

## THE FORMATION AND INFLUENCE OF PHRASAL VERBS ON THEIR LOCAL USE IN THE UNITED STATES, INCLUDING THE WIDESPREAD USE OF WORD FORMATIONS WITH THE ADDITION OF PRE-VERB PARTICLES IN THE FORMATION OF NEW WORDS

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### Annotation

When learning English, many people have difficulty learning phrasal verbs. The fact is that they can quickly and unexpectedly change their values and there are a lot of them. Phrasal verbs are especially common in spoken English. Let's take a look at this interesting topic. Phrasal verbs are constructor verbs. They consist of a verb and an additional "trailer" in the form of an adverb or preposition. The whole point of this trailer is that it completely changes the meaning of the verb. A phrasal verb is a combination of a verb and a preposition, a verb and an adverb, or both a verb and a preposition with an adverb, which is one member of the sentence and thus forms an integral semantic unit. A sentence can contain both a direct and an indirect object to a compound verb.

**Keywords:** general meaning, competence, language elements, continuity, main element in a word, particle, meaning, feature

The English language can be difficult to understand, and the phrasal verb is perhaps the most challenging area of English vocabulary. As a qualified and experienced teacher of English, I see that the difference between intermediate and advanced learners lies in a working knowledge of how, when, and where, phrasal verbs are used. This course develops your knowledge of phrasal verbs, pushing intermediate learners of English into the 'advanced' category. If you want to pass yourself off as an English native, this course is an essential stepping stone.

The use of common phrasal verbs in English language

In English Grammar, the 'Verb' constitutes of Phrasal Verbs. Phrasal Verbs make speaking and writing English a pleasure. They also highlight the meaning of the verbal or written action of a sentence more distinctive. The phrasal verb comprises of two or three parts, mainly the verb and a preposition, or verb with an adverb. One can separate these two elements and use them in sentences. But, the meaning of a sentence will vastly change when it includes a phrasal verb. English learners should be very careful when they use common phrasal verbs as they may express the wrong meaning entirely by using incorrect phrasal verbs.

The English Language contains hundreds of phrasal verbs. One verb may take on a different meaning when used with other adverbs or prepositions. For example, 'Look at' and 'look into' and 'look after' denotes different meanings from each other. When someone 'looks at' something, he or she examines the subject more carefully and widely. On the other hand, when someone 'looks after' something, he or she will protect the subject from harm. He or she protects and supplies the objects with at least the most essentials they need.

In this context, English learners, especially foreign learners, must not 'look down on' each phrasal verb that comes along in the process of their learning. However, it is in the opinion of English professionals that beginners of English learning may understand Phrasal Verbs as they use the language. Therefore, they say to have them indulge in the practical use of the language rather than lectures on Phrasal Verbs. It may be true with the more common phrasal verbs. So what are the most commonly used English Phrasal Verbs? 'Looking at' them will undoubtedly provide for English learners their forms and their usage.

Common Phrasal verbs, too, have three grammatical differences. Some phrasal verbs are separable. For example, one can write or talk by using the phrasal verb 'bring up' without using it together like 'The mother will bring her children up on the farm'. Here, the phrasal verb 'bring up' takes two separate positions in the above sentence. So it is a separable phrasal verb. Likewise to name a few, some of the breakable phrasal verbs include 'call off,' 'do over,' 'hold on,' 'find out,' 'go away,' 'hold up,' 'leave out,' 'look over,' 'make up,' 'pick out,' and 'hang up.'

On the other hand, some phrasal verbs cannot be used for breaking their parts. For example, one cannot use the phrasal verb 'call on' separately, like shown in the above paragraph. In this sentence, 'The mother 'calls on' her children'. One cannot use 'calls' separately from 'on' like 'the mother calls her children on' because it does not give the intended meaning. Here's a few from a long list of such phrasal verbs that includes 'go over,' 'go through' 'run into', 'wait on', and 'run across'. Some phrasal verbs contain three parts. Examples from a long list, include, 'come up with', 'cut down on', and 'drop out of'. Also, note that a category of phrasal verbs called 'intransitive phrasal verbs' do not use objects. One example is 'catch on'.

What is a phrasal verb?

A phrasal verb is a vocabulary item that consists of a 'root verb' such as break, get, put, etc and a 'particle' (an adverb or preposition and sometimes both) such as off, away or in. A phrasal verb can have a literal meaning, i.e. pick up – to lift something up from a surface, e.g. Be careful when you pick up the bag; it's heavy. Or, it can have an idiomatic meaning, i.e. pick up – to learn a new skill or habit without intending to, e.g. I just picked up a few words of Turkish when I was on holiday in Izmir.

Phrasal verbs should be seen as words (lexical items) in their own right and not simply as a combination of two or three words.

Why do students often find phrasal verbs difficult?

It appears that many of the perceived difficulties students have with phrasal verbs stem from three issues:

1. Mistaken familiarity. Learners may know the meanings of the different components of the phrasal verb and this leads them to a (false) belief that they will know the meaning of the phrasal verb as a whole. For example, students know the words put and off and therefore assume they will know the meaning of the two words when combined in the phrasal verb put off. Typically, they will think of the verb to put as meaning 'to place', and they will usually equate the particle off with 'movement away from something'. Therefore, they might wrongly infer that to put off will mean 'to remove', e.g. I put the umbrella off the table. Because of this, they find it difficult to understand sentences such as, Can we put this off until tomorrow? or The music was so loud, it put me off. The fact that many phrasal verbs have non-literal (idiomatic) meanings is at the heart of the problem for many learners.

2. Multiple meanings. For example, the phrasal verb put off has six different meanings, some of which are quite different: e.g. to delay something; to prevent someone from concentrating; to discourage someone from doing something. The fact that phrasal verbs often have more than one meaning seems to worry students a lot.

3. Duplication of components. The vast number of phrasal verbs are made from just a limited number of words, meaning that students can easily get confused. For example, phrasal verbs with put include: put about, put above, put across, put around, put aside, put away, put back, put before, put behind, put down, put down as, put down for, put down to, put forward, put in, put in for, put into, put off, etc.

In dealing with phrasal verbs it is important to address these issues and make students aware that they need not be too problematic and that, like other vocabulary items, there are ways in which they can be learnt.

Knowing any word is a complex thing (as is discussed in the article What do words mean?). Understanding phrasal verbs is no more or less complicated, but can be made more so by thinking the words combine the meaning of the two component parts.

Dealing with the issue of mistaken familiarity is reasonably easy, as the solution lies in making our students aware that phrasal verbs need to be treated as items of vocabulary in their own right and not as a combination in meaning of two separate words.

Dealing with the issue of multiple meanings is also not overly difficult. Multiple meanings actually occur with many items of vocabulary and not just phrasal verbs. Making students aware that words often have more than one meaning is part and parcel of teaching vocabulary. If your students complain that phrasal verbs are difficult because of all the different meanings they have, then just ask them how many meanings they know for words such as book (four as a noun and two as a verb), number (nine as a noun + phrases and two as a verb), or light (three as a noun + phrases, ten as an adjective + phrases, three as a verb + phrases and one as an adverb). By doing this, you will show your students that multiple meanings is not a problem

that is particular to phrasal verbs, and they need to be generally aware that when they think they ‘know’ a word, it may well be that they only know a few of its meanings.

Phrasal verbs are compound verbs (more than one word) that result from combining a verb with an adverb or a preposition. The resulting compound verb is idiomatic (e.g. its meaning cannot be derived from the dictionary meaning of its parts). For instance, “take back” is a phrasal verb consisting of the verb “take” and the adverb “back.” As a phrasal verb, its meaning becomes “to retract a statement,” (I take back my comment on the discussion.), which cannot be derived solely by combining the dictionary meanings of the original verb and adverb.

Such phrasal verbs are the main way new verbs enter the English language. They usually begin in casual speech where they become part of our everyday vocabulary and eventually become recognized as acceptable standard usage.

But because their meanings are idiomatic, there is no logical pattern or formula for learning them. And to make matters worse, many phrasal verbs have more than one idiomatic meaning. For instance, “take back” can also mean to return merchandise for a refund. (John went to the mall to take back the sweater he bought).

The difficulty in learning phrasal verbs is two-fold, the unpredictability of their idiomatic meaning and the rules describing how they may be entered into the rest of the sentence. For the first difficulty, only two solutions exist—memorizing the phrases and immersing yourself in the English language.

**TIP:** A good strategy for memorizing phrasal verbs is to make flash cards of phrases that you come across. You can write the phrase on one side of the card and draw or cut out a picture that depicts the phrase on the back of the card. Flash cards are very useful and can prove to be very successful.

Always remember that there can be several different idiomatic meanings for just one phrasal verb.

For the second difficulty, there are several different solutions depending on the construction of the phrasal verb. First of all, it is important to know that phrasal verbs can either be transitive (the verb takes a direct object) or intransitive (the verb cannot take a direct object).

Transitive phrases are those that can take a direct object. Some transitive verbal phrases are separable. That is, the verb can be separated from the preposition by a direct object. If the direct object is a noun it may or may not come between the verb and the preposition; however, if the direct object is a pronoun, it must come between the verb and the preposition.

There are no rules for helping you to determine which transitive phrases are inseparable; you just have to memorize them. In these cases the verb and the preposition or adverb cannot be separated by the direct object.

Intransitive phrases are those that do not take a direct object and cannot be separated.

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