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Learner identity, motivation and autonomy in EFL pronunciation learning: Development and evaluation of a pedagogical model

Ph.D. Thesis in Applied Linguistics

2011

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DECLARATION

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SUMMARY

This thesis has three broad aims. Firstly, it sets out to explore the nature of the relationship between pronunciation and identity. Secondly, it aims to establish whether such a relationship can contribute to a model of L2 pronunciation pedagogy, whose development, implementation and evaluation is subsequently outlined. The third aim, contingent on the first two, is to establish the pronunciation goals set by a group of EFL learners, and the motivating influences that give rise to them.

A review of L2 pronunciation research reveals that proposed pronunciation teaching methods tend to be based on the mechanical articulation of sounds in order to approximate native-like pronunciation. Despite the prevalence of such proposed teaching methods throughout the research literature, there is a comparative dearth of empirical investigation into their efficacy. This thesis aims to address both these limitations.

Two topics only peripherally mentioned in the pronunciation literature are learner identity and motivation. Further investigation of these phenomena more generally illustrates the role of identity in Dörnyei's recent framework of L2 motivation, the L2 Motivational Self System (2005). It is proposed that this construct and Omoniyi's Hierarchy of Identities (2006) can together be brought to bear in understanding the formation of L2 learners' pronunciation goals.

On the basis of this investigation, a model of L2 pronunciation learning is presented, which proposes that pronunciation is influenced by the combination of circumstantial factors (environmental and biological influences) and the target accent that stems from affective factors (identity and motivation, as conceptualised in the models of Omoniyi and Dörnyei). Given the importance of the target accent in mediating the influence of the affective factors, it is suggested that learners' awareness of their pronunciation goals be incorporated into the pronunciation teaching process. Out of this model arises the third broad aim of the study: the investigation of learners' L2 pronunciation goals.

This model of pronunciation forms the basis of a proposed pedagogical model, which outlines the principles of an approach to pronunciation teaching that draws on learner autonomy to address the affective factors outlined above. The pedagogical model involves goal-setting, awareness-raising, reflection and the use of drama and role play, as well as the more mechanical activities used in previous approaches to control the movements of the organs of articulation. The implementation of a pronunciation course, which puts into practice the principles outlined in the pedagogical model, is subsequently described. The evaluation of this course forms a core component of the empirical study, along with the examination of learners' pronunciation goals and the influence exerted by learners' identity and motivation.

The empirical study is built on a mixed methods paradigm and consists of four phases: the distribution of a questionnaire to 147 learners of English as a foreign language; the implementation of the pronunciation course already described with a subset of 14 of those learners; the analysis of pre- and post-test recordings of the pedagogical study participants by a group of independent raters; and finally, an interview conducted with each of the pedagogical study participants, designed to follow up on their involvement in previous phases of the study. Analysis of the study is provided of both the results as a whole, and of individual case studies of learners who participated in the pedagogical study.

The study finds that while more learners tend to aim for native speaker varieties of English than varieties based on intelligibility alone, the majority are motivated primarily by a need to communicate. Pronunciation goals are shown to represent a chosen facet of the learner's identity. While no overall statistically significant improvement is observed in the pronunciation of the group of learners who attended the pronunciation course, nearly all participants demonstrate increased awareness of their pronunciation goals and how to address their individual difficulties after taking the course. The findings suggest a tendency among learners to associate native-speaker varieties of English with intelligibility, and that learner identity has a role to play in L2 pronunciation learning. It is recommended that pronunciation instruction should incorporate goal-setting, awareness-raising and other tasks designed to enhance learners' awareness of the importance of individual learner identity in pronunciation learning.

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I reserve my final and most heartfelt thanks for my parents, Imelda and Conrad. My dedication of this thesis to you both comes with gratitude and love – and a promise that you don't have to read it all. (Again.)

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

ACELS	Advisory Council for English Language Schools
AOA	age of arrival
AOL	age of learning (the target language)
ASR	automatic speech recognition
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BICS	basic interpersonal communication skills
c.	circa, approximately
C1	first/native culture
CAE	Certificate of Advanced English
CAH	contrastive analysis hypothesis
CALL	computer-assisted language learning
CALP	cognitive/academic language proficiency
CAPT	computer-assisted pronunciation training
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference
CLL	community language learning
CLT	communicative language teaching
CPE	Certificate of Proficiency in English
CPH	critical period hypothesis
DoS	Director of Studies
EAP	English for academic purposes
EFL	English as a foreign language
EIL	English as an international language
ELF	English as a lingua franca
ELT	English Language Teaching
ENL	English as a native language
EPTiES	English Pronunciation Teaching in Europe Survey
ESL	English as a second language
ESOL	English for speakers of other languages
FCE	First Certificate of English
FETAC	Further Education and Training Awards Council
FSW	'Find somebody who' (EFL speaking activity)
FTA	Dhi Fonètik Tîcerz' Asóciécon (Phonetic Teachers' Association)
GA	General American (pronunciation)
HoI	Hierarchy of Identities (Omoniyi, 2006)
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IGE	Intermediate General English
IPA	International Phonetic Association

l.	line # (in interview transcripts)
L1	first language
L2	second language
LAD	Language Acquisition Device
LFC	Lingua Franca Core
LOR	length of residence
m	minutes
N	number
NAE	North American English
NNS	non-native speaker
NS	native speaker
PG	Pedagogical Group
Q1, Q2 etc.	Question 1, Question 2 etc.
QG	Questionnaire Group
RP	Received Pronunciation
RQ1, etc.	Research Question 1, Research Question 2, etc.
s	seconds
SIL	Summer Institution of Linguistics, Inc.
SLA	Second language acquisition
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
T1, T2, etc.	Time#1, Time #2, etc.
TESOL	Teachers of English to speakers of other languages
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TOEIC	Test of English for International Communication

INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims to establish the role of learner identity in L2 pronunciation. A second aim involves the exploration of how identity can be incorporated into an approach to pronunciation teaching. A pedagogical model is described, on the basis of a proposed model of L2 pronunciation learning. Empirical research is carried out to implement and evaluate this pedagogical model with a group of EFL learners attending English classes in seven different language institutions in Dublin. The third aim of the study is to investigate learners' L2 pronunciation goals, with a view to establishing a better understanding of how the affective factors of identity and motivation influence the process of L2 pronunciation learning.

My research in this area stems from an interest in the intuitive belief that pronunciation, whether in the L1 or L2, reveals something of a speaker's identity. It is generally accepted that, at the very least, an individual's speech may indicate (to some listeners) the geographical origins of the speaker, her social status, whether she is a native or non-native speaker of the language and a range of other attributes that may legitimately be considered part of individual identity.

Consider the following statement:

> "I've lost my identity, because I never talked like this before [...] I'm a very different person and it's strange and I don't like it."
> (Walker, BBC News Magazine, 2009)

This quote was taken from an interview with a British woman named Linda Walker, who had awoken from a stroke in 2006 to find her Geordie accent transformed into one that, to some, sounded Jamaican. Walker was diagnosed with foreign accent syndrome, a rare condition which causes people who have suffered a neurological event – such as severe migraine or stroke – to pronounce their speech with what sounds to listeners like a foreign accent. More accurately, victims of this condition have been found to produce speech in which "critical elements" are impaired (Blumstein, Alexander, Ryalls, Katz, & Dworetzky, 1987, p. 215), which causes the perception of a foreign accent by some listeners (for further discussion, see e.g. Blumstein et al., 1987; Kurowski, Blumstein, & Alexander, 1996; Moen, 2000). Walker's description of how this illness robbed her not just of her mode of pronunciation, but of her identity, illustrates the far-reaching implications of the way we speak for our very sense of self, and epitomises the kernel of the discussions presented here: the nature of the relationship between identity and pronunciation. This thesis attempts to elucidate this relationship and to apply it to the development and evaluation of an approach to teaching L2 pronunciation. The thesis is structured in such a way as to present the hypotheses, outline the implementation of the pedagogical model, describe the empirical study and discuss the results, in that order. This structure will now be discussed in further detail.

Chapter One provides an overview of the role of pronunciation in second language research literature. Approaches to teaching L2 pronunciation are a regular feature throughout the literature. One fundamental issue in pronunciation pedagogy remains a matter of debate: the question of which phonological model represents an appropriate target for learners. The traditional goal of native-like pronunciation has, over the past 30 years, been called into question, with a target of intelligibility now more generally preferred. In spite of this significant development, many pronunciation teaching methods have continued to focus on achievement of a native-like level of L2 pronunciation that fails to be attained by the vast majority of learners, suggesting a possible gap between research and practice. This chapter also examines some of the studies that have been carried out to investigate the factors that influence degree of L2 accent (e.g. Derwing & Rossiter, 2003; Derwing, Thomson, & Munro, 2006; Flege et al., 2006; Flege, Munro, & MacKay, 1995b). It finds that the topics of identity and motivation in L2 pronunciation have been only peripherally mentioned in previous empirical studies, the notable exception being a series of studies carried out by Smit et al., 1997-2002, which investigated the correlation between learner motivation and L2 pronunciation achievement and found learner identity to be a major contributing factor. The chapter concludes that there is a dearth of pedagogical research carried out to assess the efficacy of pronunciation pedagogy, and that the topics of identity and motivation in L2 pronunciation merit further investigation.

Chapter Two begins with an overview of English Language Teaching, which provides a context for the investigation of pronunciation amongst learners of English as a foreign language. There are now more non-native speakers of the language than native speakers, a fact that has led to a discussion in the literature of a change with regard to what is considered to be an appropriate phonological target for learners of English, particularly in relation to the context of English as an international language (i.e. English spoken among non-native speakers). In particular, researchers such as Jenkins (e.g. 1997; 2000) and Seidlhofer (e.g. 2004) strongly advocate the right of learners to retain their L1 identity by means of preserving their L1 accents when speaking English, thus aiming for mutual intelligibility rather than attainment of a native-like accent. These views seem to provide support for my underlying argument that, given an association between learner identity and pronunciation, learner identity ought to be addressed in L2 pronunciation instruction. However, one crucial difference is that there is an assumption in the views of some researchers that learners *wish* to project their L1 identity in their L2 speech, a claim I go on to dispute as an over-simplification of the role played by identity in pronunciation.

The second part of Chapter Two presents an overview of recent developments in identity research, and highlights the importance of its role in L2 motivation research, and in particular Dörnyei's model, the L2 Motivational Self System (2005). This model represents L2 motivation as a collection of the learner's envisaged possible selves. Also presented here is a model of identity proposed by Omoniyi: the Hierarchy of Identities (2006). This describes the individual's prioritisation of different aspects of his or her identity - which may include, but not be limited to, L1 identity projection, as suggested by Jenkins - for given situations. I argue that together, these two models represent a set of affective factors that determine the target accent the learner wishes to achieve in the L2. The chapter culminates in a proposed model of L2 pronunciation learning. This model is based on the assumption that all L2 pronunciation output is directly shaped by the articulatory processes, which can be influenced directly by circumstantial factors such as biological and environmental influences, or indirectly by the affective factors of motivation and identity as described above. These are mediated by the learner's target accent, or L2 pronunciation goal, which then feeds into the articulatory processes that ultimately produce L2 pronunciation.

On the basis of this model, I argue that the ability of a learner to project a chosen aspect of her identity in her L2 pronunciation, and the establishment of individual pronunciation goals, constitute elements of pronunciation learning that have been neglected in previous conceptualisations of the L2 pronunciation learning process. There is a strong case to be made that raising learners' awareness of these issues may greatly enhance a pedagogical approach to L2 pronunciation learning.

In Chapter Three, these findings are applied to a more pragmatic purpose: the proposal of a pedagogical model of L2 pronunciation. Given the prominent role of pronunciation goals in the previous chapter's model of L2 pronunciation learning, a pedagogical model is proposed which encourages learners to reflect on the accent they wish to achieve, how it represents their identity and the steps they can take to achieve it. One of the most effective means of doing so is through an approach that incorporates all relevant aspects of the learner's identity into her pronunciation learning: in other words, by means of an approach that promotes learner autonomy. The benefits of a pedagogical approach that draws on learner autonomy are discussed in this chapter, followed by a discussion of the proposed objectives of this pedagogical model.

The chapter concludes by outlining the principles of a pedagogical model that is founded on the model of L2 pronunciation learning put forward in Chapter Two, and encompasses an autonomous learning ethos. Five pedagogical principles are outlined, based on the premise of raising learners' awareness of their L2 pronunciation goals and how to identify and address them, the physiological manipulation required of the articulatory organs to produce certain sounds, and using drama and role play to illustrate the capacity of pronunciation for projecting identity.

Chapter Four outlines the practical application of the theoretical proposals put forward thus far. It describes the implementation of the pedagogical model as a pronunciation course carried out with two groups of EFL learners at two different educational institutions in Dublin. Each section of the chapter outlines the activities undertaken by the learners for a given lesson within that course. The purpose of this chapter is to reify the abstract pedagogical principles outlined in Chapter Three, and illustrate how they may be – and indeed, were – put into action in the EFL classroom. The pronunciation course described in this chapter was originally intended to form the sole component of the empirical study, which is described in the next chapter, and ultimately constitutes Phase II of a four-phase study.

Chapter Five describes the empirical study, and more specifically the research methodology used. The study aims to establish what pronunciation goals are set by this sample of EFL learners, how learner identity is manifested in their pronunciation goals, and the effect of an approach to teaching pronunciation that encourages learners to reflect on these pronunciation goals and use them to project their identities. The empirical study was carried out in four separate phases, which combined qualitative and quantitative aspects to form a mixed methods study:

- Phase I consisted of a questionnaire distributed to 147 learners of English attending one of seven participating English language institutions around Dublin;
- Phase II consisted of the implementation of a pronunciation course with a subset (N=14) of those learners who had already completed the questionnaire presented in Phase I;
- Phase III consisted of analysis of the pronunciation of the 14 learners who participated in the pronunciation course. Samples of learners' speech were recorded before and after the course, and these were later analysed by a group of 31 independent raters;
- Phase IV consisted of a one-on-one interview with the same 14 learners, with the intention of elaborating on learners' responses to the Phase I questionnaire and their participation in the Phase II pedagogical study.

Chapter Six presents the results of the empirical study, in the form of a discussion of three research questions:

1. What are the pronunciation goals of this group of English language learners, and what factors influence them?
2. How does learner identity manifest itself in the pronunciation goals of this group of learners?
3. What is the effect of an EFL pronunciation pedagogy that encourages learners to reflect on their pronunciation goals and use them to project their identities?

The answers to these research questions are sought in the analysis of the subjects' participation as a whole where appropriate, and in the form of individual case studies. Conclusions from the data are presented in Chapter Seven, along with recommendations for future research based on the findings of the empirical study.

This thesis aims to make a number of contributions to the field of pronunciation research. Firstly, it responds to Derwing & Munro's (2005) call for greater collaboration between pronunciation researchers and practitioners. The review of pronunciation literature provided in Chapter One shows an abundance of pronunciation teaching method proposals, which are not reflected in the pronunciation teaching currently being practised in L2 classrooms. This situation has thus far resulted in two outcomes: a shortage of pedagogical studies evaluating the considerable variety of proposed pronunciation teaching methods, and a chasm between the theory and practice of pronunciation teaching. In this thesis, I aim to narrow this gap by not just developing a method of teaching pronunciation, but also by implementing and evaluating it, thus contributing in a meaningful way to the debate surrounding the appropriateness of proposed pronunciation teaching methodologies.

The implementation of my proposed pedagogical model also addresses the comparative scarcity of empirical research carried out into the role of identity in L2 pronunciation. The relationship between the two is so intuitive as to be implicit, a sentiment to which Smit and Dalton allude in their previously-mentioned study of motivation in L2 pronunciation learning: "[Pronunciation] touches upon the learner's identity most immediately" (2000, p. 229). Drawing on the series of studies carried out by Smit, Dalton-Puffer and Kaltenböck (1997, 2000, 2002), I investigate the role of identity in L2 motivation, and consider how this association can be applied to the development of a pedagogical approach to L2 pronunciation.

The pedagogical model itself aims to provide an innovative approach to L2 pronunciation instruction in that it combines a 'top-down' methodology that relies heavily on metacognitive processes, with a more 'bottom-up' approach that draws on the benefits of describing the mechanical movement of the articulatory organs. This is in contrast to previous methods that have more frequently dwelt solely upon the mechanical aspect of pronunciation. Elements of the pedagogical model are based on the concept of learner autonomy, as a result of the prominent role ascribed to identity and motivation in the model of L2 pronunciation learning. The model's sound theoretical and pedagogical foundations lend credibility to the study's proposals.

The reader should bear the following three terminological points in mind while reading this thesis. Firstly, throughout this study, I have adopted the broader interpretation of the term *pronunciation*, described by Luoma as "the sound of speech" (2004, p. 11). Pronunciation here refers not just to segmental articulation and enunciation, but more generally to overall speech patterns. This includes suprasegmental features such as stress, pause and intonation, as well as the aforementioned articulation of consonants and enunciation of vowel sounds. More specifically, 'pronunciation' is used to refer to the *process* of producing phonological output, while *accent* instead refers to the "cumulative auditory effect of those features of pronunciation which identify where a person is from, regionally or socially" (Crystal, 2003a, p. 3); i.e. pronunciation denotes the process of speech production, while accent refers to the speech sounds that are produced and how they are perceived by the listener.

Secondly, the term *EFL* is used to refer not just to the specific case of learning English as a foreign language in a non-English-speaking country (e.g. among French students in France), but to all cases of non-native speakers of English learning it for any purpose. The sole exception to this use is in Section 2.1, in which I distinguish between the more technical terms used to identify English learning in different contexts.

Thirdly, throughout the thesis I have used the female pronouns *she* and *her* in all generic references such as to the language learner, or the individual. In the pedagogical study, although the participating subjects were a mixture of men and women, it was the female learners who were squarely in the majority (four men and ten women). For this reason - and for the sake of simplification - I followed suit in the rest of my writing.

Finally, the appendices to this thesis are featured on the DVD that accompanies it. They contain the documentation associated with the implementation of the empirical investigation, and are divided into six sections: one for each of the four phases of the study, one for statistical analysis procedures, and one containing media files of recordings used in the pronunciation course. References to the relevant sections are indicated in the text where appropriate.

CHAPTER ONE

PRONUNCIATION IN SECOND LANGUAGE RESEARCH

1.0 Introduction

Research into the role of pronunciation in second language acquisition has ebbed and flowed in the years since L.G. Kelly memorably hailed it as the "Cinderella" of language teaching (Kelly, 1969, p. 87). Ever since its beginnings in the origins of the International Phonetic Association (IPA) alphabet in the late 19th century, the level of importance ascribed to pronunciation throughout the course of second language acquisition (SLA) research has varied widely in accordance with contemporary L2 teaching methods and theories. In this opening chapter I will examine the place of L2 pronunciation within the framework of second language research, and how its role has evolved since the inception of the study of phonetics.

At the heart of pronunciation instruction right throughout the 19th and 20th centuries was the assumption that the goal of language learning was to sound as native-like as possible, and, as such, that a foreign accent should be reduced, if not eliminated completely. In recent years, this notion has been challenged, giving way to a broader interpretation of acceptable second language phonology, and an increased emphasis on the achievement of intelligible speech, rather than adherence to a native-like model. This issue, and other major topics which have helped to shape the direction of pronunciation research, are discussed, along with the development of the most significant pronunciation teaching methods since the introduction of phonetics and phonology to the L2 classroom.

Central to the development of such pronunciation teaching methods have been a number of studies conducted to investigate the factors which most affect degree of foreign accent in a language learner. Factors as diverse as the learner's age, native language background, and pattern and extent of L1 and L2 use have been investigated to see what correlation, if any, exists between such features and the learner's L2 pronunciation. These studies too are explored, indicating possible directions of future research and pronunciation pedagogies.

This chapter is divided into three sections. Section 1.1 provides an overview of the history and progress of pronunciation research, including the development of teaching approaches, from the 19th century onwards.

Section 1.2 describes pronunciation teaching methodology in more detail, incorporating both older methods and more recent techniques. Finally, Section 1.3 looks at studies that have investigated the individual factors that affect learners' acquisition of pronunciation.

1.1 Pronunciation research in SLA

In his 2005 observation on the state of the art of pronunciation instruction in English language teaching, Levis notes that since its origins, the role of EFL pronunciation instruction has been "a study in extremes", varying from relative insignificance to pivotal importance, and various points in between (p. 369). When the fluctuations evident throughout the history of L2 pronunciation research are considered, this comment seems justified. In this section, I will address the progress of this research from its beginnings in the 19th century, right up to the most important issues in contemporary research. While this section will incorporate reference to pronunciation teaching methods, these will be discussed in greater detail in Section 1.2 below.

1.1.1 The late 19th Century: The Reform Movement

Explicit pronunciation instruction first arose as a serious contender for inclusion in the language syllabus towards the end of the 19th century. In accordance with the study of the classics, grammar and vocabulary had formed the focal points of modern language teaching throughout the 1800s, while the paucity of research into the sounds of language via phonetics and phonology was reflected in a lack of pronunciation instruction in the classroom (Kelly, 1976). The first major development in phonological research occurred with the establishment of the International Phonetic Association in 1886 in Paris by a number of prominent phoneticians, under the leadership of Paul Passy. The initial aim of the Association (or, as it was originally named, *Dhi Fonètik Tîcerz' Asóciécon*, or FTA) was to encourage the instruction of pronunciation in foreign language teaching, through the use of phonetic notation. There was widespread support for the aims of the Association amongst several international language teachers and phoneticians, including Johan Storm in Norway, Henry Sweet in Britain and Hermann Klinghardt in Germany (International Phonetic Association, 1999).

The development of the IPA alphabet and phonetic transcription method provided a foundation from which pronunciation could be taught to language learners, paving the way for a new direction in language teaching. This emerged in what became known as the Reform Movement, advocated mainly by phoneticians involved in the establishment of the IPA (Bayley, 1998). It promoted an entirely new concept of language teaching by pushing speaking skills to the forefront of the agenda, and encouraging the introduction of phonetic knowledge to learner and teacher education (Howatt & Smith, 2002).

The new direction of language teaching was highlighted in 1899, with the issue of the Committee of Twelve Report by the National Education Association in the United States, which marked a move away from the grammar-translation methods in place at the time and mentioned two new approaches: the 'natural' and 'direct' methods (Grittner, 1977). While these methods continued to stress the importance of extensive reading to language learning, they also developed a greater focus on speaking skills, including the use of oral drills: "These methods require [...] almost exclusive use of the foreign language by teacher and pupil, much repetition, and an approach to the written word not by means of grammar but through oral-aural means" (Zeydel, 1964, p. 359).

The Direct Method had major implications for the goals of modern language teaching, and especially for the role of pronunciation: "The emphasis was [...] on speech and not, as with the grammar translation method, on the written word [...]. [C]orrect pronunciation was now considered highly important" (Webb, 1974 pp. 19-20). However, while this method may have indirectly attributed greater importance to pronunciation in its use of oral exercises, the subject was not made explicit during instruction; it was instead placed "in the back wings...under the assumption that errors in pronunciation...were part of the natural acquisition process and would disappear as students gained in communicative proficiency" (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996, p. 5). The Direct Method gave rise to a number of similar teaching methods called 'naturalistic' methods. Further details on these approaches may be found in Section 1.2.1.

1.1.2 Behaviourism and pronunciation research

The Direct and naturalistic methods governed pronunciation instruction for the first half of the 20th century, together with the method of audiolingualism (otherwise known as audiolingual or audio-lingual methodology), which gained popularity in the 1940s and 1950s. This method, too, emphasised the role played by pronunciation in successful language learning, and incorporated elements of the Direct Method and phonetic transcription in its instruction.

At the heart of the audiolingual method was a core of mimicry and repetition, the theory being that "in small steps, the student was constantly learning and, moreover, was shielded from the possibility of making mistakes by the design of the drill" (Harmer, 2001, p. 79). The ethos behind this approach was heavily rooted in behaviourist theory, which exerted considerable influence on second language acquisition throughout the first two thirds of the 20^{th} century, owing in particular to the works of Bloomfield (1933) and Skinner (1957). According to behaviourist psychology, human behaviours were directly influenced by the conditions under which they were produced, and could subsequently be strengthened. This process was embodied in the Pavlovian concept of classical conditioning, in which the Stimulus-Response-Reinforcement model of behaviour was rooted (Heffernan, 2000). Based on the assumption that it was one such example of human behaviour, language - including pronunciation - could be reinforced through the cultivation of habit. In a revised edition of his seminal 1933 work 'Language,' Bloomfield stressed the importance of such repetitive instruction to successful language learning:

> The result [of foreign language teaching] depends very little upon the theoretical basis of presentation, and very much upon the conditions of teaching and on the competence of the teacher.... The matter that is to be presented, the thousands of morphemes and tagmemes of the foreign language, can be mastered only by constant repetition. (Bloomfield, 1935, pp. 503-505)

Coinciding with the increasingly influential behaviourist ideology in language teaching was the rise to prominence of the notions of transfer and interference and their respective influence on language learning, forming part of the theory that a language learner's native language can assist, or inhibit, accurate acquisition of the second language. This gave rise to the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis: the proposition that a teacher who had drawn comparisons between the learner's native and target languages would be better equipped to deal with learning difficulties: "The teacher who has made a comparison of the foreign language with the native language of the students will know better what the real problems are and can provide for teaching them" (Lado, 1957, p. 2). A more detailed discussion of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis and the effect of the learner's native language on SLA may be found in Section 1.3.2.

1.1.3 Chomsky's nativist theory

The behaviourist view of language learning dominated second language acquisition research for the first half of the 20th century, and as a result, precluded any major shift in the focus of pronunciation techniques until the late 1950s. At this point, Chomsky's renowned 1959 challenge to Skinner's 'Verbal Behavior' dealt a blow to the widespread supremacy of behaviourist theory in language acquisition. Among other features, Chomsky questioned Skinner's extension of findings from animal laboratory experiments to human behaviour, and cast doubt on the validity of his emphasis on the almost exclusive influence exerted on language by external forces. Chomsky was forceful in his criticism, and highlighted Skinner's one-sided investigation approach as an indication of the extent to which linguistic behaviour remained unexplored: "The magnitude of the failure of this attempt to account for verbal behavior serves as a kind of measure of the importance of the factors omitted from consideration, and an indication of how little is really known about this remarkably complex phenomenon" (Chomsky, 1959, p. 28).

As an alternative to the behaviourist perspective, Chomsky proposed his transformational-grammar theory of language structure, to account for humans' ability to produce original utterances from a finite set of resources. He posited the existence of an innate language acquisition device (LAD) with which every person was equipped, which he claimed was responsible for children's capacity to decipher and produce complex signal patterns in the form of language – an ability that he referred to as the "innate theory of potential structural descriptions" (Chomsky, 1965, p. 32).

This position had serious implications for the future of pronunciation instruction, as it ran counter to the behaviourist methodologies in which pronunciation teaching had become entrenched. Contrary to behaviourist principles which held that pronunciation – or any other aspect of language, for that matter – could be learned with enough practice, the transformational-generative grammar theory instead indicated that a person's language learning capacity was a product of the LAD, and could not simply be learned by parroting a series of drilled sentences, such as were popularised by the audiolingualism method. Subsequent research into the relationship between language acquisition and age (see Section 1.1.4) further complicated the issue of pronunciation instruction, on which Chomsky's theories had already cast doubt.

1.1.4 Critical period hypothesis

Around the same time (late 1950s and early 1960s), another theory was put forward suggesting that acquisition of language may need to take place before a certain age in order to be successful, a proposal that later became known as the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH). Research revealed a loss of neural plasticity just before the onset of puberty, resulting in the effective allocation of the language faculty to the left hemisphere of the brain. Penfield & Roberts (1959) claimed that once this process – known as lateralization – occurs, only the left side of the brain is capable of linguistic control, making it physically less suited to acquiring language: "…[F]or the purposes of learning languages, the human brain becomes progressively stiff and rigid after the age of nine" (Penfield & Roberts, 1959, p. 236). Penfield & Roberts' proposals were supported by the findings of Lenneberg (1967), whose empirical investigation revealed that injuries to the right side of the brain caused greater linguistic impairment in children than in adults: "[W]e infer that *language learning* can take place, at least in the right hemisphere, only between the age of two to about thirteen" (p. 153, emphasis in original). While Penfield & Roberts' study and that of Lenneberg expressed slightly differing views on the age at which this cut-off point for language learning ability takes place (age 9 for Penfield & Roberts, age 13 for Lenneberg), the underlying implication of their arguments remained the same: that approximately the first ten years of life comprise a so-called critical period which constitutes the optimal time in which to learn a language.

Further investigation suggested that the Critical Period Hypothesis may be particularly relevant to adults' acquisition of second language phonology. Scovel (1969) claimed that while it was not unheard of for some adult learners of a second language to master the lexicon and syntax of a language to near-native levels, equivalent mastery of the sound patterns of that language was impossible. Scovel attributed the difficulty experienced by adults in learning the sound patterns of a second language to the effect of cerebral dominance on the "motor activity" which controls speech mechanisms, a physiological factor not present in the acquisition of lexical or syntactic patterns (p. 252). The existence of a physical component in pronunciation, Scovel suggested, presented an insurmountable obstacle to the eradication of foreign accent, except amongst children under twelve;

thus he declared all efforts to teach a native-like accent to adult second language learners to be "futile" (p. 252).

Scovel's position on pronunciation seemed to be underscored by transformational-generative grammar theory (Chomsky, 1965). Within this framework, the attainment of a native-like level of pronunciation was deemed impossible. Together, these findings suggested that L2 education was less suited to pronunciation instruction, and better served by a focus on "more learnable items" of grammar and vocabulary (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996, p. 5). While the prevailing popularity of the behaviourist movement in the early 20th century had bolstered the practice and instruction of L2 phonology, the years that followed seemed to negate these developments. Native-like pronunciation was soon considered to be an unachievable goal and the focus of language teaching switched back to grammar and the lexicon.

1.1.5 Communicative approach

Following the controversy surrounding the Critical Period Hypothesis, and Chomsky's challenge to Skinner and the behaviourist view of language acquisition, pronunciation instruction and research experienced something of a lull. The doubt which Chomsky's nativist theory had cast on the effectiveness of pronunciation teaching had caused the popularity of contemporary behaviourist-driven methodologies to wane, and though new teaching methods such as the Silent Way and Community Language Learning were developed and implemented (see Sections 1.2.3 and 1.2.4), there were no major developments in the area for most of the next two decades.

In the 1970s, however, a more practical view of language teaching arose: the communicative approach, also known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). It gained steadily in popularity throughout the 1980s and remains arguably the most widely-held approach to language pedagogy today (e.g. Avery & Ehrlich, 1992; Ellis, 1985; Hinkel, 2005; Morley, 1987). The communicative approach in some ways harked back to the principles which underpinned the establishment of the IPA in the late 19th century. Essentially this approach was based on two notions: that the ultimate goal of language learning is the ability to understand the target language and be understood while using it, and that this goal is best achieved through use of the language in communication. As a result, CLT once more assigned to oral skills, including pronunciation, a prominent position in the overall scheme of language teaching.

The new approach's increased emphasis on communication broadened the scope of pronunciation instruction, extending it to include such broader themes as context-based learning, discourse-level communication and connected speech, among others (e.g. Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994; R. H. Jones, 1997). One lasting effect that this change had for pronunciation learning was the introduction of the instruction of suprasegmental features.

1.1.6 The role of suprasegmentals

The past three decades of research have witnessed the advance of suprasegmental features of L2 speech (Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994; Levis, 2005; Morley, 1987; Trofimovich & Baker, 2006). Prior to this, the focus of pronunciation instruction had, generally been the production of phonetic segments. A suprasegmental feature is "a vocal effect which extends over more than one sound segment in an utterance, such as a pitch, stress or juncture pattern" (Crystal, 2003a, p. 466). Previous teaching techniques such as audiolingualism and the Direct Method did not address such prosodic elements. The more recent emphasis on these features has arisen primarily out of a renewed interest in the communicative value of language, and the widely-accepted view of the considerable influence they exert on the communicative potential of language: "[T]he fact that the focus of my pronunciation instruction now very explicitly centers on communication rather than manipulation means that I can...indirectly encourage practice of appropriate stress and intonation" (Celce-Murcia, 1987, p. 11).

The perceived association between suprasegmental features and communicatively successful L2 pronunciation has led to the development of an abundance of pronunciation training techniques which incorporate the instruction of prosodic features, e.g. Levis and Pickering (2004), Brookes (1989), Hardison & Sonchaeng (2005) and Knoerr (2000). The increased interest in these elements, though, has not been reflected in an equal rise in the number of empirical studies investigating them. While there has been no shortage of studies investigating the factors that most influence perception and production of pronunciation (see Section 1.3 below), the limited number of empirical studies carried out to establish the link between suprasegmental features and successful L2 communication has been noted. As Hahn (2004) observed, "Numerous pedagogical resources on ESL/EFL pronunciation advocate teaching non-native speakers (NNSs) suprasegmentals to improve the intelligibility of their speech. However, little empirical support exists for such claims" (p. 201).

In spite of the widespread, if perhaps largely intuitive, recognition of the communicative significance of suprasegmentals, the level of importance ascribed to them has varied widely throughout the research. As far back as 1977, Grittner defined essential speaking skills as "the ability to produce all the significant sounds and intonation patterns of the foreign language" (1977, p. 84), allocating intonation a position alongside - but not above - segmental sounds. This view was echoed in Dalton & Seidlhofer (1994), and, more recently, Jenkins' Lingua Franca Core (e.g. Jenkins, Modiano, & Seidlhofer, 2001). However, other researchers (e.g. Celce-Murcia et al., 1996; McNerney & Mendelsohn, 1992; Morley, 1987) have prioritised prosodic elements, assigning to them a more important role than segmental features. Morley notes that amongst speakers at a 1985 TESOL colloquium, there was a collective "focus on the primary importance of suprasegmentals...and how they are used to communicate meaning, with a secondary importance assigned to segmentals" (Morley, 1987, preface). This preferential treatment for the suprasegmental features of language was justified thus by McNerney and Mendelsohn:

> No pronunciation course can teach everything. Therefore, we are arguing that a short-term pronunciation course should focus first and foremost on suprasegmentals, as they have the greatest impact on the comprehensibility of learners' English. We have found that giving priority to the suprasegmental aspects of English not only improves learners' comprehensibility, but is also less frustrating for students because greater change can be effected in a short time. (McNerney & Mendelsohn, 1992, p. 186)

Some researchers have attributed the significant role played by suprasegmentals in English to the timing of the language. It is widely contended that English is a stress-timed language (Taylor, 1981), which means that its rhythm is based on isochronously-timed stresses, i.e. "the STRESSED SYLLABLES recur at regular intervals of time...regardless of the number of intervening unstressed syllables" (Crystal, 2003a, pp. 456, emphasis in original). This is contrary to the rhythm of a syllable-timed language such as Spanish, which is based on regularly-occurring syllables (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996). Although the status of English as a stress-timed language has been challenged (e.g. Stockmal, Dace, & Bond, 2005), there is sufficient evidence to suggest "an overwhelming tendency towards regular alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables" (Taylor, 1981, p. 219). Interestingly, the significance of the stress-timed rhythmic structure of English can be seen in the volume of poetic verse written in iambic meter, which is rooted in the accurate placement of stress on the second of two beats; thus iambic meter reflects the important role assigned to stress in the spoken word in English, and is "considered by many English...writers the meter closest to that of ordinary speech" (Stallworthy, 1996, p. lxiii).

1.1.7 Native-like pronunciation -v- intelligibility

The communicative approach further revolutionised decades of pronunciation instruction and research by casting doubt on the validity of the objective of a native-like level of pronunciation. Within a behaviourist framework, the goal of all L2 pronunciation instruction was to produce an accent that would resemble native speech as closely as possible. However, from the mid-20th century onwards, this goal became the subject of debate. As far back as 1956, the need for language learners to speak with a flawless – i.e. native-like – accent was questioned, as in Abercrombie's proposals for teaching pronunciation:

> Is it really necessary for most language learners to acquire a perfect pronunciation? Intending secret agents and intending teachers have to, of course, but most other language learners need no more than a comfortably intelligible pronunciation (and by 'comfortably' intelligible, I mean a pronunciation which can be understood with little or no conscious effort on the part of the listener). I believe that pronunciation teaching should have, not a goal which must of necessity be normally an unrealized ideal, but a *limited* purpose which will be completely fulfilled: the attainment of intelligibility. (1956b, p. 93, emphasis in original)

It is interesting to note that in spite of Abercrombie's recommendation that learners aim for a "comfortably intelligible pronunciation", he includes teachers (as well as secret agents) amongst those learners who should strive towards "perfect" pronunciation (ibid). This suggests that even though he espouses the abstract notion of intelligibility as a valid goal, he still views native-like pronunciation as the 'ideal' speech model.

Abercrombie's perceived ideals of pronunciation teaching standards notwithstanding, the position of the native-like L2 pronunciation model continued to weaken in subsequent years. Following the combined effects of Chomsky's nativist theory and the Critical Period Hypothesis in the 1960s, the spread of Communicative Language Teaching dealt a further blow to the goal of native-like L2 pronunciation by advocating an emphasis on the learner's achievement of 'communicative competence' (e.g. Canale & Swain, 1980; for further discussion of this subject, see Section 1.2.6). Thus L2 instruction developed a new focus on the achievement of a 'threshold level' of linguistic proficiency, described by van Ek (1975) as "the lowest level at which learners may expect to be able to interact socially with foreign language speakers" (p. 21). The impact of the proposal of this threshold level extended as much to pronunciation as to other aspects of language instruction, as demonstrated by Hinofotis & Bailey (1980, cit. Celce-Murcia, 1987, p. 5). They evaluated American undergraduate students' perceptions of the English speech of non-native teaching assistants, and found that if pronunciation fell below this threshold level, oral communication became demonstrably more difficult, regardless of the speaker's proficiency at English grammar or vocabulary (ibid.).

In addition to declaring the attainment of a native-like level of pronunciation to be impossible (as previously indicated by the CPH), the communicative approach also deemed it unnecessary. However, vestiges of the native-like approach remain. While Van Ek and Trim (1998), in their description of the requisite language features of the threshold level, stress that only an intelligible pronunciation should be *expected* of L2 learners, they still highlight the desirability of a native-like model: "[L]earners should target one of the native norms...but should not be required or expected to approximate to it more closely than is required for full intelligibility, not only to native English speakers, but also to other non-native learners who have reached *Threshold Level*" (1998, p. 116, emphasis in original). This statement suggests that according to the threshold-level view, while a native-like L2 accent should not be imposed on the learner, it still forms the ideal L2 speech model, in accordance with the views expressed by Abercrombie 20 years earlier (see pp. 17-18 above).

Arising from the increased focus on the development of intelligible L2 pronunciation was a need to establish a more precise definition of 'intelligibility'. Derwing and Munro made the following careful distinction between intelligibility, comprehensibility and accentedness:

> *Intelligibility* refers to the extent to which an utterance is actually understood [...]. We use the term *comprehensibility* to refer to listeners' perceptions of difficulty in understanding particular utterances [...]. *Accentedness* refers to how strong the talker's foreign accent is perceived to be. (Munro & Derwing, 1995b, p. 291, emphasis in original)

Having established the differences between intelligibility, comprehensibility and accentedness, Derwing and Munro went on to show that the three are not always correlated, and that accentedness does not necessarily compromise intelligibility or comprehensibility. Munro & Derwing (1995a), for example, showed that even when a listener was able to transcribe an NNS's utterance perfectly, he or she sometimes still referred to the speech as moderately or heavily accented, indicating that "the presence of a strong foreign accent does not necessarily cause L2 speech to be low in comprehensibility or intelligibility" (Munro & Derwing, 1995a, p. 90).

Other studies have examined the intelligibility of L2 pronunciation with a view to establishing which features of speech most contribute to the perception of a foreign accent. The results have varied, with some highlighting an association between accentedness and certain speech features, and others disputing the existence of such an association across all listeners. In the study cited above, Munro & Derwing (1995a) found that listeners cited prosodic errors as posing a bigger obstacle to intelligibility than segmental ones, thus seeming to emphasise the importance of suprasegmental features to intelligible L2 speech. Derwing & Rossiter (2003) supported these findings in a study investigating the effects of different methods of pronunciation instruction on the speech of 48 non-native English speaking subjects. A greater improvement in overall L2 pronunciation (both segmental and prosodic) was found in learners who received 'global' instruction, which incorporated prosodic elements into a pedagogy that also featured segmental instruction.

Conversely, Riney et al. (2005), showed that the features of speech that contributed to listeners' evaluation of accent varied considerably between native speaker (NS) and non-native speaker (NNS) listeners. They examined the perceived degree of accent in the English speech of groups of Japanese and American students and found that Japanese NNS listeners mostly judged the accentedness of speech in terms of its prosodic features, whereas American native speaker NS listeners relied more on consonantal distinctions such as /r/ and /l/. These results support the view that NS and NNS listeners rely on different parameters to assess degree of accent. Two further studies investigate the possibility of a speech intelligibility benefit between NNSs talking and listening to English. Bent and Bradlow (2003), who investigated the intelligibility of English sentences uttered by non-native English speakers to NNS listeners, found that even when speaker and listener shared a common language background, the utterance was no more intelligible to the listener than those utterances of speakers from other language backgrounds. Their results were supported by a similar study by Munro et al. (2006), which revealed that English spoken by an NNS was no more easily understood when speaker and listener shared a common L1 background than when they did not (Munro et al., 2006).

These occasionally conflicting findings seem to justify the growing number of studies into the complex phenomenon of L2 speech perception. Such an increase is illustrative of the changing direction in L2 pronunciation research and its relatively recent focus on intelligibility. This change in direction has undoubted implications for the future of pronunciation instruction, as teachers and learners choose a realistic and relevant level of pronunciation to target. This shift in focus was concisely summarised by Celce-Murcia et al. (1996):

> The goal of teaching pronunciation to [...] learners is not to make them sound like native speakers of English. With the exception of a few highly gifted and motivated individuals, such a goal is unrealistic. A more modest and realistic goal is to enable learners to surpass the threshold level so that their pronunciation will not detract from their ability to communicate. (p. 8)

This is not to say, however, that native-like norms are anathema in the L2 pronunciation classroom. Luoma (2004) contends that a native speaker model of pronunciation is a natural foundation from which the features of a communicative norm can be established. She writes, "Communicative effectiveness, which is based on comprehensibility and probably guided by native speaker standards but defined in terms of realistic learner achievement, is a better standard for learner pronunciation [than a native-like level]" (Luoma, 2004, p. 10). Similarly, Cruttenden argues that, in relation to the specific case of English pronunciation, while it is perhaps advisable to introduce the learner to multiple phonological models, these should not necessarily be introduced simultaneously. Instead, he claims that it would be preferable to choose a single standardised pronunciation –

"e.g. a representative form of British or American pronunciation" (Cruttenden, 2001, p. 297) – and to simply allow for the introduction of a more localised English variety once the original model has been established in the minds of the learners.

The impact of the new-found preference for intelligibility in L2 pronunciation research and instruction is observable in the assessment guidelines for international language proficiency tests. Examination of the scoring guides and standards of four of the major English proficiency tests support this claim. Official guidelines for the assessment of pronunciation in the speaking component of the IELTS, Cambridge (FCE/CAE/CPE), TOEFL and TOEIC exams all stress the importance of (variously) 'comprehensibility', 'intelligibility', and 'clarity' of speech. However, one noticeable difference separated the Cambridge exams from the rest. In the scoring guides for TOEFL, TOEIC and IELTS, there was no reference to native speaker norms (British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia, & University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, 2010; Educational Testing Service, 2004, 2009). However, the Cambridge ESOL Common Scale for Speaking (University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, 2010) described the pronunciation of Level C2 (i.e. highest possible level) proficiency as "'native-like'" (University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, 2010, p. 96). This would seem to suggest that the Cambridge ESOL pronunciation assessment procedures uphold the authority of the native speaker model of English pronunciation more so than do their counterparts listed above.

The subject of the goals of pronunciation research within the context of English pronunciation will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two (Section 2.2.2).

1.1.8 Contemporary pronunciation research

The effect of the communicative approach to teaching and its influence on the proposal of intelligibility as a viable goal of instruction has inevitably contributed to the growing interest in L2 pronunciation research since the mid-1990s. In spite of the comparatively sidelined role it previously occupied in language teaching – as evidenced by the "Cinderella" syndrome so memorably referenced by Kelly (see p. 9 above) – pronunciation instruction has since gained in popularity and esteem, and is now viewed as "an effective and important part of language pedagogy" (Derwing & Munro, 2010, p. 366). Major journals, including *TESOL Quarterly* (2005) and *Language Learning and Technology (*2009), have devoted entire specialist issues to pronunciation research and instruction. Currently, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) lists 'Phonological Control' as one of its descriptors in the Language Competence/Linguistic category, and pronunciation is considered one of the key elements in the speaking component of major international English language proficiency tests such as Cambridge, IELTS, TOEFL and TOEIC (see p. 22 above).

However, in spite of the recent heightened profile of pronunciation research and teaching, there remain some noticeable shortcomings in the literature. When compared to other aspects of language study, research in the area tends to be somewhat erratic. While numerous lines of investigation are carried out simultaneously, they tend not to be integrated with one another, and the findings of research are slow to be implemented in the L2 classroom. There are a significant number of empirical studies investigating the factors contributing to the successful production and perception of L2 pronunciation – most notably those carried out by Flege and his colleagues (e.g. Flege, Frieda, & Nozawa, 1997; Flege, Munro, & MacKay, 1996; Yeni-Komshian, Robbins, & Flege, 2001 - see Section 1.3 for further details) – and yet there is a dearth of empirical evidence in other areas, such as the communicative value of prosodic features of language, as already highlighted in Section 1.1.6 above. Furthermore, attempts to assess the impact of pronunciation research in the L2 classroom have fallen flat due to a lack of empirical evidence outlining current teaching practices.

This particular shortcoming is currently being addressed by an international research project currently underway in Europe, led by Alice Henderson, titled EPTiES (Henderson, in progress). This project has been developed by English language teachers and researchers from ten European countries (including my own participation as the Irish representative). The study consists of an online survey to determine the pronunciation teaching practices of English language teachers around Europe, and is currently in the data gathering stage (Henderson, 2010). In anticipation of this project, a similar, small-scale investigation was carried out by Murphy to establish the pronunciation practices of a small sample of English language teachers in Dublin (2009). The study found that teachers were unfamiliar with a variety of methods of teaching pronunciation compared to other language skills, and instead tended to resort to the same approaches on a regular basis. The results also showed that approximately half of all teachers surveyed used both British English and Irish English models of pronunciation with their learners, although nearly all claimed that the pronunciation teaching resources were based entirely on British English models. The study recommends that teachers receive more extensive training in pronunciation instruction, and that pronunciation materials be kept up to date in accordance with the pronunciation models being used in class (ibid.).

I have observed in the literature a distinct shortage of pedagogical studies carried out to determine the success of proposed pronunciation training programmes, which are frequently put forward without any accompanying theoretical or empirical justification. This trend was also noted by Derwing & Munro (2010), who remarked that "[u]ntil recently, little had been established about the effectiveness of pronunciation teaching, and pedagogical techniques were based more on speculation and theoretical notions than on empirically well-justified principles" (Derwing & Munro, 2010, p. 366).

This observation is particularly relevant given the abundance of commercially-available computer-aided language learning multimedia, as noted by Derwing & Munro in a slightly earlier study (2009). This availability has created a huge market for pronunciation learning technology, which purports to accelerate the learner's achievement of a native-like L2 accent. Many of these software packages are advertised and sold online, from companies which promote native-like pronunciation – or, as it is frequently called, "accent-free pronunciation" – as the key to personal and professional success. The following quote was taken from the advertising information on the website of one such company, Best Accent Training: "If your job deals with American clients, be prepared ! Americans can be easily frustrated and impatient with heavy accents. In fact, Americans have a saying: It's not *what* you say, it's *how* you say it!" (http://www.bestaccenttraining.com/Productbenefits.html, emphasis in original). This quote is a typical example of the type of emotive language found on such websites; however, the growing popularity of such accent reduction technology seems to run counter to current doubts about the validity of the goal of native-like pronunciation, as outlined in Section 1.1.7 above (while the ethical implications of luring the customer with threats of interactions with frustrated and impatient native speakers seem questionable at best).

This disparity is indicative of the conflict between contemporary research and pronunciation teaching. I must concur with Derwing & Munro's (2005) call for greater liaison between pronunciation teachers and researchers, in order that the pedagogical insight provided by research findings may be successfully applied to the foreign language classroom, to the benefit of the language learner.

1.2 Pronunciation teaching

In spite of the increased research in recent years investigating such aspects of L2 phonology as the role of intelligibility, and the factors that affect it, the most widely-researched theme in L2 pronunciation research is still the search for an effective method of teaching pronunciation. Though various teaching proposals have been suggested in the context of L2 pronunciation research (as discussed in the previous section), it remains unclear how such teaching approaches were put into practice in the language classroom. Having considered such approaches from a research perspective, in this section I will focus on the pedagogical processes of the primary L2 pronunciation teaching methods from the late 19th century to the present.

1.2.1 The Direct Method

The Direct Method was devised at the turn of the 20th century by Charles Berlitz (H. D. Brown, 2002). It was produced at the height of the Reform Movement as a reaction to the grammar-translation method, which had, until the foundation of the International Phonetic Association in 1886, been the methodology of choice in teaching the classical languages. Since it was the first of the major teaching methodologies to develop a focus on the spoken language, it was instrumental in emphasising the importance of pronunciation in the language classroom.

The Direct Method was rooted in the theory that second language learning should replicate as closely as possible the child's acquisition of her first language, and differed from traditional teaching in a number of important ways: its emphasis was on context-based learning rather than isolated segments of language; teaching methods were inductive rather than explicit; and teaching was carried out in the target, rather than the native, language (Webb, 1974). It promoted phonological skills through intuition, and imitation of a model, highlighting the importance of accurate, native-like pronunciation (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996).

The Direct Method subsequently gave rise to a series of similarly-focused so-called naturalistic methods, based on the concept of natural first language acquisition. Among these later methods were Asher's Total

Physical Response (1977) and Krashen and Terrell's Natural Approach (1983), each of which recommends an initial period of silence to allow the learner to absorb input of the L2 phonological system, before attempting to replicate it in production. Though the Direct Method was significant because of its defiance of the ways of the grammar-translation tradition, it depended ultimately on the competence and enthusiasm of the teacher, and was as such "doomed to limited success" (Grittner, 1977, p. 7).

1.2.2 Audiolingualism

As described above, audiolingualism, or Audio-lingual methodology, was developed in the behaviourist school of psychology, and based on the Stimulus-Response-Reinforcement model. This methodology introduced the notion of habit cultivation into the classroom in the form of drills and repetition exercises. Like the Direct Method, it placed great emphasis on the importance of accurate pronunciation, but rather than taking its cue from the natural acquisition of the first language, audiolingualism relied heavily on guidance from the teacher. This guidance usually came in the form of utterances which acted as models of the language to be repeated by the learner, as indicated by Bloomfield's description of the importance of teacher-student repetition to the language learning process (1935, see p. 4 above).

It was in this method that the use of minimal pair drills was first put into widespread use. These exercises consisted of the repetition of pairs of words that differed in only one sound (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996). Drills did not always take the form of isolated words, but occasionally of short sentences too, as in the following example:

Teacher: There's a cup on the table … repeat
Students: There's a cup on the table
Teacher: spoon
Students: There's a spoon on the table
Teacher: Book
Students: There's a book on the table
Teacher: On the chair
Students: There's a book on the chair
etc. (Harmer, 2001, pp. 79-80)

Such a technique bears little relevance to communicative learning, and requires little if any attention to the underlying structures or processes of language. However, the audiolingual method remained popular in the language classroom throughout the twentieth century, in spite of trends of research promoting the value of communicative learning. It remains at the core of certain pronunciation instruction methodologies, particularly self-access learning programmes and multimedia materials (Harmer, 2001).

1.2.3 The Silent Way

The Silent Way was a teaching methodology devised in the 1960s and 70s by Caleb Gattegno. At this point in second language acquisition research, pronunciation occupied a lower priority in language teaching instruction than it had since the late 19th century, in keeping with Chomsky's decrial of behaviourism, and the development of the Critical Period Hypothesis. In spite of this, and in spite of its title, the Silent Way reserved an important role for pronunciation instruction within its execution.

True to its title, the Silent Way required little spoken input from the teacher. Where this was absolutely necessary, instructions were issued in the target language only. As an alternative, the teacher had to rely on the use of mime, gesture and a selection of specifically-designed teaching aids, including sound-colour charts (wall charts listing all the sounds of the target language in different colours) and Fidel wall charts (similar charts incorporating use of colour-coded Cuisenaire rods) to give instructions (Gattegno, 1978). The system relied heavily on the learners' capacity and willingness to figure out the intended meaning of the teacher's actions.

Though a Silent Way lesson could be adapted to focus on any aspect of the language, accurate pronunciation was encouraged through the repeated actions and utterances of the learners. In this way, the teacher, through manipulation of the Cuisenaire rods, was able to draw the learners' attention to various features that needed work – including pronunciation, where necessary. For example, the teacher might indicate to the learners that they should swap different coloured rods with one another, explaining their actions in the target language as they did so. Where necessary, the teacher could request the learners to repeat the action as often as necessary until their pronunciation had reached a satisfactory level (Gattegno, 1978).

The Silent Way foreshadowed future language pedagogies in a number of important ways. Though the method itself was rather complex, not to mention deliberately artificial, the underlying premise was that the teacher's 'silence' (or as close to it as possible) would shift control of the lesson from the teacher to the learner. This move served two purposes: 1) it switched attention from the teaching process to the learning process, and 2) it gave the learner unprecedented control over her own learning. This pre-dated the concept of learner autonomy, which would become a much-discussed topic in language education from the 1990s onwards (see section 3.3.1 below).

From the perspective of pronunciation instruction, the Silent Way technique also stood out from its predecessors by drawing the learner's attention to the importance of the prosodic features of pronunciation in addition to individual sounds, in an emphasis on suprasegmental features that was only beginning to come into its own as an integral part of pronunciation teaching (see Section 1.1.7). In addition, the learner's attention was drawn to combined sound patterns and utterances, and not just discrete sounds in isolation. Although the Silent Way was perhaps too stylised to endure as a widely-used teaching method, it remains important part of the history of pronunciation instruction, and an indicator of the more contextualised and communicative approaches to teaching that were to follow in the next few years.

1.2.4 Community Language Learning

Continuing the focus of learner-centred education as highlighted by the Silent Way technique was the method of Community Language Learning (CLL), developed by Curran (1976, cit. Celce-Murcia et al., 1996). In this teaching approach, the onus was on the learners, not the teacher, to choose a topic of discussion, and control of the lesson was very much in their hands. The teacher's role, then, was primarily that of adviser or facilitator, rather than authoritarian or orator.

In a typical CLL lesson, the learners sat in a circle, leaving the teacher to stand or sit outside it. This immediately shifted the focus of the lesson away from the teacher and on to the learners. The learners discussed the chosen topic, and if they lacked the vocabulary to make a complete statement in the target language, the teacher supplied it to them, providing a model of correct pronunciation for the learner as many times as the learner wished. In this sense, the teacher assumed the role of a 'human computer,' to be switched on or off at will by the learners (Harmer, 2001).

Another important aspect of CLL was the use of a tape recorder to record learners' utterances. A recording would only be made once the learner felt comfortable with the level of fluency achieved. The recordings were kept and played back for analysis later in the lesson, enabling the learners to discuss their own and each other's speech, under the teacher's guidance where appropriate. This strongly encouraged learners to reflect on their linguistic performance, and reinforced the teacher's role of facilitator.

CLL was similar in its technique to the Direct Method in that it involved imitation and mimicry, but, crucially, it operated in an environment controlled by the learner rather than the teacher. While the repetition of words and sentences to a satisfactory level encouraged the production of accurate pronunciation, there was also an emphasis on fluency, to facilitate discussion amongst the 'community' members. However, the method had its limitations. Given the teacher's role as 'human computer,' CLL did not lend itself well either to multilingual groups of learners, or to learning situations in which the teacher did not share the native language background of the learners.

1.2.5 Suggestopaedia

Another teaching approach which gained popularity in the 1970s was that of Suggestopaedia, developed by Georgi Lozanov. This was another highly stylised teaching method, which placed significant emphasis on the learners' physical surroundings. A positive learning environment was encouraged, to put learners at their ease and create a relaxed atmosphere (Harmer, 2001). The logic behind the elimination of learners' anxieties to make them more susceptible to learning was similar to Krashen's (1981) notion of the benefits of a lowered affective filter.

Suggestopaedia was based on the premise that learners are most inclined to learn when they are at their most comfortable. Thus, potentially distressing subjects were avoided, and the learners were made aware of the teacher's support of and sympathy towards them. Learners even assumed new names and identities in an effort to reduce pre-conceived barriers to learning. A lesson consisted of three parts: a discussion of previously learned material for revision, the presentation of new dialogue material, and, finally, a "'séance' or 'concert' session, [in which] learners listen to relaxing music (slow movements from the Baroque period at about sixty beats per minute are preferred) while the teacher reads the new dialogue material in a way which synchronises with the taped music" (Harmer, 2001, p. 90).

The emphasis placed by the Suggestopaedia method on putting learners at their ease lent itself particularly well to pronunciation learning, a finding later supported by Hammond (1990). Dialogue was presented and practised in dramatized form, encouraging learners to develop their communication skills. The use of music helped to draw attention to the rhythm and pitch of target language speech. With its focus on fluency of speech, Suggestopaedia complemented other contemporary teaching practices by encouraging communicative competence, a trend just emerging from the dominant teaching methods of the time.

1.2.6 Communicative language teaching

As previously mentioned, the language teaching method most widely in place today is that of the communicative approach, or communicative language teaching (CLT), not to be confused with the earlier teaching method titled Community Language Learning, or CLL (see Section 1.2.6 above). Communicative language teaching focuses on the learner's achievement of communicative competence. In their seminal paper on the subject, Canale and Swain (1980) attempt to "measure" communicative competence (p. 1), and outline the theory underlying the development of a communicative approach to language teaching. They conclude that knowledge of grammar alone is insufficient to ensure communicative competence, and propose an integrative view of communication, involving the creative use of language in authentic social and interpersonal interaction. They recommend a teaching approach that "minimally includes three main competencies: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence" (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 28).

In accordance with this integrative approach to communicative competence, Canale and Swain go on to stress the importance of classroom activities which cater to learners' individual communicative needs: "[I]t is crucial that classroom activities reflect, in the most optimally direct manner, those communication activities that the learner is most likely to engage in [...]. Furthermore, communication activities must be as meaningful as possible" (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 33). Thus CLT tends to shun the drills and repetition-based exercises associated with audiolingualism and other behaviourist-driven methodologies in favour of more communicatively meaningful, context-based activities. Harmer

(2001) demonstrates the significance of CLT in the overall scheme of second language acquisition research by pointing out its revolutionary approach to two major issues in language pedagogy: 1) What should we teach? and 2) How should we teach it?

With regard to 'what to teach,' CLT stresses the importance of a more functional approach to language. One of the principles of CLT is that the main purpose of language is to communicate meaning, and that language teaching methods should be adapted accordingly (Wilkins, 1975). Consequently, aspects of language such as grammar and vocabulary, which formed the basis of many previous teaching methodologies, should be treated as recurring topics in communicative exercises, rather than as separate subjects. The 'how to teach' question again veers away from the artificial, isolated exercises advocated by Direct Method, audiolingual and Silent Way teaching in favour of activities simulating realistic communication in a variety of contexts. Examples of such activities include role-plays, where learners must assume characters and act out a given scenario; games, where learners must converse to combine information and solve a puzzle; and team writing exercises, where groups of learners must work together to put a story together (Harmer, 2001).

The shift of focus heralded by CLT did not, in its early stages, make a positive impact on pronunciation teaching, which was at the time still heavily rooted in the notion that language learners should strive for a native-like accent. This outlook conflicted with the emerging perspective that communication of meaning was paramount; "the familiar ways and means of teaching pronunciation did not seem to fit in" (Morley, 1987, preface). However, as CLT continued to flourish, research emerged indicating that pronunciation teaching was far from incompatible with a communicative approach. The study by Hinofotis and Bailey (1980, cit. Celce-Murcia, 1987, p. 5) already mentioned in Section 1.1.7 above demonstrated that a threshold level of pronunciation was not just desirable for oral L2 communication, but essential for it (see p. 19 above). This finding contributed to the nativeness/intelligibility debate that persists in pronunciation research and instruction today.

The communicative ethos accelerated the need for the development of pronunciation teaching methods that would be compatible with the new direction being taken in pronunciation instruction, and would enable the learner to take control of her own learning.

1.2.7 Technology in pronunciation instruction

In recent years, the impact of technology has been felt throughout all aspects of language instruction, as the Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) industry has continued to thrive. The domain of pronunciation research is no exception. The variety of Computer-Assisted Pronunciation Training (CAPT) software which has become widely available commercially in the last fifteen years has had significant implications for the future of pronunciation research and instruction, and the increasing popularity of the Internet has witnessed a significant increase in free and subscription-based online interactive pronunciation tools, such as those mentioned in Section 1.1.8 above (e.g. Accent Master; Best Accent Training; Confident Voice; Fonetiks.org). Many major dictionaries, too, now include CD-ROMs containing spoken samples of the lexicon. However, the features available on these CD-ROMs vary widely and some have been criticised for their incompleteness and/or inaccuracy (see e.g. Setter & Jenkins, 2005; Sobkowiak, 2007).

Until relatively recently, CAPT software has been mainly associated with the production of individual, isolated sounds. More recently, as in other realms of pronunciation instruction, there has been a renewed focus on suprasegmental features. Systems such as MacCecil © and WinCecil © (developed by SIL International and demonstrated by Hardison & Sonchaeng, 2005), and Kay Elemetrics Computerized Speech Lab (as utilised by Levis & Pickering, 2004) have incorporated the use of speech visualisation technology to enable the learner to see visual representations of their own vocal intonation. However, the pedagogical value of such programs without any feedback facility to monitor progress has been questioned, giving rise to a growing number of studies investigating the effectiveness of proposed suprasegmental programs (e.g. Hardison, 2004, 2005; Hirata, 2004).

More recently, the use of CAPT software has become more closely linked with the development of autonomous learning. By its very nature, CALL is associated with self-instruction, and, consequently, with learner autonomy, two concepts which, though superficially similar in meaning, represent different ideas. The term 'self-instruction' may be attributed to any example of "a learning situation which does not require the presence of a teacher" (Kaltenböck, 2001), but does not necessarily refer to the learning *process* itself, while learner autonomy more accurately denotes the learner's ability to take charge of her own learning. This topic goes on to form a central tenet of the pedagogical model described in this thesis, and is discussed in further detail in Section 3.1 below.

Kaltenböck's (2001) CD-ROM, designed to teach English intonation, is based on the premise that the lack of feedback provided by such a mode of instruction can be compensated for by a focus on the development of the learner's self-assessment skills. Conversely, integrated automatic speech recognition (ASR) technology does incorporate feedback, enabling the learner to monitor her progress. Programs making use of this technology are discussed in e.g. Hincks (2003), Kawai & Hirose (2000), Neumeyer, Franco, Digilakis & Weintraub (2000), and Witt & Young (2000). Engwall & Balter (2007) argue that "Unsupervised CAPT systems [...] must try to replace the feedback that the teacher would give in a supervised session by an automatically generated equivalent" (p. 236). However, even when equipped with such feedback features, there is a strong case to be made that the majority of CAPT programs are still better suited to a teacher-guided learning situation. Setter & Jenkins (2005) question the notion that CAPT systems are coming to replace teachers in the classroom: "[A]t best programmes such as those described can only be used in conjunction with classroom teaching, and recent research urges us towards the careful evaluation of computer programmes for teaching pronunciation" (p. 10).

Ultimately, for CAPT software to be really useful, individual programs need to be developed alongside pedagogical research in order to reflect contemporary findings. For example, in spite of the growing prevalence of suprasegmental features in these technologies, the extent to which such development has been motivated by a communicative rationale is questionable. Pennington (1999) in her description of the "potentials and limitations" (p. 430) of what she refers to as CAP pedagogy points out that it helps the precision of articulation of individual sounds, but adds the caveat of a "[f]ocus on decontextualized articulatory mechanics" (ibid).

Such a focus would mark a noticeable departure from the communication-based ethos of CLT, and would instead revert back to audiolingualism and the drills and repetition exercises better associated with the behaviourist-driven methods of the early 20th century. Neri et al. (2002) found that a number of systems are blindly developed with no pedagogical impetus, and without paying due consideration to the needs and resources of the language learner:

> [W]e have observed that various devices are sometimes used without an underlying pedagogical criterion, simply to make a fancy-looking product. In other cases, displays that are easy to produce are used, while they either have little pedagogical value, or are not transparent for the student and thus require support from an expert. We therefore suggest that developers first focus on the learner's needs and accordingly select functionalities and technology that meet those needs. (Neri, Cucchiarini, Strik, & Boves, 2002, pp. 459-460)

It is worth bearing in mind that this diagnosis may have important implications for the wealth of accent reduction software currently on the market, at a time when the goals of pronunciation teaching seem to be shifting away from native-like pronunciation and instead moving towards communicative intelligibility.

1.2.8 Benefits of pronunciation instruction

While the pronunciation teaching industry undergoes something of a rebirth (and certainly in the realm of CAPT, the establishment of an industry), it is worth pausing to consider what effect, if any, can be reasonably be expected from pronunciation instruction. If, on the basis of the factors previously discussed in Section 1.1.7 above, we consider the goal of pronunciation instruction to be intelligibility rather than a native-like level of L2 phonology, it would appear that there is cause to be hopeful for the success of pronunciation instruction. However, empirical investigation into the subject has produced only conflicting results. A 2002 study by Harris evaluated the English pronunciation of a group of L1 Mandarin speakers before and after a programme of English pronunciation instruction. The results showed no significant improvement in the accentedness ratings assigned to the speakers by a group of NS raters.

However, Harris's study was in contrast to other research carried out within the same general timeframe. In Moyer (1999), learners who received both segmental and suprasegmental training were found to score more highly on a scale of native-like pronunciation than those who had not; while a study by Bongaerts, Van Summeren, Planken & Schils (1997) showed that ultimate attainment of L2 phonology was deemed to be possible with a combination of favourable attributes and appropriate instruction. The authors concluded, "Certain learner characteristics and learning contexts may work together to override the disadvantages of a late start" (Bongaerts et al., 1997, p. 447). Thus it is important to note that while neither of these studies claimed pronunciation instruction to be the only factor in the subjects' pronunciation success, it was found to be one of the features that exerted a positive influence on L2 phonology.

In light of the relative difficulty in conducting pedagogical research for long enough to observe a change in participants' pronunciation, it is worth considering whether the advantages of pronunciation instruction may extend beyond the demonstration of improvement in learners' pronunciation skills. Thompson & Gaddes (2005) hypothesised that pronunciation instruction can improve learner autonomy in adult learners by bolstering self-confidence. The question of learner autonomy, they argue, is particularly relevant in the case of ESL, where so many of the learners are adults who might respond more favourably to a pedagogy in which they have more control over their learning (Holec, 1981). The case for an approach to teaching pronunciation that actively promotes and improves autonomous learning is a powerful one, and will be addressed again in Chapter Three (Section 3.1).

It is worth noting that none of the pronunciation teaching approaches highlighted here have referred to the possible influence of affective factors such as identity or attitudes to the language. Instead, pronunciation seems to have been conceptualised solely in mechanical terms, and the teaching techniques designed accordingly. However, if we are to suggest that identity has a role to play in pronunciation, it would be a fallacy to claim that phonological output consists of nothing more than a series of sounds, produced by the physiological action of the vocal folds and articulatory organs. This matter will be explored in further detail in Chapter Two.

This section has already described how one external influence - namely, instruction - can impact the production of L2 pronunciation. However, there remain still other influences to be considered. In the next section I will outline research into some of the other factors which affect L2 pronunciation.

1.3 Factors affecting L2 pronunciation

While much of the early history of pronunciation research was consumed with investigation into instruction, the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) gave rise to a new, albeit related, line of exploration. When studies by

Penfield & Roberts (1959) and Lenneberg (1967) revealed the significance of the learner's age in determining the extent to which a native-like proficiency in the second language may be reached, it naturally led to the question of which differences - other than age - between individual learners and learner groups exerted an influence on their L2 phonology. This question has formed the basis of a wide number of studies, particularly since the 1980s, in an effort to determine how best to address learners' pronunciation and thus improve teaching methods. Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) draw a distinction between "learner" factors and "the institutional and setting variables" - i.e. those factors pertaining solely to the learner or group of learners, and those pertaining to the learning environment (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996, p. 14). Having already examined teaching methodologies in Section 1.2 - and thus the 'institutional and setting variables' - I will now go on to address some of the more commonly investigated 'learner' variables.

1.3.1 Age

In Lenneberg's (1967) experiment to study the effects of brain injury on language in children and adults (see Section 1.1.4), no evidence was produced to indicate that language was *easier* to acquire before lateralisation; rather, this was an assumption made by him for the purposes of the study. This assumption was later subjected to a series of empirical investigations, which yielded contradictory results, with linguistic superiority being attributed to both children and adults. These wide-ranging results led Krashen, Long and Scarcella to observe that age may have a greater effect on the *speed* with which the L2 is learned, rather than the level of proficiency reached in it. They wrote, "[A]dults and older children in general initially acquire the second language faster than young children (older-is-better for rate of acquisition), but child second language acquirers will usually be superior in terms of ultimate attainment (younger-is-better in the long run)" (Krashen, Long, & Scarcella, 1979, p. 574).

Other theories suggested that the loss of neural plasticity accompanying brain lateralisation at the onset of puberty was particularly relevant to the acquisition of phonology, and prohibited acquisition of a native-like accent in the target language; as Scovel wrote, "The simultaneous occurrence of brain lateralization and the advent of foreign accents is too great a coincidence to be left neglected" (Scovel, 1969, p. 252). Sharwood Smith (1999) argues that different aspects of language act as self-contained units, indicating that language difficulties resulting from a loss of neural plasticity are more likely to manifest themselves in the phonology of the target language than in any other aspect of it:

> [T]he broad mass of second language learners, may find native-like control of target language phonology to be impossible, whereas grammatical aspects of the language may be mastered [...] up to native-speaker level. Hence loss of (neurolinguistic) plasticity in older learners may be expected to bring development to a halt in some domains and not in others. (p. 35)

The presence of a foreign accent in the speech of the majority of adult learners of a second language seems, intuitively, to support this claim. However, empirical evidence does not always corroborate this theory. Olson and Samuels (1973) examined the pronunciation of groups of elementary, junior high and college students following a two-week German course. Their results showed that the junior high and college groups significantly outperformed the elementary group in their pronunciation of the phonemes on which they were tested (Olson & Samuels, 1973). Furthermore, even where empirical investigation shows age to exert an influence on pronunciation, its relative importance compared to other factors is far from consistent. Flege, Frieda et al. (1997) investigated the factors – including age – that affect L2 pronunciation, and in particular, examined evidence for the existence of a critical period during which L2 phonological development could be optimised. Their results presented a challenge to the view that an individual's state of neurological development is the sole influence on successful L2 pronunciation, finding instead that amount and frequency of L1 exposure had a greater effect than age of learning (see Section 1.3.2 for further discussion of the effects of L1 exposure on L2 acquisition). These results were supported by the findings of numerous other empirical studies (e.g. Bongaerts, 1999; Flege, 1987; Flege et al., 2006; Snow & Hoefnagel-Höhle, 1977), which, while stopping short of denying outright the existence of a critical period, also queried the notion that the quality of L2 pronunciation was subject to its acquisition before a specific age. The above-mentioned studies by Flege and his colleagues represented a significant challenge to the Critical Period Hypothesis (see Section 1.1.4 above); however it has been claimed that such studies furnish insufficient evidence to refute it (cf.Patkowski, 1990).

Flege (1981) adds a further dimension to the age debate by theorising that such a critical period may be relevant to the production, but not perception, of L2 phonology. He argues that perception of accent may involve confounding the phonological representations from the native language with those of the target language, basing them all "on an acoustic model provided by pairs of similar sounds in two languages, rather than on a single language-specific acoustic model as in first-language acquisition" (Flege, 1981, p. 443). In another theory, Scovel (1969) suggests that as pronunciation is the only aspect of language which requires an articulatory component (in the movement of the articulatory organs) as well as cognitive exertion, it requires additional coordination and programming that other aspects of language do not: "[S]ound patterns are produced by actual motor activity and are thus directly initiated by neurophysiological mechanisms. To the best of my knowledge, lexical and syntactic patterns lack any such 'neurophysiological reality'" (Scovel, 1969, p. 252). Scovel's theory may offer an alternative explanation to account for the persistence of foreign accent in older learners but not younger.

Overall, however, research has not definitively determined the role of age in language acquisition, and has as yet failed to provide indisputable evidence for the existence of a critical period of optimal L2 pronunciation learning, as shown by the conflicting results of the studies above. As already illustrated in the work of Krashen et al. (1979 - see Section 1.3.1 above), there is evidence to suggest that age affects the acquisition of some aspects of language but not others, a view supported by Ellis (1985): "Only where pronunciation is concerned is an early start an advantage, and even then only in terms of success, not rate of acquisition" (pp. 107-108). In their comprehensive review of the role of age in language acquisition, Singleton and Ryan (2004) are somewhat more conservative in their evaluation. While acknowledging the "consistent findings" of studies indicating better performance on oral-aural skills by learners under 30, they remind the reader that "the evidence is for a trend rather than for an inexorable law" (p. 87).

1.3.2 L1 background, use and exposure

The impact of the learner's native language on her acquisition of a second language was central to the habit formation theories borne out of the behaviourist tradition in the 1950s. According to these theories, language (both first and second) is best learned through a regime of imitation and reinforcement. This meant that habits acquired when learning the L1 could conceivably affect the manner in which the L2 was learned: "[H]abit-formation theory [...] provided a theoretical account of how the learner's L1 intruded into the process of SLA" (Ellis, 1985, p. 21). It was out of these behaviourist-rooted theories of habit-formation, and the ensuing notions of transfer and interference, that the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) grew in an effort to develop effective L2 teaching pedagogies (Ellis, 1985). The CAH was based on the idea that a teacher should draw comparisons between the language learner's native and target languages in order to assess where particular difficulties for the language learner might lie. One of the main proponents of the CAH, Lado, summed it up clearly: "Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult" (1957, p. 2).

The CAH shares some of its basic principles with the constructs of markedness theory (e.g. Eckman, 1977) and language universals (e.g. Greenberg, 1980), which provide theories to account for phonological diversity in natural languages. Both are generally based on the premise of a systematic hierarchy by which the phonological features of a given language are selected. If, as the theory of language universals postulates, certain features are shared across the native and target languages, they will be more easily acquired by target language learners, illustrating a theory not dissimilar to the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis.

Thus, just as the notion of a critical period during which language learning is optimal has been acknowledged to be, potentially, of particular relevance to the acquisition of L2 phonology, so too has the influence exerted by the learner's native language. The existence and nature of a language learner's foreign accent indicates at least some level of L1 influence on the L2. Research by Ioup (1984) shows clear support for the significance of L1 transfer in L2 phonology, and, further, illustrates that a non-native speaker's accent may identify her as a member of a specific L1 community: "[N]ative speakers can easily match foreign accents using phonological information suggesting that speakers from a common native language background manifest L2 errors which are particular to that language group" (Ioup, 1984, p. 13). This association between L1 and L2 extends not just to the production of non-native sounds, but also to learners' perception of them. In C. Brown's study of speech perception and phonological acquisition, she hypothesises a positive correlation between the sounds from a language learner's L1 that she is capable of identifying, and those sounds in the L2 that she is capable of acquiring: "...[T]he learner's native grammar constrains which non-native contrasts he or she will accurately perceive and, therefore, limits which non-native contrasts that learner will successfully acquire" (C. Brown, 2000, p. 19).

There has in recent times been a wave of research to investigate the impact not just of the L1, but more specifically of the amount and frequency of its use. Flege, Frieda et al.'s (1997) comparison of the pronunciation of short English sentences by groups of native English monolinguals and native Italian speakers in Canada revealed that those Italians who frequently spoke their native language retained a significantly stronger accent than those who did not, regardless of age of arrival in Canada. Similar investigations by Flege et al. (1999) and Piske et al. (2001) showed that L2 learners who continued to use their L1 on a regular basis demonstrated weaker L2 pronunciation than those who did not. By the same token, other studies carried out to investigate the influence of the learner's L1 on her *perception,* as well as production, of L2 speech, have yielded similar results. The findings of Flege & MacKay (2004) and Flege, MacKay & Meador (1999) indicate that the learner's ability to understand the L2 is affected by the frequency with which the L1 is spoken. Both these studies show that native Italian learners of English who seldom speak Italian perform better on English vowel discrimination tests than those Italian learners who speak their native language on a regular basis. Their results suggest that the more frequently a learner speaks her native language, the more difficulty she will have in discriminating the sounds of the L2.

In summary, the findings of Flege and others would seem to indicate that the less contact the learner has with her native language, the more native-like her production and perception of L2 pronunciation will be as a result. This suggests that the learner's L2 pronunciation may actually benefit from teaching that would restrict native language use. However, this is only a preliminary observation, and many other relevant factors (e.g. the learner's living situation and her level of confidence) would have to be taken into consideration before making such a recommendation. Besides, in spite of its possible merits, this advice is impractical at best, since use of the L1 (outside a language classroom) may be beyond the learner's control.

It may be more appropriate to conclude that pronunciation learning relies not just on the training methods of the teacher, but also on the willingness of the language learner to engage in interaction in the L2. This is largely dependent on the learner's attitudes to language learning, which are discussed in Section 1.3.4.

1.3.3 L2 exposure and length of residence (LOR)

This factor is a measure of the frequency with which the language learner comes into contact with native speaker use of the target language. I include under this heading the issue of length of residence (LOR), as an immigrant learner's exposure to the L2 will be a function of the length of time he/she has resided in the country of the target language. To a certain extent, this factor is indirectly proportional to the learner's level of L1 exposure. Some of the studies mentioned above, particularly those relating to the frequency with which the learner's native language is spoken, have also addressed this question.

Generally speaking, research into the impact of L2 input on L2 phonological acquisition has proved inconclusive, as results have varied across a number of studies. Piske et al. (2001) claim that, after AOL (age of learning the target language), "the most frequently studied variable has been amount of L2 experience" (p. 197). However, the majority of studies use only LOR as the marker by which L2 experience is measured, which may account for the conflicting results of studies carried out in the past. Some (e.g. Derwing et al., 2006; Flege et al., 2006; Flege, Yeni-Komshian et al., 1999) have reported evidence of a link between LOR/L2 input and pronunciation proficiency. For example, in Flege et al. a longitudinal study was carried out to evaluate the effects of age and LOR on the degree of accentedness in the L2 speech of Korean adults and children living in the United States. Although at T2, the Korean children received lower accentedness ratings than did the Korean adults, there was no significant change in foreign accent between T1 and T2 in either children or adults, leading the authors to conclude that the lower accentedness ratings obtained for the children were caused by the greater amount of L2 input typically received by immigrant children than adults (Flege et al., 2006).

A more specific study carried out in 2006 by Trofimovich and Baker investigated the effect of L2 experience not just on pronunciation generally, but more specifically on the suprasegmental aspects of L2 speech. Results suggested that the learner's amount of L2 experience did influence the production of stress timing, but that other features, such as pause frequency and duration, were more affected by the learner's AOA (age of arrival in the L2 community, in this case the United States) (Trofimovich & Baker, 2006). However, other studies (e.g. Oyama, 1976, cit. Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 158) have found no evidence of a link between LOR and L2 foreign accent. One possible explanation is suggested by a range of studies carried out by Flege and others, which indicate that LOR does not affect foreign accent in individuals who begin learning the target language as adults (e.g. Flege, 1988). This indicates a possible ceiling effect in the influence of LOR on pronunciation proficiency.

As previously mentioned, however, the results of the research have proved too inconsistent to draw any reliable conclusions as to the effect of target language exposure on L2 pronunciation. It should also be borne in mind that since the studies cited here concern long-term immigrant populations, they are not informative about the equivalent experiences of ESL learners who are shorter-term residents of an English-speaking country. Taking this into consideration, the results of these studies, while undeniably insightful for the population in question, may be less relevant to my own research focus.

1.3.4 Aptitude, attitude and motivation

The other learner-centred pronunciation variables that I will discuss are not easily quantifiable and are thus more difficult to assess. For the sake of clarity, I will group them loosely into the three categories listed above.

1.3.4.1 Aptitude

Like all language skills, learning pronunciation is subject to the learner's inherent capabilities. The general capacity for learning – which applies to all other subjects as well as languages and is based on reasoning abilities – is what we usually refer to as 'intelligence'. The particular talent of an individual learner for a specific subject such as a language is better defined by the term 'aptitude'. Both of these abilities refer to the intellectual *capacity* of the learner, or what we may consider to be his potential for successful learning.

This potential for successful language learning may be more narrowly divided into separate abilities for separate skills. Cummins (1979) draws a distinction between what he terms cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP) and basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS). Of these two, the latter is more closely associated with the acquisition of proficiency in oral communication, while the former is linked with overall academic skill and such rule-governed aspects of language learning as grammar and translation. Cummins' theory goes some way to explaining the results of a 1976 study by Genesee, in which intelligence was found to be strongly related to the development of L2 French reading, grammar and vocabulary, but not generally associated with spoken French, as evaluated by native speakers (Genesee, 1976).

This separation of oral linguistic ability and other language skills is also addressed by Carroll (1981). According to this study, foreign language aptitude may be viewed under the guise of four separate abilities, each addressing a particular linguistic need. The first of these, phonetic coding ability, relates to oral production and perception, and is claimed by Skehan to be the ability least related to overall intelligence. This indicates that proficiency in oral language skills may be inherently different to the skills required for other aspects of language learning (Skehan, 1989).

In their 2001 study already mentioned, Piske et al. investigate a number of factors for degree of influence on L2 pronunciation ability, including language learning aptitude. Though they determine that "oral mimicry" successfully indicates degree of L2 foreign accent, they remark on "a paucity of studies examining aptitude factors in a controlled manner," and suggest that future research should investigate whether oral mimicry is an innate capacity, "or whether it develops as a result of certain still-to-be-identified experiences" (Piske et al., 2001, pp. 202-203). Though this and the studies mentioned above suggest the existence of some kind of factor which correlates positively to pronunciation and other aspects of L2 speaking skills, it seems that up-to-date research is in short supply, and further investigation of the role of aptitude and intelligence in pronunciation acquisition is merited.

1.3.4.2 Attitude / Affective variables

Dulay and Burt (1977, cit. Ellis, 1985, p. 11) introduced the notion that every language learner is equipped with a 'socioaffective filter': a mechanism which dictates which linguistic input is processed, and which is discarded, based on the learner's psychological and emotional state. This concept was later adopted by Krashen for incorporation into his 'Affective Filter Hypothesis', a revision of his earlier Monitor Theory (Krashen, 1981). According to the Affective Filter Hypothesis, the learner requires a certain level of receptiveness in order to process linguistic input. A reluctance to learn, characterised by such factors as demotivation or low self-confidence, could cause the learner to seek less input and to fail to capitalise on any input that is received: "[E]ven if they understand the message, the input will not reach that part of the brain responsible for language acquisition, or the language acquisition device" (Krashen, 1982, p. 31).

The effect of the affective filter on pronunciation proficiency was explored in a 1990 study by Hammond. In this study, Hammond investigated the attitudes of a group of Spanish and Hispanic speakers of L2 English in Miami towards their own and others' foreign accent. The experiment yielded somewhat conflicting results. While most of the subjects claimed to harbour no objection to foreign accents in general, a clear majority wanted to avoid a Spanish accent in their own English pronunciation. However, those learners who said that they disapproved of a foreign accent did not demonstrate more successful L2 pronunciation than those learners who did not. The author claimed that the apparently contradictory results could be specific to the subjects' linguistic environment, pointing to "the unique sociolinguistic nature of the bilingual community in which all 292 subjects reside" (Hammond, 1990, p. 70).

In Schumann's model of second language acquisition, language learners are claimed to acquire the target language only to the degree that they acculturate (Schumann, 1986). Some research has even gone so far as to try to explain other influences on pronunciation acquisition in terms of the learner's willingness to integrate into a new culture. In Neufeld's (1978) argument against the existence of a sensitive period for language learning, he proposes that children's preoccupation with peer group pressure renders them more likely to achieve native-like pronunciation proficiency. He suggests that adults are less likely to be motivated by the need to 'fit in' to acquire a more in-depth knowledge of the language including more native-like pronunciation, leading to the observable difference in pronunciation proficiency between people who acquire a second language in childhood and adulthood. This reference to the role of motivation leads us to the third and final of the affective variables to be discussed in this section.

1.3.4.3 Motivation

The role played by motivation in language learning has been steadily gaining recognition ever since Gardner & Lambert's (1972) seminal work on the subject. They were the first to point out the significant influence exerted by motivation on L2 learning, to the point of overriding the effect of the learner's aptitude (or lack thereof).

Dörnyei (2005) describes the study of motivation in the last half century as divisible into the following three periods:

- Social psychological period, 1959-1990

- Cognitive-situated period, 1990s
- Process-oriented period, 2000- ongoing

The social psychological period was marked by a view of the individual within the context of her environment, exemplified in Gardner & Lambert's study of the Anglophone and Francophone communities in Canada (1972). It was this period of research that spawned the concepts of integrative and instrumental motivation: the learner's desire to learn owing to personal wishes - such as the desire to "come closer to the other language community" (Gardner, 2001, p. 5) - or external requirements, such as the need to get a job in the target language community. The subsequent cognitive-situated period of research narrowed the focus down to the individual and the influences of a given learning situation. The broader, social perspective of the social psychological period that had preceded it was not entirely rejected, but instead viewed as a context within which the learner's motives in the language classroom could be established (Dörnyei, 2005).

In complete contrast to these two approaches, the most recent period of research - the so-called process-oriented period - takes into account the transient nature of motivation. In this conceptualisation, motivation is no longer treated as a binary condition, and is instead viewed as a dynamic process that changes over time. This considers both the social and situated aspects of motivation, as in the view of Ushioda (2003), who argues that while motivation must originate within the language learner, it must be developed in a social-interactive environment.

The development of motivation research just described had potentially significant implications for pronunciation, which were addressed in studies by Dalton-Puffer, Kaltenböck & Smit (1997), Smit & Dalton (2000) and Smit (2002). These studies investigated the attitudes towards native and non-native English accents of a group of highly proficient Austrian learners of English attending a course in pronunciation. Investigation consisted of a three-part study: a modified matched-guise test to establish participants' views of a range of English accents in Austria, a questionnaire in which the subjects evaluated their perceptions of their identities, and a second questionnaire to explore learner motivation. Results revealed the subjects to have a) a high level of integrative motivation, and b) the ultimate goal of near-native-like speech. However, Smit (2002) revealed that the success of the learners who undertook the pronunciation course in question was more dependent on their previous pronunciation training than their level of motivation. This indicates that even though motivation may on occasion supersede the effect of aptitude in L2 learning, it cannot be uniformly hailed as the single most influential factor, and all other relevant aspects – as previously discussed in this section – must also be taken into consideration.

The studies by Smit et al. as outlined above also indicate the importance of the link between pronunciation learning and learner identity. I believe that this is a highly relevant issue, the value of which is not adequately reflected in the volume of research into it. This subject will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter Two in the context of the relationship between the learner's motivation and identity.

Each of the situations described above are inextricably bound up with one another; for example, the influence of LOR depends on the age at which the learner first learned the language (as highlighted by Flege, 1988). Because of this, it is difficult to separate them, and perhaps too risky to attribute pronunciation performance reliably to one factor but not another. Overall, the pattern suggested by the above findings seems to indicate that an immersion-style learning process restricting use of the L1 is conducive to successful L2 pronunciation acquisition, but not necessary for it. This also raises the question of what constitutes 'successful L2 pronunciation acquisition.' Given the developments in pronunciation research in recent years, and more particularly the question of whether native-like or intelligible pronunciation is the more desirable goal (see Section 1.1.7), we must ask whether the pronunciation goals established in the classroom really match those of the learner. This issue will be addressed in the context of EFL pronunciation in Section 2.3.1 (see p. 75).

1.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have provided an overview of the main issues in pronunciation research since L2 phonology was first integrated into modern language teaching in the late 19th century. In Section 1.1, I examined the lead-up to and legacy of major movements and principles in Second Language Acquisition such as the Reform Movement, behaviourism and the Critical Period Hypothesis. Section 1.2 provided a description of the main pronunciation teaching methods, from the departure from the grammar-translation methods of the 19th century, to the intelligibility-focused techniques devised as a result of Communicative Language Teaching. The many investigations of factors affecting learners' L2 pronunciation were addressed in Section 1.3, largely revealing age of L2 learning and amount of L2 exposure to be the most influential of these factors. In my investigation of affective factors, however, I found that research into the link between motivation and pronunciation is still in its infancy, and I suggested that studies by Smit and Dalton (2000) and Smit (2002) linking the learner's L2 pronunciation motivation to her concept of identity merit further investigation.

Additionally, in spite of the burgeoning interest in pronunciation research and instruction at present, I have noted that the field still lacks some unity of thought. The majority of recent pronunciation instruction methods - including the proliferation of multimedia and technology-based programs designed to assist accent reduction - are proposed without adequate empirical investigation to establish their effectiveness. Although there have been some advances in this area in recent years (e.g. Akita, 2005, 2006; Gorsuch, 2001), I have observed that this domain would benefit from further pedagogical research.

One issue which I have not, as yet, fully addressed in this chapter is that of the changing position of English worldwide, and the extent to which this has strengthened the growing interest in pronunciation teaching and research. The ongoing controversy over whether L2 learners should aim for a native-like or intelligible pronunciation is particularly relevant to English, at a time when fewer people than ever speak such traditionally-assumed models of English pronunciation as Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GA). In the next chapter, I will explore the progress of English Language Teaching in light of these developments, and its implications for pronunciation instruction. In particular, I will examine how these issues have affected learner identity, EFL learners' attitudes to L2 accents, and how their conception of the link between the two is shaping the future of pronunciation research.

CHAPTER TWO

UNDERSTANDING L2 PRONUNCIATION LEARNING[1]

2.0 Introduction

Having set out a theoretical backdrop to the principal issues in contemporary pronunciation research and instruction, I must now establish the wider research context in which I seek to develop a pedagogical model of L2 pronunciation. Language instruction does not take place in a vacuum, and pronunciation instruction is no exception.

In the previous chapter (Section 1.3), I outlined studies by Flege and others investigating the factors that influence degree of accentedness in L2 pronunciation, and determined that the role played by identity and motivation would require further investigation. Before considering these questions further, however, I first give an account of the contemporary role of the English language. I begin by describing the practice of English language teaching in Ireland, and go on to outline the radical changes that have taken place in the use and instruction of English worldwide in the past half century. I examine some of the most important findings of recent sociolinguistic explorations of the English language and consider their consequences for EFL pronunciation instruction in Ireland.

Having established a wider context of English language learning and teaching in which my investigation of identity and motivation in L2 pronunciation takes place, I then go on to analyse recent advances in the social sciences. Research in these areas has demonstrated a move towards perspectives that conceive of both identity and motivation respectively as dynamic processes, constantly evolving over time, and subject to continuous negotiation and reconstruction. In this chapter, I outline the major developments in these aspects of research, and the interplay of these developments. In particular I consider the theory of possible selves as explored by Markus & Nurius (1986) and its application to L2 motivation, as in Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2005). After first considering their applicability to pronunciation in the L1, I then explore how these findings may impact on the acquisition and instruction of pronunciation in the L2.

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[1] Portions of this chapter were previously published in Murphy (2010)

Chapter Two will be in three sections. Section 2.1 will discuss the role of English language instruction in Ireland, as well as the development of the English language around the world. In it I will consider how recent changes in English have raised issues of learner identity. Section 2.2 will explore developments in identity and motivation research. It will examine how the issue of identity is and has been treated in personality psychology and its parallels with motivation, along with views in the literature as to the relative influence of each on the production of L1 pronunciation. Finally, in Section 2.3, I will draw together these strands in a discussion of identity and motivation in L2 pronunciation.

2.1 English Language Teaching

For decades, English Language Teaching (ELT) has been grounded in the practice of teaching English as a Foreign Language, i.e. to learners who wished to use English to communicate with native speakers. However, the function of English around the world has taken on a new role as the number and location of its speakers have in recent years radically changed, altering the global landscape of English language teaching. In this section I will first give an account of ELT practice in Ireland, before briefly addressing the recent development of the English language worldwide and how this development has impacted on the establishment of English pronunciation goals.

2.1.1 ELT in Ireland

Legally, Irish is the national and first official language of Ireland, and English is the second official language (Constitution of Ireland, 1937). In practice, however, English is the primary language of use throughout the country, apart from Gaeltacht areas where Irish is spoken. The English language teaching profession in Ireland varies greatly in terms of the institutions that provide it and the learners who attend.

There is a technical distinction to be made between the ESL (English as a Second Language) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) sectors in Ireland. The ESL sector deals with those learners living in Ireland long-term. This sector includes refugees, asylum seekers, and children of immigrants attending mainstream primary and post-primary education. English instruction in these environments usually consists of one or two hours of English language support per student per week, usually provided by a teacher with a qualification in primary or post-primary school teaching. In recent years, perhaps as a result of the Irish economic downturn, the Department of Education and Skills has scaled down English language support resources (Lyons & Little, 2009). The EFL system for students at second level has come under criticism for providing insufficient support to learners, particularly for students who enter the education system later (Ní Chonaill, 2010).

The EFL sector, then, is populated mainly by privately-run language schools, whose learners may be of any age, language background, nationality or length of residence. It is from this pool of learners that the majority of participants in my empirical study (approximately 92%) were drawn. (The remaining 8% were attending an English language support programme for postgraduate students at university. See Chapter Five for further details in the description of the research methodology.) EFL schools in the private sector in Ireland are often general education institutions that offer courses in other skills and trades in addition to English language instruction. Ordinarily learners tend to be adults, though some schools cater to younger learners as well, particularly to teenage exchange students from schools and colleges around Europe, who are in Ireland for a brief stay of one or two weeks to improve their English. Most schools offer English language instruction for virtually all proficiencies, ranging from beginner to advanced level.

The Irish Department of Education and Skills is not directly in charge of the EFL sector in Ireland, and has instead designated the Advisory Council for English Language Schools (ACELS) as the overseeing body. ACELS is responsible for monitoring and maintaining international standards in the EFL sector. Many schools offer preparation programmes for major English language examinations, including TOEFL, IELTS, and Cambridge (Citizens Information: Public service information website, 2010).

It is worth mentioning the role occupied by English amongst EFL learners in Ireland. Since learners are situated in a native English-speaking country, it would be easy to assume that the main function of English for them is to communicate with native speakers in a classic EFL / ESL context. However, the reality is that the multicultural population of contemporary Ireland – and in particular of young people in Dublin, who comprise the sample of participants in my study – is such that on a daily basis, many EFL learners interact just as much, if not more, with other non-native speakers of English as native speakers, particularly with their peers in school and at work. Consequently, for many learners, English is used as a lingua franca just as much as in classic ESL/EFL interaction.

2.1.2 English worldwide: A changing landscape

The recent developments in pronunciation pedagogy mentioned in Chapter One above, which have seen the discipline undergo such fundamental change, particularly in the last two decades, have not simply marked an arbitrary shift from the goal of native-like to intelligible speech (see p. 18 above). These developments have rather been reflective of a wider trend in the case of English: the unprecedented global spread of the language, particularly in non-native contexts. This expansion has been documented in a number of proposed models which have aimed to encapsulate the changes that have taken place in English, such as those put forward by Görlach (2002) and McArthur (1998). However, perhaps the most renowned model is that of Kachru's three concentric circles (e.g. 1983, 1985). Kachru assigns the English-speaking regions of the world to a position in one of three circles: described as the *inner, outer* (or *extended*) and *expanding* circles. The inner and outer circles refer to those parts of the world where English occupies a 'native-speaker' (e.g. United Kingdom, Australia) or institutionalized (e.g. India, Nigeria) role respectively; however, it is the third and so-called 'expanding' circle which holds the most relevance to the status of English today.

Unlike the outer circle, English in the expanding circle did not arise out of colonisation by members of the inner circle, but simply through the diffusion of the language, owing at least partly to the prestige associated with it: "English is often learned because of its heritage, because of the status it may confer on the reader or speaker, because of the doors which it opens in technology, science, trade, and diplomacy" (Kachru, 1983, p. 3). As the label would suggest, the number of regions in this circle is rapidly expanding, and in doing so developing the international nature of the language:

> Understanding the function of English in this [the expanding] circle requires a recognition of the fact that English is an international language, and that it has already won the race in this respect with linguistic rivals such as French, Russian and Esperanto, to name just two natural languages and one artificial language...It is the users of this circle who actually further strengthen the claims of English as an international or universal language. (Kachru, 1985, p. 13)

The use of English in a wide range of locations across the world in both native and non-native contexts, while long recognized, has in recent years risen to unprecedented levels. Jenkins (2003) estimated that the combined number of native and non-native speakers of English around the world numbered "around one billion (although it should be said that this figure is not uncontroversial)" (p. 15). In the same year, Crystal put the number of English language learners alone at 430 million (2003b), excluding the millions who reside in countries for which no figures exist. In a 1997 report commissioned by the British Council to evaluate the future of the English language in the 21st Century, Graddol claimed that English owed its global standing to the legacy of the British colonial empire, and in more recent yearsa to the penetrating global influence of the USA (Graddol, 1997). In a 2006 review of the same report, he went on to note that "the key drivers of change were demographic, economic, technological and long-term trends in society" (Graddol, 2006, p. 9), echoing Kachru's comments made twenty-three years earlier regarding the prestige associated with English (see p. 52 above).

However, the key to the rapid expansion English has undergone in the past twenty years lies in the rise of the number of non-native speakers. In 1997, Graddol predicted that "within a decade or so, the number of people who speak English as a second language will exceed the number of native speakers" (p. 2). That prognosis was realised long before the predicted decade had passed; in October 2000 the British government announced that there were more non-native than native speakers of English worldwide (Bright, 2000). Ultimately, the future of the language no longer lies solely in the hands of native speakers, but rather with the hundreds of millions of English language learners around the globe.

According to Crystal (2003b), there are 75 territories worldwide where English is spoken either as a native language or as a second language in an official capacity. Given such a wide geographical range, it is reasonable to expect that the same variety of English is not employed in every region. The resulting increase in the number of recognised English varieties has led to a classification of English according to its official role and how and where it is spoken. This may describe its use among native speakers only (English as a Native Language, ENL); between native and non-native speakers (English as a Second/Foreign Language - ESL/EFL); or as a shared language between native speakers of a variety of languages, including, possibly, English (English as an International Language / English as a

Lingua Franca (EIL/ELF). These last two terms are used virtually synonymously, though EIL is possibly in wider use (Jenkins, 2000).

A caveat: it should be noted that the descriptions above refer specifically to the *official* role of English in the locations described. In reference to English language *pedagogy*, however, these terms can take on a slightly different meaning. The terms ESL and EFL are often, in pedagogical contexts, taken to refer to English language teaching in opposing linguistic environments. EFL is more commonly used than the more accurate ESL to denote English language instruction to NNSs resident in countries in which English is the native language, such as teaching English to Brazilian learners in Ireland. However, it (EFL) more correctly denotes English language teaching in countries in which English occupies no official or practical role (McArthur, 1996), e.g. French schoolchildren learning English in France. In practice, the terms ESL and EFL are both used to refer to English language instruction in a native English-speaking environment. 'ESL' tends to be more widely used in North America, while 'EFL' is more commonplace in Ireland and the UK. A further distinction should be noted between those terms that are used to separate NS-NNS communication (EFL) from NNS-NNS communication (EIL/ELF) (e.g. Jenkins, 2000; 2003).

It is perhaps the last category defined, EIL/ELF, that has had the greatest impact on English language research since the end of the 20th century. The question of pronunciation is particularly relevant to this type of English, given its history as a relatively recent development arising out of the increasing use of the language for communication among non-native speakers. With no obvious native speaker norm to refer to, the question must be asked: what constitutes a phonological model for English as an International Language?

2.1.3 The shifting goalposts of English pronunciation instruction

Attempts to define a standard model of English have led to a plethora of definitions (e.g. Crystal, 2003a; Strevens, 1983; Trudgill & Hannah, 1994), which mostly refer to the necessity for communicative potential and social acceptability. Interestingly, however, there appears to be a general consensus that 'standard English' refers to grammar and lexis, but not phonology, thus implying the absence of an acknowledged standard of English pronunciation.

In spite of this lack of standardised pronunciation, English language pronunciation instruction has traditionally aimed for one of two native-speaker models: RP (Received Pronunciation) and GA (General American). L1 influence on the L2 in the form of a native accent has generally been viewed negatively, and referred to as either 'L1 transfer' or 'L1 interference' (Jenkins, 2006, p. 76). RP is a variety of English pronunciation spoken in the south of England and has traditionally been the model of choice promoted by definitive English pronunciation guides such as those of D. Jones (e.g. 1960) and Wells (1982). GA is generally seen as the standard North American English (NAE) accent; it is perceived as a neutral American accent, typical of the English spoken in the central and mid-western states. GA is the model recommended for use by broadcasters as it is the accent that is "most readily understood by the majority of his [the broadcaster's] listeners" (Ehrlich, 1951, p. ix, as quoted in Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 138).

Recent developments in pronunciation pedagogy mentioned in Chapter One have seen the discipline undergo fundamental change in the last twenty years or so, witnessing a shift from the goal of native-like to intelligible speech. Such developments have been reflective of a more global trend in ELT: a broader acceptance of what constitutes 'standard' English, in light of the wide variety of contexts and locations in which English is now spoken. The role of English as an International Language has come under particular scrutiny, and has raised the level of debate in this field to extraordinary levels. Much of the controversy surrounding this subject has been due to proposals for a phonological model for the use of English as an International Language, as an alternative to the native speaker one (e.g. Jenkins, 2000; 2002; Seidlhofer, 2004).

One of the leading voices among those supporting the introduction of such an alternative model is that of Jennifer Jenkins. Jenkins' proposals for EIL phonology hinge on her contention that EIL is fundamentally different from ENL or EFL because of the purposes for which it is required, and as such it is not appropriate for native speakers to determine the standards against which it should be judged (Jenkins, 2000). She claims that the primary goal of English pronunciation instruction in this type of linguistic environment is to promote 'mutual intelligibility' between NNSs (e.g. 2000, 2003). Her proposals extend beyond a generic belief that intelligibility is, in the abstract, a more attainable goal of pronunciation instruction than native-likeness. To facilitate such mutual intelligibility, Jenkins proposes an alternative set of core features – the Lingua Franca Core – which she claims constitute the minimal requirements for intelligible EIL communication (e.g. 2002; 2007). In these claims Jenkins has garnered support among ELT researchers who dispute the relevance of native speaker authority in types of English language communication (e.g. Seidlhofer, 2004; Sewell, 2009). However, influential though her proposals may be, they have not been without controversy, and have also generated disagreement and in some cases direct opposition (e.g. Scheuer, 2005).

In her proposals for an EIL phonology, Jenkins attributes the impetus for such emphasis on intelligibility to the role of identity in language, and in pronunciation in particular. The following quote describes the central role of identity in her description of EIL phonology:

> For teachers of EIL pronunciation, one of the most crucial elements in their education should surely now be the role of L1 identity in L2 accents. With English being spoken around the globe in an ever-expanding range of communicative contexts, one of the only means available to preserve L1 identity is, increasingly, L1 accent. (Jenkins, 2000, p. 207)

Jenkins suggests that native-like pronunciation is not a target for many learners of English, because of their connection to their L1 identity in their native accent: "Either they [the learners] wish to preserve their mother-tongue accent in their L2 English or, more probably, they simply do not wish to identify, through mimicking an L1 English accent, with native speakers of the language" (2003, p. 37). Jenkins' assumption of the learner's desire to express her L1 identity – or avoid assuming an alternative one – through an accent leads to a potential conflict in terms of the type of pronunciation being promoted in an EIL context. As Crystal points out, "the need for intelligibility and the need for identity often pull people – and countries – in opposing directions" (2003b, p. 127).

Jenkins' interpretation of identity as identification with the relevant linguistic community is a significant one for EIL research. In the traditional framework of EFL, the learner's desire to identify with a linguistic community is relatively uncomplicated; the target language community simply consists of all native speakers of the target language (in this case, English), and the learner's identification may be with the whole group or with some particular subset of it (e.g. speakers of North American English). However, in the case of EIL, the target language community becomes a far more complex concept. Here, it refers to the community of EIL/ELF speakers, i.e. all those for whom English is a non-native language used for the express purpose of communicating with other NNSs (Jenkins, 2006). Jenkins assumes language learners' desire to be a part of this community, and to express their identity as members of it through the adoption of EIL pronunciation (2003). However, in an investigation carried out to assess the reactions of NNSs to EIL proposals, respondents demonstrate their reluctance to identify with such an ELF community (Jenkins, 2005). Further discussion of the learner's identification with a given speech community will take place in Sections 2.2.3 and 2.3.1.

It should be noted that, crucially, the changes proposed by Jenkins relate only to ELF, and are thus intended to apply only to NNS-NNS interaction. However, these proposals have implications for the teaching of English pronunciation in EFL and ESL contexts as well. If, as argued by Jenkins above, accent is indicative of the speaker's sociolinguistic identity, then the same principles should apply to learners of English who wish to communicate with native speakers just as much as to those for whom it serves as a lingua franca. Before proceeding any further with such questions, however, the issue of identity must be further examined. In the following section, I shall explore what is meant by the term 'identity', and – guided by the recommendations of Chapter One – its relationship with learner motivation.

2.2 The role of identity and motivation in pronunciation

Research in Applied Linguistics, and particularly in SLA, has in recent years drawn on work in the social sciences in adopting a stronger focus on learner identity, and how this relates to the language learning process. In particular the role of sociolinguistic identity, and how the language learner relates to the world around her, has been discussed at length in debates surrounding the proposal of new models of second language learning (e.g. Atkinson, 2002; Block, 2007a; Firth & Wagner, 1997). This change of direction has occurred alongside similar developments in language pedagogy research, such as the new strands of learner-centred education, the tendency towards an emphasis on language learning as opposed to language teaching, the investigation of the benefits of learner autonomy, and the acceptance of communicative competence as a legitimate target of language learning. The combined effect of these developments has been the elevation of the language learner from the role of recipient of language instruction to that of manager of her own language learning experience.

However, quite separate from its relationship with language, the study of identity, too, has changed direction in recent years. Recent developments in research into identity have paralleled a wider cultural fascination with the place of the individual in society, and in particular with the individual's potential for personal transformation. Researchers in the social sciences have moved away from a perspective of identity as a stable, fixed entity towards a model that conceptualises identity as more fluid and changeable (e.g. Block, 2007b). Similar advances have been noted in the study of L2 motivation, which has recently come to be viewed as a dynamic process, subject to change over time and space (e.g. Norton Peirce, 1995). These developments and others in the study of identity and motivation will be addressed in this section.

2.2.1 Recent developments in identity research

Today, we need look no further than prime time television or the pages of any internet browser to see the rise of a culture that reveres the individual. Television is now dominated by reality TV shows that track the every move of 'ordinary' people on their path to personal metamorphosis. Every day, millions of internet users worldwide share their personal profiles and opinions with countless others on social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter; they post videos of themselves on YouTube, and add an endless stream of comments to online articles, reviews and blogs. In 2006, Time Magazine awarded the annual Time Person of the Year Award, ordinarily reserved for politicians, entrepreneurs and humanitarians, to 'You', recognising the impact of these innovations of personal presentation. The accompanying article lauded the rise to power of the individual in society, hailing it as "the many wresting power from the few [...]. This is an opportunity to build a new kind of international understanding, not politician to politician, great man to great man, but citizen to citizen, person to person" (Grossman, 2006). This escalation of public interest in the individual has followed, and perhaps reflected, a shift in the academic perspective of personal identity.

For centuries, and until the early 1900s, the prevailing view of the individual in humanist Western scholarship was that of a controlled being with an essential set of 'core' values that composed a unique, fixed personal identity (Sim, 2005). One of the principal tenets of this philosophy was the perception of the individual, or subject, as guided entirely by reason. An early challenge to this assumption came in the late 19th Century from the work of Ferdinand de Saussure. His development of the linguistic sign system and his belief in the existence of a fundamental underlying structure independent of human agency paved the way for a broader theory that would call into question the individual's position as a powerful, rational being. De Saussure's theory formed the beginnings of structuralism, an influential intellectual movement that prevailed throughout the first half of the 20th century. During this time, structuralist theory was extended to a number of fields, notably to anthropology in the work of Lévi-Strauss (e.g. Lévi-Strauss, 1977).

This approach was taken even further with the advent of poststructuralism in the mid-20th century. While structuralism had viewed the individual as incidental, rather than integral, to reasoning, poststructuralism challenged the very concept of a subject with a stable 'core', and instead argued that an individual could never be completely separated from her surroundings, which would inevitably exert considerable influence on her identity. This ecological perspective was described by Williams, who wrote, "A fact cannot escape its history, its meaning and its future; it does not exist independently of them. This poststructuralist claim extends to personal identity (the self cannot be abstracted from its background)" (Williams, 2005, p. 23, parentheses in original).

The poststructuralist approach had significant implications for the way in which individual identity was viewed in the social sciences. In previous traditions, the self had been viewed as a fixed entity, stable and unchanging, defined according to biologically or culturally predetermined characteristics (White, 2006). From the 1960s onwards, however, following the work of researchers such as the philosopher Derrida, the essentialist concept was challenged by the postmodern outlook, under which the individual was viewed as "a fragmented being who has no essential core of identity" (Sim, 2005, p. 312). This change in perspective is summarised thus by Block:

> In current social science literature, poststructuralism is, in very general terms, about moving beyond the search, associated with structuralism, for unchanging, universal laws of human behavior and social phenomena to more nuanced, multileveled, and, ultimately, complicated framings of the world around us. (Block, 2007a, p. 864)

This position, and the flexibility of identity that it theorizes, is the predominant view among social scientists today. It allows identity to be construed as "produced within social action rather than as pre-existing categories to which people and things are assigned" (Omoniyi, 2006, p. 14); in other words, it is to be negotiated rather than assumed. One interpretation of this view involves the consideration of identity in terms of a process, rather than the product or 'label' arising out of such identification; or, more accurately, "the processes that constitute and continuously re-form the subject who has to act and speak in the social and cultural world" (Hall, 1995, p. 65).

Within these parameters, then, the construction of personal identity is a project of constant re-evaluation, that requires the individual to reconcile her past, present and future on an ongoing basis (Block, 2006). However, this does not mean that the individual's manifold identity categories are discrete personalities to be assumed and dropped in different contexts; rather they are to be considered as different aspects of a multi-faceted character. Carter's proposition of 'multiplicity' – a view of the mind as composed of a number of separate, but complementary, personalities (2008) – is rooted in the same concept. She posits that a number of personalities may reside alongside one another in an individual, taking the form of one major personality and a small number of minor personalities, or several minor personalities operating in conjunction with one another (R. Carter, 2008, p. 3).

This concept is concisely encapsulated in Omoniyi's construct of the Hierarchy of Identities (HoI) (2006), which is built on a pluralist, dynamic view of identity. Omoniyi argues that time is made up of *moments*, into which all social activities may be divided. An individual's identity – or, more specifically, the identity category that is assumed by that individual – is constructed on a moment-by-moment basis, with the most appropriate category selected for a given context from a range of available identities. Thus, it may be appropriate for an individual to identify herself as mother in one moment, employee at another, wife, customer, plaintiff or student, as the moment requires. Omoniyi outlines the cohesive nature of these associated identities:

> [O]ne identity isn't simply chosen from an array of possibilities over the others which are discarded; there is on the contrary a cluster of co-present identities but with varying degrees of salience. The latter depends on the most preferred presentation of self in a given moment. (Omoniyi, 2006, p. 20)

Given the pluralist nature of such a model of identity, it is important to note that it is not so much the available 'roles' themselves that dictate the presentation of identity at a given moment, as the individual's choice of the *most salient identity*. This process reflects the specific context in which the speaker finds herself at a given moment in time, and perhaps more pertinently, the aspect of identity which she judges to be of most critical importance for a given context. Thus it is the individual who determines which element of her identity is most indicative of her projected 'self', an element which will almost certainly undergo some change as the learner assumes different roles.

Within Omoniyi's framework, the 'preferred presentation of self' may be an interactive process between the individual and those around her, or it may take place on the basis of internal reflection, *in reference* to the "established norms and conventions of a social system" (Omoniyi, 2006, p. 30). Thus while the hierarchy of identities may feature socially-constructed identities, it may also have elements that are determined by the individual alone, albeit within the framework of social identity. This pluralist view of identity affords the individual greater agency in establishing which aspect of her identity to project in a given situation. What Omoniyi's construct conveys particularly well is the power of the individual to express both personal and group identity. If, at a given 'moment', the subject selects membership of a particular group as her most salient identity, this does not preclude her from selecting a more local identity at a different 'moment'.

Take, for example, a football fan who supports a well-known team. At a given 'moment' - say, during a match - her most salient identity may, unsurprisingly, take the form of her role as a follower of that particular football team. This, however, will not preclude her from prioritising a different identity at another moment; when subsequently waiting to be served in a shop, she may perhaps opt instead to assume the role of a polite customer.

These two roles represent different levels of identification to the individual. On the one hand, her identity is expressed by virtue of her membership of a massive, international group, among other people who share the common bond of being supporters of the same football team. On the other hand, the second role requires the learner to revert to her own character, since the most significant reference point for the politeness that distinguishes this particular identity is that of her own personality. The two roles are not mutually exclusive, but are instead available to the individual at all times, to be chosen and dropped at the appropriate moment, regardless of how different they are from each other.

Thus a multi-faceted model of identity – and Omoniyi's hierarchy of identities in particular – allows for the individual to identify with, but not be uniquely defined by, membership of a given group. Cook (2002) emphasises the importance of this distinction, and warns against 'pigeon-holing' individuals into single categories: "I object to being called an asthmatic, rather than a person who suffers from asthma. People are not just women or lawyers or parents or heterosexuals, but women and lawyers and parents and heterosexuals [...] [T]hey are simultaneously members of many groups" (p. 275). The roles represented by these groups must be integrated with one another, and selected or deselected at the appropriate time, in the appropriate context.

As briefly mentioned above, the exploration of the dynamic aspects of personal identity is a relatively recent venture in the social sciences. One explanation for these developments is the progress that has been made in establishing frameworks for more stable dimensions of personality (Dörnyei, 2005). Dörnyei claims that such are the advances that have been made in this realm of personality psychology that attention has now turned to "*how* individual differences are translated into behavioral characteristics" (p. 98, emphasis in original); in other words, to the effect of individual identity on the bearer's behaviour. When we move away from consideration of individual identity to the actions that this identity can produce, we begin to ask about the choices that motivate these actions. Thus in the following section, we will turn to the discussion of motivation, and L2 motivation in particular, and the attendant concept of 'the self'.

2.2.2 L2 motivation research and the role of identity

The developments in identity research outlined in the previous section are indicative of a similar trend in L2 motivation research, already mentioned in Chapter One (1.3.4): the relatively recent perception of L2 motivation as a dynamic process. The temporal aspect of L2 motivation was highlighted in Dörnyei & Ottó's (1998) Process Model, reflecting the fact that learning a second language usually takes place over a period of months or even years. This model drew heavily on the Action Control Theory of Heckhausen & Kuhl (e.g. 1985, cit. Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998, p. 46), and posited the existence of three stages of motivation: preactional, actional and postactional, each reflecting discrete stages of the language learning process. Such a view of motivation as subject to change over a period of time shows distinct parallels with a poststructuralist model of identity as outlined above.

Recognition of the changeable nature of the language learner's motivation paved the way for a model of motivation that was more closely linked with her sense of identity, and in particular to its variation over time and with the learner's surroundings. However, Dörnyei & Ottó emphasized that few models of motivation had reflected the temporal nature of motivation as a *process*, even though some recognized the need to take into account the learner's past, present and future.

One such model, which drew attention to the learner's relationship with the language, and to her transient social identity as a result, is that of Norton Peirce (1995). She highlighted the case of immigrant women learning English in Canada and conceived of their motivation to learn the language in terms of what she called their level of *investment* in it. In doing so she turned to the concept of 'cultural capital', a term introduced by the sociologist Bourdieu (e.g. Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), to refer to the bank of knowledge and thought available to a given cultural group. Norton Peirce proposed that the level of cultural capital return gained by the language learner depends on her degree of investment in the language learning process. As the learner's sense of identity in the language learning context develops over time, so too does the nature and extent of her investment, alongside her changing relationships with the surrounding world:

> It [the notion of investment] conceives of the language learner as having a complex social identity and multiple desires. The notion presupposes that when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers but they are constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. Thus an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner's own social identity, an identity which is constantly changing across time and space. (Norton Peirce, 1995, pp. 17-18)

For Norton Peirce, then, the individual's motivation to learn a language is rooted in how she conceives of herself and her 'multiple desires' in a sociolinguistic context. The allusion to such desires indicates the existence of a wish on the part of the learner, a motivating impulse that spurs on acquisition of the target language in order to achieve the desired development of social identity. This concept has also been addressed within the framework of *self theory*, a framework originally put forward by Markus & Nurius (1986).

Self theory hinges on the individual's ability to visualise alternative 'versions' of herself, which then act as a motivating influence either to fulfil these roles or avoid reaching them. When commenting on the culture shock of leaving his family home to pursue fame and fortune in Hollywood, the Irish actor Colin Farrell once declared, "I was away from people in Dublin and Ireland, which is a very important part of who I am, and who I dream of being" (Farrell, 2008). Farrell's distinction between the person he *is* and the person he *dreams of being* is indicative of an imagined, other self: in this case, an identity that is both aspired to, and realised. The last line in the above quote by Omoniyi hints at the role of such an imagined self in a dynamic conceptualisation of identity. The "most preferred presentation of self in a given moment" (Omoniyi, 2006, p. 20, quoted above p. 60) suggests the existence of a plurality of 'selves' that co-exist with one another, from which the appropriate 'self' is chosen for a given situation.

The implications of self theory for motivational psychology were first highlighted by Markus & Nurius (1986) with their defining paper on *possible selves*. They proposed that possible selves represent individuals' beliefs about the personalities they could imagine themselves adopting in a hypothetical situation; for example, the kind of person they would like to become or would like to avoid becoming. The controlling dimension of this self-system relates the individual's perception of self to the actions she undertakes. The motivational power of the possible self is contained in the precision with which the potential self is envisaged:

> An individual's repertoire of possible selves can be viewed as the cognitive manifestation of enduring goals, aspirations, motives, fears and threats. Possible selves provide the specific self-relevant form, meaning, organization, and direction to these dynamics. As such, they provide the essential link between the self-concept and motivation. (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954)

It should be noted here that the term 'self' is open to interpretation. In their paper on self theory, Markus and Nurius use the terms 'self' and 'identity' so similarly that they are virtually synonymous. However, in other research, there is a distinction to be made between the past-oriented self and the present- and future-oriented identity. Within the framework described by van Lier (2010), the self is a core set of values that undergoes revision through the processes of identity:

> The self is a single, constant...reference point, referring to one and the same person across time and space [...]. However, as this person encounters new, and especially challenging, situations, new and different ways of relating to these situations need to be constructed, and this construction work is referred to as identity" (van Lier, 2010, p. xiv).

Though Markus and Nurius viewed the conceptualisation of possible selves as significant for motivation generally, there is a cogent argument to be made for their application to language learning in particular. Thornbarrow (2004) observes that the language an individual uses to represent herself is an indicator of the type of self-image she wishes to project in a given situation; thus, a change in social identity (in terms of the self system, an alternative possible self) warrants a change in the type of language used. If the type of language spoken hinges on the individual's projection of a particular possible self, then it can be argued – and has been argued, as I shall now illustrate – that self theory may have significant implications for L2 motivation.

In his (2005) account of individual differences in SLA, Dörnyei turns to the psychology of possible selves as a framework for representing language learners' motivational mechanisms, in a structure called the L2 Motivational Self System. He speculates that the dynamic representation of the self portrayed by this theory may provide an insight into the ways in which personality and motivation interact, and stresses the motivational value of an individualised, envisaged self: "[P]ossible selves give form [...] and direction to one's hopes and threats, thereby inciting and directing purposeful behavior. The more vivid and elaborate the possible self, the more motivationally effective it is expected to be" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 100). Thus a key aspect of the motivational application of possible selves is the visualization of a "specific, self-relevant" (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954) possible self. In keeping with current trends of research already mentioned, one crucial aspect of possible selves is their dynamic nature. They are built on a foundation of the individual's past experience, and rely on constant revision and reconstruction based on present and future perceived actions – what Markus & Nurius termed "the working self-concept" (1986, p. 957).

Central to the L2 Motivational Self System is the notion of different *types* of possible self. The two most important of these are the 'ideal self' and the 'ought self', as previously described by Higgins (1987). The ideal self embodies the attributes that the individual would like to possess, while the ought self represents those attributes to which she feels obliged to aspire. Given that, in Dörnyei's framework, these possible selves relate strictly to language motivation, these concepts are renamed in the L2 Motivational Self System as the *Ideal L2 Self* and the *Ought to L2 Self*. Furthermore, Dörnyei argues, the desire to achieve a goal may be reinforced if a specific positive possible self is offset by the possibility of assuming a negative, or "*feared* possible self" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 100, emphasis in original). Such a personality represents the self that the individual wishes to avoid becoming. The motivational implications of such concepts are potentially significant when we consider the quote from Markus & Nurius above. Possible selves provide a means to navigate the path towards (or away from) the individual's "enduring goals, aspirations, motives, fears and threats" (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954, quoted above, p. 64). In other words, the very existence of an ideal or ought self may furnish the learner with an impetus to assume a particular identity, by working to achieve a personalised ideal, or a certain standard imposed by external influences. The existence of the ideal and ought self illustrates what Higgins described as the 'self discrepancy theory': the theory that the individual is motivated to reduce the discrepancy between her actual self and the positive types of possible self (Higgins, 1987, p. 321).

The development of the L2 Motivational Self System has the potential to facilitate language learning, but it is contingent on the learner's ability to conceptualise her identity in terms of her relationship with the target language. In the next section I will consider the implications of the findings outlined in identity and motivation research for pronunciation in the L1, before exploring the same matters in relation to the L2 in Section 2.3 below.

2.2.3 An interpretation of identity in L1 pronunciation

In the sense that concerns us here, *accent* denotes the distinctive phonological features of a collective group of speakers from a given linguistic background, as illustrated by Lippi-Green's definition of accents as "loose bundles of prosodic and segmental features distributed over geographic and/or social space" (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 42). A distinction can be made between *accent* and *dialect*: while accent is taken only to refer to pronunciation, dialect includes grammar and vocabulary as well (Crystal, 2003a). As noted in the Introduction however (see p. 7 above), in its most widely-recognised sense, accent denotes the "cumulative auditory effect of those features of pronunciation which identify where a person is from, regionally or socially" (Crystal, 2003a, p. 3), and it is this interpretation which I will adopt in this section.

Phonological variation fulfils a number of purposes, particularly in the L1. Differing accents may serve to delineate geographical boundaries, e.g. North American, British, Belfast; however, they may also distinguish between specific religious, ethnic or social groups, e.g. Jewish New York, Italian American, middle class Dublin. Thus, accent can serve as an indicator of an individual's social, as well as national or regional, identity; as Lippi-Green writes, "[E]veryone has several bundles of [phonological] variants which are available to them and which they exploit to layer social meaning into their spoken language" (1997, p. 42).

Similarly, a speaker who chooses to discard a particular accent rather than acquire one may demonstrate an equally powerful identification with (or rejection of) a given social, national or ethnic community. Gralińska-Brawata (2007) presents an intriguing study of sociolinguistic identity as expressed through the accents and attitudes of two well-known Geordies (people from the Tyneside region of northern England): the former professional footballer Alan Shearer, and the internationally renowned singer Sting (Gordon Sumner). While Shearer claimed always to have felt and maintained a strong affiliation with his Geordie background, Sting noticed from listening to the BBC at an early age that 'successful' people did not speak like him, and came to view his Geordie accent as an impediment to success. Their conflicting attitudes were reflected in their manner of speaking; Shearer spoke in an accent clearly marked by characteristics of the regional speech variety, while Sting spoke in a virtually RP (Received Pronunciation) accent, which gave no hint of his Geordie background. Gralińska-Brawata argues that the two men use their respective accents of English to convey their affiliation with or disregard for their Geordie roots, and with it their sociolinguistic identity.

Of course, it is not always the case that a speaker simply produces one accent throughout her lifetime. Consider, for example the phenomenon, experienced by many people, of acquiring an alternative accent upon spending prolonged periods of time in different L1 regions. One notable example of such phonological code-switching is that of the actress Gillian Anderson, who was born in England and moved to the United States at age 11. After over twenty years of living in the United States and speaking with a natural American accent, Anderson moved back to the UK and quickly assumed an RP accent, not just for one of her dramatic roles, but in everyday conversation. Conversely, when interviewed on US television during the same period, she spoke in an American accent (J. Millar, 2007). Anderson later attributed the radical change in her accent to the move back to the UK, and declared a tendency to switch between accents, depending on her company: "When I am in America I speak with an American accent [...]. But if I am standing next to two people and one has an American accent and the other an English accent it is very confusing for me" (quoted in J. Millar, 2007).

The cases of Alan Shearer, Sting and Gillian Anderson present interesting examples of phonological variation, and possible explanations for them. Let us first consider them in the context of the L2 Motivational Self System (albeit in reference to the L1 only). Shearer clearly demonstrates an affiliation with the Geordie culture and language; his 'ideal self' is closely associated with them, and this emerges in his heavily-characterized Geordie speech. Conversely, Sting associates his Geordie identity with his 'feared possible self', and demonstrates this in his rejection of the Geordie accent. Anderson's situation, on the other hand, suggests identification with two distinct cultural identities, in this case British and American, which subsequently take the form of two distinct ideal selves: a speaker of RP when with her British confreres, and a speaker of GA when with her American ones. Such code-switching is not just plausible in a pluralist paradigm of identity, but probable, given the fluidity of the boundaries between social and national identities.

Another perspective on the cases of Shearer, Sting and Anderson above is in terms of Giles, Coupland & Coupland's Accommodation Theory (1991). According to this theory, the language learner uses accent to demonstrate upward or downward 'convergence' or 'divergence', i.e. the desire either to approximate or distance herself from the target language community (Giles et al., 1991, pp. 5-10). If we consider the case of Gillian Anderson above, we can note that her production of very different phonological varieties of English in different cultural contexts may be illustrative of convergence towards the linguistic community in question.

This concept is also raised in Bell's discussion of 'audience design' (1984, 1999, 2001). Bell propounds that language learners adapt their language style - be it in lexical, grammatical or phonological form - in accordance with their interlocutors. He cites an example of a study in New Zealand, in which the language styles exhibited by different groups of people are assessed in relation to the strength of their affiliation with New Zealand Paheka and Māori culture. Bell's results show a strong connection between linguistic style and audience: the greater the degree of affiliation with the native Māori culture, the stronger the speaker's Māori accent and the greater the frequency of Māori language particles (Bell, 1999). An important sidebar for further discussion of the theory of audience design is Bell's assertion that the speech differences highlighted for differentiation by the speaker need not be a perfect match of the features produced by the audience. This is of particular relevance to the case of SLA, as outlined in Section 2.3.1 below.

The case of accent demonstrating the speaker's identification with a given inguistic community may be particularly true of regions where the L1 might conflict with another, traditionally or historically more 'national' language. For example, in her investigation of attitudes towards regional identity in Brittany in northern France, Hoare (2001) found that the predominant view amongst native Breton speakers interviewed was that the use of Breton-accented French was more central to the preservation of a regional Breton identity than the use of the Breton language. Hoare interpreted this as "evidence that Breton-accented French was a more 'available' symbol of identity for them than Breton which very few of them were confident in using" (p. 79). This result illustrates that the power of accent to designate an individual's sociolinguistic profile may in some linguistic environments be equal, if not superior, to the use of a distinct language.

Conversely, some research disputes the claim that accent is an indicator of sociolinguistic identity (or, perhaps more accurately, sociolinguistic identification). Consider, for example, Sharon Millar's study of sociolinguistic identity in Northern Ireland (S. Millar, 1994). Millar conducted her investigation within the framework of Giles and Johnson's ethnolinguistic identity theory (1987), built along the same lines as the concept of convergence from Accommodation Theory (Giles et al., 1991). Giles and Johnson's hypothesis is that language learners' linguistic behaviour may be predicted by their degree of solidarity with a given ethnic group. Millar's study, however, showed that this was not always the case. She found that teachers of 'speech' (a school subject similar to elocution) in a Catholic school in Northern Ireland were willing to teach an accent with an RP influence, despite its potential connotations of anglicisation, which would run contrary to the prevalent cultural affiliations and political aspirations of the Catholic community. Teachers justified their choice to teach an RP accent by referring to the social acceptability of an RP norm:

> Elocution uses standard English, which is an accepted model. It is necessary to have a universal model of speech. [female teacher, all-girls' Catholic secondary school] (S. Millar, 1994, p. 306).
>
> Such a model is used perhaps because of a colonial attitude. I would like children to be able to speak confidently and have confidence in using their own native speech sounds, provided they were not distorting such sounds. For performance, a more anglicised approach may be needed in some circumstances. [female teacher, all-girls' Catholic grammar school] (ibid.).

Millar's data shows that when choosing an appropriate phonological model for their learners' speech, while teachers were aware of the distinction between the learners' 'native' speech and an RP form which, to them, was considered more contrived, there was no strong desire to encourage the learners to express national allegiance in the form of a more localised accent. On the contrary, the focus was on the social implications of the chosen accent: "The speech class with its focus on standards could be unproblematically viewed as emphasising [social] status" (S. Millar, 1994, p. 305).

If we return to the proposal that pronunciation is intricately linked to sociolinguistic identity, Millar's assertion that the teaching of accent in her Northern Ireland study was more closely related to social status than it was to national affiliation, is itself a comment on the form taken by sociolinguistic identity. Let us recall the multi-faceted model of identity proposed by Omoniyi, which noted that individual identity can take one of many forms in a given context. If, as advocated by the teachers in S. Millar's study above, a speaker wishes to impress upon the listener that she is a member of a given social or socioeconomic group, accent may be one means of doing so. The fact that Millar's participants wished to convey social status rather than national background with their accent is no less indicative of the projection of a sociolinguistic identity than if they had chosen to retain their original regional accents to demonstrate where they came from. In reference to Jenkins' assertion that speakers of EIL will wish to project their L1 identity by means of an L1 accent in their English, this multi-faceted model of identity raises two major doubts:

1) The learners in question may not wish to identify with their L1 community at all, and may instead prefer to identify with a native English-speaking linguistic community;

2) The learners may well harbour strong feelings of identification with their native language and culture (L1/C1 - see Marx, 2002); but it is entirely possible that they may choose not to project this aspect of their identity through their L2 accent, and instead select another aspect as the more salient one to be presented by means of their pronunciation.

Luoma (2004) wrote: "As speakers, consciously or unconsciously, people use their speech to create an image of themselves to others" (p. 10). (It should be noted that 'speech' in this case refers to all phonological output.) In the case of Millar's study cited above, the image created by the speech teachers was that of a speaker of socially acceptable status. This presents a strong argument that a speaker's pronunciation can be used to confer an identity on her at any one of a number of levels: not just whether she is a native or non-native speaker of the language, but also her national or regional place of origin, her social or socioeconomic status, or even aspects of her personality. If such an association can be taken as given in the L1, the next question is, how can it be exploited by the language teacher to assist the L2 pronunciation learning process?

From this section, we can see that recent developments in the research of identity and motivation have exhibited some similarities. Both concepts have come to be viewed in the literature as dynamic processes that change and develop over time and in different environments. While Omoniyi's construct of a hierarchy of identities was shown to encapsulate the multi-faceted nature of identity (2006), the interplay of identity with motivation was seen in Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005). Section 2.2.3 discussed the relative roles of identity and motivation in L1 pronunciation, and concluded that L1 pronunciation is frequently used as a means of identifying with a linguistic community, although the form taken by this identification requires further investigation. A framework such as that embodied by the HoI would seem to suggest that the speaker's social identity, as constructed in interaction with her interlocutors, can exert considerable influence on her pronunciation in a given context (e.g. Bell 1984). It remains to be seen precisely how identity and motivation can be drawn together to influence L2 pronunciation learning, and this will be addressed in Section 2.3.

2.3 Implications for L2 pronunciation instruction

Having explored recent advances in identity and motivation research, and the reasons behind the increasingly popular view that identity has a role to play in English language learning, I have yet to establish the import of these developments for L2 pronunciation. This section investigates how learner identity and motivation are manifested in L2 pronunciation, and discusses their importance relative to other influences, before proposing a model of L2 pronunciation learning.

2.3.1 Identity and motivation in L2 pronunciation

In the section preceding this one, I explored the ways in which identity and motivation affected L1 accent. I concluded that a speaker's pronunciation can be used to convey a context-specific aspect of her identity. Moreover, I found that the identity projected may be at any one of a number of levels, and may stem from group membership (such as social status or nationality), or more local properties (such as personality). Bearing in mind that the overall goal of this thesis is to evaluate a pedagogical model of L2 pronunciation built on the concepts of learner identity, motivation and autonomy, I will now turn to the issue of L2 pronunciation, and see whether the findings above may be extended to it.

In January 2007, the UK edition of the reality TV show *Celebrity Big Brother* (Channel 4) provoked international outcry when three members of the Big Brother household - Jade Goody, Jo O'Meara and Danielle Lloyd, all of whom were British, and white - were accused of racist behaviour towards the Indian actress Shilpa Shetty. One of the actions cited amongst the 39,000 complaints generated by the show was the housemates' mockery of Shetty's Indian-accented English (McCartney, 2007). The public outrage that ensued suggested that the imitation of Shetty's accent was perceived by viewers not just as an attack on her manner of speaking, but on her national and cultural identity, thereby implying an intuitive relationship between the two.

The emotive response generated by these events reflects a view in contemporary SLA research that the speaker's use of language is intricately linked to her social identity (e.g. Gatbonton, Trofimovich, & Magid, 2005; Golombek & Jordan, 2005; Joseph, 2004; Lippi-Green, 1997; Norton, 1997; Thomas et al., 2004; Ushioda, 2006). There is also considerable anecdotal evidence that suggests that this relationship between language and identity is particularly salient at the phonological level. Indeed, the association between pronunciation and identity appears in the literature to be so intuitive as to seem wholly unremarkable; as Smit and Dalton note, pronunciation "touches upon the learner's identity most immediately" (2000, p. 229).

Jenkins invokes this relationship between identity and pronunciation in her call for a non-standard model of EIL phonology, as described in Section 2.1.3 above. According to this perspective, the extent of a learner's native, or L1, accent in the L2 relates directly to her desire to identify with her L1 speech community. In addition to citing the impracticability of urging learners to attain a native-like goal that they will in all likelihood never reach, Jenkins claims that learners are in fact reluctant to relinquish the vestiges of their L1 identity by taking on the phonological norms of a foreign language. She ascribes the low percentage of L2 learners who achieve native-like pronunciation, and the age profile that goes along with it, to the learner's "response to conscious and subconscious feelings of L1 group identity which, predictably, develop and strengthen with age" (Jenkins, 2000, p. 208).

To the extent that they relate L2 pronunciation to the learner's entrenchment in a given identity, Jenkins' assertions are somewhat reminiscent of the work of Alexander Guiora and his colleagues (e.g. Guiora, Acton, Erard, & Strickland Jr, 1980; Guiora, Beit-Hallahmi, Brannon, Dull, & Scovel, 1972). In these studies, Guiora comments on how pronunciation interacts with the boundaries of personal identity. He introduces the notion of 'language ego' as the individual's linguistic self-representation, and hypothesises that pronunciation lies at its centre:

> Pronunciation is the most salient aspect of the language ego, the hardest to penetrate (to acquire in a new language), the most difficult to lose (in one's own)....[T]he most sensitive index of the

> ability to take on a new identity, i.e., the degree of permeability of language ego boundaries, is found in the ability to achieve native-like pronunciation in a second language" (Guiora et al., 1972, pp. 421-422)

Within this framework, Guiora theorises that ego boundaries build and strengthen with time, and that as such the language ego is in a more malleable state in childhood than adulthood. Since the flexibility (or lack thereof) of an individual's language ego dictates the extent to which she may assume or drop a particular mode of pronunciation, such a theory would account for the apparent ease with which children learning a second language can take on native-like L2 pronunciation; in this respect language learners are restricted not by physiological limitations, but by the rigidness of their language ego boundaries.

Another way of framing the argument for pronunciation as a function of the speaker's identity is to view the degree of foreign accent in language learners' L2 speech as at least partially determined by their desire to be affiliated with the target language community. This can perhaps be best addressed with reference to Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, as mentioned above (e.g. 1977). Block (2007b) mentions accent as one example of the "educational resources and assets" which comprise the learner's cultural capital, and are required for her "to be a fully functioning participant in a particular community of practice" (Block, 2007b, p. 25). Thus, as the learner's cultural capital resources build and strengthen, so too will her identification with the target language community, reflected by an increasingly native-like accent in the L2.

On very much the same theme, a similar concept is that of the learner's 'legitimate peripheral participation' in a given community of practice, as outlined by Lave & Wenger (1991). They describe this phenomenon as the process by which learners acquire specific skills in order to participate fully in the relevant community: "[L]earners inevitably participate in communities of practitioners and [...] the mastery of knowledge and skill requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 29). Though Lave and Wenger make no explicit reference to the role of phonological output, it is possible to conceive of pronunciation as one of the 'skills' acquired by learners to achieve full participation in such a community of practice. This concept, applied to pronunciation and accent, may be likened to the notion of 'audibility' as proposed by J. Miller (2003), which views accent as an integral part of the social and cultural know-how required for membership of a particular community of practice.

One more theory which operates along the same lines of logic is Bell's theory of audience design, outlined in Section 2.2.3 above, which argues that the learner may attempt to adapt her speech style - including pronunciation – to reflect that of her interlocutors, in order to identify with them (Bell 1984). According to Bell, it is not the *result* of such an attempt that influences the speaker's speech, but rather the process of trying: "[S]peakers cannot match the speech differences of all their interlocutors – but they can approach them" (1984, p. 158). I argue that this analogy may be extended to L2 learners attempting to reproduce a native-like level of speech. Within this framework, the language learner who wishes to approximate the language style of an interlocutor but is (as yet) unable to replicate it exactly may still be influenced by the desire to identify with her interlocutors in future L2 speaking endeavours.

There is a common thread running through the proposed descriptions of identity in L2 pronunciation: the use of accent not just as a means of actually replicating the speech of a given community of practice, but as a means of expressing *desire* to identify with or shun that community. Bell's assertion that the concept of audience design applies to the *attempt* to identify with interlocutors by means of mirroring their speech patterns is a significant one. It implies that the process of identifying with an individual (or group) affects not just the act of speaking itself, but also the *motivation* to mirror the listener's speech. This conclusion seems a logical one, if we consider again the examples of Alan Shearer and Sting presented in Section 2.2.2. Alan Shearer's identity as a Geordie was not simply illustrated by the regional accent he produced as a symbol of his affiliation with his cultural background. It was also illustrated by his determination to project that affiliation: in other words, by the goals he set for his pronunciation. Thus there is a strong argument to be made that a speaker's identity is conveyed by her target accent – even if the accent *produced* falls short of that target.

Therefore it seems that pronunciation – whether in the L1 or the L2 – projects an image of the speaker to the listener(s), as illustrated in studies that have carried out matched-guise tests to establish listeners' perceptions of speakers on the basis of their speech (e.g. Dalton-Puffer et al., 1997; Hoare, 2001; Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner, & Fillenbaum, 1960). While this image may purely be representative of some aspect of the speaker's identity, it is also possible that 1) she may be trying to project an entirely different image, 2) she may be basing the projected image on how she would like others to *perceive* her identity, or simply 3) she may not be consciously projecting an image at all. Regardless of the speaker's intentions, however, an impression is made on the listener. If the speaker can learn to appreciate, through a process of self-awareness and reflection, the potential of her pronunciation to project an image of her, and use it to convey a relevant aspect of her identity in the image perceived by the interlocutor, she may be able to alter her pronunciation to better reflect her goals as a language learner, and as a person.

One means of conceptualising such desired identities is in terms of the ideal selves discussed in Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System above. If the learner visualises the image of herself that she would like to project to her listeners, that image comprises her Ideal L2 Self. However, to conceive of a single, unified Ideal L2 Self is rather simpler than the situation requires. As discussed in Section 2.2.1, the contemporary view of individual identity is such that just one image would be insufficient to convey it. To return to the concept of Omoniyi's hierarchy of identities, it would be more appropriate to envision a multi-faceted Ideal L2 Self, with the most salient aspect to be chosen in the relevant 'moment' (Omoniyi, 2006). This conceptualised crossover between Omoniyi and Dörnyei's constructs of identity and motivation respectively may be illustrated by the diagram shown in Figure i below.

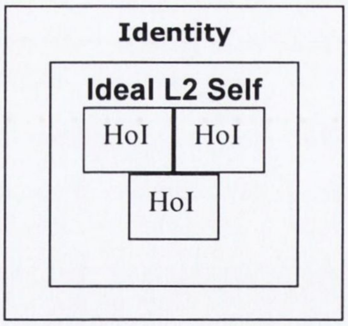

Figure i: Model of learner identity as it occurs in L2 pronunciation

Let us take the hypothetical example of a Chinese businessman named Xin, who is learning English primarily to communicate with other non-native speakers in an international business context. Xin has lived all his life in

China, and is very proud of his cultural heritage. Conversely, he is also very devoted to his career, and sees the English language as a tool with which he can wield power within the international business community. Within Jenkins' framework of EIL phonology, Xin's learning requirements indicate that he need only attain a level of English pronunciation that is mutually intelligible with other international speakers of English, and as such he should aim to preserve his L1 Chinese accent when speaking English in order to convey his Chinese identity. However, Xin admires the success of native speakers of English from the United States who work in his field, and in order to build a closer professional rapport with them, his aim is to speak English with an American accent.

From this vignette, it can be established that Xin has at least two Ideal Selves: proud Chinese patriot, and ambitious professional. I argue that for the purposes for which he requires English, his most salient 'self' is that of ambitious professional, and so it is this role which he chooses to prioritise. Consequently, he selects the goal of American-accented English in accordance with the L2 aspect of that 'self'.

Having proposed a model of identity and motivation as they occur in L2 pronunciation learning, I shall now explore the other factors that contribute to pronunciation in the L2, and consider how they work alongside identity and motivation to produce L2 pronunciation.

2.3.2 A model of L2 pronunciation learning

The previous section showed how identity and motivation can play an important role in contributing to the pronunciation goals established by L2 learners. However, clearly pronunciation cannot be characterised as a purely psychological phenomenon. As observed by Scovel (1969) and mentioned in Section 1.3.1 above, pronunciation is the only aspect of language production that demands physical intervention. It is only by the "motor activity" (Scovel, 1969, p. 252) of the organs of the mouth that individual sounds are articulated and enunciated, leading to the production of utterances which listeners perceive as speech. Indeed, more so than any other language skill, pronunciation includes a physiological component without which speech is rendered impossible.

The importance of this physiological element may be likened to the control required of an actor over speech, body and facial movements, without which no amount of intellectual empathy or understanding of the character will convey the desired role. It is a conundrum that was summed up by the American actor Michael J. Fox in his autobiography, in which he described the difficulty of pursuing an acting career while suffering from Parkinson's disease (which impairs the motor skills). Fox wrote, "Layers of subtext and Stanislavskian sense memory may motivate a character to drink a beer, let's say, but if I can't lift the bottle mouthward without spilling suds, it's all for naught" (Fox, 2009, p. 265). Similarly, a language learner may be thoroughly motivated and focused on the achievement of a specific pronunciation goal, may have a perfectly-formed image of her desired Ideal L2 Self and be capable of flawless discrimination of target phonemes; but without the physical acuity required to articulate the sounds of the language in the appropriate manner, the target accent will be unattainable.

From this analogy, it is clear that pronunciation is simply impossible without the intervention of articulatory movement. However, it is my contention that pronunciation is a complicated phenomenon that cannot simply be reduced to movements of the jaw, tongue, and soft palate. The first chapter (Section 1.3) discussed the effect of various influences on L2 pronunciation, as evidenced in the studies of Flege, Piske and others. The most frequently-investigated factors included the age at which the learner arrived in the L2 community (AOA), L1 background, use and exposure, L2 exposure and the length of time she had resided in that community (LOR), and aptitude. Among the most influential of these was the age of L2 learning, as well as the amount of exposure to the L2. These factors inevitably contribute to the speaker's accent, and their effect may not even be noticed by the speaker.

The other factors investigated were attitude and motivation. My discussion of motivation and identity in this chapter incorporated attitude in reference to the learner's desire to move towards or away from a given linguistic community, e.g. in Gralińska-Brawata's study of the pronunciation of Alan Shearer and Sting. Language learners' attitudes to the target language were shown to be an extension of their motivation to identify with the associated linguistic community. I concluded that learner motivation - and, by extension, learner attitude and identity - has potentially more influence on L2 pronunciation than extant research would seem to indicate, though the precise nature of that influence is open to debate, and is discussed below.

I propose that all the factors mentioned above, each of which I argue has a role to play in the production of L2 pronunciation, can be assigned to one of three categories:

1. **Circumstantial**.
   The circumstantial factors are those unalterable influences of the situation in which the learner finds herself. They include environmental influences and biological factors.
2. **Affective.**
   The second component, affective factors, encompasses the features of identity and motivation, as encapsulated in the model of identity presented in Figure i above. These factors are not depicted as having a direct influence on the articulatory processes that contribute to pronunciation, but instead influence the generation of a target accent.
3. **Articulatory processes**
   This component simply refers to the production of pronunciation, and more specifically to the physiological movement of the speech organs that gives rise to the accent produced.

A depiction of this model is presented in Figure ii below. This model indicates that the proximate cause of pronunciation patterns is the articulatory action of the speaker. This articulatory action, however, is directly influenced by both circumstantial and affective factors. While the circumstantial factors affect the learners' pronunciation directly, the affective factors contribute instead to the development of the learner's target accent, which in turn influences the articulatory processes. In other words, the effect of the affective factors on the speaker's pronunciation is mediated by the creation of a pronunciation goal, or target accent. With this distinction in mind, it is worth re-examining the circumstantial, affective and articulatory components of the pronunciation model in further detail.

The circumstantial factors are unavoidable elements of the speaker's wider experience that directly impact on her pronunciation. The first of the sub-categories, environmental influences, includes some of the variables described in the studies by Flege and others that were outlined in Section 1.3 above, such as the type and degree of L2 exposure, the length of the learner's residence (LOR) in the L2 community if applicable, use of the L1,

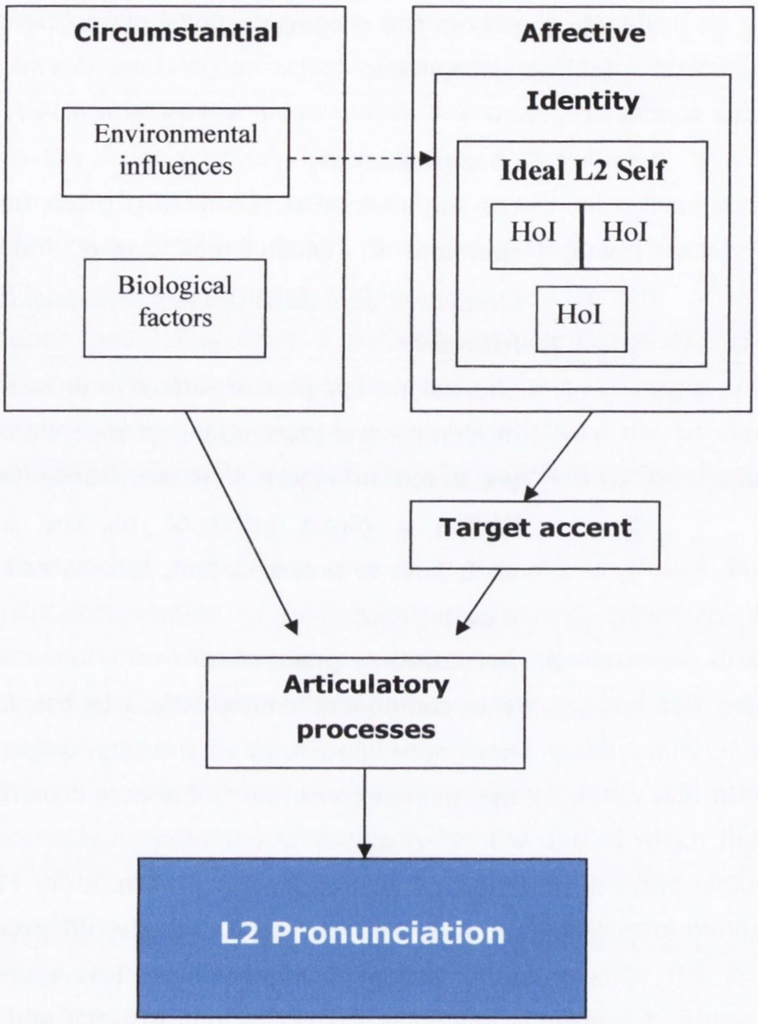

Figure ii: Proposed model of L2 pronunciation learning

etc. This component of L2 pronunciation also includes biological factors, which relate solely to the physiological *capabilities* of the speaker (i.e. not articulation itself, but rather the speaker's ability to articulate, e.g. speech impediments etc).

The second component of the model comprises the influences of motivation and identity, as outlined in Figure i above. I have chosen to label this component 'affective' in order to encompass the features of both identity and motivation, as both play a crucial role in this aspect of pronunciation. This part of the model draws on Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System and Omoniyi's hierarchy of identities to present the aspect of identity which the speaker chooses to project in a given 'moment'. They constitute the aspect of identity projected by the speaker in the L2. Figure ii depicts the speaker's Ideal L2 Self embedded within her identity. Her chosen identity first influences her motivation, in the form of her selection of the most appropriate facet of her Ideal L2 Self (as illustrated by the 'Target accent' component above), before this identity can have a more direct influence on the articulatory activity required of L2 pronunciation.

From a pedagogical perspective, circumstantial factors are usually not addressed in the L2 classroom, for the simple reason that they are unalterable; it would be impossible to change them. Additionally, they are so interwoven into the speaker's background they usually fall below the level of consciousness. Conversely, it is improbable that learner identity and motivation would directly influence the speaker's pronunciation without the learner's direct cognitive participation. Consequently, for identity to influence the determination of pronunciation goals and the quality of pronunciation produced, awareness of this component of pronunciation must be raised above the level of consciousness. This observation forms the basis for a core component in a pedagogical model arising out of this model of pronunciation learning (see Section 3.3 below).

Some influences, such as the presence of a cleft palate, a biological factor that directly influences the quality of the speaker's pronunciation, may be quite clearly defined as circumstantial. Others may be assigned with equal certainty to the category of affective factors, e.g. an English language learner's desire to approximate an American accent because of an admiration of American culture. However, it is worth calling attention to the fact that the separation of circumstantial and affective factors does not necessarily suggest that there is no relationship between the two, and that no overlap occurs.

For example, consider the case of age of arrival in the L2-speaking community (AOA), e.g. in MacKay, Flege & Imai (2006) and Yeni-Komshian, Robbins & Flege (2001). Since age is a biological indicator of the learner's ability to learn the language at a given point in time (i.e. within a critical period framework of interpretation), AOA is classified as a circumstantial factor over which the learner has no control, as it is simply an unavoidable by-product of the immigration process. However, there is also an argument to be made that a learner's AOA may directly influence the extent of her desire to identify with the target language community, e.g. the younger the age of arrival, the greater the possibility that the learner will wish to achieve a native-like accent in order to fit in with her peers. In this case, the learner's motivational impulses would mediate the biological fact of the age at which the learner arrived in the L2 community. While this association cannot be broadly extended to all L2 learners normally resident in an L2-speaking community, it is a possibility that must be taken into account in the above model. Thus while AOA is clearly definable as a circumstantial variable, it may correlate with the affective factors of motivation and identity in some circumstances.

Another circumstantial factor which may show evidence of a causal relationship with affective factors is length of residence (LOR), investigated by Flege et al. (2006). LOR denotes the length of time a learner has been resident in the L2 community, but it may also serve as an indicator of the degree to which a learner wishes to integrate with the L2 community by emulating the target language accent. It is plausible - though not always the case - that the more time a learner spends in the host country, the more she will wish to integrate into the linguistic community and aim to reproduce the phonological norms of native speakers. Like AOA, LOR would be classified as a circumstantial factor that in some cases correlates to affective factors. This possible correlation is represented in Figure ii by virtue of a dotted arrow. The arrow is marked from 'Environmental influences' since the type of circumstantial factors that relate to affective ones are more likely to be due to environmental than biological influences.

These illustrations show that although some factors such as age of arrival and length of residence that are defined as circumstantial may correspond to affective factors such as motivation, the two categories - circumstantial and affective - are conceptually distinct. The question of how each individual factor is to be interpreted falls outside the scope of this study. For the purposes of my investigation, this leads us to the conclusion that while affective factors can play an important role in shaping a language learner's target accent, there are also a number of factors influencing pronunciation that fall beyond the realm of the affective and consequently are unrelated to motivation, a fact that must be taken into account in any pedagogical proposal resting on this model of pronunciation learning.
Ultimately, however, whether the influences are determined to be circumstantial or affective, the actual production of pronunciation is shaped by the physiological action of articulation, and it is this process that dictates the formation of pronunciation.

These discussions illustrate that while L2 pronunciation will always be subject to certain influences beyond the control of the speaker – namely environmental and biological factors - the relative role of identity can play an equally important role in determining L2 pronunciation goals, and consequently, in the production of L2 pronunciation. If learner motivation and identity play such an essential role in L2 pronunciation, there is a compelling case to be made for language learners to determine their own pronunciation goals. The alternative is to follow a phonological norm prescribed for an entire group of learners who are highly unlikely to share identical Ideal L2 Selves and resultant targets for pronunciation learning. This argument calls into question Jenkins' recommendation of the Lingua Franca Core (LFC) as the phonological model for all EIL/ELF learners, to the extent that this is what she appears to propose (2000). Within the framework outlined above, the specific features of such a phonological model are of less pedagogical relevance than the need to avoid imposing such a model on a group who should instead be treated as the individual learners they are. Thus, regardless of the variety of English in question, whether EFL, EIL or ELF, it is the learners themselves who should determine the phonological model most appropriate for their needs.

However, this poses a problem for language teachers, as the ordinary L2 classroom requires them to address the learning needs of not just one learner, but a whole group. My model of pronunciation learning suggests the importance of encouraging individual learners to incorporate aspects of their own identities into the language learning process, and use them to set out their L2 pronunciation goals. In other words, to the extent of goal-setting at least, I argue that the process of pronunciation pedagogy can be individualised. To return to Figure ii above, within this framework, one of the teacher's roles is to raise the affective component of L2 pronunciation learning above the level of consciousness. In the next chapter I will investigate the challenges involved in this process, and outline a pedagogical model that illustrates how such a task may be accomplished.

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have provided an account of ELT in Ireland, the changes that have taken place in English language research in recent years and the consequences these have had for English pronunciation research. I have carried out an overview of the relevant recent innovations in identity and motivation research, and discussed their application to L1 phonological output. I have investigated how the combined effect of these developments affects pronunciation in the L2, and in particular how identity and motivation – relative to other influences - affect this phenomenon. Finally, I have presented a model of L2 pronunciation learning that encompasses circumstantial, affective and articulatory components, paving the way for the development of a pedagogical model of L2 pronunciation.

Previous pronunciation teaching methods, as outlined in Section 1.2 above, have tended to focus on the development of techniques for how to control the articulatory organs and practise moving them in order to produce speech sounds in a particular way. It is my hypothesis that a pedagogy that encompasses the learner's desired projected identity and how it relates to the target accent, along with a more mechanical approach to the physical articulation of sounds will be more successful than one which addresses only one of these aspects, given the importance of both dimensions to L2 pronunciation. As significant progress has already been made on the instruction of pronunciation from a mechanical perspective (e.g. using approaches such as that of audiolingualism, see Section 1.2.2), the question of how to address identity and motivation must be considered. This question will now be tackled in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER THREE

TOWARDS A PEDAGOGICAL MODEL

3.0 Introduction

So far in this thesis, I have attempted to give an account of previous research into L2 pronunciation. I have outlined reasons why learner identity and motivation, in the form of the language learner's Ideal L2 Self, are particularly relevant to the case of L2 pronunciation, and why they should be incorporated into a pronunciation teaching approach. However, it remains to be seen how such abstract concepts as identity and motivation are to be addressed in a classroom setting and built into pronunciation pedagogy. These concepts raise questions about the relative roles of the instructor and the instructed in the classroom, shifting the focus from teacher to learner.

In the learner-centred classroom arising out of such a theoretical shift, it would become increasingly important for the teacher to take a holistic view of the language learner, and to foster an atmosphere that would advocate appreciation and acceptance of each learner's individual identity. However, as briefly mentioned in Section 2.3.2, the reality of the language classroom is that the teacher only has a finite amount of interaction with each individual learner per lesson. Within this type of classroom situation, the challenges confronted by the teacher are evident, and the creation of an atmosphere that acknowledges the 'individual identity' of every learner may seem somewhat elusive. With this in mind, such an atmosphere may be best developed within the framework of a teaching approach that focuses more on the learner's ability to assume further responsibility for her own language learning; in other words, in an approach that promotes and actively nurtures learner autonomy.

Thus Chapter Three will begin with an overview of learner autonomy research in Section 3.1, and will consider how developments in this area of research may be applied to pronunciation instruction in particular. Taking into consideration these principles of learner autonomy, the objectives of an L2 pronunciation teaching approach will then be discussed in Section 3.2, keeping in mind the model shown in Figure ii above. Finally, Section 3.3 will outline the pedagogical principles underpinning a model of L2 pronunciation instruction, before leading into a description of the implementation of such a programme in Chapter Four.

3.1 The role of learner autonomy

The model of L2 pronunciation outlined in Figure ii above assumes that the two main influences on the development of L2 pronunciation can be categorised as either circumstantial or affective. These two aspects contribute either directly (circumstantial) or indirectly (affective) to the motor movement of the articulatory organs. This articulatory activity is ultimately responsible for the quality of the pronunciation produced by the speaker. Having acknowledged that circumstantial influences are beyond the scope of the L2 classroom, I have recommended that a preferable approach would be to address the affective aspect of pronunciation, in addition to the articulatory one (which, as previously mentioned, has been addressed in earlier pronunciation methodologies, but remains central to the production of speech).

Addressing the affective component of pronunciation entails consideration of learner identity and motivation, two notoriously difficult concepts to transfer from the abstract to reality. Any approach to teaching L2 pronunciation that would take into account the learner's individual identity as an integral component of the learning process – as proposed in Section 2.3.2 above – would inevitably shift the focus of instruction from teacher to learner. Such a pedagogical approach would be particularly relevant in the context of a multicultural, multilingual language classroom such as that which features in my empirical study (see Chapter Five), in which the differences between learners should be embraced rather than curtailed.

In this section, I argue that the most appropriate means of developing such a learner-centred pedagogical model of pronunciation would be to promote a learning environment that would harness the benefits of learner autonomy. An autonomous learning environment would incorporate language learners' awareness of their identity into the language learning process, heighten their awareness of their pronunciation goals and facilitate the projection of their identity in their L2 pronunciation, following the model presented in Section 2.3.3. In the coming pages I will provide an overview of autonomous learning, and will clarify the role it can play in building an effective pedagogical model of L2 pronunciation. I will begin by providing a précis of the associated literature.

3.1.1 Theoretical background

As discussed in Chapter One above (Section 1.2), language teaching in the first half of the twentieth century was marked by the prevalence of behaviourist theory, which lay behind such influential teaching methods as audiolingualism and the use of the language laboratory (Benson, 2001). The subsequent decline of behaviourism gave way to a revised approach to language instruction, which aimed at the achievement of communicative competence (e.g. Breen & Candlin, 1980), a view which largely persists today. It was within this context of fundamental ideological change that the concept of learner autonomy rose to the forefront of SLA research in the work of such researchers as Holec (e.g. 1981, 1985), Little (e.g. 1989; 1991, 2007; Little, Ridley, & Ushioda, 2003), Benson (e.g. Benson, 2001, 2003; Benson & Voller, 1997) and others.

The renewed emphasis on the accomplishment of successful communication had a profound impact on the research and teaching of foreign languages, and raised questions about the very nature of language instruction. It moved the focus of the language learning process from teacher to learner, heralding the beginning of the learner-centred L2 classroom (Nunan, 1988), a concept compatible with the focus on individual learner identity presented in the model of L2 pronunciation learning above (Section 2.3.2). Crucially, the traditional classroom model of the authoritative teacher doling out information to a group of passive learners no longer accurately represented the underlying ethos of language pedagogy. In the learner-centred classroom, the learner was viewed not just as a participant in the learning process, but as the principal agent in determining her own learning experience.

With their new-found role as protagonists in the language classroom came greater responsibilities for the learners, and a requirement for a different set of learning skills. Little (1991) wrote: "Communicative efficiency in the target language community depends on learners having...independence, self-reliance and self-confidence" (p. 27). Such skills are clear indicators of a capacity for a type of learning that originates within the learner herself, rather than being imposed on her by the requirements of external assessment or a demanding teacher; in short, in this type of learning it is the learner who assumes the responsibility of ensuring that learning takes place. This is the type of learning which may generally be termed 'autonomous'.

While Little argues that "there is nothing new or mysterious about learner autonomy" (1995, p. 175), and that successful language learners have always demonstrated skills and characteristics consistent with what is now known as autonomous learning (such as those briefly mentioned in the previous paragraph), the term 'learner autonomy' has only been in regular use since 1981. In that year, Henri Holec, in his seminal publication on the subject, used it to denote the greater agency of learners within the framework of a communication-based, learner-centred language learning process. He described autonomy in terms of a learner assuming responsibility for the learning process, specifically referring to the capacity to "take charge of one's learning" (p. 3). He went on to elaborate:

> *To take charge of one's learning* is to have, and to hold, the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning, i.e:
>
> - determining the objectives;
> - defining the contents and progressions;
> - selecting methods and techniques to be used;
> - monitoring the procedure of acquisition properly speaking (rhythm, time, place, etc);
> - evaluating what has been acquired.
>
> The autonomous learner is himself capable of making all these decisions concerning the learning with which he is or wishes to be involved.
>
> (Holec, 1981, pp. 3, emphasis in original)

While Holec's description of learner autonomy remains possibly the most widely cited (R. C. Smith, 2003), another widely-accepted definition is that of Little (1991), who describes learner autonomy in terms of the specific actions that distinguish the autonomous learner from her peers: "Essentially autonomy is a *capacity* – for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making and independent action" (p. 4, emphasis in original). Contrary to Holec's definition, which outlines specific decisions taken by learners in relation to their learning, Little's characterisation of autonomy refers to the higher-level processes at work in the autonomous learner, and describes autonomy as the *potential* for action, rather than the action itself.

While the above terminology is given in relation to autonomy among language learners, it does not explicitly refer to language. However, Little (2007) contends that learner autonomy is not just a capacity that *can* be exploited for language learning as much as any other subject, but rather that the autonomous language learning process requires a command of language to be a success, e.g. in tasks that involve goal-setting and reflection.

Crucial to the success of an autonomous approach to language learning, Little claims, is the cultivation of inner speech (Vygotsky, 1962) in the target language, which he argues enables learners to develop their capacity for autonomous learning alongside their language proficiency. He writes:

> How do we develop this capacity for inner speech in the language classroom? By requiring learners not only to take the initiative in determining learning goals and selecting learning materials and activities, but to do this in the target language, and to use the target language also for regular 'reflective intervention' in what they have learnt and how they have learnt it. When they use the target language as the medium of task performance but also of metacognition and metalinguistic reflection, learners' developing proficiency is an integral part of the autonomy that arises from successful task performance. That, as it seems to me, is the essential characteristic of *language* learner autonomy. (Little, 2007, pp. 23, emphasis in original)

According to Little's view of the central role of inner speech, we can see that autonomous learning is not just *applicable* to language learning, but that by its very nature it encompasses elements of language use that are intricately woven into the fabric of the learning process. When activities are conducted entirely through the target language, they provide an ideal platform from which language learning can take place. However, this does not discount the metacognitive value of the activities that contribute to learner autonomy more generally, as they can be applied to language learning. Broader processes designed to enhance learner autonomy - such as goal-setting, the selection of learning materials, and reflective intervention, as mentioned in the above quote by Little (2007) - may still hold great potential for L2 pedagogy. In the even more specific case of the L2 pronunciation learning model presented in Section 2.3.3 above, it is questionable whether the use of the *target language* in carrying out the above-mentioned processes is integral to the success of a learner autonomy-based pedagogical approach. In the pedagogical model outlined below in Section 3.3, for example, there is a case to be made that some principles may be better suited to a learning environment in which only the target language is used, e.g. accent discrimination tasks, speech and identity differentiation, articulatory control, use of drama and role play. If a learner is carrying out an activity designed to rehearse the movement of the articulatory organs, for example, as in tongue-twister exercises, it would serve little purpose to practise them in anything but the target language.

However, it could also be argued that some of the more metacognitive aspects of the course - such as goal-setting, raising self-awareness and reflection - would still retain their pedagogical value *for L2 pronunciation* even if they were conducted in an alternative shared lingua franca (e.g. the learners' L1). Goal-setting, for example, requires the learner to examine carefully her reasons for aiming to achieve a particular variety or level of pronunciation. This type of introspective activity would be no less effective - and indeed, may even reduce affective barriers and prove more productive - if it were carried out in the learner's L1. Thus, for the purposes of the pedagogical model of pronunciation described below, the teaching approach may be more accurately described as equal parts learner autonomy and language learner autonomy.

It should be noted from the definitions given above that learner autonomy does not comprise specific *actions* undertaken by the learner to bring about a degree of independence or control in her learning experience. Instead, it is a capacity for or approach to learning that tends to encompass a number of actions such as critical self-assessment and reflection. Pro-active behaviour on the part of the learner should not be taken as a given, for, as mentioned in Section 1.2.7 above, 'self-instruction' cannot be assumed to be synonymous with 'autonomous learning' as they refer to different processes. Self-instruction essentially denotes a course of instruction that takes place without the aid of a teacher, while autonomous learning, as previously discussed, refers not to a learning process, but to an approach to learning. As Benson (2001) points out, "under certain conditions, self-instructional modes of learning may even inhibit autonomy" (p. 9).

Given, then, that autonomous learning refers to a capacity for learning in a certain way, the question remains: how does this capacity manifest itself throughout the learning process? To address the answer, we must attempt to reify learner autonomy, and move it from the abstract into the more concrete environment of the L2 classroom, which I will do in the following section.

3.1.2 Learner autonomy in the L2 classroom

Equipped with a theoretical background to learner autonomy, we must next consider it from a more practical perspective, and examine the features that distinguish an autonomous language learning environment from one which is not autonomous. This task is made no easier by the broad range of topics that have emerged in discussion of learner autonomy. Oxford (2003) criticised the inconsistency of the literature, deeming it "far from coherent" (p. 75), and claiming that a more comprehensive approach to the subject was required. A side-effect of this particular feature of the literature has been that efforts to establish a set of practical guidelines for the development of learner autonomy in the L2 classroom have led to a broad range of proposals from many different researchers (e.g. Dam, 2003; Dickinson, 1995; Legenhausen, 2003; Little, 2007).

Studies by Little (1999, cit. 2007) and Dam and Legenhausen (1997) have adopted the view that language learner autonomy can best be characterised by guiding principles. These studies present many of the features used throughout my pedagogical study, in which the pedagogical model proposed in Section 3.3 below is implemented with two groups of EFL learners. While the works of Little and Dam & Legenhausen differ from each other in their approaches to the problem, their fundamental conceptualisations of the requirements of an autonomous learning environment complement one another, as I will now demonstrate.

Little's guidelines hinge on his proposal that successful L2 teaching is governed by the three interacting principles of:

- learner involvement
- learner reflection and
- target language use (e.g. Little, 2007).

Largely due to Little's own work in the area of learner autonomy, these terms have become central tenets of the discipline, and refer to the principles behind the activities of learner and teacher in the autonomous L2 classroom. They also serve as a guide for the implementation of specific activities and tools (some of which are discussed below), which are designed to enhance autonomous learning in the L2 classroom.

In contrast, Dam and Legenhausen do not restrict their recommendations to pedagogical requirements, and instead outline the three principles that they claim *characterise* an autonomous learning environment. While to a certain extent there is some overlap between their principles and those of Little outlined above, the proposals of Dam and Legenhausen provide an appraisal of the multiplicity of factors – both academic and practical – that must be taken into consideration when implementing a teaching programme intended to foster learner autonomy:

- the *underlying* principle that language instruction depends largely on communicative competence appropriate to the learners' individual requirements;
- the *operational* principle that social interaction in the classroom must be authentic in nature;
- the *procedural* principle that teaching must be managed to allow adequate liaison between teachers and learners, and to record and evaluate the results of teaching processes (Dam & Legenhausen, 1997).

If we first consider Little's concept of learner involvement, we find that it is perhaps the most comprehensive of all the principles listed above. This denotes the learner's complete participation in all stages of the learning process, and begins with the development of an understanding of the learning process, or "learning how to learn" (Little, 1991, p. 52). Despite its name, a vital role in learner involvement belongs to the teacher, as it "requires that the teacher draws her learners into their own learning process" (Little, 2007, p. 23); ultimately it is under the teacher's guidance that the learner develops the ability to become increasingly involved in all aspects of the language learning process. If we consider learner involvement more broadly, e.g. in terms of the ongoing nativeness/ intelligibility debate currently taking place in pronunciation research, it becomes clear that there are many aspects of language pedagogy in which learner involvement has not, as yet, been prioritised, since this debate has to date been a discussion among researchers and practitioners, rather than learners. If we consider this in terms of the above model of L2 pronunciation, it is particularly important that learners are afforded greater opportunity to determine their own pronunciation learning goals, since it is the target accent that most closely reflects the learner's individual identity. The failure to involve the learner at this stage of the pronunciation learning process is a shortcoming which I aim to address in the principles of the pedagogical model outlined in Section 3.3 below.

Learner involvement includes determining the syllabus (through the use of tools such as needs-analysis surveys); selecting activities, materials and resources; monitoring progress and evaluating learning outcomes. This concept of learner involvement is in keeping with Dam and Legenhausen's procedural principle that there must be cooperation between learners and teachers. In his review of these principles, Legenhausen (2003) stresses the importance of involving learners in the development of classroom activities, equating their level of involvement in classroom decisions to their degree of responsibility for their learning: "For the learners, freedom of choice and decision making go hand in hand with accountability" (p. 68).

For learners, involvement at this level of the learning process means cultivation of the ability to reflect on a number of issues, such as learning requirements and preferences. Thus Little's second principle, 'learner reflection', is closely related to learner involvement, as it is reflection that enables the learner to participate more actively in the planning and execution of the learning process: "The principle of learner reflection is already implied by the principle of learner involvement" (Little, 2007, p. 24). Learner reflection is one of the terms perhaps most often associated with autonomous learning, particularly as it forms part of Little's influential definition of learner autonomy (see p. 88 above).

Ridley (2003) argues that two distinct - though related - types of reflection are required of autonomous learning: metalinguistic skills, which enable the learner to analyse target input and output, and metacognition, which governs the learner's ability to assess her language learning performance. It is the learner's ability to reflect that enables her to monitor and consequently take responsibility for her own learning; as Ridley writes, "If learners are going to assume some responsibility for their learning, they need to stand back and assess what they are learning and the ways in which they go about it" (1997, as cited in Ridley, 2003, p. 78). It should be noted too that while reflection here refers exclusively to activities on the part of the learner, it can also be a valuable resource to the teacher; Huttunen identifies reflection as an integral part of the planning and goal-setting required of successful language teaching (Huttunen, 2003).

Reflection on the part of the learner encompasses goal-setting, target language analysis and self-monitoring, all of which can contribute to the promotion of autonomous learning (e.g. Little, 2003; Ridley, 2003; Yule, Damico, & Hoffman, 1987), and all of which relate to the affective component of the pronunciation model in Figure ii above. Given the centrality of the role of reflection to an autonomous learning approach, it stands to reason that autonomous learning environments should be equipped with a tool to facilitate the pursuit of reflection, such as a learner journal. Broadly speaking, a learner journal is any written record, kept by the learner, which documents her progress in the language learning process. While there is no definitive format for an effective learner journal, one of the more widely-used journals is the Council of Europe's European Language Portfolio (ELP). The ELP is a particular kind of journal which provides learners with a series of statements that encapsulate all they can do in the target language. These statements focus learners' attention on assessment of their current language level, setting goals for the future and evaluation of their progress as they learn, all while incorporating Little's third principle of learner autonomy, i.e. target language use (Little, 2007).

This principle stipulates that in an autonomous language learning classroom, the target language should be used to the exclusion of all others. If we recall that the very concept of autonomous learning emanated partially out of a call for the goal of communicative competence, it is only logical that one of the primary means of achieving this goal is the regular and strategic use of the target language, not in a series of isolated, context-free exercises, but in a purposefully communicative environment that is meaningful to the learners, a requirement that falls within the remit of Dam & Legenhausen's underlying and operational principles (Dam & Legenhausen, 1997; Little, 1991; Thomsen, 2003).

The emphasis on target language use is compatible with the prevalence of project work and task-based learning in the autonomous learning environment. Group work allows learners to reduce their dependency on the teacher, and can be a strategic means of introducing 'scaffolding' into the classroom, a process in which more expert learners assist more novice or struggling learners with more advanced language use (Thomsen, 2003). In the pronunciation classroom, activities involving pairs or groups of learners working together may be useful for encouraging learners to reflect on their pronunciation goals and compare them with those of other learners. Additionally, of course, there is the benefit that group work requires learners to communicate, and consequently to practise their pronunciation on one another. This is crucial, since no amount of discussion and reflection will result in an improved pronunciation if the language is not put into meaningful use.

The implementation of projects involving group work, however, is contingent on learners having a level of language proficiency that enables them to work actively and cohesively in groups. The achievement of such a level of linguistic prowess has particular significance for the autonomous learner, as it paves the way for metalinguistic reflection and progress analysis through the target language (Thomsen, 2003). Above all, group work facilitates meaningful, communicative, spontaneous target language use in the classroom – a feature which, Little laments, is all too absent from many language learning environments: "[W]hile it is clear that learners need to interact with input they can understand, it is also clear that their own efforts to communicate increasingly complex messages in speech and writing play an essential role" (Little, 2007, p. 21).

3.1.3 Autonomy and learner identity

There is one crucial aspect of learner autonomy to which I have not yet referred: how autonomy addresses the learner's requirements as an individual language learner. It is this element of learner autonomy that is perhaps most relevant to pronunciation, and to this study in particular, so in this section I will explore it in further detail.

If we accept that autonomous learning entails the learner's ability to assume responsibility for her own learning, it becomes clear that classroom activities designed to foster learner autonomy place a high premium on the conceptualisation of each learner as a distinctive individual (e.g. Little, 1995; R. C. Smith, 2003). For the language teacher, this means accepting the learner as someone who brings to the language classroom her own unique set of life and learning experiences. Participants in the L2 classroom cannot reasonably be viewed merely as 'students', but rather as 'learners', with a past, a present and a future, both independent of and inextricably linked to their experiences as language learners; as van Lier (2007) describes them, "people with their own lives, aspirations, needs, worries, dreams and identities...persons in their own right" (p. 47).

This view harmonises with the discussion of identity presented in Chapter Two. An individual is not characterised by a single identity, but by any one of a number of roles that may be prioritised in the appropriate context (see Section 2.2.1 above). Such a multi-layered perspective of identity is compatible with the aims and assumptions of an autonomous learning environment. In assuming responsibility for the learning process, the language learner inevitably undertakes activities that are compatible with *all* aspects of her identity, and not just those associated with the immediate language learning environment. Noels (2009) describes such activities as 'authentic action', and argues that they fulfil the requirement of taking into account all aspects of an individual's identity:

> An authentic action is characterised by a sense of authorship, in the sense that one endorses and takes responsibility for one's actions. When endorsed by the whole self, actions are experienced as congruent with other values and commitments that the person holds (Noels, 2009, p. 296).

Noels' description of the importance of the 'whole self' strikes a chord with the concept of the Ideal and Ought-to L2 Selves in Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005). The relationship between motivation and learner autonomy is well documented (e.g. Ushioda, 1996, 2003; van Lier, 2007); as Ushioda observed, "Autonomous learners are by definition motivated learners" (1996, p. 2). This relationship hinges on the common thread of identity. Given the pivotal role of identity and motivation in my model of pronunciation outlined above (see Figure ii, p. 80 above), learner autonomy may also have a role to play in the pronunciation learning process as defined within this model.

The term 'identity', however, remains subject to interpretation in a framework of language learner autonomy. Riley (2003b) drew a distinction between the 'person' – the public persona presented to other people – and the 'self': the private core of traits and values known only to the individual herself. This dual identity consisting of both private and public components has interesting implications for language learners seeking to identify with a target language community, while still retaining a core sense of 'self'. Ushioda (2006) refers to the specific case of learners of English, who may not necessarily wish to identify with a specific L1 community such as British or American, but rather with a global network of English speakers. In this case, learners may conceive of their own linguistic identities, with reference to an 'external reference group', as "part of one's internal representation of oneself as a de facto member of that global community" (p. 150).

However, it should be borne in mind that the concept of social or group identity as it relates to the proposed model of pronunciation (see Figure ii above) hinges very much on the extent to which it influences the particular manifestation of identity chosen by the learner for a given 'moment'. Some have argued that the attraction of a group identity is a strong one, and make the claim that even for learners of English as an international language, fragmented though its population of native speakers may be, the international community of 'English language speakers' still appeals to EFL learners who wish to identify with a target language group (e.g. Jenkins, 2006; Ushioda, 1996). If we consider the framework of the model proposed in Section 2.3.2 above, we can see that the effect of identity on pronunciation is not necessarily a product of either individual or group identity, but rather is a result of the level of identity the learner would like to project in a given context. Thus, a speaker's projected identity may or may not draw on the features of the greater group identity for its definition.

I believe a cogent argument can be made that the emphasis placed by an autonomous learning environment on the language learner's context-specific identity is particularly suited to the teaching of pronunciation. As Riley claims, much traditional teaching actually has a negative impact on the learner's sense of personal identity:

> [L]earners are provided with detailed instructions as to how they are to behave, the words are put in their mouths, they are fitted up with roles and identities without reference to their own personalities. The only solution to this ethical conundrum is, of course, autonomy, empowering learners to identify...their own needs, roles and discourse. (Riley, 2003a, p. 247)

While a very limited number of previous studies have implemented and evaluated an autonomous approach to teaching L2 pronunciation, the theoretical impetus has not stemmed from an argument for the role of individual identity in L2 pronunciation and its development within an autonomous learning environment. Kaltenböck (2001) considered the pedagogical effect of a CD-ROM for pronunciation instruction, and Thompson and Gaddes (2005) posited the benefits of learner autonomy for pronunciation by improving learners' self-confidence (see p. 35 above), while Yule et al. (1987) investigated the effect of self-monitoring on developing pronunciation skills. (Interestingly Yule et al.'s results showed that while learners' phoneme discrimination skills showed a slight deterioration after a short period of initial instruction in perception, their self-monitoring skills demonstrated improved accuracy, suggesting that the pedagogical intervention may have improved learners' meta-learning skills, if not their pronunciation in this first period of instruction.)

Although these studies were similar to my own in that they too set out to carry out an empirical evaluation of an autonomous learning approach, their investigations had no proposed pedagogical impetus. In this study, however, I will go on to propose a model of L2 pronunciation pedagogy that has been developed in conjunction with a proposed model of L2 pronunciation itself (see Section 2.3.2). Before considering the elements of the pedagogical model, however, let us first consider its aims.

3.2 Proposed objectives

Before outlining my proposed pedagogical model for L2 pronunciation, it is worth considering to what end such a model is to be proposed. This question is particularly relevant to the model in question, given the central role played by motivation and goal selection. In this section I will briefly discuss the following three objectives, which I propose this pedagogical model should aim to achieve:

1. To enable learners to identify a pronunciation goal that projects the chosen aspect of their identity;
2. To enable learners to approximate as closely as possible their selected pronunciation goal;
3. To equip learners with the tools necessary to be able to monitor and address their pronunciation difficulties as autonomous learners.

3.2.1 Identifying L2 pronunciation goals

Taking into consideration the affective component of my proposed pronunciation model, I argue that an effective pronunciation training programme must help learners to establish a better understanding of their L2 pronunciation motivation so that they can form a clearly-visualised goal towards which they can work. In addition, within this framework it is equally important for learners not just to select a goal, but to be aware of the reasons why it is important for them to do so.

If we think of this process in terms of the nativeness-intelligibility debate described in Chapter One (Section 1.1.8), previous allusions to L2 pronunciation goals in the literature have been almost exclusively in the context of defining a phonological model to which it is assumed that learners should aspire. However, the pedagogical model proposed in Section 3.3 below takes an entirely different approach, and requires the learner to establish her own pronunciation goal, echoing the important role of goal-setting within a framework of learner autonomy (see Section 3.2

above). Such an approach shifts the focus of instruction away from the model of pronunciation taught, and on to the learner's relationship with the chosen model.

The type of pronunciation used as a model for the learner to attain should be the learner's prerogative, not the teacher's, in keeping with a learner-centred approach to language learning. This model is chosen in conjunction with the selection of the aspect of identity that the learner wishes to project in her pronunciation.

Upon completing a course of pronunciation based on the pedagogical principles outlined in this chapter (see Section 3.3), learners should have an understanding of the regional, social and personal connotations of accent, and should be able to use this knowledge to identify the pronunciation goal they would most like to emulate. I contend that having a clearly identified pronunciation goal in mind will aid learners in the development of their Ideal L2 Selves, and allow them to use their L2 pronunciation to project an aspect of this Ideal L2 Self that is representative of the image they wish to convey to the listener. Further discussion of the processes involved in goal-setting is provided in Section 3.3.2 below. Thus, the first intended learning outcome of the pedagogy is the establishment of a clear L2 pronunciation goal that will allow the learner to project her desired L2 identity.

3.2.2 Approximating chosen pronunciation goal

At its most basic level, this objective relates to the attainment of proficiency, and simply underlines the learner's desire to emulate her desired phonological model. Having determined the aspect of their identity that is most desirable for them to project in their L2 speech, learners must then establish a means of bridging the gap from desired identity to features of speech. This is a crucial aspect of this pedagogical model because it enables the learner not just to identify her pronunciation goals, but also to *achieve* them.

This objective may be considered in terms of Higgins' Self-Discrepancy Theory (1987 – see p. 66 above). This claims that a motivational impulse for the individual may be to seek to reduce the discrepancy between her actual self and the positive aspects of her possible selves. In the case of my pronunciation model, this would suggest that language learners would seek to 'leave behind' aspects of their actual L2 selves in an effort to become more like certain aspects of their Ideal L2 Selves, thereby approximating their pronunciation goals.

According to the pronunciation model in Figure ii, pronunciation can only be affected via articulatory processes, i.e. by the movement of the articulatory organs. Thus, a pronunciation pedagogy that aims to enable learners to approach their pronunciation goals must incorporate a means of addressing the specific articulatory processes that control the production of speech, whether directly or indirectly.

3.2.3 Developing autonomous pronunciation learning

The three objectives listed in this section can be easily divided into two categories: metacognitive and practical. Of the previous two, the first (identifying L2 pronunciation goals) was metacognitive, and the second (approximating chosen goal) was practical. The third of these objectives can also be defined as metacognitive, as it relates to the ability of the learners to maintain their awareness and understanding of the pronunciation learning process, even after the course of instruction has ended; in other words, their ability to embody the principles outlined in Section 3.1 of this chapter, by developing autonomous pronunciation learning.

Bearing in mind the importance ascribed to learner identity and motivation within this framework of pronunciation learning, the ensuing pedagogical model cannot consist of presenting learners with a phonological model and requiring that they perform a series of 'listen and repeat' drills for the duration of the course. Instead, learners are encouraged to play a more active role in determining their own phonological targets (see 'Goal-setting', Section 3.3.1 below), and identifying and carrying out the steps required to achieve them. These are skills that are every bit as important as the emulation of the target itself. In other words, this pedagogical model sets out not just to teach L2 pronunciation, but to teach learners how to learn it for themselves, by equipping them with the skills necessary to do so.

A pedagogical model of pronunciation based on an autonomous learning approach, as described in Section 3.1, would aim to provide learners with the skills needed to maintain the awareness of pronunciation required to identify, monitor and address their pronunciation difficulties. By identifying an L2 pronunciation goal and setting out to achieve it, learners are not just establishing a short-term task to be completed during class time, but rather are carving out a path for the future development of their pronunciation learning.

Ultimately, in keeping with the principles of autonomous learning outlined in Section 3.1 above, the pedagogical principles presented below aim to transfer to the learner a life-long capacity for pronunciation learning, by raising her awareness of the pronunciation learning process, and particularly of the importance of goal-setting and reflecting on the relevance of pronunciation for her own learning needs.

These three stated objectives are by no means an exhaustive list of the benefits of taking an approach such as that outlined in the following section to the teaching of L2 pronunciation. However, they do constitute the primary aims of this pedagogical model: identification of a clearly-outlined pronunciation goal, approximation of existing pronunciation to target phonological norms, and the ability to continue this process in an autonomous learning environment, without the guidance of a teacher. The following final section of Chapter Three will outline the general principles behind the pedagogical model that aims to address these three goals.

3.3 Principles of a pedagogical model of L2 pronunciation

So far in this chapter, I have discussed the relevance of an autonomous language learning environment to a pronunciation model encompassing learner identity and motivation, and highlighted the main objectives to be expected of a pedagogical approach that draws on these elements. In this section, I will outline the general principles of a pedagogical model of L2 pronunciation, in accordance with the theoretical research outlined in previous chapters.

3.3.1 Goal-setting

The L2 pronunciation learning model outlined in Figure ii above illustrates the importance not just of the speaker's pronunciation, but of her pronunciation *goals*, in expressing her identity. This is an important deviation from previous teaching methodologies, which have presented a predetermined phonological model to a group of learners without any consideration of the learners' individual requirements. As discussed in Chapter Two, L2 motivation – and L2 pronunciation motivation in particular – is intricately bound up with notions of identity. For the learner, the power to decide which type of pronunciation to aim for equates the ability to express her identity, or at least some part of it.

Within the context of a pedagogical model, then, the learner should be actively encouraged to consider what motivates her to achieve a certain variety of L2 pronunciation, and how this variety would be representative of her Ideal L2 Self. The target accent should be considered at a number of levels, ranging from broad (e.g. why a learner would like a British English accent rather than an Irish one, or a native-like pronunciation rather than an accented one), to narrow (at the level of features of speech - rather than segmental features of articulation - such as why they might prefer a faster mode of speech rather than a slower one, or an allophone of /t/ such as /θ/). I contend that every learner sets out to achieve a goal that is unique to her particular needs and ambitions as a language learner and as a person. A clear understanding of the goal they are setting out to accomplish will help them to focus their learning on the achievement of a specific target.

If we return to the earlier stages of the pedagogy, and the selection of a phonological model of English, it is worth considering past convention. As discussed in Chapter One (Section 1.1.7), the traditional goal of English pronunciation instruction has been the achievement of a native-like level, usually one approximating the models of Received Pronunciation (RP - British English) or General American (GA - American English). In spite of recent investigations which have found that traditional models of English pronunciation (i.e. RP and GA) do not adequately reflect either native (e.g. Deterding, 2005; Wells, 1999) or non-native (Walker, 2001) speech trends, there remains a yawning gap between the theories and findings presented in the literature, and the reality of pronunciation in the English language classroom. More recently, however, the goal of pronunciation instruction has shifted from a native-like focus to one of intelligibility. Derwing & Munro (2005) echo Jenkins' (2002) call for a more research-based approach to pronunciation instruction, to understand better the link between accent and communication, and provide an empirical basis for the selection of instructional priorities.

Goal selection may be considered a two-part process. Firstly, it comprises the language learner's choice of the aspect of identity she wishes to project by means of her L2 pronunciation. This can be a continual process, starting out with the very broadest of goals and establishing ever more specific ones as the course of instruction unfolds. For example, initially, learners may determine whether they wish to aim for a native-like level of pronunciation or a 'comfortably intelligible' one. They may then progress to determining a more specific phonological model based on a variety (or collective varieties) of the target language, e.g. Irish English. As the course continues and learners become more accustomed to the concept of projecting aspects of their identity with their pronunciation, they may wish to project a more individual aspect of identity beyond that of nationality, such as personality.

The second part of the process of goal-setting depends on the selection of specific elements of the desired pronunciation, so that the learner may prioritise these features in the effort to produce the target accent. This should be carried out in two ways; firstly, by identifying the image of her identity that she would like to project to the listener, and secondly, by identifying the features of speech that correspond to the desired projected identity. Evidently, learners must first have an understanding of the difference between features of speech and identities conveyed by differing speech styles, a distinction addressed in the awareness-raising portion of this pedagogy (see Section 3.3.2.2 below).

Within the model of pronunciation proposed above in Figure ii, it makes little sense for learners to follow blindly whichever phonological model is set by the teacher. Instead, a more useful approach would be for the learners to determine for themselves which target accent they wish to produce. Taking into consideration the role of identity and motivation in the proposed model of L2 pronunciation learning, there is a strong argument to be made for including goal selection as an essential part of the pronunciation learning process. This will help to ensure that the type of pronunciation produced by a learner is indicative of the image or aspect of identity that she wishes to project to the listener. To do otherwise would effectively impose a prescribed identity on the learner, and run counter to the notion of a learner-centred classroom or an autonomous learning environment.

Crucially, as mentioned in Section 3.2.1 above, in addition to identifying specific goals, learners must also be made aware of the reasons why it is important to do so. Thus instruction in how to identify a target phonological model must be accompanied by an explanation as to the importance of goal selection in projecting the image learners consider most indicative of their Ideal L2 Self. In order to achieve this, learners must go through a process of awareness-raising, which must take place on a number of levels. These processes will be explained in the following section.

3.3.2 Awareness-raising

In Section 3.2.3 above I described the importance of encouraging a learner to assume responsibility for her own pronunciation learning, with a view to maintaining an awareness of it. This process of developing megacognitive awareness forms the next principle of this pedagogical model. However, the term 'awareness-raising' covers a broad range of possibilities, not all of which are pertinent to this particular pedagogy. For the sake of clarification, I have divided the discussion of this principle into three smaller sections, each one referring to a more specific aspect of the process of awareness-raising.

3.3.2.1 Accent discrimination

One of the most evident aspects of a speaker's identity, particularly as conveyed by her pronunciation, is that of national or regional origin. If learners are to view L2 pronunciation as a means of expressing the most salient aspect of their identity for a given situation, it stands to reason that they must first be able to distinguish between different varieties of it. Before being able to choose one L2 phonological variety over another one, therefore, learners must first be made aware that phonological differences exist, particularly among speakers from different linguistic backgrounds.

This degree of heightened phonological awareness can be achieved by exposing learners to a variety of accents of the target language, both native and non-native. However, there is a balance to be struck. It would be neither feasible nor beneficial to dwell unduly on an impracticably wide array of phonological varieties of English, and indeed would only run the risk of causing undue confusion to students. Evidently, a compromise must be reached. Bearing in mind that this pedagogy aims to encourage learners to approximate a pronunciation goal that is indicative of the most salient aspect of their identity, it is the teacher's responsibility to select samples of only those varieties of English that would be most relevant to the learners in question. For example, a teacher of English as a foreign language in Dublin may opt to begin by introducing learners to a range of Irish English accents, as well as RP and GA (which learners may recognise from international media), and varieties representing the countries of origin of the learners within the class (e.g. Polish English, Spanish English, etc).

A further complication with the introduction of an indefinite number of phonological varieties lies in the question of what can reasonably be expected of the teacher. It is possible that learners will be inclined to opt for a model of pronunciation based on their perception of that spoken by the teacher; thus it is worth considering the potential influence of the instructor on learners' aspirations to a particular mode of pronunciation. While it is important that the teacher should have an awareness of the existence of a number of phonological varieties beyond her own, however, it is neither to be expected nor required that she must master the pronunciation of the same number of accents. Her role must rather be to ensure that students are made aware of the existence of such phonological diversity, and in particular of the specific features that distinguish accents from one another.

Within the framework of L2 pronunciation learning outlined in the model in Figure ii above, it is crucial that each pronunciation model put forward be presented in an unbiased manner, as the purpose of this stage of the learning process is not to promote any one particular model above any other. Rather, this aspect of the pedagogy is included in the hope that learners may be alerted to the broad range of phonological variation in the target language, and to equip them with the information they will need in order to determine the most appropriate pronunciation goals for their requirements. Perception exercises, too, will help learners to develop a keener sense of which elements of pronunciation are important for the achievement of different accents.

The key to the effectiveness of this particular aspect of awareness-raising is for the teacher to exercise judgement in determining which particular phonological varieties may be of particular relevance for her students, and ensuring that she is sufficiently aware of these varieties to be able to highlight, rather than actually replicate, their most distinctive features. Thus a crucial element in the early stages of this pedagogical model is the development of learners' ability to distinguish various phonological models of the target language.

3.3.2.2 Speech and identity differentiation

Also falling under the broad category of 'awareness-raising' is the learners' ability to associate specific features of speech with the desired image or identity to be projected. If a language learner is to learn how to manipulate her speech in order to project an image of herself to the listener, once she is familiar with the overall effect of these speech features by choosing the appropriate target accent, she will then need to determine which speech features are most pertinent to the achievement of a given target accent (and by extension, a given Ideal L2 Self).

Awareness of this possible influence may give learners control over the type of image they wish to project with their accent. This image may be one of any number of roles that are appropriate in a given context, but the chosen pronunciation goal is indicative of the most salient level of a learner's identity in a given context. Learners can then work on establishing the particular aspect(s) of pronunciation that correspond to their desired projected identity. The teacher can help the learner to reflect on this process, to understand which aspects of pronunciation are most relevant for her needs, and to attempt to reproduce those elements by focussing on projecting an image or identity to the listener, rather than concentrating solely on the mechanical production of a series of sounds.

Exercises should be carried out to enable learners to identify the features of a particular mode of pronunciation e.g. 'mumbling', 'opening the mouth widely', 'speaking quickly' etc. In conjunction with those exercises, learners should also be guided in how to distinguish those features from the image or identity projected by the speaker because of that mode of pronunciation, e.g. 'confident', 'boring', etc. This separation of features of speech from desired identity is central to the concept of using the features of speech to project an identity in a speaker's pronunciation.

3.3.2.3 Self-awareness

As stated in Section 3.2.3 above, one of the objectives of this pedagogical model is for learners to be able to identify, monitor and address their individual pronunciation difficulties; in other words, to facilitate learners in their ability to monitor their own pronunciation progress and achieve fulfilment as autonomous pronunciation learners. In order to achieve this objective, learners must develop an understanding of their own L2 pronunciation strengths and weaknesses.

One of the most effective means of fulfilling this goal is the use of recording equipment to record and play back learners' pronunciation. Hearing their pronunciation from the perspective of listener rather than speaker gives learners the opportunity to reflect on how their speech is perceived by others, and to establish more clearly the elements of pronunciation that are required for them to approximate more closely the attainment of their pronunciation goals.

In hearing themselves speak, learners can identify the features of their pronunciation that fail to reach the standard or quality they would like to achieve. Regular use of this approach to developing self-awareness can enable learners to monitor their pronunciation over a period of time, an activity that itself facilitates the awareness-raising process. With regard to the third aspect of the objective listed above - to identify, monitor and address pronunciation difficulties - addressing specific pronunciation challenges requires an alternative approach, since this must be directed at the level of practice rather than meta-learning, as will be discussed in the following section.

3.3.3 Articulatory control

I will say relatively little on this subject as it does not relate directly to the focus of this pedagogical study, namely, drawing out the language learner's identity and encouraging her to express it through her L2 pronunciation. If we reconsider the model of pronunciation learning on which this pedagogy is based, we will see that the actions outlined up to this point in the pedagogical model relate only to the affective aspect of pronunciation learning. However, as I have argued in Sections 2.3.2 and 3.0 above; pronunciation is a multilayered phenomenon that cannot be governed merely by cognitive processes alone.

At some point in this pedagogical model, the role of the articulatory organs of the mouth must be addressed. However, it would be inaccurate to teach aspects of the physiological production of pronunciation on their own, without any reference to the affective component of the pronunciation model. Thus an integrative approach, in which exercises that rely solely on the articulatory element of the production of pronunciation are combined with those that raise the learner's awareness of her identity in pronunciation and the pronunciation goals she sets herself, is the most appropriate course of action.

In order to avoid reverting to traditional pronunciation teaching methods that referred only to the mechanical production of pronunciation, such as audiolingualism, the teacher should not simply prescribe specific aspects of pronunciation that must be practised by the whole group of learners. Such an approach would apply to only a small number of the learners, and would detract from the focus on individualising pronunciation learning for each learner. Instead, the decision as to which aspects of pronunciation must be considered next must be made by the learners, as part of the goal-setting and awareness-raising processes outlined in Sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2.

3.3.4 Reflection

The reflection component of this pedagogical model calls on learners to consider the target language used in the L2 classroom and evaluate their performance in it. Reflection is identified as a critical component of an autonomous language learning environment. Consider Ridley's interpretation of reflection as outlined in Section 3.1.2 above, which consists of two strands: metalinguistic skills, or the ability to reflect on the target language, and metacognition, or the ability to reflect on target language performance (Ridley, 2003).

Within this pedagogical model of L2 pronunciation, the learner's ability to reflect on the target language – i.e. her metalinguistic skills – is crucial to the ability to project her identity in her pronunciation. Perhaps even more relevantly, reflection forms an important part of the other stages already outlined in this model.

If we consider, for example, the steps outlined above in raising awareness of phonological variation in the target language (Section 3.3.2.1), it becomes clear that simply exposing learners to a variety of pronunciation models is insufficient to ensure their familiarity with them. It is only through the learners' evaluation of these phonological varieties that they will form opinions on them, note those varieties they would like to emulate and those they would prefer to avoid, and otherwise draw conclusions as to the possibility of identifying one as a pronunciation goal.

Similarly, in forming an association between features of speech and projected image, it is only through careful reflection on the speech produced that learners can arrive at an understanding of the relationship between pronunciation and identity. Through this understanding, learners will develop the ability to identify those aspects of identity that they would most like to convey through their pronunciation, thereby contributing to the goal-setting process.

However, it is perhaps in relation to metacognition that reflection can have the greatest impact on pronunciation learning. If learners are to change their pronunciation, and set about approximating a specified goal, awareness of their current level of pronunciation and of how it develops during the learning process will be of paramount importance. In terms of Higgins' Self-Discrepancy Theory as discussed above (Section 3.2.2), in order to reduce the discrepancy between their actual selves and their Ideal L2 Selves, learners must be aware of the pronunciation that indicates either self. This aspect of reflection has already been outlined in the section on developing self-awareness (Section 3.3.2.3).

The final component of the pedagogical model, as described in the following section, relates to the learners' ability to put into practice her newly-heightened awareness of the association between pronunciation and identity, as she aims to use her manner of speech to project a given identity; in other words, to take on a dramatic character.

3.3.5 Use of drama and role play

The use of drama in language learning has been lauded as an effective means of reproducing authentic communication in the L2 classroom (Harmer, 2001). The presentation of a drama, even a two-minute role play, allows learners to practise their speaking skills and particularly their pronunciation in front of other learners in a presentation format that may not fall within the remit of an ordinary EFL lesson. However, viewed from a broader pedagogical perspective, rather than simply in relation to pronunciation, introducing drama to the classroom may be a somewhat risky manoeuvre. Learners may have had little previous experience of drama, and may be reluctant to the concept of taking on a character in front of their peers (S. M. Smith, 1984). In spite of this, within the framework of this pedagogical approach to L2 pronunciation, the use of drama was considered an entirely appropriate instructional tool, for two main reasons.

Firstly, the use of drama actively encourages learners to develop their resources as autonomous learners. In preparing performances such as role plays for presentation in front of their classmates, learners are encouraged to draw on their own strengths and those of their partner, before referring to the teacher for assistance. Additionally, playing such an active role in the completion of the task - developing their own script and characterisations - allows learners to make the performance a reflection of their own interests and talents. This is a persuasive illustration how language learning can incorporate learners' identities into the language classroom, as advocated by Ushioda (2009).

Secondly, the assumption of an alternative character or identity is very much in keeping with the ethos of the pronunciation model presented in Chapter Two above. Such a process supports the notion that individual pronunciation involves projection of speaker identity. The benefit of its application to this pedagogical model of L2 pronunciation lies in its ability to demonstrate to learners how working to approximate a given identity can influence the achievement of a particular type of pronunciation.

This last point was perhaps the most significant benefit of including drama in this pronunciation pedagogy: its suggestion that identity may not just affect the learner's pronunciation goals, but that it may also play a more direct role by influencing the articulatory processes that lead to production of pronunciation. If learners take on an alternative 'character' or 'identity' by means of performing a role in a drama or role play, they take on all aspects of that role, including the character's speech properties. Certain roles lend themselves well to the development of an alternative mode of pronunciation, particularly if the role relates to an aspect of personality, e.g. confidence or decisiveness. In other words, by asking learners to take on a dramatic role, the learner focuses first on the presentation of an identity, which directly affects her resulting pronunciation, rather than focusing directly on pronunciation instead. This view would alter the model of pronunciation learning outlined in Figure ii above and replace it with a slightly modified version, shown in Figure iii below.

In this representation of pronunciation learning, the 'target accent' component is eliminated, resulting in a direct relationship between identity and articulatory processes. This suggests that drama and role play may have significant implications for the pronunciation instruction within this L2 pronunciation framework. Furthermore, if temporarily taking on an alternative role allows the learner to indirectly influence the type of pronunciation produced, there is no reason why this relationship may not be extended to the real world. The use of drama as a mere communicative exercise to be carried out in class may be transferred to its use as a learning strategy beyond the confines of the L2 classroom. Thus drama and role play may serve not just as a useful means of establishing pronunciation goals, but also as a means of achieving them.

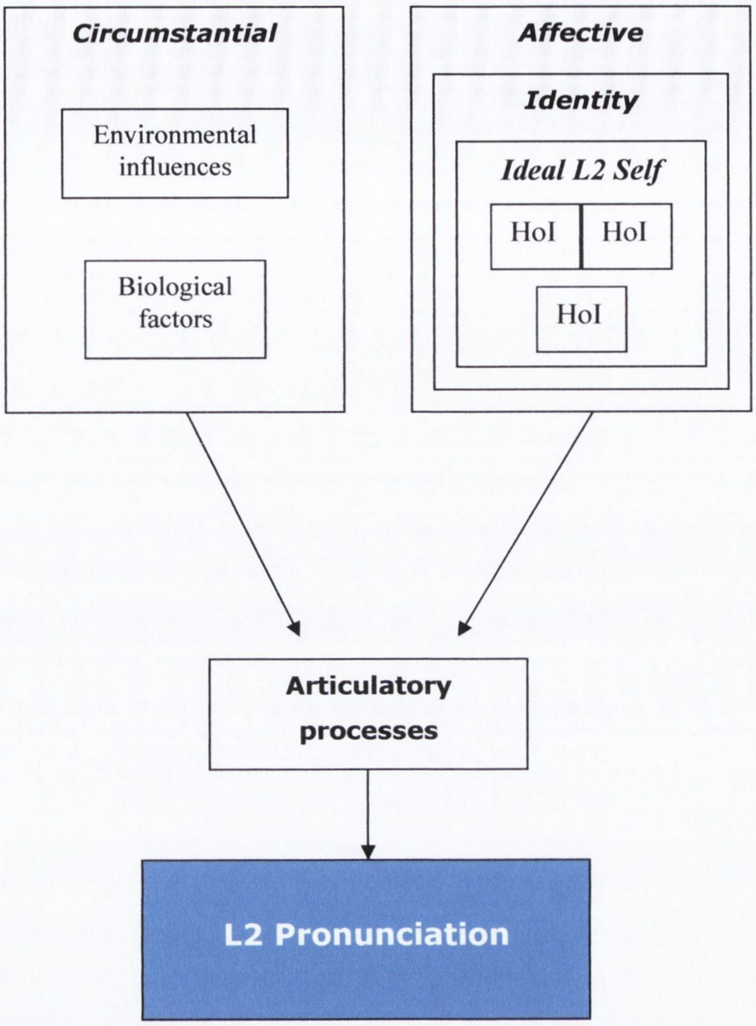

Figure iii: Alternative model of L2 pronunciation learning

3.4 Conclusion

The principles of this pedagogical model illustrate that this approach to pronunciation teaching is somewhat removed from previous methodologies, in that it attempts to provide the learner with a set of skills that will outlast the pronunciation training programme, rather than restricting instruction to the reproduction of drills and speaking activities during class time. The skills acquired as a result of this teaching approach aim to enable learners to assume responsibility for their own pronunciation learning, and to work towards overcoming their own pronunciation difficulties instead of simply receiving error corrections from the teacher.

Furthermore, in identifying their own pronunciation goals, developing their self-awareness and reflecting on the steps of their learning development, learners are participating in a learning process that is unique to their own requirements. This highlights another significant aspect of this pedagogical model: the emphasis placed on the individuality of each learner's pronunciation learning experience. These features are what distinguish this model from previous approaches to teaching L2 pronunciation.

In this chapter I have attempted to give an account of the pedagogical principles behind the L2 pronunciation model outlined in Chapter Two. These principles form the basis of an approach to teaching L2 pronunciation that would allow the learner to project some aspect of her identity in her manner of speech. In the opening section, I proposed that the promotion of learner autonomy would be an appropriate means of encouraging the learner to be aware of her identity and how to incorporate it into the L2 pronunciation learning process. In my overview of the research into learner autonomy, I discussed how language is inextricably bound up in the processes by which the language learner develops her capacity for autonomous learning. Furthermore I argued that the emphasis placed by an autonomous learning environment on learner identity is particularly relevant to the model of L2 pronunciation learning which I proposed in the previous chapter.

I went on to outline the proposed objectives of a pedagogical model of L2 pronunciation instruction, drawing on previous research into SLA, pronunciation, identity, motivation and autonomy already discussed in Chapters 1-3 of this thesis. This model is based on the general assumption that learner identity and motivation are inseparable from the learner's pronunciation, highlighting an association that ought to be integrated into the L2 pronunciation learning process. The principles of this pedagogy are outlined in the final section of this chapter. However, since these principles present the tenets of the pedagogy purely in the abstract, they perhaps give little indication of how such a pedagogical model might be brought to life in the language classroom.

With this in mind, the following chapter will provide a point-by-point description of how this pedagogical model was put into action in the second phase of my empirical study. In this chapter, I will describe events in the language classroom as they unfolded during the implementation of this pedagogical model. It is hoped that this description will afford the reader a more thorough understanding of my pronunciation pedagogy, and how it may be implemented in a classroom setting.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRONUNCIATION COURSE DESIGN

4.0 Introduction

So far in this thesis, I have put forward theories regarding the relevance of identity, motivation and autonomy to the process of L2 pronunciation learning. On the basis of these observations, I have proposed a pedagogical model, which outlines an approach to L2 pronunciation learning that emphasises the importance of encouraging learners to use their manner of speech to project their Ideal L2 Selves, and of incorporating pronunciation goals into the learning process. This chapter will take those proposals one step further and describe their instantiation in the form of a course in EFL pronunciation that was analysed as Phase II of my empirical study (see Chapter Five below).

The pronunciation course in question was carried out twice, in two separate educational institutions and with two separate groups of EFL learners. In each case, the course was integrated into a daily English language programme. It was first carried out with a group of Intermediate-level (CEFR level B1/B2) learners attending a course in general English at a private English language school in Dublin named Carlton International College, and subsequently with a group of international postgraduate students attending a supplementary pre-sessional course in English for Academic Purposes (CEFR level C1) at the Language Education Centre in a Dublin university. In order to preserve the anonymity of the staff and students of the school in question, pseudonyms have been used in place of the schools' real names.

This chapter will give details of the content of each respective pronunciation course with a view to describing the classroom experiences of the learners who took part. Section 4.1 will outline the course that took place with the intermediate group in the private school, while Section 4.2 will do the same for the course with the learners attending the university's pre-sessional EAP programme. Individual lessons are labelled by a prefix that indicates whether they took place with the intermediate learners in the private school (denoted by IGE - Intermediate General English), or with the EAP students in the university (denoted by EAP). Lessons are then numbered in the form of "IGE1.2" or "EAP1.2", where 1 represents the week of instruction, and 2 represents the pronunciation lesson within that week. For example, Lesson EAP2.3 denotes the third pronunciation lesson of the second week of instruction in the EAP pronunciation course.

The aim of this chapter is to describe the pronunciation course from a pedagogical rather than a research perspective. With this in mind, it should be noted that this section will only give the content of the course, outlining the activities undertaken by the learners, and where appropriate the learners' responses to them. The research approach to this classroom investigation will be discussed in Chapter Five, and copies of the materials used during the course will be included in the appendix. Both these chapters will be referenced throughout this chapter.

On a final note, it should be observed that throughout the pronunciation courses described in this section, I occupied the roles of both teacher and researcher. In the ensuing description of the course, the term 'the teacher' will be used in an effort to distance myself from my role as researcher.

4.1 IGE pronunciation course

The first course of pronunciation instruction took place over a seven-week period with a group of intermediate EFL learners. The pronunciation lessons were integrated into their overall English language programme, which consisted of 15 hours of tuition per week, 3.75 hours daily, Monday-Thursday. Table 1 on the next page outlines a summary of the content of the IGE pronunciation course, and the content of each pronunciation lesson, described in further detail, follows.

4.1.1 Lesson IGE1.1

The aim of the first pronunciation lesson with this group of intermediate learners of English was to introduce them to the concept of different target language accent varieties, and to the notion that pronunciation can convey a general impression of the speaker. It was hoped that such an introduction would lay the foundation for a later association between specific features of speech and specific facets of the learners' Ideal L2 Selves. The lesson lasted 55 minutes, and eighteen learners were in attendance, including six of the fourteen learners who would participate in all phases of the study (henceforth known as 'the Pedagogical Group').

Lesson #	**Lesson content**
IGE1.1, IGE2.1	• Raising awareness of target accent varieties • Discriminating pronunciation features in accent varieties
IGE3.1, IGE3.2	• Associating specific features of pronunciation with the images of individual identity that they represent • Identifying desired images or identities and how to use pronunciation to convey them
IGE4.1, IGE5.1, IGE5.2	• Improving the features identified as most important to good pronunciation (through the use of more traditional pronunciation teaching methods)
IGE6.1, IGE6.2	• Focusing further on individual goals, desired identities and how to convey them
IGE7.1, IGE7.2	• Practising individual pronunciation difficulties • Using desired identities to improve individual pronunciation difficulties

Table 1: IGE pronunciation course summary

The lesson began with a simple introductory exercise. The teacher wrote a hub word, 'Pronunciation', on the whiteboard, and learners were invited to suggest, out loud, any words or expressions that they associated with it. All offerings were accepted with no boundaries or limitations, and written on the board around the hub word (forming a 'spidergram'). After two minutes, the class reviewed the words that had been offered. Suggestions included 'accent', 'speech', 'communication' and 'understanding'.

After briefly concept-checking learners' understanding of the words suggested by the class, the teacher divided the group into pairs. Learners were asked to discuss with their partner the type of accent they had - or were perceived to have - in their native language, and whether this accent had any connotations in their home country. This discussion lasted for approximately fifteen minutes, during which time the teacher 'visited' each pair in turn to discuss their thoughts on the subject. Without being prompted, each pair produced the same analysis: their native accent identified their geographical origin.. For example, a learner from Spain remarked that he had a strong regional accent, stating, "Everybody tell me I am from Basque country". Similarly, a Brazilian learner noted "Everybody in Brazil knows I come from the northeast." The purpose of the L1 accent discussion was to encourage learners to reflect on their own pronunciation by discussing it with their peers.

For the next activity, learners worked together in groups of four. They were asked once more to talk about their accents and how they felt they were perceived because of them, but this time they were asked to refer only to their English pronunciation. Additionally, learners were asked to discuss what type of accent they would like to produce in English, and why. Again, the teacher came to each group for feedback. After ten minutes of discussion in groups, the questions were discussed in plenary format.

The prevailing view was that ultimately, the variety of English pronunciation achieved by the learners was of secondary importance to comprehensibility. Opinion varied from learner to learner, however. While some stated that they simply wished to communicate successfully, regardless of their level of pronunciation, others expressed a desire to speak well. Among those who wanted to convey a sense of strong proficiency in their English proficiency were Gustavo and Adriana (see Sections 6.1.3 and 6.2.1 below respectively). Still other learners did favour a specific variety of English pronunciation, simply as a matter of personal preference for the sound of the accent, such as the learner who wanted to aim for an Irish accent as long as he was living in Ireland.

In an effort to assess the learners' familiarity with varieties of English pronunciation, the next exercise sought to determine their ability to distinguish between different accents of English. The activity took the form of a table quiz. In the same groups or 'teams' of four, learners listened to ten short (c. 20s) samples of English speech, and tried to determine whether a) the speakers were native or non-native speakers of English, and b) where possible, the speaker's country of origin. Learners were not expected to guess with 100% accuracy, but the purpose of the exercise was to train them to pay attention to details of the speakers' pronunciation in order to guess the discriminating features of each accent. The ten recordings used for this activity belonged to speakers from a variety of national and linguistic backgrounds (see Appendix B4 for details and Appendix F1 for recordings).

The table quiz lasted for approximately fifteen minutes, and concluded the pronunciation lesson. For homework, learners were asked to try to identify three features specific to Irish English pronunciation. Finally, learners filled in a questionnaire giving their opinions of the pronunciation lesson (Appendix B5). One of these questionnaires - with different questions, depending on the content of the lesson - was distributed at the end of every pronunciation lesson (except Lesson IGE3.1) throughout the pronunciation course. These questionnaires were collected by the teacher at the end of the lesson.

4.1.2 Lesson IGE2.1

The goal of Lesson IGE2.1 was to reinforce the practice learners had gained in the previous week's lesson at discriminating different accents of English. Sixteen learners were in attendance, of whom five were in the Pedagogical Group.

To begin, the teacher asked learners for feedback on their homework. The question "What features of English speech are distinctively Irish?" was put to the class as a whole, and learners were invited to suggest answers. After inviting learners to name these features and give examples of words containing them, the teacher wrote the class's suggestions on the board. Ultimately the class arrived at a general consensus that the following were the sounds that they most associated with Irish English:

- Rounding of /Λ/ to /Ʊ/; e.g. 'Dublin' as /'dƱblən/, 'bus' as /bƱs/ etc.
- Rounding of the /aɪ/ vowel to /ɔɪ/; e.g. 'lie' as /lɔɪ/, 'fire' as /fɔɪr/ etc.
- Dentalisation of /θ/; e.g. 'thirty' as /'tərti/, 'Howth' as /hɒƱt/ etc.
- Rhoticity; e.g. 'letter' as /'lɛtər/, 'car' as /kɒ:r/ etc.

Learners were then asked to work in pairs and listen to a short (11s) recording of a native speaker of Irish English. The recording played was an excerpt from the radio broadcast of a well-known male Irish media personality (Ryan Tubridy), though when asked afterwards if they could identify the speaker, none of the learners in the class claimed to recognise him. The recording was played three times, after which the teacher invited suggestions of instances of the previously-mentioned Irish English features.

In their pairs, learners identified as many of the previously-identified features of Irish English pronunciation as possible in the recording. While generally, learners did not observe any rounding of the vowels, they did point out the prevalence of the post-vocalic /r/, highlighting the rhoticity of the words 'labour' and 'berserk'. They also noticed that the speaker pronounced 'earth' as /ərθ/, rather than /ərt/ which they had anticipated as a result of the dentalisation of /θ/ earlier noticed. The teacher used the learners' observations of how the speaker's pronunciation differed from that of some other Irish speakers of English to call attention to the fact that pronunciation does not just indicate a speaker's place of origin, but that other factors besides nationality can affect a speaker's phonology.

For the next activity, learners were asked to work individually once again. This activity was designed to encourage learners to pay attention to the specific *features* of speech that made a speaker easy or difficult to understand. Every learner was asked to listen to eight successive recordings of different speakers saying the same sentences out loud, and to evaluate each speaker in terms of their relative intelligibility. The complete handout for this activity can be found in Appendix B6, and other details about the source materials used in this activity can be found in Appendix B7. There were two main differences between this activity and the table quiz of Lesson IGE1.1 (see above). Firstly, the recordings in this lesson all featured speakers reciting the same passage to facilitate comparison across speakers. Secondly, instead of simply identifying the speaker's origin, learners were asked to evaluate the intelligibility of their speech, thereby introducing them to the subjective element of pronunciation production and perception.

In discussion after the exercise, learners' comments ranged from the speakers' intelligibility, to their features of speech and the images they projected to the listener. For example, the Strabane speaker was noted above all for his distinctive intonation patterns; some learners referred to this as a musical attribute: "He sounds like he's singing". In their general comments, learners seemed to find this speaker the most difficult to understand.

To digress briefly, the notes above include a term that evolved during this course from a collaborative process between both teacher and learners: 'separation of words/sounds'. This term was used to describe a speaker's articulation of the individual sounds in an utterance, generally resulting in distinct speech. Care was taken to highlight to learners that 'separating sounds' referred to phonology and not necessarily orthography, thus ensuring that only the appropriate letters in a word would be pronounced, and that any unexpected word-sound correlations or silent letters would be taken into account; for example, despite its spelling, the word ‘tongue’ would be pronounced /tΛŋ/, not /’tɑŋgju:/.

For the next activity, learners worked in pairs and listened to the eight recordings again. This time, they were asked to identify whether speaking more slowly or quickly made the speakers easier or more difficult to understand. The aim was to show learners that moderation should be exercised in choosing the appropriate speed of speech. The replays were followed by general class discussion, in which the learners showed no strong views on the role of speed in intelligibility of speech.

It should be noted that at this point, the class’s concentration appeared to have diminished since the beginning of the lesson; listening to the eight recordings a second time may have been too repetitive an activity to retain the learners’ interest and this was reflected in the reluctance with which they contributed to the class discussion.

One final discussion was held at the end of this lesson, centring on the question of whether native or non-native speakers of English were easier to understand. The final conclusion was that it was impossible to establish whether native or non-native speakers of English are easier to understand, given the highly idiosyncratic nature of pronunciation. At the end of the lesson, learners filled out another questionnaire giving their response to the lesson (see Appendix B8). This lesson lasted approximately 45 minutes.

4.1.3 Lesson IGE3.1

The third lesson took place in the following week, a full seven days after the previous lesson. The aim of Lesson IGE3.1 was to establish that speech – and pronunciation in particular – can convey an image of the speaker, and to facilitate learners in beginning to establish their own ideal L2 pronunciation selves. Fifteen learners were present, including six of the Pedagogical Group.

For the first five minutes, there was a general class discussion to review the previous week’s lesson. In this discussion, learners confirmed the previous week’s conclusion: that speakers’ pronunciation can convey information that extends beyond their nationality. There were then a series of listening activities, designed to enhance learners’ awareness of different accents of English and the images these different modes of pronunciation can convey.

Firstly, learners were paired off and the teacher played short (approximately 30-second) samples of the speech of three well-known native speakers of English. I decided to use native speakers for this exercise because the focus of the activity was that of the image(s) projected by the speakers, and I wanted to lessen the possibility that the learners would associate non-native speakers exclusively with their status as speakers of English as a second or foreign language. I chose three samples as I felt that any more would be needlessly repetitive for the learners, and I opted for these three native speakers in particular in order to provide a broad range of English pronunciation varieties for the learners' benefit, as each of the speakers hailed from a different English-speaking country (UK, Ireland and Australia respectively – samples 6, 5 and 2 respectively from Appendix B4, the recordings presented in Lesson IGE1.1). A transcript of these recordings can be found in Appendix B9, and the recordings themselves are in Appendix F4.

In their pairs, learners were asked to make lists of words to describe the image projected by each speaker. In particular, the teacher asked learners to listen to whether the speakers were easy or difficult to understand. A general class discussion ensued, in which learners were nominated by the teacher to suggest words to describe each of the speakers. A variety of descriptions was put forward, including 'fast', 'non-stop', 'confusing', 'boring', 'singing', 'resentful'. No one speaker was suggested as the best, the most successful or the most effective; but broadly speaking, the learners reacted more positively to the first and third recordings (those of Simon Cowell and Cate Blanchett respectively) than to the second (Brian Cowen).

Next, learners in their pairs discussed with their partner the ways they would most like their own speech to sound – i.e. images they would like to project with their pronunciation – and ways they would *not* like their speech to sound. Upon establishing these lists, each pair then ranked their likes and dislikes in order of preference, with the most-desired image at the top and the least-desired image at the bottom.

This activity took approximately fifteen minutes, during which time the teacher monitored their discussions at a distance, without directly intervening in their conversations. At the end of the exercise, learners shared the images they had ranked on their lists with the rest of the class in a group discussion. The teacher collected the ranking lists but returned them to learners the next day, after taking a copy for research purposes. The lesson lasted approximately 45 minutes. This was the only lesson in this pronunciation course for which learners did not fill in a questionnaire; instead it was merged with that of the next lesson.

4.1.4 Lesson IGE3.2

The aim of this lesson was to introduce learners to specific segmental and suprasegmental features of speech associated with particular identities, which would thus help to convey the relevant aspect of their Ideal L2 Selves. Twenty-one learners attended the class, including all eight learners from the Pedagogical Group. The lesson lasted 30 minutes and took place one day after Lesson IGE3.1. This was the first time two pronunciation lessons took place in the same week.

Firstly, learners again undertook a two-minute class discussion to review the findings of the previous day's lesson. Learners were reminded how the three native speaker recordings they listened to projected different identities from one another by showcasing different aspects of their speech. The teacher asked learners, as a group, to recall the images projected by each of the three speakers.

The aim of this lesson was to reinforce the association between features of speech and projected identities or images. This goal was addressed with further perception tests similar to the intelligibility evaluation exercise carried out in Lesson IGE2.1 (see Section 4.1.2 above). However, in place of mere intelligibility evaluations, learners were instead presented with a matched-guise task, based on the model first put forward by Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner and Fillenbaum (1960). This type of task invites the participant to evaluate speech for the presence or degree of suggested characteristics, such as clarity, fluency and accuracy, among others (see Appendix B10). Learners gave their evaluations by filling in a handout that showed ratings for speakers' personality and features of speech. The recordings were taken from the selection previously used in Lesson IGE2.1, and again featured speakers reciting the same passage. Details on these recordings can be found in Appendix B11, and the recordings are in Appendix F5.

This exercise proved to be rather arduous for learners. Once more, they appeared unenthused by the prospect of listening to repeated recordings of the same speakers, and responded with flagging interest in the exercise. The purpose of this exercise was to increase learners' awareness of the identities conveyed by particular features of speech, with a view to establishing the features they would most need to work on to improve their own pronunciation.

Having completed the matched-guise test, learners were then asked to work in pairs and compare their responses to those of their partner. They were given ten minutes to do so, and during this discussion the teacher made her way around the class and spoke to each pair in turn to assess their opinions of the speakers. This period of discussion was followed by a general overview with the whole class, in which it was established that three features were most often chosen by learners as indicative of an intelligible speaker. The three features were:

- the use of pause;
- clear articulation [this was described to the learners as 'separating sounds', as described on p. 118 above]; and
- speaking slowly enough to be understood.

Arriving at a consensus on these three features was vital to the continued progress of the pronunciation course, as the next stage of the course focused on the instruction of those features which were identified by the majority of learners as most important to the achievement of their individual goals.

Despite the repetitive nature of the matched-guise test, it was a valuable exercise for learners to complete, because it reinforced their understanding of the association between certain features of speech, and the identities or images of the speaker that they can project. It was particularly important that the learners completed this test individually as well as with a partner, as it highlighted the subjective nature of pronunciation evaluation, and illustrated to the learners their own preferences for speech production and perception.

In the final five minutes, learners completed another post-lesson questionnaire (Appendix B12). The lesson lasted approximately 30 minutes.

4.1.5 Lesson IGE4.1

This lesson took place five days after Lesson IGE3.2, and was the longest pronunciation lesson to date at 90 minutes. Fourteen learners attended, including seven from the Pedagogical Group. This lesson moved away from the more perception-oriented focus of previous pronunciation lessons, and instead focused on the first of the three features identified by the class in the previous lesson as most important to good pronunciation: use of pause. Pause was cited by the learners as an important means of conveying the speaker's intent by dividing the text into meaningful 'chunks'. In recognising this important communicative function of pause, learners were echoing Wells' concept of *tonality*, which he defines as "[presenting] the material as two, or three, pieces of information rather than as a single piece" (Wells, 2006, p. 3). When speech is divided in this way, the components are known as *intonation phrases* or *chunks*. One means of separating these phrases, argues Wells, is the insertion of pause in between them, a nuance that was identified by the learners in this English class.

This focus on a single element of pronunciation was drawn from the pronunciation model outlined in Section 2.3.2 above. Regardless of the amount of instruction that hinges on developing a learner's ability to express her identity through her pronunciation, it is ultimately the articulatory processes that shape speech as pronunciation (see Figure ii, p. 80 above), and with this in mind, the next portion of the pronunciation course aimed to show learners how to address this articulatory aspect of speech. In this case, the affective aspect of pronunciation had previously been addressed as learners had been invited in the previous lesson (IGE3.2) to identify those elements of speech that conveyed a given image about the speaker on a speech recording. During the usual brief (2-minute) review of the previous lesson, learners were asked to name the three features of speech they had determined to be the most essential to good pronunciation. The three features were named without undue hesitation (see Section 4.1.4 above).

A short excerpt from the film 'When Harry Met Sally' (Reiner, 1989) was downloaded from www.youtube.com as a VLC media file, and shown to the class on a projector screen. The clip lasted for 02:27 (2 minutes and 27 seconds). This clip was not new to the learners, having been played in class the day before for an activity not related to pronunciation. Before playing the video, the teacher asked learners to decide which of the two characters spoke more clearly, Harry or Sally. It was my expectation that the learners would find Sally's speech clearer: Harry's character was notable for his uninterrupted flow of speech, which featured little or no pause. Sure enough, after playing the clip once, when the question was thrown open to the class, the learners immediately nominated Sally as the clearer speaker. She was identified as 'stronger' in her speech (this was then clarified as more definite or decisive), and easier to understand. Harry, on the other hand, was criticised as virtually unintelligible for the speed at which he spoke, his style of speech which was characterised as resembling mumbling, and learners criticised his underuse of pause. This introductory showing of the clip with the subsequent class debate was designed to draw learners' attention to the use of pause in clear speech, and it took approximately ten minutes.

Next, the learners were divided into pairs and asked to watch the video clip again. This time, they were asked to identify at what points in the video the characters paused. The purpose of this activity was to encourage learners to the use of pause. After two more minutes of viewing the video, learners discussed in pairs their opinions on how the two characters used pause and for what purposes, before reporting their views to the rest of the class in turn. In doing so, learners were quick to notice that the speakers – and Sally in particular – used pause to divide the components of an utterance in the way that was best calculated to bring out the meaning.

Each pair was then given a copy of the script from the video (see Appendix B13) split up into sections in a random order to be placed into the correct sequence, for a separate reading comprehension and grammar activity. After correcting this exercise together as a class, pairs then carried out a role play activity, reading out the script of the video, with one person playing the character of Harry and the other of Sally, with the aim of carrying out controlled practice of the use of pause. Learners were reminded to insert pause in the appropriate places. They were given approximately ten minutes to carry out this part of the exercise, in order to give each learner the opportunity to practise each part of the dialogue (i.e. both Harry's and Sally's). During the exercise, the teacher monitored the learners from a distance, and only intervened where learners were experiencing difficulties.

To follow on from this very controlled practice of pause, each pair was then given the script of another dialogue from the same film (see Appendix

B14). This time, in anticipation of viewing the video clip, learners were asked to read the script first and mark the places where they felt the speakers would take a pause. Learners were given ten minutes to do this, which included time for them to check their answers with their partner and with other pairs. Instead of correcting the answers immediately, the teacher than played the video clip to give learners further opportunity to check their answers, before reviewing the excerpt with the class at large. Learners' awareness of the placement of pause appeared to be relatively accurate at this point, with virtually the whole class having predicted pauses at the appropriate points in the second dialogue.

At this point, learners were then instructed to carry out a role play of the second video, using a script, without pausing. This activity was intended to demonstrate the importance of pause to meaning and fluency, and how both these aspects of speech would be affected without appropriate use of pause. Learners were encouraged to correct their partner as they were reading, to facilitate awareness of the correct use of pause. For this part of the activity, the teacher monitored the pairs from a distance, noting common areas of difficulty. Again, learners were given enough time to practise the role play twice, once in each role. After five minutes, learners were told to repeat the activity, this time inserting pauses in the right place, on the basis of their corrections and of having viewed the video clip.

For the final class activity, the class was once more divided into pairs, but this time they were rearranged so that each learner was working with a different partner. In keeping with the theme of that week's syllabus, each pair was instructed to discuss the statement 'Men and women can be friends.' In each pair, the two learners were pitted against one another. Every learner was then asked to deliver a short speech to the class explaining why he/she agreed or disagreed with the statement, bearing in mind the important use of pause in outlining an argument and clarifying meaning. Learners were given ten minutes to prepare then each learner was asked to speak in turn; every speech took approximately one minute or less. Overall, the exercise served as a useful way for learners to learn the role of pause in generating meaning in speech. One learner in particular (Gustavo - see 6.1.3) exhibited a tendency to omit pause entirely when particularly enthusiastic about his topic, a habit that was highlighted in the feedback he received from the teacher. All learners received comments from the rest of the class as well as the teacher, with an effort to focus on the positive rather than the negative attributes. This activity marked the end of a long pronunciation lesson, and finished with the usual post-lesson questionnaire (Appendix B15), which this time included a section on the learners' views on the role of pause.

4.1.6 Lesson IGE5.1

The next pronunciation lesson took place a full week after the preceding lesson on pause. Fourteen learners were present, including seven of the eight in the Pedagogical Group. Continuing the attempt to develop learners' articulatory skills in accordance with the prioritised features they had identified in Lesson IGE3.2, the aims of this lesson were to raise learners' awareness of the importance of distinct speech and separation of individual sounds to clear pronunciation and perception, and to give learners the opportunity to practise clear articulation, both in controlled and less controlled exercises.

The lesson began with a brief review of the previous week's lesson, and once more defined the three features of pronunciation that learners had identified as the most important to them: use of pause, clear articulation and appropriate choice of speed. Learners were reminded that the previous week's sole pronunciation lesson had addressed the question of appropriate use of pause at some length, and were informed that this lesson would move on to the importance of articulation – or, to employ the simpler terminology used for the learners' benefit, pronouncing their sounds separately.

The introductory review was followed by a very simple exercise in which the teacher read out a quote from that day's newspaper in two different styles (see Appendix B16). The first time the teacher read the statement, she deliberately omitted or failed to articulate clearly vital consonantal sounds in each word. For the second reading, the teacher read the statement correctly, pronouncing every sound correctly. The learners were asked, as a class group, which reading they found easier or more difficult to understand. Unsurprisingly, every learner in the class agreed that the first reading – the one that omitted certain sounds – was more unintelligible than the second. When they were asked to identify what made the second reading easier to understand, however, many learners had difficulty identifying their problem in deciphering the teacher's speech in the first reading. To aid them, the teacher read the quote out loud again, again omitting certain consonants, giving learners the opportunity to identify the errors. One learner – not one of those in the Pedagogical Group

– volunteered the answer that the reading was difficult to understand because certain sounds were omitted, rendering the pronunciation inaccurate. Upon a third reading, the whole class appeared better able to identify the difference in pronunciation and how it caused problems for the speaker's ability to be understood.

Learners were then put into pairs. A list of tongue-twisters (Appendix B17) was distributed, but each partner received only half the list. To introduce the concept of tongue-twisters, the teacher read out the first tongue-twister (which featured on all learners' lists) and encouraged the class to suggest what was special about such a rhyme; the learners were easily able to identify the repetitive structure of a tongue-twister and the label was introduced to the class.

For their activity, the learners were instructed to take it in turns to dictate the tongue-twisters to their partner, *while omitting the final consonant in each word.* The partner, in turn, was instructed to write down the tongue-twister as they understood it from the speaker's pronunciation. Like the previous lesson's role play task, in which learners were asked to speak without pausing, this exercise was designed to highlight to learners the importance of separating the sounds in a word (i.e. using clear articulation) in order to convey meaning accurately. The teacher monitored this activity from a distance, allowing learners time and space to try to figure out the pronunciation of the tongue-twisters, intervening only where particular difficulties arose. Enough time was allowed for each partner to deliver at least one tongue-twister and attempt to write down another.

After ten minutes of this, learners were allowed to show their partner the rhyme they had been trying to utter, and pairs were encouraged to share their tongue-twisters in an attempt to produce the correct pronunciation. As a class, learners then briefly read through each of the tongue-twisters on each page, in order to establish the correct pronunciation before going on to practise them further.

For the final fifteen minutes of the lesson, learners practised saying the tongue-twisters to their partner, swapping roles (speaker/listener) after each one, in order to practise separating every sound from the next, and in particular articulating each consonantal sound. The teacher monitored this activity more closely, visiting each pair and listening to their tongue-twister recitals, correcting pronunciation errors and providing explicit instruction where necessary (e.g. "To pronounce the /θ/ sound, stick your tongue out between your teeth"). Perhaps owing to the multinational and multilingual nature of the class group, learners' pronunciation difficulties varied widely from learner to learner. Korean learners tended to find the /θ/ sound particularly difficult, though one of them, in spite of her difficulty in producing /θ/ in isolation, fared much better in a rhyme that relied on the distinction between /t/ ('tree') and /θ/ ('three'). Overall, in fact, consonants did not pose as many difficulties as did the vowel sounds, particularly diphthongs such as /aʊ/ (as in 'cow') and distinctions such as /uː/ and /ɔː/; however, some vowel sounds posed no problems for any learners, such as /ɔɪ/ ('boy').

Because of the differences between different learners' difficulties with English pronunciation, and perhaps more significantly, the differences in their pronunciation goals, this lesson, more so than previous ones in the training programme to date, highlighted the importance of an individualised approach to pronunciation learning. This was an issue which would go on to be addressed later in the programme (see Section 4.1.9 below). Once more, for the final five minutes of the lesson, learners again filled in a post-lesson questionnaire (Appendix B18).

4.1.7 Lesson IGE5.2

This lesson occurred two days after Lesson IGE5.1 in the same week. Fifteen learners were in attendance, including all eight from the Pedagogical Group. This was the last lesson to focus on enhancing the articulatory skills required to produce a particular feature of speech, and focused on the achievement of appropriate speed of speech.

Firstly, the previous two lessons were reviewed, and learners were made aware that today's lesson would focus on the role of speaking at an appropriate speed. To remind learners of why this was considered to be an important aspect of pronunciation, the teacher began by playing two of the original recordings from Lesson IGE2.1: Simon Cowell and Brian Cowen. When these recordings were first played, and learners were asked to list words to describe how each speaker sounded, the word 'fast' was applied to both speakers. However, in reference to Simon Cowell's speech, 'fast' was deemed to be a positive attribute, whereas in Brian Cowen's, it was considered negative.

Upon listening to the two recordings again in this lesson, learners agreed once more that Simon Cowell's speech was easier to understand. They suggested that while the speed of the two men's speech may have contributed to the overall sound they produced, it was not the determining factor in either case, as they each projected a completely different image; in other words, there is no one correct speed of speech, but it must instead be moderated for the purpose at hand.

In order to help attune their perception of the speed at which they speak, learners were given a self-assessment exercise. The class was divided into pairs, and learners were named either A or B. Two different handouts were distributed: one for Learner A (see Appendix B19) and one for Learner B (see Appendix B20). On each handout was a series of four exercises. Moderated by the teacher, learners carried out the four exercises at their own pace, following the instruction on the sheet, and monitored at a distance from the teacher. Each exercise took approximately five minutes.

In the first exercise, Learner A was given the instruction, "Describe something you are afraid of." Learner B was given the corresponding instruction, "Listen to your partner describing something he/she is afraid of." After finishing, each learner's handout instructed the learner to rate Learner A's speed of speech on a scale from 'Very slowly' to 'Very fast'. A second question asked the speaker to be rated for intelligibility on a scale from 'Very easy [to understand him/her]' to 'Very difficult'. When Learner A's speech had been evaluated by both partners, learners had to swap roles so that Learner B had a chance to speak and be assessed.

Question 2 followed a similar format, but instead of delivering an impromptu speech, Learner A had to recite two tongue-twisters that appeared on her handout as fast as possible. This time, speech was only assessed for intelligibility. Again, learners swapped roles before progressing to the next question. In Question 3, Learner A was instructed to recite the same two tongue-twisters, but this time, to "[s]low down your speech until you think you are able to pronounce every sound". Again, the learner was assessed by both partners for intelligibility, before the learners exchanged roles again. Finally, in Question 4, Learner A was instructed to "Describe something that makes you very happy. Speak at a speed that you think is normal for you." As in Question 1, the speaker was to be assessed for speed of speech and intelligibility, and speakers had to swap over when Learner A's speech had been evaluated.

Upon completing all four exercises, each pair was advised to share their assessments with each other. The purpose of this exercise was to show learners how their own perception of their speed of speech, and how it affected their intelligibility, may not necessarily match their perception by other listeners. The goal was to heighten learners' awareness of the speed of speech they should use in different circumstances; for example, it would be more appropriate for a speaker to speak fast when describing something which made her happy than when describing something less frivolous, such as something of which she was afraid.

Learners completed these exercises in their own time, but within the 35 minutes allotted to completion of this lesson. The teacher found time to visit each pair during the exercises, and helped them to address any difficulties that arose with the speed of their speech. The final five minutes of the lesson were devoted to completion of that day's post-lesson questionnaire (Appendix B21).

4.1.8 Lesson IGE6.1

Lesson IGE6.1 was carried out five days after Lesson IGE5.2, and marked a move away from the previous two weeks of explicit instruction on specific pronunciation features. Week 6 marked a step forward on the road to autonomous pronunciation learning with a renewed focus on each learner's individual pronunciation difficulties and how to address them. In Lesson IGE6.1, fifteen learners were present, including all eight belonging to the Pedagogical Group. The aim of this lesson was to return learners' focus to the association between desired identities and the features of speech that might convey them.

The lesson began with a whole class discussion in which learners were asked to recall the three recordings played at various points throughout the course to date, namely those of Simon Cowell, Brian Cowen and Cate Blanchett. Without replaying these recordings, learners were asked to cite from memory some of the words used to describe each of the speakers. Descriptions such as 'fast', 'boring', 'confusing', 'hesitant', 'clear' and 'pauses' were suggested by the learners. The teacher wrote these suggestions on the whiteboard, and then asked learners to differentiate between those words or expressions that denoted features of the speakers' speech and those that described the type of personality projected by the speaker with their speech. The teacher went through the whole list of words and expressions, ensuring that each learner was comfortable with the distinction between features of speech and projected images.

The teacher then showed the learners a list of twenty-three words on a screen, each of which depicted either a feature of speech or an associated image (see Appendix B22). The words were scattered around the screen in random order. Learners were divided into pairs, and given ten minutes to allot the words to one category or the other, during which time the teacher monitored each pair at a distance. Corrections were then made as a class; the list of words was read out, with the teacher nominating a learner to assign a category to each one.

The next activity, called 'Find Somebody Who' (often abbreviated to FSW), is a speaking activity that is widely used in EFL classrooms to help learners practise, within a relatively controlled activity, a recently-used structure or element of speech. Each learner received a handout bearing the heading 'Find somebody who...' followed by a series of statements which all related to the week's overall theme of fashion (see Appendix B23 for handout). The learners' task was to find at least one person in the class who could answer 'yes' to each statement by asking them the relevant question. For example, the first statement read, "Find somebody who has a favourite fashion designer." Learners were expected to ask other learners in turn, "Do you have a favourite fashion designer?" until they found somebody who could answer "Yes, I do."

The twist to this otherwise quite ordinary speaking activity was that as learners were moving around the room asking each other questions, at intervals the teacher wrote an adjective on the whiteboard describing a manner of speech. When a new adjective appeared, learners were expected to speak in the manner of speech appropriate to that adjective. For example, if the teacher wrote the word 'relaxed' on the board, learners were then expected to alter the features of their speech accordingly, and ask and answer questions in a way that would convey a relaxed manner of speaking.

Throughout the duration of the activity, the teacher wrote the words 'confident', 'nervous' and 'decisive' on the board and observed the resultant change in learners' pronunciation from a distance. The activity proved to be a very effective means of generating conversation and of encouraging learners to use different pronunciation techniques to improve their speech.

It took approximately twenty minutes for learners to put all ten questions to their classmates. This was followed by a five-minute class discussion, in which the teacher opened the floor to comments from the learners. In general, learners were in accordance as to the means of conveying the stipulated adjectives in their pronunciation.

This activity was followed up with an exercise in which learners once again used the image of a prescribed identity or characteristic to shape their speech, this time while speaking in pairs. After being paired off with a partner, learners received a handout featuring a grid with two columns bearing the headings 'Possible images' and 'Possible speech features' (see Appendix B24). Written on a screen in full view of the class were the following five numbered topics for discussion:

1. Describe the best thing about living in Dublin
2. Describe what you like to do in your free time
3. Describe where you were when you heard about the attacks on the World Trade Center on 9/11
4. Describe the best celebration you ever attended
5. Describe the worst thing about living in Dublin

Each instruction was to be completed by both learners in a pair before progressing to the next one. Learners were labelled A and B in each pair, and each learner then received a list of five adjectives describing an image to be projected. 'A' learners received a different list to 'B' learners, with each adjective corresponding to a particular topic of discussion. The 'A' learners' list of adjectives was the following:

1. confident
2. relaxed
3. unsure
4. strong
5. boring

The 'B' learners had to discuss their topics using the following adjectives:

1. relaxed
2. decisive
3. confident
4. confusing
5. articulate

Once more learners had to choose the most appropriate way to alter their pronunciation in order to convey an image of the adjective in question. The aim of this part of the exercise was to reinforce learners' understanding of the association between features of speech and speaker identity by guessing the image their partner was projecting by the type of pronunciation they were using. Learners were encouraged to give feedback by sharing their opinions of each other's speech, and whether they were successfully conveying the desired adjective or not, and were instructed to record the adjectives and associated features of speech employed by the speaker on the handout they received before beginning the activity. The teacher monitored this activity closely and helped learners who were having difficulty in associating images with identity. Learners were given five minutes at the end of the lesson to complete the post-lesson questionnaire (Appendix B25).

The length of time put into the identity-pronunciation interface in this lesson seemed to pay off, as learners were much more confident in their speech and pronunciation by the end of the lesson than they had been at the start. Overall, the majority of learners from the Pedagogical Group rated this lesson 'Helpful', as opposed to 'Very helpful', 'Quite helpful' or 'Not helpful' (based on the results of the post-lesson questionnaire).

4.1.9 Lesson IGE6.2

Lesson IGE6.2 took place two days after Lesson IGE6.1, in the same week. Only ten learners were present, but seven of those belonged to the Pedagogical Group. The aim of this lesson was to continue to reinforce learners' understanding of the association between pronunciation and individual identity by increasing their awareness of their own pronunciation goals and requirements, and thus to further the learners on their path to achieving their Ideal L2 Selves. This involved a return to the more explicit form of articulatory pronunciation instruction, which, as previously mentioned, complements the focus on identity projection within my proposed model of pronunciation pedagogy. This lesson also saw the introduction of the pronunciation diary, an integral component of the pronunciation course. The lesson lasted 50 minutes.

In the opening minutes of Lesson IGE6.2, learners were reminded of the specific features of pronunciation they had worked on in the previous lessons in the context of projecting an identity, such as use of pause, intonation, speaking loudly or softly, articulating consonants, etc. However, bearing in mind the autonomous learning approach being suggested for this course of pronunciation instruction, and the importance of the learners' individuality in honing this particular language skill, the teacher pointed out to learners that while such features were generally important, it was of even greater importance to be able to identify the areas of pronunciation that were a cause of difficulty for them as individual learners. With this in mind, each learner was given a pre-prepared individual 'pronunciation diary' to aid them in their quest to address their particular pronunciation problems. The pronunciation diary was a document bearing the name of the learner, and the date of today's lesson, designed to allow the learner to identify at a glance her pronunciation requirements and how to address them. Appendix B26 shows a pronunciation diary prototype.

The body of the pronunciation diary is divided into three sections. The first of these, labelled 'How you would like to sound', suggests images that the learner would like to project with her pronunciation. This information was gathered from the post-lesson questionnaire distributed after Lesson IGE6.1. The second section, 'What you need to do to sound that way', refers to the corresponding features of speech which can be manipulated in order to simulate the images already listed in section one. The third main section of the diary outlines 'Features that need attention'. This describes specific aspects of the learner's pronunciation that she has particular trouble with, in order to help her address her individual pronunciation difficulties. The remainder of the pronunciation diary is simply labelled 'Your notes', and leaves space for the learner to make additional notes or observations.

Sections 1 and 2 on the pronunciation diary had been drawn from the learners' responses to the post-lesson questionnaire after Lesson IGE6.1, while comments about which areas of their pronunciation needed work were based on recordings that learners had submitted for research purposes before the pronunciation course began. Even though the first two sections were drawn from previous input by the learner, the purpose of the pronunciation diary was to gather that information in a single document and make it as accessible to the learner as possible. Once presented with the diary, it was the responsibility of the learner to put that information into practice, and use it to help to achieve her pronunciation goals.

Having distributed the pronunciation diaries at the beginning of class, the teacher then gave learners five minutes to read over their diaries individually and note the information that was contained within them. Learners were then told that there would be time to address any queries later in the lesson, and the teacher moved on to the next activity. It is worth noting that in retrospect, the term 'pronunciation diary' was somewhat misleading for the document received by learners in this lesson, as it had already been completed by the teacher, and thus served as more of a report than a diary. For this reason, when the pronunciation course was replicated in the subsequent pedagogical study in the Language Education Centre, the term 'pronunciation diary' was replaced with 'pronunciation report'.

The next twenty minutes of the lesson were taken up with direct instruction of the features that most often arose in the teacher's observation of learners' difficulties, based on the pre-test recordings taken for Phase III of the empirical study (see Section 5.4.3 below). A list of the features addressed in this lesson can be found in Appendix B27. After outlining the relevant pronunciation errors and fielding learners' questions about them, the teacher then passed responsibility over to the learners to put their new-found knowledge to the test. In pairs, learners were asked to describe to a partner what they would wish for if they were granted three wishes (an activity that incorporated a grammar topic covered in another part of that day's English class). Learners were expected to discuss their three wishes at length with their partner, asking follow-up questions where necessary, and then to swap over and allow each partner to have equal opportunity to speak.

During this activity, the teacher visited each pair and went through the features of their pronunciation diary with them, asking questions and confirming that each learner was fully cognisant of the images, features and errors that had been pointed out on her pronunciation diary. Generally, there was a mixture of surprise and resignation at the errors that had been pointed out to them, but as a group, they responded positively to the pronunciation diary, and were appreciative of the opportunity to correct their individual pronunciation difficulties. The lesson was followed as always by distribution and collection of the post-lesson questionnaire (Appendix B28).

4.1.10 Lesson IGE7.1

This lesson took place six days after the previous pronunciation lesson and was attended by twelve learners, including six of the Pedagogical Group.

The aims of this penultimate lesson were to reinforce learners' awareness of their individual pronunciation goals and requirements by encouraging them to take responsibility for setting and achieving their pronunciation goals, and to target one pronunciation feature for improvement in that day's activities. The lesson lasted 70 minutes.

For the first five minutes of the lesson, learners were nominated to share with the class the features of their pronunciation that required improvement. All learners (but one – Josefina, see Section 5.1.5) were unable to name the features without first consulting their pronunciation diary from the day before. The teacher used this as an opportunity to stress to learners the purpose of the pronunciation diary, and the importance of making use of it with regular consultation.

For the first interactive activity, learners were asked to work with a partner, and to select from their own pronunciation diary one feature of their pronunciation that they wished to work on in that day's lesson. They were asked to share that feature with their partner, and to give feedback to each other on whether they were making any improvement or not. This 'transfer' of responsibility from teacher to classmates was an important part of achieving learner autonomy in the classroom; if learners were to be able to address their own pronunciation difficulties, they would also need to be able to provide frank self-evaluation, and assessment of a partner's pronunciation was a significant step towards developing this skill. The speaking task itself was taken from another part of the day's lesson, which centred on improving vocabulary on the subject of clothes shopping. In their pairs, learners were asked to discuss this subject in the style of four adjectives: confident, decisive, relaxed and strong. These four adjectives were chosen for their contrastive nature. During the first ten minutes of this lesson, the teacher was engaged in reviewing pronunciation diaries with three learners who had been absent the day before. For the remaining ten minutes, she monitored the learners' discussions from a distance, noting pairs that were particularly engaged in providing feedback on one another's chosen feature of pronunciation, and gently reminding other pairs who were more lackadaisical to comment more on these features.

This activity was then repeated as learners were asked to select a different feature from their pronunciation diary and practise improving it in a different conversation. This time, learners discussed the theme of making a complaint in a shop, or returning faulty goods. The same instructions were given for learners to give feedback to their partners on their pronunciation, and to share their concerns about their own. This time, however, the teacher monitored each pair very closely, and discussed with each learner the feature of pronunciation they most wanted to improve.

In addition to comments from the teacher, this activity involved a further tool to assist learners in their self-assessment: a Dictaphone, which was used to record learners' speech as they discussed the relevant topic with their partner. The recording was not ideal, as the speakers were recorded while the rest of the class engaged in a speaking activity around them, and so the learner's voice was surrounded by background noise; however, it was sufficient for learners to hear their own voice upon immediate playback. Learners responded very positively to the use of the Dictaphone and many expressed an interest in repeating the activity at home in an effort to better assess their pronunciation skills.

Before recording them, the teacher asked learners to state which feature of their pronunciation they were attempting to address in the speaking exercise at hand. Learners were asked to choose a suprasegmental feature (labelled for learners' benefit as 'a general feature') rather than a specific consonantal error in a particular word. Upon naming their chosen difficulty, learners were then advised by the teacher to try to project a certain image when speaking, in an effort to overcome the difficulty in question.

For example, Laura's pronunciation diary (see Section 5.2.3) stated that she tended toward overuse of rising tone in inappropriate circumstances, particularly at the end of a sentence. She found it difficult to understand in the abstract the significance of using falling tone in the appropriate place, but when she listened to the recording of her voice, she understood at once that it lent an air of inconclusiveness to her tone of voice. (It should be clarified that even though this particular feature, rising tone, may also be considered a dialectal variation, it was established through discussion with the learner in question that her use of this feature was not a deliberate attempt to emulate a particular accent, but rather a lack of awareness as to the role of intonation in her speech.)

Like Laura, all learners expressed surprise upon hearing their voice recordings, and noted the perceived exaggerated effect it lent to their pronunciation errors. In the post-lesson questionnaire for that day's lesson, and the learners' final comments on the course, the recording ranked highly among learners as among the most beneficial activities.

In an effort to keep in mind the overall approach to the pronunciation course, the teacher reminded learners of the association between identity and features of pronunciation in addressing pronunciation difficulties. When visiting Laura and her partner Regina, for example, the teacher advised Laura to try to project an image of decisiveness, in an effort to adjust her excessive use of rising tone to a downward inflection at the end of a sentence. The result was noticeable as Laura's intonation improved considerably when assuming this persona.

For the final activity, learners were instructed to remain in their pairs and to work with the partner, as they would begin preparation for a task that would be completed the following day. The teacher explained to the class as a group that the following day, each pair would present a short role play to the rest of the class, in which each learner would assume a character who projected a certain manner or image, as identified by the teacher. In preparation, learners would have to identify one feature of their pronunciation that they intended to focus on improving in this activity, and before performing the role play, each learner would be expected to share this feature with the class; feedback from the other learners would then be elicited.

Two dialogues were distributed; three pairs took one dialogue, the other three pairs took the other one. Both dialogues depicted scenarios inspired by topics covered in other parts of the English class that week. The first showed the scene of an employer and employee arguing about the possible discontinuation of a company's uniform policy; the other scenario featured a customer and sales assistant discussing the return of an unwanted purchase. These scenarios were chosen because they contained a (limited) element of dispute, and provided scope for the kinds of images the learners would need to project in order to address some of their pronunciation difficulties.

For the final twenty minutes of Lesson IGE7.1, learners began to prepare for their performance of the role play the following day, starting with identification of the pronunciation feature they felt most in need of improving. The teacher spoke to each learner before the end of the lesson in order to ensure that everybody had a clear understanding of what was expected of them the following day. The teacher asked each learner to tell her which pronunciation feature they intended to work on for the following day's performance; and then in keeping with the principles of the pronunciation course so far, the teacher gave each learner a quality, expressed as a single adjective, and instructed her to perform the role play in the manner of that quality. The rationale behind this instruction was the same logic that had prompted the ethos of the course to date, and that had brought about such a result in Laura's pronunciation earlier in the same lesson. If learners were experiencing difficulties in their pronunciation, one means of addressing that difficulty was to consider it as an expression of identity; in other words, as projection of a given image.

After visiting each learner and giving her the adjective she was to use for the following day's role play performance, the teacher kept her distance from the learners, but remained available for questioning and intervened whenever learners appeared to be 'stuck' or veering off point. Learners filled in another post-lesson questionnaire at the end of the lesson (Appendix B29).

4.1.11 Lesson IGE7.2

The final lesson in this stage of the pedagogical study took place the day after Lesson IGE7.1. The goal of this lesson was to give learners an opportunity to display their new knowledge of and improvement in their pronunciation, and to encourage them to focus on their individual pronunciation goals rather than trying to conform to the requirements of a whole group at large. The underlying purpose of this lesson was to equip learners with the knowledge they would require to continue to monitor and evaluate their pronunciation following the end of the course. This lesson lasted 105 minutes and was attended by thirteen learners, including seven of the Pedagogical Group.

The main feature of the final lesson was the performance of the role plays, for which learners had begun to prepare the day before. To re-establish the purpose of this role play, the teacher began the class by spending five minutes eliciting from the class at large the features of speech that could be used to convey certain images. For each adjective mentioned, learners had to suggest as many associated features of speech as possible. Learners were then given twenty minutes to continue preparing their role plays, both to ensure that the performance would have a definitive conclusion, and more importantly to practise their pronunciation.

The bulk of the lesson consisted of the performance of five role plays. Because of some absenteeism on the day, eight learners performed the role plays in pairs and one performed it in a group of three. Each performance had to last no less than 2 minutes and no more than 5 minutes (most averaged at around 3 minutes). Each performance began with both (or all) members informing the class of the feature of their pronunciation that they had chosen to focus on for this activity, and the quality that they had been asked to evoke during the presentation.

Every learner who performed was well received by his or her classmates; learners applauded every performance. Frank feedback was then exchanged for about two to three minutes, and the performance – specifically, the pronunciation – of both participants was reviewed, with all class members participating by providing positive feedback and constructive criticism. The teacher allowed learners to introduce themselves or each other, granting them further ownership of the performance and enabling them to give a definitive statement regarding the feature of their pronunciation they chose to work on for that activity.

After each of the role plays had been performed, learners were asked to take out their pronunciation diaries. The teacher distributed a second page for them to complete in the immediate aftermath of the role play, allowing them to draw on the experiences of the performance. This second pronunciation diary page is shown in Appendix B30.

The teacher conducted a brief review of the points that had been raised during the pronunciation course:

- That there are a variety of native English accents;
- That initially, it may be more important to be understood by ALL listeners, rather than approximating a particular accent;
- That every learner has some pronunciation difficulty;
- That images of the learner's identity can be used to help produce a particular type of pronunciation;
- To improve pronunciation, learners need to take an active awareness and interest in it, instead of relying on correction from teachers or friends.

The lesson ended with the distribution of a third pronunciation diary – this time, a blank one, with the intention that learners would complete it and consult it regularly after the pronunciation lessons had ended (see Appendix B31).

Finally, learners completed one last post-lesson questionnaire (Appendix B32). As this was the last questionnaire of the course, there were an additional set of questions about learners' responses to the whole programme, so learners took 10-15 minutes to complete the questionnaire in class time.

4.2 EAP pronunciation course

The pronunciation course was carried out again at a university in Dublin approximately seven weeks after the final lesson of the first course, outlined above. In its second iteration, however, the course had to be significantly modified, as its duration and the sample of learners differed significantly to those of the first programme. All learners were studying for postgraduate degrees at the university. As a result, learners were at an advanced level of English (learners having already passed IELTS 6.5 or equivalent). Lessons were attended by between seven and nine learners, drawn from the two separate classes attending the English language course.

The EAP programme within which the pronunciation course took place was an intensive four-week pre-sessional module specifically designed to provide language support for international postgraduate learners attending – or about to attend – the university. Classes took place for four hours daily over a four-week period. Because of this, the EAP pronunciation course was inherently more intensive than the first, IGE course. Five pronunciation lessons lasting a total of 400 minutes (6.75 hours) were taught over just seven days.

In some ways, the fact that these lessons were more concentrated than in the IGE course facilitated instruction, as learners were less likely to forget material that was covered in earlier lessons; but from a more challenging perspective, such an intensive teaching experience risked distributing too much information to the learners in a short space of time. However, while the situation may not have been ideal, it was still suitable for a second run of the pedagogical study.

Lesson #	Lesson content
EAP1.1, EAP2.1	• Associating specific features of pronunciation with the identities they represent • Identifying desired identities and how to use pronunciation to convey them
EAP2.1, EAP2.2, EAP2.3	• Improving the features identified as most important to good pronunciation • Focusing further on individual goals, desired identities and how to convey them
EAP2.4	• Identifying and practising individual pronunciation difficulties • Using desired identities to improve individual pronunciation difficulties

Table 2: EAP pronunciation course summary

Table 2 above shows that the EAP pronunciation course focused almost exclusively on the issues raised in the second half of the Intermediate General English course. This was because for practical reasons, it was not possible to begin the EAP course until the end of the third week of the pre-sessional language module, leaving a little over one week to carry out the pronunciation course.

This dramatically altered the content of the course from that which had been previously carried out with the IGE learners. For this reason, only those elements of the pronunciation course which had been particularly well received by the IGE learners and which stemmed most directly from my model of L2 pronunciation were repeated. Table 2 above gives a brief outline of the course of instruction. The lesson plans of each stage of the course will now be described in further detail.

4.2.1 Lesson EAP1.1

Lesson EAP1.1, the first of the pronunciation lessons to be carried out in the participating university, took place on Thursday in the third week of the four-week intensive English course. This lesson was carried out twice with separate groups of learners. The first time, five learners were in attendance, one of whom would later become part of the Pedagogical Group. When the lesson was taught for the second time, four learners were present, including two from the Pedagogical Group. With each class, the lesson lasted approximately 35 minutes. The aim of the lesson was to introduce learners to the concept of associating specific features of speech with identities or images to be projected by their manner of pronunciation, thus paving the way for producing their Ideal L2 Selves in their speech at a later stage.

To open up the first pronunciation lesson, the teacher began with a general class discussion about the distinction between features of speech and images that speakers can project, as previously discussed in e.g. Lesson IGE3.2 (see Section 4.1.4 above). The words 'Image' and 'Features of speech' were written on the board as column headings. Learners were asked, as a group, to call out words that might belong to one category or the other. The teacher began the process by entering the word 'confident' under 'Image', and 'loud' under 'Features of speech'. For two to three minutes, learners added their own suggestions to each category, which were written on the board into the appropriate column by the teacher.

Upon concluding that all learners had a clear understanding of the difference between features of speech and projected image - and the relative importance of each - the teacher began the next activity by dividing the class into pairs (or, in the case of the class with five learners, one group of two and one group of three). Learners were then asked to listen to recordings of three native speakers of English and to make a list of adjectives to describe the image projected by each speaker. This activity was the same as that carried out in Lesson IGE3.1; the recordings used were once again those of Simon Cowell, Brian Cowen and Cate Blanchett. A transcript of the speech recordings played can be found in Appendix B32, and the recordings can be found in Appendix F6.

Learners were asked to suggest adjectives to describe the image projected by each speaker based on their interpretation of the three recordings. Instead of just making a list, however, each pair was first given a handout featuring a grid with spaces for image and features of speech as conveyed by each speaker (see Appendix B33), to be filled in while listening to the three recordings. The adjectives proposed by the learners to describe each speaker were similar to those put forward by the IGE learners in the same exercise. After discussing the image conveyed by each speaker, learners were asked to listen to the recordings again, and this time to note the specific features of speech that made them project the images already discussed.

Speaker 1 **(Simon Cowell)**	**Speaker 2** **(Brian Cowen)**	**Speaker 3** **(Cate Blanchett)**
Images conveyed boring uninterest**ed** confident sure decisive bossy / dominant	*Images conveyed* boring unclear interest**ed** unconvincing	*Images conveyed* involved (engaged) lively informal uncertain confident interactive
Features of speech emphasis stress fast well-articulated monotonous good use of pause clear	*Features of speech* too fast poor articulation doesn't open mouth 'sounds like eating' flat intonation no emphasis no 'chunking' no stress	*Features of speech* well articulated not fluent (hesitant) fast stress varied intonation

Table 3: Learners' observations on Speakers 1, 2, and 3 – EAP1.1

Table 3 above summarises learners' noted associations between the speakers' features of speech and projected images. It is clear from these observations that while learners generally gave balanced opinions of all speakers, Speaker 2 was more critically received than Speakers 1 and 3. The features of stress, intonation and distinct speech (articulation - what was referred to in the previous pronunciation course as 'separation of sounds') were notably present in the more positively-received speakers' pronunciation and absent from Speaker 2, while other features such as pause and speed were categorised as either good or bad, depending on their application. This served as an effective introduction to the use of speaker identity as a guide for learners' pronunciation.

The activity detailed in Table 3 above took approximately fifteen minutes to carry out, including the review of results at the end, based on how learners filled in the grid they had received at the start of the exercise. In the following activity, to put their new-found understanding of the roles of image, identity and features of speech into practice, learners then put their speaking skills to the test.

For the remaining ten minutes of the pronunciation lesson, learners were asked to move around the room, and greet the other learners (one on one, or in groups, as the situation unfolded) in the style of the adjective the teacher had written on the board. Learners carried out this activity for ten minutes, allowing the teacher three changes of adjective - enough time for every learner to practise manipulating their pronunciation according to the current adjective. The teacher chose the adjectives 'confident', 'strong' and 'nervous', bearing in mind the learning requirements of the learners; learning how to sound confident and strong would be of benefit to the learners in academic environments, and learning how *not* to sound nervous would also prove beneficial. Learners found the exercise difficult at first, but having relaxed into the activity and observed the other learners in the room doing likewise they showed significant improvement in their pronunciation. At the end of the lesson, learners spent five minutes filling in a post-lesson questionnaire (Appendix B34).

4.2.2 Lesson EAP2.1

Lesson EAP2.1 took place on Monday of the final week of the English course, four days after the first lesson. Unlike the first lesson, all learners from the two English classes were put together in one group, so the lesson was taught only once. Seven learners were in attendance, including four from the eventual Pedagogical Group. The aim of this lesson was to revise the findings of the first lesson, to give learners the opportunity to establish their target accents and practise replicating them, and to illustrate to learners the importance of pronouncing sounds separately and distinctly in order to achieve clear speech (thus focusing on the development of their articulatory skills).

Learners were immediately reminded of the findings of the first lesson, and in particular of the distinction between the image projected by a speaker's pronunciation and the features of speech that contribute to it. To further reinforce this finding - and to recapitulate the previous lesson's material for the benefit of the learners who had not been in attendance the previous week - the teacher briefly replayed the three recordings that were used in Lesson EAP1.1. Once more learners were asked to suggest words and expressions describing the image projected by the speakers; learners who had missed the previous week's lesson were strongly encouraged to contribute. Adjectives suggested by the class to describe the speakers' voices were left on the board as a reminder, and also as a prompt for the next activity.

After five minutes of such revision, the focus moved from speakers in general to the learners' own pronunciation. Learners were asked to work with a partner; as there was an uneven number of learners, the class divided into two pairs and one group of three. In their pairs or their group, learners were asked to discuss the adjectives that had already been suggested to describe the earlier recordings, and to use that discussion to make a list outlining which of these adjectives they would like to apply to their own pronunciation, and perhaps equally importantly, those they would not like. Once the list on the board was exhausted, learners were encouraged to add their own adjectives to that number.

The learners were given ten minutes to discuss their own and each other's preferred projected images, and this was followed by five minutes of feedback with the whole class. Unsurprisingly, the list of desirable adjectives included the previously-mentioned 'confident', 'interesting' and 'decisive'. New additions included 'authoritative', 'knowledgeable', 'reliable' and 'friendly'. In the discussion, the teacher asked the class whether it was possible to convey all these manners using pronunciation. Learners agreed that while it might not be possible for certain very nuanced descriptions, it would certainly be possible to distinguish between opposing adjectives.

Following on from this activity then, the same pairs and group were asked to consider each of the adjectives they had chosen as desirable images, and to assign to them a feature of speech or style of pronunciation that would reflect that adjective. The teacher gave the example of speaking confidently, taken from the previous lesson's recording of Speaker 1. Learners had observed that the speaker was loud enough to be heard and used 'separate' (i.e. clearly-articulated) sounds, both of which contributed to his air of confidence. Learners were asked to do the same for every adjective they had selected as desirable, with the goal of addressing as many adjectives and/or images as possible in class.

The class took five minutes to carry out the last task. The results were discussed as a class, and it was clear that three features were chosen by all three groups (two pairs and a group of three) as representative of the most desired images. Those features were:

- good articulation (described by the learners as 'pronouncing sounds separately');
- appropriate and varied use of stress;
- appropriate and varied use of intonation.

It should be noted that these three features differed from the top three chosen by the IGE learners in the equivalent task. This reflected the variation of phonological priorities from learner to learner, as suggested in my model of L2 pronunciation learning.

The activities in this lesson took 60 minutes to carry out, including the warm-up revision and post-activity discussion. Together, they were designed to give learners the chance to reflect on their pronunciation goals and to determine which features of pronunciation would form the focus of the explicit instruction that would mirror that which took place in the middle of the IGE pronunciation course. No post-lesson questionnaire was distributed; instead this was reserved for the following day's lesson.

4.2.3 Lesson EAP2.2

The next pronunciation lesson took place the following day. Nine learners were in attendance, including, for the first time, all six learners who formed the EAP component of the pedagogical study. Lesson EAP2.2 aimed to reinforce learners' awareness of the pronunciation goals they had set in the previous lesson, and subsequently to focus on their articulatory skills by addressing two of the features that had been determined to be central to the learners' pronunciation goals: good articulation (and in particular pronouncing each sound separately and distinctly), and appropriate and varied use of stress.

As usual, the first few minutes of class were spent reviewing the findings of the course to date, led by the teacher who elicited input from the learners where necessary. Following on from this, the lesson went on to address articulation. The teacher first led a whole-class activity, revolving around a series of tongue-twisters distributed to the learners on a handout. (The list of tongue-twisters was the same as that used for Lesson IGE5.1 - see Appendix B17). The class was advised that on the first round of practice, the first few tongue-twisters would be read out loud to the whole class, with each learner taking one tongue twister each, in order to ensure an accurate foundation from which to practise their articulation. This first practice demonstrated that there were few, if any, pronunciation errors common to the whole group; rather each learner seemed to experience different difficulties. The whole-class reading took approximately twenty minutes, allowing enough time for every learner to practise reading one tongue-twister, and to receive feedback from the teacher, and the other learners, on their pronunciation.

To follow up on this activity, learners were divided into pairs or groups of three, and instructed to take it in turns to practise the remaining tongue twisters on the handout, going through as many as possible in the 25 minutes that would be dedicated to the activity. The use of pair work at this stage of the lesson was vital as it allowed the learners greater opportunity to practise speaking than when they were waiting to read in turn from the whole class. As the purpose of the tongue-twisters was to focus on accuracy rather than fluency, the teacher monitored this stage of the activity very closely, and went to each pair of learners in turn to assess their performance on the tongue-twisters and discuss any particular pronunciation concerns they had.

In general, the learners' pair work confirmed what had been suggested in the whole-class reading of the first tongue-twisters: errors tended to be more idiosyncratic in nature than indicative of a pattern among the class. Some errors were inevitably as a result of L1 interference. For example, a learner from Zambia (Luwi, see Section 6.3.4 below), experienced considerable difficulty in distinguishing between the vowels /ɑ/ and /ɔ:/, resulting in pronunciation of the word 'short' as 'shot'. Other learners mainly experienced problems with vowel sounds rather than consonants. One distinction in particular caused difficulty for a number of learners across a variety of L1 backgrounds, namely the distinction between /ʌ/ and /ɑ/ (e.g. 'Dublin' as opposed to 'Doblin'). Among those who failed to make this distinction were Aman, from India (Section 6.3.2) and Chin Ho from Korea (Section 6.3.5). However, owing to the multinational composition of the class, even recognition of L1-influenced errors could not contribute to whole-class instruction, suggesting that a more individualised approach would be necessary. This realisation was dealt with in a rather limited capacity in this lesson, but would go on to be addressed in greater detail in Lesson EAP2.4.

There were more tongue-twisters on the page than time would allow for every learner to practise along with their partner, but this ensured that the teacher was able to spend time with every learner while the others in the class were practising. In general, learners were very responsive to the practice of tongue-twisters, and enjoyed having the opportunity to receive one-on-one feedback on their pronunciation from the teacher.

After the pairs' practice of the tongue-twisters, one last opportunity was given for learners to put what they had learned into practice. Going around the room, the whole class read a short (four lines) tongue-twister, with each learner taking one word. This gave learners the chance to demonstrate the knowledge they had just acquired on how to pronounce individual sounds within the tongue-twister, while also practising strong articulation without the added difficulty of the tongue-twister as a whole. This last exercise generated a very positive atmosphere in the classroom, and learners were enthusiastic about their work with the tongue-twisters.

Given the time constraints on the course, it was not possible to pursue the teaching of articulation any further than that, so the lesson ended with the learners' completion of another post-lesson questionnaire (Appendix B35). This lesson lasted approximately 60 minutes.

4.2.4 Lesson EAP2.3

Lesson EAP2.3 continued the theme of articulatory development and moved on from the topic of articulation to the instruction of the second and third features identified as important to the learners' pronunciation goals: appropriate use of stress and intonation. For this lesson, the format reverted to that of Lesson EAP1.1, as the learner group was taught in two separate classes instead of altogether. Each class contained four learners, and all six learners participating in the Pedagogical Group attended. The lesson lasted 60 minutes.

It should be noted before going any further that 'stress' in the context of this pronunciation course was taken to refer primarily to the volume, and secondarily to the pitch and length, of the syllable in question. This interpretation follows Crystal's (2003a) definition: "The prominence [of a stressed syllable] is usually due to an increase in loudness of the stressed syllable, but increases in length and often pitch may contribute to the overall impression of prominence" (p. 454).

The beginning of the lesson as always presented a brief review of the main points of the course to date. Learners were asked to remind the teacher and the class of the three most important features to their pronunciation goals, as identified by them in an earlier lesson (articulation, stress and intonation). This was followed by a very brief reference to the previous day's work on articulation. The teacher nominated learners one by one (the reader will recall that there were only four learners per class) to read out part of a tongue-twister. This brief warm-up took approximately five minutes.

Attention then shifted to the main topic of the lesson: appropriate use of stress and intonation. Although two separate topics in their own right, for the purposes of this pronunciation programme, the correct use of stress and intonation were taught together because of the suitability of the instrument used, which provided a means of highlighting the two features. Firstly, learners were divided into pairs, and a handout was distributed, on which was printed a short dialogue (see Appendix B36). Learners were instructed to take turns reading the dialogue out loud to each other.

Initially learners were asked to read the dialogue without using any stress at all and to try to make sense of the reading. They were then asked to work with their partner to try to establish the location of the stresses. Learners were given ten minutes to work on the exercise and locate the stresses, during which time the teacher monitored the learners' interactions from a distance. It was clear during this brief period of observation that the activity provided an excellent opportunity to learners to practise their use of stress; completion of the task depended entirely on reading the dialogue out loud. Even learners who tended to prefer writing to speaking were forced to practise their use of stress by saying the dialogue - or certain parts of it - out loud, both for their own benefit and for that of their partner.

While carrying out the task, in some cases unwittingly, learners were also practising their use of intonation. When reading out the dialogue to find the appropriate location of stress, they were also exaggerating the intonation in their voices in keeping with the theme of the piece, and to facilitate their use of stress. However, since the task at this point was to allocate stress to the right position, the role of intonation was not highlighted.

After ten minutes working on this exercise, the teacher then distributed an answer sheet, on which the script of the dialogue was printed, with the words to be stressed underlined on the page. Working together as one group of four, the learners read through the dialogue line by line together to get the answers. Having corrected the answers and found the correct location of the stress in each sentence, the learners were then advised by the teacher to consider what other aspects of speech were used in this dialogue to convey contrast between one line and the next. Learners soon noticed that their voices were moving 'up and down' (as observed by Chin Ho); the teacher called attention to this upward and downward movement, labelling it 'intonation', and asked learners to read the dialogue again, this time paying attention to where the intonation rose and fell. To finish the exercise, learners practised reading the dialogue to one another a final time, this time using appropriate stress and intonation, as per the class corrections. This last correction took only five minutes.

At this point in the lesson, the two classes carried out different activities. The first class still had 15 minutes left out of the hour allocated to the pronunciation lesson, so they used the next ten minutes to carry out a speaking activity in pairs. This activity required the learners to tell each other three pieces of information about themselves: two truths and one lie. The speaker's partner then had to guess which piece of information was untrue. The learners in this class were advised to treat this activity as a bonus exercise, and a chance to practise the use of stress and intonation to lend additional meaning to their speech, particularly in indicating contrast. The learners then presented one piece of information about their partner to the rest of the class, paying attention to his or her pronunciation.

The other class did not respond quite so quickly to the correction of the stress and intonation dialogue activity. They spent a little longer reading through the answer sheet and discussing the answers with their partners. In order to facilitate their individual learning styles, the final speaking activity was added on simply as a brief five-minute activity to finish off the class. It was not cut entirely because it was important for the following day's lesson that the teacher had an opportunity to record a short sample of each learner's speech – an opportunity which she took during the final speaking activity in each class.

Learners responded positively to this lesson, and found that the time spent investigating how to use stress and intonation accurately was well spent. The final five minutes of class were again spent by learners filling in the post-lesson questionnaire (Appendix B37).

4.2.5 Lesson EAP2.4

The final lesson of the pronunciation course took place the following day; it was the fourth pronunciation lesson taught in as many days. Once more the learners were taught all together as a group for their final lesson. Eight learners attended, including all six from the Pedagogical Group. The aims of this lesson were: 1) to give learners the opportunity to listen to recordings of their voices and assess the features they need to work on to improve their pronunciation, thus helping to foster their sense of learner autonomy; and 2) to apply the theory, learned throughout the pronunciation course, of presenting an Ideal L2 Self through their English pronunciation. The lesson took approximately 70 minutes to complete.

At the lesson's outset, learners were informed that they would be spending the final lesson focusing on their individual pronunciation strengths and weaknesses, beginning by listening to a recording of their speech and analysing it for specific errors. To do this, the class moved to a language laboratory, and signed on to computers with internet access and multimedia facilities. The teacher had emailed each learner an mp3 recording of a 30s sample of their own speech, recorded at the end of the previous day's pronunciation lesson (see 4.2.4). Each learner was equipped with a set of headphones or earphones, and invited to play their allocated mp3 file. At the beginning of the class, the teacher had distributed a handout featuring a list of possible pronunciation errors made by non-native speakers of English, based on analysis of the learners' recordings (see Appendix B38). Learners were now asked to listen to the recording of their pronunciation and mark any of the errors on this handout that applied to their own pronunciation.

For the next twenty-five minutes, learners worked on their own at their computers, listening to the recordings and analysing recordings. The teacher left learners alone for the first five minutes, ensuring that every learner was able to access the pronunciation file and listen to his or her recording. After that, each learner was visited in turn by the teacher in order to discuss their pronunciation. For each learner, the teacher had a record of the errors he or she was most susceptible to. Before discussing these errors, however, the learner was asked to identify them, in order to ascertain the learners' capacity for self-assessment. Overall, learners were very accurate in their identification of the pronunciation mistakes that posed most difficulty for them. With the teacher's help, they were also able to pick out additional, more minor errors that would help them to achieve the pronunciation goals they had stated on a previous post-lesson questionnaire filled in during the week's pronunciation course.

In a further effort to strengthen learners' sense of autonomy, which was particularly important for the final lesson, while visiting each learner, the teacher distributed an individualised pronunciation report. [See p. 135 above for discussion of how this document came to be renamed a pronunciation report rather than a diary.] This report was identical to the last pronunciation diary distributed at the end of the IGE programme but for the fact that it was headed 'Pronunciation report' instead of 'Pronunciation diary' (see Appendix B30). It was empty apart from the learner's name, the date, and the headings on each of the three sections on the diary, since learners in the EAP study had identified their goals and how to go about achieving them. In addition to what had been covered by the IGE learners, the EAP group also had the opportunity to record their pronunciation, listen to it in class, and, with the teacher's help, identify for themselves the features of their pronunciation that required most attention. For this reason, and as an incentive to continue taking responsibility for their own pronunciation learning, the blank pronunciation report was distributed to learners during the listening activity in the language laboratory.

Once the teacher had visited all learners, the class left the language laboratory and returned to the classroom for one final activity. Having pinpointed the features of their pronunciation that were in need of attention, and discussed with the teacher how best to address their pronunciation difficulties, learners were then asked to revert to an earlier stage of the course, when they were shown how specific images could be conveyed by certain features of speech.

The final activity was called 'Who am I?' The learners were gathered and a space was cleared at the top of the classroom. The teacher distributed a small, folded piece of paper to each learner, which they were warned not to show to anyone else. On each piece of paper was a description of a person in a particular situation. Learners were told they would be attending an imaginary party, hosted by the teacher, at the front of the classroom, which they would have to attend as the person described on their individual piece of paper. Learners were expected to associate one or more features of speech with the image of the personality described on their piece of paper in order to convey the character of the person they were representing. They would assume that character until the rest of the class guessed their character from their pronunciation. Some of the characters included 'A boss who is clearly used to having people's respect', 'A politician who is giving a speech to a very large crowd of people' and 'An actor who still thinks he is on stage.' A full list of the characters distributed in this activity is provided in Appendix B39. A separate page was prepared for the teacher, listing possible identities of the characters learners were asked to portray, and the speech features they could use to project them (see Appendix B40).

The activity, while met with apprehension from some learners at first, was ultimately well received by the learners, and gave some of them an opportunity to display a previously unknown acting gift, thereby revealing one last advantage of the autonomous approach to language learning: accepting the language learner as a whole person with a unique set of talents and experiences that can enrich the L2 classroom. This enabled the course to finish on a very positive note, and learners were generous in their post-lesson questionnaires (Appendix B41).

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to depict as completely as possible the implementation of a pronunciation course - in two stages - carried out to put into practice the pedagogical model of pronunciation teaching proposed in Chapter Three. All pedagogical aspects of the two courses were discussed, including the relative successes and failures of individual lessons, learners' responses to various activities, and the pedagogical aims of each lesson. Both pronunciation courses ended on a positive note, with learners embracing the approach I had taken to addressing their English pronunciation requirements.

This chapter provided detailed information as to how the pronunciation course at the core of this study was implemented. However, as a research project, the pronunciation course constituted only one phase of the empirical study to hand, which consisted of four phases in total. In the next chapter, I will explain the methodological approach used for each phase of my empirical study, and in particular the impetus behind my choice of a mixed methods research approach.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.0 Introduction

As suggested by the findings of the first chapter, there appears to be a growing need for further empirical investigation into pronunciation teaching and learning. While the past decade of research has witnessed an increase in the number of studies carried out - particularly in the work of Munro and Derwing, Flege and others, as discussed in Chapter One - the vast majority of these are designed to evaluate the factors that influence accent production and perception, rather than the effects of pronunciation pedagogy.

Such studies are noteworthy for the contribution they make to researchers' understanding of pronunciation. This in turn plays an important role in the development of theory-based pronunciation teaching programmes, the necessity for which is highlighted by Derwing & Munro (2005). However, rather more uncommon in pronunciation research are empirical investigations conducted not just to highlight specific features of speech that require attention, but to investigate the feasibility and efficacy of a proposed research-based programme of instruction.

It was as a result of these observations that I arrived at the decision to implement and evaluate a pedagogical approach to L2 pronunciation that would have a sound theoretical basis, in an investigation henceforth to be referred to as 'the pedagogical study'. However, over the course of its development, the study evolved into a more complex investigation, which explored learners' pronunciation goals and attitudes towards L2 pronunciation in addition to the pedagogical study. In this chapter I will outline the development of the research methodology I adopted for this study, and describe how each stage was carried out.

5.1 Methodological approach

This section will provide an outline of the stages of my empirical study, from the establishment of my research goals to a description of the institutional context in which the study took place and a profile of the participating subjects.

5.1.1 Background to research methodology development

It was originally intended for the pedagogical study to form the sole focus of this research project. The study was to consist of the implementation and evaluation of the pronunciation course outlined in Chapter Four, which would be taught by the researcher. Evaluation was to take the form of statistical analysis of accent ratings, as carried out in numerous studies investigating causes of foreign accent (e.g. Derwing et al., 2006; Flege et al., 2006; Flege et al., 1997; Flege et al., 1995b; Piske et al., 2001).

Ultimately, however, the success of this study was dependent on the participation of enough subjects for the findings to be capable of being generalised to a broader population of EFL learners, and it became apparent from early on that this would not be the case. In my role as teacher, I realised before commencing the study that due to the varying schedules of the learners, unavoidable subject attrition would occur, leading to a significant fall in the number of learners regularly attending class, and consequently, regularly participating in my pedagogical study. While I had hoped to have approximately twenty learners regularly attending the pronunciation lessons, the actual number was likely to be less than half that.

This posed a number of difficulties to the implementation of the study in its original form. With such a comparatively low number of subjects, the data gathered was at risk of being uninformative about a larger population. A different methodological approach would be required, that would a) increase the number of participants in the sample, b) gather a richer dataset, or c) do both. While this would not be easily done within the confines of the existing research, it could be achieved by expanding the research aims. Bearing these considerations in mind, I began to explore the possibility of adapting the study to supplement the existing research aim of evaluation of a pedagogical model of pronunciation.

Examination of the L2 pronunciation learning model put forward in Section 2.3.3, and the resultant pedagogical model put forward in Section 3.3, revealed a common argument: that learners' desired identities manifested themselves in their pronunciation goals. Given the pivotal importance ascribed to this thesis in my conceptualisations of pronunciation learning and pedagogy, I deemed a closer examination of learners' pronunciation goals and their causes to be relevant to my research aims, and decided to incorporate this investigation into the study. Given the absence of any preconceived notions about the nature of learners' pronunciation goals, my investigation would be an exploratory one that would allow me to observe emerging themes or patterns in the motivating influences, goals and attitudes of the learners attending the pronunciation course.

The addition of this exploratory dimension raised the question of whether the study was suited to the purely quantitative research approach that had been assumed for the original investigation, or whether it would be more appropriate to explore alternative paradigms. This issue was a difficult one to address given that a combined theoretical and pedagogical investigation of pronunciation learning had not previously been attempted. Further complicating this situation was the inherently problematical nature of exploring L2 motivation, a concept that has proved notoriously difficult to operationalise for analysis.

Dörnyei (2009) identified all L2 motivation data as belonging to one of just three categories: questionnaire/survey, interview or observational. In their investigations, Smit & Dalton (2000), Dalton-Puffer, Kaltenböck and Smit (1997), and Smit (2002) relied mainly on the survey approach to examine the relationship between L2 motivation and pronunciation among a group of high-proficiency English language learners in Austria (see Section 1.3.4.3 above). They employed a modified matched-guise study along with custom-made identity and motivation scales, all of which fall under the category of survey data. Learners' responses along these scales were then analysed using primarily quantitative methods (e.g. mean scores, t-tests to investigate statistical significance). The studies of Smit et al. showed that questionnaires designed within the construct of a quantitative research paradigm had the potential to play an important role in uncovering learners' attitudes to motivation and identity in L2 pronunciation learning.

When it came to determining my own research methodology, however, given the exploratory nature of the study, ultimately, a compromise was required: one that would combine the most suitable elements of quantitative and qualitative research.

5.1.2 Mixed methods approach

In recent years, a third category of research methodology has come to be recognised alongside quantitative and qualitative paradigms: one that combines the two, known as *mixed methods research* (Dörnyei, 2007). A broad definition by Burke Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007) illustrates the potential of a mixed methods approach for the investigation of highly complex research questions: "Mixed methods research is, generally speaking, an approach to knowledge (theory and practice) that attempts to consider multiple viewpoints, perspectives, positions, and standpoints (always including the standpoints of qualitative and quantitative research)" (2007, p. 113). The benefits of combining the most relevant features of quantitative and qualitative approaches in the form of mixed methods research have been acclaimed (e.g. Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007), and may be particularly applicable to the investigation of motivation in second language acquisition (Dörnyei, 2009). It was in light of the multiple research aims of my empirical investigation that I decided to utilise such a mixed methods approach.

To supplement the study's core element of the implementation and evaluation of a pronunciation training programme based on my pedagogical model, an additional research aim was now included: uncovering learners' attitudes and goals in respect of pronunciation. I decided to combine this aim with the establishment of a broad profile of the participating learners. The data obtained would primarily indicate learners' linguistic and cultural backgrounds, their previous experience of English and pronunciation instruction, and most importantly, their pronunciation goals. The most effective means of obtaining this survey data would be the distribution of a questionnaire to all learners attending the course. The questionnaire would also be distributed to EFL learners attending a number of other English language schools around Dublin, covering seven institutions in total. The survey would be distributed with a view to establishing the attitudes towards pronunciation of a wider group of EFL learners than that which took part in the pedagogical study.

Having thus set out a means of investigating learners' attitudes to pronunciation, and in particular their reasons for selecting specific pronunciation goals, the distribution and collection of the questionnaire would be followed by the implementation of a course of pronunciation instruction, based on the theoretical principles previously established in Chapters Two and Three of this thesis. As originally planned, the pedagogical study would be evaluated by means of accent ratings, which would be supplemented by more qualitative research methods which would aim to explore the learners' experience of the pronunciation pedagogy, such as questionnaires and field notes. Finally, in accordance with a typical mixed methods design, a follow-up retrospective interview would be carried out with participants in the pedagogical study upon completion of the pronunciation course. The aim of the interview would be to probe further into learners' responses to the questionnaire, "thereby adding flesh to the bones" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 171), and to follow up on their experiences of the pedagogical study. The interview was seen as a source of rich, in-depth data that could not be obtained in a questionnaire (see Section 5.5).

Thus, my empirical study ultimately consisted of four components, or phases:

- Phase I: Pre-course questionnaire (including pilot)
- Phase II: Pedagogical study
- Phase III: Pronunciation evaluation
- Phase IV: Interview

Before proceeding with my empirical investigation, my methodology was submitted for ethical evaluation by the Research Ethics Committee in the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences in Trinity College Dublin. Approval was sought initially for the pilot study carried out for the Phase I questionnaire, and later for the study as a whole. In both cases, approval was granted, in the case of the pilot study with minor revisions.

Although this study features four separate phases and research designs, together they comprise a single research methodology that aims to provide a thorough investigation of the L2 learner's pronunciation learning experience. Below, Sections 5.2-5.5 will describe in further detail how each phase was carried out, along with a description of previous research drawing on similar methodological approaches.

First, however, I will provide an overview of the institutional contexts in which the study took place, and the subjects who participated in it.

5.1.3 Institutional context

A variety of educational institutions were represented at different points throughout the study. In total, seven different educational institutions took part. A description of their participation will now be outlined below.

5.1.3.1 Institutional overview

The participation of EFL learners from specific educational institutions is summarised in Table 4 below. As previously mentioned in Chapter Four, the names of the schools have been replaced with pseudonyms to preserve language learners' anonymity.

Phase	**Purpose**	**Name of school**	**No. of subjects**
Pilot	Pilot questionnaire	• Carlton International College	N=30
Phase I	Pre-course questionnaire	• Riverwood Language School • Academy of Language Study • The English Institute • Access English School • The Education Institute • Carlton International College • Language Education Centre	N=147
Phase II	Pedagogical study	• Carlton International College • Language Education Centre	N= 14
Phase III	Pronunciation evaluation (pre- and post-test recordings)	• Carlton International College • Language Education Centre	N= 14 N= 14
Phase IV	Interviews	• Carlton International College • Language Education Centre	N= 14

Table 4: Outline of phases of study and participating institutions

Of the seven institutions listed, five were private language schools offering instruction in English as a foreign language to international EFL learners, while two – the Academy of Language Study and the Language Education Centre (henceforth LEC) – were centres of language study in universities. However, while classes at the Academy of Language Study were open to the public, those in the LEC were restricted to new or continuing international postgraduate students attending an intensive EAP language module. Four of the institutions (The English Institute, Access English School, Carlton International College and the LEC) were located in Dublin city centre. The remaining three were located in various outlying suburbs of the city.

The two main institutions used throughout this study were those of Carlton International College and the Language Education Centre. As previously stated, it had originally been my intention to restrict my study to the implementation of a pedagogical study, which was to be carried out entirely in Carlton International College. However, at a later stage, upon completion of all stages of the study with the learners from Carlton

International College, the possibility arose for it to be repeated in the LEC with a different population of learners. The decision was made to avail of this opportunity, in an effort to offset once more the subject attrition experienced in the first iteration of Phase II.

Below I give further details on the learning environment provided by the two main educational institutions used in this study, Carlton International College and The Language Education Centre.

5.1.3.2 Carlton International College

Carlton International College was a private educational facility offering courses not just in English, but in a range of other subjects, including business, childcare, web design, healthcare and tourism. The majority of the college's learners were young adults in their twenties, studying English for a period of 6-12 months while on a period of international travel. The most widely represented nationality within the college was Brazilian.

The learners who participated in my study were all attending a course in English as a foreign language at Intermediate level. Some learners were attending the course as a step along the way to preparing for the FCE Cambridge exam, but these were in a minority. However, every twelve weeks, the learners in this class submitted to formal assessment in the form of the FETAC (Further Education and Training Awards Council) Level 4 examinations. Assessment involved reading, writing, listening and speaking performances under exam conditions, which were later evaluated both internally by the class teacher, and externally by a representative from FETAC (see http://www.fetac.ie).

It was college policy that all lessons be conducted entirely through the medium of English, and that no other language was to be spoken by the learners during class time. In practice this rule was more difficult to enforce among the lower proficiency classes, particularly when large groups of the learners came from the same country (usually Brazil or China). However, generally by Intermediate level the learners had sufficient command of the language for the English-only rule to pose no problems for them, and there were no difficulties with conducting the pedagogical study entirely through English.

5.1.3.3 Language Education Centre

The second part of the pedagogical study took place in the Language Education Centre, a university department which was at the time of the study running a four-week pre-sessional English language module. The course was designed to provide intensive EAP support to students who were carrying out - or about to carry out - their postgraduate studies at the university. There was a strong focus on writing and speaking on the course, in accordance with the students' requirements, which had been established at the beginning of the course by means of a needs analysis survey. The English language module was developed within a framework of learner autonomy, and learners were encouraged to take an active interest in determining their syllabus and in furthering their own language learning.

A broad range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds were represented on the English language module, and the six learners who participated in the pedagogical study represented six different nationalities. Learners also specialised in a diverse selection of subject disciplines, ranging from Peace Studies to Computer Science. Although no formal assessment took place as part of this English module, learners received feedback on their written and spoken performance in a group project once per week.

As in Carlton International College, the English lessons in the Language Education Centre were conducted entirely through English, a fact that posed no difficulties to the learners from this institution who participated in the study.

5.1.4 Subjects overview

The subjects who participated in the study were learners of English as a foreign language who were attending EFL classes in Dublin. All subjects were aged over 18, and the sample featured a wide variety of ages, linguistic and national backgrounds. Since the study consisted of four separate components, each phase of research involved a different number and subset of subjects. There was some overlap, as certain subjects participated in all stages of the study, and others only in some of them. For ease of reference, I have designated each subset with a group name, a description of which is given in Table 5 below.

Phase	Purpose	Name of group	No. of subjects
Pilot	Pilot questionnaire	Pilot Group	N=30
Phase I	Pre-course questionnaire	Questionnaire Group	N=147
Phase II	Pedagogical study	Pedagogical Group (subset of Questionnaire Group)	N= 14
Phase III	Pronunciation evaluation (pre- and post-test recordings)	(i) Pedagogical Group* (ii) Control Group*	N= 15 N= 15
Phase IV	Interviews	Pedagogical Group	N= 14

Table 5: Outline of phases of study and participating subjects

* The Pedagogical and Control Groups both originally contained 15 members each, but one subject was eventually eliminated from the Pedagogical Group as he failed to complete most of the data instruments distributed throughout the study, and evinced a level of English proficiency that was far below that of the other subjects. Since the number of Control Group subjects was designed to match that of the Pedagogical Group, one member was subsequently dropped from it.

Throughout the duration of the pedagogical study, on all documentation associated with the study, subjects belonging to the Pedagogical or Control Groups were denoted by a number preceded by the letter S or C (S for the learners participating the pedagogical study, C for the learners in the Control Group); for example, Alejandra was denoted by the code S33. The pseudonyms outlined in Table 7 below were developed for ease of reference during the writing process. Further details on each group of subjects will be provided below in the descriptions of the relevant phases of the study.

5.2 Phase I: Questionnaire

Having established my reasons for developing a mixed methods empirical study consisting of four distinct phases of research, in this section I will describe the background to the first of these phases, the questionnaire. I will then outline the steps involved in the execution of this stage of my research.

5.2.1 Background

This section refers to the questionnaires used in both my pilot study and the main study. The text of these questionnaires may be found in Appendix A. In addition, individual items from these questionnaires may be included in this section as they arise.

The aim of survey data was defined by Dörnyei (2007) as "describing the characteristics of a population by examining a sample of that group" (p. 101). Since survey research is based on the principle that the individuals who participate in the study are a sample of a wider population, the respondents chosen should be representative of that population. In the case of my study, the findings of the group of learners who took part in the questionnaire phase of the study was deemed to be indicative of a trend one might find amongst adult learners of English in Dublin, rather than a representative sample of those learners in strictly statistical terms.

The purpose of Phase I of the study was twofold. Firstly, the questionnaire was intended to establish common characteristics of the EFL learners who would later form the Pedagogical Group (learners participating in Phase II, the pedagogical study). With this in mind, the institutions selected for distribution of the questionnaire phase were chosen for their comparability to Carlton International College, the school in which Phase II was due to take place. The learners who completed the questionnaire were thus considered to have broadly similar backgrounds to those who would go on to participate in the pedagogical study, thereby suggesting that the results of this second phase of research might be applicable to a larger group of learners.

Secondly, the findings of the questionnaire were considered to give some indication as to the answers that might be provided by a broader sample of the population of EFL learners in Dublin. The participants across all seven participating institutions were adults, studying a part-time course in English as a foreign language (approximately 20 hours per week) at Intermediate level or higher (see Section 5.1.3.2 above). Given the broad diversity of learners' linguistic and cultural backgrounds, these restrictions suggested that the profile of the participants in the Phase I questionnaire might bear similarities to that of a considerable number of EFL learners in Dublin. Once the sample had been determined, attention turned to the development of the research instrument: the survey.

In addition to the difference between these two research paradigms, there is an important distinction to be made between the designs of different questions, which may be identified as either *closed* (or *closed-ended*) or *open-ended*, depending on the type and number of responses available to the participant: "A closed-item question is one for which the researcher determines the possible answers, whereas an open-ended question allows respondents to answer in any manner they see fit" (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 93). Open-ended questions on the other hand, eschew the multiple-choice approach and "allow respondents to answer in any manner they see fit, letting them express their thoughts and ideas in their own manner, and thus potentially resulting in less predictable and more insightful data" (Gass & Mackey, 2007, p. 151). Krosnick and Presser (2010) highlight the importance of the distinction between closed and open questions, and claim that choosing between them is "[o]ne of the first decisions a researcher must make when designing a survey question" (p. 7).

Regardless of the type of question posed, however, it can be difficult to uncover "learner-internal phenomena" (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 96) such as attitudes and motivation using questionnaires, as these can only gain access to those thought processes of which learners are explicitly aware. Furthermore, questionnaires tend to provide only shallow responses and provide little opportunity for participants to expand on their answers. In cases such as these, it is worth considering the possible benefits of a mixed methods study, which would involve adding other designs such as interviews or focus groups to the investigation.

Sections 5.2.1.1 and 5.2.1.2, which follow, describe some of the question types adopted for use in my questionnaires, in Phases I and II of my study. They are adapted from Dörnyei (2007).

5.2.1.1 Closed-ended items

In *Likert scale* items, participants are asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with a statement, usually (though not always) ranging from 'Strongly agree' to 'Strongly disagree' along a five-point spectrum (Krosnick & Presser, 2010), e.g. Question 1, Lesson IGE2.1 (Appendix B6):

1. I think this speaker is easy to understand.
   completely agree ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ completely disagree

A semantic differential scale is similar to a Likert scale but is not restricted to 'agree' or 'disagree' statements. Respondents are asked to rate their response as a position along a spectrum between two opposing adjectives, e.g. the matched-guise instrument used in Lesson IGE3.2 (Appendix B10)

clear ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ unclear

Multiple choice questions are have only a finite number of responses and offers the possible answers to the participants, e.g. Question 13, Phase I main study questionnaire (Appendix A4):

13. How often do you study pronunciation in your English class? Please underline the description you agree with most.

More than once a week *Once a week* *Once a month* *Never*

Rank order items differ from other types of closed-item questions, because instead of asking the user to make just one choice, they require a specified number of items to be ranked in order of preference. Overall scores are then obtained in analysis by allocating numbers to each item and calculating the total score obtained for each one. This type of question can be useful for ascertaining respondents' attitudes towards e.g. Question 2, post-lesson questionnaire Lesson IGE4.1 (Appendix B15):

14. Please rank the following in order of their importance to good pronunciation. For example, if you think speaking fast is more important than using intonation, write "1" opposite "speaking fast" and "2" opposite "using intonation."

...speaking fast ☐
...speaking slowly ☐
...using intonation ☐
...pronouncing each sound separately ☐
...using lots of pauses ☐

5.2.1.2 Open-ended items

Specific open questions: These demand specific information from the respondent, usually based on simple facts or previous experience, e.g. Question 1, Phase I main study questionnaire (Appendix A4):

1. What country do you come from?

Clarification questions: Often in the form of 'Please specify' OR 'Other' following a multiple-choice question, e.g. Question 17, Pilot questionnaire (Appendix A2):

17. Generally, what do you think is the best kind of English pronunciation for a learner to have? Please circle the description you agree with most:

a) To sound like a native speaker
b) To sound clear enough for non-native speakers to understand you
c) To sound clear enough for native speakers to understand you
If you answered differently to Question 16, why did you make this choice?
____

Short-answer questions: Designed to prompt a lengthier response from the participant, of "more than a phrase and less than a paragraph" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 107), e.g final question, Phase I main study questionnaire (Appendix A4):

If you have any comments about English pronunciation, or any of the issues raised in this survey, please write them here:
____
____
____

The next section will outline the procedures involved in administering the questionnaires, both in the pilot phase and for the main study.

5.2.2 Pilot study

The pilot study consisted solely of an initial draft of the questionnaire that would later be distributed as Phase I of the study. It was carried out in May 2008 in Carlton International College with the prior consent of the school's management and Director of Studies (DoS). Part of the results of this study were presented at a conference in Łódź (Murphy, 2008).

5.2.2.1 Subjects

The pilot group consisted of a group of EFL learners (N=30) attending daily English language classes in Carlton International College. Five nationalities were represented in the sample: Brazil (N=13), China (N=8), Mauritius (N=5), Malaysia (N=3) and Croatia (N=1). The learners were of Upper Intermediate and Advanced levels (approximately B2/C1 levels on the Common European Framework of Reference). All learners were aged over 18 but no more detailed record of their ages was taken. The subjects who participated in this phase of the study did not take part in any later stages.

5.2.2.2 Design and implementation

The pilot questionnaire featured 26 items and was printed on three pages (see Appendix A2). Hard copies were distributed to three classes of EFL learners attending Carlton International College, among learners of Upper Intermediate and Advanced levels. (Learners of Intermediate level or higher had been requested and these were the groups who were available to take part in the study on the morning in question.) The researcher distributed the questionnaires in person, during class time. A consent form was supplied with each questionnaire, and read out loud to the learners to ensure they understood their entitlements as participants (see Appendix A1). The point was stressed that all responses would remain anonymous, and that learners were under no obligation to fill in the survey, even if other members of the class chose to do so. Learners were given 30 minutes in which to fill in the questionnaire. Upon completion, the questionnaires were collected by the researcher and kept in a sealed envelope until analysis. Of the 31 learners who received the questionnaire, only one chose not to respond, leaving 30 responses.

The questions in the pilot study questionnaire consisted of a mixture of closed-ended and open-ended items. To avoid unnecessary repetition, I will avoid discussing the questions in further detail here. Instead, they will be addressed in the data analysis methods discussion in Section 5.2.4.1.

5.2.2.3 Changes

As a result of the pilot study, some relatively minor changes were proposed and undertaken before the survey was distributed for the main study. The changes fell under four headings: reformulation, omission, addition and restructuring.

- Some questions, while retaining their original meaning, required **reformulation** in order to ensure a) that they would be properly understood by the participants, or b) that they could be more appropriately analysed. For example Question 3 in the pilot study asked 'How long have you been learning English?' but this was changed to 'Altogether, how many years have you been studying English?' in the main study (see Appendices A2 and A4).
- A total of six questions were **omitted** from the main study: Questions 6, 7, 8 and 9 - all of which enquired about learners' additional languages - and Questions 19 and 23. These six questions were omitted for a variety of reasons, but essentially

because it was felt that they did not bring any new information to the study and it would be better to eliminate them to avoid unduly extending the length of the questionnaire.

- Thirteen new questions were **added** to the main study questionnaire, with the intention of either eliciting more detailed information or widening the scope of investigation. Among these were Question 10 (on the main study questionnaire), designed to explore the nature of learners' motivation to attend the English classes, and a number of other questions (e.g. 11, 12, 19) intending to explore further the impact of affective factors on learners' language learning.
- The main study questionnaire was longer than the pilot study (featuring eight more questions), and it extended to four pages instead of three. For this reason it was **restructured** to employ sequence marking (Dörnyei, 2003): headings for each section to alert the participants to the general purpose of each question. These headings may be seen in the text of the main study questionnaire in Appendix A4.

It is worth highlighting one of the most significant changes in the questionnaire: reformulation of a question that dealt with the subject of learners' pronunciation goals (Q16, Appendix A2). This question aimed to establish which type of English pronunciation the respondent wanted to achieve, and what factors influenced her decision in selecting that goal. In the pilot study, this question was asked in the following manner:

> 16. What level of English pronunciation would you **like** to achieve? Please circle the description you agree with most.
>
> a) To sound like a native speaker
> b) To sound clear enough for non-native speakers to understand you
> c) To sound clear enough for native speakers to understand you
> Why did you make this choice?
>
> ____

The question essentially asked whether learners intended to aim for a native-like or intelligible goal of English pronunciation. However, a decision was made to offer more specific choices to the respondent in an effort to establish whether there were any particular motivations associated with any particular varieties of English pronunciation. Thus in the main study questionnaire (Q24, Appendix A4), the question took the following form:

24. What level of English pronunciation **would you like** to achieve?
    a) To sound like a native speaker of British English
    b) To sound like a native speaker of American English
    c) To sound like a native speaker of Irish English
    d) To sound like a native speaker of **any** variety of English
    e) To sound clear enough for non-native speakers to understand you
    f) To sound clear enough for native speakers to understand you
    Why did you make this choice?
    ____

Once the appropriate changes were made, the amended questionnaires were then distributed for the Phase I main study.

5.2.3 Main study

The main study questionnaire was initially distributed over a six-week period from January-February 2009 and again in August 2009 in seven English language institutions in Dublin. Part of the results of this study were presented at the EPIP (English Pronunciation: Issues and Practices) conference in Chambéry (Murphy, 2009).

5.2.3.1 Subjects

The subjects who participated in the Phase I questionnaire were collectively termed the Questionnaire Group (N=147). Originally 165 respondents filled in the questionnaire, but later analysis revealed that six participants omitted one of the most important questions which enquired about their pronunciation goals (Q24 - see Appendix A4), and a further twelve answered the same question incorrectly by filling in more than one response (see Section 6.1.1 below). Since subsequent analysis depended on the participants' responses to this question, the responses of these eighteen subjects were eliminated. The subjects who were omitted from study appeared to share no remarkable commonalities; they came from a variety of different nationalities and educational institutions. The Questionnaire Group subsequently was considered as consisting of 147 subjects.

Participants were EFL learners attending an English course at one of seven different educational institutions around Dublin. The learners at six of these institutions - all but the Language Education Centre - were in streamed classes according to their performance on a placement test upon entering the school. Class levels were labelled as Elementary, Lower Intermediate,

Intermediate, Upper Intermediate, Advanced. To facilitate the data collection process, the questionnaire was distributed only to those learners attending English classes at Intermediate level or higher, since it was the researcher's opinion as a teacher that this was the threshold level of English sufficient for learners to understand the questionnaire. Intermediate level is approximately equivalent to B1 level within the Common European Framework of Reference, while Upper Intermediate roughly equates to B1/B2 and Advanced to B2/C1. Since the learners from the Advanced classes were studying at a level equivalent to that of a learner preparing for IELTS 6.5, a test which all students had already passed to gain entrance into the university, a fourth category - EAP - was developed to describe their level of English language proficiency, which was roughly equivalent to C1 level on the CEFR. When asked how many years they had been studying English (Q7, Appendix A4), the mean value calculated on the basis of the 147 responses received was 7.5 years, though the range of responses varied widely.

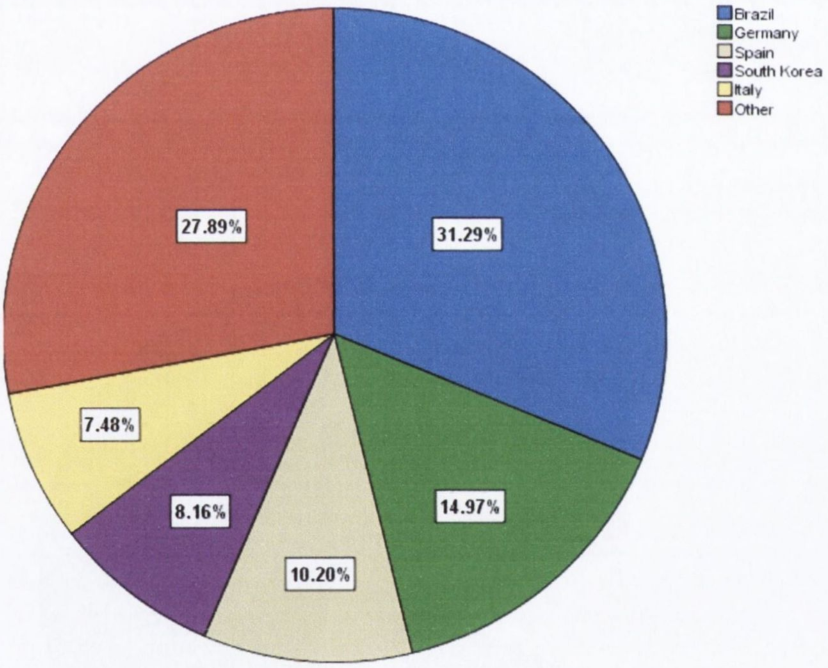

Figure iv: Most highly represented nationalities – Questionnaire Group

Although the pre-course questionnaire did not include a question asking for participants' ages, all learners attending the above institutions were required to be aged 18 or over. Of the 147 participants, the most widely represented country was Brazil, which accounted for the nationality of 46 participants. 22 came from Germany, 15 from Spain, 12 from South Korea and 11 from Italy. This distribution is represented in Figure iv above, in which the relative number of participants from each country is stated as a percentage of the overall sample. No other country neared the level of these nations' representation, and the remaining 41 participants hailed from 20 different countries (see Table 6 below).

China	N=8	**Argentina**	N=1
Malaysia	N=6	**Chile**	N=1
France	N=4	**Japan**	N=1
Russia	N=3	**Croatia**	N=1
Mauritius	N=2	**Sudan**	N=1
Venezuela	N=2	**India**	N=1
Romania	N=2	**Zimbabwe**	N=1
Peru	N=2	**Zambia**	N=1
Slovakia	N=1	**Democratic Republic of Congo**	N=1
Mongolia	N=1	**Greece**	N=1

Table 6: Less highly represented nationalities – Questionnaire Group

Given the variety of nationalities represented, the Questionnaire Group also showed a broad range of native language backgrounds, with 21 languages stated by its members as their L1, the most common being Portuguese (see Figure v below).

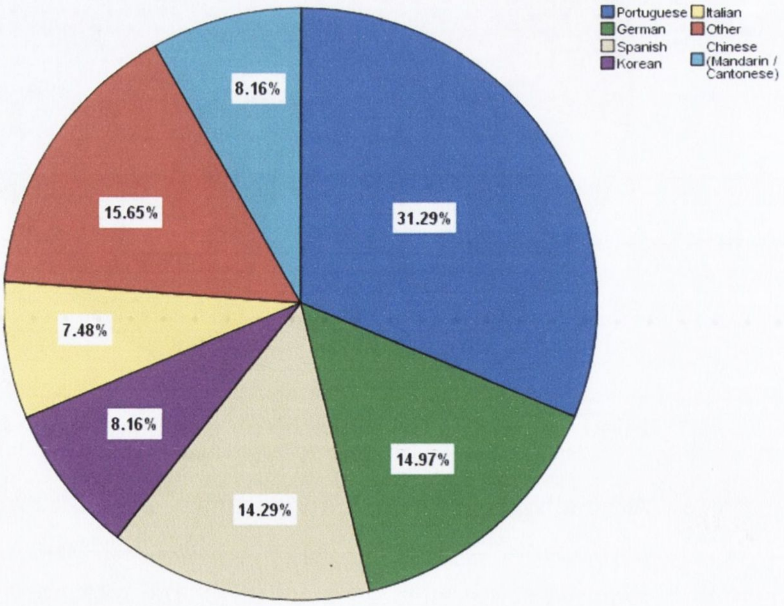

Figure v: L1s of Questionnaire Group

The 147 respondents were already experienced English language learners. When asked how many years they had been studying English (see Q7, Appendix A4), the average response was for seven and a half years. The vast majority (35.37%, see Figure vi below) had received instruction in English for between 6 and 10 years prior to completing the questionnaire, while the remainder were evenly divided between receiving instruction for less than 3 years, 3-5 years or more than 10 years.

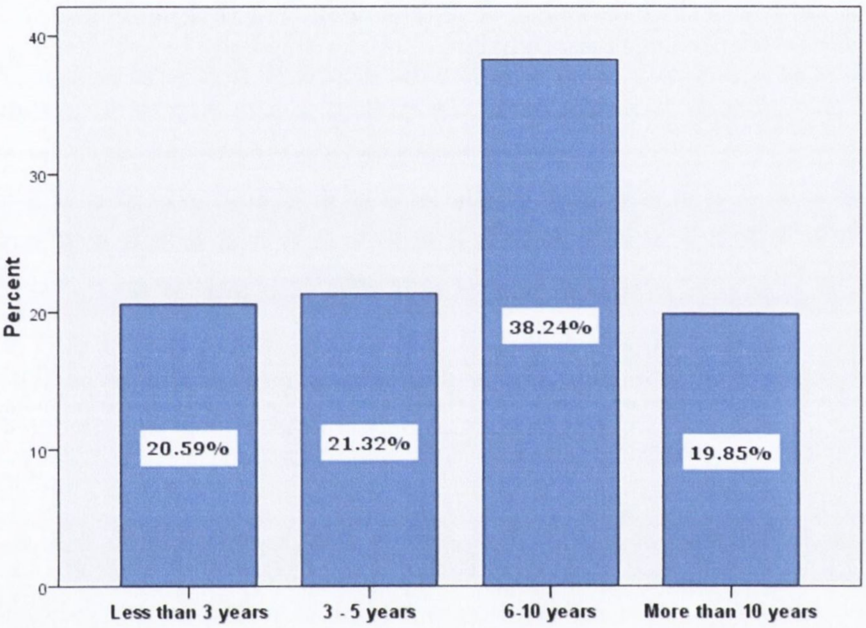

Figure vi: No. of years' previous English instruction - QG

When asked about their experience of English pronunciation instruction, 40.1% of respondents said they received instruction in pronunciation more than once per week in the English language classes they were currently attending. When provided with a list of six activities used in a pronunciation class, and asked to choose which they had previously experienced, the most commonly chosen item was "Teacher corrects as student reads out loud", and "Teacher speaks and student repeats". Only 18 of 147 learners agreed that a teacher had asked about their pronunciation goals, suggesting that learners were more familiar with more traditional approaches to pronunciation teaching (see Q14, Appendix A4).

5.2.3.2 Design and implementation

The main questionnaire survey was based on the same template as the pilot study, but incorporated the changes outlined in Section 5.2.2.3 above. The changes sought to improve the reliability of the instrument, and although broadly this improvement was achieved, there were still some shortcomings in the design of some questions which emerged at the stage of data analysis. These are outlined in Section 5.2.4.2 below.

The survey was distributed between January and March 2009 in the first six language schools to participate in the study, and then in the Language Education Centre four months later when it was decided to replicate the pedagogical study with the learners there. The questionnaires were distributed in person directly to the schools by the researcher. Once again, participants were asked to sign a consent form authorising the researcher's use of their responses (see Appendix A3). The learners in the Pedagogical Group completed a slightly different consent form to all other participants in the Questionnaire Group. The Pedagogical Group consent form indicated participants' agreement not just to fill in the questionnaire, but also to participate in the pronunciation course that formed the pedagogical study (Phase II) and submit to voice recordings before and after the study for the purposes of evaluation (Phase III). This modified consent form is shown in Appendix B1.

In all schools but one, the learners filled in the questionnaire on the spot over a period of 30 minutes. The time was either taken out of the learners' class or recreation time, in accordance with an arrangement previously made with the Director of Studies (DoS). In these cases, the researcher remained in the room, available to answer any questions that arose during learners' completion of the survey. The DoS of one school – Access English School – requested that interested learners complete the survey at home rather than during school hours, so the researcher simply distributed the surveys to individual classes and then returned at a designated time the following day to collect the completed ones. In this case, learners were advised that the survey should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. While this set of learners may have taken longer than the designated time to complete the survey, their responses did not distinguish them from those of other learners.

5.2.4 Data analysis

The questionnaire responses were inputted into a spreadsheet in SPSS and analysed according to the type of variable they produced, numerical or non-numerical (Dörnyei, 2007). In the time between the distribution of the pilot and main study questionnaires, the study was expanded to include the further exploration of learners' pronunciation goals and learning processes. This change was reflected in the difference between the pilot study and main study questionnaires, which illustrated a shift towards the collection of more qualitative data (see Appendices A2 and A4 respectively). The result was a greater proportion of non-numerical answers in the pilot study (16 questions with non-numerical responses out of a total of 27 on the pilot study, and 25 non-numerical questions out of 34 on the main study).

5.2.4.1 Pilot study

Since the pilot study consisted of a combination of open-ended and closed-ended items, each question called for a different type of analysis. Where possible, a coding scheme was used for ease of reference; this was usually applicable either to closed-ended items or to simple open-ended items. For example, Question 1 on the survey (Appendix A2) asked 'What country do you come from?' This was an open-ended question but had a finite number of responses. These were coded, with each country assigned a unique number. Likert scale questions, too, used a relatively simple coding frame, with each position on the spectrum being assigned a unique number in sequence. For example, the responses to Q5 'Overall, how would you rate your standard of English?' – listed on the questionnaire as 'Very good', 'Good', 'Average', 'Below average' and 'Poor' – were numbered in the data analysis from 1 to 5, with 'Very good' having a value of 1 and 'Poor' having a value of 5. This type of coding scheme allowed basic statistical analysis, e.g. mean, median, minimum and maximum.

More complicated open-ended questions, however, called for a more detailed coding framework. The aim of this type of open-ended question was to reduce the wide variety of responses to a more manageable number of appropriate categories (Dörnyei, 2007; Krosnick & Presser, 2010). Question 22 asked respondents, 'How long do you intend to live in Ireland?' Had the question been better worded, it would have asked for a specific number of months or years; as it was, it allowed for rather more oblique (not to say unhelpful) responses such as 'Until my English improves.' With this in mind, it was more appropriate for the analysis of these responses to create four categories, in preference to calculating a numerical average. The four categories allocated to the codes for each response were: 'Less than 2 years', 'More than 2 years', 'Until I'm happy with my English', and 'Don't know'. Ultimately, these responses were more informative than any attempt at developing an average value. [The question was reformulated before distribution of the main study questionnaire; see Question 31, Appendix A4.]

This type of analysis was also used for nominal data, where no scale was used. For example, Question 16 was a multiple-choice question which asked the following:

> 16. What level of English pronunciation would you **like** to achieve? Please circle the description you agree with most.
>
> a) To sound like a native speaker
> b) To sound clear enough for non-native speakers to understand you
> c) To sound clear enough for native speakers to understand you
> Why did you make this choice?
>
> ____
> ____
> ____

The existence of the three possible choices pre-empted the need to define new response classifications, and the participants' responses were simply allocated to one of the three categories.

The final component of Q16, 'Why did you make this choice?', acted as a clarification question (Dörnyei, 2007 - see p. 167 above). This too called for responses to be coded into categories in order to establish patterns and themes in the data as they arose.

5.2.4.2 Main study questionnaire

As with the pilot study, a combination of closed-ended and open-ended items were used in the main study questionnaire in accordance with a mixed methods approach, and the relevant approaches were used to analyse them.

Given that in both questionnaires, the majority of questions were non-numerical, statistical analysis formed only a relatively small part of the data analysis. Even where answers were numerical, statistical procedures most often took the form of frequencies. For example, Q 24 on the main study questionnaire (see Appendix A4) asked learners to choose their preferred pronunciation goal from a list of six possible options. The responses were first coded according to the possible answers, and frequency tables established the relative popularity of each option among the participants' responses. The only other statistical test used throughout the analysis of the questionnaire data was the Pearson Chi-Square test.

This was carried out to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between the pronunciation goals chosen by learners and the motivating influence they cited.

As briefly mentioned in Section 5.2.3.2 above, there were some questions on the questionnaire which, as shown by responses, failed to achieve the desired effect. Let us consider first Question 27:

27. Has your goal for English pronunciation changed since you arrived in Ireland? If so please give details.

____

____

This question was misunderstood by a high percentage of respondents; of 122 learners who answered the question, 59 (37%) claimed that their pronunciation had changed (as opposed to claiming that their pronunciation goal had changed, which was the intended meaning of the question).

Secondly, let us examine Question 32, which asks the following:

32. Do you enjoy living in Ireland?
    a) Yes, I enjoy living in Ireland very much
    b) I sometimes enjoy living in Ireland
    c) No, I dislike living in Ireland

____

The wording of this question was not as clear as it could have been. The intention was to present participants with a scale, with a high degree of enjoyment at one end, and a low degree of enjoyment (or a high degree of dislike) at the other. However, the use of the term 'sometimes' in the second option introduced the unrelated concept of time. In retrospect, it would have been preferable to use a Likert scale-type question, using a statement such as 'I enjoy living in Ireland', along with a scale going from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. However, it was expected that learners would understand from options a) and c) on the same question that I was referring to three sequential degrees of enjoyment.

One other possible shortcoming of the questionnaire, however, was the sheer number of questions. At the time it was distributed, the planned course of research had been only broadly defined, and as a result, the scope of the topics addressed was wider than ultimately necessary for the requirements of the study. Although responses to all questions were consulted when compiling the case studies of the members of the Pedagogical Group, responses to only six of the 33 questions (1, 2, 3, 6, 7, and 24 – see Appendix A4) were analysed when investigating the Questionnaire Group. In hindsight, a better approach may simply have been to distribute a shorter questionnaire to the Questionnaire Group featuring the relevant questions, and then a more detailed one to the members of the Pedagogical Group.

5.3 Phase II: Pedagogical study

This phase of the study involved the implementation of a pronunciation training programme with a group of EFL learners for subsequent evaluation; in other words, it called for a classroom study. The research aim of the pedagogical study was to bridge the division between research and teaching by implementing and evaluating a pronunciation pedagogy based on my hypothesised association between pronunciation and identity. The pedagogical aims were to encourage learners to identify their pronunciation goal(s), to bring about an improvement in their pronunciation and to develop learner autonomy in their pronunciation learning. The programme of instruction was developed from the pedagogical model outlined in Chapter Three (Section 3.3) above.

5.3.1 Background

I have already commented in earlier chapters on the relative paucity of empirical investigation carried out to evaluate the effect of pedagogical approaches to pronunciation. The research that has been carried out has been limited to the work of Gorsuch (2001), Harris (2002), Barreiro (2005), Akita (2006) and AbuSeileek (2006). Each of these studies implemented a course in pronunciation instruction with a particular group of language learners, and assessed the learners' pronunciation to consider the effect of the treatment, with varying results:

- Gorsuch (2001) evaluated the effectiveness of a pronunciation course that focused on the development of suprasegmental features among 24 EFL learners. Although learners demonstrated an improvement in their perception of pronunciation, no equivalent improvement was observable in their pronunciation production;
- Harris' (2002) investigation was inconclusive about the effects of her EFL pronunciation training programme on the pronunciation of 12 subjects, and called for further research with a larger sample;
- Barreiro (2005) tested the effectiveness of a course that focused on the incorporation of recital and singing into the pronunciation

learning of 5 EFL learners, and indicated a slight, but not statistically significant, improvement;

- Akita (2006) implemented a pronunciation course that focused on the instruction of suprasegmental features and found a significant improvement in the pronunciation of the subjects who took the course;
- AbuSeileek (2006) evaluated learners' ability to identify and produce stress with the aid of a computer-assisted pronunciation teaching program, and found – like Barreiro – that while there was a slight improvement among those learners who participated in the program, it was not statistically significant.

However, although the above studies evaluated the effectiveness of a course of pronunciation instruction, my own differed from them in another fundamental way, in that I first developed a theory of pronunciation learning and teaching, before implementing and evaluating it. It was with these goals in mind that I developed the pedagogical study.

In order to carry out this stage of my research, there were numerous factors to take into consideration, given the complex nature of classroom research. This type of research design involves the exploration of second language learning processes within the specific context of the L2 classroom. At its most fundamental level, it differs from more controlled experiments in its lack of just that: control. Mackey and Gass write, "Typical laboratory-based research has the advantage of allowing the researcher to tightly control the experimental variables, randomly assign subjects to treatment groups, and employ control groups – all of which are difficult, and sometimes impossible, to implement in classroom-based research contexts" (2005, p. 186). Their words of caution are justifiable; of the five pedagogical studies outlined in the introduction to Section 5.3 above, only one (AbuSeileek, 2006) was an experimental study in which the participating subjects had been randomly assigned to either treatment or control group.

In this part of the study, the pronunciation classes were taught by the researcher, meaning teaching and research roles were combined in an action research approach. A discussion of this research design will be provided in the following section.

5.3.2 Action research

As previously stated in Chapter One, despite the prevalence of descriptions of teaching methodologies throughout pronunciation research, relatively little empirical investigation has to date been carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of these methodologies. It is worth repeating Derwing & Munro's assertion that "[u]ntil recently, little had been established about the effectiveness of pronunciation teaching, and pedagogical techniques were based more on speculation and theoretical notions than on empirically well-justified principles" (2010, p. 366, quoted on p. 24 above).

One direct means of addressing this problem is the use of action research. This is a type of research that combines the roles of researcher and practitioner to investigate language teaching practice from within the L2 classroom. Although action research is usually carried out to address a specific problem or question (Gass & Mackey, 2007), the study presented in this thesis was carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of a treatment (in this case a series of pronunciation lessons), and to explore learners' pronunciation goals and the role played by their identity in selecting them.

Action research has been acclaimed for its ability to liaise between the occasionally conflicting goals of teaching and research; as Ellis writes, it "bridges the gulf between the researcher and the teacher" (1997, p. 24). In his discussion of Kennedy's (1997) hypotheses regarding the failure of research to have any observable impact on teaching practice or results, Mills (2011) acclaims action research, and describes it as – among other things – "persuasive and authoritative" and "relevant" (p. 11). It derives these attributes from its unique capacity to apply nascent research proposals to the practical environs of the language classroom. Ultimately, it was this "unification of theory and action" (Burns, 2005, p. 242) that served as the impetus for me to include this approach in my empirical research.

However, action research, while commendable in principle, can be notoriously difficult to carry out because of its inherently complex and unpredictable nature, and presents many challenges to the researcher. Dörnyei (2007) even went so far as to write that "...although it [action research] is a noble idea, it just does not seem to work in practice" (p. 191).

Since it blurs the lines between pedagogy and research, action research frequently generates conflict between these two often distinct practices. A teacher must act in a way that is most supportive to the learning and development of the language learner; for example, if a learner is struggling with a task, the teacher may prompt her in order to assist her. However, as a researcher, the emphasis is not on helping the learner but rather on observing her; if she struggles, the researcher remains removed from the situation and does not intervene (Baumann, 1996). This requires something of a balancing act on the part of the researcher-practitioner in an action research study. In my own study, when such situations arose, I prioritised my role as teacher, as I felt I had an ethical responsibility to continue to provide pedagogical support to the language learners in my class, even while conducting my own research.

One of the most difficult obstacles to overcome in the implementation of a classroom study is that of subject attrition caused by inconsistent attendance. This problem was particularly true of the EFL learner environment in which my study took place. The first institution in which the pedagogical study was carried out, Carlton International College, offered a variety of different packages to English language learners. Learners were entitled to enrol on a week by week basis, or for up to twelve months at a time, resulting in considerable flux in the composition of the student body. Every week the class contained different learners, as some left the class because they had reached the end of their period of study, or newcomers joined. Even regularly attending learners were occasionally absent, with the result that it became virtually impossible to predict which learners would be present on a day to day basis. It was for this reason that my study experienced considerable subject attrition, which led to the development of the overall study, and its expansion into four phases of investigation (see Section 5.1.1).

Similarly, the accuracy of comparisons between those learners who participated in the pedagogical study was called into question by the heterogeneous makeup of the class. As shown in Table 7 below, there was a mixture of nationalities and language backgrounds in both classes in which the pedagogical study was carried out. Learners also differed in age, the length of time they had been living in Ireland, the length of time for which they had been learning English, the reasons why they were attending English classes in Ireland, and in many other ways. Because of this, it was difficult to determine whether, in the event of a change in learners' pronunciation throughout the course of instruction, the improvement would be attributable to the pronunciation course or simply to other factors (the 'circumstantial' influences outlined in my model of pronunciation in Section 2.3 above). For this reason, learners were asked – both in questionnaires distributed throughout the pedagogical study, and in interview after it had ended – to elaborate on their attitudes towards the pronunciation instruction they received, and on their understanding of it.

One more possible impediment to the implementation of the pedagogical study was the simple fact of unpredictability. Regardless of how well a study may be prepared, there is always the possibility that something unexpected may arise to interfere with the lesson on a particular day, such as a fire drill, technical difficulties, or even something more mundane. For example, on the day I was due to begin my pedagogical study, a window in the classroom got stuck open and it transpired that the noise drifting in from the traffic outside was too loud for the learners to hear the sound files I was playing on the computer's loudspeakers. Obviously I had not anticipated such an event, and the lesson had to be postponed until another day.

The difficulties inherent in implementing action research are complex and should not be underestimated; Nunan described it as "difficult, messy, problematic, and, in some cases, inconclusive" (1993, p. 46, as quoted in Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 219). However, such comments are intended as a caution to the challenges involved in carrying out this type of research, rather than a suggestion that, even properly carried out, it is doomed to be ineffectual or futile. Difficulties aside, action research remains a valuable aspect of language pedagogy research that is regrettably lacking in contemporary studies. Despite the somewhat cautionary comments expressed by Dörnyei on the challenges associated with the implementation of action research, he argues that better institutional support should be provided to teachers wishing to engage in action research, and laments: "There is one big problem with action research: there is too little of it" (2007, p. 191).

Having provided an outline of the precedent set for this type of pedagogical study in the literature, I will later (Section 5.3.4) discuss the steps I followed in order to implement it. First, however, I will outline a profile of the subjects who participated in this core component of the empirical study.

5.3.3 Subjects

The Pedagogical Group (PG) was the name given to the 14 members of the Questionnaire Group who went on to participate in the pedagogical study. Since the pedagogical study was carried out in two different learning environments with two different groups of learners, eight participants were Intermediate level learners from the IGE group in Carlton International College, and the remaining six were attending a pre-sessional EAP course at the Language Education Centre.

It should be mentioned that although the Pedagogical Group consisted of learners from two different levels of English (Intermediate and EAP), it was assumed for the purposes of this study that the difference in learners' EFL proficiency would not be reflected in a corresponding difference in their pronunciation goals. As briefly mentioned on p. 171 above, learners from these particular classes were chosen partly because they had a level of English that would enable them to engage in meaningful participation in the study. Similarly, it was assumed that once learners had reached a threshold level of proficiency, their English pronunciation goals would not necessarily be determined primarily by such proficiency-related factors as a need to be understood.

Throughout this time, learner turnover was very high, a fact that greatly influenced the rate of participation in the study. In the IGE study, a total of 34 learners attended at least one lesson from the pronunciation course, but only nine learners attended eight pronunciation lessons out of the eleven that took place. Of these nine learners, only 8 were considered in the data analysis, as the remaining learner's English proficiency was deemed to be so far below that of his classmates that his participation was incomparable to theirs (see Section 5.1.4 above). In the EAP pronunciation course, thirteen learners attended at least one lesson, but only six attended four out of the five lessons that were conducted there. Thus, the total number of learners whose data was analysed in the pedagogical study came to fourteen (N=14): eight from the IGE course and six from the EAP course.

The following is a summary of the details of the fourteen subjects in the Pedagogical Group. To preserve the anonymity of the participants, pseudonyms were used in lieu of their real names. These particular pseudonyms were chosen in accordance with the subjects' national and cultural heritage.

Name	**Gender**	**Nationality**	**Age in years**	**Pronunciation course attended**
Laura	Female	Brazilian	24	IGE
Josefina	Female	Brazilian	32	IGE
Gustavo	Male	Brazilian	28	IGE
Regina	Female	Brazilian	31	IGE
Ricardo	Male	Brazilian	23	IGE
Adriana	Female	Italian	27	IGE
Lakshmi	Female	Mauritian	28	IGE
Alejandra	Female	Brazilian	19	IGE
Nadia	Female	Sudanese	28	EAP
Aman	Male	Indian	26	EAP
Lourdes	Female	Peruvian	30	EAP
Atinzwa	Female	Zimbabwean	47	EAP
Chin Ho	Male	Korean	32	EAP
Luwi	Female	Zambian	44	EAP

Table 7: Pedagogical Group subjects' profiles

As evidenced by Table 7, female learners were in the majority, with only four of the participating fourteen subjects being male. The Pedagogical Group participants had a broad range of previous English experience, and had been studying it for anything between fourteen months and fifteen years. This group comprised the core group of subjects for the duration of the whole study. These learners participated in all four phases, from the questionnaire, throughout the pedagogical study and the attendant pronunciation evaluation tasks, up to and including the interview stage in Phase IV.

5.3.4 Implementation

As previously mentioned in the introduction to Chapter Four (Section 4.0), in order to maximise the potential data yield of the inaugural phase of my empirical investigation, the Phase II pedagogical study was carried out twice: firstly with a group of Intermediate-level learners attending a Carlton International College (the IGE course), and secondly, in modified form, with a group of postgraduate students attending a pre-sessional English language module in a Dublin university (the EAP course). Although both versions of the pronunciation course were based on the same pedagogical principles (see Section 3.3), the two were not identical, largely because of the different teaching time available in each institution.

The IGE study was the first to be carried out. It consisted of eleven lessons of between 30 and 120 minutes' duration, carried out over a seven-week period. The overall teaching time for the duration of the IGE course was just under eleven hours. Pronunciation lessons were incorporated into the learners' daily English language classes and taught alongside the syllabus for the FETAC Level 4 examination (as prescribed by Carlton International College). The content of the pronunciation lessons was roughly divided into five sections, as shown in Table 1 on p. 115 above (Section 4.1). Before beginning, arrangements were made with the Director of Studies in order to ensure that all stages of the study would be acceptable to the school's management. All participants gave their consent to participate in the pronunciation course and take part in the associated research project. The consent form they had signed when completing the Phase I questionnaire covered all aspects of their participation in the empirical study as a whole (see Appendix B1), including the Phase II pedagogical study.

When repeated in the EAP study, the pronunciation course had to be modified. For practical reasons, it was not possible to begin the pedagogical study until the end of the third week of the pre-sessional course, leaving just over one week to implement a scaled-down version of the pronunciation programme. Like the IGE pronunciation course, the EAP pronunciation lessons had to be integrated into the daily classes of the English language module. The EAP pronunciation course consisted of five lessons lasting approximately one hour each, taking place over a period of five days (Thursday of first week, Monday-Thursday of second week). Total teaching time for the whole EAP course lasted approximately five hours. The course was outlined in Table 2 in Section 4.0 above.

For further information on the content of the pronunciation lessons in both courses, see Chapter Four. I will now discuss the data elicitation and collection techniques employed in the pedagogical study.

5.3.5 Data collection and analysis

Having adopted a mixed methods approach to the empirical study as a whole, I approached the pedagogical study with a similar view, namely that it was not to be treated as an independent investigation, but rather as one component of a multi-faceted, combined-design exploration of the roles of identity and motivation in EFL pronunciation learning.

Common data collection techniques employed during classroom research can include such designs as personal observations, audio and video recordings, self-report techniques, diary studies and think-aloud tasks, as well as retrospective designs such as surveys and interviews. These do not necessarily take place while teaching is underway, but may instead incorporate data collection from before, after, or before and after the period of instruction. Such designs as the retrospective interview, for example, can prove particularly beneficial to the implementation of action research, as it can be difficult for the teacher to assume the temporary role of researcher long enough to gather data. This was the case in my study, in which I sometimes found it difficult to combine the roles of teacher and researcher while in the classroom. Instead, I gathered the bulk of my data after classes had ended instead of during class time.

One means of apparently overcoming this issue is the use of recording equipment during class time, for evaluation at a later stage. However, I had two reasons for electing not to follow this procedure. The first reason was the practical constraints imposed by the institution in which the IGE course was carried out; here, the use of audio or video recording devices was not encouraged in the classroom. Only college-owned recording equipment could be used, and there were frequent administrative and technical difficulties with the use of this equipment (such as being unable to reserve it for use on the days on which I planned to carry out my study). Another very relevant concern, from a research perspective, was the existence of a variation of the 'obtrusive researcher effect' (Dörnyei, 2007). Just as learners can be alienated or otherwise negatively affected by the presence of an unfamiliar observer in the classroom, the sight of a recording camera has the potential to inhibit their full participation in a lesson. Given these concerns, I eventually opted not to make use of this particular data collection technique.

With these limitations in mind, I decided that data collection for the pedagogical study would take place in the form of a number of measures undertaken both during and after the pronunciation course: pre- and post-test speech recordings, lesson plans, field notes, post-lesson questionnaires, and a retrospective interview. (The Phase I questionnaire did not feature any items that anticipated the Phase II study in any way, and as such was not considered part of the evaluation of the pedagogical model.) The pre- and post-test recordings and the interview were treated as independent components of the study (Phases III and IV respectively), and will be considered separately in Sections 5.4 and 5.5 below.

In class, throughout the duration of the period of instruction, I prepared lesson plans for every pronunciation lesson, outlining the topics I intended to cover in class, the length of time each would take, and the purpose of each activity. A sample of such a lesson plan is shown in Appendix B2. The purpose of the lesson plans was primarily pedagogical: to ensure that all intended aspects of the pronunciation lesson were covered in class, and to return to the planned structure of the course in the event of straying from the topic at hand (e.g. when following up on learners' questions). In addition, however, the lesson plans became a useful research tool, serving as a reminder of the topics covered throughout the course once it had finished.

Lesson plans were accompanied by brief, handwritten field notes taken during class hours (for a prototype, see Appendix B3). The field notes consisted of relevant comments and responses by the learners, particularly in pair or group activities. The notes frequently consisted of little more than one-word prompts to serve as reminders when I reviewed the notes later on after the pronunciation session had ended. Depending on how informative these field notes were, they were either left in handwritten form, or later (after the class had ended) typed up and saved as a Word document. It should be noted, however, that some field notes were of limited benefit for the purposes of analysis, as their extensiveness depended very much on the amount of time available to me while teaching the class. Understandably, for most pronunciation lessons, I was fully occupied in teaching the class or monitoring the learners for questions or difficulties during group activities, so the field notes tended to become less detailed as the pronunciation course wore on and I discovered the benefits of obtaining other types of data.

The majority of my data in this phase of the study came from the post-lesson questionnaires, which were distributed after almost all pronunciation lessons (all but one in the IGE course and all but one in the EAP course). The content of the questionnaires changed from lesson to lesson, but some questions featured consistently. These post-lesson questionnaires, like the one distributed in Phase I, featured a combination of open-ended and closed-ended items. For example, Question 1 on the questionnaire after IGE lesson 1.1 (Appendix B5) was a closed, multiple-choice question that offered only four possible responses to the question 'How important do you think it is for you to study English pronunciation?' However, it was followed by an open-ended clarification question ('Please explain why'), which invited participants to state, in their own words, why a given response was selected. This enabled the researcher both to easily establish trends among the sample, and to gain further insight into the learners' thought processes during the pronunciation lesson.

All fourteen post-lesson questionnaires can be found in Appendix B. Questions aimed to assess learners' understanding of the topics covered throughout the pronunciation course, establish their awareness of their pronunciation features, and explore their attitudes towards their English pronunciation and its relationship with their identity. However, perhaps the most important purpose of the post-lesson questionnaires was to determine a) learners' pronunciation goals and their evolution throughout the pronunciation course; and b) learners' opinions of the pronunciation course. With these goals in mind, three questions were posed on every questionnaire:

- What level of English pronunciation would you like to achieve? Why did you make this choice?
- How helpful did you think today's English class was for improving your English pronunciation?
- How helpful did you think today's English class was for improving the way you **understand** English pronunciation?

The next section will outline the most quantitative aspect of the empirical study, the Phase III evaluation of learners' pronunciation by means of pre- and post-test speech recordings.

5.4 Phase III: Pronunciation evaluation

5.4.1 Background

In order to facilitate assessment of the pronunciation course, and to establish whether it had brought about any improvement in the learners' pronunciation, all participants – in both the IGE and EAP courses – submitted to a pre-test recording of their speech for the Phase III speaker analysis, prior to commencing the pronunciation course. This was in accordance with the practice established in a number of previous pedagogical investigations investigating foreign accent ratings (e.g. Derwing et al., 2006; Flege et al., 2006; Flege et al., 1997; Flege et al., 1995b; Piske et al., 2001).

The underlying premise of the pronunciation evaluation task was that a group of native English speakers would listen to recordings of the pronunciation of the subjects who had participated in the pedagogical study. They would then rate the recordings to determine whether any improvement had taken place as a result of the training received by the learners during the pronunciation treatment administered in the Phase II pedagogical study. Details of the recording and evaluation tasks will be outlined below, but first, the three participating groups of subjects will be described.

5.4.2 Subjects

Two groups of subjects participated in this phase of the study: the Pedagogical Group and the Control Group.

The Pedagogical Group consisted of the same group of learners who participated in all other aspects of the study. The purpose of the pronunciation evaluation phase of the study was to obtain an analysis of these learners' speech so that raters could determine whether their pronunciation demonstrated any observable improvement as a result of participating in my pronunciation course. At the time that Phase III took place the Pedagogical Group had fifteen participants, although this number was later reduced to fourteen when one of the IGE learners was cut from the group (see p. 163 above). However, since this decision was taken retrospectively, the speech of all available Pedagogical Group members was rated in this task; thus for the purposes of this phase of the study, the Pedagogical Group featured fifteen members (N=15). The subjects' participation in this phase of the research was covered by the consent form outlined in Appendix B1, which all Pedagogical Group participants had signed prior to filling in the questionnaire in Phase I.

In addition to the Pedagogical Group, recordings were also taken from the Control Group (N=15) whose sole purpose was to provide a comparative basis for the pronunciation development of the learners in the Pedagogical Group. The fifteen members represented eleven different nationalities: Brazil (N=3), South Korea (N=2) and China (N=2), along with Spain, Bulgaria, Panama, Greece, Germany, France, Lithuania and Poland, which were each represented by one member. Reflecting the pedagogical study, there were two subgroups, one from each school in which the study took place. For comparative purposes, the total number of subjects in this group was matched to the total number who formed the Pedagogical Group. The first subgroup consisted of nine learners of English at Intermediate level in the first English language school. They followed the same course of language instruction as the IGE course participants from the Pedagogical Group (FETAC Intermediate Level 4), but in different classes taught by different teachers, and without the pronunciation course component.

The second subgroup consisted of six international postgraduate students attending a pre-sessional English language module at the university that was similar to the module from which the EAP Pedagogical Group participants were drawn. These six EAP control group students were all about to pursue a Masters course in one of four possible sub-disciplines of Linguistics, in contrast to the six EAP Pedagogical Group subjects, who were studying a wide range of subjects, including a mixture of scientific and arts subjects. It is possible that the Control Group's background in language and linguistic study may have rendered their level of English language – and consequently their pronunciation – proficiency more advanced than those of the EAP Pedagogical Group members, but the possible difference in proficiency was deemed to be less significant than the importance of having a comparable control group.

Gender	**Nationality**	**Age in years**	**Pronunciation course**
F	Brazilian	37	IGE
F	Brazilian	32	IGE
M	Bulgarian	27	IGE
M	Chinese	28	IGE
M	Chinese	26	IGE
F	Spanish	40	IGE
M	Brazilian	28	IGE
M	South Korean	30	IGE
M	Panamanian	34	IGE
F	Greek	22	EAP
F	South Korean	28	EAP
M	German	25	EAP
F	French	21	EAP
F	Lithuanian	26	EAP
F	Polish	29	EAP

Table 8: Control Group subjects' profiles

Members of the Control Group signed a consent form before being recorded. This consent form can be viewed in Appendix C1. Details of the Control Group's profile are shown in Table 8 above.

A third group of participants involved in this phase of the study alone were the raters, who, strictly speaking, were not subjects since they did not undergo any analysis themselves, but instead acted as measurement tools. Their purpose in the study was to rate the pronunciation of learners who had participated in the Phase II pedagogical study. This group consisted of 31 native speakers of Irish English, who were living in Ireland, and ranged in age from 20 to 75, with an average age of 32. Following the precedent set in a number of previous studies which also featured accent discrimination tasks (e.g. Flege, Munro, & Mackay, 1995a), the raters had no formal training in linguistics or phonetics, and were deemed capable of carrying out the task of rating the speakers' pronunciation only by virtue of their status as native speakers of English. There was a mixture of male and female raters, but women were in the majority, composing 18 of the 31 participants. All raters were recruited from the researcher's personal acquaintance, and the ratings were carried out anonymously. No consent form was sought from these participants; instead, prior to commencing the evaluation procedure online, they were presented with an information page that outlined the data collection process.

5.4.3 Data collection (I): Speakers

The first part of the data collection for Phase III took place in the days prior to the start of the pedagogical study. Since the purpose of this phase of the study was to evaluate whether any discernible improvement had taken place in the pronunciation of the learners who participated in the pedagogical study, it was necessary to record their speech twice: once before taking part in the pronunciation course, and once immediately afterwards.

The learners who participated in the IGE and EAP pronunciation courses were recorded in the days prior to their participation in the pedagogical study. Since all members of the Pedagogical Group were present from the first lesson in the pronunciation course, they were all recorded in the week preceding the start of the pedagogical study. Although newcomers arrived into the class after this date, and agreed to fill in the Phase I questionnaire and submit to pre- and post-test voice recordings even while the pedagogical study was unfolding, none of these newcomers achieved a level of attendance that was high enough to be included in the Pedagogical Group.

5.4.3.1 Location and equipment

It was decided that since the recordings were to be used for the purposes of pronunciation evaluation, rather than for phonetic or acoustical analysis, it was not essential (nor, indeed, was it practical) to carry out the recordings in a soundproofed booth or an anechoic chamber. Instead, recordings took place in unused rooms on the premises of both institutions.

The IGE course participants were recorded in an empty classroom on the premises of Carlton International College, with the prior consent of the Director of Studies. The classroom was located on an upper floor of the building, which had fewer classrooms than the other floors and consequently ran less risk of external noise that might interfere with the recording process. Participants were recorded individually, with only one learner in the room at a time. This was a deliberate choice on my part, made in an effort to avoid unduly inhibiting the participating learner during the recording process. Similarly, the learners who took part in the EAP pronunciation course were recorded in an unused room on the premises, this time in an available office in the Language Education Centre. Once again, the participants were recorded individually, with no other students or staff members present, to reduce the possibility of noise interference.

In both cases, recordings were made on an mp3 recorder, and were later backed up on a computer as mp3 files in accordance with the confidentiality restrictions outlined in the consent form. During storage, the files were named using a unique string corresponding to the labels being used at the time to denote the subjects. Files were stored in separate folders marked 'Pre-test', 'Post-test', 'Experimental group' and 'Control group'. At no time were the subjects' real names used to identify their corresponding sound files.

5.4.3.2 Data instruments

All speaker participants in Phase III – in both the Pedagogical and the Control Group – were presented with the same two tasks. Instructions were printed on a handout, and read through with the participant, to ensure that the task was fully understood. Two tasks were presented so that when it came to analysing the data, I would have the opportunity to decide between samples of the speaker reading out loud or delivering free speech.

Task 1 (see Appendix C2) was the more controlled task, and consisted of a text which the participant had to read out loud. The text was a short paragraph, and was taken from the Speech Accent Archive (http://accent.gmu.edu/). Task 2 (see Appendix C3) was the free speech task, and featured a list of four possible topics, of which the participant was asked to choose one to talk about for a minute. Any free speech that included information that might possibly identify the participant (e.g. names of people, places or institutions) were edited from the sound files eventually used for the evaluation task, to preserve participants' anonymity.

Speakers were recorded on an mp3 recorder. The sound files were later transferred to a computer and edited down to 30-second samples using Audacity® software. All file names were coded so that participants' anonymity was preserved.

The following speech recordings were collected:

- Pre- and post-test recordings for the 9 IGE Pedagogical Group participants [this was before I had eliminated the ninth participant from the study - see Section 5.1.3.3] - **(18)**;
- Pre- and post-test recordings for the 9 IGE Control Group participants **(18)**;
- Pre- and post-test recordings for the 6 EAP Pedagogical Group participants - **(12)**;
- Pre- and post-test recordings for the 6 EAP Control Group participants - **(12)**.

This numbered 60 tokens of speech in total.

5.4.4 Data collection (II): Raters

5.4.4.1 Location and equipment

The pronunciation evaluation task took place in the form of an online survey. In it, samples of the pronunciation of the members of the Pedagogical Group were assessed by the raters on their own computers and in their own time. The survey was hosted by www.surveymonkey.com. Raters were contacted directly via email by the researcher, and provided with a link to the survey. The 60 edited mp3 files obtained from the speakers had been uploaded to a server at the researcher's university and were connected to the online survey via a series of weblinks. The data was collected over the course of a week, at which point 31 ratings had been received. Shortly afterwards, the mp3s were removed from the server.

Owing to the number of speech tokens to be evaluated, the survey was relatively long. It took up to one hour to complete, depending on the speed of the rater's computer. While this initially caused me some concern, I ultimately decided that there was no specific reason to suspect that the length of time it would take to carry out the survey would act as an impediment to the gathering of reliable data. Participants were advised in advance that the survey would take a minimum of 45 minutes, and later comparison of the evaluations that took place at the beginning and end of the survey revealed no significant difference in the ratings.

When raters were directed to the URL for the pronunciation evaluation survey, they were first met with a welcome page, which outlined the instructions for the evaluation along with their entitlements as participants in my research (see Appendix C4). The survey began on the following page. Each token was presented in the form of a question with four semantic differential scales, one for each of four parameters (accentedness, comprehensibility, Irishness, fluency – see Section 5.4.4.2 for further detail). For each question there was a link to the URL of the relevant mp3 file being stored on the university's server. When the user clicked on it, a media player or internet browser would open the file in a pop-up window and play it.

Because of the potential difficulties associated with carrying out the experiment in one session, raters had the option of saving their changes and returning at a later stage to complete the survey, though this was gently discouraged in the welcoming page since it would be better for the sake of uniformity if all tokens were rated together. Having obtained recordings both of the speakers reading out loud and engaging in free speech, I ultimately decided to use the free speech recordings for the pronunciation evaluation task. Given that raters would have 60 tokens of speech to evaluate, I felt it would be less onerous for them to listen to different speech extracts, as opposed to the same two sentences repeated in 60 successive recordings ("Please call Stella. Ask her to bring these things with her from the store"). Thus the decision was made in an effort to discourage listener fatigue. Each token lasted 20-30 seconds, so allowing time to read the instructions and provide an evaluation for each of the four parameters for each speaker, completion of the evaluation task took 45-60 minutes.

The order in which the speakers' speech samples appeared on the online survey was randomised and then checked to ensure that the recordings of speakers of similar pronunciation competence were distributed throughout the whole survey, and not in successive questions on the survey. This was done, again, to prevent listener fatigue, and also to prevent the rater from becoming complacent about the level of the speakers' proficiency.

5.4.4.2 Data instruments

Raters were asked to evaluate the tokens of speech on a nine-point semantic differential scale for each of the four parameters outlined above. A nine-point scale was chosen because of the findings of Southwood and Flege (1999), who wrote, "An 11- or nine-point scale might improve listener sensitivity when scaling degree of perceived foreign accent" (1999, p. 346). Since a seven- point scale was deemed potentially insufficient to allow raters to adequately discriminate differences in foreign accent, a nine-point scale was chosen instead. (An odd number of points was chosen to give raters the option of selecting a medial value if desired.)

Pooling together the methodological trends established by these and other studies, I arrived at the decision to implement an accent evaluation task that would require raters (for whom English would be their native language) to evaluate the subjects' speech across the following four parameters:

1. accentedness;
2. comprehensibility;
3. Irishness;
4. fluency.

The attributes of accentedness, comprehensibility and fluency were borrowed from previous studies that had used similar accent evaluation tasks (e.g. Derwing et al., 2006; Flege et al., 2006; Yeni-Komshian, Flege, & Liu, 2000), with Irishness added to supplement these ratings. These four parameters were chosen because they were most informative for the purposes of my study. The aim of the pronunciation pedagogy was to help learners to approximate their pronunciation goals by focusing on the elements of speech that would be most pertinent to their aims. For certain learners, this meant reducing the degree of foreign accent in their speech; for others, it meant producing clearer pronunciation; for still others, it meant approximating the sound of Irish English. Since it would be unfeasible to determine by this type of analysis whether learners had reached their goals, and thus prove the success of the pedagogical model. Consequently, the factors by which their pronunciation was to be assessed varied for each learner. For the Phase III recording, the above four parameters were specified because of their relevance to the majority of learners.

Parameters 1, 2 and 4 outlined above were chosen as the basis for comparison based on their use in the wide range of previous foreign accent ratings studies mentioned above. 'Irishness' was added in anticipation of the establishment of 'Irish English pronunciation' as the goal of some of the learners. (It transpired that only one learner in the Pedagogical Group, Lakshmi, aimed to achieve an Irish English accent in her pronunciation, so for all other subjects, this aspect of their pronunciation was not analysed.)

To avoid confusion among raters, instead of simply using the terms 'accentedness', 'comprehensibility' and 'fluency' and presenting a scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree', the survey described each parameter in terms of a scale that was uniquely defined for each one. For example, for accentedness, raters were asked to rate each speaker on a scale from 1 to 9, where 1='no foreign accent' and 9 = 'strong foreign accent'. Comprehensibility was described as 'very easy to understand → very difficult to understand' (based on the definition given by Munro & Derwing 1995b, as outlined on p. 20 above). Fluency was given no further explanation, described only in terms of 'very fluent → very dysfluent' (terminology taken from a similar study carried out by Derwing, Thomson & Munro (2006)). These descriptions were determined to be clear enough not to warrant further explanation, which may have risked distracting the reader. These scales are outlined in Appendix C5, which shows a screen capture of a sample ratings question from this survey.

5.4.5 Data analysis

In order to perform statistical analysis procedures, data had to be taken from www.surveymonkey.com, where it had been gathered, and imported into SPSS via Excel. The data then had to be transposed in order to facilitate analysis of the speakers' ratings rather than those of the raters. This was done manually using the copy and paste function, and crosschecked multiple times with the help of an independent assistant once the data transfer had taken place.

The majority of the analysis involved calculating means for the semantic differential scales of accentedness, comprehensibility and fluency. Means values for each token and then for each speaker's pre-test and post-test were calculated, and the relative improvement or deterioration was calculated. Paired samples t-tests were also carried out to check the significance of any such increase or decrease in the ratings, in order to verify whether differences could be attributable to the pronunciation treatment.

5.5 Phase IV: Interviews

5.5.1 Background

The final phase of the study, the interview phase, took place after the pedagogical study had ended. The goal of the interview phase was to give participants the opportunity to elaborate on their responses to the Phase I questionnaire and the Phase II post-lesson questionnaires, and to discuss their responses to the pronunciation course. From a methodological perspective, the interview provided richer, more detailed information that was more nuanced and more contextualised than previous parts of the study had allowed. This was particularly true of learners' attitudes to their pronunciation, to the role of pronunciation in general, and to the pronunciation course.

5.5.2 Implementation

Only the Pedagogical Group participated in Phase IV. Since all fourteen members had already, in the consent form filled in at the start of the study (see Appendix B1), given their consent to participate in a recorded interview, no further consent was sought. The interviews took place shortly after the pedagogical study had ended, usually in the same session in which the second recording for Phase III was taken.

The interviews followed a semi-structured framework (Coolican, 2004), which meant that an interview schedule was prepared in order to ensure that all central topics were covered, but the sequence and duration of questioning varied from participant to participant. The procedure was relatively informal, with learners encouraged to speak freely and honestly. Although I conducted the interviews in my role as researcher, I had the advantage of having already built up a rapport with the participants as their teacher, so they were already at their ease in my company. This greatly facilitated the interview process as the questions were easily interspersed among the conversation, and there was no need to ask probing questions to obtain the necessary data. In keeping with the semi-structured format, the interview followed a relatively informal structure, so while the same questions were put to every learner, the sequence varied from participant to participant. Every effort was made to ask the questions in a simple, direct manner, to avoid double-barrelled questions (i.e. asking two questions together), and to encourage participants to provide complete responses that would generate discussion and yield informative data, keeping the interview "informal but guided" (Coolican, 2004, p. 153).

The IGE course participants were recorded in an empty classroom in Carlton International College. Only the researcher and the participant were present for the interview, both to eliminate background noise and to reduce the possibility of any inhibition on the part of the participant. Similarly, the EAP course participants were recorded in a free classroom in the Language Education Centre. In both cases, recordings were made on an mp3 recorder, and were later backed up on a computer in accordance with the confidentiality restrictions outlined in the consent form.

Since the interviews were largely based on the questionnaires that the participants had completed in Phases I and II of the study, the interview schedules for all participants were alike but not identical. Because of the high degree of similarity between these schedules, only one was reproduced in the appendix as a prototype from which the content of all others may be inferred (see Appendix D1). However, although a schedule was used to keep the questions on track, the researcher also asked open-ended questions, and allowed the participants to deviate from the questions asked where appropriate, in an effort to gather the richest data possible. During each interview, however, I took notes and followed up on specific statements by the interviewees where I felt it was important to do so.

Each interview lasted between 15 and 35 minutes, and varied depending on the willingness of the interviewee to speak at length about the subject at hand. The interviews with the EAP participants were on average longer than those of the IGE participants, perhaps due to their greater language proficiency and consequent ability to talk at length about the topics being discussed. Interviews were recorded on an mp3 recorder and later transferred to a computer. As in Phase III, the files were labelled with the anonymous codes used to denote the participating subjects, and the subjects' real names were not used anywhere in the file name.

5.5.3 Data analysis

Following the completion of the interviews, the recordings were transcribed (see Section 5.2.3.1). Transcriptions of all fourteen interviews can be found in Appendix D. All transcriptions were carried out by the researcher. The following transcribing conventions were followed:

- Plus signs [+] were used to indicate pauses in the interviewees' speech, with more than one symbol being used to indicate a longer pause;
- Minor hesitations in the speakers' speech were marked by a dash [-];
- Overlapping speech by the interviewer and interviewee was indicated by enclosing the text of the overlapped text in asterisks [**];
- Non-speech items such as coughing and laughing were indicated in italics between square brackets e.g. [*laughs*];
- Apart from full stops, dashes (as highlighted above), question marks and exclamation marks, all other standard punctuation marks were omitted to avoid subjective interpretation of the interviewees' responses.

Given the exploratory nature of the research, I read the transcripts with a view to exploring the nature of the responses and the patterns that emerged in the participants' opinions of and attitudes towards identity and motivation in EFL pronunciation. Analysis was carried out according to the recurrence of specific themes, which were grouped together within a coding framework that followed the qualitative content analysis model previously employed when analysing the results of the Phase I questionnaire (see Section 5.2.4.1 above).

Benefiting from the coding framework that had been established in my incipient analysis of Phase I, I found that similar themes appeared in the Phase IV interview data. Arising out of these themes, as well as those explored in the previous three phases of this study, were three definitive research questions, which I will go on to describe in further detail in the following chapter.

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined the steps I completed to carry out my empirical study. I provided an account of the procedures involved in all phases of the study, including the challenges faced along the way.

One of the main points I made in this chapter was the relevance of a mixed methods approach to this type of research, given the broad range of data I aimed to uncover with this study. The methodological approach I outlined here allowed me to carry out a much-needed classroom study of EFL pronunciation learning, while also investigating the attitudes of a relatively large sample of EFL learners in Dublin to English pronunciation.

Having described the methodological approach employed in this study, I will now go on in the following chapter to present the results of the study and discuss their relevance to contemporary pronunciation research. Bearing in mind the qualitative nature of much of the data obtained in this study, the results and discussion provided in the next chapter will be presented not as a general discussion about the overall themes that appeared across the results of all participants, but rather in the form of a series of case studies of the Pedagogical Group members. Further discussion of this topic, including justification for my selection of this particular approach to data analysis, will be provided in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

6.0 Introduction

In Chapters One and Two I noted that the few previous enquiries that had been conducted into the effect(s) of learner identity and motivation on L2 pronunciation (such as the work of Smit and Dalton, together and separately) had yielded interesting results, and suggested that this topic deserved further exploration. I also presented research that suggested that individual identity was closely affiliated with L2 motivation, and, separately, with L1 pronunciation. Upon further examination of these affiliations, I suggested that while ultimately, the proximate cause of L2 pronunciation patterns was the movement of the articulatory organs of the mouth, these movements were prompted not just by circumstantial influences such as age or L2 exposure, but by the affective phenomena of identity and motivation that contributed to an intermediate stage in pronunciation learning: the development of a target accent.

The inclusion of a target accent in the model of pronunciation learning presented in Figure ii above raised the important question of learners' pronunciation goals. Throughout this thesis I have argued that learners should determine their own pronunciation goals (see e.g. Section 3.3.1), allowing them to incorporate part of their own identity as language learners into the pronunciation learning process. Thus, in an effort to find out more about the types of pronunciation that learners wish to emulate, and how they make their choice, I established **Research Question 1:** What are the pronunciation goals of this group of English language learners, and what factors influence them?

Following on from this question, I returned to the subject of identity as discussed in Chapter Two, and specifically the question of the intuitive association between identity and L1 pronunciation (see Section 2.3.1). I referred to Giles, Coupland & Coupland's Accommodation Theory (1991) and Bell's concept of audience design (1984) in my discussion of the possibility that speakers may select their target L1 accent in accordance with regional or national affiliation. However, S. Millar's (1994) investigation of the role of L1 accent in the formation of group identity highlighted cases where this accent was viewed as an indicator not of regional identification, but of another factor instead, in this case social acceptability (see pp. 70 - 70 above). These studies raised the question of whether such a distinction between regional and social indexing is present in L2 pronunciation, leading to the development of **Research Question 2:** How does learner identity manifest itself in the pronunciation goals of this group of learners?

Returning then to the core element of the study, the development, implementation and evaluation of a pedagogical model of L2 pronunciation, the final research question dealt with the pedagogical study. First, based on my proposed model of L2 pronunciation learning, I developed a set of pedagogical principles (Section 3.3), which I used in the design of a pronunciation course carried out with two groups of EFL learners, as recounted in Chapter Four. Having thus developed and implemented the pedagogical model, I moved on to **Research Question 3:** What is the effect of an EFL pronunciation pedagogy that encourages learners to reflect on their pronunciation goals and use them to project their identities?

Results are based on the four phases of my study (excluding the pilot study, which was used purely to test the efficacy of the questions in the Phase I questionnaire), as previously outlined in Chapter Five. As some subjects took part in several phases of the study and others took part in just one, for ease of reference I have allocated names to the groups of subjects who participated in each phase of the study, as outlined in Table 5 on p. 163 above. Table 5 shows that the subjects fall into one of three categories: Questionnaire Group, Pedagogical Group or Control Group. These titles are used to refer to the subjects throughout this chapter, and when used in tables and figures, are abbreviated to QG, PG and CG respectively.

The qualitative nature of much of my research has allowed me to focus not just on the themes arising out of the data, but more specifically on each learner's unique experience of and contribution to the study; thus it was decided to investigate and present the research as a series of case studies, for two reasons. Firstly, the qualitative nature of the study facilitates a case study approach, allowing the research to be as rich and in-depth as possible. Given the relatively small number of participants in the pedagogical study (as discussed in Section 5.1.1 above), a multiple case-study approach promises optimal, in-depth exploitation of the data, without sacrificing generality. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the case study approach is in keeping with the ethos of the thesis as a whole. I have argued extensively for pronunciation learning to be treated as an individual process, unique to each learner. Within the framework I have presented it is this very uniqueness that most influences the individual's production of L2 pronunciation. To attempt to analyse the findings for the participating subjects as a group would run counter to this ethos. A case-study approach promises the richness and depth and the individual perspective appropriate to the pedagogical approach; using *multiple* case studies promises breadth and aims to provide a certain degree of generalisability.

Consequently, rather than collating the results according to the phase of research from which they were gathered and presenting them in chronological order, I opted to depict the most salient findings as they appear within the total pronunciation learning experience of individual subjects in the form of case studies. Where relevant, I have also included quantitative analysis of results from the Phase I questionnaire in order to establish a broader context for the results of the Pedagogical Group, and from rater analyses of the pre- and post-test recordings of Phase III.

I will begin my analysis of this study by addressing Research Question 1.

6.1 Research Question 1: What are the pronunciation goals of this group of English language learners, and what factors influence them?

6.1.1 Pronunciation goals

Before examining the criteria that help to shape learners' pronunciation goals, we must first examine the goals in question. I will first examine this question in relation to the Questionnaire Group, with a view to establishing the broadest possible picture of EFL learners' pronunciation goals, before considering some of the Pedagogical Group's responses in further detail. Two points should first be clarified. Firstly, the pronunciation goals and motivating influences reported in this section and the next (Section 6.1.2) are based solely on the explicit preferences stated by learners in their responses to the questionnaires and interview. Secondly, responses denote only the learners' motivation at the time of filling in the questionnaire or taking part in the interview. They are not assumed to be permanent, an important matter to bear in mind given the dynamic model of motivation adopted here from previous discussions (see e.g. Section 1.3.4.3 above). Learners were asked to state their pronunciation goals at several points throughout the empirical study: in the Phase I questionnaire, in every post-lesson questionnaire distributed during the Phase II pedagogical study, and again in the Phase IV interview.

Learners were first asked about their goals in the Phase I questionnaire, in a section titled 'Pronunciation Goals'. The lead question in this section was Question 24 (henceforth Q24), and it asked the following:

24. What level of English pronunciation **would you like** to achieve?
    a) To sound like a native speaker of British English
    b) To sound like a native speaker of American English
    c) To sound like a native speaker of Irish English
    d) To sound like a native speaker of **any** variety of English
    e) To sound clear enough for non-native speakers to understand you
    f) To sound clear enough for native speakers to understand you
    Why did you make this choice?

    ____

    ____

Figure vii: Question 24, Phase I Questionnaire

This question was put to all subjects in the Questionnaire Group. As explained in Section 5.2.3.1 above, although 165 respondents completed the questionnaire, 18 of them gave inappropriate responses to Q24 (either omitting it altogether or providing more than one answer). Given the importance of this question to subsequent analysis, I elected to omit these 18 participants from the rest of the questionnaire analysis, so the final number for the Questionnaire Group was N=147.

Having been revised from the pilot study in order to accommodate learners' selection of specific native English varieties as indicated by a) to d) above, Q24 was analysable on two levels: A) whether learners aimed for a native speaker variety of English, or simply to be intelligible to their interlocutors; and B) whether or not those learners who did aim for native speaker pronunciation had a particular variety of English in mind. The following shorthand will be used to refer to each of these six answers:

- *NS British English*
- *NS American English*
- *NS Irish English*
- *NS any English*
- *NNS intelligibility*
- *NS intelligibility*

Let us first consider sub-question A above: whether learners opted for native-like pronunciation or intelligibility. To explore this aspect of learners' pronunciation goals, the above answers are collapsed into two fundamental categories of 'NS variety' [answers a), b), c) and d)] and 'Clear enough to be understood' [answers e) and f)]. 96 of the 147 participants (65.31%) who answered the question selected an 'NS variety' response, while 51 respondents (34.69%) selected a 'Clear enough to be understood' response. The result is represented in Figure viii below.

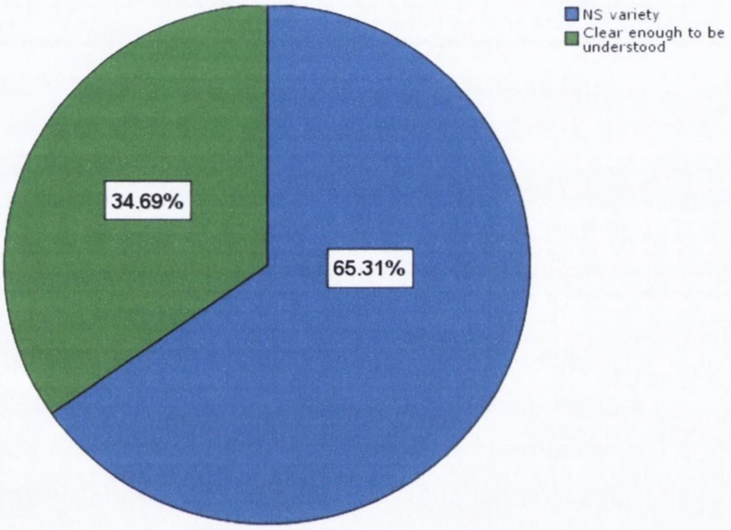

Figure viii: Pronunciation goals (Reduced) – QG (Questionnaire Group)

These numbers indicate that a majority of learners – nearly two thirds – are in favour of aiming for a native-like level of English pronunciation, a finding that seems to run counter to much of the literature which promotes intelligibility as an appropriate goal of pronunciation instruction. However, almost 35% of respondents still prioritise intelligibility (for either native or non-native interlocutors) over native-like pronunciation.

This reminder becomes even more significant when we consider the apparently conflicting results provided by Sub-question B. At this level of analysis, instead of just two basic categories of 'nativeness criterion' and 'intelligibility criterion' goals, learners' choices are defined according to the four discrete varieties of English pronunciation proposed in the question, and whether the learners aim to be intelligible for listeners who were non-native or native English speakers (categories which, it must be stressed, differ qualitatively, not in terms of proficiency level). Figure ix below illustrates the detailed breakdown of the pronunciation goals selected b the 147 respondents who answered Q24.

Despite the fact that, combining the relevant response options, th majority of learners aimed for an NS variety of pronunciation (th nativeness criterion), the most popular *specific* goal amongst thes subjects is answer f), intelligibility for native speakers. Given the choice c all six options indicated in Q24 (see Figure vii above), 46 of the 5 respondents who selected an intelligibility criterion (or 90.2%, whicl equals 31.3% of the overall sample) indicate a desire to achieve a level o pronunciation that would be intelligible to native speakers of English. Whil this number is smaller than the combined number of those who chose an one of the four NS varieties (65.3% as per Figure viii above), it still rate more highly than any *individual* native speaker variety of Englis pronunciation. This paints a more nuanced picture than suggested by th majority preference, as shown in Figure viii above, for a nativenes criterion over an intelligibility criterion.

In spite of the volume of learners who aimed for *NS intelligibility*, only a small minority (N=5, or 3.4% of the sample) stated a preference for pronunciation that is intelligible to *non*-native speakers. Such a low number may reflect the fact that the respondents were all learning English in an Anglophone environment. This matter is further explored with the participants in the Pedagogical Group at the interview stage of the study.

Of the learners who chose NS varieties, those who selected *NS British English* or *NS Irish English* are fairly evenly divided (19% and 16.3% of the valid responses of the overall sample respectively), while only 5 participants (3.4%) selected American English as their model of choice. The comparatively low rating of Irish English pronunciation is an interesting one, given that all learners were residing and studying English in Ireland. This can perhaps be best explained by some combination of three possibilities. Firstly, it is possible that this group of learners saw little benefit in aiming for an Irish variety of English pronunciation, perhaps due to an intended short period of residency in the country (as illustrated by the fact that 41.5% of all respondents said they would be staying in Ireland for only one more year or less). Secondly, even if the learners in question were happy to integrate into Irish society, it is possible that they did not wish to express this integration by means of obtaining an Irish accent. Third, this result may reflect the prestige of British English rather than any

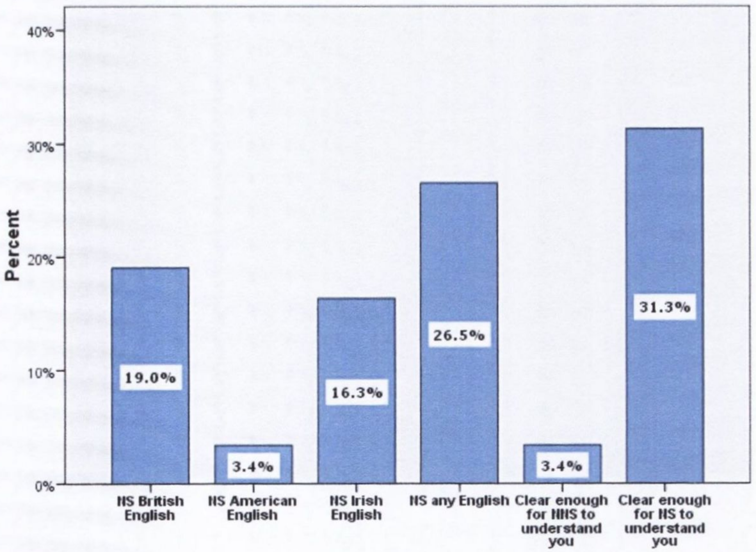

Figure ix: Pronunciation goals (Specific) – Questionnaire Group

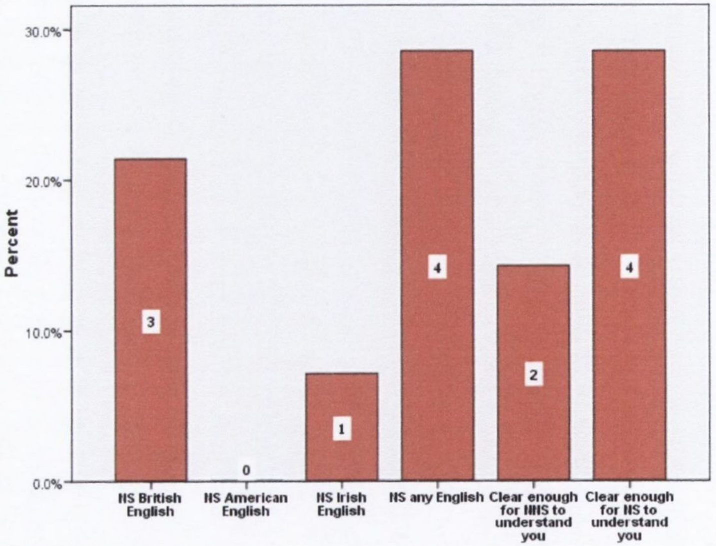

Figure x: Pronunciation goals (Specific) - Pedagogical Group negative evaluation of the usefulness or relevance of Irish English. In an event, the firm descriptive fact that emerges is that only a relatively sma number of learners in this group wished to speak English with an Iris accent.

A clear majority of the learners who aimed for a native-like pronunciatio (N=39, 26.5% of overall sample or 40.6% of the NS criterion responses indicate that they have no preference for a particular model, selecting d) *NS any English*, which is the second most popular goal amongst thi sample. The prevalence of this response, and the correspondingly weake ratings of the specific national varieties of native English pronunciation seem to suggest that these learners selected an NS variety not t demonstrate affiliation with a specific target-language community bu rather because they wanted to have native-speaker-like properties in their pronunciation. This and other issues relating to learners' motivation for choosing specific pronunciation goals are further discussed in Section 6.1.2.

Proportionally, the pronunciation goals of the Pedagogical Group (N=14) were close to those of the Questionnaire Group, though the disparity between the numbers opting for NS-criterion and intelligibility-criterion goals was even less pronounced. Figure x illustrates the numbers for this group, with percentages on the Y-axis and the count value – i.e. the number of learners in this sample who chose the goal in question – outlined in a box on each bar. Amongst these 14 learners, 8 opted for an NS variety of English pronunciation, while the remaining 6 chose a level of intelligibility instead, illustrating a very slight overall preference (57.14% to 42.86%) for native-like pronunciation.

In this group too, the most popular detailed goals were *NS intelligibility* and *NS any English*, with 4 learners selecting each of these. Also in keeping with the trends of the Questionnaire Group, three learners selected *NS British English*, two selected *NNS intelligibility*, and only one selected *NS Irish English*. None of the Pedagogical Group expressed an interest in *NS American English*, but as the numbers who aimed for this goal in the Questionnaire Group were so comparatively low, it is fair to say that the Pedagogical Group is a reasonable representation of the goals of the larger sample (see Figure ix and Figure x above).

However, the key to understanding learners' pronunciation goals lies not just in establishing the goals themselves, but also in understanding learners' motivation for choosing these goals, which leads us on to Section 6.1.2.

6.1.2 Motivation for choosing pronunciation goals

Within the framework of the L2 pronunciation model in Figure ii, the target accent is produced as a result of the combined effect of learners' affective factors, which stem from their motivation and identity. To investigate this proposal and attempt to determine which motivational factors affect learners' selection of English pronunciation goals, let us return to Q24 on the Phase I questionnaire. In this question, in addition to being asked to state the level of English pronunciation they would like to achieve, learners were also asked to justify their selection via an open-ended question ("Why did you make this choice?") added to the multiple-choice option already analysed in Section 6.1.1. Responses were provided by 122 members of the Questionnaire Group. As highlighted on p. 203 above, however, the influences discussed here comprise only those influences of which learners were aware and which they chose to mention on the questionnaire. Given the possibility that learners either may not have conscious awareness of their affiliations, or for personal reasons may not wish to put them on record, conclusions developed on this basis must be drawn in caution.

The initial aim was to place each learner's responses into a single discrete category, according to the subject matter treated in each one. However, as a clearer picture of the data emerged during analysis, it became apparent that many of the responses were too complex to be simply allocated to one category or another.

Instead, responses suggest that learners have a wide range of motivational influences at their disposal, and occasionally draw on more than one of them in the selection of their desired pronunciation goal. Ultimately, seven recurring themes emerged from the analysis. For ease of reference, these themes have been given shorthand labels, which are shown below, and described in further detail immediately afterwards.

1. *Communication*
2. *Realism*
3. *Desire for proficiency*
4. *Cultural identification*
5. *Aesthetic effect*

6. *Work purposes*
7. *Contextual influences*

Communication

Theme 1 has the shorthand title of *Communication*. It represents those learners who chose their pronunciation goal because of their practical wish to communicate with other speakers, whether native or non-native; in other words, they prioritised communication. This is indicated by their responses, e.g.:

- "Because I want only that people understand me in general";
- "I just want to speak the way everybody can understand me";
- "I think it doesn't matter the kind of English, what matters is that it's understood".

This group of participants prioritise the ability to produce intelligible speech, and do not explicitly set any other criteria for their pronunciation goals. This influence is the most frequently cited among the sample, with 55 learners giving a response associated with this theme - either alone or in conjunction with another one - when explaining their choice of pronunciation goal.

Realism

Theme 2 is labelled *Realism*. This theme arises in the responses of those learners who state a clear distinction between what they would ideally aim for if any level were achievable, and what was realistically attainable for them. While these participants indicated that their goal was for intelligible speech, their responses also suggested that native-like pronunciation may hold an appeal for them, were it a more feasible target to achieve, e.g.:

- "Because I know that it is impossible to speak as a native speaker";
- "The ideal level is to sound like a native speaker but I think it's impossible."

These responses suggested that these learners approved of the concept of achieving NS-level pronunciation in theory, but felt that they would settle for a level of communicative efficacy as a more realistic alternative. Eight learners cite the difficulty of achieving a native-like level of English pronunciation as a reason to aim for their chosen, more realistic, pronunciation goal.

Desire for proficiency

Theme 3 as outlined above, *Desire for proficiency*, indicates a desire on the part of the learner to deliver the best pronunciation possible. Twenty nine learners' responses alluded to this theme, e.g:

- "Then my English will be good";
- "I'd love to become that good, so that native speakers won't realise that I'm foreign immediately".

Cultural identification

Theme 4, *Cultural identification*, was stated by learners whose pronunciation goal was associated with a desire to identify with a given cultural group. Some of the responses that indicate this theme include the following:

- "I prefer to pronounce British English because I'm interested in British novels and culture";
- "I like Irish people";
- "I think that you don't have to seem like other people, it's important not to lose your identity";
- "Because I am Sicilian and in a way I don't want to lose my accent".

These responses illustrate that these learners may have chosen their pronunciation goals in an attempt to demonstrate their identification with either the target language community, or the L1 community. This influence arises in the responses of eight (N=8) learners.

Aesthetic effect

The fifth theme outlined above denotes learners' personal preferences for the sound of the chosen accent, and is given the label of *Aesthetic effect*. This theme applies to those learners whose pronunciation goals were selected on the basis of how they sound, rather than because of the function they might have or the identity they might convey of the speaker. Comments from some of the 28 learners who referred to this theme in their responses include the following:

- "I just like the way of the Irish. British English sounds stiff";
- "Because I like the Irish accent";
- "British English has most beautiful sound to hearing".

Work purposes

Theme 6 outlined above is the somewhat more specific theme of *Work purposes*. This theme encompasses the responses of all those learners who wished to achieve their chosen variety of pronunciation for employment reasons. This theme is the one that most closely resembles Gardner and Lambert's (1972) construct of instrumental motivation, as it relates to the practical gains at stake pending successful achievement of the learner's goal. In this case, however, the practical gains are purely professional and relate solely to the demands (or even requirements) of the learner's job. Ten learners referred to this category of themes in their responses:

- "Because I need speak English for the job";
- "I arrived in Dublin to improve my English because in Brazil it's so important to speak English to get a good job".

This last quote came from one of the members of the Pedagogical Group, Gustavo, whose selection of pronunciation goals will be discussed in Section 6.1.3, which follows this one.

Contextual influences

The final theme, *Contextual influences*, refers to the influences of a specific learning environment (e.g. classroom or national). This theme differs from the others in that previous categories involved a goal arising from an internal impetus, while those whose motivating influences matched this description appear to have been more influenced by the circumstances in which they happened to have learned the language. In this regard, these factors are similar in nature to the circumstantial factors outlined in the model of L2 pronunciation learning (Figure ii). In all, twelve respondents presented a reason for choosing their pronunciation that was categorised under the heading of contextual influences. Some of their responses were:

- "Because I live in Ireland now. So I think Irish English pronunciation I like to achieve";
- "Because I live in Ireland and I'll have interaction with British and Irish people";
- "Because I learned British English in school";
- "Since I started learning English I have studied it listening to cassette tape which was recorded by a native speaker of American English".

These seven themes are defined on the basis of the responses given by learners to the last part of Q24 on the Phase I questionnaire. However, as previously mentioned, they do not necessarily form seven discrete categories, and a total of 27 responses are classifiable as representative of more than one theme. This is particularly true of the themes of *Communication* and *Desire for proficiency*, which 'co-feature' in 13 and 14 learner responses respectively alongside another theme. Consider the following examples of responses considered characteristic of 'More than one' theme:

"Even if I prefer the American accent my goal is to speak English very well in any situation"
This response suggests the learner had a personal preference for the sound of the American accent, but still aimed primarily to achieve a high level of English pronunciation; thus it is deemed to represent both *Desire for proficiency* and *Aesthetic effect*.

"Because I wanna talk to people from all over the world in English, especially doing business"
This response suggests that the learner's job provided the main motivating influence for her choice of pronunciation goal. However, she also clarified that it was necessary for communicating with people worldwide, suggesting she was influenced by both *Work purposes* and *Communication*.

"Because I live in Ireland and I think the Irish accent very good"
This learner really gave two responses here, by firstly citing her place of residence ("Because I live in Ireland") and then stating a preference for the Irish accent ("and I think the Irish accent very good"), suggesting she was influenced by *Contextual influences* and *Aesthetic effect*.

A breakdown of the number of responses citing each theme is provided in Table 9 below. This was taken from the total sample of 122 learners who responded to this part of the question. It encompasses responses that referred to only one theme and those that referred to more than one. As evidenced by this table, the most commonly-cited reason for selecting a given pronunciation goal was that of a desire to communicate, which was selected more often than the next two most common responses combined, featuring in 55 responses, or 49.1% of valid responses. The next most popular reasons given were *Desire for proficiency* and *Aesthetic effect,* which arose in 29 and 28 responses respectively. These results seemed to suggest that an overwhelming majority of respondents prioritised the communicative value of pronunciation over any other.

Themes	No. of responses	% of valid sample
Communication	55	49.1%
Desire for proficiency	29	23.8%
Aesthetic effect	28	21.4%
Contextual influences	12	9.2%
Work purposes	10	8.2%
Realism	8	6.6%
Cultural identification	8	6.1%

Table 9: No. of occurrences of each theme in motivational influences

The results also indicate that only a minority of learners felt that their English pronunciation ought to convey identification with a given cultural or linguistic group. Bearing in mind the arguments made in Chapter Two of this thesis – particularly those of Jenkins (e.g. 2000, 2002a) – in relation to the role of pronunciation in conveying identification with a given linguistic community, it is perhaps most interesting to note that the theme of cultural identification arose in only eight responses (6.1% of sample). This would seem to indicate, however tentatively – and bearing in mind the caveats regarding explicit and implicit responses at the start of this chapter – that an intention to use L2 pronunciation to project linguistic or cultural affiliation is a priority acknowledged by a relatively small number of learners.

Such a trend would seem to suggest that Jenkins' argument for mutual intelligibility as the primary EIL phonological model may not be wholly compatible with learners' views on the role of English pronunciation, despite her assertion that "one of the only means available to preserve L1 identity is, increasingly, L1 accent" (2000, p. 207, as highlighted on p. 56 above). However, it should also be borne in mind that while Jenkins' proposals are for an EIL population, the findings of my study are based on an EFL population of learners who have relocated to a native English-speaking country, a factor that may well qualitatively distinguish their English pronunciation goals and functions from the learners to whom Jenkins refers.

Having explored the motivational influences of the Questionnaire Group as a whole, let us now turn to those of the Pedagogical Group in particular – as cited in the Phase I questionnaire – which are outlined in Figure xi below. This diagram illustrates the motivations of the group as a whole, though only nine of the fourteen PG subjects gave a reason on the questionnaire for choosing their particular goal. Even with such small numbers, however, the similarity to the Questionnaire Group remains consistent.

The most frequently-cited motivation among the Pedagogical Group is that of a practical need for communication, which was stated by five learners. Two subjects' responses fall under the category of *Desire for proficiency*. This is just ahead of *Aesthetic effect* and *Work purposes* which each accounted for one response. Only one learner entered a response that referred to more than one theme, and it alluded to *Communication* and *Aesthetic effect*, which fails to alter the overall appearance of the data findings. These combined observations suggest that the Pedagogical Group's pronunciation motivation is representative of that of the Questionnaire Group.

Over the course of the next several weeks in subsequent phases of the study, subjects from the Pedagogical Group were given frequent opportunities to restate both their pronunciation goals and their reasons for them in questionnaire form (following each lesson of the pronunciation course). The following three sections will present three individual subjects from the Pedagogical Group, with a view to establishing a more detailed picture of the factors that contribute to the formation of their pronunciation goals.

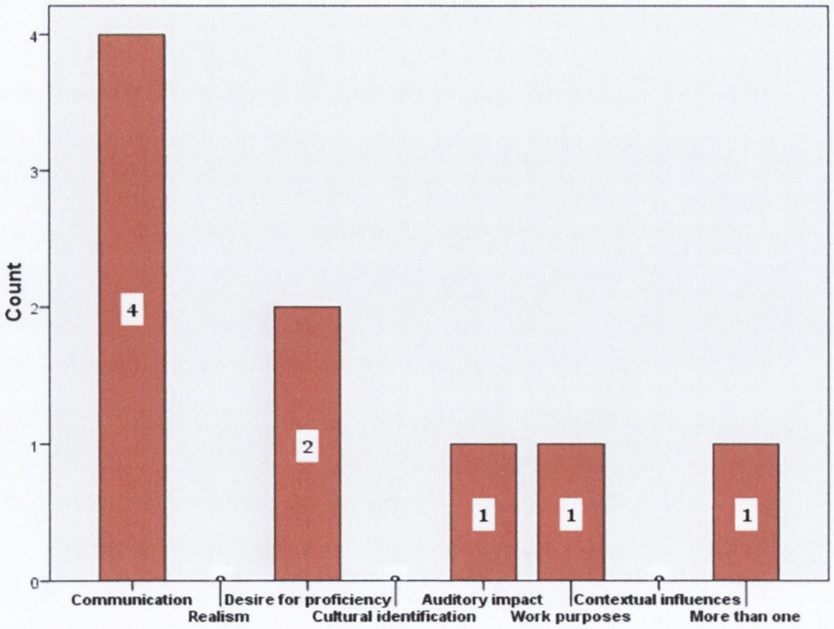

Figure xi: Reasons for pronunciation goal - Pedagogical Group

6.1.3 Case Study: Gustavo

Gustavo was a 28-year-old male student from Brazil. His first language was Portuguese and he had arrived in Dublin just one month before the start o this study. He had made the decision to come to Ireland with the intention of living there for one year to improve his English in order to advance his career prospects in advertising back home in Brazil. He was working part-time in Dublin, and studying English at Intermediate level (FETAC Level 4). He had enrolled for six months' tuition, of which he was currently in his second month.

In the Phase I questionnaire (Appendix A4), Gustavo made it clear that for him, English pronunciation was primarily a means of being understood by all listeners. In Q24, he selected *NS intelligibility* as his English pronunciation goal, explaining "I arrived to Dublin to improve my English because in Brazil is so important to speak English to get a good job". The subject's response suggests that the emphasis for him was on the merits of intelligible English pronunciation in advancing his career prospects, rather than an inherent wish to make his pronunciation better. When asked if he liked his current English pronunciation (Q19), he replied no, and attributed his response to occasional breakdowns of communication: "Because some people don't understand what I'm saying maybe because my English is American." Throughout this questionnaire, Gustavo gave little indication of any deeply-rooted personal pronunciation motivation. He did not express strong enjoyment of the skill in his English classes, rating it below his enjoyment of English generally (see Q11, Q12, Appendix A4), though he gave no reason for this difference. At this initial stage of the investigation, Gustavo's motivation appeared to be purely based on what Gardner & Lambert (1972) would have classed as 'instrumental motivation', i.e. a desire for the practical benefits that would ensue from attaining an intelligible level of pronunciation.

As the study progressed, Gustavo changed his stated goal on two occasions (Lessons IGE1.1 and IGE3.2), but otherwise stuck to his original selection of *NS intelligibility*. Table 10 below tracks these changes from the Phase I questionnaire, throughout the pedagogical study (Phase II), to the final interview (Phase IV). His participation in the pedagogical study confirmed his focus on communicative pronunciation. In the very first lesson of the pronunciation course (1.1), he took part in a classroom activity where learners were asked to discuss, in pairs, what type of English pronunciation they would like to have – British, American, Irish or other. He and his partner (Adriana - see Section 6.2.1. below) agreed that they were not interested in taking on the accent of a particular country, but only in being understood.

Gustavo reinforced this view in his comments on the post-lesson questionnaires, when asked questions that were not directly related to his pronunciation goal. In the questionnaire distributed after Lesson IGE3.2, when asked to rate on a Likert scale of 1 - 7 his level of agreement with the statement "I like having a foreign accent in English" (with 1 being "completely agree" and 7 being "completely disagree" - Q3, Appendix B12), Gustavo entered a 5, suggesting that he did not like having a foreign accent. He defended his low ranking by suggesting that a foreign accent impeded intelligibility: "Because I think that when you have a foreign accent is more difficult for the people to understand you." Later on in the pedagogy after Lesson IGE5.2, when specific features of pronunciation were being addressed, he also assessed the importance of each feature in terms of its contribution to intelligibility, e.g. "Sometimes when you speak fast you join the words and make it difficult to understand" (Appendix B21, Q2).

Throughout the questionnaire and pedagogy stages of the study, Gustavo's drive to attain a level of *NS intelligibility* in his pronunciation had seemed almost one-dimensional, consisting only in being clear enough to be understood, but in the Phase IV interview, he introduced another aspect that had not yet come to light. When asked if he would prefer to speak with a native English accent if it were possible, he replied, "Oh yes yes [...]. I think if you could do something better than average it's better" (Appendix D5, l. 73-76). This suggests that for him, a native-like level of pronunciation was inherently superior to a merely intelligible one. However, since such a level was (he believed) beyond his ability he opted instead to aim for a level that would render his pronunciation intelligible to native speakers. In terms of the motivational influences presented in Section 6.1.2 above, his approach might reasonably be influenced by the category of *Realism*.

Two points of interest arise in Gustavo's discussion of his pronunciation goals. Firstly, his main priority was to communicate successfully in English, a priority that remained consistent throughout the study. For Gustavo, native-like pronunciation appeared to be desirable only in so far as it was, for him, the ultimately intelligible accent. His stalwart adherence to the

Phase of study	Stated goal	Explanation
Questionnaire	NS intelligibility	"I arrived to Dublin to improve my English because in Brazil is so important speak English to get a good job"
Lesson IGE1.1	NS any English	"Because for me is just important improve my English to work in Brazil"
Lesson IGE2.1	NS intelligibility	"Because I will just use my English to work in Brazil"
Lesson IGE3.2	NNS intelligibility	"Because I just need to have a good English to work in Brazil in my area"
Lesson IGE4.1	NS intelligibility	"I just want that the people understand me"
Lesson IGE5.1	NS intelligibility	"I just want that the people understand me"
Lesson IGE5.2	NS intelligibility	"I just want to communicate with the people"
Lesson IGE6.1	NS intelligibility	"I just want that the people can understand me"
Lesson IGE6.2	-	(absent)
Lesson IGE7.1	NS intelligibility	–
Lesson IGE7.2	NS intelligibility	–
Interview	NS intelligibility	"I just want that people understand me" *(Appendix D5, l. 69-70)*

Table 10: Gustavo's pronunciation goals throughout study

values of a communicatively efficient level of pronunciation implied that his aspirations to an NS level were closely related to his perception of its comprehensibility. In other words, his view of NS English pronunciation appeared to be based on a quantitative evaluation of its intelligibility, with NS pronunciation at one end of the spectrum, and unintelligible pronunciation at the other. The accuracy of such an evaluation is questionable, given the subjective nature of terms like intelligibility and comprehensibility; but for this learner, within this conceptualisation, it is clear that native speaker pronunciation was a goal that did not represent the cultural or linguistic background of a given group of speakers, but rather the ultimate level of intelligibility against which all other pronunciation must be measured.

The second point raised in this section is Gustavo's reasoning for choosing this pronunciation goal. Although at various intervals throughout the study Gustavo peripherally mentioned other factors which may have had a more minor influence on his choice of pronunciation goal, such as the lure of better job prospects in the future and an inherent drive for accomplishment, the motivation behind his choice of English pronunciation goal was firmly rooted in a basic desire to engage in successful communication with any group of interlocutors. However, taking into consideration the above view of NS English pronunciation as one end of a spectrum of intelligibility, it is conceivable that the themes arising in Gustavo's motivating influences were set along a similar spectrum. Within this framework, his proximate, most urgent and most achievable goal was that of communicative competence, with the development of career prospects and the desire for pronunciation proficiency situated further along the spectrum once the initial goal had been acquired.

Considered in terms of the L2 pronunciation model shown in Figure ii above, Gustavo's Ideal L2 Self appeared to take a number of forms, in accordance with the pronunciation model shown in Figure ii above. His most salient, or most immediately achievable, Ideal L2 Self may take the form of an individual who can communicate successfully in English, while a subsequent Ideal L2 Self, waiting to be selected as the most salient choice at a later stage, may be an individual who is successfully employed in an advertising career in Brazil, while also being able to communicate successfully in English. Thus the existence of multiple facets of the Ideal L2 Selves may also account for the fact that Gustavo mentioned a number of different factors influencing his selection of pronunciation goal: each facet is the representative of a goal to be addressed at different points along the spectrum of his L2 achievement.

As Gustavo's responses in Phase I indicate that he is one of dozens of learners (N=52) who chose *NS intelligibility* as their goal, he can be viewed as a typical example of the Questionnaire Group; thus there is a strong argument to be made that his pronunciation motivation profile is a typical one for EFL learners.

6.1.4 Case Study: Lakshmi

Lakshmi came from Mauritius and was aged 28. Her native languages were French and Mauritian Creole. At the time of the study she had been living in Ireland for two years, after originally coming to Dublin for a course in nursing. While taking this course she met an Irish man, and at the time my study took place they were engaged to be married a year later, after which they intended to continue living in Ireland. Lakshmi had studied English for five years in Mauritius prior to coming to Ireland, and was registered for six months' English language tuition in Carlton International College at Intermediate level. She had not returned home to Mauritius since arriving in Ireland two years previously. She alone among the subjects of the Pedagogical Group intended to remain in Ireland on a permanent basis.

Lakshmi's personal story and her intention to settle down in Ireland immediately set her apart from the other subjects in the study. Whereas all other participants were intent on leaving Ireland in less than five years – in some cases, within a matter of months (e.g. Gustavo above) – Lakshmi had already carved out a life for herself there. With this in mind, it is perhaps unsurprising that she was the only subject in the Pedagogical Group to select a goal of *NS Irish English*. Furthermore, as Table 11 (below) demonstrates, she was consistent in this goal; she was one of only four subjects who declared the same goal throughout the entire study (see Table 11 below).

Given Lakshmi's circumstances, it would be understandable if her goal of *NS Irish English* was chosen as a means for her to identify with her adopted home. However, her responses throughout the majority of the study were not quite so straightforward. Although Lakshmi did not explain her choice of *NS Irish English* goal when she first stated it in Q24 on the Phase I questionnaire, she did share some insight in Q25. This question asked how long the learner had wanted to achieve her stated pronunciation goal. Lakshmi selected answer b) – 'Since you decided to come to Ireland' – but explained "I want to learn more and have a good English." This statement suggests that her choice of goal was motivated more by a desire to speak English proficiently than a wish to express solidarity with Ireland or Irish people.

Furthermore, throughout the pedagogical phase of the study, although she stated the same goal of *NS Irish English* in every post-lesson questionnaire, in her justifications Lakshmi never referred to her status as

Phase of study	**Stated goal**	**Explanation**
Questionnaire	NS Irish English	-
Lesson IGE1.1	-	(absent)
Lesson IGE2.1	-	-
Lesson IGE3.1/3.2	NS Irish English	"I like native English accent"
Lesson IGE4.1	NS Irish English	"I like to talk like the Irish English"
Lesson IGE5.1	NS Irish English	"I would love to talk like the native Irish people"
Lesson IGE5.2	NS Irish English	"I like to speak like native Irish English"
Lesson IGE6.1	NS Irish English	"I would love to speak like the Irish pronunciation"
Lesson IGE6.2	NS Irish English	"I like the pronunciation"
Lesson IGE7.1	NS Irish English	"I like the accent"
Lesson IGE7.2	-	-
Interview	NS Irish English	"Because when they talk I love the way they talk so quickly and I love it!" *(Appendix D9, l. 173-174)*

Table 11: Lakshmi's pronunciation goals throughout study

an Irish resident, or to her relationships with Irish people, but instead stated that she simply enjoyed the sound of Irish English: "I would love to talk like the native Irish people"; "I love the pronunciation", etc; in terms of the themes outlined in Section 6.1.2 above, these responses would fall under the heading of *Aesthetic effect*.

Curiously, unlike her fellow learners, Lakshmi did not seem to be strongly motivated by an emphasis on successful communication. Her behaviour right throughout the pedagogical phase of the study indicated that intelligibility alone was insufficient to determine her opinion of a given accent. In Lesson IGE3.1 as described in Section 4.1.3 above, Lakshmi gave four of the five speakers the highest possible intelligibility rating, but disagreed strongly that she would like to speak in the same way as any speakers, apart from the first one; this speaker was from Kilkenny, the only Irish speaker represented in this exercise, thus apparently confirming

Lakshmi's preference for an Irish-accented version of English pronunciation.

However, while she did not explicitly place a priority on intelligibility, in the post-lesson questionnaire that followed Lesson IGE3.2 (Appendix B12), Lakshmi indicated that she associated NS English with quality and clarity, an association that may also have contributed to her interest in obtaining an NS variety. When asked to agree or disagree with 'I like having a foreign accent in English', she gave it a rating of 7 (meaning 'completely disagree') and explained: "I like speak a clear English" (Lesson IGE3.2, Q3). This would appear to indicate that in Lakshmi's eyes, 'clear English' and non-native English were mutually exclusive.

So far we have seen evidence to support any one of a number of motivating influences on Lakshmi's choice of Irish English pronunciation goal: a preference for the aesthetic effect of the accent, a desire for proficient English, or a belief in the superior intelligibility of a native speaker model. However, in interview, more deeply-rooted issues arose.

In the warm-up stage of the interview, Lakshmi spoke at length of her love of Ireland, citing the weather and the (Irish English) language as her favourite aspects of living here. She chatted animatedly about her regular interaction with Irish acquaintances, including her neighbours and her fiancé's family; but a misunderstanding in the next question prompted a more revealing insight. The question put to her was, "Do you ever feel like you're a different person sometimes when you speak English compared to when you speak your own language?". Lakshmi, however, took the question to mean "Do you ever feel different to your peers?", and seized the opportunity to speak at length about feeling on the periphery of any gathering of Irish people:

> Yeah especially when I am with a group of Irish people. So I can feel it because sometimes [...] I can see when the people from Sligo talking to me, Limerick talking to me, the accent is [...] very difficult to understand them. So when I talk I need to slow down and I feel really embarrassed and I can feel that I am from Mauritius and they are from Ireland because the way they talk. So but I try my best to reach the top like they are but maybe it's gonna take quite a long time because the accent's quite difficult to get it. Yeah. (Appendix D9, l. 42-51)

This speech demonstrated Lakshmi's discomfort at being 'the odd one out' in a group of Irish people, and more importantly, her identification of accent as a feature that separated her from them. It is noteworthy that even though she observed that the pronunciation of certain group members was "very difficult to understand" (l. 45-46), she still felt pressure (albeit self-generated) to follow their lead and attempt to replicate their pronunciation, rather than asking them to modify theirs in order to facilitate her understanding. However, far from feeling vexed at this situation, Lakshmi went on to say that she used it to spur her on to achieve her goal: "I try to understand them and try to speak the same so I can say that it help me" (l. 54-56).

There remains the fact that in the pedagogical stages of the study, Lakshmi justified her *NS Irish English* goal by claiming a preference for the sound of the accent. To investigate these claims, at interview I asked her to describe some features of pronunciation that were distinctive of Irish English. She expressed difficulty in pinpointing specific features: "I can't explain it but I know - I know how it is. The sound - the way they pronounce it - I don't know how to explain it but it's different - it's different!" (l. 208-210). At a later stage in the interview, she correctly cited the vowel sound /ʊ/ as in /'bʊtəɹ/ ('butter') as a feature typical of the Irish English accent; though it should be added, she was eager not to replicate that particular feature ("I would not like to say /bʊs/ or/'bʊtəɹ/!") (l. 256). This suggests that her claims to be motivated to achieve Irish English pronunciation because she enjoyed the sound did not wholly account for her desire to emulate it. Bearing in mind her earlier comment regarding feeling different to her contemporaries, it seems possible that she viewed English pronunciation as a means of creating and potentially dissolving barriers, and aimed to use it to integrate into the group of her Irish peers.

From these statements, we can see that like Gustavo, Lakshmi's choice of pronunciation goal was influenced by a broad range of factors. In addition to *Aesthetic effect*, which was the influence she most often cited on the post-lesson questionnaires throughout the Phase II pedagogical study, throughout the study she maintained the view that a native-like level of pronunciation was more conducive to clarity and intelligibility. Furthermore, she also suggested a wish to use her English pronunciation to minimise the differences between her and her peers, by adapting it to sound more like those around her. However, analysis of the evaluations of Lakshmi's pronunciation showed her 'Irishness' rating went from 5.13 to 5.58 on the pre- and post-test recordings, with 1 representing "very like an Irish accent" and 9 representing "very unlike an Irish accent". This suggests that according to the independent listeners, her pronunciation did not sound any more similar to an Irish accent after attending the pronunciation course than it did beforehand.

Taking into account Lakshmi's unquestionable personal and emotional ties with Ireland, and her unwavering commitment to spending the rest of her life there, it is highly probable that she viewed English pronunciation primarily as a means of creating and potentially dissolving social barriers, and aimed to identify linguistically with her peers. With this in mind, it can be argued that Lakshmi conceptualised English pronunciation differently to Gustavo – who, it was posited in the previous section, viewed NS English as the most advanced level of intelligible pronunciation. Lakshmi, however, evaluated English pronunciation from an entirely different perspective. Her desire to use her pronunciation to show her identification with her Irish contemporaries demonstrated a qualitative, rather than a quantitative appraisal of the phonological qualities of the language. Put differently, Lakshmi's Ideal L2 Self was a speaker of Irish English who would be linguistically indistinguishable from her Irish peers, and it was this identity that appeared to be most salient throughout her participation in the empirical study.

6.1.5 Case Study: Josefina

Josefina was a female student aged 32, who, like Gustavo, came from Brazil. Her native language was Portuguese and she had come to Ireland both to join her British boyfriend who was already living there, and to continue learning English (she had previously studied it for six years in Brazil). At the time the study began, she had been living in Dublin for three months, studying English part-time. She had enrolled in a 12-month course of English tuition at Intermediate level, and was in her fourth month of the course when the study began. She intended to stay in Ireland for at least a year, and was undecided where she would go at that point, though she considered the possibility of either staying in Dublin or moving on to another place with her boyfriend. She did not express an interest in returning immediately to Brazil. Though no formal assessment took place in the time that she was in my class, as her teacher, I ranked Josefina as one of the more advanced learners in the class, based on her ability to excel in daily activities. Immediately after the pedagogical study ended she advanced to Upper Intermediate level (FETAC Level 5).

In Q24 in the initial Phase I questionnaire, Josefina's stated preference was for *NS British English*, because, she claimed, "I really like the British accent". Immediately, this answer set Josefina apart from Gustavo above: while from the outset Gustavo stressed his very practical goal to use his English pronunciation to get a job, Josefina appeared to be more immediately motivated by less practical concerns, namely the aesthetic effect of the accent, as had Lakshmi. However, on the next question, she confirmed that she had wanted to achieve British pronunciation ever since beginning to learn English, as she had been taught this variety at school in Brazil (Q25), a statement that points to contextual influences as well. It is apparent from these findings that multiple factors contributed to the selection of Josefina's pronunciation goal.

Josefina had a strong appreciation of the importance of pronunciation. When asked if she enjoyed studying pronunciation in English class (Q12), she selected the most enthusiastic response available ("Yes, I enjoy English pronunciation very much") and wrote "Because is important to improve pronunciation, not only grammar". However, in spite of her interest in the subject – or perhaps in part because of it – a recurring theme in Josefina's questionnaire was her apparent lack of confidence in her pronunciation ability. When asked to rate her own pronunciation, she replied only 'Average', the mid-point of the scale (Q18). When asked if she liked her pronunciation, her answer reinforced this negative self-image: "No, because sometimes my Brazilian accent get me confused. I think I need to practise more." Later on in interview, when asked to clarify this comment, Josefina explained that by confusion, she meant being unable to access the right vocabulary because of being under pressure; in other words, she found that having an accent caused her to get flustered and adversely affected her linguistic performance (Appendix D4, l. 100-104). Furthermore, when asked on the Phase I questionnaire if she had ever had any positive or negative experiences because of her pronunciation, she claimed no positive experiences, but one negative: "Because I tried to say one word but my pronunciation was wrong and the person couldn't understand what I wanted" (Q21). This tendency towards self-criticism indicates that Josefina set very high standards for herself.

However, the data so far relates largely to the subject's responses to the Phase I questionnaire, and her pattern of stated pronunciation goals throughout the whole study was a changeable one, as shown in Table 12 below. Over the study's duration, she switched between NS variety and intelligibility goals. However, she also expressed a variety of different justifications, and tended to state a different motivation with each goal.

Phase of study	Stated goal	Explanation
Questionnaire	NS British English	"Because I really like the British accent"
Lesson IGE1.1	NS intelligibility	"I think it is important to be clear enough for a native speaker understand me, because this is not my language (English) and I want to speak correct"
Lesson IGE2.1	-	(absent)
Lesson IGE3.1/3.2	NS intelligibility	"I think the main reason to learn English in other country is to be close of the native English speaker and try to be clear enough to them understand me"
Lesson IGE4.1	-	(absent)
Lesson IGE5.1	NNS intelligibility	-
Lesson IGE5.2	NS intelligibility	-
Lesson IGE6.1	NS intelligibility	-
Lesson IGE6.2	NS intelligibility	-
Lesson IGE7.1	-	(absent)
Lesson IGE7.2	NS intelligibility	-
Interview	British English	"I think it's very charming British English and I think it's very nice" *(Appendix D4, l. 94-95)*

Table 12: Josefina's pronunciation goals throughout study

In the first lesson of the Phase II pedagogy, for example, she selected *NS intelligibility* as her goal, which suggested that she was setting herself a more achievable target of bare communicative proficiency compared to the *NS British English* goal she stated in Phase I. Instead, however, she ascribed the *NS intelligibility* goal to the fact that "this is not my language (English) and I want to speak correct". This introduced a new level of motivation that she had not explicitly expressed in Phase I – a desire for proficiency in her target pronunciation. Furthermore, this wish to perform well may have been affiliated to the apparently low opinion she held of her pronunciation, as discussed above. Her reference to the fact that "this is not my language" may have meant that she felt somewhat excluded by virtue of her status as a non-native speaker, and that she had to speak correctly in order to live up to the standards imposed on her by native speakers. This possibility was further explored in Josefina's interview - see below.

Throughout the rest of the pedagogy, Josefina maintained her goal of *NS intelligibility*, though her motivation for doing so seemed to vary. The emphasis on the intelligibility of different accents early in the pronunciation course may have been a contributing factor. In Lesson IGE3.2, learners were asked to listen to a selection of five speakers, a mixture of NS and NNS, and to evaluate them in terms of their intelligibility, fluency, accuracy and a number of affective variables. While Josefina tended to give fairly high intelligibility ratings to all five speakers, she also gave clear indications that she would not like to emulate the speech of the final two speakers - who, incidentally, were the only two non-native speakers among the selection. This suggests that Josefina associated native speaker pronunciation and intelligibility, and also that her desire to speak 'correct', on this occasion at least, outweighed her desire to speak just clearly enough to be understood.

When Josefina was interviewed, she stated again her admiration and preference for British English; and, as in the first questionnaire, she attributed this to her appreciation of the sound of the accent: "I don't like American English. I don't hate it but I don't think it's - I think it's very charming British English and I think it's very nice. I would like to speak it" (Appendix D4, l. 116-119). Having said that, however, she showed that she was aware that she had changed her pronunciation goal from *NS British English* to *NS intelligibility* throughout the pedagogy, and offered this explanation: "I think I will never speak like British English people so my ideal again is to speak English clear and with good pronunciation [...] then a native speaker can understand me" (Appendix D4, l. 134-137).

From this we can conclude that while Josefina's Ideal L2 Self may be a speaker of British English, and her desire to for pronunciation proficiency and view of native speaker varieties as a means to achieve this will encourage her to strive for this goal, her realistic side will allow her to be content with the nearest approximation possible, as long as she is intelligible to native speakers. This supports the suggestion of proximate to ultimate goal as discussed in relation to Gustavo in Section 6.1.3 above.

The insight provided by these subjects and the analysis of the Phase I questionnaire suggest that while a variety of different factors contribute to the selection of pronunciation goals, the role of identity appears to vary widely from learner to learner, paving the way for examination of Research Question 2.

6.2 Research Question 2: How does learner identity manifest itself in the pronunciation goals of this group of learners?

As we saw in Section 6.1, language learners draw on a wide variety of influences when selecting a goal for EFL pronunciation. These influences range from the functional (such as a need to communicate a level that is good enough to get a job) to the personal (e.g. a desire to integrate with the target language community). Closer examination of the motivating influences of Gustavo, Lakshmi and Josefina above showed multiple factors at play, with different emphases, and occasionally different goals, being selected at given moments. While Lakshmi, for example, stated her justification for choosing an *NS Irish English* goal as a personal preference for a superficial feature of the accent, her underlying reasoning was later revealed to be based on cultural identification and integration.

With this in mind, and the issue of the influence of identity on pronunciation goal choice already emerging as a complex, multi-layered one, the question remains as to how learner identity relates to L2 pronunciation.

Let us recall that within the terms of the model of L2 pronunciation learning presented in Figure ii above, pronunciation goals are determined by the influence of affective factors, which essentially comprise a number of possible selves derived from a hierarchy of identities. With this in mind, the seven motivational influences presented in Section 6.1.2 above can also be interpreted in this way: for each influence there exists a corresponding Ideal L2 Self, as illustrated in Table 13 below.

It is notable that the ideal selves described here represent very different aspects of personal identity, referring to the speaker's command of the L2, her national and ethnic affiliation, and her professional identity. The blank box next to *Contextual influences* refers to the fact that these are *external* factors that exert an influence on the pronunciation learning process, such as previous pronunciation instruction experience, country of residence, etc.

It was noted in the discussion of the L2 pronunciation model on p. 80 above that circumstantial factors exert a direct influence on the articulatory processes that lead to L2 pronunciation, but do not contribute to the development of the target accent. Similarly, while the contextual influences cited by twelve respondents in the Questionnaire Group do in all probability exert some influence on the L2 pronunciation produced by the L2 learner, within this framework they do not contribute to the development of a specific facet of the learner's Ideal L2 Self.

	Theme	**Aspect of Ideal L2 Self**
1.	Communication	Communicatively competent L2 user
2.	Realism	Communicatively competent L2 user
3.	Desire for proficiency	Proficient L2 user
4.	Cultural identification	Representative of a given linguistic and cultural community
5.	Aesthetic effect	Possessor of a pleasing L2 accent
6.	Work purposes	Successful worker
7.	Contextual influences	--

Table 13: Motivational influences and corresponding aspects of learners' Ideal L2 Selves

This section seeks to explore further the relative role of each of these motivating influences in an attempt to determine which aspects of individual learners' identities are most relevant to L2 pronunciation. The cases of three more subjects will be examined, and how their identities influence their EFL pronunciation.

6.2.1 Case Study: Adriana

Adriana was an Italian woman who had come to Ireland for a four-month art internship. At the time the study started she had been living in Dublin for nearly one month. She had twelve years of formal English language instruction behind her, and said that one of the reasons she decided to come to Ireland for her internship was in order to improve her English – though she did not speak English as much as she had intended to while in Dublin as her flatmate was also Italian. She was attending English language classes at Intermediate level, and was registering on a week by week basis, with the intention of attending lessons for one or two months during her time in Ireland. She was 27 years of age.

It was unlikely, though not impossible, that Adriana intended to form any lasting affiliation with Ireland, much less to demonstrate it through an Irish-accented English pronunciation. In addition to the short duration of her stay – or perhaps because of it – she lived with an Italian woman, and aside from a short period of one to two hours per day (by her own estimation) in which she spoke English, Italian was her daily medium of communication. With this in mind, an Irish English accent would have been difficult to achieve at best, even if this had been her ultimate goal. Judging from Adriana's responses throughout Phases I and II of the study, however, she had no interest in emulating an Irish English phonological model, as we shall now see.

From the early stages of the study, Adriana, like most learners, had chosen her selected pronunciation goal for the practical purpose of communicating successfully with other English speakers. On the Phase I questionnaire, Adriana selected option d), *NS any English*, and explained it thus: "Because I prefer that everybody understand me". She selected the same goal in Lesson IGE1.1 of the Phase II pedagogical study, but thereafter selected *NNS intelligibility*, and maintained that goal for the rest of the study. Initially, at the time she changed her pronunciation goal (in Lesson IGE2.1, as seen in Table 14 below) she also stopped providing explanations for the next five lessons. However, her participation in other parts of the pedagogical study soon began to indicate that although she was motivated by a desire to understand and be understood, intelligibility was not Adriana's only priority. This much was demonstrated early on in the pedagogical study in Lesson IGE3.2, in the speaker evaluation task (see Section 4.1.4 above, and Appendix B10). Given the task of evaluating the pronunciation of five speakers, native and non-native, in terms of their intelligibility, clarity, fluency and other attributes, Adriana ranked most speakers towards the 'easy to understand' end of the intelligibility scale. However, in the same activity, when asked to give a rating of 1-7 for 'I would like to speak English this way' her answers frequently tended towards 'completely disagree'.

Similarly, in spite of her original goal of *NS any English*, at this stage of the course, Adriana showed that she had no objection to accentedness, and no longer saw native-like speech as the only path to intelligible pronunciation. This was shown in her post-lesson questionnaire from Lesson IGE3.2

Phase of study	Stated goal	Explanation
Questionnaire	NS any English	"Because I prefer that everybody understand me"
Lesson IGE1.1	NS any English	"Because the aim of learning English is understand and to be understood"
Lesson IGE2.1	NNS intelligibility	–
Lesson IGE3.1/3.2	–	–
Lesson IGE4.1	NNS intelligibility	–
Lesson IGE5.1	NNS intelligibility	–
Lesson IGE5.2	NNS intelligibility	–
Lesson IGE6.1	NNS intelligibility	"Because I prefer to keep my Italian sound, but I'd like to everybody to understand me"
Lesson IGE6.2	NNS intelligibility	"Because I think that if a non-native speaker can understand me, everybody can understand me"
Lesson IGE7.1	–	(absent)
Lesson IGE7.2	–	(absent)
Interview	NNS intelligibility	"I prefer that I speak English correctly but the sound – I don't care about this" *(Appendix D8, l. 45-46)* "I understood that really the point is to be clear – to be confident – to be understood. And yes maybe it's better if you don't sound like you're Italian for example but in my opinion I want to sound like an Italian person. Yeah I want to." *(Appendix D8, l.57-61)*

Table 14: Adriana's pronunciation goals throughout study

(Appendix B12); when asked to rate her level of agreement with the statement 'I would prefer to speak English without a foreign accent' on a scale of 1-7, with 1 being 'completely agree' and 7 being 'completely disagree', Adriana gave a rating of 5. She elaborated: "In my opinion, having a foreign accent doesn't matter if people understand when I speak to them."

The first sign of the motivation for Adriana's views on pronunciation appeared in the questionnaire that followed Lesson IGE6.1. At that point, after yet again selecting *NNS intelligibility* for the type of English pronunciation she would like to aim for, Adriana wrote "Because I prefer to keep my Italian sound, but I'd like to everybody to understand me". This was the first time she had revealed not simply ambivalence to the presence of foreign accent in her pronunciation, but a genuine desire to retain it. This statement indicated that ultimately, even though she aimed to produce pronunciation that was clear enough for her to be understood, Adriana was not willing to forego her Italian identity as it manifested itself in her English pronunciation, in favour of a more native-like variety.

It is worth noting that whenever Adriana was asked whether pronunciation could convey any information about her, although she referred to nationality, she never alluded to her intention to display her nationality; thus it is possible that her *explicit* conceptualisations of the pronunciation-identity association - or lack thereof - were not entirely compatible with her more instinctive responses.

In the Phase IV interview Adriana's views on pronunciation and identity were further elaborated. When asked about changing her pronunciation goal during the pedagogy, she confirmed that her choice had been a deliberate one, and said that during the pronunciation lessons she had come to realise that for her, clarity of speech superseded the importance of adhering to native speaker guidelines. Far from accepting a minimum level of L1 interference in an otherwise intelligible pronunciation, she stated a preference for retaining a recognisably Italian accent, while retaining clear pronunciation: "...[R]eally the point is to be clear - to be confident - to be understood. And yes maybe it's better if you don't sound like you're Italian for example but in my opinion I want to sound like an Italian person. Yeah I want to" (Appendix D8, l. 57-61).

It is clear from the above information that Adriana was primarily motivated not just by a need to communicate with native and non-native interlocutors, but also by a strong desire to express her Italian identity while in Ireland by retaining her Italian accent in English. In other words, she aimed to separate herself from her interlocutors, 'wearing' her accent as a distinctive badge of national pride. In terms of Giles et al's Accommodation Theory (see p. 68 above), she was driven by 'divergence' (Giles et al., 1991). This case is a clear example of Jenkins' (2000) argument for the preservation of L1 identity by means of L1 accent; though it should be noted that Jenkins' recommendations were restricted to the instruction of English as a Lingua Franca, rather than EFL as in Adriana's case (see p. 56 above).

As an aside, it is interesting to note that, even while stating a preference for an intelligible but accented English pronunciation, Adriana still conceded the possibility that accent-free pronunciation may be the superior variety: "[M]aybe it's better if you don't sound like you're Italian for example" (l. 58-59). This suggests a possible acceptance of native speaker authority.

Within the framework of identity presented in Figure i above, Adriana's Ideal L2 Self would be a version of herself who combines the identities of a proficient speaker of English, someone who communicates successfully with all interlocutors, *and* a speaker who is noticeably Italian. Adriana's choice of goal and her reasons for choosing it indicate that within the framework of Omoniyi's Hierarchy of Identities, throughout this pronunciation course, her prioritised identity was that of her Italian nationality. Other influential, though lower-ranked, identities may have included her identity as a successful student, or a multilingual art dealer; but at the significant moments of this study, she gave priority to her national identity.

This suggests that although Adriana did not use her pronunciation to reflect an affiliation with her host country, she did use it to demonstrate another aspect of her identity, and she did so intentionally. In the next section, we will see how a similar, yet differently applied, sense of identity affected the pronunciation of another subject, Aman.

6.2.2 Case Study: Aman

Aman was a male 26-year-old student and a native of India. He had been living in Ireland for two years, and had spent this time taking a Masters in Applied Computing at another third-level educational institution in Dublin. At the time of the study, he was embarking on a Ph.D. in Computer Science, which he intended to complete in three years. He was attending a four-week intensive pre-sessional module in English for Academic Purposes at the Language Education Centre to provide language support to international postgraduate students in the university. Though he had an advanced level of English, he was attending the pre-sessional course with the intention of improving his public speaking skills.

Unlike Adriana discussed above, Aman intended to stay in Ireland for an extended – albeit finite – period of three more years to complete his research. Furthermore, he demonstrated a certain level of affinity with Ireland by stating his intention to work there for another year, after finishing his Ph.D., in order to contribute to the environment that had funded his research; to use his own words, "to give something back to the country" (Appendix D12, l.47). However, Aman was not completely immersed in English whilst living in Ireland. He lived with an Indian family, and spoke only his native Hindi while in their company.

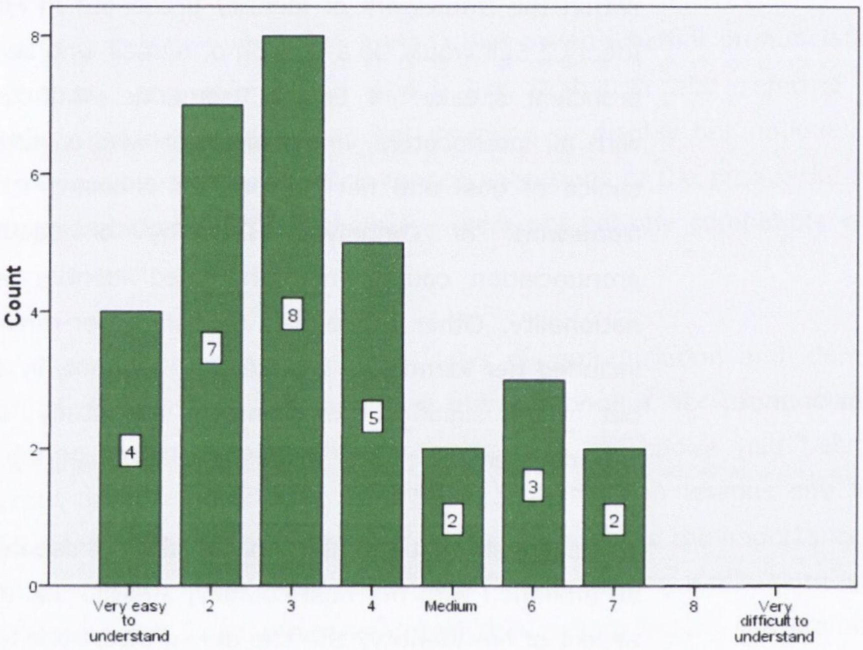

Figure xii: Aman's pre-test comprehensibility ratings

Aman was one of the four subjects who, like Lakshmi (see 6.1.4), maintained the same goal from the beginning of the study to the end. Unlike Lakshmi, however – who, it will be recalled, chose *NS Irish English* – Aman's goal was *NS intelligibility*. As his pre-test scores on the Phase III recordings illustrate, he was largely successful in this goal, even before taking part in the pedagogical study (see Figure xii above). On a scale of 1 to 9 for ease of comprehensibility, with 1 being 'Very easy to understand' and 9 being 'Very difficult to understand', 19 of the 31 raters gave him a rating of 3 or higher. Four rated his pronunciation 'Very easy to understand', and he received no ratings lower than 7. This was all before even taking part in the pronunciation course that formed the Phase II pedagogical study.

However, while Aman's goal for *NS intelligibility* remained unchanged throughout the study, his motivation for choosing this goal was not always as clear. Initially, in the Phase I questionnaire, he elaborated on his choice of *NS intelligibility* by writing "I want to improve my pronunciation". This comment indicated that Aman was dissatisfied with his current level of pronunciation. This assumption was easily verified by referring to his answer to Q19, 'Do you like the way you pronounce English (now)?' (Appendix A4). Sure enough, in answer to this question, Aman wrote "No – I feel it difficult to pronounce long words", suggesting that he was at least partially motivated by his self-perceived inadequacies in English pronunciation. He also indicated that his pronunciation clearly illustrated that English was not his first language; when asked if he felt that his English pronunciation conveyed any information about him, he replied "Its sound different then native speakers" (Q22, Appendix A4). At this point, Aman clearly felt that his accent marked him as a non-native speaker, though his answer gave no indication of whether he took this to be a positive or negative trait. However, further information on this topic arose in the Phase II pedagogical study.

In the post-lesson questionnaire that was distributed after Lesson EAP2.2 (see Appendix B35), learners were asked to rate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements in relation to the presence of foreign accent in their pronunciation. Ratings were entered on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing 'completely agree' and 7 representing 'completely disagree'. Aman gave a rating of 3 for 'I like having a foreign accent' and of 5 for 'I dislike having a foreign accent', indicating that he was inclined to approve of his L1 accent (Q3, Q5, Appendix B35). In spite of this, he gave a low rating of 6 to the statement 'I like having an accent in English because it shows where I am from,' suggesting his appreciation of his L1 accent bore little relation to its ability to demonstrate his nationality. However, when asked to rate the statement 'I *dis*like having an accent in English because it shows where I am from,' he gave only a medium rating of 4. These statements at first appear contradictory; although Aman liked his accent, he did not do so because it illustrated his nationality, but nor did he object to this association.

This rather complicated view was somewhat elucidated with Aman' comments later on in the Phase IV interview. Firstly he confirmed that i spite of the fact that he enjoyed living in Ireland, he still viewed himsel very much as an expatriate rather than someone who was integrating int Irish society and acquiring an Irish identity: "Yeah I'm still completely Indian" (l. 54). When asked if he would like to have an Irish accent, he went on to say that his priorities for pronunciation were to speak clearly and, perhaps more revealingly, not to lose his accent: "I want just to make my pronunciation clear. That's enough for me. I don't want to lose my accent because when I get back it will be very odd" (l. 60-63).

This statement shed new light on Aman's pronunciation goal of *NS intelligibility*. Not only did he seek to make his pronunciation intelligible, he wanted also to preserve his L1 accent because he felt that to lose it would separate him from his peers in his home country. This essentially was what distinguished his pronunciation goal from that of Adriana (see Section 6.2.1 above). Both learners aimed for their English pronunciation to be clearly understood, both maintained full use of their L1 while in Ireland and both wished to retain their L1 accents; but they were motivated by different desires. Adriana wanted to demonstrate her Italian nationality while speaking English in Ireland, to distinguish herself from other English speakers. Aman, however, wished to preserve his accent so that upon returning to his home country, he would reintegrate with his countrymen, instead of differentiating himself by virtue of a native-like English accent.

Considered in terms of the Accommodation Theory of Giles et al. (1991) outlined on p. 68 above, it can be claimed that Aman was using his L1-accented English pronunciation as a means of 'convergence' with his own native culture, despite (or perhaps because of) his separation from it. Whether due to his concerted efforts to preserve his accent or not, he was certainly successful in this goal. In Phase III of the study, a total of four raters identified Aman's pre-test recording in their qualitative comments as Indian, and three (two of the original four plus one other) raters identified him as Indian in his post-test recording. If we consider Aman's pronunciation profile within the context of the identity model in Figure iii, we can see that his Ideal L2 Self was a competent and confident speaker of English, but crucially, one whose manifestation would not conflict with his L1 Self. His means of reconciling these L2 and L1 Selves was to use his Indian-accented English in his native linguistic environment to demonstrate the priority he assigned to his L1 identity.

The complexity of Aman's conceptualisation of his Ideal L2 Self, and its consequences for his English pronunciation, may also be clarified with deeper consideration of his very specific linguistic situation. As a native of India, Aman had always been exposed to English in an official capacity; indeed, as he revealed at interview, he fully expected to continue to use English on a regular basis upon his eventual return to India, despite the fact that his L1 was Hindi.

However, unlike the other subjects in the Pedagogical Group - who may also legitimately have expected to maintain their use of English once back in their home country - Aman was aware that for him, English would serve not just as a lingua franca for intercultural communication purposes, but as the medium of interaction with many of his compatriots. His assertion that he wished to maintain his own accent in English for his return to India for fear of appearing different and creating an "odd" situation (see p. 236 above), suggests that he was referring specifically to his preservation of Indian English, a form labelled by Kachru (1983) as "an institutionalized variety" of English(p. 3). For Aman, given his longstanding familiarity with and use of Indian English, his English pronunciation was inextricably bound up with not just his L2, but also his L1 identity, an association that may account for his reluctance to let go of his existing accent.

However, national and ethnic identification were not the only levels on which identity played a role in the EFL pronunciation experiences of the subjects in this study; for some learners, English pronunciation was a more accurate indicator of personality than of any other level of identity, as we will see in the case of the next subject.

6.2.3 Case Study: Laura

Laura was a female student from Brazil aged 24. At the start of the study she had been living in Ireland for two months, with the intention of staying for another six. She was working part time, and at the time was in her third month of a six-month English course. She had been placed at Intermediate level, having previously studied English for seven years in her home country, but moved up to Upper Intermediate level soon after the pedagogical study ended. She had come to Ireland to improve her English, and intended to do a postgraduate degree upon her return to Brazil. Her native language was Portuguese.

From the outset, Laura stated her intention to aim for *NS intelligibility* because her priority was to achieve successful communication. In the Phase I questionnaire, in reply to Q24, she selected *NS intelligibility* and stated: "It's about communication. If they can understand me and I can understand, for me it's enough." She had had this goal since starting to learn English, for the same reason: "I want to communicate with people from another country, so when I decided to learn English, this was my objective" (Q25). Throughout the first three phases of the study, Laura maintained this goal, as illustrated by Table 15 below.

However, Laura's responses to the more indirect questions, both in the questionnaire and during the course, were not always supportive of these statements, and her answers to some of the more attitudinal questions on the Phase I questionnaire (Appendix A4) indicated that she evaluated pronunciation in more extensive terms than its intelligibility alone. When asked if she liked her pronunciation (Q19), she made no reference to how well she was understood by her interlocutors, but instead referred only to her own perception of her speech, replying "Yes, because I can speak in a quick way". When asked to name a positive pronunciation experience (Q20), she cited an occasion on which some native speakers complimented her on the standard of her English: "Yes, some people from Ireland had already said to me that my English is good. I consider this really good, because this is my first month in Ireland." Similarly, in answer to Q22, which asked if her pronunciation could reveal any information about her, she replied that it did not, except that possibly "they can think I'm smart because it's my first month here and I can speak in a good way". Laura's sense of achievement at having received this compliment is implied, and points to the possible strength of her will to succeed in her endeavours with English pronunciation.

This pattern continued throughout Phase II. Once more, Laura's responses to direct questions about her pronunciation goals (and her motivation for aiming for them) all related back to a stated desire to communicate successfully and to achieve a level of *NS intelligibility*, as shown in Table 15 below. However, closer inspection of her participation in the course showed that she continued to demonstrate more interest in obtaining a high standard of English pronunciation than her explicitly stated goals suggested. Having missed the first two lessons of the instruction programme, in Lesson IGE3.1, Laura, like all learners, was asked to draw

Phase of study	Stated goal	Explanation
Questionnaire	NS intelligibility	"It's about communication. If they can understand me and I can understand, for me it's enough."
Lesson IGE1.1	–	(absent)
Lesson IGE2.1	–	(absent)
Lesson IGE3.1/3.2	–	–
Lesson IGE4.1	NS intelligibility	"Because the most important thing for me is the communication, and not the accent that you have. For me if the natives can understand me it's amazing, because I'm learning their language."
Lesson IGE5.1	NS intelligibility	–
Lesson IGE5.2	NS intelligibility	"The important is to communicate"
Lesson IGE6.1	NS intelligibility	–
Lesson IGE6.2	NS intelligibility	–
Lesson IGE7.1	NS intelligibility	–
Lesson IGE7.2	NS intelligibility	–
Interview	NS any English	"I would like to speak like a native but I would like to clear at all my accent you know to don't have an accent. I don't know if it's possible – I try to but I guess it's impossible" *(Appendix D3, l.22-24)*

Table 15: Laura's pronunciation goals throughout study

up a list of the attributes they would like their speech to convey. Unlike the majority of her classmates, who mostly opted for clarity as their most desired feature, Laura selected 'Fluently' as the way she would most like her speech to sound. After this she ranked 'confident' and 'clear' as 2 and 3 respectively.

Laura's selection of fluency and confidence above clarity for her ideal speech confirmed her responses on the speaker evaluation task the next day, in Lesson IGE3.2. In this activity, learners were asked to evalua speakers' pronunciation for intelligibility, fluency, accuracy and a number other attributes. Like Adriana – as mentioned in Section 6.1.5 above Laura did not correlate her intelligibility ratings with her desire to emulat the speaker's pronunciation. This demonstrated that, as suggested by he responses to the questionnaire in Phase I, Laura relied on more thar intelligibility to guide her choice of pronunciation goal, in spite of what sh claimed to do (see Table 15).

This trend was repeated in the rest of Phase II. In the post-lesson questionnaires following Lessons IGE4.1, IGE5.1 and IGE5.2, which addressed the specific features of pause, articulation and speed, Laura tended to make comments referring to the relative intelligibility of speech with the feature in question. For example, in Q1, Lesson IGE4.1 (see Appendix B14), Laura filled in the 'completely agree' option, and wrote, "With pauses it's easier to understand what the person is saying", thus demonstrating that for her, 'clear pronunciation' was equivalent to intelligibility.

However, when asked to explain her attitudes to pronunciation, her strong personal desire for accomplishment was predominant. When asked in Q3, on the questionnaire following Lesson IGE6.1 (Appendix B25) to list the identities she would like to project in her pronunciation, she opted for images of strength: "fluent, confident, decisive, accurate", and justified them thus: "Because it's important that you feel yourself confident when you're speaking to somebody. If you are confident, decisive, the person will believe in you". Additionally, on one occasion, she seemed to be just as motivated by the fear of underachievement as she was by the lure of genuine accomplishment: "Pronunciation is very very important for me. I don't want to say words wrongly, and I really want to try to avoid my accent from my country" (Q5, Lesson IGE7.1 post-lesson questionnaire – Appendix B29). This indicated a streak of perfectionism in Laura, which seemed to become more obvious as the study progressed. In the post-lesson questionnaire distributed after the last lesson (7.2), Laura showed a definite preference for non-accented English pronunciation. When asked to rate her agreement with the statement 'I like having an accent in English because it shows where I am from', Laura selected the 'completely disagree' option (Q14, Appendix B32). She corroborated this response by choosing 'completely agree' in response to the next two questions, 'I dislike having an accent in English because it shows where I am from' (Q15) and 'I would prefer to speak English without a foreign accent' (Q16).

Despite the suggestions to the contrary, Laura's data still seemed to show that there was more to her English pronunciation motivation than a wish for intelligibility. Phase IV was ultimately the most intriguing phase of the study for interpreting Laura's data, owing to the conflicting nature of the goals she had explicitly selected on the one hand, and her apparent thirst for achievement on the other. At first, Laura seemed to have some difficulty in separating the need for clear pronunciation in order to communicate from her own personal desire to achieve a proficient level. She stated "I think when you are speaking another language you must clear your accent to be more correctly you know – to have a better speech"; but a moment later she claimed "[I'm] Not a native yet – I never will be because I speak Portuguese" (Appendix D3, l.7-17).

However, when asked outright if she would prefer a native-like English pronunciation with no Brazilian accent, if it were achievable, she immediately replied in the affirmative, albeit tempered with realism: "I would like to speak like a native [...] I don't know if it's possible. I try to but I guess it's impossible you know [...] [I]t's really hard to keep clear to say everything correctly I think" (l. 22-28). A watershed moment in this interview came when Laura was asked whether her understanding of 'speaking well' meant "sounding like a native speaker or speaking clearly enough for other people to understand you", to which she replied, "Good enough to the native understand you." However, when asked as a follow-up question, "So if you [...] still had a very strong Brazilian accent but native speakers could understand you would that be OK?" Laura's immediate response was "No" (l. 102-105). She went on to explain that she felt that with a strong accent, "you are not speaking properly" (l. 110-111). In other words, for Laura, accurate or correct pronunciation entailed native-like pronunciation, and it was to this goal that she aspired.

Crucially, in spite of her awareness of the improbability that she would ever achieve native-like pronunciation, Laura still stressed the importance of striving for the best pronunciation possible – unlike some other subjects in the Pedagogical Group (e.g. Chin Ho, Gustavo) who felt that although they would like NS pronunciation if it were possible, it would be too far beyond their capabilities to be worth aiming for. Even when referring to the pronunciation goals of all learners in general, rather than to herself, she illustrated how strongly she felt about accurate pronunciation.

> Pronunciation was always a thing that was – that is important for me because I don't like when people try to speak Portuguese and speak a lot of words wrongly. They don't have – they are not obligated to speak well because they are not native but I think you must do your best when you are speaking another language so this was always a thing that I always tried to do my best – pronounce well the words. (l. 89-96)

It should be noted that when asked for her ideal level of pronunciation, given the possibility of achieving any level at all, Laura opted for a native-like model of English pronunciation, which suggests a belief in NS authority.

Throughout the interview, Laura's personality as an enthusiastic learner and a motivated individual was apparent. Even her description of her time in Ireland illustrated how focused she was on achievement:

> Yeah I like it a lot. We have some problems [...]. We are here to achieve a target which is completely different from we have in Brazil so it's something particular here [...]. I came to stay just eight months because I have to come back to Brazil to work and to do a postgraduation. It's my deadline – I will be 25 in January and I have to do my postgraduation. I have my target. (l. 34-48)

Unlike Adriana and Aman who focused on the nationality dimension of their identity when it came to pronunciation, the most salient aspect of Laura's identity was her desire for achievement. Like Adriana and Aman, this identity manifested itself in her pronunciation goals: a drive to be accomplished in everything she did came through, pushing her to aim for the best English pronunciation possible. Her Ideal L2 Self was neither someone who could integrate into an Irish community, nor someone who would be instantly recognisable as a native of Brazil, but rather a competent speaker of English who mastered the language to the best of her capabilities, and demonstrated this with pronunciation that was as near to native-like as possible.

Laura's strong motivation was all the more noteworthy because it was not imposed on her externally by the lure of a job or the threat of a dismissal; it was simply in her nature to want to succeed, and to achieve as highly as possible for her capabilities. This had consequences – positive consequences – for her participation in this study. While teaching the learners throughout Phase II, I had noticed that Laura sometimes experienced difficulty in producing falling tones at the ends of sentences and clauses, with the result that her speech occasionally had an inconclusive air to it, leaving the hearer to question whether she (Laura) had completed her turn or whether she intended to say something else. In the last lesson, learners were asked to act out a role-play from one of a number of scenarios, while attempting to convey an emotion or identity given to them by me. I asked Laura – who was 'playing' the role of an irate customer in a shop – to try to sound decisive, as I felt this could help her to remember more easily the function of falling tone in speech. Laura took my advice to heart, and when performing the role-play, enthusiastically took on the role of a decisive, angry customer. As a result, she demonstrated better mastery of end-sentence falling tone than she had produced since the study began.

This approach would not have worked as well had the learner been neither willing to take part in the lesson with such enthusiasm, nor so motivated by her own desire to perform well. Laura's full participation in this aspect of the pedagogical study, and the desire for proficiency within her that drove it, suggests that a strong disposition to succeed is an invaluable characteristic to have in a language learner, and arguably one that should be fostered in the learning environment.

Laura's case highlighted two points. Firstly, she provided further evidence that learners' pronunciation goals could be perceived as a series of challenges to be met in order of achievability. For her, successful communication in her English pronunciation was a proximate goal. However, further along this series of challenges was the task of achieving a native-like level of pronunciation. Although Laura accepted that it was unlikely she would ever achieve this native-like level ("Not a native yet – I never will be" – Appendix D3, l.16-17), she still pursued it as she was motivated by her own desire for proficiency.

Secondly, this desire for proficiency illustrated that Laura was an example of a learner whose Ideal L2 Self did not represent a national or cultural affiliation, as in the cases of Adriana and Aman as outlined above. Instead, she was motivated primarily by her own strong desire to perform to the best of her ability, suggesting that for Laura, the aspect of identity that was most salient for her and thus the most appropriate to project in her L2 pronunciation was a personal characteristic: her desire for proficiency.

6.2.4 Case Study: Lourdes

Lourdes was 30 years old, female, and a native of Peru. She had arrived in Ireland six months before the study began in order to pursue a Ph.D. in Computer Science, and intended to stay in Ireland for three years to finish it. Although she knew some Irish people outside her work environment, she spent most of her time with people of a mixture of other nationalities, rather than Irish. She had learned English in her home country since primary school, and at the time of the study was attending the pre-sessional English language module. Although she had never lived in another English-speaking country, she had previously lived in Brazil and learned Portuguese while living there. She intended to return to Peru upon completion of her Ph.D.

Lourdes provided an alternative perspective on the identity-pronunciation interface, highlighting the possibility that a speaker's pronunciation may convey a false impression; in other words, that it may project a misleading identity. Her prioritised identity was not as obvious as in the cases of some of the other subjects already discussed in this section. Unlike Adriana and Aman, she did not express a desire to convey her national identity in her pronunciation; nor, like Lakshmi, did she wish to approximate an Irish accent to convey membership of an Irish community; indeed, her attitude to the degree of foreign accent in her pronunciation could be deemed indifferent. Her pronunciation goals provided no evidence of strong feelings of identification. In the Phase I questionnaire her original pronunciation goal was for *NS any English* (Q24); while this goal fluctuated throughout the course of instruction, changing to *NS intelligibility* during the course, and then returning to *NS any English* at the interview stage, her motivation remained more or less constant, referring to the goal only in the context of being understood by as many listeners as possible: "If natives can understand, I think I can do it for non-native speakers as well" (Lesson EAP1.1, post-lesson questionnaire, Q6). These responses indicate that Lourdes' feelings towards her L1 accent in English were only as strong as her desire to be understood, suggesting that for her, her personal identity did not play an important role in her L2 pronunciation.

Throughout the study, Lourdes appeared to be sceptical of one of the principal tenets of the pedagogy: that pronunciation could represent the speaker's identity, or at least one facet of it. However, rather than simply refusing to accept that such an association existed, Lourdes suggested that pronunciation could actually present a *false* identity, by giving the wrong impression of the speaker. In answer to Q22 on the Phase I questionnaire, which asks if the subject believes his or her pronunciation reveals any personal information, Lourdes replied "Maybe they can think I have a speech problem or maybe think I am boring". This response appeared mildly defensive, and raised the possibility that Lourdes was reacting to unsatisfactory experiences with her interlocutors. Sure enough, in answer to Q19 and Q21 on the Phase I questionnaire, Lourdes indicated that she had experienced some communication difficulties because of her pronunciation: "I still cannot be understood for some native speakers or people who use English for communication" (Q19).

In interview, Lourdes gave further indication that she believed pronunciation to be capable of conveying an inaccurate image of the speaker by likening the acquisition of a native-like L2 accent to imitation or pretence. When asked if it were better for language learners to aim for a native-like pronunciation or to retain their L1 accent, she stated that in the past, she had deliberately avoided aiming for a native-like pronunciation (when learning Portuguese in Brazil), as the connotations of copying an accent that was not her own was a source of discomfort to her:

> Before I feel uncomfortable trying to imitate maybe that [...] like trying to have an accent is not mine? Even when I was in Portuguese – in Brazil – I didn't like to imitate the accent of Brazilian people. Even my friends told me "Why you don't try to talk with [a Brazilian] accent? It can be better for you." No I don't like because it sound like I am acting – I don't like. (l.112-119)

However, she also pointed out that to a great extent, she had overcome these feelings, and was now more open to the acquisition of a new pronunciation.

> Now I think that feeling is less [...] I do think if I try to imitate – because I listen some Irish accent that are very strong – I say ah no it would be like imitate – acting [*laughs*]. No but – now I think I can make better that. (Appendix D13, l. 120-124)

Lourdes' comparison of native-like pronunciation to imitation or acting is clearly intended to be a derogatory one. She appears to view this simulation as a display of falsity. She was not alone in this interpretation:

Aman, whose pronunciation demonstrated his desire to reintegrate into his L1 community above, made a declaration similar to Lourdes' in his interview, expressing a wish to avoid a native English accent. He stated that he did not wish to achieve a native-like level of English pronunciation because it would involve compromising his authenticity. When asked if he would prefer to keep his L1 accent or speak like a native speaker of English, Aman stated in no uncertain terms, "I feel like if I speak like a native speaker that's quite artificial for me [...] I don't want that" (Appendix D12, l.121-122).

Lourdes' view of the significance of real versus artificial pronunciation, paralleled by the views expressed by Aman, seems to illustrate that she accepted that pronunciation could imply a given identity, even if the suggested identity were not entirely accurate. Her previous reluctance to take on a native Portuguese pronunciation was due to her belief that this would be tantamount to presenting a false image of herself in her speech. However, her earlier statements on the questionnaire showed that she also felt that L1-accented English pronunciation could cause listeners to think that her level of English was lower than it really was. This too would amount to pronunciation conveying a false identity (or, at the very least, an inaccurate representation) of the speaker.

A number of participants in the Questionnaire Group expressed similar views to that of Lourdes. They made reference to the inaccuracy of some images presented by their English pronunciation when asked if pronunciation could convey any information about them (Q22, Phase I main study questionnaire, Appendix A4):

- "No, I don't think so. Mistakes because of unknowing makes it harder to see what type of person you are because of the way you pronounce."
- "The people here think that if you don't have a good pronunciation you're not educated."
- "No, they shouldn't, because the form I'm speaking doesn't say anything about me. I'm totally different in my country."

The views expressed by Lourdes, Aman and the above subjects from the Questionnaire Group demonstrate an alternative view of the identity-pronunciation paradigm: that although pronunciation may express the most salient facet of a speaker's identity in a given situation at a given point in time, the facet conveyed may not always be an accurate representation of more stable aspects of the speaker's identity. This reference to the acting component of native-like pronunciation echoes an observation made by Piller, in a study of the role of identity in attaining native-like levels of L2 proficiency. She likened the state of passing as the native speaker of an L2 to a performance - and one of limited duration at that (Piller, 2002).

While the notion of an alternative method of pronunciation being used to 'act out' an alternative identity may have negative connotations for learners who are cautious of being misrepresented - as in the case of English language learners trying to communicate with native speakers who are either unable or unwilling to discern their meaning because of a heavily-accented pronunciation - it may also have a more positive application in a pedagogical context. Specifically, if learners wish to project a particular identity in their speech, but find it difficult to do so, perhaps channelling an alternative identity - such as that of a confident speaker, or a decisive speaker, or a knowledgeable one - may help them to produce the appropriate pronunciation. This approach was implemented during the Phase II pedagogical study, with varying degrees of success.

This leads us on to the third and final research question, regarding the development and assessment of a pronunciation pedagogy based on the principles already discussed in this chapter.

6.3 Research Question 3: What is the effect of an EFL pronunciation pedagogy that encourages learners to reflect on their pronunciation goals and use them to project their identities?

Having explored the pronunciation goals that have been established by learners, and the relative influence of different aspects of identity on them, I will now consider the question of whether these findings hold any implications for pronunciation pedagogy. In the next section (6.3.1) I discuss the outcomes of the pronunciation course implemented with two groups of EFL learners, in accordance with the pedagogical objectives established in Chapter Three. I will draw on learners' responses throughout the Phase II post-lesson questionnaires, the Phase III pre- and post-test recordings, and the Phase IV interview. The rest of this chapter will present closer examination of the participation of three subjects in the pedagogical study in the form of three case studies, mirroring the format presented in earlier sections of this chapter.

6.3.1 Outcomes of pronunciation pedagogy

This section will discuss the overall outcomes of the implementation of the pronunciation pedagogy, within the context of the objectives that were stated in Chapter Three (Section 3.2). Since the effect of the pedagogy on the learning experience of individual learners will be discussed in further detail in the case studies that will follow in Sections 6.3.2, 6.3.3 and 6.3,4, the focus in this section will be on the results of the pedagogy as they apply to the group of participating learners as a whole. Evidence for the impact on participants' pronunciation according to the evaluations of a group of independent raters will be presented, and insight will be provided into learners' summative evaluations of the pedagogical approach. Each objective of the pedagogy will now be briefly addressed in turn.

6.3.1.1 Identifying pronunciation goal

Throughout the two pronunciation courses in the IGE course in Carlton International College and the EAP course in the Language Education Centre, identifying a pronunciation goal formed an essential part of the pedagogical issues addressed. Extensive work was put into the task of raising learners' awareness of the range of English phonological varieties, in order to facilitate their selection of a pronunciation goal that would be most appropriate for their needs. For examples of the type of activities designed for the achievement of this objective, see e.g. Sections 4.1.1, 4.1.4, and 4.2.1 in Chapter Four.

Throughout the pedagogical study, every post-lesson questionnaire featured the question: 'What level of English pronunciation would you like to achieve?' (see e.g. Q3, Appendix B5; Q20 Appendix B32). As discussed in Section 6.1 above, learners' responses to this question mostly varied from lesson to lesson, though by the end of the pronunciation course, most learners had settled on a chosen goal (though this was in some cases subjected to further evaluation at interview).

However, by the end of the study, each learner was not only able to identify the pronunciation goal she was aiming for, but was also able to discuss it at length and explain why this goal suited her requirements. For example, Nadia, a 28-year-old female postgraduate student from Sudan who took part in the EAP pronunciation course, had selected *NS British English* as her pronunciation goal at the start of the pronunciation course. However, at interview she acknowledged that she had only chosen a British English model because she had believed British English was the best way to achieve comfortable intelligibility, a belief that was somewhat undermined by the end of the pronunciation course:

> [A]s I know about British English and I hear before it is most clear English one - English type - clearer than American and Australian and Irish. But after these few weeks I have to check my information because we had one [recording] in the class speak British - actually I don't know is it a problem British accent or is it speed in speaking you know? Have no stressing no points no intonation. (Appendix D11, l.287-293.)

Nadia highlighted the fact that that while she had previously assumed that a native British accent would be the key to achieving intelligible English pronunciation, there were a range of British accents, and the key to achieving intelligibility lay in identifying the most important features of speech rather than selecting a geographical variety. The specific features of speech to which she alluded - speed of speech, stress and intonation - were all topics that were covered during the pronunciation pedagogy, to broaden learners' knowledge of the features that might contribute to intelligibility.

Like Nadia, all learners from the Pedagogical Group identified their preferred model of English pronunciation at several points throughout the study and discussed their selection in the Phase IV interview; so it can assumed that the first objective of the pedagogical study was successfully achieved.

6.3.1.2 Approximating chosen pronunciation goal

The second pedagogical objective of the pronunciation course was for learners to approximate their pronunciation goals. This objective related to the learners' ability to improve their pronunciation, within the capacity of whatever 'improvement' meant for each learner. Assessment of this pedagogical aim came in the form of independent rater evaluations of learners' speech from before and after the pedagogical study had taken place, as described in Section 5.4 of the previous chapter. Subjects' recordings - 30-second excerpts of free speech - were evaluated according to four parameters: degree of foreign accent in their pronunciation ('accentedness'), how easy they were to understand ('comprehensibility'), how similar their pronunciation was to Irish English ('Irishness'), and how fluent their pronunciation was ('fluency'). Raters were asked to rate each speech sample on a scale of 1 to 9. In each case, 1 represented the most conventionally positive rating, i.e. the least accented, most comprehensible, most similar to Irish English and most fluent, with 9 representing the furthest value from each of these attributes.

Let us first examine the raters' scores for the subjects' **accentedness** scores. Mean accentedness ratings for a group of learners – whether Pedagogical Group or Control Group - were calculated by adding together the mean ratings by all raters for each speaker within that group, and then dividing the total value by 31 (the number of raters). This approach followed that used by Flege et al. (2006). Table 16 depicts the mean accentedness ratings for the Pedagogical and Control Groups respectively by all 31 raters. This table illustrates that the mean accentedness rating for subjects in the Pedagogical Group rose slightly from the pre- to post-test recordings, from 6.13 to 6.21. As the stipulation in the survey question was that 1 represented 'No foreign accent' and 9 represented 'Very strong foreign accent", this suggests that learners' degree of foreign accent actually increased during the pedagogical study, though the increase is minor. A paired samples t-test found that this score's increase was not significant, with *t (13)* = -0.384, p > 0.05 (see Table 17).

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Mean accentedness PG pre	**6.1329**	14	1.06543	.28475
	Mean accentedness PG post	**6.2136**	14	.81705	.21836
Pair 2	Mean accentedness CG pre	5.8886	14	1.26987	.33939
	Mean accentedness CG post	5.5700	14	1.42355	.38046

Table 16: Pre- and post-test accentedness ratings, PG and CG

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**	Lower	Upper	**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Pair 1	Mean accentedness PG pre - Mean accentedness PG post	-.08071	.78638	.21017	-.53476	.37333	-.384	13	**.707**

Table 17: Paired samples t-test, PG pre- and post-test accentedness

Conversely, the accentedness ratings for the Control Group dropped from 5.89 to 5.57, suggesting that their overall degree of foreign accent actually improved slightly during the same period, a finding borne out by the statistically significant paired samples t-test, $p < 0.05$ (see Table 18). These scores suggest that the pronunciation course did not result in a reduction in the overall level of foreign accent in the pronunciation of the learners in the Pedagogical Group.

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**	**Lower**	**Upper**	**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Pair 1	Mean accentedness CG pre – Mean accentedness CG post	.31857	.44410	.11869	.06215	.57499	2.684	13	**.019**

Table 18: Paired samples t-test, CG pre- and post-test accentedness

The next parameter on which speakers' pronunciation was evaluated was that of **comprehensibility**. Raters were asked to rate each sample on a scale of 1 to 9, from 'Very easy to understand' to 'Very difficult to understand.' From Table 19 below we can see that the ratings for all subjects, Pedagogical Group and Control Group, were similar for this feature.

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Mean comprehensibility PG pre	**3.7886**	14	1.19550	.31951
	Mean comprehensibility PG post	**3.9343**	14	.80638	.21551
Pair 2	Mean comprehensibility CG pre	**3.6907**	14	1.51653	.40531
	Mean comprehensibility CG post	**3.3071**	14	1.20619	.32237

Table 19: Pre- and post-test comprehensibility ratings, PG and CG

The trend exhibited by these results closely resembles that of the accentedness ratings. A paired-samples t-test on the ratings of the

Pedagogical Group revealed no significant difference in the subjects' comprehensibility before and after the pedagogy, *t* (13) = -0.702, *p* > 0.05 (see Table 20). This indicates that the mean comprehensibility score after the pedagogy (*M* = 3.9343) was not significantly higher (worse) than the mean before training (*M* = 3.7886).

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences							
		Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**	**95% Confidence Interval of the Difference**		**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
					Lower	**Upper**			
Pair 1	Mean comp. PG pre – Mean comp. PG post	-.14571	.77701	.20767	-.59435	.30292	-.702	13	**.495**

Table 20: Paired samples t-test, PG pre- and post-test comprehensibility

As discussed in Section 5.4.1 above, the **Irishness** measurement was found to be irrelevant to all but one learner, so analysis of this parameter was only carried out for her (Lakshmi, see p. 223 above). Thus, the final pronunciation parameter to be evaluated by the raters was **fluency**, which was also rated on a scale of 1 to 9. Here, 1 represented 'Very fluent' and 9 represented 'Very dysfluent', based on a similar test carried out by Derwing, Thomson & Munro (2006).

Unlike the overall mean accentedness and comprehensibility ratings, the fluency scores showed a minor decrease, representing an improvement in fluency. The mean score from the Pedagogical Group dropped from 6.1707 to 6.1307 between the pre- and post-test recordings, representing a drop of 0.04 (see Table 21); however this represented only a very slight decrease in the score. A paired-samples t-test revealed no significant difference; *t* (13) = 0.203, *p* > 0.05 (see Table 22 below). This indicates that even though the mean fluency score decreased between the pre- and post-test recordings, the difference was not statistically significant.

Further consideration was given to the manner in which individual learners responded to the pedagogical process. Below, Table 23 (p. 255) provides a summary of each subject's performance during the pronunciation pedagogy. Specifically it should be pointed out that the green arrows illustrate a decreased score, indicating an *improvement* in pronunciation

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Mean fluency PG pre	**6.1707**	14	1.24047	.33153
	Mean fluency PG post	**6.1307**	14	.98155	.26233
Pair 2	Mean fluency CG pre	**5.8086**	14	1.57448	.42080
	Mean fluency CG post	**5.7621**	14	1.45280	.38828

Table 21: Pre- and post-test fluency ratings, PG and CG

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**	**Lower**	**Upper**	**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Pair 1	Mean fluency PG pre – Mean fluency PG post	.04000	.73675	.19690	-.38539	.46539	.203	13	**.842**

Table 22: Paired samples t-test, PG pre- and post-test fluency

performance, while the black arrows illustrate an increased score, which indicates a *disimproved* pronunciation performance, as per the evaluations carried out in Phase III. Statistically significant differences are also highlighted in the table. We can see that pronunciation performance varied widely between the pre- and post-test recordings amongst all subjects. The following highlights may be noted:

- Only one learner (Luwi) demonstrated a statistically significant improvement across all three parameters of her pronunciation between the pre-test and post-test recordings (see Appendix E14);
- Two others, Laura and Ricardo, showed a statistically significant improvement in the degree of foreign accent in their pronunciation (see Appendices E1 and E5 respectively), while two more (Adriana and Chin Ho) showed statistically significant improvements in their fluency ratings (see Appendices E6 and E13 respectively);
- Two learners, Regina and Lakshmi, demonstrated a statistically significant disimprovement across all three parameters (see Appendices E4 and E7 respectively);
- Two other learners, Josefina and Gustavo, illustrate a statistically significant disimprovement in their comprehensibility ratings (Appendices E2 and E3 respectively), while three (Josefina, Alejandra and Atinzwa) show a statistically significant

disimprovement in fluency ratings (Appendices E2, E8 and E12 respectively).

The objectively observed improvement in Luwi's pronunciation tallied with my subjective observations as her teacher, as she did seem to demonstrate a noticeable improvement in her pronunciation throughout the duration of the pronunciation lessons. However, as Table 23 shows, there were also learners who demonstrated a statistically significant disimprovement in their scores, across all three parameters of accentedness, comprehensibility and fluency, a finding that weakens any argument that the course may have been responsible for improvements in pronunciation. These results confirm that, with the sole exception of Luwi, the pedagogical intervention that formed Phase II of this study did not result in a significant improvement in the scores of the participating learners, at least within the parameters of accentedness, comprehensibility and fluency.

Several possible reasons for these results must be considered. Firstly, the period of instruction was rather short: seven weeks in the IGE programme, and just over one week in the EAP programme. While these teaching periods were as long as the circumstances would allow (see Section 5.3.4), they were perhaps not long enough to produce any long-lasting change in the learners' manner of pronunciation. Furthermore, as the post-test recordings used in Phase III were, due to institutional constraints, taken days after the pronunciation course ended, they may not have showcased all that the subjects learned. With regard to the method of measurement, as mentioned in Section 5.4.2 above, the accent ratings were made by native English-speaking raters who had no formal linguistic training. These raters' lack of expertise may have contributed to the somewhat inconsistent nature of the findings; raters with a deeper understanding of the features of speech that contribute to the parameters of accentedness, comprehensibility and fluency may have provided more informative ratings. Additionally, learners who may have exhibited an improvement during the course may not have performed to the same standard in the free speech exercise from which the recordings were taken as they did while in class.

Taking all these factors into consideration, accurate analysis of the subjects' pronunciation before, during and after the pedagogical study would always prove to be a very difficult task; however, each of these factors was considered when designing the study, as outlined in the

		Laura	Josefina	Gustavo	Regina	Ricardo	Adriana	Lakshmi	Alejandra	Nadia	Aman	Lourdes	Atinzwa	Chin Ho	Luwi
Accentedness scores	Up	↑*				↑*	↑					↑		↑	↑*
	Down		↓	↓	↓*			↓*	↓	↓	↓		↓		
Comprehensibility scores	Up	↑					↑				↑	↑		↑	↑*
	Down		↓*	↓*	↓*	↓		↓*	↓	↓			↓		
Fluency scores	Up	↑				↑	↑*			↑	↑	↑		↑*	↑*
	Down		↓*	↓	↓*			↓*	↓*				↓*		

Table 23: Pedagogical Group members' performances on pronunciation scores

↑ = improvement in scores ↓ = disimprovement in scores * = statistically significant at the p<0.05 level previous chapter. So, although the results should be treated with due caution, we may conclude that the evidence suggests at best that the approach to pronunciation teaching adopted in the Phase II pedagogical study resulted in the improvement of some learners' pronunciation, but not all. To be more cautious still, it has to be recognised that the improvements suggested by Table 23 above cannot be shown to be causally connected to the pedagogy: they might have occurred in any case over the course of the period of instruction, with or without this particular pedagogical intervention; or they may reflect random fluctuations in performance, or measuring error.

Conversely, of course, given the brevity of the intervention, while these results fail to corroborate any hypothesised effectiveness in regard to comprehensibility, fluency, and accentedness, neither do they show that the pedagogical approach is ineffective. Logically it could still be the case that instruction based on this model might show a more effective result if implemented over a longer period. Indeed, triangulating the quantitative measures with data from case-study analysis (below) gives us greater reason to believe that the pedagogy was indeed effective in individual cases, and particularly so in those aspects that made use of metacognitive learning strategies.

6.3.1.3 Developing autonomous pronunciation learning

Since many of the principles outlined in the pedagogical model put forward in Section 3.3 above were based on an ethos of learner autonomy, the final objective was for learners to be able to continue the process of addressing their pronunciation goals once the course had ended. Learners were encouraged to enhance their awareness of their own pronunciation, and their pronunciation learning skills, in order to help them to identify areas of their pronunciation that required attention and to learn how to address them. Although the skills used to meet this objective were developed throughout the duration of the pronunciation course, the achievability of the objective itself could only be assessed once the course had ended. At interview, each of the participating learners were asked if they could identify the pronunciation goal they were aiming for, and the features of speech they would need to alter in order to go about meeting that goal.

This objective was, by and large, very successful, with learners demonstrating a huge improvement in their awareness of their pronunciation goals and challenges and the steps they needed to take to address them. One of the most useful pedagogical tools for this purpose was the pronunciation report (called the pronunciation diary in the IGE study). Of the fourteen learners, when asked in the retrospective interview after the course had ended, twelve were able to name the feature of pronunciation they needed to work on most as identified on the pronunciation report during the pronunciation course, and all fourteen were able to name at least one item that had been marked for their prioritisation during the pronunciation course. For example, below was an exchange during the interview with Atinzwa, a 47-year-old female postgraduate student from Zimbabwe who attended the EAP pronunciation course:

Res: You said that you wanted to speak like a native speaker of British English. And do you know now what specific features of speech you would need to change in order to sound like you were speaking British English?
Ati: Yes [...] I would need to change my inotation [*sic*].
Res: Intonation?
Ati: Intonation – and I have to change – to know when to raise my voice and when to drop it. And I have to know especially how to stress – which words to stress in a sentence [...] [f]or British English because they stress their – When they talk there is a lot of stress and emphasis.

(Appendix D14, l. 272-287)

Here Atinzwa demonstrated the type of knowledge that was typically gained on the pronunciation course. Prior to the course she had been aware that she had difficulties with her pronunciation but she could not establish how to tackle them; but she claimed afterwards that "[t]he classes helped me a lot" (l. 322).

Many learners expressed surprise at the features that had been identified as critical for them on the pronunciation report, and claimed that they would not have been aware of how to address those features unless they had been explicitly brought to their attention. From a pedagogical perspective, it was encouraging to see at interview that not only had learners benefited from the use of the pronunciation report during the course, but it had also created a lasting impression, and was facilitating their pronunciation learning beyond the end of the course and into the future, as illustrated in the following quotes (all taken from the Phase IV interview):

- "[S]ometimes it takes time [...] [a]fter we finish but in my presentation I try to be careful with my intonation – my stressing – all this. Yeah. It help me – it help a lot." – Nadia, Appendix D11, l.471-475;
- "Yes sometimes I remember for example the stress because I listen other people [...]. Suddenly I remind of that – I say "Ah." For example the pronunciation of some vowels – I remember "OK." Now I try not to open the mouth too much." – Lourdes, Appendix D13, l.315-319;
- "Yes I do [*pay more attention to my pronunciation now*]. Yes I do. Even I have the paper [*pronunciation report*] in front of me just to remind me." – Atinzwa, Appendix D14, l. 329-330;
- "I've changed + not much but I've changed it. Because now I can pay attention - how can I say – in some words I didn't used to pay attention for. For example as you told me about the 'y's – you know I didn't realise I was speaking wrong - it's good." – Regina, Appendix D6, l.
- "I was surprised - I didn't know that [*the features on his pronunciation diary*] and [...] I really enjoyed that because you + now I know [...] where I'm – ++ doing wrong [...]. [N]ow I'm + I'm looking for me - for myself and trying to – to correct it" – Ricardo, Appendix D7, l. 163-170.

6.3.1.4 Learners' overall impressions of the course

Generally learners responded very favourably to the pronunciation course. As demonstrated above, there was a particularly positive response to its autonomous learning aspects. When asked on the final post-lesson questionnaire of the course to name the activities or themes of the course that were particularly beneficial, six of the fourteen participating learners identified listening to their own speech recordings as the most helpful aspect of the course (see Q23, Appendix B32; Q13, Appendix B41).

However, while there was some consensus as to aspects of the course that were generally helpful, each learner identified particular activities or features of the course that were helpful for his or her own purposes. Below are some of the other comments taken from the final post-lesson questionnaire and the Phase IV interview:

- "Listen to my voice was very helpful because I would realize how my pronunciation is. Another thing was using an image or identity to speak a certain way" - Laura, post-lesson questionnaire, Lesson IGE7.2;
- "I liked to listen to myself and realise what I was doing wrong" - Gustavo, post-lesson questionnaire, Lesson IGE7.2;
- "Yes, practising pronunciation with partner and listening and having to pay attention to the way my classmates speak" - Regina, post-lesson questionnaire, Lesson IGE7.2;
- "Acting, reading and recording practising different sentences" - Atinzwa, post-lesson questionnaire, Lesson EAP2.4;
- "Listening to recording" - Lourdes, post-lesson questionnaire, Lesson EAP2.4;
- "I think all of them was very helpful" - Ricardo, Interview, Appendix D7, l.189;
- "The diary that you gave to us [...]. Because you know where you have to work on to improve our English. And that class that we watched that movie about the pauses" - Alejandra, Interview, Appendix D10, l. 289-293
- "They all are good but highlighting the speakers' features of speech - it was good - and the features most important to the clear pronunciation and using an image or identity to speak a certain way" - Aman, Interview, Appendix D12, l. 489-492

6.3.1.5 Possible revisions to pronunciation course

While the course was generally well received by the learners, as indicated by the comments above, there were some aspects that could be improved upon if the course were to be repeated. These recommendations are made on the basis of both learners' responses to the course and its outcomes.

Firstly, in recognition of the emphasis placed on awareness-raising in the pedagogical model (see Section 3.3.2 above), a number of activities were built into the early part of the pronunciation pedagogy designed to enhance learners' perception of L2 accent, and the supplementary information it conveys. As noted in Sections 4.1.2 and 4.1.4 above, however, these activities were not well received. In Lesson IGE2.1 for example, learners listened to recordings of eight speakers of different varieties of English, in two successive exercises. Both exercises aimed to encourage learners to assess the pronunciation of other speakers to determine what was, for them, intelligible or not. One week later, five of these recordings were used again in Lesson IGE3.2, in an activity designed to show learners how to associate certain speech features with given personality traits or images.

These activities were extremely repetitive, particularly given the materials used (see Appendices B7 and B11), since the recordings in question consisted of different speakers repeating the same two sentences ("Please call Stella. Ask her to bring these things with her from the store" - see Appendices B11 and F4). Learners' concentration seemed to wander long before the end of the tasks, and their engagement was considerably lower than for other activities. While awareness-raising, and differentiating between speech and identity in particular, is a crucial part of the proposed pedagogical model, its implementation could have been more helpfully executed. Learners' awareness might have been better developed by using a wider range of recorded materials, such as those used in Lesson IGE1.1 (see Appendices B4 and F1).

The same can be said for the amount of time spent revising the association between pronunciation and identity in the EAP iteration of the pronunciation course. Although time constraints in this course meant that less time was spent on the type of perception exercises criticised above, a short period at the beginning of every lesson was spent revising the concept of speech features conveying personal identity. The constant reminders were highlighted by one of the learners, Lourdes, in her interview; "[S]ometimes I felt that they [the activities] were very slow because - or repetitive - say 'OK again' [...][M]aybe it was useful to make it better understood the association between features and images but sometimes it was very repetitive" (Appendix D13, l.376-387.)

Lourdes conceded that there was a purpose to the constant revision of the association between features of speech and identity ("it was useful"), but her point that the reminder became repetitive is a valid one that could be easily overcome in future implementations by designing a broader range of activities to explore this relationship, rather than simply discussing it at length in plenary format.

While these recommendations are made on the basis of critical feedback, some revisions may also be made in relation to more positive responses. Given the encouraging reactions of so many learners in response to the pronunciation reports, the self-assessment exercises and the role play activities, there is a strong case to be made for allocating more time to these elements of the course in a future implementation of the pedagogical model. The role play activity in particular has an important part to play, since it presents learners with a valuable opportunity to put their understanding of the association between pronunciation and projected identity into practice.

Finally, from a research perspective as well as a pedagogical one, it would be interesting to carry out this type of pronunciation course over a longer period of time, to explore some of the themes within in greater detail, and to determine whether longer exposure to this type of instructional approach would result in a more positive effect on learners' pronunciation within the parameters explored in Section 6.3.1.2 above.

The findings discussed in this section paint an overall picture of the efficacy of the course of instruction in relevant dimensions. However, for a richer insight into the individual experience of the pronunciation course we will now return to consideration of individual case-studies.

6.3.2 Case Study: Regina

Regina was a female student who came from Brazil and spoke Portuguese as her L1. She was aged 31 and had been living in Ireland for nine months at the start of the study. She had come to Ireland to improve her English, and in addition to studying she was working part-time in a delicatessen. She intended to stay in the country for one more year before returning to her home country. She had been enrolled in an English course for over a year, and was currently in her third of six months' tuition at Intermediate level. Shortly after the end of the pronunciation course, Regina, like Laura and Josefina, moved up to Upper Intermediate level.

Regina had stated in the Phase I questionnaire that her goal for English pronunciation was to achieve *NNS intelligibility*, a goal that she maintained for the duration of the whole study. Her motivation appeared to be firmly rooted in a desire to communicate with all speakers of English, whether native or non-native; she confirmed this in the very first lesson of the pedagogy when discussing her desired level of pronunciation with another learner, and again at the interview stage of the study when explaining why she selected NNS rather than *NS intelligibility*: "[We] didn't have an option to say 'everybody'" (Appendix D6, l.165-166).

Regina was particularly positive about the implementation of the pronunciation diary in Lesson IGE6.2. She viewed it as a means by which she could learn more about her own particular pronunciation needs, and how to address them. In that lesson's post-lesson questionnaire (Appendix B28) she wrote "I liked the way I learned how to pronounce some words in particulary [*sic*]". When asked what she disliked about that day's lesson, she wrote "Nothing. I liked today's lesson" (Q5), and rated the lesson 'Helpful'. She also enjoyed taking part in a role-playing exercise in Lesson IGE7.2, for which she partnered Laura. Together, the two learners acted out a short scene of about two minutes' duration, depicting an irate customer (Laura) returning a faulty item to a shop's sales assistant (Regina). One of Regina's main pronunciation difficulties included a tendency to stress each syllable equally, and to under-articulate the last sound in some words, particularly final unstressed /i/. This feature was described for Regina in her pronunciation diary. Earlier in the pronunciation course (see Lesson IGE1.1, Table 3) learners had associated the attribute of confidence with the speech of Simon Cowell, which they also determined to be "well-articulated". As a result, asked Regina to try to project the adjective 'confident' in her pronunciation, in the hope that it would help her to articulate more clearly and speak more fluently.

Before performing the scene in front of the class, each learner had to tell the class one feature of their pronunciation that they needed to improve, so that the other learners could then determine how well they had performed. Regina told the class that she was inclined to omit the last sound in a word, especially the letter y. Both she and Laura went on to perform very well in their role-play. In the plenary discussion afterwards, other learners in the class remarked that Regina had certainly sounded confident, and the more observant commented that she had also pronounced word-final /i/ at every occurrence.

In the post-lesson questionnaire, Regina strongly endorsed 'performing' in front of the other learners, and having to describe her particular pronunciation difficulty before speaking (Q3, Appendix B32): "Because it helped me to analyse if I am improving or not." She also noted that it was easier for her to correct certain features of her speech when she tried to present an image of herself to her listeners. Later on in the interview, when asked if she had found it easier to correct the problematic features of her pronunciation when assuming a confident image when performing the role-play, Regina confirmed that assuming a confident identity had helped.

In spite of her positive attitude towards the pedagogy, and in particular towards the role-play exercise at the end of the course of instruction, Regina's ratings for accentedness, comprehensibility and fluency in the Phase III recordings all declined between the pre- and post-test recordings, as illustrated below (Table 24 and Table 25). Note that raters' scores were allocated on the basis that 1 = 'no foreign accent' and 9 = 'very strong foreign accent'). It should be noted that Regina's scores across all three parameters were already very low at the pre-test stage; her accentedness score of 4.65, for example, was considerably lower than the Pedagogical Group's pre-test mean of 6.13, suggesting that she was at a more advanced stage of pronunciation proficiency than the average level of her classmates.

		Accentedness	Comprehensibility	Fluency
N	Valid	31	31	31
	Missing	0	0	0
	Mean	**4.65**	**2.10**	**2.52**
	Std. Deviation	1.473	1.106	1.029
	Minimum	2	1	1
	Maximum	8	5	5

Table 24: Regina's pre-test pronunciation ratings

		Accentedness	Comprehensibility	Fluency
N	Valid	31	31	31
	Missing	0	0	0
	Mean	**6.71**	**4.03**	**4.26**
	Std. Deviation	1.296	1.703	1.548
	Minimum	4	1	1
	Maximum	9	8	7

Table 25: Regina's post-test pronunciation ratings

The apparent decline in her pronunciation ratings across these three parameters, however, did not mean that Regina did not benefit from the pronunciation course. In the Phase IV interview, Regina demonstrated in-depth knowledge of the issues that caused her difficulty in her pronunciation. She was able to name every feature that had been highlighted in her pronunciation diary, and reiterated how much she felt she had benefited from performing the role-play in class. She also stressed the importance of good articulation to being clearly understood: "...[W]hen I arrived in Ireland I – it was difficult for people to understand me because I didn't used to do that – to speak separately – every sound separately" (l.

297-299). She attributed this realisation to the pronunciation lessons, and more specifically, to the pronunciation diary, highlighting its role in bringing previously neglected features of speech to learners' attention.

Regina admitted that despite her heightened awareness of her pronunciation challenges, she had not been as successful in maintaining this level of pronunciation outside the classroom environment since the classes had ended. However, she also said that she had been paying more attention to her pronunciation since the pedagogy had ended. She explained, "I've been trying but it's difficult because when we keep doing one thing you know it's difficult - sometimes I remember - I try. 'OK [...] don't stress every single word' but sometimes I forget" (l. 286-289). This suggests that for Regina, while the pronunciation course may have been effective for the duration of the lesson(s), it may have been more limited in real-world situations.

Regina's participation in the pedagogical study showed that she finished the pedagogy with a distinct definition of the level of pronunciation she wanted to reach. She felt she had a clearer understanding of the issues that caused her difficulty in her own pronunciation, as well as a renewed interest in improving it, all of which comprised a positive outcome from attending the pronunciation course.

6.3.3 Case Study: Luwi

Luwi was a 44-year-old student from Zambia attending a Master in Education. Her native language was Icimemba, and she had been learning English for fifteen years before coming to Ireland. At the time of the study, she had only just arrived in Dublin, having travelled from Zambia one week previously. She was attending the pre-sessional English language module, before starting her Masters, in order to improve her academic writing and speaking skills. She intended to stay in Ireland for two years to see out the duration of her Masters course. Luwi was absent for the first lesson but did not allow this to deter her from participating fully and enthusiastically in the rest of the course of pronunciation instruction.

Luwi indicated in the Phase I questionnaire that her pronunciation goal was for *NNS intelligibility*, indicating that, like Regina above, she was not aiming for attainment of a native-like variety of English pronunciation. She later clarified in her Phase IV interview that she had intended to specify NS rather than *NNS intelligibility*, explaining that native speakers were the 'owners' of the language, suggesting a belief in native speaker authority.

In the same interview and on a similar theme, Luwi referred to her desire to sound authentic in her English pronunciation, and not to convey a false impression of herself. Although at different times she stated a preference for different levels of pronunciation, switching between NS English and *NS intelligibility*, she was firm in her conviction that she wanted to sound "natural" in her pronunciation, and not as if she were merely trying to emulate a native speaker: "I want to speak English just like the – if it is possible to speak like the native. But not also to imitate the native – no. I just want to speak if it means natural. I don't know how I can explain it. I would like it that way" (l. 96-99). Her desire to produce native-like pronunciation, and her insistence that it be a "natural" production, suggested that she wished to achieve a high standard of pronunciation while avoiding the appearance of portraying an image that was not rightfully hers.

Luwi's desire for a high level of English pronunciation – and perhaps her reluctance to view a relationship between her accent and identity – may have accounted for the fact that she was more motivated by those elements of the course that addressed specific pronunciation features, rather than demanding that the learners reflect on their pronunciation goals and associations. Although she rated all lessons that she attended as 'Helpful', Luwi participated more enthusiastically in the activities that addressed specific features of pronunciation, in Lessons EAP2.1, EAP2,2 and EAP2.3. She claimed that one of the elements she found most helpful from the whole pedagogy was the lesson in which learners highlighted the most important features of good pronunciation, as it enabled her to identify the features that required most attention; indeed, when asked in the post-lesson questionnaires to rank the features of pronunciation in order of importance, she emphasised the same three features – speaking slowly, paying due attention to intonation and appropriate use of pause – on both the first and last day of the pedagogy. She also indicated that she had enjoyed listening to a recording of her voice, as it had helped her to appreciate how her English pronunciation sounded to others: "...[L]ike when you are listening – when you are speaking and you are listening sometimes you deceive yourself. But now when you record it and after recording it then you listen to it – I think you can learn from that" (Appendix D16, l. 410-412). The only aspect of the course that Luwi criticised was its duration: "More time is required" (post-lesson questionnaire, Lesson EAP2.4, Q15).

Luwi's participation in the pronunciation pedagogy resulted in an observable improvement in her pronunciation ratings. In the Phase III analysis, raters rated Luwi's post-test recording better across all three parameters than her pre-test recording, as shown by Table 26 and Table 27 below. Hers were the only ratings to show a statistically significant rating across all three parameters of accentedness, comprehensibility and fluency.

	Accentedness	Comprehensibility	Fluency
Valid	31	31	31
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	**7.94**	**6.10**	**4.32**
Std. Deviation	.998	1.938	1.641
Minimum	6	1	1
Maximum	9	9	8

Table 26: Luwi's pre-test pronunciation ratings

	Accentedness	Comprehensibility	Fluency
Valid	31	31	31
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	**6.39**	**4.06**	**3.52**
Std. Deviation	1.334	1.652	1.546
Minimum	4	1	1
Maximum	9	8	7

Table 27: Luwi's post-test pronunciation ratings

In addition to showing a noticeable improvement in her pronunciation ratings, in the Phase IV interview Luwi reported that she had also learned which aspects of pronunciation were important for clear pronunciation. She cited articulation and variation of intonation as central to good pronunciation for learners in general and went on to cite variation of intonation and stress as the most important features for her personally, proving that she had taken note of the features pointed out on her pronunciation diary. She said she had not been aware of these problems in her pronunciation before attending the pedagogy, and that she had continued to work on them since the lessons had ended.

Luwi's ability to improve her pronunciation awareness and performance in such a short space of time suggests that she fulfilled the pedagogical aims of the course: identifying a pronunciation goal, approximating her pronunciation goal and developing her awareness of her pronunciation challenges.

6.3.4 Case Study: Chin Ho

Chin Ho was a male student from South Korea aged 32, who participated in the EAP pronunciation course. He had been living in Ireland for a year and seven months when the study began, and was in the second year of his Ph.D.,. Although he was a continuing student, and in spite of the fact that he had received English language instruction for a long time a number of years earlier while in school in South Korea, he was attending the intensive pre-sessional English language module, specifically because he wished to improve his listening and speaking skills. His native language was Korean.

Chin Ho's attitude to his English pronunciation was notable for his very low opinion of his own proficiency. On the Phase I questionnaire, he gave his standard of English the lowest possible rating ('Poor' – see Q9), and rated his pronunciation 'Below average' (Q18). At various points throughout the study, he indicated that he felt his English pronunciation was not as good as he would like because he had begun his English studies in earnest so comparatively late in life, upon arriving in Ireland two years earlier. In the Phase IV interview, he attributed his pronunciation difficulties to physiological differences between the Korean and English manner of speech: "I think the tongue structure inside the mouth – the structure is already fixed because [...] I have spoken Korean for thirty years or thirty one – thirty two years – and then I speak English for just two years" (Appendix D15, l. 62-66).

This very mechanical view of speech production was indicative of Chin Ho's approach to learning pronunciation. While he claimed that his ideal level of English pronunciation would be that of a native speaker, he also stated during the pedagogy that such a level was so far beyond his reach that he would not aim for it: "I hope but a reality of my case is not allowed to speak as native speaker" (Lesson EAP2.1, post-lesson questionnaire, Q7). He also responded well to the more mechanical aspects of the course. In Lesson EAP2.3, when reproducing a dialogue intended to highlight the importance of stress and variation of intonation, Chin Ho had had difficulty in distinguishing the pronunciation of 'want' from 'won't'. The difference was explained to him and the rest of the class with a description of articulatory posture and sounds that rhymed with each word. In the post-lesson questionnaire, Chin Ho highlighted this particular feature of the lesson; when asked to agree or disagree with 'I liked today's pronunciation lesson' (on the usual scale of 1-7), he gave the lesson a rating of 2, and made specific reference to the 'won't'/'want' distinction.

Interestingly, in conjunction with this very bottom-up approach to learning pronunciation, Chin Ho also responded well to the concept of using an image or identity to shape his pronunciation when speaking to others. In Lesson EAP2.4, the last activity that learners participated in was a drama-based game titled 'Who am I?' (see Section 4.2.5 for description). Chin Ho was given the character of 'A boss who is used to having people's respect'. This role was chosen for Chin Ho because he, like Regina as mentioned on p. 262 above, had shown a tendency to stress function words, and because he had difficulty in producing falling tone at the end of sentences. It was my hope that taking on the role of an employer who demanded respect might help Chin Ho to produce stress and intonation more accurately, thus illustrating the value of using emotions to help control his pronunciation.

In the post-lesson questionnaire, Chin Ho wrote that the use of the image of this character had indeed helped him to correct these features of his speech (Lesson EAP2.4, Q7). He also spoke of the extended benefits of this exercise in the Phase IV interview.

> [B]efore I attend pre-sessional course as you know I memorised all texts [...] and I speak same as text which is set for presentation. I already write down. But now – not just speak text. I can put into my emotion in the sentence [...] when I speak presentation so there is a – I think much more understandable for audience and I think it's a very good way. (Appendix D15, l. 397-405)

When asked which feature of the pedagogy he had found most helpful, Chin Ho selected the self-analysis activity. This task had taken place during Lesson EAP2.4, the last lesson of the pronunciation course, in a language lab. Learners were asked to listen to digital recordings of their speech, which had been taken in the previous day's pronunciation lesson, and analyse it using a grid that featured a list of possible pronunciation errors. (For further details on this activity, see Section 4.2.5 above).

Chin Ho highlighted this exercise as the activity he found most helpful from the pronunciation pedagogy (post-lesson questionnaire, Lesson EAP2.4, Q5, Q13, Appendix B41). In interview, he said he had liked this part of the lesson because he had done a similar activity in South Korea, but to little avail, as it had not specifically stated the features he needed to work on. This activity, he felt, was better structured.

> Yeah - it was good - pretty good for me. Yep. But when I was in South Korea I also recorded my voice and the teacher also shows - give me the recording and then talking about my pronunciation. But there is no clear features - defined features. Just 'You have to speak clearly' or 'You should follow his or her pronunciation'. That's it - you know [...] And I think - I feel more well-defined - well-defined features in here. (Appendix D15, l. 357-368)

The Phase III analysis of Chin Ho's pronunciation showed an improvement across all three aspects of accentedness, comprehensibility and fluency, as illustrated in Table 28 and Table 29 below.

	Accentedness	Comprehensibility	Fluency
Valid	31	31	31
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	**7.06**	**5.68**	**6.35**
Std. Deviation	1.436	1.681	1.799
Minimum	4	2	1
Maximum	9	8	9

Table 28: Chin Ho's pre-test pronunciation ratings

	Accentedness	Comprehensibility	Fluency
Valid	31	31	31
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	**6.87**	**5.39**	**4.55**
Std. Deviation	1.384	1.995	1.912
Minimum	3	1	1
Maximum	9	9	9

Table 29: Chin Ho's post-test pronunciation ratings

From these tables, it is clear that Chin Ho's pre-test scores were quite high, and showed room for improvement. However, in light of his acknowledged difficulties with English pronunciation, and his strong focus on attaining a level of communicative competence, it is particularly encouraging that he demonstrated such a noticeable improvement in his fluency ratings, from 6.35 down to 4.55. It is possible that he benefited more from the pedagogy because he felt able to apply the knowledge he acquired during it to his everyday pronunciation; his enjoyment of the listening activity showed that in spite of his preference for meticulous, guided instruction (as illustrated by the 'want'/'won't' distinction), he was open to the suggestion of more autonomous learning, provided he had a solid foundation from which to work.

Despite Chin Ho's pronunciation improvement throughout the course, and the heightened awareness he developed of his pronunciation goals and challenges, he did not seem to maintain this awareness as well as some of the other participants. At interview, when asked to name any of the items on his pronunciation report, Chin Ho was unable to name any of them, stating, "I remember the questionnaires but I can't remember my report" (l. 342-343). Additionally, when asked if he had paid any more attention to his pronunciation since the course had ended, he confirmed that he had not. This seems to suggest that even though Chin Ho's pronunciation benefited from the course while he was still attending it, the benefits did not stay with him and he did not maintain an awareness of his pronunciation in the way that Luwi and Regina had, as outlined in Sections 6.3.2 and 6.3.3 above.

The results of the involvement of Regina, Luwi and Chin Ho illustrate that while this pedagogical approach may need to be refined, and re-tested over a longer period of time, there is evidence to suggest that it may help to increase English language learners' awareness of their pronunciation goals, the features associated with those goals, and ultimately their ability to address their own English pronunciation requirements, even though this last goal was not completed within the timeframe of this particular study.

6.4 Conclusion

As discussed in Chapter One of this thesis, the role of identity and motivation in pronunciation learning has previously been one which had been largely marginalised in pronunciation research, and one which was shown to merit further exploration. In this chapter, I presented an empirical study that considered how learners determine their goals for EFL pronunciation, in the hope of elucidating the role played by learner identity and motivation, and establishing how or whether these concepts could contribute to an effective EFL pronunciation pedagogy. A guide to the four phases of this study and the participating subjects had already been outlined in Chapter Five. Results were presented collectively, where appropriate, and also in the form of case studies for individual learners. Of the fourteen learners who formed the core group of subjects for the study as a whole, ten were the subject of a case study. Those for whom no case studies were presented were Ricardo, Alejandra, Nadia and Atinzwa. This was because their contributions were similar to those of other learners discussed, but some of their responses were noted in the more general discussions.

The results were considered within the context of three research questions:

1. What are the pronunciation goals of this group of English language learners, and what factors influence them?
2. How does learner identity manifest itself in the pronunciation goals of this group of learners?
3. What is the effect of an EFL pronunciation pedagogy that encourages learners to reflect on their pronunciation goals and use them to project their identities?

In answer to the first question, the results of a 34-item questionnaire completed by 147 EFL learners studying English at seven different learning institutions in Dublin showed that the majority of respondents wanted to achieve a native-speaker level of pronunciation. However, a more detailed analysis of the responses showed that when faced with the possibility of achieving any one of six criteria of English pronunciation, including four native speaker varieties and two different types of intelligibility, more learners (31.3%) chose the goal of speaking clearly enough for native speakers to understand them, than any other. It was noted that when a similar analysis of the pronunciation goals of the fourteen learners of the Pedagogical Group (as shown in Figure x), the pattern closely resembled that of the Questionnaire Group, suggesting that the Pedagogical Group participants featured a broadly similar profile to that of the subjects who participated in the questionnaire phase of the study.

The breakdown of learners' pronunciation goals was further explored by examining the reasons they had given for choosing the goals in question. Based on the explanations that subjects provided in their own words on the Phase I questionnaire, it was found that the most popular motivating influence among this sample of learners was the desire to achieve successful communication (*Communication*), suggesting that practical requirements outranked other influences. *Cultural identification* was the least selected reason on the list, having arisen in the responses of only 8 of the 147 learners. The results also showed the multiplicity of factors at play amongst learners' selection of pronunciation goals. Twenty-seven (N=27) of the 122 learners who explained the selection of their pronunciation goal gave a reason that referred to more than one theme, as defined by the qualitative analysis carried out at this stage of the study.

These findings were borne out by closer inspection of the goals and motivation of individual learners were examined, and the results demonstrated that categorisation of learners' pronunciation goals may not be as straightforward as the previous analyses had suggested. Closer inspection of the pronunciation goals of three subjects - Gustavo, Lakshmi and Josefina - revealed that for each of these learners, there was not just one, but a range of different factors that influenced their pronunciation goal selection. Furthermore, for some learners (Gustavo and Josefina), even their target English pronunciation of choice was not constant, as they changed their minds and specified different goals throughout the pedagogy. Investigation into Lakshmi's reasons for choosing her goal of Irish English pronunciation revealed that while she claimed her desire to achieve this level was due to a preference for the sound of Irish English, she appeared to be at least equally, if not more, motivated by a desire to integrate with her Irish friends and extended family, and to use pronunciation as a means of fitting in with them.

One of the issues that arose during analysis of learners' selection of pronunciation goals and their reasons for choosing them was the question of learners' attitudes to NS English pronunciation. A distinction was made between quantitative and qualitative perspectives. According to the quantitative view, NS English was perceived as the end point of a spectrum of intelligibility (e.g. by Gustavo). Qualitatively, NS English - and to be more exact, specific varieties of NS English - constituted a means to gain entry into a given community of practice (as perceived by Lakshmi).

This distinction also raised the question of NS authority, a topic that has been the subject of much debate in the literature. While these learners were never explicitly asked if they felt NS English was superior to non-native varieties purely by virtue of being spoken by native speakers, the data yielded evidence to suggest that NS authority is a view that persists among some learners. For example, Josefina stated that she aimed to be intelligible to native speakers of English, but was less concerned about the perceptions of non-native speakers (see Section 6.1.5). In the Phase IV interview she explained this distinction with the simple statement, "Because it's the native language – they know" (Appendix D4, l. 141). Similarly, when asked at interview why she would select a goal of NS rather than *NNS intelligibility*, Laura (Section 6.2.3) said of native speakers, "Because they know the language, you know? They are, you say, the owner of the speech, you know? So if they can understand me it's great for me" (Appendix D3, l. 146-148). This view was echoed by Luwi (Section 6.3.4). When asked at interview why she selected a goal of *NS intelligibility*, she attributed her decision to the fact that native speakers were a better authority on correct use of the language than any others.

> Because they are the owners of the language! [...] Because I wouldn't want it if somebody who doesn't underst – who doesn't know it to understand me. It won't make any sense. I would want the owner of the language. The originator - the one who originated that language. (Appendix D16, l. 218-221)

Research Question 2 then sought to establish the ways in which learner identity influenced the selection of learners' pronunciation goals. The fact that each learner experienced a number of different motivations to achieve their chosen level, or levels, of pronunciation, as Section 6.1 had shown, was suggestive of a plurality of aspects of the Ideal L2 Self, when viewed within the framework of Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System. Learners then selected the most salient identity at a given moment. This interpretation of the data supported the model of L2 pronunciation learning presented in Figure ii in Section 2.3. In this section, since the motivational influences of the Questionnaire Group as a whole had already been presented in Section 6.1.2, these results were explored in depth in the case studies of four more learners.

For each of these learners, pronunciation had a role to play in their conceptualisation of their individual identity. Adriana wished to distinguish herself from her interlocutors in Ireland, while Aman wished to assimilate with his compatriots in his home country. In both cases, however, maintenance of their L1 accent was a means of expressing their national identities. In terms of the seven themes of motivational influences that had been outlined in Section 6.1.2, both Adriana and Aman could be described as being influenced by cultural identification in selecting their pronunciation goals. Laura, on the other hand, was guided by a personal characteristic, that of her own personal desire for proficiency. In terms of her pronunciation, this manifested itself in an ambition to achieve a native-like level, even though she conceded it was improbable that she would do so; thus Laura's most salient aspect of identity as expressed in her pronunciation goals was that of a personal attribute, namely, her quest for perfection. In contrast to all of the above, Lourdes demonstrated that pronunciation can contribute to conveying an inaccurate representation of the speaker, and argued that in the absence of a command of the language that would enable her to present a more accurate image of her identity – e.g. as a humorous person who liked to tell jokes – in her pronunciation, she would instead aim to speak clearly and be understood, thus again supporting the notion of a spectrum of pronunciation goals, as discussed in Section 6.1.

The findings of section 6.2 illustrated the complex nature of human identity, and how it would be simply inaccurate to make assumptions about learners' pronunciation goals, or the role that identity would play in their development. For each of these four learners, at least some level of their individual identity, in the form of their Ideal L2 Self – or, more accurately, Selves - had a significant input into the formation of their English pronunciation goals. As each learner had a specific Ideal L2 Self in mind, which related specifically to her own goals and identity, the level of identity prioritised in a given moment by each learner varied significantly from person to person (e.g. nationality for Adriana, personality for Laura), and consequently affected their pronunciation goals in different ways (Adriana aimed for *NS intelligibility*, while Laura aimed to sound like a native speaker). Above all, these findings highlighted the idiosyncratic nature of the relationship between pronunciation and identity.

Section 6.3 considered the third research question: What is the effect of an EFL pronunciation pedagogy that encourages learners to reflect on their pronunciation goals and use them to project their identities? In analysing this question, I first referred to the pedagogical objectives of the pronunciation course that was implemented for Phase II of the empirical study, as they had been outlined in Section 3.2 of Chapter Three. The overall outcomes of the course were considered, along with the experiences of three individual learners.

Analysis of the pedagogical outcomes suggested that, as a group, learners achieved better end results in metacognitive aspects of the course than in practical ones, in a pattern broadly similar to Yule et al.'s investigation of perception (1987). The first objective of the course had been for learners to be able to identify their pronunciation goals, a challenge that was met across the board. All learners were shown to have a clear understanding of the type of pronunciation they wished to achieve, and to be able to discuss them at length in the Phase IV interview.

The second objective was for learners to approximate the achievement of these goals. The results showed no statistically significant improvement in the accent ratings of the Pedagogical Group as a whole. While the mean ratings for fluency did improve marginally, they were not shown to be statistically significant. The mean ratings for the accentedness and comprehensibility of the overall Pedagogical Group showed a slight disimprovement, but these results were also shown to be statistically insignificant. On an individual basis, five of the subjects showed an improvement in their scores across all three parameters of accentedness, comprehensibility and fluency, while three showed better scores in some areas and worse in others, and six actually showed a disimprovement across all three parameters.

In response to the third objective of the pronunciation course, learners responded very favourably. Subjects demonstrated a heightened awareness of their pronunciation goals, and twelve of the fourteen learners were better able to specify the individual problems that caused them difficulty in their English pronunciation. The most popular activities varied in each pedagogical setting. In the IGE programme, the most popular exercise was the use of a characterised identity in a role-play exercise; in the EAP course, it was a similar role-play exercise and listening to recordings of their voice for specific errors in pronunciation. Overall, they were positive in their responses to the pedagogy, with many learners highlighting their enjoyment of lessons that specifically addressed pronunciation.

The results of this chapter point towards the following conclusions:

- The most popular pronunciation goal amongst this sample of EFL learners was that of sounding clear enough to be understood by native speakers of English;

- The most frequently-cited motivation amongst these learners was a practical need to engage in successful communication;
- Learners were more likely to have several different motivating factors, from which they selected a priority for a given situation, than to have one sole reason for aspiring to a given level of pronunciation;
- Expression of cultural identification through pronunciation, with either the L1 or the L2 culture, proved to be a motivating factor only for a small minority of learners, though as evidenced by Lakshmi's conflict between explicit and implicit goals, such identification may have played a more important role than the Phase I questionnaire suggested;
- While individual identity plays a role in determining the pronunciation goals of individual learners, the extent and nature of its influence is dependent on the learner in question;
- Identity can be manifested in any one of a broad range of ways in learners' pronunciation goals;
- The results of this study show that a pronunciation course built on a pedagogical model focusing on awareness-raising, articulatory control, goal-setting, reflection and the use of drama achieved mixed results in its three pedagogical aims;
- In response to the first aim, learners demonstrated greater awareness of their pronunciation goals and how to achieve them after the course had ended;
- In response to the second aim, the course did not result in an overall improved score for accentedness, comprehensibility and fluency for these two groups of EFL learners;
- In response to the third aim, the learners who participated in the course demonstrated greatly improved awareness of their pronunciation learning and their ability to identify their individual pronunciation difficulties, and possibly address these difficulties going forward.

The findings suggest that individual learner identity has an important role to play in L2 pronunciation learning, and greater awareness of this relationship can lead to an enhanced awareness of specific pronunciation difficulties, which may contribute to their improvement over time.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

This thesis had three primary aims. The first was to explore the nature of the relationship between pronunciation and identity. The second was to determine whether this hypothesised relationship could contribute to the development of an effective L2 pronunciation pedagogy, which would be implemented and evaluated in an empirical investigation. These two aims were supplemented by the addition of a third as a result of the research carried out: to investigate the pronunciation goals of participating learners and determine the factors that contribute to them. These aims were addressed with a review of the literature leading to proposed models of L2 pronunciation learning and pedagogy, an outline of the implementation of a course of instruction based on the pedagogical model, and a description of the evaluation of this course.

Chapter One provided a review of L2 pronunciation literature since the origins of the International Phonetic Association in the late 19th century. An abundance of proposed teaching methods was shown to be of limited practical value, since they are so infrequently subjected to empirical evaluation. I argued that the area would benefit greatly from an increase in the quantity of empirical investigation of teaching approaches and the consequent development of priorities for pronunciation instruction.

It was noted that the teaching methods that have been proposed to address L2 pronunciation have tended to focus on the mechanics of articulation, without considering the possible affective factors at play, such as attitude or motivation. However, a series of studies carried out by Smit, Dalton-Puffer and Kaltenböck between 1997 and 2002 were shown to relate their findings on Austrian EFL learners' motivation to their identity, prompting the researchers to call for further investigation of "more deeply-seated socio-psychological factors connected to questions of 'self' and identification with the target group" (Dalton-Puffer et al., 1997, p. 126).

The theme of identity arose early in the second chapter in an examination of the context of English language learning worldwide. In her assessment of the pedagogical requirements for English pronunciation teaching to learners of English as an international language, Jenkins asserts that English language learners who intend to use it as a lingua franca with other non-native speakers should use their L1 accent to project their L1 identity (2000). I went on to dispute Jenkins' stance, for reasons that I later made clear. The second chapter then gave an account of recent developments in identity research. It is established that recent research has represented identity as a multi-layered phenomenon, which permits the learner to conceive of herself in any one of a number of roles for a given situation. This conceptualisation is encapsulated in Omoniyi's Hierarchy of Identities (2006), which conceives of identity as a series of possible roles, to be prioritised by the individual in a given situation. This view of identity was compared to recent developments in L2 motivation research. Dörnyei's (2005) model of L2 motivation, the L2 Motivational Self System, depicts motivation in terms of the learner's envisaged possible selves: the Ideal L2 Self and the Ought-to L2 Self. I argued that a combination of these two models forms a model of identity that is compatible with how it might be manifested in pronunciation (see Figure i, p. 76 above).

In the last part of Chapter Two, I presented a model of L2 pronunciation learning that aims to encapsulate the factors that contribute to the production of a given L2 accent (see Figure ii, p. 80). This model portrays pronunciation as a direct result of the articulatory processes, which are themselves formed in one of two ways: directly, by circumstantial factors, unavoidable facts of the speaker's existence (e.g. environmental or biological influences); or indirectly, by the influence of the affective factors, which consist of the combined influences of identity and motivation, as per the models of Omoniyi and Dörnyei and illustrated in Figure i described above. These affective factors feed into the speaker's target accent, which in turn contributes to the articulatory processes.

This model places particular emphasis on the importance of learners' individual pronunciation goals, and the role played by identity and motivation in establishing them. In light of this emphasis, let us now briefly return to my earlier-stated opposition to Jenkins' stance on the goal of minimal intelligibility for EIL learners (see p. 278 above). Within the framework of my model, it is the individuality of learners' pronunciation goals that is of paramount importance, not the goal itself. To switch from one prescribed pronunciation goal (attainment of a native-like phonological model) to another (mutual intelligibility) is counter-productive within this conceptualisation. Pronunciation goals are representative of individual identity and cannot be imposed on learners; to do so is to impose an external identity on them and serves no purpose. Instead, learners must be taught to establish their goals for themselves, through guided reflection.

The thesis then turned to its second aim: exploring how these theoretical notions of identity (and motivation) in pronunciation may be applied to a pronunciation teaching approach. Given the importance ascribed to the power of the individual in the L2 pronunciation learning model, I argued in favour of the adoption of a learner-centred approach, and suggested autonomous learning as the most effective means of doing so. Evidence was presented showing the benefits of learner autonomy in embracing individual, context-specific learner identity in the L2 classroom, and I concluded that an autonomous learning environment is an appropriate one in which to incorporate learners' affective factors into a course of L2 pronunciation instruction. This led into a discussion of the aims of this approach to teaching pronunciation. I identified three objectives for learners participating in this course:

1. To identify individual pronunciation goals;
2. To approximate the chosen pronunciation goal;
3. To develop autonomous pronunciation learning.

This last aim is particularly significant, since it supports the proposal that learner autonomy could have an important role to play in the pedagogical model. I then outlined five pedagogical principles that form the basis of my pronunciation course. They are:

1. Goal-setting
2. Awareness-raising
3. Articulatory control
4. Reflection
5. Drama and role play

These principles show that autonomous learning has a significant part to play in this pedagogical model, with goal-setting, awareness-raising and reflection all representing metacognitive processes that relate to the learner's understanding of the pronunciation learning process. These processes are accompanied by the development of articulatory control – since it is argued that articulatory processes are the proximate cause of pronunciation patterns – and the use of drama and role play, which are incorporated in an attempt to use learner identity to influence the production of pronunciation directly, rather than through the medium of the establishment of a target accent (see Figure iii, p. 111).

Chapter Four, then, went on to outline an implementation of the pedagogical model, including a full account of the activities involved. These activities were based on the pedagogical principles outlined in Chapter Three.

In Chapter Five I described the methodological approach undertaken in the empirical study. The mixed methods approach used was justified as an appropriate course of action, given the range of the study's aims. The study took place in four distinct but interrelated phases:

- Phase I consisted of the distribution of a questionnaire to 147 learners of English around Dublin, to establish a general profile and their pronunciation goals;
- Phase II was the pedagogical study, which investigated the participation of fourteen EFL learners in the pronunciation course described in Chapter Four;
- Phase III was designed to evaluate whether any improvement took place in the participants' pronunciation as a result of attending the pronunciation course. Recordings of their speech were taken before and after the course took place and were subsequently evaluated by 31 independent raters;
- Phase IV consisted of a retrospective interview carried out with the pedagogical study participants after the pronunciation course had finished. The intention was to follow up on participants' responses to the Phase I questionnaire and their experiences of the Phase II pedagogical study.

The results of the empirical study were then presented in Chapter Six, in the form of whole group evaluations where applicable, and as case studies of individual participants. Results were presented in reference to the three broad aims, which were converted into three research questions:

1. What are the pronunciation goals of this group of English language learners, and what factors influence them?
2. How does learner identity manifest itself in the pronunciation goals of this group of learners?
3. What is the effect of an EFL pronunciation pedagogy that encourages learners to reflect on their pronunciation goals and use them to project their identities?

In response to Research Question 1, the following points were observed:

- The majority of participating L2 learners (65.3%) stated a preference for a phonological goal that was categorised as a native speaker variety;
- Analysis of the more detailed responses revealed whether learners who did aim for a native speaker variety had a particular accent of English in mind. The findings seemed to contradict the previous response, with the most popular specific goal (accounting for 31.3% of the overall sample) chosen being "To sound clear enough for native speakers to understand you";
- Learners appeared to distinguish between quantitative and qualitative evaluations of native-like English pronunciation, with quantitative perspectives viewing it as the ultimate level of intelligibility, and qualitative perspectives viewing it as a means of gaining entry into a given cultural or linguistic community. The results of this study suggest that learners may have been more likely to adopt the quantitative perspective;
- The most frequently-cited reason for choosing this goal among this sample was that of a wish to engage in successful communication, suggesting that most learners were motivated by practical considerations;
- However, many learners (27 of the 147 who completed the questionnaire) stated a reason that was classifiable as indicative of more than one theme.

These findings point towards the overriding complexity of L2 pronunciation motivation, a factor that led into the investigation of Research Question 2, and the manifestation of identity in pronunciation:

- Investigation of the case studies of other learners in response to Research Question 2 illustrated that learners wished to express their nationality, their personality and even their professional affiliations in their L2 pronunciation;
- It was found that the motivational influence of cultural identification was selected by only a small minority of participants, suggesting that the majority of learners were not concerned with projecting national affiliation or identification in their L2 pronunciation;
- However, deeper analysis of the responses of one of the participants in the pedagogical study revealed an unexpressed wish to integrate with her peers in the host community, suggesting that identification with a national or ethnic group may exert greater influence on

learners' selection of their pronunciation goals than the answers obtained from the Phase I questionnaire might indicate.

These projected identities may be considered in terms of the multi-faceted Ideal L2 Self that is represented in the proposed model of L2 pronunciation learning described in Chapter Two, with each motivational influence representing an aspect of this Ideal L2 Self, and the learner selecting the most appropriate one for the image she wishes to convey to her interlocutors. Within the proposed framework, then, identity is revealed to play a significant part in establishing learners' individual pronunciation goals. However, the form it may take and the extent to which that identity impacts on L2 pronunciation is dependent on the learner in question.

The third research question, which relates to the effectiveness of the pronunciation pedagogy, was analysed firstly in terms of the participants' overall responses to the pronunciation course, and secondly in how the course addressed the three pedagogical objectives outlined in Chapter Three (Section 3.2). Overall, mixed results were achieved.

- Learners responded favourably to the course, with many particularly pleased to be attending a series of lessons specifically aimed at addressing pronunciation;
- Learners identified the activities based on role play exercises and their own voice recordings as the most beneficial of the course;
- A greater overall success rate was evident in the metacognitive aspects of the course than in the practical aspects;
- The first pedagogical objective was highly successful, with all learners able to identify their pronunciation goals and discuss them in some detail during the interview after the course had ended;
- The second objective was less successful: analysis of pre- and post-test recordings of learners' pronunciation did not result in an improved score for the group as a whole within the parameters of accentedness, comprehensibility or fluency. The results may have been affected by the short duration of the course, or may not be directly attributable to the pedagogical treatment alone.
- On an individual basis, there were more mixed results: five learners' scores improved across all three parameters, three showed a mixture of improvement and deterioration, and six learners demonstrated lower scores across all three parameters;
- The third pedagogical objective was for learners to develop a capacity for autonomous pronunciation learning, and it, too,

demonstrated a high level of success. Twelve of the fourteen learners were able to identify the feature of pronunciation they needed to work on the most after completing the course, and the steps they needed to take to improve it.

The results showed that while learners did not demonstrate an observable improvement in their pronunciation after attending this pronunciation course, they showed a marked improvement in their awareness of the pronunciation learning process. Specifically, they showed they were able to identify their individual pronunciation challenges, and outline strategies to work on overcoming these challenges on an ongoing basis in the future. Overall, the findings from the empirical study are supportive of my claim that identity occupies a role in L2 pronunciation learning, and suggest that learners may be able to develop greater awareness of this relationship, with a view to identifying their individual pronunciation challenges.

This study attempts to fill some gaps in the L2 pronunciation literature, by addressing the following topics:

Empirical investigation

In this study I found that there was a shortage of theoretically sound, empirically researched approaches to teaching pronunciation. I aimed to address this shortage by not only proposing a pedagogical model of L2 pronunciation, but also subjecting it to empirical evaluation and thus determining its appropriateness for the L2 pronunciation classroom. In so doing I addressed the concerns raised by Derwing & Munro (2005, 2009), who have called for greater ties between pronunciation research and teaching.

Identity in L2 pronunciation pedagogy

In response to my original query, I set out to investigate the role played by identity in L2 pronunciation, and found that previous researchers had called for further investigation of how it might influence L2 pronunciation (Dalton-Puffer et al., 1997). Additionally, the influence of identity had not been taken into account in previous teaching methodologies. Building on recent conceptualisations of identity such as that represented in Omoniyi's Hierarchy of Identities (2006), and the confluence of identity and motivation presented in Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005), I proposed a model of identity that would represent the affective factors in the model of L2 pronunciation described below.

Model of L2 pronunciation learning

While much research has been done in recent years to investigate the factors affecting L2 pronunciation – particularly in the work of Flege, Derwing, Munro and others – there have been few attempts to depict the manner in which it is affected by them. My model, presented in Figure ii in Section 2.3.2 above, aims to encompass all influences that contribute to the production of L2 pronunciation. I drew particular attention to the role played by the affective factors in establishing the speaker's target accent, which in turn exerts considerable influence on the articulatory processes that produce L2 pronunciation.

Individualisation of pronunciation learning

Since the pronunciation model in Chapter Two presents pronunciation goals as arising out of the learner's unique identity and motivation, individuality is shown to be a core component of the approach to pronunciation adopted in this thesis. Previous methodologies have not conceived of pronunciation in this way, and have instead worked from the assumption that learners must work towards a phonological target set by the teacher. In earlier, more traditional approaches this target was native-like pronunciation; more recently the goal of mutual intelligibility has been presented within the context of EIL learning (see Jenkins e.g. 2000, as discussed above). However, in this thesis I argue that the target accent itself is not as important as the fact that it must be set by the learner herself, if it is to reflect her individual identity and motivation. I contend that the best way to achieve this ideal is by advocating a learner autonomy-based approach to L2 pronunciation teaching.

Despite every effort to minimise them, there are some limitations to this study. Firstly, caution must be exercised in generalising the findings of the pedagogical study (Phase II of the empirical study) to other learning populations, given the unavoidably small sample size of the pedagogical study. As discussed in Chapter Five, subject attrition meant that the number of learners who attended an acceptable majority of the pronunciation course was even smaller by the end of the study than at the start. However, the limitation of generalisability is no greater in this investigation than in most qualitative pedagogical studies. Indeed, the use of both quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches, and the analysis of multiple case studies, shows an attempt to overcome these limitations by widening the scope of the findings of the study. Future replications of the study should, however, strongly consider implementing it with a larger sample size where practicable, to extend the generalisability of this study's findings.

As discussed in Section 6.3.1, the short duration of the course cast some doubt on the validity of the pronunciation evaluations. It was shown in Section 6.3.1.2 that the pedagogy resulted in no effect on the learners' pronunciation, as assessed in terms of accentedness, comprehensibility and fluency. However, the absence of quantitative evidence supporting such an improvement may be attributable to the brevity of the pedagogical treatment. Given a longer period of instruction, it is possible that more learners may have demonstrated an observable improvement in the pronunciation scores attributed to them by the raters who evaluated their recordings.

Conversely, there is also the possibility that the timing of the post-test recordings may have resulted in a transitory effect on the pedagogical effects of the course. Learners who participated in the pedagogical study may in the immediate post-test recording have produced a higher standard of pronunciation than if they had been recorded some time after the course had ended. With this in mind, the use of delayed post-test recordings of participants' pronunciation at a designated point in time after the end of the course may be advisable to supplement immediate post-test scores for comparative analysis, particularly in relation to Research Question 3.

The implementation of the pedagogical model itself was subject to recommended modifications, as discussed in Section 6.3.1.5 above. Among the most important points to take into consideration are minimisation of activities geared towards perception, greater variation of materials and activities, and inclusion of further opportunities for learners to put their enhanced understanding of pronunciation into practice.

Given the fact that the empirical exploration of identity in L2 pronunciation is still in its infancy, there is much research yet to be done, but this study represents a start. From a research perspective, additional studies should be carried out into how L2 learners conceive of their identity and how it is projected in their L2 pronunciation, in order to build up a greater source of empirical evidence on the subject. Given the complexity of identity in L2 pronunciation, there is a greater need for empirical investigation that will encapsulate the nuances of this phenomenon and how it is manifested in L2 pronunciation; in other words, there is a greater need for qualitative rather than quantitative research, as highlighted in the discussion of the empirical study results on p. 281 above.

From a pedagogical perspective, if pronunciation is to remain a priority in language research and pedagogy, further empirical investigation is essential to the establishment of definitive instructional priorities. In particular, more pedagogical studies should be conducted to establish the efficacy of proposed teaching methods.

Finally, the results of this study may be considered with some confidence to be generalisable to EFL learners studying English in Dublin (and perhaps in the rest of Ireland). However, this does not mean that the issues explored therein are not more widely applicable to learners of English in other contexts, and learners of other languages. In particular, there is a global population of English language learners, for whom the issue of identity will only become a more pressing concern in the years ahead. Given the arguments that have already been made that learners of English in lingua franca contexts should be entitled to preserve their L1 identity by means of preserving an accent in their L2 English, it may be worthwhile to consider implementing this type of investigation in an ELF context, to determine whether the evaluations of identity in pronunciation presented in this study may be generalised to other populations of L2 learners.

This thesis has aimed to shed new light on the manner in which learner identity is manifested in pronunciation, and has proposed and evaluated a pedagogical model that draws on L2 motivation and learner autonomy to incorporate notions of identity into the process of L2 pronunciation learning. It is hoped that the outcome of these efforts is a body of work that may make a substantive contribution to the field of pronunciation research.

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