

Assessment of Morphological Awareness on Derivation through the Impact of Reading Materials

Angelou O. Ramos

*Faculty, Languages Education Department, College of Teacher Education,
Pangasinan State University, Philippines*

Abstract - Morphological awareness, the understanding of word formation rules and the connection between sounds and meanings, plays a pivotal role in language development and comprehension. This study aimed to assess the level of morphological awareness among Education English major students at Pangasinan State University (PSU), Lingayen campus, with a specific focus on derivational morphemes. The research utilized a descriptive survey method to examine the impact of various reading materials on students' morphological awareness. Out of 300 Education English major students, 100 were selected using stratified random sampling. The study employed a survey and a written test questionnaire as the research instruments. The data were analyzed through frequency count and average weighted mean, providing descriptive equivalents and interpretations. The findings indicated that reading magazines and articles had a significant positive impact on the students' morphological awareness of derivational morphemes. The study emphasizes the potential for improving language comprehension through the development of enriched learning materials targeting morphological awareness.

Keywords - *Impact, Reading Materials, Morphological Awareness, Derivational*

INTRODUCTION

Researchers have increasingly emphasized the significance of morphological instruction in language literacy (Fracasso, Bangs, & Binder, 2016; McLeod & Apel, 2015). Morphological instruction addresses sub-lexical features of a language, influencing literacy skills at both the lexical level, such as word reading, spelling, and vocabulary, and the supra-lexical level, encompassing reading comprehension and writing (Brimo, 2016).

Levesque, Kieffer, and Deacon (2017) have identified direct and indirect relationships between morphological awareness and reading comprehension. Morphological awareness contributes to morphological decoding, which in turn impacts word reading and reading comprehension. Weak morphological awareness may hinder the acquisition of new vocabulary, whereas strong morphological awareness helps learners decipher the meanings of new and morphologically complex words while reading.

Jiang, Kuo, and Sonnenburg-Winkler (2015) have also underscored significant differences between successful and less successful readers in their application of morphological information. Successful readers

demonstrate a greater appreciation for derivational morphology, while less successful readers tend to underestimate its importance.

Given the limited research on morphological awareness and its crucial role in language development, the researchers and faculty members of the Languages Education department, College of Teacher Education at PSU Lingayen campus, recognize the necessity of encouraging Education English major students to invest more time in reading relevant printed materials in English. Such practice enriches their morphological awareness, which involves their ability to comprehend word formation rules and the associations between sounds and meaning.

In light of these considerations, this study aims to assess the level of morphological awareness among Education English major students at PSU Lingayen campus by examining the impact of various reading materials on their understanding of derivational morphemes. Understanding how words are formed is inseparable from the ability to deconstruct and comprehend them.

As future English teachers, the respondents must be highly equipped with both content knowledge and pedagogy concerning

language competence, with a specific emphasis on morphological awareness. By delving into this topic, this study seeks to contribute valuable insights that will enhance language education practices and ultimately benefit the language development of students.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This section presents the methods and materials used in this study that include the research method used, locale of the study, respondents, instrumentation, data gathering procedure, and the statistical tools that were utilized.

Respondents

Through stratified random sampling, 100 of the 300 Education English majors enrolled at PSU Lingayen campus for the academic year 2020–2021 were selected for this study.

Assessments and Measures

The primary objective of this study was to assess the level of morphological awareness among Education English major students at PSU Lingayen campus and determine the impact of reading materials on their understanding of derivational morphemes. The research adopted the descriptive survey method, which, as Shona McCombes (2020) explains, aims to provide an accurate and systematic description of a population, circumstance, or phenomenon.

To gauge the respondents' level of morphological awareness and its association with reading materials, the researchers utilized a survey and a test questionnaire. The survey questionnaire focused on identifying the most preferred reading materials in English among the respondents, which enabled the researchers to assess the influence of reading materials on morphological awareness.

Conversely, the written test concentrated specifically on morphology, particularly derivational morphemes. The test consisted of sixty items, requiring the respondents to provide the appropriate affixes to attach to the words inside parentheses. This assessment provided valuable insights into the participants' grasp of derivational morphemes and their morphological awareness.

For data analysis, the collected information underwent statistical processing involving frequency count and average weighted mean. The average weighted mean was interpreted using descriptive equivalents and interpretations to provide meaningful and comprehensive insights into the participants' overall level of morphological awareness and its specific impact on derivational morphemes.

By utilizing the descriptive survey method and employing appropriate research instruments, this study aimed to shed light on the crucial aspect of morphological awareness among Education English major students. The statistical analysis allowed for a rigorous evaluation of the data, enabling the researchers to draw well-supported conclusions and contribute valuable findings to the field of language development and literacy.

The study's methodological approach and data analysis techniques were thoughtfully chosen to accurately explore the relationship between reading materials and morphological awareness, contributing valuable knowledge to the academic community and promoting effective language instruction practices. Further, the average weighted mean used in this study was interpreted using descriptive equivalent and descriptive interpretation below.

Mean Score	Descriptive Equivalent	Descriptive Interpretation
25-30	Very High Impact	Morphologically Aware
19-24	High Impact	Morphologically Aware
14-18	Average Impact	Morphologically Aware
7-13	Low Impact	Not Morphologically Aware
0-6	Very Low Impact	Not Morphologically Aware

RESULTS

This section contains the presentation of the data gathered in the conduct of the floating of questionnaires in answer to the problem posed in this study. The variables are presented in tabular form.

Morphological Awareness through the Impact of Reading Materials

The problem addressed in this study pertains to the level of the respondents’

morphological awareness through the impact of reading materials.

Table 1 shows the data relative to the morphological awareness of the respondents along derivational morphemes.

Table 1 Morphological Awareness on Derivational Morphemes

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Derivational Morphemes		
			Mean Score	Descriptive Equivalent	Descriptive Interpretation
Most Preferred Reading Materials in English	Textbook	54	23.00	High Impact	Morphologically Aware
	Online Publications	18	23.89	High Impact	Morphologically Aware
	Pocketbooks	9	24.67	Very High Impact	Morphologically Aware
	Magazines	7	25.14	Very High Impact	Morphologically Aware
	Dictionary	5	20.80	High Impact	Morphologically Aware
	Newspaper	4	24.25	High Impact	Morphologically Aware
	General Articles	3	21.33	High Impact	Morphologically Aware
TOTAL		100			

The respondents who preferred reading magazines (n=7) showed a more commendable morphological awareness with a mean score of 25.14 described as very high impact interpreted as morphologically aware along derivational morphemes than respondents who preferred reading pocketbooks (n=9) with a mean score of 24.67 described as very high impact interpreted as morphologically aware, newspaper (n=4) with a mean score of 24.25 described as high impact interpreted as morphologically aware, online publications (n=18) with a mean score of 23.89 described as high impact interpreted as morphologically aware, textbook (n=54) with a mean score of 23.00 described as high impact interpreted as morphologically aware, general articles (n=3) with a mean score of 21.33 described as high impact interpreted as morphologically aware, and dictionary (n=5) with a mean score of 20.80 described as high impact interpreted as morphologically aware respectively.

DISCUSSION

This section discusses the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered in the conduct of the floating of questionnaires in answer to the problem posed in the study.

The respondents’ level of morphological awareness on derivational morphemes has reference to affixes –ion and –able. Most of the respondents supplied the affix –ion correctly to the base words *construct, obsess, and consider* likewise supplied the affix –able correctly to the base words *account, accept, and comfort* thus affixes –ment for *agree* and –er for *contain*.

In view of the results above, reading habits have been singled out to immensely affect the scholarly output of the students (Huang et al.,2014). It is an indispensable method of acquiring knowledge and is essential for higher academic performance and it determines the success of university students around the globe.

It is also strongly supported by Chettri and Rout (2013) that reading habits are “the number of materials being read, the frequency

of reading as well and the average time spent on reading” (p.13).

According to Tighe et al. (2018), metalinguistic skills such as morphological awareness have direct and indirect relationships with reading comprehension abilities of adult readers. Metalinguistic awareness is related to reading comprehension via decoding and oral vocabulary knowledge.

Loudermill (2014) investigated the relationship between reading comprehension and knowledge of derivational morphology among native speakers of English struggling in reading. The study examined the three aspects of derivational morphology by isolating each aspect and presenting three separate morphological tasks to assess knowledge of derivational morphology in good and poor comprehenders. The study tried to investigate if there is a statistically significant difference between knowledge of the three aspects of derivational morphology in good and poor comprehenders, and if there is a significant correlation between reading comprehension and knowledge of derivational morphology in poor comprehenders. Results showed significant difference in each of the three aspects of derivational morphology among the participants. The poor comprehenders in the current study performed better on tasks assessing relational knowledge than on tasks assessing syntactic knowledge. This suggested that their relational knowledge was more developed than their syntactic knowledge just as seen in the good comprehenders group.

In addition, Shoeib (2017) investigated levels of awareness of EFL Saudi university students and tried to discover any potential relationship between their morphological awareness and successful reading comprehension. The total scores of students on morphological tests positively correlated with their total scores on reading comprehension test.

Crosson et al. (2018) investigated whether instruction concerning morphological awareness would enhance word learning outcomes of ELL adolescents. The results showed significant treatment effects for morphological problem-solving of unfamiliar words which led to lexical access.

Hence, it was found out in this study that the reading materials in English preferred by the respondents have an impact on their level of morphological awareness along derivational morphemes.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study's findings underscore the need to recognize and reinforce the morphological awareness demonstrated by the respondents. By developing learning enrichment materials targeted at enhancing their understanding of derivational morphemes, educators can effectively nurture their language development and empower them to excel both academically and professionally as future English teachers.

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