



**AN ANALYSIS OF DERIVATIONAL MORPHEMES IN THE FOUR POEMS  
ENTITLED “STILL I RISE”, “A BRAVE AND STARTLING TRUTH”, “MOTHER, A  
CRADLE TO HOLD ME” AND  
“A PLAGUED JOURNEY” BY MAYA ANGELOU**

**Bela Alpina Meindaningsih<sup>1)</sup>; Arni Sukmiarni<sup>2)</sup>**  
Universitas Nasional PASIM  
belaalpina@gmail.com

**ABSTRACT**

The title of the research is An Analysis of Derivational Morphemes in the Four Poems Entitled ‘Still I Rise’, ‘A Brave and Startling Truth’, ‘Mother, a Cradle to Hold Me, ’ and ‘A Plagued Journey’ by Maya Angelou. The aims of this research are not only to identify what types of derivational morphemes are used but also to analyze which types of derivational morphemes are dominant in the four poems by Maya Angelou. The main theory used by Yule (2023) discusses morphology. In this research, the researcher used a descriptive qualitative method. The data collection is taken from 4 poems by Maya Angelou titled "Still I Rise", "A Brave and Startling Truth", "Mother, a Cradle to Hold Me" and "A Plagued Journey". The data are identified, classified, and counted numerical data on derivational morphemes of words found in the four poems by Maya Angelou. The research results show that there are two types of derivational morphemes used in the four poems by Maya Angelou, namely prefixes and suffixes, which appear to have a total of 60 data. The dominant types of derivational morphemes found in the four poems by Maya Angelou are the suffixes found in 52 data with a percentage of 86,7%.

**Keywords: Derivational Morphemes, Prefixes, Suffixes, Maya Angelou’s Poems.**

**INTRODUCTION**

Language is an essential means of communication for humans to enable them to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas (Yule, 2023). Poetry is one of the mediums of communication to express individuals’ ideas. It is a type of literature using language to convey ideas, emotions and experiences of individuals deeply and creatively. The poem is a verbal composition designed to convey experiences, ideas, or emotions vividly and imaginatively (Pinsky, 1998). In addition, it has unique features that share distinct sounds, differentiating from other works. As stated by



Crystal (2003), poetry involves the use of rhythm, metaphors, and carefully chosen words to create powerful messages to deeply connect with readers.

The distinct features of poetry result from how words are formed and structured, as these also greatly affect their meanings and interpretations. Words are not just random symbols; they are created using different morphological processes. A morphological process is a process to form new words or modify words by adding or changing parts of a word, called morphemes (Yule, 2023). The term of derivational morphology is one of the morphological processes that is very important for developing vocabulary and shaping the meaning of words (Katamba, 1993).

Studies of derivational morphology play an important role in revealing the meaning of words' meaning intended by the poets. How poets shape their words in their poems to enhance and strengthen the expressions of the poems can be investigated by conducting studies in this field. For example, a previous study by Aprianti and Parmawati (2020) discusses derivational and inflectional morphemes investigating the affix of derivation and inflection in song lyrics, and the results show that any different types of words have been formed through affixation. Another study related to morphological process (Afri and Maulana, 2011) identifies derivational and Inflectional morphemes in the song lyrics, which results in the most frequent morphemes found are inflectional morphemes. Meanwhile in the present study, an exploration of the use of derivational morphemes in Maya Angelou's poems is highlighted aiming to identify the types of derivational morphemes and determine the most dominant ones in four selected poems: *Still, I Rise, A Brave and Startling Truth, Mother, A Cradle to Hold Me, and A Plagued Journey* by Maya Angelou (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/maya-angelou>).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Morphology is "the study of forms," specifically in the context of language (Yule, 2023). Morphology investigates the basic "elements" or units of meaning in a language, which are technically known as "morphemes." It focuses on how these morphemes are structured and how they function within linguistic messages. Morphemes are classified as free and bound morphemes. There are two types of bound morphemes, namely derivational morphemes and inflectional.



Derivational morphemes are bound morphemes used to create new words or to change the grammatical category of a word (Yule, 2023). They are a collection of affixes forming the category of bound morphemes and they can be suffixes like *-ment* and *-ify* and also prefixes, such as *re-*, *pre-*, *ex-*, *mis-*, *co-*, *un-*.

. For example, adding the derivational morpheme *-ment* to the verb *encourage* forms the noun *encouragement*, and adding the derivational morpheme *-ify* to the noun *class* forms the verb *classify*. Derivational morphemes can be both prefixes (e.g., *re-*, *pre-*, *ex-*, *mis-*, *co-*, *un-*) and suffixes (e.g., *-ment*, *-ify*).

Parts of speech (Khan, 2020) refer to categories or types of words in a language: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. Each part of speech has unique characteristics and functions within a sentence. Understanding the parts of speech is essential for effective communication and language comprehension.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data of derivational prefixes in the four poems by Maya Angelou is shown in table 1. These following prefixes alter the base word meaning.

No	Word	Previous Word	Types Prefixes	Word-class or meaning
1.	indifferent	different	in-	without
2.	irresistible	resist	ir-	not
	<b>“Mother, a Cradle to Hold Me”</b>			
1.	unwilling	willing	un-	not
2.	reentered	enter	re-	again
	<b>“A Plagued Journey”</b>			
1.	invisible	visible	in-	not
2.	reclaim	claim	re-	again
3.	irredeemable	redeem	ir-	not
4.	disconsolation	consolation	dis-	reversive



<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	
--------------	----------	--

Table 1. Data of Derivational Prefixes in the Four Poems by Maya Angelou.

The data of derivational suffixes in the four poems by Maya Angelou are indicated in Table 2. These suffixes alter the word class and meaning.

No	Word	Previous Word	Types Suffixes	Word-class change
<b>“Still I Rise”</b>				
1.	sassiness	sassy	-ness	adj → noun
2.	certainly	certain	-ty	adj → noun
3.	haughtiness	haughty	-ness	adj → noun
4.	hateful	hate	-ful	verb → adj
5.	hatefulness	hateful	-ness	adj → noun
6.	sexiness	sexy	-ness	adj → noun
7.	wondrously	wonderous	-ly	adj → adverb
<b>“A Brave and Startling Truth”</b>				
1.	hostility	hostile	-ity	adj → noun
2.	bloody	blood	-y	noun → adj
3.	identical	identity	-ical	noun → adj
4.	rapacious	rapacity	-ious	noun → adj
5.	stoutly	stout	-ly	adj → adverb
6.	religious	religion	-ous	noun → adj
7.	childhood	child	-hood	noun → noun
8.	mysterious	mystery	-ous	noun → adj
9.	perfection	perfect	-ion	adj → noun
10.	collective	collect	-ive	verb → adj
11.	delicious	delice	-ous	noun → adj
12.	kithless	kith	-less	noun → adj
13.	cankorous	canker	-ous	noun → adj
14.	sweetness	sweet	-ness	adj → noun
15.	irresistible	resist	-ible	verb → adj
16.	tenderness	tender	-ness	adj → noun
17.	contradiction	contradict	-ion	verb → noun
18.	freely	free	-ly	adj → adverb
19.	sanctimonious	sanctity	-ous	noun → adj
20.	miraculous	miracle	-ous	noun → adj
<b>“Mother, a Cradle to Hold Me”</b>				
1.	steadily	steady	-ly	adj → adverb



2.	eternally	eternal	-ly	adj → adverb
3.	immediately	immediate	-ly	adj → adverb
4.	quickly	quick	-ly	adj → adverb
5.	easily	easy	-ly	adj → adverb
6.	assurance	assure	-ance	verb → noun
7.	confidence	confide	-ence	verb → noun
8.	securely	secure	-ly	adj → adverb
9.	absence	absent	-ence	adj → noun
10.	happiness	happy	-ness	adj → noun
11.	condescendingly	condescending	-ly	adj → adverb
12.	nearly	near	-ly	adj → adverb
13.	selfishness	selfish	-ness	adj → noun
14.	ignorance	ignorant	-ance	adj → noun
15.	mockery	mock	-ery	verb → noun
<b>“A Plagued Journey”</b>				
1.	toothless	tooth	-less	noun → adj
2.	invader	invade	-er	verb → noun
3.	direction	direct	-ion	verb → noun
4.	formerly	former	-ly	adj → adverb
5.	encasement	encase	-ment	verb → noun
6.	expectation	expect	-ation	verb → noun
7.	darkness	dark	-ness	adj → noun
8.	irredeemable	redeem	-able	verb → adj
9.	disconsolation	console	-ation	verb → noun
10.	lasciviously	lascivious	-ly	adj → adverb
<b>Total</b>			<b>52</b>	

Table 1. Data of Derivational Suffixes in the Four Poems by Maya Angelou.

The results show that among the four poems by Maya Angelou, the most frequently found derivational morphemes are suffixes, with a total of 52 data and a percentage of 86,7% as it shown in table 3.

Title of Poems	Types of Derivational Morphemes			Amount Data
	Prefix	Infix	Suffix	
Still I Rise	0	0	7	7
A Brave and Startling Truth	2	0	20	22
Mother, a Cradle to Hold Me	2	0	15	17



A Plagued Journey	4	0	10	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>13,3%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>86,7%</b>	

Table 3. The data of derivational morphemes in the four poems by Maya Angelou.

## Conclusions

Based on the data in the table above, it is shown that two types of derivational morphemes are used in the four poems by Maya Angelou: prefixes and suffixes. In English, there are three kinds of affixes: prefixes, infixes, and suffixes. However, infixes are rarely applied in English words. In this study, prefixes and suffixes are found. Meanwhile, there are 8 prefixes, zero infixes, and 52 suffixes found in the 60 derivational morphemes. The most frequent types of derivational morphemes used in the four poems by Maya Angelou are suffixes, which reveals 52 occurrences or 86.7%, whereas compared to the prefixes data with 8 occurrences or 13.3%. Thus, it can be concluded that more than half of the dominant data that appear are suffixes.

## REFERENCES

- Afri, E., & Maulina, I. (2021). *ANALYSIS OF DERIVATIONAL AND INFLECTIONAL MORPHEME IN SONG 'S LYRICS OF ADELE ALBUM*. *Research Method*. 99, 32–37.
- Aprianti, I. N., & Parmawati, A. (2020). *DERIVATIONAL AND INFLECTIONAL MORPHEME ANALYSIS ON THE SONG LYRICS OF LADY GAGA " A STAR IS BORN " ALBUM*. 3(3), 322–328.
- Katamba, F. (2006). *Morphology: Palgrave Modern Linguistics.pdf* (2nd ed.). Macmillan Education.
- Khan, S. I. (2020). *Part of Speech* (S. Batool (ed.); 1st ed.). English Literary Society.
- Pinsky, R. (1998). *The Sounds of Poetry: A Brief Guide* (1st ed.). Farrar, Straus and Giroux.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/40154573>



Jurnal Sastra Studi Ilmiah Sastra  
Universitas Nasional Pasim  
**E- ISSN 2751 - 5165**  
Vol 14 No. 2, December 2024

Poetry Foundation. (n.d.). *Maya Angelou*. Retrieved June 27, 2024, from

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/maya-angelou>

Yule, G. (2023). *The Study of Language* (8th ed.). Cambridge University Press.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009233446>