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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MORPHOLOGICAL AWARENESS BETWEEN EFL TEACHERS OF FORMAL AND NONFORMAL EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY

by

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Abstract:

The ability to dissect words into the smallest unit of language is not something many people can do. However, studies on linguistic awareness have shown that there is a correlation between morphological awareness (MA) and a language learner's level of language proficiency. This study aimed to investigate the morphological awareness of EFL teachers from formal and non-formal education; conventional school and English courses. The teachers-participants were selected from both institutions, tested with a morphological test, and interviewed to verify and confirm their MA test results. Descriptive statistic was used to analyze the results of tests and content analysis to analyze the interviews. Results of this study showed that the non-formal education EFL teachers demonstrated a better understanding of morphological knowledge than the formal education EFL teachers. Moreover, all teachers acknowledged the importance of morphological awareness in their language learning teaching. This study not only contributes to the growing area of morphology within the Indonesian context, but it also encourages teachers, particularly from formal education, to strengthen their understanding of morphological knowledge to design learning materials that fulfill students' needs of morphological knowledge and awareness, and invites educators and policymakers to consider designing morphologically-focused content.

Keywords: *EFL teachers, morphological awareness, morphological knowledge*

Abstrak:

Kemampuan untuk membedah kata-kata ke dalam satuan bahasa terkecil bukanlah sesuatu yang dapat dilakukan banyak orang. Namun, penelitian tentang kesadaran linguistik telah menunjukkan bahwa ada korelasi antara kesadaran morfologi (MA) dan tingkat kemahiran bahasa pembelajar bahasa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kesadaran morfologi guru EFL dari pendidikan formal dan nonformal; sekolah konvensional dan kursus bahasa Inggris. Para guru-peserta dipilih dari kedua lembaga, diuji dengan tes morfologi, dan diwawancarai untuk memverifikasi dan mengkonfirmasi hasil tes MA mereka. Statistik deskriptif digunakan untuk menganalisis hasil tes dan analisis konten untuk menganalisis wawancara. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa guru EFL pendidikan nonformal menunjukkan pemahaman pengetahuan morfologi yang lebih baik daripada guru EFL pendidikan formal. Selain itu, semua guru mengakui pentingnya kesadaran morfologi dalam pengajaran pembelajaran bahasa mereka. Penelitian ini dimaksudkan untuk mendorong guru, khususnya dari pendidikan formal, untuk memperkuat pemahaman mereka tentang pengetahuan morfologi untuk merancang materi pembelajaran yang memenuhi kebutuhan pengetahuan dan kesadaran morfologi siswa.

Kata kunci: *kesadaran morfologi, pengetahuan morfologi, guru EFL*

INTRODUCTION

Morphological awareness is an essential ability for language learners to construct words. It refers to the ability to analyze words into meaningful units, such as morphemic parts (Wang & Zhang, 2023), and contributes to different aspects of word knowledge, such as form, meaning, and word order (Sukying, 2020). Despite its importance, some studies have found that teachers' lack of morphological awareness affected students' performance in EFL classes (Moats, 2009; Newton, 2018). Recent studies have shown that morphological awareness has a beneficial impact on language comprehension for EFL learners. It enhances learners' vocabulary knowledge, which in turn supports their reading comprehension and helps teachers develop effective, morphologically rich vocabulary instruction. Recognizing affixes and receiving explicit affix instruction in English language classrooms helps learners acquire vocabulary and word knowledge (Badawi, 2019; Sukying, 2020; Sumarni, 2016; Wang & Zhang, 2023). These findings have motivated teachers to revise their teaching strategies by incorporating explicit morphological instruction, which positively impacts students' reading comprehension (Amirjalili & Jabbari, 2018; Apel et al., 2013; Bunau, 2023; Memiş, 2019; Sulistyawati et al., 2021) and writing performance (Apel & Werfel, 2014; Asaad & Shabdin, 2019; McCutchen et al., 2022). Given its broad impact, morphological awareness plays a significant role in supporting students' overall language development.

Despite the importance of fostering students' awareness of word formation, morphological awareness is found to be performed poorly by teachers. Several studies have shown that students' lack of awareness in morphology is due to teachers' inadequacy in linguistic awareness, including morphological awareness, and its pedagogy (Moats, 2009; Newton, 2018). Carlisle (2003) revealed that students' negligence in following instructions on the morphological structure of words was due to teachers' limited knowledge of linguistic awareness in reading. Linguistic pedagogy is often overlooked in English language and teaching classrooms, especially in the Indonesian context. Teachers with solid linguistic competence will greatly benefit their students if they are committed to upgrading their abilities through research-based language instruction (Moats, 2009). Teachers must first understand before transferring the knowledge to their students.

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Most studies on morphological awareness have been predominantly concerned with the relationship between morphological awareness and reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge in students. So far, very little attention has been paid to the role of morphological awareness of EFL teachers, especially in the Indonesian context. At the time this study was conducted, only one study from Indonesia had explored the morphological awareness of Indonesian EFL teachers. Bunau (2023) investigated 71 teachers across 24 provinces in Indonesia on their awareness of derivational and inflectional words in reading comprehension texts. The study revealed that 60%-80% teachers demonstrated morphological awareness. Newton (2018) explored a three-year longitudinal case study of three elementary teachers who studied morphemic features and their impact on vocabulary instruction. All participants demonstrated significant improvement in their vocabulary instruction as they gained new insights into the importance of morphological knowledge and awareness. In this regard, the present study aimed to investigate the morphological awareness of Indonesian EFL teachers from both formal and non-formal education.

This study aims to contribute to this expanding field of research by exploring morphological awareness among EFL teachers, especially in the Indonesian context, and how it was implemented in the class. Additionally, the findings may support educators and teachers in integrating linguistic knowledge, especially morphology, into designing English learning materials. Previous studies have demonstrated a significant correlation between morphological knowledge and awareness in improving EFL learners' word knowledge, language comprehension, and production. Unfortunately, this study is unable to encompass the entire comprehension of morphological awareness and the rigorous process of data collection and analysis due to practical and time limitations. Nonetheless, the researcher showed some interest in exploring morphology to gain in-depth knowledge, as it was a challenging yet important linguistic area.

In an exploratory study, Washburn & Mulcahy (2019) administered a morphological awareness test to 350 teachers enrolled in a teacher preparation program. The test was designed comprehensively by examining teachers' explicit knowledge of morphology and pedagogical content knowledge about teaching morphology. Findings revealed that teachers had difficulty with the technical terminology of morphology and lacked possible teaching scenarios of

morphology. While data collection was thorough, deeper insight into teachers' knowledge of morphology and its pedagogical content could be gained through an interview or an open-ended questionnaire. In a more recent study, Bunau (2023) employed closed-ended questionnaires featuring a 5-point Likert Scale to 71 in-service teachers from 24 provinces. Findings indicated that the teachers were aware of derivational and inflectional words in reading texts, with scores of 76.29% and 74.05%. Both studies share a commonality in that all participants were enrolled in teacher training programs.

Morphology concerns the internal structure of words and various processes that allow humans to constantly expand the vocabulary of a language (Kortmann, 2020). The smallest meaningful unit of language is called a morpheme; thus, "morphological awareness" suggests an awareness of the smallest meaningful unit of language. For instance, the word 'sleep' is a free morpheme and adds the affix *a-* to become 'asleep'. Students may notice that *sleep* and *asleep* differ in both meanings and grammatical functions, prompting a deeper exploration of derivational affixes that influence word class and meaning. In contrast, inflectional affixes refer to grammatical features, including number and tense (Brinton & Brinton, 2010).

The terms 'morphological awareness' and 'morphological knowledge' have created confusion for some; however, Apel (2014) clarified that morphological awareness refers to the conscious reflection on morphemes. In contrast, morphological knowledge, or morphological production, is a subconscious process due to its occurrence in spontaneous spoken language. This may help explain why morphological awareness tests are mostly conducted in written formats, such as reading and writing tasks. Therefore, this paper attempted to explore morphological awareness in written morphemes. Adopting a qualitative case study approach, the data were collected through a researcher-designed morphology test based on the morphological framework of Brinton & Brinton (2010) and Kortmann (2020), as well as a semi-structured interview to capture teachers' perspectives on teaching morphology features in the classroom. The data were analyzed using content analysis by identifying recurring patterns, similarities, and differences.

The objective of the present study is to investigate the morphological awareness of EFL teachers from formal and non-formal education, conventional school and English course, and

their perspectives on morphological awareness. The researcher was keen to see the level of morphological awareness, considering that the English materials are designed differently across these two educational contexts. Moreover, this study contributes to the growing area of morphology studies, particularly in the Indonesian context, and offers insights for teachers, educators, and policymakers to consider the integration of linguistics-based content.

Thus we propose research questions:

1. To what extent is the morphological awareness of EFL teachers in formal and non-formal education?
2. What are the similarities and differences in perspectives between morphological awareness from formal and non-formal education EFL teachers?

METHOD

Design

This qualitative research employed a case study design to gain insight into a specific case or phenomenon. The researcher investigated a case or phenomenon, namely the morphological awareness of Indonesian EFL teachers. To investigate this, the researcher administered a morphological awareness test, and the results were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Additionally, a semi-structured interview was conducted to capture teachers' perceptions of morphology features in their classrooms, and the results were analyzed using content analysis. Furthermore, this study presented a comparative analysis between two different groups, teachers from formal and non-formal education settings, to gain rich and all-around information within the case. The advantage of case study design is its potential as a 'step to action', prompting the outcomes to be put to use, a source of development, within-institutional feedback, formative evaluation, and educational policy-making (Cohen et al., 2017). Accordingly, the results of this study aim to offer useful recommendations for educators and policymakers.

Participant

This study employed purposive sampling based on characteristics specified by the researcher (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The participants consisted of six EFL teachers, three from conventional schools and the other three from English courses. These two educational

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settings typically use differently designed English learning materials, which were expected to influence their linguistic knowledge. Additionally, the participants were assigned pseudonyms to protect their identities (BERA, 2018).

Table 1: Participants' Identity

<i>Participants</i>	<i>Institutions</i>	<i>Length of teaching experience</i>
<i>Rasha</i>	<i>Public school</i>	<i>7 years</i>
<i>Laila</i>	<i>English course</i>	<i>9 months</i>
<i>Doni</i>	<i>Public school</i>	<i>1 year</i>
<i>Isya</i>	<i>English course</i>	<i>7 years</i>
<i>Gendis</i>	<i>Private school</i>	<i>12 years</i>
<i>Diyan</i>	<i>English course</i>	<i>6 years</i>

Instrument

A morphological awareness test was administered to acquire the quantitative data on morphological awareness from both formal and non-formal teachers. The test was designed based on the morphological content framework of Brinton & Brinton (2010) and Kortmann (2020) and was further inspired by the previous studies that have done similar tests. The test consisted of seven parts, each with four to six questions. The test was adapted from studies by Apel (2017) and Apel et al. (2021) on morpheme identification, Apel (2014) on understanding the meaning of affixes, affixes recognition, and affixes use, Wang & Zhang (2023) on morpheme recognition and morpheme discrimination, and Apel & Werfel (2014) on word relatives.

Table 2: The Framework of Morphological Knowledge

<i>Free morpheme –base/root</i>	<i>Bound morpheme – affixation</i>	<i>Other word-formation processes</i>
<i>Lexical (content word)</i>	<i>Derivational</i>	<i>Compounding</i>
	<i>o Prefixation</i>	<i>Conversion</i>
	<i>o Suffixation</i>	<i>Blends</i>
<i>Grammatical (function word)</i>	<i>Inflectional</i>	<i>Clippings</i>
	<i>o Suffixation</i>	<i>Initialism</i>

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A semi-structured interview was conducted to gather qualitative data on EFL teachers' perspectives regarding morphological knowledge and awareness, as well as their implementation of these concepts in the classrooms. Participants answered ten interview questions through various formats, including voice calls, voice messages, written notes, and in-person conversations. To ensure alignment with the objectives of both instruments, content validity was established through expert review.

Data collecting technique

The data were collected over two weeks. Before collecting the data, the researcher obtained permission from all participants. The participants included three individuals from two English courses, and three others were from three different public schools. They were provided with a general overview of the study, including the purpose of the study and how data was obtained through a test and an interview. After getting their permission, the researcher distributed the test via a Google Form link shared through a messaging application. For the interview, participants were given the flexibility to choose their preferred format, online or in person. If they preferred online, they could select from several modes, including voice call, voice message, or written note. While the interviews were primarily delivered in English, Indonesian was used when participants appeared confused or misinterpreted the questions.

Data analysis technique

The test results were analyzed using descriptive statistics, which are commonly employed in quantitative research as they indicate numerical data and provide insights into how numbers, or scores, in relations to each other (Creswell, 2012). However, quantitative data is possible in a case study, as it covers behaviours or events relevant to the research focus (Yin, 2018). In this study, the test generated numerical data in the form of participant scores. The researcher calculated each score by dividing the number of correct answers by the total number of test items. These scores were then converted into percentages, described, and interpreted accordingly.

The results of the semi-structured interviews were examined using qualitative content analysis, an approach that involves organizing or segmenting data to identify patterns, similarities, and differences (Miles et al., 2014). With participants' consent, all interviews were recorded, transcribed, and tabulated (*see Appendix*). The researcher provided a considerable

description of the tabulated data, along with interpretations and comparisons between findings and relevant literature. Similarities and differences in participants' test performances and perspectives on morphology features taught in the class were examined to answer the second research question. To enhance the validity of findings, triangulation was employed by comparing results from both the test and the interviews.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

This segment addresses the first research question, which explored the extent of morphological awareness among EFL teachers in formal and non-formal educational settings. As previously mentioned, the Morphological Awareness Test (MAT) was developed on a relevant theoretical framework and previous studies that had done similar research. The test consisted of seven parts, each representing different components of morphological awareness. It had 40 items and scored one point each. Instructions were provided for each section to guide participants in understanding the tasks. Table 4 below presents the participants' scores on the MAT, including individual part scores and the total score, all converted into percentages.

Table 3: Participants' MAT scores

<i>Aspects of morphological awareness</i>	<i>Rasha</i>	<i>Laila</i>	<i>Doni</i>	<i>Isya</i>	<i>Gendis</i>	<i>Diyan</i>
<i>Morpheme identification (5 items)</i>	5	5	0	5	5	0
<i>Affix meanings (9 items)</i>	8	8	6	9	8	9
<i>Affix recognition (9 items)</i>	6	9	6	9	7	9
<i>Affix uses (6 items)</i>	4	6	5	6	4	5
<i>Morpheme recognition (4 items)</i>	3	3	3	4	3	3
<i>Morpheme discrimination (4 items)</i>	4	3	3	4	2	3
<i>Word relatives (3 items)</i>	3	3	3	3	3	3
<i>Total</i>	33	37	26	40	32	32
<i>In percentages</i>	82,5%	92,5%	60%	100%	80%	80%

The first part of the test assessed the ability to identify morphemes in a word. They were instructed to identify the base words, or root words, along with any affixes. Participants

answered by stating the number of morphemes and naming the affixes used. In conclusion, four out of six participants correctly answered this part. The second part tested the understanding of the affixes' meaning and consisted of two sub-parts. In the first sub-part, participants selected a word with a correct derived and inflected word. Two participants responded incorrectly, even though the meaning of the prefixes was being provided. In the second sub-part, participants identified the meaning of affixes *re-*, *mini-*, *-ly*, *-ize*, which resulted in errors with *-ly*, *-ize*, and *-able*. The third part, which assessed the ability to recognize the correct affix, consisted of two sub-parts. Participants completed the sentences with the correct spelling of affixes in the first sub-part. Three mistakes were found, such as choosing suffix *-able* over *-ance*, answering *nothing* despite being given the clue word, and answering with a non-existent affix in English morphology. The second sub-part instructed participants to select correct affixes, and three participants responded incorrectly.

The fourth part was completing sentences with correct derivational and inflectional words by getting a hint with the same base word but different affixes. Four participants answered incorrectly over three different questions. The fifth part tested the recognition of the morphological relationships between pairs of words. Participants chose between *yes* and *no* to a statement. Four participants responded *no* to the correct statement of 'fabulous comes from fable'. One participant responded *yes* to the incorrect statement of 'corner comes from corn'. The sixth part tested the ability to distinguish compound structure by identifying the odd word from the list based on meaning or structure. Four participants made incorrect responses on this section. The seventh part tested the ability to find derivational or inflectional forms of the base word. All participants successfully identified relative words using various affixes.

This segment provides the participants' experiences and perspectives on morphological awareness. There were nine questions representing nine focuses of morphology awareness (see *Appendix*). Most participants agreed that they did well on the test, but one found some parts confusing, and one did not provide any information. Participants had no significant difficulty sharing their thoughts on what morphological awareness was. Most participants described morphological awareness as the study of words, how words function, and why they are learned. All participants agreed that morphological awareness had an important role in the ELT class. However, one participant mentioned that morphological features were not something

deliberately focused on during English learning. Moreover, they incorporated knowledge of morphology into their English class, including vocabulary building, spelling activities, grammar, phonology activities, reading, and writing exercises.

Morphological knowledge of participants was also explored. Three participants could not define free and bound morphemes, while four participants could not explain derived and inflected words. Only one participant answered incorrectly on the understanding of compound words, having confused it with comparative and superlative forms. All participants agreed that morphological awareness supported students in developing their vocabulary and writing. They had implemented strategies they believed supported students' morphological awareness. Some emphasized vocabulary building, as it was more practical given the expectation for students to learn new words every meeting. One participant focused on tenses and sentence structures as part of developing morphological awareness. Another emphasized derivational and inflectional forms, particularly identifying allomorph sounds of /-s/, /-z/, /-ɪz/, /-t/, /-d/, /-ɪd/. The other participants gave unspecific responses to enhance students' morphological features.

Discussion

The first research question in this study was to investigate the EFL teachers' morphological awareness. The findings revealed that all participants demonstrated a good level of morphological awareness. As noted earlier, each part provided explicit instructions to guide participants in understanding the tasks. For this reason, participants demonstrated a positive effect on their performance. The concept of morphological instruction, as explored by Amirjalili & Jabbari (2018), highlighted that such instruction benefits learners in identifying the meaning of complex or unfamiliar words. In line with this finding, Sukying (2020) and Anwar & Rosa (2020) confirmed that explicit instructions of English affixes are effective for EFL learners. However, the instructions provided in this current MAT were comparatively simpler than in the previous study. Despite its clear instructions, two participants misidentified the number of morphemes. One of them misunderstood a morpheme with the affix found in the given word, while the other was not clear on how she decided to determine the morphemes. A study by Washburn et al. (2011) presented a similar finding that preservice teachers had difficulty counting the number of morphemes on the morphology survey. These mistakes may stem from a limited understanding of morphological features. Indonesian EFL Teachers usually focus on

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the prescribed teaching materials that mostly cover functional language over linguistic features. Over time, this practice unintentionally led teachers to pay less attention to linguistic features, such as morphology. Another finding related to a similar cause was the participants' oversight of the instructions. Two participants selected the incorrect affixed words despite being informed about the meaning of the affixes. Explicit instructions supposedly supported students in having strategies for finding unknown words (Amirjalili & Jabbari, 2018), and that was what the other five participants did. There was also confusion among participants in interpreting the meaning of prefixes and suffixes in the given words. Suffix meaning tends to create more confusion than the prefix meaning, as the suffix brings two functions, which are changing the meaning of the root word and changing the part of speech of the root word (Brinton & Brinton, 2010). For instance, suffix *-ly* as the adverb-forming means like the base word, while *-ize* as the verb-forming means to make or to become (Wolter & Green, 2013).

The next finding was about participants' ability to recognize the correct affix, which likely reflected their level of understanding of morphological features. The same two participants mentioned earlier, joined by another participant, made errors by misinterpreting the meaning of certain suffixes. This is understandable since suffixes can often be confusing due to their dual function, both meaning and grammatical function. Derwing (1976), Apel (2014), and Wang & Zhang (2023) have suggested that the ability to recognize the morphological relationships between pairs of words serves as an effective measure. For instance, four participants incorrectly answered 'no' to the statement 'fabulous comes from fable'. This type of measurement gave unique encouragement to language learners, as it prompts reflection on word relationships that are often overlooked. Another task required participants to identify the odd word among a set of compound words, which also led to errors made by four participants. This technique is called morpheme discrimination, which can improve morphological knowledge (Wang & Zhang, 2023). The final part of the test appeared to be equally easy for all participants since they made no errors. They managed to extend a base word by adding appropriate affixes. This activity, known as a relative task, is a form of production task (Apel & Werfel, 2014) that involves learners generating multiple derivational and inflectional forms of a root word. This activity indicated strong vocabulary-building skills among EFL teachers as

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they were able to extend base words with various affixes, which reflected a solid understanding of word formation processes essential for effective language teaching.

The second research question explored the perspectives of EFL teachers on morphological awareness, revealing both similarities and differences in views. Five out of six participants were consistent with their responses to the first interview question. Their strong test performance supported their self-reported confidence in morphological awareness. One participant expressed some confusion in her response, which was also reflected in her test performance, though she still performed reasonably well. In contrast, the remaining participant did not provide any reflection on his performance during the interview and obtained the lowest score among the group, with a higher number of errors. Overall, all participants scored above 50% which aligned with expectations given their background as graduates from the English language department and are presumed to recognize linguistic features.

As previously noted, morphology awareness and morphology knowledge are often misshaped, largely due to a lack of clear definition in previous studies (Wang & Zhang, 2023). Apel (2014) explained that they differ in terms of how they are produced. Morphological awareness is produced consciously, while morphological knowledge is produced spontaneously. Morphological awareness is the ability to manipulate the knowledge of morphology in a conscious, reflective manner. Wang & Zhang (2023) studied the correlation between morphology awareness and morphology knowledge in vocabulary knowledge and came up with a statement that morphological awareness significantly mediated the relation between morphological knowledge and vocabulary knowledge. This confusion was evident in some participants' responses, as they inaccurately defined morphological awareness as a study of linguistics and confused it with the concept of morphology. While this research did not initially plan to differentiate the two terms, the researcher treated them as interrelated concepts that influenced one another.

All participants agreed that morphological awareness had an important role in the ELT class as they help learners to improve their language learning process, such as improving spelling, reading, and writing (Apel et al., 2013; Apel & Werfel, 2014; Grammenou, 2020; McBride-Chang et al., 2005; Newton, 2018; Sumarni, 2016; Wang & Zhang, 2023). Supporting

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this view, Newton (2018) explored how morphological awareness assisted teachers with their academic vocabulary, allowing them to effectively assist students in building vocabulary by utilizing instructional techniques. McBride-Chang et al. (2005) revealed that English morphemes are strongly associated with phonological units; thus, morphological and phonological awareness assist vocabulary development. This suggests that the integration of morphological awareness in ELT classes can create a comprehensive approach to language learning that addresses multiple linguistic skills.

Another finding revealed that some participants struggled with the terminology despite their understanding of the underlying concepts. For instance, some could not recall terms like free and bound morphemes, inflectional and derivational forms. However, they remembered after the researcher provided brief explanations. This contrast was evident in their MAT results and interview responses. On the test, most participants successfully identified the number of morphemes in the derived or inflected words, selected the correct spelling of prefixes and affixes, and recognized root word relatives. As previously mentioned, they studied morphology in undergraduate programs and continue to apply the knowledge in their teaching practices. This finding aligns with Moats (2009), who revealed that teachers often demonstrated limited linguistic content of knowledge due to insufficient preparation and awareness in areas such as phonemes, graphemes, morphemes, parts of speech, and the like. Nevertheless, forgetting certain terminology is not unusual among English teachers.

These findings led to an examination of similarities and differences between formal and nonformal education EFL teachers. Based on MAT's results, the median score from formal education EFL teachers was 74.2%, while non-formal education EFL teachers was 90.8%. This suggests that non-formal education EFL teachers demonstrated stronger awareness of morphological knowledge, which was reflected in their interview responses. However, these performances should not be taken as a definitive representation of their morphological knowledge and awareness. Although the researcher designed the MAT based on established morphology concepts and previous studies, the test may not have captured comprehensive elements of morphology. As Apel (2014) notes, a morphological awareness test may vary in morphological awareness aspects, or it would be inadequate to capture all the components of morphology, which should be considered by the researchers and practitioners.

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The present study identified similarities between non-formal and formal education EFL teachers. Both groups acknowledged the significant role of morphological awareness in their ELT classes. The ability to understand how words are formed and used will benefit language learners to a more advanced level of language proficiency. To support this development, participants emphasized the importance of preparing effective strategies for teaching morphology. One of the participants mentioned that it was her responsibility to first master the knowledge before delivering it to her students. Teachers' preparations play a crucial role in developing materials integrated with morphological awareness. This aligns with previous research indicating that students lack morphological understanding due to teachers' limited knowledge of linguistic awareness (Carlisle, 2003; Moats, 2009; Washburn et al., 2011; Washburn & Mulcahy, 2019). Participants described classroom activities they had implemented in the class, including vocabulary-building exercises and more linguistically focused content, such as parts of speech, prefixes and suffixes, Latin and Greek root words, and inflectional endings.

On the other hand, this study found differences between formal and nonformal EFL teachers, particularly in their morphology awareness and the sources they used for English materials. As previously discussed, non-formal education EFL teachers had a stronger grasp of morphological concepts, which was further supported by their interview responses. It has been mentioned that both educational settings used different English learning designs; hence, this must influence teachers' focus and their teaching practices. One formal education teacher remarked that morphological knowledge was not explicitly addressed in the national English curriculum, and as a result, she allowed students to acquire linguistic knowledge organically and subconsciously through classroom exposure.

The researcher can attest to this observation based on her own experience in both educational settings. During her six years teaching English in a conventional school, morphology and other linguistic features were modestly covered, mainly in the form of parts of speech and affixes as a tool for vocabulary and grammar development. On the contrary, during 9 months of teaching at an English language course, she encountered a broader range of linguistically focused materials that dealt with morphology, including parts of speech, affixes with meanings, root words, and derivational and inflectional morphemes. This comparison

illustrated how teachers' level of morphological awareness was shaped by the nature of their classroom practices and the instructional materials they engaged with.

The present study found that Indonesian EFL teachers from both formal and non-formal education settings generally demonstrated a good level of morphological awareness. All participants were able to express their understanding of morphological features, although some of them encountered difficulty related to terminology. Such confusion is not uncommon among EFL teachers and is often temporary, as they will recall the knowledge once they get the chance to teach the content. Additionally, all participants shared similar perspectives on the importance of morphological awareness in the classroom. They believed integrating morphological features into their teaching could improve students' language development. However, their approaches to the implementation may be varied, influenced by the nature and content of their teaching materials.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Conclusion

Morphological awareness of EFL teachers from both formal and non-formal education settings was investigated in the present study. The result of the test indicates that EFL teachers were aware of morphology, with scores ranging from 60% to 100%. Teachers from non-formal education exhibited a stronger understanding of morphological features compared to teachers from formal education, which was reflected in their interview responses. This difference may stem from the distinct designs of teaching materials used in the classroom. Non-formal education setting utilizes flexible learning materials that emphasize explicit linguistic features like morphology, allowing teachers to develop better morphological knowledge. In contrast, formal education curricula focus more on general language skills or communicative competence. This discrepancy suggests that the nature of material designs plays an important role in shaping teachers' morphological awareness.

In their interview response, all participants expressed positive perspectives on morphological awareness. They agreed on the importance of morphology awareness in their ELT classrooms. They acknowledged that morphological awareness supports students' language development, primarily vocabulary-building and grammatical function. As a result, some teachers made deliberate efforts to integrate morphological features into their existing

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learning materials. This suggests that these teachers understand the importance of explicit morphological teaching to enhance students' word recognition and production. In contrast, others preferred to let the students acquire the knowledge organically through classroom exposure. This difference highlighted varying pedagogical beliefs or competence levels in teaching morphology explicitly. These perspectives revealed the complexity of implementing morphological awareness in practice and suggest the need for more consistent teaching strategies of linguistic features.

Limitation

Limitations in this present study were particularly related to the sampling technique and the test instrument. Due to time constraints, purposive sampling was employed, yet it limited the diversity of participants' institutional backgrounds. A different range of teaching experiences and the curricula employed in different schools and non-formal education courses might affect teachers' morphological awareness. Therefore, the findings may not be generalizable to other EFL teachers from schools that adopt international curricula, local English courses, and those with more extensive teaching experience. Additionally, the test instrument lacked comprehensive coverage of morphology knowledge as it primarily focused on written morphology. Future studies are expected to develop a more refined version of the morphological awareness test, which aims at spoken morphology and morphophonology with different research designs involving participants from a wider range of institutional backgrounds and teaching experiences.

Implication

This study highlighted the importance of morphological awareness and its benefits the EFL learners. Moreover, it contributes to the growing area of research on morphological features, particularly in the Indonesian context, where studies on this topic remain limited. The findings offer valuable insights for teachers to emphasize the importance of morphology and integrate it into their teaching practices. Additionally, the study invites educators, stakeholders, and policymakers to consider redesigning the existing materials and language curricula to incorporate morphologically-focused content.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Instrument of the Morphological Awareness Test

<i>Sources</i>	<i>Components of MA</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>	<i>Instruction</i>	<i>Sample of the question</i>
<i>Apel, 2017.</i> <i>Apel et al., 2021.</i>	<i>Morpheme identification.</i>	<i>Ability to identify morphemes in a word.</i>	<i>Here is the list of words in which you identify the add-ons (affix) and mention the number of morphemes.</i>	<i>Word: knives (2 morphemes) Useful (2 morphemes) Studied (2 morphemes)</i>
<i>Apel, 2014.</i>	<i>Affix meanings.</i>	<i>Ability to understand the meaning of the affixes (prefix and suffix)</i>	<i>Choose the correct word that implies the proper derived and inflected word.</i> <i>Determine the meaning of the derived and inflected words.</i>	<i>She was (unafraid / afraidless / afraidly) to speak up. (un- =not/negation)</i> <i>If -ish means nearly, which word means nearly green? (Greenful/ greenish/ greenless)</i> <i>I spent two hours yesterday in the library. (Yesterday indicates past event)</i> <i>He (sharp/ sharpens) his knife in the kitchen. (Verbalizer is when an adjective or noun shifted to verb by adding suffix -en)</i> <i>The owner plans to rebuild the house. What does rebuild here mean? (Prefix re- means again)</i>
	<i>Affix recognition.</i>	<i>Ability to recognize the correct affix by attaching to base words.</i>	<i>Complete the word with the correct spelling of the add-on (affix). Choose the word with the correct add-on (affix).</i>	<i>I've learned a lot from my failure.</i> <i>He's famous for her (friendliness/ friendship/ friendly)</i>
	<i>Affix uses.</i>		<i>Complete the sentence with the correct derived or inflected word. Use</i>	<i>Act. When he grows up, he wants to be an actor.</i>

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			<i>the given word as a hint to complete the missing word.</i>	<i>Hopeful. I <u>hope</u> she wins the competition.</i> <i>Room A is <u>bigger</u> than Room B.</i> <i>Carla has a dress. Denise has a dress. They have two <u>dresses</u>.</i>
<i>Wang & Zhang, 2023.</i>	<i>Morpheme recognition</i>	<i>Ability to recognize the morphological relationships between pairs of words.</i>	<i>Choose yes or no after reading this statement.</i>	<i>Thirsty comes from thirst (yes).</i> <i>Mother comes from moth (no)</i>
	<i>Morpheme discrimination</i>	<i>Ability to distinguish compound structures.</i>	<i>Choose the odd one from the list.</i>	<i><u>mushroom</u> / classroom / bedroom</i>
<i>Apel & Werfel, 2014.</i>	<i>Word Relatives</i>	<i>Ability to find (relative) words from a base word.</i>	<i>Find words as many as possible from its base word.</i>	<i>Know: knowledgeable, unknowingly, knowing, knowledge.</i>

Appendix B: Participants' Response from Interview

Focus	Rasha	Laila	Doni	Isha	Gendis	Diyan
<i>Thought of MAT performance.</i>	<i>Did well.</i>	<i>Did well.</i>	<i>No information.</i>	<i>Did well.</i>	<i>Did well</i>	<i>Did well, though there were some parts she did not know.</i>
<i>Cognition of MA*.</i>	<i>Defined what morphology is by saying that morphology is the study of words.</i>	<i>Said MA can help language learners to read and speak well.</i>	<i>MA is about the smallest unit of meaning in language, that is morpheme.</i>	<i>MA is a knowledge of words, adding affixes, and dealing with parts of speech.</i>	<i>MA is knowledge of word formation.</i>	<i>MA is where we can break down words and word formation.</i>
<i>The role of MA and MK** in the ELT class,</i>	<i>MA is important to some extent, especially for vocabulary building. But it is not something that is</i>	<i>It is important because it helps her as a teacher to help her young learners to read well. She needs to</i>	<i>It is important to determine recognition of words to a certain extent.</i>	<i>It is important that students know how the word is used and formed. Hence, they know the meaning and apply at the</i>	<i>It is important as it helps students understand word classes.</i>	<i>It is important to understand how words work so students can understand how one word can be formed in</i>

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	<i>consciously used in the class.</i>	<i>master it first before the students.</i>		<i>sentence level (syntax)</i>		<i>different ways and functions.</i>
<i>MK taught in the ELT class</i>	<i>Most materials she has taught must include MK. However, it does not specify as its competence is not mentioned in the curriculum. It is more like a spontaneous thing.</i>	<i>Mostly used in spelling activities. MK includes affixes, roots, and the meaning of affixes.</i>	<i>Mostly in grammar and syntax, also writing but not as important as grammar. MK includes prefixes and suffixes.</i>	<i>Mostly in grammar and phonology. MK includes parts of speech, affixes, and root words.</i>	<i>Mostly in reading and writing activities. MK includes singular, plural, negation word (negative prefix im-), and other affixes.</i>	<i>Mostly in grammar, like explaining past tense (inflectional words -ed, -ied). MK includes roots and affixes.</i>
<i>Cognition of free and bound morphemes.</i>	<i>Cannot explain.</i>	<i>Cannot explain.</i>	<i>Yes, by saying a free morpheme can stand by itself, and a bound morpheme cannot stand by itself.</i>	<i>Yes, a free morpheme can stand on its own and make its own word; bound affixes added to the word might change derivational meaning or inflectional meaning.</i>	<i>Yes, by giving examples: free morpheme: beauty; bound morpheme: beautiful.</i>	<i>Cannot explain.</i>
<i>Cognition of derived and inflected words.</i>	<i>Cannot explain.</i>	<i>Yes, an inflected word is a root word combined with suffixes that do not change part of speech, but a derived word is a root words that combine either</i>	<i>Cannot explain.</i>	<i>Yes, derivational changes part of speech and meaning. Inflectional has the same meaning but a different form, ending -s and -ed.</i>	<i>Cannot explain.</i>	<i>Cannot explain; found it hard to explain.</i>

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		<i>prefixes and suffixes, which change part of speech and meaning.</i>				
<i>Cognition of compound words</i>	<i>Knows by giving an example: rainbow, from rain and bow.</i>	<i>Explain that a compound word is a combination of two different words that create two whole different meanings. Example: watermelon.</i>	<i>Cannot explain (misunderstood it with comparison and superlative)</i>	<i>Explain that a compound word is a word that is derived from two different roots. They have different meanings, but when they're combined, and create another meaning.</i>	<i>Explain that a compound word is a combination of two words, for example, roundtable.</i>	<i>Explain that a compound word is a word that is made up of two words: butterfly, skateboard, bookcase</i>
<i>Importance of MK & MA</i>	<i>It is important in a way, especially when it is to improve students' vocabulary (and writing and reading).</i>	<i>It is important to help language learners write better.</i>	<i>It is important in all aspects of English, specifically in grammar and speaking. Determine tenses of passive and active sentences and part-of-speech recognition.</i>	<i>It is important, as she mentioned, that English has different grammar forms, and students sometimes cannot differentiate particular words due to a lack of knowledge of parts of speech.</i>	<i>It is important that students can feel at ease using proper words in writing.</i>	<i>It is important to know that one word can be used differently to help students. figure out the meaning of the word, use it in everyday life, and enrich vocabulary.</i>
<i>Strategies to implement MA & MK</i>	<i>Have done vocabulary building. The plan is to introduce the concept of compound words to students.</i>	<i>Make sure her students understand the concept of part of speech, the use of affixes, and their function to improve vocabulary.</i>	<i>Focus on improving tenses, for example, the present tense, by giving students a formula to help them structure the sentences. Mention regular verbs.</i>	<i>Have done is giving lots of examples of how to use particular words, like teaching them by context. (can as a noun and can as a verb). Inflectional</i>	<i>Have done is diagnostic test to know how well students' vocabulary and word formation. (complete the sentence). But for the future, she has</i>	<i>Enforcing MK by giving worksheets, reading materials, and finding morpheme words in stories.</i>

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				sound /-s/, /-z/ (challenging and will be focus), /-t/, /-d/	not come up with any idea.	
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Note: *MA: Morphological Awareness

**MK: Morphological Knowledge