



## Phonetic Analysis of Makhārij al-Ḥurūf Pronunciation Errors in the Recitation of Surah Al-Fātiḥah by Grade VIII Students at SMPIT Nurul Yaqien

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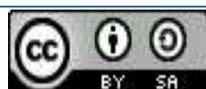
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**Abstrak:** This study aims to analyze phonetic errors in makharij al-ḥurūf (the articulation points of Arabic letters) in the recitation of Surah Al-Fātiḥah by 8th-grade students of SMPIT Nurul Yaqien. The method used is descriptive qualitative, involving direct observation and in-depth interviews with tahsin teachers and selected students. The results show that the most frequent pronunciation errors occurred in the letters Ḍād (ض), Ṣād (ص), Ghain (غ), Ḥā' (ح), and 'Ain (ع), which have no direct equivalents in Indonesian phonology. Contributing factors include limited theoretical understanding of makhraj, lack of articulation practice, and teaching methods that do not incorporate phonetic-based approaches. The findings highlight the need for phonetic and visual strategies in teaching tajweed to improve mastery of makharij al-ḥurūf. Theoretically, this study contributes to Arabic linguistic research by identifying phonetic error patterns among non-native speakers. Practically, it serves as a foundation for developing more effective phonetic-articulatory based tajweed instruction methods in Islamic educational institutions..

**Analisis Fonetik Kesalahan Makharij al-Huruf pada Bacaan Surah Al-Fātiḥah oleh Siswa Kelas VIII SMPIT Nurul Yaqien Cisarua Bogor**

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kesalahan fonetik dalam makharij al-ḥurūf (tempat keluarnya huruf) pada bacaan Surah Al-Fātiḥah oleh siswa kelas VIII SMPIT Nurul Yaqien. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik observasi langsung dan wawancara mendalam kepada guru tahsin dan beberapa siswa. Hasil observasi menunjukkan bahwa kesalahan paling dominan terjadi pada huruf Ḍād (ض), Ṣād



(ح), Ghain (غ), Ḥā' (ح), dan 'Ain (ع), yang tidak memiliki padanan langsung dalam fonem bahasa Indonesia. Faktor penyebab kesalahan mencakup keterbatasan pemahaman teoretis tentang makhraj, kurangnya latihan artikulasi, dan metode pembelajaran yang belum berbasis fonetik. Implikasi dari studi ini menunjukkan perlunya pendekatan fonetik dan visual dalam pengajaran tajwid agar makharij al-ḥurūf dapat dikuasai lebih baik. Secara teoritis, penelitian ini memperkaya kajian linguistik Arab dengan mengidentifikasi bentuk kesalahan fonetik dalam konteks pembelajaran non-penutur asli. Secara praktis, temuan ini dapat menjadi dasar pengembangan metode pembelajaran tajwid berbasis fonetik-artikulatoris yang lebih efektif bagi lembaga pendidikan Islam.

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## INTRODUCTION

Surah Al-Fātiḥah is the opening chapter of the Qur'an and is obligatory to recite in every unit (rak'ah) of prayer. The accurate pronunciation of the Arabic letters in this surah is crucial – not only from the perspective of tajwīd (rules of Qur'anic recitation), but also from a phonetic standpoint to preserve the intended meanings (Gazali & Auliya, 2020). In Arabic linguistics, phonetic studies play a vital role in understanding makhārij al-ḥurūf, which refers to the articulation points of letters in the mouth and throat (Sholihin, 2020). However, in practice, many Indonesian students struggle with pronouncing certain Arabic letters in Surah Al-Fātiḥah, particularly those that do not exist in the Indonesian phonological system.

This study aims to identify and analyze mispronunciations of Arabic letters from a phonetic perspective and to explore the contributing factors to these errors, particularly within the context of SMPIT Nurul Yaqien.

## METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected through two primary techniques: (1) Direct observation during tahsin learning sessions, where students were asked to individually recite Surah Al-Fātiḥah while the researcher noted any phonetic mispronunciations; (2) In-depth interviews conducted with the tahsin teacher and three eighth-grade students to gain pedagogical insights and learning experiences related to articulation (makhraj) pronunciation. The research subjects consisted of 25

eighth-grade students. The data were analyzed using an articulatory phonetics approach by comparing the production of Arabic sounds with the articulatory features of phonemes in the Indonesian language (Ulum, 2024).

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the research findings obtained through observations and interviews, followed by analysis based on phonetic theory and makhārij al-ḥurūf (articulation points of Arabic

letters). To facilitate understanding, the results and discussion are presented separately. This section serves as the core of the study, as it highlights the actual pronunciation conditions of the students and the factors that influence them.

### Findings

Based on observations of 25 students, five dominant types of articulation (makhraj) pronunciation errors were identified:

Tabel 1 Jumlah Siswa yang Salah Melafalkan Huruf Hijaiyah dalam Surah Al-Fatihah

| Letter    | Word in the Surah | Type of Error                             | Number of Students |
|-----------|-------------------|---|--------------------|
| ض (Dād)   | الضَّالِّينَ      | Pronounced like /z/ or /d/                | 17 students (68%)  |
| غ (Ghain) | المَغْضُوبِ       | Unclear; sounds like /g/ or /k/           | 14 students (56%)  |
| ص (Ṣād)   | صِرَاطَ           | Pronounced like regular /s/               | 15 students (60%)  |
| ح (Ḥā')   | الْحَمْدُ         | Pronounced like regular /h/               | 10 students (40%)  |
| ع ('Ain)  | عَلَيْهِمْ        | Not pronounced; becomes regular vowel /a/ | 12 students (48%)  |

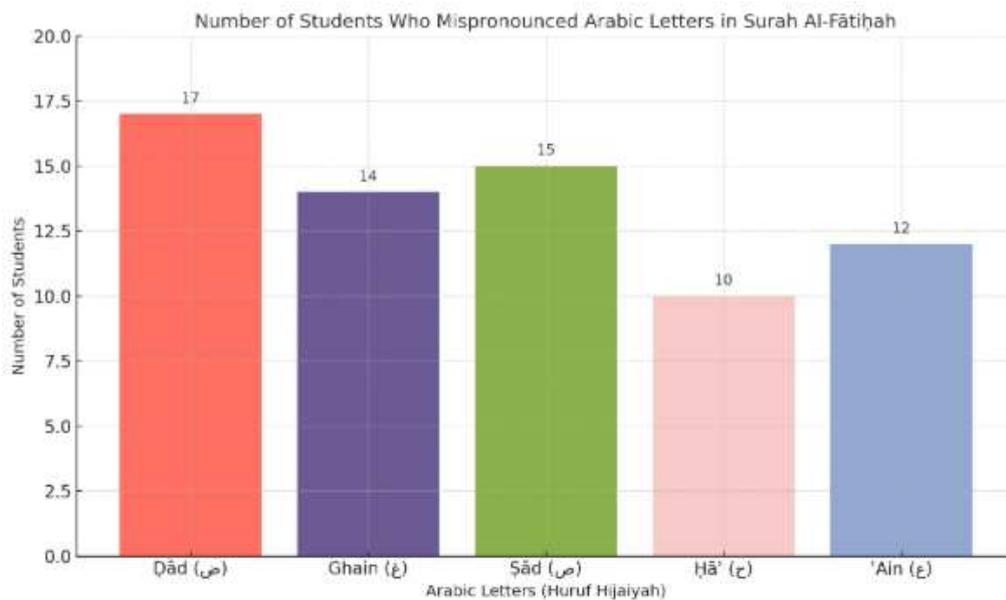


Figure 1 Jumlah Siswa yang Salah Melafalkan Huruf Hijaiyah dalam Surah Al-Fatihah

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the mispronunciation of makhārij al-ḥurūf in the recitation of Surah Al-Fātiḥah by eighth-grade students at SMPIT Nurul Yaqien is not merely a technical issue but also involves linguistic and pedagogical factors. These errors are particularly evident in letters that lack direct phonetic equivalents in the Indonesian language, such as Ḍād (ض), Ṣād (ص), Ghain (غ), Ḥā' (ح), and 'Ain (ع). The analysis of the types and frequencies of these errors leads to a central conclusion: phonological interference from the mother tongue (L1) and a learning approach that insufficiently emphasizes articulatory phonetics are the dominant causes of these mispronunciations.

For instance, the letter Ḍād (ض)—which is phonetically described as an emphatic voiced alveolar lateral fricative—was pronounced by most students as either /d/ or /z/, phonemes that are more common in the Indonesian language. The fact that 68% of students replaced Ḍād with /d/ or /z/ reinforces the theory of negative transfer in second language phonology acquisition, where learners attempt to

reproduce unfamiliar sounds using the phonological system of their native language (Yusuff & Abd Halim, 2024). This is a strong indicator that the absence of the Ḍād sound in Indonesian prompts students to substitute it with the closest approximate, despite its inaccuracy in terms of makhraj.

A similar error occurred with the letter Ṣād (ص), which 60% of students pronounced as a regular /s/. Phonetically, Ṣād is an emphatic consonant that influences the resonance of the oral cavity. Without phonetic training that emphasizes vocal pressure (emphasis) and proper tongue positioning, students find it difficult to distinguish between /s/ and /ṣ/. Ulum (2024), in his study on Arabic phonological classification, emphasized that such differences require explicit articulatory instruction, especially for non-Arab learners such as Indonesian students.

Furthermore, the pronunciation errors involving Ghain (غ) and 'Ain (ع) reveal that students struggle significantly with producing guttural phonemes, which originate from the throat. 56% of students substituted غ with /g/ or /k/, while 48% of students

pronounced ‘Ain as the vowel /a/. This indicates a weak phonetic awareness of vocal cord function and throat articulation. Nasution (2022) noted that Arabic letters such as ع and غ possess phonetic characteristics that cannot be substituted by other phonemes without significantly altering the meaning.

From a pedagogical perspective, the approach used at SMPIT Nurul Yaqien still centers on talaqqī—a traditional method of mimicking the teacher’s recitation orally. While this method holds great spiritual value and preserves sanad (chain of transmission) within Islamic tradition, its effectiveness becomes limited when not supported by visual media or articulatory training. Interviews with the tahsin teacher revealed that makhraj training had not been conducted technically, nor had it utilized visual aids such as anatomical diagrams of articulation, tongue movement animations, or audio-visual simulations of sound production. Consequently, students lacked a concrete understanding of how and from where each sound should be produced.

Interviews with students further

supported these findings. Most expressed that pronunciation was difficult because they could not visualize the position of the mouth and throat during recitation. Some students even admitted they only realized their mistakes after being corrected by the teacher but did not know how to fix them. This highlights a lack of articulatory awareness—the ability to identify and control the speech organs during sound production. According to Hasibuan (2022), such awareness is a fundamental prerequisite for improving the accuracy of Arabic letter pronunciation.

Phonetic errors in Qur’anic recitation have implications not only from a linguistic standpoint but also from theological and ritual perspectives. Errors in makhraj can change the meaning of a word and, in some cases, alter the meaning of an entire verse. For instance, confusing Dād (ض) with Dāl (د) in the word aḍ-ḍallīn may lead to a significant semantic shift. Since Surah Al-Fātiḥah is an essential component (rukṅ) of prayer (ṣalāh), persistent mispronunciations could potentially affect the validity of the prayer if left uncorrected.

Therefore, it is crucial to emphasize that tahsin instruction should not only focus on memorizing the text but must also address phonetic aspects in a technical and theoretical manner. As suggested by Albantani (2019), Qur'anic learning becomes far more effective when it incorporates phonetic, communicative, and visual approaches. Through this method, students are not only able to memorize the words but also understand their sound structure and pronunciation consciously and purposefully.

This study recommends the development of a phonetics-based tahsin curriculum, integrating visual media (such as makhraj diagrams, slow-motion articulation videos, and interactive digital apps), mirror-based articulation practice, and direct simulation of tongue and throat positions. Such training can foster both phonetic competence and reflective awareness in students' recitation. With this strategy, students can recite the Qur'an not only fluently but also accurately in terms of makhraj, and meaningfully in their spiritual practice.

In conclusion, these findings offer significant contributions for teachers,

educational institutions, and future researchers. Teachers can use this data to evaluate and improve tahsin methods with more structured and effective strategies. Educational institutions can design teacher training programs that enhance understanding of Arabic phonetics and visual teaching techniques. Future researchers are encouraged to develop visual phonetic-based experimental learning models and to test the effectiveness of such approaches in improving students' Qur'anic recitation across various educational levels.

## CONCLUSION

This study reveals that mispronunciations of makhārij al-ḥurūf in the recitation of Surah Al-Fātiḥah by Grade VIII students of SMPIT Nurul Yaqien are influenced by limited phonetic understanding and teaching methods that do not accommodate visual and articulatory approaches. Although the students have memorized the text verbally, their ability to correctly pronounce letters such as Ḍād, Ṣād, Ghain, Ḥā', and 'Ain remains low due to a lack of technical training in proper articulation (makhraj).

This finding underscores the importance of teaching tahsin not merely as rote memorization but through phonetic training with visual aids. Innovative teaching strategies are needed to help students concretely understand the articulatory positions of letters. This research recommends that educational institutions integrate phonetic media into tajwīd instruction as an effort to enhance recitation quality and preserve the integrity of the Qur'anic meaning.

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