An Analysis of Inflectional Affixes on English Department Students' Undergraduate Thesis Abstracts

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Abstract: *This research aimed to explore what types of inflectional affixes found and which one type of inflectional affixes that were dominantly used in students' writing. The researcher applied one of the qualitative design namely case studies. The documentation was employed as the data collecting method. In this case, the researcher analyzed the students' writing product. There were 30 English Department students' undergraduate thesis abstracts at IAIN Metro (State Islamic Institute) in Indonesia as the research samples. The data was analyzed by using Cresswell method. The results found that there were several types of inflectional affixes which appeared in the research samples. The most frequently used was the suffixes in nouns (plural). The second rank was in verbals (present: V1, past: V2 regular and V3 perfect/ passive voice) forms. The third rank was in adjectives (comparative and superlative) forms. The last rank was in possessives (singular and plural) forms. There was no one inflectional affixes in adverb found on the students' writing. It indicated that the students frequently use inflectional affixes in their writing. It can be noted that English inflectional affixes have a significant contributions to English writing until bachelor degree. The results of this research can be considerations for the teacher about the importance of inflectional affixes knowledge for their students' writing skill. Therefore, it should be taught in detail.*
Keywords*: Inflectional affixes, Case study, Students' abstract writing*

I. Introduction

Basically, there are four skills in English that must be mastered by students namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Especially for writing, Siahaan (2008:2) defines that it is a skill of a writer to communicate information to reader or group of readers. The writer skill is also realized by his or her ability to apply the rule of the language s/he is writing to transfer the information s/he has in her or his mind readers effectively. Moreover, (Richards and Renandya, 2002:303) assume that there is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for L2 learners to master. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable text. It means that writing is considered as the difficult skill to be mastered by the students although they have been at university level. Especially for Indonesian EFL learners, they have a duty to master academic writing such as making a text, essay, or project paper based on their school levels. However, several errors usually are still found on the students' writing.

According to Brown (2001:335), there are several compositions that are important in English writing. Brown organizes a good deal of attention was placed on "model" compositions that students would emulate and on how well a student's final product measured up against a list of criteria that include; content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanical considerations (spelling and punctuation). It can be concluded that, writing is more than the activity to write the ideas on the paper. It has to be accepted with the rules and structures of language namely grammar that is integrated with morphology, syntax, and discourse in linguistics study.

Basically, the structures of language don't not only occur in the sentence but also in the word. It is related to the discussion of morphology. Mark and Kirsten (2011:1) state that in linguistics, morphology refers to the mental system involved in word formation or to the branch of linguistics that deals with words, their internal structure, and how they are formed. A major way in which morphologists investigate words, their internal structure, and how they are formed is through the identification and study of morphemes, often defined as the smallest linguistic pieces with a grammatical function. It can be noted that the knowledge about morphology also has a significant role in writing.

Morpheme is a main discussion in morphology. There are two kinds of morphemes they are free and bound. According to Andrew and McCarthy (2002:18), the morphemes that can stand on their own are called free, and ones that cannot are bound. Bound morphemes are also called affixes which can be classified into prefix, infix, and suffix. English only has two kinds of bound morphemes namely prefixes and suffixes. There

are not infixes in English. Bound morphemes are classified into two namely derivational and inflectional morphemes. Inflectional morphology is the relationship between word-forms of a lexeme. While, derivational morphology is the relationship between lexemes of a word family, Martin and Andrea (2010:18). Much deeper, Rochelle (2009:108) distinguish inflectional and derivational in the following ways:

Inflection	*Derivation*
▪ Never changes category	▪ Sometimes changes category
▪ Adds grammatical meaning	▪ Often adds lexical meaning
▪ Is important to syntax	▪ Produces new lexemes
▪ Is usually fully productive	▪ Can range from unproductive to fully productive

Moreover, focus on inflectional affixes, Rochelle (2009:7) Inflectional word formation is word formation that expresses grammatical distinctions like number (singular vs. plural); tense (present vs. past); person (first, second, or third); and case (subject, object, possessive), among others. It does not result in the creation of new lexemes, but merely changes the grammatical form of lexemes to fit into different grammatical contexts. It can be noted that inflectional affixes refer to the additional affixes (prefix of suffix) because the influence of grammatical rules without change the based meaning or word class. Andrew and McCarthy (2002:18) organize that the types and examples of Engish inflectional that occur in the writing based on the word classes' category are as follows:

Nouns : cat, cats

Verbs : learn, learned, learned

Adjectives : green, greener, greenest

Adverbs : soon, sooner, soonest

Possessive : father's car

Regarding to all the discussions above, the discussion about inflectional affixes is very closely and related to the grammar that is to be important aspect in writing. However, in practice, the teachers rarely teach students more detail about how to add English affixes especially in noun; plural and verb; present correctly. So, the students sometimes still have errors in their writing. A relevant research from Suwaree (2014) found that Thai University students make such a large number of errors in English inflection. Also, Hamidah (2016) indicated that the types of inflectional morphemes errors in the text written by second year students of MAS TPI SilauDunia were omission, addition, and misformation. It can be noted that the teacher should teach the students deeper about inflectional affixes in order to decrease the students' writing errors especially in using inflectional affixes.

Stressing the point above, this research aimed to explore what types of inflectional affixes which can be found and which one type of inflectional affixes that were dominantly used in students' writing in the form of undergraduate thesis abstracts. Furthermore, it is purposed to conclude how much inflectional affixes contribute to the students' writing until bachelor degree. Essentially, the result of this research can be considerations for the teacher about the importance of inflectional affixes knowledge for their students' writing skill. Therefore, it needs to be explored.

1.1 Research Questions

The main purpose of this research is to answer the research questions below:

1) What are types of inflectional affixes found in English Department students' undergraduate thesis abstracts?
2) What are types of inflectional affixes which are dominantly used?

II. Methods

2.1 Type of Research

Actually, the researcher here conducted qualitative research. Creshwell (2009:4) states that qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. This research applied one of the research qualitative approaches namely case study. Creswell mentions that case study is kind of qualitative approach which the researcher detail analysis a program, an event, an activity, a process, or one or more individuals. In this case, the researcher analyzed, described and interpreted the inflectional affixes that appear on students' writing performance.

2.2 Data source

In qualitative research, there is no population as the data sources, but usually called social situation consisting of three elements such as place, actors and activity. Automatically, purposive sampling was applied based on the purpose to analyze the writing performance of students at university level that have been good enough in mastering grammar.

The researcher used written documents to get an understanding of the phenomenon under study. In this research, the researcher analyzed the students' writing product namely 30 English Department students' undergraduate thesis abstracts at IAIN Metro (State Islamic Institute) as one of university in Indonesia.

2.3 Data Collection

The researcher collected the data by using documentation during the process of research to proof the data. Creswell (2009:181) states that these may be public document (e.g., news-papers, minutes of meetings, official reports) or private document (e.g., personal journals and diaries letters, e-mails). In this case, the researcher collected the data from English Department students' writing performance in the form of their undergraduate thesis abstracts published in IAIN Metro library.

2.4 Data Analysis

Creswell (2009:185-189) argues that there are six steps of data analysis can be used. It involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data, and making an interpretation of the large meaning of the data. Thus, the researcher applied the six steps to analyze the data as well. In this research, the steps can be explained as follows:

1) Preparing the data for analysis. For this step, the researcher started it by collecting several English Department students' undergraduate thesis abstracts writing.

2) Reading all the data to obtain a general sense of the information and to reflect on its overall meaning. Sometimes qualitative researchers write notes in margins or start recording general thoughts about the data at this stage.Thirty students' abstract writingswere scanned to gain thegeneral information of inflectional affixes.

3) Begining detailed analysis with coding process. Coding is the process of organizing the material into chunks or segments of text before bringing meaning to information. The script of students' abstract writings were marked and separated based on inflectional affixes categories.

4) Using the coding process to generate the description of the setting or people as categories or themes for analysis. In this step, the researcher described inflectional affixes that were found in the students' undergraduate thesis abstracts.

5) Conveying the descriptive information. It is a discussion that mentions the description information about each participant.

6) Interpreting all the data as the last steps on data analysis. In order to answer both of research questions. The researcher presented a list of data to calculate and classified the data based on the types of English inflectional affixes. Then, the researcher concluded the inflectional affixes that were dominantly occur on the students' undergraduate thesis abstracts and how much inflectional affixes contribute to writing skills.

III. Results

Based on the theory from Rochelle (2009:7) and Andrew-McCarthy (2002:18) about types of inflectional affixes, the researcher provided a table as the results of data analysis on the 30 students' undergraduate thesis abstracts at IAIN Metro to answer the first and second research questions in this present research. Generally, it could be organized are as follows:

3.1. What are types of inflectional affixes found in English Department students' undergraduate thesis abstracts?

Table 3.1.Types of Inflectional Affixes

No	Types	Prefix/ Suffix	Amount	Percentage	Finding Examples
1	Nouns (plural)	*s/ es/ ies*	306	41.35 %	- The data in the form of *words*or *pictures* rather than *numbers* - The *students* found *difficulties*..... - Those *strategies* can make the students........ - There are some *progresses* after giving treatment.......

2	Verbals - present: V1 - past: V2 regular - perfect/ passive voice: V3 regular	*s/ es/ ies* *d/ ed/ ied*	280	37.84%	- Researcher *collects* the data - The data *indicates* that..... - The finding of the research *shows* that..... - The writer *tries* to attest that Dialogue activity can be one of teaching activity....... - This research *used* questionnaire....... - The researcher also *analyzed* the data...... - The result of this research *showed* that.... - The researcher had *outlined* the problems in this research - The appropriate method which can be *applied*...... - Ha is *accepted* and Ho is *rejected*.
3	Adjectives (comparative/ superlative)	*er/ est*	33	4.46%	- t*observed* = 6.984 is *higher* than t*table......* - The average score was 74.6, with the low*est* was 60 and the high*est* was 85......
4	Adverbs (comparative/ superlative)	*er/ est*	0	0%	-
5	Possessives (singular/ plural)	*'s/ s'*	121	16.35%	- English teacher and young *learner's* capablity - The strategies applied in the short story translations of *O.Henry's* The Gift of the Magi - The *students'* error in using irregular verb - There is the influence of teacher*s'* classroom management....
	TOTAL		740	100%	

Based on the table above, it shows that there are four types of inflectional affixes that appear on English Department students' undergraduate thesis abstracts based on word classes category. The first are nouns (plural) form which use suffixes (s/ es/ ies) 41.35%. The second are verbals (present:V1, past:V2 regular and V3 perfect/ passive voice) form which use suffixes (s/ ies) or (d/ ed/ id) 37.84%. The third are possessives (singular and plural) form which use suffixes ('s/ s') 16.35%. The last are adjectives (comparative and superlative) form which is use suffixes (er/ est) 4.46%. Especially for adverbs (comparative and superlative) form, the researcher doesn't find it in the student's abstract writing. So, it is 0% for this type.

3.2. What are types of inflectional affixes which are dominantly used?

Related to the second research question, it can be answered by seeing the data on the table above. It shows that the types of inflectional affixes that dominantly appear on English Department students' undergraduate thesis abstracts are nouns (plural) form which use suffixes (s/ es/ ies). It appears 41.35 % from all of inflectional affixes which is used on students' abstracts writing.

IV. Discussion and Conclusion

Dealing with the theories from Rochelle (2009:7) and Andrew-McCarthy (2002:18) that there are five types of English inflectional affixes in word classes, the results of this research found that there were several types of inflectional affixes appeared in the research samples (students' undergraduate thesis abstracts writing). The most frequently used were the suffixes (s/ es/ ies) in nouns (plural). The second rank was in verbals (present:V1, past:V2 regular and V3 perfect/ passive voice) which used suffixes (s/ ies) or (d/ ed/ id). The third rank was in adjectives (comparative and superlative) form which used suffixes (er/ est). The last rank was in possessives (singular and plural) form which use suffixes ('s/ s'). There was no one inflectional affixes in adverb form found on the students' writing.

It indicates that the students frequently use inflectional affixes in their writing consciously. It can be inferred that English inflectional affixes have a significant contribution to English writing until bachelor degree. Moreover, there are also the errors possibility of using inflectional affixes that was founded by the previous researches from Suwaree (2014) and Hamidah (2016). Therefore, it is necessary that the students must comprehend the rules how to use inflectional affixes correctly. Especially for the differences in using suffixes (s/ es/ ies), (d/ ed/ id), (er/ est) or ('s/ s') in order to avoid the errors in their writing. The implications of this research to the English teaching, it should be a consideration for the teachers that they have to teach students

more detail about how to use English inflectional affixes correctly. For example, the teacher should teach specifically how to use suffix (es) for noun or verb by ending (s, z, x, sh, ch) or suffix (ies) for noun or verb by ending (consonant+y). It is going to be better if the material about inflectional affixes can be taught start from senior high school level.

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