3. METHODOLOGY

The researchers began by observing talks, speeches, and presentations made by the students. From the findings, general understanding on the difficulties were obtained. This made it possible for the researchers to list certain difficult sounds and ask the students to pronounce them. In this phase, their pronunciation were also recorded in order to have proofs and data for further analysis. To strengthen the analysis and the conclusion made, the students were also interviewed related to the phonological difficulties they face when talking in English.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data processed by the researchers were classified according to the main points set forth below as they represent the common errors made by the students. The phoneme /r/ in this research is used for that of Indonesian sound carried by letter *r* and /□/ is for that of American English, not to pose a new issue but simply to bridge problems that may arise between English and Indonesian phonetics.

Voiced Alveolar Approximant Sound

The first four of the six words shown below demonstrate the use of the turned R or voiced alveolar approximant sound in their pronunciation. Represented by letter *r*, this sound in English can be seen in *red* or *zero*. The pronunciation of the last two in the table, however, is somehow different from the first four. Being at the end of the words *factor* and *car*, the voiced alveolar approximant sound /□/ becomes less stressed in English.

No.	Word	Correct Pronunciation	Student's Pronunciation
1	Red	/□ed/	/red/
2	Write	/□a□□/	/ra□□/
3	Zero	/□□□□.□□/	/□□□r.□/
4	Agree	/□□□□□/	/□□□r□/
5	Factor	/□□□□.t□□/	/□□e□.t□r/
6	Car	/□□□/	/□□r/

From the data analysed by the researchers, it was found out that the students pronounced the letter *r* as voiced alveolar trill /r/. As the researchers were observing the presentations delivered by the students, this voiced alveolar approximant sound looked more like that of Indonesian voiced alveolar trill sound. They also treated the one at the end of a word like those in (5) and (6) above the same way.

Voiced Dental Fricative Sound

The data found and analysed by the researchers showed that the learners also had problems with voiced dental fricative sound /□/. For this sound, among other variations that appeared in the data, there are two common pronunciation errors they made.

No.	Word	Correct Pronunciation	Student's Pronunciation
7	That	/□□□/	/de□/
8	Them	/□e□/	/de□/
9	Although	/□□□□□□/	/□□□t□□/
10	Brother	/□□□□.□□□/	/□□r□.d□r/

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Seen from the table, the first type of mistake they made is by assuming that the sound /□/ is pronounced like voiced alveolar plosive sound /d/. Examples are presented in (7), (8), and (10) above. The other type is seen in datum (9) in which /□□□□□□/ is treated as /□□□t□□/ by the student.

Other kinds of mistakes are also seen from the data. They can be seen from how the students pronounced the words *although* and *brother* and compared them to the standard pronunciation of the given words. In addition, they also made mistakes in treating other consonant and vowel sounds.

Voiceless Dental Fricative Sound

Still about dental fricative sounds, the students also found it difficult to produce the voiceless type of the sound. Compared to the previous kind discussed above, this sound is much more difficult for them. This is seen from the interview done and from the fact that they sometimes made it right in pronouncing voiced dental fricative sound but they hardly made it right when articulating the voiceless dental fricative sound.

No.	Word	Correct Pronunciation	Student's Pronunciation
11	Think	/□□□□/	/□□□/
12	Thanks	/□□□□s/	/□e□s/
13	mathematics	/□□□□□□.□□□□/	/□□□te.□□.□□□□/
14	Something	/□□□□.□□□/	/□□□□.t□□/
15	Both	/□□□□/	/□□t/
16	Mouth	/□□□□/	/□□t/

In the data given above, for example, they say the words *think* as /□□□/, *something* as /□□□□.t□□/, and *both* as /□□t/. Such phenomenon is commonly heard when the students deliver their presentations or when they talk to their friends outside the class.

Just like in the data presenting voiced dental fricative sounds, the students also make mistakes related to sounds other than voiceless dental fricatives. They often pronounce *think* without the sound /k/, *thanks* with /e/ replacing /□/ and without /k/, *mathematics* with similar case, or *mouth* with /□/ replacing the sound /□□/ like in the data presented in (11) through (16).

Voiceless Post-alveolar Fricative Sound

The last common mistakes made by the students related to phonological issues of consonants is about voiceless post-alveolar fricative sound. In English, this sound is represented by the combination of letters *s* and *h* in succession. Below are six words chosen from the data indicating the difficulty the students face in pronouncing this sound.

No.	Word	Correct Pronunciation	Student's Pronunciation
17	Shoe	/□□/	/s□/
18	She	/□□/	/s□/
19	Cashier	/□□□□□□/	/□es□r/
20	Finishing	/□□n□□□□/	/□□n□s□□/
21	English	/□□□□□□/	/e□□□s/
22	Wash	/□□□/	/□□s/

It is obvous from the data reported that this and other kinds of phonological errors are potential to cause misunderstanding from the listeners. The pronunciations /s□/ in (18) and /□□s/ in (22), for instance, might be misunderstood as they sound more like *see* or *sea* and *was* rather than sound like *she* and *wash* as the actual words being used. Problems with this voiceless post-alveolar fricative sound always occur whenever the students found *s* and *h* being grouped and pronounced together.

5. CONCLUSION

From the data analysed by the researchers, there are other problems related phonological difficulties in consonant sounds. However, those presented here are the ones occuring the most in the data and, thus, are representative of the difficulties faced by the students in learning English as a foreign language. In the previous works studied while conducting this research, there are findings which show that errors made by second language learners are caused by their linguistic backgrounds. The researchers do have a tendency to accept the possibility of such phenomenan occuring in the data analysed, but they also consider the arguments posed against that outcome. The issue should be left for further discussion, partly because the aim of this research was purely finding the difficulties the students faced and partly because a more comprehensive and throughout study is needed in order to arrive at a strong conclusion about it. It is strongly suggested, however, that these phonological difficulties should be paid attention to in teaching learning process of English. This conclusion is supported by the result of the interview done by the researchers.

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