

AFFIXES IN THE LYRICS OF MICHAEL LEARNS TO ROCK SONGS

Citra Indah Maharani Laoli
Universitas Sumatera Utara
citraindah@usu.ac.id

Dena Andromeda
Universitas Sumatera Utara
denaandromeda@usu.ac.id

Syukratun Nufus
Universitas Sumatera Utara
syukratunnufus@usu.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to identify affixes in the lyrics of Michael Learns to Rock Songs. This study was conducted based on qualitative research method. The data of this study were the lyrics of the five songs from Michael Learns to Rock. The songs were (1) Paint My Love, (2) Sleeping Child, (3) Take Me to Your Heart, (4) That's Why (You Go Away), and (5) The Actor. The instrument used to collect the data was an observation sheet. Based on the data analysis conducted, it was found that suffixes were the only type of affixes found in the five songs analyzed. From 99 affixes found, there were 99 suffixes (100%). Moreover, there were nine types of suffixes found, namely: suffix -est, -s, -ly, -es, -dom, -ing, -y, -ed, and -ness. Furthermore, suffix -ing (47%) and suffix -s (37%) were the two dominant types of suffixes found in the five songs analyzed. The predominance of -ing (47%) and -s (37%) shows that present participles and plural or third-person singular verb forms are the most frequently used, which aligns with the common linguistic patterns in song lyrics that often emphasize ongoing actions, emotional states, and habitual activities. Overall, the results reinforce previous observations that popular song lyrics typically prioritize simplicity and fluency, relying on basic and frequent English inflectional suffixes to enhance rhythm, rhyme, and listener comprehension.

Keywords: affixes, suffixes, lyrics, songs.

Introduction

In communicating with one another, we use a set of vocal sounds or written marks called language. Language is a vehicle for communicating ideas and feelings. The scientific study of language itself is called as linguistics. Linguistics studies the principles that govern the structure and use of a language (Hamawand, 2011).

One of the subjects studied in linguistics is morphology. Morphology is the study of how words are built of form-meaning units. It studies the ways in which form alterations reflect meaning distinctions. This amounts to saying that the morphological structure of a word mirrors its semantic structure.

A fundamental unit with which morphology is concerned is the word and its constituents. A word is a symbolic unit which is a combination of meaning and sound. A word like *car*, for example, has two aspects which cannot be separated: the sound image /ka:/ and the concept [CAR], a type of vehicle (Hamawand, 2011).

A composite word is made up of two or more substructures. The substructures are referred to as morphemes. A morpheme is the minimal meaningful unit in a language. It is minimal because it cannot be further divided into smaller units. It is meaningful in that it stands for something conceived in the speaker's mind. Morphemes can be either free or bound. A free morpheme can appear as an independent word, whereas a bound morpheme can only appear as part of another word.

Affixation is the morphological process of deriving a new word by adding an affix, namely a bound morpheme, to a root or base. For example, the verb *endear* is formed by adding the affix *en-* to the adjective *dear*. There are two types of affixes, namely: prefixes and suffixes. A prefix is a bound morpheme that is added to the beginning of a free morpheme to form a new composite word of either a similar or different word class, for examples: *mono-*, *re-*, *il-*, *ir-*, *trans-*. A suffix is a bound morpheme that is added to the end of a free morpheme to form a new composite word, of either a similar or different word class, for examples: *ance*, *-ess*, *-s*, *-s*, *-es*..

There are some previous studies conducted in relation to the analysis of affixes in songs. They are Nandito (2016), Yastanti (2018), Meinawati (2018), Siboro (2020), Meinawati (2020), and Aprianti (2020).

In this study, the researcher focused the analysis on affixes, including prefixes and suffixes, found in the five songs of Michael Learns to Rock. This was conducted because based on the relevant studies reviewed, there have not been studies that used Michael Learns to Rock songs as the data for affix analysis. The importance of this study lies in its contribution to enriching linguistic research on song lyrics by providing empirical evidence about the types and frequency of affixes used in popular music. It also offers insights for language learners and educators by showing how song lyrics can serve as accessible and authentic materials for understanding English word formation.

Method

Data

The data of this study were the lyrics of the five songs from Michael Learns to Rock. The songs were (1) Paint My Love, (2) Sleeping Child, (3) Take Me to Your Heart, (4) That's Why (You Go Away), and (5) The Actor. These songs were selected to be analyzed because they were some of the greatest songs known until now.

Instruments

Observation sheet was used to categorize the types of affixes including prefixes and suffixes found in the lyrics of the five songs from Michael Learns to Rock.

Data Analysis Procedure

The lyrics of the five songs from Michael Learns to Rock were analyzed to identify the affixes including the prefixes and the suffixes realized in the songs. The data were analyzed through the three steps of qualitative data analysis, namely:

1. Data Condensation

In this step, the words that have affixes were selected. After that, they were classified based on the types of affixes, including prefixes and suffixes.

2. Data Display

In this step, the data were displayed in tables. The data were displayed to show the types of affixes found.

3. Drawing and Verifying Conclusions

The research questions are answered by describing and explaining the meaning of the data, and the conclusion is reached based on the data display.

Findings

The results of data analysis from each of the five songs can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. Types of Affixes Found in Paint My Love Song

1. Paint My Love

No.	Words	Types of Affixes		Root
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
1.	Youngest		-est	Young
2.	Years		-s	Year
3.	Lovely		-ly	Love
4.	Skies		-es	Sky
5.	Deepest		-est	Deep
6.	Sunsets		-s	Sunset
7.	Freedom		-dom	Free
8.	Doves		-s	Dove
9.	Coming		-ing	Come
10.	Sunsets		-s	Sunset
11.	Freedom		-dom	Free
12.	Doves		-s	Dove
13.	Days		-s	Day
14.	Changed		-ed	Change
15.	Sunsets		-s	Sunset
16.	Freedom		-dom	Free
17.	Doves		-s	Dove

No.	Words	Types of Affixes		Root
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
18.	Sunsets		-s	Sunset
19.	Freedom		-dom	Free
20.	Doves		-s	Dove

There is no prefix found in this song, while there are seven types of suffixes found, namely: suffix –est, -s, -ly, -es, -dom, -ing, and –ed.

Table 2. Types of Affixes Found in Sleeping Child Song

2. Sleeping Child

No.	Words	Types of Affixes		Root
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
1.	Milky		-y	Milk
2.	Twinkling		-ing	Twinkle
3.	Praying		-ing	Pray
4.	Sleeping		-ing	Sleep
5.	Sleeping		-ing	Sleep
6.	Yours		-s	Your
7.	Fighting		-ing	Fight
8.	Wars		-s	War
9.	Lasting		-ing	Last
10.	Kings		-s	King
11.	Leaders		-s	Leader
12.	Arms		-s	Arm
13.	Sleeping		-ing	Sleep
14.	Sleeping		-ing	Sleep
15.	Sleeping		-ing	Sleep
16.	Sleeping		-ing	Sleep
17.	Sleeping		-ing	Sleep
18.	Sleeping		-ing	Sleep
19.	Sleeping		-ing	Sleep

There is no prefix found in this song, while there are three types of suffixes found, namely: suffix –y, -ing, and –s.

Table 3. Types of Affixes Found in Take Me to Your Heart Song

3. Take me to Your Heart

No.	Words	Types of Affixes		Root
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
1.	Hiding		-ing	Hide
2.	Trying		-ing	Try
3.	Looking		-ing	Look
4.	Crowded		-ed	Crowd
5.	Listening		-ing	Listen
6.	Wonders		-s	Wonder
7.	Lasts		-s	Last
8.	Guiding		-ing	Guide
9.	Standing		-ing	Stand
10.	Looking		-ing	Look
11.	Friends		-s	Friend
12.	Really		-ly	Real
13.	Talking		-ing	Talk
14.	Saying		-ing	Say
15.	Makes		-s	Make
16.	Wonders		-s	Wonder
17.	Lasts		-s	Last
18.	Guiding		-ing	Guide
19.	Guiding		-ing	Guide

There is no prefix found in this song, while there are four types of suffixes found, namely: suffix –ing, -ed, -s, and -ly.

Table 4. Types of Affixes Found in That's Why (You Go Away) Song

4. That's Why (You Go Away)

No.	Words	Types of Affixes		Root
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
1.	Sadness		-ness	Sad
2.	Eyes		-s	Eye
3.	Feeling		-ing	Feel
4.	Kissing		-ing	Kiss
5.	Feelings		-ing -s	Feel
6.	Lasting		-ing	Last
7.	Missing		-ing	Miss

No.	Words	Types of Affixes		Root
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
8.	Satisfied		-ed	Satisfy
9.	Tried		-ed	Try
10.	Kissing		-ing	Kiss
11.	Feelings		-ing -s	Feel
12.	Lasting		-ing	Last
13.	Missing		-ing	Miss
14.	Sitting		-ing	Sit
15.	Kissing		-ing	Kiss
16.	Feelings		-ing -s	Feel
17.	Lasting		-ing	Last
18.	Missing		-ing	Miss

There is no prefix found in this song, while there are four types of suffixes found, namely: suffix –ness, -s, -ing, and –ed.

Table 5. Types of Affixes Found in The Actor Song

5. The Actor

No.	Words	Types of Affixes		Root
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
1.	Takes		-s	Take
2.	Takes		-s	Take
3.	Gives		-s	Give
4.	Yours		-s	Your
5.	Odds		-s	Odd
6.	Hoping		-ing	Hope
7.	Games		-s	Game
8.	Shows		-s	Show
9.	Knows		-s	Know
10.	Watching		-ing	Watch
11.	Stars		-s	Star
12.	Satisfies		-es	Satisfy
13.	Thinking		-ing	Think
14.	Makes		-s	Make
15.	Cars		-s	Car
16.	Restaurants		-s	Restaurant
17.	Hoping		-ing	Hope
18.	Hoping		-ing	Hope

No.	Words	Types of Affixes		Root
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
19.	Hoping		-ing	Hope
20.	Hoping		-ing	Hope

There is no prefix found in this song, while there are three types of suffixes found, namely: suffix –s, -ing, and –es.

The percentages of prefixes and suffixes found in the five songs can be seen in the following table.

Table 6. Types of Prefixes and Suffixes Found in the Five Songs Analyzed

Affixes	Prefixes	Suffixes		
		-	0	0%
		-est	2	2%
		-s	37	37%
		-ly	2	2%
		-es	2	2%
		-dom	4	4%
		-ing	46	47%
		-y	1	1%
		-ed	4	4%
		-ness	1	1%

Based on the data analysis conducted, it was found that there was not prefix found in the five songs analyzed. Furthermore, there were nine types of suffixes found in the five songs, namely: -est (2%), -s (37%), -ly (2%), -es (2%), -dom (4%), -ing (47%), -y (1%), -ed (4%), -ness (1%). So, it can be concluded that suffix –ing (47%) and suffix –s (37%) were the two dominant types of suffixes found in the five songs analyzed.

The comparison of the two types of affixes found in the five songs analyzed can be seen in the following table.

Table 7. Two Types of Affixes Found in the Five Songs Analyzed

Affixes	
Prefixes	Suffixes
0 (0%)	99 (100%)
Total= 99 (100%)	

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that suffix was the only type of affixes found in the five songs analyzed, in which there were 99 (100%) suffixes found.

Discussion

Affixation is the morphological process of deriving a new word by adding an affix, namely a bound morpheme, to a root or base. A prefix is a bound morpheme that is added to the beginning of a free morpheme to form a new composite word of either a similar or different word class. A suffix is a bound morpheme that is added to the end of a free morpheme to form a new composite word, of either a similar or different word class (Hamawand, 2011).

The results of this study were in line with the theory above stating that affixation exists in language, especially in English, in which it is a morphological process. Moreover, the results of this study also confirm that suffix, the type of affixes can be found in language, especially in English. And also, there are many types of suffixes that can be found.

The results of this study were also in line with Nandito (2016) "*Derivational and Inflectional Morphemes*," Siboro (2020) "*Morphological Analysis of Derivational Affixes in Brothers Grimm's the Story of Rapunzel*," and Aprianti (2020) "*Derivational and Inflectional Morpheme Analysis on the Song Lyrics of Lady Gaga 'A Star Is Born' Album*." This study confirms that many types of affixes, especially suffixes can be found in songs.

The results of this study show that suffixes were dominant compared to the prefixes. This result was in line with the previous studies: Yastanti (2018) "*Affixes in Song Lyrics of Adele*," and Siboro (2020), "*Morphological Analysis of Derivational Affixes in Brothers Grimm's the Story of Rapunzel*."

The data indicate that all affixes identified in the five songs were suffixes, suggesting that the morphological processes in these lyrics rely heavily on word-ending modifications rather than prefixation. The predominance of -ing (47%) and -s (37%)

shows that present participles and plural or third-person singular verb forms are the most frequently used, which aligns with the common linguistic patterns in song lyrics that often emphasize ongoing actions, emotional states, and habitual activities. This finding implies that the songs analyzed tend to use progressive verb forms to convey immediacy and continuity, while the frequent use of –s reflects narrative descriptions or repeated actions.

Overall, the results reinforce previous observations that popular song lyrics typically prioritize simplicity and fluency, relying on basic and frequent English inflectional suffixes to enhance rhythm, rhyme, and listener comprehension. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to enriching linguistic research on song lyrics by providing empirical evidence about the types and frequency of affixes used in popular music. It also offers insights for language learners and educators by showing how song lyrics can serve as accessible and authentic materials for understanding English word formation.

However, this study is limited by its small dataset, analyzing only five songs from one band, which may not fully represent broader linguistic patterns in song lyrics. The analysis also focuses solely on affixes without examining other morphological processes such as compounding or derivation. For future research, it is suggested to use a larger and more varied corpus of songs from different genres or artists and to incorporate additional linguistic features to provide a more comprehensive understanding of morphology in music lyrics.

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