

University of Benghazi Faculty of Languages Department of Theoretical Linguistics The Importance of The Morphological Awareness in Comprehension and Reading for Learners of English as a Second Language Submitted by Ahmed Fathallah Alobiady 63649 Aisha Mohammed Almahjoup 63534 Supervised by Abdulfattah Alobiady 2024/2025

A Message of Gratitude and Appreciation : I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks and deep appreciation to the Faculty of Languages, Department of English, for their unwavering dedication and exceptional efforts in shaping the academic journeys of countless students. Morphology "refers to the word meaning-making process by decomposing morphologically complex words into morpheme constituents," such as roots, prefixes, and suffixes (Zhang & Shulley, 2017, p. 170). Other researchers, like Richards-Tutor et al. (2016), also determined that morphological analysis was more successful in helping EFL students comprehend texts than vocabulary or comprehension strategies. Morphological awareness, the understanding of morphemes--the smallest units of meaning in a language--is a critical component of reading comprehension, particularly for learners of English as a second language (ESL). This skill enables learners to decode complex words, infer meanings, and expand their vocabulary, thereby improving overall reading fluency and comprehension. For ESL learners, who often encounter challenges in grasping the intricate structure of English, morphological awareness provides a framework for recognizing patterns and their grammatical functions aiming to facilitate more effective language acquisition and literacy development for English As Second Language(ESL) learners.

1.2 Research Question : Q1:How does morphology instruction affect English learner students' ability to figure out unknown words ? Q2:What is The Morphological Awareness ? Q3:What is the important of morphological awareness for learners of English as a second Language ? Q4:What is the all components of morphological awareness ?

1.3 Objectives Of The Study : This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of morphological awareness instruction in enhancing reading comprehension among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners at the University of Benghazi. The primary objective is to evaluate whether teaching word structures, including prefixes, suffixes, and roots, improves students' ability to decode unfamiliar words. Additionally, the study seeks to explore the relationship between morphological awareness and vocabulary development, emphasizing its role in strengthening reading fluency. It also aims to assess the extent to which morphological instruction increases learners' confidence and independence in interpreting complex texts. Finally, the research aspires to provide practical strategies for integrating morphological awareness into EFL teaching practices to improve language proficiency

1.4 Significance of the study : This study underscores the pivotal role of morphological awareness in advancing both reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. By equipping students with the tools to analyze and decode the structural components of words, this research offers a pathway to more effective and independent language learning. Furthermore, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how morphological instruction can address the specific challenges faced by EFL learners, such as limited exposure to authentic language contexts and difficulties in interpreting complex texts. It emphasizes the role of morphology-based strategies in enhancing students' ability to recognize patterns, infer meanings, and expand their lexical knowledge. The findings also provide actionable Insights for educators, guiding them in the design and implementation of targeted instructional practices.

By integrating morphological awareness into curricula, teachers can foster not only linguistic proficiency but also critical thinking and problem-solving skills in students. Ultimately, this study aims to bridge the gap between theoretical research and practical application, Chapter 2 Literature Review : 2.1 Introduction

The ability to comprehend written texts is a cornerstone of language proficiency, particularly for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. However, many EFL students face significant challenges in achieving this skill due to the complexity of the English language and the limited resources available for targeted instruction. Reading comprehension goes beyond recognizing words; it involves understanding the meaning, context, and structure of texts. For many learners, this task is made even more difficult by gaps in their lexical knowledge and a lack of awareness about how words are constructed and interconnected. Morphological awareness, defined as the ability to recognize and manipulate the smallest units of meaning in a word—such as prefixes, suffixes, and roots—plays a vital role in bridging these gaps. This skill enables learners to decode complex words, infer meanings, and expand their vocabulary, making it a crucial component of reading fluency. Despite its importance, morphological awareness is often overlooked in traditional language instruction, which tends to focus on rote memorization of vocabulary and grammar rules. This gap in instruction leaves many students ill-equipped to tackle unfamiliar texts, limiting their ability to succeed academically and communicate effectively. The challenges faced by EFL learners are not limited to vocabulary acquisition alone. Many students struggle with the structural aspects of English, which can differ significantly from their native languages. For instance, learners whose first languages do not use morphological systems similar to English may find it difficult to understand how prefixes and suffixes alter a word's meaning or grammatical function. This lack of understanding can lead to confusion, reduced confidence, and a sense of frustration when encountering complex texts. The purpose of this study is to investigate how incorporating morphological awareness into language instruction can improve EFL learners' reading comprehension and overall linguistic competence. By analyzing the relationship between morphological skills and text comprehension, this research seeks to identify effective strategies that educators can use to support their students. Specifically, it aims to determine whether teaching students to deconstruct words into their constituent parts can enhance their ability to decode unfamiliar vocabulary, leading to improved reading fluency and comprehension. Beyond its immediate implications for reading, morphological awareness has broader benefits for language learning. It supports the development of writing skills, as students become more adept at constructing and deconstructing words. It also enhances spelling proficiency, as learners gain a deeper understanding of word formation and structure. Furthermore, by equipping students with the tools to independently analyze and infer word meanings, morphological awareness fosters a sense of autonomy and confidence in language learning, which is essential for long-term success. This research also highlights the importance of moving beyond traditional teaching methods that rely heavily on memorization. Instead, it advocates for a more dynamic approach that integrates morphological analysis into daily instruction. Such an approach not only helps students tackle immediate language challenges but also prepares them for future academic and professional demands. In conclusion, this study emphasizes the critical role of morphological awareness in addressing the challenges faced by EFL learners. By focusing on the structural aspects of language, it

aims to provide practical solutions that enhance reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and overall language proficiency. The findings of this research will offer valuable insights for educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers, paving the way for more effective and inclusive language teaching practices.

2.2 Morphology Instruction

Research in vocabulary instruction has consistently highlighted the limitations of traditional approaches that rely solely on teaching word definitions. Findings from various studies emphasize the importance of focusing on the structural components of words—such as prefixes, suffixes, and roots—rather than providing definitions in isolation. Richards–Tutor et al. (2016) observed that direct instruction in word meanings often fails to equip students with the skills needed to independently decipher unfamiliar vocabulary. Instead, morphological instruction, which teaches students how to analyze and interpret the smallest units of meaning within words, has proven to be a far more effective strategy for vocabulary development. Morphology enables learners to uncover the relationships between words, fostering a deeper understanding of how language functions. Silverman et al. (2014) argue that "if students are taught to break down words into meaningful parts and analyze how these words are used, they may be able to learn new words and improve language proficiency" (p. 48). This skill enables learners to decode complex words, infer meanings, and expand their vocabulary, thereby improving overall reading fluency and comprehension.