

Post-Nominal Modifiers in English Job Advertisements in Jobstreet.com

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Abstract - Job advertisements are featured by the use of simple sentences and complex nominal groups that can cause possible different perceptions between one reader and another. Therefore, carefulness in understanding job advertisements is a matter of urgency. One characteristic of a complex nominal group used in job advertisements is the post-nominal modifier, which functions to give clear meaning to the nominal group itself. This study examines the use of post-nominal modifiers and aims to identify the constituent elements as well as the types of circumstantial elements in post-nominal modifiers contained in English language job advertisements. The job advertisements were obtained from one of the largest job market websites in Indonesia; jobstreet.com. This study used a descriptive qualitative method through the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approach. The results found that all post-nominal modifiers consist of prepositional phrases, with the preposition "in" (60%), "of" (14.3%), "with" (11.4%), "as" (4.3%), and "at", "for", and "to" (1.4%). Meanwhile, the types of circumstantial elements found in the post-nominal modifier are the type of matter (80%), manner-means category (7.1%), accompaniment-comitative category (4.3%), location- place category (4.3%), and the role-guise category (4.3%). The result of this study is significant to the teaching and learning of text analysis and English grammar, especially in the discussion of noun groups or prepositional phrases.

Keyword: noun group, post-nominal modifier, circumstantial elements

Intisari - Bahasa pada iklan lowongan pekerjaan memiliki fitur berupa kalimat sederhana dan nominal group yang kompleks yang dapat menimbulkan persepsi yang berbeda antara pembaca yang satu dengan pembaca yang lainnya. Oleh karena itu, kejelian dan kehati-hatian dalam memahami iklan lowongan pekerjaan merupakan suatu hal sangat dibutuhkan. Salah satu ciri dari nominal group yang kompleks yang kerap digunakan dalam iklan lowongan pekerjaan adalah post nominal modifier yang berfungsi memberikan arti yang jelas terhadap nominal group itu sendiri. Penelitian ini mengkaji penggunaan post-nominal modifier dan bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi unsur pembentuk dan jenis circumstantial element pada post-nominal modifier yang terdapat pada iklan lowongan pekerjaan berbahasa Inggris. Iklan lowongan pekerjaan yang diteliti diperoleh dari salah satu website ketenagakerjaan terbesar di Indonesia; jobstreet.com. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif melalui pendekatan Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Dari penelitian ini ditemukan bahwa semua nominal group memiliki bentuk post-modifier berupa frasa preposisi, dengan preposisi "in" (60%), preposisi "of" (14,3%), preposisi "with" (11,4%), dan preposisi "as" (4,3%), preposisi "at", "for", dan "to" (1,4%). Sementara itu, tipe circumstantial element yang terdapat pada post-nominal modifier adalah tipe matter (80%), manner dengan kategori means (7,1%), accompaniment kategori comitative (4,3%), location kategori place (4,3%), dan role kategori guise (4,3%). Hasil penelitian ini dapat diterapkan pada pengajaran dan pembelajaran teks analisis dan grammar khususnya pada pembahasan nominal group atau frasa preposisi.

Kata Kunci: nominal group, post-nominal modifier, circumstantial element

INTRODUCTION

Job advertisements have become interesting studies both in terms of content and language. In terms of the content, they are utilized to study the profile of graduates required by industries, the types of jobs offered, and the skills that prospective applicants must possess. In terms of language, job advertisements are used to examine the style and structure of the language.

Related to the use of language, the information contained in job advertisements is delivered communicatively in simple sentences and nominal groups (Setiawan et al., 2017), (RSI, 2013). The nominal groups have a complex construction because of their pre- and post-modifiers. Pre-modifiers are found in the form of deictic, enumerative, epithet, and classifier, while the post-modifier is in the form of prepositional phrases.

A modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that has a function as an adjective and adverb that describes another word. In this case, the adjective functions to explain nouns, while adverbs explain verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. Modifiers can appear both before and after the word it describes (Thing). Pre-modifier appears before the Thing while post-modifier appears after the Thing. The post-nominal modifier can be defined as a modifier contained in the nominal group, and it appears after the Thing (Payne, 2010). A post-nominal modifier is almost always a prepositional phrase or a relative clause (Gerot & Peter, 1995).

Post-modifier allows large-scale expansion of the amount of information that can be fitted into a nominal group (Gerot & Peter, 1995). It provides additional defining or circumstantial information about the Thing (Gerot & Peter, 1995) and serves to provide a precise meaning to the phrase so that readers can better understand what is meant by the phrase (Aitchison & Lewis, 2004). Furthermore, Bieber (Aitchison & Lewis, 2004) explained that the use of post-modifiers, especially those in the form of attributive adjectives and prepositional phrases, indicates that a text has a “focus of information.” The existence of a post-modifier makes simple sentences in job advertisements longer, which may lead to different perceptions and understanding among readers.

Circumstantial elements can be seen from two points of view, namely from a structural and semantic perspective (Khorina, 2018). From a structural point of view, circumstantial elements are manifested in the form of adverbial groups and prepositional phrases, while from a semantic point of view, circumstantial element consists of nine basic meanings (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). The nine types of circumstantial elements are presented in the following table.

Table 1 The Types of Circumstantial Element

No.	Type	Categories	WH-item
1	Extent	Distance	How far?
		Duration	How long?
		Frequency	How many times?
2	Location	Place	Where?
		Time	When?
3	Manner	Means	How?
		Quality	How?
		Comparison	How? What like?
		Degree	How much?
4	Cause	Reason	Why?
		Purpose	Why? What for?
		Behalf	Who for?
5	Contingency	Condition	Why?
		Default	
		Concession	

6	Accompaniment	Comitative	Who/what with?
		Additive	What/who else?
7	Role	Guise	What as?
		Product	What into?
8	Matter		What about?
9	Angle	Source	
		Viewpoint	

Some previous studies have researched post-modifier. The first study examined the emergence, structure, and complexity of post-modifiers found in nominal groups in Nigerian English. This study showed that 51% of post-modifiers found were composed of two to four words (Akinlotan, 2018). The second study focused on the subject of sentences in the abstract of the Public Administration students’ theses of the University of Muhammadiyah Sukabumi in 2015 and 2016. It was aimed to explain the types and constituents of the post-modifier contained in the subject of the sentences. The results showed that there were two types of post-modifiers found in the subject sentences in the abstract; 1) 25 post-modifiers were found in prepositional phrases marked with ‘of’ and ‘for’ after the head, and 2) two post-modifiers were found in the adjective phrase marked with words that describe the head (AHN Nurjanah, EC Pertala, 2018). The next study examined the use of the post-nominal modifier in the writing of English Department students at Widya Mandala Catholic University, Surabaya. In this study, the type of post-nominal modifier and the level of complexity, accuracy, and efficiency of using noun post modification indicated the level of students’ understanding of the post-nominal modification structure. This study found that eight of the nine types of post-modifiers and the prepositional phrase is was mostly used or appears (65.235%). It also discovered that the level of complexity of the post-nominal modifier used was still low (Ariwibowo & Tedjasuksmana, 2018). The fourth study examined the language features found in English job advertisements from the syntactical point of view. The results indicated that noun phrases and sentences were two grammatical features mostly found in English job advertisements. The noun phrases which were primarily found in the middle of the advertisements contained information about applicants’ requirements. Meanwhile, most sentences that were found at the beginning of the ads stated brief information about the company profile (Setiawan et al., 2017). Another previous study analyzed the nominal group structure in the professional and popularized legal texts. The results indicated that there was no significant variation in the nominal group structure of both legal texts. The head noun in both types of text was pre-modified by the determinants of the article “an” and adjectives. Meanwhile, the post-modifiers found were in the

form of complex post-modifiers, namely relative pronoun and preposition (Sharndama, 2015).

From those previous studies, there are no studies on the post-nominal modifier in job advertisements. For this reason, it is needed to conduct this study since the results can contribute to the teaching of grammar and specifically to the teaching of writing English job advertisements.

Given the importance of post-modifiers in understanding a text, an analysis of the use of post-nominal modifiers found in English job advertisements was conducted. They were analyzed from the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) perspective as it connects grammar categories with communicative functions in order to describe language in its actual use (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013).

This study was conducted to answer the following research questions: 1. What are the constituent elements of the post-nominal modifier found in the English job advertisements? 2. What are the types of circumstantial elements of post-nominal modifiers found in the English job advertisements?

METHODOLOGY

This study applied a descriptive qualitative method. This method is to describe the research problems by the facts that existed at the time the study was conducted (Nilamsari, 2014). In this current study, this method was used to describe the constituent elements and types of circumstantial elements of the post-nominal modifier found in English job advertisements.

The technique of data collection was a documentary study. It is used to study, categorize, analyze, and interpret the physical data, which are usually in written documents (Ahmed, 2010). The documents were English job advertisements collected from www.jobstreet.co.id. This website was selected because it is the largest online job market in Indonesia so that many companies post their job advertisements, which can be accessed freely by job seekers.

The data were analyzed using content analysis. It is a systematic approach used for exploring large amounts of textual information to determine trends and patterns of words used, their frequency, their relationships, and the structures of communication (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). Miles and Huberman state that the process of data analysis was conducted in three steps; data reduction, data display, and data verification (Ahmed, 2010).

Firstly, the data were reduced to omit the least relevant for this study. It was also to minimize the same data found in the advertisements since the same advertisement may be published more than once during the period of data collection. Data were then displayed in the form of a brief description completed with tables. The last step was data verification. It was required to get the results of the study and answer the research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Constituent Elements of Post-Nominal Modifier in the Job Advertisements

The following table shows the examples of nominal groups with a post-modifier in the form of a prepositional phrase. The prepositional phrases found in this study consisted of prepositions *as*, *at*, *for*, *from*, *in*, *of*, *with*, *to*, and nominal groups. All nominal groups in the following table are written in bold, while post-modifiers in the form of prepositional phrases are written in underline.

Table 2. The Example of Nominal Group and Type of Post-Nominal Modifier

Nominal groups	Type of Post Modifier	Prep.
Minimum 2-3 years working experience <u>in similar responsibility</u> and from five stars hotel are more preferred	Prepositional phrase	in
Possess Diploma or Bachelor's degree <u>in any field</u>	Prepositional phrase	in
Good leadership and strong team player <u>with the ability to do multi-tasks and work effectively under pressure</u>	Prepositional phrase	with
Good command <u>of English</u>	Prepositional phrase	of
The ability to manage time and <u>prioritize well</u>	Infinitive phrase	to
Strong leader <u>of people</u>	Prepositional phrase	of
Build and establish strong relationship <u>with the assigned merchant and account</u>	Prepositional phrase	with
Maintain thorough and up to date hard copied record <u>for all bookings</u> for easy access	Prepositional phrase	for
University/diploma degree <u>from recognized institutions</u>	Prepositional phrase	from
Having work experience	Prepositional	as

in the <u>Airline or travel industry as ticketing staff</u> is preferable	phrase	
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After post-nominal modifier constituent elements were identified, data tabulation was performed to get the number and the percentage of prepositions, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The Distribution of Prepositions in Post-Nominal Modifiers

Preposition	Number	Percentage
<i>as</i>	3	4,3 %
<i>at</i>	1	1,4 %
<i>for</i>	1	1,4 %
<i>from</i>	4	5,7 %
<i>in</i>	42	60 %
<i>of</i>	10	14,3 %
<i>with</i>	8	11,4 %
<i>to</i>	1	1,4 %
Total	70	100%

Table 2 shows that the preposition *in* is almost always found as the constituent element of the prepositional phrase in the post-nominal modifier by 60%, followed by the preposition *of* by 14.3%, the preposition *with* by 11.4%, the preposition *as* by 4.3%, and prepositions *at*, *for*, and *to* by 1.4% each.

2. The Types of Circumstantial Elements of Post-Nominal Modifier in the Job Advertisements

Circumstantial elements are realized in the form of adverbial groups and prepositional phrases that function to develop the primary form of the group/phrase by adding details of time, location, method, and reason (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013). The following table shows the examples of circumstantial element types found in this study.

Table 4. The Types of Circumstantial Elements Found in the Job Advertisements

Nominal group	Type of Circumstantial Element
Minimum 2-3 years working experience in similar responsibility and from five stars hotel are more preferred	Projection (Matter)
Good leadership and strong team player with the ability to do multi-tasks and work effectively under pressure	Manner (Means)
Working location in GWK, Bali	Location (Place)
Resolve customer service issues to customer's satisfaction with appropriate corrective and preventive measures	Manner (Means)
University/diploma degree from	Location (place)

<u>recognized institutions</u>	
Email correspondence with guests and business partner	Accompaniment (Comitative)
Check and process reservation letters from sales banquet and travel agent	Location (Place)
Two years experience in Reservation or front office	Projection (Matter)
Minimum 3 years experience as ticketing/travel consultant manager	Role (Guise)
Able to work with minimum supervision from superiors	Accompaniment (Comitative)

The data in the table above were tabulated to get the number and percentage of the circumstantial element types. The tabulation is presented in the following table.

Table 5. Distribution of Circumstantial Element Types in Post-Nominal Modifiers

Type of Circumstantial Element	Number	Percentage
Accompaniment (comitative)	3	4,3 %
Location (place)	3	4,3 %
Manner (means)	5	7,1 %
Role (guise)	3	4,3 %
Projection (Matter)	56	80 %
Total Number	70	100%

Table 5 shows that the distribution of matter is by 80%, followed by manner by 7.1%, accompaniment by 4.3%, location by 4.3%, and role by 3.4%.

The discussion for each type of circumstantial element is presented as follows.

a. Matter

The tabulation result in table 5 shows that matter is the type of circumstantial element that was mostly found in job advertisements. This condition indicates that the information contained in the advertisements mostly refers to a probe "what about?"

Examples:

[1] Possessing a strong passion in world tour and travel

[2] Good knowledge of tour destination countries

[3] Have a diploma or bachelor degree from all fields

In example [1], the prepositional phrase "in the world tour and travel" modifies the preceding nominal group "a strong passion." In example [2],

the prepositional phrase “of tour destination countries” modifies “good knowledge”. In example [3], the prepositional phrase “from all fields” modifies “a diploma or bachelor degree”. From the three examples, the prepositional phrases (in the world tour and travel, of tour destination countries, from all fields) are the expansion and provide additional information or defining about the nominal groups (a strong passion, good knowledge, a diploma or bachelor degree).

b. Manner

The second most common type of circumstantial element is manner. This type explains “how?” and “what with?” or explains how a thing works.

Examples:

[4] Good teamwork, strong customer focus with great customer service attitude

[5] Good leadership and strong team player with the ability to do multi-tasks and work effectively under pressure

Example [4] shows that the prepositional phrase “with great customer service attitude” modifies “strong customer focus” and example [5] shows that the prepositional phrase “with the ability to do multi-tasks and work effectively under pressure” modifies “strong team player”. The prepositional phrases here are the expansion of the nominal groups, and they provide information about how “strong customer focus” and “strong team player” are carried out.

c. Role

The next type of circumstantial element is the role. It explains “what as?” or “as what?”.

Examples:

[6] Proven experience as tour guide

[7] Minimum 3 years experience as a ticketing/travel consultant manager

In example [6], the prepositional phrase “as tour guide” modifies the preceding nominal group “proven experience” and in example (7), the prepositional phrase “as a ticketing/travel consultant manager” modifies the nominal group “Minimum 3 year experience”. Here, the prepositional phrases provide defining information about roles that applicants have experienced in their previous jobs.

d. Location

The next type of circumstantial element is the

location, which refers to “where?” The location here does not only include static locations but also includes the origin (source), path, and destination.

Examples:

[8] Working location in GWK, Bali

[9] University/diploma degree from recognized institutions

In example [8], “in GWK-Garuda Wisnu Kenaca, Bali” modifies “working location” and in example [9] “from recognized institutions” modifies “university/diploma degree”. It means that the prepositional phrases “in GWK-Garuda Wisnu Kenaca, Bali” and “from recognized institutions” are the expansion of the nominal groups “working location” and “university/diploma degree”. However, example [8] shows that prospective job applicants must be willing to be placed (working location) in GWK, Bali, while example [9] explains that prospective applicants must possess a diploma or university education background originating from famous educational institutions.

e. Accompaniment (Comitative)

Accompaniment is the type of circumstantial element that describes a process involving two entities. This type has a meaning “who with?” or “what with?”

Examples:

[10] Maintain a good relationship with clients and suppliers

[11] Email correspondence with guests and business partners

In example [10], “with client and suppliers” modifies “maintain a good relationship” and in example [11], “with guests and business partners” modifies “email correspondence”. The examples show that the prepositional phrases provide further information about with whom “a good relationship” and “email correspondence” are carried out.

CONCLUSIONS

This study reveals that nominal groups found in job advertisements are almost always post-modified with prepositional phrases. The prepositional phrases are preceded with the preposition in, of, with, as, at, for, and to. Meanwhile, the information presented in prepositional phrases were mostly about the matter, followed by manner, role, location, and accompaniment. The prepositional phrases found in

this study expand the nominal groups. It means the prepositional phrases act as the focus of information and provide additional defining or circumstantial information about the nominal groups (Gerot & Peter, 1995), which helps the readers get a better understanding of what is meant by the sentences in job advertisements. The result of this study is significant to the teaching and learning of text analysis and English grammar, especially in the discussion of noun groups or prepositional phrases. Further studies are plausible to analyze the language of job advertisements from a different point of view.

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