

English-Majored Students' Barriers in Using
the Pattern "I + Cognitive Non-Factive Verb
and Epistemic Adverb Collocations":
A Case of a Vietnamese University

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ABSTRACT

Using modal devices in daily communication has been one of the most language learners' extreme interests recently, yet employing modal English collocations is not always an easy task for learners of English because of their complication. Consequently, this study aims at examining barriers that English-majored students at a private university in the central region of Vietnam encounter in using the pattern "I + cognitive non-factive verb and epistemic adverb collocations" in communication with or without lecturer's assistance and possible solutions. 526 English-majored students in 10 second-year classes and 5 third-year classes were asked to fill in a questionnaire while 15 lecturers of English specializing in English speaking skills participated in semi-structured interviews on their students' knowledge of the pattern "I + CNFV and EA" and on the barriers that students with or without being assisted by their teachers are likely to encounter in using this type of collocation in communication. The findings showed that most students did not or rarely use this English pattern. Even some of them used the pattern, they could not get successful conversations since they do not know the important use of the pattern in expressing the pragmatic features in communication such as hedges and mitigation. It is hoped that the study will help learners of English recognize barriers in using the modal English pattern and give them some possible solutions so that they can apply it effectively in their English-based communication.