Problematic English Consonant Sounds
for Indonesian EFL Learners

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A B S T R A C T

This paper analyzes Indonesian EFL learners' perspectives on pronouncing problematic English consonant sounds. Therefore, the opinions of the Indonesian EFL learners about the difficulty level of 24 problematic consonants were the expected data. A descriptive qualitative method was used to analyze the data of this study. The study reveals that interlingual, intralingual, and developmental factors influence problematic English consonant sounds like /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, and /r/, suggesting EFL learners are more attentive to these sounds to improve pronunciation.

Introduction

Pronunciation plays a crucial role in spoken English. With good pronunciation, speakers can provide a better understanding of the message conveyed to minimize miscommunication, improve the quality of speech, and practice the recognition of various kinds of sounds and practices (Anggraini, 2022). In addition, good pronunciation can give a distinct impression and provide effective communication between each other **(Suwartono & Sari, 2020; Topal & Altay, 2022)**. A study by Purnama et al. (2023) detected the pronunciation proficiency of 70 postgraduate students which resulted in 43 students (61%) making pronunciation mistakes and 27 students (39%) having good pronunciation. Pronunciation errors were found in 4 students (5.71%) for vowels, 5 (7.14%) for consonants, 3 (4.28%) for diphthongs, and 14 (20%) for consonant clusters. It indicates that the problem of consonant pronunciation contributes to the non-native speakers' speaking fluency.

Angela (2015)explains that EFL is defined as a foreign language for countries that do not use English as the main language (L1). Indonesian English learners are also included in the EFL because the Indonesian first language is the Indonesian language. So, English becomes their second, or third language or foreign language for their daily life and they use English for several purposes, for example, for their education, job needs, and just for sheer pleasure. Some factors are sometimes affecting EFL learners when pronouncing some English words, it is due to the L1 effect or the first language or the mother tongue. Some factors affecting EFL learners' English pronunciation were: the mixing of the first language, the educator at school, the curriculum, the learner itself, and less practice outside class hours (Al Yaqoobi et al., 2016). One of the main purposes of English teaching and learning is to help learners get fluency and understandable pronunciation. Some Indonesian EFL learners often make mistakes in pronouncing some sounds in the word "thank", they used to pronounce it as [tæŋk] not [θæŋk]. Sometimes, there is a misunderstanding between the EFL speakers with native speakers due to mispronunciations which causes weird sounds produced (Hasyim et al., 2020).

Based on observations made by researchers at the English Language Education Study Program, Sanata Dharma University batch 2019, some students still faced difficulty pronouncing some words containing consonant sounds. Pronunciation courses were taught in semester 1 to semester 2, The lecturer provided books and examples of the types of sounds in English accompanied by transcription and how to pronounce them. However, students were unaware of how to pronounce the sounds and only focused on transcription based on IPA. Some English consonants exist in Indonesian consonant sounds such as /θ/, /dʒ/, and /tʃ/. Therefore, Indonesian speakers tend to adjust English words with their local accents and pronunciations. Lack of motivation in practice also causes their speaking skills to not be very good because the mouth muscle is not used to being trained so it becomes stiff. Albiladi (2019)states there is a glaring lack of interest and motivation among EFL students in many non-speaking countries. Not having the desire to learn is one of the most common obstacles that English teachers face. This lack of interest and motivation among students can be attributed to reasons including (but not limited to) static and boring language classes, repetitive activities and ways of teaching, and language instruction that focuses on memorization. Generally, factors that cause pronunciation errors include intralingual, interlingual, and developmental errors (Ping et al., 2020; Richards, 1971). These factors may cause the problem of EFL learners' consonant sound production.

Interlingual errors in pronunciation are caused by the negative impact of the mother or native language on the second language **(Sayogie & Adbaka, 2022)**. Due to the impact, speakers tend to follow their L1's pronunciation rather than the L2's. Brown (2014) mentions speakers also assume the similarity between the pronunciation of L1 and L2. This phenomenon might occur when learners embrace the L1 rules and utilize them in L2 (Zhu, 2019). According to Richards (1974, p. 6), intralingual factors refer to items produced by learners that do not reflect the structure of the mother tongue, but generalizations based on partial exposure of the target language. Richards (1974, p.120) and Sari (2016) classify intralingual errors into four categories including over-generalization, ignorance of rule boundaries, incomplete application of rules, and hypothesized conceptual errors or semantic errors. Lastly, developmental factors refer to factors that are not related to language elements or are outside the scope of linguistics (Ping et al., 2020; Richards, 1974). In another study, there are four causes of pronunciation errors, namely (1) several differences in speech sounds between English and Indonesian; (2) the same phonetic features whose distribution is different between English and Indonesian; (3) mother tongue interference; and (4) lack of practice and exposure in English pronunciation (Marzuki, 2021). Based on the problems elaborated previously, the researchers formulated the following research question to resolve: **What are the problematic consonant sounds from the perspective of Indonesian EFL learners?**

Research Method

A descriptive qualitative method was employed in this study. Qualitative research is important for interpreting diverse social problems that come from certain cultural situations (Tracy, 2013). Tracy (2013) states that the main instrument of the qualitative study was the researcher itself. Therefore, the researchers interpreted the data gathered in this study. The theory of the factors causing pronunciation error by Richards (1974) became the basic theory underlying this study.

In this research, the researchers collected data using questionnaires. The researchers also used empirical studies, theoretical articles, and books related to teaching English and

English pronunciation. Data from this study were collected by using a Google Form survey containing 25 questions including the pronunciation difficulty levels of 24 English consonants and a question about how learners overcome their pronunciation difficulty.

The following was the process of how the research was carried out:
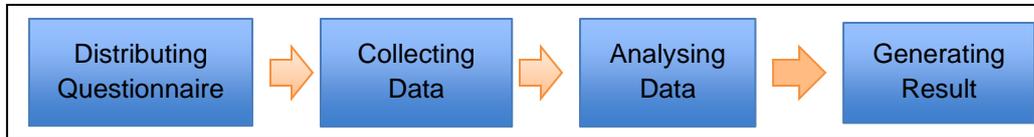
To obtain the data, the researchers involved English learners on purpose, such as English Language Education students English Literature students, and self-taught learners who studied English as a second language as the main respondents. The respondents were asked to fill out the questionnaires about the difficulty level of consonant sounds. There were 21 respondents obtained by the researchers. The analysis of this study was presented narratively to make the analysis understood easily. The data from this study had also been checked many times to ensure data quality.

Result and Discussion

As stated previously, there was one question formulated underlying this study about what the problematic consonants are. Therefore, the answer to the question was discussed in this section. The results of the distributed questionnaire showed there were 21 data collected from Indonesian EFL respondents. Figure 1 below shows 10 (47.6 %) respondents from English education students, 9 (42.9%) respondents from English Literature students, and 2 (9.5%) others who were not from the English language study program.
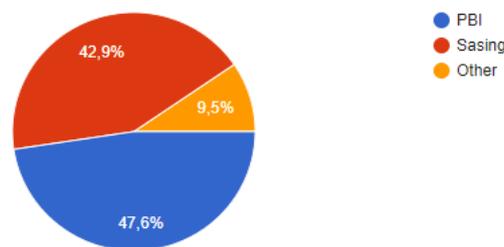

Figure 1. Data respondent distribution

Table 1. The Results of the Distributed Questionnaire

Statement: how difficult for you to pronounce words that contain the sound element…	Percentage of the Answer				
	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
/s/ → "nice, soon"	42.9%	47.6%	9.5%	0%	0%
/z/ →"zoom, goes"	19%	47.6%	28.6%	0%	4.8%
/ʃ/ →"ship, flash"	23.8%	47.6%	23.8%	4.8%	0%
/ʒ/ →"measure, beige"	0%	14.3%	42.9%	38.1%	4.8%
/t/ →"turn, might"	47.6%	42.9%	9.5%	0%	0%
/d/ →"down, modern"	52.4%	38.1%	4.8%	4.8%	0%
/tʃ/ →"chip, inch"	14.3%	47.6%	23.8%	9.5%	4.8%
/dʒ/ →" just, merge"	4.8%	47.6%	23.8%	19%	4.8%
/p/ →" profit, upload"	57.1%	38.1%	4.8%	0%	0%
/b/ →" benefit, lab"	61.9%	33.3%	0%	4.8%	0%
/f/ → " format, laugh"	33.3%	47.6%	19%	0%	0%
/v/ →" vacuum, five"	33.3%	28.6%	19%	14.3%	4.8%

/θ/ →"think, math"	9.5%	19%	33.3%	23.8%	14.3%
/ð/ →"this, breathe"	9.5%	38.1%	23.8%	19%	9.5%
/k/ →"cable, track"	57.1%	42.9%	0%	0%	0%
/g/ → "grant, lag"	47.6%	42.9%	4.8%	4.8%	0%
/m/ → "motor, sum"	66.7%	28.6%	4.8%	0%	0%
/n/ →"new, fine"	61.9%	38.1%	0%	0%	0%
/ŋ/ → "ring, language"	52.4%	42.9%	4.8%	0%	0%
/l/ →"light, tell"	61.9%	38.1%	0%	0%	0%
/r/ → "wrong, far"	42.9%	23.8%	19%	14.3%	0%
/w/ → "want, away"	57.1%	28.6%	4.8%	4.8%	4.8%
/j/ → "yawn, you"	42.9%	47.6%	9.5%	0%	0%
/h/ → "high, ahead"	57.1%	38.1%	0%	4.8%	0%

Table 1 shows the English consonants difficulty scale. Scale 1 indicated the easiest level and scale 5 indicated the hardest level. The researchers considered the problematic sounds at a 20% minimum on a scale of 3 and above. Therefore, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, and /r/ are considered problematic. According to Indriani (2001), two kinds of English speech sounds are consonant sounds and vowel sounds. In pronunciation, there are several aspects that we must learn such as vowel and consonant sounds, voice, and voiceless sounds, then diphthong and monophthong. In line with Ambalegin and Arianto (2018), a consonant is a letter of the alphabet that represents a basic speech sound produced by obstructing the breath in the vocal tract. All the letters in the alphabet apart from *a, e, i, o,* and *u* (vowels) are known as consonants. Below are deeper elaborations of each problematic sound.

/z/ sound→"zoom, goes"

/z/ sound was considered easy to pronounce by some respondents, respondents 1 and 5 for example. The reasons were closely related to the interlingual factor that disruption of the mother tongue is a major problem in the process of learning the target language (Fadillah, 2020; Ping et al., 2020; Richards, 1971). Below are the samples of the easy-level consonants of the respondents' answers:

"Because the Indonesian language also has a similar or the same sound". (Respondent 1)
"because there is a consonant /z/ in Bahasa Indonesia, so I can pronounce /z/ very easy." (Respondent 5)

However, /z/ sound was also considered difficult by some respondents.

"z sound in the word zoom is very easy to pronounce, while the second one goes is quite easy because not everyone 'always' remembers that the correct pronunciation goes is ended with z sound." (Respondent 3).
"Sometimes i use "s" not"z"" (Respondent 6)
"hard to differentiate between s and z sounds." (Respondent S9)

The statements from respondents 3, 6, and 9 were classified as intralingual factors since the problem was related to the target language itself (Ping et al., 2020). But, it could also be considered as the developmental factor since the reason was not included both in the interlingual and intralingual factors. The problem was the ignorance of the/z/ sound in the word "always" by most speakers since generally in the Indonesian language *z* was pronounced as /z/ sound, in the word *zakat* for example, it was pronounced as /zakat/. Therefore misunderstanding of the /s/ and /z/ pronunciation commonly occurred in the Indonesian EFL speaking context. This issue might occur in other English vocabulary

items. This could be supported by Muljono et al. (2016) that stated the number of different phonemes of languages could also influence the difficulty of language learners.
"It's kind of difficult since a few Indonesian words only contain the sound element /z/, so I don't get used to saying it." (Respondent 8)

According to respondent 8, Indonesian words contained less /z/ sound. Therefore, respondent 8's statement indicated interlingual factors that influenced the /z/ sound as a problematic consonant sound.

/ʃ/ sound→"ship, flash"
/ʃ/ sound as in the word *ship* transcribed /ʃɪp/and *flash* transcribed /flæʃ/ were considered both easy and difficult by the respondents.

"There is no consonant /ʃ/ in Indonesia, but I can pronounce it easily because it is similar to the /s/ sound" (Respondent 5)
"Because we don't need a lot of effort to pronounce it" (Respondent 13)
"quite easy cause it only needs to be more effort in making the "ssss" sound." (Respondent 9)
"It is easy for me, because I learned it in my college, even when I was in my elementary school" (Respondent 10)
"It's daily words and really basic" (Respondent 19)

Respondents 5 and 13 for example, the interlingual factors that the English /ʃ/ consonant sound did not exist in the Indonesian language.. Meanwhile, the integral factor also influenced the easiness of the /ʃ/ pronunciation as stated by respondent 9 considered the process of producing the /ʃ/ sound easy. Respondents 10 and 19 considered the developmental factor of the /ʃ/ sound where the reasons were out of the language itself but the external factors influenced the easiness of the /ʃ/ pronunciation. The common use and practice of language made someone fluent in delivering the targeted language. Therefore, the /ʃ/ sound didn't cause serious difficulty for the speaker. According to Pei (2022), teachers must introduce world English to students, which is beneficial for students to increase their confidence in speaking English with an accent.

"Sometimes i forget "h"" (Respondent 6)
"when it is said in a sentence it would be more difficult." (Respondent 11)
"It depends on the word, but I do not really find it too difficult to pronounce it" (Respondent 20)
"It is not often pronounced in Bahasa Indonesia or Javanese language." (Respondent 21)

/ʃ/ sound sounded slightly similar to the /s/ sound in the Indonesian language, however, it has a slight difference where /s/ should be pronounced together with the /h/ sound. Therefore, as stated by respondents 6 and 21, sometimes Indonesian EFL learners forgot to pronounce the /h/ sound in the English consonant /ʃ/ since the /ʃ/ sound did not exist in Bahasa Indonesia. This could be considered an interlingual factor that influenced this difficulty. Respondents 11 and 20 conceived intralingual factors that influence the difficulty since the length of the English sentence might influence the difficulty of /ʃ/ pronunciation. This is in line with Lee et al. (2004) that the pronunciation of the tone in a syllable will be affected by the pronunciation before or after it.

/ʒ/ sound→"measure, beige"
The sound /ʒ/ became the hardest sound to pronounce according to the respondents. This statement could be shown by the percentage that reached 42.9%. The

596   P-ISSN 2623-0356
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/ʒ/ sound as appeared in the words measure /ˈmeʒə(r)/ and beige /beɪʒ/ were categorized as a difficult sound by some of the respondents. They said that they were not familiar with this sound because, in the Indonesian language, this sound did not exist.

"because I'm not used to it in the Indonesian language." (Respondent 11)
Other respondents also said that their mother tongue was still stiff whenever they tried to pronounce the sound /ʒ/.
"It's quite difficult because my mother tongue pronounces it different" (Respondent 16)

This error was influenced by the interlingual factor. The interlingual factor is the error caused by interference from the learners' first language or mother tongue. According to Wilkins (1972) and Fadillah (2020), this error occurred due to differences in the mother tongue system and the language system being studied. Respondents 11 and 16 stated the similar thing that the sound /ʒ/ was difficult to pronounce because their tongues were not used to pronouncing the sound. This comment was following the understanding of the interlingual factor which made it difficult for them to pronounce the sound because of their mother tongue system.

/tʃ/ sound→"chip, inch"

/tʃ/ sound as in the words *change /tʃeɪndʒ/, chip /tʃɪp/, inch /ɪntʃ/,* and *watch /wɒtʃ/* was considered difficult by more than 30% of the total respondents. On the contrary, more than 50% of the total respondents considered /tʃ/to sound easy. Even so, the researchers kept considering the /tʃ/ sound problematic since more than 20% of the respondents thought the /tʃ/ sound was difficult. Below are examples of respondents' answers.

"Because the Indonesian language also has a similar or a same sound" (Respondent 1)
"there is no consonant /tʃ/ in Indonesia, but I can pronounce it easily because it is similar with /c/ sound" (Respondent 5)
"a bit effort to say like "chehh" sound." (Respondent 9)
"It is easy for me, because I learned it in my college, even when I was in my elementary school" (Respondent 10)
"because since childhood I has been taught to pronounce chairs" (Respondent 21)
"It's kind of difficult since Indonesian does not practice the sound element /tʃ/." (Respondent 8)
"because I'm not used to saying /tʃ/" (Respondent 11)
"It depends on the word itself, the word before and after the word that contain that sound element" (Respondent 20)

Interlingual factors influenced the easiness of the /tʃ/ sound pronunciation in the view of respondents 1, 5, and 8. Respondent 1 believed the /tʃ/ sound existed in Bahasa Indonesia. Whereas, respondents 5 and 8 did not. In Bahasa Indonesia, the closest /tʃ/ sound was the /c/ sound as in the Indonesian word *cari* transcribed */ca·ri /.* In comparison, the /tʃ/ and /c/ sounds had a slight difference where the /tʃ/ sound should be pronounced by emphasizing the aspirated /h/ sound while the /c/ sounds should not. It was in line with respondent 9's opinion that the /tʃ/ sound was spoken like the sound "chehh" where the /c/ sound was formed together with the /h/ sound. Sometimes, Indonesian speakers tend to embed the local sound /c/ into the English consonant /tʃ/. One of the factors causing pronunciation errors is the similar phonetic features whose distribution is different between English and Indonesian (Marzuki, 2021). Situmorang et al. (2023) argue that Indonesian learners tend to replace English consonants with the more familiar sounds of their native language. On the other hand, the developmental factors or external factors

597

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also helped the EFL learners to pronounce the /tʃ/ sound. For example, the educational process taken by the EFL learners and daily speaking practice can help learners to ease their English speaking fluency as stated by respondents 10, 11, and 21. The Intralingual factors also took a role as stated by respondent 20 that the position of the words might affect the level of pronunciation difficulty. This was in line with Lee et al. (2004) that the pronunciation of the tone in a syllable will be affected by the pronunciation before or after it.

/ʤ/ sound→" just, merge"

The palate-alveolar English sound /ʤ/ was considered difficult by almost half of the total respondents. English /ʤ/ sound appeared in the words *just /dʒʌst/, merge /mɜːdʒ/, general /ˈdʒenrəl/, jealous /ˈdʒeləs/,* and *judge /dʒʌdʒ/.* Below are the respondents' responses regarding their reasons for the difficulty level of the /ʤ/ sound.

"Because the Indonesian language also has a similar or a same sound" (Respondent 1)
"there is no consonant /ʤ/ in Indonesia, but I can pronounce it easily because it is similar with /j/ sound" (Respondent 5)
"It is not difficult because it has similar pronunciation in Bahasa Indonesia." (Respondent 21)
"challenging for me. same with the previous reason, it's because we need to make our voice heavier and there is a vibration in our throat ." (Respondent 3)
"it's a bit different from Indonesian "j"." (Respondent 9)
"when it occurs in the middle it would be difficult" (Respondent 11)
"Sometimes I read this as /tʃ/. This is the difficulties" (Respondent 13)

The English sound /ʤ/ had the closest sound to the Indonesian /j/ sound (Ting, 2011) /ʤ/ sound could be found in the word *just /dʒʌst/* and the Indonesian /j/ sound could be found in the words *jari /ja·ri/* and *jangan /ja·ngan/*. This phenomenon influenced respondents 1,5,21, and 9 to consider the Interlingual factors that caused the /ʤ/ sound problematic. The researchers assumed that the Indonesian language had the /ʤ/ sound in the form of /j/ sound transcriptionally, whereas, the sounds of these two were similar. One of the factors causing pronunciation errors is the similar phonetic features whose distribution is different between English and Indonesian (Marzuki, 2021). Respondent 11 believed the intralingual factors influenced the difficulty level since the position occurrence of the /ʤ/ sound in a word could make the pronunciation of the word easier or harder. The problem faced by respondent 13 could be considered a developmental error where the speaker might pronounce the /ʤ/ sound wrong. The researchers assumed this problem might be related to the slip tongue phenomenon. It is in line with Harastasya et al. (2020) who stated one of the speech errors that are often encountered in everyday life is the slip of the tongue. Slip of the tongue was a speech error where the spoken words were not the ones the speaker meant to say.

/v/ sound→" vacuum, five"

/v/ sound as in the words *vacuum /ˈvækjuːm/, five /faɪv/, village /ˈvɪlɪdʒ/, over /ˈəʊvə(r)/* was considered easy by the most of the respondents. The respondents who thought that the */v/* sound was easy said that in Indonesian there are sounds that are similar to the /v/ sound, so they could pronounce it easily. The /v/ sound in Indonesia can be found in word *aktivitas /ak·ti·vi·tas/*. However, Laila and Leliana (2022) stated that there is no */v/* sound in Indonesia. Moreover, Hassan (2014) proved in his study at the Sudan University of Science and Technology, whose background language is Spoken Sudanese Arabic, has some mistakes with consonants not in their language, such as */v/* they replace

with /f/. The respondents might assume that the sound /v/ is similar to the sound /f/. However, according to Laila and Leliana (2022), the consonant sound /v/ is pronounced heavier than the /f/ sound. This statement was correlated with some of the respondents who said that the /v/ sound was difficult to pronounce. Some of their comments are:

"I'm not sure if this sound exists in Bahasa, but I admit that it's a little difficult." (Respondent 4)
It's very difficult for me at first because Indonesian people tend to pronounce the sound element /f/ when pronouncing a word that has a "v" letter in the beginning, for example, "vacuum" becomes "facum". " (Respondent 8)

This problem happened because there were interlingual factors faced by the speaker. There was a difference between the mother tongue system and the language system being learned (Fadillah, 2020; Sari et al., 2020). On the other hand, some of the respondents thought that the /v/ was easy to pronounce because they were used to saying this sound. This statement was lined with the comments of respondent 5, as follows:

"because there is a consonant /v/ in Bahasa Indonesia, so I can pronounce /v/ very easily." (Respondent 5)

The strategy that can be applied by students to improve pronunciation, especially in the /v/ sound, is reading aloud. As mentioned by Hossain (2015), reading was one of the effective strategies that allowed learners to understand the text content.

/θ/ sound→"think, math"

The difficulty level of the English consonant /θ/ sound got more than 50% of the respondents' attention. The /θ/ sound appeared in the words *think /θɪŋk/, math /mæθ/, method /ˈmeθəd/,* and *thank /θæŋk/.* Below are examples of respondents' answers regarding the difficulty level of the /θ/ sound pronunciation.

"I think because I feel familiar with this sound" (Respondent 1)
"This word appears often in English novels that I read, so I'm familiar with the pronunciation." (Respondent 7)
"It is easy for me, because I learned it in my college, even when I was in my elementary school" (Respondent 10)

Respondents 1, 7, and 10 considered the /θ/ sound easy to pronounce since they were familiar with the /θ/ sound existence. Therefore, the developmental factors including educational factors and familiarity might influence the reasons raised by the respondents.

"it is kind of hard to pronounce this consonant because this consonant doesn't occur in Bahasa Indonesia" (Respondent 5)
"Sometimes i forget "h" like just tink not think" (Respondent 6)
"It's very difficult for me at first because Indonesian people tend to pronounce the sound element /t/ because Indonesian words do not contain /θ/. For example, "math" will be pronounced "mat" instead of voicing the "h" sound at the end. " (Respondent 8)
"isn't familiar in Bahasa so it's a bit hard." (Respondent 9)
"It is kind of hard to make the tongue shape to produce /θ/" (Respondent 13)
"It is because that pronunciation is often confused with ð" (Respondent 21)

The /θ/ sound clearly did not exist in Bahasa Indonesia transcriptionally. However, Indonesians tended to pronounce the /θ/ sound by combining the /t/ and /h/

sounds. A study by Ercan and Kunt (2019) investigated the sounds /θ/ and /ð/ pronounced by Northern Cyprus EFL learners. They found that the /θ/ sound was mispronounced by some respondents. The /θ/ sound was more likely to be replaced with the /t/ and /f/ sounds, for example, the word *think /θɪŋk/* was pronounced /**t**ɪŋk/ or /**f**ɪŋk/. This issue was also believed by respondents 6 and 8 who tended to exclude the /h/ sound while pronouncing the /θ/ sound. The researchers assumed this issue belonged to the intralingual factors that influence the difficulty level of the /θ/ pronunciation.

The speech error factors also influenced the difficulty level as stated by respondents 13 and 21. Respondent 13 felt a bit complicated to produce the /θ/ sound. This might be due to the fact that the /θ/ sound was different from the /t/ sound in Indonesian, their mother tongue. The mother tongue is a major problem for EFL learners which prevents them from producing the correct sounds of English while speaking(Demirezen, 2007; Fadillah, 2020). The /θ/ sound was switched with the /ð/ according to respondent 21. The researchers assumed the influence of the types of the /θ/ and /ð/ sounds. Both /θ/ and /ð/ were classified into fricative classes. However, the /θ/ was considered voiceless, and /ð/ was considered voiced (Ercan & Kunt, 2019). The problem of pronouncing the sounds /θ/ and /ð/ happens to Ghanaians when they include both these sounds in their English conversation since the variety of Ghana is different from American and British (Asante et al., 2022). Therefore, the /θ/ and /ð/ sounds were often interchanged.

/ð/ sound→"this, breathe"

The difficulty level of the English consonant /ð/ sound got more than 50% of the respondents' attention. The /ð/ sound appeared in the words *this /ðɪs/, breathe /briːð/, mother /ˈmʌðə(r)/,* and *those /ðəʊz/.* Below are examples of respondents' answers regarding the difficulty level of the /ð/ sound pronunciation.

"challenging. I cannot differentiate what is the difference between d sound and /ð/ to in phonetics transcription" (Respondent 3)
"I'm not sure if this sound exists in Bahasa, but I admit that it's a little difficult." (Respondent 4)
"it is kind of hard to pronounce this consonant because this consonant doesn't occur in Bahasa Indonesia" (Respondent 5)

Generally, the /ð/ did not exist in the Indonesian phonetic alphabet. However, the /ð/ had a slightly similar sound to the Indonesian /d/ sound. However, the /ð/ sound was heavier and the pronunciation technique was also different from the /d/ sound. The problem of respondent 3 who could not differentiate the /ð/ and /d/sounds was already discussed by (Polka et al., 2001). Polka et al. (2001) did research on the differences in perception of English contrast among EFL speakers. The English /ð/ sound was commonly substituted with the /d/ sound in French, whether the English /θ/ sound was substituted with the /t/ sound in French (Polka et al., 2001).

/r/ sound → "wrong, far"

A post-alveolar English sound /r/ was considered difficult by respondents. English /r/ sound appeared in the words *wrong /rɒŋ/, far /faː(r)/, rabbit /ˈræbɪt/,* and *giraffe /dʒəˈraːf/.* Below are the respondents' responses regarding their reasons for the difficulty level of the /r/ sound.

"Because the Indonesian language also has a similar or a same sound" (Respondent 1)
"This sound also exists in Bahasa, but it is not as easy." (Respondent 4)

"It is easy to remember the pronunciation." (Respondent 13)
"it's quite different from Indonesian 'r'." (Respondent 9)
"because sometimes native speakers do not pronounce /r/" (Respondent 11)
"For the sound /r/, until now I still like to get tangled up, but it's hard if there's a lot of reading contexts, it makes my tongue slip." (Respondent 17)

Respondents of this research considered the /r/ sound both easy and difficult to pronounce, respondents 9 and 11 for example. English and Indonesian /r/ sounds were different in terms of their production. Ambalegin and Hulu (2019) explained the process of making the Indonesian and English /r/ sound as "When producing the English /r/ sound, the position of the tongue hangs in the mouth area and the tongue does not touch any part of the articulation organs in the oral cavity. When English /r/ is produced, the airflow vibrates the tongue. Meanwhile, in the Indonesian /r/ sound, the front tongue touches the protrusion while pronouncing Indonesian /ɾ/. The water flow is blocked by the tongue, then air flows through the left and right sides of the tongue. The sound /r/ is produced when the air is flapped by the tongue. The vibrating sound was clear." Thus, EFL learners tended to pronounce Indonesian /r/ when pronouncing the sound /r/ in English. This was due to differences in the position of the tongue between native speakers and EFL students.

The results of this study focus on identifying consonant sounds that are difficult to pronounce by Indonesian EFL learners who produce /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, and /r/ as consonant sounds that fall into the problematic category. This is also a development from research from Purnama et al. (2023), who show that consonant sounds and consonant clusters are quite influential factors in pronunciation problems by non-native speakers. Leviakandella (2022) in his research also discusses the nonexisting manner of articulation for fricative sounds (/v/, /θ/, /ð/, /ʒ/) and the nonexisting place of articulation for labiodental /v/, dental /θ / (unvoiced) /ð/ (voiced), palate alveolar /ʒ/ in the Indonesian language, which sounds also appear in the problematic consonant sounds in this study. One other similar study about problematic English consonant sounds by Al Mafalees (2020) reveals that the /p/-/b/, /f/-/v/, and/tʃ/-/dʒ/-/ʃ/ sounds are considered problematic for Yemeni EFL learners. Compared to this study's result that interlingual, intralingual, and developmental factors influence problematic English consonant sounds like /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, and /r/, therefore, the variety of problematic consonant sounds found in this research is richer than in other studies.

Conclusion

To conclude, the problematic English consonant sounds for Indonesian EFL learners covered /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, and /r/. The EFL learners' difficulty pronouncing the problematic sounds was influenced by interlingual, intralingual, and developmental factors. Mostly, the underlying interlingual factor was due to the absence of some English consonants in the Indonesian sound. Whereas in the intralingual factor, most respondents felt confused about the position of problematic sounds in sentences and often experienced tongue slips. Then, developmental factors that often affect EFL learners were due to a lack of practice and a level of familiarity with several English consonant sounds. After knowing the problems of consonant sounds in English and the factors that influence them, this study implies that EFL learners are more aware and often practice speaking with proper English pronunciation to improve their English performance. Data from this study is still limited in terms of the quantity and depth of the respondents' answers. Thus, future researchers are expected to be able to increase the quantity of data and also explore more about EFL's view of these problematic consonant sounds.

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