

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I.1. Background of the Study

Few times a day, especially minutes approaching the prayer call, we may hear the Qur'anic recitation played through the loudspeaker in mosques or *mushollas*. The recitation, which sounds a distinct form of extreme beauty with rhythmic verses, strikes the mind and heart of every sensible Muslim. Every *Surah* (chapter) and *Ayah* (verse) of the Qur'an expresses eloquence and magnificence. It is reasonable since The Qur'an is the word of God, which is transmitted to mankind in a chain starting from the Almighty Himself to the angel *Jibreel* (Gabriel) to the Prophet Muhammad (Lajnah Pentashih Al-Quran Depag RI, 1990). One of the many miracles of the noble Qur'an is that regardless of the number of times it is recited, one never gets tired nor bored with its recitation. It is said in the noble Qur'an, "Indeed the believers are those who tremble with fear when Allah is remembered and when the verses of the Qur'an are recited before them, it increases their beliefs and upon Allah they have complete trust (Qur'an, 8: 2)." One of the salient points mentioned in this verse is that when a believer recites the noble Qur'an in the correct manner, it increases his faith and belief in Allah. Reciting the noble Qur'an in the correct manner means to recite it with *Tajwid* (Abdul-Aziz, 2002).

The very name "Qur'an" means a "reading or recitation" (Wehr, 1979: 882), and the first verse of the Qur'an to be revealed was: "Recite, In the name of your Lord Who created (Qur'an, 96:1)." Therefore, from the beginning of the

final phase of the prophethood, great care has been paid to the recitation of the Qur'an (Philips, 1998). Care was taken to see that the Qur'an was recited as close to the way it was revealed as possible. Scholars who specialized in the recitation of the Qur'an, such as Abu 'Ubaid Al-Qasim bin Sallaam, formulated principles of recitation based on the authentic recitations which they had learned (Online Qur'an Reciter, 2002). These principles—which outline the correct method of pronunciation for Arabic letters, the interaction of the letters when they meet, individual words and sentences—came to be known as the science of *Tajwid* (Philips, 1998). The word '*Tajwid*' is derived from the root *Jawwada*' meaning "to make well" or "improve" (Wehr, 1979: 172). This means that each Arabic sound—which makes up Arabic consonant, vowel, word and sentence—should be articulated correctly, according to the language of Qur'an when it was revealed to the Prophet Mohammed.

Reciting the Qur'an with *Tajwid* apparently is not an easy task, even for a native speaker of Arabic. Almost all muslim Arabs seriously take their time studying *Tajwid* in order to be able to recite the Qur'an in a correct manner (Online Qur'an Reciter, 2002). One of the reasons may be due to the fact that the language of the Qur'an—which is considered as Classical Arabic by some linguists—is partly different from the Standard Modern Arabic as spoken today. In the word '*anfaal*', for instance, /n/ is not only pronounced /ŋ/, but also have to be lengthened, as stipulated in the principles of Qur'anic recitation (*Tajwid*). So, we can say that there are two processes in the meeting of /n/ and /l/, that are nasal assimilation and lengthening. In Linguistics, such processes are explained under

the heading of Phonology, that is, a study of system and pattern of speech sounds within a language (Bloothoof, 2002).

We may find the process of nasal assimilation or lengthening only in any other languages, yet the processes of nasal assimilation and lengthening occurring at the same time are distinctive and may only be found in *Tajwid*. Therefore, the writer is challenged to find out the concurrence of nasal assimilation and lengthening processes in *Tajwid*, and attempts to formulate the appropriate rules underlying the processes. By studying *Tajwid* from different viewpoint (other than religious one), we may see that it is not simply a matter of reciting the Qur'an correctly, but the fact that the phonological phenomenon in *Tajwid* may become an interesting linguistic analysis.

I.2. Statements of the Problem

1. What principles of Qur'anic recitation (*Tajwid*) contain the concurrence of nasal assimilation and lengthening processes?
2. How is the formulation of phonological rules underlying the nasal assimilation and lengthening processes in *Tajwid*?

I.3. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. to find out the principles of Qur'anic recitation (*Tajwid*) that contain the concurrence of nasal assimilation and lengthening processes
2. to formulate the phonological rules underlying the nasal assimilation and lengthening processes found in *Tajwid*.

I.4. Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to enrich studies concerning Phonology and provide reference for other researchers as well as students of linguistics who are interested in the field, especially in the study of nasal assimilation and lengthening processes and rules. It may also give contributions to muslim people worldwide, mainly those who are so much concerned with the study of *Tajwid*.

I.5. Scope and Limitation

This study is restricted to the identification of nasal assimilation and lengthening processes found in *Tajwid*. Although this thesis may come in touch with the phonology of either Classical or Modern Arabic language, it does not intend to focus on any of the languages nor make comparison between them. *Tajwid* here is considered as a separate entity or context. Furthermore, *Tajwid* defined in this thesis is based on the reading of Aasim *rawi* Hafs, a reading which is followed by most Qur'an reciters in the world (Fathoni, 1992). Another limitation is that the recitation method meant in this thesis is *bi At-Tadwir*, which means reciting the Qur'an in normal speed, not slow nor fast (Semaan, 1962). What is more important is that, even if this thesis may reveal religious interests and employs Qur'anic verses, it purely emphasizes the linguistic aspects found in a religion-based phenomenon.

I.6. Theoretical Framework

Apart from the general description of Phonology as the study of sound pattern of a language (Fromkin and Rodman, 1988: 216), Phonology is defined particularly as how the sound systems of a language interact with each other

(Hutton, 2002: 1). In the interaction, accordingly, sounds may change or alternate. We can typify such alternations in terms of being caused by, or being due to, some phonological process (Davenport and Hannahs, 1998).

These processes occur generally because there is speech sound simplification or systematic modifications of a class of sounds or sound sequences (Weiss and Gordon, 1990). In other words, the surface form or the so-called *phonetic representation* 'deviates' from the basic form/*underlying representation*, and usually is easier to produce than the target form/*phonological representation*. Our example is the word 'anfaal' (underlying representation) which is pronounced [amfa:!] (phonetic representation). It may be difficult for anyone to pronounce 'anfaal' as [anfal] (phonological representation) since /n/ and /f/ are not in the same place of articulation.

The underlying and phonetic representations above are not just connected without any 'help' from the third 'party', that is rule. Rules are formal statements which express the relationship between units on the different levels of the phonological component (Davenport and Hannahs, 1998).

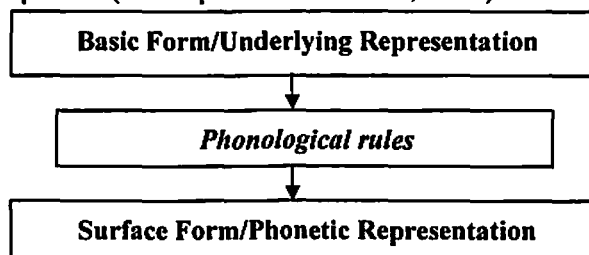


Figure 1.1 A schematic relationship between underlying representation, phonological rules, and phonetic representation (taken from Weiss and Gordon, 1990: 65).

The application of rules in this way is called a **derivation** (Fromkin and Rodman,

1988: 109). Such derivation is an unequivocal way of showing the effect and function of phonological rule on phonological processes. Phonological rules “convert underlying representation in a language...to derive surface representation” (Weiss and Gordon, 1990). They specify which sound segment change, how they change, and the conditions under which they change. By means of rule, as further stated by Davenport and Hannahs, we can represent processes, and characterize the alternations that result from them (1998: 114). Further discussions on rule formulation, such as features, notational devices and conventions, will be presented in the next chapter.

Assimilation is a phonological process that is quite common in languages. In a assimilatory process, a segment takes on features of a neighboring segment, thus becoming more similar to the neighboring segment (Harrington and Mannel, 2001). Among other kinds of assimilation, nasal assimilation or the so-called nasalization is more commonly found in world languages. Daniel Jones defines nasalization as follows:

When sounds (other than plosive and nasal consonants) are pronounced with simultaneous lowering of the soft palate, so that the air passes through the nose as well as through the mouth, they are said to be nasalized (1988: 213).

Assimilation processes in general, for the most part, are caused by articulatory or physiological factors, as asserted by Fromkin and Rodman:

There is a tendency when we speak to increase the ease of articulation. Assimilation rules in languages reflect what

phoneticians often call **coarticulation**—the spreading of phonetic features either in anticipation of sounds or the perseveration of articulatory processes (1988: 99).

Supporting Fromkin and Rodman's statement, Lass maintains that the standard assimilation involves direction, meaning that the assimilating influence may act either to the right or the left (1993:171). To simplify, here we may speak of the segment that assimilates as the 'target of assimilation', and the segment that is assimilated as the 'trigger of the assimilation'. The followings are three types of directional assimilation, based on Lass' taxonomy (1993: 171-173):

- a. **Regressive (anticipatory)** : a consonant becomes more like a consonant which follows it, or the trigger spreads its feature (s) leftwards.
- b. **Progressive (perseverative)** : a consonant becomes more like a consonant which precedes it, or the trigger spreads its feature (s) rightwards.
- c. **Bidirectional (fusional)/Coalescent** : a consonant becomes more like a consonant which follows or precedes it, or the trigger spreads its feature (s) in both directions.

Assimilation can also be classified by its extent, as noted by Maidment (2000):

- a. **Partial** : only some phonetic features are copied from source to target.
- b. **Complete** : the target is changed to become identical with the source.

An area in which languages may differ is in the way that they vary the lengths of segments, either vowels or consonants. Length means the time it takes to produce a sound, not the speed at which a person speaks (Nasr in Jones, 1988). Contrasts

between long and short consonants, rather than that between vowels, are not so common, but they do occur. Ladefoged gives example in Italian “nonno” [nonno] (grandfather) versus “nono” [nono] (ninth) (1975:223). Another example is in Arabic “illaa” [illa:] (but) versus “ilaa” [ila:] (to). Different from both examples, which show the contrasts of length to meaning, the lengthening occurs with nasalization process in *Tajwid* shows no contrast in meaning because the lengthening is intended to beautify the rhythm of reading (Abdul-Aziz, 2002). In common usage, the long consonants (or vowels) can be analyzed as double consonants (or vowels), or the so-called **geminate**s (Ladefoged, 1975:223).

I.7. Method of the Study

This is a qualitative study since it uses documentary data, as stated by Punch:

Documents, both historical and contemporary, are a rich source of data for social research...documentary sources of data might be used in various ways in social research...Some studies might depend entirely on documentary data, with such data the focus in their own right (Punch, 1998:190)

Furthermore, this inquiry is simply a library research since the writer acquires information (i.e. secondary data) from previous researches in the same field. The writer also uses books about *Tajwid*, which are prominently useful for the investigation. Secondly, this qualitative study does not attempt to compare groups or variables as quantitative one does, but simply focuses on identifying the nasal

assimilation and lengthening processes found in *Tajwid* and formulating the appropriate rules underlying the processes.

I.7.1. Definition Of Key Terms

Below are some terms that need descriptions and/or specifications and may frequently appear in this thesis:

- a) **Nasal** : An elementary sound which is uttered through the nose, or through both the nose and the mouth simultaneously.
- b) **Assimilation** : A phonological process in which a segment takes on features of a neighboring segment, thus becoming more similar to the neighboring segment.
- c) **Lengthening** : A process showing the duration of a sound or vowel, which can be analyzed as double consonants or vowels.
- d) **Processes** : i.e. phonological processes, which explain sound alternation in interaction with other sounds.
- e) ***Tajwid*** : Principles of Qur'anic recitation, outlining the correct method of pronunciation for the letters of the Arabic alphabet, individual words and sentences.

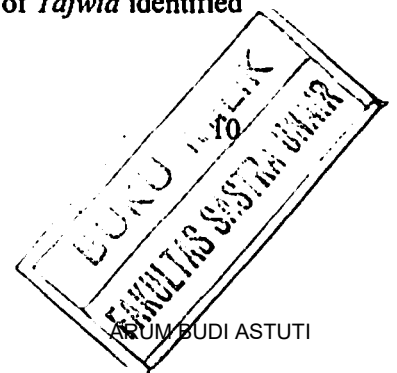
- f) **Phonological rules** : Formal statements which express the relationship between units on the different levels of the phonological component.
- g) **Features** : Articulatory properties used to characterize speech sound.
- h) **Phoneme** : The simplest significant unit of sound.
- i) **Allophone** : A phonetic variant of a phoneme in a particular language.

1.7.2. Technique of Data Collection

The data used in this inquiry is collected by gathering necessary information about *Tajwid*. Jupp in Punch (1998: 190) mentioned that the range of documents used by social researchers included diaries, letters, essays, personal notes, biographies, institutional memoranda and reports, and government pronouncements and proceedings. In this case, the writer uses pronouncements as the main data, not compiled by the government, but by scholars specializing in the study of the Qur'an, especially its recitation or *Tajwid*. Therefore, the data used are the principles of *Tajwid* themselves, and the examples employed will be taken from the Qur'an, the text where *Tajwid* applies.

1.7.3. Technique of Data Analysis

In this respect, the writer is actively involved in identifying the principles of Qur'anic recitation (*Tajwid*) that are explained in terms of nasal assimilation and lengthening processes. Then, she describes the principles of *Tajwid* identified



by using the theory of nasal assimilation and lengthening processes, formulates the most appropriate phonological rules underlying the processes, and finally draws a conclusion. To sum up, the procedures of the data analysis are:

1. Finding out principles of *Tajwid* that are explained in terms of nasal assimilation and lengthening processes
2. Describing the principles identified by using theories of nasal assimilation and lengthening processes
3. Formulating the most appropriate rules underlying the processes
4. Drawing a conclusion.

I.8. Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is presented in four chapters. The first chapter is *Introduction*. It comprises eight subchapters: background of the study, statement of the problems, objective of the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework, scope and limitations, method of the study, and the organization of the paper itself. The second chapter is *Literature Review*. Here, it deals with arguments, opinions, related studies, and other supporting sources in the study of *Tajwid* and Phonology. In the third chapter, *Presentation and Analysis of the Data*, the writer describes the findings and explanations of the concurrence of nasal assimilation and lengthening processes in the principles of *Tajwid*, and stipulates the rules underlying the processes. Finally, the whole study is summarized in the last chapter, *Conclusion*, given in a clear and brief way.

CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW