

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Background of the Study

Words often undergo the change of categories in their use; for example, verb changes into noun, noun into verb, adjective into adverb, and so on. These changes sometimes happen without any change in the word form. The following may clarify the discussion:

- (1) a. This memo appears to be the first that directly *questions* the legal premises of the Bush administration policy of “extraordinary rendition” (*Newsweek* of August 8, 2005, page 5)
- b. And any one of them can answer your *questions* and give you solution to your problem (*Time* of June 5, 2006, page 4)
- (2) a. Milosevic’s death coincided with the kick-off of formal *talks* between Belgrade and the international community on the future of Kosovo (*Newsweek* of March 27, 2006, page 4).
- b. They will *talk* to this government, but the United States must be involved as well (*Newsweek* of August 8, 2005, page 13).

The word *questions* in the sentence (1a) functions as the predicate of the subject *that*; it belongs to a verb. The verb *questions* here is in agreement with the subject *that* and with the tense of the sub-clause. Because the subject is the third person singular and the tense is simple present, the verb here ends in *-s*, showing the third person singular verb, not plural identity. Actually, in its

common use, the word *questions* belongs to a noun, such as in the sentence (1b). It is classified as noun due to the fact that the word *questions* functions as the object of the predicate *answer*. In addition, it is preceded by the determiner *your*. Besides, the ending *-s* also indicates that it is a noun, showing its number, that is, plural identity, not the third person singular verb. Thus, the word *questions* undergoes the change of category, from noun into verb, without any addition or reduction of the original, namely *question*.

The similar thing is also encountered in the use of the word *talk*. The word *talk* is primarily used as a verb as in the sentence (2b). It is classified as verb, since it functions as the predicate of the subject *they*. Besides, it is preceded by the auxiliary *will*. While, in the sentence (2a), the word *talk* does not belong to a verb, but to a noun, which is signalled by its function, that is, the object of the preposition *of*. Moreover, it is also indicated by the suffix *-s* to show its agreement in number, namely plural identity, not the third person singular verb. This clarifies that there is a category change of the word *talk* in the sentence (2a), from verb into noun, without any addition or reduction of the original, namely *talk*.

The process of the category change without any addition of an affix, such as in the examples numbered (1a and 1b) and (2a and 2b) is known as conversion. Conversion is the derivational process whereby an item changes its word class without addition of an affix (Quirk, 1987:441).

Conversion is very productive to enlarge English lexicon, because it provides an effective way to create new words from the existing ones. Thus, the

meaning is comprehensible and the speaker can avoid the using of complex words or fewer words.

The aim of conversion varies within the users. Adults convey it to use fewer words, whereas children perform it in order to be understood, although they frequently produce ungrammatical utterances (Aitchison, 1989:161). Anyway, it always helps to make communication easier. These phenomena encourage the writer to do a research on the topic intended.

### **1.2 The Reason of Choosing the Topic**

The use of conversion in *Newsweek* magazine is chosen as the topic of this study because conversion is an interesting phenomenon in linguistics. In fact, two words may have the same form, but they are different in category and function. In one sentence a word may be categorized as a verb which functions as predicate; while, in other sentences it may be categorized as a noun which functions as subject, object, complement or modifier. This fact often confuses the learners of English. Consequently, this research is still regarded relevant for both the researcher and the other learners of English.

### **1.3 The Statement of the Problem**

In relation to the topic of the study, the researcher determines two problems to discuss, as follows:

1. How do the words change their category in the conversion?
2. What are the functions of those words in sentences?

#### **1.4 The Objective of the Study**

In line with the statement of the problems, this research tries to answer the three questions, namely:

1. To determine the way of category changes which the words undergo in the conversion.
2. To seek the functions of those words in sentences.

#### **1.5 The Scope of The Problem**

It is important to limit the scope of the problems in this study in order to get detailed information about the topic of the discussion, that is, English word formation. English word formation includes compounding, derivation, coinage (invention), echoism, clipping, blending, back formation, borrowing, antonomasia, acronymy, reduplication, and conversion. This research focuses on conversion only. The conversion intended is seen from two aspects - morphology and syntax. Morphology here is concerned with the formation of words; while, syntax deals with the function of the words in sentences. In short, this research discusses the classes of the words which undergo conversion and the function of those words in the sentences.

#### **1.6 The Significance of the Study**

It is hoped that this research gives benefit and good impression to the readers, especially the English students of Widya Mandala University. Practically, this research may encourage them to apply this method of word

formation in order that they can enrich their vocabulary; hence, they enhance their English competence. Theoretically, the result of this research can stimulate other researchers to do further research in the same topic. Specifically, it is beneficial for the readers who are not familiar to such conversions that they will have good understanding about them.

### **1.7 The Meaning of Key Terms**

1. Morphology. It is the study of morphemes and their arrangements in forming words (Nida, 1962:1).
2. Syntax. It is the study of the arrangement of words into phrases, clauses, and sentences (Nida, 1962:1).
3. Morphosyntactic. It is an analysis of language that uses criteria from morphology, the combining of morphemes to form word, and syntax, the structuring and functioning of words in sentences (Richard, 1999:243).
4. Word Formation. It refers to the process of forming a new word out of the existing one (Nida, 1999:115).
5. Conversion. It is the derivational process whereby an item changes its word class without addition of an affix (Quirk, 1987:441).
6. Syntactic Function. It is the subject, predicate, and object of sentences (Verhaar, 1996:165)
7. Syntactic Category. It refers to the word classes themselves, such as noun, verb, adjective, adverb, ecetera. (Verhaar, 1996:170).
8. The *Newsweek* magazine. It is one of English magazines published weekly.