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Tên đề tài: A study on compound adjectives in English

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

I. Rationale

Nowadays, English plays an important role in international communication. It is widely used in all fields of life such as, economics, politics, tourism and international conferences. That's why teaching and learning English have become a great demand of many people.

Realizing the importance of English, Vietnamese learners have been studying English both young and old. To be knowledgeable about English is significant in the integration process into WTO.

In order to learn English well and understand it deeply. It is very difficult. We can not only learn its basic rules of grammar but also study all of its aspects. And vocabulary is also one part we can not pass over. We must study many new words and find the new way to form new words, especially when the life becomes more complex, many new things are invented and people need more new words to name these new things. This is not easy. But by wise knowledge people found some ways to form new words. Among these ways, the commonest way is compounding. By compounding, we can form many compound nouns, compound verbs, compound adverbs, and compound adjectives. However, when communicating or writing, learners may be confused with using compound adjectives. Compared with Vietnamese compound adjectives, those who study on it can find similarities and also differences. The variety and usefulness of English also attracts learners' interest in further studying on compound adjectives.

Thus, I decided to choose compound adjectives as the topic for my research with the hope that learners could know more about the usage of compound adjectives in daily life in order that this research may become effective.

II. Aim of the study

My research aims at:

- Giving theoretical background of compounding, adjectives in English.
- Indicating the analysis of compound adjectives in English.
- Helping the learners identify some characteristics, classifications of compound adjectives based on criteria, in order to help readers practise in making and using compound adjectives.
- Pointing out some differences between compound nouns and some other word classes.
- Finding out some difficulties and suggesting solutions to overcome.

III. Scope of the study

Although learners of English find so many things interesting during their learning process, I myself do the same. However, the most fantastic part that I keep growing my passion on is compounding. Because of my limitation of knowledge, experiences and also time, it is difficult to study all types of English compounds. That's why, my research paper is only focused on compound adjectives analysis in English and related fields, i.e.: criteria, classification, and characteristic, so on. Moreover, I also discuss about some difficulties which Vietnamese learners may face and suggest their solutions experienced during my study process.

IV. Methods of the study

To deal with this topic, I have got myself well informed by a lot of books, websites relating to the topic: "A study on compound adjectives in English". In addition to the valuable source of books and websites, this study is also fortunate to receive the down to earth advices from my supervisor who I have learned the ideas and techniques that I try to pass on this Study. In short, to study successfully and effectively in my studying process, the methods of this study are:

- Information collection and analysis.
- Descriptive method.

That is the way I carried out my research paper.

V. Design of the study

The study consists of three parts:

The first part is Introduction, which gives out the reason for choosing the topic of this study, pointing out the aims on conducting the study and making out the methods applied as well.

The second part is Development, consisting of three chapters:

Chapter one is theoretical background knowledge of the study, generalizing some definitions of adjective, its categories, orthography of word formation and overview of compound adjectives.

Chapter two makes an investigation into compound adjectives analysis in English. In fact, this chapter gives criteria, classification, and formation of compound adjectives.

In chapter three, I point out implication of the study and difficulties which learners often face when analyzing compound adjectives. Some suggestions and solutions to overcome problems are mentioned.

Lastly, the part three is Conclusion which gives the summary of all what mentioned in the study.

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PART TWO: DEVELOPMENT

Chapter one

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. An overview of adjectives in English

1.1.1. Definition of adjectives.

We can not tell whether a word is an adjective by looking at it in isolation: the form does not necessarily indicate its syntactic function some suffixes are indeed found only with adjectives, eg: - *ous*. But many common adjectives have no identifying shape, eg: *good, hot, hot, little*. . . Nor can we identify a word as an adjective merely by considering what inflections or affixes it will allow. It is true that many adjectives inflect for the comparative and superlative, eg: *great, greater, greatest*. But many don't allow inflected form, eg: *disastrous, disastrouser, distrousest*. Moreover, few adverbs can be similarly inflected, eg: *(He worked) hard, harder, hardest*. It is also true that many adjectives provide the base from which adverbs are derived by means of an *-ly* suffix, eg: *adjective happy, adverb happily*. Nevertheless, some do not allow this derivational process; for example, there is no adverb *oldly* derived from the adjective *old*. And there are a few adjectives that are themselves derived from an adjective base in this way, eg: *kindly*, an item functioning also as an adverb.

Adjective is a word which denotes a certain characteristic of things such as: quality, colour, age, size, shape. . .

Quality: *a beautiful T-shirt, a nice day*

Size : *a big house, a small pen*

Age : *a new person, a young girl*

Shape : *a round table, a square box*

Colour : *a blue hat, a black pen*

Origin : *a Japanese camera, a Chinese lamp*

An adjective can also describe the idea contained in a whole group of words, as in:

Professor Roberts' lecture on magnetism was fascinating.

Many adjectives can answer the question: *What . . . like?* And, depending on context, can give general or precise information:

What's Tom like (to look at)? – He's tall/ short.

What's the car like? – It's new/ old/ red.

What's the car like to drive? – It's difficult/ fast.

1.1.2. Characteristic of adjectives

Four features are generally considered to be characteristic of adjectives:

(1) They can freely occur in attributive position; for example, they can premodify a noun

Eg: *Happy in the happy children.*

(2) They can freely occur in predicative position, i.e. they can function as subject complement

Eg: *old in the man seemed old*

or as object complement

Eg: *ugly in he thought the painting ugly*

(3) They can be premodified by the intensifier *very*

Eg: *The children are very happy*

(4) They can take comparative and superlative forms whether inflectionally

Eg: *The children are happier now.*

They are the happiest people I know.

Or by the addition of the premodifiers *more* and *most* (periphrastic comparison)

Eg: *These students are more intelligent.*

They are the most beautiful paintings I have ever seen.

However, not all words that are traditionally regarded as adjectives possess all of these four features. Moreover, some of the features apply to words that are generally considered to belong to other classes.

1.1.3. Classification of adjectives

There are 2 ways to classify adjectives

1.1.3.1. Classification according to syntactic functions

There are 3 kinds of adjectives.

The first kind is the central adjective (be found both attributive and predicative), eg: “*beautiful*”. We can say:

She is a beautiful girl.

The girl is beautiful.

In the first example, adjective “*beautiful*” is attributive when it comes before a noun (and is therefore part of the noun phrase). In the second example, adjective “*beautiful*” is predicative when it is used on its own as the complement.

The second kind is attributive only. It only comes before a noun but can’t be used on its own as the complement, eg: “*historic*”, “*utter*”. We only can say “*the historic event*” and “*an utter fool*” but can not say “**the event is historic*” and “**the fool is utter*”.

The third kind is predicative only. It only can be used on its own as the complement but doesn’t come before a noun, eg: “*interested*”, “*loath*”. We only can say: “*He is interested in books*” and “*the woman is loath to admit it*” but can’t say “**the interested books*” and “**a loath woman*”

1.1.3.2. Classification according to semantic features

1.1.3.2.1. Stative / Dynamic

Adjectives are characteristically stative but many can be seen as dynamic. In particular, most adjectives that are susceptible to subjective measurement are capable of being dynamic. Stative and dynamic adjectives differ in a number of ways. For example, a stative adjective such as *tall* can not be used with the progressive aspect or with the imperative: **He's being tall*, **Be tall*. In contrast, we can use *careful* as a dynamic adjective: *He's being careful*, *Be careful*.

1.1.3.2.2. Gradable / Non- gradable

Most adjectives are gradable, that is to say, can be modified by adverbs which convey the degree of intensity of the adjective. Gradability includes comparison:

<i>Tall</i>	<i>taller</i>	<i>tallest</i>
<i>Beautiful</i>	<i>more beautiful</i>	<i>most beautiful</i>

And other forms of intensification

<i>Very young</i>	<i>so plain</i>	<i>extremely useful</i>
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All dynamic adjectives are gradable. Most stative adjectives (*tall*, *old*) are gradable; some are non – gradable, principally ‘technical adjectives’ like *atomic* (*scientist*) and *hydrochloric* (*acid*) and adjectives denoting provenance, eg: *British*

1.1.3.2.3. Inherent / Non – inherent

Most adjectives are inherent, and it is especially uncommon for dynamic adjectives to be other than inherent, an exception is *wooden* in: *The actor is being wooden*, which is both dynamic and non – inherent.

Whether or not an adjective is inherent or non – inherent, it may involve relation to an implicit or explicit standard *Big* is inherent in a *big mouse*, the standard being the relative size of mice; contrast a *little mouse*. *Big* is non- inherent in a *big fool*, the standard being degrees of foolishness; contrast a *bit of a fool*. The

relative standard is to be distinguished from gradability as well from the inherent / non – inherent contrast. For example, *perfect* and *good* are non – inherent in *a perfect mother* and *a good mother*, the standard being motherhood, but only *good* is gradable (*a very big elephant*, **a very perfect mother*). Similarly, though the inherent *big* in *a big elephant* in *an enormous N* is not gradable (**a very enormous N*)

1.2. Orthography of word formation

1.2.1. Some equivalent concepts

Hoang Tat Truong states that: “Word formation is the process of building of new words from the material already existing in the language according to certain structural and semantic patterns and formulate”.

The subject mater of word – formation is of course not simple words but the ones that are analyzable structurally and semantically, i.e. derived and compound words. Thus, word formation goes into such words as “*learner mouthy*”, “*baby – sister*” but not “*learn mouth*”, “*baby*” and “*sit*”.

In linguistics, word formation is the creation of a new word. Word formation is sometimes contrasted with semantic change, which is a change in a single word’s meaning. Word formation can also be contrasted with the formation of idiomatic expressions.

Conventionally, a combination of two or more words that function as a single unit of meaning, such as *barefoot*. Word whose component parts are themselves words or combined forms (Adapted from ISO4: 1984)

1.2.2. Ways of word – formation

The following are the various principal ways of word formation in English graded according to their productive degrees. Two major ways are:

- (1) Affixation
- (2) Compounding

Affixation is the formation of new words with the help of affixes.

Affixes consist of prefixes and suffixes; therefore affixation is divided into prefixation and suffixation. For example: *dislike, inconvenient, approval, unstable. . .*

Besides, these other ways, namely:

- (1) Shortening
- (2) Conversion
- (3) Sound imitation
- (4) Sound and stress interchange
- (5) Words from name
- (6) Back derivation

However, aside from merely expanding the lexicon with new word, word formation experts have recognized two types of word formation rules, that is:

- (1) Lexical derivation
- (2) Compounding

In terms of lexical derivation, the use of morphemes and their functions can be described as functional derivation, transposition, category adjustment and affective derivations. Functional lexical derivations insert a grammatical category function

Compounding (word – composition) is the building of a new word by joining two or more words. A compound word (or just “compound” for short) is therefore a word that consists of at least two root morphemes:

It is clear that the components of a compound may be either simple or derived words or even other compounds.

Compound can function in a sentence as separate lexical units due to their integrity, semantic unity and so on.

In general, English compounds have two stems. The second element usually expresses a general meaning. In the examples above, *boy, keeper, carrier* etc.

express a general meaning thus being the basic part in the compound. This basic part is called “determinatum”. The first part, being the determining ones, is called “determinant”

1.3. An overview of compound adjectives

A compound adjective is one that has at least two roots, with or without derivational morphemes: *manmade*, *good – looking*, *habit - forming*, *happy – go – lucky*, *deaf – mute*, *blameworthy*, *record – breaking*, etc.

Similarly, a compound adjective is one that has at least two roots, with or without derivational morphemes, and functions as adjectives.

A compound adjective is a modifier of a noun. It consists of two or more morphemes of which the left hand component limits or changes the modification of the right – hand one, as in “*the dark – green dress*”, “*dark*” limits the “*green*” that modifies the dress.

Chapter two

AN INVESTIGATION INTO COMPOUND ADJECTIVES

ANALYSIS IN ENGLISH

2.1. Criteria of compound adjectives

Compound adjectives are generally composed of free forms; therefore it is sometimes very difficult to distinguish them from free word groups. Linguists often have different opinions.

The following is a brief summary of the most useful and convincing criteria that have been suggested:

2.1.1. Phonological criterion.

In English there is a great tendency to give compound adjectives a heavy stress on the first element (determinant), not the second element – the “determinatum”

2.1.1.1. Stress the first syllable of a 2 – word adjective

For example: *'bitter – sweet, 'deaf – mute*

2.1.1.2. Stress the **-ing participle** in **Noun + -ing participle** compound word.

For example:

Habit – 'forming, ear 'splitting, blood – 'curdling, earth 'shaking, labour – 'saving

2.1.1.3. Stress the noun in a noun + adjective compound word

For example:

'Class – conscious, 'machine – readable, 'blameworthy, 'duty – free However there are also many compound words which have double stress (even stress):

For example:

'Happy - go - 'lucky, 'blow –by – 'blow, 'Wall – to – 'wall,

'fly – by – 'night

This criterion is, therefore, insufficient.

2.1.2. Semantic criterion

According to this criterion, a compound word only expresses a single idea despite the fact that it consists of two or more words. The meaning of the whole compound word is not the sum of the meanings of its components

For example:

Red – letter = memorable

(in the sentence: *It was a red – letter day*)

Red letter = the letter of red colour

Similarly, *all – star* = famous

(in the sentence: *She is a all – star singer*)

all star = all most of star on the sky

This criterion is quite useful for identifying idiomatic compound:

Cheese – paring = closefisted

Cloak – and – dagger = involving or suggestive of espionage

Cold – blooded = lacking normal human feelings

Happy – go – lucky = cheerfully casual

However we can also see the insufficiency of this criterion because in a number of cases it is difficult to decide whether there is only one single idea: *Anglo – Saxon*, *window – cleaner*....

2.1.3. Graphic criterion (spelling criterion)

This criterion means that we can rely on the spelling of a word group to discriminate between free word groups and compound adjectives. If that word group is spelt with a hyphen or with no separation at all, it is a compound adjective:

For example:

Fore – and – aft, four – wheeled, mixed – up, happy – go – lucky, roundabout, earsplitting, hot - tempered, easy - going, manmade, heartfelt...

In terms of graphic criterion, compound adjectives are classified into 3 kinds:

2.3.1.1. The ‘solid’ or ‘closed’ form (as one word)

The ‘solid’ or ‘closed’ forms in which two usually moderately short words appear together as one. Solid compounds most likely consist of short (monosyllabic) units that often have been established in the language for a long time.

The closed form, in which the words are melded together.

For example:

Downhearted, downtrodden, lightweight, lightproof, underwater, manmade, noteworthy, slowmotion...

There are some well-established permanent compound adjectives that have become solid over a longer period especially in American usage: *earsplitting, eyecatching, downtown.*

However in British usage, these, apart from downtown are more likely written with a hyphen: *ear-splitting, eye-catching*

Numbers that are spelled out and have the suffix “-fold” added: *fifteenfold, sixfold.*

Points of the compass: *northwest, northwester, northwesterly, northwestwards,* but not *North-West frontier*

2.1.3.2. The hyphenated form (as two words jointed with a hyphen)

The hyphenated form in which two or more words are connected by a hyphen. A compound adjective should be hyphenated if the hyphen helps the reader differentiate a compound adjective from two adjectives that each independently modifies the noun:

old - English scholar – an old person who is English and a scholar,

or an old scholar who studies English. If, however, there is no risk of ambiguities, it may be written without a hyphen: *Sunday morning walk*

Hyphenated compound adjectives may have been formed originally by an adjective preceding a noun:

For example:

- *Round table* as in *round - table discussion*
- *Blue sky* as in *blue – sky law*
- *Red light* as in *red – light district*
- *Four wheel* as in *four – wheel drive*

Other may have originated with a verb preceding an adjective or adverb:

For example:

- *Stick - on* as in *stick – on label*
- *Walk on* as in *walk – on part*
- *Stand by* as in *stand – by fare*
- *Roll on, roll off* as in *roll – on, roll – off ferry*

The following compound adjectives are always hyphenated:

(1) When compound adjectives formed with *high* or *low* are generally hyphenated:

For example:

- *High – level discussion*
- *High – quality programming*
- *Low – price mark – up*
- *Low – budget films*

(2) Compound adjectives which formed with an adverb plus an adjective or a participle are often hyphenated when they occur before the noun they modify:

For example:

A well – known actor, an ill – advised move, best – loved poems, a much – improved situation, the so – called cure.

However, when these compounds occur after the noun, or when they are modified, the hyphen is usually omitted:

- *The actor is well known;*
- *An extremely well known actor.*

(3) Compound adjectives formed with an adverb or a noun and a past participle are always hyphenated when they precede the noun they modify: *well – kept secret, above – mentioned reason, helium – filled balloons, snow – capped mountains*. Many compound this type have become permanent and are therefore hyphenated whether they precede or follow the noun they modify:

For example:

- *A well – worn shirt*
- *His shirt was well – worn*
- *The tongue – tied winner*
- *She remained tongue – tied*

(4) Also hyphenate compound adjectives formed with an adjective and a noun to which *-d* or *-ed* has been added:

For example:

- *Yellow- eyed cat*
- *Fine – grained wood*
- *Many – tied cake*
- *Stout – limbed toddler*

Many of these compounds have become permanent hyphenated:

For example: *Middle – aged, old – fashioned*

(5) Compound adjectives formed with a noun, adjective, or adverb and a present participle are hyphenated when the compound precedes the noun it modifies:

For example:

- *A bone – chilling take*
- *Two good – looking sons*
- *Long – lasting friendship*

Many of these compounds have become permanent solid compounds: *earsplitting, farseeing*. Many other compounds have become the noun they modify:

For example:

Far – reaching consequences

The consequences are far - reaching

(6) Numbers from twenty – one to ninety – nine and adjective compound with a numerical first element (whether spelled out or written in figures) are hyphenated:

For example:

13- piece band, 19th century novel, decades – old newspapers, six – sided polygon, ten – thousand – year – old bones

(7) Compound colour adjectives are hyphenated: *a red – gold sunset, a cherry – red sweater, a red - letter day...*

Color compounds whose first element ends in “-ish” are hyphenated when they precede the noun but should not be hyphenated when they follow the noun:

For example:

- *A darkish – blue color,*
- *A reddish – gold sunset,*
- *The sky is reddish gold.*

(8) Comparatives and superlatives in compound adjectives also take hyphens:

For example:

● *The highest – placed competitor*

● *A shorter – term loan*

However a construction with “*most*” is not hyphenated:

The most respected member

2.1.3.3. The open or spaced form (as two separate words)

The open or spaced form consisting of newer combinations of usually longer words

We are often confused and “*annoyed*” with the spellings of some compound adjectives like “*well – balanced*”, “*well – bred*” and so on. These are usually, hyphenated when attributive but not hyphenated when predicative:

For example:

● *They were well – balanced soldier*

● *You have to be well balanced to cope with the stress of your job.*

● *He is a well – bred person.*

● *He is well bred so he behaves politely.*

The following compound adjectives are not normally hyphenated:

left – hand components of a compound adjective that end in “*ly*” that modify right – hand component that are past participles (ending **in – ed**):

For example:

● *A hotly disputed subject*

● *A greatly improved scheme*

● *A distantly related celebrity*

Compound adjectives that include comparatives and superlatives with *more*, *most*, *less* or *least*:

For example:

- *A more recent development*
- *The most respected member*
- *A less opportune moment*
- *The least expected event.*

Notes:

There are no specific rules about how to form a compound adjective. Sometimes a word may be spelled in different ways. Usage in the US and in the UK differs and depends on the individual choice of the writer rather than on a hand – and – fast rule; therefore, open, hyphenated, and closed forms may be encountered for the same compound adjective.

For example: In American usage “*earsplitting*”, “*eyecatching*”. However in British usage these are more likely written with a hyphen: “*ear – splitting*”, “*eye – catching*”

2.2. Classification of compound adjectives

There is a great variety of compounds hence, a great variety of classifications.

Some practical ways to classify them are presented as follows:

2.2.1. Classification according to the meaning.

This classification can be called “semantic classification”

2.2.1.1 Non – idiomatic compounds (motivated)

Non – idiomatic compound adjectives are those whose meanings are easily deduced from the meanings of the components:

For example:

- *Blue – eyed girl* = the girl has blue eyes
- *Middle – age lady* = the lady at midlife
- *Four – wheel drive* = the public road for the vehicle which has four wheels

- *Kind – hearted man* = the man is very kind
- *Good – looking girl* = the girl is very beautiful

In general, the modifier limits the meaning of the head. This is most obvious in descriptive compound, in which the modifier is used in an attributive.

For – example:

- *Car – sick* = affected with motion **sickness** in an **car**
- *Home – made* = **made** privately at **home**

In some case, they are partially non – idiomatic since the motivation is partial.

For example:

- *Lionhearted* as in “*lionhearted man*” is not the person who has type of heart, but it is a man with a heart like a lion (in its bravery, courage, fearlessness. . .)
- *Bookworthy* = something worth being published
- *Widely – based* = being widen and spread
- *Acid – based* = acid is main component

2.2.1.2. Idiomatic compound adjectives

Idiomatic compound adjectives are those whose meanings can not be deduced because there is no relationship between the meanings of the components.

Lack of motivation in these words is related to figurative usage of their components

For example:

- *Cheese – paring* = closefisted (no relationship between the meanings of “*cheese*” or “*paring*”)
- *Cloak – and - dagger* = involving or suggestive of espionage (no relationship between the meanings of “*cloak*” or “*dagger*”)
- *Happy – go – lucky* = cheerfully casual (no relationship between the meanings of “*happy*”, “*go*”, “*lucky*”)

- *Cold – blooded* = lacking normal human feelings

In the sentence: *He was a cold – blooded murderer and showed no emotion of any kind.*

→It is clear that meaning of “*cold – blooded*” has no relationship between the meaning of “*cold*” or “*blood*”.

- *Closemouthed* = cautious or reticent in speaking.

In the sentence: *He always is a closemouthed. He’s never made people sad because of his speech.*

→It is clear that meaning of “*closemouthed*” has no relationship between the meaning of “*close*” and “*mouth*”

2.2.2. Classification according to componental relationship

According to the connection between the components we have:

2.2.2.1. Coordinative compound adjectives:

Coordinative compounds are those whose components are both structurally and semantically independent:

For example:

- *Willy – nilly* in the sentence: *“They rushed us along although they are willy – nilly”*

→*willy + nilly = willy – nilly* (*willy* and *nilly* are both structurally and semantically independent)

- *Happy + go + lucky = happy – go –lucky* (*happy*, *go*, *lucky* are both structurally and semantically independent)

- *Deaf – mute* in the sentence: *Peter was a deaf – mute person when he was small.*

→*deaf + mute = deaf – mute* (*deaf* and *mute* are both structurally and semantically independent).

There are many similar examples, such as: *catch – as – catch – can*, *blow – by – blow*, *fore – and – aft*, *blue – black*, *dark – brown*, *bitter – sweet*, *cut – and – dry*, etc.

2.2.2.2. Subordinative compound adjectives

Subordinative compound adjectives are those that are characterized by the domination of one component over the other.

The second element usually expresses a general meaning

→being the basic part of compound adjectives. In other words, the second component – the determinatum, is often the structural centre.

The first part is the determining one or called determinant.

For example:

In the sentence: Most animal are warm – blooded but all reptiles are cold – blooded.

Warm – blooded distinguish from cold – blooded

Structural centre

→*warm* and *cold* are the determinant

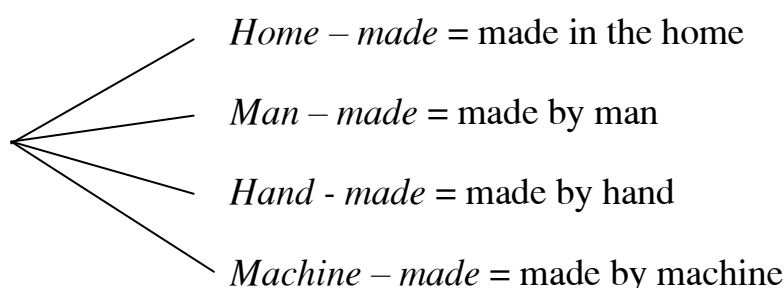
In the sentence: I see a blue – eyed girl at the first table and a brown– eyed girl at the second table in the classroom.

Blue – eyed distinguish from brown – eyed

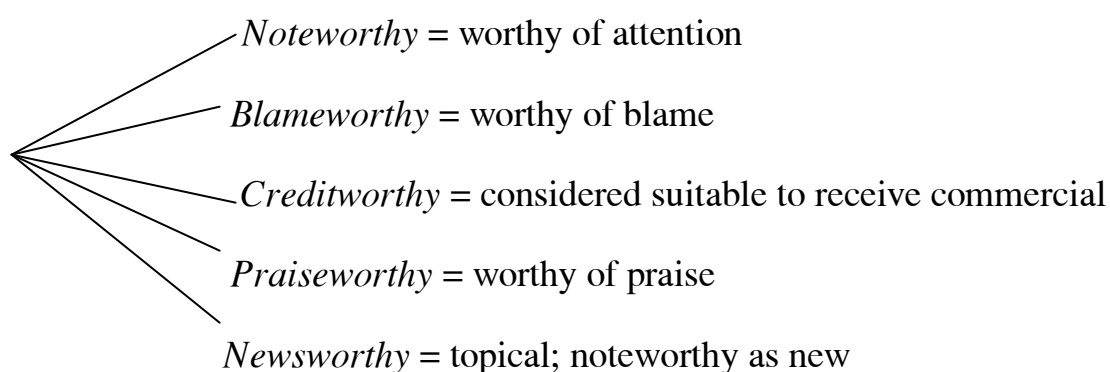
Structural centre

→*blue* and *brown* are the determinant

Similarly, we have:



In these examples, “*made*” is the structural centre. We distinguish each from the others according to the determinant, i.e. “*home, man, hand, machine*”



In these examples, “*worthy*” is the structural centre. We distinguish each from the others according to the determinant i.e. “*blame, note, praise, credit, news*”

In terms of families of compounds, there are many sets of compound based on the same word. In the sets, the second element is generic, but its relationship with each member of its set likely to be different.

For instance, we have one set of compound adjective:

In the sentence: *An acid – based powder supplied to police forces all over the world to trace fingerprints on paper.*

Acid – based = acid is main component

In the sentence: *ITI is a British – based engineering group.*

British – based = all most activities are hold in British

In the sentence: *The company should hold a widely – based dialogue.*

Widely – based = being widen and spread

2.2.3. Classification according to compositional types

2.2.3.1. Compounds formed by juxtaposition

(without any connecting element)

For example:

Heart – broken, pollution – free, risk – free, empty – headed, flood – ridden, flavorsome, hand – made, blue – eyed, manmade, roundabout, . . .

2.2.3.2. Compounds formed by morphological means

(with vowel or consonant as a linking element)

For example:

- *Franco – Vietnamese, Afro – Asian* → “o” vowel is used as a linking element between “*Franc*” and “*Vietnamese*”
- *Handicapped* → “i” used as a linking element between “*hand*” and “*capped*”.

2.2.3.3. Compounds formed by syntactical means:

A group of words are condensed to make one word.

For example:

Happy – go – lucky, catch – as – catch – can, fore – and – aft, up – to – date, blow – by – blow, fly – by – night, hard – and – fast, heart – to – heart, matter – of – fact, meter – kilogram – second...

2.2.3.4. Compounds formed both by morphological and syntactical means

Phrases turned into compounds by means of suffixes.

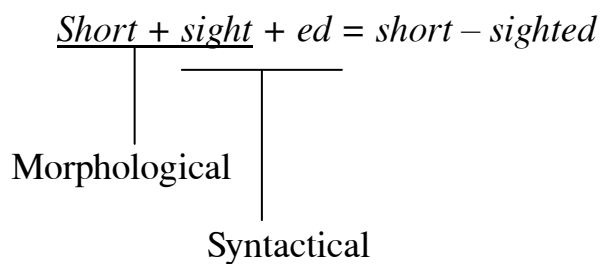
For example:

High + mind + ed = high – minded

Blue + eye + d = blue – eyed

Kind + heart + ed = kind – hearted

Single + mind + ed = single – minded



In the sentence:

- Mary is a blue – eyed girl although her parents are brown – eyed people.
- He loved India with the single – minded devotion that some men give to their work.
- My mother is a kind - hearted woman.

2.3. Miscellanea of compound adjectives

The types of compound are extremely varied. Apart from the ones previously investigated, there are some others that should be taken into consideration.

2.3.1. Derivational compound adjectives:

Derivational compound adjectives are words whose structural integrity is ensured by a suffix:

For example:

Big – bellied, ill – mannered, one – stringed, seven – coloured, kind – hearted, big – headed, muddle – headed, free – standing, habit - forming...

2.3.2. Reduplicative compound adjectives

Reduplicative compound adjectives are words built by imitating sounds or repeating one of their components in one way or another.

For example:

Fifty – fifty, hoity – hoity, harium – scarum, hush – hush. . .

2.4. Formation of compound adjectives

Words can be combined to form compound adjectives. These are very common, and new combinations are invented almost daily

2.4.1.1. Adjectives / adverb + -ing / ed participle

Adjective or adverb plus **-ing participle** or **-ed participle** is one of the most common patterns for forming compound adjectives

(1) adjective + -ing participle

For example:

Good - looking	High - sounding	Far - seeing
Far - reaching	Free - standing	High - ranking

- The good – looking chef was dressed in hard – wearing clothing and sitting in front of a free – standing.
- Peter is a far – seeing person.
- John’s father works in a high – ranking organization of government.

In these examples:

- *Good – looking* = handsome, of a pleasing or attractive appearance
- *Far – seeing* = seeing distant things best.
- *Far – reaching* = having wide application or influence.
- *Free - standing* = standing or operating independently of anything else.

We can find that adjectives: “*good*”, “*far*”, “*free*” function as modifier of “**-ing participle**”: “*looking*”, “*reaching*”, “*standing*”. The adjectives may stand in an adverbial relationship to the verb.

(2) Adverb + -ing participle

For example:

Hard- wearing	Never - ending	Ever - lasting
Long - lasting	Brightly - shining	Ever - increasing

In the sentence:

- The good – looking chef was dressed in hard – wearing clothing.

- We signed a long – lasting agreement for his services which we hoped would be never – ending.

In these examples:

- *Hard - wearing* = hard to beat
- *Ever – lasting* = enduring forever
- *Ever – increasing* = continuing to increase
- *Long – lasting* = lasting in a long time
- *Never – ending* = not being stopped

The adverb: “*hard*”, “*ever*”, “*never*”, “*long*” like a modifier of “**-ing participle**”

(3) Adjective + -ed participle

For example:

Serious - minded	New - made	Low - keyed
Ready - made	Cold - blooded	High - flown

- They request us to prove the usage of new – made product.
- My sister likes buying the ready – made clothes.
- He was a cold – blooded murderer and showed no emotion of any kind.
- She was possibly even more serious – minded than her father.

The adjective “*serious*”, “*new*”, “*low*”, “*ready*”, “*cold*” tell us how the action which denoted by **-ed participle** perform. It has the same function as a modifier of “**-ed participle**”. It may stand in an adverbial relation to the verb.

(4) Adverb + -ed participle

For example:

Deeply - rooted	Well - behaved	Brightly - lit
Well - educated	Densely - populated	Hard - boiled

- Nevertheless, she held deeply – rooted beliefs about the sanctify of marriage.
- The brightly – lit streets in our town discourage burglars.

Similarly, in the structure **adverb + -ed participle**, adverb like a modifier of “**-ed participle**”. The adverb answers the question: how the action denoted by “**-ed participle**” perform.

2.4.1.2. Noun + -ing participle

For example:

Mouth - watering	Record - breaking	Blood – curdling
Labour - saving	Habit - forming	earsplitting

- The dishes he had prepared will all the labour – saving devices at his disposal were all mouth – watering
- The earsplitting sound he makes everyday in the house is from his old machine.

In these examples:

- *Habit – forming* = causing addiction.
- *Earsplitting* = intolerably loud or shrill
- *Bloodcurlldling* = arousing fright

The nouns: “*habit*”, “*ear*”, “*blood*” have the same function as the modifiers “**-ing participle**”

2.4.1.3. Noun + adjective

For example:

Diet– conscious	Machine – readable	Pollution - free
Ice – free	blameworthy	Safety - conscious

- John is blameworthy boy because he broken window of class.
- Lan was the most safety – conscious member of the team.

- An electric car would be pollution – free.
- Not until mid – July do the lakes become ice – free and the snow begins to melt.
- The company plans to market the low – calorie sweetener in diet – conscious America.

In these examples, the noun “*safety*”, “*pollution*”, “*blame*”

has the same function as a classifying modifier. It tells or describes specific information about the adjective: “*conscious*”, “*free*”, “*worthy*”...

2.4.1.4. Adjective + adjective

Adjective plus adjective is one of the most common patterns for forming compound adjective.

When we want to add more specific information beside main information about someone or something, we sometimes use adjective in front of another adjective

For example:

Deaf – mute	White - hot	Worldly - wise
Bitter - sweet	Blue - black	Dark - brown

- Many people like eating chocolate because of the bitter – sweet taste of it.
- The deaf – mute people have many difficulties in their lives because they can not hear and see anything.
- John is considered as the most worldly – wise person in his family.

2.4.1.5. Adjective + noun –ed

For example:

Big – bellied	Kind - hearted	Wide – eyed
big - headed	Closemouthed	High - spirited

- They told us of for being big – headed.
- My mother is a kind – hearted woman.

- The young soldiers often is high – spirited and hot - headed.

In the **adjective + noun –ed** structures, the adjective behaves similarly to a modifier of the Noun. It tells or describes the nature of the noun.

2.4.1.6. Adjective + noun

For example:

Slow-motion	Deep - sea	Full - length
First - class	Red - letter	Last - minute

- *Deep - sea* = of or taking place in the deeper parts of the sea
- *Full - length* = showing or fitted to the entire length, especially of the human body or of a normal or standard length
- Red – letter = memorable (in the sentence: It was a red – letter day)
- *Last - minute* = the period just before a significant or concluding moment such as a deadline, due date, or scheduled event.

2.4.1.7. V + adjective / adverb

For example:

- *Feel - good* as in *feel - good factor*
- *Buy - now, pay - latter* as in *buy - now pay - latter purchase*.

2.4.1.8. V + preposition

For example:

- *Stick - on* as in *stick - on label*
- *Walk - on* as in *walk - on part*
- *Stand - by* as in *Stand - by fare*
- *Roll - on, roll - off* as in *roll - on roll - of ferry*.

2.5. Compound adjectives made with number

2.5.1. Cardinal numbers combine with nouns (usually singular) to form compound adjectives relating to time, measurement, etc

For example:

- Age: *a three – year – old building*
a twenty – year – old men
- Area / home: *a three – acre plot, a two – litre car*
- Length / depth: *a twelve – inch ruler, a six – foot hole*
- Price: *a \$50 dress, a \$ 90000 house*
- Time / distance: *a ten – minute walk, a three – hour journey*
- Weight: *a ten – stone man, a five – kilo bag of flour.*

→All these examples have structure:

A + numeral + noun

However, compound adjective also is formed by:

A + numeral + noun -ed

For example:

- *A one – layered disk*
- *A three – headed monster*
- *A three – legged stool*
- *A three – legged stool*

→When we use a part of a body as part of an adjective, we add **-ed** after noun (note: the “body” parts are not units of measurement)

2.5.2. Ordinal numbers can be used in compounds

For example:

- *A first – rate film*
- *A second – hand car*
- *A third – floor flat*
- *A nineteenth – century.*

Chapter three

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

3.1. Difficulties encountered by learners of English

Studying compound adjective is useful. However, in the process of studying, getting confusion is unavoidable. There is a great variety of compound adjectives hence various classifications can be evident. The main difficulty a learner comes across is how to classify compound adjectives according to some practical ways. In this chapter, I would like to give some consideration:

3.1.1. Trouble in stressed syllable of compound adjectives

Graphic criterion often causes argument as well. In English spelling, there is lack of consistency

To be more specific, there are no specific rules about how to form a compound adjective. Many words may be spelled in all three ways: the closed form, hyphenated form, open form. In other words, hyphenated for the same compound adjectives:

For example: *manmade* ----- *man – made*
earsplitting----- *ear – splitting*
well – known----- *well known*
eyecatching----- *eye – catching*

Different people, different dictionaries have different spellings. We may come across two ways of spelling.

For example: “*heart – to – heart*” in the sentences:

Mary is so *heart – to – heart* that she has never told a lie.

Mary is so *heart to heart* that she has never told a lie.

We are often confused because of the various ways of spelling of many compound adjectives. So it is hard for English learners to identify the proper spelling.

3.1.2. Misunderstanding meaning of compound adjectives especially idiomatic ones

According to semantic criterion, a compound adjective only expresses a single idea despite the fact that it consists of two or more words. The meaning of the whole compound word is not the sum of the meanings of its components.

However we can also see the insufficiency of this criterion because in a number of cases it is difficult to decide whether there is only one single idea: *deaf – mute*, *bitter – sweet*.

Therefore, basing on this criterion to classify non – idiomatic and idiomatic compound adjectives can cause confusions.

Moreover, there is misunderstanding of the meaning of compound adjectives. Discussing on this problem, I think, can not avoid complications.

According to “semantic classification”, Hoang Tat Truong classified compound adjectives into two types:

- non – idiomatic
- idiomatic

We can guess the meaning of non – idiomatic compounds, because the meaning of non – idiomatic compounds are easily deduced from the meanings of components,

For instance:

- *Dirt – cheap* = cheap as dirt
- *Paper – thin* = thin as paper
- *Camera – shy* = shy in respect of appearing or speaking before cameras
- *Man – made* = made by man

But in terms of idiomatic compounds, it causes many troubles. There is no relationship between the meanings of the components.

For example:

- *Seat – of – the – pants* = employing or based on personal experience, judgment and effort rather than technological aids.
- *Fly – by – light* = seeking a quick profit by shady acts
- *Hand – to – mouth* = having or providing nothing to spare.
- *Happy – go – lucky* = cheerfully casual

Idiomatic compound nouns are various; therefore when studying on this field, learners get a trouble in identifying the exact meaning of the words.

3.1.3. Difficulties in distinguishing between compound adjectives and free word groups

Concerning compound adjectives, there are still many problems that cause controversy. English compound adjectives are generally composed of free word group. First of all, I'd like to mention about differences between compound nouns and free word groups.

3.1.3.1. Basing on graphic criterion (spelling criterion)

This criterion means that we can rely on the spelling of a word group to discriminate between free word groups and compounds.

If two words are written with no space between them, possibly with an intervening hyphen, they form a compound (a solid compound or a hyphenated compound, respectively)

For example:

*Roundabout, waterlogged, clearheaded, happy – go – lucky,
blow – by – blow, wall – to – wall, etc.*

In contrast, if it has no hyphen or with separation, it is free word group.

However, this criterion causes argument as well because both compound adjective and free word group are spelt with separation (in case compound adjective is spelt in open form)

3.1.3.2. Basing on inseparability criterion

This can be also called “criterion of structural integrity”. It means that compounds are indivisible. Between the elements of a compound word it is impossible to insert any other word. These elements lose their grammatical independence and endings to the whole word:

For example:

Closemouthed, brokenhearted, wholehearted, handicapped, loudmouthed, etc.

3.2. Some solutions to problems

Studying on compound adjectives, I think that many learners may get the same problem. I would like to suggest some solutions:

3.2.1. Distinguish compound adjective from free word groups

How to discriminate between free word groups and compound adjectives? It goes without saying that we can not base ourselves or rely on one criterion. It is usually necessary to refer to at least two or sometimes all these criteria to decide whether such and such word groups are compound. We can recognize some criteria for the identification of one type or the other:

- (1) Orthography: if two words are written with no space between them, possibly with an intervening hyphen, they form a compound.
- (2) Inseparability criterion: Between the elements of a compound adjective, it is impossible to insert any other word.

3.2.2. Confusion in applying hyphen to connect compound adjectives

In writing, we are often confronted with the problem of compound words and phrase – and the appearance of hyphenation.

There are some following cases we must add hyphenation:

- (1) When compound adjectives formed with *high* or *low* are generally hyphenated:

For example:

- *High – level discussion*
- *High – quality programming*
- *Low – price mark – up*
- *Low – budget films*

(2) Compound adjectives which formed with an adverb plus an adjective or a participle are often hyphenated when they occur before the noun they modify:

For example:

A well – known actor, an ill – advised move, best – loved poems, a much – improved situation, the so – called cure.

However, when these compounds occur after the noun, or when they are modified, the hyphen is usually omitted:

The actor is well known;

An extremely well known actor.

(3) Compound adjectives formed with an adverb or a noun and a past participle are always hyphenated when they precede the noun they modify: *well – kept secret, above – mentioned reason, helium – filled balloons, snow – capped mountains*. Many compound this type have become permanent and are therefore hyphenated whether they precede or follow the noun they modify:

For example:

- *A well – worn shirt*
- *His shirt was well – worn*
- *The tongue – tied winner*
- *She remained tongue – tied*

(4) Also hyphenate compound adjectives formed with an adjective and a noun to which *-d* or *-ed* has been added:

For example:

- *Yellow- eyed cat*
- *Fine – grained wood*
- *Many – tied cake*
- *Stout – limbed toddler*

Many of these compounds have become permanent hyphenated:

For example: *Middle – aged, old – fashioned*

(5) Compound adjectives formed with a noun, adjective, or adverb and a present participle are hyphenated when the compound precedes the noun it modifies:

For example:

- *A bone – chilling take*
- *Two good – looking sons*
- *Long – lasting friendship*

Many of these compounds have become permanent solid compounds: *earsplitting, farseeing*. Many other compounds have become the noun they modify:

For example:

Far – reaching consequences

The consequences are far - reaching

(6) Numbers from twenty – one to ninety – nine and adjective compound with a numerical first element (whether spelled out or written in figures) are hyphenated:

For example:

13- piece band, 19th century novel, decades – old newspapers, six – sided polygon, ten – thousand – year – old bones

(7) Compound colour adjectives are hyphenated: *a red – gold sunset, a cherry – red sweater, a red - letter day...*

Color compounds whose first element ends in “-ish” are hyphenated when they precede the noun but should not be hyphenated when they follow the noun:

For example:

- *A darkish – blue color,*
- *A reddish – gold sunset,*
- *The sky is reddish gold.*

(8) Comparatives and superlatives in compound adjectives also take hyphens:

For example:

- *The highest – placed competitor*
- *A shorter – term loan*

However a construction with “*most*” is not hyphenated:

The most respected member

However the appearance of hyphenation is not always absolute. If you are not sure, it is better to write as two words or you can put a compound.

3.2.3. Others solutions

To know more about phonological criterion, learner should spend much time listening to the tapes, which help practise pronunciation day by day.

In terms of idiomatic compounds (non – motivated), we could find the meaning of the words by looking up dictionaries, or sometimes basing on the context or situation to guess the meanings

To form compound adjectives, pay much attention to the rules.

In my opinion, learners should take part in some class activities in groups. They can organize by collecting many compound adjectives, and then give the other group. This group will arrange given compounds into different types (this

activity may help learners to remember compound in term of criteria). Or each person will take in turns to explain the meaning of compound (avoid using the elements composing those in the explanation), so that the others can guess what compounds are. Learners can remember meanings of many non – idiomatic compounds. And I'm sure that, the most interesting is the meanings of idiomatic compounds, they may make others surprised. I think that it is a useful activity. Playing it as a game is a good way to improve grammar knowledge.

There still have many other fields, but to my knowledge, and refer to some references, I learn from my experiences and give some solutions. With this study and some solutions, I do hope that my graduation paper will help you master English, especially on compound adjectives day by day.

PART THREE: CONCLUSION

1. Summary of the study

It can not be denied that English plays an important role in international communication. English is used in all fields of life and it makes the relations among countries closer. English is also considered the most widely used language in the world.

In order to learn English better, learners can not help studying all aspect in English vocabulary in general and studying compound adjectives in particular. From that learners can improve their English.

Thanks to the supportive help of my supervisor, teachers, the encouragement of my friends and my family, I have finally finished the research study. I really hope that my study, to some extent, will help readers who want to learn more about English grammar, especially compound adjectives some knowledge. And they can find useful way to use compound adjectives in writing, communicating. Besides, I also point out some difficulties which other learners may also get. In part, I give some solutions to overcome. To summarize, the matter of compound adjectives still has larger aspects. However, in my study, I only mention some main fields as concerned about.

My graduation paper “A study on compound adjectives in English” includes three chapters. Each chapter takes its own functions which are analysed with the view of English learners.

The first chapter is theoretical background knowledge of the study, generalizing some definitions of adjectives, its categories, orthography of word formation and overview of compound adjectives.

Chapter two makes an investigation into compound adjectives analysis in English. In fact, this chapter gives criteria, classification, and formation of compound adjectives.

Third chapter lists some mistakes that learners may make and suggests solutions to overcome problems are mentioned.

However, due to the limitation of my knowledge as well as time my research stops here but I expect that it will be profoundly analysed more by following people who are interested in compound adjectives.

2. Suggestions for further study

As far as I am concerned in the scope of the study, my graduation paper is not extensive due to the limitation of time and knowledge. I can not mention all the types of compounding according to part of speech, i.e. compound noun, compound adverb, compound verb, etc. Beside compounding, there are other ways of word formation in English graded according to their productive degrees, namely affixation, which can be a topic for another study, shortening, back derivation, conversion, affixation, sound imitation. . . I will be given encouragement of readers the help of my teachers, my friends to spend time to concentrate on studying more about related fields.

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APPENDIX

Exercise 1:

Try to create compound adjective by matching the words in the column 1 with the words in the column 2. In some cases, more than one answer may be appropriate:

column 1	column 2
1. good -	a. behaved
2. middle -	b. reaching
3. old -	c. minded
4. well -	d. splitting
5. far -	e. wearing
6. home	f. looking
7. blue -	g. age
8. hard -	h. made
9. long -	i. ending
10. open -	j. eyed
11. world -	k. fashioned
12. kind -	l. weight
13. never -	m. mute
14. deep -	n. watering
15. cold -	o. lasting
16. light -	p. famous
17. heart -	q. sea
18. red -	r. hearted
19. habit -	s. blooded
20. mouth -	t. letter
21. ear -	u. broken
22. deaf -	v. forming

Exercise 2:

Rewrite the following sentences using compound adjectives:

1. The office - block costs two million pounds.

It's.....

2. The woman is seventy years old.

She's.....

3. The conference lasts two days.

It's.....

4. The farm is eighty hectares.

It's.....

5. The journey takes three days.

It's.....

6. The bag weighs five kilos.

It's.....

7. My engine is three litres.

It's.....

8. It's a note for fifty pounds.

It's.....

9. The fence is twenty miles.

It's.....

10. The tunnel is fifty kilometres.

It's.....

Exercise 3:

Complete in each space in the following sentences with an appropriate compound adjectives formed from a word in the list:

1. I bought this CD **duty** - as I was coming back from London.
2. I made a **long** -call to England and I cost me a fortune.
3. They seem to be very **well** -at least they have a great big house and two expensive cars.
4. I'm **fed** -with this exercise.
- Can't we do something else?
5. On the strain I travel **second** -because it's cheaper.
6. You can see this vase in **hand**.....and wasn't produced in a factory.
7. She is so - **minded** that she has never remembered what I told her.
8. The office is **air** -..... So it's very cool, even in the summer.
9. He's so proud - I've rarely met anyone so **big** -He has a really high opinion of himself.
10. I want to get my eyes tested - I've become really **short** -lately.
11. A - **maintained** car won't have a reliable engine.
12. There isn't much grass in the- **up** areas of the city.

Answer keys

Exercise 1:

1.e	9.o	17.u
2.g	10.c	18.t
3.k	11.p	19.v
4.a	12.r	20.n
5.b	13.i	21.d
6.h	14.q	22.m
7.j	15.s	
8.e	16.l	

Exercise 2:

1. It's a two - million - pound office - block.
2. She's a seventy - year - old woman.
3. It's a two - day conference.
4. It's an eighty - hectare farm.
5. It's a three - day journey.
6. It's a five - kilo bag.
7. It's a three - litre engine.
8. It's a fifty - pound note.
9. It's a twenty - mile fence.
10. It's a fifty - kilometre tunnel.

Exercise 3:

1. Free

2. Distance

3. Off

4. Up

5. Class

6. Made

7. Absent

8. Conditioned

9. Headed

10. Sighted

11. Badly

12. Built