

THE USE OF PREFIXES AND SUFFIXES FOR INCREASING VOCABULARY STUDENTS

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Abstract

A prefix is a word or letter. And also, a prefix is a letter or a group of letters added to the beginning of a word to make a new word. Every prefix has its own meaning. An English word can consist of three parts: the root, a prefix, and a suffix. A suffix is a word element that is placed after the root. The suffixes changes the word's meaning as well as its function (use). Vocabulary is one element for communicating or sharing idea. A vocabulary is important, it is not only to read or write. The students who have adequate vocabulary will easy to understand and support the carrier in the future. Moreover, the students who have good skill absolutely fast to adapt with the international global era situation.

Key words: prefix, suffix and vocabulary

A. Introduction

English is a global language that very important in this era since it was decided to be International language. Language is not only for communicating but also as an important skill of the people. In 2019, the new curriculum in the school of Indonesia that English had started again from elementary school, so the student could learn it since they are still young. It's because foreign language learning in Indonesia as a strategy for the country to absorb and keep abreast the science development and technology.²

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² Imam Santoso, 'Pembelajaran bahasa asing di Indonesia: Antara globalisasi dan hegemoni', *Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, vol.14 no.1 (2014), p. 1

Moreover, ability in English is one of the basic to compete in the global era, especially ASEAN Community.³ It's the reason, why the skill of English is really important for all of the people now.

Language is very important for all people to communicate each other's and use it as a gift from God to human being as adjusted to the Holy Koran stated in the Hujurat verse 13 as follow:

The meaning: O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you people and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.

English has an important role and unique character language in the world. At this time, there is no part of the country without knowledge of English to communicate in the social community. In Indonesia, English is a foreign language had taught in every public or private school. English in academic fields is taught as one an important subject matter in the class. By learning English, the students are expected to be able to communicative about anything in the foreign language. According to the Jeremy Harmer statement that the final aim of teaching a foreign language is to produce students who can communicate about anything in foreign language with the different situation. English is learned for many different reasons. It may be an essential tool for education, business, travel or it may be for the media/entertainment.

³ Sri Handayani, 'Pentingnya berbahsa Inggris dalam menyongsong ASEAN Community 2015', *Jurnal Profesi Pendidikan*, vol.3 no.1 (2016), p. 106

The language components involve vocabulary, grammar/structure and pronunciation. In fact, all language components are really important thing, but the most one in language teaching is vocabulary, because, as Coleman says, the most important things is vocabulary because by having enough vocabulary, study English is will easier. Besides, there is a direct relationship between a success career and large vocabulary. Students who had achieved distinction with variety of field were proved to have vocabularies larger than the average. It does not mean that a large vocabulary can guarantee one to become a scientist. It means that inadequate vocabulary will minimize one's changes to success.⁴

As a part of important element of language, vocabulary is always use in different situation and condition. The basic component can help the student to understand material, read the text or identify an object thought its meaning. According to Mofareh Alqahtani argue that the vocabulary is essential for successful second language use because without an extensive vocabulary the students will difficult to use structures and function for comprehension communication.⁵ We know everybody learn and use the words to particular purposes and continue to learn the new words as long as we live noted in the Holy Koran in the Al-Baqarah verse 31 and 32 below.

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ
 إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ قَالُوا سُبْحٰنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

A good vocabulary can help our ability to think logically and to learn easily and quickly at the different condition. And also, language can help us to understand

⁴ Zainaluddin Rahmat, "indoskripsi", <http://one.com/2009/10/21>

⁵ Mofareh Alqahtani, 'The importance of vocabulary in language learning and how to be taught', *International Journal of Teaching and Education*, vol.III (3), p. 22

ourselves and the world around us. English vocabulary is enormous and develops every year with technological and cultural assimilation. The vast majority of a new words introduced, and a great percentage of the words used to express abstract ideas, are complex words that are made of simple word parts (prefixes, roots, and suffixes) that have their own definitions and can be understood a context without an exact definition. By slowly and steadily studying the most prominent prefixes, roots, and suffixes, students can acquire a vocabulary that is far greater than the sum of its parts.⁶

The ways to increase vocabulary is depend of individual characteristic and preferences. Someone may use a dictionary in which the words are translated into his/her native language. And also can be learned by using word cards, vocabulary pocket, vocabulary notebook, English diary or cards which are written down whenever the students hear or see them, student may also use other ways of forming new words by compounding to create a single and attaching a short form (prefixes and suffixes). This can also be done by teaching students new words grouped in particular families. An important consideration is that one can maximize vocabulary considerably by teaching word families instead of individual word forms. Presenting word families, with many words built around a particular root, gathers words together of that associations among them can be seen⁷.

Especially in this case, the writer will discuss prefixes and suffixes as a way to enlarge one's vocabulary by adding a word-part at the beginning of a word to make a new word (prefix) or at the end of a word (suffix).

⁶ Pittman, "Building Vocabulary", <http://www.iteslj.org/Techniques/2001/5/12/html>.

⁷ Jeanette S. Decarrico, "Vocabulary Learning and Teaching"(2000), p. 287.

The students learn to master four skills in English as well as grammar, vocabulary, teaching methodology and all aspects of English are taught in teaching and learning process. A receptive vocabulary is word one knows when student listens or read the word student knows when he receives through other and expressive vocabulary is the word one use when he speaks or writes that is when he expresses his thought to others.⁸ More students hear, speak, read and write English, the student will get more opportunity to increase their vocabularies. Learning prefixes and suffixes is particularly important in helping students to increase vocabulary because from a single word that can be turned into a “word family”. They allow learn word in groups instead of one by one.

B. Discussion

1. Definitions of Prefixes

Most words used in the English language today were not originally English. These words were taken from other languages. The majority of English words have Latin or Greek origins. An English word can consist of three parts: the root, a prefix and a suffix. The root is the part of the word that contains the basic meaning (definition) of the word. The root is the base element of the word. A prefix is a word element that is placed in front of a root. A prefix changes the word's meaning or makes a new word. A suffix is a word element that is placed after the root. The suffix changes the word's meaning as well as its function (use). Prefixes and suffixes are called *affixes* because they are attached to root.⁹

⁸ Saadillah, handout adapted from “*College Vocabulary Skills*”, written by James F. Shepherd, Boston, 1996.

⁹ Southampton, <http://www.liunet.edu/academic/pau/course/2010/2/12/webesl.htm>

A prefix is a word or letter, placed at the beginning of another word (a base word) to adjust or qualify its usage or meaning.¹⁰ A prefix is placed at the beginning of a word to modify or change its meaning¹¹

A prefix is an affix which is placed before the stem of a word. The word *prefix* is itself made up of the stem *fix* (meaning attach, in this case), and the prefix *pre-* (meaning “before”), both of which are derived from Latin roots. Understanding the meanings of the common prefixes can help to deduce the meanings of new words that we encounter¹²

Every prefix has its own meaning. When added to a root word, a prefix changes the meaning of the root word to which it is added. The root word “purpose” means “an aim or a goal one wishes to achieve.” The prefix “multi” means “many.” The new word “multipurpose” means “designed or used for many purposes.” English prefixes are affixes (i.e., bound morphemes that provide lexical meaning) that are added before either simple root/complex bases (or operands) consisting of:

- (a) A root and other affixes,
- (b) Multiple roots, or
- (c) Multiple roots and other affixes.

A prefix is something which goes in front of a word. It usually a group of letters such as *pre-* or *sub-* or *anti-*, the prefix usually changes the meaning of the word-or it makes a new word. Prefix never changes the root word to which it is attached.

¹⁰ <http://www.learningenglish.de/grammar/prefixtext/2010/2/12/htm/>

¹¹ <http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/prefixes/2010/12/html>.

¹² <http://grammar.about.com/od/words/a/comprefix07/12/2/2010/htm>.

2. Kinds of Prefixes

A prefix is a word-part that is added at the beginning of a word to make a new word. There are three kinds of prefixes in English, as follow:

a. Negative Prefix

One of the most frequent meanings of prefixes is “negative”. These prefixes are used with nouns, adjectives and verbs. For example, the use of “ in, un, non, mis, and dis”.¹³

b. A Prefix that Forms Verb

The only prefix that forms verbs is “en-“. This is used with adjectives and nouns. Examples: enable, encircle, enlarge, enrich.

c. Other Prefixes

Most of the other prefixes used in English are derived from Latin or Greek, and they have rather definite meanings. However, in some cases, their original meaning has often been lost. The stems which they are used are not complete words when the prefix is removed. For example, the prefix “re-“ which means ‘again’, is easy to understand in words like reread and rewrite. Its meaning is less clear in return and repeat and is not clear at all in receiving.

Below are some commonly used prefixes and their area of meanings as well as examples:

- Prefixes denoting space and time relations
- Counting prefixes (quantify the root)
- Involvement prefix

¹³ Saadillah handout, *op. cit.*, p.p 8,9.

- Judgements prefixes
- Locative prefixes
- Measurement prefixes
- Temporal prefixes

3. General Roots and English Prefixes

a. List of Roots

Most words, used in the English language today were not originally English. The majority of English words have Latin or Greek origin. Knowing is these origins or "roots" of English vocabulary may be possible to guess the meaning of an unknown word when one knows the meaning of its root. Knowing prefixes and suffixes can also assist in the process.

The root is the part of the word that contains the basic meaning (definition) of the word. The root is the base element of the word. A prefix is a word element that is placed in front of a root.

Following is a list of roots for English vocabulary. The list is formatted so that the root. Its definition is shown first, then the source of the root. The source word's definition, and then last is an example of the root as used in a word and the word's definition.

- *Act, ag*: do, act, drive
 - Latin, *agree*: to drive, lead act, do
 - *Active* (adjective): moving about
- *Am, ami*: love, like
 - Latin, *amare*: to love

- Amorous (adjective): loving
- *Anim*: mind, life, spirit, anger
 - Latin, *animus*: spirit
 - Animal (noun): a living creature

b. List of English Prefixes

List of general English prefixes are very common in the reading text or sentences.

Table 2.1 General English Prefixes

prefix	general meaning	example
a	on, at	Aboard, asleep
ab	away	Abnormal, absent
a, an	not, without	Amoral, anarchy

4. Definition Suffixes

A suffix is a group of letters with a special meaning appearing at the *end* of a word.¹⁴ Suffixes modify the meaning of a word and frequently determine its function within a sentence. Take the noun *nation*, for example. With suffixes, the word becomes the adjective *national*, the adverb *nationally*, and the verb *nationalize*.¹⁵ Suffixes are groups of letters attached to the ends of roots, words, and word groups. Suffixes serve a grammatical function. A suffix can indicate what part of speech (noun, verb, adjective, and adverb) to which the

¹⁴ <http://www.ctl.ua.edu/CTLStudyAids/StudySkillsFlyers/VocabularyDevelopment/vocabsuffixandprefix/2010/2/12/htm>.

¹⁵ http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/definition_list/2010/2/12/htm.

word belongs. Suffixes can also modify and extend meaning.¹⁶ Suffixes are added to the end of a base word. They change the meaning of the base word.

Examples:

- wonder + ful = wonderful
- Loud + ly = loudly
- Rest + ful = restful

5. Kinds of Suffixes

There are two kinds of suffixes in English: inflectional and derivational. The inflectional suffixes are the ones learned in grammar. Examples: the “-s/-es” ending on verbs with subject of the third person singular (John goes to school); the “-ing” ending on verb forms (I am reading a book); the “-er” that makes adjectives comparative (Isna is taller than Adam); the “-ed” of the past tense of verbs (He helped me); and the “-s” that makes noun plural (apple + s = apples).

Derivational suffixes, on the other hand, change the meaning of the base in some important way or else change it into different word classes. They turn nouns into adjectives, adjectives into verbs, nouns of one type into nouns of another type, and soon. They add new meanings to the base. In many cases more than one derivational suffix can be found in the same word.

There are only three words classes that can take suffixes: noun, verb and adjective. This gives three groups of suffixes: Noun-forming suffixes (suffixes that change verbs or adjectives into nouns), Verb-forming suffixes

¹⁶Southampton, *loc. cit.*

(suffixes that change nouns or adjectives into verbs) and Adjective-forming suffixes (suffixes that change nouns or verbs into adjectives).

6. General English Suffixes

The following is the list of English suffixes with the example:

- a. Noun: -hood: brotherhood, motherhood. ship: friendship, hardship
- b. Adjective: -able: acceptable, legible. ful: careful, hopeful, useful.
- c. Verb: fy: beautify, simplify, and clarify.
- d. Adverb: ly: quickly, carefully, and slowly.¹⁷

7. Teaching Prefixes and Suffixes (Word Families)

Words belong to families. Many words share a family resemblance to each other and share the same family history. And, just like with human families, once you get to know one member of the family, it is easier to recognize and get to know the other members.

A word family is a set of words that includes a base word plus its inflection/derivations. For purposes of teaching, especially, it makes more sense to view sets such as *talk*, *talked*, *talking*, and *talks* as members of a closely related “family”, not as four single words, and to help students recognize them as such. Presenting word families, with many words build around a particular root, gathers word together so that associations among them can be seen.¹⁸

Word families are groups of words that are sufficiently closely related to each other to form a “family” words can be grouped into families in two main ways:

- a. They are simmlar form (form-based word families)

¹⁷ Rachmad Taufik Hidayat, *Kosa Kata Bahasa Inggris*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2008), p.p 145-148.

¹⁸ Jeanette S. Decarrico, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

b. They are similar meaning (meaning-based word families)¹⁹

Most words used in the English language today were not originally English. These words were borrowed (taken) from other languages. The majority of English words have Latin or Greek origins. An English word can consist of three parts: the root, a prefix and a suffix. The root is the part of the word that contains the basic meaning (definition) of the word.

Many English words are made by attaching a short form called an affix to either the beginning or the end of word. Learning prefixes and suffixes is particularly important in helping to increase vocabulary because they turn a single word into a word family, they allow to learn words in groups instead of one by one. Knowing the stem of a new word and having some familiarity with the prefixes or suffixes, the words contains, we can understand its meaning without having to look it up in the dictionary too often.²⁰

Improving students skill with vocabulary is a part of studying that very important. Break down word is the way to increase student vocabulary, by teaching student how is word originated from can be quite interesting. From that, the student can know the root of word. The word is unique and come from different dialect, culture, tradition and so on. When the teacher teach the meaning of common prefixes and suffixes and the student try to guess words meaning based on the word parts.²¹ Such as from prefixes, suffixes and root of words can help the students to learn and remember words to be more. The teacher can begin to teach word with different ways strategy by telling the students that words can be composed of affixes, prefixes, and roots.

¹⁹ Schott Thornbury, *How to Teach Vocabulary*, (England: Longman, 2002), p. 2.

²⁰ Robert Harris, "Word root and prefixes", <http://www.virtualsalt.com/roots/2009/12/23/htm>.

²¹ Essortmen, "way to increase", http://www..com/all/_tvek/2009/12/29/htm.

In the article “Building Vocabulary through Prefixes, Roots & Suffixes” said that English vocabulary is enormous and grows steadily with technological and cultural assimilation. The vast majority of new words introduced, and a great percentage of the words used to express abstract ideas, are complex words that are made up of simple word parts (prefixes, roots, and suffixes) that have their own definitions and, when familiar to the student of English, can be understood at context without an exact definition. By slowly and steadily studying the most prominent prefixes, roots, and suffixes, students can acquire a vocabulary that is far greater than the sum of its parts. The most crucial requirement in this system is a basic understanding of the most prominent prefixes, roots, and suffixes in the English language. Teacher may teaches a reading, writing, or listening/speaking class or what text is being used, or if there is any text at all. Some paragraphs written in English will have at least a few words that are made up of prefixes, roots and suffixes, and this is where the method begins.

C. Conclusion

Ability in English is absolutely urgent for all of us. We need language for communicating, sharing, answering questions, interview, and so on. For communicating we need a lot of vocabulary to support our fluency for an interaction. Material about prefixes and suffixes are the material in an English

lesson that very important for students to develop their skill in English. From that, the student can learn about prefix, kinds of prefixes, general roots, general meaning, and suffix. Based on the prefix and suffix, everyone could understand the lesson by reading, analyzing or identifying an object through its meaning and learn language more easily and quickly. Master a large vocabulary can help to think logically and to learn something automatically. Moreover, language can help us to understand ourselves and the world around us.

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