

**Unfolding The Meaning Of English Noun Phrase Structure  
With Reference To Marya Holcombe's *The Best Letter Book Ever***

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**Abstrak**

*Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk membuka makna dari frasa nomina dengan mengidentifikasi struktur frasa nomina, struktur sintaksis, dan struktur semantiknya berdasarkan kepala frasa yang berasal dari nomina deverbial. Nomina deverbial dapat diidentifikasi berdasarkan teori dari Carstairs-McCarthy (2002), yang kemudian frasa nomina teridentifikasi nomina deverbial nya dikelompokkan berdasarkan jenis modifikasi frasa nomina berdasarkan teori dari Quirk et al. (1985) dan struktur sintaksis dari frasa nomina dapat digambarkan menggunakan teori dari Wekker dan Haegeman (1985). Setelah itu, makna frasa nomina dibuka berdasarkan teori dari Larson (1998) beserta teori Van Valin dan LaPolla (1997). Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, terdapat delapan jenis modifikasi nomina deverbial dan tiga jenis modifikasi frasa nomina dari data yang diidentifikasi; juga, makna dari frasa nomina dengan nomina deverbial sebagai kepala frasa dapat dibuka menjadi dua hingga empat klausa dan dapat disatukan menjadi sebuah kalimat.*

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Words are different each other that there are varieties of word in this world where verb noun hold the position as the most-frequently renewed and modified. Noun can be modified as verb and also verb; it can also be modified into noun. As noun is modified noun phrase, the phrase may be derived from a structure of clause in which it is modified in order to avoid sentence fragments or repetition in a sentence.

Since noun phrase varies, depending on what modifies head, the modification of head from verb can be said as one of the ways to determine whether a phrase is categorized as noun phrase or not. This modification where verb is transformed into head of noun phrase, noun, is called *nomina deverbal*.

By transforming into different word class, *nomina deverbals* derived from verb can still bring along its previous structure, and then modifies it to match its current structure in which it is already in form of noun; however, the modification itself means it has to be rearranged. The rearrangement of the sentence structure into phrase structure from *nomina deverbals* may omit some words. When a structure of words is rearranged, there is no way the meaning is changed. According to Larson (1998:9), one form may express a variety of meanings and single meaning may be expressed in a variety of forms. By opening the meaning of the noun phrase, therefore it can be more useful to find out the function of every noun phrase that it later can be paraphrased to avoid ambiguity between structured words and its meaning.

The problems of this study can be formulated as follow: What types of modifications in the noun phrase are found in Marya Holcombe's book *The Best Letter Book Ever?* And what types of meaning of the NP were found in Marya Holcombe's book *The Best Letter Book Ever?* This study aims to classify types of noun phrase found in the book and to analyze the NP in form of *nomina deverbals* found in the book.

## **2. MATERIALS AND METHOD**

### **2.1. MATERIALS**

The data are obtained through note-taking from the book, entitled "The Best Letter Book Ever" written by Marya Holcombe, a 542 pages book which consists of various types of how to make business correspondence and also there are various NP found in this book. Each letter provides example of how the letter is used to write a formal letter either for a customer or firm which is addressed to.

## 2.2 METHOD

The procedure of collecting data was firstly conducted by reading the whole book of Marya Holcombe entitled "The Best Letter Book Ever", and then the necessary data were noted in order to conduct further analysis.

The collected data were analyzed by conducting descriptive-qualitative method, applying theory of Carstairs - McCarthy (2002), Quirk et al. theory (1985), and Wekker and Haegeman theory (1985) to find out kinds of verb to noun derivational suffix, types of noun phrase modification, and syntactic structure, and theory of Van Valin and LaPolla (1997), and theory of Larson (1998) are applied to identify the meaning within the noun phrase.

Descriptive method was applied in presenting the analyzed data. For the first problem, the data was classified into types of noun phrase based on its verb to noun derivational suffix. Then the classified data was taken to be represented in form of Haegeman's tree diagram to prove the head of the noun phrase validity. For the second problem, the analyzed data in form of noun phrase were breakdown into several clauses and were identified to find out how the forms of noun phrase changed and how the function of subject and object were related each other to the head clause or verb.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISSCUSSION

### 3.1 Types of Noun Phrase Structure

#### 3.1.1 Derivational Suffix -ation

Data 1: Because of the rapid appreciation of housing (and replacement costs) here in Southern California, we need to make sure you current homeowner's policy of \$300,00 provides sufficient protection before we renew the policy on May 30... (Holcombe, 2002: 9)

As the sentence presents the data, it can be shown that the underlined words of the Data 1 are the noun phrase in form of multimodification. The proof can be shown from the underlined words of noun phrase cannot be omitted since those respectively give the

information about the cause occurred so that the reader or hearer has to provide sufficient protection and additional chronological information of the sentence. The omission of the noun phrase is given in the following example:

Data 1a: Because of, we need to make sure you current homeowner’s policy of \$300,00 provides sufficient protection before we renew the policy on May 30.

The omission of the noun phrase in the data provides no specification. The data does not explain the object causing the new policy by the writer in the Data 1a. By adding the previously omitted noun phrase, the sentence in the Data 1a can be clearer that it explains what causes the new policy is established, that is the rapid appreciation of housing (and replacement costs) here in Southern California.

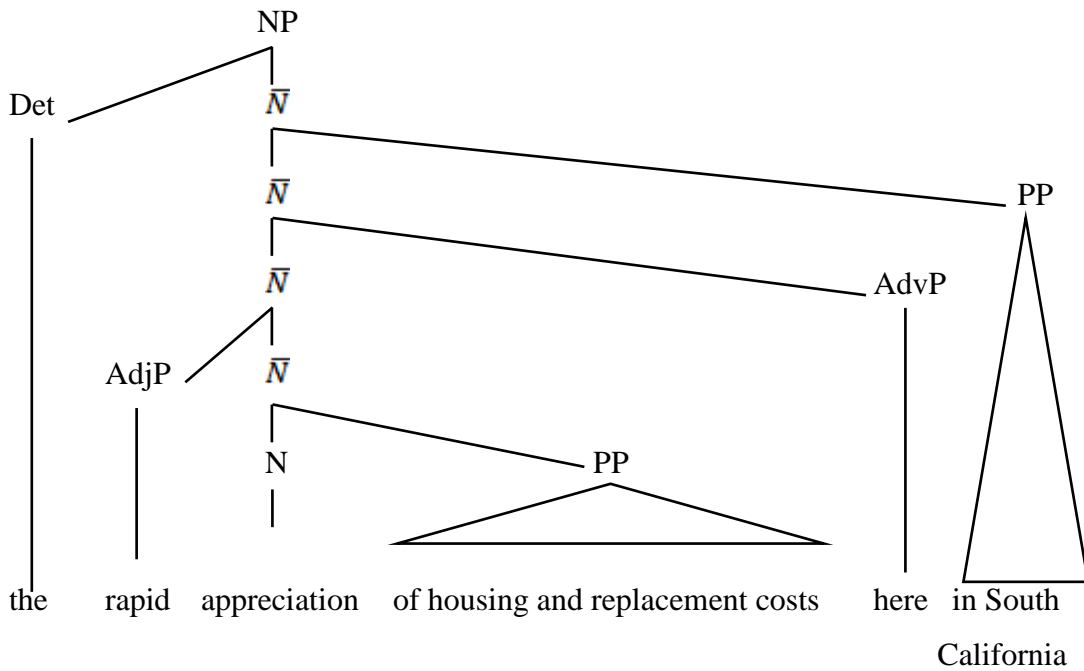
Data 1 is taken for example. The noun phrase consists of head **appreciation** that it is in form of deverbal nouns. It can be proved by omitting it from the phrase that it does not provide any information of the phrase: the rapid of housing (and replacement costs) here in Southern California. The head noun, then is postmodified by prepositional phrase **of housing (and replacement costs)**, an Adverb phrase **here** and also another prepositional phrase **in Southern California**. The head is also premodified by adding a determiner **the** and an adjective phrase **rapid**.

The structure of the NP can be break down into several structures which is drawn as follow:

Category	Det	AdjP <sub>1</sub>	N	PP <sub>1</sub>	AdvP <sub>1</sub>	PP <sub>2</sub>
GF	Spec	Mod (Pre-m)	H	Mod (Post-m)	Mod (Post-m)	Mod (Post-m)
	the	rapid	appreciation	of housing (and replacement costs)	here	in South California

The internal hierarchy shows that the closely associated phrase from the H **appreciation** is **of housing (and replacement costs)**, followed by the next closely

associated modifier **rapid, here, in South California**, and then closed by the use of Spec **the**. It can be identified the structure is confirmed by the order of N, PP<sub>1</sub>, AdjP<sub>1</sub>, AdvP<sub>1</sub>, PP<sub>2</sub> and Det is fixed and the modification of the NP into a appreciation in South California here of housing (and replacement costs) rapid is inadequate. The tree diagram can be represented, followed by the bracketed structure as follow:



[NPthe<sub>[N1</sub>[N<sub>2</sub>[N<sub>3</sub>rapid<sub>[N<sub>4</sub>appreciation of housing and replacement costs]here]in South California]]</sub>

### 3.2 Unfolding the Meaning of Noun Phrase Structures

#### 3.2.1 Derivational Suffix -ation

**Data 1:** Because of the rapid appreciation of housing (and replacement costs) here in Southern California, we need to make sure you current homeowner’s policy of \$300,00 provides sufficient protection before we renew the policy on May 30... (Holcombe, 2002: 9)

Semantically, the data represents logical structure of meaning that the meanings of the noun phrase the rapid appreciation of housing (and replacement costs) here in Southern California can also be breakdown into several parts that also implies sentence:

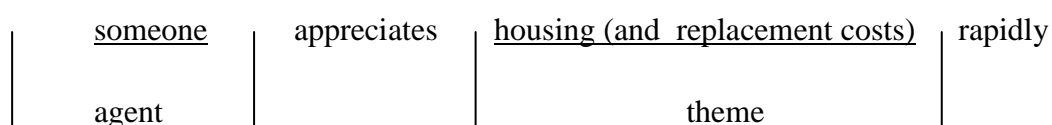
1. **the rapid appreciation:** someone appreciates something rapidly

2. **appreciation of housing**: someone appreciates housing
3. **appreciation of replacement costs**: someone appreciates replacement costs
4. **appreciation in Southern California**: someone appreciates something in Southern California

The example above implicates there are four messages which can be described as a sentence as the primary meaning of the noun phrase that is someone appreciates housing and replacement costs rapidly in Southern California. The phrase and sentence indicate the same meaning that the action of housing and replacement costs is highly appreciated by people in South California.

A change to the structure shift occurs between the two phrases and sentence where the NP the rapid appreciation of housing (and replacement costs) here in Southern California is shifted to be a sentence someone appreciates housing (and replacement costs) rapidly in Southern California. It is shown the two phrase and sentence have similar H that is **appreciation** and **appreciates** in which the V **appreciates** is derived from a root V **appreciate** which gains an inflectional suffix **-s** to explain the action is done by the third person **someone**, then the root is modified by adding a derivational suffix **-ation** to form N word class, to show a concept of **appreciate**.

As the clause structure is obtained, semantic roles can be identified. The underlined clause someone appreciates housing (and replacement costs) rapidly in Southern California indicates that it is included in *action* type of state of affairs since the participant someone does something which does not involve any change to housing (and replacement costs). Then, the word someone acts as doer of the action, to appreciate, and housing (and replacement costs) becomes the affected by the action, to be appreciated; in addition to it, Southern California indicates where the accident occurs. As a result, someone which refers to the doer can be termed as 'agent', housing (and replacement costs) as the entity being appreciated can be termed as 'theme', and Southern California which shows the location can be termed as 'location' It can be drawn as follow:



in Southern California  
location

Based on the clarification above, logical structures can be represented accordingly. The use of appreciate as the head clause indicates verb class of activity as the agent South California intends to do something to the theme housing (and replacement costs) without any goal. The structure can be drawn as follow:

[do' (South California [**appreciate**' (South California, housing (and replacement costs), rapidly)))]

Therefore, the meaning of the sentence implied on the clause is South California do something that it expresses appreciation that it is related to housing (and replacement costs).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

There are eight derivational suffixes to create deverbal nouns found from the data; those are -ance, -ence, -ment, -ing, -ation, -tion, -ion, and -al. All modifications of noun phrase structure are found, that is postmodification, premodification, and multimodification.

It is identified based on semantic analysis that a phrase is derived from a clause which may consist of more than two or four arguments. This analysis shows the forms and meanings within the sentences and it is found that the described data consists of processes and action states of affairs. The analysis of semantic roles of the data also shows the use of agent, theme, recipient and patient. Logical structure identified on the sentences also results in three indications of structure: activity, achievement, and accomplishment. The identification of the three structures results in the unfolding of the sentences that conveys the meaning of the identified data.

#### 5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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