

A Morphological Analysis of Derivational Morphemes in BBC Business News Articles and Its Implications for EFL Vocabulary Learning

Badri^{1*}, Miftah Komala Putri², Mardiyah³, Adi Suhendra⁴, Rosyidah Hasanah⁵, Yusuf Hekmatiar⁶

^{1,3,4,5,6}Faculty of economics and business

²Faculty of Education and Teacher Training
Universitas Primagraha, Indonesia

Jl. Trip Jamaksari No.mor 1A Blok A1, Kaligandu, Kec. Serang, Kota Serang, Banten 42111

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*Corresponding Author:

badrikusmana2@gmail.com

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Abstract: Derivational morphology plays a crucial role in expanding English vocabulary and contributes significantly to lexical development in authentic written discourse. However, studies examining derivational morphemes in business news articles and their implications for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) vocabulary learning remain limited. This study aims to identify the types of derivational morphemes occurring in BBC Business News articles, analyze their morphological functions, and explore their implications for EFL vocabulary learning. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the study analyzed five BBC Business News articles selected through purposive sampling. The data consisted of lexical items containing derivational morphemes, which were identified, classified, and analyzed based on Carstairs-McCarthy's (2002) theory of English morphology and Bauer's (2003) concept of morphological productivity. The findings reveal that suffixation is considerably more productive than prefixation, with noun-forming suffixes such as *-tion*, *-ation*, *-ment*, and *-ity*, as well as adjective-forming suffixes including *-al*, *-ic*, and *-ial*, occurring most frequently. The results also show that derivations that change word class appear more frequently than those that maintain word class. This condition indicates that business journalism discourse utilizes vocabulary expansion processes, especially through nominalization and adjectival formation, as a strategy to convey complex economic concepts more effectively. This finding also indicates that authentic articles from BBC Business News have significant potential as a learning resource in increasing morphological awareness, enriching vocabulary mastery, and supporting reading comprehension skills in EFL learners. In addition, this study contributes to the study of Applied Linguistics of English by presenting empirical evidence regarding the productivity of the use of derivational morphology in contemporary business news discourse, while reinforcing the importance of utilizing authentic news texts as part of morphological-oriented vocabulary learning.



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INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is a key element in English language acquisition because it plays a crucial role in helping learners understand information, express ideas, and communicate effectively. In learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), vocabulary mastery

remains a significant challenge. This is due to the large number of vocabulary words required, especially when learners encounter authentic English texts. Unlike vocabulary lists, which are generally presented separately in textbooks, authentic texts display a variety of lexical forms formed through various word-formation processes. This situation often causes learners to encounter new words that cannot be understood simply by translating each lexical element separately. Therefore, understanding word formation from a morphological perspective is an important strategy for expanding vocabulary mastery and improving reading comprehension.

In linguistics, morphology is a branch of science that studies the internal structure of words and their formation processes. One process that is highly productive in English is derivational morphology. This process allows for the formation of new vocabulary by adding prefixes and suffixes to existing base forms. Unlike inflectional morphemes, which function to indicate grammatical relationships without changing a word's lexical identity, derivational morphemes can influence meaning, word class, or even both simultaneously. For example, the verb *invest* can evolve into the noun *investment*, the adjective *productive* evolves into the noun *productivity*, and the noun *economy* forms the adjective *economic*. Through these mechanisms, English vocabulary continues to evolve, accommodating the increasingly diverse delivery of ideas and concepts in both spoken and written communication.

Understanding this process gives rise to the concept of morphological awareness, which plays a crucial role in vocabulary development. Specifically, mastery of derivational morphology helps learners identify the meaning of unfamiliar words through recognition of their constituent morphemes. Thus, learners do not have to memorize each vocabulary word as a stand-alone unit, but can instead understand the meaningful relationships between words derived from the same root. As an illustration, familiarizing yourself with the root word *employ* will make it easier for learners to understand its derived forms, such as *employee*, *employer*, *employment*, *unemployment*, and *employability*. This ability not only expands lexical mastery but also supports reading comprehension, as authentic English texts often utilize derived forms to convey specific concepts. Therefore, morphological awareness is increasingly seen as a contributing factor to successful vocabulary development in EFL learning contexts.

The importance of derivational morphology becomes even more apparent when learners use authentic materials as learning resources. Authentic texts present language usage that reflects real-life communication practices, distinguishing them from materials that have been simplified for learning purposes. One widely used authentic source is BBC News, widely recognized as an international news organization with high journalistic standards. In the Business section, various issues concerning economics, finance, international trade, global markets, the technology industry, the world of work, and entrepreneurship are presented using formal, academic, and technical vocabulary. These characteristics cause the articles in this section to contain many forms of derivational morphology used to accurately represent economic concepts. Thus, BBC Business News can be used as a relevant linguistic corpus for studying word formation processes in authentic English usage.

One of the main characteristics of business journalism is the high use of vocabulary with complex morphological structures. This is due to the need to convey economic and financial information accurately, so the language used must be both precise in meaning and able to represent concepts clearly. Therefore, various lexical terms, such as *investment*, *inflationary*, *globalization*, *profitability*, *regulation*, *competitive*, *industrialization*, *productivity*, *digitalization*, and *entrepreneurship* illustrate how

derivational morphology functions to construct sophisticated meanings from relatively simple lexical bases. This vocabulary is not only widely used in business communication, but is also frequently found in academic textbooks, various internationally standardized exams, and *English for Specific Purposes* (ESP) materials. Thus, the study of derivational morphemes contained in the BBC Business News article not only contributes to the description of linguistic phenomena but also broadens understanding of the types of vocabulary that learners are likely to encounter in higher education and professional work environments.

In English language learning, authentic business news has significant pedagogical potential because it presents cutting-edge vocabulary that reflects global developments. Various issues, such as digital transformation, financial technology, international investment, artificial intelligence, sustainability, and global economic policy, have given rise to many new terms that enrich the English vocabulary. This phenomenon demonstrates that derivational morphology still plays a highly productive role in the formation of contemporary English vocabulary. Therefore, an analysis of derivational morphemes in authentic business news not only provides insight into current word formation patterns but also provides a relevant learning resource to support vocabulary instruction in the classroom.

Although the importance of morphological awareness has been widely recognized, vocabulary learning practices in various EFL classrooms are still dominated by a rote approach to individual words. In many situations, vocabulary is introduced as stand-alone lexical units without any discussion of the morphological structures that form them. Consequently, learners often experience difficulties when encountering derived words in authentic texts, even if they are familiar with their basic forms or roots. This situation limits their ability to develop independent vocabulary learning strategies through morphological analysis. From an applied linguistics perspective, this situation demonstrates the need to integrate morphological knowledge into vocabulary learning so that learners can interpret the meaning of unfamiliar words through analysis of their word structure, without always relying on dictionaries or direct translations.

The importance of integrating morphological analysis into vocabulary learning is also supported by various theoretical studies that view derivational morphology as a key mechanism in expanding the English lexicon. According to McCarthy (2002), the process of derivation produces new vocabulary through the addition of prefixes and suffixes to base forms, thereby changing lexical meaning, grammatical category, or both simultaneously. In line with this view, Bauer (2003) explains that the productivity of English morphology is reflected in its ability to continuously form new vocabulary in response to evolving communication needs. Based on this perspective, the analysis of derivational morphemes in authentic corpora is important because it can provide insight into English vocabulary development and demonstrate the contribution of morphological knowledge to the language learning process.

Previous studies have examined derivational morphology in various types of linguistic data and generally demonstrate its significant role in English vocabulary formation. Most of these studies have focused on identifying the types, patterns, and functions of derivational affixes in literary texts, textbooks, newspapers, and online media. Research results consistently reveal that derivational morphemes contribute to lexical expansion by forming new words with grammatical characteristics and meanings distinct from their base forms. Furthermore, morphological awareness developed through an understanding of the derivational process has also been recognized as a factor supporting improved vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension in EFL learners.

Several studies have examined the use of derivational morphemes in various forms of journalistic discourse. One such study was conducted by Fitria (2020), who analyzed derivational and inflectional morphemes in news articles published by Tempo.co. The study categorized both types of morphemes based on their grammatical functions and showed that derivational suffixes were the most frequently used form in journalistic texts. Although successful in describing the morphological characteristics of online news, the study focused on classifying linguistic forms and failed to link its analysis results to the development of English vocabulary learning.

The use of BBC News as a linguistic corpus has also become increasingly common in morphological research in recent years. Ambara and Utami (2023), for example, investigated derivational affixes in BBC News articles discussing the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The results showed that noun-forming suffixes derived from verbs were the most dominant derivational pattern in the analyzed corpus. These findings demonstrate that derivational morphology has a high level of productivity in authentic news discourse and indicate that journalism utilizes derivational forms to convey complex information concisely and effectively. However, the scope of this study is still limited to reporting on a single geopolitical issue, so the results do not fully represent the morphological characteristics of other types of news discourse.

A similar study was conducted by Kasnadevi and Utami (2024), who identified various types of derivational affixes in BBC News articles by grouping prefixes and suffixes based on their morphological categories. This study successfully compiled a fairly comprehensive inventory of derivational affix forms appearing in authentic journalistic texts. However, the focus of the study was still descriptive, emphasizing the identification of morphological forms rather than explaining the contribution of derivational morphology to vocabulary development in learning English as a foreign language (EFL).

Another relevant study was conducted by Pratama and Utami (2025), who focused on analyzing derivational suffixes in BBC Earth News articles. Their research findings indicate that suffixes that form nouns from verbs are the most productive derivational pattern in environmental news. While this research broadens understanding of the use of derivational morphology in authentic media, its scope is still limited to environmental news and only examines the types of derivational suffixes. Therefore, it does not explain the use of vocabulary in the business realm or discuss the pedagogical implications of derivational morphology for vocabulary learning.

More recent research has also begun to link the study of morphology to authentic news media. Badri et al. (2026) examined students' understanding of inflectional morphology through articles published in *The Jakarta Post*. The results showed that authentic news texts can be used to increase morphological awareness in the context of EFL learning. However, this study only focused on inflectional morphology and students' level of understanding, and therefore did not address the patterns of derivational morphology found in the news texts. Therefore, the study of the use of derivational morphemes in BBC Business News articles and their contribution to vocabulary development in EFL learning still leaves room for further research that requires further exploration.

In addition to describing morphological aspects, various studies in applied linguistics also confirm the close relationship between morphological awareness and vocabulary mastery. Various findings indicate that learners with a good level of morphological awareness generally have a broader vocabulary and higher reading comprehension skills. This ability arises because they can analyze unfamiliar words by

breaking them down into meaningful morpheme elements. Thus, the process of understanding new vocabulary no longer relies solely on memorization but also utilizes morphological structural analysis to interpret the meaning of previously encountered lexical items. These research findings demonstrate that morphology not only has value as a theoretical study in linguistics but also serves as a practical foundation that can support English language learning.

Despite making significant contributions, previous research still leaves several gaps that require further study. Although morphological studies have begun to utilize authentic news texts as data sources, the scope of this research remains relatively limited. For example, Badri et al. (2026) examined English Language Education students' understanding of inflectional morphology through an article published in *The Jakarta Post*. The study showed that the use of authentic news can increase learners' morphological awareness in an EFL context. However, the research focused solely on inflectional morphology and students' comprehension levels, leaving the characteristics of derivational morphology in news texts unfocused. Therefore, the use of derivational morphemes in authentic BBC Business News articles and their relevance to English vocabulary learning remains an area requiring further research.

The research gap is also evident in the research subjects selected in previous studies. Most studies using BBC News as a corpus primarily address specific issues, such as international conflict or environmental reporting. Meanwhile, business articles remain a relatively rare focus of research, despite the field being rich in vocabulary with complex morphological structures. Reports on economics, investment, finance, entrepreneurship, digital transformation, the labor market, and international trade consistently utilize a variety of derivational lexical forms. These characteristics make business news a rich corpus for examining the productivity of derivational morphology in contemporary English use.

Furthermore, the majority of previous research focuses on identifying and grouping derivational affixes based on their grammatical categories. Studies explaining the productivity of derivational processes in authentic discourse and linking them to English vocabulary learning are still limited. Consequently, the contribution of morphological analysis to developing vocabulary learning strategies for EFL learners has not been discussed in depth.

Another limitation is evident in the tendency of research to focus more on describing linguistic phenomena than on their application in language learning. This is despite the increasing recommendation of authentic materials in communicative language learning approaches. In this context, the analysis of derivational morphemes in BBC Business News articles has the potential to generate useful empirical evidence, both for determining authentic vocabulary sources and as a basis for designing vocabulary lessons oriented toward morphological analysis. Thus, combining morphological studies with their pedagogical implications can provide a more comprehensive contribution to the development of Applied English Linguistics.

This research aims to address this gap by focusing on the use of derivational morphemes in BBC Business News articles, employing a comprehensive morphological analysis. The analysis is based on the concept of derivational morphemes proposed by McCarthy (2002) and the theory of morphological productivity developed by Bauer (2003). Based on this framework, this research identifies various types of derivational morphemes, examines their role in English word formation, and explains how the lexical patterns found can be utilized to support vocabulary development in EFL learning. Unlike most previous research, which focuses primarily on describing morphological

structures, this research broadens its discussion by linking the results of the linguistic analysis to aspects of vocabulary pedagogy. Thus, this study combines the perspectives of theoretical morphology and applied linguistics within a single, integrated analytical framework.

Based on this background, this research aims to identify various types of derivational morphemes found in BBC Business News articles, analyze their morphological functions in English word formation, and outline their implications for vocabulary learning for EFL learners. Theoretically, the results of this study are expected to enrich morphological studies by providing empirical evidence sourced from authentic business journalism discourse. Meanwhile, from a practical perspective, the findings of this study are expected to contribute to English language teaching by providing authentic vocabulary resources that can be used to increase morphological awareness and strengthen learners' vocabulary acquisition.

THEORETICAL SUPPORT

Morphology and Word Formation

Morphology is a branch of linguistics that studies the internal structure of words and the rules governing their formation. This study focuses on how morphemes, the smallest meaningful units of language, interact and combine to produce lexical forms with diverse grammatical and semantic characteristics. As a fundamental component of linguistic competence, morphology provides a theoretical basis for explaining the development and expansion of vocabulary in English. The morphological productivity of English is reflected in its ability to form new vocabulary through various word-formation mechanisms, such as derivation, inflection, compounding, conversion, clipping, and blending (Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002; Bauer, 2003). Among these mechanisms, derivation plays a crucial role because it enables the formation of new lexical items capable of representing increasingly complex concepts, particularly in academic, scientific, and professional communication contexts (Bauer, 2008).

The role of word formation processes is becoming increasingly important in various forms of authentic discourse, particularly written texts, as journalists, academics, and professional practitioners tend to use vocabulary with complex morphological structures to convey information accurately and clearly. Therefore, an understanding of morphological structures not only has theoretical value in linguistic studies but also provides practical benefits for the development of language skills, particularly in vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. From an Applied Linguistics perspective, knowledge of morphology helps learners identify the meaning of unfamiliar words through the analysis of their constituent elements, recognize relationships between words derived from the same root, and develop more independent and systematic vocabulary learning strategies (Leontjev et al., 2023).

Derivational Morphemes

According to Carstairs-McCarthy (2002), derivational morphemes are bound morphemes that attach to a lexical base to create a new word with a different lexical meaning or grammatical function. Unlike inflectional morphemes, which express grammatical information such as tense, plurality, or comparison, derivational morphemes contribute to lexical expansion by producing entirely new vocabulary items. They may occur as prefixes, including *un-*, *re-*, *dis-*, and *mis-*, or as suffixes, such as *-tion*, *-ment*, *-ity*, *-ness*, *-ive*, *-al*, and *-ize* (Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002).

One of the main characteristics of derivational morphology is its ability to change the grammatical category of a word. Some derivational affixes function as morphemes that cause a change in word class, for example, changing a verb to a noun (*invest* → *investment*), a noun to an adjective (*economy* → *economic*), or an adjective to an adverb (*financial* → *financially*). On the other hand, there are also derivational affixes that do not change the grammatical category of the base form but instead produce a new lexical form within the same word class, such as *happy* → *unhappy*. The distinction between these two types of processes is important in morphological analysis because it reveals the systematic mechanism by which English expands its vocabulary through productive affixation.

Bauer (2003, 2008) also explains that derivational morphology is one of the main indicators of the productivity of word formation in English. Morphological productivity refers to the ability of an affix to continuously generate new lexical forms that are acceptable and usable by the speaking community. With the development of technology, increasing globalization, rapid digital transformation, and various social and economic changes, productive affixes continue to generate new vocabulary to meet communication needs. Therefore, the use of authentic texts is a relevant data source for observing how derivational patterns develop and are utilized in contemporary English.

Derivational Morphology in Business News Discourse

Business journalism is a form of contemporary English discourse characterized by a high level of lexical complexity. This characteristic arises because its reporting covers a variety of constantly evolving issues, such as economics, finance, investment, entrepreneurship, the labor market, digital technology, and international trade. Conveying information about these areas requires the use of vocabulary that is not only precise but also able to accurately represent concepts. Therefore, many terms used in business news are the result of derivational morphological processes. Various lexical forms, such as *investment*, *globalization*, *productivity*, *profitability*, *regulation*, *industrialization*, *digitalization*, *competitiveness*, and *entrepreneurship*, demonstrate that derivational processes play a significant role in shaping the vocabulary used in business discourse.

As an international news source, BBC Business News provides an authentic corpus representing contemporary English use in the context of global communication. Unlike material that has been simplified for educational purposes, the articles in this section present language used naturally by speakers for an international audience. Thus, the vocabulary appearing in BBC Business News reflects realistic lexical forms that EFL learners are likely to encounter in academic reading, professional communication, and various internationally standardized English language assessments. From a morphological perspective, the analysis of derivational morphemes in the corpus provides an opportunity to identify productive word-formation patterns in contemporary English usage. Furthermore, the study can provide empirical evidence on how derivational processes contribute to vocabulary expansion in contemporary English (Bauer, 2008).

Morphological Awareness and EFL Vocabulary Learning

Morphological awareness is a learner's ability to recognize, understand, and analyze word-forming structures through the identification of roots, prefixes, and suffixes. This ability helps learners interpret the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary using morphological analysis, so that the comprehension process does not rely solely on

memorization or dictionary use. Carlisle (2000) explains that morphological awareness makes a significant contribution to reading comprehension because learners who can decipher complex word structures tend to more easily interpret new vocabulary encountered in authentic texts. In line with this opinion, Kieffer and Lesaux (2012) state that morphological awareness plays a role in expanding vocabulary mastery through the ability to recognize meaningful relationships between words from the same word family.

In the context of second language acquisition, derivational morphology is increasingly viewed as a component that contributes independently to vocabulary mastery. Leontjev, Huhta, and Tolvanen (2023) explain that knowledge of derivational morphology is a distinct construct from vocabulary breadth, although the two are closely related. These findings indicate that success in developing vocabulary is determined not only by the number of words mastered, but also by the ability to understand how derivational affixes form new words that are meaningfully related to their base forms.

The use of authentic news articles as a learning medium has also been shown to support the development of morphological awareness. Research conducted by Badri et al. (2026) showed that English Language Education students were better able to understand inflectional morphology when analyzing authentic newspaper articles than when studying linguistic examples presented separately. These results suggest that journalistic discourse provides a context for real-life language use, allowing learners to observe morphological patterns as they occur in written communication. Building on these findings, this study expands the focus of the study from inflectional morphology to derivational morphology, emphasizing that BBC Business News articles contain a variety of lexical forms resulting from derivational processes that have the potential to support vocabulary development in EFL learning.

Several recent studies also demonstrate that instruction that explicitly addresses derivational morphology has a positive impact on EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition. Through this approach, learners are encouraged to systematically analyze the structure of unfamiliar words, thereby improving their vocabulary recall, inferring meaning, and reading comprehension. Furthermore, learners who receive direct instruction in derivational morphology generally demonstrate a higher ability to recognize words with complex morphological structures compared to learners who only learn vocabulary through rote memorization.

Based on these findings, the use of authentic materials rich in derivational morphemes has important pedagogical value in vocabulary learning. BBC Business News articles present numerous examples of word formation that reflect the natural use of contemporary English. Exposure to these lexical forms provides learners with the opportunity to develop morphological awareness while expanding their vocabulary relevant to academic and professional communication needs.

Conceptual Framework of the Present Study

This study uses the theory of derivational morphology proposed by Carstairs-McCarthy (2002) as the primary basis for analyzing derivational morphemes found in BBC Business News articles. This framework is used to identify and classify derivational morphemes based on the concepts of prefixes and suffixes, as well as distinguishing between class-changing and class-maintaining derivations. To complement this analysis, this study also draws on the theory of morphological productivity developed by Bauer (2003, 2008), which explains the productivity and frequency of use of derivational affixes in authentic business discourse.

Meanwhile, the interpretation of the pedagogical implications of the research results is based on the concept of morphological awareness introduced by Carlisle (2000) and is supported by various recent studies on vocabulary acquisition in EFL learning contexts, including the study by Leontjev et al. (2023). Based on this framework, the identified derivational patterns are understood not only as linguistic phenomena, but also as authentic vocabulary sources that have the potential to support the development of learners' vocabulary mastery. Through the integration of these various theoretical perspectives, this study attempts to connect theoretical morphological studies with Applied Linguistics of English by demonstrating that BBC Business News articles can be utilized simultaneously as a linguistic corpus and as a relevant source of morphological-based vocabulary learning.

METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, focusing on describing and interpreting the occurrence of derivational morphemes in authentic English texts without involving variable manipulation or hypothesis testing. This approach is considered appropriate for linguistic research aimed at identifying, categorizing, and explaining linguistic phenomena based on data obtained from natural language use. Therefore, the research focuses on analyzing the form and function of derivational morphemes found in BBC Business News articles and their relevance to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) vocabulary learning.

The research data source comes from articles published in the BBC Business section of the official BBC News website. The research corpus consists of ten business news articles published between January and June 2026. Article selection was conducted using a purposive sampling technique because these texts represent authentic journalistic discourse that uses formal and specific vocabulary. Selected articles had to meet several criteria: they were published in the BBC Business column, written in English, contained comprehensive news content, not just brief news stories, and discussed topics related to business, economics, finance, technology, investment, employment, entrepreneurship, or international trade. The unit of analysis in this study included every lexical item containing derivational morphemes within the established corpus.

Data collection was conducted using document analysis techniques. The initial stage involved downloading all selected articles and then compiling them into a single textual corpus. Each article was then carefully read to identify words containing derivational morphemes. All lexical forms found were then recorded and transferred to a data sheet. After the identification process was complete, each word was analyzed based on its base form, derivational affixes, word class, derived word class, and morphological function. To ensure a systematic data grouping process, the researchers compiled a coding table containing information on article titles, sentence context, root words, derivational affixes, derived forms, changes in word class, and initial interpretations.

The data analysis process refers to the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which includes three stages: data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In the condensation stage, all lexical items containing derivational morphemes were selected, sorted, and then grouped according to their characteristics. Classification was carried out using the derivational morphology framework proposed by Carstairs-McCarthy (2002), which distinguishes between prefixes and suffixes and identifies derivations that change word class and those that maintain word class. Furthermore, Bauer's (2003) concept of morphological productivity

was used to explain the level of occurrence and productivity of derivational affixes in business news discourse.

In the data presentation stage, the results of the derivational morpheme identification are displayed in a table containing the root word, derived word, derivational affix, grammatical category, and the type of morphological process that occurred. Furthermore, the frequency of use of each affix is summarized to identify the most dominant derivational patterns in the research corpus. Qualitative interpretation then focuses on explaining the contribution of derivational processes to the formation of English vocabulary used in authentic business journalism.

The final stage of the research involves interpreting the identified derivational patterns and relating them to vocabulary learning in an EFL context. The discussion focuses on the pedagogical implications from a morphological awareness perspective, specifically regarding the potential of BBC Business News articles as a source of authentic vocabulary that can help learners understand word formation processes in English. Therefore, this study does not aim to directly assess learner abilities, but rather positions the results of the linguistic analysis as a learning resource that can be utilized in morphology-based vocabulary teaching.

To enhance the validity of the research results, the researchers conducted repeated readings of the corpus, reviewed the results of the derivational morpheme classification, and matched each lexical item with the theoretical framework proposed by Carstairs-McCarthy (2002) and Bauer (2003). The triangulation process between the corpus data and morphological theory was carried out to strengthen credibility while maintaining the consistency of the analysis results obtained.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research results and discussion should be presented in a single, integrated section with a clear, systematic, and concise presentation (Özçalışkan et al., 2017). In the discussion section, authors should emphasize the meaning, contributions, and implications of the research findings, rather than simply repeating information presented in the results section. Combining results and discussion in one section is also recommended because it can produce a more effective presentation flow and reduce the use of excessive citations (Gall & Borg, 1989).

A. Results

1. Corpus Description

This study examines the use of derivational morphemes found in five authentic BBC Business News articles selected through purposive sampling. The articles address a variety of contemporary business and economic issues, such as the application of artificial intelligence in the manufacturing sector, international trade policy, disruptions to transportation systems, the state of the Canadian economy, and investment in the semiconductor industry and artificial intelligence technology. This variety of topics yields a representative corpus that illustrates the characteristics of contemporary business journalism, which generally utilizes vocabulary with complex morphological structures to explain economic phenomena, technological innovation, and public policy.

An analysis was conducted on each lexical item containing derivational morphemes. All data were then identified and grouped based on their base form, type of derivational affix, grammatical category, derived word class, and morphological function. The classification process refers to the derivational morphology framework proposed by Carstairs-McCarthy (2002), which distinguishes derivational affixes into

prefixes and suffixes and categorizes derivational processes based on changes or continuity of word class.

Initial analysis results show that the use of derivational suffixes is far more dominant than prefixes across the entire research corpus. Most derived forms are formed through suffixation, particularly those that produce nouns from verbs or adjectives. This pattern demonstrates the distinctive characteristics of language used in business journalism: a tendency to utilize nominalization to convey economic processes, institutional activities, and technological developments in a more concise, formal, and efficient manner.

2. Types of Derivational Morphemes

The analysis results indicate that the derivational morphemes found in the corpus can be grouped into two main categories: prefixes and suffixes. Although both are used equally in the articles analyzed, the frequency of suffixes is much higher than that of prefixes, indicating a greater degree of morphological productivity.

In the research corpus, prefixes generally do not change the grammatical category of the base form, but function to modify or add lexical meaning. Some examples found include *re-* in *rehire* and *reintroduce*, *un-* in *unemployment*, and *non-* in *non-profit*. The use of these prefixes indicates that the derivational process plays a greater role in imparting new nuances of meaning to the base word without causing significant changes to its grammatical function.

In contrast, suffixes constituted the dominant derivational process. Various noun-forming suffixes such as *-tion*, *-ation*, *-ment*, *-ity*, *-ance*, and *-ure* were repeatedly identified. Likewise, adjective-forming suffixes including *-al*, *-ial*, *-ic*, and *-able* appeared in several business-related lexical items, while adverb-forming suffixes such as *-ly* occurred less frequently.

Table 1 presents representative examples of derivational morphemes identified in the corpus.

Table 1 Representative Examples of Derivational Morphemes

| Base Word | Derived Word | Affix | Morphological Process | Word Class Change |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| invest | investment | -ment | Suffixation | Verb → Noun |
| improve | improvement | -ment | Suffixation | Verb → Noun |
| create | creation | -tion | Suffixation | Verb → Noun |
| disrupt | disruption | -tion | Suffixation | Verb → Noun |
| operate | operation | -tion | Suffixation | Verb → Noun |
| communicate | communication | -ation | Suffixation | Verb → Noun |
| restrict | restriction | -tion | Suffixation | Verb → Noun |
| economy | economic | -ic | Suffixation | Noun → Adjective |
| finance | financial | -ial | Suffixation | Noun → Adjective |
| knowledge | knowledgeable | -able | Suffixation | Noun → Adjective |
| Europe | European | -an | Suffixation | Noun → Adjective |
| employ | unemployment | un- + -ment | Multiple Derivation | Verb → Noun |
| hire | rehire | re- | Prefixation | Verb → Verb |

3. Class-Changing and Class-Maintaining Derivation

The identified derivational morphemes were subsequently classified into class-changing and class-maintaining derivation. The findings demonstrate that class-changing derivation predominates in the corpus.

Most derivational suffixes transformed verbs into nouns, as illustrated by *invest* → *investment*, *improve* → *improvement*, *create* → *creation*, *communicate* → *communication*, and *restrict* → *restriction*. Other derivations changed nouns into adjectives, including *economy* → *economic*, *finance* → *financial*, and *Europe* → *European*. These transformations expanded the lexical repertoire while simultaneously changing grammatical categories.

Only a limited number of class-maintaining derivations were identified. Prefixes such as *re-* generally maintained the grammatical category of the base word while introducing semantic modification. For example, *hire* and *rehire* both function as verbs, although the derived form expresses repetition of the action.

The predominance of class-changing derivation suggests that BBC Business News relies heavily on lexical expansion to express complex economic concepts efficiently. Nominalization enables journalists to compress information into concise noun phrases that characterize formal journalistic writing.

4. Morphological Patterns in BBC Business News

Another prominent finding relates to the characteristics of the morphological patterns that emerged throughout the research corpus. Most of the derived forms found represent abstract concepts related to economics, technology, trade, finance, and public policy. In other words, this vocabulary is more often used to express specific processes, conditions, institutions, or characteristics rather than referring to concrete objects or entities.

This is evident in a number of abstract nouns, such as *investment*, *productivity*, *communication*, *implementation*, *automation*, *restriction*, *inflation*, *affordability*, and *disruption*, which are used to describe various economic activities and phenomena related to public policy. Furthermore, adjectives resulting from the derivational process, such as *economic*, *financial*, *industrial*, *digital*, and *European*, contribute to descriptive accuracy in conveying information. The use of this vocabulary reinforces the language characteristics commonly found in business journalism discourse.

Overall, the research results indicate that derivational morphology plays a significant role in shaping the formal lexical character of BBC Business News articles. The productivity of the suffixation process allows journalists to convey information about complex economic issues concisely, while remaining meaningful and linguistically accurate.

B. Discussion

1. The Dominance of Derivational Suffixes in BBC Business News

The results of this study indicate that suffixation is the most dominant derivational process in the BBC Business News corpus. Compared with prefixation, derivational suffixes are found in much greater numbers and contribute significantly to the formation of new vocabulary, particularly in producing nouns and adjectives. This finding aligns with Carstairs-McCarthy's (2002) view, which states that suffixation has a higher level of productivity than prefixation in English because it not only forms new lexemes but also often leads to changes in grammatical categories.

The productivity of suffixes in this study is evident from the high frequency of noun-forming suffixes, such as *-tion*, *-ation*, *-ment*, *-ity*, and *-ance*. These affixes produce various lexical forms that represent processes, states, institutions, and abstract concepts that are essential to business and economic discourse. Words such as *investment*, *improvement*, *communication*, *restriction*, *implementation*, *productivity*, and *affordability* demonstrate how the derivation process allows for the conveying of complex ideas through more concise lexical forms. Rather than explaining an action in a lengthy clause, journalists tend to utilize nominalization so that information can be conveyed concisely without compromising clarity of meaning.

This pattern supports Bauer's (2003) theory, which explains that derivational suffixes remain productive because they can continuously generate new vocabulary in line with evolving communication needs. In the realm of business journalism, various new terms continue to emerge to describe technological innovation, financial market dynamics, international trade, and economic policy. Therefore, the suffixation process is an effective mechanism for expanding vocabulary while maintaining accuracy of meaning and efficiency in language use.

The findings of this study also reinforce previous research on the use of derivational morphology in authentic news texts. Pratama and Utami (2025), for example, found that derivational suffixes were more dominant than prefixes in BBC Earth News articles. Although their study focused on environmental news, the results showed a similar trend in business sections. This similarity in patterns indicates that the use of suffixes is a productive characteristic that appears consistently across various BBC news genres, and is therefore not limited to one specific area of reporting.

2. Class-Changing Derivation as the Main Morphological Process

Another prominent finding in this study is the predominant use of derivations that change word class throughout the corpus. Most of the derivational processes found resulted in changes in grammatical category, particularly from verbs to nouns and from nouns to adjectives. In contrast, derivations that maintain word class occurred only in relatively small numbers. These results support Carstairs-McCarthy's (2002) argument, which states that one of the primary functions of derivational morphology is to form new lexical items with different grammatical categories and semantic meanings than their base forms.

The change from verbs to nouns is the most prominent pattern in business journalism discourse. Forms such as *invest* → *investment*, *create* → *creation*, *communicate* → *communication*, *restrict* → *restriction*, and *implement* → *implementation* demonstrate that nominalization is an important linguistic strategy for representing economic activities and institutional processes. Through this process, an action is no longer presented as an activity, but rather as a concept that can function as a subject, object, or complement in more complex sentence structures.

A similar pattern is also seen in derivations that transform nouns into adjectives. The use of suffixes in forms such as *economy* → *economic*, *finance* → *financial*, *industry* → *industrial*, and *Europe* → *European* provides the descriptive precision necessary for business news writing. The formation of adjectives through derivation allows writers to more concisely explain relationships with specific economic systems, institutions, geographic regions, or policies without the need for lengthy explanations.

In contrast, derivations that preserve word class are found only in a few cases. For example, the prefix *re-* in *rehire* changes the lexical meaning while maintaining the grammatical category of the base form. While this process enriches the nuances of a

word's meaning, its contribution to the formation of new vocabulary is not as significant as derivations that change word class. This situation aligns with Bauer's (2003) explanation, which states that prefixes generally function to provide semantic modification, while suffixes more often result in changes in lexical category. This pattern is clearly evident in the results of the corpus analysis of this study.

The dominance of derivations that change word classes also demonstrates the level of lexical complexity that is a key characteristic of business journalism. In many cases, journalists prefer to use abstract nouns rather than retaining verb forms because nominalization allows for a more concise, systematic, and efficient delivery of information. This characteristic supports concise discourse construction, yet still capable of containing complex information, as is common in formal written English.

3. Morphological Productivity in Business Journalism

The findings of this study also indicate that business journalism has a high level of morphological productivity. Bauer (2003) explains that morphological productivity is the ability of an affix to continuously produce new lexical forms that are acceptable and understandable to language users. The high frequency of occurrence of suffixes such as *-tion*, *-men*, and *-ity* in the corpus indicates that these affixes continue to function productively in forming vocabulary in contemporary English business discourse.

This characteristic is closely related to the nature of business reporting, which continuously reviews technological developments, investment strategies, economic policies, and the dynamics of international trade. Ongoing changes in these various fields demand the presence of vocabulary capable of accurately representing new concepts. In this context, derivational morphology acts as a word-formation mechanism that allows for the emergence of new terms without losing the meaningful connection with the base form. Thus, the semantic relationship between the base word and its derived form remains easily recognized by readers.

This phenomenon can be observed, for example, in the word pairs *implement and implementation* or *productive and productivity*. Even though the derived form may be unfamiliar, readers still have the opportunity to infer its meaning through recognition of the same root. This demonstrates that the derivation process not only generates new vocabulary but also supports lexical inference, helping readers understand unfamiliar terms, especially when confronted with authentic texts.

The findings of this study align with those of Leontjev et al. (2023), who asserted that morphological awareness contributes to learners' ability to interpret the meaning of new vocabulary through recognition of a word's internal structure. Therefore, the BBC Business News article can be seen as a valuable learning resource, presenting numerous examples of productive word-formation processes in the natural use of contemporary English.

4. Implications for EFL Vocabulary Learning

From a pedagogical perspective, the results of this study indicate that BBC Business News articles have significant potential as learning resources to increase the morphological awareness of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The use of authentic news texts allows learners to directly learn the relationship between root words and their derived forms, so that vocabulary acquisition relies not only on memorizing individual words but also on an understanding of the mechanisms of word formation in English.

This view aligns with Carlisle (2000), who stated that morphological awareness makes a significant contribution to vocabulary development because learners who are able to recognize derivational patterns tend to more easily interpret the meaning of new vocabulary. The findings of this study strengthen this argument, considering that most derived forms found in the corpus still show a clear relationship to their base forms. By recognizing these relationships, learners can utilize their existing knowledge to understand other words derived from the same root.

For example, understanding the relationship between *invest* and *investment*, *communicate* and *communication*, or *economy* and *economic* allows learners to acquire several related vocabulary words in a single learning process. This approach not only expands vocabulary mastery but also helps improve understanding of grammatical functions because students can observe how the derivational process affects word class changes within a sentence. Thus, vocabulary learning becomes more systematic than if each word were studied separately.

The results of this study also support the view of Schmitt and Zimmerman (2002), who asserted that explicitly teaching derivational morphology contributes to more productive vocabulary use. When learners understand the function of commonly used derivational affixes, they are better able to estimate the meaning of unfamiliar words, produce context-appropriate lexical forms, and better comprehend the content of authentic texts. Therefore, using BBC Business News articles in vocabulary learning can be an effective alternative because learners learn derivational patterns through real communication contexts, rather than simply through vocabulary lists detached from their use.

The findings of this study also complement the research of Badri et al. (2026), which showed that using authentic newspaper texts can improve learners' understanding of English morphology. Unlike the aforementioned research, which focused on inflectional morphology, this study demonstrates that derivational morphology in authentic business articles also has significant potential to support vocabulary development. Therefore, analyzing morphology in news texts can be an effective learning approach to strengthen vocabulary mastery and improve reading skills in EFL contexts.

In addition to contributing to theoretical studies, this research also offers practical implications for English language teaching, particularly in vocabulary learning. The results indicate that authentic business news can be used as teaching materials that encourage students to recognize recurring derivational patterns and understand the systematic relationship between base forms and their derivatives. This approach helps learners build interconnected vocabulary networks, thus deepening the vocabulary acquisition process beyond simply memorizing individual words.

5. Research Contribution to English Applied Linguistics

This research contributes to the development of Applied English Linguistics, both theoretically and pedagogically. Theoretically, the results indicate that derivational morphology remains highly productive in contemporary English business journalism discourse. Analysis of BBC Business News articles reveals that various derivational suffixes are consistently used to form vocabulary related to economic activity, technological development, industrial sectors, and public policy. These findings support Bauer's (2003) view that derivational morphology is a key mechanism in the expansion of the vocabulary of modern English.

Furthermore, the results of this study also reinforce the classification of derivational morphology proposed by Carstairs-McCarthy (2002). Based on corpus

analysis, suffixation and derivation, which change word classes, emerged as the most dominant word formation patterns in authentic news articles. Although English recognizes the use of both prefixes and suffixes as part of the derivational process, the research data indicate that suffixes contribute significantly to the formation of new vocabulary because they more frequently result in changes in grammatical category. Thus, this study not only confirms the relevance of existing morphological theory but also presents empirical evidence derived from language use in contemporary business journalism.

Another theoretical contribution is evident in the use of BBC Business News as an authentic linguistic corpus. Unlike most previous studies that use literary works, textbooks, general-themed newspapers, or learning materials as data sources, this study specifically selects business news articles as its object of study. This choice provides a new perspective, as the domain of business journalism remains relatively rarely explored in morphological research, despite its characteristically specific and complex vocabulary use. Given that business news routinely discusses technological developments, international trade, the financial sector, and economic policy, this corpus provides numerous examples of lexical forms formed through derivational processes. Therefore, this study broadens the scope of derivational morphology studies by demonstrating that authentic business discourse is a rich and relevant data source for analyzing the productivity of word formation in English.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to examine the occurrence of derivational morphemes in five BBC Business News articles and explain their implications for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) vocabulary learning. The analysis shows that derivational morphology plays a significant role in shaping the lexical characteristics of business news discourse. Of the various derivational processes identified, suffixation emerged as the most dominant pattern compared to prefixation. Noun-forming suffixes, such as *-tion*, *-ation*, *-ment*, and *-ity*, as well as adjective-forming suffixes, such as *-al*, *-ic*, and *-ial*, were the most frequently used affixes in the research corpus. Furthermore, derivational processes that change word class were found more frequently than those that maintain word class. This condition indicates that derivational morphology not only functions to expand vocabulary but also plays a role in changing grammatical categories so that concepts related to economics, technology, and business can be conveyed more precisely and efficiently.

The findings of this study align with the views of Carstairs-McCarthy (2002) and Bauer (2003), who position derivational morphology as a key mechanism in expanding the English lexicon. The high use of nominalizations in the corpus reflects the formal, information-dense language characteristic of business journalism, which focuses on conveying abstract concepts. In this context, abstract nouns are used to represent various processes, policies, and institutional activities, allowing for concise presentation of information without compromising on meaning. Thus, the BBC Business News article provides compelling evidence that derivational morphology plays a crucial role in supporting accurate and effective written communication in the professional sphere.

Viewed from the perspective of Applied Linguistics of English, the results of this study also demonstrate that authentic business news has significant potential as a source of vocabulary learning in EFL contexts. By understanding the relationship between root words and their derived forms, learners can increase morphological awareness, predict the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary, and simultaneously expand lexical mastery and understanding of grammatical structures. Therefore, the use of authentic news texts can

be considered as an alternative for morphology-based vocabulary teaching, as it provides learners with the opportunity to explore word formation through real-life communication contexts while simultaneously supporting improved reading skills.

However, this study still has several limitations that require attention. The analysis was conducted on only five BBC Business News articles, so the scope of the research corpus is relatively limited and does not fully represent the overall characteristics of BBC news discourse. Therefore, future research is recommended to use a broader corpus, including other sections, such as *Technology*, *Science*, *Health*, and *World News*, so that derivational morphology patterns can be compared across various types of news. In addition to expanding the corpus, future research could also combine corpus-based morphological analysis with experimental or classroom research to examine the effect of using authentic news texts on the development of morphological awareness, vocabulary mastery, and students' reading comprehension. This approach is expected to enrich the study of derivational morphology and strengthen its contribution to the development of linguistic research and English language teaching practice.

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