

Conversion As A Method of Word Formation in Linguistics

Azimbayeva Dilafroz Abdujabbarovna

Uzbekistan state world languages university, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT

This work determines the significant features of conversion among other word-forming means of the English language. Along with this goal, certain tasks were set to establish the essence of conversion as one of the productive ways of word formation in English words; find out the expected specifics of the spread and widespread use of such a word-formation method as conversion; characterize individual conversion models in particular; conduct a comparative analysis of some conversion models based on written materials in English.

KEYWORDS: significant features of conversion, productive ways, word formation, conversion models, comparative analysis, emergence of new words, word-forming device.

Introduction

Some of the most productive methods of word formation, that is, such mechanisms for the formation of new words that are most often involved in the process of the emergence of new words from existing ones, since they correspond to the phonetic, phonological, grammatical, lexical features of a particular language (in this case, English) to a greater extent, are word production, composition and conversion. It is necessary to find out how conversion stands out against the background of other word-forming means. To begin with, it is worth noting that conversion is widespread primarily in Germanic languages, but many researchers confirm its presence in Slavic, Romance, and Baltic languages [2].

When the time came to define this word-forming device, as it turned out, scientists did not come to a consensus. The author of the term "conversion" is the English philologist-linguist Henry Sweet - in his work "New English Grammar" of 1891, the name for this type of word formation first appears, and even then a significant problem arose of attributing conversion to one or another type of formation of English words [1].

The same phenomenon was presented by the Soviet linguist A.I. Smirnitsky, who introduced the term "conversion" into Soviet linguistics [3], where the following interpretation was assigned: "a type of word production in which only the paradigm of the word serves as a word-forming means" [1].

In foreign linguistics, this same method can also be called affix-free derivation [2] or zero derivation, that is, the formation of a derivative from the original word without any additional linguistic means [4].

A.A. Reformatzky, despite the fact that in his work he refers to A.I. Smirnitsky, classifies conversion as a special type of homonymy, and not as a separate type of word formation, since words pass into another part of speech without significant changes in their phonetic composition and in the

set of morphological properties, however, in the course of the further narration in his work, Reformatzky writes about conversion as a method of word formation in which a word appears in a paradigm different from the previous one [3].

Conversion is also defined as one of the types of transposition processes, i.e. such processes that establish "connections between individual parts of speech of a particular language" and which focus on the functioning of the word of one part of speech as "a source of derivation for the creation of a word of another part of speech." Also, this word-formation method can be compared with metonymy, a process in which transposition occurs a sign of an object onto another object, one lexical unit appears instead of another.

In this direction, a similar phenomenon occurs in conversion: one original stem or stem(s) with the affix "appears" in another context instead of some other unit: empty - to empty, implement - to implement, blackmail - to blackmail, etc. .d. [3].

In connection with the above proposals for interpretations of this word-formation device, which are far from limited to just these formulations, a certain pattern arises when various linguists include conversion largely in the invective areas of word formation, morphology, syntax, even in the sphere of word semantics [1], or specifically exclude from the sphere of word formation, since at its core conversion is a process of "functional recategorization of a word" [4].

I.V. Arnold addresses this issue, in particular the problem of such differentiation in interpretations of the name of conversion, and provides his own criticism:

1. Such explanations as "affix-free, root word formation", as well as "change in function", are not identical with conversion, due to the fact that they do not fully reflect this phenomenon. "Affix-free word formation" does not work in this context because it does not represent only the conversion type of word formation, therefore, this term involuntarily captures other word formation concepts, for example, the umlaut of vowels, or their alternation: to sing (sing) - song (song) , food (food) - to feed (feed), etc. [1]. However, when attributing "affixless word formation" to conversion, authors usually add the important information that formation occurs without the aid of other means.

2. Not only monosyllabic simple lexemes are subject to conversion, but also those with different affixes or more than one root: provision (food) - to provision (supply with food), black-list (black list) - to black-list (blacklist)). From this argument it follows that the term "root word formation" for conversion is fundamentally inappropriate.

3. Changing the function means seeing conversion not from the point of view of word formation, but from the aspect of word use. In a sense, this refers to the blurring of boundaries

between parts of speech, since a given word, apparently, can perform the function of two or more parts of speech, although those who affirm such an interpretation do not directly reject the idea of the morphological structure of the word. Most linguists still adhere to the division of words into parts of speech, since in a general sense they have different syntactic and semantic characteristics.

4. We can go even further and say that the name "conversion" does not reflect the phenomenon of conversion. This term implies a transition, the transformation of a word from one part of speech into a word from another part of speech, but in essence, during conversion, the original and derivative words continue to coexist as facts of the language, the original does not cease to be a common language unit for native speakers [1]. Conversion is distinguished by the fact that "it is seen neither in the expansion nor in the narrowing of the motivating basis, but in its rethinking, in the "turn" of the basis and its consideration from a new angle" [4].

In order to more fully illuminate the phenomenon of conversion, it is necessary to look at modern literary sources and other media in English. For this purpose, three sources were selected from books and articles of journalistic style and attempts were made to establish the type of semantic model of the found words obtained using the conversion method of word formation (perhaps in some cases it was difficult to accurately determine the belonging of a derived word to a particular group) using the Etimonline etymological dictionary. From the books, 3 pages were taken from each with an average number of pages of about 1000, and 3 entire articles, each of which had a word count approximately equivalent to 3 book pages. Below are just some of the examples found.

1. Books as:

a). A Brief History of Time by Stephen Hawking, 1988: He described how the Earth orbits around the sun and how the sun, in turn, orbits around the center of a vast collection of stars called our galaxy. Orbit – to rotate, from noun. orbit - orbit. Recent breakthroughs in physics, made possible in part by fantastic new technologies, suggest answers to some of these longstanding questions. Breakthrough - breakthrough, from the verb. break through – break through [2].

b). Witches abroad by Terry Pratchett, 1991: "Well... bit of a turn, the glass breaking like that..." she mumbled. Turn – turn, from the verb. turn – turn. If it wasn't well known that Granny Weatherwax was tough, anyone might have thought she had just had the shock of her life and was practically desperate to take part in a bit of ordinary everyday bickering. Shock – shock, from the verb. shock – to shock; Everyday - daily, from the phrase every day - every day [4].

c). Looking for Alaska by John Green, 2005: I think I'm ready for finals, which is good, since we have an ank-pray to an- play. Finals – exams, from adj. final – final, final. Dolores' okra had less grease, more crunch. Crunch - crunch, from the verb crunch - to crunch. He was just scared that we would act like condescending boardingschool snobs. Boarding-school – boarding school, from noun. boarding school – boarding school [2].

Thus, this work was devoted to the meaning of such a method of word formation as conversion in modern English. Problems associated with the interpretation of conversion were given, of which there turned out to be quite a lot: since conversion does not use (with the exception of) external

auxiliary means, such as affixes, many linguists associate with conversion the terms "affixless word formation" or "root", "change of function" derived word, some scientists attribute conversion to morphology and homonymy, syntax, lexicology and do not even include it in the sphere of word formation.

The main definition - "transition" - also does not reflect the essence of the phenomenon of conversion, since the original word does not cease to exist after the appearance of a new word derived from it. There is still no single clear definition of conversion, so it is important to understand how existing opinions on definitions are proven in order to come to your own understanding of this word-formation method, which was given towards the end of the first paragraph of the first chapter.

In addition, a brief information was given about the reason for the spread of conversion in the English language - the formation of similar pronunciation of inflections and their subsequent loss of productivity. Linguists, in the course of studying the conversion of English words, have identified its two main types: verbalization (the formation of verbs) and substantivization (the formation of nouns), while adjectivation (the appearance of adjectives) is sometimes not included in this classification. The main most widely used conversion models are N>V, V>N, Adj>V, Adj>N, N>Adj; also the source words can be abbreviations, prefixes, phrases. In verbalization, the main semantic relationships between the original and derived words include: instrumental, agentive, locative, cause-effect/resultative and temporal; in foreign linguistics there are a little more of them. This is the most productive way of forming words using conversion.

When substantivizing, there are also a lot of new nouns, and sometimes they can change their spelling, for example, adding a hyphen, continuous pronunciation and shifting stress when the original word is a phrasal verb. In this case, this is acceptable, as well as changing the pronunciation of the final consonants of the stem, if this is an indicator of the grammatical structure of the word. In verbalization and substantivization, there are cases of partial conversion, when the derived word does not take on all the characteristics of the new part of speech. When adjectivating from nouns, there is a problem that is worth a separate discussion in another work: the stone wall problem about the status of the first component of the phrase. In the formation of words by conversion, it can be difficult to establish the exact original and derivative words, but this can be done by comparing similar existing strings of words in the language, comparing the "breadth" of the meaning of the intended first and second words, and analyzing the degree of their use.

Conversion is not limited by the number of members of the word-formation chain, but has limits in the degree of prevalence for some words: if the word is borrowed and complex or denotes more than a single act, the probability of conversion is small, just as in the situation if the word already has a pair in another part of speech, only then the likelihood of a new word appearing is even lower. During the consideration of examples based on modern English-language literature and the press, it was noticed that N>Adj- and V>N-models predominate, contrary to the generally accepted opinion that the N>V-model is the most productive.

The least common are those models where one of the components of the conversion model is an adjective. This may be due to the peculiarities of the phonomorphological

structure of the adjective. In general, it can be noted that in recent years the N>Adj model has been used to a greater extent and basic verbalization from nouns and substantivization from verbs remain quite common; in other cases, the data obtained do not allow us to determine with any degree of accuracy the direction in which models are used, which can be associated with the insufficient number of books and journalistic articles, as well as with individual writing habits and the author's writing style.

The conducted study of the role of conversion in the English language allowed us to immerse ourselves in a frequent word-formation phenomenon, which occupies one of the leading places among the ways of forming English words. The conversion method of word formation is worth exploring, because conversion does not cease to be a productive word-formation tool at the present stage of development of the English language and contributes to its enrichment.

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