Pronunciation of Syafatain in Surah Al-Fatihah: Phonetic Analysis of The Imam of The Mosque

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ABSTRACT

Arabic has a specific pronunciation and has the potential to change meaning if it is not pronounced correctly. This study oriented to analyze the characteristics of the pronunciation of the Syafatain makhārijul huruf in surah Al-Fatihah by the imam of a mosque in Sukasari sub-district when leading prayers and to identify phonological errors made. The research method used was descriptive with a qualitative approach. To collect research data, the methods used were listening methods, interviews, and documentation in the form of recordings of the voice of the imam of the mosque when reciting surah Al-Fatihah. The results of this study indicated that the characteristics of the imam of the mosque in reciting surah Al-Fatihah were quite diverse and there are phonological errors made by the imam of the mosque in reciting the letter ب especially Al-Fatihah when the letter is in the middle of the word segmentation level. Any Arabic pronunciation needs to follow phonological conventions so that the Arabic sounds occupy the appropriate positions.

Kata Kunci: Karakteristik, fonologis, makhraj huruf, syafatain

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1. Introduction

Al-Qur’an is the word of Allah revealed to the prophet Muhammad salallahu ‘alaihi wassalam, who is the prophet of the end times through the angel Jibril ‘alaihissalam. Al-Qur’an is a source of knowledge for Muslims, Al-Qur’an is also the basis of law which covers everything related to religious law and social aspects of daily life. Studying the contents of Al-Qur’an will add new treasures, broaden views and insights. knowledge, to increase new perspectives and discover new things, because Al-Qur’an is a source of knowledge and a storehouse of knowledge if studied in detail (Faizah et al., 2020) According to Salim in Syofrianisda (Syofrianisda & Eriawati, 2020) Al-Qur’an is one of the miracles received by the Prophet Muhammad saw. Al-Qur’an is the greatest miracle that applies to all mankind, has a rational nature, and is set as a guide for humans throughout life, whenever and wherever they are. Al-Qur’an has conveyed mutawatir without any deviations or changes guaranteed by Allah subhanahu wa ta’ala that its authenticity will always be maintained. According to Al-Suyutiy in Norazman bin Alias (Dr. Norazman bin Alias et al., 2021) the Al-Qur’an as a holy book begins with surah Al-Fatiha as the opening surah. Surah Al-Fatiha, which in language means opening, is a surah that was revealed in the city of Makkah in its entirety. Al-Mawardiy in N. bin Alias (Dr. Norazman bin Alias et al., 2021) states that Surah Al-Fatiha as the opening surah of Al-Qur’an contains seven verses in it that Muslims must read when performing prayers. Surah Al-Fatiha is the only surah in Al-Qur’an that is legally required to be recited in prayer and is one of the pillars of prayer which if it is not recited both in obligatory and sunnah prayers, then the prayer is invalid. Before reading Al-Qur’an, we must study makhraj and tajwid well so that we will be able to read Al-Qur’an fluently, properly and correctly (Faizah et al., 2020). Reading Al-Qur’an properly, tartil and always paying attention to the values that have been taught in Al-Qur’an is a command from Allah subhanahu wa ta’ala to mankind as a form of respect and glorification of Al-Qur’an. Tartil perfection is to read clearly the letters of Al-Qur’an, each letter is pronounced according to its makhraj (Rasyid, 2015).

Makhārijul huruf which are part of the science of phonology in Arabic and are a linguistic subdiscipline related to the sounds of language (Rahmatia et al., 2021). According to Nasrulloh in Rahmatia (Rahmatia et al., 2021) the makhārijul huruf are the places where the sound is sourced so that the sound of one letter can be distinguished from another. In general, there are five parts of makhārijul huruf, namely the group Al-Jauf (Mouth Cavity), Al-Halq (Throat), Al-Lisan (Tongue), Asy-Syafatain (Lips), and Al-Khaisyum (Nose Cavity) (Asih et al., 2020). One of the branches of Phonology in Arabic which examines how to read the holy Qur’an with special rules and characteristics in it is Al-Qur’an Phonology, or better known as the Science of Tajwid (Anam, 2018). According to Syukri in Norazman bin Alias (Dr. Norazman bin Alias et al., 2021) The science of recitation is a science related to rules and laws in reading and reciting verses from the Al-Qur’an as revealed by the Al-Qur’an to the Prophet salallahu ‘alaihi wassalam. Therefore, understanding the rules and principles both in reading and reciting the verses of the Al-Qur’an is very necessary to maintain and glorify the Al-Qur’an and to perfect the worship that we do.

In this increasingly advanced era, many muslims just read and recite verses of Al-Qur’an without paying attention to the existing rules and regulations, Permana even stated in Fahmi Irfanudin (Irfanudin et al., 2022) that according to the General Chairperson of the Central Executive Indonesian Dai Association (PP IKADI), Ahmad Satori Ismail indicated the occurrence of Al-Qur’an illiteracy in Indonesia caused by community groups in urban areas. Based on research results from the Institute of Qur’an Science (IQ) there are around 65% of Indonesian people who do not recognize the letters of the Al-Qur’an. In 2018 Susenas data compiled by the Central Statistics Agency showed that as many as 53.57% of muslims in Indonesia could not read Al-Qur’an (Herlina, 2021).

In congregational prayers, an imam with good quality reading is required to lead the prayer (Herlina, 2021). However, in practice in real life and in most circles of society there are still prayer imams who read Al-Qur’an with poor quality which, if left unchecked, can reduce the value of the perfection of prayer. Many Muslims today have the courage to lead prayers in the midst of society even though there are still errors in their reading of Al-Qur’an, thus changing the pronunciation to the meaning of the verses being read (Herlina, 2021). In contrast to errors, errors occur not systematically, not because the language system in question has not been mastered, but because the language system that has been mastered is not applied (Haniah, 2018). In real life, language errors are something that cannot be avoided and are the result of unsuccessful language learning which includes learning related to phonology (sound system). There are two types of sounds in phonology, namely phonemic which sees speech sounds as part of the language...
system and phonetics which are language sounds to distinguish meaning (Rahmatia et al., 2021).

Many studies related to the analysis of the pronunciation of *makhārijul huruf* have been carried out. However, not much has been researched about the pronunciation of the *makhārijul huruf* to the imam of the mosque. Among these studies is research conducted by Siti Rahma Herlina in 2021 with the title "Bacaan Al-Qur’an Imam Masjid dan Langgar Wilayah Kecamatan Pugaan Kabupaten Tabalong Kalimantan Selatan". In this study, it was stated that most of the samples had a score of fluency in reading Al-Qur’an in the very fluent category, namely reading that was not stammering, without errors and paying attention to the laws of each reading. However, in the fluency assessment, the highest percentage was in the fluent category, with many of them only reaching the moderate category, and some were judged to be not fluent, namely they still made many mistakes in the application of the meaning of letters, *shifatul huruf*, reading laws for *nun sukun* or *tanwin*, and laws for *mim sukun* as well as *mad* law.

Based on the description above, the researcher found the urgency of the importance of analyzing the pronunciation of the *makhārijul huruf* of the imam of the mosque in the city of Bandung which is expected to have implications for learners and language learners to understand the role and function of the *makhārijul huruf* in language learning. This research is also expected to be able to encourage educators to help students to improve their fluency in speaking Arabic. The focus of this research is the pronunciation of the *makhārijul huruf* in the area of *Syafatain* in reading surah Al-Fatihah by the imam of the mosque in one of the sub-districts in the city of Bandung, so that further this research aims to elaborate on the characteristics of the pronunciation of the *makhārijul huruf* in the area of *Syafatain* in reading the surah Al-Fatihah of the imam of the mosque.

2. Method

In this study, the research method used is a qualitative research method. According to Bodgan and Taylor in Immanuelle (Immanuelle & Azallia, 2019) qualitative research is research that produces descriptive information from the written or spoken words of people and the behavior studied. According to Miles and Huberman in (Sirajuddin, 2017) data that appears qualitatively is in the form of words and not a series of numbers. Although the data is collected in various ways such as; observations, interviews, document summaries, recordings, and are usually processed before use through recording, typing, editing, or transcription, but qualitative analysis still uses words that are usually arranged in expanded text (Sirajuddin, 2017). While the design used in this research is descriptive design. According to Zuriah in Asih (Asih et al., 2020) descriptive research is research that aims to offer symptoms, facts, or events in a methodical and precise manner. In this case it is the phonetic study of the *makhraj huruf syafatain* in surah Al-Fatihah.

Qualitative selection is based on identification of field conditions. Sukasari is a quite religious place, in terms of the Islamic activities it was also attended by young people to the elderly. This can also be seen during congregational prayers, the imam praying in every mosque there is quite a variety, some are young people and some are elderly. The reading of elderly mosque imams will be influenced by several factors, one of which is the decreased ability to pronounce *hijaiyah* letters. Even so, for both young people and the elderly, the thing that has the most influence on the quality of their reading is learning Al-Qur’an, especially the *makhārijul huruf* (Herlina, 2021).

2.1. Respondents

The subjects in this study were selected randomly using a purposive sampling technique, meaning that the selected subjects were determined based on the researchers’ considerations according to their objectives (Nurdiawan & Zanthy, 2019). Purposive sampling is used to make the sample more relevant to the research design, so that the research objectives are more easily fulfilled.

Respondents in this study were prayer imams at mosques in Sukasari sub-district, totaling 3 people. The characteristics of the participants are described in Table 1.
Table 1. Characteristics of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20 Years old</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30 Years old</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;30 Years old</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the Al-Qur'an Learning Experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic boarding school</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Islamic School</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience as a Mosque Imam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5 Years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10 Years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2. Data Collection Technique

Data collection was carried out by researchers in this study, namely using the listening technique: Researchers as observers and listeners to observe the pronunciation of the makhārijul huruf in the recitation of surah Al-Fatihah Imam Masjid, interviews: interviews were conducted with 3 mosque imams in Sukasari sub-district regarding their background in learning Al-Qur'an and difficulties in pronouncing makhārijul huruf, and documentation: in the form of voice recordings reading al-Fatihah from the mosque's imam when leading prayers.

2.3. Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique used was (1) listening carefully and carefully to the recording of the recitation of surah Al-Fatihah by the imam of the mosque and paying attention to the suitability of the pronunciation with the makhārijul huruf, (2) recording errors in the pronunciation of each letter of the imam of the mosque in Sukasari sub-district in the pronunciation of al-Fatihah when leading the congregational prayer, (3) analyzing each sound produced from the recitation of surah Al-Fatihah in terms of the makhārijul huruf rules, (4) drawing conclusions and describing the data obtained to be elaborated in the discussion section.

3. Results and Discussion

At the beginning of the study, the researcher found an imam who had several errors in his pronunciation that were not in accordance with the proper meaning of the letters. This is an error in reading from a phonetic point of view which changes the structure of the reading which can also change the meaning of the reading and is also one of the categories of errors in reading Al-Qur’an from the point of view of the science of recitation (Dr. Norazman bin Alias et al., 2021). Bassah in bin Alias (Dr. Norazman bin Alias et al., 2021) states that making obvious mistakes in reciting Al-Qur’an, whether intentional or unintentional, is unlawful according to unanimous ijma’ulama. Given the important role of the imam in leading congregational prayers, this should be of particular concern to Muslims, especially in Indonesia where the majority of its citizens are Muslims. According to Salih in Fadhil (Fadhil, 2018) the first criterion for the imam in prayer that takes precedence is the one with the best recitation, that is, a person who can read Al-Qur’an proficiently and is able to recite it perfectly. In line with this, one of the criteria for an imam in prayer according to the Islamic Community Guidance of the Ministry of Religion in Fadhil (Fadhil, 2018) is having the ability to read Al-Qur’an with tahsin and tartil. Therefore, it is important for us to take the ability of the imam to recite the verses of Al-Qur’an as a consideration in determining the prayer imam.

In Arabic, sound is one of the basic elements and causes for the occurrence of language which has a big contribution to the purpose of using the language itself (Masyhur, 2022). The use of language in the realm of worship is something that cannot be underestimated, especially in Islamic rituals of worship there are absolute rules and their own rules for reading God’s words which must be in accordance with what was taught from the Prophet sallallahu ‹alaihi wassalam (Rambe, 2019). The diverse and unique characteristics of the hijaiyah letters are one of the aspects that often makes Arabic learners make mistakes, namely in their pronunciation, especially for letters that are difficult to pronounce, such as ش. خ. ذ.
In this study, each respondent had a qualified Al-Qur’an learning background with different experiential backgrounds and ages showing different pronunciation characteristics. This is due to the use of different pronunciation styles as an effort to fulfill adab in reading Al-Qur’an, namely reading in a good voice (Rambe, 2019). Even so, reading Al-Qur’an must pay attention to conformity with its basic rules so that there are no mistakes in reciting it.

Mispronunciation of letters in Arabic, which is the language of Al-Qur’an, is included in the category of phonological errors (Muhammad Nur Sholihin, 2020). In this study, there are several phonological characteristics of the respondents in the indicators of the makhraj of letters in certain words which, although they only occur in one segment, can change the meaning of the actual word, and Syafatain is no exception.

3.1. Interview Findings Indicator

Researchers collected data through listening techniques, interviews and documentation. Table 2 is a description of the interview indicators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Background of the Al-Qur’an Learning Experience</th>
<th>Experience as a Mosque Imam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/AS</td>
<td>57 Years old</td>
<td>Islamic boarding school</td>
<td>28 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/AR</td>
<td>22 Years old</td>
<td>Integrated Islamic School</td>
<td>5 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/MZ</td>
<td>19 Years old</td>
<td>Islamic boarding school</td>
<td>1 Years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of this study were obtained from direct research by researchers using test instruments that had been previously described. The researcher listened to the recitation of surah Al-Fatihah by each participant in each mosque where the participant became an imam. Then the researcher conducted interviews with each participant and recorded the indicators that had been determined, besides that the researcher also recorded and documented the recitation of al-Fatihah and the results of the interviews with the participants.

3.2. Classification of Pronunciation Errors

Furthermore, from the listening technique, several indicators of phonological study were obtained. Researchers analyzed the data using Praat software version 6.2.13 to study and measure the accuracy of the pronunciation of each makhraj huruf, the makhraj huruf in question are Syafatain. The researcher found that there were 4 errors in the pronunciation of the letters specified in each makhraj category. However, in general, the letters that are the analysis of letters in surah Al-Fatihah in the intended makhraj category are presented in Table 3, which the researchers then focus on in the Syafatain category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Makhraj Category</th>
<th>Analyzed letters</th>
<th>Words with analyzed letters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asy-syafatain (lips)</td>
<td>ب</td>
<td>1. بسم 2. رب 3. نعبد 4. المغضوب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-halq (throat)</td>
<td>غ</td>
<td>1. العليم 2. تستعين 3. أهنت 4. علّيهم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-lisan (tongue)</td>
<td>ص</td>
<td>1. المستقيم 2. الصبراً</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(َلَهِ) (Lathifah et al., 2017).
The results of the analysis show that the errors that occur are spread over one word in each of the different makhraj categories and by different respondents. See Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4. Analysis of Pronunciation Errors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imam's Recitation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wrong Pronunciation of Letters</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>نَعْؤُدُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>البلدِنِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>المَسْتَقِيمُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الْعَلَمِيْن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>المُسْتَكِيمَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>البَيْنَ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3. Characteristics of Makhraj Pronunciation of Syafatain Letters in Al Fatihah

From the listening technique, the results of the pronunciation characteristics are obtained as shown in table 3 above. The characteristics in question are explained as follows:

3.3.1. Asy-Syafatain Letter ب

The letter ب is a consonant letter which when viewed from the factor of the articulation area is in the bilabial category. Bilabial consonants are pronounced by pressing the upper lip and lower lip to completely cover it, then holding the air behind the two lips and blowing it so that the air is blown out (Marlina, 2019). The letter ب has 5 mutadhadah properties (الصفات المتضادّة): First, the letter ب belongs to the category of Jahr letters (الجهر) which according to language is al-I’ilan wal izh-har which means resounding clearly. Second, the letter ب is syiddah (الشدّة) which means strong, syiddah in terms means the sound is retained when the letter is evaporated because the makhraj is pressed very hard. Third, the letter ب includes the Istifal letter (الإستفعل) which in terms is al-inkhifadl or humble. The Istifal is pronounced by spreading the tongue out so as to create a space between the palate and the tongue which then makes the sound of the letters low, thin and light. Fourth, it has the nature of Infitah (الإنفتاح) which in language is al-iftiraq which means open. When pronouncing the letter ب, the tongue does not stick or come closer to the upper palate so that the sound is not enlarged or thick. Fifth, the letter ب has the characteristic of Idzlaq (الإذلاق), which is pronounced in a light and smooth voice, and is pronounced more quickly because the pronunciation emphasizes the corners of the lips (Hidayat, 2022).

Based on the division of the types of sound waves, the letter ب is included in consonants that have popping sounds so that in the division of sound waves it is in the transient category. Explosive consonants are sounds which when pronounced clearly get strong resistance from the vocal organs and no air comes out, either from the nose or from the left and right sides of the mouth, so that air is trapped behind the vocal organs. The vocal organs then quickly open the airway, making a popping sound. Each respondent can pronounce the letter ب according to its characteristics. However, in certain words, the pronunciation of the letter ب by some respondents sounded faint. To find out the truth of the short duration explosion sound waves, the following visualization forms of the speech of the letter ب in the word نعبد are displayed which are pronounced by reference speakers as a reference for truth for respondents in the Picture 1.
The speech annotation above is the pronunciation of the letters to be analyzed, namely the letter ب as an illustration so that the reader knows the whole speech. While the following is presented in Figure 2 is the pronunciation of the letter ب after segmentation.

The part marked with a red circle in Figure 2 shows that the sound wave of the letter ب is very short. This is also one of the factors indicating that the letter ب belongs to the category of transient sounds. Functionally, the characteristics of transient sounds have a pattern characterized by a very short duration so that regularity is difficult to identify (Rois, 2022). The reference speaker’s pronunciation is used as a reference in the pronunciation of the letter ب in this study. The results of the data analysis showed that 2 out of 3 respondents did not pronounce the letter ب in the word بعبيد correctly or close to the correct pronunciation of the reference speaker. In general, the letter ب lies in the makhraj category which is easy to pronounce and is similar to the letter “b” in Bahasa Indonesia. However, the special properties of the letter ب in authentic Arabic often make foreign speakers who use Arabic as their second language often make mistakes in their pronunciation. This is in line with what Rahmatia conveyed in her research, that intralanguage errors are the main factor causing language errors, namely errors caused by the influence of the source language (BI) or BI interference with B2 (Rahmatia et al., 2021). The most fatal mistake made was changing the letter ب into another letter which was made by respondent 1 and the mistake made by respondent 2 was pronouncing the letter ب not in accordance with the character of the letter. The following pictures 3, 4, and 5 are a form of visualization of the pronunciation of the letter ب in the word بعبيد by each respondent.

As shown in Figure 3 above, that respondent 1 has a mistake by changing the letter ب to the letter خ, while the two letters have different points of articulation. The letter ب is described as a bilabial consonant while the letter خ is a pharyngeal consonant (Marlina, 2019). Although the letters ب and خ are both described as popping sounds and are part of the transient sound wave type. There is a difference at the formant point which looks flat without a significant explosion. This pronunciation error has an impact on the meaning of the word بعبيد, which means “we worship”, to بعوبد, which means “we’re back”.

Figure 3. Visualization of sound waves and a spectogram of the pronunciation of the letter ب in the word بعبيد by respondent 1.

Figure 4. Visualization of sound waves and spectrograms from the pronunciation of the letter ب in the word بعبيد by respondent 2.

Figure 5. Visualization of sound waves and spectrograms from the pronunciation of the letter ب in the word بعبيد by respondent 3.
In Figure 4 presented above, it is shown that respondent 2 made a mistake by ignoring some of the characteristics of the letter 重回, including the characteristics of Jahr and Siddah. Although it is still pronounced humbly, openly and quickly according to its nature, namely istifal, infitah and idzlaq. However, the letter ئ in the word نعبد is pronounced unclearly and weakly. This can be seen from Figure 4 which shows that at the same duration as the reference speaker, there is no significant explosion even though the sound waves are tenuous. Pronunciation that is in accordance with the point of articulation by ignoring some of the characteristics of the letters does not have an impact on changing the meaning of the spoken word, but can reduce the composition and characteristics of the letters.

Respondent 3 was the only one who pronounced the letter 重回 clearly according to its nature, namely jahr. As seen in Figure 5, the sound waves drawn from respondent 3’s pronunciation are the closest to those produced by the reference speaker. With the same segmentation duration, the resulting waves look tenuous and there are short bursts.

3.3.2. Factor differences in the characteristics of makhraj huruf

Factors causing the difficulty in pronouncing hijaiyah letters that occur in respondents are influenced by several things, including 1) habits from the environment; 2) the influence of the first language (mother); and 3) the place of articulation (makhārij huruf) in this case is reciting syafatain. In this case, the pronunciation of the letter ئ, although it is exactly the same, is slightly different from the pronunciation of the letter B in Indonesian, which in Arabic Asy-Syafatain means two lips, meaning the place where the letter comes out is located on two lips, both upper and lower lips together, if both lips are tightly closed. Whereas in Indonesian, the pronunciation of the letter B is bilabial, namely the articulation made by the lower lip and upper lip so that it produces the sound [b], [p]. however, this should be a concern because changing the sound of letters can affect the meaning of the word that is pronounced or can be called its semantics (Marlina, 2019). Meanwhile, mistakes in not pronouncing letters according to their characteristics can eliminate the composition and characteristics of the letters spoken (Hidayat, 2022).

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of this analysis it can be concluded that in the recitation of surah Al-Fatihah, imams have different characteristics and some of them make mistakes in pronouncing the letter ئ, especially in certain words. The error that occurs is changing the letters and removing some of the character traits so that they don’t match as they should. The impact of mistakes in changing letters with other letters certainly affects the semantic meaning of the pronunciation, as well as the characteristics of letters can be shifted. Errors in pronouncing the letter ئ are caused even though in Indonesian there is the letter [b] which is pronounced identically with the letter ئ. However, the composition and characteristics of the hijaiyah letters contained in their special properties are often overlooked, especially when the letters are in the middle of a word.

From the research findings in the field, this research has a practical impact, namely the theory from the field findings can add to the knowledge of Arabic, especially in the phonetic / aṣwat science category. In addition, it has empirical implications, where this finding is a concern for some parties to place knowledge of the makhraj huruf, especially in the syafatain category, as something that needs to be learned for fluency in speaking Arabic, reading Al-Qur’an, and speech in socioculture.

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