

# THAI AND ENGLISH CONSONANTAL SOUNDS: A PROBLEM OR A POTENTIAL FOR EFL LEARNING?

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## Abstract

*This paper aims to examine similarities and differences between Thai and English consonants. It determines areas of difficulties when Thai students try to pronounce English consonantal sounds. It is found that English sounds which do not occur in the Thai phonology tend to pose great difficulty for Thai students to utter. Those sounds include ʔgʔ, ʔvʔ, ʔθʔ, ʔðʔ, ʔzʔ, ʔʃʔ, ʔʒʔ, ʔtʃʔ, and ʔdʒʔ. Sounds which exist in Thai but can occur in different environment, i.e. syllable position, are also prone to be difficult to pronounce. Such examples are /f/ and /s/. To tackle the problem of sounds nonexistent in Thai, Thai students are likely to substitute Thai sounds for the English sounds. In addition, the phenomenon where ʔlʔ and ʔrʔ are used interchangeably in Thai tends to be transferred in pronouncing /l/ and /r/ in English with great challenges.*

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