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Distribution and Use of Phrasal Verbs in a Grade I ESL Textbook

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ABSTRACT

The present paper delves into the distribution and uses of English phrasal verbs as well as their syntactic and semantic representation in the grade-1 ESL textbook published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) of India prescribed for the academic curriculum programme. The identified phrasal verbs are then compared with the list of 150 most frequent phrasal verbs in the British National Corpus (BNC) and The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (Liu, 2011) and the constituent elements of EPVs (i.e. a verb and a particle) are also compared with the list of top 20 most frequent lexical verb lemmas and 16 most frequent particles functioning as phrasal verb forms in the British National Corpus (BNC) (Gardner & Davies, 2007) respectively. The study found that the particles denote their literal senses and contribute to the formation of compositional or literal meanings. This study does not reflect the most frequent phrasal verbs found in the various genres of the BNC and COCA. Lexical verbs are mostly verbs of motion, and particles belonging to the group of spatial orientation are presented in the grade-1- ESL textbook. Most of the phrasal verbs are presented in its literal sense. Very few present idiomatic/figurative/ extended meanings. However, the aspectual phrasal verbs are absent in the grade-1 ESL textbook.

KEYWORDS: English Phrasal Verbs, NCERT Textbooks, Vocabulary Learning, Lexical Verbs, Particles.

INTRODUCTION

English phrasal verbs represent one of the most notoriously challenging aspects of English language instruction (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999; Gardner & Davies, 2007; Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007). They are, in particular, complex and challenging for non-native learners in English as a second /foreign language setting. Language learners struggle to remember meaning, grammar, and structure (Hlaing, 2020). Phrasal verbs are combinations of a lexical verb and an adverbial or prepositional particle that together denote a single semantic unit. It represents a complex area of English vocabulary and often creates a problem for non-native learners. It behaves more like a phrase than a single lexical unit representing semantic content. English phrasal verbs can also be termed verb phrases, discontinuous verbs, compound verbs, verb-adverb combinations, and verb-particle construction (VPC) (McArthur, 1992). The

particle not only represents a complex multi-word verb but also changes the original meaning of the verb and adds an extra meaning. The writing and speech of native speakers of English are full of phrasal verbs and expressions, especially in the spoken form of English. This takes us to the fact that native speakers of English use expressions like ‘hang on’ instead of ‘wait’, ‘call up’ instead of ‘telephone’ and many more in their speech. On the other hand, non-native speakers of English avoid using phrasal verb constructions, especially those not frequently used, simply because they find them challenging to handle. The difficulty in handling these constructions is attributed to the fact that they are highly idiomatic, i.e., the total meaning of the combination may bear little or no relationship to the meaning of the individual words of combinations.

English phrasal verbs are used extensively in written and spoken forms of language by native speakers. The spoken form especially abounds in phrasal verbs, and native speakers substitute words for their day-to-day usage with such constructions. What we mean by this is that the meanings of their individual constituent cannot determine the meaning of such phrasal verbs. For example, the phrasal verb ‘*hang on*’, which means ‘to wait’, has no connection with the meanings of either ‘hang’ or ‘on’, and the meaning of the combination is beyond the individualistic meaning of its constitutive elements. Being fluent in English does entail having mastery over the usage of such expressions, and because of the highly idiomatic meanings that they carry, it becomes very difficult. Phrasal verbs are integral to achieving fluency and naturalness in English. According to Garnier and Schmitt (2015), the high frequency and idiomatic meaning of phrasal verbs in everyday English necessitate their inclusion in ESL curricula. These verbs are often used in spoken language and informal writing, making their understanding crucial for effective communication.

The textbooks are the main source through which a learner is exposed to the second language. Cunningsworth (1995), Richards (2001), and others argued for the necessity of a textbook in a language teaching program for the benefit of both the teachers and the learners, which they can use as a reference point for their teaching and learning. Therefore, curriculum developers and textbook writers should take into consideration that they systematically introduce students to the literal and figurative meanings of phrasal verbs based on the frequency of usage and the cognitive maturity of ESL learners. Therefore, systematic exposure to the language becomes of utmost importance.

Frequency of occurrences has a significant role in vocabulary learning primarily because they enhance fluency or communicative efficiency by exposing students to the most frequent words used in a language. Also, as human cognition is integral to knowledge acquisition, repetitive exposure creates an environment for such vocabulary consolidation. The present paper is not only concerned with the frequencies of phrasal verbs, lexical verbs and particles but also tries to compare the frequency of occurrence of these items with the BNC and COCA corpus. These corpora contain data from British and American English, respectively.

The present study is directed towards the identification of the grammatical behaviour of phrasal verbs in NCERT grade I ESL textbooks and, more specifically, the structural relation that holds not only between the particle and its associated verb but also the syntactic relationship between the phrasal verb combinations and the other constituents they keep company with. Further, phrasal verb constructions are analysed on the basis of their semantic presentation in the textbook and their percentage distributions have also been counted.

On the basis of the above scope of the works, the major research questions formulated are as follows:

1. What is the frequency of each lexical verb with the adverbial or prepositional particle found in the target textbook and vice versa?
2. What is the relative frequency rank of these phrasal verbs in comparison with the 150 most frequent phrasal verbs in BNC and COCA (Liu, 2011)?
3. What are the syntactic and semantic characteristics of the phrasal verbs found in the early ESL textbook used in India?
4. How can corpus linguistic data help to develop and evaluate the ESL textbook?

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 presents the classification of phrasal verbs in English and the empirical studies reported on the phrasal verbs in the ESL textbook. The subsequent section provides the study's methodology, followed by findings and a discussion of relevant comparative data on phrasal verbs from the existing English corpora. The final section provides the concluding remarks and the limitations of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Classification of phrasal verbs in English

Phrasal verbs are considered one of the most striking idiosyncrasies of the English language (Liu, 2011). They are composed of two components: a verb and a particle; the second element particle is typically homonymous with an adverb or a preposition. The verb and the particle together constitute a single indivisible semantic unit, and their meaning cannot be derived from the meaning of the constitutive elements. They are distinct from simple English verbs and exhibit specific characteristics. Phrasal verbs have been classified based on their complex syntactic and semantic structure (Thim, 2012; Jackendoff, 2002). Phrasal verbs are difficult to learn because of their complex syntactic and semantic patterns. They are often classified based on their syntactic and semantic patterns. The syntactic classification of phrasal verbs includes the features of transitivity (intransitive and transitive) and separability (inseparable and separable) (Bolinger, 1971; Live, 1965; Fraser, 1976; Quirk et al., 1985). The transitivity features include the intransitive and transitive constructions. On the other hand, the separability feature includes the separable and inseparable constructions. The transitive constructions are followed by a direct object, as in *She took out a notebook*. With most transitive constructions, the particle can either precede or follow the direct object, i.e. when a phrasal verb has a direct object, the two parts of the verb can usually be separated (Swan, 1980). Robert (1997) agrees that it is a characteristic of particles of phrasal verbs that they “can appear in a position after the direct object” without affecting the structure or meaning of the sentence, as in *I'll turn on the television* and *I'll turn the television on*. If the object is a full noun phrase, the object may come either before the particle or after the particle (i.e., ‘joined’ vs. ‘split’ orders in terms of Lohse et al., 2004), as in *she took off her shoes* and *she took her shoes off*. However, if the object is a personal pronoun (e.g. me, us, you, him, etc.), we always put the pronoun before the particle, as in *She put him off* vs. **She put off him*. Quirk et al. (1985) state that the “particle tends to precede the object if the object is long, or if the intention is that the object should receive focus”; cf. the following examples (based on Jackendoff 2002) *Lila looked up the answer to the question that was on everyone's mind* vs. **Lila looked the answer to the question that was on everyone's mind up*. Among the detailed studies devoted to the subject of particle placement in present-day English, Dehé (2002) argues that the ‘neutral’ order is ‘verb-particle-object’ and that the choice of one order rather than the other depends on the “news value” (Dehé, 2002, p. 77) of the object. On the other hand, PVs can be intransitive, i.e., they are not followed by a direct object. Intransitive phrasal verbs do not take a direct object, and therefore,

the verb cannot be separated from the particle- they are always inseparable. Intransitive verbs are almost always immediately followed by a particle, as in *The taxi broke down*. Apart from their complex syntactic structure, they pose complex semantic interpretation in the sense of whether each component partakes in meaning formulation or the resultant meaning is beyond the combination of the individual meaning of each of the constituents. They have been semantically categorised based on compositionality. The semantic classification of phrasal verbs ranges from fully compositional/literal (i.e., each component contributes its meaning, as in, *I picked up the kids' clothes that were lying on the floor.*) to non-compositional/idiomatic (as in, *when you live in a country you soon pick up the language.*). They are semantically classified as literal, semi-idiomatic/aspectual and idiomatic/non-compositional (Dehe', 2002). The literal phrasal verbs are those where the verb and the particle both retain their literal basic meaning and contribute individual semantics in the meaning of composite structure. For instance, the literal sense of the particle *up* denotes the movement of an entity from a lower to a higher position or place, and the central sense of the verb *take* is 'to get hold of something'. If these two literal senses are combined, the semantics of the phrasal verb *take up* turns out to be 'getting hold of something and lift up' as in, *she took up the carpet*. In literal constructions, the particle contributes its directional meaning to the verb. The second semantic classification is semi-idiomatic or aspectual constructions, where the verb retains its basic literal meaning, and particles specify its meaning by adding a sense of completion to the entire expression and denoting a completed action. For example, the particle *up* in *eat up*, *use up*, and *drink up* does not imply 'direction' or movement from a lower to a higher position' but adds a sense of 'entirely, completely; *down* in *burn down* implies 'completely, entirely' rather than the spatial directional meaning. The particle implies that the action has reached its end or is completed. The third semantic category is the non-compositional or idiomatic phrasal verbs where the meaning of the phrasal verb is unpredictable from the individual meaning of the constituent elements, verb and particle as in *give up*, the individual semantics of *give* and *up* cannot account for the semantics of phrasal verb *give up* 'to quit' as in *she gave up alcohol at the age of 35*. In idiomatic or non-compositional constructions, particles completely change the meaning of the verb to a novel unseen meaning, and that gets established after a certain period and reflected in speech and writing as the sense of phrasal verb *pick up* 'to catch' in *she picked up cold*.

Phrasal verbs in ESL textbooks

Learning English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL) is a requisite and indisputable part of an educational system from primary to upper level. English phrasal verbs are one of the most inventive and creative features of English language vocabulary, often denoting fluency and command over the language. Teaching English phrasal verbs and using them correctly is a complex and challenging aspect of vocabulary learning in ESL/EFL classrooms. Phrasal verbs composed of a verb and a particle often exhibit complex syntactic and semantic structures and result in a specialised context-specific meaning that cannot be directly inferred from the individual meaning of the constituent elements. This absolutely hinders the learning process, especially for non-native learners. Phrasal verbs are common in language use and are considered an imperative and challenging aspect of vocabulary learning (Garnier & Schmitt, 2015). Textbooks are the primary source of teaching-learning material (Gak, 2011). PV structures and their correct use are also problematic grammatical items for ESL learners (Akbari et al., 2021; Zarifi & Mukundan, 2014; Kamarudin et al., 2020). Learners are often exposed to phrasal verbs early in their learning when using a communicative approach to language teaching. In most introductory courses, students describe their daily routines and are exposed to lexical phrasal verbs such as '*wake up*' and '*get up*'. Many phrasal verbs are used in classroom instructions, and in these early stages, they do not cause many problems because their meaning is literal or the context in which they are used is very clearly understood. The

problem starts when the learning continues, newer and more complex structures come into play, and non-native speakers refrain from using such constructions in everyday conversations.

In recent decades, examination of the occurrences of phrasal verbs in an ESL instruction material has caught the attention of researchers to find out whether the selection and presentation of these combinations are based on their occurrence in a natural text or in companion to the PVs occurrence in natural language use reported in the major corpora of English language. Most of the literature identifies the criteria for selecting the phrasal verbs (PVs) in ESL textbooks and examines their complex syntactic and semantic presentation. In a recent study, Shubha (2021) investigates the utilisation of phrasal verbs in the lower secondary English language teaching (ELT) textbook in Bangladesh that are recommended by the national government for education at the countrywide level. This study employs a methodological approach that utilises corpus tools and does associated analysis to examine the presentation of Phrasal Verbs in textbooks. The study identifies the occurrences of phrasal verbs in the textbooks along with their frequency distribution. Further, the researcher compares those constructions with the list of most frequent PVs in the two most reliable English language corpora - The British National Corpus (BNC) and The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (Liu, 2011). The study compares the significant values, relative positions to the reference corpora, and other corpus-related scores of the top fifteen Phrasal Verbs in the textbook corpus. The findings indicate that the phrasal verbs in the chosen textbooks are not closely related to the two established large corpora. Ultimately, the findings lead to specific remarks and implications that might be applied for pedagogical reasons. This study presents the inaugural examination of Bangladeshi Lower Secondary ELT textbooks using the corpus approach. In another study, Zamin et al. (2019) examine the use of phrasal verbs found in Malaysian upper secondary school textbooks and provide the frequency count of each PV using a corpus linguistic approach. Further, they compared the most frequent PVs in each textbook to the Biber et al. (1999) list. The study reveals that the selection and presentation of these combinations in the secondary school textbooks used in Malaysia depend more on the authors' intuition rather than on empirical findings and pedagogic principles. They found that the presentation of PV in the textbooks is far from satisfactory. The study suggests that these syntactically and semantically loaded expressions should be selected and presented by incorporating the corpus findings. In another study, Zarifi and Mukundan (2012) examined the presentation of PV constructions with research findings in textbooks for Malaysian ESL learners at the secondary level (Forms 1-5). They found an inconsistency between the PVs selected and presented in the textbooks and their actual use in BNC. Moreover, the study found that PVs used in textbooks had extremely low frequency counts in general English. Thus, Zarifi and Mukundan (2012) argued that PV constructions' selection and presentation process in Malaysian secondary school textbooks is based on authors' intuition rather than research findings and pedagogical principles. In another study, Zarifi and Mukundan (2014) explored the grammatical treatment of PV items in Malaysian ESL secondary-level textbooks. They examined how phrasal verbs are taught in Malaysian ESL textbooks at the secondary level. They observed that despite 15 distinct syntactic patterns linked with these multi-word verbs, they were primarily disregarded as a separate category of language phenomenon with their own grammatical characteristics. The selection, presentation, and sequencing of diverse patterns connected with them lacked a driving principle, indicating that the production of ELT textbooks is driven more by intuition than empirical evidence. The study suggests that students should be provided with appropriate materials and activities that enable them to produce PVs, particularly idiomatic ones, more effectively. The findings of the study revealed that there appears to be "no guiding principle underlying the selection, presentation, and sequencing of different patterns associated with them, bringing further the observation that the development

of ELT textbooks is more intuitively than empirically motivated” (Zarifi & Mukundan, 2014, p. 649). Further, in line with the semantic presentation of phrasal verbs, Zarifi and Mukundan (2015) examined the semantic treatment of PV combinations in a pedagogical corpus of Malaysian ESL textbooks (Form 1-5). They found that although the corpus has many PV combinations, most of these constructions were barely presented; they were repeatedly used with the same meaning. The study also points out that some items were presented with their rare and infrequent word meanings. Therefore, the selection and presentation of the word senses of different PV combinations proved to be more intuitive than empirically motivated. Another study focusing on the presentation of multi-word items in ELT material is McAleese’s (2013) work, which investigates the occurrences of these combinations in contemporary ELT course books used for English courses in Japan. The study identifies multi-word items from the vocabulary lists in the course book appendix. He used a large-scale corpus, i.e., Bank of English, to determine the frequency and range of multi-word items. The frequency and range data were used to compare and rank those multi-word items. McAleese (2013) found that a large proportion of multi-word items that appeared in the course book “may be unrepresentative of authentic language and therefore have limited value to the learners” (p. 321). In another study, Koprowski (2005) examined the selection and presentation of PVs and other multi-word items (MWIs) in ELT coursebooks and compared the items against the Bank of English corpus (BoE) frequency list. He found that (1) MWIs were chosen haphazardly as there were no specific criteria for selection; (2) most items that appeared in the coursebooks had low frequency and range values against the BoE frequency list. Consequently, the study claimed that (3) items were subjectively selected and lacked any empirical study since ELT coursebook writers had chosen them based on their own experiences and intuition. Findings from the above study suggest that instructional material did not receive the importance of presenting PVs. Therefore, the pedagogical values of these ELT materials are very limited to ESL learners. The selection of PV items to be included in the textbooks seems to lack any pedagogic principle and is mainly based on writers’ intuition (Zarifi & Mukundan, 2012; Kamarudin, 2013).

A great deal of the corpus-based work on phrasal verbs is focused on the presentation and frequency counts of these forms across different general and specialised corpora (Akbari, 2017; Gardner & Davies, 2007; Trebits, 2009; Schneider, 2004; Von, 2007). However, empirical examinations of these pairings in instructional materials are few and far between. Side (1990) contends that the problems associated with phrasal verb combinations are partially prompted by the manner in which they are presented, based on an examination of a few ELT course books and reference resources. She finds that phrasal verb descriptions in instructional materials frequently fail "to create learnable patterns" and occasionally create "patterns of the wrong kind" (P. 150). Furthermore, when Darwin and Grey (1999) compared the top 20 phrasal verbs in the BNC to the combinations in a typical ESL grammar book, they discovered that just three forms in the textbook matched the items on the list. Similarly, Koprowski (2005) revealed that none of the three modern ELT course books produced as general English resources for intermediate-level learners shared a single phrasal word. Lastly, Zarifi and Mukundan (2012) evaluated the usage of phrasal verb combinations in the spoken parts of Malaysian ESL textbooks in another recent research. They discovered combinations of exceptionally low-frequency counts in general English and vice versa in textbooks. According to the findings, both the selection and presentation of these combinations were discordant with their actual use in the British National Corpus.

According to the study findings from the literature, selecting and presenting phrasal verb combinations is a key educational problem. With so many phrasal verbs in the language and so many collections to pick from, curriculum designers and materials producers alike are

sometimes frustrated with which phrasal verbs to include and how many of them to include in the textbook. This sense of irritation is exacerbated by the restricted number of course materials available and the fact that not all of these phrases are equally useful to EFL/ESL students. Having said that, it becomes essential to see whether ELT developers are really taking into account the research findings and pedagogical principles in selecting and presenting the most useful phrasal verb combinations. The current study, therefore, aimed to identify all the instances of phrasal verb combinations and their constituents, determine their frequency of occurrence and investigate their distribution in the NCERT ESL textbooks developed for Indian students.

METHODOLOGY

Materials

The textbook under our consideration is *Marigold*, designed and developed by the National Council of Education, Research and Training (NCERT) for Grade-1 ESL instruction. Looking at the general structure of the target ESL textbook it has two parts: the first part contains the text through which the students are exposed to the target vocabulary and grammatical items in context (comprising of a poem and a short story), and the second part comprises exercises or practice sets through which the target linguistic items are practised which were introduced in the first section. Our analysis incorporated the phrasal verbs in both sections.

Procedures

Sentences containing English Phrasal Verbs (EPVs) in the target ESL textbook were identified manually. After that, the combinations of the constituent elements of EPVs (i.e., the lexical verb and the particle) were also identified, and their frequency and percentage were calculated. A comparison was made on three levels with the two available corpora: the BNC and the COCA. The first comparison was with the frequency of the 150 most frequent phrasal verbs in both the corpora (Liu, 2011). After that, the lexical verbs (LVs) that contribute to the formulation of these phrasal verbs were compared with the top 20 lexical verb lemmas functioning in phrasal verb constructions in BNC (Gardner & Davies, 2007). Further, the particles found in the phrasal verb construction in the target textbook were also compared with the 16 most frequent particles in phrasal verb construction in BNC (Gardner & Davies, 2007). EPVs were then classified based on their structural patterns and semantic nature in the NCERT Grade-1 ESL textbook. The theoretical background adopted for examining English phrasal verbs is the syntactic and semantic characteristics and classification of phrasal verbs in English. The standards of comparison of phrasal verbs and their constituent elements have been taken from the works accounting for the frequency of phrasal verbs in the British and American English corpus (Liu, 2011), and the frequency rank of the constituents of phrasal verbs are taken from Gardner & Davies, 2007. Based on these theoretical bases, the above comparison has been carried out in the NCERT Grade-1 ESL textbook.

FINDINGS

The first part of the present work is to identify the total number of phrasal verbs occurring in the target textbook material. The process of identification was manually carried out due to the complex structure of EPVs and the distinction between verb-particle to verb-preposition sequences (from *put on the light* to *put on the table*). The study found a total number of 34 occurrences of phrasal verbs that constitute 19 different phrasal verbs in a class 1 Indian ESL textbook. These 34 occurrences are the combination of 15 lexical verbs and 10 particles. In these 34 numbers of occurrences of phrasal verbs, the phrasal verb *look at* has the highest frequency of 12. Table 1 below lists the phrasal verbs in terms of their constitutive elements along with their frequency.

Table 1. The frequency of the combinations of lexical verbs and particles in NCERT Class-1 ESL textbook.

	Lexical verb	Particle	Frequency		Lexical verb	Particle	Frequency
1.	Look	at	12	11.	get	up	1
2.	look	out	1	12.	get	into	1
3.	Come	along	1	13.	act	out	1
4.	come	down	1	14.	walk	away	2
5.	Fly	off	2	15.	go	out	1
6.	Climb	up	2	16.	stay	in	1
7.	Grow	into	1	17.	wake	up	1
8.	Hold	up	1	18.	run	away	1
9.	Hold	on	1	19.	take	out	1
10.	Put	in	2				

After extracting all the phrasal verbs from the textbook, we compared them with the list of 150 most frequent phrasal verbs in The British National Corpus (BNC) and The Corpus of Contemporary American English (Liu, 2011). And also specified their respective rank in both the target corpus. Table 2 below lists the same.

Table 2. Comparison of PVs in textbook with 150 most frequent PVs in BNC & COCA

	PVs in Class-1 Textbook	Rank in BNC	Rank in COCA
1.	Act out	*	*
2.	Climb up	*	*
3.	Come along	82	112
4.	Come down	33	31
5.	Fly off	*	*
6.	Get up	25	23
7.	Get into	*	*
8.	Go out	6	8
9.	Grow into	*	*
10.	Hold up	61	38
11.	Hold on	107	77
12.	Look at	*	*
13.	Look out	59	46
14.	Put in	114	149
15.	Run away	*	*
16.	Stay in	*	*
17.	Take out	31	24
18.	Wake up	62	35
19.	Walk away	*	*

* Shows the absence of the phrasal verbs in the target corpus.

The comparison found that only 10 phrasal verbs in the class-1 textbook are present in the target list of most frequent phrasal verbs in the BNC and COCA corpus. However, their rank is very low except for one phrasal verb *go out* that falls into the category of the top 10 phrasal verbs in both the corpora. The phrasal verb *look at* has the highest frequency in the textbook and surprisingly it does not appear in this list of frequency distribution of none of the corpora of English. The study does not reflect the most frequent phrasal verbs found in the various genres of the BNC and COCA. The phrasal verbs found in the textbook mainly denote action-oriented uses associated with some motion events.

As stated above, these 34 occurrences are the results of the combination of 15 lexical verbs with 10 particles presented as 19 different phrasal verbs. The frequency and percentage of lexical verbs and adverbial or prepositional particles functioning as phrasal verbs in the NCERT class 1 ESL textbook are shown in Figures 1 and 2 below respectively.

Fig.1. Frequency and percentage of lexical verb functioning as phrasal verb in NCERT class 1 ESL textbook

Lexical Verb	Frequency	Percentage
Look	13	38%
Come	2	6%
Fly	2	6%
Climb	2	6%
Grow	1	3%
Hold	2	6%
Put	2	6%
Get	2	6%
Act	1	3%
Walk	2	6%
Go	1	3%
Stay	1	3%
Make	1	3%
Run	1	3%
Take	1	3%

The lexical verbs (LV) functioning as phrasal verb combinations in the textbook are then compared with the top 20 lexical verb lemmas functioning as phrasal verb forms in the British National Corpus (BNC) (Gardner & Davies, 2007). We found that the lexical verbs *look, come, put, get, go, make, and take* match the target list of LV lemmas. There are in total 15 lexical verbs found in the NCERT Class 1 textbook out of which 7 match with the top 20 LV lemmas functioning as phrasal verb forms in BNC. Table 3 below lists the lexical verbs functioning in phrasal verb combinations in the NCERT grade 1 ESL textbook with their respective rank in comparison with the top 20 LV lemmas functioning in phrasal verb combinations in BNC.

Table 3. Relative comparison of LV in PV constructions in the textbook with BNC.

	LV functioning in PV form in the textbook	Rank in BNC top 20 LV functioning in PV
1.	Act	*
2.	Climb	*
3.	Come	2
4.	Fly	*
5.	Get	4
6.	Go	1
7.	Grow	*
8.	Hold	19
9.	Look	9
10.	Put	10
11.	Run	*
12.	Stay	*
13.	Take	3
14.	Wake	*
15.	Walk	*

* Shows the absence of the lexical verb in the BNC list.

The relative comparison of the lexical verb (LV) in the textbook with the top 20 LV in BNC occurring in phrasal verb constructions in both the corpora shows that of the 7 lexical verbs in the textbook that resemble the BNC list, 4 LVs fall into the category of top 10 lexical verb lemmas functioning as phrasal verb form in BNC. This means while selecting the phrasal verbs in the textbook the focus was to go by the lexical verbs that are frequent to make phrasal verbs instead of taking phrasal verbs as a unit itself. Therefore, the most frequent phrasal verbs of BNC and COCA are completely missing in the NCERT textbook.

Fig.2. Frequency and percentage of particles used to form phrasal verbs in NCERT Class 1 ESL textbook.

Distribution and Use of Phrasal Verbs in a Grade I ESL Textbook

Particle	Frequency	Percentage
At	12	35%
Up	5	15%
Out	4	12%
In	3	9%
Off	2	6%
Into	2	6%
Along	1	3%
Away	3	9%
On	1	3%
Down	1	3%

The particles functioning as phrasal verb combinations in the textbook are then compared with the top 16 most frequent particles functioning as phrasal verb forms in the British National Corpus (BNC) (Gardner & Davies, 2007). We found that the particles *up*, *out*, *in*, *off*, *along*, *on*, and *down* match the target list of particles in BNC. Thus, out of 10 particles in the textbook 7 matches with the most frequent particles used to form phrasal verbs in BNC. Table 4 below presents the same.

Table 4. The frequency rank of phrasal verb particles in the textbook with the top 16 most frequent particles in phrasal verb construction in BNC.

Si no	Phrasal verb particles in the textbook	Frequency rank in BNC
1.	At	*
2.	Up	1
3.	Out	2
4.	In	7
5.	Off	6
6.	Into	*
7.	Along	13
8.	Away	*
9.	On	5
10.	Down	4

There are, in total, 15 lexical verbs found in the NCERT Class 1 textbook that take part in the making of phrasal verbs, and 10 particles combine with these verbs in joint configuration. *Look* is the most frequent verb found in Class 1 which takes part in the phrasal verb construction. It has an occurrence of 13, accounting for 38% (12 times with 'at' and once with 'out'). *at*, *up*,

and *out* are the most frequent particles that go with the lexical verbs to make phrasal verbs, accounting for 35%, 15% and 12%, respectively.

After extracting all the occurrences of phrasal verbs in the target textbook material, the next step focuses on sorting them out into their various grammatical patterns or structural configurations, as phrasal verbs may occur in a wide range of syntactic configurations. Consequently, a pretty wide list of the distributional possibilities of these combinations as used in the corpus was developed. This list involves five different grammatical patterns of phrasal verbs, which run as follows:

Structural Patterns of PVs observed in NCERT class-1 textbook.

- I. V + Prt + NP- look at the picture- *compositional*, Read and act out this story- *idiomatic*. (Freq- 18)
- II. V + Prt- The wind came along- *literal*. The mosquito flew off- to disappear- *idiomatic/figurative/ extended*. (Freq- 8)
- III. PV (V + Prt) + Prep + NP- Appu came down to the river. I climbed up on a big tree. - *Literal* (Freq- 6)
- IV. V + Prt + NP + PP- look at the pictures of the animal. - *Literal* (Freq- 1)
- V. PV (V + Prt) + Non-Finite Infinitive Tense Particle + PV (V + Prt) + PP (P + NP)- She woke up to look out of her window. - *Literal/Compositional*. (Freq-1)

Fig.3. Frequency and percentage of structural patterns of phrasal verb in NCERT class 1 ESL textbook

Structural Patterns	Frequency	Percentage
V + Prt + NP	18	52%
V + Prt	8	24%
PV (V + Prt) + Prep + NP	6	18%
V + Prt + NP + PP	1	3%
PV (V + Prt) + Non-Finite Infinitive Tense Particle + PV (V + Prt) + PP (P + NP)	1	3%

Further, the identified phrasal verbs are analysed on the basis of their semantic nature. Semantically, most of the phrasal verbs denote their literal or compositional meaning, that is, the combined meaning of the verb and the particle. In other words, both constitutive elements partake in the formation of meaning. A few phrasal verbs represent the extended or metaphorical meaning. However, we do not find any evidence of aspectual or semi-idiomatic phrasal verbs in the target textbook. Table 5 presented below shows the semantic nature of phrasal verbs along with their frequency and percentage distribution. Some sample sentences from the textbook have also been presented here.

Table 5: The semantic nature of phrasal verbs along with their frequency and percentage distribution in the target textbook.

Distribution and Use of Phrasal Verbs in a Grade I ESL Textbook

	Semantic Types of EPVs	Sample sentences	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Literal/compositional	Look at the picture. Appu came down to the river.	26	76%
2.	Aspectual/semi-idiomatic	*	*	*
3.	Metaphorical/ Idiomatic	Read and act out this story. (to perform) The mosquito flew off. (to disappear)	8	24%

* Shows the absence of the phrasal verbs in the particular semantic category.

Fig 4. The semantic distribution of the phrasal verbs in the NCERT class-1 ESL textbook in the form of a pie chart.

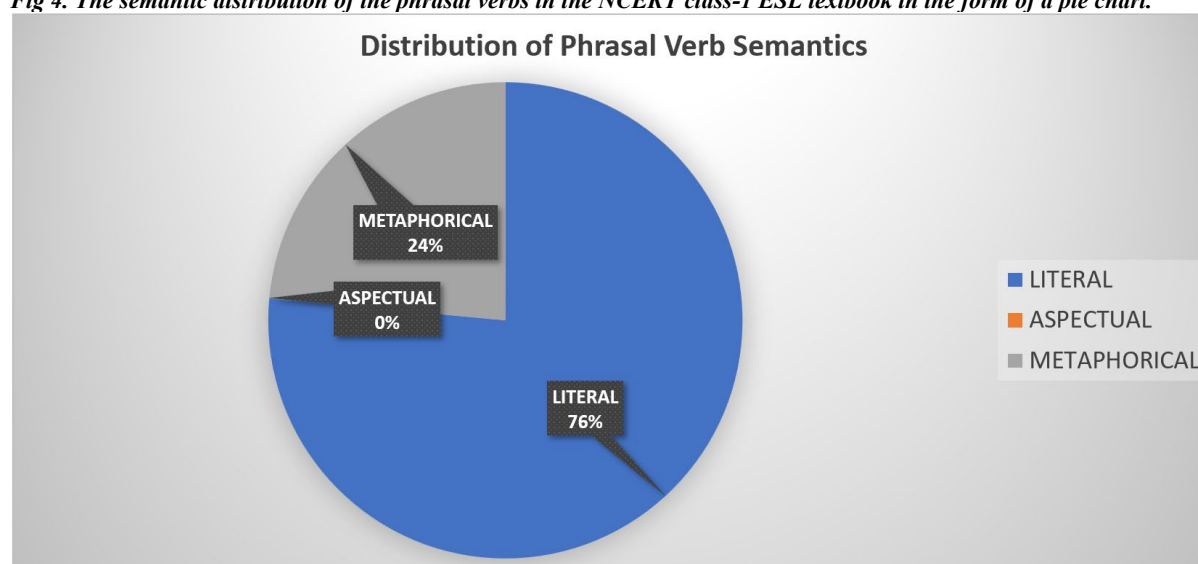


Figure 4 clearly shows that most of the PVs are presented in their literal or basic senses, and some phrasal verbs denote idiomatic/metaphorical ones. 76% of the total phrasal verbs are presented in their basic sense, and 24% represent metaphorical senses. Structurally speaking, all the phrasal verbs are presented in Continuous / Non-separable/ Joint configuration. It means that the object is placed after the PV for the transitive one. There are some instances where a three-word sequence of lexical verb + particle + preposition (such as climb up on) that is often termed as phrasal prepositional verb is also observed, and they denote the compositional meaning. Lexical verbs are mostly verbs of motion, and particles belonging to the group of spatial orientation are presented in the Class-1- ESL textbook.

DISCUSSION

Phrasal verbs are highly significant in ESL (English as a Second Language) textbooks as they are commonly used in everyday English communication and play a crucial role in helping learners become fluent and natural in the language. The main aim of this study is to examine

the patterns of phrasal verbs in the NCERT Grade 1 Indian ESL textbook and compare the findings against their respective rank with the most frequent PVs in BNC and COCA (Liu, 2011). In total, 34 occurrences of PVs were observed. These 34 occurrences consist of 15 distinct lexical verbs in combination with 10 different particles accounting for 19 distinct phrasal verbs in the target textbook. Subsequently, the comparison of these phrasal verbs against the most frequent list of phrasal verbs in BNC and COCA reveals that there seems to be a significant disparity between the frequency distribution of the phrasal verbs in the selected corpora and the target textbook. Only one phrasal verb, i.e., *go out*, finds a spot in both the corpora at the 6th and 8th position, respectively. Other phrasal verbs have a comparatively lower rank order in the corpora frequency list, i.e., no phrasal verb finds a spot in the top 10 list of both corpora. This indicates that the selection of phrasal verbs fails to adhere to corpus-informed findings and research in language teaching.

The next research question aimed at identifying the diverse structural and semantic patterns of the phrasal verbs in the target textbook. The findings show that most occurrences are transitive constructions (accounting for 55% of total occurrences) following the Lexical verb + Particle + NP pattern that often denotes the literal/compositional meaning. However, certain instances of intransitive constructions (i.e., phrasal verbs are not followed by an NP) represent the idiomaticity of the verb particle combinations. From the structural perspective, the transitive constructions are more frequent than the intransitive ones in the target textbook. This reveals that despite the five structural patterns of phrasal verbs found in the target textbook, the significance is paid to their complex sentential environment in contrast to their complex semantic interpretation. Similarly, as evidenced by Fig. (4) presented above, we can see the predominance of literal phrasal verbs over aspectual and idiomatic phrasal verbs. This implies that semantic complexities have been taken care of while representing them in the textbook. However, the absence of aspectual phrasal verbs raises concern. We, therefore, suggest that aspectual phrasal verbs should be introduced before idiomatic phrasal verbs, as on the complexities level, the aspectual phrasal verbs are partially compositional in the sense that the verb retains its basic/core meaning, and the particle provides aspectual information (completion, inception, progression, etc.) to the action represented by the verb.

Our study noticed that the distribution of phrasal verbs was uneven and random. This may indicate that the selection was based on intuition rather than corpus-based evidence. Corpus findings have greater significance in the design and development of instructional material. Alavi and Rajabpoor (2015) explain that learners might tend to become more selective in learning, preferring to accelerate their learning time on items that occur more frequently in the language and are more practical. In addition, the implementation of corpus-based approaches to select vocabulary and phraseological units – as proposed by several authors (Minugh, 2002; Liu, 2011; Simpson & Mendis, 2003; Grant, 2005; Gardner & Davis, 2007), could prove more reliable – especially when it comes to the objectivity of the resulting selection. Koprowski (2005) expressed discontent with the absence of uniformity among textbooks, noting that developers of English Language Teaching (ELT) materials do not adhere to any systematic criterion when selecting vocabulary items like phrasal verbs. They make subjective decisions about which items to select and include, relying on their experience and intuition. Similarly, McPartland (1983, p. 155) affirms that the regular use of phrasal verbs in language input appears to speed up the process of language acquisition, regardless of the complexity of meaning and structure.

CONCLUSION

Our study attempted to address a major question: to what extent corpus linguistics helps in the evaluation of the ESL material. We conclude at the end of this study that corpus linguistic input certainly can guide the material planners to select the appropriate vocabulary especially the complex items like phrasal verbs when designing the textbooks. The selection of the most frequent but non-polysemous and compositional phrasal verbs is ideal in a textbook written for early learners. Although the textbook selected mostly compositional and non-polysemous phrasal verbs which leave no speculation about their meanings, it does not take into account the frequency of usage of the phrasal verbs. The use of phrasal verbs with direct compositional meaning fits well with the cognitive maturity level of the early learners.

As far as the meaning is concerned, it has been observed that both the lexical verb and particle partake in the formulation of meaning. For instance, the lexical verb *look* is found to be most frequent with the particle *at* where both the verb and the particle partake to denote the literal meaning. It is really surprising that such a common action phrasal verb does not appear even in the frequency list of the spoken corpus. However, we speculate if the corpus is of spontaneous speech this phrasal verb would have taken place in the list. The children's vocabulary is full of action verbs and they often understand the sense of a word by some action. Therefore, the phrasal verbs list of the class I textbook has an overwhelming priority of the motion and action-oriented verbs followed by a particle of spatial orientation. Spatial cognition is the most basic cognition with which a child starts learning about her environment. Cognitive linguists also postulate that our language cognition is mostly grounded in our physical and spatial experiences. From this perspective, the choice of mainly the action-oriented lexical verbs and spatial particles is justified. However, it seems the textbook planners selected them separately while making a choice of the phrasal verbs. When these two are combined, which combinations are most frequently used in the language have not been taken into consideration at all. We hope that our evaluative study will certainly help in further improvement of the textbook writers especially for the early learners.

This study does not provide statistics on the occurrence of the phrasal verbs in terms of the total word count of the text. The study is done on a limited short corpus. In future, we plan to extend our work to the rest of the primary grades so that we can come to draw further conclusions on the usage of the phrasal verbs and provide feedback towards the development of educational materials for the early learners of ESL.

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