The Realization of the Derivational and the Inflectional Processes in the Students’ Writing

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Abstract

In learning a language, students are supposed to study linguistics in order to be able to recognize the root of words, how they are formed, and the context of language. This study aimed to explain the realization of the derivational process, the inflectional process, and the causes of the error in the students’ writing. This study used a descriptive qualitative design. The researchers analyzed the students’ writing essays written by the XII-graders of the Vocational High School Al-Musyaffa Kendal in the academic year 2021/2022. The instruments are document analysis theory and interview. It used the theory of Dulay et.al. (1982). The findings demonstrate that the students made errors that belong to both the derivational and the inflectional processes. Most of the students made errors in the omission of derivation, yet they made fewer errors in the addition and malformation of derivation. Besides, there were many problems in dealing with the inflection. Most of the students were confused about how to deal with the omission of noun inflection and the omission of verb inflection. Nevertheless, they made fewer errors in the misordering of verb inflection. In addition, the cause of the error that the students did was mostly carelessness as it occurs due to students’ lack of motivation and less enthusiasm in engaging in the teaching and learning process. Expectantly, this research will provide an essential contribution as a reference in comprehending word formation and contribute to teaching and learning of forming English words.

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INTRODUCTION

Up till now, language is a means to talk to each other, and it is perceived that it has a very significant role in the daily life of people. Men are social creatures that require communication in their life, and the practical means of communication is the use of language. According to Hartono and Suwandi (2021), it is an important part of social life because it helps people express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas easily compared to other means. It is mainly utilized to communicate with others in daily life, and people will not be able to communicate with others in any real sense without the existence of language itself as it is an essential tool to communicate. In line with Harley (2001, p. 4) stated “language is a system of symbols and rules that enables people to communicate. Symbols are things that stand for other things namely words, regardless if they are either in the written form or spoken form, they are series of symbols”. Consequently, mastering a language matters a lot, and one of the most important elements in mastering a language is to learn how to form English words as being skilled in word formation will lead to both understandable writing and an understandable saying.

As other languages, learning English requires students to acquire listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills simultaneously in order to communicate effectively in the target language, particularly writing skills. Amperawaty and Warsono (2019, p. 35) stated that “writing is more than putting words together. It is an ongoing process of thinking and structuring”. Rethinking and restructuring words to create phrases that can be communicated effectively. The teacher should satisfy language components such as grammatical structure, vocabulary, spelling, and pronunciation during the teaching-learning process (Zakiyah and Rukmini, 2022). These are designed to help students generate written English that is fluent, correct, and appropriate. Furthermore, writing comprises the ability to articulate the students’ thoughts or to teach clearly and effectively in written form (Artyani et.al., 2014). It is an activity that involves creating a sequence of words placed in a specific order and linked together.

“Words are important part of linguistic knowledge and a constitute component of our mental grammar” (Fromkin et al., 2014, p. 69). It can be drawn a line that words have a great role as a means to convey notions in languages. On the other hand, without knowing a language and having a very limited amount of words, people will not be able to deliver their thoughts or notions through the language, so the communication will never happen (Widyaningrum et al. 2020). It means good knowledge of the language will build positive communication and interaction with each other in life.

As life becomes more complex, people invent new words to describe their thoughts or notions better (Alawiyah, 2014). However, most of ordinary dictionary writers do not take the risk of predicting or anticipating new forms before they are attested, even though it is clear that there exist certain quite clear, regular, rule governed processes by which words are born from old ones. These processes are frequently called the derivational process. The derivational process is one of the many studies that concerns on studying language, particularly the word formation. According to Efransyah (2019), derivation is harnessed to create new words, and it frequently synthesizes with affixes. Moreover, in many cases, they modify both the syntactic categories and the semantic categories in which the meaning is occasionally predictable. Moreover, there is another principle in which deals with forming English words as well called the inflectional process. According to Ismai (2016), inflectional process is significant as it is to modify a verb’s tense, aspect, mood, person or number or pronoun by affecting the word’s meaning or the part of speech. In other words, the inflection marks the contrast of grammatical subclass such as number in terms of either singular or plural, person (first, second, third), tense (past, present, future).

Studies which deal with the derivational process have been conducted by Alareefi
et.al. (2021); Bahr et.al. (2020); Chau et.al. (2021); Deng et.al. (2017); Iwaizumi and Webb (2021); Luthfiyati et.al. (2017) and Sujatmiko (2019). They showed that the use of the derivational process intensely matters for students’ writing skill since the students’ understanding about the derivational process influences their ability in forming English words into their writing products.

Luthfiyati et al. (2017) researched the most common type of derivation words that are used in the headline of ten education articles in the “Jakarta Post Website” in October 2015 until April 2016. The research revealed that the most common of derivation words used in the headline of those ten education articles is noun derivations.

There are also studies dealing with the inflectional process have been conducted by Abdelrady and Ibrahim (2015); Wibowo (2016); Austin et.al. (2022); Bonami and Pellegrini (2022); Bunau, (2020); Budiharto et.al. (2020); and Cahyadi, (2018). Those studies showed that the use of the inflectional process has an essential role in producing students’ writing products because the students’ knowledge of it affects students’ writing.

Abdelrady and Ibrahim (2015) researched the effects of the inflectional comprehension by Saudi preparatory year students at Al-Jouf University. The focus of this research is mainly to investigate the occurrence of errors made by the students. The research found out that EFL teachers of Preparatory year at Al-Jouf University are required to deal with the inflectional morphemes more appropriately.

Furthermore, Afifuddin (2016) researched the students’ errors in writing descriptive text in which the objective of the research was to find out the types of grammatical errors made by 25 college students who were taking the course of writing III on descriptive writing. The result of this qualitative research revealed that there were many errors occurred in their descriptive text writing such as verb tense, verb form, subject-verb agreement, plural, possessive inflection, definite article, indefinite article, word order, run-on, and fragment.

Meanwhile, Ananda et al. (2014) researched an error analysis from students’ sentences in their writing products. This study is to investigate the types of sentence errors and their frequency made by first grade students from a high school in Banda Aceh in their writing products, and this research revealed that there were five types of fragmented sentences namely the absence of a subject, the absence of a verb, the absence of both a subject and a verb, the absence of a verb in a dependent clause, and the absence of an independent clause.

In addition, this study is analyzing the students’ errors in forming English words in their writing product. According to Zoubi (2018) error analysis is sort of linguistic analysis that deals with the learners’ errors, and this leads to the information of the learning difficulties which is useful for the acquisition of the language learners. By this way, it can be said that analyzing the students’ errors in forming English words matters especially when it comes to the writing as writing skill is undeniably one of the most significant skills that the students of vocational high school Al-Musyaffa have to be good at, for those students focus on fashion and art that they are potentially to be tailors or designers in the future. Moreover, they may have either cooperation with foreigners or becoming international designers that definitely require them to understand English well. Consequently, to be good at English, especially writing, is very helpful for them.

Based on those explanations, it necessary to do research on the derivational and the inflectional process on students’ writing skills. This current study also intended to search for the causes why the students make those errors as well.

Besides from those distinctions, what triggers the researchers interested in conducting this study is mostly because forming English words is not always regularly ruled, sometimes it is unpredictable or even confusing. Consequently, it is essential to conduct this research because it helped the students to recognize errors of theirs in forming English words, and they learned from their errors not to
do the same things in the future. Based on those explanations, this study aimed to explain the realization of the derivational process, the inflectional process, and the causes of the errors in the students’ writing.

At the end, the result of the study is expected to help the students in recognizing errors of theirs in forming English words, and they learned from their errors not to do the same things in the future.

METHOD

The study was descriptive qualitative design. The subject of this research was the XII-graders of Vocational High School Al-Musyaffa Kendal in the academic year 2021/2022 which consists of 2 classes. There were 74 students. Besides, the object of the study was the students’ essay writing.

The instruments used are document analysis and interview. The document analysis was used to analyze the errors discovered in the writing essay of the students, and it was in regards to the derivation and the inflection. Furthermore, the researchers used purposive sampling as the interviewees as they made errors at least two times. Consequently, the researchers deliberately selected those students who made the errors in terms of derivation and inflection, and they would’ve asked why the students had made those errors in order to recognize the causes. In supporting the data, the researchers used documentation and recording tools.

In this case, the researchers identified the students’ errors based on the theory of Dulay et al. (1982). Then, the errors were classified as either derivation or inflection. Besides, the researchers evaluated the students’ errors by giving correction and analyzed the result of the interview to get informed the causes of the errors based on the Norrish (1983) theory. Therefore, the research discussed the students’ errors in terms of the derivation and inflection, and the causes of the errors that they have made in the writing essay of theirs based on the theories.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents an examination of the data obtained from the students’ essay writing. Based on the research questions, the researchers separated the discussion into three parts, namely the realization of the derivational process, the inflectional process, and the causes of error in students’ writing.

The Realization of the Derivational Process

According to Dulay et al. (1982) theory of forms of error consists of four categories: omission, addition, malformation, and misordering. However, based on the data, the researchers found merely three categories of error types: omission, addition, and malformation in the students’ writing. The data showed in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Error Type</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addition of Derivation</td>
<td>4 Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malformation of Derivation</td>
<td>6 Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omission of Derivation</td>
<td>14 Data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Addition of Derivation

There are four data errors in the addition of derivation. Addition errors are the inverse of omission errors. They are distinguished by the presence of an item that cannot be conveyed in an adequately constructed utterance (Dulay et al., 1982). For example: “The planning of the students,” the word planning is incorrect. The student should use the word plan because it produces word denoting an act or an activity. Therefore, the word planning should be a verb, and the suffix ing must be deleted since it is indicating a verb. It can be concluded that the students committed an error when he added ing as a sign of the word denoting an act or an activity.

Malformation of Derivation

The researchers found six data errors in the malformation of derivation. According to Dulay
et al. (1982), malformation errors are characterized by the use of the wrong form of morpheme or structure. For example: “15 students are as the interviews” the word interview is supposed to be modified to be interviewees representing those students being interviewed. It morphologically adds suffix –ee, yet it is syntactically class maintaining as it remains as a noun, and it semantically produces word denoting an agent.

Based on the explanation above, the researchers concluded that this study is crucial to lead students' understanding in forming English words and develop their writing skills. In line with this study, Zuhri et. al (2022) show that the use of the derivational process intensely matters for students' writing skills since the students' understanding about the derivational process influences their ability in forming English words into their writing products.

Omission of Derivation

In the omission of derivation, it is discovered fourteen data errors. Omission is the error of omitting something that must be present for a statement to be regarded as grammatically correct (Dulay et al., 1982). For example: “after graduate,” the word graduate is incorrect because it produces word denoting an act or an activity. Therefore, the word graduate should be a noun, and the suffix ion must be added to modify it into a noun.

The Realization of the Inflection Process

Dulay et al. (1982) stated that identifying writing errors using taxonomy’s strategy consists of four categories: omission, addition, malformation, and misordering. Based on the data, the researchers found four categories of error types of the inflection process. They are omission, addition, malformation, and misordering in students' writing. The detail data is displayed in the table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Error Type</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omission of Noun Inflection</td>
<td>31 Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omission of Verb Inflection</td>
<td>11 Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition of Noun Inflection</td>
<td>4 Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition of Verb Inflection</td>
<td>3 Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malformation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malformation of Verb Inflection</td>
<td>5 Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malformation of Adjective Inflection</td>
<td>6 Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misordering</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misordering of Verb Inflection</td>
<td>1 Datum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Omission of Noun Inflection

There are 31 data omission errors in the noun inflection. For example: “Sixty percent select to study at university,” the word select must have “s” at the end of the word select and the sentence became “Sixty percent selects to study at university.” Most students omitted “s” while forming the present tense for the third-person singular.

Omission of Verb Inflection

Regarding to the finding, the researchers discovered eleven data error which is omission of verb inflection. An error of omission is characterized by the absence of an item required to occur in a well-formed utterance, as stated Dulay et al. (1982). The students deleted the suffix -ing at the end of the verb. For example: “to send an application letter by send an email or post it,” the word send and post must be placed with the suffix -ing at the end due to the existence of prepositions. It should be sending and posting. Therefore, the sentence became “To send an application letter by sending an email or posting it.” It
means the student committed an error when they removed the suffix -ing at the end of the verb as a sign of progressive.

Addition of Noun Inflection
In the addition of noun inflection, it is discovered four data errors. For example: “The job that every students wants is different.” The word students must be written student because before the word student, there is the quantifier every, which should not be followed by the letter “s.” Most students committed an error when they added “s” as a mark of the noun singular.

Addition of Verb Inflection
In the addition of verb inflection, the researchers found three datum error. The student must delete ed at the end of the verb as a sign of past tense. For example: “fifty five percent prefers to continued in Ponpes” the word continued must not have suffix ed at the end of the verb as there is a preposition to right before the word. Therefore, the sentence became “55% percent prefers to continue in Ponpes.”

Malformation of Verb Inflection
Based on the finding, it is discovered five data errors in the malformation of verb inflection. In this case, the students do not know how to modify the correct structure of a sentence. The students do not know how to modify the correct structure of a sentence. They omitted ed at the end of the verb. For example, “eighteen students want to become entrepreneurs” the word want is incorrect structure, which omitted ed at the end of the verb. It is a sign of past tense. The word want should be added ed at the end of the verb. Therefore, the sentence became “eighteen students wanted to become entrepreneurs.”

Malformation of Adjective Inflection.
Based on the finding, it is discovered 6 data errors in the malformation of adjective inflection. In this case, the students do not know the use of a comparison degree. The term "degree of comparison" is a version of the word "comparison," which is used to compare one person or object with another with the same attribute. It has something to do with the adjective in the sentence.

For example: “students who want to be an entrepreneur are very many then working at government” the word very many is incorrect words to explain the comparison of two things. The students should utilize the word comparative degree er in describing the comparison of two things. Therefore, the sentence became the students who want to be entrepreneurs are higher than working at government”. Most students committed an error when they used comparative degree in describing the comparison of two things.

Misordering of Verb Inflection
Regarding to the data, most students are wrong in placing of morpheme while writing a sentence. The error of uttering words out of the order is known as misordering (Dulay et al., 1982). It is found 1 datum in misordering verb inflection errors. The example is that “report on what will the student doing” the word do must not have suffix ing as a sign of the present tense for the third-person singular, and the correct word order has to be “report on what the students will do”.

Beside of the inflection process, the derivation process is very important to learn by students to increase their knowledge in writing skills. Wulandari and Indriani (2021) show that the use of the inflectional process has an essential role in producing students’ writing products because the students’ knowledge of it affects students’ writing.

The Causes of Error
In finding out the causes of error, the researchers harnessed the result of the interview, and it led the researchers to determine why the students made errors in writing the essays. Some students got things wrong because they did not understand how the sentence was put together. The students are careless and pay less attention in writing a correct sentence. They write what they have known without paying attention to the structure in a sentence. Therefore, there are errors and less effective in writing sentences.
For example: sixty percent select to study at university. The student omitted s after the noun select, in which the sentence explains the third singular present. Hence, that student should write selects. According to Norrish (1983), one of the aspects that cause an error within a sentence is carelessness. Carelessness occurs due to students’ lack of inspiration when studying a second language or content they find dull, which causes students to be less enthusiastic in following the teaching and learning process. The detail data is summed in the diagram 1.

![Diagram 1: The Causes of Error](image)

**Figure 1. The Causes of Error**

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that most students made errors because of their carelessness when learning foreign languages. For instance: sixty present select to study at university. This omission of derivation existed because the student did not add suffix ‘s’ on the verb indicating the third person singular present, and the result of the interview revealed that the student committed in making error due to carelessness.

Moreover, some students wrote sentences by translating. There were five students who wrote sentences by translating from their mother tongue to the target language. For example: Students who want to be an entrepreneur are very many than working at government. In this case, the student translated the word sangat banyak by using the word very much. She could use the word higher, in which the student used a comparative degree to compare something. This incorrectness is caused by students’ habit that only translating without understanding the meaning. Norrish (1983) stated that translating sentences is the cause of errors in writing. Translation occurs when a student attempts to convey the meaning of a word, phrase, or idiomatic expression from their native language into the target language.

There are also 2 students made errors when writing a sentence based on their spoken in their daily life and did not pay attention to the appropriate structure. It happens because of first language interference. For example: the planning of the students. This malformation of derivation occurred because of the interference of the first language. Interference occurs when the speaker utilizes a second language, and the first language or mother tongue interferes how the second language is managed. In this case, the student committed that he got used to saying that way to represent ‘rencana’ in English. By this way, it can be inferred that the first language interference or the mother tongue affects the students’ composition when dealing with the foreign language they are learning (Norrish, 1983). It means interference is the habitual transfer of the surface structure of the first language to the target language.

Furthermore, a student made a mistake, not an error. In this case, a student did not care about their writing. For example: This report is written to formulate information about students decision. She forgot to add an apostrophe after the word student. She knows the correct structure but is less concerned and focused because the class conditions are not conducive.

In line with this study, it is supported by Dinamika and Siregar (2020). They found the errors in students’ writing are plenty and various. Generally, students find it tough to express their notions in English writing simply because they do not get used to it and are not well-skilled in forming English words. Therefore, students made significant morphological errors using derivational morphemes, inflectional morphemes, and affixes”.

The researchers concluded that most of the students’ errors in writing sentences are their carelessness. It occurs due to students’ lack of inspiration when studying a foreign language or content they find dull, which causes students to be less enthusiastic in engaging in the teaching
and learning process. Besides, the students do not pay sufficient attention to teacher’s explanation, which leads to errors made by the students when performing the exercise.

Based on the explanation above, this study differs from previous studies because it focused on the inflectional processes, derivational processes and the causes of the errors in students' writing that have not been studied. Besides, this study provides essential contribution as reference in comprehending word formation and contribute to teaching and learning of forming English words.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion, there were three categories of error types in the derivation process: omission, addition, and malformation in the students’ writing. There were four data errors in the addition of derivation, six data errors in the malformation of derivation, and fourteen data errors in the omission of derivation. Besides, there were four categories of error types in the inflection process: omission, addition, malformation, and misordering in the students’ writing. There are thirty-one data errors in the omission of noun inflection, eleven data errors in the omission of verb inflection, four data errors in the addition of noun inflection, three data errors in the addition of verb inflection, five data errors in the malformation of verb inflection, six data errors in the malformation of adjective inflection, and one datum error in the misordering of verb inflection. Besides, most of the students’ errors in their essays are revealed because of students' carelessness, namely first language interference, translation, and condition. It occurs due to students’ lack of motivation and enthusiasm in teaching and learning a foreign language. Furthermore, this research provides essential contribution to comprehend word formation and contribute in the teaching and learning of forming English words. The findings of this study can provide references for future researchers who like to investigate the process of derivation and inflection. They can study English word formation to generate new English words by applying the concept of morphological process, namely combining two existing words so that new words are generated with a new meaning called compounding. It aims to fill the research gap.

REFERENCES

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