

Elaborating the Derivational Morpheme in Students' Thesis Acknowledgement in Higher Education

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Abstract

The students are still finding difficulties in formatting the sentences in the thesis acknowledgments. This study aimed to find out the types of derivational morphemes and the function of derivational morphemes used in the students' thesis acknowledgments. This study is qualitative descriptive research. The instrument of this study was the documentation. There were nine acknowledgments of the student's thesis. The data were analyzed by using the descriptively characteristic analysis. The result of the data analysis, the researcher found four types of derivational morphemes in the thesis acknowledgment, which are noun derivation, verb derivation, adjective derivation, and adverb derivation. In this study, researchers also found the types of derivation morphemes that are dominantly used and those that are rarely used. Thus, the derivational morpheme should be comprehended by the students to write the acknowledgments academically

INTRODUCTION

Language is a complicated form of communication that changes throughout time. In an academic setting, language is utilized not simply to convey knowledge, but also to express appreciation and thanks. Morphology, particularly derivational morphemes, is a complex topic that deserves additional investigation (Agung et al., 2021). The significance of language structure and morphological components in academic writing, particularly in the setting of a thesis, has been a key focus of linguistic research. The usage of derivational morphemes in the thesis acknowledgment section is one intriguing area to look into. This section not only expresses gratitude to the individual or entity that contributed to the study, but it also demonstrates the cautious and deliberate use of words.

Furthermore, derivational morphemes constitute the second class of morphemes, which modify a word based on its lexical and grammatical class. It has a greater impact on basic words. However, understanding how researchers utilize derivational morphemes in dissertation acknowledgments can provide an in-depth understanding of the language factors involved in expressing gratitude and appreciation. This analysis can pave the way for further investigation into the motivations or communicative nuances that may be embedded in the choosing of a specific

morpheme, which can lead to a deeper understanding of the social, cultural, or even political values inherent in the morphology (Ismail, 2023).

In recent decades, linguistic study has also focused on language's morphological structure. However, there are still aspects of academic writing that have not been well investigated. Although the acknowledgment portion of a thesis is sometimes considered a formality, it demonstrates careful word choice and sentence construction (Taahirah, 2017). As a result, the examination of derivational morphemes in this section may reveal new information about how writers convey appreciation.

Moreover, several prior studies focused on the morphological examination of academic writing. The first prior research was conducted by Arsana et al., (2021), who found the morpheme analysis in the Jakarta Post newspaper text. The purpose of his research is that he discovered three major kinds of bound morphemes through the Jakarta Post daily text: morpheme -ing, morpheme -d/ed, and morpheme -s/-es, each with their function. The second prior study was conducted by Agustina (2021), who looked at the free and bound morphemes in the Islamic short narrative 'love along the Journey'. As a consequence of the research's findings, she found that the dominant or most commonly encountered morpheme in the Islamic short narrative 'Love along the path' is free morpheme. According to past studies, there is minimal research on morphology, particularly in academic writing, such as student thesis acknowledgments.

Thus, research into the morphology of student theses is of significant importance. It is for this reason that the researcher is interested in conducting this research. The objective of this research is to contribute new insights related to academic language and its influence on the comprehension and interpretation of the thesis as a whole by detailing and analyzing the use of derivational morphemes in the acknowledgment of the thesis section. It is therefore evident that this research will contribute to the advancement of linguistic theory, as well as offer a practical application in the context of academic writing, particularly in the area of thesis acknowledgments.

Furthermore, acknowledgment is a crucial element in conveying dedication and gratitude to those who have contributed to the development of the thesis (Altakhaineh et al., 2024). Furthermore, Paul-Hus and Desrochers (2019) posit that the acknowledgment represents the writer's testimony. It can be argued that the acknowledgment represents a key element of the thesis writing style. This is because it describes the writer's emotional state, their style of writing, and their feelings of gratitude (Bala et al., 2024). In this instance, the objective is to adopt a human approach to advance the position that pertains to an individual who has contributed to the research. Consequently, the acknowledgment represents a personal sentiment upon the conclusion of a research project.

Given the academic context, there is a need to investigate the writing tendencies of the acknowledgment, as it can provide greater accessibility and acceptance within the academic domain (Ferreira et al., 2023; Bao & Liu, 2024; Jusslin & Widlund, 2024). The research discusses the importance of analyzing the use of derivational morphemes in the acknowledgment section of theses or academic works. Language is a sophisticated means of communication that undergoes continual evolution, including within academic contexts. One area of language that requires further investigation is morphology, with a particular focus on derivational morphemes (Agung et al., 2021). The deployment of derivational morphemes in the acknowledgment section serves not only to convey appreciation but also to reflect a meticulous and deliberate choice of words. An understanding of how researchers utilise derivational morphemes can facilitate a deeper insight into the linguistic factors involved in the expression of gratitude and appreciation. Despite the extensive coverage of language morphological structures in linguistic research, the acknowledgment section of theses has not been subjected to the same degree of examination (Thahirah, 2017). Moreover, the study can assist students in elucidating the processes of word formation in the context of acknowledgment.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive methodology, chosen for its ability to provide a detailed understanding of specific academic issues (Sutopo, 2006). Conducted at the University of Pasir Pangaraian, the research targeted English Study Program students. Data were collected using documentation, specifically the acknowledgments from students who graduated in 2022. A random sampling method yielded nine acknowledgments for analysis. Data collection involved compiling, filtering, and preparing the acknowledgments, followed by analyzing and identifying the types and functions of derivational morphemes.

Instruments and Procedures

The instrument is a crucial tool for data collection. There are numerous methods for gathering data that can be employed to substantiate and illustrate the capabilities of a research project. In this research project, the researcher utilized the available documentation to collect the required data. The documentation in question was an acknowledgment of students who graduated in 2022. The total number of acknowledgments was nine. The researcher obtained the data from the English Department Library. This instrumentation is optimal for research approaches that necessitate descriptive, characteristic data, particularly for the identification and clarification of morphological usage in acknowledgments.

In the process of data collection, researchers take several steps to collect data, namely:

1. Researchers compile the acknowledgment through students' thesis.
2. The researchers filter the data that is irrelevant.
3. Researchers prepare the data that has been filtered.
4. Researchers analyze, identify types, and find out the functions of derivational morphemes found in acknowledgment of the thesis.
5. The researchers summarize and conclude the research findings

Data Analysis Procedures

The procedure for analyzing the diagnostic data in this research project employs three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion-drawing. As outlined by Silverman (2008), the researcher initially reduces the data set and then presents the remaining information in a table. Then, at that, all in all, the writer sums up the aftereffect of this concentrate distinctly.

1. Compile and filter the acknowledgment through students' thesis.
2. Using Marks Aronoff's theory (He reduces the three lists to one single list, stating that it could only be words that are listed in the lexicon, not morpheme), the researcher has evaluated and categorized the data into categories of derivational morphemes.
3. Explored the types of derivational morphemes.
4. Compiled a list of derivational morphemes into a table.
5. Defined and explained the forms and meanings of derivational morphemes.

FINDINGS

This research presents an analysis of the use of derivational morphemes in students' thesis acknowledgments. This research presents a review of the types of derivation morphemes and their functions found in theses, based on an analysis of related literature. The analysis identifies the types and functions of derivational morphemes in thesis acknowledgments, thereby answering the research formulation, "What types of derivational morphemes are found in thesis acknowledgments?" Furthermore, what are the functions of the derivational morpheme in thesis acknowledgment?

Table. 1 The derivational morpheme analysis of the student's thesis acknowledgment

Thesis Acknowledgement	Noun Derivation	Verb Derivation	Adjective Derivation	Adverb Derivation
Acknowledgment 1	22	10	4	3
Acknowledgement 2	29	18	3	1
Acknowledgement 3	12	4	3	2
Acknowledgment 4	23	8	9	3
Acknowledgment 5	23	7	7	1
Acknowledgment 6	27	10	5	0
Acknowledgement 7	18	3	2	3
Acknowledgement 8	15	3	2	1
Acknowledgement 9	15	5	0	2

The study's findings led to the conclusion that the thesis acknowledgment comprises four types of derivation morphemes: noun, verb, adjective, and adverb derivation. This is attributable to the presence of all four types of derivation morphemes in seven of the nine samples examined. In contrast, the remaining two samples encompass only three types of derivation morphemes.

Firstly, acknowledgment **1** contains 39 derivational morphemes, there are 22 words of noun derivation, 4 words of adjective derivation, 10 words of verb derivation, and 3 words of adverb derivation. there are four types of derivational morpheme, namely noun derivation, adjective derivation, verb derivation, and adverb derivation. Noun derivation functions to form nouns from adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and nouns.

Secondly, Acknowledgement **2** contains 51 derivational morphemes, there are 29 words of noun derivation, 3 words of adjective derivation, 18 words of verb derivation, and 1 word of adverb derivation. As a result, there are four types of derivational morpheme, namely noun derivation, adjective derivation, verb derivation, and adverb derivation. Noun derivation functions to form nouns from adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and nouns

Thirdly, acknowledgment **3** contains 21 derivational morphemes, there are 12 words of noun derivation, 3 words of adjective derivation, 4 words of verb derivation, and 2 words of adverb derivation. Thus, there are four types of derivational morpheme, namely noun derivation, adjective derivation, verb derivation, and adverb derivation. Noun derivation functions to form nouns from adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and nouns

Fourthly, acknowledgment **4** contains 43 derivational morphemes, there are 23 words of noun derivation, 9 words of adjective derivation, 8 words of verb derivation, and 3 words of adverb derivation. there are four types of derivational morpheme, namely noun derivation, adjective derivation, verb derivation, and adverb derivation. Noun derivation functions to form nouns from adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and nouns

Fifthly, acknowledgment **5** contains 38 derivational morphemes, there are 23 words of noun derivation, 7 words of adjective derivation, 7 words of verb derivation, and 1 word of adverb derivation. It is claimed that there are four types of derivational morpheme, namely noun derivation, adjective derivation, verb derivation, and adverb derivation. Noun derivation functions to form nouns from adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and nouns.

Sixthly, acknowledgment **6** contains 42 derivational morphemes, there are 27 words of noun derivation, 5 words of adjective derivation, and 10 words of verb derivation. there are three types of derivational morpheme, namely noun derivation, adjective derivation, and verb derivation. It can be concluded that noun derivation functions to form nouns from adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and nouns.

Seventhly, acknowledgment **7** contains 26 derivational morphemes, there are 18 words of noun derivation, 3 words of verb derivation, 2 words of adjective derivation, and 3 words of adverb

derivation. there are three types of derivational morpheme, namely noun derivation, adjective derivation, and verb derivation. Noun derivation functions to form nouns from adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and nouns.

Eighthly, acknowledgment 8 contains 21 derivational morphemes, there are 15 words of noun derivation, 3 words of verb derivation, 2 words of adjective derivation, and 1 word of adverb derivation. Thus, there are four types of derivational morpheme, namely noun derivation, adjective derivation, verb derivation, and adverb derivation. Noun derivation functions to form nouns from adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and nouns.

Finally, acknowledgment 9 contains 22 derivational morphemes, there are 15 words of noun derivation, 5 words of verb derivation, and 2 words of adverb derivation. Thus, there are three types of derivational morpheme, namely noun derivation, verb derivation, and adverb derivation. Noun derivation functions to form nouns from adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and nouns

Furthermore, these four types of morphemes also have different functions according to their types. Noun derivation turns a root or base word into a noun derivation morpheme through the addition of a prefix or suffix. Adjective derivation turns a root or base word into an adjective derivation morpheme through the addition of a prefix or suffix. Verb derivation turns a root or base word into a verb derivation morpheme through the addition of a prefix or suffix. Adverb derivation turns a root or base word into an adverb derivation morpheme through the addition of a prefix or suffix.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this research demonstrate the process of word formation in the context of acknowledgment. It is essential to investigate word formation for effective writing. In line with this, previous research has highlighted the value of the earlier study, which employed different objects and other hypotheses, including morphological aspects of post-newspaper, descriptive text, novel, and short story (Tariq et al., 2020; Thahirah, 2017; A.Y.A. Kay & N.L.P.S. Adnyani, 2021). The current study, meanwhile, provides a comprehensive examination of the types of derivational morphemes found in the acknowledgment sections of nine sample theses, selected from a total of 26 acknowledgment sections analyzed.

Through analysis, the study detects and categorizes derivational morphemes found in acknowledgment written by student English study program. The morphemes are divided into four categories: noun derivations, verb derivations, adjective derivations, and adverb derivations, each with a specific grammatical and semantic function. This result is pointed out by the previous studies; this categorization not only allows for a detailed examination of the morphological structures employed but also provides a framework for understanding how these structures contribute to the overall communicative goals of the acknowledgment section (Adekannbi, 2023; Bao & Liu, 2024; Eripuddin et al., 2022, 2024; Ferreira et al., 2023). On the other hand, the prevalence of certain types of derivations might indicate particular strategies used by students to convey formality, express gratitude, or establish their academic identity.

Notably, the findings indicate that noun derivations are the most common type of derivational morpheme used in thesis acknowledgments. This majority demonstrates that writers mostly use nominalized forms to express gratitude, which may lend formality and permanence to their expressions of gratitude. For instance, words like "gratitude," "appreciation," and "contribution" are frequently employed, transforming verbs or adjectives into nouns that carry more weight and substance. This aligns with research by (Jusslin & Widlund, 2024; Mason et al., 2024; Thompson & Tribble, 2001), who found a high frequency of nominalization in academic writing, particularly in expressing abstract concepts and relationships.

Adverb derivations, on the other hand, are the least used category, reflecting a lower emphasis on modifying the manner or degree of acknowledgment in these portions. This contrasts with findings from conversational English studies, such as those by (Paul-Hus & Desrochers, 2019), where adverbs are more prevalent. The limited use of adverb derivations in thesis acknowledgments suggests a preference for direct and unembellished expressions of gratitude in formal academic contexts.

By quantifying and comparing the occurrences of each morpheme type, this study sheds light on the language patterns and preferences displayed by authors in the formal setting of thesis acknowledgments. The dominance of noun derivations and the scarcity of adverb derivations reveal a distinct linguistic profile that differs from other genres of writing. For example, Hyland and Tse's (2004) analysis of research article acknowledgments found a more balanced distribution of word classes, indicating that thesis acknowledgments may have unique morphological characteristics.

These findings not only help to further our understanding of academic writing traditions but also have ramifications for the larger subject of morphological analysis and its applications in a variety of fields. The preference for noun derivations in thesis acknowledgments may reflect broader trends in academic discourse, where nominalization is often used to package complex ideas into more manageable linguistic units. This aligns with (Mason et al., 2024) observations on the role of grammatical metaphor in scientific writing, where processes and qualities are frequently recast as things or objects.

Moreover, the patterns observed in this study could have implications for teaching academic writing, particularly to non-native English speakers. As noted, understanding the specific linguistic features of different academic genres is crucial for developing effective writing instruction (Flowerdew, 2016; Kuhl & Rezaei, 2014). The clear preference for certain types of derivational morphemes in thesis acknowledgments could inform targeted teaching strategies, helping students craft more idiomatic and genre-appropriate expressions of gratitude in their academic work.

In addition, this research not only provides a detailed morphological profile of thesis acknowledgments but also situates these findings within the broader context of academic discourse analysis. Revealing the unique linguistic choices made in this often-overlooked section of academic writing opens up new avenues for research into the interplay between language, genre, and academic conventions.

CONCLUSION

It thus follows that this research underscores the significance of examining derivational morphemes in academic theses' acknowledgment sections. The study, which analyses nine acknowledgments, reveals the various derivational morphemes that authors use to express their gratitude and appreciation. The findings indicate that noun derivations are the most prevalent, suggesting a proclivity for nominalized forms that convey formality and permanence. Conversely, adverb derivations are the least common, indicating that modifying the style or level of recognition is not a significant concern.

Ultimately, this study highlights the complex interrelationship between language, morphology, and the expression of gratitude in academic contexts. This study paves the way for further investigation into the rationale and communicative nuances behind these linguistic choices, by shedding light on the intricacies of derivational morpheme usage. This may provide insight into the deeper social, cultural, or even political implications embedded within the morphological structures employed in academic writing. A brief conclusion section should encapsulate the study's primary conclusions. It is not necessary to rewrite previous portions.

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