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**К ВОПРОСУ О ФУНКЦИОНИРОВАНИИ КОНВЕРСИОННЫХ МОДЕЛЕЙ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ
 АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ**

Аннотация

В статье рассматриваются некоторые распространенные конверсионные модели глагольного образования из существительных в современном английском языке, анализируются способы их вторичной номинации и приобретение дополнительных значений при употреблении их в речи. Известно, что явление конверсии настолько активно протекает в современном английском языке, что почти все части речи вовлечены в большей или меньшей степени в этот процесс, хотя и неодинаково: чаще других - это существительные, глаголы, прилагательные и наречия. Более того, конверсия является типичной для английского языка, благодаря его аналитическому строю и почти полному отсутствию морфологических показателей частей речи.

Ключевые слова: конверсия, словоизменительные модели, первичное и вторичное значение.

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ON THE QUESTION OF FUNCTIONING OF CONVERSIONAL PATTERNS IN MODERN ENGLISH*Abstract*

The article considers some widely-spread conversional patterns of verbal word-formation from nouns in modern English. The ways of their secondary nomination are also being discussed, as well as acquiring additional meanings while functioning in speech. It is known that the phenomenon of conversion is so active in modern English that nearly all parts of speech somehow are involved into this process, however in different extent - most of them they are nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. Moreover, conversion is typical for English due to its analytical structure and nearly complete absence of morphological identifiers of parts of speech.

Keywords: conversion, word-changing patterns, initial and secondary meaning.

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Introduction

The development of the language is mostly dependable on the development of its word-formation system, appearing new word-forming patterns of words, changing of existing words, as well as increase or decrease of their productivity and many other factors of a word-formation process.

Creation of new words takes place, first of all, as the reflection of needs of the socium to express new ideas or realities, constantly emerging as the result of development of progress, science, culture, public relations and so on.

The creation of new words in the language is also due to different ways:

- 1) Borrowings from other languages;
- 2) Affixation;
- 3) Change of the meaning.

One of the most important ways of creating new words in English is conversion. The specific feature of conversion is the fact that formation of a new meaning is also followed by cardinal change of grammar semantics. As a result, the word transforms into another grammatical class (part of speech): *an air (n) > air (adj) > to air (v); a box (n) > to box (v)*.

According to J. Ayto, the role of conversion in creation of new meanings of the words in English is gradually increasing.

The objects of the research are the verbs and nouns connected by derivational ties of conversion.

The subjects of the research are the ties of the words meanings of verbs and nouns formed by means of conversion as well as by their prototypes - nouns.

The main aim of the research thus is analyses of semantic connections between the meanings of the verbs formed by means of conversion as well as their prototypes - nouns. Taking into account the main aim of the article, we can state the following tasks of the research: 1) to define conversion as a way of formation of new words in modern English; 2) to reveal the types of conversion; 3) to examine productive semantic models of conversion in English.

Method

We mostly use in the research such methods as cognitive generalizing, comparative-contrasting; inductive-deductive; as well as the descriptive method, which together help understand how new words appear in English. The material for analyses are words created by means of conversion taken from different dictionaries of the English language.

Discussion

The frequency of conversion is so active in modern English that nearly all parts of speech are involved into this process: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, however these cases differ in number. Moreover, conversion is typical for English because of the following reasons: due to its analytical structure and nearly complete absence of morphological identifiers of parts of speech, this is also connected with the historical development of the English language, as in old English for creation of new words they used their active vocabulary, used one-morpheme words to create compound words.

Results

Semantic model $N > V$ (verbalization).

As we know, conversion is widely spread in English. The most its frequently used variant is verbalization, i.e. formation of verbs from different parts of speech. Formation of verbs from nouns is the most productive conversional model in English.

We have found the following basic models of lexical conversion of verbs from nouns:

1. If a noun has instrumental semantics, i.e. it means some artifact created and serving to fulfill some action, then the convertive verb would mean that action: 1) the action for which the original noun is used to denote an instrument or tool; 2) the function to complete which one needs the use of the original noun.

In this case we can speak not about any possible function of the initial nouns, but about their typical exact function which they are meant for.

2. If the noun expresses the whole class of phenomena or things for which some action is normal or at least is the typical feature:

1) the verb has the meaning of “action done by the thing denoted by the initial noun”;

2) to fulfill, to express, to reveal characteristic or typical class-making feature of the initial noun, or to be the initial noun.

3. Getting the meaning of “becoming, getting the image given by the initial noun” and “action connected with the meaning of the initial noun”.

4. The relations of reason and consequence between the meanings of the noun and the verb. The verbs describe situations, in which we can see several subjects connected by some relations. Meanwhile, the verb includes into the structure of its meaning one of the arguments as the differentiating feature, for instance, *a room «a place to live in» – to room «to live somewhere»*.

5. Nouns denoting spiritual, emotional and physiological spheres can form the verbs with the meaning “to feel (reveal, display) such emotions”.

Semantic model “period of time/to be somewhere in a certain period of time”

1. Weekend (n) to weekend (v)

This example shows that the verb ‘to weekend’ formed by conversion from a noun ‘a weekend’ with the meaning of «the end of the week, days-off», has the meaning of «to spend days-off», i.e. it describes the action which denotes some position in a certain period of time, described by the first meaning of the initial noun. Other meanings, different from that of an initial noun, acquired by it on its own, we don’t notice.

2. Winter (n) to winter (v)

This example contains the verb ‘to winter’ which is formed by conversion from a noun ‘winter’ with the meaning «cold season of a year, old age, period of troubles», and at first it takes the meaning of «to live in winter, to spend winter», i.e. it denotes an action taking place in the period of time of the first meaning of the initial noun, but later on this verb during its independent functioning acquired an independent meaning of «freeze», which does not correlate with any of the meanings of the noun. The same can be said of the following examples:

3. Holiday (n) to holiday (v)

4. Honeymoon (n) to honeymoon (v)

5. Fast (n) to fast (v)

6. Vocation (n) to vocation (v)

7. Summer (n) to summer (v)

Semantic model “name of an animal - a man’s behavior like of this animal”

1. Fox (n) to fox (v)

This example shows that the verb ‘to fox’, formed by conversion from a noun ‘fox’ with the main meaning of “a small animal with a long curly tail” at first has the meaning of «to be sly, cunning, to make tricks», which denotes the behavior of a man similar with that of a fox, later on it acquires an independent meaning of «to turn pale», which has nothing in common with all the meanings of the corresponding noun and it denotes quite a new phenomenon. We can also suppose that there is an opposite chain of conversion of a noun from a verb, to denote a man acting like a fox, i.e. a noun has a new meaning of “a sly, tricky person”.

2. Wolf (n) to wolf (v)

This example contains a verb ‘to wolf’ formed by conversion from a noun ‘wolf’ with the main meaning of «wild animal», than it acquires the meaning of «to eat

hungrily without being fed up», i.e. it means a person eating food like a wolf. This verb later gets one more meaning - “to lead a wasteful life”, connected with the second meaning of the noun - “a waster” - and in this case it means the behavior of a man called by the initial noun. There are no other meanings disconnected with the meaning of the initial noun.

The same can be said about the following cases:

3. Peacock (n) to peacock (v)

4. Cock (n) to cock (v)

5. Tomcat (n) to tomcat (v)

6. Snake (n) to snake (v)

7. Ape (n) to ape (v)

8. Monkey (n) to monkey (v)

9. Dog (n) to dog (v)

Semantic model “Instrument - Actions done by it”

1. Hammer (n) to hammer (v)

This pair shows that the verb ‘to hammer’ formed by conversion from a noun ‘hammer’ with the main meaning of “sledgehammer”, accepts the meaning of “to beat, strike, fit in with a hammer”, i.e. the action which is expressed by the noun denoting this action as a tool or instrument. Later on during the development of its semantics, this verb acquires the meaning of “to make noise, to rattle”, i.e. the imitation of sounds produced by physical objects and parts of mechanisms.

2. Nail (n) to nail (v)

This example displays that the verb ‘to nail’ formed by conversion from a noun ‘nail’, gets the meaning of “to strike in nails, to fix with nails”, i.e. means the action in which the initial noun is used to denote the instrument or a tool of action, at the same time the verb includes into its meaning the artifact by means of which actions similar with this one are being done, in this case it is ‘fixing something with nails’ which is possible to do “with the help of a hammer”. In the process of its independent development the verb acquired the meaning of “to attract somebody’s attention”, which probably reflects the functions of the corresponding noun - “to chain” and the second meaning - “to discredit”, which is not connected anyhow with any of the meanings of the corresponding noun.

3. Wire (n) to wire (v)

This case depicts the verb ‘to wire’ which is formed by conversion from a noun ‘wire’ with the meanings of “telegraph”, “telephone cords” and gets the meanings “to wind with the wire, to telegraph, to send something by telegraph”. It denotes the actions for which the corresponding noun is specially meant as an instrument or a tool. During further development of its semantics the verb acquired the meaning of “to set in overhearing tool”, which has nothing to do with the previous meanings of this noun.

The same can be said about the following cases:

4. Poker (n) to poker (v)

5. Spade (n) to spade (v)

6. Bat (n) to bat (v)

7. Knife (n) to knife (v)

8. Axe (n) to axe (v)

9. Rivet (n) to rivet (v)

10. Sandpaper (n) to sandpaper (v)

11. Scythe (n) to scythe (v)

All the examples above express the way of composing verbs from nouns in English by means of conversion. We see that the most productive model in modern English is the basic pattern of lexical conversion, while the verb acquires the meaning of action, to perform which the corresponding noun is specially devoted to as a tool or an instrument.

Conclusion

The most productive semantic conversional verbal models in modern English are the following: 1) period of time - to be somewhere in a certain period of time; 2) instruments - actions done by means of them; 3) a place - to put in a certain place; 4) an animal - a behavior of a man similar to this animal.

In general, we can see that all the patterns of lexical conversion $N > V$ to some extent are connected by the idea of realization of some action, more exactly, this general direction of all the cases of conversion of this type are set by an image of actions performing, realizing or revealing some typical feature (peculiarity, quality or function) of the class of the original nouns.

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