

DERIVATIONAL AND INFLECTIONAL MORPHEMES USED IN STUDENTS' ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

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Abstract:

This study analyzes the derivational and inflectional morphemes used in argumentative essays written by students. This study aims to determine the word formation and dominant categories of derivational and inflectional morphemes found in argumentative essays written by students. This study was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach and the documentation technique to collect data. This investigation utilized humans as its instrument. All categories of derivational and inflectional morphemes were found in students' argumentative essays. There are three dominant categories of inflectional morphemes: 228 morphemes in the verb to noun category, 51 morphemes in the noun to adjective category, and 20 morphemes in the adjective to adverb category. Two categories dominate the derivational morpheme, with 292 morphemes belonging to the -s as plural category and 20 morphemes belonging to the -ed as past tense category. The results of the present research have shone some light on the field of English teaching context and are discussed herein.

Keywords: Derivational morpheme, Inflectional morpheme, Argumentative Essay

INTRODUCTION

Words are an element that contributes to language fluency. Sentences are unable to be formed without words. Word, according to Handoko (2019:4), is the simplest free form found in a language. Similarly, Carstairs-McCarthy (2017) identified this word as the fundamental linguistic unit. It implies that the word is the smallest meaningful unit in a sentence that can contribute to the development of a language. The relationship between meaning and form within words (Purwanti (2020) cites Rafold (2006). Morphology is tasked with explaining, through the study of word structure, the relationship between changes in word form and changes in meaning that typically occur consistently and meticulously, and which in general also correspond to various syntactic functions. According to Lieber (2009:2), morphology is the study of word formation, which includes the ways in which new words are coined in the world's languages and the ways in which the form of words varies dependent on how they are used in sentences. To comprehend morphology, one must be familiar with the term morpheme. According to Lieber (2009:32), morpheme are the meaningful elements used to form words. The smallest linguistic unit with a meaning or grammatical function (Mariani, 2007). Therefore, words are the greatest object of study in morphology, while morphemes are the smallest.

There are two types of morpheme: free morpheme and confined/bound morpheme. Yule (2022:63) asserted that free morphemes can exist alone as single words, such as open and tour and bound morphemes are morphemes that cannot exist alone but are typically attached to another form, such as re-, -ist, -ed, and -s. A free morpheme is a morpheme that can exist independently in a language (Lieber, 2009:2). Bound morphemes cannot exist alone in nature; they must be attached to root, stem, or bases (Handoko, 2019:10). In other terms, bound morphemes are composed of

prefixes and suffixes, also known as affixes. According to Katamba (2004:44), a prefix is an affix applied before a root or stem or base, such as re-, un-, and in-, whereas a suffix is an affix attached after a root (or stem or base), such as -ly, -er, -ist, -s, -ing, and -ed.

In bound morphemes, there are two types of morphemes called derivational and inflectional morphemes. Derivational morpheme is a bound morpheme that changes the meaning and word class. Derivational patterns commonly change the word class of the base lexeme (Haspelmath & Sims, 2013). For example, when the suffix -ness is added to the adjective “kind”, the adjective “kind” becomes the noun “kindness”. While inflectional morphemes is a morpheme that does not cause a change in word class and word meaning. But this morpheme affects the number (plurality) and tenses. Yule (2022) stated that inflectional morphemes is a morpheme that is not used to produce new words in the language, but rather to indicate aspects of the grammatical function of a word. The key point about inflectional morpheme is that applying never gives a new word class, but only a different form of the same word Hippisley & Stump Purwanti (2016, as cited in Purwanti, 2020). For example, in the word “table” is added the suffix -s, the suffix does not change the syntactic category of the word “tables”, but it is only gives grammatical meaning which shows that the word tables is plural.

Students frequently do not comprehend the lexical and grammatical meaning of a word, despite the fact that they employ a vast array of vocabulary, including the use of morphemes. Henceforth, studying derivational and inflectional morphemes can help students comprehend the grammar-specific significance of each word or the affixing process. There are several previous studies that examine the relationship between morphology in improving students' writing quality. Study conducted by Sarfraz & Abbas (2018) and also Asaad & Shabdin (2019) about the effectiveness or the importance of morphological awareness in academic writing

found that morphological awareness can have a significant effect on improving students' writing quality. In addition, a study conducted by Azahra et al., (2021) about the correlation between morphological awareness found that there is a correlation between students' morphological awareness on their accuracy in writing, but in this study the authors analyzed recount texts. The researchers in this previous research, explained that morphology affects students' accuracy because they have no difficulty in making good words or sentences, including inflectional and derivational morpheme so they can minimize errors in writing.

Writing is one of the language abilities that affect the use of morphemes. This is because, when writing an essay, students will naturally use a great deal of vocabulary, particularly English vocabulary, to convey their ideas. On the other hand, the elegance of writing is typically not limited to the author's delivery of ideas. Choosing a good or diverse vocabulary can also affect the readers' desire to read a piece of writing, particularly if it is intended for academic purposes. By understanding the process of word formation, students will have no trouble expressing their ideas through a variety of words, notably through the use of derivation and inflection morphemes, as they will be able to easily comprehend the meaning of these words. Based on the preceding explanation, the underpinning question of the present study is to what extent students apply inflectional and derivational morphemes in their argumentative essay.

METHOD

In this study, the researchers used qualitative methods to answer research questions and analyze the data. Descriptive qualitative method is to learn intensely phenomenon to find patterns and themes about life events when the researcher has specific question about the phenomenon (Yastanti et al., 2021). In

this research, the object of the study was argumentative essay written by the third semester students of English study program at Universitas Katolik Indonesia St. Paulus Ruteng which consist of 25 students, who had been taught about writing argumentative essay.

To collect the data, the researchers used documentation technique. There are several steps that was taken by the researchers in collecting and analyzing the data, such as the researchers collected students' argumentative essays from the writing lecturer and having collected the students' argumentative essay, the researchers read and analyzed the students' argumentative essay. As they read thoroughly the students argumentative essays, the researchers used the theory to determine derivational and inflectional morphemes in students' argumentative essay. In other words, the researchers served as the main instrument to gather and analyze the data qualitatively. They directly involved in collecting, identifying, analyzing, and interpreting data by applying three stages of analyzing data, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

RESULT

This study sought to determine the extent to which students use derivational and inflectional morphemes in their argumentative essays. The categories and word formation of each derivational morpheme used in students' argumentative essay are shown in table 1.

Table 1. The Derivational Morphemes in Students' Argumentative Essay

No	Category	Word Formation										Total
1.	Noun (verb to noun and adjective to noun)	er	men	ag	io	Anc	or	ur	ist	in		
		t	e	n	e			e		g		
		19	21	16	21	3	1	1	1	14	8	231
2.	Adjective (verb to adjective and noun to adjective)	fu	able	ou	y	Al	les	iv	is	ed		
		l		s			s	e	h			
		1	9	12	8	4	1	17	1	16		69
3	Adverb (Adjective to adverb)	ly										
		23										23
4	Verb (adjective to verb and noun to verb)	iz	en									
		e										
		3	1									4

As shown in Table 1, the total number of derivational morphemes occurrences used by the students in their argumentative essay varies on each category. The noun category takes 231 occurrences, the adjectives category takes 69 occurrences, the adverbs category takes 23 occurrences, and the verb category takes 4 occurrences.

Moreover, aside from investigating the use of derivational morphemes applied by the students in their argumentative essay, the study also analyze the inflectional morphemes used by the students. The categories and word formation of each inflectional morpheme used in students' argumentative essay are shown on table 2.

Table 2. The Inflectional Morphemes in Students' Argumentative Essay

No	Categories	Total
1.	-s or -es as plural noun	292
2.	-ed as past tense	20
3.	-'s as possessive	19
4.	-s as third person singular present	15
5.	-ing as progressive	9
6.	-est as superlative	3
7.	-er as comparative	3
8.	-en as past participle	1

Data presented in table 2 revealed that the process of inflectional morphemes used by the students in their argumentative essay was dominantly using -s or -es plural noun category. Whereas, other categories of inflectional morphemes were rarely applied by the students.

DISCUSSION

Students' argumentative essays consist of three categories of morphemes that are widely used. First, the researchers found 231

morphemes that were included in the noun category (verb to noun or adjective to noun). Purwanti (2020) stated that the category of verb to noun is a kind of derivational process that is formed by changing the current part of speech into noun formation. While (Hermapratwi & Simatupang, 2022) stated that the category of verbs to nouns changes the words or morphemes to nouns. An example of this derivational morpheme used in students' argumentative essay was as follows.

"Besides that, the media can make students independent because they can search more material than their teacher gave."(text extracted from student number 17). In the extracted sentence, the word "teacher" consists of two morphemes; they are morpheme teach-, and morpheme -er. The morpheme "teach" is a verb and after adding the -er suffix it changes the word class, namely a noun. In this case, the word "teach" means the activity of conveying or transferring knowledge, whereas after being combined into one word, the word "teacher" changes in meaning, a person who conveys or shares knowledge.

Second, there were noun to adjective morphemes found in students' argumentative essays. Purwanti (2020) stated that the category of noun to adjective is a kind of derivational process which is formed by changing the current part of speech into an adjective. While Hermapratwi & Simatupang (2022) stated that the noun to adjective category is the derived words that change into adjectives. An example of a derivational morpheme in the noun to adjective category used in students' argumentative essay was as follows.

"...to encourage personal reflection in relationships in order to be aware of their actions and decisions and also inspires them to build good relationships with other people"(text extracted from student number 15).

In the sentence above, there is the word "personal", where the word "personal" consists of two morphemes, they are the person-

morpheme and the -al morpheme. The morpheme "person" is a noun and after adding the suffix -al it changes the word class into adjectives. In this case, the word "person" means human, and after being combined into the word "personal", it changes in meaning which is human as individual being. Third, another morphemes were included in the adjective to adverb category. Purwanti (2020) stated that the category of adjective to adverb is a kind of derivational process which is formed by changing the current part of speech into adverbs. While Hermapratwi & Simatupang (2022) stated that the category of adjectives to adverbs are derived words that change into adverbs. An example of a derivational morpheme in the adjective to adverb category used in students' argumentative essays was as follows.

"However, drinking is a tradition in some cultures especially in Indonesia that can't leave" (text extracted from student number 4).

In the sentence above, there is the word "especially", where it consists of two morphemes, the especial-morpheme, and the -ly morpheme. The morpheme "especial" is an adjective and after adding the suffix -ly it changes the word class, namely an adverb. In this case, the word "especial" means particular, while after being combined into the word "especially", it changes the meaning into giving emphasize the importance of one thing among others.

Besides the use of derivational morphemes, there were also the use of inflectional morphemes applied by the students in their argumentative essays. First, the most widely inflectional morpheme used by the students was -s as plural. Saragih et al., (2022) stated that -s or -es is used to express plurality, or to mark as more than one. While Wulandari & Indriani, (2021) stated that the inflectional suffix -s or -es added to countable nouns is used to express plurality, -s or -es is added to the end of a count noun which is the standard plural. An example of an inflectional morpheme in the -s as plural category used in students' argumentative essays was as follows.

"So, that clear death penalties are opposite to religion rules" (text extracted from student number 7).

In the sentence above, there is the word "rules." It consists of two morphemes. They are morpheme rule-, and morpheme -s. Morpheme-rule is a noun which means provisions that must be obeyed by society. Meanwhile, the morpheme -s is a suffix indicating that the number of nouns is more than one but does not change the meaning of the word.

Second, there were also morphemes which belong to -ed as past tense. Saragih et al., (2022) stated that -ed as past tense is used to express something that happened in the past. While Wulandari & Indriani (2021) stated that -ed as past tense used to show that activity happened in the past. An example of an inflectional morpheme in the -ed as past tense category used in students' argumentative essay was as follows.

"We can see the farmer at the north of Sambi Rampas district, East Manggarai region who planted tobacco" (the text extracted from student number 19). The word "planted" consists of two morphemes. They are morpheme plant-, and morpheme ed-. The morpheme plant is a verb which means to put or cover the seeds with soil while the morpheme ed- which is added to the morpheme "plant" indicates the past tense or something that has happened but does not change the meaning of the word.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzed the derivational and inflectional morphemes used in the argumentative essays written by the third semester students of the English study program at a private university in Ruteng, Flores Island. There were 25 students who participated in the study. After the researchers conducted an analysis on the students' argumentative essays, it has been discovered that there are seven types of derivational morphemes

found, such as noun to adjective, verb to noun, adjective to verb, adjective to noun, verb to adjective, and adjective to verb. All types of derivational morphemes are used in students' argumentative essays. Moreover, all types of inflectional morphemes were used in students' argumentative essays as well. Therefore, it can be said that the various use of morphemes in students' argumentative essays has helped the readers understand the meaning of words applied by the students in their writing. In addition, students must acquire a great deal about morphemes, specifically derivational and inflectional morphemes, as it is one method for enhancing English vocabulary. Students can discover the process of word formation, as well as changes in the meaning and class of words after going through a morphological process. The present study focused on investigating the use of morphemes in argumentative essays written by university students. Future researchers need to conduct a study about the use of morphemes in other text types by doing a comparative study.

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