

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

Words can be combined together to construct a phrase, a clause, and a sentence to express certain ideas. A phrase, as described by Brown, is a group of related words that functions as a single part of speech but lacks a subject, a predicate, or both (1984: 257). It means that a phrase is a construction composed of two or more words without subject, predicate, or both.

Due to its structure, a phrase can be noun phrase, verb phrase, adjective phrase, adverb phrase, prepositional phrase, gerund phrase, participial phrase, absolute phrase, and infinitive phrase. A noun phrase consists of modifier and head which is a noun. Noun phrase is defined as a group of words consisting of a noun and the words that describe, limit, or qualify it (Heffernan and Lincoln, 1982: 205). It means that noun in a noun phrase serves as head, while the accompanying words that describe, limit, or qualify the noun function as modifier.

In fact, the arrangement of those components in a noun phrase may be modifier – head, head – modifier, or modifier – head – modifier. The modifier coming before the noun is called pre-modifier and the modifier coming after the noun is called post-modifier. For example:

The drawing room was full of silent people, sitting at a long and ornate table. (07/M – H/10)

Something heavy could be heard sliding across the floor beneath the table. (22/H – M/15)

The broken bit of mirror danced away from him. (37/M – H – M/30)

In the datum numbered (7) the noun phrase *the drawing room* consists of the head *room* and the modifiers *the* and *drawing*. These modifiers come before the head *room*. Therefore, they are called pre-modifier. Next, the noun phrase *something heavy* in the datum numbered (22) above is composed of the head *something*, and the modifier *heavy*. This modifier is called post-modifier because it comes after the head. Then, the noun phrase *the broken bit of mirror* in the datum numbered (37) above consists of the head *bit* and the modifiers *the*, *broken* and *of mirror*. The words *the* and *broken* are called pre-modifier because they come before the head, while the prepositional phrase *of mirror* is called post-modifier because it comes after the head.

In terms of its pattern, a noun phrase may be of various kinds, as evidenced below:

There was *something funny* there. (113/H – M/150)

He peered into the mirror fragment again, and saw nothing but *his own bright green eye* looking back at him. (38/M – H/30)

The construction *something funny* in the datum numbered (113) above is a phrase because it is composed of more than one word without subject and predicate. The head of the phrase is *something*, which is a noun, and the modifier is *funny*, which is a quality. Therefore, the pattern of the noun phrase is *noun + quality*. Meanwhile, the noun phrase *his own bright green eye* in the datum numbered (38)

consists of the noun *eye*, which functions as a head, and possessive *his*, intensifier *own*, quality *bright*, and color *green*, which function as modifier. Therefore, the pattern of the noun phrase is *possessive + intensifier + quality + color + noun*.

Besides, due to its category, modifier may be a noun, a verb, an adjective, an adverb, or a function word. For instance:

They were still *library books*, even if Dumbledore had taken them off the selves. (74/M – H/88)

That's *a problem to solve*, though, because ripping, smashing, or crushing a Horcrux won't do the trick. (75/M – H – M/90)

Small children often find, before they're trained. (69/M – H/74)

The sky outside was growing brighter. (108/M – H – M/148)

For a second they stood quite still, wands directed at each other's chests; then, recognizing each other, they stowed *their wands* beneath their cloaks and started walking briskly in the same direction. (01/M – H/09)

In the datum numbered (74) the noun phrase *library books* consists of the head *books* and the modifier *library*. Both head and modifier are nouns. Next, the noun phrase *a problem to solve* in the datum numbered (75) above is composed of the head *problem* and the modifiers *a*, which is an article, and *to solve*, which is an infinitive. Then, the construction *small children* in the datum numbered (69) consists of the head *children* and the modifier *small*, which is an adjective. Furthermore, in the datum numbered (108) an adverb *outside* functions as modifier of the head *sky*. Moreover, the noun phrase *their wands* in the datum

numbered (01) above consists of the noun *wands* and the modifier *their*, which is a function word.

Meanwhile, in relation to its form, modifier may be a word, a phrase, or a clause, as evidenced below:

There were *purple shadows* under her brown eyes. (149/M – H/283)

There are *pictures of them* inside. (125/H – M/186)

He wanted to go to Godric's Hollow, even if Bathilda was in no fit state to talk to him; he wanted to visit *the place where he and Dumbledore had both lost loved ones*. (123/M – H – M/180)

In the datum numbered (149) the construction *purple shadows* consists of the head *shadows* and the modifier *purple* which is in a word. Next, the noun phrase *pictures of them* in the datum numbered (125) above is composed of the head *pictures* and the modifier *of them* which is a phrase. Then, the construction *the place where he and Dumbledore had both lost loved ones* in the datum numbered (123) is composed of the head *place* and the modifiers *the* and *where he and Dumbledore had both lost loved ones* which are a word and a dependent clause respectively.

The evidences above become a phenomenon which encourages the researcher to do a scientific study on the topic.

1.2 The Reason of Choosing the Topic

There are a lot of problems in studying linguistics, especially syntax. One of them concerns with the use of English noun phrases in sentence

constructions. A study of noun phrases is chosen as the topic of discussion in this research for some reasons. First, learners of English often face some difficulties in comprehending the use of English noun phrases. Second, the topic bears many great problems, such as the patterns of noun phrases, the categories and the forms of their modifiers, the relationship between the heads and modifiers, etcetera. Third, English noun phrases are of high frequency in their use in both spoken and written texts. That is why, the researcher feels challenged to discuss it in order to get detailed information about the problems.

1.3 The Statement of the Problem

According to the topic of the discussion in this research, three main problems are formulated as follows:

1. What are the patterns of English noun phrases in relation to structures of modification?
2. What are the categories of the modifiers in English noun phrases?
3. What are the forms of the modifiers in English noun phrases?

1.4 The Objective of the Study

In line with the statement of the problems as stated above, this research tries to answer those three questions namely,

1. To describe the patterns of English noun phrases in relation to structures of modification
2. To show the categories of the modifiers in English noun phrases

3. To reveal the forms of the modifiers in English noun phrases.

1.5 The Scope of the Study

Syntax is a basic branch of linguistic study concerned with the interrelationships of words. Syntax discusses the way how words are arranged in order to construct phrases, clauses, and sentences. This research focuses its discussion on the use of noun phrases in English. Noun phrases here are discussed in terms of their patterns, such as *quality + noun*, *noun + quality*, *article + color + noun + adverb*, etcetera, and the categories of modifiers, such as noun, adjective, verb, adverb, or function word as well as the forms of modifiers, such as word, phrase, or clause.

1.6 The Significance of the Study

Generally, it is hoped that this research may give valuable contribution to the readers as well as to the researcher herself. By reading this work, the readers may have good understanding on the topic discussed, namely the use of English noun phrases in relation to structures of modification. Theoretically, this research is expected to improve the knowledge of English learners about syntax, especially English noun phrases. Practically, the result of this research may encourage other researchers to conduct further researches on the same topic seen from different points of view.

1.7 The Meaning of Key Terms

In order that the discussion in this research is comprehensively understandable, some key terms together with their meanings are presented below:

1. Phrase is a group of related words that functions as a single part of speech but lacks a subject, a predicate, or both (Brown, 1984: 46).
2. Noun phrase is a group of word consisting of a noun and the words that describe, limit, or quality it (Heffernan and Lincoln, 1982: 205).
3. Structure of modification is the structure consisting of a head and a modifier (Francis, 1958: 297).
4. Head is a term used in the grammatical description of some types of phrases (endocentric phrases) to refer to the central element which is distributionally equivalent to the phrase as a whole (Crystal, 1980: 172).
5. Modifier is a word or word group that describes, limits, or qualities another word group in a sentence (Heffernan and Lincoln, 1982: 211).
6. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* is a novel written by Joanne Kathleen Rowling. It is the seventh series of *Harry Potter*.