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IDENTIFICATION OF PHRASAL VERBS IN THE LITERATURE

Abstract: My paper concerns the identification of phrasal verbs in recent grammar books, dictionaries and in the literature. Their importance lies in the fact that they form such a key part of everyday English, whereas they represent a feature of English much dreaded by learners. Some authors interpret phrasal verbs in a broader, others in a narrower sense, i.e. they include and exclude prepositional verbs respectively. After discussing their different interpretations, I suggest that cognitive grammar is the theoretical framework in which they can be analysed best as it seems to solve the problem arising from their being interpreted in a different way.

1 Introduction

Phrasal verbs are a common feature of the English Language and one which learners encounter at a very early stage. *Get up, take off, give up* etc. would certainly appear in the vocabulary list of any course book for beginners. Learners, however, perceive them as a difficult aspect of the language. The productivity and the importance of phrasal verbs is also shown by the fact that a number of dictionaries of phrasal verbs have been published recently. E.g.: Collins Cobuild Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs (1989, 1995), Longman Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs (1983), Oxford Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs (1993), Cambridge International Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs (1997). There are also some new workbooks on phrasal verbs available. E.g. English Idioms: Exercises on phrasal verbs by Seidl (1990), Collins Cobuild Phrasal Verbs Workbook by Goodale (1993), Test your Phrasal Verbs by Workman (1990), Phrasal Verbs and Idioms (Intermediate, Advanced) by Allshop.

In this paper I would like to present how phrasal verbs are identified in recent grammar books and dictionaries and in the literature with special regard to cognitive grammar.

2 Phrasal verbs in recent grammar books and dictionaries

At the outset, I will be concerned with identifying the phrasal verb and I will compare their interpretations in recent grammar books and dictionaries. I will concentrate on the two dictionaries I use as the main source of my corpus in my analysis (Oxford Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs and Collins Cobuild Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs), The Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language written by Quirk et al. and The English Verb by Palmer, which are generally used at colleges and universities as the main bibliographic sources of a verb phrase course.

The Collins Cobuild Dictionary (1995) regards combinations of verbs with adverbial and prepositional particles as phrasal verbs. They point to four main types of combination of verbs with particles:

1. Combinations where the meaning of the whole cannot be understood by knowing the meanings of the individual verbs and particles. E.g.: *put off* = postpone, *turn down* = reject

2. Combinations where the verb is always used with a particular preposition or adverb, and is not normally found without it. E.g.: *refer to, rely on*

3. Combinations where the particle does not change the meaning of the verb, but is used to suggest that the action described by the verb is performed thoroughly, completely, or continuously. E.g: in *spread out*, the verb *spread* has its basic meaning, and the adverb *out* adds ideas of direction and thoroughness. In *link up*, the particle *up* adds an idea of completeness to the idea of connection. These combinations are sometimes called 'completive-intensives'.

4. Combinations where the verb and particle both have the meanings which may be found in other combinations and uses, but where there is overwhelming evidence that they occur together. E.g.: in the combination *fight back*, the verb *fight* has the same meaning that it normally does in isolation, and *back* is used in a similar way in other combinations such as *phone back* and *strike back*. Such combinations are sometimes called 'literal phrasal verbs'.

The Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English Volume 1: Verbs with Prepositions & Particles (1976: xxxv–lvii), the earlier edition of The Oxford Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs (1993) gives the following basic patterns:

    [A1] intransitive pattern with a particle E.g.
        The electricity supply *went off.*
        The pilot *took off* smoothly.
    [A2] intransitive pattern with a preposition E.g.

He *ran through* the main points.

He has *provided for* his family well.

[A3] intransitive pattern with a particle and preposition E.g.:

The coaster *went aground on* a sandbank.

He *scraped along on* a low salary.

[B1i] transitive pattern with a particle E.g.

These entertainers *make* their stories (them) *up*.

These entertainers *make up* their stories.

[B1ii] transitive pattern with a particle E.g.

The comedian doesn't *get* his jokes (them) *across*.

The police *moved* spectators (them) *along*.

[B1iii] transitive pattern with a particle E.g.

The search party has *given up* all hope of finding the missing aircraft.

The hedgerows *put forth* new buds.

[B2] transitive pattern with a preposition E.g.

I have *taken* careful note *of* your remark.

I don't *hold* his past feelings *against* him.

[B3] transitive pattern with a particle and preposition E.g.

We *brought* them *around to* a different way of thinking.

They *filled* me *in on* the latest developments.

The 1993 new edition of the dictionary entitled Oxford Dictionary of Phrasal verbs, however, defines phrasal verbs as follows:

"When a verb + particle or a verb + preposition or a verb + particle + preposition is a unit of meaning like in *Cholera **broke out** in the north of the country.* ('start suddenly or violently'); *He **glanced through** the article quickly.* ('scan (sth) quickly or casually') or *He just wasn't going to **put up with** all the caterwauling.* ('tolerate') it is a phrasal verb."

As it is clear from the above discussion, dictionaries of phrasal verbs use the term phrasal verbs in a broader sense. On their cover page we can read phrasal verbs, but they, E.g.: The Collins Cobuild Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs, make a distinction between prepositional, phrasal and phrasal prepositional verbs, which is apparent in their notation given in the Extra Column : V + ADV, V + PREP, V + ADV + PREP.

Quirk et al. (1985:1150–1161) use a most appropriate term, 'multi-word verbs', which they divide into: phrasal verbs, prepositional verbs and phrasal -prepositional verbs. They have the following types:

Type I (intransitive) phrasal verbs consisting of a verb plus an adverb particle, as exemplified in :

> She *turned up* unexpectedly.
>
> When will they *give in?*

Type II (transitive) phrasal verbs, which take a direct object. Examples are:

> They have *called off* the strike.
>
> Someone *turned on* the light.

Type I prepositional verbs consisting of a lexical verb followed by a preposition with which it is semantically associated. E.g.:

> *Look at* these pictures.
>
> I *approve of* their action.

Type II prepositional verbs, which are followed by two noun phrases, normally separated by the preposition: the former is the direct object, the latter the prepositional object. E.g.:

> He *deprived* the peasants *of* their land.
>
> May I *remind* you *of* our agreement?

Phrasal-prepositional verbs, which contain, in addition to the lexical verb, both an adverb and a preposition as particles.

Type I phrasal – prepositional verbs require a prepositional object. E.g.:

> He had to *put up with* a lot of teasing at school.
>
> We are all *looking forward to* your party on Saturday.

Type II phrasal – prepositional require a direct object and a prepositional object. E.g.:

> We *put* our success *down to* hard work.
>
> I'll *let* you *in on* a secret.

Quirk et al. draw a distinction between phrasal verbs like 'give in' (surrender), 'blow up' (explode) and free combinations in which the verb and the adverb have distinct meanings, the verb acting as a normal intransitive verb, and the adverb having its own meaning. E.g.: *He **walked past**. I **waded across**. Past* and *across* are considered to be adverbs, but their function is equivalent to that of a prepositional phrase of direction, i.e. *past the object/ place* and *across the river/ water etc.* Thus the term 'phrasal verb' is used only for idiomatic combinations.

We can observe that Quirk et al.'s Type II. covers patterns [B1i], [B1ii] and [B1iii] in the Oxford Dictionary.

Palmer (1988:214–238) defines phrasal verbs as verbs which consist of a verb plus a particle that is clearly to be treated as an adverb. There are two types, transitive and intransitive. E.g. *The plane flew in.* vs. *The pilot flew the plane in.* In contrast to Quirk et al., Palmer uses the term 'phrasal verb' for both idiomatic and non-idiomatic combinations. E.g. *The enemy **gave in***

vs. *The guests came in.* or *He made up the whole story.* vs. *He brought up a book (to a child in bed).*

As far as prepositional verbs are concerned, Palmer distinguishes them from simple sequences of verb and prepositional phrase. E.g: *The passenger flew in the plane.* vs. *The sparrow flew in the plane.* He also makes a distinction between intransitive and transitive prepositional verbs, the former being semantically transparent and fairly free syntactically, the latter being semantically and syntactically more restricted. E.g.: *He came across the road. He came across the missing papers.* vs. *He took me for a man he knew. They deprived the children of their rights.* This distinction corresponds to Quirk et al.'s Prepositional Verbs Type I and Type II.

Palmer also remarks that it has been argued that sometimes prepositions may follow rather than precede the noun phrase and so are 'postpositions.' Examples are: *He has travelled the world over. I pass their arguments by. They ran him over.* The reason for thinking that these are prepositions rather than adverbs is the fact that they may, with little or no change of meaning, precede the noun phrase in sentences where they are much more plausibly to be regarded as prepositions.: E.g.: *He has travelled over the world. I pass by their arguments. They ran over him.* Palmer argues, however, that these are merely the adverbial particles of 'marginal' phrasal verbs and not postpositions.

3 Phrasal verbs in the special literature

So far I have merely suggested by examples the kinds of combinations that are regarded as phrasal verbs in recent grammar books and dictionaries. At this point it might be useful to compare the terms or labels used in the literature with the term phrasal verb, since these labels are quite similar, but the ranges of complex verbs they designate are not the same. To illustrate the complexity of terms and labels, let us just mention The Oxford Companion to the English Language (1992), which, besides the term 'phrasal verb', refers to terms like 'verb phrase', 'compound verb', 'verb-adverb combination', 'verb-particle construction' (VPC) and AmE 'two-part word/verb' and 'three-part verb' (depending on number of particles). We can see, however, that some authors use phrasal verbs in a narrower, others in a broader sense.

3.1 Phrasal verbs in a narrower sense

Some authors exclude prepositional verbs and include both literal and figurative, transitive and intransitive combinations. E.g.: the 'phrasal verb' in

Mitchell (1958), Fairclough (1965), and Bolinger (1971); Quirk et al. (1985); Rot (1988); Graver (1990); Palmer (1988); to the 'verb-particle construction' in Lipka (1972); to the '(separable) verbal compound' in Curme (1931), Kruisinga (1932); to the 'verb-adverb combination' in Wood (1955); to the 'compound verb' in Gratten and Gurrey (1925); to the 'discontinuous verb' of Live (1965); to the verb-particle combination in Fraser (1976) and to the 'verb-particle construction' in Lindner (1981).

Henry Sweet (1898/1920:36) divides parts of speech into declinable (nouns, adjectives, verbs) and indeclinable (particles: adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, interjections) and draws a clear dividing line between combinations 'verb plus adverb' and 'verb plus preposition'. Sweet (1898/1920:31–33) also recognises that most prepositions are also used as adverbs; thus *by* is a preposition in *'he passed by the house'*, and an adverb in *'he passed by'* He also says that some prepositions such as *of, to, for* are not used as adverbs. According to Sweet, grammatically the preposition is associated with the noun-word it governs, but in meaning it is associated quite as closely or even more so with the word modified by the preposition-group. This association in meaning consists in the fact that the collocation of verb and particle in the construction 'verb plus particle plus noun-word' is, in a given case, equivalent to a single transitive verb. This type of collocation is called by Sweet a 'group-verb'. Such collocations as *look at, think of, attend to* are also considered group verbs because they have counterparts in single transitive verbs.

Gratten and Gurrey (1925:79–85) make a distinction between prepositions, adverbs, verbal particles and postpositions. They state that while adverbs merely add to the meaning of the verb, verbal particles may be said to fuse with the verb, and with it they express one unit of thought. This union of simple Verb with Particle forms what is known as a 'Compound Verb'. They admit, however, that the distinction is sometimes impossible. "Where the verb preserves its literal meaning, it is practically impossible to make a distinction between Particle and ordinary Adverb, and so to determine whether we have before us a Compound Verb or not, for example: *Come back., Go Away.,* He *threw* the parcel *down.*

In Curme's (1931:568) classification, particles seem to constitute two major classes, viz. adverbs and prepositions, but within each class special subclasses are distinguished, namely prepositional adverbs within adverbs, and inflectional prepositions within prepositions. About prepositional adverbs Curme says that they often "stand at the end of a proposition because of the suppression of a governed noun or pronoun, which is omitted since it is suggested by a preceding noun or by a situation: E.g. *I threw the ball at the wall*, but *I threw it too high and it went over.*

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Prepositional adverbs now usually have the same form as the prepositions that stand before a noun, but in older English, they often had a different form and except in relative clauses, are sometimes still distinguished in the case of *out*, *in*, and *on* in connection with verbs denoting motion from or toward: *'He came out of* (preposition) *the house.'* and *'He is now in the house but will soon come out.'* (prepositional adverb).

Inflectional prepositions, according to Curme (1931:91) are prepositions which "have often lost a good deal of their original concrete meaning and are no longer felt as prepositions, for they have developed into inflectional particles which indicate definite grammatical relations. E.g.: They *depend upon* him. That the preposition and the verb have fused into one word, a real compound, can be seen in passive form, where the preposition remains with the verb: He can be *depended upon*."

E. Kruisinga (1932:11) distinguishes 'semicompound' as *laugh at* from what he calls 'separable verbal compound' like *put on, take off*: "These groups (i.e. such as *laugh at*) differ, from the separable verbal compound like *to put on, to take off* in that the object can never separate the two elements of the group (He *put* it *on.*, but He *laughed at* it.)"

As pointed out by Live (1965:429), there exists in English a considerable group of basic verbs, each of which is, in certain of its occurrences, closely linked with a particle – adverbial or prepositional – in such a manner as to justify considering the two elements as constituting one discontinuous verb (e.g. *look up, – into, – for; make up, – out; carry on, – out, – through; pass off, – in, – over, – up*).

Mitchell (1958:103) makes a clear distinction, based on the distribution features of particles, between the 'colligation' phrasal verb – noun e.g. *He turned off the light.* with its positional variant *He turned the light off.* and the 'colligation' non-phrasal verb-prepositional phrase e.g. *He turned off the road.*, where the positional variation is not possible.

Dietrich (1960:9) also makes a clear distinction between adverbs and prepositions and particles which can be used both as an adverb and a preposition. "Den Kategorien der "reinen" Adverbien wie *aside, away, back, forth, together* usw. und der ausschießlich präpositional gebrauchten Formwörter wie *at, for, from, of, till, with* usw. steht im Neuenglischen eine Gruppe von Partikeln wie *about, above, across, after, along, around, before, behind, below, between, beyond, by, down, in, inside, near, off, on, out, outside, over, past, round, through, throughout, to, under, up* usw. gegenüber, die sowohl in adverbialer wie in präpositionaler Verwendung auftreten." Furthermore Dietrich notes "Auch dem Neuhochdeutschen ist diese grammatische Gruppe nicht fremd; man vergleiche z. B. *"Ich sah das Bild an"*, wo *an* ein Adverb ist (vgl. *"Ich wollte das Bild ansehen"*), mit

*"Ich **sah an** die Uhr"*, wo *an* eine reine Präposition ist (vgl. *"Ich wollte **an** die Uhr **sehen**"*)."

Bolinger (1971:23) uses the term adprep for particles that function now as adverbs, now as prepositions and he states that these form the most typical phrasal verbs. One can frequently add a prepositional function by simply repeating a noun already in the context:

He came to the end of the water and *jumped off* (the bridge).

More often, the unmentioned context supplies the missing prepositional object:

She *pulled* the tablecloth *off* (the table).

3.2 Phrasal verbs in a broader sense

Other linguists deviate – implicitly or according to explicit criteria – from the above categorisation. The following terms designate basically the same range of verbs as phrasal verbs, but include certain prepositional verbs as well: the 'group verb' in Poutsma (1926), the 'two word verb with adverbial use of the adprep' in Taha (1960), and the 'combinations of verb and adverb' in Jespersen (1924/1968). Other terms in the literature include the full range of combinations, subsuming phrasal and prepositional verbs by admitting combinations of a verb with either a preposition or an adverb. These terms include the 'verb adverb combination' of Kennedy (1920) and Konishi (1958), Roberts' (1936) 'verb-adverb locution' and Mechner's (1956) 'collocations of verb and particle'.

Poutsma (1926: Part II,ii, 88) makes a distinction between 'group verb' and 'verb plus preposition', but he is not sure about their distinctive features. "There is some hesitation whether in the following quotations we have to understand *to see through* (viz. his intentions, his manoeuvres) as a kind of group verb governing an object, or to apprehend *to see* as an intransitive and *through* as a preposition. Considered in the light of the Dutch translation, which would have 'dozen' as the equivalent of *to see through*, the first view would seem to be more plausible than the second."

Roberts (1936:466) defines verb-adverb locution as "the association of a verb with an adverb which determines the spatial range of the predication". The definition is obviously inadequate if it is intended to cover not only such combinations as *come in*, or *go out*, in their 'physical' meaning, but also such as those in **break up** *a meeting*, or **break off** *negotiations*.

Kennedy (1920:9)'s verb-adverb combinations include also particles which are never used as adverbs i.e. *at, for, with*. These are "only combinations formed with the sixteen prepositional adverbs: *about, across, around, at, by, down, for, in, off, on, out, over, through, to, up, with*."

Jespersen's (1924/1968:273–77) attitude towards the problem of adverbs and prepositions is subjective, based on intuitive grounds. According to him, *by* in *pass by* is a preposition, if the meaning is local, as in *'The river passes by a small village'*, but an adverb in the figurative meaning 'pass without taking notice, overlook, disregard'. These meanings, however, cannot always be kept apart. As regards the collocation *see through* Jespersen says that *through* is a preposition in *'We saw through the secret'* (discovered what was behind it), but an adverb in *'I'll see him through'* (help him to get through); according to him, in this case, too, the distinction is not always observed.

L.P. Smith (1923:172) introduces the very term 'phrasal verb' into the linguistic literature. It is worth noting that the work in which he speaks of this category of verbs is entitled "Words and Idioms" and states that the OED Editor Henry Bradley suggested the term to him. The 'phrasal verbs' are introduced as follows:

> "Even more numerous are the idiomatic collocations of verbs followed by prepositions, or by prepositions used as adverbs. Collocations of this kind, 'phrasal verbs' we may call them, like *'keep down'*, *'set up'*, *'put through'*, and thousand others, are not only one of the most striking idiosyncrasies of our language, but as we shall have occasion to note later on, they enter as well into a vast number of idiomatic anomalies – phrases with meanings not implied by the meaning of the words which compose them. These phrasal verbs correspond to the compound verbs in synthetic languages. Thus *'fall out'* has the meaning of the Latin *'excidere'*, the German *'ausfallen'*. As a matter of fact we have in English both compound and phrasal verbs, often composed of the same elements – *'upgather'* and *'gather up'*, *'uproot'* and *'root up'*, *underlie'* and *'lie under'*. In these instances the meaning is the same in each, but in other cases the meaning is changed by the grouping of the different elements: *'undergo'* and *'go under'*, *'overtake'* and *'take over'* have not the same signification; and *'upset'* and *'set up'* are almost exactly opposite in meaning."

We see from Smith's statement that the problem of whether the particle of the verb-particle collocation is an adverb or a preposition is quite irrelevant for Smith's definition of 'phrasal verbs'. The defining characteristic of Smith's 'phrasal verbs' is that the verb and the particle constitute a semantic unit.

W. P. Jowett (1950/51:152) also defines phrasal verbs as "semantic units consisting of verb plus particle." Among his examples we find Adverbs, e.g. *If you let the side down we shall **fall out*** (If you don't do your share we shall

quarrel), Prepositions, e.g. *Who are you getting at?* (At whom are your remarks covertly aimed?) and Advpreps, e.g. *It didn't quite come off* (It failed to produce the hoped-for effect.)

Mechner (1965:43) concentrates on the problem of patterns of verb-particle collocations. His examples contain one of the following verbs: *come, go, give, get, put, take, make, keep,* and one of the following particles: *about, across, after, again, against, among, at, before, between, by, down, far, for, forward, from, here, in, off, on, over, out, there, through, to, under, up, with.*" The author distinguishes six patterns of verb-particle collocation. They are the following:

Group I

　　　　Pattern 1: Subject Verb Particle
　　　　Pattern 2: Subject Verb Particle Object
　　　　Pattern 2 a: Subject Verb Object Particle

Group II

　　　　Pattern 1: Subject Verb (Particle Object)
　　　　Pattern 2: Subject Verb Object (Particle Object)
　　　　Pattern 2 a: Subject Verb (Particle Object) Object

In fact the particles in the three patterns of Group I are adverbs, and those in the three patterns of Group II are prepositions.

Sroka (1965:85) employs the term 'phrasal verb' to include (1) verb + adverb collocations, e.g. *fall out*, (2) verb + preposition collocations, e.g. *go for*, (3) verb – AP collocations with the Adverbial Function of the A–P word, e.g. *take in*, and (4) verb – AP collocations with the Prepositional Function of the A–P word, e.g. *run across.*

Dixon (1982:38) uses the term 'phrasal verb' for any combination of verb and preposition(s) where the meaning of the combination cannot be fully inferred from the meanings of the component words. He states that there is no strict cut-off point, but rather a continuum – ranging from fully literal combinations like *stand on /X/, take /X/ under /Y/,* through *go out (of /X/), put /X/ on /Y/,* to semi-literal *wash /X/ down, pick /X/ up,* and finally strongly phrasal verbs like *have /X/ on* and *put up with /X/.* Dixon (1982:14) distinguishes six sub-types of phrasal verbs:

(He uses 'N' for a noun phrase and 'p' for a preposition; each phrasal verb begins with a verbal element and it is not included in the formula.)

　　(I) p e.g. *set in, come to, fall through, pass out*
　　(II) pN e.g. take after /X/, come by /X/, set about /X/, pick on /X/
　　(III) Np e.g. *put /X/ off, take /X/ on, put /X/ up, bring /X/ down*
　　(IV) NpN e.g. *see /X/ through /X/, hold /X/ against /Y/, take /X/ for /Y/*

(V) ppN e.g. *take up with /X/, go in for /X/, get on to /X/, scrape by on /X/*

(VI) NppN e.g. *put /X/ down to /Y/, let /X/ in for /Y/, tie /X/ in with /Y/, take /X/ up on /Y/*

As we could see above, phrasal verbs are rather problematic for linguists and they have different views on them. Some identify phrasal verbs as a combination of a lexical verb and an adverbial particle, others interpret them in a broader sense and also include verb + preposition constructions. It may seem to be contradictory that the above mentioned up-to-date dictionaries of phrasal verbs (see Oxford, Cobuild, Cambridge Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs) use the term 'phrasal verb' not only for verb + adverbial particle combinations, but also for verb + preposition and verb + adverbial particle + preposition combinations, whereas the latest 1985 edition of Quirk et al.'s Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language regards phrasal verbs only as verb + adverbial particle combinations excluding prepositional verbs. What makes things even more complicated is that some particles, e.g. OVER, OUT, or UP can function as a preposition, an adverbial particle or even as a prefix. It was Dixon (1982) who was the first to realize that we cannot draw a strict borderline between prepositional (verb + preposition combinations) and phrasal verbs (verb + adverbial particle combinations), but there is a fuzzy area between them.

My interpretation corresponds to the term of phrasal verbs used in a broader sense, i.e verb + particle combinations, where the particle can be an adverbial particle or a preposition. Whenever I refer to the term phrasal verb in the narrower sense, I always indicate in brackets that the term 'phrasal verb' covers verb + adverbial particle combination only.

This is the point where we can raise the question of how we could interpret and analyse them best. My efforts to find the theoretical framework in which phrasal verbs can be interpreted best have led me to cognitive grammar.

3.3 Phrasal verbs in cognitive grammar

Cognitive grammarians e.g.: Langacker (1987) and Lakoff (1987) argue that like other conceptual categories, linguistic categories, (in our case prepositions, particles, adverbs and prefixes) are meaningful, and are prototypically structured. Besides, grammatical categories are often grounded on our everyday experience and make use of imaginative processes such as metaphorical mapping. Thus, linguistic categories are complex, and as Langacker (1987:369) notes, "it is not always possible to find a description valid without qualification for all class members and inapplicable to all non-members. Hence it cannot in general be presumed

that membership is a predictable, all-or-nothing affair. Membership is commonly a matter of degree, resistant to strict delimination".Thus, we cannot draw a borderline between prepositions and adverbial particles in a prepositional and phrasal verb, respectively. Cognitive grammarians do not even use the terms 'phrasal verb' or 'prepositional verb', but they analyse how the categories (e.g.: prepositions and particles) are structured, i.e. how the different senses are related to one another.

Radden (1991:57) also notes that as far as the structure of linguistic categories is concerned, cognitive grammar seems to show a "strong preference for structuring dissimilar members of a natural category in terms of priviliged prototypical members and less representative peripheral members. The linguistic categories which most conspicuously display prototypical structure are polysemous lexical items the various senses of which are radially linked to a central, or prototypical sense. Studies of prepositions and their bewildering multitude of senses have provided particularly revealing insights into the nature of radial structures."

Brugman's (1981), Taylor's (1989), Lakoff's (1987), Radden's (1991) analysis of OVER as a preposition, particle, adverb and prefix and Lindner's (1981) analysis of the particles UP and OUT(1981) and Johnson's (1987) analysis of OUT are the most important studies to investigate the intricate semantic network of such highly polysemous words and show the principles upon which these networks of senses are based. As Radden (1991:57) points out, such networks consist of chains of senses which are linked in a natural and motivated fashion by minimal changes in their schematic configuration. In their analysis of OVER, Brugman (1981), Taylor (1987), Lakoff (1987) and Radden (1991) have shown that OVER has a network of radially structured spatial senses, which also serves as the source domain for metaphorical extensions.

Susan Lindner (1981:xii) investigates the particles OUT and UP, and she also observes that these particles have a range of both concrete and abstract meanings, which are related so that OUT and UP comprise unified concepts. Analysing the meanings of OUT and UP, Lindner (1981:49) states that VPCs (Verb-particle constructions), while often considered unanalysable and idiomatic, are in fact componential and their meanings are interrelated. They have a central, prototypical meaning, which are the concrete, literal meanings and the most fully analysable; whereas other meanings i.e the non-literal, figurative meanings depart from the prototypical in various ways and to various degrees, typically via metaphorical extension.

4 Conclusion

The fact that phrasal verbs have been investigated by so many authors and that special dictionariesof phrasal verbs and workbooks have been published recently shows that phrasal verbs are aquiring more and more importance in teaching and learning English. As the discussion above has, however, shown, phrasal verbs seem to be rather problematic for linguists as some interpret them in a broader, others in a narrower sense. Furthermore, I argue that cognitive grammar is the theoretical framework in which phrasal verbs can be best analysed. Following the interpretation given to phrasal verbs by the above mentioned cognitive grammarians, by phrasal verbs I mean combinations of a verb + adverbial particle/ preposition with special emphasis on the complex network of senses of the adverbial particle/preposition. Thus I suggest that adverbial particles/pepositions have a central, prototypical meaning, which is their literal, spatial meaning, and the other, figurative meanings are the metaphorical extensions of the prototypical meaning.

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