A STUDY ON THE ABILITY OF THE THIRD SEMESTER STUDENTS OF THE ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM OF THE TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION FACULTY OF RIAU UNIVERSITY IN IDENTIFYING ENGLISH MORPHEME

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Abstract: This is a descriptive study on the ability of the third semester students of the English Study Program of the Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Riau University in identifying English morpheme. There were 30 students chosen as the sample of this research. They were given a test as the instrument of this study. Based on the test, the mean score of the students in identifying the amounts of morpheme was 59.67 or at poor to average level. Another aspect of analysis is based on the kinds of morpheme; free and bound morpheme. The mean score of the students in identifying free morpheme was 75.67 or at the level of average to good and in identifying bound morpheme was 69.54 or at average to good level. Besides, this study also describes the result of the students in identifying English Morpheme based on the class of words. For the noun morpheme, the mean score of the students was 57.33 or at poor to average level. For the verb morpheme, the mean score was 52 or at poor to average level and 66.67 or at average to good level for adjective morpheme meanwhile the mean score of the students in identifying adverb morpheme was 62.67 or at the level of Average to Good level.

Keywords: *ability, identifying, English morpheme.*

1. Background

Learning English as a foreign language is a complex process that needs understanding of its components, such as structure, vocabulary (lexical) and language skills. There are four skills in English which have to be mastered by English learners. The four important skills are speaking, listening, reading, and writing and all of them correlate each other.

Besides, there are two aspects involved in learning a language. They are phoneme and morphemes. Phoneme is the smallest unit of sound that makes different meaning in a language. Morpheme is a component that builds a word and in a word consists of at least one morpheme. Morpheme is one of the useful

aspects in communication because beside it is the component of word formation, it also can correct certain misconception about meaning of the words and sentences in a language.

Morphology is part of grammatical system define as a study of forms of morphemes and their arrangement in forming words. Morphemes may either be free morphemes or bound morphemes. The bound morphemes are usually affixes.

In Indonesian context, the system of English is different from that of the native Indonesian language. Therefore, English is considered difficult to be learned by Indonesian students. It seems reasonable that students who find difficulties will make mistakes. One of the hard things is to identify morpheme. Students feel difficult to identify where it may occur, how many morphemes consist in a word and what kind of morpheme it is.

Students of English Study Program of the Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Riau University have to learn some courses that deal with linguistics. The courses are Introduction to Linguistics, English Phonology, Morphology, English Syntax, Semantics, Sociolinguistics, and Psycholinguistic. As the starting course, Introduction to Linguistic should be taken by the third semester students. In this class, the students are going to learn general linguistics and introduce them the four main branches of linguistics such as Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, and Semantics. The point is that the students have to have sufficient knowledge on linguistic before they take other linguistic classes.

Based on the writer experiences in teaching English Syntax, many students seem to have no idea about how to segment a word into smallest unit. In a word they tend to have problem in identifying how many morphemes and what kind of morphemes are in certain words. This makes the writer wants to have study on particular problem. In this case the writer will investigate whether the third semester students who theoretically have learned the topic in Introduction to Linguistic class are able to identify the amount of morpheme in some words and determine the kinds of each morpheme in the words.

Aarts and Aarts (1982) define morpheme as the minimal unit of grammatical description in the sense that it cannot be segmented any further at the

grammatical level of analysis. In linguistic terminology, the minimal parts of words such as: *fill – refill, introduce – reintroduce, happy – unhappy, fair – unfair* are called morphemes. Morphemes come in different varieties, depending on whether they are free or bound and inflectional or derivational morpheme.

According to Wardhaugh (1988) free morphemes can stand by themselves i.e. they are conventionally calls *words* and either tell us something about the world (free lexical morphemes) or play a role in grammar (free grammatical morphemes**).** *Man, pizza, run* and *happy* are instances of free lexical morphemes, while *and, but, the* and *to* are examples for free grammatical morphemes. It is important to note the difference between morphemes and phonemes: morphemes are the minimal meaning-bearing elements that a word consists of and are principally independent from sound.

For example, the word *zebra* (ˈziːbrə) consists of six phones and two syllables, but it contains only a single morpheme. *Ze-* and *-bra* are not independent meaning-bearing components of the word *zebra,* making it mono morphemic *(Bra* as a free morpheme does in fact mean something in English, but this meaning is entirely unrelated to the *-bra* in *zebra).*

Not all morphemes can be used independently, however. Some need to be bound to a free morpheme. In English the information "plural number" is attached to a word that refers to some person, creature, concept or other nameable entity (in other words, to a noun) when encoded in a morpheme and cannot stand alone. Similarly the morpheme *-er,* used to describe "someone who performs a certain activity" (e.g. a *dancer,* a *teacher* or a *baker)* cannot stand on its own, but needs to be attached to a free morpheme (a verb in this case).

Aarts and Aarts (1982) state that bound morphemes come in two varieties, derivational and inflectional, the core difference between the two are that the addition of derivational morphemes creates new words while the addition of inflectional words merely changes word form.

A morpheme which can occur alone as an independent word is called a free form; for example, *the, cat, man, go, like, quite, alligator,* and *hippopotamus.* A free form to which other morphemes may be attached is called a base (or root).

Words in the list just given are bases. A base is not always a free form. The *dict* of *predict,* the *spect* of *spectator,* and the *spir* of *conspiracy* are not free: they are bound bases rather than free ones. Likewise, the *s* of *cats* cannot occur alone. It represents the "plural," a bound morpheme in English. Other examples of bound morphemes of this kind are the "past tense" morpheme in *baked,* the "negative" morpheme in *infamous,* and the "quality" morpheme in *goodness.*

A bound morpheme must cooccur with at least one other morpheme. Using examples in conventional English spelling for convenience, we see that *cats* is composed of a free form *cat* and a bound morpheme *s, goodness* of a free form *good* and a bound morpheme *ness,* and *infamous* of a free *famous* and a bound morpheme *in.*

Some free forms never take cooccuring bound morphemes, for example *the, very,* and *quite.* On the other hand, bound morphemes need not always be attached to free forms, for they may be *attached* to other bound morphemes: *receive* is *re* and *ceive* and *submit* is *sub* and *mit.* Finally, free forms may be combined, as in *tomcat, briefcase, armchair,* and *showcase* to form words called compounds.

From the explanation above, the problems that are investigated in this study are first, how do the third semester students of English Study Program identify how many morphemes in certain words? Second, how do they identify what kinds of morpheme in the words? In a word, this research attempts to formulate the ability of the students in identifying the numbers of morpheme in certain words and identifying the kinds of the morphemes in the words.

METHODOLOGY

This research is a descriptive research which has one variable that is the ability of the third semester students of English Study Program of FKIP UR in identifying English Morpheme.

The instrument used in this study is a sort of test. The students are asked to identify the numbers and the kinds of morpheme of twenty (20) words. The

words belong to four parts of speech i.e. 5 nouns, 5 adjectives, 5 verbs, and 5 adverbs.

The population of this study is the third semester students of English Study Program of the Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Riau University in academic year 2013-014. According to Gay (2000) the population is a group of which a research would like the result of the study to be generalized. There are three classes of the second year students in this institution and in each class there are more or less 30 to 35 students. In another word, the population is about between 90 to 105 students. Since the population is large enough, it could be more than 100, so it is necessary to use sample. Here, the writer used cluster sampling technique and chose one of the class that had 30 students as the sample of this research.

The result of the students' identification of morpheme would be presented by using the classification of class performance suggested by Harris (1974) as in table 1.

Table 1: The Classification Level

No	Test Score	Classification Level
1	80 – 100	Good to Excellent
2	60 - 79	Average to Good
3	50 – 59	Poor to Average
4	0 - 49	Poor

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The presentation of the research data is presented in detail based on certain categories. The first is the result of the third semester students in identifying morpheme based on the class of word; they are Noun, Verb, Adjective, and Adverb. The second is based on the numbers of morpheme on the words and the third is based on the kind of morpheme; Free and Bound morpheme.

There are 30 students from the third semester students at The English Study Program of the Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Riau University that had been tested. Table 2 shows the correct answer of the students in identifying morphemes of noun and its classification level.

Table 2
Noun Morpheme

No of Items	Correct Answer of the students	Score	Mean Score	Classification Level
1	9	30		
2	20	66.67		
3	13	43.33	57.33	Poor to Average
4	28	93.33		
5	16	53.33		

Based on table 1 the mean score of the students in identifying Noun Morpheme is 57.33. It can be concluded that the classification level of the students in identifying Noun Morpheme is at poor to average level.

Table 3 presents the result of students in identifying morphemes of verbs and its classification level.

Table 3
Verb Morpheme

No of Items	Correct Answer of the students	Score	Mean Score	Classification Level
6	21	70		
7	13	43.33		
8	18	60	52	Poor to Average
9	16	53.33		
10	10	33.33		

Based on the table, the students' mean score in classifying the Verb Morpheme is 52. It can be concluded that the difficulty level of Verb Morpheme is poor to average level.

Meanwhile, the table 4 describes the result of students' identification of Adjective morpheme and its classification.

Table 4
Adjective Morpheme

No of Items	Correct Answer of the students	Score	Mean Score	Classification Level
11	21	70		
12	16	53.33		
13	13	43.33	66.67	Average to Good
14	24	80		
15	26	86.67		

Based on the table 4 above, the students have got 66.67 in mean score of the Adjective Morpheme. It can be concluded that the ability level of the students in identifying Adjective Morpheme is at average to good level.

Then for the last class of word that is adverb, the result is presented in the following table.

Table 5
Adverb Morpheme

No of Items	Correct Answer of the students	Score	Mean Score	Classification Level
16	19	63.33		
17	18	60		
18	16	53.33	62.67	Average to Good
19	21	70		
20	20	66.67		

The students' classification in identifying adverb morpheme is average to good, because it can be seen from the table that the students Mean score is 62.67.

After calculating the scores of the students in identifying Morpheme, the overall mean score of students based on the class of words is 59.67. It means that the ability the third year students at the English Study Program of the Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Riau Univesity in identifying English Morpheme based on the class of words is at poor to average level.

Moreover the writer also analyzed the ability of students in identifying how many morphemes consisted in each word and what kinds of morpheme contained in the words. After calculating the data, the result is presented in the following table.

Table 6

**The Ability of Students in Identifying Morpheme
Based on the Amounts and the Kinds of Morpheme**

Category	Mean Score	Classification Level
Amounts of Morpheme	59.67	Poor to Average
Free Morpheme	75.67	Average to Good
Bound Morpheme	69.54	Average to Good

On the table above, it is clear that the mean score of the third semester students in identifying morpheme based on the amounts or how many morpheme in each word is 59.67 or at Poor to Average level.

On the other hand, the means score of the students in identifying the free morpheme is 75.67 or it is categorized as Average to Good level. Finally, the mean score of the students in identifying bound morpheme is 69.45 or at Average to Good level

After analyzing the finding of the data, the writer finds that the students seem to get difficulty in determining the amounts of morpheme consisted in a word. The mean score is only 59.67 or at the level of Poor to Average. However, they have got a little bit satisfactory result in identifying free morpheme. They have 75.67 or at Average to Good level. Yet the students have a little bit confusion in determining the bound morpheme. The mean score is rather unsatisfactory, it is only 69.54 but according to the classification level it is at Average to Good level.

This indicates that the students' knowledge to identify English morphemes is unsatisfactory since they only get 59.67 or at the level of Poor to Average. No

one can reach the level of Good to Excellent. In average, they are only in two level category; Poor to Average level and Average to Good level.

Moreover, based on the mean score of the students in identifying morpheme according to the part of speech, it seems that they find Noun morpheme and Verb morpheme are more difficult than Adjective and Adverb morpheme.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The purpose of this study is to measure the ability of the third semester students of English Study Program of the Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Riau University in identifying English Morphemes. In this study, there were 30 students who took the test. Having analyzed the data presented in the previous session, the writer finds that the students' ability in classifying English Morphemes based on class of word is 59.67 or at Poor to Average level

The writer also analyzed the data based on how many morphemes consisted in the words and the kinds of morpheme. The first is based on the numbers or how many morphemes in each word, the means scores is also at Poor to Average level that is 59.67.

The second is based on the kinds of morpheme, the mean scores for identifying free morpheme is 75.67 or at Average to Good level. Meanwhile the mean score for determining the bound morpheme is 69.54 or at Average to Good level.

It is concluded that the ability of the third semester students of English Study Program of the Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Riau University in identifying English Morphemes is yet insufficient.

From the research result and conclusion, the writer would like to give some suggestions as presented in the following.

1. The students have to pay more attention to develop their skill in language knowledge or linguistic especially in the Introduction to Linguistics class.

2. The students should motivate themselves to develop their knowledge on the English Morphemes for it is one of the important things in language structure especially in word formation as well as sentence structure.

3. The lectures need to encourage and motivate the students to learn linguistics especially in the classes of Introduction to Linguistics, morphology, and syntax.

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