

Topic: Word Formation (continued...)

One of the chief characteristics of a living language is its constantly developing nature. Among the multidimensional development of any given living language also comes adding to its vocabulary in different ways like borrowing from different sources and coinages of the new words by various processes of Word-Formation. I had already explained about the four of the processes of Word-Formation in my last lecture (Lecture No - 13). The remaining processes are the following:-

Blending; Compounding; Conversion.
Duplication; Word manufacture; Multiple Formation.

(v) Blending:-

"Blending" is the process of Word Formation in which a new word is coined by combining the sound as well as the meaning of two words. The words obtained through this process are called "blends" or "Portmanteau" words. These words contain the traces of both the words acoustically or in their spelling. These words can be divided into two categories:-

(a) In words of this category the initial part of one word is blended with the terminal part of the another word. For example:-

"Oxford" + ~~Comp~~ "Cambridge" = "Oxbridge";
"Smoke" + "Fog" = "smog".

(2)

"Motorists" + "Hotel" = "Motel".

"Breakfast" + "Lunch" = "Brunch".

"Television" + "Broadcast" = "telecast".

"Helicopter" + "Airport" = "Heliport".

(b) In the second process of Blending a new word is obtained when the two words used as bases are made to overlap each other acoustically or in spelling or bothways:

"Slang" + "Language" = "Slanguage".

"guess" + "Estimate" = "guesstimate".

"Balloon" + "Lunatic" = "Balloonatic".

(vi) Compounding :-

In this process of "word formation" two existing words are joined to form a compound ^{but longer} new word. Dr. Bradley observes:-
"The principles of English word-compounding are to a great extent, inherited from the primitive Indo-Germanic language". A compound word renders a new meaning by joining two or more words. There are many classes of compound words present in English:-

(a) Noun compound words such as - "Book-reviews".

"oil well"; "Gold mine";

(b) Pronoun compound - "Myself"; "Anybody"; "none".

(c) Verb compound - "Overtake"; "upset"; "ill-treat".

- (c) Adverb compound:- "somewhere"; "nowhere";
"nevertheless" etc.
- (d) Adjective compounds:- "oversensitive"; "milkwhite";
"trustworthy" etc.
- (e) Preposition compounds - "into"; "within", "without" etc.
- (f) Conjunction compounds - "whenever"; "however"; "never-
the-less";
- (g) Interjection compound - "heigh-ho" etc.

Of these types of compound words in English, Noun compounds are found in largest numbers followed by the compound adjectives. The only word class not to be found in English as compounds is the 'article'. Certain compound words have been formed in English in imitation of the French in which the first element is a verb stem and the second element is a noun denoting the object of the action. For example:- "Breakfast", "sawyer", "spendthrift", "makeshift", etc.

(vii) Conversion :-

"When a word of one grammatical class is used as word of another grammatical class", as D. Thakur points out "without any change in its form, the process is known as Conversion". In this process, though apparently no new word is formed but in semantic terms we get a new word for sure.

these new words differing syntactically from the original words can be of four types:-

(a) Nouns used as Verbs:-

"He pews in fits, with pallid restlessness" - Hardy

"The dust falls in such quantities as to dirt everything on" - Darwin

"I oiled myself and sunbathed" - Agatha Christie.

(b) Adjectives used as Verbs:-

He slowed the car and idled it by the side of the road.

"She was considered quite a catch at card-parties" - Maryat.

(c) Verb used as Nouns:-

"I believe it's a good buy" - H. Quick

"Temporal blessings are not trifles, for the miss of them would be a dire calamity" - Spurgeon.

(d) Adjectives used as Nouns:-

"A few samples of earlies were offered at market today" - Daily News.

"Things are somehow echoed to the pretty dears" - Byron.

There are also some instances of a group of words or a clause being downgraded to the status of a single word. This process also comes under the qualification "conversion" and are referred to as such.

(To be concluded.)