

# ***A STUDY ON STUDENTS' MORPHOLOGICAL AWARENESS ABILITY OF THE FOURTH SEMESTER STUDENTS OF ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM UNIVERSITAS RIAU***

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***Abstract:*** This research was aimed to find out the ability of the fourth semester students' morphological awareness in English Study Program, Universitas Riau. The population of this research was the fourth semester students. The number of sample was 23 students selected randomly from 3 classes (A Class, B Class, and C Class) by using cluster random sampling technique. The instrument used to collect the data was a written test in the form of multiple choices with 55 questions based on the indicators of morphological awareness stated by Ken Apel (2014). The test instrument consist of four parts which cover the components of morphological awareness namely spoken form of morphemes (allomorph), meaning and grammatical changes, manner of affixes (orthography), and relation between base words and its derived and inflected forms. The data were analyzed by using a formula made by Wayan and Sumartana (1986) and then classified into five levels of ability: very poor, poor, mediocre, good and excellent by using classification made by Harris (1969). Based on the findings of this research, it was found that the students' morphological awareness ability of the fourth semester students was in a good level with the mean score 63. The implication of this research is that the fourth semester students are in a good level of morphological awareness ability.

***Key Words:*** Students' Morphological Awareness, Students' ability.

**PENELITIAN TENTANG KESADARAN MORFOLOGI  
MAHASISWA SEMESTER EMPAT PROGRAM STUDI  
PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS  
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**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui tingkat kesadaran morfologi mahasiswa semester empat Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Riau. Populasi penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa semester empat. Jumlah sampel pada penelitian ini sebanyak 23 siswa yang diambil secara acak dari kelas A, B dan C dengan menggunakan teknik cluster random sampling. Instrumen yang digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data adalah soal tes pilihan ganda yang terdiri dari 55 pertanyaan yang disusun berdasarkan indikator kesadaran morfologi (morphological awareness) yang telah disusun oleh Ken Apel (2014). Instrumen test terdiri dari 4 bagian yang mencakup komponen kesadaran morfologi (morphological awareness), yaitu allomorph, perubahan makna dan tata bahasa, aturan penulisan affixes, hubungan antara kata dasar dan imbuhan. Data yang diperoleh dianalisis dengan menggunakan rumus yang disusun oleh Wayan dan Sumartana (1986) lalu diklasifikasikan ke dalam lima tingkat penguasaan, seperti sangat rendah, rendah, menengah, baik dan sangat baik. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa tingkat kesadaran morfologi mahasiswa semester empat berada pada tingkat yang baik dengan skor rata-rata adalah 63. Implikasi dari penelitian ini adalah bahwa mahasiswa semester empat memiliki kemampuan yang baik dalam kesadaran morfologi (morphological awareness).

**Kata Kunci:** Kesadaran Morfologi Siswa, Kemampuan Siswa.

## INTRODUCTION

English is an international language which is used and studied in many countries. English is used widely in many aspects of life, such as in trade, technology, education, communication across nation, etc. There are several basic language skills in English that should be mastered, they are listening, reading, speaking, and writing. In order to be able to master these skills, there is a need to know and develop the aspects of language.

There are three aspects that set up a language which consist of Phonology, Syntax, and Semantics (Aitchison, 1990). Morphology is an element of Syntax. Syntax is a study of sentence structure. Sentence is build up by words. The words itself have a system and one of the system that make up a word is morpheme. Specifically, the words are studied in morphology.

Morphological awareness contributes to the literacy development skills which are reading, writing, and spelling. After learning about morphology, students are expected to have a better morphological awareness level which affected those skills because when dealing with reading, writing, and spelling, students will face different types of text. Those texts are built up by words. The words itself have a system, and one of the system that make up the words is morpheme. In order to be able to recognize the words, students should have a sense to determine the meaning of the word according to the base word, or generally called as morphological awareness.

This situation happened to the writer as a student teacher. Before learning morphology, the writer should memorize many words and consulting dictionary multiple times. But after learning morphology, it is easier to recognize new words just by looking at the root.

In English Education Department of Universitas Riau, students learnt morphology course as one of the main courses at the fourth semester. Before studying morphology, students learnt Introduction to Linguistic at the third semester as the supplement for their background knowledge about linguistics, including morphology in general. The aim of studying morphology is to look for or analyzed how words are formed and modified. There are four components of morphological awareness suggested by Ken Apel (2014), which are allomorph, meaning and grammatical changes, manner of affixes (orthography), and relation between base words and their inflected or derived forms. This components include not only morphology, but also phonology, and grammar.

Based on the writer observation in the real condition, it was found that generally students' morphological awareness ability are in a good level. But some of them also have upper level and lower level of awareness. In addition, students in English Study Program of Universitas Riau learnt morphology and phonology at the fourth semester. It means that students should have better morphological awareness level because as mentioned before, morphology and phonology contribute to morphological awareness development. Based on this condition, the writer are interested to conduct a research to prove this condition. The aim of the research is to find out the ability of the fourth semester students' morphological awareness in English Study Program Universitas Riau. This research answered the question about what is the ability of the fourth semester students' morphological awareness in English Study Program Universitas Riau?

## METHODOLOGY

This is descriptive research design which described the morphological awareness of English Study Program in Universitas Riau. Descriptive methods is useful for educational issues (Gay and Airasian, 2000). In addition, according to Gay, Mills, and Peter (2009), descriptive research is the collection and analysis numerical data to describe, explain, predict or control phenomena of interest. The objective of this research is to find out the ability of the fourth semester students' morphological awareness in English Study Program in Universitas Riau.

This research was conducted at English Study Program of Universitas Riau which is located on Bina Widya, Panam, Pekanbaru, Riau Province. The data were collected from May 20<sup>th</sup> 2019 until May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2019.

The population of this research are the fourth semester students of English Study Program, Universitas Riau which consist of three classes, A Class, B Class, and C class. Each of them consist of 34 students. So, the number of population are 102 students. As the population is quite large, it needs a process of sampling to make a limitation. Gay (2000) stated that sampling is a process of selecting individuals which represent the population from where they are selected. In conducting this research, the writer used random sampling technique. According to Cohen (2007 in Thahirah 2015), the selection of groups or clusters of subjects rather than individuals is known as cluster random sampling. Cluster random sampling is a technique to select the sample which the overall population is split in groups and random sample of these groups are selected. Cluster random sampling randomly select the group, not individual. All the members of the groups have similar characteristics (Gay and Airasian, 2000).

Based on the explanation above, the writer used cluster random sampling technique to select the sample of this research because the forth semester students of English Study Program in University of Riau come from the same level of education.

To get the data, test instrument was used in this research. The test instrument of this research is aimed to check students' morphological awareness based on the four indicators stated by Ken Apel (2014), which are allomorph, meaning and grammatical changes, manner of affixes (orthography), and relation between base words and their inflected or derived forms. Before conducting the real test to the sample, the researcher was giving a try out test to the other class to see the reliability and difficulty level of the test. There are four parts of questions which represent the four components above.

After conducting the real test, the data were analyzed using the formula made by Wayan and Sumartana (1986) and then classified it into five level of mastery as in the following table:

Table 1. Classification of Students' Score

No.	Score	Description
1.	81-100	Excellent
2.	61-80	Good
3.	41-60	Mediocre
4.	21-40	Poor
5.	0-20	Very Poor

(Adopted from Harris, 1969)

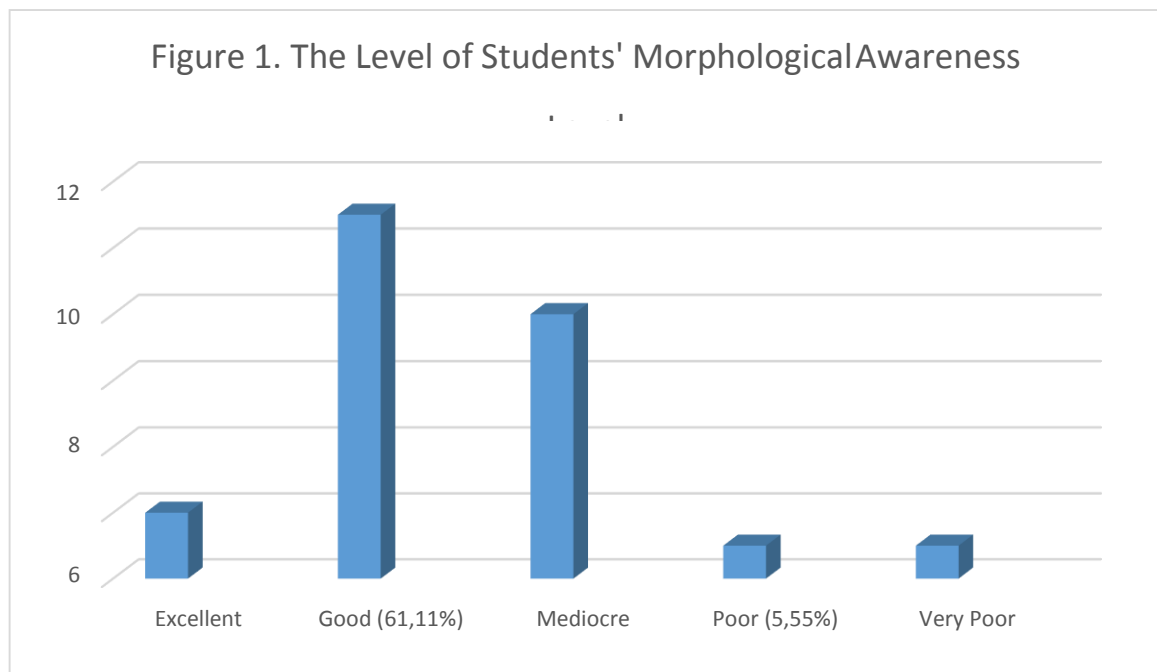
## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The objective of this research is to find out the ability of the fourth semester students' morphological awareness in English Study Program in Universitas Riau. The sample in this research is B class of the fourth semester students of English Study Program of Universitas Riau. The data of the real test was computed using a formula adapted from Harris and the result of the test can be shown as follows:

Table 2. The Level of Students' Morphological Awareness Level

no	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Ability	Mean Score
1	81-100	2	11.11111	Excellent	63
2	61- 80	11	61.11111	Good	
3	41-60	8	44.44444	Mediocre	
4	21-40	1	5.555556	Poor	
5	0-20	1	5.555556	Very poor	
	Total	23	127.7778		

The data on the table 2 can be presented in the following figure:



Based on the data from table 1 and figure 1, it was found that most students (61,11%) were in *good* level and the mean score is 63.

Furthermore, the writer also analyzed students' individual raw score on the test items. It was shown in the following figure:

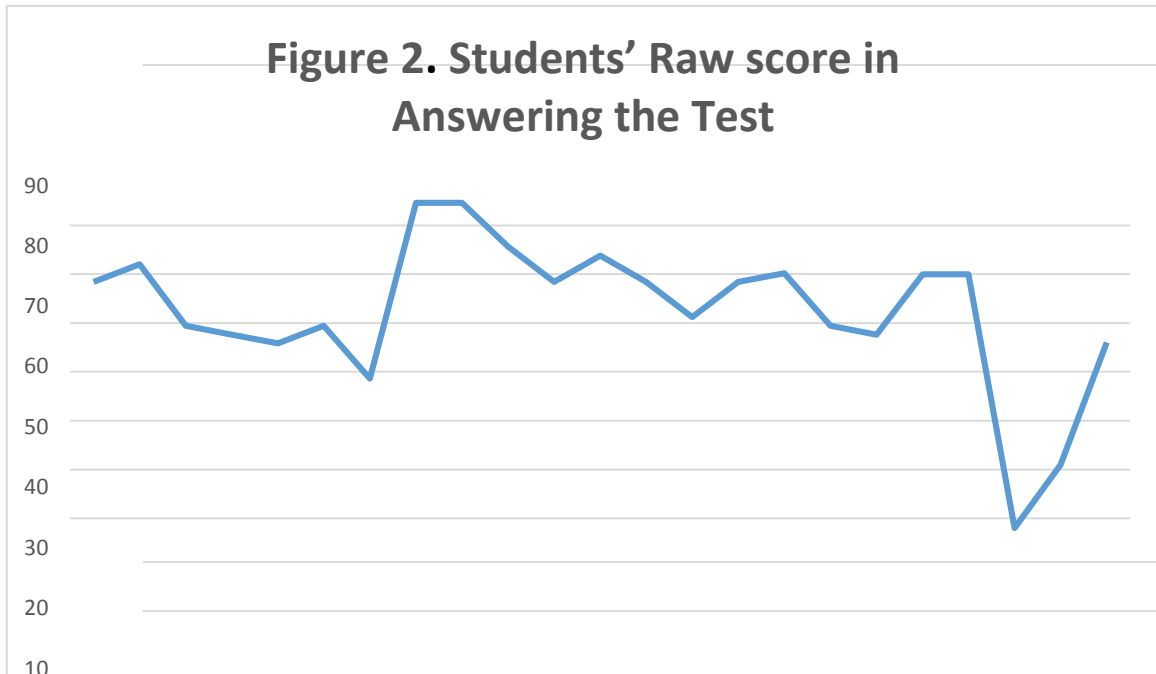


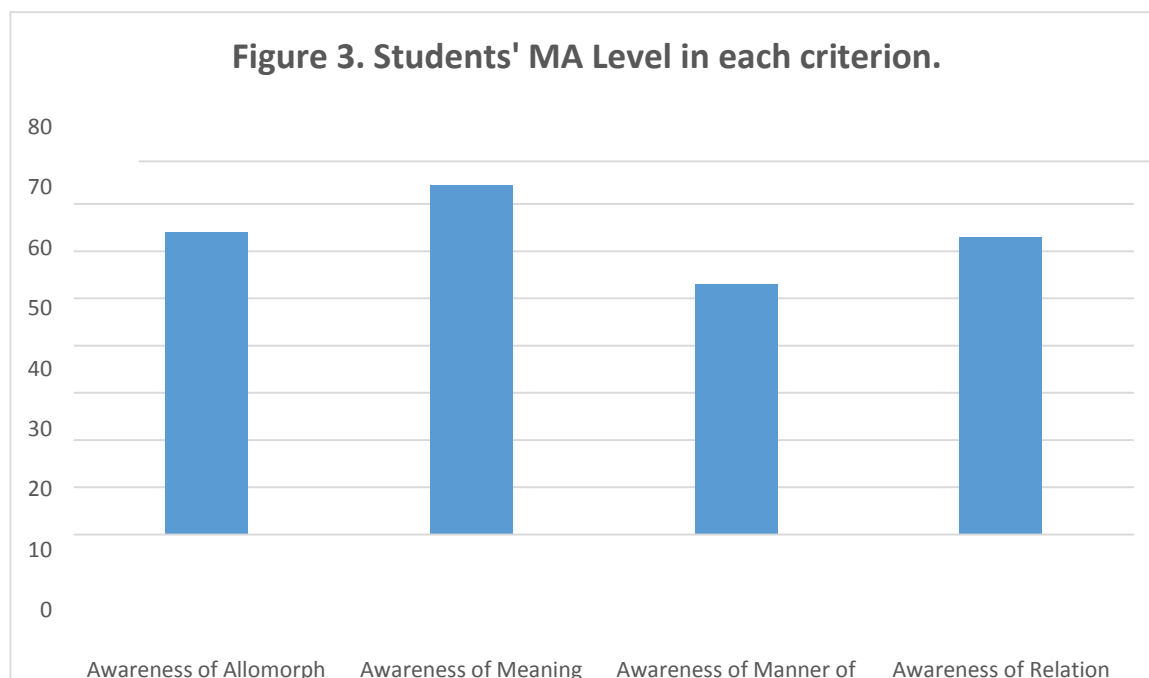
Figure 2 shows that students' morphological awareness raw score are mainly above 60 which means that their morphological awareness are in a *good* level.

In addition, the writer also computed students' morphological awareness in each criterion which presented in the table 2 above:

Table 2. Students' MA Level in each criterion.

No	The Classification of The Question	Mean Score	Level of Ability
1	Awareness of Allomorph	64	Good
2	Awareness of Meaning and Grammatical Changes	74	Good
3	Awareness of Manner of Affixes (Orthography)	53	Mediocre
4	Awareness of Relation between Base Words and Their Inflected or Derived Forms	63	Good
	Mean Score of The Whole Test	63	Good

The data in the table 3 can be shown in figure 3 above:



Based on table 3 and figure 3, it shows that students have a good level of awareness for allomorph with mean score 64. The mean score of meaning and grammatical changes is 74 which means that students' awareness is at a good level. The mean score of manner of affixes (orthography) is 53, it indicates that students' level of awareness for that aspect is at a mediocre level. The last aspect is relation between base words and their inflected or derived forms. The mean score of this aspect is 63 which imply that their awareness ability for this aspect is at a good level.

Among four aspects which has been tested to the sample, most of the students' have *good* level of morphological awareness *except* for manner of affixes (orthography) which is at a mediocre level.

## Discussion

The mean score of the fourth semester students of English Study Program test score is 63 and was analyzed by Heaton (1975) formula. Additionally, 2 students were categorized in excellent level. Then, there were 11 students categorized into good level. 8 students were categorized into mediocre level. 1 students were categorized into poor level and 1 student was categorized into very poor level. It means that they had good sense in reflecting or manipulating morphemes. Students may be satisfied with this result, but they still need to practice more in order to increase their morphological awareness.

In this research, the students' ability from each morphological awareness components can be described as follows: four components is in good level and one component is in mediocre level. From the result, it found that students have good level in almost all morphological awareness components except for one component which is

awareness of manner of affixes (orthography) with mean score 53. The rest of the components are in good level, such as awareness of allomorph with mean score 64, meaning and grammatical changes with mean score 74, and relation between base words and their inflected or derived forms with mean score 63.

The data shows that the most difficult aspect in morphological awareness is in awareness of manner of affixes (orthography). Students' mean score is 53. In this part, there are four answer choices and the students should choose the correct written form of the words (e.g. Indispensabel, Indispensible, Indispensable, Indespensible). In written form, when affixes attached to the base word, it might change the written form of the word orthographically. The consonant might be doubled or there might be omission in the consonant. Most of them made lot of mistakes when answering this part. This result might happened because of students less carefulness in identifying the correct written form of the words or it might be because they became confused when choosing the correct words from the given options because the answer choices are similar with the correct form of the words. Another possible reason is the students don't know or don't aware about the rules governing word changes. In addition, Kenn Apel stated that transparent relations between base words and their derived forms are easier to be answered than items that represent a shift phonologically and/or orthographically. Transparent relation doesn't require changes in phonological or orthographical form, so it's simpler and easier.

Awareness of relation between base words and their inflected or derived forms become the second most incorrect answer. Students' mean score in this component is 63. In this part, the students are obligated to identify the base word and if there is bound morpheme, the students need to classify it based on their category which are derivational or inflectional affixes. Based on students answer, determining bound morpheme is more complicated than determining free morpheme. Word frequency issues may be the cause of students difficulty in answering this part. Kenn Apel (2014) stated that word frequency issue can function on multiple levels. There are far fewer inflectional affixes than derivational affixes, and those inflectional affixes are more frequent in occurrence and shorter in letter length, which may lead to ease in performance on tasks.

Students mean score is 64 in awareness of allomorph. Allomorph is variation of morphology which can determine words pronunciation. In this part, students should determine the correct pronunciation of the words based on its pronunciation symbol. More than half of the students got it wrong when answering question number 10 in this part. The question is:

10. The first dated entry in the registration book was from June 2015

- a. [deitit]
- b. [deytid]
- c. [deitid]

Many students answer A instead of C. It might happened because they don't pay attention to the rules of allomorph.

The last component is awareness of meaning and grammatical changes. Students get the highest mean score in this component which is 74. In this part, the students should fill in the blank with correct grammar which suit the sentence. Students might familiar with this type of question which ease them when answering the questions in this part.



Morphological awareness is an important linguistic awareness skill that impacts the development of written language: reading and spelling. So, there is a need to develop students' morphological awareness.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **Conclusions**

After conducting a research entitled "A Study on the Fourth Semester Students' Morphological Awareness of English Study Program in Universitas Riau" and collecting the data, the conclusion of this research can be drawn as follows:

First, there were 23 students from class B participated in this research. From the whole sample, 2 (11,11%) students were in excellent level of morphological awareness, 11 (61,11%) students were in good level of morphological awareness, 8 (44,44%) students were in mediocre level of morphological awareness, one (5,55%) students were in poor and very poor level of morphological awareness. From the explanation above, students' morphological awareness level is in a good level because most students surpass more than 50% (61,11%).

Second, the mean score of the students' morphological awareness for each subtopic which are allomorph, meaning and grammatical changes, manner of affixes (orthography), relation between base words and their inflected or derived forms are 64, 74, 53, 63 respectively. Students' morphological awareness on allomorph, meaning and grammatical changes, and relation between base words and their inflected or derived forms were in good level, while students' morphological awareness on manner of affixes (orthography) was in mediocre level.

Third, students' morphological awareness level of meaning and grammatical changes have the biggest mean score (74) compared to the other aspects. It may happen because they are familiar with this topic because it carried grammatical meaning (changing form of the words e.g when verb, noun, adjective, and adverb should be used in a sentence). In addition, students' lowest score was manner of affixes (orthography). It might happen because students may familiar with a word, but they do not really pay attention to the written form of the words.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the results of the study and the conclusion, the writer would like to offer two recommendations related to the students' morphological awareness level, as follows:

First, students are recommended to do more practice in order to make them become more and more familiar with each subtopic which are allomorph, meaning and grammatical changes, manner of affixes (orthography), and relation between base words and their inflected or derived forms.

Second, further research can focus on studying each subtopics more specifically. It might not only studied about students' ability in one subtopic, but also help them how to increase their morphological awareness in that specific subtopic.

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