ANALYSIZING ERRORS OF INFLECTIONAL AFFIXES ON STUDENTS' WRITINGS

Ahmad Sunandar
Politeknik Indonusa Surakarta
Email: ahmadsunandar@poltekindonusa.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to identify what error of inflectional affixes was the most frequently appeared on students' writings and what error of inflectional affixes was the least frequently appeared on students' writings. The approach of research was qualitative method with descriptive analysis to analyze the data. The data were taken from students' writings made by 111 second semester students of Indonusa Polytechnic Surakarta majoring in health information management. This research was to perform the percentage of error of inflectional affixes on students' writings. The percentage of plural -s/es was 58,46 %, third person present singular -s/es was 20 %, past tense –ed was 6,15 %, past participle -en/ed was 6,15 %, progressive –ing was 3,08 %, possessive –'s was 3,08 %, superlative –est was 1,68 % and comparative –er was 1,40 %. Referring to the percentages of the research, the researcher concluded that the error of inflectional affixes which the most frequently appeared was plural –s/es with the percentage 58,46 %, and the error of inflectional affixes which the least frequently appeared was comparative –er with the percentage 1,40 %. Mastering inflectional affixes is important in order to make precise sentences. Therefore, students should perform well in applying inflectional affixes.

Keywords: *Affixes, Error analysis, Errors in writing, inflectional affixes, Students' English writings*

Introduction

English is the most important language in the world, it is used by a lot of people in the world to communicate each other and it becomes an international language that is used to communicate (Hamid & Qayyimah, 2018). English is considered as the most studied foreign language, and it is taught as a compulsory subject from secondary schools to universities. Hence, students have to learn English more seriously. Learning English is not easy for a lot of students, and they think English is complicated. The students of English have to use English correctly and precisely even though it is just a foreign language in Indonesia.

In Indonesia, English is a foreign language that is often used to communicate with foreign people. English is used in more over 70 countries, and one out of five of the world's population speaks it, so we could say that English language takes very essential tools to communicate amoung them (Al-khasawneh, 2016). Now days, English is more necessary in order to communicate in international communication, and it is also the main language at international business, academic conferences, science, international competition and advertising. English is being adopted as one of necessary languages for communication. Hence, it demands Indonesian people to master English well.

The mastery of English is very important for communication. A lot of people are able to use English to communicate to each other, but they do not master the English well. The mastery of language means that we have to know and comprehend the rules of grammar. Rules mean controlling the way of a communicational system. Grammar is more of a language-internal study, it studies form and pattern in sentences. Mastering English grammar is mastering the form and pattern to make good sentences (Kharmilah & Narius, 2019). Grammar is the fundamental organizing principle of language. Therefore, grammar is very necessary in mastering a language. To master the grammar of a language, we need to study deeply about the grammar. If we master the grammar of a language well, we will easily know how a sentence in its language is well-formed or not. The mastery of grammar does not only understand or comprehend how a sentence is structured but also have to master the subfields of its grammar.

Grammar itself has four subfields. Here they are: Phonology, Morphology, syntax, semantics

To build a good sentence in order to communicate intelligibly, the speaker and the recipient have to share or understand the rules of grammar in its language. Knowing a language means knowing its rules of grammar.

The four subfields above have to be mastered by people who want to master a language well. In this research, the researcher did the research on the morphological field. Morphology is one of the fileds which has to master by the students, so they could use the language well and It is one of the linguistic scopes that learns about word formations (Nurjanah et al., 2018). As a researcher of a language, we have to know the form of word structure. Morphology, of course, has some subfields, but on this occasion the researcher focused on the field of inflectional affixes.

An affix which is attached to a word and does not change the word class is called inflectional affixes, it is only for grammatical rules (Rijal, 2019). Rather, it produces another form of the same word. Students of English should master this subfield of morphology. The mastery of inflectional affixes is very important in order to make well-formed sentences. To master inflectional affixes, students have to find out much information of its rules. In other word, Inflectional morpheme does not make a new class of the word. It only influences the person, the time, and the process of an action in the sentence (Maulidina et al., 2019a). English affixes are not to produce new categories of words, but rather to indicate aspects of the grammatical function of a word. Inflectional affixes are used to show if a word is plural or singular, if it is past tense or past participle, if it is comparative or superlative, if it is 3rd person present singular or present participle, and if it is possessive or not. The researcher could decide that there are only eight inflectional affixes in English. Here they are:

1. Past tense   → ed
2. Past participle   → en/ed
3. Third person singular → s/es
4. Progressive   → ing
5. Comparative   → er
6. Superlative   → est
7. Plural   → s/es
8. Possessive   → 's

Many analyses on inflectional affixes have been conducted by many researchers in any texts. (Florianus & Syamsi, 2021) did a research on errors analysis of inflectional affixation in academic writings of freshman students. It was found out that students faced difficulties in subject-verb agreement, plurals, and past participle. Meanwhile, (Ninsiana & Hakim, 2018) conducted a research on an analysis of inflectional affixes errors in argumentative writing. The results showed that there were some errors found. They were errors in the use of –s, errors in the use of –es, errors in the use of –ies, errors in the use of –ed, errors in the use of –ing, and no errors found in the use of –er and –est. The first commonly error found was the use of –ed, the second one was the use of –s, and the third one was –es. It could be said that the students had difficulties in deciding to apply the correct affixes to the words. (Tiyas, 2021) who analyzed errors on inflectional affixes on students' writing found that there were four types of errors. They were omission errors, additional errors, misinformation errors, and miss-ordering errors.

This time, the researcher did the research at Polytechnic Indonusa Surakarta and took the materials from the second semester students majoring in Health Information Management divided into four classes. The reason why the researcher took the second semester students' writings of Health Information Management as the research was that a lot of students still made some errors on their writings in applying inflectional affixes even though they were college students. Their writings should be in advanced level and perform well in applying inflectional affixes. Thus, the writings should not show any problems in applying inflectional affixes. In fact, a lot of students still make some errors in applying English inflectional affixes on their writings. For example, students often made errors in attaching plural -s/es on a regular plural noun. The researcher took an imprecise sample of student's writing in applying plural -s, here it is "*We cannot do all thing we want to do*" in the sentence the *thing* word functions as a plural noun, so that an affix -s has to attach to it to make it plural. If applying inflectional affixes is not appropriate, the sentences are ill-formed or ungrammatical. The main reason that arouses the researcher to analyze inflectional affixes in the students' writings is to find out the mastery of inflectional affixes.

Method

Error is one thing that is often found on students' writings. In the course of learning, students frequently committed errors. Students can learn new vocabulary, grammatical structures, pronunciations that differ from their native language, and rules of language specific to the foreign language. Due to the fact that English is a foreign language in Indonesia, making errors are normal for students studying a foreign or second language (Pardosi et al., 2019). Students' errors

need not be seen as signs of failure. On the contrary, they are evidence for learning process to develop their knowledge of language. On students' writings, there are lots of errors that can be encountered on their writings. In this research, the researcher focuses on the errors found in applying inflectional affixes. For example, students of English have learnt a rule to form plurals. A noun can be made into plural by adding suffix –s. However, when we say '*we saw two gooses.*' gooses is not plural form of goose. In English, there are some exceptions of forming plurals. The forming of these plurals can be explained in the study of internal change.

On the other hand, Errors are common, essential, and crucial to the learning process. A student makes errors at first to figure out how to fix them and improve their learning (Hamidah Daulay & Maryati Salmiah, 2016). We still encounter some errors on students' writings in applying inflectional affixes. There is some identification where students frequently make some errors: forming plural –s/es, possession –'s, third person present singular –s/es, progressive -ing, past tense -ed, past participle –en/ed, comparative -er and superlative –est. Making errors while learning a language is a process that they are unable to correct (Febriyanti & Sundari, 2016). There is a need for students to recognize the significance of errors which occur on their writings. Errors in the language learning process are as an effective means of improving grammatical accuracy.

In situations involving second languages as well as native speakers, mistakes are often made. Because of this, it is likely that people will make mistakes when speaking the language, whether they are native speakers or second language students. This is known by the students, but they do not use it, which leads to mistakes (Putri & Dewanti, 2014). The student is quick to remedy mistakes when his attention is directed to them since they are usually made randomly (Aqel & Mohammed, 2017). Lots of mistakes are frequently encountered on students' writings, these are because of less of attention. Sometimes students are lazy to check out their writing after finished so that more mistakes will be easily encountered.

Selecting, erasing, and rearrangement of content are all sophisticated decision-making processes involved in writing (Sitorus & Sipayung, 2018). Even if they are at university, writing is thought to be a difficult talent for students to learn. In particular, Indonesian EFL students have a responsibility to master academic writing skills, such as creating texts, essays, or project papers based on their academic levels (Sukmacahyadi, 2018). If we want to send a message, we hopefully write the message clearly to avoid misinterpreting to the reader or recipient. Writing is one of means of communication to others in that we have to master how to write English well.

There are lots of definitions of morphology pointed out by linguists. The study of words and word development is known as morphology (Lieber, 2022). Lots of words in English get the attachment of elements to form new words or just change grammatical function. Words have a very important role in a language to convey thoughts. Without words, we would not able to convey out thought, so that it is why words have a very important role in a language. We can learn millions of words of a language, but do not know how those words are constructed. For example, we want to find out the meaning -unreasonable in Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, we will not find it easily by searching directly to the word –unreasonable in the dictionary. We can find it by guessing meaning of prefix –un in the word –reasonable. Violations of the guidelines for creating different word forms might be used to explain morphological problems. When employing a numeral, the most speech mistakes happen (Shadiyeva, 2022). Studying morphology is studying words, studying words is also studying the parts of words. To study words is one of important parts of studying morphology. Studying words also has to study about morpheme. The smallest linguistic component that makes up a word in English is called a morpheme. One morpheme, or a group of morphemes, can create a word (Maulidina et al., 2019b). We can recognize that English words such as plays, player, played and playing consist of one element –play, and a number of other elements such as –s, -er, -ed and –ing, these elements are called morphemes. Morphemes, themselves, are divided into two categories; morphemes that can stand alone as single words, for instance, close and wait, they are free morphemes. Morphemes that cannot stand alone and must be attached to other forms, for example, ed, s, re and others, they are bound morphemes.

The study of words is known as morphology (Silvinuril et al., 2017). The study of morphology is necessary for students to master English. Morphology generally is the study of words. A word at least contains one morpheme, for instance, a word –table contains just one morpheme as singular, and if we want to make it plural, just add a suffix –s.

There are a lot of definitions of affixes in English, here are some of them. A morpheme that only appears when it is attached to another morpheme, such as a root, stem, or base, is referred to as an affix (Azmi, 2013). On morphology field, an affix is one of the terms that has to be studied and mastered by the students well. As the students of English, we have to know where and when an affix must be attached to a word. Through learning, students can know how the affix is attached to a word. For example, affix –re that has meaning *again* has to attach before the word such as replay, reread and others. We have to know that many words in English cannot be broken down into grammatical parts. A, boy, yes, etc cannot be separated into grammatical parts because they consist of a base or stem form.

Affixation is a type of morphology that transforms a root or base word into a new term (Kusumawardhani, 2020). All affixes are bound morphemes because they cannot stand alone. There are several kinds of affixes in English. Here they are:

a Affixes which attach to the beginning of a word are prefixes, for instance, prefix –un is attached to the word –do becoming –undo. Prefixes in English have purely a lexical role.

b Affixes which attach to the end of a word are suffixes, for example, suffix –ful that is attached to the word -beauty becomes beautiful. Suffixes in English have two kinds. Firstly, suffixes that change the meaning of words and have purely lexical meaning are called derivational suffixes such as ness, ship, etc. Secondly, suffixes that are to show purely grammatical functions are called inflectional suffixes such as –s to show plural nouns, -ed to denote past tense, etc.

c. Bound morphemes which are inserted within a word are called infixes. English generally does not have infixes, but an exception might be –frickin in absofrickinlutely. The base of its word is absolute, and its base form gets suffix –ly onto absolutely. The absolutely word gets infix –frickin into absofrickinlutely. Infixes in English are difficult to find because English generally does not have this form.

d. Affixes which surround the word, attaching to the beginning and end of the word are called circumfix. English has few examples of circumfixes such as embolden, enlighten, etc. the base form of embolden is bold, its word gets circumfix em- and –en to make a new word –embolden.

Bound morphemes require a connection to another morpheme because they are unable to stand alone (Astuti et al., n.d.). In English there are only two kinds of affixes. Here they are:

a. Prefix is the attachment of bound morphemes that is added to the beginning of words. This term has a necessary role in use, there are a lot of prefixes that are frequently used in English such as un, pr, inter, re, trans, sub, and others. Prefix always occurs at the beginning of words, and they might bring out the meaning of new words or only change the function of new words.

b. Suffix is the attachment of bound morphemes that are attached to the end of words. Suffixes can happen in the category of derivational or inflectional affixes. The study of suffixes is more complex because an English word can have both derivational and inflectional affixes in the same time.

In English, there are two kinds of affixation, derivational affixation and inflectional affixation. The writer is going to define a brief about these affixations. Derivational morphemes are morphemes that are employed to create new words, but not always to modify a syntactic category (Kusumawardhani, 2018). Derivational morphemes have some characteristics which separate from inflectional morphemes. Here they are:

a. Change the meaning or create a new word of part of speech, e.g. beauty as noun that gets morpheme -ly becomes verb - beautify.

b. Occur with only some members of a class of morphemes, morpheme-hood occurs only with a few words such as brother, neighour, and knight, but not with others.

c. Occur before inflectional suffixes, e.g. teachers, the derivational suffix –er comes before the inflectional suffix –s.

d. Indicate semantic relations within the word, e.g. the morpheme -ful in pain has no specific connection with any other morpheme the word beyond the word painful.

e. Word classes and categories can alter as a result of derivational affixes (Siboro, 2019). Derivation in English and other languages plays a crucial role of forming new words. A noun can be formed by adding suffix –er to a verb with the meaning one who does something.' Verb base –play gets the suffix –er becoming -player. Here are some lists of derivational affixes in English:

Table 1
Derivational affixes

Affixes Suffixes	Changes	Examples
-able	V→A	Understand-able, believe-able

-ion	V→N	Protect-ion, assert-ion
-ful	N→A	Beauti-ful, hope-ful
-ize	N→V	Hospital-ize, crystal-ize
-en	A→V	White-en, hard-en
-ly	A→Adv	Slow-ly, careful-ly
-ness	A→N	Happi-ness, sad-ness
Prefixes		
anti-	N→N	Anti-abortion, anti-pollution
re-	V→V	Re-read, re-think
un-	A→A	Un-happy, un-intelligent

Other examples can be seen in figure 1 which illustrates the English words.

Figure 1
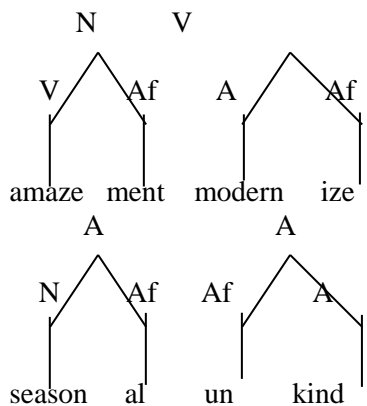**Some Words Formed by Derivation**

Figure 1 shows the process of creating new words. The verb –amaze gets the attachment of an affix –ment being amazement as a noun. This is as we call nominalization. The adjective –modern is combined with an affix –ize becoming modernize as a verb. This is what we call verbalization. The noun –season is combined with an affix –al becoming seasonal as an adjective. This is what we know as adjectivalization. The affix –un is attached to the adjective –kind being unkind also as adjectivalization. In English, it is possible to create multiple levels of word structure since derivation can apply more than once (see figure 2).

Figure 2 a word with a multilayered internal structure
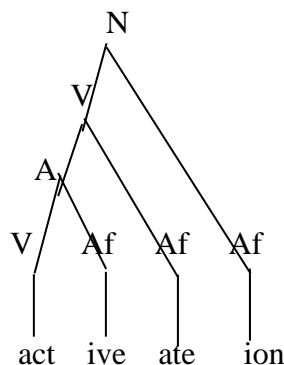
The word –activation has three derivational processes. First, the verb –act gets attachment of the affix –ive creating active as an adjective. Then, the adjective –active is combined with the affix –ate becoming activate as a verb. At last, the verb –activate is combined with the affix –ion resulting the noun-activation.

The writer would like to analyze the written results of students' writings in applying inflectional affixes. The use of inflectional affixes does not change the part of speech of the words, but they only change the grammatical function or the meaning of the words. Affixes with inflectional endings serve purely grammatical purposes and do not alter the word's class or meaning (Rijal, 2019). For example, when we add suffix –s to a noun, it becomes the plural form, not create a new word. In English inflectional affixes have three criteria which are commonly used to distinguish from derivational affixes. Here are the three criteria of inflectional affixes:

a. Inflectional affixes never change either grammatical category of the type of meaning (see figure 1).
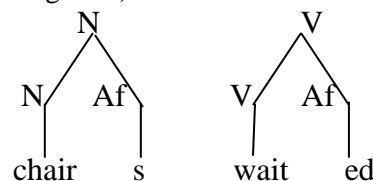
In figure 1, the noun –chair gotten a suffix –s is still a noun and has the same type of meaning as the base, though chairs from chair refer to several things rather just one. Suffix –ed which is attached to the verb –wait is to denote that the action took place in the past. It does not change the word category or type of meaning. The word is still a verb as the base.

b. The positioning of inflectional affixes takes place after derivation (see figure 2).
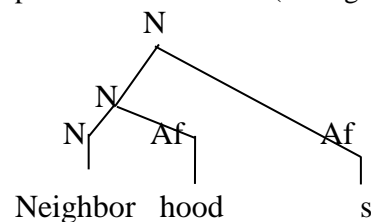
In figure 2, the noun –neighbourhoods has two processes of affixation. Firstly, the noun –neighbour gets the attachment of derivational affixes –hood becoming neighbourhood as a noun. After that, the noun –neighborhood that has undergone the attachment of derivation gets the attachment more of inflectional affixes –s resulting neighbourhoods.

c. Inflectional affixes are productivity. Productivity means the freedom with which inflectional affixes can combine with bases of

the appropriate category, and they can be attached to the bases easily. For instance, the suffix –s can combine with any nouns that allow a plural form especially for regular nouns.

change as a result of the addition of an inflectional morpheme, which is typically a bound morpheme (Fitria, 2020). In English, inflectional morphemes have three categories:
a. Noun, inflectional morphemes that attach to the noun are –s/es (plural) and – 's (possessive).
b. Verb, inflectional morphemes which attach to the verb are –s/es (3rd person present singular), -ing (progressive), -ed (past tense) and –en/ed (past participle)
c. Adjective, inflectional morphemes which attach to the adjective are –er (comparative) – est (superlative).

All inflectional morphemes in English are suffixes. The eighth of inflectional morphemes have different use and function. Suffix –s/es (plural) is used with noun and to show that the noun is plural. Possessive -'s is to show the ownership of something. Verb –s/es is to indicate that the verb is singular in that the subject should be singular or third person present singular. Progressive -ing is to show that the activity is in progress. Past tense -ed is to indicate that the activity happened in the past. Past participle –en/ed is used in present perfect or past perfect. Comparative -er is used with adjectives that have only one or two syllables, and it is to compare two equal things. Superlative -est is also used with adjectives with one or two syllables, and it is to find out which one is the best or the most outstanding of more than two items.

This research was done by taking the materials of writings which students did. Then, the data were analyzed. In this research, the researcher used the qualitative method. Qualitative method is a method that uses words, sentences, schemes and pictures to perform the result of research. This does not stress meaning by using numerically measured data, but it stresses meaning by the context. In the qualitative method we get data by doing some researches as case studies, interviews, observation and surveys (Fitria, 2018). On the other hand, the researcher used library research to support this method in order to get more information and knowledge about what the researcher is researching.
1. Technique of Collecting Data
   In doing this research, the researcher collected the data from students' writings. The data were taken after the students did the final test.
2. Technique of Analyzing Data

The method used in this research is qualitative method. Then, the researcher analyzed the writings. Every sheet of the writings was analyzed in order to find out more detail data. The researcher described in the form of sentences or tables.

Findings and Discussion
Findings
In this research, the researcher did analyzing the data of students' writings in order to find out more accurate data. There were one hundred eleven pieces of sheet of writings which were going to be analyzed. The following is some samples of errors that were found on the students' writings:

Table 2
Finding on error

No	Identification of Error	Classification of Error	Appropriate Sentence_
1.	The final exam was very difficult, so nervous, and **need** much preparation.	Past tense	The final exam was very difficult, so nervous, and **needed** much preparation
2.	The conclusion is the education is very **need** by all of people in the world.	Past participle	The conclusion is the education is very **needed** by all of people in the world.
3.	It **mean** that we can choose for living in a small town.	Third person present singular	It **means** that we can choose for living in a small town.
4.	People who **are having** education oriented want to do something …	Progressive	People who **have** education oriented want to do something …
5.	Living in a big city is **more hotter** than in a village	Comparative	Living in a big city is **hotter** than in a village
6.	The math was **the most easier** subject.	Superlative	The math was **the easiest** subject.
7.	There are so many **tourist**.	Plural	There are so many **tourists**.
8.	As we know that	Possessive	As we know that

globalization 's era will come to Indonesia.	*globalizatio n era* will come to Indonesia.

Discussion

After the researcher did analyzing on samples, the next step is to perform the dominant errors of inflectional affixes to find out the percentage of each error of inflectional affixes.

Table 3
Types of error

No	Types of errors	Number Of Errors
1.	Past tense –ed.	44
2.	Past participle –en/ed.	44
3.	3rd person present singular -s.	143
4.	Progressive –ing.	22
5.	Comparative –er.	10
6.	Superlative –est.	12
7.	Plural –s/es.	418
8.	Possessive –'s.	22
	Total	**715**

Past tense: $\frac{44}{715}$ x 100 = 6, 15 %

Past participle: $\frac{44}{715}$ x 100 = 6, 15 %
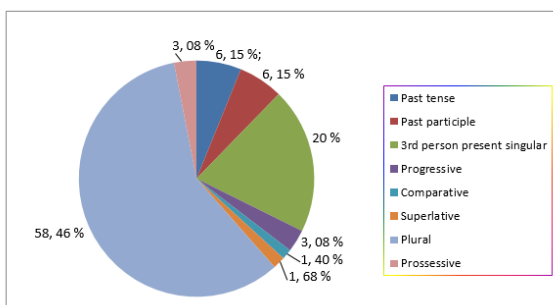
3rd person present singular: $\frac{143}{715}$ x 100 = 20 %

Progressive: $\frac{22}{715}$ x 100 = 3, 08 %

Comparative: $\frac{10}{715}$ x 100 = 1, 40 %

Superlative: $\frac{12}{715}$ x 100 = 1, 68 %

Plural: $\frac{418}{715}$ x 100 = 58, 46 %

Possessive: $\frac{22}{715}$ x 100 = 3, 08 %

In this research, the writer encountered 6,15 % error of past tense. Students made this error because they did not master enough the past form- when a sentence should be in present or past form. 6,15 % error of past participle also encountered. Lots of students are still confused when they should use past participle in a sentence. Students of English should know when a sentence should be in past or past participle. The writer

found 20 % error of third person present singular. This error frequently found on students' English writings. This was caused that the students did not pay attention to the subject of its sentence in that they did not attach this suffix to a verb. 3,08 % error of progressive, students made this error because they have not comprehended enough of using progressive. The using of progressive is not just to show an activity in a progress but the using of it has some functions and the students have to master them. The writer met 1,40 % errors of comparative –er on students' writings. This was the lowest percentage which found on this research. Students made this kind of errors because of the lack of understanding in applying comparison. The error of superlative was 1,68 %.. Students made this error because they did not comprehend to which adjectives this suffix be attached. The error of plural was the highest percentage in this research, 58,46 %, this was caused that students did not comprehend well of using plural –s/es on a regular plural noun. On English writing, students should know how to use possessive on writings. In this research, the researcher found error of possessive 3,08 %.

From the table above, we can conclude that there are some errors on students' writings in applying inflectional affixes. After the researcher analyzed the writings of the students, the researcher found several errors in applying inflectional affixes shown above. The researcher can formulate that the inflectional suffix –plural s/es is the most frequently appeared on students' writings with the percentage 58,46 % % and the inflectional suffix –comparative er is the least frequently appeared with the percentage 1,40 %.

Conclusion

There are several errors found on their writings in applying inflectional suffixes. The researcher would like to present the errors of inflectional suffixes in its class through percentage. The percentage is going to be presented from error that the most frequently appears to error that the least frequently appears. Here they are:

a. Plural -s/es : 58,46 %
b. 3rd present person singular -s/es : 20 %
c. Past tense –ed: 6,15 %
d. Past participle -en/ed: 6,15 %
e. Progressive –ing: 3,08 %
f. Possessive –'s: 3,08 %
g. Superlative –est : 1,68 %
h. Comparative –er: 1,40 %

From the percentage above, the researcher can infer that the error of inflectional suffix the most frequently appeared is plural –s/es, and the error of

inflectional suffix the least frequently appeared is comparative -er.

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