

Mother Tongue Interference Towards Students' English Pronunciation: A Case Study of Fatoni University Students in English for Communication Course

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to investigate how different mother tongues (Pattani Malay, Thai, Arabic) affect students' capability in pronouncing English words by selecting a case study from 30 samples of Fatoni university students in English for communication course. Besides, examining the percentage of students' accuracy in pronouncing with their substituted phonemes in English initial, medial and final consonants. Also, discovering the other factors probably affect their English pronunciation. The research instruments used document analysis, a questionnaire, and pronunciation testing of 20 difficult English words which were selected from the previous studies of difficult or disappearing phonemes in all 3 mother-tongue groups compared to phonemes in English. The findings show that different mother tongues (Pattani Malay, Thai, and Arabic) have distinct effects on their pronunciation. There are different percentages of students who could accurately pronounce initial, medial, and final consonants in English in each group with various substituted phonemes that they automatically chose from the closest equivalences in their language. Furthermore, other factors such as bilingualism, studying abroad, and previously enrolling in an English phonetic course are likely to have a positive or negative impact on their English pronunciation, according to the research.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the age of globalization, learning a foreign language is becoming more and more important. It helps to communicate with people all over the world. However, learning a foreign language presents a challenge, as people best describe themselves in their native language (Soares, 2008). It is generally assumed that the first language (L1) will influence the foreign language. For example, a native English speaker can tell if someone is Chinese or Arab just by speaking a few words of English. The influence of the mother tongue is clearly visible in both written and spoken language. According to Bredsmore (1982), the influence of the native language can be seen in phonology, vocabulary, and grammar. Speaking and writing, which are examples of learners' English outputs, frequently show a trace of mother tongue interference. "The term interference refers to any difference that may exist between the speech of a monolingual and that of a bilingual," said Francois (Swan, 2008). Non-native students will invariably encounter influences from their first languages (L1) when learning a foreign language or a second language, resulting in any slight changes or inaccuracies in the target

language.

Comprehending phonetics is of main concern in learning a foreign language in order to speak with correct or understandable pronunciation, because "the sense, and consequently, the understanding of a word, depends upon its pronunciation, even if it is pronounced only mentally" (Handchin, 1923). Incorrect or unclear pronunciation may cause misunderstanding among those with whom we communicate. For example, if you ask someone, "Do you want to eat some right, light, or even lice?" Instead of rice, the listener may be perplexed or misunderstand your question. According to Gilakjani (2011), if the speaker's pronunciation is unacceptable, their words will not be comprehended by the listeners, and so their communication would fail. Good pronunciation is the basis of efficient oral communication. If communicators pronounce their words accurately and clearly, their listeners should be able to comprehend what they are attempting to say (Garrigues 1999). Several research have discovered that non-native English speakers' pronunciation problems are systematic rather than arbitrary. Fries (1948) pointed out in his book, "the basic problems arise not out of any essential difficulty in the features of the new language themselves but primary out of the special set created by the first language habits." In other words, the challenges that new language learners confront are caused by their mother tongue's interfering patterns, not by the new language itself.

Students in English for the communicative course at Fatoni University in Thailand originate from various mother tongue languages. They are usually from the three southernmost provinces, namely Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat, where they speak the Pattani Malay dialect. Thai is also the mother tongue of some learners from other parts of Thailand. Furthermore, there are many students from the Middle East who are Thai migrants in Saudi Arabia, as well as other students from Arab countries using Arabic since they were born. These students frequently communicate in their mother tongue languages around the campus and in their daily lives. The various mother-tongue languages interference of the students in this class indicates the intriguing distinct challenges in English pronunciation that the lecturer should be concerned about in order to locate the exact problems for the future solution. There have been some studies on mother tongue interference of Thai students, Pattani Malay natives, and Arab learners from various perspectives, but there has not yet been a variety of how these three different groups of mother tongue languages interfere with English pronunciation in English for communicative classes, particularly at Fatoni University in Thailand.

When speaking English words in their mother tongue, users will experience several common challenges. According to Brown (2006), phonological disparities between their native language (L1) and their second language/foreign language are variables that cause difficulty (L2). It seems true that we unintentionally tend to apply the phonology of our mother tongue to the pronunciation of the target language. Thus, as Odlin (1989) states, native language phonetics and phonology are important impacts on second language pronunciation. Mispronunciation may occur among speakers whose mother tongue languages do not use some English phonemes in their pronunciation. For example, the Malay language or Pattani Malay dialect does not have aspirated phonemes such as /p/, /t/, and /k/ in their pronunciation, which may cause Pattani Malay speakers to generate incorrect English pronunciation. If a word like pin is pronounced [p^hɪn] instead of [phin], the audience may misunderstand bin (Ilva, 2021).

In Thai language also has some different phonemes. Darren (2019) pointed out that /r/ is a non-existent sound in Thai language. The Thai /r/ is a voiced alveolar trill or tap that sounds very similar to the English /l/. As a result, new English speakers frequently substitute /l/ for the English /r/. Some Thai speakers will find themselves omitting the /r/ sound entirely. Moreover, Thai students pronounced some consonants incorrectly, such as g for Hungary (students pronounced /hʌŋkəri/ the correction (hʌŋgəri), dʒ for Germany (students pronounced /yərman/ the correction dʒə:maəni), v for Yugoslavia (/yu:ɡɒslɑ:wɪə/ the correction ju:ɡɒ(v)slɑ:vɪə), and ɵ for South (students pronounced /saʊt/ the correction saʊɵ). As same as Arabic language, some different phonemes influence English pronunciation. According to Muna (2016), the phoneme /p/ does not exist in Arabic. If a word begins with 'p,' it is substituted by /b/ before consonants, and especially before the consonant 'r.' If a word begins with 'p' and is placed before vowel sounds, /b/ is spelled instead of /p/ etc.

Regarding phonological disparities between their mother tongue and their foreign language are variables that cause difficulty (L2) finding in many studies, the researcher can anticipate some pronunciation problems in three groups of students based on their mother tongue languages: Pattani Malay, Thai, and Arabic. However, it would be fascinating to explore more details whether those students who have different native languages affect their capacity to pronounce English words and if so, which words or sounds are affected. This study is useful for lecturers to understand their students' difficulties pronouncing

English words. Students will realize their challenges, and they are also encouraged to pay closer attention to the interfering words as their own flaws or limitations, and then continue to try to conquer them in continuing correctly pronouncing English words. This study is also intended to add to the field of mother language interference, providing students with a valuable learning experience. Various investigations in the literary field have examined the elements that impede non-native English speakers from pronouncing English words or

phrases. Linguists and researchers also noted the influence of linguistic factors such as *mother tongue*, *interference*, and *phonology*.

1) Mother tongue

Bloomfield (1993) claims that the human mother tongue is referred to as the native language. Children from a specific community have progressively grown to acquire a language from their parents in a natural way as they were born. This really is the so-called mother tongue, and it is transmitted from generation to generation. Similarly, Careless (2008) asserts mother tongue is a language that develops from a group of people's conversational habits, and the surface morphology of that language forms their first language. Based on linguistic considerations, the influence of mother tongue through the use of a second/foreign language can have either good or negative consequences. To be more exact, according to Denizer (2017) mother tongue not just refers to languages received from one's parents, but it also relates to the dominant language spoken by the majority of people in the community in which one is involved. In other terms, a native language is a mother tongue. Such a mother language is constantly associated with the culture that predominates in a particular place. Consequently, different communities may have different mother languages. A linguistic community is often connected with a certain place. Accordingly, it is normal for people from various locations to have different mother languages.

2) Interference

Interference is described by Dulay et al. (1982) as "the automatic transfer" caused by first language's tendency of transferring into a target language. According to Decharts and Ellis (as stated in Bhela, 1999), when foreign language students communicate or produce in the target language, they tend to rely on their native language syntax. If the structures differ, the first language will show unique errors. The mother tongue interference in the target language is apparent in this case. Interference is defined by Lott (1983) as linguistic mistakes that arise when mother tongue features are introduced into the language being learned. Interference, according to Lott, denotes the kind of errors experienced in one's non-native language, and such mistakes may be recognized by searching into his mother tongue. Furthermore, Ellis (1997) defines interference as "the impact that the learner's first language imposes over the acquisition of a target language." He believes that the mother tongue transfer is influenced by learners' views of what is transferrable and also their level of development in the target language proficiency. When studying a foreign language, students create their own temporary principles using their native language background because they assume this will help them learn the target language. Therefore, the deference of their mother tongue will affect or cause errors in their new language learning.

3) Pronunciation and Phonology

Pronunciation is defined by Labov (2003) the process of simplifying the ordered sounds of language generated by the human speech organ while also utilizing all of the phonemics units of the language. Broadly said, pronunciation is a method of articulating words or linguistic codes that employ phonetic and phonemic principles such as phonemes, intonations, rhythms, and other associated components (Deterding, 2016) However, phonology is concerned with sound structure in individual languages: how sound differences are utilized to separate linguistic items, and how the sound structure of the same element alters as a consequence of the other sounds in its environment. Phonology and phonetics both deal with sound in human language, but they vary in that phonetics investigates sounds from a language-independent perspective, whereas phonology explores how sounds are distributed and used inside specific languages. Therefore, in language acquisition "the source of foreign accent" is when the learners are unable to pronounce a phoneme in the target language since the phoneme does not really exist in their native language and instead replace another phoneme from their first language. Thus, he refers to this sound replacement done in the target language as "pro-active interference" or "native language interference". Moreover, according to Ellis (1997), mistakes in the target language indicate disparities in the learner's learning between the first language and the target language; they occur because the students either found the structure challenging since it is different from their native language or do not know which are right. The errors indicate specific flaws in production; they arise because the learners are often unable to create what they know.

In consideration of these issues, this study investigates mother language interference in three separate groups of students: Pattani Malay, Thai, and Arabic; in English for the communicative course toward students' English pronunciation, and employs phonology to elucidate the findings.

1. How do different mother tongues (Pattani Malay, Thai, Arabic) influence their ability in pronouncing English words?
2. How many percentages of accuracy and what are substitution pronunciations of students who have Pattani Malay, Thai, and Arabic mother tongue toward the given *English initial consonant words*?
3. How many percentages of accuracy and what are substitution pronunciations of students who have Pattani Malay, Thai, and Arabic mother tongue toward the given *English medial consonant words*?
4. How many percentages of accuracy and what are substitution pronunciations of students who have Pattani Malay, Thai, and Arabic mother tongue toward the given *English final consonant words*?
5. What are other factors probably affecting students' English pronunciation?

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study's research design made use of the qualitative method of research.

2.2 Population and Samples

The population in this study was 15 first-year students from Fatoni University in Thailand who were enrolled in English for Communication Course. The 30 students were separated into three groups based on their mother tongues: 10 Pattani Malay students, 10 Thai students, and 10 Arabic students.

2.3 Research Instruments

The research instruments in this study were document analysis, a questionnaire, and pronunciation testing. 20 difficult words were tested; the selection was based on the studies of difficult or disappearing phonemes from the previous research in all 3 mother-tongue groups compared to phonemes in English.

2.4 Data Collection

In the process of decollation, all sample students were given a questionnaire and pronunciation tests which were divided into 3 groups of words to complete (*English initial consonant words*, *English medial consonant words*, and *English final consonant words*). Before they were gathered, the researcher double-checked them for accuracy.

2.5 Data Analysis

Following data collection, all tests were scored and analyzed. The data analysis was adapted from Paramal (2019). The accuracy of each item in every English consonant group was calculated to be the percentage among the students of the same mother tongue group. The test item that produced the most difference or completely changed from the original English phoneme for the participants was determined to be the most difficult sound for each mother-tongue group which was affected by mother tongue interference.

As an examiner, the researcher focused on the one problem that the item was chosen to evaluate and ignored all others. This technique was to include a symbol depicting the distortion created by the subjects as well as the test word with the problematic sound underlined. So, when the response was pronouncing differently, the mark was placed next to the symbol indicating the distortion, and when the response was correct, the mark was placed next to the letters or symbols representing the correct sound.

Furthermore, a point-by-point examination of the sounds of Patani Malay, Thai, Arabic, and English was utilized to find sound substitutions that lead participants' pronunciation to change. Lastly, the answers from the questionnaire were analyzed to find the other factors that possibly affect their pronunciation.

3. RESULTAND DISCUSSION

3.1 Students' Pronunciation Result

Students with different mother tongues: Pattani Malay, Thai, and Arabic, have a different impact on their English pronunciation, according to the data analysis. They pronounce the same provided English initial, medial, and final consonant words differently due to their language's substitution phoneme. The percentage of accuracy and substitutional pronunciations of students with Pattani Malay, Thai, and Arabic mother tongues

toward the given English initial, medial, and final consonant words are shown below.

3.1.1 English Initial Consonant

1) Pattani Malay students

Fricatives (/v/, /θ/) and affricates (/tʃ/, /dʒ/) were the most difficult English initial consonant phonemes for Pattani Malay students to pronounce, followed by some plosives (/p/, /k/) that only 20% of students properly pronounce. This is owing to the absence of equivalents in Pattani Malay, the language they utilize as their mother tongue in daily life. The substitutions are indicated in the table below. However, /ʃ/ is another fricative that 70% of students correctly pronounce.

Table 1. Difficulties with English initial consonant pronunciation of Pattani Malay students

English Initial Consonant	Percentage of Accuracy n = 10	Substitution	Examples
/tʃ/	0	[ʃ]	Cheap
/p/	20	[p̃]	Paper, Popcorn
/k/	20	[k̃]	Kiwi
/v/	0	[w]	Voice, Vary
/θ/	0	[t̃]	Thing
/dʒ/	0	[dʒ̃]	Juice
/ʃ/	70	[s]	Sugar

2) Thai Students

The hardest English initial consonant phonemes for Thai students to utter were fricatives (/v/, /θ/) and affricates (/tʃ/, /dʒ/). This is attributable to the fact that there are no equivalent phonemes in the Thai language. Interestingly, two plosives exist in Thai language: /p/ and /k/, although only 10% of students effectively pronounce them. The replacements are shown in the following table. /ʃ/, on the other hand, is another fricative that 50% of students effectively pronounce.

Table 2. Difficulties with English initial consonant pronunciation of Thai students

English Initial Consonant	Percentage of Accuracy n = 10	Substitution	Examples
/tʃ/	0	[ʃ]	Cheap
/p/	10	[p̃]	Paper, Popcorn, Pizza
/k/	10	[k̃]	Kiwi
/v/	0	[w] [f]	Voice, Vary
/θ/	0	[t̃]	Thing, Think
/dʒ/	0	[dʒ̃]	Juice
/ʃ/	50	[s]	Sugar

3) Arabic Students

The most difficult English initial consonant phonemes for students who speak Arabic to pronounce were fricatives (/v/) and affricates (/tʃ/), followed by a plosive (/p/) that only 20% of students correctly pronounce. This is due to the lack of equivalent phonemes in Arabic. The substitutions are shown in the table below. Most students, however, properly pronounce the phonemes /k/, /θ/, /ʃ/, and /dʒ/.

Table 3. Difficulties with English initial consonant pronunciation of Arabic students

English Initial Consonant	Percentage of Accuracy n = 10	Substitution	Examples
/tʃ/	0	[ʃ]	Cheap
/p/	20	[b]	Paper, Popcorn, Pizza
/k/	50	[k]	Kiwi
/v/	0	[f]	Voice, Vary
/θ/	70	[t]	Thing
/dʒ/	100	-	Juice
/ʃ/	90	[s]	Sugar

3.1.2. English Medial Consonant

1) Pattani Malay Students

When it came to pronouncing English medial consonants, Pattani Malay students had four typical concerns. First, all students in this group substituted [k] for the English phoneme /k/ and [d] for /ð/. Second, the majority of them replace the phoneme [t] for the native phoneme /t/. Third, they frequently used [ʃ] and [dʒ] instead of /ʒ/. Finally, they adopted [p] to represent the original /p/. However, since their language has the same phoneme [g], 80 percent of students in this group could effectively pronounce /g/ in the medial consonant. The table below depicts the production of the medial consonants.

Table 4. Difficulties with English medial consonant pronunciation of Pattani Malay students

English Medial Consonant	Percentage of Accuracy n = 10	Substitution	Examples
/k/	0	[k]	Cookie
/ð/	0	[d]	Mother
/t/	10	[t]	Football, Butterfly
/ʒ/	20	[ʃ], [dʒ]	Television
/p/	30	[p]	Paper
/g/	80	[k]	Sugar

2) Thai Students

Since Thai has no /ð/, /ʒ/, or /g/ as medial consonant phonemes, Thai students pronounced [d] instead of /ð/, [ʃ] instead of /ʒ/, and [k] instead of /g/. The table below illustrates how each medial consonant is substituted.

Table 5. Difficulties with English medial consonant pronunciation of Thai students

English Medial Consonant	Percentage of Accuracy n = 10	Substitution	Examples
/k/	0	[k̃]	Cookie
/ð/	0	[d]	Mother
/t/	30	[t̃]	Football, Butterfly
/ʒ/	0	[ʃ]	Television
/p/	0	[p̃]	Paper
/g/	20	[k]	Sugar

3) Arabic Students

As Arabic lacks medial consonant phonemes /k/, /ð/, /t/, /ʒ/, /p/ or /g/, Arabic students pronounced [k̃] instead of /k/, [d] instead of /ð/, [t̃] instead of /t/, [ʃ] instead of /ʒ/, [p̃] instead of /p/ and [k] instead of /g/. Table 6 below outlines the details of their phoneme substitution. However, there are 30% for /t/ and 20% for /g/.

Table 6. Difficulties with English medial consonant pronunciation of Arabic students

English Medial Consonant	Percentage of Accuracy n = 10	Substitution	Examples
/k/	0	[k̃]	Cookie
/ð/	0	[d]	Mother
/t/	30	[t̃]	Football, Butterfly
/ʒ/	0	[ʃ]	Television
/p/	0	[p̃]	Paper
/g/	20	[k]	Sugar

3.1.3. English Final Consonant

1) Pattani Malay Students

In the final position of the chosen words, the students in this group were unable to produce English fricatives /v/ and stop /k/ phonemes. As a result, they replaced such sounds with some other sounds that they could create, such as [f] and [b] for the final /v/ and [ŋ] for the final /k/. However, Malay students could flawlessly create /p/ in the final position of the word. It is clear that 80 percent of students pronounce it correctly, despite the fact that 20 percent are still perplexed and chose the [b] sound instead.

Table 7. Difficulties with English final consonant pronunciation of Pattani Malay students

English Final Consonant	Percentage of Accuracy n = 10	Substitution	Examples
/v/	0	[f], [b]	Wave
/k/	40	[ŋ]	Think
/l/	50	[w]	Football

/p/	80	[b]	Cheap
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2) Thai Students

The sample of Thai students was unable to produce English fricatives /v/, stop /p/ /k/, and lateral /l/ phonemes in the final position of the chosen words. They substituted other sounds, such as [f] and [b] for the final /v/, [b] for the final /p/, [ŋ] for the final /k/, and [n], [w] for the final /l/. The table below depicts the students' percentage of correct pronunciation and how each final consonant is substituted.

Table 8. Difficulties with English final consonant pronunciation of Thai students

English Final Consonant	Percentage of Accuracy n = 10	Substitution	Examples
/v/	0	[f], [b]	Wave
/k/	20	[ŋ]	Think
/l/	20	[n], [w]	Football
/p/	20	[b]	Cheap

3) Arabic Students

Arabic students used other sounds to replace the final /v/ with [f] and [b] and /p/ with [b]. In the final position of the chosen words. This is related to the reason that these phonemes do not begin in the final position in their language. Therefore, e.g., they chose the closest phonemes in their L1 in the same labial fricative group to produce the final [f], the voiceless sound, and the final [b], the voiced labial stop automatically instead of the original /v/ as the voiced sound. The table below shows how each final consonant is substituted and the students' percentage of correct pronunciation. However, as the final position of the words, 100 percent of Arabic students could perfectly pronounce /k/ and /l/.

Table 9. Difficulties with English final consonant pronunciation of Arabic students

English Final Consonant	Percentage of Accuracy n = 10	Substitution	Examples
/v/	0	[f], [b]	Wave
/k/	100	-	Think
/l/	100	-	Football
/p/	0	[b]	Cheap

3.2 Other factors probably affecting students' pronunciation

According to the data analysis from this study's questionnaires, some other factors may influence students' pronunciation. The result shows the following:

1) Pattani Malay students

Table 10. the other factors probably affecting Pattani Malay students' pronunciation

Other factors probably affect student's pronunciation	Percentage of student N=10
1. Bilingualism (Both their Malay and Thai are very fluent)	80

2. Studying abroad	0
3. Having previously enrolled in English phonetic course.	20

The table above shows that 80% of Pattani Malay students are very fluent in both Malay and Thai or it can be said that they are bilingual students. 20% percent of this group have been enrolled in an English pronunciation class. However, the students who have been studying abroad are not found in this group.

2) Thai Students

Table 11. the other factors probably affecting Thai students' pronunciation

Other factors probably affect student's pronunciation		Percentage of student N=10
1. Bilingualism		0
2. Studying abroad		0
3. Having previously enrolled in English phonetic course.		20

The table above shows that 20% of students in this group have been enrolled in an English phonetics course. However, students who have been studying abroad and have enrolled in an English phonetic course are not found in this group.

3) Arabic Students

Table 12. the other factors probably affecting Arabic students' pronunciation

Other factors probably affect student's pronunciation		Percentage of student N=10
1. Bilingualism (Both Arabic and Malay are very fluent)		80
2. Studying abroad		100
3. Having previously enrolled in English phonetic course.		30

The table above shows that 80% of students in This group are very fluent in both Arabic and Malay language. They are bilingual students. 100% of students have been studying abroad and 30% have enrolled in an English phonetic course. These three additional factors: bilingualism, study abroad, and enrollment in an English phonetics course are likely to have a significant impact on the pronunciation of these three groups of students.

According to the findings of this study, it is clear that students who speak Pattani Malay, Thai, and Arabic have a different impact on their English pronunciation. Due to their language phonemes being different from English, they pronounce the same provided English initial, medial, and final consonant words differently. These differences suggest that the sound systems and structures of their languages, which they use in their daily lives, have a significant impact on their English pronunciation. In other words, the differences in phonemes between the languages they are repeatedly used to and the second language are most likely reflected in their pronunciation errors.

Regarding the first group, students who speak Pattani Malay students had the most difficult English initial consonant phonemes: fricative (/v/, /θ/) and affricates (/tʃ/, /dʒ/) with 0% accuracy. Moreover, only 20% of students could pronounce plosive (/p/, /k/). These are due to the fact that there are no equivalence phonemes in Pattani Malay. They replaced the nearest equivalence phonemes instead such as /v/ with [w], /θ/ with [t], /dʒ/ with [dʒ] (the voiceless sound / dʒ /) etc. However, another fricative phoneme /f/ which appears as the same phoneme in Malay Pattani had the highest accuracy pronunciation with 70% of the students. Considering the

English medial consonant, the most difficult phonemes were /k/ and /ð/ at the percentage 0, follow by /t/, /z/ and /p/ at the percentage 10, 20 and 30 orderlies. These are to the absence of these phonemes in the middle of Malay words. They were automatically replaced with the close phoneme equivalences such as /k/ with [k̚] (the voiceless sound /k/), /ð/ with [d], and so on. At the English final consonant, Malay students pronounced /v/ of the word "Wave" most difficultly. No one could pronounce it correctly; they substituted the phoneme with [f] and [b].

Following other phonemes such as /k/ of the word "think", they replaced it with [ŋ] instead. This is due to the fact that there is no /k/ sound at the final position of the word in their language. Nevertheless, there are two other factors that probably affect their pronunciation as well: bilingualism and having enrolled in an English phonetic course. Since Thai is the national language that students have to learn from school and use it as the official language in their daily life, 80% of Pattani Malay students used both Malay and Thai very fluently. Their pronunciation may affect by Thai language as well. For example, Despite the fact that they have the same phoneme /g/ in Malay, 20% of students replaced the voiced stop phoneme /g/ from the word "sugar" with the voiceless stop phoneme [k]. This is most likely due to the Thai language's sound system interfering with their pronunciation. Another factor that may influence their correct pronunciation is whether or not they have previously taken an English phonetic course, as they are more likely to pronounce some English words correctly when they are familiar with the English phonetic system.

In reference to the next group, students who have Thai as their mother tongue. They mostly pronounced fricatives (/v/, /θ/) and affricates (/tʃ/, /dʒ/) of English initial consonants difficultly. This is because these English initial phonemes do not appear in their language. Intriguingly, Thai has two plosives: /p/ and /k/, but only 10% of students could correctly pronounce them. This is likely due to the fact that some loanwords in Thai are pronounced differently than the original, such as "popcorn," which is pronounced "ป๊อปคอร์น" with [p̚] slightly differently than English. When it came to English medial consonants, Thai students could not pronounce /ð, /z/, or /g/ and had to replace them with Thai phonemes. However, in Thai, the phonemes /k/, /t/, and /p/ exist, but they are pronounced differently. This is due to the interference of loanwords in Thai, which are pronounced differently than in English. As for English final consonants, Thai students was difficult to produce English fricatives /v/, stop /p/ /k/, and lateral /l/ phonemes. This is because of no these phonemes are at the final of any word in Thai.

Hence, they replaced them with the nearest phonemes. However, 20% of students could correctly pronounce /k/, /l/, and /p/, which is likely due to the fact that they had previously enrolled in an English phonetic course that taught them how to pronounce those phonemes. With regard to the last group, students who usually use Arabic in their daily life as their mother tongue. The most difficult English initial consonant phonemes were fricatives (/v/) and affricates (/tʃ/), followed by a plosive (/p/) that only 20% of students correctly pronounce. Since there is no equivalence of these phonemes in Arabic, they replaced them with the closest phonemes in Arabic. However, the word "juice" which has /dʒ/ similar to the sound of the alphabet "Jim" in Arabic, 100% of students could correctly pronounce. Concerning the English medial consonant, most Arabic students difficult to pronounced /k/, /ð/, /t/, /z/, /p/ and /g/. This is because they absent these phonemes in their language and they replaced them with the nearest equivalences. As to the English final consonant, Arabic students hard to pronounce /v/ and /b/, they replaced /v/ with [f], [b] and /p/ with [b]. However, it was easy for them to pronounce /k/ and /l/ as the final position of a word. 100% of students could pronounce them perfectly. This is due to the fact that they have the same phonemes at the final position in Arabic. Interestingly, some students still could pronounce some phonemes which are absent in their language correctly. This is most likely due to other factors, such as the fact that found in the finding, the majority of them are bilingual (Arabic and Malay) and have previously studied abroad. Furthermore, 30% of students have taken an English phonetic course in the past. These factors may also have an impact on their English pronunciation, whether they are able to correctly pronounce English words or not.

Several of the concerns students who speak Pattani Malay have with their English pronunciation, as well a Thai (Plailek, 2016, and Attaphonphiphat, 2017) and Arabic (Hassan, 2014), are due to a lack of phonemes in their mother tongue languages. This research also shows that students from various linguistic backgrounds have varying levels of difficulty producing sound. The study also supported by Sahatsathatsana (2017), who found in her pronunciation problems of Thai students learning English phonetics research that Thai students' opinions revealed that some sounds, particularly /θ/, /ð/, and /dʒ/, caused serious phonetics learning problems at the segmental level for them. This can be explained that it was difficult to find the equivalence phonemes in their language.

However, the findings of this study differ from those of Waelateh (2016), who found that Patani Malay students tended to overlook phonemes in their mother tongue, which could aid them in accurately producing English phonemes. They used Thai phonemes to replace English phonemes, which can be explained by the fact that the students in his study were likely bilingual, speaking both Pattani Malay and Thai fluently. As a result,

their Thai has a significant impact on their pronunciation. However, his research differs from this one in that not all Pattani Malay students used Thai phonemes that do not exist in Malay to replace English words. The majority of them could correctly pronounce some English words with similar phonemes in Malay, such as the phoneme /g/ 80% pronounced correctly. Accordingly, it can be said mother tongue interference has a great effect on students' pronunciation as supported by many previous studies. However, some students were discovered to be able to correctly pronounce some English words despite the fact that the phonemes do not exist in their language. This is due to other factors that assist in their pronouncing.

4. CONCLUSION

This study mainly aimed at how different mother tongues (Pattani Malay, Thai, Arabic) influence students' ability in pronouncing English words, the researcher selected a case study from 30 samples of Fatoni university students in English for a communication course. Besides, investigate the percentage of accuracy pronouncing by students with their replacement phonemes in English initial, medial and final consonants. Moreover, discovering the other effects may probably influence their pronunciation. The result can be concluded that different mother tongues (Pattani Malay, Thai, Arabic) clearly impact their pronunciation differently. There are the different percentages of students who could accuracy pronounced in English initial, medial and final consonants in each group with the different substituted phonemes which they automatically chose from the nearest equivalences in their language. Furthermore, the research found that the other factors such as bilingualism, studying abroad, and having enrolled in an English phonetic course probably affect their English pronunciation in both positive and negative ways.

All of the study's findings have significant implications for English teachers who teach students who speak in different mother tongues particularly Pattani Malay, Thai, and Arabic. Undoubtedly, emphasizing the inherent difficulties of English pronunciation and comprehending the causative factors of these kinds of errors can assist both teachers and students in pronouncing English more precisely. This is due to the fact that English teachers who understand sound systems understand how model English makes it sound and can compare them to similar sounds in the students' native language or try to show them where each sound that students produce error exactly comes from so that they can pronounce that sound perfectly or mostly correctly. Teachers can then create suitable lesson plans and effective materials to help students from different linguistic backgrounds learn English.

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