

An Examination of the Characteristics of Arabic Letters on the Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5

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Abstract

The knowledge related to the consonants of the Quran is an important thing that Muslims need to learn. This knowledge enhances their knowledge and helps Muslims correct the Quran's recitation correctly and accurately. The Muslim community who practices this knowledge can identify and distinguish the pronunciation of the letters of the Quran which are like each other, such as the letters Qaf and Kaf. This is because the mispronunciation of the letters of the Quran makes the meaning of the verses of the Quran distorted and does not comply with the requirements of Allah SWT. The issue of weakness in the pronunciation of Quranic letters among the Muslim community is seen as continuing to this day. The researchers conducting preliminary surveys in the centers of Quranic studies found that most of the Quran students at the school failed to correct the pronunciation of the letters of the Quran. Therefore, this study aims to examine and expose the consonants of the Quran letters found in Surah al-Baqarah, verses 1-5 as a further effort towards refining the debate on the consonants of letters in the Quran and so on will be extended to surahs or other verses of the Quran to include 30 juzs of the Quran. The researchers used content analysis and library research methods to identify the characteristics of Arabic letters in the Quran. The results of the study found that there are 12 consonants of the Quran which are Istifal, Hams, Isti'la', Inhiraf, Takrir, Bainiyyah, Rakhawah, Ghunnah, Lin, Safir, Itbaq, and Qalqalah in Surah al-Baqarah, verses 1-5. It is hoped that the disclosure of data related to the characteristics of Arabic letters in the Quran will help Muslims correct the pronunciation of the letters of the Quran by the recommendations and teachings of the Prophet PBUH.

Keywords: Weakness Of Mastery, The Letters Of The Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah Verses 1-5; An Examination; 12 Consonants

Introduction

Al-Quran is Kalamullah revealed by Allah SWT to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH over almost 23 years through the intermediary of the Archangel Gabriel AS. This process of decline is gradual to complete the 30 juzs of the Quran (al-Zarqani, 1988).

Teaching and learning related to the letters of the Quran have become the main topic in the syllabus of adult tajweed classes of various levels conducted in al-Quran study centers in Malaysia from the past to the present (Sholeh, 2024). However, the weakness in mastering the pronunciation of the letters of the Quran among adult students who participate in the study classes is still seen as continuing. This is proven through a preliminary survey by researchers at three adult Quran study centers in Malaysia, namely the Tartil Center in Kulim, Kedah, the al-Husary Academy in Kangar, Perlis, and the Darul Qurra' Quran Study Center in Bertam, Penang. The summary of information obtained from the owners of the study centres shows that on average almost 70% of the students in their places fail to pronounce the letters of the Quran accurately. The interview results found that this issue also involved students who had been studying the theory and method of pronunciation of the letters of the Quran for a long time.

This issue of mastery arises among individuals who are not native speakers of Arabic such as in Malaysia because the language is not considered a second language (Zarima, 2018). The weakness in pronunciation is due to several factors such as the influence of the local language and some Arabic letters that are not found in the pronunciation of Malay consonants (Kamarulzaman, 2000). Among the factors contributing to this issue of dominance is the dialect of the Malay language. This is because some Hijaiyyah letters are not found in Malay consonants, such as the letters (ح) and (هـ) (Sholeh, 2014 & Amiruldin, 2008).

The issue needs to be paid attention to preserving the true discipline in pronouncing the letters of the Quran, especially for those who are not able to master pronunciation properly. This is because, mistakes in the pronunciation of Arabic letters lead to the implication of changing the meaning, of speech and writing, especially spelling. For example, the consonant pronunciation (ق) and (ك), and the words qalbun and kalbun (Zarima, 2018). Furthermore, the correct pronunciation of the Hijaiyyah letters is a special requirement that is very important during the recitation of the Quran (Afifah, 2012). This is because the proper pronunciation of the letters of the Quran when reading the Quran is included in the demands of Islam (al-Mirsafi, n. d & Sholeh, 2024). Of course, the correct and perfect pronunciation of the letters of the Quran is a very important point to emphasize. Therefore, a perfect recitation of the Quran must be taken from teachers who have authentic recitation in the field of the Quran (Leong, 2012). Furthermore, the accuracy of the pronunciation of the letters of the Quran was emphasized by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, which can be seen through his action in choosing four Sahabah who are experts in the field of the Quran as teachers of the Quran (al-Bukhari, 2023).

In this regard, this study was conducted to explore and reveal data related to the letters of the Quran contained in Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5 which is an extension of the previous study which focused on Surah al-Fatihah. The collected data are listed in the form of tables and brief descriptions to help the community know and understand the data related to the consonants of the letters of the Quran contained in Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5. This study is expected to be completed so that it covers 30 juzs of the Quran. Hopefully, the results of this study can provide new and useful inputs to the community in knowing, understanding, and acting on the correct pronunciation of the letters of the Quran as recommended by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

Research Objective

The main objective of this study is to identify and disclose data related to the consonants of the letters of the Quran contained in Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5. After that, this study will elaborate on the data in detail guided by the instructions of the Prophet PBUH.

Discussion

According to al-Khazin (2004), Surah al-Baqarah is a surah revealed in Medina which is known as Madaniyyah. There is one verse revealed in Mecca, which is the 281st verse. However, in the opinion of the most famous scholars, this verse still gets the title Madaniyyah referring to the time of its decline, which is after the migration of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH to Medina. This surah has 286 verses, there is also an opinion that the number of verses in this surah is 287 verses. Looking at the number of words and letters, it has 6121 words and 25500 letters (al-Khazin, 2004). This surah is named Surah al-Baqarah which means cow because there is a story about a cow that the Bani Isra'il had to buy because they wanted to solve a murder case that occurred among them (Sonhadji, 1992).

Among the advantages of reading Surah al-Baqarah is described as the reward of reading this Surah will turn into a cloud or a bird that will shade the reader on the Day of Resurrection and if this Surah is recited in a house, surely the devil will run away from the house (al-Khazin, 2004).

Verses 1-5 of Surah al-Baqarah are formulated with the characteristics of the pious persons and the believers. There are three characteristics of a pious person that are stated: first, believing truthfully about supernatural things such as heaven, hell, and the scales on the Day of Resurrection. Second, perform the prayer five times at the time with sufficient conditions. Third, issuing zakat, providing sufficient support to children and wives, donating, and giving alms to those in need. Meanwhile, there are also two characteristics of believers, namely first, believing in all the Scriptures, namely the Quran revealed to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, the Torah to the Prophet Moses, the Zabur to the Prophet David, and the Gospel to the Prophet Isa. Second, believing in the existence of the Day of Resurrection which is a day where all human deeds will be counted and rewarded according to the deeds done. Good deeds are rewarded with heaven, while evil deeds are rewarded with hellfire (al-Baydawi, 2017 & Sonhadji, 1992).

Through this study, the researchers debated the consonants of the letters found in Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5. These consonants are categorized into shared attributes such as Hams and Rakhawah and singular attributes such as Takrir (Suwaid, 2021). However, the researchers only touched on the most important consonants to facilitate the public to understand and practice the recitation of Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5. Analysis of the characteristics of Arabic letters and the related consonants found in Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5 are explained in Table 1 and Table 2 below.

Table 1

Analysis of The Characteristics of Arabic Letters and Consonants Found in Surah Al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5

Code	Text of the Quran	Letters	Consonants
Q1	آلَمْ	Hamzah, Lam, Fa', Mim	Istifal, Hams, Bainiyyah, Ghunnah
S2	ذَٰلِكَ أَلْكَتَبُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ	Dhal, Lam, Kaf, Ta', Ra', Ba', Fa', Ha', Dal, Qaf, Nun	Istifal, Inhiraf, Bainiyyah, Isti'la', Lin, Ghunnah
S3	الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ	Hamzah, Lam, Dhal, Nun, Mim, Ba', Ghayn, Waw, Qaf, Şad, Ta'	Istifal, Inhiraf, Bainiyyah, Isti'la', Lin, Hams, Safir, Itbaq, Raghawah
S4	وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ	Waw, Mim, Ra', Zai, Qaf, Nun, Fa'	Istifal, Bainiyyah, Ghunnah, Isti'la', Qalqalah
S5	وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ	Waw, Lam, Dhal, Nun, Mim, Ba', Zai, Hamzah, Ya', Kaf, Qaf	Istifal, Inhiraf, Bainiyyah, Lin, Qalqalah, Hams
S6	وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ	Waw, Ba', Hamzah, Kha', Ra', Ta', Mim, Qaf, Nun	Istifal, Inhiraf, Bainiyyah, Isti'la', Ghunnah
S7	أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ	Lam, Hamzah, Kaf, 'Ain, Dal, Mim, Ra', Ba', Ha'	Istifal, Takrir, Isti'la', Bainiyyah, Ghunnah
S8	وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ	Wow, Lam. Hamzah, Kaf, Fa', Nun	Istifal, Inhiraf, Bainiyyah, Hams, Ghunnah

Table 1 above shows the verses of the Quran from Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5 which are divided according to Code S1 to Code S8. Code S1 states that the letters of the Quran involved are Hamzah, Lam, Fa', and Mim. Code S2 contains the letters Dhal, Lam, Kaf, Ta', Ra', Ba', Fa', Ha', Dal, Qaf, and Nun. Code S3 contains the letters Hamzah, Lam, Dhal, Nun, Mim, Ba', Ghayn, Waw, Qaf, Şad, and Ta'. Code S4 is the letters Waw, Mim, Ra', Zai, Qaf, Nun, and Fa'. Code S5 is the letters Waw, Lam, Dhal, Nun, Mim, Ba', Zai, Hamzah, Ya', Kaf and Qaf. Code S6 is the letters Waw, Ba', Hamzah, Kha', Ra', Ta', Mim, Qaf and Nun. Code S7 is the letters Lam, Hamzah, Kaf, 'Ain, Dal, Mim, Ra', Ba' and Ha', and the last code S8 is the letters Waw, Lam. Hamzah, Kaf, Fa' and Nun. The consonants of the letters of the Quran related to Code S1 are Istifal, Hams, Bainiyyah, and Ghunnah. Code S2 are the consonants of Istifal, Inhiraf, Bainiyyah, Isti'la', Lin, and Ghunnah. The code S3 consonants are Istifal, Inhiraf, Bainiyyah, Isti'la', Lin, Hams, Safir, Itbaq, and Raghawah. Code S4 consonants are Istifal, Bainiyyah, Ghunnah, Isti'la' and Qalqalah. The code S5 consonants are Istifal, Inhiraf, Bainiyyah, Lin, Qalqalah, and Hams. Code S6 consonants are Istifal, Inhiraf, Bainiyyah, Isti'la' and Ghunnah. The code S7 consonants are Istifal, Takrir, Isti'la', Bainiyyah, and Ghunnah, and Code S8 which is the last code of the consonants are Istifal, Inhiraf, Bainiyyah, Hams, and Ghunnah.

Table 2

Details of the Characteristics of Arabic Letters and Consonants Found in Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5

Code	Consonants	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	Total	Percent (%)
K1	Istifal	3	11	10	6	18	4	9	5	66	49.6
K2	Hams	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2
K3	Isti'la'	0	2	2	2	1	3	1	0	11	8
K4	Inhiraf	0	2	2	0	1	1	1	1	8	7
K5	Takrir	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.7
K6	Bainiyyah	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	1	20	15
K7	Rakhawah	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2
K8	Ghunnah	2	1	0	3	3	2	2	1	14	10.5
K9	Lin	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	2
K10	Qalqalah	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	1.5
K11	Sapphire	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.7
K12	Itbaq	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.7
Total		8	21	21	15	28	13	17	10	133	-
Percent (%)		6	15.7	15.7	11	21	10	13	7.5	-	100

Referring to Table 2 above, the findings of the study are described as follows. Consonants in Code S1 were found as often as eight times (6%), S2 21 times (15.7%), S3 21 times (15.7%), S4 15 times (11%), S5 28 times (21%), S6 13 times (10%), S7 17 times (13%) and S8 10 times (7.5%). Meanwhile, the consonants of the letters of the Quran as a whole found in verses S1 to S8 are shown as follows. Code K1 (Inhiraf) was detected 66 times (49.6%), K2 (Hams) three times (2%), K3 (Isti'la') 11 times (8%), K4 (Inhiraf) eight times (7%), K5 (Takrir) once (0.7%), K6 (Bainiyyah) 20 times (15%), K7 (Rakhawah) three times (2%), K8 (Ghunnah) 14 times (10.5%), K9 (Lin) three times (2%), K10 (Qalqalah) twice (1.5%), K11 (Safir) once (0.7%) and the last code K12 (Itbaq) once (0.7%).

Conclusion

The results of the study conducted on the consonants of the letters of the Quran found in Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5 can be summarized as follows:

- i. Surah al-Baqarah is a surah revealed in Medina which is known as Madaniyyah. There is one verse revealed in Mecca, which is the 281st verse. However, in the opinion of the most famous scholars, this verse still gets the title Madaniyyah referring to the time of its decline, which is after the migration of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH to Medina.
- ii. This surah has 286 verses, there is also an opinion that the number of verses in this surah is 287 verses. Looking at the number of words and letters, it has 6121 words and 25500 letters.
- iii. This study has explored and revealed the consonants of the letters of the Quran found in Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5 as continuing of the study that has been carried out on Surah al-Fatihah. The collected data is listed in the table and the complete description is made to help the community know and understand the data related to the consonants of the letters of the Quran contained in Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5.

These consonants are categorized into shared attributes such as Hams and Rakhawah and single attributes such as Takrir. However, the researchers only discussed the most important consonants to facilitate the public to understand and practice the recitation of Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5.

- iv. There are 12 consonants of the letters of the Quran in Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5 namely Istifal, Hams, Isti'la', Inhiraf, Takrir, Bainiyyah, Rakhawah, Ghunnah, Lin, Safir, Itbaq and Qalqalah. The consonants are arranged according to the codes K1 to K12. Meanwhile, Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5 are arranged according to codes S1 to S8. The study concluded that the most frequent consonant in Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 1-5 is the Istifal consonant, which is 66 times equivalent to 46.9%. Whereas, the fewest consonants are Takrir, Safir, and Itbaq consonants which are in one place each equivalent to 0.7%.

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