



Types of Derivational Suffixes Found in “The Girl Who Fell Beneath The Sea” Novel

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyze the types of derivational suffixes found in the novel “The Girl Who Fell Beneath the Sea” by Axie Oh, which was selected because its rich use of descriptive language and modern narrative style. Morphology, as a branch of linguistics, focuses on the structure and formation of words. One important part of morphology is the use of derivational suffixes. This study focuses on identifying and classifying these suffixes into four types: adjectival, adverbial, nominal, and verbal. The theory used in this study is based on Plag (2002) and McCarthy (2002), which explained the classification and functions of derivational suffixes. This study uses a qualitative method with an observation technique. The data were collected by reading the first three chapters of the novel, identifying words with derivational suffixes, and grouping them using labelling and bracketing. The result showed 214 derivational suffixes, with adjectival suffixes occurring most frequently, indicating that adjectival derivation has an important role in shaping descriptive expressions in the novel.

Keywords: *derivational suffix, adverbial, adjectival, nominal, verbal.*

Introduction

Morphology is one part of linguistics that focuses on the structure and formation on words within a language. According to Katamba (1994:3), morphology studies how words are formed, modified, and structured to express and convey meaning. Every language has its own set of morphological rules and systems, including English, which is widely regarded as a global language. English morphology focuses on how a word can change its form from one to another one. It also focuses on the function of a word that can shift through various linguistic processes.

The term word is an important part of linguistics, especially in morphology. A word is considered as a meaningful linguistic unit that may consist of one or more morphemes. According to McCarthy (2002:16), a morpheme is defined as the

smallest part of a word that still has meaning, while Lieber (2009:3) describes a morpheme as the smallest individual unit of language that contributes to meaning. Morphemes are generally classified into two types. The first type is free morpheme which can stand alone as independent words, such as *rain*, *pure*, *shy*, etc. Then, the second type is bound morpheme which must attached to another element to convey meaning, such as *-ness*, *-ly*, *-ing*, etc. One of common word-formation processes involving bound morphemes in English is affixation, a process where prefixes or suffixes are added to a root or base word.

Affixation is generally classified into two types: inflectional and derivational. Inflectional affixes express grammatical features such as tense, number, possession, or comparison without changing the word's class meaning or grammatical category. In contrast, derivational affixes are used to form new words and often change meaning or grammatical category. According to Katamba (1994:38), derivational affixes consist of prefixes, which are placed at the beginning of a root (e.g., *un-* in *unhappy*), and suffixes, which are added at the end of a root (e.g., *-ness* in *kindness*). Prefixes typically modify the meaning of a word without changing its class, while suffixes frequently affect both meaning and grammatical function.

In here, Derivational suffixes are widely used in English and serve various functions. Derivational suffixes itself is the type of suffix added in the end of a root to create a new word with a new meaning or to change the word's grammatical category. According to Plag (2002:109-123), classified derivational suffixes into four types: nominal, adjectival, adverbial, and verbal. According to McCarthy (2002:48-56), distinguished derivational suffixes based on whether its maintain or change word class.

To support this study, there are three previous studies which discussed about derivational suffixes where there are some differences with this study. The first previous study was from Desmara et al. (2022) entitled "An Analysis of Derivational Suffixes in Justin Bieber's Changes Album". The aim of this previous study was to describe the types and functions of derivational suffixes. The result mentioned there were three types of derivational suffixes with 36 data and divided into two different functions, 31 data included in class changing, 5 data included in class maintaining. Those three types consisted of 21 nominal suffix, 10 adverb suffix, and 5 verb suffixes.

The second previous study was written by Dewi et al. (2023) entitled "Morphological Analysis of Derivational English Suffixes with Reference to Enola Holmes Movie". The purpose of this previous study was to identify the types of English derivational suffixes and assess their functions. This previous study used qualitative methodology and the result showed there were three types of derivational suffixes, such as nominal suffix, verb suffix, and adjective suffix. The last previous study was from Putrawan et al. (2023) entitled "Morphology Analysis of Derivational Suffixes Process in the "Walls" Music Album by Louis Tomlinson".

This previous study used qualitative research which had aim to explore the derivational process of types of derivational suffixes. The result showed if there were

four types of derivational suffixes which consisted of nominal suffix, verbal suffix, adjectival suffix, and adverbial suffix.

The difference this study with those previous studies is in the method of analysis. This study uses labelling and bracketing to analyze words, which makes it easier to divide and group all the suffixes found into four types of derivational suffixes. In contrast, the previous studies did not use labelling and bracketing, so the analysis was less organized and detailed.

Method

The primary source of data in this study is a novel titled "The Girl Who Fell Beneath the Sea", written by Axie Oh. It was published on February 22nd, 2022, by Feiwei & Friends. The novel consisted of 336 pages in its Kindle edition. This novel had 36 chapters, however there were only the first three chapters are used as data sources because the data obtained were appropriate for analysis and the scope of the study remained manageable. In collecting the data, observation method was applied in this study.

The data were collected through several steps, including reading the novel from chapter 1 until chapter 3, identifying words that contain derivational suffixes, and categorizing them based on the types of the suffixes. This study used a qualitative method to analyze derivational suffixes found in the novel "The Girl Who Fell Beneath the Sea" by Axie Oh. To ensure reliability, the categorization of derivational suffixes was carefully rechecked. The findings are presented in table in the results section and further interpreted and discussed in the discussion section.

Results

TYPES OF DERIVATIONAL SUFFIXES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Adverbial Suffix	60	28%
Adjectival Suffix	78	36%
Nominal Suffix	74	35%
Verbal Suffix	2	1%
TOTAL	214	100 %

Table 1. Types of Derivational Suffixes in The Girl Who Fell Beneath The Sea Novel

Based on the table above that showed the result of the data, there were 214 data from the first three chapters in words form. Those data included in derivational suffixes, which divided into four different types. The first type was adverbial suffix with 60 data in suffix -ly. The second type was adjectival suffix with 78 data in 10 kinds of suffixes, such as *-able* (8 data), *-ive* (5 data), *-al* (2 data), *-less* (7 data), *-ing* (10 data), *-ent* (2 data), *-ful* (23 data), *-ic* (2 data), *-y* (5 data), and *-en* (4 data). The third type was nominal suffix with 74 data in 10 kinds of suffixes, such as *-ness* (14 data), *-ity* (2 data), *-ance* (5 data), *-ence* (5 data), *-ment* (8 data), *-ing* (2 data), *-ion* (16 data), *-er* (10 data), *-or* (1 data), *-ess* (3 data), and *-y* (8 data). Then, the last type

was verbal suffix which only consist of 2 data with each 1 data in suffixes *-ize* and *-en*. Adjectival suffix is the most frequently used which emphasized on descriptive language in the novel. While, the low frequency of verbal suffixes may be attributed to the narrative style which involved limited use of verbal derivation. Representative examples of each type of derivational suffix are further discussed in the discussion below.

Discussion

Adverbial Suffix

Datum 1.

For instance, there's my own path—the literal path before me, stretching **narrowly** through the waterlogged rice fields.

The Girl Who Fell Beneath The Sea, (Pg. 1, Chap. 1, Para. 5, 1st Sentence).

narrowly **[[narrow]_{adj} -ly]_{adv}**

The bolded word *narrowly* indicated the used of derivational suffix. The root narrow is an adjective. It added with suffix *-ly* and changed the word *narrow* became *narrowly*. It also changed the word class adjective into adverb and indicated this process as forming adverb as one type of derivational suffixes. According to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, the term *narrow* means measuring a short distance from one side to the other, especially in relation to length. Whereas, the term *narrowly* only by a small amount.

Datum 2.

Bright cushions are arranged **haphazardly** about the tables as if revelers had been sitting comfortably, enjoying their meals, only minutes before.

The Girl Who Fell Beneath The Sea, (Pg. 13, Chap. 2, Para. 39, 4th Sentence).

haphazardly **[[haphazard]_{adj} -ly]_{adv}**

The bolded word *haphazardly* above included in the used of derivational suffix that exist in the novel. It had root *haphazard* with adjective as the word class. It attached with suffix *-ly* and changed the word *haphazard* became *haphazardly*. This process changed the world class from an adjective into an adverb and included as forming adverbial as one type of derivational suffixes. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the word *haphazard* means marked by lack of plan, order, or direction. While the word *haphazardly* according to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries means in a way that has no particular order or plan; in a way that is not organized well.

Adjectival Suffix

Datum 3.

"The Spirit Realm is a vast and **magical** place, but the greatest of all its wonders is the Sea God's city."

The Girl Who Fell Beneath The Sea, (Pg. 9, Chap. 2, Para. 12, 1st Sentence).

magical **[[magic]_n -al]_{adj}**

The bolded word *magical* in the sentence indicated the used of derivational suffix. This word had *magic* as the root with noun as the word class. It attached with the suffix *-al* and changed the word *magic* to *magical*. This process also changed the word class noun into adjective and indicated this process as forming adjective as one type of derivational suffixes. According to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, the word *magic* means the secret power of appearing to make impossible things happen by saying special words or doing special things. On the other hand, the word *magical* means containing or used in magic.

Datum 4.

I cross over short, arched bridges and down abandoned streets, everything around me **colorless** and dull but for the ribbon, achingly bright as it cuts through the fog.

The Girl Who Fell Beneath The Sea, (Pg. 13, Chap. 2, Para. 43, 3rd Sentence).

colorless **[[color]_n -less]_{adj}**

The word *colorless* with bold writing above indicated the used of derivational suffix. The word *colorless* had *color* as its own root. The root added with suffix *-less* and turned the word *color* into *colorless*. This process indicated as forming adjectival suffix as the word class noun changed into an adjective. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *color* means a phenomenon of light (such as red, brown, pink, or gray) or visual perception that enables one to differentiate otherwise identical objects. On the other hand, the word *colorless* means lacking of color or without color or very pale.

Datum 5.

The briny air misted over our faces like **salty** kisses.

The Girl Who Fell Beneath The Sea, (Pg. 9, Chap. 2, Para. 10, 3rd Sentence).

briny **[[brine]_n -y]_{adj}**

The bolded word *briny* above was one example of the used of derivational suffix. That word had *brine* as the root. It added with suffix *-y* and change the word *brine* into *briny*. This process also turned the word class noun into an adjective and indicated the forming adjectival as one type of derivational suffixes. According to

Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the word *brine* means water saturated or strongly impregnated with common salt. Whereas, the word *briny* means relating to, or resembling brine or the sea.

Nominal Suffix

Datum 6.

Which **destiny** belongs to me? Which **destiny** will I graps on to with both hands?

The Girl Who Fell Beneath The Sea, (Pg. 1, Chap. 1, Para. 5, 1st-2nd Sentence).

destiny **[[destine]_v -y]_n**

The bolded word *destiny* in those sentences included to derivational suffix. The word *destiny* had the root *destine* with verb as the word class. The root added with suffix *-y* and turned the word *destine* into *destiny*. This process changed the word class from verb become noun and indicated the changing process as forming noun as one type of derivational suffix when the noun derived from a verb. According to Merriam-Webster, the word *destine* means to determine the fate of in advance. Whereas, the word *destiny* means a state or end that seemingly has been decided beforehand.

Datum 7.

In time, she discovers that he's caught in a powerful **enchantment**, the root of his destructive nature.

The Girl Who Fell Beneath The Sea, (Pg. 24, Chap. 3, Para. 16, 4th Sentence).

enchantment **[[enchant]_v -ment]_n**

The bolded word *enchantment* was one of the used of derivational suffix. This word had *enchanted* as its own root. It attached with suffix *-ment* and changed the word *enchant* into *enchantment*. This process indicated the forming nominal suffix as suffix *-ment* changed the word class verb into a noun. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *enchant* means to influence by or as if by charms and incantation. Whereas, *enchantment* means the act or art of enchanting or the quality or state of being enchanted.

Datum 8.

"I have a name. Chosen by my grandmother to give me **cleverness** and strength. (...)."

The Girl Who Fell Beneath The Sea, (Pg. 29, Chap. 3, Para. 69, 3rd Sentence).

cleverness **[[clever]_{adj} -ness]_n**

The word *cleverness* with bold writing above showed the used of derivational suffix. That word had *clever* as its own root. It added with suffix *-ness* and changed the word *clever* into the *cleverness*. This process also changed the word class adjective into noun and indicated the forming noun as one type of derivational suffix.

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the word *clever* means skillful or adroit in using the hands or body. On the other hand, *cleverness* means the quality of being quick at learning and understanding things.

Verbal Suffix

Datum 9.

My throat **tightens**, and my heart pounds with relief – all the brides before me, they lived.

The Girl Who Fell Beneath The Sea, (Pg. 8, Chap. 2, Para. 4, 1st Sentence).

tightens [[**tight**]_{adj} -**en**]_v -**s**]_v

The bolded word *tightens* above was an example of the used of derivational suffix. The word *tightens* had *tight* as its own root. It attached with suffix *-en* and change the word *tight* into *tighten*. While the suffix *-s* was not derivational suffix, but included in inflectional suffix as third-person singular present. This process indicated into the forming verbal as one type of derivational suffix where the word class adjective changed into verb. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the word *tight* means so close in structure as to prevent passage or escape. Whereas, the word *tighten* means to become tight or tighter.

Datum 10.

I **realize**, His eyes do more to hide his thoughts than his mask does to hide his face. The Girl Who Fell Beneath The Sea, (Pg. 28, Chap. 3, Para. 54, 2nd Sentence).

realize [[**real**]_{adj} -**ize**]_v

The word *realize* with bold writing above was one example of the used of derivational suffix. That word had the word *real* as its own root. The root *real* attached with suffix *-ize* and changed the word *real* into *realize*. This process indicated the forming verbal as one type of derivational suffix as the class work adjective turned into verb. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the word *real* means having objective independent existence. On the other hand, the word *realize* means to cause to seem real or make appear real.

Conclusion

This study explores the use of derivational suffixes in the novel *The Girl Who Fell Beneath the Sea* by Axie Oh. It focuses on four main types of derivational suffixes: nominal, adjectival, adverbial, and verbal. These suffixes play an important role in forming new words and changing word classes, which reflects the flexibility and richness of English morphology as seen in the novel's language. To support the analysis, labelling and bracketing were used to help identify and examine each suffix clearly within its word structure.

This method allowed for a more precise observation of how the suffixes function in context. The findings show that derivational suffixes are widely used and

contribute meaningfully to the construction of words, enhancing the understanding of word formation in English. The results further reveal that adjectival suffixes are the most frequently used, reflecting the descriptive nature of the novel, while verbal suffixes occur very rarely. These findings provide insights into the morphological patterns commonly found in narrative and fantasy text. This study may contribute to English morphology learning, literary linguistic analysis, and future research on derivational processes in different genres of texts.

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