

Student Mastery In Arabic Weak Verbs

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Abstract

Weak (*Mu'tal*) verb is one of the aspects studied in Arabic morphology and used as a measure to assess students' abilities. Some students believe they have already mastered Arabic morphology once they can combine common verbs and pronouns very well. This is because, once the pronouns are combined with weak verbs, many students cannot produce the correct weak verb. Thus, the present study aims to survey the level of students' mastery in Arabic morphology for weak verbs and identify the types of weak verbs that are students' primary weaknesses. Based on this, a set of multiple-choice tests were distributed to semester one students from the Bachelor of Arabic Language in Professional Communication (LG242) program at UiTM Shah Alam. A purposive sampling technique was employed to test papers that had been administered while in the examination hall. A total of 40 students participated. Instrument reliability analysis recorded items number at 0.82, which is near 1.0 in the interpretation of Cronbach's Alpha score, while item quality showed good individual separating power (person separation exceeding 2.0). Descriptive analysis showed a moderate level of achievement in the students. The final result revealed that this aspect of weak verbs needs to be more emphasized like other aspects of Arabic morphology in the syllabus. The present study uses a quantitative survey method (cross-sectional). The respondents are 40 students in semester one of Arabic Language Professional Communication (LG242) UiTM, Shah Alam. In order to measure students' level of mastery of the weak verb, a set of written test instruments was administered and distributed to the study respondents. A total of 20 items were adapted from last semester's questions, consisting of 20 questions in the form of multiple-choice questions. Since this item has not been ascertained in terms of its validity and reliability. The researcher conducted a reality and reliability test on the instrument. The study found that the first semester students of the Bachelor of Arabic in Professional Communication UiTM Shah Alam are weak in mastering the morphology of the Arabic language involving the weak type. This situation may occur due to several factors, such as lack of use of weak verbs in making sentences, and lack of revision of weak verbs for a long time after completing the Sijil Tinggi Agama Menengah (STAM) examination, and not mastering verb patterns very well.

Keywords: Mastery; Morphology; Arabic; Weak; Verbs; Mu'tal

INTRODUCTION

Language involves three central cores of knowledge: phonology, syntax, and morphology. Morphology refers to the mind-system that discusses the formation of words or a field that examines the structure of words and the procedure to form words and their functions (Muhammad Afiq & Hakim, 2018). The study of morphology is one of the most

complex studies of language compared to the study of syntax. Although there is a connection between the field of morphology and the field of syntax known as grammar (Luwan, 2018), the area of morphology is one of the main elements for mastering the Arabic language (Muhammad Afiq & Hakim, 2018).

The word morphology is a transliteration of the word from the English language, which means 'study of word forms.' Siti Hajar (1996) defined morphology as a branch of linguistics that studies questions related to the possibility of word changes, groups, and meanings. The morphological study revolves around word structure, form, and classification (Nik Safiah et al., 2004; Kamarudin, 1997).

Word structure means the arrangement of utterance sound forms or symbols (writing) that becomes meaningful language units. On the other hand, a word form is a grammatical unit, either singular or the result of the processes of accumulation and multiplication. At the same time, word classification is a process of classifying words based on the similarity of form or function, or form and function. Comments with such similarities are classified into the same word group (Hasmidar et al., 2018).

Verhaar (2010) stated that morphology is a field that studies the grammatical arrangement of word forms. As such, the intricacies of a word and the influence of changes in word structure that occurs in the word group or meaning is what is discussed in the field of morphology (Ramlan, 2009). The 'word' aspect is one of the most critical components in morphology. For inflectional languages like Arabic, the change of word form is due to the evolution of type, number, and case, and the second, the difference of persona, number, and tense (Hasmidar et al., 2018).

Mastery of Arabic morphology is an important element in learning Arabic. Morphology is a field of study that focuses on word formation that encompasses various molds and arrangements according to specific word categories (Abu Razin & Ummu Razin, 2014). Among the field studied in morphology is weak verbs. Weak is a word mold for verbs that contain the letters Alif (ا), Waw (و), and Ya' (ي) either at the front, middle, or end of the verb.

Weak (*Mu'tal*) is divided into four categories; first category is *Mu'tal Mithāl*, which is when one of the letters Alif (ا), Waw (و), and Ya' (ي) is at the beginning of the verb. While the second one is *Mu'tal Ajwaf*, which occurs when one of the three letters is in the middle of the verb. The third is *Mu'tal Naqis*, and it is when one of the three letters is at the end of the verb. Whereas the fourth is *Mu'tal Lafif* which is divided into two types. The first is *Mu'tal Lafif Mafrūq*, and it's when the letters Waw (و), and Ya' (ي) are separated and the second *Mu'tal Lafif Maqrūn* is when the letters Waw (و), and Ya' (ي) are adjacent (as-Samiraie, 2013).

The mastery of morphology was strongly emphasized by ancient Arab scholars as they believed that morphology should be more mastered first before syntax. This is because mastering the knowledge of morphology will provide a correct understanding when the student begins to learn the knowledge of syntax. Thus, a good understanding and solid mastery of morphology is essential in learning Arabic (al-Rajhi, 1973). These weak verbs will be combined with certain pronouns according to the verb tense, such as past, present, and command tense respectively, to change the form of the weak verb (al-Ghalayayni, 1994).

In many cases, second language students face problems (Salinah & Rohaidah, 2016) and make mistakes in their writing with regards to the morphological aspect. The

errors committed in the second language learning are in the use of rewards (Alhaadi & Zaitul Azma, 2018). This is one of the aspects that often causes difficulties for foreign speakers in learning a second language. This is because second language learners or foreign language learners will easily accept foreign language elements that are the same or almost identical to their mother tongue. On the other hand, different elements will cause difficulties in their learning process (Brown, 2000).

In addition, the weakness of the use of grammar included in the field of Arabic morphology is a major problem faced by students studying Arabic (Marpuah, 2017). Students only understand from a theoretical point of view but fail to apply it in the construction of correct and grammatical Arabic sentences (Saipolbarin et al., 2018). This encourages students to make mistakes in terms of morphology. These morphological errors include various mistakes, such as word formation errors, affix selection errors or incorrect use of vocabulary in speaking (Hasibuan & Khairina Nst, 2014) as they stem from students who have not yet mastered basic skills in morphology and word formation. Weak mastery of basic morphological skills is the cause of students' ability to master word or vocabulary skills (Kaseh et al., 2011). Errors in the use of vocabulary in sentences from the aspect of morphology become the main weakness of students in the aspect of writing (Che Radiah, 2009).

Nevertheless, students can construct Arabic sentences well in terms of morphology but still weak in terms of mastery of Arabic grammar. Students can master morphological aspects, such as the difference between singular-dual-plural, masculine-feminine, past tense verbs and present tense verbs. There are overall results of a survey showing that the construction of Arabic sentences among students from the aspect of morphology and syntax is at a high level while from the lexical aspect is at a moderate level (Mohammad Taufiq et al., 2019).

However, there are two contradictory study findings with regard to this. The first finding states that students' use of grammar in the field of Arabic morphology will still be weak, as they fail to apply it in the construction of correct and grammatical Arabic sentences. Meanwhile, the second finding opined that student in second language are able to construct Arabic sentences well in terms of morphology. Due to these contradictions, there is the need to carry out research in order to determine students' mastery level of one of the topics of Arabic morphology (the weak verb) such as in the present study.

This study is conducted to answer the following questions: 1. What is the level of students' mastery of the weak verb when they combine the pronoun self with the verb? and 2. What type of weak verb is the weakness of students when they combine pronouns with the verb?

In addition, mastery of morphological aspects needs to be strengthened because poor mastery will affect sentence formation, especially in terms of phrase construction and semantics that fill the subject and predicate constituents. Therefore, mistakes made by students can help language instructors or researchers from time to time. Error in morphological and syntactic aspects by students is a useful input to enable teachers and researchers to produce strategies that can improve the techniques of teaching and learning Arabic. Therefore, the present study is carried out to improve teaching strategies and techniques subsequently utilized by teachers and instructors who teach Arabic.

Weak in Arabic phonetics refers to two letters, namely Waw and Ya' (al-Wadi, 1990), which are also known as glides in English. A gliding sound is produced when the

articulator involved makes a glide and aims from one vowel towards the vowel that follows it. Thereafter, the lips are rounded and the two vowels behind the tongue are raised towards the lip to allow a soft-voiced palate. When pronouncing the letter Waw, [w] the soft palate itself is lifted to the back of the throat cavity. The vocal cords are vibrated as the tongue moves rapidly into position to release the middle vowel. For the letter Ya' [y], the front of the tongue is raised high towards the hard palate with the lips spread. Afterwards, the soft palate itself is lifted to the back of the throat cavity. Finally, the vocal cords are vibrated as the tongue moves rapidly into position to produce the middle vowel (Roshidah, 2010).

Morphology is one of the components that makes up a language system in addition to syntax, phonetics, semantics, and pragmatics (Enamul, 2015). It is a branch of linguistics that focuses on the study of the structure, form, and categorization of words. The basics of word formation through the structure of the arrangement of word units, the process of word structure formation, and the method of merging word units are among the elements studied in Morphology (Mohamad, 2008). As such, priority should be given to morphology first before other fields of linguistics are ventured into by the researchers (al-Rajih, 1983).

More so, the weak verb is one of the morphological branches of Arabic as opposed to the verb *Ṣāhih*. Both the type of weak verb and the verb *Ṣāhih* are the two main components in Arabic morphology that discuss the form of a verb (al-Rajih, 1983). The verb *Ṣāhih* is a verb made up of consonant letters (*Ṣamit*) only, while the weak verb is a form of a verb that is constructed from sliding letters, such as Waw and Ya either at the beginning of the verb, like *وَصَلَ* and *يَبْسُ*, or in the middle of a verb, such as *يَقُولُ* and *يَبِيْعُ*, or at the end of a verb, like *يَذْعُو* and *يَبْكِي*, or the conjunction Waw and Ya in one verb, like *رَوَى* and *وَعَى* (Aiman, 2010). The Arabic morphology of the weak verb involves many phonological processes, such as deletion (*حذف*), diversion (*قلب*), assimilation (*مماثلة*), conversion (*إبدال*) and so on (Idris, 2014).

In the context of Arabic language education in Malaysia, Arabic language syntax is often seen to gain a wide place from researchers due to significant student weaknesses (Halim Mohamad, 2009). Morphology is also one of the major subjects in Arabic subjects taught at the religious stream secondary school level.

There are several researchers who conduct studies related to Arabic morphology (Muhammad Natsir, 2017) who said that among the disadvantages of learning morphology is the boredom of students when spending long class time, understanding the text but with minimal mastery of morphology and memorization methods that do not help when they do not understand the words being read.

In addition, Arnida (2006)'s study found that students lack knowledge in three aspects when deepening their knowledge of morphology. These three aspects identified are: (i) the ability of students to recognize various word forms. (ii), their knowledge skills in identifying root words and their awareness of the changes of words in accordance with certain forms that have been made to correspond to the intended meaning in the text. (iii), their competence in knowing the meaning of words according to the type of word. Their findings further suggests that studies related to morphological mastery among students need to be multiplied to determine the frequently repeated errors and provide the best morphological mastery methods. However, the study did not touch on the weak aspect in detail which is one of the major topics in Arabic morphology.

In addition, Idris (2014) mentioned that an alternative approach to the process of formation of derivative verbs and nouns (*iṣṭiqāq*), such as making the final formulas is proposed as a direct reference to the formation of derivative verbs and nouns without looking at aspects of morphological changes and phonology that occurs. In another study by Fathoni (2013), the formation of Arabic words has the principle of roots and patterns. In that, structural and semantic words in Arabic are always related to their roots. In the morphological process, word formation in Arabic can be done by inflection or inflectional morphology or by derivation or derivational morphology.

Furthermore, the study by Muhammad Natsir (2017) found that students still face some problems in mastering the skills of reading, pronouncing, phrases and finding the meaning of words. This situation stems from students not recognizing words based on pronunciation rules and patterns (types based on words and their meanings). From this problem, the researcher proposed an alternative solution by presenting the pattern by way of learning to analyze Arabic morphology. The results of his study show that the learning pattern by analyzing Arabic morphology is quite effective as students are able to pronounce the appropriate words easily. Also, students can also remember easily the acquisition of vocabulary or the origin of words that change their meaning.

Additionally, students are easily and quickly able to understand the text more after knowing the vocabulary as well as mastering its meaning. It was also established that the pattern of Arabic morphology analyzer is very important for students to master Arabic morphology as its analysis skills developed by students help them to determine the correct and appropriate words to use in different situations.

Nevertheless, Samah (2012)'s study explained that students often make morphological errors in distinguishing between nouns and verbs, derived word patterns, as well as singular and plural. The findings of the study found that students' ability to construct sentences is greatly influenced by their mastery of morphology. Similarly, native Arabic speakers also face the same problems in morphological aspects (Taha & Elinor, 2017; Benmamoun, 2014). However, the study focused on the formation of plurals in Arabic types as well as methods of merging. In compound derivation, the plural suffix added to the original word usually involves the replacement of vowels and prosodics with similarities to form into consonant roots. On the other hand, the study found that the knowledge of native Arabic speakers with regards to the root system and patterns of the Arabic language is still weak although they have a good understanding of root words and word patterns as the basic unit of word formation in the Arabic dialect.

METHODOLOGY

The present research is a quantitative study using survey method (cross-sectional). The respondents consist of 40 students in semester one Arabic Language Professional Communication (LG242) UiTM, Shah Alam. In order to measure students' level of mastery of the weak verb, a set of written test instruments were administered and distributed to the study respondents. A total of 20 items were adapted from last semester's questions, which consisted of 20 questions in the form of multiple-choice question. Since this item has not been ascertained in terms of its validity and reliability, the researcher conducted a validity and reliability test on the instrument.

Validity is an important aspect in the context of measuring a construct. The validity of a measurement depends on the extent to which it succeeds in measuring what

is to be measured (Azizi Yahya et al., 2017). Therefore, the instrument must go through the process of face validity and content validity to check the aspects of language, structure and sentence order that are appropriate or not with the components in the measurement and meaning of the items asked (Mohd. Najib Abdul Ghafar, 2003). In the current study, prior to the instrument distribution to the respondents, the test instrument went through a content validation process with five selected panel of experts. The expert panel consists of senior lecturers at the UiTM Shah Alam Academy of Language Studies who have extensive experience in the field of Arabic for more than 10 years. The expert panel were requested to review and ensure the selection of the test items contained according to the level of difficulty of the test, as well as provide opinions based on the test content from the aspect of language style.

Furthermore, in order to determine the inter-expert reliability, the Content Validation Index (CVI) was used. The number of expert panels recommended ranged from three to ten people (Lynn 1986). CVI considers the average level of agreement between expert panels with accepted CVI values > 0.80 (Lynn 1986). Overall, all values reached the coefficient of agreement indicating a reasonable value of agreement exceeding the value of 0.80. This value indicates that all items in the instrument obtain good coefficients of agreement by all expert panels involved. Although there were expert views that needed to be considered as some words and contexts of sentence expressions required to be revisited for use because they seem to depend in terms of their meaning. It is feared that it would confuse the respondents.

The reliability of the instrument explains the extent to which the scores in each item obtained are consistent or stable when tested several times. (Ghazali Darusalam & Sufean Hussin, 2016). In the present study, reliability was measured using the Rasch measurement model approach through Winstep software version 3.68.2. Typically, most studies refer to Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients to measure the level of item reliability in an instrument. This reliability value is referenced in a commonly used measurement model based on True Score Test Theory (TSTT) or known as the classical model. However, apart from the Cronbach's alpha value, the Rasch measurement model based on Item Response Theory was also found to be able to provide evidence of item quality to further strengthen the validity of an instrument formed as a result of considerations that take into account individual ability level (person) and item difficulty level (Azrilah Abdul Aziz, Mohd Saidfudin Masodi & Azami Zaharim, 2013; Rosseni Din et al., 2009).

Among the functional checks that can be done using the Rasch measurement model approach are from the aspects of (i) reliability and isolation of items (i) reliability of items and instruments, (ii) detecting polarity of items measuring constructs based on PTMEA CORR values, (iii) detecting item suitability (item fit), and (iv) measure dementia uniformity (unidimensionality) using the Residual Principal Component Analysis (PCA) technique. Indirectly, the use of this diagnosis answers the first research question in the current study which is to confirm that the items found in the test instrument are used through functional inspection of the items by employing the Rasch measurement model approach. The explanation for each inspection and verification of the item are as follows:

1. Reliability of items and instruments

Based on the analysis of the Rasch model, the reliability value for this instrument gives the impression that the index is good. Moreover, the reliability of the items is also at a very good and effective value with a high degree of consistency because it approaches the value of 1.0 as described in the interpretation of the Cronbach's alpha score by Bond and Foz (2015) in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Interpretation of Cronbach's Alpha Scores

Cronbach's Alpha Score	Interpretation of Reliability Values
0.8-1.0	Very good and effective with a high degree of consistency
0.7-0.8	Good and acceptable
0.6-0.7	Acceptable
<0.6	Item needs to be repaired
<0.5	Items need to be dropped

This means, the value indicates the adequacy of the items to measure what should be measured. The expectation of recurrence for this test is also high if administered to another group of respondents with similar abilities (Bond & Fox, 2015).

2. Detect Item Polarity and Item Suitability

Item polarity analysis (Point Measure Correlation) or item parallelism is an indicator used to show that the item used is moving in one direction by the measured construct. A measure that exhibits a positive index for all items indicates all items used are functioning in a parallel direction. However, if there is a negative index, the researcher needs to re-examine the data whether it needs to be corrected or dropped.

Table 1 which shows the results from the item calibration for the weak verbs test. The minimum PTMEA CORR value was at a negative value of -0.02 on item 4, while the maximum PTMEA CORR was for item 17 at a positive value of 0.63. These findings show encouraging results because only 1 item showed a negative value which means there is 1 item that is inverse and needs to be either dropped or repaired (J. Linacre, 2002). PTMEA CORR analysis is a very important basic procedure for producing true items in parallel with other items for measuring the construct to be measured.

3. Item Fit

In order to facilitate the detection of any item outlier or misfit in measuring the construct, a check should be seen on the Mean Square outfit index value (MNSQ). MNSQ infit means a match that matches the pattern of response to the targeted item and respondent while MNSQ outfit does not pose significant problems in measurement and is easier to overcome compared to MNSQ infit.

Therefore, the MNSQ outfit index needs to be considered first to determine the suitability of the item (Item Fit) that measures a construct. According to Boone et al. (2014), the suitability range of productive items ranged from 0.5 to 1.5. An MNSQ that is out of the MNSQ range will usually show a high z -Std value and exceeds the accepted range of $-2.0 < ZSTD < +2.0$.

Table 2. Item Fit Size

Item	Infit		Outfit		Result
	MNSQ	ZSTD	MNSQ	ZSTD	
S4	1.71	3.8	2.33	3.9	Maintain + authentic

S3	1.47	2.6	1.63	1.7	Maintain + authentic
S13	1.53	2.9	1.52	1.5	Maintain + authentic

Based on Table 2, there are three (3) items that are within the unacceptable range and these disturbances need to be addressed either to be purified or dropped. Items that exceed the value of 1.5 that are in the MNSQ outfit column are S4, S3 and S13. Thus, after discussion with experts and looking at the needs of the study, all three items from this test were not dropped and were refined for further study.

4. Measuring Unidimensionality Using Residual Principal Component Analysis (PCA) Techniques

The aspect of dimensional uniformity is a critical aspect in determining that an instrument can measure in one direction (Azrilah Abdul Aziz et al., 2013). Instruments that have characteristics of ambiguity and confusion among respondents need to be reviewed and refined to obtain the objective of the instrument in measuring is robustness and achievable. Rasch analysis using Residual Principal Component Analysis (PCA) technique can detect the capability of the instrument in one dimension that is uniform with the level of interference (noise) of acceptable items.

Linacre (2002) outlined that the optimal value of variance is > 60%. However, the findings shown in the gross variance have reached the instrument uniformity requirement of at least 20%. Based on Table 4, the gross variance value is 26.6%, yet the required value for instrument uniformity of at least 20% were achieved (Fisher, 2007). But the value of variance was not explained in contrast 1 as it is high as 11.5 % which is well controlled and far from the ceiling value of 15%. This situation indicates that the second dimension does not clearly exist.

Table 3. Unidimensions: Standardized Residual Variance 3 Constructs Pilot Study Questionnaire

Instrument	Gross Variance	Unexplained variance According to Contrast 1 Residual PCA
Test	26.6% (Weak)	11.5% (Good)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Students' Mastery Level In Arabic Morphology for Weak Verbs

Descriptive statistical analysis otherwise known as descriptive statistics refers to the characteristics of a variable that is described using mean, standard deviation, frequency or percentage and then draw conclusions based on numerical data (Ghazali Darusalam & Sufean Hussin, 2016). This study uses the mean score level interpretation value outlined by Oxford (1990) which at 1.0 to 2.4 carries a low-level interpretation, while between 2.5 to 3.4 is at a moderate level and 3.5 to 5.0 is at a high level. Table 4 shows the results of mean analysis, standard deviation, and interpretation for holistic motivation.

Table 4. Min, Standard Deviation, and Interpretation of Students' Mastery Level against the Weak Type of Verb

Type of weak verbs	Item	Standard deviation	Min Score	Interpretation
<i>Mithāl</i>	3, 7, 13, 16, 20	0.25	0.32	Medium
<i>Ajwaf</i>	2, 6, 10, 14, 18	0.34	0.31	Medium
<i>Naqış</i>	1,5,12,17	0.30	0.33	Medium
<i>Lafīf</i>	4,8,9, 11, 15,19	0.24	0.35	High
Overall			0.33	Medium

Table 5. Student Proficiency Level Based on Verbs Past, Present and Order

Types of Weak Verbs	Tense					
	Past		Present		Order	
	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	Low	Medium
<i>Mithāl</i>		1		1	1	2
<i>Ajwaf</i>		1	2	1		1
<i>Naqış</i>	1	1	1		2	
<i>Lafīf</i>	1	1	1	1	1	

Based on Table 5, students' mastery level was very weak on the *Mu'tal Ajwaf* verb type with two questions involving instruction verbs, and one question each for past and present tense, while one question showed moderate level in past tense. The *Mu'tal Lafīf* verb type recorded one question at a weak mastery level in the past, present and command tense respectively, and one question was at moderate level involving the past tense and present tense. The *Mu'tal Mithāl* recorded two questions involving present tense verbs indicating a weak level, and one question each involving past and present tense as well as command showing a moderate level of mastery. For the *Mu'tal Naqış* verb type, there was one question indicating a weak level of mastery involving the verb instruction, while two questions involving instruction showed a moderate level of mastery, and one question each involving the past and present tense showed a moderate level of mastery.

The level of students' mastery of weak verb is still at a weak level. Students' errors on this weak aspect can be identified when they are confused to choose the appropriate verb. This is driven by several factors as follows.

Types Of Weak Verbs Which Are Students' Main Weaknesses

Some students are confused with the concept of weak verb conversion combined with pronouns which is similar to the concept of authentic verb conversion. Among the issues that arise when they are tied to pre-existing forms are often exemplified, like the verb قال. When other *Mu'tal Ajwaf* verbs are placed as questions, such as مات, أقام, ناب, and أمال, students are found to lose the ability to combine those *Mu'tal Ajwaf* verbs with other connected pronouns. This causes them to fail to answer correctly and proves that they memorize more, rather than understand (Ismail et al., 2013 & Ku Fatahiyyah et al., 2017). The study by Umi (2014), Kamilah (2014) and Ku Fatahiyyah et al. (2014) found that memorization method only helps students to acquire vocabulary but is not helpful enough in terms of mastery of Arabic verb morphology.

There are various complex and difficult morphological as well as phonological processes, such as deletion (حذف), diversion (قلب), assimilation (مماثلة), conversion (إبدال) and many others (Idris, 2014) that are not well mastered by students. These processes

occur not only on weak verb but are also found on authentic verbs that contribute to student confusion. This is further complicated when more than one process occurs in a single verb, such as a combination of abortion and conversion in the past tense verb **أمال** which changes to **يُميل** in the present tense with the pronoun (he is a man). Figure 1 shows the morphological process for the verb **أمال**:

Figure 1. Morphological Process for Verbs **أمال**

Past tense	Morphological Process	Present tense	Morphological Process	Present tense
أمال	Conversion	يُميل	Deletion	يُميل
	→		→	

Based on Figure 1, the slip letter Alif (ا) in the past tense verb **أمال** has changed to the slip letter Ya'(ي) due to the conversion process (**أمال** → **يُميل**). Afterwards, the letter Hamzah which is located before the letter Mim (م) disappeared due to the process of abortion (**يُميل** → **أمال**). These processes differ according to the type of weak verb that the student needs to master.

The process of deletion and conversion occurs a lot involving varying letter positions and additional letters representing different pronouns in the context of weak verb (Al-Wadi, 2004; Turabi & Bulbul, 2007). Also, the type of workspace shows a variable abortion and conversion process, such as a slide letter that is dropped on the command workspace, but not on the current workspace. Additionally, there are sliding letters retained in the past but dropped in the present tense. Guided by these three conditions (letter position, additional letters, and type of verb tense), students face difficulties in determining the correct verb form when involving weak verb. This is because they need to master these three conditions to choose the right process and form the right verb (Taha & Elinor, 2017).

More so, lack of student appreciation is a factor that affects student mastery (Zakaria, 2011, & Abdullah et al., 2015). Weaknesses of students in mastering weak verb were also detected based on several samples of weak verb, such as **أحى**, **نوى**, **أقام**, **رأى**, and **وقى**. These verbs are often used either when praying, doing ablution, and reading the Qur'an. Students fail to appreciate the form of the weak verb correctly even though they actually often pronounce the verbs because they are in different tense situations that cause students to be confused. Table 6 shows the weak verb uttered during worship.

Table 6. *Weak verb Pronounced During Worship*

Weak verbs	Mention During Worship	Verbs in the questions
أقام	يُقيمون (reading the al-Quran)	أقيموا
رأى	تَرَى (reading the al-Quran)	تَرُونَ
نوى	نَوَيْتُ (Ablution and fasting)	نَوَتْ
أحى	يُحيى (Ablution and fasting)	أحيوا
وقى	وَقَيْنَا (pray)	تَقِين

Based on Table 6, the weak verb **أقام** in the Quranic verse is read as **يُقيمون الصلوة**. However, when changed to **أقيموا**, only 42.5% could answer correctly. As for the weak verb **رأى**, the verse of the Qur'an **﴿الَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ﴾** is a Daily Surah learned since primary school. When they converted the verb to the present tense **تَرُونَ**, 85% of students who fail to answer correctly. The verb **نوى** is often mentioned in the pattern of the past verb **نَوَيْتُ** when performing ablution and the intention of fasting. When converted to **نَوَتْ**, as many as 70% of students who fail to form the correct verb pattern. Thereafter, 50% of the students

managed to answer correctly for the verb أَحْيُوا which is often mentioned in the present tense pattern يُحْيِي in zikr after prayer. The verb وَقَى which is often read when praying in the command pattern وَقْنَا shows that 25% of students failed to answer correctly when changing to the current working tense pattern تَقِين. This phenomenon is supported by the study of Abdul Wahab et al. (2021) who showed low vocabulary size among students.

All these findings indicate that the weaknesses of these students are still persistent driven by the factors mentioned above. The results of the study found that *Mu'tal Ajwaf* is a type of weak verb that is the weakness of students followed by *Mu'tal Lafif*, then *Mu'tal Naqis* and *Mu'tal Mithal*. The results of the study also found that students made the most frequent mistakes when they combined the weak verb with the present tense verb followed by the command and the past tense.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the present study found that the first semester students of the Bachelor of Arabic in Professional Communication UiTM Shah Alam are weak in mastering the morphology of the Arabic language involving the weak verbs type. This situation may occur due to several factors, such as lack of use of weak verb in making sentences, having not reviewed weak verb for a long time after completing the Sijil Tinggi Agama Menengah (STAM) examination, and not mastering verb patterns well. Important concepts in morphology such as the discussion on weak verb should be given thorough and comprehensive emphasis by the lecturer. It should be noted that a good understanding of concepts helps students to detect any kind of changes that occur in morphology be it weak verb types *Mithal*, *Ajwaf*, *Naqis*, and *Lafif* found in all types of Arabic verbs which are divided into three based on the framework time. This is to prevent students from simply memorizing verb patterns blindly and as a result student are not able to apply memorization without being supported by an understanding of the concepts on the variety of questions asked.

In order to produce students who are proficient in Arabic, the students themselves need to play a significant role apart from the efforts mobilized by lecturers in providing learning to them in more interactive way. Furthermore, the students need to think creatively and critically in overcoming the problems faced specially to understand a new lesson. Thus, the present study has succeeded in highlighting another side that is different from studies related to the level of mastery of Arabic morphology which previously revolved around gender, number, and pronouns that the level of mastery of semester one students of Bachelor of Arabic Professional Communication UiTM Shah Alam on the verb pattern weak is low.

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