

## The Consistency of the Use of Inflectional and Derivational Affixes for Word Formation in Students' Writing

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### Abstract

To master writing skill, students must use grammatical function correctly in writing, especially the use of inflectional and derivational affixes. Unfortunately, in the real situation, they have errors while trying to use inflectional and derivational affixes in word formation in writing process. It means that there is no consistency in using them. Then, it was needed to conduct a study to investigate the case widely to prove the truth and to find out the difficulties. The objects of the study are: 1) to explore the teacher's preparation of teaching writing dealing with the use of inflectional and derivational affixes for word formation; 2) to investigate the process of how the teaching writing runs in occasion of using inflectional and derivational affixes; 3) to analyze the procedures and the result of the students' way of using inflectional affixes for word formation in writing a text; 4) to analyze the procedures and the result of the students' way of using derivational affixes for word formation in writing a text; 5) to analyze the comparison between the students' performance of inflection usage and the use of derivation; 6) to investigate the difficulties faced by students in using inflectional and derivational affixes in writing text. The study was conducted using qualitative case study. The instruments were teacher interviews, documents observation, classroom observations, and student interviews. The subject of the study was the eleventh graders of SMA NU 03 Muallimin Weleri. The results showed that there were errors in the students' use of inflectional and derivational affixes in writing texts.

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## INTRODUCTION

Writing becomes a challenging task to do for senior high school because they have to expand their mind to find ideas. It means that students should be more active joining the learning. For instance, Bharati (2016) says that school curriculum (KTSP) aimed to encourage students-centered learning, so that the classroom activities motivate students to explore their ideas.

Besides posing strong ideas, perfect grammar is also necessary for constructing sentences. For that, the lexical knowledge is an important thing to be a foundation to express their ideas. Somehow, students at senior high school level must have the competence to write a text, in writing they have to be skillful in using language features of English, especially in grammar such as inflectional and derivational affixes. Theoretically, both of them are important parts of grammatical function useful to create sentences.

Stephany (1982) claims that lexical and inflectional morphology form a scaled continuum with respect to grammaticalization. It means that the use of inflectional formation actually influences not only the grammatical function, but also the message delivered. For instance, the use of simple past tense in writing recount text should become an important issue to pay attention, or the use of simple present tense for descriptive text. To creating sentences of recount text, students must change the form of infinitive to past form verb. The change process occurs in each clause and sentence. For example, the word "begin" in sentence "I begin the project" will change to "began" when it is used to write a recount text, to show past activity. The sentence will be "I began the project". Often, to make the sentence more perfect, they can add adverbial time as a signal that the activity was done in past time, such as: yesterday, last night, last week, etc.

On the face of it, not only the use of verb in creating sentences, but also the other parts like the use of singular and plural also need to

pay attention. By adding -s after nouns (in countable nouns) to show that there must be plural. For example the word "book"-singular becomes "books"-plural showed in sentence "They leave the books in the library". It means that they leave more than one book in the library.

Supporting the idea, Bickel and Nichols (2001) state that 'inflection' cannot be defined by simply generalizing over attested inflectional systems or paradigms. Rather, they define it as those categories of morphology that are sensitive to the grammatical environment in which they are expressed. It means that inflectional formations work on the register and the situation of the sentence used, and also it has relationship with the use of subject agreement. Matthews (1991, p.126) gives an example that the word "sailed" illustrates a regular formation of the Past Tense and Past Participle. "Come" in "have come" represents an irregular formation.

Students of senior high school perhaps get many materials dealing with the use of grammatical function, including the use of inflectional affixes to support their writing skill, but there are still possibilities for students to have errors because of they do not practice writing text every day, only two or three times per each semester. The description of students' mistakes can be in singular-plural usage, possessive, and so on.

Yet, the next grammatical function part to take attention is when a word will have a different function to sentences by adding affixes in, later it is called derivation. Matthews (1991, p.62) believes that the formation of "generation" can be derived from "generate" by adding a suffix "-ion". While in the sentence "this box can generate electricity", clearly the function of "generate" is the verb. The function changes in the term of "generation" becoming noun, although the root comes from the same word "generate". This formation change depends on the need in creating sentence. If necessary, it can be added with other affixes to any word like the formation of "retell" which is obtained by adding

"re-" as the prefix. It is severely crucial to use in writing texts, and knowing this change of formation can make sure students to not get wrong way to write.

The students should be aware of the use of derivational affixes besides comprehending inflectional affixes. It is supposed that the eleventh graders must be familiar with this change of words that influence the word function. But the fact tells different thing. The assumption is that there are still errors in students' writing regarding the use of derivational affixes. Although they comprehend the material well, they should use them practically in their writing that needs habituation to do. They often do mistakes such as using the word "payment" to show verb like in the sentence "he payment the drink". They fail to use derivational affixes.

Further, Torres (2010) believes that there is also a zero-derivation which is the process of derivation which happens without any explicit derivational morphemes. For instance, the word "book" in "I book the orders", the function as a verb can change to a noun without any addition of an affix, so it can be used in the sentence "The book is too thick".

Other examples of derivational affixes adopted from Packer (2011) are:

-ize, if were attached to a noun or an adjective will turn it into a verb, for example: rubberize, normalize.

-ful, if were attached to a noun, it will turn into an adjective, for example: successful.

-ly, if were attached to an adjective, it will turn into adverb, for example: happily.

Un-, dis-, a-, anti-, indicate negations, for example: unhappy, dislike, atypical, anti-aircraft.

There are some problems faced by the eleventh graders of SMA NU 03 Muallimin Weleri in their use of inflectional and derivational affixes in writing texts. Then, the subject of the study was 25 students.

To take the data, there were some instruments used. They were teacher interview, document observation, classroom activities

observation, and student interview. Teacher interview aimed to get information dealing with teacher's preparation before taking teaching learning process of writing. To support the data, document observation was needed. The lesson plan made by the teacher was observed to validate the interview result with the teacher.

After that, guided by the check list, there was an observation to students' activities of writing process dealing with the use of inflectional and derivational affixes. To get data of how students use inflectional and derivational affixes so that the result would be seen after finishing the writing. Then, to get some information of the difficulties during the use of inflectional and derivational affixes, students' interview was done by taking some students as the representation of the group.

## METHODS

The writer used a case study method to cover the object of the study in which the result elaborated the description of students' use of inflectional and derivational affixes. Therefore, descriptive analysis is the appropriate way to use, perhaps the writer also needs quantitative data to support the data collected.

Expert's view. Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) say that qualitative research usually tries to understand how thing occurs by going to the natural setting without implementing any intervention. Then, Creswell (2003) has an opinion that qualitative application uses the natural setting of an event, behavior, and process as a direct source of data. This allows direct interaction between researcher and participants at the time of the research. It is different with a quantitative method which needs statistic formula to count the data.

Griffie (2012:96) claims that CSD is more likely to investigate narrowly defined topic areas such as classroom problems or language development. However, it includes qualitative research that has been explained above. Fidel (1984, p.272) says that case studies carried out to generate findings of relevance beyond the individual cases. Supporting the idea, Merriem

in Saleh (2011) believes that case study is study to a phenomenon involving program, event, process, institution, or social community.

As a research method, case study seems to be appropriate for investigating phenomena when: (1) a large variety of factors and relationships are included, (2) no basic laws exist to determine which factor and relationships are important, (3) when the factors and relationship can be directly observed. In an opinion, Yin in Griffiee (2012, p.97) believes that a case study has three aspects, which can serve as a definition: it must have data from multiple sources, examine something in a real-life context, and use theory to generalize results. Supporting these view, Johansson (2003) says that there should be "a case" to conduct a case study by paying attention to 3 points involving the case should be a complex functioning unit, be investigated in its natural context with a multitude of method, and be contemporary.

Procedures. The research was conducted in May. There were 7 main meetings to conduct. The first meeting was on March 13, 2017 that contained the interview with the teacher of English Subject to get data dealing with the preparation of teaching-learning of writing text involving the use of inflectional and derivational affixes. It was followed by the second meeting on March 14, 2017. The writer asked the lesson plan that was used as the guidance to teach in the classroom to be observed to validate the teacher's preparation of teaching and learning regarding the use of inflectional and derivational affixes in writing text.

The next was the observation of classroom activities of students' use of inflectional and derivational affixes for word formation in writing text. It was divided into three parts of observation. The first was conducted on March 15, 2017. In this meeting, the writer observed the preparation of the learning regarding the use of inflectional and derivational affixes and the beginning of the students' writing. The second was conducted on March 17, 2017. Here, the writer observed the students' activities dealing with the use of inflectional and derivational affixes in writing

text. It involved the students' ways in using inflectional and derivational affixes, such as interacting to the teacher and the use of aids to help them finding words in constructing sentences. The third meeting of observation was the continuity of student – teacher interaction, and followed by giving feedback, evaluation and solution dealing with the students. It was conducted on March 22, 2017.

The writer continued with observed the document study, such as the products of students' writing to find out the frequency of the errors in using inflectional and derivational affixes in writing text. It was done on 23 to 29 of March, 2017.

The last is the interview with the representation of the eleventh graders of SMA NU 03 MualliminWeleri to investigate the kinds of difficulties while using inflectional and derivational affixes and the solution to solve them. It was done on August 22, 2017.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results and discussions of the study present the product after data analysis done. There were six research questions that should be answered as explained above, and the further elaboration could be seen as follows:

### Results

The research resulted description dealing with the use of inflectional and derivational affixes based on the research problems. It presented the preparation of teacher before the students' writing process, the classroom activities, the students' way of using inflectional and derivational affixes in writing text, the comparison of their use of inflectional and derivational affixes, and the kinds of difficulties faced by students in using inflectional and derivational affixes for word formation in writing text.

Teacher's preparation. The preparation the teacher did was to make the learning of writing text dealing with the use of inflectional and derivational affixes running well. They were:

1. The teacher planned "empowering vocabulary" before teaching and learning process as a strategy to increase the students' mastery of verb which has relation with the development of students' inflectional affixes in each meeting.
2. The teacher did not prepare independent learning to teach inflectional and derivational affixes in improving the students' mastery of them.
3. The teacher prepared about three meetings to finish the learning in getting the target result of students to master the perfect use of inflectional and derivational affixes, and their application to the writing.
4. The teacher had no special method to teach derivational affixes in her teaching learning activities.
5. The teacher planned to give feedback to the learning of that day and give solution for the difficulties faced by the students.

Classroom activities. The teaching and learning process of writing dealing with the use of inflectional and derivational affixes involved three meetings. The first meeting was the preparation before starting writing process. The teacher explained the materials needed by the students including how to use inflectional and derivational affixes as parts of grammatical function. The second meeting, the teacher built interaction with the students to guide and correct them if there were errors in writing process. By individual meeting, the students got the correction. The students who did not get the chance submitted the products to the teacher. Then the last was giving feedback and suggestion to the students dealing with the errors made by them. By pointing some parts and examples of the errors, the students were given feedback and suggestion for better improvement. Then, they re-wrote the text onto new pages as the last writing step.

How students use inflectional and derivational affixes. Based on the research that

there were some ways how students use inflectional and derivational affixes in writing text. Actually, both the use of inflectional and derivational affixes were used through same steps, e.g. teacher direction, the use of translator aids, and teacher – student interaction. The difference among them was just the beginning activity. To support students' writing skill, the teacher applied vocabulary empowerment. It was regarded to improve students' mastery of verb which is a part of inflection materials.

Empowering vocabulary was done as the first activity before starting teaching learning process. Teacher programmed to develop students' mastery on verb by asking them to mention a verb, its form change, and the meaning for every student. It was done to support their experiences in using inflectional affixes for word formation in writing texts. It's was done in every meeting of learning with a different verb presented.

Teacher's direction meant the teacher gave some explanations dealing with the materials of that day. It involved the genre of the text, some steps of the writing process, and the grammatical function used in writing the text. Here, inflectional affixes were discussed to make the students understood its usage. The students had opportunities to ask questions if there was any confusing part.

Translator aids such as mobile phone that could relate to internet and manual dictionary were allowed to help them finding words they need to support their writing. Almost of them used mobile phone which connected to the internet network, and an application such as "google translate" became a choice to help their writing process.

Teacher – student interaction. one by one student having face to face interaction with the teacher after finishing the writing, words and grammar correction, evaluation, and suggestion or giving feedback.

The beginning interaction happened when the students had finished the writing, then they were asked to meet the teacher individually to discuss and correct the writing, including the use of inflectional affixes. Giving explanation of the

errors and telling them the right, and sign that the students should fix it. Not all students had the opportunity because of the limited time. Then, they submitted the works to the teacher so that the correction could be continued at home.

The next meeting would be the time for the teacher to have evaluation of the students' works. The students got some evaluation and more explanation dealing with their errors in writing the text, such as the use of words and the grammatical function, and the accuracy of the target writing.

By this way, the students understood their mistakes of the use of inflectional and derivational affixes in their writing. Then, they re-wrote the text as the way to tell them the right writing and developing their knowledge.

The comparison among students' use of inflectional and derivational affixes. After comparing the result of the frequency of students' use of inflection and derivational affixes and analyzing the frequency, they were some statements to describe. There was no significant relation between the students' use of inflectional and derivational affixes. Firstly, the students' use of inflectional and derivational affixes were almost in balance based on the data. The data showed that the use of inflectional

highlighting the wrong use by a red pen as the affixes almost the students wrote above 7 times, and it also happened to the students' use of derivational affixes.

The next finding was students' use of derivational affixes was better than the use of inflectional affixes. The students were easier to use of derivational affixes than inflectional affixes during writing the text. It was more than 50% of the total number of students had errors in using inflectional affixes in writing texts, and less than 50% had errors in using derivational affixes.

Then, the data showed that the higher students' errors of inflection did not affect students' use of derivation. There was no certain measurement that the students' use of inflectional affixes in writing could influence the use of derivational affixes, or vice versa. Some students used inflectional affixes more than derivational affixes, and vice versa. Each student had different results. In brief, there was no relation between them, so it meant that the mastery of students of the use of inflectional affixes did not have any relation with their mastery of derivational affixes.

Kind of difficulties. Some difficulties that students had in using inflectional and derivational affixes were:

**Table 1.** The difficulties in using inflectional and derivational affixes in writing text

Inflectional affixes	Derivational affixes
<p>a. They sometimes got confused to recognize the change of words because they should memorize some different forms of inflection.</p> <p>b. They had difficulties to use it practically in writing text because writing was only practiced once a semester.</p> <p>c. They always practiced the change of words of inflection only in a word, not in sentence. The effect was they had problem to suitable the words and the context of sentences.</p>	<p>a. Sometimes they could not find a proper word during searching the target words.</p> <p>b. They rarely practice the use of derivational affixes of word formation in writing text, although they actually comprehend theoretically the material.</p> <p>c. They sometimes got confused to use the formation of derivation in the sentences because of their limitation of knowledge.</p> <p>d. They seldom applied derivational formation in their daily life</p>

Solution for the problems. Solutions chose by students for the problems in using the use of inflectional affixes in writing texts were:

They were helped by the teacher to correct the errors. By highlighting the wrong forms and gave the correct one, the teacher evaluated the students' comprehension of implementing inflectional affixes for word formation in writing the hortatory exposition text. Further, they knew what part of their mistakes and knowing how the correct word form should be.

They learn and read again the material to empower their knowledge of inflectional formation.

They were asked to re-wrote the the text. The corrected text which was submitted to the teacher before was written again on the new page to make them more aware of their mistakes, and comprehending the correct one as a hope that they could be familiar to this case next writing.

The teacher applied empowering vocabulary (verb form) program as a routine activity in each meeting in the beginning of English learning. As what the teacher said in the previous elaboration that it was effective.

Then, to overcome the problems dealing with the use of derivational affixes for word formation in writing texts were:

After finishing their writing, they had time to interact with the teacher regarding the writing they wrote. Then, they asked the teacher for the correct form or the proper words which should be written. The teacher gave them suggestion about the errors and the correct one by giving signs to the errors and wrote the correct one as the substitution using red pen.

They learn more about derivational affixes which had been taught by the teacher from their note. It could make them to get more in memorizing the material of derivational formation.

They asked their friends when they were having problems in implementing derivational affixes during writing sentences of their texts.

They browsed internet as a help to solve their problems to find proper words for their writing. The teacher allowed the students to use dictionary and internet access in the activities of writing process.

### Discussions

The consistency of the use of inflectional and derivational affixes of the eleventh graders of SMA NU 03 MualliminWeleri can be concluded that there were still errors in using them in writing text. Although not all of students did mistakes, but there was more than 50% of the frequency of inflectional and derivational affixes usage. For example, they got mistakes while trying to change the word form based on the context of sentences. They placed wrong type of words. As the expert says that inflection refers to word formation that does not change category and does not create new lexemes, suggested by Leiber (2009). Some could use them well without any mistake.

Somehow, the process of students' writing run systematically that was guided by the teacher during three meeting. It actually made the students easier to write the text. The type of the writing used was controlled writing, suggested by Robinnet in Yusnita, et al (2011). Teacher monitored every step of writing process and guided the way of writing so that the target writing could be achieved.

Further, teacher, in preparation before writing practice, had done everything that needed to prepare, such as giving students related materials with the learning target, and so on. It was in line with Hayes and Flower's statement (1981) that believes the quality of writing depends on the preparation. It involved how to prepare grammatical function usage for students such as the use of inflectional and derivational affixes for word formation.

Matthews (1991) states that inflection and derivation are different and have their own characteristics, so there is no relation of the students' mastery of using inflectional and derivational affixes. Students who had no errors in using inflectional affixes, they perhaps had errors while using derivational affixes. Then,

there were difficulties faced by students to use inflectional and derivational affixes. Generally, the problems were alike but there was also different.

One of them was that they told that they rarely practice English in their daily activities, so there were never use inflection and derivation forms directly. It made them so strange while asked to write in English correctly. Ellis (1997) claims that based on behaviorist theory, language learning is like any other kind of learning in that it involves habit formation. In conclusion, there should be habitual action to practice English in daily life interaction to master the language structurally and correctly in use.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of this study is to investigate the consistency of the use of inflectional and derivational affixes for word formation in students' writing. By obtaining data through some instruments, then analyzing them, some conclusions can be drawn as follows.

The teacher prepared well before teaching the students. Preparing the plan of how the learning would be, the method, the learning sources, the learning aids (conditional), and the assessment. She made a lesson plan to guide the process of the classroom activities. Dealing with the learning and the use of inflectional and derivational affixes, the teacher planned to give them a comprehension theoretically, then it would be practiced in writing the text, continued by giving correction and feedback.

Teacher had prepared everything she needed to teach writing, including giving explanation theoretically the use of inflectional and derivational affixes, guiding the process of writing, giving correction, evaluation, feedback, and solution for the problems faced by students during writing text.

The way that the students did to use inflectional affixes were four points, the first was they were supported with empowering verbs in every meeting of the learning, so that it could help them in using inflectional affixes, the

teacher's direction before the writing process, the use of kinds of dictionary to help them in writing process, and the last was the interaction between teacher and the students. Then, the description of the use of inflectional affixes for word formation done by the students was good enough. They actually understood the theory but sometimes they got mistakes in the implementation. The table above showed the error number of each student, and the total mistake was smaller than the correct forms.

There were three steps to use derivational affixes done by the students. They were the teacher' direction, the use of dictionary, and the interaction between the teacher and the students that was really useful for the students' development. Also, the students were better in using derivational affixes. Some students got correct forms without any mistake. This proved how the mastery of the students in using derivational affixes that was good. Somehow, that should be developmental program to improve the students' mastery. The teacher had planned it trough class discussion.

There was no relation between the students' mastery of inflectional affixes and derivational affixes. The data showed that not all the students who had high score in the use of inflectional affixes, they also had good mastery in the use of derivational affixes.

The difficulties faced by the students in using inflectional and derivational affixes were because they still got confused to find proper words for their inflectional and derivational formation, lack of knowledge, writing was too taboo for them, and there was no use of the use of inflection and derivation in the real life. Those reasons commonly caused the students did mistakes in writing a text.

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