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Attitudes towards English Usage in the Late Modern Period:
The Case of Phrasal Verbs

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Abstract

Phrasal verbs are an intrinsic part of Late Modern English, and are found in both informal and colloquial language (*check out, listen up*) and more formal styles (a thesis might *set out* some problems and then *sum up* the main points). They are highly productive: *up* can be added to almost any verb to signify goal or end-point (*read up, finish up, eat up, meet up, fatten up*); and once a phrasal verb has been coined, a conversion often follows (for example, the verb *phone in* was first recorded in 1946, and the noun *phone-in* in 1967; *dumb down* was coined in 1933, and we read of *dumbed-down* material in 1982).

Perhaps because of their pervasiveness, phrasal verbs are frequently criticized (although occasionally praised) in Late Modern English texts about language. The purpose of this thesis is to examine such attitudes in three strands. Firstly, over one hundred language texts (grammars, dictionaries, and usage manuals, among others, from 1750 to 1970) were examined to discover how phrasal verbs were recognized and classified in Late Modern English. Secondly, these materials were analyzed in order to find out how attitudes towards phrasal verbs in English developed in relation to broader attitudes towards language in the Late Modern period. Thirdly, phrasal verb usage in *A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers,* a corpus of British and American English from 1650 to 1990, was analyzed to determine how such attitudes affect usage. It will be shown that attitudes towards phrasal verbs reflect various strands of language ideology, including opinions about Latinate as opposed to native vocabulary; ideals relating to etymology, polysemy, and redundancy; reactions to neologisms; and attitudes towards language variety. Furthermore, it will be suggested that in the case of certain redundant combinations such as *return back* and *raise up,* proscriptions of phrasal verbs did have an effect on their usage in the Late Modern period.

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Abbreviations

<u>Periods of English</u>

eME = Early Middle English

EModE = Early Modern English

LModE = Late Modern English

ME = Middle English

OE = Old English

PDE = Present Day English

<u>Dictionaries, thesauri, databases and corpora</u>

ARCHER = A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers

BYU-BNC = Brigham Young University British National Corpus

CMSW = Corpus of Modern Scottish Writing

DAB = Dictionary of American Biography

DNB = Dictionary of National Biography

DSL = Dictionary of the Scots Language

ECCO = Eighteenth Century Collections Online

HTOED = Historical Thesaurus of the OED

OED1 = A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles (Oxford English Dictionary, 1st ed.)

OED2 = Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed.

OED3 = Oxford English Dictionary, 3rd ed.

<u>Parts of speech in Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755, 1773)</u>

v.a. = verb active (i.e. transitive verb)

v.n. = verb neuter (i.e. intransitive verb)

n.s. = noun substantive (i.e. noun, as opposed to noun adjective)

<u>Other</u>

SPE = Society for Pure English

Chapter 1. Introduction

Whether due to the disapproval of old-fashioned grammarians, or to the fact that their use is, for the most part, more colloquial than literary, there still persists a certain prejudice against phrasal verbs, and many writers half-consciously avoid them... But they are genuinely English in their character; they add immensely to the richness of our vocabulary... and it is perhaps in colloquialisms of this kind... that we come nearest to the idiomatic heart of the English language (Logan Pearsall Smith 'English Idioms' 1923:58-9).

1.1. Preliminaries

The purpose of this thesis is twofold: firstly, to survey the history of attitudes towards phrasal verbs in English, and secondly, to consider how such attitudes reveal beliefs about the language. Phrasal verbs form a fascinating grammatical category: difficult to define, classify, teach and learn, they are also a highly fluid and productive class. Perhaps because of their tendency to be used innovatively, grammarians, lexicographers, and self-appointed arbiters of English usage (to name but a few) have, since the eighteenth century, formed strong opinions on them: either that they are inelegant, redundant or weak, or, on the other hand, that they are expressive, vigorous or homely. Furthermore, these opinions reflect more general attitudes towards English usage: for example, whether or not it is desirable that a word has more than one meaning, or whether 'Latinate' words are preferable to 'Saxon' ones. Thus the broader purpose of this thesis is to place the treatment of phrasal verbs in the context of such attitudes in LModE. Two other aspects of phrasal verbs will also be considered: firstly, the way they were named, recognized and classified in LModE materials about language; and secondly, their usage in LModE texts.

The hypothesis that will be tested is that all of these areas – attitudes towards language in general, attitudes towards phrasal verbs in particular, classification of phrasal verbs, and usage of phrasal verbs – are meaningfully related to each other.

In this chapter, phrasal verbs are described and distinguished from other related constructions (1.2), and previous research on the two central concerns of this thesis – phrasal verbs and attitudes towards English usage – is reviewed (1.3). The source materials which form the basis of the thesis are then discussed (1.4), followed by a chapter outline (1.5).

1.2. Phrasal verbs in English: definition and terminology
1.2.1. Phrasal verbs

A phrasal verb is a lexeme consisting of a verb and a separable adverbial particle. It can be intransitive or transitive. If it is transitive, a pronominal direct object separates the verb and the particle; a nominal direct object optionally separates them. Thus there are three possibilities:

1. intransitive phrasal verb:
   a. Things are <u>looking up</u>.
   b. I <u>give up</u>!
   c. The plane <u>took off</u>.
2. transitive phrasal verb with a nominal direct object:
   a. I <u>looked</u> the word <u>up</u> in the dictionary/I <u>looked up</u> the word in the dictionary.
   b. They <u>gave</u> their baby <u>up</u> for adoption/They <u>gave up</u> their baby for adoption.
   c. Isaac <u>took</u> his socks <u>off</u>/ Isaac <u>took off</u> his socks.
3. transitive phrasal verb with a pronominal direct object:
   a. I <u>looked</u> it <u>up</u> in the dictionary [*I <u>looked up</u> it in the dictionary][1].
   b. They <u>gave</u> her <u>up</u> [*They <u>gave up</u> her].
   c. Isaac <u>took</u> them <u>off</u> [*Isaac <u>took off</u> them].

There are some exceptions to these general rules. For example, if the direct object is a long noun phrase, it is less likely to separate the verb and particle: most people would prefer 'I looked up the long and unpronounceable word in the dictionary' to 'I looked the long and unpronounceable word up in the dictionary'. Also, it has been argued that the more idiomatic a phrasal verb is,

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[1] As is conventional, * before an example indicates that it is not possible in Standard English, while ? indicates that it is unlikely or unusual.

the less likely it is to be separated by a nominal object: thus 'give up smoking' is preferable to '?give smoking up' (Visser 1963:602). Dialectal differences also play a part: in Scottish English and American English the particle is more likely to be placed directly after the verb (Trudgill and Hannah 2002:95). Furthermore, there are some contexts in which a pronominal object might be placed after the particle: one might say, for example, 'They gave up *her*?' for added emphasis (Visser 1963:605; Bolinger 1971:39).

There is no resolved list of possible constituents of phrasal verbs. Claridge (2000:46) lists the following adverbial particles, showing that they all indicate motion or result or both:

> *aback, aboard, about, above, across, after, ahead, along, apart, around, ashore, aside, astray, asunder, away, back, behind, by, counter, down, forth, forward(s), home, in, off, on, out, over, past, round, through, to, together, under, up.*

From Bolinger (1971:18) we can add *alongside, again, athwart, before, below, between,* and a variety of nautical particles such as *aloft* and *astern.* These change over time (*forth* is now archaic, and *again* is obsolete in the sense 'back' in which it can be used as an adverbial particle), and also vary according to dialect or idiolect: Bolinger (1971:20-1) suggests that 'while the class of particles is restricted, it is not closed by any standard that will not do violence to natural language'. However, there is a core set of particles that has varied very little over time: *up, out, down, away, back, on, in, off* and *over* (and in earlier periods, *forth*) have consistently been the most frequent particles (Akimoto 1999:222; Claridge 2000:126).

Certain verbs are more productive of phrasal verbs, particularly monosyllabic verbs of Germanic origin. Of these, 'light' verbs with little semantic content, such as *come, get, give, go, make, put, set* and *take,* are very productive. Disyllabic verbs with initial stress, such as *follow, carry* and *gather,* can also form phrasal verbs, as can disyllabic verbs with stress on the second syllable, as in *explain away* and *return back*, but these are less frequent (although they were more frequent in earlier periods of English; see Denison 2007).

Furthermore, there are some verbs which tend not to form phrasal verbs, particularly stative verbs (such as *know* and *hope*) and polysyllabic verbs (Claridge 2000:54)[2]. However, there is no finite list of verbs which can enter into phrasal verbs, and novel combinations are frequent[3].

Some of the adverbial particles in the above list are also prepositions. With these, there are several tests for distinguishing clauses with transitive phrasal verbs (4a) from clauses with verbs and prepositional phrases (4b):

> 4a. He ran down her reputation
>
> 4b. He ran down the hill.

One of the signs that *run down* in 4a is a phrasal verb is that its direct object can be placed between verb and particle, as in 5a:

> 5a. He ran her reputation down/He ran it down.

This is not possible with *run down the hill*:

> 5b. *He ran the hill down.

Another is that prepositions can usually be fronted or moved to the left of a relative (6b and 7b), whereas adverbial particles cannot (6a and 7a):

> 6a. *Down her reputation he ran.
>
> 6b. Down the hill he ran.
>
> 7a. *Hers was the reputation down which he ran.
>
> 7b. This is the hill down which he ran.

Furthermore, adverbs can usually separate verbs and prepositions (8b), but not phrasal verbs (8a):

> 8a. *He ran cruelly down her reputation.
>
> 8b. He ran slowly down the hill.

Tests such as these have received a lot of attention in the literature (see *inter alia* Live 1965; Lipka 1972:20-7; Quirk et al. 1985:1150-68; Lindner 1983:5-18;

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[2] There are exceptions to the latter. Claridge (2000:116) finds three polysyllabic constituents of phrasal verbs in the *Lampeter Corpus* (*assemble together*, *deliver back/in/out/up* and *interpret away*), and similar phrasal verbs are also mentioned in my materials, e.g. *continue on, register up* and *cooperate together*. Some of these, such as *deliver up* and *continue on*, are also found in PDE (in the *BYU-BNC,* a version of the *British National Corpus*).

[3] *Up* is particularly productive. My six-year old son, for example, sometimes asks me to *microwave up* his soup, presumably by analogy with *warm up, heat up* and so on. A recent article in *The Times* (7th Nov '09) referred to people who forgot to *poppy up* (i.e. wear a poppy) on Remembrance Sunday. (Neither *poppy up* nor *microwave up* appears in *OED*3 or the *BYU-BNC*.)

Claridge 2000:48-55). The general pattern is that, with the exception of the direct object, phrasal verbs are less likely to be separated than verbs and prepositions: they are thus considered to be fused lexical items.

Stress patterns are also used to distinguish phrasal verbs from verbs with prepositional objects. In the former, the stress is on the adverbial particle (9a); in the latter, it is on the verb (9b):

> 9a. I looked <u>up</u> the word/I looked the word <u>up</u>.
>
> 9b. I <u>looked</u> at the picture.

However, as Quirk et al. (1985:1157) point out, 'the "stress test" is not entirely reliable, as other polysyllabic prepositions like *across, over* and *without* usually receive stress'. Thus stress cannot be used to distinguish a phrasal verb with *over* (9c) and a verb with *over* as part of its prepositional object (9d):

> 9c. They took <u>o</u>ver the company.
>
> 9d. They walked <u>o</u>ver the bridge.

The term *phrasal verb* is sometimes limited to combinations which are not semantically transparent (e.g. in Dixon 1982, Quirk et al. 1985, Brinton 1996). Thus *bring up* in 'bring up a problem', which has little to do with bringing or upward movement, would be classed as a phrasal verb, while *bring up* in 'bring up the coffee' would not. However, literal combinations can behave syntactically like non-literal ones:

> 10a. Alfred brought up the coffee.
>
> 10b. Alfred brought the coffee up/ Alfred brought it up [*Alfred brought up it].
>
> 10c. *Up Alfred brought the coffee.
>
> 10d. *This is the coffee up which Alfred brought.
>
> 10e. ?Alfred brought carefully up the coffee[4].

Even though in this example the combination *bring up* is transparent, it is subject to the same syntactic limitations as idiomatic combinations: it cannot

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[4] In the *BYU-BNC*, out of 433 examples of 'bring/brings/bringing/brought up' separated by one word, there is only one instance with an interpolated adverb ('the bow of the casualty was brought slowly up into the wind'). This suggests that, although the construction is possible in English, it is unusual.

usually be separated except by a direct object, and a pronominal direct object must separate it. Furthermore, it is not always clear whether a phrasal verb should be classified as literal or idiomatic: there are borderline cases such as *grow up*, where *grow* is literal but *up* is used metaphorically, and *get up* ('arise from bed'), where *up* is literal but *get* is not used in its primary sense. Given current scholarly awareness of the pervasiveness of metaphor in language, it seems unwise to attempt to draw too sharp a distinction between the literal and the idiomatic (see also Claridge 2000:47; Hampe 2002:15-22).

Another problematic class is that of intransitive phrasal verbs. Obviously these cannot be subjected to tests with direct objects, but fronting and adverb-insertion tests can be performed. In some cases, idiomatic intransitive phrasal verbs behave in the same way as transitive combinations (11a-c):

　　11a. I gave up.

　　11b. *Up I gave.

　　11c. *I gave reluctantly up.

By contrast, literal combinations can usually be subject to fronting and adverb insertion:

　　12a. I came back.

　　12b. Back I came.

　　12c. I came reluctantly back.

However, some idiomatic combinations can also be subject to fronting:

　　13a. We set off.

　　13b. Off we set.

They are also perhaps subject to adverb insertion:

　　13c. We set slowly off[5].

On the other hand, some literal combinations (which are sometimes excluded from the category of phrasal verbs, e.g. in Brinton 1996:189) adhere less comfortably to the fronting test:

　　14a. I looked away.

　　14b. ?Away I looked.

---

[5] In the *BYU-BNC*, of 110 instances of 'set/sets/setting off' with one word interpolated, there are two examples with an adverb: 'I put the phone down again, turned, looked upward, and set wearily off' and 'Ashley set briskly off past the motorhomes'.

Again, given the fuzzy boundary between these and fully idiomatic combinations, both types are treated as phrasal verbs in this thesis.

Another feature of phrasal verbs is that they can often be substituted by simple verbs, often Latinate in origin, for example:

> 15a. Isaac took off his socks → Isaac removed his socks.

> 15b. Tim brought up the problem → Tim raised the problem.

However, this is not always possible: there is no obvious equivalent for *take off* in 'the plane took off': *departed* does not convey quite the same meaning (for further examples see Bolinger 1971:6). Furthermore, non-phrasal verb examples can also be substituted, as in:

> 15c. He went up the hill → He ascended the hill.

Thus this is not a guaranteed method of identifying phrasal verbs.

To summarize, a phrasal verb is a lexeme consisting of a verb (which is often monosyllabic and usually active rather than stative) and an adverbial particle (which is of a fairly closed set and which expresses motion or result). It can be either transparent/literal or opaque/idiomatic: both are treated as phrasal verbs in this thesis. If the phrasal verb is transitive, it can be separated by its direct object, and tends to be separated if the direct object is a pronoun. There is usually stress on the particle rather than the verb, and phrasal verbs tend to resist fronting, left-movement of the particle, and adverb-insertion[6].

It should also be noted that there are many synonyms of the term *phrasal verb*: *verb-adverb combination* (Kennedy 1920), *verb-particle combination* (Fraser 1974), *verb-particle construction* (Lipka 1972, Pelli 1976, Lindner 1983), *discontinuous verb* (Live 1965), *two-word verb* (Meyer 1975) and *wordset* (Ralph 1964), among others (not all covering exactly the same types of combination). *Phrasal verb* is used in this thesis as it now appears to be the accepted term in British English; it is used in most of the secondary texts which have informed my

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[6] Of course, as Claridge (2000:56) and Thim (2006:293) point out, tests such as particle-shifting cannot be performed on historical material. However, given that there are several criteria for identifying phrasal verbs, it is likely that by combining these, there will be a sufficient level of correspondence between the structures we call 'phrasal verbs' in PDE, and the structures identified in the material under analysis.

understanding of the construction (e.g. Bolinger 1976, Dixon 1982, Hiltunen 1983a, 1983b, 1994, Brinton 1996, Denison 1998, Claridge 2000, Thim 2006); and it is the term I learned when I first became interested in phrasal verbs as a teacher of English as a foreign language.

1.2.2. Related constructions

Although the focus of this thesis is on phrasal verbs, there are other types of combination which are closely related, and which will be referred to throughout: prepositional verbs, phrasal-prepositional verbs, other group-verbs, verbo-nominal combinations and verb-adjective combinations. These are now briefly described.

1.2.2.1. Prepositional verbs

A prepositional verb is a verb with an inseparable preposition. Unlike a phrasal verb, it is not separated by a direct object:

> 16a. Edward takes after his father [*Edward takes his father after].
>
> 16b. Edward takes after him [*Edward takes him after].

Like phrasal verbs, though, prepositional verbs can often be replaced by simple verbs (in this cases, *resemble*), and they are often semantically opaque. Furthermore, they cannot usually be fronted, moved to the left of a relative, or separated by an adverb:

> 16c. *After his father Edward takes.
>
> 16d. *That is the man after whom Edward takes.
>
> 16e. ?Edward takes uncannily after his father.

There is also a class of verbs such as *rely on* and *approve of* which are sometimes classed as prepositional verbs although they are not subject to the same syntactic restrictions:

> 17a. I rely on Eva's advice.
>
> 17b. On Eva's advice I rely.
>
> 17c. Eva's is the advice on which I rely.
>
> 17d. I rely heavily on Eva's advice.

17a-d are all quite possible. These types are often considered as units because the verb cannot be used without the particle: they are necessary collocations.

These also differ semantically from the other types because if, as Lyons (1968:413) argues, '[a]n utterance has meaning only if its occurrence is not completely determined by its context', then in such combinations the particle has no meaning.

1.2.2.2. Phrasal-prepositional verbs

A phrasal-prepositional verb is an inseparable unit consisting of a verb, an adverbial particle and a preposition, as in *put up with, come up with, check up on* and *look down on*. Like phrasal and prepositional verbs, they are distinguished from other combinations of verbs, adverbs and prepositions in that they cannot be fronted (19b), and they are less likely to allow adverb insertion (20b):

 18a. He came up with the coffee.

 18b. He came up with the idea.

 19a. Up he came with the coffee.

 19b. *Up he came with the idea.

 20a. He came slowly up with the coffee/ He came up slowly with the coffee.

 20b. *He came slowly up with the idea/?He came up slowly with the idea.

However, it is notable that in 20b, an adverb between the verb and particle is highly unlikely, whereas an adverb between the particle and preposition is, although unusual, not impossible[7]. This suggests that the verb is more fused with the particle than with the preposition. This is supported by the fact that phrasal-prepositional verbs are often historically derived from phrasal verbs, e.g. *put up with* from *put up* and *check up on* from *check up* (Denison 1998:224). Phrasal-prepositional verbs can, then, be seen as a type of phrasal verb, and they are often treated as such in LModE grammars (see chapter 2). For this reason,

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[7] In the *BYU-BNC*, there are a few instances of phrasal-prepositional verbs with adverbs interpolated between particle and preposition - e.g. 'London Transport...has had to put up recently with dubious accusations that its trains have suddenly started running late'; 'I'll press B. And it's come up straight away with record number two'; 'they come down suddenly with a violent illness'; 'waiters, taxi drivers and night-watchmen, who in turn could look down slightly on gardeners, miners and dustmen' - but none that I could find with an adverb between verb and particle.

attitudes towards phrasal-prepositional verbs will also be considered in this thesis.

1.2.2.3. Other group-verbs

As Dixon (1982:14) and Denison (1998:222) show, there are other types of group-verb, as exemplified in *take X out on Y, suspect X of Y, come on over,* and *get X over with.* However, none of these types is referred to in my materials.

1.2.2.4. Verbo-nominal and verb-adjective combinations

It will occasionally be necessary to refer to other verbal idioms throughout the thesis. Following Claridge (2000), idiomatic combinations of verbs and nouns (e.g. *take place, run a risk*) will be referred to as 'verbo-nominals', and verbs and adjectives (e.g. *make merry, cut short*) as 'verb-adjectives'[8]

1.2.3. Conversions

Phrasal verbs are frequently converted into nouns and adjectives in LModE. Several types are discernible (see further Lindelöf 1937; Lipka 1972:132-52):

1. zero-derived nouns, e.g. *show-off, clean-up*;
2. agent nouns, e.g. *runner-up, diner-out*;
3. gerunds, e.g. *summing-up, washing-up*;
4. nouns with interpolated pronouns, e.g. *pick-me-up, hand-me-down*;
5. participial adjectives, e.g. *snowed-in, broken-down*;
6. attributive adjectives, e.g. *pick-up (truck), pin-up (girl)*.

Unless finer distinction is necessary, these will simply be referred to as conversions, or as nominalized and adjectival forms.

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[8] Verbo-nominal combinations have received a lot of attention in recent literature, and are also referred to as 'composite predicates' (Cattell 1984, Akimoto and Brinton 1999) and 'complex verbs' (Brinton 1996, Brinton and Akimoto 1999). Definitions vary in their breadth: some writers (e.g. Wierzbicka 1982, Stein and Quirk 1991) include only combinations with nouns which are isomorphic with the corresponding verb (for example *have a chat* but not *have an argument*). Because these types will not be discussed in detail in this thesis, and will only be mentioned when writers conflate them with phrasal verbs, the more general and inclusive term 'verbo-nominal' is preferable.

1.3. Previous work in the field

1.3.1. Phrasal verbs

A full analysis of the literature on phrasal verbs would almost constitute a thesis in itself: the following is a summary of the main scholarly trends.

As will be discussed in chapter 2, phrasal verbs have been described in English grammars for centuries, with particularly detailed analyses appearing in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century grammars such as Sweet (1892-8) and Jespersen (1909-49). The first monograph dedicated to phrasal verbs is Kennedy (1920), which discusses the history of phrasal verbs and their syntactic peculiarities, and also offers a semantic analysis of some of the adverbial particles. In the 1960s and 70s a wave of scholarly publications on the subject appeared, including Live (1965), Spasov (1966), Bolinger (1971), Lipka (1972) and Fraser (1976). Live focuses largely on classifying and distinguishing between types (phrasal and prepositional) using syntactic tests, but also touches on aspect and polysemy, while Spasov's study is mostly semantic; particularly useful is its classification of adverbial particles into spatial, metaphorical and 'structural' (i.e. aspectual or Aktionsart) types. Fraser describes the syntax of phrasal verbs within a transformational-generative framework. Bolinger offers a range of syntactic tests for delimiting the phrasal verb, and also covers semantic features and prosody. Lipka attempts a comprehensive semantic classification of phrasal verbs, suggesting that they are either deadjectival (e.g. *tidy up* 'become tidy'), denominal (e.g. *line up* 'form into a line') or deverbal (e.g. *beat up eggs* 'mix by beating'); or that the particle is redundant (e.g. *eat up*), or functions as an adverb (e.g. *help out* 'help for some time'). A phrasal verb which cannot be put into any of these classes is, Lipka claims, 'unanalysable…and must therefore be considered an idiom' (1972:115). Other early descriptions of phrasal verbs which focus on syntactic tests are Dixon (1982) and Quirk et al. (1985:1150-68).

In the 1980s, the first cognitive linguistic studies of phrasal verbs appeared. Lindner (1983) uses the framework of Langacker's space grammar (a forerunner of cognitive grammar) and provides metaphorical explanations for combinations with *up* and *out,* showing that the distinction between literal and idiomatic

phrasal verbs is not always clear. Lindner proposes explanations of combinations like *catch up* (on sleep) and *take up* (a hobby), which earlier studies would simply have labelled as idiomatic. Other works which offer metaphorical analyses of adverbial particles include Brugman (1983) and Tyler and Evans (2003).

Brinton (1988) persuasively challenges the tendency to describe particles as aspectual, arguing that they are markers of Aktionsart – which reflects 'the inherent nature of the situation portrayed: whether it is static or dynamic, punctual or durative...' (1988:3) – rather than aspect, which reflects a speaker's perspective on a situation. Another new perspective on phrasal verbs is given in Hampe (2002), which analyzes phrasal verbs with supposedly redundant particles and explains their range of functions and meanings using three theoretical frameworks: truth-based, functional and cognitive semantics.

The history of phrasal verbs has also been well documented. Kennedy (1920), Konishi (1958) and Spasov (1966) include overviews of the growth in frequency of phrasal verbs since OE. The first detailed study of OE and ME phrasal verbs is Hiltunen (1983b), which describes the shift from OE prefixed verbs such as *agiefan* to ME phrasal verbs such as *give up*, and analyzes the functions and meanings of prefixes and particles in OE and eME. Denison (1985) discusses the development from the literal meaning of *up* in OE to its telic function in ME. Brinton (1988) also includes a chapter on the shift from spatial to Aktionsart meanings of particles in OE and ME, arguing that this shift is due to a 'principle of diagrammatic iconicity' (1988:234), where goal-orientation is perceived in the same way as spatial direction.

Phrasal verbs in EModE have also been analyzed in detail. Hiltunen (1994) uses evidence from the *Helsinki Corpus* to show firstly that concrete senses were more frequent than abstract ones, and secondly that phrasal verbs were primarily colloquial in EModE. Claridge (2000) uses materials from the *Lampeter Corpus* as the basis for a description of multi-word verbs (including phrasal verbs, prepositional verbs, and other verbal combinations) in EModE. Like

Hiltunen, Claridge discovers that phrasal verbs were more frequent in texts that are closer to spoken English (dialogues and sermons) (2000:197). She also notes an overall decline in the frequency of phrasal verbs in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and tentatively ascribes this to '(a) the standardization process, (b) a certain dominant stylistic ideal, and (c) prescriptivist tendencies' (2000:178). In addition, Claridge provides an overview of attitudes towards multi-word verbs in this period (discussed in 1.3.3 below) and competition between multi-word verbs and their Latinate counterparts. Thim (2006), using a smaller non-computerized corpus of EModE texts, challenges the notion that phrasal verbs were colloquial in this period, suggesting that the choice of phrasal versus simple verb was usually based on semantic considerations.

Various aspects of the development of phrasal verbs in LModE have also been surveyed. Pelli (1976) offers a semantic classification of phrasal verbs in American plays from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries and gives evidence for the increased use of phrasal verbs in American English in this period. Akimoto (1999) devotes a few pages of his article on collocations and idioms in LModE to phrasal verbs, using a self-compiled corpus of fiction, drama, essays and letters (twenty-five works/collections in total) to show that 'phrasal verbs occur more frequently in letters and dramas than in essays or academic writing' (1999:221-2). Smitterberg (2008) uses the *Corpus of Nineteenth Century English* to show the increased use of phrasal verbs in written texts in the nineteenth century, and gives this as evidence of increased colloquialization of written texts in this period. Denison (1998) offers a useful survey of group-verbs (including phrasal verbs) in LModE, showing that phrasal verbs increase in number and frequency throughout the period, although individual constructions have occasionally fallen out of use. He also shows that phrasal-prepositional verbs in particular have been gaining ground, sometimes replacing phrasal verbs, as in the shift from *check something up* to *check up on something*. Another interesting discovery by Denison (2007) is that phrasal verbs have become more restricted in one respect since the eighteenth century, in that combinations with iambic disyllabic verbs (such as *adjourn out* and *repair up*) have become far less frequent. An early but

unsurpassed study by Lindelöf (1937) analyzes one particular aspect of phrasal verbs in LModE: their tendency to be converted into nouns such as *cut-back* and *breakdown*. Lindelöf argues that such conversions have become much more frequent since the late nineteenth century, particularly in American English, and particularly in specialized vocabularies and colloquial usage.

Despite the substantial literature on phrasal verbs, of which the above is a small but representative sample, very little has been written on attitudes towards the construction. Exceptions are discussed in 1.3.3 below.

1.3.2. Attitudes towards English usage

The classic work on the history of attitudes towards the English language is Jones (1953), which provides a comprehensive survey of perceptions of English, particularly in comparison with Latin, from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century. A different strand of research, and one that is more relevant to this thesis, is on attitudes towards particular types of English usage (rather than towards English *per se*); several monographs have been written on this subject. Philp (1968) is a short overview of the history of the prescriptive/descriptive debate in English (particularly British) grammar books. Finegan (1980) provides a chronological survey of views on English usage since the eighteenth century, with a heavier focus on twentieth-century American materials, particularly the usage surveys undertaken by the *National Council for Teachers of English* and the debate over *Webster's Third*. There are also books for the general reader on this topic. Wardhaugh (1999) gives the historical background of a selection of 'incorrect' uses such as the split infinitive and *like* as a conjunction. Crystal (2007) takes a similar but more systematic approach, discussing the history of attitudes towards spelling, pronunciation, grammar and semantic change with a view to 'explain[ing] why English usage became such an issue' (2007:218). Another perspective on this subject is given in Milroy and Milroy (1999), which provides an overview of two strands of 'complaint' about English – those relating to correctness, and those relating to clarity – since the Middle Ages. Many general histories of English, such as Baugh and Cable (1993), contain chapters on eighteenth-century prescriptivism. Beal's (2004) chapter on grammar and

grammarians extends this survey to an overview of prescriptive trends in nineteenth- and twentieth-century grammars and usage books.

Other books have been written on particular aspects of this topic. Mitchell (2001) discusses the ideology of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century grammars in relation to broader educational and social debates. The articles in Beal et al. (2008) provide further insight into the extent and range of (mostly eighteenth-century) prescriptive attitudes, questioning the assumption that prescriptivism was necessarily a 'bad thing'. Mugglestone (2007[1995]) focuses on attitudes towards pronunciation, but also provides a wealth of more general information about the culture of prescriptivism in Britain, and is one of the few books on the subject to pay particular attention to the nineteenth century. Another book with this focus is Dekeyser (1975), which analyzes prescriptions on number relations (such as whether *everybody* should have singular or plural concord) and case relations (such as 'It is I' versus 'It is me') in a corpus of sixty grammar and usage books. Dekeyser shows that 'the ethos of 19th c. grammar... [was] a continual alternating between descriptivism and prescriptivism' (1975:34), but that the second half of the nineteenth century showed a decline in prescriptivism (1975:266).

Also relevant are compilations of eighteenth-century attitudes towards English. The most important of these is Sundby et al.'s *A Dictionary of English Normative Grammar* (1991), which uses a body of 187 primary sources (mainly grammars) as the basis of a classification of prescriptive attitudes. An earlier compilation of attitudes is found in Leonard (1929), while Tucker (1961) offers a selection of excerpts from sixteenth- to eighteenth-century texts which reflect perceptions of English and English usage. Unfortunately, there is no such compilation or classification of post-eighteenth-century attitudes.

Another growing area of research is the influence of prescriptive attitudes on usage. Such studies are usually based on a particular construction, for example double negatives in Tieken-Boon van Ostade (1982), the subjunctive and double comparatives in Auer and González-Díaz (2005), and preposition stranding in

Yáñez-Bouza (2007). Notably, all of these are studies of eighteenth-century attitudes. Dekeyser (1975, discussed above) analyzes discrepancies between prescription and usage in the nineteenth-century works in his corpus, while Peters (2006) considers the influence of twentieth-century proscriptions on usages such as *like* as a conjunction and *shall* versus *will*.

1.3.3. *Attitudes towards phrasal verbs*

There have been three article-length studies of attitudes towards phrasal verbs in English (as well as occasional – and sometimes inaccurate – statements about such attitudes dotted throughout the literature on phrasal verbs[9]). Claridge (2000:212-20) charts attitudes towards multi-word verbs (including phrasal and prepositional verbs) up to around 1800, basing her material largely on Sundby et al. (1991). Claridge shows that there were no direct proscriptions of phrasal verbs in her material, but that negative comments were sometimes made about individual constructions – although she adds that 'the negative terms used [such as *vulgar* and *improper*] are in general not very helpful' (2000:213), and does not attempt to analyze their meanings. She concludes that 'the prescriptivists, and probably most people then, seem to have had a rather neutral or tolerant attitude towards these verbal combinations [phrasal verbs and other multi-word verbs]' (2000:278).

In a chapter of her unpublished MA dissertation, Ralph (1964:37-48) presents some twentieth-century criticisms of phrasal verbs as Americanisms and slang or as having excessive semantic range. Since her main purpose is to discredit these claims, Ralph does not attempt to analyze them systematically or to place them in their social, historical or linguistic context. Brinton (1996) also discusses twentieth-century attitudes towards phrasal verbs and complex verbs, focusing mainly on post-1950 materials. She suggests that twentieth-century critics of phrasal verbs

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[9] For example, see chapter 8 for unfounded statements about Samuel Johnson's attitudes towards phrasal verbs.

sense a lack of semantic precision... and frequently point out that a single verb, semantically more specialized and generally Latinate, can often replace the construction with its native verbs of broad meaning (1996:191). However, Brinton discovers that 'in recent years, the objections [to phrasal verbs] seem to have subsided; handbooks now define phrasal verbs but do not proscribe against them' (1996:189).

Thus, while Claridge suggests that before the nineteenth century phrasal verbs were not yet proscribed, Ralph and Brinton show that, by the twentieth century, negative attitudes were frequently expressed, although less so towards the end of the century.

From these findings, it would appear that the nineteenth century was a formative period in the development of attitudes towards phrasal verbs. One of the aims of this thesis is to study this defining but uninvestigated period. Another aim is to develop the surveys described here, by charting attitudes more fully and systematically, and placing them in the context of broader ideas about language in the LModE period.

1.3.4. Other

Other bodies of secondary literature that are relevant to this thesis – such as works on the history of lexicography, the history of grammars, and the history of semantics – will be discussed in the chapters to which they relate.

1.4. Source materials

1.4.1. Delimitation of period

The analysis of attitudes is based on materials published between 1750 and 1970, approximately corresponding with what is considered the 'Late Modern English' period. This period was chosen for several reasons:

- It is the period in which phrasal verbs began to be systematically analyzed and classified. 1755 marks one of the earliest comprehensive treatments of phrasal verbs in English, in Samuel Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language*, and by the 1970s scholarly investigation of phrasal

verbs was established. It is in the intervening formative period that attitudes were most likely to be crystallized.

- As noted above (1.3.3), there has been some analysis of attitudes towards phrasal verbs before 1800 (in Claridge 2000) and after 1900 (by Ralph 1964 and Brinton 1996), but none of the intervening period 1800-1900. The choice of focal period here (with extensions on either side to allow continuity of attitudes to be examined) aims to fill this gap in research. Furthermore, there have been relatively few studies of nineteenth-century attitudes towards English in general; again, it is hoped that this thesis can contribute to this important area of research.

- Given that one of the aims of this thesis is to analyze the effects of attitudes on usage, it is useful to have a lag period between the two. Attitudes up to 1970 and usage up to 1990 (see 1.4.3. below) were surveyed in order to allow this gap.

1.4.2. Source materials: precepts

The following types of materials were analyzed for precepts about phrasal verbs: grammars, usage manuals, dictionaries, articles and letters in newspapers and journals, and some additional monographs and tracts.

1.4.2.1. Grammars

While there is an abundance of eighteenth-century grammars available through *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (ECCO), the Scolar Press collection of facsimile reprints (1700-1800) and the American Linguistics facsimile series (1700-1900), there is as yet no reprint series of British grammars for the nineteenth century[10]. Guidance was taken from the list of the 'most important titles' and 'supplementary titles' in Görlach's *An Annotated Bibliography of Nineteenth-Century Grammars of English* (1998), from Kennedy's *A Bibliography of Writings on the English Language from the Beginning of Printing to the end of 1922* (1961) and from the works discussed in secondary literature such as Beal (2004), Görlach (1999a) and Leitner (1986), particularly where there is reference

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[10] Görlach (1998:10) mentions that he intended to develop a facsimile series of nineteenth-century grammars but was unable to do so because of prohibitive costs.

to the grammars being influential or frequently reprinted. First editions were consulted where possible[11]. Furthermore, a range of types of grammar (British and American; school, private and university; elementary and higher) was surveyed, and a balance has been sought between well-known grammars (of, for example, Robert Lowth, Lindley Murray, William Cobbett and Henry Sweet) and less well-known.

Fewer grammars have been consulted for the twentieth century than for the earlier periods. This is because by the end of the nineteenth century grammars were generally more descriptive (Dekeyser 1975:276) and I found no attitudes towards phrasal verbs expressed in grammars after the late 1870s. Whereas early grammars were often prescriptive, and indeed cannot always be fully distinguished from books on rhetoric (Mitchell 2001:12), by the twentieth century the forum for expressing attitudes towards language was no longer in grammars but in usage manuals, editorials, and letters to the press.

1.4.2.2. *Usage manuals*

I use the term 'usage manual' to refer to any work which gives guidance on correct English, yet does not fall into the category of 'grammar' and is not as inclusive as a general dictionary. Thus 'usage manual' encompasses works on rhetoric; composition and style guides; lists of words to be avoided; discursive monographs on writers' opinions about proper and improper English; and dictionaries which focus only on points of controversy. Usage manuals have some affinities with etiquette guides (Landau 2001:263); indeed, one such guide, Oliver Bunce's *Don't* (1884), gives advice on correct use and pronunciation of words alongside strictures upon blowing one's nose with one's fingers. They are

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[11] Yáñez-Bouza (2007:57) suggests that one should analyze more than just the first edition as grammarians may change their minds and their prescriptions from one edition to the next. However, given the length of the period under analysis in this thesis, and the range of materials, I felt it was more useful to survey a broader range of different texts by different authors. Also, as Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2008b:122) points out, not all 'new' editions were really new; some were simply advertised as having been 'corrected' by the author even after the author's death. Indeed, I found by skimming through different editions that very few did change their comments about phrasal verbs. Occasional exceptions have been made, as in the case of Joseph Priestley, whose two editions of *The Rudiments of English Grammar* are known to be substantially different (see Hodson 2008). In some cases the first edition was unavailable to me and a later edition has been consulted instead.

also akin to, and often arranged like, dictionaries, although they make no attempts at inclusiveness (Weiner 1988:174). Furthermore, they are usually single-authored, and tend to be prescriptive and opinionated (Creswell 1975:86); for this reason they are particularly useful sources for gauging contemporary attitudes about the language.

There is a substantial body of literature on the history of rhetoric since the eighteenth century (e.g. Bizzell and Herzberg 1990), and there has also been some research on the teaching of composition in this period (e.g. the articles in Murphy 2001). Using these works as guides, I have consulted the works of the key eighteenth- and nineteenth-century rhetoricians – George Campbell, Hugh Blair, Richard Whately, Alexander Jamieson and Alexander Bain – as well as those of the composition writers of the later nineteenth century such as John Franklin Genung and Adams Sherman Hill. Some usage manuals – in particular, Henry Alford's *The Queen's English* in the nineteenth century and H.W. Fowler's *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage* in the twentieth – are frequently referred to, but there are many more such guides which have received little attention, and there is no adequate bibliography, collection or history of these works[12]. Again, I have based my selection on references in the literature, such as Creswell (1975), Finegan (1980, 1998), Mugglestone (2007) and Allen (2009). As with the grammars, variety (in type, period and provenance) was sought.

1.4.2.3. Dictionaries

Retrieving information on attitudes from grammars is generally straightforward, as comments about a particular construction are usually explicit and given in one or two fairly predictable sections. Usage manuals are more varied and less predictable, but the attitudes expressed in them also tend to be explicit and easy to interpret. Gathering information about lexicographers' attitudes is more complex, and depends on finding all the lexemes (or at least, a representative sample) in which a construction occurs, and then analyzing the labelling of these lexemes. In the case of phrasal verbs, which occur on almost every page of a

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[12] Kennedy (1961) contains some titles, and Görlach (1998) has an appendix with bibliographies of 'Books on logic, rhetoric, elocution, style and composition' and 'Advice on good English' (376-9) but these make no claim to comprehensiveness.

dictionary (at least since Johnson), this is a formidable task. For this reason dictionaries have been treated separately, with an in-depth analysis of the three most important and influential dictionaries of the period: Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), Webster's *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828), and Murray et al.'s *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* (1884-1928) (*OED*1).

1.4.2.4. Articles/letters

Newspapers, journals and periodicals are another useful source of information about attitudes towards language. I searched the following databases for references to phrasal verbs:

- *The Times Digital Archive* (1785-1985).
- *19th Century UK Periodicals,* which includes periodicals such as *Punch* and *The Girl's Own Paper*.
- *JSTOR* and *Oxford Journals* for articles in twentieth-century academic and educational journals such as *The English Journal* and *College English* (both published by the National Council of Teachers of English for teachers in American high schools), *American Speech* and *ELT journal*.

Searching these databases yielded several types of material, including 'letters to the editor', editorials, letters from teachers, and academic articles. Although the databases covered the whole of the period under analysis, almost all the data retrieved were from the twentieth century.

1.4.2.5. Other works

I have also taken into account some early twentieth-century scholarly/academic works which are important in documenting the growing awareness of (and accompanying attitudes towards) phrasal verbs, including Kennedy's *The Modern English Verb-Adverb Combination* (1920) and Smith's 'English Idioms' (1923), in which the term *phrasal verb* was coined.

1.4.2.6. Summary

These materials (excluding dictionaries, which are treated separately) were compiled into a 'precept corpus'[13]. There are 138 items in the precept corpus: thirty-six grammars, fifty-eight usage manuals, thirty-nine articles and letters, and five classified as 'other'. These works are detailed in appendix 1. Appendices 2-5 give background information (biographical and bibliographical) about each work (for articles and letters, information is given about the journals and newspapers instead).

Given the difficulties and limitations outlined in the preceding sections, there are some imbalances in the corpus. Firstly, there are relatively few materials for the early nineteenth century. This situation is due to lack of available material: pre-nineteenth-century materials can be found online or in facsimile reprints; later nineteenth-century materials can be accessed in libraries; materials for the period in between are more elusive. Secondly, there are variations in the types consulted for different periods. As noted above, pre-1900 grammars are more useful for the purpose of this thesis as they are more likely than their twentieth-century counterparts to express attitudes towards the grammatical features they describe. On the other hand, I have consulted more usage manuals for the later sub-periods, particularly the late nineteenth century, when there was an explosion of this kind of text (Dekeyser 1975:23). In the case of articles and letters, almost all are from the twentieth century. This is not due to insufficient data (journals and newspapers covering each sub-period were searched) but because of lack of references to phrasal verbs in the early materials.

1.4.3. Source materials: usage

Chapter 9 presents the results of a corpus study of phrasal verbs, and thus considers the interplay between attitudes and usage. The analysis is based on *A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers,* version 3.1 (henceforth ARCHER). ARCHER is a corpus of around 2 million words, organized in three

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[13] The notion of a 'precept corpus' was first used by German scholars in the late 1990s, and then by Auer and González-Díaz (2005) in relation to attitudes towards English usage, where a precept corpus is compared to a usage corpus in order to determine the effects of attitudes on usage.

strata: period (seven approximately fifty-year periods from 1650 to 1990); genre (drama, fiction, sermons, journals/diaries, medical texts, news, science and letters); and variety (British and American). Using parts of ARCHER, I survey the usage of a selection of phrasal verbs in both British and American English, in a variety of genres, in four periods: 1650-99, 1750-99, 1850-99 and 1950-90. Full details of the corpus study are given in chapter 9.

1.4.4. A note on the use of the OED as evidence

Throughout this thesis, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (henceforth *OED*) is used as evidence for the usage of particular lexemes in particular periods.
I have consulted the newest version at the time of writing: for most entries, this is *OED*2, but where available, I have used the draft entries in *OED*3, and indicated these as such.

It is well known that there are flaws in the first and second editions of the *OED*, particularly in the representation of different periods: for example, Brewer (2000) has shown conclusively that the eighteenth century is underrepresented in the quotations, while the sixteenth and twentieth centuries are given much fuller coverage. In addition, dates of quotations must be taken as approximate, and as new evidence is uncovered, lexemes and senses are often antedated. However, despite this caveat, the *OED* is by far the most useful resource available for determining the dates of particular lexemes and senses in English.

1.5. Outline of thesis

Before analyzing attitudes towards phrasal verbs, it is essential to understand how phrasal verbs were understood, labelled and classified in the precept corpus and dictionaries; this is the subject of chapter 2. The body of the thesis, chapters 3-7, focuses on the attitudes expressed in the materials in the precept corpus. Chapter 3 is an overview. In chapter 4, the comparison, both favourable and unfavourable, of phrasal verbs with their Latinate counterparts is placed in the context of changing attitudes towards Latin versus 'native' or 'Saxon' language. Related attitudes towards monosyllables and preposition stranding are also discussed in this chapter. In chapter 5, the focus is on attitudes towards the

meaning of phrasal verbs, in relation to beliefs about etymology, polysemy and redundancy. In chapter 6, attitudes relating to linguistic level and neologisms are considered. In chapter 7, comments about phrasal verbs as either Scotticisms or Americanisms are discussed in the context of the wider debate over regional and Standard English. In chapter 8, all of these considerations are brought together in an analysis of the labelling of phrasal verbs in dictionaries. Chapter 9 analyzes the actual usage of a selection of proscribed phrasal verbs in order to consider the interplay between prescriptivism and usage. Chapter 10 presents conclusions and questions for further research.

Chapter 2. The recognition and classification of phrasal verbs in Late Modern English

2.1. Introduction

In order to analyze the development of attitudes towards phrasal verbs, it is essential to be aware of how they were understood, named and classified in the materials under analysis. After surveying previous research on the classification of phrasal verbs (2.2), this chapter analyzes their treatment in LModE grammars (2.3), dictionaries (2.4), usage manuals (2.5), articles and letters (2.6) and other works (2.7).

2.2. Previous research on the recognition and classification of phrasal verbs

2.2.1. Grammars

Hiltunen's 'Phrasal Verbs in English Grammar Books before 1800' (1983a) analyzes forty-three grammars published between 1586 and 1839 (only three are post-1800). Hiltunen shows that the first grammar of 'New English', Bullokar's *Bref Grammar* (1586), indicated some awareness of phrasal verbs in noting that prepositions following a verb can change the signification of that verb. In the seventeenth century, little advance was made on this observation, except for the occasional comment comparing Latin prefixed and English phrasal constructions, e.g. in Miège's *The English Grammar* (1688). In the eighteenth century the term 'particle' was frequently used, indicating an awareness of the overlap between prepositions and adverbs. There were also 'more definite statements of verb and particle forming a group instead of being dissociated items' (1983a:381), showing that grammarians recognized their semantic and syntactic unity.

Hiltunen also points out that the developing awareness of phrasal verbs was not chronological: some of the later eighteenth-century grammars only mention them in passing, while the most comprehensive treatment is found in Mattaire's *The English Grammar* (1712). According to Hiltunen, Mattaire goes further than any of the other eighteenth-century grammarians in recognizing (a) that the position of the particle can vary (*I keep my breath in* vs. *I keep in my breath*), and (b) the possibility of two particles being added to a verb (i.e. in a phrasal-

prepositional verb) [14]. Mattaire also mentions (although does not discuss) nominalized phrasal verbs such as *their sitting down* and *the going out*.

In a chapter of her monograph on multi-word verbs in EModE, Claridge (2000:198-227) charts the awareness of multi-word verbs (including phrasal and prepositional verbs) in ten grammars from 1640-1712. She shows that, while some of the grammars use phrasal verbs as examples when translating Latin prefixed forms, Miège (1688) 'is the first grammarian to make an explicit comment' about phrasal verbs (2000:203), in that he describes the English tendency to put the preposition after the verb, and separate from it, as in *look upon, look for, put out*. Like Hiltunen, Claridge shows that Mattaire is the next most important grammarian, after Miège, to deal with phrasal verbs.

In addition to these analyses, there are two short sections on the treatment of phrasal verbs by grammarians before 1800 in Sundby (1995). Sundby shows that phrasal and prepositional verbs were not usually distinguished, and that while grammarians generally noted the ability of the particle to change the meaning of the verb, they did not go much further. With the exception of Mattaire (1712), all the grammars quoted by Sundby are dated between 1750 and 1800.

As far as I am aware, there has been no research on the treatment of phrasal verbs in nineteenth-century grammars[15]. Their coverage in twentieth-century grammars has been studied in more detail: Fraser (1976:63-9) quotes from the grammars of Onions (1904), Poutsma (1904-26), Kruisinga (1909-32) and Jespersen (1909-49), and discusses their analyses of the word-order of verb, direct object and particle; Ralph (1964) surveys some twentieth-century

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[14] However, Mattaire's recognition of phrasal-prepositional verbs is somewhat doubtful. Claridge (2000:205) points out that Mattaire's example *to turn away back* is 'not exactly prototypical to modern eyes'. I would go further and say that this is not an example of a phrasal-prepositional verb, since *back* is not a preposition and the whole is intransitive: rather, it is a sort of emphatic phrasal verb with two particles.

[15] A minor exception is Ralph (1964), who mentions Lindley Murray's (1795), Goold Brown's (1864) and Henry Sweet's (1891) grammars. However, it is evident that Ralph's investigation of the treatment of phrasal verbs in nineteenth-century grammars is fairly basic (given that it is not the primary purpose of her thesis) as she suggests that Murray's 'recognition of the existence of wordsets [phrasal verbs]' was plagiarized in subsequent grammars, without taking this back further and realizing that Murray himself plagiarized Lowth verbatim.

grammatical descriptions of phrasal verbs, particularly in structural linguistics; and Brinton (1988) includes a useful appendix which shows twentieth-century grammarians' descriptions of the aspectual properties of particles.

2.2.2. Dictionaries

Research on the history of the lexicographical treatment of phrasal verbs has focused largely on Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), with occasional references to their treatment in other dictionaries. This section will piece together existing research to provide a survey of what is already known about the treatment of phrasal verbs in English dictionaries.

As Stein (1985:237) remarks, '[t]he lexicographical history of phrasal verbs in English is very difficult to retrace'; phrasal verbs do appear in early English-Latin dictionaries but it is not clear whether these are examples of 'an authentic English phrasal verb or one prompted by a translation of a Latin prefixal verb' (1985:237). Stein goes on to suggest that Peter Levins, in his English-Latin *Manipulus Vocabulorum* (1570) 'may have had something of a beginning insight into the class of phrasal verbs'. Levins gives headwords like 'to pine away' (*tubescere*) and 'to weare on' (*ferre*), and also translates the particle *up*: '[v]p in composition, ad, as to rise vp, assurgere, to stand vp, astare assurgere' (1985:238). Osselton (1986) examines some phrasal verbs in two bilingual dictionaries, Abel Boyer's *Dictionnaire royal* (1699) and Robert Ainsworth's *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae Compendiarius* (1736), and shows that '[e]ven the most cursory look at any of these bilingual works shows that they do indeed provide immeasurably better coverage of the phrasal verbs than any monolingual dictionary had ever done' (1986:12). Osselton also looks at the treatment of the verb *come* in Bailey's *Universal Etymological English Dictionary* (1721, 1727) and concludes that 'the monolingual dictionary had hardly even started to evolve a technique [for phrasal verbs] in Johnson's time' (1986:7).

A notable exception is John Wilkins' and William Lloyd's *Alphabetic Dictionary* (1668) (part of Wilkins' proposal for a universal language, *An Essay towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language,* 1668), which is often omitted from

histories of lexicography (such as Starnes and Noyes 1946). Dolezal (1985:31) shows that Wilkins and Lloyd were ahead of their time in their treatment of common words, including phrasal verbs: for example, under *fall* there are subentries for *falling down, falling in with, falling off* and *falling out*, unlike in other monolingual English dictionaries before Johnson. Dolezal notes that although 'Wilkins and Lloyd did not formally distinguish between multiword lexical units and frequently used free lexical combinations... the systematic inclusion of both in a monolingual English dictionary was an innovation' (1985:86).

Despite these examples of earlier lexicographers' awareness of phrasal verbs, the discussion presented in them is quite limited, and it is frequently stated that Johnson was 'the first [lexicographer] to deal systematically with... phrasal verbs' (McDermott and Moon 2005:153; see also *inter alia* Horgan 1994:128, Hanks 2005:250, Mitchell 2005:211[16]). Less has been written on what Johnson did with these phrasal verbs; notable exceptions are Osselton (1986), Reddick (1990), Claridge (2000) and Landau (2005), which are now surveyed.

Osselton (1986) poses the question of where Johnson got his phrasal verb word-list from, and suggests that he may have used the definitions in bilingual dictionaries such as Ainsworth and Boyer (Johnson owned copies of both works). Osselton shows the similarities between Johnson's and Ainsworth's entries for *call* and concludes that 'the list of entries in Ainsworth served as a kind of catalyst for [Johnson's] literary memory' (1986:14).

Reddick (1990) proposes a slightly different theory as to how Johnson came to describe phrasal verbs so thoroughly. Reddick argues that it is unlikely that Johnson started with a word-list and then proceeded to find illustrations. Instead, he would have started by marking passages in books to use as examples, and '[t]he word-list would take care of itself, he felt, growing out of the

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[16] Hanks (2005:250) goes as far as to suggest that 'Johnson was probably the first *writer* to draw attention to the phenomenon of the phrasal verb in English' (my italics) – this is something of an exaggeration, given the treatment of phrasal verbs by earlier grammarians such as Mattaire (see 2.2.1 above).

illustrations, with a check on the comprehensiveness of the list by reference to other dictionaries' (1990:33). Johnson would mark a quotation and underline the word it illustrated, and his amanuenses would then copy the headword and the quotation into the dictionary manuscript. Reddick shows how phrasal verbs could present problems with this method, since if Johnson underlined *stand up*, for example, the amanuensis would write a separate headword *stand up*, and 'a glance into Boyer and Ainsworth would have confirmed that "To Stand Up" should be given a separate heading' (1990:44). However, since Johnson listed phrasal verbs under the main verb, he would then have had to rearrange the manuscript, and Reddick (1990:206, note 56) suggests that this may have led to Johnson's particular awareness of phrasal verbs.

Claridge (2000:208-10) briefly analyzes Johnson's treatment of multi-word verbs, including phrasal verbs. She remarks that, since he includes these items in his dictionary but does not discuss them in his grammar, 'he clearly regards the combinations as a *lexical* problem, not as a syntactic one' (2000:208). (It is worth pointing out, though, that Johnson's grammar was very brief, and his treatment of syntax even briefer – seven sentences long, in fact. In general he was more interested in lexical than syntactic issues, and so would inevitably have perceived phrasal verbs in this light.) Claridge goes on to survey Johnson's treatment of the verb *put*, showing that it includes 'phrasal, prepositional, phrasal-prepositional verbs and verbo-nominal combinations... There is a mix of idiomatic and literal combinations, and Johnson takes account of the polysemy so often found in this area' (2000:210).

Landau (2005) compares Johnson's treatment of phrasal verbs with *come, make* and *set* with that of Webster's *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828) and Worcester's *A Universal and Critical Dictionary of the English Language* (1846), in order to ascertain the extent of Johnson's influence on the American lexicographers. Landau shows that, as well as giving additional senses (particularly nautical ones), Webster often combines or omits senses. For example, Johnson gives two separate senses of *set out*: 'To begin a journey, or course' and 'To begin the world'; Webster combines these into 'to begin a

journey, or course; as, to *set out* for London or from London; to *set out* in business; to *set out* in life or the world'. He often substitutes Johnson's lengthy quotations with invented examples, and Landau concludes that the 'overall treatment is still modeled on Johnson's, but the changes made and the conciseness of presentation do suggest an entirely different lexicographic methodology' (2005:224).

With the exception of this article by Landau, there has been no other research on Webster's treatment of phrasal verbs. Furthermore, surprisingly little has been written about their treatment in *OED*1. Silva (2000) makes a couple of remarks about *OED*1's practice in this respect. She notes that '[i]n discovering the sense-order for an entry, the *OED* editors applied "logical" yardsticks: for example, concrete precedes abstract... simple verb precedes phrasal verb' (2000:93). Also, 'Murray tended to compress under one heading many senses which the other editors would have separated out: for example, whereas at *Speak* a series of phrasal verb subentries was recognized, the uses of *Talk* v. with adverbs and prepositions were treated as phrases subsumed under main senses' (2000:82). However, as yet there has been no systematic study of how the *OED*1 editors dealt with phrasal verbs.

Cowie (1999) shows how, since the mid-twentieth century, dictionaries for non-native speakers of English have developed their own methods of handling phrasal verbs, but that is outwith the scope of this thesis[17].

2.3. Recognition and classification of phrasal verbs in LModE grammars

Rather than survey all the grammars in the precept corpus (many of which are highly derivative), I will focus only on those whose treatment of phrasal verbs is new or interesting or builds on the descriptions of previous grammars.

The first grammar in the corpus to mention phrasal verbs is Lowth (1762). Lowth first discusses prefixed forms and their frequently idiomatic nature, and adds:

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[17] Disappointingly, Herbst and Klotz's section on phrasal verb dictionaries in *The Oxford History of English Lexicography* (2009:27-31) is not particularly historical, but rather surveys a selection of late twentieth-century phrasal verb dictionaries.

> But in English the Preposition is more frequently placed after the Verb, and separate from it, like an Adverb; in which situation it is no less apt to affect the sense of it, and to give it a new meaning; and may still be considered as belonging to the Verb, and a part of it. As, *to cast* is to throw; but *to cast up*, or to compute, *an account*, is quite a different thing: thus, *to fall on, to bear out, to give over*; &c. So that the meaning of the Verb, and the propriety of the phrase, depend on the Preposition subjoined (1762:128-9).

Lowth here gives phrasal verbs (*cast up, bear out, give over*) and one prepositional verb (*fall on*). In a footnote to this section he lists '[e]xamples of impropriety in the use of the Preposition in Phrases of this kind' (1762:129), but they are all examples of 'improper' prepositional verbs such as *accuse for* and *differ with.* Treating both types together, Lowth refers to their idiomatic quality (the preposition is 'apt to affect the sense of it, and to give it a new meaning'), their unity (the preposition 'may still be considered as belonging to the Verb, and a part of it') and their tendency to be translated by single verbs ('*to cast up*, or to compute').

The next grammar of note is the second edition of Priestley (1768). Whereas in the first edition of his grammar Priestley (1761) does not mention phrasal verbs at all, in the second he adds the following paragraph:

> A very great number of the most common and significant phrases in our language are made by the addition of a preposition to a verb, particularly the saxon monosyllabic verbs, as *to get, to keep, to make, to give, to cast, to go, to hold,* &c. In the case of these complex terms, the component parts are no guide to the sense of the whole. Thus the common idea annexed to the verb *give* is lost in the phrases, *to give up, to give out, to give over,* &c. (1768:141-2).

There are two points of interest here. Firstly, Priestley gives phrasal verbs a name – *complex term* – and he is the first to do so in the corpus. This is the only place where *complex term* appears in his grammar, so it seems that it specifically refers to phrasal verbs. Furthermore, although he does not make an explicit comparison between the two types of construction, he gives examples

only of phrasal, not of prepositional verbs, which suggests a latent awareness of the difference.

Webster (1784:80) offers a similar description of phrasal verbs:

> Note further, that prepositions are often placed after verbs and become a part of them; being essential to the meaning. Thus, in the phrases, *to fall on, to give over, to cast up* (an account) the particles *on, over, up,* are essential to the verbs to which they are annexed, because on them depends the meaning of the phrases. This sort of verbs is purely Saxon and they seem to be growing into disuse; but they are often very significant and their place cannot always be supplied by any single word.

Webster is the first grammarian in the corpus to use the term *particle* to refer to the second element of phrasal verbs. Furthermore, he supplements Lowth's description of phrasal verbs with the observation that 'their place cannot always be supplied by any single word', suggesting that Lowth's glossing of *cast up* (as 'compute') is not possible with every phrasal verb[18].

Ussher (1785:79) also mentions the idiomatic properties of phrasal and prepositional verbs ('the same Verb often admitting various significations by having different Prepositions joined to it'). Furthermore, he is the first of the grammarians in the corpus to mention the fact that phrasal verbs are separable:

> But the Preposition generally follows the Verb separately; as, *to give over, to give out, to take off, to pass by, to wink at, etc.* These verbs may be considered equally with the former [i.e. prefixed verbs] as compound Verbs, though the Preposition may stand sometimes at a distance from its Verb (1785:80).

However, he does not distinguish between separable phrasal verbs (*give over, give out, take off* and *pass by*) and inseparable prepositional verbs (*wink at*). Ussher is also the first of these grammars to use the term *compound verb* to refer to phrasal (as well as prepositional and prefixed) verbs.

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[18] It is also notable that Webster believes that phrasal verbs are 'growing into disuse' at the end of the eighteenth century. The frequency of phrasal verbs in a corpus is examined in chapter 9, and it is shown there that there was indeed a marginal decline in phrasal verbs in British English in the 1750-1800 period. Unfortunately, as discussed in chapter 9, there is a lack of data for this period in American English, but Webster's comment points to a similar pattern.

In a section on prepositions Fenn (1798:62) describes phrasal verbs in a manner clearly based on Priestley:

> Prepositions... are also placed after verbs, particularly the monosyllable verbs to give, to keep, to make, to cast, to go, to hold; of which they generally change the signification; as, to give up, to give over, to give out.

However, although she uses the term *preposition* here, she elsewhere distinguishes between adverbs and prepositions, noting that in *she rides about*, *about* is an adverb, but in *she rides about the city,* it becomes a preposition (1798:90). Similarly, in one of the parsing lessons, in the sentence 'the young chickens come out' *out* is parsed as an adverb 'as no noun follows it' (1798:99). Yet in another, '[the lark] brings up its young', *brings up* is parsed together as a single verb (1798:126). This last is particularly significant: clearly Fenn felt that in this sentence *up* could not be an adverb (because a noun follows it), but also felt that it was not a preposition, so instead treated the words together as a single lexeme.

D'Orsey (1842) is notable in that his is the only grammar to give a separate conjugation table for phrasal verbs. Alongside tables for intransitive and transitive verbs, there is a 'Table of a compound verb' (1842:31) which conjugates *give up* (*I give up, I do give up, I was giving up,* etc., along with some oddities like *I have been getting giving up*); apparently D'Orsey felt that these were worth treating separately. Also, like Ussher, D'Orsey uses a specific term, *compound verb*. However, elsewhere he writes that '[p]repositions are adverbs when parts of compound verbs – give *in, out*run' (1842:135), so clearly, as in Ussher, the term *compound verb* encompasses prefixed as well as phrasal verbs.

Crane (1843) discusses phrasal verbs at length. He mentions the unity and idiomaticity of phrasal verbs:

> although the modifying particle, taken singly, must be regarded as an adverb, it in effect often forms with the verb itself a compound verb... In other cases the particle so changes the meaning of the conjoined verb, as to express an action having no relation to the one expressed by the simple

verb. So intimate, indeed, is the connexion, that we find the compound term treated as a distinct verb in our dictionaries (1843:78).

He is also the first grammarian to note the function of adverbial particles as indicating manner, suggesting that

> The following sentences contain prepositions and adverbs of place used to determine the meaning of the verb by a circumstance of manner.
>
> Ex. The president stood *up*. The speaker sat *down*. The dog ran *away*. The kettle boiled *over*. The thieves fell *out*. The garrison holds *out*. The patient lingers *on*. The house has fallen *in*. The ice has broken *up* (1843:78).

He also discusses the separable quality of phrasal verbs:

> When such a compound verb is transitive, we find the modifying particle either preceding or following the complement almost indifferently; as to bring the ship *to,* or to bring *to* the ship; to break *off* the head, or to break the head *off*; to pull *down* the house, or to pull the house *down* (1843:78).

Crane is the first grammarian in the corpus to discuss phrasal-prepositional verbs, although he includes one example of a verb-adjective with preposition (*speak ill of*) in his examples:

> We have some such verbs compounded with an adverb or a preposition used adverbially, that govern their complement indirectly through a preposition.
>
> Ex. The upstart looks *down upon* his neighbours. The vicar sometimes looks *in upon* us. The spendthrift has made *away with* his estate. You must look *out for* a situation. A slanderer speaks *ill of* every one. The fox ran *away with* the goose.
>
> As before mentioned, our language is very copious, and we can commonly find a simple verb that is the perfect equivalent of these periphrastic terms. Thus to look down upon, is to despise; to look in upon = to visit; to make away with = to squander, and sometimes even to murder; to look out for = to seek; to call out to = to hail, &c. &c. (1843:79).

Finally, Crane is the first grammarian to suggest phrasal verb exercises. Students are asked to make sentences with compound verbs (mostly phrasal verbs, but also one verb-adjective (*break loose*) and one prepositional verb (*look after*)) and also with other compound verbs that they think of themselves.

Arnold (1852:100) observes that

> in some of these verbs the following noun appears to be strictly under the
> government of the preposition; in others not. *Him* may be considered as
> governed by *at,* in *to laugh at him*; but *account* cannot well be supposed
> under the government of *up,* in *to cast up an account*.

Although Arnold does not expand on this comment, his suggestion that there is a
grammatical difference between the direct objects in *laugh at* and *cast up*
shows a tentative awareness of the difference between phrasal and prepositional
verbs.

Parminter (1856) gives a mixture of phrasal (*try on, put off, bring under*) and
prepositional verbs (*think of, come by, laugh at*) as examples of *consecute
verbs*. He is the only grammarian to use this term; indeed, *consecute* as an
adjective is not recorded in the *OED*. He also mentions that these constructions
'have a definite *single* meaning' (1856:154), are transitive and can be turned
into passives, and 'are *separable* in the *active* form of voice, i.e. many words
may intervene between the simple verb and its annexed preposition' (1856:155).
However, he does not indicate that only phrasal and not prepositional verbs are
separable.

Next of interest is the English translation of Maetzner (1874) (originally in
German), which is the first to indicate awareness of nominalized phrasal verbs,
giving plural forms of 'a *substantive* with a *particle* subjoined', where the
substantive takes the plural, e.g. *holders*forth, *hangers*-on (1874:Vol. I, 233).
Furthermore, although Maetzner does not explicitly name or classify phrasal
verbs as units, his awareness of the construction is evident in his section on
meanings of particles, as in his analysis of *up*:

> *up* enters into the most various combinations with notions of activities. The
> meanings of this adverb, which has become a preposition may, however, be
> reduced essentially to two, the root meaning of upwards, with the
> reference to the direction or movement aloft, and the derivative one of
> reference to the altitude at which the activity appears as done, finished or

concluded. More rarely appears the notion of opening, combining with the idea of bringing aloft and exposing to view (1874:Vol. III, 94).

This is the first reference in any of the grammars to the perfective function (where the 'activity appears as done, finished or concluded') of particles.

Bain (1877) discusses the meanings of the prepositions *up, down, over, on, off, under, along, across, beneath* and *behind* and notes their adverbial uses. For example, he gives 'the price of stock is up' as an example of the 'primary signification' of *up*, and then notes that '[i]n compound words we have the adverbial form with a like signification: "look up", "fill up", "lead up", "hush up"' (1877:57). However, he does not explain how *up* in 'hush up' and 'the price of stock is up' has the same signification, and does not differentiate between literal and telic uses of the particle. Bain also briefly mentions nominalized phrasal verbs: in the section on compounds, there is a category 'Adverb & Verb, with Verb preceding' (1877:146) which includes the examples *cast-away, drawback* and *run-away*.

All the grammars analyzed from the end of the nineteenth century onwards describe phrasal verbs, often in more than one section. This can be seen in the two volumes of Sweet (1892-8). In Vol. I (1892:137-8) Sweet discusses the capacity for prepositional verbs to become intransitive phrasal verbs, for example *run across the road and tell him to come here* can be elided to *run across and tell him to come here*. He calls both of these types *group-verbs*. In a later section, Sweet discusses the stress patterns of phrasal verbs such as *pass by, draw back* and *break down* (which he calls *compound verbs*) and their nominalized forms (1892:Vol. I, 293). In the second volume of the grammar, devoted to syntax, Sweet refers to the various syntactic possibilities of phrasal verbs and objects:

> When a verb is followed by an object word and an adverb, the order of these is sometimes doubtful, as in *I have brought back your umbrella* or *I have brought your umbrella back*. In such a sentence as *bring in some more coals!* the adverb generally precedes. But the general tendency is to put the object first; in some cases, indeed, no other order is allowable, as in

let him in! | I have left my umbrella behind. The reason appears to be that the adverb might be mistaken for a preposition, if put before the noun-word (1898:Vol. II, 20).

Although we would now add that the word order in these examples is also influenced by the choice of pronoun vs. noun (i.e. *let <u>him</u> in!* vs. *bring in <u>some more coals!</u>*), Sweet's is a much more detailed discussion of the syntax of phrasal verbs than that of any previous grammar.

A concise but clear treatment is given in Onions (1904:36), in a section entitled 'Verbs constructed with a fixed Preposition'. Onions first describes 'verbs... compounded with Prepositions' (i.e. prepositional verbs). He then distinguishes these from phrasal verbs: 'From these must be distinguished combinations of *Transitive* verbs with certain adverbs, as *away, back, forth, in, off, on, up,* etc.' Onions also notes the separable quality of phrasal verbs, although he does not go into as much detail as Sweet in this matter, but simply writes that 'the adverb in most cases may either precede or follow the object. Thus we may say: "Call off the hounds" or "Call the hounds off".' He also describes phrasal-prepositional verbs: 'Some of them may be themselves constructed, like simple verbs, with fixed prepositions, as *to come out with* (an expression), *to put up with, to do away with, to do out of* (slang – to deprive of), *to take up with*'. Thus, without naming them, Onions clearly distinguishes between prepositional verbs, phrasal verbs and phrasal-prepositional verbs.

A comprehensive treatment is found in Poutsma (1904-26). Poutsma pays particular attention to the aspectual functions of particles, noting that they can provide ingressive aspect:

> Many verbs... are assisted in expressing an ingressive (or momentaneous) aspect by adverbs (or adverbial word-groups) implying a moving in a certain direction [e.g. *lie back, look up*] (1926:296).

He also gives examples of the way they denote result:

> In the majority of cases the notion of terminativeness is brought out with the assistance of adverbs, chiefly *out, through* and *up,* which, indeed, modify the meaning of the verb in various ways [e.g. *wait out, finish up,*

burn up]... [These] may, in a manner, be regarded as denoting a kind of result of the action expressed by the verb with which they are connected (1926:300).

Poutsma also gives a more thorough analysis than any previous grammarian of the possible word-order of verb, direct object and particle, including an interesting remark about the (non-)separation of verb and particle:

In some cases the verb is so closely linked with the complement denoting the result of the activity that it forms a kind of compound with it. Thus in *He called out the military, He cast off the dogs, He threw up his post...* we could hardly say **He called the military out, *He cast the dogs off, *He threw his post up...* (1926:25).

Fraser (1976:65-6) interprets this passage as meaning that at the time 'the verb-particle combination, while certainly an integral part of English, was not generally accepted in the verb – noun phrase – particle order unless the noun phrase consisted of a pronoun'. However, the fact that this word-order was documented by earlier grammarians (such as Crane, Sweet and Onions, discussed above) suggests that this was not the case. Also, elsewhere Poutsma accepts variation in word-order, allowing both *live out your life* and *live your life out* (1928:420)[19]. It seems rather that Poutsma saw *call out, cast out* and *throw up* in the sentences above as bound and therefore inseparable (in the same way that most speakers nowadays would find 'give smoking up' unacceptable; cf. chapter 1), not that he believed that a nominal object could not intervene between verb and particle.

Phrasal verbs are discussed in several sections of Jespersen (1909-49). They are given as an example of a phrase, which is defined as:

A combination of words which together form a sense unit, though they need not come in immediate juxtaposition. Thus the words *puts off*, which make a phrase, the sense of which ('postpones') cannot be inferred from that of the words taken separately, may be separated, e.g. by *it: he puts it off* (1914:15).

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[19] Unfortunately I was not able to access the first edition (1904) of this volume (Part I, First Half): this example is from the second edition (1928).

Jespersen discusses the possible order of verb, particle, and object, and points out subtle differences in meaning that result from different choices, for example between *get it over* (= 'have done with, make an end of it') and *get over it* (= 'recover from the consequences of') (1927:275). Plural forms of different types of nominalized phrasal verb are also discussed (1914:28-33), as are adjectival forms such as *made-up* and *broken-down* (1914:337).

Mittins (1962) is a school grammar, and the only grammar in the corpus to use the term *phrasal verb,* referring to all group-verbs. Mittins' inclusion of phrasal verbs in several different sections suggests that by this period they were felt to be an integral part of the language, and an aspect that students should come to terms with. For example, students are asked to give approximate single-word equivalents for group-verbs such as *get up, put up with* and *turn down,* and vice versa, for verbs such as *watch* and *extract* (1962:25-6). Mittins also includes sentences with phrasal verbs as examples of basic sentence patterns (S – V, S – V – C and so on) and encourages students to do the same. For example, they have to explain the difference between 'The thief made off' (S – V) and 'Mother made a cake' (S – V – Od) (1962:41). They also have to identify phrasal-prepositional verbs and write pairs of sentences such as 'They *ran out of* petrol' (phrasal verb + Od) and 'They *ran out* of the fog' (phrasal verb + adverbial phrase) (1962:111).

2.3.1. Summary
2.3.1.1. Terminology
There were tentative and sporadic attempts in LModE grammars to lexicalize the concept of phrasal verbs, and these attempts indicate a growing awareness of their status as units. Ten of the grammars in the corpus give phrasal verbs a specific name (although most names encompass prepositional verbs and occasionally prefixed verbs as well). The terms used are:

    complex term (Priestley 1768);
    compound verb (Ussher 1785, D'Orsey 1842, Crane 1843, Bain 1872, Bain 1877, Sweet 1892-8);
    consecute verb (Parminter 1856);
    group-verb (Sweet 1892-8, Poutsma 1926);

phrasal verb (Mittins 1962).

However, some of the grammars with the most perceptive descriptions of phrasal verbs do not attempt to name them, but rather describe them using circumlocutions such as 'combinations of *Transitive* verbs with certain adverbs, as *away, back, forth, in, off, on, up,* etc.' (Onions 1904:36) and 'verb-phrase consisting of verb and adverb (prep.)' (Jespersen 1914:27).

Another problematic aspect of the terminology of phrasal verbs is what to call the second element. The early grammarians tend to use the term *preposition*, although some (e.g. Lowth 1762 and Fenn 1798) recognize its adverbial qualities. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, grammarians begin to use *adverb,* generally stating that prepositions come before nouns so that in a phrase like *I give up, up* must be an adverb. The term *particle* is first used by Webster (1784), then by Crane (1843) and Maetzner (1874), and in the twentieth century becomes the generally used term. The reason for this choice is implied in Jespersen's comment that there is no difference between *in* in *Mary was in* and *Mary was in the house*, even though the two are traditionally labelled adverb and preposition (1914:11); *particle* is a convenient alternative term which allows grammarians not to make the distinction[20].

2.3.1.2. Distinction between phrasal verbs and other types of group-verb

Sundby (1995:87) observes that most of the eighteenth-century grammars that he analyzes include prepositional verbs in their discussions of phrasal verbs; this is also the case in the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century grammars in my precept corpus. Before 1850, none of the grammars distinguishes between the two types. The only possible exceptions are Priestley (1768) and, following him, Fenn (1798), both of whom give only phrasal verb examples; they do not, however, make an explicit distinction. From the mid-nineteenth century, there is growing awareness of the difference, as expressed in Crane (1843) and Arnold (1852), and the later nineteenth-century grammars do not conflate the two types in their examples. By the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the

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[20] *Particle* has been used since the sixteenth century as a catch-all term for prepositions, adverbs, conjunctions and other closed-class parts of speech (Michael 1970:ch.15).

twentieth century, in the grammars of Sweet, Onions, Jespersen and Poutsma, the distinction between phrasal and prepositional verbs is clearly made. Crane (1843) is the first grammar in the corpus to describe phrasal-prepositional verbs, and there is no further discussion of these until the twentieth-century grammars.

2.3.1.3. Awareness of grammatical and semantic features of phrasal verbs

The main features of phrasal verbs that are mentioned in the grammars are:

- *Meaning*. Lowth's (1762:128) observation, that the preposition is 'apt to affect the sense of [the verb], and to give it a new meaning', is repeated in various forms in most of the grammars that mention phrasal verbs. Crane (1843) is the first grammarian to go further than this, in his recognition that the adverbial particles in phrasal verbs like *hold out* and *linger on* indicate manner rather than place. At the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, deeper semantic analyses become more frequent: both Maetzner (1874) and Bain (1877) analyze the meaning of *up* in phrasal verbs, while Jespersen (1914) discusses the way that changes in the word order of phrasal verbs affect their meaning.

- *Unity*. Lowth (1762:128) is the first to express the idea that the preposition 'may still be considered as belonging to the Verb, and a part of it', although it is not clear whether he means semantic or grammatical unity, or both. The first indication of phrasal verbs being treated as grammatical units is in Fenn (1798), who parses *bring up* as a single verb; this is also evident in D'Orsey (1842), who gives a separate conjugation table for phrasal verbs. The idea that phrasal verbs are semantic units is also implied in the tendency to gloss phrasal verbs with single verbs (e.g. *cast up* as 'compute', first in Lowth). From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, there are further explicit statements about the unity of phrasal verbs: for example, Crane (1843:78) points out the 'intimate...connexion' between verb and particle, while Parminter (1856:154) notes that they 'have a definite *single* meaning'.

- *Syntax*. Ussher (1785) is the first grammar in the precept corpus to mention that phrasal verbs can be separable: 'the Preposition may stand sometimes at a distance from its Verb'; similarly, Parminter (1856:155) observes that they

'are *separable* in the *active* form of voice, i.e. many words may intervene between the simple verb and its annexed preposition'. However, neither Ussher nor Parminter distinguish between separable phrasal verbs and inseparable prepositional verbs. Crane (1843:78) is the first to state directly that adverbial particles can come before or after the direct object (as in *break off the head/break the head off*). Sweet (1892-8) notes that in some cases there is no choice in word order (as in *let him in* rather than **let in him*), although he does not relate this to the use of the pronoun. Poutsma (1904-26) is the earliest comprehensive treatment of the syntax of phrasal verbs.

- *Conversion.* As Hiltunen (1983a) shows, certain nominalized phrasal verbs (*their sitting down* and *the going out*) were mentioned but not discussed in Mattaire's *The English Grammar* (1712). However, this feature is not mentioned in the grammars in my corpus until the late nineteenth century, when Maetzner (1874) and Bain (1877) discuss the plural forms of nominalized phrasal verbs such as *holder-forth* and *drawback;* further analysis of these types is found in the grammars of Sweet, Jespersen and Poutsma.

2.4. Recognition and classification of phrasal verbs in LModE dictionaries

This section will survey the treatment of phrasal verbs in the three main dictionaries under analysis in this thesis: Johnson (1755), Webster (1828) and *OED*1 (1884-1928).

2.4.1. *Johnson's A Dictionary of the English Language (1755)*

As mentioned above (2.2.2), it is generally agreed that Johnson was the first lexicographer to discuss phrasal verbs explicitly, and the first to treat them systematically in his dictionary. In this section, several aspects of Johnson's treatment of phrasal verbs are examined: description and terminology (2.4.1.1); the number of phrasal verbs and senses (2.4.1.2); the treatment of adverbial particles (2.4.1.3) and conversions (2.4.1.4); the distinction between phrasal and other types of group-verb (2.4.1.5); the treatment of literal and idiomatic combinations (2.4.1.6); and changes in the fourth edition (2.4.1.7) and abstracted version (2.4.1.8) of the *Dictionary*. As it would be unfeasible to

examine the treatment of all the phrasal verbs in the dictionary, a sample has been selected for analysis: the letter B; a selection of verbs which frequently produce phrasal verbs (*come, get, give, go, look, make, put, set, take* and *turn*); and the main adverbial particles (*away, back, down, forth, in, off, out, over* and *up*). In some more detailed sections, where indicated, only phrasal verbs treated in the letter B are analyzed.

2.4.1.1. Description and terminology

In the *Preface*, Johnson comments on the way that '[w]e modify the signification of many verbs by a particle subjoined' and gives examples of both phrasal and prepositional verbs such as *come off, fall on* and *take off* (1755:3). He notes that these are often 'wildly irregular' and that they cause difficulties for foreigners (1755:3). Nowhere in the dictionary does he use any specific terminology for phrasal verbs, instead referring to them as verbs with additional particles. His use of the word *particle* is broad, and covers prepositions (such as *for* and *with*), adverbial particles (such as *up* and *down*), conjunctions (such as *and* and *if*) and prefixes (such as *anti*).

2.4.1.2. Treatment of phrasal verbs and senses

The superior treatment of phrasal verbs in Johnson's *Dictionary* can be seen by briefly comparing the treatment of phrasal verbs in B in Johnson with the same sample in two earlier monolingual dictionaries, Bailey's *Dictionarium Britannicum* (1730) and Martin's *Lingua Britannica Reformata* (1749).

Bailey (1730) has only four phrasal verbs beginning with B: *belly out* 'to strut, to jut *or* put forth the belly'; *blurt out* 'to speak rashly or inconsiderately'; *branch out* 'to spread or divide into branches'; and *buoy up* (in the sense 'to uphold, encourage or support' and as part of the nautical phrase *to buoy up a cable*). Bailey also includes the nominalized phrasal verb *bringers up* ('the whole last men in a battalion drawn up, or the last men in every file'). Martin (1749) gives definitions for five phrasal verbs beginning with B: *bear out, bear off, blot out, blow up* and *blunder out*. He also gives the participial forms *borne down* and *borne out*. Martin recognizes the polysemy of phrasal verbs more than Bailey:

blot out can mean both '1. To efface or erase' and '2. To forget, to remember no more'; *blow up* can mean '1. To elevate in the air; 2. To destroy a city, castle etc. by gunpowder; 3. To reveal one's secrets'. Martin also includes two phrasal verbs after the entry for *back*: *give back* '1. To retire; 2. To return or restore' and *go back* 'To return back again; 2. Not to perform one's promise'.

This sample gives an indication of the way that phrasal verbs were treated before Johnson. It is perhaps an exaggeration to claim that they were 'woefully inadequate' (Osselton 1986:8): a number of phrasal verbs are recognized and given separate entries and definitions from the simple verbs, and Martin even gives several senses for each phrasal verb that he defines. However, the treatment is certainly rather limited and unsystematic, as can be seen from the fact that in Bailey, *bringers up* has an entry but *bring up* does not; and that in Martin, some phrasal verbs are given after the entries for the adverbial particles, others after the entries for the verbs.

Johnson generally gives verbal idioms in alphabetical order after the main senses of the simple verb. For example, after the first eleven meanings of *bring,* the twelfth is *bring about*, the thirteenth *bring forth*, and so on. The following are all the phrasal verbs beginning with B which are so treated: *bear off, bear out, bear up, beat down, beat up, bind over, blow out, blow over, blow up, boil over, break in, break off, break out, break up, bring about, bring forth, bring in, bring off, bring on, bring over, bring out* and *bring up.* There is also one phrasal verb headword – *brisk up* ('to come up briskly') – and one nominalized phrasal verb headword – *bringer up* ('instructor, educator'). This list consists of twenty-four lexemes, significantly more than in Bailey or Martin[21].

Furthermore, many of the phrasal verbs in Johnson are shown to have several meanings and/or are treated separately as v.n. (verb neuter, i.e. intransitive verb) and v.a. (verb active, i.e. transitive verb). Each sense is treated as a new

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[21] It should also be noted that Johnson's headword list was longer than Martin's, although not longer than Bailey's. However, the differences between the lists mainly relate to more obscure words – Martin 'favors the fundamental words' (Starnes and Noyes 1946:154) – and their coverage of basic words such as *bear* and *bring* are similar.

numbered subentry. For example, *break up* has three meanings under *break* v.a.:

34. To break up. To dissolve; to put a sudden end to.

35. To break up. To open; to lay open.

36. To break up. To separate or disband.

It has three meanings under *break* v.n.:

23. To break up. To cease; to intermit.

24. To break up. To dissolve itself.

25. To break up. To begin holidays; to be dismissed from business.

In addition, Johnson sometimes indicates a phrasal verb by including a note about the addition of a particle, as in the following examples:

To BARTER v.a.

1. To give any thing in exchange for something else...

2. Sometimes it is used with the particle *away* before the thing given.

To BUNDLE v.a.

To tie in a bundle; to tie together; with *up*.

2.4.1.3. Definitions of the adverbial particles

Johnson's references to phrasal verbs in his definitions of the adverbial particles are sporadic. Many of the senses are illustrated by quotations with phrasal verbs: for example, the fourth sense of *down,* 'to a total maceration', is illustrated by *boil down*; the eleventh sense of *out*, 'to the end', is illustrated by *hear out* and *dream out*. There are also several explicit comments about the particles' association with verbs: *away* is 'often used with a verb; as to drink away an estate; to idle away a manor; that is, to drink or idle till an estate or manor is gone'; 'the chief use [of *off*] is to conjoin it with verbs, as, *to come off*; *to fly off*; *to take off*; which are found under the verbs'; *out* 'is added emphatically to verbs of discovery', as in *find out*.

2.4.1.4. Conversions

In the sample under analysis, Johnson gives no adjectival and only six nominal conversions. Three are listed as separate entries: *bringer-up* meaning 'instructor, educator'; *coming-in* 'revenue, income'; and *go-by* 'delusion;

artifice; circumvention; over-reach'. A further three are given as subentries of nouns: *looker-on* (no definition) in *looker* n.s. (noun substantive); *put-off* 'excuse, shift' in *put* n.s.; and *putter-on* 'inciter, instigator' in *putter* n.s. It is notable that the three which are treated separately are at the beginning of the alphabet, while the three treated as subentries of nouns are towards the middle and end; this might reflect a change in Johnson's method, although the sample is too small to be certain. Johnson also fails to recognize some conversions. For example, all of the quotations in the first sense of *setter* n.s. illustrate nominalized phrasal verbs:

SETTER n.s.

1. One who sets.

When he was gone I cast this book away: I could not look upon it but with weeping eyes, in remembering him who was the only *setter* on to do it. Ascham.

Shameless Warwick, peace! Proud *setter* up and puller down of kings! Shakes. H. VI.

He seemeth to be a *setter* forth of strange gods. Bible Acts xvii.

2.4.1.5. Distinction between phrasal and other types of group-verb

Johnson defines phrasal verbs along with other verbal idioms such as verb-adjectives (*make merry*) and verbo-nominals (*take place*). Furthermore, he does not overtly distinguish between phrasal, prepositional, and phrasal-prepositional verbs; all are listed together alphabetically. However, it is clear that he is aware of the difference between them. Intransitive phrasal verbs (such as *break up* in 'school is breaking up soon') are given under the intransitive simple verb. Transitive phrasal verbs (such as *give away* in 'Love gives away all things') are given under the transitive simple verb, indicating that Johnson views these types as single lexemes, in that there is a direct object of the phrasal verb as a whole. On the other hand, prepositional verbs and phrasal-prepositional verbs (such as *bear with* and *come in for*) are listed under the intransitive simple verb, suggesting that the object is considered a prepositional rather than a direct object. There are some exceptions: the prepositional verb *bind to* is listed under the transitive form of *bind*; *blow upon* is listed under transitive *blow*; *put upon*

is listed under transitive *put*; there is a transitive example of a phrasal verb ('The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs') under intransitive *put*; *set on* or *upon* (meaning 'attack') is listed under both transitive and intransitive *set*; and *turn to* (meaning 'have recourse to') is listed under transitive *turn.* Apart from these, though, Johnson's treatment is consistent and indicates his awareness of the different levels of cohesion of phrasal and prepositional verbs.

2.4.1.6. Literal/idiomatic combinations

One of the problems in defining phrasal verbs is whether to include all combinations of verb and particle, or only idiomatic combinations; and following from this, deciding at what point a combination becomes idiomatic (cf. 1.3.1). This question is, as Osselton (1986:10) remarks, 'a grey area in which lexicographers have been floundering' ever since Johnson, whose practice in this regard is not always consistent. In the *Preface* (1755:3), Johnson implies that not all phrasal verbs need to be defined: 'combinations of verbs and particles, by chance omitted, will be easily explained by comparison with those that may be found'. This statement is analogous to his policy on the inclusion of compounds: 'Compounded or double forms I have seldom noted, except when they obtain a signification different from that which the components have in their simple state' (1755:3). However, in practice he includes many combinations which could easily be understood from their components: *come in* ('enter'), *come up* ('grow out of the ground'), *go down* ('be swallowed'), *take away* ('deprive of') and so on. In other cases, though, he does not treat these types separately: *put back*, for instance (in 'put the clock back') is treated under a main sense of *put*, and *get on* (in 'get on thy boots') is a main sense of *get*.

2.4.1.7. Changes in the fourth edition

It is evident that, by the time Johnson made his revisions for the fourth edition in 1773, his awareness of phrasal verbs had developed. For example, two new senses of *come in,* one more of *put in,* one of *take on,* and one of *take away* are added. In other cases, senses are divided or rearranged. For example, one

definition of *blow up* in the first edition is 'To raise or swell with breath', with the following illustrative quotations[22]:

1. A plague of sighing and grief! it blows a man up like a bladder.

2. Blown up with the conceit of his merit…

3. …the bladder appeared as full as if blown up with a quill.

4. It was my breath that blew this tempest up…

5. His presence soon blows up the unkindly fight…

6. An empty bladder gravitates no more than when blown up…

7. When the mind finds herself very much inflamed with devotion, she is too much inclined to think that it is blown up with something divine within herself.

In the fourth edition three extra senses are added to the entry for *blow up*: the second quotation is given under a new sense 'To inflate with pride'; the fifth under 'To kindle' and the seventh under 'To move by afflatus'. Here, Johnson separates metaphorical from literal senses.

In addition, many notes are added to definitions of verbs showing that certain senses are in fact found with a phrasal rather than the simple verb. In some cases, Johnson simply indicates the addition of a particle, e.g. 'with *up*'; in others, he also shows the function of the particle, as in 'it has *up*, an intensive particle'. All such additions to verbs beginning with B are shown in table 2-2. In most of these cases, no new illustrative quotations are added; it seems, rather, that Johnson re-examined the existing quotations and realized that they demonstrated phrasal verb usage.

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[22] I have shortened quotations where appropriate, and omitted sources.

Table 2-1 Additions of particle references in B in the fourth edition of Johnson

Headword	Definition in 1st ed.	Addition to 4th ed.
To bear, v.a.	8. To support; to keep from falling.	frequently with *up*.
To bear, v.a.	9. To keep afloat.	to keep from sinking: sometimes with *up*.
To bear, v.a.	20. To gain; to win.	commonly with *away*.
To bear, v.a.	28. To hold; to restrain.	with *off*.
To bear, v.a.	29. To impel; to urge; to push.	with some particle noting the direction of the impulse; as, *down, on, back, forward*.
To bear, v.n.	6. To tend; to be directed to any point.	with a particle to determine the meaning; as, *up, away, onward*.
To bear, v.n.	16. To drive by violence.	with a particle
To beat, v.n.	7. To try different ways; to search.	with *about*.
To bind, v.a.	5. To cover a wound with dressings and bandages.	with *up*.
To bind, v.a.	10. To confine; to hinder.	with *in*, if the restraint be local; with *up*, if it relate to thought or act.
To bloat, v.a.	To swell, or make turgid with wind.	it has *up*, an intensive particle.
To block, v.a.	To shut up; to inclose, so as to hinder egress.	It has often *up*, to note clausure.
To blow, v.a.	1. To drive by the force of the wind.	with a particle to fix the meaning.
To blurt, v.a.	To speak inadvertently; to let fly without thinking.	commonly with *out* intensive.
To bound, v.a.	1. To limit; to terminate; 2. To restrain; to confine.	3. Sometimes with *in*.
To breathe, v.a.	3. To expire; to eject by breathing.	with *out*.
To bungle, v.a.	To botch; to manage clumsily; to conduct awkwardly.	with *up*.
To buy, v.a.	3. To regulate by money.	in this sense it has particles annexed.

In other cases, Johnson shows an increased awareness of the way phrasal forms contribute to the overall meaning of a verb. For example, at the end of the definition of *break* v.n. the note in the first edition is:

> It is to be observed of this extensive and perplexed verb, that, in all its significations, whether active or neutral, it has some reference to its primitive meaning, by implying either detriment, suddenness, or violence.

In the fourth edition the last comment is

> … by implying either detriment, suddenness, violence, or separation. It is used often with additional particles, *up, out, in, off, forth*, to modify its signification.

The addition of the sense 'separation' refers to *break up* and *break off from*, which can both be used with this meaning.

There are also changes in the fourth edition showing a clearer understanding of the difference between phrasal and prepositional verbs. For example, *set on or upon* is listed under transitive *set* in the first edition, in contrast to the usual practice of classifying prepositional verbs as intransitive. In the fourth edition, however, the note 'This sense may, perhaps, be rather neutral' is added. Similarly, three transitive uses of *take in* are classified as intransitive in the first edition, but are moved to transitive *take* in the fourth.

Another change in the fourth edition is that Johnson rather oddly adds some phrasal verb definitions to the end of the senses of *off* (*be off, come off, get off* and *go off*) and *over* (two senses of *give over*). All of these except *be off* are also defined under the main verbs, although with slightly different definitions (for example, *give over* is defined under *give* as 'to leave; to quit; to cease', but under *over* as 'to cease from'). Why Johnson decided to add these phrasal verbs, but not others (*break off, put over,* etc.), and why only *off* and *over* were amended, is not clear. It seems rather a regression to the inconsistency of earlier dictionaries to have phrasal verbs only partially treated under the adverbial particles.

2.4.1.8. Changes in the abstracted version

As Dille (2005:198) remarks, 'the dictionary that most of Johnson's contemporaries used was not the familiar folio but the "abstracted" *Dictionary*, the two-volume octavo that Johnson abridged from the folio for the benefit of the common reader'. Although it is uncertain whether Johnson was involved in the creation of this abstracted dictionary, or whether he delegated the work to others (Dille 2005:199), the success and proliferation of this version – it sold 40,000 copies over thirty years, compared with the folio, which sold only 4,000 over ten years (Green 1996:228) – means that its treatment of phrasal verbs may have been influential on later perceptions of them.

According to Dille (2005:204), one of the changes made in the abstracted dictionary was the omission of words which can be understood from their constituent parts, such as compounds and prefixed words. As the last of these might plausibly include the omission of some phrasal verbs, I compared phrasal verb coverage in the eleventh edition of the abstracted dictionary (1799)[23] with that in the folio.

The main difference is the omission of quotations. In a few cases, an example is given, as in 'To PUT up. To expose publickly: as, these goods are put up to sale', but this is rare. Definitions also tend to be shorter: for example, one definition of *come in* in the folio is 'To be an ingredient; to make part of a composition'; in the abstracted the corresponding definition is simply 'To be an ingredient'. This is all in keeping with the nature of an abridged edition. Perhaps surprisingly, though, phrasal verbs are still treated quite fully. For example, only a few phrasal verbs with *come* are omitted (relatively transparent ones – *come in* 'arrive at a port', *come over* 'repeat an act' and *come up* 'grow out of the ground' and 'come into use'). No senses of phrasal verbs with *get, give, go, look, make, put, set, take* or *turn* are removed: even the least idiomatic such as *go down* 'be swallowed' are included. This suggests that phrasal verbs were felt to be an important part of an abridged dictionary for everyday use.

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[23] The reason for choosing the eleventh edition was that it includes material added to the fourth edition of the folio.

2.4.2. *Webster's An American Dictionary of the English Language (1828)*
Webster's debt to Johnson has often been noted: Sledd and Kolb (1955:198) find that 'in the first ten pages of the letter *C,* Webster cites Johnson by name more than twenty times and sometimes uses him without citation, taking over entry-words, definitions, authorities, and etymologies', while Reed (1962:97) remarks that '[t]he striking similarity of many of the definitions is immediately apparent'. However, as discussed in 2.2.2, Landau (2005:224) suggests that Webster's treatment of phrasal verbs 'do[es] suggest an entirely different lexicographic methodology'. In this section, the extent to which Webster developed Johnson's treatment of phrasal verbs is examined.

2.4.2.1. Phrasal verbs with bear *in Johnson and Webster*
The main differences between Johnson's and Webster's treatment of phrasal verbs can be seen by comparing their entries for transitive *bear*. Like Johnson, Webster puts phrasal verbs, along with other group-verbs and phrases, at the end of an entry. However, whereas Johnson continues the numbering of entries for phrasal forms, which he gives in alphabetical order, Webster gives them as unnumbered subentries, sometimes out of alphabetical order. For example, after the twentieth sense of *bear* v.t. – 'To remove, or to endure the effects of, and hence to give satisfaction for' – the subentries which follow (with definitions omitted) are:

> *To bear the infirmities of the weak, to bear one another's burdens...*
> *To bear off...*
> *To bear down...*
> *To bear down upon...*
> *To bear hard...*
> *To bear on...*
> *To bear through...*
> *To bear up...*
> *To bear up...*
> *To bear a body...*
> *To bear date...*

> *To bear price...*
> *To bear in hand...*
> *To bear a hand...*

Whereas Johnson gives different senses of phrasal verbs as separate numbered subentries, Webster usually gives them within the same subentry, marked by the word 'also', as:

> *To bear through,* is to conduct or manage... Also, to maintain or support to the end.

Occasionally, though, he gives a new sense in a new subentry, as:

> *To bear up,* to support; to keep from falling.
> *To bear up,* to keep afloat.

The main differences between Johnson's and Webster's treatment of phrasal verb senses in this entry are shown in table 2-3. Entries in bold are subentries, where the phrasal form is distinguished from the main verb; numbered entries are senses within the definition of the main verb. The order follows that of Johnson and shows Webster's equivalent definitions alongside; this means that the table does not show Webster's ordering of senses and subentries. Webster's reliance on Johnson is evident from this comparison; many of the definitions are the same or very similar. However, Webster makes the entry more succinct by omitting many of Johnson's quotations, and occasionally rearranges the wording of a definition. He also adds three new senses: two are nautical (*bear down upon,* and the second sense of *bear off*), and one is general (*bear through,* meaning 'maintain or support to the end').

However, the main difference is that, whereas Johnson often indicated phrasal verbs (especially those which were added in the fourth edition) with a note on an added particle, Webster displays them more explicitly as subentries. In two cases – *bear through* meaning 'conduct, manage' and *bear on* meaning 'incite' – Johnson does not recognize the phrasal verbs, despite evidence in the quotations. Thus, while Webster uses Johnson's material, he groups the phrasal verbs more systematically. The only exception to this in Webster's entry for *bear*

is sense thirteen 'To gain or win', where he writes that 'The phrase now used is, to bear away'; there is, however, no subentry for *bear away.*

Table 2-2 Phrasal verbs with *bear* in Johnson and Webster

Johnson (1773, 4th ed.) Phrasal verbs in *bear* v.a.	Webster (1828) Phrasal verbs in *bear* v.t.
8. To support; to keep from falling: frequently with *up*.	**To bear up**, to support; to keep from falling.
9. To keep afloat; to keep from sinking: sometimes with *up*.	**To bear up**, to keep afloat.
20. To gain; to win: commonly with *away*.	13. To gain or win. (Not now used. The phrase now used is, to bear away.)
28. To hold; to restrain: with *off*.	**To bear off**, is to restrain; to keep from approach.
/	**To bear off**… in seamanship, to remove to a distance; to keep clear from rubbing against any thing; as, to bear off a blow; to bear off a boat.
29. To impel; to urge; to push: with some particle noting the direction of the impulse; as, *down, on, back, forward*.	**To bear down**, is to impel or urge; to overthrow or crush by force; as, to bear down an enemy.
/	**To bear down upon**, to press to overtake; to make all sail to come up with.
30. To conduct; to manage. [example of bearing through a consulship]	**To bear through**, is to conduct or manage; as, "to bear through the consulship." B. Jonson.
/	**To bear through**… Also, to maintain or support to the end; as, religion will bear us through the evils of life.
32. To incite; to animate. [example of confidence bearing one on]	**To bear on**… also to carry forward, to press, incite or animate.
37. **To bear off.** To carry away.	**To bear off**… to carry away; as, to bear off stolen goods.
38. **To bear out.** To support; to maintain; to defend.	**To bear out**, is to maintain and support to the end; to defend to the last

2.4.2.2. Other additions/developments in Webster

Similar differences were found in an analysis of a larger sample (the same as in the analysis of Johnson – entries in B, productive verbs and main adverbial particles): Webster added some new phrasal verbs and some new senses of phrasal verbs. In many cases, these additions are evident in Johnson's illustrative quotations but are not recognized by Johnson; the exceptions are the many nautical phrases which Webster adds, such as *brace about, broach to,* and *go about* meaning 'turn the head of a ship'[24].

Given that the development of phrasal verbs has often been described as an American phenomenon (see chapter 7), it was hoped that Webster might indicate some specific examples of phrasal verbs in American English. However, in the material analyzed, there are only three references to senses or uses particular to American English: *break up* means 'to plow ground the first time, or after lying long unplowed; a common use in the U. States'; *buckle in,* 'to close in' is a 'popular use in America'; while *put up* meaning 'to pass unavenged; to overlook; not to punish or resent; as, to put up injuries; to put up indignities' is not used in America: 'we always say, to put up with; we cannot put up with such injuries'. In fact, *break up* meaning 'open up (ground) with the spade or plough' is recorded in the *OED* (*break* v, 57f) from 1557 and is not marked as American; the only recorded use of *buckle in* is in 1600 (*OED buckle* v, 1b); while *put up* meaning 'submit to, endure...' became obsolete by the mid-nineteenth century and was replaced by *put up with* in both Britain and America (*OED*3 *put up,* 5a). Thus Webster's comments are not particularly helpful in highlighting British-American differences. The fact that there are only three such notes is a little surprising, given Webster's desire to create a specifically American dictionary, although, as Green (1996:263) remarks, 'the bulk of Webster's material has no especial qualification as "American"'.

There are five more phrasal-prepositional verbs in the sample of Webster than in that of Johnson: *bear down upon, come out of, get away from, go through with*

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[24] Reed (1962:100) notes that the many new nautical terms in Webster can be traced to *The Mariner's Dictionary* (1805).

and *make up with*. *Bear down upon* is a nautical sense and is not recorded in the *OED* until 1716 (*bear* v, 37b), while *get away from* meaning 'escape from' is not distinguished from *get away* in the *OED* (*get* v, 61a). Johnson's omission of these is not, then, surprising. *Go through with* is evident in Johnson's quotations, but is not recognized as distinct from *go through*. Johnson's omission of *make up with* meaning 'become friends again' does seem to be an oversight, though, as it is recorded in the *OED* from 1669 (*OED*3 *make up,* 13b).

Webster also defines four more nominalized phrasal verbs: *bringer in* 'the person who introduces'; *come-off* 'means of escape; evasion; excuse'; *look-out* 'a careful looking or watching for any object or event'; and *set-off* 'the act of admitting one claim to counterbalance another'. Furthermore, three senses of *coming-in* are added to Johnson's: 'entrance', 'commencement' and 'compliance; submission'. Of these, the relevant senses of *look-out* and *set-off* may have been coined too late – their first citation dates are 1748 and 1766 respectively – to be recorded by Johnson (*OED lookout*, 1; *set-off,* 3). *Come-off* meaning 'evasion' is first recorded in 1722, but the first quotation is from the *New England Courant* (*OED come-off* n, 4): a New England usage would of course have been more likely to be noticed by the Connecticut-born Webster than by Johnson. The sense 'compliance, submission' of *coming-in* is not recorded in the *OED* (*coming* vbl. n). The other senses of *coming-in* ('entrance' and 'commencement') and *bringer-in* meaning 'one who introduces' would have been available to Johnson, having been used since 1586 and 1581 respectively (*OED coming* vbl. n, 7a; *bringer*, 2). However, both are rather literal senses and Johnson may have deliberately excluded them.

Webster's treatment of the adverbial particles is as unsystematic as Johnson's: a few phrasal verb examples are added to the definitions of *away, back, off, out, over* and *up,* but it is not clear why, for example, *bear up* and *grow up* are added to *up,* but others such as *make up* and *set up* are not.

As Landau (2005) argues, Webster's main development is methodological: his entries and illustrative quotations are more succinct. We can add to this that his

treatment of phrasal verbs, while drawing largely on Johnson's material with only a few additions, improves on Johnson's methodology by arranging them coherently as subentries rather than as notes on additional particles, and by recognizing phrasal verbs which are evident in Johnson's illustrative quotations but not defined by Johnson. However, one aspect of Webster's handling of phrasal verbs which could be seen as a regression from Johnson is the lumping of senses within a subentry, which Johnson had shown more clearly as separately numbered senses.

2.4.3. OED1

Phrasal verbs are not mentioned in Murray's 'General Explanations' in the first fascicle of *OED*1 (1884), and it is evident on browsing through the dictionary that they are treated differently in different entries. Given the size of the *OED* and the difficulties involved in searching the first edition, it would be unfeasible within the scope of this chapter to analyze the treatment of the same range of phrasal verbs as in Johnson and Webster[25]. Instead, the treatment of a selection of phrasal verbs in B (Vol. I, 1888) is analyzed, in order to gauge how they were handled at the beginning of the dictionary (B was chosen as there are fewer productive verbs in A). This is followed by a comparison with selected phrasal verbs in subsequent volumes.

2.4.3.1. Phrasal verbs in B (*1888*)

In this section, phrasal verbs in the following entries in B are analyzed: four of the most productive verbs in B – *bear, beat, break* and *bring*; and four verbs which enter less frequently into phrasal combinations – *blast, blaze, block* and *burn.*

The entry for *bear* v1 is divided into four branches: 'I. to carry'; 'II. to sustain'; 'III. to thrust, press' and 'IV. to bring forth'. Phrasal verbs are included in

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[25] As Brewer (1993:314) remarks, while *OED*1 is 'an important historical record of the state of knowledge of the foremost lexicographers of the period... *OED*2 many times blurs or distorts that record'. Furthermore, while there is a CD-ROM of *OED*1 (thanks to Marc Alexander for this information), it is not yet publicly available or easily searchable. Thus, in order to search *OED*1, one must search *OED* online and then check one's data manually against the printed volumes of *OED*1.

several senses within the first three branches, and are shown in four main ways. In some cases, the phrasal verb is given in italics as a particular sense of the verb:

1f. *To bear across:* to support (things) going across.

21. *To bear up:* a. (trans.) to uphold (a principle); to keep up the spirits of (a person)….

In other cases, the addition of an adverbial particle is indicated after the sense:

30. Transferred to downward pressure, as that of a load: a. *trans.* with *down.*

All the quotations for this sense are of *bear down.* Another method is where the adverbial particle is placed in italics as part of the definition:

18a. To hold (*up*) from falling or sinking, to support, keep *up.*

Here, 'keep *up*' glosses *bear up,* while 'hold (*up*)' with optional *up* shows that either *bear* or *bear up* can be used. Finally, where the particle is optional this is often expressed in phrases such as the following:

** To support, keep up, maintain. Usually with *up.*

36. intr. To press, force one's way against resistance; to move with effort, with persistence, or with a distinct bias in some direction. Extended by many advs., as *back, away, on, down.*

The senses of *beat* v1 are divided into two main branches, and, as in the entry for *bear,* phrasal verbs are scattered throughout. However, the entry for *beat* differs from *bear* in that phrasal verbs are also treated in a separate branch. After the two main branches of meaning there is a third, 'III. With adverbs, and in phrases', which is divided into two asterisked sections: '* *With adverbs*' and '***In the phrases*'. The section '* *With adverbs*' contains numbered entries (with numbers continued from the previous branch) for each phrasal verb (or sometimes two phrasal verbs treated together): 34 *beat about* and *beat away,* 35 *beat back,* 36 *beat down* and so on, all in bold typeface. Some of these are simply cross-referenced to senses of the simple verb where the phrasal verb had already been given as an alternative: for example at 34 *beat about* we are told to 'See 26b'. For each of the phrasal verbs treated in more detail, a list of lettered senses is given, followed by quotations for all of these senses grouped

together. The treatment of *beat up* gives an indication of the way that phrasal verbs are handled in this entry[26]:

40. Beat together: (see 23.)

Beat up: a. To tread up by much trampling (cf. 3); b. To make way against the wind or tide (see 19b); c. To bring a soft or semi-fluid mass to equal consistency by beating (see 23); d. (see 30, 31b); e. *to beat up for* recruits, etc. (see 27); *to beat up quarters* (see 28).

1882 *Daily Tel*. 24 June, At the commencement of play the wicket was moderately good, but it was beaten up considerably during the latter half of the Australian innings. *Mod*. 'We had an egg beaten up and biscuits.'

Firstly, *beat up* is not given a numbered sense of its own, but is lumped with *beat together*. Secondly, although five senses of *beat up* are given (a-e), only two (a and c) are illustrated in the quotations, and it is left to the reader to determine which sense is shown by which quotation.

The entry for *break* v has seven main branches, followed by 'VIII. Phrases and combinations', which is divided into **Phrases* and ***Combined with adverbs*. In the latter are phrasal verbs. Unlike those in the phrasal verb branch of *beat*, these are treated as subentries, where each lettered sense is illustrated by its own group of quotations (the date of the first quotation for each sense is given here in square brackets):

55. Break out.

a. *trans*. [from 33.] To force out by breaking [1611–]

b. *intr*. [from 37.] To burst or spring out from restraint, confinement, or concealment. Said of persons and things material, also of fire, light, etc. [a1000–]

c. Said of a morbid eruption on the skin; also of an epidemic disease [1535–]

d. A person, or his body, is also said to *break out* (*in* or *into* boils, etc.) [c1300–]

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[26] In this and subsequent examples from *OED*1, bold and italic typeface is as in the original.

e. Said of exclamations, feelings, passions, traits; of discord, riot, war, rebellion, etc. [1580–]

f. Persons or other agents are also said to *break out into* or *in* some manifestation of feeling or some action [1480–].

This follows *OED*1's tendency to arrange senses logically. The first sense is illustrated by one quotation from the Bible (1611) 'Breake out the great teeth of the young lyons' and by 'modern' invented examples 'To break the glass out of a window, the teeth out of a rake, etc.'; this was clearly a later and less frequent use than any of the subsequent senses, but given first because it is more literal and transparent[27]. The phrasal-prepositional verb *break out in* is included within these senses.

The entry for *bring* v is divided into two branches:

I. Simply.

II. *Combined with adverbs*. (See also sense 1, and the adverbs, for the non-specialized combinations).

The latter contains phrasal verbs, set out in the same manner as in the entry for *break*. However, in *bring* Murray tends not to define literal senses of phrasal verbs (as he did with the first sense of *break out*), but rather directs the reader to the definitions of the simple verb and particular particles. For example, *bring in* is divided into two senses:

18. Bring in. a. See sense 1 and IN *adv*.

b. To introduce (customs, etc.).

*c*1384 WYCLIF *De Eccl*. Sel. Wks. III. 345 To assente wiþ suche falseheed bringiþ in ofte heresies. 1611 BIBLE *2 Peter* ii. 1 False teachers..who priuily shall bring in damnable heresies. 1690 LOCKE *Govt*. I. vi. §58 Manners, brought in and continued amongst them. 1753 *World* No. 10 Near two years ago the popish calendar was brought in.

Thus there are no quotations illustrating the literal combination *bring in*; all the quotations illustrate the idiomatic sense 'introduce'.

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[27] The tension between logical and chronological arrangement of senses in the *OED* is discussed in Zgusta (1989); see also appendix 6.

In the entries for the verbs *blast, blaze, block* and *burn*, phrasal verbs are treated as part of the main sense development (in the same manner as in *bear*) and are not given branches or sections of their own. It appears that less productive verbs (where there are fewer phrasal verbs with fewer senses) were consistently treated in this way.

Nominalized forms of the phrasal verbs discussed above are given as separate entries, such as *break-up* and *break-off*, or within entries for the nominal forms, such as *breaking out* 'eruption' in *breaking* n, 6. Senses of nominalized forms are often lumped together, as in the entry for *bringer*:

> 2. With *back, in, out, up*, etc. *Bringer up*, one who rears or educates. *c*1386 CHAUCER *Wife's T*. 340 Povert is..A ful gret brynger out of busynesse. 1529 WOLSEY in *Four C. Eng. Lett*. 11 Your olde brynger up and lovying frende. 1581 SIDNEY *Apol. Poetrie* (Arb.) 71 They were first bringers in of all ciuilitie. 1604 EDMONDS *Observ. Cæsar's Comm*. 130 The bringers-up or last rancke called Tergiductores. 1742 C. WESLEY in Southey *Life Wesley* (1820) II. 26 Bringers-in of the Pretender. 1840 CARLYLE *Heroes* iv. 210 A bringer back of men to reality. 1865 BUSHNELL *Vicar. Sacr*. II. ii. (1868) 156 He is the Captain, or bringer on, of salvation.

It is left to the reader to decide from which senses of the phrasal verbs these nominalized forms are derived. Similarly, adjectival forms tend to be defined and illustrated rather briefly within the participle form of the simple verb, as in the entry for *broken,* where only *broken-down* is given full treatment:

> II. With adverbs: see combs. of BREAK *v*.
>
> 17. a. **broken-in**, **broken-off**, **broken-up**.
>
> 1837 MARRYAT *Olla Podr*. xxxiv, Broke-in horses. 1876 GEO. ELIOT *Dan. Der*. IV. lv. 131 This broken-off fragment. 1637 in *Cambridge Reg. Bk. Lands* (1896) 42, 20 ac[res] of broken upp grounde..& 25 ac[res] unbroken upp lying by it. 1684 in *Essex Inst. Hist. Coll*. (1862) IV. 68/2 He should have liberty to make use of part of ye improved & broken up ground upon ye sd ffarme. 1846 J. BAXTER *Libr. Pract. Agric*. II. 247 Winter potatoes on broken up grass land.

b. **broken-down**, (*a*) reduced to atoms, decomposed; (*b*) decayed, ruined; whose health, strength, character, etc. has given way.

1817 J. SCOTT *Paris Revis.* (ed. 4) 75 His poor broken-down animal. 1827 *Blackw. Mag.* Oct. 452/1 A half-drunk horse-couper, swinging to and fro..on a bit of broken-down blood. 1839-47 TODD *Cycl. Anat. & Phys.* III. 488/1 A mass of broken-down epithelium. 1840 R. DANA *Bef. Mast* xxi. 63 Broken-down politicians.

It is evident from this survey that in the first volume of *OED*1, Murray and his team were still working out the best way of dealing with phrasal verbs. The following means of indicating and defining phrasal verbs have been identified:

- the phrasal verb is given in italics as one of the senses of the simple verb;
- the addition of an adverbial particle is indicated after the sense (e.g. 'with *down*', 'with *up*');
- an adverbial particle, in italics, is included in the definition, as in 'To swell (*up* or *out*)';
- an optional adverbial particle is indicated by a phrase such as 'usually with *up*' or 'also with *out*';
- phrasal verbs are treated as separate senses within a distinct branch. There is further variation within this method:
  - either each phrasal verb is defined in all its senses, followed by quotations for all of these grouped together;
  - or each phrasal verb is treated more like an entry in its own right, with lettered senses separately illustrated. This method becomes more common towards the end of the volume, in the entries for *bring* and *break*.

Furthermore:

- literal combinations are sometimes defined and illustrated, but sometimes simply cross-referenced to senses of the simple verb and particle;
- conversions are treated in separate entries or in the entries for the relevant nouns or adjectives, and tend to be treated less fully than the phrasal verb itself.

2.4.3.2. Phrasal verbs in later volumes of OED1

If one browses through subsequent volumes of *OED*1 it becomes evident that there was still some variation in the way that phrasal verbs were treated. In entries for highly productive verbs there is usually a separate branch for phrasal verbs. Sometimes the description of these branches makes it clear that only specialized senses of phrasal verbs will be given:

> IX. With adverbs: forming the equivalents of compound verbs in other languages: e.g. *come again*, L. *revenire*, F. *revenir*, Ger. *wiederkommen*. *Come* is used with adverbs generally, esp. adverbs implying motion toward, as *hither, together*; only those in which the sense is more or less specialized are here dealt with (*come* v).

In other cases this is not mentioned:

> VII. With adverbs (*get* v).

In some cases, as in *come* (above), phrasal verbs are compared with compound verbs in other languages.

There is continued variation in the way that literal combinations are treated. For example, literal combinations with *give* (in Vol. IV, 1901, edited by Bradley) are defined and illustrated, as with *give away* 'To alienate from oneself by gift; to dispose of as a present, as alms, or in any way gratuitously'. In contrast, literal combinations with *put* (in Vol. VII, 1909, edited by Murray) are illustrated but not usually defined or discriminated, as can be seen in the definition of *put down*:

> **41. put down. a.** See simple senses and DOWN *adv. To put one's foot down*: see FOOT *sb.* 28.
>
> 1483 *Cath. Angl.* 295/1 To Putte downe, *calare.., commergere, deponere, deprimere.* 1599 B. JONSON *Cynthia's Rev.* V. iv, As buckets are put downe into a well. 1795 J. WOODFORDE *Diary* 29 June (1929) IV. 210 We were put down at the White Hart in Stall Street. 1841 DICKENS *Let.* 2 May (1969) III. 276 'Mind Coachman' as the old ladies say 'you take me as fur as ever you go, and don't you put me down till you come to the very end of the journey.' 1879 F. W. ROBINSON *Coward Consc.* II. vi, Whereabouts..do you want me to put you down? 1887 BARING-GOULD *Gaverocks* xviii, She put

down her needlework. 1897 <u>HOWELLS</u> *Landl. Lion's Head* 142 The new
rooms were left..uncarpeted; there were thin rugs put down.

As *OED*3's reworking of this section shows, at least four separate senses can be
discerned in these quotations: moving to a lower position; allowing to alight
from a vehicle; laying (a carpet, linoleum, etc.); and laying down and ceasing to
give one's attention to (a piece of work, a book, etc.) (*OED*3 *put down,* 1a-d).

As in B, less productive verbs tend not to have separate branches or sections for
phrasal verbs. However, there is not always consistency in this. As Silva
(2000:82) points out, *speak* has a separate branch for phrasal verbs but *talk* does
not. Silva ascribes this to Murray's tendency towards compression, but we might
also note that whereas there is a separate branch for phrasal verbs with *write,*
there is none for *read*; both of these are in sections edited by Craigie.
Furthermore, there are inconsistencies within entries. *Write* has four branches:
'I. *trans*'; II. With advs'; 'III. *intr.*' and 'IV. *intr.* for *pass.*' Transitive phrasal
verbs with *write* are treated separately in branch II, but intransitive phrasal
verbs are treated along with general senses of the simple verb. For example,
intransitive *write off* and *write over* are lumped together with a specialized
sense of *write in*:

> 22. To compose a letter, note, etc.; to communicate information, etc.....
> c. With advs., as *off*, *over*. **Write in** (*Theatr.*) to send in notice in writing.

Where relevant there are separate branches for prepositional verbs: for
example, in the entry for *come* there is an eighth branch 'With prepositions (and
prepositional phrases), in specialized senses' with definitions for *come across,
come at* and so on. This was not a feature of any of the verbs examined in B, as
none of the verbs with B that had separate phrasal verb sections formed
prepositional verbs. As in the entries in B, phrasal-prepositional verbs (such as
look up to and *come in for*) are treated within the senses of the phrasal verbs
they are based on (*look up* and *come in*). Phrases which contain phrasal verbs
(such as *make up lost ground*) are treated in the same way.

Entries for the adverbial particles often contain explanations to the effect that idiomatic phrasal verbs are treated under the verbs:

- The following are the general and usual senses of the adverb; for its special combinations with verbs, as <u>BEAR</u> *down,* <u>BREAK</u> *down,* <u>BRING</u> *down,* <u>BURN</u> *down,* <u>CALL</u> *down,* <u>CAST</u> *down,* <u>COME</u> *down,* see under the verbs. (*down,* adv.)

- 1h. *Out* may be added to a vb. trans. or intr. with the sense of driving, putting, or getting out, with or by means of the action in question, e.g. *to bow, crowd, din, drum, hiss, hoot, ring, smoke* (a person, etc.) *out.* See the verbs. (*out,* adv.)

- *Off* is used idiomatically with many verbs, as BUY, COME, DASH, GET, GO, LOOK, MARK, PALM, PASS, RATTLE, SHOW, TAKE, etc. q.v. (*off,* adv.)

However, phrasal verbs are frequently given within definitions of the adverbial particles, where several phrasal verbs suggest a single sense, as in the following senses of *off*:

3. a. Expressing separation from attachment, contact, or position *on*; as in *to break, cast, cut, put, shake, take off,* etc.

4. a. So as to interrupt continuity or cause discontinuance; as in *break off, leave off, declare off,* etc.

5. a. So as to exhaust or finish; so as to leave none; to the end; entirely, completely, to a finish; as *To clear off, drink off, pay off, polish off, work off.*

6. a. In the way of abatement, diminution, or decay; as in *To fall off, cool off, go off*; also, *to be off.*

Conversions continue to be treated either as part of the related nouns or adjectives, or as separate entries. However, occasionally they are treated within the verb entries, as in *let* v1, which includes definitions for both *let-off* (as noun and verb) and *let-up* (as noun). This is somewhat surprising in the case of *let-off*, which is given five senses, and would perhaps warrant an entry of its own:

32f. as *sb.* (*a*) A display of festivity, a festive gathering. (*b*) A part of a property which is 'let off'. (*c*) An outlet (*fig.*). (*d*) A failure to utilize some manifest advantage in a game; e.g. in *Cricket*, the failure on the part of a

fielder to get a batsman out when he gives a chance. (*e*) *Weaving*. The 'paying off' of the yarn from the beam; *concr.* a contrivance for regulating this; also attrib. as *let-off mechanism* (Posselt *Techn. Textile Design*, 1889).

2.4.3.3. Terminology

The term *phrasal verb* is not used at all in the metalanguage of *OED*1, as it was not coined until 1923 (see 2.7 below), just five years before the dictionary reached its completion. Indeed, by searching the whole dictionary (not just the sample under analysis), it was discovered that various terms for *phrasal verb* were used. They are occasionally called 'phrases', especially at the beginning of the alphabet, for example:

> Here may also be put the phrases: *To bear off*: to resist and cause (a stroke) to rebound, to repel, to ward off... (*bear*, v)

They are consistently called 'verbal phrases' in the etymologies of conversion entries, for example:

> *break-up*, n. [f. verbal phr. *to break up*: see BREAK *v*. 56.]

Where there are phrasal verb branches, they are often referred to as 'equivalents of compound verbs in other languages' (*come* v, branch IX; *do* v, branch VI; *put* v1, branch V). In only one case, in the entry for *die*, the term *compound verb* on its own is used to mean 'phrasal verb': branch III of *die* is headed 'With adverbs, forming compound verbs'.

The same terminology was used in *OED*2, although there are a few references to *phrasal verbs* in the added material. *Phrasal verb* is used consistently in *OED*3.

2.4.4. Summary

The foregoing survey has shown how the treatment of phrasal verbs in English dictionaries developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth century from Johnson's unprecedented inclusion of a large number of phrasal verbs, to Webster's refined method of indicating these, to the changes in methods of dealing with phrasal verbs in different volumes and entries in *OED*1.

2.4.4.1. Terminology

Neither Johnson nor Webster uses any particular terminology for phrasal verbs. *OED*1 often describes them as 'equivalents of compound verbs in other languages', and once simply as *compound verbs*. Johnson refers to adverbial particles (along with many other closed-class words) as *particles,* while *OED*1 consistently uses *adverb*, describing phrasal verbs as verbs 'combined with adverbs'.

2.4.4.2. Distinction between phrasal verbs and other types of group-verb

Johnson does not explicitly distinguish between phrasal and prepositional verbs, but he does treat them differently, usually grouping transitive phrasal verbs with transitive verbs, but prepositional verbs with intransitive verbs. Webster follows this classification. *OED*1, where it has branches for phrasal forms, has separate branches for prepositional and phrasal verbs. All three treat phrasal-prepositional verbs along with phrasal verbs.

2.4.4.3. Awareness of grammatical and semantic features of phrasal verbs

Since the function of dictionaries is not to describe but to define, the awareness of features of phrasal verbs must be deduced from the way that they are defined and grouped.

- *Meaning.* Johnson's awareness of the tendency of adverbial particles to change the meaning of verbs is evident both in the *Preface* and in many comments in the dictionary itself. In the fourth edition there are often further divisions of senses, indicating Johnson's continued interest in the polysemy of phrasal verbs. Webster occasionally picks out further senses from the illustrative quotations in Johnson, but otherwise does not advance this aspect of the treatment of phrasal verbs. The volumes of *OED*1 show a development from defining only idiomatic combinations, to defining even literal combinations, which can also have more than one sense.
- *Unity.* One of the most interesting aspects of these dictionaries' treatment of phrasal verbs is the extent to which they classify them as units. Johnson often shows the existence of a phrasal verb by adding a comment like 'often with *up*' at the end of a definition of the simple verb, especially when adding

them in the fourth edition. Webster tends to convert such comments into phrasal verbs as subentries, showing them more clearly as units. The same process can be seen in the volumes of *OED*1, where at the beginning of the dictionary phrasal verbs are more likely to be given as alternatives to the simple verb, whereas in later volumes they tend to be given as subentries with their own semantic history.

- *Syntax.* Not surprisingly, little information about the syntax of phrasal verbs is explicitly given in the dictionaries.
- *Conversion.* Johnson and Webster give relatively few nominalized phrasal verbs, and no adjectival forms. *OED*1's coverage of these forms is much fuller, although still far briefer than its treatment of the phrasal verbs themselves.

2.5. Recognition and classification of phrasal verbs in LModE usage manuals

As discussed in chapter 1, the genre which I label 'usage manual' covers guides to correct English, lists of improprieties, and works on rhetoric and composition. The feature that distinguishes these texts from grammars, dictionaries and academic works is that their focus is not primarily on describing or analyzing features of the English language, but on giving advice on how to use these features correctly. However, some of these manuals do also name, describe or classify phrasal verbs. As with the grammars, only those manuals whose descriptions of phrasal verbs are new or interesting will be discussed in this section.

2.5.1. Terminology

Of the thirty-six usage manuals that mention phrasal verbs, only five give phrasal verbs a name. Campbell (1776), Gregory (1808) and Brewer (1877) all use the term *compound verb*, while Gowers (1954) and Gowers' revision of Fowler (1965) use *phrasal verb*. The spread of *phrasal verb* can be seen in the fact that in 1948 Gowers does not use any term for the construction, but by 1954 he adopts *phrasal verb* after Smith (see 2.7 below).

Eleven of the usage manuals name the second element of phrasal verbs. Blair (1783), Jamieson (1820), Brewster (1913), Berry (1963) and Follett (1966) all use the term *preposition*. Others show awareness of the adverbial nature of this element, using terms such as *particle* (Nichol 1879), *adverbial modifier* (Bechtel 1901), *adverb* (Hill 1902), and circumlocutions like 'adverb, or intransitive preposition' (Alford 1864:168), 'adverbs converted to verbal particles' (Gowers 1948:41) and 'adverbs, or prepositions masquerading as adverbs' (Herbert 1935).

2.5.2. *Distinction between phrasal verbs and other types of group-verb*

Campbell (1776) is the only usage manual in the corpus to distinguish between (intransitive) phrasal verbs and prepositional verbs, calling the former *compound neuter verbs* and the latter *compound active verbs* (1776:Vol. I, 493). He is also the only one to classify and name phrasal-prepositional verbs (as *decomposite verbs,* 1776:Vol. I, 494). None of the other usage manuals explicitly distinguishes between types of group-verb, and several treat different types together. In the twentieth-century manuals, phrasal verbs are usually separated from prepositional verbs and other verbal idioms, but are treated together with phrasal-prepositional verbs.

2.5.3. *Awareness of grammatical and semantic features of phrasal verbs*

- *Meaning.* References to the meaning (or lack of meaning) of phrasal verbs appear in many of the usage manuals in the form of comments about superfluous or illogical particles and polysemous phrasal verbs. These comments will be analyzed in detail in chapter 5. Alford (1864:168) is the first writer in this category to go beyond this, in his recognition of the telic function of the particle *up* which, he argues, 'intensifies and gives precision… [and] implies the *closing* and *finality* of the act indicated'. Herbert (1935:153) discusses the difference between simple and phrasal verbs, such as *wash* and *wash up*.

- *Unity.* Several of the usage manuals point out that phrasal verbs are a kind of compound, but none explores this in more detail.

- *Syntax.* Berry (1963:92) is the only usage manual to allude to the fact that phrasal verbs are separable, in his advice that '[i]f the preposition "up" is to

be used with a verb, it should not be needlessly separated from the verb': for example, *the highwayman held up the traveller* is better than *the highwayman held the traveller up*. However, it is not clear whether he is aware that the examples he gives are phrasal verbs.

- *Conversion.* This feature does not appear in any of the usage manuals until Gowers' revision of Fowler (1965), which gives examples of 'phrasal verbs as nouns' such as *take-over* and *wash-out*.

2.6. Recognition and classification of phrasal verbs in LModE articles/letters

As explained in chapter 1, the forty articles and letters in the precept corpus were collected by searching a selection of journals and newspapers for references to phrasal verbs. This category, then, differs from the others in that all of its materials mention phrasal verbs. However, there is a great deal of variation in the depth with which these texts discuss them. It is also notable that only one article and one letter mentioning phrasal verbs were found in the nineteenth-century materials, suggesting that they became a more central area of concern – for teachers, scholars and members of the public – in the twentieth century.

2.6.1. Terminology

Twelve articles/letters use a specific term for phrasal verbs. The terms used are:

> *verbal phrase* (Anon 1926)
>
> *prepositional verb* (to include phrasal verbs) (Willis 1927)
>
> *verb-adverb combination* (Kennedy 1933, Perrin 1943, Bryant 1960, Girr 1960)
>
> *two- and three-word verb* (Stoakes 1943)
>
> *phrasal verb* (Jowett 1951, Perren 1963, Anon 1966, Potter 1966)
>
> *verb-particle combination* (Bryant 1960)
>
> *merged verb* (Bryant 1960)

The term *verb-adverb combination* gained currency in American materials (articles in *American Speech, College English* and *The English Journal*), while *phrasal verb* became the standard term in British materials (especially the *ELT*

Journal) by the mid-twentieth century. However, my searches also showed that as late as the 1960s the term *phrasal verb* could be used to refer to all sorts of verb combinations such as auxiliary + verb[28]. Furthermore, it is clear from the letters in forums for teachers – 'The Question Box' (*ELT Journal*) and 'Current English Forum' (*College English*) – that teachers were still uncertain about how to name or classify phrasal verbs: one asks 'In the sentence "He dug up the treasure" is "up the treasure" an adverbial phrase?' (Bryant 1960). The lack of an accepted term can be seen in the fact that the answer to this question uses three terms for the construction:

> *dug up* is a verb-adverb combination, a so-called merged verb… the verb-particle combination is a unit… (Bryant 1960).

As in the other types of works, a variety of terms continues to be used for the second element of phrasal verbs: *preposition, adverb, particle,* and in one case *auxiliary* (Anon 1964). In some cases importance is placed on the term used: for example, Pence (1949) argues that the rule of not ending a sentence with a preposition does not apply to constructions like *put off* and *settle up* because in these the second element is an adverb, not a preposition (this argument is discussed further in chapter 4).

2.6.2. Distinction between phrasal verbs and other types of group-verb
None of the letters and articles in the corpus explicitly distinguishes between different types of group verb, and many conflate different types in their examples.

2.6.3. Awareness of grammatical and semantic features of phrasal verbs
- *Meaning.* As with usage manuals, many of the letters and articles in the corpus comment on the redundancy or illogicality of phrasal verbs, while Anon (1882) and Stoakes (1943) remark on their idiomaticity and difficulty for foreigners. More detailed semantic discussions appear in Jowett (1951), and particularly in Potter (1966), who classifies phrasal verbs depending on the

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[28] For example, an article entitled 'The English Verb: a Traditional View' in *College Composition and Communication* gives 'the phrasal verb form *will have been speaking*' (Long 1966:100).

extent to which they depart from their original meanings.

- *Unity.* Perren (1963) points out that phrasal verbs should be taught as 'sense units' while Bryant (1960) writes that 'the verb-particle combination is a unit, in that some other single word can give an approximate idea'. Jowett (1951) is the only writer in this category (and indeed, the only writer in the corpus apart from Webster in his 1784 grammar) to remark that phrasal verbs cannot always be replaced by single verbs.

- *Conversion.* Several articles discuss nominalized and/or adjectival phrasal verbs (Willis 1927, Kennedy 1933, Bartlett 1940, Hunter 1947, Potter 1966), usually mentioning their colloquial quality.

2.7. Recognition and classification of phrasal verbs in other works

There are several early twentieth-century academic monographs and articles which are important in documenting the growing awareness of phrasal verbs, and these have been included in the precept corpus. The first of these is Bradley's *The Making of English* (1904). According to Smith (1923:6) it was Bradley who first suggested the term *phrasal verb* to him, but Bradley does not use this in his own work, instead referring to combinations such as *break out* and *give up* as *compound verbs*.

Anon (1911), a report commissioned to simplify and unify grammatical terminology in schools and other organizations, also uses *compound verb* for both phrasal and prepositional verbs, and relates the use of the term to the need to consider phrasal verbs as units: 'it is difficult to draw a line determining at what point an Adverb or a Preposition becomes so closely attached to the verb as to make the term "Compound Verb" necessary' (1911:20).

Kennedy's *The Modern English Verb-Adverb Combination* (1920) is the first published monograph on phrasal verbs, and as such goes into a lot more detail on the subject than any previous materials. Kennedy explains his choice of the term *verb-adverb combination* rather than *verb-adverb compound*: he did 'not want to give the impression that in all the combinations... the verb and the combining particle are welded together with uniform closeness' (1920:9). While

most of his examples are phrasal verbs, some prepositional verbs, such as *get at, laugh at* and *go with* (1920:19), are included. Kennedy discusses in detail the meaning of the adverbial particles, and also includes appendices on nominalized and adjectival forms.

Smith's 'English Idioms' (1923), published as a tract for the *Society for Pure English* (*SPE*), is the first to use the term *phrasal verb*, which he defines as 'verbs in which a preposition or adverb follows the verb, and is often placed at some distance from it' (46)[29]. In this tract Smith discusses several aspects of phrasal verbs, including their idiomatic and semantic properties (particularly their basis in 'kinaesthetic' as opposed to 'visual' metaphors); their tendency to be formed with 'dynamic' verbs (*go, come, take*, etc.) rather than verbs of perception or cognition (*know, feel, see,* etc.); their tendency to be used colloquially; and their ability to be converted into nouns and adjectives.

The final work in this category is Horwill's 'American Variations' (1936), another *SPE* tract. Horwill notes that 'the preference of a combination of verb and adverb to a single verb or to a more roundabout expression' is 'a distinctive feature of American idiom' (194).

2.8. Summary
It is evident that the extent to which phrasal verbs are recognized and classified in the materials under analysis depends a great deal on the type of work in question. However, some general tendencies and developments can be picked out.

2.8.1. Terminology
To this day, there is no generally accepted term for phrasal verbs (see 1.2.1), so it is not surprising that there is substantial variation in the way that the concept is lexicalized in our period. Many writers (including some who describe the construction most accurately and lucidly) do not use a specific term at all, but a

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[29] Although 'phrasal verb' was coined in this 1923 tract, Smith brought the term to the general public in his monograph *Words and Idioms* (1925), and this use of the term is often given as the first, even in *OED*3 (*phrasal* adj.).

circumlocution such as 'verb with adverbial particle'. However, the increase in
the number of terms that are used for phrasal verbs suggests a growing sense of
them as units. This increase is shown in table 2-4. *Compound verb* was the most
common term in the nineteenth century (although it generally referred to
prefixed verbs as well), but this was replaced by *phrasal verb* in Britain and
verb-adverb combination in America.

Table 2-3 Terminology for phrasal verbs in the precept corpus

	compound verb	verb-adverb combination	phrasal verb	group-verb	others with only one occurrence	Total
1750-1775					1	**1**
1776-1800	2					**2**
1801-1825	1					**1**
1826-1850	2					**2**
1851-1875	1				1	**2**
1876-1900	4			1		**5**
1901-1925	2	1	2	1		**6**
1926-1950		2			3	**5**
1951-1975		2	6		2	**10**
Total	**12**	**5**	**8**	**2**	**7**	**34**

There is also some variation in the term used for the second element of phrasal
verbs, in this thesis referred to as an *adverbial particle*. Early works tend to call
it a *preposition* or occasionally a *particle,* while later works argue for its
adverbial status. The distinction is relevant to changing attitudes towards the
use of phrasal verbs at the end of sentences, associated with the prevailing
proscription of preposition stranding (discussed in detail in chapter 4).

2.8.2. Distinction between phrasal verbs and other types of group-verb
Before the mid-nineteenth century very few writers explicitly distinguish phrasal
verbs from prepositional verbs and other types of verbal idiom (a notable
exception being Campbell (1776)) although it is sometimes possible to infer
awareness of the difference by the examples chosen. From the end of the

nineteenth century onwards, the distinction is made clear in grammars and in *OED*1, but not in other materials. In almost all the materials analyzed, phrasal-prepositional verbs are treated as types of phrasal verb (again, Campbell (1776) is an exception). Since in this thesis the focus is on attitudes towards phrasal verbs, it is important to be aware that comments about this construction often refer to other types of phrase as well.

2.8.3. Awareness of grammatical and semantic features of phrasal verbs

- *Meaning.* From the very beginning of our period there are comments about the idiomatic nature of phrasal verbs. The various functions and meanings of the adverbial particles are defined in the dictionaries under analysis although, unsurprisingly, the other materials are less informative in this respect. There are, however, discussions of the meanings of particles in several of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century grammars and in some other twentieth-century materials. Furthermore, many of the materials comment on the redundancy of the particles, or their illogical nature, or the polysemy of phrasal verbs: these comments will be analyzed in chapter 5.

- *Unity.* Many of the materials suggest that phrasal verbs should be treated as a unit, or that the particle is connected to the verb, or that they have a single meaning. The growing awareness of phrasal verbs as semantic units is evident in the way that dictionaries move from treating them as variants of the simple verb, to presenting them as subentries in their own right.

- *Syntax.* With a few exceptions, it is not until the end of the nineteenth century that grammars mention the fact that phrasal verbs are separable and discuss the various possibilities of ordering verb, particle and object. Very few other materials refer to this feature.

- *Conversion.* Nominalized and adjectival forms of phrasal verbs are not mentioned in the grammars until the late nineteenth century, and are treated quite sparsely in dictionaries before *OED*1. The twentieth century sees a growing interest in these forms, with several articles, usage manuals and other works referring to their formation and their frequently colloquial nature.

2.9. Conclusion

According to McArthur (1989:39):

> Because [phrasal verbs] have for centuries been part of that 'plain' foundation underneath the French and Latin superstructures of the language, they have attracted little attention among classically-inspired grammarians. Lexicographers like Johnson have been more interested in them, but only marginally so. As a result, this linguistic orphan has waited until the later 20th century for adequate coverage in grammar book and dictionary.

However, it has been shown in this chapter that, while the treatment of phrasal verbs certainly did become more widespread and detailed in the twentieth century, the construction was far from being a 'linguistic orphan' in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Chapter 3. Overview of attitudes in the precept corpus

3.1. Introduction

In chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7, attitudes towards phrasal verbs in the precept corpus materials are discussed in their historical, social and linguistic context. In the present short chapter, the groundwork is laid for this analysis: methodology is explicated (3.2), followed by an overview of the main themes (3.3).

3.2. Methodology

As stated in chapter 1, the precept corpus consists of 138 primary sources – mainly grammars, usage manuals, articles and letters – published between 1750 and 1970. The corpus was divided into nine sub-periods for analysis: 1750-1775, 1776-1800, 1801-1825, 1826-1850, 1851-1875, 1876-1900, 1901-1925, 1926-1950 and 1951-1970. Firstly, each work was read or searched for references to phrasal verbs. The grammars and usage manuals, many of which are not digitized, were read cover to cover (only those sections which were highly unlikely to contain relevant material – for example, sections on orthography in the grammars, or sections on oratory in the usage manuals – were skimmed over). In the case of articles and letters, online collections of newspapers and journals were searched for references to phrasal verbs. Because of the lack of accepted terminology for phrasal verbs in the period under analysis (see chapter 2), it was necessary to perform fairly wide searches for combinations such as *verb* and *preposition*, *verb* and *adverb, verb* and *particle, verb* and *compound,* and then to discard what was irrelevant. Each of the works in the precept corpus was then tagged according to its attitude towards phrasal verbs.

3.3. Overview

Firstly, each work was tagged to show whether its attitude is negative, positive, mixed, or 'none' (including both works which do not mention phrasal verbs and works which mention them neutrally). This tagging does not show the variations in degrees of attitude: for example, a negative attitude might be one that criticizes a few examples of phrasal verbs, or phrasal verbs in general; finer distinctions of types will be given in the following chapters. Table 3-1 shows the number of works, and the percentage of the total number of works, expressing

such attitudes in each of the sub-periods. It can be seen that 40% of the works consulted do not express any attitude towards phrasal verbs; 39% view phrasal verbs negatively; and 14% positively. Figure 3-1 shows the development of attitudes chronologically.

Table 3-1 Number and percentage of works in the precept corpus expressing positive and negative attitudes towards phrasal verbs[30]

	Negative		Positive		Mixed		None	
	no.	as %	no.	as %	no.	as %	no.	as %
1750-1775	3	38	0	0	0	0	5	63
1776-1800	5	63	1	13	1	13	1	13
1801-1825	3	60	0	0	0	0	2	40
1826-1850	3	30	0	0	0	0	7	70
1851-1875	6	30	2	10	1	5	11	55
1876-1900	9	43	0	0	2	10	10	48
1901-1925	6	35	2	12	2	12	7	41
1926-1950	10	33	11	37	2	7	7	23
1951-1970	9	47	3	16	2	11	5	26
Total	**54**	**39**	**19**	**14**	**10**	**7**	**55**	**40**

Figure 3-1 Percentage of works in the precept corpus expressing positive and negative attitudes towards phrasal verbs

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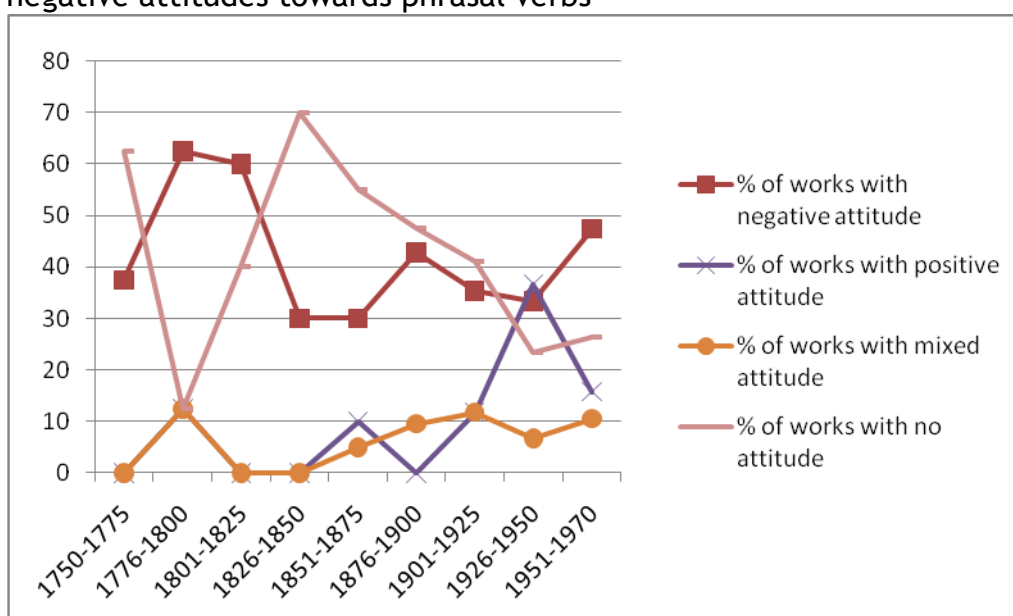
[30] Note that percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

The percentage of works with negative attitudes has, in almost all periods, been higher than the percentage with positive attitudes. The proportion of positive attitudes increased in the early twentieth century but, perhaps surprisingly, dropped again in the final period under analysis, 1951-1970.

Furthermore, there are several discernible types of attitudes expressed in the materials, which were categorized as follows:

- **Latinate/native**: attitudes related to the contrast between 'native' (or 'Saxon') phrasal verbs and their Latinate equivalents. Included in this category are attitudes related to preposition stranding (which was perceived as a fault because it is not possible in Latin) and to the contrast between monosyllables (which are usually native) and polysyllables.
- **Meaning**: attitudes related to the meanings of phrasal verbs, particularly their tendency towards polysemy and redundancy.
- **Linguistic level and neologism**: attitudes related to perceptions of style and status (the labelling of phrasal verbs as vulgar, colloquial, etc.) and to neologisms (the criticism or approval of phrasal verbs as producing new lexemes). (The relationship between these two types of attitude will be discussed in chapter 6.)
- **Variety**: attitudes related to the variety of English (usually Scottish English or American English) in which a particular phrasal verb supposedly originates.

Each work was tagged for these type(s). If a work expresses more than one type of attitude, it was counted more than once: for example, a work which criticizes phrasal verbs for being polysemous and American was counted once for 'Meaning' and once for 'Variety'. On the other hand, a work that has more than one comment expressing the same type of attitude (for example that phrasal verbs are polysemous, redundant and unetymological, i.e. all related to meaning) is counted only once. The purpose of this kind of classification was to gain a general impression of the spectrum of attitudes in different periods. More detailed analyses will be undertaken in subsequent chapters. Table 3-2 shows the number and percentage of works expressing such attitudes in each period.

Table 3-2 Number and percentage of works in the precept corpus expressing types of attitude

	Latinate/native		Meaning		Level/neologism		Variety	
	no.	as %	no.	as %	no.	as %	no.	as %
1750-1775	1	13	0	0	1	13	1	13
1776-1800	5	63	3	38	3	38	1	13
1801-1825	2	40	1	20	0	0	0	0
1826-1850	0	0	3	30	1	10	1	10
1851-1875	3	15	6	30	3	15	1	5
1876-1900	4	19	10	48	2	10	2	10
1901-1925	4	24	10	59	4	24	2	12
1926-1950	9	30	10	33	2	7	9	30
1951-1970	7	37	11	58	1	5	6	32
Total	35	**25**	54	**39**	17	**12**	23	**17**

A quarter of the works in the precept corpus express an attitude relating to the native as opposed to Latin origin of phrasal verbs, while over a third convey an attitude related to meaning. Only 12% base their opinions of phrasal verbs on linguistic level or neologism, while 17% comment negatively or positively on the regional origins of phrasal verbs.

Figure 3-2 Percentage of works in the precept corpus expressing types of attitude
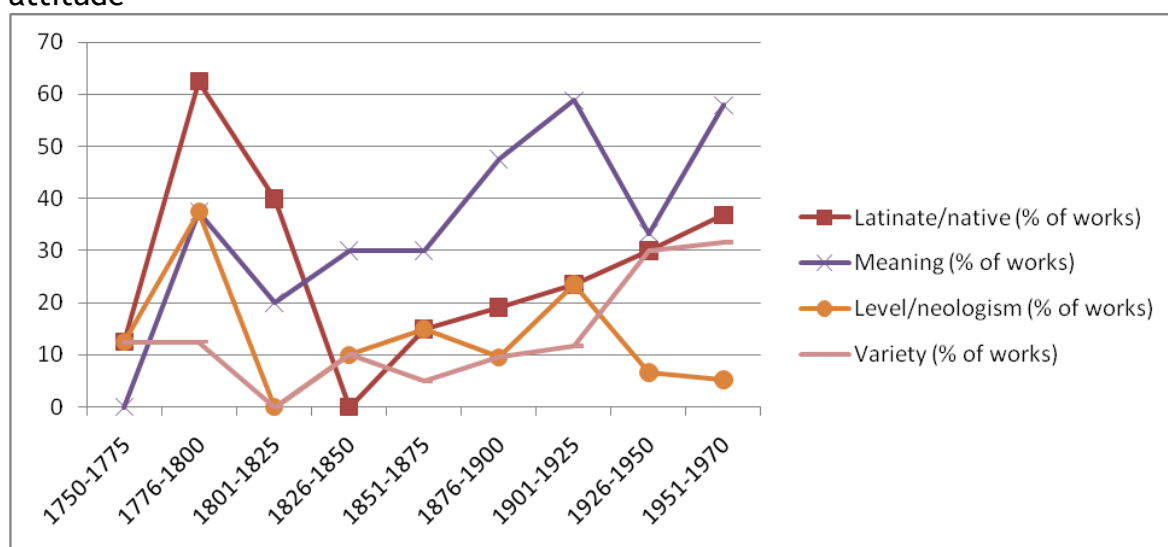
Furthermore, as can be seen in figure 3-2, there has been an increase in the percentage of works with attitudes related to the meaning and variety of phrasal verbs, whereas the percentages of works with attitudes relating to Latinate/native origin and linguistic level/neologism have fluctuated.

In the following four chapters, the development of these types of attitudes will be studied in the context of wider debates about English usage.

Chapter 4. Phrasal verbs and attitudes towards Latin

4.1. Introduction

According to Görlach (1999b:476) '[v]ariation in English, and attitudes towards the vernacular, cannot be seen independently of views on Latin'. The importance of this observation is especially salient for phrasal verbs, which are often semantically equivalent to simple Latinate verbs: for example, *give up* is synonymous (in some of its senses) with *abandon*, *put off* with *postpone*, and so on. Many of the attitudes towards phrasal verbs in the precept corpus are intertwined with attitudes towards the choice of either Latinate or 'native' vocabulary, and towards Latinate grammatical patterns. Before describing and analyzing these attitudes (4.3), I will briefly outline the history of this debate, with particular focus on the LModE period (4.2).

4.2. Attitudes towards Latinate vocabulary and grammar: an overview

4.2.1. *Latinate vocabulary*

The history of attitudes towards the borrowing of Latinate words into English has been well-documented in the literature; the following is a summary of the main trends.

We can trace the debate over Latinate borrowings at least as far back as the early fifteenth century. As Smith (2006:122-8) explains, Britain's shift from being bilingual to being predominantly monolingual meant that writers no longer had the option of writing in French when they wanted to use eloquent language; they needed to use English, which had not previously had the same range of functions and thus did not have the same breadth of vocabulary. The situation is captured by Caxton in the prologue to his translation of *Eneydos,* where he discusses the difficulties he experienced in choosing between native words (which are 'rude and brood') and borrowed terms ('ouer curyous termes which coulde not be vnderstande of comyn people') (Caxton 1490, reprinted in Craigie 1946:120-1). One response was the development of 'aureate diction', a term coined by John Lydgate to refer to the Latinate borrowings he used in his religious poetry. However, although there were frequent references in this period to the ineloquence of English, these were not always negative. As Jones

(1953:31) argues, 'condemnation of the mother tongue varies according to the value placed upon eloquence, or rhetoric', and descriptions of English based on homely metaphors such as 'homespun cloth' can be read in light of Puritan mistrust of rhetoric and preference for plain speaking. Thus Latinate terms were seen on the one hand as necessary to enrich the language, but on the other as excessive and affected.

Similar forces were at play in the Renaissance debate over 'inkhorn' terms. On the one hand, there was a perceived need for Latinate loanwords to express new concepts in art and science. One of the most prominent neologizers of the sixteenth century, Sir Thomas Elyot, explained that he 'borrowed of the latin tongue' because of 'the insufficiencie of our owne langage'[31]. However, while Elyot explained Latinate words when he introduced them, other writers were less careful in this respect, prompting criticisms that Latinate loanwords were obscure, and that those 'who so fully vnderstandeth not the Latin tongue, yea and also the Greek, can scarse vnderstand them'[32]. Also, Latinate terms were not always borrowed to fill lexical gaps, and there were criticisms of the practice of borrowing for 'mere brauerie'[33]. Furthermore, as Blank (2006:224) points out, the neologizers 'advanced a "foreign" English which was, above all, associated with an educated elite', and neologisms were often perceived as pedantic, affected and bookish: thus the term 'inkhorn'.

Two alternatives to borrowing were proposed by purists. On the one hand there were archaizers, such as Spenser, who attempted to revive obsolete English words. However, as Jones (1953:120) shows, this method had limited success, partly because of the obscurity of the archaisms, and partly because there was not a sufficient supply of old words to express the new terms of art; thus archaizing came to be limited to poetic diction only. The other alternative was word-formation using native elements, exemplified in Sir John Cheke's proposed nativisms such as *moond* for *lunatic* and *biword* for *parable* (Jones 1953:121). However, this method was not very successful either in that it, too, was

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[31] *The boke named the Gouerner,* 1535, quoted in Jones (1953:79).
[32] William Fulwood, *The Enimie of Idleness,* 1567, quoted in Jones (1953:94).
[33] Richard Mulcaster, *The First Part of the Elementarie,* 1582, quoted in Jones (1953:206).

stigmatized. Blank (2006:222) gives the example of the tutor Ralph Lever who, in his *Art of Reason, Rightly Termed Witcraft* (1573), proposed alternative compounds such as *backset* for *predicate* and *kinred* for *species*, but ironically had to provide a glossary of the 'native' terms for his readers.

By the seventeenth century, borrowing, rather than compounding or reviving obsolete words, came to be accepted as the main method of augmenting the English vocabulary. There were exceptions and opposing voices, though. Jones (1953:219) shows how the seventeenth century saw a growing interest in the history of English: 'English writers awoke to a fact which had been only passively perceived before: namely, that they and their language were originally derived from the Saxons, the noblest of Teutonic peoples'. This interest led to a renewed pride in the native element of the English language, and Jones (1953:238-42) gives examples of writers praising native monosyllables as strong, masculine, and useful for compounding. However, this was a minor movement, and its 'primitivistic element… ran counter to the beginning of the idea of progress and to the strong confidence in the excellence of modern English' (1953:270).

Thus by the end of the EModE period, Latinate loanwords were accepted as integral to the English vocabulary. Furthermore, loanwords were seen as a useful means of *copia* or variety, since they could provide synonyms for native lexemes. As Adamson (1999:573) argues, Latinate terms allowed variety of meaning as well as style; they 'are associated not only with a formal, public style but also with a range of meaning that is primarily abstract and ideational, whereas Saxon words are associated with private and intimate discourse and their semantic range is characteristically experiential: they encode perceptions, emotions, evaluations'. Thus the availability of both kinds of lexeme allowed the exploitation of both kinds of meaning. Another reason for the choice of Latinate terms might have been their tendency towards monosemy, as Nevalainen (1999:365) suggests: '[t]he success of Latin terminology may be partly attributed to its lack of ambiguity. While promoting the use of English, the Royal Society, for example, openly endorsed the one-form-one-meaning principle.' (This

preference for monosemous rather than polysemous lexemes will be explored further in chapter 5.)

However, in the LModE period the tide began to turn. Adamson's (1998:609) summary is worth quoting in full:

> [There was] a strenuous campaign in favour of 'Saxon-English' which, by the end of the nineteenth century, had largely succeeded in driving latinate vocabulary out of the literary lexicon. By the mid-twentieth century, it was being evicted from its refuge in academic and administrative discourse by those who, like Orwell… regarded it as the servant of euphemism and political deceit. And by the late twentieth century the fate of latinate English was probably sealed when Latin lost its privileged place in the school curriculum.

This trend towards favouring native vocabulary is also evident in some of the texts in the precept corpus. Several writers voice the argument that borrowing from Latin is unnecessary. For example, White (1883:21) writes that

> it may at least be doubted whether we do not turn too quickly to the Latin lexicon when we wish a name for a new thought or a new thing, and whether out of the simples of our ancient English, or Anglo-Saxon, so-called, we might not have formed a language copious enough for all the needs of the highest civilization, and subtle enough for all the requisitions of philology.

(Whether or not White was aware of the irony in his use of Latinate words such as *copious, civilization* and *requisitions* is debatable.)

References to the vigour or expressiveness of native lexemes are also frequent in the precept corpus. For example, Mathews (1876:174) argues that native words 'from association, are more concrete and more pictorial than those derived from the Latin', while Genung (1893:118) writes that '[t]he Saxon element of the language, both in its words and in its racy idioms, has the advantage of vigor as well as intelligibility'. However, arguments for *copia* are also put forward: Mathews (1876:180-1) advises his readers to 'give no fantastic preference to either Saxon or Latin, the two great wings on which our magnificent English

soars and sings, for you can spare neither' and warns 'do not over-Teutonize from any archaic pedantry'.

The growing preference for native vocabulary can also be seen in shifting attitudes towards monosyllables. Gustaffson (2008) shows that most eighteenth-century rhetoric books criticized monosyllables, but that in the twentieth century there was 'a radical change in stylistic preferences' and 'the prescriptions to prefer "short", Saxon and familiar words repeatedly occur in modern style guides targeting those who write for educational and professional purposes' (2008:105). Again, texts in the precept corpus support this. The eighteenth-century texts tend to criticize monosyllables – Campbell (1776:Vol. II, 413) is representative:

> Our modern languages may in this respect be compared to the art of carpentry in its rudest state, when the union of the materials employed by the artisan, could be effected only by the help of those external and coarse implements, pins, nails and cramps. The ancient languages resemble the same art in its most improved state, after the invention of dovetail joints, grooves, and mortices, when thus all the principal junctions are effected by forming properly the extremities or terminations of the pieces to be joined. For by means of these the union of the parts is rendered closer, whilst that by which their union is produced is scarce perceivable.

Campbell is not only criticizing monosyllables *per se*, but monosyllables as representative of English as an analytic language, compared with the classical, synthetic languages.

The disapproval of monosyllables continues in the early nineteenth century; for example, Jamieson (1820:23) asserts that '[p]articles and prepositions are mostly monosyllables, and the frequency with which they must be used, impairs the modulation of language'. However, by the end of the nineteenth century a shift in attitudes is evident, and comments like the following from Mathews (1876:134) are frequent:

> The truth is, the words most potent in life and literature, – in the mart, in the Senate, in the forum, and at the fireside, – are small words, the

> monosyllables which the half-educated speaker and writer despises...
> These are the heart-beats, the very throbs of the brain, made visible by
> utterance.

Thus, throughout the history of English there have been varied attitudes towards Latinate borrowings. On the one hand, such loanwords have been seen as necessary for filling lexical gaps, enriching the 'ineloquent' language, or providing variety through synonyms. On the other hand, they have been viewed with disapproval as unnecessary, pedantic, or less expressive than their native equivalents. While such attitudes have existed side by side, one can detect broad tendencies in different periods. Relevant to this thesis is the apparent shift towards a preference for native over Latinate vocabulary in the LModE period.

4.2.2. Latinate grammar

The history of attitudes towards Latinate grammatical structures in English really begins with the first English grammars in the sixteenth century. Before then, English was rarely considered as having any grammar; 'grammar' meant 'Latin grammar' (Beal 2004:107)[34]. The early English grammars, beginning with Bullokar's *Bref Grammar* in 1586, did little to challenge this belief, but rather attempted to describe English using the framework of Latin. Indeed, they were often written with the express purpose of making it easier for students to learn Latin grammar[35].

However, as Michael (1970:495) remarks, '[if] the dominance of Latin lasted a long time it was also resisted early, continuously, and on several grounds'. The first notable resistance is in John Wallis' *Grammatica Linguae Anglicanae* (1653) which, although written in Latin, aimed to 'attempt an entirely new method, suggested not by the usual manner of the Latin language but by the peculiar

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[34] This notion that English has no grammar can even be found in nineteenth-century texts. White (1883:280) claims that 'the construction of the Latin sentence is grammatical, that of the English sentence, logical' and that 'English is an almost grammarless language' (1883:295).

[35] For example, the title page of one seventeenth-century grammar advertises itself as 'very useful for all young Scholars, and others that would in a short time learn the Latin tongue' (R.R. 1641, quoted in Fries 1927:225).

account of our language' (translated and quoted in Sugg 1964:243). In the eighteenth century, 'nativist' grammars, such as John Ash's *Grammatical Institutes* (1763), were written for those who would not study Latin; these works 'sought to describe English grammar in its own terms' (Algeo 1986:313). Grammars written by and for women (who were not classically educated) were also notable in their rejection of Latin terminology and categories (Beal 2004:109). There was a growing awareness of the lack of correspondence between Latin and English grammar, as in Joseph Priestley's recognition that there is no future tense in English (Beal 2004:110). Furthermore, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there were increasingly frequent comments about the independence of English from Latin grammar. Webster (1784:3) remarks that

> men of much classical learning warmly contend that the only way of acquiring, a grammatical knowledge of the *English Tongue,* is first to learn a *Latin Grammar*. That such a stupid opinion should ever have prevailed in the English nation – that it should still have advocates – nay that it should still be carried into practice, can be resolved into no cause but the amazing influence of habit upon the human mind.

Nearly a century later, the practice was evidently still widespread, for White (1883:280) writes 'how preposterous, how impossible, for us to measure our English corn in Latin bushels! Yet that is what we have so long been trying to do with our English grammar'.

However, grammarians and usage writers often simply paid lip-service to the notion of a distinct English grammar, while continuing to describe English in terms of Latin; 'the process of discarding Latinate patterns was slow' (Dekeyser 1975:29). Furthermore, while descriptive grammars since the late nineteenth century have ceased to use Latin as their basis, Latin has continued to influence English grammar rules in prescriptive texts. One example is the proscription of utterances such as 'It is me', where the subject complement is in the accusative case, rather than the nominative as it would be in Latin[36]. Algeo (1977:62-3)

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[36] In fact, as Bauer (1998:134) points out, speakers of Latin would not have said the equivalent of either 'It is I' or 'It is me', but rather *Ego sum*, i.e. 'I am'.

finds that this construction is '[a]t the head of the list of shibboleths' in twentieth-century usage manuals. Another is the split infinitive, which has been seen as incorrect because it is impossible in Latin. This usage was first proscribed in the nineteenth century (Beal 2004:112) and is still 'an almost inescapable concern of usage writers' in the twentieth (Algeo 1977:60).

Perhaps the most widespread Latin-influenced proscription, though, is of preposition stranding. End-placed prepositions were first criticized by John Dryden in the seventeenth century (Yáñez-Bouza 2008:251) and are still occasionally criticized in twentieth-century texts. Because of the relationship between preposition stranding and phrasal verbs, these attitudes will be discussed in detail in 4.3.3.

However, the rise of descriptive grammar meant that increasingly 'observers on both sides of the Atlantic successfully resisted imposing Latin structures on the analysis of English' (Finegan 1998:549). Furthermore, even in prescriptive texts, only a few 'shibboleths' are based on Latin grammar; it is notable that modern classifications of the kinds of rules found in usage manuals (e.g. Weiner 1988:179) do not include Latin as a prominent feature, but rather group rules as based on logic, aesthetics, social/regional usage and so on[37]. Moreover, rules which are based on Latin are often not overtly expressed as such (as Beal 2004:110 points out), and they now appear to be fossilized proscriptions rather than evidence of the ongoing influence of Latin grammar.

4.2.3. Summary

While the LModE period has seen an increased preference for native vocabulary, Latinate grammatical structures have continued to influence prescriptive grammar rules to some extent, although the rules based on Latin appear to be fossilized. The following analysis of attitudes towards the native origin of phrasal verbs will take into account these shifting attitudes.

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[37] This only applies to Latin grammatical structures. Words with Latin etymologies (such as *aggravate* and *decimate*) are still hot topics in usage manuals; see chapter 5.

4.3. Attitudes in the precept corpus towards the native origins of phrasal verbs

The following thirty-five works in the precept corpus – a quarter of the total – express an attitude which is related to the native, as opposed to Latinate, origin of phrasal verbs:

Author and date	Type of attitude
1. Bayly 1772	Monosyllables
2. Campbell 1776	Should not be passivized
3. Blair 1783	Should not end a sentence
4. Webster 1784	Cannot be replaced
5. Ussher 1785	Should not be passivized
6. Murray 1795	Should not end a sentence
7. Gregory 1808	Should not end a sentence
8. Jamieson 1820	Should not end a sentence
9. Arnold 1852	Exercise replacing Latinate with phrasal verbs
10. Parminter 1856	Weaker than Latinate verbs
11. Bain 1867	Should not end a sentence
12. Mathews 1876	Shorter than Latinate verbs
13. Anon 1882	Phrasal verb replaced with Latinate verb
14. Genung 1893	More vigorous than Latinate verbs
15. Meiklejohn 1899	Exercise using phrasal verbs
16. Bechtel 1901	Phrasal verb replaced with Latinate verb
17. Bradley 1904	More distinctions of meaning than Greek/Latin verbs
18. Kennedy 1920	Less educated than Latinate verbs
19. Smith 1923	Can end a sentence
20. Pink 1928	Shorter than Latinate verbs
21. Kennedy 1933	Reduce Latinate vocabulary
22. Smith 1933	Age of phrasal verbs
23. Baker 1933	Age of phrasal verbs
24. C.E. 1933	Age of phrasal verbs
25. Dobinson 1933	Native origin; more vivid
26. Horwill 1936	More vivid than Latinate verbs

27.	Pence 1949	Can end a sentence
28.	Stevick 1950	Can end a sentence
29.	Jowett 1951	Cannot be replaced
30.	Gowers 1954	Can end a sentence
31.	Girr 1960	Phrasal verbs replaced with Latinate verbs
32.	Berry 1963	Particle should not be separated from verb
33.	Harrison 1964	Age; native origin
34.	Fowler 1965	Can end a sentence
35.	Potter 1966	More vigorous and vivid than Latinate verbs

The types of attitude can be categorized as follows:

- general negative attitudes (related to the weakness of phrasal as opposed to Latinate verbs);

- general positive attitudes (related to the vividness or uniqueness of phrasal as opposed to Latinate verbs, or to their age or native origins);

- attitudes towards adverbial particles ending a sentence, related to the debate about preposition stranding. These can be further divided into:

    - negative attitudes (that adverbial particles should not end a sentence);

    - positive attitudes/defences (that adverbial particles can end a sentence);

- other attitudes.

4.3.1. General negative attitudes

Only six works in the precept corpus state or imply that phrasal verbs are inferior to Latinate verbs. The first is Parminter's grammar (1856:153), which comments approvingly on 'Latin and Greek compounded words, which now form almost the staple of our vocabulary', and remarks that

> Notwithstanding this valuable importation, there is still a great deficiency of *single* words, especially in the verbs, as appears in the custom of *associating* prepositions by *annexation* rather than *incorporating* them by *composition*: thus we use such forms as

to think *of*	to try *on*	to come *by*
to laugh *at*	to put *off*	to bring *under*

> and numerous others.

Thus the English method of adding particles (as well as prepositions) to verbs is seen as inferior to the classical method of compounding. This can be read in relation to the preference for synthetic languages, as expressed in Campbell's metaphorical description of English using clumsy pins and nails, and Latin using smooth dovetail joints (1776, quoted in 4.2.1 above).

The only other nineteenth-century work which implies an attitude of this sort is an anonymous usage manual (1882) which gives the nominalized phrasal verb *break up* as an error, and replaces it with a Latinate equivalent:

> *Break up*. We shall have a regular *break-up* in the ministry. Should be, We shall have a *dissolution* of the ministry.

According to the *OED, break-up* is not marked as colloquial or otherwise restricted; indeed, the quotations are from quite 'respectable' texts such as Lord Auckland's correspondence, *The Times* and an encyclopaedia of anatomy (*OED break-up* n). However, it might have been perceived as a neologism: it is first recorded in 1795, less than a century before the publication of this manual.

A further four twentieth-century works compare phrasal verbs unfavourably with their Latinate equivalents. Bechtel (1901:115) implies this in his prescription of *hangs on*:

> "The cold weather hangs on." Better, "The cold weather continues."

Hang on meaning 'continue' is first recorded in the *OED* in 1860. Another two works with similar comments are by Arthur Kennedy, who is the strongest proponent of this argument. In his monograph *The Modern English Verb-Adverb Combination* (1920:34), Kennedy writes that

> one can generally distinguish between the average man of fairly good education and the indifferent user of English by his choice in such a list as:

ball up	confuse	*get on*	prosper
blow in	spend	*hang out*	reside
call down	censure, rebuke	*hold up*	rob
call off	cancel	*jack up*	reprove
catch on	comprehend	*jolly up*	encourage
chip in	contribute	*knock off*	cease work

cough up	pay	*let down*	relax
dig in	apply oneself	*let on*	pretend
do up	exhaust	*make out*	understand
fizzle out	fail	*muddle up*	confuse
fix up	improve, furnish	*pull out*	depart

Of the verbs that mark out the 'man of fairly good education', almost all derive from Latin (or Latin through French). The only exceptions are *spend* and *understand,* from OE *spendan* and *understandan,* and *rob,* borrowed from Old French but ultimately of Germanic origins (*OED rob* v). Of the phrasal verbs which are used by 'indifferent' English speakers, almost all would have been relatively new or in restricted usage in Kennedy's time, according to *OED* evidence. The exceptions are *fix up,* with the sense 'To put oneself in proper trim; to dress up; to spruce up' since 1783 (*fix* v, 16b); *get on,* recorded in the sense 'prosper' since 1785 (*get* v, 71g); *knock off,* which could mean 'cease work' since 1649 (*knock* v, 12c); and *make out,* recorded in the sense 'understand' since a1625 (*OED*3 *make out* 11). The other eighteen phrasal verbs that Kennedy lists are recorded (in the relevant senses) from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, and/or are labelled as slang or colloquial in the *OED*[38]. Furthermore, in two of the examples – *fizzle out* meaning 'fail' and *jolly up* meaning 'encourage' – the verb itself is marked as colloquial, with or without the adverbial particle. It is clear, then, that the phrasal verbs which Kennedy adversely compares with simple (predominantly Latinate) ones are not representative of phrasal verbs in general, but rather those which he perceived as novel or not used in Standard English.

However, Kennedy also makes more general comments about the weakness or laziness of phrasal verbs, such as that '[t]he development of these combinations

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[38] *ball up* 1884 – orig. and chiefly US (*OED*3 *ball* v2, 6b); *blow in* 1886 – slang, chiefly US (*blow* v1, 9d); *call down* 1896 – colloq. (*call* v, 27e); *call off* 1888 – (*call* v, 30c); *catch on* 1884 – US colloq. (*catch* v, 51c); *chip in* 1861 – orig. US (*chip* v1, 8c); *cough up* 1894 – slang, orig. US (*cough* v, 3c); *dig in* 1884 – dial. and US colloq. (*dig* v, 11e); *do up* 1803 – colloq. (*do* v, 52d); *fizzle out* a1848 – chiefly US colloq. (*fizzle* v, 3a); *hang out* 1811 – colloq. or slang (*hang* v, 27c); *jolly up* 1893 – orig. US (*jolly* v, 2c); *let down* 1866 – chiefly US (*let* v1, 32b); *let on* 1822 – orig. dial. and US (*let* v1, 36b); *muddle up* 1870 – (*OED*3 *muddle* v, 6d); *pull out* 1855 – orig. US colloq. (*OED*3 *pull out,* 3b). *Jack up* meaning 'reprove' is not recorded in the *OED,* which suggests that it was new or restricted in the 1920s.

is essentially a process of the common, relatively uneducated, mind' (1920:40) and that 'much of the usage [of phrasal verbs] is a result of linguistic laziness' (1920:44). Furthermore, while he accepts that phrasal verbs can have important uses, he argues that the construction 'should be accepted in so far as it can become a useful part of the English vocabulary, but it should not be permitted to crowd out any verb which cannot well be spared' (1920:46). Kennedy's use of the phrasal verb *crowd out* is notable here. Going by Kennedy's own argument, *crowd out* could be replaced in this sentence with the Latinate verb *exclude*. Perhaps Kennedy uses it ironically, or perhaps he sees *crowd out* as an instance of a phrasal verb which is 'a useful part of the English vocabulary'. Or perhaps *crowd out,* recorded since 1652 (*OED crowd* v1, 8), was not the kind of phrasal verb that Kennedy was concerned about, as it was in established usage.

Kennedy goes into this argument in more detail in his article on 'The Future of the English Language' (1933), where he claims that 'there is a growing avoidance of many special verbs such as *recover* "to get over," *exhaust* "to use up," *examine* "to look over," and this disuse of such verbs threatens to cut down the active vocabulary of English very materially during the next few generations' (1933:6). All of these phrasal/prepositional verbs were well-established in Kennedy's time[39]. Kennedy also criticizes the use of nominalized phrasal verbs in this respect:

> More serious in its encroachment upon the vocabulary of English is that process of 'conversion' whereby one form can be employed as various parts of speech…The verb-adverb combination is often converted in this way, such a combination as *clean up* not only replacing verbs like *reform,* but serving as a noun in *the latest cleanup* and as an adjective in *cleanup days*' (1933:6).

The noun *clean-up* meaning 'reform' is recorded in the *OED* from a1889 (the first quotation is an invented one), and the adjective from 1921, so Kennedy would certainly have seen this as a neologism.

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[39] *Get over* meaning 'recover' is recorded from 1712 (*get* v, 46b), *look over* as a prepositional verb meaning 'examine' from 1590 (*look* v, 19a) and as a phrasal verb from c1450 (*look* v, 41a), and *use up* meaning 'exhaust' from 1785 (*use* v, 13a).

The only other work which voices this argument is Girr's article on improving students' writing (1960:631), which suggests that '[p]erhaps vivid verbs can be substituted for verb-adverb combinations'. Girr gives no examples of these, but it seems likely that he is referring to Latinate and phrasal verbs.

Criticisms of phrasal verbs as weak or uneducated in comparison with Latinate verbs are, then, relatively rare in the precept corpus. There are only six works that voice such criticisms, and four of them (Parminter 1856, Anon 1882, Bechtel 1901, Girr 1960) imply rather than directly state a preference for Latinate forms. Kennedy (1920, 1933) is the only author to explicitly argue that phrasal verbs are weaker and lazier than Latinate verbs. Furthermore, most of his examples are of phrasal verbs that were new, colloquial or slang when he was writing at the beginning of the twentieth century. This suggests that he was not comparing all phrasal verbs with Latinate forms, but only novel or restricted ones.

4.3.2. General positive attitudes

In contrast, fifteen works in the precept corpus compare phrasal verbs favourably with their Latinate counterparts. Most refer to their vividness or vigour; there are also arguments based on their age and rootedness in the language; and some works refer to the fact that phrasal verbs cannot always be replaced with Latinate verbs.

In direct contrast with the arguments or implications that phrasal verbs are weaker or lazier than Latinate verbs, there are eight works in the precept corpus which suggest that phrasal verbs are stronger or more vivid. The earliest of these (all grammars and usage manuals) imply rather than state this attitude, by setting exercises in which students have to replace Latinate with phrasal verbs. Arnold (1852:167) asks pupils to read a passage and 'instead of verbs in Italics, most of which are from the Latin, use simple Saxon verbs with adverbs or prepositions used objectively': e.g. 'The wicked will be *excluded* from heaven. The publication is *postponed* till Christmas'. This indicates that Arnold felt it would be useful for pupils to know and be able to use phrasal verbs such as

cast/leave out and *put off*. Genung (1893:24) gives the rule 'Prefer idioms to bookish terms', and advises of pairs like 'Get up – Rise' that the Latinate equivalents, though not incorrect, 'have a more artificial and pretentious sound' and that their use 'deprives language of much of its life and vigour'. He gives an exercise in which students have to substitute phrases in a letter (between friends) with more forceful ones, and suggests replacing 'trying desperately to obtain money' with 'trying desperately to pick up here and there a penny' (1893:125-6). This indicates an awareness of different types of vocabulary for different functions; while Latinate verbs are not actually criticized, they are seen as unsuitable for informal or intimate registers. Meiklejohn (1899:72) sets exercises in which students have to put phrases, including phrasal verbs as well as other verbal idioms, into sentences, an activity which 'will not only increase the extent and vigour of his vocabulary, it will accustom him to the use of words and phrases that are part of the innermost core of our language'.

Other works suggest that Latinate verbs are long and pretentious, whereas phrasal verbs are short and pithy. In a chapter on 'Grand Words', Mathews (1876:96-8) writes of people for whom '[t]he simple Saxon is not good enough for their purposes, and so they array their ideas in "big, dictionary words," derived from Latin...': one example is that 'they never take off their clothes, but "divest themselves of their habiliments," which is so much grander'; another is that 'tradesmen have ceased "sending in" their "little bills," and now only "render their accounts"'. Similarly, in a section 'Long words instead of short', Pink (1928:88) criticizes 'the pointless use of polysyllabic variants', and gives 'The scheme did not *materialize* (was not carried out)' as one of his examples.

None of these works actually states that phrasal verbs are stronger or more vivid than Latinate verbs; they simply imply this in their examples. The first explicit statement to this effect is in a letter to *The Times*. Responding to a series of letters in which phrasal verbs such as *try out* are criticized as Americanisms (see chapter 7), Dobinson (1933:13) argues that phrasal verbs are part of the structure of Teutonic languages, and asks 'Is not it, therefore, better, to let them grow still on native lines rather than to suffer, as we do, our good old

country Anglo-Saxon to be swamped by the educated town-talk which uses educated Latin words whose roots are buried in the barren soil of languages dead to all but scholars?'

Two twentieth-century articles give a reason for the strength of phrasal verbs: that verbs and adverbial particles retain the vividness of the metaphors on which they are based, whereas in the equivalent Latinate verbs, the metaphors are dead. In his *SPE* tract on 'American Variations' (1936), Horwill first discusses the American preference for classical words such as *automobile* for *motor-car* and *elevator* for *lift*, but points out that in the case of phrasal verbs Americans tend to prefer the 'Saxon' form, for example *pass up* for *decline* and *turn down* for *reject*. He then argues that '[t]he advantage of the American idiom [i.e. phrasal verbs] is that it preserves the vividness of the metaphor, while in the English idiom [i.e. Latinate verbs] one has almost come to forget that the term employed uses any metaphor at all' (1936:195). Similarly, Potter (1960:8) argues that '[b]ecause phrasal verbs used as nouns have native components, they are often more vivid and vigorous than their synonyms derived from Greek and Latin'; for example, '[a] *let-up* is more forceful than a period of relaxation' (1960:8). It is notable that these arguments do not appear until the twentieth century, when the decrease in classical education meant that for most people the metaphors in Latinate verbs were no longer alive; that, for example, *reject* was no longer analyzed as 'throw back'.

Another argument in favour of phrasal as opposed to Latinate verbs is that they are old and rooted in the native vocabulary. The four sources which express this are all letters in *The Times*. Firstly, in response to a letter criticizing *try out*, Baker (1933) remarks that *try out* is 'a term of Biblical and Tudor English' and is 'an apposite metaphor and a piece of fine old English'. Smith (1933) adds that these constructions have been used since as long ago as the twelfth century, and quotes examples from Shakespeare and Milton. Similarly, C.E. (1933) gives 'Shakespearian authority' for the phrasal verbs *try out* and *fire out*. A year later, in response to another letter criticizing 'American' phrasal verbs, Harrison (1964) replies that '[t]he practice of adding adverbs and preposition, often

unnecessarily, for the purpose of emphasis is far too deeply rooted in almost all Teutonic tongues for any effort to change it to be successful', and that '[w]e find a similar practice in our Teutonic sister-tongue, German'.

Two works in the precept corpus also point out that phrasal verbs cannot always be replaced with Latinate equivalents, and are therefore important to the language. The first is Webster (1784:80), who states that phrasal verbs are 'purely Saxon... they are often very significant and their place cannot always be supplied by any single word'. It is not until nearly two centuries later that another writer expresses the same idea: Jowett (1951:154) remarks on the difficulty of replacing some phrasal verbs with single verbs; glossing *picked up* as 'seized' is not quite satisfactory, and neither is replacing *put down* with 'discarded'. The implication here is that the supposed choice between Latinate and phrasal verbs is not in fact valid, since there is not an exact equivalence between them.

Several works express the idea that phrasal verbs enrich the vocabulary by giving fine distinctions of meaning; these are discussed in chapter 5. Bradley (1904:123) is the only writer who relates this aspect of phrasal verbs to their native origin, arguing that '[i]n its power of expressing fine distinctions of meaning by this method [of forming phrasal verbs] English vies with Greek and Roman, and has a great advantage over the Romanic languages, which have hardly any compound verbs at all'.

To sum up, approving comments about the strength, age or expressiveness of phrasal verbs in comparison with their Latinate equivalents emerge in nineteenth-century texts and are frequent in the twentieth century. Such attitudes correspond with the idea of a 'strenuous campaign in favour of "Saxon-English"' in this period (Adamson 1998:609, discussed in 4.2.1 above).

4.3.3. *Phrasal verbs and preposition stranding*
One of the reasons that phrasal verbs were censured, particularly in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century materials, was related to the proscription of preposition

stranding. This proscription was partly due to the fact that the construction does not occur in Latin, and partly due to a dislike of (English) monosyllables as opposed to (Latinate) polysyllables, particularly in emphatic positions. Because adverbial particles were frequently seen as prepositions, sentences like 'the weather cleared up' were sometimes analyzed as examples of ending a sentence with a preposition, and thus proscribed. Before surveying such comments, attitudes towards preposition stranding in LModE will be summarized, followed by an analysis of constructions with end-placed adverbial particles.

A detailed discussion of eighteenth-century attitudes towards preposition stranding can be found in Yáñez-Bouza's thesis on the topic, which shows that these attitudes became more proscriptive in the latter part of the eighteenth century (2007:126). The comments on preposition stranding include advice about appropriateness and register, such as Lowth's remark that

> it prevails in common conversation, and suits very well with the familiar style in writing; but the placing of a preposition before the relative is more graceful, as well as more perspicuous, and agrees much better with the solemn and elevated style (1762:127-8).

There are also outright proscriptions, such as Dearborn's:

> Direction. Never close a sentence, or member of a sentence, with a preposition, when it may be conveniently avoided (1795, quoted in Yáñez-Bouza 2007:122).

Although there has been no similar study of nineteenth- and twentieth-century attitudes towards preposition stranding, Yáñez-Bouza (2007:279) assures us, based on her ongoing research, that '"prepositions at the end" are still a matter of debate' in the twentieth century. In the materials in my precept corpus, there is a marked decrease in proscriptions of preposition stranding. In the nineteenth century, we continue to find advice, clearly based on Lowth, that preposition stranding should only be used in familiar language:

> In the familiar style, a preposition governing a relative or interrogative pronoun, is often separated from its object, and connected with the other terms of relation; as, "*Whom* did he speak *to*?" But it is more dignified, and

> in general more graceful, to place the preposition before the pronoun; as, "*To whom* did he speak?" (Brown 1823:173).

There are also more direct proscriptions:

> Avoid ending the sentence with an adverb, preposition, or any insignificant word (Parker 1832:66).

However, the descriptive grammars of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century generally accept that preposition stranding is more widely prevalent in English:

> very frequently, in all styles of English, the object of a preposition is placed before the verb in the sentence, while the preposition comes after it (Whitney 1877:144).

Preposition stranding continues to be discussed in twentieth-century materials; indeed, there are entire articles devoted to the subject. Fowler's *SPE* tract 'Preposition at End' gives the following advice:

> if the abnormal, or at least the unorthodox, final preposition that has naturally presented itself sounds comfortable, keep it; if it does not sound comfortable, still keep it if it has compensating vigour, or when among awkward possibilities it is the least awkward (1923:21).

Pence's article 'Up with which we can no longer put' (1949) allows the construction in spoken English, 'where it is often perfectly natural for a preposition to come at the end of a statement'; avoiding this can result in 'prissy, schoolmarm diction' (1949:199-200). On the other hand, in written English, 'I may plan my sentence… [and] there is no excuse for my wasting the most emphatic place in the sentence on as weak a word as a preposition'. However, '[e]ven in written discourse *naturalness* should govern the word order' and an end-placed preposition is better than an awkward avoidance of one. In both of these articles then, it is argued that preposition stranding should be avoided if possible, particularly in written English, but allowed if it is the only 'natural' option.

Other writers, however, go as far as advocating preposition stranding and proscribing the alternative as awkward and unidiomatic. Malone (1928:264) advises that 'the question *what are you talking about* is excellent, idiomatic

English, whereas *about what are you talking* (with the preposition at the beginning) is alien to the genius of the language and not to be recommended'. However, the fact that the rule continues to be discussed in articles and usage manuals suggests that some people still advocated it.

As Yáñez-Bouza (2007:18) shows, preposition stranding can occur in a variety of contexts in English, such as prepositional passives (example 1a), interrogatives (1b) and relative clauses (1c):

1a. Paul was laughed at.

1b. Who(m) are you talking to?

1c. This is the house which I lived in.

These examples can be rephrased so as to avoid preposition stranding. The passive sentence can be rewritten as active (2a). In the interrogative and relative, the preposition can be moved to the left of the clause – (2b) and (2c) – a movement called 'pied piping' (Yáñez-Bouza 2007:20, after J.R.Ross):

2a. Somebody laughed at Paul.

2b. To whom are you talking?

2c. This is the house in which I lived.

There are some contexts, though, where pied piping cannot take place, for example in interrogative or relative clauses with idiomatic phrasal-prepositional verbs. Sentences (3a) and (3b) cannot be converted into (4a) and (4b), where the preposition is moved to the left, nor into (5a) and (5b), where both preposition and adverbial particle are moved to the left:

3a. What have we run out of?

3b. Those are the beans which we have run out of.

4a. *Of what have we run out?

4b. *Those are the beans of which we have run out.

5a. *Out of what have we run?

5b. *Those are the beans out of which we have run.

This kind of sentence is parodied in Winston Churchill's famous (and apocryphal) statement: 'This is the sort of bloody nonsense up with which I will not put' (quoted in Crystal 2007:112).

The adverbial particles in idiomatic phrasal verbs can similarly end sentences in passives (6a), interrogatives (6b) and relatives (6c):

6a. The sandwiches have already been made up.

6b. What kind of sandwiches did you make up?

6c. These are the sandwiches which we made up.

The passive form can be converted into an active (7a):

7a. Somebody already made up the sandwiches.

However, the same restrictions on pied piping occur as with phrasal-prepositional verbs: it cannot be employed in interrogatives (7b) or relative sentences (7c):

7b. * Up what kind of sandwiches did you make?

7c. * These are the sandwiches up which we made.

(Literal phrasal verbs are not always subject to the same restrictions: see 1.3.1.)

Furthermore, adverbial particles can also end sentences in straightforward SP(O) clauses: firstly, where the phrasal verb is intransitive (8a) and secondly, where the phrasal verb is transitive with a pronominal object (8b):

8a. I give up.

8b. I left it out.

The only way to avoid ending these sentences with adverbial particles would be to completely rephrase them or replace the phrasal verbs with simple (often Latinate) verbs, as in (9a) and (9b):

9a. I surrender.

9b. I omitted/excluded it.

It is evident, then, that adverbial particles end sentences in a wider variety of contexts than prepositions, and that it is less easy to convert these into sentences without final particles.

As discussed in chapter 2, many of the works in the precept corpus, especially those written before the twentieth century, treat adverbial particles as prepositions. It is not surprising then, that several pre-twentieth century works

include phrasal verbs in their proscriptions against preposition stranding. The earliest work to do so is Blair's *Lectures on Belles Lettres* (1783:Vol.I, 287):

> A fifth rule for the strength of sentences; which is, to avoid concluding them with an adverb, a preposition, or any inconsiderable word. Such conclusions are always enfeebling and degrading [...] For instance, it is a great deal better to say, "Avarice is a crime of which wise men are often guilty," than to say, "Avarice is a crime which wise men are often guilty of." This is a phraseology which all correct writers shun; and with reason. For, besides the want of dignity which arises from those monosyllables at the end, the imagination cannot avoid resting, for a little, on the import of the word which closes the sentence: and as those prepositions have no import of their own, but only serve to point out the relations of other words, it is disagreeable for the mind to be left pausing on a word, which does not, by itself, produce any idea, nor form any picture in the fancy.
>
> For the same reason, verbs which are used in a compound sense, with some of these prepositions, are, though not so bad, yet still not so beautiful conclusions of a period; such as, *bring about, lay hold of, come over to, clear up*, and many other of this kind; instead of which, if we can employ a simple verb, it always terminates the sentence with more strength.

Thus the reader is told not to place the phrasal verbs *bring about* and *clear up* or the phrasal-prepositional verb *come over to* at the end of a sentence. Furthermore, Blair does not suggest moving the phrasal verb to an earlier part of the sentence, but recommends omitting it altogether and 'employ[ing] a simple verb' instead.

Because of Blair's influence on subsequent grammars and usage manuals, this advice is perpetrated throughout the nineteenth century. Murray (1795:208-9) copies Blair's proscription verbatim. Gregory (1808:Vol. I, 111) repeats Blair's example ('[a]varice is a crime...') and adds that '[c]ompound verbs should seldom be used at the end of sentences'. Jamieson (1818:100-1) also copies Blair, but rewords the proscription slightly to make it stronger:

> For the same reason, verbs which are used in a compound sense, with some
> of the prepositions, are *not beautiful conclusions* of a period. Such verbs
> as, *bring about, lay hold of, come over to, clear up,* and many other of this
> kind, ought to be avoided, if we can employ a simple verb, which will
> always terminate the sentence with more strength [Jamieson's italics].

Jamieson omits Blair's concession that phrasal verbs at the end of sentences are
'not so bad' as other forms of preposition stranding (implying that he thought
them quite as bad), and rewrites Blair's 'not so beautiful conclusions' with the
terser 'not beautiful conclusions'. He also adds the direct proscription that these
'ought to be avoided'.

Bain (1867:115) is also direct in his proscription:

> The worst kind of ending is a syllable short, emphatic and abrupt; as, 'He
> came up.' A monosyllable is not necessarily a bad close. It may be
> unemphatic, as often happens with the pronoun *it,* and with the
> prepositions *of, to, for* &c.: or it may have liquid or other consonants that
> protract the sound, as *ease, same, shine*.

This statement is interesting in that Bain does not criticize all monosyllables at
the end of sentences, but only stressed ('emphatic') monosyllables, which are a
particular feature of phrasal verbs. Furthermore, the example that Bain gives is
a sentence with an intransitive phrasal verb ('he came up') where the particle
cannot be moved. We have to assume, then, that Bain was advising his readers
to avoid phrasal verbs altogether in such contexts.

Another interesting point about Bain's proscription is that it appears to refer to
speech rather than writing, with its reference to 'liquid or other consonants'.
Blair had argued that preposition stranding 'is a phraseology which all correct
writers shun' (1783; my italics), but there was perhaps an awareness in Bain that
advice relating to monosyllables is more appropriate to the spoken language.

As noted above, fewer proscriptions of preposition stranding are found in the
twentieth century. Furthermore, in this period there is an increased awareness
of the difference between prepositions and adverbial particles, and

consequently it is often pointed out that phrasal verbs should not be included in the proscription against preposition stranding. Smith (1923:12-3) argues that preposition stranding 'is perfectly good English, and is only condemned because it is not found in Latin, or in languages derived from Latin'; he then gives examples, including phrasal verbs (*weed it out, get up*), from 'good writers'. Furthermore, he remarks that:

> Owing to their close connexion with prepositions at the end of clauses (and these terminal prepositions are generally the detachable parts of phrasal verbs) they have shared in the discredit which this English usage has incurred; and when Dryden, in revising his prose, moved back his prepositions, he also eliminated a number of phrasal verbs, changing 'bound up' to 'limited', 'brought in' to 'introduced', and 'looking upon' to 'regarding', &c. (1923:8).

In his article defending preposition stranding as 'perfectly natural', Pence (1949:200) writes that

> Prepositions are often confused with adverbs. In such a sentence as 'The old building had to be torn down,' *down* is an adverb, not a preposition… Similarly *off*, *up,* and *out* are adverbs, in 'The meeting has been put off,' 'He will have to settle up,' 'The fire has been put out.'

In these cases, argues Pence, the so-called stranded preposition is not a preposition at all, and thus should not be criticized. Another article which defends preposition stranding is Stevick's 'The "Deferred Preposition"' (1950:213-4). Stevick argues that in 'sequences of verb and preposition' and in '[c]omplicated poly-word verbs' such as *put up with*, 'most speakers feel the verb and preposition to be fused into one word' and thus it is awkward to move the preposition to avoid stranding. Similarly, Gowers (1954:139) observes that 'when the final word is really a verbal particle, and the verb's meaning depends on it, they form together a phrasal verb… – *put up with* for instance – and to separate them makes nonsense'. Gowers' edition of Fowler (1965:475) adds that '[i]f the preposition is in fact the adverbial particle in a PHRASAL VERB, no choice is open to us; it cannot be wrested from its partner. Not even Dryden would have altered *which I will not put up with* to *up with which I will not put*'.

The latter three articles only directly mention phrasal-prepositional verbs – indeed, the same one, *put up with*, alluding to Churchill's satirical example. However, because phrasal-prepositional verbs were generally classified as phrasal verbs in this period (see chapter 2) we can infer that these writers were also referring to phrasal verbs in their statements that it is awkward to separate 'fused' verbs.

The foregoing analysis has shown that in the eighteenth and occasionally the nineteenth century, end-placed particles were condemned alongside end-placed prepositions, and the result of this was a suggestion (explicit or implicit) that phrasal verbs should be avoided altogether in these positions. However, in the twentieth century a more positive attitude towards end-placed particles developed. This was partly because preposition stranding in general came to be viewed as more acceptable and natural; and partly because it was recognized that particles are not the same as prepositions, and that in some cases avoiding end-placed particles can be awkward if not impossible. While this development does not necessarily imply an active approval of phrasal verbs, but rather a lack of disapproval (that there is nothing wrong with ending a sentence with an adverbial particle), it would have permitted the use of phrasal verbs in a wider variety of contexts, and perhaps a general perception of them as more acceptable.

4.3.4. Other

There are two eighteenth-century works which criticize phrasal-prepositional verbs in the passive voice (e.g. *he was fallen out with by her*) as inelegant and clumsy, because of the clustering of monosyllables. Campbell (1776:Vol. I, 494) writes that 'it must be owned, that the passive form, in this kind of decomposite verb, ought always to be avoided as inelegant, if not obscure', since bringing together three prepositions 'inevitably creates a certain confusion of thought'. Ussher (1785:59) agrees that these

> are sometimes very inelegant; as *The rock was split upon by the ship. They were fallen out with by her. She was gone up to by him.* On these

> occasions Transitive Verbs are to be preferred; as, *The ship split upon the rock. She fell out with them. He went up to her*.

This appears to be related to the preference for Latin polysyllables over English monosyllables. Campbell's distaste for 'inelegant' and 'confused' clusters of prepositions is reminiscent of his description of English as a clumsy analytic language (4.2.1 above).

There is one twentieth-century usage manual which criticizes the separation of verbs and particles. In a section entitled 'Up – separating from the verb', Berry (1963:92) argues that '[i]f the preposition "up" is to be used with a verb, it should not be needlessly separated from the verb'. He gives the examples *the highwayman held up the traveller*, which he argues is better than *the highwayman held the traveller up*, and *the mechanic tuned up the motor*, rather than *the mechanic tuned the motor up*. It is not clear what the basis of this proscription is, or whether it extends to other verbs and particles, but it seems to be related to the preposition stranding debate and to the particularly 'English' analytic feature of separable particles (as opposed to synthetic Latin prefixed verbs)[40].

Although in these works phrasal verbs in themselves are not condemned, but rather certain syntactic uses of them, such comments might have led wary readers to avoid them altogether. However, in one eighteenth-century grammar there does appear to be a general proscription of phrasal verbs. After repeating Lowth's description of compound verbs (encompassing both phrasal and prepositional verbs), Bayly (1772:76-7) writes:

> I am at a loss in what class to place compound verbs, whether in that of thoughtless chance, or of judicious accommodation. When I feel an embarrasment [sic] in their pronunciation by the increase of syllables, and see prepositions used in separation before the noun of like import to those

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[40] Indeed, Bolinger (1971:57) suggests that 'until the present century end position [of particle] was comparatively rare in writing'. Rissanen (1999:269) writes that the placement of nominal object follows the same rules in EModE as in PDE (i.e. either before or after the particle, but with varying tendencies depending on the length of the object, etc.), but Claridge (2000:150) found that only 1.3% of nominal objects in phrasal verbs in the Lampeter Corpus were placed between verb and particle.

in composition, I then see them as an incumbrance and deformity, similar
to that in the cases of substantives; but when they save the use of
prepositions, and bring no inconvenience of utterance, I am inclined to
admit them among the ingenuities and ornaments of art.

Although the exposition of his argument is less than clear, the reasons for
Bayly's dislike of these compounds appear to be based on an unfavourable
comparison with Latin: phrasal verbs increase the number of (mono)syllables,
and involve the separation of the verb from its particle ('preposition'). In
contrast, if they do not exhibit these features, then Bayly is prepared to accept
them[41].

4.4. Conclusion

Figure 4-1 Percentage of works in the precept corpus expressing positive and
negative attitudes towards the native origin of phrasal verbs
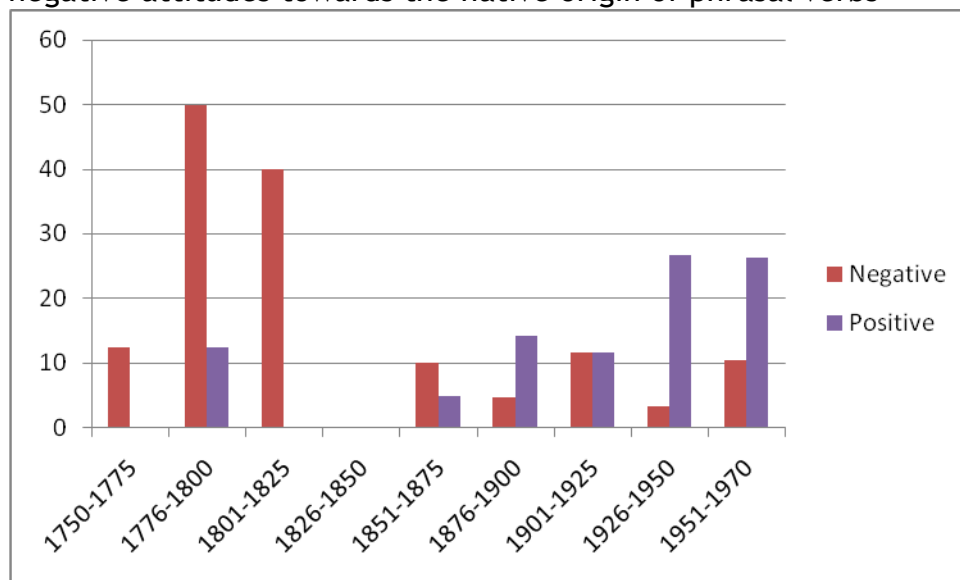
Figure 4-1 displays the percentage of works in the precept corpus with positive
and negative attitudes towards phrasal verbs as related to Latinate vocabulary
and grammar. It is evident that negative attitudes declined, while positive
attitudes increased, particularly in the twentieth century. This change in
attitude is due to two developments. Firstly, there was a shift towards a
preference for plain 'Saxon' language as more direct, vigorous and expressive,

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[41] It is not clear, however, what Bayly means when he writes that these compounds are
acceptable 'when they save the use of prepositions'.

and a corresponding distaste for excessively Latinate vocabulary; phrasal verbs and their Latinate equivalents were viewed in the context of this dichotomy. Secondly, the declining influence of Latin grammar meant that preposition stranding was less frequently proscribed, while the recognition that adverbial particles differ from prepositions meant that end-placed adverbial particles were also viewed as entirely natural in English. This development meant that phrasal verbs came to be accepted in a wider variety of grammatical contexts.

Chapter 5. One word, one meaning: phrasal verbs and attitudes towards etymology, polysemy and redundancy

5.1. Introduction

One characteristic feature of phrasal verbs is their semantic fluidity and flexibility. This was recognized in some of the earliest accounts of phrasal verbs, such as Joseph Priestley's remark that the idiomatic meanings of phrasal verbs made them 'peculiarly difficult to foreigners' (1768:142). Occasionally such comments were neutral, but more often they were negative, expressing concern that phrasal verbs were illogical, weak, ambiguous or redundant. Such attitudes are found in over a third of the works in the precept corpus, and will be analyzed in 5.3, after an overview of the history of related ideas, in 5.2.

5.2. Attitudes towards etymological meanings, polysemy and redundancy: an overview

Three kinds of attitude which are relevant to this chapter will now be discussed: the 'etymological fallacy', or the belief that the original meaning of a word is its true meaning (5.2.1); the view that each word should have only one meaning (5.2.2); and the criticism of redundant words (5.2.3). Given the complexity of these attitudes, some additional material – the treatment of etymological senses in English dictionaries, and a brief history of the recognition and treatment of polysemy in English – is given in appendix 6.

5.2.1. Etymology and the true meaning of words

In 1977 John Lyons coined the term 'etymological fallacy' to refer to 'the common belief that the meaning of words can be determined by investigating their origins' (Lyons 1977:244). The concept is much older: belief in the power and importance of etymology goes back at least as far as Plato's *Cratylus,* 'the earliest record of any extended debate on linguistic questions that survives in Western literature' (Harris and Taylor 1989:1). *Cratylus* (written around 360 BCE) is a dialogue between Socrates, Cratylus and Hermogenes on the question of whether the forms of names (largely proper names, but also common nouns such as *soul, body, moon* and *sun*) are natural or conventional. Socrates agrees with Cratylus 'that things have names by nature, and that not every man is an artificer of names, but he only who looks to the name which each thing by

nature has, and is able to express this name in letters and syllables' (Jowett 1953:49). Throughout the dialogue, Socrates employs some rather fanciful etymologies to support this position, and there is no obvious etymological method other than that of adding and changing letters as required. The *Cratylus* 'heavily influenced the Stoics; and its "method" set the tune for etymology up into the middle ages' (Baxter 1992:57). Indeed, its use of etymology (or pseudo-etymology) to discover the 'true' meaning of a word continued down the centuries and in other Western cultures (see e.g. Bordhart 1968). However, it would be unfeasible to trace the history of etymology since Plato: given the focus of this thesis, the discussion will be restricted to British and American ideas about etymology since the eighteenth century[42].

The importance given to etymology in eighteenth-century Britain was partly due to the influence of John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690). Unlike Plato, Locke held that the forms of words are arbitrary and conventional: 'sounds have no natural connexion with our *ideas,* but have all their signification from the arbitrary imposition of men' (1690:Vol. II, 105). However, since complex ideas are based on simple ones, we would better understand words referring to complex ideas if we could trace these to the simple ones to which they originally referred:

> *Spirit,* in its primary signification, is breath; *angel,* a messenger; and I doubt not but, if we could trace them to their sources, we should find in all languages the names, which stand for things that fall not under our senses, to have had their first rise from sensible *ideas* (1690:Vol. II, 5).

As Harris and Taylor (1989:119) remark, this passage was highly influential on eighteenth-century ideas about language, and 'suggested to many that, with the help of etymology, we should in principle be able to work out the original meaning (for some, such as Horne Tooke, the "true" meaning) of those words not standing for simple ideas of sensation'. Locke was also influential on eighteenth-century lexicographers, and etymological senses tended to be

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[42] Socrates also questions his own etymologizing, calling it an 'ingenious device' (Jowett 1953:78) and saying that 'the etymologist... is not put out by the addition or transposition or subtraction of a letter or two, or indeed when the same meaning is expressed in wholly different letters...' (1953:53). Whether or not this meant that Plato did not intend the etymologies to be taken seriously is a point of debate (see Sedley 1998). However, although the dialogue is by no means conclusive, it does establish the practice of deriving a word's true meaning from its etymology.

prioritized in English dictionaries well into the nineteenth century (see appendix 6).

The next important philosophical contribution to the etymology debate in Britain was John Horne Tooke's (1786, 1805) *The Diversions of Purley*. In this dialogic treatise, Tooke argues that all words are abbreviations of nouns and verbs referring to simple ideas or sensations. For example 'our corrupted IF has always the signification of the English Imperative *Give*; and no other' (1805:104) and the pronoun *it* is 'merely the past participle of the *haitan,* haetan, nominare' and thus means 'the said' (1805:59-60). Although he states that 'it was general reasoning *a priori,* that led me to the particular instances; not particular instances to the general reasoning' (1805:130), Tooke's argument is structured around the etymologies, and the bulk of the two volumes is devoted to (largely erroneous) derivations. Indeed, in *The Diversions of Purley* 'etymology acquires paramount importance as the only technique which can show, indeed demonstrate, the "concrete" origin of all words and all parts of speech' (Morpurgo Davies 1998:28).

The Diversions of Purley was enormously popular and influential (Aarsleff 1983:73, Morpurgo Davies 1992:29). That is not to say there was no opposition: Dugald Stewart in particular challenged Tooke in his 1810 essay 'On the Tendency of some Late Philological Speculations' (see Aarsleff 1983:102-5). Questioning Tooke's assumption that etymology is a valid method of discovering true meanings, Stewart argued that words only have meanings in context (1829:146) and that

> the instances are few indeed (if there are, in truth, any instances) in which etymology furnishes effectual aids to guide us, either in writing with propriety the dialect of our own times; or in fixing the exact signification of ambiguous terms (1829:169-70).

However, Stewart was in the minority, and in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Britain, Tooke's method of intuitive etymologizing held sway. As Jackson (1983:79) remarks, 'etymological speculation was as widespread and respectable a practice as it ever had been' and was 'a game any intelligent reader could play'.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the kind of intuitive etymologizing practised by Tooke (and by early nineteenth-century lexicographers; see appendix 6) had lost its prestige: 'the philosophical, a priori method of the eighteenth century was abandoned in favour of the historical, a posteriori method of the nineteenth' (Aarsleff 1983:127). However, belief in the importance of etymology (even if now scientifically rather than intuitively studied) continued with, if anything, heightened vigour. This belief can be seen in Richard Chevenix Trench's *On the Study of Words* (1851) and *English Past and Present* (1855). Trench has recently been portrayed as a linguistic prescriptivist: Aitchison (2001:120) describes 'his thunderous pronouncements [which] ... linked meaning change with general demoralization', while Adamson (2008:106) refers to 'the full-blown etymological fallacy as practised by Trench (under the influence of the Romantic philology of Horne Tooke)'. But Trench's understanding of language was more subtle than this kind of characterization allows. Referring to Ralph Waldo Emerson's image of language as 'fossil poetry', Trench writes of how, by rediscovering the original meaning of a word, one can understand its original force. For example, for the first person who spoke of a 'dilapidated fortune', 'what an image must have risen up before the mind's eye, of some falling house or palace, stone detaching itself from stone, till all had gradually sunk into desolation and ruin' (1851:12). This fascination with the history of words heralded a new kind of interest in etymology; not simply in the origin of a word, but in its semantic history. Along with this interest went concern, as Aitchison notes, that semantic change meant semantic weakening: Trench writes that

> [m]en forget a word's history and etymology; its distinctive features are obliterated for them... this is not gain, but loss. It has lost its place in the disciplined *army* of words, and become one of a loose and disorderly *mob* (1855:122).

However, Trench also allows that

> it is not of necessity that a word should always be considered to root itself in its etymology, and to draw its life-blood from thence. It may so detach itself from this as to have a right to be regarded independently of it (1851:63).

For example, despite their etymologies, *journal* can refer to a weekly newspaper, and *quarantine* to a period of isolation lasting any number of days (1851:63-4). Thus in Trench we can see a conflict between an understanding that

words do change their meanings and 'detach themselves from their roots', and a desire to repel this kind of change so as to make the semantic history of words more transparent.

In nineteenth-century Europe, semantics began to develop as a theoretical discipline in its own right. To begin with, the focus was largely on typologies of semantic change, but by the end of the century there was a new insistence on 'the forgetting of the etymological meaning' (Nerlich 1992:132) and focusing on the synchronic meaning of words based on language use and context. The key figure in this shift was, of course, Ferdinand de Saussure, with his edict that 'diachronic facts have no connection with the static fact which they brought about' (de Saussure 2005[1916]:120). Thus since the early twentieth century, etymology as a discipline has been somewhat marginalized from mainstream theoretical linguistics (Hutton 1998) and appealing to a word's etymology to explain its meaning is now generally considered, after Lyons (1977), a fallacy.

However, there continues to be a strong popular belief in the primacy of etymological meanings. Mittins et al., in their 1970 survey of attitudes towards a range of controversial usages, found that 'etymological items' such as *under the circumstances* were found unacceptable by nearly half of their respondents (1970:15). Such attitudes may be changing: Nunberg (1990) compared a 1969 and a 1988 survey of attitudes and found that on questions of etymology (such as *aggravate* meaning 'irritate') the more recent survey showed more tolerant views. However, one can still find comments such as the following by a writer in the *Boston Globe* complaining about unetymological uses such as *transpire* meaning 'happen': 'as etymologists say, if enough people agree on the wrong meaning of a word, eventually it becomes the right meaning. That's how language evolves. I'm just afraid that it's evolving in the wrong direction - toward ambiguity, vagueness, jargon' (Powers 2004).

5.2.2. Polysemy

Closely linked to the etymological fallacy is what might be called the 'monosemy fallacy'. This is the belief that each word has, or should have, only one meaning, and that the proliferation of polysemous senses is unnecessary, confusing, weak, or otherwise improper. This is a logical extension of a belief in the primacy of

etymological meanings: if a word's original meaning is its true meaning, then any additional meanings cannot be true.

A brief history of the recognition and treatment of polysemous senses in English is given in appendix 6, where it is shown that the concept of polysemy was not fully delineated or lexicalized until the early twentieth century. Thus in the following discussion of attitudes towards polysemy, it should be noted that it is not always clear whether the criticisms were of polysemy as now understood, or of homonymy or vagueness[43].

One early reason for criticizing polysemy was related to the interest in philosophical languages that developed in the seventeenth century. This can be seen in John Wilkins' *An Essay towards a Real Character, and a Philosophical Language* (1668), which proposed a method of giving each word (or rather, each sense of each word) a non-arbitrary name indicating its meaning. This made him more aware of polysemous words, which he then tabulated in his *Alphabetic Dictionary*. It also made him more critical of words with multiple meanings; in his artificial language, each form would have a distinct meaning, and vice versa. Wilkins writes that

> [i]n regard of *Equivocals,* which are of several significations, and therefore must needs render speech doubtful and obscure... that argues a *deficiency*, or want of a sufficient number of words. These are either *absolutely* so, or in their *figurative* construction, or by reason of their *Phraseologies* (1668:17).

He then gives examples of the homonyms *bill* (meaning a weapon, a beak and a scroll) and *grave* (sober, sepulchre, carve), and his use of the word *equivocal* is thus used to illustrate the sense 'homonym' in the *OED* (*equivocal* a. and n.). However, in the passage quoted above, Wilkins does seem to distinguish between homonyms (words whose meanings are '*absolutely*' several) and

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[43] Throughout this chapter, and in appendix 6, I use *polysemy* to refer to the multiple meanings of a single lexeme of a single origin, and *homonymy* to mean the unrelated meanings of two lexemes which have the same typographical and phonological form. This is not always an unproblematic distinction: for example, from a synchronic point of view, *pupil* 'scholar' and *pupil* 'centre of the eye' are unrelated and therefore homonyms, but from a diachronic point of view they are from the same root and therefore polysemes (see Taylor 2003:106). I will use the terms with a diachronic emphasis, and thus refer to lexemes such as *pupil,* whose meanings are related even if they are now not recognized as such, as polysemous.

polysemes (which have multiple meanings 'in their *figurative* construction'), and criticizes both. As Horgan (1994:138) remarks, 'Wilkins seems to betray no suspicion that certain aspects of verbal communication might actually be assisted rather than impeded by polysemy' and suggests that this was because 'the distrust of metaphor had become so deeply ingrained among men of science that it had become more or less identified with misrepresentation in their minds'.

A similar distrust of multiple meanings is expressed by Locke who, in his desire to define words with exactness in order to eradicate misunderstanding, writes that one

> should use the same word constantly in the same sense. If this were done... many of the books extant might be spared; many of the controversies in dispute would be at an end; several of those great volumes, swollen with ambiguous words now used in one sense and by and by in another, would shrink into a very narrow compass; and many of the philosophers' (to mention no other) as well as poets' works might be contained in a nut-shell (1690:Vol. II, 164).

For Locke, polysemy is a source of both ambiguity and wasteful 'swollen' language.

The notion that polysemes 'render speech doubtful and obscure' (Wilkins 1668:17) was developed in the rhetoric and usage manuals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Polysemy was not generally criticized in itself, but only when it caused potential misunderstanding. In his section on 'Equivocation' in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776) George Campbell writes of the 'species of equivocation that comes under reprehension... when an author undesignedly employs an expression susceptible of a sense different from the sense he intends to convey by it' (1776:Vol. II, 29). He allows that '[i]n order to avoid this fault, no writer or speaker can think of disusing all the homonymous terms of the language, or all such as have more than one signification' (the disjunctive suggests that by the latter phrase Campbell means polysemes). However, Campbell adds, 'equivocal terms ought ever to be avoided, unless where their connexion with the other words of the sentence instantly ascertains the meaning' (1776:Vol. II, 29). He gives several examples where polysemous words

might be misinterpreted, as in 'mortal animal', where *mortal* might mean 'causing death' or 'liable to death', and 'overlook a passage', where *overlook* could mean 'revise' or 'fail to see'. However, Campbell is also aware that such instances are rare, and that in most cases 'the hearer will never reflect that the word is equivocal, the true sense being the only sense which the expression suggests to his mind' (1776:Vol. II, 29). His argument here anticipates that of Bréal over a century later, that

> [i]t will be asked, how it is that these meanings do not thwart each other; but we must remember that each time the words are placed in surroundings which predetermine their import.... We are not even troubled to suppress the other meanings of the word: these meanings do not exist for us, they do not cross the threshold of our consciousness (Bréal 1964 [1900]:141).

Comments about the potential ambiguity of polysemous words can be found in other usage manuals of the period. For example, Williams (1830:10) notes in a paragraph on 'clearness' that

> there are numerous terms in English, which sustain several distinct acceptations; and although in most instances, the accompanying phraseology serves to display the general idea to be attached to a particular expression, yet it is very possible, so to introduce a word, as that its proper meaning shall be involved in a degree of obscurity.

Mathews (1876: 212-3) writes of words where 'under a seeming unity there lurks a real dualism in meaning, from which endless confusions arise' and gives as an example the 'ambiguity of the word *money*, which, instead of being a simple and indivisible term, has at least half-a-dozen different meanings [bank-notes, capital and credit, etc.]'. However, such comments are sporadic, and are generally accompanied by a comment to the effect that polysemy is rarely a cause of ambiguity.

Another aspect of this debate, directly related to the etymological fallacy, is the argument, not that words *should* not have more than one meaning, but simply that they do not, or cannot, since every word has only one true meaning. This argument was often voiced in reaction to the number of polysemous senses that began to be included in dictionaries. Harris (1752:14) complains of Ainsworth's

dictionary 'how intolerable must it appear to every Man of Sense, to find frequently 6, 8, 10, or 20 supposed different meanings added to a single Word, when in Reality it has but one *leading* Sense, which, once given, would inable a Learner to construe that Word in every Example produced'. Johnson's dictionary provoked similar comments: Tooke (1786:84) asks '[i]s it not strange and improper that we should, without any reason or necessity, employ in English the same word for two different meanings and purposes?' and argues that Johnson gives so many senses of words like *for* and *from* because he has mistakenly 'transferr[ed] to the preposition the meaning of some other word in the sentence' (1786:327). Following in this vein, Richardson criticizes Johnson for making 'distinctions [in sense], where no differences subsist' (1836:39), such as giving ten senses of *sad*:

> Here, then are ten distinct explanations of the same word, founded upon no etymological or radical meaning, totally disconnected; with no distinction of literal from etymological signification. How is it possible that any word should have such a variety of separate meanings? (1836:46)

Such comments continue throughout the nineteenth century. Richard Grant White, in his highly popular *Words and their uses* (1883), criticizes Johnson and Webster for the number of senses they give to words like *run* and *fall*. According to White, their system 'sets forth mere metaphorical uses of words as instances of their use in different senses' (1883:371); '[d]efinitions... must be formed upon the principle, which is axiomatic in language, that a word can have but one real meaning... metaphorical applications... have no proper place in a dictionary' (1883:389). Thus, White argues, a metaphorical sense of a word is not really a sense at all, as it is not the etymological sense; hence a polysemous word is not really polysemous.

Perhaps the most enduring criticism of polysemy, though, is that it weakens the language. This idea does not tend to be expressed in theoretical works (indeed, Bréal (1964 [1900]:140) asserts that '[t]he more meanings a term has accumulated, the more it may be supposed to represent the various sides of intellectual and social activity'), but rather in the advice in nineteenth- and twentieth-century usage manuals on how to use language precisely and expressively. For example, White (1883:81) writes that 'when we find in a language one word serving many needs, we may be sure that that language is the

mental furniture of an intellectually rude and poverty-stricken people'. The idea seems to be that it is simply lazy and uneducated to use one word to express more than one meaning. Furthermore, language critics argue that such laziness reduces the number of words in the language, thus rendering it less expressive. Kennedy (1933:6-7) writes that one 'method of eliminating words from the vocabulary of everyday speech... is through the multiplication of meanings' and this will 'result ultimately in a very marked decrease in the number of separate word-forms required to express our thinking'.

Another aspect of this debate is the criticism of particular polysemous words. In the entry for the verb *guess* in his *Dictionary of Americanisms* (1848), Bartlett writes that 'the words to fix and to guess' are instances of 'a tendency to banish from common use a number of the most useful and classical English expressions, by forcing one word to do duty for a host of others of somewhat similar meaning'. Perhaps the most frequently criticized word, though, is *get*. For White (1883:117), *get* is, of all words, 'one of the most ill used and imposed upon - is, indeed, made a servant of all work, even by those who have the greatest retinue of words at their command', while Bechtel (1901:55) advises of *get* and *got* that '[b]ecause a horse is willing is no reason why he should be ridden to death' (for other similar criticisms of *get* and *got,* see Rice 1932). The metaphor underlying all these comments is of words as workers or servants, with jobs to perform; if they have too many duties they cannot carry them out properly, and become weak with overwork.

5.2.3. Redundancy
Another idea related to the etymological fallacy is that each word should have a definable meaning, and that a word without meaning is redundant. Although this notion has not been treated as extensively as etymology and polysemy in theoretical works, it is a central aspect of works on rhetoric and usage in the period under analysis, as part of a more general criticism of verbosity and 'offences against brevity'.

The concept of 'verbosity' was lexicalized early and frequently in English: the *Historical Thesaurus of the OED* (henceforth *HTOED*) lists thirteen words for the sub-category 'verbosity' beginning with OE *gewyrd,* and twenty-two for

'prolixity', beginning with *prolixity* itself from c1374. *Verbosity* is defined in the *OED* as 'The state or quality of being verbose; superfluity of words; wordiness, prolixity', and *prolixity* as 'Tedious lengthiness of spoken or written matter; long-windedness, wordiness. Occas. in more neutral sense: lengthiness or elaborateness of discourse'. The definitions and quotations illustrating these words – for example 'The confusion, ambiguity, and verbose prolixity of the narrative' (1864, *prolixity* n) and 'He gave his opinion… with an emptiness and verbosity, that rendered the whole dispute… ridiculous' (1781, *verbosity* n) – make their pejorative connotations clear. Thus it is evident that the excessive and unnecessary use of words has long been criticized in English.

Related to verbosity is the concept of needless repetition or *tautology*:

> a. A repetition of the same statement. b. The repetition (esp. in the immediate context) of the same word or phrase, or of the same idea or statement in other words: usually as a fault of style [first quotation 1587] (*OED tautology*).

Again, this is seen as a fault. Perhaps the only exception to the generally pejorative connotations of such words is *pleonasm*, first used in 1610 and defined as 'The use of more words in a sentence or clause than are necessary to express the meaning; redundancy of expression either as a fault of style, or as a rhetorical figure used for emphasis or clarity' (*OED pleonasm*, 1a). Although pleonasms were often criticized, they were sometimes, as expressed in the definition, seen as a figure of speech: for example *false lie* is said to be an 'expressive pleonasm' in one quotation from 1860.

The word *redundancy* is not recorded in the *OED* until 1601/2. Although the *OED*'s definition 'The state or quality of being redundant; superabundance, superfluity' does not explicitly relate this quality to language, the first quotation does: 'There is in them me thinketh great redundancie of wordes, which might wel be spared' (*OED redundancy* n, 1a.). It is also clearly pejorative. The specific (and neutral) linguistic sense of *redundancy* – 'The element or degree of predictability in a language arising from knowledge of its structure; the fact of superfluity of information in a piece of language' (*OED redundancy* n, 2c) – is not recorded until 1948. Thus although it is now accepted that redundancy is essential to the production and processing of a language (Hurford 1994), this is a

relatively new concept. For the writers of usage manuals in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, redundancy, verbosity, prolixity, tautology and (sometimes) pleonasm, were seen as faults of style.

As Sundby et al. (1991:347) point out, eighteenth-century grammars often use terms such as *redundant* and *tautological* interchangeably. Similarly, subsequent popular usage manuals of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries do not always maintain the distinction between types, but use *redundant, superfluous, pleonastic, verbose* and *tautological* to refer to both repetition of meaning and lack of meaning. In some cases, metaphors of redundancy are used instead: for example, Mathews (1876:79) complains about 'authors who... pad out their sentences with meaningless expletives. They employ words as carpenters put false windows in houses; not to let in light upon their meaning, but for symmetry'; while Herbert (1935:151) compares superfluous words to 'unnecessary noise in a motor-car' or 'unprofitable splashing by a swimmer'.

Despite the variety of ways of expressing this criticism, the same kinds of constructions have been subject to censure. Most frequently criticized are adjectives expressing a quality inherent in the noun (e.g. *sylvan forest, new beginner, safe haven*); prepositions added to adverbs which include the same meaning (e.g. *from hence, from whence*); and, as will be discussed in 5.3 below, phrasal verbs.

It should be noted that many usage manuals are guides to written, rather than spoken, English (although not all explicitly state this). Since redundancy is a particularly prominent and necessary feature of spoken discourse (Jahandarie 1999:74) it is perhaps not surprising that it is criticized when used in writing. This is made explicit in one usage manual's comment about *more preferable* and *very slightest* that '[t]hese redundancies are derived from conversation, the vulgarities and inaccuracies of which frequently insinuate themselves insensibly into our written language' (Jamieson 1820:66-7).

5.3. Attitudes in the precept corpus towards the meaning of phrasal verbs

The following fifty-four works in the precept corpus express an attitude towards the meaning of phrasal verbs:

Author and date	Type of attitude
1. Campbell 1776	Redundant
2. Ussher 1785	New meanings
3. Mitchell 1799	Illogical & redundant
4. Brown 1823	Redundant
5. Anon 1826	Illogical
6. Whately 1836	Redundant
7. Smart 1848	Polysemous
8. Irving 1852	Polysemous
9. Reid 1854	Polysemous
10. Anon 1856	Redundant
11. Alford 1864	Redundant or emphatic
12. Routledge 1866	Redundant
13. Bain 1867	Redundant
14. Mathews 1876	Illogical
15. Nichol 1879	Redundant
16. Anon 1880	Redundant
17. Gould 1880	Redundant
18. Anon 1882	Redundant
19. Ayres 1882	Redundant
20. Anon 1886	Redundant
21. Moon 1892	Redundant
22. Genung 1893	Redundant
23. Meiklejohn 1899	Polysemous
24. Bechtel 1901	Redundant & wrong meaning
25. Hill 1902	Redundant
26. Bradley 1904	Distinct meanings
27. Brewster 1913	Redundant
28. Strunk 1918	Redundant
29. Kennedy 1920	Polysemous & emphatic
30. Smith 1923	Emphatic
31. Blackman 1923	Polysemous
32. Masson 1924	Redundant
33. Webb 1925	Redundant
34. Willis 1927	Distinct meanings

35. Harap 1930   Redundant
36. Anon 1933   Redundant
37. Smith 1933   Emphatic
38. Butler 1933   Emphatic
39. Anon 1934   Redundant
40. Herbert 1935   Redundant, polysemous & new meanings
41. Strauss 1947   Redundant
42. Partridge 1947   Redundant & polysemous
43. Gowers 1948   Redundant, polysemous & new meanings
44. Jowett 1951   Emphatic
45. Gowers 1954   Redundant
46. Anon 1962   Redundant & illogical
47. Berry 1963   Polysemous
48. Harrison 1964   Distinct meanings
49. Michaelson 1964   Illogical
50. Maude 1964   Illogical
51. Anon 1964   Redundant
52. Fowler 1965   Redundant
53. Follett 1966   Redundant
54. Caminada 1968   Redundant

Table 5-1 shows the number of works expressing different types of attitudes; the total figure is slightly higher than the number of works shown above, as there is sometimes more than one type of attitude per work. In 5.3.1 criticisms of 'illogical' phrasal verbs will be related to the etymological fallacy. The focus of 5.3.2 will be proscriptions of the excessive polysemy of phrasal verbs, and the opposing comments that phrasal verbs reduce polysemy by creating new and distinct lexemes. In 5.3.3 criticisms of redundant particles will be analyzed, as well as the opposing comments that particles have some sort of emphatic or intensive function.

Table 5-1 Number of works in the precept corpus expressing attitudes towards the meaning of phrasal verbs

	Illogical/ wrong meaning	Polysemous	Distinct/ new meanings	Redundant	Emphatic	Total
1750-1775	0	0	0	0	0	0
1776-1800	1	0	1	2	0	4
1801-1825	0	0	0	1	0	1
1826-1850	1	1	0	1	0	3
1851-1875	0	2	0	4	1	7
1876-1900	1	1	0	8	0	10
1901-1925	1	2	1	6	2	12
1926-1950	0	3	3	7	2	15
1951-1970	3	1	1	6	1	12
Total	7	10	6	35	6	64

5.3.1. 'Illogical' phrasal verbs and the etymological fallacy

Some of the earliest comments about phrasal verbs refer to their unexpected and unetymological meanings, often in relation to the difficulties they pose for non-native speakers of English. For example, Priestley observes that

> the component parts [of phrasal verbs] are no guide to the sense of the whole. Thus the common idea annexed to the verb *give* is lost in the phrases, *to give up, to give out, to give over,* &c. This circumstance contributes greatly towards making our language peculiarly difficult to foreigners (1768:141-2).

Bayly (1772:76) notes that the addition of particles to verbs 'modifies the signification... oftentimes with a wildness and equivocation that may be diverting to the natives, though perplexing to foreigners'. Meiklejohn (1899:71) writes that idioms (including phrasal verbs) are 'words, which, when combined with nouns, prepositions, or adverbs, change their meaning in the most surprising manner, and appear to bid good-bye to the original signification which they once bore'; these 'are the despair of the foreigner'.

However, these comments are fairly neutral. Only seven of the works in the corpus are directly critical of particles used in contrast to their 'real' meanings: four are usage manuals (Mitchell 1799, Anon 1826, Mathews 1876 and Bechtel

1901) and three are twentieth-century letters in *The Times* (Anon 1962, Michaelson 1964 and Maude 1964).

Mitchell (1799:28) suggests, of '*cut out* your hair and get a wig', that 'The cutting *out* of one's hair suggests a most painful operation, nor could it be efficiently done without the aid of a scalping knife', and recommends replacing this with '*cut off* one's hair'. Thus it is implied that the phrasal verb should be compositional and that the core meaning of *out* should be present. Similarly, Mathews (1876:346) writes of *crushed out* (as in 'The rebellion has been crushed out'): 'Why *out*, rather than *in*?', although he does not attempt to answer this question.

The unknown author of *The Vulgarities of Speech Corrected* (1826:90-1) goes into great detail about the illogicality of *up* in '*taken up* for a crime' and *lock up*:

> It is only a chance that his prison chamber may be *up*, instead of *down*; that is, elevated above the street, on which he was *taken*, instead of being sunk below it. If his crime be murder, or any other of a heinous stamp, he must be content with the lowest dungeon the jail can afford; and when settled in it, he must certainly be taken *down*, and not *up*. Fancy him brought to a lock-up house, and secured in the strong barred room on the first floor, while his guard sits over his head, on the second floor. One of them would easily say, 'he is locked *up* at last.' 'Where is he locked *up*?' - '*Downstairs*.'

In this example of *take up, up* metaphorically refers to the higher authority of the magistrate before whom one is taken. In *lock up, up* has a telic function, meaning 'lock completely'. However, the writer ignores these extended uses and implies that *up* should only be used in its literal meaning 'to a higher position in space'.

Similar comments can be found in twentieth-century texts. Bechtel (1901:62-3) complains that:

> *Fix* means to make fast, but its incorrect use in the sense of mend, repair, arrange, is so common that the word when properly used sounds strange, if not strained. "To fix up the room," "to fix up the accounts," "to fix up

matters with my creditors," "to fix the rascals who betrayed me," are examples illustrating the looseness with which the word is used.

Although he does not explicitly criticize the phrasal verb *fix up*, it occurs in three of his four examples. The implication is that the 'proper' sense of *fix* is lost in the phrasal verb *fix up*, with its 'loose' and 'incorrect' meanings 'arrange, settle, repair'.

An editor in *The Times* (Anon 1962) ignores the telic function of *up* and insists on its literal interpretation, asserting that *up* is illogical in *drink up* 'when we are obviously pouring drink down', as is *break up* (of schools) when 'pupils are breaking outwards'. In another series of letters to *The Times* entitled 'Out, damned out', one writer (Harrison 1964) defends the 'subtle and positive role' of adverbial particles like *up* and *out* in 'extending or broadening the concept contained in the verb'. The following week, Michaelson (1964:11) responds that:

> It would be helpful to those who have been convinced by Mr Joseph Harrison... if he would explain the difference in meaning of "slow up" and "slow down".

The implication here is that there is no difference. Maude (1964:11) replies that '[t]here may be a kind of crazy logic' in the use of phrasal verbs, 'but it stops well short of conviction'. Why, for example, do Americans *fill out* forms while we *fill* them *in*, why should a tree first be *sawn down*, then *sawn up*; and what are the differences between *wash, wash up, wash out*, and *wash through*?

In all of these criticisms, it is implied that the constituents of phrasal verbs (either the verbs or, more frequently, the particles) have, or should have, one particular meaning, and that in the cases given, they are used with the wrong meaning. Furthermore, it is assumed that it is illogical for different particles to be used synonymously, as they should have discernible meanings.

5.3.2. Polysemy of phrasal verbs

One of the most striking features of phrasal verbs is their frequently polysemous nature: indeed, phrasal verbs were used as a principal example in the paragraph in which Jespersen (1928:26) introduced the word *polysemy* to English:

> We now see the reason why polysemy is found so often in small words to an extent which would not be tolerated in longer words. This is particularly

> frequent with short verbs, some of which on that account are the despair of
> lexicographers... These verbs are frequently used in connexion with
> adverbs or prepositions in such a way that the meaning of the combination
> can in no wise be deduced from the meaning of each word separately, cf.
> for instance *put in, put off, put up (put up with), make out, make for,*
> *make up, set down, set in, set out, set on, set up* (this with some forty
> subdivisions), *give in, give out, give up*, &c.

In fact, phrasal verbs represent two kinds of polysemy: the polysemy of
individual phrasal verbs forms (for example, the many meanings of *take up*); and
the polysemy of the verbs which produce phrasal verbs (the meanings of *take up*
can be seen as contributing to the polysemy of *take*, as well as deriving from it).

The comments about the 'perplexing' nature of phrasal verbs for foreigners
(quoted in 5.3.1 above) may also have referred to their multiple meanings: in
particular, Bayly (1772:76) notes that the changed meanings result in
'equivocation'. It is not until the twentieth century that specific examples of
polysemous phrasal verbs are cited as being difficult for learners of English.
Stoakes (1943:453-4) notes that 'when he [the foreigner] encounters our "two-
and three-word verbs" he gasps once more in bewildered amazement'. Stoakes
gives as an example:

> You can, for instance, *run out of* supplies and *run out of* the house. You
> can *run down* the street, *run down* a reference, *run down* a reputation, and
> *run down* a pedestrian; you can also *run over* a pedestrian and *run into*
> him.

In this sentence, both the verb *run* and the phrasal verbs which it produces (*run*
down and *run out*) are polysemous (although he does not distinguish between
the phrasal verb in *run down a reference* and the verb with prepositional object
in *run down the street*). A similar comment can be found in a letter to *ELT*
Journal's 'Question Box' (Anon 1966), where a teacher asks for an explanation of
the meaning of *take off* (as in 'they take off several famous people'). The writer
replies that it means 'satirize', and that it is 'a good example of a phrasal verb
one of whose meanings has moved rather far away from those of its constituent
elements'; also that these phrasal verbs 'may give difficulty because, although
they have taken on new meanings, their old meanings may also continue to be
used'.

However, these comments do not necessarily indicate a criticism of the polysemy of phrasal verbs, rather an awareness of the difficulty this causes. Ten works in the corpus are critical of this feature: Smart 1848, Irving 1852, Reid 1854, Meiklejohn 1899, Kennedy 1920, Blackman 1923, Herbert 1935, Partridge 1947, Gowers 1948 and Berry 1966.

Sometimes the reason for criticism is potential confusion or ambiguity (cf. 5.3.1 above). For example, Irving (1852:32-3) gives the example 'It *fell out* unfortunately that two of these principal persons *fell out*, and had a quarrel' and writes that 'This is worse than the description of the children sliding on the ice, all on a summer day; of whom we are told, "It so *fell out* that they *fell in*."' Reid (1854:83) and Blackman (1923:50) repeat (or plagiarize) this criticism and example. Herbert (1935:200) complains about *winding up,* which he argues is confusing because it can mean 'starting' (of a clock) yet also 'finishing' (of a speech); and 'assembling' (of wool/thread, etc.) yet also 'distributing' or 'dispersing' (of an insolvent estate). Gowers (1948:42) quotes a sentence from *The Times* about a fire-extinguishing appliance: 'The engine and the foam pump motor were run up', and claims that

> Here the wanton addition of *up* is positively misleading. If the context did not show the meaning to be that these engines were run from time to time to keep them warm, the reader would have supposed it to be that they were brought rapidly to the scene of the accident.

Thus Gowers sees this new meaning of *run up* ('keep an engine warm') in semantic conflict with an earlier meaning ('make a hurried journey')[44].

In some cases, though, it is evident that the polysemy would not cause ambiguity, but is simply felt to be clumsy. Of a quoted use of the phrase 'the bus took off' Partridge (1947:326) writes that

> *The O.E.D. Supplement* admits the expression as applied in aeronautics: *to start from rest, attain flying speed and become air-borne.* True, an aeroplane is often called a 'bus', so why may not a 'bus' be said to 'take

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[44] The sense 'run (an aircraft engine) quickly while it is out of gear in order to warm it up' is recorded from 1938 in the *OED* (*run* v, 81i(f)), while 'take a (hurried) journey for the purpose of making a short stay at or visit to a place. Chiefly with *down, over, up*' is recorded from 1860 (*run* v, 11a).

off'? But 'take off' has several meanings already, both active and passive, and, unless we are to allow anything to mean anything and everything to mean everything else, some precision is advisable.

Another criticism is that excessive polysemy leads to semantic weakening. Kennedy (1920:43), using the nineteenth-century metaphor of words as workers (see 5.2.2 above), complains that '[a] verb-combination that is capable of fifteen different uses or phases of meaning has already become more or less a "Jack of all trades" and its capacity for good work on a given job is open to suspicion'. Furthermore, it is argued, such weakness can extend to the language as a whole. In a later article, Kennedy writes that:

> By combining the more commonly used verbs of English, such as *give, put, lay, get* and *bring* with some sixteen combining particles like *in, out, over, up, by, on, off,* it is possible to express a great variety of ideas with a relatively limited vocabulary. Hence there is a growing avoidance of many special verbs such as *recover* 'to get over,' *exhaust* 'to use up,' *examine* 'to look over,' and this disuse of such verbs threatens to cut down the active vocabulary of English very materially during the next few generations (1933:6).

Thus the polysemy of phrasal verbs is criticized because the more meanings a verb has, the fewer 'special' verbs the language needs, and the smaller the vocabulary becomes. That Kennedy sees this as a negative development is clear from his use of words like 'threaten' and 'limited'. This criticism is also linked to the loss of Latinate verbs such as *recover* and *exhaust* (cf. chapter 4).

Also criticized is the polysemy of verbs that form phrasal verbs. Smart (1848:29) argues that '[a] sentence may consist of unexceptionable words, and these may be put together without offence to grammar yet the whole sentence may be in bad taste: for instance, by a repetition of the same mode of speaking or phrase', and gives examples of repeated words like *got* and *so*. Several of the exercises that follow contain phrasal and prepositional verbs that are changed in the key. For example, Smart gives the following sentence for correction:

> He set off running as hard as he could; but they set the dogs upon him, on which he set up such a cry that they might have heard him a mile off.

In the key, 'set upon' is changed to 'let loose' and 'set up' to 'utter' (1848:88). The implication here is that the use of different meanings of *set*, which is highly polysemous partly because of the number of phrasal and prepositional verbs it forms, is an example of what he calls 'bad taste'. Similarly, in a chapter on 'Some common errors in English and grammar', Meiklejohn (1899:287) gives the following sentence as an example of 'illogical or misappropriate use of words':

> He walked to the table and took up his hat and bade adieu to his host and took his departure.

Meiklejohn argues that '"[t]ook" in two senses is illogical', and suggests writing 'lifted his hat' instead.

The worst offender, however, is *get*. Herbert (1935:215-8) despairs of the varied meanings of this word, listing phrasal and prepositional verbs with *get – get off with, get on, get at, get about, get round* and so on – mixed in with other phrases such as *get the hang of*, and suggests an exercise replacing all the *gets* in a narrative. Similarly, Berry (1963:135) argues that "'[g]et' is extensively used as a synonym for many other words" and criticizes the use of '*get* in' for arrive, and '*get* over' for recover, among other non-phrasal verb examples.

A contrasting perception of phrasal verbs, and one that is a source of approval, is that they *reduce* polysemy by giving finer distinctions to the meanings of the light verbs. Six of the works in the corpus voice this attitude: Ussher 1785, Bradley 1904, Willis 1927, Herbert 1935, Gowers 1948 and Harrison 1964.

Ussher stands out in being the only pre-twentieth century writer and the only grammarian in the corpus who expresses this opinion. He writes approvingly that:

> One great use of Prepositions in English is to encrease the number of our Verbs by changing their meaning, the same verb often admitting various significations by having different Prepositions joined to it. Ex. *To give up a project,* is to abandon it; but *to give into a project,* is to undertake it' (1785:79).

The next comment of this kind is found in Bradley's *The Making of English*:

> We can, if you please, call *give up, break out, set up, put through,* and such like, 'compound verbs'... In its power of expressing fine distinctions of

meaning by this method English vies with Greek and Roman, and has a great advantage over the Romanic languages, which have hardly any compound verbs at all (1904:123).

Willis (1927:544) notes that phrasal verbs are a means of 'coining new verbs (and derivatives) representing fine distinctions of meaning'. Of adverbial particles, Herbert (1935:153) writes that they 'have a magical and valuable power to enrich or distinguish a plebeian verb; and wherever they are properly employed to these ends we should be proud of them'. Gowers (1948:41-2) points out the usefulness of 'the marvellous flexibility which has enabled us for instance out of the strong, simple transitive verb *put* to create verbs of such diverse meanings as *put about, put away, put back* [etc.]'. Harrison (1964:13) writes that the addition of an adverbial particle 'plays the subtle but positive role of extending or broadening the concept contained in the verb'.

In all of these comments, phrasal verbs are praised for distinguishing the meanings of the verbs which produce them. This approval depends on the perception of a phrasal verb as a single lexeme, different from either of its constituent parts. That is, *give* in its many senses is highly polysemous, but when it produces phrasal verbs by the addition of particles like *up, out* and *off*, it is no longer polysemous but rather the root of separate lexemes with distinct meanings – *give up, give out* and *give off*. (Of course, these phrasal verbs can and do become polysemous themselves, but this point is not addressed in these materials.)

5.3.3. Redundant particles

One of the most frequently voiced criticisms of phrasal verbs, found in thirty-five of the works in the precept corpus (a quarter of the total), is that the adverbial particle is redundant. The extent to which these works are explicitly critical of phrasal verbs varies. The earlier works tend to give a few examples of phrasal verbs in sections on pleonasm, redundancy, tautology or superfluous words. For example, Campbell (1776: Vol II, 278) explains of pleonasm that

> Here, though the words do not, as in the tautology, repeat the sense, they add nothing to it. For instance, "They returned *back again* to the *same* city *from* whence they came *forth*" instead of "They returned to the city whence they came". The five words *back, again, same, from,* and *forth,*

are mere expletives. They serve neither for ornament, nor for use, and are therefore to be regarded as encumbrances.

Two of these five words (*back* and *forth*) are adverbial particles[45]: evidently Campbell considered phrasal verbs a useful example of pleonasm. This sentence is repeated as an example in Whately's (1836:300) section on pleonasm and in Bain's (1867:70) discussion of redundancy/pleonasm. Similarly, when Brown (1823:306) advises the reader to '[a]void a useless tautology, either of expression or sentiment', five of his eighteen examples are phrasal verbs (*return back, converse together, rise up, fall down* and *enter in*).

Gould (1880:108-9) is the first to indicate a more specific awareness of the tendency of adverbial particles to be used redundantly. Of *open up,* he asks:

> Can any English scholar inform anybody else what is the propriety of "up" in those and in a thousand similar instances? No doubt, "up" is a little word, and it may often be overlooked in a crowd; but it has a very ambitious strut, when thus paraded on stilts.

Genung (1893:331) and Hill (1902:208) also comment on the superfluous use of *up,* and Strunk (1918) on the redundant use of *up* and *out.* Another comment about redundancy is found in Masson's (1924:47) chapter on Scotticisms. After criticizing the use of *get over* in a sentence about 'getting over to hear the minister', she advises that:

> *Up, down, along, through, over,* etc., should not be used in connexion with places unless to emphasise altitude or direction. Thus, do not say "I am going down to so and so's" unless you wish to emphasise the fact that 'so and so' lives at the bottom of a hill[46].

These writers are evidently aware that phrasal verbs with 'redundant' particles are not just isolated instances, but reflect a more general tendency[47].

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[45] It is possible that *again* is also an adverbial particle in this sentence, used in the sense 'back', which was archaic but still in use in Campbell's time (*OED again* adv, 1b and d).

[46] The accuracy of the assertion that such usages are Scotticisms is discussed in chapter 7.

[47] A note on terminology is necessary here, to avoid putting 'redundancy' and 'redundant' in inverted commas throughout. I will use *redundant* to refer to phrasal verbs/particles which are treated as such in the grammars, even though they would no longer be perceived as redundant in modern linguistic theory, but rather as intensive, Aktionsart, etc.

Anon (1933), in a series on 'American Prepositions' in *The Times* (discussed in more detail in chapter 7) points out that many of the redundant particles under attack are not in fact Americanisms, but adds that

> it does not follow that because a bad usage, old or new, is not American but English in origin, every one is bound to stand for it... unless we watch out, the speeding-up of this abuse of prepositions (or adverbs) will cancel out all the good that is being tried out by the Society for Pure English, and by the B.B.C., to whose pronouncements on the English language we all listen-in with a reverent hold-up of the breath.

The 'bad usage' and 'abuse' which is derided here is clearly the addition of redundant particles.

Herbert (1935) goes beyond any of the earlier materials in his discussion of redundant particles. Firstly, he attempts to define them: he calls the second element of *try out* an 'adverbial particle', and adds that

> There are others like him - ups, and ins, and downs, and throughs, and tos adhering loosely to the tails of verbs. They are sometimes adverbs, or prepositions masquerading as adverbs, and sometimes, I think, prepositional phrases with a word or two left out (1935:151).

He criticizes the use of these particles in several parts of his usage manual, for example:

> The trouble is that the baser sort of English-speaker... thinks that it is right and clever to add 'up' or 'out' to any short verb, though the sense is neither enriched nor altered (1935:153).

Similarly, *beat up* meaning 'beat' is 'mere verbosity, and is not necessary even for eggs' (1935:155), while elsewhere the phrasal-prepositional verbs *check up on, face up to* and *meet up with* are examples of a tendency whereby 'in the continual effort to be swift and snappy the slangsters become at last verbose and dilatory' (1935:42).

By the mid-twentieth century the discussion of redundant phrasal verbs was a staple of usage manuals. As well as having separate entries on pleonastic *burn up, burn down, climb up, close down, face up to* and *watch out,* Partridge (1947:327-8) gives a list of 141 tautological phrases, of which forty-nine (over a third) are phrasal verbs. Gowers (1948:41-2) discusses redundant phrasal verbs

like *man up* and *study up* in a section 'Tacking Prepositions to Verbs', while Fowler (1965:451) has a section on phrasal verbs in which it is lamented that 'we have got into the habit of using phrasal verbs in senses no different from that of the parent verb alone'.

A full list of the phrasal verbs which are criticized as redundant is provided in appendix 7. Most of the phrasal verbs appear in only one or two works, and some of these seem quite idiosyncratic, such as *weaken up* in Hill (1902), which is not included in either the *OED* or Craigie and Hulbert's *A Dictionary of American English* (1938-44). In this section I will examine the phrasal verbs which are most frequently listed as redundant in the corpus: *return back* (in 10 works), *rise up* (9), *open up* (7), *ascend up* (7), *sink down* (6), and *meet up* (*with*) (6). Table 5-2 shows the dates of the materials in which these were criticized compared with the dates of their recorded usage in the *OED*.

Table 5-2 Redundant phrasal verbs in the precept corpus/*OED*[48]

Phrasal verb	References in the precept corpus	*OED* dates
return back	1776, 1823, 1836, 1856, 1867, 1882, 1882, 1886, 1930, 1947.	1590-1768
rise up	1823, 1856, 1880, 1882, 1882, 1886, 1893, 1901, 1947.	c1200 –
open up	1864, 1880, 1880, 1893, 1901, 1902, 1947.	a1400 –
ascend up	1880, 1882, 1886, 1893, 1901, 1925, 1947.	1526
sink down	1856, 1882, 1886, 1893, 1901, 1947.	1398 –
meet up (with)	1935, 1947, 1947, 1948, 1962, 1968.	1870 –

These results show an interesting mixture of tendencies. *Return back* and *ascend up* seem to have gone out of use before they started being included in usage manuals. *Rise up, sink down* and *open up* have, in their various senses, been in use for centuries[49]. Only the criticisms of *meet up (with)* seem to be in response to neologism: *meet up* is first recorded in 1884, and *meet up with* in 1870[50]. Thus there is no discernible pattern in the kinds of phrasal verbs that are

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[48] *Meet up* and *open up* are from *OED*3; the other entries are from *OED*2.
[49] *Open up* in its physical sense is recorded in a1400 and 1592, and then seems to have gone out of use until its next appearance in 1873. However, in its figurative senses (make accessible, available etc.) there is no such gap.
[50] *Meet up with* meaning 'overtake' is recorded slightly earlier (1837) as a regionalism.

criticized as being redundant: current, obsolete and new forms are all subject to censure.

In addition to particular phrasal verbs being singled out for criticism, there are patterns in the particles which are given as redundant, as can be seen in table 5-3. Until the end of the nineteenth century, criticisms are fairly evenly spread between *down*, *up* and *back*. From 1876-1950 *up* is by far the most frequently criticized particle, while in the period 1951-1970, phrasal verbs with *out*, as well as *up*, begin to draw criticisms.

Table 5-3 Redundant particles in the precept corpus

	up	out	down	back	together	off	in	over	on	other	Total
1750-1775	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1776-1800	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	5
1801-1825	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	5
1826-1850	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
1851-1875	2	1	2	4	1	0	1	1	0	2	14
1876-1900	16	3	8	4	3	0	2	2	3	0	41
1901-1925	18	5	5	1	0	2	1	1	0	3	36
1926-1950	41	8	8	7	13	1	2	1	1	1	83
1951-1970	13	15	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	32
Total	92	32	26	19	18	7	7	5	4	8	218

The phrasal verbs that are criticized as redundant in the precept corpus can also be usefully divided into semantic categories. Firstly, there are those where the particle repeats the meaning of a verb's Latin prefix:

> *recall back, relax back, repay back, restore back, retire back, retreat back, return back, revert back, descend down, enter in, issue out, protrude out, collaborate together, connect together, consolidate together, combine together, cooperate together*.

Secondly, there are other phrasal verbs where the particle repeats an element of the verb's meaning. For example, *fall* is usually defined as 'To drop from a high or relatively high position' (*OED fall* v, 1a), so the addition of the particle

down repeats the meaning of downward motion already evoked by the verb. The following phrasal verbs from the precept corpus belong to this group:

> *drink down, drop down, dwindle down, fall down, plunge down, reduce down, sink down, shrink down, swallow down, come forth, continue on, cover over, converse together, couple together, gather together, join together, link together, meet together, merge together, mingle together, mix together, unite together, ascend up, climb up, hoist up, rise up, soar upwards*[51].

Finally, there are those where the particle does not repeat any part of the meaning to the verb, but rather has an Aktionsart function. In the precept corpus, these are:

> *file away, vanish away, burn down, close down, settle down, listen in, start in, divide off, drop off, kill off, level off, pay off, start off, stop off, cancel out, crush out, drown out, lend out, lose out (on), miss out (on), sound out, start out, try out, watch out, win out, flood over, add up, beat up, burn up, button up, divide up, drink up, check up (on), eat up, end up, fail up, face up (to), finish up, grow up, hasten up, head up, hold up, hurry up, kill up, man up, match up, meet up (with), muster up, open up, pack up, polish up, register up, rest up, ring up, settle up, shoot up, shrink up, shroud up, sign up, speed up, start up, study up, take up, weaken up, weigh up.*

This classification was inspired by Hampe's (2002) synchronic study of redundant phrasal verbs in PDE, but with some modifications[52].

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[51] *Upwards* is not a prototypical particle and would be excluded in some classifications (although cf.Thim (2006:294) who includes *backward* and *homeward*(*s*)). I have included it here because I believe it implies a more general criticism: after giving this example, Routledge (1866:34) asserts that '[t]he needless insertion of a preposition is always to be avoided'.

[52] Hampe (2002:33) proposes five types: '1. constructions where the particles literally repeat elements of the verbal meanings... 2. constructions consisting of aktionsart verbs plus particles functioning as aspectual/aktionsart markers... 3. constructions consisting of accomplishment/achievement verbs... plus particles functioning as telic markers...4. constructions containing (mostly) deadjectival inchoative or causative verbs referring to gradual processes... [and] 5. redundant phrasal-prepositional verbs'. I disagree with Hampe's decision to classify phrasal-prepositional verbs separately: *meet up with* is as much an example of an accomplishment verb and particle as *meet up* (and in my materials, the two types are generally treated together). I have omitted group 4, as there is only one example of a deadjectival inchoative verb in my data (*weaken up*, elsewhere unattested). Furthermore, I have conflated groups 2 and 3, as they both involve a kind of Aktionsart. Finally, I have separated Hampe's group 1 (literal repetition) into two types, depending on whether the repetition of a Latin prefix is involved, since this is relevant to language attitudes in the LModE period.

I am following Brinton (1988) in using the term *Aktionsart* rather than *aspect* to refer to the function of particles in phrasal verbs such as those listed above. Aspect refers to a speaker's perspective of a situation, for example as completed (*perfective aspect*) or as continuing (*continuous aspect*). Aktionsart, on the other hand, refers to the intrinsic qualities of a situation: a lexeme can have *telic Aktionsart*, indicating that it must have an end-point, or *atelic Aktionsart*, indicating that no end-point is essential. Indeed, one can analyze a sentence in terms of both its aspect and its Aktionsart. For example, in 'the shoes are wearing out', there is continuous aspect, but the phrasal verb *wear out* is an example of telic Aktionsart, in that there is an intrinsic notion of end-point: if something wears out it becomes completely worn (Brinton 1988:168).

Let us return to the classification of phrasal verbs in the precept corpus as repetitive (Latin), repetitive (general) and Aktionsart. The classification is not always straightforward: *grow up*, for example, might be classified as repetitive (in that people and animals prototypically grow upwards, although in some cases outwards as well) or as having telic Aktionsart (in that *up* indicates the goal of the act of growing). I have classified as repetitive only those phrasal verbs where the primary senses of the verb are defined in the *OED* with reference to spatial direction, and where that direction is also expressed by the particle. Since the *OED* defines *grow* in terms of having life, coming into existence, and increasing in size (in any direction) (*grow* v, 1-6), with upward direction being a contextual rather than primary sense, *grow up* is classified as Aktionsart rather than repetitive.

Table 5-4 shows the number of criticisms of these types of phrasal verbs per period; figure 5-1 shows these as percentages of overall criticisms. It is evident that in the eighteenth and nineteenth century most of the criticisms are either of constructions like *return back*, where a Latin prefix is repeated in the form of a native adverbial particle, or *fall down*, where the particle repeats a meaning already evoked by the verb. These kinds of criticism become gradually less frequent, until in the period 1951-1970 there are no such comments. (Furthermore, almost all the examples of repetitive particles in the 1926-1950 section are from one work, Partridge 1947.) Conversely, there are very few criticisms of Aktionsart particles before the twentieth century, but by the final

sub-period 1951-1970, all of the criticisms are of this type. This pattern suggests a decreasing concern with etymology and logic, and an increasing concern with redundancy as a kind of stylistic weakness.

Table 5-4 Criticisms of types of redundant phrasal verb

	repetition of Latin prefix	other repetitive	Aktionsart	total
1750-1775	0	0	0	**0**
1776-1800	1	2	2	**5**
1801-1825	2	3	0	**5**
1826-1850	1	1	0	**2**
1851-1875	7	6	1	**14**
1876-1900	7	16	18	**41**
1901-1925	0	6	30	**36**
1926-1950	12	19	52	**83**
1951-1975	0	0	32	**32**
total	**30**	**53**	**135**	**218**

Figure 5-1 Criticisms of types of redundant phrasal verb, as percentage of overall criticisms
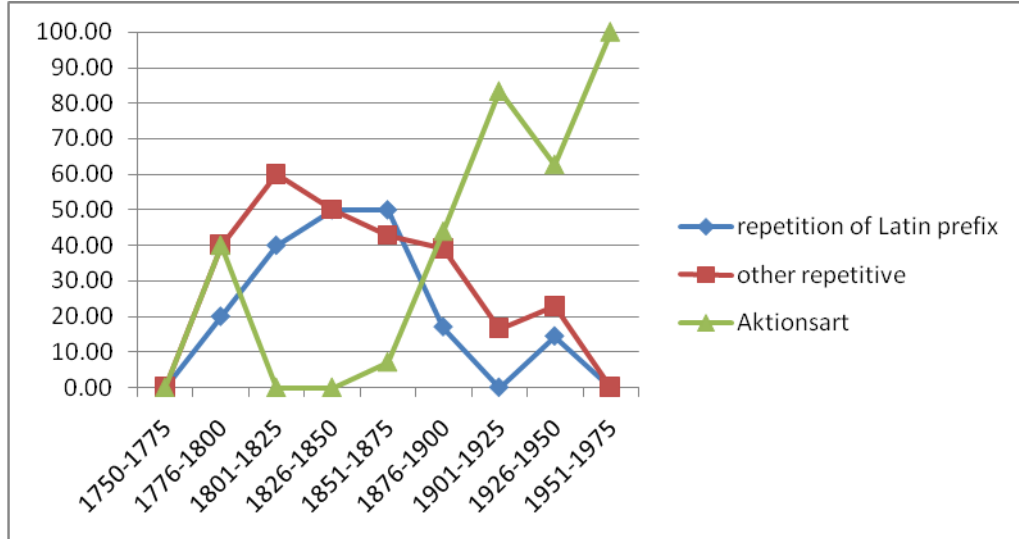
The perception of phrasal verbs such as *return back* and *protrude out* as redundant depends on awareness of the meanings of the Latin prefixes *re-* and *pro-*: the fact that there are fewer proscriptions of this type in the twentieth century could be related to the decline in classical education and hence the decreased salience of Latin etymologies (cf. chapter 4).

Some of the more perceptive early analyses of phrasal verbs recognized that supposedly 'redundant' particles do have particular functions. Johnson seems to have been the first to be aware of this; in the fourth (1773) edition of his *Dictionary* he adds several comments noting the intensive function of particles like *up* (cf. chapters 2 and 8). A century later, Alford (1864:168), despite criticizing *open up*, approves of *rise up* and *grow up* since 'in these cases the adverb, or intransitive preposition, *up*, gives us the tendency in which the progressive action indicated by the neuter verb takes place; and even if it did not do that, intensifies and gives precision'.

The first writer to specifically challenge the notion of redundancy in phrasal verbs is Kennedy (1920:18) who points out that 'such redundancies as *bow down, fill up, hatch up, leaf out,* have become so well entrenched in the language that one scarcely thinks it possible to use them otherwise'. Furthermore, he adds:

> I should hesitate to name a single combination as an example of redundancy since I believe that the speaker almost always feels a nice distinction even tho his sense of the logical tells him that the particle should be quite unnecessary… So we say, for example, *add up, air out… meet up… rise up…* [and] we feel a difference between *bowing* and *bowing down…* [etc.] (1920:28).

Other writers make similar comments in defence of supposedly redundant phrasal verbs where they feel there is some distinction in meaning. For example Gowers (1954:71), while disapproving of the addition of *up* in general, adds that *measure up to* is acceptable as it gives the verb a different meaning (i.e. being adequate to an occasion); while Herbert (1935:153) notes that *wash up* is more specific than *wash,* and *dress up* different from *dress.* Jowett (1951:156) points out that in phrasal verbs like *beat up, shoot up, eat up, drink up* and *mop up,* 'the particle "up" in these cases is used with intensive force and indicates the thoroughness and completeness of the process'.

Thus, alongside the many proscriptions of redundant particles there is an awareness, though voiced less frequently and more tentatively, that these particles can have the function of intensifying the verb, giving it a sense of completion, or distinguishing its meaning in some other (often unidentified) way.

5.4. Conclusion

Throughout the LModE period, semantic considerations were a significant feature of language attitudes. Until the mid-nineteenth century etymology was considered, in varying degrees, to be of primary import in deciding the true meanings of words, and this belief continues in popular works to the present day. Related to this is the criticism of polysemy. Lexicographers, grammarians, philosophers and usage writers since the eighteenth century have shown concern that polysemous words are ambiguous, unetymological or semantically weak. Another semantic feature that has been subject to criticism, particularly in usage manuals, is redundancy, of words that are thought to either repeat meanings or be empty of meaning.

These attitudes underlie many of the criticisms of phrasal verbs in this period. Belief in the primacy of etymological meaning occasionally emerges in criticisms of adverbial particles when used metaphorically rather than literally. The polysemous nature of phrasal verbs and the verbs that form them is also a source of criticism, sometimes because of potential ambiguity and sometimes because of the semantic weakening that polysemy supposedly causes. The most frequent criticism of phrasal verbs, though, is of redundant adverbial particles. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, most frequently criticized were particles that repeated the meaning of the verb in some way (as in *fall down* or *return back*). Since the late nineteenth century, the focus has shifted on to particles that are 'empty' of meaning (as in *open up* and *meet up*). It has been shown, though, that some writers were aware that these particles were not entirely empty, and tentative descriptions of the telic or intensive functions of particles like *up* and *out* can be found throughout the period.

Chapter 6. Vulgar abuses or enrichments of the vocabulary: phrasal verbs, linguistic levels and neologisms

6.1. Introduction

In the preceding two chapters, the attitudes under analysis have been based on theories about language use, relating firstly to borrowed versus native forms, and secondly to the semantic properties of words. In the next chapter, the focus will shift to attitudes towards language variety, and the perception of phrasal verbs as either Scotticisms or Americanisms. The present chapter will analyze attitudes relating to the more nebulous area of language level, and proscriptions of phrasal verbs as, for example, *slang, vulgar* or *low*. It will also consider the related area of neologisms, and attitudes towards phrasal verbs as a means of coining new lexemes. Before analyzing these attitudes in the precept corpus in 6.3, a brief overview of the semantic history of labels such as *slang* and *vulgar*, and an outline of attitudes towards neologisms, will be given in 6.2.

6.2. Attitudes towards linguistic levels and neologisms: an overview

6.2.1. Style and status labels

The use of style and status labels is one of the most subjective features of modern lexicography. Monson (1973: 211) writes that it is "not yet an exact science" while Hulbert (1955:83) suggests that it "is governed by nothing except the judgement of the editor and his advisers: there is no absolute criterion". Several studies (such as McDavid 1973) have shown that dictionaries do not always agree in their use and application of, for example, *colloquial* and *informal.* It is not surprising, then, that the meanings of style and status labels have also varied historically, not only in dictionaries (discussed in chapter 8) but in the usage manuals and other texts under analysis in this chapter. In this section, the various meanings of the three labels used most frequently in the precept corpus – *slang, colloquial* and *vulgar* – will be outlined.

'Slang', remarks Landau (2001:237), 'deserves a category all by itself. It is sometimes grouped with the style labels (*formal/informal*) and sometimes with the status labels (*standard/non-standard*), but it does not fit comfortably with either'. It is indeed a problematic label and, in modern dictionaries, is often

used interchangeably with *informal* and *colloquial* (Tottie 2002:104). Coleman (2004a:4) defines *slang* as follows:

> *Slang* terms are characteristically short-lived, and tend to be used by a closed group of people, often united by common interests… Some slang terms become more widely used, and enter into colloquial use or even standard language; most, however, fall from use altogether.

This indicates one of the main problems with the label: by the time slang terms have been captured and remarked upon, they have usually become obsolete or are no longer slang. Furthermore, as Coleman (2009:2) shows, the label *slang* is not usually used neutrally, since 'the choice of a slang term usually represents the rejection of a standard equivalent, and labelling a term or a set of terms as slang places them in opposition to the standard'. This is supported by uses of the term *slang* in the precept corpus, which are generally pejorative. For example, Anon (1856:70) advises the reader to '[a]void all slang and vulgar words and phrases'; Anon (1886:171) asserts that '[n]ext to profanity and obscenity, slang is the worst crime of speech'; Genung (1893:32-3) warns his readers to '[b]e too well informed to use slang and provincialisms' since 'slang words crowd out seriously chosen words and become only counters rather than coins of thought', and Bechtel (1901:22), in a similar vein, remarks that:

> Where there is least thought and culture to counteract its influence slang words crowd out those of a more serious character, until, in time, the young and inexperienced speaker or writer is unable to distinguish between the counterfeit and the genuine.

Occasionally a concession to its usefulness is made, but with reservations, as in White's (1883:85) comment that '[slang] is mostly coarse, low, and foolish, although in some cases, owing to circumstances of the time, it is racy, pungent, and pregnant of meaning'.

Colloquial is another problematic label. Even though it refers etymologically to medium of communication (spoken language), Kenyon (1948) shows how it has often been used as a label indicating cultural level (substandard language). Indeed, *colloquial* has been misunderstood so often that some modern dictionaries have stopped using it as a label altogether (Cassidy 2003:267). Again, there is evidence in the precept corpus for this use of *colloquial*. In the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century materials, *colloquial* tends to be used

negatively. For example, Mitchell (1799:vii) explains that the focus of his advice will be on 'such colloquial words and phrases, as prevail among the middle class, and into which, through inadvertence, even those who have had a liberal education, are sometimes apt to fall'. Smart (1848:39) writes, of preposition stranding, that ending a sentence on a polysyllable is preferable in any style 'at all raised above the colloquial'. The metaphor underlying both of these comments is that colloquial language is low: it is something that one might 'fall' into, and other styles are 'raised above' it. Furthermore, colloquial language is often treated in sections along with slang and vulgarisms, as in Anon (1886:174), who claims that '[c]olloquialism and vulgarism… arise, in the first instance, from use by persons of defective education'. In the twentieth-century materials, though, there are instances of *colloquial* being used to mean 'spoken, conversational', occasionally in a neutral or even positive way. For example, Jowett (1951:156) refers to phrasal verbs which are 'still more properly thought of as slang rather than good colloquial English'.

Another label with a varied semantic history is *vulgar* (see further Wild 2008). Two main senses are relevant to the precept corpus material: the sense 'coarse, unrefined', which is recorded in the *OED* since the seventeenth century (*vulgar* a, 13); and the more neutral etymological sense 'pertaining to the common people, common, customary', which is recorded with reference to language use since the sixteenth century – with examples such as 'By a Month, in the vulgar way of speaking, is meant 30 Days' (*vulgar* a, 5) – and which is now largely obsolete, except in set phrases such as *vulgar fraction* and *vulgar Latin*[53]. Most uses of *vulgar* in the precept corpus have negative connotations. For example, in Blair's highly influential *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres,* 'propriety' is defined as 'the correct and happy application of [words]… in opposition to vulgarisms, or low expressions' (1783: Vol. I, 221-2). Bache (1868:v) puts vulgarisms firmly in their place in his remark that '[f]rom an occasional lapse no one, however well educated, is exempt, but such a mistake cannot properly be termed a vulgarism, unless it is one that is habitually made by the illiterate'.

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[53] The other current sense – 'crude, obscene' – is not yet included in the *OED*'s entry for *vulgar*, and appears to be a twentieth-century development.

6.2.2. Neologisms

It has already been observed in previous chapters that neologisms are particularly susceptible to criticism: that, for example, proscriptions of phrasal verbs as opposed to their Latinate equivalents tend to focus on new combinations (see chapter 4). Distrust of neologisms has a long history: indeed, the sixteenth-century 'inkhorn' controversy (discussed in chapter 4) was based on approval or disapproval of new lexemes. Many subsequent calls for language reform show a similar distrust: for example, Swift's *A proposal for correcting, improving and ascertaining the English tongue* blames the degradation of English partly on those 'Dunces' who 'give Rise to some new Word, and propagate it in most Conversations, though it had neither Humor, nor Significancy' (1712:20). As Baugh and Cable (1993:255) remark, 'Swift was by no means alone in his criticism of new words. Each censor of the language has his own list of objectionable expressions'. This is indeed the case in the precept corpus materials. Blair (1783:Vol. I, 222-3) advises that 'new-coined words... should never be ventured upon, except by such whose established reputation gives them some degree of dictatorial power over language', while Beattie (1789:5) argues that '[e]very unauthorised word and idiom, which has of late been, without necessity, introduced into [English], tends to be a debasement'. Anon (1886:1) laments that '[e]very day new words are coming up, and new meanings are given to old ones. They start with the blundering or the fancy of the ignorant and careless, and spread like an epidemic'.

Such attitudes are closely linked to those expressed in the labelling of words as *slang, colloquial* and *vulgar*, in that they tend to reflect the personal preferences and prejudices of the censors rather than actual linguistic facts or theories. Neologisms are proscribed when they are 'unauthorised' or introduced by the 'ignorant'; if they are coined by those with 'dictatorial power over the language', then they are not censured. Thus it is not the neologisms themselves that are censured, but the people who coin them. Furthermore, prescriptive labels are sometimes specifically applied to neologisms. As mentioned above, lexemes tend only to be considered *slang* when they are new: once they have been in use for several years, they either become obsolete or they cease to be slang.

6.3. Attitudes in the precept corpus relating to linguistic levels and neologisms

Many of the materials in the precept corpus refer to the style and status of phrasal verbs in conjunction with references to other features: for example, that they are 'slang Americanisms'. These are discussed in the chapters on these other features; in this chapter, only isolated comments about phrasal verbs as colloquial, vulgar and so on will be discussed, alongside references to phrasal verbs as neologisms. Furthermore, only comments which are clearly proscriptive are included[54]. Seventeen works are relevant here:

	Author and date	Type of attitude
1.	Harris 1752	Style/status
2.	Blair 1783	Style/status
3.	Withers 1790	Style/status
4.	Mitchell 1799	Style/status
5.	Anon 1826	Style/status
6.	Reid 1854	Style/status
7.	Anon 1856	Style/status
8.	Bain 1872	Neologisms
9.	Anon 1886	Style/status
10.	Genung 1893	Style/status
11.	Bechtel 1901	Style/status
12.	Blackman 1923	Style/status
13.	Smith 1923	Neologisms
14.	Webb 1925	Style/status
15.	Anon 1926	Status/neologisms
16.	Grattan 1927	Status/neologisms
17.	Fowler 1968	Neologisms

6.3.1. Style and status

Twelve writers include phrasal verb examples in lists or sections on vulgar, low or colloquial language, without making any broader claims about phrasal verbs as a whole. Harris (1752:25) lists five 'disgustfull' phrases, two of which are phrasal verbs: *chaulking out a way* and *bolstering up an argument*. Blair

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[54] For example, Partridge (1947) includes phrasal verbs as examples of slang, but given his positive attitude towards slang, this is not interpreted as censure.

(1783:Vol. II, 80), in a section on Addison's style in *The Spectator*, suggests that 'worked out by dint of thinking' 'is a phrase which borders too much on vulgar and colloquial language'. Withers (1790:205) writes that '[t]he Phrase *cast about for Ornaments* is *improper* as well as inelegant'. Mitchell (1799:52-3) castigates four phrasal verbs as 'low expressions; allowable only in familiar discourse, and perhaps in epistolary writing': *follow up* an idea; *make up* one's mind; *smell out* a design; and *cast about* for expedients. Anon (1826) lists the following in a section on 'slang vulgarities': *kick up a row/dust*; *blow up/give someone a blowing up*; *dished-up* ('ruined'); *hang out* ('reside'); *keep it up* ('prolong'); *knock under* ('submit'); *looking up* ('improving'); *picking up* ('recovering/improving'); *pull one up* ('take before a magistrate'); *serve one out* ('beat, foil, kill'). Reid (1854:83) asks students to correct 'vulgar' expressions in sentences, including 'He is very dexterous in smelling out the views and designs of others' and 'Learning and the arts were but then getting up'. Anon (1856:70) advises the reader to '[a]void all slang and vulgar words and phrases' – including *blow up, fork out* and *kick up* – and *flunk out* is condemned as 'a vulgar expression for *to retire through fear*' (1856:51). Anon (1886) castigates *blow up, blow out, cave in, cook up, flare up, fork over, gone up, knock off, pony up, shut up, stave off, take in* and *take on* as *vulgar, slang* or *colloquial*. Genung (1893) labels the following: *back up* ('colloquial and slang for support'); *give away* ('a slang expression not suitable for composition'); *go in for* ('a colloquial expression, more used in England than in America; to be avoided'); *size up* ('slang for show the character or measure of; not to be used in any but colloquial style'); *cut up* ('upset' – slang). Bechtel (1901:13) gives two phrasal verbs in his section on 'Very Vulgar Vulgarisms':

> No one who has any regard for purity of diction and the proprieties of cultivated society will be guilty of the use of such expressions as... *shut up* for be quiet, or be still, or cease speaking, *went back on me* for deceived me or took advantage of me…

Blackman (1923:49), following Reid (1854), gives 'Learning and the arts were but then *getting up*' as an example of a 'vulgar phrase', while Webb (1925:158-9) gives a list of colloquial phrases used inappropriately in writing, including 'The prize distribution *came off* on the 23rd of January' and 'The Government… appears determined to *stick up for* its rights'.

None of these comments is supported by any argument: the reader is simply told that particular instances of phrasal verbs are slang, vulgar and so on, and to avoid them (or at least, to avoid them in writing). In order to gauge the accuracy of these claims, I have compared them with the *OED* evidence (given in appendix 8). Of the forty labelled phrasal verbs, sixteen are given usage labels in the *OED*. The labels do not always correlate: whereas *vulgar* is often used in the usage manuals, the *OED* tends to use *colloquial, slang,* or both, indicating the fuzziness of these labels. (The use of restrictive labels in the *OED* will be discussed further in chapter 8.) Also, the phrasal verbs which are proscriptively labelled in the usage manuals tend to be relatively new. The average number of years between the first recorded usage in the *OED* and the date of publication of the first usage manual in which the phrasal verb is censured is ninety-five, and half of the censured phrasal verbs were less than fifty years old (in print, at least) when they were selected for criticism. In addition, with a few exceptions, each usage manual tends to give a different selection of phrasal verbs to avoid, suggesting that the passage of time renders them less offensive. Another point worth mentioning is that one of the phrasal verbs labelled *US* (but not *colloquial* or *slang*) in the *OED* is labelled *vulgar* in a usage manual (Anon 1856 and Anon 1886, *flunk out*); as will be discussed in chapter 7, the distinction between American English and vulgar English was not always clear.

6.3.2. Neologisms

It has often been noted that phrasal verbs are a means of creating new lexemes and new senses (see chapter 2). In this section, only those works which express an attitude towards phrasal verbs as a means of coining new lexemes are considered. (For attitudes towards new senses and distinctions of senses, the reader is referred to chapter 5; although such attitudes are related to those presented here, they refer to this aspect of phrasal verbs in relation to perceptions of polysemy.)

The first indication of such an attitude is in Bain (1872:78), who remarks that the combination of verbs and particles is 'one of the regular processes of the language, for increasing the number of useful words [i.e. lexemes]'. Similarly, Smith (1923:58) remarks that phrasal verbs 'add immensely to the richness of our vocabulary'. He celebrates the 'enormous increase of phrasal verbs which...

have sprung to life in enormous profusion… as a reaction against the deadness of much contemporary English', and praises such 'modern Americanisms' as *flareback, rake-off* and *frame-off* (Smith 1923:61)[55]. Fowler (1968:451) also remarks on the growth of nominalized phrasal verbs, arguing that 'the use of phrasal verbs as nouns, a prominent feature of contemporary English (e.g. *set-to, take-over, hold-up, show-down, wash-out*)' enrich the vocabulary[56]. In these works, in contrast to some of the conservative outlooks quoted in 6.2.2 above, neologizing is seen in a positive light, and new phrasal verbs – particularly nominalized forms, which have increased in frequency since the nineteenth century (Algeo 1998:67) – are praised. Two distinct reasons for approval are given. Bain presents the new combinations as 'useful', perhaps in the sense of filling lexical gaps. Smith and Fowler, on the other hand, see their novelty as a good thing in itself, as a means of enriching and enlivening the English vocabulary.

6.3.3. Status/neologisms

Finally, two related early twentieth-century articles in *The Times Literary Supplement* address the question of neologism and status alongside each other. The first is a review of three works, including Fred Newton Scott's *SPE* tract *American Slang*[57] of which the reviewer writes:

> There remains one important class of locutions [in American slang], that of simple and emphatic verbal phrases. (To this class belong *come across, fall for, get away with, get by with, get the bulge on, put across, put over*.) This is perhaps the class which must be most seriously reckoned with. It does not represent the evolution of a new language so much as the degradation of an old one. Every language contains its own potentiality of deterioration, and the tendency illustrated by these verbal phrases exists, independently, in this country: notice the success, among certain classes in England, of *phone through* instead of *telephone* or the acceptable *ring up*.

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[55] According to the *OED, rake-off* was first recorded in 1887 in the US. Neither *frame-off* nor *flareback* are given in the *OED* or in Craigie and Hulbert's *A Dictionary of American English* (1938-44). *Flareback* has only three hits in the *TIME Magazine Corpus*, one in 1937 and two in 1953; *frame-off* has none.

[56] *OED* dates for these are: *set-to* 1743 –; *take-over* 1917– (orig. US); *hold-up* 1837 – (orig. US slang); *show-down* 1892 –; *wash-out* 1873-.

[57] Scott's tract is an alphabetical list of a selection of slang expressions current in American English, without any authorial comment.

> We can strive against this tendency more competently if we recognize that it is indigenous (Anon 1926).

The emotive terms 'degradation' and 'deterioration' represent the status of phrasal verbs as low, and relate to the use of *vulgar* discussed above: we are told that 'certain classes' (presumably lower ones) tend to use these forms. The writer initially gives American phrasal verbs, all less than fifty years old (at least, in written form) at the time the article was written[58]. The focus then shifts on to 'indigenous' forms, exemplified in *phone through,* which must have been quite novel at the time of writing: the first quotation in the *OED* is from 1927, the year after this review was written. The implication is that phrasal verbs represent an attempt at novelty, but, rather than succeeding in 'the evolution of a new language', only result in degrading the existing one. Furthermore, although the article appears to condemn phrasal verbs in general, it is notable that the older form *ring up* is considered 'acceptable'; again, it appears that new forms in particular are selected for censure[59].

In the following year, Grattan (1927) responds in an article on Standard English in the same journal:

> The large majority of words preserved or fresh-coined by the 'people' signify concrete things or simple actions. And in such matters the inherent linguistic sense of the uneducated is often sounder than that of the learned… phrases like *e.g. phone through* and *come across* no more represent 'degradation' than do *give up, give in, ring up, send off, think out*; and if the standard language should absorb *slack down, take off, put across,* and a hundred similar expressions from mine, factory and forest, it will gain in forcefulness and clarity.

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[58] The *OED* first dates and labels for the phrasal verbs examples are: *get away with* 'get the better of' or 'carry off successfully' 1878 – colloq./slang, orig. US; *get by with* 'be successful in evading' 1926 – colloq., orig. US; *put across* 'execute' 1906 – orig. US; *put over* 'convey' 1908 – colloq., orig. US. The author does not specify which senses of the phrasal verbs in question are intended, but given that it is American phrasal verbs that are under discussion, these are the earliest possible senses (*put over,* for example, has been used since the fifteenth century in senses such as 'postpone', 'transfer' and so on, but could not be considered American slang).

[59] Although *ring up,* first recorded in the *OED* from 1880, was also quite new at the time this article was written (newer than *get away with,* which was censured), we must take into account the relative possibilities. The telephone was not invented until the mid-nineteenth century, and the verb *telephone* is not recorded until 1878; *ring up* would have appeared, in 1926, relatively established in comparison with *phone through.*

Several arguments are intertwined here. Firstly, phrasal verbs are presented as 'forceful', 'clear' and 'concrete', relating to the arguments about vividness and vigour discussed in chapter 4. Secondly, Grattan contends that, if they are a working-class phenomenon (coined in the context of 'mine, factory and forest'), this is not necessarily a bad thing. Thirdly, and particularly relevant here, Grattan refutes the suggestion that phrasal verbs are a new development in the language, by comparing the new combinations *phone through* and so on with much older forms: *give up* has been recorded in various senses in English since 1154, *give in* since 1616, *send off* since 1666 and *think out* since 1382 (cf. the comments about the age of phrasal verbs discussed in chapter 4).

6.4. Conclusion

Less than half of the works surveyed in this chapter discuss phrasal verbs in general; most include examples of phrasal verbs in lists or examples of 'slang expressions' or 'vulgarities' to be avoided. Furthermore, it tends to be new phrasal verbs, often those first recorded in informal contexts, which are negatively labelled in the usage manuals. However, these comments are relatively few in comparison with the attitudes discussed in other chapters, and no general disapproval of phrasal verbs can be inferred. Furthermore, there are occasional expressions of opposing attitudes – one article gives examples of much older phrasal verbs to show that new phrasal verbs are simply new combinations rather than an entirely new phenomenon, while three writers praise new phrasal verbs as being useful or enriching the vocabulary – but on the whole, praise of neologisms is sparse.

Chapter 7. Regional prejudices: phrasal verbs as Scotticisms and Americanisms

7.1. Introduction

Phrasal verb usage differs depending on the variety of English in question. For example, whereas in English English the particle is often placed after the direct object (as in 'he turned the light out'), in Scottish English, Northern Irish English and American English, it often remains directly after the verb (as in 'he turned out the light') (Trudgill and Hannah 2002:95). Schneider (2006) suggests that speakers of post-colonial Englishes (East Africa, India, and the Philippines in his study) use phrasal verbs less frequently than speakers of British English, and seem to prefer verb-particle-object order rather than verb-object-particle. A more widely-recognized difference is that American English has 'a special predilection for adding semantically empty adverbs to verbs, as in *point out, extract out, hike up*' (Tottie 2002:161), and also that nominalized phrasal verbs such as *cookout, add-on,* and *stopover* are more frequently coined in American English (Tottie 2002:108; Trudgill and Hannah 2002:70). However, the purpose of this section is not to trace the development of such differences, but to analyze attitudes towards phrasal verb usage in different varieties, whether these attitudes are based on actual differences or on other aspects of perceptions of dialect variation. Almost all of the comments in the precept corpus relating to regional usage of phrasal verbs are about Scottish English or American English, so these constitute the main part of the chapter. In 7.2, general attitudes towards Scotticisms and Americanisms will be overviewed, followed by an analysis of attitudes in the precept corpus and other supplementary works in 7.3, and concluding remarks in 7.4.

7.2. Attitudes towards regional variation: an overview

Attitudes towards different varieties of English (that is, varieties other than one's own) have a long history: Penhallurick (2009:292) gives examples of twelfth-century proscriptions (by a Southern English speaker) of the 'uncouth' nature of Northern English. Furthermore, such attitudes tend to be negative: there is

> a general commentary running from the end of the sixteenth century
> through the seventeenth and eighteenth which, whilst displaying an

> interest in dialect, shows a distaste for and criticism of provincial speech...
> and which integrates this into a campaign for a regularized, supra-regional,
> educated English, to be used in formal and public contexts and especially in
> writing (2009:292).

This desire for a 'supra-regional' standard was crystallized in Campbell's (1776) oft-quoted definition of proper usage as *reputable, national* and *present*. National usage is contrasted with both foreign and provincial usage; of the latter, Campbell writes that

> this use is bounded by the province, county, or district, which gives name
> to the dialect, and beyond which its peculiarities are sometimes
> unintelligible, and always ridiculous (1776:Vol.I, 354).

Such attitudes continue to be voiced in nineteenth- and twentieth-century materials: for example, Masson (1924:40) argues that usages particular to Scottish English (and by extension, other regional varieties) are to be avoided:

> When you write English you address the whole English-speaking public, and
> you must therefore use words and phrases that are common to the whole
> English-speaking public, and not such as are common to only a section of it.

Another general comment that can be made is about the historical overlap between what is considered dialect and what is marked as *slang* or *vulgar*. For example, Coleman (2004b:50) shows how Francis Grose reduplicated phrases and proverbs from his *Provincial Glossary* (1787) in the second edition of *The Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (1788); in the former 'they were presented as dialect', but in the latter 'we interpret them as cant or slang'. Coleman also shows that this was particularly the case with Australian English, as there was a 'nineteenth-century tendency to stigmatize every word and phrase that was distinctively Australian as slang' (Coleman 2009:151). Thus negative remarks about regional usage are not necessarily accurate; rather, they often reflect a tendency to ascribe undesirable features of the language to what are perceived as undesirable varieties.

It would be beyond the scope of this thesis to consider the history of attitudes towards all varieties of English. Since most of the comments in the precept corpus relating to regional variety are about Scotticisms or Americanisms, the history of attitudes towards these varieties will now be surveyed in more detail.

7.2.1. Scotticisms

The history of attitudes towards Scotticisms is a complex one, which is further complicated by problems of definition. As McClure (1994:23) shows, it is important to distinguish between 'Scots' – 'a distinctly Scottish form' of West Germanic which developed in Scotland from the sixth century – and 'Scottish English', 'a written, and subsequently also a spoken, form approximating to those of the English metropolis'. The distinction, though, is 'not always clear in practice' (1994:24), and it has been suggested that Scots and Scottish English are better seen as at opposite ends of a cline (Frank 1994:53). The term 'Scotticism' is defined by the *OED* as 'An idiom or mode of expression characteristic of Scots' (*Scotticism, Scoticism* 1), but in practice a 'Scotticism' might refer to a usage deriving from either Scots or Scottish English. It was first recorded in the pamphlet *Ravillac Redivivus* (1678) where the author asks readers to '*[a]dmonish* [him] of all the *Scoticisms,* or the *Words* and *Phrases* that are not current *English* therein' (cited in Dossena 2005:46).

Attitudes towards Scots developed relatively late: as McClure (1994:32) remarks, 'the mutual hostilities of the Scottish and English monarchies and peoples... appears to have had no influence – for a long time, at least – on Scottish attitudes to the language'. Gavin Douglas was the first to oppose 'Scottis' and 'Inglis' in 1513, but even after this date either word could be used to refer to the language of the Scots. According to Bailey (1991:70), '[s]eventeenth century comments on Scots and English are exceedingly rare': the focus of the Stuart monarchs was on the extermination of Gaelic rather than on the specific variety of English which should replace it.

However, by the end of the eighteenth century 'comments about the English of Scots... [had] swell[ed] to a flood' (Bailey 1991:70), and this development must be seen in light of the changing relationship between Scotland and England. Following the Union of the Crowns in 1603 and the Act of Union in 1707, both the language and culture of Scotland were gradually Anglicized:

> Having lost both its court and its political centre, Scotland found itself far from the centres of attraction of "good society", hence the constant attempt, on the part of gentry and nobility, or anyway upwardly mobile

classes, to imitate southern lifestyle and modes of expression' (Dossena 2005:56).

In addition, many Scots saw the benefits of the Union and 'were able to seize upon jobs and opportunities in the south to an unprecedented degree' (Colley 2005:124), while Parliament in turn saw the advantage of Scottish manpower in the army (Colley 2005:120). Thus the situation was not simply that of Scotland bowing to Anglicization, but of Scots using the opportunities which a closer relationship with the south afforded them (and vice versa). On the other hand, the enormous intellectual achievements of Scots in the eighteenth century, which resulted in Scotland having 'intellectual eminence... vis-a-vis the rest of Europe' (Frank 1994:56), would lead one to expect expressions of pride in a distinct Scottish language. This was not the case, though; instead there was a remarkable paradox of 'the desire of members of the Scottish Enlightenment proudly to preserve their separate identity in everything but their speech' (Frank 1994:60). Furthermore, although there was also intense reaction to the Anglicization of Scots, particularly in the poetry of Allan Ramsay and later Robert Burns, this was limited in its sphere: Ramsay tended to use Scots more in his comic than his serious poems, while Burns had to 'adopt the wholly spurious pose of an untaught peasant in order to excuse his preference for writing in Scots' (McClure 1994:40-1).

The linguistic self-consciousness of the Scottish *literati* is evident in the lists of Scotticisms which began to appear from the mid-eighteenth century. The first of these was a list drawn up by the Scottish philosopher David Hume, apparently intended for private use but then appended to the 1752 edition of his *Political Discourses* (the list is given in full in Dossena 2005:67-70). Thirty years later, John Sinclair's *Observations on the Scottish Dialect* (1782) was designed to draw attention to differences between English and Scots, since 'if the same language were spoken on both sides of the Tweed... no striking mark of distinction would remain between the sons of England and Caledonia'; Sinclair intends to contribute to 'a purpose so desirable' (1782:10). There followed a similar publication by the Scottish poet and philosopher James Beattie: *Scoticisms, Arranged in Alphabetical Order, Designed to Correct Improprieties of Speech and Writing* (1787). These lists were not necessarily reliable: Basker (1993:84) shows that Hume's was discredited by a contemporary reviewer as containing

usages found in such eminent English writers as Bacon, Milton and Johnson, while Frank (1994:59) suggests that Beattie's intention was to 'make the language of the readers of his booklet more genteel and polite' according to 'the accepted canons of his age' and that 'genuine Scotticisms really [had] very little to do with this'.

In the nineteenth century, with the development of a state education system, Scots was further eroded as a written medium: '[l]ike the dialects of England, Scots lost all social status, and its use in school was punished after the 1872 Education act' (Leith 1983:160). Although, as Donaldson (1986) has convincingly shown, Scots continued to be used in local and national newspapers throughout the nineteenth century, its sphere was limited: as Kay (2006:125) remarks, '[t]he language had not really changed, it was simply that, with the upper classes having deserted it, what was considered fine before was now deemed vulgar'. Lists of Scotticisms continued to be published in the nineteenth century, such as *The Vulgarities of Speech Corrected: with elegant expressions for provincial and vulgar English, Scots and Irish...* (Anon 1826, London), *Scotticisms Corrected* (Anon 1855, London), and Alexander Mackie's *Scotticisms, Arranged and Corrected* (1881, Aberdeen), all with an 'adamantly prescriptive attitude' (Dossena 2005:126). It is notable that whereas the eighteenth-century lists tended to be compiled by linguistically self-conscious Scots, some of the nineteenth-century texts appear to have been written by English writers, in that they are published in London and adopt an external stance in describing Scotticisms (for example, Anon (1826) writes of the linguistic errors of 'well-educated Scotsmen, who move in the most polite circles in their own country...').

According to Kay (2006:139), '[t]he status of Scots at the beginning of the twentieth century derived very much from trends established in the eighteenth and hardened in the nineteenth century': Scots was perceived as working-class and parochial, while Standard English was the medium of education, news and government. It is notable, though, that lists of Scotticisms cease to be written after the nineteenth century. (The only exception that I am aware of is Masson's *Use and Abuse of English*, which was first published in 1896: the chapter on 'Scotticisms' continued to be included in subsequent editions throughout the

early twentieth century.) This suggests that Scots had been devalued to such an extent that it was no longer seen as a threat to Standard English.

In the mid-twentieth century Scots was revived as a poetic language by Hugh MacDiarmid and the 'Lallans' movement, and in recent years the status of written Scots has risen considerably through active efforts by Scottish novelists, universities and parliament (see Kay 2006:ch.8). However, (Scottish) Standard English is still the accepted written medium in Scotland, and it is debatable whether Scots will ever replace this usage.

7.2.2. Americanisms

Before analyzing attitudes towards Americanisms it is necessary to first consider when people (on both sides of the Atlantic) became aware of American English as a distinct variety, and thus subject to criticism or approval[60]. Read (1933) shows that there was some awareness of American English in eighteenth-century Britain, although Britons were still often baffled by the new variety, confusing American accents with Scottish ones, and unsure of the new meanings of words like *fall*. The first term to refer to this new variety was 'Americanism', which was coined in 1781 by the Reverend John Witherspoon, a Scot who emigrated to America and became President of what was to become Princeton College. Witherspoon defined an Americanism as

> an use of phrases or terms, or a construction of sentences, even among persons of rank and education, different from the use of the same terms or phrases, or the construction of similar sentences, in Great Britain (1781, reprinted in Mathews 1963:17).

The term has since been used with varied meanings, sometimes referring only to words which were coined in America, but sometimes including dialectal or obsolete English words used widely in America (see Mencken 1963:103-9). Furthermore, there is almost always a slightly pejorative tone to the term; as Bailey (2001:459) notes, '"Americanisms" are never praised, though there may be a begrudging suggestion that they are racy, fashionable, and colloquial'.

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[60] 'American' is used throughout this chapter to mean 'North American'. Also, since none of the works under analysis distinguish between the English of the United States and that of Canada, but usually appear to be referring to the former, 'American English' and 'United States English' are used interchangeably.

More neutral terms came slightly later: Noah Webster coined both 'American tongue' (1789) and 'American English' (1806). The first dictionary which claimed to include words particular to the United States was Caleb Alexander's *The Columbian Dictionary* (1800), although the number of Americanisms actually included was quite minimal (Burkett 1979:26). Webster's *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828) was of course a landmark in American lexicography, but in fact even this was not particularly American in orientation (Green 1996:263). It was the dictionaries of Americanisms published throughout the nineteenth century (discussed in 7.3.2 below) which really began to catalogue differences in the American lexicon, and this research was developed in more scholarly twentieth-century dictionaries such as Craigie and Hulbert's *A Dictionary of American English on Historical Principles* (1938-44).

It is usually agreed that '[f]rom the time that differences in the vocabulary and idiom of Americans began to be noticed, they became the subject of comment and soon of controversy' (Baugh and Cable 1993:382). Mencken (1963:25) notes that '[m]ost [nineteenth-century] English books of travel mentioned Americanisms only to revile them'. Comments on American English in some nineteenth-century usage manuals are similarly critical: Alford (1864:6) remarks on 'the process of deterioration which our Queen's English has undergone at the hands of Americans… their reckless exaggeration, and contempt for congruity' and compares this with the immorality of America itself, evidenced in its 'cruel and unprincipled war' (Alford does not explain how a civil war causes the language to deteriorate). To this day, despite the development of more pro-American feelings in the early twentieth century – for example, the *SPE* was in sympathy with American English (Mencken 1963:44) – suspicion of Americanisms prevails. Indeed, awareness of increasing American influence on aspects of British culture – notably music and film – and British resentment of America's rise in economic and social power, may have contributed to this hostility (Beal 2004:213-4).

Even in America, early attitudes towards diversions from the British standard were often hostile. For example, Webster was often criticized for the Americanisms in his dictionaries (Mencken 1963:27) even though the number he

included was actually quite small. As Wells (1973:51-2) argues, after the Revolution

> authoritarian attitudes... became mixed with pro-British feelings. These attitudes were usually manifested in pleas to preserve the purity of the language, as spoken and written in cultivated English society, from the corruption of American provincial influence.

This was certainly the view expressed by Witherspoon, who, in the essay in which he coined the term 'Americanism', wrote that educated Americans commit 'errors in grammar, improprieties and vulgarisms, which hardly any person of the same class in point of rank and literature would have committed in Britain' (1781, in Mathews 1963:16). However, opposing attitudes were voiced, most ardently by Webster, who argued that Americans should 'adhere to [their] own practice and general customs' in language (1789:290), and defended American innovations on the grounds of necessity, convenience and analogy (1817).

This positive attitude received more support in the twentieth century, with more scholarly research into the distinctive nature of American English. George Krapp, for example, in *The English Language in America*, praised the 'ingenuity and inventiveness' of American English, which has not been checked by the 'sense of propriety' in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England (1925:52). On the other hand, Drake (1977:31) notes that despite the growth of descriptive linguistics in the United States, public attitudes in the twentieth century were highly influenced by conservative and prescriptive forces. This can be seen in the fact that usage manuals, which tend to rely on linguistic insecurity for sales, are more in demand in America than in Britain (Landau 2001:249).

7.3. Attitudes in the precept corpus towards the regional origins of phrasal verbs

The following twenty-three works in the precept corpus express an attitude relating to the regional origin of phrasal verbs (either individual instances or types of phrasal verbs):

Author and date	Country of publication/ Nationality of author	Type of attitude
1. Priestley 1768	England/English	Scotticism (?)

2. Mitchell 1799	Scotland/Scottish	Scotticism & Irish
3. Anon 1826	England/?	Scotticism
4. Alford 1864	England/English	Scotticism
5. Bain 1877	England/Scottish	Scotticism
6. Anon 1882	England/?	Scotticism
7. Smith 1923	England/American	Americanism
8. Masson 1924	Scotland/Scottish	Scotticism
9. Craigie 1930	England/Scottish	Americanism
10. Butler, P.R. 1933	England/?	Americanism
11. Glover 1933	England/?	Americanism
12. Butler, A.J. 1933	England/?	Americanism
13. Anon 1934	England/?	Americanism
14. Herbert 1935	England/English	Americanism & Australian
15. Horwill 1936	England/English	Americanism
16. Strauss 1947	England/?	Americanism
17. Gowers 1948	England/English	Americanism
18. Gowers 1954	England/English	Americanism
19. Anon 1964	England/?	Americanism
20. Leslie 1964	England/?	Americanism
21. Fowler 1965	England/English	Americanism
22. Follett 1966	United States/American	Americanism
23. Caminada 1968	England/?	Americanism

It is evident that the attitudes largely fall into two discrete groups. Earlier comments, written by a mixture of Scottish and English writers, are about phrasal verbs as Scotticisms; the more frequent twentieth-century comments, written almost wholly by the English – only two are by American writers – are about phrasal verbs as Americanisms. These will be discussed in 7.3.1 and 7.3.2 respectively, alongside other contemporary evidence of such attitudes. Only two works consider phrasal verbs as particular to any other varieties: one refers to Irish English and the other to Australian English. These will be surveyed together in 7.3.3.

7.3.1. *Scotticisms*

Six works in the precept corpus give phrasal verbs as examples of Scotticisms. Mitchell (1799), who in his preface criticizes the Scottish education system for failing to teach pupils correct English and thus not preparing them for society, marks three phrasal verbs as Scotticisms, and suggests alternatives:

> To *cast out* with a person; Sc. - To quarrel with, to be at variance with. -
>
> To *fall out* with a person, is English, but it is far from being elegant;
>
> To *cast up a fault to one*; Sc. - To upbraid one with a fault;
>
> To *follow out* a plan; Sc. - To carry on, to execute a plan.

Anon (1826) gives examples of 'vulgar Scotch expressions' including *cut out (hair)*, to be replaced with 'cut off' and *she cast it up to me,* corrected to 'she upbraided me with it'. Alford (1864:168), in criticizing the redundant use of *up* in *open up* (e.g. *open up a well, open up a view*), asserts that 'I can only regard them as Scotticisms, which certainly would not have been written south of the Tweed'. Almost the same set of examples as in Mitchell appears, nearly a century later, in the lists of Scotticisms appended to Bain's *A Higher English Grammar* (1877): 'they never *cast-out*' should be 'they never disagree/quarrel'; 'cast up a fault to one' should be 'upbraid one with a fault' and 'cut out your hair' should be 'cut off your hair'. Bain also adds another Scotticism: 'take out your glass' should be simply 'take your glass'. Finally, another anonymous usage manual (1882) gives two of the same Scotticisms again:

> *Cast out*. We never *cast out*. Should be *quarrel* – Scotticism.
>
> *Out*. Cut *out* your hair. Should be *off*. – Scotticism.

In a chapter on Scotticisms in her usage manual, Masson (1924) gives an invented letter which is replete with Scotticisms, and attaches explanatory footnotes to each. One distinct phrasal verb is given – *sleep in* is '[p]eculiarly Scottish', and is to be replaced with 'oversleep himself' (1924:44). In addition, there is a note on *get over* in 'I got over to hear the minister': Masson advises that

> *Up, down, along, through, over*, etc., should not be used in connexion with places unless to emphasise altitude or direction. Thus, do not say "I am going down to so and so's" unless you wish to emphasise the fact that "so and so" lives at the bottom of a hill (1924:47).

This implies that redundant uses of particles when used with verbs of motion or direction are a particularly Scottish phenomenon: the accuracy of this implication will be discussed below.

Of these works, three are written by Scots (Mitchell, Bain and Masson), one by an Englishman (Alford), and the nationalities of the two anonymous writers are unknown.

One final comment that seems to belong in this section is in Priestley (1768:180), where it is argued, of David Hume's '*Arran proposed to* invite *back* the king *upon conditions*', that

> Even when a verb and a preposition, or some other word, make, as it were, but one compound word, and have but one joint meaning, yet they should be separated in this case...

Priestley then corrects Hume's sentence to '*invite the king back*'. Although Priestley does not state that this is a Scotticism, the fact that placing the adverbial particle before a nominal object is a Scottish English tendency (see 7.1 above), and that the example is from a Scot, suggests that this is the reason for the criticism. I found no other comments of this nature in the precept corpus; in fact, later works are more likely to advise avoiding end-placement of the particle (see chapter 4).

7.3.1.1. Supplementary evidence in lists of Scotticisms

Given the recurrence of a restricted set of phrasal verbs proscribed as Scotticisms in the precept corpus, it is useful to compare these with items given in selected lists of Scotticisms (discussed in 7.2.1 above): the list appended to the 1752 edition of David Hume'*s Political Discourses* (quoted and analyzed in Dossena 2005:67-70); John Sinclair's *Observations on the Scottish Dialect* (1782); James Beattie's *Scoticisms* (1787); and the anonymous *Scotticisms Corrected* (1855).

Hume lists three phrasal verbs to be avoided and replaced with correct English forms:

cut out his hair	cut off his hair;
to open up	to open or lay open;

to take off a new coat	to make up a new suit.

More are listed in Sinclair (1782):

To make up to a lady	To make an offer of marriage to a lady;
To cast out with a person	To fall out with a person;
To cut out one's hair	To cut off one's hair;
To follow out a plan	To carry on, execute, or finish, a plan;
To follow out a chain of reasoning	
	To trace out a chain of reasoning;
To open up a wound	To open, or lay open, a wound;
Come in by	Come in, or draw near;
To set off on a journey	To set out on a journey;
Come, say away	Come, begin;
To take out a glass of wine.	To take off a glass of wine;
To red up a room	To put a room in order;
A shake-down.	Bed-clothes spread upon the floor.

Beattie (1789) gives the following phrasal verbs in his list of Scotticisms:

Cut out your hair, and get a wig	Cut off your hair;
To *cast up* a fault to one	To upbraid one with a fault;
To *follow out* a plan	To execute, or carry on a plan;
I *slipped a foot* and fell down	My foot slipped, and I fell.

Although in the last of these it is the phrase *slipped a foot* that is italicized and highlighted as a Scotticism, the replacement of *fell down* in the 'Scottish' example with *fell* in the correction suggests that Beattie regarded it too as a Scotticism.

Anon (1855) includes:

They often *cast out* with him; say *quarrel* &c.;

The cistern *runs out*: say, *leaks*;

I would not *cast up that fault to him* again: say, I would not *reproach him with that fault* again;

They *met in with him* in the country: say, They *met him* &c.;

The boy *slipped a foot,* and fell *down*: leave out *a foot,* and *down*, which are redundant;

Cut *out* your hair, and wear a wig: say Cut *off* &c.;

Come *in by*, my lad: say, Come *nearer*, &c.;

Take out your glass: say, *Empty your glass*;

The surgeon opened *up* the wound with great care: leave out *up*, which is superfluous;

He killed the robber *off*: leave out *off*, which is unnecessary;

I intend to *follow out* my plan; say to *carry out*, &c.;

Come then, *say away*: say, *begin*;

He *smelt out* their proceedings: say, *discovered* &c.;

He set *off* on his journey on Monday last: say, set *out* &c.;

They are completely *done for - done up*: say, *ruined*.

7.3.1.2. Discussion

Having identified a set of phrasal verbs proscribed as Scotticisms in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century texts, we can now examine what these proscriptions were based on and what they implied. Firstly, there is a high degree of overlap between the texts. There is a core set of phrasal verbs which recur: *cast out, cast up, cut out, follow out* and *open up* all appear in three or more works. Sinclair (1782), Anon (1855) and Masson (1924) are exceptional in listing examples which appear in none of the other works.

There is some variation in the extent to which the phrasal verbs given as Scotticisms were in fact Scottish in origin or usage. This can be seen in table 7-1 which shows, for each phrasal verb, dates and usage labels from the *OED,* with supplementary evidence from the *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (*DSL*) and the *Corpus of Modern Scottish Writing* (*CMSW*) where *OED* evidence is lacking.

Table 7-1 *OED, DSL* and *CMSW* evidence for proscribed Scotticisms

	OED evidence[61]	supplementary *DSL* evidence	supplementary *CMSW* evidence
cast out ('quarrel')	1730 – (Sc. & north dial.)		
cast up ('mention (a fault)')	1604 – (Sc. & north dial.)		
come in by ('come near')	not in	1782 Sinclair; 1818 Walter Scott	1782 Sinclair; 1823 James Hogg
cut out ('cut off (hair)')	not in	1782 Sinclair	1782 Sinclair
done up ('ruined')	1803 – (colloq.)		
fall down ('fall')	1690 –		
follow out ('execute')	not in	1782 Sinclair	
kill off ('kill')	1607 –		
make up to ('propose marriage to')	not in	not in	1782 Sinclair
meet in with ('meet')	1821 – Sc.		
open up ('open')	a1400-		
red up ('put in order')	1718 – cf. Sc.		
run out ('leak')	1530 –		
say away ('begin')	1821 (1 quote, Walter Scott)		
shakedown ('bedclothes')	c1730 – (first quote Scottish)		
sleep in ('oversleep')	1883 – (orig. *Sc.*)		
smell out ('discover')	1538 –		
set off ('set out' on a journey)	1774 –		
take out ('empty (a glass)')	not in	1812-	
take off ('make up (clothes)')	not in	1711-	
up, down, over ... (with places, without referring to direction or altitude)	[see discussion below]		

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[61] All of these data are from *OED*2 with the exception of *open up, make up to* and *meet in with*, from the *OED*3 draft revisions.

Of the twenty phrasal verbs listed, twelve do appear to be restricted to Scottish use in these senses (or, in the case of *cast out* and *cast up*, Scottish and other northern dialects): *cast out, cast up, come in by, cut out, follow out, make up to, meet in with, red up, shakedown, sleep in, take out* and *take off*. It is notable, though, that of these, *cut out* (hair), *follow out* and *make up to* are only recorded in lists of Scotticisms, without any evidence of actual use in Scots[62]. We might also add *say away* to this list, since the only quotation in the *OED* is from the Scottish novelist Walter Scott; however, this does not necessarily mean it was (or is) restricted to Scots usage, and *say away* is not included in *DSL*.

There is no evidence that *open up, fall down, run out, kill off, smell out, set off* and the participial adjective *done up* are, or were, Scotticisms. With the exception of *open up*, all of these are only listed in Anon (1855). Finally, there is no evidence to support Masson's assertion that the redundant use of adverbial particles with verbs of motion is a Scotticism. Since this claim extends to many combinations (e.g. *go down* in 'I went down to my aunt's', *come over* in 'why don't you come over to see me tomorrow?' and so on) it is rather difficult to determine whether any of these are particularly Scottish. However, *up* and *down* have been 'in conventional use' in phrases such as 'come up to London' – even when the speaker is neither in a geographically lower position nor south of London – since the thirteenth century (*OED up* adv1, 6d; *down* adv, 2). Of *over*, the *OED* notes that it was 'originally used with reference to crossing the surface of the sea or other water, a street, a field, or other defined area; later used more generally of crossing the space or distance between two places' (*OED*3 *over* adv and int, 5a); none of the instances of the more general sense is restricted to Scottish usage.

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[62] Usages which are similar in sense are recorded, though. *Follow out* meaning 'pursue to a conclusion' is recorded from 1762 in the *OED* (*follow* v, 20), the first quotation from the Scottish judge and philosopher Lord Kames, but this is not quite the same as the sense 'execute a plan'. *Make up to* is given in the sense 'make advances to (a person); to pay court to; to curry favour with' in the *OED* (*OED*3 *make up* 14b), while in *DSL* the similar form *make it up* is recorded as meaning 'plan to get married'. In *CMSW, make up to* is recorded in Sinclair, and then in 1900 in a similar sense: 'If your lass is coquettish and frisky, / Make up to her easy and briskly'. However, in nowhere but Sinclair is it recorded in the specific sense 'propose marriage to'.

7.3.1.3. Summary

Few of these works make any explicit remark about phrasal verbs as Scotticisms (exceptions are Alford and Masson); rather, they list certain phrasal verbs as examples. In some cases, these were genuine Scotticisms, and their inclusion tells us little about attitudes towards phrasal verbs, only that some phrasal verbs were particular to Scottish usage and were thus proscribed in the anti-Scotticism literature of the period. What are more interesting for the purpose of this thesis are the phrasal verbs which were marked as Scotticisms but were not in fact restricted to Scottish usage. It appears that these were considered incorrect or low, and thus given the stigmatizing label 'Scotticism' as a warning to the reader to avoid them. This is particularly the case in the 1855 list of *Scotticisms Corrected,* which seems to use 'Scotticism' as an all-encompassing term for undesirable usages. Furthermore, of these non-Scottish 'Scotticisms', several are phrasal verbs with redundant particles: *open up, fall down* and *kill off*. This kind of attitude is also expressed in Alford (1864), who implies that because *open up* is redundant, it 'can only be regarded' as a Scotticism. This could be linked to an awareness that redundancy is often a particular feature of non-standard English[63].

7.3.2. Americanisms

Sixteen works in the precept corpus express an attitude towards American use of phrasal verbs: all are from the twentieth century, and nine (over half) are letters or articles in *The Times*. William Craigie, in his article on Americanisms (1930), includes '"to brace up," "to blow in," and others yet more colloquial and slangy' and adds that such instances are 'an indication of what may follow in their wake'; here the criticism is implied rather than explicitly stated. More direct criticisms are voiced in a series of articles and letters in *The Times* in February 1933. The series begins with a letter to the editor criticizing the Chancellor's use of the phrase *try out* in 'try out the possibilities of these new methods': the reader 'cannot believe that [the editor] would put an Americanism into his mouth' (Glover 1933). Other phrasal verbs with *out* – *look*

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[63] For example, Vasko (2008) identifies the following types of redundancy in twentieth-century 'dialect speech': double or multiple negation; double comparative; redundant personal pronoun ('My wife, she uset' go fruitpicking'); redundant 'what' in comparative clauses ('Snowin' make more water than what rain do'); 'for to' infinitives ('I was out early in the morning for to shoot a brace of rabbits'); and 'off of' ('they used to scrape the hairs.... off of the pig').

out, watch out, win out and *lose out* – are also criticized, as is the prepositional verb *stand for* and the phrasal-prepositional verb *stand up for.* Other readers respond with a variety of agreements, including criticisms of the allegedly American *cancel out, speed up, slow up, sign up* and *check up,* all of which, it is claimed, have a redundant particle (A.J. Butler 1933). However, there are also some defences: one reader shows that *try out* is 'a term of Biblical and Tudor English, as other "Americanisms" sometimes are' (Barker 1933)[64]. Another adds that these phrasal verbs are not wholly redundant: 'much as we may deplore these American gate-crashings, is it not a fact that they add an emphasis to a phrase which otherwise it lacks?' (P.R. Butler 1933). On the whole though, the attitude is negative, and even in the last comment, the phrase 'American gate-crashings' presents an image of a private British language which Americanisms are insidiously infiltrating and corrupting.

Later letters and articles in *The Times* display a similarly negative attitude. One reader asks: 'Why does Sir. John R. Marriott inflict on us the horrid Americanism of "face up to"? Why can he not simply and tersely "face the facts"?' (Anon 1934). Another asks 'Must the strong, simple transitive verb, which is one of the main glories of our tongue, become as obsolete in England as it appears to be in America?', and criticizes *man up, meet up with* and *study up on* (Strauss 1947). An editorial piece (Anon 1964) complains about *win out, help out* and *fire out,* where

> a nasty verbal convention takes the place of a plain word…"Out", of course, used as an unnecessary auxiliary [sic] comes into this country from the United States, and, while we have been benefited much linguistically and otherwise from the flow of imports from that country, this is one immigrant we can dispense with.

This metaphor of a word as an 'immigrant' is reminiscent of the comment about 'gate-crashings'; again, American English is undesirable and invasive[65]. Leslie (1964) agrees that '[t]he literary language of too many American regions is

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[64] This is true of the sense 'find out by examination'. However, the sense of *try out* in the sentence in question is 'test the advantages, possibilities, or qualities of', which is an Americanism according to the *OED.*

[65] The metaphor of words as citizens has a long history: naturalized foreign words have been described as 'denizens' since the seventeenth century (*OED denizen* n, 2c), and Murray's 'General Explanations' of *OED*1 (1884) is the first record of non-naturalized words described as 'aliens' (*OED alien* n, 3c).

clouded…with unwanted prepositions' (the reference is to adverbial particles in combinations such as *win out*). A few years later, Caminada (1968) points out that politicians 'no longer just "meet" one another; they "meet with" or "confer"', and 'before long the British men of politics will, like their American counterparts, "meet up with"'.

The first usage manual to discuss phrasal verbs as Americanisms is Herbert (1935), where the addition of a redundant particle is presented as a particularly American feature. In a section on 'North American slang' he writes that 'in the continual effort to be swift and snappy the slangsters become at last verbose and dilatory' and gives as examples the phrasal-prepositional verbs *check up on, face up to* and *meet up with,* which add nothing except extra words (1935:42). However, Herbert also notes that British English is as guilty of the redundant particle as American English:

> You are tired out, you wake up, you get up and sit down. But when you hear that North Americans are beating up or shooting up or trying out you shiver… The step from foul American slang to valuable English idiom is sometimes very short (1935:151-2).

This view is followed by Gowers (1948:41-2), who is not wholly critical of phrasal verbs and commends their 'marvellous flexibility' (see chapter 5), but also warns readers about the use of redundant particles and notes that this is an 'infection which… is spreading across the Atlantic [and] calls for watchfulness'. In a later volume (1954:71) Gowers adds:

> *Drown out, sound out, lose out, rest up, miss out on*, are other examples of phrasal verbs which I am told are used in America in senses no different from that of the unadorned verb. These have so far found little favour in this country.

In his edition of Fowler (1965:451), Gowers writes that phrasal verbs are 'largely of U.S. origin' and notes that simple verbs are 'disappearing owing to this curious dislike of the verb standing alone'.

The only non-American writer who writes about this aspect of phrasal verbs in a positive way is Horwill (1936:194-5), who praises the 'vividness' of the American

use of phrasal verbs (see chapter 4). (Horwill also wrote a dictionary of American usage and lived in the United States in his retirement.)

Only two American writers express an attitude towards the American preference for phrasal verbs. The first is Logan Pearsall Smith, an American who moved to Britain as an adult. Smith praises the 'many new and vivid idioms' which have 'made their way across the Atlantic', and gives as an example conversions such as *flareback, rake-off* and *frame-off* (1923:61; see chapter 6). In contrast, Follett (1966:340) disapproves of the addition of redundant particles, which he considers an Americanism: '[t]he wish to give more and more emphasis by gathering prepositions… is very strong in American English. First we *check,* then we *check up,* finally we *check up on* somebody's identity or good faith'. However, Follett is not particularly critical of this tendency, writing that it is 'wasteful but… harmless'; this is quite mild compared to some of his other strictures (for example, that *disinterested* meaning 'uninterested' is 'a deplorable confusion' (1966:131)).

7.3.2.1. *Supplementary evidence in Dictionaries of Americanisms*
Because the only information about attitudes towards phrasal verbs as Americanisms is in twentieth-century works in the precept corpus, I looked for supplementary evidence in the first records of differences between British and American English (and accompanying attitudes towards these), the dictionaries and lists of Americanisms published throughout the nineteenth century.

The earliest of these was John Pickering's *A vocabulary, or collection of words and phrases which have been supposed to be peculiar to the United States of America* (1816), which consists of just over 500 terms, although most of these are not genuine Americanisms but rather colloquialisms prevalent in Britain (Burkett 1979: 90). Pickering was a confirmed Anglophile and argued for the preservation of the purity of the English language in America: if American writers 'are ambitious of having their works read by Englishmen as well as by Americans, they must write in a language that Englishmen can read with pleasure' (1816:2). John Russell Bartlett's *Dictionary of Americanisms: a glossary of words and phrases usually regarded as peculiar to the United States* (1848) 'was the first study of American English that seriously attempted to

collect all of the words that were peculiar to the United States' (Crowell 1972:229). The first edition contained many words and phrases which were not in fact Americanisms, but rather British colloquialisms or provincialisms, but in the second (1859) edition Bartlett removed many of these, so that it 'claims to be more strictly American than the first' (Bartlett 1859:v); thus it is the second edition that is analyzed here. He is, unlike Pickering, generally neutral in his discussion of Americanisms – Crowell (1972:232) argues that he 'was less concerned with policing variations from British English than with writing a kind of provincial glossary for America' – but prescriptive comments and labels do appear. For example, Bartlett notes in his introduction that he does not defend 'the nasal twang, the drawling enunciation, or those perversions of language which the ignorant and uneducated [in America] adopt' (1859:viii).

Maximilan Schele de Vere's *Americanisms: The English of the New World* (1872) is not so much a dictionary as a monograph, with chapters discussing 'Indian words', 'Cant and slang' and so on. Schele de Vere is generally approving of Americanisms, defending the need to 'cast [an old word] aside and invent a better one… full of vigor and new meaning' (1872:3). John S. Farmer, whose *Americanisms, old and new* (1889) is by far the largest of the dictionaries under discussion, defends Americanisms on the grounds that they are usually 'found to possess a parentage that cannot be questioned' or are otherwise 'capable of reduction to some sort of law of orderly sequence' (1889:vi), but Farmer still applies labels such as 'vulgar' throughout his dictionary[66]. T. Baron Russell's *Current Americanisms: A Dictionary of Words and Phrases in Common Use* (1897) is the first of these dictionaries to be written by an Englishman, and Russell explains the need for such a dictionary 'in these days of easy steamer transit' and to aid understanding of American journals published in London (1897:5). Russell is quite descriptive in his approach, noting that 'Americanism' is 'simply a term of geographical description', not a reproach (1897:11).

It is important to distinguish between these and the lists of Scotticisms discussed in 7.3.1 above. The latter were all written to help readers avoid Scotticisms, which were assumed to be incorrect, and which were replaced with 'correct

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[66] See chapter 6 on the meanings of *vulgar* in this period.

English' equivalents. The lists and dictionaries of Americanisms, however, with the exception perhaps of Pickering, were not written with such a purpose, but rather to catalogue curious and interesting differences, or to assist in trans-Atlantic understanding. Thus whereas it was possible to infer that any phrasal verb included in the lists of Scotticisms was proscribed, the same is not possible with the dictionaries of Americanisms: only phrasal verbs with negative comments or labels attached can be read as censured. The number of phrasal verbs in each dictionary, and the number with comments attached, is shown in table 7-2.

Table 7-2 Phrasal verbs in nineteenth-century dictionaries of Americanisms

Dictionary	Number of phrasal verbs	Number of negative[67] comments	Number of positive comments
Pickering (1816)	1	0	0
Bartlett (1859)	104	16 (11%)	1 (1%)
Schele de Vere (1872)	73	4 (5%)	3 (4%)
Farmer (1889)	168	11 (6%)	2 (1%)
Russell (1897)	65	3 (4%)	0

Only one phrasal verb (*go by* 'stop and dine') is given in Pickering (1818), with no label. In Bartlett (1859), on the other hand, just over one hundred phrasal verbs are given as Americanisms. Most are uncensured, but Bartlett does apply negative labels or comments to sixteen of them. *Clear out* ('depart'), *come (it) over* ('get the better of'), *fetch up* ('stop suddenly'), *hush up* ('hush'), *knock off* ('deduct'), *pony up* ('pay'), *shut up* ('stop talking') and *try (it) on* ('try') are all labelled *vulgar*. As discussed in chapter 6, *vulgar* is a rather ambiguous label, but by the nineteenth century it was almost always used pejoratively to mean 'low' or 'unrefined'. According to Bartlett, *let on* ('divulge') is 'often heard among the illiterate'; while *suck in* ('cheat, deceive') is 'low'. A further three are labelled 'colloquial' – *rope in* ('take in collectively'), *take on* ('grieve, fret') and *dragged out* ('exhausted') – and one is considered 'slang' – *fork over* ('hand over money'). In only two cases does Bartlett give a reason for his censure. Of

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[67] I include here phrasal verbs labelled as *colloquial* and *slang,* which were often used pejoratively in the nineteenth century (cf. chapter 6), but these are discussed in more detail below.

burn up ('burn/ruin') he remarks that in 'correct English', grass is burned up, but it is 'hardly proper' to say that an exhausted man is burned up (rather, he is *burned out*) or that a factory is burned up (it is *burned down*). He also criticizes *climb down* ('descend'), writing that '[t]o climb, is to ascend, to mount, to rise; but in no sense to descend'. Both of these criticisms are based on logic (cf. chapter 5): it is, Bartlett implies, illogical to say *climb down* when *climb* means 'go up'; or to say that a factory is *burned up* when in fact it ends up lower than it began. Bartlett also gives one positive comment: of the nominalized phrasal verb *carryings-on* he notes that '[t]here is good authority for the use of this term by English writers of the seventeenth century', the invocation of 'authority' suggesting that this is an acceptable phrasal verb, perhaps in comparison with some of the other 'slang' and 'vulgar' ones.

Schele de Vere (1872) is less critical of phrasal verbs: of the seventy-three included, only four (5%) have negative comments attached. *Climb down* is, following Bartlett, criticized on grounds of logic. *Row up* ('punish') is censured because of its low origins in the slave trade, and Schele de Vere here remarks on 'the facility which cant terms have, like weeds, to grow up from a stray seed, and to take the place of better words'. *Cracked up* ('reputed') is 'vulgar slang', and the particle *around* ('in the neighbourhood', as in *stand around*) is a 'violent abuse' of the language. Schele de Vere also comments positively on two phrasal verbs: *back down* and *back out* meaning 'retreat' are 'quite picturesque in form and suggestive in meaning'. Furthermore, he defends the addition of a particle in the construction *break up* ('open up land'): 'the land has to be *broken up* – not simply *broken,* as in England, perhaps because of the much greater difficulty in breaking new land'. As we have seen, the addition of redundant particles is one feature of the American phrasal verb which is heavily criticized in twentieth-century materials, so it is notable that Schele de Vere defends this type of construction as meaningful and emphatic.

Farmer (1889), the largest of the dictionaries, has the most phrasal verbs – 168 – and only eleven (6%) have negative labels or comments attached. Two of these – *climb down* and *stand/hang around* – follow Bartlett and Schele de Vere. *Clear out* (depart) is '[a]n exclamation perhaps more forcible than polite'. A further eight are labelled *slang, cant* or *vulgar*: *catch on to* ('understand'), *choke off*

('obstruct'), *close out* ('clear out') and *slop over* ('miss one's mark)'; the nominalized forms *break up* ('place where large numbers of people separate') and *getaway/goaway* ('locomotive'); and the adjectival forms *cut up* ('in mental pain') and *dragged out* ('exhausted'). Again, these labels were not necessarily negative, and Farmer occasionally expresses positive comments alongside: *catch on to* ('understand'), although 'vulgar' also shows, in the fact that it translates the Latin *apprehend*, 'a keen appreciation in off-hand fashion of the real gist of the idea thus conveyed'. This view is similar to Horwill's (1936) comment that (American) phrasal verbs are more vivid than Latinate verbs because they are based on living metaphors (see chapter 4). Similarly, *slop over* is 'expressive though vulgar'.

Russell (1897), who is the only English writer of the dictionaries of Americanisms under analysis, is generally uncritical of the phrasal verbs he includes. Only three have negative comments attached. Of *bug out* ('extend, be astonished'), Russell remarks scathingly '[h]ow is it that so tasteful an expression has not commended itself to the new journalism?' *Fix* ('adorn/arrange'), which often takes the particles *out* or *up*, has 'become vulgarized by constant overwork', while *go-aheadativness* ('progressive spirit') is 'A vulgarism of somewhat aged disrepute'. In addition, Russell remarks – although not critically – on two instances where American English adds a particle without changing the meaning: *cool off* is 'To cool, simply', while *wipe off* is 'To wipe, simply. "Wipe off that table" is simply *wipe* it, not necessarily remove anything from it'.

7.3.2.2. Discussion

For a full list of the phrasal verbs criticized in these texts alongside *OED* evidence, see appendix 9. Of the fifty-four censured phrasal verbs, thirty-five (nearly two-thirds) are actual Americanisms according to the *OED*: either they are labelled as such; or the illustrative quotations give evidence that they were originally or chiefly in use in the United States. The level of accuracy varies from text to text, however. Bartlett's dictionary of Americanisms includes several phrasal verbs, such as *knock off* and *shut up*, which were not particularly American but were in general (often colloquial) British usage, whereas Schele de Vere, Farmer and Russell are more accurate in this respect. The British usage manuals of Herbert and Gowers are largely accurate: each only censures one

'Americanism' which is in fact British in origin (*face up to* in Herbert and *sound out* in Gowers). The letters in *The Times* are much less accurate: *cancel out, help out, look out* and *stand up for* were all used in British English long before Americans could be blamed for them, and others such as *man up* and *speed up* are, although late nineteenth- and twentieth-century coinages, not marked as particularly American in the *OED*.

What is striking about the comments in these texts is the change in type of criticism. In the dictionaries of Americanisms, the phrasal verbs which are criticized are labelled as vulgar, slang, or colloquial: only two (*burn up* and *climb down*) are criticized on grounds of logic, and neither of these is in fact an Americanism. On the other hand, over three-quarters (nineteen of twenty-five) of the phrasal verbs which are censured as Americanisms in the twentieth-century British texts are criticized because of the addition of the supposedly redundant particles *up* and *out*: this tendency is castigated as verbose, wasteful, and damaging to the stock of simple verbs in the English vocabulary. Furthermore, the non-American 'Americanisms' which are censured in letters to *The Times* – *cancel out, help out* and so on – are redundant phrasal verbs. It seems that the writers of these letters, recognizing the addition of a redundant particle as American in some instances (such as *win out* and *lose out*), extended this to all occurrences of such additions.

7.3.2.3. Summary

There are no comments about phrasal verbs as Americanisms in any of the nineteenth-century texts in the precept corpus. In the nineteenth-century dictionaries of Americanisms, some phrasal verbs are negatively labelled, mostly as vulgar, but these are relatively few, and there is no indication of a generally negative view of the American use of the construction. In the twentieth-century British material, however, more markedly negative attitudes towards the American use of phrasal verbs appear, all focusing on the addition of the redundant particles *up* and *out*. Comments in British usage manuals such as Herbert and Gowers, and indignant remarks in letters to *The Times*, show a widespread perception of this tendency as weakening the English vocabulary and replacing 'strong', 'simple' verbs. They are, on the whole, accurate in the phrasal verbs they identify as Americanisms, although occasionally the censured

form is in fact of British origin. Furthermore, the language used in these criticisms is often highly charged. The Americanisms given are 'gate-crashings', 'immigrants' and 'infections': the English language is portrayed as an invaded party, country or body, with America as the unwanted aggressor. In contrast, the only such comment in the twentieth-century American material is that the American tendency to add redundant particles is 'wasteful but… harmless' (Follett 1966:340). The other American writers in the corpus either do not remark on this tendency at all, or, in one case, praise the 'vividness' of American English use of phrasal verbs.

7.3.3. *Other*

Only two works in the precept corpus express an attitude towards phrasal verbs in relation to another regional variety. Mitchell (1799) lists

> To kill him *off*; Irish and vulg. Eng. – To kill him. – See *up*.
>
> To kill him *up, or, off*; Irish and vulg. Eng. – To kill him. – *Up* and *off* are evidently superfluous.

Neither of these lexemes is marked as Irish English in the *OED*: there is only one quotation illustrating *kill up,* from an English writer (Willian Hinde), and two illustrating *kill off*, one from an Englishman (Edward Topsell) and one from a Scot (Henry Drummond). It is notable that Mitchell presents both of these as 'Irish and vulgar English', blurring the distinction between dialect and 'vulgarity'.

Herbert (1935:153-4) claims that '[a]lready from Australia I hear of "meet up", "rest up", and "get it over with"'. In fact, none of these appear to be of Australian origin. The first quotation for *meet up* in the *OED* is from the American *Century Magazine* (*OED*3 *meet up*), while *rest up* is labelled 'orig. U.S.' (*OED rest* v1, 2g). The origin of *get it over with* is less certain: the first quotation in the *OED* is in fact Herbert's comment (*OED get* v, 74c), but Denison (1984:273) gives an 1894 quotation from the *English Dialect Dictionary* and adds that to him 'it sounds quite natural and dialectally unmarked'.

All of these examples are redundant phrasal verbs, which is further evidence that redundancy was often associated with dialect in the prescriptive works under analysis.

7.4. Conclusion

In his article on British awareness of American English, Read (1933:334) notes that in the eighteenth century, British writers were not yet very critical of Americanisms, since 'the defenders of the purity of the language were as yet engaged in reprobating Scotticisms'. To indicate the extent to which this situation had changed by the nineteenth century, I offer the following quotation from an 1852 composition textbook by a Scottish scholar, who notes that many supposed Scotticisms are not particular to Scotland, and that

> the most plentiful harvest of barbarous phraseology is to be gathered in America, where the changes in the English language have been so considerable, as in many cases to render it unintelligible to an Englishman (Irving 1852:27[68]).

It appears that there was a shift in attitude as to which variety of English was regarded as problematic and/or threatening. In the eighteenth century, when the union of Scottish and English parliaments meant greater interaction between speakers of English English and speakers of Scots or Scottish English, there was a heightened awareness of differences between the two varieties, largely on the part of self-conscious Scots. However, with the increasing Anglicization of language in Scotland in the nineteenth and twentieth century, Scotticisms ceased to be seen as problematic. Instead, the focus of criticism turned to American English which, particularly by the twentieth century, was perceived as threatening and invasive, and indicative of the more general cultural influence of America on Britain.

The attitudes towards phrasal verbs which have been discussed in this chapter reflect this shift. In the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century materials, several phrasal verbs are identified (sometimes inaccurately) as Scotticisms and thus castigated; in the twentieth-century materials on the other hand, undesirable phrasal verbs are censured as Americanisms. Furthermore, there is a clearly identifiable trend whereby redundant phrasal verbs are censured, first as Scotticisms, later as Americanisms, and occasionally as Irishisms and Australianisms, even when they are not in fact restricted to any particular

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[68] This textbook was first published in 1803, but this passage does not appear in the first edition.

regional variety. This could be partly due to an awareness of redundancy as a common feature of non-standard English, and partly due to the particular dislike of redundant phrasal verbs which was discussed in chapter 5. In the case of American English, where the addition of redundant particles is more common, there was a process by which this feature was first identified and criticized, and then extended to redundant phrasal verbs which are centuries old in British English.

Chapter 8. The labelling of phrasal verbs in Late Modern English dictionaries

8.1. Introduction

The importance of dictionaries in the dissemination of attitudes towards language in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries can hardly be exaggerated. Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) became, in the form of its many abridgements and miniature versions, a household name, and even 'an instrument of cultural imperialism', with editions exported and used in schools in Australia and New Zealand in the nineteenth century (Hitchings 2005:213). Webster's *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828) has become 'an integral part of American culture. As early as the mid-nineteenth century the name Webster had become synonymous with a dictionary' (Rollins 1976:415). Indeed, Noah Webster was so important a figure in America that, at the end of the nineteenth century a historian, writing about the three Americans whose reputations were most likely to last, chose Webster along with Christopher Columbus and George Washington (Micklethwaite 2000:9). As for *OED*1 (1884-1928), '[i]ts authority was recognized from the appearance of its first installation' (Baugh and Cable 1993:338). Its chief editor, James A.H. Murray, was often perceived as 'a kind of public linguistic oracle' and received numerous letters from members of the public asking for advice on questions of usage (Mugglestone 2005:144).

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the attitudes of these great authoritative dictionaries towards phrasal verbs, with particular focus on their use of restrictive labels such as *colloquial* and *vulgar,* and to relate these to the attitudes revealed in the precept corpus materials. Before discussing methodology (8.4) and analyzing the data (8.5), the dictionaries' general attitudes to language will be summarized (8.2), and the development and meanings of restrictive labels discussed (8.3).

8.2. Johnson, Webster and the *OED* – from prescriptive to descriptive?

As Barnbrook (2005:92) remarks, Johnson was a 'self-confessed prescriptivist'. Comments in the *Plan* and the *Preface*, as well as in essays in the *Rambler* and

elsewhere, reveal his desire to 'clear [the language] from colloquial barbarisms' (1752:286) and to 'preserve the purity... of our English idiom' (1747:4). Even in the *Preface,* where he admits that attempts to 'fix the language' are futile, Johnson still hopes that we can 'retard what we cannot repel' (1755:40). Such comments are expressive and quotable, and have served to reinforce the image of Johnson as authoritarian and opinionated about language. However, as several studies have shown, Johnson was not quite as prescriptive as he made himself out to be. Siebert (1986:486) shows that Johnson was 'quite hospitable to neologisms and the colloquial language of his day', and often included these without censure. McDermott (2005) argues that, in his attention to polysemy and his use of illustrative quotations, Johnson in fact produced a highly descriptive work. Also, it is important to remember that Johnson was not considered prescriptive by his contemporaries: Adam Smith, for example, wished that Johnson had 'oftener passed his own censure upon those words which are not of approved use' (1755, quoted in Wells 1973:44).

Noah Webster's position in terms of a descriptive/prescriptive approach to language is also complex, and most commentators on his attitudes mention some kind of duality. Wells (1973:54-5) remarks that Webster – like Johnson – changed his mind about whether 'fixing the language' was desirable, moving to a more descriptive position in his mature years. Finegan (2001:369) points out that his descriptive theories were not always realized in practice: '[t]hough ostensibly descriptive, Webster frequently analyzed not what occurred in usage but what he thought ought to occur'. Certainly, Webster was in some ways traditional and conservative – yet he was also an innovator, most obviously in his proposals for spelling reform and his desire to establish an independent American language. Webster's attitude towards language is also complicated by his attitude towards Johnson, 'the father figure [whom he] admired, emulated, and rebelled against' (Micklethwaite 2000:19). Throughout the dictionary one can trace an ongoing dialogue with Johnson: for example, *likely* meaning 'pleasing' is 'not obsolete, as Johnson affirms, nor is it vulgar', while the use of *evidence* to mean 'A witness; one who testifies to a fact... is improper and inelegant, though common, and found even in Johnson's writings'. In some cases, Webster seems to be distancing himself from Johnson's normative comments; in others, placing himself as more authoritative and prescriptive than Johnson.

*OED*1 was intended as a monument of objectivity. Trench's paper 'On Some Deficiencies in Our English Dictionaries', whose principles were to form the theoretical basis of *OED*1, stated that a dictionary is 'an inventory of the language… It is no task of the maker of it to select the *good* words of a language' (1860:4-5). In practice, however, this objectivity was not always achieved. Indeed, Trench went on to say that '[w]here [the lexicographer] counts words to be needless, affected, pedantic, ill put together, contrary to the genius of the language, there is no objection to his saying so'. And the *OED*1 editors did occasionally 'say so', marking words as *vulgar, corrupt* and so on (see 8.3. below). Furthermore, as Mugglestone (2005:145) argues, the 'determinedly prescriptive' culture of the late nineteenth century problematized the intended objectivity of *OED*1, with editors occasionally revealing their own preferences and prejudices. Thus, despite the intention of *OED*1 to be 'Johnson's polar opposite' (Mugglestone 2004:147) in its descriptive approach to language, this ideal was not always realized. It is clear, then, that lexicography in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries did not progress smoothly from having a prescriptive to a descriptive approach.

8.3. Restrictive labels

Although prescriptive symbols, such as daggers marking obsolete or cant words, were used in pre-Johnsonian dictionaries (Osselton 2006), it was Johnson who started the tradition of restrictive labelling, marking words as *low, improper, vulgar* and so on. According to Allen (1978:198) Johnson used over one hundred labels, the most common being *proper* and its variants (*improper, propriety,* etc.), *low, corrupt, cant* and *barbarous.* Allen shows that the total number of judgements that Johnson made is 1,417, a significant proportion of the 41,443-word dictionary (1978:198)[69]. Webster's use of labels has not been analyzed to the same extent as Johnson's, although Cassidy (2003:265-66) suggests that Webster most frequently used labels indicating currency, such as *not in use* and *not usual,* as well as labels indicating quality and status, such as *low* and *vulgar.* The prevailing myth about the objectivity of *OED*1 leads Cassidy (2003:266) to

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[69] It should be noted, though, that in many cases it is only a particular sense of a word which is labelled, so a more accurate comparison would show the number of judgements against the total number of senses in the dictionary.

claim that its editors 'avoid[ed] Johnson's "bad, barbarous, corrupt, low, vulgar"', but Mugglestone (2000b:30) shows that *vulgar* and *low,* along with *shoppy, illiterate* and other proscriptive labels, were indeed used in *OED*1, 'even if [they were] nowhere overtly identified as part of editorial policy or process'.

Indeed, none of the three dictionaries provided a list or discussion of the restrictive labels they used. This fact, combined with semantic changes of some of the labels, means that care must be taken when basing assessments of the dictionaries' attitudes towards language on their use of labels. A selection of the labels that are most relevant to the discussion of phrasal verbs – *improper, colloquial, familiar, vulgar, popular, slang* and *inelegant* – will now be analyzed in order to show some of the changes in their meanings and connotations since Johnson's use of them in 1755.

8.3.1. Improper

Johnson's application of *improper* is a useful indication of his views on language. In some cases it indicates an erroneous spelling or grammatical usage, but in many cases it marks figurative senses. It is possible that it is sometimes descriptive, used in the following sense:

> Formerly sometimes [used] without implication of blame or censure, e.g. said of a meaning given to a word which is not the 'proper' or literal one, but metaphorical (*OED improper* a, 1).

This sense is illustrated by only one quotation in the *OED,* from 1701, and is not included in Johnson's own entry for *improper.* However, given that Johnson sometimes used *proper* to mean 'literal' (and included this sense in his entry for *proper*), it is possible that its antonym *improper* could mean 'figurative'[70]. This is a plausible reading of his entry for *connascence*:

> CONNASCENCE, n.s.
>
> 1. Common birth; production at the same time; community of birth.
>
> 2. The act of uniting or growing together: improperly.

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[70] Johnson's entry for *abroach* is an example of a use of *proper* which almost certainly means 'literal': 'ABROACH, adv. 1. In a posture to run out; to yield the liquor contained; *properly* spoken of vessels. 2. *In a figurative sense*; in a state to be diffused or advanced; in a state of such beginning as promises a progress' (my emphases). Sense 7 of Johnson's entry for *proper* is 'Not figurative'. See Wild (2009).

Here, it is possible that Johnson means that the first sense refers to literal and physical 'birth together', while the second sense is a figurative extension. However, Johnson often does use *improper* in a prescriptive way, to refer to senses which cannot be logically derived from the etymology of the word. For example, *prejudice* 'To injure; to hurt; to diminish; to impair; to be detrimental to... is often improperly extended to meanings that have no relation to the original sense; who can read with patience of an ingredient that *prejudices* a medicine?' This sense of *prejudice* is not simply figurative; it is excessively figurative, too distant from its original meaning. Such comments relate to Johnson's views on figurative language. According to Boswell, Johnson's opinion was that:

> Sir, as to metaphorical expression, that is a great excellence in style, when it is used with propriety, for it gives you two ideas for one; – conveys the meaning more luminously, and generally with a perception of delight (Boswell 1791:157).

We cannot be sure whether Johnson actually used the word 'propriety' here, or whether this is Boswell's rewording; but if he did, it is an interesting usage. In this case, it clearly does not relate to literal senses, but to appropriate, reasonable use of metaphor. Conversely, *impropriety* often refers to extended meanings which, as Johnson says, 'have no relation to the original sense'.

Webster's conception of *improper* words is, like Johnson's, often based on logic and analogy. For example, *attainable* has been used with the sense 'obtainable' due to 'an inattention to the true sense of this word'; the word *black-lead* 'is improper, as it contains no lead'; and *middlemost* in the sense 'nearest the middle' is improper since '[i]f a thing is in the middle, it cannot be more so'. In addition, Webster uses *improper* to enforce his ideas about spelling reform (which were also heavily based on logic and analogy): *ax* is 'improperly written axe', while *meter* 'is most improperly written metre. How very absurd to write the simple word in this manner, but in all its numerous compounds, meter, as in diameter, hexameter, thermometer, &c.'

Improper is used quite rarely in *OED*1: in a search of the whole of B and G, only twelve words were thus labelled, all of them occurring in *B*[71]. In most cases Murray attaches *improper* to grammatical deviations, such as *barrack* treated as singular, and to alternative spellings, such as *blessful* for 'blissful'. In one instance though, Murray, like Johnson, calls an extended sense *improper*: *basilica* was 'Originally, a hall of justice handed over by Roman emperors and consecrated for religious use; thence applied to other early churches built on the same plan, and improperly to churches generally'. It is impossible to tell whether this use of *improper* means 'incorrect' or simply 'figurative'.

8.3.2. Colloquial

As shown in chapter 6, *colloquial* has often been used to mean 'low' rather than 'spoken'. This pejorative connotation may have originated with Johnson, whose remark about 'clear[ing the language] from colloquial barbarisms' is the first quotation in the *OED* for the sense 'characteristic of or proper to ordinary conversation' (*OED colloquial* a, 2). Furthermore, Johnson often used *colloquial,* like *improper,* to refer to illogical, unetymological, and imprecise senses, as in *reverse,* the second sense of which ('A contrary; an opposite') Johnson calls 'a sense rather colloquial than analogous'. This sense of *colloquial* is also apparent in the *Preface*, where Johnson writes that 'illiterate writers... not knowing the original import of words, will use them with colloquial licentiousness, confound distinction, and forget propriety' (1755:39).

Webster occasionally uses *colloquial* as a negative marker: for example, *folk* meaning 'people' is 'a colloquial word, not admissible into elegant style'. Unlike Johnson, though, Webster also allows that colloquial English can be perfectly respectable: the noun *lead* meaning 'precedence' is 'A colloquial word in reputable use'. Webster's more neutral use of the word is also evident in their definitions of *prentice,* which for Webster is 'a colloquial contraction of apprentice', compared with Johnson's more proscriptive 'contracted, by colloquial licence, from apprentice'.

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[71] Although B is larger than G, this difference between the letters is notable and suggests that Henry Bradley, who edited G, was not perhaps as prescriptive as Mugglestone (2005:173) claims.

In his 'General Explanations', given as an introduction to the first fascicle of *OED*1 (1884), Murray proposes a classification in which colloquial words, along with literary words, are part of the common 'nucleus' of the vocabulary: indeed, he writes, 'the great majority [are] at once literary and colloquial'. In accordance with this, *OED*1 uses *colloquial* with almost impeccable neutrality. In a selection of over ninety uses of the label, only one has a pejorative implication[72]. According to Murray, in a sentence like 'How is it possible but that we should be discontent?', '*but that* is still the better form, and *but* is familiar or colloquial', implying a contrast between familiar and colloquial language on the one hand, and 'better' (formal written) language on the other.

8.3.3. Familiar

The use of *informal* meaning 'without formality, unceremonious' is not recognized at all in Johnson, and the first quotation for this sense in the *OED* is from Webster (1828). None of the three dictionaries gives a sense relating to language; thus it is not surprising that neither Johnson nor Webster uses it as a label, and *OED*1 uses it only once[73]. The equivalent of modern *informal* in Johnson, Webster and *OED*1 is *familiar*.

Johnson uses *familiar* less negatively than *colloquial,* although it too occasionally has pejorative connotations (for example, *abominably* is 'a word of low or familiar language'). Unlike Johnson, whose definition of *familiar* as 'well known', 'well acquainted' and 'frequent' does not include a sense referring to informal language, Webster gives a specifically stylistic sense of the word: 'easy; unconstrained; not formal. His letters are written in a familiar style'. This understanding of *familiar* can be seen in its use as a label: *epistle* is 'rarely used in familiar conversation or writings, but chiefly in solemn or formal transactions'. Occasionally Webster uses it in a pejorative way, equating informality with inelegance: *crusty* 'peevish' is 'a word used in familiar

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[72] Due to the size of the *OED* and difficulties involved in searching *OED*1 (see 8.4), verbs beginning with B and G were searched to provide a representative sample. In fact, no proscriptive uses were found in this sample: the example given here was actually found in a search of the label *familiar* (in all parts of speech in B and G), although of course is still relevant.

[73] The example is interesting in itself, as it may be the first use of *informal* as a dictionary label. It occurs in *M*, edited by Bradley and published in 1903. *M.P.* is defined as 'The usual abbreviation for 'Member of Parliament'. Often treated (*colloq.* or in informal writing) as a word, with the pronunciation (ᴱm piː); the plural is written *M.P.'s,* sometimes *M.P.s.*'

discourse, but not deemed elegant' while *queerness* 'peculiarity' is 'a familiar, not an elegant word' (see the discussion of *elegant,* 8.3.7 below). However, it is sometimes used positively or neutrally: *hanker* is 'a familiar, but not a low word' while *tack* meaning 'stitch' is 'in the familiar style… in good use'.

In *OED*1, *familiar* often marks pet names and forms of address suitable to communication between friends, e.g. *granny, bubby* ('boy') and *Betty.* As with *colloquial*, there are occasional slips into subjectivity in the employment of *familiar – Bobby* is a 'familiar perversion of *Robert*' (*perversion* is defined as 'turning aside from truth or right; diversion to an improper use; corruption, distortion') – but these slips are rare.

8.3.4. Vulgar

As discussed in chapter 6, *vulgar* had two main senses in the eighteenth and nineteenth century: 'coarse, unrefined' and 'pertaining to the common people, common, customary'. Johnson uses *vulgar* as a label twenty-four times, and in five cases it collocates with a negative word such as *low* and *unauthorised*. However, in one case *vulgar* is used positively. Because the etymology of *craunch* is the Dutch *schrantsen*, Johnson writes that 'the vulgar say more properly *to scraunch*', again indicating his prioritizing of etymology as the gauge of correctness. It seems, then, that just because Johnson marked a word as used by the 'common people' he did not necessarily consider it improper. In fact, Johnson writes in the preface to his edition of Shakespeare (1765:156) that the most 'settled' style of speech is to be found in 'the common intercourse of life', whereas the 'polite' (i.e. the upper classes) in their 'modish innovations' tend to 'forsake the vulgar, when the vulgar is right'.

Webster's understanding of *vulgar* is ambivalent. In the introduction to the *American Dictionary* (1828) he writes that '[i]n general, vulgar words are the oldest and best authorized in the language', but then goes on to say that 'he has 'not gone quite so far as Johnson and Todd have done, in admitting vulgar words. Some of them are too low to deserve notice'. In the dictionary itself, *vulgar* is occasionally positive: *blubber* 'bubble' is 'a common vulgar word, but legitimate', and *have at* 'assail' is 'Legitimate, but vulgar'. Here, the implication is that vulgar words are used by the common people but are as

legitimate and proper as words used by the upper classes. Occasionally Webster uses the label in a derogatory sense. *Grutch* 'grudge' is 'now vulgar, and not to be used', while *worser* is 'a vulgar word, and not used in good writing or speaking'.

As in Johnson and Webster, there are two relevant senses of *vulgar* in the *OED*1 definition. One is neutral: 'common or customary in respect of the use or understanding of language, words, or ideas'. The other is negative: 'of language: coarsely commonplace; lacking in refinement or good taste; uncultured, ill-bred'. When used as a label, the pejorative intention is occasionally clear: for example, the use of *gent* for 'gentleman' is 'now only vulgar... its use came to be regarded as a mark of low breeding'. Interestingly, *vulgar* often labels words which refer to bodily parts or functions – *behind* ('posterior'), *belch, bog-house, bog-shop, gobble-gut, greedy-guts* and *gut* – so perhaps the sense 'obscene' was beginning to develop, although it does not appear in the definition of *vulgar*.

8.3.5. *Popular*

Johnson defines *popular* as 'vulgar' and 'suitable to the common people'. He tends to use *popular* to indicate a sense which is less 'proper' and precise than the original meaning: for example, *like* used as an adverb is a 'popular use not analogical'. Again, this rests on Johnson's beliefs about logic and precision in language.

Webster almost always uses *popular* neutrally, and he develops its use as a label meaning 'non-technical'. In many cases he labels one sense as *popular*, and another with a field label such as *botany* or *zoology*. For example, we are told of *autumn* that 'Astronomically, it begins at the equinox, when the sun enters libra, and ends at the winter solstice; but in popular language autumn comprises September, October and November'. Occasionally the distinction is expressed in a negative way: for example *physic* is 'In popular language, a medicine that purges; a purge; a cathartic' but 'In technical and elegant language this sense is not used'. However, such instances are rare, and Webster develops a more neutral use of *popular* than was found in Johnson.

*OED*1 follows Webster in this respect, and tends to use *popular* as a label marking alternatives to scientific names for plants and animals. Occasionally it appears to be used negatively – for example, *benzoin* is 'Also called by popular corruption BENJAMIN' – but such moments of editorial subjectivity are, again, rare[74].

8.3.6. Slang

Neither Johnson nor Webster used the label *slang,* although they used *cant*, meaning jargon, usually of beggars and thieves. *OED*1 does use *slang,* although not as extensively as *colloquial.* In a search of the two labels applied to verbs beginning with B and G (excluding headword labels), *colloquial* was used ninety-two times, *slang* sixty-nine. Also, *slang* was used twice as many times in the data in G than in the corresponding data in B (forty-six compared with twenty-three times), suggesting that the label gained more currency in the intervening years.

As discussed in chapter 6, *slang* has often been used in a pejorative sense. That this connotation was present in its use in *OED*1 is evident in its definition:

> 1. a. The special vocabulary used by any set of persons of a low or disreputable character; language of a low and vulgar type [1756–];
> b. The special vocabulary or phraseology of a particular calling or profession; the cant or jargon of a certain class or period [1801–];
> c. Language of a highly colloquial type, considered as below the level of standard educated speech, and consisting either of new words or of current words employed in some special sense [1818–].

Both the first and third senses use markedly negative language – slang is low, uneducated and substandard – although the second sense is more neutral, and the jargon of professions is perhaps accepted as necessary. The uncertain nature of slang is also made clear in Murray's 'General Explanations' (1884). Unlike colloquial language, slang is not part of the 'common vocabulary', but is on the periphery: the lexicographer need only include such of the slang words 'as are

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[74] Pearce (2004) has convincingly shown that the label *corrupt* was not always pejorative when used by Johnson, and that it still had, in some cases, its neutral scientific denotation of simple change. Without further investigation, it is difficult to determine whether the neutral sense was still available for the *OED*1 editors. Certainly the definitions of *corrupt* adj. are all negative: '1. Changed from the naturally sound condition...; infected or defiled by that which causes decay'; '2 Spoiled by base additions; adulterated; debased'; '3. Debased in character; infected with evil; depraved; perverted; evil, wicked' and so on.

passing into common use and approach the position or standing of "common words"'. When used as a label in *OED*1, then, *slang* is clearly more negative than *colloquial*.

8.3.7. Inelegant

The relevant sense of *elegant* in the *OED* is:

> Of composition, literary style, etc.; also of words or phrases: Characterized by grace and refinement; 'pleasing by minuter beauties' (J.). (Formerly used somewhat vaguely as a term of praise for literary style; from 18th c. it has tended more and more to exclude any notion of intensity or grandeur, and, when applied to compositions in which these qualities might be looked for, has a depreciatory sense.) (*elegant* adj, 4a).

This sense, and its antonym *inelegant* – 'wanting in grace of form or manner; ungraceful; unrefined; clumsy, coarse, unpolished (esp. of language and literary style)' (*inelegant* adj, 1b) – have been in use since the early sixteenth century.

Elegance and *inelegance,* according to these definitions, are concerned with minutiae, and Ingham (1968:272) shows that this was the meaning of the terms when used by eighteenth-century grammarians: Priestley, for example, 'uses "elegant" to describe usages marked by neatness and economy of expression'. Ingham also shows that this was the sense that Johnson used in his literary criticism, although with a particular focus on the accuracy of poetic imagery (1968:273). Ingham does not explore Johnson's use of the terms in his dictionary, but a glance at the lexemes labelled *inelegant* (which he defines as 'not becoming; not beautiful') indicates its connotations for Johnson:

> INFAUSTING n.s. The act of making unlucky. An odd and inelegant word.
>
> OR conj. 3.It sometimes, but rather inelegantly, stands for either. For thy vast bounties are so numberless, /That them or to conceal, or else to tell,/ Is equally impossible [4th ed.]
>
> OVERWHELMINGLY adv. In such a manner as to overwhelm. Inelegant, and not in use [4th ed.]
>
> To PLEASURE v.a. To please; to gratify. This word, though supported by good authority, is, I think, inelegant.

SKYED adj. Envelloped by the skies. This is unauthorised, and inelegant [4th ed.]⁷⁵

It appears that *inelegant* is particularly used to mark expressions that Johnson felt to be clumsy or ill-formed: the repetition of *or;* the multiplication of syllables in *overwhelmingly;* and novel conversions (*pleasure*) or derivations (*skyed, infausting*).

Like Johnson, Webster also uses *elegance* to refer to minutiae of style, in contrast with the 'sublime', for example arguing that 'many writers of the last and present age have, both in elegance and sublimity of style, equaled, if not surpassed the Roman authors of the Augustan age' (1784:3). Occasionally, though, *elegance* appears to be a general term of approbation, as in his claim that '[t]he English tongue… has attained to a considerable degree of purity, strength and elegance' (1789:18). Similarly, Webster's definition of *inelegant* shows its general application:

> Not elegant; wanting beauty or polish, as language, or refinement, as manners; wanting symmetry or ornament, as an edifice; in short, wanting in any thing which correct taste requires.

Webster applies the label *inelegant* to a variety of usages, as can be seen in the following examples:

> HOW adv. 7. In some popular phrases, how is superfluous or inelegant. Thick clouds put us in some hope of land; knowing how that part of the South Sea was utterly unknown.

> HUGE adv. 2. It is improperly applied to space and distance, in the sense of great, vast, immense; as a huge space; a huge difference. This is inelegant, or rather vulgar.

> LAZING a. Spending time in sluggish inaction. This is an ill-formed, inelegant word.

> LENGTH n. 8. Distance. He had marched to the length of Exeter. Unusual and inelegant.

> PERADVENTURE adv. By chance; perhaps; it may be...The word is obsolescent and inelegant.

---

⁷⁵ These are the only occurrences of *inelegant* I found in the dictionary; several more are labelled *not inelegant* and *not elegant*.

> Put case, for put the case, suppose the case to be so; a vulgar or at least
> inelegant phrase.

Here, criticisms refer to redundancy (*how*), unusual senses (*huge, length*), obsolete or obsolescent words (*peradventure*) and 'ill-formed' words (*lazing*). It is also notable that, in his comment about *put case,* Webster suggests that *inelegant* is less prescriptive than *vulgar. OED*1 does not use the label *inelegant* at all.

8.3.8. Summary

Any analysis of attitudes in dictionaries relies on interpreting the meanings of the style and status labels employed. This is further complicated when one is analyzing dictionaries of the past, since the labels are subject to changes in meaning and connotations: for instance, *vulgar* was sometimes used in the neutral sense 'pertaining to the people', while *improper* was often used by Johnson and Webster to refer specifically to unetymological or bleached senses. In the ensuing analysis of the labelling of phrasal verbs in these dictionaries, the changing implications of the different labels will be taken into account.

8.4. Methodology

Because of the number of possible phrasal verbs in each dictionary, it would have been impractical to analyze each one, so various searches were employed in order to capture as many proscribed forms as possible. For Johnson and Webster, these searches were as follows:

- all the entries beginning with B;
- the following main verbs that frequently combine to form phrasal verbs: *come, get, give, go, look, make, put, set, take, turn*, and any conversions of these such as *give-away* and *made-up*;
- the main adverbial particles: *away, back, down, forth, in, off, out, over, up*;
- the labels *barbarous, colloquial, erroneous, elegant*[76]*, familiar, improper, inelegant, low, pleonastic, popular, redundant, slang, superfluous, ungrammatical, unnecessary* and *vulgar,* with wildcards to capture variants (e.g. *colloq** to retrieve *colloq., colloquial, colloquially*

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[76] This positive label was searched because of the frequency with which Webster in particular uses 'not elegant'.

and *colloquialism*);

- phrasal verbs which were criticized in other works in the precept corpus.

A cross-checking approach was adopted: for example, if a particular phrasal verb is marked as *low* in Johnson, it was checked in Webster.

The searches of Johnson are based on McDermott's (1996) CD-ROM of the first (1755) and fourth (1773) editions. Changes to the fourth edition will be discussed in 8.5.1.2. An edition of the abstracted version was also analyzed for comparison with the folio: this will be discussed in 8.5.1.3. The searches of Webster are based on both the CD-ROM of the facsimile edition, and the online version. Neither yields perfect results: the CD-ROM can only be searched as a PDF file, which occasionally misses occurrences, while the online version omits some material. It is hoped that by searching both these sources a complete, or nearly complete, set of data has been retrieved.

As mentioned in chapter 2, searching *OED*1 is time-consuming, as one must search *OED*2 online and then compare these results with printed volumes of *OED*1. Furthermore, there are certain searches that cannot be carried out using *OED* online. One can search labels under 'definition', but this misses labels at headword level (that is, a sense marked *colloquial* would be retrieved, but a word marked *colloquial* would not)[77].

Given these problems and the size of the *OED*, the searches of *OED*1 were as for Johnson and Webster, with the following exceptions:
- the entries beginning with B were not checked;
- the same labels were searched, but with limitations. Full-text searches were carried out for *barbarous, elegant, improper, inelegant, pleonastic, redundant, superfluous* and *unnecessary*, as these are relatively infrequent. For the more frequent *erroneous, familiar, low, popular* and *vulgar*, only entries in B and G were searched (these letters were chosen to reflect any differences in the labelling practices of Murray and Bradley). Because of the large amount of data for *colloquial* and *slang,* only verbs beginning with B

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[77] I am grateful to James McCracken of OUP for supplementing my data by finding labels at headword level using in-house search facilities.

and G were analyzed for these labels.

Field labels (*military, medical,* etc.) and currency labels (*obsolete, archaic,* etc.) have not been included in the analysis, as they do not reflect attitudes.

8.5. Analysis

8.5.1. *Johnson*

Johnson has acquired a reputation amongst critics for despising phrasal verbs. Smith (1923:58) was the first to claim that Johnson disapproved of the construction:

> Dr. Johnson's attitude towards them is easy to understand; so numerous are these phrasal verbs, and so vast their range of meaning, that they are a burden to the life of the lexicographer, and wishing, as Dr. Johnson wished, to do away with 'grammatical irregularities' he naturally disapproved of these idiomatic combinations.

Smith adds that Johnson criticized the redundant particles *down* (in *fall down*) and *up* (in *fill up*) (1923:48) and that he thought that the prepositional verb *come by* was 'an irregular and improper use' (1923:58). He also shows that, in the *Rambler* no. 140, Johnson criticized Milton's use of phrasal verbs in two lines of *Samson Agonistes*: 'Fathers are wont to *lay up* for their sons;/ Thou for thy son are bent to *lay out* all' (Smith 1923:58). This image of Johnson proscribing phrasal verbs has been perpetuated throughout the twentieth century. Jowett (1951:154) writes that Johnson 'hated such verbs as *bind up, bring in, look on*'; Konishi (1958:122) repeats Smith's arguments, while Hiltunen (1983:384-5) claims that '[t]he great lexicographers, Dr Johnson and Noah Webster, were also strongly against phrasal verbs'. Mugglestone (2004:151) writes that Johnson 'castigat[ed] the laxity with which phrasal verbs could be deployed' but gives only two examples of the prepositional verbs *dispense with* and *ponder on*. Beal (2004:83) writes that 'Johnson… appears to accept these constructions [group-verbs], albeit grudgingly'. Fairman (2006:81) asserts that Johnson 'recorded phasal verbs as lexemes in his dictionary, but registered disapproval of them in his preface: "a class of word too frequent"'. (This quotation from the *Preface* – which is actually 'a class of verbs too frequent' (Johnson 1755:4) – in fact refers to the light verbs (*come, give, set,* etc.) and not to phrasal verbs.)

Certainly, Johnson's discussion of phrasal verbs in the *Preface* is rather grudging; he notes that many of them 'appear wildly irregular, being so far distant from the sense of the simple words, that no sagacity will be able to trace the steps by which they arrived at the present use' (1755:28). This statement is clearly linked to the etymological fallacy (cf. chapter 5). However, Johnson was also the first lexicographer to treat phrasal verbs systematically (see chapter 2), and, as will be shown in this section, although he did sometimes censure individual phrasal and prepositional verbs, the number he criticized is not large.

8.5.1.1. Phrasal verbs with proscriptive labels in Johnson (1755, 1773)

The following are all the negative comments about phrasal verbs found in the first (1755) and fourth (1773) editions of Johnson's dictionary:

1. Of *beat up*, as 'to beat up for soldiers', Johnson writes that 'The word *up* seems redundant'. However, in the fourth edition, he modifies this, adding 'but enforces the sense, the technical term being to raise soldiers'.
2. *Call in,* 'to stop without intention of staying', is 'barbarous', but is supported by two quotations from Addison.
3. The addition of *out* to *copy* is, in the fourth edition, 'a kind of pleonasm'.
4. *Cut down,* 'to excel; to overpower', is called 'a low phrase' in the fourth edition, despite being illustrated by a quotation from Addison.
5. To the definition of *fall down*, 'To prostrate himself in adoration', Johnson adds that '*down* is sometimes added to *fall*, though it adds little to the signification'; this comment seems also to extend to the following two senses 'To sink, not to stand' and 'To bend as a suppliant'. In the fourth edition he removes a quote with *fall down* ('he fell down dead' – Bible, Judges v. 27) from an earlier sense of *fall*.
6. *Fell,* v.a., is defined in the first edition as 'To knock down; to bring to the ground'. In the fourth edition, another sense is added: 'It seems improperly joined with *down* or *along*', exemplified by two quotes from Dryden ('he fell'd him down', 'I fell'd along a man').
7. Of *fill up* ('to make full'), Johnson notes that '*Up* is often used without much addition to the force of the verb'.
8. *Help* has, 'in familiar language', the particle *out*.
9. *Make away with*, defined as 'To destroy; to kill; to make away', is

'improper', although it is supported by a quotation from Addison.

10. In the fourth edition, the phrasal verb *be off* ('recede'), which is used 'In common talk', is added to the definition of *off*.

11. In the fourth edition, a new sense of *sue* v.a. is added: 'To obtain by intreaty: with *out*. The expression is perhaps improper'. The intransitive use of *sue*, meaning 'beg, intreate', with no particle, is not censured.

12. *Take in*, 'To cheat; to gull: as, the cunning ones were taken in', is condemned as 'A low vulgar phrase'.

13. *Ward off* is criticized in the fourth edition: the sense 'To fence off; to obstruct, or turn aside any thing mischievous…is now used with *off*, less elegantly'.

14. The second sense of *whet,* v.a., is 'to edge; to make angry or acrimonious': in the fourth edition, Johnson adds that 'it is used with *on* and *forward*, but improperly'.

If variant forms (*fell down/along* and *whet on/forward*) are counted as separate phrasal verbs, then sixteen phrasal verbs are censured. In the case of *fall down,* the negative comment seems to apply to all three senses, so in total eighteen phrasal verb senses are censured. Although it is possible that some occurrences of proscriptive labels were missed, I believe that the searches were comprehensive enough to pick up the majority. Furthermore, by analyzing one letter in full it is possible to see how relatively few the negative comments are. In the letter B, there are forty-four phrasal verb senses, and only one of these, *beat up* in 'beat up for soldiers' is censured. Thus in B, less than 3% of the phrasal verb senses are criticized, clearly a very low proportion[78].

Of the phrasal verbs that Johnson does criticize, he uses a variety of proscriptive labels, shown in table 8-1. *Redundant* is used only once (of *beat up*), and *pleonasm* once (of *copy out*), but Johnson also indicates redundancy with two other phrases: that *down* 'adds little to the signification' of *fall down*, and that in *fill up,* '*Up* is often used without much addition to the force of the verb'. The

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[78] This figure is based on the first edition (see 2.4.1.2); in the fourth edition the proportion is actually lower, since more phrasal verbs and senses are added to B (see 2.4.1.7), but no proscriptions are added. The number of phrasal verb *senses* (rather than forms) has been counted, because even where a negative label is attached to a phrasal verb, it is often just one sense that is criticized rather than the whole phrasal verb (*beat up for soldiers* is censured, but *beat up* meaning 'attack' is not).

latter is the only comment that seems to extend to phrasal verbs in general. Also, some other labels perhaps suggest redundancy as well: *ward off* is 'less elegant' than simple *ward,* implying that *off* adds nothing but clumsiness to the expression.

Table 8-1 Frequency of labels attached to phrasal verbs in Johnson

Label	No. of times applied to a phrasal verb
redundant, pleonastic, and other phrases indicating redundancy	4
improper	4
low	2
common	1
barbarous	1
familiar	1
vulgar	1
less elegant	1

Of the phrasal verbs that Johnson does criticize, he uses a variety of proscriptive labels, shown in table 8-1. *Redundant* is used only once (of *beat up*), and *pleonasm* once (of *copy out*), but Johnson also indicates redundancy with two other phrases: that *down* 'adds little to the signification' of *fall down,* and that in *fill up,* '*Up* is often used without much addition to the force of the verb'. The latter is the only comment that seems to extend to phrasal verbs in general. Also, some other labels perhaps suggest redundancy as well: *ward off* is 'less elegant' than simple *ward,* implying that *off* adds nothing but clumsiness to the expression.

The most frequent single label that Johnson applies to phrasal verbs is *improper*, of *fell down/along, make away with, sue out* and *whet on/forward.* As discussed in 8.3.1, Johnson often uses this label when he considers the construction to be illogical or not analogous. This might be the case with *fell along*: *fell* is defined as 'knock down', so it is somewhat illogical to attach a different particle to this. In the case of *sue out, out* is not used in its literal sense, and thus might also have been considered illogical. In the case of *fell down,* though, it is redundancy which is at fault (*down* repeats an element of the meaning of the verb).

Similarly, *make away with* is censured as *improper*, yet is defined as 'make away', which is elsewhere defined without criticism, suggesting that Johnson felt the preposition *with* to be redundant in this phrase.

Other labels are used sporadically. *Low* is used twice, of *cut down* and *take in*. The latter is also *vulgar* – the only application of this label to a phrasal verb. *Familiar* and *common* are each used once (of *help out* and *be off*) and may simply be comments on the informality of the phrases, rather than criticisms.

Another reason that Johnson might have censured some of these combinations is if they were new, or used only in restricted contexts or registers. Based on the *OED* evidence (given in appendix 10), six of the phrasal verbs (*be off, beat up, call in, cut down, take in* and *fell along*) were less than a century old when Johnson was compiling his dictionary. Furthermore, two of these have restrictive labels in the *OED*: *call in* is *familiar,* and *take in* is *colloquial*. Also, two of them are only recorded twice – *cut down* (once by Addison and then not until the nineteenth century) and *fell along* (twice by Dryden) – so were possibly not in general established usage. A further two – *whet on* and *whet forward* – are recorded only once, at the end of the sixteenth century. The remaining seven (*copy out, fall down, fell down, fill up, help out, sue out* and *ward off*) are all recorded from at least a century before Johnson's time, and seem to have been established in Standard English. It is notable that four of these – *copy out, fall down, fell down* and *fill up* – are phrasal verbs with redundant particles. This suggests a pattern in Johnson's criticisms of phrasal verbs: in general, he censured either phrasal verbs which were neologisms or not in widespread usage, or phrasal verbs with redundant particles, irrespective of their age or currency. This implies that the only specific feature of phrasal verbs that Johnson disliked was redundancy.

It is also worth mentioning that some of the phrasal verbs which later critics claimed to have been censured by Johnson are not labelled at all. *Bind up, bring in* and *look on*, which Jowett (1951:154) said that Johnson 'hated', are defined

without censure, as are *lay out* and *lay up*, which, as Smith (1923:58) pointed out, Johnson criticized when used by Milton[79].

8.5.1.2. Changes in the fourth (1773) edition

Two phrasal verbs – *copy out* and *cut down* – are only criticized in the fourth edition, having been unmarked in the first. What led Johnson to decide to proscribe these forms is not clear[80]. However, he also becomes more accepting of supposedly redundant particles in the fourth edition. The note that he adds to the definition of *beat up,* where he indicates that *up* may be redundant, but also 'enforces the sense', suggests a deeper awareness of the intensive function of adverbial particles. To test this, I also ran a full-text search for *intensive* in the first and fourth editions, which yielded the results in table 8-2. These additions suggest that, by the time Johnson came to revise his dictionary for the 1773 edition, he had become increasingly aware of the function of particles in enforcing a sense without necessarily adding to the meaning.

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[79] In fact, Johnson's comment in the *Rambler* on Milton's use of *lay out* and *lay up* is not clearly a condemnation of them as phrasal verbs. As part of a general critique of the language and style of *Samson Agonistes* – including the use of mixed metaphor, weak imagery, and phrases such as *rides post* which 'want elevation' (Johnson 1751:164) – Johnson writes: 'And yet more despicable are the lines in which Manoah's paternal kindness is commended by the chorus: Fathers are wont to *lay up* for their sons;/Thou for thy son are bent to *lay out* all' (Johnson 1751:165; Johnson's italics). Since Johnson gives no further explanation, it is not clear what exactly is 'despicable' about these lines. It could be that Johnson finds that these phrases, too, 'want elevation'; on the other hand, he could be criticizing the repeated use of *lay* with different meanings. In any case, this isolated comment does not entail Johnson's wholesale condemnation of phrasal verbs.

[80] It is difficult to gauge from the *OED* whether these phrasal verbs were changing in register or collocation in Johnson's time. There are only four illustrative quotations for *copy out*, from 1563, 1595, 1611 and 1881 (Nowell, Shakespeare, the Bible and J.Russell respectively) (*copy* v1, 1b), thus there is no evidence of how it was used in the eighteenth century. *Cut down* is illustrated by the same 1713 quotation from Addison which Johnson gives (of cutting down an orator) and then an 1865 quotation with the phrasal verb in inverted commas: 'Captain Spurrier "cut down" by Romford' (*cut* v, 54e). This suggests that it was not in general usage in the nineteenth century, but it is not clear whether its status changed in Johnson's time.

Table 8-2 Comments with *intensive* added in the fourth edition of Johnson

Headword	Definition in 1ˢᵗ ed.	Addition to 4ᵗʰ ed.
To bloat, v.a.	To swell, or make turgid with wind.	it has *up*, an intensive particle.
To blurt, v.a.	To speak inadvertently; to let fly without thinking.	commonly with *out* intensive.
To coop, v.a.	To shut up in a narrow compass; to confine; to cage; to imprison.	when it is used absolutely, it has often, perhaps always, the intensive particle *up*.
To drink, v.a.	1. To swallow, applied to liquids...	6. It is used with the intensive particles *off*, *up*, and *in*: *Off* to note a single act of drinking. 7. *Up*, to note that the whole is drunk. 8. *In*, to enforce the sense; usually of inanimate things.
To puff, v.a.	To swell as with wind.	it has *up* intensive.
To tie, v.a.	To hinder; to obstruct.	with *up* intensive.
To wrap, v.a.	To involve; to cover with something rolled or thrown round.	has often the particle *up* intensive.

On the other hand, two changes to the fourth edition reflect an implicit censure of the phrasal verbs *raise up* and *rise up*:

1. The thirteenth sense of *raise* is 'To bring into being' and in the first edition, this is supported by four quotations from the Bible with *raise up*: 'Marry her, and raise up seed'; 'I raised up of your sons for prophets'; 'I will raise up for them a plant of renown'; 'I will raise up evil against thee'. In the fourth edition, all of these quotations are omitted.

2. The fourth sense of *up* is 'From a state of decumbiture or concealment', supported by a quotation with *rise up*: '...Up rose the sun, and up rose Emily...' (Dryden). This quotation is removed from the fourth edition.

Both of these are examples of redundant phrasal verbs involving literal repetition (i.e. *up* is part of the meaning of *raise*), whereas the phrasal verbs in table 8-2 are all examples with particles which have an Aktionsart or intensive function (cf. chapter 5). This suggests that Johnson, when editing the fourth

edition, was more accepting of the latter kind of redundancy, but still resisted the former.

8.5.1.3. Changes in the abstracted version (1756)

As discussed in chapter 2, it was the abstracted version of Johnson's dictionary that was most popular in his own time. One of the changes in this version was the elimination of usage markers (Dille 2005:204). This is perhaps surprising, given that it was written to educate and inform the 'common reader' (Johnson 1799:1-2): one would expect it to be more rather than less prescriptive. However, as Johnson writes in the preface, '[m]any barbarous terms and phrases by which other dictionaries may vitiate the style are rejected from this' (1799:2), indicating that proscribed words are simply omitted rather than labelled.

The treatment of phrasal verbs, though, is oddly mixed[81]. Of those criticized in the folio edition, only *cut down* still has its negative label (*low*) attached. Most of the proscribed forms or senses – *beat up, be off, call in, copy out, fell down, raise up, sue out, ward off,* and *whet on/forward* – are simply removed from the abstracted dictionary, indicating a heightened form of prescriptivism where evidence of offensive forms is erased. However, some of the items which were condemned in the folio – *fall down, fill up, make away with* and *take in* – are given in the abstracted version without any negative comment attached. This is quite surprising: if Johnson was indeed the editor of this version, surely he would have wanted to warn the 'common reader' against the use of these forms, which he clearly disliked. Whether the inclusion, without labelling, of these items, was due to carelessness, a change of attitude, or the attitude of an editor other than Johnson, is not clear, but the result is that the abstracted version is quite mixed in its treatment of phrasal verbs. Thus the average nineteenth-century reader who used this version of the dictionary and looked up a phrasal verb would often have received no indication that these forms were to be avoided.

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[81] As in chapter 2, this analysis is based on the eleventh (1799) edition of the abstracted version.

8.5.1.4. Summary

To what extent, then, is Johnson prescriptive in his treatment of phrasal verbs? According to McDermott (2005:116-21) there are three ways in which Johnson is a descriptivist in practice: his focus on polysemy at the expense of etymology (the 'true' sense of a word); his use of illustrative quotations as evidence of usage; and his sparing use of prescriptive labels. With regard to the first point, Johnson's treatment of phrasal verbs in all their senses is certainly descriptive rather than prescriptive. As for the second point, Johnson illustrates the use of phrasal verbs with quotations from a range of respected authors. In some instances (e.g. *fall down*) he criticizes them regardless of this evidence, and this kind of practice – 'the attempt to impose norms in defiance of normal usage' (Barnbrook 2005b:95) – is certainly prescriptive. His omission of illustrative quotations with *raise up* in the fourth edition, and his omission of many proscribed forms in the abstracted dictionary, is also prescriptive: by removing evidence of these forms, he attempts to remove them from the language. As for the third point, though, Johnson's proscriptive labelling of phrasal verbs is minimal, and accounts for only a small proportion of the overall number of phrasal verb senses in the dictionary.

Thus, although Johnson may have found some instances of them improper or redundant, the claim that he was 'strongly against phrasal verbs' (Hiltunen 1983:384-5) is unfounded[82]. The phrasal verbs that Johnson does proscribe can be divided into two main groups: those which were novel or not in general usage, and those with redundant particles.

8.5.2. Webster

According to Hiltunen (1983:384-5) Webster as well as Johnson was 'strongly against phrasal verbs'. The aim of this section is to analyze Webster's attitudes towards phrasal verbs in the *American Dictionary* (1828), particularly in comparison with Johnson's.

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[82] Although some of the critics who make this claim might also be referring to Johnson's attitude towards prepositional verbs (given the often inclusive nature of the term *phrasal verb*), this too would be unfounded. While it is outwith the scope of this thesis to analyze attitudes towards prepositional verbs, it is worth noting that, according to my search results, Johnson only proscribed nine in the dictionary – *abide by* (low); *brag on* (improper); *come by* (improper); *dispense with* (ungrammatical); *know for* (colloquial); *ponder on* (improper); *presume of* (improper); *rave upon* (colloquial) and *tell on* (doubtful).

The following are all the comments about phrasal verbs (including one adjectival form) found in Webster's (1828) *American Dictionary* which might be interpreted as proscriptive:

1. *Beat out* (adj.), 'extremely fatigued', is 'popular'.
2. In *bloat up*, *up* is used 'without necessity'.
3. *Bolt out,* 'examine by sifting', is 'inelegant'.
4. *Bound in* meaning 'confine' is 'hardly legitimate'.
5. *Breed up* is 'vulgar; *up* is used unnecessarily'.
6. *Buckle in,* 'close in', is 'a popular use in America'.
7. *Claw off/away,* 'to scratch away; to get off or escape' is used 'in vulgar language'.
8. In *copy out,* the use of *out* is 'not elegant'.
9. *Cry off*, 'to publish intentions of marriage', is used 'in vulgar dialect'.
10. *Cut down* is 'not elegant, but in popular use'.
11. *Cut on,* 'to hasten; to run or ride with the utmost speed', is 'vulgar'.
12. *Cut out,* 'to shape; to adapt', is 'not elegant'.
13. *Cut out,* 'to step in and take the place of, as in courting and dancing', is 'vulgar'.
14. In the case of *fill up,* 'and in many other cases, the use of *up* weakens the force of the phrase'.
15. *Fob off,* 'to shift off by an artifice; to put aside; to delude with a trick', is 'low'.
16. *Heave up* meaning 'relinquish' is 'vulgar'.
17. In *let out,* 'to lease; to grant possession and use for a compensation…', the use of *out* is 'unnecessary'.
18. In the entry for *off* adv., *be off,* 'to depart or to recede from an agreement or design' is 'colloquial'.
19. In *pen up,* *up* is 'redundant'.
20. *Pluck up,* 'to resume courage', is 'not elegant'.
21. In *pucker up, up* is 'superfluous'.
22. *Put out* meaning 'publish' is 'now vulgar'.
23. In *seek out,* the use of *out* is 'unnecessary and inelegant'.
24. *Set out* meaning 'publish' is 'not elegant nor common'.
25. *Shark out,* 'escape by low artifices', is 'vulgar'.

26. *Shove by,* 'to push away; to delay, or to reject', is 'not elegant'.

27. In *sum up,* 'to add particulars into one whole…', *up* is 'superfluous'.

28. *Surrender up* is 'not elegant'.

29. *Take in,* 'to cheat; to circumvent; to gull', is 'not elegant'.

30. *Up* 'is much used to modify the actions expressed by verbs. It is very often useful and necessary; very often useless'.

31. *Whet on/forward,* 'to urge on; to instigate', is 'not proper'.

Table 8-3 Frequency of labels attached to phrasal verbs in Webster, compared to Johnson

Label	No. of times applied to a phrasal verb	
	Webster	Johnson
redundant, pleonastic, and other phrases indicating redundancy	9	4
improper/not proper	1	4
low	1	2
common	0	1
barbarous	0	1
familiar	0	1
vulgar	8	1
inelegant/not elegant/less elegant	10	1
popular	3	0
colloquial	1	0
hardly legitimate	1	0

If we count *claw off/away* and *whet on/forward* as separate phrasal verbs, then Webster criticizes thirty-three in total, about twice as many as in Johnson. It should also be noted that there are two comments about *up* which clearly extend to other phrasal verbs as well: that 'in many other cases, the use of *up* weakens the force of the phrase' (*fill*); and that *up* is 'very often useless' (*up*). However, we should also take into account the larger number of phrasal verbs in Webster, and his more positive or neutral use of some of the labels employed (as discussed in 8.3 above). Webster's use of particular labels is shown in table 8-3.

As discussed in 8.3, Webster's use of *colloquial* and *popular* is often uncritical, so the four phrasal verbs that he labels as such (*be off, beat out, buckle in* and *cut down*) might have been quite neutral for Webster. He also labels eight phrasal verbs as *vulgar*, and given his ambivalent use of this label (see 8.3.4) he may have intended it neutrally as 'in common language'. In one case, though, it is clearly negative: *breed up* is *vulgar* because the particle *up* is unnecessary. The label that Webster most frequently applies to phrasal verbs is *inelegant/not elegant*. As discussed in 8.3.7, *inelegant* was often used by Webster as a general term of condemnation. However, in some cases it seems to refer to redundancy, as in the comment that the *out* in *copy out* is 'not elegant'.

Webster is more critical than Johnson of redundant particles: nine of his comments refer to this aspect of phrasal verbs (and if some of the uses of *inelegant* and *not elegant* apply here as well, the figure may be higher). In several cases, such as *bloat up* and *surrender up*, Webster writes that *up* is 'superfluous' where Johnson calls the particle in the same constructions 'emphatical' or 'intensive'. Both criticize *fill up*, but while Johnson simply notes that *up* is used 'without much addition to the force of the verb', Webster comments more critically that *up* 'weakens the force of the verb', suggesting that the particle is not just unnecessary but wrong. Webster also has a note about the redundancy of *up* in the definition of *up* itself, whereas there is no such comment in Johnson.

If we look at the *OED* evidence for the phrasal verbs criticized in Webster (given in appendix 10), a different pattern than in Johnson emerges. Whereas Johnson tended only to censure redundant, neologistic or non-standard combinations, Webster attaches negative labels to several old and established (and not redundant) phrasal verbs. For example, *cut out* 'shape, adapt', recorded from 1593, and *put out* 'publish', recorded from c1475, are both labelled 'not elegant'; while *pluck up* 'resume courage', recorded from c1330, is labelled 'vulgar'. This labelling suggests that Webster was more proscriptive of phrasal verbs as phrasal verbs.

On the other hand, Webster also gives a positive comment about one phrasal verb that Johnson criticizes: *ward off* is 'not inelegant'. It is also notable that there are some phrasal verbs which are condemned by Johnson, yet defined by Webster without comment, for example *fall down*. Given Webster's reliance on Johnson, it is unlikely that he failed to note Johnson's censure of these: rather, he must have decided that they were acceptable. Furthermore, as discussed in chapter 2, Webster's (1784) grammar was quite positive about phrasal verbs, calling them a 'very significant' part of the English vocabulary, although it is possible that Webster's attitude changed in the forty-four years between publishing his grammar and his dictionary.

In summary, although the number of censured phrasal verbs in Webster is low compared to the overall number in his dictionary, it is slightly higher than in Johnson. Furthermore, there is evidence that Webster was more proscriptive than Johnson of redundant particles, and of phrasal verbs that were established in Standard English.

8.5.3. *OED1*

The purpose of this section is to analyze *OED*1's labelling of phrasal verbs to determine how descriptive it was in practice. Unlike with Johnson and Webster, where it was possible to present a fairly comprehensive list of all the censured phrasal verbs, the data for *OED*1 are more selective and representative. A full list of the phrasal verbs discussed in this section can be found in appendix 11.

The only labels applied to phrasal verbs within the data searched in *OED*1 are *colloquial, slang, vulgar, redundant* and *pleonastic. Barbarous, inelegant/not elegant, superfluous* and *unnecessary* are not used to label phrasal verbs at all, while *erroneous, familiar, low* and *popular*, which were only searched in B and G, are not attached to any phrasal verbs beginning with these letters.

Table 8-4 shows the number of times that each of the labels is applied to a phrasal verb in the data from *OED*1. However, the results are not proportionate, as limited searches (as set out in 8.4. above) were employed, and these are summarized in the 'search parameters' column. For example, *redundant* is used only twice in the whole dictionary to label a phrasal verb. On the other hand,

colloquial is used 51 times as a label within the search parameters employed: verbs beginning with B and G, the main verbs (*come, get,* etc.), and the main adverbial particles (*away, back,* etc.). If the whole dictionary had been searched, this figure would presumably have been far larger.

Table 8-4 Labels attached to phrasal verbs in *OED*1

Label	Search parameters	Number of times used to label phrasal verbs
Colloquial	Main light verbs (including conversions), main adverbial particles, and verbs beginning with B and G	51
Slang	Main light verbs (including conversions), main adverbial particles, and verbs beginning with B and G	22
Vulgar	Main light verbs (including conversions), main adverbial particles, and all of B and G	1
Redundant	Whole dictionary	2
Pleonastic	Whole dictionary	2

8.5.3.1. Phrasal verbs labelled colloquial *and* slang

In comparison with the other labels used, and with Johnson and Webster (who use *colloquial* infrequently, and *slang* not at all), *colloquial* is the label most frequently applied to phrasal verbs in *OED*1, followed by *slang. * As discussed in 8.3.2 above, *colloquial* is almost always used neutrally in *OED*1, and we can assume that, when applied to phrasal verbs, it means that the labelled form was used in spoken language, rather than that it was considered substandard. This in itself is important in assessing the status of phrasal verbs in LModE. It is often claimed that phrasal verbs 'are more or less colloquial and betray clearly their popular origin' (Baugh and Cable 1993:340), but this was not necessarily the perception of the *OED*1 editors. In fact, relatively few phrasal verbs are labelled *colloquial* in the dictionary. While it would be impossible to calculate the total number of senses of phrasal verbs in *OED*1, a sample is indicative. There are 148 numbered/lettered senses of phrasal verbs with *take* in *OED*1, and only four (*take in* 'to deceive, cheat, trick, impose upon', *take off* 'to imitate or

counterfeit', *take on* 'to "go on" madly or excitedly' and *take on* 'to "catch on", become popular') are considered to be *colloquial* – under 3% of the total.

Another important point to consider when assessing the labelling of phrasal verbs as *colloquial* in *OED*1 is how the editors decided that these lexemes were colloquial, as of course all their evidence was based on written materials. Some forms labelled *colloquial* are:

- *burst*, v. 2a. …To break suddenly when in a state of tension, to fly asunder or in pieces… Also *fig.* (chiefly with allusion to the bursting of a bubble); now often colloq. with *up*.
- *give*, v. 59. give in. a. *intr.* To yield; to give up the contest; to acknowledge oneself beaten; *occas.* (*colloq.*) to admit under pressure of argument (*that*).
- *got*, ppl. a. Hence got-up *n. colloq.*, an upstart.
- *take*, v. 85. take off. j. To imitate or counterfeit, esp. by way of mockery; to mimic, caricature, burlesque, parody; to make a mock of. *colloq.*

From the quotations used to illustrate these four phrasal verbs, it seems that several approaches were taken in deciding on the label. There are no quotations illustrating the colloquial sense of *burst up,* suggesting that the editor simply knew of this usage (presumably from spoken contexts) and included it without evidence. The colloquial sense of *give in* is illustrated by quotations from dialogue in two late Victorian novels, while a quotation of *got-up* in inverted commas is taken from Macmillan's Magazine: these are as near to colloquial language as is possible with written sources. The illustrative quotations for *take off* meaning 'imitate' however, are quite mixed. There are six altogether, and four of the sources are close to colloquial: a letter, a journal, first-person narrative in a novel, and a humorous poem. Two, though, are from biographies – Henry Brooke's *The fool of quality; or the history of Henry, Earl of Moreland* and William Minto's *Daniel Defoe* – suggesting that this meaning of *take off* was not exclusively colloquial in the nineteenth century, despite the label.

One aspect of phrasal verbs that is more marked as *colloquial* in *OED*1 is their tendency to be converted into nouns and adjectives. As discussed in chapter 2, this feature of phrasal verbs was treated rather haphazardly by Johnson and

Webster, but began to be dealt with systematically in *OED*1. It is not surprising, then, that no conversions are negatively labelled in Johnson, and only one adjectival form (*beat out* 'extremely fatigued') is labelled (as 'popular') in Webster. In contrast, of the main verbs searched (*come, get, go,* etc.) in *OED*1, eight conversions are labelled *colloquial*:

- *give-away. colloq.* (orig. *U.S.*).
- *go*, v. VIII. The vb.-stem occas. forms phraseological combs. (chiefly *colloq.* or *techn.*) having the function either of n. or adj.; as *go-about...* etc.
- *go-in. colloq.*
- *go-off. colloq.*
- *got*, ppl. a. Hence got-up *n. colloq.*, an upstart.
- *set*, ppl. a. *set-up* 10c. *dial.* and *colloq.* conceited, 'stuck-up'
- *take-in. colloq.* An act of taking in; a cheat, swindle, deception...
- *take-off* 2. An act of 'taking off' or mimicking... a mimic; a caricature. *colloq.*

In four cases (*give-away, go-in, go-off* and *take-in*), the label is at headword level and applies to the whole construction rather than just one sense of it, suggesting a more marked perception of the colloquial nature of these forms.

Of the twenty-one phrasal verbs labelled *slang* in the data, six are labelled specifically as the slang of particular professions or groups: two as *sporting slang*, and one each as *hunting, racing, commercial* and *political slang.* One more is clearly racing slang from the context: *get on* 'lay (a bet) on (a horse)'. These are not considered negative – the definition for this kind of slang in the *OED* is simply 'The special vocabulary or phraseology of a particular calling or profession' (*OED slang* n3, 1b: see 8.3.6. above). Three more are labelled *thieves' slang,* and two others are evidently of this type from the context: *put away* meaning 'betray' to the police and *turn up* meaning 'release' a prisoner. These are clearly examples of the slang of 'persons of a low or disreputable character; language of a low and vulgar type' (*OED slang* n3, 1a). The rest are of the type defined in the *OED* as 'language of a highly colloquial type, considered as below the level of standard educated speech' (*OED slang* n3, 1c), for example:

- *put away* f. *slang* or *colloq.* (*a*) To consume as food or drink, take into

the stomach.

- *set-down* 3. *U.S. slang* A sit-down meal.

There is some overlap with *colloquial*: two are labelled '*colloq.* or *slang*', suggesting that the distinction between the two is not always clear. Four are specifically *U.S. slang,* although this often seems to mean simply *U.S. colloquial.* For example, *set-down* meaning 'a sit-down meal' is labelled *U.S. slang,* but is illustrated with quotations from a diary, the Harvard Magazine, and two novels – sources which would seem to illustrate colloquial or informal usage rather than necessarily slang. Perhaps the fact that it is a colloquial American usage made it seem more 'uneducated' to the *OED*1 editors (cf. chapter 7). In any case, if we discount the phrasal verbs that are labelled as the slang of particular groups or professions, only fourteen are of the 'low' and 'uneducated' varieties of slang – not a significant figure in proportion to the number of phrasal verb senses analyzed. It seems that, even if in the twentieth-century phrasal verbs often contribute to slang formations (McArthur 1992:941), they were not perceived as particularly 'slangy' in the nineteenth century.

8.5.3.2. Phrasal verbs with other labels

The other negative labels are hardly used at all. Only one phrasal verb is marked as *vulgar*: set *up* meaning 'sit up (late at night)'. However, there is a similar criticism of simple *set* meaning 'sit' (*set* v, 5a), so no criticism of the phrasal verb construction is implied.

Redundant and *pleonastic* are each used twice. *Ascend* is 'occas. emphasized by a redundant *up*', while *avale* is 'Often [used] with redundant *down*'. *Adown* is used 'pleonastically with vbs. signifying descent as *fall, sink, alight, sit, kneel*' and *enter* is found 'with pleonastic *in*'. In addition, at the definition for *fill up*, Bradley quotes Johnson's criticism – '"*Up* is often used without much addition to the force of the verb" (J.)' – implying his agreement with it.

However, five such comments in the whole dictionary is not a significant number. Also, the fact that all of them occur in the first half of the dictionary (three in the first letter), and that there is a comment about *adown* being used

pleonastically, but no such criticism of *down* when it is used with verbs such as *fall*, suggests that a less prescriptive approach was adopted in later volumes.

8.5.3.3. Summary

The treatment of phrasal verbs in *OED*1 is, on the whole, neutral, with the exception of some negative comments about redundant particles, especially in the earlier volumes, and a few forms which are labelled as *slang*. In addition, the editors of *OED*1 did not seem to consider phrasal verbs particularly colloquial, with the possible exception of the nominalized and adjectival forms, which are more frequently labelled as such. The majority of the senses of phrasal verbs analyzed are unmarked and were considered neutrally as part of the common vocabulary.

8.6. Conclusion

Johnson and Webster use the labels *colloquial, familiar, popular* and *vulgar* with ambivalent connotations, so it is difficult to ascertain whether the phrasal verbs that they labelled as such were considered common, on the one hand, or incorrect, on the other. However, the number of times that these labels are applied to phrasal verbs is quite minimal, and in Johnson they usually refer to new or unusual combinations.

Several of the specific criticisms that Johnson and Webster make about phrasal verbs relate to redundancy: such opinions are in accordance with concerns voiced in the precept corpus (see chapter 5). What is more surprising is Johnson's gradual awareness that 'redundant' adverbial particles in fact have an intensive function: in this respect he is not as prescriptive as is often assumed, and is less prescriptive than Webster. *OED*1 also expresses the attitude that adverbial particles are redundant, but very infrequently, and only in the earlier fascicles. This shows that a more descriptive approach, based on usage rather than logic, was indeed adopted.

Chapter 9. The interplay between prescriptivism and usage: a diachronic study of phrasal verbs in British and American English

9.1. Introduction

It has been shown in the preceding chapters that a range of attitudes towards phrasal verbs is expressed in LModE texts. The single most frequent type of criticism, though, is of adverbial particles which are perceived as redundant: this criticism is voiced in a quarter of the precept corpus materials, and is the only clearly identifiable type of criticism in the dictionaries under analysis. Redundant phrasal verbs are also censured as Americanisms in several of the twentieth-century texts. (As noted in chapter 5, the word 'redundant' is used here in the sense it is used in the precept corpus, i.e. to refer to particles perceived as redundant, even if these would now be described as having an intensive, telic or other function.)

While there have been several diachronic corpus analyses of phrasal verbs in English, there has been very little research into the development of redundant phrasal verbs, or the comparative history of phrasal verbs in different varieties of English. Thus it was decided to carry out a corpus study of redundant phrasal verbs in LModE, in both British and American English, in order to analyze the interplay between proscription and usage. The results of this study will be discussed in 9.3, after an overview of previous research in this area, in 9.2.

9.2. Previous diachronic corpus studies of phrasal verbs in English

As discussed in chapter 1, there have been several diachronic corpus studies of phrasal verbs in English, including Pelli 1976, Hiltunen 1994, Akimoto 1999, Claridge 2000, Thim 2006 and Smitterberg 2008. The main discoveries of these are that:

- phrasal verbs have increased in frequency since their inception in OE, with a slight decline in frequency in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (Claridge 2000:178; this dip is also evident in the smaller-scale analyses of Konishi 1958 and Spasov 1966);
- literal combinations have always been more frequent than figurative combinations (Hiltunen 1994:132; Pelli 1976:109; Claridge 2000:144; Thim 2006:296);

- there is a core set of adverbial particles (*up, out, away, down, back, off*) which have been consistently frequent since EModE;

- phrasal verbs are generally argued to be more frequent, in both EModE and LModE, in informal texts, or texts approximating to spoken English, such as letters, sermons, and dialogue (Hiltunen 1994:137; Akimoto 1999:222; Claridge 2000:197); indeed, Smitterberg (2008) uses the colloquial nature of phrasal verbs in LModE as evidence of the 'colloquialization' of written texts in the nineteenth century. A notable challenge to this claim is in Thim (2006), who argues that the conclusions of these studies are based on preconceptions. That is, he argues, scholars say that phrasal verbs are colloquial, and then claim that texts with higher frequencies of phrasal verbs are therefore more colloquial. For example, Thim points out that in Hiltunen's study, phrasal verbs were found to have been more frequent in fiction than in private letters: if phrasal verbs were really colloquial or informal in EModE, one would expect them to be more frequent in private letters, generally considered a more 'oral' genre than fiction (2006:299). It seems, then, that more research is needed on the colloquial status of phrasal verbs.

9.2.1. Studies of redundant phrasal verbs

With the exception of the broad comparison between literal and figurative combinations, very little research has been carried out on the historical development of different semantic categories of phrasal verbs, or on redundant phrasal verbs in particular. There are a few exceptions. Claridge (2000:236-42) surveys different semantic types of phrasal verbs in the *Lampeter Corpus of Early Modern English Tracts*. This survey includes: 1. constructions such as *echo back* and *decry down* where 'the particle repeats semantic information (which may be an endpoint or it may not) already contained in the verb'; 2. phrasal verbs with Aktionsart particles, such as *wipe off*; and 3. phrasal verbs expressing iterative or durative aspect, such as *pine away*. However, Claridge does not give much indication of the relative frequency of such items, or whether there was any diachronic change in their frequency or usage[83]. She concludes that

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[83] An exception is her case study of *off* (2000:238-9), which occurs in phrasal verbs 356 times in the *Lampeter Corpus* and which Claridge says can be interpreted as a telic particle in about 89% of its occurrences.

aspectual distinction was an option phrasal verbs offered compared with their simplexes, and this could therefore play a role in the usage of these complex items. But I find it impossible on the basis of the present data to call it a very common phenomenon (2000:242).

Pelli (1976) also semantically classifies the phrasal verbs in his corpus (which is made up of sixty-eight American plays, totalling just over a million words, published between 1765 and 1972). Pelli proposes four semantic types: 1. literal combinations; 2. figurative combinations where '[t]he particle contains a directional-motional semantic characteristic on the one hand… and additional semantic characteristics on the other hand'; 3. combinations where '[t]he particle in relation to the verb has no directional-motional or locational semantic quality at all, because it occurs with verbs that do not denote a motion'; and 4. idiomatic combinations (1976:66). Of particular interest for this chapter are Pelli's groups 2 and 3, both of which include redundant uses of particles: group 2 contains combinations where the particle reinforces or repeats part of the meaning of the verb, as in *bow down* and *return back,* while group 3 contains phrasal verbs with intensifying and telic particles, as in *burn down* and *sew up.* Unfortunately for our purposes, both groups also contain other non-redundant combinations, so that although Pelli charts the diachronic development of each type (showing overall stability – literal combinations are by far the most frequent in each period, with fairly even proportions of the other types (1976:109)), it is impossible to discern the development of redundant phrasal verbs in particular[84]. Furthermore, given that Pelli's corpus is made up entirely of American plays, there is no indication of varying trends in different genres or varieties of English.

Finally, an illuminating synchronic account of redundant phrasal verbs in PDE is given in Hampe (2002), which has already been mentioned in chapter 5 as

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[84] For example, group 2 contains phrasal verbs such as *go ahead,* interpreted as 'allow[ing] for the additional interpretation "first"' (1976:79); to me, this would be better classed as a literal combination. Also, group 3 contains examples such as *dim down,* 'express[ing] reduction or diminution of the action expressed in the verb' (1976:84), but this seems unnecessarily split from combinations in group 2 such as *bow down,* where the particle 'reduplicates the meaning that is already present in the verb' (1976:77). Pelli does analyze the sub-types 'intensity', 'completion' and 'repetition' (in group 3), but no clear pattern emerges, except that phrasal verbs with particles expressing repetition (e.g. *play on, do over*) decrease in frequency (1976:111).

informing my classification of redundant phrasal verbs. Hampe gives the results of a study of selected redundant phrasal verbs, compared with their simple counterparts, in four late twentieth-century British English corpora[85]. She finds that, for the pairs she analyzes – *cover (up), tighten (up), narrow (down), polish (up), queue (up), sharpen (up), brighten (up), cool (down/off), sketch (down/off)* and *slow (up/down)* – the simple verb is almost always more frequent than the phrasal verb (the one exception is *slow down*, attested more often in the corpora than the verb *slow*), but phrasal verbs are sometimes more frequent than simple verbs when used in non-literal senses (2002:56). In addition, Hampe discovers that 'redundant phrasal verbs are considered [by both language users and lexicographers] more colloquial than their simple-verb counterparts' (2002:61), and that 'the use of redundant phrasal verbs is indeed linked to the informality of the speech situation' (2002:126).

9.3. A corpus study of redundant phrasal verbs in LModE

9.3.1. Methodology

The corpus chosen was ARCHER (version 3.1), as this is the only corpus currently available which covers the whole of LModE and which contains comparable British English and American English material. ARCHER is subdivided into seven periods: 1650-99, 1700-49, 1750-99, 1800-49, 1850-99, 1900-49 and 1950-90. British English material is available for all of these periods, but American English is only available for the periods 1750-99, 1850-99 and 1950-90. In fact, this suits the purpose of this thesis quite well, since it is possible to compare three stretches of British English and American English. However, in order to determine the effect (if any) of prescriptivism on usage, it is also useful to analyze usage before the period of prescriptivism under analysis (see Yáñez-Bouza 2007:128). For this reason, the period 1650-99 was also included, even though this is only available for British English. Thus seven sections of ARCHER were selected: 1650-99 (British English), 1750-99B (British English), 1750-99A (American English), 1850-99B (British English), 1850-99A (American English), 1950-90B (British English) and 1950-90A (American English). Each of these comprises approximately 180,000 words, divided into eight genres: drama,

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[85] The corpora she uses are LOB (the Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus of British English, 1961), MCA (the Micro-Concord Corpus Collection A, 1989), LLC (the London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English, 1953-88) and SEC (the Lancaster/IBM Spoken English Corpus, 1984-7).

fiction, sermons, journals/diaries, medical texts, news, science and letters[86].
(Word-counts for each period and genre are given in appendix 12.)

Each of these sections was searched, using MonoConc, for *up, out, down* and
back. These particles were selected as they are among the most common
adverbial particles in any analysis of any period[87], and they are the four particles
which are most frequently criticized as redundant in my materials (see 5.3.3).
Variant spellings, as attested in the *OED* from the seventeenth century onwards,
were also searched. In addition, I searched for *-up, -out, -down* and *–back* to
find conversions such as *look-up* and *set-back,* and the wordlist of ARCHER was
used to find non-hyphenated conversions such as *lookup* and *setback*[88]. ARCHER
is not yet tagged grammatically, so all of the results were then checked
manually to eliminate non-phrasal verb occurrences[89]. Numbers of phrasal verbs
for each period, genre and variety were then tabulated. Finally, each phrasal
verb was tagged as either redundant or not redundant, and further classified by
type of redundancy (this classification is discussed further in 9.3.2.4).

9.3.2. Results and analysis

This section sets out and analyzes the results of the corpus study. Firstly, there
is a survey of tokens (9.3.2.1) and types (9.3.2.2); then an analysis of the
distribution of phrasal verbs across genres (9.3.2.3); and finally a detailed study
of redundant phrasal verbs in ARCHER (9.3.2.4) [90].

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[86] Some of the early literature on ARCHER (e.g. Biber et al. 1994) states that it includes ten
genres. In earlier versions, fictional dialogue was treated as a separate genre from fictional
narrative, and legal texts were available for some periods; neither of these additional genres is
available in ARCHER 3.1. ARCHER 3.2, in preparation, will include legal texts and advertising
texts, and will also divide journals/diaries into two genres, but fiction will continue to be
treated as one genre (Nuria Yáñez-Bouza, p.c.).

[87] For EModE, Claridge (2000:126-7) finds *up, out* and *down* to be the most frequent particles;
back is the eleventh most frequent. She compares this with the PDE corpus LOB, where *out* and
up are still the most frequent, followed by *back* in third place and *down* in fifth. See also the
table in Akimoto (1999:222) which compares periods (based on other corpus studies) and finds
that *up* and *out* have consistently been the most frequent particles since the sixteenth century.

[88] The wordlist is available at
<http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/llc/files/ARCHER/wordlist_3-1.txt>

[89] Biber (2001) states that ARCHER is grammatically tagged, but this tagged version is not
publicly available. The classification of combinations as phrasal verbs follows the discussion in
chapter 1: both literal and idiomatic forms are included. Two borderline cases are excluded:
verbs followed by two particles, as in 'he was *walking up and down*'; and combinations with *out
of,* as in 'he looked out of the window', since it is difficult in such cases to distinguish between
verbs with the complex preposition 'out of' and phrasal verbs with 'out' followed by a
prepositional phrase with 'of' (cf. Claridge 2000:49).

[90] Throughout this chapter, figures in ARCHER refer to the parameters specified above: that is

9.3.2.1. Tokens

In total, there are 5113 phrasal verb tokens with *back, down, out* and *up.* The distribution of tokens by period and particle is shown in figure 9-1, and the distribution of tokens by period and variety in figure 9-2.

Figure 9-1 Phrasal verbs with *back, down, out* and *up*: tokens per 10,000 words
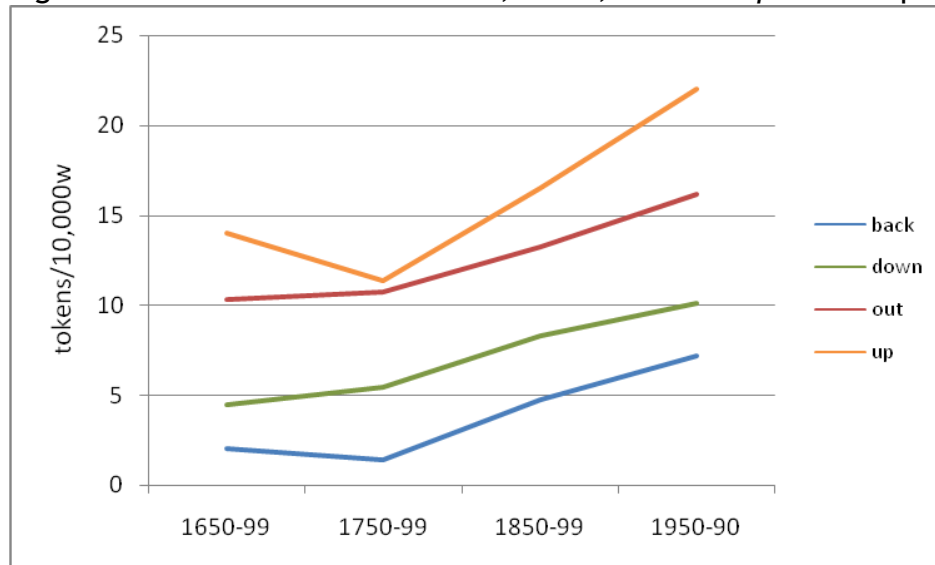
Figure 9-2 Phrasal verbs in British English and American English: tokens per 10,000 words
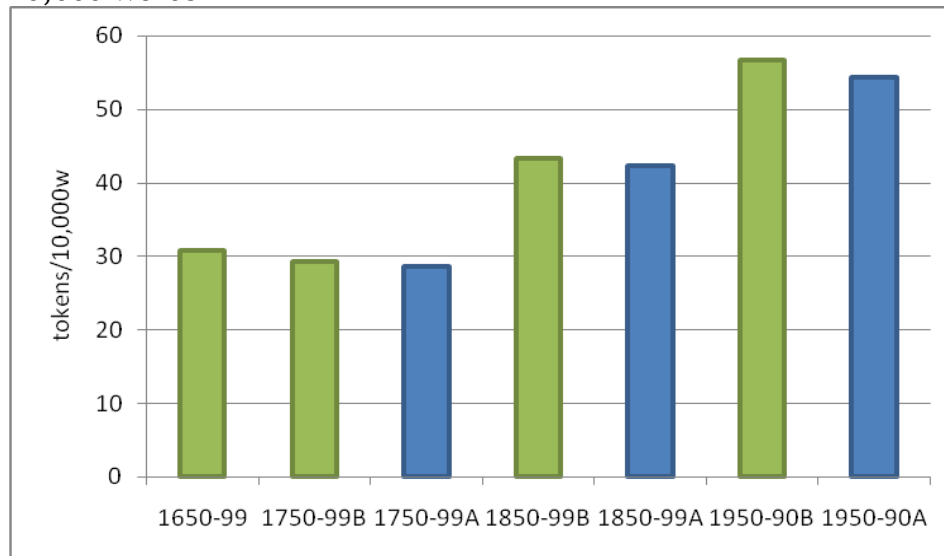
These figures show some expected patterns. Firstly, there is diachronic stability

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'phrasal verbs' means phrasal verbs with *back, down, out* and *up*; and 'in ARCHER' means in the periods analyzed: 1650-99 (British English), 1750-99 (British English and American English), 1850-99 (British English and American English) and 1950-90 (British English and American English).

in the frequencies of phrasal verbs between the late seventeenth and late eighteenth century. Secondly, *up* has consistently been the most frequent particle, followed by *out,* then *down,* with *back* the least frequent (corresponding with the relative frequencies of these particles in EModE given in Claridge 2000:126-7). More surprising is the comparison between British English and American English. It is sometimes claimed that phrasal verbs are more frequent in American English: for example, McArthur (1992:775) states that phrasal verbs 'have increased in number since the mid-19c and even more so since the mid-20c, especially in AmE' (see also Vallins 1957:130; Live 1965:429; Baugh and Cable 1993:340; Schneider 2006:135; and the comments in the precept corpus, discussed in chapter 7). However, this is not the case in ARCHER, where the frequency of phrasal verbs in British English and American English is very similar in each period. (In fact, the number of phrasal verb tokens per 10,000 words is marginally lower in American English than in British English for each period.)

9.3.2.2. *Types*

Figure 9-3 Phrasal verb types per 10,000 words
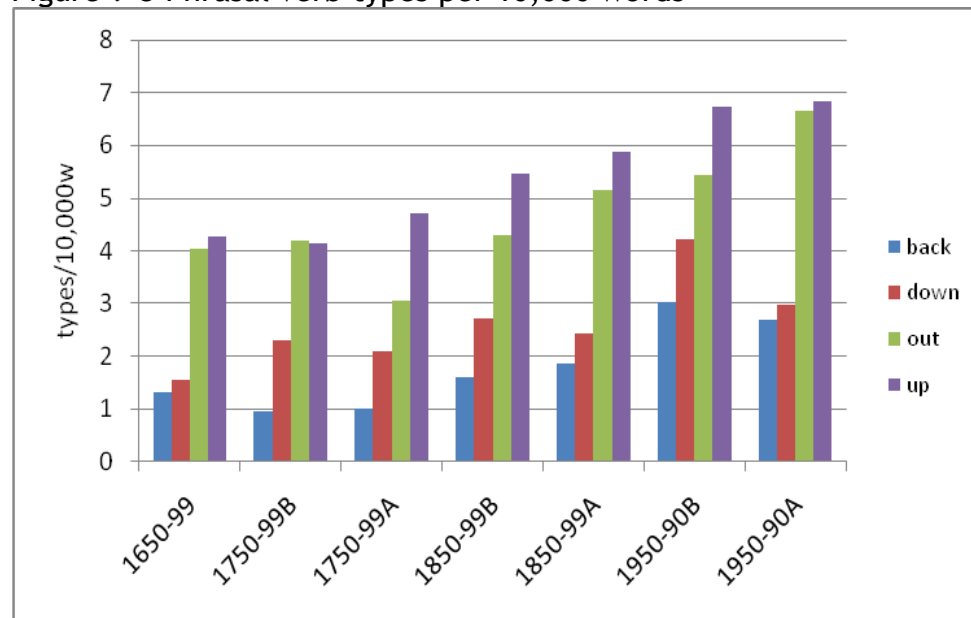
As can be seen in figure 9-3, the variety of phrasal verb types has also increased over time, indicating that the phrasal verb construction has become more productive as well as more frequent. The three most frequent phrasal verb types

for each particle are shown in table 9-1[91]. These largely correspond with the most frequent types in other corpora of EModE and PDE: almost all of the types listed in table 9-1 are also among the five most frequent types in both the Helsinki Corpus and LOB (see Hiltunen 1994:132 for a summary). The only exception is *make up*, which is third most frequent in ARCHER and LOB but far less so in the Helsinki Corpus. On the whole, though, there has been stability in the most frequent phrasal verb types since EModE.

Table 9-1 Most frequent phrasal verb types with *back, down, out* and *up* in ARCHER

	1650-99	1750-99B	1750-99A	1850-99B	1850-99A	1950-90B	1950-90A	total
back								
come back	5	2	0	23	14	24	15	83
go back	2	3	1	13	12	13	24	68
bring back	3	2	1	4	3	8	6	27
down								
sit down	6	17	6	34	19	24	27	133
come down	9	11	8	29	15	7	9	88
go down	3	1	10	13	10	8	13	58
out								
go out	9	12	8	28	24	24	22	127
find out	15	8	5	12	11	18	15	84
come out	2	14	13	12	11	10	20	82
up								
take up	25	23	16	19	11	13	7	114
come up	22	12	15	11	10	10	18	98
make up	18	10	3	15	24	9	6	85

It is also notable that the most frequent types in ARCHER are the ones that are usually used in a literal or transparent sense. However, the grouping of phrasal verbs by type does obscure the fact that these types can represent different senses. While it would be beyond the scope of this chapter to analyze the semantic development of each type, the following example is indicative. Before

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[91] These figures include conversions: for example, an occurrence of the noun *comeback* is counted as a token for *come back*.

the eighteenth century, all the occurrences of *come down* in the corpus are of the literal and spatial sense 'descend', e.g.:

> God was **come down** to entreat with men, and allure them into the knowledge and love of Himself. (1684howe.h2b[92])

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries we find the first examples of the transferred senses 'be reduced in size or amount' and 'descend in rank':

> For the rest of the day he continued pretty easy, and his pulse **came down** to eighty. (1773chal.m4b)

> When people have **come down** in circumstances, the best way that can do is to keep up their names. (1863tayl.d6b)

It is not until the twentieth century that the phrasal-prepositional form *come down to* with the highly idiomatic sense 'be a matter of' is attested:

> ...the cultural revolution, launched last year by Mao, ostensibly to revitalise the Communist Party's younger generation, has **come down to** a struggle for power between the men surrounding Mao. (1967stm1.n8b)

It is possible, then, that the increase in types may be even more pronounced than suggested in figure 9-3, if different senses were counted as different types. Given the focus of this chapter, though, the question of the extent to which the number of senses of each type has changed over time must remain a matter for future research.

At the other end of the spectrum are the many phrasal verb types which occur only once in ARCHER: there are 368 of these in total. As can be seen in both table 9-2 (which presents raw figures) and figure 9-4 (which shows types per 10,000 words), these *hapax legomena* are more frequent in the twentieth century, both in the American English section (which includes combinations such as *bold up* 'make bold'*, bog down, calculate out* and *die back*), and in British

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[92] Examples from ARCHER are given here with their filenames, which are all of the form *nnnnabcd.gpv,* where *nnnn* = year, *abcd* = abbreviation of author's surname, *g* = genre, *p* = period and *v* = variety. The abbreviations for genres are: d = drama, f = fiction, h = sermon, j = journal/diary, m = medicine, n = news, s = science and x = letters. The numbering of periods is: 2 = 1650-99, 3 = 1700-49, 4 = 1750-99, 5 = 1800-49, 6 = 1850-99, 7 = 1900-49 and 8 = 1950-90. The abbreviations for variety are: b = British and a = American. See further <http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/research/projects/archer/archer3_1/>

English (where we find the only occurrences of, for example, *gobble down, camp up* 'make theatrical/effeminate', *refer back* and *phase out*)[93].

Table 9-2 Number of types which occur only once in ARCHER

	1650-99	1750-99B	1750-99A	1850-99B	1850-99A	1950-90B	1950-90A	total
back	7	1	6	5	7	19	15	60
down	4	9	11	12	6	24	8	74
out	13	15	5	14	18	21	38	124
up	14	7	13	13	12	20	31	110
total	38	32	35	44	43	84	92	368

Figure 9-4 Number of types which occur only once, per 10,000 words
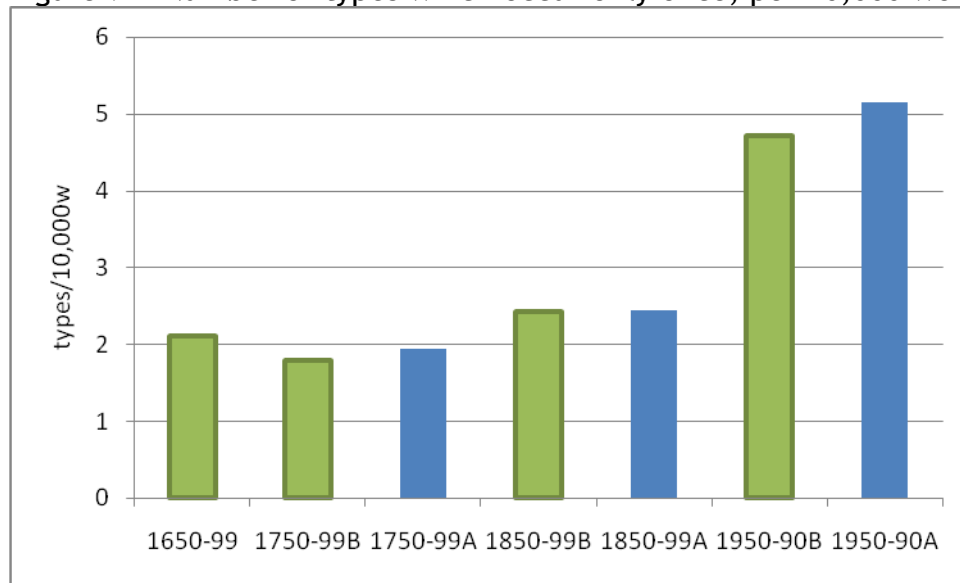
It is evident from the foregoing sections that, as well as becoming progressively more frequent since the eighteenth century, on the evidence of ARCHER, phrasal verbs have also become more productive, with greater variety of types and more *hapax legomena*.

9.3.2.3. Genre

As noted above, the texts in ARCHER are divided into eight genres: drama, fiction, sermons, journals/diaries, medicine, news, science and letters. As

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[93] It should be noted that these are *hapax legomena* only in the context of ARCHER: it is not claimed that they are truly unique items. However, their relative infrequency does indicate a degree of novelty in comparison with more established forms such as *take up* and *come down*.

discussed by Biber et al. (1994:3), genres were selected in order to represent two dimensions: written/speech-based, and formal/informal. There are two speech-based genres: sermons, representing formal English, and drama, representing more informal speech. The remaining six genres represent formal and informal writing, which Biber et al. (1994:3) present as a continuum: '[a]t the more informal end are Journals-Diaries and Letters, while the more formal end is represented by... Medical Research articles and Science. Between these poles are fiction and news'. The position of these genres in terms of the dimensions written/speech-based and formal/informal is presented in table 9-3. (This table was inspired by a similar presentation of genres in Yáñez-Bouza 2007:134.)

Table 9-3 Genres in ARCHER

	Formal ⇐ .... ⇒ Informal
Written	science letters medicine journals/diaries fiction news
Speech-based	sermons drama

Characteristics of the formal genres are that they are expository, informational, non-narrative and impersonal; informal genres on the other hand are involved, narrative, situation-dependent and personal (see the dimensions of variation in Biber 2001:92). However, it must also be borne in mind that these genres have not remained stable historically. As Biber et al. (1994:5) remark,

> For historical corpora, the identification of registers is further complicated by the fact that the register distinctions of one period may not be tidily aligned with those of another. Nor need registers remain equally distinct from one another over time.

Research has shown that genres such as letters, news and fiction have become more informal and involved since the eighteenth century, while genres such as science and medicine have become more 'literate' and formal (see for example Biber and Finegan 1989; Biber and Finegan 1997; Biber 2001; Smitterberg 2008).

The implication of this variation within genres on the findings of the present study will be discussed in 9.3.3.

Table 9-4 Phrasal verbs by genre: number of tokens per 10,000 words[94]

	1650-99	1750-99B	1750-99A	1850-99B	1850-99A	1950-90B	1950-90A	total
drama	35	30	26	71	75	82	115	61
fiction	28	29	20	49	56	85	76	50
sermons	21	34	17	28	59	36	24	31
journals/diaries	52	38	66	50	44	67	67	55
medicine	22	32	15	21	19	25	6	20
news	30	29	31	25	20	31	37	29
science	30	17	36	35	15	14	7	22
letters	24	25	18	54	39	74	64	42
total	31	29	29	43	42	57	54	41

Table 9-4 shows the distribution of phrasal verb tokens by genre (for a full breakdown of these figures, including raw figures and distribution by particle, see appendix 12). In the period 1650-99, phrasal verb tokens are fairly evenly distributed: there are between 20 and 40 tokens/10,000w in each genre, with the exception of journals/diaries, which contain the slightly higher proportion of 52/10,000w. Similar distribution is found in the 1750-99 sections. In the 1850-99 sections, an increased proportion of phrasal verbs is found in drama (71/10,000w in British English and 75/10,000w in American English, compared to around 30/10,00w in previous periods) and in fiction (49/10,00w in British English and 56/10,000w in American English, compared to around 25/10,000w in previous periods). In the 1950-90 sections, the number of phrasal verbs in drama, journals/diaries, fiction and letters all increase, while in the American English section for this period there is a decline in the number of phrasal verbs in science and medicine (both less than 10/10,000w).

The differences can usefully be presented by comparing formal and informal texts in British English and American English across time. Figure 9-5 shows the sum of the tokens for the more formal genres (science, medicine and sermons)

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[94] Note that figures are rounded to nearest whole numbers.

compared with the sum of the tokens for the less formal genres (letters, journals/diaries and drama), for both British English and American English, per 10,000 words in these genres. Fiction and news, which cannot easily be classified as either formal or informal (Biber et al. 1994:3; see above), have been excluded from these figures.

Figure 9-5 Phrasal verbs in formal and informal texts: tokens per 10,000 words
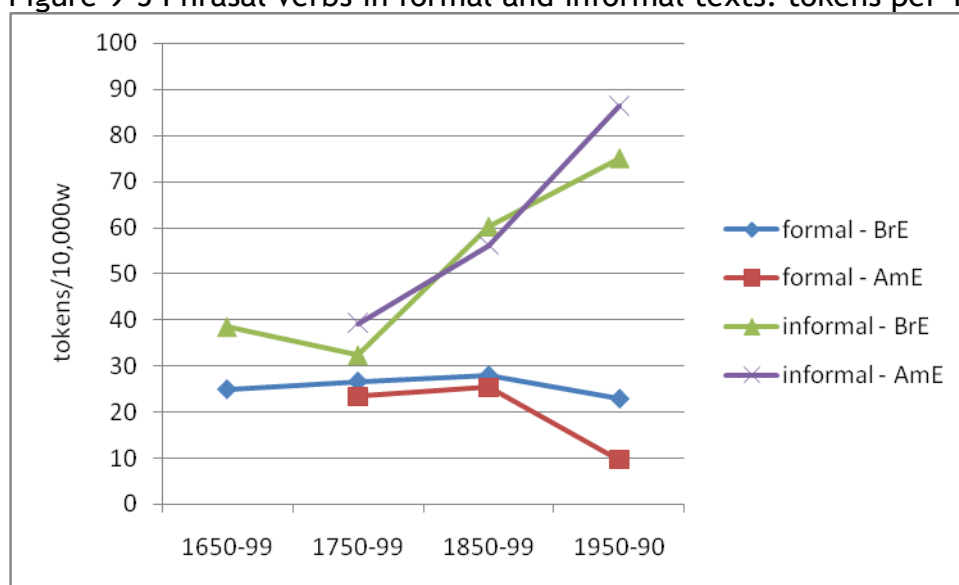
The pattern for British English is as follows: between 1650-99 and 1750-99, the frequency of phrasal verbs is fairly stable in both formal and informal texts. After 1750-99, they become more frequent in informal texts. They become slightly more frequent in formal texts, until 1950-90, when there is a decline in frequency. Unfortunately, data are not available for 1650-99 American English, but the pattern in the subsequent periods is similar to that of British English: a large increase in informal texts and a slight increase in formal texts between 1750-99 and 1850-99. The difference is that in the twentieth century there is a more pronounced decrease in phrasal verbs in formal texts. In fact, according to the figures for 1950-90, while speakers of American English use phrasal verbs more frequently in informal texts, they use them less frequently in formal texts.

9.3.2.4. Redundant phrasal verbs

The purpose of this section is to analyze the development of redundant phrasal verbs in particular, and to compare patterns with the development of phrasal verbs in general. In order to do this, all the phrasal verb tokens had to be

classified as either redundant or not redundant. Redundant phrasal verbs include:

- combinations where the particle repeats the meaning of a Latin prefix, e.g.
  - o We stayed there but just so long as it take a view of its fortifications & other curiosities, which was one night, & so **returned back** to Calais. (1687ferr.j2b)
- other combinations where the particle repeats an element of the meaning of the verb, e.g.
  - o Thursday last two Chairmen carrying the body of a Coach on a Horse through Little Queen-street, lincoln's Inn-Fields, one of them **fell down** and fractured his Leg in a terrible Manner... (1762pub1.n4b)
- Aktionsart combinations, for example where the particle is ingressive, or telic (i.e. adds the notion of a goal or endpoint to the situation), or has an intensive function (where it emphasizes a verb with inherent Aktionsart), e.g.
  - o ... You know. That we have just been born, the earth and me, and are just **starting out.** There is no pollution, no hurt... (1964hans.d8a)
  - o ... the "revolutionary" forces operating against the Cambodian regime had **slowed down** their rapid advance in order "to give the Chinese advisers time to leave Phnom Penh." (1979stm1.n8b)
  - o I was **finishing out** my Naval duty by negotiating settlements of terminated war contracts in the Bureau of Aeronautics office in New York City... (1976coov.f8a)

Phrasal verbs which have been classified as not redundant include:

- literal combinations, where both verb and particle are required in their literal meanings e.g.
  - o So we sent four of our Servants to **bring** him **back** to us... (1675barn.f2b)
- figurative/idiomatic combinations, where both elements are required to form an idiomatic whole, e.g.
  - o It **turned out** afterward that the alleged order to surrender from

Lieutenant Tays was a lie. (1878was1.n6a)

Such a classification is, inevitably, not always clear-cut. In particular, the distinction between Aktionsart and idiomatic phrasal verbs is not straightforward, since the former can develop specialized senses which are only possible with the phrasal and not the simple form. For example, *break up* in the sense 'break into pieces/break completely' has telic meaning, and could in the following example be replaced by the simple verb *break* (though with a more awkward prosody and the loss of the sense of endpoint to the situation):

- ...a heavy sea was roaring; and the wreck was sure to be **breaking up**, unless she had been swallowed up. (1872blac.f6b)
- ...the wreck was sure to be **breaking**...

On the other hand, *break up* meaning 'disband, of a meeting, etc.' is specialized and idiomatic, and could not be replaced by the simple verb:

- The conference **broke up**, and Kerim gave orders to his chief Eunuch... (1797butl.f4a)
- *The conference **broke**...

Similarly, *shut up* meaning 'close' is classified as redundant, whereas *shut up* meaning 'stop talking' is not; and *start up* meaning 'begin' is redundant whereas *start up* meaning 'rise suddenly, stir oneself to action' is idiomatic. Thus each phrasal verb token had to be considered individually in order to arrive at a classification.

In addition, only those cases where the particle could be perceived as redundant, and where the combination could be replaced by the simple verb, are classified as Aktionsart: if the addition of the particle changes the argument structure and is thus necessary, it is classified as not redundant. For example, *lock up* in the following sentence is classified as redundant because the particle can be deleted (due to the presence of the adverbial phrase 'in the dark Room'):

- Here, **lock up** Mrs. Flippant in the dark Room... (1697pix-.d2b)
- Here, **lock** Mrs. Flippant in the dark Room.

However, *lock up* in the following sentence, a few lines later in the same text, is not redundant:

- Ay, **lock** her **up**, **lock** her **up**, I say. (1697pix-.d2b)

In this example, the particle cannot be deleted, since *lock* can only be used in the sense 'shut up or confine with a lock' with an adverbial particle or adverbial phrase (*OED lock* v1, 2), and the following is ungrammatical:

- * Ay, **lock** her, **lock** her, I say.

Decisions such as these are based on *OED* evidence about possible argument structure in the relevant period.

Finally, there is one type of redundancy which was impossible to detect without further context, where particles are used with verbs of motion, not to indicate altitude or direction, but emphatically or redundantly, for example:

- And at night I **went up** to see Mr Heyricke and to see about Mr Case his goeinge to-morrow, and yn Mris Lancashire, Mr Heyr: sister, came in. (1661newc.j2b)

In this example, it is impossible to determine, without further knowledge about the situation, whether *go up* refers to going to a higher position (Mr Heyricke might live at the top of a hill) or going north (perhaps the writer lives in London and Mr Heyricke lives in Oxford), or whether it is used redundantly. Such instances have been classified throughout as not redundant.

Figure 9-6 Redundant phrasal verbs: tokens per 10,000 words
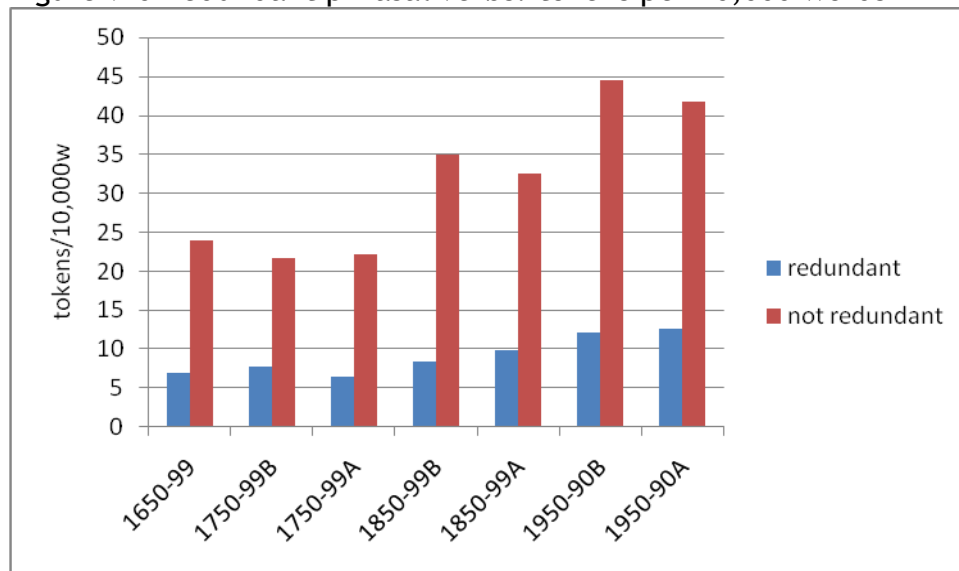
Based on this classification, figure 9-6 shows the number of redundant phrasal verb tokens per 10,000 words for each period, compared with those which are not redundant. While it is evident that redundant phrasal verbs have become

more frequent in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this increase is in line with the increase in the number of phrasal verbs in general. In each period, approximately a quarter of phrasal verbs are redundant and three-quarters are not redundant (raw figures for these data can be found in appendix 13).

Again, though, analyzing the results by genre is illuminating. Figure 9-7 shows the number of redundant phrasal verb tokens per 10,000 words in formal texts (science, sermons and medicine) and informal texts (drama, letters and journals) (see 9.3.2.3 above for a discussion of the division of genres). In the seventeenth-century material, redundant phrasal verbs are equally frequent in formal and informal texts (both just over 6/10,000w). In the subsequent centuries, redundant phrasal verbs become more frequent in informal texts in both British and American English. In formal texts, they become more frequent in American English, and remain stable in British English, until 1850-99, after which period there is a decline in frequency in both varieties. The change is particularly striking in American English. The highest frequency of redundant phrasal verbs in formal texts is in the nineteenth-century American English materials, where there are fifty tokens altogether (9/10,000w). By contrast, the lowest frequency of redundant phrasal verbs in formal texts is in twentieth-century American English, where there only ten tokens of this type (less than 2/10,000w).

Figure 9-7 Redundant phrasal verbs in formal and informal texts: tokens per 10,000 words
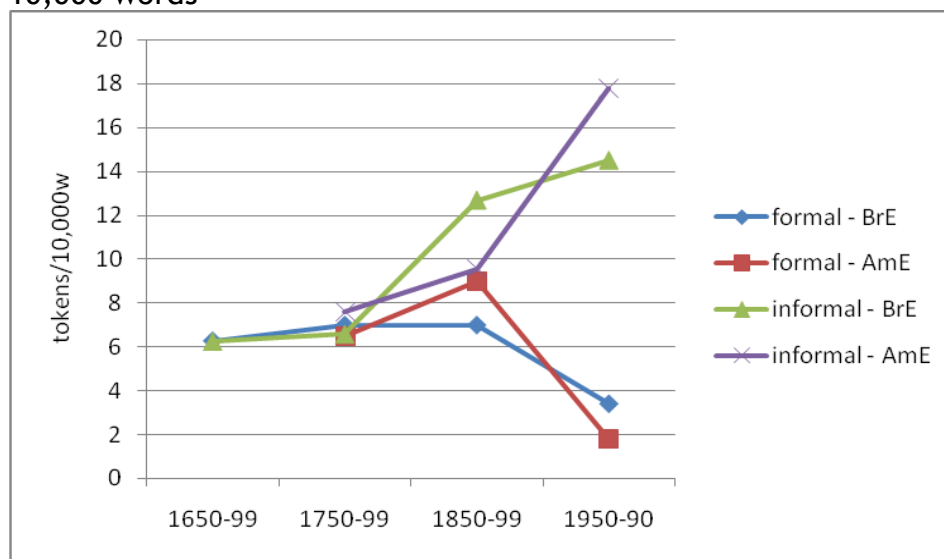
Another approach which was considered to be potentially fruitful was to examine the individual redundant phrasal verbs which were censured in the precept corpus and dictionaries. These are listed in appendix 14, with number of tokens per period alongside the dates of the volumes in which they were criticized. There are some suggestive developments. For example, the declining frequency of *fall down*, which is censured in five texts between 1755 (Johnson, first edition) and 1892 (Moon), suggests that the proscriptions may have had an effect. *Fall down* occurs six times in the seventeenth-century material and then decreases in frequency: it occurs only once in the twentieth-century American English section and not at all in twentieth-century British English (see table 9-5). This is not to say, of course, that *fall down* has become obsolete – intuition and a quick search of the *BYU-BNC* tells us that it is still in use – but the occurrences in ARCHER suggest that it has become relatively less frequent, particularly in formal texts. However, it is impossible to draw any firm conclusions from such a small number of tokens. Many of the other censured phrasal verbs occur even less frequently in ARCHER. For example, *ascend up* and *return back*, two of the most frequently censured phrasal verbs in the precept corpus, occur only once each (both in 1650-99); while *meet up*, which was a favourite target of twentieth-century proscriptions, and condemned as an Americanism (see chapters 5 and 7), occurs only once in ARCHER, in a twentieth-century British novel. In these cases, conclusions cannot be drawn from a single occurrence.

Table 9-5 *Fall down* in ARCHER

	1650-99	1750-99B	1750-99A	1850-99B	1850-99A	1950-90B	1950-90A	total
Formal	3	1			1			
Informal	2		1	1				
Neutral	1	2	1	1			1	
Total	**6**	**3**	**2**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**15**

The final line of investigation was to examine redundant phrasal verbs by sub-category, based on the classification given in chapter 5 (see also the examples given at the beginning of this section). Thus each redundant phrasal verb was classified as involving either repetition of the meaning of the verb (as in *fall down*), repetition of the meaning of a Latin prefix (as in *return back*), or the use

of an Aktionsart particle (as in *start out* or *eat up*). Based on this approach, the redundant phrasal verbs were sub-classified as follows (these are also listed in appendix 15, with number of tokens in each period):

- **Back:**
  - all four types – *refer back, remand back, retire back* and *return back* – involve the **repetition of the meaning of a Latin prefix.**

- **Down:**
  - Twenty-two types are **repetitive:** *sit down, fall down, drop down, lie down, lay down, kneel down, bend down, dip down, hang down, bow down, stoop down, lower down, sink down, bog down, fell down, topple down*, *gobble down, gulp down, munch down, swallow down, rain down* and *shower down.*
  - Twenty-one types are **Aktionsart:** *break down, settle down, shoot down, burn down, calm down, close down, die down, cool down, write down, hunt down, track down, wear down, grind down, shut down, slow down, soothe down, batter down, flag down, reboil down, snuggle down* and *trample down.*

- **Out:**
  - One type – *explode out* - involves the **repetition of the meaning of a Latin prefix.**
  - Twenty-one types are **repetitive:** *cry out, call out, speak out, say out, bawl out, blare out, blurt out, murmur out, roar out, shine out, spread out, jut out, branch out, broaden out, widen out, lengthen out, bulge out, gush out, pout out, stretch out* and *swell out.*
  - Sixty types are **Aktionsart:** *find out, wear out, fit out, hold out, seek out, watch out, mark out, try out, fill out, die out, hunt out, pick out, play out, start out, tire out, write out, blot out, clear out, count out, eat out, fight out, help out, live out, measure out, plan out, search out, spell out, stick out, straighten out, argue out, audition out, calculate out, chalk out, copy out, deck out, descry out, drown out, dry out, dude out, even out, finish out, flesh out, grope out, guess out, last out, learn out, paint out, part out, rig out, shape out, sketch out, smooth out, snuff out, thaw*

out, trick out, wager out, weary out, flatten out, rent out and *sell out*.

- **Up:**
  - Fifteen types are **repetitive**: *lift up, stand up, raise up, rise up, climb up, pile up, rouse up, vomit up, heap up, rear up, ascend up, buoy up, soar up, surge up* and *well up*.
  - One hundred and twenty-nine types are **Aktionsart**: *make up, wake up, grow up, build up, wrap up, shut up, clear up, fill up, light up, tie up, gather up, swallow up, break up, bind up, cheer up, lock up, block up, burn up, tear up, wind up, call up, catch up, clean up, cut up, dry up, eat up, end up, hurry up, line up, ring up, stir up, mix up, open up, pack up, roll up, boil up, cover up, serve up, sew up, back up, choke up, cook up, double up, dress up, fix up, fold up, follow up, patch up, saddle up, screw up, show up, shrink up, snatch up, speed up, split up, strike up, tidy up, train up, add up, beat up, carve up, chain up, chop up, close up, face up, finish up, fire up, fit up, freeze up, harrow up, heal up, hunt up, keep up, mess up, save up, seal up, size up, start up, treasure up, use up, warm up, wash up, write up, batter up, bold up, bottle up, breed up, bundle up, camp up, check up, chuck up, cloister up, conjure up, coop up, couch up, count up, crumple up, cry up, dam up, dip up, divide up, drink up, feel up, flare up, join up, link up, meet up, muddle up, muster up, nurse up, own up, plug up, polish up, preach up, rig up, scorch up, shoot up, shrivel up, smell up, spin up, stock up, stop up, strap up, sum up, surrender up, team up, tell up, tense up* and *wire up*[95].

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[95] As discussed in chapter 3.2 (with reference to *grow up*), this classification is not straightforward, and there are some ambiguous cases. It was decided to classify both *sit down* and *stand up* as repetitive (rather than ingressive), since the primary senses of these verbs involve movement from a standing (higher) to a seated (lower) position, or vice versa. Phrasal verbs with *down* in the semantic field of eating - *gobble down, gulp down, munch down* and *swallow down* – were also classified as repetitive, since the primary sense of all of these verbs involves downward movement from the mouth to the stomach. Finally, phrasal verbs with *out* in the semantic field of speaking or making noise- *cry out, call out, speak out, say out, bawl out, blare out, blurt out, murmur out* and *roar out* - were also classified as repetitive, since these verbs involve movement of air and sound from inside to outside the mouth. However, it is understood that such a classification is necessarily somewhat subjective.

Figure 9-8, which shows the distribution of tokens per 10,000 words for these sub-categories of redundant phrasal verbs, and figure 9-9, which shows types per 10,000 words, display very similar patterns (raw figures can be found in appendix 16). Firstly, it is notable that phrasal verbs where the particle repeats the meaning of a Latin prefix are extremely infrequent – there are only five tokens altogether (one each of *return back, refer back, remand back, retire back* and *explode out*). Secondly, the frequency of other repetitive phrasal verbs has remained fairly stable – between 2 and 4/10,000w[96]. By contrast, there is an increase in both types and tokens of Aktionsart phrasal verbs.

Figure 9-8 Sub-categories of redundant phrasal verbs: tokens per 10,000 words

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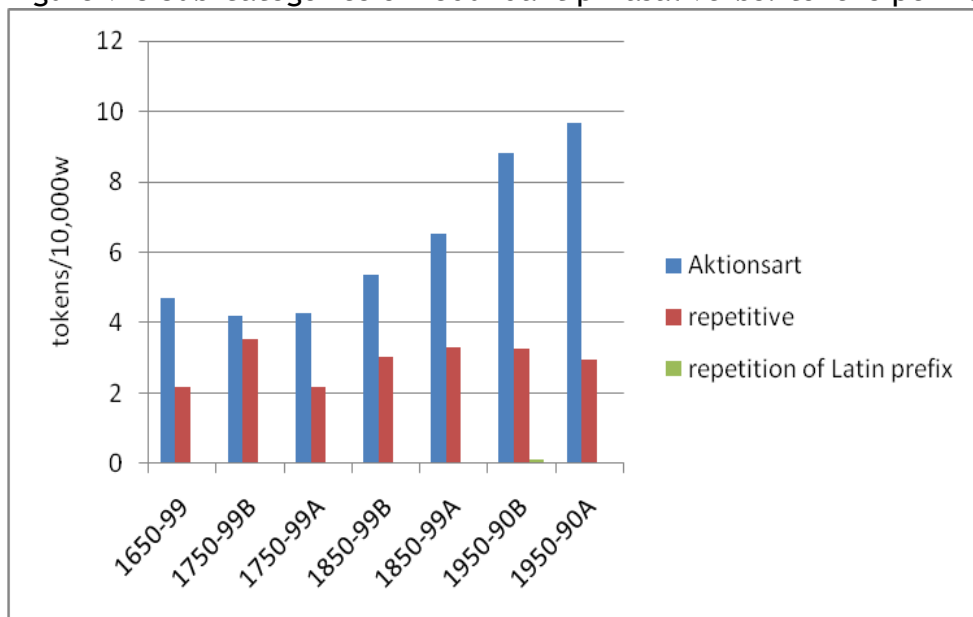
[96] Given that *sit down* is particularly frequent – indeed, the most frequent phrasal verb type in the corpus, with 133 tokens – and that it is classified here as repetitive but could conceivably be classified as ingressive (see note above), these calculations were repeated with *sit down* omitted. However, while this affected the frequency of repetitive phrasal verbs, it did not affect the overall pattern, and there was still diachronic stability: between 1 and 3/10,000w in all periods were repetitive.

Figure 9-9 Sub-categories of redundant phrasal verbs: types per 10,000 words
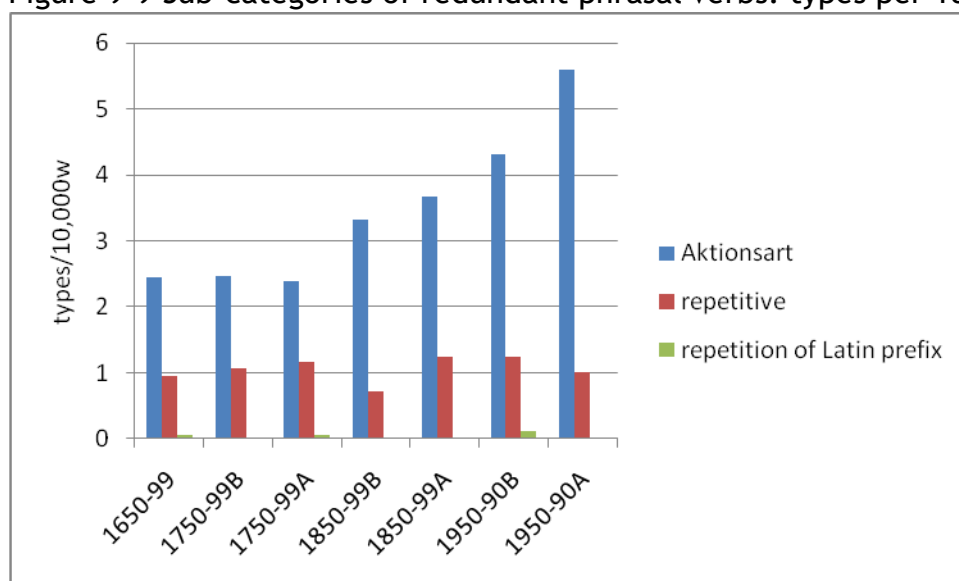
Of the 273 redundant types listed above, more than a third – 113 in total – occur only once; a further 138 occur between two and ten times; and only twenty-two occur more than ten times in the corpus (see appendix 15 for number of tokens for each type). While it is therefore difficult to discern patterns in individual types, a few remarks can be made. Firstly, despite the overall increase in the Aktionsart category, there are a few types which become notably less frequent. For example, there are twelve tokens of redundant *find out* in 1650-99, e.g.

- I hope, you and others of the R. Society will **find out** some ingenious and docible persons, who, for reasonable gain to themselves, and for common good, will furnish us with store of these Instruments... (1675ray-.s2b)
- Upon which the East-Indian Company of the United Netherlands omitted neither study, nor care, to **find out** a passage through the North-Eastern Sea for those who were to return to Europe from the East-Indies. (1675ano2.s2b)

This use of *find out* to mean 'find/discover a person/thing/place' becomes increasingly rare, and in later periods *find out* tends to mean 'discover a fact', and is frequently intransitive and therefore not redundant, e.g.

- I wasn't planning to do anything until you **found out**. (1961gree.d8b)

Similarly, *make up* is frequently used redundantly in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, e.g.

- ...they sent to search the Church and finding a part of the wall new **made up** again, put them to it, whether that there were any thing hid there...

(1653merc.n2b)

- A fribble, Kitty -- oh! you innocent, tall, beautiful creature! -- a fribble is a thing **made up** of rags, wig, ruffles, wind, froth, amber cane, paint, powder, coatskirts and sword. Nothing else, I assure you. (1881besa.f6b)

This type of usage becomes much less frequent in the twentieth century, when *make up* is almost always used in idiomatic and non-redundant ways, e.g.

- … men are often slower than we are at **making up** their minds… (1952whit.f8b)
- Did not Mr. Otway add that apologies were useless, that they could not **make up for** his foolishness and naiveté in being deceived by the Nazis? (1969weid.d8a)

The development of these types indicates the way that originally Aktionsart uses can develop specialized idiomatic senses which are therefore not redundant. On the other hand, some of the Aktionsart types become more frequent over time, such as *wake up*, which is not attested at all in the seventeenth or eighteenth-century materials but is one of the most frequent redundant phrasal verbs (with nineteen tokens) in the twentieth. Furthermore, many occur only in the twentieth century, such as *ring up, warm up, close down, count out* (British English); *join up, crumple up, conjure up, finish out, drown out* (American English); and *tidy up, add up, slow down* (both British and American English).

As stated above, the frequency of repetitive phrasal verbs has remained fairly stable. Some types, such as *sit down*, have remained consistently frequent. Some have become more frequent, such as *stand up* (one token in the eighteenth century, five in the nineteenth and eleven in the twentieth), while others have become less frequent, such as *fall down* (discussed above) and *lift up* (five tokens in the seventeenth century, five in the eighteenth, two in the nineteenth and one in the twentieth century). Again, though, the low number of tokens means that analyzing individual types is inconclusive; patterns can only be determined by analyzing categories as a whole.

Finally, these sub-categories can also be analyzed by genre. Given the very small number of tokens of phrasal verbs which repeat the meaning of a Latin prefix, this type will be ignored, and only Aktionsart and repetitive types analyzed.

Figure 9-10 shows the number of repetitive and Aktionsart phrasal verbs, per 10,000 words, in formal and informal texts (following the classification given in 9.3.2.3). Raw figures can be found in appendices 17 and 18.

Figure 9-10 Repetitive and Aktionsart phrasal verbs in formal and informal texts: tokens per 10,000 words
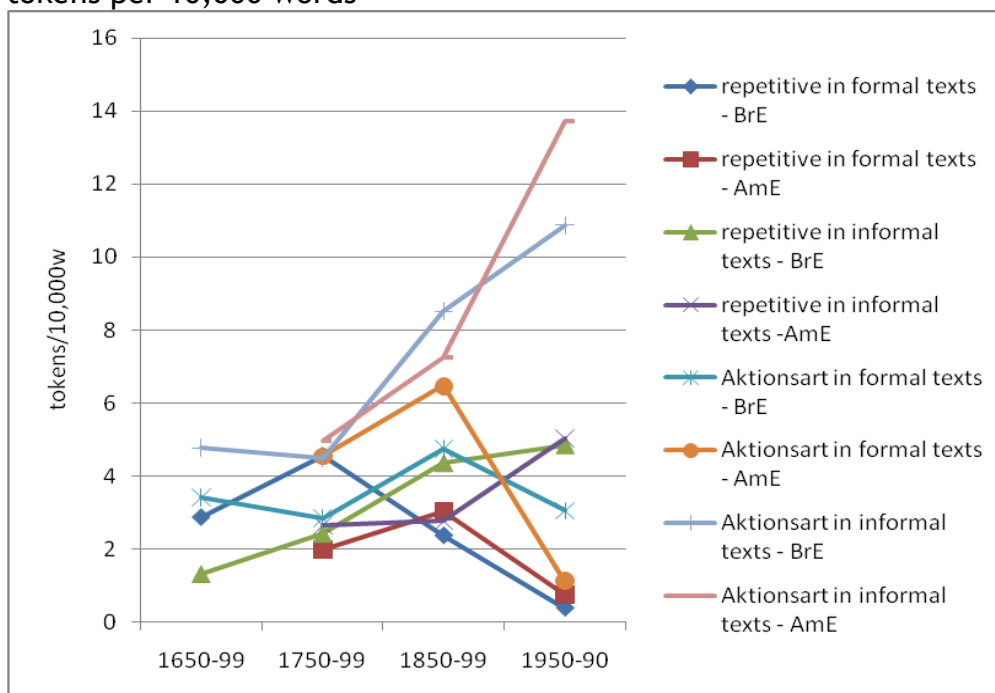
In both British and American English, Aktionsart phrasal verbs have become more frequent in informal texts, as have, to a lesser extent, repetitive phrasal verbs. However, there are different trends in formal texts in British English and American English. In American English, the most pronounced change is the decrease in the number of Aktionsart phrasal verbs in formal texts after the nineteenth century. These were quite frequent in nineteenth-century formal texts (6.5/10,000w), with examples such as:

- … the impression was conveyed that the red blood corpuscles had **split up** into a number of smaller pieces. (1887pres.s6a)
- … the patient doing the **cleaning-up** work and a good deal of lifting. (1868cutt.m6a)

However, this type becomes far less common in twentieth-century formal texts in American English (just over 1/10,000w).

In British English, on the other hand, the most interesting change is the decline in the frequency of repetitive phrasal verbs in formal texts, from over 4.5/10,000w in 1750-99 to 0.7/10,000w in 1950-90. For example, the following repetitive phrasal verbs are from 1650-99 and 1750-99 British English formal texts:

- … he called for burnt Brandy, drank it, went to bed and **vomited** it **up**; after this he had a restless night... (1683list.m2b)

- ... if the swimming bladder of any Fish be pricked or broken, such a Fish sinks presently to the bottom, and can neither support nor **raise up** it self [sic] in the water. (1675ray-.s2b)

- You are not now to partake of the sacrifice offered by the High Priest Melchisedec; you are not to be supported by the manna which was **rained down** from the clouds, in the desert, before the people of God... (17xxarch.h4b)[97]

This type becomes negligible in twentieth-century British English formal texts: there are no occurrences in science or medicine, and only two in sermons (one of *spread out* and one of *rise up*). Furthermore, what is particularly interesting is that this is the only group of phrasal verbs that declines in frequency in the nineteenth century. All other categories that have been analyzed either remain stable or become more frequent until the twentieth century; it is only repetitive phrasal verbs which begin to decline in frequency before then.

9.3.3. Discussion

9.3.3.1. Summary of main trends

The figures below set out the main trends in the diachronic development of phrasal verbs in LModE: overall (figure 9-11); and in formal texts in particular (figure 9-12).

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[97] This example alerted me to a problem in analyzing the language of sermons, as it is clearly a paraphrase of a biblical text ('And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven', Psalm 78, Authorized Version), and the language of a quotation or paraphrase does not necessarily represent the language of the period. Since sermons are often replete with biblical paraphrases, this raises questions about the usefulness of sermons in a historical corpus. On closer inspection I found that several more occurrences of repetitive phrasal verbs in sermons were of this type (Jesus 'lifting up his eyes to heaven', for example), so I recalculated the results with sermons excluded. However, this did not affect the overall pattern.

Figure 9-11 Summary of phrasal verbs in all texts: tokens per 10,000 words
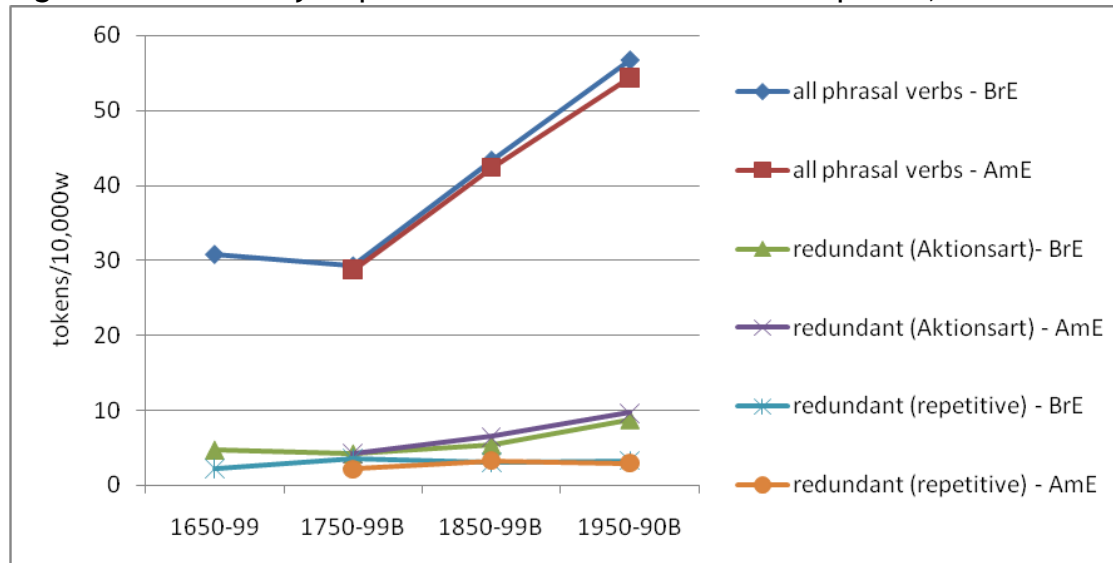
Figure 9-12 Summary of phrasal verbs in formal texts: tokens per 10,000 words
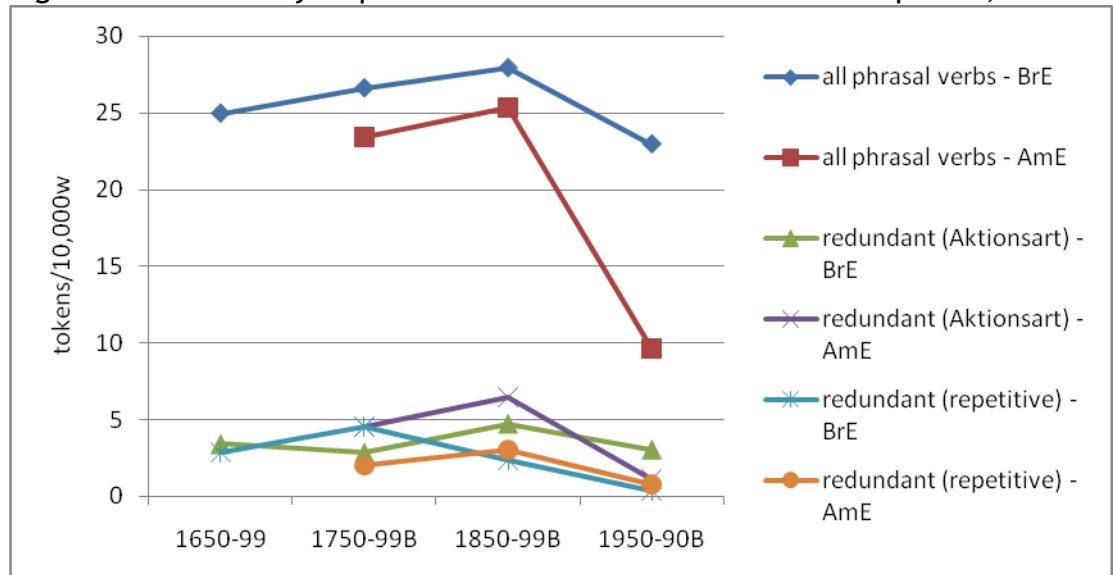
The following are the main patterns of change (and stability) that have been identified:

1. Between the late seventeenth and late eighteenth century, the frequency of phrasal verbs in British English was stable (unfortunately, data are not available for American English for the seventeenth century). Since the late eighteenth century, phrasal verbs have become much more frequent and more productive in both British and American English.

2. There is remarkable similarity between British and American English in the overall frequencies of phrasal verbs in each period.

3. Phrasal verbs have become more frequent in informal texts (drama,

letters and journals) in both British and American English.

4. The frequency of phrasal verbs in formal texts (science, medicine and sermons) increased until the end of the nineteenth century, and then decreased in the twentieth, particularly in American English.

5. Redundant phrasal verbs have become more frequent in both varieties, but this has been in line with the increase in frequency of phrasal verbs in general: in each period and variety, redundant phrasal verb tokens make up about a quarter of all phrasal verb tokens.

6. In formal American English texts, there is an increase in the frequency of redundant phrasal verbs between the seventeenth and the nineteenth century. In British English formal texts, the frequency of redundant phrasal verbs remains stable in this period. This is followed by a decrease in frequency in both varieties in the twentieth century.

7. The sub-category of phrasal verbs which goes against the overall pattern is that of repetitive phrasal verbs such as *fall down* and *raise up*; these started to decline in frequency in British English formal texts before all the other types, in the nineteenth rather than the twentieth century.

In the following sections, these tendencies are considered with reference to the attitudes towards phrasal verbs (and redundant phrasal verbs in particular) presented in the preceding chapters. Given that the purpose of this chapter is to analyze the interplay between prescriptivism and usage, the discussion will be divided into two strands: firstly, the extent to which prescriptive attitudes responded to and reflected usage trends; and secondly, the extent (if any) to which they influenced usage.

9.3.3.2. Prescriptive attitudes: reflection of usage?

Firstly, let us consider how accurate the prescriptivists were in reflecting usage. Concern about redundant phrasal verbs – expressed in a quarter of the precept corpus materials, and all of the dictionaries – clearly responded to an increase in this type of phrasal verb. Furthermore, the perception of these phrasal verbs as particularly frequent in American English – a criticism voiced in many of the twentieth-century materials – was accurate to an extent. Redundant – particularly Aktionsart – phrasal verbs are slightly more frequent in American English than in British English in both the nineteenth and twentieth century.

However, the difference is marginal, and there are many redundant types which occur only in the British English materials: the claim that such phrasal verbs are, for an example, an 'infection which… is spreading across the Atlantic' (Gowers 1948:41-2; see chapter 7) is clearly an exaggeration.

In one respect, the prescriptivists were not accurate at all: in the proscription of phrasal verbs where the particle repeats the meaning of a Latin prefix. There are thirty references to this type of phrasal verb in the precept corpus, and yet they appear only five times in ARCHER: that is, they represent only 0.03 tokens per 10,000 words, or 0.1% of all the phrasal verbs. *Return back* is criticized in ten different works, from 1775 through to 1947, yet it appears only once in ARCHER, in 1687. The persistence of this type of attitude might be due to two factors. Firstly, the first criticism of this type in the precept corpus is by the eminent rhetorician George Campbell, whose influence on subsequent usage manuals and grammars might have caused the proscription to be perpetrated without reference to usage. Secondly, the repetition of the meaning of a Latin prefix, perhaps by people unaware of its etymology, is the kind of 'error' which is irresistible to purists (see the discussion in chapter 5 of the continuing proscription of words/phrases used in ways which depart from their Latin etymologies, such as *under the circumstances, aggravate* and *transpire*).

9.3.3.3. Prescriptive attitudes: influence on usage?

As has been shown in the preceding chapters, attitudes towards phrasal verbs in LModE have been mixed. The most clearly positive attitudes are related to their native as opposed to Latin origin, and such attitudes have been more frequently voiced since the late nineteenth century (see chapter 4). It is possible that the increase in frequency of phrasal verbs since the late eighteenth century, evidenced in this chapter and in other studies, was facilitated by such attitudes. Furthermore, the lack of increase between the late seventeenth and the late eighteenth century may have been related in part to the general preference for Latinate forms in that period (again, see chapter 4). This conclusion corresponds with Claridge's (2000:178-9) speculation that the slight decline in phrasal verbs evidenced in her late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century materials may have been due to the standardization process and prescriptivist tendencies of that period.

However, I would agree with Claridge that such a conclusion must remain speculative, given that the decline is very slight. Furthermore, since there is actually a slight increase in phrasal verbs in formal texts and a decrease in informal texts, the influence of prescriptivism seems even less likely, since proscribed forms would be more likely to be avoided in formal texts. As for the increase in frequency since the eighteenth century, this is a continuation of a pattern of increasing frequency of phrasal verbs since OE (see e.g. Konishi 1958 and Spasov 1966). Thus, while their growth in LModE may have been partially encouraged by positive attitudes, it may also have been simply the continuation of an existing trend. Furthermore, as discussed in the preceding chapters, the increased positive attitudes towards the native origin of phrasal verbs were counterbalanced by negative attitudes towards their excessive polysemy, 'vulgarity' and so on, so it is difficult to determine a correlation between attitudes and usage.

However, there are two areas where I would argue that prescriptivism may have had an influence on usage: firstly, phrasal verbs, particularly redundant ones, in formal texts; and secondly, repetitive phrasal verbs. We might first consider the development of phrasal verbs in formal texts (science, medicine and sermons). Until the late nineteenth century, phrasal verbs either become more frequent (in American English) or remain stable (in British English) in these genres. Between the late nineteenth and late twentieth century, this pattern reversed, and they became substantially less frequent: in American English, the decrease is particularly marked with Aktionsart types such as *split up*, while in British English it is repetitive types such as *raise up* that become notably less frequent.

There are two interpretations of this change. The first is that, influenced by proscriptions of phrasal verbs, particularly redundant phrasal verbs, writers of formal texts avoided these combinations. It is quite plausible that formal rather than informal usage would be influenced by such proscriptions, since prescriptive works are usually aimed (either explicitly or implicitly) at writers of more formal texts. The second interpretation is that the decreasing frequency of phrasal verbs in formal texts reflects the overall diachronic drift of genres such as science and medicine towards more formal and 'literate' language (as

discussed in Biber and Finegan 1997; see 9.3.2.3 above). I would argue that these two interpretations are compatible. It is plausible that writers of formal texts in the twentieth century avoided phrasal verbs, particularly redundant ones, in order to conform to expected standards of formality, due to the perception of these lexemes as less appropriate for formal texts – a perception which resulted from prescriptive attitudes.

This theory is even more plausible in the case of repetitive phrasal verbs. The present study has shown that this category of phrasal verbs (including e.g. *ascend up* and *fall down*) is the only one which began to decrease in frequency in nineteenth-century British English formal texts, before the overall decline of phrasal verbs in twentieth-century formal texts. Given that this pattern diverges from that of other phrasal verbs in formal texts, I would suggest that the argument for the influence of prescriptivism is quite strong in this case. As shown in chapter 5, most of the proscriptions of redundant phrasal verbs in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century were about repetitive rather than Aktionsart types. Furthermore, repetitive phrasal verbs were only ever proscribed, whereas there were sometimes mitigating or approving comments about the functions of Aktionsart ones (for example in Johnson's dictionary; see chapter 8). Thus it is plausible that frequent and unambiguous proscriptions of repetitive phrasal verbs from the eighteenth century onward had an effect on the frequency of these types in formal texts, before the general avoidance of phrasal verbs in twentieth-century formal texts.

9.4. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been twofold: to analyze the development of phrasal verbs in LModE in order to understand the basis of attitudes towards them; and to consider whether these attitudes had any influence on their development. It has been shown that the prescriptivists did, on the whole, respond to actual developments in the language, although in some cases their concerns were rather displaced: firstly, in the exaggerated claims about the American English origins of redundant phrasal verbs (or even of phrasal verbs in general); and secondly, in the excessive proscriptions about phrasal verbs which repeat Latin prefixes, which have been shown to occur very infrequently in actual usage.

The question of the influence of prescriptivism on usage is a more difficult one and, given the problems of ascribing any changes in language to a single cause, must necessarily remain speculative. However, it has been suggested that two changes in particular may have been influenced by prescriptivism. Firstly, the avoidance of phrasal verbs in twentieth-century formal texts may have been related to perceptions of these as inappropriate to the increasingly 'literate' nature of genres such as science and medicine. Secondly, the early decline in the frequency of repetitive phrasal verbs may have been influenced by the recurrent and unmitigated criticisms of this category of phrasal verbs in dictionaries, grammars and usage manuals since the eighteenth century.

Chapter 10. Conclusions

In this chapter, the main findings of the thesis are summarized, and suggestions for future research proposed.

10.1. Findings

10.1.1. Recognition of phrasal verbs in LModE

Phrasal verbs have been discussed or mentioned in English grammars, usage manuals and dictionaries since the eighteenth century (and, in a few cases, even earlier). In the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century texts, they are largely perceived as a lexical phenomenon: most of the descriptions and comments refer to the idiomatic nature of phrasal verbs or to their status as semantic compounds, with few references to their syntactic features. Furthermore, they tend not to be distinguished from other types of group verb, and there are few attempts to give them a name. In the late nineteenth- and twentieth- century texts, clearer and more explicit descriptions of phrasal verbs emerge: syntactic features are discussed; the function and meaning of adverbial particles are considered in more detail; the terms *phrasal verb*, *verb-adverb combination* and so forth are coined; and methods for distinguishing phrasal verbs from other verbal compounds are set out.

10.1.2. Attitudes towards phrasal verbs in LModE

The attitudes in the precept corpus and dictionaries vary widely in the clarity with which they are expressed. Given that phrasal verbs were not fully described until the late nineteenth/ twentieth century, it is not surprising that many of the comments in the earlier materials are not explicitly critical or approving of phrasal verbs, but only of certain aspects or instances of them. Furthermore, there is no monolithic set of attitudes towards phrasal verbs; rather, there are various – sometimes contradictory – attitudes which reflect different trends in language ideology. These attitudes can be summarized as follows:

1. One type of attitude relates to the debate, ongoing since the fourteenth century, about the relative values of Latinate and 'Saxon' or 'native' vocabulary, since phrasal verbs are frequently perceived as alternatives to Latinate simple verbs (e.g. *fall out* vs. *disagree*). In a few cases, phrasal verbs are criticized as being weaker or less educated than their Latinate

counterparts. In others, the availability of both Latinate and phrasal verbs is seen as a strength of the language, a form of *copia*. More frequently, though, and particularly in the twentieth century, it is argued that phrasal verbs are more homely, 'vigorous' or expressive than 'pretentious' Latinate verbs. This shift in attitudes corresponds with the overall growing preference for 'Saxon' vocabulary in the twentieth century, as identified by Adamson (1998).

2. Related to the debate about Latinate and native vocabulary are attitudes towards preposition stranding, a feature of English which has frequently been proscribed, largely because it does not occur in Latin. This proscription has been thoroughly researched, particularly by Yáñez-Bouza (2007), but my research has shown that it also extends to phrasal verbs. Since adverbial particles tended not to be distinguished from prepositions in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century materials, sentences like *the weather cleared up* were perceived as examples of ending a sentence with a preposition, and thus censured. Furthermore, while preposition stranding can usually be avoided (by 'pied-piping'), this is not always possible with end-placed adverbial particles, so that in order to avoid ending a sentence like *the weather cleared up* with the word *up*, one would have to reword the sentence altogether, perhaps by selecting a simple (Latinate) verb such as *improve*. In the twentieth century, proscriptions of end-placed particles became less frequent, partly because preposition stranding in general became more widely accepted, and partly because of the awareness of the difference between prepositions and adverbial particles. This development, then, is an example of a case where terminology and linguistic awareness had an effect on prescriptivism.

3. Another strand of attitudes can be read in the context of the long-standing 'etymological fallacy' (the argument that each word has one true meaning) and, related to this, what I have called the 'monosemy fallacy' (the argument that, if each word has only one true meaning, it cannot have more than one true meaning). Phrasal verbs are particularly striking candidates for censure in this context, since they are often highly polysemous. Several of the precept corpus materials criticize this feature, arguing that the multiple meanings of either phrasal verbs themselves, or

the verbs and particles which they consist of, are clumsy, illogical, ambiguous, weak, or simply wrong. In a few (mostly twentieth-century) materials, a contrasting attitude is voiced: phrasal verbs are praised for *reducing* polysemy, since lexemes such as *put off, put up* and *put out* distinguish the meaning of the root verb *put*: rather than one highly polysemous simple verb, there are a number of less polysemous phrasal verbs. This attitude depends on the perception of phrasal verbs as single lexemes – another example of linguistic awareness influencing attitudes.

4. The most frequent single type of criticism is of redundant adverbial particles: a quarter of the precept corpus materials proscribe this aspect of phrasal verbs, and it is the only clearly expressed criticism in the dictionaries. This criticism is partially related to the etymological fallacy and the 'monosemy fallacy': if a word has one true meaning, this implies that it should have *a* meaning: a word which does not have a single, separate, definable meaning is redundant and pointless. Criticism of redundancy is also part of the ideology of rhetoric, where repetition, long-windedness, verbosity and so on are perceived as faults of style. Furthermore, redundancy tends to be a feature of spoken language – indeed, as is now recognized, a necessary feature of spoken language – and is thus perceived as less appropriate in written English. Criticisms of phrasal verbs which have 'redundant' adverbial particles can be seen in light of these attitudes. The eighteenth- and nineteenth-century comments are usually about particles that repeat part of the meaning of the verb (such as *return back* and *fall down*), whereas twentieth-century criticisms are more frequently about Aktionsart particles (such as *meet up*). This, I have argued, suggests that the earlier critics were more concerned with faults against (Latin) etymology and logic, whereas in the twentieth-century the criticisms of redundancy are based on perceptions of stylistic weakness. Running counter to these criticisms are the perceptive comments in several of the materials – first in Johnson's *Dictionary,* and then more frequently in late nineteenth- and twentieth-century works – about the intensive and Aktionsart functions of apparently 'redundant' particles.

5. It has also been shown that attitudes towards redundancy have frequently been related to attitudes towards varieties of English. By analyzing

proscriptions of phrasal verbs as regionalisms (usually Scotticisms or Americanisms), it was discovered that these could largely be divided into two types. In some cases, the proscriptions were accurate. For example, *cast out* meaning 'quarrel' was censured as a Scotticism in eighteenth and nineteenth century texts, and, according to *OED* evidence, *cast out* was indeed a Scottish English usage. Similarly, *win out* was criticized in twentieth-century texts as an Americanism, and it was indeed first used in American English. These comments tell us little about attitudes towards phrasal verbs, only that particular lexemes were identified as Scottish English or American English and proscribed in the anti-Scotticism or anti-Americanism literature of the period. In other cases, though, the proscribed forms are not in fact limited to any particular variety of English: *open up*, for example, was censured first as a Scotticism and later as an Americanism, but according to *OED* evidence it has been in use in general English since the fifteenth century. What is striking about these criticisms is that the majority are of redundant phrasal verbs. This suggests that negative regional labels – first 'Scotticism' and later 'Americanism' – were applied as proscriptive labels to undesirable forms, irrespective of usage, and is further evidence of the strong proscription against phrasal verbs with redundant particles.

6. There are a number of criticisms of individual phrasal verbs, in both the precept corpus and dictionaries, which refer to their language level, using labels such as *vulgar, colloquial, slang, popular* and *familiar*. Interpreting such labels is problematic, since their meanings have shifted throughout the LModE period, and a reconstruction of their senses is required before classifying them as prescriptive or descriptive. It was also discovered that these labels tend to be applied to new phrasal verbs, and that attitudes towards neologisms and language level – and sometimes also language variety – are frequently intertwined.

7. My analysis of three LModE dictionaries – Johnson, Webster and *OED*1 – has shown that, as in the precept corpus materials, the main type of criticism is of redundant phrasal verbs. However, these criticisms are relatively few, and none of the dictionaries can be described as censuring phrasal verbs in general. This discovery is particularly interesting with regards to Johnson's dictionary, as it dispels the frequently voiced assertion that

Johnson disliked phrasal verbs. This is further evidence of the mythology surrounding Johnson's dictionary, and the fact that the general perception of it as authoritative and prescriptive is not necessarily accurate.

10.1.3. Usage of phrasal verbs in LModE

In order to determine the relationship between, on the one hand, the attitudes discovered in the precept corpus and dictionaries and, on the other, English usage in the Late Modern period, I carried out a corpus analysis of phrasal verbs in British English and American English texts from 1650-1990, with a particular focus on phrasal verbs with redundant particles. The results revealed both expected and unexpected patterns, which are summarized as follows:

1. It was shown that, after a period of stability between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, phrasal verbs have become increasingly frequent since the eighteenth century. This largely correlates with the findings of previous studies, and appears to be a pattern independent of prescriptive attitudes.

2. Perhaps surprisingly, it was discovered that phrasal verbs have been equally frequent in British English and American English since the eighteenth century, thus refuting the claim that phrasal verbs are a particularly common feature of American English.

3. In terms of genre distribution, it was found that phrasal verbs were fairly evenly distributed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; that in the nineteenth and twentieth century they became much more frequent in informal texts (drama, journals/diaries and letters) in both British and American English; and that they became less frequent in formal texts in the twentieth century, particularly in American English. These changes are even more pronounced with redundant phrasal verbs. These patterns, it is argued, can be explained in terms of the development of these genres: informal texts have become increasingly informal, and formal texts increasing literate. However, they might also be understood in terms of prescriptivism: part of the reason that phrasal verbs (particularly redundant ones) were felt to be inappropriate for the increasingly literate and expository nature of twentieth century formal texts is that they were proscribed as such in the grammars and usage manuals of the period.

4. Furthermore, there is one subcategory of phrasal verbs which seems to demonstrate the influence of prescriptivism. Repetitive phrasal verbs (*fall down, rise up*, etc.) began to decrease in frequency in British English formal texts between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in contrast with the pattern of phrasal verbs in general, which were becoming more frequent in this period. Given that this type of phrasal verb had been unanimously censured since the eighteenth century, I have argued that this is a small but persuasive example of the influence of prescriptivism.

10.2. Questions for future research

The following are some suggestions for future areas of enquiry, both specific and general, which I have identified in the course of my research.

1. While there is a growing body of research on the influence of language attitudes on language use (particularly in the eighteenth century), this research could usefully be expanded, since there is as yet no clear relationship between the two: as Auer and González-Díaz (2005:318) remark, '*the idea* of the influence of prescriptivism has sometimes been ignored but more often overrated'. In this thesis, I examined this relationship with regard to one area – redundant phrasal verbs – but several other aspects of phrasal verb usage might profitably be analyzed. In particular, given the clearly identifiable pattern of decreasing proscriptions of end-placed particles in the twentieth century, it would be instructive to examine whether there was a corresponding increase in the occurrence of end-placed particles in English texts.

2. One area of my research which has proved both problematic and rewarding is the interpretation of 'prescriptive' labels such as *vulgar* and *colloquial*. While there is a growing body of work on the meanings of these labels in dictionaries, particularly in Johnson (see e.g. Pearce 2006, Wild 2008, Wild 2009), such research could be expanded to include other labels and other materials.

3. There has been a lot of research into the attitudes to language expressed in LModE (particularly eighteenth-century) dictionaries and grammars. However, the genre which I have labelled 'usage manuals' has been relatively under-studied. A few texts – such as Alford's *The Queen's*

English (1864) and, in particular, Fowler's *Modern English Usage* (1926) – are often referred to in the literature, but there are many more which have received very little attention. Furthermore, the genre has not been adequately defined or distinguished from the closely related genres of grammars on the one hand and treatises on rhetoric on the other. Given that, as shown in appendix 3, many of these usage manuals were very widely circulated, it would be of great benefit to future research into language attitudes if there were a full bibliography of such texts, and an analysis of their aims, influences and readerships.

Appendix 1. Overview of the precept corpus

	Grammars	Usage manuals	Articles/ letters	Other works	Total
1750-1775	5	3	0	0	**8**
1776-1800	4	4	0	0	**8**
1801-1825	3	2	0	0	**5**
1826-1850	5	5	0	0	**10**
1851-1875	11	9	0	0	**20**
1876-1900	4	15	2	0	**21**
1901-1925	3	10	0	4	**17**
1926-1950	0	6	23	1	**30**
1951-1975	1	4	14	0	**19**
Total	**36**	**58**	**39**	**5**	**138**

Appendix 2. Grammars in the precept corpus

For each grammarian/grammar I include any biographical information from the *DNB* or *DAB,* and any bibliographical information from Alston (1965), Kennedy (1961), or Görlach (1998), with occasional supplementary comments from other secondary literature or from the prefaces or introductions to the grammars themselves.

Joseph Priestley *The rudiments of English grammar* (London 1761)

Priestley (1733-1804) was a theologian and natural philosopher who, among his many accomplishments, discovered oxygen. He wrote his grammar when working as a teacher of languages and *belles-lettres.* His grammar, which went through nine English editions, is often noted for its 'insistence that usage was the only viable standard for correct English' (Schofield 2004), although recent studies have shown that it too was marked by the prescriptivist temperament of its time (see Beal 2004:106).

Robert Lowth *A Short Introduction to English Grammar* (London 1762)

Lowth (1710-87) was a professor of poetry at Oxford and later Bishop of London. *A Short Introduction to English Grammar* was immensely popular in Britain and America; there were at least forty-five editions before 1800 (Alston 1965 Vol.1:42-8) and 'more than 34,000 copies had been printed by 1781' (Mandelbrote 2004). Lowth has often been held up as an icon of prescriptivism, but this view has recently been challenged (see Beal 2004:105-7).

William Ward *An Essay on Grammar* (London 1765)

Ward (1708/9-72) was a priest and later a headmaster. Of *An Essay on Grammar,* Austin (2004) notes that '[a]lthough Ward intended it for use in teaching the boys at his school the *Essay* goes far beyond a school textbook, especially in the speculative part.' Ward's prescriptive aims are set out in his preface, where he argues against use and custom as guides to correctness since (based on the comments in Lowth) 'our authors, of the highest reputation, have fallen into such inaccuracies as would not be pardoned in a school-boy, if they appeared in a Latin composition' (Ward 1765:ix).

Joseph Priestley *The rudiments of English grammar*, **2**nd **ed. (London 1768)**

The second edition is 'considerably enlarged' (Alston 1965:Vol. I, 40); Hodson (2008) shows that the two versions (particularly the prefaces) differ substantially.

Anselm Bayly *A Plain and Complete Grammar of the English Language* **(London 1772)**

Bayly (1718/9-94) was a clergyman who wrote a work on oratory and a Hebrew grammar as well as his English grammar (Rigg 2004). Alston (1965:Vol.I, 59) lists only one edition. In his preface, Bayly states that a good grammar should be learned, plain and 'extensive, so as to take in the whole English tongue, and be introductory to other languages, particularly Latin, Greek, and Hebrew' (Bayly 1772:ix).

Noah Webster *A Grammatical Institute of the English Language Part II* **(Hartford 1784)**

Webster (1758-1843) is primarily remembered for *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828), although it was *The American Spelling Book* (1787) which sold best in his lifetime; it is estimated that only the Bible sold better (Yazawa 2004). Alston (1965:Vol.I, 72-6) lists twenty-three editions of the grammar to 1800. In his preface, Webster criticises earlier Latin-based grammars, saying that his own is 'a Grammar of our own language upon its true principles... for the benefit of common English schools' (Webster 1784:3).

George Neville Ussher *The Elements of English Grammar* **(London 1785)**

Not in *DNB*. Alston (1965:Vol.I, 79-80) notes that there were seven editions in the eighteenth century. In his preface, Ussher states that this books was written 'for grounding youth in the knowledge of English grammar' (Ussher 1785:v), and specifically for ladies, '[a]s a grammatical knowledge of English is becoming essentially necessary in the education of ladies' (Ussher 1785:vi).

Lindley Murray *English Grammar, adapted to the different classes of learners* **(York 1795)**

Murray (1745-1826) was born in Pennsylvania, worked as a lawyer, and later moved to England, where he began to write books. His *English Grammar* was

almost entirely based on the work of earlier grammarians – indeed, in his introduction, Murray admits that, given the number of grammars available, 'little can be expected of a new compilation, besides a careful selection of the most useful matter, and some degree of improvement in the mode of adapting it to the understanding' (Murray 1795:iii). It was enormously popular: Alston (1965:Vol.I) lists hundreds of editions and reprints throughout the nineteenth century. Given Murray's practice of uncritically copying rules from other grammarians, it has been suggested that '[i]f we need an eighteenth-century icon for prescriptivism, a better choice than Lowth would be Murray... [who] with his pedestrian interest in grammar, not language, makes a more fitting forerunner of today's usage expert' (Chapman 2008:35-6).

Ellenor Fenn [Mrs. Lovechild] *Parsing lessons for elder pupils* (London 1798)

'Mrs. Lovechild' is one of the pseudonyms of Lady Ellenor Fenn (1744-1813), who wrote stories and educational books for children. Fenn was 'not only concerned with writing for children but also with providing their mothers with the materials and the self-confidence to educate them' (Stoker 2004). *Parsing lessons for elder pupils* is dedicated 'to mothers, governesses, assistants, all who are engaged in the task of teaching' in order 'to render the study of grammar pleasant' (title page). It contains explanations of the parts of speech along with passages to be parsed.

Alexander Crombie *The Etymology and Syntax of the English Language* (London 1802)

Crombie (1760-1840) was a schoolmaster from Aberdeen; in addition to this grammar he published a work on Latin composition (Ritchie 2004). According to Görlach (1998:97), *The Etymology and Syntax of the English Language* was popular and well received: at least twenty-six other writers referred to it, and it was published in nine editions to 1865. In his preface, Crombie writes that this treatise is 'intended chiefly for the improvement of those, who have made some advancement in classic literature, and are desirous of attaining a critical acquaintance with their native tongue' (Crombie 1802:2).

William Cobbett *A grammar of the English language, in a series of letters* **(London 1818)**

Cobbett (1763-1835) was a self-educated political writer and radical. Concerned that petitions for parliamentary reform had been rejected on the grounds of poor English, he wrote his grammar to teach the working classes Standard English (Beal 2004:98). His grammar 'was one of the most-quoted 19th-century grammars' (Görlach 1998:87), and it was still used in English schools in the 1920s and 1930s (Dyck 2004).

Goold Brown *The Institutes of English Grammar* **(New York 1823)**

Brown (1791-1857) was a teacher with his own academy in New York, and devoted his free time to writing grammars and text-books (Genzmer 1929). Görlach (1998:61-2) shows that there were at least fifty editions of the *Institutes* until the early twentieth century, and that it was used widely in American schools in the mid-nineteenth century. According to Wachtler (1986:357), *The Institutes* was 'not a grammar but a correctionist exercise-book. As such it was a forerunner of a type of book that was to become very successful in America: the guide to good usage'.

William Hunter *The Principles of English Grammar* **(Glasgow 1835)**

Not in *DNB*. No information in Görlach. As well as sections on grammar, this book contains sections on rhetoric (largely from Campbell, as Hunter acknowledges), purity, perspicuity, and ambiguous terms.

Alexander James Donald D'Orsey *English Grammar and Composition* **(Edinburgh 1842)**

Not in *DNB*. The *National Archives* list D'Orsey as a Scottish Episcopal clergyman and Portuguese scholar. Görlach (1998:111) notes that he was an English master in Glasgow, and that the content of the grammar is conventional.

George Crane *The Principles of Language* **(London 1843)**

Not in *DNB*. Görlach (1998:96) writes that 'Crane was an earlier influence on English grammar than is commonly realised. More interesting pedagogically than most grammars. Very careful exposition of traditional grammar (some influence of Latin structures), moderately prescriptive'.

Robert Gordon Latham *An elementary English grammar: for the use of schools* (London 1843)

Latham (1812-88) was a physician as well as a professor of English language and literature at University College London, and he wrote widely on ethnology, natural history, and the English language (Ridler 2004b). Görlach (1998:209) notes that 'Latham's descriptive method for the structure of English, combined with elements of universal grammar, gained high praise from contemporaries', but that his works on the history of the English language were better.

Gerald Murray *The Reformed Grammar, or Philosophical Test of English Composition* (London 1847)

Not in *DNB*. In the preface, Murray writes that the aim of the book is 'to raise learners from the degradation of being mere senseless parrots, to the dignity of rational youth, by substituting the exercise of reason for the slavish abuses of the memory' (Murray 1847:6). Görlach (1998:252) describes this grammar as '[a]n attempt at a "philosophical" description', with a reformed terminology which was 'almost wholly cosmetic'.

Robert Gordon Latham *A handbook of the English language, for students of the universities and higher classes of schools* (London 1851)

Like *An elementary English grammar* (see above), this grammar for higher students sold well, with editions in New York and London throughout the late nineteenth century (Görlach 1998:210).

Edward Thring *The elements of grammar taught in English* (Cambridge 1851)

Thring (1821-87) was a headmaster and clergyman, described by Leinster-Mackay (2004) as 'the greatest public school headmaster during the second half of the nineteenth century'. *The elements of grammar* is a 'modest account for teachers and learners' (Görlach 1998:326).

Thomas Kerchever Arnold *An English grammar for classical schools* (London 1852 [1838])

Arnold (1800?-53) was a priest and educational writer who wrote widely on theology as well as publishing grammars of Latin, Greek and English (Lee 2004).

Görlach (1998:36) describes *An English grammar for classical schools* as '[v]ery traditional, based on Latin structures'. In the preface, Arnold writes that this grammar is designed to 'give the pupil a mastery over the idioms and laws of construction of his own language; to which he will soon learn to refer, for comparison, those of any foreign language he may happen to be studying' (Arnold 1852:no page number).

George Henry Parminter *Materials for a grammar of the modern English language* (Cambridge 1856)

Not in *DNB*. Görlach (1998:267) describes this as a '[t]raditional unexciting account'. In the preface, Parminter points out the advantages of pupils having 'a sound knowledge of Latin and Greek' and argues that 'some system should be devised and recognised, which, without servility, adapts to the English language the classical laws of Grammar' (Parminter 1856:v-vi).

John Daniel Morell *A grammar of the English language together with an exposition of the analysis of sentences* (Edinburgh 1857)

Morrell (1816-91) was a philosopher, minister, teacher and inspector of schools. He wrote books on philosophy, religion and education, in addition to several works on English grammar (Buckland 2004). Görlach (1998:245) describes this grammar as an '[i]nteresting sketch of traditionalist/structuralist methods transcending parsing'. In the preface, Morell claims that his object is 'to make the treatment of Grammar, as a science, conform to purely logical principles' (Morrell 1857:v).

Charles Peter Mason *English grammar, including principles of grammatical analysis* (London 1858)

Not in *DNB*. Görlach (1998:233) notes that Mason was a fellow of University College London, and that this grammar was '[v]ery influential, with at least forty editions, frequently enlarged'.

Roscoe Mongan *The Practical English Grammar* (London 1864)

Not in *DNB*. Görlach (1998:244) writes that Mongan was also 'a very prolific editor of Greek and Latin classical authors' and that this grammar is 'A clear exposition of traditional knowledge, but stressing the importance of English'. In

his preface, Mongan argues that 'the prejudice is fast dying away, that the study of the classics forms the best medium for understanding the genius and structure of English' (Mongan 1864:iii),

John Coghlan *Reformed English Grammar* (Edinburgh 1868)

Not in *DNB*. Görlach (1998:89) describes this as containing '[t]houghtful criticism of earlier grammarians'. Coghlan argues that usage is regulated by '*order, or whatever other term may be employed to express a change from the irregular, the complex, and the confused, to uniformity, simplicity, and symmetry*' (Coghlan 1868:24).

Joseph Angus *Hand-book of the English tongue* (London 1872 [1861])

Angus (1816-1902) was a minister, president of a college, and examiner in English to London University. He wrote handbooks of the Bible and English literature as well as English language (Gordon 2004). Görlach (1998:33) describes this grammar as a '[v]ery thorough exposition... but marred by detail'. In his preface, Angus writes that this grammar is for 'training young men to speak and write the English tongue with accuracy, clearness, propriety, and force' (Angus 1872:v).

Alexander Bain *A First English Grammar* (London 1872)

Bain (1818-1903) was 'one of the founders of modern psychology' and chair of logic at Aberdeen University; he lectured and published widely on psychology, philosophy, rhetoric and English grammar (Richards 2004). Görlach (1998:40) describes this as a small book with 'preparatory explanations'.

Eduard Adolf Ferdinand Maetzner *An English grammar: methodical, analytical, and historical* (London 1874)

Görlach (1998:228) writes that 'Maetzner's book was a scholarly grammar of a new type, starting from a system quite new, analysing the language in minutest detail and supporting his conclusions with an enormous amount of historical and comparative evidence'. In the translator's preface, Grece (1874:iii) argues that 'English grammar has, in fact, under the hands of the native grammarians, barely emerged from the region of dogmatism', and that Maetzner's scientific approach is new and necessary.

Alexander Bain *A Higher English Grammar* (London 1877 [1863])

Görlach (1998:40) writes that this is '[a] very detailed grammar containing, apart from clear definitions and appropriate illustrations, a host of insightful observations on usage (including Scotticisms) in a clear if discursive style'.

William Dwight Whitney *Essentials of English Grammar* (London 1877)

Whitney (1827-1894) is chiefly remembered for his Sanskrit grammar and for editing *The Century Dictionary. Essentials of English Grammar*, along with his grammars of French and German, were 'all for practical use in schools and college, [and] show the same clarity, conciseness, and insight that mark his Sanskrit; they anticipated contemporary methods and were widely used and deservedly influential' (Bender 1936). Görlach (1998:343) describes the *Essentials of English Grammar* as a '[l]argely descriptive, detailed exposition'. In his preface, Whitney writes that 'correctness of writing is only one [of the purposes of grammar] and a subordinate or secondary one – by no means unimportant, but best attained when sought indirectly' (Whitney 1877:iii).

John Miller Dow Meiklejohn *A short grammar of the English Tongue* (London 1890)

Meiklejohn (1836-1902) was a private schoolmaster then professor of education, and wrote numerous books on English literature, language and education (de Montmorency 2004). Görlach (1998:240) notes that his grammar ran to at least twenty-three editions. This is a short grammar, intended for schoolchildren. It is fairly progressive, and attempts to analyze parts of speech in terms of function, but it still falls into the trap of using Latin preconceptions, e.g. writing about the five cases of English.

Henry Sweet *A New English Grammar Logical and Historical* (Oxford 1892-8)

Sweet (1845-1912) had a 'relatively unconventional' academic career, making his living from his publications and private pupils (especially non-native learners of English) until he became reader in phonetics at Oxford in 1901 (MacMahon 2004). In addition to his works on grammar, he wrote the seminal *Handbook of phonetics* in 1877 and works on Old English and modern language teaching. In the preface to this grammar, Sweet writes that '[t]his work is intended to supply

the want of a scientific English grammar, founded on an independent critical survey of the latest results of linguistic investigation as far as they bear, directly or indirectly, on the English language' (Sweet 1892:v).

Charles Talbut Onions *An Advanced English Syntax* (London 1904)
Onions (1873-1965) worked for a large part of his life on the *OED,* and independently edited *Su-Sz*, *Wh-Worling* and the volumes containing *X, Y,* and *Z,* as well as later editing the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* and the *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology. An Advanced English Syntax* was written during his early work on the dictionary. According to Bennett (2004) '[h]is approach to linguistic and lexical problems was essentially pragmatic'.

Hendrik Poutsma *A Grammar of Late Modern English* (Noordhoff 1904-26)
Poutsma (1856-1937), a Dutchman, was a teacher of English in secondary schools. His grammar, structured around copious examples from literature, is widely regarded as one of the most authoritative and comprehensive English grammars of the period (Stuurman 1990:15).

Otto Jespersen *A Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles* (Copenhagen 1909-49)
Jespersen (1860-1943) was a Danish linguist who studied in Oxford and wrote on general phonetics and the grammar of both Danish and English. 'The name of Otto Jespersen is a household word to all advanced students of English' (Haislund 1943). *A Modern English Grammar* was published in seven parts between 1909 and 1949, the last compiled and published by Neils Haislund. Part 1 is on Sounds and Spellings and Part 6 on Morphology; the remaining 5 are on Syntax.

William Henry Mittins *A Grammar of Modern English* (London 1962)
Not in *DNB*. This grammar is 'primarily a practical work-book' for secondary school pupils (Mittins 1962:xi). Mittins' prescriptive aims are evident in his remark that:

> If, as seems demonstrable, the poor quality of much English speech and writing derives from looseness in verbal construction and reliance upon a very restricted range of constructions, a systematic examination of the

nature and range of verbal patterns might conceivably foster both firmness and resourcefulness in the matching of words to meanings (Mittins 1962:ix-x).

Appendix 3. Usage manuals in the precept corpus

As with the grammars, I include any biographical information from the *DNB* or *DAB,* and any bibliographical information from Alston (1965) or Kennedy (1961). Unfortunately, there is much less information available about the usage manuals (some of which are anonymous).

George Harris *Observations upon the English language*. *In a letter to a friend* (London 1752)

Not in *DNB* or Alston. This short letter is about spelling, pronunciation and 'Expression' – *who/which, like,* French words, etc. – where Harris says he will 'rely upon the Latin as my chief, and surest Director' (Harris 1752:19).

Henry Home, Lord Kames *Elements of criticism*. *In three volumes* (Edinburgh 1762)

Home (1696-1782) was a judge who wrote on diverse subjects such as legal issues and agriculture as well as his *Elements of criticism* (Durie and Handley 2004). The latter was well received: Alston (1965:Vol. IV) lists nine editions in the eighteenth century, at least eighteen in the nineteenth century, and a translation into German.

Robert Baker *Reflections on the English language, in the nature of Vaugelas's Reflections on the French*... (London 1770)

Not in *DNB*. This book, which is 'one of the earliest works that could be regarded as a usage guide' (Allen 2009:342) is divided into short sections about a variety of improprieties in English. Alston (1965:Vol. III, 69) notes that there were three editions to 1779.

George Campbell *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (London 1776)

Campbell (1719-96) was a minister and chair of divinity at Aberdeen. He was a prominent member of the *Aberdeen Philosophical Society*, where he gave lectures on (among other things) eloquence and rhetoric, later published as *The Philosophy of Rhetoric.* This work, '[a]lthough generally well received by contemporary critics... did not become a best-seller until the nineteenth century, when it was established as a standard text in the American college

curriculum' (Suderman 2004). Alston (1965:Vol. VI) lists twenty-four editions throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Hugh Blair *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (Dublin 1783)

Blair (1718-1800) was a minister who also pursued 'a second career, as a man of letters and an academic [and was] an active participant in the convivial and intellectual club-life that characterized the culture of the Scottish Enlightenment' (Sher 2004). He eventually became chair of rhetoric at Edinburgh. His *Lectures,* when published, 'immediately became the new standard for the study of rhetoric and literary criticism' (Sher 2004); there were at least fifty editions in the nineteenth century (Alston 1965:Vol. VI).

Philip Withers *Aristarchus, or the principles of composition* (London 1790 [1789])

Not in *DNB*. The first edition is mainly a discussion of the merits of grammar: that it is the foundation of all clear writing; that it is essential for children to learn grammar, and so on. In the second edition there is also a list of improprieties, mainly regarding verbs (e.g. the confusion of singular and plural). Sugg (1964:251) gives this work as an example of 'prescriptivism in the worst sense'.

Hugh Mitchell *Scotticisms, Vulgar Anglicisms, and Grammatical Improprieties Corrected* (Glasgow 1799)

Not in *DNB*. In the preface, Mitchell writes of the failure of Scottish education in not teaching pupils how to speak and write English properly, and thus not preparing them for society. He writes that he has confined himself 'to such colloquial words and phrases, as prevail among the middle class, and into which, through inadvertence, even those who have had a liberal education, are sometimes apt to fall' (Mitchell 1799:vii).

George Gregory *Letters on Literature, Taste and Composition* (2 vols) (London 1808)

Gregory (1754-1808) was a clergyman and preacher who published essays, sermons and translations, in addition to these *Letters* written to his son (Sanders 2004).

Alexander Jamieson *A grammar of rhetoric and polite literature* (New Haven 1820 [1818])

Not in *DNB/DAB*. Michael (1987) lists several editions in New Haven and London. Ferreira-Buckley and Horner (2001:183) note that it was inspired by Blair's *Lectures.*

Anon *The Vulgarities of Speech Corrected…* (London 1826)

The author begins by discussing the disadvantages of 'vulgar' language: 'if you have not attended to your manner of speaking, and the selection of your words, the moment you open your lips you will be discovered'; this is important especially for those 'who have, by industry and good fortune, risen above their original station and prospects' and for young people, especially ladies (Anon 1826:3-4). Kennedy (1961) lists one edition.

Henry Wilkinson Williams *The Principles of English Composition* (Bristol 1830)

Not in *DNB*. This is a very short book on the five main features of English composition – precision, clearness, strength, variety and harmony. Michael (1987) lists one edition. Görlach (1998:345) does not list this but another title by an author of the same name, *A treatise on English composition* (1836).

Richard Green Parker *Progressive exercises in English composition* (Boston 1832)

Parker (1798-1869), born in Boston, was a teacher and writer of textbooks which had 'great popularity in their day' (Faulkner 1934). This book of exercises had gone through forty-five editions by 1845.

Richard Whately *Elements of rhetoric* (London 1836 [1828])

Whately (1787-1863) was an Oxford fellow, later Archbishop of Dublin, who wrote widely on philosophy and theology (Brent 2004). *Elements of rhetoric,* despite having been written for 'private use' (Whately 1836:xxxiii) was used widely in schools and colleges, published in seven editions to 1848, and 'guided teaching practices into the twentieth century' (Ferreira-Buckley and Horner 2001:183).

Benjamin Humphrey Smart *A Manual of Rhetoric, with exercises* **(London 1848)**

Smart (1787?–1872) was an elocution teacher who supplemented his income by writing books, including a grammar and this manual (Adolph 2004). Smart's *An Outline of Sematology* (1831) was one of the key works on this topic in nineteenth-century Britain (Nerlich 1992:13).

David Irving *The Elements of English Composition* **(Edinburgh 1852 [1801])**

Irving (1778-1860) was a literary scholar and librarian who wrote widely on a variety of subjects from law to Scottish poetry (Ovenden 2004). *The Elements of English Composition* was 'the most successful of his early works' (Ovenden 2004); Michael (1987:489) records at least eleven editions.

Alexander Reid *Rudiments of English composition* **(Edinburgh 1854 [1839])**

Reid (1802-60) was a Scottish schoolmaster who became inspector of primary schools. He wrote several schoolbooks, including a dictionary, a grammar textbook and a geography textbook (Watson 2004).

Anon *Mistakes of Daily Occurrence in Speaking, Writing and Pronunciation, corrected* **(London 1856)**

In the preface, it is explained that the work is intended 'for the use of those, who have received what is generally considered a *fair* education'. Slang and 'down-right vulgarisms' have been omitted, with the focus rather on 'the inaccuracies, that are daily perpetrated even in the very highest classes of society' (Anon 1856:iii).

Henry Alford *The Queen's English: stray notes on speaking and spelling* **(London 1864)**

Alford (1810-71) was dean of Canterbury and a biblical scholar. He was '[o]ne of the most voluminous writers of his age... [and] published forty-eight volumes, and many articles, hymns, sermons, and tracts (Fremantle 2004). *The Queen's English* was first published as *A Plea for the Queen's English* in 1863; the revised version went through five editions to 1880 (Kennedy 1961). Beal (2004:119) describes the tension between prescriptivism and descriptivism in this work,

concluding that Alford's 'is a more subtle prescriptivism, which, rather than making *ipse dixit* statements about errors, recommends what he considers the better usage. In this respect, Alford foreshadows the more prescriptive texts of the twentieth century, such as Fowler's *Modern English Usage*'.

Edmund Routledge *Every-day Blunders in Speaking* (London 1866)
Routledge (1843-99) edited a magazine (*Routledge's Magazine for Boys*) and wrote several short books, including one of riddles and jokes and one of quotations from Shakespeare (Anon 1899). *Everyday Blunders in Speaking* is organized as a story about a master who gives a series of meetings to four school-pupils, and corrects their English.

Alexander Bain *English composition and rhetoric, a manual* (New York 1867)
See entry in appendix 2.

Richard Meade Bache *Vulgarisms and other errors of speech* (Philadelphia 1868)
Not in *DAB*. In the preface, Bache writes of those people who have 'risen to station in society' and who 'gladly avail themselves of opportunities for instruction' (Bache 1868:iii).

Edwin A. Abbott and John R. Seeley *English lessons for English people* (London 1871)
Abbott (1838-1926) was a headmaster and deacon who wrote theological works, a Shakespearean grammar, and two usage/composition books (Farnell 2004). Seeley is not in *DNB*.

John Seely Hart *First lessons in composition* (Philadelphia 1873)
Hart (1810-77) was an educator and editor from Massachusetts who became professor of rhetoric and English literature at the College of New Jersey (Monaghan 1931).

Anon *How to Speak or Write English Correctly with Perspicuity and Fluency* (London 1876)

This is a small handbook, with chapters on, for example, 'Fluent & Correct Speaking', 'Qualities of a Good Style' and 'Cautions and Hints for Speakers and Readers'.

William Mathews *Words; their use and abuse* (Chicago 1876)

Mathews (1818-1909) was a journalist, teacher and author, who edited and contributed to various periodicals and was professor of rhetoric and English literature at Chicago. Twenty-five thousand copies of *Words; their use and abuse* were sold (French 1933). In the preface, Mathews writes that the book was inspired by a lecture he gave on the subject (Mathews 1876:7).

Ebenezer Cobham Brewer *Errors of Speech and of Spelling* (London 1877)

Brewer (1810-97) was a teacher whose 'lifelong educational contribution was a range of simple and comprehensive textbooks in catechetical form' on a variety of subjects (Ridler 2004a). He is most famous for his *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (1870). In the preface to *Errors of Speech and Spelling,* Brewer notes that his purpose is to 'call attention to errors of speech and spelling made, not by the uneducated, but by those who wish to speak and spell correctly' (Brewer 1877:iii). The book is arranged as a dictionary.

John Nichol *English Composition* (London 1879)

Nichol (1833-94) was chair of English literature at Glasgow and wrote poetry and critical works. Pittock (2004) describes his *English Composition* as 'a powerful and precise textbook which still has its merits'.

Anon *A Dictionary of Daily Blunders* (London 1880)

Some catalogues list this work as written by Thomas Peston (not in *DNB*). In the preface, the author explains that the dictionary is a collection of blunders 'mostly taken from modern literature', and that it is 'a novel attempt' to arrange errors alphabetically, in contrast to the way they are dispersed throughout grammars (Anon 1880:6).

Edward Sherman Gould *Good English, or, Popular Errors in Language* (New York 1880 [1867])

Gould (1805-85) 'followed a varied career of writing in New York', publishing lectures, novels, translations of French, and sketches in periodicals. According to George Washington Moon, Gould was 'recognized in America as an authority in matters of literary and philological criticism', and was thus to be criticised when he did not offer sufficiently strict rules on usage (Lorenz 1931). Kennedy (1961) lists the first edition of 1867, and this revised edition.

Anon *The Penny Book of Daily Blunders* (London 1882)

The author writes that 'the object of this little book is to point out a multitude of common errors in the use of language, and so enable its readers to express themselves accurately in conversation' (Anon 1882:1). There follows a list, in alphabetical order, of 'common errors'.

Alfred Ayres *The Verbalist: A manual devoted to brief discussions of the right and the wrong use of words* (New York 1882)

Not in *DAB*. Kennedy (1961) lists one edition. In the preface, Ayres lists other books he has drawn on, including grammars such as Cobbett's and Goold Brown's, and usage books such as Alford's, Washington Moon's and Gould's. The book is arranged alphabetically.

William Ballantyne Hodgson *Errors in the use of English* (Edinburgh 1882 [1881])

Hodgson (1815–80) was an educationalist and economist who was a strong believer in universal education, promoted the teaching of economics to schoolchildren, and became chair of political economy at Edinburgh. *Errors in the use of English*, published posthumously, was based on his project to write an English dictionary (Curthoys 2004).

Richard Grant White *Words and their uses, past and present; a study of the English language* (Boston 1883 [1870])

White (1821-85) was a journalist and writer who 'wrote voluminously for periodicals' and also edited a complete works of Shakespeare (Genzmer 1936). *Words and their uses* was first published as a series of articles in *The Galaxy*,

and it went through at least thirty-three editions in the nineteenth century (Kennedy 1961). Genzmer (1936) notes that '[t]he usual representation of [White] as a disagreeable, humorless snob, coxcomb, and Anglomaniac was a caricature of a high-minded gentleman and an accomplished man of letters'.

Anon *Many Mistakes Mended* (New York 1886)

According to the preface, this book is intended for 'the class of people who have not the time to consult many books' (Anon 1886:vi). The author claims to have consulted a variety of grammars, including Cobbett and Bain, and rhetoric/usage manuals, including Blair, Alford, Ayres and White.

George Washington Moon *Learned men's English: the grammarians...* (London 1892)

Not in *DNB*. According to Allen (2009:343), Moon was born in London of American parents. This book is a combination of two of Moon's previous works – *The Dean's English* and *Bad English Exposed*. In the first part, Moon focuses on the errors he has found in Dean Alford's *The Queen's English*; in the second, on the errors of grammarians such as Lindley Murray; '[m]ost of the criticism is petty and pedantic, and much of it misconceived' (Allen 2009:343).

John Franklin Genung *Outlines of rhetoric: embodied in rules, illustrative examples, and a progressive course of prose composition* (Boston 1893)

Genung (1850-1919) was a professor of rhetoric (as well as, later in his career, professor of literary and Biblical interpretation) at Amherst College. As part of his college duties he wrote manuals for rhetorical analysis (Whicher 1931). In his preface, Genung states that this book is 'designed to cultivate in progressive and systematic order the student's sense of the leading requisites of composition' and argues that correction of false grammar, while necessary, is a negative thing, whereas composition is positive (Genung 1893:iii-vi). In practice, he does use a lot of corrective exercises, but also exercises requiring students to choose the correct word, etc.

C.E. Clark *The Mistakes We Make* (London 1898)

Not in *DNB*. This book, which contains chapters on mistakes about place-names, animal-names, plant-names, history, etc., has one chapter on '[c]ommon errors

in speech and writing'. The mistakes covered in this chapter range from wrongly used verbs (e.g. *lie/lay*) to wrongly used prepositions (e.g. *different than*) to spelling mistakes.

John Miller Dow Meiklejohn *The Art of Writing English* (1899)

Meiklejohn (1836-1902) was a private schoolmaster then professor of education, and wrote numerous books on English literature, language and education. *The Art of Writing English* was already in its fourth edition by 1902 (de Montmorency 2004). In the preface, prologue and introduction Meiklejohn writes that this book was written for young students to help them write compositions clearly. Although he states that it is for native speakers – 'it is of great importance to be able to use one's mother-tongue rightly' (Meiklejohn 1899:3) – he makes several comments throughout the book about the difficulty of certain constructions/styles for foreigners.

John Hendricks Bechtel *Slips of Speech* (Philadelphia 1901 [1895])

Not in *DAB*. In the introduction, Bechtel notes that because the study of grammar and rhetoric at school is so 'uninviting', grammar rule books are often laid aside after school years are over; hence the need for a book which gives 'rules of writing [which] are the outgrowth of the study of the characteristics and qualities of style which distinguish the best writers from those of inferior skill and ability' (Bechtel 1901:no page number).

Adams Sherman Hill *Beginnings of rhetoric and composition, including practical exercises in English* (New York 1902)

Hill (1833-1910) was a law reporter and then Professor of Rhetoric at Harvard (Bizzell and Herzog 1990:861-2). Hill's prescriptive approach to rhetoric is often remarked upon. Bizzell and Herzog (1990:664) note that he developed a new approach of emphasizing correct grammar and usage. Wright and Halloran (2001:231) argue that 'Hill... developed standards of correctness far more subtle than the actual practice of elite speakers and writers, and thus beyond anything requisite to give students the social mobility they sought. And by attempting to impose a "hyper-correct" dialect on the generally privileged students at Harvard and the other established liberal arts colleges, Hill and others may actually have strengthened the linguistic obstacles to upward mobility, ensuring that those

students formally studying the dialect could overcome the obstacles while those informally studying would not'.

James Champlin Fernald *Connectives of English Speech* (New York 1904)
Not in *DAB*. The subtitle advertises the books to explain '[t]he correct usage of prepositions, conjunctions, relative pronouns and adverbs'.

Henry Watson Fowler and Francis George Fowler *The King's English* (Oxford 1906)
H.W. Fowler (1858-1933) was first a school-teacher (of classics and English literature) and then turned to writing with his brother, F.G. Fowler (1871-1918). Together they translated the works of Lucian, produced *The King's English*, and compiled the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (1911). *The King's English* 'remained a standard authority throughout the twentieth century' (Burchfield 2004a).

William Tenney Brewster *The Writing of English* (London 1913)
Not in *DNB*. The book is a 'study of formal English composition' (Brewster 1913:10) and includes chapters on correctness, sentence structure and paragraph use.

William Strunk Jr. *Elements of Style* (New York 1918)
Not in *DAB*. Strunk (1869-1946) was Professor of English at Cornell University. The book 'aims to give in brief space the principal requirements of plain English style' and to help its readers 'write plain English adequate for everyday uses' (Strunk 1918:no page number).

Robert Brooks Popham *Every-Day Mistakes in Speaking and Writing* (London 1921)
Not in *DNB*.

Robert D. Blackman *Composition and Style* (Edinburgh 1923)
Not in *DNB*. In the preface, Blackman explains that this book 'sets forth and illustrates all the rules which should be observed by the young author' (Blackman 1923:v); it is designed to help authors get published.

Rosaline Masson *Use and Abuse of English* **(Edinburgh 1924 [1896])**
Not in *DNB*. Rosaline Masson's father, David Masson, who wrote a preface to this edition, was a Scottish university teacher and editor (Smith 2004). Rosaline Masson also wrote a biography of Robert Louis Stevenson.

William Trego Webb *English of Today* **(London 1925)**
Not in *DNB*.

Henry Watson Fowler *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage* **(Oxford 1926)**
After his brother Francis' death, H.W. Fowler wrote *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*, which became 'one of the most celebrated reference works of the twentieth century'. However, it ignored the scholarly linguistic work of its time, and 'lay plainly in the area of prescriptivism, that is, of setting down rules about how features of the language are sanctioned by long usage, the passage of time, and, where appropriate, the classical rules of the languages of ancient Greece and Rome' (Burchfield 2004a).

William Dodgson Bowman *Correct English: How to Speak and Write Grammatically* **(London 1927)**
Not in *DNB*. In the introduction, Bowman claims that 'communication in speech and writing has become more scrappy and informal, as well as slovenly and careless' (Bowman 1927:8); the book aims to teach writers and speakers to use English correctly, clearly and plainly.

Maurice Alderton Pink *A Dictionary of Correct English* **(London 1928)**
Not in *DNB*. In his preface, Pink writes that this dictionary is intended to give 'information and advice that is of practical importance to the writer of everyday English' (Pink 1928:v).

Alan Patrick Herbert *What a Word!* **(London 1935)**
Herbert (1890-1971) was a politician and writer of novels, light verse, and also humorous pieces for *Punch* (Pound 2004).

Eric Partridge *Usage and Abusage* (London 1947)

Partridge (1894-1979) was born in New Zealand, moved to Britain to study at Oxford, taught briefly, then devoted his life to writing. He is mostly remembered for his slang dictionaries; *Usage and Abusage* 'aimed to topple Fowler's *English Usage* from its dominance of the field' (Green 2004).

Ernest Gowers *Plain Words: a guide to the use of English* (London 1948)

Gowers (1880-1966) was a civil servant ('one of the greatest public servants of his day' according to Burchfield (2004b)). In the preface, Gowers explains that this book was written at the request of the treasury, that it is 'concerned particularly with the use of English by officials' and that there is thus some imbalance in it, as 'there are some faults to which official writing is specially prone, and others from which it is comparatively free' (Gowers 1948:iii). He takes most of his examples from the writings of officials, i.e. civil servants, the military, staff of public bodies, etc.

Ernest Gowers *The Complete Plain Words* (London 1954)

This is a compilation of *Plain Words* (above) and a subsequent volume, *ABC of Plain Words* (1951). Gowers notes in the Preface that it is a reconstruction with some new material. The section on phrasal verbs includes material which is not in either of the earlier volumes.

Thomas Elliott Berry *The Most Common Mistakes in English Usage* (London 1963)

Not in *DNB/DAB*. This is a version of an earlier 1961 American edition. In his preface, Berry writes that this book is 'an analysis of errors commonly made in spoken and written English'. He also writes that principles of usage are important '[r]egardless of shortcomings in formal education' and that there is 'an ever-growing demand that people in all walks of life be able to communicate effectively' (Berry 1963:v).

Henry Watson Fowler *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*, revised by Sir Ernest Gowers (Oxford 1965)

In this edition, Gowers substituted modern examples, added new material on topics that interested him, and drew on the *OED* and the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (Allen 2009:348-9).

Wilson Follett *Modern American Usage* (London 1966)

Not in *DAB*. Follett (1887-1963) died before he could finish *Modern American Usage*; it was completed by a group of editors headed by Jacques Barzun (Allen 2009:354). The book consists of an alphabetically-ordered style guide (similar in some respects to Fowler) and appendices on *shall/will* and punctuation.

Appendix 4. Articles and letters in the precept corpus

Given that many of the writers of the items in this part of the corpus are anonymous, and that there is rarely any information available about those who are named, this appendix instead includes information about the databases, journals and newspapers in which the articles and letters appear, followed by a list of titles in chronological order.

19th Century UK Periodicals is a database of over 180 periodicals. Two items that refer to phrasal verbs were retrieved. One is from *The Boy's Own Paper*, a weekly paper first published in 1879 by the Religious Tract Society in reaction to the proliferation of sensational penny weeklies for children. *The Boy's Own Paper* appealed to both boys and parents by 'inculcating moral virtues but informing and entertaining its readers' through a mixture of stories, practical information and sport (Dixon 2008). The other is from *The Girl's Own Paper*, set up in 1880 by the same society.

Eighteen items were found by searching *The Times Digital Archives 1785-1985*. Despite the coverage of the database, the only relevant materials are from the twentieth century, mostly letters to the editor. Two relevant articles were also found in *The Times Literary Supplement*, which first appeared in 1902 as a supplement to *The Times* and became an independent publication in 1914.

Two twentieth-century British journals were also searched. Five items were retrieved from *ELT Journal,* which was founded by A.S. Hornby in 1946 (the original title was *English Language Teaching*) and published by the British Council. One was found in the *Review of English Studies*, a scholarly journal on English language and literature which was established in 1925.

In addition to these British sources, several American journals were searched. Four items were found in *American Speech*, a quarterly on English usage first published in 1925 by the *American Dialect Society*. Five were retrieved from *The English Journal*, which was established by the *National Council for Teachers of English* in 1912 and which, according to Drake (1977: 34), expressed 'a strong continuity from the 19th century of genteel notions and apparatus' in its

attitudes towards English usage. One is from *College English*, which grew out of *The English Journal* and became a journal in its own right in 1939. One was found in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, the academic journal of the *National Communication Association*.

Chronological list of articles and letters:

1. Anon. (1882) 'Some oddities of speech' *The Boy's Own Paper*
2. Anon. (1884) 'Answers to correspondents' *The Girl's Own Paper*
3. Anon (1926) 'American Prose' *The Times Literary Supplement*
4. Grattan, J.H.G. (1927) 'On Anglo-American Cultivation of Standard English' *Review of English Studies*
5. Willis, C.A. (1927) 'Prepositional Verbs' *The English Journal*
6. Craigie, W. (1930) 'Americanisms: The Making of Modern English' *The Times*
7. Harap, H. (1930) 'The most common grammatical errors' *The English Journal*
8. Kennedy, A.G. (1933) 'The Future of the English Language' *American Speech*
9. Glover, T.R. (1933) Letter to the editor, *The Times*
10. Baker, E. (1933) Letter to the editor, *The Times*
11. Butler, A.J. (1933) Letter to the editor, *The Times*
12. Anon. (1933) 'American Prepositions' *The Times*
13. Butler, P.R. (1933) Letter to the editor, *The Times*
14. Pearsall Smith, L. (1933) Letter to the editor, *The Times*
15. C.E. (1933) Letter to the editor, *The Times*
16. Dobinson, H. (1933) Letter to the editor, *The Times*
17. Anon. (1934) 'Points from letters' *The Times*
18. Robertson, S. (1939) 'British-American Differentiations in Syntax and Idiom' *American Speech*
19. Bartlett, A.C. (1940) 'Full-Word Compounds in Modern English' *American Speech*
20. Perrin, P.J. *et al.* (1943) 'Current English Forum' *The English Journal*
21. Stoakes, J.P. (1943) 'Round Table: Teaching English as a Foreign Language' *The English Journal*
22. Hunter, E.R. (1947) 'Verb + Adverb = Noun' *American Speech*
23. H. Strauss (1947) '"Manned up"' *The Times*
24. Pence, R.W. (1949) 'Up with which we can no longer put' *Quarterly Journal of Speech*

25. Stevick, E.W. (1950) 'The "Deferred Preposition"' *American Speech*

26. Jowett, W.P. (1951) 'On phrasal verbs' *ELT Journal*

27. Hornby, A.S. (1955) 'The Question Box' *ELT Journal*.

28. Bryant, M.M. (1960) 'Current English Forum' *College English*

29. Girr, F.X. (1960) 'Group Paragraph Revision' in *The English Journal*

30. Anon. (1962) 'Uppishness' *The Times*

31. Perren, B. (1963) 'Classroom English' *ELT Journal*

32. Anon. (1964) 'Out, Damned Out' *The Times*

33. Harrison, J.G. (1964) Letter to the editor, *The Times*

34. Leslie, S.C. (1964) Letter to the editor, *The Times*

35. Michaelson, R.L. (1964) Letter to the editor, *The Times*

36. Maude, A. (1964) Letter to the editor, *The Times*

37. Anon. (1966) 'Question Box' *ELT Journal*

38. Potter, S. (1966) 'Changes in Present-Day English (2)' *ELT Journal*

39. Caminada, J. (1968) 'A discouraging word - about words' *The Times*

Appendix 5. Other materials in the precept corpus

Henry Bradley *The Making of English* (London, 1904)

Bradley (1845–1923) taught himself modern and classical languages while working as a tutor, a corresponding clerk and a companion. Eventually he became one of the editors of the *OED*, where he was responsible for editing *E, F, G, L, M, S-Sh, St*, and part of *W. The Making of English* was 'popular and highly successful' (Craigie 2004).

Anon *On the Terminology of Grammar, Being the Report of the Joint Committee on Grammatical Terminology* (London, 1911)

This is the result of a 'proposal for the simplification and unification of the terminologies and classifications employed in the grammars of different languages' decided upon by a Joint Committee of 'eight Associations – The Classical Association, The Modern Language Association, The English Association, The Incorporated Association of Headmasters, The Association of Headmistresses, The Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, The Incorporated Association of Assistant Mistresses in Public Secondary Schools, The Association of Preparatory Schools' (Introduction, 2).

Arthur Garfield Kennedy *The Modern English Verb-Adverb Combination* (Stanford, 1920)

Kennedy (1880-1954) was born and educated in Nebraska. He taught Latin and German in high schools, and later became Professor of English Philology at Stanford University (Meritt et al.). As well as this monograph on phrasal verbs, he compiled a concordance to the works of Chaucer, a survey of English usage, an Anglo-Saxon reader and a bibliography of writings on the English language.

Logan Pearsall Smith 'English Idioms' *S.P.E. Tract XII* (Oxford, 1923)

Smith (1865-1946) was born in New Jersey, educated at Harvard and Berlin, and then moved to England where he studied at Oxford. As well as writing collections of reminiscences and several anthologies, he wrote widely on the English language and was one of the founders of the *SPE* (Basu 2004).

Herbert W. Horwill 'American Variations' *S.P.E. Tract XLV* **(Oxford, 1936)**

Horwill (1864-1952) was born on the Isle of Wight and educated at Oxford, then entered the Bible Christian ministry in 1887. 'After his retirement he spent several years in the United States and contributed to American journals until a short time before his death' (National Archives). Horwill also wrote a dictionary of American usage and an 'Anglo-American Interpreter'.

Appendix 6. Additional material on etymology and polysemy

The purpose of this appendix is to supplement chapter 5 with a survey of the treatment of etymological and polysemous senses in English dictionaries and other related works.

The treatment of etymological senses in English dictionaries

Locke's influence on eighteenth-century lexicographers, especially Johnson, has been well-documented (see e.g. McLaverty 1986, Hedrick 1987), and it has been shown that etymology in eighteenth-century dictionaries was 'understood in Lockeian terms: [it] showed "the Original of Words, in order to distinguish their true Meaning and Signification"' (Aarsleff 1983: 248). This can be seen in the definitions of the word *etymology* in the main dictionaries of the period[98]. For Bailey 1724 (and similarly Bailey 1730, with minor alterations in wording), *etymology* is 'a Part of grammar shewing the original of Words, in order to distinguish their true Meaning and Signification'; for Martin (1749) it is 'an account of the true original and derivation of words' and for Ash (1775) it is 'the true derivation of a word from its original'.

Martin is the first of these dictionaries to discuss the importance of etymology in his preface:

> [etymology is] absolutely necessary to a *due Understanding* and *Emphatical Expression* of many or most of our principal Words... if the Reader be told that it [*abominate*] is derived from two Latin Words, *Ab*, from, and *Omen*, a Sign of Ill-luck by Augury; he will naturally know the true and emphatical Signification of the Verb, *to Abominate,* is *to fly from,* or *avoid any Thing as ominous*, or *presaging some ill Event*. But otherwise this primary Sense is lost, and only the secondary vulgar one, *to hate* or *abhor*, is left for information... In short, no Person can pretend to write with great Propriety, or criticise without Ridicule, who is not in some tolerable Degree acquainted with the original Significations of Words (Martin 1749:iv-v).

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[98] This survey is based on Bailey's *An Universal Etymological Dictionary* (2nd ed., 1724) and *Dictionarium Britannicum* (1730), Martin's *Lingua Britannica Reformata* (1749), Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) and Ash's *New and Complete Dictionary of the English Language* (1775).

Two main points can be extracted from this. Firstly, one must know etymologies in order to understand what words really mean and to 'criticise without ridicule'. Secondly, one must be able to *use* etymological senses so as to exhibit learning and 'write with great Propriety'.

Compared to that of his contemporaries, Johnson's treatment of etymology is more complex. On the one hand, there are several statements in the *Plan* and the *Preface* about the primacy of etymological meanings. For example, in the *Plan* Johnson writes, of the verb *arrive*, that 'because of its original and etymological sense ['reach the shore'], it cannot properly be applied but to words signifying something desirable' (1747:13). In the *Preface* he complains of 'illiterate writers' who 'not knowing the original signification of words, will use them with colloquial licentiousness, confound distinction, and forget propriety' (1755:39). Furthermore, Johnson occasionally applies proscriptive labels to senses which have wandered too far from their etymological origins, such as *ponder on* meaning 'think, muse' (rather than the original and etymological meaning of *ponder,* 'weigh mentally') and *prejudice,* which 'is often improperly extended to meanings that have no relation to the original sense; who can read with patience of an ingredient that prejudices a medicine?'[99]. Also, as DeMaria (1986:165-6) notes, Johnson 'often gives an etymological definition first, even when his researches have not turned up an example of its usage in that sense... [and] he often strains his definitions in order to include the etymology of the word in question'. For example, Johnson defines *mountebank* as '[a] doctor that mounts a bench in the market, and boasts his infallible remedies and cures' in order to incorporate its etymological roots in the definition (De Maria 1986:165).

However, this does not mean, as Aarsleff (1983:248) claims, that in this respect Johnson's *Dictionary* was 'a profound and typical expression of its age'. Firstly, unlike those of Bailey, Martin and Ash, Johnson's definition of *etymology* avoids the word 'true'; etymology is simply '[t]he descent or derivation of a word from its original; the deduction of formations from the radical word; the analysis of compound words into primitive'. In fact, Johnson gives an illustrative quotation which derides the tendency to give primacy to etymological meanings: '[w]hen

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[99] See chapter 8 for a discussion of Johnson's use of restrictive labels.

words are restrained, by common usage, to a particular sense, to run up to *etymology*, and construe them by Dictionaries, is wretchedly ridiculous'. Secondly, Johnson is aware of the conflict between usage and etymology, and writes that

> I know not whether *ardour* is used for material heat, or whether *flagrant*, in English, ever signifies the same with *burning*; yet such are the primitive ideas of these words, which are therefore set first, though without examples, that the figurative senses may be commodiously deduced (1747:31).

Compared with Martin's discussion of etymology (quoted above), this is more subtle. Whereas Martin claims that one needs to know etymological senses in order to 'write with... Propriety', Johnson is aware that one does not need to write or use these senses; rather, they are necessary to understand the logical semantic development of the word in question. While this is an 'etymological fallacy' of sorts, it is a more perceptive one than was current in Johnson's time, and indeed was the practice of the *OED* until the third edition's policy of ordering senses chronologically.

Finally, although as noted above Johnson did sometimes 'strain his definitions' in order to include etymological meanings, he had less of a tendency to do so than his predecessors Bailey and Martin, as can be seen by comparing their definitions of *abominate*. *Abominate* derives from *abominable,* which in turn derives from the Latin *abominari* 'to deprecate as an ill omen', from *ab* 'off, away' + *omen* (*OED abominable,* a.). However, according to the *OED*, the English word *abominate* has never had this literal meaning, but only '1. To feel extreme disgust and hatred towards; to regard with intense aversion; to abhor, loathe. 2. *loosely*. To dislike strongly' (*OED abominate*, v.). *Abominate,* then, is an example of a word whose etymology does not correspond with its meaning in use.

As can be seen in table A6-1, Bailey in 1724 only gave the sense 'abhor'. By 1730, though, he had clearly decided that the Latin etymology 'against an omen' should be included in the first and 'proper' sense. Martin (1749) continues in this vein, giving the sense 'flee from as ominous' before the sense actually used in English, and also using the word as an example in his discussion of etymology in

the preface (quoted above). Johnson ignores this spurious sense and reverts to the single sense 'abhor, detest, hate', and this in turn is the practice of Ash.

Table A6-1 Entries for *abominate* in eighteenth-century English dictionaries

Dictionary	Etymology	Definition
Bailey 1724	*abominatum*, L.	to abhor, loathe, or hate.
Bailey 1730	*abominari*, of *ab* and *omen*.	properly signifies to take a thing for an ill Sign or unlucky Omen; to pray against it, or with the contrary, by certain Forms and Speeches, we use it for to abhor, hate, or loathe.
Martin 1749	of *abominor*, lat. of *ab* against, and *omen* an augury.	1. to avoid, or flee from as ominous; 2. to detest, abhor or hate.
Johnson 1755	*abominar*, Lat.	to abhor, detest, hate utterly.
Ash 1775	*from the* Lat. *ab from and* omen, *a presage of ill*	to detest, abhor.

However, in the nineteenth century, there was a reversion to the prioritizing of etymological senses. Noah Webster, partly influenced by John Horne Tooke (whose *Diversions* he called 'a new & useful Theory of language' (quoted in Micklethwaite 2000:105)), spent ten years writing a still unprinted *Synopsis of the Principal Words in Twenty Languages* in preparation for his 1828 dictionary. Webster's aim was to connect words with formal and semantic similarities in order to show that all languages are related and can be traced back to the language of Genesis. He used a Tookean method of etymological reasoning, as in the following passage from the introduction to the *American Dictionary*:

> We find by the Saxon, that the English *reck,* to care, and *reckon*, and the Latin *rego,* to rule, are all the same word, varied in orthography and application. To find the primary sense of *reck,* to care, we are then to examine the various derivative senses. And we need go no further than to the Latin *rectus* and the English *right*, the sense of which is *straight*, for

> this sense is derived from *straining, stretching. Care* then is a *straining of the mind,* a stretching towards an object, coinciding with the primary sense of *attention.* The primary sense of *reckon* is to strain out sounds, to speak, tell, relate; a sense now disused (Webster 1828).

This is not the etymology of *reckon,* nor is 'strain out sounds' its primary sense; such a sense is not recorded in the *OED* at all. However, to give Webster credit, he did not tend to allow these etymologies to influence his definitions. Although in his etymology of the verb *reckon* he notes that '[t]he primary sense of the root is to strain', he does not include this sense in the definition, but gives instead the senses actually used, i.e. '1. To count; to number', '2. To esteem' and so on. Similarly, in his definition for *abominate* he gives 'deprecate as ominous' in the etymology, but follows Johnson's practice in excluding this unused sense from the definition, and giving only 'to hate extremely; to abhor; to detest'.

Charles Richardson, in his *A New Dictionary of the English Language* (1836-7), goes much further than Webster in following Tooke's pursuit of etymological meanings. In the preface he states unambiguously that

> [t]he great principle upon which I have proceeded, in the department of the Dictionary which embraces the explanation, is that so clearly evolved, and so incontrovertibly demonstrated in the "Diversions of Purley;" namely that a word has one meaning, and one only; that from it all usages must spring and be derived; and that in the Etymology of each word must be found this single intrinsic meaning (1836:41).

This practice is followed through in the dictionary itself. To continue with the example of *abominate*, Richardson reverts to the etymologically-based definitions of Bailey and Martin: 'To turn from as ill *omened*. To loath or abhor, hate or detest, to accurse or execrate'[100].

Even *OED*1 treated the semantic history of a word as a logical development. As Zgusta (1989:199) shows, each entry in the *OED* 'contains two sequences of data:

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[100] After having written this appendix, I read Pinnavaia's (2008) article which analyzes the entries for *abominate, abominable* and *abominably* in Johnson, Richardson and the *OED*. Pinnavaia points out that Richardson is more descriptive than Johnson in these entries in that he does not attach any proscriptive labels, whereas Johnson labels the third sense of *abominable* as 'low and ludicrous'. However, she admits that Richardson's method of putting etymological and literal meanings first means that 'his attitude may not have been totally descriptive' (2008:157).

the sequence of senses, i.e. the reconstructed history of the multiple meaning, and the chronological sequence, or attestations, i.e. the "factual" or "recorded" history'. In many cases these sequences merge harmoniously; in some, the 'logical' – often etymological – sequence takes precedence over the factual sequence, as in the entry for *ardour*:

> ardour, ardor [L. *ardŏr-em* heat]
>
> 1. Fierce or burning heat; *concr.* fire, flame. [c1645-1814]
>
> †2. *poet.* An effulgent spirit. (Cf. *Heb*. i. 7.) *Obs.* [1667]
>
> 3. *fig.* Heat of passion or desire, vehemence, ardent desire; warmth of emotion, zeal, fervour, eagerness, enthusiasm. Const. *for*. (The earliest sense in Eng.: formerly used of evil passions, but now only of generous or noble impulses.) [c1386–]

Even though the figurative sense 'heat of passion or desire' is by far the earliest attested sense in English, *OED*1 gives the etymological sense 'fierce or burning heat' first. (For further examples of similarly ordered entries, see Zgusta 1989 and Considine 1997.) *OED*1 thus continues Johnson's policy that 'the primitive ideas... are therefore set first... that the figurative senses may be commodiously deduced' (Johnson 1747:31). The only difference is that Johnson includes these senses 'though without examples' (Johnson 1747:31); *OED*1 only includes recorded senses, but still inverts the order of senses in order to show a development from literal to metaphorical. As Osselton (1995:22) points out, a distrust of metaphor had prevailed in Europe since the seventeenth century, and 'it is, then, not surprising that in this great formative age for European dictionaries figurative senses should have come to be at best tolerated, and in many cases marked down in them', and were also 'deliberately relegat[ed]... to second place'. It is only in the third edition of the *OED*, in progress, that senses are ordered chronologically rather than logically, even if this means that figurative senses occasionally precede concrete ones (see Considine 1997). However, this decision has been criticized: for example, Lundbladh (1997:232) argues that

> it would hardly be considered an improvement to place the figurative sense first just because it was attested earlier. On the contrary, the description would become elusive if the dictionary user had to look further for the related literal sense to get the background to the figurative one. The

arrangement would not be appropriate to an etymological historical dictionary, the task of which is to clarify the development of senses.

The fact that this belief, that 'the development of senses' must proceed from the literal to the metaphorical, is voiced in an article from the end of the twentieth century, shows how deeply the belief in the importance of etymology still runs.

A brief history of awareness of polysemy in English dictionaries and other works

<u>The treatment of polysemous senses in English dictionaries</u>

John Rider's (1589) *Bibliotheca Scholastica* was the first bilingual English dictionary (in this case, English-Latin) to number polysemous senses (Stein 2007:34). Early monolingual dictionaries, with their focus on hard words (which are often monosemous) usually gave single-sense definitions, or simply separated polysemous senses with commas or semi-colons. The first monolingual English dictionary to clearly identify polysemous senses was John Wilkins' and William Lloyd's *Alphabetic Dictionary* (1668), part of Wilkins' *An Essay towards a Real Character, and a Philosophical Language*. Because they included a greater number of common English words, which tend to have more senses, Wilkins and Lloyd developed a system of indenting these senses (Dolezal 1985:90). However, the *Alphabetic Dictionary* seems not to have had much influence on subsequent English dictionaries, and Martin, in his *Lingua Britannica Reformata* (1749),'re-invented' this practice. In his preface he writes that

> [a] Critical and accurate Enumeration and Distinction of the several Significations of each respective Word must be allow'd by all to be indispensably the chiefest Care of every Writer of Dictionaries. And yet nothing is more certain, than that all our English Dictionaries are more notoriously deficient in this important Particular than in any other; indeed it has never been attempted in any one of them that I have seen (1749:viii).

Martin then proposes a system of ordering senses: etymological or original; general and popular; figurative and metaphorical; humorous, poetical and burlesque; and lastly scientific (1749:viii).

Johnson had proposed a similar system in his *Plan*, published two years earlier (in fact, as Starnes and Noyes (1946:152) remark, Martin may have copied his system from Johnson):

> In explaining the general and popular language, it seems necessary to sort the several senses of each word, and to exhibit first its natural and primitive signification;... Then to give its consequential meaning... Then the remoter or metaphorical signification... [then] the poetical sense... To the poetical sense may succeed the familiar... The familiar may be followed by the burlesque... And, lastly, may be produced the peculiar sense, in which a word is found in any great author...' (Johnson 1747:13-4).

However, Johnson went far beyond this restricted system in the dictionary itself, and realized that words cannot always be neatly divided into a given number of senses, as he discusses in the *Preface* (1755:30):

> In every word of extensive use, it was requisite to mark the progress of its meaning, and show by what gradations of intermediate sense it has passed from its primitive to its remote and accidental signification; so that every foregoing explanation should tend to that which follows, and the series be regularly concatenated from the first notion to the last.
>
> This is specious, but not always practicable; kindred senses may be so interwoven, that the perplexity cannot be disentangled, nor any reason be assigned why one should be ranged before the other. When the radical idea branches out into parallel ramifications, how can a consecutive series be formed of senses in their nature collateral? The shades of meaning sometimes pass imperceptibly into each other; so that though on one side they apparently differ, yet it is impossible to mark the point of contact.

This is a remarkably modern description of polysemy, aware of the tendency of polysemous senses to overlap, and to develop in 'branches' rather than linearly (cf. the 'network' model of polysemy proposed by Langacker (1988:133)). It is generally agreed that one of the characteristic features of Johnson's dictionary was its focus on polysemy (McIntosh 1998:12; McDermott 2005:116), and this was a feature that invited criticism[101].

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[101] For a contrasting view, see Hedrick (1987:433), who suggests that Johnson 'appears to share some of Locke's enthusiasm for single significations'. In her analysis of the letter F, she finds that 67% of entries have only one meaning, a further 16% only two, and only 17% have three or more meanings. Further work would need to be done on other letters, and in comparison with other dictionaries, to determine the extent of Johnson's awareness of polysemy.

After Martin and Johnson, the numbering of polysemous senses became standard practice, with the notable exception of Richardson. Following Tooke's edict that each word has only one true meaning, Richardson reverted to the practice of giving as few meanings as possible, and separating them with semi-colons rather than numbering them.

Polysemy in theoretical works on semantics in English

With the development of theoretical semantics in nineteenth-century Germany and France came a growing awareness of polysemy, culminating in Michel Bréal's chapter on 'la polysémie' in his *Essai de Sémantique* (1897), and Karl Otto Erdmann's discussion of 'Vieldeutigkeit' in his *Die Bedeutung des Wortes* (1900). Neither Bréal nor Erdmann distinguished between polysemy and homonymy; this distinction did not come until Kristoffer Nyrop's *Sémantique* (1913)[102].

In Britain, 'semantics in the 19th century was not a theoretically well established field' but was largely discussed in either philosophical or lexicographical works (Nerlich 1992:207). It is not surprising then that, with the exception of some footnotes in the works of Fitzedward Hall, polysemy was not discussed in a theoretical linguistic work in English until the early twentieth century, in Otto Jespersen's (1928) *Monosyllabism in English*. Jespersen distinguishes between polysemy and homonymy (or rather, homophony), noting that 'the psychological effect of these cases of polysemy, where "one and the same word" has many meanings, is exactly the same as that of those cases where two or three words of different origins have accidentally become homophones' (1928:27).

Lexicalization of the concept 'polysemy'

The concept of words having multiple meanings existed long before there was an English lexeme to express it. As can be seen in table A6-2, which shows the data for the concepts 'polysemy', 'word having several meanings' and 'polysemous'

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[102] See Nerlich and Clarke (1997) and Nerlich (2003) for detailed analyses of theories of polysemy, especially in Germany and France, before and after Bréal.

in the *HTOED*, it was not until the late nineteenth century that these concepts were lexicalized in English[103].

Table A6-2 Lexicalization of 'polysemy' in English

Polysemy (n)	
multivocalness	1873
polysensuousness	1899
polysemia	1900
polysemy	1928 -
polysemantism	1939 -
polysemanticity	1966
polyvalency	1971
Word having several meanings (n)	
wandering name	a1555-1659
multivocal	1873
polysemant	1873
polyseme	1953 -
Polysemous (adj.)	
polysemantic	1862
polysemous	1884 -
polysensuous	1904
polysemic	1930 -

The phrase *wandering name* meaning 'word having several meanings' is the only pre-nineteenth-century lexeme in this section. It is illustrated by two quotations. The first, from Bishop Ridley's *Works* (a1555), is 'If in the wordes This is my bodye, the woorde (this) be as Dunse calleth it a wanderynge name, to appointe and shewe furthe anye one thinge whereof the name or nature it doeth not tell'. Determiners like 'this' would not normally be considered polysemous, but contextually vague[104]. The second quotation is from Somner's *Dictionarium Saxonico-Latino-Anglicum* (1659): *wudumerce* meaning 'ambrosia, nectar' is 'a wandring name given unto many severall herbes'.

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[103] French and German words denoting polysemy were coined slightly earlier (see Nerlich 2003:59).

[104] See Geeraerts (1994:3227), who bases the difference between polysemy and vagueness on 'the question whether a particular piece of semantic information is part of the underlying semantic structure or the contextual (and hence pragmatic) specification'.

With the exception of *wandering name*, the first words in each section were introduced by Fitzedward Hall: *polysemantic* in a note on one of his translations, and *multivocalness, multivocal* and *polysemant* in his monograph *Modern English.* Again, in some cases these do not refer to polysemy as now understood. In the relevant section of *Modern English*, Hall first uses *multivocal* to refer to conversions: 'verbs that began with being substantives or adjectives, and... substantives that began with being adjectives or verbs' (1873:169-70). In a footnote, Hall adds a further explanation of *multivocals*:

> These are of three sorts. I. Polysemants, where there is identity of form in the symbols of primary significations and their derivatives; as (a) *burst, cast, cut, hit*, presents, preterites, and participles; as (b) *love,* substantive and verb, or *ill,* adjective, adverb, and substantive; and as (c) *post, stage,* the substantive. II. Homographs, identical to the eye; as *base, bore, dun, fair, file, grave, hail, host, lead, light, low, mail, match, mean, mystery, pale, pallet, sole,* in their various senses. III. Homophones, identical to the ear only; as *ail* and *ale, air* and *heir, all* and *awl, altar* and *alter, bail* and *bale, bare* and *bear, be* and *bee.* (1873:169).

Here, only the examples in I(c), the nouns *post* and *stage,* might refer to polysemes; the other examples are all homonyms or conversions. However, in the case of *multivocalness,* Hall clearly does mean polysemy when he writes in a footnote that 'a long detail would be required for an exhibition of all the shades of meaning which, in the antique 'in respect *of*', appertain to *respect*, a word comparable, for its multivocalness, with the Latin *ratio*' (1873:95).

Polysemous entered English in a translation of Dante: 'What Dante himself, in his dedication to Can Grande, calls the "polysemous" character of the poem' (*OED polysemous,* a.), but it was not until 1929 that *polysemous* was used specifically to refer to a *word* having several meanings. *Polysemia* was first used in Cust's 1900 translation of Bréal's *Essai,* and *polysemy* itself in Jespersen's 1928 work.

It can be seen from this that, until the twentieth century, words for polysemy were not clearly distinguished from words for homonymy and vagueness (*homonymy* itself is recorded much earlier, from 1597). Also, with the exception

of Fitzedward Hall's *hapax legomena*, words denoting polysemy were first introduced after the translation of Bréal became widespread.

Appendix 7. Redundant phrasal verbs in the precept corpus

The following is a list of all the works in the precept corpus which criticize redundant phrasal verbs, along with the forms which they criticize.

Campbell 1776: *return back; come forth*

Mitchell 1779: *fall down; kill up; kill off*

Brown 1823: *return back; converse together; rise up; fall down; enter in*

Whately 1836: *return back; come forth*

Anon 1856: *rise up; return back; restore back; enter in; plunge down; sink down; issue out; cover over; combine together; retreat back*

Alford 1864: *open up*

Routledge 1866: *soar upwards*

Bain 1867: *return back; come forth*

Nichol 1879: *divide up*

Anon 1880: *ascend up; enter in; fall down; continue on; rise up; open up*

Gould 1880: *open up*

Anon 1882: *ascend up; return back; enter in; fall down; open out; cover over; rise up*

Ayres 1882: *continue on; crush out; sink down; converse together; return back; rise up*

Anon 1886: *ascend up; take up (of collection); continue on; cover over; descend down; issue out; plunge down; return back; retreat back; rise up; sink down; combine together; converse together*

Moon 1892: *grow up; fall down*

Genung 1893: *ascend up; end up; open up; rise up; sink down*

Bechtel 1901: *settle up; settle down; ascend up; open up; rise up; sink down; end up*

Hill 1902: *vanish away; drop down; dwindle down; start in; level off; start off; start out; win out; button up; end up; fail up; open up; shroud up; weaken up; weigh up*

Brewster 1913: *divide up; recall back*

Strunk 1918: *lose out; try out; win out; sign up; register up*

Masson 1924: *up, over, down, along, through*

Webb 1925: *ascend up; muster up*

Harap 1930: *start in; add up; end up; return back*

Anon 1933: *watch out; speed up; cancel out; listen in; hold up; try out*

Anon 1934: *face up to*

Herbert 1935: *try out; meet up (with); rest up; shoot up; beat up; hasten up; hurry up; check up (on); ring up; pack up; furnish out; hot up; face up to*

Partridge 1947: *ascend up; burn down; burn up; collaborate together; connect together; connect up; consolidate together; continue on; cooperate together; couple together; descend down; divide off ; divide up; drink up; drink down; eat up; end up; file away; finish up; flood over; gather together; hoist up; hurry up; join together; lend out; link together; meet together; merge together; mingle together; mix together; open up; polish up; protrude out; recall back; reduce down; relax back; repay back; rest up; retire back; return back; revert back; rise up; settle up; shrink down; shrink up; sink down; study up; swallow down; unite together; climb up; close down; face up to; watch out*

Strauss 1947: *man up; meet up with; study up on*

Gowers 1948: *man up; meet up with; study up on*

Gowers 1954: *drown out; sound out; lose out; rest up; miss out on*

Anon 1962: *meet up with; win out; lose out; check up on*

Anon 1964: *win out; help out; fire out*

Fowler 1965: *meet up with; lose out on; match up; miss out on; man up; win out; check up on; close down; face up to; start up; stop off; try out; pay off; rest up; sound out; head up; drop off; drown out*

Follett 1966: *check up (on)*

Caminada 1968: *meet up with*

Appendix 8. Phrasal verbs and linguistic level: types of criticism and *OED* evidence

Phrasal verb	Author and date	Label	*OED* dates and labels	Years between *OED* date and publication date
chalk out ('mark out')	Harris 1752	'disgustful'	1579 –	173
bolster up ('support')	Harris 1752	'disgustful'	1581–	171
work out ('accomplish')	Blair 1783	vulgar, colloquial	1534 –	249
cast about ('search')	Withers 1790, Mitchell 1799	improper, inelegant, low, familiar	1677 –	113
follow up ('reinforce by further action')	Mitchell 1799	low, familiar	1794 –	5
make up (one's mind)	Mitchell 1799	low, familiar	1765 –	34
smell out ('search/find')	Mitchell 1799 Reid 1854	low, familiar, vulgar	1538 –	261
kick up ('make a disturbance')	Anon 1826, Anon 1856	slang, vulgar	1756 –	70
blow up ('scold')	Anon 1826, Anon 1856 Anon 1886	slang, vulgar	1710 – colloq.	116
blowing up (n.) ('a scolding')	Anon 1826	slang, vulgar	1772 – colloq.	54
dished-up ('ruined')	Anon 1826	slang, vulgar	not in[105]	–
hang out ('reside')	Anon 1826	slang, vulgar	1811 – colloq. or slang	15
keep up ('prolong')	Anon 1826	slang, vulgar	1513 –	313
knock under ('submit')	Anon 1826	slang, vulgar	1670 –	156
looking up ('improving')	Anon 1826	slang, vulgar	1822 – slang [as participle - 1806 in simple form]	4
picking up ('recovering/ improving')	Anon 1826	slang, vulgar	1751 – [as participle – 1740 in simple form]	75

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[105] Simple *dished*, meaning 'defeated, ruined', is recorded from 1798 and labelled as slang (*OED dish* v1, 7).

pull up ('take before a magistrate')	Anon 1826	slang, vulgar	1799 – colloq., orig. slang	27
serve out ('beat, foil, kill')	Anon 1826	slang, vulgar	1817 – colloq., orig. pugilistic slang	9
get up ('ascend, rise in dignity')[106]	Reid 1854, Blackman 1923	vulgar	1629 –	225
fork out ('pay')	Anon 1856	slang, vulgar	1831 – colloq. or slang	25
flunk out ('retire through fear')	Anon 1856, Anon 1886	vulgar, low	1838 US[107]	18
blow out ('scold')	Anon 1886	vulgar	not in	–
cave in ('yield')	Anon 1886	low	1837 – colloq.	49
cook up ('alter')	Anon 1886	colloquial	1751– colloq.	135
flare up ('become angry')	Anon 1886	slang/ colloquial/ vulgar	1840 –	46
fork over ('hand over money')	Anon 1886	vulgar	1839 –	47
knock off ('deduct')	Anon 1886	gross vulgarism	1811 –	75
pony up ('pay')	Anon 1886	vulgar	slang (orig. and chief. U.S.) 1824 –	62
stave off ('delay')	Anon 1886	slang/ colloquial/ vulgar	1664 –	222
take in ('dupe')	Anon 1886	vulgar	1740 – (colloq.)	146
take on ('grieve, fret')	Anon 1886	slang/ colloquial/ vulgar	c1430 –	456
back up ('support')	Genung 1893	colloquial, slang	1840 –	53
give away ('expose, betray'[108])	Genung 1893	slang	1878 – orig. US slang	15
go in for ('choose, commit to')	Genung 1893	colloquial	1849 – colloq.	44
size up ('show the character or measure of')	Genung 1893	colloquial, slang	1884 – colloq. orig. US	9
cut up (adj.) ('upset')	Genung 1893	slang	1844 –	49

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[106] This is the sense that best fits the phrase that is censured – *Learning and the arts were but then getting up*, from Hurd's *Moral and Political Dialogues* (1776).

[107] This is the only quotation for *flunk out* in the *OED* which illustrates 'retire through fear': other slightly earlier uses (1823 onwards) illustrate the now current sense 'fail utterly'.

[108] Genung does not indicate which sense of *give away* he considers to be slang, but it seems unlikely that it is the literal sense 'give as a gift', and this is the only other plausible sense in the *OED* which was current for Genung.

shut up ('be quiet')	Anon 1886, Bechtel 1901	vulgar	1840 – colloq. or slang	46
go back on ('deceive, take advantage of')	Bechtel 1901	vulgar	1859 – colloq. orig. US	42
come off ('happen')	Webb 1925	colloquial	1825 –	100
stick up for ('defend')	Webb 1925	colloquial	1837 – colloq.	88
				Average:95

Appendix 9. Phrasal verbs as Americanisms: types of criticism and *OED* evidence

Phrasal verb	Reason for criticism (if any)	Text(s) in which phrasal verb is criticized	Nationality of writer(s)/ provenance of text	*OED* first quotation date and labels (if any)
burn up ('burn, ruin')	illogical	Bartlett 1859	American	c1305 –
come (it) over ('get the better of')	vulgar	Bartlett 1859	American	1827 –
fetch up ('stop suddenly')	vulgar	Bartlett 1859	American	1838 – [most quotes American]
fork over ('hand over money')	slang	Bartlett 1859	American	1839 –
hush up ('hush')	vulgar	Bartlett 1859	American	colloq. 1860 [Bartlett]
knock off ('deduct')	vulgar	Bartlett 1859	American	1811 –
let on ('divulge')	illiterate	Bartlett 1859	American	orig. dial. and U.S. 1637 –
pony up ('pay')	vulgar	Bartlett 1859	American	slang (orig. and chief. U.S.) 1824 –
rope in ('take in collectively')	colloquial	Bartlett 1859	American	orig. U.S. 1859 –
shut up ('stop talking')	vulgar	Bartlett 1859	American	1840 –
suck in ('deceive')	low	Bartlett 1859	American	dial. and slang 1842 –
take on ('grieve, fret')	colloquial	Bartlett 1859	American	c1430 –
try (it) on ('try')	vulgar	Bartlett 1859	American	slang 1811 –
climb down ('descend')	illogical	Bartlett 1859, Schele de Vere 1872, Farmer 1889	American	a1300 –

clear out ('depart')	vulgar	Bartlett 1859, Farmer 1889	American	colloq.:1825 – [most quotes American]
dragged out ('exhausted')	colloquial	Bartlett 1859, Farmer 1889	American	1831 – [early quotes American]
cracked up ('reputed')	vulgar slang	Schele de Vere 1872	American	colloq. 1829 – [most quotes American]
row up ('rebuke')	low, cant	Schele de Vere 1872	American	U.S. slang 1845 –
stand/hang around ('stand nearby/ in the neighbourhood')	abuse of language	Schele de Vere 1872, Farmer 1889	American	U.S. 1776 –
break up (n.) ('place where large numbers of people separate')	slang	Farmer 1889	American	not in
catch on to ('understand')	vulgar	Farmer 1889	American	U.S. colloq. 1884 –
choke off ('obstruct')	slang	Farmer 1889	American	1818 – [first quote British]
close out ('clear out')	cant	Farmer 1889	American	U.S. 1852 –
cut up (adj.) ('in mental pain')	colloquial	Farmer 1889	American	1844 – [both quotes British]
getaway/goaway (n.) ('locomotive')	cant	Farmer 1889	American	getaway 1923 – [goaway not in]
slop over ('miss one's mark')	vulgar	Farmer 1889	American	U.S. 1859 –
bug out ('extend, be astonished')	tasteless	Russell 1897	British	U.S. colloq. 1877 –
fix out/up ('arrange')	vulgar, overused	Russell 1897	British	chiefly U.S. colloq. 1725 –
go-aheadativeness ('progressive spirit')	vulgar	Russell 1897	British	U.S. 1855 –

blow in ('spend, squander')	colloquial/slang	Craigie 1930	British	chiefly U.S. 1886 –
brace up ('pull oneself together')	colloquial/slang	Craigie 1930	British	orig. U.S. 1809 –
cancel out ('cancel, delete')	redundant	*Times* 1933	British	1530 –
look out ('be vigilant')	–	*Times* 1933	British	1602 –
sign up ('enrol')	redundant	*Times* 1933	British	1903 – [first quote American]
slow up ('go slower')	redundant	*Times* 1933	British	1881 – [both quotes American]
speed up ('go faster')	redundant	*Times* 1933	British	1894 –
stand up for ('defend, support')	–	*Times* 1933	British	1605 –
try out ('test possibilities of')	–	*Times* 1933	British	orig. U.S. 1888 –
watch out ('be vigilant')	–	*Times* 1933	British	colloq. orig. U.S. 1845 –
check up (on) ('examine')	redundant	*Times* 1933, Herbert 1935, Follett 1966	British, British, American	*check up*: orig. U.S. 1889 – *check up on*: orig. U.S. 1926 –
lose out ('fail')	redundant	*Times* 1933, Gowers 1954	British, British	orig. U.S. 1858 –
win out ('win')	redundant	*Times* 1933, *Times* 1964	British, British	orig. U.S. 1896 –
face up to ('confront')	redundant	*Times* 1934, Herbert 1935	British, British	1920 – [first quote Scottish]
beat up ('thrash')	redundant	Herbert 1935	British	orig. U.S. 1907 –
shoot up ('assail by shooting')	redundant	Herbert 1935	British	colloq. (orig. U.S.) 1890 -
meet up (with) ('meet')	redundant	Herbert 1935, *Times* 1947, *Times* 1968	British, British, British	orig. U.S. 1870 –

man up ('supply with workers')	redundant	*Times* 1947	British	1947 – [first quote this letter; second quote from British Parliamentary debate]
study up on ('study')	redundant	*Times* 1947	British	U.S. colloq. 1946 –
crowd out ('overpower')	redundant	Gowers 1954	British	1884 [American quote]
miss out on ('be deprived of')	redundant	Gowers 1954	British	colloq. (orig. U.S.) 1929 –
rest up ('recover by resting')	redundant	Gowers 1954	British	orig. U.S. 1895 –
sound out ('investigate')	redundant	Gowers 1954	British	1579 –
help out ('help')	redundant	*Times* 1964	British	1618 –
fire out ('dismiss')	redundant	*Times* 1964	British	U.S. slang 1885 –

Appendix 10. Phrasal verbs with prescriptive labels in Johnson and Webster: *OED* dates and labels

Johnson

All data are from *OED*2, with the exception of *be off,* from *OED*3.

Phrasal verb	*OED* dates	*OED* labels
be off ('recede')[109]	1710 –	/
beat up ('recruit')	1696 –	/
call in ('visit')	1711 –	familiar
copy out	1563 –	/
cut down ('overpower')	1713 + 1865	/
fall down	a1175 –	/
fell down	a1325 –	/
fell along	1665 + 1668 (both Dryden)	/
fill up	1596 –	/
help out	1618 –	/
sue out ('obtain by entreaty')	c1412 –	/
take in ('cheat')	1740 –	colloq.
ward off ('turn aside')	1638 –	/
whet on ('incite')[110]	1595	/
whet forward ('incite')	1579	/

Webster

All data are from *OED*2, with the exception of *be off, pen up, pluck up, pucker up* and *put out,* from *OED*3.

Phrasal verb	*OED* dates	*OED* labels
be off ('recede')	1710 –	/
beat out (aj.) ('fatigued')	1758 –	/
bloat up	not in	/
bolt out ('examine by sifting')	1544 –	/
bound in ('confine')	1603 –	/
breed up	1611–	/

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[109] This sense of *be off* is not given in the entry for *be*. The closest sense in the entry for *off* is '[o]f a person: disengaged (from), done *with,* no longer committed to', illustrated by quotations with *be off* from 1710 (*OED*3 *off* adv. 4c).

[110] Johnson defines *whet* as '[t]o edge; to make angry or acrimonious'. There is no exact match to this sense in the *OED*; the closest (and the one suggested by the quotes in Johnson) is '[t]o incite, instigate, egg or urge *on to* or *to do* something' (*OED whet* v, 2).

buckle in ('close in')	1600	obs.
claw off ('scratch away; get off or escape')	1514-1748	obs.
claw away ('scratch away; get off or escape')	not in	
copy out	1563 –	/
cry off ('publish intentions of marriage')	1775 –	/
cut down ('overpower')	1713 + 1865	/
cut on ('hasten')	1834 (1 quote American)	*cut* in this sense labelled slang or colloq.
cut out ('shape, adapt')	1593 –	
cut out ('step in and take the place of')	a1700 –	
fill up	1596 –	/
fob off ('shift off by an artifice')	1597 –	
heave up ('relinquish')	not in	
let out ('lease')	1526 –	
pen up	1650 –	
pluck up ('resume courage')	c1330 –	
pucker up	1712 –	
put out ('publish')	c1475 –	
seek out	c1290 –	
set out ('publish')	1559-1612	obs.
shark out ('escape by low artifices')	1828 (Webster)	dial.
shove by ('push away, delay, reject')	not in	
sum up ('add particulars into one whole')	c1450 –	
surrender up	c1590-a1774	now rare or obs.
take in ('cheat')	1740 –	colloq.
up	OE –	
whet on ('incite')	1595	/
whet forward ('incite')	1579	/

Appendix 11. Selection of labelled phrasal verbs in *OED*1

See chapter 8 for an explanation of methods for retrieving these data.

Colloquial

1. away, adv. 8. Straightway, forthwith, directly, without hesitation or delay; chiefly colloquial in imperative sentences, as Fire away! = proceed at once to fire, begin immediately, Say away = say on, and U.S. and Eng. colloq. right away = straightway, directly.

2. blaze, v1. 8. intr. to blaze away: to fire continuously with guns or artillery; fig. to work at anything with enthusiastic vigour (colloq.). Cf. fire away. Also to blaze (out) at.

3. blow, v1. 25 fig. to blow up b. To scold, rail at. colloq.

4. bolt, v. 6. colloq. To swallow hastily and without chewing, swallow whole or with a single effort, gulp down.

5. book, v. 5. transf. To engage (a person) as a guest or the like. Also with up. colloq. Cf. BOOKED 3.

6. bowl, v1. 6. Hence fig. (colloq. or slang). To bowl (a person) out, over, down.

7. bring, v. 18 bring in j. Of a jury: To bring in a verdict, hence colloq. to 'find' as 'The jury brought him in guilty.'

8. bring, v. 27 bring up j. To vomit. (colloq.)

9. brisk, v. 1. trans. To make brisk; to freshen, enliven, animate, exhilarate, quicken. Now with up or (colloq.) about.

10. burst, v. 2a. Now chiefly of a surface or thing with extended surface: To break suddenly when in a state of tension, to fly asunder or in pieces; to be broken by expansion of the contents... Also fig. (chiefly with allusion to the bursting of a bubble); now often colloq. with up.

11. get, v. 53 get along d. imp. get along with you = go away; also fig. let be, have done, be quiet. colloq.

12. get, v. 54 get away c. to get away with: (U.S. slang) to get the better of, to beat in a contest. Also (colloq., orig. U.S.), to carry off successfully; to succeed in winning or stealing; to do (something) with impunity; freq. in phr. to get away with it: to succeed in what one tries; to act without being detected or punished; so to get away with murder: to get away with anything; to do whatever one wishes.

13. get, v. 62 get back c. to get back at (or on): to retort or retaliate upon. colloq. (orig. U.S.). - SUPP

14. get, v. 62 get off h. To 'get off one's hands'; to find sale for (goods); colloq. to get (one's daughters) married.

15. get, v. 64 get out b. imp. = 'Go away', 'be off' (expressing disbelief, dissent, or a desire to hear no more). colloq.

16. get, v. 80. get up g. colloq. As a command to a horse = Go! go ahead!

17. give, v. 59. give in. a. intr. To yield; to give up the contest; to acknowledge oneself beaten; occas. (colloq.) to admit under pressure of argument (that).

18. give-away colloq. (orig. U.S.).

19. go, v. 83 go off j. To be disposed of by sale. Also, of daughters, to be married. colloq.

20. go, v. 84 go on g. colloq. To talk volubly; to rail, storm at. Also, to talk excessively or tiresomely about (a subject); to discuss ad nauseam.

21. go, v. 84 go on j. Expressing impatience or derision: = Go your ways, go along with you. colloq.

22. go, v. 88 go round e. To make a detour. Also colloq. to pay a visit in an incidental or informal way. (Cf. COME 71a.)

23. go, v. VIII. The vb.-stem occas. forms phraseological combs. (chiefly colloq. or techn.) having the function either of n. or adj.; as go-about (see quot.)…. etc.

24. go, v. 74 go back c. to go back from (now also colloq. of, on, upon): to withdraw from (an engagement, promise, or undertaking).

25. go, v. 74 go back d. to go back on: to prove faithless or disloyal to; to betray. colloq. (orig. U.S.).

26. go, v. 81 go in. f. to go in at: to assail vigorously. colloq.

27. go, v. 81 go in for. (Recent and colloq.; see 82b.)

28. go-in colloq.

29. go-off colloq.

30. got, ppl. a. Hence got-up n. colloq., an upstart.

31. look, v. 32. look back. intr. e. colloq. in negative contexts: To show signs of retrogression or interrupted progress. (Cf. 14.)

32. look, v. 41. look over. b. colloq. = look on, 39b. [no quotes]

33. look, v. 45. look up. h. To call on, go to see (a person). colloq.

34. make, v. 86. make down. b. colloq. To refashion so as to fit a smaller

wearer.

35. put, v. 39. put away. f. slang or colloq. (a) To consume as food or drink, take into the stomach.

36. put, v. 45. put in. k. colloq. To pass, spend, use up (a portion or period of time), usually by means of some occupation.

37. put, v. 50. put over. h. To knock over (with a shot). colloq.

38. put, v. 56. put up. g. colloq. To show, exhibit (a game, play). to put up an appearance (north. dial. and Sc.), to make one's appearance.

39. put, v. 56. put up. q. trans. to put (a person) up to (colloq.): (a) To make conversant with or aware of; to inform of, instruct in (something, originally some artifice or expedient). (b) To stir up, instigate, incite, induce, persuade (to some action, etc., or to do something).

40. set, v. 154. set up. cc. (a) To establish or start (a person) in a business or profession; transf. said of the money, stock, or outfit sufficient to equip a person. to be set up for (colloq.): to be well provided with.

41. set, ppl.a. set-up 10c. dial. and colloq. conceited, 'stuck-up'

42. take, v. 84. take in. o. To deceive, cheat, trick, impose upon. colloq.

43. take, v. 85. take off. j. To imitate or counterfeit, esp. by way of mockery; to mimic, caricature, burlesque, parody; to make a mock of. colloq.

44. take, v. 86. take on. j. To 'go on' madly or excitedly; to rage, rave; to be greatly agitated; to make a great fuss, outcry, or uproar; now esp. to distress oneself greatly. Now colloq. and dial.

45. take, v. 86. take on. m. To 'catch on', become popular: = sense 10c. colloq.

46. take-in colloq. An act of taking in; a cheat, swindle, deception...

47. take-off 2. An act of 'taking off' or mimicking... a mimic; a caricature. colloq.

48. turn, v. 72. turn down. e. colloq. To drink down, 'toss off' (? obs.); also in Brewing, to put (liquor) into a vat to ferment. (Cf. 25c.)

49. turn, v. 73. turn in. f. (orig. Naut.) To go to bed. colloq.

50. turn, v. 75. turn on. b. To set (a person) to do something; to employ: cf. 34b. colloq.

51. turn, v. 76. turn out. p. To get out of bed. (Cf. 73f.) colloq.

Slang

1. bowl, v1. 6. Hence fig. (colloq. or slang). To bowl (a person) out, over, down.

2. bruise, v. 7. intr. with along. To ride on recklessly, without regard to fences

or crops damaged, or to sparing the horse. (Hunting slang: cf. to pound along.)

3. come, v. 58. come back - b. Sporting slang. To fall back, lose ground.

4. get, v. 61 get away. c. to get away with: (U.S. slang) to get the better of, to beat in a contest.

5. get, v. 71 get on d. slang. To lay (a bet) on (a horse). Also intr.

6. get, v. 72 get out e. slang. Racing. (See quot. 1884.) Stock Exchange. To get rid of one's shares in any venture.

7. gin, v2 2b. U.S. slang. to gin her up: to work things up, to make things 'hum', to work hard.

8. give, v. 54. give away. d. orig. U.S. slang. To betray, expose (oneself, another person) to detection or ridicule; to let slip (a secret), esp. through carelessness or stupidity. See also SHOW n.[1] 16.

9. go, v. 87. go out. k. Thieves' slang. (See quot. 1812.) 1812 J. H. VAUX Flash Dict., Go out, to follow the profession of thieving;

10. grab, v. 4. slang. to grab on: to get along, live.

11. look, v. 45. look up. e. slang. To improve. Chiefly Comm.: cf. look down, 33d. [look down with the antonymous sense is labelled comm. but not slang]

12. look-in 2. Sporting slang. A chance of success.

13. put, v. 39. put away. f. slang or colloq. (a) To consume as food or drink, take into the stomach.

14. put, v. 39. put away. g. slang. To inform against, 'give away', betray.

15. put, v. 46. put off. j. To dispose or get rid of (a commodity) by sale; to make to 'go off', to sell (? now dial. and slang);

16. put, v. 56. put up. t. fig. To concoct or plan in combination with others; to prearrange, preconcert (a robbery, or any iniquitous or underhand piece of work). Orig. and chiefly Thieves' slang: see also PUT-UP ppl. a. 1.

17. put-up 1. (orig. Thieves' slang.) Arranged or concocted beforehand, as a burglary, by conspiracy with other persons, as servants in the house; preconcerted, planned in an underhand manner: see PUT v.[1] 56t. Often in phr. a put-up job.

18. set-down 3. U.S. slang A sit-down meal.

19. turn, v. 72. turn down. d. U.S. slang. To rebuke, snub...

20. turn, v. 81. turn up. o. To set free, turn loose; to discharge or release (a prisoner). Cf. 25. Now only slang.

21. turn, v. 81. turn up. p. To give up, renounce, abandon, cast off, discard, 'throw up'. Now only slang.

22. turn-over The act of turning over. spec. in Polit. Slang, a transference of votes from one party to another

Redundant

1. ascend, v. 1. intr. (occas. emphasized by a redundant up) To go or come up, originally by a gradual motion, to a relatively higher position;

2. avale, v. 1. intr. Of persons: To descend; to come, go, or get down; to dismount, alight. (Often with redundant down; cf. ascend up.)

Pleonastic

1. adown, adv. and prep. 1. To a lower place or situation; downward, down. With vbs. of motion, and pleonastically with vbs. signifying descent; as fall, sink, alight, sit, kneel.

2. enter, v. 1c. with pleonastic in (adv.). Somewhat arch. or rhetorical.

Vulgar

1. set, v. 154. set up. intr. kk. To sit up (late at night). Now dial. or vulgar.

Appendix 12. Phrasal verbs with *back*, *down*, *out* and *up* in ARCHER, by period and genre

	drama	fiction	sermons	journals/diaries	medicine	news	science	letters	total
1650-99									
back	8	12	2	6	4	2	2	1	37
down	10	16	6	11	10	6	15	7	81
out	32	35	5	35	21	24	24	10	186
up	42	54	10	59	16	35	24	12	252
total	92	117	23	111	51	67	65	30	556
no. of words	26,648	41,512	11,146	21,374	23,117	22,292	21,441	12,659	180,189
/10,000 words	34.52	28.18	20.64	51.93	22.06	30.06	30.32	23.70	30.86
1750-99B									
back	0	10	2	7	3	1	1	4	28
down	15	20	10	15	19	9	10	5	103
out	30	57	10	28	22	32	12	10	201
up	28	43	16	34	23	25	12	11	192
total	73	130	38	84	67	67	35	30	524
no. of words	23,962	45,056	11,068	21,843	21,003	23,087	20,565	12,091	178,675
/10,000 words	30.46	28.85	34.33	38.46	31.90	29.02	17.02	24.81	29.33
1750-99A									
back	1	6	1	3	1	6	4	1	23
down	15	19	3	23	5	8	16	5	94
out	20	26	7	62	15	28	20	6	184
up	35	32	8	58	15	26	34	8	216
total	71	83	19	146	36	68	74	20	517
no. of words	27,331	42,417	10,987	22,109	23,433	22,271	20,664	11,056	180,268

/10,000 words	25.98	19.57	17.29	66.04	15.36	30.53	35.81	18.09	28.68
1850-99B									
back	26	33	5	10	1	3	1	13	92
down	43	56	4	27	17	13	17	11	188
out	57	55	6	31	13	25	25	15	227
up	62	70	16	46	16	17	32	19	278
total	188	214	31	114	47	58	75	58	785
no. of words	26,469	43,289	10,953	22,686	22,143	23,066	21,715	10,705	181,026
/10,000 words	71.03	49.44	28.30	50.25	21.23	25.15	34.54	54.18	43.36
1850-99A									
back	22	26	1	20	1	2	2	4	78
down	23	41	9	9	8	5	4	11	110
out	58	82	20	25	12	18	14	19	248
up	78	98	33	46	18	19	11	10	313
total	181	247	63	100	39	44	31	44	749
no. of words	24,214	44,224	10,740	22,534	20,424	21,992	21,326	11,253	176,707
/10,000 words	74.75	55.85	58.66	44.38	19.10	20.01	14.54	39.10	42.39
1950-90B									
back	33	61	3	19	2	3	1	6	128
down	34	75	7	29	1	23	6	9	184
out	76	94	8	40	22	23	11	26	300
up	58	155	19	62	28	22	12	42	398
total	201	385	37	150	53	71	30	83	1010
no. of words	24,450	45,095	10,190	22,225	20,794	22,920	21,308	11,259	178,241
/10,000 words	82.21	85.38	36.31	67.49	25.49	30.98	14.08	73.72	56.66
1950-90A									
back	40	48	2	15	2	8	3	11	129

down	52	66	7	21	0	18	3	11	178
out	75	96	6	50	1	23	3	24	278
up	108	128	9	62	11	36	5	28	387
total	**275**	**338**	**24**	**148**	**14**	**85**	**14**	**74**	**972**
no. of words	23,810	44,214	10,123	22,131	22,473	23,072	21,343	11,611	178,777
/10,000 words	**115.5**	**76.45**	**23.71**	**66.87**	**6.23**	**36.84**	**6.56**	**63.73**	**54.37**
grand total	**1081**	**1514**	**235**	**853**	**307**	**460**	**324**	**339**	**5113**
no. of words	176,884	305,807	75,207	154,902	153,387	158,700	148,362	80,634	1,253,883
/10,000 words	**61.11**	**49.51**	**31.25**	**55.07**	**20.01**	**28.99**	**21.84**	**42.04**	**40.78**

Appendix 13. Redundant phrasal verbs in ARCHER

		redundant	as %	not redundant	as %
1650-99	back	1	2.7	36	97.3
	down	19	23.5	62	76.5
	out	43	23.1	143	76.9
	up	62	24.6	190	75.4
	total	**125**	**22.5**	**431**	**77.5**
	no. of words	180,189		180,189	
	/10,000w	6.9		23.9	
1750-99B	back	0	0.0	28	100.0
	down	35	34.0	68	66.0
	out	40	19.9	161	80.1
	up	63	32.8	129	67.2
	total	**138**	**26.3**	**386**	**73.7**
	no. of words	178,675		178,675	
	/10,000w	7.7		21.6	
1750-99A	back	1	4.3	22	95.7
	down	26	27.7	68	72.3
	out	19	10.3	165	89.7
	up	71	32.9	145	67.1
	total	**117**	**22.6**	**400**	**77.4**
	no. of words	180,268		180,268	
	/10,000w	6.5		22.2	
1850-99B	back	0	0.0	92	100.0
	down	60	31.9	128	68.1
	out	21	9.3	206	90.7
	up	71	25.5	207	74.5
	total	**152**	**19.4**	**633**	**80.6**
	no. of words	181,026		181,026	
	/10,000w	8.4		35.0	
1850-99A	back	0	0.0	78	100.0
	down	37	33.6	73	66.4
	out	39	15.7	209	84.3
	up	97	31.0	216	69.0
	total	**173**	**23.1**	**576**	**76.9**
	no. of words	176,707		176,707	

	/10,000w	9.8		32.6	
1950-90B	back	2	1.6	126	98.4
	down	63	34.2	121	65.8
	out	33	11.0	267	89.0
	up	119	29.9	279	70.1
	total	**217**	**21.5**	**793**	**78.5**
	no. of words	178,241		178,241	
	/10,000w	12.2		44.5	
1950-90A	back	0	0.0	129	100.0
	down	53	29.8	125	70.2
	out	50	18.0	228	82.0
	up	124	32.0	263	68.0
	total	**227**	**23.4**	**745**	**76.6**
	no. of words	178,777		178,777	
	/10,000w	12.7		41.7	
	grand total	**1149**	**22.5**	**3964**	**77.5**

Appendix 14. Redundant phrasal verbs criticized in the precept corpus and dictionaries: occurrences in ARCHER

	Dates of criticism in precept corpus and dictionaries	1650-99	1750-99B	1750-99A	1850-99B	1850-99A	1950-90B	1950-90A	total
grow up	1892	1	1	3	1	3	6	11	**26**
fall down	1755, 1799, 1823, 1880, 1882, 1892	6	3	2	2	1		1	**15**
settle down	1901			3	3	3	4	2	**15**
fill up	1755, 1828, 1900		4	3	1	2		1	**11**
rise up	1823, 1856, 1880, 1882, 1882, 1886, 1893, 1901, 1947	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	**11**
seek out	1828	5			1	2		1	**9**
drop down	1902		3	2			2	1	**8**
watch out	1933-1947					3	2	3	**8**
burn up	1947			3	1		1	2	**7**
burn down	1947	1				1	2	2	**6**
try out	1918, 1933, 1935, 1965						5	1	**6**
eat up	1947	1			1		4		**6**
end up	1893, 1901, 1902, 1930, 1947						3	3	**6**
hurry up	1935, 1947						2	4	**6**
ring up	1935						6		**6**
close down	1947, 1965						5		**5**
climb up	1947		1			2	1	1	**5**
open up	1864, 1880, 1880, 1893, 1901, 1902, 1947			1	1			3	**5**
pack up	1935		1			1	3		**5**
start out	1902							3	**3**
shrink up	1947			3					**3**
speed up	1933						1	2	**3**
add up	1930						1	1	**2**

beat up	1935							1	1	**2**
face up	1934, 1935, 1947							1	1	**2**
finish up	1947				1				1	**2**
sink down	1856, 1882, 1886, 1893, 1901, 1947						1	1		**2**
start up	1965							1	1	**2**
fell down	1755	1								**1**
swallow down	1947			1						**1**
copy out	1773, 1828				1					**1**
drown out	1954, 1965								1	**1**
ascend up	1880, 1882, 1886, 1888, 1893, 1901 1935, 1947	1								**1**
breed up	1828	1								**1**
check up	1962, 1965, 1966								1	**1**
divide up	1879, 1913, 1947							1		**1**
drink up	1947	1								**1**
meet up	1935, 1947, 1947, 1947, 1962, 1965, 1968							1		**1**
muster up	1925	1								**1**
polish up	1947								1	**1**
shoot up	1935							1		**1**
retire back	1947							1		**1**
return back	1776, 1823, 1836, 1856, 1867, 1882, 1882, 1886, 1930, 1947	1								**1**

Appendix 15. Sub-categories of redundant phrasal verbs in ARCHER: types and tokens

A = Aktionsart

R = repetitive

RL = repetition of Latin prefix

		1650-99	1750-99B	1750-99A	1850-99B	1850-99A	1950-90B	1950-90A	total
refer back	RL						1		1
remand back	RL			1					1
retire back	RL						1		1
return back	RL	1							1
total with 'back'		**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**4**
break down	A	1		3	5	2	2	2	15
settle down	A			3	3	3	4	2	15
shoot down	A				1		1	5	7
burn down	A	1				1	2	2	6
calm down	A						4	2	6
close down	A						5		5
die down	A				1	1	2	1	5
cool down	A		1		3				4
write down	A		1		1		1	1	4
hunt down	A				1	1		1	3
track down	A						2	1	3
wear down	A			2			1		3
grind down	A				1	1			2
shut down	A							2	2
slow down	A						1	1	2
soothe down	A				2				2
batter down	A		1						1
flag down	A							1	1
reboil down	A					1			1
snuggle down	A						1		1
trample down	A			1					1

sit down	R	6	17	6	34	19	24	27	133
fall down	R	6	3	2	2	1		1	15
drop down	R		3	2			2	1	8
lie down	R	1	3		1		3		8
kneel down	R		3	1			3		7
bend down	R					3	1	1	5
dip down	R				4				4
hang down	R	1	1				1	1	4
bow down	R			2		1			3
stoop down	R			1		2			3
lower down	R	1	1						2
sink down	R					1	1		2
bog down	R							1	1
fell down	R	1							1
gobble down	R						1		1
gulp down	R			1					1
lay down	R	1							1
munch down	R						1		1
rain down	R		1						1
shower down	R			1					1
swallow down	R			1					1
topple down	R				1				1
total with 'down'		**19**	**35**	**26**	**60**	**37**	**63**	**53**	**293**
find out	A	12	1	2	1				16
wear out	A		2	2	1	3	4	3	15
fit out	A	4	3	4	1				12
hold out	A	2	4			3	1		10
seek out	A	5			1	2		1	9
watch out	A					3	2	3	8
mark out	A			1	2	2		1	6
try out	A						5	1	6
fill out	A						1	3	4
die out	A				1	1	1		3
hunt out	A	1				2			3

pick out	A	1	1					1	3
play out	A					1	1	1	3
start out	A							3	3
tire out	A		1			1	1		3
write out	A		1		1	1			3
blot out	A	1						1	2
clear out	A				1	1			2
count out	A						2		2
eat out	A	1					1		2
fight out	A	1			1				2
flatten out	A					1	1		2
help out	A					1		1	2
live out	A							2	2
measure out	A		1					1	2
plan out	A		1					1	2
rent out	A							2	2
search out	A	1				1			2
sell out	A				1			1	2
spell out	A							2	2
stick out	A							2	2
straighten out	A							2	2
argue out	A				1				1
audition out	A							1	1
calculate out	A							1	1
chalk out	A	1							1
copy out	A				1				1
deck out	A		1						1
descry out	A		1						1
drown out	A							1	1
dry out	A						1		1
dude out	A							1	1
even out	A						1		1
finish out	A							1	1
flesh out	A						1		1
grope out	A		1						1

guess out	A					1			1
last out	A				1				1
learn out	A	1							1
paint out	A		1						1
part out	A	1							1
rig out	A					1			1
shape out	A						1		1
sketch out	A						1		1
smooth out	A							1	1
snuff out	A							1	1
thaw out	A					1			1
trick out	A					1			1
wager out	A		1						1
weary out	A		1						1
cry out	R	7	12	5	4	3	1	2	34
call out	R		3		1	1	2	3	10
speak out	R	1	1	2		2	1	2	9
spread out	R	1					1	2	4
jut out	R				1		1		2
say out	R					2			2
shine out	R					2			2
bawl out	R			1					1
blare out	R							1	1
blurt out	R					1			1
branch out	R	1							1
broaden out	R						1		1
bulge out	R				1				1
gush out	R		1						1
lengthen out	R			1					1
murmur out	R	1							1
pout out	R						1		1
roar out	R		1						1
stretch out	R					1			1
swell out	R		1						1
widen out	R			1					1
explode out	RL							1	1

total with 'out'		43	40	19	21	39	33	50	245
make up	A	11	8	1	8	11	1	1	41
wake up	A				6	2	9	10	27
grow up	A	1	1	3	1	3	6	11	26
build up	A			2	1	3	11	4	21
wrap up	A	1	4	3	1	2	1	3	15
shut up	A	1	8	2	1		1		13
clear up	A	2	2	1	1	2	3		11
fill up	A		4	3	1	2		1	11
light up	A		1	2	3	2		3	11
tie up	A	5	2	1	1	1		1	11
gather up	A	2			3	2	1	2	10
swallow up	A		1	4	1	2		2	10
break up	A			2	5		1	1	9
bind up	A	3		1	1	2	1		8
cheer up	A			2		1	5		8
lock up	A	2	1			2	2	1	8
block up	A	2	1	1	2	1			7
burn up	A			3	1		1	2	7
tear up	A			1	1	1	2	2	7
wind up	A			4	2			1	7
call up	A						2	4	6
catch up	A						3	3	6
clean up	A					2	2	2	6
cut up	A	2	2		1	1			6
dry up	A		1	1	3	1			6
eat up	A	1			1		4		6
end up	A						3	3	6
hurry up	A						2	4	6
line up	A		1				3	2	6
ring up	A						6		6
stir up	A			3	3				6
mix up	A					3	1	1	5
open up	A			1	1			3	5
pack up	A		1			1	3		5

Verb									Total
roll up	A				1	1	2		1	5
boil up	A	2		1				1		4
cover up	A		1				1	1	1	4
serve up	A		3	1						4
sew up	A		1		1	2				4
back up	A				1				2	3
choke up	A		1		1				1	3
cook up	A						3			3
double up	A					2			1	3
dress up	A	1			2					3
fix up	A					2			1	3
fold up	A			1	1		1			3
follow up	A					3				3
patch up	A						3			3
saddle up	A					3				3
screw up	A			1					2	3
show up	A								3	3
shrink up	A			3						3
snatch up	A	1			1	1				3
speed up	A						1	2		3
split up	A					2			1	3
strike up	A	1				2				3
tidy up	A						2	1		3
train up	A	1	1	1						3
add up	A						1	1		2
beat up	A						1	1		2
carve up	A					1	1			2
chain up	A					2				2
chop up	A								2	2
close up	A		1				1			2
face up	A						1	1		2
finish up	A				1				1	2
fire up	A				1	1				2
fit up	A				1	1				2
freeze up	A	1		1						2
harrow up	A			2						2

heal up	A				1	1				2
hunt up	A						2			2
keep up	A								2	2
mess up	A							1	1	2
save up	A						1		1	2
seal up	A			1		1				2
size up	A						1		1	2
start up	A							1	1	2
treasure up	A			1		1				2
use up	A						1	1		2
warm up	A							2		2
wash up	A					1		1		2
write up	A							2		2
batter up	A	1								1
bold up	A								1	1
bottle up	A			1						1
breed up	A	1								1
bundle up	A			1						1
camp up	A							1		1
check up	A								1	1
chuck up	A							1		1
cloister up	A				1					1
conjure up	A								1	1
coop up	A								1	1
couch up	A	1								1
count up	A					1				1
crumple up	A								1	1
cry up	A	1								1
dam up	A	1								1
dip up	A								1	1
divide up	A							1		1
drink up	A	1								1
feel up	A								1	1
flare up	A							1		1
join up	A								1	1
link up	A								1	1

meet up	A						1		1
muddle up	A							1	1
muster up	A	1							1
nurse up	A	1							1
own up	A							1	1
plug up	A					1			1
polish up	A							1	1
preach up	A			1					1
rig up	A							1	1
scorch up	A	1							1
shoot up	A						1		1
shrivel up	A							1	1
smell up	A	1							1
spin up	A			1					1
stock up	A						1		1
stop up	A	1							1
strap up	A							1	1
sum up	A			1					1
surrender up	A		1						1
team up	A							1	1
tell up	A			1					1
tense up	A							1	1
wire up	A							1	1
lift up	R	2	5	3	2	4	2	1	19
stand up	R			1	1	4	6	5	17
raise up	R	5	2	3	1	1	1		13
rise up	R	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	11
climb up	R		1			2	1	1	5
pile up	R					3	1		4
rouse up	R			2		1			3
vomit up	R	1	2						3
heap up	R	1		1					2
rear up	R					1		1	2
ascend up	R	1							1
buoy up	R			1					1
soar up	R							1	1

surge up	R							1	1
well up	R					1			1
total with 'up'		**62**	**63**	**71**	**71**	**97**	**119**	**124**	**607**
grand total		**125**	**138**	**117**	**152**	**173**	**217**	**227**	**1149**

Appendix 16. Sub-categories of redundant phrasal verbs

	1650-99	1750-99B	1750-99A	1850-99B	1850-99A	1950-90B	1950-90A	total
Aktionsart	85	75	77	97	115	157	173	779
no. of words	180,189	178,675	180,268	181,026	176,707	178,241	178,777	1,253,883
/10,000 words	4.72	4.20	4.27	5.36	6.51	8.81	9.68	6.21
repetitive	39	63	39	55	58	58	53	365
no. of words	180,189	178,675	180,268	181,026	176,707	178,241	178,777	1,253,883
/10,000 words	2.16	3.53	2.16	3.04	3.28	3.25	2.96	2.91
repetition of Latin prefix	1	0	1	0	0	2	1	5
no. of words	180,189	178,675	180,268	181,026	176,707	178,241	178,777	1,253,883
/10,000 words	0.06	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.11	0.06	0.04
redundant total	125	138	117	152	173	217	227	1149
no. of words	180,189	178,675	180,268	181,026	176,707	178,241	178,777	1,253,883
/10,000 words	6.94	7.72	6.49	8.40	9.79	12.17	12.70	9.16

Appendix 17. Repetitive phrasal verbs, by genre

	drama	fiction	sermons	journals/ diaries	medicine	news	science	letters	total
1650-99									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
down	1	6	1	1	3	2	1	2	17
out	1	5	2	0	2	0	0	1	11
up	1	2	1	1	3	0	3	0	11
total	**3**	**13**	**4**	**2**	**8**	**2**	**4**	**3**	**39**
no. of words	26,648	41,512	11,146	21,374	23,117	22,292	21,441	12,659	180,189
/10,000w	**1.13**	**3.13**	**3.59**	**0.94**	**3.46**	**0.90**	**1.87**	**2.37**	**2.16**
1750-99B									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
down	6	10	4	6	3	2	1	0	32
out	1	9	2	1	5	0	1	0	19
up	0	3	3	0	5	1	0	0	12
total	**7**	**22**	**9**	**7**	**13**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**63**
no. of words	23,962	45,056	11,068	21,843	21,003	23,087	20,565	12,091	178,675
/10,000w	**2.92**	**4.88**	**8.13**	**3.20**	**6.19**	**1.30**	**0.97**	**0.00**	**3.53**
1750-99A									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
down	2	8	2	2	1	0	1	1	17
out	3	2	0	2	1	0	1	1	10
up	3	2	1	2	1	0	3	0	12
total	**8**	**12**	**3**	**6**	**3**	**0**	**5**	**2**	**39**
no. of words	27,331	42,417	10,987	22,109	23,433	22,271	20,664	11,056	180,268
/10,000w	**2.93**	**2.83**	**2.73**	**2.71**	**1.28**	**0.00**	**2.42**	**1.81**	**2.16**
1850-99B									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

down	18	11	0	3	1	1	8	0	42
out	1	2	0	2	1	0	0	1	7
up	0	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	6
total	19	15	2	6	2	1	9	1	55
no. of words	26,469	43,289	10,953	22,686	22,143	23,066	21,715	10,705	181,026
/10,000w	7.18	3.47	1.83	2.64	0.90	0.43	4.14	0.93	3.04
1850-99A									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
down	5	15	1	0	2	0	1	3	27
out	3	4	2	1	1	0	0	1	12
up	1	7	8	2	0	0	1	0	19
total	9	26	11	3	3	0	2	4	58
no. of words	24,214	44,224	10,740	22,534	20,424	21,992	21,326	11,253	176,707
/10,000w	3.72	5.88	10.24	1.33	1.47	0.00	0.94	3.55	3.28
1950-90B									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
down	11	18	0	4	0	2	0	2	37
out	3	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	8
up	6	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	13
total	20	25	2	6	0	3	0	2	58
no. of words	24,450	45,095	10,190	22,225	20,794	22,920	21,308	11,259	178,241
/10,000w	8.18	5.54	1.96	2.70	0.00	1.31	0.00	1.78	3.25
1950-90A									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
down	16	10	2	3	0	1	0	0	32
out	4	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	10
up	3	6	1	1	0	0	0	0	11
total	23	19	4	6	0	1	0	0	53
no. of words	23,810	44,214	10,123	22,131	22,473	23,072	21,343	11,611	178,777

/10,000w	9.66	4.30	3.95	2.71	0.00	0.43	0.00	0.00	2.96
grand total	89	132	35	36	29	10	22	12	365
no. of words	176,884	305,807	75,207	154,902	153,387	158,700	148,362	80,634	1,253,883
/10,000w	5.03	4.32	4.65	2.32	1.89	0.63	1.48	1.49	2.91

Appendix 18. Aktionsart phrasal verbs, by genre

	drama	fiction	sermons	journals/ diaries	medicine	news	science	letters	total
1650-99									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
down	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
out	10	9	2	1	0	5	3	2	32
up	12	15	5	2	4	6	5	2	51
total	**22**	**24**	**7**	**3**	**4**	**13**	**8**	**4**	**85**
no. of words	26,648	41,512	11,146	21,374	23,117	22,292	21,441	12,659	180,189
/10,000w	**8.26**	**5.78**	**6.28**	**1.40**	**1.73**	**5.83**	**3.73**	**3.16**	**4.72**
1750-99B									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
down	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
out	4	7	3	1	0	5	0	1	21
up	8	18	4	9	2	3	5	2	51
total	**12**	**26**	**7**	**11**	**2**	**8**	**6**	**3**	**75**
no. of words	23,962	45,056	11,068	21,843	21,003	23,087	20,565	12,091	178,675
/10,000w	**5.01**	**5.77**	**6.32**	**5.04**	**0.95**	**3.47**	**2.92**	**2.48**	**4.20**
1750-99A									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
down	1	1	0	3	1	0	3	0	9
out	2	1	0	0	1	4	1	0	9
up	12	11	4	10	1	5	14	2	59
total	**15**	**13**	**4**	**13**	**3**	**9**	**18**	**2**	**77**
no. of words	27,331	42,417	10,987	22,109	23,433	22,271	20,664	11,056	180,268
/10,000w	**5.49**	**3.06**	**3.64**	**5.88**	**1.28**	**4.04**	**8.71**	**1.81**	**4.27**
1850-99B									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

down	6	2	2	2	0	1	3	2	18
out	4	4	0	1	0	2	1	2	14
up	15	11	8	10	2	0	10	9	65
total	**25**	**17**	**10**	**13**	**2**	**3**	**14**	**13**	**97**
no. of words	26,469	43,289	10,953	22,686	22,143	23,066	21,715	10,705	181,026
/10,000w	**9.45**	**3.93**	**9.13**	**5.73**	**0.90**	**1.30**	**6.45**	**12.14**	**5.36**
1850-99A									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
down	1	1	3	0	1	0	2	2	10
out	7	9	2	2	1	3	2	1	27
up	14	24	9	13	7	2	7	2	78
total	**22**	**34**	**14**	**15**	**9**	**5**	**11**	**5**	**115**
no. of words	24,214	44,224	10,740	22,534	20,424	21,992	21,326	11,253	176,707
/10,000w	**9.09**	**7.69**	**13.04**	**6.66**	**4.41**	**2.27**	**5.16**	**4.44**	**6.51**
1950-90B									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
down	4	14	1	2	0	5	0	0	26
out	2	11	1	7	0	1	1	2	25
up	13	42	8	19	1	5	4	14	106
total	**19**	**67**	**10**	**28**	**1**	**11**	**5**	**16**	**157**
no. of words	24,450	45,095	10,190	22,225	20,794	22,920	21,308	11,259	178,241
/10,000w	**7.77**	**14.86**	**9.81**	**12.60**	**0.48**	**4.80**	**2.35**	**14.21**	**8.81**
1950-90A									
back	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
down	3	5	0	6	0	5	1	1	21
out	4	16	0	9	0	4	1	5	39
up	26	49	1	12	0	9	3	13	113
total	**33**	**70**	**1**	**27**	**0**	**18**	**5**	**19**	**173**
no. of words	23,810	44,214	10,123	22,131	22,473	23,072	21,343	11,611	178,777

/10,000w	13.86	15.83	0.99	12.20	0.00	7.80	2.34	16.36	9.68
grand total	148	251	53	110	21	67	67	62	779
no. of words	176,884	305,807	75,207	154,902	153,387	158,700	148,362	80,634	1,253,883
/10,000w	8.37	8.21	7.05	7.10	1.37	4.22	4.52	7.69	6.21

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