



## **SECOND YEAR STUDENTS' ABILITY IN ANALYSING NOUN PHRASE WITHIN TEXT AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT FBS UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG**

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### **Abstract**

Grouping words into phrases is one of the problems faced by English students in using the language. Noun phrase as a basic constituent of a sentence is seen very problematic. The paper tries to explore how well second year students of English Department analyse noun phrases and their problems in doing it. There were 28 chosen taken students through proportionate stratified sampling as the sample. The text designed consisting of 20 noun phrases were distributed to the sample to be analysed. Each noun phrase was generally analysed into three aspects, namely, identifying type/component, its function within a sentence, and role of each element. The analysis was by scoring and putting them into percentage. Then, they were categorized into *excellent*, *good*, *average*, *poor*, and *very poor*. The result shows that about 40% of sample failed to analyse noun phrase correctly. Their way of analysing noun phrase was in *average* level on identifying type/component (58.29%), *very poor* level on its function within a sentence (45.5%), and *good* level on the role of each element of noun phrase (67.53%). The problem was mainly students' lack competence in identifying the part of speech and its function for each point.

Key Word: *students' ability, analysis, noun phrase, text*

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Syntax is one of crucial subjects that need to be comprehended in learning English. Many people still need to comprehend syntax, since it helps people in knowing the structure of phrases and sentences. Fromkin et al (2000: 174) states that syntax is the structure of phrases and sentences; the system of rules in the syntax of language that determines the way in which words are combined to form meaningful phrases and sentences. It is supported by Hoff in Anggraeni (2013:82) that syntax is the component of grammar that governs the ordering of words in sentences. By learning syntax, someone is expected to know exactly how phrases and sentences are formed in meaningful way. In short, learning

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syntax will help people in modifying and combining several phrases and sentences in order to express thought based on grammatical rules.

A phrase is the smallest component of syntax. It can consist of one or more words that are linked in a systematic order. English has various kinds of phrases, such as adjective phrase (AdjP), noun phrase (NP), verb phrase (VP), adverb phrase (AdvP), and prepositional phrases (PP) (see Wheeler, 1998). Each on them has the head except prepositional phrase. In PP, preposition is called relator of the phrase. Here are examples of each category (the bold type are the head except prep is relator):

NP	VP	PP	Adj.P	Adv.P
<u>my friend;</u>	<u>joint him soon;</u>	<u>on the shelf;</u>	<u>very easy;</u>	<u>very beautifully</u>
Det.(Poss) N	V Pron Adv	Prep (Art N)	Deg Adj	Deg Adv

The coverage of syntax mentioned can be seen in any kind of text. The students can use text as a medium which enables them to practice English in written form. Text is defined in any different way, firstly as any passage spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole (Gleason, 1998: 277) and Thornbury (1999: 71), and as a combination of lexical and grammatical device, which shows cohesiveness and coherence in order to make sense of utterances (Marina: 2006).

Related to its type/component, noun phrase can be seen in many different ways. Noun Phrase may be only noun (*books*). In another way, noun phrase can be found in determiner plus noun (Det + N) such as *some materials*, determiner plus adjective plus noun (Det + Adj + N), like *an interesting idea*. Determiner plus noun plus prepositional phrase (Det + N + PP) like *the man at the station* is another type.

One word phrase automatically has a role as a head (such as *Helen*), while the phrase consisting of more words has a head and modifiers (MacFadyen, 2009). Related to the role of each element, noun phrase is divided into two components, the head (H) and Modifier (Mod). The students have to understand basic knowledge about noun as the core (the head) of noun phrase. Greenbaum & Nelson (2002:66), Kroeger (2005: 86), Börjars & Burridge (2010: 168), Vu (2010: 3) have similar ideas about the concept of noun phrase. It is a group of words which have noun *head* and numbers of associated *modifiers*, including adjective (*small, red, lovely*), adjective phrases, adjective clauses, possessive adjectives (*my, his, her, their*), adverb (*very, extremely, usually*), determiners (*the, a, an*).

Furthermore, the position of noun phrase within a sentence is very important to analyse. The position shows the function of a noun phrase. Due to its importance in the language use, a noun phrase has various functions, namely as a subject, object, complement and object of preposition. Knowing each of them represent students one's competence in using it.

Noun phrase is quite difficult for the students to analyse. Noun phrase is a basic constituent of a sentence is seen very problematic for the students. In part of speech, words can function as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions,

pronouns, prepositions or interjections. Most errors made in students' written work is that the students often confuse between noun, adjective, adverb and verb forms (English Language Centre n.d.). In detail, the students cannot completely differ whether a word belongs to noun or verb, noun or adjective, adjective or adverb, etc in a sentence. However, a word can be classified as a different part of speech depending on its position in a sentence.

This present study has some similarities with some of those previous studies conducted by Sari (2010), Wahidah (2011) and Putra (2012) which the topic is about noun phrase. However, each research was conducted in different focus. Sari (2012) discussed about noun phrase analysis in the text of developing English competencies book for X grade of senior high school and Wahidah (2011) discussed about noun phrase analysis in sentences of opinion column at the Jakarta Post newspaper on Saturday, February 19, 2011 edition, the present study is about noun phrase analysis within text. Furthermore, the study which conducted by Putra (2012) is also discuss about Noun Phrase, but this study was not focused on the analysis, but more focus on constructing and arranging words with pre-modifiers. This present study tries to explore how well second year students of English Department analyse noun phrase and their problem in doing it. In addition, they are supposed to be able to identify and analyse the noun phrase and use the rules correctly because they have passed Basic Morphology and Syntax (Morsynt).

## B. RESEARCH METHOD

The subject of the research was second year students of English Department. They were in the third semester students who were currently studying Morphology and Syntax. There were 91 students from three classes of non-educational study program (NK1, NK2 and NK3). The sample was taken by using proportionate stratified random sampling technique, by which 30% of the students from each class were chosen randomly (see Gay, 2012). They were 28 students. The test in form of text was an instrument to collect the data. It was designed by providing it with 20 noun phrases. These were asked to be analysed based on the indicators of identifying their types/components, functions within a sentence and the role of each element. To get the data of identifying the type/component of Noun Phrase, the sample was assigned to use tree diagram approach to analyse, such as common noun ( $N_C$  or  $N$ ); proper noun ( $N_P$ ); personal pronoun ( $Pro_P$ ); possessive pronoun ( $Pro_S$ ); Det  $N$ ; Art Adj NP; ( $N$  Poss)  $N$ ). For the function within a sentence, the indicators are *subject* ( $S$ ), *object of verb* ( $OV$ ), *object of preposition* ( $OP$ ), and *complement* ( $C$ ). For the role of noun phrase element, they are *head* ( $H$ ) and *modifier* ( $M$ ), especially *pre-modifier* (*Pre-Mod*). To know the students' problem in analysing noun phrase are the confusion of part of speech, incompetence of identifying the function of NP within a sentence, and getting the correct place of head and modifiers (especially pre-modifier).

The analysis of data was by scoring the ways of students' analysis on each kind of data and putting them into percentage. For the correct answer, the score was 10 and for the incorrect answer, the score was 0. It was going on with

putting them in percentage using formula. Next, they were categorized into *excellent, good, average, poor* and *very poor* as follows.

**Table 1. Range of Student’s Score (Pedoman Akademik UNP, 2014)**

Percentage of Score	Grading Criterion
81-100%	Excellent
66-80 %	Good
56-65%	Average
41-55%	Poor
0-40 %	Very Poor

The problems faced by students were analysed descriptively.

**C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**1. Result Finding**

The result findings can be seen in the following table. It shows the description of students’ ability in noun phrase analysis in based on its type/component, role of each element, and its function within a sentence.

**Table 4. Students’ ability in analysing noun phrase**  
Noun Phrase Analysis

Noun Phrase based on its type/component	Item with correct answer	Total	Noun Phrase based on the role of each element of noun phrase	Item with correct answer	Total	Noun Phrase based on the function within sentence	Item with correct answer	Total
N	106	47.32%	H	152	49.35%	Subject	276	71.43%
N <sub>p</sub>	22	39.28%				Object	86	76.79%
Pro <sub>p</sub>	15	53.57%				Complement	28	25%
Art + N	33	60.71%	Pre-mod + H	216	85.71%	Object of Preposition	50	35.71%
Adj + N	24	85.71%						
Art + Adj + N	46	82.14%						
Det + N	48	39.29%			67.53%			45.5%

Based on the table 4, it was found that students’ ability in analysing noun phrase based on its type/component, the role of each element of noun phrase, and the function within sentences are more than 50% but still in poor level category. Students’ ability in analysing noun phrase based on its type/component is with the percentage 58.29%, based on the role of each element of noun phrase with the percentage 67.53% and based on function within sentences with the percentage 45.5%.

In detail, the noun phrase analysis results were expanded as follows:

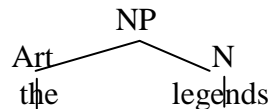
**a. Students Ability in Analysing Noun Phrase Based on the Type/Component**

After analysing and giving score to the students’ noun phrase, the students were categorized into five levels which are excellent, good, average, poor, and

very poor. As the result, no student got excellent level (>81), 7 students got good, one student got average level, and 12 students got poor level, and 8 students got very poor level (<40). It was found that the students' ability in analysing noun phrase based on its type/component was in 51.79% (poor level).

The appropriate analysis of noun phrase based on its type/component was in Datum 1 as follow:

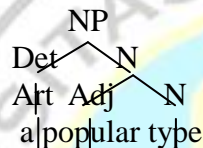
Datum 1



For datum 1, this was the correct analysis of noun phrase where construction of NP had the constituent of Art (*the*) and N (*legends*).

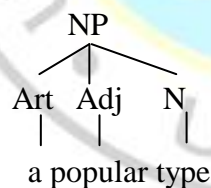
Conversely, the student's inappropriate analysis of noun phrase below was drawn by in datum 2 as follow:

Datum 2



The analysis of noun phrase from Datum 2 was incorrect because construction of NP had two constituent, namely Det and N; Art was as constituent of Det while Adj and N were as constituent of N. Conversely, the appropriate analysis was the words “a” as Art, “popular” as Adjective (Adj) and “type” as Noun constituent in construction of NP.

Clearly, the appropriate analysis was Art + Adj + N constituents in construction of NP as follow:



#### b. Students Ability in Analysing Noun Phrase Based on the Role of Each Element of Noun Phrase

Based on the result analysis, there were 5 students were in excellent category, 8 students were in good level, 6 average students were in good level and 5 students were in very poor level. The students' ability in analysing noun phrase based on the role of each element of noun phrase was 65.71% (368 correct noun phrases from 560 noun phrases).

The students' correct noun phrase analysis based on the role of each element was in Datum 3 as follow:





Lack understanding in basic of word order affected how well the students in identifying the function of noun phrase within a sentence (as subject, object, object of preposition, and complement). It could be seen from the results of analysis where there were 276 from 364 items for noun phrase as subject, 86 from 112 items for noun phrase as object, 27 from 112 items for noun phrase as complement, and 43 from 140 items for noun phrase as object of preposition.

## **2. Discussion**

Based on the result of data analysis, it was found that the second year of English Department students in analysing noun phrase based on the role of each element of noun phrase is better than two other aspects, namely noun phrase analysis based on the type/component and its function within sentence. The fact that the students performed better in analysing noun phrase based on the role of each element of noun phrase because this research is focused on analysing pre-modifier and noun found in noun phrase. So, the students just have to find out noun as the head of the phrase. If the students are easy to identify noun as the core of NP, then they can claim that the other words are modifier, whether the position are before or after noun.

The fact that the students' lack ability in analysing noun phrase based on its types or component carried out a question. One of supporting reason related to this finding is the students' lack understanding to identify each part of speech and its function for each point. So, the lack capability of the students to understand and to identify the various structures of the noun element in any given construction makes them confused to identify noun and other word classes. This finding is in line with Ataieb and Hmouma (2014: 42) that one difficulties of NP in English is the confusion of nouns with other related grammatical forms.

Since the students are difficult to analyse noun phrase based on its type or component, it can also affect to the low performance of students in analysing noun phrase based on the function within sentences, this is caused by lack understanding of word classes and the structure of noun phrase whether in simple or in complex form. As Baani (2017: 6) reveals that identifying noun in English sentences were difficult, especially when the noun phrase structure is in complex form. So, this situation lead them having trouble to identify whether noun phrase as subject, object, complement or object of preposition.

As students' ability in analysing noun phrase is in poor level, it indicates that noun phrase is one difficult phrase to analyse due to its complexity. This finding is supported by Mustafa and Omer (2007) that English learners have problems regarding to nouns, the class of noun, and its phrase patterns. However, it is important for the students to have good ability in analysing noun phrase as it is one of component in learning English, specifically in Syntax study.



#### D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research findings, the researcher concludes that the students' lack understanding of part of speech and its function, the complexity of noun phrase, and low performance in identifying various structures of the noun element leads to poor category of students' noun phrase analysis based on their written work.

In advanced, it was found that the noun phrase analysis based on the type/component, the role of each element of noun phrase and the function of noun phrase within sentences are seemed difficult for the students to deal with, even they have learned it in Morphology and Syntax (Morsynt). Therefore, in order to be able to analyse noun phrase correctly, the students have to comprehend the basic knowledge of noun phrase itself and how it works in a sentence.

Noun phrase analysis based on the type/component, the role of each element of noun phrase and its function of noun phrase within a sentence seems difficult for the student to deal with, even they have learned in Morphology and Syntax. Therefore, in order to be able to analyse noun phrase correctly, the students have to comprehend the basic knowledge of noun phrase itself and how it works in a sentence. More practices and exercises are really needed related in order to improve the ability to analyse noun phrase.

Furthermore, the students must pay more attention to the correct formula, the use and its function of each type of noun phrase within a sentence. So, the students can be aware to analyse noun phrase. For the lecturers, they have to prepare various kinds of exercises to improve the students' accuracy in analysing noun phrase and help the students out from their problem during analysing noun phrase. And for the next researchers, they can be more focused on finding the problems in analysing noun phrase in complete noun formation (Pre-Mod, H, and Post-Mod) because this research is only more concerned only to Pre-Mod and H formation of noun phrase.

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