

ABSTRACT

Studying a foreign language is a lifelong and endeavour process which involves learning not only language skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening but also language knowledge like grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Since the final target of most English learners is communication, vocabulary is inevitably a useful means to achieve the end. While communicating, it is essential that learners should choose the most powerful and concise words in order to convey their messages fully and effectively and using compound words is often recommended. Among English compounds, compound nouns appear to be the most popular among learners. Hence, this graduation paper, which was conducted at the Faculty of English Language Teacher Education, ULIS, VNU, is expected to investigate the most common types of compound noun used in writing pieces of second year mainstream students as well as their perceptions about using English compound nouns in writing. Through a detailed analysis of 200 writing samples and interview of 10 students, the results of this study show that the targeted participants tended to use the most productive subgroup of each type of English compound nouns. They took control of using English compound nouns; however, their usage of a variety of English compounds was still limited. Moreover, the effectiveness of using compounds in writing had not been widely recognized by students. By the end of this study, some suggestions are made by the researcher so as to help learners realize one way to improve the quality of their writings.