

Teaching Conversion in EFL Classrooms

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ABSTRACT: The following article aims at investigating teaching conversion in EFL classrooms. It reflects on the term conversion as one of the important and peculiar aspects of the English language. It gives information about the types (Noun > Verb, Verb > Noun, Adjective > Noun, Adjective > Verb, Adverb > Verb) and kinds (complete and partial) of conversion. The article emphasizes the importance of teaching methods and approaches in EFL classrooms. For this reason, the article identifies factors to consider while teaching conversion to learners of English as a foreign language.

KEYWORD: Conversion, complete conversion, partial conversion, Noun > Verb, Verb > Noun, Adjective > Noun, Adjective > Verb, Adverb > Verb types.

Introduction

English is rich in lexical items. There are up to a million words in English. That is why vocabulary is an integral part of teaching English as a foreign language. This may be due to the abundance of word formation mechanisms. There are 12 primary and secondary ways of word formation. Conversion is one of these ways. Teaching and learning conversion play an important role in building an overall command of non-native and native speakers of English. Word conversion is characterized by a change in the word class, function, and meaning of a specific lexical unit without a matching alteration in the form of the word, such as the addition or removal of any derivational affixes. However, this just means that the original word's functional pair is produced and does not imply that the original word ceases to exist throughout the process.

When it started raining, snow easily blanketed the earth.

The gourmet forked into the caviar, and brought into his mouth.

The words such as "blanket" and "fork" here are changing their functions from noun to verb without overt marking. According to Plag (2003), conversion is the process of word formation without any visible marking.

Kinds of conversion

Complete conversion

A complete conversion describes a word's complete adaptation to a new class, acquiring all of that class's traits, including inflection. *I am fed up with the warnings of my mother.* Here the verb warn has been converted into a noun form, taking plurality. Sometimes, stress changes into different syllables of the word when converted.

Partial conversion

When words are partially converted, they continue to belong to the old word class and only take on some properties of the new word class, so we may say that they are simultaneously a part of two classes. The examples are of the adjective > noun type, such as the ignorant, the wealthy, the accused, the wounded, the kind, the Welsh, the unemployed, the disabled.

You can differentiate between the good and the bad soon.

Conversion types

Noun > Verb

It is the conversion style that English speakers use the most. The original word and the converted form have a wide range of syntactic and semantic associations. Affixed forms as well as compound nouns might act as the conversion's foundation.

The examples are: *to drum, to father, to mother, to pocket, to iron.*

Verb > Noun

It is also one of the productive type only second to the previous type (Fernandez-Dominguez, 2009). They can appear as a concrete object or result of the action such as *answer, drink, reject, suspect, meet, bet*, senses such as *taste, love, desire*, results of an action such as *acclaim, search, clap*, instrument of an action such as *cover, sting, wrap*. Some verbs like *to give, to have, to make, to take* can serve to create conversions. The examples are *to give a hug, to give a look, to give a kiss, to have a drunk, to make a desire.*

Adjective > Noun

Sometimes, nouns are missing in the phrases with adjectives. The examples are *comic (actor), daily (newspaper), final (game, race). Today we started finals (final exams).*

Adjective > Verb

This is also one of the productive types of conversion. The examples are *to free, to still, to calm, to ready, to dirty, to narrow, to yellow, to empty, to slim, to lower, to best, to better, to worst.*

Adverb > Verb

This type is not so productive as the previous types. The examples are *to near, to west, to further, to south, to east, to up, to down.*

The importance of teaching conversion in EFL classrooms

Conversion is of immense importance as it is a typical feature of the English language. Additionally, the 30.000 English conversion terms that Y. M. Biese stated existed by the 1940s must have doubled in quantity by this point. Next, conversion is a lexicological process that has substantial syntactic and semantic ramifications for the language as a whole. As a result, it is definitely worthwhile to study and is seen as a crucial component of TEFL. Without the capacity to effectively respond to any recombination of linguistic units based on conversional principles, one cannot be considered a proficient speaker of English. Many experts feel that conversion will become even more popular in the future since it is a relatively simple approach to generate new words in English, despite the fact that there is still some disagreement among scholars over some of the conversion's primary difficulties. English has likely had the greatest rate of conversion this century compared to any other language. Up to 21 distinct forms of word class changes or transitions may be noted in English, which lends support to this. As a result, thorough study of it might improve language learning for the majority of non-native speakers and facilitate translation.

Factors to consider in teaching conversion in EFL classrooms

A variety of practice approaches and exercise activities might be developed in order to get the students in the EFL classroom to pay more attention to the process of productive word conversion. Textbooks, materials for teaching languages, and practice books all include these techniques, ideas, and procedures. The following elements should be taken into consideration while doing actions involving conversion in English:

Introduction to the phenomenon of conversion

The first factor to consider is to introduce the pupils to the phenomena of conversion in English and aid them in realizing that this process is present in the language. Without taking this first step, it is impossible to expect the pupils to learn the language correctly and appreciate its combinatory possibilities, let alone comprehend the syntactic structure of English accurately. Thus, they would generally be better able to avoid misreading and misinterpreting documents written in the English language.

Identifying word class of converted pairs

The second factor to take into account is identifying the word class of concrete words, concentrating on the characteristic of English in which formally similar word forms execute several grammatical functions in sentences.

Teaching and making “conversion-wise” students.

In order to become "conversion-wise" while learning English and developing their ability to express themselves in the language, conversion-related activities and practice should be centered on the proper use of conversion-words in sentences and other situations.

Semantic changes in conversion.

Conversion techniques should consider the meaning the words acquire throughout the conversion process as well as any potential semantic changes that may result (Martsa, 2013). The capacity of pupils to paraphrase sentences based on a previously cited example, replacing the target words with their functional equivalents, should be strengthened through exercise models.

Conversion types and kinds.

Activities should prioritize the most prevalent categories. Since getting nouns from verbs is the most frequent conversion in English, it is important to stress and use this characteristic as much as possible.

Introducing stress change.

Activities should involve introduction to the main stress changes that occur when words are converted from one parts of speech to another one.

<i>to tormént</i>	<i>a torment</i>
<i>to permít</i>	<i>a pérmít</i>
<i>to constrúct</i>	<i>a cónstruct</i>
<i>to extráct</i>	<i>an éxtract</i>
<i>to abstráct</i>	<i>an ábstract</i>

Conclusion.

The current paper investigated conversion instruction in EFL classes. The phrase conversion is seen as one of the distinctive and significant features of the English language, according to this reflection. We have described the sorts (full and partial) and types (Noun > Verb, Verb > Noun, Adjective > Noun, Adjective > Verb, Adverb> Verb). We have drawn conclusion that teaching conversion is of significant importance. The

significance of instructional strategies and procedures in EFL classrooms to teach conversion should be emphasized by learning facilitators. The article lists considerations to make while teaching conversion to English language learners as a foreign language in light of this. To encourage EFL students to pay closer attention to the process of productive word conversion, a range of practice methods and exercise activities may be designed. These methods, concepts, and approaches are all included in textbooks, language learning resources, and practice books. This article has suggested the following factors to take into account while instructing conversion in English. Teachers should make sure that students are aware of the linguistic phenomenon itself. Secondly, the approaches teachers use should create chances for students to differentiate different parts of speech. They also should consider authentic teaching and learning. More precisely, the theoretical knowledge students are gaining should be put into real situations easily. Furthermore, students should be aware of semantic relationships between converted pairs. Finally, students should know and determine different types and kinds of conversion so that when they encounter them, they should be able to analyze them syntactically and lexically.

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