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## TYPES OF MEANINGS OF PARTICLE “UP” IN ENGLISH PHRASAL VERB “TAKE UP”

**Summary.** The article deals with revealing and analyzing the types of the meanings the particle “up” can have in the phrasal verb “take up”. It was found that it possesses three types of meanings, namely directional, metaphorical, and aspectual. In the course of investigation an important aspectual function of the particle “up” indicating the beginning of the action has been discovered. The research inspires a semantic approach in learning and teaching phrasal verbs meanings.

**Key words:** phrasal verb, particle, aspect, aspectual meaning, telicity.

**Introduction.** Phrasal verbs (PhVs) have introduced innumerable valuable additions to the English vocabulary. They have been an area of intense linguistic study ranging from theoretical research into their semantic and syntactic properties to various applied fields including first and second language acquisition. Once neglected and unduly treated by lexicographers today they enjoy specialized dictionaries and numerous self-study course books for learners of English. It is often said that PhVs are rather colloquial or informal and more appropriate to spoken English than written, and even that it is better to avoid them and choose single-word equivalents or synonyms instead. However, in many cases PhVs and their synonyms have different ranges of use, meaning, or collocation, so that single-word synonyms cannot be substituted appropriately for PhVs.

PhVs are combinations of a verb and an adverb or preposition that function together as a single unit of meaning [1, p. 1]. Biber and others [2, p. 58–59] define PhV as a multi-word lexical unit, as a sequence of word forms which functions as a single grammatical unit and which has become lexicalized, often with a non-compositional meaning. As claimed by E. Kovacs [3, p. 141], PhVs consist of a “base verb” such as “go”, “put” or “set” and a particle such as “down”, “back” or “off”. When a learner encounters an unfamiliar phrasal verb, he/she will often know what the base word means and what the particle means – but put the two together and you get something completely different. It is an indisputable fact that PhVs meanings are not transparent. They can range from reasonably predictable occurrences to highly unpredictable ones. It is obvious that the meaning of PhV cannot be merely predicted from the meanings of its constituents: the verb and the particle. We hope that the methods applied in the research will contribute enough to proper understanding of PhVs semantics instead of just guessing it.

As far as research into PhVs is concerned, there is not much attention given to the semantic properties of the particles and their contribution to the whole meaning of PhVs. The topicality of the paper consists in division of PhVs particles into three types of meanings: directional, metaphorical, and aspectual.

**The aim** of the present paper is to reveal and analyze the types of the meanings the particle “up” can have in the PhV “take up”.

**Presentation of the main research material.** Understanding the meaning of a verb component in PhVs is important but not

always sufficient. In many cases the major problem with PhVs is gaining inside into the meanings of their particles and understanding why this particle is used and another one is not. Particles in PhVs have been of great interest to cognitive linguists [4; 5; 6; etc.]. They showed that the meanings of particles in PhVs form a network of related senses. However, most of their studies were concentrated on describing the semantics of particles from the perspective of their special (directional) or metaphorical (figurative) senses. They were looking for a correlation between the direction the particle expresses in the vertical or horizontal dimension and the metaphorical meaning it can motivate in PhV. Only a few authors, namely S. Lindner [7], T. Viiburg [8], M. Walcova [9] have explored the topic of particles as aspect markers in English PhVs, that is defined their aspectual meaning.

According to S.E. Goursky, “adverbial particles in phrasal verbs are not denied their independent meaning and are the only reliable companions of the verb components in the sentence” [10, p. 21]. As claimed by E. Kovacs, the meaning of particles in PhVs is not at all arbitrary [3, p. 157]. Biber [2, p. 403] indicates that adverbial particles all have core special or locative meanings <...> however, they are commonly used with extended meanings. M. Walcova has established such aspectual features as dynamicity, durativity, and telicity [9, p. 7]. Consider a typical example from the literature on telicity of verbs “drink-drink up”. The received opinion is that “up” adds an inherent endpoint (i.e. telicity) to the otherwise atelic verb “drink” [9, p. 63].

According to different treatments of various authors aspect can be identified as a characteristic of a verb, a phrase or even a whole sentence [8, p. 13]. In general, aspect is a grammatical category that expresses how an action, event, or state, denoted by a verb, extends over time. Perfective aspect is used in referring to an event conceived as bounded and unitary without reference to any flow of time. Imperfective aspect is used for situations conceived as existing continuously or repetitively as time flows [11]. T. Viiburg distinguishes completive, disintegrative, continuous aspects, as well as next stage aspect, reciprocative, and reversative aspects [8, p. 16–17]. The researcher acknowledges that disintegration and completion in particular have an inherent meaning of perfectiveness. What sets them apart from each other is that while the use of the completive aspect draws attention to something being completed, disintegration emphasizes that something disappears or is completely removed [8, p. 17–18]. As pointed out by M. Walkova, in case of particles used in their special sense their function was always marking direction, in case of metaphorical particles the usage was most commonly motivated by an orientational metaphor like “more is up” and in case of aspectual particles, the specific functional meaning referred to a type of aspect, for example completion, continuation or disintegration [9, p. 29–30].

Our research concentrates on the meanings of the particle “up”. It occurs in 482 PhVs in the Collins Cobuild Dictionary

of Phrasal Verbs [CCDPhVs] and is the commonest of the particles used in combinations. It has the following 12 fixed meanings: 1) movement and position; 2) increasing and improving; 3) preparing and beginning; 4) fastening and restricting; 5) approaching; 6) disrupting and damaging; 7) completing and finishing; 8) rejecting and surrendering; 9) happening and creating; 10) collecting and togetherness; 11) revealing and discovering; 12) separating [CCDPhVs, p. 487–491]. These fixed meanings of the particle “up” contribute to a variety of combinations in the process of creating PhVs. The division of them into three types of meanings, namely directional, metaphorical and aspectual will facilitate the procedure of decoding PhVs meanings.

We have examined and grouped the 15 meanings of the PhV “take up” included in CCDPhVs (take up<sub>1</sub> – take up<sub>15</sub>) according to the corresponding type of the meaning of their particles.

The directional meaning of the particle “up” indicating movement and position was revealed in PhVs take up<sub>1</sub>, take up<sub>2</sub>, take up<sub>10</sub> and take up<sub>11</sub>.

*Take up<sub>1</sub>* – if you take someone or something up, you go with them, or make them go with you, to a higher level, position, or place:

*e. g. I will take Fanny up to my room now [CCDPhVs, p. 393].*

*Take up<sub>2</sub>* – if you take up an object, you begin to hold it or carry it:

*e. g. She took up the box and tapped the lid. [CCDPhVs, p. 393].*

*Take up<sub>10</sub>* – if you take up a particular position, you move to it:

*e. g. The fire engines had taken up position by the runway [CCDPhVs, p. 394].*

*Take up<sub>11</sub>* – if something that is fixed to a surface is taken up, it is removed from that surface by force:

*e. g. The rails were taken up and used to make weapons [CCDPhVs, p. 394].*

While analyzing the second type of the meaning of the particle “up” we noticed a clear connection between its directional meaning and its metaphorical function. For instance, “up” directionally describes movement towards a higher position; metaphorically it has to do with increases in size, number or strength. In addition, “up” can also be used to indicate an increase in quantity or intensity. The metaphorical meaning of increasing and improving was found in take up<sub>13</sub>.

*Take up<sub>13</sub>* – if someone takes you up when you are starting a career, they help, support, and encourage you to succeed:

*e. g. You are lucky to have been taken up by a clergyman [CCDPhVs, p. 394].*

The metaphorical meaning of fastening and restricting we revealed in take up<sub>12</sub>:

*Take up<sub>12</sub>* – if you take up something such as a dress or a pair of trousers, you shorten it by folding up the bottom edge and stitching it in place:

*e. g. You can always take that skirt up if you don't like it that long [CCDPhVs, p. 394].*

The metaphorical meaning of happening and creating was discovered in take up<sub>4</sub>, take up<sub>5</sub>, take up<sub>9</sub>, and take up<sub>14</sub>:

*Take up<sub>4</sub>* – if you take up a point, idea, or issue that you think is important, you draw attention to it and cause it to be discussed or dealt with:

*e. g. The committee is expected to take up the question of the government's role in the arts [CCDPhVs, p. 393].*

*Take up<sub>5</sub>* – if you take up an offer, challenge, or opportunity, you accept it:

*e. g. She wished Jane would take up Derek's offer to decorate the house [CCDPhVs, p. 393].*

*Take up<sub>9</sub>* – if something takes up a particular amount of time, space, or effort, it uses that amount:

*e. g. Dresses don't take up much space [CCDPhVs, p. 394].*

*Take up<sub>14</sub>* – to take up moisture, gas, or other substance means to absorb it:

*e. g. Red blood cells take up oxygen [CCDPhVs, p. 394].*

The metaphorical meaning of collecting and togetherness was found in PhV take up<sub>15</sub>:

*Take up<sub>15</sub>* – if you take up a collection of money, you collect it from people:

*e. g. He took up a collection and sent the money to Jerusalem [CCDPhVs, p. 394].*

The English particle “up” has been defined as a potential aspect making particle by many authors. Its main and the most spread aspectual function is to express the completion of the action. However, an overview of the particle “up” meanings has shown that it doesn't motivate the aspectual meaning of completion in the PhV under consideration. In the course of investigation another important aspectual function of the particle “up” indicating the beginning of the action has been revealed in PhVs take up<sub>3</sub>, take up<sub>6</sub>, take up<sub>7</sub>, and take up<sub>8</sub>. The sentences given below provide further support for the claim.

*Take up<sub>3</sub>* – if you take up an activity or job, you start doing it:

*e. g. She decided to take up medicine as a career [CCDPhVs, p. 393].*

*Take up<sub>6</sub>* – if you take up a particular attitude, belief, or way of doing something, you start to have it:

*e. g. They had abandoned Californian living patterns and had taken up European ones [CCDPhVs, p. 393].*

*Take up<sub>7</sub>* – if you take up an activity that was interrupted, you continue doing it from the point where it had stopped:

*e. g. Sam took up the story [CCDPhVs, p. 393].*

*Take up<sub>8</sub>* – if you take up a song or chant that other people are singing or shouting, you start singing it or shouting it to them:

*e. g. The other boys took up the cry till the mountain rang [CCDPhVs, p. 384].*

**Conclusions.** Having analyzed the 15 meanings of “take up” registered in CCDPhVs we revealed that four of them (take up<sub>1</sub>, take up<sub>2</sub>, take up<sub>10</sub>, take up<sub>11</sub>) are formed with the particle “up” in the directional meaning, seven meanings (take up<sub>4</sub>, take up<sub>5</sub>, take up<sub>9</sub>, take up<sub>12</sub>, take up<sub>13</sub>, take up<sub>14</sub>, take up<sub>15</sub>) are formed with the particle “up” referring to the metaphorical meaning and four meanings (take up<sub>3</sub>, take up<sub>6</sub>, take up<sub>7</sub>, take up<sub>8</sub>) in which the particle “up” carries an aspectual function. The obtained results showed that the particle “up” in PhVs can motivate the aspectual meaning of beginning of an action as well as the aspectual meaning of completion.

The number of English PhVs is constantly growing and changing. New combinations appear and spread. We are convinced that they are rarely formed on a random basis. That's why knowing the particular meanings of the particles can to some extent make them more anticipated and analyzable. The paper hopes to inspire a semantic approach in learning and teaching PhVs meanings. Knowing the type of the meaning the particle “up” can occur will facilitate the semantic “reading” of the whole meaning of PhV “take up”. The prospects of the research we see in applying the methodology to analyzing PhVs containing the particle “up” in their structure.

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**Вислободська І. М. Типи значень частки «up» в англійському фразовому дієслові «take up»**

**Анотація.** У статті визначено та проаналізовано типи значень частки «up» в англійському фразовому дієслові «take up». Виявлено три типи значень, характерних для неї, а саме значення напрямку, метафоричне та аспектуальне значення. Результати дослідження показали, що основне аспектуальне значення частки «up» вказує на те, що завершеність дії не долучається до формування семантики фразового дієслова «take up». Натомість у досліджуваному дієслові активізується важливе аспектуальне значення на позначення початку дії.

**Ключові слова:** фразове дієслово, частка, аспект, аспектуальне значення, завершеність.

**Вислободская И. М. Типы значений частицы «up» в английском фразовом глаголе «take up»**

**Аннотация.** В статье определяются и исследуются типы значений частицы «up» в английском фразовом глаголе «take up». Обнаружено три типа значений характерных для неё, а именно значение направления, метафорическое и аспектуальное значения. Результаты исследования указывают, что главное аспектуальное значение частицы «up» указывает на то, что завершение действия не участвует в формировании семантики фразового глагола «take up». В исследованном глаголе активизируется аспектуальное значение, которое указывает на начало действия.

**Ключевые слова:** фразовый глагол, частица, аспект, аспектуальное значение, завершение.