Nominal Suffixes Found in The Game

"Final Fantasy VIII" by Square Enix

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Abstract

The study examines the derivational suffixes, Nominal Suffixes found in the game "Final Fantasy VIII". It focuses on analyzing the types and morphological processes, providing insights into linguistic structure of the game's language. Descriptive qualitative method was employed, which allowed for an in-depth exploration and elaboration of the data. The analysis was conducted in the framework proposed by Lieber (2009), with additional theoretical support from Plag (2003). The study identified 1,189 words containing derivational suffixes within the game. These suffixes were categorized into four types: nominal, verbal, adjectival, and adverbial. The findings revealed that nominal suffixation occurred in 1.189 instances, accounting for 47.7% of the total. Verbal suffixation was observed in 4 instances, representing a mere 2.0%. Adjectival suffixation was the most prevalent, with 391 instances, making up 42.5% of the identified suffixes. Adverbial suffixation was the least common, with only 2 instances, constituting 7.8 % of the total. The analysis highlights that adjectival suffixation is the most common type of derivational suffixation found in the game. This predominance of adjectival suffixes suggests a linguistic trend within the game's dialogue. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how derivational processes function in the context of video game linguistics.

Keywords: *morphological acts, morphology, suffixes, derivational, morpheme*

Introduction

Words are the fundamental units of language, essential for constructing sentences and conveying complex ideas. Morphology, a branch of linguistics, delves into the internal structure of words, focusing on elements such as roots, stems, morphemes, prefixes, infixes, and suffixes (Lieber, 2009). According to Crystal (1988), morphology examines the structure of words through the study of morphemes, the smallest units of meaning in a language. Morphemes appear either as free morphemes, which can stand alone, or bound morphemes, which require attachment to other morphemes to contribute meaning, thereby playing a crucial role in the process of suffixation.

Suffixation, according to Bauer (1988), is a critical process in word formation where suffixes are added to base words or roots. McCarthy (2002) explains that suffixes can serve either inflectional purposes modifying grammatical aspects like tenses, numbers, or derivational purposes, which alter the word's grammatical category or core meaning to create new words. For example, adding the suffix "-ness" to "happy" transforms the adjective into the noun "happiness", a shift that expands vocabulary and allows for more complex expression.

This study specifically focuses on derivational suffixes, particularly nominal suffixes, using data from the video game *Final Fantasy VIII.* The choice of this game is deliberate, as it offers unique and context specific examples of suffix usage, which differ from those typically encountered in conventional texts. Understanding derivational suffixes is essential not only for grasping sentence structures in English but also for enhancing vocabulary. Therefore, analysing these suffixes in the context of video game dialogue makes this study both practical and intellectually engaging.

A review of related literature reveals that while numerous studies address derivational affixation, few explore it outside traditional, static media forms such as literature, newspapers, and song lyrics. For instance, Sumual (2021) analyzed derivational affixes in the *Avengers* movie, finding four main characteristics associated with meaning changes, orthographic transformations, and pronunciation shifts when affixes are added. Dwiyanti (2022) studied *New Idea* magazine, identifying the types and processes of derivational affixes based on theories from Katamba (1993) and Lieber (2009), yielding 427 instances of derivational affixation. Nurjanah (2023) explored inflectional and derivational affixes in Justin Bieber's album *Justice*, uncovering 88 examples of suffixes and prefixes. Similarly, Windiatmika (2023) examined the *Jakarta Post* newspaper, identifying 36 derivational affixes. Samosir (2023) analyzed Psalms Chapters 1-10 in the *Bible King James Version*, discovering 49 derivational affixes using Katamba's (1993) framework. While these studies have contributed valuable insights into derivational affixation, they predominantly focus on traditional, static forms of language.

In contrast, video games represent an evolving and interactive linguistic environment, providing a unique source of morphological data. Video game dialogue, as a dynamic form of digital narrative, reflects language usage in real-time, making it a valuable setting for analysing derivational suffixes, particularly nominal suffixes. *Final Fantasy VIII,* known for its complex characters, dialogue, and storyline, serves as a rich data source due to its variety of suffixes and character-specific language. This game context not only allows for an examination of suffixes in a narrative setting but also offers insights into how language evolves within digital media.

The objectives of this study are as follows:
• **Identify the types of derivational suffixes, particularly nominal suffixes, used in the dialogue of *Final Fantasy VIII.***
• **Examine the morphological processes of these derivational suffixes within the game's context.**

By addressing these objectives, this study aims to contribute a fresh perspective on derivational suffixes within an underexplored context, enhancing our understanding of morphology in digital storytelling. The findings may serve as a foundation for future studies in morphology across interactive media, providing insights that traditional sources may not capture.

Method

This study draws on data from Final Fantasy VIII, a video game published by Square Enix for the Sony PlayStation console on 1999, which spans four discs and has a playtime of approximately 39 to 56 hours. This game was selected as a valuable data source for studying suffixation due to its rich narrative and dialogue, which feature diverse examples of English morphology within a dynamic, interactive context. The game's popularity and cultural impact also make it a relevant subject for linguistic analysis, particularly as video games are increasingly recognized as unique linguistic environments that differ from traditional texts.

The data collection and classification process were conducted in several steps. First, the entire storyline of Final Fantasy VIII was played to ensure comprehensive data collection. During the gameplay, note taking method was used to record instances of derivational suffixes as they appeared in dialogue or text within the game. Afterward, all identified suffixes were categorized by the type according to linguistic theory on derivational morphology.

To analyse the data, both formal and informal methods were used. The formal method involved organizing the identified suffix types in a table, providing a clear overview of the types and functions of derivational suffixes found in the game. Additionally, tree diagrams were created to illustrate the morphological processes of these suffixes, visually mapping out how each suffix attaches to a base word to

form a new word. The informal method was employed to describe and interpret the morphological processes observed in the game's storyline, offering insights into how suffixes contribute to meaning within this interactive narrative.

Tables and diagrams serve specific functions in this study. Tables categorize and summarize the types of derivational suffixes identified, while tree diagrams provide a visual representation of the suffixation process, aiding readers in understanding the structural changes. Together, these methods and visual aids enhance clarity and provide a thorough overview of the morphological aspect observed in Final Fantasy VIII.

Results

This study identified a range of nominal suffixes within Final Fantasy VIII, totalling 1,189 instances across 24 distinct suffixes. The analysis focused on nominal derivational suffixation which reflects how these suffixes transform base words into nouns, adding layers of meaning within the game's dialogue and narrative.

The data summarized in the table below shows that nominal suffixation is the most frequently occurring type, constituting 47.07% of all derivational suffixes identified. This prevalence highlights the linguistic emphasis on nouns representing actions, qualities, and states essential elements for narrative progression and character interactions within the game.

Table 1. Nominal Suffixes Found in "Final Fantasy VIII" video game.

No	Derivational Affixes	Affix		Total
		Prefix	**Suffix**	
	Derivational of Noun	*bi-*		8
		dis-		30
		mid-		3
		over-		15
		re-		11
		super-		7
			-able, -ity	143
			-ance	90
			-ence	81

1	(Nominal)		*-er*	56
			-hood	40
			-ian	31
			-ing	171
			-ion	34
			-ism	25
			-ist	49
			-mate	13
			-ment	146
			-ness	133
			-or	37
			-ship	57
			-work	9
		Total		**1.189**

The most common nominal suffixes found include:
• **-ing** (171 instances, example *"training"*) often used to denote ongoing activities or processes.
• **-able / -ity** (143 instances, example *"possibility"*) reflecting attributes or capacities.
• **-ment** (146 instances, e*xample "development"*) indicating results or conditions stemming from actions.
• **-ness** (133 instances, e*xample "darkness"*) representing abstract qualities or states.
• **-er** (56 instances, e*xample player"*) identifying roles or agents in the storyline.

In contrast, less common suffixes include **-work** (9 instances, e*xample "artwork"*) and **-mate** (13 instances, *example "teammate"*), indicating that these are used selectively within the game's dialogue.

The prominence of suffixes such as *-ing*, *-able / -ity*, and *-ment* suggests that much of the language in Final Fantasy VIII is centered on describing actions, attributes, and states. This tendency aligns with the interactive nature of the game, where characters frequently discuss tasks, goals, and qualities, which are crucial to

advancing the plot and developing character relationships. For instance, the frequent use of *-ing* forms reflects ongoing processes or states that are directly tied to the characters experiences, while *-er* forms identify agents, emphasizing the roles that characters play within the game.

To illustrate each suffix functions within the game's context to add depth to the narrative:

• The **-ing** suffix in words like *"training"* emphasizes continual actions that shape the characters' development.

• The **-able / -ity** suffix in *"capability"* highlights attributes that define the characters' abilities and limitations.

• The **-ment** suffix in *"employment"* reflects states or conditions that impact the plot.

• **-ness** in *"darkness"* evokes themes central to the game's atmosphere, enhancing the sense of mystery or danger.

• **-er** in *"player"* represents roles, essential for distinguishing characters and their purposes.

The results show that nominal suffixation in Final Fantasy VIII not only plays a crucial role in defining actions and states but also enriches the game's linguistic and thematic complexity. These nominal forms contribute to the immersive storytelling by helping to convey character roles, actions, and abstract concepts, thereby enhancing the players engagement with the game's narrative.

Discussion

In this section, the analysis of the data is presented through tree diagrams, illustrating the morphological processes involved in the formation of each selected word. Bold font highlights the parts of the utterances that contain derivational suffixes. The examples selected for this study focus on nominal suffixes, showcasing how these suffixes alter the grammatical category and meaning of the base words.

The analysis of Final Fantasy VIII reveals distinct uses of derivational suffixes, particularly nominal suffixes, which transform verbs and adjectives into nouns. This finding aligns with previous studies on derivational suffixes in traditional media, such as literature, film, and song lyrics, where suffixation similarly serves to expand vocabulary and adjust its own meaning. However, unlike static media, Final Fantasy VIII presents these suffixes within an interactive narrative, allowing players to experience language evolution in real time dialogue. For instance, studies on literature and film often emphasize the role of suffixes in character development and thematic depth (Sumual, 2021; Dwiyanti, 2022). In contrast, this study finds that nominal suffixes in video game dialogue not only support the

storyline but also reflect the dynamic, interactive environment unique to gaming linguistics.

These findings suggest that video games, as an evolving linguistic medium, offer unique opportunities to study morphological processes within engaging, digital contexts. The usage of nominal suffixes, as seen in Final Fantasy VIII, contributes to the immersive experiences by adding depth to characters and enhancing the thematic richness of the game world. From a linguistic perspective, this highlights video games as valuable tools for studying language use and structure in real time, where suffixation is applied across contexts in ways that differ from traditional media. Such insights could be beneficial for fields like gaming linguistics, which examines language in interactive digital environments, and for applied linguistics, as it offers a novel platform for language acquisition and vocabulary expansion.

This study's analysis yields several important insights regarding nominal suffixes and their prevalence in Final Fantasy VIII. Nominal suffixes like "-ment", "ness", "-ance", and "-hood" frequently occur, transforming verbs and adjectives into nouns and altering both grammatical category and meaning. For example, the suffix "-ment" in "employment" changes the verb "employ" into a noun, highlighting job related themes within the game's storyline. The suffix "-ness" in "darkness" adds a layer of atmosphere, creating nouns that emphasize the game's mysterious, thrilling tone, while "-ance" in "appearance" reflects visual and physical themes within the game. Similarly, "-hood" in "childhood" conveys themes of growth and development, adding emotional depth to character interactions. The analysis of the data can be seen below.

Data 1

"He should not come from Balamb Garden just to accept his ***employment***" (FFVIII Disc 1 speech by Quistis Trepe)

The data above is categorized as derivational noun of Nominal suffixes because there is an alteration of the base word into both a new word class and has new meaning as follow: ***employment***

[[employ]verb -ment] noun
Morphological process covers the word noun "***employment***" which derived from the base word of verb "***employ***". This transformation occurs by adding the suffix "-***ment***" to the verb "***employ***", resulting in noun form of word "***employment***". The suffix "-***ment***" is used to create nouns from verbs, indicating either the process of an action or its outcome. For example, the verb "***employ***" means to give someone work for payment (Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary, 2008). When the suffix "-***ment***" is added, the word changes to "***employment***", meaning regular paid work or

the state of being employed (Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary, 2008). This demonstrates a change in both word class and meaning with the formation of "***employment***".

Data 2

"Who dares wakes up the sleep of the ***darkness*** evil? Now you shall feel my wrath" (FFVIII Disc 1 speech by encountered Diablos)

The data above is categorized as derivational noun of Nominal because there is an alteration of the base word into a new word class and has new meaning as follow: ***darkness***

[[dark]adjective -ness] noun
The morphological process involves the formation of the noun "***darkness***", derived from the adjective word "***dark***". This transformation occurs through the addition of the suffix "-***ness***" to the word "***dark***". resulting in "***darkness***". The suffix "-***ness***" is utilized to convert the adjective word into nouns, typically denoting danger, thread or even an evil entity. For instance, "***dark***" as an adjective means a solid deep of black color that surrounding all area which indicating a mystery. When "-***ness***" is appended to "***dark***", the word shifts to "***darkness***", a multifaceted visual that enhances the difficulty of the game or showing thriller theme of the game itself. This illustrates a shift in both grammatical category and meaning during the creation of "***darkness***".

Data 3

"Geez, look out those SeeDs ***appearance,*** now I really want to become a SeeDs" (FFVIII Disc 1 intro speech by Zell Dincht)

The data above is categorized as derivational noun of Nominal because there is an alteration of the base word into both a new word class and has new meaning as follow: ***appearance***

[[appear]verb -ance] noun
The morphological process involves the formation of the noun "***appearance***", derived from the verb word "***appear***". This transformation occurs through to the suffix "-***ance***", resulting in "***appearance***". For instance, "***appear***" refers to a verb which indicating the act of becoming visible or showing out them or itself in the world. When the suffix "-***ance***" is appended to "***appear***", the word shifts to "***appearance***", which refers to the aspects of how people look on their physic and

visual. In various contexts. This illustrates a shift in both grammatical category and meaning during the creation of the word "***appearance***".

Data 4

"Don't say that you had the same ***childhood*** dream as me? What kind of relation is this" (FFVIII end of disc 3 speech by Squall Leonhart)?

The data above is categorized as derivational noun of Nominal because there is an alteration of the base word into both a new word class and has new meaning as follow: ***childhood***

[[child]noun -hood] noun
The process of word formation involves creating the noun "***childhood***" from the noun "***child***" by adding the suffix "-***hood***". The noun "***child***" describes as a young individual in a stage of growing and develop. When the suffix "-***hood***" is added to "***child***", it transforms into "***childhood***" which denotes how the development of human in different aspect such as characteristic, mindset, and specific conditions. This change demonstrates a shift in both the grammatical category and the meaning of the word "***childhood***".

Together, these findings underscore the significance of suffixation in enhancing storytelling and thematic elements in video games, establishing *Final Fantasy VIII* as a valuable resource for understanding the application of morphological processes in digital narratives. The prevalence of nominal suffixes specifically demonstrates how language in video games can mirror complex human interactions, further solidifying their potential for future linguistic study.

Conclusion
Based on the analysis conducted in the preceding chapter, four types of derivational suffixes were identified in this study. There were 391 instances of nominal suffixation, constituting 39.33% of the data, which included suffixes such as -al, -ance, -ency, -ence, -ancy, -ant, -ee, -er, -or, -ery, -ess, -ness, -ing, -ion, -ation, -ment, -ism, -ist, and -ity. Verbal suffixation accounted for 4 instances, representing 0.70% of the data, and included suffixes like -ate, -ize, -en, and -ify. Adjectival suffixation, the most prevalent type, comprised 255 instances, making up 44.97% of the data, with suffixes such as -able, -ive, -al, -ary, -en, -ed, -esque, -ful, -ant, -ic, -less, -ly, -ous, -ite/-ate, -ing, -y, and -ly. Adverbial suffixation, the least frequent type, accounted for 85 instances, totaling 14.99% of the data, and included suffixes such as -y and -ly. The study's findings indicate that adjectival suffixation was the most commonly occurring type among the derivational suffixes, representing 44.97% of the total, while verbal suffixation was the least frequent, comprising only 0.70% of all derivational suffixes identified in the data source. Furthermore, it can be

inferred that derivational suffixes primarily aim to change the grammatical category or meaning of words. Thus, understanding the types and morphological processes of word utterances in context is crucial for identifying the speaker's intent.

Suggestion

Based on the findings, it can be suggested to both future researchers and students in linguistics or related fields. For future researchers, the findings underscore the importance of understanding derivational suffixes and their role in changing the grammatical category or meaning of words. This understanding is crucial for interpreting language in context. Researchers can build on this study by further exploring morphological processes and their implications for understanding language use and speaker intent. For students, understanding derivational suffixes and their functions is essential for learning about word formation and grammar. By studying these morphological processes, students can gain a deeper understanding of how language works, which will enhance their ability to analyze and interpret linguistic data effectively.

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