

Tenth Lecture: Proverbs and collocations

Word Formation Processes II : a) Conversion b) Backformation c) Reduplication

1- Proverbs and Collocations

A proverb is a short sentence that people often quote , which gives advice or tells you something about life . It's a short popular saying , usually of unknown and ancient origin , that expresses effectively some commonplace truth or useful thought ; adage ; saw . a wise saying or precept ; a didactic sentence a person or thing that is commonly regarded as an embodiment or representation of some quality ; byword . On one hand , the term collocation refers to set of words that regularly seem within the same context . On the opposite hand , the term proverbs are short sayings that contain some wisdom or observation about life and people . They are popular and memorable ; they are short and to the point ; they provide wise advice ; they contain simple truths from experience over the years . Most proverbs exhibit simple rhyme and elegant balance . It can also be defined as a short well - known expression that states a general truth or gives advice . Proverbs are pieces of brief and popular sayings , generally in the form of a phrase . They are commonly used to illustrate a specific point . Knowledge about proverbs is important since it increases your vocabulary and enhances social skills . Proverbs often appear in questions for various competitive exams , and thus getting familiar with different proverbs and their meanings should be an essential part of your preparation . For examples ;

- Beggars can't be choosers
- A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush
- An apple a day keeps the doctor away

2- Word Formation Processes II: a) Conversion b) Backformation c) Reduplication

a) Conversion

Conversion is the process of changing or causing something to change from one form to another. Or it can be defined as the transposition of the subject and predicate of a proposition according to certain rules to form a new proposition by inference. The spoken exchange of ideas, observations, opinions, or feelings between people. Conversion is a change in the function of a word, as for example when a noun comes to be used as a verb (without any reduction), is generally known as conversion. is also a type of word formation, but one in which the morphological structure of the word does not change. Instead, the new word created is of a different word class or part of speech. The most productive form of conversion in English is from noun to verb, for example, "I can send you an email" to "I can email you". The labels for this very common process are "category change" and "functional shift." A number of nouns such as bottle, butter, chair and vacation have come to be used, through conversion, as verbs: We bottled the home-brew last night; Have you buttered the toast?; Someone has to chair the meeting; They're vacationing in Florida. These conversions are readily accepted, but some examples, such as the noun impact being used as a verb, seem to impact some people's sensibilities rather negatively. The conversion process is particularly productive in Modern English, with new uses occurring frequently.

The conversion can involve verbs becoming nouns, with guess, must and spy as the sources of a guess, a must and a spy. Phrasal verbs (to print out, to take over) also become nouns (a printout, a takeover). One complex verb combination (want to be) has become a new noun, as in He isn't in the group, he's just a wannabe. Verbs (see through, stand up) also become adjectives, as in see-through material or a stand-up comedian. Or adjectives, as in a dirty floor, an empty room, some crazy ideas and those nasty people, can become the verbs to dirty and to empty, or the nouns a crazy and the nasty.

To sum up, conversion is a very common process of word-formation in English. It is the derivational process whereby an item changes its word-class without the addition of any affix. e.g. verbs/nouns: smell/taste/hit/walk/bottle/brake; adjectives/verbs: dirty/empty/lower. It is done by converting a lexeme belonging to one class to another, without any overt change in shape. However, it is not easy to determine the original and the converted word in a pair of words that are exactly the same in spelling. There are some elements that are to be considered: the semantic dependence, the range of usage, the semantic range, and also the phonetic shape. Conversion almost always involves open-class vocabulary, especially noun, verb, and adjective. The converted words produced by this process are also in these three classes. The original words, compared to the converted ones, usually have broader range of meaning and usage.

Some grammars distinguish between full conversion and partial conversion – the latter being cases where only some of the characteristics of the new word-class are adopted (e.g. the rich). Other terms used for this phenomenon, which is very common in English, include 'zero derivation' and 'functional shift'

b) Backformation

In linguistics, back-formation is the process of forming a new word (a neologism) by removing actual or supposed affixes from another word. Put simply, a back-formation is a shortened word (such as edit) created from a longer word (editor). Verb: back-form (which is itself a back-formation). Also called back-derivation.

The term back-formation was coined by Scottish lexicographer James Murray, the primary editor of the Oxford English Dictionary from 1879 until 1915. As Huddleston and Pullum have noted, "There is nothing in the forms themselves that enables one to distinguish between affixation and back-formation: it's a matter of historical formation of words rather than of their structure".

Backformations are more likely to occur with very strongly entrenched patterns and they have the effect of filling an apparent void. The process has given us common verbs such as afflict (from affliction), enthuse (from enthusiasm), laze (from lazy), liaise (from liaison), aggress (from aggression), televise (from television), housekeep (from housekeeper), jell (from jelly), and many more."

Back-formation is the process of creating a new lexeme by removing actual or supposed affixes. Back-formation is different from clipping – back-formation may change the word's class or meaning, whereas clipping creates shortened words from longer words, but does not change the class or meaning of the word. Words can sometimes acquire new lexical categories without any derivational change in form (for example, ship was first a noun and later was used as a verb). That process is called conversion (or zero-derivation). Like back-formation, it can produce a new noun or a new verb, but it involves no back-forming. Backformation A very specialized type of reduction process is known as backformation. Typically, a word of one type (usually a noun) is reduced to form a word of another type (usually a Word formation verb). A good example of backformation is the process whereby the noun television first came into use and then the verb televise was created from it. Other examples of words created by this process are: donate (from “donation”), emote (from “emotion”), enthuse (from “enthusiasm”), liaise (from “liaison”) and babysit (from “babysitter”). Indeed, when we use the verb backform (Did you know that “opt” was backformed from “option?”), we are using a backformation. One very regular source of backformed verbs in English is based on the common pattern worker – work. The assumption seems to have been that if there is a noun ending in -er (or something close in sound), then we can create a verb for what that noun -er does. Hence, an editor will edit, a sculptor will sculpt and burglars, peddlers and swindlers will burgle, peddle and swindle.

Back-formations are objectionable when they are merely needless variations of already existing verbs:

back-formed verb - ordinary verb

*administrate - administer

*cohabitare - cohabit

*delimitate - delimit

c) Reduplication

A term in morphology for a process of repetition whereby the form of a prefix/suffix reflects certain phonological characteristics of the root. This process may be found in Greek, where the initial consonant of the root is reduplicated in certain grammatical contexts (perfective forms); e.g. /clupop/ λ2ω), 'I loose', becomes /cleluka/ (λ'läκκ), 'I have loosed'. In English the nearest one gets to this is in reduplicative compound words, such as helter-skelter, shilly-shally. The phonological processes involved in reduplication have been a particular focus of prosodic morphology, which distinguishes the base form (B) of the reduplication from the repeating element (the reduplicant, R), as well as prefixing and suffixing types.

Reduplication is a morphological process in which the root or stem of a word (or part of it) or even the whole word is repeated exactly or with a slight change. English has several types of reduplication ranging from informal expressive vocabulary (the first four forms below) to grammatically meaningful forms. Reduplication is used in inflections to convey a grammatical function, such as plurality, intensification, etc., and in lexical derivation to create new words. It is often used when a speaker adopts a tone more "expressive" or figurative than ordinary speech and is also often, but not exclusively, iconic in meaning. Reduplication is found in a wide range of languages and language groups, though its level of linguistic varies. Rhyming reduplication, when two halves of the reduplication aren't the same ex. Hanky panky exact reduplications also can be used to emphasize the strength of a word ("He wants it now now") In ablaut reduplications, the first vowel is almost always a high vowel (typically ɪ as in hit) and the reduplicated vowel is a low vowel (typically æ as in cat or o as in top) Comparative reduplication always combines the reduplicated comparative with "and". This construction is common in speech and is used even in formal speech settings, but it is less common in formal written texts. nonce word (also called an occasionalism) is a lexeme created for a single occasion to solve an immediate problem of communication. Some nonce words may acquire a fixed meaning inferred from context and use, possibly even becoming an established part of the language, at which point they stop being nonce words.

Some nonce words may be essentially meaningless and disposable, but they are useful for exactly that reason — the words "wug" and "blicket" for instance were invented by researchers to be used in exercises in child language testing. nonsense word a word that is invented and does not exist in the language you are using. possible words which are nonsensical, they are also called accidental gaps in English.

A reduplicative is a word or lexeme (such as mama) that contains two identical or very similar parts. Words such as these are also called tautonyms. The morphological and phonological process of forming a compound word by repeating all or part of it is known as reduplication. The repeated element is called a reduplicant.

Reduplicatives can rhyme but aren't required to. They likely have a figure of sound represented in them, as alliteration (repetition of consonants) and assonance (repetition of vowel sounds) would be common in a word or phrase that doesn't change much among its parts, such as in this by Patrick B. Oliphant, "Correct me if I'm wrong: the gizmo is connected to the flingflang connected to the watzis, watzis connected to the doo-dad connected to the ding dong."

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