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Understanding the semantics of phrasal verbs

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Abstract

The present paper aims to investigate and examine the semantic features of phrasal verbs at the EFL level. The main objectives of conducting this study are to recognize some semantic features associated with language acquisition and to review the semantic structures of these phrasal verbs. Because of their intricate semantic patterns, which include polysemy and idiomatic usage, phrasal verbs (PVs) pose a substantial barrier to students learning English as a foreign language (EFL) as well as second language (L2) learners. The importance of phrasal verbs in the English language, as well as the difficulties learners encounter in mastering them, are examined in the present paper. PVs are quite common in both spoken and written English, according to the statistical investigation of corpus data, such as the British National Corpus (BNC), underscoring their crucial role in developing fluency. Despite being widely used, PVs can be difficult because of their polysemous character and erratic verb-particle combinations. The understanding of polysemy in L2 learners has not received enough attention in the literature, which has concentrated on receptive and productive knowledge regarding PVs. This study looks at the semantic characteristics of PVs, classifying them as literal, semi-transparent, and idiomatic. It also highlights the necessity of specialized teaching strategies to assist students in navigating these complications. The study concludes that in order to enhance both comprehension and production in EFL situations, language teaching must pay close attention to PVs' complex syntactic and semantic characteristics. Achieving native-like fluency and competency in English, especially in casual speech, requires effective mastery of PVs. Finally, this paper proposes that as lexical items, phrasal verbs are certainly one of the greatest problematic tasks in education. This paper additionally offers the related past studies on this subject and presents the outcomes of these studies.

Keywords: Figurative phrasal verbs, language acquisition, lexical items, phrasal verbs, semantic features.

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1. Introduction

English has evolved into a global language that is widely spoken all over the world [1, 2]. It enjoys a special status as the universal language in all areas of the humanities, sciences, social sciences, trade, and diplomacy.

PVs are used to group verbs, prepositions, adverbs, and participles that have a certain level of idiom, which assumes that phrasal verbs possess semantic purposes that are outside the number of their parts Pütz and Niemeier [3] and Kharitonova [4]. Celce-Murcia et al. [5] offer a broader interpretation of phrasal verbs and classify phrasal verbs into three semantic classes: literal or transparent phrasal verbs, idiomatic PVs, and aspectual PVs. They do not classify literal PVs as PVs even when they feature components that seem to retain a large portion of the connotation they have (This is comparable to the "non-idiomatic constructs" proposed by Quirk et al. [6]. In the context of these examples, it may be possible to restore the senses of sit and down in sit down by simply combining the senses of the two elements (p. 432).

Furthermore, understanding the utilization of phrasal verbs is a problematic issue for learners to develop and acquire their EFL skills. This is because their knowledge and acquaintance with the English language are very restricted to a classroom [7]. Learners learning English phrasal verbs in an EFL setting face problems in many syntactic and semantic structural issues, especially when selecting phrases and building ideas about a specific writing theme. More significantly, they encounter problems expanding phraseology skills, such as the suitable use of phrases in a natural situation within a different social setting in a resourceful manner [8].

2. Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs (henceforth PVs) are a group of standard expressions that are extremely common in English, specifically in spoken and written communication. The statistical evidence from corpus data related to the 100-million-word British National Corpus (BNC) has shown that learners can identify one PV for every 192 English words, or on average, two PVs on every page in a transcript [9-11]. Furthermore, since prescribed language is now recognized as an essential component of the English lexicon, L2 learners should recognize it in order to develop fluent and proficient language [12, 13].

Moreover, word occurrence and practicality are not always equivalent in vocabulary study; the more frequently a word occurs in an L2, the more beneficial it is to recognize [14-16]. So, there is little doubt that identifying extremely common PVs is vital for convenient language employment, also studies are required to measure the knowledge of these objects in L2 learning. Though phrasal verbs are considered greatly polysemous [10, 17], not many investigations till the present time have considered this polysemy when investigating the knowledge of L2 students of PVs [18, 19]. As far as we know, only four recent studies have looked at this problem: Al-Khasawneh et al. [20]; Garnier and Schmitt [19]; Omidian et al. [21], and Zhang and Wen [22]. Zhang and Wen [22] evaluated receptive knowledge, whereas Garnier and Schmitt [19] evaluated productive knowledge. Because the two studies used different PVs, operationalized certain aspects (such as opacity) differently, focused on distinct EFL groups, and significantly used different measurements (receptive vs productive), the results cannot be directly compared. It is crucial to compare the receptive and productive degrees of proficiency as they are separate but connected parts of vocabulary knowledge [23]. In their 2019 study, Omidian et al. [21] compared receptive and productive PV knowledge. Nevertheless, most evaluated items only had one sense, negating the goal of studying polysemous PVs [24].

Furthermore, phrasal verbs in EFL are particularly perplexing for various learners of English in the context of foreign language (EFL) and second language (ESL) for their structural developments and semantic connotations [11, 25]. They are integrally problematic for foreign language (FL) students to master [26]. They are not simply ample but also semantically and syntactically difficult. Furthermore, Students find PVs difficult to understand and avoid them because of the unpredictable verb and particle combination as well as the phrasal verbs' complex syntactical and semantical arrangements [7, 27, 28]. FL students' difficulties with PVs, whether syntactical, semantical, or combinations, are improved by the extremely creative setting of English PVs [29, 30].

Additionally, learner-related studies have exposed that EFL learners of English are inclined to be rather stylistically poor when applying PVs, in which they do not seem fully aware of the variances between spoken and written informal English. De Cock [31] claims that learners' spoken language sometimes exhibits a "formal and bookish" tone and that their formal writing regularly incorporates speech-like patterns, which includes the incorrect use of PVs. Remarkably, De Cock asserts that the use of PVs in writing by learners can be linked to the influence of the learner's native language (L1). In particular, she asserts that the structures of PVs "are not patent for style" in certain languages, such as Dutch, German, or Swedish, and that they might apply fairly to informal writing and speech.

PVs are said to be difficult for ESL students to learn since they are impulsive, polysemous, recurring, and non-universal, according to White [32]. They can occasionally have accurate connotations (stand up), aspectual (speak up), or idiomatic (butter up). Therefore, they are changing [33]. They are regarded as polysemous, and one PV can take many connotations. Learners turn in homework, criminals are turned in to authorities, and when individuals go to bed, they turn in for the night. Gardner and Davies [10] state that students will face an average of one PV formation for every 150 English utterances they are introduced to, with native speakers often using PVs (p. 347).

3. Understanding the Phrasal Verbs' Significance

Without being aware of the use of PVs, a learner cannot understand a range of languages [5]. Since PVs are important components of native-like discourse, non-native speakers can be perceived as affected and out of place if they do not employ them [34]. According to Cornell [35], the large number of existing PVs also contributes to the significance of PVs. At least 3000 registered PVs and 700 PVs operate normally in English daily [35, 36].

The importance of teaching PVs, enhancing accessible consciousness, and developing the ability to produce them is stated by Armstrong [37]: Despite their intricacy, phrasal verbs require training at certain stages due to their generality, creative and reasonable structure, and importance in the language system; as Bolinger [38] puts it, they create "an explosion of lexical creativeness that surpasses anything else in our language."

Additionally, all students acquire at least open awareness, enabling them to comprehend the PVs they encounter in spoken and non-spoken texts. Students who want to develop into proficient users must be able to produce at least the more general PV combinations in an applicable manner [34]. The challenge of PVs has been highlighted to English students in various linguistics educational resources and ESL readings by many linguists alongside learners interested in ESL/EFL research. Specifically, Particle, preposition, and P-form are some of the most challenging forms for non-native English speakers to acquire while learning the language, according to O'Dowd [39]. Also, Celce-Murcia et al. [5] mentioned, "For EFL/ESL learners, we are again dealing with a structure that is considered problematic."

Furthermore, PVs are commonly seen as challenging in terms of teaching, learning, and using second languages, according to Moon [40]. The PVs' connotation is the most challenging aspect. Despite some semantic systematicity, enough idiomaticity still exists to cause complications for ESL/EFL learners. Consequently, PVs are often non-compositional and have a distinctive meaning; in other words, one can identify the genuine sense of the Particle and the connotation of the verb, but when they are joined, an extraordinary connotation results [5].

PVs are defined by Siyanova and Schmitt [34] as holding two or more orthographic expressions together, making it difficult to recognize them as having one semantic component. Students are encouraged to attempt to figure out the meanings of the individual words if they recognize the sequence of words as multiword verbs. ESL/EFL learners may also experience issues with the PV register.

According to Siyanova-Chanturia et al. [41], the issue for students is not choosing a verb form with the correct meaning as it choosing a verb with the appropriate register that adheres to the language community's expectations. Therefore, choosing multiword verbs correctly and their one-word counterparts helps learners shift successfully and communicatively. For example, many English language learners tend to sound unnatural and non-idiomatic when not using multiword verbs in their talk [24].

Furthermore, the number of non-Germanic languages with PVs is quite limited. Conversely, PV employment in English is highly regular. They differ from verbs in many different languages throughout the world. Consequently, the majority of learners of English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) will see these verbs as peculiar and troublesome [42]. Without comprehending PVs, it is impossible to converse or comprehend English, at least the informal language. However, English language learners do not understand this and may misuse one-word verbs when PVs would be significantly more appropriate. Furthermore, the circumstances that govern the verb's and the Particle's optional or compulsory departure for PVs are applied transitively; any nominal or pronominal objects about the verb are assigned [40, 43].

Furthermore, definite particles in the category of semi-transparent PVs have a certain consistency of meaning. However, ESL and EFL students may encounter challenges. For example, blow down and blow up do not constitute antonyms since down implies a more undesired full extinction meaning, but up has a desirable goal fulfillment meaning. Additionally, some particles in the semi-transparent category are difficult to assign to any verb since they consistently convey positive meanings [44].

According to Thim [45] and Trebits [46], fade-up is not customary, whereas fade-out is. According to Cornell [35], PV polysemy manifests as a learning difficulty. This is because a particular verb + particle blend may not be polysomic if it contains both an idiomatic and non-idiomatic implementation; however, it may be polysomic if it possesses multiple idiomatic functions.

According to Vilkaitė [47], there is more than one idiomatic and non-idiomatic function of put-up. The idiomatic phrase "put up" can have several meanings, such as the boy put them up for the evening. Who put them up to this? She put up an amazing fight. English language learners were found not to employ PVs frequently despite their semantic and syntactic challenges. Numerous studies in the field of SL acquisition have shown that PVs should be avoided [32, 48].

Many academics, motivated by Schachter's [49] study, which initially highlighted the avoidance of relative clauses, studied the avoidance of PVs. This is covered in multiple research efforts in the literature review of avoidance occurrence and mostly empirical studies on ESL/EFL language learners' avoidance PVs [50-52].

To sum up, this researcher believes that EFL teachers might use phraseology to analyze their methods, particularly about phrasal verbs, and to look at how students communicate and engage when studying EFL. Language learners can learn more about phraseology and how it is applied to achieve interaction goals in various syntactic-semantic situations by using phrasal verbs appropriately [5].

Phraseology could assist language instructors and students in designing an EFL classroom that mirrors the usage of ESL and EFL and motivates students to become proficient in a second language. The researcher concurs with phraseology experts that both form and content are necessary for successful phrasal verb acquisition at the syntactic and semantic levels. Furthermore, phraseology specialists concur that using meaningful phrasal verbs is important for EFL acquisition.

4. The Semantical Features of Phrasal Verbs

Semantics: In linguistics, the branch of psychology that investigates meaning. Semantics can handle words, phrases, sentences, and substantial discourse elements. Compositional and lexical semantics are the two most essential questions in semantics. The focus of compositional semantics is how smaller components, like words, combine and interact to create the

meaning of larger expressions, like sentences [53]. The correlation between form and meaning is one of the most important topics in linguistic semantics [54].

Assuming that phrasal verbs have semantic functions beyond the number of their components, PVs are used to group verbs, prepositions, adverbs, and participles which demonstrate a particular degree of idiom [3, 4]. Phrasal verbs are interpreted more broadly by Celce-Murcia et al. [5], who divide them into three semantic classes: aspectual PVs, idiomatic PVs, and literal or transparent phrasal verbs. Similar to the "non-idiomatic constructs" put out by Quirk et al. [6], they do not categorize literal PVs as PVs, even when they contain elements that appear to maintain a significant amount of their meaning. By merely merging the senses of the two parts, it could be able to recover the sensations of sit and down in sit down in the context of these cases (p. 432).

However, the typical connotations of make and up are lacking from idiomatic phrasal verbs that incorporate expressions like makeup ('be reconciled'), and the two components (make and up) do not maintain their consistent meanings. Celce-Murcia et al. [5] claim that aspectual PVs, which are comparable to the "semi-idiomatic" constructions proposed by Quirk et al. [6], have more evident meanings than idiomatic PVs. However, they may not be as obvious as literal PVs. Aspectual phrasal verbs are further divided into "semantic classes based on the semantic involvement of the particle" [6], which contain particles that provide the verbs with reliable aspectual meaning.

The simplest to categorize phrasal verbs, as stated by Celce-Murcia et al. [5], are those with idiomatic meanings in which the total verb's connotation is unrelated to the sense of its verb parts, such as keep up and chew out (p. 433). Celce-Murcia et al. [5] specified that polysemous phrasal verbs (PVS with multiple connotations) are the last semantic category for phrasal verbs. Checking something out illustrates the polysemous PVs with five distinct senses included in their defined semantic classes (p. 434).

Mahpeykar and Tyler [55] state that the lack of progress in conventional perspectives on PVs is because, without considering the associates of polysemy networks of the verb and the Particle, PVs semantics were solely examined in terms of the connotations of the Particle. They notice that most particles in phrasal verbs can also operate as prepositions, but not vice versa. This means that many prepositions are monofunctional, not multifunctional. To clarify the difference between mono-functional and multifunctional objects, they are first of all listed.

Table 1.
Monofunctional and Multifunctional items of PVs.

1.	Mono-Functional Items (Prepositions Only)	Multifunctional Items (Prepositions, Adverbs, or Particles)
2.	At, to, from, into, onto, out of, between, amongst, above, below, under, beneath, underneath, against, beside, near, next to, with.	On, in, out, off, up, down, by, over, along, through, about, around, across.

A significant generalization is that mono-functional prepositions generally signify zero-dimensional spatial concepts, as opposed to those that represent one or more dimensions and include routes, surfaces, and containers with a vertical orientation. The general conceptual basis for multifunctional prepositions is improving the concept of physical or non-concrete indication. Therefore, the organizational variation between the two subsections and the diverse possible meanings of delays in phrasal verbs have a theoretical basis. Let us provide some instances of the semantic meanings of three particles in the phrasal verbs: off, up, and out.

Table 2.
Some Semantic Functions of PVs.

Particle	General definition	
off	Indicating a separation, removal, departure, or distance in time or space. (Despite the length of this definition, all of the terms are from the equivalent lexical category that differ in association and connotation.)	
	Phrasal verb	Meaning
	Strain off the fluid	remove, separate
	The pollution zone was fenced off	separated from the neighboring part
	The van turned off	stopped
	They were cut off	disconnected
	What time will you knock off	leave
	He warns her off	To stay distance
	Our conference was put off	postpone
	You can see me off at the train station	leaving
Out	Compared to "off," "out" is a less clear particle since it lacks a single, overarching meaning. Rather, there are two distinct meaning domains. This means going into the open, away from, not in or at a place, and removal (frequently compared with "in"). It could become more understandable if we divide this first category into two smaller categories—"obvious" and "metaphorical." Typical instances in the "obvious" category might be:	
	The criminals broke out	Away From
	The party members walked out	Went on Strike
	She let the news out	Known/ Expose

	You have <i>missed out on</i> my title	Removal (Remove)
	Examples of the second category, "metaphorical" would include:	
	Her effort stands out	Is above average
	Watch/look/mind out	Taking care/caution
	I passed out	Fall unconscious
	She will speak out in the meeting.	Public talk
	We <i>laid out</i> some money in the market	Spent
	It's easy to <i>make him out</i>	Recognize him
	Examples in the second meaning category contain:	
	Prices bottomed out	Finish
	The passion burned out	Finish
	I've <i>run out</i> of money	Finish
	Eventually, things <i>turned out good</i>	Finish
	He cleaned me out	Took all my money
	<i>Fill</i> this form <i>out</i>	Complete it
	Argue it out	Reach a conclusion
Up	Among the most complicated particles, it is also among the most often employed. The following is a definition of its domains of meaning: General meaning: in an ascending direction, expanding, developing, and improving. The first portion of this description is more literal, while the second part is an increased metaphorical extension. Examples might include the following:	
	<i>He blow up</i> the balloon.	Begins/ to suddenly become very angry/ (filled with air)
	We were <i>brought up</i> here	Raised
	Why don't you cheer up?	Feel happy
	After screaming, he <i>hung up</i> the phone	Put down
	You need practice to <i>keep up</i>	Improve
	Throughout the year business is <i>looking up</i>	Improve
	If you want to own it <i>cough up</i>	Pay
	We <i>ended up</i> in a field	Stopping
	He must settle up the bill	Pay
	Please, Shut up	Stop talking
	The strike <i>blows up</i> the house	Destroyed
	Sickness <i>laid him up</i> for a week	In bed
	<i>Call up</i> your brother	Phone him

Furthermore, the present study will be centered on the previous illustration concerning categorizing phrasal verbs; this research will use the one introduced by Celce-Murcia et al. [5] with an insignificant modification. The PVs inspected in this research will be distributed into two primary classes: literal and non-literal (idiomatical PVs) instead of the three distinct classes (literal, idiomatic, and aspectual) provided by Celce-Murcia et al. [5].

According to Celce-Murcia et al. [5], the two classes of phrasal verbs are intransitive and often have an idiomatic or metaphorical meaning or transitive and often have a compositional or transparent meaning.

The categorization of phrasal verbs into these two types was grounded on empirical observations of how PVs are used in English. This classification provides a useful framework for understanding phrasal verbs' syntactical and semantical properties, which can aid language learners and teachers in language acquisition and instruction [5].

Lindstromberg [56] states that the main feature of PVs is that each word list combination should work as an independent lexical unit featuring a distinct meaning. In this regard, PVs are categorized into literal, Semi-transparent, and Idiomatic categories [5].

Classifying PVs into three types is very useful because their complexity depends on their categories. Additionally, other scholars categorized PVs as:

- PVs with non-idiomatic or literal meaning caused by distinct vocabulary meaning, as in, (come in, stand up, go out).
- PVs with a metaphorical addition are different from literal ones, as the problem was hedged in with complications that indicate a connection.
- PVs whose parts represent almost nothing concerning the idiomatic denotation of the entire, such as sign off (stop broadcast), catch on (comprehend) [57].

Arnold [58] proposes that the verb and the Particle constitute the essential total, which generates a set of expressions, such as fall out for (to dispute), if the sense does not naturally flow from that of the components. It is possible to identify a grouping lacking idiomatic denotation as some free combination through:

- (i) Preserve the Particle's characteristics, such as go-go out (direction).

- (ii) Marking the Particle as a completive, as in eat/eat up, inchoative, run / runoff, and durative, talk/talk away.
- (iii) Concentrating the Particle as in, sing-sing out.

Further, there are many semantic criteria in which PVs can be categorized in terms of meaning. This includes the following.

Literal PVs

They consist of objects in which the Particle up, like in the following instances, maintains its literal adverbial connotation:

The thief blew up the bank.

The thief blew the bank up.

The thief blew it up.

It is simple and informal to understand and identify the PVs used in the preceding statements [5].

4.1. Competitive PVs

They discuss PVs in which the Particle exhibits a comprehensive activity. These particles (up, out, off, and, down) All seem to be used in this manner, though up is the one that is used in this function the most frequently:

He ripped up the newspaper.

He ripped the newspaper up

He ripped it up.

As stated previously, comparable competitive PVs are inchoative as run-run-off, durative as talk-talk away, and intensive as sing-song-out [57].

4.2. Figurative PVs

This type of PV is considered metaphorical when there is no systematic type of semantic criterion that combines the verb with the Particle. Try out the following expressions:

Jehad looked up the evidence. (Quest for)

Jehad looked the evidence up.

Additional figurative PV instances include turn up (appear), catch on (understand), and look over (review). These PVs present the greatest comprehension and recognition challenges for non-native learners [5].

Additionally, when phrasal verbs (PVs) are used literally and completely, the particle may frequently be eliminated without affecting the appropriateness of the phrase. However, when PVs are used figuratively, the outcome is generally unfavorable. Study the succeeding phrases:

- Literal

Kibo hung the sign up on the fence.

Kibo hung the sign on the fence.

- Completive

Hamodah ripped the newspaper up.

Hamodah ripped the newspaper.

- Figurative

Shadi looked the evidence up.

* Shadi looked at the evidence.

The last structure is not suitable in English. According to Palmer [59], every PV with a literal meaning contains a verb of motion along a particle that characterizes the motion's tendency. The PV has the extra semantic quality of reflecting the final position. Reflect these structures:

Aziz ran the banner up.

The aviator flew the airplane in.

As observed earlier, the processes were accomplished; the banner was up, and the airplane was in the airport. Test these extra cases:

Abood pulled up the cable.

* Abood pulled upwards the cable.

Since pulling upwards has no meaning in the first structure, whereas it does in the second, the first structure is semantically phrasal verb (PV), while the second is not. Given this, the researcher finds teaching and learning phrasal verbs from the syntactic-semantic level necessary in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Therefore, in an EFL learning context, more emphasis should be placed on the above-mentioned aspects at the higher education level to help EFL learners study and master the utilization of such important PV structures.

5. Review of Related Studies on the Semantical Features of Phrasal Verbs

Mahpeykar and Tyler [55] postulated that despite many attempts made by researchers to discover certain systematicity in PV semantics, scarce studies have investigated how the verb's various senses also complement the PV meanings. The corpus-based research develops future investigations on PVs by investigating the communication of the polysemy systems of the Particle and the verb in four PVs' structures: *go up*, *take out*, *go out*, and *take up*.

Using the Cognitive Linguistics method created by Tyler and Evans [60] for analyzing the semantics of particles in conjunction with Langacker's [61] examination of the semantics of verbs, a systematic polysemy inquiry of the semantics of acquiring and taking was discovered. The polysemy systems of the corpus for verbs and particles provided the framework for analyzing PVs' various senses. Throughout the polysemy networks interaction of the constituent verbs-particles, the semantical CL-based analysis of PV structures reveals the compositional foundation of PVs, indicating that various senses may be considered methodically.

Moreover, every Particle explains the conceptual journey to some point in an altered mode by the particles that the verb may be associated with and Kokorniak [62] aspectual outline of thinking. Their semantical significance to the aspectual verb characteristic is revealed, and corpus occurrences reflect their usage. Moreover, the writer of this study suggests that the non-progressive vs. progressive feature must be used to illustrate the internal constituency of an occurrence. Lexical aspects, and hence verb semantics, are also used to convey it linguistically. The Integrated Model of Aspects (IMA) demonstrates that the two kinds of distinctions arise at two different levels of schematicity [63]. While English has only one aspectual profiling tool, particles are very helpful at the lexical level for capturing minute aspectual alterations that the semantics and inflection of the main verb cannot.

6. Conclusion

PVs are so complicated for speakers of another language to recognize. This is because they have difficult idiomatic meanings. Prepositions and adverbial particles, among the many facets of the English language, cause more difficulties for many foreign learners, according to Heaton [64]. The selection of a preposition or Particle can be defined based on a certain verb, noun, adjective, or adverb after repeated use. PVs, in which a verb and an adverbial particle join to form a collocation with a distinct meaning, are a notable feature [65-70]. The PVs should be treated as a unit, for their denotation could seldom be implied solely from information related to the verb and Particle.

Additionally, several scholars have attempted to classify PVs into other categories, including competitive (cut off, burn down), figurative (turn up, let down), and literal (go out, take away) [48]. PVs are also classified as figurative, semi-transparent, and transparent semantically [71]. Regarding the PV's semantic clarification, they may be easily categorized as aspectual, idiomatic, or compositional [67]. Due to their semantic challenges, PVs have no recognized categorization, which is significant. For learners with various linguistic backgrounds, the aforementioned phrasal verb issues have been viewed as producing significant difficulties.

For example, Siyanova and Schmitt [34] state that non-Germanic or non-Scandinavian EFL learners may find PVs difficult. In particular, metaphorical PVs have baffled Chinese learners [28]. Many issues lead to difficulties. According to Cornell [35], the primary issue facing L2 learners is the variety of meanings associated with PVs. Side [72] has a thorough grasp of the issues that learners may face, such as "polysemy" and "confusion of combining the verb and the particle."

To sum up, this paper proposes that, as lexical items, phrasal verbs (PVs) are certainly one of the greatest problematic challenges in education. A word's connotation can render a whole grammatical phrase incoherent if it is unknown or misidentified. PVs are constituents of English vocabulary that are particularly challenging for non-native English language learners. This is because the importance of previously recognized verbs changes significantly when combined with different particles.

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