KHẢO SÁT NHỮNG KHÓ KHĂN CỦA NGƯỜI VIỆT KHI GIẢI THÍCH NGHĨA CÁC TỪ GHÉP TRONG CÁC BÀI BÁO TIẾNG ANH

Nguyễn Thị Thanh Hương*

Đọc báo hiện là một nhu cầu của nhiều người trong xã hội hiện đại, khi hầu hết mọi thông tin đều có thể được tiếp cận thông qua báo, đặc biệt là báo mạng điện tử. Tuy nhiên, người Việt Nam gặp một số khó khăn trong việc giải thích nghĩa các từ ghép trên báo tiếng Anh, không chỉ bởi cấu trúc phức tạp của các từ ghép trong tiếng Anh, mà còn do sự khác biệt khá lớn giữa cấu trúc của danh ngữ trong tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt. Bài viết này phân tích về sự ảnh hưởng do sự khác biệt của trật tự từ trong tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt đối với người Việt đọc báo bằng tiếng Anh khi họ muốn hiểu nghĩa của các từ ghép — một trong những cách thức hiệu quả nhất nhưng cũng khó khăn nhất trong việc thể hiện nghĩa của các bài báo tiếng Anh.

Từ khoá: thông tin, báo mạng điện tử, giải thích nghĩa từ ghép, sự khác biệt, cấu trúc của danh ngữ.

People in modern society have a great demand for reading newspapers since information of all kinds could be achieved through newspapers, especially online ones. However, the Vietnamese have difficulty interpreting compounds in English newspapers, because of not only the complicated structure of English compounds but also the big differences in structures between English and Vietnamese noun phrases. This study aims at discussing how the differences in word order in English and Vietnamese affect Vietnamese readers of English newspapers in understanding the meaning of compounds – one of most effective yet difficult way to express meaning in English articles.

Key words: information, online newspapers, interpreting compounds, difference, structure of noun phrase.

A STUDY ON DIFFICULTIES OF VIETNAMESE IN INTERPRETING COMPOUNDS IN ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS

1. Introduction

1.1. Aims of the study

The study aims at carrying out research on typical features of compounds in

* TS., Khoa Ngoại ngữ, Học viện Báo chí và Tuyên truyền

Email: thanhhuong6130@gmail.com

English in general, and in English newspapers in particular basing on the principles of news writing and differences between structures of English and Vietnamese noun phrases (NP). The results of the research may serve as evidence for predicting problems faced by Vietnamese readers in interpreting

compounds in English newspapers, as well as suggesting ways to solve these problems.

1.2. Research Methodology

Data collection and data analysis are carried out, as well as quantitative research. Materials are collected from 50 articles of different reliable sources such as bbc.co.uk, cnn.com, theguardian.com (G), thereuter.com (R), washingtonpost .com (W), nytimes.com (N), cnbc.com, etc.

2. Key concepts

2.1. English newspapers style

2.1.1. English newspapers in modern society

The trend of receiving information in modern society is getting the main points only and ignoring the minor ones, especially for busy readers.

Articles seem to become shorter so readers can get the most important information immediately in shortest period of time, as well as by using different kinds of technical devices like smart phones or iPads.

2.1.2. Qualities of Newswriting

Newswriting has six qualities that distinguish it from other forms of writing: dealing with recent event, being accurate, objective, balanced, concise, and clear.

Harkrider (1997) claims that newswriting must be clear and concise. The facts are presented in as few words as possible, without sacrificing necessary detail, and language is easy to understand. In order to make the news concise, it is necessary for reporters to 'Keep sentences and paragraphs short. Whenever possible, use only one idea for each sentence. Set a maximum of twenty-five words for each sentence and one to three sentences for each paragraph. Use short, familiar words rather than long, unusual words'. [p.15]

According to Mallette (1990), vigorous writing is concise, and it is useful for reporters to 'try for short sentences, but vary their length so as not to be staccato; keep average length under 18 words', and 'remove all unnecessary parts' [p.17]

For the reasons mentioned above, it is natural for reporters to try to cram all his facts into the space allotted, as he is obliged to be brief, and one of the way to achieve that is using compounds.

2.2. Compounds in English

2.2.1. Definition of Compounds in English

A compound word is a combination of two or more words that function as a single unit of meaning. [1]

Consisting of at least two stems which occur in the language as free forms, compound words in English function in a sentence as a separate lexical unit.

2.2.2. Classification of Compounds in English

Compound words can be written in three ways: as open compounds (spelled as two words, e.g. family ties), closed compounds (joined to form a single word, e.g. offshore), or hyphenated compounds (two words joined by a hyphen, e.g. high-level). Sometimes, more than two words can form a compound (e.g. editorat-large). [2]

1) Open Compound Words

An open compound word is created in cases when the modifying adjective is used with its noun (N) to create a new noun. A space is used between the adjective and the noun (e.g. living room), so sometimes it is hard to identify as a compound; however, if the two words are commonly used together, it's considered to be a compound word. [2]

E.g. business models (G.13.7.2017), news story (R. 13.7.2017)

2) Closed Compound Words

Closed compound words look like one word. At one point, these words were not used together, but they are now accepted as a "real word" in the English language. Closed compound words are usually made up of only two words. [2]

E.g. lawmaker, sizeable (R. 13.7.2017)

3) Hyphenated Compound Words

There are many grammar rules regarding hyphens in compound words. One important rule of thumb to remember is that in most cases, a compound adjective is hyphenated if placed before the noun it modifies, but not if placed after the noun. [2]

E.g. <u>Labour-led</u> government (R. 15.7.2017), <u>meal-kit</u> companies (R. 13.7.2017)

Although 'British English often prefers hyphenated compounds, whereas American English discourages the use of hyphens in compounds where there is no compelling reason' [9], it is clear that hyphenated ones are essential to signal the loosen connection between two or more sterms.

2.3. Function of Compounds

2.3.2. Function of Compounds in English sentences

Theoretically, there is no limitation for compounds' role in English sentences where they can be used in position of ordinary nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs.

2.3.2. Function of Compounds in English newspapers

According to Harkrider (1997), qualities of newswriting may decide the functions of compounds in English newspapers.

Firstly, the usage of compounds helps to meet the severe space demands by replacing a quite long free phrase by only two- or three-word combination without sacrificing necessary details.

Secondly, 'temporal' combination is really effective in describing specific detail, or 'taking the reader to the scene'.

Finally, playing the role of different parts of speech, mainly of open class such as noun, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, compounds' functions may be flexible, depending on their position in the certain context. E.g. We're not too good for mince on toast; mince on toast is too good for us. Enjoy your non-mince-on-toast meals, Britain. (G.13.7.2017)

Being considered to be a NP in 1st sentence, once became a compound in 2nd sentence, 'mince on toast' functions as an adjective, or noun premodifier.

2.4. Structure of noun phrase in English in comparison with Vietnamese

According to Tran Huu Manh (2008, p.213), the biggest differences between structure of English and Vietnamese NPs can be recognized in premodifiers as shown in diagram below.

Diagram 1: Typical structure of English and Vietnamese noun phrases



According to Quirk (1980, p.925), is possible for 7 cases where contentive premodifiers in English may be various. It words are used as premodifiers in a NP.

Table 1: Premodifiers in English noun phrase

- 8	- 7	- 6	- 5	- 4	- 3	- 2	-1	HEAD
derterminer	general	age	colour	participle	provenance	noun	deniminal	NOUN
Grammatical words	Contentive words							

Quirk, R. El al (1980, p.925)

3. Typical features of compounds in English newspapers

The typical feature that makes compounds in English newspapers more effective than in other kinds of discourses is the various usage of hyphenated compound words. Many of them is 'temporal combination' acceptable only in certain contexts to express specific concepts. It is not likely for them to become common or be included in dictionaries.

In spite of being easy to be recognized typographically, hyphenated compounds are difficult to be understood, as their function and meaning depend mainly on the context.

3.1. Syntactical features of compounds in English newspapers

Compounds in English newspapers may consist of two or more than two words. The number of components may be up to 6 for hyphenated ones.

E.g. <u>black-red-and-gold</u> hatbands (R. 15.7.2017) (4 words)

the <u>everything-under-the-sun</u> medicinal purposes... (cnn.10.2.2016) (4 words)

as the never-had-it-so-good beneficiaries of the NHS, (G.4.4.2017) (5 words)

that <u>more-of-the-same-but-tougher</u> will work (G.13.7.2017) (6 words)

3.1.1. Structure of compound nouns in English newspapers

Theoretically, compound nouns can be identified basing on the last component which frequently is a noun or a gerund, and most popular kinds of compound nouns in English newspapers can be classified as following:

- 1) Common Noun Common Noun: e.g. a part-owner (of Ansett Airlines)
- 2) Common Noun Present Participle: e.g. the fellow-feeling (was)
- 3) Bare Infinitive Common Noun: e.g. spin-rate (for toast)
- 4) Adjective (Full form) Common Noun: e.g. (two) low-points
- 5) Preposition Common Noun: e.g. (the) cross-pressures (in the news production)
- 6) Bare Infinitive Adverb: e.g. the know-how (of putting together things)
- 7) Bare Infinitive Preposition: e.g. (structural) break-up (of the aircraft)

3.1.2. Structure of compound adjectives in English newspapers

Theoretically, compound adjectives can be identified basing on the last component which must be an adjectives or a past participle. Most popular kinds of compound adjectives in English newspapers can be classified as following:

- 1) Cardinal numeral–noun–adjective: e.g. 66-year-old (James T. Hodgkinson III)
- 2) Adverb adjective: e.g. nowmythical (car journey)
- 3) Pronoun adverb adjective: e.g. all-too-common (mistakes)
- 4) Adjective past participle: e.g. cold-blooded
- 5) Adverb past participle: e.g. wellbehaved

A hyphen should not be placed in a compound adjective if the adjectives are capitalized.

3.1.3. Structure of Compound verbs in English newspapers

Besides compound verb that is made up of multiple words such as prepositional verbs or phrasal verbs, compound singleword verbs consist of:

- Common Noun verb: e.g. (need to) proofread (my manuscript)
- 2) Cardinal numeral verb: e.g. (we) second guess (the outcome)

3.2. Semantic features of compounds in English newspapers

It is difficult to identify the relationships between the constituents of a compound word. The ties between words may be syntactic or lexical ones

3.2.1. Syntactic relations between compound's components

Relations between compound's components may be the same kind of those between sentence's components

- 1) Subject-predicative relation: e.g. crybaby (the baby who cries too often)
- 2) Predicative-object relation: e.g. flag-waving (crowds) (waving flag)
- 3) Attribute and adverbial relation: e.g. well-being (to be well)
- 3.2.2. Semantical relations between compound's components

There many cases where relations between compound's components depend on meaning of each component. Followings are the most common types:

- 1) Purpose or functional relation: e.g. raincoat (coat to wear to keep someone dry in the rain)
- 2) Place or local relation: e.g. gardenparty (party organized in garden)
- 3) Comparison relation: e.g. goldfish (orange or red fish having the same colour as gold)
- 4) material relation (the material or elements the thing is made of): e.g. claypipe (pipe made of clay)

- 5) Temporal relation: e.g. summerhouse (house to stay at in summer)
- 6) Sex-denoting relation: e.g. shedog (female dog)
- 7) Process relation: e.g. fastest-rising (rising at the fastest rate)
- 8) Instrument relation: e.g. pin-prick (prick by pin)
- 9) Reason relation: e.g. Islamist-rooted (politics) (rooted by Islamists)

Many compounds may be explained in more than one ways.

E.g. 'Spacecraft' may be interpreted as 'a craft travelling in space' (local) or 'a craft designed for travelling in space' (purpose)

4. Problems faced by Vietnamese readers in interpreting compounds in English newspapers

4.1. Problems in identifying the head noun

The biggest problem faced by Vietnamese occurs when dealing with strings of three, four or more nouns. The most popular mistake of Vietnamese is identifying the head noun. The reason of misunderstanding the combination's meaning is the impact of the word order in Vietnamese NP. Naturally, Vietnamese always identify the 1st noun of the string to be the head, whereas the must be the last one.

In an English NP containing a string of three, four or more nouns, nouns earlier in the string modify those that follow, so it must be read backwards in order to be interpreted.

E.g. No <u>rail replacement bus services</u> were arranged: ... (G.13.7.2017)

In the combination of 4 nouns 'rail replacement bus services' '<u>services</u>' is the head, but many Vietnamese may fail to do so, as the choice may be '<u>rail</u>'.

The same thing can be noticed in 'identical 1,400-calorie weight loss *diets* for 12 weeks. (cnn.19.5.2017), or 'an <u>Australian-run offshore detention *center*' (R.15.7.2017)</u>

4.2. Problems in identifying the compounds' lexical category

Theoretically, a compound's lexical category can be decided by its head's part of speech. In two-word compounds, the head is always the last component.

E.g. sugar habit (N) (cnn.10.2.2016); people-smugglers (N) (G.13.7.2017); human rights protections (N) (N.13.7.2017)

In the examples above, the heads are noun, so the compound are nouns. In the example below, the compound are adjectives because heads are adjectives.

E.g. <u>all-inclusive</u> citizenship (adj.) cnn.10.5.2017); <u>economy-friendly</u> policies (adj.) (cnn.10.5.2017); <u>fact-free</u> denial (adj.) (G.13.7.2017)

Identifying the compounds' part of speech is also challenging as in many cases, compounds' lexical category is contextual. Compounds ending in gerund may function as noun, adjective and verb.

E.g.

- ... protective shell against <u>fat-</u> <u>shaming</u>. (N) (G.13.7.2017)
- ... Mediterranean <u>people-</u> <u>smuggling</u> starts on land ... (N) (G.13.7.2017)
- ... no "cherry picking" from the benefits ... (N) (R.15.7.2017)
- ... death is <u>soul-crushing</u> for his supporters ... (adj.) (N.13.7.2017)
- Facebook is <u>open-sourcing</u> this technology ... (V) (cnn.19.4.2017)

Things can be more complicated when a compound consists of more than two words and its components are of different parts of speech, the heads is not the last component.

E.g. (to become) <u>Geneva-on-Thames</u> (N) (G.13.7.2017)

- (old) <u>U-S-of-A (N)</u> (cnn.1.6.2017)
- (his) <u>15-year-stay</u> in the Americas (N) (cnn.1.2.2016)

In examples above, the heads are nouns in 1st, 2nd or the last position of the compounds respectively.

4.3. Problems in finding compounds' relevant free phrases

While writing articles, it is compulsory for reporters to use compounds to make condensation of details' meaning. As the result, the shorter and more convenient compounds are for writing and editing, the more complicated and difficult for readers to interpret them. It is the reporters' work to cram as many details as possible into a combination of couple of words; on the contrary, it is the readers' effort to expand it by looking for its relevant free phrase.

The compounds' lexical category and meaning can be identified based on the certain compound's structure, however, it is impossible to identify compounds' relevant free phrase in the same way, as it depends on relations between its components. It is more difficult if the compound consists of more than three stems.

Compound

lower- and middle-income Americans (W.13.7.2017)

<u>carrot-and-stick</u> approach (G.13.7.2017)

- the <u>hand-to-hand</u> wrestling (G.13.7.2017)
- become <u>Geneva-on-Thames</u> (G.13.7.2017)

Relevant free phrase

Americans on middle income and lower than middle

The approach of dangling a carrot in front of a mule and holding a stick behind it (a policy of offering a combination of rewards and punishment to induce good behavior)

Close combat, wrestling at very short range

Become a city that is similar to Geneva but located on river Thames

4.4. Problems in translating compounds

Compounds may be a problem for translators or interpreters too, especially the inexperienced ones. Failing to identify the head of the string make translators confused and prevent them from finding the real meaning of the combination.

E.g. <u>Air-popped</u> popcorn is a healthy, <u>whole-grain</u>, <u>antioxidant-rich</u> *snack* that's low in calories. (G.13.7.2017)

Mistakes may occur when translators are unable to discover the omitted words of the equivalent free phrase in English and do not change the order of the NP in Vietnamese, that may result in incorrect Vietnamese version.

Another problem is arranging the components in Vietnamese version. In English NP, compounds may function as premodifier of the head and its position is before the head. In Vietnamese version, premodifier's equivalent is located in post position of the head. It sometimes is difficult to decide the order of the combination that must sound good in Vietnamese without changing the meaning of the original one.

The premodifier in NP 'a healthy, whole-grain, antioxidant-rich snack' must be moved to postposition while translated into Vietnamese.

Theoretically, the more important the detail, the closer to the head it need to be. In Vietnamese there may be more than one equivalent versions for the above combination:

- (1) bữa ăn nhẹ giàu **chất chống oxy hóa,** được làm bằng bột mì nguyên hạt, có lợi cho sức khoẻ (21 words).
- (2) bữa ăn nhẹ được làm bằng bột mì nguyên hạt (nên) giàu chất chống oxy hóa (và) có lợi cho sức khoẻ (23 words).
- (3) bữa ăn nhẹ có lợi cho sức khoẻ do được làm bằng bột mì nguyên hạt (nên/ và) giàu chất chống oxy hóa (23 words).

Space limitation may be a headache for translators as well. There are always more words in compounds' relevant free phrases, as ellipsis is not acceptable. In Vietnamese version, words are breeding and make it more difficult to be edited to meet the severe space demand of newspapers.

In the example above, 21 or 23 words are needed to express the meaning of 5-word noun phrase.

5. Tips on dealing with compounds in English newspapers

Interpreting compounds in English newspapers is unavoidable for readers. Below are several tips based on the analysis of part 3 and 4.

5.1. Identifying compound's grammatical function

Compound's grammatical function can be identified basing on core sentence, on basic sentence patterns in English. It is essential to decide the 'bare-bones' core sentence, which is normally of 'S-V-O' structure, of long and complex sentence with a developed system of clauses to identify the function of compounds in concrete cases.

E.g. *Theresa May is* not *a* <u>pseudodemocratic</u> *dictator* in the mode of Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan or Hungary's Viktor Orban, both of whom used initial election victories to facilitate <u>a</u> <u>one-party</u> takeover of state machinery. (cnn.19.4.2017)

The core sentence is 'Theresa May is not a dictator' (S-V-C), so the 1st compound's function is premodifier of

main clause's complement, and of 2nd one is the part of relative clause's adverbial.

5.1.1. Identifying function of compound nouns

Function of compound nouns in a sentence may be various. Their roles may be:

- 1) Subject of main or subordinate clauses
- E.g. ... all those <u>backward-lookers</u> should know better than to bring down the Brexit shutters on the young? (G.4.4.2017)
 - 2) Object of main clause
- E.g. ... Frenchman D. De Quelus recounted his <u>15-year-stay</u> in the Americas (cnn.10.2.2017)
 - 3) Complement of main clause E.g.
- One scenario likely causing sleepless nights in Brussels is a Le Pen-Mélenchon <u>head-to-head:</u>... (cnn.18.4.2017)
- Although ..., losing the collective wisdom and institutional knowledge of more experienced researchers is <u>ill</u>advised and inefficient. (cnn.15.5.2017)
- 4) Part of subject, object, complement or adverbial of main clause

E.g.

The lack of an immediate <u>Brexitinduced</u> economic downturn also serves as a useful foil for Le Pen when (cnn.18.4.2017)

- In this <u>fast-changing</u> world, it's the American people who will lose. (cnn.15.5.2017)
- ... mobile is <u>Facebook's not-so-secret</u> weapon. (cnn.18.5.2017)
 - 5.1.2. Adverbial of a clause
- E.g. ... people who would have studied <u>part-time</u> in higher education have been deterred from doing so. (N.13.7.2017)
- 5.1.3. Identifying function of compound adjectives

Compound adjectives may play the role of complement in sentence pattern S-V-C

- E.g. Mr. Liu's death is <u>soul-crushing</u> for his supporters, ... (N.13.7.2017)
- 5.1.4. Identifying function of compound verbs

Compound verbs may play the role of main verb (predicate) of a clause

- E.g. Facebook is <u>open-sourcing</u> this technology so ... (cnn.19.4.2017)
- ... when you <u>front-load</u> your calories instead, ... (cnn.19.5.2017)

5.2. Identifying compound's components

Compound's components can be identified basing on the rule of extended NP. Having the most typical function as noun premodifier, compounds in English articles can be identified basing on the rule for extending a basic NP. Besides typical compound adjectives, compound noun and verbs of all types can be used in

preposition of the head noun to give additional information to the head.

Components of open and closed compounds may depend on the structure of the combination. Closed compounds can be found in dictionary, open ones mainly consist of two nouns, and the second of those is the head. In English newspapers, 'temporal' compounds are usually hyphenated ones.

Following are examples of two-word hyphenated compounds functioning as adjectives in NPs:

Structure of compound

Examples

(1)	Adj. – adj.	far-right Lega Nord (cnn.18.4.2017)
(2)	Common N – Adj.	most press-friendly countries (cnn.28.4.2017)
(3)	Proper N – adj.	Osborne-free regime (G.2.5.2017)
(4)	Adv. – adj.	then-new antidepressant bupropion (cnn.10.2.2017)
(5)	Adj. – V-ing	backward-looking aches (G.4.4.2017)
(6)	N-V-ing	crowd-pleasing answers (cnn.7.5.2017)
(7)	Adj. – V-ed	white-dominated government (W.13.7.2017)
(8)	Proper N – V-ed	Brexit-induced economic downturn (cnn.18.4.2017)
(9)	Common N – V-ed	financier-turned politician (bbc.5.8.2017)
(10)	Adv V-ed	well-structured social interests (cnn.15.5.2017)
(11)	Superlative Adj. – V-ed	highest-valued private company (N.13.7.2017)
(12)	To – V infinitive	to-do list
(13)	V infinitive - preposition	run-off rival Marine Le Pen (bbc.5.7.2017)
(14)	Adj. – common N	double-whammy act (N.13.7.2017)
(15)	Comparative Adj. – common N	lower-calorie breakfasts (cnn.19.5.2017)
(16)	Cardinal numeral - N	<u>360-degree</u> videos (cnn.18.5.2017)
(17)	Proper n - proper n	<u>UK-EU</u> relationship (cnn.18.4.2017)
(18)	Common N - common N	"cliff-edge" Brexit scenario (cnn.19.6.2017)
(19)	V - N	catch-all populism (cnn.18.4.2017)

5.3. Identifying compounds' relevant free phrases

Relevant free phrases mainly depend on relation between components, that helps readers to discover omitted words when compounds are used to replace free phrase, structure of which consists of postmodifier to express the meaning.

Two-word compounds can be understood by being read backward,

the head of the more-than-two-word

combination, then discover the relation

The head 'diets' is modified by two

added omitted words such as articles, etc. And replaced by easier words or prepositions, auxiliaries, linking words, phrases.

	Compound	Relation	Free phrase
•	immediate <u>Brexit-induced</u> economic downturn (cnn.18.4.2017)	reason	an immediate downturn in economy as a result of the influence of Brexit
•	protective shell against <u>fat-shaming</u> . (G.13.7.2017)	reason	feeing ashamed <u>because of</u> being too fat
•	Osborne-free regime (G.12.5.2017)	manner	regime (system) <u>not being</u> <u>controlled/influenced by</u> Osborne
•	a <u>cancer-fighting</u> food (cnn.10.2.2017)	purpose	food to stop/ prevent/ reduce the rate of cancer

The same kind of combination can be interpreted in different ways depending on contexts.

-	ments.				
	Compound	Re	elation	F	ree phrase
	press-friendly countries (cnn.28.4.2017)	at	titude	countries she toward press	owing friendly attitude
	economy-friendly policies (cnn.10.5.2017)	at	titude	1	viding economy with es than other areas
	More-than-two-word	compounds	depend	ding on the l	nead's part of speech.
car	nnot be treated in the same	way like to	Somet	imes,	more-than-two-word
tw	o-word ones. It is effective	to identify	combin	nation can be	divided into pairs or

between the head and the rest of the compound basing on rule for extending NP, verb phrase or adjectival phrase

E.g. your non-mince-on-toast meals, Britain (G.13.7.2017)

lose weight.

putting them together.

groups and interpreted separately before

providing only 1,400 calories in order to

Compound	Relation	Free phrase		
mince-on-toast	location	toast topped with mince		
non-mince	negative	meal without mince		
• non-mince-on-toast meals	Location + negative	meal without toast topped with mince		
The same thing can be don	e to other compound	d nouns '1,400-calorie' and		
combinations. E.g.	'weight	loss' expressing quantity and		
• on identical 1,400-calo loss diets for 12 weeks. (cnn.19.	5.2017) relevant f	relations respectively, so the ree phrase may sound like: <i>diets</i>		

112

• that <u>more-of-the-same-but-tougher</u> will work (G.13.7.2017)

There exist two kinds of relations: comparison and contrast. It is compulsory to look backward to find the reference of comparison relation. The noun referred to can only be found in the previous clause and is itself the omitted head noun that the compound modifies. The full sentence will help to decide the relevant free phrase:

'In Italy and elsewhere there are influential actors who continue to believe that a more hardline deterrence strategy will offer a way out – that more-of-thesame-but-tougher will work'.

The relevant free phrase is: *The* <u>deterrence strategy</u> that is hardliner but tougher.

5.4. Deciding equivalents while translating English compounds into Vietnamese

As mentioned in 4.4., the order of components in Vietnamese equivalent NP is the most difficult task, but relevant free phrase of the compound will reduce this workload.

There is only one problem occurs when compounds appear in a NP in both preand postpositions of the head. In Vietnamese equivalent, both of them become postmodifiers and their positions after the head depend on how closed they are in meaning to the head.

E.g. Labour's election manifesto turned the cost of degrees into the hottest issue, but deterring people from becoming nurses is a <u>double-whammy</u> <u>act</u> of political <u>self-harm.</u> (N.13.7.2017)

It is advisable for NPs with both premodifier and postmodifier to be read backward first, then forward. But it is not the choice for all similar cases.

Both relevant free phrase for 'a <u>double-whammy act</u> of political <u>self-harm</u>' can be accepted: (1) an <u>act</u> in which politician may make harm for himself/ herself by/ while causing twice more unpleasant problems, or (2) an <u>act</u> causing twice more unpleasant problems in which politician may make harm for himself/ herself.

And Vietnamese equivalent may sound like: một hành động mà trong đó chính trị gia gây hại cho chính bản thân mình do làm cho vấn đề phức tạp lên gấp đôi so với tình trạng ban đầu vốn có.

Generally speaking, interpreting compounds in English newspapers may become easier and more exact for Vietnamese if the suggested steps are followed:

- (1) Identifying the function of compounds in the sentence
- (2) Identifying the relation between compound's components
 - (3) Identifying relevant free phrases
- (4) Rearranging word order in Vietnamese equivalent version when translating into Vietnamese.

6. Conclusion

Compounds in English newspapers are very popularly used to help reporters to meet severe demand space and prevent busy readers from quitting reading too articles. However, Vietnamese readers may become confused and exhausted by compounds' complicated structures, the relations between their components and the differences between English and Vietnamese noun phrases. It is advisable for Vietnamese readers to follow logical steps of interpreting compounds in English newspapers in order only to get necessary information, but also find reading newspapers in English a really interesting kind of entertainment as well as way to improve ability to read in English.

REFERENCES

1. Get it write (2003), *Compound Words:* When to Hyphenate, http://www.getitwrite online.com/archive/042703compwdshyph.htm

- 2. Grammarly blog, *Compound Words*, https://www.grammarly.com/blog/open-and-closed-compound-words/
- 3. Harkrider, J. (1997), *Getting started in Journalism*, National Textbook company.
- 4. Mallette, M. F. (1990), *Handbook for Journalists of Central and Eastern Europe*. World Press Free Committee
- 5. Trần Hữu Mạnh (2008), Ngôn ngữ học đối chiếu cú pháp tiếng Anh tiếng Việt, NXB Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội. (p.213)
- 6. Mencher, M. (1998), *Basic Media Writing*, Brown & Benchmark, 5th Edition.
- 7. Neal, J. M., & Brown, S. S. (1982), *Newswriting and Reporting*, The Jowa State University Press.
- 8. Quirk, R. el al (1980), A Grammar of Contemporary English. Longman Group Ltd.
- 9. Wikipedia, *American and British English spelling differences*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_and_British_English_spelling_differences#Compo unds_and_hyphens

(Toà soạn nhận bài viết ngày 15/9/2017, duyệt đăng ngày 30/9/2017)