English Phonetic and Pronunciation Resources for Polish Learners in the Past and at Present

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Abstract This paper is an attempt to present the contribution of Polish practitioners and theoreticians to teaching English phonetics and pronunciation to Polish learners of English. In this analysis, which is far from being a critical review, we plan to examine books with a contrastive Polish–English phonetic component and/or aimed at a Polish reader. We take into consideration resources written over a period of nearly 90 years, from Benni (1924) to Porzuczek et al. (2013). Our analysis encompasses the most-favoured standards of English by Poles, i.e. Received Pronunciation and General American. Although all the examined resources share a unifying theme of English phonetics they differ in many respects, such as: the scope of discussion (a rudimentary introduction to, or a comprehensive course in, English pronunciation), the choice of model variety (Received Pronunciation, presented in most of the selected literature, or General American), objectives (a textbook, a practice book or both), the targeted audience (an average English learner/intermediate reader or a university student in an English Department), the language of instruction (English or Polish) as well as the accompanying materials (recordings on tapes, CDs or DVDs). Most of the above-mentioned textbooks include a selection of useful additional phonetic materials, e.g. Sobkowiak's (1995) well-known list of words commonly mispronounced, Porzuczek et al.'s (2013) list of English vowels and diphthongs in different contexts; Sawała et al.'s (2009) list of loanwords, etc. We also take a closer, contrastive look at one selected feature, which is the TRAP vowel in a sample of six textbooks to examine how this issue has been tackled at different times, by different authors over the period of nine decades, and also to see whether the treatment of it was affected by any trend in EFL methodology. It is hoped that this analysis apart from reviewing the phonetic literature will also encourage some readers to familiarize themselves with pioneering or recent teaching resources that have been published in Poland.

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1 Introduction

This paper aims to identify and illustrate some of the scholarly resources for the study of English phonetics, written by Polish authors over a period of 90 years.[1] The majority of these publications are targeted at Polish learners. There are four issues that we would like to discuss in the introductory section. The first of these is the importance of histography in pronunciation teaching and learning. Next, a brief overview of English phonodidactics in Poland with a focus on the main research areas is presented, where two summarizing studies are quoted. We then move onto the evaluation of the phonetic component in EFL textbooks and finally sketch the overview of teaching methods in EFL phonetic textbooks.

1.1 The Importance of Histography of Teaching and Learning Pronunciation

The present review of the phonetics and pronunciation textbooks outlines the Polish contribution to the history of applied phonetics teaching, which, as mentioned by Ashby and Przedlacka (2013, p. 11), is one of the major transnational themes that need to be traced. Here, we offer a summary of their postulates, which to some extent justify the subject of our study.

Ashby and Przedlacka express the view that the histography of teaching and learning pronunciation is little studied and should be explored further. They state (2013, p. 11) that textbooks provide the most accessible and permanent indication of the content and methods of phonetics teaching. They inform us about the creation of the Warwick ELT Archive (2014), still a work in progress, which includes all sorts of English language teaching and learning resources such as course-books, journals, etc. which were published up to the 1990s, beginning from the late 19th century. A comment is made that the creation of annals of relevant publications preferably linked to the physical or digital repository would be much favoured. They also suggest that a phonetic subdivision of this archive could be formed,

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[1] A considerable effort has been made to present as many representative publications as possible, however, we realize that the list of the books under discussion, comprehensive as it is hoped, is not a complete one. Should the reader be familiar with any other material that could be added to this examination, please do not hesitate to contact the author. Although I am aware of the existence of some pronunciation-oriented books by Reszkiewicz (1962, 1963), Wolak (1963a, b, 1964, 1965, 1987), Sankowska (2006), I was unable to obtain them and include them in this analysis. Some valuable research publications, e.g. Biedrzycki's (1995) dictionary including both British and American pronunciation, the same author's (1978) focus on the phonology of English and Polish sonorants, Jassem's (1951) work on intonation of conversational Southern English and his (1987) English phonology manual for university students or Waniek-Klimczak's (2005) publication on temporal parameters should also be listed here, although they do not fall in the phonetic textbook category.

restricted to this area of the language. It could also include book reviews, reading lists and bibliographies and could function as a collaborative international project of collective historical phonetic bibliography. In their paper they also touch upon such issues as the use of technology and media in pronunciation teaching. It is suggested that there should be a place for the presentation of language laboratory equipment over time and of other devices such as the kymograph or lioretgraph which were used as teaching aids in pronunciation classrooms. Ashby and Przedlacka (2013, p. 12) point to the lack of an international union catalogue of audio material and a serviceable conspectus of sound archives around the world. The same authors draw our attention to the British Library Sound Archive, created in 1955, as a major collection of sound files. In addition they remark that the UCL Phonetics collection, from mostly the inter-war period of the 20th century, is a part of this archive and consists of recordings of lectures and performances and other teaching materials for English and also other languages. They call for preservation and cataloguing as well as digitization of the entire material and, what is of great importance, making it freely available to the public. The authors further claim that assessment of phonetics should also be more closely investigated; here they make us aware of the UCL project for digitizing phonetics exam papers dating back to 1929 to see how they developed over time. We learn that in the early 20th century the CPE exam had a compulsory 90-min written phonetics paper, which consisted of two transcriptions in careful and conversational style and theoretical questions; however, this idea was given up in 1932 and phonetics was removed from the exam so as not to discourage candidates. The paper finishes with a comment that learning is an area which is difficult to document and here they suggest using memoirs and recommend turning to oral history and interviews with phoneticians and their reminiscences of the experience of being phonetics students and of their teachers, etc.

1.2 The Evaluations of English Phonodidactics in Poland: Research Focus

The research on teaching English pronunciation to Polish learners has a long tradition and concerns many areas. Szpyra-Kozowska (2008) and Pawlak (2010) present a critical evaluation of pronunciation studies in Poland. In this section I intend to briefly summarize their major findings.

Szpyra-Kozłowska (2008) provides a thorough analysis of the achievements and failures of English phonodidactics in Poland and assesses the future prospects for this discipline. However, her examination is not based on textbooks devoted to teaching phonetics but to more than a hundred papers presented at the first three Accents conferences, organized by Prof. Waniek-Klimczak, as well as six meetings with a focus on teaching foreign language pronunciation, arranged in the years 2000–2006 by Prof. Sobkowiak and Prof. Waniek-Klimczak. Szpyra-Kozłowska (2008) discusses such issues as: the Polish context for teaching English pronunciation, the goals

of this process, i.e. the choice of a pronunciation model and the selection of pro-
nunciation priorities, the Polish learner, pronunciation teaching techniques and
resources, evaluation, testing and feedback. As one of the major failures of pro-
nunciation research in Poland, Szpyra-Kozłowska (2008, p. 221) points to its lack of
impact on actual pedagogical practice. She also indicates the matters that require
further investigation, which are as follows: the perception of Polish-accented speech,
the perception of English prosody by a Polish learner, more longitudinal studies on
the attainment of English phonetics by Poles, the teacher-dependent aspects of pro-
nunciation teaching and the effectiveness of innovative techniques in pronunciation
teaching/learning.

Pawlak (2010) in his examination of the present and future focus of pronunciation
research in Poland offers some guidelines for research methodology and stresses the
need to make pronunciation research relevant to the needs of practitioners and for the
benefit of phonetic instruction. One of his calls for change concerns the preparation
of consistent pronunciation syllabi for learners of different levels of language
advancement. He also advocates more research into the area of pronunciation
learning strategies and the development of pronunciation autonomy in learners.

1.3 The Evaluation of the Phonetic Component in EFL Textbooks

So far the phonetic component in EFL textbooks of different kinds and different levels
of advancement has been the focus of some researchers' attention. The issues con-
cerned covered: the treatment of pronunciation in materials that are targeted at learners
of general English (Szpyra-Kozłowska et al., 2003b; Szymańska-Czaplak, 2006;
Sobkowiak, 2012; Henderson and Jarosz, 2013), the role of phonetics in international
language exams such as Cambridge, TOEFL and TSE (Szpyra-Kozłowska, 2003), a
detailed analysis of the phonetic component in textbooks preparing for these inter-
national language exams (Szpyra-Kozłowska et al., 2003a).

Szpyra-Kozłowska et al. (2003b), who examine pronunciation-oriented tasks in
twenty series of course-books, observe that the top-down approach to phonetics is
visible in them since it is prosodic elements and linking that are more frequently
included in these courses.

Szymańska-Czaplak (2006) and Sobkowiak (2012) scrutinize the phonetic
component in course-books at elementary level. The former author examines 30
textbooks for beginners at primary, junior high school and secondary school. In
general, she finds that learners are not presented with a coherent picture of English
phonetics, but they are rather sporadically, if at all, exposed to some focus on
elements of pronunciation. She recommends two textbooks, *English in Mind* by
Puchta and Stranks (2004) and *New English File* by Oxenden and Latham-Koening
(2004), for a well-planned and complete presentation of English phonetics at a
mostly segmental level with some suprasegmental aspects.

Sobkowiak (2012) in his chronological analysis of phonetic treatment in a sample of four beginner's EFL textbooks over a period of 50 years remarks that pronunciation learning/teaching is not prioritized and structured the way other aspects of the foreign language such as grammar and vocabulary are. He notices changes in teaching/learning paradigms, from an explicit grammatical explanation of articles characteristic of the grammar-translation method, through the application of phonetic transcription and the active encouragement of a learner to speak, typical of audiolingualism, as well as an emphasis on spoken practice in the communicative approach to lack of explicit treatment of phonetics nowadays, and the substitution of transcription with a sound file. By means of the Phonetic Difficulty Index (henceforth PDI) he points to some other differences between pronunciation teaching now and then. One of the differences is the use of longer and more communicatively useful sentences as well as the use of easy-words per record, which has risen five times over the examined time, which in turn could suggest that textbook writers are attempting to make their books more user-friendly now. However, what is worrying is the complete redundancy of phonetic aspects in the contemporary sources, which might suggest that a learner's pronunciation should take care of itself with no help from a textbook.

Henderson and Jarosz (2013) compare the treatment of English pronunciation in school textbooks aimed at the compulsory levels of the education systems in two countries, France and Poland. They focus on the preferred model accent/accents and on the activities that relate to prosody. Celce-Murcia et al.'s (2010) Communicative Framework for teaching pronunciation was applied in their analysis to check the degree of a learner's communicative involvement in a pronunciation task. One of their findings is that in both countries textbook writers opt for a focus on form rather than on meaning and interaction. The authors offer some suggestions of how to move the students from the inactive description and analysis stage to the communicative use of the language by means of digital textbooks and resources, e.g. SOFRES (2010).

Szpyra-Kozłowska (2003) questions the very impressionistic phonetic criteria that relate only to being intelligible and comes to the conclusion that the role of pronunciation in these exams is marginal. It is also suggested that such ignorance toward learning and teaching pronunciation may lead to a 'washback' effect, since exam takers do not regard their phonetic competence and performance as crucial because it is of low significance for their overall exam result. The above-mentioned arguments have been confirmed in a study by Szpyra-Kozłowska et al. (2003a), in which gross neglect of pronunciation practice has been found typical for exam course-books.

To sum up, the findings of the research into the treatment of phonetics in EFL textbooks indicate that the top-down approach to phonetics is characteristic of the majority of the courses. In general, with only a minute number of exceptions, contemporary textbooks aimed at the elementary level fail to teach learners pronunciation and disregard the importance of a well-structured phonetic syllabus. Although they seem to be more user-friendly, since they implement more communicatively useful phrases and include phonetically easier words, as verified by Sobkowiak's PDI, the lack of explicit concern for pronunciation suggests that it is a

skill which should take care of itself. It is also observed that a communicative approach to pronunciation teaching cannot be found in these courses. In addition, in the courses preparing for international language exams the same neglect of pronunciation-oriented tasks is observed, which is in line with the requirements of international language exams as well as the state secondary school final language exam in Poland (Dłutek, 2006), where care taken over pronunciation is of no merit.

1.4 The Overview of Teaching Methods in EFL Phonetics Textbooks

Sobkowiak (1996, p. VIII) observes that over a period of time new technologies, new theories and new insights have given us not only better understanding of English pronunciation, but also better methods of teaching it.

Jones (1997) makes a lot of valuable and accurate comments on pronunciation teaching over a period of 50 years, which are still relevant today. He briefly presents the approaches to teaching pronunciation with different methods. He reminds the reader that pronunciation, starting from being completely disregarded in the grammar translation method, benefited with the direct method and audiolingualism then lost its prominence in Communicative Language Teaching and the Natural Approach. Nowadays, in pronunciation-oriented publications worldwide the top-down approach to teaching pronunciation advocated in the 80s by Pennington and Richards (1986) and Pennington (1989), seems to prevail (Szpyra-Kozłowska et al., 2003b; Wrembel, 2004, 2008) in which suprasegments and especially elements of connected speech are regarded as more essential for successful communication than excellence in isolated sounds. In Jones' (1997, p. 104) analysis of some phonetics course-books available in the 90s, it is noticeable that most activities are of the habit-formation type since they are remarkably similar to the audio-lingual texts of the 50s, relying heavily on mechanical drilling of decontextualized words and sentences, and they are not in the least grounded in communication, which was also evidenced by Henderson and Jarosz (2013). In the analysed materials, exercises in elocution, proper rendition of discrete sounds, sounds in words and sentences, minimal pairs, in the form of imitation drills and reading aloud activities, prevail. Jones (1997) and Pennington (1996) admit that such tasks have always been indispensable tools for pronunciation learning since drilling enhances habit formation of cognitive and motor functions, leads to more automatic and routinized articulation, and is a necessary stage on the way to comfortable sounding communicative and meaningful discourse.

Jones (1997, p. 107) advocates the greater use of phonetic-awareness raising activities with the focus on L1 and L2 interference, which he notes might be more beneficial than error correction. The positive influence of conscious explicit knowledge of phonetics on the ability to self-monitor pronunciation development is also mentioned. What, however, calls for change in the future is the application of

more inductive rather than deductive techniques in pronunciation teaching. Jones remarks that the psychological and sociological factors of the learning process are neglected in pronunciation materials. He suggests that this could be changed if the textbook writers were willing to include personalization and student-centred activities, through questionnaires. He (1997, p. 110) exemplifies this by saying that such opportunities can be realized through questionnaires asking learners to reflect on their attitudes towards non-native like pronunciation of their own language, their pronunciation needs in their future careers, their perceptions of their ability to change their pronunciation, as well as activities in which learners are asked to comment on their impressions of recordings of speakers with different varieties and degrees of foreign accent.

Wrembel (2004, 2008) in her analysis of a sample of phonetics textbooks, shares Jones' (1997) view when it comes to the content and organization of material as well as the types of tasks. She echoes his arguments that in the analysed resources, 30 textbooks and 14 CD-ROMs of different model varieties of English, the audio-lingual method still prevails. Software is more likely to present not only British or more frequently American accents, but also other varieties such as Canadian or Australian. She observes an increased emphasis on suprasegmentals such as intonation, word and nuclear stress as well as rhythm, and also the occurrence of sections on fluency building and the slow rise in communicative activities. In the textbooks published in the 80s and 90s she notices a balanced treatment of segments and suprasegments. Moreover, in her analysis, the four resources published in Poland by Reszkiewicz (1984) [1981], Arabski (1987) and Sobkowiak (1996, 2000) fall into this category. She also remarks on the occasional use of consciousness-raising and self-monitoring tasks; however, she indicates the lack of voice quality and a separation of pronunciation study from other skills.

All in all, we should not forget that it is not only the rigid textbook that should be the source of a student's linguistic and phonetic metacompetence. Sobkowiak (2002) suggests that other sources could also be trivia in the forms of internet-lore, postcards, leaflets and others, written both in English and in Polish. He gives examples of skilful, humorous and undeniably creative use of these materials in the phonetics syllabus and shows how these texts and recordings could raise students' phonetic awareness and serve as a basis of segmental, suprasegmental and prosodic analysis. Sobkowiak makes an observation that the implementation of trivia in textbooks is well-justified for their highly communicative and metaphonetic value. He also notices that they are not commonly applied in Polish books and syllabi and expresses his hope for a change in the forthcoming future.

2 Method

This paper is an attempt to present the contribution of Polish practitioners and theoreticians to teaching English phonetics and pronunciation to Polish learners of English. In this analysis we plan to examine 23 phonetically-oriented books written

by Polish writers and published in Poland. Our corpus for analysis comprises: Benni (1924), Boniakowski (1946), Jassem (1964, 1993, 1995), Bałutowa (1990) [1965], Reszkiewicz (1965), Krzeszowski (1968), Janicki (1989) [1977], Gibińska and Mańkowska (1978, 1980), Wolak (1992) [1978], Reszkiewicz (1984) [1981], Wełna (1982), Arabski (1987), Jassem (1995), Szpyra-Kozłowska and Sobkowiak (2011) [1995], Sobkowiak (1996, 2000), Miatluk et al. (2008), Mańkowska et al. (2009), Sawała et al. (2009), Nowacka et al. (2011) and Porzuczek et al. (2013).

Most of these materials have a contrastive Polish–English phonetic component and/or are aimed at Polish readers. We take into consideration resources written over a period of nearly 90 years. Our analysis encompasses the most-favoured standards of English by Poles, i.e. Received Pronunciation and General American, since other varieties are not represented in the corpus materials.

A description and representation of the data on the books on English phonetics published in Poland is organized chronologically in Tables 1 and 2, from the older to the latest publication, from Benni (1924) to Porzuczek et al. (2013). Since the books were written over a period of 90 years we can assume that they will reflect some features corresponding to the teaching method at play at the time of their publications, i.e. reverberations of the grammar-translation, audio-lingual or communicative teaching schools. We hope to see differences in the material design and ideology.

Although all the above-mentioned resources share a unifying theme of English phonetics, they differ in many respects in terms of the structure of the book and the phonetic content. In this study, the term 'structure' encompasses seven features, namely:

(a) the year of publication;
(b) the model variety under discussion;
(c) objectives, where a division is made into a theoretical textbook, a practice book or a combination of both in which the explicit instruction is followed by a practical part;
(d) the scope and focus of the discussion—whether it is an introductory or comprehensive course and if it centres around phonetics or discusses other linguistic aspects, e.g. spelling, vocabulary or grammar;
(e) the targeted audience—this refers to the advancement in the language, e.g. advanced, intermediate or beginner, the last category is equivalent to a reader with no prior knowledge of phonetics. The courses meant for students of particularly English Departments, as specified by the authors, bear the reference 'university';
(f) the language of instruction, whether English or Polish;
(g) accompanying materials, which encompass the additional sections or appendices, recordings and the application of multimedia;

The contents of the examined books vary not only in the arrangement but also in the choice of the phonetics issues. As it seems a rather unachievable task to compare all the issues discussed within the scope of this paper, we restrict our analysis to a range of twenty-one selected topics, which traditionally form the basic

Table 1 The structure of the analysed phonetic textbooks

	Benni (1924)	Boniakowski (1946)	Jassem (1964) [1954]	Balutowa (1990) [1965]	Reszkiewicz (1965)	Krzeszowski (1968)	Jassem (1993) [1971]	Janicki (1989) [1977]	Gibińska–Mańkowska (1978)	Wołak (1992) [1978]	Gibińska–Mańkowska (1980)
Year of publication [first edition]	(1924)	(1946)	(1964) [1954]	(1990) [1965]	(1965)	(1968)	(1993) [1971]	(1989) [1977]	(1980)	1978	1980
Variety: American: Am British: Br	Br	Br	Br	Br	Br	Am	Br	Am/Br	Br	Br	Br
Textbooks: Theory: Th Practice: P	Th	Th	Th, P[a]	Th&P	Th	Th	Th&P[b]	Th	P	P	P
Focus[c]	Ph	Ph&G	Ph	Ph	Ph	Ph	Ph	Ph, Sp, V, Phr, G	Ph	Ph	Ph
Audience[d]	B–A	B	I–A, U	B–A	B–A	A, U	I–A, U	I–A	I–A U	I–A U	I–A U
Appendix/additional sections	+	–	–	–	+	+	–	+	–	–	–
Recordings/sound carrier	–	–	–	+2 tapes	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Multimedia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Language	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	E	E	E	E

	Reszkiewicz (1984) [1981]	Wełna (1982)	Arabski (1987)	Jassem (1995)	Szpyra-Kozłowska–Sobkowiak [2011] [1995]	Sobkowiak (1996)	Sobkowiak (2000)	Miatluk et al. (2008)	Mańkowska et al. (2009)	Sawala et al. (2009)	Nowacka et al. (2011)	Porzuczek et al. (2013)
Year of publication [first edition]	(1984)	(1982)	(1987)	(1995)	(2011) [1995]	(1996)	(2000)	(2008)	(2009)	(2009)	(2011)	(2013)
Variety: American: Am British: Br	Br	Br	Am	Br	Br	Br	Br	Br	Br	Am/Br	Br	Br
Textbooks: theory: Th practice: P	Th&P	Th	Th&P	P	P	Th&P	Th&P	Th	P	P	P	Th&P
Focus[e]	Ph	Ph& Sp	Ph	Ph	Ph	Ph	Ph	Ph	Ph	Ph	Ph	Ph
Audience[f]	I–A, U	A, U	B–A	I–A	A, U	I–A, U	B–I	B–I	I–A, U	B–A	B–A, U	B–A, U

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

	Reszkiewicz (1984) [1981]	Wełna (1982)	Arabski (1987)	Jassem (1995)	Szpyra-Kozłowska–Sobkowiak (2011) [1995]	Sobkowiak (1996)	Sobkowiak (2000)	Miatluk et al. (2008)	Mańkowska et al. (2009)	Sawała et al. (2009)	Nowacka et al. (2011)	Porzuczek et al. (2013)
Appendix/additional sections	+	+	+	–	+	+	+*	–	–	+	–	+
Recordings/sound carrier	–	–	+ 2 tapes	–	–	–	+	–	+ 4 CDs	+ DVD	+ 1 CD	+ 1 CD
Multimedia	–	–	–	–	–	–	+ on-line	–	–	+	–	–
Language	E	E	P	E	E	E	P	E	E	P	E	P

a Practical activities constitute only about 6 % of the book (10/181 pages)

b Here the percentage of practical part is higher than in Jassem (1964) [1954] and it takes 26 % of the whole course (54/205 pages)

c G grammar, Ph phonetics, Phr phraseology, Sp spelling and V vocabulary

d A advanced, B beginner/no prior knowledge required, I intermediate, U university

Table 2 The selected issues covered in the analysed phonetic textbooks

		Benni (1924)	Boniakowski (1946)	Jassem (1964) [1954]	Bałutowa (1990) [1965]	Reszkiewicz (1965)	Krzeszowski (1968)	Jassem (1993) [1971]	Janicki (1989) [1977]	Gibińska–Mańkowska (1978)	Wołak (1992) [1978]	Gibińska–Mańkowska (1980)
Segments	Vowels	+	+	+*a	+	+	–	+	+	+	+	–
	Consonants	+	+	+*	+	+	–	+	+	+	–	–
	Final voicing	+	+	+*	+	+	–	+	+	–	–	–
Suprasegments	Syllable	–	–	–	+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Word stress	–	–	–	+	+*	+	–	+	+	–	+
	Sentence stress	–	–	–	+	–	+	–	+	–	–	–
	Assimilation	–	–	–	–	+	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Elision	–	–	–	–	+	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Linking	–	–	–	+	+*c	+	–	–	–	–	–
	Weak forms	–	–	–	+	+	+	–	+	–	–	–
	Rhythm	–	–	–	+	+	+	–	+	–	+	–
	Tones and tunes	–	–	–	+	–	+	–	+	–	–	–
	Sentence intonation	–	–	–	+	–	+	–	+	+	–	–
	Fluency of speech	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	+	–	–	–
General phonetics	Introduction to phonetics	–	–	–	+	–	–	+	+	–	–	–
	The organs and speech mechanics	–	–	–	+	+	–	+	+	–	–	–
	Spelling-to-sound correspondence	+	+	+*	+*	+	–	–	+	–	–	–
	Transcription intro	+	+	+*	+	–	–	–	+	–	–	–
	Transcription (symbols)	+	+	+	+	+	–	+	+	+	+	+

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

	Benni (1924)	Boniakowski (1946)	Jassem (1964) [1954]	Bałutowa (1990) [1965]	Reszkiewicz (1965)	Krzeszowski (1968)	Jassem (1993) [1971]	Janicki (1989) [1977]	Gibińska–Mańkowska (1978)	Wolak (1992) [1978]	Gibińska–Mańkowska (1980)
Transcription (practical material)	+	+	−	+	+	−[c]	+	+	+*	+*	+
British versus American: differences	−	−	−	−	−		−	+*	+	−	−

		Reszkiewicz (1984)	Wełna (1982)	Arabski (1987)	Jassem (1995)	Szpyra-Kozłowska—Sobkowiak (2011) [1995]	Sobkowiak (1996)	Sobkowiak (2000)	Miatluk et al. (2008)	Mańkowska et al. (2009)	Sawała et al. (2009)	Nowacka et al. (2011)	Porzuczek et al. (2013)
Segments	Vowels	+	+	−	+	−	+	+	+	+	+[b]	+	+
	Consonants	+	+	−	+	−	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	Final voicing	+	+	−	−	−	+*	+	+	−	+	+	−
Suprasegments	Syllable	+*	+*	+*	−	+	+	+	−	+	−	−	−
	Word stress	+	+	−	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	−	−
	Sentence stress	+	+	−	+	−	+	−	+	+	−	−	−
	Assimilation	−	−	−	−	−	+	+	+	−	+	−	−
	Elision	−	−	−	−	−	+	+	−	−	−	−	−
	Linking	+	+	−	−	−	+	+	+	−	+	+	+
	Weak forms	+	+	−	+	−	+	+	+	+	+	−	+
	Rhythm	+	+	−	−	+	+	−	−	+	+	−	−
	Tones and tunes	+	+	−	−	+	−	−	+	+	+	−	−
	Sentence intonation	+	+	−	+	+	+	+	−	+	−	−	−
	Fluency of speech	−	−	−	−	−	+	+	−	−	−	−	−
General phonetics	Introduction to phonetics	−	−	−	−	−	+	+	−	−	−	−	−
	The organs and speech mechanics	+*	+*	−	−	−	+	+	+	−	−	+*	−
	Spelling-to-sound correspondence	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	−	−	+*	+
	Transcription intro	−	−	−	−	−	+	+	+	−	−	−	−

Table 2 (continued)

	Reszkiewicz (1984)	Wełna (1982)	Arabski (1987)	Jassem (1995)	Szpyra-Kozłowska—Sobkowiak (2011) [1995]	Sobkowiak (1996)	Sobkowiak (2000)	Miatluk et al. (2008)	Mańkowska et al. (2009)	Sawała et al. (2009)	Nowacka et al. (2011)	Porzuczek et al. (2013)
Transcription (symbols)		+	+	+	+[d]	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Transcription (practical material)		–	+*	–	+	+	+	–	+*	+	–	+*
British versus American: differences		–	+	–	–	+	–	+	–	–	+	–

[a] An asterix, when placed next to a plus, means that only selected aspects of this issue are presented in a book or that a topic is covered only partially, not as a separate section

[b] Triphthongs are not included

[c] Bałutowa (1990) [1965] does not discuss intrusive r

[d] Jassem (1995) uses his own set of phonemic symbols

[e] In Reszkiewicz (1965) the material on weak forms is occasionally transcribed

skeleton in a phonetics study. Therefore, within segmental phonetics we distinguish three aspects (fundamental vowels and consonants as well as final voicing) as examples of negative transfer from the Polish interference point of view. Suprasegmental features form the more numerous category and include the following eleven elements: syllable, word stress, sentence stress, assimilation, elision, linking, weak forms, rhythm, tones and tunes, sentence intonation and fluency of speech. Finally, the last group comprises some areas of general phonetics in which we have selected such topics as: introduction to phonetics, the organs and mechanics of speech, spelling-to-sound correspondence, introduction to transcription, transcription symbols, transcription of practical material and the comparison of British and American English.

It needs to be added that Jones' (1997) and Wrembel's (2004) publications on the methods of teaching pronunciation and the type of activities in the contemporary phonetic textbooks worldwide were a stimulus for my examination of the similar texts in the Polish context.

3 Results

To begin with the date of publication, as presented in Fig. 1, the greatest number of books, namely five, found their way into the market in the 80s. We can see that there was a rise in the 60s, from 1 to 3 and then, after a stable decade, another rise from 3 to 5 between the 70s and 80s. The first decade of the 21st century welcomed 4 resources and the second decade so far has gathered 2 but it is too early to speculate how it is going to develop.

The second criterion concerns the model variety of English chosen for the purpose of description. In Fig. 2 we can clearly see that an overwhelming number of Polish textbook writers, 83 % (19), lean towards the British standard. A discussion of General American is undertaken twice by Krzeszowski (1968) and Arabski (1987) and the two model varieties are presented simultaneously in Janicki (1989) and Sawała et al. (2009).[2]

The resources under investigation can be divided according to the purpose they serve. Some are designed as theoretical foundation books, others as practical phonetics workbooks and the last category encompasses both phonetic theory and practice. Figure 3 shows that all types of books are proportionally distributed with a slight minority of phonetics textbooks with a sole focus on theory, below the ones with a practical and a combined practical–theoretical goal.

The number of textbooks combining theory and practice as well as the ones with a solely practical phonetic component is the same (8). The textbooks which include explicit phonetics instruction with practical pronunciation exercises constitute the

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[2] Biedrzycki's (1995) pronunciation dictionary exemplifies both General American and British pronunciation.

Fig. 1 The number of
phonetics books published in
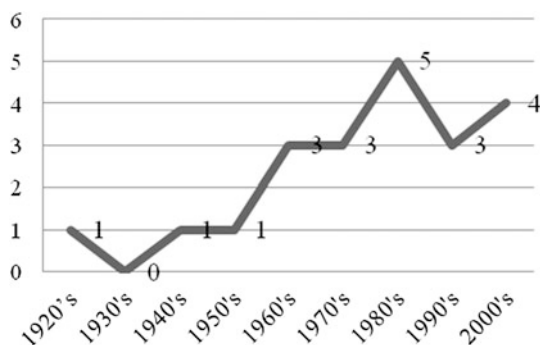Poland from 1920s to 2000s

Fig. 2 The model English
variety: RP, GA, or RP and
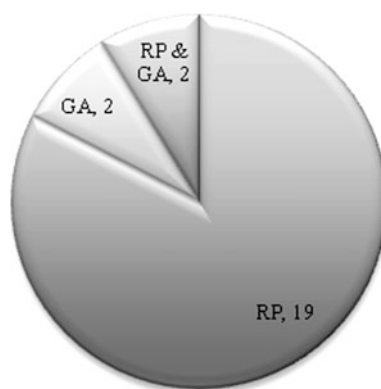GA in the examined phonetic
textbooks

Fig. 3 The proportion of
theory-oriented textbooks,
practical pronunciation
courses and textbooks of
theory and practice combined

following group: Jassem (1964) [1954], Bałutowa (1990) [1965], Reszkiewicz
(1984) [1981], Jassem (1993) [1971], Arabski (1987), Sobkowiak (1996, 2000),
Porzuczek et al. (2013). The pronunciation practice books, handbooks, workbooks
and software were written by Gibińska and Mańkowska (1978, 1980), Wolak
(1992) [1978], Jassem (1995), Szpyra-Kozłowska and Sobkowiak (2011) [1995],

Mańkowska et al. (2009), Nowacka et al. (2011) and Sawała et al. (2009). The textbooks which provide a theoretical background to English phonetics include: Benni (1924), Boniakowski (1946), Reszkiewicz (1965), Krzeszowski (1968), Janicki (1989), Wełna (1982) and Miatluk et al. (2008).

When it comes to the scope of discussion most of the analysed materials are of a comprehensive character with only a few exceptions, e.g. Boniakowski (1946) which was meant as a brief overview of rudimentary knowledge of phonetics or Janicki (1989) which is an introductory course into the differences between British and American English. The descriptive and prescriptive discussion of phonetics and/or pronunciation practice is the focal point of the majority of these publications. Some of the analysed resources, however, cover other issues, e.g. grammar (Boniakowski, 1946); spelling, vocabulary, phraseology and grammar (Janicki, 1989 [1977]).

As regards the language of presentation used for the purpose of description, the textbook writers fluctuate from English to Polish (see Fig. 4). We can observe a small advantage of materials written in English (13) over the ones in which the Polish language serves as the language of discussion (10). The resources written in English include the following: Krzeszowski (1968), Janicki (1989) [1977], Gibińska and Mańkowska (1978, 1980), Wolak (1992) [1978], Wełna (1982), Reszkiewicz (1984), Jassem (1995), Szpyra-Kozłowska and Sobkowiak (2011) [1995], Sobkowiak (1996), Miatluk et al. (2008), Mańkowska et al. (2009) and Nowacka et al. (2011). On the other hand, the Polish language characterizes the materials by Benni (1924), Boniakowski (1946), Jassem (1964), Bałutowa (1990) [1965], Reszkiewicz (1965), Jassem (1993) [1971], Arabski (1987), Sobkowiak (2000), Sawała et al. (2009) and Poruczek et al. (2013).

An overwhelming number of these materials are addressed specifically to the needs of the Polish learner, the authors frequently make this clear in the title (Szpyra-Kozłowska and Sobkowiak, 2011 [1995]; Sobkowiak, 1996; Poruczek et al., 2013) or in the preface, e.g. Reszkiewicz (1984) [1981], Mańkowska et al. (2009). Other resources, in which there is no Polish–English contrastive approach

Fig. 4 The language of instruction: English versus Polish

Fig. 5 The language
advancement of the target
audience in phonetics books

applied, seem to have a general English learner of no defined L1 in mind, e.g.
Janicki (1989) or Jassem (1995).

Sometimes the target audience is explicitly referred to by the course-writers.
This is done by specifying the requirements of readers' language advancement,
their minimum knowledge of phonetics, or their level of education whether
secondary, tertiary or, more precisely, college and university English Departments.
Figure 5 presents the results of the targeted readership.

Most of the books (10) are targeted at an intermediate and advanced learner,
sometimes called an average English learner, e.g. in Sobkowiak (1996). Then, a
large proportion of courses (7), especially the ones written in Polish, cater for the
needs of a wide array of learners, from ones with no prior knowledge of phonetics
(here referred to as 'beginners') to ones who want to deepen or refresh their know-
how. The remaining three categories encompass books for advanced phonetics
readers (3) or ones for the beginners in the field. In addition, in most of the
examined materials a university student of an English Department is considered a
prospective user (Jassem, 1964 [1954], 1993 [1971]; Krzeszowski, 1968; Gibińska
& Mańkowska, 1978, 1980; Wolak, 1992 [1978]; Reszkiewicz, 1984 [1981];
Wełna, 1982; Arabski, 1987; Szpyra-Kozłowska & Sobkowiak, 2011 [1995];
Sobkowiak, 1996; Mańkowska et al., 2009 and Porzuczek et al., 2013).

What has also been examined is the accompanying materials in the form of
recordings, multimedia or additional/appendix sections. For obvious reasons the
books published early in the first half of the 20th century did not include recorded
material.[3] The general trend, outlined in Table 1, is that, beginning with
Sobkowiak's (2000) on-line publication, in all phonetically-oriented resources, with
the exception of Miatluk et al. (2008), recording of the practical material constitutes
an inseparable part of a course. The sound carrier, as one can expect, changed over
time, from tapes (Bałutowa, 1990 [1965]; Arabski, 1987) through CDs

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[3] No exact data on the dates of tape recording release accompanying, e.g. Bałutowa's (1965)
course are available to me. In the course by Janicki (1989) some reference is made to the
recordings; however, I found no trace of a commercially-available recorded product.

(Mańkowska et al., 2009; Nowacka et al., 2011; Porzuczek et al., 2013) to a DVD in Sawała et al. (2009) which should be distinguished here as the only multimedia course in the Polish phonetic market.

Nearly half of the above-mentioned textbooks include a selection of useful additional phonetics materials. The issues covered, presented in Table 3, range from purely practical, e.g. homophones, homographs, silent letters, proper names, place-names, text for analysis or a reading passage with rhythmic and intonation marks, etc., to more explicit phonetic rules, such the pronunciation of the –*ed* ending of regular verbs, the –*(e)s* plural ending of nouns, the –*(e)s* ending of the 3rd person singular or the '*s* genitive ending of nouns.

Next, we concentrate on phonetics issues covered by the textbooks. As might be expected, the content in all these resources is not uniform and differs in, for example, the choice and arrangement of the material, which reflect not only the needs of the reader but also the preferences of the author. To be able to make some generalizations concerning the distribution of the phonetic material in the selected resources and to see which aspects attract more attention and which are less popular we have tabulated the overall results in Table 4.

As can be seen from the data, the first nine aspects can be found in most phonetics courses. The introduction of transcription symbols is a textbook core element, present in nearly all of the materials (96 %). Then, unsurprisingly, it is the basic segments: vowels and consonants, which are discussed in 78 % of the texts. Nearly three-quarters of the books (74 %) include transcription of the practical material. In 65 % of the resources a focus on word stress is found. Other significant components comprise: final voicing and spelling-to-sound correspondence (61 %) as well as two suprasegmental topics of weak forms and rhythm (56.5 %).

On the other hand, the remaining twelve topics score less than 50 %, which means that they constitute part of the content in fewer than half of the analysed resources. This list encompasses: four connected speech elements, i.e. linking (48 %), elision (26 %), assimilation (22 %) and fluency of speech (17 %); four prosodic features of sentence intonation (48 %), sentence stress (39 %); syllable (30 %) and tones and tunes (30 %); and finally, four mostly descriptive topics, in the form of the organs and mechanics of speech (39 %), introduction to transcription (35 %), introduction to phonetics (26 %) and the comparison of British and American English (26 %).

All things considered, we can make a few final generalizations about the structure and content of the analysed phonetic resources. In the 80s we observed the greatest number of phonetics books in the Polish market. In an overwhelming number of these textbooks one variety of English, in particular the British standard, is chosen as a model variety, less frequently it is General American. Other varieties do not appear in the textbooks. Moreover, most of these comprehensive resources are addressed specifically to the needs of Polish intermediate and advanced learners. These texts, which represent theoretical textbooks, practical workbooks or which are a combination of a theoretical and practical approach, are written in the native or the target language, with a slight majority of the English texts over the Polish ones. It seems that a recording of the practical material is an inseparable part of nearly all

Table 3 The content of appendices and additional sections of the textbooks

No.	Book by	Appendix/additional sections on
1.	Benni (1924)	Colloquial proper names Place-names
2.	Reszkiewicz (1965)	The analysis of the text, written in spelling in three versions: no phonetic marks, with rhythm marks and with intonation marks
3.	Krzeszowski (1968)	English and Polish segmental phonemes
4.	Wełna (1982)	Spelling and pronunciation in the history of English
5.	Reszkiewicz (1984)	A table of English consonants The speech organs in cross-section A text for analysis The –*ed* ending of regular verbs The –*(e)s* plural ending of nouns The –*(e)s* ending of the 3rd person singular The *'s* genitive ending of nouns
6.	Arabski (1987)	The most frequent homonyms The most frequent homographs Two texts in spelling for pronunciation and intonation practice Translation of the whole practical material in Polish
7.	Janicki (1989)	Notes on recordings of American and British speakers: Part 1: pronunciation—on the main segmental differences between the two varieties Part 2: stress, sentences 3 texts in spelling
8.	Sobkowiak (1996)	Irregular verbs Christian names Proper names Common English homographs Common English homophones Quasi-homophones in Polglish Sound frequency in English French loanwords Words commonly mispronounced
9.	Sobkowiak (2000)[a]	Main difficulties in the rendition of vowels, diphthongs and consonants Morphological alternations of diphthongs Silent letters Reduction of vowels Derived forms Syllabification
10.	Sawała et al. (2009)	Homophones Homographs Words and names frequently mispronounced Silent letters Prefixes Loanwords Websites: 4 British, 10 American Phonetic symbols

Table 3 (continued)

No.	Book by	Appendix/additional sections on
11.	Porzuczek et al. (2013)	English vowels and diphthongs in different contexts, e.g. *bead*, *bid*, *bed*, etc. Transcription: word-reading, e.g. /lest, kæptʃə/, etc. Pairs of words with different vowel combinations, e.g. /iː, ɪ/*feed pigs*, etc. Pronunciation of words spelled with –*ough* Pronunciation of /j/before/uː/

ᵃ Sobkowiak (2000) is an on-line course with non-linear footnotes (recordings, hyperlinks, explanation of the terms in a mini-lexicon). Since there are no sections corresponding to an Appendix in a book we include examples of topics that are not usually included by other authors. The learners do not have to cover the book in turn, unit by unit, but they may familiarize themselves with the topics of their choice

Table 4 Focus on the content: the choice and corresponding percentage of phonetic issues in the examined phonetic resources

No.	Phonetic issues	n	%
1.	Transcription (symbols)	22	96
2.	Vowels	18	78
3.	Consonants	18	78
4.	Transcription (of the practical material)	17	74
5.	Word stress	15	65
6.	Final voicing	14	61
7.	Spelling-to-sound correspondence	14	61
8.	Weak forms	13	56.5
9.	Rhythm	13	56.5
10.	Linking	11	48
11.	Sentence intonation	11	48
12.	Sentence stress	9	39
13.	The organs and mechanics of speech	9	39
14.	Transcription introduction	8	35
15.	Syllable	7	30
16.	Tones and tunes	7	30
17.	Elision	6	26
18.	Introduction to phonetics	6	26
19.	British versus American: differences	6	26
20.	Assimilation	5	22
21.	Fluency of speech	4	17

the materials published in the 21st century. They are typified by the application of additional sections and practical exercises for further study. As regards the phonetic content the issues which are most often represented involve: phonetic symbols, spelling-to-sound rules, transcription of the practical material, the discussion of vowels and consonants, the importance of final voicing, word stress and only two suprasegmental units, namely weak forms and rhythm. The aspects of fast, colloquial speech and prosody have a lower frequency of occurrence.

4 A Contrastive Look at TRAP Teaching in the Past and at Present

The changing methodological trends in FL pedagogy over the last nine decades affect pronunciation treatment in a variety of ways. In this section I will make an attempt at taking a comparative look at the treatment of TRAP in a sample of six teaching resources through the time.

The selection of the TRAP vowel for the analysis is due to its notoriety in the context of learning it by Poles. As has been confirmed by Jassem (1993), Sobkowiak (1996), Nowacka (2008) and Gonet et al. (2010), TRAP, non-existent in the Polish vocalic system, is frequently replaced by Polish equivalents [e] and [a].

For this analysis we have examined six resources published over the period of 90 years, characteristic for the 20s, and then for each decade from the 70s to the present time, which comprise: Benni (1924), Jassem (1993) [1971], Reszkiewicz (1984) [1981], Sobkowiak (1996), Mańkowska et al. (2009), Sawała et al. (2009) and Porzuczek et al. (2013).

Benni (1924) calls TRAP the relatively easiest vowel in the group of TRAP, STRUT and COMMA. He transcribes it by means of a symbol /ä/, gives it a name of a 'short English a,' makes a reference to its intermediate perceptive and productive value between Polish /e/ and /a/ as well as to its most characteristic spelling represented by the letter 'a'. He also comments on the spelling-based Polglish /a/-like pronunciation of TRAP, e.g. in *man* as well as on the Polglish /e/-like rendition of it, adopted by the Polish language in borrowings from English, e.g. in *mecz* from *match.* Some hints on its correct articulation are also provided in relation to the tongue movements, raising the tongue for /e/, lowering it for /a/ and thus finding an intermediate place for a new TRAP category. To facilitate a correct enunciation of this sound for a Polish learner, Benni gives examples of Polish words in which the quality of /a/ resembles *ash*, owing to the coarticulation in the context of /j/ and /i/ and the raising and fronting of the tongue position, e.g. in *jajko* (egg), *jaśmin* (jasmine) or *niańka* (nanny).

Jassem (1993) [1971] in his succinct description, uses a symbol of /ɛ/, and refers to two realisations of the TRAP phoneme, the one before /l/ and in other contexts. To exemplify the former occurrence he provides two sentences with transcription, in which *canal* and *pals* serve as examples of its retracted quality, with an intermediate value between Polish /e/ and /a/. The latter case is represented by words,

such as *back*, *cat*, *match*, *national* and *matter*. Jassem's suggestions on articulation of this variant are that it is closer to /e/ than to /a/ and should not be treated as an intermediate sound between Polish /e/ and /a/ which is true only for the context before /l/. A graph with a vowel quadrilateral, representing the said TRAP variants and the Polish vowels /a/ and /e/ is also shown. The practice of this sound included in the activities at the end of the book involves a drill of words.

Reszkiewicz (1984) apart from a descriptive and prescriptive instruction on TRAP articulation, includes a cross-section of the head with the tongue position characteristic for this vowel and a photograph that shows its spread lip postulation. He remarks (1984, p. 36) that it should not be referred to as being in between Polish /e/ and /a/ "because it is more front than *a* and lower than *e*". Then he focuses on TRAP distribution and gives some examples of words and notes on the following context: before voiced consonants as in *bad,* where it is prolonged, before nasals, e.g. *man* in which no nasalization of a vowel should occur, on the length differences in monosyllabic and longer words, e.g. *hand* versus *habit*. Some minimal pairs activities are also included, where TRAP is contrasted with DRESS, then STRUT, and also with KIT.

Sobkowiak's (1996) instruction on TRAP makes an account of its articulatory similarity to the Polish /e/ and /a/, and comments on its very distinctive timbre, which causes some difficulty to learners. A reader can also find a description of the distribution of this sound in stressed but also unstressed syllables of English words, the latter case contributing to a likely Polglish mistake, e.g. in *triAngle*. This information is supported by a long list of examples of words, arranged in order of frequency of occurrence. The remaining part of the unit is devoted to the spelling-to-sound correspondence and its most likely representation of the letter 'a'. The dual pronunciation of the letter 'a' before the letters 's' and 'n' is commented on, in which one can find either TRAP or BATH, as in *gas* versus *last* or *can* versus *answer*. This description is followed by an impressively large bank of words for imitation practice. It needs to be emphasised that Sobkowiak's textbook stands out from the rest thanks to its application of a computer-readable dictionary of English which allowed for the provision of large portions of practical material arranged according to the order or frequency, from the most frequent to the rarest ones. Sobkowiak (1996, p. IX) also deliberately cuts off from the audio-lingual drill practice and applies a cognitive approach where "the automatization of proper pronunciation habits is seen as coming **after** the learners' realization of **what** it is that they are trying to achieve, and **how** they can best try to achieve it."

Mańkowska et al. (2009) in their pronunciation practice book with recordings, accompanying a descriptive grammar course, include a variety of lexical input and a wide range of varied drill tasks. The focus on the TRAP vowel consists of a brief description of the vowel, two sections named 'words for practice' with easy and harder words, sub-divided into groups according to the position of the stress and number of syllables in the word, exercises on vowel-clipping before a voiceless consonant, minimal pairs, sentences for practice (easy and more difficult), deceptive spelling, proper names (including personal names and place names), proverbs, tongue twisters as well as rhymes and limericks.

The contemporary materials by Sawała et al. (2009) and Porzuczek et al. (2013) deserve to be praised for their application of work on perception and self-monitoring activities. Sawała et al. (2009) is a multimedia course, incorporating two varieties, General British and American. Apart from a description of an articulation and a typical spelling corresponding to a sound, it includes movable head cross-sections showing the tongue position, a video recording of an individual sound and the same sound in a word, e.g. *abstract* for TRAP, which lets the learner see the shape of the lips when a sound is articulated. First, attention is drawn to repetitive drills of sounds in words of various kinds comprising proper names, surnames, place names, phrases, sentences and minimal pairs. Then, work on perception involves a task on minimal pairs of words, phrases and sentences in which a learner is asked to mark the correct version. Finally, the unit finishes with a self-evaluation activity, prepared in the form of imitation of a model pronunciation, ending with the user recording their own voice and eventually comparing the two versions, which makes them actively involved in taking care of their own pronunciation in English.

Porzuczek et al. (2013) start with presentation of the difference in the articulation of TRAP and DRESS and their differences from Polish /e/ and /a/ qualities by means of a vowel quadrilateral. They introduce TRAP and DRESS in the same unit, first separately and then together. They start with a brief description then move to pronunciation of the sound by making it contrast with the Polish /ɛ/ and /a/, and then introducing an intermediate category for *ash*. Then they proceed to the typical spelling of TRAP with a letter 'a', e.g. *fat*, to some exceptions in a certain context, e.g. pronouncing /a:/ before –*st* as in *fast,* some trap words like *plait* and an exercise in which Polish and English words are pronounced interchangeably and minimal pairs of TRAP, DRESS and a Polish /a/ are formed. Then in the following subsection the two vowels are practised together in word-reading tasks, in minimal pairs, in phrases and sentences. Work on these vowels is summed up by a review exercise, in which the previously studied sounds appear together with the newly learnt TRAP and DRESS. Students are asked to transcribe the words they hear, to decide whether a heard syllable corresponds to Polish or English, to repeat the words after the model and to compare their own pronunciation with the model one as well as to transcribe the sentences.

To recap, it is evident that the description of TRAP articulation, distribution and spelling representations prevail in the above-mentioned materials. Some courses make use of a vowel quadrilateral to visualize an English, as distinct from Polish, enunciation of this vowel. They also include cross-sections of the head and photos and videos of lips, with a recording of a given sound in isolation and in a word to make the position of the tongue and lips clearer to the learner. It is visible that drill, repetitive, habit-formation exercises are common in the work on production of a sound. We also observe a variety of tasks and richness in the lexical input (proper names, place names, tongue twisters, proverbs, limericks and rhymes). None of the examined courses implemented the communicative approach to pronunciation teaching, i.e. a practice of the said sound in a free speech context. What should be stressed is that in the recently published resources, attention is also drawn to the value of perceptive discrimination tasks and also to self-assessment of a learner's

pronunciation. A recording of the practical material constitutes an inseparable part of the recent courses, which makes pronunciation study more learner-friendly as the user is freed from an over-reliance on transcription.

5 Discussion

Since it is not my intention to criticize any of the books for their layout, I much prefer to point to the areas which have not been explicitly covered by the textbook writers and which could be considered in future pronunciation course-books. The findings of our analysis point to the leading role of segments in the phonetic syllabus. Only some of the recent publications, e.g. Szpyra-Kozłowska and Sobkowiak (1995), Sobkowiak (1996, 2000), Mańkowska et al. (2009) and Porzuczek et al. (2013), note the importance of suprasegmentals and in particular connected speech elements such as linking, elision and assimilation and also draw the learner's attention to fluency of speech (Porzuczek et al., 2013).

Only a small proportion of the recently published texts include examples of colloquial fast speech (Sobkowiak, 2000; Mańkowska et al., 2009 and Porzuczek et al., 2013) to enhance the learners' comprehension of spoken English. This latter adaptation agrees with the research findings by Shockey (2003, p. 124) who advocates including the perceptive analysis of conversational speech in English courses since she claims "exposure to a range of inputs which are phonetically different but phonologically the same will aid in overall comprehension of naturally-varying native speech." She also suggests that the explicit teaching of phonological reductions may boost a foreigner's understanding of the spoken message. On the basis of a series of experiments Shockey (2003, 2006, 2008) states that interpretation of conversational input is a lengthier process for non-native speakers since they need more acoustic-phonetic input and depend on syntactico-semantic information rather than a phonological context to comprehend connected speech rich in reductions. Shockey (2011, p. 29) makes a valuable observation on the teaching of connected speech by saying that "in my experience, English teachers shy away from teaching 'sloppy' pronunciation and hence aim for a style which is overly articulated. But in doing so, they avoid exposing students to exactly the style they will need to deal with in everyday conversations." All of this just proves that an explicit focus on reduction processes should find its due place in phonetics textbooks since it might lead learners to better understand the spoken message.

We have also observed that what has not been much covered in the research corpus of the textbooks is the contrastive L1–L2 analysis of intonation, with the exception of Miatluk et al. (2008) and Porzuczek et al. (2013). English tones and tunes and sentence intonation, have been dealt with by Jassem (1964, 1993, 1995) Reszkiewicz (1965, 1984), Janicki (1989), Arabski (1987), Szpyra-Kozłowska and Sobkowiak (1995) and Sobkowiak (2000). We can see a discrepancy in the treatment of intonation and nuclear stress between Wrembel's (2004, 2008) and our findings. In her study of phonetic resources with no particular L1 in mind,

intonation and sentence stress ranked highly as one of the most frequently presented issues in the majority of the examined publications, while in our research these features belong to the less likely topics of discussion.

Jones' (1997) speculation concerning the greater concern for voice quality, as evidenced in Jones and Evans (1995) has not been supported in my analysis since this topic is not covered by the text-book writers. This does not mean that voice quality settings for Poles have not been researched. Święciński (2004, 2006, 2013) in a series of studies has compared Polish and English articulatory settings; however, as has been evidenced these findings have not yet made their way into phonetics textbooks for the Polish audience.

Some of the books we have examined, especially new publications by Sawała et al. (2009) and Porzuczek et al. (2013), have follow-up self-assessment activities where the explicit knowledge can be put into practice by self-monitoring. For example, Sawała et al. (2009) gives learners a chance to record themselves and to compare their pronunciation with a native speaker's model. Porzuczek et al.'s (2013) course incorporates consciousness-raising and self-monitoring activities, in which they ask a learner to record their pronunciation after listening to the model pronunciation and imitating it with the help of the text in transcription. This technique is in line with Jones' (1997) call for the incorporation of reflective and confidence building activities in the course of pronunciation training.

It is also apparent that all the corpus textbooks organize the course according to the tradition phonological categories, such as segments, suprasegments, etc. not on discourse function such as highlighting or questioning, etc. which is characteristic for Bradford's (1988) and Brazil's (1994) books on intonation.

Celce-Murcia et al.'s (2010) Communicative Framework, in which pronunciation tasks are intertwined with grammar or vocabulary practice in a communicative activity, has not found its place in the analysed phonetics teaching materials. The widespread reliance on decontextualized language and lack of grounding in the realities of actual communication is still the greatest weakness of the analysed pronunciation materials. Jones (1997, p. 109) comments that "absent from most materials is the opportunity for freer practice which allows students to participate in discourse situations that exemplify a variety of suprasegmental features, such as the free conversation and 'fluency workshop' activities…". Gabryś-Barker (2011, p.136) stresses the over-use of drill-like pronunciation activities with the focus on segments and adds that "the priority should be given to prosodic (suprasegmental) features of language as enabling language users/learners to function in a variety of contexts: from real-life situations of daily interactions to academic and professional environments". In general what we have also observed is that the omnipresent, mechanical and repetitive practice of sounds is very seldom followed by real communicative practice of the same material. This could easily be changed if follow-up communicative pronunciation-oriented activities were added to the new editions of the practice book.

It should not be a surprise that the phonetics textbook writers limit their description and do not include some useful aspects like articulatory settings or a more communicative approach in teaching pronunciation. If one knows the Polish

context, meaning the low number of hours that phonetics teachers have at their disposal, it is no wonder that course-book authors resort to the absolute minimum of the issues covered. Baran-Łucarz (2006) presents the situation of pronunciation teaching at schools of higher education, which is even truer at present. Among other things she states that the number of hours devoted to phonetics is notoriously low in comparison with other practical skills, the criteria concerning the phonetic component in an oral exam are impressionistic and vague, and there is no practical phonetics in the syllabus of postgraduate courses aimed at teachers or even in methodological textbooks targeted at teachers of the languages, not to mention the requirements for Cambridge exams and the Polish secondary school leaving exam.

This rather pessimistic picture of the treatment of pronunciation in Polish educational institutions is still valid. Pronunciation, it seems, at least in the minds of the authorities responsible for national language syllabi for secondary school leaving exams and for the programmes of university students of English Departments, is not regarded as an essential part of language education.

6 Conclusions

What we have not done in this paper and what could be examined in the future is analyse the type of activities implemented in the phonetics textbooks, which was undertaken in similar studies by Jones (1997) and Wrembel (2004). My preliminary observation, which goes in line with the findings of the above-mentioned authors, is that most of the materials in this analysis rely on the audio-lingual habit-formation tasks, which from my point of view as a teacher of phonetics and an author, should not be regarded as a major flaw. The textbook writers, instead of giving up the much favoured and useful repetition tasks, which undeniably have their place in pronunciation study, could think of enriching their resources with awareness-building and self-checking tasks. Another modification that could be introduced is the inclusion of communicatively oriented phonetic activities or suggestions on how the material under study could be practised in a free speech context. What seems to be missing in these publications is a focus on suprasegments and especially a practical contrastive Polish–English approach to connected speech and prosody features. None of the examined materials exposed the learners to a variety of English different from British and American or presented the phonetic rules more inductively through discovery activities, which, as suggested by Jones (1997), have plenty of advantages, e.g. making the new knowledge more memorable and providing the opportunity for communication.

Taking into consideration the research findings on the beneficial role of accent-varied input on learners' perception and thus understanding of English we can hope that it will be reflected in future textbooks addressed to Polish readers. If some of these changes were introduced in the next editions of these already-existing resources we would have a chance to verify in time whether, as advocated by current teaching methods and mainstream trends in phonetics teaching, a top-down, communicative

approach to learning pronunciation is more effective than the prevailing traditional drill-based, but so far quite fruitful, way of pronunciation teaching.

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