

Vol. 12, No. 5  
pp. 305-331  
November &  
December  
2021

## An Investigation into Pronunciation Representation in an EFL Textbook Series Utilized in a Turkish State University

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### Abstract

Textbooks play a crucial role in language education even in a digital age where education tends to be digitalized. It has been claimed that pronunciation is underrepresented in EFL textbooks, notwithstanding its significance in spoken interaction. To this end, this research investigated the treatment of pronunciation in a multilevel EFL textbook series along with such components as teacher's book, pronunciation extra, and MyEnglishLab. Following the analysis of a total of 264 units in student's book and other textbook components individually, it was found that suprasegmental features predominated the textbook series compared to segmentals. It was also discovered that controlled practice activities prevailed, pursued respectively by description and analysis, and listening discrimination activities. The findings suggest that the analyzed textbook series contain a sufficient amount of pronunciation practice, albeit not including adequate guided and communicative practice. The research concluded that pronunciation is not underrepresented in this textbook series. It might accordingly be inferred that there might be other causes of ignoring pronunciation than its treatment in EFL textbooks in the Turkish context, such as teacher cognition (i.e. beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge, etc.), institutional policies, time constraints, or psychological reasons.

**Keywords:** textbook analysis, pronunciation, segmentals, suprasegmentals, language education, EFL textbook series

Received: 1 August 2021  
Received in revised form: 2 October 2021  
Accepted: 23 October 2021

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## 1. Introduction

The perceived goal of language learning, in a broad sense, is to attain overall language proficiency incorporating “a language learner’s or user’s communicative abilities, knowledge systems, and skills” (Harsch, 2017, p. 250) and comprising such components as general competences, communicative language competences, communicative language activities, and communicative language strategies (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 30). These components can variously be associated with pronunciation. For instance, *savoir-apprendre* (ability to learn) under general competence might require learners to possess language and communication awareness, particularly “general phonetic awareness and skills” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 107). The second component of language proficiency, that is, linguistic competence under communicative language competences necessitates learners to be equipped with phonological competence that “involves a knowledge of, and skill in the perception and production of” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 116) several pronunciation features. The third component, communicative language activities should include pronunciation activities about “reception and production and stimulate interaction and mediation” (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 32). The last component, communicative language strategies incorporate production strategies, more specifically, “compensation strategies” (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 33) that learners might use to offset their inadequate pronunciation skills. Overall, it might be argued that pronunciation is a salient component to language proficiency, especially with regard to effective communication (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019).

In the related literature, both segmental (Collins & Mees, 2013; Saito, 2011) and suprasegmental features of pronunciation (Field, 2005; Kang, 2010) were shown to relatively influence intelligibility which is central to pronunciation (Levis, 2018). Despite the varying views and blurry dichotomy between segmentals and suprasegmentals (Wang, 2020), it is safe to say that the salience of pronunciation cannot be disregarded. Pronunciation is however largely ignored (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; McCrocklin, 2014; Pillai, 2017; Rahimi & Ruzrokh, 2016) in foreign language education settings due to such various reasons that can be categorized as teacher cognition (Couper, 2017) and curricular exclusion (Darcy, 2018), notwithstanding its significance. It was demonstrated in early research that language teachers do not feel competent or knowledgeable enough to teach pronunciation (Baker, 2014). It was also shown that pronunciation instruction is not adequately incorporated into language teaching curricula (Camus, 2019). It was

further indicated that pronunciation is underrepresented in textbooks (Nikolić, 2018). Besides, it was claimed that teaching materials including textbooks are divorced from research findings (Levis, 2016).

Considering that pronunciation is significant for effective communication (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019) and language proficiency (Harsch, 2017), this study intended to analyze a multilevel EFL textbook series as regards the treatment of pronunciation. To this end, student's book, teacher's book, pronunciation extra, and MyEnglishLab components of Speakout second edition textbook series (Clare & Wilson, 2015; Eales & Oakes, 2015) were analyzed quantitatively. A previous study examined the state of pronunciation in French and Polish secondary school textbooks (Henderson & Jarosz, 2014) revealing the lack of communicative activities about pronunciation and the prevalence of suprasegmentals. Another study investigated the effect of textbooks on pronunciation teaching (Tergujeff, 2015) and found that they indeed influence pronunciation teaching. Derwing et al. (2012) analyzed an ESL textbook series and obtained variations both across and within the textbook series with regard to the treatment of pronunciation. In the Turkish EFL context, textbooks were evaluated for different purposes in earlier studies (Atar & Erdem, 2020; Tok, 2010); however, no studies, by the researcher's reckoning, specifically examined the pronunciation representation in EFL textbooks, which adds up to the significance of this research. The present study differs from earlier studies in terms of data sources, context, and scope. The findings are therefore expected to contribute relatively to pronunciation instruction and textbook analysis.

Two main research questions were formulated in congruence with the objectives:

RQ (1): What are the distributions in the textbook series by level and pronunciation feature?

RQ (2): What kind of pronunciation activities are provided in the textbook series according to Celce-Murcia et al.'s (2010) communicative framework?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Pronunciation: Definition, Features, and Significance

Effective communication is viewed as the ultimate goal in second/foreign language learning (East, 2018). Manifold factors might be claimed to intervene to achieve this goal, one being clear and intelligible pronunciation. Collins online dictionary defines pronunciation as “the act or manner of pronouncing syllables, words, and phrases with regard to the production of sounds and the placing of stress, intonation, etc.” (Collins, n.d.). As this definition may suggest, pronunciation can be divided into segmentals and suprasegmentals, whereby the first deals with the phonemes and segments in the language, while the latter relates to such characteristics as intonation and rhythm beyond the segmental level. It might therefore be surmised that a good command of pronunciation encompasses competence in both segmentals and suprasegmentals (Gao & Weinberger, 2018).

Segmental features comprise vowels and consonants (Richards, 2015). English language contains 26 letters. However, there are 44 sounds (20 vowels, 24 consonants) represented by these 26 letters. The use of vowels might vary among native speakers of English, elucidating the discernable differences between varieties of English such as American English (AE) and British English (BE) (Richards, 2015). According to Richards (2015), AE includes 15 vowels, whereas BE comprises some 20 vowels. It is important to mention certain concepts including tongue position, lip rounding, muscular tension (i.e. tense-lax), and diphthongs when talking about vowels. Since the production of English sounds is largely physical (Richards, 2015) and requires neuromuscular flexibility (Demirezen, 2010b), it might be argued that learners may have to acquire familiar or unfamiliar sounds depending on their native language. Research has shown that mispronunciation of some vowels and consonants cause misunderstanding and communication breakdowns (Demirezen, 2010a; Jenkins, 2002; Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019; Richards, 2015).

Suprasegmentals, on the other hand, include such features as word stress, intonation, rhythm, and voice quality (Richards, 2015). English is a stress-timed language (Nespor et al., 2011). It might therefore pose certain pronunciation problems at the suprasegmental level for nonnative speakers with non-stress-timed languages such as Turkish – a syllable-timed language (Nespor et al. 2011). In English, words consist of different numbers of syllables, and different syllables carry more stress in words. On the other hand, sentences might contain certain

words with more prominence (or stress) – also called as sentence stress. Content words are usually stressed more than function words in English sentences (Höhne & Weissenborn, 1999). Stress is regarded as one of the components of intonation, together with pitch and juncture (Topal, 2017). The speech pattern formed through the use of stressed syllables is often referred to as the rhythm of the language (Richards, 2015). Research on suprasegmentals has revealed the significance of these pronunciation features on comprehensibility and intelligibility (Kang, 2010) and their inclusion in instruction (McAndrews, 2019).

Despite the varying implications the research on both segmentals and suprasegmentals has suggested for pronunciation teaching, both features are deemed significant for clear and intelligible pronunciation – an essential component to effective communication (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019). It is therefore plausible to assert that English teachers should be competent in pronunciation since they present role-models for their students (Richards, 2015), and textbooks should contain a sufficient amount of pronunciation practice for both features as they are considered as the main teaching materials (Henderson et al., 2012).

## ***2.2. Textbooks in English Language Education***

A textbook, in Collins dictionary, is defined as “a book containing facts about a particular subject that is used by people studying that subject” (Collins, n.d.). According to Richard’s (2015) classification of published materials, EFL textbooks might be considered under “multilevel textbook series for domestic or international markets” (p. 595). Textbooks can also be viewed as the major and commonplace teaching materials (Henderson et al., 2012). As Tomlinson (2012, p. 143) asserts, materials can be categorized as informative, instructional, experiential, eliciting, and exploratory. Ideal materials should therefore own these features. Given that EFL textbooks inform about the target language, support language practice, provide language experience, urge language use, and assist with language discovery on part of language learners, it is safe to say that they harbor these qualities of ideal materials to varying degrees.

Manifold merits are provided by textbooks. First, textbooks present structure and a program syllabus (Molværsmyr, 2017; Richards, 2001). Indeed, it is safe to say that, without textbooks, it would be very demanding to design a language program.

Second, textbooks assist with the standardization of instruction (Richards, 2001). Especially with multilevel textbook series, learners of all types and levels can receive similar language input thus be tested similarly. Third, textbooks help sustain the quality materials (Choi & Tsang, 2020; Richards, 2001). Given that textbooks are developed by experts and professionals, it might be stated that the materials and input presented in textbooks to learners have been tested and designed appropriately. Fourth, various learning resources are provided by textbooks (Matkin, 2009; Richards, 2001). Nowadays, textbooks come with several components such as workbooks, audiovisual and digital components therefore offer a variety for learning. Fifth, textbooks serve as a guide for novice teachers (Ball & Feiman-Nemser, 1988; Richards, 2001). It would be no surprise that textbooks might serve quite well for teachers with limited teaching experience because textbooks have kind of an all-inclusive nature, offering novel teachers a roadmap to follow. Last but not least, textbooks save time for teachers (Richards, 2001; Ulla, 2019). It would otherwise be quite demanding to prepare materials for learners of different ages, levels, and backgrounds.

On the other hand, textbooks do have several downsides. First, they might include inauthentic language (Richards, 2015; Waters, 2009). This aspect of textbooks is criticized in that the language used in real life is not presented in textbooks. Another criticism addressed to textbooks is that content is distorted in textbooks (Gray, 2010; Richards, 2015). To state differently, the content in textbooks is prepared by textbooks writers and reflect their own views on materials selection thus may be divorced from the reality. A third disadvantage of textbooks is that they have the potential to “deskill teachers’ professional knowledge” (Chien & Young, 2007, p. 156). In other words, textbooks constrain teachers’ abilities to contribute to their teaching practice thus cause them to serve as language technicians. Fourth, learners’ needs may not be reflected well in textbooks (Richards, 2001). Considering that textbooks are published for international markets, this might be a real concern. A final drawback of textbooks might be the financial burden they place on learners’ shoulders (Martin et al., 2017). However, this might be overcome by using alternative approaches, such as using the digital book versions (i.e. classware).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research Design

This study adopts quantitative content analysis (QCA) as a research method. Quantitative content analysis (QCA) is “a research approach in which characteristics of textual, visual, or auditory information are methodically categorized and recorded in order to be analyzed” (Coe & Scacco, 2017, p.1). In this sense, the text (four components of Speakout second edition textbook series) was systematically categorized in relation to pronunciation treatment. Both printed and electronic versions and components of the textbook were put to analysis. A codebook was created in an electronic file (Microsoft Excel) including the specific codes (i.e. pronunciation features) across textbook levels and components. In line with Krippendorff’s (2013) proposal of units (i.e. sampling units, recording/coding units, and context units) in QCA, it might be stated that the sampling unit in this research was a multilevel EFL textbook series; recording/coding units were the pronunciations sections in the textbook components; the context unit was at the lexical level.

#### 3.2. Context

The context of the research is English as a foreign language (EFL) setting in Turkey. English owns a foreign language status in Turkey and is a compulsory course in state schools since the second grade in primary school (Ministry of National Education, 2018a), wherein learners are provided with two-hour courses from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade (A1), three-hour courses from 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade (A1), and four-hour courses from 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade (A2). The curriculum is centered on integrated teaching of four skills, with the main focus on listening and speaking along with very limited reading and writing. The same model curriculum also accounts for secondary education (Ministry of National Education, 2018b), whereby learners (aged 14-17.5) are provided with four-class hour of English courses from 9<sup>th</sup> grade (A1-A2) to 12<sup>th</sup> grade (B2+). The secondary education curriculum underscores the teaching of four skills integratively, with the main emphasis on listening and speaking along with the limited focus on language structures and pronunciation practice. In tertiary education, English medium departments require their majors to possess a certain English proficiency therefore mandate one-year English education

in preparatory school, whereas preparatory school education is voluntary in Turkish medium departments (Official Gazette, 2016). The analyzed textbook series were utilized in the college of foreign languages of a prominent Turkish state university.

### 3.3. Instruments

Data for this research were obtained from four components of Speakout second edition multilevel book series: (i) student's book, (ii) teacher's book, (iii) MyEnglishLab, and (iv) pronunciation extra. All four components were analyzed from Starter (A1) to Advanced (C2) levels. MyEnglishLab is an online platform that allows learners to practice or revise the learned language structure, the layout of which was designed in accordance with the textbook content. Pronunciation extra, as the name might suggest, contains revision materials specifically developed for various pronunciation features as they were presented in the textbook series. There were 12 units in the first three textbook levels (i.e. Starter, Elementary, and Pre-Intermediate) and 10 units in the last three levels (i.e. Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate, and Advanced). A total of 264 units in all four components comprised the data instrument for this study.

**Table 1**  
*Information on the Analyzed Instruments*

Name of instrument	Level	Number of Sample	Authors/Date	Publisher
Student's book	A1-C2	66 units	Eales & Oakes, 2015; Clare & Wilson, 2015	Pearson
Teacher's book	A1-C2	66 units	Eales & Oakes, 2015; Clare & Wilson, 2015	Pearson
Pronunciation extra	A1-C2	66 units	-	Pearson
MyEnglishLab	A1-C2	66 units	-	Pearson

### 3.4. Data Collection and Analysis

The multilevel series (Starter-Advanced) of Speakout second edition student's textbooks (Eales & Oakes, 2015; Clare & Wilson, 2015), teacher's books (Eales & Oakes, 2015; Clare & Wilson, 2015), MyEnglishLab, and pronunciation extra were analyzed for the representation of pronunciation in their content. Specific features of pronunciation were listed alongside of related information (i.e., title of unit, page number, etc.) in an electronic file. Quantitative content analysis was utilized to



analyze data for the first research question, more specifically, to see which pronunciation features have more presence in the textbook series. Qualitative content analysis is one of numerous qualitative approaches for evaluating data and understanding its meaning that are now accessible, and it is a systematic and objective way of describing and measuring occurrences (Schreier, 2012). Segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation presented in the textbooks were grouped, followed by a frequency and content analysis. For the second research question, the communicative framework for pronunciation teaching proposed by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p.45) was utilized. The pronunciation exercises in the textbook components were categorized by carefully examining the instructions. To illustrate, a typical instruction for description and analysis exercises would be “Listen and check” urging learner to notice the target structure. For listening discrimination exercise, it was “Listen and write the words in the correct group below (/s/, /z/, /ɪz/)” asking learners to differentiate between the target sounds. A sample instruction for controlled practice was “Then listen and repeat. Copy the intonation to sound polite” encouraging learners to imitate the target structure by a given model. Since pronunciation exercises in guided and communicative practice categories were not encountered in the components, their sample instructions were not provided.

#### 4. Results

*RQ (1): What are the distributions in the textbook series by level and pronunciation feature?*

Quantitative content analysis revealed that suprasegmentals prevailed in student’s books ( $f = 192$ ), pronunciation extra ( $f = 377$ ), and MyEnglishLab ( $f = 11$ ) compared to segmentals ( $f = 29$  in student’s books,  $f = 188$  in pronunciation extra worksheets, and  $f = 0$  in MyEnglishLab). The distribution of segmentals and suprasegmentals across the student’s books was presented in Table 2 below.

**Table 2**  
*Distribution of Segmentals and Suprasegmentals in Textbooks*

Student’s Book	WS	SS	I	CS	IS	ST	R	<i>f</i>
Starter	8	8	4	8	14	2	0	44
Elementary	7	9	9	15	4	1	0	44

Student's Book	WS	SS	I	CS	IS	ST	R	<i>f</i>
Pre-Intermediate	8	6	6	11	5	1	1	38
Intermediate	8	1	9	13	2	3	0	36
Upper-Intermediate	4	9	8	13	1	2	0	37
Advanced	15	0	11	9	4	3	2	44
<i>f</i>	41	34	46	65	29	11	3	229
%	20.49	13.52	19.26	28.28	12.30	4.92	1.23	100

\*WS: word stress, SS: sentence stress, I: intonation, CS: connected speech, IS: individual sounds, ST: Speakout tip, and R: rhythm.

Table 2 shows that suprasegmentals comprised 82.78%, while segmentals consisted of 17.22% of the textbooks across all six levels. Connected speech was the most frequent prosodic feature, whereas rhythm was the least frequent. Teachers were provided with 11 Speakout tips about the related pronunciation features across six book levels. The distribution of related pronunciation features in pronunciation extra worksheets was illustrated in Table 3 below.

**Table 3**

*Distribution of Segmentals and Suprasegmentals in Pronunciation Extra Worksheets*

Pronunciation Extra	WS	SS	I	CS	IS	PT	R	<i>f</i>
Starter	12	23	13	13	56	15	0	132
Elementary	14	13	8	28	51	18	2	134
Pre-Intermediate	14	11	7	28	35	16	6	117
Intermediate	16	8	19	20	12	11	0	86
Upper-Intermediate	16	14	11	16	7	11	2	77
Advanced	16	13	10	24	27	12	0	102
<i>f</i>	88	82	68	129	188	83	10	648
%	13.58	12.65	10.49	19.91	29.01	12.81	1.54	100.00

According to Table 3, suprasegmentals (58.18%) predominate the segmentals (29.01%) in pronunciation extra worksheets of all six levels. In these worksheets, individual sounds and connected speech had the highest ( $f = 188$ ,  $f = 129$ ) and rhythm ( $f = 0$ ) had the lowest frequency. Unlike in textbooks, teachers were provided with far more pronunciation tips ( $f = 83$ ) in the extra worksheets. The distribution of relevant pronunciation features in MyEnglishLab platform was

displayed in Table 4 below.

**Table 4**

*Distribution of Segmentals and Suprasegmentals in MyEnglishLab*

MyEnglishLab	CS	I	SS	<i>f</i>
Starter	0	0	0	0
Elementary	2	0	0	2
Pre-Intermediate	2	1	1	4
Intermediate	0	0	0	0
Upper-Intermediate	0	2	1	3
Advanced	0	2	0	2
<i>f</i>	4	5	2	11
%	36.36	45.46	18.18	100

Table 4 indicates a clear prevalence of prosodic features in MyEnglishLab platform, with intonation ( $f = 5$ ) being the most frequent and sentence stress ( $f = 2$ ) the least frequent. No activities about segmentals were encountered in MyEnglishLab.

In addition to student's books, pronunciation extra worksheets, and MyEnglishLab, teacher's books were also analyzed. The findings revealed three categories: (i) instruction (whereby teachers are instructed how to teach), (ii) teaching tip (handy hints about teaching pronunciation), and (iii) watch out (wherein teachers are asked to pay attention to the relevant pronunciation feature). The distribution of these categories across six book levels was shown in Table 5 below.

**Table 5**

*Distribution of Content in Teacher's Books*

Teacher's Book	Ins	TT	WO	<i>f</i>
Starter	35	13	1	49
Elementary	32	8	2	42
Pre-Intermediate	36	2	1	39
Intermediate	31	4	4	39
Upper-Intermediate	31	3	0	34
Advanced	30	4	7	41
<i>f</i>	195	34	15	244
%	79.92	13.93	6.15	100

\*Ins: instruction, TT: teaching tip, WO: watch out

As can be observed in Table 5, instructions (79.92%) on how to teach the specific pronunciation features had the highest frequency, followed respectively by teaching tip (13.93), and watch out (6.15%).

*RQ 2): What kind of pronunciation activities are provided in the textbook series according to Celce-Murcia et al.'s (2010) communicative framework?*

Following the response to the first research question, the answer to the second one comes from the comparative analysis of segmental and suprasegmental features available in the textbook components and the communicative framework for teaching English pronunciation (Table 5) consisting of (i) description and analysis, (ii) listening discrimination, (iii) controlled practice, (iv) guided practice, and (v) communicative practice (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p.45).

**Table 6**

*A Communicative Framework for Teaching English Pronunciation*

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Description and Analysis - oral and written illustrations of how the feature is produced and when it occurs within spoken discourse
Listening Discrimination - focused listening practice with feedback on learners' ability to correctly discriminate the feature
Controlled Practice - oral reading of minimal-pair sentences, short dialogues, etc., with special attention paid to the highlighted feature in order to raise learner consciousness
Guided Practice - structured communication exercises, such as information-gap activities or cued dialogues, that enable the learner to monitor for the specified feature
Communicative Practice - less structured, fluency-building activities (e.g. role play, problem solving) that require the learner to attend to both form and content of utterances

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(Adapted from Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p.45)

Moving from analysis to production, this framework urges the separation of pronunciation lessons in five phases. The first phase (D&A) is based on Schmidt's (1990) noticing hypothesis and directs learner's attention to relevant pronunciation features and their occurrence in discourse. The second phase (LD) advocates focused listening (perception) due to the close link it has with production (Escudero, 2007). Next comes controlled practice (ConP) which encourages learners to monitor their own production since this contributes significantly to their performance (Venkatagiri & Levis, 2007). The fourth phase (GP) takes place when pronunciation practice is guided by the instructor. This phase includes focused tasks whereby a transition from controlled to semi-controlled practice is made in the hope for achieving automatic production of the relevant feature (McLaughlin, 1987). The

final phase (ComP) requires learners to use the target features in real-life contexts because only then learning or instruction becomes meaning-focused (Ellis, 1990).

**Table 7**

*Distribution of Framework Components across Levels and Pronunciation Features in Student's Books*

Framework Component	Starter		Ele.		Pre-Int.		Int.		Upp-Int.		Advanced	
	Seg	Sup	Seg	Sup	Seg	Sup	Seg	Sup	Seg	Sup	Seg	Sup
D&A	8	9	1	23	5	20	1	16	0	6	0	7
LD	9	17	3	15	1	10	1	9	1	22	2	11
ConP	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	6	0	6	0	21
GP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ComP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>f</i>	17	26	4	40	6	31	2	31	1	34	2	39
%	7.30	11.16	1.72	17.17	2.58	13.30	0.86	13.30	0.43	14.59	0.86	16.74

Table 7 demonstrates that the majority (84.55%) of the pronunciation activities falls into the categories of D&A ( $f = 96$ ) and LD ( $f = 101$ ). ConP ( $f = 36$ ) comprises the 15.45% of the total, with no activities in GP and ComP components. It can also be observed that the pronunciation features (i.e. segmentals and suprasegmentals) were distributed proportionately across the levels in student's books, given the total frequency.

**Table 8**

*Distribution of Framework Components across Levels and Pronunciation Features in Pronunciation Extra*

Framework Component	Starter		Ele.		Pre-Int.		Int.		Upp-Int.		Advanced	
	Seg	Sup	Seg	Sup	Seg	Sup	Seg	Sup	Seg	Sup	Seg	Sup
D&A	3	33	4	28	1	29	3	12	1	14	11	20
LD	2	20	0	21	0	24	4	13	2	7	3	12
ConP	8	54	2	61	1	46	5	38	4	38	13	31
GP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ComP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>f</i>	13	107	6	110	2	99	12	63	7	59	27	63
%	2.29	18.84	1.06	19.37	0.35	17.43	2.11	11.09	1.23	10.39	4.75	11.09

As indicated in Table 8, most exercises are grouped under ConP ( $f = 301$ ), followed consecutively by D&A ( $f = 159$ ) and LD ( $f = 108$ ). No activities were encountered in GP and ComP components in extra worksheets as in student's books. However, the activities in pronunciation extra ( $f = 568$ ) outnumbered those in student's books ( $f = 233$ ) in total. Unlike in student's books, segmentals and suprasegmentals were not distributed commensurately across the textbook levels. It might however be stated that there is a compatibility between the first and last three levels in terms of distribution of pronunciation features. More precisely, the number of activities in the first and last three levels was relatively similar.

**Table 9**

*Distribution of Framework Components across Levels and Pronunciation Features in MyEnglishLab*

Framework Component	Ele.		Pre-Int.		Upp-Int.		Advanced	
	Seg	Sup	Seg	Sup	Seg	Sup	Seg	Sup
D&A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LD	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	0
ConP	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	2
GP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ComP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>f</i>	0	2	0	4	0	3	0	2
%	0	18.18	0	36.37	0	27.27	0	18.18

Table 9 illustrates that ConP ( $f = 6$ ) was the most frequent, while LD ( $f = 5$ ) was the least frequent activity type in MyEnglishLab. In contrast to student's book and pronunciation extra, no segmental activities were presented in MyEnglishLab; therefore, an overwhelming prevalence of prosodic features exists in this component. No activities in GP and ComP were encountered in student's book and pronunciation extra components. It was also found that MyEnglishLab was the component with the fewest activities and activity types.

## 5. Discussion

This study analyzed four components (i.e. student's book, teacher's book, pronunciation extra, and MyEnglishLab) of a multilevel EFL textbook series utilized in the Turkish context. The findings of the first research question revealed an overwhelming prevalence of suprasegmental features of pronunciation ( $f = 580$ )

over segmentals ( $f = 217$ ) in student's book, MyEnglishLab, and pronunciation extra components, which concurs with the findings of earlier studies (Derwing et al., 2013; Henderson & Jarosz, 2014; Kralova & Kucerka, 2019). It was also found that connected speech was the most frequent prosodic feature in student's book, while rhythm was the least frequent. The most and least frequent items were individual sounds and rhythm in pronunciation extra, intonation and connected speech/sentence stress in MyEnglishLab. With regard to the distributions by level, it was discovered that starter, elementary and advanced level student's books contained the most pronunciation exercises ( $f = 44$  each), with connected speech being the most frequent ( $f = 65$ ) and rhythm the least ( $f = 3$ ). Elementary ( $f = 134$ ) and starter ( $f = 132$ ) pronunciation extra worksheets included the most exercises, with a considerable dominance of individual sounds ( $f = 188$ ). No instances of rhythm were encountered in pronunciation extra worksheets. Last but not least, MyEnglishLab involved the most frequent exercises in pre-intermediate ( $f = 4$ ) and upper-intermediate levels ( $f = 3$ ) respectively, with intonation being the highest ( $f = 5$ ) and sentence stress the lowest ( $f = 2$ ) in frequency. Since other studies investigating the treatment of pronunciation in EFL textbooks did not examine the textbooks by levels (CEFR levels), these findings could not be compared. In this sense, these findings can be considered novel, contributing to the literature.

The findings of the second research question demonstrated that ConP ( $f = 343$ ) was the most frequent activity type, followed respectively by D&A ( $f = 255$ ) and LD ( $f = 213$ ), with no instances in the other components of the framework proposed by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p.45). This finding both accords and discords with Henderson and Jarosz's study (2014). It was found that ConP and LD were the most frequent, whereas it was only ConP with the highest frequency. Also, their study revealed instances of GP and ComP, but these activities were not encountered in the present study. It was further found that pronunciation extra included the most activities ( $f = 568$ ), followed consecutively by student's book ( $f = 233$ ), and MyEnglishLab ( $f = 11$ ). In addition to these, teacher's book series contained instructions ( $f = 195$ ) on how to teach the target pronunciation feature, teaching tips ( $f = 34$ ), and watch out sections ( $f = 15$ ) wherein teachers' attention is drawn to the target features.

The content analysis revealed that pronunciation exercises centered on problematic sounds in tandem with (i) given grammar points, (ii) particular

vocabulary items, and (iii) language functions. For instance, intonation in Wh-questions was the focus in the grammar part dealing with question forms in the Intermediate book. In the vocabulary part of the Elementary textbook dealing with countries and nationalities, the pronunciation focus was word stress. In the function part of the Pre-Intermediate book dealing with making conversations, the pronunciation feature in focus was connected speech, more specifically, linking to sound natural. In student's books, learners are provided with the chance to familiarize themselves with the presented language models of pronunciation, notice the key features and practice them.

The input exercises revolved around five strands of pronunciation: (i) sentence stress, (ii) word stress, (iii) intonation, (iv) connected speech, and (v) individual sounds. The first four of these were prosodic features, while the last one was segmental. The activities in these strands aimed to assist learners to (i) determine the stressed words in sentences to understand fast speech where important pieces of information are highlighted by speakers, (ii) identify the words used by speakers and use the vowel sounds accurately, (iii) find out how intonation might influence meaning or how sentences are received by listeners, (iv) learn how sounds change in fast speech and produce rapid speech, and (v) identify and produce certain problem-causing individual sounds. Considering this distribution of pronunciation features all over the textbook series and other components, it might be asserted that significant pronunciation features were presented. To illustrate, English is a stress-timed language (Crystal & Potter, 2020) where the correct placement and production of stress is significant, because sentence stress, along with word stress, "create the rhythm of an English utterance" (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010, p. 209). Additionally, word stress assists the comprehension of oral speech and enhances its intelligibility (Checklin, 2012). It was also shown that lack of word stress relatively accounted for misunderstandings in speech (Lewis & Deterding, 2018). Furthermore, intonation is another salient feature of pronunciation (Taylor, 1993) in that it allows language learners to communicate their intentions or certain meanings. The fourth strand in the textbook series; namely, connected speech is particularly important as native speakers utilize certain phonological changes or rules such as reductions, linking, deletion, and assimilation (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010) for the sake of being economic in speech (Clarey & Dixson, 1963). Last but not least, individual sounds or segmentals were also considered to influence understanding (Kang, Thomson & Moran, 2020). It was even found that certain sounds were problematic for language learners (Saito, 2011). Given that sentence stress (Arslan,



2013), word stress (Hişmanoğlu, 2012), intonation (Demirezen, 2009), connected speech (Demirezen, 2010b), and individual sounds (Hişmanoğlu & Hişmanoğlu, 2011) tend to be problematic for Turkish EFL learners, the inclusion of these pronunciation features in the textbooks seem pertinent.

On the whole, it might be argued that the incorporation of both segmentals and suprasegmentals in EFL textbooks bears salience, notwithstanding the blurry and unnecessary dichotomy between the two (Wang, 2020). Given that every individual learner is unique in terms of learning styles (Ng, Pinto, & Williams, 2011) and linguistic backgrounds (Bair, 2014), it is plausible not to concentrate on specific pronunciation features in EFL textbooks developed for international markets. It must however be noted here that language teachers could prepare pronunciation materials addressing to the needs of learners locally.

## 6. Conclusion

The present study attempted to examine a multilevel EFL textbook components and found that activities about prosodic features of pronunciation outnumbered those about segmentals. It was also indicated that the majority of these activities fell into the ConP category of Celce-Murcia et al.'s (2010) framework, followed consecutively by D&A and LD categories. This finding suggests two implications. First, textbooks should include more activities aiming guided and communicative practice. Second, it imposes more workload and responsibility on language teachers' shoulders with regard to developing locally-addressed pronunciation materials for communicative purposes. This can be expected of language teachers in accordance with the requirements of both national and international teaching standards and qualifications (European Commission, 2011; Ministry of National Education, 2017; TESOL, 2019). Additionally, teachers have already been provided with adequate number of instructions, teaching tips, and warnings in teacher's book series. They might therefore refer to teaching manuals in case they feel incompetent. The findings of this study might also imply that negligence of pronunciation is not due to its exclusion in textbooks, but other reasons such as teacher cognition (Couper, 2017) and institutional priorities and constraints (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016).

It goes without saying that this study has certain limitations. First, it focused solely on a particular multilevel EFL textbook series, excluding others. However, this was done to have a sole focus on all textbooks components (i.e. student's books, teacher's book, pronunciation extra, and MyEnglishLab) by a publishing company. Second, the views of teachers who used these book series were not acquired because it was considered that teacher cognition could be the topic of another study. This study concludes that textbooks "...survive and prosper primarily because they are the most convenient means of providing the structure that the teaching-learning system - particularly the system in change - requires" (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994, p.317). Despite the prevalence of digitization and digitalization in language education (Lütge et al., 2019), it is considered that digital textbooks in the form of classware components might continue to serve as a guide for teachers.

Based on the limitations to this study, further research might focus on obtaining the views of language teachers on pronunciation teaching and the inclusion of this skill in textbooks. Another study might also deal with actual classroom practice of teachers regarding pronunciation. A prospective study can further address to teacher cognition about pronunciation by comparing teacher's knowledge base and their classroom practice. This way, the reasons for not teaching pronunciation can be determined or eliminated now that this study found that the analyzed textbook series included sufficient amount of pronunciation practice.

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