

A FUNCTIONAL AND CATEGORICAL ANALYSIS OF NOUN PHRASES IN THE TEXT “TEN ADVANTAGES OF BEING BLIND”

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Abstract. Noun phrases dominate other types of phrases in sentence construction. Few studies on noun phrases are conducted towards English texts written by disabled persons, particularly persons with visual impairment. This study aims at describing the noun phrases used in an English text by specifying the constituents that make the noun phrases from the functional and categorical perspectives. The data source was an English text entitled “*Ten advantages of being blind*” written by Julie McGinnity, a person with visual impairment, published by the National Federation of the Blind (<https://nfb.org/blog/ten-advantages-being-blind>). The data were analyzed by segmenting all of the constituents of the noun phrases by describing the functions and the categories of the constituents. The study concludes that the functional elements that make the noun phrase phrases vary with one constituent (H), two constituents (Det + H, Prem + H, H + Pom), three constituents (Det + Prem + H, Det + H + Pom, Prem + H + Pom), and four constituents (Det + Prem + H + Pom). The categories that realize the Determiner (Det) are article (DefArt/IndefArt), possessive pronoun (ProssPro), Numeral (CNum/ONum), or quantifier (Quan); Premodifier (Prem) can be realized by adjective (Adj) or noun (N); H is always realized noun (N); and Postmodifier can be realized by prepositional phrase (PrepP) or clause (FinCl/NFinCl). The dominant noun phrase used in the text is the noun phrase with one constituent (H), while the least is the noun phrase with three constituents (Prem + H + Pom).

Keywords: advantages of being blind; functions and categories; noun phrases; syntax

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Noun phrase is the group of words that work together to name and describe a person, thing, place, or idea. Like all nouns, a noun in a sentence can function as subject or complement. Noun phrase is very important in the construction of sentence. According to Arts and Arts (1987), there are three functions that make noun phrases: **Determiner**, **Modifier**, and **Head**. The **Determiner** is to define or qualify the meaning of the noun. It functions to realize the noun, head. It can be realized by a wide range of items, such as the definite article, the indefinite article, possessive pronoun, demonstrative pronoun, quantifier, ordinal numbers, cardinal numbers, and numerals. There are 3 types of determiners, they are predeterminer, central determiner, and post-determiner. For example: *all the first page*. *All* is the pre-determiner because it is located before *the* which is the central determiner, while *first* is the post-determiner because it is located between central determiner and head.

The **Modifier** is to describe other words. It can be realized by single word, noun phrase, adjective phrase, adverb phrase, prepositional phrase, non-finite clause, and finite clause. There are two types of modifiers, they are **Premodifier** (a modifier preceding the Head) and **Postmodifier** (a modifier following the Head). For the example: *the beautiful girl alive*. *The* is the Determiner, *beautiful* is the Premodifier because it comes before Head, and *girl* is the Head and *alive* is the Postmodifier because it comes after Head.

The **Head** is the key word to determine the natural of noun phrase in contrast to any determiner and modifier. The Heads are nouns and pronouns and they can stand alone. For the example: *the girl*. *The* is Determiner and *girl* is Head. Another example of head that can stand alone: *I love*

football. There are two heads, *I* and *football*. *I* is pronoun and *football* is compound noun which consists of *foot* and *ball*.

Noun phrases and their constructions have become the focuses of some linguistic and EFL studies in various texts, such as reading (Swierzbis, 2014), research article (Lau, 2017), chemistry (Fajri, 2021), EFL context (Azizah et al., 2025), writing (Parawali et al., 2024), and Grammar (Siregar et al, 2026). There are still few studies on noun phrases that focus on texts written by disabled persons, particularly persons with visual impairment. Even though syntax theory has been taught in the school, students were still difficult to categorize and identify noun phrase in the text (Swierzbis, 2014; Fajri, 2021; Azizah, 2025). That's why this research was written to help reader especially students to get understanding about noun phrase more.

This study analyzed and found noun phrase which was dominant in the text. The writer found every sentence has noun phrase with longer constituents, different functions and categories of syntactic analysis. This study focuses on syntactic analysis of noun phrases to describe the constituents that make noun phrases in terms their functions and categories. The analysis of noun phrase is shown in table to get clear definition of noun phrase constituents together with their functions and categories. The analysis was based on a text entitled "*Ten advantages of being blind*" written by Julie McGinnity, a person with visual impairment, published in National Federation of the Blind, Maryland USA.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses qualitative descriptive method as a research type. Qualitative method is a study in which the researcher does not set out test hypotheses, but rather to observe what is present with their focus, and consequently the data are free to vary during the observation. Descriptive research is used in literal sense of describing situation or events (Isaac and Michael, 1987:91). By using descriptive qualitative method, this study is intended to find and describe noun phrases in the text of *Ten Advantages of Being Blind* written by Julie McGinnity, a person with visual impairment, published in the National Federation of the Blind, Maryland USA at <https://nfb.org/blog/ten-advantages-being-blind>.

The unit of analysis is all the noun phrases used in the text under study based on their functions in the sentence. For example, in the following sentence "*One time in middle school, we lost power, and I had to tell everyone to quiet down because I was still reading while they were freaking out.*", the data are all the underlined noun phrases based on their functions in the sentence as Subject (*we, I, they*), Adverbial (*one time in middle school*), Direct Object (*power*), and Indirect Object (*everyone*).

The data were analyzed by segmenting the constituents of a noun phrase by specifying the function that the constituent plays in the noun phrase and the category of word/phrase it belongs to. The analyses were presented in table where a constituent in a shell was described its Function (F) and Category (C). Some functional abbreviations were used in the analysis, such as H (Head), Det (Determiner), Prem (Premodifier), Pom (Postmodifier). Some categorical abbreviations include Art (Article), Quant (Quantifier), Num (Numeral), N (Noun), Adj (Adjective), Pron (Pronoun), NP (Noun Phrase), PrepP (Prepositional Phrase), etc.

For example:

One time in middle school

Constituent	<i>One</i>	<i>time</i>	<i>In middle school</i>
Function:Category	Det: CNum	H:N	Pom:PrepP

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

There are 125 noun phrases (NPs) used in all of the sentences in the text under study. Those NPs function as Subjects or various Complements in the sentences. The sequence of the functions that make the NPs together with their categories can be summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Functions and Categories of Noun Phrases

No	Functions	Categories	Total		%
1	H	PersPro	55	67	59%
		N	10		
		DemPro	2		
2	Det + H	PersPro + N	14	23	20%
		IndefArt + N	9		
3	Prem + H	Adj + N	4	8	7%
		N + N	4		
4	H + Pom	N + NFinCl	3	3	3%
5	Det + Prem + H	PossPro + Adj + N	4	11	10%
		IndefArt + Adj + N	2		
		DefArt + N + N	1		
		DefArt + Adj + N	2		
		IndefArt + N + N	2		
6	Det + H + Pom	CNum + N + PrepP	5	7	6%
		PosPro + N + PrepP	2		
7	Prem + H + Pom	Adj + N + PrepP	1	2	2%
		N + N + PrepP	1		
8	Det + Prem + H + Pom	IndefArt + Adj + N + PrepP	1	4	4%
		DefArt + Adj + N + PrepP	1		
		PossPro + Adj + N + PrepP	1		
		PossPro + N + N + PrepP	1		
	Total			114	100%

Discussion

In this section, all types of noun phrases presented in Table 1 are discussed by describing the functions and categories of all constituents that make the noun phrases.

1. Noun Phrases with Head (H) Only

There are 67 noun phrases used in the text which consist of only one constituent with H functional element. H functional elements in these noun phrases are realized by PersPro (personal pronoun), N (noun) or DemPro (Demonstrative pronoun). Some noun phrases with H realized by PersPro, for example *I*, *he*, *me*, realized by N such as *diversity*, *power*, *posts*, and realized by DemPro such as *that*, *this*. The functional and categorical analysis of these types of noun phrase can be shown in the following segmentation.

Constituent	<i>He</i>
F: C	H: PersPro

Constituent	<i>Diversity</i>
F: C	H: N

Constituent	<i>That</i>
F: C	H: DemPro

The segmentation above can be read as follows. For example, NP *diversity* has one constituent: *diversity*, functioning as Head which is realized by Noun.

2. Noun Phrases with Determiner (Det) + Head (H)

There are 23 noun phrases used in the text which consist of two constituents with Det and H functional elements. The Det functional elements can be realized by the categories of article (IndefArt/DefArt) or possessive pronoun (PossPro), while the H functional elements are realized by the category of noun (N).

The functional and categorical analysis of these types of noun phrase can be shown in the following segmentation.

Constituent	<i>A</i>	<i>punishment</i>
F: C	Det: IndefArt	H: N

Constituent	<i>My</i>	<i>eyes</i>
F: C	Det: IndefArt	H: N

The segmentation above can be read as follows. For example, NP *my eyes* has two constituents: *my*, functioning as Determiner realized by possessive pronoun (PossPro) and *eyes*, functioning as Head realized by noun (N).

3. Noun Phrases with Head (H) + Postmodifier (Pom)

There are 8 noun phrases used in the text which consist of two constituents with H and Pom functional elements. The H functional elements are realized by the category of noun (N) and the Pom functional elements can be realized by non-finite clauses (NFinCl).

The functional and categorical analysis of these types of noun phrase can be shown in the following segmentation.

Constituent	<i>Need</i>	<i>to pack a bag or get something out of it</i>
F: C	H: N	Pom: NFinCl

The segmentation above can be read as follows. For example, NP *need to pack a bag or get something out of it* has two constituents: *need*, functioning as Head (H) realized by noun (N) and *to pack a bag or get something out of it*, functioning as Postmodifier (Pom) realized by non-finite clause (NFinCl).

4. Noun Phrases with Determiner (Det) + Premodifier (Prem) + Head (H)

There are 11 noun phrases used in the text which consist of three constituents with Det, Prem, and H functional elements. The Det functional elements can be realized by the category of possessive pronoun (PossPro) or article (IndefArt or DefArt), Prem by adjective (Adj) or noun (N), and H by noun (N).

The functional and categorical analysis of these types of noun phrase can be shown in the following segmentation.

Constituent	<i>My</i>	<i>blind</i>	<i>Friends</i>
F: C	Det:PossPro	Prem:Adj	H:N

Constituent	<i>The</i>	<i>blindness</i>	<i>Community</i>
F: C	Det:DefArt	Prem:N	H:N

The segmentation above can be read as follows. For example, NP *the blindness community* has three constituents: *the*, functioning as Determiner (Det) realized by article (IndefArt), *blindness*, functioning as Premodifier (Prem) realized by noun (N), and *community*, functioning as Head (H) realized by noun (N).

5. Noun Phrases with Determiner (Det) + Head (H) + Postmodifier (Pom)

There are 7 noun phrases used in the text which consist of three constituents with Det, H, and Pom functional elements. The Det functional elements can be realized by the category of possessive pronoun (PossPro) or numeral (CNum or ONum), H by noun (N), and Pom by prepositional phrase (PrepP) or clause (FinCl or NFinCl).

The functional and categorical analysis of these types of noun phrase can be shown in the following segmentation.

Constituent	<i>ten</i>	<i>advantages</i>	<i>of being blind</i>
F:C	Det:CNum	H:N	Pom:PrepP

Constituent	<i>my</i>	<i>understanding</i>	<i>that sighted people literally depend on their eyes</i>
F:C	Det:PossPro	H:N	Pom:FinCl

The segmentation above can be read as follows. For example, NP *my understanding that sighted people literally depend on their eyes* has three constituents: *my*, functioning as Determiner (Det) realized by possessive pronoun (PossPro), *understanding*, functioning as Head (H) realized by noun (N), and *that sighted people literally depend on their eyes*, functioning as Postmodifier (Pom) realized by finite clause (FinCl).

6. Noun Phrases with Premodifier (Prem) + Head (H) + Postmodifier (Pom)

There are 2 noun phrases used in the text which consist of three constituents with Prem, H, and Pom functional elements. The Prem functional elements can be realized by the category of adjective (Adj) or noun (N), H by noun (N), and Pom by prepositional phrase (PrepP) or clause (FinCl or NFinCl).

The functional and categorical analysis of these types of noun phrase can be shown in the following segmentation.

Constituent	<i>blind</i>	<i>friends</i>	<i>From all over the country</i>
F:C	Prem:Adj	H:N	Pom:PrepP

Constituent	<i>snap</i>	<i>judgments</i>	<i>about a first impression that relies on sight their eyes</i>
F:C	Prem:N	H:N	Pom:PrepP

The segmentation above can be read as follows. For example, NP *snap judgments about a first impression that relies on sight their eyes* has three constituents: *snap*, functioning as Premodifier (Prem) realized by noun (N), *judgments*, functioning as Head (H) realized by noun (N), and *about a first impression that relies on sight their eyes*, functioning as Postmodifier (Pom) realized by prepositional phrase (PrepP).

7. Noun Phrases with Determiner (Det) + Premodifier (Prem) + Head (H) + Postmodifier (Pom)

There are 4 noun phrases used in the text which consist of four constituents with Det, Prem, H, and Pom functional elements. The Det functional elements can be realized by the category of article (IndefArt/DefArt) or possessive pronoun (PossPro), Prem by the category of adjective (Adj) or noun (N), H by noun (N), and Pom by prepositional phrase (PrepP) or clause (FinCl or NFinCl).

The functional and categorical analysis of these types of noun phrase can be shown in the following segmentation.

Constituent	<i>an</i>	<i>important</i>	<i>part</i>	<i>Of my life and education</i>
F:C	Det:IndefArt	Prem:Adj	H:N	Pom:PrepP

Constituent	<i>My</i>	<i>companion</i>	<i>traveler</i>	<i>who keeps me safe</i>
F:C	Det:IndefArt	Prem:N	H:N	Pom:FinCl

The segmentation above can be read as follows. For example, NP *my companion traveler who keeps me safe* has four constituents: *my*, functioning as Determiner (Det) realized by possessive pronoun (PossPro), *companion*, functioning as Premodifier (Prem) realized by noun (N), *traveler*, functioning as Head (H) realized by noun (N), and *who keeps me safe*, functioning as Postmodifier (Pom) realized by finite clause (FinCl).

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of functions and categories that make the noun phrases in the text under study, it can be concluded that:

1. The functional elements that make the noun phrase phrases vary with one constituent (H), two constituents (Det + H, Prem + H, H + Pom), three constituents (Det + Prem + H, Det + H + Pom, Prem + H + Pom), and four constituents (Det + Prem + H + Pom).
2. The categories that realize the Determiner (Det) are article (DefArt/IndefArt), possessive pronoun (PossPro), Numeral (CNum/ONum), or quantifier (Quan); Premodifier (Prem) can be

realized by adjective (Adj) or noun (N); H is always realized noun (N); and Postmodifier can be realized by prepositional phrase (PrepP) or clause (FinCl/NFinCl).

3. The dominant noun phrase used in the text is the noun phrase with one constituent (H), while the least is the noun phrase with three constituents (Prem + H + Pom).

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