

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the things which have to do with the topic of discussion, namely the use of English homonymous suffixes. It includes the background of the study, the reason of choosing the topic, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the scope of the problem, the significance of the study, and the meaning of key terms.

1.1 The Background of the Study

Language, as a means of communication, involves the production of words. To know how words are produced, it is necessary to study morphology. It is in line with Nida's opinion, saying that morphology is the study of morphemes and their arrangements in forming words (1949: 1). Accordingly, it can be said that morphology includes the constructions of words and parts of words.

Further, the process of forming words out of the existing ones is called word formation. This process may involve morphemes (free or bound morphemes) and various word classes such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. In word formation, suffixes play an important role. They are always attached to the final position of words. Gleason (1961: 59) states that suffixes are affixes which follow the roots with which they are most closely associated. This statement shows that suffixes are affixes that always come after the roots in word constructions. Further, there are two types of suffixes in English — derivational

and inflectional suffixes. Derivational suffixes usually change the part of speech to which they are added, but not always. For instance, the noun *act* becomes an adjective *active* by the addition of suffix *-ive*. Meanwhile, inflectional suffixes are not used to produce new words, but rather to indicate aspects of the grammatical function of a word. For example, *big* and *bigger* are both adjectives. The suffix *-er* in *bigger* is functioned to show 'comparative'.

Sometimes, suffixes appear in the same writing and pronunciation, but they are totally different in meanings. Such a kind of phenomenon is usually called homonymous. The word homonymous is the adjective form of homonym. Parera (1990: 59) says that homonym is two utterances which appear in the same writing and pronunciation. In other words, homonymous forms appear in the same writing and pronunciation, but they still can be differentiated through their meanings.

The following examples clarify the discussion above:

- (1) Wanda, a sales *analyzer*, runs a series of "what if" scenarios to determine how pricing changes will impact sales (Oracle of March/April, 2003: 40).

There is one word which contains suffix *-er* in the sentence above, namely *analyzer*. The word *analyzer* is constructed by the addition of morpheme *-er* to the operand *analyze*, which belongs to verb. Meanwhile, the derivand *analyzer* is classified as a noun. Therefore, the morpheme *-er* in *analyzer* is a derivational morpheme because the addition of morpheme *-er* to the word *analyze* causes a word class change from verb into noun. Together with the noun phrase *a sales*, the

word *analyzer* in the sentence above modifies the subject of sentence, namely *Wanda*. Consequently, the morpheme *-er* in the word *analyzer* means ‘*performer*’ or ‘*the doer of the action*’.

- (2) They want to enter information once, share the data everywhere, and have *fewer* people touching the data, which means that the employees can then do more value-added activities (Oracle of March/April, 2003: 26).

In the sentence above, there is one word which contains suffix *-er*, namely *fewer*. The word *fewer* is formed by the addition of morpheme *-er* to the operand *few*, which belongs to adjective. Meanwhile, the derivand *fewer* is also classified as an adjective. The addition of morpheme *-er* to the word *few* does not cause a word class change. Both *few* and *fewer* are of the same class, namely adjective. Consequently, the morpheme *-er* in *analyzer* is said to be inflectional. The morpheme *-er* in *fewer* means ‘*comparative*’. In the sentence above, the word *fewer* modifies the object of the sentence, namely *people*.

The morphemes *-er* which appear in those two sentences above have the same writing and pronunciation, but they are totally different in meanings. The morpheme *-er* in the sentence (1) means ‘*performer*’ or ‘*the doer of the action*’, while in the sentence (2) the morpheme *-er* means ‘*comparative*’. Accordingly, the morphemes *-er* in the sentence (1) and (2) are said to be homonymous.

Concerning the two examples above it can be said that homonymous suffixes can be differentiated through their meanings although they are of the same writing and pronunciation.

1.2 The Reason of Choosing the Topic

The study on the use of English homonymous suffixes found in *Oracle* magazine is chosen as the topic of this study because English homonymous suffixes are interesting phenomena in linguistics. In fact, they have the same writing and pronunciation, but they are totally different in meanings. Further, they contain some other problems to investigate, such as their kinds, the types of suffixes they belong to, and the features that characterize those homonymous suffixes. These problems make the researcher feels challenged to do a research on the problems in order to get some alternative solutions on the problems.

Moreover, the problems which are found in the use of English homonymous suffixes are often faced by English learners. Consequently, this research is still regarded as a relevant study both for the researcher and the learners.

In addition, it is so far never discussed as a thesis material by the students of Widya Mandala University. That is why, the researcher is quite interested in doing a research on the topic intended.

1.3 The Statement of the Problem

In line with the topic of the study, namely the use of English homonymous suffixes, the researcher finds three problems to discuss. They are as follows:

1. What kinds of homonymous suffixes are found in *Oracle* magazine?
2. What are the types of those homonymous suffixes?

3. What are the meanings and features which characterize those homonymous suffixes?

1.4 The Objective of the Study

In line with the problems as stated above, the researcher determines three aims of this study, namely:

1. To show the kinds of homonymous suffixes which are found in *Oracle Magazine*.
2. To reveal the types of those homonymous suffixes.
3. To convey the meanings and features which characterize those homonymous suffixes.

1.5 The Scope of the Problem

Due to their independence, morphemes in English can be classified into two types — free morpheme and bound morpheme. Free morphemes are morphemes that can stand by themselves. While bound morphemes are morphemes that cannot stand by themselves; they must be attached to some other morphemes as their bases. Further, bound morphemes may be differentiated into two kinds — derivational morpheme and inflectional morpheme. Derivational morphemes may be either prefixes or suffixes, but inflectional morphemes are always suffixes. In this research, the researcher discusses only suffixes viewed from the point of homonymous aspect. The suffixes intended are of the same writing and pronunciation, but are of different meanings. There are five

homonymous suffixes to discuss in this research. They are suffixes *-ed*, *-en*, *-er*, *-ing*, and *-ly*.

1.6 The Significance of the Study

Generally, the researcher hopes that this study may give valuable information about the use of English homonymous suffixes to the readers, especially for the students of the English Department, University of Widya Mandala Madiun. Theoretically, it is hoped that the result of this study can help the readers to increase their knowledge on the use of English homonymous suffixes. Practically, it may contribute other researchers something valuable to be used as a reference for further research on the same topic.

1.7 The Meaning of Key Terms

Due to the topic of the study, there are some key terms that need to be explained. They are as following:

- a. Morphology is the study of morphemes and their arrangements in forming words (Nida, 1949: 1).
- b. Morphemes are the minimal meaningful units which may constitute words or parts of words (Nida, 1949: 1).
- c. Free morpheme is a morpheme that can be uttered alone with meaningfully (Effendy, 1988: 7).

- d. Bound morpheme is a morpheme that cannot be uttered alone with meaning. It is always annexed to one or more morphemes to form a word (Effendy, 1988: 7).
- e. Derivational morphemes are morphemes which usually change the part of speech of the word to which they are added (Effendy, 1988: 10).
- f. Inflectional morphemes are morphemes which do not usually change the form class of the stem to which they are attached (Effendy, 1988: 12).