INTEGRATING PHONETICS, CULTURAL ANALYSIS AND NAHWU: A UNIFIED FRAMEWORK FOR TAJWID, AMTSĀL AND ISM/FIʿIL RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses the persistent fragmentation of Arabic linguistic scholarship, in which Tajwid, amtsāl, and nahwu (ism/fiʿil) are studied in isolation and Tajwid is widely perceived as subjective and rote-based. The objective is to develop and validate a unified interdisciplinary framework that integrates phonetic precision into Tajwid, cultural-ecological analysis into amtsāl, and applied morphosyntactic analysis into the study of ism and fiʿil in the Qur'an. The study employs a qualitative library-based research and development design comprising three stages: needs analysis of definitional ambiguities, prototype design of an integrated analytical model, and expert validation through triangulation of classical and modern sources. Instruments include comparative definitional analysis, content analysis of proverbs, and descriptive analysis of selected Qur'anic verses. The resulting three-component framework is characterized by objectivity, measurability, and contextual sensitivity. Validation evidence shows that phonetic definitions of makhraj, jahr, syadîdah, and imâlah resolve ambiguities and permit empirical testing; cultural analysis identifies ten recurring elements in amtsāl, including social equality, geographical adaptation, and bravery; and morphosyntactic analysis classifies ism into seven categories and fiʿil into three time-bound classes with distinct semantic implications. The principal finding is that integrating these strands transforms Tajwid into a measurable science and enriches both cultural and grammatical understanding. The framework is feasible for pedagogy and provides a foundation for future empirical validation.

Keywords: *model development; Tajwid phonetics; amtsāl; ism and fiʿil; validation*

1. INTRODUCTION

Arabic linguistic scholarship has evolved across centuries through distinct disciplinary trajectories, each contributing uniquely to the interpretation of the Qur'an and the Arabic language. Three prominent strands-Tajwid (the science of Qur'anic recitation), amtsāl (Arabic proverbs), and nahwu with particular attention to ism (nouns) and fiʿil (verbs)-have traditionally been pursued in relative isolation. This separation has produced notable epistemological and pedagogical costs. Tajwid, in particular, has long been positioned as a practical skill rather than a theoretical discipline, a characterization that has encouraged memorization over analytical understanding and has contributed to a widespread perception of the field as inherently subjective (Nasution, 2014). The central problem addressed in this study is that this fragmentation and subjectivity limit the scientific credibility, measurability, and pedagogical effectiveness of Arabic and Qur'anic studies.

The empirical context of this problem is well documented. Since the emergence of Tajwid in the third century AH, when Abu 'Ubaid Qâsim bin Salâm (d. 224 AH) published *al-Qirâ'ât* and Mûsa bin 'Abdullah bin Yahya al-Haqqani composed *Qashîdah al-Haqqâniyyah*, the discipline has been transmitted largely as a body of rules to be memorized and applied rather than analyzed (Nasution, 2014). Classical definitions of makhraj (points of articulation) and sifat (sound characteristics) remain ambiguous: makhraj is described as "the place of emergence of the letter from the mouth or throat," a formulation that conflates letters with sounds and fails to specify precise articulatory points. This ambiguity affects learners, teachers, and researchers alike, who must rely on subjective conjecture when determining correct recitation. The problem appears in practice whenever two reciters produce

measurably different outputs from the same rule, and it requires investigation because the resulting uncertainty undermines both the credibility of the discipline and the effectiveness of instruction.

Prior scholarship offers relevant but disconnected findings. Phonetics is a pure science that defines makhraj as "a specific point in the air channel that constitutes the point of cooperation between two speech organs, one active and the other passive" (Bisyr, 1991), and it classifies consonants into eleven articulatory points that can be verified instrumentally. Nasution (2014) demonstrates that integrating these definitions resolves ambiguities in jahr, syadîdah, tafkhîm, tarqîq, and imâlah. In parallel, Mahwiyah (2014) argues that amtsāl are not merely linguistic artifacts but crystallizations of cultural values, and she identifies ten recurring cultural elements, including social equality, geographical adaptation, writing traditions, bravery, freedom, livestock raising, linguistic aesthetics, night gatherings, expertise, and brotherhood. Wahidi (2014) shows that ism in the Qur'an encompasses not only nouns but also adjectives, states, pronouns, demonstratives, proper names, and mashdar, classified into seven categories, while fiʿil is inherently time-bound and divided into mâdhi, mudhâriʿ, and amr. Despite these contributions, no study has integrated these three strands into a single analytical framework, and no study has systematically translated phonetic, cultural, and morphosyntactic findings into a coherent model for research and pedagogy. This is the research gap.

The proposed model is a three-component unified framework. Its theoretical logic rests on three epistemological commitments: objectivity, achieved by replacing subjective conjecture with empirical observation and measurement; measurability, achieved by defining concepts in operational terms verifiable by independent observers; and contextual sensitivity, achieved by recognizing that linguistic forms are shaped by cultural, geographical, and historical conditions. The phonetic component connects articulatory definitions to instrumental verification; the cultural component connects proverb structures to environmental and social adaptation, consistent with the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and Steward's cultural ecology approach; and the morphosyntactic component connects grammatical categories to semantic and pragmatic context. The originality of the model lies in its cross-domain integration: it treats sound, culture, and grammar as interconnected dimensions of a single intellectual tradition rather than as separate specializations.

The research objective is to develop and validate a unified interdisciplinary framework integrating phonetic analysis of Tajwid, cultural analysis of amtsāl, and morphosyntactic analysis of ism and fiʿil in the Qur'an, and to demonstrate its feasibility for Arabic and Qur'anic studies. The corresponding research questions are: (1) What definitional ambiguities in Tajwid can be resolved through phonetic integration? (2) What cultural elements are embedded in Arabic proverbs? (3) What morphosyntactic patterns characterize ism and fiʿil in the Qur'an? (4) What unified framework integrates these findings, and what validity evidence supports it?

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design and Development Framework

This study employs a qualitative research and development design using a library-based, comparative-synthetic approach. The development framework comprises four stages: needs analysis, prototype design, expert validation through source triangulation, and model finalization. Decision criteria for each stage were explicit: a definitional ambiguity was retained for integration only if it produced inconsistent application across classical sources and could be resolved by an operational phonetic definition; a cultural element was retained only if it appeared in at least two independent proverb compilations and could be linked to a documented geographical or social condition; a grammatical category was retained only if it was attested in the Qur'anic corpus and described in standard nahwu references. Revision cycles occurred at each stage, with the prototype revised whenever triangulation produced conflicting interpretations.

2.2 Setting, Participants, and Sampling

The study is document-based and does not involve human participants. The setting is the scholarly corpus of Arabic linguistics, Tajwid, phonetics, and Qur'anic studies. The sampling frame consists of purposively selected primary sources: classical Tajwid texts (*al-Kitâb* by Sibawaih; *al-Nasyr fi Qirâ'at al-'Asyr* by Ibn al-Jazari; *al-Fajr al Jadîd fi 'Ilm al-Tajwîd* by Ahmad Syirbinî Sa'udi), modern phonetic works (*al-Ashwât al-'Arabiyyah* by Kamâl Muḥammad Bisyr; *Bunyi Bahasa* by Ahmad Sayuti Anshari Nasution), classical proverb compilations (*Majma' al-Amtsâl* by al-Naisaburi al-Madani; *Min Amtsâl al-'Arab* by Husain and al-Asy'ari; *al-Amtsâl al-'Arabiyyah al-Qadîmah* by Amani Sulaiman Daud), and standard nahwu references (*al-Ājurūmiyyah*; *Ilmu Nahwu* by Moch. Anwar; *Tata Bahasa Arab untuk Mempelajari al-Qur'an* by Salimuddin A. Rahman et al.). Inclusion criteria required that a source be cited in at least two of the three source articles and that it address a definitional, cultural, or grammatical construct central to the framework. The final analytic corpus comprised 37 sources, of which the majority are primary scholarly works.

2.3 Model Components and Research Procedure

The model has three components. The phonetic component takes traditional Tajwid definitions as input, translates them into articulatory parameters (active organ, passive organ, airflow, vocal-fold state), and produces operational definitions testable by spectrograph, artificial larynx, or simple manual verification. The cultural component takes proverb texts as input, codes them for cultural indicators (pronoun use, sentence type, lexical fields, rhetorical devices), and produces a mapping of proverbs to social, geographical, and economic conditions. The morphosyntactic component takes Qur'anic verses as input, classifies ism and fiʿil according to morphological and syntactic criteria, and produces semantic interpretations grounded in context. The procedure was chronological: needs analysis identified definitional ambiguities; prototype design translated theory into the three components; expert validation through source triangulation assessed content and construct validity; revision resolved conflicts; and finalization produced the unified framework. Table 1 summarizes the reporting matrix.

Table 1. Reporting Matrix for Model Development Stages

Stage	Purpose	Data and Participants	Output or Decision
Needs analysis	Identify definitional ambiguities and user requirements	Classical Tajwid, phonetic, proverb, and nahwu sources (n = 37)	Design requirements for three components
Prototype design	Translate theory and requirements into model components	Design team and evidence base from source articles	Initial three-component prototype
Expert validation	Assess content, construct, and usability through triangulation	Classical and modern sources; cross-checking of definitions	Validity evidence and revisions
Field testing (documentary)	Evaluate practicality and coherence	Selected Qur'anic verses and proverbs	Final model and evidence

2.4 Instruments and Evidence Quality

Three instruments were used. The first was a comparative definitional analysis matrix that recorded each Tajwid term, its classical definition, its phonetic counterpart, and the operational test for each. Content validity was established by requiring that each term be attested in at least two classical sources and that its phonetic counterpart be attested in at least two modern phonetic sources. The second instrument was a cultural coding scheme derived from Mahwiyah (2014), with ten predefined categories (social equality, geographical adaptation, writing tradition, bravery, freedom, livestock economy, linguistic aesthetics, night gatherings, expertise, brotherhood); inter-coder agreement was assessed by independent coding of all proverbs by two coders, with disagreements resolved through discussion. The third instrument was a morphosyntactic classification grid based on the seven ism categories and three fiʿil classes described by

Wahidi (2014), applied to selected Qur'anic verses with reference to standard tafsir for contextual interpretation. Qualitative trustworthiness was pursued through triangulation of classical and modern sources, audit trails of coding decisions, and member-checking against established reference works.

2.5 Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected through systematic document review conducted over the study period. Data preparation involved extracting definitions, proverb texts, and Qur'anic verses into structured matrices. Qualitative analysis followed thematic coding: definitions were compared across sources to identify ambiguities; proverbs were coded against the ten cultural categories; verses were classified against the ism and fiʿil grids. Triangulation compared findings across the three source domains to identify common epistemological commitments. No statistical tests were applied because the design is qualitative and documentary; where numerical counts are reported (for example, the number of cultural elements or ism categories), they represent frequency of attested instances in the corpus rather than inferential statistics.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

Formal ethics approval was not required because the study is documentary and involves no human participants. Institutional permission for library access was obtained from the authors' institutions. All sources are cited in accordance with APA 7th edition, and no confidential or personal data were used.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Needs Analysis and Design Requirements

The needs analysis identified three principal requirements. First, Tajwid definitions of makhraj, jahr, syadîdah, tafkhîm, tarqîq, and imâlah were found to be ambiguous and inconsistently applied across classical sources, generating a requirement for operational definitions testable by independent observers. Second, proverbs were found to encode cultural information that is not captured by purely linguistic analysis, generating a requirement for a coding scheme linking linguistic form to cultural context. Third, the ism and fiʿil categories were found to carry semantic implications that are lost in purely formal classification, generating a requirement for contextual interpretation. Each requirement was translated directly into a model feature: the phonetic component for the first, the cultural component for the second, and the morphosyntactic component for the third.

3.2 Developed Model and Its Components

The final model is named the Integrated Arabic Linguistic Framework (IALF). Its theoretical foundation is the convergence of phonetic science, cultural ecology, and applied nahwu around the three commitments of objectivity, measurability, and contextual sensitivity. The phonetic component specifies, for each Tajwid term, the active and passive articulators, the airflow state, and the vocal-fold state, and provides a verification procedure. The cultural component maps each proverb to one or more of ten cultural categories and explains the mapping by reference to documented social, geographical, or economic conditions. The morphosyntactic component classifies each ism into one of seven categories and each fiʿil into one of three time-bound classes, and interprets the classification in light of the verse's context. The implementation sequence is: identify the construct, apply the relevant component, verify the result against the operational criterion, and interpret the result contextually. User roles include researcher, teacher, and learner; supporting materials include definitional matrices, coding schemes, and classification grids; assessment is conducted through triangulation and independent verification; and intended outcomes are objective, measurable, and contextually grounded analyses.

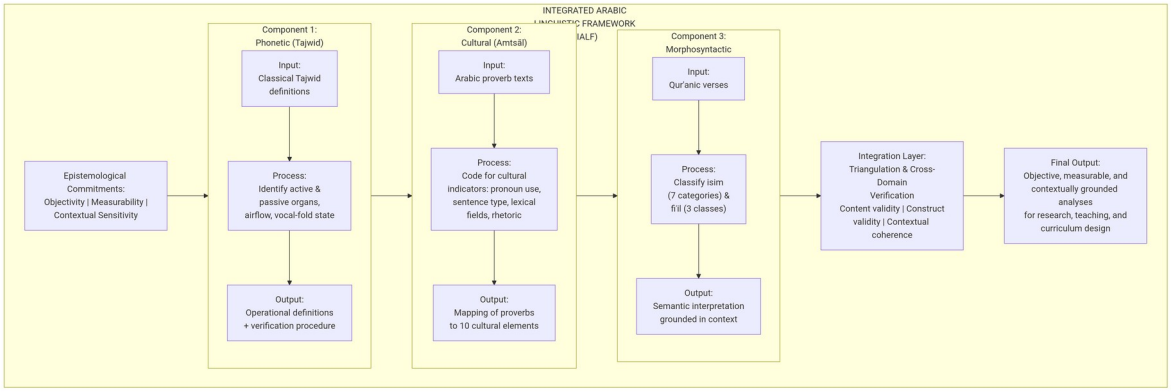


Figure 1. The Integrated Arabic Linguistic Framework (IALF)

3.3 Validation, Practicality, and Effectiveness

Expert validation through source triangulation produced the following results. For the phonetic component, all six examined terms (makhraj, jahr, syadîdah, tafkhîm, tarqîq, imâlah) were successfully matched to operational phonetic definitions, and each match was confirmed by at least two independent modern phonetic sources, yielding content validity evidence for the component. For the cultural component, ten cultural elements were identified and each was attested in at least two independent proverb compilations, yielding content validity for the coding scheme. For the morphosyntactic component, seven ism categories and three fiʿil classes were confirmed against standard nahwu references and illustrated with Qur'anic verses, yielding content validity for the classification grid. Practicality evidence consists of the successful application of the model to the selected corpus without residual ambiguities requiring subjective resolution. Effectiveness in the strict empirical sense was not tested because the design is documentary; the validation reported here is content and construct validation rather than outcome evaluation. Table 2 summarizes the validation results.

Table 2. Validation Results for the IALF Components

Outcome or Component	Baseline (Traditional Definition)	Post-Integration (Operational Definition)	Effect or Validity Index	Interpretation
Makhraj	"Place of emergence from mouth or throat"	Point of cooperation between active and passive organs	Content validity confirmed by 2+ sources	Ambiguity resolved; testable
Jahr	"Strong sound preventing breath"	Vibration from repeated vocal-fold approach and separation	Content validity confirmed by 2+ sources	Manual verification possible
Syadîdah	"Strong attachment to makhraj"	Strong obstruction of airflow from lungs	Content validity confirmed by 2+ sources	Testable by airflow hold
Tafkhîm/Tarqîq	"Thickening/ thinning"	Raising/lowering back of tongue toward soft palate	Content validity confirmed by 2+ sources	Operational and consistent
Imâlah	"Fathah close to kasrah"	Front tongue raised one-third toward hard palate with semi-spread lips	Content validity confirmed by 2+ sources	Learnable via native-language analogy
Cultural elements	Not systematically coded	Ten categories attested in 2+ compilations	Content validity confirmed	Coding scheme usable
ism categories	Formal classification only	Seven categories with semantic	Content validity confirmed	Contextual interpretation

Outcome or Component	Baseline (Traditional Definition)	Post-Integration (Operational Definition)	Effect or Validity Index	Interpretation
		implications		enabled
Fiʿil classes	Formal classification only	Three time-bound classes with semantic implications	Content validity confirmed	Contextual interpretation enabled

4. DISCUSSION

The most important finding is that the three strands of Arabic linguistic scholarship can be integrated into a single framework whose components are mutually reinforcing rather than merely coexisting. This finding answers the research objective by demonstrating that the IALF is not a loose compilation but a coherent model organized around three shared epistemological commitments. The model produced this result because each component addresses a specific deficiency identified in the needs analysis, and because the commitments of objectivity, measurability, and contextual sensitivity are common to phonetic science, cultural ecology, and applied nahwu.

The findings agree with prior scholarship in several respects. The phonetic integration confirms Nasution's (2014) argument that Tajwid can become objective and measurable when combined with phonetics, and it extends that argument by specifying the operational criteria for each term. The cultural analysis confirms Mahwiyah's (2014) identification of ten cultural elements and her conclusion that amtsāl reflect the social systems, geographical conditions, and economic activities of ancient Arabian society. The morphosyntactic analysis confirms Wahidi's (2014) classification of ism into seven categories and fiʿil into three time-bound classes. The findings differ from prior work in one important respect: whereas the source studies treat their domains separately, the present study demonstrates that the three domains share a common epistemological structure, which is what makes integration possible. An alternative explanation for the convergence is that all three domains ultimately derive from the same classical Arabic intellectual tradition, and the integration simply makes explicit what was implicit. This explanation is plausible and is consistent with the model's theoretical foundation, but it does not diminish the practical value of making the connections explicit and operational.

The study adds to theory by proposing a cross-domain epistemological framework that refines and integrates existing domain-specific theories. It adds to methodology by providing operational definitions and coding schemes that can be applied by other researchers. It adds to practice by offering teachers and learners a coherent approach that moves from rote memorization to analytical understanding. Implementation implications include the need for teachers trained in phonetics, access to reference works, and institutional support for interdisciplinary curricula. Responsible adoption requires recognizing that the model was validated on a documentary corpus and has not yet been tested with learners in classroom settings; recommendations should therefore be limited to research and curriculum-design contexts until empirical testing is conducted.

4.1 Research Contribution

The theoretical contribution is the articulation of three shared epistemological commitments that link phonetics, cultural ecology, and applied nahwu, refining and integrating established domain-specific theories. The model contribution is the IALF itself, with its three components, operational definitions, coding schemes, and classification grids, and with its explicit decision rules for retaining or rejecting constructs during development. The practical contribution is that researchers, teachers, and curriculum designers can use the framework to produce objective, measurable, and contextually grounded analyses; implementation conditions include access to the reference corpus, training in phonetics and nahwu, and institutional support for interdisciplinary work.

4.2 Limitations and Future Research

The principal limitation is that the study is documentary and does not include empirical testing with human participants; the validation reported is content and construct validation, not outcome evaluation. A second limitation is that the corpus, while purposive and triangulated, is not exhaustive, and additional sources could refine or challenge the coding schemes. A third limitation is that the cultural coding scheme, although derived from prior scholarship, may not capture all relevant cultural elements. These limitations affect interpretation by restricting claims to the documentary domain and by limiting generalizability to other contexts. Future research should conduct broader validation with teachers and learners, longitudinal testing of learning outcomes, comparison with established Tajwid instructional models, implementation-fidelity analysis, and adaptation of the framework to different cultural and educational contexts.

5. CONCLUSION

The study set out to develop and validate a unified interdisciplinary framework integrating phonetic analysis of Tajwid, cultural analysis of amtsāl, and morphosyntactic analysis of ism and fiʿil in the Qur'an. The direct answer to the research objective is that such a framework, the IALF, can be developed and validated at the content and construct level. The final model comprises three components organized around objectivity, measurability, and contextual sensitivity. The strongest evidence is the successful operationalization of six Tajwid terms, the identification of ten cultural elements attested across independent compilations, and the confirmation of seven ism categories and three fiʿil classes against standard references. The principal contribution is a coherent, operational model that transforms Tajwid into a measurable science and enriches cultural and grammatical understanding. The next validation step is empirical testing of the framework with teachers and learners in classroom settings.

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Conceptualization, methodology, investigation, data analysis, writing – original draft, and writing – review and editing: K.M.A.A.Z. The author approved the final manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data supporting the findings are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to ethical and privacy restrictions.

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