

**BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO**  
**TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG**

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**ISO 9001 : 2008**

**KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP**

**NGÀNH: NGOẠI NGỮ**

**HẢI PHÒNG - 2010**

**HAIPHONG PRIVATE UNIVERSITY  
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**

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**GRADUATION PAPER**

**A STUDY ON ENGLISH WORDS FORMED BY  
CONVERSION RELATING TO THE NAMES OF  
ANIMALS**

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

On the completion of this study, I wish to express my special thanks to many of my teacher, my family and friends from whom I have received a great deal of assistance, guidance and encouragement.

First of all, I wish to send my sincere thanks to my supervisor Mrs. Nguyen Thi Yen Thoa for her valuable guidance, helpful suggestions and critical feedback throughout the research.

Also, I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to all the lecturers in my the Department of English, Hai phong Private University for their useful lessons from which I have benefited a lot for the accomplishment of this study.

Last but not least, I would like express my special thanks to my loving family, and my closed friends who offered me their love, care, support and encouragement so that I could accomplish my study.

Hai phong, June 2010

Ngo Thi Quynh anh

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# PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1. Rationale

We all know that English is used in the world as the global language today. It has been used in all spheres of public activity. Perceiving its importance I have chosen English as my second language. The fact that the language is widely spoken all around the world draws the attention of many linguists, to become fluent in which the language now is one of the essential demands of most English learner. However, it is not easy to achieve this because the language can sometimes cause them a lot of troubles with its grammar, structures, vocabularies, and pronunciation. I think that English vocabulary is one of great importance and that one does not know much of it, he cannot use English to communicate easily.

Realizing and thinking highly of the importance of English vocabulary, I decided to pick it out for the study of my graduation paper. However, due to the limitation of time and knowledge, I will just spend time concentrating on the study of an issue of English vocabulary called **“English words formed by conversion relating to the names of animals”**.

I hope that it will become useful for those who study English vocabulary in general and functions of conversion in word formation relating to names of animals in English in particular.

## **2. Aims of the study**

This study is conducted to help readers understand the words formed by conversion relating to names of animals more clearly. With this trend, the study will serve two purposes:

- ❖ To present a certain understanding about the functions of conversion in word formation relating to names of animals that students need to be familiar with receptively and productively to be able to speak and write in English effectively.
- ❖ To be reference for anyone concerned with this theme

## **3. Methods of the study**

In order to achieve the mentioned aims, the writer has used the collecting and analyzing methods in this study.

Firstly, collecting method is used to find out all the syntactic functions of conversion in word formation relating to the names of animals from variety of books and valuable resource such as magazines, the internet, ect.

Secondly, examples are used to illustrate given information which are extracted from a variety of textbooks and resources.

In addition, an in-deep analysis is made into the functions of conversion in word formation relating to the names of animals to figure out distinctive features that may challenge the learner.



#### **4. Scope of the study**

The functions of conversion in word formation are a quite narrow aspect. However, because of the limitation of time, knowledge and experience, I cannot concern all functions of conversion. There for, in this study, I have focused mainly functions of conversion in word formation relating to the some typical names of animals.

#### **5. Design of the study**

With the purpose of creating an easy-understanding research, this graduation paper is divided into three parts:

- ❖ Part one is introduction of the paper in which the rationale, the aims of the study, the methods of the study, the scope of the study and the design of the study are introduced.
- ❖ Part two, the development, is divided into three chapters. Chapter I give some theoretical background of conversions. Chapter II is designed to provide the knowledge about words formed by conversion relating to names of animals. Chapter III is about some difficulties probably made by Vietnamese learners in learning the word formed by conversion relating to names of animals and suggested ways avoiding these mistakes.
- ❖ Part three, the conclusion, summaries the main points mentioned in the previous parts.

# Part two: Development

## Chapter I: Theoretical background

### I.1. What is conversion:

As the society develops, as life becomes more complex, people need more and more new words to name new things and to indicate new ideas. Some of these are applied by foreign languages but most of them are homemade. People use the words that they have to help make the new words that they need. This process is called word-formation and one of types of word-formation is conversion. There are a lot of different definitions of conversion from linguists.

Conversion may be defined as a process by which a word belonging to another word class is transferred to another word class without any committable change of form, either in pronunciation or spelling. It is a highly proliferous source for the production of new words since there is no restriction on the form that can undergo conversion in English. In fact, this word- formation process occurs so regularly that many scholars prefer to consider it a matter of syntactic usage rather than as word formation (See Bauer 1993:227). Pyles and Alger (1993:281) use the term “functional ship” to refer the same process and to highlight the fact that in such cases, words: converted from one grammatical function to another without any change form.

*“Conversion is the derivational process whereby an item changes its word class without the addition of an affix”*

(Quirk, Randolph and Green Baum; 1987:441)

Conversion is generally considered to be a derivational process whereby an item is adapted or converted to a new word class without the addition of an affix. Take “**single**” and “**simple**” for example. Both are adjectives, but “**single**” can be used as a verb without changing the form, e.g.: “*The singled him out at one as possible victim*”. In contrast, simple cannot function as a verb without adding an affix. E.g. “*Continental quilts simplify (not simple) bed-making*”. The first instance is a case of conversion whereas the second is one of suffixation as suffix – ify is added to make “**simple**” a verb. Look at the word round in the following sentences:

E.g. He was knocked out in the thirst round.

(noun)

We rounded the corner at high speech.

(verb)

The earth moves round the sun.

(proposition)

The moon is bright and round tonight.

(adjective)

Spring will soon come round again.

(adverb)

(English – Vietnamese; 2007:1777)

In each sentence, “**round**” is used as different part of speech: **noun, verb, proposition, adjective and adverb**. However, their meaning also relate to the meaning “round”. The words “round” were derived by conversion.

*“Conversion is the formation of new word in different part of speech without adding any element”.*

(Hoang Tat Truong; 1993:43)

The new word has new meaning which differs from that of the original one through it can more or less be easily associated with it. It has also a new paradigm peculiar to its new category as a part of speech. Therefore, the term “functional shift” is used to refer to the same process and to highlight the fact that in such cases words are converted from one grammatical function to another without any change in form.

E.g. Party (noun) -> party (verb)

I'm giving a party next Saturday night.

(noun)

They like to party.

(verb)

(English – Vietnamese dictionary; 2007:1777)

The verb “**party**” was derived from the noun “**party**”. Its meaning relates to the meaning of the noun “**party**”. Thus, it expresses the action “*to take part in the party*”.

E.g. Must (verb) -> must (noun)

When you enter the building, you must show the guard your pass.

(verb)

His new novel is a must for all lovers of crime fiction.

(noun)

(English – Vietnamese dictionary; 2007:1339)

These “**must**” in above sentences are different part of speech. However, these meanings are relating to each other. The noun “**must**” was formed from the verb “**must**” with the meaning “*it is necessary to do something*”. Conversion is the formation of new words by another class. This is a method of turning words of one part of speech to those of different part of speech. These words are new only in a grammatical sense. Since, the

words do not change in morphological structure but in function, this process is also known as functional shift.

In linguistics, conversion is also called zero derivation, is a kind of word formation, specifically, it is the creation of a word from an existing word without any change in form. Conversion is more productive in some languages than in others. In English it is a fairly productive process often a word of one lexical category (part of speech) is converted to a word of another lexical category, for example, the noun **“green in gift”** (referring to a putting- green) is derived ultimately from are both very common and unknowable in English; much more remarked upon is verb, the creation of a verb by converting a noun or other word (e.g. the adjective clean become the verb to clean).

The boundary between conversion and functional shift (the extension of an existing word to take on a new syntactic functional shift) is not well defined.

Conversion may involve a change within the same word class as in change from one type of noun to another or one type of verb to another. For example: The use of uncountable nouns is as countable and vice-versa. Thus, in **“Some beer/coffee/ sugar/ tea”** the nouns are uncountable whereas in **“two beers/ coffees/ sugars/ teas”** the nouns are countable.

E.g.:    Lecture (n)    -> to lecture (v),  
          Hand (n)        -> to hand (v),  
          Up (n)         -> to up (v)  
          To drop out (v) -> a drop out (n)  
          To go (v)      -> a go (n)

A general rule, if the context is carefully chosen, it is possible to use almost noun in either way. Even proper names can be easily used as

common noun as in “which Hilary do you?” Similarly, intransitive verbs are often used as transitive verbs. Compare for instance the members of the following pair.

E.g. How long can a pigeon fly non-stop?

(intransitive verb)

Can this little boy fly a kite?

(transitive verb)

(Howard Jackson, 2000:74)

The first is intransitive and the second is transitive. The verb “**fly**” is intransitive verb. Pigeon is so a kind of bird that it can fly. But, people used the intransitive verb “**fly**” as a transitive verb. Because a kite cannot fly by itself. The transitive verb “**fly**” was formed by conversion with the meaning “*to move in the air*”.

Including, conversion is a highly prolific source for the production of new words, since there is no restriction on the form that can undergo conversion in English. In fact, this word formation process occurs so regularly that many scholars prefer to consider it a matter of syntactic usage rather than as word formation.

## **I.2. Characteristic features**

The new words formed by conversion are different from the old words: morphologically, syntactically and semantically.

### **I.2.1. Morphologically**

The new word with the new part of speech has the new inflectional paradigm. A word may have much morphology depending on the subject, the tense, the number...

There are not morphological restrictions. Up to date, there has only been found one restriction: derived nouns rarely undergo conversion (particularly not to verbs) (Bauer, 1983: 226). This exception is easily understood: if there already exists one word in the language, the creation of a new term for this same concept will be blocked for the economy language.

E.g.

The noun “**denial**” will never shift into a verb because this word already derives from the verb “**deny**”. In that case, the conversion is blocked because “to deny” and “to denial” would mean exactly the same.

However, there are some special cases in which this process seems to happen without blocking. This can be exemplified in the noun “**sign**”

The noun “**sign**” is converted into the verb “**to sign**” changed by derivation (suffixation) into the noun “**signal**” and converted into a new verb “**to signal**”. In this case, there is no blocking because these words have slight semantic different (Bauer, 1983:226-227).

### I.2.2. Syntactically

The new word has new part of speech or new function. In terms of characteristics, it is easy to realize that a word formed from conversion have many function in sentence.

E.g. Doctor (noun): He is a doctor.

(subject complement)

Doctor (verb): She doctors many patients a day.  
(predicate)

The functions of the words “doctor” are different. The verb “doctor” was derived and has function as a predicate. There is a change part of speech from a noun to a verb and function from a subject complement to a predicate. It is conversion.

### I.2.3. Semantically

The new word has the new meaning. It must be pointed out that the process of conversion has some limitations: a converted word any assumes one of the ranges of meanings of the original word.

E.g.

- The noun “nurse”: has the meaning “a person who looks after the patients”.
- The verb “nurse”: means to look after.

The demonian verb, though, only contains the sense of putting that material on places like walls. This shows the converted item has only converted part of the semantic field of the source item.

## I.3. Common conversions

### I.3.1. Phenomena of conversion

Conversion most often involves a change from one word class to another. The major kinds of conversion are noun ->verb, verb->noun, adjective noun, and adjective -> verb...

#### a) **Conversion from noun to verb:**

Verb converted from nouns are semantically relate to the original nouns in a variety of ways. Quirk et al sum up as follows.



❖ To pocket noun – to put noun into the pocket.

To can the fruit – to put the fruit into cans.

To bottle, to commission, to data-bank, to network (to put something in/on)

❖ To give noun/ to provide with noun

To shelter the refugees- to give shelter to the refugees

To oil the machine – to provide the machine with oil.

Butter, fuel, graces, arm, finance, coat.

❖ To remove from nouns from

To skin the lamb-to remove the skin from the lamb

To juice the oranges –to remove the juice from the oranges

Coke, peel, feather, gut.

❖ To do with nouns

To pumps water –to bring water with a pump.

To knife the steak –to cut the steak with a knife

Rake, fiddle, finger, hammer, shoulder, glue

❖ To be/act as nouns

To nurse the baby –to be the nurse the baby

Father, parrot, pilot, referee, tutor

❖ To make/change into nouns

To cash the cheque - to change the cheque into cash.

To orphan the boy –to make the boy an orphan.

Cripple, fool, knight, window.

❖ To send/go by nouns

To mail the letter –to send the letter by mail.

To bicycle –to go by bicycle.

Helicopter, ship, telegraph, boat, motor.

Verb of this type are all transitive except (7). Helicopter, ship, telegraph, boat, motor look at the actual use of nouns as verbs.

E.g. I cannot stomach seafood.

(LACVIET mtd2002 – EVA)

He helmeted at the change and then he regretted for it.

(LACVIET mtd2002 – EVA)

He's rooming with my friend Alan.

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007:1772)

From noun “**stomach, helmet, room**”, the verb “**stomach, helmet, room**” were formed. Their functions in these sentences were change by conversion.

b) **Conversion from adjective to verb**

Conversion of adjective into verbs is not as productive as those nouns. These verbs thus converted are semantically simple, that is, they can be used either transitively to mean “**to make ... adjective**” or transitively “**to become adjective**”

Most verbs converted from adjective have both transitive and intransitive functions.

Here are some more words: dim, dirty, warm, cool, show, clear, dry and narrow. Verb restricted to transitive use are still, foreword, free, bare, blind and so on. Those limited to intransitive use are by fewer like sour, slim.

❖ To make more adjective

to be calm – to make somebody calm

to be slim – to make somebody slim.

E.g. He walked carefully so as not to wet his shoes.

(LACVIET mtd2002 – EVA)

In this example, “**wet**” is used as a transitive verb meaning “**make... wet**”, so the sentence can be paraphrased as “*the walked carefully so as not to make his shoes wet*”.

❖ To become adjective

to be dry – to become dry

to be empty – to become empty

E.g. The manuscript had yellowed with age.

(LACVIET mtd2002 – EVA)

The verb “**yellow**” in this example does not take an object, obviously a transitive use meaning “*become yellow with age*”. Most verbs converted from adjectives have both transitive and intransitive functions.

E.g. Two men carrying a wooden key emptied its contents into the opening.

The play was over and the auditorium bean to empty.

(LACVIET mtd2002 – EVA)

There are some more words; dim, dirty, warm, cool, slow, clear, dry and narrow. Verbs restricted to transitive use are still, forward, free, bore, blind and so one. Those are to intransitive use are by far fewer like sour, slim.

❖ To make oneself better

to be better himself – to make himself better

### c) **Conversion from verb to noun**

Almost all mono-morphemic verbs can be used as nouns, which are semantically related to the original verbs in various ways (according to Quirk et al; 1997: 46).

❖ State (of mind or segmentation)

The root words are the verbs. The noun was derived from the verbs by conversion to express the state of something or someone.

Doubt: the state of doubting

Want: what is wanted

Desire, love, hate, smell, taste.

E.g. He loves her more than he say.

(verb)

Their love has cooled.

(noun)

(English – Vietnamese dictionary; 2007:1227)

The word “**love**” in two sentences has different function. It is formed by conversion. The meaning is not changed.

❖ Event or activity

The nouns were derived from the verbs by conversion to express the event or activities.

Search: the activity of searching

Laugh: the act of laughing

Attempt, hit, release, swim, shut-down, teach-in.

E.g. The prisoners of war attempted a jailbreak but failed.

(verb)

They made no attempt to break out of jail.

(noun)

(LACVIET mtd2002 – EVA)

The function of the word “attempt” in these sentences is different.

The noun **“attempt”** was derived from the verb **“attempt”** by conversion. It bases on the act of **“attempting”**.

❖ Result of action

The nouns were derived from the verbs by conversion to express the result of action.

Catch: what is catch

Find: what is found

reject, by, hand out, answer, let...

E.g. The answer he gave was quite astonishing.

(noun)

You should think carefully before you answer.

(verb)

(English – Vietnamese dictionary; 2007:106)

The noun **“answer”** was derived from the verb **“answer”**. It describes the result of action **“what is answer”**.

❖ Owner of the action

The nouns were derived from the verbs by conversion to express the owner of action.

Help: one who helps

Cheat: one who cheats

Bore, coach, flirt, scold, stand-in.

E.g. It's embarrassing when they flirt like that in public.

(verb)

They say he is a terrible flirt.

(noun)

(English – Vietnamese dictionary; 2007:796)

With the purpose to describing the owner of the action “**flirt**”, the noun “**flirt**” was derived from the verb “**flirt**”. One who flirt was described as *a cheated person*.

❖ Tools or instruments to do action with

The nouns were derived from the verbs by conversion to express the tools or instrument to do action with.

Cover: used to cover something

Wrap: used to wrap something

Cure, paper, wrench

E.g. The mountain top was wrapped in mist.

(verb)

Evening wrap is usually very warm.

(noun)

(LACVIET mtd2002 – EVA)

The noun “**wrap**” was derived from the verb “**wrap**” by conversion with meaning “*to wrap the mountain*”.

❖ Place of action

The nouns were derived from the verbs by conversion to express the place of action.

Pass: where one has to pass

Walk: a place for walking

Divide, turn, drive, retreat, lay-by

E.g. He passed the exam.

(verb)

He got a pass in exam.

(noun)

(LACVIET mtd2002 – EVA)

The word “**pass**” in two sentences has different function. One is a verb and one is a noun. The noun “**pass**” was derived from the verb “**pass**” with the purpose describing the exam he passed.

Many simple noun converted from verb can be used with have, take, make, give, ECT. To form phrases to replace the verb or denote a brief action: have a look (smoke, swim, try, wash), take a walk (ride, glance, rest, shower, give a cry (grant, start, laugh, shudder), make a move (guess, offer, slip, attempt). Words like hand-out, stand-by, teach-in, lay-by, shut-down are all converted from phrasal verb. Such conversion is very common in English.

#### d) **Conversion from noun to adjective**

There are some clues, though, to make sure conversion has taken place. In the case of adjective coming from nouns, the hints are quite easy. They can be considered as cases of conversion only when they can appear in predicate as well as in attributive form. If the demonical adjective can be used attributively, we can affirm conversion has happened. If it can only appear predicatively, it is merely a case of partial conversion. For example: “*The deals come and go at a dizzying pace. Blink, and a hand stand is sold for \$15, an antique mahogany sewing stand and sewing machine for \$30, a mahogany music box for \$75*”. In above sentence, “**mahogany music box**” can be used in an attributive way, “**the music box is mahogany**”. This apply is a demonical adjective. So conversion has taken place.

#### e) **Conversion from adjective to noun**

Adjective can also ship into noun, though it is not very frequent. It mainly happens in well –established patterns of adjective plus noun phrase.

Nominalization occurs when the noun is eddied and the adjective is widely used as a synonym of an existing set pattern.

E.g. The rich often travel by plan.

(LACVIET mtd2002 – EVA)

Adverbs, prepositions, conjunction, interjection and even affixes can all act as bases for conversion as into up price (preposition -> verb) the hereafter (adverb -> noun). Furthermore, many of these word classes can undergo conversion as into more than one other word class. Finally, it should be noted that even a whole phrase may undergo conversion and act as a noun.

f) **Conversion from preposition to verb:**

“Closed – class categories can also undergo conversion. Although their frequency is much less common, the process is not ungrammatical. All morphologic categories have examples of this kind”. (Cannon; 1985:425-426). Prepositions are probably the most productive one. They can easily become adverbs, noun and verbs. Some prepositions can become verbs such as “out”, “up”, “down”. This is proved here under.

E.g. (1) He upped and left without telling anyone.

(2) The buyer upped their offer by \$1000.

(3) The veer’s wife, Tipper, jumped up and down and hugged her girls and everyone else in sight.

(Oxford advanced learner’s dictionaries; Dictionary section)

The word “**up**” in (3) is a preposition with the meaning “*to or in a higher position*” but the word “**up(ed)**” in (1) and (2) is a verb. The verb “up” is derived from the preposition “up” and it has new paradigm: up - ups – upped. When the preposition “**up**” is converted into the verb



“**up**”, it changed not only morphologically but also semantically. The verb “**up(ed)**” has the meaning “*to suddenly move or do something unexpected*” as in (1) and the meaning “*to increase the price or amount of something*” as in (2).

Some other verbs formed by this way:

Out (preposition) -> out (verb): to say publicly that somebody is homosexual especially when they would prefer to keep the fact a secret.

Down (preposition) -> down (verb): to force somebody or something down to the ground.

g) **Conversion from modal verb to ordinary verb:**

Modal verb is a verb, such as “can”, “might” and “must”, that is used with another verb to express an idea such as possibility, permission, intention that is not expressed by the main verb of a sentence. Ordinary verbs were formed by conversion from the modal verb to become the main verb to express the action

E.g. Must (modal verb) -> must (verb)

I must ask you not to do again.

You must that.

(LACVIET mtd2002 -

EVA)

The verb “**must**” was derived from the modal verb “**must**” with the meaning “*to do something because of responsibility*”.

h) **Conversion from closed system word to noun:**

There are two postulated major word classes the English language: open class and close class, namely, open system words and closed – system words. An open class is one whose membership is in principle in definite

or unlimited, whereas a closed class is one whose membership is fixed or limited.

New items are constantly being added to the open class, as new ideas and inventions. Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs are open class items, that is open-system words. New items are not regularly added to the closed class as they are in the case of open class items, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, articles. All are closed-system words.

E.g.: must (modal verb) → must (noun)

This student must clean the flour.

His new novel is a must for all lovers of crime fiction.

(English – Vietnamese dictionary; 2002:1339)

The modal verb “**must**” expresses the idea “*it is necessary to clean the flour*”. The noun “must” was derived to express the event.

i) **Conversion from phrase to noun:**

Phrases or combinations of more than one word may sometimes be reduced to noun status by conversion.

E.g.:

a forget-me-not, a has-been, a don't know

a Monday morning feeling, a not-to-be-missed opportunity.

Whenever I gamble, my horse is one of the also-rans

(it is one of the horses which “also ran” but was not among the winners)

j) **Conversion from particle to noun:**

Particle is a word or a part of a word which has grammatical purpose but often has little or no meaning. The noun is derived from the particle by conversion. For example: in (to have an in influence), down (to have down on somebody)

E.g. What have you got in your hand?

I have an in with my father.

(English – Vietnamese dictionary; 2002:1051)

The noun “in” was formed from the preposition “in” by conversion to express an influence.

**k) Conversion from phrase to adjective:**

under the weather (phrase) -> under-the-weather (adjective)

Some pair of words that don't occur due to conversion as a result of contains historical processes (dropping the endings of simplification of terms).

For example: love - love

**l) Approximate conversion: avoiding and stress shift**

In some case, conversion is approximate rather than complete that is a word, in the course of changing its grammatical function may undergo a slight change of pronunciation or spelling. The most important kinds of alternation are avoiding of final consonants and shift of stress.

❖ Avoiding of final consonants

With respect to pronunciation, there are some nouns ending in voiceless fricative consonants /-s/, /-f/ and /-θ/ which are converted into verbs with the voicing of the final consonant into /-z/, /-v/ and /-ð/, respectively.

E.g. (1) And it is hard to imagine that Mr. Bush will not occasionally want his father on the other end of the telephone giving advice.

(2) They went on to advise the parents that they did not have to allow their children to be interviewed, but if they did, “you have right to be present”.

(Ana Isabel, 2005:16)

Looking at the above examples (1) and (2), we see that “advice” and “advise” are completely different parts of speech. “Advice” is a noun and “advise” is a verb. However, two these words has a closed relation. The noun “advice” undergoes a slight change of pronunciation or spelling to form the verb “advise”.

Advice - advise, thief – thieve, house – house

❖ Ship of stress

When verb of two syllables are converted into nouns, the stress is sometimes shifted from the second to the first syllable.

Conduct, conflict, convent, export, ECT...

Including, there are many kinds of conversion as noun from verb, verb from noun, adjective from verb... These are main kinds of conversion are popular in word formation in English. They help me to understand the essence of the issue I study on.

### I.3.2.Common nouns use to make verbs by conversion

❖ **Names of tools or implements:**

The noun is the name of the tool; the verb denotes the action performed by the tool.

E.g. (1) The yo-yo was invented 2,500 year ago Greece.

(2) Well, there are still four billion people out there who do not know how to yo-yo.

(Ana-Isabel, 2005:12)

The word “**yo-yo**” in (1) is a noun denoting implement. It is a children' toy. This toy consist of a pair of discs with a deep groove between them in which string is attached and wound, and which can be made to fall and rise. But, when this noun converts into verb “**to yo-yo**” as in (2), it will express the action done with the implement

“yo-yo”. The verb “**to yo-yo**” in (2) can be paraphrased to play with a yo-yo.

E.g. (3) I have a big hammer

(4) She hammered the nail into the wall

(Oxford advanced learner’s dictionary: Dictionary section)

(5) But last month, talks in Geneva to hammer out the final details surprisingly stall.

(Ana Isabel, 2005:12)

The word “**hammer**” in (3) and “**hammer**” in (4), even though have the same form; they belong to different parts of speech. The word “**hammer**” in (3) is a noun but the word “**hammer**” in (4) is a verb “hammer” in noun denoting a tool with a handle and a heavy metal head, used for breaking things or driving nails, etc. The verb “**hammer**” performed with hammer as in (4): *to hit a nail by means of hammer*. In (5), the verb “**to hammer**” combines with the preposition “out”; as a result, it has a different meaning that is “*work out*” details of a plan to find solutions.

#### ❖ Names of parts of body:

The noun is the part of body; the verb generally denotes an action performed by it.

E.g. (5) Every one shut their eyes

(Quirk, 1973:200)

(6) They eyed us with alarm.

(Oxford advanced learner’s dictionary: Diction section)

We can see that the word “**eye (s)**” in (5) and the word “**eye (d)**” in (11) have a same form but they belong to two different word classes. Because they are different parts of speech, they are

different form, each other morphological, syntactic and semantic. The word “eye” in (5) is a noun naming a part of body that is an organ of sight. This part of body is used to watch or observe or look things happening around us. This word “eye (d)” in (6) is not a noun but a derived verb from the noun “eye(s)” with a completely new meaning of denoting an action performed by the noun “eye”. The verb “eye” in (6) paraphrases as: *to watch or observe closely with suspicion*. Morphologically by the noun “eye” has new paradigm: eye - eyes – eyed.

Similarly, the verb “to hand” is also converted from the noun “hand” and it has the meaning of denoting a typical action made by the noun “hand” to give, to pass something to, ect. This is exemplified in (7) and (8).

(7) Like his Biblical name sake. Noh got the call to do no less the save the world’s endangered creatures and this does not even get a divine helping hand, as far as we know.

(Ana Isabel, 2005:11)

(8) We were each handed a leaflet

(Quirk, 2002:57)

#### ❖ Names of professions:

The noun is the name of a profession; the verb denotes an activity typical of it

E.g. (9) Ian, our host, introduced us to the other guests

(Oxford advanced learner’s dictionary: Dictionary section)

(10) Both were major international events and hosted roughly the same number of journalists.

(Ana Isabel, 2005:12)

The word “**host**” in (9) is a noun denoting occupation. It means a person who invites guests to a meal, a party, ECT or who has people staying at their house. However, when it becomes a verb as in (10), it has different meaning. Its meaning is “*to act as the host of a house*”. This meaning of the verb “**host(ed)**” is able to be easily deducted from the meaning of a noun “**host**”.

E.g. (11) She is a nurse in a big hospital.

(12) He worked in a hospital for ten years nursing cancer patients.

(Oxford advanced learner’s dictionary: Dictionary section)

When the word “nurse” in (11) is a noun, it denotes a person whose job is to take care of sick or injured people, usually in a hospital. However, when it is converted into verbs as in (12), its expresses an action of caring for somebody who is ill or injured.

#### ❖ **Names of places:**

The noun is a name of place; the verb denotes the process of occupying the place or putting something in it.

E.g. (13) You slipped a watch into your pocket, did not you?

(Ana Isabel, 2005:11)

(14) In fact, the recent allegation those Russian officials pocketed a \$4.8 billion IMF loan date from the summer of 1998, when Chernomyrdin had already left office.

(Ana Isabel, 2005:11)

As the mention above, the word “**pocket**” in (13) is a name of a small bag sewn into the verb “**pocket(ed)**” as in (14), it express an action of putting something into one’s pocket. In (14), the verb “**pocket**” has also the same meaning but used negatively.

### ❖ Names of the color:

The noun is the name of color; the verb denotes an action to make something have that color or the process of becoming to have that action.

E.g. (15) I lie awake at night; see things in black and white.

(Extracted from the song “pretty boy”)

(16) He blacked his face with soot.

(Quirk, 1973:446)

“**Black**” in (15) is a noun denoting a kind of color like the color of night or coal but “**black**” in (16) is a verb. The verb “**black(ed)**” is derived from the noun “**black**” with meaning of making something black. Therefore, the sentence (16) can be rewritten as follows: “*He made his face black with soot*”.

### ❖ Names of animals:

The noun is the name of animal; the verb denotes an action or aspect of behavior considered typical of the animal.

Some other verbs derived from the noun denoting name of animal.

E.g. Monkey (n) -> monkey (v): to tamper or play mischievous tricks (with)

Dog (n) -> dog (v) : to follow closely

Wolf (n) -> wolf (v) : to devour greedily like a wolf.

There are many common nouns using to make verbs by conversion. Those are main phenomenon. However, I think that words formed by conversion relating to the names of animals is more popular is the easily way of word formation. In this part, I only mention some examples. In following part, I will mention more deeply with specific examples.



## I.4. Classification of conversion

### I.4.1. Traditional and occasional conversion

#### ❖ Traditional conversion

*“Traditional conversion means the type of conversion commonly and traditionally used by the public. The words built by traditional conversion are recorded in dictionaries”.*

(Hoang Tat Truong; 1993:44)

E.g. Favorite (noun) -> Favorite (verb)

From one direction comes the rich smell of frying bread, from another the aroma of boiled pork dumplings and from yet another fermented or “smelly” bean curd, a Chinese “*favorite*”.

In the above sentence, the adjective “**favorite**” functions as a noun. Here, conversion happens because the noun “**favorite**” in “**a Chinese favorite**” is formed from the adjective “**favorite**”.

#### ❖ Occasional conversion

*“Occasional conversion refers to the individual use of conversion in special situations, occasions, to express one’s idea vividly, humorously ECT. The words built by occasional conversion are individual coinage and of course not present in dictionaries”.*

(Hoang Tat Truong; 1993:44)

E.g. He hello-dears everybody.

(Verb)

I am tired of his “hello-dear”

(Noun)

### **I.4.2. Partial conversion**

*“Partial conversion is the building of some nouns from verbs. These nouns usually go with verbs like “have, take, make” to form verbal phrases. They are not used quite independently”.*

(Hoang Tat Truong; 1993:44)

E.g. Have a look/talk/smoke/a bath/a sunbath/a drink ECT.

Give a ring/ kick/blow/wipe/cry ECT.

Make a call

Take a rest/ a nap

Some nouns are used only in idiomatic phrases

E.g.: To be in the know, in the long run, in a hungry ECT

### **I.4.3. Substantiation**

❖ *“Substantiation is the formation of nouns from adjectives. In other words, it is the transition into nouns”.*

(Hoang Tat Truong; 1993:46)

E.g. Native (noun): a native, 2 natives, the native

Female (noun): a female, 2 females, the female

Valuable (noun): a valuable, valuables

Substantiation is also done from ellipsis.

E.g. daily (noun): daily newspaper

elastic (noun): elastic cord

❖ *“Partial substantiation is the formation of nouns from adjectives with the help of the article “the”.*

(Hoang Tat Truong; 1993:46)

E.g. the rich, the happy, the blind, and the good.

These nouns always go with “the” and are not inflected for the plural and in general cannot be used in the possessive case. They do not undergo morphological changes (they do not have a new paradigm). They have properties of both nouns and adjectives. For example: “The very unfortunate, the usually good” ect. This unusual combination is a good means of expression.

Conversion is extremely productive to increase the English lexicon because it provides an easy way to create new words from existing ones. There are many kinds of conversion but I only focus on the conversion relating the names of animals. I think this is important in conversion. Name of animals are familiar to the life of people. We observe them and find their characteristic, habit... and we use their names with the purpose describing activities and nature related those animals.

## **Chapter two: Words formed by conversion relating to the names of animals**

Names of animals are familiar with the life of people. We observe them and find their characteristics, habits. Each of animals has its typical character. Basing on typical characters of animals, people convert many nouns naming animals into verbs and adjectives... It is called conversion. The verbs and adjectives denote actions, behaviors or natures which are typical of the animal.

### **II.1. Domestic animals**

“A domestic animal is animal kept for companionship and enjoyment or household animal, as opposed to wild animals or to livestock, laboratory animals, working animals or sport animals, which are kept for economic or productive reasons. The most popular domestic animals are noted for their loyal or playful characteristic, for their attractive appearance or their song. Domestic animals also generally seem to provide their owner with non-trivial health benefits, keeping pets has been shown to help relieve stress to those who live having animals around”. (Wikipedia.org/wiki/domestic animal). Thus, names of domestic animals are very common and closed. We used many their names as verb, adjective... with meaning relating to their characteristic.

### II.1.1. Dog (noun) -> dog (verb)



The dog is a domesticated form of the wolf. The domestic dog has been one of the most widely kept working and comparison animals in human history. Dogs perform many roles for people, such as hunting, herding, protection, assisting police and military, companionship, and more recently,

aiding handicapped individuals. This versatility, more than almost any other known animal, has given them the nickname “Man’s best friend” in the western world. The dog has powerful muscles, fused wrist bones, a cardiovascular system both sprinting and endurance, and teeth for catching and tearing.

E.g. (1) Curiously, the dog never barked

(noun)

(Quirk; 2002:78)

(2) He is always dogging my footsteps

(verb)

(LACVIET mtd2002 - EVA)

Especially, the domestic dog always follows his owner closely. Thanks to this characteristic, the verb “**dog**” is created and has the meaning relating to the noun “**dog**”. It is exemplified through (1) and (2). The verb “**dog**” in (2) expresses an action “*to follow somebody closely as a dog does*”.

## II.1. 2 . Fish (noun) -> fish (verb)



A fish is any aquatic vertebrate animal that is covered with scales, and equipped with two sets of paired fins and several unpaired fins. Most fish are “cold – blooded’ or ectothermic, allowing their body temperatures to vary as ambient temperatures change. Fish are abundant in most bodies of water. They can be found in nearly all aquatic environments from high mountain streams to the abyssal and even great depths of deepest oceans. Fish exhibit greater species diversity than any other class of vertebrates. Food prepared from animals classified as fish is also referred to as fish, and is an important human food source. Commercial and subsistence fishers “hunt” fish in wild fisheries (see fishing) or “farm” them in ponds or in cages in the ocean. They are also caught by recreational fishers and raised by fish keepers and are exhibited in public. Fish have had a role in culture through the ages, serving as deities, religious symbols and the subjects of art, books and movies.

E.g. (3) They caught several fish.

(noun)

( English - Vietnamese dictionary; 2007:780)

(4) They fished for the pearl.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007, 781)

(5) I often fish at weekend.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007, 781)

The verb **“fish”** in e.g. (4) and the verb **“fish”** in e.g. (5) are formed by traditional conversion. Fish live and swim in the water for seeking food. Base on the characteristic of fish, the verb in (4) was derived with the meaning *“to seek for pearl”*. Beside, to catch fish is usual custom of many people from young to old. Thus, the noun **“fish”** in (3) is used as verb **“fish”** in (5) with the meaning *“to catch fish”*. Culture is very important for any linguistic learner. Understanding language used habit, we can understand clearly and fully.

### **II.1.3. Rabbit (noun) -> rabbit (verb)**



Rabbits are small mammals in the family leporidae of the order lagomorphs, found in several parts of the world. There are seven different

general in the family classified as rabbits. The rabbit lives in many areas around the world. They live in groups and the best known species. The rabbit's long ears, which can be more than 10 cm long, are probably an adaptation for detecting predators. They have large, powerful hind legs. Each foot has five toes, with one greatly reduced in size. They are digigrade animals; they move around on the tips of their toes.

E.g. (6) The rabbit's foot was caught in a snare.

(noun)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007: 1939)

(7) What are you rabbiting on about?

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007: 1664)

Usually, we see that rabbits eat very slowly. Thus, people link noun **“rabbit”** with the action *“to speak too long-windedly”*. The verb **“rabbit”** is derived by occasional conversion. We can understand the full mean of the word **“rabbit”** when we know the discourse it used.

#### **II.1.4. Parrot (noun) -> parrot (verb)**

Characteristic features of parrots include a strong curved bill, an upright stance, strong legs, and clawed zygodactyls feet. Most parrots are predominantly green, with other bright colors, and some species are multi-colored. Cockatoo species range from mostly white to mostly black, and have a mobile crest of





feathers on the top of their heads. Most parrots are monomorphic or minimally sexually dimorphic. They are the most variably sized bird order in terms of length. The most important components of most parrots' diets are seeds, nuts, fruit, buds and other plant material. A few species also eat insects and small animals, and the Lories and lorikeets are specialized to feed on nectar from flowers, and soft fruits. Almost all parrots nest in tree holes (or nest boxes in captivity), and lay white eggs from which emerge altricial (helpless) young.

E.g. (8) Can your parrot talk?

(noun)

(LACVIET mtd2002 – EVA)

(9) The children usually parrot the adult.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007, 1463)

Parrots are some of the most intelligent birds, and the ability of some parrot species to imitate human voices enhances their popularity as pets. However, parrot only imitate human voices but it does not think and understand. Thus, people used the noun “**parrot**” as the verb to describe the action “*to speak or imitate someone without understanding it or thinking about its meaning as a parrot*”. The verb “**parrot**” in (8) was formed by tradition conversion.

### **II.1.5. Bitch (noun) -> bitch (verb)**

A bitch is a female dog. Its original use as an insult was based on a comparison of a woman to a dog in heat.



E.g. (10) Don's talk to like that, you bitch.

(noun)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007: 219)

(11) She always bitches about the people at work.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007: 219)

“In literal, non-slang use, bitch is a term for female canines, particularly among dog breeders. It is also common English pro family for a woman that typically carries denigrating or misogynistic overtones- such as resemblance to a dog. It is also used to chantries someone who is belligerent and unreasonable, or displays rudely intrusive or aggressive behavior. Its original use as a vulgarism, documented to the fourteenth century, suggested high sexual desire in a woman, comparable to a bitch as heat. The range of meanings has expanded in modern usage. In a feminist context, it can indicate a strong or assertive woman, one who might make men feel threatened. When applied to a man, “**bitch**” is a derogatory term for subordinate”. According to website “[en.wikipedia.org/ wiki/ bitch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/bitch)”. The verb “**bitch**” in (11) was derived from the noun “**bitch**” in (10) by conversion belong to history and culture

of people. They do not like “**bitch**” name. They view name “*bitch is not good*”. Thus, action “**bitch**” is related to the name of animal “**bitch**” with the meaning “*to complain and make unkind remarks about someone or something especially when they are not there*”.

### II.1.6. Hound (noun) -> hound (verb)



A hound is a type of dog that assists hunter by tracking or chasing the animal being hunted. It can be contrasted with the gun dog, which assists hunters by identifying the location of prey, and with the retriever, which recovers host quarry. There are three types of hound, with the several breeds belonging to the each type.

In general, they are very fast and will catch and will game by themselves.

E.g. (12) The hound lost the scent of the fox.

(noun)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007:1015)

(13) He was hounded by reporter, creditor, and the press.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007:1015)

(14) They hounded him down in the town.

(verb)

(LACVIET mtd2002 –EVA)

Hound is a kind of animal which is trained to find fox. They have a good nose and sensitive ears. When they found, there is hardly fox can escape. Basing on the characteristic of animal which has name “**hound**”, the verb “**hound**” in (13) is formed with the meaning “*to chase someone or refuse*”

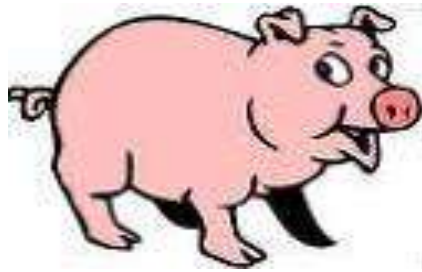
*to leave them alone especially because you want to get something from them*". The verb **"hound"** in (14) was derived to express the action *"to find something or somebody after hard hunt"*. We only understand as well as identifying meaning of noun **"hound"** and verb **"hound"** when they used in concrete situation.

## **II.2. Farm animals.**

Farm animal refers to one or more animals are raised in an agricultural setting to produce commodities such as food or fiber, or labor. The term "farm animal" as used in this article does not include poultry or farmed fish; however the inclusion of these, especially poultry, within the meaning of "farm animal" is common.

Farm animal generally are raised for subsistence or for profit. Raising animals (animal husbandry) is an important component of modern agriculture. It has been practiced in many cultures since the transition to farming from hunter-gather lifestyles. Animals are 'domesticated' when their breeding and living conditions are controlled by humans. Over time, the collective behavior, life cycle, and physiology of animals have changed radically. Many modern farm animals are unsuited to life in the wild. Goats and sheep were domesticated around 8000 BCE in Asia. Swine or pigs were domesticated by 7000 BCE in the Middle East and China. The earliest evidence of horse domestication dates to around 4000 BCE.

### II.2.1. Pig (noun) -> pig (verb)



A pig has knout for a nose, small eyes, and a small tail, which may be curly, linked or straight. It has thick body, short legs and coarse hair. There are four toes on each foot with the two large middle toes used for walking. Pig does not have functional sweat glands, so pigs cool themselves using water or mud during hot weather. They also use mud as a form of sunscreen to protect their skin from sunburn. Mud also provides protection against flies and parasites.

E.g. (1) Don't be such a pig.

(noun)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007, 1516)

(2) He pigged it.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007, 1517)

(3) Tom pigged himself at that party.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007, 1517)

Because its appearance and behavior, people think pig as rash, dirty, rude animal. The verb “**pig**” in (2) was derived from noun “**pig**” in (1) with the meaning “*to live or behave dirtily or wild*”. With English, when they actually hate someone, they compare him with a pig. Beside, pigs often

eat very much. Thus, people also compare someone which eats too much with a pig. The verb “**pig**” in (3) was derived to express an action “*to eat to a lot or too much*”.

### II.2.2. Duck (noun) -> duck (verb).



The ducks are divided between several subfamilies in the Anatidae family, they do not represent a monophyletic group but a form taxon, since swans and geese are not considered ducks. Ducks are mostly aquatic birds, mostly smaller than the swans and geese, and may be found in both fresh water and sea water. Ducks are sometimes confused with several types of unrelated water birds with similar forms, such as loons or grebes, grebes, gallinules, and coots.

E.g. (4) Ducks are waddling about the yard.

(noun)

(LACVIET mtd2002 - EVA)

(5) His sisters ducked her in the river.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007: 626)

(6) It is his turn to wash up and he will try and duck out of it.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007: 626)

Duck is the common name for number of species in the Anatidae family of birds. Living environment of duck is water. It has a long neck and flat

beak. When it seeks for food, its beak is in the water to catch fishes and insects. Because people observe this habit of duck, the verb “**duck**” in (5) was used as action with the mean “*to put someone under water for a short time*”. The verb “**duck**” in (6) was formed by conversion with the meaning “*to avoid doing something*”.

### II.2.3. Cow (noun) -> cow (verb)



“Bos Taurus, bosinducus cattle (colloquially cows) are the most common type of large domesticated ungulates. They are a prominent modern member of the subfamily Bovine, are the most widespread species of the genus Bos, and are most commonly classified collectively as Bos primigenius. Cows are raised as livestock for meet (beef and veal) as dairy animals for milk and other dairy products and as draft animals. In some country, such as India, cows are scared.”

(Wikipedia.org/wiki/cow)

E.g. (7) There are a herd of milch cows in the field.

(noun)

(LACVIET mtd2002 - EVA)

(8) The men were cowed in total submission.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007: 468)

The verb “**cow**” in e.g. (8) was derived from the noun “**cow**” in e.g. (7). This is traditional conversion. It depends on characteristic of cow. Voice of cow is very loud and hoarse. It can spread out very long. Thus, it can make someone terrified and startled. People observed this cow’s characteristic so that they use the noun “**cow**” as a verb “**cow**” with the meaning “*to frighten someone into doing something, using threats or violence*”. If only basing on the form or pronunciation with discourse, it is not able to know which is used as noun, which is used as verb.

#### **II.2.4. Chicken (noun) -> chicken (verb, adjective)**



Chicken is a kind of animal which was raised very much in the farm. Chicken is a kind of bird but it fly very little. In the wild, they often scratch at the soil to search for seeds, insects, and even large animals such as lizard or young mice.

Domestic chickens are not capable of long distance flight, although lighter birds, are generally capable of flying for short distances, such as over fences or into trees (where they would naturally roost). Chickens will sometimes fly to explore their surroundings, but usually do so only to flee



perceived danger. Chicken are gregarious birds and live together as a flock. They have a communal approach to the incubation.

E.g. (9) This farm keeps chickens.

(noun)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007 : 344)

(10) He had an appointment to see the dentist but he chickened out

(verb)

(of it) at the last moment.

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007 : 344)

(11) Because he is very chicken, he does not climb the tree.

(adjective)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007 : 344)

The verb “**chicken**” in (10) and the adjective “**chicken**” in (11) were derived from the noun “**chicken**” by conversion. Because characteristic of chicken is very timid, people used noun “**chicken**” as verb “**chicken**” with the meaning “*to decide not to do something because of fright*”. Similarly, the adjective “**chicken**” was derived with the purpose to describe the people with the characteristic “timid”.

## II.2.5. Ram (verb) -> ram (noun)



Ram is domestic sheep, is a quadruped, ruminant mammals typically keeps as livestock. Numbering a little over one billion, domestic sheep are the most numerous species in their genus. Sheep are the most likely descended from the wild

modulo of Europe and Asia. One of the earliest animals is domesticated for Agricultural purposes. Sheep are raised for fleece meat and milk. Sheep's wool is the most widely used of many animals and is usually harvested by shearing. Sheep continue to be important for wool and meet today and are also occasionally raised for pelts, as dairy animals or as model organisms for science. A group of sheep is called a flock or mob. Adult female sheep are referred to as ewes; intact males are rams or occasionally tups. Being a key animal in the history of farming, sheep have a deeply entrenched place in human culture, and find representation in much modern language and zymology.

E.g. (12) These rams were raised very good.

(noun)

(13) They rammed the door to smash it down.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary, Vietnam Institute of linguistic)

Ram lives with its flock. In flock of sheep, there are always disputes especially in reproductive reason. The rams usually fight each other to join in wedlock. They come full butt at each other by horn. Basing on this action of this animal, the verb “**ram**” was derived by conversion. The verb “**ram**” in (13) expresses an action “*to hit or put something force with as a ram does*”.

### **II.3. Wild animals**

Wild animals can live independently of humans and are not descended from domesticated animals. They behave in a similar way to other members of their species and do not need people to provide them with

food, accommodation or breeding partners. Wild animals live in natural environment.

### II.3.1. Snake (noun) -> snake (verb)



Snakes are elongate, legless, carnivorous reptile of the suborder. Many species of snakes have skulls with many more joints than their lizard ancestors, enabling them to swallow prey much with their highly mobile jaws. In order to accommodate their narrow bodies, snakes paired organs (such as kidneys) appear one in front of the other instead of side by side and most have only one functional lung. Some species retain a pelvic girdle with a pair of vestigial claws on either side of the cloacae. They range in size from the tiny. Snakes are thought to have evolved from either burrowing or aquatic lizards during the Cretaceous period. Most species are non-venomous and those that have venom use it primarily to skill and subdue prey rather than for self-defense. Some possess venom potent enough to cause painful injury or death to humans. Non-venomous snakes either swallow prey alive or kill by constriction.

E.g. (1) Always afraid of snakes, we shut every door and window at night  
(noun)

(Quirk.2002:95)

(2) The road snaked away into the distance.

(verb)

(Oxford advanced learner's dictionary)

The verb “**snake(d)**” as in (2) derived from the noun “**snake**” by tradition conversion. Because snakes have a very long thin body and no legs, they move in long twisting curves. Basing on this characteristic, the verb “**snake**” is formed with the meaning “*to move or twist like a snake*”. Learner only knows the word “**snake**” to be a noun or a verb as well as understand the meaning of it when it is used in concrete situation. If only basing on the form or the pronunciation without discourse, it is not able to know which is used as noun, which is used as verb.

### II.3.2. Monkey (noun) -> monkey (verb)



Monkeys are generally considered to be intelligent and, unlike apes, monkeys usually have tails. Some live in trees while others live on the grassland. Almost of them diet and differ among the various species but may contain any of following: fruit, leaves, seed, nuts, flowers, eggs and

small animals. The many species of monkey have varied relationships with humans.

E.g. (3) This is a monkey.

(noun)

(LACVIET mtd2002 - EVA)

(4) Mary likes to monkey her brother.

(verb)

(LACVIET mtd2002 - EVA)

The word “**monkey**” in (3) is a noun referring the name of an intelligent imitative animal and the word “**monkey**” in (4) is a verb converted from noun “**monkey**”. Naturally, imitation is typical of monkey so when becoming a verb as in (3), “**monkey**” means “*to imitate somebody*”. We only understand as well as identifying meaning of noun “**monkey**” and verb “**monkey**” when they used in concrete situation. If only basing on their form or their pronunciation without discourse, we cannot know which is used as noun, which is used as verb.

### II.3.3. Wolf (noun) -> wolf (verb)



Wolves are the largest members of the dog family. Wolves live and hunt in packs of around six to ten animals. Wolf packs are established according to a strict hierarchy, with a dominant male at the top and his mate not far behind. Usually this male and females are only animals of the pack to breed. All of a pack’s adults help

to care for young pups by bringing them food and watching them while others hunt.

E.g. (5) He has hungry as a wolf.

(noun)

( LACVIET mtd2002 - EVA)

(6) I thought there would be some biscuits left but they are wolfed

(verb)

the lot!

( English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007:2337)

The wolves are known to roam large distances perhaps 12 miles in a single day. These social animals cooperate on their preferred prey – large animals such as deer, elk, and moose. When wolves are successful, they do not eat in moderation. A single animal can consume 20 pounds (9 kilograms) of meat at sitting. Wolves also eat smaller mammals, birds, fish, lizards, snakes and fruit. The food each wolf can eat in a day is very big. Thus, they have to eat very fast. Basing on the way they eat, the verb “**wolf**” was derived. We used the noun “**wolf**” as verb “**wolf**” with the meaning “*devour greedily like a wolf*”.

#### **II.3.4. Beaver (noun) -> beaver (verb)**



The beaver (genus *Casstor*) is a primarily nocturnal, large, semi-aquatic rodent. Beavers are known for building dams, canals and lodges (home). They are the second –largest rodent in the world (after the capybara). The habitat of the beaver is the riparian Zone, inclusive of stream bed. The actions of beavers for hundreds of thousands of years in the Northern Hemisphere have kept these watery systems healthy in good repair, although a human observing all the downed trees might think that the beavers were doing just the opposite. The beaver works as a keystone species in an ecosystem by creating wetlands that are used by many other species. Next to humans, no other extant animal appears to do more to shape its landscape. Beavers fell trees for several reasons. They fell large mature trees, usually in strategic location, to form the basis of a dam, but European beavers tend to use small diameter trees for this purpose. Beavers fell small trees, for food. Broad leaved trees re-grow as a coppice, providing easy-to-reach stems and leaves for food in subsequent years. Ponds created by beavers can also kill some tree species by drowning but this creates standing dead wood which is very important for a wide range of animals and plants.

E.g. (7) She is wearing a beaver hat.

(noun)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary, Vietnam Institute of linguistics)

(8) I have been beavering away at this job for hours.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary, Vietnam Institute of linguistics)

The verb “**beaver**” in (8) was derived from the noun “**beaver**” by conversion. The characteristic of beaver is very hard. They collect

branches of trees to dam up for theirs. Basing on this characteristic, the verb “**beaver**” is formed with the meaning “*to do something very hard as beaver does*”.

### **II.3.5. Hare (noun) -> hare (verb).**

Hares are leporids belonging to the genus lepus. They can run at speeds up to km/h (45 mph). They live solitarily or in pairs, while a “drove” is the collective noun for a group of hares. Their bodies are capable of absorbing the g- force produced while running at extreme speeds or while escaping predators. Hares do not bear their young below ground



in a burrow as do other leporids, rather in a shallow depression or flattened nest of grass called a form. Hares are adapted to the lack of physical protection, relative to that afforded by a burrow, by being born fully furred and with eyes open. They are hence able to fend for themselves soon after birth, they are precocial. By contrast, the related rabbits live underground in burrows or warrens, while hares live in simple nests above the ground, and usually do not live in groups. Hares are generally larger than rabbits with longer ears, and have black markings on their fairs. Hares have not been domesticated, while rabbits are often kept as house pets. There is a domestic pet known as the “Belgian hare” but this is a rabbit that has been selectively bred to resemble a hare.

E.g. (9) Hare often run very fast.

(noun)

(LACVIET mtd2002 – EVA)



(10) He hared off down the street.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007 :

961)

Hares can run very fast. They can run at speed of up to 72 km/h. Base on this characteristic of hare, the verb “**hare**” in (10) is derived from the noun “**hare**” by traditional conversion. The verb “**hare**” describes the action as a hare does with the meaning “*to run very fast*”. If only basing on their form or their pronunciation without discourse, we cannot know which is used as noun, which is used verb.

### II.3.6. Swan (noun) -> swan (verb)



Swan, are birds of the family Anatidae, which also includes geese and ducks. Swans are grouped with the closely related geese in the subfamily Anserine where they form the tribe.

The swans are the largest members, and are amongst the largest flying

birds. Compared to the closely related geese they are much larger in size and have proportionally larger feet and necks. They also have a patch of unfettered skin between the eye and bill in adults. The sexes are a like in plumage, but males are generally bigger and heavier than females. Swan

usually mate for life, though “divorce” does sometimes occur, particularly following nesting failure. The number of eggs in each clutch ranges from three to eight.

E.g. (11) We watched the swans glide by.

(noun)

(LACVIET mtd2002 - EVA)

(12) Swaning around (the town) in her new sports when he should

(verb)

have been at work.

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007 : 2077)

Swans swim very quietly on the water. They usually go with each other and wander about the water. Basing on this action of swans, people used the name “**swan**” as the verb “**swan**” with the meaning “*to travel, move or behave in a relaxed way for pleasure and without worrying that others may feel annoyed*”. Thus, the verb “swan” is derived by the traditional conversion. We only understand as well as identifying meaning of noun “**swan**” and verb “**swan**” when they used in concrete situation.

### **II.3.7. Worm (noun) -> worm (verb)**



Worm are long, soft bodied animals with no legs. Worms usually have a cylindrical, flattened or leaf like body shape and are often without any true limbs or appendages. Instead, they may have bristles or fins that help them move. A few have light – sending organs. Worms vary in size. They live in all type of environments, even as parasites inside plants and other animals.

E.g. (13) There are a lot of worm in the soil.

(noun)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007 : 2347)

(14) We will have to worm the dog

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007 : 2077)

(15) Eventually they wormed the truth out of her.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007 : 2077)

(16) They had to worm their way through the narrow tunnel.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007 : 2077)

Worms live in many environments. Especially, worms live in other bodies and take nutrient of those bodies. Thus, worms harm those bodies. For protecting health of human and animals, it is necessary to clear worm in bodies. So that, the verb “**worm**” in (14) was formed to express the action “*to clear worm*”. Worms gradually take nutrient of bodies which they live on. Those bodies do not die at the moment but they become thin and sick. Basing on this characteristic of worm, the verb “**worm**” in (15) was formed with the meaning “*to take information from someone cleverly.*”

Similar to snake, worms have not leg. Body of worms has many joints. Around each joint, there are bristles which help worm to move. Because of this structure of body, worms cannot move straightly and they can move zigzag. Basing on the movement of worm, the verb “**worm**” in (16) was derived with the meaning “*to crawl as a worm*”.

### **II.3.8. Fox (noun) -> fox (verb)**



Foxes are members of the wild dog family. Worldwide they comprise a group of over twenty species, characterized by grace and adaptability. Because they are closely related to domestic dogs, they seem tantalizingly familiar, yet their wildness brings an elusive mystery. Foxes are small medium-sided (slightly smaller than the median – sized domestic dog) characterized by possessing a long narrow snout, and a bushy tail (or brush). Unlike many canids, foxes are not usually pack animals. Typically, they live in small family groups and are opportunistic feeders that hunt live prey (especially rodents). Using a pronouncing technique practice from an early age, they are usually able to kill their prey quickly.

Foxes also gather a wide variety of other foods ranging from grasshoppers to fruit and berries. Foxes are normally extremely wary of human.

E.g. (17) The fox is known for its cleverness and cunning.

(noun)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007 : 2077)

(18) He was completely foxes by her behavior.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007 : 2077)

In opinion of the English, fox is cleverness and cunning. When they talk about a bad person, they usually compare that person with a fox. Thus, the verb “**fox**” was derived by conversion to express the action “*to swindle someone*”. If you do not know the culture of a nation, you will not understand their language.

### II.3.9. Rat (noun) -> rat (verb)



Rats are various medium-sized, long-tailed rodents of the superfamily Muroidea. Rats are typically distinguished from mice by their size; rats are generally large muroid rodents, while mice are generally small muroid rodents. Rats are bigger than most Old World mice, which are their relatives, but seldom weigh over 500 grams in the wild. The common species are opportunistic survivors and often live with and near humans, therefore they are known as commensals. Rats are a common food item for snakes.

E.g. (19) Rats, rabbits, squirrels are rodents

(noun)

(Vietnamese – English dictionary;

2005:477)

(20) The cat rats very well.

(verb)

(LACVIET mtd2002 – EVA)

(21) She is ratted on us - here comes the head teacher.

(verb)

(English- Vietnamese dictionary; 2007 :

1678)

Rats are rodents. They are harm for agriculture. Thus, it is necessary to catch rat. The verb “**rat**” in (20) was derived with the meaning “*to catch rat*” or “*go ratting*”. Beside, European associations with the rat are generally negative. For instance, "Rats!" is used as a substitute for various vulgar interjections in the English language. These associations do not draw, *per se*, from any biological or behavioral trait of the rat, but possibly from the association of rats (and fleas) with the 14th-century medieval plague called the Black Death. Rats are seen as vicious, unclean,

parasitic animals that steal food and spread disease. Thus, they consider “**rat**” for a betrayer. Thus, the verb “**rat**” in (21) was formed to express the action “*to betray someone*”.

Conversion is extremely productive to increase the English lexicon because it provides an easy way to create new words from existing ones. With the names of animals, many new words were derived. They make the language to be more abundant. Basing on the characteristics and habit of animals, we can the mean and the use of the verbs and adjectives were formed from the names of animals. These are some previous examples to prove the usefulness of conversion in English.

### **Chapter III: IMPLYCATION**

#### **Some difficulties in learning the function of words formed by conversion relating to the names of animals and suggested ways of avoiding these difficulties.**

It is said that forming words from names of animals by conversion is a useful way in enriching the learners’ source of words. Thanks to this process, learners find it easily to catch meaning of words in the context although they meet the words in the first time due to the following reasons. First, conversion carries the meaning of the original word over to the new word class. Second, conversion does not happen in isolation but in association forming a syntactical – semantic pattern. However, when studying this subject, learners discover that besides benefits, there are some difficulties in this process.

### **III. 1. Some difficulties in realizing meaning of words formed by conversion relating to names of animals in English.**

Beside benefits, words formed by conversion relating to names of animals also cause some problems to learner. First of all, it must be point out that the process of conversion has some semantic limitations. A converted word only assumes one of the ranges of meaning of the original words.

E.g. (1) Many swans are swimming in the lake.

(noun)

(2) All his geese are swan.

(noun)

(3) Swaning around (the town) in her new sports when he should have

(verb)

been at work.

The noun “**swan**” in (1) and the noun “**swan**” in (2) have different meaning. The word “**swan**” in (1) denotes the kind of bird which has white feather. But the word “**swan**” in (2) means “**gold**”. Thus, the noun “**swan**” has many different meaning. However, the converted verb “**swan**” has a meaning “*to wander about something*”. It is related to the one meaning of the noun “**swan**”. It has been semantic limitation. Learners hardly identify the meaning of derived word which has many meaning.



Secondly, some converted words denote more meaning than that in terms of relation.

E.g. (4) The house has many rats.

(noun)

(5) My cat rats every night.

(verb)

(6) She is ratted on us – here comes the head teacher!

(verb)

From the noun “**rat**”, the verb “**rat**” in (5) and the verb “**rat**” in (6) have complete different meaning. The verb “**rat**” in (5) means “*to hunt rat*” and the verb “**rat**” in (6) mean “*to betray someone*”. Thus, the verb “**rat**” has many meaning. It is difficult for learner to understand the meaning of derived word fully.

Thirdly, most words formed by conversion have two meaning: literal meaning and figurative meaning but only literal of the converted word is related to the meaning of root words. Therefore, learner may have difficulty in guessing the figurative meaning of those verbs in some cases.

E.g. (7) They caught several fish.

(noun)

(8) I often fish at weekend.

(verb)

(9) He fished in troubled water.

(verb)

The verb “**fish**” in (8) and the noun “**fish**” in (7) have meaning related to each other. The noun “**fish**” is a name of animal which live in water and the verb “**fish**” denotes the action “*catch the fish*”. However, the verb “**fish**” in (9) has different meaning. It means “*to take advantage of situation*”. This is figurative meaning of the verb “fish”. Thus, if learners do not put the verb in its situation, they will not realize exact meaning of the verb.

In many cases, two words have same spelling but their meaning is completely different.

E.g. (10) Bears usually hibernate in the winter.

(noun)

(11) Most animals bear their young in the spring.

(verb)

The noun in (10) is a kind of animal. Bear is a large, strong wild mammal with a thick fur coat that lives especially in colder part of Europe, Asia and North American. But the verb in (11) means “*to give birth to young*”. Their meaning is completely different. Although two words have same spelling, their meaning is not related to each other. They are homonym. It is not conversion.

In addition, in English, there are a large number of words undergoing conversion to become new words, but the meaning of these verbs is unable to be guessed easily. The meaning of new verbs is not associated to that of the root words, so unable to be deduced from the original word.

### **III. 2. Suggested solutions**

### III. 2. 1. Watching original English films and reading authentic materials stories, establishing English clubs.

Native language environment is very important part to improve English skills. Almost foreign language student have not many chance to communicate with foreign or native speakers. (Native speakers of English are people whose first language is English. They think in English. They use it naturally. Native speakers of English are people from English – speaking countries like USA, Great Britain, Australia, Canada, ect). This is one disadvantage. So that, their applying of conversion is restricted. By watching original English films and stories, learners can observe the way native speakers communicate with each other, the way they apply conversion in each situation. By this way, learners not only know how to use conversion but also learn how to pronoun. Establishing English clubs is the good way to improve exactly English. Students can take part in and practice English every day.

### III. 2. 2. Improving knowledge in terms of culture.

People from different culture background are likely to interpret the imagery and messages in different ways. Difference between people within any given nation or culture are much greater than difference between groups. Education, social standing, religion, personality, belief structure, past experience, affection shown in the home, and a myriad of other factors will affect human behavior and culture. There are many

cultural differences. This leads to wrong equivalence and use incorrect words. And it is easy to make mistake in applying conversion. To use word formation from names of animals by conversion effectively, accuracy, we should know about culture to avoid misleading, misunderstanding.

### III. 3.3. Checking dictionaries.

To understand exactly the meanings of words in the different situations or part of speech is very hard. So that, when learners meet a new function of the word which is difficult to understand, learners should check on big dictionaries. After that, learning by heart the meaning of words and its formation is always the best solution.

## **Part three: Conclusion**

### **1. Summary**

Finally, a brief summary of what discussed in the previous parts and some conclusion remark are presented in this part.

It can be said that conversion is a large matter in English vocabulary. There are many matters related to conversion but because the limitation of time as well as knowledge, in this graduation paper, the writer only focus on small part of conversion – that is word formed by conversion relating to the names of animals.

With the knowledge of the writer, the help of the teachers and the study in reference books, I suggested the organization of the study as follow:

The first part is “introduction” with the rationale of the study, the aims of the study, the methods of the study, the scope of the study and the design of the study.

The development is the main part of the study. It consists of three chapters. The general knowledge about conversion is introduced in chapter one – “theatrical background”. How word formations from conversion relating to names of animals is the problem presented in chapter two.

Chapter three presents the implication of the study with the benefits and possible problems in which possible problems part refers to some difficulties of verb formation from formation relating to the names of animals and suggested solution that help learner to avoid.

In short, I expect that my study will somewhat satisfy the need of the learners are people who will correct my unavoidable mistake my graduation.

Once again, I would like to thank all my teachers and my friends who help me complete this graduation paper.

## **2. Suggestions for further study.**

Conversion is extremely productive to increase the English lexicon because it provides an easy way to create new words from existing ones. There are many common phenomenons in conversion such as word formations from names of colors, instruments, parts of body, ect. And word formations by conversion relating to the names of animals are one of the common phenomenon. So that, I hope that more studies on common phenomenon of conversion are done with deeper analysis. This will be useful for learners, especially for English major students.

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