

## Analyzing the Usage of Noun Phrases on Billboard Advertisements

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### Abstract

There are many varieties of advertisement, and one of them is billboard. The usage of language on the billboard requires a short message but the meaning is easily understood by consumers. It aims to encourage consumers to buy the products offered. So, the function of language is used to promote goods, and it is also be useful for learners to analyze its language as well as meaning. The purpose of this study is to know the usage of noun phrase on billboards advertisement. The type of research used is qualitative. The object of this research is advertisement boards. Data collection technique is done by choosing billboard images randomly. While, data analysis technique used 3 steps, they are: settle the data obtained, and then apply it in the research result and discussion. The final activity is to analyze data based on the usage of noun phrases on the billboard. From the results of 15 billboards that have been chosen, it can be conclude that not all the language used in the advertisement is in the form of phrases. It is also in the form of sentences. Even, there is a combination between sentence and a phrase in one advertisement. Data proved that there are 8 advertisements of billboard included in noun phrase. 2 advertisements involved in adjective phrase. And, there are 2 advertisements are categorized as verb phrase. Finally, the others are in the form of sentences. The result of this research can be the additional references for the students in studying about grammar, syntax or even semantics in the university level.

**Keywords:** *Usage, Noun Phrases, Advertisement, Billboard*

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## INTRODUCTION

The use of language has developed in modern era. So that is why the communication media can also increase and spread out in everywhere such as through radio, television, and print media as well as business world including the use of advertisement language on billboards. Billboard is also a form of outdoor advertising promotion. It usually has a large size with complements or pictures, with the aim that the merchandise will sell more. This is supported also by Effendi et al (2023, 97) that advertising billboards are large – scale, visually appealing, and established for the benefit of road users. They typically placed in crowded areas where many people pass by.

The usage of language on the billboard requires a short message, but the meaning is easily understood by consumers. It aims to encourage consumers to buy the products offered. Indirectly, the language employed on billboards can be used as a communication tool in the business world and it is easily embedded in people's memories. As (Adam et al, 2014: Fomukong, 2016) saying that an advertiser's intension is to give meaning to a product by developing associations in the main of the reader or listener and persuading them to buy it. They go on to emphasis that these associations are cultural in the sense that any member of the culture for which the advertisement is produce will find them easy

to recognize. The interpretations of these cultural aspects warrant the contextual elements to come into play for interpretation of the advert.

There are some previous studies became references in this research such as; a study was conducted by Famukong (2016) about Stylistics Analysis in Advertising Discourse: A Case of the Dangote Cement Advertisement in Bamenda- Cameroon. This research investigated advertisement discourse and whether the meaning can be conveyed to the readers. This study has emphasized the structural analysis and the role of context to reveal functioned and underlying meaning of the text. It also concludes that the advertisers use different stylistic devices that carry positivity, and a common ground that makes the readers identify with the advertisements, urging them go for the Dangote Cement.

A research also came from Famukong at the same year (2016) but different title. Stylistic Ideology: Building Images in Advertising Language in the Brewery and Communication Industries in Cameroon. This research looks at the ways two brewery and two communication companies in Cameroon propagate their ideologies in advertisements on billboards, banners, posters and mobile messages. The conclusion is since ideology is made up of the ideas that are opinions, mental impressions, beliefs, the brand or product becomes the mental representations in the consumers' mind, giving the impression that the richer the emotional content (that is, the consumer linking the qualities imposed on the product to themselves), the more likely the consumers will go for the product. One of the ways the advertiser implant rich and powerful mental representations in the minds of the consumers is through the use of words in naming and describing the brand.

The next research was conducted by Effendi et al (2023) with the title; Morphological and Syntactical Analysis on Advertising Billboard Used by Hotels in Banjarmasin. This current study contributes to giving empirical evidence on the use of proper English to tailor the meaning in the advertisement field in the spectrum of morphological and syntactical English views. The finding discovered in the morphology section that numerous hotel advertisements had issues adding suffixes, which were lack of suffix – ly, suffix – s/es for verbs, and suffix – s/es for nouns. Furthermore, the phrase or sentence from the existing hotel billboard has a structural flaw in the syntactic part which is difficult to distinguish with morphological elements. The issues with morphology and syntax are intertwined in every hotel billboard. And above all, different with this research is it focuses on analyzing noun phrase as well as other phrases employed in the advertisements of billboard.

In present, many people or companies have been applied a second or foreign language to promote goods or products. Language on billboards also has an important role in communication. However, the use of language on many billboards those are not in accordance with the rule of sentences in grammar point of view, but in reality, many people do not care about the language especially the phrases in billboard involve the students who learn English. Mostly, they do not pay attention or analyze the phrases employed in billboards.

From the above description, it can be said that the benefits of grammar are to develop the art of translation, helping get vocabulary, increase knowledge of actual sentence comprehension and build conceptual thinking about the structure of English. As Elin (2008:3) views that without grammar, people will have only words or sounds, images, and individual body language to communicate meaning.

Grammar as one of the language components plays an important role in learning a language including phrase. Phrase can be interpreted as a combination or unity of words formed from two or more groups of words that have one grammatical meaning (meaning changes according to context). In short, phrases are a combination of two or more words but cannot form perfect sentences because they do not have a predicate. But, sometimes it

is not easy for the students to mastery well about the phrase and used it in oral or written form especially for advertisement. And the problem is there are many advertisements on billboard using English, but when the students of English saw it, they just saw it without analyzing its meaning and grammar point of view especially for the application of the phrase. That is why the researchers formulated the problem of this study is "how far is the usage of noun phrases on billboards advertisement? And, the purpose of this study is "to know the usage of noun phrase on billboards advertisement".

## METHOD

The researchers used qualitative research. Qualitative research is descriptive research and tends to use analysis. Therefore, qualitative analysis focuses on designation of meaning, description, clarification, and also the placement of data in their perspective contexts and often describes it in words than numbers, so a general description of the object of research is the usage of language on billboard.

Qualitative research aims to obtain a full picture of a matter according to the human perspective studied. It relates to ideas, perceptions, opinions or beliefs of the person being studied and all of them cannot be measured by numbers. According to Creswell (2012) that qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures; collecting data in the participants setting; analyzing the data inductively, building from particulars to general themes; and making interpretations of the meaning of data. The final written report has a flexible writing structure.

In collecting data for this study, the researchers took the data from internet randomly. Whereas, in data analysis technique employs 3 steps, they are: 1. Settle the data obtained, data that is closely related to the problem to be discussed is a top priority in data resolution. 2. Apply it in the research result and discussion. 3. The final activity is to conclude the results of the analysis based on the use of phrases on the billboard that has been done by researchers.

## RESEARCH RESULT

This section, the researchers present the billboard pictures that have been taken randomly as the sources of the data.



**Figure 1. Nose hair trimmer - safety cutting system**

When we see the picture or image in the above billboard, it seems a little bit funny. But when we come to the analysis, it possesses two phrases here. The first phrase is "nose hair trimmers". Here, all the words (*nose, hair and trimmer*) are noun, so it can

be said that this is a noun phrase. Noun phrase is a phrase that has a noun (indefinite pronoun) as its head or performs the same grammatical function as a noun.

The next is the phrase "*safety cutting system*". The word '*safety*' can be synonym with secure or salvation. Then, '*cutting*' is a verb and the last word '*system*' is a noun which means an arrangement, or an order, etc. If we translated into Indonesian language is "sistem pemotongan yang aman" (safety cutting system). Thus, this phrase is included in noun phrase also because it is clearly related to this definition noun phrase is a group of words that work to describe a person, place, things, animals or idea.



**Figure 2. We bye used cars. Top cash paid "for trucks and cars"**

Based on the picture above, it can be seen that the billboard are about notifications, which consists of a sentence and a phrase. "*We bye used cars*" which means "we go by using old car". That is the prediction because the word '*bye*' here has multi meaning. While the word '*used*' can mean '*former*', and the second is a phrase, "*Top cash paid for trucks & cars*" means "the best cash paid for trucks & cars" so it can be conclude that this billboard applied noun phrases in their advertisement because it contain some nouns such as car, trucks, cash, and top.



**Figure 3. Food lover's market – we love fresh**

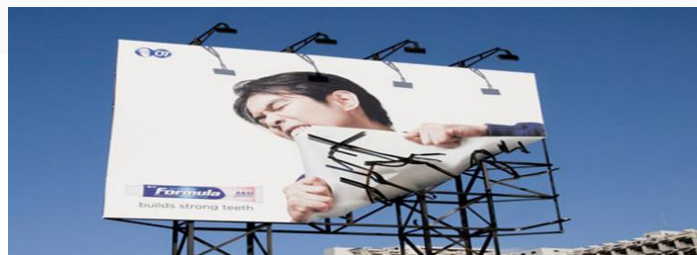
From the picture above, it is clear show that this billboard promoting food, which consists of a phrase "*food lover's market*" can be translated become the market special for the people who love food so much. Where, the word like food, lover and market are all nouns, so it is included in a noun phrase. And there is also a sentence "*We love fresh*". Fresh is another way to say that something is "cool" or "great" or referring to something that's new and clean; it most commonly used to describe food.



**Figure 4. Surprisingly smooth. Cold - brewed coffee**

The ad in the billboard above is about a kind of drink that very famous and most people like it very much, it is coffee. If see carefully, this ad consists of several words like the word '*surprisingly*' which means shocking. '*Smooth*' is an adjective which means soft, not sharp taste. '*Cold and coffee*' are noun class. Totality, "*surprisingly - smooth cold brewed coffee*" can be categorized into a noun phrase.

"*Cold Brew Coffee*" is probably one of the brewing methods with the longest soaking duration. Coffee and water are generally steeped together for 8 to 12 hours. Usually during soaking, the container containing the cold brew is placed in the refrigerator. This process will produce a unique taste, sweet and low acidity.



**Figure 5. Formula builds strong teeth**

This billboard is about dental formula which consists of some words such the word '*formula*' is a noun which means a material that is often used for washing the teeth. '*Build*' is a verb which means forming. '*Strong teeth*' are a combination of an adjective and a noun. So, it can be said that the billboard above is categorized as a noun phrase.



**Figure 6. Chocolate chip chill - new frappe**

The billboard above shows about a new and well-known type of coffee in the city of Thessalonica (Yunani). '*Frappe*' is an ice coffee drink made from

instant coffee powder, and introduced at the international trade fair in the city of Thessalonica in 1997. Ice frappe also has different flavors; one taste of frappe ice is mixed with chocolate chill which is served for lovers of sweet taste. This ad consists of several words such as the word '*chocolate and chip*' are noun. '*Chip*' is chocolate grains. '*Chill*' is cold, and it is an adjective. Totally, it can mean new frappe chocolate chip chill and it is categorized into a noun phrase.



**Figure 7. New for Easter - (rabbit pizza, made from real rabbit. Like this billboard)**

As we can see on the billboard above which present a new fast food for an Easter day that is rabbit pizza. This content of billboard is really honesty because we can look it from its statement which supports it "*New for Easter (rabbit pizza made from real rabbit)*". Here, the phrase "*new for Easter*" as an informational point, and then "*Rabbit pizza made from real rabbits*" is actually a sentence which give the announcement that this is original comes from rabbit.



**Figure 8. Fine cut for fine taste**

Based on the above picture, it is sharp enough that this billboard is about the cigarette than consist of some words such as the words '*fine*'. Fine here is an adjective which means good, okay, well, acceptable, etc., and the next word is '*cut*' means slice, chop, and so on. When we combine those words '*fine cut*' it will become '*good cut*'. The word taste is a noun which means flavor, favorite, so '*fine taste*' is synonym with '*good taste*'. Thus, the phrases on the billboards above "*fine cut for fine taste*" can be categorized as an adjective phrase.



**Figure 9. New! Djarum black cappuccino**

It is easy to understand that this billboard is about promoting new product of cigarettes. The name of the new product is “*Djarum black cappuccino*” which consists of several words, namely ‘*new*’ is an adjective as the pressing point that this is really the new one. Then the word “*Djarum black*” is the name of the product of the cigarette. And in the last word is ‘*cappuccino*’ is the new taste for the cigarette. So it can be interpreted as noun phrase because it describes about a things. Djarum Black Cappuccino Cigarettes can be said to be one of the most successful innovative products issued by PT Djarum. Launched in 2004, this product still survives today. You could even say that this product has almost no competition in the fruit-flavored non-cigarette market.



**Figure 10. New real fruit smoothies - strawberry banana**

The billboard above is to produce one organic health drink made from healthy fruits or vegetables (smoothies). It is a kind of drink made from vegetable or fruits, syrup, sugar, plain milk, yogurt, chocolate and sweetened condensed milk. The appearance of fruit juice but thicker like a milk shake, this drink will become virgin and organs from within, thus making the body healthy. The vitamins and minerals in smoothies will leave your skin glowing and protected from free radicals, pollution and the ill effect of sunlight.

The advertising consists of a few words such as the word ‘*new*’ means that new taste for the drink. ‘*Real*’ means fact or really and it is an adjective. *Fruit* is a noun. While, a *smoothie* is adjective; so here ‘*real fruits smoothies*’ means that new drinks made from the combination of new fruit that is strawberry and banana. So that you can say it is as an adjective phrase. An adjective phrase is a group of words that describe a noun or pronoun in a sentence. The adjective phrase can be placed before or after the noun or pronoun in the sentence.



**Figure 11. I found the latest look - I am white rose**

This billboard is promoted about fashion, and it is in the form of sentence because it has the subject and predicate. It consists of two sentences. The first is “*I found the latest look*” which means “*I found a new appearance*”. And the second sentence is “*I am white rose*”. Here, the word ‘white rose’ cannot translate literally because it does not match with the context. If we analyze the words, it is also called as the symbol and has the history for human being for example as the symbol of woman virginity (chastity of women), symbol for the true love, even symbol of sadness (sorrow), etc. Actually, white rose here is the name of dress product which acronym (white rose shopping centered – fashion your way).



**Figure 12. Wear a friggin' mask!**

The history of this billboard is to help the most vulnerable New Jersey populations affected during Covid from mental health issues to digital divide issues to food insecurity. So the aim is actually invite the people to wear mask in order to protect them self from the virus. ‘Wear’ is a verb which means to attire, while ‘mask’ is a noun in Indonesian language means masker (cover / face shield). And, ‘friggin’ is like a slang language of “freaking”. It usually puts emphasis on something, and it usually expresses excitement or frustration. This is involving in verb phrase because it functioning as verb phrase head like the word ‘wear’.



**Figure 13. Pimples? Clean pores fights pimples**

Based on the image of the billboard above, it is so clear that this billboard promoted the face wash product and ponds is a name of a product. This product used to clean the face to prevent acne. As you can see the writing in the billboard, it consists of several words like the word '*pimples*' is synonym of acne, which is categorized as a noun. Cleans is a verb, and the pores means skin holes. "*Pimples? Cleans pores fight pimples*" is categorized as verb phrase.



**Figure 14. Mary had a little lamb fries and a coke.**

It is recognizable that this billboard is promoting one new brand or new meal for McDonald's in Australia which is the lamb burger, with meat sourced locally in new Iceland. There is a sentence applied to promote burgers, namely "*Mary had a little lamb*". The word lamb is a noun. So there is new burger which one of the ingredients is used lamb. In the second part "*fries and a coke*", here, this statement means potato and Coca-Cola which is understandable that it is noun phrase because it explain about the food.



**Figure 15. Fill half your plate with fruits and veggies**

On the billboard above, it is graspable that this billboard promotes fruits and vegetables. "*Fill half your plate with fruits and veggies*" can be interpreted as one sentence which means to put fruit and vegetable in your plate or mix between fruit and

vegetable. A half for fruit and the other is for vegetable. So this is actually a healthy meal and this is almost refers to vegetarian people.

## DISCUSSION

According to Fomukong (2016: 105) that there are many purposes for using language which determine how the writer or speaker chooses words, syntactic expressions and figurative language. This is as a result of the fact that language has a very powerful effect over people, their actions and thought. He also explains that the powerful influence language has on people therefore make encoders to be choosy in the use of language, especially in advertisement because they have to persuade the readers. Furthermore, Linghong (2006) view that in order to secure a number of readers and to compete with many other similar advertising messages, advertisers try to make their advertisement as effective as possible. They use various linguistics devices to catch attention, arouse desire, induce action and contribute towards satisfaction. Advertising text is therefore distinctive, with an unusual and indirect language. In relation to this description, the researchers found that there are various types or form of advertisements in this research; such as advertisements of cigarettes, food, drinks (coffee and juice), face cream, hair cutting, fruits and vegetable, teeth formula, masker, and dress product.

The researchers also saw that not all languages usage on billboards was in the form of phrases, even in the form of sentences too, for examples dress advertisements: *"I found the latest look – I am white rose"*. If we see carefully, it shows that there are two kinds of sentences on this billboard, namely in the first sentence *"I found the latest look"* and the second sentences is *"I am white rose"*. And if we analyze the sentences deeply, it is so understandable that it is a verbal sentence (*I found the latest look*) and a nominal sentence that is a sentence uses to be. (*I am white rose*).

*Rabbit pizza made from real rabbit*. This is also included in sentence, and it is a passive sentence. Rabbit pizza here functioned as subject. Besides, there is also a simple sentence like in an advertisement *"Mary had a little lamb fries and a coke"*. And another advertisement likes *"Fill half your plate with fruits and veggies"* as well as *"We bye used cars - top cash paid for trucks & cars"*. These are also included in sentences.

Besides, the researchers also found that there are some advertisements that its language usage is difficult to categorize which is included into a noun, verb, adjective, or adverb phrases and so on, but on average, every advertisement is supported by images so that people can understand well the content presented in the billboard. The images are also various and full of color and it also become the interesting thing in the advertisement.

Related to research result and explanation above, Keraf (1984:138) described that phrase is also defined as a grammatical unit in the form of a combination of words that are non-predictive, or commonly also called a combination of words that fills one of the syntactic functions in a sentence. Whereas, Ramlan (1985) explains that a phrase is a grammatical unit consisting of one or more words and does not exceed the limits of function or position. This means that no matter how many words the origin does not exceed his position as a subject, predicate, object, complement, or information, then it can still be called as a phrase. Phrases are two or more elements that have many types, including prepositional phrases.

If we related to those definition above, we can say that the words used in advertisement is a combination of words that fills one of the syntactic functions in a sentence (as stated by Keraf) which is included into a noun, verb, adjective, or adverb phrases and so on, and it is supported too by the definition from Ramlan that a phrase is a grammatical unit consisting of one or more words and does not exceed the limits of function or position. But, in reality, sometimes in Billboard not always the language not

in the form of phrases but also it is in the form of sentences, even though the reader still comprehend the message from an advertisement.

Famukong (2016: Maria Stanatelou, 2015) considering that in advertising, participants only engage in the discourse passively, the encoders make use of concepts that build relationships and vocabulary which will make the readers desire to go for the product. In building on the interpersonal relationship between advertiser and consumer, they try to establish truth and goodwill in their advertisement.

This is also related to the final conclusion of the article written by Effendi et al (2023: 107) that their research contributes to giving empirical evidence on the use of proper English to tailor the meaning in the advertisement field in the spectrum of morphological and syntactical English views. In this regard, billboard advertisement makers need to pay attention when announcing and attracting customers using English. They can consult first with those who are literate in English properly and correctly because it can make a pleasing and easier impression for international travelers can easily catch the meaning conveyed by the hotel billboard advertisement.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **Conclusion**

This study has examined the usage of language particularly to grammar point of view, and focus on analyzing noun phrase in advertisement language at billboard, and based on the previous data, the researchers can conclude that from the results of 15 billboards above, it can be said that not all the language used in the advertisement in billboards is in the form of phrases. It is also in the form of sentences. Even, there is a combination between sentence and a phrase in one advertisement. Data proved that there are 8 advertisement of billboards included in noun phrase. 2 advertisements involved in adjective phrase. And, there are 2 advertisements are categorized as verb phrase. Finally, the others are in the form of sentences.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the result of this study, the researchers want to provide suggestion to readers and English students that it is not only to pay attention on the picture, but it also better analyzing well about the language usage specifically its phrases on billboards, so you have a good understanding about its phrases as well as its meaning in one advertisement.

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