Use of english
- Part 4 -

1: COULDN'T HAVE BEEN | COULD NOT HAVE BEEN | CAN'T HAVE BEEN

NEGATIVE LOGICAL ASSUMPTION
COULDN'T/CAN'T + HAVE + PAST PARTICIPLE is used to say that we believe something was impossible.
Similar Conversions

- I'm sure he's not German. => He can't be German. CAN'T + INFINITIVE (PRESENT INFINITIVE)
- I'm sure he isn't playing football now. => He can't be playing football now. CAN'T + BE + GERUND (PRESENT CONTINUOUS INFINITIVE)
- I'm sure he didn't do it. => He couldn't/can't have done it. COULDN'T/CAN"T + HAVE + PAST PARTICIPLE (PERFECT INFINITIVE)

2: ABOUT TO HAVE HER

IDIOM
BE + ABOUT TO + INFINITIVE => to be going to do something very soon.

Similar Conversions

- I was almost falling asleep when I heard a crash. => I was about to fall asleep when I heard a crash. BE + ABOUT TO + INFINITIVE
- He is about to go mad, I'm afraid. => He is on the point of going mad, I'm afraid. BE + ON THE POINT OF + GERUND
- Our company is on the point of going bankrupt. => Our company is on the verge of going bankrupt. BE + ON THE VERGE OF + GERUND

3: FAILED TO COMPLETE

ACHIEVEMENT
FAIL + TO + INFINITIVE => to not succeed in achieving something.

Similar Conversions

- Susan managed to beat him at tennis yesterday. => Susan succeeded in beating him at tennis yesterday. SUCCEED + IN + GERUND
- He failed to get into art college. => He didn't manage to get into art college. MANAGE + TO + INFINITIVE
- John didn't manage to write the essay for tomorrow. => John wasn't able to write the essay for tomorrow. BE + ABLE TO + INFINITIVE

4: DID SHE BEGIN

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS => PAST SIMPLE
HOW LONG (HAVE YOU) => WHEN (DID YOU)

Similar Conversions
When did you leave university? => How long ago did you leave university? WHEN + PAST SIMPLE => HOW LONG AGO + PAST SIMPLE
When did you leave university? => How long is it since you left university? WHEN + PAST SIMPLE => HOW LONG IS IT SINCE + PAST SIMPLE
When did you begin playing football? => How long have you been playing football? PAST SIMPLE => PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

5: FIVE YEARS AGO WHEN | FIVE YEARS AGO THAT

CLEFT SENTENCE
Cleft sentences are used to help us focus on a particular part of the sentence and to emphasise what we want to say.

Similar Conversions

- Jim took Pam to the theatre last week. => It was Jim who took Pam to the theatre last week. EMPHASIS ON THE SUBJECT
- Jim took Pam to the theatre last week. => It was last week when Jim took Pam to the theatre. EMPHASIS ON THE ADVERBIAL
- Jim took Pam to the theatre last week. => It was Pam that Jim took to the theatre last week. EMPHASIS ON THE OBJECT

6: PAID ANY ATTENTION TO/PAID ATTENTION TO

IDIOM
Pay attention to => to watch, listen to, or think about someone or something carefully.
Similar Conversions

- Boys, listen carefully to what I'm saying! => Boys, take notice of what I'm saying! TAKE NOTICE OF (IDIOM)
- Boys, listen carefully to what I'm saying! => Boys, pay attention to what I'm saying! PAY ATTENTION TO (IDIOM)
- Boys, listen carefully to what I'm saying! => Boys, concentrate on what I'm saying! CONCENTRATE ON (VERB + PREPOSITION)