CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

This chapter reviews the literature and research related to teaching pronunciation. The review is divided into three parts. The first part surveys the definition and background of pronunciation and development of language acquisition. The second part surveys the theories that influence the effective ways of teaching pronunciation. The third part surveys previous related research works about language perception and pronunciation.

2.1 Definitions and Background

One of the difficulties a learner of a new language faces is that of minimal pairs. Minimal pairs are pairs of words whose pronunciation differs at only one segment (vowel or consonant sound), such as *sheep* and *ship*, or *lice* and *rice* (Higgins, 2006. Online). They are often used in listening tests and pronunciation exercises. Theoretically, it is the existence of minimal pairs which enables linguists to build up the phoneme inventory for a language or dialect, though the process is not without difficulty. There are many of these in the English language. Which minimal pairs cause a student problems depends on the phonetics of their native language and their language of study (L1 and L2). In the case of Japanese learners, "fat" and "hat", pose a problem because of the nature of the Japanese language which lacks the sound for the English "f". Another example would be "eel" and "heel" for a French learner of English. This pronunciation problem would arise because the French language lacks an "h" sound. For this reason these language learners have a very difficult time clearly differentiating between the sounds both when they hear them and when they attempt to pronounce them. In turn, difficulties with minimal pairs may even cause language learners problems in areas like reading and spelling, as students mix up words and meanings (Fryer, 2005. Online).

Minimal pairs are a more serious problem than simple poor pronunciation or listening skills on the part of a student. This is because mistakes with minimal pairs do not simply impair understanding; they can lead students to believe that they understand when in fact they are quite mistaken. These kinds of mistakes can hamper their conversation skills in the obvious way that they are difficult to understand, but it can also affect their confidence and thus their inclination to even try to communicate in the first place (Fryer, 2005. Online).

The problem with helping students with minimal pairs is that it is not as simple as teaching a rule and then reinforcing it with an exercise and/or homework. This simply does not provide enough practice to enable to students to learn and become competent with new phonetics. Though minimal pairs are addressed by many language learning texts, they generally do so in a brief, one time activity or some simple repetition. Though this is better than nothing, this does little to aid students in gaining any lasting improvement in either listening or pronunciation. Minimal pairs need to be seen as a problem to be dealt with over a longer period (Fryer, 2005. Online).

Insights gathered from the study of the acquisition of L2 phonology can help teachers to decide what to concentrate on, given the severe time constraints they are faced with in the classroom. For example, if students can survive by substituting their L1 sounds for those of the L2, then substitution is not too much of a problem. Therefore, finding out which sounds are difficult due to L1 transfer or developmental problems is important. In this respect, we should be concerned principally with those sounds that may cause confusion among listeners, whether they are native speakers of English or non-native speakers (Jenkins, 1998. p. 119).

2.2 Teaching of Pronunciation and the Development of Language Acquisition

The teaching of pronunciation has been at-odds with the teaching of grammar and vocabulary ever since it was first studied systematically shortly before the beginning of the twentieth century (Kelly, 1969). In the time that has passed since the acceptance

of pronunciation as a contributing factor to language acquisition, it has come in and out of fashion as various progressive movements in language acquisition have prevailed.

The Importance of Segmental Techniques

Hansen (1995. p. 289) notes that segmental techniques, like drilling minimal pairs, have lost favor in the current pedagogical climes of CLT. As often happens older methodologies and approaches that offer students something worthwhile are discarded in favor of more ideologically appropriate methodologies.

Yet one area where adult learners can improve rapidly is the pronunciation of segmentals. Segmentals are the individual sounds that can be broken down in a language and focused on individually. Hammond (1995. p. 300) notes that adults learning a second language are capable of perceiving and articulating subtle differences. However, the inference is that these must be made explicit. Segmentals do not need to be taught technically, although a background in phonetics would be useful. Tricks such as telling students to make a rabbit face to correctly produce a /f/ sound can help them to remember longer.

Korean students can be taught to identify the differences between the sounds that are not present in the Korean Hangul alphabet. Learning to distinguish differences aurally can help students recognize individual, distinct sounds, so they are better able to focus on producing them. Fraser (1999. p. 2) points out that there can be a sizeable gap between what people think they are saying, a phonetic description of the sounds they are actually producing, and how someone from a different language background describes their speech. Students may not realize that they sound different from the teacher or an audio tape. Dalton (1997) suggests that students will convert unclear input into a similar sound in their own language. Since the Korean alphabet does not have a /f/ sound, Koreans will substitute /p/ or even /hw/. Through the use of contrastive analysis students can develop a better understanding of the differences between their L1 and English.

Improvement with segmentals can lead to a feeling of accomplishment and increased motivation. Vitanova and Miller (2002. p. 2) cite a student who wrote: "I changed my wrong consonant sounds likes F, P, B, V and RL sounds into correct enunciation. I was very happy to hear that my American friends told me, 'Your pronunciation is getting better.'" Conversely, segmental pronunciation mistakes can also lead to embarrassing misunderstandings such as asking for a cap but receiving a cup.

Approaches for Pronunciation Teaching

Teachers of pronunciation have adopted two general approaches (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996. p. 2): an intuitive-imitative approach and analytic-linguistic approach, which are described below.

An intuitive-imitative approach. This approach assumes that a student's ability to listen to and imitate the rhythms and sounds of the target language will lead to the development of an acceptable threshold of pronunciation without the intervention of any explicit information. The invention of the (recently much maligned) language lab and the audio-lingual method contributed to the support of this approach in the 60's, 70's and right up into the 80's. Indeed, many contemporary second language practitioners still hold to this view but research is needed to ascertain if their beliefs have any foundation.

An analytic-linguistic approach. This approach recognizes the importance of an explicit intervention of pronunciation pedagogy in language acquisition. Developments in the fields of phonetics and phonology from the latter half of the century are drawn upon and often diminished in effect for use in the language classroom. Pedagogical aids such as the phonemic chart, articulatory descriptions, explanations of the form and function of prosody and practical exercises such as minimal pair drills and rhythmic chants form the basis of an explicit program of accent modification.

An example of analytic-linguistic approach can be seen in the case of Korean ESL students. Korean learners are usually not exposed to an explicit method of pronunciation instruction until they venture from high school into a TESOL classroom and have exposure to a native speaking teacher who is skilled in pronunciation pedagogy.

Even now the majority of these students still learn English without actually speaking it. In their pre-adolescent and adolescent years when exposure to a native model would most benefit their acquisition of pronunciation, Korean students learn by *Grammar Translation* and *reading-based approaches*. These methods of language instruction will not be treated in the following discussion of the historical development of language acquisition models because they are not concerned with oral communication of the target language and are therefore not concerned with pronunciation.

Apart from the intuitive-imitative approach and analytic-linguistic approach, several approaches have been introduced and used in language teaching. They are the direct method, the reform movement, audiolinguism and the oral approach, the cognitive approach, the silent way and the communicative approach which are described below.

2.2.1 The Direct Method

This method of language instruction, which gained acceptance in the late 1800's, was formed from observations of children attaining their first language. Students would imitate a model of the target language that was spoken by the teacher (and later by recordings) and attempt to approximate the model through constant repetition. Later models that were built on this approach include Asher's (1977) Total Physical Response and Krashen and Terrell's (1983) Natural Approach. The methodology of these models consists of intensive listening comprehension, which persist for an extended period before any speaking is allowed. Proponents of these *naturalistic methods* maintain that: "the initial focus on listening without pressure to speak gives the learners the opportunity to internalise the target sound system. When learners do speak later on, their pronunciation is supposedly quite good despite never having received explicit pronunciation instruction." (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996)

2.2.2 The Reform Movement

In the 1890's the developers of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), Henry Sweet, Wilhelm Viëtor and Paul Passy, led a movement in language teaching that was generally known as the Reform Movement. These phoneticians did much to influence the teaching of pronunciation with their contribution to the development of a system for

describing and analysing the sound systems of languages and by advocating the following guidelines (Celce-Murcia et al. 1996, p.3):

2.2.2.1 The spoken form of a language is primary and should be taught first

2.2.2.2 The findings of phonetics should be applied to language teaching

2.2.2.3 Teachers must have solid training in phonetics

2.2.2.4 Learners should be given phonetic training to establish good speech habits

2.2.3 Audiolinguism and the Oral Approach

The contribution of the latter analytic linguistic approach to pronunciation pedagogy led to the next noticeable movement in the 1940's and 1950's. In the United States, audiolingualism and in Britain,the Oral approach were two methodologies that were built upon the explicit instruction of phonological aspects of language. These two methods emulated the Direct Method by relying on a recording or the teacher to model the target language followed by the students' repetition of that language. However, the teacher also drew from their knowledge of phonetics and for the first time used simplified charts of the IPA and of articulatory models in the classroom. Also introduced was the practice of using minimal pairs for listening practice and oral production. This technique was based on the concept of the phoneme as a minimally distinctive sound (Bloomfield 1933) and was used, and indeed *overused* by Baker (1977) in her very popular course book on contrastive segmental instruction *Ship* or *Sheep*?

2.2.4 The Cognitive Approach

The 1960's was the decade which was to have a profound destabilising effect on the teaching of pronunciation. An influential new movement, transformational-generative grammar (Chomsky, 1965) asserted that language was essentially rule-governed behaviour and not habitually learnt. This view, which found widespread acceptance in English language teaching circles, de-emphasised the role of pronunciation in language acquisition pedagogy in favour of grammar and vocabulary because its advocates argued, (1) native-like pronunciation was an unrealistic objective and could not be

achieved (Scovel, 1969); and (2) time would be better spent on teaching more learnable items, such as grammatical structures and words (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996).

2.2.5 The Silent Way

In the early 1970's pronunciation returned to favour with the development of the Silent Way (Gattegno 1972, 1976). In this methodology (which is still in practice in the U.S.A) segmentals as well as suprasegmentals are highlighted from the very beginning of instruction. As the name suggests, teacher talk in this method is kept to a minimum. Instead of complicated articulatory and phonetic explanations the teacher indicates through gestures what the students should do. Teachers hold up fingers to indicate the number of syllables in a word, tap out rhythmic patterns and model the place and manner of articulation with their own lips and throat or with a *hand puppet* of the tongue and oral cavity. Also central to the Silent Way are visual teaching aids that have been found useful in demonstrating some of the more abstract principals of pronunciation to second language learners. These teaching aids are as follows.

2.2.5.1 The *sound-colour chart*. Each phoneme on a phonemic chart is assigned a colour and is referred to by colour for ease of reference.

2.2.5.2 Fidel wall charts. A colour categorisation system which segments the letter to sound rules into phonetic bundles. For every letter or group of letters, which represent a phoneme in English, a colour is designated.

2.2.5.3 Cuisenaire rods. Also used to teach children basic numeracy, these colored pieces of wood of differing lengths have various uses in the pronunciation classroom. Rods can be used to build and visually demonstrate intonation patterns, vowel duration and lexical stress.

2.2.6. The Communicative Approach

The current dominant methodology, which persists today with criticism from some quarters, sprung into prominence in the 1980's. The Communicative approach holds that oral communication is the primary use of language and therefore should be central to the mode of instruction. Although pronunciation is not an explicit feature in this mode of instruction, the importance of pronunciation has been highlighted by it. By

focusing more on active communication in the classroom, it has been recognised (Hinofotis & Bailey, 1980) that pronunciation competence below a certain threshold renders even the most grammatically and lexically advanced student unintelligible.

This renewed focus on pronunciation has raised many new problems for the teacher working within the Communicative Approach. One problem is that the artificial and contrived teacher centered nature of previous pronunciation instruction techniques does not allow for a comfortable fit with the discourse-based Communicative Approach (Brumfit & Johnson, 1979). As a result of teacher training methods centered around the Communicative Approach and the rigidly adhered-to Presentation, Practice, Production (PPP) model of instruction, a generation of teachers impartial to, and inadequately trained in the instruction of pronunciation has been produced.

In an attempt to keep pronunciation communicative, integration of pronunciation was only treated with token significance by material developers in the 1980's and was more or less pushed to the outer to be taught in isolation by practitioners still interested enough in its worth and knowledgeable in its form and function.

2.3 Related Studies and Arguments on Pronunciation Teaching

In 1997, Ho Mian Lian, a researcher at Nanyang Technological University on Singapore, studied the specific features of pronunciation that exert a strong influence on the written communication of students in a tertiary institution in Singapore. These features include conflation of certain vowels and consonants, non-distinction between voiced and voiceless consonants, different placement of stress on syllables of words, use of glottal stops and the deletion of consonants, particularly those in final position of consonant clusters. The data showed that there was a close relationship between spoken and written communication. As pointed out by Bickerton (1971), 'an improvement in specific oral skills might lead to a corresponding improvement in writing'. This statement is equally applicable to all learners of English as a second or foreign language. Moreover, she suggested that it was important to provide more practice in the areas of pronunciation in the English language classrooms in Singapore.

More recent research (University of Aizu, 1999) suggested that researchers were at least looking for ways that may help the educator in the quest to teach pronunciation in a meaningful way. After 7 years of observing Korean English teachers in the classroom, it was obvious that Korean school teachers were well aware of the student's shortcomings and paid attention to the problems, but usually long after they occured. Research carried by Dash (2002) clearly showed that students in governments schools received almost no opportunity to speak in the L2 in classes that were still teacher centered. In one month the student may get to speak for one minute only if lucky. Thus, teacher-centered classes were the norm, and whilst this was the wrong approach, it was easy to see why attention was not given to pronunciation issues so as to minimize the need for subsequent corrections. Again one merely glanced through the poorly and ill-designed text books to see where the fault lies. However, even if the approach changed and students were to receive more opportunities to speak, the native Korean speaker was subject to the overriding silent yet powerful issue of Confucianism (Robertson, 2002) and may be hesitant and scared to speak in the L2.

Otlowski (2001) often noted the cited view that little relationship existed between teaching pronunciation in the classroom and attained proficiency in pronunciation, which was supported by research done by Suter (1976. p. 233) and Suter & Purcell (1980. p. 286). They concluded that pronunciation practice in class had little effect on the learner's pronunciation skills and moreover, the attainment of accurate pronunciation in a second language is a matter substantially beyond the control of the educators (Suter & Purcell, 1980, 286). The findings were subject to the caveat (as also noted throughout literature in numerous places) that variables of formal training and the quality of training in pronunciation could affect the results. Pennington (1989. p. 203) noted that there was no firm basis for asserting categorically that pronunciation was not teachable or that it was not worth spending time on. Pennington and Richards (1986) suggested that there was little or no evidence to support pronunciation training, but that view must now be seen as out dated, and lacking credibility in the area of Intercultural L2 training issues. Between these divergent views, Stern (1992. p. 112) says, "There is no convincing empirical

evidence which could help us sort out the various positions on the merits of pronunciation training." Yet one decade later that evidence is slowly being manufactured.

In highly specific research (compliant with the caveats of Saville-Troike (1989) of research in another culture, and Robertson (2002)) conducted in a language laboratory in Korea in 2003, on 300 students aged 12-14 (Korean age) and 60 adults aged 24-55, results showed that those in both groups who undertook six hours of pronunciation training recorded noticeably higher computer-analyzed results of pronunciation than those whose training omitted the pronunciation program. Instructors were native English speakers, qualified and unqualified in EFL teaching. However, the software and language laboratory were something not generally available to the greater majority of educators. But the results supported the view that pronunciation training does help the student in his L2 mastery, and is an effective tool in the teacher's repertoire. This supported and advanced the view of Pennington (1989)

Yet Dash (2002) researched and analyzed the Korean classroom and found that an English Only policy was seriously flawed. So, they have a chasm between what some believe was the academically ideal way to proceed in any pronunciation program, and those who consider clearly identifying cultural peculiarities within the target (Asian learning zone) led to identification of alternate approaches in delivery of pronunciation programs in Asia. However, despite propounding the inclusion of pronunciation programs, (Otlowski, 1998; Kenworthy, 1996) the method of delivery was thrown into doubt by Dash's (2002) findings, which based upon the evidence to date, that pronunciation programs in Asia must and can be delivered successfully by native speakers of English irrespective of their varying levels of educational background. This view was supported by Kenworthy (1996) whilst Fromkin and Rodman (1998) extended the category to those with near native speech. Moreover, the mode of delivery of a pronunciation program must relate to that particular countries culture so as to complement, and not offend, cultural complexities.

Paul Robertson (2003) examined the relationship between students' pronunciation learning and the teachers' role. In Asia it was submitted by him that

pronunciation programs must be viewed in context of the local culture and not applied with a non specific textbook approach. He also submitted that Asia's vast force of TEFL teachers were well positioned to successfully teach pronunciation programs despite any lack of formal qualification. Cultural pragmatics were of primary importance, and only those on location in China, Japan and Korea can understand the complexities of inter cultural relationships and teaching requirements. Given the Korean Education Departments bold imitative to introduce English to elementary school 1st and 2nd grade classes from the beginning of the 8th curriculum, as a result of Korean parents demanded that their children spoke with a near native like pronunciation, the initiative should results in Korean students obtaining a level of understandable pronunciation that satisfied the teacher goals and satisfied the parents', curriculum's, students' demands.

However, in 2005, Neide Cesar Cruz, a researcher at Universidade Federal de Campina Grande, tried to investigate to answer the following question: are minimal pairs suitable to illustrate meaning confusion derived from mispronunciation in Brazilian learners' English? Insights to answer this question are provided on the basis of an analysis of empirical data which investigated the pronunciation intelligibility of Brazilian learners' English. On the basis of the results obtained, he suggested that it was not possible to make generalizations and stated that minimal pairs were definitely not suitable to illustrate meaning confusion. However, he argued that the linguistic context, or any other variable which influenced listeners' comprehension, would need to be included when minimal pairs are used to illustrate listeners' misunderstanding owing to Brazilian learners' mispronunciation.

In Thailand, there have been two studies on Thai students English speaking ability, Kanoksilapatham et al., 1987 and Kanoksilapatham, 1990-1993 which are reviewed below.

Kanoksilapatham et al (1987) studied and investigated the errors made or problems encountered when second year Atrs students listen to English. The subjects were 149 second year students of the faculty of Arts during the 1987 academic year. The tool used in this research was an objective multiple choice test consisting of 45 items.

The first three items were to test the students' ability in discriminating three pairs of vowels which, within each pairs, differ only in the tense feature during articulation. The rest of the items were to test twenty-two initial and twenty final consonants. These forty-five items had been checked on both the appropriate level of difficulty and the coverage of English phoneme. Moreover, an item analysis had been carried out to make sure that the items had a satisfactory level of difficulty and discrimination. The number of errors for each item made by the149 subjects were calculated in percentage.

The result showed that the English vowels differing only in the tense feature were the most difficult part for the students to discriminate. Among the three pairs, the /ʊ, ʊː/ vowel pair was the most difficult. It was also found that five initial consonant sounds (/ð/, /v/, /r/, /ʃ/, /s/) and five final consonant sounds (/f/, /ð/, /v/, /g/, /θ/) were hard for students to identify. The causes of the errors were the influence of Thai on English listening, the complexities of the English language itself, the lack of practice on the listeners' part, and other factors not directly related to the language or the learners themselves, namely inefficient teachers and the wrong choice of dictionaries.

Kanoksilapatham (1990-1993) investigated the errors made by students in respect of English stress and intonation of third year English major students of Silpakorn University Arts faculty. The students took an oral test which was tape-recorded. The data were analyzed to determine the types of errors and their causes. The analysis showed that the subjects had most difficulty in pronouncing four-syllable words. Amongst the four types of words tested, verbs were found to be least-well pronounced and the nouns with an -ity ending were most correctly pronounced. Incorrect placement of word stress was also evident; in certain words final syllables seemed to be stressed rather than the first syllables. In the intonation section of the test, the greatest difficulties were apparent in the production of utterances with two thought groups and also in tag questions used to elicit confirmation. The students used a 231 intonation pattern most correctly. However, they tended to replace a 23 intonation pattern with a 231 one in the utterances that were non - final.

These problems referred to could possibly be attributed to two main factors: the language and the learner. The language factor included native language interference and the complexity of the English language. Shyness also proved to be a general problem amongst the language learners.

Her pedagogical implications and recommendations are offered to assist English language teachers in Thailand to implement teaching techniques which could lead to improve language learning and better pronunciation.

Additional Arguments on Pronunciation Teaching

Generally speaking changes in language learning and teaching have influenced a move from teacher centered to learner-centered classrooms. Chamot (1992) said that to develop classroom speaking skills, children need opportunities to participate in small group discussion, to present oral reports, and to respond adequately to teacher questioning. No doubt the first aspect was easily arranged, but clearly the second element depended upon numerous factors not elicited in the phrase, namely the student's level of linguistic competency, inter alia.. The third aspect, whilst being an ideal, was no more for overriding rules of Confucianism dictated that silence was the norm. And whilst teachers talk of a shift towards student centered learning, this was more in lip service than practice, for it was not an aspect of classroom management widely understood.

Morley (1991. p. 48) noted there had a shift from specific linguistic competencies to broader communicative competencies as goals for teachers and students. In particular, the Korean education system was focusing much attention on student centered classes, with classrooms specifically designed for language teaching, whereby students occasionally work in groups in a well equipped and spacious rooms, sometimes stocked with reasonable reference materials for student use. However, Korean teaching staff on the whole were reluctant to speak in English and have little or no training in the appropriate methods of pronunciation teaching. Action research showed that the Korean teachers not willing to speak English in their L2 lesson. And whilst Morley (1991) stated

the need for the integration of pronunciation exercises with oral communication, a shift from segmental to supra-segmentals, increased emphasis on individual learner needs, meaningful task based practices, development of new teacher strategies for the teaching and introduction of peer correction and group interaction, the fundamental issued that underpin this theory have been ignored. In other words, the cart was well before the horse in Asian English teaching programs.

As well, the individual learner needs must often be ignored when dealing with a large class size, with 35 - 45 students, though as noted by experienced nonnative speaker educators in Korea, class size should not be a valid reason to avoid individual student attention. The main factor identified and noted by numerous educators was that classes were test driven and not learning driven. This was also noted in Poole's (2003) expose of the Japanese education system and Lee (2001) expose of the Korean education system.

Cohen (1977. p. 71) argued that teaching of pronunciation went far beyond the teaching of phonemes, thus with the emphasis on meaningful communication and Morley's premised (1991. p. 488) that intelligible pronunciation was an essential component of communication competence, teachers should ideally be included components of pronunciation in their courses.

It was also said that that without adequate pronunciation skills the learner's ability to communicate was severely limited. Morley (1991) believed that not attending to a student's pronunciation needs is an abrogation of professional responsibility (Morley, 1991. p. 489.). Unfortunately this requirement overlooked a list of criteria such as, curriculum needs, student's motivation or the countries educational demands, to mention but a few items of relevance. Other research gave support to Morley's (1991) belief in the need for 'professional responsibility' when the results showed that a threshold level of pronunciation in English such that if a given non-native speaker's pronunciation fell below this level, they will not be able to communicate orally no matter how good their control of English grammar and vocabulary might be. This seemed logical, however, it can be argued that there were numerous factors at play if the student failed to

communicate, and pronunciation was but one of many possibilities, and it was submitted, not the only factor.

Gilbert (1995. p. 1) believed that the skills of listening comprehension and pronunciation were interdependent. If they can not hear well, they were cut off from language. If they cannot be understood easily, they were cut off from conversation with native speakers.

It was argued by Morely (1991. p. 500) that the goal of teaching understandable pronunciation should be changed from the attainment of perfect pronunciation to the more realistic goals, but this imprecise term 'perfect pronunciation' is, at best, a slippery slope, for who can say what perfect pronunciation is? What is the test, and who are the testers? In a world of numerous different accented native English teachers with localized dialects, one cannot begin to postulate even an image of perfect pronunciation without meeting a barrage of questions, most of which will succumb to a different answer by a different nationality teacher. Kenworthy (1996. p. 3) preferred to see the terminology reduced to a goal of a comfortably intelligible pronunciation, but even this begged many questions when considered alongside a Chinese, Japanese or Korean speaker. Secondly, Morely' s goal can surely only apply to an ESL situation, and have no relevance to an EFL situation such as exists in Japan, Korea and China where English usage outside the four walls of the English classroom is non existent.

As can be seen in the related research mentioned, many researchers realize the importance of teaching pronunciation. The literature reviewed above were some of the linguistic studies that could provide different ideas for developing ESL/EFL learners' pronunciation. Pronunciation needs to set up more practice in the English classroom (Ho, 1997). Also, it is important to start pronunciation practice at the beginning level of L2 study (Robertson, 2003). However, the use of minimal pairs in L2, teaching L2 segmentals, and students L1 backgrounds are still in debate on whether they have an effect on pronunciation learning. Therefore, this study aimed to demonstrated how reflections of these issues could be utilized as a tool of raising young students'

consciousness in the pronunciation classroom and, at the same time, to voice their beliefs and concerns about pronunciation learning and teaching.

As one of the researchers is an English teacher of grade 2 students at Phichit Inter School, he found that grade 2 students are much better to teach pronunciation since they are still young and are likely to perceive better than the older students in higher levels.

Also, the minimal pair technique is one of the most suitable and effective ways to portray young learners how each phoneme is produced. This technique should help them to discriminate those similar sounds in minimal pairs correctly. Then, they will be able to pronounce English consonant sounds that are problematic to them more efficiently. (see Appendix A, C)