Arabic Affixed Word Mastery Among Pre-University Students In Islamic Religious Schools

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Abstract
Affixed vocabulary is very important in learning Arabic vocabulary. Studies on Arabic affixed vocabulary in Malaysia show a lack of research on the weak aspects of affixed vocabulary among students at the pre-university level. Therefore, this study was conducted to identify the level of mastery of affixed vocabulary and the problematic vocabulary types for students to master. This quantitative study uses a survey method by distributing affixed vocabulary tests to collect data based on the research objectives. The sample consisted of 144 STPM students following the pre-university program at the Selangor State Islamic Religious Schools. Stratified random sampling was used for sample selection. The findings show that the mastery level of Arabic-affixed vocabulary among STPM students at Selangor State Islamic Religious Schools could be better. The final result revealed that the aspect of complex affixed vocabulary to mastery is *sahih mahmuz al-ayn, mu'tal ajwaf, mu'tal naqis, mu'tal lafif mafruq dan mu'tal lafif maqrun.* This result shows that the functions of the derivational system are essential skills for mastering the types of affixed words in Arabic. Hence, teachers, lecturers, and practitioners involved in Arabic language learning are suggested to use the skill to enhance students' vocabulary mastery.
Keywords: Mastery; Vocabulary; Arabic; Affixed Word; Pre-University

INTRODUCTION

Arabic affixed vocabulary consists of various types and forms of words. The diversity of Arabic affixed vocabulary is due to the existence of a system involving the derivation process. Each affix carries a certain meaning and is used contextually to understand the text. Schmitt (2014) explains that vocabulary knowledge is closely related to the contextual use of affixed vocabulary, but most students make mistakes in using inappropriate types or forms of words according to the context (Che Radiah, 2009). Therefore, mastery of Arabic affixed vocabulary encompasses an understanding of the meanings and forms of types of Arabic affixed vocabulary.

Mastery of affixed vocabulary also serves as an indicator of mastery of Arabic vocabulary. This mastery can be assessed through the use of various types of vocabulary used according to the correct grammatical function, i.e. students form complete sentences by using understanding about the type of an affixed word used. Any sentence presented is explained accurately by students according to the situation based on the choice of appropriate affixed vocabulary (Mohd Zulfahmi and Nik Mohd Rahimi, 2022). In this regard, Ilham and Fajar (2023) emphasize that it is impossible for students of Arabic to master Arabic without achieving a good level of mastery of Arabic affixed vocabulary. Thus, learning affixed vocabulary is not just memorizing all types of words but mastering the types of affixed vocabulary also needs to be given special attention.

The quality of letter and word pronunciation can also be associated with mastery of Arabic affix vocabulary. According to Hazrul (2020), an individual who understands the agreed upon language system and rules to the extent that they can communicate with other individuals can be considered to have mastered the language. In this case, Tkacukova (2020) adds that it is important to develop effective communication skills that follow the established language system because without mastery of the language system, students will feel awkward and disappointed. Therefore, students' confidence in language skills can be improved when their mastery of affix vocabulary is good.

Every type of Arabic affixed vocabulary originates from a root word. According to Zainur and Mahmud (2014), there are two types of root words in Arabic affixed vocabulary - three letter root words (*thulasiyy*) and four letter root words (*rubaiy*). Arabic root words form various types of affixed vocabulary when expanded through the process of derivation, which is combining the original letters of the root word with additional letters specifically designated as affixes, namely *alif, ha', ya', wau, mim, ta', lam, hamzah*, and *sin*. Affixation of the root word can occur in the beginning, middle, end, beginning and middle, beginning and end, as well as in the beginning, middle and end. Basically, the process of affixation in new words can be analogized with known words if both words have the same arrangement patterns in the root word despite different spellings for both words. Hence, in-depth knowledge of arrangement patterns (*wazn*) and additional letters for each type of affixed vocabulary is an important aspect in mastering affixed vocabulary.

Mastery of types of affixed vocabulary is also closely related to students' ability to identify whether a word has been affixed or is still in its root form. In this matter, Al-Shuwairekh (2001) states that students who have mastered types of affixed vocabulary tend to utilize skills in finding root words, matching words to arrangement patterns (*wazn*), paying attention to affixes, and scanning known words. Therefore, mastery of types of affixed vocabulary can be facilitated by separating root words from additional letters combined in an affixed vocabulary.

In addition, Nation (2001) explains that the more known words increases the ease of learning new words through comparative methods to identify similarities between derived affixed vocabulary that share the same root words. When known words and new words share uniform linguistic features, namely patterns of affixes and arrangements of original and additional letters, students can utilize these linguistic features to match both words. Hence, mastery of types of affixed vocabulary in terms of root words, _wazn,_ and additional letters assists students in acquiring many new words obtained through comparative methods and matching of linguistic features in words.

Derivative knowledge generally related with vocabulary mastery. Without good vocabulary mastery, one is unable to communicate well in the second language being learned (Nurul Afiqah, 2022). Vocabulary mastery also supports a person to communicate using the correct language rules and produce quality writing (Zunita et al., 2016). Students' weaknesses in mastering vocabulary will have a negative impact on their overall mastery of Arabic (Rosni, 2012). Looking at the importance of mastering vocabulary, there is a need for research that shows the actual reality of students' vocabulary mastery at various levels. Therefore, the first step to detect weaknesses in mastering Arabic should begin by examining the level of vocabulary mastery from various aspects.

The diversity of vocabulary aspects makes Arabic complex and rich with various types and forms of words. The richness of Arabic vocabulary is due to the existence of a

systematic method of forming new words known as the derivation process. The derivation process is a system of affixation using the technique of adding affixes to root words to form words with new meanings and different grammatical functions (Tajudin, 2019). In this regard, the collection of affixed words that are gradually expanded through the derivation process is categorized as affixed vocabulary (Hasnurol, 2022). Therefore, mastery of Arabic affixed vocabulary can be associated with increasing the number of vocabulary among students. Thus, mastery of affixed vocabulary plays an important role in expanding and enhancing existing vocabulary.

In the context of teaching and learning Arabic in Malaysia, Arabic is taught as a second or third language in schools from primary to university level. At primary and secondary schools, the affixed vocabulary aspect is one of the core areas in learning Arabic (Rosni, 2009). In this case, Hasnurol et al. (2020) argue that the skill aspect of understanding the meaning of affixed vocabulary and its use cannot be ignored and needs to be placed at the forefront in language learning at schools and universities. Therefore, students need to be exposed to the level of mastery of affixed vocabulary to strengthen their existing vocabulary or newly learned vocabulary.

At the pre-university level, Arabic subjects are offered in the Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia (STPM) examination at Islamic religious schools such as government-aided religious schools (SABK). Students who pass the STPM examination in Arabic subjects are eligible to apply for the field of Islamic studies and Arabic language studies at the degree level at universities. Based on a study by Harun (2014), STPM students who take Arabic subjects tend to continue their studies in the field of Islamic studies at universities. Therefore, the mastery level of students needs to be given attention so that pre-university students who really want to pursue studies in religious fields at the degree level can be assisted by teachers to achieve a good level of mastery of Arabic.

A good level of vocabulary mastery is important for STPM students in SABKs, but it is found that students' mastery of vocabulary in STPM students in SABKs is weak as reported by local researchers Harun (2014). Not only that, past researchers who studied the level of vocabulary mastery of STPM students in SABK, namely Harun (2014) did not specifically state the aspect of that weakness. Information on students' weaknesses in mastering vocabulary is important in the teaching and learning process. Hence, research that reveals weaknesses in mastering vocabulary specifically among STPM students in SABK empirically and currently can serve as a guide for teachers at the pre-university level to help STPM students master complete vocabulary before continuing their studies to degree level at universities.

In addition, among the studies that have been conducted in the context of mastering Arabic vocabulary are the ability of students to master Arabic vocabulary in STAM textbooks (Zainur et al., 2016), vocabulary learning strategies and mastery of Arabic vocabulary knowledge among STAM students (Nur Naimah and Harun, 2017), ability to translate Arabic vocabulary among STAM students (Izzah and Rosni, 2020), vocabulary size and knowledge of Arabic collocations of STAM students (Uraidah et al.,2021), Arabic vocabulary learning strategies in Islamic religious secondary schools (Harun, 2014) and assessment of Arabic vocabulary knowledge in writing skills of students in Islamic religious secondary schools (Zunita, 2020). Overall, research on the mastery level of affixed vocabulary of STPM students in SABK is limited. The selection of vocabulary research context is more focused on STAM students. Therefore, in-depth discussion on vocabulary mastery for STPM students in SABK needs to be continued in

order to show the overall situation regarding the mastery of Arabic vocabulary at the pre-university level.

Therefore, research that provides a clear picture of the mastery of Arabic affixed vocabulary needs to be identified so that it can serve as a guide for teachers and students. Moreover, exposure to affixed vocabulary discussions will raise awareness about the importance of the derivation process in the field of Arabic (Neely et al., 2020). Thus, this study aims to identify the level of mastery of internal word structure knowledge of Arabic words among students at the school level. Specifically, this study aims to identify the mastery level of Arabic affixed vocabulary among STPM students in SABK and examine the types of Arabic affixed vocabulary that are difficult for STPM students in SABK to master.

METHOD

This study is a survey study. A survey study is one of the research designs in the quantitative research approach. The procedures used in the survey research method are using a survey or questionnaire on a group of people called a sample that can show the nature of attitudes, opinions, behaviors or phenomena that occur in a large group of people called the population (Creswell & Guetterman, 2021). The selection of this method is based on the suitability of the objectives of the study conducted.

The study population that can provide information to this study are Form Six students in Religious Secondary Schools in Selangor State. Based on information through the Data Management System on the official portal of the Selangor State Education Department (JPNS), Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM), the total population of Form Six students in Religious Secondary Schools who take Arabic language subjects for the STPM examination is 227 students involving three Government-Aided Religious Schools (SABK).

In determining the unbalanced subpopulation, Othman (2013) suggested that stratified random sampling technique be used. Furthermore, Muhammad & Aziz (2016) added that the distribution of the population can be done naturally or according to fractions that require separate estimates but need to be based on the characteristics of the population elements. Therefore, the researcher used stratified random sampling based on schools to determine the selection of respondents. Therefore, the study sample selected in this study were 144 people based on the sampling table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). After that, the researcher divided the total sample number of each school into the total percentage. Thus, the sample size for each school was obtained by multiplying the sample percentage by the required sample size. The researcher explains the details of the number of research respondents through Table 1.

Table 1. Number of Participants in Each School by Percentage

School	Population	Sample percentage (%)	Number of pre-university student
SAMT Tengku Ampuan Rahimah	81	35.7	51
SAMT Sultan Hisamuddin	74	32.6	47
SAMT Kuala Kubu Bharu	72	31.7	46
Total	227	100	**144**

Source: Selangor State Education Department Official Portal

This study adapts the research instrument of Hasnurol (2022). Meanwhile, this instrument is an inventory to test the knowledge of Arabic affix vocabulary called USDAi which stands for Affix Word Internal Structure Test. The format of this test is in Arabic

but the question instructions are in Malay. Respondents are required to choose one correct answer from four answer options. The total number of items in this questionnaire is 130 items. The distribution details of the items are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Details of Types of Affix Vocabulary based on Affix Vocabulary Test

Item	Construk	Type of Affixed Word	Derivation Category
B1 until B30	Root word *Sahih*	*Salim*	*Mudari'*
		Muda'af	*'Amr*
		Mahmuz fa'	*Masdar*
		Mahmuz al-'ayn	*Ism fa'il*
		Mahmuz lam	*Ism maf'ul*
			Ism alat/makan/zaman.
B31 until B60	Root word *Mu'tal*	*Mithal*	*Mudari'*
		Ajwaf	*'Amr*
		Naqis	*Masdar*
		Lafif mafruq	*Ism fa'il*
		Lafif maqrun	*Ism maf'ul*
			Ism alat/makan/zaman.
B61 until B90	Affix *Sahih*	*Salim*	*Mudari'*
		Muda'af	*'Amr*
		Mahmuz fa'	*Masdar*
		Mahmuz al-'ayn	*Ism fa'il*
		Mahmuz lam	*Ism maf'ul*
			Ism alat/makan/zaman.
B91 until B120	Affix *Mu'tal*	*Mithal*	*Mudari'*
		Ajwaf	*'Amr*
		Naqis	*Masdar*
		Lafif mafruq	*Ism fa'il*
		Lafif maqrun	*Ism maf'ul*
			Ism alat/makan/zaman.
B121 until B130	W*azn*	*Salim*	*Mudari'*
		Muda'af	*'Amr*
		Mahmuz fa'	*Masdar*
		Mahmuz al-'ayn	*Ism fa'il*
		Mahmuz lam	*Ism maf'ul*
		Mithal	*Ism alat/makan/zaman.*
		Ajwaf	
		Naqis	
		Lafif mafruq	
		Lafif maqrun	

Source: Adapted from Hasnurol (2022)

The validity of the questionnaire involved five experts in the field. Purification in terms of language and arrangement of answer choices was made based on the characteristics of respondents studied, namely the education level of students and types of schools. According to Azizi et al. (2007), questionnaires that pass face validity are able to measure what is to be measured in the research questions, thus stimulating respondents to answer correctly. This questionnaire obtained a Cronbach Alpha reliability value of 0.89 and a value of 0.70 as a measure of reliability or internal consistency of the instrument is sufficient (Hair et al., 2010; Taber, 2018).

The data of this study were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 27 to analyze the test item set descriptively and obtain scores and grades for each respondent. To analyze the descriptive findings, the researcher used the interpretation of grade adapted from the study of Hazrul Affendi et al. (2016).

Meanwhile, to determine the level of mastery based on the mean score, the researcher refers to Nunally (1978).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Mastery Level of Affix Vocabulary Among STPM Students

The findings of the survey study measured the mastery level of affix vocabulary which covers three aspects, namely mastery of root words, affixes and *wazn* of affix verbs. The mastery level of Arabic affix vocabulary among the respondents based on the grade and score in test is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage of Student Mastery Based on Affix Vocabulary Test Score

Grade	Score	Frequency	Percentage (%)
A	85-100	0	0
B	70 - 84	9	6.3
C	60 - 69	59	41.0
D	45 - 59	65	45.1
E	30 - 44	10	6.9
F	0 - 29	1	0.7
	Total	144	100

Mean= 57.52, SD= 9.17

Based on Table 3 above, this study found that the overall mean score for all the items tested in the test showed that the mastery level of affix vocabulary among STPM students at SABK was at a poor level (Mean= 57.52, SD= 9.17). Out of 144 respondents studied, 65 students achieved grade D, which is 45.1 percent of the total number of students. This makes grade D the highest based on student mastery level. Then, the second highest place is grade C which recorded 41 percent to represent 59 students followed by grade E which is 10 people (6.9%) and grade B which is 9 people (6.3%).

Meanwhile, grade F only reached 0.7 percent of the total number of respondents which is one student who got that grade. As for grade A, no respondents or students managed to achieve this grade. So, the F grade is at the lowest position for the affix vocabulary test that has been carried out. Therefore, the findings of this study prove that the ability of students to use the knowledge of morphology correctly and appropriately has not reached an excellent level. This study shows that overall, STPM students at SABK are at a poor level. These findings prove that STPM students at SABK do face serious vocabulary problems. Moreover, this mastery level has not reached a high level and there are still weaknesses that need to be addressed. According to Zainur et al. (2020), vocabulary weakness issues can be associated with students' own desires and interests in learning affix vocabulary. In addition, Amani and Nurkhamimi (2018) argue that STPM students learning Arabic do not care about the aspect of vocabulary usage but only focus on the rote learning or total vocabulary required. Therefore, the findings of this study clearly show that among the factors contributing to student errors are lack of interest in learning affix vocabulary and not understanding the concept of affix vocabulary.

In addition, the findings of this study slight differed from Harun's (2014) study which showed that students' mastery of Arabic vocabulary size in STPM at Arabic language schools is at a weak level. According to Harun (2014), students at that time were just starting to explore vocabulary at the secondary school level. The delay in learning vocabulary in depth caused students to lack adequate vocabulary, which makes it difficult for students to follow classes in the field of Islamic studies at universities (Harun & Zawawi, 2015). In addition, although Harun's (2014) study was conducted in the context

of vocabulary size, vocabulary size can be associated with mastery of affix vocabulary. This statement is supported by Smith's (2014) study on the strong relationship between mastery of affix vocabulary and vocabulary size. Thus, mastery of affix vocabulary encompasses aspects of vocabulary size and usage.

The small difference in findings of this study with Harun's (2014) study in the context of the general level of vocabulary mastery shows that mastery of vocabulary in terms of affix vocabulary has begun to receive attention at the primary level, that is primary school, so that students have more time to master aspects of vocabulary better. However, the STPM Arabic language curriculum at Arabic schools also clearly different on vocabulary learning, compare to the STAM Arabic language curriculum. Based on the Nur Naimah and Harun (2017) research report, the level of mastery of affix vocabulary of STAM students at Arabic schools is at a moderately high level. This statement shows that STAM students' mastery is better than STPM students. In this regard, students who receive Arabic language curriculum at the school level impact their achievement at university (Awatif et al., 2020). Thus, the improvement in the level of mastery of affix vocabulary can be associated with the duration of years students have studied the Arabic language curriculum in schools and the type of curriculum that involved.

Types of Affix Vocabulary That Are Difficult for STPM Students to Master

In this study, the researcher presents percentage values to indicate items or types of vocabulary that are difficult for students to master. Therefore, the analysis of the mastery level towards the list of tested words involves three internal construct structures of Arabic affix vocabulary namely root words, affixes (additional letters) and the *wazn* (pattern) of verbs. In detailing to determine the results based on mean scores, the researcher converts raw scores to z-scores. The reference line of z-score value 0 is equivalent to the overall mean score and has been used by the researcher as the midpoint separator for two groups, namely the high and low categories Thus, referring to Nunally's (1978) interpretation table, scores below the mean value of 1 can be considered low. Hence, the feedback from respondents for all three internal construct structures of Arabic affix vocabulary is explained in Figure 1.
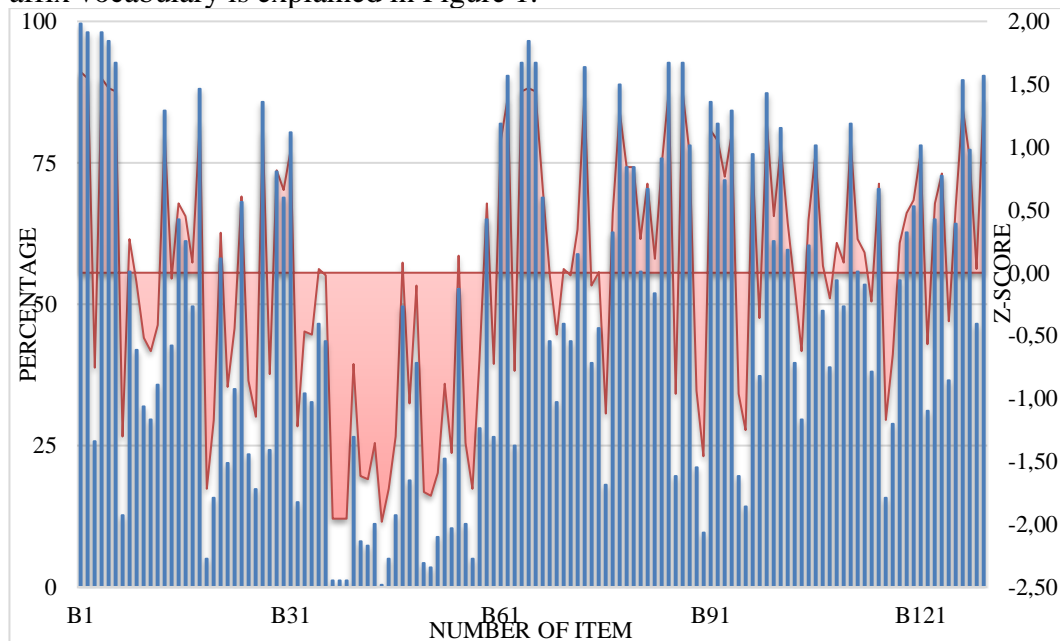
Figure 1 above specifically shows the high and low categories in mastering Arabic affix vocabulary based on the constructs of affix vocabulary studied. The low category indicates the weakness aspect for the affix vocabulary that has been tested. In this regard, Figure 1 shows items B31 to B61 are in the low category. The list of words in these items consists of the root word construct *mu'tal* which involves the type of affix vocabulary *mithal, ajwaf, naqis, lafif mafruq* and *lafif maqrun*. Meanwhile, students' mastery level was very high on item B1 that involving type of affix vocabulary *sahih salim mudari'*. Thus, this finding shows that overall students have difficulty in answering affix vocabulary consisting of the *mu'tal* root word construct for the *mudari', 'amr, masdar, ism alat, ism makan* and *ism zaman* derivation categories.

To answer the second objective of the study specifically, the researcher lists the 10 words that obtained the lowest number of correct answers in Table 4 below:

Table 4. Words with the Lowest Correct Answers

Word	Type of Affixed Word	Frequency of Correct Answer by Student
أَبْدِ	*Mu'tal naqis amr*	7
يَسْتَفِيدُ	*Mu'tal ajwaf mudari'*	8
أَجِزْ	*Mu'tal ajwaf amr*	8
اِسْتِقَامٌ	*Mu'tal ajwaf masdar*	8
اسْتِيفَاءٌ	*Mu'tal lafif mafruq masdar*	15
وَعِّ	*Mu'tal lafif mafruq amar*	16
يَسْتَيْأَسُ	*Sahih mahmuz al-ayn mudari'*	17
اِغْتِنَاءٌ	*Mu'tal naqis masdar*	17
إِحْيَاءٌ	*Mu'tal lafif maqrun masdar*	17
مُتَسَوَّكٌ	*Mu'tal ajwaf ism alat/makan/zaman*	20

Based on the list of words in Table 4 above, the word that is most difficult for STPM students at SABK to master is أَبْدِ which is categorized as *mu'tal naqis amr* type of affix vocabulary. This finding also shows that students have difficulty in mastering all types of Arabic affix vocabulary that fall under the *mu'tal* root word construct for the *mudari', 'amr, masdar, ism alat, ism makan* and *ism zaman* derivation categories. In addition, students are also found to have difficulty in answering words consisting of the *sahih* root word construct for the type *mahmuz al-ayn mudari'*, which is يَسْتَيْأَسُ. In contrast, all students answered correctly for words of the *sahih salim mudari'* type. Thus, the findings of this study indicate that STPM students at SABK find it easier to answer questions consisting of words from the *ism fa'il* and *ism maf'ul* derivational categories for all types of Arabic affix vocabulary.

Based on the research findings regarding the types of words that are difficult to master, these findings indicate students' specific weaknesses in terms of types of affix vocabulary. Students were found do not master affix vocabulary consisting of the *mu'tal* construct. The *mu'tal* construct includes types of affix vocabulary *muʿtal ajwaf, muʿtal lafīf, muʿtal naqiṣ* and *muʿtal mithāl*. Students' weaknesses in terms of the *mu'tal* construct can be associated with students' skills in using derivation processes in affix vocabulary. Regarding derivation processes in Arabic affix vocabulary, Tajudin (2019) explains that *mu'tal* affix vocabulary involves processes of irregular deletion and substitution of letters. Thus, the addition of substitute letters representing different

pronouns also varies and no longer follows the main *wazn*. Therefore, students have difficulty determining the correct verb form when it comes to *mu'tal* affix vocabulary.

Students' weaknesses in this aspect can be associated with the vocabulary learning strategies used by students. According to Al-Shuwairekh (2001), the use of affix vocabulary learning strategies among students is related to the level of mastery of affix vocabulary. Students who have different levels of mastery of affix vocabulary use different techniques to memorize affix vocabulary, and the way affix vocabulary is processed in memory changes based on students' level of mastery in affix vocabulary. Meanwhile, Henning (1973) explains that weaker students use more general affix vocabulary learning strategies, namely making contextual meaning conclusions based on pronunciation similarities between target words and known words. On the other hand, higher level students tend to use analysis strategies based on understanding the linguistic characteristics of affix vocabulary, such as finding root words according to *wazn*. Thus, the choice of affix vocabulary learning strategies is related to students' difficulties in mastering types of affix vocabulary.

This study also shows that students are confused with the concept of conversion of *mu'tal* affix vocabulary. Students make affix substitutions using the concept of authentic conversion of affix vocabulary without going through the process of deletion and substitution of *'illah* letters, namely the letters *alif, wau and ya'* (Al-Dahdah, 1993). Among the issues that arise, students are bound to existing forms such as the word أَبْدِ in this vocabulary test. The *mudari'* verb for the word أَبْدِ is أَبْدَى so when the word أَبْدِ needs to be converted to the root word, students seem to lose the ability to restore the letter *wau* which has been replaced by the letter *alif* in the root word أَبْدَى. Subsequently, when students do not restore the *'illah* letter to the root word because they assume the *alif* letter in the word أَبْدِ is the original letter in the root word, this mistake continues until it causes students to choose less precise *wazn*. Therefore, inaccurate *wazn* determination also causes students to be unable to answer correctly and this proves that students can only answer vocabulary they know and do not fully master the concepts in the field of Arabic affix vocabulary morphology and memorized the *wazn*.

Therefore, these findings indicate that students need to properly master the derivation process when forming *mu'tal* affix vocabulary. The derivation process is fundamental in mastering affix vocabulary. If knowledge of this derivation process is not taken into account, students will continue to make mistakes when encountering *mu'tal* affix vocabulary (Saxena et al., 2020). These findings are in line with Abdul Azim and Lily's (2022) study, which is that students' mastery of the types of vocabulary *muʿtal ajwaf, muʿtal lafīf, muʿtal naqiṣ and muʿtal mithāl* is weak. This confirms that students' mistakes begin when manipulating words in the form of *mu'tal* root words without the correct derivation process understanding. Thus, there is a need to strengthen students' knowledge of the derivation process on the *mu'tal* root word construct because this knowledge is important to help students master difficult affix vocabulary.

However, the research findings also showed students' high level of mastery in mastering *sahih salim mudari'* affix vocabulary. This type of affix vocabulary does not involve complex derivation processes such as deletion and substitution of *'illah* letters. According to Mohammad Afiq and Hakim (2019), students are usually able to produce other words if given one of the same and well-known *wazn*. This study proves that the *wazn* of *sahih salim mudari'* affix vocabulary, which consists of the arrangement of *sahih* letters, namely hijaiyyah letters other than *'illah* letters, is more known to students. Beside

, based on the researcher's observation of the list of most commonly used Arabic words by students in the Malaysian context by Wan Rusli et al. (2021), most of the word structures for this list of words are *sahih* letters and according to Ahmad Sobri (2017) the use of common and frequently used words in Arabic language curriculum textbooks at Arabic schools is high. Thus, rarely used vocabulary in class or not in textbooks is difficult for students to master.

In the context of Arabic language textbooks used in Arabic schools, the number of common and frequently used words decreases in line with the increase in grades. Moreover, the use of complex sentences is higher than simple sentences even though the number of common and frequently used words is high in the textbooks (Kamarulzaman et al, 2021). In this case, STPM students who enrolled in Arabic schools since Primary One should have mastered a lot of vocabulary and can be exposed to new words. However, when STPM students do not master the linguistic features of the language, students have difficulty understanding more complex texts (Kamarulzaman et al., 2017). Thus, the selection of teaching materials should take into account the linguistic features that contribute to text readability and help students master affix vocabulary (Heilporn et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

This study found that STPM students at Selangor Arabic schools have a poor level and capable to master but there are misinterpretations. The significant inaccuracies explained when this study shows that STPM students at Selangor Arabic Schools are weak in mastering *mu'tal* type root word affix vocabulary. Researchers believe that this is due to the use of teaching materials that involve practice using the derivation process for mu'tal type affix vocabulary in class. Thus, researchers suggest that Arabic language teachers add teaching materials that focus on aspects of affix vocabulary and then students can use the teaching materials in self-directed learning. Sufficient materials will encourage students to use affix vocabulary learning strategies outside of school hours.

The findings of this study also show the main aspects in the derivation process such as deletion and substitution of *'illah* letters taught in the topics of *ibdal* and *i'lal*. Both of these topics need to be emphasized comprehensively by teachers. Understanding the concepts of *ibdal* and *i'lal* helps students detect any changes that occur in Arabic affix vocabulary. In addition, this study also provides recommendations for Arabic language teachers to encourage students to use appropriate memory strategies so that memorization activities that are common practices are supported by accurate conceptual understanding and can be used to answer complex questions. Moreover, students themselves need to think creatively and critically to solve problems faced. Thus, this study has presented in-depth information about the student weakness in vocabulary aspect and poor mastery level among student that should be given attention for future researchers in Arabic language education research.

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