

Chapter 5

Distribution and Use of Phrasal Verbs in NCERT ESL

Textbooks

5.1. Introduction

English phrasal verbs are claimed to be one of the most notoriously challenging aspects of English language instruction (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999; Gardner & Davies, 2007; Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007). Phrasal verbs are combinations of a lexical verb and an adverbial or prepositional particle that together denote a single semantic unit. It represents a complex area of English vocabulary and often creates a problem to non-native learners. It behaves more like a phrase than a single lexical unit used to represent a semantic content. English phrasal verbs can also be termed as verb phrase, discontinuous verb, compound verb, verb-adverb combination, and verb-particle construction (VPC) (McArthur, 1992). The particle not only represents a complex multi-word verb but also changes the original meaning of the verb and adds an extra meaning. The writing and speech of native speakers of English is full of phrasal verbs and expressions, especially in the spoken form of English. This takes us to the fact that native speakers of English use in their speech expressions like *hang on* instead of 'wait', *call up* instead of 'telephone' and many more. On the other hand, non-native speakers of English avoid using phrasal verbs constructions, especially those which are not frequently used, simply because they find them difficult to handle. The difficulty in handling these constructions is attributed to the fact that they are highly idiomatic, i.e., the total meaning of the combination may bear little or no relationship to the meaning of the individual words of combinations.

Owing to the importance of textbook as discussed in detail in Chapter 2, it should be taken into concern by the curriculum developers and textbook writers that they systematically introduce students to the literal and figurative meanings of phrasal verbs based on the frequency of usage and the cognitive maturity of the ESL learners. Therefore, a systematic exposure to the language becomes utmost important.

5.2. Role of Frequency in Teaching English Phrasal Verbs

Frequency of occurrences has a significant role to play in vocabulary learning primarily because they enhance the fluency or communicative efficiency by exposing students to the most frequent words used in a language. Also, as human cognition has an integral part to play in knowledge acquisition, a repetitive exposure creates an environment for such vocabulary consolidation to take place.

The current study is not only concerned with the frequencies of phrasal verbs, lexical verbs and the particles but also seeks to compare the frequency of occurrence of these items with the British National Corpus. This will shed some light on the fact if the design of the concerned textbooks complies with the corpus findings.

5.3. Review of Related Literature

In a recent study on the Malaysian ESL textbooks, Zarifi and Mukundan (2012) investigated the use of phrasal verb combinations in the spoken sections of the materials. They observed that both the selection and presentation of these structures were inconsistent with their natural function in the BNC. According to them, textbooks were not helpful to learners since they included combinations of words that are rarely used in ordinary English, while excluding combinations that are also rarely used.

Zamin et al. (2019) conducted a study where they analysed the use of phrasal verbs in Malaysian higher secondary school textbooks. They employed a corpus linguistic technique to determine the frequency of each phrasal verb. In addition, they compared the most commonly occurring phrasal verbs in each textbook and the list provided by Biber et al. (1999). The study demonstrates that the choice and arrangement of these combinations in the textbooks utilised in Malaysia rely primarily on the writers' intuition rather than on empirical research and pedagogical principles. The researchers discovered that the portrayal of phrasal verbs in the textbooks is inadequate. The study proposes that these constructions, which are rich in syntax and semantics, should be carefully chosen and represented by the individual.

Shubha (2021) conducted a study examining the use of phrasal verbs in the English language teaching (ELT) textbook for lower secondary schools in Bangladesh. The national government recommends the textbook for use throughout the country. This study adopts a methodological approach that employs corpus tools and conducts related analysis to analyse the presentation of phrasal verbs in textbooks. The study examines the presence of phrasal verbs in textbooks and analyses their frequency distribution. In addition, the researcher conducts a comparison between those constructions and the list of the most frequently used phrasal verbs (PVs) in the two most dependable English language corpora - The British National Corpus (BNC) and The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (Liu, 2011). The study examines the statistical significance, relative positions in relation to the reference corpora, and other scores linked to the corpus for the top fifteen Phrasal Verbs in the textbook corpus. The results suggest that the phrasal verbs found in the selected textbooks are not strongly connected to the two well-established major written or spoken language collections. In conclusion, the findings yield specific observations and consequences that can be utilised for educational purposes. This study provides the first

analysis of English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks for lower secondary education in Bangladesh, utilising the corpus approach.

5.4. Polysemous nature of English Phrasal Verbs

ESL/EFL students and learners from various backgrounds sometimes struggle to use phrasal verbs. Non-native speakers, in contrast to native speakers, do not possess the proficiency to utilise phrasal verbs proficiently and they also seem to lack the comprehension to grasp their intended significance. This issue is regarded as a challenge in the knowledge and skill level of non-native English speakers, as well as a deficiency in their efforts to master the English language. An explanation for the difficulty ESL/EFL students faces in understanding and using phrasal verbs in communication is that phrasal verbs in English have a meaning that is distinct from the individual words that make them up. Therefore, learners must understand the phrasal verb as a cohesive entity and not attempt to deduce its meaning by analysing the individual words (verb and particle) independently. The average of 5.6 meanings per PV implies that mastering the most used PVs in English involves understanding between 560 and 840 form-meaning connections, rather than just 100 or 150.

Let us, for example, consider the phrasal verb *look up* which comprises of the verb *look* and the particle *up*. Given below are the different meanings that this phrasal verb conveys.

1. The phrasal verb *look up* can refer to the act of conducting a search for information in a book or computer, as seen in the line "I will search for the meaning of this word in the dictionary."

2. The phrasal word *look up* can also denote "visiting someone whom you haven't visited in a significant amount of time," as exemplified by the statement "I will look her up on my next visit to Egypt."
3. This phrasal verb, for example, also signifies that "things are improving" in the sense of "things seem to be *looking up*," indicating that things are becoming better or improving. (McCarthy & O'Dell, 2004, page 6).

5.5. Syntactic features of English Phrasal Verbs

While analysing the syntactic features of English Phrasal Verbs we would delve into three major aspects. These are

1. Characteristics of the Constituent Particles
2. Transitive and Intransitive Phrasal Verb Construction
3. Separable and Inseparable Phrasal Verbs

Fraser's significant work in 1974 focuses on the syntactic aspects pertaining to the verbal constituents found within phrasal verbs. As per the theoretical framework posited by him, it is postulated that the particle, which denotes the second constituent of a phrasal verb, exhibits the capability of being affixed to both transitive and intransitive verbs. He directs our attention towards the verbs mentioned above and their potential functionalities. When lexical verbs undergo the process of "phrasalisation," they undergo a transformation from a transitive state to an intransitive state, or vice versa. This can be illustrated by an example given below.

1. She *turned on* the lights as it started getting dark (transitive construction)
2. As she entered the room, the lights automatically *turned on* (intransitive construction).

If we take the first sentence *turned on* takes a direct object, i.e. ‘the lights’ whereas in the second sentence, *turned on* does not take any object thereby behaving intransitively.

5.5.1. Characteristics of the Constituent Particle in the PV Construction

The second element that affixes itself for the construction of a phrasal verb which can be either adverb or a preposition is referred to as a particle. As per Jowett (1964), the significance of the particle in this construction cannot be overstated, as it possesses the ability to modify the semantic implications of the verb and, on occasion, introduce novel connotations. Consequently, these particles fulfil the function of generating novel verb forms. An illustrative example can be found in the transformation of the verb 'make' when conjoined with the particle 'out', resulting in a novel signification denoting 'comprehension' in its phrasalised form. Hence, it becomes imperative to delve into the inherent attributes of said particles. Jowett (1964) enumerates five distinct functions attributed to these particles, which shall be talked about below.

The semantic interpretation of particles undergoes a transformation when they are conjoined with verbs, resulting in a phrasalised construction that alters the overall meaning. An illustrative instance can be observed when the particle 'up' conjoins with the lexical verb 'give' to generate the composite unit *give up*, thereby endowing this linguistic construction with the signification of 'to accept defeat'.

1. In certain instances, when the particles conjugate with lexical verbs, it does not alter their semantic content, yet it does introduce an additional layer of dimension to the verb's meaning. Let us take for example, the combination of the verb "speak" with the adverb "out" imparts a sense of ‘speaking loudly’ rather than completely altering the meaning.
2. There are instances where the particles impart a sense of completion (aspectual information) to the verb it combines with. This can be instantiated by the example,

when the particle 'up' combines with the verb 'drink' to form the phrasal verb *drink up* indicating thereby the sense of completion.

3. Particles also fulfil the function of establishing collocational relationships. In instances of this nature, meaning is inherently constitutive, as exemplified by the phrase *go out*.
4. In certain cases, particles exhibit a functional resemblance to prepositions, with a stronger syntactic connection to the verb. The prepositions under consideration exhibit a distinct characteristic in comparison to pure prepositions, namely, the potential for omission of their subsequent complement while maintaining comprehensibility through contextual cues. This can be understood by the following example:

"He left the mobile upstairs and went down." (stairs).

The omission of the term 'stairs' would not result in any alteration of the conveyed meaning.

5.5.2. Transitivity of Phrasal Verbs

Based on the structural configuration of the constitutive elements of English phrasal verbs i.e. a lexical verb and a particle (adverbial/prepositional), English phrasal verbs can be transitive or intransitive in nature. Context plays an important role in the determination of transitivity of English PVs. What distinguishes transitive phrasal verbs from an intransitive phrasal verb is the fact that transitive phrasal verbs take an object while intransitive do not take an object with them. Since they cannot take an object with them therefore, they cannot be passivised. Stageberg (1965, p.225) denotes transitive phrasal verb construction as (VAC+ O) and intransitive phrasal verbs as simply VAC. Here VAC is the 'verb adverbial construction and O is the 'direct object that immediately follows this construction. In instances, where a pronoun acts as an object of the phrasal verb, it is placed

before the constitutive particle thereby resulting in a split configuration as in the following example,

I read the news and decided to call her up (not ‘call up her’)

In constructions where a preposition immediately follows the phrasal verb, the object follows the preposition. The following example can illustrate this.

- a. The Government has *cut down* on the use of plastic bags.
- b. She *came out* of the room as soon as she heard the noise.

On the other hand, Stageberg (1965) enlists three characteristics of intransitive phrasal verbs referred to as VAC. These are as follows: -

1. Some intransitive phrasal verbs exhibit semantic information that is different from the combined meanings of their constituent elements. These entities are discretely stored within the cognitive repository known as the mental lexicon, alongside the corresponding semantic representations of their respective constituent elements.

For example,

He *turned up* late for the examination (arrived)

2. The immovability of the adverbial component within the intransitive verb-argument construction (VAC) is a salient characteristic. The construction provided below exhibits ungrammaticality within the English language.

*He *turned* late generally *up* for the examination.

In the sentence above *up* cannot be moved away from *turned* and be placed anywhere in the sentence.

3. The verb and the adverbial particle cannot be separated, i.e. they are inseparable. As Stageberg (1065) notes that if there is a modifier insertion in between the verb and the adverbial particle, the resulting sentence is ungrammatical. For example,

*He *turned* generally *up* for the examination.

Inserting *generally* in between the verb *turned* and *up* makes it an ill-formed construction.

5.5.3. Phrasal Verbs and Their Separability

Given that phrasal verbs constitute an indispensable component of communication and conceivably one of the most difficult aspects thereof, it becomes imperative for learners to acquire a comprehensive grasp of their separable and inseparable nature. The differentiation in question is of utmost importance, as it pertains to the categorization of phrasal verbs into those that permit separation and those that do not. Despite the potential for phrasal verbs to undergo detachment, it is important to note that the resulting phrase may exhibit a markedly distinct semantic interpretation.

I saw the plan through. (through as a particle)

I saw through the plan. (through as a preposition)

5.6. Semantic Features of English Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal Verbs in English are of three types: -

1. Literal Phrasal Verbs
2. Aspectual Phrasal Verbs
3. Idiomatic Phrasal Verbs

These are discussed below in detail.

1. Literal Phrasal Verbs

Literal phrasal verbs are the ones whose meaning is the sum of meaning of its individual components. Literal phrasal verbs are composed of a verb and a particle that substitutes a prepositional phrase (Jackendoff, 2002, p. 74), e.g. (1a) has the same meaning as (1b). The particle can normally occur in either position before or after the direct object noun phrase, as (1a) shows.

(1) (a) Beth *took* the food *in/took in* the food. (phrasal verb)

(b) Beth took the food into the house. (verb + prepositional phrase)

As their meaning is transparent, literal phrasal verbs are not stored in the mental lexicon (ibid., p. 75) and are learner-friendly (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999, p. 432).

2. Aspectual Phrasal Verbs

Aspectual phrasal verbs are semi-idiomatic in nature. The particle modifies the aspect of the verb root, including the meanings of inception, continuation, iteration, and completion (ibid., p. 432), e.g. (2a–d, respectively). Since the particle functions as an optional modifier, it is frequently omissible and sometimes even redundant (Jackendoff, 2002, pp. 76-77), as signalled by bracketing in the following examples:

2. (a) Jake started (up) a business in London.

(b) The nightingale *sang* (*on*) until the Emperor fell asleep.

(c) *I need to write an essay (over).

(d) The baby *drank* (*up*) her milk.

Jackendoff (ibid., p. 80) maintains that some, but not all, aspectual phrasal verbs need to be stored in the mental lexicon. It follows then that these phrasal verbs can pose a problem to learners of English, as noted by Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1999, p. 433).

3. Idiomatic Phrasal Verbs

Idiomatic phrasal verbs are the semantic grade of phrasal verbs that poses the greatest problem to learners of English. The reason is that their meaning cannot be deduced from the individual meanings of the verb root and the particle, e.g. (3). Given their semantic non-compositionality, idiomatic phrasal verbs must be stored as units in the mental lexicon (Jackendoff, 2002, p. 73). Let us elucidate this with examples 3a-c.

3. (a) Namrata figures out the answer to the second question on the test. ‘Solve’
- (b) Sunanda just keeps putting off going to the dentist. ‘Delay’
- (c) I am sorry your grandfather has passed away. ‘Die’

5.7. Pedagogical Challenges in English Phrasal Verbs

Regardless of their background, learners of English as a second or foreign language may be unable to communicate effectively and natively due to their incapacity to comprehend phrasal verbs, either by misinterpreting their meaning when listening to native English speakers or by misusing them when speaking English.

Thyab, (2019). enlists certain problems linked with the instruction of phrasal verbs.

These include: -

1. Lack of exposure to the phrasal verbs
2. Lack of inclusion of phrasal verbs as a common vocabulary in the teaching context, classroom and in the materials used in the learning-teaching program.
3. Dearth of knowledge on the way phrasal verbs can be dealt with in the classroom.

The students' proficiency in comprehending and employing phrasal verbs is undeniably impacted by their familiarity with their native language. The consequences of L1 interference in relation to prepositions and particles have extensive repercussions. The issue lies in the fact that interference is not solely limited to language, but also extends to the realm of concepts (Side 1990, p. 145).

5.8. Textbook Representation of Phrasal Verbs

A major problem that ESL teachers face is to decide upon which phrasal verbs or multiword items should be included in a syllabus and taught to learners. When making this decision, it is most logical to consider a frequency count, as suggested by Liu (2011). This aligns with the notion that language training should be based on real-life language usage. Moreover, the actual frequency of occurrence is a more dependable measure of utility as compared to pure intuition (Hunston, 2002; Schmitt, 2010).

Phrasal verbs are commonly known as multi-word expressions that bridge the gap between vocabulary and grammar (Gass & Selinker, 2001). These words are not only difficult to understand in terms of their meaning, but they are also challenging since they can take on several grammatical structures. Although there has been extensive discussion on the teaching of phrasal verbs, there has been a lack of research on how these structures are grammatically presented in English Language Teaching (ELT) materials (Zarifi, 2013).

Trebits (2009, p. 471) argues that language teaching and materials development do not consider research findings pertaining to the representation of phrasal verbs. Side (1990, p. 144) suggests that the challenges of phrasal verbs are sometimes exacerbated by teachers is when they imply that there is no systematic approach to learning them and the only way to master them is through memorisation. Gass, Behney, & Plonsky, (2020), observes that only a small number of coursebooks consider these and other discoveries from second language acquisition research, such as the importance of encountering vocabulary within a framework of structure and meaning for effective acquisition. In addition, Biber and Reppen (2002, p. 200) observe that the choices made by material authors on the content of learning materials have typically relied on the author's subjective instincts and informal evidence of how language is used by speakers and writers.

5.9. Research Questions

The major research questions addressed in this chapter are as follow

1. What are the most frequent particles, lexical verbs and phrasal verbs found in the NCERT English textbooks designed for grades 1, II & III?
2. Are the particles, lexical verbs, and phrasal verbs in accordance with their frequencies in the British National Corpus?
3. What are the semantic and syntactic patterns in which these phrasal verbs are represented in the NCERT English textbooks for grades 1-III?

5.10. Methodology and Materials

Looking at the general structure of a typical ESL textbooks, it has two parts: the first part contains the text through which the students are exposed to the target vocabulary and grammatical items in context, the second part comprises of exercises or practice sets through which the target linguistic items are practised which were introduced in the first section. Our analysis incorporated the phrasal verbs in both the sections. Sentences containing English Phrasal Verbs (EPVs) in the target ESL textbooks were identified manually. Subsequently, the combinations of the constituent elements of EPVs (i.e., the lexical verb and the particle) were also identified and their frequency and percentage were calculated. A comparison was then done on three different levels with the BNC First, the lexical verbs (LVs) that contribute in the making of these phrasal verbs were compared with the top 20 lexical verb lemmas functioning in phrasal verb constructions in BNC (Gardner & Davies, 2007). Further, the particles found in the phrasal verb construction in the target textbook were also compared with the 16 most frequent particles in phrasal verb construction in BNC (Gardner & Davies, 2007). EPVs were then classified based on their structural patterns and semantic nature in the NCERT grade 1 to III textbooks. The

theoretical background adopted for the examination of English Phrasal Verbs were the syntactic and semantic characteristics and classification of phrasal verbs in English language. The standards of comparison of Phrasal Verbs and its constituent elements have been taken from the works accounting for the frequency of phrasal verbs in the British National Corpus and frequency rank of the constituents of phrasal verbs are taken from Gardner & Davies, 2007.

5.11. Result & Discussion

5.11.1. Grade-wise Analysis

The table in Appendix C illustrates the Lexical Verbs and the particles they combine with found in grades 1-III along with their frequency.

In Grade 1, (Appendix C1) the cumulative frequency of Phrasal Verbs is 34. The verb *look* is the most used lexical verb, appearing 13 times and accounting for 38.2% of the total occurrences. The particle *at* is the most common, appearing 12 times and accounting for 35.2% of all particles identified.

Lexical Verb-Particle combination found in Grade II are presented in Appendix C2.

35 lexical verbs combine with 12 particles to yield 112 tokens of phrasal verbs which is the highest in the three grades. Lexical verbs like *look* and *go* combine with 5 particles each followed by *come* that combines with 4 particles. *Out* and *at* are the most frequent particles with a frequency of 26 and 23 respectively.

Appendix C3 presents the list of Phrasal Verbs in Grade 3. 19 lexical verbs combine with 12 particles to yield 68 instances of phrasal verbs. The lexical verb *go* combines with 5 particles (*into, back, by, up, and on*) followed by *look* that combines with 4 particles (*at, after, up, and down*). *Look at* is the most frequent phrasal verb followed by *pull up* with a

frequency of 17 and 7 respectively. *Up* and *at* are the most frequent particles found with a frequency of 23 and 17 respectively.

5.11.2. Overall Analysis

The total frequency of the Phrasal Verbs across the three grades in the NCERT English textbooks is 214. Their frequency distribution across the three grades is depicted below.

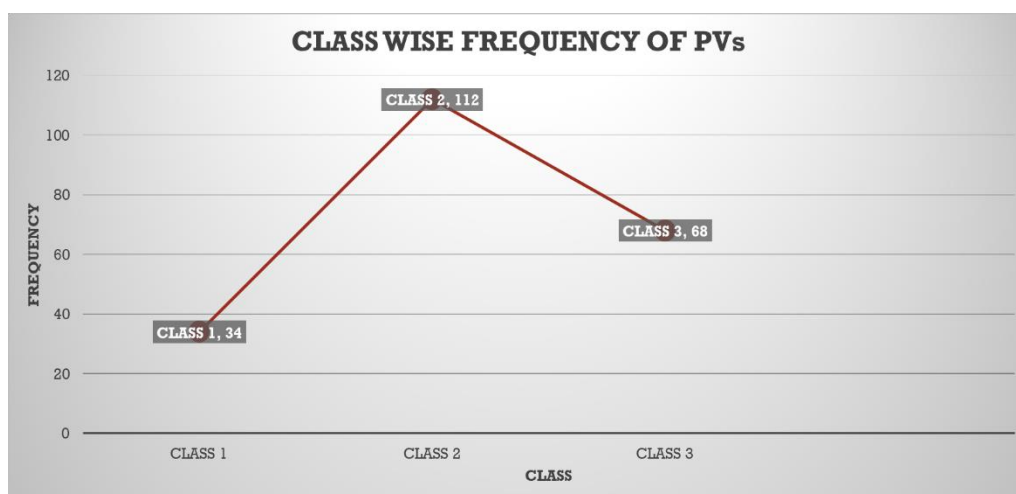


Fig 5.1: Frequency Distribution of Phrasal Verbs across the three grades in the NCERT English textbooks

There seems to be an uneven distribution of phrasal verbs across the three grades. Generally, the frequency should ascend with grades. However, we found that phrasal verbs in Grade 2 is almost 3.3 times more than Grade 1 and 1.6 times more in Grade 3.

In the tables below we will delve into the most frequent lexical verbs, particles and phrasal verbs found in the NCERT English textbooks (for grades 1, II, & III) and compare their ranking with the British National Corpus.

Table 5.1: 10 most frequent Lexical Verbs across the three grades in the NCERT English Textbooks

Rank in the textbook	Lexical Verb	Frequency	Rank in the BNC
1	Look	60	9
2	Go	20	1
3	Come	15	2
4	Get	11	4
5	Pull	10	*
6	Wake	9	*
7	Call	6	*
8	Take	6	3
9	Grow	6	*
10	Act	5	*

* Signifies absence in the BNC

The table above shows 10 most frequent lexical verbs that take part in phrasal verb construction in the given NCERT ESL textbooks. There seems to be a notable difference in the frequency of the most frequent LV *look* and other LVs. The lexical verb *go* combine with the most number of particles (8) namely, *out, on, away, up, down, into, back* and *by*, followed by *look* which combines with 7 particles like *at, into, at, up, down, for* and *after*. Five of the Lexical Verbs (i.e. 50%) find a spot in the list of most frequent LVs in the BNC while five of them do not.

Table 5.2: Distribution of Particles across the three grades in the NCERT English Textbooks

Rank	Particle	Grade 1	Grade II	Grade III	Total
1	At	12	23	17	52
2	Up	5	12	23	40
3	Out	4	26	7	37
4	Down	1	13	1	15
5	Away	3	10	1	14
6	Off	2	10	1	13
7	Back	0	5	5	10
8	On	1	4	4	9
9	Into	2	2	3	7
10	In	3	4	0	7
11	By	0	0	3	3
12	After	0	0	2	2
13	Along	1	1	0	2
14	Over	0	2	0	2
15	About	0	0	1	1
	Total	34	112	68	214

10 particles have been introduced in the Grade 1 textbook. Two new particles *back* and *over* have been introduced in Grade 2 and three new particles namely, *by*, *after*, and *about* are introduced in Grade 3. The particle *at* is the most frequent across the three grades accounting for 24.3% of the total particle found in the target textbooks. The top five particles, i.e. *at*, *up*, *out*, *down*, and *away*, account for 73.8% of the total particle

occurrences. Here, in the table below we will illustrate the comparison between the particles found in the textbook with that found in the BNC.

Table 5.3: Comparison of Ranks of Particles in the NCERT English textbooks and the British National Corpus

Rank in textbook	Particle	Rank in BNC
1	At	*
2	Up	1
3	Out	2
4	Down	4
5	Away	*
6	Off	6
7	Back	*
8	On	5
9	Into	*
10	In	7

* Signifies absence in the BNC

As is evident from the table above that four particles (*at, back, into* and *away*) that are present in the textbook in the top 10 particles list, do not align with the ranking order in the BNC. 60% of the particles found in the NCERT textbooks align with the particles found in the BNC.

Table 5.4: Comparison of 15 most frequent Phrasal Verbs across the three grades in the NCERT English Textbooks with the BNC

Rank in the textbook	Phrasal Verb	Frequency	Rank in BNC Corpus
1	Look at	51	*
2	Wake up	9	*
3	Come back	7	6
4	Blow down	7	*
5	Pull up	7	*
6	Go out	6	7
7	Get off	6	66
8	Call out	6	*
9	Act out	5	*
10	Go on	4	1
11	Grow up	4	*
12	Put up	4	*
13	Take off	4	42
14	Get into	3	*
15	Sweep away	3	*

* Signifies absence in the BNC

The 15 most frequent phrasal verb account for 59% of the total occurrences. *Look at* is the most frequent phrasal verb found across the three grades. Surprisingly, if we look at the phrasal verb at the second position (*wake up*), we would see a huge frequency gap. 10 of the PVs found in the textbooks are absent in the BNC indicating to the fact that the most frequent phrasal verbs used in the British English are not represented in the textbooks. It is also noteworthy that the most frequent phrasal verb in the textbook *look at* does not appear in the list of 100 most frequent phrasal verbs in the BNC. Only three phrasal verbs

in the textbooks, i.e. *go on*, *come back*, and *go out* are in the top 10 list of most frequent phrasal verbs in the BNC. The remaining two phrasal verbs found in the textbooks, i.e. *take off* and *get off* occupy the 42nd and 66th positions respectively

5.11.3. Syntactic Classification of Phrasal Verbs

In the table below, we will delve into the syntactic distribution of the Phrasal Verbs found in the given NCERT ESL textbooks. We have divided the phrasal verbs based on their transitivity. Further the transitive phrasal verbs are divided into joint and split configuration.

Table 5.5: Syntactic Distribution of Phrasal Verbs across the three grades in the NCERT English textbooks

Sl. No	Syntactic Categories		Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
1.	Transitive	Split	0	18	3
		Joint	26	63	44
2.	Intransitive		8	31	21

28% of the phrasal verbs found across the three grades are intransitive in nature. Out of the 72% of the transitive verbs that we found, 86% of them are in joint configuration while the remaining 14% are in split configuration. The pie-charts presented below elucidates the fact.

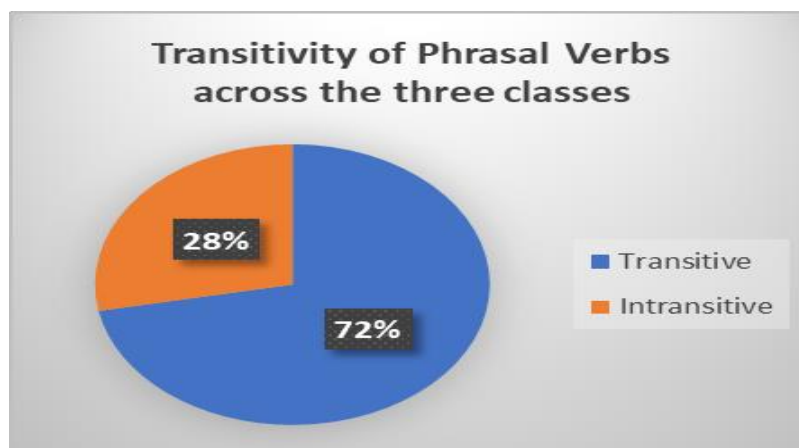


Fig 5.2: Distribution of Transitive and Intransitive Phrasal Verbs across the three grades in the NCERT textbooks

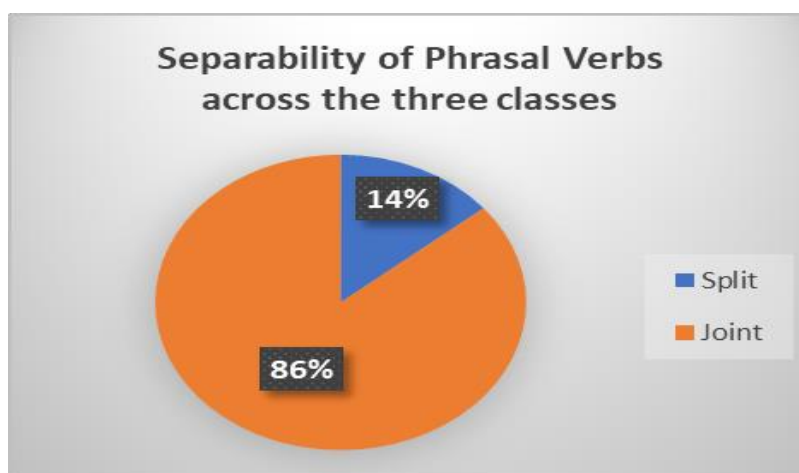


Fig 5.3: Distribution of Split and joint Phrasal Verbs across the three grades in the NCERT textbooks

5.11.4. Semantic Classification of Phrasal Verbs

The table below, illustrates the semantic distribution of phrasal verbs in the said textbooks across the three grades.

Table 5.6: Semantic Distribution of Phrasal Verbs across the three grades in the NCERT English textbooks

Sl. No	Semantic Categories	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
1.	Literal	26	106	62
2.	Aspectual	0	3	1
3.	Idiomatic	8	3	5

In the table above, we see the predominance of literal phrasal verbs in all the three grades. Temporal phrasal verbs are not introduced in Grade 1 and has comparatively less frequency in Grade II and Grade III.

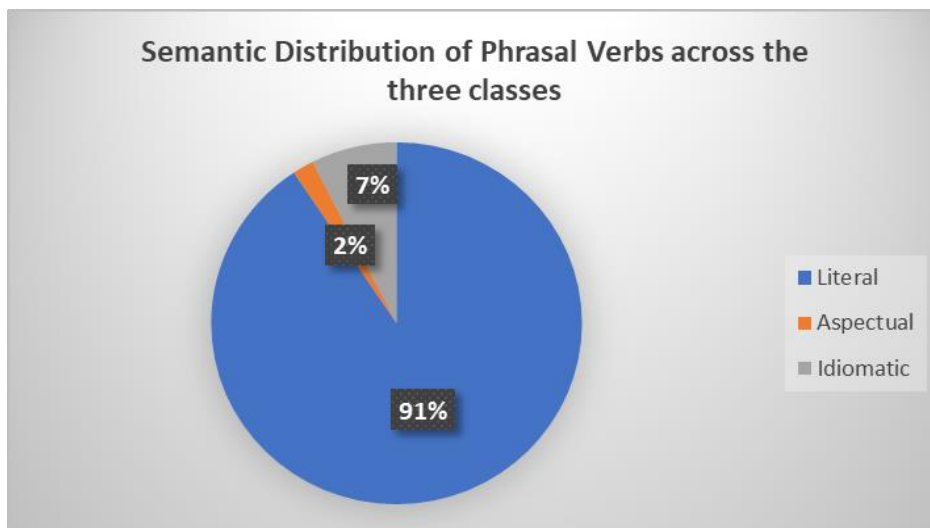


Fig 5.4: Distribution of Literal, Aspectual and Idiomatic Phrasal Verbs across the three grades in the NCERT English textbooks

The pie-chart above clearly depicts the pre-dominance of literal phrasal verbs over aspectual and idiomatic phrasal verbs. As discussed earlier, literal phrasal verbs carry meaning that can be deciphered from the meanings of its individual constituent. Therefore, they do not need to be stored in the mental lexicon as a separate entity. This is however not the case with idiomatic phrasal verbs. Since the overall meaning has nothing to do with the

meaning if its individual elements, they are required to be stored as a separate lexical entity in our mind which makes it difficult for the learners.

5.12. Discussion

Phrasal verbs are highly significant in ESL textbooks as they are commonly used in everyday English communication and play a crucial role in helping learners become fluent and natural in the language. The main aim of this study was two-fold. The first was to examine the phrasal verbs in the NCERT Indian ESL textbooks developed for grades 1, II and III and compare the findings against their respective rank with the most frequent PVs in BNC. Secondly it was to look at the semantic and syntactic patterns that these phrasal verbs exhibited.

In total, 214 occurrences of PVs were observed in the NCERT English textbooks developed for Grades 1, II & III. These 214 occurrences consist of 43 distinct lexical verbs in combination with 12 different particles accounting for 214 distinct phrasal verbs in the target textbooks. Subsequently, the comparison of these phrasal verbs against the most frequent list of phrasal verbs in BNC reveals that there seems to be a significant disparity between the frequency distribution of the phrasal verbs in the selected corpora and the target textbooks.

Only five phrasal verbs, i.e., *go on*, *come back*, *go out*, *take off*, and *get off*, finds a spot in the BNC corpus at the 1st, 6th, 7th, 42nd, and 66th position respectively. Other phrasal verbs do not find a spot in the 100 most frequent phrasal verbs in the BNC. This indicates that the selection of phrasal verbs fails to adhere to corpus-informed findings and research in language teaching.

The next research question aimed at identifying the diverse syntactic and semantic patterns of the phrasal verbs in the target textbooks. The findings reveal that most

occurrences are transitive constructions (accounting for 72% of total occurrences). However, certain instances of intransitive constructions are also observed, and it accounts for 28% of the total occurrences. As evidenced from Chart 3 presented above, we can see the predominance of literal phrasal verbs (91%) over aspectual phrasal verbs (2%) and idiomatic phrasal verbs (7%). This implies that semantic complexities have been taken care of while representing them in the textbooks. However, the dominance of idiomatic phrasal verbs over aspectual phrasal verbs raises concern. We, therefore, suggest that aspectual phrasal verbs should be introduced before idiomatic phrasal verbs, as on the complexities level, the aspectual phrasal verbs are partially compositional in the sense that the verb retains its basic/core meaning, and the particle provides aspectual information (completion, inception, progression, etc.) to the action represented by the verb.

Our study noticed that the distribution of phrasal verbs was uneven and random. This may indicate that the selection was based on intuition rather than corpus-based evidence. Corpus findings have greater significance in the design and development of instructional material. Alavi and Rajabpoor (2015) explain that learners might tend to become more selective in learning, preferring to accelerate their learning time on items that occur more frequently in the language and are more practical. In addition, the implementation of corpus-based approaches to select vocabulary and phraseological units – as proposed by several authors (Minugh, 2002; Liu, 2011; Simpson & Mendis, 2003; Grant, 2005; Gardner & Davis, 2007), could prove more reliable – especially when it comes to the objectivity of the resulting selection. Koprowski (2005) expressed discontent with the absence of uniformity among textbooks, noting that developers of English Language Teaching (ELT) materials do not adhere to any systematic criterion when selecting vocabulary items like phrasal verbs. They make subjective decisions about which items to select and include, relying on their experience and intuition. Similarly, McPartland (1989,

p. 155) affirms that the regular use of phrasal verbs in language input appears to speed up the process of language acquisition, regardless of the complexity of meaning and structure. Studies like these holds great potential since instructional materials play a crucial role in English as a Second Language (ESL) learning environments. The language input in textbooks is a probable factor contributing to the challenges faced by ESL learners in acquiring complex language elements like phrasal verbs.

Students' exposure to vocabulary is very critical at this foundational stage, and therefore, it is important to critically evaluate the textbooks to gain insights into the vocabulary they are being exposed to. To have better exposure to complex lexical items like phrasal verbs, the curriculum planners and developers can consult the available frequent lists of these items. On the other hand, teachers should also be aware of the most frequent phrasal verbs and should, therefore, design exercises to compensate for the shortcomings of the textbooks. This would help the learners enhance their proficiency and command over the language.