THE PROBLEM OF UNDERSTANDING AND USING ENGLISH PHRASAL VERBS AMONG FINAL-YEAR UNDERGRADUATES IN SELECTED NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

BY

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MAY, 1998.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis was written by me and that it is the product of my own research. It has never been presented in any previous application for higher degree. All quotations are clearly indicated while sources of information have been acknowledged by means of references.

G.S. YAKUBU

MAY, 1998.

CERTIFICATION

This thesis entitled "The Problem of Understanding and Using Phrasal Verbs Among Final-Year Undergraduates in Selected Universities and Colleges of Education" by Garba Sadiq Yakubu meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.



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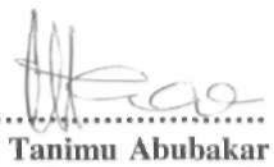


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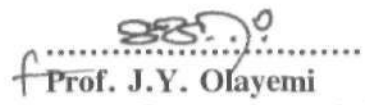
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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my late grandmother, Alhajiya Haafsatu and my guardian, Alhaji Mahmud Abubakar Dembo, for laying a solid foundation for my education. It is also dedicated to:

Maimunatu Isa Abdulkarim	-	my dear wife
Isa Sadiq	-	Son
Abdulkarim Sadiq	-	Son
Hassan Sadiq	-	Son
Hussain Sadiq	-	Son
Maryam Sadiq	-	beloved daughter

for all their love, understanding and patience.

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ABSTRACT

Several studies have been conducted to investigate and describe the phenomenon called "Nigerian English." These have been in the areas of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. Unfortunately, however, scholarly papers or any rigorous studies aimed mainly at elaborating the complex nature of English idioms and phrasal verbs as it applies to the Nigerian local context have been very few and far between. On the face of such an orientation, the present researcher felt very strongly that some aspects of idiomaticity require more indepth investigation than being treated superficially.

This study, therefore, sought to complement what other researchers have done. It aimed primarily at describing as adequately and objectively as possible how final-year undergraduates in selected Nigerian higher institutions of learning interpreted and used English phrasal verbs. It isolated only one of the six levels of idiomaticity (the fourth level) postulated by Fraser in order to call the attention of Nigerians to this indispensable but under-rated and neglected aspect of English. This (fourth) level entailed the extraction of some constituent of an idiom to some extra-idiom position in a sentence. This is indicated by a number of transformations such as the particle movement transformation where the particle is extracted from the idiom.

A total of 849 subjects were drawn randomly from three selected Nigerian universities and two Federal Colleges of Education and subjected to a one-shot test designed by the researcher. Some of the items required the subjects to construct pairs of sentences to distinguish the use of such phrasal verbs as, go under, kick off or cook up used first literally and then idiomatically. Both criterion referenced and norm referenced forms of testing were employed in this study. The subjects' scores in the test constituted the primary data for the present study.

Descriptive statistics was used in presenting the data in the form of frequency tables, polygons and histograms. Some statistics such as the means and standard deviations were also employed for computing the findings. A group or sector analysis was done so as to establish a typology of how final-year Nigerian undergraduates interpreted and used English phrasal verbs. An abstraction of a grammatical model was therefore provided for the Nigerian users of English as regards phrasal verbs.

It was discovered that the general performance in each school was rather poor as seen from their mean scores. Out of a total sample size of 849 subjects that were drawn for the study, only 245 (28.85%) passed. The inability to use and understand English phrasal verbs appropriately certainly hinders effective communication in both formal and informal situations. Our study therefore has important implications for students, teachers, authors, educational planners and course designers. Two major avenues (the direct channel and the incipient avenue) have been recommended for Nigerian users of English to improve their general proficiency especially the mastery of phrasal verbs.

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Chapter 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Problem of Verbal Idioms

The unique behaviour of idioms has been a subject of interest to several linguists. Idioms have been dealt with under various linguistic terms, such as "ready-made utterances" (Lyons, 1968:177) ,"Lexemes and sememes" (Makkai, 1972: 120) and "Hyper-morphemes" (Pike, 1967:426, citied in makkai, 1972:42). Others are Taha's "two-word verb", Fraser's "verb-particle combination", Kennedy's tentative "verb-adverb compound", Quirk et al's "multi-word verb" as well as Tregidgo's "phrasal verb".

It is noteworthy that many linguists have adopted this last-term (phrasal verb) purely for the sake of convenience. Equally important is the fact that the central focus of the present study is on the nature of phrasal verbs and a description of how undergraduates in selected Nigerian Universities and colleges of education interpret and use them at the productive and receptive levels.

Perhaps, it will be useful to explain to the general reader that a phrasal verb is a group of words that acts like a verb and consists usually of a verb with an adverb and / or a preposition. "Get by", "use up"and "put up with" are examples of phrasal verbs.

As we shall see shortly, phrasal verbs appear in several possible combinations. What is of most concern to us at this stage is that they fall

under two broad categories namely, literal and idiomatic phrasal verbs. They are literal when each of the words that make up the phase retains its basic lexical meaning as in:

The police are going into the house.

We could see clearly that the underlined phrasal verb is synonymous with "enter" and is therefore literal. On the contrary, a phrasal verb is idiomatic when the words that constitute it lose their lexical meanings and take on a new figurative one as in:

The police are going into the matter.

In this case, the same phrasal verb is synonymous with "investigate". Naturally, we do not go into a matter in the same manner as we go into a house. You may also notice that we have used "constitute" in place of "make up" in the above examples just to show the nature of phrasal verbs.

1.1.1 The Definitive Properties of Idioms

There are differences among linguists in the inclusiveness of the definitions of idioms. Hockett (1958:171) defines an idiom very broadly as "a grammatical form which has a meaning that cannot be deduced from its structure", and he thus includes pronouns, proper names, figures of speech, phrasal compounds and abbreviations. Tregidgo (1959) views an idiom as being plainly a set expression which can only be altered to a limited extent, and which must be learnt and used exactly. Rudolf (1968), Pietro (1971) and

Fraser (1974) regard an idiom as a single constituent or series of constituents whose semantic interpretation is independent of the formatives which compose it. Lyons (1968:177) would include a variety of phrases learned as unanalysed wholes, including greetings such as "How do you do?" and proverbs.

Perhaps, the definition given by Balint (1969), cited in Makkai (1972: 45) is closer, just like Fraser's above, to the usual dictionary definition: (an idiom is) "a phraseological unit whose meaning cannot be arrived at from the separate meaning of the constituents of the unit." Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English (1948:421). It is with this type of definition that the present study primarily concerns itself especially as it applies to phrasal verbs.

Furthermore, Palmer (1981:79) maintains that "... the meaning of the resultant combination is opaque. It is not related to the meaning of the individual words but is sometimes (though not always) nearer to the meaning of a single word". Similarly, Bolinger and Sears (1981:53) regard idioms as "a group of words with set meanings that cannot be calculated by adding up the separate meanings of the parts."

Many linguists have observed that oddity, illogicality and incorrect grammatical forms are acceptable characteristics of idioms despite the fact that many remain regular and logical. They have also observed that there is scarcely any language which does not have such as the English "by and

large" or "to blow somebody to kingdom come". Oddities may also have occurring patterns as one finds in, for example, adverbials consisting of co-ordinated noun phrases: "to fight tooth and nail", "neck and neck", "to go at something hammer and tongs" (Weinreich, 1969: 46). These are some of the distinct characteristics which constrain a speaker of English to focus attention on the idiom as a meaningful unit rather than a patchwork of individual constituents.

In addition, Cowie and Mackin (1979: pp VII-IX) assume that "... an idiom is a combination of two or more words which function as a unit of meaning". While they suggest a scale of idiomaticity in which "pure" or "true" idioms, for example, "step up" occupy the apex, Fraser (1970) postulates a "frozenness hierarchy" which spans from level zero to level six with the most idiomatic, such as "take the bull by the horns" or "put the cart before the horse" at level zero (o). According to him, this implies that idioms which are higher on this hierarchical arrangement permit more changes than those which are lower.

Moreover, Makkai (1972: 153) also notes that there are several patterns which many English idioms follow. He notes, among others, a group of irreversible binomials, which contain two elements in a fixed order, such as "hem and haw" and "hit and miss"; a group with a compulsory indefinite article such as "to blow a fuse" or "to pull a fast one". According to him, many other patterns could be found, but it is important to note that such

minor points as an article can be essential to retaining idiomatic meaning. These explanations are very interesting and helpful to the present study because they enable us to know how much of each level or how many such levels can be tested at a time.

Many linguists have also given attention to what constitutes "pure", "true", "proper" or "completely frozen" as against "semi-opaque" or "transparent" idioms. Glaser (1971:129) describes idioms proper" as those which are "no longer analysable" because their meanings "seem completely unmotivated, petrified or congealed". Some of such idioms are: "to eat one's words" and "to shoot the breeze". Fernando (1978:337) also describes "pure idioms" as does Hatman (1981:48) to whom a pure idiom is "a non-literal set expression whose meaning is not a compositional function of its syntactic constituents but which always has a homonymous literal counterpart". Azuike (1988: 21) observes that this definition is a synthesis of most of the other attempts that seek to characterise "pure" idioms.

Two points have emerged so far from all the above definitions.

i. that idioms are non-literal though they may have homonymous literal counterparts. And it is in this quality that the stylistic capacity of the idiom inheres. Meir (1975: 67) notes that "It lives by this contrast, and by this contrast with another entity: the literal interpretation".

ii. the meaning of an idiom is not always resolvable from its syntax. That is, there is an asymmetry between sense and syntax.

On the basis of the above points Makkai (1972: 122) feels that the most essential property of the idiom is its "disinformation" potential which arises from its having a homonymous literal counterpart. This potential can be realised in the possible literalization of the following idioms by the unwary reader (or learner), [emphasis our own] "to dance on air", "to bite the dust", "to return to Abraham's bosom", "to cash in one's chips" all of which have to do with "death". That is, indeed, one of the factors that prompted the present study - a situation whereby Nigerian speakers of English give literal interpretations to idiomatic phrasal verbs.

The present researcher has, in the course of teaching English at different levels of education from primary to university, observed that learners demonstrate very little knowledge of English idioms in general and phrasal verbs in particular. Specifically, he has observed that at the productive level, such learners seldom use phrasal verbs, most especially the idiomatic ones, while at the receptive level they either completely fail to understand the meanings of the expressions or they misinterpret them by giving them literal or even antonymous meanings. He observes that they (phrasal verbs) are the most taken for granted of all the forms of idiomatic expressions there are. Perhaps, he thinks, this is so because they look too ordinary to cause any serious problems.

The researcher feels that this should not be the case especially if one considers the high frequency at which phrasal verbs are used in both

the print and the electronic media. He, like many other scholars, believes that one of the contributing factors is poor teaching and impoverished classroom conditions. There have also been several cases of serious understanding of our primary and postprimary institutions - a problem that now spills over to higher institutions of learning in the country. The implication here is that by the time the learners go into our universities, many of them may have passed what is called "the critical stage" in their language development.

The bitter truth is that many university lecturers themselves hardly demonstrate an impeccable knowledge of phrasal verbs among several other linguistic deficiencies they may have. This has been particularly noticed at their congress meetings and other informal settings like the Staff Recreation Club (See Jowitt, 1990:129-130). It is, for example, a very common thing among lecturers to use round up/round off, or call up/call off interchangeably as in:

i. The NEC conference will be rounded up tomorrow.

ii. The pass mark should be rounded off to 40%.

iii. Nobody knows when we shall call up the national strike.

iv. The ASUU meeting has been put up indefinitely.

It then becomes very difficult for the learners to be exposed to a rich linguistic environment where they can learn the appropriate use of the expressions among several other things.

Perhaps, another cause is that learners do not read extensively thus reducing their chances of acquiring the required proficiency proportionate to their level of education or socio-linguistic background. Again, they may not be sufficiently motivated to work hard as situations are fast changing in the society such as unemployment, poverty and other uncertainties in life. One can go on and on listing some of the possible factors that hamper their proficiency in general and their ability to use and understand phrasal verbs in particular.

What readily comes to mind is a vivid picture of a vicious-circle in which university graduates take up appointments such as teaching in tertiary institutions like colleges of Education and Polytechnics, which are in turn responsible for the training and production of primary and secondary school teachers. Although there are plans underway to make N.C.E. the minimum teaching qualification at the primary school level, what differences will that ever make? See Omojuwa (1976:32-38).

The present researcher is thus of the opinion that breaking the said vicious-circle could be the first meaningful step towards improving the general proficiency of our learners. This could be done by shifting emphasis from the learners to the quality of the teachers themselves, and the best place to start from, in his own view, is the university. This then is the second major factor that prompted the present study.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

We have already stated two of the factors that prompted this study. The third and perhaps the most important factor is that, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, the scholarly articles or rigorous studies aimed primarily at elaborating the complex nature of phrasal verbs as it applies to the local Nigerian situation and from which empirical conclusions could be drawn are few and far between.

After a long and thorough search, two scholarly papers titled "The use of idioms in Nigerian Newspaper Writing: Problems and Prospects" by Igbani (1986) and "Idiomaticity in Nigerian English" by Azuike (1988) were identified respectively. These two papers, though focused on the Nigerian context, were rather deductive in their approach. In other words, they both concentrated on the concept of idiomaticity in its totality with specific reference to the written medium of communication. On the face of the above orientation, the present researcher feels strongly that some aspects (levels) of idiomaticity have been neglected or under-rated and this does not give us an adequate or objective description of what idiomaticity is all about in the Nigerian context. The researcher's conviction is that the study of such complex issues as idiomaticity should be inductive so that we begin from the parts or levels and arrive at the whole and not vice-versa. It is the strong feeling that each level is as opaque as any other and should therefore be given special attention.

It is with the above considerations that Yakubu (1992) carries out a study titled "Investigating the idiomatic use of phrasal verbs among Diploma Students of Journalism in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria". See the next chapter for details of these three attempts.

Another aspect of the research problem is that scholars, for almost a century now, have not reached a consensus as to the exact number of patterns or levels of English idioms there are. The six levels of idiomaticity proposed by Fraser are very hazy and imprecise. There is no way we could possibly say where one level ends and another one begins judging, of course, from his claim that "... the most significant feature of this proposed hierarchy is that any idiom marked as belonging to one level is automatically marked as belonging to any lower level."

1.2.1 Aims of the Study

This study attempted to probe deeper into the problem of using and understanding English idioms among Nigerian undergraduates. Unlike earlier studies, it isolated only one level of idiomaticity called phrasal verbs so that it could be thoroughly examined, analysed and described. To give such a detailed and systematic description literal phrasal verbs were also examined on the assumption that they too, like their idiomatic counter-parts, posed problems for L2 learners. The idea was to come up with an overall picture of how Nigerian undergraduates use and interpret phrasal verbs in general.

The study thus specifically hoped to:

(a). test the ability of Nigerian undergraduates to use and understand both literal and idiomatic phrasal verbs in the written medium of communication.

(b). find out what actually constitutes their problems.

(c). describe as objectively as possible how such undergraduates interpret and use English phrasal verbs in general.

(d). call the attention of Nigerian speakers of English to this indispensable but rather under-rated aspect of informal English.

(e). add to the findings of earlier researches on idiomaticity as they relate to the Nigerian local situation.

1.2.2 Research Questions

On the basis of the above aims, the present study put forward the following research questions:-

(i) Why do Nigerian undergraduates demonstrate very poor mastery of English phrasal verbs?

(ii) Will Nigerian undergraduates who have been properly trained and strongly motivated show better mastery of phrasal verbs than those who have not?

(iii) Are those of them who intrinsically read extensively likely to be more proficient and intelligible than others who do not?

(iv) Will there be any significant difference in the mean scores of the subjects drawn from the various institutions of higher learning?

1.2.3 Significance of the Study

A lot of phrasal verbs gain entry into English besides the existing ones due to technological advancement as well as language spread/contact. These appear very frequently and in varying degrees of complexity in novels, newspapers, textbooks, magazines, journals, cartoons, advertisements, public announcements, video-films, radio and television programmes. The students in our universities are expected to be full-fledged graduates on the successful completion of their various courses. They are likely to meet a lot of challenges in their future jobs as teachers, teacher-trainers, medical doctors, lawyers, journalists, translators, architects, engineers and preachers. These and other related tasks will, one way or the other invariably require a good knowledge of English phrasal verbs.

Moreover, many scholars have expressed their views on the significance of phrasal verbs. McArthur and Atkins (1974) observe that:

> "The English phrasal verb has always been a headache to the foreign learner. Combinations of verb and adverb or preposition are among the first things the English-speaking child learns to say - Go away, Come along, Shut up. Such expressions form the basis of much everyday communication". (See also Mackenzie, 1974:20).

Seidl and Mcmordie (1979: 4) also remark that "English is very rich

in idiomatic expressions. In fact, it is difficult to speak or write without using idioms".

It is Hornby (1974: xxvii) that describes the importance of English phrasal verbs the most. According to him,

> An important sign of a person who has learnt English from a native-speaker (or a person who has a native-speaker's command of the language) is his knowledge of the meaning and correct use of expressions such as make up one's mind, be all ears, with all one's heart, etc. Native speakers use these expressions naturally and unconsciously.... You [The non-native learner] will need to learn them before using them. The more you use them, the more they will become a natural part of your English. Unless you use them your English will always be foreign.

Similarly, Tregidgo (1959:149) upholds that "A student is likely to speak or write poor English unless he is familiar with the common phrasal verbs which help to make up the language."

It is very fascinating to find the same opinions expressed in a most recent BBC English magazine by D.A. Hill (1998:7):

> One of the most problematic areas for both learners and teachers is phrasal verbs ... It's important that both teachers and students realise that if learners are to sound natural and colloquial in their speech, they must master phrasal verbs. What native speaker uses "tolerate" or "endure" when talking normally? "put up with" is the term anyone who speaks "proper" English uses. Moreover, once students have a good command of these tricky features, they will radically improve the quality of their English ... unfortunately, there are no easy options here. The only way to get to grips with phrasal verbs is through hard graft and this is particularly true of students learning English in their own countries, where they have zero exposure to these constructions outside the classroom.

It is very clear from the above views that the present study would, hopefully, be of inestimable value to students themselves and also to teachers, schools, parents or guardians, educational planners and, indeed, the nation at large.

1.3 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This research has examined the ability of Nigerian undergraduates to use and understand both literal and idiomatic phrasal verbs. It must be re-emphasized that idiomatic phrasal verbs constitute only one level (L4-Extraction) out of the six levels of idiomaticity as postulated by Fraser (1970). That means that the other levels (L6-Unrestricted, L5-Reconstitution, L3-Permutation, L2-Insertion, L1-Adjunction, and L0-Completely Frozen) are beyond the scope of the present study. See the next chapter for details of these levels. The literal phrasal verbs, on the other hand,are thoroughly examined to verify the extent to which they pose problems for L2 learners and to help us account for how phrasal verbs are generally used and interpreted by our undergraduates. The researcher strongly believes that by isolating and focusing on phrasal verbs alone, more indepth, accurate, objective and systematic data could be gathered.

For practical reasons also, it was impossible to sample the entire country. The researcher, however, selected three Nigerian Universities and two Federal Colleges of Education, namely: Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria;

Bayero University, Kano; University of Jos ; Federal College of Education, Kano and Federal college of Education, Zaria. He adopted a stratified random sampling approach by which ANY final-year Nigerian undergraduate could qualify as a respondent. He also hoped that the population samples he drew were fairly representative of all Nigerian undergraduates.

There was the initial problem of deciding which criteria to use in selecting the test items. Frequency of occurrence was one such criterion. There was also the initial problem of authenticating the test instrument itself. This was solved through the assistance of a renowned scholar, an Associate Professor of English and a native speaker of the language, David Jowitt of Bayero University, Kano. He did an acceptability rating of the items that had been collected and considered for inclusion in the instrument.

1.3.1 Sources of Data

Two major sources of collecting data used were primary and secondary sources. Final-year undergraduates in selected Nigerian universities and Federal Colleges of Education were used in collecting the former type of data by subjecting them to a one-shot test designed by the researcher and administered under strict examination condition. The second type of data (secondary data) came specifically from library research through published materials.

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK/LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Preamble

There are two sections in this chapter. The first deals with a review of the different theoretical approaches that have been employed in the study of phrasal verbs and the choice of a model for the analysis of the present investigation. The second segment presents the view of related literature on the use of phrasal verbs in general to cover idiomaticity and phrasal verbs, and the observations of applied linguists on phrasal verbs and language testing.

2.1 Consideration of Differing Theoretical Models

The function of any theory is to provide explanations for some range of observed phenomena. A theory thus provides the crucial descriptions and explanations required to define the tasks involved in managing the phenomena. Linguistics, which is defined as the scientific study of language by means of controlled and empirically verifiable observations, employs different approaches to the study of language depending on the school of thought. The present investigation examines specifically four out of the many approaches to the study of English phrasal verbs namely: the traditionalist, the structuralist, the transformational generative (TG) as well as Quirk et al's approaches. Thereafter, a model is adopted for the analysis

of the present data.

2.2 The Traditionalist Approach

The traditionalist approach to language study is actually little more than an abstraction. In other words, there is no systematically worked-out pattern of language description so labelled. According to Lyons (1968: 4) traditional grammar, like so many other of our academic traditions, dates back to Greece of the 5th century before Christ. It also refers to all attempts to describe or "prescribe" rules for language before the emergence of scientific (linguistic) theories. Language, in the traditional sense, is not studied in itself and for its own sake, but to throw light on other human phenomena. That is why traditional grammar is described by different schools of linguistics as being, among several other things, a highly subjective, prescriptive, misleading and generally unscientific method of language description and analysis. Despite all these shortcomings, the present researcher is of the view that the traditionalist approach can be useful to our investigation.

Blake (1988: 48-65) who adopts a traditionalist approach discusses the verb and its constituents. After defining the verb, he maintains that just as the function of a noun can be accomplished by several words referred to as a noun group, so also the action performed by a verb can be indicated by several words which can on analogy be known as a verb group. He gives the

following examples to illustrate his points:

1. Dorinda laid the table.
2. Dorinda was laying the table.
3. Dorinda laid out her plans.
4. Dorinda was laying out her plans.

Our interest in this case is in the third and fourth sentences. Blake (1988) points out that it is important to realise the fact that the word "out" in them belongs with the verb group. He explains that "out" is not a preposition and one cannot understand "out her plans" as forming a unit of language. The "out", according to him, belongs with "lay", and "lay out" is a separate verb from "lay" and has a different range of meanings. As a verb group "laid out" can be replaced by a single verb; in one of its uses it can be substituted by "explained".

The writer introduces a term known as "extension" to throw more light on the nature of verbs. According to him, an extension comprises a word or more which are to be understood as part of the verb and modify its meaning so that a verb with its extension has a quite separate sense from the simple verb by itself. For example, "to take off" which may mean "to get going successfully" among other meanings, is something quite different from " to take". He explains further that extensions take many forms, but two are more common.

The first is that of a prepositional adverb such as "off" or "up", which is usually added to a common monosyllabic verb like "take" or"set". He advises that it is important to recognise when this word belongs with the verb group and when it is a preposition with its own following noun phrase. Usually, he upholds, the meaning will be a sufficient guide, but it is possible to employ substitution of the verb group by another word or to rearrange the sentence order or structure. He cites the following examples.

5. He came round last night.

6. He came round the corner too fast.

Both sentences, according to him, contain the words "came round". It is easy to see that in the fifth sentence, "round" is an extension to "came", and the verb group may mean he "paid a visit". In the sixth example, however, "round" goes with the "corner" because it tells us where he came. The close link of "round" with "the corner" is seen through the possibility of placing "too fast" between "came" and "round"; but it would not be permissible to break up the sequence of "round the corner" by putting "too fast" after "round". It would, though, be possible to substitute for "round the corner" an adverb such as "there". Thus, in the fifth sentence, if one were to substitute a verb group for "came" and "round"; it would be impossible to substitute something just for "come" and to leave "round" in the sentence. An expression that could be

substituted for "came round" is "dropped in".

Blake (1988) explains further that the second common form of extension is made up of those words which have come to form an idiomatic expression with the head of the verb group so that the whole has a completely separate meaning from that which is implied by its parts. When one says colloquially that "He kicked the bucket", the "bucket" could be understood as a noun group which is the object of "kicked". But the whole expression "kicked the bucket" may have nothing to do with "kicking" or with the "bucket"; it may be another way of saying "He died". The writer maintains that it is therefore quite reasonable to consider "kicked the bucket" in this usage as a verb group consisting of a head "kicked" and an extension "the bucket". He points out that it is naturally impossible to characterise this type of extension since it occurs in many different forms. However, one can say that the extension of the verb group, unlike the qualifier in a noun group, consists of a formulaic set of words which cannot be expanded. One cannot say "He kicked the grey bucket" without changing the structure of the sentence, for the "grey bucket" would be a noun group acting as the object of "kicked" not as the extension within the verb group. He explains that each extension is usually no more than three words long, and the majority contain only a single word.

Similarly, Blake illustrates that a verb such as "steal" can operate in two distinct ways as can be seen in the following sentences.

7. Dorinda stole an apple.

8. Dorinda stole away.

He explains that in each of the above sentences "Dorinda" is the subject. But in the seventh example the verb "stole" has an object, indicating that which was stolen. In the eighth example, however, there is no object because "away" is an extension of the verb group and there is nothing which was stolen.

Close (1975: 230-239), who also adopts a traditionalist approach, identifies four categories of phrasal verbs. He, however, excludes such expressions as; "come in", "Take off your coat" and "Keep away from the fire" whose meaning and use, according to him, can be assumed. He also excludes prepositional verbs such as "belong to", "listen to", "look for" and the others. The four categories are as follows:

Type 1 Verb + Preposition + NP[2]

According to him, prepositions in this category are unstressed, unless otherwise indicated (as in across). Passive is also frequently used when an example of it is given. For example,

(a) "Be about (it)" = "be doing it", as in:

1. Please get me some stamps, and post these letters while you're about it.

(b) "Get at" = (i) "mean", (ii) "criticise", as in:

2. What exactly are you getting at?

3. Are you getting at me? Am I being got at?

(c) "Jump at" = "accept immediately", as in:

4. It's an offer that you won't get again, so I should jump at it if I were you.

Type 2 Verb + Adverb Particle

Close (1975) explains that the participle is always stressed and that there is no passive. For example:

(a) "Answer back" = "argue after receiving order or rebuke", as in:

5. Do what I tell you and don't answer back.

(b) "Break up" = "Come to an end e.g. of a meeting" as in:

6. School has broken up for the Summer holidays.

(c) "Come to" = "regain consciousness", as in:

7. She fainted, and it was half an hour before she came to again.

Type 3 Verb + Object + Adverb Particle or Verb + Adverb Particle + Object.

The particle in this category, affirms close, is stressed when it follows the object; passive is also freely used, as in these examples:

(a) "back up" = "support", for example:

9. Always back up your friends.

10. They like being backed up.

(b) "Call Off" = "Cancel", as in:

11. The meeting has been called off as neither side is prepared to negotiate.

(c) "give up" = (i) "surrender, as in:

12. I want your gun. Give it up.

(ii) "Stop", as in:

13. Why don't you give up smoking?

Type 4 Verb + Adverb Particle + Preposition + NP

Close (1975) explains that the particle in this category is also stressed as in these examples:

(a) "go back on" = "break a promise", as in

14. You promised to let me have that, you don't go back on your word now.

15. Will no one stand up for me, or will you all let me down?

(b) "run up against" = "meet (an obstacle)" as in:

16. You'll find that job difficult. You'd run up against some very tricky problems.

The traditionalist approach is certainly useful to the present investigation. It, however, fails to account for what makes phrasal verbs what they are, the criteria by which to distinguish idiomatic phrasal verbs

from literal ones or the different levels of idiomaticity of such verbs.

2.2.1 The structuralist Approach

The term "structuralism" has been used a slogan and rallying cry by a number of different schools of linguistics, with somewhat different implications, in Europe and America. In the European sense, structuralism refers to the view that there is an abstract relational structure that underlies and is to be distinguished from utterances - a system underlying actual behaviour - and that this is the primary object of study for the linguist. This is the view held by such schools as the Prague School, most notably represented by Nikolay S. Trubetsky and Roman Jacobson, (both Russian emigres), Copenhagen or the Glossematic School (centred around Louis Hjelmslev) as well as John Rupert Firth and his followers referred to as the London School.

Allen (1947: 292-298) adopts the European structuralist approach to the analysis and description of language. He observes that many verbs get strongly associated with certain prepositions in one of the two ways:

(i) Verb and preposition keeping their basic meanings.

(ii) as a compound having an idiomatic meaning (we cannot guess the meaning from the two). For example,

Type (i)

17. Take the novel in your hand and open it at Page 4.

18. He's sitting on a chair and looking out of the window.

19. He spoke about his holiday.

Type (ii)

20. I didn't take to her at first (like).

21. She took after her mother (resembled).

22. We set about preparing dinner (began to prepare).

23. The ship made for the harbour (went towards).

We can easily see that sentences of the first type have phrasal verbs *which retain their literal meanings while those of the second have figurative* meanings. Allen also identifies another group as discussed below:

2.2.1.1 Adverbial Particles

Adverbial particles, according to Allen (1947), combine with verbs even more often than prepositions to form idiomatic compounds. Most of them have the same form as their corresponding prepositions, but the following seven are adverbial only and are never used as prepositions: away, back, out, backward(s), downward(s), upward(s), forward(s). He explains further that adverbial particles are most commonly found as part of compound verbs (or phrasal verbs). As with similar compounds made with

prepositions, these are of two kinds:

Type (i) - Verb and adverb keeping their own basic meanings: "go in", "walk away"; "come out"; "play back", etc.

Type (ii) - Verb and adverb combining to give a new idiomatic meaning: "keep on" (continue); "bring about" (cause); "give in" (yield); "take off" (leave the ground or imitate): "blow up" (explode), etc.

Allen (1947) also explains that some of these compounds can be followed by a preposition to make a further combination: "go in for" (practice for pleasure) "come out with" (say suddenly); "get down to" (apply oneself); "put up with" (suffer, bear), etc. According to him, it is not always easy to distinguish between a prepositional and adverbial compound. He, however, suggests that these are the main differences:

A preposition is closely tied to the pro(noun) it controls -

24. He looked/at the boys.

25. He spoke/to them.

26. He spoke/about his problems.

27. He looked/out of the window.

Conversely, an adverbial particle is closely tied to its verb (as if by a hyphen):

28. Please put-out/the light.

29. We blew-up/the bridge and the rebels gave-in.

2.2.1.2 Word Order

Allen (1947) also explains the word order of prepositions and adverbial particles. As indicated above, a preposition must precede its (pro)noun object while adverbial particle always follows a pronoun object. It usually follows the object even when this is a noun, unless the noun-phrase object is a long one, which would leave the verb too far from its particle:

30. Look the word up in the index.

31. Look up the word in the index.

32. Look up all the difficult words and phrases in the index (the particle "up" can only precede such a long object).

The writer illustrates further that the distinct word-orders of *preposition and adverb can be seen when the object is a pronoun* -

33. (a) Adverbial particle: Look the word up.

(b) Look it up.

34. (a) Preposition: Look up the chimney.

(b) Look up it.

35. (a) Adverbial particle: He couldn't get his talk across (= manage to communicate).

He couldn't get it across.

36. (a) Preposition: He couldn't get across the river.

(b) He couldn't get across it.

2.2.1.3. Stress

Stress is also used as a phonological distinguishing factor between the two. According to Allen, the difference is quite clear in speech because at the end of a phrase a verb with preposition has a final stress on the verb:

37. Give it to the man you ˈspoke to.

38. Who does he ˈtake after?

At the end of a phrase, however, a verb with adverb particle has a final stress on the adverb:

39. Which word are you going to look ˈup?

40. This is the book he brought ˈback, and here's the one he wants to take ˈout.

Phrasal verbs with prepositions, he explains, also take their final stress on the adverb when in this position:

41. We have a lot of troubles to put ˈup with.

42. Chess is a good game to go ˈin for.

He cautions us to note that it is possible for the same verb-adverb compound to have more than one meaning according to the context in which it is used:

43. This box is heavy: I must put it down.

(place on the ground)

44. Shall I put his name down, too? (make note of)

45. The riot was put down by the police. (suppressed).

46. I should put him down as a student. (reckon, consider).

47. He said nothing; we put it down to shyness.

(attributed).

48. You can't get through this door with your umbrella up; you'll have to put it down. (shut).

In the American structuralist view of language, description of the framework of a language is of paramount importance. A given language is considered a system which consists of different levels: phonological, syntactic and semantic. Each of these interacts with and is dependent on the level immediately above it. Thus, structural linguists usually begin their analysis of language at the phonological level which to them is the most accessible and immediately noticeable or observable aspect of language. In insisting upon the necessity of treating each language as a more or less coherent and integrated system, American linguists tend to emphasize, if not to exaggerate, the structural uniqueness of individual languages. The conditions or circumstances under which American linguistics developed from the end of the 19th century made such linguists as Franz Boas, and Bloomfield less concerned with the construction of a general theory of the structure of human language than they were with prescribing sound methodological principles for the analysis of unfamiliar Indo-European languages.

After Boas, the most influential American linguists were Edward Sapir (died 1939) and Leonard Bloomfield (died 1949). Bloomfield's book Language (1933) dominated the field of linguistics for 30 years. In it, he

explicitly adopted a behaviouristic approach to the study of language, eschewing in the name of scientific objectivity all reference to mental or conceptional categories. Of particular consequence was his adoption of the behaviouristic theory of semantics according to which meaning was simply the relationship between a stimulus and a verbal response.

Hornby (1966: 34-35) who was influenced by the above theoretical point of view speaks of phrasal verbs and how they should be learnt and taught. According to him, there are numerous phrasal verbs which are used in patterns with either gerunds or infinitives. He upholds that many of them are not easily suitable for classroom situations for oral drills. When, however, they have occurred in the textbook and have been explained (e.g. by giving an equivalent, either in English or in the language of the pupils), it is often possible to use them incidentally, and so keep them in the minds of the pupils. School textbooks of ordinary length cannot usually provide enough repetitions of new vocabulary items, so we should look out for and use opportunities for repeating them occasionally.

The writer explains further that such phrasal verbs as "go on" and "keep on" (meaning "continue") and "give up" and "leave off" (meaning "stop") are common enough to deserve occasional incidental use, so that the pupils hear them. If a pupil says that something is difficult, the teacher may encourage him by saying:

49. "Go (or keep) on trying". During a day of continuous rain the

teacher may say:

50. "It still goes on raining" or

51. "When will the rain leave off?" or

52. "When will it leave off raining?" Or he may say, of someone known to his pupils.

52. "So and so has given up playing tennis/smoking, etc)".

Hornby (1966) points out that these phrasal verbs are very common in informal English (much commoner than "continue", for example), and by using them in class the teacher will prepare his pupils for the time when they read colloquial English in fiction and drama. "Leave off" means "stop" and, as shown in the examples, is used transitively and intransitively. It is used with gerunds. It is not synonymous with "give up". "Give up" suggests finality, as in "give up smoking". "Leave off" does not suggest finality. If, during a lesson, it rains and then stops, the teacher may say:

53. The rain has stopped.

54. It has stopped raining.

55. The rain has left off.

56. It has left off raining.

These, according to him are four ways of saying the same thing, and all quite common. If, during a lesson, it begins to rain, the teacher may say:

57. "Look, it has begun to rain. It has come on to rain". Come on, as

an impersonal verb with it, is used with an infinitive, not a gerund.

Also adopting the structuralist approach, Lado and Fries (1943: 136-137) obviously influenced by the slogan that "Language is learnt as a set of habits" or the behaviouristic theory in a nutshell, recommend what they call pattern practice for the teaching of phrasal verbs. To them, combinations such as "call on" "call up" could be introduced into a lesson and the teacher's task is simply to get the learners to repeat the expressions so much so that they learn them as a habit. For example:

Practice 3

58. I look like my father. I look like him.

59. I ran into my sister. I ran into her.

60. I ran out of ink. I ran out of it.

61. I call on my teacher. I call on him/her.

62. I get along with the other students. I get along with them.

Practice 4

63. I called up my father. I called him up.

64. I looked up a difficult word. I looked it up.

65. I put on my hat. I put it on.

The two structuralist approaches to the analysis and description of phrasal verbs are indeed useful to the present investigation more especially the European approach. They, however, fail to account for the many other possible combinations in which phrasal verbs appear and their levels of

complexity.

2.2.1.4. The Transformational Generative Approach

The transformational generative school of linguistics propounded by Chomsky (1957) believes that every natural language has a finite set of rules that its speakers internalise and in turn generate an infinite number of sentences. Speakers, according to this view, have the capacity to understand and interpret novel utterances at the levels of phonology (sound), syntax (grammar) or semantics (meaning), even if they may never have heard such utterances before, so long as they are grammatically well-formed.

One of the most important distinctions in Chomsky's theory of language, therefore, is that between competence and performance. That is, the deep-seated difference between a speaker's underlying abilities and the knowledge of the language and his use of that language ability. The two, according to him, are very different and must be kept apart. He maintains that the capacity to be described is an ideal speaker-listener's competence in the language and that linguistics as a discipline should concern itself primarily with the theory of language with a capital L - Language as a universal grammatical theory of linguistic abilities. Transformational generative grammar is therefore a mentalistic theory of language which sets out to tap the ideal speaker's linguistic competence.

According to Jacobs and Rosenbaum (1968: 102-106), adopting the transformational approach, some sentences do contain words known as verb particles in their verb phrases. For example, "up" and "out" in the following sentences:

66. The chemists shook up the mixture.

67. The telegraph operator bawled out the clerk.

They maintain that words such as "up and "out", as used above, are often considered to be prepositions and this, to them, is erroneous and misleading especially if such sentences are compared with the two below:

68. The chemist walked up the street.

69. The telegraph operator walked out the door.

They explain further that there is little use in considering the said words to be prepositions in the four sentences above. In the first pair (66 and 67), the words "up" and "out" can be moved around to the other side of the object, giving the sentences below:

70. The chemist shook the mixture up.

71. The telegraph operator bawled the clerk out.

Conversely, in the second pair (68 and 69), these words cannot be moved around to the other side of the NPS which follow them. If this permutation is carried out, according to them, two ungrammatical sentences arise:

72. *The chemist walked the street up.

73. *The telegraph operator walked the door out.

Thus, despite their superficial similarity, sentences (66) and (67) are somehow syntactically different from sentences (68) and (69).

Jacobs and Rosenbaum explain further that there are other differences between the way they function as prepositions. Prepositions, according to them, may be shifted (or preposed) to the front of sentences when questions are asked. It is on this basis that both of the sentences below are fully grammatical:

74. Up what did the chemist walk?

75. Out of what did the telegraph operator walk?

Contrarily, particles may not be preposed in a question because if they are, ungrammatical sentences often result:

76. *Up what did the chemist shake?

77. *Out who did the telegraph operator bawl?

The explanation for this, according to them, is that when question sentences containing verb particles are generated the particle must remain in its original position. It cannot be preposed:

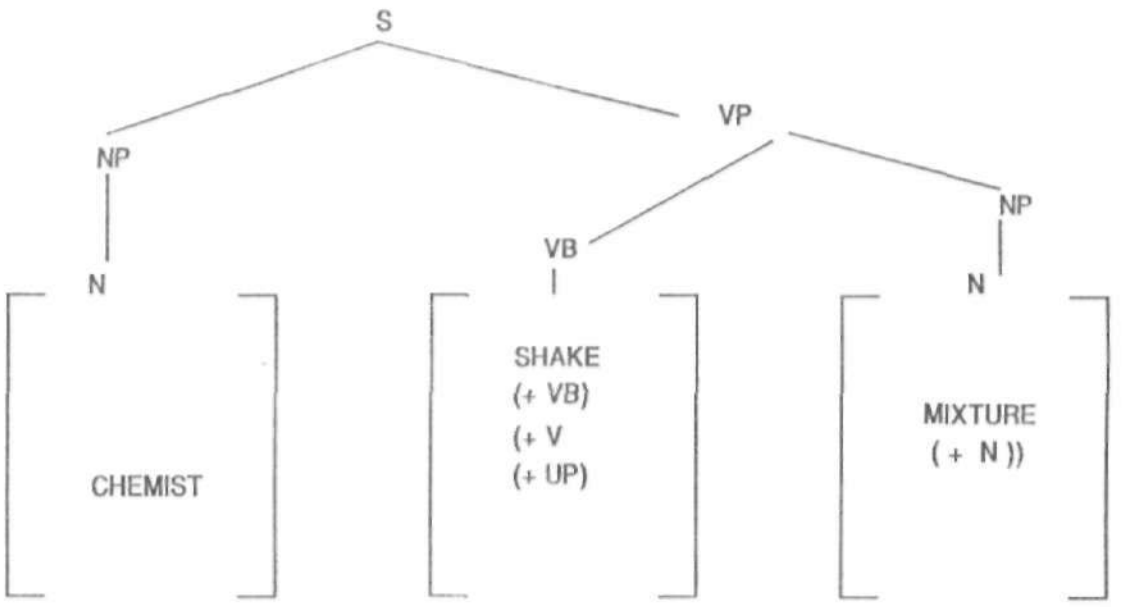
78. What did the chemist shake up?

79. Who(m) did the telegraph operator bawl out?

According to them also, there are at least two ways in which particles can be represented in deep structures. First, they can be represented as actual constituents in the deep structure. Second, they can be represented

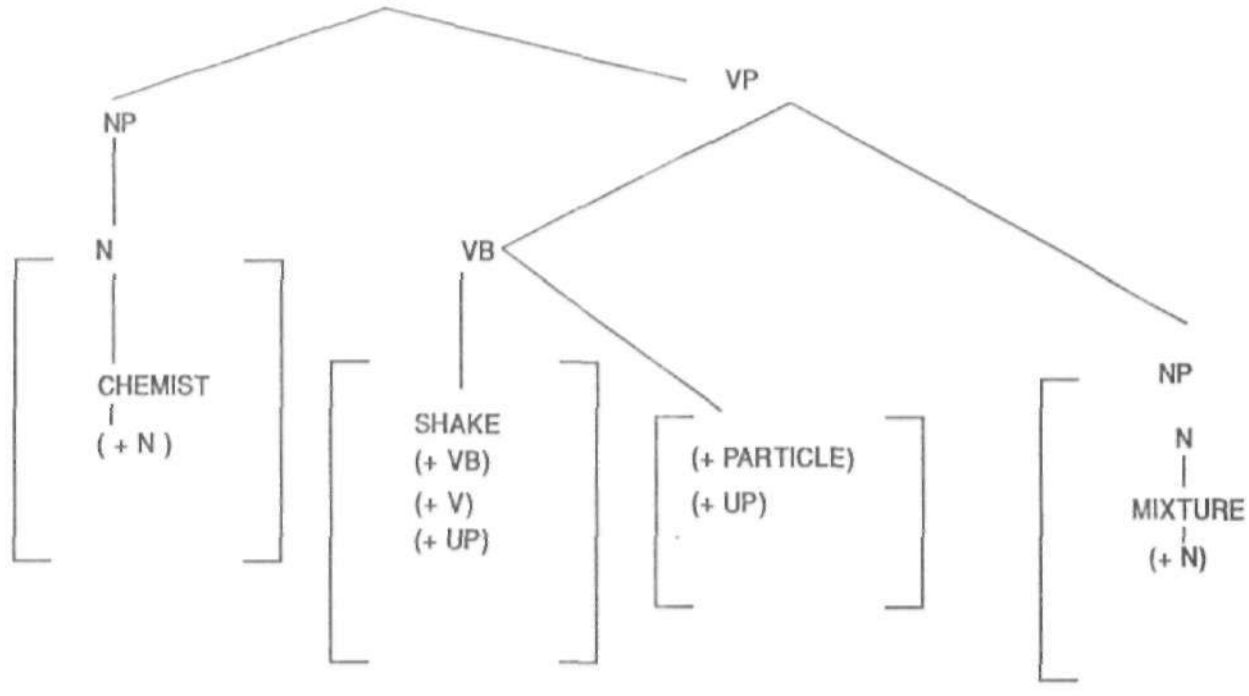
as verb features that cause the application of a transformation which introduces a particle segment into the structure. We must note, however, that this question has not been resolved by grammarians. Thus, the writers adopt what they call "the feature representation of particles" (since in other situations, new evidence is being found for feature analysis rather than constituent analysis).

In terms of their analysis, they uphold that the deep structure of sentence (66) (that is, The chemist shook up the mixture) is:

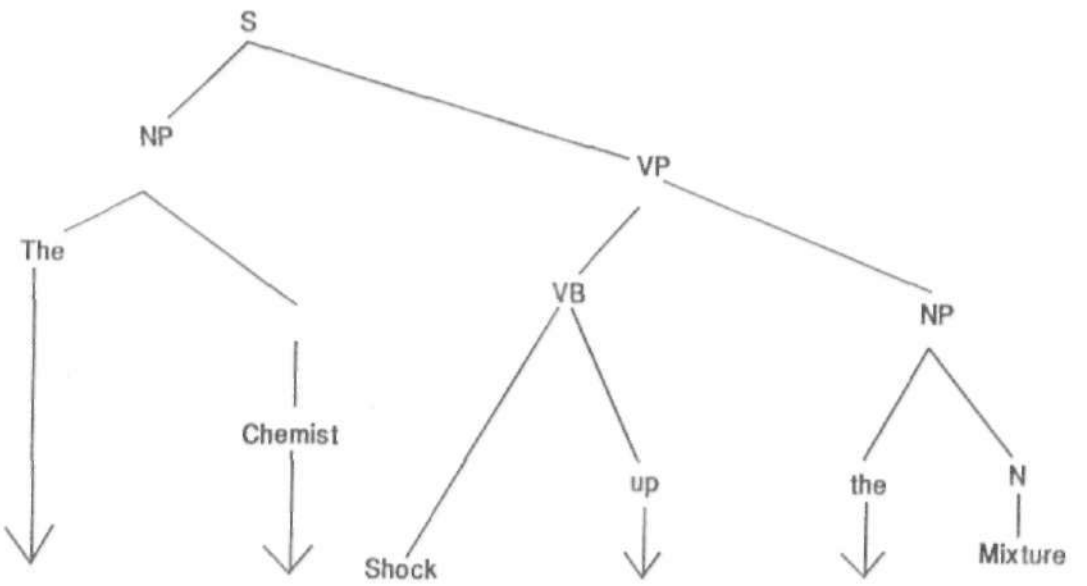


In other words, particles appear in the deep structure neither as constituents such as NP or VP, nor as segments, but as features on the verbal segment.

They go on to explain that the transformation responsible for introducing a particle segment into the structure is simply called the particle transformation. ' This introduces a segment into the verb phrase which contains the feature (+ particle), together with whatever particle feature is specified in the verb segment. They uphold that when the particle transformation is thus applied to the above deep structure, it generates the following structure:



Jacobs and Rosenbaum maintain that if no other transformations are applied to this structure, the segments in this surface structure are replaced by actual words from the lexicon. In this case, the particle segment is replaced by the word "up". (The surface structure below assumes that the particle transformation and the agreement transformation have already been applied):

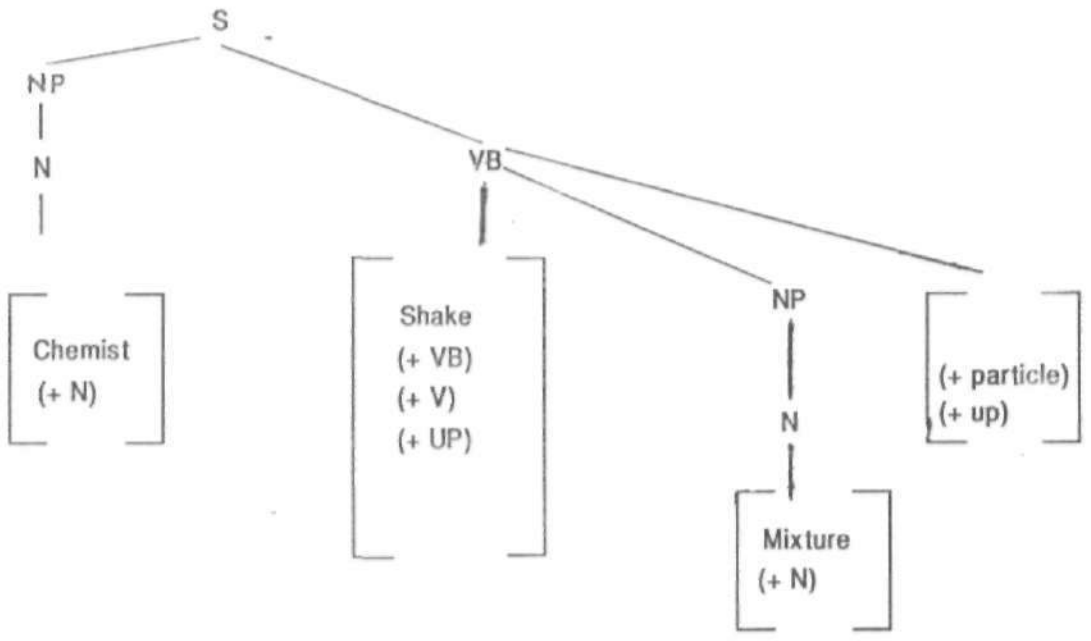


If we examine the following pair of sentences, they explain:

80. The chemist shook up the mixture.

81. The chemist shook the mixture up.

we will discover that the word "up" is a particle in both sentences, and both sentences have precisely the same deep structure. Furthermore, both sentences are synonymous. The transformation which relates them is the particle movement transformation. This transformation moves the particle segment introduced by the particle transformation around to the other side of the object of the VP, creating the structure below:



The writers further explain that after the lexicon has been drawn on, the result is the structure of the sentence "the chemist shook the mixture". It is obvious that the particle segment has not previously been generated by the particle transformation. The particle movement transformation is normally optional, that is, it may or may not be applied. This explains why English contains both of the sentences below:

82. The chemist shook up the mixture.

83. The chemist shook the mixture up.

We can see that in the first sentence, the particle movement transformation has been applied while it has not in the second. Jacobs and Rosebaum, however, caution that there are certain cases in which the transformation is obligatory:

84. The chemist shook it up.

85. *The chemist shook up it.

Here, we can see that the second sentence above is ungrammatical because the particle movement transformation has not been applied. The writers explain that whenever the object noun is a pronoun, the particle movement transformation is obligatory. This can be tested by constructing other pairs where the object is a pronoun:

86. *The landlord put out him.

87. The landlord put him out.

88. *The visitor looked up them in the telephone directory.

89. The visitor looked them up in the telephone directory.

Radford (1985: 96-101), also adopting the transformationalist viewpoint, proposes eight diagnostics for determining whether a given set of words in a sentence is a constituent or not, and if so, of what type or category. He maintains that these tests can be used to determine both NPS and constituents of VPS. The present investigation, however, is interested only in the latter as they relate to phrasal verbs. The proposed diagnostics are as follows:

(a) Does it have the same distribution as (i.e., can it be replaced by) an appropriate phrase of a given type? If so, it is a phrase of the relevant type

(b) Can it undergo movement (that is, preposing or postposing)? If so, it is a phrase of some sort.

(c) Can it serve as a sentence-fragment? If so, it is a phrasal constituent.

(d) Does it permit positioning of S- or VP-adverbials internally. If so, it is an S or VP, and not, for example, an NP or PP.

(e) Can it undergo ordinary co-ordination with another string? If so, it is a constituent of the same type as the one with which it is coordinated.

(f) Can it serve as the "shared constituent" in shared constituent coordination? If so, it is a phrase.

(g) Can it be replaced by, or serve as the antecedent of a phrase of the same type as the proform?

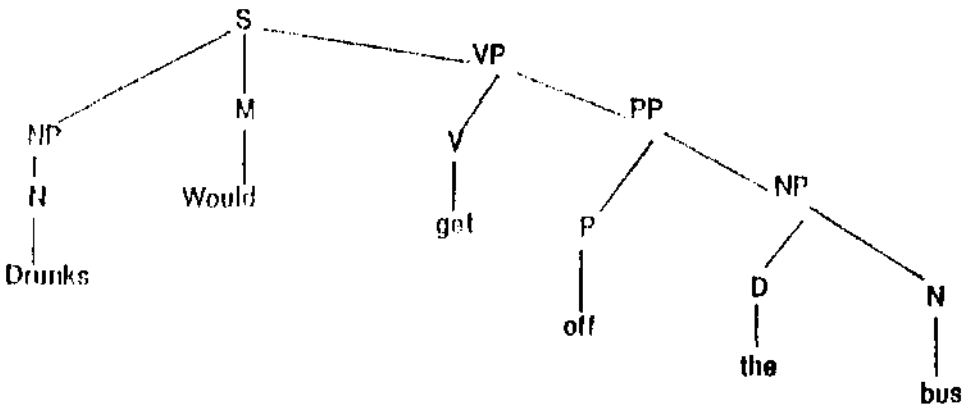
(h) Can it undergo ellipsis under appropriate discourse conditions? If so, it is a VP.

After outlining the above structural diagnostics, Radford (1985) then applies them to determine the constituent structure of a couple of sentences as shown below:

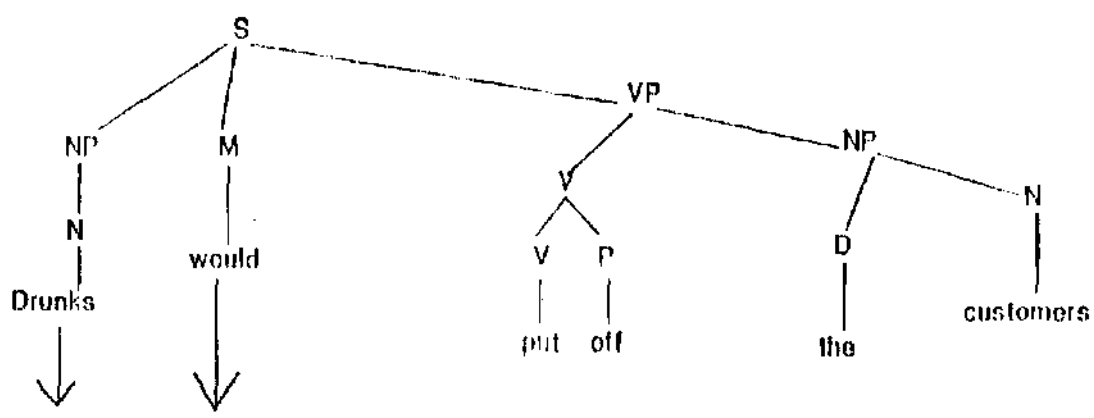
90. Drunk would get off the bus.

91. Drunks would put off the customers.

At a glance, according to him, the above two sentences might appear to be syntactically parallel especially as both consist of a sequence of a Noun (drunks), a Modal (would), a verb (get/put), a preposition (off), a determiner (the), and a Noun (bus/customers). Yet, as far as he is concerned, the two sentences have very different constituent structures. More specifically, sentence (90) above has the following structure:



whereas sentence (91) has the following structure:



He explains further that the essential difference between the two structures is that in sentence (90) the preposition "off" goes with the following NP "the bus" to form the prepositional phrase "off the bus"; whereas in sentence (91), the preposition "off" goes with the verb "put" to form the complex phrasal verb "put off". Thus in traditional terms, we might say that "get" in (90) is a prepositional verb (because it is a verb which takes a prepositional phrase after it) whereas "put" in (91) is a phrasal verb because the sequence "put off" forms a "compound verb". Radford therefore claims that his eight diagnostics can be used empirically to support the view that there is a syntactic difference between prepositional and phrasal

verbs. According to him, the distribution argument (a) would seem to lend support to our analysis. He affirms that if the sequence "off the bus" in (90) is a prepositional phrase, then we should expect that it can be replaced by other PPS with a related meaning: since "on" is the antonym of "off", we might expect it to be able to replace the off-phrase in (90) by an on-phrase. This is possible as the sentence below shows:

92. Drunks would get off the bus.
get on the bus.

The fact that the sequence "off the bus" ca be replaced by the PP "on the bus" would seem to confirm its PP status. But what is fascinating is that in the case of the second example (91), the sequence "off the customers" has no "on" counterpart.

93. Drunks would put off the customers.
*put on the customers.

We may wish to ask why this is so and the answer, according to him, is that the sequence "off the customers" is not a PP (indeed not a constituent at all), and hence cannot be replaced by a PP like "on the customers". Thus, maintains Radford, distributional facts seem to support the claim that "put off" is a phrasal verb, whereas "get off" is a prepositional verb.

Radford, however, cautions that we may be over-simplying a bit by ignoring the fact that the sequence "put on" can indeed be used as a phrasal verb as in the sentence below:

94. Mary would put on a new dress.

The writer explains further that whereas there is a consistent parallelism between "get off" and "get on", no such parallelism holds between "put off" and "put on". The obvious explanation is that "get" seems to have a constant meaning(in both cases, it is roughly synonymous with "climb") irrespective of whether it is combined with "on" or "off". But this, according to him, is not at all the case with "put". Thus, "put off" means more or less the same as "deter", whereas "put on", (in its most familiar sense) has roughly the same meaning as "wear". He therefore maintains that we can make a generalisation by proposing that prepositional verbs have a consistent, componential meaning (that is, the meaning of the whole impression is a simple function of its component parts), whereas phrasal verbs tend to have an idiosyncratic or idiomatic meaning (that is, there is no way of telling what "put off" or "put on" mean simply by knowing the meaning of "put", "on" and "off"). This information is very useful to the present investigation.

Another syntactic evidence in support of the claim that prepositional and phrasal verbs have different structures is the movement (that is, preposing and postposing) test. This has, however, been explained above by Jacobs and Rosenbaum and will not therefore be repeated. This leads us to the sentence fragment test.

The sentence fragment test yields the same results as the others for, as we see below, the sequence "off the bus" can serve as a sentence-fragment in sentence (90):

95. Speaker A: Did he get off the train?

96. Speaker B: No, off the bus.

Radford explains that since only full phrases can serve as sentence-fragments, this confirms the PP status of the above sentence. By contrast, the string "off the customers" in sentence (91) cannot function as a sentence fragment, as shown below:

96. (a) Speaker A: Would drunks put off the waitresses?

96. (b) Speaker B: *No, off the customers.

But why, we may wish to ask, can't "off the customers" function as a sentence-fragment? The answer suggested by the analysis of sentence (91) above is that the sequence "off the customers" is not even a constituent, let alone a phrase (and we should recall that only full phrases can function as sentence-fragments).

The next test relates to the distribution of Adverbial phrases. The class of VP-Adverbials includes such expressions as "quickly" "slowly", "completely" etc. Since VP-Adverbials can occur internally within VPS, then we should expect that such an Adverbial could be placed in between the verb "get" and the prepositional phrase "off the bus" in (90) and the sentence below proves that this indeed is the case:

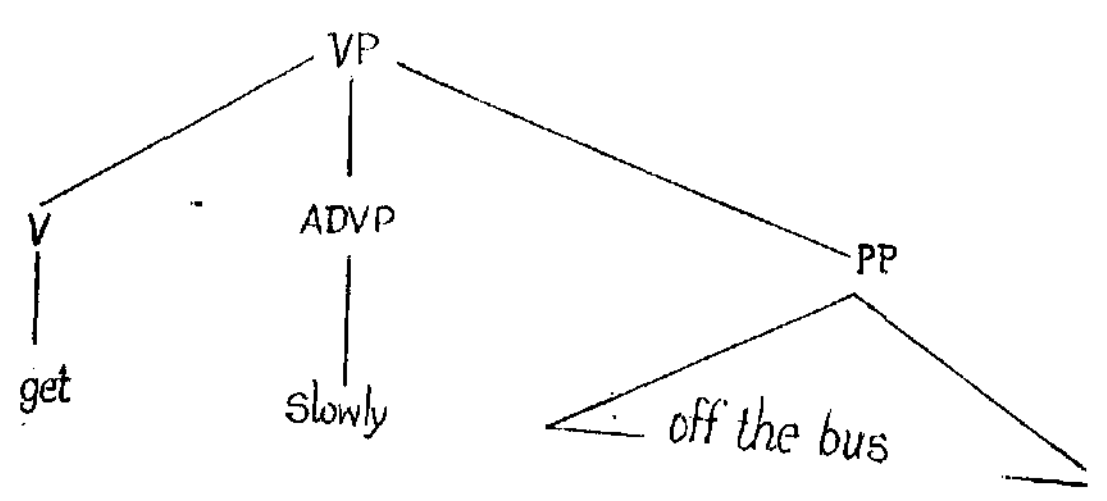
97. Drunks would get slowly off the bus.

By contrast, it is impossible to position a VP-Adverbial between "put" and "off" in (42), as evident from the ungrammaticality of the sentence below:

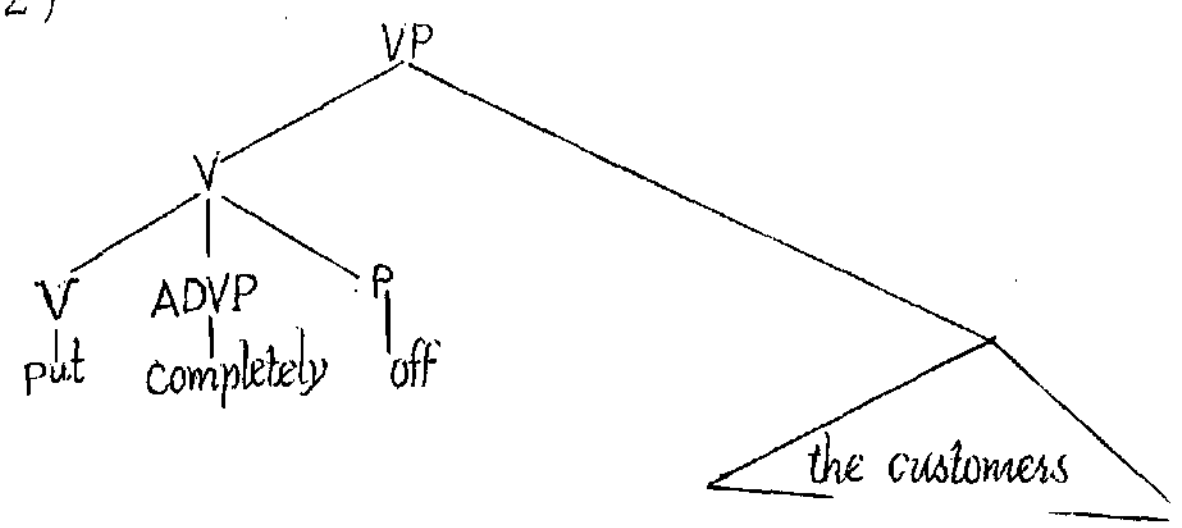
98. *Drunks would put completely off the customers.

We may wish to ask why it should be possible for a VP-Adverbial to intrude between "get" and "off" in (90), but not between "put" and "off" in (91). Radford says that we can see the answer immediately if we look at the different structures assigned to each of the verb-phrases in (90) and (91) repeated below:

(1)



(2)



It should now be immediately obvious why analysis (1) is correct, but (2) is not. For, since Adverbials like "slowly and "completely" are VP-Adverbials, they can only attach to a VP node. In other words, structures like (1) and (2) make precisely the right predictions about the distribution of the VP-Adverbials with prepositional verbs on the one hand, and phrasal verbs on the other.

Next is the coordination test and given our assumption that "off the bus" is a PP constituent in (90), we should expect that it can be coordinated with another PP of the same type; and as the sentence below shows, this is indeed the case:

99. Drunks would get (off the bus) and (on the train).

Radford upholds that given our assumption that the sequence "off the customers" is on the contrary not a constituent of any sort in (2), we should

also expect that it cannot be coordinated with another similar sequence: and this is exactly the right prediction as the ungrammaticality of the sequence below illustrates:

100. *Drunks would put off the customers and off the waitresses.

But what about shared constituent coordination test (f)? Given our assumption that the sequence "off the bus" in (41) is a PP constituent, we should expect that it can function as the "shared constituent" in sentences involving shared constituent coordination, and we see below that this is the case:

101. Drunks would get - and junkies would fall - off the bus.

In comparison, the sequence "off the customers" cannot be used in the same way in (42) as shown below:

102. *Drunks would put - and junkies would also put - off the customers.

Radford goes on to discuss the Ellipsis test (h). He explains that GAPPING is one of the different types of Ellipsis found in English and that it is called so because it has the effect of leaving a "gap" in the middle of some phrase or clause. What is of immediate interest to us here is the fact that the verb "get" can be gapped along with the modal "would" in structures such as (90), resulting in sentences like:

103. Drunks would get off the bus, and junkies off the train.

However, what is even more interesting is that we cannot gap the verb "put" along with the modal "would" in structures like (91) as illustrated

by the ungrammticality of the sentence below:

104. *Drunks would put off the customers, and junkies off the waitresses.

By contrast, the writer explains, we can gap the whole expression "put off" along with "would" as shown below:

105. Drunks would put off the customers, and junkies the waitresses.

Thus, continues Radford, it would seem that as far as gapping is concerned, the whole expression "put off" is somehow treated as a single "compound verb". This is the very intuition encapsulated in analysis (2), by giving the sequence "put off" the status of a single V constituent (i.e., by analysing it as a phrasal verb). Thus, facts about gapping lend yet further support to our argument.

Finally, we come to the pronominalisation argument (g). The expressions "the bus" and "the customers" are all NPS consisting of a Determiner and a Noun. Now, if they are indeed NPS, argues Radford, we should obviously expect that they can be replaced by an appropriate pro-Np constituent such as "it or "them". And yet while this is true of the object of a prepositional verb like "get off" as illustrated below:

106. The trouble with the bus was that drunks would want to get off it every few kilos, to exercise their natural bodily functions,

it is not true of phrasal verbs like "put off" as shown below:

107. *What worries me about the customers is whether drunks would put off them.

This then is the transformational generative approach to the analysis of phrasal verbs. The eight proposed diagnostics will be of great help to the present investigation in distinguishing phrasal verbs from prepositional verbs. The approach does not, however, account for the different types of phrasal verbs and their levels of idiomaticity, nor does it give us other criteria than the syntactic such as the semantic or the phonological) for the analysis of phrasal verbs.

2.2.1.5. Quirk et al's Approach

Quirk et al (1972:811-818), 1973:347-352) have also treated phrasal verbs. Their approach comprises the following components:

i. Phrasal Verbs
   - (a) Intransitive phrasal verbs
   - (b) Transitive phrasal verbs

ii. Phrasal and prepositional verbs
   - (a) Semantic criteria
   - (b) Syntactic criteria
   - (c) Phonological criteria

iii. Phrasal-prepositional verbs
   - (a) A sample of multi-word verbs
   - (b) Verb-adjective combinations

iv. Alternative analyses.

2.2.1.6. Phrasal Verbs

In their own treatment of phrasal verbs, Quirk et al (1973) give a number of sentences to illustrate their points, such as:

108. Adam called the man.

109. Adam called up the man.

110. Adam called on the man.

111. Adam put up with the man.

According to them, verbs can be divided into single-word verbs as in (108) and multi-word verbs, which are phrasal verbs as in (109), prepositional verbs as in (110), or phrasal-prepositional verbs as in (111).

They maintain that the above set of sentences can be distinguished from other, superficially similar sequences consisting of verbs and prepositional phrases (the second set of sentences below):

112. Adam called from the office.

113. Adam called after lunch.

114. Adam called from under the table.

The difference between the two sets, they explain, is one of "cohesion": in the first set, the adverbial or prepositional particle (up, on, up with) forms a semantic and syntactic unit with the verb; in the second set, the prepositional particle (from, after, from under) is more closely connected with the head of the prepositional phrase. These points will be discussed fully shortly. For now, we shall distinguish intransitive phrasal verbs from

transitive ones.

2.2.1.7. Intransitive Phrasal Verbs

According to the writers, an intransitive phrasal verb is one common type of multi-word verb which consists of a verb + particle as exemplified in:

115. The children were sitting down.

116. Drink up quickly.

117. The plane has now taken off.

118. The prisoner finally broke down.

119. When will they give in?

120. He is playing around.

121. Get up at once.

122. Did he catch on?

123. He turned up unexpectedly.

124. The tank blew up.

We can see here that most of the particles are place adjuncts or can function as such. In some instances, the particles form the first element in a complex preposition:

125. Come along (with me/us).

126. He moved out (of the house).

Of particular interest to the present investigation is the fact that

phrasal verbs vary in the extent to which the combination preserves the individual meanings of verb and particle. In instances like:

"give in" (surrender)

"catch on" (understand)

"turn up" (appear)

it is clear that the meaning of the combination cannot be predicted from the meanings of the verb and particle in isolation.

2.2.1.8. Transitive Phrasal Verbs

The second type of phrasal verbs are called transitive phrasal verbs which, according to the writers, take a direct object. For example:

127. We will set up a new unit.

128. Find out whether they are coming.

129. Drink up your tea quickly.

130. They turned on the light.

131. He can't live down his past.

132. They called off the strike.

133. I can't make out what he means.

134. He looked up his former friends.

As we can see from the above examples, some combinations ("drink up", "give in") can be either transitive or intransitive, with or without a difference of meaning. With most transitive phrasal verbs, the particle can either precede or follow the direct object:

135. They turned on the light.

136. They turned the light on.

although it cannot precede personal pronouns:

137. They turned it on.

not

138. They turned on it (except, rarely, with contrastive stress).

As with the intransitives, intransitive phrasal verbs vary in the extent to which they form idiomatic combinations. For example, the verb and particle in "put out the cat" preserve their individual meanings in that combination and in a wide range of combinations (e.g. put + down/outside/away/aside; take/turn/bring/push/send/drag + out). There are fewer alternative combinations that the verb and particle in "turn out the light" can enter (turn + on/off/down/up; switch + on). Finally, in "put off" (postpone) the verb and particle are fused into a new idiomatic combination which does not allow for contrasts in the individual elements.

2.2.1.9. Phrasal and Prepositional Verbs

(Semantic Criteria)

Quirk et al also explain the sort of relationship between phrasal and prepositional verbs by using certain semantic criteria. The semantic unity in phrasal and prepositional verbs (the first set of sentences already introduced at the beginning of this model) can often be manifested by substitution with

a single-word verb, for example.

"Visit" or "call on"

"summon" or "call up")

"omit" for "leave out"

"See" for "look at", and so forth.

Furthermore, they explain, phrasal and prepositional verbs often have composite meanings which are not normally deducible from their parts, for example:

"make out" (understand)

"take in" (deceive)

"come by" (obtain)

This explanation is of great importance to the present investigation as it highlights one of the major problems of the students' inability to properly use and understand idiomatic phrasal verbs. The writers once again caution that the terms "phrasal" and "prepositional" verbs are not, however, restricted to such idiomatic combinations. According to them, three sub-classes can be distinguished with the first set (where it will be convenient to refer to both the adverbial and prepositional element as "particle"):

A. In this sub-class, the verb and particle retain their individual meanings, as in -

"look over" (inspect)

"set up" (organise)

The individuality of the components appears in possible contractive substitutions:

bring] [in

take] [out

turn] [on

Switch] [off

B. In the second sub-class, the verb alone retains its basic lexical meaning and the particle has an"intensifying" function:

"find out" (discover)

"sweep (up)" (the crumbs)

"spread (out)" the rug

C. In the third sub-class, the verb and the particle are fused into a new idiomatic combination, the meaning of which is not deducible from its parts, for example:

"bring up" (educate)

"come by" (obtain)

"put off" (postpone)

"turn up" (appear)

In such combinations, they illustrate further, there is no possibility of contrastive substitution: there are no pairs such as

"bring up/down"

"put off/on"

"give up/down"

"give in/out", etc

for this sub-class. The adverbial, lexical values of the particles have been lost, and the entire verb-particle has acquired a new meaning. In some cases the verb-particle combination can belong to more than one sub-class with a corresponding difference in meaning:

139. Adam went into (the house (literate meaning).

(the problem (figurative meaning).

140. Adam puts up with Ladi (stays with).

(tolerates).

2.3.1 Syntactic Criteria

Quirk et al also use syntactic criteria to show the difference between phrasal and prepositional verbs.

2.3.1. (a) Passivisation

The syntactic similarity of verbs in the first set can be seen in their acceptance of passivisation:

141. First set: the man was (called up).

(called on).

(put up with).

142. Second set: (*Lunch was called after.

(*? The office was called from.

In the passive the verbs of the first set behave identically with single-word transitive verbs (The man was called) whereas those of the second set do not allow the passive. It can also be seen that ambiguous combinations such as "put up with" take the passive only when they have the figurative meaning:

143. Ladi couldn't easily be put up with (= tolerate)

but not (= stay with).

2.3.2. (b) Pronominal Question Form

The writers show that the questions of the first set are formed with "who(m)" for personal and with "what" for non-personal objects:

144. Who(m) did Adam call?

145. What did Adam look for?

2.3.3. (c) Adverbial Question Form

Adverbial question form is the third syntactic criterion used by the writers to distinguish the two sets of sentences. The prepositional phrases of the second set have adverbial function, and have question forms with "where", "when", "How", etc.

146. Where did Adam call from?

147. When did Adam call?

We may notice that there is a certain amount of overlap between the two sets. If we apply the three criteria, (P), Passivisation. (Qpro) pronominal question form and (Qadv) adverbial question form, to sentences 1-5 below, we can state their relations by means of a matrix:

	P	QPro	Qadv		
	+	+	-	(148)	The police might ask for more detail.
	-	+	-	(149)	Abdu agreed with Ladi.
	-	+	+	(150)	The car stopped beside a wall.
	-	-	+	(151)	She left before six o'clock.
?*	-	-	(+)	(152)	His job also comes into the picture.

Quirk et al explain that sentence 148 above has both passive and pronominal question forms:

153. More details might be asked for by the police.

154. What might the police ask for?

Sentence (149) has only the pronominal question form:

155. Who did Abdu agree with? The passive, according to the writers, is highly doubtful.

156. ? Mary was agreed with by Abdu.

Sentence (150) can form no passive, but both types of question are possible, the pronominal one is the "recapitulation form" whereas the adverbial one is the more natural question form:

157. What did the car stop beside?

158. Where did the car stop?

Sentence (151) has only the adverbial question form.

159. When did she leave?

Finally, sentence (152) shows its idiomatic nature by refusing any of the three criteria, resisting this kind of syntactic manipulation.

2.3.4. Phonological Criteria

Phonological criteria are also used by the writers to distinguish between prepositional and phrasal verbs. Quirk et all explain that the particle in phrasal verbs is normally stressed and, in final position, bears the nuclear tone, whereas the particle in the prepositional verb is normally unstressed and has the "tail" of the nuclear tone on the lexical verb. For example:

160. He called 'up the man - The man called up.

161. He called on the man - The man was called on.

2.3.5. Phrasal-Prepositional Verbs

Phrasal-prepositional verbs, according to Quirk et al, are combinations of the two multi-word verb classes (phrasal verbs and prepositional verbs) which usually consist of verb followed by two particles:

162. He puts up with a lot of teasing (tolerates).

As with prepositional verbs, we can analyse these as transitive verbs with the succeeding noun phrase as "direct object". They allow pronominal

questions and under certain conditions can occur in the passive:

163. He can't put up with bad temper.

164. What can't he put up with?

165. Bad temper can't be put up with for long.

As with single-word transitives and prepositional verbs, we cannot insert an adverb immediately before the object:

166. *He puts up with willingly that secretary of his.

Though it is possible to do so between the particles:

167. He puts up willingly with that secretary of his.

168. We look forward eagerly to your next visit.

In relative clauses and questions, the particles are positioned after the rest:

169. The party we were looking forward to so eagerly.

170. Who(m) does he put up with willingly? or (less commonly) the final particle can be brought into initial position:

171. The party to which we were looking forward so eagerly.

172. With whom does he put up willing?

The writers explain clearly that like phrasal and prepositional verbs, these multi-word verbs vary in their idiomaticity. Some like "Stay away from" (avoid), are easily understood from their individual meaning. Others are fused combinations, and it is difficult (or impossible) to assign meaning to any of the pairs, for example:

"Put up with" (tolerate).

There are, according to the writers, still others where there is a fusion of the verb with the first particle or where one or more of the elements may seem to retain some individual meaning. For example, "put up with" can also mean "stay with", and in that sense "put up", constitutes a unit by itself ("stay with", *"put up at"*, and the transitive phrasal verb *"put"* in.

173. "I can't put you up")

Similarly,

174. "Check up on (his record) = "investigate", is analysable consisting of the verb "check on" plus the intensifying element "up". We also have the single word verb "check", and therefore three transitive verbs of similar meaning, together with the intransitive "check" and "check up".

2.3.6. A Sample of Multi-Word Verbs

Here, Quirk et al present us with samples of multi-word verbs. The verbs in parenthesis illustrate or gloss their meanings:

(a) Phrasal Verbs

back *up* (*somebody*)

blow up (a ship)

break off (our relations)

bring about (a change)

bring up (children)

catch on (understand)

pull up (stop)

draw up (a contract)

burn up (a house) etc.

(b) Prepositional verbs

add to (the bill).

allow for (delays).

apply for (a post)

approve of (an action)

object to (something)

enlarge on (a topic)

care for (somebody)

comment on (the results) etc.

(c) Phrasal Prepositional Verbs

break in on (somebody's conversation) = interrupt"

walk out on (abandon)

look forward to (anticipate)

look down upon (somebody) - "despise"

look in on (somebody) - "visit"

cut down on (expenses) - "curtail"

get away with (such behaviour) - "avoid being reprimanded or

punished for"

look up to (somebody) - "respect" etc

2.4 Verb-Adjective Combinations

We must note, according to the writers, that there is a verb-adjective combination that is very similar to phrasal verbs. Let us compare the following sentences:

175. He put the cloth straight.

176. He put it out.

Here only "put out" is considered a phrasal verb. Both combinations form close units but the adjectives in verb-adjective combinations have their individual meaning and grammatical properties:

177. Abdu didn't put the table cloth as (straight)

as Binta (*out)

Adjectives in combinations like "cut short", "rub dry", "scrub clean", "set free", "dye red", "wash clean", "work loose", etc are, however, selected from a rather restricted range of adjectives. Thus, non of these verbs can have several adjectives, but the adjectives can co-occur with many different verbs, for example: "burst open", "force open", "hold open", "push open", "kick open", "swing open", "tear open", etc. It is in this respect that verb-adjective combinations differ from verb+ adjective complements which can select complements from a very wide range of adjectives:

1. He found her pretty/rich/intelligent/foolish/stubborn/smart, etc.

2.4.1 Alternative Analyses of Strings Consisting of A Verb + A Prepositional Phrase

Apart from those mentioned above, the writers also suggest that there are other alternative means of analysing strings consisting of a verb plus a prepositional phrase. A sentence like:

178. He looked at the girl

can be analysed in two ways. In one, there is a prepositional phrase "at the girl" as adverbial; in the other, "looked at" is a prepositional object. The writers here use the shorter term "prepositional object" for what should properly be termed "object after a prepositional verb".

Analysis 1

He looked at the girl

Analysis 2 Prep V Prep O

Analysis 1 (Verb + Adverbial) accounts for the similarity of prepositional phrases with regard to relative clause structure and the position of adverbs:

179. The girl at whom he looked.
to whom he came.

180. He looked slyly at the girl.

stood quietly near the girl.

Analysis 2 (prepositional verb + prepositional object) accounts for the similarity of these structures to that of transitive non-prepositional verbs:

181. The girl was looked at/admired.

*stood near.

Two modes of analysis are also applicable to sentences like:

182. He gave an apple to the girl

where "to the girl" can be considered a prepositional adverbial (Analysis 1), accounting for the similarity between, for example, the following sentences:

183. (a) gave an apple

He found an apple for

aimed an apple at

Quirk et al uphold that the two analyses can be regarded as different, but equally valid and complementary ways of looking at the same structure.

2.4.2 Working Model for this Study (Yakubu's Grammar)

On the whole, we have examined the traditionalist, the structuralist, the transformational generative as well as Quirk et al's approaches to the analysis and description of phrasal verbs. Our reservations about each of them calls for the adoption of an eclectic model (which would henceforth be known as "Yakubu's Grammar) to adequately handle our data.

Yakubu's Grammar

Phrasal verb is a group of words that acts like a verb and consists usually of a verb with an adverb and/or a preposition. Structurally, we could describe a phrasal verb as consisting of V + adv/+ prep.

Phrasal verbs could be classified into two broad types: literal or figurative. They are literal when each of the words that make up the phrase retains its basic lexical meaning. For example:

184. When the pupils saw their teacher coming they all walked away.

We could see clearly that the verb and adverb in the above sentence both retain their own basic meanings.

On the other hand, they are figurative when the words that constitute them lose their basic meanings and take on a new integrated one. For example:

185. I told my son to keep on doing his assignment.

Here, we see how the verb and adverb combine to give a new idiomatic meaning "continue". It is clear that the meaning of the combination cannot be predicted from the meanings of the verb and adverb in isolation.

It is noteworthy that phrasal verbs appear in different structural patterns such as:

(A) V + Prep + NP2, for example:

186. I hope you are not getting at me.

(B) V + ad particle, for example:

187. Do what I say and don't answer back.

(C) V + obj. + adv. particle, for example:

188. You can't be backed up all the time.

(D) V + adv. particle + prep + NP, for example:

189. Aliyu promised to buy me a gift, he can't go back on his word now.

Furthermore, part of the mysterious nature of phrasal verbs is that it is possible for a particular verb to take several different particles. Let us consider the verbs "put" and "get" as examples:

- Put about/across/aside/away/back/down/up/down for/up with/forward/in/in for/off/on/out/over/through/upon etc.
- get away/at/round to/back/back at/down/down to /forward/into/in with/off/off with/away with/on/on for/on to/out/out of/through/through with/up/together/up to/along/along with/ahead of/by/about etc.

It is also possible for each combination to have several meanings depending on the contexts in which it is used. The expression "put off", for example, could mean "postpone", dismay", "discourage", or "extinguish". Similarly, "get at" in some of it senses could mean "reach", "imply", "criticise", "taunt", "suggest", "discover", "gain access to", "bribe", "corrupt", and so forth. These are some of the changes that phrasal verbs permit unlike the other kinds of idiomatic expressions many of which remain

fixed in form and function.

There are differences between the way some words function as prepositions and their behaviour as adverb particles. We may consider these examples:

190. Bello shook up the bottle.

191. The teacher walked up the street.

The first difference is that prepositions can be moved around (or postposed) to the other side of the object, as in:

192. Bello shook the bottle up.

Conversely, adverb particles cannot be postposed to the other side of the NPs which follow them. If we carry out the particle movement/transformation on such sentences, ungrammaticality arises. For example:

193. *The teacher walked the street up.

Moreover, prepositions, not adverb particles, can be shifted (or preposed) to the initial position of sentences when we wish to ask questions. It is on the basis of this transformational rule that the sentence:

194. Up what did the teacher walk? is grammatical (but may be marginally awkward for some) whereas the following sentence is ungrammatical:

195. *Up what did Bello shake?

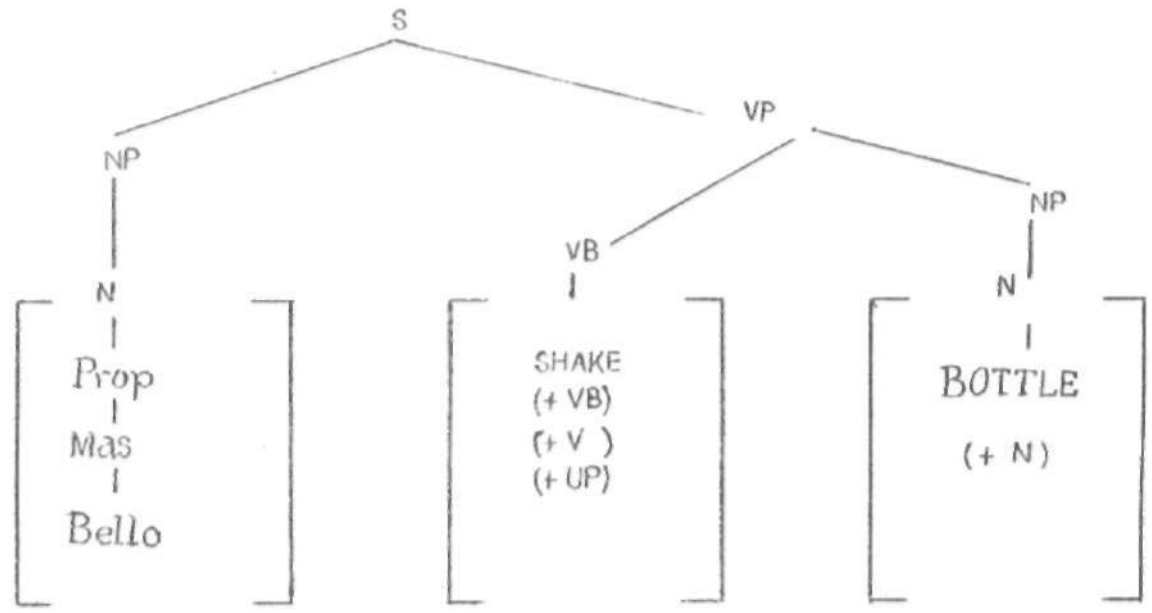
The reason is that when asking question sentences containing verb

particles are generated, the particles must remain in their original position. They cannot be preposed. For example:

196. What did Bello shake up?

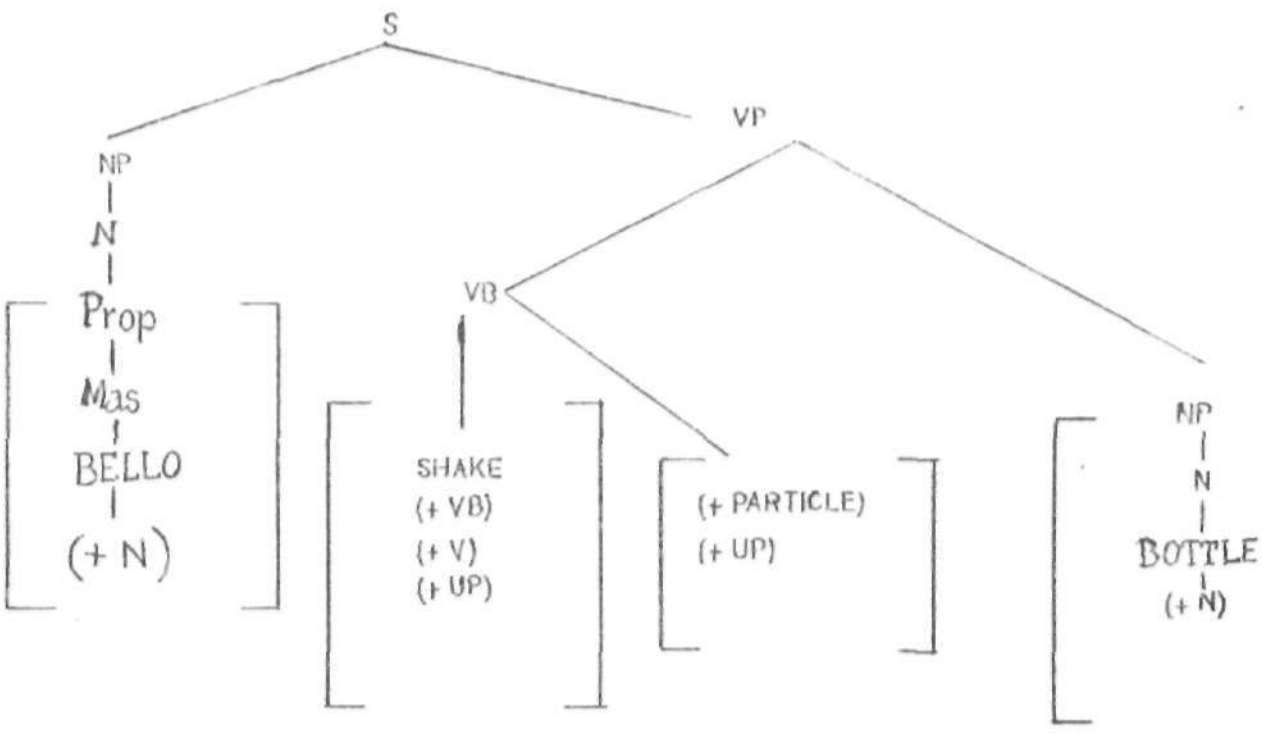
Particles in sentences such as 190 can be represented in deep structure in at least two ways. First, we can represent them as actual constituents in the deep structure and second, as verb features that cause the application of a transformation which introduces a particle segment into the structure. Therefore, the deep structure of the above sentence is:

Bello shook up the bottle:



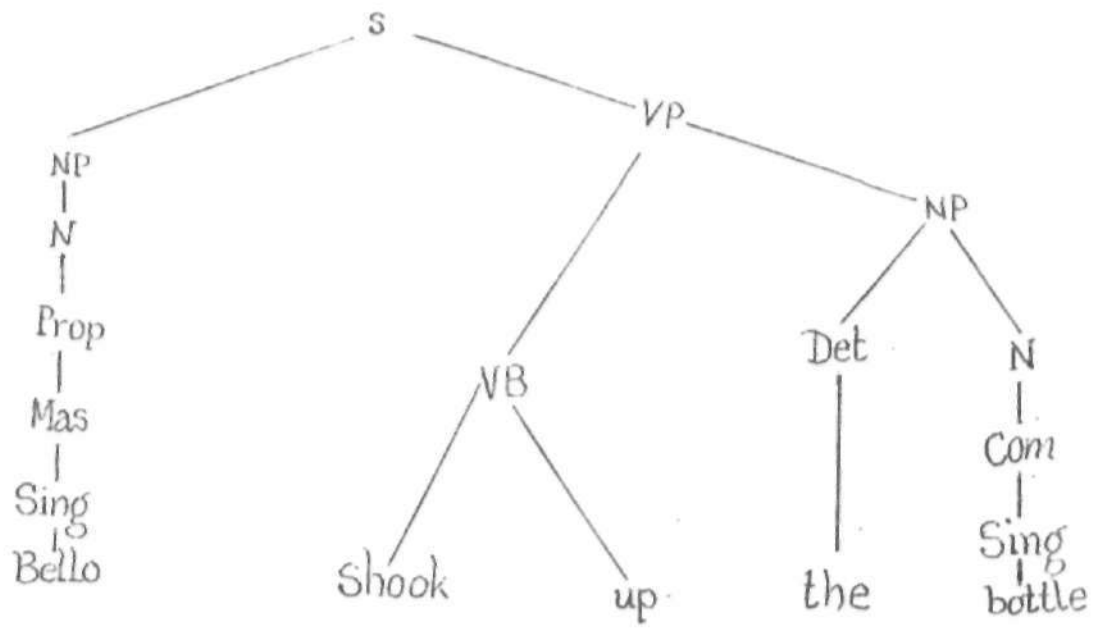
The above diagram illustrates that particles appear in the deep structure neither as constituents such as NP or VP, nor as segments, but as features on the verbal segment. We can explain further that the transformation responsible for introducing a particle segment into the structure is simply called the particle transformation. This introduces a segment into the verb phrase which contains the feature (+ particle), together with whatever particle feature is specified in the verb segment. Thus, when the particle transformation is applied to the above deep structure, it generates the following structure:

Bello shook up the bottle.



The same sentence, Bello shook up the bottle, can be represented in surface structure to illustrate that the particle transformation and the concord transformation have been applied.

Bello shook up the bottle.



If we examine these two sentences:

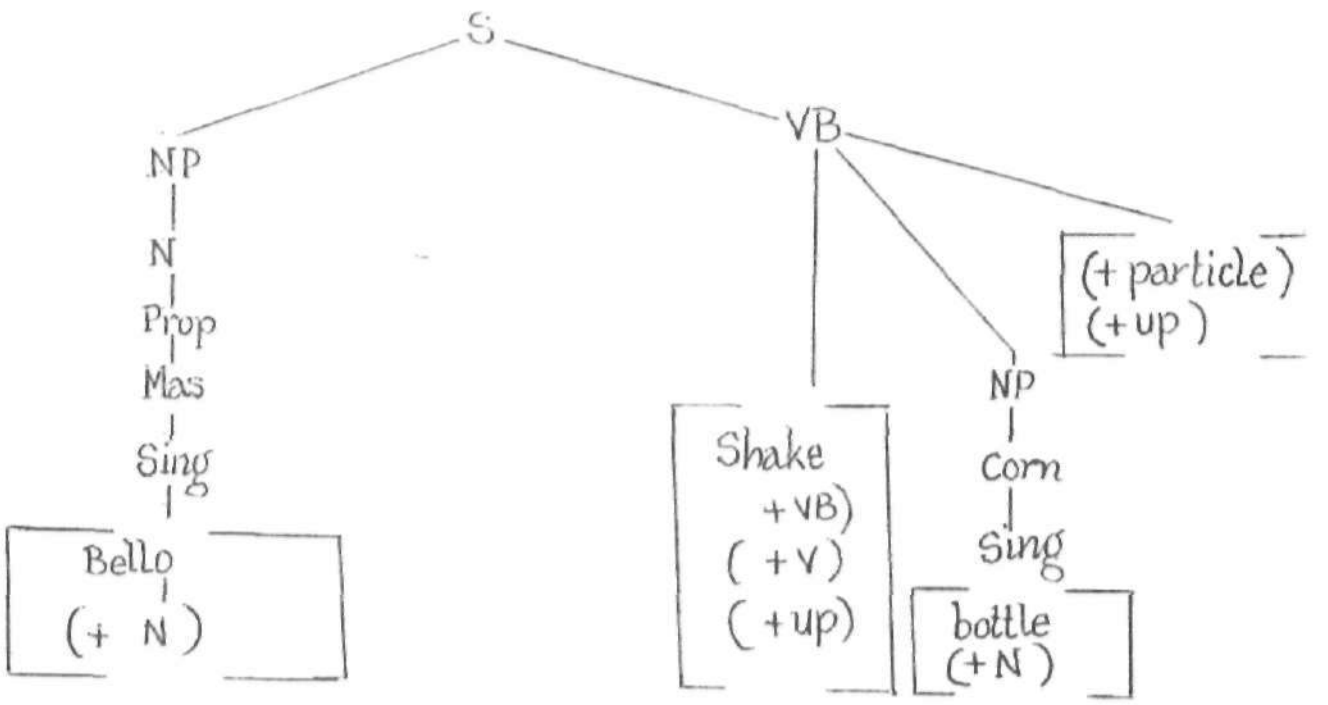
197. Bello shook up the bottle.

198. Bello shook the bottle up.

we can discover that the word "up" is a particle in both of them, and both sentences have the same deep structure and meaning. The transformation that relates them is what we may call the particle movement transformation which postposes the particle segment to the other side of the object of the VP. This creates the structure below:

Deep structure representation of

Bello shook (up) the bottle (up).



We must note that the particle movement is normally optional. That is to say that it may or may not be applied which explains why English permits both 197 and 198 illustrated above.

Finally, it is our hope that this eclectic approach which has drawn from the four different approaches discussed earlier on, but with more leaning towards the Transformational Generative approach, could and would account for our subjects' ability to use and interpret both literal and idiomatic phrasal verbs.

Let us now examine the three attempts that have been made to describe the use of English idioms in the Nigerian local context. In her scholarly paper, Igbani (1986: 136) examines the writing of twelve daily newspapers over a period of three weeks for her data and concludes that:-

> In the daily newspapers of Nigeria there are frequent examples of idioms used to add colour to a piece of writing. In a large number of cases, these are used in the same way as they would be in another English-speaking country. However, in many cases one finds idioms in Nigerian newspaper writing which differ in form, meaning, or context from the usage in countries where English is the first language. These differences are important since an idiom used incorrectly may at least, lose its effectiveness and at the worst become incomprehensible. On the other hand, some of the innovations in idiom usage in Nigeria may enrich the language.

The central focus in her article is on the extent to which the use of idioms by Nigerian writers deviates from the native English patterns in form and usage.

She identifies eight major such deviations namely:-

I. application of syntactic operations

II. omission of essential words

III. Lexical substitution

IV. blending literal and metaphorical levels

V. Changes in number

VI. violations regarding irreversible binomials

VII. blending of idioms, and

VIII. idioms borrowed from the Nigerian context.

She gives several examples of each form of deviation and it will be useful to examine some of them.

I. Legislators ... had clamped down on witch-hunted daring politicians...

She cites the above sentence as one of the examples of the first type of deviation. According to her, the word "witch-hunted" appears to be derived from a passive, as in "The politicians were witch-hunted by someone". She explains that this is ungrammatical since the passive transformation is blocked with many idioms. She maintains that even the starting point is faulty as witch hunt is used as a noun, not a verb.

This example is very striking in the sense that the entire discussion centres around the idiom "witch hunt" at the expense of an equally opaque phrasal verb "clamped down on" which means "became more firm". It is this

type of treatment that under-rates the idiomatic power of phrasal verbs.

II. Igbani gives three examples of the second type of deviation i.e. omission of essential words. We will examine two of them because they have direct relevance to the present study.

(a) Shagari gets pat over handling of Nigeria-Cameroun border crisis.

She explains that the word pat is used with the implied meaning of "a compliment" only when it is used in the idiom "a pat on the back". The omission of the prepositional phrase, she says, is what blocks the idiom.

(b) MP calls for a shake in the P and T.

Here she explains that the intended meaning is a reorganisation of personnel, or a shake-up and the particle up is essential to the form of the idiom.

This last example is informative and very useful to the present study. Unfortunately, there are not many of its kind to illustrate the different combinations in which phrasal verbs appear and their levels of complexity.

III. The third deviation is what she calls "Lexical substitution". She explains that in some instances a word has been substituted for one or more of the words in the idioms as in:-

(d) "The reply stood on the nerves of Alhaji ..."

She explains that stand has been substituted for get in the idiom "to get on one's nerves". The problem with this, according to her, is that as opposed to non-idiomatic phrases, idioms cannot be freely formed by combining words in accordance with grammatical rules, but they act as fixed units within the lexicon. Substituting words, she explains further, can lead to the loss of the idiomatic meaning or at least to the quality of sounding "strange" or "unacceptable".

IV. The fourth deviation is "blending literal and metaphorical levels". She explains that most idioms use figurative language in referring to a real event or situation. The interpretation of the metaphor, she adds, may be made on the context of the idiom or through the addition of words within the structure of the idiom or before or after it. She, however, maintains that it is generally not acceptable to substitute the word explaining the literal meaning for the metaphor as in -

(e) "Lagos takes flood by the horns".

According to her, this headline combines the literal and metaphorical levels by substituting "flood" for "bull" in the idiom "to take the bull by the horns". While it is obvious that it is a flood that Lagos is dealing with and not a bull, the image is destroyed if we drop the word "bull".

V. "Changes in number" is the fifth deviation.

She quotes Makkai (1977) as saying that even the choice of making a noun singular or plural is important to the form of an idiom, and changes in number may affect the meaning or acceptability of an idiom. For example:

(f) "All these pressures hit the rock ..."

Her explanation here is that the expression "hit the rocks" meaning "to fail" always uses the plural of rocks.

VI. The sixth deviation is what she calls "Violations regarding irreversible binomials". She points out that a number of English idioms contain two parts joined by a conjunction. Unlike other conjoined phrases, the order of the elements is fixed. For example:

(g) "... the sun shines and sets for them".

In this case, she says, a word has been substituted for half of the irreversible binomial "the sun rises and sets for someone". Thus, the use of the word shines destroys the balance of the two actions of the phrase.

VII. Another deviation she observes is what she regards as "Blending of idioms". According to her, some examples in the data contain elements of more than one idiom and are used in a different way from the one they resemble most in form. She explains further that it appears that some English idioms are

undergoing a "remixing" in the Nigerian media, and are acquiring new meanings. For example:

(h) "Students apply confrontational method only when dragged to the mud and pushed to the wall".

The explanation she gives is that the idiom "to drag through the mud", which means "to expose someone's faults and insult him" has been changed here to conform to the form of the second idiom "to push someone to the wall", by the substitution of the preposition "to" for "through". The meaning of the first idiom also seems to have been changed to be the same as the second, meaning "to be driven to hopeless position".

VIII. Lastly, she speaks of another form of deviation she refers to as "idioms borrowed from the Nigerian context". She explains that she finds several examples of phrases which look like idioms in terms of their form and use of metaphor, but which cannot be traced to any English idiom. She adds that the types of image used seem to suggest an African, rather than an English origin. It seems likely to her that in many cases the metaphor is the creation of an individual writer, but is based in a certain local tradition of imagery and metaphoric language. These individual usages, she believes, have the potential of coming into general use as a stock phrase, or of

becoming an idiom. Let us have an example of this:

(i) "In addition, they (the Yorubas) did not allow the Hausa to chase them as chickens asked by the its owner to find nest when it was day, but also joined in eliminating those they described as 'brilliant rivalry' (i.e. the Igbos) …."

This last expression, she upholds, seems to refer to being driven out without protection and is based on the African tradition of keeping chickens that may move freely around the owner's compound.

Finally, on the implications of differences in idiom usage, she maintains that idioms naturally provide an outlet and freedom for creativity in language and that Nigerian writers can exploit such freedom to put new life into the English language by using English idioms. She points out that such manipulations must be done consciously and with a knowledge of the patterns that are being violated.

Consequently, she suggests that more attention should be given to the syntactic and semantic rules which idioms obey as well as to stylistic considerations.

On the negative side of such deviations, she cautions that since idioms can only be interpreted on the basis of common knowledge, too many innovations may also hamper national and international intelligibility. She

adds that even where an idiom is intelligible, a slight difference in form may be taken as an error, which reduces the writer's credibility.

On the positive side, however, she upholds that if a variant idiom form is stabilised in Nigerian usage, it can rightfully be regarded as a valid characteristic of Nigerian variety of English. She, therefore, believes that the English language stands to gain rich new resources from new coinages in Nigerian English just as a large number of current English idioms find their way into the language from foreign sources such as Burma and Greece. She concludes by affirming that:

> "The traditional proverbs and images from Nigerian languages as well as the creative effects of Nigerian writers may provide a treasury of figurative language for English speakers throughout the world".

This paper has certainly made a significant contribution in portraying the problems and prospects of using idioms by Nigerian writers. The present researcher, however, observes that it is rather ambitious in the sense that it seeks to cover the concept of idiomaticity in general, forgetting the fact that it has different levels which deserve intensive individual attention in order to be properly accounted for. Besides, the writer seems to have drawn most of her examples from those idiomatic expressions on the lower levels of the idiomaticity scale at the expense of those on the higher. Consequently, phrasal verbs appear to have received little attention as if they were not as

"opaque" as the others. Giving only five or six examples on them seems to undermine their true nature especially as they appear in various possible forms and levels of complexity.

The second scholarly article titled "Idiomaticity in Nigerian English" is written by Azuike (1988:pp. 19-32) and probably influenced by Igbani's article above. The emphasis in the two articles appears to be more or less the same. This is seen in Azuike's words:

> The Nigerian writer often discovers that he needs idioms in his authorial assignment and he uses them profusely in order to give his erudition free reign. With equal frequency, the result of this is either unproductive or a development. It is unproductive when the writer fails entirely to inform, and a development when his creative urge yields a new phrase or figurative extension to the English language.

It is also seen in other statements she has made: "It must be pointed out that the creation of idiom is not the preserve of native speakers alone. A rich source of idiom creation can also be found in the language variety of a language like English".

The above views do not seem to be any different from Igbani's. Azuike's approach is, however, different as she starts her own article by asking four thematic questions, namely:

I. What are idioms in the English language?

II. Are their structures inviolate?

III. What happens to English idioms in a second language setting like Nigeria,

where the English language coexists with a myriad of mutually exclusive languages which lay equal claims to communication media?.

VI. How exactly does a Nigerian writer handle the repertoire of English idioms at his disposal in his daily penmanship?

She then attempts answering these questions, but what is of most interest is her treatment of idiom behaviour in Nigerian English. She indicates that her source of data is largely from Nigerian newspaper editorials, but does not specify how many such newspapers she has consulted and for how long. Our major interest is in the examples she draws in order to illustrate the modifications British English idioms have been subjected to in the NE variety. Unlike Igbani, she presents and analyses these examples under five headings as follows:

I. Reconstitution: where the structure of the Br.E idiom has been re-cast.

II. Omission of essential word or particle.

III. Lexical and particle substitution.

IV. Deletion (slight and radical reductions) in idiom structure.

V. Insertions.

We may wish to examine one example from the many examples she has given of each heading.

I. There are five examples under the first heading (i.e. Reconstitution) to show how the structure of Br. E idioms have been recast. We find example

(a) very striking

(a) "The coup hit the rocks when the 400 Senegalese crack force stationed in banjul.. fought back the rebels to restore Sir Dawda's government". Her explanation is that the idiom "to be on the rocks" which means to be in trouble, used of a project, a marriage or financial situation, has been recast into the underlined form. The idea expressed here, she explains further, is that the coup was unsuccessful. Perhaps we could recall that this same idiomatic expression, like many others, has already appeared in Igbani's article.

II. She gives six examples under the second heading to show certain essential elements i.e. particles are omitted thus affecting the realization of the status of the idioms. Example (e) seems to be of interest to us.

(e) "... the military regime, naively swallowed hook and sinker any goose tale of loss to dish out colossal largess to the institutions".

She explains that the word "line" is dropped from the idiom "swallow hook, line and sinker" which simply means "to be gullible" or "to believe anything". We, however, observe that she fails to account for another idiomatic phrasal verb in the same sentence "to dish out" which means "to serve out to several people".

III. Under the third heading, she gives six examples also one of which reads as follows:

(d) "They should endeavour to lessen the herculean burden of the state government by minimising the number of petitions sent daily to his office".

She explains that the word "task" has been replaced with "burden" in the phraseological unit a "herculean task".

IV. She gives five examples under the fourth heading to show what she calls "some substantial structural modifications" to the affected idioms as in:

(d) "Understandably, the re-introduction of school fees is a bitter pill that will inevitably go down the throats of parents ... in Imo State".

We find this example once again very amusing because all she says about it is that it is a reduction of "swallow the bitter pill" which means "to experience a discomfort". We observe, however, that she fails to recognize "go down" the throat of parents as another possible idiomatic expression.

V. The last heading is "insertions" and according to her, additional elements are introduced into idiom structure which help to achieve emphasis or specificity. She gives five examples one of which reads as follows:

(d) "most of the streets are not wide enough to cope up with the volume of traffic".

She goes on to explain that this form is common in Nigerian English usage where the particle "up" is usually inserted in the idiom "cope with" which means to manage adequately a crisis or situation.

On the whole, we have seen some improvement in the treatment of some of the levels of idiomaticity especially idiomatic phrasal verbs. We only wish that the writer had focussed her attention on this particular level alone (i.e. phrasal verbs) and dug much deeper into it. Apart from this improvement, however, everything else in her article is generally a re-echoing of what Igbani (1986) has already presented in her own article in terms of title, scope, medium, sources of data, emphasis, examples, findings and conclusion.

In his study titled "Investigating the idiomatic use of phrasal verbs among Diploma students of Journalism, in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria" Yakubu (1992) observes that his students always have trouble in understanding idiomatic expressions generally. Bearing in mind that the entire concept of idiomaticity cannot easily be examined in a single study, he limits the scope of his investigation to idiomatic phrasal verbs in particular.

To collect his data he draws one hundred subjects from a total of one hundred and sixty Diploma II students of Journalism and divides them into two groups: control and experimental. He designs a test instrument comprising one hundred discrete-point items and administers it twice to the two groups before and after experimental treatment. The first test

administration is aimed at finding out if there is any initial difference in the performance of the two groups and an average of 1.8% is recorded in favour of the control group. Some of the general errors recorded at the receptive level include the interpretation given to the following sentences:

(a) Let's kick around this new idea.

Most of the subjects give negative answers such as "forget", "abandon", "reject" or "leave" instead of the usual meaning "consider slowly and carefully".

(b) David is likely to be successful in his academic career because he doesn't take long to catch on.

Many of the subjects interpret the phrase to mean "meet" or "arrest" instead of "understand".

(c) Do you think that your brother hits it off with his boss?.

Here, many of the subjects consider the expression to mean "fights" or "beats" instead of the actual meaning "gets along" or simply "enjoys good relationship".

At the productive level, on the other hand, they produce such sentences as the following, despite the examples given them and the clear instruction for them to use the phrasal verbs idiomatically:

(a) chew over

(b) fall flat

(c) trigger off

(a) He told me to chew over the bread.

Answer: He told me not to eat the bread.

(b) She fall flat

Answer: She hard an accident.

(c) The man trigger off his gun.

Answer: The man shoot his gun.

The second test administration is interested in assessing the effect of the experimental treatment. An overall average of approximately 29% is recorded this time in favour of the experimental group. It is also clear from their responses that their creativity in the use of idiomatic phrasal verbs has increased significantly and their errors have been minimised.

To supplement the test instrument, a questionnaire is also administered to the subjects and the responses they provide are used in testing the formulated hypotheses.

A study of this nature cannot be without shortcomings. The researcher himself affirms that:

> The findings of this research study and the conclusions arising out of them were limited to investigations within a single class and even here, only a selected number of students/respondents (about 100) were involved. The experimental treatment took a period of three months only and the focus was on the subjects' ability to use and understand idiomatic phrasal verbs.

The question that comes to mind is whether the findings of that study could be described as being representative of all Nigerian Diploma students in particular or Nigerian students in general. The answer would seem to be in the negative. Does the study provide an overall picture of how our students generally understand idiomatic phrasal verbs? Again, the answer would seem to be in the negative. Also, we notice that, just like Igbani's and Azuike's, Yakubu's focuses on the written medium of communication. Although, unlike the other two, it examines the problem of understanding idiomatic phrasal verbs, it fails to consider the subjects' ability to use and understand the expressions in a spontaneous spoken medium of communication. We are only presented with data collected from subjects under strict examination conditions instead of in relaxed/informal contexts. As the title itself seems to suggest, does it mean that the subjects do not find any problem with literal phrasal verbs? This has to be found out. We also notice yet another weakness in the test instrument itself. While he speaks of idiomatic phrasal verbs, we find out that many of the test items are indeed verbal idioms in general. On the whole, the research study is potentially significant, despite its weaknesses, because it provides some motivation and challenges for further research.

Fraser (1976:103-123) claims that English idioms differ widely with respect to how frozen they are in terms of the application of various syntactic transformations. He explains that idioms can be analysed as permitting or

not permitting certain types of operations such as passivisation, particle movement, gerundive nominalisation, action nominalisaltion, adverb insertion, and prepositional phrase preposing. On the basis of these operations he proposes what he calls "Frozenness Hierarchy" as follows:

L - Completely frozen. This signifies that no operations whatsoever may apply to an idiom so characterised. E.g. bleed one white, kick over the traces, build castles in the air, bite off one's tongue.

L1 - Adjunction of some non-idiomatic constituent to the idiom. Examples: kick the bucket, burn the candle at both ends, turn over a new leaf.

L2 - Insertion of some constituent into the idiom. This involves the placement of some non-idiomatic constituent into the idiom sequence. Examples: do a good turn to, give the benefit of the doubt to.

L3 - Permutation of two successive constituents of the idiom. This happens when the direct object movement rule applies to an idiom containing both a direct and indirect object. Examples: let one's hair down, bring down the house.

L4. - Extraction of some constituent of the idiom to some exra-idiom position in the sentence. This is indicated by a number of transformations e.g. particle movement transformation

where the particle is extracted from the idiom. This means preposing of prepositional phrases when either only the preposition or the entire prepositional phrase is a part of the idiom. Thus, the preposition "on" has been extracted from the verbal idiom "depend on" in "on whom can we depend?" Other examples are: Look up the information, Look the information up.

L5 - Reconstitution of the idiom into another constituent structure or organisation. This involves the operation of the action nominalisation transformation. Usually, the syntactic function of the entire idiom has been altered. Examples: cast pearls before swine, crack the whip over, throw in the sponge.

L6 - This is the topmost level which has the interpretation of permitting any operations to an idiom so characterised. Here no example is given by the writer.

Fraser explains that the hierarchy reflects, from bottom to top, an increasing degree of distortion permitted to the basic idiom shape of the untransformed idiom. The most frozen idioms, those characterised by LO, permit no distortion; those least frozen, L5, permit considerable alteration. He cautions that the most significant feature of this proposed hierarchy is that any idiom marked as belonging to one level is automatically marked as belonging to any lower level. The higher up on the hierarchy, the more

syntactically unfrozen the idiom.

McArthur and Atkins (1979: 5-7) classify all verbs as transitive or intransitive in the first place, that is, as to whether or not they take a direct object. They break transitive verbs further into separable verbs and fused verbs. The separable ones, according to them, are those which, under certain conditions, may have an item inserted between the verb and the particle. They explain such conditions as follows:

If the object of a separable phrasal verb is a noun, the particle may precede or follow the noun e.g.

184. He picked up the book up. OR

185. He picked up the book.

If, however, the object is a pronoun, the particle must follow it. For example,

186. He picked it up.

They maintain that the vast majority of phrasal verbs are in this category.

A fused verb, on the other hand, is not normally separated by an item or items coming between the verb and the particle. They explain that the particle in a fused phrasal verb has in effect been "stolen" from another phrase. The result is a special idiom and the fused structure should be spoken and thought of as a unit.

187. The man came across/his friend.

Contrast with

188. The man came across//the street.

The writers also uphold that there appear to be varying degrees of "fusedness" between certain verbs and certain particles. This is particularly true when the intransitive phrasal verb (such as "keep on" in the sense of "continue") is followed by such a preposition as "at". In some instances, they explain further, it makes more sense to treat these as phrasal verbs followed by an unattached preposition, while in other metaphoric instances it is best to take them as a fused whole.

Also of interest are their rules for placing adverbs with phrasal verbs. They explain that the rules relate to whether the phrasal verb is intransitive or transitive.

a) Intransitive rule: place the adverb either BETWEEN the verb and the particle, or AFTER the particle e.g.

189. He ran away.

190. He ran happily away. OR

191. He ran away happily.

b) Transitive rule: place the adverb either BEFORE the verb, or AFTER the object or particle, whichever comes last. e.g.

192. She picked the letter up.

193. She eagerly picked the letter up.

194. She picked the letter up eagerly. OR

195. She picked up the letter eagerly.

On the whole, the writers identify at least six types of verb that can be phrasalised:

a) verbs of movement (usually monosyllabic and of Anglo-saxon origin); go, come, walk, hop, skip, etc.

b) verbs of invitation and ordering etc:
invite, order, summon, let etc.

c) the so-called "empty verbs" or verbs of indefinite meaning: get, put, take, make, do, etc.

d) verbs formed with or without the suffix-en, from simple mono - syllabic adjectives: brighten, slacken, flatten, dry, cool, etc.

e) verbs formed unchanged from simple, unusually monosyllabic nouns with such paraphrase patterns as:

chalk up = mark up with chalk

brick up = seal up with brick

f) a random scattering of two-syllable verbs of Latin origin, with which some kind of direction or emphasis is required: contract (out), measure (up), level (off) etc.

In their study and analysis of phrasal verbs, Eckersley and Eckersley (1960: 160-176) give a number of sentences to illustrate first the difference between words used as prepositions and as adverbs (forming adverb complements) and then how the two often form phrasal verbs:

196. (a) The monkey came down the tree.

(b) The pole blew down in the wind.

197. (a) He put the book on the table.

(b) Put your coat on.

198. (a) Henry came before four o'clock.

(b) I have explained that point before.

199. (a) Mary is in the garden.

(b) I opened the door and the cat walked in .

According to them, it is obvious that the words in the sentences marked (a) are different in function from the corresponding words in those marked (b). In the first case they are prepositions, while in the second they are adverbs and form adverb complements. They note how often such words as discussed above (prepositions and adverbs) are attached to, and affect the meaning of verbs. Let us consider these sentences:

200. I will put out the light.

201. This has taken up a lot of my time.

202. The boy accidentally knocked over the lamp.

203. Turn on the gas.

204. Take off your hat.

The writers explain that all these words (out, up, over off, on) are used in front of nouns and noun equivalents, but they could go equally well elsewhere, for example:

205. I will put the light out.

206. This has taken a lot of my time up.

207. They boy accidentally knocked the lamp over.

208. Turn the gas on.

209. Take your hat off.

We can notice that they are not showing the relationship between the noun that follows them and any other word in the sentence: they belong much more closely to the verb. The writers explain that these expressions can, in fact, be replaced by single verbs of practically similar meaning. For example:

put out	-	extinguish
take up	-	occupy
knock over	-	upset
take off	-	remove etc

According to them, there are a great many of these "phrasal verbs" (that is verb + preposition or adverb) and a number of verbs (usually the commonest in the language) may have a dozen or more different meanings according to the adverbial particle which accompanies them. For example:

put off	-	postpone
put up	-	accommodate, raise
put up with	-	tolerate
put on	-	pretend

put across	-	communicate successfully
put through	-	connect.

Some of the meanings, they feel, could be literal and the meaning of the phrase may be gathered from the individual words that compose it. For example:

210. Put the book up there.

211. The ice was broken up by the ice-plough.

But very frequently, they explain, the meaning is figurative and can only be learned by treating the combination as one unit, as in:

212. Can you put me up for the night? = (accommodate)

213. We have broken up for two weeks. = (classes) have finished for a two weeks' holiday).

Furthermore, in some cases the adverbial particle has become completely fused with the verb to become an inseparable particle. In that case, the writers explain, it precedes it. For example:

outnumber

overlook

upset

withstand, etc.

Cowie and Mackin's approach (1975: 28-49) is rather different from the one (or all the ones) discussed above. It examines idioms in general and phrasal verbs in particular. According to them, idioms correspond to a wide

range of grammatical types as found in the following phrase patterns:

a) article + adjective + noun, as in

the last straw

a live wire

a lame duck

b) article + present participle + noun, as in

a parting shot

a sitting duck

c) article + past participle + noun, as in

a foregone conclusion

a close-run thing.

Idiomatic expressions also span sentences of various structural types, as in:

break the bank

fill the bill

make somebody's day

jump the gun

214. give him an inch and he'll take a mile.

215. spare the rod and spoil the child.

These, according to them, are but a small sample of the great diversity of grammatical forms which idiomatic expressions may take.

Of most significance to the present investigation is the fact that though various expressions have been cited as examples of each type, we have yet to say what it is that entitles us to refer to them as idioms. Thus in turning to the central question of the nature of idiomaticity, the writers suggest that it is useful to pose the following basic questions and attempt to find suitable answers to them:

(i) How in practice do we determine whether a given expression is idiomatic or not? We sense, for example, that "put up" as used in the sentence:

216. (a) "They are having a memorial put up to him by public subscription" is not idiomatic, whereas "put up" in:

216. (b) A well-wisher had put up the money for the scheme.

is idiomatic.

ii) Is the distinction between non-idioms and idioms clear cut, or does the one type shade off gradually into the other?

iii) What criteria in particular determine the inclusion of some items and the exclusion of others as idioms?

iv) Finally, what is the bearing of the conclusions we reach upon the grammatical labels we attach to idioms?

If an expression such as "put up" (in the second example above) is shown to be a unit of meaning, should we not describe it as a grammatical unit also, and generally abandon the "verb + particle" labelling in idiomatic

cases? Discussions of idiomaticity are sometimes confused by introducing inappropriate grammatical criteria into an area where considerations of meaning carry particular weight. A question which is often raised in treatments of the verb + particle combination, but from the discussion of which the wrong conclusions are sometimes drawn, has to do with the different grammatical functions of "on" in such pairs of sentences as:

217. (a) The machine turns (= rotates) on a central pivot.

217. (b) Pop music turns on (= stimulates, excites) many young people.

According to the writers, there is surely a difference of function in the use of the word "on" here: We cannot shift the final NP to precede "on" in the first sentence, but we can in the second:

218. (a) *The machine turns a central pivot on.

219. (b) Pop music turns young people on.

Further evidence, they explain, of the difference is the contractive positioning of "it" and "them" (as replacements for the NPS) in the two sentences:

219. (a) The machine turns on it.

219. (b) Pop music turns them on.

Cowie and Mackin argue that it is on the basis of such criteria that "on" can be said to function as a preposition in the first example and as particle (or adverbial particle) in the second. At this point, it will be wrong

to use this grammatical evidence of contrastiveness in support of the claim that "turn on" (=excite) is a unit of meaning, and thus an idiom. If we did, the writers argue further, we should have to explain why it is that "turn on" as used in the sentence:

220. "The porter turns on the hall lights" appears, and can be shown to be, less idiomatic, while at the same time displaying the same characteristics with regard to the particle. Let us compare this pair of sentences:

221. (a) The porter turns the hall lights on.

221. (b) The porter turns them on.

We should also have to account for the fact that, whereas "turn on" (verb + preposition) in:

222. "The machine turns on a central pivot" is intuitively less idiomatic than its homonym in the following sentence, ("on" is equally "prepositional" in both cases):

223. Our conversation turned on (= had as its main topic) what was to be done when the elections were over.

The evidence of such examples, according to them, points to the conclusion that whereas the particle and preposition contrast is a valid and important one, it has no bearing on whether expressions are idiomatic or not. The idiom/non-idiom contrast is different in kind and must be established by different means.

The writers thus conclude that we can begin the discussion of idiomaticity with a simple and familiar assumption: an idiom is a combination of two or more words which function as a unit. This assumption can be easily tested. If, for instance, a verb + particle expression is a semantic unit we should be able to substitute for it a number of single words (in this case, verbs) of equivalent meaning. By this criterion, "step up" as used in the sentence:

224. His promotion has stepped up their social status. is clearly idiomatic, since it is synonymous with "improved"; "enhanced". By the same token, "take off" is an idiom in the sentence:

226. Bill took off Hitler to perfection.

since it is equivalent in meaning to "mimicked" or "imitated".

Cowie and Mackin also propose that we can also test our intuitions about idiomaticity in another way. If "step up" and "take off" are indivisible units of meaning, it should not be possible to break that unity either by removing the particle component or by replacing the verb component with other verbs of like meaning. The "particle deletion" test shows both expressions to be idiomatic: the effect of applying it is to make nonsense of the example sentences:

226. *His promotion has stepped their social status.

227. *Bill took Hitler to perfection.

"Verb replacement" is another criterion and, according to them, it

also applies negatively in both cases: there are no precise equivalents to steps" and "take" as they are used here:

228. His promotion stepped up his social status.

?pushed

?bumped

The writers point out that the semantic unity which is characteristic or idioms tends to make them behave as single grammatical words also. This tendency is reflected, for example, in the fact that some verb + particle expressions which are idiomatic can be converted into nouns. As "to make up" (one's face) has a corresponding noun "make up" and "to break down" (the accounts, the figures) has the corresponding form "breakdown". This characteristic suggests a further test of "noun formation" - which applies positively to both our examples. In parallel with the cases just cited, we find that "to step up" (someone's status can be changed into "a step-up" (in someone's status) and "to take off" Hitler into "a take off" (of Hitler).

The next criterion, according to them, is that idiomatic expressions are units of meaning; non-idiomatic ones, conversely, are made up of distinct meaningful parts. We should expect this assumption about non-idioms to be borne out when they are tested in the same ways as idioms. This time, however, the test should apply in reverse. Let us consider the item "draw out", as in the example:

229. John drew out twenty naira from his savings account.

We note first that there is no corresponding noun in this case: we shall not attest *"a draw-out" (of twenty naira) to parallel "a step up" (in status). We find too that we can equally well use "take" or "draw' in this context: the verbs are synonymous here. Again, the particle "out" can be deleted without affecting sense or acceptability:

230. John drew twenty naira from his savings account.

The examples we have been looking at, the writers explain, tend to suggest that there is a sharp contrast between idioms and non-idioms - that there are items like "take off" (a soldier) to which all the tests apply positively or negatively as appropriate, and other combinations like "draw out" (money) to which the same tests apply in reverse. In reality, the picture is not so clear-cut: even "draw out" which on most counts seems unidiomatic enough, has a one-word equivalent in "withdrawal" (suggesting semantic unity):

231. John withdrew twenty naira from his savings account.

In fact, the more individual cases that we examine the more does it appear that the boundary between highly idiomatic items and the rest is not sharply drawn, rather it is hazy and imprecise. We shall do better to think in terms of a scale of idiomaticity, with the "true" idioms ("step up"; "take off") clearly established at the upper end and "draw out" appearing near the bottom, but with many items representing varying degrees of semantic and

grammatical unity spaced in between. Among the intermediate types, or "semi-idioms", we find items like "put up" as used in the sentence:

232. Increased transport costs will put up the prices. and "muck up", as in the example:

233. The weather really mucked up our party.

Cowie and Mackin believe that what gives such items their special status is that when the tests used to identify idioms (or non-idioms) are applied, the results are not conclusive either way. We discover, for example, that whereas "put up" and "muck up" are unitary according to one criterion ("raise or "increase" can as well as substituted for the first expression and "spoil" or "ruin" for the second), they are inseparable according to another criterion (replacement of the verb component by a verb or verbs of equivalent meaning). Thus, we can say:

234. Increased transport costs will send up the prices (or cause the prices to go up) where "send" and "go" replace "put" in the original sentence. We can also say:

235. The weather really messed up our party. Where the synonym "mess" replaces "muck".

What has been said about the nature of the relationship between idioms and non-idioms applies also to more complex expressions - those containing a noun and an adjective, for example. Here too there is a gradual shading-off from absolutely fixed expressions, such as:

236. make an honest woman of, or

237. make a clean breast of

through those which allow the replacement of certain words by others of related meanings - down to the expressions of which an adjective (etc) is not an essential part, for example:

238. Keep a (careful, close, watchful, etc) eye on.

239. take (strong, instant, particular, etc) exception to.

As these examples suggest, the distinctive idiomatic character of such expressions is brought out by applying the same tests of replacements and deletion that we demonstrated earlier.

In the above discussion, we have considered one of the most useful approaches to the treatment of phrasal verbs. In it, a number of thought-provoking questions were asked to throw more light on the problem of deciding what actually qualifies as an idiom and what does not, the criteria used in distinguishing idiomatic from non-idiomatic expressions as well as the different levels of idiomaticity.

2.4.3. Observations Made by Applied Linguists

We may at this juncture pause a moment to ask why it is that our undergraduates nowadays demonstrate very little knowledge of phrasal verbs, among several other things. Tiffen (1969: 9) maintains that the crux of the problem of English language teaching lies in the primary school, for it is here that the teaching of English is begun and the foundations laid. There

is, however, a growing feeling that these foundations are often inadequate and that primary school children as exposed to the poor, non-standard English of many teachers and often fail to acquire the skills necessary to use English as the language of learning.

Obanya (1982: 280) examines the matter from two perspectives. According to him, there are pedagogical and environmental reasons for the young Nigerian learner's linguistic disabilities. The pedagogical reasons are related to the poor quality of reading and the calibre of available teachers in primary schools (thus agreeing with Tiffen above), inappropriate methods of teaching including what Odu and Umeh (1975: 46) call "the tendency to translate English into the vernacular", the non-availability of adequate, relevant, and effective facilities for the teaching of English, the near total absence of libraries and children's readers of appropriate content and standard. Many pupils, according to Obanya, speak English only during English classes and very little outside the classroom, the number of such English periods on the time-table is often too small to allow any effective teaching and learning to take place. The situation is even worse if the pupil - teacher ratio is taken into consideration and the fact that in some areas the learners' and often the teachers' English is seriously affected by the widespread use of pidgin or substandard type of English, or a heavy and active linguistic (mother-tongue) interference.

The environmental reasons, the writer explains, have to do with the use of English itself in the Nigerian society, and the prevalent conditions in the child's home as well as his immediate environment. Obanya believes that a large proportion of Nigerian children live and grow up in homes without books. Most of them are not encouraged to read books other than the ones prescribed in schools. Griffith-Jones (1959: 83) support this claim where he states that:

> Most homes are not able to supply the necessary conditions of uninterrupted peace, and many parents are quite unconvinced that books are work anyway: there is usually 'more important' housework or gardening or shopping to do; the television is on in the only available room; there is no tradition of reading, as we understand it at all. These may seem harsh criticisms, but as statements of fact I believe they are justified.

He goes further to say that there are many parents who support us splendidly, sympathetically and intelligently - but there are many, many more who have to be educated (at parents' meetings and such occasions) to accept and indeed, encourage their children's need to develop the reading habit. Meanwhile - and in addition - we can offer those children a half-hour island of peace in each stormy week when they know that their sitting down with a book will be noticed and approved. He concludes by saying that:

> "at least, you are giving those children moments which many of them may never have a chance to savour again after they leave school; at the most, you are sowing the seeds for the richest of harvests"

Bright and McGregor (1970: 52) also uphold the contention that books provide most pupils with the situations in which learning takes place. Where there is little reading, they argue, there will be little language learning. Direct experience, as far as they are concerned, of language used as part of real life in the way the learner acquires his first language may not be possible in our schools especially if one considers the multiplicity of contexts required. They affirm that something can of course be done with films and photographs, more can be done with television, but it will be true for a few years yet that the student who wants to learn English will have to read himself into a knowledge of it, unless he can move into an English environment.

Richards (1978: 98-101) also expresses a similar opinion where he affirms that:

> ....If the pupil cannot live in any English-speaking environment all his waking hours, he must spend as many hours as he can immersed in books. The teacher's first duty is to ensure that vast quantities of reading are done. If he does this, and no more, all pupils will be constantly presented with learning situations and some will develop for themselves depth and delicacy of understanding. If he does not ensure that enough reading is done, no amount of toiling over "comprehension" passages will ever produce competent readers. Quantity is king.

Obanya (1982) once again observes that very few communities have public libraries where children can read. Since English is rarely used in the child's immediate environment he has not become fluent in English at the time of entry into secondary school and above, and it is this lack of fluency

that poses problems for teachers of English. Rivers (1978:67-80) is also of the view that the situation in post-secondary institutions is more or less the same as far as English language teaching and learning are concerned.

In stressing the importance of wide reading, Oduh and Umeh (1975: 198-206) lament that it is odd that administrators will happily pay the salaries of teachers and then make their work impossible by refusing to supply them with the first essential - enough books. They feel that it is worthwhile to recall that the first schools that were established in Africa had a teacher standing in the open air with a lot of children sitting round him - with their books; no desks, no walls, no roof, no formica-topped dining tables but books. They strongly believe that there were lots of things wrong, but the priorities were right.

More specifically, there are quite a number of factors that pose problems of using and understanding phrasal verbs among learners of English as a second language. Tregidgo (1959:142) upholds that one of those factors is that the words which make up the phrases are usually simple in themselves, but understanding each separate word does not always enable one to understand the meaning of the phrase as a whole. Secondly, according to him, very often the expression is not quite logical or grammatical. He cites a number of examples such as when we say we "look forward to" something, we are not really looking at all. We also say "at the break of the day" despite the fact that the day cannot really break. Moreover, we all have two

feet and we say "on foot" and although "foot is a countable noun in the singular, we disobey the rule about using an article. He concludes that it is peculiarities of this sort which help the students to recognise that a certain expression is an idiom, even though they may never have seen it before and it is at such moments that a dictionary comes in handy. With good training, he claims, the students can independently and easily understand or use such expressions appropriately. Besides, he advises that students keep a special watch for verb-idioms which consist of a common preposition or adverb because there are so many of them in English that are given a special name: "phrasal verbs". He affirms that phrasal verbs actually pose serious problems to students.

The same view is expressed by Eckersley and Eckersley (1960:316) and Quirk et al (1972:46) who state that there are a great many of these "phrasal verbs" and many of them may have several different meanings according to the context in which they are used and the particle that accompanies them. To say that such expressions are in common use, according to Cowie and Mackin (1975: 58), is not, however, to say that their meanings are always self-evident.

Fraser (1974: 176) concludes, like many other writers, that some of the meanings are literal and the meaning of the phrase may be gathered from the individual words that compose it. But frequently the meaning is figurative and can only be learned by treating the combination as one unit.

Thus, distinguishing literal meanings of phrasal verbs from the figurative ones is a very difficult task for most students. He argues further that expressions like "make love to", "beat around the bush", "bury the hatchet", "pass the buck" and the like are all instances of idioms, just as are verb-particle combinations like "look up the information", "eke out a living" and "boil down to something". In "to pass the buck", for instance, there is no independently motivated interpretation of the verb "pass" or of the noun phrase "the buck" such that when taken together the string "pass the buck" would immediately receive the interpretation of "to avoid work by giving the job to someone else".

Also of particular significance and relevance are learners' errors. According to Corder (1974: 20), there have been two schools of thought in the field of methodology in respect of learners' errors. The first school maintains that if we were to achieve a perfect teaching method the errors would never be committed in the first place. What this simply implies is that the occurrence of errors is merely a sign of the present inadequacy of our teaching techniques. The philosophy of the second school is that we live in an imperfect world and consequently errors will always occur in spite of our best techniques for dealing with errors after they have occurred.

Corder explains further that learners' errors are significant in three ways: to the teacher, to the researcher and to the learners themselves. They are significant to the teacher because they tell him how far towards the goal

the learners have progressed and, consequently, what remains for them to learn. To the researcher they provide evidence of how language is learned or acquired and what procedures the learners are employing in their discovery of the language. Errors are also significant to the learners because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learners use in order to test their hypothesis about the language they are learning. Errors should not therefore be regarded as signs of inhibition, but simply as evidence of the learners' strategies of learning. See also Omojuwa (1970).

Another relevant field of study to the present investigation is the area of language testing. Several questions come to mind when we administer a test instrument on a group of subjects. How can we decide how good or bad a particular score is? How "good" is a testee's score of, say , 58 out of 100, or a testee profile of 6,7,7,6,6, on a 1-9 scale? Carroll and Hall (1985) uphold that there are two main ways in which we can give meaning to these figures.

The first according to them, is to interpret a person's performance by comparing it against those of students, or at 1 standard deviation above the mean of a sample of 5,000 students, or in the 3rd docile of that sample. The meanings of the scores are, in these cases, interpreted by reference to the scores of others. They are relative rather than absolute measures, and are often referred to as "norm-referenced" interpretations.

The second way of interpreting scores, they explain, is to relate them directly to the performance of specific tasks, usually at a given number of levels of mastery. In this way, we have direct guidance as to what kind of performance the figures represent. We often call this procedure "criterion-referencing". A testee could be bottom of a group and still be able to perform a certain number of tasks. From the norm point of view he is as low as can be. From the criterion point of view he is adequate.

Similarly, views have also been expressed by Salvia and Tsseldyke (1978: 27 - 30). According to them, a norm-referenced test is a device through which the performance of a particular individual is compared with the performance of his or her peers. Thus, in their own words:

> Norm-referenced devices typically are designed to do only one thing: to separate the performances of individuals so that there is a distribution of scores. They allow the tester to discriminate among the performances of a number of individuals and to interpret how one person's performance compares to that of other individuals with similar characteristics.... The raw score an individual student earns on a test is compared to the scores earned by oher students, and transformed score (for example, a percentile rank) is used to express the given student's standing in the group.

On the other hand, criterion-referenced tests, according to the writers, are a recent development in education and behavioural psychology. Rather than indicating a person's relative standing skill development, criterion-referenced tests measure a person's development of particular skills in terms of absolute levels of mastery. Thus, criterion-referenced tests provide answers to specific questions such as, "Does Maureen spell the word dog

correctly?" According to the writers:

> "In criterion-referenced measurement the emphasis is on assessing specific and relevant behaviours that have been mastered. Criterion-referenced tests treat the student as an individual rather than simply providing numerical indexes of where the student stands on a variety of subtest continua."

From the above views, we can deduce that the emphasis in criterion-referenced tests is on absolute or exact number of items answered correctly by each testee. The testee's performance can be rated or computed on an individual basis and the inference deducible from the result could be used to construct a profile of each testee. In practical terms what this means is that an individual's proficiency level in an area of language like the mastery of phrasal verbs can be gauged. One way of doing this is by designing a test with some sub-tasks all on the area of phrasal verbs.

It is also important to note that all norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests are objective. Objective tests, according to Salvia and Ysseldyke, are tests that have pre-determined answers and standards for scoring a response. They are objective in the sense that attitudes, opinions, and idiosyncrasies of the examiner do not affect scoring; any two examiners would score a response in the same way. By contrast, a subjective test is a test for which a pre-determined answer does not exist. Therefore, the examiner's subjective judgements, attitudes and opinions can affect the

scoring.

The mention of objective testing brings us to yet another important area of discrete point versus integrative testing. Traditionally, a discrete point test, according to Oller (1979:36), is one that attempts to focus attention on one point of grammar at a time. Each test item is aimed at one and only one element of a particular component of a grammar (or hypothesised grammar), such as phonology, syntax, or vocabulary). Moreover, a discrete point test purports to assess only one skill at a time (e.g. listening, speaking, reading or writing) and only one aspect of a skill (e.g. productive versus receptive or oral versus visual). Within each skill, aspect, and component, discrete items supposedly focus on precisely one and only one phoneme, morpheme, lexical item, grammatical rule, or whatever the appropriate element may be.

Oller also explains that the concept of integrated test was born in contrast with the definition of a discrete point test. If discrete items take language skill apart, integrative tests put it back together. Whereas discrete items attempt to test knowledge of language one bit at a time, integrative tests attempt to assess a learner's capacity to use many bits simultaneously, and possibly while exercising several presumed components of a grammatical system, and perhaps more than one of the traditionally recognised skills or aspects of skills.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Preamble

This chapter talks about the research procedures used for data collection, the location for the study, the sample size, the test instrument administered, the pre-test of research instrument, ethical issues in the fieldwork as well as the framework of analysis.

3.1 Fieldwork Method and Procedure

3.1.1 Location

The research study was carried out in three selected Nigerian Universities and two Federal Colleges of Education, namely: Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria; Bayero University, Kano; University of Jos; Federal College of Education, Kano and Federal College of Education, Zaria respectively.

The choice of these institutions of learning was borne out of the consideration that sufficient sample population could be drawn from them that would be adequately representative of all the final-year students in the Nigerian universities and tertiary institutions alike. In addition, the researcher reasoned that the selected institutions included both first and second generation universities in terms of years of existence. They were therefore typical of existing conditions in terms of teaching personnel,

learning facilities and socialising environment.

3.1.2 Subjects

A total of 849 subjects (266 from A.B.U., zaria, 174 from B.U.K., 149 from University of Jos, 126 from F.C.E. Kano and 134 from F.C.E. Zaria) were drawn randomly from some of the departments in the various institutions of learning. This figure represented only 10% of the total number of final-year undergraduates in the various departments from where they were drawn. Five hundred and thirty of them (62.4%) were male while the remaining three hundred and nineteen (37.6%) were female.

The rationale for drawing subjects from final-year undergraduates was for the simple reason that on graduation such students are normally regarded as budding professionals wherever and in whatever capacity they are employed to work in Nigeria. Some of them are often employed as lecturers in the Polytechnics and Colleges of Education and made responsible for the training and production of primary and post-primary school teachers. Others are employed as Graduate Assistants in Nigerian Universities from where they could rise up to the rank of Senior lecturers or even professors. Those offered non-teaching appointments are always looked upon as "models" or "authorities" of some sort. This is the point at which the researcher strongly maintains (as already mentioned in chapter 2 and repeated here only for the purpose of emphasis) that the vicious circle should be broken. Moreover, if

this particular category of learners is improved, there is the optimistic feeling that the general quality of teaching and other services would hopefully, be greatly enhanced.

3.1.3 The Test Instrument

The primary source of data collection was a test instrument designed by the researcher. Both criterion referenced and norm referenced forms of testing were employed in this study. We, however, used more of the former than of the latter. Specifically, we used criterion referenced testing:

a) to help identify each subject's specific grasp of phrasal verbs as a grammatical item;

b) to identify such items that might be so problematic that even the relatively best performers among the subjects would find difficult to tackle;

c) to identify such items that could be indicative of the subjects' non-sensitivity to the distinction between such areas as the phrasal verb at the idiomatic level and the phrasal verb at the literal level;

d) to identify such test items that could be regarded as simple or "manageable" in terms of the subjects' performance.

We used norm referenced testing because we tried to compare the standard of the subjects in band distributions. This way, we were able to place the different subjects into some bands of performance such as

Excellent, Good, Fair and Weak.

We used 35% as the cut-off mark for pass essentially because this figure approximates most closely that which is employed in most public examinations in Nigeria. The examination institutions that use 35% or thereabouts as the pass mark include National Teachers' Institute (N.T.I.), Interim Joint Matriculation Board (I.J.M.B.), Joint Admissions Matriculation Board (JAMB), West African Examination Council (WAEC) and most Nigerian Universities, Colleges of Education and Polytechnic.

The test instrument initially consisted of one hundred and twenty discrete-point objective items divided into six sections A - F. They were objective in the sense that they all had pre-determined answers. Sections A and B contained twenty items each, but while the former was designed to test the subjects' ability to distinguish literal from idiomatic use of phrasal verbs, the latter was aimed at testing their productivity and their task was simply to use the given phrasal verbs first literally, then idiomatically. Section C had ten multiple-choice items aimed at testing their ability to choose from the options given lettered A-E the most appropriate interpretation of each underlined expression. Section D, which consisted of twenty items, sought to test their ability to interpret the use of idiomatic phrasal verbs while section E, which comprised thirty items, aimed at testing further their creativity in the appropriate use of idiomatic phrasal verbs. Section F, which was the last in the test, contained twenty items designed mainly to

supplement sections A-E by providing the subjects with more authentic or natural contexts in which to encounter phrasal verbs.

3.1.4 Pre-test of Instrument

The first draft of the test instrument was subjected to a rigorous moderation by experienced colleagues and three experts: one from B.U.K. and two from A.B.U., Zaria. This proved very helpful as some of the difficulties that the researcher had not anticipated soon manifested themselves such as the following:

i) The time allowed for the designed test;

ii) The rationale for the choice of the test items;

iii) Insufficient contextualisation of some of the items;

iv) Unclear rubrics or instructions for some of the sections;

v) Lack of illustrative sentence at the beginning of section F;

vi) The authenticity of the test instrument itself especially from the point of view of a native speaker.

With the aid of the above observations, the researcher was able to remove all the expressions that appeared to have very low frequency of occurrence. These were replaced with others more likely to be encountered in normal daily interactions. The contextualization of the affected items was significantly improved and it was at this particular point that Section F was added in order to provide the subjects with more authentic contexts in which

to find phrasal verbs.

Having made these modifications, the second draft of the test instrument was given to a native speaker (who in 1995 was Associate Professor of English Language) for the purpose of authentication. This too helped the test instrument to attain a higher level of face and content validity than it would have been capable of if left to the judgement of the researcher alone. The instructions were made more explicit than they had hitherto been. Some of the test items including the multiple-choice ones were greatly modified to facilitate the subjects' understanding. One sentence containing the verb "conk out" was found to be very slangy and another one identified as being un-natural and replaced with a more natural one. Most significantly, some of the items were still found by the native speaker to be verbal idioms in general and not phrasal verbs. Consequently, twenty items were removed for being unsuitable leaving a total of one hundred items only.

The third draft was prepared together with a comprehensive marking scheme and sent back to the native speaker for the purpose of final validation of the test items. A few more possible answers that had never occurred to the researcher were included in the marking scheme and that modification too proved critical. In all, one hundred items were approved and maintained in the test instrument.

The fourth and final draft was administered to 50 subjects drawn from final-year B.Ed students of Federal College of Education, Zaria who were

similar to the target subjects. Many of them complained that the test instrument was rather bulky and the time limit too short. It therefore became necessary to remove sections A and F in order to reduce the size of the test instrument and increase the time limit by thirty minutes, thus making it two and a half hours. Apart from those adjustments, everything else was found to be satisfactory and the researcher finally felt justified and contented to administer the test instrument to the target subjects.

3.1.5 Ethical Issues in the Fieldwork

The researcher ensured that the Heads of the various Departments where the research was carried out were duly informed well in advance about the conduct and purpose of the study and they gave their consent. All the lecturers in the respective departments were also informed and effort was made to ensure that the study did not interfere with the departments' programmes of study.

3.2 Framework of Analysis

The subjects' test scripts were marked, scored and analysed quantitatively in order to give a general picture of their understanding and use of phrasal verbs in general. See the next chapter for more on this.

A marking scheme (see Appendix B) was worked out based on informal English usage and bearing in mind the various shades of meaning

that some of the items could have so as to ensure valid and reliable assessment of the subjects' responses. Specifically, descriptive statistics was used to present the date in form of frequency tables, polygons and histograms. Some statistics such as the means and standard deviations were computed and presented.

In addition, a group/sector analysis was also done in order to establish some kind of typology of the way phrasal verbs are interpreted and used by our final-year undergraduates. Finally, an attempt was made to answer the research questions we put forward at the beginning of the investigation.

Chapter 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, attempts have been made to present and analyse the data collected for the present research study. In particular, descriptive statistics is used to present the primary data in the form of frequency tables, polygons and histograms. Some statistics such as the means and standard deviations are also employed for computing. Finally, a group/sector analysis is done so as to establish some kind of typology of how final-year Nigerian undergraduates interpret and use phrasal verbs.

4.1 Presentation of Data

A total of 960 subjects in five higher institutions of learning were served with the test instrument designed by the researcher. As a result of mortality, however, exactly 849 (88.44%) question papers were returned. The characteristics of students from each institution were investigated. Below are the frequency tables with their corresponding graphic representations. The researcher decided to develop a confidence interval and used the upper limit as cut-off points.

TABLE 4.1 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF F.C.E. ZARIA STUDENTS' SCORE

Class Interval	*Freq.*	*Cum. Freq.*	*Cum. Per Freq.*
55-59	4	134	100
50-54	7	130	97
45-49	18	123	91.8
40-44	9	115	85.8
35-39	13	106	77.1
30-34	14	93	69.4
25-29	17	79	58.9
20-24	25	62	46.3
15-19	32	37	27.6
10-14	3	5	3.7
5-9	2	2	1.5

KEY

Freq.	Frequency
Cum Freq.	Cummulative Frequency
Cum per Freq.	Cummulative Percentage Frequency

FIG. 4.01 HISTOGRAM AND FREQUENCY OF POLYGON OF F.C.E. ZARIA STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE

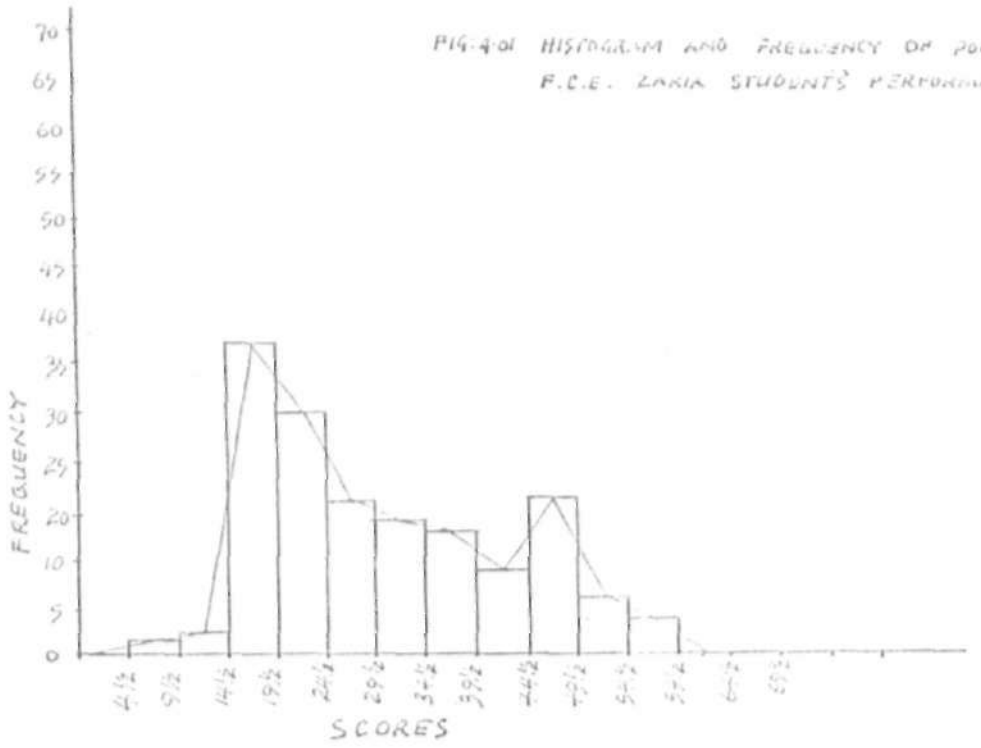


TABLE 4.2 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF F.C.E. KANO STUDENTS' SCORE

Class Interval	Freq.	Cum. Freq.	Cum. Per Freq.
45-49	11	126	100
40-44	5	115	91.3
35-39	16	110	87.3
30-34	11	94	74.6
25-29	28	83	65.9
20-24	26	55	43.7
15-19	23	29	23.0
10-14	5	6	4.8
5-9	1	1	0.01

KEY

Freq.	Frequency
Cum Freq.	Cummulative Frequency
Cum Per Freq.	Cummulative Percentage Frequency

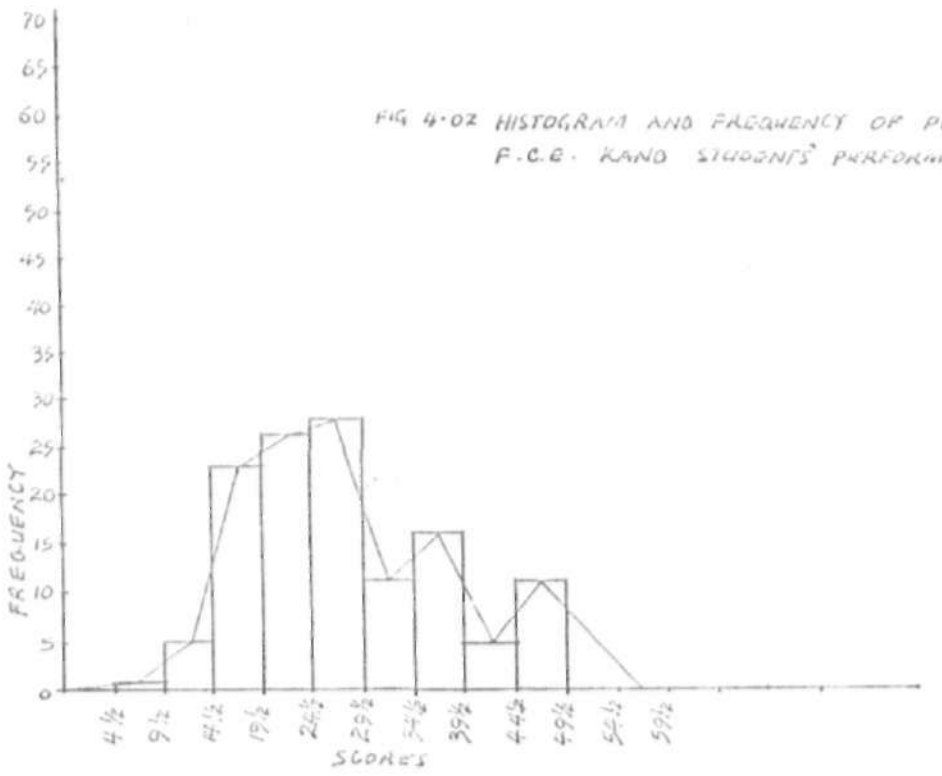


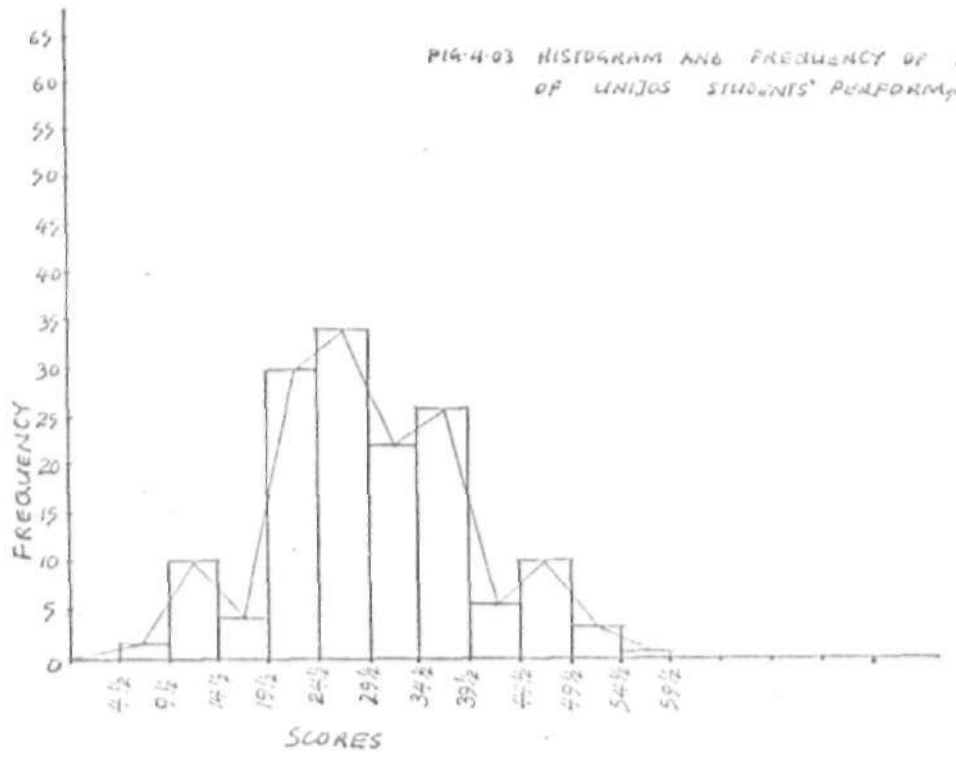
FIG 4·02 HISTOGRAM AND FREQUENCY OF POLYGON OF F.C.E. KANO STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE

TABLE 4.3 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF UNIJOS STUDENTS' SCORES

Class Interval	Freq.	Cum. Freq.	Cum. Per Freq.
55-59	1	149	100
50-54	3	148	99.3
45-49	10	145	97.3
40-44	7	135	90.6
35-39	26	128	85.9
30-34	22	102	68.5
25-29	34	80	53.7
20-24	30	46	30.9
15-19	4	16	10.7
10-14	10	12	8.1
5-9	2	2	1.3

KEY

Freq.	Frequency
Cum Freq.	Cummulative Frequency
Cum Per Freq.	Cummulative Percentage Frequency



FIG·4·03 HISTOGRAM AND FREQUENCY OF POLYGON OF UNIJOS STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE

TABLE 4.4 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF B.U.K. STUDENTS' SCORES

Class Interval	Freq.	Cum. Freq.	Cum. Per Freq.
66-64	1	174	100
55-59	2	173	99.4
50-54	4	161	97.1
45-49	4	157	96.0
40-44	12	153	83.3
35-39	14	141	81.0
30-34	15	127	67.2
25-29	43	112	64.3
20-24	26	69	39.7
15-19	23	43	24.7
10-14	15	20	11.5
5-9	5	5	2.9

KEY

Freq.	Frequency
Cum Freq.	Cummulative Frequency
Cum Per Freq.	Cummulative Percentage Frequency.

FIG. 4 (a) HISTOGRAM AND FREQUENCY OF POLYGON OF B.UK. STUDENTS PERFORMANCE

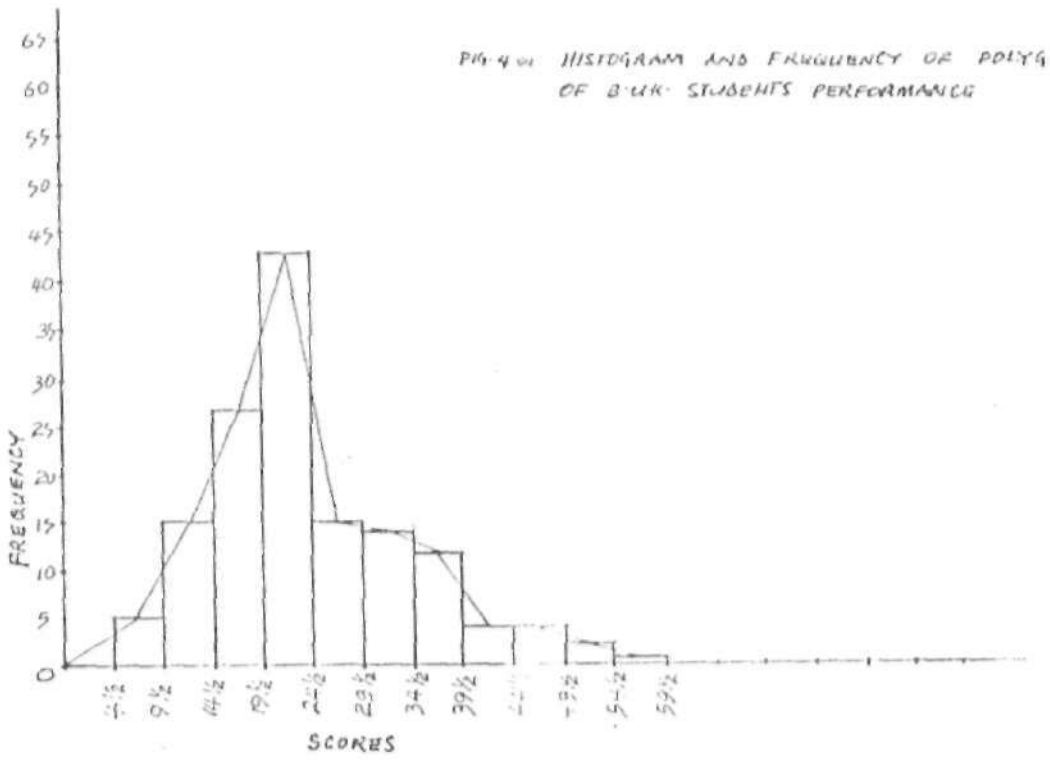


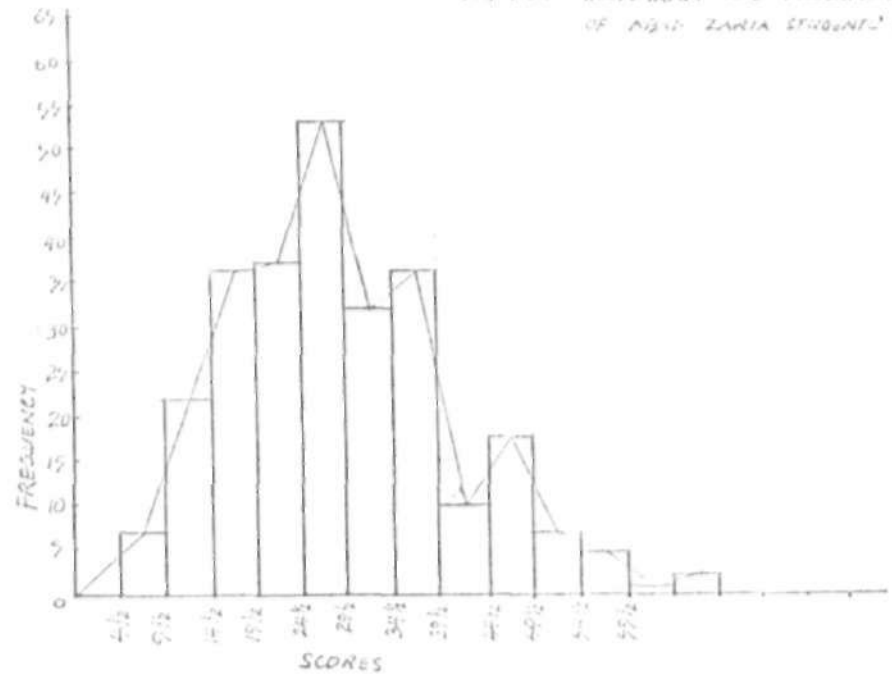
TABLE 4.05 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF A.B.U. STUDENTS' SCORES

Class Interval	Freq.	Cum. Freq.	Cum. Per Freq.
65-69	2	266	100
60-64	1	264	99.2
55-59	4	263	99.9
50-54	6	259	97.4
45-49	18	253	95.1
40-44	11	235	88.3
35-39	36	224	84.2
30-34	32	188	70.7
25-29	53	156	58.6
20-24	37	103	24.8
15-19	36	66	24.8
10-14	23	30	11.3
5-9	7	7	2.6

KEY

Freq.	Frequency
Cum Freq.	Cummulative Frequency
Cum Per Freq.	Cummulative Percentage Frequency.

FIG 4·05 HISTOGRAM AND FREQUENCY OF DISTRIBUTION OF NIGER ZARIA STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE



Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5 show the frequency distributions of the subjects' scores in the one-short test administered in the respective institutions. Despite the fact that a relative pass mark of 35% was used due to the generally poor performance of the subjects, the results show that only 51 (38.05%) of the 134 subjects drawn from F.C.E. Zaria, 32 (25.40%) of the 126 from F.C.E. Kano, 47 (32.54%) of the 149 from University of Jos, 37 (21.26%) of the 174 from B.U.K. Kano, and 78 (29.32%) of the 266 from A.B.U. Zaria could be identified as fair performers.

The nature of the distribution of scores was investigated and the graphs (histograms and frequency polygons) were drawn for that purpose. See figures 4.01, 4.02, 4.03, 4.04 and 4.05 as examples. Haber and Runyon (1980) emphasized the importance of graph in statistical analysis. According to them "... a graph is worth a thousand data points." Hence, a look at Figure 4.01 indicates that the F.C.E. Zaria students' scores are Platy-Kurtic. That is to say that the curve is flatter (which means that the frequency distribution is more widely spread) than the normal curve presumably because the value of the Kurtosis is negative (-0.135).

It may be pointed out that for the normal distribution, the Skewness has a value of zero and the Kurtosis also has a value of zero (Ferguson, 1981). Additionally, the higher or lower the index for Skewness from zero, the greater the degree of Skewness either to the left or to the right and the further the deviation of the value of the Kurtosis from zero the greater or

lower the extent of flatness.

To give more meaning, therefore, to Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5, the smoothed frequency polygons of the distributions are shown by institutions in Figures 4.01, 4.02, 4.03, 4.04 and 4.05 respectively. In Figure 4.01, for example, the scores show an erratic distribution with some multi-model characteristics. This shows a very wide divergent performance of students in F.C.E. Zaria either as a result of weak background, poor motivation, bad teaching or some other possible causes. We may observe that Figures 4.01 and 4.02 show that the subjects' scores in those institutions are skewed positively. The scores of subjects drawn from UniJos in figure 4.03, however, proves to be fairly normal compared with Figures 4.01 and 4.02. Furthermore, tables 4.4 and 4.5 (Figures 4.04 and 4.05) show the histograms and frequency polygons for B.U.K. and A.B.U. to be partially more normally distributed and dispersed than those for F.C.E. Zaria and F.C.E. Kano. We may also observe that Table 4.1 and Figure 4.01 of F.C.E. Zaria are more positively skewed than those in Table 4.2 and Figure 4.02 of F.C.E. Kano. It is important to note that in the theory of testing, a distribution of scores that is skewed positively indicates that the majority of the subjects scored below the mean.

4.2 General Performance

A discussion of the general performance of the subjects drawn from

the various institutions of learning could also be very helpful.

Table 4.06 below indicates the general distribution of mean scores and standard deviations in various institutions. Regardless of these distributions, the B.U.K. Kano had a mean score of 26.91 while F.C.E. Zaria had a mean score of 30.19 out of the total relative score of 35 marks. Clearly, F.C.E. Zaria and B.U.K. Kano performed poorly. Out of a total sample size of (849 subjects), only 245 subjects (28.85%) performed fairly. The percentage of the number of passes would have been much lower if the absolute pass mark of 40% had been used. This shows that there are differences in students' performances in each group score. The significance of these differences will be tested later through the consideration of certain hypotheses. Let us for now examine the distribution of the mean scores and standard deviations in the various institutions.

TABLE 4.6: DISTRIBUTION OF MEAN SCORES AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS

	Schools	X	S.D.	No. of Passes %	Total
1.	F.C.E. ZARIA	30.19	12.55	45 (33.58)	134
2.	F.C.E. KANO	27.44	9.69	32 (25.40)	126
3.	UNIJOS	29.68	12.1	17 (11.41)	149
4.	B.U.K. KANO	26.91	11.02	37 (21.26)	174
5.	A.B.U. ZARIA	28.50	11.91	78 (29.32)	266
TOTAL				209 (24.62)	849

To test this hypothesis, the F-statistics (One way analysis of variance) was used. Table 4.7 shows the summary of the F-value computation of students' performance.

TABLE 4.7: THE SUMMARY OF ONE-WAY ANOVA OF STUDENTS' PERFORMANCES IN VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS

SOURCE OF VARIATIONS	SS	DF	MS	F	P
BETWEEN	756.4	2	378.2	4.79	0.00
WITHIN	66752.2	847	78.81		
TOTAL	67508.6	849			

Significance, $P < 0.05$

The result in Table 4.7 shows that there exists a significant difference in the mean scores of students across the five institutions under this study. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The Scheffe's test results (Table 4.8).

TABLE 4.8: THE SCHEFFE'S TEST ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE

PAIR OF INSTITUTIONS	F-VALUE	P-VALUE
F.C.E. ZARIA VS F.C.E. KANO	2.69	0.36
F.C.E. ZARIA VS UNIJOS	2.81	2.33
A.B.U. VS B.U.K.	2.80	1.97
A.B.U. VS F.C.E. KANO	2.79	1.96
B.U.K. VS UNIJOS	2.82	1.75
F.C.E. ZARIA VS B.U.K.	2.84	1.61
UNIJOS VS A.B.U. ZARIA	2.78	0.34
B.U.K. VS F.C.E. KANO	2.86	0.56

From the above table, there is no justification in rejecting the fact that the mean performances of the subjects in the five institutions are the same. Even though the analysis of variance indicates non-identical subjects' performance in the five institutions, Scheffe's test implies that the differences in the performance are not significant in either case. One may speculate that

what might affect the identical nature of the subjects' performances in all the institutions could be the general difficulty of phrasal verbs, especially the idiomatic ones. It could also be as a result of the subjects' limited experiential exposure to phrasal verbs due to their reluctance to read extensively, among others.

4.2.1 Group/Sector Analysis of Sample Responses of Subjects Drawn from the Various Institutions of Learning

In this section, we shall attempt to present and describe qualitatively how phrasal verbs are interpreted and used by final year Nigerian undergraduates. We shall include some of the sample responses based either on their frequency of occurrence among the subjects or on the striking nature of such responses especially for the category of learners under study.

Generally, the test instrument, which was the primary source by which we gathered our data was able to tap the subjects' internalised grammars. On the one hand, it succeeded in measuring their linguistic creativity in the use and understanding of phrasal verbs. Some of the responses they produced undoubtedly conformed with English patterns including alternative responses that had not occurred to the researcher at the time of writing the test. Such responses could be found in Appendix C tagged "Sample Responses - Type A."

Conversely, there were several other responses that differed in varying degrees from normal English patterns which would be seen in Appendix B labelled "Sample Responses - Type B". On the basis of the above information, therefore, we may safely conclude that final-year Nigerian undergraduates use phrasal verbs in two broad ways: the first conforms with normal English patterns in terms of form and function.

4.2.2 Sentences Similar to Normal English Patterns, as in:

1. (a) The baby was wrapped up in a warm towel. (Literal)
   (b) I was so wrapped up in the music that I didn't hear you leave.
2. (a) We had to shake off a black car before reaching the bank.
   (b) We had to lose a car before reaching the station. (Interpretation).
3. (a) Sani gives up his weekends to golfing and fishing.
   (b) Interpretation - Sani devotes his weekends to golfing and fishing.

The second way, however, deviates in varying degrees to normal English patterns as in:

4.2.3 Sentences with Wrong Tenses/Inflections, for example:

4. The food items have been cook up yesterday during supper. (Idiomatic).

5. Corruption has ate into the fabrics of the Nigerian society. (Literal).

4.2.4 **Nonsensical Sentences, for example:**

6. She eats into sorrow.
7. The attempts goes together without differences.
8. Army rubbers were told to go together by bullets.

4.3 **Confusion/Blending of Idioms, for example:**

9. Birds of the same feather always go together.
10. John must always blows up his own trumphet.

4.3.1 **Sentences with Errors of Particle Substitution, as in:**

11. I usually blow up my candle before going to bed.
12. Ali has take off a new job.
13. The Government shake off exercise cut across all Ministries.

4.3.2 **Sentences with Errors of Particle Deletion, for example:**

14. You should not let anybody to dig your records or your life history.
15. He will cough the money he stole.

4.3.3 **Sentences with Errors of Verb Substitution, as in:**

16. The ASSU members after series of consultation take off their strike.

17. Don't fold up hope.

4.3.4 Sentences with Errors of Particle Insertion, for example:

18. Pull up yourself together.

19. We did pull up a fast one on the driver.

20. They took off to their heels.

4.3.5 Treating Either the Verb or Particle as a Noun, as in:

21. The wind is blowing up now.

22. I have some cough up syrup in the first aid box.

4.4 Literalization of Either the Verb or Particle, as in:

23 (a) Call him and shake off.

(b) Call him and reconcile.

24 (a) The room is round off.

(b) The room is circular.

25 (a) I am fed up now.

(b) I am satisfy now.

4.4.1 Idioms Coined from Local Nigerian Languages, for example:

26. One man's turn is one man's turn off.

27. The Alafin has kick off the calabash yesterday.

28. When desirable is not available, then available should be drag into use.

29. The man was drag into the ocean of thinking while his wife was moving in front of him.

30. Those who dig into their hairs would find lices.

31. So much water has gone under the bridge for me to forget.

4.4.2 **Tautological Sentences, such as:**

32. The take off of the match commences today.

33. The kick off of the nigerian Politics is yet to start.

34. Mr. Smith will definately go under if he goes bankrupt.

4.4.3 **Sentences with Errors Arising from Phonological Interference, for example:**

35. The problem must be dog into.

36. Please torn off the lights.

4.4.4 **Sentences with Errors of Misinterpretation, as in:**

37 (a) It is high time you get even with one another.

(b) It is high time you understand one another.

38 (a) We should chew over this matter.

(b) We should forget this matter.

4.5 Sentences Containing Multiplicity of Particles, as in:

39. The Principal take off the matter off her hand.

40. Please come and take it off away from here.

41. The man was kicked off out of the group.

A close look at the sample responses in 4.2.3 shows that they are all well-formed. Sentence 1(a) shows the appropriate literal use of the phrasal verb "wrapped up" as distinct from its idiomatic use in 1(b). Sentences 2(a) and 3(a) are grammatically appropriate and their interpretations in 2(b) and 3(b) are equally suitable.

On the contrary, sentences in 4.2.4 clearly differ from normal English sentences. Sentence 4 should have been in the simple past passive as the adverb of time "yesterday" seems to suggest, that is, "The food items were cooked up yesterday during supper". Should we remove the adverb, the sentence would still be wrong in the present perfect passive because of the absence of inflection for the verb "Cook". The sentence should have therefore been "The food items have just been cooked up during supper". Note the mis-spelling of the word "super" instead of "supper". Sentence 5 was perhaps intended to be in the present perfect. The wrong form of the verb "ate" after the third person auxiliary renders the sentence ungrammatical.

We have tagged sentences in 4.2.5 as nonsensical because we cannot say precisely what each of them means. Sentence 6 appears to be

grammatical except for the noun object "sorrows". Sentence 7 is both ungrammatical (because of the wrong verb form "goes" instead of "go" to suit the plural noun "attempts") and nonsensical (because we cannot say precisely what the expression means). Sentence 8 is also difficult to understand because of the phrase "by bullets" and even the spelling "Army rubbers" instead of "Armed robbers".

In 4.3 we see instances of confusion/blending of idioms. Sentence 9 appears to be a confusion of the English idiom "Birds of a feather, flock together". So "go together" is confused with "flock together". Note also the intrusion of the adjective "same" instead of the indefinite article "a" before the noun "feather". The phrasal verb "go together" could of course be used idiomatically to mean "suit or match" on its own. It is in this sense we assumed that two idioms have been confused and blended in one. Sentence 10 also appears to be a confusion of the idiom "blow one's own trumpet" which means "praise oneself". If we remove the noun object "trumphet" instead of "trumpet" and change the main verb to "blow" instead of "blows", we will be left with another possible idiomatic expression as in "John must always blow up" which may mean "John must always be violently angry" but for what to happen, we do not know. For sentence 10 to be grammatically appropriate and acceptable, the verb inflection "s" and the particle "up" must all be removed and the spelling of the word "trumphet" changed to "trumpet". We must also supply additional information to make the sentence

complete, for example: "John must always blow his own trumpet to win admiration from others".

Sentences in 4.3.1 are those with errors of particle substitution. In sentence 11, the particle "up" seems to substitute "out" as a candle or fire is usually "blown out" not "blown up". Thus, the sentence should have been "I usually blow out my candle before (not b4) going to bed". Sentence 12 substitutes "off" for "up" and the form of the main verb is inappropriate. The sentence should have been "Ali has taken up a new job". Again, in sentence 13, the particle "off" is used instead of "up" in "The government shake up exercise cut across all ministries" in the past, or "cuts across all ministries" in the present. In any case, "Shake off" appears to have been confused with "shake up".

The sentences in 4.3.2 are those with errors of particle deletion. Sentence 14 appears to be ungrammatical on two counts: the use of the infinitive verb "to dig" after the verb "let" is ungrammatical. What is needed there is a bare infinitive "let anybody dig". Secondly, the particle "into" appears to have been deleted. We "dig into" something when we "investigate" that thing thoroughly. So, the sentence should have been "Don't let anybody dig into your records or life history". Again, the particle "up" seems to have been deleted in sentence 15 since whatever is "coughed up" in the idiomatic sense is "provided unwillingly". We therefore expect the sentence to have read "He will cough up the money he stole".

In 4.3.3 we find sentences that have errors of verb substitution. In sentence 16 the verb "take" is used instead of "call" as a strike is usually "called off" when it is "stopped". The intended meaning in that sentence was perhaps "The ASUU (not ASSU) members after a series of consultations call off their strike". This sentence could be appropriate in the simple present. Clearly, the verb "give" in sentence 17 appears to have been substituted for "fold". We "give up hope" and not "fold up hope".

The sentences in 4.3.4 have errors of particle insertion. Sentences 18 and 19 both have the intruding particle "up" which in each case affects the form and meaning of the sentence. Sentence 18 should have been "Pull yourself together" which means "Get control of yourself" or "Get control of your feelings". The particle "up" in sentence 19 is not required. So we are left with "We did pull a fast one on the driver". In the same manner, the particle "off" in sentence 20 should also be removed leaving us with "They took to their heels" which means "They ran away".

In sentences of the (4.3.5) type, either the verb or particle is treated as a noun. The expression "wind up" could be used both literally and idiomatically. In the literal sense it means "turn a handle or raise by winding" while in the idiomatic sense it means "be brief, get ready, finish, end, be exited, close, or bring to an end". In sentence 21, however, we see how the verb is changed into a noun and the particle literalized. In sentence 22 "cough" appears to have been used in its noun sense.

In 4.4 we see instances where either the verb or particle is literalized. In sentence 23 (a), the verb "shake" is clearly literalized as the interpretation in 23(b) indicates. Perhaps what was intended was "Call him and shake hands" as a sign of reconciliation. In 24(a) the verb is also literalized judging from the interpretation in 24(b). Sentence 25(a) equally shows an instance of literalization as judged from the interpretation in 25(b). "I am fed up now" as it is used could mean "I am bored now" and not "satisfy" (satisfied).

In 4.4.1 we find idioms that appear to have been coined up from local Nigerian languages. Sentence 26 is perhaps a confusion of the English proverb "One man's meat is another man's poison" which means "What one person likes is not necessarily liked by anyone else". Sentence 27 also appears to be a confusion of the English idiom "Kick the bucket" which means "die". We see the use of a wrong tense "has kick" considering the adverb of time "yesterday" and the substitution of the noun "bucket" for "calabash". This sentence seems to suggest transfer of culture on the part of those subjects that produced it. Sentence 28 is certainly non-sensical, but again, may be based on some local nigerian language. Sentence 29 is perhaps the Hausa way of saying that "The man was absorbed in deep thinking while his wife was walking in front of him" Sentences 30 and 31 both appear to have been coined up from some Nigerian languages, but it is difficult to say what they mean let alone give their English equivalent.

Sentences in 4.4.2 are found to be tautological, that is, needless repetitions. In sentences 32, 33 and 34 we find the phrasal verbs and their interpretations used simultaneously. Sentence 32 could therefore be either "The take off of the match is today" or "The match takes off/or commences today" but certainly not the two used together in the same sentence. Sentence 33 appears to be rather doubtful because we cannot readily understand the sense in which Nigerian politics is said to "kick off". Perhaps if it were something like "general elections" then we could say "The Nigerian general elections are yet to kick off/or yet to start". We could also say "General elections are yet to kick off/or start in Nigeria". Sentence 34 has the phrase "go under" and "bankrupt" which could be viewed as synonymous, but are used here as if they were different things. This sentence (34), like sentence 33, is also doubtful because if we remove the repetition "bankropt" instead of "bankrupt" we are left with a fragmentary sentence "Mr. Smith will definitely (not definately) go under ..." or "Mr. Smith will definitely go bankrupt ..." if what happens?

Sentences in 4.4.3 contain errors arising from phonological interference. The verb in sentence 35 should have been "dug" and not "dog" but the two are often pronounced interchangeably by many speakers of English in Nigeria. The same applies to sentence 36 where "torn" and "turn" are often pronounced in the same manner.

In 4.4.4 the sentences have errors of misinterpretation. Sentence

37(a) is almost grammatical except for the present tense form of the verb "get" instead of the past tense form "got" that usually comes after the phrase "high time". Thus, the sentence "It is high time you got even with one another" could mean "You should have your revenge on one another at once". The interpretation given in 37(b) is quite contrary to this. In sentence 38(a), the phrase "chew over" which appears to mean "consider or discuss the matter at length" is taken to mean "forget the matter".

Finally, sentences in 4.5 contain multiplicity of particles. Sentence 39 is ungrammatical on two counts: first the wrong verb form "take" and the presence of another particle "off". We feel that the sentence could have been more meaningful if it had been expressed either in the present perfect "The principal has taken the matter off/or from her hand" or in the simple past "The Principal took the matter off/or from her hand". To use the phrase in the simple present either to show habituality or futurity, we could have "The principal takes the matter off/or from her hand" and an adverb of time such as "usually" or "next week" must be added to make it more meaningful. In sentence 40 only one of the particles is needed, as in either "Please come and take it off here" or "Please come and take it away from here". The presence of the two particles renders the sentence ungrammatical. The same applies to sentence 41 where only one particle is required. We could have either "The man was kicked (not kick) off the group". Or "The man was removed from the group". What is required is the past participle form of the verb

"kick" and not the simple present form.

4.6 Findings of the Study

After scoring, grouping, analysing and describing the subjects' performances in the one-short test, we present below our findings for the purpose of answering our research questions and assessing the extent to which we have achieved our aims.

The analysis of our primary data revealed that out of a total number of 849 subjects drawn from the five higher institutions, only 245 of them (28.86%) performed within the bound of "fair". That means that the remaining 604 subjects (71.14%) all failed despite the fact that the pass mark was pegged at 35% due to, among other considerations, the desire not to set too high a standard.

It also means that the percentage of the number of passes would have been much lower than this if the absolute pass mark of 40% had been used. The range of scores was from 5% - 69%. Although very few of the subjects (mostly from medicine and other science-based courses) scored beyond 50% and several others scored less than 35%, this appears to be a good indicator of the discriminatory power of the test instrument. That means our instrument was able to distinguish the high scorers from the low scorers in the use and understanding of English phrasal verbs.

The instrument also answers the second and third questions that we put forward at the beginning of our research study. The former sought to find out if Nigerian undergraduates who had been properly trained and strongly motivated would demonstrate better mastery of phrasal verbs than others. The latter question wanted to find out if Nigerian undergraduates who intrinsically read extensively were likely to be more proficient and intelligible in the use of phrasal verbs than those who did not.

Thus, to the best of our knowledge, only 28.85% of the total number of subjects drawn could perhaps be described as having been fairly trained, motivated or exposed to phrasal verbs through their personal efforts in reading extensively, judging of course from their general performance. Guess-work was discouraged as much as possible by removing sections of the test instrument that seemed to encourage it. We are prepared to assume that their scores are most probably true manifestations of their ability to interpret and use phrasal verbs.

Undoubtedly, too, we would expect the high scorers to be not only more intelligible and proficient, but more competent language users than the remaining 71.14% who performed poorly. This was our third hypothesis which was basically speculative or predictive. We also discovered a difference of $P < 0.05$ in the mean scores of subjects drawn from the five institutions of higher learning which by Scheffe's test was shown to be very insignificant. This also answers our fourth question which sought to find out

whether there would be any significant difference in the mean scores of subjects from the five institutions under study.

We could also say that we have achieved our set aims considerably. We tested the ability of final-year Nigerian undergraduates to use and understand both literal and idiomatic phrasal verbs in the written medium of communication. We discovered that their errors were more glaring in the written medium than in the oral perhaps because they were more at home with the spoken medium of communication. We also discovered that they had little problem in understanding literal phrasal verbs. Their ability to use these (literal phrasal verbs) was observed to be greatly impaired by their general deficiency in English most especially in the area of tenses and verb forms.

We have also given a descriptive (typology) of the way the subjects interpreted and used English phrasal verbs which we hope could be representative or typical of all final-year undergraduates in our higher institutions of learning.

Several factors, as we mentioned before, could account for the subjects' poor performance. While poor socio-linguistic and academic backgrounds could be viewed as the causes of their general weakness, lack of motivation, general reluctance to read extensively and effects of the inherent difficulty of phrasal verbs, most especially the idiomatic ones, may be considered to be specifically the chief causes of their poor mastery of

phrasal verbs. Even the age of the learners often counts a lot. This answers our first question which sought to find out why our undergraduates often demonstrate poor mastery of English phrasal verbs.

We have, thus, discovered that the problems of understanding and using phrasal verbs are more complex and serious than they have been made to appear by earlier research studies. With all fairness to such studies, we have indeed confirmed almost everything said by earlier researchers about idiomaticity in Nigerian English as it relates to phrasal verbs such as particle deletion, particle insertion, or particle substitution. But we have gone much further to prove that there are indeed several other errors among Nigerians such as those arising from mother-tongue interference (phonological, cultural, syntactic and semantic) multiplicity of particles, misinterpretations, wrong use of tenses and verb forms (inflection), tautological as well as nonsensical sentences. Literalization ranked highest among the recorded errors. There is little doubt that such errors could hamper effective communication greatly.

It is, therefore, in this regard that the present research study could be said to have contributed to the findings of earlier studies and set the pace for future researchers into the other various levels of idiomaticity for the purpose of describing systematically and objectively how Nigerians actually use and interpret idioms and phrasal verbs.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.0 A Retrospection

The present research investigation was aimed generally at describing how final-year Nigerian undergraduates used and interpreted phrasal verbs. Specifically, it hoped to test their ability to use and understand both literal and idiomatic phrasal verbs in the written medium of communication. It also hoped to find out what factors actually constituted their problems and investigate the extent to which such factors hampered their understanding, intelligibility and linguistic creativity in the use of phrasal verbs. Furthermore, it sought to predict the sort of competences they might turn out to be after graduation. The researcher had the conviction that if the general quality of University education could be greatly improved upon, then the quality of other levels of education such as the primary, secondary and tertiary would also possibly improve significantly.

Chapter one was, therefore, focused on the consideration of what prompted the present investigation and the above general and specific aims. Moreover, the research problem, need for, significance, scope and delimitation of the study as well as the sources of data were carefully examined. Chapter two was divided into two major parts: theoretical framework and literature review.

Chapter three, on the other hand, was devoted to the fieldwork method and procedure, locations for the study, the subjects drawn, the test instrument and other forms of testing used, the pre-test of instrument, ethical issues in the fieldwork as well as framework of analysis. Chapter four concentrated on the presentation and analysis of the data collected as well as the findings of the research investigation.

5.1 Implications of the Study

From the fore-going, it can be seen that the present research investigation has a lot of serious implications for students, teachers, parents, Federal, State and Local Governments. The following are some of them:

The study has shown that the students' sociolinguistic and academic backgrounds remain some of the major causes of their lack of proficiency in general and poor mastery of phrasal verbs in particular. Thus, poor teaching, impoverished home and classroom conditions, negative attitudes, lack of motivation and reluctance to read extensively generally impede our students' language development. Consequently, with such poor performances on the part of our students as seen from the results of the present investigation, it is only natural to expect our graduates to be half-baked, unproductive and incompetent in whatever capacity they may find themselves - unless of course definite and concrete steps are taken to rescue the situation.

It is a well known fact that our primary and post-primary institutions are badly maintained and staffed by the authorities concerned. This yields nothing but problems in all shapes and sizes to the learners, teachers, parents and the entire nation.

Educational planners, too, do not ensure that their plans/schemes are actually implemented, rigorously modified or up-dated occasionally so as to cater for the needs of our students and the entire nation in these fast and ever-changing times.

Many parents, due to harsh economic conditions, do little to provide their children with the basic facilities such as books, light, furniture and a conducive atmosphere in which to learn at home. This also helps greatly in aggravating the problems of teaching and learning in the country.

Furthermore, some communities/localities contribute to the problem by relying absolutely on the government to build schools, public libraries or reading rooms, television-viewing centres and so forth. This hampers the students' progress in no small measure as the government is often over-stretched. The inability to use and understand English phrasal verbs appropriately certainly hinders effective communication. There is just no limit to the extent of damage or havoc that miscommunication can cause to an individual, group of individuals or even the life of a nation.

The above observations imply that it is often very difficult for the Nigerian society to produce the right calibre of workers and other

competences that are needed for the general survival and progress of the nation. Nevertheless, it is still possible to reverse the situation positively if we set our minds to do so.

5.2 Recommendations

This research study has brought to the fore the need to have avenues and modes through which general proficiency could be enhanced especially the mastery of phrasal verbs. These avenues include:

a) The incipient avenue

b) The direct channel.

For the incipient avenue, it is our opinion that learners could be encouraged to read novels, learned magazines like Reader's Digest, Times Educational Supplement, News Week, Time Magazine and West Africa. In addition to the general themes handled in these publications, very often specialized articles on both literary topics and linguistics are treated by guest writers. By reading them, the learners, especially in the ESL situation, have the rare opportunity of encountering the forms of English especially as employed by writer who could be described as possessing the standard variety of the language. The alert reader would occasionally find it necessary to take note of forms of the language discovered through such reading. Ultimately, this incipient mode of acquiring language becomes one to be treasured by both learners and teachers of English in Nigeria.

Some channels are more direct than what has been described above. The direct channel consists of language lessons, language test columns, past examination questions, language debates and other language-oriented symposia. These all provide authentic settings through which the learner of English is made to have practical experience. Under some of these settings the learner is subjected to listening to some radio broadcasts like those aired by the British Broadcasting Corporation (B.B.C.) and even NTA's Tales by Moonlight.

The difference between these channels and those cited under the incipient avenue is that the direct channels subject the learner to follow a programme like the candidate going through the pencil - and - paper test. There is even provision in such programmes for the participation learner to score himself. The procedure makes it possible for the learner to compare his own performance against what is eventually given as the absolute or perfect score. By using all these modes we are suggesting that the learner of English who desires to be proficient, especially in the area of handling phrasal verbs, must see learning as a continuous and a dynamic process.

These avenues and modes certainly require a lot of money. Parents must therefore encourage their children (the learners) to eke out a living by learning one handicraft or the other such as welding, tailoring, building, carpentery, shoe-shining and so on. This will make the learners less dependent on the parents for the supply of reading materials and other basic

school needs. The learners must also be constantly guided to make the best use of their opportunities at home and in school, for example, through not only extensive reading but group discussion or doing their homework.

Teachers must be prepared to attend seminars, workshops, symposia, conferences and undergo in-service training in order to equip themselves with current trends and innovations in the art of teaching and learning. Such functions would give them the opportunity to improve upon their knowledge as well as their ability to make effective use of the audio-visual aids and other teaching techniques, so as to provide a variety of learning experiences for the learners. Tape recorders, cassette tapes, television sets, video films, film slides and a host of other gadgets could be of great help in giving the learners adequate exposure to English language as pointed out already.

Schools could organise appeal funds, P.T.A. meetings, convocation ceremonies, alumni meetings, speech and prize-giving days, sports, cultural shows and related functions and invite the general public in order to generate funds for the purchase of the necessary teaching/learning facilities.

Teachers/lecturers should always ensure that they teach by example. They should read widely before they could expect the learners to emulate them. They should use phrasal verbs and other forms of English expressions frequently with ease and accuracy if they want the learners to do the same. They should also be industrious, and always keep the learners very busy by giving them lots of practice and assignments to do either at home, in class

or hostel. Most of all, they should instill in the learners the habit of engaging in extensive and independent reading. In the case of any doubts, the learners must also be taught the proper way to use a dictionary. We share the same opinion as Aliyu (1991:135) that using a dictionary exposes the learners to some of the basic grammatical rules of the language including phrasal verbs and useful idiomatic expressions.

There is also the need to have community/public libraries in addition to the existing library facilities in some of our institutions of learning where learners could carry out further reading at their free time or during holidays. Again parents and members of each community should make generous donations in cash or in kind for their collective progress. Study groups could be formed in each community and competitions in form of debates or quizzies organized at the local government, state and national levels where different prizes could be won. Winning prizes, of course, has a lot of advantages for the learners, but the amount of progress the learners could make through each exposure is of much greater importance.

The current self-help practice in some communities is also worthy of emulation. Summer lessons are organized for all categories of learners in a given community by undergraduates and students of Colleges of Education and Polytechnics. Lessons are usually prepared alongside the above mentioned discussion groups at the ward or even local government level. The importance of this is that nobody pays anything and the students make

the most of their time.

The Federal as well as State Governments should ensure adequate funding of education at all levels so that the necessary facilities could be purchased and the right calibre of teachers employed for effective teaching and learning to take place in our institutions of learning. Teachers should be given regular promotion and other incentives such as prompt payment of salaries, in-service training and the like. The researcher strongly recommends that once in a while teachers of English who prove to be competent and dedicated to their duties should be sponsored by the Federal Government to study English abroad as this would expose them to the English language and culture simultaneously.

The researcher also feels that there are so many things that textbooks cannot explain and teachers of English in Nigeria certainly need opportunities to go abroad and explore such areas. After all, when such teachers are fully trained, they could be of tremendous help to so many thousands of children whose parents might not have the privilege of sending them to study abroad.

Finally, the success of Nigerian youths in the educational sector, for example, in any national or international competitions should be viewed with the same vigour and importance as that in sports. Benefits such as cash prizes, free houses, plots of land, scholarships and so forth should be extended to our aspiring students at all levels of education.

5.3 Directions for Further Research

Research investigations into how Nigerians use and interpret English idioms are really very few. The only two relevant but almost similar works that we were able to find were too ambitious in the sense that they attempted to cover the area of idiomaticity in its entirety. As we have seen in the second chapter, Fraser (1970) postulates a "frozenness hierarchy" of English idioms which spans from level Zero to level Six with the most idiomatic at level Zero. Cowing and Muchin (1979) also suggest a scale of idiomaticity in which "pure" or "true" idioms occupy the apex. Understanding the syntactic pattern of each level of idiomaticity should be the first major step to take in attempting to understand the mysterious nature of idioms before we could describe how Nigerians interpret and use them. The present research investigation has singled out only one of the six levels postulated by Fraser, studied it thoroughly and described how final-year Nigerian undergraduates interpret and use some of the expressions (phrasal verbs) in it.

A thorough and systematic study of the syntectic and phonological nature of the remaining levels (from Level 5 down to Level Zero) is also very desirable. Some of the levels, for example, are said to comprise either simple, intermediate or highly opaque and complex idiomatic expressions. Others are said to have a compulsory definite or indefinite article and so on. Future researches might wish to investigate further and deeper why they are so labelled, their total number in English, the contexts in which they are used

and the sort of problems they pose for ESL teachers and learners. Again, in the area of supra-segmental phonology one might wish to find out whether such things as stress, rhythm, pitch, melody and intonation play any significant roles in the use and understanding of each level of idiomaticity.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

We recognize certain limitations in the present study. Although we have over thirty universities, a total sample size of 849 subjects drawn from only five higher institutions of learning might appear to be too small. We are, however, grateful that all the institutions are federal in character and that subjects were drawn from virtually every faculty, department and course.

It was also impossible to give a supra-segmental analysis of the phrasal verbs used by our subjects especially in the spoken medium because of the total absence of a well-equipped language laboratory. It would have been more informative to account for such things as placement of stress either on the verb or particle and the consequence of misplacement of stress, had one been available.

A lot of useful information was also lost as a result of some of the final-year undergraduates' refusal to either take the test, be interviewed or surrender their personal letters or diaries. Clearly, some of the subjects interviewed used what Corder (1974) refers to as "avoidance strategy" because they were apparently not sure of the right expressions to use.

In spite of all these limitations, however, we believe that the present research investigation has provided information that would hopefully be representative of all final-year Nigerian undergraduates. We also hope that it has contributed to the current attempts to describe features of the complex phenomenon called Nigerian English.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE OF THE TEST INSTRUMENT

Department of English

Faculty of Arts and Social Science

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

Time Allowed: 2½ hours

General Instructions

This test comprises 100 items which you are required to answer as carefully as possible. You are advised to study the instructions and examples given at the beginning of each section. All answers must be supplied in the space provided on the question paper.

SECTION A

instruction: In this section, there are 20 sentences in which some phrasal verbs have been used either literally or idiomatically. For example:-

(A) Adam wants to go into the house. L

(b) Adam wants to go into the matter. I

In (A) above, the underlined phrasal verb is synonymous with "enter" and is therefore literal. Note how each of the words in the phrase retains its individual meaning.

In (B), however, the same phrasal verb is synonymous with "investigate" and is therefore idiomatic. Note also how the words now lose their basic lexical meanings and take on a new idiomatic one.

Now do numbers 1-20 by simply labelling each sentence either L (for literal) or 1 (for idiomatic) as illustrated above.

1. The new Kaduna State Administrator said he would clean up the State.
2. The doctor has been looking after the new hospital since its opening. Now he is looking forward to leaving the hospital wards for a holiday in London.
3. The manager has been sitting on my application for over a month now.
4. You can only see the black smoke if you look up the chimney.
5. She told her parents she needed money for fees, and they were taken in.
6. The rebels say that they will sweep out the administration and introduce a more effective one.
7. An American sniper picked off two Iraqi sentries this morning.
8. If you like the picture in that magazine, why don't you just cut it out?
9. The newspapers love to dig up scandals so as to make a lot of money.
10. If Ibrahim keeps spending money the way he does, he'll eventually run into trouble some day.

11. She cut off the ends of the yams before peeling them.

12. An attack of malaria fever soon pulls you down.

13. Ladi looks down on everyone around her just because she thinks she is rich.

14. In summer the sun beats down on the roof, so that the upper rooms become unbearably hot.

15. Use the following words in sentences, to bring out their meanings.

16. The glare from the fire lit up the sky.

17. The days are closing in now that harmattan is nearly here.

18. My guest knocked off two chops and a plateful of vegetables in about ten minutes, and then asked for more.

19. He enjoys sitting at a table and sipping some good wine.

20. The jury couldn't have sewn up the case without outside help.

SECTION B

Instructions: Use each verb first literally, then idiomatically, for example:

colour up

(C) I'd like to colour the place up a bit. (Literal).

(D) Some journalists like to colour their stories up with lurid details of people's private lives. (Idiomatic).

21. go together

---

22. blow up

23. pull up

24. take off

25. wind up

26. turn on

27. kick off

28. drag into

29. give away

30. cook up

31. eat into

32. button up

27. kick off

28. drag into

29. give away

30. cook up

31. eat into

32. button up

33. dig into

34. grow up

35. fold up

36. cough up

37. put up

38. go under

_____

_____

_____

39. wrapped up in

_____

_____

_____

40. pull off

_____

_____

_____

SECTION C

Instruction: After each of the following sentences, a list of possible interpretations of the verb is given. You are required to choose the interpretation that you consider most appropriate for each underlined verb. For example:

(E) When my teacher realised that I always did very well in his subject, he told me to keep it up.

(a) constrain

(b) abstain from it

(c) refrain from it

(d) maintain it

The most appropriate interpretation in this case is (d). So you answer the question by placing a tick against the corresponding alternative as follows:

(d) maintain it

Now answer questions 41-50 in the same manner.

41. You'll have to sweat it out for another hour.

(a) suffer (c) relax

(b) persevere (d) cogitate

42. They feared that their allies would chicken out at the last moment.

(a) materialise from nowhere

(b) attack violently and win

(c) lose courage and withdraw

(d) charge fiercely and kill

43. We ought to cash in on our business success while there is time

(a) invest (c) spend more money on

(b) raise capital for (d) exploit for profit

44. I feel rather cast down at the moment.

(a) discarded (c) disillusioned

(b) demoralized (d) discredited

45. In very narrow streets the traffic builds up and great congestion is created.

(a) accelerates (c) depreciates

(b) accumulates (d) appreciates

46. Jane had been picked at so often by parents and teachers that she didn't know how to behave.

(a) chosen (c) scolded

(b) rejected (d) neglected

47. The lecturer used to do well, but he seems to have gone off recently.

(a) lost his skill

(b) run away quickly

(c) travelled to some place

(d) disappeared suddenly

48. Bala's temper sometimes runs away with him.

(a) gives him a ride

(b) takes possession of him

(c) plays trick on him

(d) stays away from him.

49. "How horribly servile and ingratiating that man is! He makes me want to throw up".

(a) vomit (c) hit him with a stone

(b) sneeze (d) cough

50. We hope the boxer will not <u>let us down</u>

(a) surprise us (c) disappoint us

(b) collapse in front of us (d) disgrace us

<u>SECTION D</u>

<u>Instruction:</u> Give the interpretation of each underlined verb as illustrated below:

(F) The meeting has been <u>put off</u>.

Answer: The meeting has been postponed.

Do numbers 51-70 in the same way. Note that the interpretation is re-written in a full sentence.

51. Sani <u>gives us</u> his weekends to golfing and fishing.

_____

_____

_____

52. Ado finds it hard to <u>give up</u> smoking.

_____

_____

_____

53. The rotten piece of meat left in the freezer <u>gives off</u> a bad odour.

_____

54. Why do you always look upon me as a criminal?

55. As the best overall student of Zaria Federal College of Education, Muazu won a prize. Yet, he really must polish up his English before going to London.

56. More men are needed to ginger up the police force.

57. The manager would consider drastically curtailing the number of radio series and taking steps to pep up those that were left out.

58. Despite all the evidence that was brought against the suspect, for over an hour he managed to face it out.

_____

_____

_____

59. Once you make an appearance on television, you'll never look back.

_____

_____

_____

60. Lawal does pile it on: anyone would think he's the only one with domestic problems.

_____

_____

61. If James hadn't bolstered up his position in the case with new evidence, he wouldn't have won it.

_____

_____

_____

62. "You daughter committed an abortion! Well, you can't hush up a thing like that".

_____

63. Witnesses often clam up in the face of a hostile lawyer.

64. The mistaken belief that scholars always grind away on their research makes some people detest the teaching profession.

65. If we could rope in a few prominent people it would serve as a good advertisement for the scheme.

66. I truly don't know what to make of his behaviour.

67. Mr. Benjamin accuses his wife of carrying on with a butcher.

68. If ever I come into a fortune, I shall buy a mansion by the seaside.

69. Why do they always pick on the poor boy to do their dirty jobs?

70. The teacher was instructed to score off the names of the culprits and prepare a new list.

SECTION E

Instructions: You are required to perform two tasks in this section -

(1) make an illustrative sentence by using each of the following phrases idiomatically;

(2) give the interpretation of each idiom in brackets as shown in the examples below:

(a) put up

i) Will you put me up for tonight only?

ii) Will you (accommodate) me for tonight only?

(b) put up with

i) I can't put up with your nasty behaviour any longer.

ii) I can't (tolerate) your nasty behaviour any longer.

Do numbers 71 - 90 in the same manner.

71. muck up

72. shack up with

73. simmer down

74. chip in

75. fed up

76. hammer into

77. tip off

78. shake off

79. brush up

80. brush off

81. round up

82. round off

83. long for

84. walk out on

85. get even with

86. chew over

87. keel over

88. bash in

89. rattle on

90. trigger off

SECTION F

Instruction: Read the following passages carefully and give the interpretation of each underlined group of words as it is used in the passage, for example:

built up = erected.

PASSAGE A

It is a chaotic house, built without method, and has acquired its present form over many years: many different-sized rooms, some built up against one another at different times, either because they were needed or because my grandfather found himself with some spare money for which he had no other use. Some of the rooms lead off one another, others have doors so low that you have to double up to enter, yet others are doorless; some have many windows, some none. The walls are smooth and plastered with a mixture of rough sand, black mud and animal dung, likewise the roofs, while the ceilings are of acacia wood and palm-tree trunks and stalks. A maze of a house, cool in summer, warm in winter; if one looks objectively at it, from outside one feels it to be a frail structure, incapable of survival, but somehow, as if by a miracle, it has surmounted time.

Entering by the door of the spacious courtyard, I looked to right and to left. Over there were dates spread out on straw matting to dry; over there onions and chillies; over there sacks of wheat and beans, some with mouths stitched up, others open. In a corner a goat eats barley and suckles her young. The fate of this house

is bound up with that of the field; if the field waxes green so does it, if drought sweeps over the field it also sweeps over the house. I breathe in that smell peculiar to my grandfather's house, a discordant mixture of onions and chillies and dates and wheat and horse-beans and fenugreek, in addition to the aroma of the incense which is always floating up from the large earthenware censer. The aroma of incense put me in mind of my grandfather's ascetic manner of life and the luxury of his accessories for prayers: the rug on which he prays, made up of three leopard skins stitched together, and which he would use as a coverlet when it turned excessively cold; the brass ewer with its decorations and inscriptions, which he used for his ablutions, and the matching brass basin. He was especially proud of his sandalwood prayer-beads, which he would run through his finger and rub against his face, breathing in their aroma; when he got angry with one of his grandchildren he would strike him across the head with them, saying that this would chase away the devil that had got into him. All these things, like the rooms of his house and the datepalms in his field, had their own histories which my grandfather had recounted to me time and time again, on each occasion omitting or adding something.

(Taken: from Tayeb's Season of Migration to the North)

91. double up

_____

_____

_____

92. spread out

93. stitched up

94. made up

95. sweeps over

96. run through

PASSAGE B

Back at the bush Rest House on the hill outside the town the District Officer offered his companion a cigarette from a silver case, engraved with his initials. He took one himself. They both smoked in silence for a while.

"Damn it all, man", Gregory said, throwing his cigarette-end through the window on to the wide concrete veranda. "It's all wrong. Can't these people see that we're trying to help them?" "Is it really all that simple?". Stanfield asked reflectively. He wandered out on to the veranda and paced up and down. His companion joined him, offering him a cigarette of his own from a packet which he took from the breast pocket of his shirt.

"If these farmers can't see that all diseased trees must be cut out, the end of the cocoa industry here is absolutely inevitable. And we may as well pack up - book our passages on the next mailboat out. The meeting was going perfectly well until that bloke broke it up. Why in God's name, Jim, can't we put the fellow in custody?

"Then we really would be landed in trouble", said the District Officer. He looked down over the quartermile of wooded slope which was supposed to protect the Rest House from the malaria-carrying mosquitoes which infested the town. "Put Chief Momo of Ipaja in custody! Just what for, Henry?".

"Why, for standing in the way of progress. These bloody Africans need to be protected against themselves, and against their own ignorance. And, damn it," he continued, "they need to be protected against our fancy notions of democracy.

Just because we in Britain have evolved a system of government by discussion and argument which somehow seems to work we think we must get agreement on every measure before we take decisions. But, what's the good of discussion by fellows who don't understand what we are talking about, and persist in misunderstanding our motive?"

"Parliamentary democracy, Henry, is the one great contribution that our country has made to civilization. It's for this that Britain will be remembered long after our empire has passed away".

Source: Aluko, T.M. (1964): One Man, One Matchet, Heinemann, London.

97. paced up and down

98. pack up

99. broke it up

100. passed away

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE OF THE MARKING SCHEME

Department of English

Faculty of Arts and Social Science

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

MARKING SCHEME

Section A

1.	I	6.	I	11.	L	16.	L
2.	I	7.	I	12.	I	17.	L
3.	I	8.	L	13.	I	18.	L
4.	L	9.	I	14.	I	19.	L
5.	I	10.	I	15.	I	20.	I

SECTION B

21.	go together	L -	Court/keep company/or accompany
		I -	match/be suitable together/suit or harmonize.
22.	blow up	L -	develop, arise, start, e.g. of storm, explode, erupt, inflate, detonate

		I -	enlarge, or increase in size, e.g. of photograph, begin violently, e.g. of a dispute, to fail suddenly and publicly with embarrassing consequences, develop suddenly and probably ominously, collapse, especially under investigation, exaggerate, destroy as if by explosion, e.g. of a reputation, become suddenly angry, reprimand angrily, show violent emotion
23.	pull up	L -	(The ordinary sense of) straining on a rope etc to suggest great or sustained effort, the literal act of pulling upwardly e.g. of stockings, socks, collars, etc
		I -	bring or come to a halt, stop, e.g. of a vehicle, check, improve, rebuke, scold, reprimand
24.	take off	L -	remove, amputate, lead away, deduct
		I -	remove from service or circulation, leave hurriedly, leave the ground, imitate

25.	wind up	L -	make the string tight in e.g. a watch, turn a handle, e.g. of a windless, raise something by winding
		I -	brief, get ready, finish, end, be excited, close, bring to an end
26.	turn on	L -	cause water, gas, etc, in a pipe, to flow by unscrewing a tap, switch on, start (a radio, light, etc) especially by using a button or switch, allow to operate
		I -	affect strongly and favourably, excite or interest (a person) strongly, and often sexually, depend on, hinge on, attack
27.	kick off	L -	remove by kicking e.g. shoes or slippers, propel with the foot
		I -	begin, start
28.	drag into	L -	pull along (especially with effort and difficulty)
		I -	involve somebody unwillingly in an undertaking

29.	give away	L -	bestow, distribute, make someone a present or prize of something, deliver or officially hand over (a woman) to the husband at a wedding
		I -	tell (a secret) intentionally or unintentionally, make known the truth about something, reveal or betray a secret or a confidence, serve as father or guardian at a wedding, show or make known an answer
30.	cook up	L -	cook completely, prepare by cooking quickly
		I -	invent falsely, concoct or fabricate
31.	eat into	L -	destroy, through action of acids, eat part of something, e.g. cake
		I -	use part of something
32.	button up	L -	(cause to) close or fasten with buttons
		I -	be quiet, not talking much, having or showing difficulty in feeling or expressing oneself freely.
		-	of a piece of work, successfully completed

33.	dig into	L -	push something into, break up and move earth, make a hole by taking away the earth, eat heartily (sl)
		I -	investigate thoroughly
34.	group up	L -	grow in an upward direction e.g. of plants, mature (of human beings)
		-	increase in size or height, (of people) to develop from child to man or woman
		I -	arise, develop into something lasting, increase in numbers or amount
35.	fold up	L -	make smaller by folding
		I -	end in failure, to fail especially of a business, collapse
36.	cough up	L -	emit while coughing
		I -	provide money or information unwillingly
37.	put up	L -	raise, erect
		I -	stay, live, encourage, accommodate, offer as a contribution
38.	go under	L -	sink

I - fail (of business)

39. wrapped up in

L - covered, wear warm clothes, be packed or enclosed in, wrapped completely

I - engrossed/absorbed in, giving complete love or attention to, hide (an idea) in words, be concealed in, be deeply devoted to

40. pull off

L - remove e.g. a garment

I - complete successfully, to succeed in (a difficult attempt), to drive a vehicle onto the side of the road, succeed in a plan or in winning something.

SECTION C

41. b
42. c
43. d
44. b
45. b
46. c
47. a
48. b
49. a
50. c

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SECTION D

51. Sani devotes his time to golfing and fishing.

52. Ado finds it hard to stop smoking.

53. The rotten piece of meat left in the freezer produces (or emits) a bad odour.

54. Why do you always regard me as a criminal?

55. As the best overall student of Zaria Federal College of Education, Muazu won a prize. Yet he really must improve his English before going to London.

56. More men are needed to make the police force more effective.

57. The manager would consider drastically curtailing the number of radio series and taking steps to make more lively those that were left out.

    N.B Other possible interpretations are: make more interesting, or cheerful, or simply to improve.

58. Despite all the evidence that was brought against the suspect, for over an hour he managed to stand his ground and refused to admit his guilt..

59. Once you make an appearance on television, you'll never fail to advance. Or, you will make continuous progress..

60. Lawal does exaggerate: anyone would think he's the only one with domestic problems.

61. If James hadn't supported his position in the case with new evidence, he wouldn't have won it.

62. "Your daughter committed an abortion! Well, you can't hide a thing like

that".

63. Witnesses often keep quiet in the face of a hostile lawyer.

64. The mistaken belief that scholars always study hard or work hard on their research makes some people detest the teaching profession.

65. If we could persuade a few prominent people it would serve as a good advertisement for the scheme.

66. I truly don't understand his behaviour.

67. Mr. Benjamin accuses his wife of having an affair with a butcher.

68. If ever I inherit a fortune, I shall buy a mansion by the seaside.

69. Why do they always select the poor boy to do their dirty jobs?

70. The teacher was instructed to delete the names of the culprits and write in others.

SECTION E

71.	muck up	-	spoil, ruin
72.	shack up with	-	live together
73.	simmer down	-	become calm (after being angry or excited)
74.	chip in	-	interrupt/contribute
75.	fed up	-	tired, bored, depressed
76.	hammer into	-	to force (someone) to understand by repeating
77.	tip off	-	to give (someone, as the police) a warning or to give someone private or secret information about something
78.	shake off	-	get rid of, avoid, lose
79.	brush up	-	improve
80.	brush off	-	reject/to reject someone or someone's advances or suggestions
81.	round up	-	herd together, gather in, bring everything together, make a good summary of something, bring up to the next higher whole figure
82.	round off	-	finish off well, finish in a suitable way, and something suitably and satisfactorily
83.	long for	-	want (something) very much
84.	walk out on	-	abandon

85.	get even with	-	have or get one's revenue on somebody
86.	chew over	-	consider, discuss at length
87.	keel over	-	capsize
88.	bash in	-	dent (usually severely), batter, beat in
89.	rattle on	-	talk continuously
90.	trigger off	-	cause something to happen, be the immediate cause of something serious or violent
91.	double up	-	fold up violently at the waist, bend with pain
92.	spread out	-	dispersed, scattered
93.	stitched up	-	bound, sewn, fastened, sealed
94.	made up	-	formed or produced from
95.	sweeps over	-	moves quickly over
96.	run through	-	pass or draw right through
97.	paced up and down	-	walked regularly backwards and forwards
98.	pack up	-	put their belongings together
99.	broke it up	-	terminated, ended or caused it to come to an end
100.	passed away	-	died, ceased to exist

NOTE

Discre-point questions have been used in this test instrument. There may not be any problem with the scoring of these as they permit only one possible answer. Care must be taken to ensure that the respondents' responses tally with any of the expected different shades of meaning or their equivalents recorded above. The

distribution of marks should be as follows:-

Section A	1 mark x 20	= 20 marks
Section B	½ mark x 40	= 20 marks
Section C	1 mark x 10	= 10 marks
Section D	1 mark x 20	= 20 marks
Section E	1 mark x 20	= 20 marks
Section F	1 mark x 20	= 10 marks
	Total	= 100 marks
		= 100%

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE RESPONSES (TYPE A)

SECTION A

go together

1 (a) The man wanted to go together with us. (literal).

(b) The blue shirt will go together with your black shoes. (Idiomatic)

turn on

2 (a) Could you please turn on the lights? (Literal)

(b) The Chairman's speech really turned me on. (Idiomatic)

wrapped up in

3 (a) The baby was wrapped up in a warm towel. (Literal)

(b) I was so wrapped up in the music that I didn't hear you enter. (Idiomatic).

SECTION B

4 You'll have to sweat it out for another hour.

(a) Suffer (b) persevere (c) relax (d) cogitate

5 In very narrow streets the traffic builds up and great congestion is created

(a) accelerates (b) accumulates (c)depreciates (d) appreciates

6 We hope the boxer will not let us down.

(a) surprise (b) collapse in front of us (c) disappoint

(d) disgrace.

SECTION C

7 Sani gives up his weekends to golfing and fishing.

Answer: Sani devotes his weekends to golfing and fishing.

8 Witnesses often clam up in the face of a hostile lawyer.

Answer: Witnesses often keep quite in the face of a hostile lawyer.

Other similar answers given by some of the respondents were: Keep silent, remain silent, refuse to talk, shut up, and so forth.

9 Why do you always look upon me as a criminal?

Answer: Why do you always consider me a criminal?

SECTION D

muck up

10 (a) Don't muck up your clothes while playing.

(b) Don't spoil your clothes while playing.

shake off

11 (a) We had to shake off a black car before reaching the bank.

(b) We had to lose a black car before reaching the bank.

trigger off

12 (a) I don't want to trigger off another argument

(b) I don't want to start another argument.

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE RESPONSES (TYPE B)

SECTION A

(1) go together

1. The attempts goes together without differences (Idiomatic).

2. Jane and Paul are always together. (Literal)

3 Some students have been together in all their studies. (Literal).

4 Birds of the same feather always go together. (Idiomatic)

5 Army rubbers were told to go together by bullets (Idiomatic).

6 Fire and water does not go together. (Idiomatic).

(2) blow up

7 (a) Musa usually blow up knowledge. (Literal)

(b) He blow up the ideas of his intelligence performance. (Idiomatic).

8 (a) When the rain is about to fall a wind blow up everything here. (Literal).

(b) He blow us a lier. (Idiomatic)

9 (a) Some times air blow up the light object when keeps in an open space (Literal)

(b) Mr. David blow up the wrong decision. (Idiomatic)

10 (a) John must always blows up his own trumpet in orther to win admiration. (Literal)

(b) I usually blow up my candle before going to bed. (Idiomatic)

(3) pull up

11 (a) pull your dress up before taking birth. (Literal)

(b) pull yourself up together. (Idiomatic)

12 (a) When we rich the swimming pool everybody start to pull up their shirt to swim. (Literal)

(b) We did pull up a fast one on the driver. (Idiomatic)

13 (a) The students will pull up the tree down. (literal)

(b) I want to pull up with you. (Idiomatic)

(4) take off

14 (a) Some guys like to take their off on thursday to enjoy theirself. (Literal)

(b) They take off to their heels. (Idiomatic)

15 (a) The ASSU members after series of consultation take off their strike. (Literal)

(b) The heavy rain of yesterday forced John to take off the invitation for a party.

16 (a) The plane had take off. (Literal)

(b) Ali has take off a new job, (Idiomatic)

17 (a) The take off of the match commences today. (Literal)

(b) The principal take off the matter off her hand. (Idiomatic)

(c) Please come and take it off away from here. (Idiomatic).

(5) wind up

18 (a) The wind blow up the roof. (Literal)

(b) Wind up the roof. (Idiomatic)

19 (a) The wind is blowing up now. (Literal)

(b) Let us wind up the glass. (Idiomatic)

20 (a) He has wind up the discussion. (Literal)

(b) His alterance had wind up the discussion. (Idiomatic)

21 (a) It is high time you wind up the case. (Literal)

(b) Some girls like to wind theirself up for the beauty context. (idiomatic)

(6) turn on

22 (a) He turn the speech into ridicule. (Literal)

(b) One mans turn on is one mans turn off. (Idiomatic)

23 (a) Kabiru want to turn on the imbitation (Literal)

(b) His mother turn on to be a murderer. (Idiomatic)

24 (a) I easily get torn on when I see a long hairy woman. (Literal)

(b) The teacher turn a deaf ear on the matter. (Idiomatic)

(7) kick off

25 (a) The guest of honour kick off the ball. (Literal)

(b) The old man kick off the bocket. (Idiomatic)

26 (a) The man was kick off out of the group. (Literal)

(b) The Alafin has kick off the calabash yesterday. (Idiomatic)

27 (a) They kick off yesterday which made people to loosed their heads. (Literal)

(b) The kick off of the Nigerian politics is yet to start. (Idiomatic)

8 drag into

28 (a) The suspect was drag into a custody. (Literal)

(b) The man was drag into the ocean of thinking while his wife was moving in front of him. (Idiomatic)

29 (a) The police will drag you into case if you steel. (Literal)

(b) When desirable is not available, then available should be drag into use. (Idiomatic)

30 (a) The dronkerd was drag into his house. (Literal)

(b) Do not drag me into matters that doesn't concern me. (Idiomatic)

(9) give away

31 (a) Please give me way to pass. (Literal)

(b) The police confronted him and he give away his friend. (Idiomatic)

32 (a) When he saw me coming he quickly give way. (Literal)

(b) I bought the dress in a give away prize. (Idiomatic)

33 (a) He give away this morning. (Literal)

(b) He die this morning. (Idiomatic)

(10) cook up

34 (a) The cook cook up lunch before they arrive. (Literal)

(b) You can't cook up your meals and have it again. (Idiomatic)

35 (a) The woman was busy to cook up the timber of yam. (Literal)

(b) The police man cook up his gun and shot to the target. (Idiomatic)

36 (a) The food items have been cook up yesterday during super. (Literal)

(b) The manager cooked up a false story to cover his shameful act. (Idiomatic)

(11) eat into

37 (a) Cheating has eat into your blood. (Literal)

(b) The insects eat into the books. (Literal)

38 (a) She eats into sorrow. (Literal)

(b) Despite I am guilty, but I am able to eat into progressives. (Idiomatic)

39 (a) We shall eat into the kitchen. (Literal)

(b) Corruption has ate into the fabrics of the Nigerian society. (Idiomatic)

(12) button up

40 (a) You must button up if you wants to pass your exams. (Literal)

(b) She button up with her studies. (Idiomatic)

41 (a) You have to button up to succeed. (Literal)

(b) He said from the button up his mind. (Idiomatic)

(13) dig into

42 (a) The tractor dig into the large place to get water for drinking. (Literal)

(b) The problem must be dog into. (Idiomatic)

43 (a) Those who dig into their hairs would find lices. (Literal)

(b) They were digged into thoroughly for reliable evidences.

44 (a) She has digged a grave for herself. (Literal)

(b) Don't let any body to dig up to your records. (Idiomatic)

45 (a) The labourer digged into the whole that he was asked to do. (Literal)

(b) Some people like to dig there nose into people's affairs. (Idiomatic)

(14) grow up

46 (a) Paul have fully grow up as a result of good feeding. (Literal)

(b) Do not let this issue to grow up because it can tarnish your image. (Idiomatic)

47 (a) He has growed up. (Literal)

(b) Grown ups are presidents of tomorrow. (Literal)

48 (a) I didn't folded up my foolscap. (Literal)

(b) Don't fold up those papers. (Literal)

49 (a) Dupe fold up those papers. (Literal)

(b) The meeting will fold up in ten minutes. (Idiomatic)

50 (a) The Company has fold up. (Literal)

(b) The whole issues has not been fold up till late evening. (Idiomatic)

(16) cough up

51 (a) I have some cough up syrup in my first aid box. (Literal)

(b) The masses are coughing up with the present administration. (Idiomatic)

52 (a) They are cough up as like donkeys. (Literal)

(b) They were cough up red handed. (Idiomatic)

(17) put up

53 (a) He has putting up his hand in other to answer the question. (Literal).

(b) The Chairman put up the matter until next week. (Idiomatic).

54 (a) His wife put up to bed. (Literal)

(b) Mary felt to put up the matter as it happen.

(18) go under

55(a) The thief always go under the bridge to hide.

(b) So much water has gone under the bridge for me to forget. (Idiomatic).

(c) Mr. Smith will definately go under if he goes bankropt.

(19) wrapped up in

56. (a) Who ask her to wrapped up the money in that paper? (Literal)

(b) I don't think I am wrapped up myself with this your lose ideas. (Idiomatic)

57. (a) Abdu wrapped up his absentism by fallen sick. (Literal)

(b) After the abortion she wrapped up herself as innocent lady. (idiomatic)

58(a) The essence of dress is to wrapped up herself as innocent lady. (Literal)

(b) The essence of teaching is to wrapped in humans illiteracy. (Idiomatic)

(20) pull off

59. (a) Water pull off the Bucket. (Literal)

(b) Mallam Gambo pull off today. (Idiomatic)

60(a) The town is pull off flies. (Literal)

(b) Don't pull off a fast one on me. (Idiomatic)

SECTION B

ITEM NUMBER	EXPRESSION	COMMON RESPONSE/S
(21)	Sweat it out	**(a)**
(22)	Chicken out	(a) and (d)
(23	Cash in on	(a) and (b)
(24)	Cast down	**(a)**
(25	builds up	(d)
(26)	Picked at	(a) and (b)
(27)	gone off	(b) and (c)

(28)	runs away with	(d)
(29)	throw up	(c)
(30)	let us down	(b) and (d)

SECTION C

(31) gives up

61 (a) Sani has now devote his weekends to golfing and fishing.

(b) Sani prefer to go fishing and golfing at weekends.

(c) Sani postponded his golfing and fishing to weekends.

(d) Sani took to golfing and fishing instead of to spend his weekends with idoleness.

(32) give up

62 (a) Ado find it difficult to surrender smoking.

(b) He find it difficult to quite smoking.

(c) Ado find it difficult to stop smoking.

(33) gives off

63 (a) The rotten peice of meat left in the freezer

(a) Smells badly odour

(b) booms

(c) has rotten

(d) pollutes the air

(34) look upon

64 (a) Why do you always suspect me as a criminal?

(b) Why do you always refer to me as a criminal?

(c) Why do you always call me a criminal?

(35) polish up

65 (a) to increase his English.

(b) he really must merit his English.

(c) he really must master his English.

(d) he really must refresh his English.

(e) he really must correct his English.

(36) ginger up

66 (a) to join the police force.

(b) to jouns the police force.

(c) to joined the police force.

(d) to enlist in the police force.

(e) to attack the police force.

(37) pep up

67 (a) to reduce those that were left out.

(b) to remove those that were left out.

(c) to change up those that were left out.

(d) to dispose of those that were left out.

(38) face it out

68 (a) for over an hour he managed to depends it.

(b) he managed to scale through.

(c) he manage to get out of the hook.

(d) he managed to escape.

(e) to stand on his ground.

(39) look back

69 (a) You'll never appear again.

(b) You'll never look older or younger.

(c) You will never forget.

(d) You'll never be demoted.

(e) you will never be nervous.

(40) Pile it on

70 (a) Lawal does gathered.

(b) Lawal does complain too much.

(c) Lawal does organise.

(d) Lawal has accumulate a lot of domestic problems.

(41) bolstered up

71 (a) If James hadn't depended.

(b) If James hadn't compounded.

(c) If James hadn't spoil.

(42) hush up

72 (a) Well, you can't secret a thing like that.

(b) Well, you can't disclose a thing like that.

(c) Well, your can't deny a thing like that.

(d) Well' you can't imagine.

(e) You can't broadcast.

Other answers were discuss, accept, worry about, allow, ignore, forgive, encourage, terminate and expect.

(43) clam up

73 (a) Witnesses often get frighten.

(b) Witness often get compose.

(c) They often stammer.

(d) Witnesses often feel shy.

(c) Witnesses often shiver.

(44) grind away

74 (a) The mistaken belief that scholars always neglected their research.

(b) always crack their brain on their research.

(c) always brain drain.

(d) are always frustrated on their research .

(e) always loose interest on their research.

(f) always waste their time in research.

(45) rope in

75(a) If we could arrest a few prominent people,

(b) If we could implicate a few prominent people,

(c) If we could catch a few prominent people,

(d) If we could inform a few prominent people,

(46) make of

76(a) I truly don't know what to say of his behaviour.

(b) I truly don't know how to interpret his behaviour.

(c) I truly don't know how to describe his behaviour.

(d) I don't know what to think of his behaviour.

(47) carrying on

77(a) Mr. Benjamin accuses his wife of immoral with a butcher.

(b) of chasing a butcher.

(c) of moving with a butcher.

(d) of continuing with a butcher.

(e) of making affairs with a butcher.

(f) of befriending a butcher.

(g) of dealing with a butcher.

(48) come into

78(a) If ever I get a fortune,

(b) If I am lucky to get a fortune

(c) If I am ever success in a fortune,

(d) If I receive a fortune,

(e) If I ever become wealthy,

(f) If I collect a fortune.

(49) pick on

79(a) Why do they always aloud the poor boy.

(b) Why do they always worry the poor boy.

(c) Why do they always distort the poor boy.

(d) Why do they always force the poor boy.

(e) Why do they always punish the poor boy.

(50) score off

80(a) The teacher was instructed to forget

(b) The teacher was instructed to sought out the names.

(c) He was instructed to fail the names.

(d) The teacher was instructed to concealed.

SECTION D

(51) muck up

81(a) I will muck up the dirt.

(b) I will clean the dirt.

82(a) She will mock you up tonight.

(b) She will make a jest of you tonight.

83(a) He was muck up at the party.

(b) He was ridicle at the party.

84(a) It was a muck up test.

(b) It was not a true test.

85(a) Jaji muck him up at the buttocks

(b) Jaji hit him at buttocks.

(52) Shack up with.

86(a) She is shack up with booze

(b) She is dronk.

87(a) I will shark up with him.

(b) I will desert him.

88(a) I have to go and shack up with my friends.

(b) I have to go and drink with my friends.

89(a) Can you shack up with him?

(b) Can you co-operate with firm?

(53) Simmer down

90(a) Can you simmer down from the sky?

(b) Can you drop from the sky?

91(a) The aeroplane simmer down as it started burning.

(b) The aeroplane crash down when it started burning.

92(a) He can simmer down.

(b) He can come down.

(54) Chip in

93(a) John chip in with a remark.

(b) John enter the conversation with a remark.

94(a) She just chip in.

(b) She just come in.

95(a) Please chip and great your parents.

(b) Please visit and great your parents.

(55) fed up

96(a) The teacher fed up his students with what he learnt in school.

(b) The teacher imported to his students with what he learnt in school.

97(a) Please fed up the computer.

(b) Please give information to the computer.

98(a) You will fed up at home.

(b) You will eat at home.

99(a) I am fed up now.

(b) I am just satisfy.

(56) hammer into

100(a) Hammer the nail into the wood.

(b) Hit the nail into the wood.

101(a) We can hammer into the river.

(b) We can dive into the river.

102(a) He hammer into the crust of the matter.

(b) He dig into the crust of the matter.

(57) tip off

103(a) He is always been tip off.

(b) He is always bribe

104(a) You must tip him off before he broke into your file.

(b) You must bribe him.

105(a) Mr. Jacob was given a tip off before he could allowed passengers to board the aircraft.

(b) He was given a bribe.

(58) shake off

106(a) Call him and shake off.

(b) Call him and reconcile.

107(a) You can shake off your head if you don't know the answer.

(b) You can nord your head if you don't know the answer.

108(a) The Government shake off exercise cut across all ministries.

(b) The Government retrenchment exercise cut across all ministries.

(59) brush up

109(a) Your mouth is smelling. You must brush it up.

(b) You must clean it.

110(a) Brush up the soup on your gown.

(b) remove or clean the soup on your gown.

111(a) Please brush up your suit, it look a bit dirty.

(b) Please clean up your dirty suit.

(60) brush off

112(a) Just brush off the house.

(b) Just clean the house.

113(a) Why don't you brush off your problem with him?

(b) Why don't you settle your problem with him?

114(a) Have anyone ever brush off this toilet?

(b) Have anyone ever clean this toilet?

(61) round up

115(a) We should try and round up this our work.

(b) We should try to finish our work.

116(a) We will like to round up the show with a short prayer.

(b) We will like to finish the show with a short prayer.

117(a) Everybody should please round up with his work.

(b) Everybody should please conclude his work.

(62) round off

118(a) I can't round off the stories.

(b) I can't summaries the stories.

119(a) The room is round off.

(b) The room is circular.

120(a) The man has been ask to round off the detainees.

(b) The man has been ask to release the detainees.

(63) long for

121(a) He is long for promotion.

(b) He is qualify for promotion.

122(a) I look long for her arrival.

(b) I expected her arrival.

123(a) I cannot long for in my studies.

(b) I cannot read long in my studies.

(64) walk out on

124(a) Will you walk out of my office?

(b) Will you get out of my office?

125(a) Michael Jackson walk out on the moon.

(b) Michael Jackson is a good dancer.

126(a) The baby have begon to walk out on the floor.

(b) The baby have begon to trot.

(65) get even with

127(a) I was warn by my father not to get even with dishonest people.

(b) I was warn not to associate with dishonest people.

128(a) Fati get even more friendly with her friend.

(b) Fati is even more friendly with her friend.

129(a) It is high time you get even with one another.

(b) It is high time you understand one another.

130(a) Get even with them.

(b) Be equal or the same with them.

(66) chew over

131(a) Let us chew over all the food brought.

(b) Let us eat all the food brought.

132(a) We should chew over this matter.

(b) We should forget this matter.

133(a) I can chew over my problems these days.

(b) I can hide my problems.

(67) keel over

134(a) I am not keen over that.

(b) I am not interested in that.

135(a) They keel over all the enemies

(b) They murder all the enemies.

136(a) I can kneel over my grievances.

(b) I can suppress my sorrows.

(68) bash in

137(a) May I bashi in the river?

(b) May I swim in the river?

138(a) You should apologize when you bash into people.

(b) You should say sorry when you crash into people.

(69) rattle on

139(a) Dayo still rattle on this issue.

(b) Dayo still murmur on this issue.

140(a) The congress decided to rattle on the V.C.

(b) The congress decided to challenge the V.C.

(70) trigger off

141(a) The machine gun just trigger off.

(b) The machine gun just fire.

142(a) They will trigger off now.

(b) They will leave now.

143(a) Don't trigger off on me.

(b) Don't shout on me.

144(a) The debate made him to trigger off.

(b) The debate made him to explode.