

# Identifying and Analyzing Frequent Verbs Used in Students' Speaking and Listening Activity

Tita Ratna Wulandari, Cita Hikmah Yanti  
 Universitas Bina Darma, Palembang, Indonesia  
 titawulandari@binadarma.ac.id  
 citahikmahyanti@binadarma.ac.id

**Abstract** - This study discussed words used in English language. The writers aimed to know what are the most frequent words used by foreign language learners for their oral communication. The target words analysis were verbs only. Therefore, the problems of the study were formulated as follows: (1) what are most frequent verbs used in students' speaking process?, (2) what morphological process did occur?, and (3) what are the meaning of the verb found?. To answer the problems, the writers did conversation recording to a group of students. The population of this study was the English Study Program Students. The samples were taken from the 2, 4, and 6 semester students. The data were analyzed through several steps such as transcript the conversation, find the verbs, tally the verbs, make the verbs frequency, analyze the morphological process, and find the meaning of the verbs. It was found that think was the most dominantly verb occurred with 39 times out of 503. The inflectional morphemes were usually used to modifies the verbs. It was also found that the students were still facing problems in word choice.

**Keywords:** Verbs, Oral Communication, and Inflectional Morphemes

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is surely done by people for their daily basic needs. They communicate through verbal (spoken) or symbols (written). For instance, telling stories, giving opinions, expressing ideas, and complaining someone are what the people do with language. However, people must be able to use their communication skill properly in order to achieve their purposes in communication. Speaking and listening skills, for example, must be integratedly used whenever a person has an oral communication. If she/he fails in doing that, the conversation would not run smoothly. There might be misunderstanding or misleading information when a person cannot use the productive and receptive skills properly. As Richards, Platt, and Platt (1992) state that productive skill is the ability of producing a language and receptive skill is the ability of receiving the message of utterances.

Vocabulary mastery is one of supporting items of communication. Someone who possesses bigger vocabulary size will be able to choose and use proper vocabulary for their communication. Improper vocabulary used will influence the meaning transferred. For example, In Bahasa Indonesia, '*lucu*' literally translates into English could be 'funny' or 'cute'. A speaker would be able to select which is correct for explaining "*bayi anda lucu*". Cute is the correct choice to explain the intended sentence. This shows that vocabulary mastery is

really essential for a language user. Unfortunately, language learner faces difficulties in this vocabulary mastery and this, of course, influences communication skill.

English is the most learned language in Indonesia. It could be seen that all schools in Indonesia teach English to their students. Parents enroll their children to English courses. And, government set the policy of English as one of foreign languages which must be taught in classroom. Language learners are always trying hard to use their English in all occasion in order to be more fluent in communication.

Part of speech provides the language learners varieties of words. Traditional grammar classifies words into nine parts such as noun, pronoun, article, adjective, verb, adverb, conjunction, preposition, and interjection. Verbs express action, a state of being, and the relationship between two things. Noun is a word which names a person, place, thing, idea, animal, quality, or activity. Pronoun is a word which refers to a noun. Adjective modifies a noun or pronoun. Adverb modifies a verb, adjective, or adjective. Conjunction connects words, phrases, or clauses. Preposition precedes phrase that acts as a modifier or a noun. Interjection expresses emotion.

Those word categories are always used either in oral or written. However, the occurrence would be varied in each category. The writers believed that verbs might always occur during the communication due to their function as mentioned above. Therefore, this study aimed to see how much the occurrence of verbs in an oral communication and analyze their morphological aspects such as their morphemes. At last, the writers also explained their meaning. Finally, it is hoped that this study would be a beginning step of bigger attempt to provide the English language learners learning sources and media such as a morphology dictionary which discusses words in detail.

## 2. METHODS

### 2.1 STUDY DESIGN

This study was done at Universitas Bina Darma, Palembang, South Sumatera. The samples were taken from the even semester students of English Study Programs, Language and Literature Faculty, academic year 2015-2016. The method of this study was multi-design study, where descriptive quantitative was used to explain the verbs occurrence and descriptive qualitative was used to explain their morphological aspects and meaning.

## 2.2 SAMPLES

Purposive Sampling Technique was used in this study.

The writers took the samples based on some criteria as follows: (1) the students have studied at least one semester as an English major student. Consequently, the students have time to explore their English skills during one semester with some subjects given. (2) the samples were not last semester students because the writers tried to avoid inconsistency of samples due to their focus. In the last semester students will focus more on their thesis. (3) the students have enrolled to speaking 1 and listening 1 class. The writers assumed that the students would be able to do oral communication better if they have taken those subjects. Seeing those criteria the second, fourth, and sixth semester students were taken as samples for this study.

## 2.3 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

In collecting the data, the writers used these following steps: (1) group the samples, (2) assign the students to record their conversations for randomly chosen topics, (3) make the transcript, (4) select the verbs used from conversation, and (5) classify the word into their occurrence frequency using tally.

However, in analyzing the data, the writers did these steps: (1) collect the data, (2) select the verbs, (3) percentage them (4) analyze the verbs found for their morphological aspects, and (5) consult dictionary for the verbs meaning.

## 2.4 MORPHOLOGY

One of linguistics studies was morphology. As it is explained by Haspelmath (2002), Morphology is the study of the internal structure of words. One of topics discussed is morphemes. According to Yule (2010, P: 67), 'elements' in the form of a linguistics message are technically known as 'morphemes'. There are six types of morphemes discussed in this study, and they are taken from Yule (2010). Those six types of morphemes are (1) free morpheme - an independent morpheme which can stand by itself and posses a meaning such as *book*, *door*, *give*, and *happy*, (2) bound morpheme - a dependent morpheme in which it should be attached to another morpheme to posses a meaning such as *-s*, *-ly*, *un-*, and *-less*, (3) lexical morpheme - is also known as open class word where words are usually dynamically added. This word class includes verb, noun, adjective, and adverb such as *download*, *sandwich*, *happily*, and *sad*, (4) functional morpheme - is known as close class word where words are not dynamic. This word class includes pronoun, preposition, articles, and conjunction such as *she*, *by*, *a*, and *or*, (5) derivational morpheme is a bound morpheme which change the meaning and/or part of speech of a free morpheme such as *happy* (adj) + *-ly* = *happily* (adv), and (6) inflectional morpheme is a bound morpheme which acts as a grammatical marker such as *-s*, *-ing*, *-ed*, and *-er* such as *tall=taller*, *cook=cooking*, and *pen=pens*.

## 2.5 ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILL

Doing oral communication means the language users use two skills of language integratedly, namely speaking and

listening. Fromkin and Rodman (1998) state that this two skills help language users go through understanding process of utterances, and this also helps them relates brain of the speakers to the brain of the listeners. Literally, speaking skill could be defined as an activity of producing sounds with certain patterns so it transfer meaning to listeners. Meanwhile, listening skill is defined as an activity of receiving sounds and getting meaning from them.

## 3. FINDINGS

### 3.1 VERBS OCCURRENCE

It is found that there were five hundred and three verbs (503) occur during the recording. The highest occurrence was 'think' with thirty nine (39) times uttered (7.8%), 'know' with thirty three (33) times uttered (6.6%), 'like' with twenty nine (29) times uttered (5.8%), 'go' with twenty one (21) times uttered (4.2%), 'have' with twenty (20) times uttered (4%), 'see' with sixteen (16) times uttered (3.2%), 'do' with fifteen (15) times uttered (3%), 'want' with twelve (12) times uttered (2.4%), 'come on', 'look', 'watch' with ten (10) times uttered (2%), 'love' and 'make' with nine (9) times uttered (1.8%), 'call' with eight (8) times uttered (1.6%), 'going' with seven (7) times uttered (1.4%), 'give' with six (6) times uttered (1.2%), 'got', 'join', 'talk', 'tell' with five (5) times uttered (1%), 'change', 'come', 'get', 'hate', 'hear', 'invite', 'meet', 'say', 'sing', 'start', 'stay', 'try', 'wait' with four (4) times uttered (0.8%), 'ask', 'done', 'drink', 'eat', 'fit', 'hope', 'live', 'mean', 'play', 'saw', 'take', 'text', 'tried', 'wear' with three (3) times uttered (0.4%), 'agree', 'became', 'being', 'believe', 'broke up', 'brought', 'care', 'check', 'coming', 'decrease', 'enjoy', 'feel', 'finish', 'get out', 'hang out', 'happen', 'improve', 'increase', 'learn', 'made', 'need', 'read', 'release', 'scream', 'shoot', 'solve', 'study', 'swing', 'told', 'use' with two (2) times uttered (0.4%), 'arrived', 'avoid', 'born', 'borrow', 'building', 'built', 'cheat', 'choose', 'compare', 'contact', 'dance', 'decide', 'doing', 'download', 'dribble', 'drive', 'driving', 'earn', 'fell', 'fixed', 'follow', 'following', 'forgot', 'gathering', 'guess', 'had', 'handle', 'has', 'heard', 'hurt', 'ignores', 'left', 'lie', 'listening', 'melt', 'mention', 'message', 'mind', 'order', 'pass', 'permit', 'practice', 'pray', 'prefer', 'refresh', 'register', 'reply', 'ride', 'run', 'said', 'save', 'send', 'sent', 'share', 'show', 'sleep', 'slow down', 'smile', 'stress', 'supposed', 'take care', 'taken', 'talking', 'taste', 'teach', 'traveling', 'treat', 'turn on', 'went', 'wish', 'work', 'yelling' only once occurred (0.2%).

### 3.2 MORPHEMES ANALYSIS

Inflectional morphemes were majorly occurred to those verbs found such as going, tried, being, coming, arrived, building, doing, driving, fixed, following, gathering, ignores, listening, supposed, talking, traveling, and yelling. The morphemes are only grammatical marker as it was shown on this Table 1

**Table 1: Inflectional Morphemes Process**

No	Words	Inflectional Morphemes
1	going	Go + -ing (present participle marker)
2	tried	Try + -ed (past participle marker)
3	Being	Be + -ing (present participle marker)
4	Coming	Come + -ing (present participle marker)
5	Arrived	Arrive + -ed (past participle marker)
6	Building	Build + -ing (present participle marker)
7	Doing	Do + -ing (present participle marker)
8	Driving	Drive + -ing (present participle marker)
9	Fixed	Fix + -ed (past participle marker)
10	Following	Follow + -ing (present participle marker)
11	Gathering	Gather + -ing (present participle marker)
12	Ignores	Ignore + -s (third persent singular marker)
13	Listening	Listen + -ing (present participle marker)
14	Supposed	Suppose + -ed (past participle marker)
15	Talking	Talk + -ing (present participle marker)
16	Traveling	Travel + -ing (present participle marker)
17	Yelling	Yell + -ing (present participle marker)

### 3.3 MEANING

In meaning analysis, the writers tried to translate the verbs found into Bahasa Indonesia. 'think' means *pikir* or *rasa*, 'know' means *tahu*, 'like' means *suka*, 'go' means *pergi*, 'have' means *memiliki*, 'see' means *melihat* or *mengerti*, 'do' means *melakukan* or *melaksanakan*, 'want' means *ingin*, 'come on' means *ayolah*, 'look' means *melihat*, 'watch' means *menonton*, 'love' means *mencintai*, 'make' means *membuat*, 'call' means *menelpon*, 'going' means *pergi*, 'give' means *memberikan*, 'got' means *mendapatkan*, 'join' means *mengikuti*, 'talk' means *berbicara*, 'tell' means *memberitahu*, 'change' means *mengubah*, 'come' means *datang*, 'get' means *mendapatkan*, 'hate' means *membenci*, 'hear' means *mendengarkan*, 'invite' means *mengundang*, 'meet' means *bertemu*, 'say' means *mengatakan*, 'sing' means *bernyanyi*, 'start' means *memulai*, 'stay' means *menempati*, 'try' means *mencoba*, 'wait' means *menunggu*, 'ask' means *meminta*, 'done' means *melaksanakan*, 'drink' means *meminum*, 'eat' means *memakan*, 'fit' means *cocok*, 'hope' means *mengharap*, 'live' means *tinggal*, 'mean' means *berarti*, 'play' means *bermain*, 'saw' means *melihat*, 'take' means *mengambil*, 'text' means *mengirimkan pesan*, 'tried' means *mencoba*, 'wear' means *memakai*, 'agree' means *menyetujui*, 'became' means *menjadi*, 'being' means *menjadi*, 'believe' means *mempercayai*, 'broke up' means *putus hubungan*, 'brought' means *membawa*, 'care' means *perduli*, 'check' means *memeriksa*, 'coming' means *datang*, 'decrease' means *mengurangi*, 'enjoy' means *menikmati*, 'feel' means *merasakan*, 'finish' means *selesai*, 'get out' means *keluar*, 'hang out' means *jalan-jalan*, 'happen' means *terjadi*, 'improve' means *meningkatkan*, 'increase' means *meningkatkan*, 'learn' means *belajar*, 'made' means *membuat*, 'need' means *membutuhkan*, 'read' means *membaca*, 'release' means *melepaskan*, 'scream' means *berteriak*, 'shoot' means *menembak*, 'solve' means *menyelesaikan*, 'study' means *belajar*, 'swing' means *berubah*, 'told' means *berbicara*, 'use' means *menggunakan*, 'arrived' means *tiba*, 'avoid' means *menghindari*, 'born' means *lahir*, 'borrow' means *meminjamkan*, 'building' means *membangun*, 'built' means

*membangun*, 'cheat' means *mencontek*, 'choose' means *memilih*, 'compare' means *membandingkan*, 'contact' means *menghubungi*, 'dance' means *berdansa*, 'decide' means *memutuskan*, 'doing' means *melakukan*, 'download' means *mengunduh*, 'dribble' means *menggiring bola*, 'drive' means *mengemudi*, 'driving' means *mengemudi*, 'earn' means *menghasilkan*, 'fell' means *merasakan*, 'fixed' means *memperbaiki*, 'follow' means *mengikuti*, 'following' means *mengikuti*, 'forgot' means *melupakan*, 'gathering' means *berkumpul*, 'guess' means *menebak*, 'had' means *memiliki*, 'handle' means *mengatasi*, 'has' means *memiliki*, 'heard' means *mendengar*, 'hurt' means *menyakiti*, 'ignores' means *mengacuhkan*, 'left' means *meninggalkan*, 'lie' means *berbohong*, 'listening' means *mendengarkan*, 'melt' means *mencair*, 'mention' means *menyebutkan*, 'message' means *mengirimkan pesan*, 'mind' means *berkeberatan*, 'order' means *memesan*, 'pass' means *lulus*, 'permit' means *mengijinkan*, 'practice' means *berlatih*, 'pray' means *berdoa*, 'prefer' means *menyukai*, 'refresh' means *menyegarkan*, 'register' means *mendaftarkan*, 'reply' means *menjawab*, 'ride' means *mengendarai*, 'run' means *berlari*, 'said' means *berkata*, 'save' means *menyimpan*, 'send' means *mengirimkan*, 'sent' means *mengirimkan*, 'share' means *berbagi*, 'show' means *pertunjukkan*, 'sleep' means *tidur*, 'slow down' means *memperlambat*, 'smile' means *tersenyum*, 'stress' means *menekankan*, 'supposed' means *bertujuan*, 'take care' means *perhatian*, 'taken' means *mengambil*, 'talking' means *berbicara*, 'taste' means *merasakan*, 'teach' means *mengajari*, 'traveling' means *berpergian*, 'treat' means *memperlakukan*, 'turn on' means *menyalakan*, 'went' means *pergi*, 'wish' means *mengharapkan*, 'work' means *berkerja*, 'yelling' means *berteriak*.

### 4. RESULT DISCUSSION

The most dominant verb used was 'think'. This was used as an expression of giving ideas or opinion about something based on the speaker thought. Speaker dominantly used this in order to show the signal of what is uttered in the next sentence is purely his or her opinion. Meanwhile, other words occurred in very varied condition. They occurred because the speakers need to explain something properly. Furthermore, the speaker, indirectly, are able to use morphemes in variation since it had been found that there were some inflectional morphemes occurred such *third person marker*, *past tense marker*, and *present participle marker*. Moreover, it is accepted why are only inflectional morphemes found because this study only focused on verb. However, students still needed to improve their ability in word choices where the writers still found wrong vocabulary used. For example, a student said *because lots of people brought a car*, what should be highlighted is the word 'brought'. The speaker misused the word 'brought' where it should be changed by 'drive'. It is fully understood that this was happened due to students' L1 influences. In their L1, *membawa* could be used to describe *mengendarai*. Meanwhile, English has different meaning.

## 5. CONCLUSION

From the study above, it could be concluded that inflectional morphemes dominantly occurred in verbs. In addition, the language learners must try hard to improve their knowledge of word choice in order to be able to use proper word to explain something.

## REFERENCES

- Fromkin, V. & Rodman, R. (1998). *An Introduction to Language- 6th ed.*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- Haspelmath, M. (2002). *Understanding Morphology*. London: Arnold.
- Richards, J. C., Platt, J. & Platt, H. (1992). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*. Edinburgh, UK: Longman.
- Yule, G. (2010). *The Study of Language. 4th Edition*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.