



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***ESTABLISHING AND EVALUATING PHRASAL VERB USE IN A
MALAYSIAN ESL SECONDARY SCHOOL TEXTBOOK CORPUS***

ABDOLVAHED ZARIFI

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By

ABDOLVAHED ZARIFI

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra
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Doctor of Philosophy**

June 2013

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To my loving mother and my hardworking father,

To my beloved family:

My wife, my son, and my daughters

And

To my dear brothers and sisters

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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June 2013

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Phrasal verbs are one of the most notoriously puzzling aspects of English language instruction. Despite their potential complexities and idiosyncrasies, they are of high relevance for ESL/EFL learners because knowledge of them is often equated with language proficiency and fluency. With more and more phrasal verbs appearing in textbooks, it is worth considering whether the use of these structures is informed by research findings. This is of main research concern as ESL textbooks are reported to be far from in keeping with natural facts and they often misrepresent language phenomena. The present corpus-based content analysis study, thus, seeks to 1) identify all the instances of phrasal verbs and determine their frequency and distribution, 2) provide a typology of the syntactic structures of these combinations, 3) explore the treatment of the combinations in terms of their potential word meanings, and 4) investigate the pedagogical exploitation of these combinations in the Malaysian ESL Forms One through Five prescribed for students in the secondary school level. To achieve this importance, use was made of the Zar-Test,

Focus Framework, Cognitive Load Framework, all developed by the researcher, along with WordSmith version 4.0 and the Oxford Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs as the research instruments.

Findings revealed that the selection, presentation and sequencing of these combinations were based more on authors' intuition than on empirical findings and pedagogical principles. To begin with, some combinations of frequent use in natural language were not at all so in the ESL corpus and vice versa. Despite the large number of phrasal verbs in the corpus, their presentation was far from satisfactory, with some being over-repeated at the expense of some others. Secondly, the grammatical patterns of phrasal verbs were distributed unevenly across the corpus both in terms of type and number. Thirdly, these combinations were inadequately presented in semantic terms. While a few combinations were used with all their different potential dictionary meanings, many others were narrowly used with only few possible meanings, hence not fleshed out appropriately. Findings also cast light on some of the traces of the localized variety of English in the use of phrasal verbs in the corpus. Finally, these combinations turned out not to be appropriately pedagogically used. Only 6% of the combinations in the reading texts received direct focus, with the overwhelming majority being either in Indirect Focus or in No Focus status. The learning activities on phrasal verbs were, likewise, shown to have moderate cognitive loads, hence not fully appropriate for deep learning of these units.

In addition to the research findings, this study has a few methodological innovations to contribute. Although literature offers a number of tests for the identification of phrasal verbs, these tests are rather complicated, including 7 to 9 items. They are subject to exceptions and counterexamples as well. Moreover, they tend to differentiate Verb + Real Particles from Verb + Prepositions but remain silent on how they are distinct from Verb + Adverb particles. The Zar-Test of Initialization, on the other hand, consists of only one single item that can be applied in three stages to identify the different types of these combinations.

Moreover, the study offers two separate frameworks, namely Cognitive Load Framework and Focus Framework, for the evaluation of the use of phrasal verbs in ELT textbooks. Unlike Laufer and Hulstijn's Involvement Load Hypothesis which is learner-based, the Cognitive Load Framework is mainly task-based and purely cognitively oriented. The framework has been validated as a helpful tool in determining the cognitive load of the various learning activities dealing with not only the phrasal verbs but also other lexical elements. In a similar way, the Focus Framework provides a sound basis for the assessment of different lexical items appearing in the reading texts of the instructional materials.

Abstraktesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**MEWUJUDKAN DAN MENILAI PENGGUNAAN FRASA KATA KERJA
DALAM BUKU TEKS ESL CORPUS SEKOLAH MENENGAH DI
MALAYSIA**

Oleh

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Frasa kerja merupakan salah satu aspek yang paling mengelirukan dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggeris. Walaupun kompleks dan idiosinkrasi, frasa kerja mempunyai hubungan yang tinggi untuk ESL/EFL pelajar kerana pengetahuan mereka sering disamakan dengan penguasaan bahasa dan kefasihan. Disebabkan oleh banyak frasa kerja terdapat di dalam buku teks, ia sangat penting untuk mempertimbangkan sama ada penggunaan struktur ini dapat memperlihatkan penemuan bagi penyelidikan ini. Perkara ini merupakan perhatian utama terhadap penyelidikan buku teks ESL yang dilaporkan berada jauh dari fakta semula jadi dan memberi gambaran yang salah tentang fenomena bahasa. Kajian analisis kandungan berdasarkan korpus ini, bertujuan 1) mengenal pasti semua contoh frasa kerja dan menentukan kekerapan serta penyebaran, 2) menyediakan tipologi struktur sintaktik 3) mengkaji kombinasi baik pulih daripada segi memahami makna perkataan, dan 4) menyelidik pedagogi yang mendedahkan kombinasi ini dalam ESL Malaysia

tingkatan 1 hingga tingkatan 5 yang ditetapkan untuk pelajar-pelajar di peringkat sekolah menengah. Untuk mencapai kepentingan ini, pengkaji membuat Zar-Test, Fokus Rangka Kerja, Kognitif rangka kerja, semuanya dibentuk oleh penyelidik, berbantuan wordsmith versi 4.0 dan Kamus Oxford frasa kerja sebagai instrumen kajian.

Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa pemilihan, persembahan dan penjujukan kombinasi lebih berdasarkan gerak hati penulis daripada prinsip pedagogi dan empirikal. Bermula dengan dengan, beberapa kombinasi yang kerap penggunaannya dalam bahasa tempatan tidak terdapat langsung dalam korpus ESL dan sebaliknya. Walaupun terdapat sebahagian besar frasa kerja dalam korpus, tetapi persembahan mereka tidak memuaskan, terdapat beberapa perkara yang diulangi pada penerangan hal-hal lain. Kedua, pengagihan tatabahasa frasa kerja tidak sekata bagi keseluruhan korpus tentang jenis dan bilangan. Ketiga, kombinasi ini tidak dipersembahkan dalam bentuk semantik. Walaupun gabungan beberapa kamus digunakan, tetapi penggunaannya sangat terhad dan memadai dengan makna yang tidak berapa jelas. Hasil kajian juga mendapati kurang perhatian terhadap variasi penggunaan bahasa Inggeris tempatan yang menggunakan frasa kerja dalam korpus kajian. Akhirnya, kombinasi tersebut ternyata tidak menggunakan pedagogi yang sewajarnya. Hanya 6% daripada kombinasi dalam teks bacaan menerima fokus secara langsung, dan majoriti fokusnya sama ada secara tidak langsung atau tidak berfokus. Begitu juga aktiviti pembelajaran frasa kerja, memperlihatkan beban kognitif sederhana, oleh itu tidak sesuai untuk pembelajaran yang mendalam tentang unit-unit ini secara total.

Gabungan analisis sintaktik dan semantik gabungan frasa kata kerja juga menunjukkan bahawa bahan buku teks Malaysia juga tidak bebas daripada pengaruh pelbagai Bahasa Inggeris tempatan. Ia telah menunjukkan bahawa bentuk-bentuk yang diandaikan sebagai ciri gramatical agak berbeza dengan pelbagai bahasa Inggeris British standard. Peluasan kombinasi makna juga merangkumi contoh yang tidak dapat di buktikan oleh penutur asli bahasa Inggeris. Sebagai tambahan kepada hasil penemuan penyelidikan, kajian ini menyumbang beberapa inovasi metodologi. Walaupun beberapa kajian menyediakan beberapa ujian bagi mengenal pasti frasa kerja, ujian ini juga rumit dan menyeluruh, terdiri daripada 7 hingga 9 item. Terdapat beberapa perkara yang boleh disangkal dan dikecualikan. Selain itu, kajian ini cenderung untuk membezakan kata kerja + partikel sebenar daripada preposisi + Kata kerja dan kekal tanpa mengira ia berbeza daripada kata kerja + adverb. Dalam kata lain Ujian-Zar, mengandungi hanya satu item yang boleh digunakan dalam tiga peringkat untuk mengenal pasti semua jenis kata kerja frasa.

Sebagai rangka kerja kognitif, ia dianggap menarik, tidak seperti kognitif dan afektif yang dibuat oleh Laufer dan Hulstijn yang melibatkan hipotesis yang berasaskan pelajar, tetapi secara asasnya berorientasikan kognitif yang tulen. Rangka kerja baru ini telah dirancang untuk digunakan bagi tujuan analisis kandungan. Rangka kerja fokus, menyediakan asas yang jelas untuk digunakan oleh *practitioners* untuk menilai penggunaan kategori yang berlainan elemen leksikal bagi bahan dalam buku teks.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 28 June 2013 to conduct the final examination of Abdolvahed Zarifi on his Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled “Establishing and Evaluating Phrasal Verb Use in a Malaysian ESL Secondary School Textbook Corpus” in accordance with Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The committee recommends that the student be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citation, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

ABDOLVAHED ZARIFI

Date: 28 June 2013

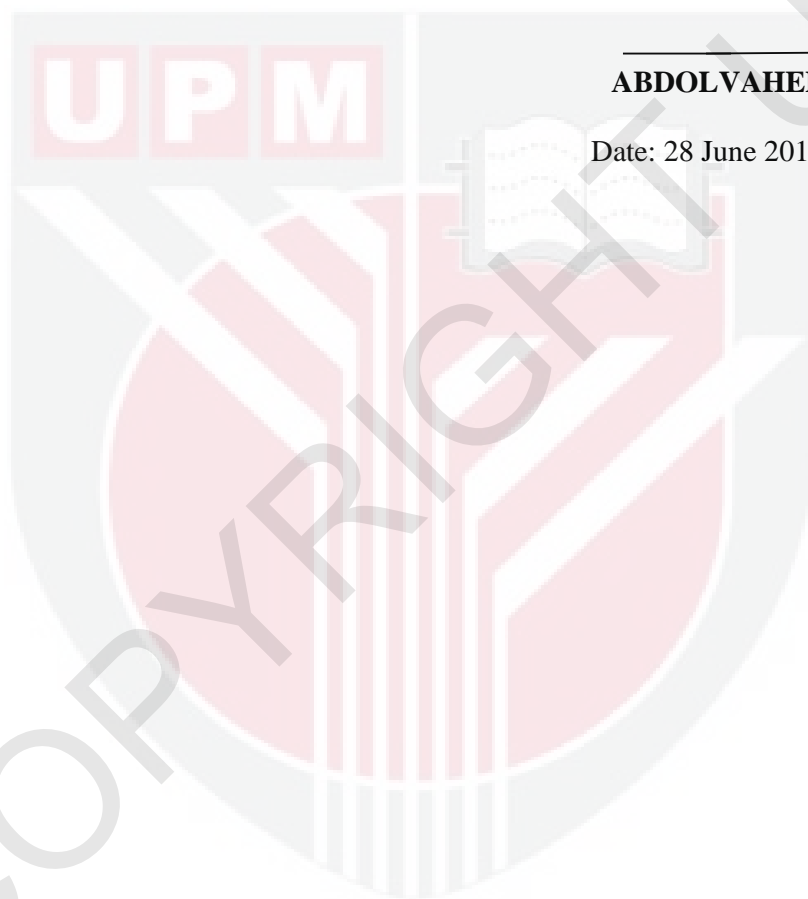


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