
Using Alternative Media in Promoting Students' Morphological Competence in Classroom

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Abstract

As one of the linguistic branches, Morphology has become one of the subjects that is definitely learned by English Department students. In terms of vocabulary and grammar, Morphology mostly concerns and supports language elements and enhances students' linguistics or morphological competence. The purpose of this research is to determine how morphological awareness plays important role in students' word structure comprehension which is useful to improve students' vocabulary by knowing the word structure itself such as viewing affixes in words. As the descriptive method, it will be more concerned with investigating some strategies and alternative media in teaching Morphology in the classroom to English Department Students by viewing the needs and situations in the classroom. Some strategies that can be used as alternative teaching morphology are using video in explaining material instead of thick books, using card media in teaching words containing words and pictures, using the creative game to show some morphological process, showing some word lists that as the real example of English Morphology that is applied in the real daily life and giving quizzes. These strategies in using alternative media hopefully can attract the learners to understanding Morphological phenomena and finally can improve their ability in writing, speaking, listening, and reading skills in English.

Keywords: Teaching Morphology, Morphological Awareness, Learning Strategies, Alternative Media

Introduction

Learning Morphology is actually interesting if the teacher knows the right way to teach morphology, considering that morphology studies word formation problems, an accurate strategy is needed to make learning morphology interesting. So far, learning morphology seems monotonous and not challenging because it is taught more theoretically than a thick book so the class becomes boring and lifeless. However, in learning, students seem less interested or less enthusiastic about learning it. In fact, learning morphology requires precise strategies so that it becomes an easy-to-understand lesson. There is an assumption that morphology is difficult because they have to memorize the theory plus other more severe assumptions such as the lack of importance of morphology in learning English.

As a person who teaches morphology, lecturers should have or use effective ways as an alternative to teaching so that it is not boring. In its journey, morphology as the most basic study in learning English as a foreign language requires a special strategy so that students can focus on studying and knowing the process of forming the correct words in English. Because this study is the basis for learning vocabulary as the basis for forming sentences that will greatly affect English language skills, namely, writing, reading, speaking, and listening. In fact, if you look closely, learning word formation is the initial and basic capital in mastering English even for all skills such as helping in spelling and grammar. Morphology is the grammar for words while syntax is the grammar for sentences.

Word is a small unit of linguistic form limited by spaces that produce sentences that need a word to start with. On the other hand, a word can be said as the ingredient of sentences that need to build up.

Word can be simple or even complex. People can create complex and compound words by applying some theories of word formation. Affixation and compounding or else can be studied in Morphology itself. As a result, studying it is a great way to improve the student's vocabulary. As a result, the student can speak or write with those words as well. Moreover, by knowing the word formation, the student can guess the meaning of words especially those of belong to complex and compound words. This method can be one of the great ways to start learning English as a foreign language for learners.

In short, studying English morphology can impact a better understanding of English through morphological concepts and its awareness while they are learning a foreign language. Morphological awareness as one of the linguistic awareness abilities belonging to human beings can also be defined as an individual attentive knowledge of the morphemic structure of certain words and the ability to reproduce and employ that structure as Carlisle in Tong et.al (2011,4). Moreover, Apel (2014) suggests that morphological awareness is an important linguistic awareness ability that deserves much attention in learning language because it plays important role in reading and spelling development. Alsaeedi (2017) and Akbulut (2017) proved that teaching morphology plays a significant role in increasing student's morphological awareness and vocabulary knowledge.

It shows that English Morphology plays an important role in learning English as a second and foreign language. Furthermore, this paper explains English Morphology, Morphological Awareness, and some alternative media that can be used in learning Morphology for learners. The purposes of this study are:

1. To determine how morphological awareness plays important role in student's word structure comprehension
2. To reveal some alternative ways that can be used to create an effective method of teaching morphology

Methods

The research method is a systemic procedure a researcher uses to solve the defined research question (Atmowardoyo, 2010). The purpose of science itself is scientific and of course, it fulfills the requirements and rules of science whose truth can be accounted for. The descriptive research method is the method used in this study. This is because it is following the research objectives, namely to see the important role of morphological awareness for students in learning word structure as a whole and also to determine and suggest some alternative media that can be used in the classroom. For this reason, this research is carried out by observing and analyzing by considering the classroom environment in the morphology learning process in the 5th semester of English Education Study Program students as many as 16 people at the Muhammadiyah University of West Sumatra.

The discussion is carried out qualitatively because it uses a description of the words in the description referring to the topic to be achieved regarding the suggestions of alternative media that can be used in learning morphology. In addition, in descriptive research, researchers look for appropriate and sufficient descriptions of all observed activities, objects, processes, and humans themselves (Sulistyo-Basuki, 2010:110)

Results and Discussion

As we know, the word 'Morphology' has been used since 1828 in English learning. This word first refers to the branch of biology that deals with the form of the living organism and its parts, and the relationship between their structure (Tokar:1). Furthermore, Aronoff (2011:2) mentions that 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. The point thing here is how the Morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit in language and also words become the central points in studying Morphology in the classroom.

Learning morphology can be more complicated if it is not taught creatively because it studies both their internal structure and their word formation. Some words can be morphologically complex or even just simple. It means those words can be easily broken down into smaller parts or units with their meaning. For example, the word that we can categorize as Blending, such as *cybercast*, *digipak*, *irone*, *chugger*, *backronym*, or *brunello*. Kata '*cybercast*' taken from *cyber* + *broadcast*. Then, the word '*broadcast*' can be cut as '*cast*'. Then, it can be added to *cyber*. It means, the mixed process that happens in that word (*clipping* and *Compounding*) can be combined each other to get the new one after that. Other examples of the process like this, such as *digipak*, *irone*, *clicktivist*, and many more.

As mentioned previously that morphemes (bounded) and words (as root or called free morpheme) are important in studying morphology so those two things must be understood first or even should be comprehended more. Morphemes generally refer to the smallest meaningful unit in language and it must be the minimal linguistic units with lexical or grammatical meaning (Booij, 2005, pp. 8). In addition, Katamba (1993, pp. 20) defines morphemes refer to the smallest, inseparable unit of semantic content or grammatical function in which words are formed. Furthermore, Spenser (1997, pp. 5) explains that units that seem to share some sort of meaning or function with the word that they belong to and units that cannot be decomposed into smaller parts are called morphemes. In short, a morpheme cannot be divided into smaller parts anymore, then, a morpheme carries meaning and grammatical information such as plurality and tense markers (in Giyatmi, 2019). For examples; the word *pens* is composed of *pen*+ *-s*. *Pen* is a Noun and *-s* is a suffix for plurality marker. Both *pen* and *-s* cannot be broken down or divided any further and both of them carry their own meaning, so *pen* and *-s* is categorized as morphemes.

Morphemes can be classified into three; **free morphemes** (a morpheme that can stand alone), **bound morpheme** (a morpheme that cannot stand alone), and **zero morpheme** (a morpheme consisting no phonetic form). Then, words can also be classified as the content words or class words (Noun, Verb, Adjective, Adverb) and Function words (Preposition, Articles, Conjunction, Pronoun, etc.) Based on their position and their used, affixes can be classified into some forms, they are **prefixes** (affixes in the front position, such as *de-*, *re-*, *dis-*, *il-*, *im-*, *inter-*, etc.) and **suffixes** (affixes in the back position such as *-al*, *-able*, *-ion*, *-ment*, etc.)

Furthermore, based on their function, affixes can be **derivational** and **inflectional affixes**. Derivational affixes are those that can change the word class of the word that they attach to like a verb change into a Noun or else. For example, is *sad* (Adj) + *-ness* (suffix) becomes *sadness* (Noun), the word *develop* (Verb) + *-ment* (suffix) becomes *development* (Noun). There is the changing of them in the word class classification or its part of speech.

On the other hand, differing with the explanation above about derivation, the inflectional affixes are those that cannot change the part of speech of the words that they attach to, for example, is *cloth* (Noun) + *-es* (suffix) becomes *clothes* (Noun). Then, the word *walk* (Verb) + *-ed* (suffix) become *walked* (Verb). There is no changing of their word class even though there is affixation in the process.

Besides those things above, morphology also concerns another great word formation. Since Morphology deals with how the words are built up, besides Derivation and Inflection, there are several ways of word formation such as affixation, compounding, blending, clipping, coinage, folk etymology, acronym, abbreviation, back-formation borrowing, etc.

Morphology is not only about knowing how the words are formed but, in their usage, it gives more crucial knowledge that must be needed to improve other English skills like reading, listening, writing, and also speaking or pronunciation. Tong et al (2011, pp. 5) write that morphology has been closely related to word reading as well as reading comprehension. So, it means, knowing the morphological process and improving morphological awareness is important.

Knowing how crucial learning morphology is, there must be some great ideas to make it easy to be learned in the classroom. Therefore, this research needs to suggest some great ideas to improve students' morphological awareness and competence.

Some Alternatives Media that can be Used in Teaching Morphology

1. Watching the Video

Nowadays, watching videos from many platforms like Youtube or else is a very simple thing to be done. We live in a digital era that allows us to connect and find all the things we need easily. Sari and Yoni (2021) mentioned that using technology and internet literacy in learning can be one of the great thing in teaching nowadays.

As a creative teacher, it's a good idea to find or even make your own creative learning videos that can attract students' attention to learning. Currently, there are many applications that teachers can use to deliver material virtually. Video creation and editing applications are widely available and can be downloaded for free and are easy to use. Examples include *Kinemaster*, *PowerDirector Video Editor*, *Filmora Go*, *Quick Video Editor*, *VideoShow*, *Viva Video*, *Youcut*, and many more.

Presumably, the many facilities that can be achieved today will facilitate the teaching and learning process to be more enthusiastic because we will be spoiled with creative visuals. Imagine if morphological learning that discusses the word formation process is presented in the form of a creative video. Of course, it will make students interested and pay more attention so that learning is more effective. Creating a creative video to expose the morphology lesson instead of reading a thick book. Students feel eager when they learn by watching video. Some Steps that we can use are:

- a. Teacher asks the student to watch some related or prepared videos
- b. Students must struggle to Listen (to train their focus and listening comprehension)
- c. If it is needed, the student can replay the video until getting the point of material
- d. Students do some Discussion and presentation
- e. Students must retell the topic after doing a group discussion

2. Using Word Cards

Using word cards to teach words containing words and pictures. Teachers can use card media as one of the media in teaching morphology. The recommended card is a card that contains vocabulary or vocabulary in English that undergoes a morphological process in its formation so that each card that contains these words can be described in a morphological study such as the origin of the word, the process of its formation, and its origin. and their use. For example: One card contains a picture and the words 'angpow', so students must be able to explain what category the word 'angpow' is in morphology. For the explanation, it can be explained that the word 'angpow' is a group of Borrowing words originating from Chinese which is used throughout the world and means a word that is borrowed directly without any changes in its use.

Another example is the word 'Internationalization' which is classified as an affixation, so students must also be able to explain the morphological process of the word, starting from the root of the word to the free morphemes that make up the word, namely:

Internationalization = (Prefix) *Inter* + (root) *Nation* + (Suffix) *al* + (suffix) *iz* + (suffix) *ation*

Some steps that can be done:

- a. Each student gets a certain card in turn and randomly
- b. Each card obtained must be able to explain the morphological process experienced by the word
- c. The explanation must be detailed so that students are able to mention the origin of each word
- d. If it is finished and properly presented, then students can continue by taking the next card
- e. The teacher can count points to make the learning atmosphere even more impressive.

3. Playing Games

In addition, the media that we can also use is in the form of an exciting game. There are many types of games that we can do in the classroom which of course aim to stimulate and attract students' attention in learning about word structures. Some ideas to play Games for Morphology:

a. Affix Cards

The affix card game focuses on the affixation process experienced by a word by first sorting out which is the root word and which is the affix that attaches to it. To be more challenging, the game does not stop at searching for word structures but is continued by knowing the word class after affixation occurs so that students become better understand which ones are derivation and which ones are classified as inflection. Some steps that can be done: (a) Using two boxes filled by root and affix; (b) Student try to match the root and the affix as many as student can find; (c) Creating and Arranging the word as many as they can; (d) Guessing the class of word (Noun, Adjective, Verb or Adverb); and (e) Classify it is derivation or inflection.

b. Identifying Affixes

Other games can also be played including a quick 'identify affix' game. After being given an explanation of the affixation process with many examples, the next thing that can be done is to guess or identify the affixes that occur. Some steps that can be done: (a) Preparing 10 cards with complex form like establishment, nationality, reaction, unbelievable, etc (words that undergo affixation process); (b) Each group of students competes to describe the affixation process in the word; (c) The group that is fast and precise is the winner; and (d) In order to increase English skills, it can be added by making sentences containing these words. Of course, this game can train students' memory, creativity, knowledge and awareness of morphological intelligence. Furthermore, it will not only make them understand the process of word origin, they will also understand the correct pronunciation and be able to use these words in daily life which will directly improve their English skills.

4. Using Real Daily Word List

The next thing that can be done is to use words that in health are used which without us realizing it are words that undergo a morphological process. The method that can be used is to make a Listing of some word's formation and its meaning and usage that is easily found in daily life. Among the words that are common and often used in everyday life such as:

Borrowing: *Sofa* (Arabic), *Tycoon* (Japanese), *Yogurt* (Turkish), *Garage* (French), *Concerto* (Italian), *Pizza* (Italian) etc.

Folk Etymology: *Garter snake* menjadi *Garden snake*, *Asparagus* menjadi *Sparrow Grass*, *Peperoncinis* menjadi *Pepper Chilis*, etc.

Compounding: *Boyfriend*, *Cupboard*, *Software*, *Lighthouse*, *Breakfast*, etc.

Coinage: *Kodak*, *Kleenex*, *Nylon*, *Xerox*, *Google*, *Yahoo*, etc.

Blending: *Sitcom* (Situation + Commedy), *Brunch* (Breakfast + Lunch), *Staycation* (Stay + Vacation), etc.

Abbreviation: *BRB* (*Be Right Back*), *DM* (*Direct Message*), etc.

Acronym: *ASAP* (*As Soon As Possible*), *YOLO* (*You Only Live Once*), etc.

Clipping: *Phone* from *Telephone*, *Exam* from *Examination*, *Fridge* from *Refrigerator*, *Ad* from *Advertisement*, etc.

Back Formation: *Editor* become *Edit*, *Revision* become *Revise*, *Formation* become *Form*, etc.

By knowing the structure of the word and the origin of the word, it is hoped that students will be able to use it well in their daily lives and be able to analyze as well as English students. These daily words can be easily heard in our daily conversation but may be, people don't realize where the words come from and how to explain the etymology. So, learning morphology can really help us to know the word deeply.

5. Playing QUIZ

Another thing that is certainly no less interesting is using quizzes. Giving a quiz that will attract them to memorize the changing and process of a word. The quiz here is meant as an assessment that can

be done in the relaxation process at the end of the teaching and learning meeting. The goal is that the material that has been studied will be easier for students to remember in learning morphology.

Currently there are many applications or platforms that teachers can use easily in the classroom. Of course, by using media such as laptops, computers or cellphones by each student. Some quiz applications that can be used easily, including *kahoot!*, *quizziz*, *mentimeter* and others. If this is done at the end of each lesson, it will certainly have a positive impact on students who will make them more understanding and easier to remember what they learned earlier.

In short, knowing some alternatives media or methods that can be used in teaching and learning Morphology hopefully can increase the curiosity and improve students' knowledge and also increase the information about how a word can be formed. Then, it will become the new knowledge for them to know how to use it, how to mention it and how to put it into the great structure of sentence. Finally, it can create the better understanding in all of language skills namely writing, reading, listening and also speaking.

Conclusion

Learning Morphology is essential for students in starting the development of their basic grammar about word and vocabulary. By learning Morphology and improving our morphology competence can constantly support our writing, reading, speaking and listening skill in learning English properly. There are some alternative strategies that can be used in the classroom in order to attract student's awareness, such as: Watching video, Using word cards, Playing Games, Knowing the word list in the real daily life and also Using quiz. By avoiding boring class, hopefully, these strategies will be helpful to solve the problem in learning English especially word formation in the classroom.

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