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A MORPHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF DERIVATIONAL AFFIXES IN THE BOOK ENTITLED THE LITTLE PRINCE

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ABSTRACT

This paper was intended to discover derivational affixes in the book entitled The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Derivation is one of the word formation processes in English which creates new words through the addition of affixes. Data were gathered, analyzed, and categorized based on the derivational category by Katamba (2005) as well as O'Grady and Archibald (2019). Through quantitative descriptive method, the findings showed 176 derivational affixes in the book The Little Prince, which were classified into eight types: Noun derived from Verb (33.52%), Adjective derived from Verb (15.34%), Adverb derived from Adjective (22.16%), Noun derived from Adjective (9.66%), Verb derived from Verb (3.41%), Adjective derived from Noun (10.23%), and Noun derived from Noun (3.41%), and Adjective derived from Adjective (2.27%). The findings indicated that the process of creating new words from noun to noun was the most dominant derivational affixes. This study contributes to the morphological understanding by demonstrating how derivational affixes occur in literary works. This study highlights the potential use of literary works in expanding EFL learners' vocabulary mastery. By understanding the morphological process, EFL learners could recognize word families and expand their lexical knowledge.

***Keywords**: Derivational affixes; Morphological analysis;Literary works; The Little Prince; Word formation process*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan imbuhan derivasional dalam buku berjudul The Little Prince karya Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Derivasional adalah salah satu proses pembentukan kata dalam Bahasa Inggris untuk menciptakan kata baru melalui penambahan afiks. Data yang diperoleh dikumpulkan, dianalisis, dan dikategorikan berdasarkan kategori derivasional menurut Katamba (2005) serta O'Grady dan Archibald (2019). Melalui metode deskriptif quantitative, data menunjukkan ada 176 afiks derivasional dalam buku The Little Prince, yang diklasifikasikan menjadi delapan jenis: kata benda yang berasal dari kata kerja (33,52%), kata sifat yang berasal dari kata kerja (15,34%), kata keterangan yang berasal dari kata sifat (22,16%), kata benda yang berasal dari kata sifat (9,66%), kata kerja yang berasal dari kata kerja (3,41%), kata sifat yang berasal dari kata benda (10,23%), dan kata benda yang berasal dari kata benda (3,41%). Temuan dalam penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa nominalisasi merupakan imbuhan derivasional yang paling dominan. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman morfologi dengan menunjukkan bagaimana imbuhan derivasional muncul dalam karya sastra. Studi ini menyoroti potensi penggunaan karya sastra dalam memperluas penguasaan kosakata pembelajar EFL. Dengan memahami proses morfologi, pembelajar EFL dapat mengenali kata dan menyimpulkan maknanya secara lebih efketif dalam kegiatan membaca.

***Kata kunci:** Analisis morfologi; Imbuhan derivasional; Karya sastra; Proses pembentukan kata; The Little Prince*

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INTRODUCTION

Morphology is a branch of linguistics which studies how words are formed. Katamba (1993) defines morphology as "the study of the internal structure of words" (p.3) which shows the relationship of how words are coined and structured. Morphology deals with words as the building blocks of a language. O'Grady and Archibald (2019) express that morphology is a linguistics study which concerns on grammar rules of words. It copes with how roots, prefixes, and suffixes are utilized to create new words which are meaningful and can be used in sentences.

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, morphological analysis plays an important role in understanding how words function in a language as it helps learners to decode unfamiliar words. Students could understand how a certain word is formed and how it is used in a sentence as appropriate to the context. Moreover, through morphological analysis, EFL students could enrich their vocabulary mastery (Arbi et al., 2022; Hutaminingrum, 2022; Syafaat & Saragih, 2023). To be proficient using a certain language, an individual should be able to master the elements of the language, namely, sentence, vocabulary, and structure (Priskinanda et al., 2021; Rugaiyah, 2018; Sulistyawati et al., 2021). One of the approaches to enrich vocabulary mastery is through analyzing the morphological process in literary text. Indeed, classic and modern literature contain abundant vocabulary in complex word formation.

Numerous studies have been done to discover the morphological process in written text or visual media. Wagut (2025) examined derivational suffixes in the animated movie entitled Wish. Her research aimed to find how derivational suffixes were used in conversational language as illustrated in the film entitled Wish. The findings of her study showed that adverb derived from adjective became the most common derivational suffixes. Further, this study highlighted that adverb derived from adjective was the most productive process in derivational suffixes since it could express the emotional narrative style in the film. Although the writer claimed that the findings described real occurrence of derivation, the study lacks the analysis on morphological productivity.

In a similar vein, Lestari et al. (2023) discovered the types and the functions of derivational affixes in the La La Land Movie. They found four types of derivational suffixes in the La La Land Movie, including nominal, adjectival, adverbial, and verbal suffixes. Those suffixes have their own function, such as changing and maintaining the class affixes. The finding of this study showed examples of derivational suffixes in a movie. However, this study tends to be descriptive rather than providing in-depth analysis on the derivational suffixes found in the movie. Meanwhile, Yuniari et al. (2022) explored suffixes forming noun in the novel The Girl on the Train by Paula Hawkins. Their study focused on finding suffixes which could create new words with noun as the syntactic category. Based on their findings, several suffixes could be attached to the base word to create noun, such as suffixes *-ment*, *-ation*, *-er*, *-ance*, *-ness*, *-ity*, *-ship*, *-ist*, and *-hood*. Although

the results of this study show various suffixes examples, this study has not elaborated the process of each derivation suffix.

The above-stated research results highlight the data richness of derivational suffixes found in literary works. The previous studies indicate that derivational is one of the most productive word formation processes in English. Although the previous studies have discovered the derivational suffixes in the literary works, few studies analyze derivation affixes in classic literary works such as The Little Prince. This study focuses on discovering derivational affixes in relation to the morphological functions and implication for EFL vocabulary development. The Little Prince is a modern classic of literature written by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry in 1943. Even though it is classified as children's book, The Little Prince could be an alternative literary work used in EFL learning activities since it provides various forms of derivational affixes. Thus, this study contributes to adding understanding of derivational affixes found in The Little Prince. Two research questions are formulated in this study, namely, 1) what are the categories of derivational affixes which appear in The Little Prince; 2) how are they distributed according to the morphological function?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Morpheme

In morphology, morpheme is the smallest unit of a word functioning as a building block of word (Katamba, 1993; O'Grady & Archibald, 2019; Yule, 2020). Morpheme cannot be broken down into smaller pieces unless it carries meaning and grammatical function (Katamba, 1993). Morpheme is divided into two types, namely free and bound morpheme (O'Grady & Archibald, 2019). Free morphemes are words that could stand alone, such as, *desk, play, beautiful,* and *ring*. Free morpheme also functions as root or base since it is an irreducible core of a word carrying basic syntactic meaning. Meanwhile, bound morphemes are words that cannot stand alone and should be attached to free morpheme. Several examples of bound morphemes are *un-, -ness, -ly,* and *-ize*. According to Katamba (1993), "many English words are morphologically complex" (p.20) since the words consist of both free and bound morphemes. For instance, *beautifully* is comprised of free morpheme which is *beautiful* and bound morpheme which is *-ly*. Another example is the word *unpredictable*. The word *unpredictable* could be broken down into free morpheme which is *predict* and bound morphemes which are *un-* and *-able.* In a nutshell, most of English words are formed by combining free and bound morpheme.

Derivation

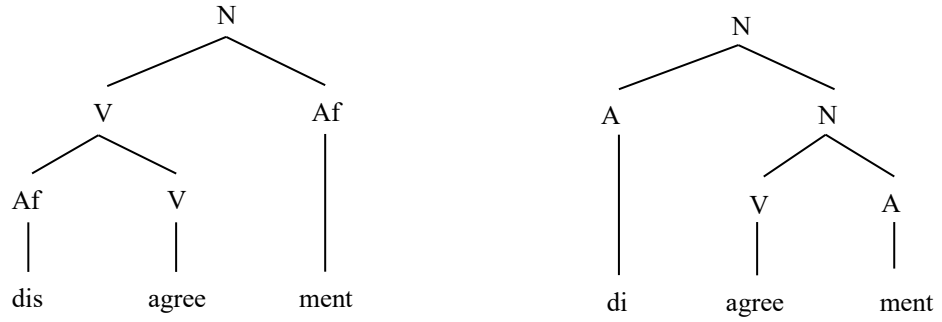
English has several word formation processes, including compounding, conversion, clipping, derivation, inflection, reduplication, internal change, suppletion, stress and tone placement, cliticization, and backformation (O'Grady & Archibald, 2019). Among these processes, derivation and inflection are the most productive (Harahap, 2021; Huda, 2025;

Khanetnok et al., 2023; Lestari et al., 2023). Derivation and inflection create new words by adding affixes to the base word.

Derivation is a process of creating new words by the addition of affixes resulting in meaning or syntactic category differs from the root or base word (Lieber, 2016; O'Grady & Archibald, 2019). Affix which is enclosed before root or base word is called prefix, while affix which is enclosed after root or base word is referred as suffix. For instance, the word *teacher is* derived from the base word *teach* and affix *-er*. The addition of suffix *-er* changes the syntactic category of the word from verb to noun. It also changes the meaning of the word. According to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, the word *teach* is defined as to give lessons to students, whereas *teacher* means a person whose job is giving lesson to students. The addition of suffix *-er* indicates a person who does the action (Katamba, 1993).

Similarly, the word *happiness* is coined from the base *happy* and suffix *-ness*. This word formation process changes the syntactic category of the base word from adjective to noun as well as the meaning of the base word. The base word, *happy*, means feeling or showing joy, while *happiness* means the state or quality of being happy. Suffixes usually change the meaning and syntactic category of words, whereas prefixes do not change the category of the base (O'Grady & Archibald, 2019). For example, the word *disagree* is derived from the base *agree* and prefix *dis-*. The addition of prefix *dis-* only changes the meaning of the base word to become opposite or not agree, while the syntactic category remains the same. Derivation can apply to a word more than once (O'Grady & Archibald, 2019). This process is known as complex derivation. To illustrate, the word formation process of *disagreement* is provided. The base word is *agreed* and added affixes *dis-* and *-ment*. The process is further explained as follows.

Figure 1. Two possible structures for the word *disagreement*



On the other hand, inflection is defined as creating new words by adding affixes without changing the syntactic category as well as the meaning of the base word (O'Grady & Archibald, 2019). The addition of affixes is solely to express the grammatical function of the words. For instance, the addition of suffix *-s* in *books, tables,* and *chairs* signifies plural nouns. Another example is the addition of suffix *-ed* in *worked, danced,* and *played* indicates past tense maker. The addition of suffix *-er* in *bigger, smarter,* and *shorter* indicates comparison. Briefly, derivational, and inflectional affixes are the common or productive word formation process in

English. The core difference between derivational and inflectional affixes lies in their roles in word formation and grammatical marking.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed descriptive quantitative to identify and analyze the types of derivational affixes, both suffixes and prefixes, in the story of The Little Prince. The Little Prince was written by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. The book consists of approximately ninety pages with illustration on several pages. Although the book was originally written in France, the data were taken from the English translation of The Little Prince which was first published in 1943. The quantitative data consisted of the percentage of each type of derivational affixes found in The Little Prince. As a children's literature, the story of The Little Prince provides ample examples of derivational affixes which could help EFL learners enrich their vocabulary. The researcher identified words containing derivational affixes and classified according to derivational categories by Katamba (2005) as well as O'Grady and Archibald (2019). The data were analyzed using a systematic morphological approach based on Katamba (2005) and Lieber (2016). Each affix was classified as a prefix or suffix and further categorized into class-changing or class-maintaining derivation. Each word was classified based on Katamba's (1993) classification on derivational affixes. Then, the data were calculated to find the frequencies and percentages to support the result. The frequency was calculated based on type occurrence meaning each derivational word was counted only once regardless of repetition. To minimize subjectivity, the data were checked and verified using linguistic references. A tree diagram model by McCarthy's (2002) was provided to visually explain the derivational affixes illustrating the relationship between root and affixes.

FINDING

This following part describes the derivational affixes found in The Little Prince. The morphological awareness on derivational affixes could enhance EFL students' vocabulary mastery. Unlike inflectional affixes, derivational affixes form new words with different syntactic category and meaning from the base word. The study showed that the most frequent derivational categories were noun derived from verb and adverb derived from adjective. The distribution indicated that class-changing derivation was more productive than class-maintaining derivation. Table 1 shows the results of derivational affixes found in The Little Prince written by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.

Table 1. Derivational Affixes Found in The Little Prince Book

Derivational Affixes	Frequency	Percentage
Noun derived from Verb	59	33.52%
Adjective derived from Verb	27	15.34%
Adverb derived from Adjective	39	22.16%
Noun derived from Adjective	17	9.66%
Verb derived from Verb	6	3.41%
Adjective derived from Noun	18	10.23%
Noun derived from Noun	6	3.41%

Adjective derived from Adjective	4	2.27%
Total	176	100%

Based on the table above, 176 words were found and categorized according to derivational affixes categorization by Katamba (2005) as well as O'Grady and Archibald (2019). Derived from the data, the most common occurrence of derivational affixes was noun derived from verb with a percentage of 33.52%. This was followed by adverb derived from adjective with a percentage of 22.16% which reflected the common use of adverb to show how action was performed in a specific manner or degree. The process of creating new words from verb to adjective also appeared in the book The Little Prince with the percentage of 15.34%. Meanwhile, adjective derived from noun occurred eighteen times with the percentage of 10.23% followed by the occurrence of noun derived from adjective with the percentage of 9.66%. Verb derived from verb and noun derived from noun showed a same result which was 3.41%. The least common was adjective derived from adjective with a percentage of 2.27%.

The findings of this study reveal several affixes found in The Little Price book. These affixes consisted both suffix and prefix, namely, *-en, -er, -ly, -ness, -ing, -ion, -less, -ment, -dom,* and *-y*. Whereas the prefixes were *re-, dis-, un-*, and *in-*. These affixes were attached to the base words to create new words with different meaning and syntactic category. In a nutshell, the findings showed that derivational affixes were the productive word formation process which changed the meaning and syntactic category of the base word.

DISCUSSION

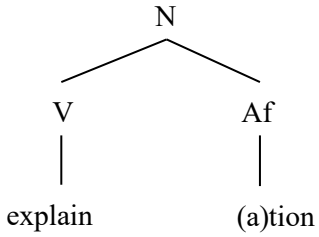
In addition to the findings above, further explanation of each derivational affix is provided in this part. Types of derivational affixes are discussed below. To illustrate each derivational affix process, tree diagram is provided to visually explain the process of each derivational affix.

A. Noun derived from Verb

Based on the findings, noun derived from verb was the most productive derivational affixes found in The Little Prince. In this category, one of the examples of derivational affixes found in The Little Prince was *explanation*. In the figure 2, the tree diagram illustrates the derivational structure of the word *explanation.* The addition of suffix *–(a)tion* in the word *explanation* changes the syntactic category and meaning of the base word. This example demonstrates a class-changing derivation from verb to noun. This finding is supported by Lieber (2016) who states that turning verb into noun with the addition of *–(a)tion* changes the meaning of the base word to "the process of X-ing" (p.43). According to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, *explanation* is defined as statement or reason given for something, whereas explain refers to an action to tell somebody about something. The word's class shifts from verb to noun by the addition of affix *-ation*. Although previous studies discovered derivational affixes in literary works, these results of the study revealed that noun derived from verb was the most productive derivational affixes in The Little

Prince. As a children's literature, the book provides simple vocabularies making it suitable for language acquisition.

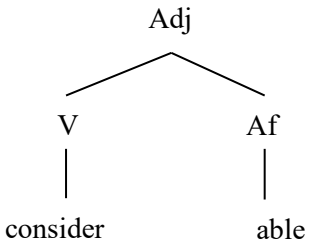
Figure 2. Tree diagram of Noun Derived from Verb



B. Adjective derived from Verb

Another example of derivational affix found in The Little Prince was adjective derived from verb. For instance, the word *bending*, whose root is *bend*, transforms from verb to adjective. According to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, *bend* means to lean or make something lean. The addition of suffix *-ing* gives meaning in the process of doing something (Katamba, 1993). Another example is *considerable*, whose root is *consider*. The process of derivational affix that changes verb to adjective is illustrated in Figure 3. The root *consider* belongs to verb and the meaning of *consider* is to think about something (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries). However, when the suffix *-able* is added to the base word, it alters the word class to adjective. In other words, this process belongs to class-changing. The meaning of the new word becomes great in amount, size, or importance. The addition of suffix *-able* in the word *considerable* denotes capability of being considered. The result of this study is supported by Rugaiyah (2018) who discovered derivational and inflectional affixes in reading textbook for grade X. Rugaiyah (2018) found that suffix *-able*, as adjectival suffixes, changes the base to adjective. In her study, the base could be either verb or noun.

Figure 3. Tree diagram of Adjective derived from Verb

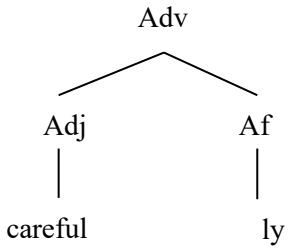


C. Adverb derived from Adjective

The researcher found several examples of derivational affixes which changed the syntactic category of the base words from adjective to adverb, such as *carefully, softly, politely, firmly,* and

punctually. The aforementioned words are originally adjective. However, the addition of affix *-ly* changes the syntactic category of the words to adverb. Figure 4 provides illustration of derivational affix that changes adjective to adverb. It can be seen that the word *careful* is formed from adding suffix *-ly* to the base word. The base word is *careful* which means giving a lot of attention to details (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries). The base word *careful* belongs to adjective category yet the syntactic category changes when suffix *-ly* is added. The word *carefully* is defined as in a careful manner. Therefore, the addition of affix *-ly* means in a specified manner. This finding is supported by Masfufah (2022) and Ambara and Utami (2023) who state that suffix -ly signifies adverb.

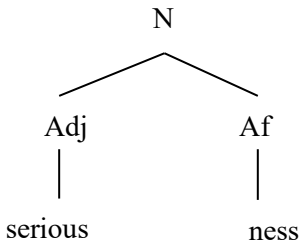
Figure 4. Tree diagram of Adverb derived from Adjective



D. Noun derived from Adjective

The fourth derivational affix found in The Little Prince was noun derived from adjective. The examples were *seriousness* and *electricity*. The suffix *-ness* added to the base *serious* creates a new word which is *seriousness.* The process could be seen in Figure 5. As it seen in Figure 5, *serious* is classified as an adjective, but when suffix *-ness* is added to the root, the word class changes to noun. According to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, *serious* is defined as bad or dangerous, whereas the definition of *seriousness* is the state of being serious. Indeed, affix *-ness* forms a noun indicating state or condition (Katamba, 1993). Wagut (2025) also found the process of derivational affix which changed adjective to noun. In her study, she found three examples of derivational affix which altered adjective to noun. The example she provided was the word *weakness*. Both Wagut's (2025) and this study revealed the same findings.

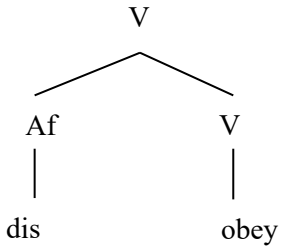
Figure 5. Tree diagram of Noun derived from Adjective



E. Verb derived from Verb

The fifth derivational affixes found in The Little Prince was verb derived from verb. One of the examples of this process was *disobey*. Based on Figure 6, the word *disobey*, whose root *obey*, has prefix *dis-*. The process of derivational affix in the word *disobey* changes the meaning of the word. *Obey* is defined as to do what a person is told or expected to do, while *disobey* means to refuse to do what a person tells someone to do (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries). The addition of affix *dis-* signifies not or the opposite of (Katamba, 2005). This finding showed the example of class-maintaining derivational affixes. Siboro and Bram (2020) discovered the same examples of class-maintaining derivational affixes. They found several words of verb derived from verb, namely, *unfasten, resound, and remark*. Indeed, the addition of prefix in English typically do not change the word class of the root (O'Grady & Archibald, 2019).

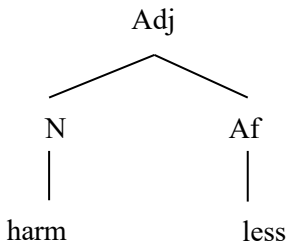
Figure 6. Tree diagram of Verb derived from Verb



F. Adjective derived from Noun

One of the examples of derivational affix found in The Little Prince which changed the word class from noun to adjective was *harmless*. Figure 7 illustrated the process of changing noun to adjective. Based on Figure 7, the affix *-less* attached to the base *harm* creates a new word which is *harmless. Harm* is classified as a noun, but when suffix *-less* is added to the root, the word class changes to an adjective. According to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, *harm* is defined as damage or injury that is caused by a person or an event, whereas the definition of *harmless* is unable to cause damage. This finding is supported by Septiana et al., (2024) who found that the addition of suffix *-less* occur mostly in noun. The addition of affix *-less* indicates without (Katamba, 1993).

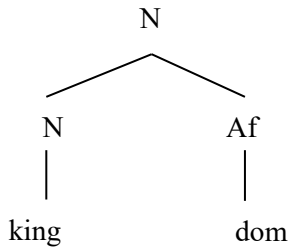
Figure 7. Tree diagram of Adjective derived from Noun



G. Noun derived from Noun

The example of derivational affix found in The Little Prince which change the meaning of the word is *kingdom*. Based on Figure 8, the base word is *king* which means the male ruler (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries). When the base word is added to suffix *-dom*, the meaning alters to a state or country that has a king or queen (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries). This derivational affix belongs to class-maintaining as the syntactic category of the base word remains the same. The finding of this study is in line with Wagut (2025) who found that noun derived from noun occurred the least.

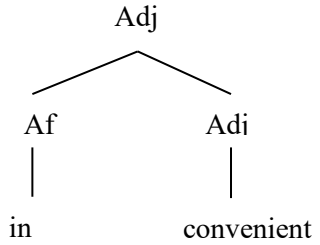
Figure 8. Tree diagram of Noun derived from Noun



H. Adjective derived from Adjective

The eight derivational affixes found in The Little Prince changed adjective to adjective. The examples of this process were *inconvenient* and *unimportant*. Figure 9 illustrated the process of this derivational affix. As seen in Figure 9, the word *inconvenient* has a root *convenient* which means not causing problem (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries). However, the addition of prefix *in-* changes the meaning of the base word to causing trouble or problems. Katamba (2005) elaborates that prefix *in-* alters the word into negative meaning. This example reflects class-maintaining derivational affix in which the base word is not changed although the prefix is added. The same process occurs in the word *unimportant*, whose base is *important.* According to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, *important* is defined as having a great value, while *unimportant* means having no value. This derivational affix does not change the syntactic category of the base word meaning it belongs to class-maintaining. However, the addition of prefixes *in-* and *un-* changes the meaning of the base word. Adding *in-* and *un-* indicates not or the opposite of something.

Figure 9. Tree diagram of Adjective derived from Adjective



CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, there were 176 occurrences of derivational affixes. Most of the derivational affixes changed the syntactic category of the base words. The findings showed that the most frequent occurrence of derivational affix was noun derived from verb. The second dominant occurrence was adverb derived from adjective reflecting descriptive style of narrative language where derivational helped express manner. Meanwhile, adjective derived from adjective was the least productive derivational affix. The results contribute to the understanding that literary work, especially The Little Prince, could be used to enrich EFL learners' vocabulary. Although The Little Prince is classified as children's literature, there were ample of word formation process examples which could enhance the vocabulary mastery. This study is not without its limitations. It only focused on one of the word formation processes in English which is derivational affix. The classification of affixes relied on the theoretical interpretation and dictionary-based identification which may lead to bias, especially case such as the suffix *-ing* which could function as either derivational or inflectional depending on the context. Therefore, future research could address these limitations by adopting multiple theoretical frameworks, such as corpus-based productivity analysis to examine complex derivational affixes more systematically. Such approach would provide deeper insight into how derivational morphology applied more effectively in EFL vocabulary mastery.

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