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An Analysis Of Free And Bound Morpheme In Mathhew Mc Conaughey Motivational Speech

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Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menilai kandungan morfem bebas dan morfem terikat dalam pidato Matthew McConaughey serta mengklasifikasikannya berdasarkan pergeseran kelas kata menjadi morfem bebas dan morfem terikat. Penelitian ini mengumpulkan data dengan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Pidato motivasi Matthew McConaughey memuat 30 morfem, baik morfem bebas maupun morfem terikat. Berdasarkan temuan penelitian ini, sufiks muncul pada 96,88% tuturan, sedangkan prefiks muncul pada 3,12%. Hal ini menunjukkan kecenderungan yang kuat terhadap penggunaan sufiks. Hasil akhir penelitian ini adalah pengelompokan dan klasifikasi kelas kata berdasarkan perubahan yang terjadi ketika morfem bebas digabungkan dengan morfem terikat berupa afiks.

Kata kunci: *Free , Bound , Morpheme, Suffixes. Prefox,*

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to assess the content of free and bound morphemes in Mathew Mc Conaughey's speech and classify them based on the shift of word class into free and bound morpheme.. This study collected data using a descriptive qualitative method. Mathew Mc Conaughey's motivational speech contains 30 morphemes, including both free and bound morphemes. According to the findings of this study, suffixes occur in 96.88% of utterances, while prefixes appear in 3.12%. This indicates a substantial propensity for suffixes. The end outcome of this study is the grouping and classification of word classes based on the modifications that occur when free morphemes are coupled with bound morphemes in the form of affixes.

Keywords: *Free , Bound , Morpheme, Suffixes. Prefox,*

1. INTRODUCTION

Language plays an essential role in daily communication because it allows people to convey information, ideas, and feelings to others. However, miscommunication often occurs when language does not match the context or when the sentence structure is imprecise. For this reason, an explanation from a linguistic perspective is needed, and one branch of linguistics that studies word structure is morphology.

Morphology is a branch of linguistics that studies how words are formed and structured, with the morpheme as its main focus (Crystal, 2011). Understanding morphology helps students see how the meaning of a word changes as morphemes are added or changed (Katamba, 1993). It also helps them expand their vocabulary through word families, such as *create*, *creation*, *creative*, and *creatively* (Aronoff & Fudeman, 2022). In addition, it strengthens grammar skills because morphological variation reflects grammatical relationships within a sentence (Bauer, 2003).

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In morphology, morphemes are divided into free and bound morphemes. Free morphemes are stand-alone units of meaning, such as “life,” “success,” and “dream.” Bound morphemes, such as prefixes, suffixes, and inflectional endings (e.g., “un-,” “-ed,” and “-ing”), cannot stand alone and must be combined with other morphemes (Aronoff & Fudeman, 2022). In Matthew McConaughey’s motivational speech “5 Minutes for the Next 50 Years,” free morphemes convey key concepts directly, while bound morphemes add depth to the language and reinforce the persuasive intent of the speech.

Several previous studies have examined free and bound morphemes in different objects. Prabawa et al. (2024) analyzed free and bound morphemes in Barack Obama’s speech at the 2020 Democratic National Convention and classified them based on word class changes. Dewi and Hermawan (2023) examined derivational and inflectional morphemes in the lyrics of Maher Zain’s song “Forgive Me,” while Astuti et al. (2021) identified free and bound morphemes in William Shakespeare’s poems. Building on these studies, the present study examines a different object, namely a motivational speech delivered by Matthew McConaughey.

Therefore, this study aims to identify the free and bound morphemes in Matthew McConaughey’s motivational speech “5 Minutes for the Next 50 Years” and to classify the bound morphemes into prefixes and suffixes in order to understand the word structure of the speech. It is also expected to give readers a deeper understanding of, and an additional reference on, morphology, especially free and bound morphemes.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the free and bound morphemes in Matthew McConaughey’s motivational speech “5 Minutes for the Next 50 Years,” delivered on November 12, 2023. The data were taken from the Life Advice YouTube channel, from a video titled “5 Minutes for the Next 50 Years - Matthew McConaughey Motivational Speech,” which is 5:18 minutes long and has 5,476,497 views. The speech was chosen using purposive sampling, a technique in which samples are selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives (Etikan et al., 2016). The data of this study are the free and bound morphemes found in the speech.

The data were collected by watching the video carefully and transcribing it into text. The analysis was then carried out in three steps. First, the free and bound morphemes in the transcript were identified. Second, the words were categorized into free morphemes, which can stand on their own, and bound morphemes, which must be attached to another morpheme. Third, the bound morphemes were classified as prefixes or suffixes and described in detail, including their function and the word class changes they cause.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section highlights the findings and discussion of the free and bound morphemes found in Matthew McConaughey’s motivational speech “5 Minutes for the Next 50 Years.” A total of 30 words were selected as data, and each word was broken down into its free morpheme (the base form that can stand alone) and its bound morpheme (the affix attached to it). To make the data easier to follow, the findings are presented in five tables of six words each, and every table is directly followed by the discussion of its words. The first table presents the first six words found in the speech.

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Table 1. *Data Findings of Words 1–6*

No	Words/Data	Free Morpheme	Bound Morpheme
1	Going	Go	-ing
2	Things	Thing	-s
3	Learned	Learn	-ed
4	Passing	Pass	-ing
5	Practicing	Practice	-ing
6	Entitlement	Entitle	-ment

Based on the data in Table 1, the researcher analyzed each morpheme as follows:

The word “going” consists of the free morpheme “go” and the bound morpheme “-ing.” “Go” is a verb that means to move or travel from one place to another, and it can stand alone as a single word. Meanwhile, “-ing” is a bound morpheme because it cannot stand alone as a meaningful word. It functions as an inflectional suffix that marks the progressive form, indicating that the action of “go” is taking place.

The word “things” consists of the free morpheme “thing” and the bound morpheme “-s.” “Thing” can stand alone as a single word and means an object. The suffix “-s” is an inflectional suffix that marks the plural form, changing the singular noun “thing” into “things,” which refers to more than one object.

The word “learned” consists of the free morpheme “learn” and the bound morpheme “-ed.” “Learn” can stand alone as a single word and means to acquire knowledge or skills through experience or education. The suffix “-ed” is an inflectional suffix that forms the past tense of the verb, indicating that the action of learning has occurred in the past.

The word “passing” consists of the free morpheme “pass” and the bound morpheme “-ing.” “Pass” can stand alone as a single word and means to move past or to give something to someone. The suffix “-ing” forms a present participle or a gerund. In this case, it indicates that the action of “pass” is ongoing, but it can also function as a noun (gerund), as in “the passing of time.”

The word “practicing” consists of the free morpheme “practice” and the bound morpheme “-ing.” “Practice” can stand alone as a meaningful word and refers to doing something repeatedly to improve a skill. Meanwhile, “-ing” is a bound morpheme because it cannot stand alone and must be attached to a base word. The suffix “-ing” forms a present participle or a gerund, which shows an ongoing action or state.

The word “entitlement” consists of the free morpheme “entitle” and the bound morpheme “-ment.” “Entitle” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to give someone the right or permission to do something. Meanwhile, “-ment” is a derivational suffix that forms a noun (nominalization). It turns the verb “entitle” into the noun “entitlement,” which means a right or authority that has been granted.

The first six words show how bound morphemes attach to verbs and nouns through both inflection and derivation: the suffixes -ing, -s, and -ed mainly mark grammatical meaning, while -ment forms a new noun. Building on this, the second table presents the next six words, which involve a wider range of suffixes, such as -selves, -y, -ly, and -ize, that form reflexive pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs.

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Table 2. *Data Findings of Words 7–12*

No	Words/Data	Free Morpheme	Bound Morpheme
7	Feeling	Feel	-ing
8	Ourselves	Our	-selves
9	Healthy	Health	-y
10	Spiritually	Spiritual	-ly
11	Prioritize	Priority	-ize
12	Antagonizes	Antagonist	-ize and -s

Based on the data in Table 2, the researcher analyzed each morpheme as follows:

The word “feeling” consists of the free morpheme “feel” and the bound morpheme “-ing.” “Feel” can stand alone as a single word and means to sense or experience a sensation. The suffix “-ing” forms a present participle or a gerund. In this case, it indicates that the action of “feel” is taking place, but it can also function as a noun that refers to emotions (gerund).

The word “ourselves” consists of the free morpheme “our” and the bound morpheme “-selves.” “Our” is a possessive form that can stand alone and refers to a group of people that includes the speaker. Meanwhile, “-selves” cannot stand alone and must be attached to a pronoun such as “our” to form a reflexive pronoun, which shows that the subject performs the action on itself.

The word “healthy” consists of the free morpheme “health” and the bound morpheme “-y.” “Health” can stand alone as a single word and means a good physical or mental state. The suffix “-y” is a derivational suffix that forms an adjective and shows the quality of the base word, so “healthy” means having good health.

The word “spiritually” consists of the free morpheme “spiritual” and the bound morpheme “-ly.” “Spiritual” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means related to the spirit, the soul, or things that are not physically visible. The suffix “-ly” is a derivational suffix that turns an adjective into an adverb, so “spiritually” means in a way that relates to the spirit or soul.

The word “prioritize” consists of the free morpheme “priority” and the bound morpheme “-ize.” “Priority” is a noun that can stand alone and means something that is regarded as more important than other things. The suffix “-ize” is a derivational suffix that forms verbs from nouns or adjectives, so “prioritize” means to give something priority or to treat it as more important.

The word “antagonizes” consists of the free morpheme “antagonist” and two bound morphemes, “-ize” and “-s.” “Antagonist” can stand alone as a meaningful word and refers to an enemy or opponent. The suffix “-ize” is a derivational suffix that forms a verb meaning to cause or bring about a state, so “antagonize” means to cause hostility or opposition. The suffix “-s” is an inflectional suffix that marks the third-person singular present tense, indicating that the action is performed by a third-person singular subject.

The second group of words shows that bound morphemes can change the word class of a free morpheme, for example from noun to adjective, from adjective to adverb, and from noun to verb. The third table continues this pattern with the next six words, in which the suffixes -s, -ion, and -ing are attached to verbs and nouns.

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Table 3. *Data Findings of Words 13–18*

No	Words/Data	Free Morpheme	Bound Morpheme
13	Leads	Lead	-s
14	Elimination	Eliminate	-ion
15	Defining	Define	-ing
16	Knowing	Know	-ing
17	Friends	Friend	-s
18	Keeps	Keep	-s

Based on the data in Table 3, the researcher analyzed each morpheme as follows:

The word “leads” consists of the free morpheme “lead” and the bound morpheme “-s.” “Lead” can stand alone as a single word and means to guide or be in charge of something. The suffix “-s” is an inflectional suffix that marks the third-person singular present tense, as in “he leads,” indicating that the action is performed by a third-person singular subject.

The word “elimination” consists of the free morpheme “eliminate” and the bound morpheme “-ion.” “Eliminate” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to remove or get rid of something. The suffix “-ion” is a derivational suffix that forms a noun showing the process or result of an action, so “elimination” means the process of removing something or the result of its removal.

The word “defining” consists of the free morpheme “define” and the bound morpheme “-ing.” “Define” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to explain the meaning of something or to state its limits. The suffix “-ing” forms a present participle or a gerund. In this case, it indicates that the action of “define” is taking place or describes the process of defining.

The word “knowing” consists of the free morpheme “know” and the bound morpheme “-ing.” “Know” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to have knowledge or understanding of something. The suffix “-ing” forms a present participle or a gerund. In this case, it indicates that the action of “know” is taking place or describes the process of knowing.

The word “friends” consists of the free morpheme “friend” and the bound morpheme “-s.” “Friend” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means a person with whom one has a bond of affection. The suffix “-s” is an inflectional suffix that marks the plural form, showing that “friends” refers to more than one friend.

The word “keeps” consists of the free morpheme “keep” and the bound morpheme “-s.” “Keep” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to maintain or hold on to something. The suffix “-s” is an inflectional suffix that marks the third-person singular present tense, indicating that the action of “keep” is performed by a third-person singular subject.

The third group confirms that the suffixes -s and -ing function mostly as inflectional morphemes, while -ion functions as a derivational morpheme that forms a noun. Moving on, the fourth table presents the following six words, which continue to show the same tendency toward suffixation in the speech.

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Table 4. *Data Findings of Words 19–24*

No	Words/Data	Free Morpheme	Bound Morpheme
19	Giving	Give	-ing
20	Interaction	Interact	-ion
21	Eating	Eat	-ing
22	Tastes	Taste	-s
23	Makes	Make	-s
24	Putting	Put	-ing

Based on the data in Table 4, the researcher analyzed each morpheme as follows:

The word “giving” consists of the free morpheme “give” and the bound morpheme “-ing.” “Give” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to hand something over to another person. The suffix “-ing” forms a present participle or a gerund. In this case, it indicates that the action of “give” is ongoing or describes the process of giving.

The word “interaction” consists of the free morpheme “interact” and the bound morpheme “-ion.” “Interact” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to connect or communicate with each other. The suffix “-ion” is a derivational suffix that forms a noun showing the process or result of an action, so “interaction” means the process or act of interacting.

The word “eating” consists of the free morpheme “eat” and the bound morpheme “-ing.” “Eat” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to take food into the body. The suffix “-ing” forms a present participle or a gerund. In this case, it indicates that the action of “eat” is ongoing or describes the process of eating. As a gerund, “eating” can also function as a noun.

The word “tastes” consists of the free morpheme “taste” and the bound morpheme “-s.” “Taste” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to perceive a flavor. The suffix “-s” is an inflectional suffix that marks the third-person singular present tense of a verb (or the plural form of a noun). In this case, it indicates that the action of “taste” is performed by a third-person singular subject.

The word “makes” consists of the free morpheme “make” and the bound morpheme “-s.” “Make” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to create or produce something. The suffix “-s” is an inflectional suffix that marks the third-person singular present tense, indicating that the action of “make” is performed by a third-person singular subject.

The word “putting” consists of the free morpheme “put” and the bound morpheme “-ing.” “Put” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to place something in a particular position. The suffix “-ing” forms a present participle or a gerund. In this case, it indicates that the action of “put” is ongoing or describes the process of putting. As a gerund, “putting” can also function as a noun.

The fourth group again shows the frequent use of -ing and -s, along with the derivational suffix -ion. The fifth and last table of word data presents the final six words, which include the only prefix found in the speech, in-.

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Table 5. *Data Findings of Words 25–30*

No	Words/Data	Free Morpheme	Bound Morpheme
25	Places	Place	-s
26	Inadvertently	Advertent	In- -ly
27	Spending	Spend	-ing
28	Eliminated	Eliminate	-ed
29	Options	Option	-s
30	Wasted	Waste	-ed

Based on the data in Table 5, the researcher analyzed each morpheme as follows:

The word “places” consists of the free morpheme “place” and the bound morpheme “-s.” “Place” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means a location or position. The suffix “-s” is an inflectional suffix that marks the plural form, showing that “places” refers to more than one location.

The word “inadvertently” consists of the free morpheme “advertent,” the prefix “in-,” and the suffix “-ly.” “Advertent” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means paying attention or being aware. The prefix “in-” is a derivational bound morpheme that expresses negation, so “inadvertent” means not paying attention or unintentional. Meanwhile, “-ly” is a derivational suffix that turns an adjective into an adverb, so “inadvertently” means unintentionally.

The word “spending” consists of the free morpheme “spend” and the bound morpheme “-ing.” “Spend” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to use time or money on something. The suffix “-ing” forms a present participle or a gerund. In this case, it indicates that the action of “spend” is ongoing or describes the process of spending. As a gerund, “spending” can also function as a noun.

The word “eliminated” consists of the free morpheme “eliminate” and the bound morpheme “-ed.” “Eliminate” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to remove or get rid of something. The suffix “-ed” is an inflectional suffix that forms the past tense or past participle of a verb, indicating that the action of “eliminate” has happened in the past or has been completed.

The word “options” consists of the free morpheme “option” and the bound morpheme “-s.” “Option” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means a choice or alternative. The suffix “-s” is an inflectional suffix that marks the plural form, showing that “options” refers to more than one choice.

The word “wasted” consists of the free morpheme “waste” and the bound morpheme “-ed.” “Waste” can stand alone as a meaningful word and means to use something inefficiently or to throw it away. The suffix “-ed” is an inflectional suffix that forms the past tense or past participle of a verb, indicating that the action of “waste” has happened in the past or has been completed. As a past participle, “wasted” can also describe a state caused by waste.

After all 30 words were analyzed, the bound morphemes were counted and grouped into prefixes and suffixes to see which type of affix is used most often in the speech. The result of this calculation is presented in the following table.

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Table 6. *Prefixes and Suffixes in Matthew McConaughey's Motivational Speech*

Bound Morpheme	Number	Percentage %
Prefix	1	3,12
Suffixes	31	96,88
Total	32	100,0

As a result, the analysis of the 30 selected words found 32 affixes in total, consisting of 31 suffixes (96.88%) and 1 prefix (3.12%). One word, "inadvertently," combines a prefix and a suffix, and another, "antagonizes," carries two suffixes. Overall, suffixes were used far more often than prefixes in the speech. The analysis also shows that inflectional affixes do not change the core form of a word, whereas derivational affixes do.

According to Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2014), linguistics is the scientific study of language that encompasses a variety of disciplines involved in human language research. In this context, linguistics is a discipline that studies language from a variety of perspectives, including morphology, phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Yule (2017), in his book The Study of Language, divides language into six major groups that are interconnected in terms of structural analysis. Meanwhile, morphology is a discipline of linguistics that investigates the smallest meaningful element in word production, known as the morpheme. According to Aronoff and Fudeman (2011), morphemes are the smallest units of meaning that play a role in word creation and grammatical structure. According to Spencer (2013), morphemes are parts of words that have grammatical functions and can form words themselves.

This study examined the morphemes found in Matthew McConaughey's motivational speech "5 Minutes for the Next 50 Years." According to Spencer and Zwicky (2001), morphemes are classified into two types: free morphemes, which can stand alone as words, and bound morphemes, which can only function when attached to other morphemes. The 30 words found in the speech were analyzed and explained using these two types, and the bound morphemes were further grouped by their function as affixes, namely prefixes and suffixes. The end result is a grouping and classification of word classes based on the changes that occur when free morphemes are combined with bound morphemes in the form of affixes.

4. CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the use of free and bound morphemes in Matthew McConaughey's motivational speech "5 Minutes for the Next 50 Years," with the focus on the classification of bound morphemes into the categories of prefixes and suffixes. There are 30 morphemic data in the speech, consisting of suffixes (96.88%) and prefixes (3.12%). Based on the data analysis, suffixes were found to be the most commonly used and dominating type of bound morpheme in the speech. Thus, this study provides a deeper understanding of how free and bound morphemes shape word structure and word class in a motivational speech, and it is expected to serve as a reference for further research in morphology.

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