Inflectional Morphemes

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ABSTRACT

Inflections in a language are significant because they can convey information regarding tense, agreement, person, number and other details. But, despite their importance, they are omitted or incorrectly substituted. The omission of an inflection could be expected in usage by second language (L2) learners when they are exposed to a highly inflectional language with rich verbal paradigms, where multiple verb forms compete for the learner's or user's attention and overwhelm the processing system. English, with its residual inflectional morphemes, should not be so challenging.

This study deals with the English inflectional morphemes. It is made up of four sections:

The First Section: sheds the light on such concepts as: the problem, the aim, the limit, the value and the procedures.
The Second Section: studies the main body of the paper, which is the problems that the second language learners (L2) have with inflectional morphemes. It attempts to account for their difficulties with these inflections and gives sights regarding these inflectional variations and irregularities are offered to encourage deeper understanding and improvement of English skills as a foreign language for both teachers and learners.
The Third Section: reveals the main findings of the study that relate to the inflection of nouns, verbs and adjectives.
The Fourth Section: which is considered as the back material of the study? It reveals the main conclusion that the writer reached as well as including the main references that the writer depended on completing this task.
Keywords: Inflections in a language, Metaphor

I.   SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Problem of Study:

For ESL/EFL learners, the inflectional morphemes require at least some explicit language instructions. These inflectional endings are not obvious to ESL/EFL learners, especially if something comparable does not exist in their native languages so they need to be exposed to the ideathat these words must change form in certain instances.

Another reason that ESL/EFL learners need explicit instructions regarding these forms is that they may not hear the inflectional endings because their sound is reduced. By this we mean that inflectional endings do not receive stress in a word, so learners may not always be aware of them.

1.2 Aims of the Study:

The key aim of this study is to develop the students' ability and to enable them how to use the English inflectional morphemes in a correct way. The study aims at :

1. Analysis inflections in nouns.
2. Analysis inflections in verbs.
3. Analysis inflections in adjectives.

1.3 Limits of the Study:

The paper is limited to the study of inflections as they occur in English language in nouns, verbs and

adjectives, including both regular and irregular forms. in order to quantify how many types of variations there are and to determine what these variations are. The instrumentation of the study comprises of a content analysis of the inflections in English that yields an 8-point framework of the inflection of nouns, verbs and adjectives: 1. Pluralnouns, 2. Possessive nouns, 3. Present verb-third person, 4. Present participle verb, 5. Past tense verbs, 6. Past participle tense, 7. Comparative adjectives and 8. Superlative

1.4 Value of the Study:

This paper is considered valuable and precious that it delivers rich and useful data, which will give a broader idea of the usage of English inflectional morphemes. Also it will be beneficial for educators in terms of the pedagogy of developing the students' level of ability in linguistics competency.

1.5 Procedures of the Study:

It is worth mentioning that the main procedures that the writer of this study follows in writing this paper can be summed up as the following:
1. Borrowing several books from the library to be the main sources of this study.
2. Extracting information from the internet to be extra knowledge.
3. Using different examples to clarify what this study is intended to convey.

II. SECTION TWO

THEORITICAL BACKGROUND

2. Introductory Note

A continuous stream of speech can be broken up by the listener or linguist into smaller meaningful parts. A conversation for example can be divided up further into the words that make up each of the sentence. It is obvious to most people that a sentence has a meaning, and each of the words that constitute it has a meaning as well. Can we go further and divide words into smaller units which still have meaning? Many words can be divided into smaller units. Now, consider the words "look", "looks" and "looked". What about the "-s" in "looks" and the "-ed" in "looked"? These segments are

called morphenies, and can be separated from the meaningful unit "look", and although they don't have really an identifiable meaning themselves, each does have a particular function. The "-s" is required for agreement with certain subjects (she "looks", but not she "look"), and the "-ed" signifies that the action of the verb "look" has already taken place. Segments such as these are called inflectional morphemes, which are the concern of this paper and will be discussed in detailed in a following sections.

2.1 English Inflectional Morphology

Inflectional morphemes, alter the form of a word in order to indicate certain grammatical properties such as plurality, as the {-s} of magazines does, or past tense, as the {-ed} of kicked does. English has only eight inflectional morphemes listed in Table 1 along with the properties they indicate. Except for {-en}, the forms that the researcher lists in Table1 are the regular English inflections. They are regular because they are the inflections added to the majority of verbs, nouns and adjectives to indicate grammatical properties such as tense, number and degree. (Laurie Bauer; 1938: 126-127) They are also the inflections we typically add to new words coming into the language, for example, we add {-s} to the noun throughput to make it plural. When we borrow words from other languages, in most cases we add the regular English inflections to them rather than borrow the inflections they had in their home language; for example, we pluralize operetta as operettas rather than as operette as the Italian inflection does. The regular inflections are the default inflections that the learners tend to use when they do not know the correct once. For example, they add regular past inflection {-ed} to the verb grow -growedrather than grew. (Ibid)
Inflectional morphemes are always the last morphemes of a word. They are always suffixes. Only one inflection morpheme can be added to a word. Inflectional   are essential for the correct production and understanding of grammatical or structural elements of utterance. (Andrea DeCapua; 2008:55)

2.2 Definition of Inflectional Morphemes

A major division in morpheme is free and bound. A free morpheme has been referred to as an independent word. The bound morpheme is of two types :

a) Inflectional and derivational morphemes:

An inflectional morpheme, which is a type of a bound morpheme, is defined by linguists as a mere grammatical indicator or marker. An inflectional morpheme cannot generate or create new words nor can it affect the grammatical class of a word.

Yule defines inflectional morphemes as "set of bound morphemes which are not used to produce new words in the language, but rather to indicate aspects of the grammatical function of a word. Inflectional morphemes are used to show f a word is plural or singular, if it is past tense or not, and if it is a comparative or possessive form." (Yule George: 2006; 64) .DeCapua states that "inflectional morphemes, are small closed set of eight grammatical morphemes. These eight add little or no content, but serve a grammatical function such as marking plural or tense. Inflectional morphemes change the form of a word without changing either the word category belongs to or its meaning."
(Andrea DeCapua:2008 ;38)

Robinson mentions that "inflectional morphemes are bound morphemes that are used to serve grammatical purpose. As opposed to derivational morphemes, the attachment of an inflectional morpheme does not create a new word. Therefore an inflected word always stays in the same lexical category as the original word (i.e. stein)." Peter Robinson: 2013; 308) Cyckens states that "inflectional morpheme is a morpheme that does not assign or change the set of inflectional morphemes associated with a stem." (1-lurbert Cyckens: 2007; 634) .Angel mentions that "inflectional morpheme is abound morpheme that is added to a base (root) that changes the meaning of the word not the part of speech." (Carol A. Angel: 2009; 22) ."Inflectional morphemes mod5' a verb tense-a noun's number without affecting the word's meaning or class. Examples of applying inflectional morphemes to words are adding -s to the root dog to form dogs and adding - ed to wait to form waited. In English, there are eight inflections." "indicate aspects of the grammatical function of a word. There are eight inflectional morphemes in English. They are all suffixes. Two inflectional morphemes can be attached to nouns, - 'S (possessive case), - (e)s (plural). Four inflections can be attached to verbs, - (e)d (past tense), -ing (present particiole), -en (past participle), -s (3rd person singular).

Two inflections can be attached to adjectives, -er (comparative), -est (superlative)" linguistics in-English

2.3 Classification of Inflectional Morphemes

2.3.1 Nouns Inflectional Morphemes

2.3.1.1 Noun plural {-S Pl}

Most countable nouns in English have two words forms: a singular and plural. Inflectionally, for any noun lexeme X there are just two grammatical words, 'singular of X' and 'plural of X'. Contrasting in number. Thus, to the lexeme "cat" there corresponds a singular form "cat", consisting ofjust one morpheme, and a plural form "cats", consisting of a root cat plus the suffix {- s}.only count nouns have plural forms. The regular plural is the {-s} inflection affixed or attached to the end of a count noun. Although most count nouns in English take the plural {-s} inflection, there are a -few exceptions. There are also count nouns that don not have plural forms such one sheep, two sheep, or ten deer, fifteen deer, and words that always end in 's' but are not plural as in series or politics. There are a number of irregular nouns that change the internal vowel of the root, more precisely, an allomorph of the root with different vowel from the singular, for example teeth,feet, geese. (McCarthy; 2002:43) Irregular plural nouns are generally nouns that follow older patterns of English or are nouns that have been borrowed from Latin or Greek and thus take the Latin or Greek plural formation. In the case of words that have been borrowed from Latin or Greek, there is a tendency for them to adopt over time the regular English plural {-s} inflection. Therefore, we see words such as syllabus that actually have two plural forms, the original syllabi and the English syllabuses. Since these exceptions are limited, they are not difficult for ESL/EFL to learn.

(Andrea DeCapua; 2008:67)

Table 2 : English Regular And Irregular Plural Inflectional Morphemes

Regular plural		plural s Irregular plural	ending Internal vowel				change F VES
Halves	Half	Men	Man	Syllabi	Syllabus	Pictures	Picture
Wives	Wife	Feet	Foot	Formulae	Formula	Desks	Desk
Loaves	Loaf	Geese	Goose	Cacti	Cactus	Forests	Forest
Knives	Knife	Mice	Mouse	Criteria	Criterion	Houses	House

2.3.1.2 Noun Possessive {-'S}

The possessive {-'s} identifies that words as a noun. Traditional definitions of possessive {-'s} define this inflectional ending as a suffix added to certain nouns to show possession or ownership. In reality, the possessive {-'s} indicate more than possession or ownership, it can also convey the meaning of originator or inventor as in:

1) Darwin's theory of evolution.
2) Edison's light bulb.

Possessive {-'s} can also describe something related to a characteristics as in:

3) The soldier's courage.
Can all nouns take the inflectional possessive - 'sj?
No, not all nouns can take the inflectional possessive {-'s} to indicate possession or ownership. Nouns that can take the inflectional possessive {-'s} are generally those referring to:

- People
- Time
- Animals
- Collective nouns

Nouns that generally do not take the inflectional possessive {-'s} are inanimate nouns, although there are certain inanimate nouns that do take the inflection possessive {-'s}. These are generally collective nouns that refer to group of people such as company, team, committee or government. Most inanimate nouns take "off phrase" to show possession, as in the back of desk not * the desk's back.Consequently, while ESL/EFL learners may want to know exactly when they can or cannot use the inflectional possessive {-'s}, there is no hard and fast rule for them to follow, just general guide lines. When ESL/EFL learners do use the inflectional possessive {-'s} where native speakers would not, such errors are not serious. They generally do not cause misunderstandings and rarely stigmatized by native speakers. (Andrea DeCapua; 2008:66)

2.3.2 Verbs Inflectional Morphemes

2.3.2.1 The verb five Forms

In English, a verb lexeme has at most five distinct forms, as illustrated here with GIVE:

4) GIVE

a. The base form: give
E.g. Mary wants to give a lecture.
Mary may want to give a lecture.
b. The -s form: gives
E.g. Mary gives a lecture every day.
c. The past form: gave
E.g. Mary gave a lecture yesterday.
d. The -ed (perfect or passive participle) form: given
E.g. Mary has given a lecture today.
E.g. A lecture is always given by Mary.
e. The -ing (progressive) form: giving
E.g. Mary is going to give a lecture today.

The contrast between present at (4b) and past at (4c) is a contrast of tense. The other dimensions of contrast manifested in (4a) are person (third person versus the rest) and number (singular versus plural). (McCarthy; 2002:48-49)

For the form labeled perfect or passive participle, two examples are given, because perfect and passive contexts can be distinguished clearly it is early mentioned that a verb lexeme has at most five forms. In fact, most verbs have only four forms, because the past tense and the perfect (or passive) participle forms are the same.

This is true for all regular verbs (those that the past tense with the inflectional suffix {-ed}), such as PERFORM as illustrated below:
4) PERFORM
a. The Base form: perform
b. The -s form: performs
c. The Past form: performed
d. Perfect or passive participle: performed
e. The -ing (progressive form): performing
The inflectional endings -s, -ed, and -ing are added to the base form of the verb. In this section we shall discuss each of these inflections in turn. (Ibid)

2.3.2.2 The -s form

The -s form of a verb is produced by adding -s to the base form. It is used only in the present tense, when the subject of the verb is he, she, or it (the third-person singular pronouns):
5) She walks to school.

6) Amy writes poetry. (Gerald Nelson; 2001:41)

2.3.2.3 The past form

The past form of a verb is produced by adding -ed to the base form. It is used for the past tense, with all subjects:

7) *1 cooked dinner last night.*
8) *You cooked dinner last night.*
9) *David cooked dinner last night.*
10) *We cooked dinner last night.*

(Ibid)

2.3.2.4 The -ed form (perfect or passive participle)

Like the past form, the* -ed form of a verb is produced by adding the -ed to the base form. The -ed form is used:

1. After the passive auxiliary be The play was directed by Trevor Nunn. The Queen was shown to her seat. Our suitcases were stolen from the hotel. Two new scenes were written for the final version.
2. After the perfective auxiliary have Trevor Nunn has directed many plays. The Mayor has shown the Queen to her seat. Someone had stolen our suitcases. The scriptwriter had written two new scenes.
3. In subordinate clauses Published in 1998, the book became a best-seller (Ibid: 42) [Note: The -ed forn is just a cover temi. Only regular verbs actually end in -ed in this form (e.g. was destroyed). Irregular verbs display a very wide variety of endings in the -ed (e.g. begun, written, brought, shown, stolen).]

2.3.2.5 The -ing form

The -ing form of a verb is produced by adding -ing to the base form. The –ing is used:

a) After the auxiliary "Be" She is walking to school.
Alan was sleeping when I arrived.
b) In subordinate clauses Paul slammed the door, bringing the ceiling down. (Ibid: 43)

2.3.3 Adjectives Inflectional N'Iorphemes

Just as only plural count noun can take the inflectional -s ending, there are inflections that adjectives take. Adjectives and adverbs can take the -er and - est inflection to show the comparative and superlative. When we compare two things, we use the comparative. When we compare more than two things, we use the superlative. We can identify many adjectives by their ability to take the comparative suffix -er and the superlative -esi.

Table 3 : Adjectives and Their Inflectional Endings

Adjective	Comparative —er		Superlative —est
Cool	Cooler	(than)	The coolest
Mad	Madder	(than)	The maddest
Happy	Happier	(than)	The happiest
Small	Smaller	(than)	The smallest
Old	Older	(than)	The oldest

Many English adjectives exhibit three forms, positive, comparative and superlative as illustrated below:

Table 4 : English Adjectives Forms

Positive Comparative Superlative
happy happier happiest
long longer longest
pure purer purest
new newer newest
old older oldest
big bigger biggest
good better best
bad worse worst

All these exhibit a regular pattern of suffixation with -er and -est, except for better, best, worse and worst which are suppletive. Broadly speaking, the comparative form is produced by adding an -er ending to the base form. The superlative form is produced by adding an -est to the base: Base cold + -er comparative "colder" Base cold + -est = superlative "coldest" .Some adjectives form the comparative and superlative using more and most respectively: Base Comparative Superlative recent more recent most recent important more important most important.   (McCarthy; 2002:49-50)

2.3.2.1 Comparative Degree {-ER CP}

The form of an adjective that is used when comparing things, for example:
He is taller than me.

The comparative is formed in different ways according to the length of the base adjective:
- If it has one syllable, then the letters -er are added.
- If the word has three syllables or more, then the word 'more' is added before the adjective:

She is more attractive than me.

Irregular suppletive forms: {good/well + -ER} = better

{bad+ -ER} = worse

{ much + -ER} = more

2.3.2.2 Superlative Degree {-EST SP}

The superlative is formed in different ways according to the length of the base adjective:
- If it has one syllable, then the letters -est are added. He is tallest on in the class
- If the word has three syllables or more then the word 'most' is placed before the adjective:

She is the most attractive girl in the class.

Irregular suppletive forms: {good/weli + -EST} = best

{bad+-EST} = worst

{much + -EST} = most

2.4 Characteristics of Inflectional Morphemes

Below are 5 characteristics that distinguish inflections from derivations. Remember that these can apply to any formal class, suffixes, prefixes, infixes, root change, suppletion and reduplication, etc.

1. Do not change part of speech or meaning; e.g. big and bigger, big, biggest are all adjectives.
2. Typically indicate syntactic or semantic relations between different words in a sentence, e.g. the present tense morpheme {-s} in waits shows agreement of the verb (both are third person singular).
3. Typically occur with all members of some large class of morphemes, e.g. the plural morpheme {-s} occurs with almost all count nouns in English.
4. Occur at the margins of a word, after any derivational morphemes, e.g. rationalizations, {-s} is inflectional, and appears at the very end of the word.
5. In English are suffixes only.

(Clayton Valli: 2000; 309)

2.5 Functions of Inflectional Morphemes

An inflectional morpheme plays three grammatical roles in English:

1. It indicates tense - Tense relates to a verb. It then means that to indicate tense, it affects verb. A verb is affected in the following ways.

Come come + s, come + ing

walk walk + s, walk + ing, walk + ed

write write + s, writ + ing (writing), write + en (written)

{-s} is a third person singular marker.

{-ed} is the past tense marker.

{-en} is the past participle marker.

{-ing} is the continuous tense marker.

2. It indicates number - Plurality deals with nouns. Nouns are affected by number. Nouns are subdivided into singular and plural. Plural nouns are indicated with {-s}. Thus,

Boy + s = boys

School + s = schools

Table + s = tables

The {-s} above is plural marker and it is an additive morpheme. It indicates that the morpheme carrying it is 'more than one'.

3. It indicates comparison - Adjectives are used to compare. Adjectives have comparative (for two things) and superlative (more than two things) forms.

Fat + er = fatter

Fat + est = fattest

The {-er} and {-est} morphemes are used to indicate comparative and superlative forms of the adjective *fat* above. (Harrison Adeniyi; 20 10:22-23)

2.6 Inflectional Morphemes and their Allomorphs

Is every morpheme pronounced in the same way? In fact, many morphemes have two or more different pronunciations, called allomorphs, the choice between them being determined by the context. These include some of the commonest morphemes in the language, as the researcher illustrates directly, then will discuss in more detail what aspects of the contexts can influence the choice of an allomorph.

How are the plurals of most English nouns formed? If one compares cats, dogs and horses with cat, dog and horse respectively, the obvious answer is: 'by adding {-s}'. But English spelling is notoriously unreliable as a guide to pronunciation. In fact, this {-s} suffix has three allomorphs: [s] (as in cats or lamps), [z] (as in dogs or days), and [iz] or [ozj (as in horses and judges). Is it, then, that everyone learning English, whether natively or as a second language, must learn individually for each noun which of the three allomorphs is used in its plural form? That would seem extremely laborious. In fact, it is easy to show that there allomorphs are distributed in an entirely regular fashion, based on the sound immediately preceding the suffix, thus:

- When the preceding sound is a sibilant (the kind of 'hissing' or 'hushing' sound heard at the end of horse, rose, bush, church and judges, the [rzj allomorph occurs.
- Otherwise, when the preceding sound is voiceless,(i.e. produced with no vibration of the vocal folds in the larynx (as in cat, rock, cup or calf), the {s] allomorph occurs.

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Otherwise, after a vowel or a voiced consonant, as in dog or day, the [z] allomorph occurs.

Another very common suffix with phonologically determined allomorph is the one spelled I-ed!, used in past tense form of most verbs. Its allomorphs are [tj, [dl and [id] or [dj, which their distribution is based on sound immediately preceding the suffix, thus:

- When the preceding sound is a t or d sound, as in wait or load, the [id] allomorph occurs.
- Otherwise, when the preceding sound is voiceless (as in rip, lick, watch and wash), the [t] allomorph occurs.
- Otherwise, (i.e. after a vowel or a voiced consonant, as in drag or play), the [d] allomorph occurs.

(Quirk: 1973; 28-29)

2.7 Regular and Irregular Inflectional Morphemes

Because of its long and complex history, English (like all languages) has many irregular forms, which may be irregular in a variety of ways. First, irregular words may use different inflections than regular ones: for example, the modem past participle of a regular verb is {-ed}, but the past participle of freeze is frozen and the past participle of break is broken. Second, irregular forms may involve man/men, woman/women, grow/grew, ring/rang/rung. Third, some forms derive form historically unrelated forms: went, the past tense of go, historically was the past tense of different verb wend. This sort of realignment is known as suppletion. Other examples of suppletion include good, better, and best, and bad, worse, and worst. Fourth, some words show no inflectional change: sheep is both singular and plural; hit present and past tense, as well as past participle. Fifth, many borrowed words, especially nouns, have irregular inflected forms: alumnae and cherubim are the plurals of alumna and cherub, respectively. (Laurie Bauer; 1983:127)

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

3.1 Findings related to Noun Inflection

Nouns inflections occur in the following environments:
1) Nouns endings with -f(surf), -fe (knife), -ff(cliff), -ffe (giraffe), -gh and –ph.
2) Nouns ending with -o, -00, -ou, -ow, and –eau.
3) Nouns ending with -y, -ay, -ey, -oy, andu y.
4) Nouns ending with-th,
5) Nouns having suffixes -en and-ren,
6) Nouns with suffixes -ee, -e and –i.
7) Nouns with a zero suffix suffixal plural,
8) Nouns with Greek and Latin suffixes -a, -e, es, -ces and –i.
9) Compound nouns with different forms of affixes.
10) Nouns with multiple plural forms.

The pronunciation of -s is affected by voiced, voiceless and sibilant phonemes of the final consonant and by final vowels sounds, all of which are voiced. Some of them are inflected within the word, such as in man - men and woman- women. A few of them are inflected by a zero suffixed plural with no change occurring either within or at the end of the word, such as fish - fIsh. Some nouns ending with -e will retain a silent -e when inflected for plural form, such as:

note -* notes, while others will have the -e pronounced such as :
bridge - bridges.

The suffixes that are added in noun plural inflections in English as follows: -s,-es, -yes, -ies, -en, -ren, -ee, and i. There are also Greek and Latin suffixes - a, -e, -ices and -i and a zero suffixed plural included.This indicates that noun inflection for plural in English is not a simple process but one that requires a broad knowledge of numerous environments and irregular inflectional affixes. The options for noun plural inflection are much more complicated than simply adding {-s} to the end of a noun.Inflection for noun possessives also has numerous variations for the use of {- 's}. These include:

1) Singular nouns with -'s
2) Plural nouns without-s affix

3) Two owners with one thing
4) Noun phrases
5) Names of some places
6) Nouns telling time
7) Nouns telling distance
8) Nouns telling weight. This also indicates that noun inflection in possessive form in English is also not a simple process, but one that requires a broad knowledge of the environments in which {-'s} and {-'s} can occur. According to Conway (1998), he discussed the problem of English plurals, claimed that even at the lexical level, it can be a complex matter to correctly inflect the individual words of a sentence to reflect their number, person, mood, case, etc. However, Wagner (2008), posed questions regarding teaching morphemes in a certain order, asking if it should be broadened to include other factors, for example, should teachers focus on the morphemes which students make the most mistakes, or should teachers focus on the most frequently used and disregard acquisition order altogether and should teachers focus less on grammatical morphemes and more on communicative ability.

The options for noun possessive inflection are more varied than simply adding{ -'s} or {-s'} to the end ofa noun.

3.1.2 Findings related to Verb Inflection

Inflection for verbs was also found to include a number of variations. While there are very few variation for 3' person, and just five variations for the present participle, there are approximately 100 irregular verbs of different types for the past tense and past participle forms, as well as other types of variation. This also indicates that inflection for verbs in English requires more consideration than simply adding the affixes {-s}, {-ing} and {-ed}.

For present 3rd -person singular, verbs are formed by adding the affix {-s} for both regular and irregular verbs. In the case of verbs ending with a sibilant consonant, the suffix {-es} is added. Also, verbs that end with -y preceded by consonant have the -y to -i and the suffix {-es} is added.

To form the present participle, the suffix {-ing} is added to the majority of verbs. However, the spelling of the present participle varies slightly according to the specific environment. When a verb ends with -e, that -e

is deleted and when a verb ends with a consonant preceded by a short vowel, that consonant must be doubled. And few verbs ending with -ie will have the -ie changed to-y.

The suffix {-ed} is normally to verbs in order to form them into both the past tense and past participle forms. This is the regular process for verbs in Modem English. Depending on the environment of the verb, a number of spelling variations can be found for these regular forms using the suffix {-ed}.

Verbs that are formed in ways other than through the use of the suffix {-ed} are considered to be irregular. Some of these verbs add suffixes {-d} or {-t} similar to regular past tense verb forms. Many others are formed through changes in the vowels of the verbs. Some of them have a zero suffix and not change at all. While there are some general patterns for the irregular past tense forms, the number of variations is greatly varied and not easily predicted. For the past participle forms, there are also various ways other than the affix {-ed}. These irregular forms have many variations. Although there are some general patterns, this aspect of inflection is also highly irregular and unpredictable Also, some past participles have two accepted forms, regular and irregular.

3.1.3 Findings related to Adjective Inflection

Although inflection for adjectives is relatively more straightforward than both noun and verb inflection in the English language, it was also found to include two main variations and some spelling variations for comparative and superlative forms using {-er} and {-est} affixes.

For comparative and superlative forms, adjectives are formed by adding the suffixes {-er} and {-est} respectively. The rules of spelling for words ending with -e or a consonant preceded by a vowel are followed. If the adjective has two or more syllables, the comparative and superlative forms are generally made by adding more or most before the adjective. Some two-syllable adjectives follow both of the two rules by either adding {-er} or {-est} at the end or using more and most before. Also, there are a small number of adjectives that do not follow either of these inflectional patterns and thus are considered to be irregular. It can be concluded that adjective inflection in English is also more complicated than following simple rules of grammar.

IV. SECTION THREE

CONCLUSION

The main findings of the study show that inflectional variation in the English language is significant. EFL/ESL learners are not normally exposed to these variations. In addition, an inflectional language or the concept of a changing process is difficult for EFL/ESL learners. They are not familiar with the different environment of inflected nouns, verbs and adjectives, because there is no inflection occurring in their languages. Furthermore, inflection and the various linguistics are interlinked, for example, the phenomenon at the phonological level by English inflection, as in the sound change from a plural noun morpheme, possessive noun morpheme and a third person singular verb —s can be inflected to one of three phonemes Is! , Izi, and IzJ. In addition, inflection at the syntax level, for example subject and verb agreement, is more complicated. Thus, English competency should be developed a long with both communicative and linguistic competence in the learning process and the way the various aspects of inflection are presented and taught in the classroom has to be considered. Inflection should not be taught as separate from other various elements, but they should all be taught in an integrated system at the beginner and elementary levels. In other words, inflection should be explained and taught in context during the classroom activities when practicing reading comprehension and speaking ski! is. The implication of this correlation is that changes and adjustments to language teaching programs should be considered by schools, institutes and universities.

This language curriculum reform should focus on providing students with courses that emphasize inflection and inflectional variations and exceptions. Universities could also be encouraged to provide more activities and opportunities for using English for both communicative skills and linguistic competence, in order to improve students' second language acquisition.

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[22] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morpheme

APPENDEX NO. (1)

Adding inflections : general spelling rules

1. **Spelling rule 1. Double the final consonant before adding -ed,-ing, - er or -est:**

Verb	ed $_+$	+-ing
rub	rubbed	rubbing

Adjective +-er

Red   redder

travel travelled travelling

marvel marveled marveling

However, in American English, final 1 is not doubled:

travel traveled traveling

marvel marveled marveling

• Final 1 is not doubled when it follows a or 0:

    conceal concealed concealing

    reveal revealed revealing

    cool cooled cooling

• Final g is not doubled when it follows n:

    Strong stronger strongest

    Young younger youngest

2. **Spelling** rule **2. Change final y to i before adding -s, -ed, -er or -est:**

Verb + +-ed

Easy easier easiest Adverb ±..er -est

early earlier earliest

verb   +s   +ed

cry	cries	cried
occupy	Occupies	occupied
try	tries	tried
worry	worries	worried
Adjective	+-er	+-est

• **If the final y follows a vowel, then it is retained:**

    convey conveys conveyed

    delay delays delayed

    play plays played

    enjoy enjoys enjoyed

3. **Spelling rule 3. Drop silent e before adding -ed, -ing, -er, or -est:**

Verb +-ed +-ing

blue	*bluer*	*bluest*
close	*closer*	*closest*
large	*larger*	*largest*

whitest whiter whitest

care	cared	caring
change	changed	changing
hope	hoped	hoping
love	loved	loving
Adjective	+-er	+-est

• If the base ends in ie, change ie toy before adding -ing:

> *die dying*
> *lie lying*
> *tie tying*

• The e is retained in dyeing and canoeing.

4. **Spelling rule 4. Add e before -s if the base ends in one of the following:**

s, sh, ch, tch, x or z:

Verb
pass passes
push pushes
teach teaches
catch catches
relax relaxes
buzz buzzes

Noun
mass masses
box boxes
church churches
match matches
wish wishes
quiz quizzes

APPENDEX NO. (2)

Terminology

Allomorph : one of the variant pronunciations of a morpheme, among which the choice is determined by context (phonological, grammatical or lexical). For example, [z], [iz] and [SI are phonologically determined allomorphs of the plural suffix, occurring respectively in cats, dogs and horses. A morpheme with only one pronunciation is sometimes said to have only one allornorph.

Allomorphy : choice of allomorphs, or (in respect of a morpheme) the characteristic of having more than one allomorph.

Base : word or part of a word viewed as an input to a derivational or inflectional process, in particular affixation.

Bound Morpheme, Bound Allomorph: morpheme or allomorph that cannot stand on its own as a word. A bound morpheme is one whose allomorphs are all bound. See also free morpheme.

Communicative Competence : the general ability to use language accurately, appropriately and flexibly.

EFL- is an abbreviation for "English as a Foreign Language". This is mainly used to talk about students (whose first language is not English) learning English while living in their own country.

ESL- is an abbreviation for "English as a Second Language". This is mainly used to talk about foreign students learning English while living in an English-speaking country.

Free Morpheme, Free Allomorph: morpheme or allomorph that can stand on its own as a word. A morpheme may have both free and bound allomorphs, e.g. wife is free but wives- is bound because it appears only in the plural word form wives.

L2 : refers to a second language or a foreign.

Lexeme: word seen as an abstract grammatical entity, represented concretely by one or more different inflected word forms according to the grammatical context. Where the distinction is important, lexemes are conventionally represented in small capitals while word forms are in italics. For example, the verb lexeme PREFORM has four inflected word forms: peiform, performs, performing and performed.

Morpheme : a minimal unit of grammatical structure. (The morpheme is often defined as the minimal meaningful unit of language).

Stem : term used in various senses: root, or base in general, or base for the word forms of a lexeme (involving the addition of inflectional affixes only, not derivational ones).

Suffix : bound morpheme that follows the root.

Suppletion : phenomenon whereby one lexeme is represented by two or more different roots, depending on the context; for example, the verb GO is represented by wen(t) in the past tense and go elsewhere.

Tense : grammatical category exhibited by verbs, closely associated with time. In English, a distinction between present and past tenses is expressed inflectionally, e.g. in give and wait versus gave and waited.