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AVOIDANCE OF ENGLISH PHRASAL VERBS AMONG SAUDI ESL STUDENTS

by

Abdullah Alshayban

A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirement for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Major: English

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the most caring and loving person in this world, my mother, Luluwah Allahim.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I am grateful to Almighty God for the opportunity to pursue and complete this project.

Furthermore, this project would have been impossible without the help and encouragement of many people. I would like to thank Dr. Teresa Dalle for her guidance and support throughout the entire writing process. Sincere thanks also go to my other committee members, Dr. Emily Thrush, Dr. Verner Mitchell, and Dr. Angela Thevenot, for their feedback, which greatly improved many aspects of the study.

I am deeply indebted to my mother, Luluwah Allahim, who supported and motivated me with her endless love and prayers through the challenges I faced while completing this project. This project is a culmination of the opportunity she gave me to study in the United States. I am likewise grateful for the support of my stepfather and siblings for their boundless compassion and kindness.

My friends were pillars of support while I wrote this dissertation. I will forever cherish the insights and advice offered by Dr. Abdurrazzag Alghammas and Dr. Ali Alqarni, which helped improve some of the weak areas.

Lastly, I express my sincere gratitude to the participants for volunteering their time and attention.

Abstract

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Students of English as a second language (ESL) are often perplexed by English phrasal verbs (PVs) and require help to understand them. This is because PVs using the same verb or particle do not usually correspond semantically. For example, when a particle is used with a verb to form a PV, the meaning of the sentence could change completely. This semantic transformation frequently leads to miscommunication, and the large number of PVs in English exacerbates the difficulty of learning vocabulary and contextual meanings.

To examine this hypothesis, I collected data from 53 undergraduate native English speakers and 60 Arabic-speaking Saudi undergraduate and graduate ESL learners. The sample utilized an objective test and 20-question Likert-scale test. Saudi ESL students were interviewed with semi-structured questions, and a demographic survey of all participants was collected.

The analysis showed that native English speakers were significantly more familiar with the verbs and their meanings than Saudi ESL students; 78% of ESL students knew what *get up* meant and what type of phrase it was, 73% had already studied PVs, 60% used PVs at least half the time, 67% did not feel that PVs caused a problem when communicating with native English speakers, and 85% communicated with native English speakers at least once a week.

The analysis of the 15 multiple-choice questions adopted by Liao and Fukuya (2004) showed that the most common PVs chosen by participants were *get up* (88%), *showed up* (84%), *brush up on* (63%), *let down* (52%), *hold on* (83%), *put out* (75%), *made up* (96%), *turn down* (59%), *run into* (66%), *show off* (71%), *go away* (60%), *take away* (67%), and *come in* (63%), as well as the one-word *exploded* (50%) and *surrender* (54%). Statistical testing showed that native English speakers were significantly more likely to prefer *rise*, *went off*, *brush up on*, *put out*, *give*

in, turn down, run into, boast, remove, and come in than native Arabic speakers. Native Arabic speakers, in turn, were significantly more likely to prefer *get up, improve, exploded, surrender, refuse, meet, show off, take away, and enter* than native English speakers.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Cultivating a well-developed vocabulary is crucial for academic achievement because words are the core of learning. Johnson and Johnson (2004) describe words as the tools humans use to think, express ideas and feelings, and learn about the world. To learn a second language (L2), an extensive vocabulary is also foundational to developing the five basic skill areas: speaking, listening, reading, writing, and grammar (DeCarrico, 2001).

Comprehension of a text in one's first language (L1) or L2 depends on knowing the vocabulary used in it. There is a high correlation between reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge (Laufer, 1997). For example, Zimmerman (1997) argues vocabulary is imperative for a regular language learner. Additionally, Nation (1993) suggests that vocabulary knowledge is a pre-condition for the successful development of language skills since it enables the use of language, which further boosts further increases in vocabulary. Both L1 speakers and L2 learners continue to learn new words from different sources throughout their lives (Schmitt, 2000). According to Nation and Waring (1997), learning new words and remembering the old ones through extensive listening and reading represents a significant incidental or indirect development of one's vocabulary.

An L2 learner must know a large number of words to understand spoken and written discourse. Hu and Nation (2000) argue that 98% of words appearing in a text must be known to comprehend it fully. According to Schmitt (2008), for a reader to reach that 98% comprehension in spoken discourse, a learner must be familiar with 6000-7000 words.

Furthermore, for a student to fully comprehend a word, he or she must know its meaning, grammatical function, written form, register, association, collocations, and frequencies. Nation

(1990) calls these the required types of ideal native-like word knowledge. The quality and depth of one's word knowledge depend on knowing these required types. However, Schmitt (2008) and Verhallen and Schoonen (1993) have demonstrated that L2 learners often show weaknesses in their depth of word knowledge, even regarding common words.

Knowledge of frequent collocations is a critical type of word knowledge. Moon (1997) argues that representing the lexicon through individual lexical items is an isolationist approach. According to Ryan (1997), knowing collocations or which words frequently appear together is one factor that makes learning vocabulary for a second language a complex process. Numerous studies have confirmed the importance of knowing the links between words, especially highlighting multi-word lexical items (Moon, 1997).

Vocabulary items, however, are not always single orthographic units. The best way to learn multi-word units and *contextualized* aspects of word knowledge (e.g., collocation) is to be repeatedly exposed to the lexical items in different contexts (Schmitt, 2008). McCarthy and O'Dell (2005) accurately illustrate the importance of mastering collocation:

You need to learn collocations because they will help you to speak and write English in a more natural and accurate way. People will probably understand what you mean if you talk about 'making your homework' or say 'My uncle is a very high man' but your language will sound unnatural and might perhaps confuse. (p. 4)

Vocabulary knowledge of widely-used collocations cannot be completed without knowing phrasal verbs (PVs), which are the focus of this study. Mastering PVs is a challenging and complex process for L2 learners, as explained in Chapter 2. PVs consist of a verb and a particle (usually originating as a preposition or an adverb) or a verb and two particles (from a preposition and an adverb). Examples of both types are *take off* and *look forward to*. Learners

master PVs by classifying them as individual vocabulary items and studying them as phrases. Frequently, there is a one-word equivalent, such as *encounter* for *come across* (McCarthy & O'Dell, 2007). It is possible to say *to pick up* a language and *to acquire* a language, but it sounds less literal and formal to use *come across* and *pick up* than it does to use *encounter* and *acquire* (McCarthy & O'Dell, 2007). *Come across* and *pick up* are used more often in speaking, which might cause difficulty for non-native English speakers to understand. It is very common for native English speakers to use PVs, particularly in spoken and informal settings. According to Zarifi and Mukundan (2013), "Phrasal verbs as an aspect of the lexicon are one of the most prolific, productive and elusive structures among the multiword expressions" (p. 212).

PVs are used in newspaper headlines, songs, and even movie titles, such as *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Cast Away*. Their one-word synonyms are more often employed in formal spoken and written contexts. Accordingly, register is an important aspect of PVs (McCarthy & O'Dell, 2007). Register is "often used to refer to whether or not the word being used is formal or informal. It can also be used to refer to the language associated with a particular job or interest" (McCarthy & O'Dell, 2007, p. 16). According to Taylor (1990), in order to know a word, a speaker must be familiar with the register, i.e., "knowing the limitations imposed on the use of the word according to variations of functions and situation" (p. 2). It is thus vital to distinguish between formal and informal registers. To illustrate, informally, it is possible to say *to miss out on* a question, but the verb *omit* is expected in a formal register (McCarthy & O'Dell, 2007).

As discussed further in Chapter 2, there is no general agreement on a standard classification of PVs, although different scholars have attempted to classify them on the basis of different criteria (Liao & Fukuya, 2004). Many terms are used in the literature to describe PVs, such as literal, transparent, semitransparent, systematic, completive, opaque, figurative, and

idiomatic. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) classify PVs into literal, idiomatic, and aspectual groups. Literal PVs are those whose elements keep much of their meaning, such as *look for*, as in “he is *looking for* his keys.” However, in idiomatic PVs, the regular meaning of separate words is lost. An example would be the idiomatic PV *to make up*, which means “to reconcile.” The aspectual PVs are semi-idiomatic since their meaning depends on the meaning of the verb, as in “Ali drank (*up*) his coffee.” In these cases, the particle emphasizes the action, such as the verbs *play on* and *fill up*. However, all terms essentially refer to three main categories. In this study, I use the terms *literal*, *semi-transparent*, and *figurative PVs*.

Verb-particle combinations are widely used by L1 English speakers, particularly in colloquial speech, yet L2 English learners face numerous difficulties in mastering them. Native and non-native English teachers as well as teachers of English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) agree that PVs are one of the most difficult aspects for English language learners (ELLs) to master. Moreover, many scholars have argued that PV structure is complex and challenging for most L2 learners (e.g., Dagut & Laufer, 1985; Darwin & Gray, 1999; Hulstijn & Marchena, 1989; Laufer & Eliasson, 1993; Liao & Fukuya, 2004).

McArthur (1975) considers PVs to be the single “biggest headache” for ELLs (p. 6), and Rudzka-Ostyn (2003) claims that PVs “do not enjoy a good reputation” in English learning, although they are exceptionally frequent in spoken and written English and new combinations are continuously being coined (p. 1). Gardner and Davies (2007) concur that PVs are among the most infamously challenging aspects of English. This challenge primarily lies in their semantic opacity and syntactic peculiarity (Dagut & Laufer, 1985). Their structural oddity and meaning complexity make PVs a linguistic phenomenon rare outside the Germanic languages (Darwin &

Gray, 1999). In addition, they are more common in English than in other languages belonging to this family.

Furthermore, PVs and verb-particle combinations frequently appear randomly (Side, 1990). In addition, since PVs consist of two or more orthographic words, it is sometimes hard to perceive them as a single semantic unit. If learners do not recognize a PV as a multi-word verb, they decode the meanings of each word separately (Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007). Therefore, learners must acquire, store, and retrieve from their memory each PV as a unit (Wray & Perkins, 2000).

Moon (1997) summarizes the reasons PVs are so challenging for ELLs. The combination of verbs and particles is seemingly spontaneous but is actually fixed. Their meanings are specialized. Literal and transparent PVs are not exceptionally difficult to master, such as *write down*, but there are also semi-transparent PVs (e.g., *eat up*, *stretch down*) and opaque, figurative, and idiomatic PVs (e.g., *butter up*, *tick off*). An additional challenge for ELLs is that usage of PVs differs between different varieties of English. In British English, *tick off* means to speak angrily to someone because they have done something wrong, whereas it means “to make someone angry or annoyed” in American English (McCarthy & O’Dell, 2007). British English uses PVs with *round*, such as John spent the whole day *walking round* the village, while American English uses *around*, such as Michelle *walked around* the park for two hours (McCarthy & O’Dell, 2007). Finally, PVs are sometimes arbitrary combinations, making it impossible to rationalize and analyze them (Moon, 1997).

Statement of the Problem

English is a challenging language for foreign speakers to comprehend, and PVs are one of the most important factors that contribute to this difficulty. PVs are especially challenging for

Arabic-speakers, as Arabic does not have PVs equivalent to English but rather utilizes prepositional verbs. Thus, ESL/EFL Arabic-speaking students often avoid using English PVs and related idiomatic expressions, especially in speaking (Ben Duhaish, 2008).

Purpose of the Study

The performance of Arabic-speaking ELLs with lexicalized phrases that lack a formal equivalent in Arabic (PVs) has not been sufficiently studied, and few studies have examined PV avoidance. Such studies are limited to Ben Duhaish (2008), Dagut and Laufer (1985), Huilstijn and Marchena (1989), Laufer and Eliasson (1993), and Liao and Fukuya (2004). Therefore, the present study has investigated the reasons Saudi ESL learners avoid using English PVs.

Theoretical Framework

According to Dagut and Laufer (1985), the difficulty in the acquisition process derives from the ambiguity of PVs. The nature of PVs affects the behavior and attitude of ELLs. As they are a complicated and “fuzzy grammatical category” (Gardner & Davies, 2007, p. 341), learners tend to avoid them.

Gocsik (2004) and Girju (2008) consider articles and prepositions to be the most difficult part of English to master and a great source of grammatical errors. Other studies have argued that PVs can be as or nearly as difficult as articles and prepositions. Covitt (1976), for instance, conducted a survey that showed the most challenging aspects of English were articles and prepositions, followed by PVs, verbs, and conditional sentences.

Darwin and Gray (1999) argue that PVs are challenging for most L2 learners of English, even for those whose mother tongue is closely related to English:

Not only do learners with non-Germanic native languages experience this difficulty with PVs, however. Dagut and Laufer (1985) and Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) have shown

Dutch ESL learners also misunderstand or avoid English PVs, even though there are similar constructions in their native language. (p. 66)

There is thus a tendency among L2 learners to avoid using PVs. This concept of avoidance refers to a communication strategy used by L2 learners not to talk about concepts in which they are not proficient. Avoidance belongs to the borrowing category of communication strategies. Paraphrasing is also a communication strategy focused on circumlocution. According to Tarone (1981), circumlocution refers to a situation where a learner talks about actions and objects without employing an adequate L2 grammar or lexicon (e.g., using the word *panda* to refer to a bear). It is important to emphasize that avoidance and circumlocution belong to different communication strategy categories.

According to second language acquisition (SLA) studies, students' avoidance behavior has a significant impact on language acquisition. Gass and Selinker (2008) discuss the impact of previously studied languages on acquiring a target language and language transfer. Schachter (1974) argues that L2 learners form a hypothesis about the L2 based on knowledge of their L1. Consequently, L1 learning strategies are employed when learning an L2. Students learn constructions similar in the L1 and L2 more easily. This process is called "facilitation" in SLA and is an example of positive transfer (Gass & Selinker, 2008). In cases of constructions that are "radically different, learners reject them or use them only with extreme caution" (Schachter, 1974, p. 212). Schachter suggests that forms they are avoiding and do not produce should be studied in addition to the forms learners produce while studying the L2. Since Schachter (1974), numerous studies have focused on avoidance behavior related to reading, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Such studies are important for finding the best approaches to improving language learning and teaching as well as raising teacher awareness of students' difficulties.

Avoidance of PVs hinders the learning process and results in unnatural speech. For example, a learner reluctant to use PVs might say I *encountered* an old classmate instead of I *came across* an old classmate (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999). The inclination for Arabic speakers to avoid PVs in English is explained by differences between structures of the L1 and L2 (Ben Duhaish, 2008) and by semantic and idiomatic reasons (Abu Jamil, 2010). Duhaish (2008) showed that Arabic speakers avoid all three types of PVs: literal, semi-transparent, and idiomatic. However, Abu Jamil (2010) showed that although the Arabic language does not have PVs, Arabic learners of English did not avoid all PVs. Rather, they avoided semantically complex and idiomatic PVs.

Tarone (1981) defines avoidance as a tactic in communication adopted to consolidate the linguistic knowledge of the speaker of the language in question and the linguistic understanding of a scholar learning a foreign language under real communication situations. For Ellis (1994), avoidance represents an expression or sign of language transfer. Other occurrences similar to avoidance are error (negative transfer), facilitation (positive transfer), and overuse. In some cases, avoidance means a learner is unfamiliar with the given structure. According to Kleinmann (1977), “To be able to avoid some linguistic feature presupposes being able to choose not to avoid it, i.e., to use it” (p. 97). In spite of the many studies focused on avoidance, it is unclear how to accurately determine the origins of and what counts as avoidance.

Language instructors must guide students to comprehend and use PVs and understand the factors that cause them to avoid using PVs. Schachter (1974) observed learners of different languages, developed L2 forms, identified structures that learners used in daily communication, and noted structures they avoided. Other research has also studied patterns of avoidance (e.g., Dagut & Laufer, 1985; Huilstijn & Marchena, 1989; Kamimoto, Shimura, & Kellerman, 1992;

Kleinmann, 1977, Laufer & Eliasson, 1993; Liao & Fukuya, 2004; Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007).

These scholars discovered avoidance of some English patterns among English learners from different backgrounds.

Kleinmann (1977) researched the avoidance of certain linguistic forms to determine whether they derived from ignorance about their usage or from simple avoidance. Specifically, he studied avoidance behavior related to English direct object pronouns, present progressive, passive voice, and infinitive complement constructions among ESL learners from Arabic, Spanish, and Portuguese linguistic backgrounds. He discovered several avoidance patterns typical of learners from these backgrounds. For instance, native speakers of Spanish and Portuguese who had learned English avoided using infinitive complements and direct object pronouns in sentences with infinitive complements (e.g., I told her to leave). Arabic speakers avoided the passive voice. In fact, among all studied groups, Arabic speakers produced the fewest passive forms. Kleinmann developed a conceptual test of familiarity with these grammar structures and their use in native languages. The aim was to enhance students' awareness of these sentence structures.

Kleinmann (1977) showed that avoidance patterns were related to a discrepancy in comprehending sentence structure patterns. Similarly, the uniformity in using comparable sentence structures was correlated with knowledge of those sentence structures, as concluded in a contrastive analysis. Factors, such as confidence and facilitation of anxiety, also affected frequency of use. Facilitation of anxiety happens when the complexity level of the assignment generates the appropriate quantity of anxiety (Scovel, 1978). Kleinmann (1977) concluded the following:

while CA [contrastive analysis] is a fairly good predictor of avoidance, there is an intersection of linguistic and psychological variables in determining learner behaviour in a second language in that structures which otherwise would be avoided are likely to be produced depending on the emotional state of the learner. (p. 93)

His research confirmed the argument of Schachter (1974) that the structural variance between L2 and L1 depends on the structural dissimilarities between the two languages.

Li (1996) examined English and Chinese relative clauses and found that the differences in sentence structure between the L1 and L2 were not the main factor behind avoidance. Students at the intermediate level were proficient in using them in written language. Thus, Li concluded that refined subliminal dissimilarities impacted the sentence structures.

These studies suggested possible reasons for avoidance behavior in the learning patterns of L2 learners. However, although mastering PVs is a demanding and long-lasting task for ESL learners, using PVs correctly in speech is a criterion of fluency. As stated above, proficiency in PVs is particularly strenuous for ESL learners whose L1 is non-Germanic because the combination of verb and particle is uncommon in other language families (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999; Cornell, 1985). Nonetheless, English learners must master PVs if they aim for fluency as PVs are a basic element of English commonly used by native speakers. Therefore, English learners must develop a receptive awareness to understand the meaning of PVs in spoken and written contexts. The goal should be expertise: the mastery of commonly used PVs (Armstrong, 2004).

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. Are Saudi ESL students familiar with English PVs?

2. What perceptions do Saudi ESL students have about the ease or difficulty of learning PVs?
3. What terms do Saudi ESL students understand and use to refer to PVs?
4. Do Saudi ESL students use the most common PVs?
5. Where do Saudi ESL students learn PVs (e.g., classrooms, movies, news, reading, online chatting, talking with native speakers, or other means)?
6. Do Saudi ESL students avoid using PVs?

Limitations of the Study

The sample of this study was small, with the target population comprising 50 to 60 Saudi students and 50 to 60 native English-speaking students at the University of Memphis. The study was limited to avoidance phenomena among Saudi ESL students and did not investigate the learning process (explicit or implicit) of PVs.

Significance of the Study

English PVs challenge Arabic-speaking ESL learners because these structures are absent from Arabic. However, few researchers have studied PV avoidance among Arabic speakers. When learners have previous or passive familiarity with some language structures and are incapable of distinguishing them in their own speech and writing, avoidance takes place (Blum & Levenston, 1977). In this light, writing is an important aspect when studying avoidance. The present study is significant because previous studies have failed to examine PV avoidance among Arabic-speaking ESL students. Further research is thus needed to provide evidence for the assumption that speakers of Arabic avoid English PVs. With this knowledge, ESL teachers can create ways of minimizing such avoidance to help students attain higher proficiency levels in written and spoken English.

Outline of the Study

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 reviewed vocabulary learning literature, introduced and defined PVs, and gave the statement of the problem, purpose, theoretical framework, research questions, limitations, and significance of the study. Chapter 2 discusses PV definitions, usage, and avoidance phenomena in greater detail, as well as literature related to PV research and acquisition problems faced by EFL/ESL learners from different backgrounds. Chapter 3 presents the methodology. Chapter 4 presents and analyzes the results. Chapter 5 interprets these findings and offers recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter gives an overview of research on English PVs and related topics. It begins with a summary of different types of word knowledge and delineates collocation and its significance in L2 learning. Next, it examines PVs and the core area of interest: English PV avoidance. It ends with an inquiry into practical research on this avoidance. The chapter incorporates a revision of syntactic and semantic information crucial for comprehension of the problems that ESL students face with PVs.

Defining Word Knowledge

Whether language is primary, secondary, or totally foreign, learning vocabulary is pivotal to language learning (Decarrico, 2001). Teaching vocabulary necessitates much more than assigning students vocabulary lists to memorize. One difficulty arises because a vocabulary unit can contain multiple words, as in *post office* or *sister-in-law*, and there are even multi-word idioms like *call it a day* (Ur, 1996). In this case, the exact meaning of the idiom cannot be clear by simply understanding the component words, and thus memorization of words and their meanings is not sufficient for substantial vocabulary development.

Apart from meanings, students must master other features of each vocabulary item. Nation (1990) proposed a list of receptive and productive types of knowledge that a non-native English speaker must have in order to have a full command of each word. Receptive knowledge refers to the recognition of a word when it is heard or seen. Productive knowledge is a wider concept that includes receptive knowledge, but it is also necessary to know the exact pronunciation and spelling of a word and to use it correctly in various grammatical patterns. According to Nation, the following aspects of vocabulary must be taken into account.

The spoken form of the word. Learners can easily pronounce English words that consist of sounds that exist in their L1. For instance, words such as *sun*, *pen*, and *see* are not difficult for English learners whose L1 is Chinese. Nonetheless, they generally have difficulties with the pronunciation of words such as *eight*, *regular*, and *rice* (Nation, 1990).

The written form of the word. Studying English is easier for learners whose L1 is written in the Roman alphabet than for those whose L1 has a different writing system, such as Chinese, Japanese, or Arabic, as a new script makes mastering the writing of English more difficult (Nation, 1990). The other difficulty related to the written form of words in English is the fact that some letters are pronounced differently in different words depending on where they appear in the word or for no predictable reason. An example would be the different pronunciations of O in *odd*, *woman*, *women*, *chose*, and *love*, which Schmitt and McCarthy (1997) claimed are often pronounced and written incorrectly. Furthermore, word stress is usually unpredictable, which affects learner pronunciation, as it is necessary to stress the right syllable to distinguish certain words and to sound natural. If the stress is not placed on the right syllable, the grammatical function of a vocabulary item can change. The word *convict* provides an example, as it has final stress when the meaning is “to prove guilty” but initial stress when it refers to “a prisoner” (Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997, p. 143).

The grammatical behavior of the word. Students must make the connection between a vocabulary item and grammar. According to Ur (1996), EFL teachers must be aware of how unpredictable and idiosyncratic changes of word forms are in learning a language for students. Ur argues that teachers should explain the irregularities while also teaching the basic form of a unit, such as in the case of verbs with irregular past-tense forms (e.g., *do*, *did*, *done*). The same applies to count and non-count nouns. Students should be informed from the beginning of this

distinction so that they can produce the correct forms of the plural and connect nouns with the right verbs. Other grammatical aspects of vocabulary items are appropriate adverb position, adjectival order, and the behavior of PVs.

The collocational behavior of the word. It is insufficient to learn an appropriate grammatical use of a new word. A student must also master how to combine a word with other words so that it sounds natural and is used in the appropriate context. It is crucial for learners to understand that the appropriateness of a word varies in different discourses (Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997). To illustrate this, students need to learn that they *make* a decision but *come* to a conclusion (Ur, 1996). This chapter examines collocation with an emphasis on the collocation of PVs.

The frequency of the word. An important aspect of vocabulary knowledge is knowing the likelihood of hearing the word in speech or seeing it in print. It is essential to make a distinction between words common in the spoken language (e.g., *well*, *actually*, *indeed*) and those typical of the written language (e.g., *latter*, *former*) (Taylor, 1990).

The stylistic register constraints of the word. Harmer (1991) states that students should know when and how to use words by taking into account style and register of discourse, and there are words that can only be used in certain contexts. According to Nation (1990), inadequate usage of words most often happens when an English learner uses the old-fashioned word instead of the more commonly used word, an impolite word, or a formal word in an informal setting. In the United States, for example, the word *silver* is used only for the metal or associated color, but in New Zealand, it means coins in general. Furthermore, it is appropriate to use the words *potty* and *tummy* only when talking to children. Words *slim* and *skinny* have the same meaning, but *skinny* can have a negative connotation (Nation, 1990).

The conceptual meaning of the word. Students must know how vocabulary items function grammatically and their collocations, but it is important to emphasize that the shape and grammatical value of certain words can change. Therefore, students must be taught these basic facts about words to use them in different grammatical contexts (Harmer, 1991). Ur (1996) suggests that a learner should divide vocabulary items into morphological units and components to gain useful information. For instance, learners familiar with different affixes (e.g., *-able*, *un-*, *sub-*) are more likely to guess what some unknown words mean, such as *untranslatable* or *substandard*. Nevertheless, they must be warned that in many cases affixes are not connected to the root, such as with *subject* and *comfortable* (Ur, 1996). The compounding process refers to combining two words into one, the derivational process refers to modifying an item to create a new word by adding affixes, and the inflectional process refers to creating different versions of the same item via inflections to show different grammatical categories. When learners are familiar with these processes, they can use them appropriately in different contexts, for example, being able to use *running* as a present participle but also as an adjective or gerund.

The association the word has with related words. Association impacts the way a word is remembered and stored in the brain (Nation, 1990). It also impacts the ability to remember and restore a word when it is necessary. In psychological research, word association is examined by asking people to say which words come to their mind when they think about a given word. For instance, a psychologist might ask what words are associated with the word *table*. Typically, the word *chair* is associated with this word. Even if these words are not used together often, people still associate them with each other.

Upon mastering the aforementioned aspects of word knowledge, the speaker should be able to use vocabulary items like a native speaker and be fluent in different contexts (Schmitt & Meara, 1997).

Collocation

As outlined in a previous section, vocabulary knowledge means more than knowing the basic meaning of different words. As Nation (1990) suggested in his list, knowing collocations is an essential part of knowing an L2. Nattinger (1988) also argues that the meaning of a word is related to its associations.

When studying a vocabulary item, the learner may find it logical to focus initially on a word as the primary unit. Dictionaries are typically written in this manner as they represent the lexeme in a series of individual lexical items. This approach is practical from an organizational point of view. However, it isolates words by treating each word as an arbitrary unit (Moon, 1997). The crucial element of vocabulary knowledge is the ability to combine words that are commonly used together in the language. For instance, a native speaker says *sour milk*, not *bitter milk* and *weak tea* instead of *feeble tea* (Hussein, 2011). For Ellis (2003), real language knowledge represents collocational knowledge: the idea that language recognition and production depend on the capacity to retrieve and recognize lexical items when they are combined not only on the ability to apply syntactic rules. An important part of vocabulary knowledge is the capacity to unify words that occur together regularly in the language. Language identification and usage depend on the learner's capacity to recall and identify the merged lexical items, rather than the capacity to use syntactic rules alone.

As mentioned above, collocation is related to the way words exist together, often in unforeseeable ways (McCarthy & O'Dell, 2002). Knowing a word requires knowing with which

word it commonly occurs. It is more natural, for instance, to say *fast food* in English than *speedy food* or *quick food* (Nation, 2001).

Pawley and Syder (1983) contend that native speakers can talk in their L1 fluently and choose the right word order because they have accumulated considerable numbers of memorized series in their brain. Instead of forming these whenever they need to speak, they commonly refer to these ready-made groupings of words. Native speakers thus have an instinctive knowledge of how to connect lexical elements correctly when they write or talk. This characteristic distinguishes native and non-native speakers. DeCarrico (2001) clarifies this point by suggesting that one must learn collocation associations in the L2; otherwise, one's speech or writing will sound strange and non-native. That is, when lexical collocations are not put together in a customary pattern, the expression will sound odd to a native speaker. In simple English, all speakers aim at making themselves understood, and proper collocational knowledge plays a key role in this goal.

One kind of collocation is the collocation of PVs. As previously mentioned, a collocation is simply a group of words that people use together often. For L2 English learners, it is important to know that some verbs are PVs and to remember with which types of words the PV is commonly used. For instance, *pore over* (examine or study something carefully) collocates with a book, manuscript, document, or a list of names. There have been many diverse opinions among scholars concerning PVs and how to treat them in English. A recapitulation of the important points of this discussion follows.

English PVs

Much attention has been paid to PVs in recent years, and one could argue that people have discovered them as a crucial element in ESL curricula. Different factors have contributed to

this, one of them being an overall increase of interest in the spoken language. In general, PVs are more commonly used in spoken than written English. Nevertheless, there are important irregularities in PVs that must be learned to master the language. A PV may appear at first colloquial or informal, but later people may be found to use it in more formal situations (Cornell, 1985).

There is a controversy related to the term PV. The blending of a verb, preposition, or adverb has been named differently by various linguists. PVs have been called separable verbs (Francis, 1958), two-word verbs (Taha, 1960), and verb-particle combinations (Fraser, 1976). The most common term, though, is *phrasal verb*. Since it is possible to have verb combinations with three words with one particle and one preposition after the verb, for example, *put up with*, Taha's definition is misleading. Bolinger (1971) considers the PV to be a neutral combination since it also includes phrases that are longer than two words, but he avoids stating how close the link between words should be to establish a compound. In this study, I use the term *phrasal verb* (PV) because it is now embedded as the appropriate term in contemporary references, grammar, and teaching material.

In Germanic languages, such as English, German, and Dutch, PVs are common. Only a few non-Germanic languages also have PVs, which may provide an explanation for the trouble L2 English learners experience with these verbs. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) delineates how PVs are sufficiently different from other languages' verbal systems that they pose a particular challenge, exacerbated by the fact that English has such a large number of them that L2 learners must try to learn them. The hardest part of this process is likely meaning as well as semantic systematicity. Another difficulty for L2 learners of English is idiomaticity.

What this suggests with regard to the current research on Arabic-English language learners is crucial. Since Arabic is a Semitic language which lacks the PV structure, most Arabic speakers who study English are likely to have more difficulty with these combinations (Ben Duhaish, 2008). From personal experience, I have noted that such L2 learners avoid PVs because of their complicated nature and out of fear that they will be misunderstood. Many students complain that it is incredibly hard to recall the various meanings of verbs that take different particles, for example, *look after*, *look for*, *look into*, *look out*, *look up*, *look up to*. Finally, students quit attempting to learn PVs since they assume they can communicate without using them.

Phrasal Verbs and Idiomaticity

Researchers generally agree that PVs pose a serious challenge for L2 English learners. Since some PVs are figurative in meaning, “the meaning of the complex unit does not result from the simple combination of those of its constituents” (Arnaud & Savignon, 1997, p. 161). Regarding another Semitic language, Dagut and Laufer (1985) discovered that Hebrew speakers learning English were more comfortable using single-word verbs than PVs, yet the opposite was true for native English speakers. The ease of acquiring mastery of single-word verbs over PVs makes this discovery no surprise since figurative PVs tend to have more complex meanings than single-word verbs. Liao and Fukuya (2004) revealed that L2 English learners selected fewer idiomatic PVs than transparent PVs on a multiple-choice test because of the higher complexity of idiomatic PVs.

The Significance of PVs

Although there are obstacles and students tend to underestimate the importance of learning PVs, the significance of acquiring PVs cannot be disregarded. Morales (2000), who as a

person who completed her bachelor's degree at the University of Costa Rica, described the experiences she had when she first arrived in a country where the main language used was English:

I really thought that I was totally fluent in English after having four years of intensive courses. Nevertheless, I had ongoing difficulties in communication and in understanding simple but crucial information when I first came to the US. For instance, when I was talking about the problems on the phone, the firm representative wanted to know if the line was *hooked up*. Since I was unsure, she had to suggest another word, *connected* for me to understand. Then, I had a problem reporting the secretary of the dentist on the phone that my filling's piece had *come off*. (pp. 27–28)

Another reason to learn PVs, besides the fact that native speakers commonly use them in daily speech, is that they let people convey their thoughts briefly and more effectively in English. For instance, even though the sentence is meaningful, it is not natural to tell someone that his or her coat has become old from being worn many times when there is an alternative: the coat is *worn out*, which conveys the same idea and is more succinct.

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) showed that particular PVs were linked with a certain field for which there were no definite options. For example, *check out* in a statement such as “*I need to check out by 1:00 pm* will likely be understood to mean check out of a hotel room” (p. 434). It is not easy to narrate the same act without this verb. An alternative way to say this would be “upon leaving a hotel, I have go to the front desk, give the clerk my key, and pay my bill,” but there is no other single verb that gives the same meaning as *check out* (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999, p. 434).

Another important reason for the increasing acceptance of PVs is the growing number of nouns that stem from PVs. Expressions such as *stand-off* and *face-off* are widely used in the press (Morales, 2000). Moreover, adjectives can also be derived from PVs. For instance, the PVs *wear out* and *break down* could be included as adjectives in sentences like he wore an old, worn-out t-shirt and in our bathroom, we have an old broken-down washing machine (McCarthy & O'Dell, 2007).

The above cases explain why it is crucial to emphasize a correct understanding of PVs. Daily life is full of PVs when using computers (*login, setup*), buying items (*try on, check out*), calling someone on the phone (*hold on, hang up*), education (*drop out*), and reading instructions in a manual (*hook up*), among other situations. If learners of English cannot master these basic phrases, they may develop resentment and ultimately become reluctant to use the language (Ben Duhaish, 2008). Students may even ask themselves whether their time was used wisely since they possess comprehension but cannot master fluency for daily conversation. This does not suggest, by any means, that students are not making progress. Yet they are often unaware that English spoken by native speakers is different from what they learn in the classroom. One could argue that the competency in and comprehension of PVs is a prerequisite for the cultural literacy needed to learn the language well.

Issues Caused by PVs

As explained earlier, one aspect of English that most L2 learners have difficulty mastering or understanding is related to PVs, which are assumed to be challenging for a variety of reasons. At the simplest level, PVs contain two or more orthographic words operating together (Wray & Perkins, 2000). This factor makes it challenging to identify them as a single entity. Unless students are aware that a series of words can constitute a PV, they will attempt to

decipher the meanings of the individual words. Without integrating those meanings, this plan is not useful in many situations. These verbs must be learned as interconnected components. If students are not taught correctly, they will not instinctively identify this need.

Semantic Classifications of PVs

Another issue created by PVs for L2 English learners is related to how definitions of PVs differ on a transparency scale, a matter referred to above (Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007). Some can be inferred from the individual words (*get back* from Italy = return), while others are almost unthinkable (*brush up* on your English = revise). The PVs containing an idiomatic (figurative) sense could involve difficulty due to the discrepancy between the idiomatic meaning and the meanings of the separate words in the PVs.

Classifying PVs according to their level on a transparency scale can enable students to understand their meanings. In this case, it is necessary to explain the common uses of the terms *literal*, *figurative*, *directional*, *transparent*, *opaque*, and *idiomatic*. These terms are often not consistently distinguished among scholars. *Literal* and *directional* are usually identified with *transparent*, and *figurative* often corresponds to *idiomatic*; *literal*, *directional*, and *transparent* are often contrasted with *figurative* and *idiomatic* (see Armstrong, 2004; Dagut & Laufer, 1985; Laufer & Eliasson, 1993; Liao & Fukuya, 2004; McPartland, 1989). Another opposite term to *transparent* is *opaque*.

Another problem with this transparency scale is related to those PVs that Laufer and Eliasson (1993) define as “semitransparent” PVs (p. 38) and which Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) define as “aspectual” PVs (p. 432). According to Überlingen (2007), the part of the PV derived from a verb often retains its meaning outside the PV, but the particle often does not. This can be illustrated with “*eat up*, *mix up*, *burn down*, *chat away*, or *play around*” (p. 19).

Überlingen argues that even though these PVs could appear to be transparent because the verb root's meaning is maintained, the particle's contribution to the PV is often not transparent: “*Up* in *eat up* and *mix up* does not suggest ‘direction’ or ‘movement from a lower to a higher position’ but ‘entirely, completely’; *down* in *burn down* implies ‘completely, entirely’ rather than the directional ‘from higher to lower’” (p. 19).

As indicated in Chapter 1, the present study has employed the semantic classification developed by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999), even though the usage of the terminology was slightly altered. These scholars categorized PVs as literal, idiomatic, or aspectual. Literal PVs have components that give the impression of preserving much of their meaning. For instance, the sense of *take* and *down* in *take down* the picture is traceable. In this research, I refer to these PVs as *literal*. In idiomatic PVs like *make up* (as in “to be reconciled”), the common definitions of *make* and *up* appear to be gone. For the purposes of the present study, I have used the term *figurative* when referencing these types of PVs. What aspectual PVs suggest is more transparent than those of idiomatic PVs although probably not as transparent as those of literal PVs. While the verbal element in aspectual PVs could be perceived literally, the particle plays a part in the meaning or some aspect of the verb, which is often not clearly perceived. For instance, the *up* in He *ate up* all the food and *drank up* the juice shows that the actions are finished (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999).

Polysemous PVs

One more complex feature of PVs is that they are polysemous (Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007). In other words, they can have several meanings. One such example is the verb *bring up*. Its meaning is carry something up as in the sentence *bring up* the chairs from the garden; it also

means nurture in the sentence parents *bring up* children, whereas in I *brought up* a suggestion it means mention (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, Finegan, 1999).

Furthermore, if L2 English learners strive to use PVs often, they cannot always be sure that a one-word verb can be replaced with a PV. For instance, they face difficulties in deciding whether in the phrase *to privatize a business*, it is possible to replace the verb *privatize* (Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007). Even in cases when a one-word verb has a PV equivalent (i.e., *die* and *pass away*, *cancel* and *call off*), in numerous instances, the meaning is not identical. Überlingen (2007) provides examples of *tolerate* and *put up with* and argues that they are not synonyms, as *tolerate* has a neutral connotation (i.e., To tolerate the views of other people), whereas *put up* bears a negative connotation (i.e., To *put up* with views of other people).

Register

Another difficulty with one-word verbs and PVs is that frequently their appropriate use depends on the register (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999; Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007; Überlingen, 2007). According to McCarthy and O'Dell (2007), registers serve to decide if a word is informal or formal and if it is related to a particular profession or interest.

It is commonly easier for L2 English learners to master the one-word verb than the PVs, particularly if this structure does not exist in their L1, and as one-word verbs appear more formal to students, they tend to use them to show their proficiency. Frequently, they are not aware that it is more appropriate to use PVs in some settings (Überlingen, 2007). British parents are unlikely to say, do not *admonish* the children, but rather might use the colloquial phrase *tell off*. McArthur and Atkins argue that native speakers avoid verbs of Classical origin, as they sound too formal and pompous. Such verbs are found in written discourse, especially in academic discourse and

written reports (as cited in Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007). On the other hand, more colloquial PVs are an essential element of informal, spoken English (Biber et al., 1999).

Hence, the goal of learners should not be to use the verb with the right meaning but rather a verb with the appropriate register for a given discourse. In fact, the crucial distinction between native-like and communicatively successful learners is the correct choice between a one-word verb and PV equivalents (Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007).

Syntactic Features of PVs

Another difficulty that L2 English learners have with PVs is their similarity to the regular structure of verb + preposition, such as in the sentences, he *looked over* the client and she *looked over* the wall. Furthermore, PVs typically allow particular movement, whereas prepositional verbs do not, which causes a change in meaning (Carter & McCarthy, 2006). The following examples provide further clarification:

- Phrasal verb: The teacher will *bring up* this topic next week; The teacher will *bring* these topics *up* next week.
- Prepositional verb: You need to *go up* the staircase and turn right; You need to *go* the stairs *up* and turn right (Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007).

Characteristics of PVs

Darwin and Gray (1999) point out that lexical and syntactic combinations of verb and particle act as a single word. This is the case with PVs, with one exception. PVs can be transitive (e.g., “I *filled out* the form”) or intransitive (e.g., “First, I *passed out*; then, I *came to*”).

Furthermore, transitive PVs typically form passives (e.g., “The form was *filled out*”), as well as action nominals (e.g., “the *filling out* of forms”). Also, some PVs consist of two words and a preposition, such as *to come up with* (devise) and *to put up with* (tolerate).

Regarding phonology, PVs usually have the same pattern as one-word verbs. For instance, as is the case of many verbs (e.g., *consume*) in which the stress is on the final syllable, the stress is on the particle, which is the final syllable of PVs (e.g., *put up*) (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996). As the verbal element and particle can be separated, a speaker can choose where to put the particle (before or after the object), as in “I *looked up* her name in the phone book” or “I *looked* her name *up* in the phone book” (Darwin & Gray, 1999, p. 69). L2 English learners can be confused by mentioning syntactic, lexical, and phonological similarities, and these issues must be adequately addressed.

The Use of PVs

This section discusses several studies conducted on the usage of PVs by English learners. These studies include Yorio (1989), McPartland (1989), Sjöholm (1995), Hägglund (2001), Überlingen (2007), Cheon (2006), and Morales (2000).

Yorio (1989) examined how 25 ESL students in the US used idiomatic expressions in writing. The study showed that native speakers and learners used PVs in almost equal amounts. Nevertheless, native speakers used figurative PVs more often than learners, even the learners who had lived in the US for more than a year. Yorio selected PVs that students produced in free writing activities. The study had certain limitations, as not all written productions were taken into account. Moreover, Yorio did not provide a list of PVs used and instead simply pointed out that the English native participants and learners tended to use different PVs. However, it must be noted that Yorio’s study did not focus exclusively on PVs but rather on general learner avoidance of idioms.

McPartland (1989) focused on the factors responsible for learner difficulty mastering PVs. According to the author, semantic complexity was one of the main reasons non-native

speakers tended to use literal PVs and avoided idiomatic ones. Thus, she concluded that avoidance of this group of PVs was related to their inherent ambiguity. Other identified factors were phonological (intonation of PVs) and syntactic (placement of particles) irregularity.

Sjöholm (1995) examined an understanding mechanism that underlies L2 acquisition. The author elaborated on internal and external factors that might impact SLA processes and conditions for the occurrence of cross-linguistic influences. He collected empirical data through a multiple-choice test from two groups of English learners, Swedish-speaking and Finnish-speaking Finns, who had different levels of proficiency (advanced and intermediate). The goal was to determine how the total cumulative years spent studying English impacted their usage of PVs. He also investigated different usage patterns with literal and figurative PVs to find out whether avoidance was determined by semantic or structural factors. The study showed that both Finnish and Swedish speakers used PVs with less frequency than native speakers. At the intermediate level, however, Finnish-speakers used fewer PVs than Swedish speakers. The results confirmed the hypothesis put forth by Sjöholm (1995) and Dagut and Laufer (1985) that structural L1-L2 variations impact one's ability to learn how to use PVs. It should be emphasized that unlike Finnish, Swedish has PV equivalents of English. As was assumed, Swedish-speaking learners showed a better performance with English PVs that had a semantic equivalent in Swedish. On the other hand, Finnish speakers tended to avoid idiomatic PVs. In addition, learners who were exposed to English in a native English environment used idiomatic PVs more frequently than those who studied English only in Finland.

Hägglund (2001) employed a different approach to PVs. The author examined how Swedish speakers with an advanced level of English proficiency used PVs with regard to stylistic awareness. She adapted a summary of the most used PVs from Biber et al. (1999) and compared

the Swedish Component of the International Corpus of Learner English (SWICLE) to the Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays (LOCNESS), its English equivalent. Furthermore, a comparison was made between the SWICLE and the Longman Grammar Corpus (see Biber et al., 1999). Hägglund's (2001) assumption was that PV usage frequency in argumentative essays written by learners was higher in the registers of conversation and fiction, as was found in Biber et al. (1999), than in the register of academic writing and in news reporting. Hägglund (2001) defined underuse as well as overuse patterns of PVs. However, the results did not support her hypothesis. She selected 31 verbs and according to the results, Swedish learners underused and overused 12 of them, in contrast to the writing of native speakers. In comparison to the Longman Grammar Corpus, Swedish speakers underused or overused only seven PVs. Accordingly, Hägglund concluded that Swedish students did not use PVs in speech more than in writing. The results were limited since the author investigated only 31 PVs. Consequently, it was not clear how Swedish speakers utilized PVs in writing. She also emphasized the weakness of such a quantitative approach and the limited size of the data used.

Überlingen's (2007) study was based on the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE). The author compared how Italian and German learners of English adopted PVs in writing. The collected data were matched against the native control corpus. The goal was to identify potential deviation from the natural usage of PVs by the learners. The results showed differences and similarities between the two groups of English learners. German speakers used more PVs than native speakers (+2.6%), while Italian learners used fewer PVs than native speakers (-41.7%). The most common PVs Italian speakers used were strictly related to the essay topic, whereas German learners wrote in an informal style and used numerous colloquial PVs. Finally, there were both negative and positive effects from their L1. German learners showed a

greater capacity than Italians to formulate PVs based on the stipulated PV patterns. This was because Germans were more familiar with PVs due to the structure of the German language. Italians were not motivated to use informal PVs and instead showed a high level of formality. In addition, Überlingen found a positive correlation between studying and living in a country where English was the main language and the number of PVs a person used. Überlingen also emphasized that English students commonly utilized PVs in an unnatural manner. Both Italian and German users tended to make inappropriate choices and simplify their use of PVs.

Cheon (2006) conducted an experimental study on how learning conditions impacted PV use among adult ESL learners who were native Arabic and Korean speakers. The study was carried out in three phases. The first phase consisted of a pre-test in the form of a checklist test. The second phase was a treatment developed through software tools. The third, post-test phase consisted of a written test. The author examined how learning conditions (context vs. translation), native language, and proficiency level interacted. In addition, the author examined the semantic features of PVs (idiomatic vs. literal). According to the results, Korean participants benefited more from translation learning conditions, whereas Arabic-speaking participants benefited more from contextual learning conditions.

Cheon's (2006) study was innovative in the sense that it employed a computer program to develop the tasks for participants to perform a technologically advanced technique. Nonetheless, this study also had weaknesses. First, the author randomly selected PVs from two dictionaries. The author justified this decision by arguing that there were not enough previous researchers that measured the frequency of PVs. Second, as the author was not a native Arabic speaker, he was not able to assess the impact of that native language on ESL acquisition by taking into account educational background and learning experiences. To overcome this lack of knowledge of

Arabic, the author employed a bilingual Arabic-English speaker, who was neither a translator nor a language professor, to translate the test into Arabic. Consequently, it can be seen from the examples given in the study that the test was not translated proficiently.

Morales (2000) examined how Spanish speakers majoring in English used and understood English PVs. The author examined whether level of proficiency impacted learner performance. The participants received translation tasks, were asked to make grammatical judgments, and filled in multiple-choice questions. Morales tested and compared three proficiency levels and found a correlation between comprehension and use of English PVs. If students fully understood PVs, they tended to use them, while students who did not fully understand PVs tended to avoid using them. The correlation between these two skills, use and comprehension, was significant. However, students generally performed better in comprehension. This was an expected outcome since learners can understand the meaning of a new word based on the meanings of other words in a sentence. Morales concluded that participants were likely to guess the meaning of a PV when they saw it for the first time. Regarding proficiency levels, Morales found significant differences between them. Although none of the three levels managed to obtain high scores overall, advanced students used and understood PVs better than students at the intermediate level.

Reasons for the Limited Understanding of PVs

Gardner and Davies (2007) indicated that PVs are difficult to classify and define. Gaston (2004) further suggested that because of the inherent problems and confusion that come with the use of PVs, they present a significant obstacle for non-native learners. Darwin and Gray (1999) suggested three causes for the difficulties L2 English learners have with PVs. The first cause is determining the meaning of PVs. Even though linguists state that a PV is a combination of a verb

and a particle functioning as one term, applying that meaning tends to be difficult. Brinton (1988) would consider a term like *drink up* to be a PV, but Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) are not clear on how to categorize such a term. The second cause is the lack of compiled lists of the most commonly used PVs developed by language researchers. Since researchers often rely on personal judgment when making a list of commonly used PVs, it is difficult to establish a universal list. The third cause is how to introduce PVs by their verb category. For instance, Frank (1996) identified five PVs starting with the term *bring*, four with *make*, and five with *take*.

Various factors discourage L2 English learners from prominently employing PVs in their speech (Gaston, 2004). PVs might be difficult for learners to use because of their unfamiliar *verb + particle* construction, their idiomatic character, or their basic structural differences (Gaston, 2004). Because the individual words used to create PVs have different denotative meanings, PVs must be understood through their implied or comprehensive idiomatic meanings. For example, Bolinger (1971) affirmed that “*take off* has no more to do with *take* than *disease* with *ease*” (p. 60). One cannot escape how important PVs are in English grammar and how they continuously perplex and puzzle linguists, grammarians, and learners. Even though Bolinger’s book *The Phrasal Verb in English* was published in 1971, the problem of PVs continues to plague English learners and their teachers to this day.

Another major problem that learners face when acquiring knowledge of PVs is to keep pace with the new PVs that are coined each year. For example, phrases like *chill out* have become rampant in everyday speech due to their use in the media (Hanks, 2005).

Avoidance

As studies have shown, to monitor the progress of L2 learners, it is not enough to examine production; one must also study the tendencies of avoidance. Schachter (1974) was the

first to study avoidance behavior among L2 learners. Schachter emphasized the significance of studying forms that learners produced in a foreign language, as well as forms they avoided regularly. Subsequently, many researchers have focused on this phenomenon, such as Kleinmann (1977), Hulstijn and Marchena (1989), Laufer and Eliasson (1993), Kamimoto et al. (1992), Dagut and Laufer (1985), Siyanova and Schmitt (2007), and Liao and Fukuya (2004).

Schachter (1974) analyzed the relative clauses in 50 English essays written by English learners and compared them with similar essays written by American native English speakers. The learners included Arabic, Persian, Japanese, and Chinese speakers. The results showed that Arabic (154) and Persian (174) speakers had approximately the same number of relative clauses in their English essays as native English speakers (173). On the other hand, Japanese (63) and Chinese (76) speakers produced significantly fewer relative clauses. Schachter labeled this the *avoidance phenomenon* and stated that students were more likely to avoid using structures in English that were hard for them to understand. However, Liao and Fukuya (2004) argued that Schachter's study had certain limitations, particularly because it did not take into account level of proficiency or how frequently relative clauses appeared in learner texts. Schachter also did not provide evidence that Japanese and Chinese learners were able to use relative clauses. As a result, their failure to use English relative clauses might have been caused by a lack of understanding instead of avoidance (Liao & Fukuya, 2004).

Kleinmann (1977) investigated four English grammatical structures (direct object pronoun, infinitive complement, present progressive, and the passive) to identify avoidance behavior among two groups of English learners. The first group was native Arabic speakers, the second native Portuguese and Spanish speakers. Prior to studying potential avoidance behavior, the author gave a comprehension test to ensure that learners knew the four studied structures.

The results indicated that a pattern of avoidance and difficulty predictions had a correlation, which was determined through contrastive analysis. There was also a correlation between the frequency of use of these structures and certain affective measures, such as anxiety and confidence. The author concluded that although contrastive analysis could be used to predict avoidance, psychological and linguistic variables also impacted learner behavior regarding these L2 structures, and the affective state of learners impacted their avoidance or production. This study provided evidence for Schachter's (1974) argument that structural differences between an L1 and L2 determine avoidance behavior.

Other researchers have argued that underproduction of some structures, as well as structural differences between two languages, does not mean avoidance is not the sole factor behind this scenario. Kamimoto et al. (1992) emphasized that to determine whether avoidance is a reason for underproduction of some structures by certain groups of learners, L1 forms as well as the functions and distributions of structures assumed to be avoided in the L2 must be taken into account. In addition, it must be clear which means were used to decide if and to what degree members of the group knew the given L2 structures.

Li (1996) studied English and Chinese relative clauses and concluded that advanced and intermediate learners did not inevitably avoid structures that differed from those in their native language. According to Li, structural differences were not the reason for conscious avoidance of English relative clauses by Chinese learners. Instead, they subconsciously underproduced relative clauses because of subtle pragmatic differences.

The studies discussed above showed potential causes of avoidance behavior among L2 learners. The following section deals with studies on the avoidance of PVs in English.

Avoidance of English PVs

Dagut and Laufer (1985) examined native Hebrew speakers' usage of PVs in English. They identified 15 PVs that native speakers preferred using in spoken English instead of single-word verbs that were semantically equivalent. For example, in the sentence "I didn't expect that Peter would ever ____ his colleagues," native speakers tended to use *let down* instead of *disappoint* (p. 74). The 15 PVs were used in tests to determine whether Hebrew speakers preferred them or single-verb equivalents. Three tests were administered: a verb-memorizing test, a multiple-choice test, and a verb-translation test. Furthermore, the study examined how frequently learners avoided using completive, literal, and figurative PVs. According to the results, the majority of Hebrew learners preferred single-word verbs and avoided PVs. The authors argued that learners were likely to avoid what they may not understand, since in Hebrew, these verbs do not exist. Figurative PVs were avoided more often than the other two types of PVs. Arabic as well as Hebrew-speaking learners of English tend to overuse single-word verbs, as neither of those languages exhibit PVs. Dagut and Laufer concluded that intra-lingual factors (e.g., fossilization, wrong application of rules, and over-generalization) did not satisfactorily explain the difficulty Hebrew learners had with producing English PVs. Rather, the interlingual approach should be employed, which focuses on structural differences between two languages. This study provided evidence that the cause of avoidance was primarily a typological difference between English and Hebrew.

Liao and Fukuya (2004) criticized Dagut and Laufer (1985) because of two weak points. The first was a weakness in the method used to assess the knowledge of participants about linguistic features. The PVs were also chosen on the basis of the researchers' intuition and impressions stemming from their teaching experiences. More precisely, the authors selected

certain PVs because they were mentioned in textbooks and assumed to be covered in the curriculum. Hence, Kamimoto et al. (1992) concluded that Dagut and Laufer did not obtain enough evidence to claim that they discovered “a genuine avoidance phenomenon” (p. 78). Kamimoto and his colleagues warned that ignorance might be a cause of underproduction. Furthermore, Dagut and Laufer (1985) argued that inter-lingual differences explained why some people avoided PVs. Nonetheless; these authors did not explain why Hebrew speakers avoided figurative PVs more than complete and literal PVs, which introduced an intra-lingual element in the explanation of this avoidance behavior.

Dagut and Laufer’s (1985) study was replicated by Hulstijn and Marchena (1989). Based on Dagut and Laufer’s (1985) theory that learners whose native language was non-Germanic would avoid PVs, Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) developed their hypothesis that English learners whose native language was Dutch, which has PVs, would not avoid English PVs. Nonetheless, the authors also proposed a hypothesis that Dutch learners generally shied away from PVs due to semantic, not structural reasons. They adopted elicitation tests similar to those of Dagut and Laufer (1985) but utilized a variety of PVs. They studied two groups (intermediate and advanced level learners) to determine if there was a tendency to avoid PVs in a negative correlation with increasing level of proficiency. However, the findings did not support the hypothesis, as Dutch learners at both levels of proficiency did not tend to avoid PVs categorically.

Liao and Fukuya (2004) pointed out two findings of Hulstijn and Marchena (1989). Dutch students did not universally avoid all PVs, but they did avoid those PVs that seemed similar to Dutch PVs. This finding implied that structural differences between two languages are not the only cause of avoidance. The opposite could be true as well: avoidance may result from similarities. Therefore, the strategy of Dutch learners could be labeled circumspect, as the results

showed they preferred single-word verbs, which had several meanings, compared to those PVs whose meanings were specified and occasionally idiomatic (Hulstijn & Marchena, 1989).

Überlingen (2007) also commented on previously mentioned studies. He pointed out that Dutch learners at intermediate and advanced levels utilized more PVs than native Hebrew-speaking students. For Dutch learners, the PVs did not indicate learning problems. As a result, the results of Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) indirectly supported the claims of Dagut and Laufer (1985). However, semantic difficulties may also build a tendency to avoid usage of PVs by Hebrew speakers and Dutch intermediate students. Dagut and Laufer (1985) did not further develop the above argument, in spite of their classification of PVs into completive, figurative, and literal. The least frequently used were figurative PVs, followed by completive, with the most frequently used being literal PVs. This finding implied that avoidance occurred because of semantic difficulties, which was further supported by Hulstijn and Marchena (1989). Dutch intermediate learners exhibited preferences for using simple verbs with general meanings instead of specialized PVs or PVs with idiomatic meanings.

Laufer and Eliasson (1993) carried out a study based on previous studies. The authors pointed out three potential causes of lexical and syntactic avoidance: a) differences between L1 and L2 (see Dagut & Laufer, 1985), b) similarities between L1 and L2 (see Hulstijn & Marchena, 1989), and c) difficulty of an L2. Laufer and Eliasson (1993) studied advanced Swedish learners of English. There are PV structures in Swedish. Accordingly, the authors assumed that if participants avoided figurative PVs in English, despite the presence of PVs in Swedish, it would show that semantic difficulty of English was a factor behind this avoidance. However, if they showed no preference for one-word verbs, it would indicate that non-avoidance or avoidance varied from similarities and differences between languages. The authors used a

translation test and a multiple-choice test. The control group had a comprehension test to determine passive knowledge of PVs. The authors contrasted the results with those of Dagut and Laufer (1985). Their conclusion was that the learners whose native language (Swedish) had PVs did not avoid them, whereas learners whose native language (Hebrew) did not have that grammatical category did avoid them. Finally, Laufer and Eliasson (1993) came to the conclusion that idiomatic similarity between two languages did not impact avoidance and that differences between the L1 and L2 were the best predictor of avoidance.

Liao and Fukuya (2004) studied avoidance levels of PVs among intermediate and advanced Chinese students of English, using Dagut and Laufer (1985) and Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) as foundational studies, but with two important differences. Liao and Fukuya (2004) used PVs preferred by American English speakers, whereas Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) utilized PVs preferred by British English speakers. Additionally, Liao and Fukuya (2004) used colloquial PVs with an informal register, whereas previous studies used longer sentences that may have appeared too formal to learners.

Liao and Fukuya (2004) also examined the impact of test type by using recall, translation, and multiple-choice tests. Their results showed that not only were the type of PVs and level of proficiency important, but the type of test also impacted avoidance. Advanced learners produced more PVs than intermediate learners in all tests. In fact, they produced almost the same number of PVs as native English speakers. According to Liao and Fukuya, intermediate students avoided PVs as a result of structural differences, as the Chinese language does not have PVs. This finding supported the argument of Dagut and Laufer that L1-L2 differences were the main cause of avoidance. Overall, Chinese learners produced more literal than figurative PVs. On the other

hand, intermediate students produced fewer figurative PVs compared to learners at an advanced level.

Furthermore, Liao and Fukuya (2004) tested the interrelation between PV type and test type verbs. The translation test did not offer possible answers, and the Chinese learners overall used more literal than figurative PVs. Liao and Fukuya explained this by means of semantic difficulty. The study showed no interaction between the two groups and the types of PVs. It suggested that both groups preferred literal PVs given on the multiple-choice test. More precisely, learners of both proficiency levels used more literal verbs. Furthermore, the authors argued that non-avoidance or avoidance could be in this case explained as a manifestation of learners' interlanguage development, not a result of structural similarities or differences between Chinese and English.

In reference to the developmental framework, Liao and Fukya (2004) found a tendency of development from avoidance to non-avoidance of PVs, due to the amount of contact with the L2. The authors based this conclusion on the fact that the advanced learners who participated in the study spent at least nine months in a country with English as the primary language. On the other hand, 30 out of 40 of the intermediate learners had not experienced such an environment. Thus, exposure and interaction with native speakers were contributing factors to why learners at the advanced level used more PVs compared to the intermediate learners.

Siyanova and Schmitt (2007) concentrated on the problems faced by English learners in relation to PVs that led to avoidance. The authors compared the probability of using PVs instead of single-word verbs with advanced non-native speakers and native speakers. The results showed that native speakers were more likely to use PVs in informal, spoken contexts. Remarkably, the amount of time spent in a native-speaking environment did not appear to impact the probability

of using PVs. This study differed from previous ones as it explored the usage of PVs in written and spoken discourse, compared the usage of native and non-native speakers, used corpus and questionnaire data, and examined whether exposure increased the likelihood of using PVs.

The questionnaire in Siyanova and Schmitt (2007) asked non-native and native English speakers about how they used 26 verb pairs in a colloquial setting. Participants were asked how likely they were to use a single-word verb or a PV in that context. The possible answers ranged from “very unlikely” to “very likely.” The results showed that native speakers preferred PVs, whereas advanced learners preferred single-word verbs. Nevertheless, the learners were willing to use PVs but simply did not prefer them as strongly as native speakers. According to the authors, although long-term exposure to a native English environment impacted the choice of PVs to a certain degree, even spending more than a year in an English-speaking country may not be enough for non-native speakers to have the same proficiency with PVs as native speakers. Thus, the authors argued that since PVs were so complex, it would take more than a year until exposure showed substantial results. The authors gave a cross-linguistic explanation in their argument that non-Germanic learners required substantial time to become comfortable with a structure that was foreign to them. Moreover, they argued that in the British National Corpus (BNC) and Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE), there were more single-word verbs than PVs. Accordingly, learners used fewer PVs because they were exposed to one-word verbs more.

The present study is related to previous studies. Its purpose was to examine the avoidance of PVs by English students whose native language was Arabic, which lacks PVs. The studies discussed indicated three main reasons for the avoidance of PVs: structural differences between L1 and L2, structural similarities between L1 and L2, and semantic complexity of the L2. The

design of this study was based on Liao and Fukuya (2004). In addition, it has included demographic surveys, written interview questions, multiple-choice questions, and Likert-scale questions containing the 20 most frequent English PVs.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 2 gave a review of the literature on L2 vocabulary learning, PVs, and the phenomenon of avoiding PVs due to their semantic and syntactic complexity. It also included empirical studies on avoidance of PVs relevant to this study.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter outlines the methods, research questions, participants, data collection instruments, and data analysis used in this dissertation. A mixed-methods approach was employed because it allowed the researcher to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data to gain additional insight into the studied phenomena. According to Hallie Preskill, while “all methods have inherent biases and weaknesses [...] a mixed method approach increases the likelihood that the sum of the data collected will be richer, more meaningful, and ultimately more useful in answering the research questions” (as cited in Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007, p. 121). This study thus used qualitative and quantitative methods, consisting of a survey, semi-structured written interview, a multiple-choice test on PVs, and a Likert-scale survey. These methods were combined into an online questionnaire for participants to complete.

Population and Sample

The overall aim of this study was to understand the cultural dimensions of the avoidance of English PVs by Saudi ESL students. The study was conducted to advance our understanding of avoidance in L2 acquisition and how it is influenced by educational background and level of proficiency. The specific objective was to evaluate whether Saudi ESL learners avoided using PVs due to the availability of a corresponding single-word expression. For this study, 60 Saudi ESL learners and 53 native English speakers were selected. The Saudi ESL students were reached through the Saudi Students Association (SSA) at the University of Memphis at which those ESL students were enrolled in undergraduate classes. The sample included both male and female students. The native speaker participants were also undergraduate students at the

University of Memphis and were reached through administration emails to different departments at the same university. Students majoring in English were excluded.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. Are Saudi ESL students familiar with English PVs?

This question was answered by analyzing Saudi ESL students' responses to the survey question "How familiar are you with the following terms: Phrasal verb, Two-word verb, Three-word verb?" and a Likert-scale survey comprising questions aimed at testing their familiarity with the 20 most common English PVs. In addition, several questions from the written interview (i.e., Q15 "Do you use such phrases when you speak or write?" Q16 "Can you give me some phrasal verb examples?") contribute to the assessment of the use of English PVs by ESL students.

2. What perceptions do Saudi ESL students have about the ease or difficulty of learning PVs?

This question was answered by analyzing Saudi ESL students' responses to the questions from the written interview, such as "Do you feel these phrasal verbs cause problems when you communicate with native speakers? If so, please explain how." As the respondents were given space to elaborate on encountered problems, their answers provided additional insight into the factors behind the tendency to avoid PVs and the challenges encountered while communicating with native speakers.

3. What terms do Saudi ESL students understand and use to refer to PVs?

One of the objectives of this study was to determine whether Saudi ESL students knew of the term *phrasal verb*, and if not, which terms they employed to refer to PVs. Hence, this

research question was answered by analyzing the Saudi ESL responses to the following interview question from the questionnaire: “How familiar are you with the following terms: “Phrasal verbs, Two-word verb, and Three-word verb?” The possible answers were 1) not familiar at all, 2) slightly familiar, 3) moderately familiar, 4) very familiar, and 5) extremely familiar.

4. Do Saudi ESL students use the most common PVs?

This question was answered by analyzing Saudi ESL students’ knowledge and use of the most common PVs via Likert-scale questions, as per Liu (2011). Also, Questions 4 and 5 from the written interview (“Do you use such phrases when you speak or write?” and “Can you give me some examples?”) evaluated their usage of PVs and showed a tendency to use or avoid PVs in written and spoken discourse.

5. Where do Saudi ESL students learn PVs (e.g., classrooms, movies, news, reading, online chatting, talking with native speakers, or other means)?

This question was answered by analyzing Saudi ESL students’ responses to the interview question “How and/or where did you learn PVs?”

6. Do Saudi ESL students avoid using PVs?

This question could be answered by analyzing Saudi ESL students’ answers to the 15 multiple-choice questions, which demonstrated whether there was a tendency to avoid PVs, as the students could select a correct answer that was either a more colloquial PV and likely to be used by native speakers or a more formal one-word verb. For instance, they could choose between *appear* and *show up*, *improve* and *brush up on*, and *refuse* and *turn down*.

Data Collection and Instruments

Data were collected through a survey, a written interview, multiple-choice questions, and Likert-scale questions. All methods were combined in an online questionnaire, which was pilot tested before being sent to participants to ensure the link functioned correctly and the text was readable and compatible with the most commonly used electronic devices, including iPads, smartphones, and computers.

The first part of the online questionnaire utilized qualitative methods. The Saudi ESL students and native English speakers first completed a survey about their demographic characteristics (gender, age, major, level of education, and period of study in the US). The second part assessed their familiarity with PVs (Appendix A). The third part was a semi-structured interview, consisting of written questions with the same group of ESL students (Appendix B). The questions were open-ended so that participants could write their answers in their own words. This qualitative method provided data about the past experiences of studying English PVs, how students used PVs, difficulties they encountered, and the frequency of communication with native English speakers. The written interview was given to students based on the assumption that they would answer them honestly without feeling pressured to provide “correct” answers. All participants answered the same questions to enable the researcher to compare their answers. According to Newton (2010), “The success and validity of an interview rests on the extent to which the respondent’s opinions are truly reflected: the interviewee’s ‘voice,’ communicating their perspective” (p. 4). The interview was part of an online questionnaire as it was easier to approach participants with this method than with a face-to-face interview. The interview questions were as follows:

1. Do you know what “get up” means? Do you know what type of phrase this is?

2. Have you studied phrasal verbs?
3. How and/or where did you learn phrasal verbs?
4. Do you use such phrases when you speak or write?
5. Can you give me some examples?
6. Do you feel these phrasal verbs cause a problem when you communicate with native speakers?
7. How often do you communicate with native English speakers?

The fourth part of the questionnaire focused on quantitative methods, including a multiple-choice test, which measured participants' ability to select the correct PVs to complete sample sentences (see Appendix C). For this test, the researcher adapted 15 multiple-choice questions, each with four possible options, from Liao and Fukuya (2004), who examined the avoidance of PVs by intermediate and advanced Chinese learners of English. This set of multiple-choice questions was employed because multiple-choice questions were used as an elicitation tool in many related studies (e.g., Dagut & Laufer, 1985; Duhaish, 2008; Huilstijn & Marchena, 1989; Laufer & Eliasson, 1993; Liao & Fukuya, 2004; Siyanova & Schmitt 2007; Sjöholm, 1995). Moreover, the multiple-choice task has been shown to yield solid evidence on avoidance, where the learners chose non-PVs, rather than the native speakers' PVs preference.

Liao and Fukuya's (2004) results showed advanced speakers were more likely to use PVs than speakers at the intermediate level, who opted for a one-word verb. According to these researchers, "The L1-L2 structural difference [...] between Chinese and English might be a reason for the avoidance of PVs by the intermediate Chinese learners" (Liao & Fukuya, 2002, p. 89). This finding is relevant to this study, considering that Arabic, like Chinese, does not have PVs, which are typical of Germanic languages. Hence, this test assessed the use of the following

PVs: *get up, show up, brush up on, let down, go off, hold on, put out, make up, give in, turn down, run into, show off, go away, take away, and come in.*

The fifth part contained a 20-item survey on a 4-point Likert scale to assess the extent to which participants used the most common PVs in American and British English (Appendix D). This scale was developed by the psychologist Rensis Likert, whose goal was to evaluate attitudes of participants about various social issues. According to Busch, “Likert-type scales may be described as consisting of three or more ordinal (ranked) scale categories placed along a continuum” (Busch, 1993, p. 734). Using a Likert scale is common in studies related to L2 learning because it efficiently captures opinions, motives, and attitudes of learners. This test revealed participants’ familiarity with the 20 most frequently used English PVs. According to Liu (2011), who studied frequency and usage patterns of PVs through the Corpus of Contemporary American English and the British National Corpus, the most frequently used PVs were as follows: *go on, pick up, come back, come up, find out, come out, go out, point out, grow up, set up, look over, turn out, give up, get out, take on, put away, make up, end up, get back, and look up*. Sentences, including the abovementioned PVs, were given to the participants, who were asked to mark those that applied to them. The options were 1) not familiar with the verb and its meaning; 2) kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning, but not sure; 3) familiar with the verb and its meaning, but not using it; and 4) familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it.

Both the multiple-choice test (Appendix C) and the Likert-scale survey (Appendix D) were administered to 60 Saudi ESL participants and 53 native English speakers, who were undergraduate students at the University of Memphis, for comparison to reveal whether the ESL participants answered the multiple-choice questions in the same way as native speakers. The goal was to determine any differences between Saudi ESL learners and native English speakers to

identify the most challenging PVs and the patterns of familiarity. The native speakers were not asked the interview questions. Participants were recruited through email. The data were designed using the Qualtrics program, survey software used for creating online questionnaires.

Data Analysis and Statistical Procedures

Because this study used a mixed-methods design, data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Quantitative data, collected via the multiple-choice test and Likert-scale survey, were analyzed using SPSS (Version 24). The qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews were analyzed by comparing answers and identifying the main issues (e.g., where they studied PVs, challenges communicating with native speakers) and commonalities and differences between participants in the written interview.

Each participant's performance was calculated by summing the number of questions answered correctly on the entire test to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between Saudi ESL students and native English speakers on the 15-item multiple-choice test measuring PV use (Appendix C). Then, each group's mean performance was compared by conducting an independent-samples *t*-test, wherein the independent variable was the participant group (Saudi ESL students vs. native English speakers), and the dependent variable was their multiple-choice test performance. The alpha (i.e., Type-1 error rate threshold) was set at .05, and effect size was computed using Pearson's *R* correlation.

Each participant's overall familiarity was computed by summing his or her ratings across the 20 Likert-scale items (Appendix D) to determine whether Saudi ESL students had significantly different familiarity with PVs from native English speakers. The presence of a statistically significant mean group difference was determined by conducting an independent-samples *t*-test, in which the independent variable was participant group (Saudi ESL students vs.

native English speakers), and the dependent variable was an overall score on a Likert scale. As with the analysis described above, the alpha was set at .05, and effect size was computed using Pearson's R correlation.

Demographic data collected through the survey were also analyzed using SPSS. Calculating the averages of the answers produced valuable information, such as the average age of participants and years of education in the US.

Chapter Summary

A mixed-methods approach was employed because it helped overcome the limitations of quantitative and qualitative methods, to collect richer data, to gain deeper insight into the phenomenon of interest, and to answer the research questions. The study included qualitative methods (a survey and written interview) and quantitative methods (a multiple-choice test and Likert-scale questions). SPSS was used for the quantitative analysis of the multiple-choice test, the Likert-scale questions, and the demographic data obtained through the survey. The qualitative data were analyzed using a semi-structured, written interview.

Chapter 4

Results

This chapter reports the study's main findings, including the relevant quantitative (statistical) and qualitative (narrative) data. Findings are presented in two sections: descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics for demographic characteristics pertinent to participants are calculated, organized, and presented. Scores obtained from both groups are evaluated and summarized. The inferential statistics section presents the testing procedures for this study. Hypotheses were tested to answer the research questions and are described in a separate section.

Descriptive Statistics

This section presents key statistics to describe the data and relationships between the study variables. Descriptive statistics provided a sense of the sample's important characteristics. The most suitable descriptive statistics generated were frequencies and percentages. Descriptive findings are represented graphically in pie and bar charts.

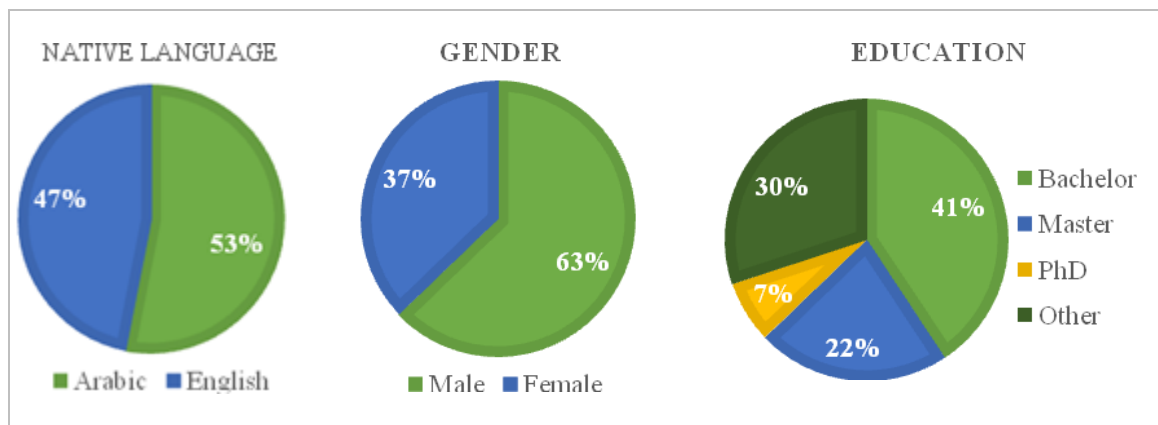
Participants consisted of undergraduate and graduate Saudi ESL students and undergraduate native speakers of American English. None of the participants were majoring in English. Therefore, the first procedure before conducting any statistical analysis was to filter out the data from students who did not meet the inclusion criteria. A total of 177 surveys were sent and received. Only 113 surveys were eligible for analysis, representing responses of undergraduate and graduate students not majoring in English.

Demographics. Demographic characteristics were assigned by a number of nominal variables: Arabic/English Native Speaker, Gender, and Education Level. Nominal variables are described in Table 1 and represented graphically in Figure 1.

Table 1

Frequency and Percent for Nominal Demographic Variables

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Arabic/English Native Speaker		
Native Arabic Speaker	60	53.10
Native English Speaker	53	46.90
Total	113	
Gender		
Male	71	62.83
Female	42	37.17
Total	113	
Education Level		
Bachelor's Degree	46	40.71
Master's Degree	25	22.12
PhD	8	7.08
Other	34	30.09
Total	113	

*Figure 1. Pie charts for nominal demographic variables.*

Other demographics included age of participants, which is a scale (continuous) variable, summarized by descriptive statistics, such as the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum. Results for age are given in Table 2 and graphically represented by a histogram in Figure 2 to demonstrate the distribution of participant ages and a boxplot in Figure 3 to detect outliers. Descriptive analysis of demographic characteristics revealed the following findings. Slightly more than half (53%) were native Arabic speakers, and 47% were native

English speakers. Gender was divided into 63% male and 37% female. Most participants were bachelor's degree holders (41%), followed by master's degree holders (22%), and PhD holders (7%). In addition, 30% held other degrees, such as a high school diploma (19 participants), associate degree (five), Doctor of Pharmacy (four), a bachelor's degree, and a few other undefined certificates. The mean age of participants was 31, with a standard deviation of 8.78. Ages ranged from a minimum of 18 to a maximum of 65. The median age was 30, indicating that 50% of participants were at least 30 years of age, and the mode (the most frequent age) was 28.

Table 2

Age Descriptive Statistics

	95% Confidence Interval for Mean			Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
	Mean	Lower Bound	Upper Bound				
Statistic	30.89	29.21	32.56	30.00	8.78	18	65

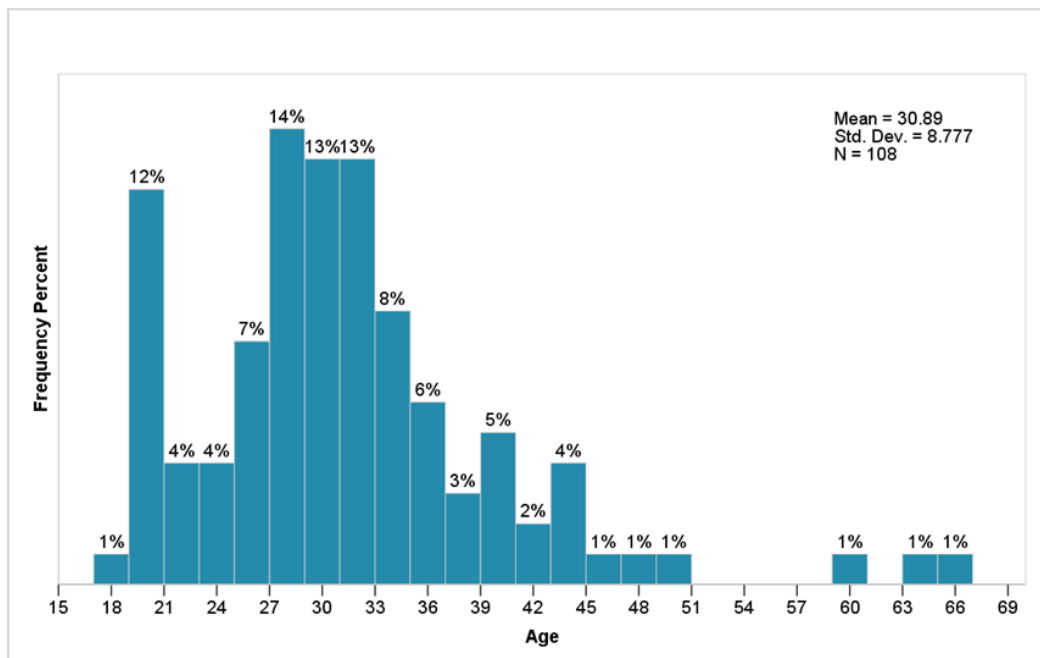


Figure 2. Histogram of age.

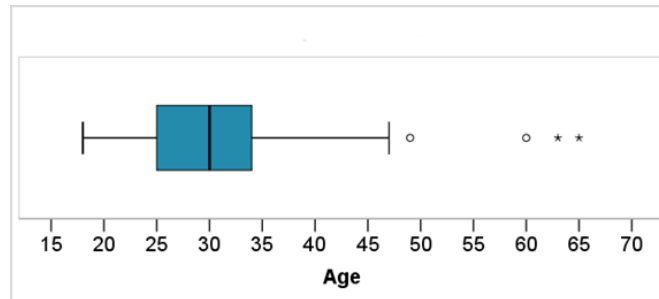


Figure 3. Boxplot of age.

Most participants were 35 to 45; however, the boxplot in Figure 3 shows two outliers and two extreme values. SPSS produces a boxplot that shows an outlier as a circle and an extreme value as an asterisk. A Stem-and-Leaf plot (Figure 4) shows that four participants were 49 and older. By visually scanning the data, outliers were detected as three outlying points away from the rest of the age data. When the three outlying points were removed, the mean age was equal to 29.98 years with a standard deviation of 7.01. The results did not change dramatically after removing the outliers. Therefore, there was no need to remove them from the data.

Frequency	Stem &	Leaf
.00	1 .	
8.00	1 .	89999999
7.00	2 .	0000001
5.00	2 .	22233
8.00	2 .	44555555
5.00	2 .	66777
19.00	2 .	8888888888889999999
13.00	3 .	0000000111111
12.00	3 .	22222223333
9.00	3 .	444445555
4.00	3 .	6677
2.00	3 .	89
6.00	4 .	000011
2.00	4 .	33
3.00	4 .	445
1.00	4 .	7
4.00	Extremes	(≥49)
Stem width:	10	
Each leaf:	1 case	

Figure 4. Stem-and-leaf diagram for age.

Familiarity with PV terms. Participants were asked to give their level of familiarity with the terms “Phrasal Verbs,” “Two-Word Verbs,” and “Three-Word Verbs.” Frequency analysis performed on the overall sample of 113 students revealed that nearly half were familiar with Phrasal Verbs (47%) and Two-Word Verbs (45%) but fewer with Three-Word Verbs (29%). Familiarity was referred to by the scores “Moderately familiar,” “Very familiar,” and “Extremely familiar.” The findings of the frequency analysis are presented in Table 3 and Figure 5. Shades of blue represent levels of familiarity with the terms plotted in Figure 5.

Table 3

Familiarity with Phrasal Verb, Two-Word Verb, and Three-Word Verb

	Phrasal Verb		Two-Word Verb		Three-Word Verb	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Not familiar at all	28	25.00	31	28.44	49	44.95
Slightly familiar	31	27.68	30	27.52	29	26.61
Moderately familiar	28	25.00	30	27.52	17	15.60
Very familiar	18	16.07	13	11.93	11	10.09
Extremely familiar	7	6.25	5	4.59	3	2.75
Total	112	100.00	109	100.00	109	100.00

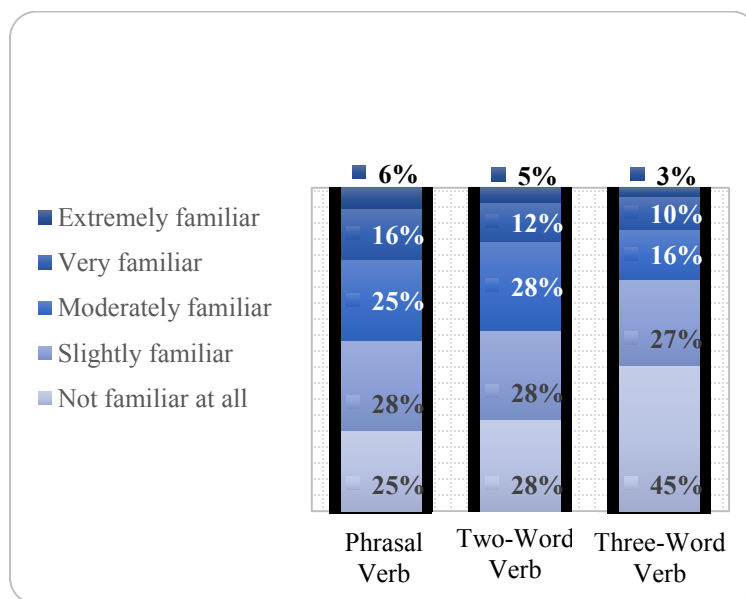


Figure 5. Familiarity with phrasal verb, two-word verb, and three-word verb.

Multiple-choice questions. Each question in the 15-item multiple-choice questions taken from Liao and Fukuya (2004) was analyzed to assess the options chosen by participants, that is, to assess their ability to select a PV to complete a target sentence. Table 4 shows percentages of each PV chosen by participants for each of the 15 multiple-choice test questions.

Table 4

Multiple-Choice Test Questions Adopted from Liao and Fukuya (2004)

Test Question	Verb	Frequency	Percent
1. "When the weather is nice I love to ____ early." "Me, too. It's good to enjoy the morning air."	Rise	11	9.82
	Release	3	2.68
	get up	98	87.50
	Total	112	100.00
2. "I didn't expect to see Emily at the party. I thought she had gone on vacation." "Me neither. I was also surprised when she ____"	Claimed	1	0.89
	Appeared	17	15.18
	showed up	94	83.93
	Total	112	100.00
3. "I heard that the company is sending you to Germany again." "Yes. It's been a long time since I was there, so I guess it's time to ____ my German."	Abolish	3	2.68
	Improve	39	34.82
	brush up on	70	62.50
	Total	112	100.00
4. "How do you like John?" "He is one of those few people who never ____ their friends."	Disappoint	54	48.21
	let down	58	51.79
	Total	112	100.00
5. "Did you hear about the bombing of the embassy in Nairobi?" "That was a disaster. Fortunately, there weren't that many people in the building when the bomb ____"	went off	54	48.21
	turned in	1	0.89
	Exploded	56	50.00
	Replied	1	0.89
	Total	112	100.00
6. "Hello, Jan!" "Hi, Susan! How nice of you to call me!" "I want to ask some advice from you." "No problem. Oh, can you ____ a second? Someone is knocking at the door."	hold on	93	83.04%
	Wait	19	16.96
	Total	112	100.00
7. "Michelle always forgets to ____ the fire when she leaves!" "That's dangerous! You should talk to her about this."	break into	3	2.68
	Foresee	6	5.36
	put out	84	75.00
	Extinguish	19	16.96
	Total	112	100.00
8. "I was late for my date last night, so I ____ a story about a traffic jam." "But did your girlfriend believe it at all? Better be frank next time."	made up	108	96.43
	followed	4	3.57
	Total	112	100.00

Table 4 (Continued)

Test Question	Verb	Frequency	Percent
9. "Robert and Paul were fighting on the street this morning." "So I heard. Was it serious?" "They didn't stop until Paul twisted his ankle and had to ____"	realize	5	4.46
	give in	44	39.29
	surrender	60	53.57
	look up to	3	2.68
	Total	112	100.00
10. "How is your business going?" "Pretty good. Though I have to ____ several good offers because I am just short of time."	offend	3	2.68
	turn down	66	58.93
	cheer up	4	3.57
	refuse	39	34.82
	Total	112	100.00
11. "When you think about it, most of your classmates will disappear forever from your life after you graduate." "Yeah, but every now and then you will ____ one of them on the street."	run into	74	66.07
	meet	36	32.14
	applaud	2	1.79
	Total	112	100.00
12. "Do you notice that Marvin likes to ____?" "Yes. But I don't think that he has anything to be proud of."	lie	10	8.93
	boast	20	17.86
	show off	79	70.54
	break out	3	2.68
	Total	112	100.00
13. "I'm sorry I hurt you. I didn't mean to say those things. I was just angry." "Just ____ . I don't want to see you for a while."	leave	40	35.71
	sit	1	0.89
	go away	67	59.82
	move on	4	3.57
	Total	112	100.00
14. (In a restaurant) –"Miss, could I get a bit more coffee when you've got a chance?" "Sure. Would you like me to ____ these plates first?"	remove	32	28.32%
	take away	76	67.26%
	mix	1	0.88
	drop in	4	3.54
	Total	113	100.00
15. "How do you get in that office?" "You have to ____ the back door."	enter	34	30.09
	come in	71	62.83
	adopt	4	3.54
	put up	4	3.54
	Total	113	100.00

Familiarity with and use of the most common English PVs. Participants were given a 20-item survey on a 4-point Likert scale to assess their familiarity with and use of the most popular PVs in American and British English. Table 5 shows that the majority (76%) were familiar with the meaning of the verb and used it, 13% were familiar with the verb's meaning but did not use it, 7% were kind of familiar with the meaning but not entirely sure, and 4% were not

at all familiar with the verb and its meaning. Mean scores for the 20 verbs ranged from 3.41 to 3.88, suggesting participants were more likely to be either (3) “familiar with the verb and its meaning but don’t use it” or (4) “familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it.”

Table 5

Familiarity and Use of the Most Common English PVs (N = 112)

	Not at all familiar with verb and meaning (%)	Kind of familiar with verb and meaning but not sure (%)	Familiar with verb and meaning but do not use it (%)	Familiar with verb and meaning and use it (%)	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1 We can’t go on like this anymore. Things have got to change.	2 (1.8)	16 (14.3)	18 (16.1)	76 (67.9)	3.50	0.805
2 He picked the phone up as soon as it rang.	2 (1.8)	4 (3.6)	16 (14.3)	90 (80.4)	3.73	0.615
3 We knew we’d come back to Cape Cod every summer.	3 (2.7)	2 (1.8)	11 (9.8)	96 (85.7)	3.79	0.607
4 Strangers come up to him on the street and say how much they enjoy his books.	7 (6.3)	8 (7.1)	16 (14.3)	81 (72.3)	3.53	0.880
5 We may never find out the truth about what happened.	2 (1.8)	0 (0.0)	9 (8.0)	101 (90.2)	3.87	0.474
6 He said it’ll all come out in court.	10 (8.9)	8 (7.1)	20 (17.9)	74 (66.1)	3.41	0.964
7 Let’s go out to eat tonight.	1 (0.9)	5 (4.5)	8 (7.1)	98 (87.5)	3.81	0.546
8 He was always very keen to point out my mistakes.	4 (3.6)	9 (8.0)	14 (12.5)	85 (75.9)	3.61	0.787
9 What do you want to be when you grow up?	1 (0.9)	3 (2.7)	4 (3.6)	104 (92.9)	3.88	0.460
10 They want to set up their own import-export business.	4 (3.6)	7 (6.3)	8 (7.1)	93 (83.0)	3.70	0.745
11 I had a few minutes before the meeting to look over what he’d written.	5 (4.5)	7 (6.3)	16 (14.3)	84 (75.0)	3.60	0.799
12 I’m sure it will turn out all right in the end.	5 (4.5)	14 (12.5)	17 (15.2)	76 (67.9)	3.46	0.879
13 I will give up drinking beer next month to lose weight.	3 (2.7)	4 (3.6)	11 (9.8)	94 (83.9)	3.75	0.651
14 I’ll get out when you stop at the traffic lights.	4 (3.6)	4 (3.6)	11 (9.8)	93 (83.0)	3.72	0.700
15 The bus stopped at station 2 to take on some passengers.	8 (7.1)	15 (13.4)	31 (27.7)	58 (51.8)	3.24	0.942
16 He put the notebook away and went to bed.	2 (1.8)	7 (6.3)	14 (12.5)	89 (79.5)	3.70	0.669
17 He’s always making up to the boss – it’s quite embarrassing.	11 (9.8)	16 (14.3)	33 (29.5)	52 (46.4)	3.13	0.997
18 After two weeks of traveling around Europe, we ended up in Paris.	7 (6.3)	7 (6.3)	10 (8.9)	88 (78.6)	3.60	0.864
19 Anyway, I’d better get back to work.	3 (2.7)	7 (6.3)	11 (9.8)	91 (81.3)	3.70	0.708
20 I looked up solar power on the Internet to know more information about it.	3 (2.7)	5 (4.5)	13 (11.6)	91 (81.3)	3.71	0.677
Total	87 (3.9)	148 (6.6)	291 (13.0)	1714 (76.5)	3.62	0.565

Inferential Statistics

This section presents the findings of the semi-structured qualitative questions, providing insight into participants' experiences studying PVs, how Arabic speakers used PVs, difficulties encountered, and frequency of communication with native English speakers. Five such questions were posed to Arabic speakers. Qualitative analysis of their answers resulted in the following findings: 78% of native Arabic speakers knew what *get up* meant and what type of phrase it was, and 30 participants provided an explanation for their answers, as listed in Table 6.

Table 6

Native Arabic Speakers' Familiarity with "Get Up"

Participant Explanation	Frequency
"get up" is a two-word verb	8
"get up" is a phrasal verb	11
"get up" means "quit"	1
"get up" means "rise"	2
"get up" means "stand-up"	3
"get up" means "wake up"	9
"get up" meaning depends on its use	1

A total of 73% of native Arabic speakers had studied PVs, and 43 provided more information about how and/or where they learned about them, as illustrated in Table 7.

Table 7

Information Provided about How/Where Participants Learned about PVs

Participant Explanation	Frequency
At school	7
At school in Saudi Arabia and the USA	1
At Spring Language	1
Bachelor's degree (ESL)	1
ELI	1
ELI UF	2
ELS in USA	1
ELS School/memorize them	1
England	1
English Language Center/School	5
English Language Center/School in USA	2

Table 7 (Continued)

Participant Explanation	Frequency
English Program	1
ESL Institute	7
In high school	1
In my English year, it was required.	1
In USA	4
Last year	1
Saudi Arabia	1
Self-study	1
Undergraduate English class	1
University	2

Five (8%) of the native Arabic speakers “always” used this kind of phrase when they spoke or wrote, 23% used them when they spoke or wrote “most of the time,” 28% used them “half of the time,” and 37% “sometimes” used them. Two Arabic speakers “never” used such phrases when speaking or writing. Participants provided 74 examples of PVs, which are listed in Table 8 with each example’s frequency.

Table 8

Phrasal Verb Examples Provided by Native Arabic Speakers

PV	Freq.	PV	Freq.	PV	Freq.	PV	Freq.
ask around	1	come on	2	hook up	1	set down	1
back up	1	come out	1	kind of	1	set up	1
be proud of	1	come over	1	lay off	1	show up	3
blow out	1	come up with	1	lay out	1	shut down	1
blow up	1	dig in	1	let down	2	stand up	1
break down	2	figure out	2	look after	1	stop by	1
break into	1	find out	3	look back	1	take away	1
break up	2	get a life	1	look down	1	take care	1
call back	1	get along	2	look down on	1	take off	2
call off	1	get away	1	look into	1	take out	1
calm down	2	get down	2	look out	2	turn down	1
carry on	1	get in	1	look up	1	turn off	1
catch up	1	get together	1	make up	3	turn on	1
check in	1	get up	2	open up	1	turn up	1
check out	1	give up	9	pick up	1	wake up	1
cheer up	1	go ahead	1	put down	1	watch out	2
clean up	1	go away	1	put out	1	well done	1
come back	3	go on	3	put up	1		
come in	1	go out	2	roll on	1	Total	74

A third (33%) of Arabic speakers felt these PVs caused problems when communicating with native English speakers. Table 9 provides their explanations for how/why they felt or did not feel these PVs caused problems in that situation.

Table 9

Arabic Speaker Perceptions of the Ease or Difficulty of Learning/Using PVs

Feel PVs Cause a Problem When Communicating with Native English Speakers	Do Not Feel PVs Cause a Problem When Communicating with Native English Speakers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Because we try to translate it literally, and then it doesn't make sense. – Confused – I cannot remember. – I do not understand the literal meaning, but I get the point of a sentence. – I think it's necessary, but I don't find them easily in my head. – I'm not sure about its meaning. – In movies. – Incorrect use. – Misunderstanding. – Sometimes I do not know some of them. – Sometimes I feel I'm using it in the wrong way serially with native speakers. – Sometimes I mean something and I use the wrong phrasal verbs. It's confusing me. – Sometimes the phrasal verb has different meanings depending on the use in the sentence. – Yes, the meaning might not reflect the exact meaning of the words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – I can understand them. – I could understand the meaning of it. – I understand them and use them. – I understand them when they use phrasal verbs. – It is very much incorporated into our day-to-day communication. – It makes it easier to communicate with native speakers. – It makes the communication easier. – It's easy to get the meaning of the sentence that has the phrase. – It's more effective than a normal verb. – It's useful and easy to use. – Native speakers use these phrases frequently. – Not at all – Some of them I don't know their meaning. – Sometimes – The meaning is not always clear. – They are clear. – They understand them.

In addition, a simple majority of Arabic speakers (57%) reported communicating with native English speakers daily, 28% a few times a week, and 15% a few times a month (see Table 10 and Figure 6).

Table 10

Qualitative Semi-Structured Questions for Native Arabic Speakers

	Frequency	Percent
Do you know what “get up” means? What type of phrase is “get up”?		
Yes	47	78.33
No	13	21.67
Total	60	
Have you studied phrasal verbs?		
Yes	44	73.33
No	16	26.67
Total	60	
Do you use such phrases when you speak or write?		
Never	2	3.33
Sometimes	22	36.67
About half the time	17	28.33
Most of the time	14	23.33
Always	5	8.33
Total	60	
Do you feel these phrasal verbs cause a problem when you communicate with native speakers? If so, please explain how.		
Yes	20	33.33
No	40	66.67
Total	60	
How often do you communicate with native English speakers?		
Never	0	0.00
Less than once a month	6	10.00
Once a month	1	1.67
2-3 times a month	2	3.33
Once a week	6	10.00
2-3 times a week	11	18.33
Daily	34	56.67
Total	60	

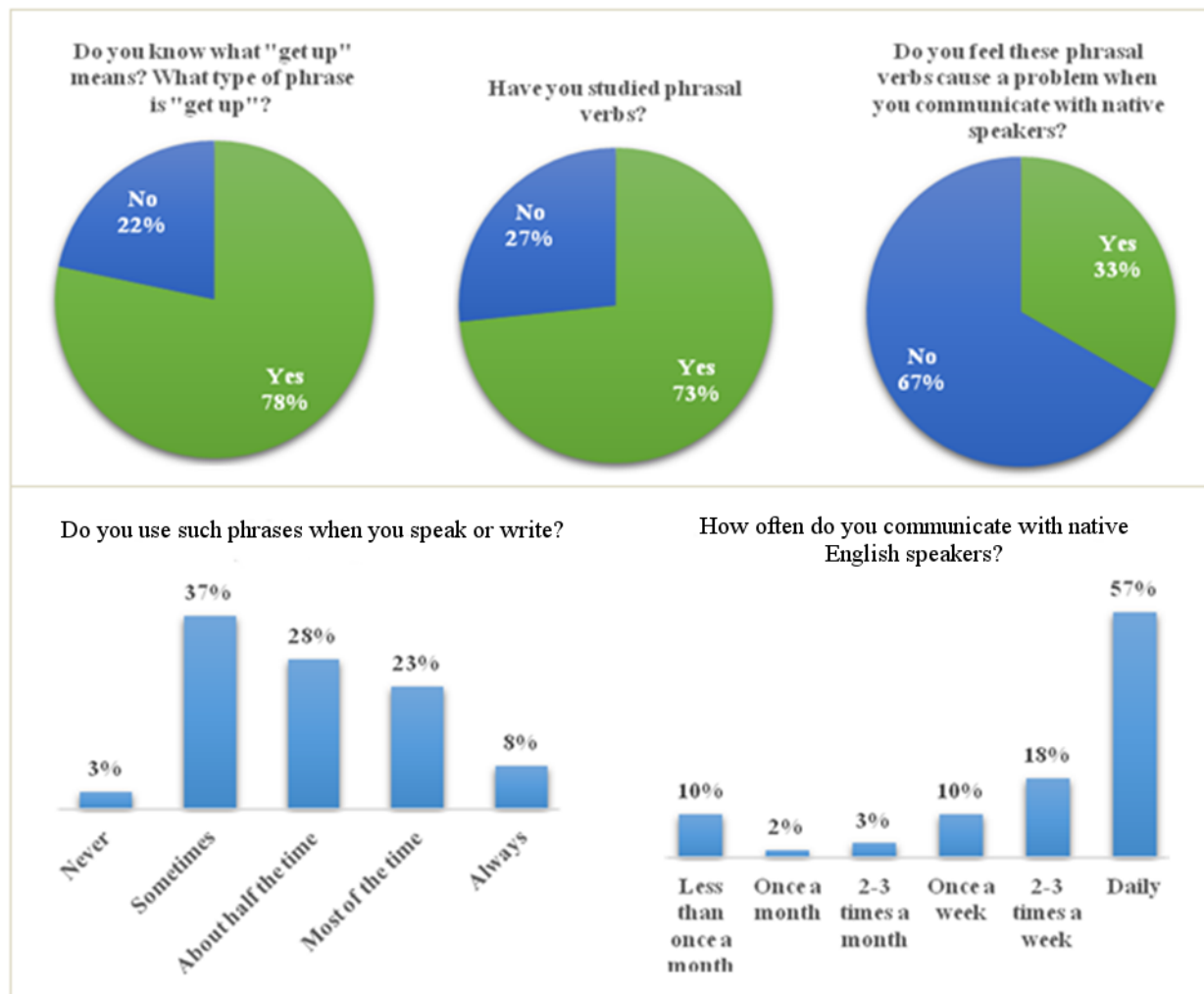


Figure 6. Graphical representation of qualitative semi-structured questions.

Hypothesis Testing

In light of the study's objectives, it tested two main hypotheses:

- H1: There is a significant difference between Arabic and English native speakers regarding their familiarity with English PVs.
- H2: There is a significant difference between Arabic and English native speakers regarding their use/avoidance of English PVs.

These hypotheses investigated the difference between Arabic and English native speakers' familiarity with and use of English PVs.

Testing the first hypothesis. The first hypothesis (There is a significant difference between Arabic and English native speakers regarding their familiarity with English PVs) was tested from two directions: 1) level of familiarity with the terms *phrasal verb*, *two-word verb*, and *three-word verb* and 2) familiarity with and use of the most common English PVs.

Familiarity with PV terms. Given that the main objective of this research was to study Saudi ESL students' attitudes regarding English when communicating with native English speakers, descriptive statistics for both groups are reported in Table 11 and Figure 7.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for Familiarity with PV Terms

		Arabic		English	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Phrasal Verb	Not familiar at all	8	13.56	20	37.74
	Slightly familiar	16	27.12	15	28.30
	Moderately familiar	15	25.42	13	24.53
	Very familiar	15	25.42	3	5.66
	Extremely familiar	5	8.47	2	3.77
	Total	59	100.00	53	100.00
Two-Word Verb	Not familiar at all	11	19.30	20	38.46
	Slightly familiar	16	28.07	14	26.92
	Moderately familiar	20	35.09	10	19.23
	Very familiar	6	10.53	7	13.46
	Extremely familiar	4	7.02	1	1.92
	Total	57	100.00	52	100.00
Three-Word Verb	Not familiar at all	25	43.86	24	46.15
	Slightly familiar	15	26.32	14	26.92
	Moderately familiar	11	19.30	6	11.54
	Very familiar	3	5.26	8	15.38
	Extremely familiar	3	5.26	0	0.00
	Total	57	100.00	52	100.00

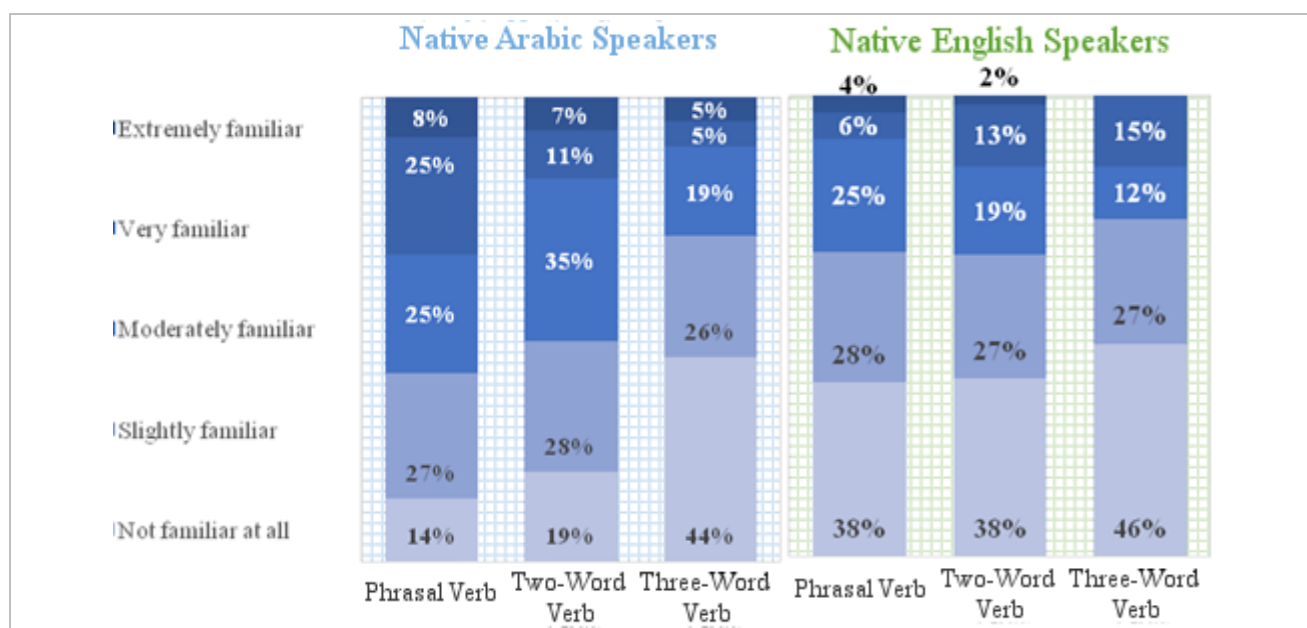


Figure 7. Descriptive statistics for familiarity with PV terms.

To test the first hypothesis, a *t*-test for two independent samples was performed to compare the means between the two groups (Arabic and English native speakers). The test explored the significance of the difference between the two sample means. As familiarity was measured on a 5-point Likert scale, scores were treated as a scale (continuous) variable (see Table 12 and Figure 8).

Table 12

Familiarity with PV Terms (t-Test Results)

Terms	Group Statistics				<i>t</i> -Test Statistics		
	Native English Speaker		Native Arabic Speaker				
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
Phrasal Verb	2.09	1.097	2.88	1.190	-3.626	110	< .001
Two-Word Verb	2.13	1.138	2.58	1.133	-2.041	107	.044
Three-Word Verb	1.96	1.102	2.02	1.157	-.258	107	.797

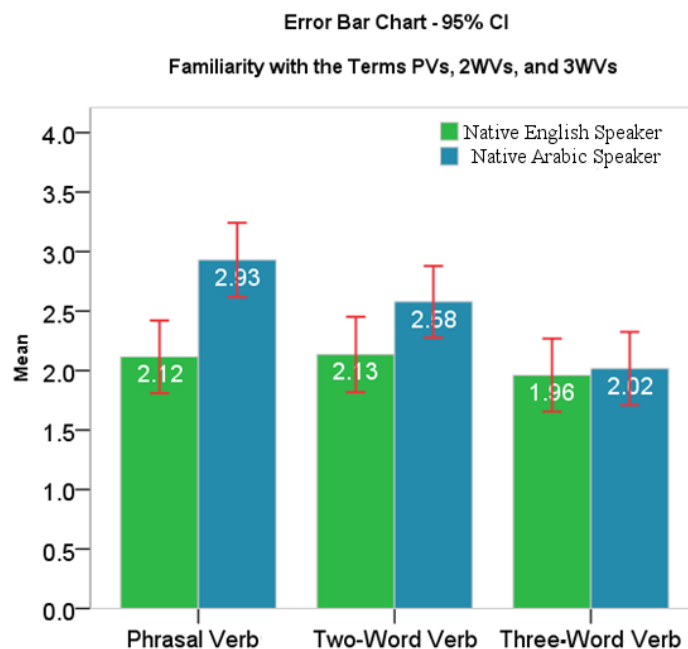


Figure 8. Familiarity with PV terms (*t*-test results).

Table 12 and Figure 7 show that native Arabic speakers appeared more familiar with the terms *phrasal verb* and *two-word verb* than native English speakers were. This can be seen by investigating the mean scores for each group. The mean score of native Arabic speakers for *phrasal verb* was 2.9, while that of native English speakers was 2.1, suggesting that Arabic speakers were more likely to be familiar with this term. The same was true for *two-word verb*. However, for *three-word verb*, the mean familiarity level was similar between the two groups.

At significance level 5% ($\alpha = .05$), the tests were significant for the terms *phrasal verb* and *two-word verb*, while no significant results were detected for *three-word verb*. This suggests that the group means were significantly different because the value in the “Sig. (2-tailed)” column is less than .05 for *phrasal verb* and *two-word verb*. That is, the differences detected in Table 12 were significant and not due to chance. In contrast, slight differences between group mean scores for *three-word verb* were not significant ($p > .05$). This study thus found that native

Arabic speakers were significantly more likely to be familiar with the terms *phrasal verb* and *two-word verb* than native English speakers ($p < .05$).

Familiarity with and use of the most common PVs. To test the first hypothesis, a *t*-test for two independent samples was performed to compare the means between the two groups of students regarding their familiarity with and use of the most common PVs in American and British English. An average score was calculated to be used as a measure of this familiarity. The *t*-test was performed using the created variable “mean scores” with the output presented in Table 13.

Table 13

Familiarity with and Use of the Most Common PVs (t-Test Using Mean Scores)

Group Statistics				t-Test Statistics		
Native English Speakers		Native Arabic Speakers		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>			
3.85	.57	3.20	.86	4.60	110.00	< .001

The *t*-test showed a statistically significant difference between Arabic and English native speakers with regard to their familiarity with and use of the most common PVs ($t = 4.60$, $p < .001$). The mean score of native English speakers was significantly higher than that of native Arabic speakers, indicating that native English speakers were significantly more likely to be familiar with the verb and its meaning and to use it than native Arabic speakers were.

Testing the second hypothesis. To test the second hypothesis (There is a significant difference between Arabic and English native speakers regarding their use/avoidance of English PVs), the number of correctly answered questions by participants was calculated, and a new variable was created to compare the number of correct answers by native Arabic speakers to that of native English speakers. A *t*-test was performed for comparison (see Table 14).

Table 14

Correctly Answered Multiple-Choice Questions

	Group Statistics				<i>t</i> -Test Statistics		
	Native English Speakers		Native Arabic Speakers				
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
Mean Number of Correctly Answered Questions	11.09	2.790	9.13	3.028	3.564	111	.001

The *t*-test was statistically significant ($t = 3.56, p < .05$), indicating that the mean number of correct answers by native English speakers was significantly higher ($M = 11.09$) than that of native Arabic speakers ($M = 9.13$).

Chapter Summary and Discussion

The statistical analysis performed has fully answered the research questions. Most participants were found to be more familiar with the terms *phrasal verb* and *two-word verb* than the term *three-word verb*. However, Saudi ESL students were significantly more familiar with the former two terms than native English speakers were.

Participants were given a 20-item survey on a 4-point Likert scale to assess their familiarity with and use of the most common PVs in American and British English. The analysis showed that the majority (76%) were familiar with the verbs and their meanings and used them. Scores given by participants were more likely to be either “familiar with the verb and its meaning but not use it” or “familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it.”

The analysis also showed that native English speakers were significantly more familiar with the given verbs and their meanings than Saudi ESL students. For example, 78% of ESL students knew what *get up* meant and what type of phrase it was, 73% had studied PVs, 60% used PVs at least half the time, 67% did not feel that PVs caused a problem when they

communicated with native English speakers, and 85% of Saudi ESL students reported communicating with native English speakers at least once a week.

The analysis of the 15 multiple-choice questions from Liao and Fukuya (2004) showed that native English speakers were significantly more likely to choose the correct answer than Saudi ESL students; that is, they were significantly more aware of correct PV usage.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The present study was motivated by the large number of previous researchers who stated that L2 English learners, particularly those whose L1 is non-Germanic, encounter difficulties in adoption and regular use of English PVs. Moreover, these verbs are regarded as one of the most challenging aspects of learning English for numerous reasons, such as their structural oddity and meaning complexity (Darwin & Gray, 1991), as well as their semantic opacity and syntactic peculiarity (Dagut & Laufer, 1985). Nevertheless, proficient use of PVs is an important indicator of fluency, taking into account their frequency, especially in an informal spoken register.

Despite the challenges related to PVs and extensive research on them, especially in relation to English learners whose L1 is Chinese, Swedish, Finnish, or Hebrew, Arabic learners of English have not been sufficiently studied. The author assumed that, as Arabic does not have an equivalent of English PVs, Arabic learners would tend to avoid them by using their one-word equivalents. This hypothesis was based on Schachter's (1974) argument that foreign language learners tend to adopt simple grammatical structures in L2 that exist or are similar to those in L1 (so-called facilitation or positive transfer), whereas they tend to avoid unfamiliar structures characteristic of L2 (negative transfer). Accordingly, the purpose of this research was to assess the familiarity of Saudi ESL students with English PVs, the terminology they used to refer to PVs, their use and perceptions of PVs, and the way they learned PVs. Participants consisted of Saudi graduate and undergraduate students and American native English speakers attending the University of Memphis. The design of the study was adopted from Liao and Fukuya (2004).

The study used a mixed-methods approach to obtain rich and meaningful data. It combined quantitative and qualitative results from a survey, a semi-structured written interview,

a multiple-choice test, and a Likert-scale survey. These methods were combined into an online questionnaire to answer the following research questions:

1. Are Saudi ESL students familiar with English PVs?
2. What perceptions do Saudi ESL students have about the ease or difficulty of learning PVs?
3. What terms do Saudi ESL students understand and use to refer to PVs?
4. Do Saudi ESL students use the most common PVs?
5. Where do Saudi ESL students learn PVs (e.g., classrooms, movies, news, reading, online chatting, talking with native speakers, or other means)?
6. Do Saudi ESL students avoid using PVs?

The findings were obtained and analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics, as presented in Chapter 4. The following sections present and discuss the study results.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results obtained while answering each of the research questions. In addition, the results are analyzed in relation to relevant studies.

Research Question 1. Research Question 1 (Are Saudi ESL students familiar with English PVs?) was answered through a multiple-choice test adopted from Liao and Fukuya (2004) and the 20-item 4-point Likert-scale survey, the aim of which was to assess familiarity with and use of the most common PVs in American and British English. Both methods revealed a distinction between the level of familiarity and use of literal verbs on the one hand, and idiomatic PVs on the other hand. As presented in Table 5 in Chapter 4, when answering the multiple-choice test questions, 88% of participants correctly chose *get up* instead of *rise* (10%) and *release* (3%), and 84% selected *show up*, whereas 15% selected *appear* and 1% *claim*.

Nevertheless, the results were far less impressive for more figurative verbs, as 50% chose *exploded* instead of *went off* (48%). Comparably, Arabic speakers tended to use formal verbs *refuse* and *meet* instead of *turn down* and *run into*. The results of the Likert-scale survey presented in Table 6 showed comparable results. Overall, 76% of participants were familiar with PVs and reported using them.

This finding was commensurate with previous research that suggested that structural oddity and meaning complexity (Darwin & Gray, 1991), as well as semantic opacity and syntactic peculiarity (Dagut & Laufer, 1985), were the reasons behind the difficulty in mastering and reluctance to use some PVs.

Research Question 2. Research Question 2 (What perceptions do Saudi ESL students have about the ease or difficulty of learning PVs?) was answered by analyzing responses to the questions from the written interview, such as “Do you feel these phrasal verbs cause problems when you communicate with native speakers?” The results were in line with Kleinmann’s (1997) conclusion that an interaction of linguistic and psychological factors determined a tendency of avoidance and that the emotional state of the speaker also played a role. According to Kleinmann, a person who feels confident about a language structure is likely to use it, whereas a person who feels anxious tends to avoid it. For example, the participants provided answers such as “Confused,” “Sometimes I feel I’m using it in the wrong way serially with native speakers,” and “Sometimes I mean something and I use the wrong phrasal verb. It’s confusing me.”

On the other hand, the present study showed that Arabic speakers were aware of the importance of using PVs. Some of the answers they provided were “It makes it easier to communicate with native speakers,” “It’s easy to get the meaning of the sentence that has the phrase,” and “Native speakers use these phrases frequently.”

Research Question 3. Research Question 3 (What terms do Saudi ESL students understand and use to refer to PVs?) was answered by analyzing responses to the following interview question from the questionnaire: “How familiar are you with the following terms: Phrasal verbs, Two-word verb, and Three-word verb?” The possible answers were 1) not familiar at all, 2) slightly familiar, 3) moderately familiar, 4) very familiar, and 5) extremely familiar. Remarkably, *t*-test output showed that Arabic speakers were more familiar with the proper terminology regarding PVs than native English speakers were. In fact, all surveyed participants were familiar with the terms *phrasal verb* and *two-word verb*. Such findings suggested that Saudi learners generally studied English in a formal educational setting. In contrast, the fact that surveyed American participants were not familiar with the terminology showed that PVs are often used in an informal register.

Research Question 4. Research Question 4 (Do Saudi ESL students use the most common PVs?) was answered by analyzing their knowledge and use of the most common English PVs. A Likert-scale survey was used to evaluate this knowledge, as suggested by Liu (2011), and the responses to questions in a written interview (4. “Do you use such phrases when you speak or write?” and 5. “Can you give me some examples?”) illustrated their usage of PVs. They showed a tendency to avoid PVs in written and spoken discourse.

Overall, Saudi ESL students tended to use the most common English PVs that were literal. However, as this study was comparative in nature by considering PV use among native English speakers as well, a remarkable finding was that when two options were offered—one PV and one single-word verb—these groups were likely to make opposite choices in cases such as *improve* / *brush up on*, *exploded* / *went off*, and *meet* / *run into*. In these cases, Arabic speakers preferred the one-word equivalent. Notably, there were also cases when native English speakers

opted for the one-word verb, but in these instances, Arabic speakers were likely to choose a PV. For example, English speakers preferred *rise*, *boast*, and *remove*, when Arabic speakers tended to select *get up*, *show off*, and *take away*. As suggested by Überlingen (2007), it is common for non-native English speakers to be unaware of when it is more appropriate to use PVs than their formal, one-word equivalents. Furthermore, this finding supported Yorio (1989), who found that native English speakers were more likely to use figurative PVs than non-native speakers were.

Research Question 5. Research Question 5 (Where do Saudi ESL students learn PVs [e.g., classrooms, movies, news, reading, online chatting, talking with native speakers, or other means]?) was answered by analyzing responses to the interview question “How and/or where did you learn PVs?” As can be seen from Table 8 in Chapter 4, all Saudi ESL learners—except one, who reported self-study—had learned PVs in official educational settings, albeit in different places, such as an English language center/school in Saudi Arabia or the US, an ESL institute, in high school, or in an undergraduate English class. Since it would be difficult to devote substantial time in an English language program to teaching PVs, it is unsurprising that ESL learners would be more comfortable with common, literal PVs than with idiomatic ones.

Research Question 6. Research Question 6 (Do Saudi ESL students avoid using PVs?) was answered by analyzing answers to the 15 multiple-choice questions, in which participants were given the option to select a correct answer (i.e., one that was a more colloquial PV or more likely to be used by native speakers) or a more formal one-word verb. This study did not establish a clear pattern of avoidance. Rather, in line with the data obtained in relation to other research questions and with studies discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, there was a tendency either to use simple, common PVs (e.g., *hold on*, *get up*, *show up*) or to opt for single-word equivalents when the PVs conveyed idiomatic, complex meanings (e.g., *surrender* instead of *give in*). Hence,

this non-use of PVs is unlikely to result from avoidance but rather from ignorance about the verbs or from not knowing their real meanings. This finding supported Abu Jamil's (2010) argument that Arabic learners of English tended not to avoid PVs in general. More specifically, they avoided those PVs that were semantically complex and idiomatic. Hence, in this case, the hypothesis that structural differences between the L1 and L2 would decisively impact the tendency to use or avoid PVs was not supported. Accordingly, the study confirmed that the theoretical framework, based on the arguments of Dagut and Laufer (1985), showed that the difficulty in the learning process depends on the ambiguity of PVs, which in turn substantially impacts the attitudes and behaviors of L2 English learners.

Pedagogical Implications

The main implications of this study are pedagogical, as the main beneficiaries of this study are ESL/EFL teachers. It is assumed that native English speakers are likely to take PVs for granted and not pay particular attention to them during the teaching process. Hence, teachers should understand that for most English learners, PVs represent an exceptionally challenging structure, and they should identify them as a significant obstacle to achieving fluency. Moreover, those designing ESL/EFL curricula should provide extra interactive practice for English PVs.

This study showed that some participants were reluctant to use PVs in communication with native English speakers due to the confusing nature of PVs and the fear of being misunderstood. Thus, it is crucial to create realistic situations in the classroom so that English learners can practice and become proficient in the informal register as well. As a result, non-native speakers of English will gain confidence, which in turn will enhance their communication with native speakers. Furthermore, since PVs are widely used in popular culture, as stated in Chapter 1, this study recommends that teachers, in addition to academic material, use non-

academic resources as well—such as popular movies, television, music, and magazines—to spark students’ interest in mastering collocations.

Instructors should seek to teach their students how to sound natural. For that reason, a further recommendation is to provide comparative teaching of informal, colloquial PVs and more formal, one-word equivalents. This study showed that Arabic speakers had a stronger preference for more formal, one-word verbs (*improve/exploded*) than native English speakers, who tended to use PVs (*brush up/went off*). Additionally, participants overall had a good knowledge of literal PVs such as *get up*. For example, 92.9% of participants were familiar with and reported using the verb *grow up* (see Table 6). In contrast, only 46.4% claimed to be “familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it” in the case of *make up*, as in “He’s always making up to the boss—it’s quite embarrassing.”

These findings showed that special attention in teaching must be given to PVs that convey idiomatic (figurative) meaning, as their real meaning cannot be easily guessed from the verb and its particles. Hence, when teaching vocabulary to students, teachers should help them learn all aspects of the word, namely its spoken form, written form, grammatical behavior, collocational behavior, frequency, stylistic register, conceptual meaning, and association with related words. Mastering contextual use of polysemous PVs, as described by Siyanova and Schmitt (2007), should be a particular priority for learners at the advanced level.

Limitations

The main limitation of this study was its small sample size. Moreover, it included only Saudi learners of English who were studying in an English-speaking country (the US). Another important limitation was that it did not assess the impact of the period spent in the US. Perhaps if the distinction were made between those who had recently arrived in the US and those who had

already spent more than a year there, this difference could have been found to be significant. With this change, the researcher could have better assessed the impact of long-term immersion in an English-speaking country. In addition, although the study obtained results regarding the frequency of communication between Saudi students and native English speakers (57% on a daily basis), it did not assess the nature of this communication.

Furthermore, the results might have been different for students at different levels of English proficiency and for those residing in Saudi Arabia. Concerning native Arabic speakers, there might be differences between those from different Arabic-speaking countries, such as Egypt or Morocco. In addition, this study did not take into account the process of studying English PVs. Although the study discovered a variety of formal settings in which participants learned PVs, including high schools, ESL schools, and English language centers in Saudi Arabia and the US (see Table 8), information about the process of learning and studying itself was not obtained.

Another limitation was that the study tested familiarity with and knowledge of PVs widely used in American and British English. Many of these verbs were literal (e.g., *get up*, *show up*), which could have increased the likelihood that participants were familiar with them. Finally, the high level of expressed familiarity and selected correct answers in the multiple-choice section was perhaps related to the answers being offered. Accordingly, it is possible that some participants only recognized certain words, i.e., did not possess active knowledge of them and would not use them in an actual situation, but were simply reminded of them. As this study did not distinguish between intermediate and advanced speakers, it was not possible to argue confidently whether the participants actively used tested verbs or only recognized them.

Further Research

The limitations above suggest several directions for further research. First, there is space for conducting comparative studies at different levels. For instance, it would be beneficial to compare results between a) Saudi students residing in Saudi Arabia and those studying in an English-speaking country, which would enable the researcher to assess the factor of immersion in an English-speaking country; b) Saudi students majoring in English and those majoring in the humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences, both in Saudi Arabia and the US; c) intermediate and advanced Saudi learners of English; d) ESL and EFL Saudi learners; and e) people whose native language is Arabic but who come from different Arabic-speaking countries. In this last case, differences in teaching English in their respective national school systems can be critical concerning English proficiency. Furthermore, it would be interesting to conduct a comparative study between the Arabic-speaking ESL learners and speakers of another non-Germanic language, such as Finnish or Romanian.

Second, further research could more deeply test participant knowledge of PVs by focusing on idiomatic PVs or by not providing the answers in a multiple-choice test. Additional methods could also be employed, such as in-depth or semi-structured oral face-to-face interviews, which could provide different information. Future research should also focus on long-term observation and analysis of the process of teaching and studying English PVs. Although this type of research is demanding and expensive, it can ultimately provide better data to improve teaching methods.

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Appendix A

Survey

Please answer the following questions honestly:

1- Gender: Male Female.....

2- Age

3- Major.....

4- What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

a. Bachelor's degree

b. Master's degree

c. PhD

d. Other (please specify)

- Years of education in the United States: Years,Months

- Have you ever heard about the following terminologies: Phrasal Verb, Two-Word Verb, and Three-Word Verb? If yes, mark ✓ next to the one you have heard about.

Phrasal Verb

Two-Word Verb

Three-Word Verb.....

Appendix B

Interview Questions

- 1- Do you know what “get up” means? Do you know what type of phrase this is?
- 2- Have you studied phrasal verbs?
- 3- How and/or where did you learn phrasal verbs?
- 4- Do you use such phrases when you speak or write?
- 5- Can you give me some examples?
- 6- Do you feel these phrasal verbs cause a problem when you communicate with native speakers?
- 7- How often do you communicate with native English speakers?

Appendix C

Multiple-Choice Questions from Liao and Fukuya (2004)

1. –“When the weather is nice I love to ____ early.” –“Me, too. It’s good to enjoy the morning air.”

- A. rise B. release C. get up D. look after

2. –“I didn’t expect to see Emily at the party. I thought she had gone on vacation.” –“Me neither. I was also surprised when she ____.”

- A. claimed B. appeared C. showed up D. looked up

3. –“I heard that the company is sending you to Germany again.” –“Yes. It’s been a long time since I was there, so I guess it’s time to ____ my German.”

- A. abolish B. improve C. brush up on D. calm down

4. –“How do you like John?” –“He is one of those few people who never ____ their friends.”

- A. solve B. disappoint C. let down D. carry on

5. –“Did you hear about the bombing of the embassy in Nairobi?” –“That was a disaster. Fortunately, there weren’t that many people in the building when the bomb ____.”

- A. went off B. tuned in C. exploded D. replied

6. –“Hello, Jan!” –“Hi, Susan! How nice of you to call me!” –“I want to ask some advice from you.” –“No problem. Oh, can you ____ a second? Someone is knocking at the door.”

- A. hold on B. capture C. wait D. fall down

7. –“Michelle always forgets to ____ the fire when she leaves!” –“That’s dangerous! You should talk to her about this.”

- A. break into B. foresee C. put out D. extinguish

8. –“I was late for my date last night, so I ____ a story about a traffic jam.” –“But did your girlfriend believe it at all? Better be frank next time.”

- A. invented B. made up C. followed D. lay down

9. –“Robert and Paul were fighting on the street this morning.” –“So I heard. Was it serious?” –“They didn’t stop until Paul twisted his ankle and had to ____.”

- A. realize B. give in C. surrender D. look up to

10. –“How is your business going?” –“Pretty good. Though I have to ____ several good offers because I am just short of time.”

- A. offend B. turn down C. cheer up D. refuse

11. –“When you think about it, most of your classmates will disappear forever from your life after you graduate.” –“Yeah, but every now and then you will ____ one of them on the street.”

- A. go over B. run into C. meet D. applaud

12. –“Do you notice that Marvin likes to ____?” –“Yes. But I don’t think that he has anything to be proud of.”

- A. lie B. boast C. show off D. break out

13. –“I’m sorry I hurt you. I didn’t mean to say those things. I was just angry.” –“Just _____. I don’t want to see you for a while.”

- A. leave B. sit C. go away D. move on

14. (in a restaurant) –“Miss, could I get a bit more coffee when you’ve got a chance?” –“Sure. Would you like me to ____ these plates first?”

- A. remove B. take away C. mix D. drop in

15. –“How do you get in that bar?” –“You have to ____ the back door.”

- A. enter B. come in C. adopt D. put up

Appendix D

Most Frequently Used English PVs in American and British English

Adapted from Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)

Look at the underlined verbs and choose only ONE of the following four choices:

Q36 1- We can't go on like this anymore. Things have got to change.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q37 2- He picked the phone up as soon as it rang.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q38 3- We knew we'd come back to Cape Cod every summer.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q39 4- Strangers come up to him in the street and say how much they enjoy his books.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)

- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q40 5- We may never find out the truth about what happened.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q41 6- He said it'll all come out in court.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q42 7- Let's go out to eat tonight.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q43 8- He was always very keen to point out my mistakes.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)

- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q44 9- What do you want to be when you grow up?

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q45 10- They want to set up their own import-export business.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q46 11- I had a few minutes before the meeting to look over what he'd written.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q47 12- I'm sure it will turn out all right in the end.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)

- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q48 13- I will give up drinking beer next month to lose weight.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q49 14- I'll get out when you stop at the traffic lights.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q50 15- The bus stopped at station 2 to take on some passengers.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q51 16- He put the notebook away and went to bed.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q52 17- He's always making up to the boss – it's quite embarrassing.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q53 18- After two weeks of traveling around Europe, we ended up in Paris.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q54 19- Anyway, I'd better get back to work.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Q55 20- I looked up solar power on the Internet to know more information about it.

- ☐ Not familiar with the verb and its meaning at all (1)
- ☐ Kind of familiar with the verb and its meaning but not sure (2)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning but not using it (3)
- ☐ Familiar with the verb and its meaning and use it (4)

Appendix E

IRB Approval

The University of Memphis Institutional Review Board, FWA00006815, has reviewed and approved your submission in accordance with all applicable statuses and regulations as well as ethical principles.

PI NAME: Abdullah Alshayban

CO-PI:

PROJECT TITLE: The Avoidance of the English Phrasal Verbs by ESL Saudi Students

FACULTY ADVISOR NAME (if applicable): Teresa Dalle

IRB ID: #3869

APPROVAL DATE: 10/09/2015

EXPIRATION DATE:

LEVEL OF REVIEW: Exempt

Please Note: Modifications do not extend the expiration of the original approval

Approval of this project is given with the following obligations:

- 1. If this IRB approval has an expiration date, an approved renewal must be in effect to continue the project prior to that date. If approval is not obtained, the human consent form(s) and recruiting material(s) are no longer valid and any research activities involving human subjects must stop.**
- 2. When the project is finished or terminated, a completion form must be completed and sent to the board.**
- 3. No change may be made in the approved protocol without prior board approval, whether the approved protocol was reviewed at the Exempt, Exedited or Full Board level.**
- 4. Exempt approval are considered to have no expiration date and no further review is necessary unless the protocol needs modification.**

Approval of this project is given with the following special obligations:

Thank you,

James P. Whelan, Ph.D.

Institutional Review Board Chair

The University of Memphis.

Note: Review outcomes will be communicated to the email address on file. This email should be considered an official communication from the UM IRB. Consent Forms are no longer being stamped as well. Please contact the IRB at IRB@memphis.edu if a letter on IRB letterhead is required.