

## Phonological Errors in the Recitation of Surah Al-Baqarah Verses 1-5 by Indonesia Vocalist: A Phonetic and Phonological Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

*This study analyzes phonological errors in the recitation of Surah Al-Baqarah verses 1-5 by Indonesian vocalist "NB" through a YouTube video. The research focuses on identifying errors in sound production, particularly related to makhraj (articulation points) and the characteristics of letters, as well as deviations in pronunciation. The method used is descriptive qualitative with content analysis and free listening techniques. The results reveal 13 phonological errors, including letter substitutions (e.g., ق replaced with ك), phoneme additions, and stress (Nabr) errors. These errors stem from a lack of understanding of makhraj and letter characteristics, as well as interference from the speaker's native language. The impact of these errors not only disrupts the clarity of recitation but also risks altering the meaning of the verses. This study emphasizes the importance of in-depth learning of phonology and tajwid to prevent the fossilization of phonological errors, especially for non-native Arabic learners. The findings are expected to serve as a reference for developing more effective methods for teaching the pronunciation of Hijaiyah letters.*

**Keywords:** *phonological errors, makhraj, letter characteristics, fossilization, Quranic recitation.*

### INTRODUCTION

Phonological errors that occur repeatedly and are not immediately corrected will become a worrying problem and risk fossilization, a linguistic phenomenon in which language errors become permanent in a person's speech system despite additional instruction and practice. Phonological errors belong to one form of error within the scope of linguistic taxonomy, where errors occur at the sound level, either at the level of words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. Errors in phonological aspects can appear in oral communication, both in speaking skills as a form of language production and in listening skills as a receptive process (Amrulloh & Hasanah, 2019; Lathifah et al., 2017; Lisnawati, 2018; Wulandari, 2020; Zulfa, 2019).

Phonology is one of the branches in the study of phonetics that focuses on analyzing sounds (speech). The science of phonology is very important in Arabic because it allows listeners to easily understand correct and precise speech. In Arabic language learning, fossilization of phonological errors is often caused by a lack of understanding of *makhraj* and the nature of letters, as well as mother tongue interference that forms certain pronunciation patterns. Typical phonemes in Arabic, such as pharyngeal (ع, ح), emphatic (ظ, ط, ظ), and uvular (ق) consonants, often pose a challenge for non-Arabic speakers because they are not found in the phonological system of their native language. Inaccuracies in the pronunciation of these phonemes not only interfere with the clarity of communication but can also significantly alter the meaning of words. For example, "قلب" (qalb, heart) and "كلب" (kalb, dog) show how a single phoneme change can have a major impact on the meaning of an utterance.

Arabic has a long vowel system and consonant doubling that are not found in other languages, including Indonesian. In addition, the existence of adjacent sounds and emphatic sounds are unique characteristics of Arabic that often cause difficulties in the learning process. In terms of phonology, Arabic consists of 28 consonants, three short vowels, and three long vowels. In addition, Arabic also has diphthongs /ay/ and /aw/, which also enrich its sound system. Thus, the meeting of two cultures, namely Indonesian and Arabic, which leads to interaction between the two languages, often occurs and causes language change (Amrullah, 2016; Aribowo, 2013; Nurul Fadillah et al., 2023).

Someone who uses Arabic needs to have the ability to pronounce the hijaiyyah letters correctly according to their place of release (*makhōrijul huruf*), and it is important to distinguish one letter from another. Differences in letter shapes and sound systems that are different from Indonesian, which uses Latin letters, often cause errors when reading Arabic texts, including phonological errors or errors in pronouncing each letter that represents the sound. This will have an impact, as one error can trigger subsequent errors in other aspects. One of the impacts is

the error in replacing one letter with another letter, which affects the meaning of a word in the semantic aspect and later results in errors in capturing the intended meaning (Mohd Azidan Abdul Jabbar, n.d.). Because the essence of language is to produce a series of words in a meaningful sentence and in accordance with existing rules, no errors should occur in it. Therefore, accuracy in the pronunciation of an utterance becomes crucial, because it can affect the meaning that the speaker wants to convey.

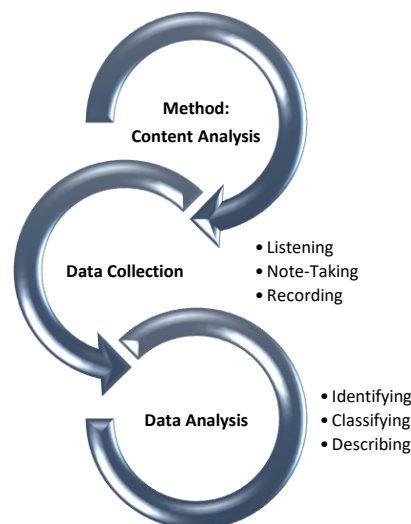
Linguistic studies show that the fossilization of phonological errors in Arabic pronunciation is generally related to mother tongue interference, limited articulatory practice, and the lack of teaching strategies that emphasize phonetic and acoustic aspects (Fadiyah Nur Amalia et al., 2023; Hayes-Harb & Barrios, 2022; Kusrin et al., 2023; Lestiono & Gusdian, 2019; Srakaew, 2021). For example, Indonesian speakers tend to replace /q/ (ق) with /k/ and /z/ (ز) with /s/ due to the absence of similar sounds in their native language. If these errors are not addressed with appropriate learning methods, then the mispronunciation patterns will fossilize and may impact the next generation of learners, which may eventually lower the standard of Arabic phonology among non-Arabic speakers.

In Arabic, there are two main forms of written language, namely Classical Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic. Classical Arabic is the language used in the Qur'an and older literary works, so Muslims often need translations to understand it. Modern Standard Arabic, on the other hand, is a language that is widely spoken in the Arab world and can be understood by all Arabic speakers. The Qur'an demands the recitation of Classical Arabic with correct pronunciation. This is in line with the discussion in the system of phonology and phonetics of the Qur'an regarding topics such as the place where letters come out (*makhraj*) and the way letters are pronounced (letter properties), as also discussed in the system of phonology and phonetics of general Arabic (Adel Nasser, 2021; Akbar Khansir & Salehabadi, 2019; Seo, 2023; Yalan et al., 2021).

Based on this urgency, this study aims to identify the mispronunciation of Arabic letters from the aspect of phonology presented by a contemporary Indonesian vocalist, "NB", when reciting the Qur'anic recitation of Surah Al-Baqarah verses 1-5 through YouTube media. The focus of this research is the analysis of sound production errors (phonology and phonetics) in the recitation of the Qur'an, especially related to *makhraj* and the nature of letters, as well as the phenomenon of sound deviation that appears during the pronunciation process. Thus, this study is expected to contribute to scientific studies in the field of Arabic phonology and phonetics, especially in the context of reading the Qur'an by non-native Arabic speakers. In addition, the findings of this study can also be taken into consideration in the preparation of appropriate methods of teaching the pronunciation of hija'iyah letters, as an important initial stage before starting further Arabic language learning.

## METHOD

This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a content analysis design, utilizing video data from the TRANS7 OFFICIAL YouTube channel featuring "NB"'s recitation of the Qur'an. The study aimed to reveal, classify, and describe the types of phonological errors present in the recitation. Data collection involved the listening method with free listening techniques, supported by writing, note-taking, and recording to ensure data accuracy and verification. The error analysis method was used to identify, classify, and describe pronunciation errors made by "NB," with analysis based on Abdul Wahab Rosyidi's theoretical framework.



**Figure 1.** Research Design  
Source : by Research

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**A. Concepts of Phonology**

Phonetics is a branch of linguistics that studies the sounds of language produced by human speech, both in terms of production, transmission, and reception. In Arabic, the term phonetics is known as "taṣawut" (تصوّت) which comes from the word "saut" (sound), which is used to study the sound system in Arabic. Phonetics deals not only with the pronunciation of letters separately, but also with pronunciation in a series of words or sentences, both by native speakers and by learners of Arabic. In addition to segmental sounds such as letters and syllables, phonetics also includes the study of suprasegmental sounds, such as stress, intonation, and rhythm, which are very instrumental in conveying meaning and speaker intent.

Phonetics is closely related to phonology, although they differ in the object of study. Phonetics focuses on the physical aspects of sound, while phonology studies the function and role of sound in shaping the meaning of words or sentences. In the context of Arabic, especially in the Qur'an, understanding phonetics is important because it is directly related to the accuracy of letter pronunciation, *makhārij al-hurūf* (the place where letters come out), and the properties of letters that must be maintained so that the meaning of the verse does not change. Therefore, mastery of phonetics is a strong basis in the study of Qur'anic phonology, because in addition to studying the physical aspects of sounds, Qur'anic phonology also pays attention to how these sounds form sacred and authentic meanings in Qur'anic recitation.

The importance of phonetic and phonological studies in Arabic is inseparable from the position of Arabic as an international language and religious language. Arabic is an official language in more than 20 countries, such as Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Eritrea, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Yethen, and Palestine. The position of Arabic is even more special because it is the language of the Qur'an, the holy book of Muslims, and is the ritual language in the worship of Muslims around the world. Therefore, learning Arabic, especially to understand and read the Qur'an, is an obligation for every Muslim (Atabik, 2014; Zuhdi, 2014).

In the process of learning the Qur'an, it is not enough for a person to understand the meaning of the words, but also to be able to pronounce the *Hijaiyah* letters and various other reading symbols correctly. Errors in pronouncing letter sounds can cause a shift in the meaning of the verse, and can even change the meaning as a whole. Therefore, mastering the science of phonology, especially in the form of *tajweed*, is an important requirement for anyone who wants to read and understand the Qur'an correctly.

However, in practice, mispronunciations of Qur'anic verses are common, especially among non-native speakers of Arabic. These errors are generally related to how to pronounce the sounds of certain letters, which if not appropriate can affect the meaning as well as the writing. These errors are usually influenced by mother tongue interference, which has a different sound system from Arabic. Errors in the pronunciation of letters or phonemes like this are included in the phonological aspect and are categorized as linguistic errors, so it is important to study and correct through an in-depth understanding of Qur'anic phonetics and phonology. Thus, the science of phonetics and phonology has an important role in maintaining the purity of the Qur'anic recitation, ensuring that each letter, *makhraj*, and its characteristics are pronounced correctly so that the original meaning of the verse can be maintained and understood correctly by all Muslims.

The following is the classification of phonological errors in "NB's" reading of surah al-Baqarah verses 1-5

**Table 1. Phonological errors in Surah Al-Baqarah verses 1-5**

No.	Word (Correct Lafazh)	Deviation	Error	Place of Articulation	Characteristics	Stress (Nabr)
1	تَقْبَلُ	تَكْبَلُ	Change ق into ك (k)	O	P	P
2	اللَّهُ	اللح	Change ه into ح	O	P	P
3	لِلْمُتَّقِينَ	لِلْمُتَكِّينَ	Change ق into ك (k)	O	P	P
4	يُؤْمِنُونَ	يُعْمِنُونَ	Change و into ع	O	O	P
5	وَيُؤْمِنُونَ	وَيُكِيمُونَ	Change ق into ك (k)	O	P	P
6	رَزَقْنَاهُمْ	رَزَكْنَاهُمْ	Change ق into ك (k)	O	O	O

No.	Word (Correct Lafazh)	Deviation	Error	Place of Articulation	Characteristics	Stress (Nabr)
7	وَالَّذِينَ	هُوَ الَّذِينَ	Adding letter و before	و -	-	P
8	يُؤْمِنُونَ	يُعْمِنُونَ	Change و into ع	و ع	O	P
9	أَنْزَلَ	عَنْزَلَ	Change و into ع	و ع	O	P
10	فَبَلِّغْ	كَبَلِّغْ	Change ق into ك (k)	ق ك	O	P
11	وَبِالْآخِرَةِ	وَبِالْآخِرَةِ	Adding "ا" after ر	ر -	-	O
12	يُوقِنُونَ	يُوكِنُونَ	Change ق into ك (k)	ق ك	O	P
13	أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ	عُولِجِكَ	Change و into ع dan ! into ع	و ع	O	P

Source: by Researcher

### Discussion (Data Analysis)

Based on the table above, there are 13 pronunciation or phonological errors in reciting surat al-baqarah verses 1-5 and can be categorized into 4 types of errors in general.

#### a. Errors in *makhraj* (Place of Articulation)

*Makhraj* errors are errors in determining the place where the *Hijaiyah* letters come out. Each letter in Arabic has a distinctive place where the sound comes out (*makhraj*), such as from the throat, tongue, lips, oral cavity, and nasal cavity. Inaccuracy in pronouncing the letter's *makhraj* can lead to significant differences in meaning. For example, the letter (ض) comes from the back side of the tongue, but is often pronounced as (د) due to lack of practice. These *makhraj* errors are common among non-Arabic readers due to the influence of mother tongue. Therefore, understanding and mastering the *makhraj* of letters is a fundamental aspect of reading the Qur'an correctly and fluently.

#### b. Errors in *Sifat* (Characteristics)

A *shifat* error occurs when the distinctive characteristics of a letter are not pronounced properly. The characteristics of letters include thickness (*tafkhim-tarqiq*), flow of sound (*jahr-hams*), and stress (*Shiddah-rikhwah*). For example, the letter (ر) should be read *tafkhim* (thick) under certain conditions, but instead it is read *tarqiq* (thin), or the letter (س) which should flow the breath (*hams*), is read halted like (ز). These errors can cause confusion of meaning and damage the beauty of reading the Qur'an.

#### c. Error in *Nabr* or stress

*Nabr* errors are errors in sound pressure or the length and shortness of the reading (*Mad* and *Qoshr*). In the Qur'an there are strict rules about when a letter or word should be lengthened (*mad*), shortened (*Qoshr*), and stressed (*Nabr*). For example, shortening the reading of *Mad Wajib Muttashil*, which should read 4-5 harakat, or putting stress out of place. These mistakes can change the meaning of the verse and disrupt the harmony of the rhythm (song) of reading the Qur'an.

#### d. Phoneme addition

This error is in the form of adding sounds or phonemes, usually known as *mad* in the Qur'an. Usually, this occurs due to the influence of the mother tongue or the reader's ignorance of the original form of the word. For example, adding a vowel or consonant sound at the beginning or end of a word, so that the reading becomes not according to the *Mushaf*. A simple example is adding a *Hamzah* (e) sound to a word that should not begin with *Hamzah*, or adding a consonant sound to the end of a word. The addition of these phonemes is classified as a serious error because it has the potential to change the meaning and reading law. These errors are detailed in the following explanation:

##### 1. The letter qaf (ق) is pronounced like the letter kaf (ك) in the words تَقْبَلِ، الْمُتَّقِينَ، وَيُؤْمِنُونَ، فَبَلِّغْ، يُوقِنُونَ، رَزَقْنَاهُمْ

The letter (ق) has the characteristics of انفجاري مهموس. The *makhraj* or place where the sound comes out is قسي لهوي (the far part of the tongue), Qaf is a short, loud, explosive, whispering sound. Qaf is a short, loud, explosive, and whispering sound. This sound is produced by air flowing from the lungs, passing through the larynx, without moving the vocal cords. Then it flows down the throat until it reaches the lowest part of the throat in the mouth, where the air is trapped by contacting the lowest part of the throat, including

the uvula, with the tip of the tongue for a period of time, the air is expelled by suddenly lowering the tip of the tongue, and the air flows out, causing an explosive sound. then the letter (ق) is pronounced more explosively so it is not the same pronunciation as the letter ك.

In contrast, the letter ك is pronounced through the back of the tongue in contact with the soft palate. When pronounced, the tongue rises and clings tightly to the soft palate, while the back palate also rises to close the air passage from the nose. The air is held for a moment and then released suddenly, creating a popping sound. The nature of this letter is *Infjārī* (popping), *Mahmus* (air flowing without vibration of the vocal cords), and not *Qalqalah* (bounce). In the process of pronunciation, the vocal cords do not vibrate, resulting in a clear and clean sound (Wahab Rosyidi, n.d.).

The mispronunciation of the letter ق into ك can change the physical aspect of the sound, and also potentially change the meaning, although these two letters both come out of the throat area (*Lahwiyah*), but the position and articulation are cognitively different. In the *Lafazh* تَقَبَّلَ read تَكَبَّلَ whose initial meaning is "accept" shifts to "shackle, restrain", *Lafazh* لِلْمُتَّقِينَ read لِلْمُتَكَبِّينَ which initially means "the pious" becomes a meaningless sentence, *Lafazh* وَيُقِيمُونَ وَيُكَيِّمُونَ which originally meant "establish or implement" became a meaningless sentence, Likewise, *Lafazh* رَزَقْنَهُمْ read رَزَكْنَهُمْ turns into a meaningless sentence in Arabic, then *Lafazh* قَبْلَكَ read كَبْلَكَ which originally meant "before you" became "your shackles", and *Lafazh* يُؤْمِنُونَ read يُؤْمِنُونَ became a meaningless sentence in Arabic.

## 2. The letter (ا، ء، ا) is pronounced like the letter (ع) in the words اُنزِلْ، اُولَئِكَ، يُؤْمِنُونَ

Indirectly, the sound ء and sound ع are indeed close, both coming out of the throat. However, they differ in the side or part of the throat. The sound has the *makhraj* of the base of the throat. The sound ء has the nature of انفجاري مهموس or a loud explosion. While the *makhraj* is حنجري or larynx, which is a sound that involves the larynx or glottis in its pronunciation. In the science of *tajweed*, the place where this letter comes out is also known as *Al-Halqu* (throat) and is included in the *Aqshal Halq* (base of the throat or lower throat) The letter that has the same place as this letter is the letter ha (ه). When this sound is pronounced, the glottis closes completely and the two vocal cords are close together, allowing no air to pass through in the short time that the *Hamzah* is pronounced, there is an explosive burst of rustling. The vocal cords do not vibrate, so *Hamzah* sounds laryngeal, explosive, whispery.

While the sound ع has the nature of احتكاكي مجهور or passive fricative. Its *makhraj* is وسط الحلق or حلق (middle of the throat). The way it is pronounced is by making the same sound produced by the throat with the tongue wall. So that the airflow causes friction, and both vocal cords vibrate when pronounced, thus, the sound sounds like a radical, velar, fricative sound. In addition, the sound ء has the properties شدة or strong. While the sound ع has the characteristic of توسط which is the middle between *Shiddah* and *Rakhwah*. The sound ء should be pronounced loudly, so that it is not like sounding trait which results in sounding like the sound.ع.

The error in this sentence also causes changes in the sound aspect and potentially changes the meaning. In يُعْمِنُونَ read يُؤْمِنُونَ, *Lafazh* اُنزِلْ read غُنزِلْ, *Lafazh* اُولَئِكَ read غُولِجِكَ, some of these *Lafazh* shift the actual sound and also make sentences in Arabic that are not meaningful.

## 3. The sound of the letter (ه) is pronounced like the letter (ح) in the phrase الله

The sound ha' (ه), has a letter exit place called حنجري, or also called luring, which is the sound or letter that comes out of the throat. In the science of *tajweed*, the place where this letter comes out is also known as *Al-Halqu* (throat) and is included in the *Aqshal Halq* (base of the throat or lower throat) The letter that has the same place of exit as this letter is the letter ha (ا). The pronunciation is that the soft palate is raised, so that the air does not pass through the nose and the vocal cords do not vibrate if the air passes through a wide gap in the vocal cords and the mouth is open.

While the place where the sound ح comes out is حنجري حلق or cyclic radical. Or also called the middle throat (وسط الحلق) and has the same properties as the letter ha (ه), namely احتكاكي مهموس or fricative whispering or blowing breath when pronouncing the sound. The way it is pronounced is to produce a throat sound in conjunction with the tongue wall. The airway in the throat space narrows when saying "ha" so that the air passes through friction and the vocal cords do not vibrate when saying it. Therefore, the "ha" sound is a voiced root, velar fricative, whisper. This error is a slightly fatal mistake in reading the Qur'an because it is the name of God that must be pronounced correctly and carefully. This error can also damage the theological meaning contained in the verse, because the improper mention of the name of God is contrary to the principle of maintaining the sanctity of the Qur'anic verses.

## 4. Adding letter و before و in the phrase وَالَّذِينَ

The sound و has the nature of احتكاكي مجهور, which is a voiced fricative, which means that there is no breath or (الهمس) in the word or sound. And the sound و has a *makhraj* شفوي which is part of the lips or also called the layered lips. The way it is pronounced is by pronouncing the letter together by the lips or "Shiftani". When one pronounces the letter و (wāw), the speech organs first form a position that resembles the vowel *dammah* (ُ), where the lips are rounded as when pronouncing the sound (u). However, this

position does not last long, as soon after, the speech organs move quickly to another position to make the transition typical of this semi-vowel sound.

During the pronunciation process, the lips remain in a rounded position, while the soft palate (velum) is raised, closing off the air pathway to the nose. This ensures that و is not a nasal sound, but rather comes out fully through the mouth. In addition, the vocal cords vibrate, indicating that this sound is voiced (*majhūr*), different from voiceless consonant sounds. With all these characteristics “waw” can be categorized as a semi-vowel or semi-consonant sound, because in pronunciation it has the properties of the vowel u but still acts as a consonant in the word structure. The resulting sound is similar to the letter w in English, as in the word "water", where there is a subtle movement from the rounded lip shape to the next vowel. Thus, when pronouncing it, the breath does not come out because it has the nature of *mahjur*, not *Mahmus*. The addition of the letter (ة) will result in a shift in meaning from the original, which originally meant "and" turned into "he (male)".

**5. Adding “ا” after ر in the phrase رَبِّ الْآخِرَةِ**

The addition of the letter “ا” later will result in changing the form of the sentence or word in Arabic. From *mufrod* (singular) to plural (many), thus shifting the meaning from the last day (*akhirat*) to "many *akhir*" and this is not commonly used in the Quran. Here there is an inaccurate emphasis of letters, resulting in an error when lengthening (مد) reading. The addition of phonemes that occurs can be in the form of a reduction in long vowels referred to as *Mad*. This refers to the phenomenon where long vowel sounds in Arabic are not pronounced in full by speakers. In Indonesian, vowel sounds consist of five letters, namely /a/, /i/, /u/, /e/, and /o/. Whereas in Arabic, vowel sounds or voids are referred to as *تأويلا (as-sawa'it)* and are divided into two categories: This error changes the structure of the word and can interfere with the meaning contained because it is not in accordance with the rules of reading the Qur'an.

If seen in outline, the following is the form of phonological classification along with the *makhraj* and properties of the letters above:

**Table 2. form of phonological classification along with the makhraj and properties of the letters**

No.	Sound	Phonetic Transcription	Manner of Articulation	Place of Articulation	Characteristic (الجهر / الهمس)
1	ق	(q)	انفجاري	لهوي	غير مجهور (مهموس)
2	ك	(k)	انفجاري	طبقي	غير مجهور (مهموس)
3	هـ	(h)	احتكاكي	حنجري	غير مجهور (مهموس)
4	ح	(ħ)	احتكاكي	حلقي	غير مجهور (مهموس)
5	الهمزة	(?)	انفجاري	حنجري	-
6	ع	(ʕ)	احتكاكي	حلقي	مجهور
7	و	(w)	أنفي	شفوي	مجهور

Source : by Resource

Based on the results and discussion that have been described, it can be concluded that the phonological errors in the reading of Surah Al-Baqarah verses 1-5 by “NB” include various important aspects, namely errors in *makhraj*, letter properties, and errors in stress (*Nabr*) and the addition of sounds. These errors occur mainly due to a lack of understanding and mastery of the correct *makhraj* and letter properties, as well as a weak ability to apply *tajweed* rules consistently. In addition, the influence of daily language habits that are different from the Arabic phonological system also contributed to the emergence of these errors.

As a result, these phonological errors not only disturb the beauty and accuracy of the Qur'anic recitation, but can also damage the meaning of the *Lafazh* read. This is certainly very important to be a concern, because reading the Qur'an correctly is part of an effort to maintain the purity of the divine message contained therein. Therefore, the results of this study emphasize the importance of learning Arabic phonology, especially related to *makhraj*, the nature of letters, and the laws of *tajweed*, so that the quality of reading the Qur'an can improve and avoid mistakes that can be fatal to the meaning. This finding is also an input for Qur'an educators and learners to

further emphasize aspects of phonetic practice in the process of learning to recite the Qur'an, so that the recitation of the Qur'an can be delivered fluently and in accordance with predetermined provisions.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis revealed phonological errors in "NB"'s recitation of Surah Al-Baqarah verses 1-5, including inaccuracies in *makhraj* (articulation points), letter properties, stress (*nabr*), and phoneme additions. These errors arose from insufficient understanding of Arabic phonology, inadequate *tajwid* mastery, and interference from the reciter's native language, potentially compromising recitational clarity and semantic accuracy. The findings highlight the need for systematic *tajwid* education, guided practice with qualified instructors, and heightened accountability for public figures as linguistic role models to prevent error fossilization. Future research should investigate longitudinal interventions combining auditory feedback technologies and mentorship programs to address phonological challenges in non-native Qur'anic recitation, particularly among influencers with wide audiences.

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