THE MORPHOLOGICAL PROCESS OF ENGLISH ADJECTIVES

ABSTRACT


Morphology is the study of internal structure of words Haspelmath (2002:1). There are three problems concerning to the process of morphology that the writer has formulated to conduct this research, which are; (1) what kinds of affixes that mark the adjective class? (2) What kinds of affixes that can transpose the adjective class into other word classes? And (3) What is the most productive and the most unproductive affix in adjective class.

The writer concludes that the markers of the adjective class are in-, im-, il-, ir-, dis-, un-, -er, -est, -able, -ant, -ive, -ed, -ing, -ful, -less, and -al. When the adjectives are attached to some affixes, such as en-, -en, -ify, -ize, -ity, -ist, -th, and -ly, they transpose the word class of adjectives. From the instrument of the research the most productive is affix –ly, it can be combined with 84 samples of adjectives from total numbers 100 adjectives that the writer has collected. While others are -er, -est, -ness, -ty, -en, un-, -ize, -ish, -th, -im, -in, -fy, en-, ir-, il-, and dis-, they are less productive. On the other hand, the least productive or the most unproductive affixes are ir-, il-, and dis-. Each of them only can be combined with one adjective.

Background of the Study

In this research, the writer would like to present the morphological process of adjective in English. Adjective, as Robert E Yaber and Mary Laine Yarber (1993:8) define, as one part of word classes is a word which modifies nouns and pronouns. We need it if we want to describe something both written and orally. In adjectives, there are also markers that mark them as adjectives. Simply we call them as affixes. So, to define how the process runs, the writer focuses on what kinds of affixes that mark the adjective and also to find out the kinds of affixes which can transpose the adjective class into other
word classes.

**Problem of the Research**

The writer formulates the problems in the following questions:

1. What kinds of affixes mark the adjective class?
2. What kinds of affixes can transpose the adjective class into other word classes?
3. What is the most productive and the most unproductive affix in Adjective class?

**Aim of the Research**

The aims of this research are:

1. To focus on the affixes as the markers in adjective class.
2. To find out the affixes that can change the adjective class into other word classes.
3. To know what is the most productive and the most unproductive affix in Adjective class.

**THEORETICAL REVIEW**

**Morphology**

In general, the branch of grammar which studies the structure or forms of words called morphology. Morphology is the field of linguistics that studies the internal structure of words.

**Morpheme**

Haspelmath (2001, 3: 16) morpheme can be defined as the smallest meaningful constituent of a linguistic expression.

**Affixes Morphemes**

Based on Francis Katamba’s book entitled *Morphology* (1993: 44). An affix is a morpheme, which only occurs when it is combining to some other morpheme or morphemes such as root or stem or base. There are three types of affixes:

a. Prefix. A prefix is an affix combine before a root or a stem or a base like *re-*; *un-*; re-make, un-kind, and in-decent

b. Suffix. A suffix is an affix combine after a root or a stem or a base like *-s, -ed, -er,* and *-ing* such as mat*-s, walk*-ed, play*-er,* and jump*-ing.*
c. Infixed. An infixed is an affix inserted into the root itself, for example in Tagalog –um- in s-umulat ‘write’

### Inflectional Morphemes

Such bound grammatical morphemes are called inflectional morphemes; they never change the syntactic category of the words or morphemes to which they are combine. They are always combining to complete words. Stated by Victoria Fromkin and Robert Rodman in their book entitled *An Introduction to Language* (1998: 91).

### Derivational Morphemes

Derivation patterns commonly change the word-class of the base lexeme- i.e. nouns can be derived from verbs, adjectives from nouns, and so on. Derivation is not relevant to the syntax. Stated by Haspelmath on his book entitled *Understanding Morphology* (2002: 68).

#### Affixes that Transpose the Adjectives into another Word Class

a. Prefix

- **Adjective → Affixes that Form Adjectives from Adjectives**
  
a. **Prefixes**
  
  - In-
    
    Examples: Insane, incomplete
  
  - Ir-
    
    Examples: Irregular, irrational
  
  - Im-
    
    Examples: Imperfect, impossible
  
  - Il-
    
    Examples: Illegal
  
  - Un-
    
    Examples: Unhappy, untidy
  
  - Dis-
Example: Dishonest

b. **Suffixes**

- The forms of the comparative, *-er.*

Examples: Smarter, easier

**Verb**

- **En-**

Example: Enlarge, enrich

b. **Suffixes**

- **Adjective → Verb**
  - *-en*

Examples: Darken, broaden
  - *-fy or *-ify*

Examples: Purify, simplify
  - *-ize or *-ise*

Examples: Privatize, idealize

- **Adjective → Noun**
  - *-ness*

Examples: Happiness, kindness
  - *-ty or *-ity*

Examples: Purity, stupidity
  - *-ist*

Examples: Realist, loyalist
  - *-th*

Examples: Warmth, depth

- **Adjective → Adverb**
  - *-ly*
Affixes that Mark the Adjective Class

Adjective may also be identified by the affixes that follow certain word-bases from every part of speech such as verbs, nouns, or even adjectives. But, for adverbial, it is impossible to form the adjective since adverbial class derived from adjective combined with suffix –ly.

Affixes that Form Adjectives from Verbs

a) -able or -ible
Examples: Breakable, readable, eatable

b) –ent or –ant
Examples: Repellant, expectant, conversant

c) –ive
Examples: Explosive, speculative, creative

d) –ed, and –ing
Examples: The show was very entertaining.
He is an educated person.

Affixes that Form Adjectives from Nouns

a) –ful
Examples: Joyful, helpful, and helpful.

b) –less
Examples: Joyless, hopeless, and helpless.

c) –al
Examples: Original, personal, and national.

d) –ish
Examples: Boyish, childish, and selfish.

(Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002:52-53)
Examples: Slowly, loudly

Method of the Research

In this research, the method that is used by the writer is qualitative descriptive method. Since the resulting data is presented in the form of words or description and not in the form of number.

Technique of Collecting Data

The data are collected through the following steps:
1. The writer reads the articles in magazine by scanning to find the words which contain affixes that mark the adjective class.
2. The writer also reads some articles in magazine by using scanning technique to find the adjective words which contain affixes that can transpose into another word classes. After that, the writer classified which data belong to verb, noun, and adverb.
3. Since the writer makes an instrument of the research, the writer collects 100 samples of adjective base words.

Technique of Analyzing Data

After collecting data, the writer analyzes the data:
1) Classifying the data into to two categories. The first category is the words that consist of affixes that mark the adjective class. The second category is the words that consist of affixes that can transpose adjective class into another class.
2) The first category has subclasses which are prefixes and suffixes. So, the data are grouped based on the affixes that join them whether the affixes belong to prefixes or suffixes.
3) The second category also has subclasses; they are the transposition of adjective into verb, the transposition of adjective into noun, and the transposition of adjective into adverb. The data are classified based on the affixes that join them, whether the affixes belong to the transposition of adjective into verb, noun, and adverb.
Presenting the Data

The data are presented in the instrument of the research. The information regarding morphemes in adjective is presented with a list of affixes. The data will be described in an analysis form of statements.

Conclusions

This research is conducted based on the problems that the writer has formulated; (1) What kinds of affixes mark the adjective class? (2) What kinds of affixes that can transpose the adjective class into another word class? And (3) what is the most productive and the most unproductive affix in Adjective class. The writer concludes that the markers of the adjective class are *in-*, *im-*, *il-*, *ir-*, *dis-*, *un-*, *-er*, *-est*, *-able*, *-ant*, *-ive*, *-ed*, *-ing*, *-ful*, *-less*, and *-al*.

The writer also concludes that when the adjectives are attached to some affixes, such as *en-*, *-en*, *-ify*, *-ize*, *-ity*, *-ist*, *-th*, and *-ly*, transpose the word class of adjectives. Transposition is a process to transfer a word class into another by using morphological processes. There are three types of transpositions concerning to the adjective, they are transposition of adjective into verb, adjective into noun, and adjective into adverb.

From the Instrument of the research, we can see the productivity of the affixes here, the most productive is affix *–ly*, it can be combined with 84 samples of adjectives from total numbers 100 adjectives that the writer has been collected. On the other hand, the least productive or the most unproductive affixes are *ir-*, *il-*, and *dis-*. Each of them only can be combined with one adjective.