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Exploring the Use of Song Media as a Phonetic Learning Innovation for College Students

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ABSTRACT

Background: First-semester students in the Arabic Language Education program often struggle with pronouncing complex Arabic phonemes in the *al-Ashwat wa al-Lahjat* course.
Aims: This study aims to identify the phonemes that pose pronunciation difficulties, examine the effectiveness of song-based media in enhancing students' phonetic accuracy, and explore students' perceptions of using songs in learning.
Methods: A qualitative case study approach was employed, involving 35 first-semester students from Class C of the Arabic Language Education Program at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. Data were collected through participant observation and focus group discussions (FGDs).
Results: The findings revealed that integrating song media, including *hijaiyyah* letter songs to identify problematic phonemes and *Asmaul Husna* songs to facilitate pronunciation practice, significantly enhances students' phonetic articulation. The most challenging phonemes identified were ع ('ain), ص (shad), ض (dhad), غ (ghin), ظ (dhadz), خ (kha), ث (tsa), ح (ha), ق (qaf), ش (shin), and ط (tha). Furthermore, song-based learning fosters an engaging and enjoyable learning environment, enhances motivation, and promotes collaborative learning.
Implications: These findings indicate that song media can be an effective pedagogical tool for enhancing Arabic phonetic instruction by improving students' pronunciation accuracy, fostering engagement, and creating a more interactive and enjoyable learning environment.
Keywords: Song-based learning; Arabic phonetics; pronunciation; innovative teaching methods

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1. INTRODUCTION

Phonetic learning is a fundamental aspect of language acquisition, especially in improving pronunciation skills and proper intonation. Phonetics, the study of speech sounds, is a priority to master before learning other linguistic elements, including language skills (Musthofa et al., 2021). (Yuan & Zhang, 2022) assert that phonetics is an integral part of

language structure that serves as a starting point in language learning because it emphasises the production and perception of speech sounds. (Gurova et al., 2020) added that phonetic skills include understanding the normative structure of phonetic elements, such as phonemes and intonation patterns in foreign languages. In addition, listening and pronunciation skills in phonetics involve rhythm and intonation that help automate and combine sound choices. In a linguistic context, a phoneme is the smallest unit of sound that distinguishes meaning in a language (Asif et al., 2021). Ibrahim et al. (2020) noted that in Arabic there are 34 phonemes, consisting of 28 consonants, three short vowels, and three long vowels. Thus, phonetics plays an important role in language learning, particularly in building speaking skills and understanding proper sound structures.

The Arabic language that is the focus of the al-*Ashwat wa al-Lahjat* course is Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). MSA is a modified form of Classical Arabic (CA) which is currently used in formal communication in Arab countries. Meanwhile, CA is the language used in the Qur'an and classical texts (Ali et al., 2021). This classification refers to the Western model, whereas in the Arabic perspective, Arabic is divided into *fusha* (standard) and *'amiyyah* (nonstandard) (Fitriani, 2022). One of the main challenges in learning Arabic phonetics is mastering the pronunciation of its letters, which requires direct guidance from educators to correct students' mistakes individually (Nasef et al., 2018). In addition, the difference in articulation between Arabic and Indonesian phonemes often causes pronunciation difficulties (Amalia, 2023). Fitrianah (2019) added that this phonetic difficulty is caused by language interference, lack of motivation to master Arabic articulation following the rules, and lack of mastery of the pronunciation of Arabic phonemes. In addition, some factors of speech disorders can also be an obstacle in learning phonetics. Therefore, this challenge in mastering Arabic phonetics needs to be considered for students studying Arabic.

Students of Arabic Language Education (PBA) UIN Sunan Kalijaga in the third semester face challenges in the course of *al-Ashwat wa al-Lahjat*. Based on the results of researcher observations, this course is taught in the first semester as an initial foundation for learning Arabic. At this stage, students need a basic understanding of Arabic phonetics to support language competence. There are three classes in the first semester of PBA UIN Sunan Kalijaga, namely classes A, B, and C. Based on an interview with the lecturer teaching the *al-Ashwat wa al-Lahjat* course, it was found that class C tends to experience greater difficulty in learning phonetics, especially in pronouncing complex Arabic phonemes. The main factor influencing this difficulty is that the majority of class C students do not have an educational background in Islamic boarding schools, so they are not familiar with the characteristics of Arabic sounds. based on the results of interviews with several students, learning *al-Ashwat wa al-Lahjat* is less interesting and monotonous because the learning media used are less varied. This finding indicates the need for more adaptive teaching innovations to support students' success in mastering Arabic phonetics.

1.1 Research Gap and Novelty

One of the innovations that can overcome problems in learning is the utilisation of technology as learning media, especially audiovisual media. This media not only serves as a tool in the educational process but is also an important factor in increasing the effectiveness of learning and teaching success (Nicolaou & Kalliris, 2020). Audiovisual media allows the delivery of material through a combination of visual and auditory elements, which can create more interactive learning conditions and help students acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes more optimally (Saputro et al., 2021). This is in line with the concept of dual coding developed by (Mayer, 2009) which explains that humans have two main cognitive channels, namely visual and auditory channels, which can be optimised

to improve information processing. The use of media that combines graphics, video, animation, and audio narration is more effective in improving information absorption compared to the use of text or audio separately (Ginting et al., 2024). Thus, the integration of audiovisual media in learning not only enriches the learning experience but also contributes to the improvement of students' academic outcomes.

The use of songs in audiovisual media can be an effective strategy for stimulating learning effectiveness. Songs, as a product of audiovisual technology, can be utilised in the learning process by integrating the interactive role of educators, thereby creating a positive learning environment (Siregar, 2018). William (1983), as cited in (Mubarak et al., 2021), explains that songs can create relaxation and harmony, which support the enhancement of learning effectiveness. At present, songs have become a trend among most university students and are frequently used in various academic and non-academic activities (Song, 2021). Furthermore, Suwartono, as cited in (Farhansyah et al., 2023), states that the rhythm and reliability of songs can be utilised in language learning, as the rhythm and melody in songs can touch a person's emotions and motivate listeners to imitate the lyrics. The same point is emphasised by Nurdiana, as cited in (Nur, 2024), who asserts that songs can be listened to during various activities and help individuals grasp sounds in spoken form. Thus, songs as a learning medium not only enhance classroom activities but also facilitate the language comprehension process. Moreover, according to Nurul Fawzani et al. (2022), the use of songs as a medium for language learning has significant benefits, as song lyrics contain speech and sentence structures that can be unconsciously retained in the brain, thereby supporting more effective language learning.

Research relevant to this study was conducted by Ardiel et al. (2023), which showed that students' mastery of alphabet spelling with video and audio media became better and smoother. In addition, research by Azizah & Nugraheni (2020) shows that the use of song media in phonology learning helps children better understand how sounds are produced in human speech and be able to pronounce and distinguish vowels and consonants appropriately. Another study by Nurhayati, (2020) showed that students find it easier to pronounce plosives than fricatives. Difficulties arise when they try to pronounce similar sounds such as /v/ and /f/ in fricatives, as they tend to use the pronunciation in their mother tongue (Indonesian). The study also identified other factors that influence learning, such as internal motivation (e.g., desire to learn the language through films, songs or other media) and external motivation (e.g., materials provided by lecturers). Similar research was also conducted by Zubaidah & Rahman (2019), who stated that songs can be used in learning *ashwat* (phonetics) in various circles because Arabic songs can make it easier, interesting, and avoid boredom in teaching phonetics.

However, most of the research that has been presented focuses more on phonetics in Indonesian and English, while the discussion of Arabic phonetics is still very limited. This shows a research gap, especially in efforts to develop Arabic phonetic skills for students through innovative approaches, such as the use of song media. Therefore, this study aims to examine how song media can be an innovation in phonetic learning and the extent of its effectiveness in improving students' phonetic competence.

1.2 Research Question

This study is guided by the following research questions: (1) Which Arabic phonemes remain the most challenging for students to pronounce after engaging with audio-visual song media featuring *Hijaiyyah* letters, and (2) what factors contribute to these pronunciation difficulties? Additionally, (3) what are the effects of incorporating *Asmaul Husna* songs in enhancing students' phonetic skills, particularly in terms of pronunciation accuracy and phonetic comprehension? Lastly, (4) how do students perceive the use of

songs as phonetic learning tools, and to what extent do songs enhance their motivation and overall learning effectiveness?

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This research used a qualitative approach with a case study method to analyze the effectiveness of song media in learning phonetics in first-semester students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program (PBA) at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. The focus of this research is the al-*Ashwat wa al-Lahjat* course, which is only taught in the first semester.

2.2 Research Subjects

The research subjects consisted of 35 first-semester C class students, the majority of whom were not graduates of Islamic boarding schools, selected based on the results of the identification of difficulties in pronouncing complex phonemes by the lecturer.

2.3 Research Procedures

This research was conducted in three main stages. The first stage was to play *hijaiyyah* letter songs to identify the imperfect pronunciation of *hijaiyyah* letters. This identification activity was reinforced by an initial test through interviews to find out the specific difficulties experienced by students. The second stage is a learning intervention designed to increase students' active involvement in the learning process. Students are not only asked to listen to the *Asmaul Husna* song carefully but also invited to participate in group discussions regarding the phonetic characteristics of each letter contained in the *Asm'ul Husna* vocabulary. Students are allowed to identify the differences between similar phonemes, such as ض (*dhad*) and د (*dal*) or ق (*qaf*) and ك (*kaf),* by comparing their pronunciation with the original pronunciation in the song. After that, students do pronunciation exercises in pairs, where one student reads out certain words, while their partner is in charge of correcting and providing feedback.

In addition, interactive practice sessions were conducted in the form of phonetic games, such as guessing letters from the sounds pronounced by their partners or composing words by paying attention to the accuracy of *makhraj* and letter properties. Students were also asked to sing back the *Asmaul Husna* song in small groups by emphasizing correct articulation. During this session, the researcher provided direct guidance by correcting errors and providing examples of more accurate pronunciation. To strengthen understanding, students are invited to practice the pronunciation of letters in syllables and simple sentences, so that they can not only pronounce letters individually but also in a broader context. With this more interactive method, students become more confident and active in improving their pronunciation. The third stage is an evaluation in the form of a final test, where students are asked to pronounce the *hijaiyyah* letters again without the help of songs to see the improvement that has occurred.

2.4 Research Instruments

Data were collected through several techniques, namely observation, group interviews (FGD), and documentation. Observation is done directly to observe how students pronounce *hijaiyah* letters in various situations, especially during learning by using songs that focus on the criteria of *makharijul huruf*, *sifatul huruf*, and *nuthqish shawamit* and

observe their behaviour when interventions are carried out using songs. The group interviews were conducted to understand students' experiences in using songs as a medium for phonetic learning. A total of 35 students were divided into seven small groups, each consisting of five people. The selection of participants was done randomly by ensuring a diversity of backgrounds to gain a broader perspective. In a structured FGD session, students were asked questions about challenges in the pronunciation of phonemes, their perceptions of the effectiveness of songs, as well as how songs help them understand Arabic phonetics. Meanwhile, the documentation used in this study is in the form of video recordings. This was chosen because it not only records the sound but also records the shape of the student's mouth when pronouncing the *hijaiyah* letters.

In the phonetic assessment rubric, *makharijul huruf* and *sifatul huruf* can be measured using a clear criteria-based rating scale. *Makharijul huruf* is measured by evaluating the position of the articulator organ when pronouncing phonemes according to Arabic phonetic standards, with a score of 5 indicating very accurate pronunciation and a score of 1 indicating incorrect positioning of the articulator organ. *Sifatul huruf* (Letter Sound Characteristics) is evaluated based on phonetic properties such as jahr, *shiddah, isti'la, istifal*, and *hams*, with a score of 5 indicating highly appropriate letter sound characteristics and a score of 1 indicating significant errors in letter sound characteristics.

2.5 Data Analysis

The data analysis technique in this study used a descriptive-interpretative approach carried out through five main stages. Data reduction was carried out by filtering information from observations, group interviews (FGDs), and video recording documentation, focusing on students' pronunciation errors in the initial test, interactions during the intervention, and pronunciation changes in the final test. The reduced data were then presented in the form of narrative descriptions and comparison tables, including comparisons between the initial and final tests, analysis of video recordings related to oral articulation, and FGD results regarding students' experiences in using songs as phonetic learning media. To increase validity, data triangulation was carried out by comparing the results of observations, video recordings, and FGDs. The data that has been analyzed is then interpreted by looking at the pattern of improvement in the pronunciation of certain phonemes, the ease of students in pronouncing phonemes in the context of words, as well as factors that affect the effectiveness of this method, such as the duration of intervention and student motivation. The resulting conclusion not only explains the effectiveness of songs in improving students' phonetic skills, but also provides recommendations for the development of more innovative phonetic learning methods in the future.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Findings

Identification of Pronunciation Errors

In the early stages, researchers presented song media by utilizing the YouTube platform. The song presented raised the theme of hijaiyah letters, with the following reasons: First, because songs about hijaiyah letters include all Arabic letters, from أ to ي, and include complex phonemes, such as the letters ق (qaf), ع (*'ain*), غ (*ghain*), and so on. In addition, *hijaiyah* letters are the basic letters in Arabic. Secondly, based on the initial observation, the researcher found that each student was familiar with the *hijaiyah* letters. However, the researcher tried to identify phonemes that are difficult to pronounce by students and determine the level of their phonetic ability by presenting hijaiyah letter songs as a medium to improve students' phonetic ability. Third, because hijaiyah songs have rhythms and

tones like songs in general, researchers try to provide a more interactive learning experience. Fourth, *hijaiyah* songs, according to Maulana et al. (2021), help bridge the accuracy of sound production and train students' articulation in word form. The presentation of this song includes audio and visual aspects, so it follows Mayer's theory (Mayer, 2009), The material presented can improve students' phonetic skills. In simple terms, the purpose of choosing this *hijaiyah* letter song is to identify students' difficulties in pronouncing Arabic phonemes, starting from the letters أ to ي.

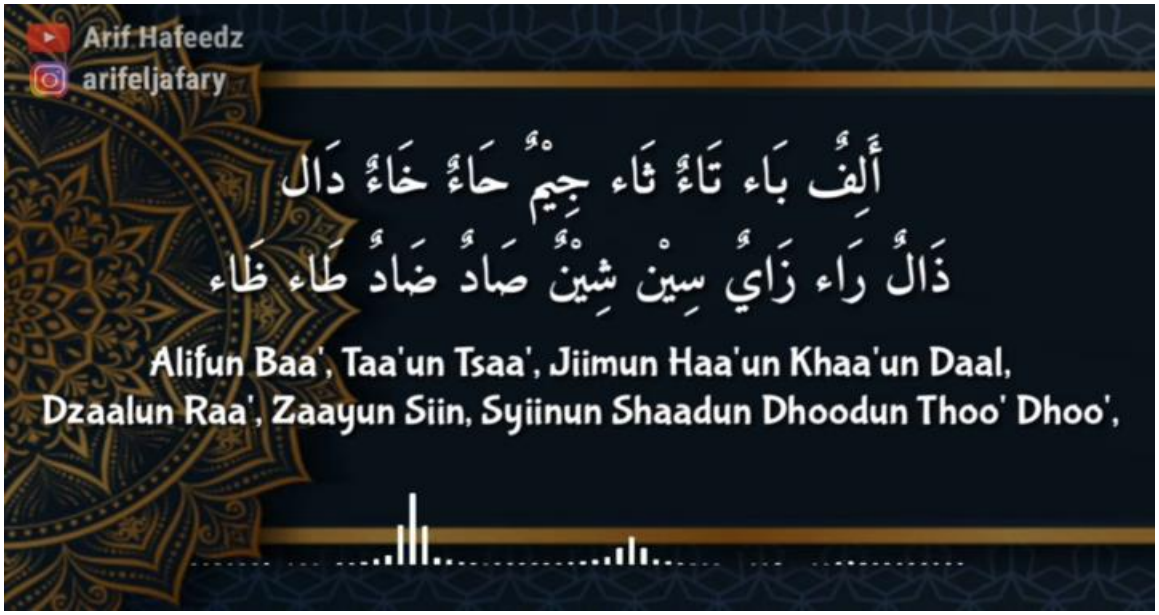

Figure 1 Song of the Hijaiyyah Letter
taken from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsYBpwFN3bA

Researchers found various errors in the pronunciation of *hijaiyyah* letters made by students. These errors vary, ranging from inaccuracy in determining the *makhraj* (the place where the letter comes out), inaccurately fulfilling the properties of the letter, especially the sound pressure on certain letters, to confusion in distinguishing phonemes that have similar sounds. Some students have difficulty in pronouncing letters that require strong air pressure, such as ص (*shad*) and ط (*tha*), while others tend to replace certain letter sounds with more familiar sounds in their native language, such as replacing ض (*dhad*) with د (*dal*) or غ (*ghain*) with G. In addition, observations also show that errors do not only occur in the pronunciation of individual letters but also when the letters are used in words or phrases, especially those with complex phonetic structures. This shows that there are still challenges in understanding and applying Arabic phonetic principles accurately.

To strengthen the observation results, the researcher conducted an initial test through interviews to identify errors and difficulties in the pronunciation of *hijaiyah* letters experienced by students. In this process, students were asked to pronounce the *hijaiyah* letters one by one according to the guidelines provided, either individually or in groups. The assessment process in the interview focused on analyzing phonetic errors, using an assessment rubric based on *makharijul huruf* and *sifatul huruf*. *Makharijul huruf* is evaluated based on the accuracy of the position of the speech organs in producing each phoneme, such as the base of the throat (*halqiyah*), the base of the tongue (*ashlul lisan*), the middle of the tongue (*wasthul lisan*), the tip of the tongue (*tharful lisan*), the lips (*shafawiyah*), and the oral and nasal cavities (*jawfiyah & ghunnah*). Errors in these aspects can lead to significant sound changes that hinder pronunciation clarity. Scoring is done on a scale of five, where a score of 1 indicates the position of the speech organ is so far from the correct *makhraj* that the letter sounds like another phoneme. A score of 2 indicates the position of the speech organ is less precise, causing significant changes in

sound. A score of 3 indicates the position of the speech organ is quite good, but still requires minor improvements to achieve *makhraj* accuracy. Score 4 indicates the position of the speech organ is almost in accordance with the correct *makhraj*, there are only minor deviations. A score of 5 indicates that the position of the speech organ is in accordance with the correct *makhraj* without error.

In addition, letter characteristics are also an important aspect of the assessment, including voice characteristics such as *jahr* and hams (clarity of sound and airflow), *shiddah*, *rakhawah*, and *bainiyyah* (level of sound pressure), *isti'la* and *istifal* (direction of sound), *ithbaq* and *infitah* (sound crush), as well as special properties such as *qalqalah* (sound reflection), *shafir* (hissing), *inhiraf* (sound deviation in ل and ر), *tafasysyī* (sound spread in ش), *takrir* (light vibration in ر), and *istithalah* (sound lengthening in ض). The accuracy of the application of these properties determines whether the student's pronunciation is following the rules of tajweed or still requires improvement. The rating scale in this aspect also consists of five levels. Score 1 is given if the letter traits are not visible, so the sound resembles another phoneme. Score 2 if some letter traits appear but are inconsistent and still sound weak or unclear. Score 3 if most of the letter traits have been applied, but there are still deficiencies in the sharpness or clarity of the sound. Score 4 if almost all letter traits are appropriate, there are only slight deviations. Score 5 shows the letter traits are pronounced clearly and by the *tajweed* rules without errors.

The researchers formed 7 groups each consisting of 5 students to facilitate the identification of phoneme pronunciation errors through the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method. With this group division, researchers can be more effective in observing the difficulties faced by each student and providing more focused guidance. Through FGD, students are encouraged to discuss and share experiences related to constraints in the pronunciation of certain phonemes. In addition, this method allows for more active interaction between students, so that they can help each other improve their pronunciation.

In the first group, some students experienced errors in pronouncing certain letters. The first student had an error in pronouncing the letter ع (*'Ain*) because the epiglottis region was not active, causing the sound to sound faint or resemble أ (hamzah). In addition, the *sifatul* huruf *bainiyyah* is not well realized, so the sound is too disconnected or even not heard at all. Errors are also found in the pronunciation of ص (*Shad*), where the tip of the tongue does not press enough against the front palate, causing the sound to be closer to س (*Sin*). This error also removes the properties of *isti'la'* and *ithbaq*, so the sound does not rise to the upper palate and loses its thick character. In the letter ق (*Qaf*), the position of the tongue did not rise enough to the base of the throat, causing the sound to approach ك (*Kaf*), and the nature of the *qalqalah* was not clear enough, so the sound reflection was not strong enough. The second student had an error in pronouncing ض (*Dhad*), where the edge of the tongue did not press enough against the upper molars, causing the sound to approach د (*Dal*). In addition, the nature of *rakhawah* did not appear well, so the sound was shorter and did not flow as it should. In the letter غ (*Ghain*), the base of the tongue does not press enough on the soft palate, causing the sound to sound like the letter G in Indonesian, with less strong rakhawah properties resulting in a more disconnected sound. Errors were also found in the pronunciation of ت (*Ta*), where the tip of the tongue was not pressed tightly against the base of the upper incisors, causing the sound to be less sharp. Excessive *syiddah* makes the sound cut off too quickly, as well as unstable hams, so the sound is not smooth. Meanwhile, the third to fifth students were able to pronounce all phonemes well.

In the second group, the first student had errors in the pronunciation of ض (*Dhad*) and ظ (*Zha*). The interdental sound was not fully formed, causing ظ (*Zha*) to sound like ز (*Zay*). This error also causes the *isti'la'* trait to not appear properly, so the sound is not thick enough, and the *rakhawah* is not enough, making the sound more like a hard

consonant sound in other languages. In the letter ك (*Kaf*), the position of the tongue is less raised to the soft and hard palate, causing the sound to sound more like ق (*Qaf*), as well as the nature of hams is not clear, so the sound is less flowing. The second student had an error in the pronunciation of خ (*Kha*), where the base of the tongue was not far enough back, causing the sound to be closer to ح (*Ḥa*), with the nature of the hams being less strong so that the sound was less powerful. Errors are also found in the pronunciation of ل (*Lam*), where the edge of the tongue does not stick tightly to the upper gums, causing the sound to be shorter and less flowing. The nature of *inḥiraf* also did not appear well, causing the sound-to-sound flatter. Meanwhile, one of the students in this group still needs to improve the sound pressure on ص (*Shad*) to make it clearer.

In the third group, the first student had an error in pronouncing ع (*'Ain*) due to the wrong position of the epiglottis, causing the sound to be almost inaudible. In addition, the *bainiyyah* trait was not well realized, causing the sound to lose its supposed transition. Errors were also found in the pronunciation of ز (*Zay*), where the tip of the tongue was not close enough to the lower incisors, causing the sound to be closer to س (Sin). Excessive *shafir* also caused the whistling sound to sound too *sharp*. Meanwhile, the second to fifth students were able to pronounce all phonemes well.

In the fourth group, the first student had an error in pronouncing غ (*Ghain*), where the base of the tongue did not press enough against the soft palate, causing the sound to be less resonant. The *rakhawah* trait was also not fully present, causing the sound to be shorter than it should be. Another error was found in the pronunciation of ب (*Ba*), where the lips did not close tightly enough, causing the sound to lack a clear *qalqalah* reflection. Meanwhile, the second to the fifth students were able to pronounce all phonemes well.

In the fifth group, the first student had an error in pronouncing ث (*Tsa*), where the tip of the tongue did not come out enough from between the upper and lower incisors, causing the sound to sound like س (*Sin*). In addition, the hams were not strong enough, causing the sound-to-sound fainter. Errors were also found in the pronunciation of ف (*Fa*), where the lower lip did not press enough against the upper incisors, causing the sound to be not clear enough, with the nature of hams not being strong enough resulting in a shorter sound. The second student had errors in pronouncing ح (*Ha*), where the epiglottis region was underactive, causing the sound to sound more like ه (*Ha*), with the nature of *rakhawah* not being strong enough resulting in a less clear sound. Meanwhile, the third to fifth students were able to pronounce all phonemes well.

In the sixth group, the first student had an error in pronouncing ق (*Qaf*), where the base of the tongue did not rise enough, causing the sound to sound like ك (*Kaf*). This error also caused the nature of the *qalqalah* to be less clear, resulting in a less sharp sound. The second student had an error in pronouncing ش (*Shin*), where the tongue was not close enough to the middle palate, causing the sound to lack sizzle. The nature of *tafasyi* is also not maximized, causing the sound to be less spread. Meanwhile, the third to fifth students experienced errors in pronouncing ر (*Ra*), where errors in *takrir* caused unstable vibrations.

In group 7, the first and fifth students were able to pronounce all phonemes well. The second student had an error like the letter in ص (*Shad*), where the sound pressure was insufficient, causing the sound to be close to س (*Sin*). Meanwhile, the third and fourth students had errors in the *makharijul* letters in ذ (*Dzal*) and ظ (*Zha*), where the interdental sounds were not yet fully formed.

Table 1 Challenging Phoneme Classification

Group	Student	Letter	Error
1	1	ع (‘Ain)	Epiglottis inactive, faint sound resembling أ (Hamzah), *bainiyyah* not well realized

		ص (Shad)	The tip of the tongue lacks pressure on the palate, and the sound approaches س (Sin), *isti'la'* and *ithbaq* is missing
		ق (Qaf)	The tongue does not rise enough to the base of the throat, the sound is close to ك (Kaf), the qalqalah is less clear
	2	ض (Dhad)	The edge of the tongue does not press enough against the molars, the sound is close to د (Dal), and the *rakhawah* does not appear
		غ (Ghain)	The base of the tongue does not press the soft palate, the sound sounds like the letter G in Indonesian, and the *rakhawah* is not strong enough.
		ت (Ta)	Tongue tip not firmly attached, excessive *shiddah*, unstable hams
	3-5	-	Able to pronounce all phonemes well
2	1	ض (Dhad), ظ (Zha)	Interdental sounds are not fully formed, ظ (Zha) sounds like ز (Zay), *isti'la'* and rakhawah are not clear.
		ك (Kaf)	Tongue less raised, sound close to ق (Qaf), hams less clear
	2	خ (Kha)	The base of the tongue is not far enough back, sounds close to ح (Ḥa), and *hams* less strongly
		ل (Lam)	The edge of the tongue does not stick tightly, the voice does not flow, inḥiraf does not appear
	3-5	ص (Shad)	One of the students needs to improve his voice pressure to make it clearer.
3	1	ع (‘Ain)	Incorrect epiglottis position, voice barely audible, *bainiyyah* not realized
		ز (Zay)	The tip of the tongue is not close enough to the lower incisors, the sound is close to س (Sin), *shafir* is excessive
	2-5	-	Able to pronounce all phonemes well
4	1	غ (Ghain)	The base of the tongue lacks pressure on the soft palate, the voice lacks resonance, *rakhawah* is incomplete
		ب (Ba)	Lips not closed tightly enough, *qalqalah* not clear enough
	2-5	-	Able to pronounce all phonemes well
5	1	ث (Tsa)	The tip of the tongue does not come out enough, the sound is close to س (Sin), the hams are not strong enough
		ف (Fa)	Lower lip not pressing enough on upper incisors, sound less clear, *hams* less strong
	2	ح (Ḥa)	Epiglottis not active enough, sound close to ه (Ha), *rakhawah* not strong enough
	3-5	-	Able to pronounce all phonemes well
6	1	ق (Qaf)	The base of the tongue does not rise enough, the sound is close to ك (Kaf), *qalqalah* is less clear
	2	ش (Syin)	The tongue is not close enough to the middle palate, the sound lacks sizzle, tafseer is not maximized.
	3-5	ر (Ra)	Error in *takrir*, unstable vibration
7	1,5		Able to pronounce all phonemes well
	2	ص (Shad)	Inadequate sound pressure, sound close to س (Sin)
	3-5	ذ (Dzal), ظ (Zha)	Interdental sound is not yet fully formed

Application and Effect of Asmaul Husna Song

In applying the phonetic learning method using *Asmaul Husna* songs, several steps must be taken the first step is to show the *Asmaul Husna* song through a projector so that all students can see the lyrics and listen to the pronunciation. The song is played three to five times so that students can listen and understand the correct pronunciation repeatedly. This repetition aims to strengthen students' auditory memory so that they can better imitate and adjust their pronunciation. After the song, each group was instructed to repeat back the song they had listened to. In this way, students can practice their phonetic skills directly in a more interactive and fun atmosphere.

To assess the effectiveness of this method, researchers conducted observations and tests through interviews to identify phonemes that were still difficult for students to pronounce. Observation was done by directly observing how students pronounced certain phonemes, while interviews were used to understand students' experiences in learning phonetics through songs. From the results of this identification, each group was then asked to repeat certain parts of *Asmaul Husna* that contained phonemes that were difficult to pronounce. This exercise aims to review students' pronunciation development and ensure that they have improved in pronouncing phonemes that were previously considered difficult. Thus, the use of *Asmaul Husna* songs in phonetic learning not only helps students recognize and remember the correct pronunciation but also makes the learning process more effective and fun.

The results of observations and interviews conducted with seven groups of students showed an increase in the ability to pronounce *hijaiyah* letters after using *Asmaul Husna* songs as learning media. Improving the pronunciation of phonemes through *Asmaul Husna* songs shows significant results in improving students' ability to pronounce *Hijaiyah* letters correctly. In Group 1, students who had difficulty pronouncing ع (*'Ain*) in *Al Aziz* (العزيز) improved after practicing with songs, so that the epiglottis was more active and the bainiyyah was clearer. The error in the phoneme ص *(Shad) in As Shamad* (الصمد) was also corrected, with the tip of the tongue pressing more against the palate and the isti'la' becoming stronger. The phoneme ق (*Qaf*) in *Al Qahhar* (القاهر) which originally sounded close to ك (*Kaf*) shows improvement in *qalqalah* technique.

In Group 2, students who struggled with ض (*Dhad*) in *Ad Dhaar* (الضار) and ظ (*Zha*) in *Az Zhaahir* (الظاهر) improved after repetition of songs helped improve their *isti'la'* and rakhawah. The phoneme خ (*Kha*) in *Al Khaliq* (الخالق) which was previously less audible due to the position of the base of the tongue not being far enough back also improved through repeated practice.

Group 3 showed positive development in the pronunciation of ع (*'Ain*) in *Al Mu'izz* (المعز), with the epiglottis more active and the voice clearer. The error of ز (Zay) in *Ar-Razaaq* (الرزاق) sounding like س (*Sin*) was also improved. In Group 4, students who had difficulty in pronouncing غ (*Ghain*) in *Al Ghafuur* (الغفور) showed improvement after practicing with songs, so that the sound was more resonant and the *rakhawah* was more perfect.

In Group 5, the error in ث (*Tsa*) in *Al Baa'its* (الباعث) which previously sounded like س (*Sin*) improved after students repeated the song with a focus on sound pressure. The phoneme ح (Ha) in *Ar Raḥman* (الرحمن) which initially sounded close to ه (*Ha*) also improved after students understood the correct breathing technique and throat position.

In Group 6, students who had difficulty pronouncing ق (*Qaf*) in *Al Qahhar* (القاهر) showed better progress after practicing with songs, especially in improving their qalqalah. The phoneme ش (*Shin*) in *As Shakuur* (الشكور) which previously lacked hissing improved after intensive practice with songs.

Group 7 improved in the pronunciation of ص (*Shad*) *in* Al *Bashiir* (البصير) after increasing the sound pressure and clarifying the isti'la'. The error in ذ (*Dzal*) in *Al-Mudzil* (المذل) which previously did not form the interdental sound perfectly also improved after students focused on repeating certain parts of the song. Similarly, the letter ظ (*Zha*) in the word *Az-Zhaahir* (الظاهر) no longer sounds like the letter ز (*Zay*).

Table 2 Phonetic Improvements in Arabic Pronunciation through *Asmaul Husna* Song Media

Group	Letter	Asmaul Husna	Improvements
1	ع (‘Ain)	Al Aziz (العزيز)	Epiglottis more active, *bainiyyah* more pronounced
	ص (Shad)	As Shamad (الصمد)	The tip of the tongue presses more against the

			palate, *isti'la'* stronger
	ق (Qaf)	Al Qahhar (القاهر)	*Qalqalah* is more pronounced, and sound no longer sounds like ك (Kaf)
2	ض (Dhad)	Ad Dhaar (الضار)	Isti'la' and *rakhawah* clearer
	ظ (Zha)	Az Zhaahir (الظاهر)	Interdental sounds better
	خ (Kha)	Al Khaliq (الخالق)	The base of tongue further back, clearer sound
3	ع (‘Ain)	Al Mu’izz (المعز)	Epiglottis is more active, clearer
	ز (Zay)	Ar Razaaq (الرزاق)	Sound No longer sounds like س (Sin)
4	غ (Ghain)	Al Ghafuur (الغفور)	More resonant sound, more perfect *rakhawah*
5	ث (Tsa)	Al Baa’its (الباعث)	Clearer voice pressure no longer sounds like س (Sin)
	ح (Ḥa)	Ar Rahman (الرحمن)	Better breathing and throat position, clearer voice
6	ق (Qaf)	Al Qahhar (القاهر)	*Qalqalah* is clearer, tongue rises more to the base of the throat
	ش (Syin)	As Syakuur (الشكور)	*Hissing* sound is clearer, *tafasyi* is maximized
7	ص (Shad)	Al Bashiir (البصير)	Voice pressure is stronger, *isti'la'* is clearer
	ذ (Dzal)	Al Mudzil (المذل)	Interdental sound is better
	ظ (Zha)	Az Zhaahir (الظاهر)	It no longer sounds like ز (Zay)

Students’ Response to *Asmaul Husna* Song

After participating in phoneme learning using *Asmaul Husna* songs, students gave various positive responses to this method. Many of them felt that the use of songs was very helpful in improving phonetic awareness. The rhythm and repetition in the song made it easier for them to recognize, remember, and correct pronunciation errors that they were previously unaware of. Compared to conventional methods that focus more on theory and individual practice, learning through songs creates a more fun, interactive, and effective atmosphere in building a deeper understanding of phonemes in Arabic.

One of the aspects highlighted by the students was how the songs helped them remember the correct tongue position, sound pressure and use of the organs of articulation. *Hijaiyah* letters that they previously had difficulty pronouncing, such as ع (*'Ain*) in *Al Aziz* (العزيز) or غ (*Ghain*) in *Al Ghafuur* (الغفور), now sound clearer after they practised with songs. Students who previously had difficulty in activating the epiglottis when pronouncing ع (*'Ain*) realized that through repetition in songs, they could better control the organs of articulation. Similarly, the pronunciation of ض (*Dhad*) in *Ad Dhaar* (الضار) and ظ (*Zha*) in *Az Zhaahir* (الظاهر), which were initially incorrect due to lack of pressure on the incisors, can now be pronounced more clearly after practising with songs.

In addition, students also highlighted the benefits of songs in building their confidence. Before using this method, some students felt hesitant and lacked confidence when pronouncing certain letters, especially letters that require special techniques such as ق (*Qaf*) in *Al Qahhar* (القاهر) or خ (*Kha*) in *Al Khaliq* (الخالق). However, after practising with songs repeatedly, they feel more confident because they can pronounce these letters more clearly and precisely. The use of rhythm and melody in the song helped them maintain sound stability, so they were better able to pronounce each letter according to its phonetic characteristics.

This method also increases students' engagement and enthusiasm in the learning process. Most students expressed that the method of learning through songs is more interesting compared to the traditional way that only focuses on memorization and theory-based exercises. With the element of music and rhythm, they feel more involved and more motivated to practice. Songs also make the learning atmosphere livelier, so students don't feel pressured or bored. They often even sing the song outside of the learning session, which indirectly helps them to repeat the material and strengthen their understanding of the pronunciation of the *Hijaiyah* letters.

3.2 Discussion

This research makes a significant contribution by highlighting the use of song media in learning Arabic phonetics, which has not been widely discussed in previous studies. Most of the existing studies focus more on phonetics in the context of Indonesian and English. The focus of this research lies on letters with high difficulty levels such as ح (*Ḥa*), خ (*Kha*), غ (*Ghain*), ض (*Dhad*), as well as other phonemes that are often a challenge for students. The song media used, such as *hijaiyah* and *Asmaul Husna* songs, not only serves as an entertainment tool but also as a pedagogical approach to correcting these phoneme articulation errors.

The results showed that the use of *Asmaul Husna* songs helped students improve pronunciation clarity, especially in understanding *makharijul huruf* and *sifatul huruf*. Letters that were previously difficult to pronounce, such as ع (*'Ain*) in *Al-'Aziz* (العزيز) or ض (*Dhad*) in *Ad-Dhaar* (الضار), experienced significant improvement after repeated practice with songs. Students who initially had difficulty in activating the epiglottis for ع (*'Ain*) or distinguishing the interdental sounds in ض (*Dhad*) and ظ (*Zha*), began to show improvements in their pronunciation after going through a process of intensive repetition. This finding shows that song media can be used as an effective alternative in supporting the learning of *al-Ashwat wa al-Lahjat* courses, especially in the phonetic aspect. This is in line with Zhang & Hu (2023) which asserts that songs can facilitate the learning of second language pronunciation, both in the aspects of vowels and sounds.

In addition to the phonetic aspect, the use of songs also provides benefits in increasing students' learning motivation. Based on interviews, students feel more confident in pronouncing difficult phonemes because this method allows them to practice collectively in small groups. With song-based learning, students not only practice individually but also in an atmosphere that supports social interaction, so they can correct and give feedback to each other. This supports the concept of collaborative learning, which according to several previous studies can improve students' understanding and retention of the material learned. The use of song media in this study also integrates auditory and visual elements following the concept of dual coding proposed by Mayer (2009). This is reinforced by Pratiwi et al. (2022) and Rindiani & Hasanah (2022) who stated that audiovisual can make the learning process more interesting and effective, and improve student learning outcomes. This integration strengthens the retention of students' understanding, makes it easier for them to remember and practice the material, and creates a more enjoyable learning experience Nurjanah et al. (2024). In addition, research by Rohi & Nurhayati (2024) shows that audiovisuals can also encourage students' active participation and increase their motivation in the learning process. According to McIntire (2020), the use of music that has text in it can strengthen understanding of the material being taught.

In addition, this research also utilizes the YouTube platform to present song content, creating digital technology-based learning that is relevant to modern educational needs. This strategy allows students to access the content flexibly and supports independent learning outside the classroom. This concept of pedagogy through digital platforms, as mentioned by Safir, (2022), provides new opportunities in integrating technology into Arabic phonetics learning.

Grouping students in learning is one of the elements of novelty promoted by this research. In groups, students can correct each other's pronunciation mistakes, share knowledge, and discuss how to improve the articulation of difficult phonemes. This approach creates an inclusive learning atmosphere and supports social interaction. This is in accordance with the statement of Karina et al. (2024) that active group discussions can enhance shared understanding and knowledge integration between members. The findings of this study also show that song media can increase students' learning

motivation. With songs, the learning process becomes more relaxed and fun. This is following Hanifah's statement that the use of songs can arouse student interest and motivation, eliminate boredom, and provide a relaxed learning atmosphere. Students feel more confident in practising the theory they have learned, as also expressed by Astuti et al. (2020) that the auditory or audio-visual environment can provide a stimulus to speak Arabic naturally.

However, this study has several limitations. First, the number of participants was limited to class C students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, so the generalization of the results of this study to a wider population still requires further research. Second, the use of songs as a learning method requires adaptation for students who have different learning styles, especially for those who are more accustomed to visual or kinesthetic methods. Third, this study only used one type of song, *Asmaul Husna*, so it has not explored the possibility of using other songs that may also be effective in learning Arabic phonetics. Fourth, this study only focuses on the pronunciation of *hijaiyah* letters in the context of *Asmaul Husna*, without exploring other phonetic aspects such as the length and shortness of the reading (*mad* and *qash*). The main focus of the research is only on *makharijul huruf* and *sifatul huruf*, so other aspects of Arabic phonology that also affect fluency in pronunciation have not been studied in more depth.

By understanding these limitations, future research can be conducted with a wider scope, such as comparing the effectiveness of different types of songs in phonetic learning or integrating this method with digital learning technology. In addition, further studies can explore how this method can be applied in the context of learning Arabic for non-native speakers or in a more heterogeneous environment. Future research could also expand the scope by not only examining *makharijul huruf* and *sifatul huruf*, but also other phonetic aspects such as mad and *qash* laws, which also affect fluency and pronunciation accuracy in reading Arabic texts. Thus, the results of this study can be a foothold for the development of phonetic learning strategies that are more innovative and following the needs of students.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study explores learning innovations in phonetic aspects by using song media for first-semester students in the Arabic Language Education Study Program (PBA) at Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta. This qualitative research uses a case study method in the Science of *al-Ashwat Wa al-Lahjat* course in Class C, which has a background problem of difficulty in pronouncing Arabic phonemes. The use of songs in this study includes *hijaiyyah* letter songs and *asmaul husna* songs as the main support, *hijaiyyah* letter songs are used to identify which phonemes are difficult for students to pronounce, and *asmaul husna* songs are used to improve phonemes that are difficult for previous students to pronounce. These difficult phonemes include phonemes ع *'ain*, ص *shad*, غ *ghain*, ش *syin*, and other letters, through the use of *asmaul husna* letter songs, in their implementation, some parts correspond to difficult-to-pronounce phonemes, such as the phoneme ع*'ain*, which corresponds to the part of العزيز *al-'Aziz*, shad phoneme with *ash-Shamad*, then غ *ghain* with الغافر *al-Ghaffar*, *syin* with الشكور al-Syakur, and so on. The results showed that students who had difficulty pronouncing phonemes before improved after using songs as learning media, and overall students could be motivated in learning phonetics, in addition, the factor of using audio and visual elements presented simultaneously in songs helped students, another factor that influenced was the collaborative learning atmosphere where students were divided into several groups so that students could help and improve each other. This study has several limitations, including a

limited number of subjects and a small variety of songs. However, this study contributes and has significant implications in the world of Arabic language education, especially in the aspect of improving students' phonetics. Further research is expected to be conducted to strengthen these findings with broader methods or coverage.

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