A STUDY ON THE USE OF PHRASAL VERBS

BY MALAYSIAN LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

by

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the level of understanding and use of English phrasal verbs (PVs) amongst Malaysian learners of English. It is generally agreed that idiomatic expressions, including phrasal verbs, present great difficulties for language learners. Various reasons have been highlighted, which include the nature of PVs themselves, as well as crosslinguistic factors.

Two different types of methodology - survey and corpus work - are used to find answers to the research questions. In the survey component, the respondents include both teachers and learners in selected secondary schools in Malaysia. A PV test was given to the student respondents, while questionnaires were used to get teachers' feedback regarding the common practice of vocabulary teaching particularly with respect to PVs, as well as their views on the vocabulary contents presented in school textbooks. The corpus work is based on the English of Malaysian Students (EMAS) and the Bank of English (BoE) corpus, and 24 PVs were selected for analysis. Drawing on findings from the survey and corpus work, an examination of school textbooks and learners' dictionaries was then carried out.

Results indicate that, in addition to learners' proficiency level and gender, the nature of PVs and crosslinguistic factors, particularly the learners' L1, play a significant role in Malaysian learners' understanding and use of PVs. Their difficulties with PVs are further compounded as textbooks and dictionaries were also found to provide insufficient and inappropriate information with respect to PVs.

This thesis makes a number of suggestions to further improve the present scenario of PVs teaching and learning. It is suggested that the teaching of PVs should also take into account learners' L1, and that learners can learn and understand PVs better if they are made aware of the lexical and grammatical patterns of PVs. Instead of relying on intuition, perhaps it is time for Malaysian textbooks and dictionaries to consider integrating the use of corpus into their selection of PVs to be presented to learners.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0   Introduction

This thesis reports on a study of learners' understanding and use of English phrasal verbs (hereafter PVs), with special reference to Malaysian school learners of English. Key questions to be explored relate to Malaysian school learners' overall understanding of PVs and problems faced in using them, Malaysian schoolteachers' perceptions of vocabulary teaching, and the treatment of PVs in reference materials used in Malaysia. These questions are set out in full in section 1.3 below. This study is particularly timely and relevant as it is the first study conducted in Malaysia that not only examines learners' knowledge of PVs, but, most importantly, the actual use of this important language feature by analysing the patterns of PVs produced, and possible factors with respect to the production of non-standard forms of PVs by this group of learners. This study also differs from others investigating PVs (e.g. Liao and Fukuya 2004; Akbari 2009), as evidence with respect to learners' problems in understanding and using PVs was gathered using both corpus and experimental data. To be more specific, the methodology includes corpus analysis of PVs in both native speaker English and the English of Malaysian learners (see Chapter 6), testing of Malaysian learners' competence with PVs (see Chapter 4), and interviewing of Malaysian teachers (see Chapter 4). This first chapter discusses the background to the study – vocabulary teaching in general and the teaching of multi-word items, including PVs, and the Malaysian context. The overall structure of the thesis is explained in section 1.5.

PVs are a subtype of English multi-word units (hereafter MWUs), which loosely consist of combinations of verbs and adverbial or prepositional particles associated with idiomatic meanings – typical examples include *make up* 'create', *carry on* 'continue', *come across* 'discover'. PVs are discussed in detail (see 2.3, 3.4, and 3.5) and it will be seen that the literature on PVs shows that there is a lack of agreement in defining exactly what PVs are (see 2.3.1). The principal reason for selecting this particular vocabulary type for the study is that PVs are prominent and important in the English lexicon (see 1.1.2), and yet remain very challenging for both language teachers and learners (see 3.2; 3.4), not least in the Malaysian context (see 3.6).

1.1 Background to the study: vocabulary teaching in general

1.1.1 Vocabulary and MWUs in language teaching and learning

For many years, the teaching of vocabulary received much less attention in language classrooms in comparison to the teaching of grammar (see 3.1). Grammar was the central focus of language teaching, as it was generally believed that learners needed to master the grammatical structures of a language in order to use the language well. This emphasis on grammar has influenced the overall scenario of language teaching and learning, including teaching practice and syllabus design as well as teaching and learning materials. However, the increasing amount of research into language teaching and learning has changed views regarding the role of grammar, indicating that both grammatical and lexical knowledge are needed to ensure learners' proficiency in the target language (see 3.1). Accordingly, various studies in the area of vocabulary in language teaching and learning have appeared, with many relating to aspects of phraseology and MWUs (e.g. PVs, idioms, collocations). However, despite research discussing the significant role of MWUs, particularly in language learning (see 1.1.2

and 3.2), it seems that this important language form is still neglected in some language teaching and learning scenarios (see 3.6, 5.4.5, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6).

1.1.2 The importance of MWUs and PVs

MWUs, 'lexical phrases', 'chunks', and 'prefabs' are some of the preferred terms used by researchers to refer to different types of word-combination. It is estimated that 'prefabs' account for 58.6 per cent of spoken English and 52.3 per cent of written English (Erman and Warren 2000). There is also convergent evidence that the number of different multi-word items may exceed the number of individual words in the lexicon (Jackendoff 1995; Mel'čuk 1995; Pawley and Syder 1983). Willis (2003) for instance, claims that, "much of the language we produce is made up not of individual words, but of strings of words which we carry around with us as fixed phrases" (p. 43). There is also a consensus among psycholinguists, cognitive linguists and others (e.g. Newell 1990; Skehan 1992) that our mental lexicon works through the process of 'chunking' as well as memorization of lexical units. Similarly, those working with children in second language acquisition (hereafter SLA) (e.g. R. Ellis 1984; Fillmore 1979; Hakuta 1974) have found extensive use of MWUs by children, indicating that 'chunking' is also a common process in children learning first language (hereafter L1). The fact that language seems to be made up of a large number of MWUs and the suggestion that our mental lexicon works through 'chunking' imply that multi-word combinations are not a marginal phenomenon; instead, they are important features of English language, thus deserving equal attention in language classrooms.

Another significant role of 'chunks' relates to communicative competence (Hakuta 1976; Skehan 1992; Nattinger and DeCarrico 1992) in that our ability to organize and

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store language as 'chunks' and rely on these 'chunks' helps us to produce language rapidly and fluently, otherwise we might not be able to communicate as quickly and efficiently as we need to in everyday communication. Skehan, for example, comments that:

> The users...operate with a more lexical unit of analysis, and achieves communication in real time not by the complexities of producing utterances on the basis of a rule system, constructing anew each time, but instead draws on ready-made elements and chunks, without the need to construct each chunk independently and to lose time planning internal organisation. (1992: 186)

As far as language learning is concerned, Schmitt (2000) states that, 'language ability requires not only the ability to produce language through syntactic generation (via grammatical competence), but also the ability to use lexical chunks' (p. 111). In other words, learners need both abilities in order to use the target language well. This further suggests that we need to include instruction on MWUs in language teaching.

As far as PVs are concerned, they are ubiquitous in English. It is generally assumed that PVs are mainly used in spoken rather than written discourse and they are very common in informal rather than formal registers, while their one-word equivalents are more often used in more formal contexts. However, De Cock's comments in her contribution to the pedagogical mid-matter in the *Macmillan Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs* that "native speakers of English use approximately half as many PVs in formal writing as in informal speech" (2005: LS17). This is confirmed in corpus statistics set out by Biber et al. (1999: 408-409), where they find the usage of PVs to be greatest in conversation and fiction with over twice the frequency in academic writing, with news journalism

between the two extremes. This suggests that PVs are not completely absent from formal discourse and there are many instances in formal occasions in which the use of PVs is more appropriate and sound more natural in expressing certain ideas (see Fletcher 2005). Apart from that, most PVs are metaphorical in meanings; and it is believed that 'metaphoric intelligence' has an important role to play in all areas of communicative competence and can contribute to language learning success (Littlemore 2001, 2006). This further suggests the importance of PVs to language learners and without having good knowledge of PVs and an ability to use them appropriately, it is almost impossible for learners to gain fluency in English. Thus, it is clear that this particular language form deserves equal attention and better treatment in language teaching and learning.

1.1.3   Learners' problems with MWUs and PVs

Despite the importance of MWUs and PVs in language learning discussed in 1.1.2 above, there is general consensus that they are difficult for L2 learners to master (Moon 1992; Yorio 1980 1989; De Cock 2005). Many classes of multi-word items, such as PVs, which are the main focus of the present study, are very common and highly productive in the English language as a whole (Celce-Murcia and Larsen Freeman 1999; Darwin and Gray 1999; Gardner and Davies 2007; Moon 1997). In addition, many multi-word items have multiple meanings themselves (see 2.3.5). For example, Gardner and Davies (2007) found that the 100 most frequent PVs in the BNC have 559 potential meaning senses, or an average of 5.6 per PV. Thus, learners may find learning MWUs is rather complicated, particularly as there are issues with respect to idiomaticity and semantic non-compositionality, which can be very confusing to learners (see 2.2.1; 2.3.5), as also applies to PVs. Furthermore, the status of particles in

PV construction (i.e. preposition or adverb particle), particle movement, and the transitivity of PVs are among other aspects that can cause further confusion for learners (see 2.3.1). Because of these reasons, most often, learners will avoid using PVs or use their one-word equivalents instead, since these are much easier to learn and understand (see 3.5).

Cross-linguistic factors, particularly the influence of learners' L1, are frequently discussed in the literature with respect to the learning of MWUs (e.g. Bahns 1993; Granger 1998a; Wolter 2006; Aertselaer 2008; Paquot 2008). In the case of PVs, the non-existence of similar structures in learners' L1s may affect their understanding of PVs, and several studies show that this may result in the avoidance of PVs (Dagut and Laufer 1985; Laufer and Eliasson 1993; Liao and Fukuya 2004). Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) found that even learners whose native language actually contains PVs (i.e. Dutch) might avoid using such forms when communicating in English. Thus, acknowledging the role of L1 in language learning, the present study will examine this issue in relation to PVs (see Chapters 5 and 7).

In addition to cross-linguistic factors, learners' lack of awareness of common collocates, regular patterns and usage, is also reported to lead to deviant or non-standard use of MWUs by language learners (Howarth 1998; Wray 2000). Therefore, Nesselhauf (2003) believes that explicit teaching and learning of phraseological units (in her case collocations) help to increase learners' awareness of this language form. Irujo (1986) further suggests that explicit teaching should be accompanied with continuous use for acquisition to take place. However, for PVs and other MWUs to be explicitly taught in language classrooms in order to increase learners' awareness of the

lexical and grammatical patterns, it is essential that teachers themselves are aware of the phraseological mechanism of the language. Little understanding of such mechanism often leads to MWUs not being taught very well in language classrooms (Granger 1998; Irujo 1986).

'Natural input' with respect to MWUs and length of exposure in the target language environment is another factor frequently discussed in the literature on PVs and other MWUs. However, the findings relating to this issue are rather inconclusive (see 3.2, 3.4). As far as this study is concerned, the role of 'natural input' is unlikely to be accessed as learners are learning the target language in a non-native environment, in which MWUs, like PVs, are not extensively or widely used. 'Frequency of occurrence', which relates to 'input', is another important issue that is commonly brought up when discussing MWUs from the pedagogical perspective. In the case of PVs for instance, it is often suggested that learners should be first introduced to the high frequency PVs rather than the less frequent ones (Nation and Waring 1997; Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999; Gardner and Davie 2007; Leila Ranta 2008; Boulton 2008), as they are more useful to learners in the real world. Thus, one of the aspects that will be further investigated in the present study is to examine whether 'frequency of occurrence' is taken into account in the selection of PVs to be included in reference materials (see Chapter 8).

1.2   The Malaysian context

As far as the teaching and learning of vocabulary in Malaysian schools is concerned, it is important to first understand the status of the English language in the Malaysian context. English language is a compulsory subject taught at all levels in every

Malaysian school, which means each learner will undergo at least eleven years of language learning at school level. With effect from 2005, English was used to teach all Science and Mathematics-related subjects in schools. However, due to some discrepancies in its implementation, the curriculum was abolished in 2011 and the national language (Malay language) is once again used as a medium of instruction in teaching these subjects. At the tertiary level, although the medium of instruction at undergraduate level in most public universities is the Malay language, most courses run in universities are conducted in English. Furthermore, all private higher educational institutions in Malaysia use English language as a medium of instruction.

The language syllabus in Malaysia seems to follow a similar trend with the developments in the field of vocabulary teaching and learning in general. Before the implementation of the KBSR (the New Curriculum for Primary Schools) and the KBSM (the New Curriculum for Secondary Schools), which is the current national school curriculum in Malaysia, the older English language syllabus for primary and secondary schools in the country followed the traditional grammar-based syllabus (e.g. *The English Syllabus for Use in Standard One to Standard Six of the Post 1970 National Primary Schools (1971)*; *The English Syllabus for Form One to Form Three of the Secondary Schools in Malaysia (1973)*). This 'structural syllabus' has greatly influenced the overall teaching and learning of English language in Malaysian schools, which emphasized the grammatical aspects of the language. In fact, it was reported that the introduction of a communicative type of syllabus (i.e. Communicative Language Teaching) in the 1970s was not always favourable to many language teachers at that time (see Etherton 1979; Gaudart 1986), and it was finally replaced by the present curriculum (i.e. KBSR and KBSM). Under this new curriculum, the teaching of English

Language in Malaysian schools follows what is referred to as a 'notional-functional syllabus' (Asraf 1996: 3). Unlike the older grammar-based syllabus, this new syllabus includes vocabulary components in addition to grammar, punctuation, sound system, etc. However, it was reported that teachers still believe that grammatical proficiency should be the primary focus in language teaching (Asraf 1996). This further suggests that, in general, greater attention is given by Malaysian teachers to the teaching of grammatical aspects of language, rather than lexical aspects, which are equally important for learners to gain fluency in the target language. As far as vocabulary contents are concerned, MWUs (e.g. PVs), which are regarded as "a means of accessing the grammar and lexicon" (Wray 2000: 469), receive less attention in the language classrooms (see 3.6; 5.4.5 and 8.5) and reference materials (see 5.3.5; 5.3.6; 8.4 and 8.6).

Because of the importance of PVs in language learning (see 1.1.2) and common problems faced by language learners in learning this language feature (see 1.2.1 and 3.5), it is timely for the study at the heart of this thesis to be carried out. With a better understanding of the present scenario of vocabulary teaching and learning in Malaysia, specifically with phraseological units like PVs, I believe that this language form will receive better treatment in language classrooms, and that learners will not only be able to learn and understand PVs more effectively, but, most importantly, they will be able to use this very important language feature appropriately in their everyday communication.

Based on my own observation and experience as a language teacher in Malaysia, teaching learners at different stages of language learning (i.e. secondary school, college

and university level), I noted that even after years of learning the language, learners hardly use PVs or else use them inappropriately in their written or spoken discourse. In fact, university students who obtained excellent results in their English language paper, use very few PVs in their writing and speaking activities. Thus, it is very frustrating to know that learners are not be able to deal with PVs appropriately when one knows how important they are in everyday conversations and in many types of written text, such as reports, fiction, newspapers and magazines, and even academic essays.

On the part of language teachers, they face difficulties in trying to teach these forms to their students, as common reference materials, particularly English language textbooks and the learner dictionaries used in Malaysian schools, do not address this type of verb in depth (see 5.3.5; 5.3.6; 8.4 and 8.6). In a country like Malaysia where the educational system and curriculum are based on textbooks, this clearly causes problems for language teachers. It is also a common practice among language teachers to teach elements that are frequently tested in examinations because examination results are an important indicator in measuring the academic achievement of schools. Thus, teachers are duty-bound to complete the syllabus to ensure students are able to produce good results. As MWUs like PVs are not much emphasized in textbooks, and less frequently tested in examinations, teachers give little attention to teaching this language feature and tend to concentrate on other components of language that have greater chances of being tested (see 5.4, 8.5).

The above-mentioned scenario is based on my personal observation and experience, which needed to be corroborated through further empirical evidence. This study was therefore designed to provide empirical evidence concerning the problems underlying

this important issue with respect to PVs, particularly in the Malaysian context where English is considered as the learners' second language (hereafter L2).

1.3 Objectives of study

With the general scenario of the teaching and learning of PVs discussed above in mind, the present study set out to answer the research questions below.

Research Question 1

What is the overall understanding of PVs of Malaysian school learners?

a) What is the learners' level of understanding of PVs?

b) Is there any difference in their level of understanding of PVs in relation to gender, school level, or language proficiency?

c) Is there any difference in their level of understanding of literal and non-literal PVs?

d) Is there any difference in their understanding of literal and non-literal PVs in relation to gender, school level, and language proficiency?

Research Question 2

What is the perception of Malaysian schoolteachers concerning the present vocabulary teaching in Malaysia?

a) What is their perception of the present vocabulary contents in school textbooks, particularly with respect to MWUs?

b) What are their reasons for teaching or not teaching PVs in language classrooms?

Research Question 3

What are the problems faced by Malaysian school learners in the use of PVs?

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a) What are the regular patterns produced by the learners in the use of PVs selected in the study?

b) Is there any deviant pattern from the standard one produced by native speakers?

c) If there is any deviance in the pattern produced by the learners, what are the possible factors for such deviance?

Research Question 4

How are PVs addressed in reference materials?

a) How do school textbooks address PVs?

b) How do dictionary writers address PVs?

1.4   Significance of the study

It is hoped that the overall findings of the present study will be useful to everyone involved in the teaching and learning of the English language in Malaysia, and increase the awareness among students, teachers, curriculum designers and reference materials providers of the general neglect of vocabulary teaching, and the teaching of MWUs like PVs in particular, which are an important language form for learners to gain fluency in English, the target language. Accordingly, appropriate measures can be taken to improve the present scenario of vocabulary learning in Malaysian schools, particularly with respect to the teaching and learning of PVs. Language teachers and learners in particular will be made more aware of the importance of this language feature for a more effective and efficient communication. Teachers may encourage learners to use this language form more frequently and perhaps can adopt better pedagogical approaches so that learners will experience more meaningful and successful learning of PVs. In addition, it is hoped that teachers will become much more aware of the

usefulness of corpora as a tool in language teaching, particularly to understand the problems faced by learners in the use of any language element including PVs.

The results of the study will be equally useful to syllabus designers, as they will serve as a basis for designing better and more effective language syllabuses. Reference materials providers like textbook and dictionary writers will be made aware of the more systematic way of selecting suitable and relevant contents with respect to PVs: the use of corpus data (i.e. corpus-based), instead of relying on their own experience or intuition, which might not always be accurate.

Finally, as far as research into PVs is concerned, there is not much attention given to this language form in Malaysia (see 3.4, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6). In fact, no study has been conducted locally that specifically focused on the typical patterns and use of PVs in order to understand the problems faced by learners, and the possible factors in the non-standard use of this language form (see Chapter 7). The present study not only fills this gap but also integrates both survey and corpus-based methods (see 1.5). While the survey helps to give general information in relation to learners' understanding of some very common PVs (see Chapter 5), the integration of corpus analysis further reveals the learners' actual use of this language form (see Chapter 7). In addition, the findings gathered from the teacher survey (see 5.3), are further complemented by analysis of reference materials (see Chapter 8). I believe that the combination of these different types of analysis makes this thesis unique and enables it to provide more comprehensive findings with respect to the issues under investigation.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

The thesis is divided into 9 chapters: this chapter (Chapter 1) has presented some background information with respect to the topic and set out the research questions. Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 provide an overview of relevant literature with respect to lexis and phraseology (Chapter 2), and issues in relation to phraseological units from the applied linguistics point of view (Chapter 3). As far as the present research is concerned, it differs from previous studies investigating PVs in terms of the methodology used. Previous studies with respect to PVs and language learners (e.g. Dagut and Laufer 1985; Hulstijn and Marchena 1989; Laufer and Eliasson 1993; Liao and Fukuya 2004) mainly relied on tests (e.g. multiple-choice, translation) as their main research instrument. However, the present study will integrate two different methods – informant testing (Chapters 4 and 5) and corpus analysis (Chapters 6 and 7). It is hoped that the integration of these two different methods will provide much richer data with respect to the issue under investigation, and, thus, more comprehensive findings can be obtained. Although the results are reported separately, they are actually interwoven and each one informs the other. Chapter 8, drawing on the results and information gathered in Chapters 4-7, addresses the issue with respect to the presence and treatment of PVs in reference materials (i.e. textbooks and dictionaries) used by Malaysian school learners. The final chapter (Chapter 9) will highlight a number of applications and implications based on the findings gathered in the present study, limitations of study and suggestions for further research into this area. The flow chart overleaf illustrates the overall structure of this thesis.

Chart 1: Thesis structure

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                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │     Chapter 1       │
                    │    Introduction     │
                    └─────────────────────┘
                              ↓
                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │  Literature Review  │
                    └─────────────────────┘
                       ↓              ↓
    ┌──────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
    │     Chapter 2        │   │     Chapter 3        │
    │ Lexis and phraseology│   │ Phraseological units │
    │                      │   │  and applied         │
    │                      │   │  linguistics         │
    └──────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────┘
                       ↓
               ┌─────────────────────┐
               │ Research Methodology│
               └─────────────────────┘
                  ↓              ↓
    ┌──────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
    │     Chapter 4        │   │     Chapter 6        │
    │ Methodology: survey  │   │ Methodology:         │
    │                      │   │ corpus analysis      │
    └──────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────┘
          ↓           ┌─────────────────┐        ↓
          ↓           │    Findings     │        ↓
          ↓           └─────────────────┘        ↓
    ┌──────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
    │     Chapter 5        │   │     Chapter 7        │
    │  Survey findings     │   │  Corpus findings     │
    └──────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────┘
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               ┌─────────────────────┐
               │     Chapter 8       │
               │ Reference materials │
               └─────────────────────┘
                        ↓
               ┌─────────────────────┐
               │     Chapter 9       │
               │ Applications and    │
               │   implications      │
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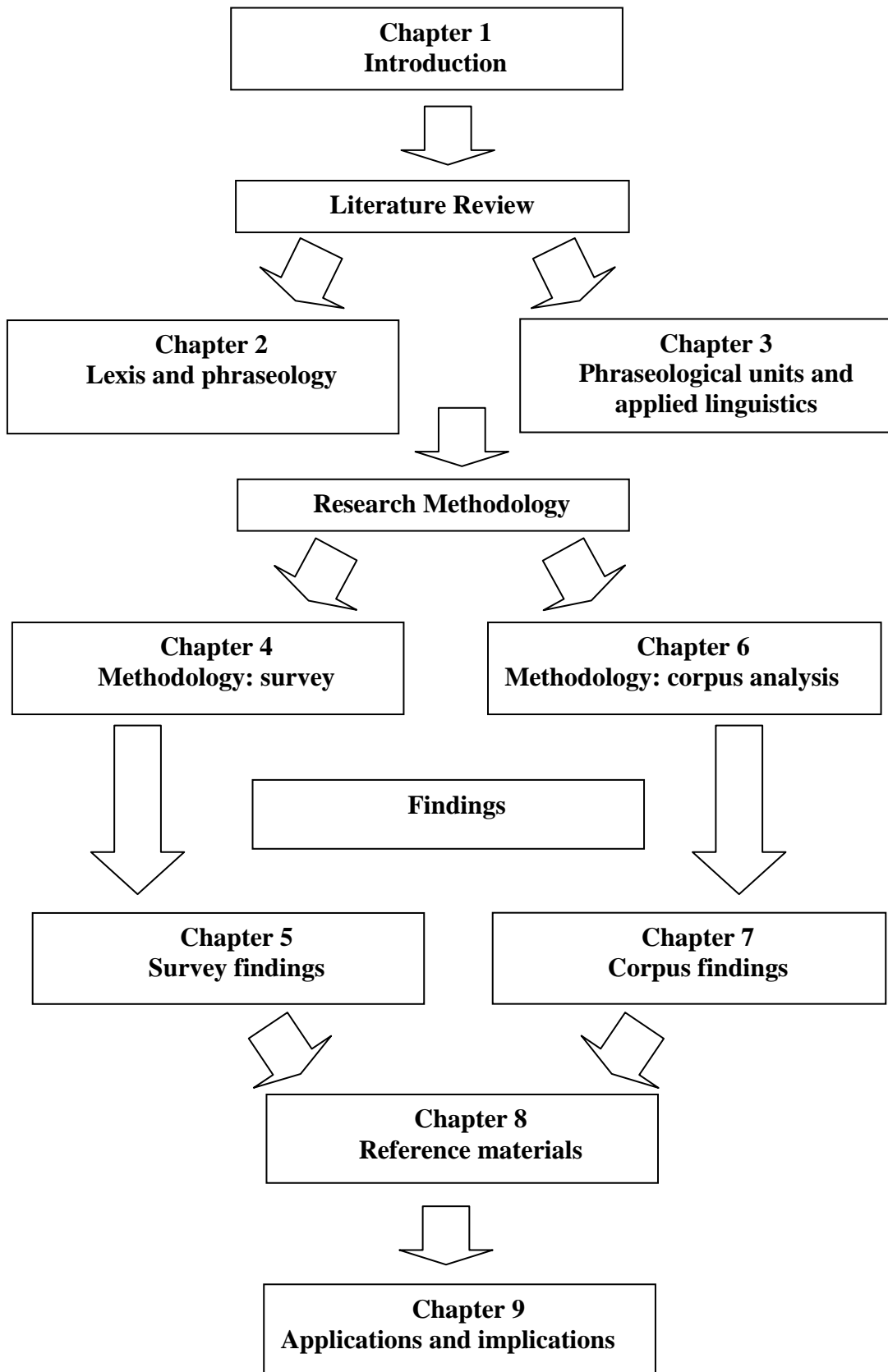
CHAPTER TWO

LEXIS AND PHRASEOLOGY

2.0 Introduction

The review of literature is divided into two separate chapters: Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. Chapter 2 will discuss lexis and phraseology in general, followed by criteria for and classifications of phraseological units (i.e. number of elements, institutionalization, semantic non-compositionality, lexicogrammatical fixedness and stress pattern). Another important sub-section in this chapter will discuss relevant issues with respect to PVs including definitions of PVs in the literature, tests for PVs, as well as problems related to the classification of PVs (i.e. idiomaticity and polysemy). Chapter 3 will focus on the pedagogical aspects of phraseology and PVs.

2.1 Lexis and phraseology

Traditionally, grammar and lexis were treated as two separate components of linguistic studies. The core concerns of linguists were always with grammar, which was regarded as the heart of the linguistic field while lexis was considered as "an appendix of the grammar, a list of basic irregularities" (Bloomfield 1933: 274) and received less attention. However, by the second half of the twentieth-century, researchers in the field of lexicology (e.g. Halliday) came to believe that there was no boundary between lexis and syntax, and his concept of 'lexico-grammar' further explained the interdependence of grammar and lexis. Halliday's work on 'lexico-grammar' was very much influenced by the work of Firth (1957) and his 'contextual theory of meaning', which suggests that "the complete meaning of a word is always contextual, and no study of meaning apart

from a complete context can be taken seriously" (Firth 1968: 7). In fact, the significance of collocation in relation to meaning was one of Firth's most well-known contributions: "Meaning by collocation is an abstraction at the syntagmatic level and is not directly concerned with the conceptual or idea approach to the meaning of words. One of the meanings of *night* is its collocability with *dark*, and of *dark*, of course, collocation with *night*." (Firth 1957: 196).

Sinclair (1991), a follower of Firth, was also in agreement that language should be studied in context and that language study should be based on actual, authentic instances rather than intuition or invented sentences. According to him, "However plausible an invented example might be, it cannot be offered as a genuine instance of language in use" (Sinclair 1991: 4). Sinclair was also interested in pattern and word meaning, and believed that "each [word] meaning can be associated with a distinctive formal patterning" (p. 6). In order to study language patterns, Sinclair (1991) emphasizes the need for a large collection of texts and integration of computer technology so that analysis can be conducted more systematically. As the possibilities for analysing language computationally have grown, this has resulted in the emergence of corpus linguistics: the integration of corpora in language studies, which not only allows researchers to study language in multiple contexts, but also to work on larger data samples (e.g. Bank of English corpus, which now consists of approximately 450 million words), and on authentic rather than invented texts. The existence of corpora has also facilitated more studies in the field of lexicology, particularly phraseology and the study of word combinations. Sinclair's own early work in corpus began in the 1960s (OSTI Report) (formally republished in 2004): the OSTI project drew on a spoken corpus of 135,000 running words.

One of Sinclair's best-known contributions to the fields of corpus linguistics and phraseology is reprinted in his book *Corpus, Concordance, Collocation* (1991): this is his most quoted paper on collocation, originally published a few years earlier (in 1987). In his discussion of collocation here, Sinclair (1991) proposes two principles in interpreting texts: 'open choice principle' and 'idiom principle'. The 'open choice principle' is designated as "probably the normal way of seeing and describing language" (p. 109) in which texts are regarded as a series of slots and any word has a chance to occur and fill in the slots as long as it satisfies the grammatical constraints. On the other hand, the 'idiom principle' views that "a language user has available to him or her a large number of semi-preconstructed phrases that constitute single choices, even though they might appear to be analyzable into segments" (p. 110). While the 'open choice principle' places emphasis on individual words, the 'idiom principle' relates to phrases and pre-fabricated units and argues that "words do not occur at random in a text" (p. 110) but have collocational bonds with other words or phrases, or are used in regular patterns showing their co-occurrence with particular grammatical structures and within particular semantic environments. Thus, Sinclair (1991) suggests the need for the 'idiom principle' because of the inadequacy of the 'open choice principle' to account for the construction of meaning in language:

It is clear that words do not occur at random in a text, and that the open choice principle does not provide for substantial enough restraints on consecutive choices. We would not produce normal text simply by operating the open choice principle.

Sinclair (1991: 110)

Sinclair's emphasis on the 'idiom principle' and his concerns with patterning were demonstrated by his subsequent discussion of collocations. He pointed out that many words and phrases attract other words in strong collocation, such as *hard work, hard luck, hard facts* and *hard evidence* (Sinclair 1991: 112). Patterning of the PV *set about* ('inaugurate'), for instance, shows that it is usually followed by an *–ing* form of a verb, such as *set about leaving*; and the verb *happen* is associated with unpleasant things (e.g. accidents), which illustrates the tendency of words and phrases to occur in a certain semantic environment (Sinclair 1991: 112). Further, Sinclair's analysis of *back* looks at its collocational patterns in association with word-class: i.e. the different patterns associated with *back* acting as adverb, preposition and noun (p. 119). The BoE corpus evidence shows, for example, that adverbial *back* frequently occurs in combination with verbs (e.g. *go/come/take* etc.) in PV structures: something particularly relevant to my own research.

2.2   Phraseology and phraseological units

Apart from corpus studies, there has been a great deal of research into phraseology by researchers in fields such as cognitive linguistics (Kövecses and Szabó 1996; Langacker 1991; Rudzka-Ostyn 2003), psycholinguistics and second language acquisition (SLA) (e.g. Meara 1982b, 1984a; Ellis 1996) as well as in the field of language teaching (e.g. Nattinger and DeCarrico 1992; Lewis 1993). In contrast to those working within the field of corpus linguistics, cognitive linguists, and SLA researchers, commonly study phraseology in relation to the way our minds work in learning and producing a language (see Chapter 3 for further discussion of this); while those in the area of language teaching are more interested in pedagogical approaches with respect to phraseological units (see Chapter 3 for further discussion of this).

Where corpus linguistics is concerned, there have been many studies investigating various types of phraseological units such as fixed expressions and idioms (Moon 1998a, 1998b; Verstraten 1992; Simpson and Mendis 2003; Fellbaum et al. 2006), collocations (Granger 1998; Nesselhauf 2003; Bernardini 2007; Hardie 2007), and PVs (Gardner and Davies 2007; Waibel 2007; Akbari 2009).

However, despite the wide recognition given to the field of phraseology, many acknowledge that phraseology is a 'fuzzy' area of linguistics. One possible reason for this is the confusing terminologies used in this field of study. This is further commented on by Cowie (1998: 210) who states that "phraseology is a field bedevilled by the proliferation of terms and by conflicting uses of the same term". With reference to phraseological units themselves, Wray (2002) lists more than 50 different terms used by linguists to refer to many different kinds of phraseological units: 'prefabs, 'chunks', 'lexical bundles', 'formulaic sequences' and 'lexical phrases', to name some of them. In the present study, even though the term 'multi-word units' (MWUs) and 'phraseological units' are used throughout this thesis, they do not refer to the same thing. While MWUs imply something holistic (e.g. idiom), 'phraseological units' on the other hand, are used for more general contexts.

In discussing the terminologies used in phraseology, Howarth (1996) argues that the inconsistency in terminologies is mainly due to differences in interest among linguists, who tend to focus on "only a part of the whole spectrum" (p. 6): if they are using different phraseological terminologies, it is unclear whether they are looking at the same phraseological phenomenon or a different one. Another reason for the problematic nature of this linguistic area highlighted by Howarth (1996: 6) is that interest in the field

of phraseology has developed almost independently in a number of language-related fields (e.g. cognitive linguistics, applied linguistics, corpus linguistics, lexicography). Applied linguists, for example, are more interested in merely looking at phraseology from application perspectives, particularly pedagogical, without taking into account the views of those in the cognitive and corpus linguistic fields. Likewise, those in the cognitive linguistic and corpus linguistic fields have also viewed and studied phraseology independently. In addition, different phraseological terms are also preferred by linguists in different language fields: Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) use 'lexical phrases' in their pedagogically oriented work. On the other hand, cognitive linguists like Boers and Lindstromberg (2008) prefer 'lexical units' (this term is rather misleading as it is used elsewhere to refer to a lexical item (either single-word or multi-word) or an individual sense of a word or a phrase). Above all, the most crucial reason for the inconsistency in the field of phraseology lies in language itself, which is messy and full of 'chunks' rather than isolated words, as remarked by Altenberg (1998) "[phraseology is] a fuzzy part of language involving various kinds of composite units and 'pre-patterned' expressions such as idioms, fixed phrases and collocations. We find it difficult to delimit the area and classify the different types involved" (p. 101).

2.2.1   Criteria in defining phraseological units

Despite the inconsistency in terminology, linguists generally agree with a number of essential criteria in identifying what phraseological units are, which include the number of elements, institutionalization, semantic non-compositionality, lexicogrammatical fixedness, and stress pattern.

Clearly, the most basic condition or criterion for phraseological units is their number of elements: a phraseological unit consists of at least two words, such as collocations (e.g. *strong coffee, by and large*), PVs (e.g. *take off, break down*) and idioms (e.g. *kick the bucket, spill the beans*). In the case of PVs, which is the main focus of the present study, they consist of a combination of two linguistic elements: a lexical verb (LV) and a particle (Prt): LV + Prt, such as *pick up, fall down*, *take off* (see 2.3 for further discussion on PVs).

With respect to the second criteria, Moon (1998) in her book-length account of fixed expressions and idioms considers institutionalization, "the process by which a string of formulation becomes recognized and accepted as a lexical item of the language" (p.7), as one of the criteria to take into account before considering a string as a unit. Pawley and Syder (1983) state that a lexical item is 'institutionalized' when "the expression is a conventional label for a conventional concept, a culturally standardized designation (term) for a socially recognized conceptual category" (p. 191). They further argue that units are only institutionalized when they are used and accepted by more than one member of the speech community: "the usage bears the authority of regular and accepted use by members of the speech community" (Pawley and Syder 1983: 209). Similarly, PVs are regarded as institutionalized, since their usage is widely accepted and frequently used in native speakers' discourse.

Another criterion is the non-compositionality or idiomaticity of MWUs (Moon 1998). Semantic non-compositionality suggests that "The meaning arising from word-by-word interpretation of the string does not yield the institutionalized, accepted, unitary meaning of the string: typical cases are metaphorical FEIs" (Moon 1998: 8). This

notion of semantic non-compositionality suggests that it is impossible to understand the meaning of the whole expression *kick the bucket* ('die'), by combining the regular meaning of each element. Similarly, in the case of idiomatic PVs, combining the regular meaning of each individual word in the combination does not yield the holistic meaning of *give in* ('surrender') or *pick up* ('to learn'). However, it is worth noting that not all phraseological units are completely non-compositional in meaning. For example, literal PVs are semantically compositional, and meanings can be derived simply by combining the regular meaning of each word in the combination (e.g. *sit down, stand up, go out*).

Lexicogrammatical fixedness is another criterion for assessing the 'holism of a string', and it "implies some degree of lexicogrammatical defectiveness in units, for example with preferred lexical realizations and often restrictions on aspect, mood, or voice. Classic examples are *call the shots, kith and kin*, and *shoot the breeze*" (Moon 1998:7). Thus, in *kith and kin* for instance, we cannot simply replace or delete any of the lexical elements or change the structure (e.g. **kin and kith*) without losing the idiomatic meaning as most idioms are generally fixed lexically and syntactically. However, as far as PVs are concerned, not all of them are entirely fixed (see 2.3.3). Waibel (2007: 6) argues that even though not all phraseological units are entirely fixed, they are fixed to at least some degree, either syntactically or lexically, and thus cannot be changed randomly. For instance, while both *perform an experiment* and *conduct an experiment* are acceptable, **perform a survey* is not, instead only *conduct a survey* is acceptable (*cf.* Cowie 1994: 3169). Similarly, in the case of aspectual PVs, such as *eat up* or *drink up,* for instance, the deletion of AVP *up* changes the holistic meaning of *eat up/drink up* ('eat/drink completely') (see 2.3.3).

Apart from all the criteria discussed above, another characteristic of MWUs is their stress or intonation pattern. Taking Verstraten's (1992) example of *the white house* and *the White House*, the meaning of the fixed phrase (i.e. *the White House*) cannot be conveyed if we do not place the stress correctly (p. 32). Similarly, in the case of the PV *come across*, the stress pattern of *across* in *come across a bridge,* will determine the speaker's intended meaning. In the PV *come across* ('discover') the stress is placed on *across*, but in the prepositional verb (to indicate the action of crossing a bridge), "the stress given the preposition is often very weak, if not completely reduced, with a pause possible just before it" (Fraser 1974: 2). However, there are instances in which the stress pattern cannot distinguish the meaning of fixed phrases *kick a bucket* ('die') or *spill the beans* ('reveal a secret') from their regular meanings (e.g. They *kick the bucket*/We *spill the beans* on the floor). This is because both literal and idiomatic uses have similar stress patterns. Therefore, stress pattern may not be a good characteristic to distinguish whether strings of words are MWUs or not.

Based on all the criteria of the phraseological units mentioned above, most linguists (e.g. Aisenstadt 1981; Cowie 1981; Glaser 1986a; Howarth 1998a) have come to an agreement that the degree of semantic non-compositionality or idiomaticity and lexicogrammatical fixedness of a phraseological unit is a continuum, with the least degree of non-compositionality and fixedness (e.g. literal PVs, collocation) at one end and others that are highly non-compositional and fixed (e.g. idioms) at the other, while the middle area is occupied by those partly non-compositional and partly fixed as in the case of the aspectual PVs discussed above.

2.2.2 Classification of phraseological units

Thus, the field of phraseology is wide and indeterminate. It is further complicated since different linguists have subcategorized phraseological units depending on the various linguistic purposes: lexicographic (e.g. Gläser 1986; Cowie 1988; Moon 1998), pedagogical (e.g. Nattinger and DeCarrico 1992; Lewis 1993), or psycholinguistic purposes (e.g. Wray and Perkins 2000; Wray 2002). In general, structural, functional, and pragmatic criteria are those most frequently used by linguists in their classification of phraseological units (e.g. Zgusta 1971; Gläser 1986, 1998b; Nattinger and DeCarrico 1992; Cowie 1988). Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss different classification systems in detail, the following shows something of the range.

Zgusta (1971), who was very much influenced by the Russian lexicalist tradition of phraseology, used relative fixedness as the main distinguishing feature to classify 'combinations of words', which is divided into 'free combinations' and 'set combinations', (p. 140-143). 'Free combinations' have a meaning that "is absolutely derivable from the meaning of the single combined words" (p. 140) while 'set combinations' "has a lexical meaning as a whole" (p. 143). 'Set combinations' is further subdivided into multi-word lexical units, set/idiomatic expressions and set groups. A secondary distinction is then made on the basis of syntactic function. While multi-word lexical units and set/idiomatic expressions function as grammatical classes (Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives); set groups, on the other hand, function pragmatically as proverbs, sayings, dicta and quotations. Zgusta (1971) also distinguishes idiomatic expressions from multi-word lexical units on the basis of semantic transparency, "the real idiomatic expressions seem always to have figurative meanings" (Zgusta 1971: 147) while a multi-word lexical unit is transparent in meaning.

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Cowie (1988) categorizes 'word combinations' into 'functional expressions' and 'composites'. 'Functional expressions' are those that have a discourse function, such as greetings, enquiries, invitations; while 'composites' include those that have a syntactic function and are "semantically specialized or idiomatic" (p. 132). The syntactic function ('composite units') is further subdivided into grammatical collocations (a combination of content word and function word, such as *get on* and *keen on*) and lexical collocations (a continuum from free combinations to pure idioms) (p. 133). Similarly, drawing on Cowie's classification, Howarth (1996) in his study on collocations, further reproduced the continuum model in classifying 'composite units' based on a number of criteria that include syntactic patterns, institutionalization, semantic transparency, commutability, semantic unity and motivation (p. 34-47).

Gläser (1998), who is also working within the same lexicalist tradition, further refined the classification of word combinations, and uses the term 'phraseology' and 'phraseological units' instead of 'combination of words' (Zgusta 1971) or 'word combinations' (Cowie 1988). Gläser's (1998) 'phraseological units' are divided into two major categories: 'nominations', which represent the centre of the phraseological system, and 'propositions' (p. 126). 'Nominations' include restricted collocations and idioms that function like the regular parts of speech to denote "a phenomenon, an object, an action, a process or state, a property or a relationship in the outside world" (p. 126). This category mostly consists of idioms. 'Propositions' are divided into proverbs, commonplace, routine formulae, slogans, commandments and maxims, and quotations and winged words, which "designate a whole state of affairs in the outside world" (Gläser 1998: 126), and thus have a pragmatic function. According to the classification,

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phraseological units that have a dual character are placed in the transition area, the area between 'nominations' and 'propositions' (p. 126).

Alexander (1984) subdivides his 'fixed expression' into five main groups according to structural and pragmatic criteria. These expressions include idioms (including PVs, 'tournures' like *kick the bucket* or *put the cat among the pigeons,* and irreversible binominals like *cash and carry* and *bag and baggage*); discourse-structuring devices (greetings and formulae like *long time no see*, and connectives and gambits like *for a kick off*); proverbs and proverbial idioms; catchphrases (clichés and slogans); and quotations and allusions (p. 129). Similarly, Carter (1998), drawing on Alexander, classified a range of fixed expressions based on their syntactic, semantic and discourse criteria, which include idioms (irreversible binomials, full idioms, and semi-idioms), proverbs, stock phrases, catchphrases, allusions/quotations, idiomatic similes, and discoursal expressions (p. 67).

Other researchers (e.g. Nattinger and DeCarrico 1992) who are concerned with the vocabulary development of L2 learners classified their 'lexical phrases' differently, which is further discussed in 3.3.

2.3 Phrasal verbs (PVs)

2.3.1 Definitions of PVs

Many studies have been conducted with respect to PVs (e.g. Fraser 1974; Cornell 1985; Side 1990; Darwin and Gray 1999; Liao and Fukuya 2004; Gardner and Davies 2007; Anna and Schmitt 2007) and various terms have been used to refer to this particular language form, such as 'separable verb' (Francis 1958), 'two-word verb' (Taha 1960;

Meyer 1975; Siyanova and Schmitt 2007), and 'verb-particle combinations' (Fraser 1974). However, the term 'phrasal verb' will be used in the present study, as it is the most general term used by researchers studying this language feature (e.g. Darwin and Gray 1999; Liao and Fukuya 2004; Gardner and Davies 2007). Added to that, the term 'phrasal verb' is a common term used in the teaching and learning environment including reference materials (e.g. learners' textbooks, course books, dictionaries).

Generally, PVs are defined as a combination of two lexical elements: a verb and a particle. However, problems with respect to definitions of PVs have been frequently discussed within the literature of PVs, particularly on the grammatical status of the particle in PV construction: whether a particle must be an adverbial particle (e.g. *up, out, down*) as in *look up, get out*, *break down*; or whether it could also include prepositions (e.g. *with, after, into*) as in *deal with*, *look after, run into*.

A number of researchers use the term 'phrasal verb' to refer to the combination of lexical verb (LV) + adverb particle (AVP) while LV + preposition (PRP) is referred to as a 'prepositional verb' (e.g. Fraser 1974; Quirk et al., 1985). While it is very clear that the combination of LV + PRP (e.g. *look at, go to*) falls into the 'prepositional verb' category, there are a number of combinations (e.g. *run into, look into*), in which the status of *into* is not very straightforward. Below are examples to illustrate *run into* and *look into,* which can function as both: PRP in prepositional verb, and prepositional particle (PRPrt) in PV.

a)   James *ran into* the office. −   LV+PRP   (prepositional verb)

b)   James *ran into* Sarah at the office. −   LV+PRPrt   (PV)

a)   He is *looking into* my eyes. −   LV+PRP   (prepositional verb)

b)   He is *looking into* the problem. −   LV+PRPrt   (PV)

Thus, in order to avoid confusion, the term 'particle' (Prt) will be used in the present study to refer to both AVP and PRPrt in a PV construction. It is clearly very important to distinguish PRP from PRPrt. Most often, reference materials including learners' textbooks define PVs vaguely as a combination of LV+AVP and LV+PRP, which may cause confusion to learners (see Chapter 8). Further discussion of criteria for distinguishing whether a combination is a PV or a prepositional verb is presented in 2.3.2.

Fraser (1974) and Quirk et al. (1985) also argue that both verb constructions (LV+Prt and LV+PRP) cannot be simply referred to as PVs as both display certain phonological and syntactic differences. For instance, the AVP in 'genuine' PVs is normally stressed, whereas the PRP in prepositional verbs is unstressed (e.g. She switched *ON* the light / He *CALLED* on the dean) (Quirk et al.: 1157). The two types of verb (i.e. PVs and prepositional verbs) also differ syntactically: while elements in transitive PVs can be separated (e.g. Please *switch off* the light/Please *switch* the light *off*/Please *switch* it *off*), elements in prepositional verbs always go together (e.g. He *went up* the stairs) and cannot be separated (e.g. *He *went* the stairs *up*/*He *went* it *up*). Issues with respect to transitivity and separability of PVs are further discussed later in this sub-section. Due to the complexity of defining PV, a number of tests have been developed (e.g. Bolinger 1971; Darwin and Gray 1999) to identify whether a combination is a PV or not (see 2.3.3).

As far as the definition of PVs is concerned and to suit the purpose of the present study, which is concerned with defining PVs for language learners, the 'more functional' definition of PVs proposed by Gardner and Davies (2007) will be adopted. In the

attempt of Gardner and Davies (2007) to classify frequent PVs in a native speaker corpus (BNC), they included all combinations of LV+AVP or 'genuine phrasal verbs' (e.g. *pick up, break down, get out, take off*), which make up the majority of PV combinations. For the purpose of the present study, however, I also decided to include PV combinations of LV+ PRPrt (i.e. *come across* and *run into*), as they are very common and frequently presented in reference materials (i.e. learners' school textbooks). At the same time, I excluded combinations of LV+PRP, which more often function as prepositional verbs rather than PVs, from the present study (e.g. *fall on, talk to, make of, look for*). Such a definition suits the purpose of this study as it not only reduces the fuzziness in classifying PVs and facilitates analysis, but, most importantly, it takes into account "the ecological reality of phrasal verb forms in the actual language experience of non-native speakers of English" (Gardner and Davies, 2007: 341).

Another important principle that needs to be clarified with respect to PVs is the notion of transitivity (Quirk et al.: 1153). PVs can occur in transitive and intransitive form or both. Transitive PVs are always followed by a direct object, which can be a noun phrase (e.g. She picked up *the phone*) or a clause (e.g. My sister found out *that her husband had been planning a surprise party for her*). On the other hand, intransitive PVs do not and cannot take objects, so the verb and particle always stay together (e.g. The price of petrol will *go up* next year/The flight will *take off* in ten minutes). Some PVs can be both transitive and intransitive in form (e.g. Please *wake* me *up* at 6 in the morning/I usually *wake up* at 6 in the morning.). As far as this study is concerned, all three forms of PVs will be considered for analysis.

In addition to the transitivity of PVs, 'separability' or "the inability of the particle to be moved to a position after [ ] noun phrase" (Quirk et al.: 1156) is another important concept with respect to PVs, which is closely related to the notion of transitivity discussed above. Most transitive PVs are separable and they allow particle movement either before or after the object noun (e.g. Please *turn off* the computer/Please *turn* the computer *off*). However, if the object is a pronoun, the particle must come after the pronouns (e.g. Please *turn* it *off*, and NOT *Please *turn off* it). In addition to pronouns, this particular rule is also applicable to words like *this/that/one* (e.g. Shall I switch *this* off/Now just switch *that* off/I switched *that one* off). The LV and the Prt in intransitive PVs are always adjacent (LV+Prt). Thus, in intransitive PV *take off* ('leave the ground and fly'), the LV (*take*) cannot be separated from the Prt (*off*) as in 'The flight will *take off* in ten minutes'/*The flight will *take* in ten minutes *off*'. On the contrary, the LV and Prt in transitive PVs can occur right next to each other (LV+Prt) or with intervening material (LV+X+Prt). For instance, *turn off* ('stop working') can occur in the form of 'Please *turn off* the computer/Please *turn* the computer *off*/Please *turn* it *off*'. Even though the LV and Prt in a PV construction can be separated at various lengths (e.g. LV+X+Prt [*pick* it *up*]; LV+X+X+Prt [*pick* the book *up*]; and LV+X+X+X+Prt [*pick* the green book *up*]), only the two (LV+Prt) and three varieties (LV+X+Prt) of PVs will be considered for analysis in the present study (see chapter 4).

As far as the point of view of lexicographers is concerned, Potter (2005), in her description of separable PVs in the mid-matter of the Macmillan dictionary, states that the choice of whether to put the object before or after the particle is not always a completely free one (Potter 2005: LS3). If the object contains information that a reader or listener already knows, it is more likely to come before the particle (e.g. Have you

looked any of *these words* up?). However, if the object presents new information, it is more likely to come after the particle (e.g. I'm trying to *look up* the *phone numbers* of all my old college friends) because we normally give more emphasis to new information than to information that is already known, and putting the object after the particle gives it a little more emphasis (Potter 2005: LS3).

2.3.2 Cognitive linguists' view on regularities of particle meanings.

As pointed out in 2.3.1, the particle element in PV construction is one of the most frequent issues discussed within the literature of PVs. Despite issues with respect to the status of the particle itself, it is traditionally accepted that the complexity of understanding PVs is partly because there is no standard rule or systematicity in the selection of particle that makes up a PV, particularly the non-literal ones. In other words, the choice is most often regarded as 'arbitrary' and 'random'. However, Lakoff (1987), and Kövecses and Szabó (1996) claim that many idiomatic expressions are in fact 'motivated' rather than 'arbitrary' and using our 'conceptual system' helps us to understand the meanings of many idiomatic expressions. Quoting Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) example of the conceptual metaphor *argument is war,* they argue that even though *argument* and *war* are two different things, "the essence of metaphor is in understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (p. 104). As in the case of *argument is war* above, the scenario of people having an *argument* is conceptualized to be similar to people fighting in a *war.* Hence, in the field of language teaching and learning for instance, learners' inability to integrate this 'human conceptual system' is perhaps one of the reasons to their difficulties in understanding meanings of many idiomatic expressions including PVs (i.e. idiomatic PVs), which are the focus of the present study.

The use of 'conceptual metaphor' introduced by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) is a widely accepted concept among those working within the field of cognitive linguistics who believe that figurative thought of various kinds is central to human cognition (e.g. Kövecses and Szabó 1996; Boers 2000; Lindstromberg 2001; Rudzka-Ostyn 2003). As Kövecses and Szabó (1996) explain, a 'conceptual metaphor' functions like a connecting element between two important domains of knowledge: a 'source domain' which is abstract in nature (e.g. *anger, argument*) and a 'target domain', which is more physical in nature (e.g. *fire, war*), in which the 'source domain' provides understanding of the 'target domain' (p. 331). This view is originally based on the framework proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). Thus, in the above 'conceptual metaphor' '*argument is war*', various expressions and concepts commonly related to a *war* ('source domain') are used when discussing an *argument* ('target domain') (e.g. "He *shot down* all my arguments", "He *attacked* every weak point in my argument", "His criticisms were *right on target*". (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 104). Similarly, in the conceptual metaphor *anger is fire* (e.g. 'He was *spitting fire), anger* is conceptualized as a *fire* and the various concepts or phenomenon related to *fire* ('source domain') (e.g. as a source of energy, intensity of fire, the danger it presents), contribute to our understanding of the meaning of the idiomatic expression 'He was *spitting fire*' above (Kövecses and Szabó 1996: 329-330). In other words, in conceptual metaphor *'anger is fire'* and *'argument is war'* discussed above, there is a correspondence between all concepts related to the source or concrete domain (i.e. fire, war) and those in target or abstract domain (i.e. anger, argument): this is what Kövecses and Szabó (1996) refer to as 'ontological mappings' (p. 336).

As far as PVs are concerned, it is generally believed that there is no systematic rule in the choice of particle in PV construction. Thus, in the case of the PVs *give up* (surrender) or *take off* (fly), for instance, the choice of particle *up* and *off* in the combination is arbitrary. However, the 'conceptual metaphors' discussed above, which are found in many languages, suggest that many linguistic features including the particle element in PVs are not 'arbitrary', but, instead, there are regularities in particle meaning, and, therefore, regularities in the PV combinations in which they occurred. Linguists commenting on the regularities of particle meaning include Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Langacker (1991), Kövecses and Szabó (1996), Kurtyka (2001) and Rudzka-Ostyn (2003). According to Kövecses and Szabó (1996), the concept of *up* or upward orientation is usually understood by native speakers to indicate the state of being finished or completion. Therefore the 'orientational metaphor' COMPLETION IS UP is commonly exemplified by PVs like *eat up, chew up, give up* (p. 347). Similarly, MORE IS UP (e.g. *speak up, turn up, go up*) and LESS IS DOWN (e.g. *run down, cut down, turn down)* are other examples of 'orientational metaphor' discussed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Lakoff (1987) (see also 3.4).

Cognitive linguists (e.g. Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Langacker 1991; Kövecses and Szabó 1996; Rudzka-Ostyn 2003) also visualise meanings of different PVs using the concept of 'container schemata' or "a mental representation of a spatial relation, such as being *in* or *out* of a container, having contact with, or being somewhere on a vertical scale" (Rudzka-Ostyn 2003: 8). The 'container schemata' emphasizes the notion of 'trajector (TR)' and 'landmark (LM)' in order to understand the multiple meanings of particles in PVs (see Langacker 1987). To further illustrate the concept of 'container schemata', in 'he *blew up* when I told him that he was wrong', for instance, the person

and his body is viewed as a 'container', the moving entity or 'trajector' in this case is an abstract object (i.e. emotions), and the meaning of particle *up* is extended to indicate an increase in value/measure or moving to a higher degree. Accordingly, when a person's emotion increases to a higher degree, this indicates that he/she is very angry and explodes. Similarly, in 'the plane *took off*', for instance, the plane ('TR') was first on the ground ('LM') and then lost contact with it (*off*) and went into the air (Rudzka-Ostyn 2003: 9). Therefore, to follow the 'container schemata' framework, the regular meaning of particle *up*, which is frequently associated with 'an upward position or motion', can be further extended and classified into various other meanings: position at a high place or moving up to a higher one (e.g. *go up, pick up, get up*); aiming at or reaching a goal, an end, a limit (e.g. *take up, call up, start up*); moving to a higher degree, value or measure (e.g. *cheer up, dress up, go up*); higher up is more visible, accessible, known (e.g. *crop up, make up, bring up*); covering an area completely/reaching the highest limit (e.g. *burn up, eat up, slice up*) (Rudzka-Ostyn 2003: 75-86).

The above discussion has shown that the 'conceptual metaphor' and 'container schemata' framework helps us to understand many idiomatic expressions; thus, the traditional view of language as arbitrary can be argued. Kövecses and Szabó (1996) comment, "Although we agree with the traditional view that there is no complete predictability, we suggest that there is a great deal of systematic conceptual motivation for the meaning of most idioms" (p. 326), thus meaning most idiomatic expressions including PVs. It is our general knowledge of the world that is embodied in our conceptual system that provides 'motivation' for the idiomatic meanings, and we always rely on this knowledge in order to understand meanings of most idiomatic expressions

(p. 330). Therefore, in the case of particles in PV combination, our understanding of the world helps us to relate the idea of 'up/high' relates to large quantities, because, usually, when we add more things to a pile, it becomes higher; and the idea that 'up/high' refers to being powerful because a person who wins a fight is usually on top of his/her opponent.

Further discussion of 'conceptual metaphors' from the viewpoint of linguists in other disciplines, particularly applied linguistics (e.g. lexicography, teaching and learning), is discussed in Chapter 3.

2.3.3 Test of phrasal verbs

In an attempt to define PVs rigorously, Bolinger (1971) developed a series of tests to prove that a verb + particle combination is indeed a PV. Nine tests are highlighted by Bolinger (1971); the following draws heavily on his discussion.

2.3.3.1 Replaceability

The most common test to determine whether a verb + particle combination is a PV is to check on the 'replaceability' of a PV with a single word verb (Bolinger 1971: 6). For example, *count out* to *exclude*, *look into* to *investigate*, *egg on* to *incite*, *get around* to *circumvent* and so on. However, it can be argued that there are a number of PVs that do not have one word equivalents, such as *take over* (assume control), *show off* ('to engage in attention-getting playful or boisterous behaviour')*,* and *pay off* (be worthwhile). In addition, despite having single-word equivalents, there are cases in which these one-word equivalents do not carry exactly the same meaning as the PVs, and may have different connotations and collocational restrictions. For instance, the PV *lie in* does not

merely mean 'to stay in bed', but 'to stay in bed beyond one's normal time for getting up'; *put up with* cannot be used in a positive manner, but *tolerate* can; the PV *take after* is always associated with close family members, but its one-word equivalent *resemble* can be used in less specific context. Therefore, this test of 'replaceability' is not always reliable as a test for proving that a verb + particle combination is in fact a PV.

In addition, the example of *look into* (investigate) given by Bolinger above, contradicts his own test of object movement in PVs (see 2.3.2.4). Applying this test, it is clear that *look into* ('investigate') cannot be classified as a PV because movement of the object is not possible: We will *look into* the problem/*We will *look* the problem *into*.

2.3.3.2   Formation of passives

According to Bolinger (1971), generally, transitive PVs (see 2.3.1) can be passivized, which he illustrated using the following example:

> *They talked about you.* → *You were talked about*.
>
> (Bolinger 1971: 7)

However, it can be argued here that in applying Bolinger's (1971) test of object movement, the above example of *talked about* obviously does not belong to the category of PVs, as the particle *about* is a preposition and object movement is impossible: *They talked you about*. Apart from that, although this test is undoubtedly true for the majority of transitive PVs, Darwin and Gray (1999) argued that some transitive PVs do not form passives, such as:

> I *came across* some old letters in the attic.
>
> *Some old letters were *come across* in the attic.
>
> (Darwin and Gray 1999: 71)

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Thus, this test of passivization is not a perfect test, as it cannot be applied to all PVs.

2.3.3.3   Formation of action nominals

The next test of PVs proposed by Bolinger (1971) is in the formation of action nominals, which can be derived from transitive PVs. For example:

> *He looked up the information.* → *His looking up of the information.*
>
> (Bolinger 1971: 8)

However, Bolinger (1971) points out that this is also an unsatisfactory test because of problematic applications as in *The running up of the hill was a matter of minutes* in which the combination is clearly free (p. 8). Following this, Fraser (1976) then further refines the test and adds that the PV in action nominals does not allow separation of the verb proper and particle as in *the throwing of his dinner up* while free combinations do allow such separation as in *the throwing of the ball up* (p. 3). Darwin and Gray (1999) also argue that, "some transitive combinations that most would consider phrasal verbs do not form acceptable action nominals" (p. 72). They illustrate using the following example:

> I *came across* an old photograph.
>
> *the *coming across* of an old photograph.
>
> (Darwin and Gray 1999: 72)

2.3.3.4   Object movement

The next test of PVs proposed by Bolinger (1971) is in the object movement in which the particle can be replaced either before or after the direct object of transitive PVs. For instance:

He *looked up* his friends.

He *looked* his friends *up*.

(Bolinger 1971: 10)

However, object movement before or after the direct object in transitive PVs is also not a perfect test of PVs. Darwin and Gray (1999) for instance, comment that object movement is not a reliable test of PVs as it may change the meaning as in:

Why don't you *run down* the list? (review)

Why don't you *run* the list *down*? (find)

(Darwin and Gray 1999: 72)

2.3.3.5   Pronoun placement

The fifth test of PVs highlighted by Bolinger (1971) is to check the pronoun placement in which this test indicates that direct-object pronouns usually precede the particle if the combination is transitive. For example:

You're putting *him* on!

*You're putting on him!

(Bolinger 1971: 11)

2.3.3.6   Adverbial insertion

Adverbial insertion is another test proposed by Bolinger (1971) that differentiates PVs from other combinations. The test shows that PVs do not allow the insertion of adverbs between the verb proper and the particle. For example:

I'm afraid you'll find these transfer students gradually *dropping out*.

*I'm afraid you'll find these transfer students *dropping* gradually *out*.

(Bolinger 1971: 13)

This test is in fact applicable to most PVs, but Darwin and Gray (1999) argue that there are instances of PVs where this test can be questioned, quoting the example found in Fraser (1976):

"The mine *caved* quickly *in*." (Fraser 1976: 4)

Interestingly, while this example with *quickly* seems dubious, *right* could be inserted between the verb proper and the particle as in 'The mine caved *right* in', which is another interesting example that perhaps needs further investigation.

2.3.3.7 Stress

The next test pointed out by Bolinger (1971: 13) is to check on the stress, as it helps to distinguish AVPs in PVs (e.g. *look UP*) from pure prepositions (*LOOK at*). However, Bolinger (1971) also reminds that this test has an exception because sometimes a word is stressed in order to emphasize or to contrast it with another word as in:

I said, "What are you *looking UP*, not what are you *looking AT*."

(Bolinger 1971: 14)

A similar view is presented by Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) – that the final syllable in many single-word verbs and the final syllable in PVs (the particle) will receive some degree of stress, as illustrated by the following example:

conSUME (single-word verb)

use UP (phrasal verb)

(Celce-Murcia et al. 1996: 143)

They claim that stress is very useful, especially in distinguishing particles from prepositions as particles receive stress but prepositions do not as in:

He *WALKED to* it.

(Celce-Murcia et al. 1996: 142-143)

However, Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) comment that this test fails to consider the verb + adverb in free combinations and they argue that the stress in adverbs cannot be reduced in that they still receive stress patterns similar to those of PVs, as in 'The elevator *WENT UP*' (p. 153). Thus, stress is also not a perfect test of PVs and I personally feel it is not a very useful test of PVs, particularly when it comes to language learners.

2.3.3.8 Definite noun phrases

Another test of PVs is to check behaviour with definite noun phrases. According to Bolinger (1971), this test is a refinement of the object movement test and that it highlights the ability of the particle to "*precede* a simple definite noun phrase (a proper name or *the* plus a common noun) without taking it as its object" (p. 15). For instance:

> You *left out* the caption.
>
> I'm afraid to *take on* John in this contest.
>
> (Bolinger 1971: 15)

However, Darwin and Gray (1999) comment, "although the test seems very reliable in distinguishing between particles and adverbial adjuncts, the results are less clear in making the distinction between particle and preposition" (p. 74). They illustrated this by giving examples of '*look up* the word' and '*focus on* the word', which are both followed by a definite noun phrase (the word) but only *look up* is a PV while *focus on* is a prepositional verb.

2.3.3.9 Listing

The final suggestion by Bolinger (1971) is to define PVs by simply listing them but he points out that this method has two shortcomings. Firstly, PVs are very productive with

respect to lexical innovations in English. Therefore, the list could not be exhaustive, as new PVs would be continually being added to it. The second problem is that "it would vary according to dialect" (Bolinger 1971: 17). Therefore, the British and the Americans, for instance, may find many of each other's PVs odd (Darwin and Gray 1999: 74).

Thus, Bolinger (1971) suggested that the most practical one would be to list the particles, as they are a relatively closed class of words (p. 17). This means PVs should be grouped together according to the particle rather than the verb because "the particle is integral to the meaning of the phrasal verb and in some cases carries more weight of meaning than the verb" (Side 1990: 146). However, this suggestion is criticized by Darwin and Gray (1999) who argue that listing is not a test because some words can appear to be both as particles and as other parts of speech (e.g. prepositions, nouns) (p. 75). Therefore, while Bolinger's (1971) list of particles seems endless, Fraser's (1976) analysis shows that only 16 words act as particles (p. 4). Gardner and Davies (2007) also listed 16 adverbial particles in their study of frequent PVs in a native speaker corpus (p. 346). *Collins Cobuild Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs*, however, has compiled a much longer and comprehensive list of about 48 particles, which include both adverbial particles (AVP) and prepositional particles (PRPrt): this increased size represents a practical lexicographical view of 'phrasal verbs', taking into account the needs of language learners, rather than a linguistic one.

Despite all the shortcomings in the nine tests proposed by Bolinger (1971) discussed above, they are undoubtedly very useful and improve our understanding of the various criteria of PVs. However, the above discussion has shown that the nine tests of PVs

outlined are not an entirely comprehensive set of tests to prove that a LV + Prt combination is indeed a PV, as they are more useful for transitive rather than intransitive PVs. Darwin and Gray (1999) comment that only three (replacement, stress and listing) out of the nine tests proposed are applicable to intransitive PVs and almost any free combination can pass the test (p. 75). Thus, Darwin and Gray (1999) propose an alternative approach to identify PVs. They decided that it might be better to 'throw out' from the PV category rather than 'throw in', so following this approach every combination is considered as a PV until proven otherwise.

> Rather than excluding a verb+particle combination from the phrasal verb category until it is proven to belong, linguists should consider all verb+particle combination to be potential phrasal verbs until they can be proven otherwise. That is, linguists should make it their business to throw out rather than to throw in. (Darwin and Gray 1999: 75-76)

Following this, Darwin and Gray (1999) came out with a set of seven tests used to exclude any LV+Prt combinations from the PV category. They argue that this 'bottom up' approach enables us to better observe performance before labelling LV+Prt combination a PV or not. However, this approach to the identification of PVs has also been criticized as there is a possibility that it "rules out combinations that aid in the teaching of these structures, rather than extending the potential membership in the class of phrasal verbs" (Sawyer 2000: 151). Apart from that, their claim that the new system will "eliminate curriculum-based problems encountered by students" (p. 65) and constitute "a great advancement in ESL" (p. 82) were also questioned by Sheen (2000).

As far as the present study is concerned, no specific tests will be adopted to classify whether a particular combination is a PV or not. A more 'functional and objective' definition of PVs suggested by Gardner and Davies (2007: 341) will be used as it has more 'instructional value' to language learners. Thus, the selection of PVs to be examined in the present study will include 'genuine' PVs (i.e. LV+AVP) and LV+PRPrt, which frequently appear in learners' reference materials (i.e. textbooks) (see Chapter 4 and Chapter 6 for further discussion on the selection of PVs in this study).

2.3.4 Classifications of phrasal verbs

In classifying PVs, some linguists attempt to distinguish between PVs, prepositional verbs, phrasal prepositional verbs, and free combinations (e.g. Biber et al. 1999; Quirk et al. 1985). Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) separate PVs based on semantic categories. These classifications will be further discussed below.

Quirk et al. (1985) define 'multi-word verbs' into two parts: syntactic and lexical unity. They distinguish multi-word verbs (PVs, prepositional verbs, and phrasal-prepositional verbs) from free combinations based on syntactic and semantic criteria. A multi-word verb is "a unit which behaves to some extent either lexically or syntactically as a single verb" (p. 1150) and "the meaning of the combination manifestly cannot be predicted from the meanings of verb and particle in isolation" (p. 1152). They further explain that the lexical unity of the PVs can be seen since the verb proper is unable to express the same meaning when its particle is deleted or replaced. For instance, *the plane touched down* is not the same as *the plane touched* (the particle is deleted) or *the plane touched downward* (the particle is replaced). Thus, in the PV *touch down*, the combination of *touch* and *down* form a lexical item, which is equivalent to the verb *land* (Darwin and

Gray 1999: 68). However, while this criterion is clearly very true in the above examples, there are instances of PVs in which this criterion can be further questioned. For example, deletion of AVP *up, out* and *down* in completive PVs like *eat up, spread out, burn down*, does not give much change to the meaning of the verb ('eat/spread/burn'): compare 'They *eat* all the food/They *eat up* all the food'.

Quirk et al. (1985) classify multi-word verbs into two main categories based on idiomatic status: 'semi idiomatic' and 'highly idiomatic' constructions. PVs like *bring up* ('rear/raise of children'), *come by* ('acquire'), *turn up* ('make an appearance') are classified as 'highly idiomatic' PVs as "there is no possibility of contrastive substitution: *bring up/down; come by/past/through; turn up/down*; etc." (p. 1163). The second category is called 'semi-idiomatic': "constructions which are variable but in a more limited way" (p. 1162), such as PVs *find out* ('discover'), *cut up* ('cut into pieces'), *slacken off* ('reduce pace/energy') in which the verb meaning is retained, but the particle meaning is less easy to isolate (p. 1162). Other 'non-idiomatic' constructions like *bring in/out, take in/out*, *walk up/down, run up/down* are not classified as multi-word verbs as "the individual meanings of the components are apparent from their constancy in possible substitutions" (p. 1162), suggesting they are free combinations rather than PVs. However, as far as the present study is concerned, I will include non-idiomatic constructions and categorize them as literal PVs, following Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman's (1999) the classification of PVs is discussed below.

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) provide a more comprehensive account of PVs and categorize PVs into three semantic categories: literal, idiomatic and aspectual.

Literal PVs have elements that appear to retain much of their meaning (which is equivalent to Quirk et al.'s (1985) 'non-idiomatic constructions', but they do not regard them as PVs). To use their examples, the meanings of *sit* and *down* in *sit down* can be easily retrieved by combining the meaning of each of the elements (*sit + down*) (p. 432). However, in idiomatic PVs, such as *make up* ('be reconciled'), the usual meanings of *make* and *up* seem to be lost and the two elements (*make* and *up*) do not retain their regular meanings. According to Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999), the meanings of aspectual PVs are more transparent than those of idiomatic PVs but perhaps not as transparent as those of literal PVs (which is equivalent to Quirk et al.'s (1985) 'semi-idiomatic' constructions). Aspectual PVs contain particles, which contribute consistent aspectual meaning to the verbs, and these aspectual PVs are further subdivided into "semantic classes depending on the semantic contribution of the particle" (p. 432). Their subdivisions of aspectual PVs include inceptive, continuative, iterative and completive (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999: 432-433).

Inceptive aspectual PVs signal the beginning state of an action, such as *set up, start out*, and *take off, set out, start up* (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999: 432). They have further subdivided continuative PVs into four groups, depending on the particle that is attached to the verb: the particles *on* and *along* are used with activity as in *hurry along, carry on,* and *play along*; the particle *away* is used with activity verbs as in *sleep away* and *dance away*; the use of the particle *around* to indicate the activity that has no purpose as in *goof around* and *play around*; and the particle *through* is used with an active verb to indicate an activity from beginning to end such as *read through* and *think through* (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999: 432). The third category of aspectual PVs is iterative PVs, which use the particle *over* to indicate a repetition in an activity as

in *do over* and *write over* (p. 433). The last subdivision of aspectual category highlighted by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) is the completive PVs, which include the particles *up, out*, *off* and *down* to show that the action is complete: these particles can change activity verbs (e.g. drink, burn, turn) into accomplishment verbs (e.g. *drink up, burn down*, *turn off*) (p. 433). Apart from that, these particles can also be used to emphasize a goal-oriented activity, such as *wind up, fade out*, and *cut off* (p. 433). Finally, particles like *out, over* and *up* are used to indicate a longer time duration in achieving something, as in *find out, check over,* and *catch up* (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999: 433).

According to Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999), idiomatic PVs are the easiest to identify, as they are PVs that have idiomatic meanings in which the meaning of the whole verb is not related to the meaning of the parts of the verb, such as *keep up* and *chew out* (p. 433). The last semantic category of PVs, as defined by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999), are polysemous PVs, which are PVs with multiple meanings, such as *check out,* which illustrates five different meanings that include the verb falling into the different semantic categories they have outlined (p. 434).

Based on the above discussion with respect to the classification of PVs, this study will follow the one proposed by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman's (1999) but with a minor adjustment. Instead of having three different categories (literal, idiomatic and aspectual), as proposed by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999), the PVs examined in this study will only be divided into two major categories: literal and non-literal (idiomatic) PVs (see 2.3.5).

2.3.5 Phrasal verbs and idiomaticity

Based on the classification of PVs discussed in 2.3.3 above, it shows that idiomaticity is an issue frequently discussed with respect to PVs. Various terms have been used in discussing the issue of idiomaticity, such as 'literal', 'transparent', 'non-literal', 'figurative', 'opaque' and 'idiomatic', to name some commonly used terms. The term 'literal' is usually equivalent to 'transparent', while 'non-literal', is equivalent to 'figurative' and 'idiomatic'. Both 'literal' and 'transparent' are frequently used in opposition to 'figurative' and 'idiomatic' (e.g. Dagut and Laufer 1985; Laufer and Eliasson 1993; Liao and Fukuya 2004). Similarly, in this study, the term literal PVs is used to refer to PVs, which are non-idiomatic and transparent in meaning, while non-literal PVs refer to those that are idiomatic, and non-transparent, as meanings are totally different from the meanings of its parts.

As stated in the earlier discussion (see 2.2.1), there is a general consensus among linguists in considering idiomaticity as a continuum, with the most opaque and idiomatic units at one end, and the literal, transparent ones at the other; while the middle area is occupied by those where (at least) one element is transparent. Similarly, based on the classifications of PVs discussed in 2.2.2, PVs are scattered along the continuum. At one end there are literal PVs, which are very transparent as both elements in the combination retain their individual meanings, thus we can easily understand the meanings of literal PVs simply by stringing together the meaning of each element in the combination (e.g. *sit down, stand up, go out*). At the other end of the continuum there are non-literal or idiomatic PVs in which their meanings cannot be derived simply by combining the meanings of each element (e.g. *come across* ['discover'], *give in* ['surrender'], and *take off* ['leave the ground and fly']). There is another group of PVs

that falls in the middle area of the continuum: 'aspectual' PVs, in which one of the elements in the combination is transparent and retains its regular meaning, while another element is non-transparent in meaning, (e.g. *eat up, burn down, finish up*).

While non-literal PVs are clearly idiomatic in meaning, it can be argued that 'aspectual' PVs also show a certain degree of idiomaticity. This is because while the verbal elements in the PVs *eat up, drink up, mix up, burn down, go on, carry on,* etc. maintain their regular meanings, the particles do not. AVP *up* in *eat up*, *drink up*, and *mix up* for instance, does not indicate 'direction or movement from a lower to higher position', and *down* in *burn down* is not showing 'direction or movement from higher to lower position' but it changes an activity verb into an accomplishment verb (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999: 433). Similarly, the AVP *on* in *go on* and *carry on* does not indicate 'position'. In other words, AVP *up*, *down* and *on* are used figuratively in the above PVs, which give them specific meanings. However, even though aspectual PVs do show a certain degree of idiomaticity, it is argued that their degree of idiomaticity is difficult to be classified. Waibel (2007) for instance, commented that this middle area of the continuum "consist[s] of too many shades of grey which are impossible to define clearly. Is *cut up* more or less transparent than the figurative use of *bring back*, is *bog down* is less transparent than *point out*?" (p. 19-20). This further suggests that PVs in the middle area of the continuum, in particular aspectual PVs, have varying degrees of transparency and are very subjective in terms of categorization. As far as the present study is concerned and to minimize the complexity with respect to classification of PVs, aspectual PVs will be categorized as non-literal PVs.

Apart from the issue associated with idiomaticity discussed above, another problem commonly associated with the categorization of PVs is 'polysemy'. It is generally agreed that many PVs are 'polysemous' and may have more than one meaning. Therefore, it is quite difficult to say that a PV belongs to one particular group (i.e. literal or idiomatic) as the meaning of a PV depends on the context in which it is being used. For instance, while the meaning of the PV *pick up* ('to lift') as in 'She *picks up* the phone' is very transparent, and, thus, can be categorized as a literal PV; the meaning of *pick up* in 'She *picked up* a few French words while staying in France', is not. Taking this problem into account, the classification of PVs in this study will also consider the context of use: *pick up* ('to lift'), for instance, will be categorized as a literal PV but when it refers to 'learn/do something new', it will be classified as a non-literal PV. Further discussions of 'polysemy' and PVs in relation to language teaching are presented in 3.4.

The above discussions demonstrate that there is no clear-cut classification of PVs as they are scattered and placed along the idiomaticity scale with varying degrees of idiomaticity and many of them have multiple meanings. Therefore, in the present study, I will classify PVs under investigation into just two major categories, literal and non-literal (idiomatic), as already stated. This is not only to reduce the fuzziness in classification, but to facilitate my analysis so that it is in line with one of the research objectives: to examine Malaysian learners' understanding and use of literal and non-literal PVs (see Chapter 1). Therefore, literal PVs will consist of those for which the meanings are transparent: both elements retain their regular meanings, while those that do not fulfil such criterion will be categorized as non-literal PVs. The term 'non-literal'

is deliberately chosen, as it is more general in meaning, and, therefore, suitable for the purpose of the present study.

3.0   Introduction

This second chapter of the literature review addresses specific issues with respect to vocabulary, particularly phraseological units, from the applied linguistic perspective. The discussion here includes the vocabulary acquisition of L1 and L2, in general, and the acquisition of phraseological units. This is followed by discussions of common problems related to PVs: a type of phraseological unit, which poses great difficulty to many language learners. Pedagogical approaches with respect to phraseological units are also reviewed, followed by comments on the teaching and learning of vocabulary, in particular, PVs, in the Malaysian context.

3.1   The teaching and learning of vocabulary

It is generally agreed that vocabulary is an area that receives less attention in language classrooms in comparison to grammar, which is often regarded as 'the heart of a language'. Hence, it is assumed that mastery of grammatical structure is very important for successful language learning. As far as language teaching is concerned, there is no doubt that teachers will integrate the teaching of vocabulary together with other aspects of language (e.g. grammar, pronunciation); however, most often, the 'teaching establishment' places particular emphasis on the teaching of grammatical aspects of the language rather than vocabulary. From a research perspective, grammar or syntax dominated linguistic research for a long time and syntax not only played a central role in the construction of second language (L2) learning and teaching theory, but also in

actual teaching practice as well as syllabus and materials design. The great emphasis on syntax is probably because traditionally, linguists viewed grammar as something, which is interconnected, while lexis has been regarded as "something isolated from other parts of the grammar" (Gass 1988: 95). In other words, grammar is viewed as a 'closed system', because it can be easily analysed by means of sets of rules. Lexis on the other hand, is regarded as an 'open system' that allows continuous creation and development of new lexical items at any time, and, therefore, is believed to be "an inherently messy part of our linguistic competence" (Meara 1984a: 230). As Carter says, as far as the teaching of vocabulary is concerned, the lack of attention given to this language area may be due to the "specialization in linguistic research on syntax and phonology which may have fostered a climate in which vocabulary was felt to be a less important element in learning a second language" (Carter 1987: 145). It was believed that learning vocabulary is comparatively easy, whereas the most challenging part is to learn the grammatical structures of a language, and that learners can only be successful in language learning by first acquiring the grammatical structures and only later acquiring the vocabulary to put into the structures they have already learned. Because of the great emphasis placed on mastering the grammatical system, it was not surprising that most language syllabuses had a 'structural organisation', focussing more on the teaching and learning of syntax and grammar (Wilkins 1976: 1). The bias towards grammatical structure was also reflected in most reference materials in L2 learning, which focus on the teaching of language structure rather than vocabulary.

However, today vocabulary is no longer being discriminated against in second language acquisition (SLA). It is now recognized that it is lexical and not grammatical knowledge that can ensure learners' great proficiency in the target language and lexis is

regarded as "the basis of accurate and fluent communication" (Rudzka-Ostyn 2003: v). McCarthy (1990) comments that, "No matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wider range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way". (p. viii). The crucial role of vocabulary for communicative competence is also pointed out by Vermeer (1992) that "Knowing words is the key to understanding and being understood. The bulk of learning a new language consists of learning new words. Grammatical knowledge does not make for great proficiency in a language" (p. 147). As a result of the increasing awareness among students, teachers, material writers, and researchers on the importance of vocabulary as "an essential part of mastering a second language" (Schmitt 2008: 329), vocabulary began to receive better treatment in language teaching and learning.

Despite the importance of vocabulary in language learning (see Chapter 1), it is generally accepted that learning L2 vocabulary is a complex process as there are various features or elements of words that learners have to know and understand ('receptive knowledge'), so that they can be stored and maintained in their mental lexicon and recalled later at the production stage for both written and communication purposes ('productive knowledge') (see 3.1.1 for further discussion of 'receptive' and 'productive' knowledge). The complexity of learning a word is highlighted by Nation (1990) who describes the various kinds of word knowledge necessary to master a word completely, including form, meanings, grammatical behaviour, associations, collocations, frequency and register (p. 30-33). Therefore, it is not surprising that learners may face great difficulties in learning and understanding lexical items of the L2. Accordingly, with so many features of a word that learners need to learn, they

cannot expect to acquire hundreds of new vocabulary items in just a short period of time, and, for them to be able to use these words correctly and appropriately in a particular situation in the real world, will understandably take a longer time. A similar view is presented by Meara (1980): "learning new words is not an instantaneous process…words are absorbed slowly over time" (p. 106-107). Considering the complexity of learning a word, it is important to further examine how our mental lexicon works in storing and memorizing a large store of lexical items; this will be discussed in 3.2.

Of the factors reported in the literature of vocabulary learning, which might affect the ease or difficulty in learning a word, one set consists of 'intralexical factors', such as pronounceability, orthography, length, morphology (inflexional and derivational complexity), synformy (similarity of lexical forms), grammar (part of speech), semantic features of the word (abstractness, specificity/register restrictions, idiomaticity and multiplicity of meaning) (Laufer 1997: 142-153). Thus, this suggests that awareness of 'word learnability' is very important as it "affect[s] the decisions of teachers and syllabus designers regarding vocabulary presentation, practice and testing" (p. 153).

Another issue commonly discussed in the area of vocabulary learning is the role of learners' first languages (L1) (e.g. Ringbom 1985, 1986; Kellerman 1986; Swan 1997; Odlin 1989). Odlin (1989), in his extended account of cross-linguistic influence or 'language transfer' (Odlin's term of reference), states that, "language transfer is an important characteristic of second language acquisition" (p. 3). According to him, transfer can be negative as well as positive, that similarities and differences of target language and any other language acquired can affect the ease or difficulty in the

acquisition process of all linguistic subsystems including vocabulary (Odlin 1989: 26). A similar point is made by Schmitt and McCarthy (1997), "it is an influence that is almost impossible to escape when dealing with almost any aspect of L2 vocabulary" (p. 3). However, while Odlin's (1989) 'language transfer' covers a rather broad range of language, which includes "any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired" (p. 27), Schmitt and McCarthy (1997) are more concerned with influence of learners' mother tongue (L1) on the target language (L2).

> Nevertheless, a learner's L1 is one of the most important factors in learning L2 vocabulary. The L1 will determine whether a majority of L2 words are easy or difficult.....If the L1 and L2 are similar, there is a much higher likelihood that the initial mapping of the new L2 word will simply be the relabelling of an L1 word, rather than the addition of a totally new conceptual unit. Of course, this relabelling will eventually have to be adjusted towards the exact properties of the L2 word, but it does have the advantage of being initially easy.
>
> (Schmitt and McCarthy 1997: 2-3)

Ringbom (1986) also agrees that the relevancy of learners' prior linguistic knowledge to the learning of a new language is largely determined by the 'perceived distance' between the L1 and the L2. The smaller the distance, the more relevant this prior knowledge is to the learner, especially at the initial stage of learning. This implies that the more similarities learners perceive between their mother tongue (L1) and the target language (L2), the more they will benefit from their mother tongue in learning to understand the new language.

As far as Malay as a first language is concerned, the results from previous studies of its influence on the learning of English are inconclusive. Paramasivam (2009), in her study with respect to language transfer in a Malaysian ESL classroom, found that learners' use their L1 (Malay) (e.g. switching) as a communication strategy and as a language learning strategy (p. 192). Her main concern, however, was not to investigate the similarities or differences in learners' L1 and the L2 with respect to lexis and syntax, which may affect the ease and difficulty in understanding the L2, and thus communicating in the L2. Maros et al. (2007) conducted a study on interference and found that much of the incorrect use of determiners, subject-verb agreement and the copula 'be' by Malaysian learners of English is due to the interference of learners' L1 (Malay) grammar (p. 15). Their findings also indicate that the omission and use of wrong forms are the two most common types of error due to the difference in L1-L2 structure, or the non-existence of a similar rule in their L1. However, a study carried out by Wee (2009) indicates that learners' L1 (Malay) is not the only factor in errors in verb forms by Malaysian learners of English in their written texts. Instead, both inter-lingual (mother tongue) influence and intra-lingual factors (complexities within the target language) interplay in the production of such errors. With regards to MWUs, Yunus and Awab's (2011) study of collocations indicates that learners' inaccurate production of collocations of prepositions is caused by both factors: students' negative interference of their first language (Malay) (interlingual errors) and also overgeneralisation of English collocations (intralingual errors). On the other hand, Ang et al. (2011) found that intralingual transfer was the most prominent source of collocational errors made by Malaysian learners of English.

The above discussion clearly suggests that cross-linguistic influence is an important factor that needs to be given considerable attention in language classrooms as "teaching may become more effective through a consideration of differences between languages and between cultures" (Odlin 1989: 4). In other words, teachers can relate learners' linguistic knowledge of their L1 to the L2 linguistic features, in order to facilitate their understanding of a particular aspect of the target language. For instance, with better understanding of the L1-L2 differences in word order (e.g. VSO, SVO, or SOV) as well as similarities and differences in lexical semantics of both L1 and L2, teachers will be able to provide better explanations to the language features presented in language classrooms. Similarly, in the teaching of PVs in particular, teachers are able to pinpoint problems related to learners' confusion between the PVs *wake up* and *get up,* for instance, if they are aware of cross-linguistic influence, which may cause learners to use these PVs inappropriately (see Chapter 7). Most importantly, acknowledging the 'perceived distance' (Ringbom 1986) between learners' L1 (Malay) and L2 (English), may increase teachers' awareness of the non-existence of LV+particle structure in the learners' L1, which may affect their understanding of English PVs. Accordingly, teachers as well as material providers can design a better way of teaching this language form to learners.

3.1.1 Receptive and Productive Knowledge of Vocabulary

The notion of receptive and productive knowledge is frequently discussed in the area of vocabulary learning (Schmitt 2010; Webb 2005, 2008; Laufer 1998; Waring 1997; Melka 1997). Receptive knowledge entails knowing a lexical item well enough to extract communicative value from speech or writing, while productive knowledge involves knowing a lexical item well enough to produce it when it is needed to encode

communicative content in speech or writing (Schmitt 2010: 87). The majority of vocabulary is learned receptively and thus it is believed that learners' receptive knowledge seem to be larger than their productive knowledge (Webb 2005, 2008; Laufer 1998; Waring 1997). A study conducted by Webb (2008) also indicates that learners who have a larger receptive vocabulary are likely to know more of those words productively than learners who have a smaller receptive vocabulary.

As Schmitt (2010) argues, receptive and productive knowledge are both important components of overall vocabulary knowledge. In line with his point of view, and as far as PVs are concerned, it is clear that language learners need both receptive and productive knowledge of PVs, not only to indicate their mastery of the target language, but most importantly for them to function well in the real world. As PVs are very common and widely used by native speakers in all discourse (i.e. formal and informal, written and spoken; academic and non-academic), language learners are not only expected to understand the forms and functions of PVs (receptive knowledge), but they should also be able to use this language feature appropriately in everyday communication (productive knowledge). Melka (1997) suggests that receptive and productive mastery lie on a continuum, and that knowledge gradually shifts from receptive mastery towards productive mastery as more is learned about the lexical item. Taking this into account and due to the nature of PVs (e.g. polysemous, idiomatic, transitivity), learners may require longer time for productive mastery of this language form.

3.2 The teaching and learning of phraseological units

As discussed earlier in Chapter 2, much of the language that we produce is pre-patterned and consists of 'ready-made chunks'. In addition to the crucial role of these ready-made chunks in written and spoken language, the emergence of the concept of lexico-grammar inspired by Halliday in the mid-1980s (see 2.1), as well as studies of collocation, has further encouraged more studies into phraseology. Accordingly, studies into the acquisition of phraseological units in L1 and L2, as well as the teaching of this feature to language learners began to receive more attention by applied linguists.

As far as cognitive linguistics studies with respect to MWUs are concerned, findings have shown how our mental lexicon works in memorizing, storing and maintaining the large store of vocabulary. According to Newell (1990) 'chunking' is an important cognitive process that our mental lexicon works by memorizing and storing 'chunks' instead of individual lexical units.

> A chunk is a unit of memory organisation, formed by bringing together a set of already formed chunks in memory and welding them together into a larger unit. Chunking implies the ability to build up such structures recursively, thus leading to a hierarchical organisation of memory. Chunking appears to be a ubiquitous feature of human memory. Conceivably, it could form the basis for an equally ubiquitous law of practice.
>
> (Newell 1990: 7)

Thus, applying the notion of 'chunking', experienced users of English, for instance, store a phrase like *as a matter of fact* as a fixed unit, and they do not work out the

internal grammatical structure of *as a matter of fact* when they produce this phrase because it is produced or decoded as a single unit (Willis 2003).

The notion of 'chunking' is also popular in SLA research. Earlier research into second language acquisition (SLA) (e.g. Ellis 1984; Fillmore 1979; Hakuta 1974) has further demonstrated that 'chunking' is very common in children learning their L1, as shown by the extensive use of MWUs by children. Fillmore (1976), in her study of formulas in the speech of five Spanish-speaking children, acquiring English in an American kindergarten, concludes that "the strategy of acquiring formulaic speech is central to the learning of language (...) it is this step that puts the learner in a position to perform the analysis which is prerequisite to acquisition" (p. 640). Taking an example by Hakuta (1974), a child will initially produce an utterance like *'wannago'* as a memorized 'chunk' before they become aware of similar phrases like *'wannaplay'* and *'wannaget'* in other contexts, then they begin to analyse this phrase as a pattern, which consists of two parts: *'wanna + VP'*.

Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) believe that the language learning situation is the same for both children acquiring their L1, and adults learning an L2, that adult learner would also find prefabricated language an efficient way to begin to acquire a new language system. However, it is equally important to take into account the difference with respect to cognitive development of children acquiring L1 and learners learning L2. In L1 acquisition, knowledge of the world and knowledge of language are developed simultaneously, whereas L2 acquisition builds upon the pre-existing conceptual knowledge; and the L2 learning involves conscious problem-solving and deduction, to a much greater degree than children do (Ellis 1994a). Thus, knowledge of world (i.e.

what children see or hear especially from caregivers), and knowledge of language (which children acquire from natural exposure to the L1) results in children producing chunks like *wannago, wannaget, wannaplay*. On the contrary, adult learners learning an L2 usually possess a higher cognitive level in comparison to children acquiring an L1 and they have already developed the 'conceptual knowledge', which may facilitate them in learning and understanding the target language better. However, it is equally important to take into account that L2 learners may face difficulties with respect to learning the cultural and social world of the L2, which may be different from their L1 world. For instance, the L1 (i.e. Malay) *kaki* is equivalent to both *leg* and *foot* in the L2 (i.e. English), which most often results in the inappropriate use of these words by Malay learners of English (see 3.1 for further discussion on the influence of L1).

As far as 'chunking' in language teaching and learning is concerned, I believe that the process of 'chunking' may be applicable to the learning of analysed utterances, as shown in the above examples, it is important to note that unanalysed 'chunks' like idioms and idiomatic PVs are considered as single lexical items and cannot be separated or analysed by simply combining the meaning of each individual unit (e.g. *kick the bucket*: die; *come across*: discover and *give in*: surrender). Thus, language learners may find unanalysed 'chunks' are more difficult to learn and understand. Apart from that, there may also be differences between ESL and EFL learners. For example, a Hispanic child growing up in the States and being educated in English would acquire chunks more easily than an older child learning English more formally as a foreign language. Similarly, my own experience with my younger children shows that even after staying more than three years and learning English in the UK, I found that although my children can communicate in the language very well, they produce very

few idiomatic expressions. This further suggests that unanalysed 'chunks' are difficult to acquire even though the children are extensively exposed to the target language in a native speaker environment.

There is general consensus that MWUs are extremely difficult for L2 learners to master (Moon 1992; Yorio 1980, 1989). As discussed in 3.1, learners' L1 can greatly influence their understanding of L2 vocabulary items including the learning of MWUs. In fact, issues associated with the influence of learners' L1 on the learning of MWUs are frequently highlighted in the literature (e.g. Bahns 1993; Granger 1992, 1998a; Nesselhauf 2003; Wolter 2006; Aertselaer 2008; Paquot 2008). For instance, Aertselaer (2008) reports that deviant patterns of use of interpersonal discourse phrases among Spanish EFL learners were due to the transfer of writing features from their L1. In a study of collocations by non-native speakers (German learners of English), Nesselhauf (2003) found that the influence of L1 played an important part in learners' production of collocations. Her study revealed that "what the learner intends to say can be expressed in English in exactly the same way as it can be expressed in German has a far greater influence on the acceptability of what is produced" (p. 237). Another finding was that of Biskup (1992), whose study aimed at finding the main causes of collocational errors, and, in particular, at determining the role of learners' L1 (Polish and German). She concludes that the perceived distance between Polish (L1) and English (L2) has resulted in Polish learners' errors in collocations, which reflect "assumed semantic similarity" (p. 91). In contrast, German students tended to produce errors resulting from "assumed formal similarity" (p. 91). Bahns (1993) also claims that learners seem to rely on a 'hypothesis of transferability' as the majority of collocational errors made by learners in his study can be traced to the L1 influence.

Granger (1992) investigated the use of collocations and formulae by native and non-native speakers of English more widely and found that L1 plays an important role in the acquisition and use of 'prefabs' in the L2.

However, literature has shown that cross-linguistic influence is not the only factor that affects learners' understanding of the target language. Learners' lack of awareness of the phraseological phenomenon is probably another reason for the deviant or non-standard use of MWUs by language learners. Howarth (1998), in his study, concludes that a much greater incidence of non-standard phraseology found in non-native writing reflects the learners' general lack of awareness of the phenomenon. He believes that one of the main reasons why the great majority of learners do not reach this state of awareness is that teachers of EFL themselves have little understanding of the phraseological mechanisms of the language. As a result, MWUs are often not taught very well in language classrooms (Granger 1998, Irujo 1986). This view is further supported by Wray (2000), who argues that MWU are difficult for learners to learn due to "the poverty of the learner experience" (p. 468) with respect to input and the way MWUs are taught. Therefore, in the case of PVs for instance, lack of awareness of the 'phraseological mechanisms' of PVs (e.g. transitivity, separability) on the part of teachers themselves may influence their overall perception of this language form and the way PVs are addressed in language classrooms.

According to Nesselhauf (2003), making learners aware of the phenomenon (in her case, collocations), which is often considered as the foremost task for teachers, is not sufficient, it is also important that a number of collocations should be taught and learnt explicitly (p. 238). Irujo (1986) also comments that even though learners often heard

'formulaic expressions' on television and movies, "input without interaction is not sufficient for language acquisition" (p. 236-237). This further suggests that explicit teaching is essential and should be accompanied by continuous practice and use of this feature, which may help to increase learners' awareness on the various aspects related to MWUs (e.g. patterns, structure, meaning, register). Thus, it is suggested that explicit teaching of PVs, particularly high-frequency PVs, is necessary as these PVs frequently occur in everyday communication and are therefore very useful to learners (see Chapters 7 and 8 for further discussion on high-frequency PVs).

In addition, it is also believed that language learners need to be exposed to a more natural language learning environment to acquire more natural input. As language is culture-related, learners cannot simply rely on textbooks or teachers who are themselves non-native speakers, instead they need to be exposed to the target language culture where MWUs are extensively and appropriately used by native speakers. However, this is clearly not possible when learners learn the target language in a non-native environment. It has also been argued that even after years of exposure to the target language culture, the extent to which learners are able to appropriately use these expressions in their communicative activities is still debatable as they are still unable to gain 'native-like' fluency and sound more natural in their speech (*cf* Anna and Schmitt, 2007).

In short, the above discussions have shown that in addition to learners' L1, input factors, awareness, explicit teaching, and continuous use of MWUs are all involved in the learners' acquisition of phraseological units, including PVs. The following section will further discuss the research findings on problems commonly faced by learners in

learning and producing common phraseological units (in this case PVs), as well as possible factors in the occurrence of such problems.

3.3   Approaches to the teaching of phraseological units

This sub-section will discuss approaches to the teaching of phraseological units, particularly the two most discussed approaches in the literature, proposed by Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992), and Lewis (1993). However, it is important to note that these two approaches do not take into account the factors discussed in 3.1 and 3.2 (e.g. inter-linguistic factors, awareness, input). Further discussions of these approaches are presented below.

Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) express concern in respect of the vocabulary development of L2 learners, in which their approach to 'lexical phrases' in language teaching is based on similar assumptions to L1 acquisition; that "learners pass through a stage in which they use a large number of unanalyzed chunks of language in certain predictable social contexts" (p. xv). They put formulaic speech at the very centre of language acquisition and see it as basic to the creative rule-forming processes that follow. L1 learners, for example, begin with a few basic phrases that they later learn to analyse by breaking them into smaller parts, and, eventually, learn the regular grammatical rules. Their 'lexical phrases' consist of 'chunks' of language of varying length, in which these phrases include short relatively fixed phrases, such as *a ___ago* (e.g. *a year ago; a month ago*); or long phrases or clauses, such as *if I X, then I Y*, *the ___er X, the ___er Y* (e.g. *the higher X, the higher Y; the longer you wait, the sleepier you get*). Each of these phrases has "a fixed, basic frame, with slots for various fillers" (p. 1). Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) express more interest in the interactional

functions associated with common lexical phrases, and their usefulness in teaching conversation. The three main categories of functional types that they have established are 'social interactions' (e.g. *excuse/pardon me, how are you? good bye*); 'necessary topics' (e.g. *my name is__, where is __, I like/enjoy___*); and 'discourse devices' (e.g. *as a result, I think that, as far as I know*) (p. 59-60). They recommend several steps in teaching lexical phrases, which include pattern practice drills using fixed routines to develop confidence and fluency; controlled variation using substitution drills to demonstrate that "the chunks learnt previously were not invariable routines, but were instead patterns with open slots"; and increased variation "allowing them to analyze the patterns further" (p. 116-117). While this approach is undoubtedly very useful in teaching analysed chunks, I doubt that a similar approach can be applied in teaching unanalysed chunks like idiomatic PVs (e.g. *give in* [surrender], *break down* [cry], *come across* [discover]), where elements cannot be segmented or broken into smaller parts: instead they are learned as one lexical item.

The Lexical Approach proposed by Lewis (1993) challenges the typical view of looking at language as a division between grammar (structure) and vocabulary (words). His view clearly follows the tradition of Firth, Sinclair and Halliday, whose approach argues that "language consists of chunks which, when combined, produce continuous coherent text" (Lewis 1997: 7). He identified four basic types of 'chunk', one of which consists of single words, while others are multi-word items called collocations, fixed expressions and semi-fixed expressions. The Lexical Approach suggests that the teaching of 'sentence grammar' should be reduced while more attention should be placed on 'word grammar' (collocation and cognates) and 'text grammar' (supra-sentential features) (p. 3). Lewis (1997) believes that it is "lexical phrases – a particular

kind of lexical item – ... [that] provide the basis for a lexically...driven syllabus" (p. 100). His selection of lexical phrases is based on their 'archetypicality', which aims to provide

> a large vocabulary, even if [low level students] are initially unable to grammaticalize it ..... pragmatically useful lexical items, particularly institutionalized utterances ....[and] a balance ..... between (relatively rare) words carrying considerable meaning, and (relatively wide and frequent) patterns with low meaning content
>
> (Lewis 1993: 106-107).

In general, both approaches discussed above view formulaic sequences or MWUs "as a means of accessing the grammar and lexicon" (Wray 2000:469). Lewis (1993) focuses on the value of 'word grammar (collocation and cognates)' rather than 'structure'. He believes that "grammar will, to some extent at least, be acquired through generalizing, and learning the restrictions on the generalization from these sentences" (Lewis 1993:100). Similarly, Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) also believe that L2 learners undergo a similar language learning process, and that prefabricated language is an efficient way to begin to acquire the L2 grammatical rules.

Undoubtedly, these two approaches to MWUs in language teaching provide useful insights and interesting implications with respect to PVs and language teaching and learning. However, while Nattinger and DeCarrico's approach could possibly be applied in the teaching of analysed chunks, a similar approach is obviously not applicable in the teaching of unanalysed phrases like idioms or idiomatic PVs, as their meanings cannot be deduced simply by combining the meaning of each individual unit

in the constructions. On the contrary, the Lexical Approach of Lewis (1993) puts more emphasis on 'word grammar', such as collocations, which I think is more meaningful for learners as they are learning vocabulary through context in relation to other words surrounding it, rather than words in isolation. Learners may find it more meaningful to know that some words always co-occur with certain words, which give them a particular meaning. For example, the word *heavy* collocates with *rain* as in *heavy rain* but not in **heavy wind*, and metaphorically *heavy* collocates with *burden* as in *heavy burden* but not **heavy problem*. Similarly, the PVs *switch off* and *turn off* may look similar in meaning and can be used interchangeably, but the object of *switch off* is associated with electrical appliances, while *turn off* may also include other collocates, such as *water pipe/tap*. Thus, this approach to vocabulary learning is more meaningful and interesting for language learners, rather than simply rote memorization of a word list. Another interesting method of learning and understanding meanings of PVs is the use of a 'conceptual metaphor' (see 2.3.2 and 3.4), and 'principled polysemy model' (see 3.4).

3.4   Regularities of particle meaning in PVs construction

There is no doubt that MWUs like PVs are difficult for non-native speakers, particularly language learners (see 3.5). Other than the factors discussed in 2.1, 2.3.5 and 3.5, which contribute to the complexity in learning PVs amongst learners, idiomatic expressions like PVs are also commonly viewed as 'arbitrary': there seem to be no systematic and clear rules in the choice of particle that makes up a PV. This is perhaps another factor contributing to such difficulty (though actually, as pointed out in Chapter 2.3.2, there are some regularities in particle meaning). In fact, the way PVs are presented to learners through textbooks and dictionaries (see Chapter 8), for instance,

clearly suggests the non-existence of any systematic way of learning and understanding this particular language form. Thus, most often, it is assumed that the only way to learn and understand this language form is through memorization of the PV as a combination of elements (particularly non-literal PVs) will result in a completely different meaning. The regular meanings of *give* and *in,* for instance, disappear when they are put together in PV *give in* ('surrender').

Given that there are some regularities, and with the benefit of the availability of large volumes of corpus data, some lexicographers (e.g. Moon 2005; Rundell 2005) have tried to indicate in dictionaries that many linguistic choices, including PVs, are not 'arbitrary' but 'rule-governed' (Rundell 2005: 1). In other words, despite the syntactic and semantic complexity in PV construction, there is a system in PVs, particularly in the choice of particles, which is further revealed in the production of 'particle indexes' in some dictionaries (e.g. *The Collins COBUILD Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs*, which pioneered this, and *Macmillan Phrasal Verbs Plus*). These show what semantic information a particle contributes when it is put together with a verb in PV construction. In relation to the meaning of particles in PV construction, Moon (2005) suggests that there is regularity in the particle meaning, which can be explained in terms of 'conceptual metaphors', a concept presented based on the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) (see Chapter 2.3.2). Therefore, in the case of particles *up, down, out, off,* for instance, their regular meanings, which usually relate to 'spatial orientation', can be extended metaphorically, and this metaphorical meaning is usually derived based on our daily experience in life. Below is Moon's (2005) description of the metaphorical meaning of the particle *up* in the mid-matter of the Macmillan dictionary, which is aimed at both teachers and learners:

The idea 'up/high' refers to large quantities because when more things are added to a pile, it becomes higher; and the idea 'up/high' refers to being powerful because if two people fight and one of them is physically on top of the other that person usually wins.

(Moon 2005: LS 6)

In the case of *up* and *down* for instance, the typical idea of *up* and *down* are metaphorically used to refer to 'quantities' and 'power'. Thus, when something *goes up*, it becomes larger; and if it *goes down*, it becomes smaller. The particle *down* is metaphorically used to indicate the state of losing power as in *step down* and *brought down* (Rundell 2005: 3). Similarly, the literal meaning of *back* is metaphorically conceptualized in terms of space: 'returning to an earlier time' (e.g. The picture brings *back* her childhood memory) because we usually discuss past events as being 'behind us', and we talk about the future as being 'ahead of us' (Rundell 2005: 4).

Apart from lexicography, the use of metaphors has also become popular in the field of language teaching and learning, particularly the teaching of prepositions, PVs and idioms (e.g. Lindstromberg 1996; Kövecses and Szabó 1996; Boers and Demecheleer 1998). Boers (2000), in his study of ways to help learners cope better in reading economic discourse, found that one way to increase learners' metaphoric awareness is by drawing their attention to the 'source domain' of idiomatic expressions they encounter in their reading. For instance, phrases like *bailing out* and *shifting tack* can be grouped under the theme of 'ships and sailing', while *weeding out, flourishing companies* and many other figurative expressions belong to the theme of 'gardening' (p. 143). Boers (2000) found that the experimental group of learners in his study were

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able to transfer "the inference patterns and value judgements associated with the source domain of an expression to its metaphoric extension" (p. 143), suggesting that this is an additional or alternative method in helping learners to learn, understand and remember figurative expressions better.

As far as PVs are concerned, Kövecses and Szabó (1996) conducted a study with Hungarian learners of English to examine whether 'motivation' (their term of reference) is more effective in the teaching and learning of PVs with the particles *up* and *down*. The first group was given a list of PVs together with their Hungarian equivalents while the second group were provided with PVs that were grouped according to the conceptual metaphors that the PVs manifest. For instance, the meanings of PVs *eat up, chew up, wind up,* and *give up,* were identified based on an understanding of the concept of *up* in English as 'being finished or completion', which illustrates the conceptual metaphor *completion is up*. Other conceptual metaphors include *happy is up, more is up* and *less is down; control is up* and *lack of control is down* (p. 347). Learners were then instructed to memorize the given PVs before answering a text completion task. The finding of this study reveals that the second group of learners scored higher in a text completion task than the first group indicating that learners benefit from the conceptual metaphor approach. However, based on a criticism that it was too a small scale of study for any statistical analysis to be made, Boer (2000) conducted a similar study involving a larger number of French learners of English and included both prepositional and PVs. His finding reconfirms those of Kövecses and Szabó (1996). The two studies above also highlight the importance of making learners aware of the metaphor-approach in the learning of figurative

expressions like PVs, which can be achieved through explicit teaching about the notion of conceptual metaphor (Kövecses and Szabó 1996; Boers 2000).

Apart from PVs, other cognitive linguists look at the teaching of prepositions and directional adverbs applying the 'prototype approach' (see Lindstromberg 1996). His primary aim is to provide suggestions for teachers and material writers on what they can do to help learners understand various common literal and metaphorical uses of prepositions, in particular, the preposition *on*. (p. 227). He uses the expressions 'located object' (LO) and 'landmarks' in his attempt to describe literal and metaphorical meanings of preposition *on*, and further outlined a number of methodological suggestions, which include "using schematic pictures, or icons, clarifying meaning by considering how semantically-related prepositions may differ in meaning, relating late-taught senses to ones learned earlier [and] clarifying metaphorical extensions" (p. 228). In another study, Lindstromberg (2001) examined the presentation of the preposition *on* in the learners' dictionaries published in the UK and found a number of deficiencies including a lack of attention to metaphors, which he believes has resulted in "a massive loss of potentially helpful information about meaning" (p. 91).

Working within a cognitive linguistic framework, Tyler and Evans (2001, 2003, 2004, 2007) offer another alternative in the teaching of polysemous lexical items: the 'principled polysemy model'. In their study of preposition *over*, they suggest that each preposition is represented by a 'primary meaning', which they term a 'protoscene', and the many distinct senses associated with *over* (which form a motivated semantic network) are accounted for by interaction of the 'protoscene' with a constrained set of cognitive principles (Tyler and Evans 2001: 724). They believe that teaching the 'central meaning' or 'core sense' (see 3.4.1) of a polysemous L2 word first will

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facilitate more accurate interpretation of unfamiliar extended meanings (Tyler 2012: 74). Thus, in the case of PVs for instance, by first teaching learners the central sense of *up* as showing an upward movement, will facilitate their understanding of the extended meaning of *up* to indicate an increase in quantity or value (e.g. *go up* = increase; *speed up*; *speak up*). In this case, teachers need to explicitly discuss these PVs, and show learners how they are related in meanings.

The above discussion, along with that in Chapter 2.3.2, with respect to particles in PV constructions underlines the system in the construction of PVs, in that they are not 'arbitrary' but 'motivated', and that the choice of particle to be inserted in the PV combination is not completely random. The concept of metaphor with respect to the particle discussed above demonstrates regularities of particle meanings that contribute to the meaning of the PVs as a whole, suggesting the non-arbitrariness of PVs. Therefore, in order to learn, understand and use PVs better, it is suggested that learners need to be made aware of this phenomenon and that explicit teaching of 'conceptual metaphors' is clearly useful.

3.4.1   Core sense

The notion of 'coreness' may be interpreted and used differently in language studies. As far as language teaching and learning is concerned, Carter (1998) in his discussion of 'core vocabulary' argues that "frequency alone is not an adequate measure of coreness, but a synthesis of corpus-based frequency analysis, linguistic specification of coreness by principled testing and a blend of insights of the kind which produced the *General Service List* .... could result in sound, up-to-date and widely usable pedagogical word lists" (p. 238). Thus, Carter (1998) proposed a number of specific linguistic tests in order to identify a core vocabulary within the lexicon of a language (pp. 36-44). The

important role of 'frequency' is also highlighted by Schmitt (2010) who argues that it is an important aspect that researchers must address in any lexical studies as "it affects the acquisition, processing, and use of vocabulary" (p. 63). This is for a clear reason that high-frequency vocabulary are words most likely to be met in discourse, and have less register marking which allows them to be used in a wide variety of contexts (Schmitt 2010: 63). This further suggests that high-frequency words are very useful in everyday communication.

The notion of 'core sense' or 'core meaning' is also interpreted differently: sometimes according to historical perspectives (so core sense is the earliest), or semantics (so core sense is the most 'literal' or concrete), or frequency. With respect to polysemous lexical units (i.e. PVs), as far as this study is concerned, 'core meaning' will refer to the meaning that is most common, most literal, or most general (referred as 'central meaning' or 'core sense' by Tyler and Evans 2001, see 3.4). This is the sense which is most useful for the group of learners under investigation (i.e. secondary school level) and is likely to be the first sense taught and learned. Apart from that, the word 'literal' used in the present study will refer to meanings of PVs which are transparent and can be easily derived by combining the meaning of each individual element in the PV combination (see 2.3). Thus, in the case when a PV has both literal and idiomatic meanings (e.g. *go up* = movement from lower to higher place; *go up* = increase), the present study will consider its literal meaning (i.e. movement from a lower to higher place) as the 'core sense' or the most common meaning of PV *go up*.

3.5   Phrasal verbs and language learners

Studies into PVs have received considerable attention in recent years, which is probably due to the importance of this linguistic feature in order to gain fluency in language learning, particularly in spoken discourse. The findings from previous studies confirm that PVs are one of the linguistic features of English with which many language learners find difficulties (Dagut and Laufer 1985; Hulstijn and Marchena 1989; Laufer and Eliasson 1993; Granger 1998; Liao and Fukuya 2004; Siyanova and Schmitt 2007). Researchers have reported various reasons as to why PVs were found to be problematic for language learners and that they would even avoid using them whenever possible.

An early contribution to research on the avoidance of PVs was conducted by Dagut and Laufer (1985) who looked at Israeli learners' use of English PVs, specifically looking into the frequency of the avoidance of three types of PV (literal, figurative and completive). The findings show that a majority of the learners avoid using PVs, preferring the one-word verbs, and the avoidance was very obvious with figurative PVs. However, these results are not surprising since the learning load in the case of figurative PVs is particularly heavy. Learners need to recognize MWUs in the first place, and not only is there more than one word to learn, learners may find very little or no clue at all as to the meaning of the idiomatic PVs (Laufer 1990). Therefore, they have to be acquired, stored and retrieved from memory as a holistic unit "together with some indication of their grammatical structure and syntactic and pragmatic function" (Howarth 1996: 6).

Dagut and Laufer (1985) also state that the Israeli learners' difficulty with producing English PVs is not purely due to 'interlingual' factors, for example, structural

differences between the L1 and L2 (the Hebrew language does not have a similar PV structure). They believe that even if such a combination exists in the learners' L1, PVs would still be considered problematic to many language learners, particularly concerning the particle movement, as most PVs allow particle movement while most prepositional verbs do not.

A follow-up study on avoidance was conducted by Hulstijn and Marchena (1989), which was based on the conclusion drawn by Dagut and Laufer (1985). Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) hypothesize that Dutch learners would not avoid PVs for structural reasons, because they have the same syntactic structure in their L1, but that they would avoid PVs for semantic reasons. Their results indicate that Dutch learners (both intermediate and advanced) did not avoid PVs but, interestingly, they did avoid idiomatic PVs that have Dutch equivalents. This indicates that idiomatic PVs seem to present a difficulty even when the learners' L1 and L2 are similar in the use of idioms. Hence, Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) conclude that structural differences of L1 and L2 are not the only reason for PV avoidance, but similarities between L1 and L2 are also possible reasons. Another interesting finding was that the Dutch learners showed "a tendency to adopt a play-it-safe strategy, preferring one-word verbs with general, multi-purpose meanings over phrasal verbs with specific, sometimes idiomatic meanings" (Hulstijn and Marchena 1989: 241).

A similar study was conducted by Laufer and Eliasson (1993), who identify three possible causes of syntactic and lexical avoidance: (a) L1-L2 differences (b) L1-L2 similarity, and (c) L2 complexity. They found that PVs were avoided by learners whose L1 lacked such a grammatical structure (Hebrew) but were not avoided by those who

possessed such a structure in their L1 (Swedish). As multi-word verbs are a feature of the Germanic language family to which English belongs, it is curious that Dutch learners in Hulstijn and Marchena's (1989) study avoid idiomatic PVs while Swedish learners in Laufer and Eliasson's (1993) did not – especially since English is widely spoken in both the Netherlands and Sweden with a high degree of competence. One possible reason to the contradictory finding is perhaps due to the types of PV analysed. While Laufer and Elliasson (1993) looked at PVs as a whole, Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) conducted detailed analysis on different types of PV (idiomatic and non-idiomatic). Another finding in Laufer and Eliasson's (1993) study is that inherent complexity did not play a major role in L2 avoidance; and contrary to the findings of Hulstijn and Marchena (1989), idiomatic-meaning similarity between the L1 and L2 did not necessarily cause learner avoidance. Hence, Laufer and Eliasson (1993) conclude that L1-L2 difference was the best predictor of PVs avoidance.

Another study of avoidance of PVs was conducted by Liao and Fukuya (2004) who examined the avoidance of English PVs by Chinese learners of English, who do not have the structure of PVs in their L1. They included learners at intermediate and advanced levels, used different PVs and more casual dialogues as the context to suit their participants. As expected, intermediate learners produced PVs much less frequently than both advanced learners and native speakers. Interestingly, figurative PVs were avoided by the intermediate but not really avoided by the advanced learners, which further suggest that "learning seems to have counteracted the effects of L1-L2 difference for the advanced learners of English" (Liao and Fukuya 2004: 211). Thus, contrary to the previous findings, Liao and Fukuya (2004) conclude that the avoidance

or non-avoidance of PVs could be "a manifestation of learners' interlanguage development rather than the L1-L2 differences or similarities" (p.198).

Liao and Fukuya (2004) further investigated whether test effects would play a role in the avoidance of PVs. While Hulstijn and Marchena's (1989) findings show that Dutch learners performed equally in all three types of tests, Liao and Fukuya (2004), on the other hand, found that Chinese learners only used fewer figurative PVs than literal ones in the translation test in which neither phrasal nor simple verbs were provided as possible answers so that students did not have any cues. Thus, Liao and Fukuya (2004) interpret this result as "an indicator of the impedimental nature of L2 semantic complexity on learners' use of English phrasal verbs" (p. 199).

Despite useful information with respect to the avoidance of PVs highlighted in the above studies, they are not without criticism. Waibel (2007) comments that Dagut and Laufer (1985) relied entirely on their teaching experiences and own assumptions in choosing the PVs for the test and they failed to check in advance whether the learners actually knew the PVs in question (p. 26), thus their conclusion that the learners had 'a genuine avoidance phenomenon' was not well grounded (Liao and Fukuya 2004: 198). They also failed to eliminate factors other than L1-L2 difference before concluding that the learners' avoidance of PVs was caused by structural L1-L2 differences, and did not provide any statistical evidence to further validate their findings (Waibel 2007: 26). Failure to provide detailed discussions on why figurative expressions were avoided more than the literal ones is another point that Liao and Fukuya (2004) and Irujo (1993) highlight. In general, both studies conducted by Liao and Fukuya (2004), and Laufer and Eliasson (1993) involved a small number of PVs and also a small number of

learners. About 15 to 20 PVs were investigated and only 70 and 87 learners participated in the studies, respectively. Apart from that, they only examined structural differences and semantic difficulties as factors to the avoidance of PVs and did not take into account other important factors, such as common practice of teaching PVs, and how this language feature is presented and discussed in reference materials. In view of these points, the present study will take into account all these shortcomings, which are further discussed later in this section.

Apart from the above studies, there are a few others that deal with PVs but do not entirely concentrate on PV avoidance, such as those by Yorio (1989), Sjöholm (1995), and Siyanova and Schmitt (2007). Yorio (1989) examined the use of idiomatic expressions, particularly idioms, in learners' writing. With respect to PVs, he found that the learners produced a similar number of PVs to native speakers, but idiomatic PVs are produced less frequently even though the learners have lived in the United States for a number of years. Yorio's (1989) study is less biased as he used free written production data from which he extracted all occurrences of PVs. However, the study is not without any shortcoming. The number of learners' productions investigated was still very small, and also the details of which PVs were used in the study were not discussed. However, it should be noted that such limitations are perhaps because PVs are only one aspect of Yorio's (1989) research, and his main concern was learners' avoidance of idioms. For the purpose of the present study, only PVs will be investigated (not idioms) and a larger number of learners' free productions (oral and written) will be investigated, as well as detailed explanations on the choice of PVs used will be presented (see chapter 4 and Chapter 6).

Another study of PVs was carried out by Sjöholm's (1995) who examined how learners' internal and external factors affect SLA processes and under which conditions cross-linguistic influence occurs. Sjöholm (1995) investigated how the number of years studying English affects PVs use and he found that learners who have been exposed to the wide use of PVs abroad tend to produce idiomatic PVs more frequently than those who had received no 'natural' input. As Swedish has PV equivalents and Finnish does not, it is not surprising that Swedish-speaking students were found to use significantly more PVs than Finnish-speaking students. A similar finding was found in Dagut and Laufer's (1985) study, which indicates that L1-L2 structural differences can impede successful learning of PVs. Apart from that, while Finnish-speaking students totally avoided idiomatic PVs, the Swedish-speaking students were found to perform better on those PVs that have semantic equivalents in Swedish. This supports the hypothesis that both structural and semantic differences of L1-L2 present problems to language learning. However, Sjöholm's (1995) finding partly contradicts Hulstijn and Marchena's (1989) study: although both Dutch and Swedish have PVs in their L1, Dutch learners in Sjöholm's study produced PVs, while Swedish learners in Hulstijn and Marchena's study avoid idiomatic PVs. This contradictory finding might be due to the fact that Sjöholm's (1995) takes into account the length of exposure in the native speaker environment, which may contribute to the greater use of idiomatic PVs amongst Dutch learners. In general, Sjöholm's (1995) study has shown that cross-linguistic, semantic, and input factors are all relevant in the acquisition of PVs among language learners.

Siyanova and Schmitt (2007) investigated the use of 'multi-word verbs' by advanced learners of English as compared to native speakers in both spoken and written contexts,

to find whether exposure to an L2 environment plays a role in the use of 'multi-word verbs' by language learners. They consulted both corpora and questionnaires in the data elicitation and the results show that 'multi-word verbs' are more frequent in spoken than written discourse and that one-word verbs were more prominent than 'multi-word verbs' in both modes. Comparing the data from the BNC with that in the learner-based ICLE corpus, the frequencies of 'multi-word verbs' in the written discourse are quite similar in both, indicating that learners are using these verbs to a similar degree as native speakers; however, it was rather surprising that these high-proficiency language learners were less likely to use 'multi-word verbs' in their spoken discourse. Therefore, Siyanova and Schmitt (2007) conclude that the length of time in a native English-speaking environment has no effect on the preference for using 'multi-word verbs' and suggest that the complexity of 'multi-word verbs' and cross-linguistic factors led to learners needing an extremely long period of time to become completely comfortable with these 'alien' 'multi-word verbs' (p. 132).

The above discussion shows that findings with respect to the role of 'input' and length of exposure to L2 are varied and inconclusive. As far as this study is concerned, the 'input' examined in this study differs from the one studied by Sjöholm (1995). As learners involved in the present study are learning the target language in an L2 environment, in which 'natural' input is hardly found, therefore, there will be no further investigation of the role of 'natural' input, which is normally obtained through exposure in the native speaker environment. Thus, this particular factor will be excluded from the present study. On the other hand, 'input', which will be examined in this study, will refer to contents with respect to the PVs presented to learners in their textbooks and dictionaries. Based on my own experience as a language teacher in Malaysia, reference

materials with respect to PVs is another important factor, which may also have influenced the overall teaching practice in language classrooms in Malaysia (see 3.6; 8.5).

In Malaysia, studies into phraseology or word combination are very few. There is only a small number of studies that focus on collocation (e.g. Ang et al. 2011; Yunus and Awab 2011; Menon and Mukundan 2010) and PVs (Zarifi and Mukundan 2012; Akbari 2009). As far as PVs are concerned, Akbari (2009) examined the use of PVs in narrative compositions produced by Malaysian learners of English and strategies they adopted to overcome their inadequacy in the use of this language form. His finding indicates that avoidance behaviour, simplification features and compensation strategies are among the common strategies used by these learners. It was also found that proficiency level affects the types of PV avoided by learners in their written texts. Although Akbari (2009) used the same learner corpus (i.e. EMAS) in his study as I did in mine, he is more concerned with avoidance strategies adopted by learners, rather than examining patterns of PVs produced (which, indirectly, indicates the problems they encounter) and possible factors to the production of such patterns, which is the aim of the present study. Another study of PVs was conducted by Zarifi and Mukundan (2012), which concentrated on the presentation of PVs in learners' textbooks. Their findings indicate that the selection and presentation of PVs in the spoken section of the Malaysian ESL textbooks are inconsistent with what is commonly produced in the natural use of the language (p. 14). Although both Zarifi and Mukundan's (2012) study and my own study use the same materials (i.e. textbooks) in analysing PVs, the focus of investigation is different. While Zarifi and Mukundan (2012) concentrate on the sections that address spoken English, my study will conduct an in-depth investigation

of the particular sections in the textbooks, which explicitly address and discuss PVs (see Chapter 8), as well as further examination of the selection and presentation of PVs in learner dictionaries (see Chapter 8). All the information with respect to PVs presented in both textbooks and dictionaries will be analysed in great detail (i.e. definitions, examples, exercises) to determine whether learners are not only presented with high-frequency PVs, but, most importantly, they are provided with accurate and relevant information with respect to PVs in order to promote appropriate usage.

Apart from the studies mentioned above, so far, no local study has been carried out with respect to PVs, particularly to investigate the level of understanding of PVs of learners in relation to a number of variables (see Chapter 4), patterns of PVs commonly produced by language learners and possible factors in the production of such patterns (see Chapter 7), as well as the presentation of PVs in reference materials (Chapter 8). These issues were not addressed in previous local studies, and thus my study fills a gap in the literature.

In addition, there are also a number of shortcomings identified from the past studies discussed above. Thus, a few adjustments will be made to the present study. Firstly, a larger number of PVs and participants will be involved (i.e. 40 PVs tested altogether in the PVs test, and 24 PVs analysed in the learner corpus; 470 participants are involved in the PVs test) in order to gain more reliable results (see Chapter 4 and 6). Added to that, a brief discussion on the common pedagogical practice in Malaysian schools with respect to PVs will also be presented (see chapter 8). Factors other than L1-L2 influence and teaching practice will also be observed, particularly reference materials used by learners (see Chapter 8), so that more comprehensive findings can be obtained.

3.6   The teaching of vocabulary and phrasal verbs in the Malaysian context

In Malaysia, English is considered as an L2 and continues to be a compulsory subject taught at all levels in every Malaysian school. Previously, most of the language learning was limited to the traditional teaching of the 'closed system' of grammar while vocabulary received very little attention in language classrooms. The great emphasis on grammar was also reflected in the school syllabus, test and examination specifications, textbooks and reference materials used. In fact, public examinations (e.g. UPSR, PMR and SPM) still emphasize the learners' mastery of the language grammatical structures rather than their knowledge of vocabulary. In other words, language learning highly focuses on learners' language accuracy rather than fluency. Consequently, students assume that they have to first master the grammatical rules or otherwise they will not be able to learn the language successfully. This might be one of the reasons for the lack of confidence among learners to communicate in the language, as they fear making grammatical errors, which indicates their lack of mastery of the target language.

Although the present scenario of language teaching and learning has improved and a vocabulary component has been included in the Malaysian school English language syllabus, in general, teachers still believe in the importance of grammatical accuracy for effective communication (see 1.1). In fact, it is a common teaching practice that grammar and vocabulary are taught separately and learners are hardly shown the interconnection between grammar and lexis. Most often, vocabulary is introduced to students in reading classes, where looking for the meanings of words from dictionaries, filling gaps with suitable words and word listings are some of the typical activities during vocabulary lessons.

Furthermore, it is rather surprising that despite extensive research in the field of vocabulary teaching and learning, syllabus designers and reference material providers in Malaysia seem unaware of the significant role of MWUs in language learning (see 1.1.2) and the problems it may present to learners in mastering the language form (see 1.1.3; 3.5). As a result, more emphasis is given to the teaching of single-word vocabulary items, while the teaching of MWUs is still inadequate (see Chapter 8).

Studies have shown that learners need to be introduced to the wide range of MWUs in the target language in order for them to be successful language learners, able to produce fluent and smooth utterances, and sound more natural in speech (Pawley and Syder 1983). Hence, the syllabus, textbooks, reference materials used in Malaysian schools should incorporate more MWUs than isolated words because "the more naturally multi-word units are integrated into the syllabus, the less 'problematic' they are" (Baker and McCarthy 1988: 32). As a language teacher in Malaysia, I believe that the lack of awareness among teachers, syllabus designers, and reference materials providers concerning the role of MWUs in mastering the L2 is perhaps a major reason for the lack of attention given to this important aspect of language.

Another issue with respect to MWUs is probably related to the approach to teaching this language element in language classrooms, as, traditionally, phraseological units like PVs are most often regarded as arbitrary, and, therefore, memorization is the only way for learners to learn this language form. However, it can be shown that PVs are not arbitrary but motivated (see 2.3.2 and 3.4), which implies that they can be taught. Jones and Haywood (2004) suggest the integration of corpus data and the "use [of] concordance lines as a way of investigating vocabulary" (p. 271). The use of

concordance lines may not always be suitable for learners as the lexical items presented are not contextualized, thus teachers may find that using concordance lines does not give much help to learners. Teachers could use a corpus as a tool to help them understand problems faced by learners in learning a particular language element. However, as teachers in Malaysia are not well exposed to corpora, as corpus linguistics is not very well-established in the country, it is rather difficult for them to see the benefit of using a corpus. In fact, there is very little attention given with respect to the use of corpora in designing and preparing language teaching materials, such as textbooks and dictionaries that suit language learners in Malaysian schools (see 8.4, 8.6).

Dornyei et al. (2004) in a study of individual differences and their effects on formulaic sequence acquisition found that sociocultural adaptation is "a central modifying factor" (p. 105) in learners' success with the acquisition of formulaic sequences. This implies that language learners need to adapt to the language culture and be actively involved in an English speaking social community for a more meaningful contact and greater exposure to the wide range of formulaic sequences used by native speakers. However, it is important to note that, in the case of Malaysian school learners, it is obviously impossible for them to have the opportunity to be involved in such a language rich environment because English is learned in a non-native environment, where phraseological expressions like PVs are hardly used. Thus, the best that can be done is to expose them to as many PVs as possible, focussing more on the high-frequency PVs widely used by native speakers as they are more useful for learners in their everyday communication. At the same time, providing learners with more practice in using PVs

may also help to reinforce their understanding and appropriate use of this language form.

Further discussion of the teaching of PVs in Malaysian schools is presented in 8.5.

3.7   Conclusion

To conclude, literature with respect to teaching and learning of PVs in this chapter has shown the general neglect of vocabulary teaching, particularly with respect to PVs, and that, in general, language learners face great difficulties in understanding and using this language form. Thus, it is timely for this study to be carried out, as, so far, no other studies have been conducted in Malaysia that specifically look at problems encountered by Malaysian learners of English with respect to PVs through the examination of both the empirical data from survey, as well as data from learner corpus (i.e. EMAS).

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY FOR SURVEY

4.0   Introduction

The methodology used in my thesis research is divided into two separate chapters:

Chapter four and Chapter six. This chapter discusses the methodology used in

conducting a survey, which comprises (1) a PV test for learners and (2) questionnaires

for language teachers. Part (1) of this survey was conducted in order to answer research

question 2 (see 1.4), which is related to the understanding of learners of common PVs.

The teacher survey provides additional information with respect to teachers' views on

vocabulary content in the present school textbooks and the teaching of MWUs, such as

PVs. Ethical guidelines and the procedures that had to be followed before the actual

conduct of the survey are discussed in 4.1.5. The results of the survey are reported in

Chapter 5.

Chapter six will address methods for the analysis of two corpora: the Bank of English

(BoE) and the English of Malaysian Students (EMAS) corpus. This analysis was

conducted to answer research question 3 (see 1.4), which is another main objective of

the present study: to examine the actual use of PVs by Malaysian school learners in

both written and oral texts. The results of the corpus analysis are reported in Chapter 7.

This study integrates both survey and corpus work as it aims to provide more

comprehensive findings with respect to learners' understanding and use of PVs. As, so

far, no studies have been conducted in Malaysia that integrate both methods in their investigation of PVs, the findings of my study will fill the research gap.

4.1 Survey

4.1.1 Schools selected in the survey

The respondents involved in the survey consist of both students and English language teachers in eight out of 21 residential schools throughout Peninsular Malaysia. The selection of schools was made according to zones: North (Perak and Kedah), Middle (Kuala Lumpur and Selangor), South (Negeri Sembilan and Melaka) and East (Pahang and Terengganu). Two schools were randomly selected to represent each zone (see Table 1).

Table 1: Schools and number of students involved

Zone	Frequency (f)	Per cent (%)
Middle:		
K Lumpur	60	12.5
Selangor	60	12.5
South:		
N Sembilan	60	12.5
Melaka	60	12.5
North:		
Kedah	60	12.5
Perak	60	12.5
East:		
Terengganu	60	12.5
Pahang	60	12.5
Total	**480**	**100.0**

Residential schools were purposely chosen due to time constraints, since I was studying in the UK and had a very limited time back in Malaysia to conduct the survey. Initially, it was my intention to involve both residential and non-residential (daily) school students as respondents in the present study so that findings would be more representative and could be generalized to a larger population. However, I was advised by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MoE) and the State Education Office (SEO) that I should only involve non-examination students[1] and also conduct the survey after school hours in order not to interrupt the learning sessions of students. Therefore, I was unable to involve students in daily or non-residential schools, as teachers informed me that most students in daily or non-residential schools are reluctant to stay back after school hours and participate in voluntary activities because many of them have other commitments after school like attending private tuition, religious classes, and sports training. Added to that, students who come from rural areas may find it difficult to stay back after school hours, as this will involve further arrangements, particularly with respect to transportation. Considering all these problems, in addition to the limited time to administer the survey, I therefore decided to exclude non-residential school students from the survey and only involve students in residential schools.

In addition, by only investigating residential school students, arrangements to conduct a survey could be more easily scheduled as students are all staying in hostels and the survey could be conducted at any time convenient to students. Therefore, their school learning sessions would not be interrupted. Furthermore, as students in residential

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[1] In Malaysia, it is compulsory for all Form 3 and Form 5 students to sit for national public examinations. The Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR) is for the Form 3 students while the Form 5 students sit for the Sijil Peperiksaan Malaysia (SPM) examinations.

schools are usually grouped according to their language proficiency level, the selection of student respondents could be done very easily.

4.1.2 Student respondents

A total of 480 students participated in the test, which was represented by 60 students from eight residential schools mentioned in 4.1.1 above. This means that each zone (North, Middle, South and East) was equally represented by 120 student respondents each (see Table 1). Student respondents comprised both Form 2 (F2) and Form 4 (F4) with 240 (50%) students in each group, as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Students' form

Form	Frequency (f)	Per cent (%)
Form 2	240	50.0
Form 4	240	50.0
Total	**480**	**100.0**

F2 and F4 students were deliberately selected in order to follow the requirements of the MoE and SEO not to involve students in examination classes. Added to that, as the test could only be conducted in the second week of a new academic year, F1 students could not take part in the study. First of all, the enrolment of F1 students in residential schools usually takes place a few weeks after schools reopen, which means that F1 students were either not in school yet on the day the test was conducted or they were attending an orientation week, which is a compulsory programme for new students upon their enrolment to any residential school in Malaysia. Taking into account all these problems, F1 students were therefore excluded in the present study. The F3 and F5

students were also not involved in the study for a very clear reason: they are in examination classes, which left only F2 and F4 students to be selected as respondents of the present study.

Each of the residential schools was represented by a total of 60 students: 30 students in F2 and 30 students in F4. Altogether, they comprised 263 (54.8%) male and 217 (45.2%) female students, which gives a total of 480 student respondents, as shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Students' gender

Gender	Frequency (f)	Per cent (%)
Male	263	54.8
female	217	45.2
Total	**480**	**100.0**

The students were accordingly grouped into three different levels of language proficiency, and the percentage of respondents representing the three proficiency groups was almost the same: 161 (33.5%) were in the high proficiency group, 160 (33.3%) in the average proficiency and 159 (33.1%) were in the low level of language proficiency. The students were purposely selected based on different levels of language proficiency (low, intermediate, and high) in order to determine what role this factor plays in students' overall understanding and use of PVs. The statistics on students' proficiency level are set out in Table 4 below:

Table 4: Students' proficiency level

Proficiency level	Frequency (*f*)	Per cent *(%)*
low	159	33.1
average	160	33.3
high	161	33.5
Total	**480**	**100.0**

4.1.3 Teacher respondents

A total of 47 English language teachers, who were all teaching in the eight residential schools selected, were involved in the survey. This figure is very low in comparison with the total number of English language teachers in the country. However, due to time constraints, these teachers were selected because they were based in the same schools as the student respondents, thus, both the PVs test (for student respondents) and the questionnaires (for teacher respondents) could be administered on the same day. The Middle, Northern and Southern zones were equally represented by 12 (25.5%) teacher respondents in each zone while the East zone comprised 11 (23.4%) teacher respondents, as shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Number of teacher respondents from each school

Zone	Frequency (*f*)	Per cent *(%)*
K Lumpur	5	10.6
Selangor	7	14.9
N Sembilan	6	12.8
Melaka	6	12.8
Kedah	5	10.6
Perak	7	14.9
Terengganu	5	10.6
Pahang	6	12.8
Total	**47**	**100.0**

Each school has a maximum of seven English language teachers. However, I was unable to get all the language teachers in each one of the selected schools because some of them were on medical leave, maternity leave, or attending meetings or courses on the day of the survey. The breakdown of teacher respondents from each school is presented in Table 5 above.

Table 6 below shows that from the total of 47 teachers, 11 (23.4%) of them were males and the remaining 36 (76.6%) were females.

Table 6: Teachers' gender

Gender	Frequency *(f)*	Per cent *(%)*
Male	11	23.4
female	36	76.6
Total	**47**	**100.0**

It is a common scenario in Malaysian schools that the number of male teachers is outnumbered by their female counterparts, as revealed by the statistics obtained from the official website of the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MoE) at http://www.moe.gov.my/ (see Table 7). Because of this, it is impossible to get an equal number of teacher respondents to represent both sex groups in the selected schools.

Table 7:   Schoolteachers in Malaysia

Gender	*Primary (n)*	*Secondary (n)*	*Total*	*Percentage (%)*
Male	71,393	55,455	126,848	**30.78**
Female	163,261	121,933	285,194	**69.19**
Total	234,654	177,388	412,042	100.00

Data obtained from the MoE website in June 2011

In relation to teaching experience, the majority of the teacher respondents, 23 (48.9%), had teaching experience of more than 10 years; 16 (34%) had 5 to 10 years of experience and the remaining teachers, 8 (17%), had less than 5 years experience. All teacher respondents were English language majors. The length of teaching experience is also considered when looking at teachers' perceptions concerning the issue addressed in the present study. The statistics on teachers' teaching experience are presented in Table 8 below:

Table 8: Teachers' teaching experience

Years	Frequency *(f)*	Per cent *(%)*
<5	8	17.0
5 - 10 years	16	34.0
> 10 years	23	48.9
Total	**47**	**100.0**

4.1.4   Instrumentation

In order to get all the necessary data, two different instruments were used in the present study: a test for student respondents (see Appendix 1) and a set of questionnaires for teacher respondents (see Appendix 2). Both the test and the questionnaire were pilot tested before the actual survey was conducted (see 4.1.4.2).   The design of each instrument is discussed in the following sub-sections.

4.1.4.1   Design of the phrasal verbs test

This test is adapted from the original one developed by Anna and Smith (2007) for their investigation of learners' preference in using multi-word verbs and single-word verbs. The test was modified in order to suit the purpose of the present investigation: to examine learners' understanding of PVs rather than learners' preference between PVs

and their single-word verb equivalents. Thus, instead of giving learners options of both PVs and single-word verbs in Anna and Smith's (2007) test, the adapted version provides learners with options containing only PVs (see Appendix 1). The adapted test was then pilot tested and checked for reliability (see 4.1.4.2).

4.1.4.2   Pilot test

The instrument (PVs test) was first pilot tested with 30 students (15 males and 15 females) in a residential school in Negeri Sembilan. Each proficiency level (high, intermediate and low) was represented by 10 students each. Based on the results of the PVs test, and feedback received from the student respondents, a number of changes were made to the test items. The initial test consisted of 41 items (Item 0 to Item 40). However, they were finally reduced to 40 items after deleting Item 0 shown below.

0.   Do you know what 'phrasal verbs' are? If 'yes', what are they?

_____

_____

_____

It was deleted as it was found to be unhelpful in identifying whether or not students know what PVs are. This is because students who responded 'YES' failed to provide any explanation to their answer or only gave a very vague explanation because they were not sufficiently proficient to express what they understood in a written form (e.g. "I know what PVs are but don't know how to explain").

In addition, after conducting the pilot test, all items in the final PVs test were reordered. Items that tested students' understanding of literal and non-literal PVs were randomly ordered in order to avoid bias. A number of dialogues in the test items were also

reworded and refined to suit learners' age and level of learning, and the location of the dialogues was also included in the respective item to inform the learners of the context, thus increasing the reliability of the final PVs test. Below is an example to illustrate this.

16.   (in a bus)
        A: "Are you sure this is the right stop?"
        B: "I'm very sure. Let's _____ now."
        A. come across   B. look up   C. put out   D. get off

4.1.4.3   The final version of the PVs test

Based on the feedback and the results of the pilot test, the necessary amendments were made and a final version of the PVs test was produced. This test consisted of nine pages. The first page is actually a cover page of the test, which expresses my gratitude to all the respondents taking part in the study, reasons for conducting the test, confidentiality of responses, and general information about the test. The University of Birmingham's letter head and the logos of all relevant organizations – Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), and MARA University of Technology (UiTM) – were displayed at the bottom of the cover page. This emphasized that the test had official sanction, and enabled me to get full support from the respondents in responding to the test (see Appendix 1).

The test itself consists of two separate sections: section A, and section B. Section A requires the respondents to provide some background information including their class or form, gender, English language group and school name. This information is required as they are variables investigated in the study with respect to learners' understanding of PVs. To ensure confidentiality of information, the respondents are not required to write down their names; instead, they are identified by numbers (see Appendix 1).

Section B is the test itself, which consists of Questions 1 to 40, comprising multiple choice questions on PVs with options A, B, C and D. Respondents are required to circle appropriate answers in the test paper itself. The PVs tested are all two-word forms (i.e. lexical verb + particle, such as *pick up, go out, and take off*). This type of PVs form is purposely chosen as this is the most basic form of PVs, which students at secondary school level should have been exposed to and be familiar with. The PVs tested include those listed in the students' textbooks and those not included in their textbooks but are very common ones; listed in the 'high-frequency lists of PVs' (Gardner and Davies 2007: 353). The selection of PVs to be included in the test required careful consideration to ensure that students were only presented with familiar PVs; those that they have been introduced to as well as 'high-frequency PVs', which many learners at this stage of learning (i.e. secondary school level) should have encountered. Firstly, this will help to reduce the degree of bias, in which learners are not tested with unfamiliar PVs. Secondly, more reliable answers can be obtained from the student respondents, as the responses provided will reflect learners' actual level of understanding of the PVs tested. Some of the PVs tested are transparent in meaning (literal PVs) while others are non-transparent (non-literal PVs). Further discussion of literal and non-literal PVs is presented in Chapter 2. The reason for incorporating both literal and non-literal PVs in the test is to further examine the claim that most language learners have a better understanding of literal than non-literal PVs (Dagut and Laufer 1985; Liao and Fukuya 2004; Yorio 1989). As far as the present study is concerned, there had not been any previous research conducted locally with our Malaysian learners of English to confirm such findings.

The final version of the PVs test was also tested for internal consistency and the Cronbach's Alpha value of the 40-item PVs test was 0.806. In general, reliability less than 0.60 is considered poor (Sekaran, 2004). Ideally, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of a scale should be above 0.7 (DeVellis, 2003) to ensure good internal consistency. In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the 40-item PVs test is 0.806, which is higher than 0.7, indicating that the test has good internal consistency reliability, and, thus, acceptable for the study.

4.1.4.4 Questionnaires

The second instrument is a self-developed questionnaire, which was created in order to obtain additional information from teacher respondents, particularly in answering research question 3 (see 1.4). The initial questionnaire was pilot tested (see 4.1.4.5) before the final one (see 4.1.4.6) was produced.

4.1.4.5 Pilot test

Initially, the items in Section C of the questionnaire required teachers to put a tick (/) in the respective boxes to indicate the reasons for teaching MWUs in classrooms, as shown below.

> For question 8 and 9, you may tick **more than one** answer.
> *Bagi soalan 8 dan 9, anda boleh menandakan **lebih dari satu** jawapan.*

> 8.   I teach multi-word units because:
>   a.   I think it is an important aspect of language.
>   b.   I think it is useful for the learners.
>   c.   I find it effective in improving learners understanding and use of the language.
>   Other reasons, please state:
>
> _____

However, after conducting a pilot test, it was found that this procedure was not providing detailed enough information with respect to the teachers' degree of agreement towards each of the reasons stated in the questionnaire. Thus, changes were made to the instructions as well as items in Section C of the initial questionnaire. Below is the revised instruction and an example of an item in the final questionnaire.

For question 9 to 18, please **CIRCLE** only **ONE** answer according to the scale.
*Bagi soalan 9 hingga 18, sila **BULATKAN** hanya **SATU** jawapan berdasarkan skala di bawah.*

Choice / *Pilihan*	Meaning	*Maksudnya*
1	Strongly agree	*Sangat setuju*
2	Agree	*Setuju*
3	Fairly agree	*Agak setuju*
4	Fairly disagree	*Agak tidak setuju*
5	Disagree	*Tidak setuju*
6	Strongly disagree	*Sangat tidak setuju*

8. I teach multi-word units because I think it is an important aspect of language.   1   2   3   4   5   6
    'Multi-word units' diajar kerana saya rasa ia satu aspek penting bahasa

Therefore, instead of having 4 items (Item 8-11) in the initial questionnaire, the final version of Section C consists of 11 items (Item 7 to 17). A detailed description of the final questionnaire is presented below.

4.1.4.6   The final version of the teacher questionnaire

The final questionnaire (see Appendix 2) includes a cover page, which consists of similar information described in 4.1.4.3. The questionnaire itself consists of 17 items altogether and is divided into three main sections: Section A requires respondents to

provide some background information including gender, years of teaching and school name. Data obtained from this section will provide some additional information with respect to teachers' perceptions in relation to the respective variables (e.g. gender, years of teaching). However, teachers are not required to provide names, as they are identified by numbers.

Section B consists of 6 items examining teachers' opinion on the vocabulary content of the present textbooks. This section will provide the researcher with additional and useful information concerning the present vocabulary content in students' textbooks from the teachers' point of view. The items in the questionnaire not only examine the teachers' opinion with respect to vocabulary content in general, but, specifically, content with respect to MWUs. The feedback received from teachers will provide useful information, particularly whether or not MWUs receive sufficient treatment in students' textbooks. Teachers are required to provide their responses based on the scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

Section C consists of 11 items with respect to the teaching and learning of MWUs in English language classrooms, from the point of view of teachers. Basically, the items in this section will provide information on the treatment of MWUs (i.e. PVs) by teachers in language classrooms. In this section, teachers are also required to provide their responses based on the same scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

Similar to the PVs test, the teacher questionnaire was also tested for internal consistency to ensure its reliability. The results show that the Cronbach's alpha

coefficient of the 17-item questionnaire was 0.823 indicating that the test has good internal consistency reliability, and, thus, acceptable for the study.

4.1.5 Data collection procedures

4.1.5.1 Ethical procedures for data collection

Prior to the collection of data, I had to comply with the ethical review procedures, as required by the University of Birmingham, including formal request for approval to conduct a survey. Once the approval was granted (see Appendix 3), then I could proceed to the actual data collection process. However, as I needed to conduct the survey in my home country Malaysia, several local procedures had to be followed before I could conduct the survey (see 4.1.5.2).

4.1.5.2 Procedures in conducting the phrasal verbs test

The data collection started on 19th January 2010, and took approximately one month, ending on 21st February 2010. The first zone surveyed was the North (Kedah and Perak), followed by the Middle (Selangor and Kuala Lumpur), South (Negeri Sembilan and Melaka) and East (Pahang and Terengganu) zones.

Two months prior to the data collection, an application form was submitted to the Economics Planning Unit (EPU) in Malaysia to conduct research in the country (refer Appendix 4). This is a protocol for overseas researchers to conduct research in Malaysia, including Malaysian students studying abroad. The EPU then forward a copy of the application form to the MoE for their approval. After an approval was granted from the MoE (refer Appendix 5), a research pass to conduct research in the relevant organizations

was released by the EPU. The actual survey was only conducted after all these requirements were fulfilled.

As my data collection involved secondary schools in eight different states in the country (see 4.1.1), approval also had to be obtained from the State Education Office (SEO) of each state. An application letter was then sent to the eight SEOs for their approval to conduct research in the selected schools of each state; it took me about two weeks to gain the necessary approvals from the SEOs (refer Appendix 6). All the approval letters received from the EPU, MoE and SEOs were then faxed to the Principals of each school involved in the study, to inform them beforehand that a survey would be conducted in the selected schools on a specified date. Follow up calls were then made with the Head of the English Unit (HEU) in each school to reconfirm the dates of the survey. The necessary arrangements were also made beforehand including a convenient time to conduct the survey, suitable venue, with the student and teacher respondents involved.

Initially, I planned to divide the survey into two separate sessions, one for students and another for teachers, and both to be carried out after school hours, preferably in the evening in order not to interrupt school lessons. Unfortunately, I was informed by the HEU that I might not be able to get all the English teachers to participate in the survey if it was conducted after school hours, so the initial plan was changed (see 4.1.5.3). As for student respondents, they would take the PVs test in two separate sessions (F2 and F4) in the evening, after school hours.

With the help of the HEU, the PVs test was conducted in a room that could comfortably accommodate 30 students at one time. The student respondents had already been identified beforehand by the HEU based on the required criteria. As students were already grouped according to their level of language proficiency, the HEU did not have any problem to randomly select them from the group name list. All the students involved in the test had already been informed by the HEU. The F2 students took the test in the first session, followed by the F4 students in the second session. Once the respondents had settled down in the room, I introduced myself, and informed them of the purpose of conducting the test. The test papers were then distributed and instructions were given orally, even though written instructions were already provided in the test papers. This was to ensure that respondents had really understood the instructions and I could also clarify any questions raised by them. The test papers were only collected after one hour. Before the respondents left the room, I thanked them for their willingness to take part in the test. Following this, the next group (F4) took the PVs test and the same procedures were followed.

4.1.5.3   Procedures in conducting the teacher survey

As for the teacher respondents, instead of having them answer questionnaires in the evening, after school hours, they had to do it during school hours, in their non-teaching hours. This is because the teachers were not willing to stay back after school hours to complete the questionnaires as they had other commitments. It was also impossible to get all the English language teachers to answer the questionnaires at the same time during school hours as they had different teaching schedules, and were not all free at the same time. Thus, the best option was to let teachers respond to the questionnaires at any time when they were free during school hours.

On the day of my visit to the school, I was introduced to all the English language teachers in the staffroom. I informed them about the purpose of my visit and the objectives of the survey, and thanked them for their cooperation and willingness to take part. Immediately afterwards, I distributed the questionnaires and gave a brief instruction and explanation regarding the survey. I informed the teachers that they could respond to the questionnaires when they were free and return them to the HEU before leaving school in the afternoon. Before the teachers were dismissed, I thanked them again for their help and support. All returned questionnaires were collected from the HEU on the afternoon of the same day.

4.1.6 Data analysis

4.1.6.1 Students data

A total of 480 questionnaires were returned to me, which gave a response rate of 100%. Students' answers in the 40-item PVs test were then marked and the answers were coded into numbers: 1 for correct answer and 0 for incorrect answer. This means that the total score for each respondent ranged from 0 to 40. Data were then transferred into Microsoft Excel before transferring them to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), which is a software programme used to perform statistical analysis based on data collected from tests or questionnaires.

The students' mean score was calculated in order to answer research question 1(a): What is the learners' level of understanding PVs? In order to categorize the students' level of understanding (low, average, and high), the standard cut off points used in the Malaysian school system were followed. Those who scored between 80 to 100 were categorized as having a good understanding, 50 to 79 was considered as average while

those who scored less than 50 were considered as having a low understanding of the items being tested.

A t-test was used to answer research question 1(b): Is there any difference in learners' level of understanding PVs in relation to gender and school level? At a confidence level of 95%, this means that if $p < 0.05$, there is a significant difference in the mean score between male and female students, as well as between F2 and F4 students. The ANOVA and post-hoc test was conducted to examine whether there is any difference in learners' level of understanding PVs across the three proficiency levels (i.e. low, average and high).

Research question 1(c) aims to determine whether there is any difference in learners' level of understanding of literal and non-literal PVs. In order to answer this, the mean score of literal and non-literal PVs was calculated. As the PVs test does not consist of an equal number of literal and non-literal PV items, the mean score was then converted to a percentage.

Research question 1(d) was formulated to identify whether there is any difference in learners' understanding of literal and non-literal PVs in relation to gender, school level, and language proficiency. Again, a t-test was used, and at a confidence level of 95%, it means that if $p < 0.05$, there is a significant difference in the mean score of literal and non-literal PVs between male and female students, as well as between F2 and F4 students. The ANOVA and post-hoc test was conducted to examine whether there is any difference in learners' level of understanding literal and non-literal PVs across the three proficiency levels (i.e. low, average and high). Descriptive analysis using

frequency count was conducted to identify the literal and non-literal PV items in the test that received a high number of incorrect responses (see 5.2.1; 5.2.2).

4.1.6.2 Teachers' data

A total of 47 questionnaires were completed and returned, which gave a response rate of 100%. Teachers' responses were then coded into numbers to facilitate data entry into the Microsoft Excel worksheet. In order to answer research questions 2(a) and 2(b), each item in the questionnaire was analysed individually, and descriptive analysis including mode, frequency analysis and percentages were used to discuss teachers' perception of the present vocabulary contents presented in school textbooks, particularly with respect to MWUs, as well as teachers' responses reasons for teaching or not teaching PVs in language classrooms. Graphic representation using a bar graph was also presented to further illustrate the results obtained from the analysis. However, due to the very small number of respondents, further statistical tests could not be carried out.

4.1.7 Conclusion

To conclude, the size of student respondents involved in the present study is considerably large (see 4.1.2) in comparison to previous other studies investigating PVs (see 3.5). Although the survey involved entirely residential school students in Malaysia, and the size of teacher respondents was quite small (see 4.1.3), I believe that it will provide some useful insights into the general scenario of vocabulary teaching and learning in the Malaysian context, particularly with respect to PVs. Most importantly, apart from the survey, the findings are further complemented by corpus work (see Chapters 6 and 7), which makes the present study unique in the sense of the methodology adopted.

CHAPTER FIVE

SURVEY FINDINGS

5.0   Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first presents the findings based on the PVs test conducted with the Malaysian school learners of English. The results with respect to the level of understanding of learners will be discussed in relation to gender, level of study (i.e. F2 and F4) and level of language proficiency (i.e. low, intermediate, high). The second section will present findings based on the teachers' questionnaire: these discuss teachers' views of the content of the present English language school textbooks, particularly with respect to MWUs, with special emphasis on PVs. A number of useful findings will be highlighted to illustrate what is lacking in the present textbooks from the point of view of teachers.

5.1   Results of phrasal verbs test

This section will discuss the findings of the PVs test, focussing on students' level of understanding PVs in general, and its relation to other variables under investigation: gender, form, and language proficiency level.

5.1.1   Level of understanding PVs

Chart 2 below shows that from the total of 40 questions in the PVs test, 9 (1.9%) students scored the full mark of 40, which is the highest score. The lowest score gained by students is 8 with 1 (0.2%). From the total score of 40, it shows that the majority of students scored between 25 and above (see Chart 2).

Chart 2: Respondents total score

no of score 1 for Q1 - Q40

no of score 1 for Q1 - Q40
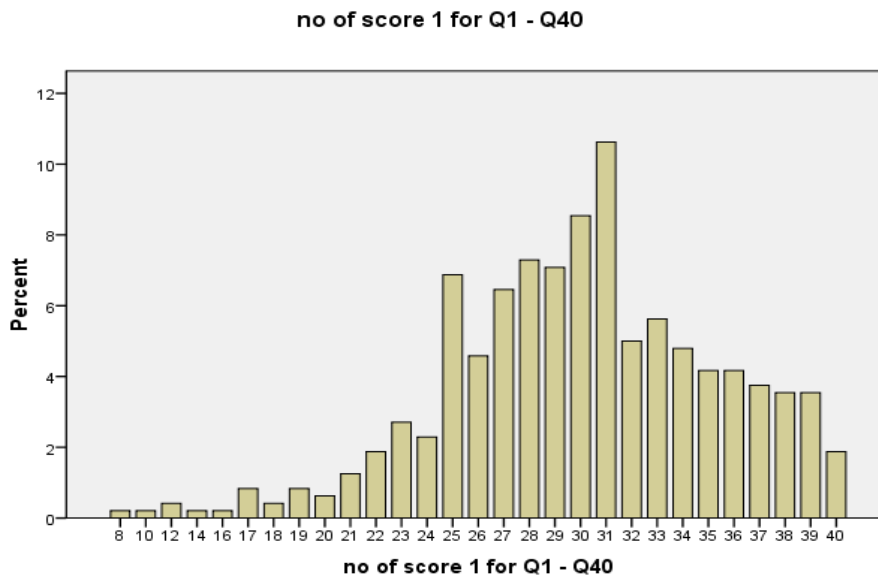
Taking a score of 80/100 as a useful cut-off point (to follow the Malaysian school standard), those who obtained 32/40 (i.e. 80%) and above will be grouped as having a good level of understanding, while 24/40 (60%) is the cut-off point for average level and those who scored below 24/100 are grouped as having a low level of understanding. Analysis shows that only 175 (36.5%) students scored 32 and above, 289 (70.8%) students scored 24 to 31, and 16 (3.33%) of them scored less than 20 marks. This indicates that, in general, the majority of the students (70.8%) have an average level of understanding of PVs tested in Chapter 4.

5.1.2 Male vs. female

Further analysis was carried out to examine whether there is any significant difference in the mean score obtained by male and female students. Statistical analysis using the t-test was then carried out; the results of the analysis are shown in Table 9 below:

Table 9: Mean score between male and female students

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Male	263	29.49	5.694
Female	217	30.65	4.823

Levene's test for equality of variance			t-test for equality of means		
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed) difference	Mean
4.396	.037	-2.385	478	.017	-1.163
		-2.423	477.662	**.016**	-1.163

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 9 above describes the test mean score and students' gender. The results show that there is a difference in the mean score between male (29.49) and female (30.65) students. Thus, further analysis using the t-test was conducted to determine whether this difference is significant or not. The t-test results show that the difference is significant ($p<0.05$). Further analysis was then carried out to check on the effect size, and results of the Pearson correlation show that the value of effect size is $r=.108$, which further suggests that gender variable has a relatively small effect on the students' overall understanding of the PVs tested. Results of the test are shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Relationship between score and gender

		Gender	Score
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	**.108***
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**.017**
	N	480	480
Score	Pearson Correlation	**.108***	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.017**	
	N	480	480

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

5.1.3   Form / level of study

The next analysis was to examine whether there is any significant difference in the mean score obtained by students at different school levels (F2 and F4). The results of the analysis are presented in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Mean score between Form 2 and Form 4 students

Form	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Form 2	240	29.40	5.302
Form 4	240	30.62	5.329

Levene's test for equality of variance		t-test for equality of means			
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean dif.
.210	.647	-2.507	478	**.012**	-1.217
		-2.507	477.988	.012	-1.217

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 11 above compares the mean score of students in the test and their school level. The results show that there is a difference in the mean score of students in F2 (29.40) and F4 (30.62). After conducting further analysis using the t-test, the results indicate that this difference is significant (p<0.05). Following this, statistical analysis using the Pearson correlation was conducted to measure the effect size (i.e. students' form), and results of the analysis are presented in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Relationship between score and students' form

		Form	Score
Form	Pearson Correlation	1	**.115***
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**.012**
	N	480	480
Score	Pearson Correlation	**.115***	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.012**	
	N	480	480

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 12 above shows that the value of effect size is $r=.115$, indicating that the students' form also has a relatively small effect on the learners' understanding of PVs. The relationship between students' form and their understanding of PVs is further confirmed in 7.1.1.

5.1.4 Language proficiency level

The next analysis conducted was to determine whether there is any significant difference in the mean score across different levels of language proficiency (low, intermediate, high). The results are presented in Table 13 and Table 14 below.

Table 13: ANOVA: Mean score and language proficiency level

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4218.587	2	2109.293	106.319	**.000**
Within Groups	9463.338	477	19.839		
Total	13681.925	479			

Table 14: Mean score and language proficiency level

Post-hoc (Scheffe)	N	Mean	Mean difference		Sig.
(1) Low proficiency	159	26.92	(1)-(2)	-2.144	**0.000**
(2)Average proficiency	160	29.07	(1)-(3)	-7.075	**0.000**
(3) High proficiency	161	34.00	(2)-(3)	-4.932	**0.000**
Total	480	30.01			

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 13 and Table 14 above present the ANOVA and Scheffe results between the mean score and language proficiency level. The ANOVA results show that p<0.05 indicating that there are significant differences in students' mean score and language proficiency level. Further statistical analysis was carried out using the post-hoc test to identify where these differences lie and whether the differences are significant across the three proficiency levels (low-average, low-high, average-high). The post-hoc test results show that the differences are significant (p<0.05) across each level of language proficiency, indicating that the understanding of students of the PVs tested differ across the three language proficiency levels. As expected, high proficiency students show a better understanding of the PVs tested than average and low proficiency groups; average proficiency students show a better understanding than low proficiency students; while low proficiency students show a lower understanding of PVs than those in the other two groups. These results are consistent with those found in the study of Liao and Fukuya (2004), in that learners at a higher proficiency level show a better understanding of PVs than those at the lower level.

In order to confirm that that there is a relationship between the mean score (students' understanding of PVs) and language proficiency level, another statistical analysis using

the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was conducted. The results are presented in Table 15 below.

Table 15: Relationship between mean score and proficiency level

		No. of score 1 for Q1 – Q40	Proficiency level
No of score 1 for Q1-Q40	Pearson Correlation	1	**.541****
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**.000**
	N	480	480
Proficiency level	Pearson Correlation	**.541****	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.000**	
	N	480	480

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 15 shows that a significant relationship exists between the students mean score and their proficiency levels (p<0.01). According to Pallant (2007), a correlation coefficient value of 0 indicates no relationship at all, a correlation of 1.0 indicates a perfect positive correlation and a value of -1.0 indicates a perfect negative correlation. The results of Pearson's correlation above show that the correlation coefficient value of the two variables is 0.541. Cohen (1988) suggests that r=.10 to .29 implies small correlation, r=.30 to .49 indicates medium correlation and r=.50 to 1.0 indicates large correlation (p. 79-81). Following these guidelines, it means that the correlation value of 0.541 shown in Table 15 above suggests that there is a strong relationship between the proficiency level and students' understanding of PVs. As expected, the result shows that the correlation is positive, which implies that the higher the level of students' proficiency, the better would be their understanding of PVs.

5.1.5   Types of PVs: literal and non-literal

The next analysis is carried out to identify whether there is any significant difference in the mean score of literal and non-literal PVs across gender, form and proficiency level.

Table 16: Mean score for literal and non-literal PVs

	Literal (11)	Non-literal (29)
Valid	480	480
Mean	9.25	20.76
Mean per cent.	**84.09**	**71.59**

Table 16 shows that the mean score for students for literal PVs is 9.25 from the total score of 11, while their mean score of non-literal PVs is 20.76 from the total score of 29. As the test has a different number of literal and non-literal items, the mean scores are converted to percentages. The results indicate that the average score of literal PVs is higher (84.09) than the non-literal PVs (71.59), suggesting that students have a better understanding of literal PVs than the non-literal PVs. Accordingly, they tend to use fewer non-literal PVs (Liao and Fukuya 2004) or avoid them (Dagut and Laufer 1985). This, however, is not surprising as literal PVs are very transparent in meaning (e.g. *come back, bring back, put down, come down*) in comparison to the non-literal ones (e.g. *make up, look up, break down, come across*).

5.1.6   Types of PVs and gender

The next analysis conducted is to examine whether there is a difference in the mean score of literal PVs between male and female students.

Table 17: Literal PVs and gender

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Male	263	**9.34**	1.713
Female	217	**9.65**	1.265

Levene's test for equality of variance				t-test for equality of means	
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean dif.
10.265	.001	-2.196	478	.029	-.308
		-2.259	472.385	**.024**	-.308

**The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The results shown in Table 17 indicate that there is a difference in the mean score of literal PVs for both male (9.34) and female (9.65) students. In order to determine whether or not this difference is significant, further analysis using the t-test was carried out. The results from the t-test indicate that the difference is significant (p<0.05).

Following this, analysis of non-literal PVs and gender was also conducted. The results are presented in Table 18 below.

Table 18: Non-literal PVs and gender

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Male	263	**20.15**	4.478
Female	217	**21.05**	4.141

Levene's test for equality of variance				t-test for equality of means	
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean dif.
1.084	.298	-2.273	478	**.023**	-.902
		-2.290	471.785	.022	-.902

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The results shown in Table 18 indicate that there is a difference in the mean score of non-literal PVs between male (20.15) and female (21.05) students. After conducting the t-test, the results indicate that this difference is significant ($p<0.05$).

In order to further confirm the relationship between gender and students' understanding of PVs, an analysis was conducted to measure the effect size. Results of the Pearson correlation analysis indicate that gender has a relatively small effect on the students' understanding of the literal and non-literal PVs, with $r=0.100$ and $r=0.103$ respectively. Table 19 and Table 20 show results of the Pearson correlation analysis.

Table 19: Relationship between literal PVs and gender.

		Gender	Literal PVs
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	**.100***
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**.029**
	N	480	480
Literal PVs	Pearson Correlation	**.100***	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.029**	
	N	480	480

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 20: Relationship between non-literal PVs and gender.

		Gender	Non-literal PVs
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	**.103***
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**.023**
	N	480	480
Non-literal PVs	Pearson Correlation	**.103***	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.023**	
	N	480	480

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In short, analysis of the gender in relation to understanding of PVs above suggests that although there is a relationship exists between gender and students' understanding of PVs, there is not enough evidence to claim that this variable (i.e. gender) has a strong relationship with students' understanding of PVs in general (see 5.1.2), or with literal and non-literal PVs as shown above.

5.1.7   Types of PVs and students' form

The next analysis using the t-test was conducted to examine whether there is a difference in the mean score of literal PVs of students in different forms. The results are presented in Table 21 below.

Table 21: Literal PVs and students' form

Form	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Form 2	240	**9.48**	1.514
Form 4	240	**9.48**	1.555

Levene's test for equality of variance		t-test for equality of means			
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean dif.
.342	.559	.030	478	**.976**	.004
		.030	477.662	.976	.004

  **The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The results in Table 21 show that there is no difference in the mean score of literal PVs between students in F2 and those in F4; both with a mean score of 9.48. The t-test results also show that p>0.05, which indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean score of literal PVs between F2 and F4 students. Thus, this implies that students in the two different forms do not differ in their level of understanding literal

PVs. This is perhaps not surprising as literal PVs are very transparent in meaning. Thus, students regardless of their level of learning do not have much problem in understanding this type of PV, as the meaning can be easily derived from each individual unit in the combination of PVs.

Following this, a t-test was carried out to check whether there is a difference in the mean score of non-literal PVs between students in the two different forms. The results of this analysis are presented below.

Table 22: Non-literal PVs and forms

Form	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Form 2	240	**19.92**	4.273
Form 4	240	**21.19**	4.338

Levene's test for equality of variance		t-test for equality of means			
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean dif.
.067	.795	-3.233	478	**.001**	-1.271
		-3.233	477.891	.001	-1.271

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The results in Table 22 show that there is a difference in the mean score of non-literal PVs of F2 (19.92) and F4 (21.19) students. The t-test results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean score of non-literal PVs for students in the two different forms (p<0.05). This implies that the F4 students may have a better understanding of non-literal PVs compared to the F2 students.

To further reconfirm the above analysis with respect to students' understanding of the two types of PVs (i.e. literal and non-literal PVs) in relation to students' forms, the test of effect size was conducted. Results of the Pearson coefficient confirm that there is no

relationship between the literal PVs and students' form (r=0.001). On the other hand, there is a relationship between the non-literal PVs and students' form, though the value is relatively small (r=0.146) (see Table 23 and Table 24).

Table 23: Relationship between literal PVs and form

		Form	Literal PVs
Form	Pearson Correlation	1	**.001**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**.976**
	N	480	480
Literal PVs	Pearson Correlation	**.001**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.976**	
	N	480	480

Table 24: Relationship between non-literal PVs and form

		Form	Non-literal PVs
Form	Pearson Correlation	1	**.146****
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**.001**
	N	480	480
Non-literal PVs	Pearson Correlation	**.146****	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.001**	
	N	480	480

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

5.1.8   Types of PV and language proficiency

The next statistical analysis using the ANOVA was conducted to investigate whether there is a difference in the mean score of literal PVs among students of different language proficiency levels. The results of the analysis are presented below.

Table 25: ANOVA results for literal PVs and language proficiency

ANOVA	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	140.991	2	70.496	34.144	**.000**
Within Groups	984.840	477	2.065		
Total	1125.831	479			

Table 26: Post-hoc results for literal PVs and language proficiency

Post-hoc (Scheffe)	N	Mean	Mean difference		Sig.
(1)Low proficiency	159	8.97	(1)-(2)	-.256	**.282**
(2)Average proficiency	160	9.23	(1)-(3)	-1.255*	**.000**
(3)High proficiency	161	10.23	(2)-(3)	-.999*	**.000**
Total	480	9.48			

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The ANOVA results shown in Table 25 indicate that there is a significant difference in the mean score of literal PVs and language proficiency level (p<0.05). Thus, the Post-hoc analysis was then conducted to identify where the differences lie. The results in Table 26 show that there are significant differences in the mean score of literal PVs between low and high proficiency students (p<0.05), and between average and high proficiency students (p<0.05). However, there is no significant difference in the mean score of literal PVs between students of low and average proficiency (p>0.05). This implies that low and average proficiency students may have similar level of understanding of the literal PVs tested. However, those of high proficiency show seems to show a better understanding in the PVs test as a whole (see 5.1.4), and they also show a better understanding of literal PVs than average and low proficiency students.

Following this, an analysis was carried out to examine whether there is also a difference in the mean score of non-literal PVs among students in the three different groups; the results are presented below.

Table 27: ANOVA results for non-literal PVs and language proficiency

ANOVA	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	140.991	2	70.496	34.144	**.000**
Within Groups	984.840	477	2.065		
Total	1125.831	479			

Table 28: Post-hoc results for non-literal PVs and language proficiency

Post-hoc (Scheffe)	N	Mean	Mean difference		Sig.
(1) Low proficiency	159	17.96	(1)-(2)	-1.182*	**.000**
(2) Average proficiency	160	19.84	(1)-(3)	-5.883*	**.000**
(3) High proficiency	161	23.84	(2)-(3)	-4.001*	**.000**
Total	480	20.56			

The ANOVA results in Table 27 show that there is a significant difference in the mean score of non-literal PVs and language proficiency level (p<0.05). After conducting a post-hoc test (Table 28), it was found that the differences are significant across all the three proficiency levels (p<0.05). This implies that high proficiency students may have a better understanding of non-literal PVs than those in the average and low proficiency groups, and average proficiency students show a better understanding of non-literal PVs than low proficiency students. In other words, students of different proficiency levels tend to show different levels of understanding with respect to non-literal PVs.

An analysis of effect size was conducted to further confirm whether there really exists a relationship between the types of PVs tested and students' proficiency level. Results of the Pearson coefficient are presented in Table 29 and table 30 below.

Table 29: Relationship between literal PVs and proficiency level

		Proficiency level	Literal PVs
Proficiency level	Pearson Correlation	1	**.335****
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**.000**
	N	480	480
Literal PVs	Pearson Correlation	**.335****	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.000**	
	N	480	480

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 30: Relationship between non-literal PVs and proficiency level

		Proficiency level	Non-literal PVs
Proficiency level	Pearson Correlation	1	**.553****
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**.000**
	N	480	480
Non-literal PVs	Pearson Correlation	**.553****	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**.000**	
	N	480	480

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Results of the analysis presented in Table 29 and Table 30 above confirm that there is a relationship between the types of PVs tested and students' proficiency level. While the relationship between literal PVs and proficiency level is at a medium level (r=0.335); the relationship between non-literal PVs and students' proficiency level is relatively big (r=0.553).

In brief, the above results further confirm previous studies (e.g. Liao and Fukuya 2004), concerning the significant role of language proficiency level and learners' use of PVs. In addition, the present findings also reveal that learners in the high proficiency group not only show a better understanding in the PVs test as a whole (see 5.1.4), but also demonstrate a better understanding of both literal and non-literal PVs (see 5.1.8). This information is extremely important for teachers, syllabus designers and producers of materials in providing relevant input with respect to PVs, for students with different proficiency levels in order to help them learn and understand this language form better and to increase fluency in the target language.

5.2 Frequency analysis of PVs

In addition to the statistical analysis presented above, descriptive analysis (i.e. frequency count) of incorrect answers for both literal and non-literal PVs in the test was also conducted. Analysis will focus on PVs that received more than 50% incorrect responses from student respondents, indicating that these PVs are difficult for them. Following this, an examination of learners' actual use of these PVs (i.e. PVs with high frequency of incorrect responses) was analysed drawing on a learner corpus (i.e. EMAS corpus), which consists of learners' actual use of the language (see Chapter 6 for further discussion of the EMAS corpus). At the same time, a comparison with the norm produced by native speakers (i.e. BoE corpus) was also made (see Chapter 6 for further discussion of the BoE corpus), and possible explanations for learners' incorrect use of these PVs will be discussed.

5.2.1   Frequency analysis of literal PVs

Table 31 below presents the frequency of incorrect answers for literal PVs. Special

attention is given to PVs that received more than 50% incorrect responses.

Table 31: Frequency of incorrect responses for literal PVs

Item	Frequency (f)	Per cent (%)
Q8 (*put up*)	**280**	**58.3**
Q33 (*put down*)	120	25.0
Q39 (*go down*)	96	20.0
Q32 (*get on*)	67	14.0
Q1 (*put on*)	64	13.3
Q15 (*go away*)	47	9.8
Q1 (*come back*)	41	8.5
Q30 (*bring back*)	38	7.9
Q22 (*get back*)	34	7.1
Q35 (*go back*)	17	3.5

Table 31 above shows that item 8 (i.e. *put up*) is the only literal PV item which received

more than 50% incorrect responses (i.e. 58.3%). This is followed by PVs with AVP

down (*put down* and *go down*); PVs with AVP *on* (*get on* and *put on*). PVs with AVP

back (*come back, bring back, get back, go back*) seem to be items with less frequency

of errors.

As item 8 has the highest frequency of errors, with more than 50% incorrect responses,

closer examination was conducted to identify possible problems faced by students in

answering this particular item. Item 8 tested the understanding of students on the PV

put up as shown below:

   A: *"Our school will organize a Health and Safety Campaign next week".*
   B: *"I know, students will help to _____ posters all over the school".*
   A. give up   *B. throw away*   *C. put up*   *D. put on*

Instead of *put up*, many students incorrectly answered *put on* suggesting their lack of understanding concerning the difference between PVs *put up* and *put on* in the above context. Closer examination on the use of *put up* in the EMAS corpus shows that students do understand that *put up* is usually associated with things that are displayed for others to see. Below are examples of *put up* found in the learner corpus.

```
              We were sweap the floor, put up buntings and arranged the chairs.
    our house. We sweap the floor, put up ballons and clean our house. My
       and I were staying at home to put up balloons and clean up my aunt
```

However, students seem to restrict the use of this PV by associating it with a small number of object collocates (i.e. *balloons* and *bunting)*. Other common collocates frequently associated with *put up* by native speakers (e.g. *signs* and *posters*) are shown in examples taken from the BoE corpus below.

```
           of merchants will be asked to put up bright blue signs in their shops
            ads in your local newspaper and put up signs on trees and sign posts in
   shoulders and walked away. The manager put up a small sign: Closed for
         and people who pass out pamphlets, put up posters and people who are
            a day earlier in which students put up a poster and distributed
```

Another possible reason why learners have answered *put on* instead of *put up* is perhaps they may have decoded the individual meaning of *put on* and assumed that posters and signs are something that is usually stuck *on* something like walls or trees. This perhaps explains why students use *put on* instead of *put up* when associating it with posters as in the case of item 8 above. This finding clearly suggests that it is important for students to be aware that PVs including *put on* and *put up* have to be learned, understood and produced as a 'unit' rather than a combination of elements in the construction of PVs.

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5.2.2   Frequency analysis of non-literal PVs

The following analysis was carried out to look at the frequency of incorrect answers of non-literal PVs in the test, indicating that these PVs are difficult to learners. The results are presented in Table 32 below.

Table 32: Frequency of wrong answers for non-literal PVs

Item	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Q4 (*come across*)	**358**	**74.6**
Q11 (*bring up*)	**353**	**73.5**
Q10 (*give up*)	**292**	**60.8**
Q6 (*run into*)	**277**	**57.7**
Q26 (*come out*)	**276**	**57.5**
Q36 (*come up*)	**240**	**50.0**
Q28 (go out)	219	45.6
Q18 (look into)	206	42.9
Q5 (call off)	171	35.6
Q38 (take on)	167	34.8
Q20 (cut down)	137	28.5
Q2 (take off)	130	27.1
Q3 (take up)	115	24.0
Q12 (set up)	113	23.5
Q37 (look back)	83	17.3
Q7 (put out)	82	17.1
Q27 (found out)	79	16.5
Q25 (make up)	64	13.3
Q14 (point out)	62	12.9
Q29 (look down)	59	12.3
Q16 (get off)	58	12.1
Q9 (stand for)	56	11.7
Q19 (break down)	48	10.0
Q24 (*pick up*)	40	8.3
Q40 (*carry on*)	36	7.5
Q13 (*look up*)	32	6.7
Q23 (*carry out*)	24	5.0
Q21 (*go on*)	17	3.5
Q31 (*come on*)	13	2.7

Table 32 above shows that the number of incorrect responses for the non-literal PVs is higher than the literal PVs. Only one item of all literal PVs tested received more than 50% incorrect responses (Item 8: *put up*). On the other hand, six of the non-literal PVs

tested (*come across, bring up, give up, run into, come out, come up*) received more than 50% incorrect responses. *Come across* (Item 4) and *bring up* (Item 11) had the highest number of students who responded incorrectly, with 358 (74.6%) and 353 (73.5%) students, respectively. This is followed by *give up* (Item 10), *run into* (Item 6), *come out* (Item 26), and *come up* (Item 36) with 292 (60.8%), 277 (57.7%), 276 (57.5%), and 240 (50%) students, respectively. In short, in general, these findings suggest that students find non-literal or idiomatic PVs more difficult than the literal ones, which further confirms the findings reported in previous studies (e.g. Dagut and Laufer 1985; Hulstijn and Marchena 1989; Liao and Fukuya 2004).

Table 32 above also shows that items with fewer incorrect responses include PVs that are used as imperatives including *carry on* (Item 40), *go on* (Item 21), and *come on* (Item 31), with 36 (7.5%), 17 (3.5%) and 13 (2.7%) incorrect responses, respectively. The PVs *pick up, look up* and *carry out* also have less than 10% incorrect responses indicating that students are familiar with the meaning of *pick up* (learn), *look up* (check) and *carry out* (perform) in the context being tested.

5.2.3   PV *come across*

The majority of the students responded to Item 4 incorrectly; this particular item tested their understanding of the PV *come across*. Item 4 of the test is shown below:

> A: *"I _____ an interesting book in the library."*
> B: *"What book is that?"*
> A: *"A book on astronomy, my favourite subject."*
> A. came across   B. looked up   C. looked after   D. came up

The PV *looked up* seems to be a more popular answer than *came across,* which shows that students do not really understand the meaning of PVs *come across* and *look up*, in

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the context tested above. This contradicts my earlier finding (see 5.2.2), that students have less difficulty with the PV *look up.* A closer analysis of *look up* suggests that students seem to develop an understanding that *look up* (check) is always associated with nouns that contain 'information' (e.g. books, dictionaries). Analysing the EMAS corpus, there are instances showing learners' understanding of *look up* in this context. Below are examples to illustrate this.

```
there are all recent and new. If we look up in there for information we
   the fix internet for students can look up for information especially now
```

Thus, one possible reason for the choice of *looked up* in Item 4 above is perhaps because of the word 'book' in the dialogue, which may have influenced them in choosing *looked up* as the best possible answer. Learners are perhaps unaware of other PVs like *come across* (discover), which can also be associated with *books* as in the case of Item 4 above. Thus, it is important for learners to understand the meaning of this common PV (i.e. *come across*) and the contexts in which *look up* and *come across* are commonly used. While *look up* usually implies deliberate action (we intentionally look for certain information in books, dictionaries, etc.), *come across* implies unexpected discovery. This is the context that many students may not be aware of, which has resulted in responding incorrectly to Item 4 above.

Another possible reason for learners' lack of understanding of *come across* is probably their tendency to decode individual meaning of *come + across,* which is not the case in PVs. When learners decode and combine the individual meaning of each element in PVs, there is no doubt that they will not select *come across* as the answer, as it is difficult to associate the literal meaning of *come* and *across* with the noun *books*. Learners perhaps are not aware that the meaning of the PV *come across* in Item 4

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cannot be decoded by its individual meaning but it should be learned and produced as one lexical unit.

Apart from the reasons highlighted above, learners' L1 (Malay) may also play a significant part in learners' understanding of this particular PV. Although learners do understand that *'the person discovered the book by accident'* or in Malay *'terlihat'*, the root word (i.e. *'lihat'*) which is equivalent to *look* in English, may have influenced them to think that PV with the verb *look* (i.e. *look up*) is the best possible answer for Item 4 above. Apart from this PV, there are many other instances found in the PVs test (see 5.2.4; 5.2.5; 5.2.7; 5.2.8) and the corpus analysis (see Chapter 7) that illustrate the influence of L1 (i.e. Malay) on learners' understanding and use of other PVs.

5.2.4   PV *bring up*

The next analysis focuses on the PV *bring up*, which is the second highest item in which more than 50% students answered incorrectly (see Table 25). This item tested learners' understanding of the PV *bring up* as shown below:

> A: *"Maria is such a strong woman."*
> B: *"She is. She _____ her two children alone after her husband's death."*
> A. *got away*   B. *brought up*   C. *put forward*   D. *looked up*

In item 11, learners' lack of understanding on the meaning of *brought up* is perhaps the main reason for their failure to select this PV as an answer. Learners' tendency to choose the PV *looked up* is most probably due to uncertainty of the meanings of PVs *look up* and *look after*, in which one of these PVs (i.e. *look after*) refers to taking care of somebody (e.g. children). In fact, Cornell (1985) also comments that even learners at

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an advanced level are occasionally confused with basic PVs such as *look for* and *look after* (p. 274). Apart from that, learners' L1 may have also influenced them to choose *look up* as the answer. As discussed earlier (see 5.2.3), the proper verb (i.e. *look*) is equivalent to the Malay term *'lihat'*. It is very common for *'lihat'* to be used informally in the Malay language in the sense of taking care of somebody (e.g. children) as in *'Tolong lihat-lihatkan anak saya'* ('Please take care of my child'). Therefore, it is not surprising that learners may have applied their understanding of the Malay word *'lihat'* in their attempt to answer Item 11 above.

Closer analysis of the learner corpus also illustrates that learners' understanding and use of PV *bring up* is very different from what is commonly understood and used by native speakers. Below are examples of *bring up* in the EMAS corpus.

```
    Then the boy managed to bring up the girl to the ground. And the girl
 unconscious when she was brought up to the banks of the river. She regain
school. Later, Melisa was brought up and lied down o the ground. Everybody
   ha time. My sister was brought up to the bank. She was treated by Chee
   girl. And the girl was brought up to the side of the river and lied down
```

The above examples illustrate the tendency of learners to combine the literal meaning of *bring* and *up* (which is clearly not applicable in the case of PVs), to indicate the action of moving something/somebody from a lower to upper place. However, *bring up* in the above sense, as used by learners, is hardly found in native speaker discourse. Analysing the BoE corpus, words like *children, kids*, and *family* are among the most common collocates of *bring up,* with reference to the nurturing or raising of children. Surprisingly, closer examination of the EMAS corpus shows that only one instance of *bring up* in this context is appropriately produced by learners.

```
    I was brought up in quite a poor family. My father was a
```

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This shows that many learners are still not familiar with the core meaning (see 3.4.1) of high frequency PVs like *bring up* (raise) and they show great tendency to combine individual meanings of elements in PV combination, which has resulted in the non-standard use of PVs, as shown in the case of *bring up* above. A similar finding with respect to different understanding of PVs meaning by learners than that of native speakers is also reported in Chapter 7 (see 7.2.2; 7.2.3; 7.2.7). In addition, further examination also revealed that reference materials also pay little attention to many high frequency PVs, which is perhaps another contributing factor to learners' unfamiliarity with PVs like *bring up*, *look up, look after*, which are more useful in everyday communication (see Chapter 8 for further discussion on reference materials).

5.2.5   PV *give up*

The next item which received more than 50% incorrect responses, is Item 10, which tested students' understanding of the PV *give up,* as shown below:

> A: *"Many people are dying of lung cancer nowadays."*
> B: *"Yeah. Smoking could be one of the reasons, I guess."*
> A: *"I hope my dad will _____ smoking."*
> A. *put down*   B. *point out*   C. *give up*   D. *throw away*

Frequency analysis shows that 292 or 60.8% of the respondents answered this item incorrectly, which indicates that more than half of the respondents do not understand the meaning of the PV *give up*. The PV *throw away* seems to be a more popular answer for Item 10 instead of *give up.* One possible explanation is that learners may have combined the individual meaning of each element in the PV combination, which is clearly not applicable in the case of the PV *give up.* Thus, it is not impossible that learners would select *give up* as the answer if they decode the meaning of *give + up*

because the proper verb *give* itself has a positive connotation which implies support or encouragement to continue smoking. On the other hand, the proper verb *throw* has a negative connotation indicating an action to get rid of something like the habit of smoking. Thus, this might be a possible reason why they selected *throw away* and not *give up* as the answer.

Another possible reason is the influence of learners' L1. In Malay, the term '*buang*', which is equivalent to the English word *throw* is commonly used when referring to an action to quit smoking as in '*buang tabiat merokok*' (*to give up smoking*). Thus, learners may have applied their understanding of the Malay term *buang* (*throw*), and assume that '*buang tabiat merokok*' is equivalent to **throw away smoking*. This is probably a very common problem among language learners in Malaysia in that they have a great tendency to translate and combine the individual meanings of words or phrases directly from Malay to English or vice-versa (see also 5.2.4 and Chapter 7). Thus, learners need to be taught that such a technique is not applicable, particularly in learning and understanding word combinations like PVs as they have to be learned as a single lexical unit rather than a combination of individual meanings. Failure to do so may result in producing non-standard use of PVs hardly found in native speakers' discourse and in real life communication (e.g. **throw away* smoking).

Further analysis of *give up* in the learner corpus indicates that the learners' understanding of *give up* is most frequently associated with issues related to *studies* (e.g. She advise for me to study hard, preserving and don't *give up* to other problem); and *competitions* (e.g. But Nicholas and I did not *give up*. We wanted to do our best even though we knew that we can't be the winner). Surprisingly, no instance of *give up*

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associated with *smoking* is found in the learner corpus. This further suggests that learners might not be aware of *smoking* as another collocate that frequently co-occurs with the PV *give up* in the sense 'to quit the habit of smoking'. This is perhaps another reason for not choosing *give up* as an answer for Item 10 discussed above. The results of the corpus analysis presented in Chapter 7 also revealed many other instances showing lack of awareness of learners of common collocates of PVs that create their meanings (see 7.1.5; 7.1.6; 7.2.5).

5.2.6 PV *run into*

The next analysis focuses on Item 6, which tested the students' understanding of the PV *run into*. Table 25 shows that 277 (57.7%) students responded to this item incorrectly.

> A: *"When you think about it, most of your classmates will disappear from your life forever after you graduate."*
> B: *"Yeah, but every now and then you will _____ one of them on the street."*
> A. *go over*   B. *get back*   C. *come out*   D. *run into*

In Item 6 above, many students answered *go over* and *get back* instead of *run into*. Again, learners may not have chosen *run into* as the answer because of their tendency to combine the individual meaning of elements in PV constructions rather than treating a PV as one lexical unit. Accordingly, students may find that combining the regular meaning of *run + into* in the above context, does not make sense at all. This is because a person will not literally *run* away from long lost friends; instead he/she will *go* or *get* near to them. Thus, *go over* and *get back* make more sense to them in answering item 6 above. Closer analysis of the EMAS corpus also shows that there is no instance of *run into* found in the learner corpus, indicating learners' unfamiliarity with this particular

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PV, which is clearly idiomatic in meaning. The findings reported in Chapter 7 also show that learners are less familiar with many idiomatic PVs in comparison to the literal ones (see 7.1.2; 7.1.4; 7.1.6; 7.2.5).

5.2.7   PV *come out*

The next item that received more than 50% incorrect responses is Item 26, which tested the students' understanding of PV *come out* as shown below:

> A: *"There's a blood stain on your shirt?"*
> B: *"I know. I've washed it many times but the stain just would not _____."*
> A. *come down*   B. *give up*   C. *come out*   D. *take off*

Table 25 shows that 276 or 57.5% of the respondents responded incorrectly to this item. Most of the respondents answered *take off* instead of *come out*. One possible explanation is that learners may have transferred their understanding of *take off,* which is equivalent to the Malay word '*tanggal'*. In Malay, '*tanggal'* is commonly associated with the action of removing clothes from the body, and '*tanggal'* also frequently co-occurs with words like *dirt* or *stain,* as shown below:

1. '*tanggal* pakaian' (*take off* shirt)

2. 'kotoran *tanggal*' (stain/dirt *comes out*)

In other word, this particular Malay term '*tanggal'* carries two different meanings as shown above. Therefore, learners may have assumed that *take off*, which is equivalent to the Malay word '*tanggal'* can also be used in both the contexts above. Therefore, it is not surprising that many of the respondents have answered *take off* for Item 26 instead of *come out*. This again suggests that L1 plays a significant role in the learners'

understanding of many common PVs including *take off*. Other instances illustrating the influence of L1 on learners' use of other PVs are presented in Chapter 7 (see 7.2.4; 7.2.3; 7.1.3).

Apart from that, their lack of understanding and familiarity with other common meanings of PV *come out*, particularly in the context tested in Item 26 above, may have resulted in them striking out this option. Below are examples of the PV *come out* found in the EMAS corpus to illustrate the learners' limited understanding with respect to the meanings of *come out.*

```
                    After the girl the girl come out of the river sh she thanks
     is where all the spirit of the dead comes out, and they are free to
         when the cat is away, the mouse comes out and play', so whenever the
 and combed my hair. After my brother had come out of the bathroom, I saw a
            Then I had a shower and then I come out of the room.
                        After a week Mere came out of the hospital. All her friends
                        the doctor came out from the emergency room with
   up to the center of the river. When we came out from the boat and we
```

The sample of concordance lines above show that the learners' understanding of *come out* is restricted to the literal meaning of *come out* and that it is always associated with animate subjects (e.g. the girl, the mouse, my brother) as shown in the concordance lines above. In fact, there is no instance of *come out* being associated with inanimate subjects, particularly *dirt/stain* found in the learner corpus, suggesting learners' unfamiliarity with *come out* in this sense. Apart from the above senses, it is also surprising that there is no instance of *come out* associated with the nouns *moon* or *sun,* which is another very common meaning of this PV. Below are examples of *come out* in this sense taken from the BoE corpus.

```
         Person #6: And then the moon came out. It was like--during the
  any time except sun. And when the sun came out, the mosquitos tag teamed
    snowing lightly - the sun actually came out the first day. <p> ROBERTS:
```

In brief, the above analysis indicates the learners' unfamiliarity with many other senses of PVs, which are very common and frequently used in everyday communication. Added to that, the learners' unfamiliarity with the meanings and the context of the use of common PVs, such as *come out* and *take off* discussed above, is also partly due to the lack of attention given to MWUs like PVs in the reference materials (i.e. textbooks, dictionaries), which is further discussed in Chapter 8.

5.2.8   PV *come up*

Table 25 also shows that Item 36 in the PVs test is another item which received more than 50% incorrect responses. Item 36 tested the students' understanding of the PV *come up,* as shown below:

> *(in a hospital)*
> A: *"Congratulations! Your name _____ during the school*
>   *assembly this   morning. You won the first place in the essay*
>   *competition last month!"*
> B: *"What? I wish I was there to hear that!"*
> A.   *put up*   B. *went out*   C. *came up*   D. *called off*

Many of the respondents answered *called off* instead of *came up*. One possible explanation why learners may have missed *came up* as the answer is probably due to their limited understanding of this particular PV. Examining the learner corpus, it shows that learners have a great tendency to associate *come up* with animate subjects (people) to show either 'movement from a lower to upper place' or 'to approach somebody', as shown in the concordance lines taken from the EMAS corpus below:

```
        from my room "Don't ever let him come up into my room or you'll get from
  I cannot saw them. Luckily, they came up to the surface. I helped the boy
     wearing tuxedo and a black hat came up to the stage. He would performed
 that moment, one of the children comes up to ask for something. Wouldn't
 happened that day when he actually came up to me and asked me out. "Hey
 The other best thing was, my enemy came up to me and said sorry. I invited
```

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This clearly shows that the learners' understanding of the PV *come up* is very much restricted to the physical action that can be seen, and they are unfamiliar with the association of *come up* with inanimate subjects (e.g. *name*), as in Item 36. This is revealed by the non-occurrence of *come up* with inanimate subjects found in the EMAS corpus. In other words, this finding suggests that learners are more familiar with meanings and use of literal rather than non-literal PVs. In fact, further evidence concerning this is presented in Chapter 7 (see 7.1.2; 7.1.4; 7.1.6; 7.2.5).

Apart from that, learners' L1 may have also influenced them in choosing *called off* instead of *come up* in the above case. As the PV structure does not exist in Malay, learners tend to rely highly on the meaning of the proper verb (i.e. *call*) in the construction of PVs. The verb *call* is equivalent to '*panggil*' in Malay, which is frequently associated with '*nama*' (*name)* (e.g. 'Dia *panggil nama* saya'/He *called* my *name*). Similarly, *call* is also frequently associated with *name* in the target language, and this may have further influenced them in selecting *call off* as the best possible answer.

5.2.9 Conclusion

The results of the PVs test above clearly indicate that, in general, learners under investigation show a moderate level of understanding of PVs as more than half of them scored between 50% and 79% in the PVs test, indicating an average performance. The PVs test conducted also revealed that learners are still struggling to understand this language form, including the high frequency PVs commonly used in everyday settings (e.g. *take off, come out, give up*): a useful finding, which is not found in any other research in Malaysia so far. It was also found that learners show better understanding of

literal PVs in comparison to the non-literal PVs (see 5.1.5, 5.1.7, 5.2.2), which is consistent with the findings of Liao and Fukuya (2004), Dagut and Laufer (1985), and Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) with respect to the avoidance of PVs: that avoidance was very obvious with figurative PVs. Therefore, the present finding further confirms that idiomatic PVs are more difficult for learners than the literal ones. The findings of the present study also reveal the tendency of learners to treat PVs as two rather than one lexical unit (see 5.2.3, 5.2.4, 5.2.5, 5.2.6), which needs to be addressed better in language classrooms. In addition, it is equally important for learners to be exposed to a number of PVs meanings (literal and non-literal) that are useful to them. A lack of awareness of the regular patterns and common collocates of PVs is another factor contributing to the lack of understanding of this language form (see 5.2.5, 5.2.7, 5.2.8). Hence, another important task for teachers, syllabus designers and material providers is to revise their approach with respect to PVs, in order to help learners to see patterns in relation to meanings. Most importantly, learners' L1, is found to play a significant part in their understanding of PVs (see 5.2.3, 5.2.4, 5.2.5, 5.2.7, 5.2.8), which needs to be taken into account when teaching this language feature. Apart from all the problems mentioned above, the lack of attention given to high frequency PVs, such as *bring up, take off, come out,* in reference materials is another contributory factor to the learners' lack of understanding of common PVs that are undoubtedly very useful for them (see Chapter 8).

In short, the above findings provide empirical evidence with respect to Malaysian learners' understanding of PVs, and a number of useful findings, which, to date, have not been found in any other study in Malaysia, have been highlighted to inform relevant

parties for further actions. Apart from the PVs discussed above, further corpus-based analysis of 24 other selected PVs is discussed in Chapter 7.

5.3 Results of teachers' questionnaire

This second section of the chapter will discuss and present findings based on analysis of the teachers' questionnaire, which examined the opinions of teachers concerning the present vocabulary content in the present English language school textbooks in Malaysia, with special reference to PVs. Descriptive statistics including mode, frequency analysis and percentages were used to analyse data and to discuss the results.

Table 33: Descriptive statistics of Items 1 to 6

	Improve understanding (Item 1)	Improve fluency (Item 2)	Still relevant (Item 3)	Need to improve (Item 4)	Emphasize SWU (Item 5)	Include MWU (Item 6)
N	47	47	47	47	47	47
Mode	5	5	5	6	5	5

Table 33 above presents the results of the descriptive statistics for each of the 6 items examining teachers' opinion with respect to the vocabulary contents in the present textbooks. Table 33 shows that the mode (items with highest frequency of occurrence) for items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 is scale 5 (agree), while the mode for item 4 is scale 6 (strongly agree). Further analysis of each item is presented below (see 5.3.2).

5.3.1 Teachers' view on vocabulary contents to improve students' understanding of the language

Item 1 examines the view of teachers concerning whether the vocabulary content in the present textbooks helps to improve the learners' understanding of the target language. Table 34 and Chart 3 below present the descriptive results of Item 1.

Table 34: Improve students' understanding of the language

	Frequency	*Per cent*	*Cumulative Per cent*
2 Disagree	2	4.3	4.3
3 Partly disagree	4	8.5	12.8
4 Partly agree	18	38.3	51.1
5 Agree	19	40.4	91.5
6 Strongly agree	4	8.5	100.0
Total	47	100.0	

Chart 3: Improve students' understanding of the language
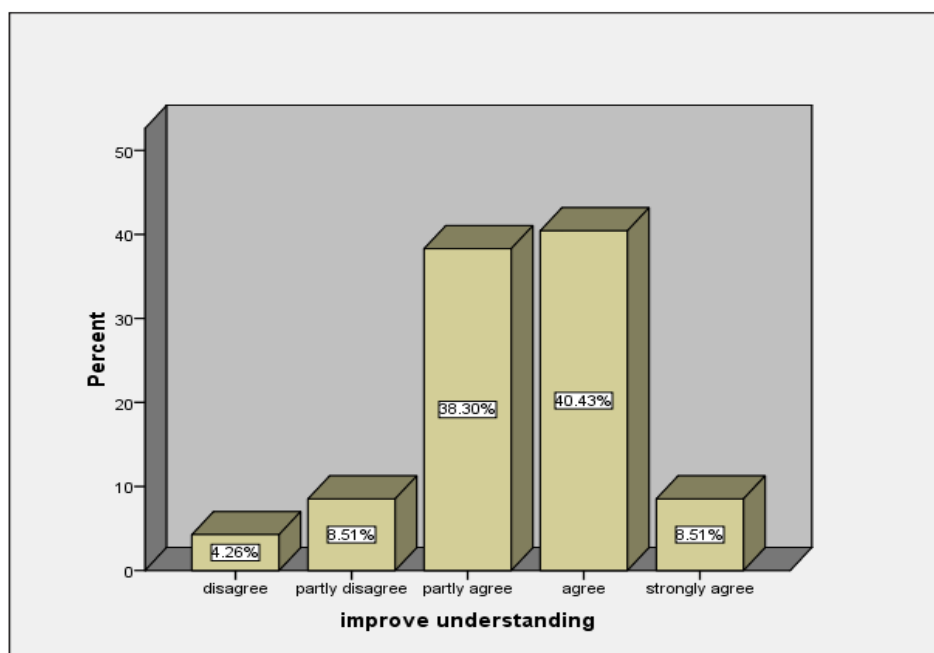
Table 34 and Chart 3 above show that 40.4% of teachers agree, and 38.3% partly agree. This is followed by 8.5% each for respondents who partly disagree and strongly agree with the statement. There is also a small percentage of respondents who disagree (4.3%) with the statement. The summary of statistics in Table 33 and Chart 3 show that the mode for item 1 is 5 (agree), which further suggests that the highest percentage of respondents agree that the vocabulary content in the present textbooks helps to improve the understanding of students of the target language.

5.3.2 Teachers' view of vocabulary content to improve students' fluency in the language

The next item (Item 2) in the questionnaires examines the teachers' view concerning whether the vocabulary content in the present English language textbooks helps to improve learners' fluency in written and spoken discourse. The results are presented in Table 35 and Chart 4 below.

Table 35: Improve students' fluency in the language

	Frequency (f)	Per cent (%)	Cumulative Per cent (%)
1 Strongly disagree	1	2.1	2.1
2 Disagree	6	12.8	14.9
3 Partly disagree	4	8.5	23.4
4 Partly agree	15	31.9	55.3
5 Agree	19	40.4	95.7
6 Strongly agree	2	4.3	100.0
Total	47	100.0	

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Chart 4: Improve students' fluency in the language
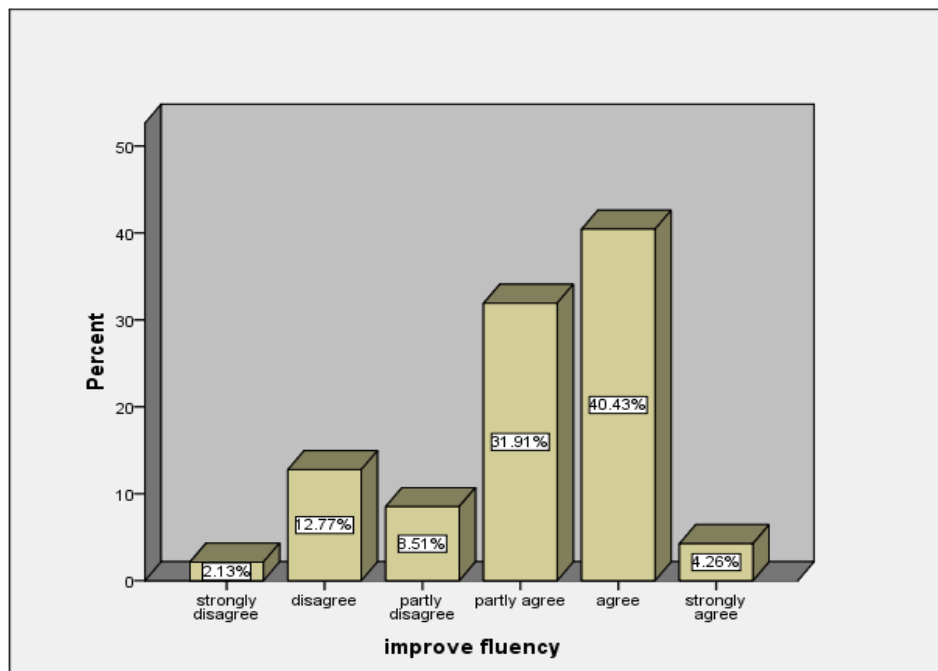
The results presented in Table 35 and Chart 4 above show that the highest percentage of teachers (40.4%) agree that the vocabulary content in the present textbooks helps to improve students' fluency in the target language. This is further supported by the summary statistics presented in Table 33, which indicate that the mode for Item 2 is 5 (agree). Only a small number of teacher respondents (8.5%, 4.3% and 2.1%) partly disagree, strongly agree and strongly disagree with the statement.

5.3.3   Teachers' view on relevancy of the vocabulary content to the language needs of the learners

In order to determine the teachers' view on the relevancy of the vocabulary content in the present textbooks to the language needs of the learners, Item 3 was created. Below are the results of the analysis.

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Table 36: Relevancy to the language needs of the learners

	Frequency (f)	Per cent (%)	Cumulative Per cent (%)
3 Partly disagree	8	17.0	17.0
4 Partly agree	10	21.3	38.3
5 Agree	25	53.2	91.5
6 Strongly agree	4	8.5	100.0
Total	47	100.0	

Chart 5: Relevancy to the language needs of the learners
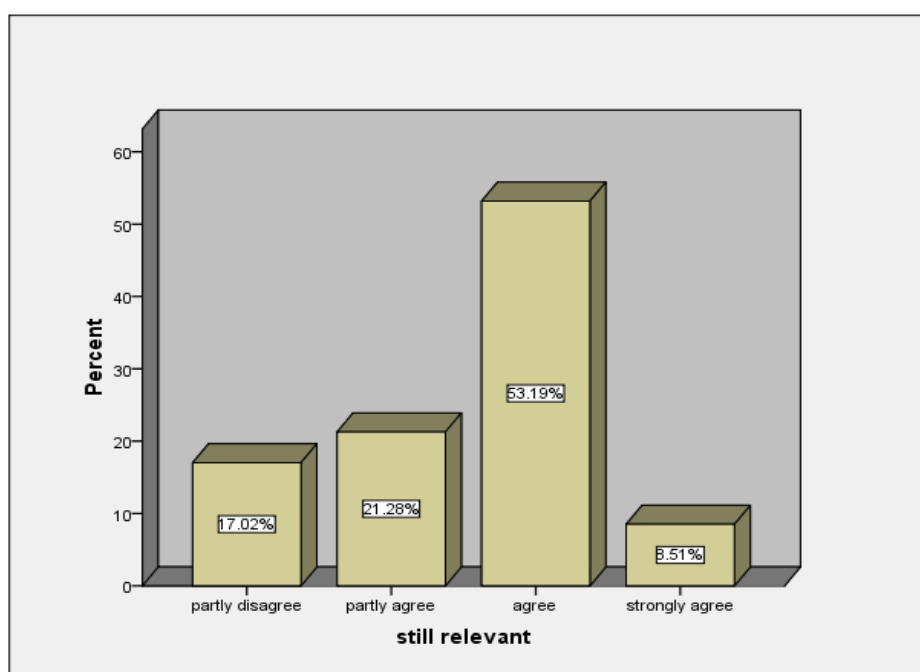
The descriptive results presented in Table 36 show that more than half of the respondents (53.2%) agree that the vocabulary content in the present textbooks is still relevant to the language needs of the learners. In addition, a small percentage of respondents (8.5%) shows strong agreement with the statement. The summary statistics presented in Table 33 also indicate that the mode for Item 3 is 5 (agree), which further

suggests that the majority of the teachers believe in the relevancy of the present vocabulary content.

To summarise, Items 1, 2 and 3 of the teachers' questionnaire suggest that the vocabulary content in the present textbooks is still relevant and generally helps to improve the understanding and fluency of learners in the target language. Obviously, this is what we would expect: that the prescribed textbooks, which are regarded as main reference points for learners, should provide all the required input for learners to learn, understand and use the target language well. However, even though teachers are generally satisfied with the vocabulary content presented in the learners' textbooks, there are a number of things that they perceived as still lacking. This will be further discussed below.

5.3.4   Teachers' view on the improvement of vocabulary content

Item 4 in the questionnaire examines the teachers' opinion concerning whether the vocabulary content in the present textbooks needs to be improved. Table 37 and Chart 6 present the results of the descriptive analysis of Item 4.

Table 37: Improvement of vocabulary content

	Frequency (f)	Per cent (%)	Cumulative Per cent (%)
1 Strongly disagree	1	2.1	2.1
2 Disagree	2	4.3	6.4
3 Partly disagree	2	4.3	10.6
4 Partly agree	6	12.8	23.4
5 Agree	16	34.0	57.4
6 Strongly agree	20	42.6	100.0
Total	47	100.0	

Chart 6: Improvement of vocabulary content
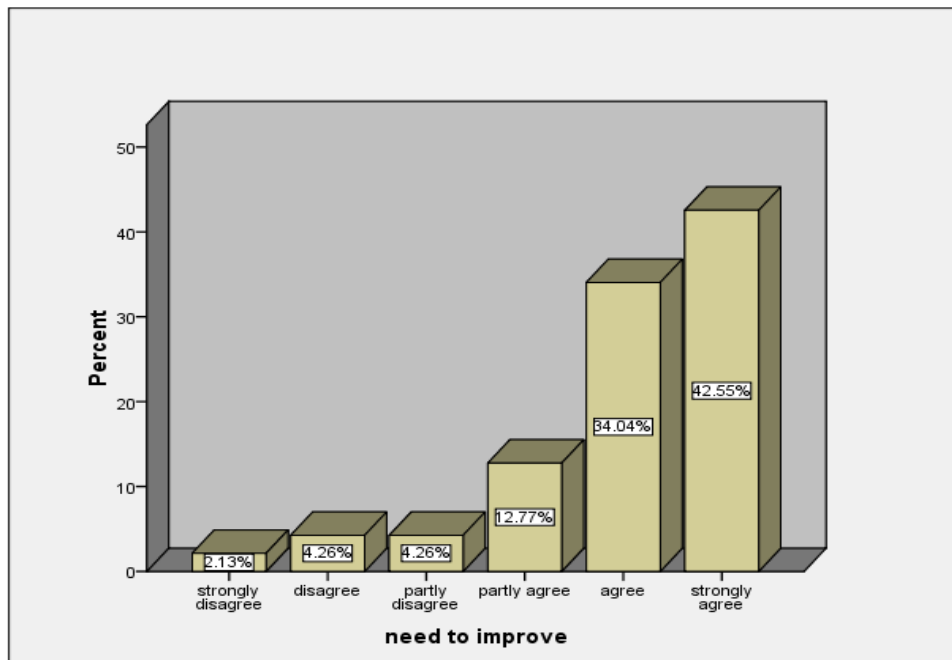
Table 37 above shows that 42.6% of respondents strongly agree and 34.0% of them agree, followed by 12.8% of them who partly agree with the statement. Those who disagree and partly disagree are 4.3% each, and a small percentage (2.1%) of respondents strongly disagrees with the statement. The summary of statistics presented in Table 33 and Chart 6 above show that the mode for Item 4 is 6 (strongly agree), suggesting a high percentage of teachers who believe in the need for improvement. Thus, perhaps it is time for the respective authorities to consider revising the present textbooks, particularly with respect to the vocabulary content relating to phraseology, as will be further discussed in 5.3.5 and 5.3.6 below.

5.3.5   Teachers' view with respect to emphasis on single-word units in the present textbooks

Item 5 in the questionnaires examine the teachers' view concerning whether the vocabulary content in the present textbooks puts too much emphasis on single-word units. Table 38 and Chart 7 present the results of the descriptive analysis of Item 5.

Table 38: Too much emphasis on single-word units

	Frequency (f)	Per cent (%)	Cumulative Per cent (%)
2 Disagree	2	4.3	4.3
3 Partly disagree	3	6.4	10.6
4 Partly agree	13	27.7	38.3
5 Agree	25	53.2	91.5
6 Strongly agree	4	8.5	100.0
Total	47	100.0	

Chart 7: Too much emphasis on single-word units
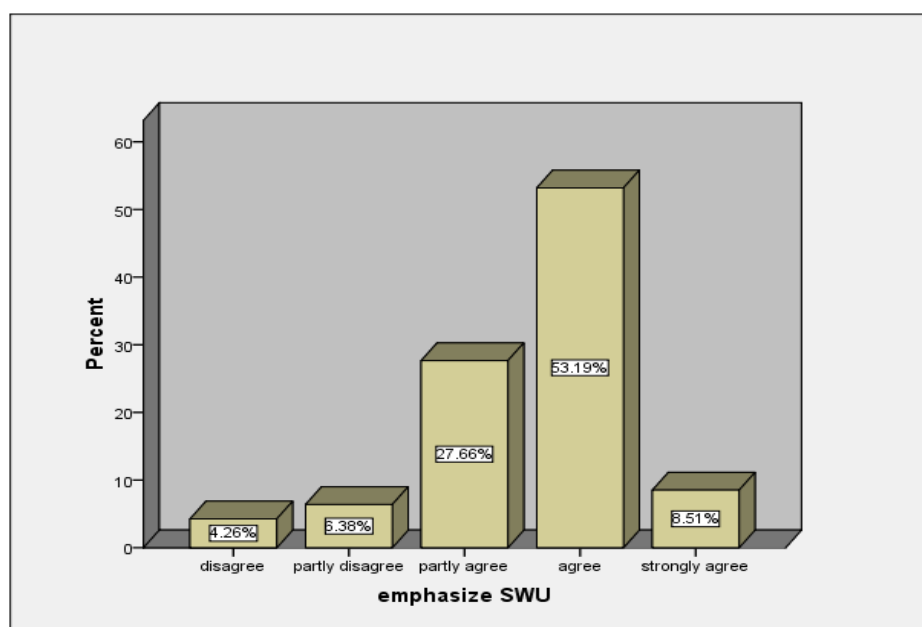
Table 38 above shows that 53.2%, which is more than half of the respondents, agree that the vocabulary content in the present textbooks put too much emphasis on single-word units; 27.7% and 8.5% of them partly and strongly agree, respectively, while 6.4% and 4.3% of the teacher respondents partly disagree and disagree with that statement, respectively. Table 33 and Chart 7 provide further description of the data, which shows that the mode for Item 5 is 5 (agree), which further supports that the majority of respondents agree that the vocabulary content in the present textbooks puts too much emphasis on single-word units. This finding suggests that this is one of the aspects of vocabulary content that needs to be further re-examined.

5.3.6 Teachers' view with respect to the inclusion of more multi-word units in the present textbooks

Table 39 and Chart 8 below present the results with respect to Item 6 in the questionnaire: whether the vocabulary content in the present textbooks needs to include more MWUs or not.

Table 39: Inclusion of more multi-word units

	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
2 Disagree	2	4.3	4.3
3 Partly disagree	1	2.1	6.4
4 Partly agree	2	4.3	10.6
5 Agree	30	**63.8**	74.5
6 Strongly agree	12	25.5	100.0
Total	47	100.0	

Chart 8: Inclusion of more multi-word units
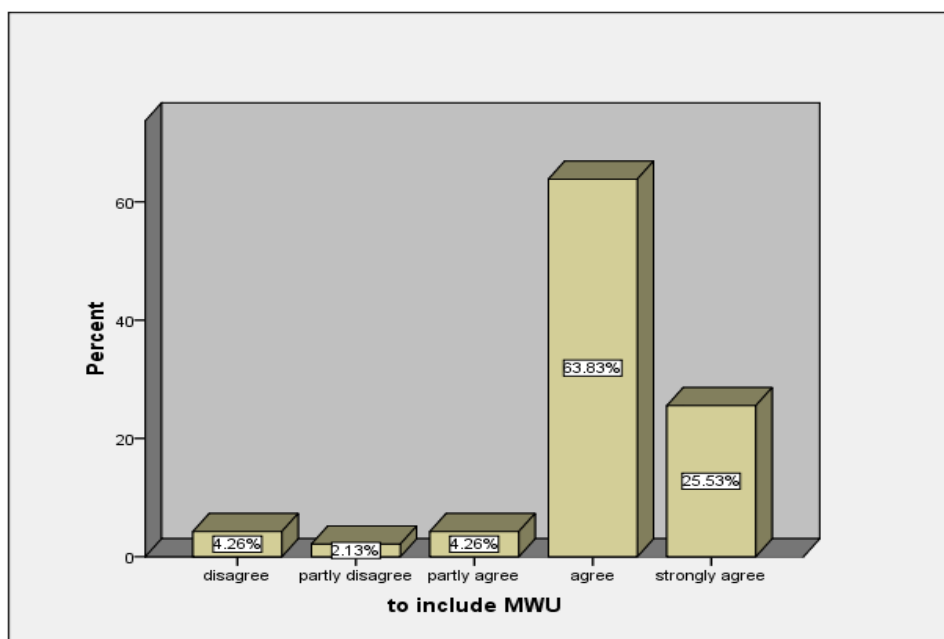
Table 39 above shows that a very high percentage of the respondents (63.3%) agree and 25.5% of them strongly agree that the vocabulary content in the present textbooks needs to include more MWUs. This finding is further explained by the summary statistics in Table 33, which show that the mode for Item 6 is 5 (agree). Only 4.3% of them partly agree and disagree, while the least number of respondents (2.1%) partly disagree with the statement. This finding clearly indicates that the present vocabulary content needs to be re-evaluated and that the inclusion of more MWUs should be considered.

To summarize, the analysis of Items 1 to 6 in the teachers' questionnaire has revealed a number of important findings. Although the teachers generally believe that the vocabulary content in the present textbooks is still relevant to the language needs of the learners (see 5.3.3) and helps to increase learners' understanding (see 5.3.1) and

fluency (see 5.3.2) in the target language, the teachers recognized the need for improvement (see 5.3.4). This is because they believe that too much emphasis is given to single-word units (see 5.3.5), while the content with respect to MWUs, like PVs, which they believe is important in language learning, is still insufficient (5.3.6). Closer examination of the vocabulary content in the learners' textbooks also revealed that MWUs, in the particular case of PVs, are not given adequate treatment in the textbooks (see Chapter 8). Perhaps it is time for the relevant authorities (e.g. syllabus designers, Ministry of Education) to take the necessary action, such as re-examining the present vocabulary content and to reconsider the inclusion of more MWUs in the learners' textbooks.

Despite the lack of attention given to MWUs, such as PVs, in the learner's textbooks, it is very interesting to know that a large number of teachers surveyed do teach and expose learners to this language form. Further discussion on this is presented in the following section.

5.4   Teachers reasons for teaching MWUs like PVs

This sub-section will discuss and present the findings for items 7 to 17 in the teachers' questionnaire, which focuses on the teaching of MWUs, particularly PVs. Table 40 below shows the frequency of teachers who teach MWUs in language classrooms.

Table 40: Frequency of teachers who teach MWUs in classrooms.

	Frequency (f)	Per cent (%)	Cumulative Per cent (%)
Yes	45	95.7	**95.7**
No	2	4.3	100.0
Total	47	100.0	

The results in Table 40 show that 95.7% of the teacher respondents reported that they do teach MWUs in their language classrooms. Even though the teaching of MWUs is not highly emphasized in school textbooks, they are not totally overlooked by teachers, as the majority of teachers do teach this language form to their students. One of the reasons is probably that teachers are aware of the significant role of MWUs like PVs in helping learners to gain mastery of the target language (see 5.4.1; 5.4.2; 5.4.3; 5.4.4). A number of teachers have also reported in the questionnaire that they usually teach this language form indirectly in language classrooms.

Table 40 above also indicates that there is a small percentage of respondents, 4.3%, who do not teach MWUs in language classrooms. Even though the percentage is very low, it may affect a larger number of students because each language teacher usually teaches not less than three English language classes with 30 to 40 students in each class. These teachers have indicated a number of reasons for not teaching this form, which is discussed in 5.4.5.

5.4.1   MWUs are important aspect of language

An analysis was carried out to examine the reasons teachers gave for teaching MWUs in language classrooms. A summary of the statistics for Items 8 to 11 in the teachers' questionnaire is presented in Table 41 below.

Table 41: Reasons for teaching MWUs

	Important aspect (Item 8)	Useful for learners (Item 9)	Improve understanding (Item 10)	Improve fluency (Item 11)
N	45	45	45	45
Mode	5	5	5	5

Table 41 above presents the results of the descriptive statistics for each of the reasons for the teaching of MWUs. It shows that the mode for all items (Items 8, 9, 10 and 11) is 5 (agree). Further analysis of each item is presented in Table 42 below.

Table 42: MWUs are an important aspect of language

	Frequency (f)	Per cent (%)	Cumulative Per cent (%)
2 Disagree	1	2.1	2.2
4 Partly agree	6	12.8	15.6
5 Agree	20	**42.6**	60.0
6 Strongly agree	18	38.3	100.0
Total	45	95.7	

Chart 9: MWUs are an important aspect of language
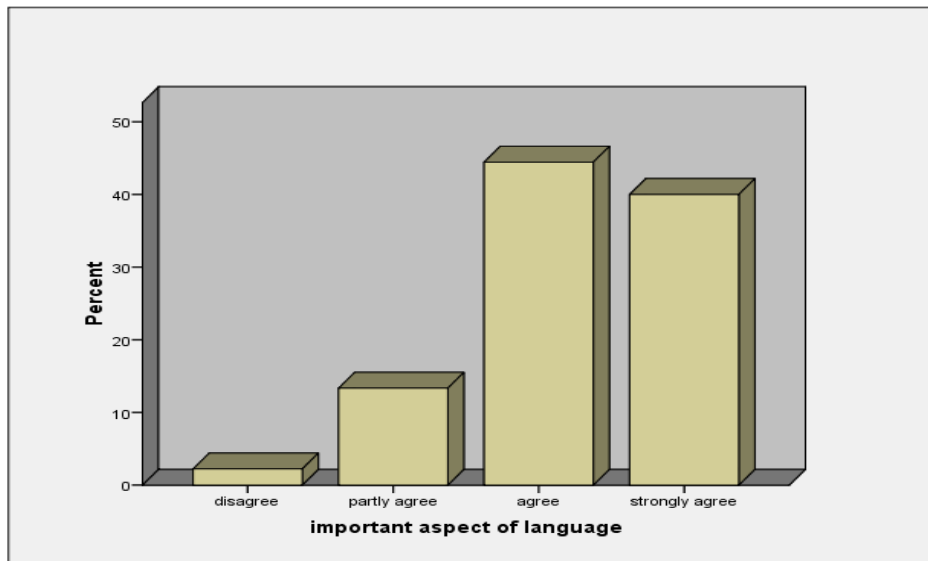
The results in Table 42 and the bar graph above (Chart 9) show that 42.6% of the respondents who teach MWUs agree that they teach this feature because it is an important aspect of language learning. In fact, 38.3% of them indicate strong agreement to this. Only 12.8% of them partly agree with this reason. The summary of statistics presented in Table 41 also show that the mode for Item 8 is 5 (agree), suggesting that the majority of teacher respondents believe that MWU is an important language form that learners need to learn.

5.4.2 MWUs are useful for learners

Item 9 in the questionnaire examined the second reason for the teaching of MWUs: its usefulness for learners. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 43 below.

Table 43: MWUs are useful for learners

	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
2 Disagree	1	2.1	2.2
4 Partly agree	2	4.3	6.7
5 Agree	22	**46.8**	55.6
6 Strongly agree	20	42.6	100.0
Total	45	95.7	

Chart 10: MWUs are useful for learners
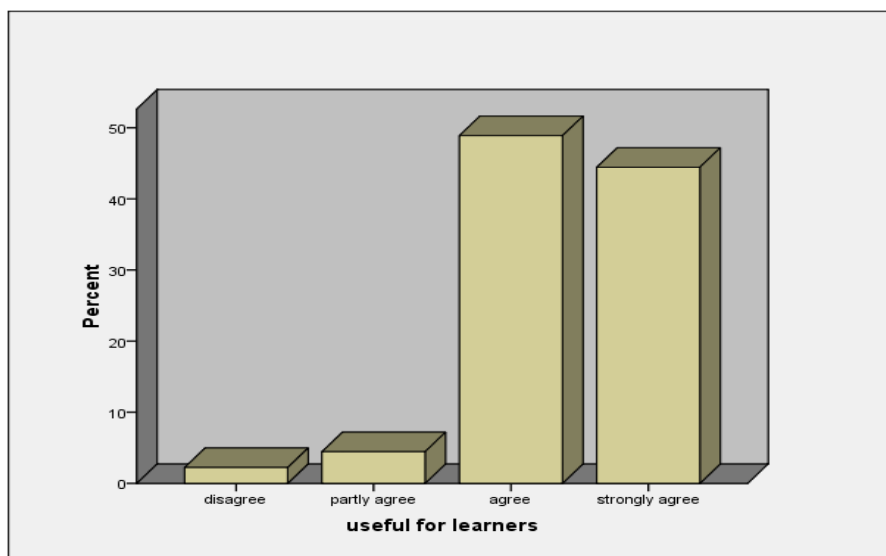
The descriptive statistics presented in Table 43 above show that 46.8% of the respondents who teach MWUs agree and 42.6% of them strongly agree that they teach MWUs because they are very useful for students. This is further explained by the summary of statistics presented in Table 41, which also indicates that the mode for Item 9 is 5 (agree). Chart 10 further illustrates the distribution of scores in which the majority of respondents belongs to groups 5 (agree) and 6 (strongly agree), indicating that most teacher respondents are aware of the usefulness of MWUs to learners. Only a small percentage (4.3%) of the respondents partly agrees with this reason.

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5.4.3   MWUs improves learners' understanding of the language

The effectiveness of MWUs in improving learners' understanding of the target language is the next reason examined in the questionnaire (Item 10). The results of the analysis are presented in Table 44 and Chart 11 below.

Table 44: MWUs improves learners' understanding of the language

	Frequency	*Per cent*	*Cumulative Per cent*
2 Disagree	1	2.1	2.2
4 Partly agree	4	8.5	11.1
5 Agree	23	**48.9**	62.2
6 Strongly agree	17	36.2	100.0
Total	45	95.7	

Chart 11: MWUs improves learners' understanding of the language
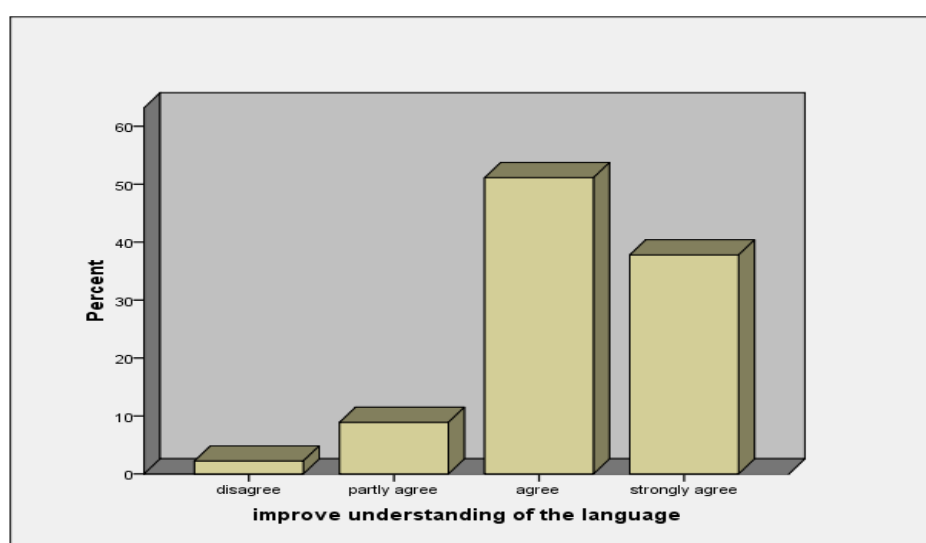
Table 44 above shows that 48.9% of the respondents who teach MWUs strongly agree that they teach this language form because it is effective in improving learners' understanding of the target language; 36.2% of them strongly agree, while 8.5% of the respondents partly agree with the stated reason. Chart 11 above clearly illustrates that

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the majority of respondents are grouped in 5 (agree) and 6 (strongly agree) categories, indicating that most of them teach MWUs because they believe it is effective in improving learners' understanding of the target language.

5.4.4   MWUs increase learners' fluency in the language

The next item (Item 11) in the questionnaire is to determine whether teachers teach MWUs because they are aware of the effectiveness of MWUs to increase learners' fluency in the target language. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 45 and Chart 12 below.

Table 45: MWUs increase learners' fluency in the language

	Frequency	*Per cent*	*Cumulative Per cent*
2 Disagree	1	2.1	2.2
4 Partly agree	8	17.0	20.0
5 Agree	21	**44.7**	66.7
6 Strongly agree	15	31.9	100.0
Total	45	95.7	
Missing System	2	4.3	
	47	100.0	

Chart 12: MWUs increase learners' fluency in the language

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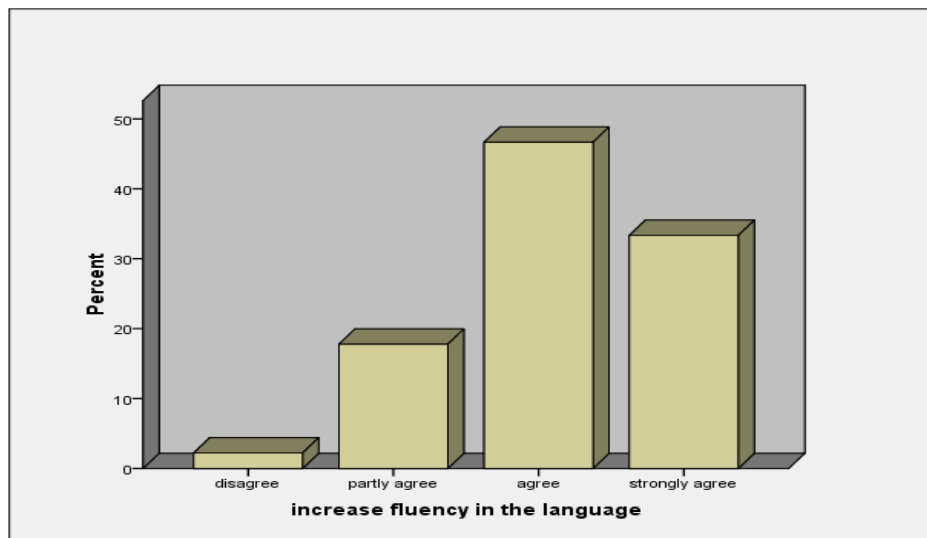
Table 45 above shows that a high percentage (44.7%) of the respondents who teach MWUs agree that they teach this language form as they found it effective in improving learners' fluency in the target language. In fact, 31.9% of them show strong agreement with this reason. The summary statistics presented in Table 41 also indicate that the mode for Item 11 is 5 (agree); and Chart 12 further illustrates that the majority of the respondents are grouped in 5 (agree) and 6 (strongly agree) categories, suggesting that the highest percentage of respondents believe MWUs are effective in improving learners' fluency in the target language.

To sum up, the findings of Items 8 to 11 above indicate that despite the lack of emphasis given to MWUs (i.e. PVs), it is good to know that most of the teachers surveyed reported that they do teach this form as they are aware of the importance and usefulness of this language form for learners to gain fluency in the target language.

5.4.5 Reasons for not teaching MWUs

Although the majority of respondents are aware of the significant role of MWUs in language learning, my earlier discussion (see 5.4) indicated that there is a small number of teacher respondents (4.3%) who reported that they do not teach MWUs. Further analysis was conducted to identify the reasons for not teaching this language form. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 46 below.

Table 46: Reasons for not teaching MWUs

	Not sure	*Not important*	*Not in syllabus*	*Not tested*
1	strongly agree	partly agree	agree	agree
2	partly disagree	disagree	partly agree	partly agree
Total N	2	2	2	2

Table 46 above shows that the first respondent reported that he/she 'strongly agreed' that uncertainty of what MWUs really are, was the reason for not teaching this language form. This teacher also 'agreed' that MWUs are not taught because they are not in the syllabus and not tested. Unlike the first respondent, the second one disagreed that MWUs are not important and also disagreed that uncertainty about what MWUs are was a reason for not teaching this feature. Instead, he/she partly agreed that this form is not taught because it is not in the syllabus and not tested. In other words, 'not in syllabus' and 'not tested' seem to be the common reasons for both teachers for not teaching this important language form.

Closer examination of the respondents' profile provided on the first page of the questionnaire indicates that the respondents who do not teach MWUs are young language teachers with less than 5 years teaching experience. This suggests that teaching experience may also play a significant part towards teachers' awareness of what MWUs are and the importance of this feature. However, due to a very small sample size (only 2 respondents), further analysis to test this assumption could not be carried out to reach a stronger conclusion. However, regardless of the small sample size, this preliminary finding is very useful in drawing the attention of relevant authorities so that further investigation with larger sample sizes can be conducted to confirm this finding.

5.4.6   Conclusion

To summarize, the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire discussed above revealed that the majority of the respondents believe that the present vocabulary contents need improvement, particularly contents with respect to MWUs, which they believed are still

lacking. Although most teachers reported teaching MWUs in classrooms, young and less experienced teachers show uncertainty in teaching this language form, suggesting the need for more training and short courses, for this group of teachers. Most importantly, the inclusion of content with respect to MWUs in Malaysian school textbooks, as well as in school tests and public examinations, should also be considered. Realizing the ever-increasing importance of English, internationally, and in the Malaysian context, in particular, perhaps it is time to re-examine or revise the vocabulary content included in the present English language school textbooks to ensure that learners are provided with the necessary knowledge concerning the target language (English) for them to communicate fluently and effectively in the real world.

CHAPTER SIX

METHODOLOGY FOR CORPUS ANALYSIS

6.0   Introduction

This chapter will discuss the second method used in the present study, that is, corpus analysis. This research was carried out to complement the findings based on the PVs test conducted earlier (see Chapter 5). In order to understand the overall ability of learners to use a particular aspect of language, it is important to look at both their 'receptive' and 'productive' skills (see 3.1.1). While the findings presented in Chapter 5 provide a general overview of the level of understanding of learners with respect to PVs, analyzing patterns of PVs commonly produced by learners will provide further information about their actual use of this language form, and the problems they typically encounter.

Corpus analysis and corpus studies are considered an increasingly popular method of language analysis, particularly with the advances in computer technology. This is because corpus linguistics allows the investigation of an enormous amount of language data, which can be easily accessed on personal computers. Most importantly, corpus analysis can provide empirical evidence based on learners' actual production of the language, rather than relying on intuition, which is not always accurate. In other words, corpus linguistics provides "completely new evidence about how the language is used" (Sinclair 1991: 2). However, despite the many benefits of using corpus analysis in

language studies including in language teaching and learning, many researchers, teachers, and material designers, particularly in Malaysia, are still unaware of what corpus linguistics can offer them, mainly because this linguistic approach is not very well-established in the country. Thus, it is hoped that the present findings, which integrate the use of corpus data, will increase awareness in Malaysia of the new method of language analysis, a method that is both systematic and convenient.

The present corpus analysis will involve analyzing two main corpora: the Bank of English Corpus (BoE), which consists of native speakers' texts (see 6.1), and the English of Malaysian Students Corpus (EMAS), a learner corpus that consists of texts produced by school learners of English in Malaysia (see 6.2). The results of the corpus analysis will be presented in chapter 7.

6.1   The Bank of English Corpus (BoE)

The BoE corpus is selected in the present study as a reference corpus to represent the common and frequent patterns of written and spoken English produced by native speakers. At present, this corpus contains approximately 450 million words and is further divided into 20 sub-corpora, which comprise written and spoken texts taken from a wide range of sources including papers, books, magazines, and public radio (see Table 39). The texts include British English (71.6%), North American English (20.6%), and Australian English (7.8%) varieties. However, the percentage of written texts is much larger than the spoken sub-corpora, with 86% and 14%, respectively. Most texts (60%) are drawn from newspapers, magazines or journals.

Table 47: The sub-corpora that make up the Bank of English corpus

Name of sub-corpora	No. of words in sub-corpora	Details of content
times	51,884,209	UK *Times & Sunday Times*
sunnow	44,756902	UK *Sun & News of the World*
brmags	44,150,323	UK Magazines
brbooks	43,367,592	UK Books
oznews	34,940,271	Australian Newspapers
usbooks	32,437,160	US Books
guard	32,274,484	UK *Guardian*
indy	28,075,280	UK *Independent*
npr	22,232,422	US National Public Radio
brspoken	20,078,901	UK Spoken
bbc	18,604,882	BBC Radio
strathy	15,920,137	Canadian mixed written
econ	15,716,140	UK *Economist*
usnews	10,002,620	US Newspapers
wbe	9,648,371	UK Business
newsci	7,894,959	UK *New Scientist*
usacad	6,341,888	US Academic Books
brephem	4,640,529	UK Ephemera
usephem	3,506,272	US Ephemera
usspok	2,023,482	US Spoken
Total no. of words	**448,496,824**	

The above figures are based on the state of the corpus in July 2010.

The great advantage of using this corpus is due to its large number of words: this makes it possible to analyze various lexical and grammatical patterns with respect to PVs, as well as their various senses (literal and metaphorical), as commonly produced by native speakers.

6.2 The English of Malaysian Students Corpus (EMAS)

The English of Malaysian School Students (EMAS) corpus is a collection of approximately 472,652 words of both written and spoken texts gathered from 872 language learners in selected primary (Year 5) and secondary schools (Form 1 and Form 4) in Malaysia. The EMAS was compiled by a group of researchers in Universiti Putra Malaysia (Arshad Abd. Samad et al. 2002). The written texts consist of various types of essay including narrative, picture and school based essays, while the spoken data consist of interviews and verbal essays. The size of the written sub-corpora is five times larger than the spoken one, with approximately 402,118 words in the written and 70,515 words in the spoken sub-corpora. Table 40 presents a detailed breakdown of the EMAS corpus according to level and tasks assigned during the data collection.

Table 48: Number of words in EMAS according to level and tasks

Level	Written			Oral		Total
	Happiest Day	Picture Essay	School Based	Interview & Verbal Essay	Verbal Essay	
Year 5	37,680	32,454	12,084	12,269	7,289	101,776
Form 1	40,504	49,073	28,776	14,099	7,743	140,195
Form 4	67,801	85,119	48,452	18,258	10,857	23,087
Total	145,985	166,821	89,312	44,626	25,889	472,652

(source: The EMAS corpus manual)

The table shows that the EMAS corpus consists of mainly narrative texts. The written texts were collected in the form of three essays. The first essay was based on a picture series (see Appendix 10), the second essay was an essay entitled "The happiest day of my life", and the third essay was a school based essay that was selected from the students' list of written works. All texts were highly narrative in nature. The spoken texts were taken from oral interview and verbal essays. The oral interview consisted of a brief self introduction, a question requiring the respondents to briefly discuss a process and another question requires students to express their opinion (see Appendix 11). In the verbal essay, the respondents were required to narrate the picture sequence used in the written essay (see Appendix 10). In other words, the interview topics were closely related to learners' personal experience and daily routines, which resulted in the production of texts that were also narrative in nature.

The reason for choosing the EMAS corpus in the present study is because, at present, it is the only available corpus in Malaysia that focuses on language learners at lower levels of language learning (primary and secondary): the group of learners targeted in the present study. There are a few other learner corpora available in Malaysia, developed by groups of researchers in different local universities. The three most notable corpora are the Malaysian Corpus of Learner English (MACLE) and the Corpus of Malaysian English (COMEL), which are corpus projects at the University of Malaya (Knowles and Zuraidah 2004); and the Corpus Archive of Learner English Sabah/Sarawak (CALES), which is a corpus under development by a team of researchers at different universities in Sabah and Sarawak (Botley et al., 2005). As the

present study aims to focus on language learners at school level, the MACLE, COMEL and CALES corpora cannot be used as they concentrate entirely on learners at a higher level of learning (i.e. university students).

Another reason for selecting the EMAS corpus is the lack of time to develop my own corpus because corpus building is a large and complex task, and the main focus of this study is the teaching and learning of PVs in Malaysia, rather than the description of Malaysian learners' English. However, even though the EMAS corpus does not cover a wide range of texts, and lacks naturalness in speech production (as texts were produced in a controlled environment), the data is generally good enough to provide some useful insights into the use of common PVs produced by Malaysian learners of English, particularly those at the lower level of language learning (i.e. primary and secondary school level).

6.3   Phrasal verbs and particles selected in the study

The selection of PVs to be further examined with respect to their lexical and grammatical patterns is based on the results of PVs test conducted (see Chapter 5). Table 41 below presents the frequency *(f)* and mean *(µ)* of errors for each of the particles tested in the earlier PVs test.

Table 49: Frequency and mean of errors for each particle

Particles (Part.)	Frequency of errors (f)	Mean (μ)
across (1 item)	358	358.0
up (9 items)	1542	171.0
out (6 items)	742	123.0
off (3 items)	359	119.6
down (6 items)	480	80.0
on (6 items)	364	60.6
for (1 item)	56	56.0
away (1 item)	47	47.0
back (5 items)	213	42.6
into (2 items)	483	241.5

Table 41 clearly shows that particle *across* in *come across* is ranked first in the list of items with the highest mean of incorrect response ($\mu=358$). This is followed by particles *up* ($\mu=171$), *out* ($\mu=123$), *off* ($\mu=119.6$) and *down* ($\mu=80$). The reason for having just one PV with particle *across* (i.e. *come across*) in the PVs test is that very few PVs include *across*. Gardner and Davies (2007) found that the particle *across* is the least frequent particle in the native speaker corpus; and the *Collins COBUILD Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs* only includes six PVs with *across*. However, as far as PVs with the particle *across* and *into* are concerned, just four examples of PVs with *across* and no examples of PVs with *into* appear in the EMAS corpus. Thus, due to the insufficient data for further examination on typical patterns of *come across*, *look into* and *run into* to be carried out, the present study will concentrate on the next four particles in which many learners have responded incorrectly in the PVs test: *up, out, off, down*, with no further discussion of PVs with *across* and *into.* However, with much larger corpora, *come across, look into* and *run into* might be interesting PVs to be

explored in future research. A brief discussion of *come across* based on the PVs test results is presented in 5.2.3.

As far as this study is concerned, the particles *up, out, off* and *down* are purposely selected for further investigation in the present study because PVs with these particles occur more frequently in the EMAS corpus and can provide rich data for further analysis, particularly with respect to regular patterns. Gardner and Davies (2007) found that these particles have high rates of occurrence with a large number of LVs (lexical verbs) in native speaker corpora, suggesting that these particles should be considered as very important, particularly to teachers, curriculum designers and material providers in preparing and designing "what might be best be used for pedagogical purposes" (p. 353). Despite the frequent occurrence of these particles, the results of the PVs test earlier show that PVs with these particles have a high mean of errors (see Table 41 above), suggesting that they are problematic for learners. Therefore, this study will further investigate the problems faced by learners in understanding and using PVs with these particles, specifically, by examining the lexical and grammatical patterns produced, thereby hoping to provide some possible explanations as to the problems they encountered.

6.4   Data gathering

There were several stages involved in gathering and preparing relevant data for the present study. As the EMAS corpus consists of untagged data, the first stage (Stage 1) involved a tagging process using CLAWS, an automated part-of-speech (POS) tagger

from the University Centre for Computer Corpus Research on Language (UCREL) owned by the Lancaster University, which is available online. As the size of the EMAS corpus is small (see 6.2), the data was tagged using the CLAWS free trial service at http://www.comp.lancs.ac.uk/ucrel/claws/trial.html. The CLAWS tagger was reported to have an accuracy rate of 96% and an error rate of 1.15% of all words in the British National Corpus (BNC) (Leech, Garside and Bryant 1994), which is considered acceptable as BNC is a large corpus and consists of texts produced by native speakers. As far as the EMAS corpus is concerned, it is expected that there will be some tagging errors, at a rate slightly higher than the one in BNC, since EMAS is a small corpus and consists of texts produced by ESL learners with many errors. Therefore, in order to increase the accuracy level, all examples extracted from the EMAS corpus were manually scrutinized to ensure they were accurately tagged before further analysis was carried out.

The purpose of conducting POS tagging is to facilitate the analysis of data, in which every single word in texts will be automatically classified according to their respective categories (noun, pronoun, verb, etc). All particles will be tagged as AVP by the CLAWS tagger, as the majority of PVs is made up of LV+AVP combination. This procedure will help to extract all instances of PVs in LV+AVP structure and eliminate prepositional verbs (PRPVs) in LV+PRP form. This distinction is necessary as *'up'* for instance can function as a PRP (in PRPVs) and AVP (in PVs), as shown in the examples below.

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They went *up* the hill. (PRP)   : *went up* is a PRPV

He went *up* to his room. (AVP)   : *went up* is a PV

However, as far as the CLAWS tagger is concerned, there are a number of instances in which PRPs that act as particles (Prt) are still tagged as PRPs by the CLAWS tagger instead of as AVPs. For instance, the particle *up* in PV *clean up* extracted from the tagged EMAS was inaccurately tagged as a PRP (e.g. cleaned_VVD up_PRP myself_PNX), and in other cases it was accurately tagged as an AVP (e.g. to_TO0 clean_VVI up_AVP ourselves_PNX). Therefore, to increase the accuracy of the tagged data, and to ensure the examples taken were true examples of PVs, they were also scrutinized manually.

After the EMAS corpus was tagged, the second stage (Stage 2) was to transfer the tagged data to language analysis software (WordSmith Tools version 5 (WS5)) for further analysis. WS Tools was chosen as it not only helps me to access and analyze corpus data conveniently on my computer, but, most importantly, the reliability of this particular corpus analysis tool has been verified by previous studies, which used WS to analyze texts in various corpora (e.g. Flowerdew 2003; Nelson 2000; Mukundan 2004; Scott 2001; Henry & Roseberry 2001; Bondi 2001). As the present study focuses on lexical and grammatical patterns, I found that WS5 was very helpful. The WS5 also claims to be "software for finding patterns in text" (http://www.lexicalanalysis.co.uk/ LexicalAnalysisSoftware/ index.htmlxxx). Added to that, the Concord function in particular, is really useful in analyzing patterns as it "renders keywords in context ... in numerous contexts and with co-texts to the left and right....the ability to re-sort lines

based on whether words preceded or followed the keyword" (Prinsloo and Prinsloo 2011: 99). Furthermore, other major functions of Concord (e.g. collocates, plot, patterns, clusters) offer detailed analysis, which can be conducted with respect to phraseological behaviour and patterns, the main focus of the present study.

In the second stage of data gathering (Stage 2), WS5 is required to identify and report every instance of AVP *up, out, off* and *down* found in the EMAS corpus. The AVP could be immediately adjacent to the lexical verb (LV+AVP), or within two words (LV+X+AVP) as in:

> *pick* (LV) *up* (AVP) the phone

> *pick* (LV) it (X) *up* (AVP)

Even though PVs can also appear within three words (LV+X+X+AVP) or more, the present study will only focus on those of two (e.g. *pick up*), and three (e.g. *pick it up*) varieties because it was reported that occurrences of PVs with longer separations are relatively infrequent (Gardner and Davies 2007: 345). Moreover, considering the learners' level of language learning (primary and secondary level), it is fairly difficult for them to produce PVs with longer separations. Table 42 below summarizes the results from the data gathering process in Stage 2.

Table 50:   Frequency of AVP *up, down, out* and *off* in the EMAS

Adverb particles (AVPs)	LV+AVP and LV+X+AVP constructions (*f*)
up	946
down	630
out	538
off	80

Table 42 above shows 946 instances of AVP *up*, 630 instances of AVP *down*, 538 instances of AVP *out* and 80 instances of AVP *off* in the form of two-word (LV+AVP) and three-word (LV+X+AVP) constructions, extracted from the EMAS corpus, which will be a focus of analysis in the present study.

Following this, the next stage (Stage 3) involved WS5 queries to identify all instances of LV and their inflections that are frequently attached to the identified AVPs (*up, down, out, off)* in LV+AVP and LV+X+AVP structures. As a result of this stage, a list was produced of LV lemmas frequently attached to each of the AVPs in the two structures. For the purpose of the present study, only the top six LV lemmas frequently attached to each of the AVPs were considered for further investigation. The reason for choosing these top six LV lemmas is because they provide sufficient rich data for analysis purposes. A summary of the results obtained from data gathering in Stage 3 is presented in Table 43 below.

Table 51: LV lemmas frequently attached to the selected AVPs

Adverb particles (AVPs)	LV lemmas in LV+AVP and LV+X+AVP structures *(f)*					
up	wake (230)	pick (165)	get (53)	set (38)	go (19)	make (7)
down	fall (301)	calm (34)	go (29)	jump (26)	put (24)	drop (6)
out	go (112)	come (84)	pull (44)	find (43)	get (39)	take (33)
off	take (15)	show (6)	switch (6)	go (6)	set (4)	get (3)

After completing all the three stages of data gathering discussed above, a list of PVs was finally produced for further analysis, which include the top four AVPs (*up, down, out* and *off*) that were found to be problematic to learners, as well as the top six LV lemmas frequently attached to these selected AVPs. Therefore, the final data consists of a total of 24 PVs, which include *wake up, pick up, get up, set up, go up* and *make up* (LV lemmas + AVP *up*); *fall down, calm down, go down*, *jump down, put down,* and *drop down* (LV lemmas + AVP *down*); *go out, come out, pull out*, *find out*, *get out* and *take out* (LV lemmas + AVP *out*), and, finally, *take off*, *show off*, *switch off* , *go off*, *set off* and *get off* (LV lemmas + AVP *off*). To summarize, below is a chart to illustrate the three main stages involved in the data gathering process.

Chart 13: Stages of Data Gathering

Stage 1

> Tagging of the EMAS data using
> CLAWS part-of-speech tagger

Stage 2

> Extracting all instances of AVPs
> *up, out, off, down* in LV+AVP
> and LV+X+AVP structures

Stage 3

> Extracting the top six LV
> lemmas frequently attached to
> each of the AVPs in LV+AVP
> and LV+X+AVP structures

Final data

> A list of PVs to be examined:
> 24 PVs altogether in both two-
> word (LV+AVP) and three-word
> (LV+X+AVP) forms
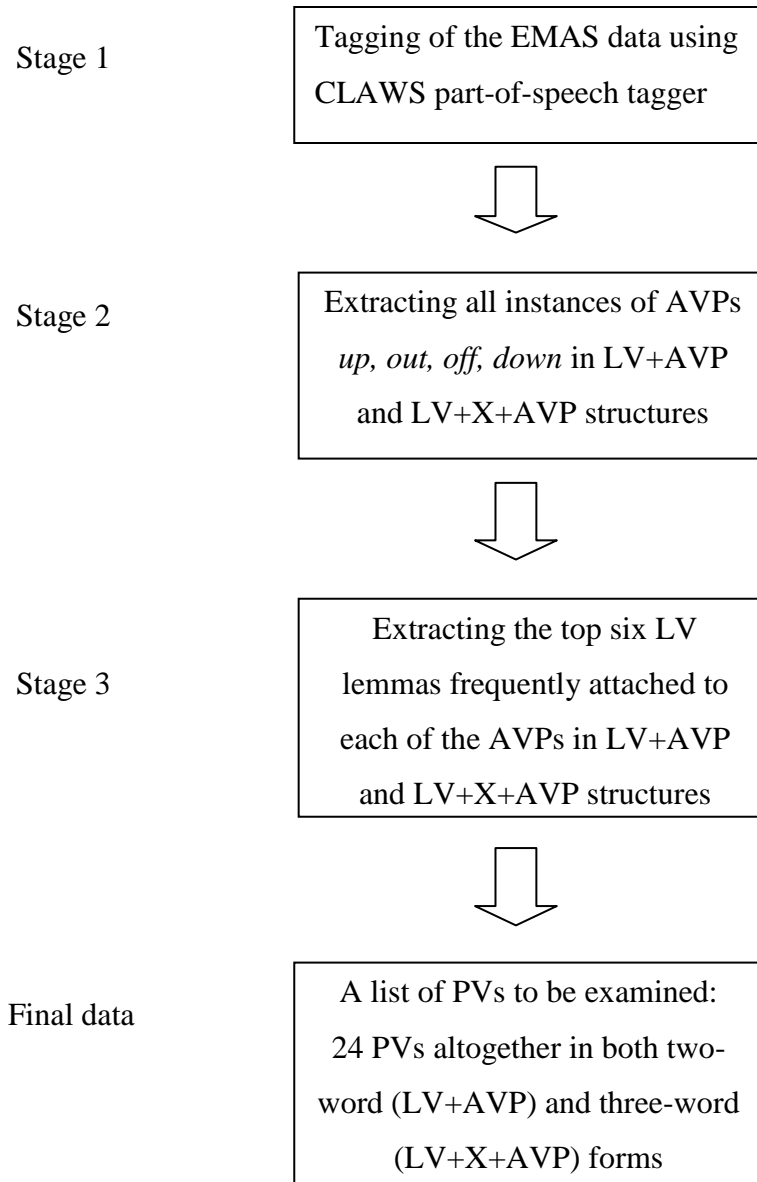
6.5   Data analysis

The next stage was to analyze the final data gathered in 6.4 above. Analysis included

distributions of the selected PVs in LV+AVP and LV+X+AVP constructions, and the

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main analysis focused on the lexical and grammatical patterns of the chosen PVs, as produced by learners in the EMAS corpus, which were to provide useful information with respect to problems faced by learners in using these PVs. At the same time, the Bank of English (BoE) corpus was used as a reference corpus in order to understand norms of use, including regular patterns of use, in PVs produced by native speakers of English. To further understand the various meanings of the selected PVs, the *Collins COBUILD Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs,* which was developed using the Birmingham Collection of English text, a forerunner to the BoE, was also used as an additional source of reference. Thus, based on the patterns identified, explanations of common problems faced by learners in understanding and using these PVs will be provided, taking into account possible factors, such as learners' lexical knowledge, influence of learners' L1, and awareness of regular patterns. Another important factor, which will also be examined is reference materials (i.e. school textbooks and learner dictionaries). The earlier findings reported in Chapter 5 showed that many teachers in the survey reported a degree of dissatisfaction with the present vocabulary content, particularly with respect to MWUs like PVs. Thus, detailed examination of learners' textbooks and dictionaries was carried out, the results of which are presented in Chapter 8.

Chart 14 overleaf summarizes the different stages involved in data analysis.

Chart 14: Stages of Data Analysis

Stage 1

> To identify learners' problems
> by analysing lexical and
> grammatical patterns of the
> selected PVs in the EMAS corpus

Stage 2

> To identify common lexical and
> grammatical patterns of the
> selected PVs produced by native
> speakers (BoE corpus)

Stage 3

> To provide explanations to
> problems faced by learners in
> understanding and using the
> selected PVs
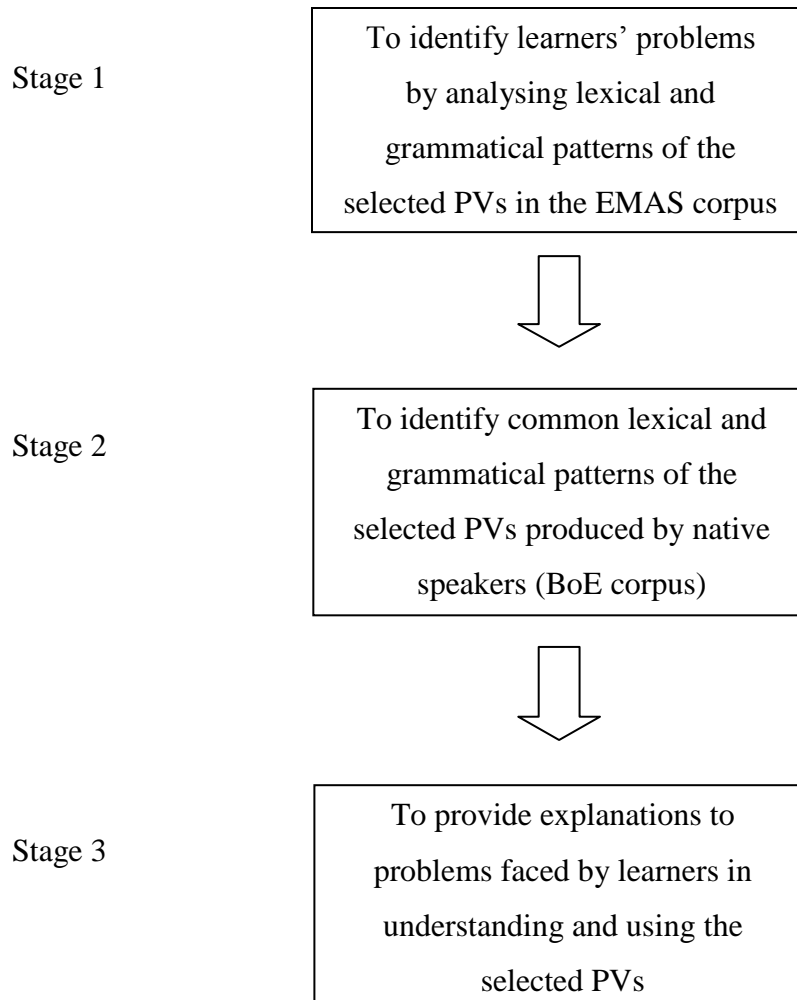
CHAPTER SEVEN

CORPUS FINDINGS

7.0 Introduction

This chapter will discuss corpus findings based on the analysis of the 24 selected PVs mentioned in Chapter 6 (i.e. PVs with particles *up, out, off* and *down*). The findings include the distributions of these PVs, as found in the learner corpus (EMAS), as well as the problems faced by learners in understanding and using them based on the lexical and grammatical patterns produced by learners in comparison with those of adult native speakers (BoE corpus). As the study focusses on patterns of PVs produced, thus detailed discussion of this will be presented while issues with respect to over-use or under-use of PVs will not be further explored. This is for a clear reason that the two corpora are not comparable in terms of size, learners' age as well as their language proficiency level.

While the two corpora are not directly comparable, analysis of the selected PVs has revealed a number of interesting and useful findings with respect to the patterns of PVs found in the EMAS corpus. A particularly important finding is that the deviant patterns and non-standard use of these PVs in comparison to the norm found in the BoE corpus is most often related to the influence of learners' L1 (Malay). In addition, the lexical knowledge as well as the lack of awareness of regular patterns of PVs of learners (e.g. common collocates) are also found to be possible contributing factors to the inappropriate use of these PVs. The findings presented in this chapter further support those discussed in Chapter 5, and provide useful confirmation of the supposition that

Malaysian learners of English face particular difficulty in understanding and using PVs. As this is a pioneering research that integrates the use of corpus data in examining problems faced by Malaysian learners with respect to PVs, I believe many parties will benefit from the findings of this study.

7.1 Results of PVs with AVP *up*

This sub-section will present distributions of PVs with the particle *up* in the EMAS corpus and is followed by detailed discussions of each of the selected PVs in relation to their lexical and grammatical patterns. A number of factors that might be associated with the patterns produced will then be highlighted.

7.1.1 Distributions of PVs with the AVP *up*

Table 44 presents distributions of LV lemmas with the particle *up* in the EMAS corpus. The frequency of occurrence *(f)* for each of these combinations (LV+AVP *up* and LV+X+AVP *up*) produced by students in each level (P5, F1 and F4) is presented below.

Table 52: Distributions of LV lemmas + AVP *up* in the EMAS

LV lemmas	*LV + AVP up structure (f)*	*LV + X + AVP up structure (f)*	*Total No. of occurrences (f)*
wake	**218** P5: 63 F1: 64 F4: 91	**12** P5: 1 F1: 2 F4: 9	**230** P5: 64 F1: 66 F4: 100
pick	**137** P5: 24 F1: 50 F4: 63	**28** P5: 4 F1: 2 F4: 22	**165** P5: 28 F1: 52 F4: 85
get	**53** P5: 10 F1: 13 F4: 30	**0** P5: 0 F1: 0 F4: 0	**53** P5: 10 F1: 13 F4: 30
pull	**4** P5: 1 F1: 2 F4: 1	**36** P5: 9 F1: 10 F4: 17	**40** P5: 10 F1: 12 F4: 18
set	**38** P5: 0 F1: 2 F4: 36	**0** P5: 0 F1: 0 F4: 0	**38** P5: 0 F1: 2 F4: 36
go	**19** P5: 5 F1: 10 F4: 4	**0** P5: 0 F1: 0 F4: 0	**19** P5: 5 F1: 10 F4: 4

Table 44 above shows that the top six PVs with the AVP *up* in the EMAS corpus include those with the LV lemmas *wake* (*f*=230), *pick* (*f*=165), *get* (*f*=53), *pull* (*f*=40), *set* (*f*=38), and *go* (*f*=19). One important finding is that, with the exception of the PV *go up*, students at the higher school level (F4) were found to produce a larger number of each PV investigated above in comparison to those at the lower school level (F1 and P5). The total frequency of occurrences of each PV investigated increases across school level (primary to secondary). The F4 learners produced these PVs approximately 2 to 3 times more often than those at the lower school level (P5). Even though the finding is not surprising, it further confirms the survey results (see 5.1.3) that learners at a higher level of learning not only show a better understanding of PVs, but they are also able to produce a larger number of PVs in their written and oral work in comparison to those at the lower school level. However, it is equally important to look at the learners' use of these PVs because the high frequency of occurrence may not guarantee appropriateness in usage. For instance, even though *wake up* and *pick up* have a high frequency of occurrence (see Table 44), it was found that PVs with AVP *up* have the highest percentage of incorrect responses compared to PVs with other particles under investigation (see 6.3). Thus, a detailed analysis of the patterns and appropriateness in the usage of these PVs needs to be conducted to identify the problems encountered by learners in using them.

Table 44 above also indicates that learners produced higher numbers of the LV+AVP compared to the LV+X+AVP form, thereby suggesting that learners are familiar and comfortable with the most basic structure of PVs (i.e. LV+AVP). However, the first two LV lemmas (*wake* and *pick*) and the fourth lemma in the list (*pull*) are found to appear with the AVP *up* in both structures (LV+AVP and LV+X+AVP), indicating that

learners are aware of the possibility of the PVs *wake up, pick up* and *pull up* appearing in these forms. Another important finding, which was not reported in previous studies (e.g. Liao and Fukuya 2004; Dagut and Laufer 1985; Akbari 2009) is that learners at a higher level of learning are also able to produce a larger number of PV variations (i.e. LV+X+AVP) in addition to the basic form (i.e. LV+AVP), in comparison to those at a lower level. This suggests that longer exposure to language learning not only increases their general understanding of the meanings of PVs (see 5.1.3), but also improves their understanding of different forms of PVs, which relates to the concept of 'separability' as in the PVs *wake up, pick up* and *pull up* above. Table 45 below shows examples of the PVs *wake up*, *pick up* and *pull up* in both structures, as extracted from the EMAS corpus according to the school level of learners.

Table 53: Examples of PVs *wake up, pick up*, and *pull up* in the LV+AVP and

LV+X+AVP structure in the EMAS corpus

School level / PVs	*Wake up*	*Pick up*	*Pull up*
Primary 5 (P5)	I *woke up* feeling fresh and happy. [SRBL-H-s5-06] From that day, I ask my mum to *wake* me *up* just in case. [SRBL-S-s5-18]	Amira and Lilian are *picking up* some flowers. [SRKG-I-s5-22] the tuisyen over, my father *pick* me *up*. [SKAC-s5-S-21]	Haris *pull up* Harris to the ground. [SKAC-s5-P-07] It was hard to *pull* Anna *up* as she was heavy. [SRMP-P-s5-23]

Form 1 (F1)	I *woke up* in the morning and found [SMART-H-f1-14]	Hasim, Ali and Raju *picked up* their fishing rods [SMMA-P-f1-26]	asked his friends to helped he *pulled up* Lina. [SMART-P-f1-05]
	up to the shore and tried to *wake* her *up* but they did not succeed. [SMTA-P-F1-01]	parents and my sister came to *pick* me *up*. [SMSAB-H-f1-19]	Ali and Ahmad *pulled* Halimah *up*. [SMART-P-f1-10]
Form 4 (F4)	We had to *wake up* early to catch the flight. [SMART-H-f4-11]	an idly yawning, I woke up and *picked up* the phone. [SMPM-P-f4-25]	to the river bank and Ramu *pulled up* the girl. [SMTA-P-f4-13]
	fall asleep. Then, a voice *woke* me *up*. "Where is Mummy?" I asked [SMART-H-f4-07]	So we decided to go and *pick* it *up*. [SMSAB-O-f4-01]	The girl grabbed the rod and I *pulled* her *up*. [SMSAB-P-f4-05]

Table 45 above shows that *wake up* and *pick up* appear more frequently in the LV+AVP form (*f*=218 and *f*=137, respectively), while the PV *pull up* seems to appear more frequently in the LV+X+AVP form (*f*=36) than in the LV+AVP form (*f*=4). One possible explanation for the low number of instances of *pull up* in the LV+AVP structure is due to the non-occurrence of a common meaning of *pull up* (a vehicle

slowing down or stopping) in the learner corpus. Analysing examples taken from the EMAS corpus, the PV *pull up* is more frequently used by learners in its literal meaning: to raise from a lower position to a higher one (see examples in Table 45 above). On the other hand, analysing the BoE corpus, *pull up* appears very frequently in the LV+AVP form in the sense 'a vehicle slowing down or stopping', as shown in a sample of concordance lines below:

```
          of the public that he had seen a car pull up outside the house with a handgun
     a pickup truck carrying 10 armed men pulled up outside her house in the town of
      Like a big question mark." A jeep pulled up outside the mcdonald's and three
       veranda and watched for the car to pull up in front of the house. I hope the
of the village, my new French friends pull up in their Renault. <p> Let us
          room to pick up some gear when Ray pulled up in his car. He wound down his
       Sarah, 23, and two friends as they pulled up in a taxi at 12.40am. Gardai are
walking home through Yerevan. A car pulled up and the rear door opened. Two
          around 3.30 when a black panel van pulled up and the driver spoke to him. As
            After Oona's burial, a truck pulled up and poured half a tonne of
```

The next analysis focuses on the PV *go up*, the only PV under investigation that is intransitive in form (does not take an object). Table 45 above clearly shows that the PV *go up* only appears in the first structure (LV+AVP) in the EMAS corpus, indicating that learners at all three levels (P5, F1 and F4) are aware of the impossibility of the separation of elements in this PV so that *go up* can only appear in the LV+AVP form. Another observation based on the results presented in Table 45 above is that, even though the PVs *get up* and *set up* can appear in both structures (e.g. '...your own computer, if you know how to *set* it *up*'/'carrying off competitions is what *gets* me *up* every morning.'), no instance of these PVs appears in LV+X+AVP in the learner corpus. One possible reason is that learners are not aware of or familiar with other forms of these PVs. Table 46 below shows the frequency of *get up* and *set up* in the LV+AVP and LV+X+AVP forms in the BoE corpus.

Table 54:   Frequent structures of *get up* and *set up* in the BoE corpus

PV structure	Frequency (f)	T-score
get up	353	18.7460
get us *up*	3	1.6537
get himself *up*	2	1.3872
get me *up*	2	1.2950

PV structure	Frequency (f)	T-score
set up	474	21.7225
set itself *up*	3	1.7294
set it *up*	3	1.5983
set yourself *up*	2	1.4124

Table 46 above shows the T-score of *get up* and *set up* in LV+AVP and LV+X+AVP forms taken from a random sample of 500 instances of each PV in the BoE corpus. The T-score shows that PVs *get up* and *set up* appear less frequently in the LV+X+AVP form (e.g. 'don't *get* me *up* in the morning'/'He *set* it *up* for me') compared to the LV + AVP form. Thus, this is possibly one of the reasons why learners are less familiar with this structure, which contributes to the non-occurrence of this form in the learner corpus.

Another interesting observation from the figures shown in Table 46 is that the number of occurrences of the PV *set up* produced by F4 students is approximately 18 times larger than those at a lower school level (F1 and P5), suggesting that this PV is produced by learners at a much later stage of language learning. As *set up* is a common PV (see Gardner and Davies, 2007) and useful to learners, it deserves better attention in language classrooms and perhaps needs to be presented to learners at a much earlier stage of language learning. Further discussion of the PV *set up* is presented in 7.1.5.

The following section will discuss the problems faced by learners in using these selected PVs (i.e. *wake up, pick up, get up, pull up, set up* and *go up*), by examining the lexical and grammatical patterns they produced in comparison with those of native speakers. Following this, possible explanations with respect to problems faced by learners in understanding and using these PVs will be presented.

7.1.2 Inappropriateness in usage of the PV *pick up* in relation to learners' lexical knowledge, unawareness of patterns and context of use

In general, analysis of the PV *pick up* in the EMAS corpus indicates that learners' lexical knowledge has great influence on the use of this PV. One clear example is in the use of the high frequency PV *pick up*. Even though learners produced a high number of the PV *pick up*, detailed analysis of all instances of *pick up* in the EMAS corpus reveals many instances in which this PV is inappropriately used by learners. In fact, learners at all school levels investigated in the study (primary and secondary) have problems, particularly in distinguishing the meanings and use of the PV *pick up* (to lift something up from somewhere) and the LV *pick* (to gather by plucking). This is illustrated by the examples taken from the EMAS corpus below:

```
              Then she started to picked up the flowers.
              Sara and Siti are picking up flowers in the garden
                    While Nurul pick up the flower, suddenly
              Sarah and Ani are picking up the flowers in the
     go there because she want to pick up some flower near the
                  While Rosmah pick up some flower near the
                   While Anita pick up the flower, suddenly
           Ah Meng decided to pick up the rambutans to eat.
      I climb up the tree and pick up the rambutans and thr
```

The above examples clearly illustrate the problem of learners to differentiate the meanings of *pick up* and *pick* in which they have a great tendency to associate *pick up* with plant objects like *flowers* and *rambutans*. Analysis shows that there are altogether

131 instances (*f*=131) of *pick up* associated with *flower/s* and *rambutan/s* in the EMAS

corpus. Even though *pick up* can be used to indicate the act of picking up flowers/

rambutans from somewhere at a lower place (e.g. ground/floor), detailed examination

looking at longer texts produced by learners indicates that this is not what they meant.

Instead, the learners' intended meaning is to illustrate the act of '*picking* flowers/

rambutans from the trees/plants' and not 'to *pick up* flowers/rambutans from the

ground/floor'. The confusion of learners with the use of these two verbs is further

revealed as *pick up* and *pick* are used alternately in their texts assuming they both carry

similar meanings. The examples below illustrate this:

```
Swee Ling wanted to picked the flowers but I warned her not to do that. But, she did not
listen to my warning. She walks towards the bank. Then she started to picked up the
flowers. Suddenly, I heard a big splash.
                                                                    (SRMP-P-s5-(19))
```

```
They went for pick the flower. Fika and Nurul pick the flower by the river. While Nurul
pick up the flower, suddenly she fell down into the river.
                                                                    (SRGK-P-s5-(31))
```

The learners' lack of lexical knowledge of the two types of verbs may have resulted in

the confusion between the use of *pick* and *pick up* in the above context. Perhaps many

learners are not aware that *pick up* and *pick* have different meanings and cannot be used

interchangeably. Even though both *pick* and *pick up* are clearly distinguished in their

L1 by two different terms (*pick* [petik] and *pick up* [ambil]), it is rather surprising that

learners at all levels (i.e. P5, F1 and F4) are still unable to use these two different types

of verb appropriately.

However, despite the inappropriate use of *pick up* discussed above, further analysis of

pick up in the EMAS corpus indicates that learners are able to use this PV appropriately

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when it is associated with object-collocate phone/telephone, as shown in the examples below:

```
      Who is speaking?" mother picked up the phone and answered it
       She picked up the phone just as the first ring rang.
                       I ran and picked up the phone
   willing to got out from the room to pick up the phone except moth
        I ran out from my bedroom to pick up the phone. "Hello! Sa
   last Tuesday. "Ring ...ring" I picked up the phone and it wa
     and answer the phone. When I picked up the phone, I heard
       an idly yawning, I woke up and picked up the phone. It was c
     ner of my room rang. I quickly pick up the phone and heard a
       papa, I ran over the phone and picked it up. To my shock, th
     elp. Finally the phone rang. I picked it up quickly, I heard
       day, the telephone rang and I picked it up. My brother call
     enly, the telephone rang and I picked it up. A stranger in t
```

However, there are relatively few instances of *pick up* with this collocate (*f*=13), and they were all produced by learners at a higher school level (F4), suggesting their familiarity with a wider sense of *pick up*. Closer examination of these instances, particularly the last four concordance lines above also illustrates their understanding of the 'separability' of elements in *pick up*. In addition, there are also instances of *pick up* in the EMAS corpus that illustrate the use of this PV with other object collocates (e.g. book, branch, letter), as shown below:

```
      an towards the tree nearby. He picked up a branch and ran to
           remembering all this I picked up the letter I got this morning
                    I tried to pick up the book but suddenly Mdm. Black
   ir things, Hasim, Ali and Raju picked up their fishing rods
   them agreed. They then quickly picked up their things, chang
         Amy was right behind her, picking up her load. Suddenly
   dog was here. She said that she picked it up by the road near
      My mother told me she would pick it up tomorrow when we h
```

These findings clearly illustrate that confusion usually arises when *pick up* is associated with plant objects like *flowers/rambutans* rather than non-plant objects (e.g. phone/s, fishing rods, letter, book). Clearly, this confusion needs to be addressed in language classrooms.

The confusion of learners in distinguishing the meanings of *pick* and *pick up* is not only observed in the context discussed above, further investigation has revealed instances showing the failure of learners to distinguish the meanings of *pick* and *pick up* when it is associated with animate objects (people) in the sense to collect someone who is waiting. Instead of the PV *pick up*, the simplex verb *pick* is used, inappropriately, and this confusion was found to occur across all school levels (P5, F1 and F4). Below are examples taken from the EMAS corpus to illustrate this:

```
*The bus pick me in eh quarter to seven     [SKWH-I-s5-(20]
 *In the evening, my mother picked me.    [SKAC-s5-S-(08]
  *ay, her mum will come back and pick her. [SMPM-H-f4-(23]
*buses and vans, waiting to pick their passengers as soon  [SMPM-H-f4-(17]
 *I continued my journey to pick Linda, the loveliest girl [SMPM-H-f4-(08]
```

In addition to the above findings, further analysis of the learner corpus has also illustrated that learners show limited use of the PV *pick up*. The *Collins Cobuild Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs* lists 21 different senses of the PV *pick up*. However, despite the diverse senses of *pick up* listed in the dictionary, analysis of the EMAS corpus shows learners' limited understanding and use of *pick up*. Most instances of *pick up* in the learner corpus are associated with inanimate object collocates (e.g. phone, branch, fishing rod) to indicate the literal meaning of *pick up* (*pick up$_1$*: lifting up something from a particular place), as shown in the examples above. In consulting the BoE corpus, *pick up* is also very frequently associated with animate object collocates, which illustrates another core meaning of *pick up* (*pick up$_2$*: to take someone who is waiting to be collected, often in a car). Below are examples of *pick up$_2$* extracted from the BoE corpus:

```
      s men. Trucks and Humvees arrived to pick up the prisoners. But then a
     arrived at her ex-husband's house to pick up their son at 10:30 a.m. Saturday.
    waited for my friend to tack back and pick me up, I started to get cold-the
              <p> In the film, each driver picks up a passenger, and Beatrice plays
      their swim lesson. Parents can then pick their children up from the YMCA when
    when he flew off in his helicopter to pick up his daughter from school. Mr Smug
    it in action a few months ago, while picking up my daughter from a children's
    Cindy Williams. <p> A working mother picks up her youngest at school, she
    and some analysts said Buchanan could pick up some of his supporters by
```

However, only eight instances (*f*=8) of PV *pick up₂* appear in the learner corpus, indicating learners' limited use of *pick up* in this sense. All instances of *pick up₂* were produced by learners at a higher school level (F4). Below are all instances of the PV *pick up₂* found in the EMAS corpus:

```
     with my friends on my new car. First, I picked up Ramesh but he was just
        l, my parents and my sister came to pick me up. My mother cooked my
     to be the most perfect day ever. My mom picked me up from school. Although I was
    in that case, for sure I'll go, would you pick me up around 8 o'clock". "OK...
    eaching. After the tuisyen over, my father pick me up. I didn't talk to my father
    telephone nearby and he called my parents to pick us up and took Aliza to the neare
     us up. A little while, my dad did came to pick us up. He drove straight to the
     use number so he could call my parents to pick us up. A little while, my dad did
```

Despite the low frequency of occurrence of *pick up₂* in the learner corpus, the above instances illustrate that learners are aware of the fact that the elements in *pick up* can be separated. However, further examination of *pick up₂* has revealed another interesting finding, particularly with respect to the context of use. The examples taken from the EMAS corpus below illustrate the lack of understanding of learners (particularly those at the lower school level) concerning the context in which *pick up* in this sense is commonly used:

```
*Mamat quickly jumped into the river to help the girl. Mamat pick up the girl at the
land. The girl was very happy and thanks to Mamat...
                                                          [SMMA-P-f1-(18]
```

```
*Faizal ran to the river and jumped into it. The girl is almost drown and so weak. I and
Azmer help Faizal picked up the girl near the river. Azmer ran to the public phoned and
phoned their parents....
                                                          [SMTI-P-f1-17]
```

One possible reason for the inappropriate use of *pick up* in the above examples is the close meaning of literal *pick up* and its one-word equivalent 'lift'. While the use of *pick up* is not appropriate in the above context, 'lift' is clearly possible (e.g. Faizal *lift* the girl up to the river bank...). Another reason is perhaps that learners are not aware of the typical pattern of *pick up$_2$*, frequently co-occurring with vehicle-related nouns as subjects of the verb. Examining a collocational profile of *pick up$_2$* in the BoE corpus, it very frequently co-occurs with subject nouns like *taxi, bus, helicopter,* indicating that the person waiting to be collected is usually taken in a vehicle and not in the context understood by the learners above. This is perhaps another important issue that teachers may highlight when teaching *pick up* in this sense. In addition, the collocational profile also indicates that subjects of *pick up$_2$* can be both animate subjects (e.g. **she** *pick up*....) and inanimate subjects (e.g. the **bus** will *pick* me *up*...). However, there is no instance of *pick up$_2$* with inanimate subjects found in the EMAS corpus.

In addition to the two core meanings of *pick up* discussed so far, native speakers also associate *pick up* with *habit, attitudes* and *skill (pick up$_3$),* as shown in the examples taken from the BoE corpus below:

```
   of the American teachers. Students pick up this attitude: 72 percent of the
    the hardest part and I began to  pick up." <p> Also tested this week is
 differ from monkeys. They are able to pick up their partner's behaviour. So,
  faster,' he says. When you first pick up a violin or a trumpet, you might
  verbal signs you think that we can pick up from our kids that are telling
```

However, analysing the EMAS corpus, no instance of *pick up* in this sense appears in the learner corpus. Although *pick up$_3$* does not appear in the EMAS corpus, the results of the PVs test conducted earlier shows that the majority of learners who took part in the PVs test responded correctly to the item that tested their understanding of *pick up$_3$*

(see 5.2.2). These contradictory results are in fact very important, suggesting that good understanding does not guarantee production, particularly when it involves idiomatic PVs such as *pick up₃*. This finding is in fact consistent and further confirms the findings of previous studies that language learners tend to use fewer non-literal PVs (Liao and Fukuya, 2004) or avoid them (Dagut and Laufer, 1985). The non-occurrence of *pick up3* in the EMAS corpus may indicate the learners' tendency to avoid the use of *pick up* in this sense although they understand the meaning. However, it is equally important to take into account the nature of texts produced in the EMAS corpus, which may also have contributed to the non-occurrence of *pick up₃* in the learner corpus, since the texts produced in the EMAS corpus are very much controlled by a given stimulus, which perhaps restricts the use of *pick up* in this sense. Thus, it is suggested that future research considers a much larger data set gathered in a less controlled environment in order to reach a more conclusive finding, particularly with respect to the use of *pick up* in the above sense. Despite the limitation, the findings with respect to the PV *pick up* above suggest the need for learners to be given more opportunities to practise and use PVs in their written and oral activities. In addition, another interesting factor that may also have influenced the overall understanding and use of the PV *pick up* of learners relates to the lack of attention given to this high frequency PV in reference materials, particularly school textbooks and learner dictionaries; this is further discussed in Chapter 8.

7.1.3 Unawareness of patterns and influence of learners' LI in the use of PVs *wake up* and *get up*

My analysis of the PVs *wake up* and *get up* reveals that learners are unaware of the common collocates of these PVs. One very clear example to illustrate this is the inappropriate use of *get up* with the noun *dream* and *wake up* with the noun *bed.* In

examining the BoE corpus, native speakers commonly associate *wake up* with nouns

indicating the state of being unconscious (e.g. *dream, nightmare, coma*), as shown

below:

```
 Capriati said: `I'm just waiting to wake up from the dream, it doesn't seem
bed - some people have been known to wake up from a dream about running or a
  Sometimes during the night you may wake up from a dream that gives you the
 and is not necessary. It is time to wake up from the nuclear dream, Mr
 Cup in Indian Wells. I hope I never wake up from this dream," Moya said after
      it's all a big mistake and I'll wake up from this nightmare and will be
   that the Serbs were beginning to wake up from `a nightmare that lasted 10
   I had these dreams. Sometimes I'd wake up from one. of them, my heart going
when Ailsa defies medical science and wakes up from her coma. Mitch's music
      it. Then one day you're 37 and waking up from an anaesthetic to hear a
```

It is also found that the PV *get up* frequently co-occurs with nouns like *chair, desk, sofa*

and bed, as shown in the examples below:

```
     everyone?" she'd said swiftly, getting up from her desk. `And will you
send me over the top," Melanie said, getting up from her chair. This sitting
 spades. But the Tories still haven't got up from it. <p> Quite how Major had
  When the whole team calmed down, I got up from the ground and saw our David
was colour again in her cheeks. She got up from the kitchen chair and
    spread across his thin face as he got up from <p> the chair and strode
my reasoning, but that was too bad. I got up from the sofa and went to stand
 sort of time, 4 to 4&half; months. I got up from bed, the waters broke, and I
      about opening a box." <p> Ruhr got up from the camp bed. `Have you no
Sweat beaded on our faces. Finally, we got up from the table and left the dirty
```

However, my analysis of the EMAS corpus shows that learners do not seem aware of

the above patterns: *wake up* + dream; and *get up* + bed commonly produced by native

speakers. This has resulted in the non-standard use of **get up* + dream and **wake up* +

bed by learners, as shown in the examples below:

```
    *they were excited and happy that I finally get up from my dreams.
                                                    [SMPM-P-f4-20]
```

```
    *Then, I woke up from my bed and walked to the bathroom.
                                                    [SMART-H-f4-06]
```

In addition to learners' unawareness of the typical patterns discussed above, the close meaning of *wake up* and *get up* is probably another reason to the production of **get up* + dream and **wake up* + bed by learners. Example 1 below illustrates this.

Example 1:
    I *wake up* at 6.00 in the morning.
    I *get up* at 6.00 in the morning.

    She *wakes up* early.
    She *gets up* early.

Example 2:
    I *woke up* from my dream.
    *I *got up* from my dream.

    I *got up* from my bed.
    *I *woke up* from my bed.

As both *wake up* and *get up* are possible in Example 1, learners may assume that these verbs can be used interchangeably irrespective of context, which has resulted in the inappropriate use of *get up* in Example 2 above.

On top of this, learners' L1 (Malay) also plays a crucial role in their understanding and use of *get up* instead of *wake up* in the above context. Both *wake up* and *get up* are represented by a single-word verb in their L1 *('bangun')*, as shown in the examples below:

    I   *wake up*   at   6.00   in the morning.
    Saya *bangun* pukul 6.00   pagi.

    She   *gets up* early.
    Dia   *bangun* awal.

    He   *got up*   from   the chair.
    Dia *bangun* dari   kerusi.

The examples clearly illustrate how the Malay *'bangun'* is used to represent both *wake up* and *get up*. Therefore, this L1 understanding may have influenced learners to think that *wake up* and *get up* can also be used as interchangeably as *'bangun'* in their L1, regardless of context. This suggests that the teaching and learning of PVs in Malaysian classrooms in particular, should take into account learners' L1. Providing learners with clear examples in both L1 and L2 is obviously necessary, and making them aware of the typical pattern and common collocates of *wake up* (which usually co-occur with words like *sleep, dream, nightmare*), and *get up* (which commonly co-occurs with words like *bed, sofa, chair*) may facilitate their understanding and appropriate use of these PVs.

Further analysis has also revealed another problem faced by learners in the use of the PV *wake up.* Those at the lower school level (primary school, in particular) seem to have a problem with the grammatical structure of *wake up* involving pronouns. Learners are found to either place pronouns incorrectly after the AVP *up* or place pronouns correctly but dropped the AVP *up*. Below are examples extracted from the EMAS corpus to illustrate this:

```
   *Every morning, my mother wakes up me at 5.00 a.m.          [SRGK-S-s5-29]
     *I went to my mum and woke her and told her ''But mummy   [SRMP-H-s5-25]
   *and asked my mother to wake me when we reached the Penang   [SKABJ-s5-H-10]
```

One possible reason for the inappropriate structure of *wake up* above is the non-existence of the PV structure in the learners' L1. Thus, it is not surprising that many learners, particularly those at the lower level of learning, are unaware of the notion of 'separability' in PVs, and, therefore, transfer their understanding of the L1 structure into the L2. Below is an example to illustrate this:

'emak   membangunkan   saya'
*'mother   *wakes up*   me'

In the learners' L1, the object pronouns always come after the verb, which is different from the structure of PVs, in which pronouns must be placed between the LV *wake* and the AVP *up*. Thus, when learners follow their L1 structure, this will result in producing a PV structure that is deviant from the norm. Other instances that illustrate the influence of L1 on the learners' use of PVs are also presented in Chapter 5 (5.2.5; 5.2.4; 5.2.3; 5.2.7; and 5.2.8) and other sections in this chapter (see 7.2.3; 7.3.3; 7.3.5; 7.3.7).

However, further analysis of *wake up* in the EMAS corpus shows that this problem does not appear in sentences produced by learners at the higher school level (i.e. secondary school), as many instances of *wake up* are grammatically formed as shown in the examples below:

```
I quickly woke both of my parents up who were sleeping like   [SMTA-S-f4-(30]
the shore and tried to wake her up but they did not succeed.   [SMTA-P-F1-01]
my mom woke me up I look at the clock and it was quite late    [SMTI-V-f4-(19]
```

This finding suggests that frequent encounters with the PV *wake up* throughout the language learning process seem to improve the learners' awareness and understanding of the correct structure of *wake up* with pronouns, and, eventually, they are able to produce this PV appropriately in speech or writing. However, considering the high frequency of *wake up* in everyday communication, it is suggested that introducing learners to possible and appropriate structures of *wake up* from the very early stage of language learning (primary school) should be considered.

In addition to the literal meaning of *wake up* discussed above, my analysis of the BoE corpus shows that the literal meaning of *wake up* is further extended to indicate the state of consciousness or alertness to problems happening around us. In other words, we do not only literally *wake up* from sleep, but may also *wake up* from the state of being unaware of global issues or crisis around us. This is revealed by the use of words like *global warming, HIV and financial shocks*. Added to that, *wake up* in this sense is always followed by the preposition *to* (*wake up + to +* issues/problems/crisis), as shown in the examples taken from the BoE corpus below:

```
on its way? When will governments wake up to the global warming crisis and
    says Berkelman. `HIV began to wake people up to that fact." Public
  rest of the world will continue to wake up to financial shocks that
organisations are beginning to wake up to the gay consumer." <p> But in
    On a day when some Americans wake up to the ill effects of liquor
      a Black perspective. Asians have to wake up to racism, we are
  to realize that that symbol really woke America up to the garbage problem,
```

However, considering the metaphorical use of *wake up* in this sense, the nature of data in the EMAS corpus, and learners' level of learning, it is expected that the use of *wake up* in this sense is unlikely to appear in the learner corpus. Furthermore, introducing learners to *wake up* in this sense is perhaps not necessary, particularly for learners at a lower level of language learning, as this meaning is less useful to them.

7.1.4 Learners' understanding of the literal meaning and grammatical structure of *pull up*

The following analysis focuses on the PV *pull up* in the EMAS corpus, which indicates that one of the possible reasons for the high frequency of occurrence of *pull up* in the learner corpus is due to the nature of the texts produced. The stimulus given to learners in the data collection process has greatly influenced learners to produce this PV more frequently in their written and oral texts. The learners' description of how the two boys

in the picture tried to save a drowning girl may have resulted in the high number of the PV *pull up* by learners in their production of texts. As the same stimulus was also used for collecting both written and spoken texts, this may have further increased the number of the PV *pull up* in the whole corpus (i.e. EMAS corpus).

Another observation from the examples of *pull up* in the EMAS corpus is that the use of this PV is very much restricted to the literal meaning of *pull up$_1$* (to raise something from a lower position to a higher one). In fact, all instances of *pull up* in the learner corpus are associated with the use of *pull up* in this sense. The objects of *pull up* in the learner corpus are very frequently associated with animate objects (people), particularly describing the act of helping somebody (i.e. a girl) who is drowning in a river by pulling her up to a higher place (i.e. a riverbank). There is no instance of *pull up* being associated with inanimate objects (e.g. socks, blanket). Below are the examples of *pull up$_1$* found in the EMAS corpus:

```
Laily to the side and the other two boys pulled her up. Laily did not response s
She fainted cause of a lot of water. We pulled her up. One of us ran to the nea
nally, Bryan grabbed Mei Ling's neck and pulled her up to the side of the pond a
ove the water. The boy tried his best to pull her up and Susan was safe at last,
Finally, Jack grabbed Jeryne's neck and pulled her up to the side of the pond.
mped into the water and saved Aminah. He pulled her up onto the bank. Fortunatel
ne of the boys managed to save Irene and pulled her up the river-bank. Irene was
er. She cooperated with me and at last I pulled her up the river bank. She cough
the rod. The girl grabbed the rod and I pulled her up. Rajoo was too far away a
Aaron and I grabbed the girl's hand and pulled her up to the ground. She was un
```

Examining the BoE corpus, *pull up* is also found to co-occur very frequently with subject nouns like car, limousine and van, to indicate another core meaning of *pull up$_2$* (to slow down or stop). In this sense *pull up* is always intransitive in form, as shown in the examples extracted from the BoE corpus below:

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```
    him to arrive and I saw a police car pull up and stop outside the flats and I
  king towards the hotel when a car pulled up alongside. Two men jumped out &
 The elderly couple in a Tarago van pulled up alongside two young men while
        It's now 4am, and a white van pulls up. It is driven by a 28-year-old
  assignation. When finally her cab pulled up in one of the rougher city
  and within another minute a truck pulled up and two dozen Somali men began
 Then two guys in a government truck pulled up next to my Bronco and <p> I saw
 what to expect when a green minivan pulled up last Wednesday and out stepped
 corner, and this humongous limousine pulled up and the driver said my name, and
     sight and a moment later the jeep pulled up beside them. Hop in, boys,"
```

However, there is no instance of *pull up₂* found in the EMAS corpus. Perhaps learners are not aware of the common collocates that create the meaning of *pull up₂*. As *pull up₂* is also not transparent in meaning, this is possibly another reason for the non-occurrence of *pull up* in this sense in the learner corpus. Learners may find the literal meaning of *pull up₁* is much easier to understand, as it clearly indicates upward movement, while such movement is completely absent in *pull up₂* (i.e. a vehicle slowing down or stopping). In addition to the findings presented in Chapter 5, this is perhaps another evidence showing the learners' difficulty in understanding and using non-literal PVs than the literal PVs, as reported by other previous studies (e.g. Liao and Fukuya 2004; Dagut and Laufer 1985).

Further analysis of *pull up₁* in the learner corpus has also revealed another important finding with respect to the grammatical structure of *pull up₁*, particularly when it involves pronouns. Learners, especially those at the lower school level (i.e. P5 and F1) were found to place the pronouns incorrectly after the AVP *up* or use inappropriate pronouns, as shown in the examples taken from the EMAS corpus below:

```
He catch Linda and pull up her onto the river. Then, when Linda   [SMMA-P-f1-29]
But when I plan to pull up her to the ground, after that I        [SRTI-I-s5-22]
Suddenly he catch Suzy and try to pull she up from the river.     [SMMA-P-f1-28]
```

However, *pull up₂* was grammatically correct in the usage of those at the higher school level, suggesting that this problem is pertinent to learners at a lower level of learning,

but seems to disappear as learners progress. Frequent encounters with *pull up₂* may have helped learners to figure out the correct grammatical structure of *pull up* in this sense, particularly when it involves pronouns. A similar problem with respect to the ungrammatical form of PVs was also observed in the use of *calm down* (see 7.2.6), *wake up* (see 7.1.3); *pull out* and *take out* (see 7.3.8).

7.1.5   Lack of awareness of other collocates of the PV *set up*

The next analysis focuses on the PV *set up*. In examining examples of *set up* in the learner corpus, it shows that there is a large number of instances of *set up* (*f*=38) being associated with an object collocate *camp/camps,* as shown in the examples taken from the EMAS corpus below:

```
When we arrive at the camsite we set up camp on 2.00 pm. At the 4 oo'clo
        stop at the riverbank. Now, we set up camp. As arrived, we were so hap
as 5 members. We were directed to set up camps or tents and cooking or lu
te. There, we took our things and set up camps. After that we have a info
 and my group has 30 members. We set up camps and ate same foods. Then,
 r to the campsite. At 1.00pm, we set up camps and lunch together before
ild the camp to campsite. Then we set up camps. We trap to the diverse fl
  the campsite teacher told us to set up camps. Before that we are gived
the air is fresh. We campsite and set up camps in two hours. We also prep
iver to campsite. At about 2pm we set up camps beside a river. At 3 pm we
```

The examples above illustrate that learners' understanding of *set up* is very much restricted to its literal meaning (*set up₁*), to indicate the act of building something (i.e. camp/s). Analyzing the BoE corpus shows that other than camp/s, nouns like *shop, home, school* are among other object collocates that frequently co-occur with *set up₁*. Below are the examples of *set up₁* extracted from the BoE corpus:

```
a plush Barbados hotel and they later set up home. But Billie-Jo soon
  no regrets". A SHAMED art tutor who set up home with a 16-year-old pupil
 with the high-living cannibal having set up home in Florence. As Clarice
   Week exclusively for Brides and Setting Up Home readers. Concentrating on
   refurbished suite. He preferred to set up shop in Stage 6, an unused
   Here <p> What do people who are setting up shop on the Internet need to
   were right for each other. They had set up house together in the two small
  he became chief executive. Mr. Greve set up house with the younger of his two
must be shot through with religion may set up their own schools, and pay for
```

However, the association of *set up₁* with these nouns does not appear in the learner corpus. Apart from the lack of awareness of other common collocates of *set up₁,* another possible explanation is perhaps the nature of the EMAS corpus itself. The stimulus used in the text collection may have encouraged higher production of *set up* with object collocate camp/s (see 6.2 for further discussion on the composition of the EMAS corpus). Closer examination also indicates that most instances (*f=36*) of *set up* are produced by learners at a higher school level (F4) and only two (*f=2*) are produced by the F1 learners, and none (*f=0*) by the P5 learners. This suggests that learners at a lower school level (F1 and P5) are less familiar with this particular PV, but longer exposure to the language learning seems to increase learners' understanding and wider use of *set up₁*.

In addition to the core meaning of *set up₁* discussed above, further analysis of *set up* in the BoE corpus shows that it is also very frequently associated with financial-related activities, which is revealed by the co-occurrence of words like *business, company and fund*, with the PV *set up*. Below are examples taken from the BoE corpus to illustrate this:

```
    cent would like to work from home or set up a business at home, and 21 per
      to retire early and is considering setting up a business consultancy
        future plans. North Tyneside has set up a private company which has even
    headquarters in Tunis have agreed to set up a development bank for the Israeli-
    internet. natwest is also planning to set up a net bank. Barclays is one high-
        investors in a joint-stock company to set up a business organization. When the
      minded Calhoun had pressed a plan to set up a $l.5 million fund for roads and
            a word processor so that he can set up a business typing students' term
    requires an investment of $10,000 to set up, but Steve has only $1000. So you
          banks and investment banks have set up swap markets in which they act as
```

However, it not surprising that there is no instance of *set up* in the above sense (*set up₂*) in the learner corpus, as *set up₂* commonly appears in economic or business type of texts (i.e. economic sub-corpora in the BoE corpus, with an average of 201.3 per million word

occurrences). On the other hand, the texts in the EMAS corpus produced by primary and secondary school students are highly narrative and descriptive in nature, which reflect the world experienced by students rather than the adult (Western) world of the BoE corpus. Further discussion on the composition of the EMAS corpus is presented in 6.2.

7.1.6 Unawareness of core meanings of the PV *go up*

As far as the PV *go up* is concerned, it is rather surprising that another core meaning of *go up$_2$* (to increase such as in price/cost/fees), which appears very frequently in the native speaker corpus, does not appear in the learner corpus. Below are examples of *go up* in this sense extracted from the BoE corpus:

```
King of the RAC said: `Prices seem to go up very quickly when petrol rises on
    subsidised petrol prices will not go up this year. For foreign trade, the
goes up and the unemployment rate may go up as well, even though the number of
  from March 1. The monthly rate will go up from 1.58 per cent to 1.65 per
    those investments that generally go up or down in value in relatively
    to tell us that income tax is to go up to 99 pence in the pound, for
    and pay tax, tax revenues are going up. They have actually doubled over
  major layoff", <p> the stock prices go up, <p> he told "Sunday <p> Morning."
for ways to make money if shares stop going up, or, even worse, slump. Hence
  at the moment because the shares are going up but only when they drop 40 per
```

Closer examination of *go up* in the EMAS corpus shows that all instances of *go up* are associated with its literal meaning (*go up$_1$*: movement from a lower to higher place) and no instance of *go up$_2$* appears in the learner corpus. Below are examples of *go up$_1$* taken from the EMAS corpus:

```
    she decided to named it Fire. Then, I went up and put back the documents and
      the further end of the stream. "Let's go up a little further, dad told me
at the lobby. With much waited breath, I went up to each and every one of them
    them luck for the future. As we were going up, Didie finally told me that
    side of the lake. While the alligator went up to the land, I kicked it and
    very ashamed of himself and then they went up. The boys were quite angry so
  my mother, father and sister planned to go up to the hotel and rest. They went
    to go up to the hotel and rest. They went up to the room and rest. Me and my
It was quite fun. We were quite tired so went up to the hotel, take a nice shower
  about two hours. Then, my family and I went up to the highest deck where the
```

One possible explanation for the non-occurrence of *go up* in this sense is the learners'
unawareness of common collocates of *go up₂* (e.g. price/cost/fees), which creates the
meaning of *go up₂*. However, it is equally important to note that the absence of *go up₂*
may also due to the nature of the texts produced in the EMAS corpus (see 6.2) which
has resulted in the absence of *go up* in this sense. Apart from that, learners may also
find *go up₁* is easier to understand as it involves physical action (i.e. upward
movement), which can be clearly observed compared to *go up₂.* Despite of the reasons
discussed above, is expected that learners, at least those at the higher school level
should be able to understand and use *go up* in this sense, which is another core meaning
of *go up* frequently appearing in the native speaker corpus, indicating its usefulness in
everyday discourse. Hence, this is probably another common PV, which should receive
greater attention in language classrooms.

7.2   Results of PVs with AVP *down*

7.2.1   Distributions of PVs with AVP *down*

The following analysis focuses on the use of PVs with the AVP *down*, by the language
learners. Table 47 below presents distributions of the top six LV lemma with AVP
down in the EMAS corpus, which include the LV lemmas *fall, calm, go*, *jump*, *put* and
drop. The frequency of occurrences of each lemma in both structures: LV+AVP and
LV+X+AVP according to learners' school level (P5, F1 and F4) are shown below:

Table 55: Distributions of LV lemmas + AVP *down* in the EMAS

LV lemmas	LV + AVP down structure (f)	LV + X + AVP down structure (f)	Total No. of occurrences (f)
fall	**301**	**0**	**301**
	P5: 125	P5: 0	P5: 125
	F1: 108	F1: 0	F1: 108
	F4: 68	F4: 0	F4: 68
calm	**18**	**16**	**34**
	P5: 0	P5: 0	P5: 0
	F1: 6	F1: 4	F1: 10
	F4: 12	F4: 12	F4: 24
go	**29**	**0**	**29**
	P5: 11	P5: 0	P5: 11
	F1: 8	F1: 0	F1: 8
	F4: 10	F4: 0	F4: 10
jump	**26**	**0**	**26**
	P5: 16	P5: 0	P5: 16
	F1: 3	F1: 0	F1: 3
	F4: 7	F4: 0	F4: 7
put	**24**	**0**	**24**
	P5: 4	P5: 0	P5: 4
	F1: 11	F1: 0	F1: 11
	F4: 9	F4: 0	F4: 9
drop	**6**	**0**	**6**
	P5: 0	P5: 0	P5: 0
	F1: 3	F1: 0	F1: 3
	F4: 3	F4: 0	F4: 3

The figures in Table 47 above show that the LV lemma *fall* has the highest frequency of occurrence with the AVP *down* (*f*=301) followed by the LV lemmas *calm* (*f*=34), *go* (*f*=29), *jump* (*f*=26), *put* (*f*=24), and *drop* (*f*=6). The above figures clearly indicate that

the frequency of occurrence of the PV *fall down* in the EMAS corpus is almost ten times larger than the other three PVs investigated with the AVP *down*. Surprisingly, closer examination of all instances of *fall down* in the learner corpus indicates learners' different understanding and use of *fall down* from that commonly understood and produced by native speakers. This is further discussed in 7.2.2. Another observation from the figures in Table 47 above is the non-occurrence of the PVs *calm down* and *drop down* in the P5 sub-corpora.

Table 47 also shows that the only PV that appears in both forms is the PV *calm down* with 19 (*f*=19) and 16 (*f*=16) instances appearing in LV+AVP in LV+X+AVP forms, respectively. In addition, the number of *calm down* produced by learners seems to gradually increase as they move on to a higher school level (P5=0, F1=10, F4=24). Examining the BoE corpus, the PVs *calm down*, *put down* and *drop down* can appear in the LV+X+AVP form, allowing objects to be placed between the two elements. Below are examples taken from the BoE corpus to illustrate this:

```
    much fun -- your child won't want to put it down! <!--photo--> <p> And your
small stones, and when they--when they put them down, they kneel on the ground,
 bun and after one distasteful bite, he put it down. Immediately, a shabbily
    of the boat and pivots, so you can drop it down in the water when you're in
    Yeah. <ZGY> <F01> Yeah. Someone'll drop it down. <M01> Sure? <F01> Yeah.
 get it out of her handbag, Deborah dropped it down beside sizzling sausages.
 All right, well, Wil, see if you can calm him down a little bit and challenge
 I thought, huh? I needed something to calm me down, so they put me in Inter-
  cage that it takes a little bit to calm them down. And we just do an
  him for help. Luckily he managed to calm her down." <p> After she moved out
```

However, no instance of *put down* and *drop down* appears in the LV+X+AVP structure in the EMAS corpus. Table 48 shows examples of *calm down*, *drop down* and *put down* in the two different structures found in the EMAS corpus.

Table 56: Examples of PVs *calm down, drop down* and *put down* in the LV+AVP and LV+X+AVP structure in EMAS

School level / PVs	Calm down	Drop down	Put down
Primary 5 (P5) LV+AVP	X	X	shouting and then run to the spot. Amin *put down* his things and jump into the [SRKG-I-s5-06]
LV+X+ AVP	X	X	X
Form 1 (F1) LV+AVP	Rani while other two boys were trying to *calm down* Suria. At last, Rani was save [SMPM-P-F1-13]	about Shannon and Linda. They quickly *dropped down* their bucket and fishing [SMART-P-f1-48]	shocked when they heard our screams. They *put down* their fishing rods and rushed [SMART-P-f1-22]
LV+X+ AVP	a hot chocolate and her friend tried to *calm* her *down*. The girl thanks Muthu for [SMSAB-P-f1-09]	X	X
Form 4 (F4) LV+AVP	They just asked the girl's friend to *calm down*. They ensure her that her friend [SMART-P-f4-27]	They quickly *drop down* their fishing rods and rushed [SMTI-P-f4-26]	Her scream caught our attention. We *put down* our things. We ran to the spot [SMTA-P-f4-28]

LV+X+ AVP	to ask my mother and my mother tried to *calm* me *down.* Suddenly, my cousin came [SMART-H-f4-24]	X	X

While *calm down, drop down* and *put down* can appear in both structures, the non-existence of *fall down*, *go down* and *jump down* in LV+X+AVP structure is expected because they are intransitive PVs; they do not have objects. Thus, object movement in these PVs is clearly not applicable. However, examining the BoE corpus, elements in *fall down* can be separated by an adverb (i.e. LV *fall* + adverb + AVP *down*), as shown in examples taken from the BoE corpus below:

```
      have the intuition that the ball will fall straight down, since only gravity
         it's--I'm afraid that it will just fall right down on him. <p> Ms. HEAD:
              after a grassy ledge broke his fall halfway down at South Shields, Tyne
               and your partner is liable to fall unfairly down the batting order." Dr
          from one side and felt himself falling endlessly down into a scarlet-
       had struck it with a big gourd, and fell straight down backwards half dead
   of teenager Peter Fitzpatrick when he fell 30ft down a cliff in October 1997.
     had let her short hair grow until it fell halfway down her back, and Janey had
      She got right up like a trouper and fell right down again. But she got up
       the summer only to discover that it fell straight down on to the floor. I
```

Similarly, *go down* and *jump down* are also intransitive. Even though the placement of an object between the two elements is impossible, placement of an adverb before the AVP *down* is possible, as illustrated in examples extracted from the BoE corpus below:

```
        and Wesley Snipes could go right down to the finishing line. <p> However,
      in the crustal zone that go right down to 7,500 metres. That's where the
       it better - was to go fearlessly down into the people and bestow their
           Yeah. <M02> and they go directly down to branch manager level or <M03> No
    this year -proved unfounded. She jumped sweetly down and completed the
     of the evening," she said before jumping lightly down from the dais and
  wear a big pair of yellow shoes and jump 900ft down into a tub of f***ing
```

One interesting observation based on the analysis of *fall down* and *jump down* in the learner corpus is the high number of instances of *fall down* and *jump down* produced,

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particularly by learners at the lower school level (i.e. P5) (see Table 47). In fact, the number of instances of *fall down* and *jump down* produced by this group of learners is approximately two times larger than those at the higher school level (F4). However, closer examination has revealed that most of these instances are inappropriately used and learners' understanding of *fall down* and *jump down* differs from what is commonly understood by native speakers (see 7.2.2 and 7.2.3 for further discussion on this).

7.2.2   Learners' over generalization and misunderstanding of the AVP *down* in *fall down*, *jump down* and *drop down*

In general, analysis of PVs with the AVP *down* indicates the problem of learners with respect to over-generalization of the regular meaning of the particle in PV construction, particularly PVs with the AVP *down*. One very interesting example to illustrate this problem can be observed in the use of the PVs *fall down*, *jump down* and *drop down*. Detailed analysis of the concordance lines containing these PVs in the EMAS corpus reveals that the AVP *down* is frequently over-generalized by learners to indicate anything that goes downward, including contexts in which it is not needed (e.g. *They quickly *dropped down* their bucket). Similarly, over-generalization of the AVP *down* can also be observed in the learners' frequent use of *fall down* and *jump down* with nouns like *river, lake, pond,* and *water*. Below are examples extracted from the EMAS corpus to illustrate this:

```
     lake for plucking flower. Suddenly Ina fell down to the river. Ina loud for he
    house. Suddenly, Zahariah tripped and fell down to the pond. It was even more
owers seem very nice. Suddenly her child fall down to the lake. She shouted for
   river bank. Suddenly, one of the girls fell down into the water. Th girl was s
owers near the riverbank, she sliped and fell down into the river. She don't no
at can save Siti, one of the girl. So he jump down into the river and save the g
   Abu hear their shouted and saw Ifa was jump down into the lake. Without dally,
 time, Ali put down his fishing rods and jump down to the river. Ali pull the gi
   someone scream for help. Jeremy quickly jump down to the pond and help that gir
```

The examples above clearly show that the AVP *down* is inappropriately used by learners to emphasize the downward movement in *fall* and *jump,* which is not required in the above context. Examining the BoE corpus, it shows that native speakers hardly say '*fall down into/to* the river' or '*jump down into/to* the river' unless the river is very deep or far down as in a canyon, as can be observed from longer extracts taken from the BoE corpus below:

```
looked straight down into the churning white water half a dozen feet below. Erin
realized that the tunnel she'd been following led inside the waterfall. Her only choice
now was either to jump down into the water below or climb back out and try to find
another way down.
```

```
Apparently the skeleton, if it was all there, lay beside the hole. Up to now,
the small amount of dirt they had dug had fallen down into the stream below and
had been partially carried away by the water. For further digging they probably
would have to remove a good hit of earth. Should it be dropped down? Nancy
suggested
```

Even though '*fall down into* the river'/'*jump down into* the river' are acceptable forms, they carry different meanings from the one intended by learners in the EMAS corpus. The learners were trying to say that 'a girl is *falling into* a river' and 'someone *jumped into* the river to save her', and the river in that context is an ordinary river and not located deep down below. Clearly, the use of *fall into* and *jump into* is more appropriate in the above context. However, learners have inappropriately produced '*fall down into* the river' and '*jump down into* the river', which is different from their intended meanings. In other words, learners' over-generalization of *down* with any downward movement (which is sometimes unnecessary or inappropriate) has resulted in a different understanding of *fall down* from what is commonly understood and produced by native speakers, as shown above.

7.2.3   Lack of awareness of common collocates and regular patterns of *fall down* and *jump down* and its relation to learners' L1

There is no doubt that one of the possible reasons for the inappropriate use of *fall down* and *jump down* discussed in 7.2.2 above is due to a lack of awareness of common collocates and regular patterns commonly produced by native speakers in the use of these PVs in that particular context. Closer examination indicates that learners frequently associate *fall down* with *river, lake, pond*, and *water*. In fact, 273 instances (*f*=273), which is more than 50% of the PV *fall down* in the EMAS corpus, co-occur with these object collocates. The PV *fall down* is extensively used by learners to indicate that a person lost his/her balance and falls into a river/lake/pond/etc., and the regular pattern produced is: somebody + *fall down* + *into* + river/lake/pond. Below are examples taken from the EMAS corpus to illustrate this:

```
    lake for plucking flower. Suddenly Ina fell down to the river. Ina loud for he
     house. Suddenly, Zahariah tripped and fell down to the pond. It was even more
   owers seem very nice. Suddenly her child fall down to the lake. She shouted for
    river bank. Suddenly, one of the girls fell down into the water. Th girl was s
   owers near the riverbank, she sliped and fell down into the river. She don't no
   ping her. He told to her mother that she fell down in to the river. Her mother w
   ree boys for hook fish. Suddenly, Afiqah fall down in to the pool. She should to
    Mashita stepped on tiny small rock and fell down into the lake. Mei Lin was pa
   them enjoying. Suddenly one of them were fell down into the lake. Then friends w
    some flowers. Suddenly one of the girls fell down into the water. The boys comi
```

However, the inappropriate use of *fall down* instead of *fall into* in this context has changed the intended meaning (see 7.2.2). Closer examination of the BoE corpus shows that among the most frequent object collocates of *fall down into* includes words like hole, rift/valley and stream below. Therefore, in 'he *falls down* into the river', indicating that a person falls from a very high place into a river, which is located very deep down and not into an ordinary river that learners are referring to. Instead, *fall into* + water/river is a typical pattern produced by native speakers in the context intended by learners, as illustrated by the examples taken from the BoE corpus below:

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```
          feeling when her distant child falls into the swimming pool—neither
        slipped while climbing a tree and fell into the River Stour at Cradley,
        determined not to be shown up. She fell into the water and got half
      sed to be an entrance gate, but this fell into the sea in the early years of
      St Lawrence River. While skating, she fell into the icy waters and was rescued
       tried to dislodge the snag. <p> She fell into the river, panicked and became
     heard as a clod of mud caved away and fell into the water. Black clouds drifted
          round the house sold out. Nobody fell into the lake, twisted their ankle,
     Ewing barbecues where somebody always fell into the pool), Lucy's barely there
             including having a BBC cameraman fall into the water on top of her during
```

A similar pattern is found in the use of *jump down + into* by learners, which is also frequently associated with words like river/lake/pond/water. On the other hand, a random sample of 500 instances of *jump down + into* in the BoE corpus indicates that instead of *river, water, lake, pool*, etc., words like *hollow, hole, pit, ditch,* are among the frequent object collocates of *jump down + into*, indicating its frequent association with empty space in the ground. However, such association does not occur in the EMAS corpus. Native speakers also use collocates like *water below/stream below* (e.g. 'he *jumped down into* the river below') to indicate a person jumps from a very high place into a river/water located deep down below (e.g. canyon). Clearly, the inappropriate use of *fall/jump down* by learners not only makes their utterances sound rather strange but might be understood and interpreted differently by native speakers. In short, this analysis has revealed that the non-standard use of *fall down* and *jump down* discussed above is partly due to the learners' lack of awareness of common collocates and regular patterns of these PVs. Closer examination of *jump down* and *fall down* in the EMAS corpus also indicates that this problem appears at all school levels (primary and secondary), suggesting that these PVs deserve further attention in the language classroom in Malaysia.

Another important factor that has also significantly influenced learners' understanding and use of *fall down* and *jump down* is their L1. Both forms *fall down into* and *fall into* are represented by a similar phrase *'jatuh kedalam'* in their L1, regardless of the

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location of the river (an ordinary river or located deep down below). Thus, learners may have assumed that *fall down into* and *fall into* can be used interchangeably as the use of '*jatuh kedalam*' in their L1, as illustrated in the examples below:

| She | *falls* | *into* | a river. |
| Dia | *jatuh* | *kedalam* | sungai. |

| She | *falls down* | *into* | a river below. |
| Dia | *jatuh* | *kedalam* | sungai di bawah. |

Similarly, the PV *jump down into* and *jump into* is equivalent to '*melompat kedalam*' in the learners' L1, and it has no restrictions on context of use (it does not matter whether the river is located deep down or not). Therefore, learners may assume that the combination of *jump down + into* can be used in both contexts, as shown below:

| He | *jumps* | *into* | a river. |
| Dia | *melompat* | *kedalam* | sungai. |

| He | *jumps down* | *into* | a river below. |
| Dia | *melompat* | *kedalam* | sungai di bawah. |

The above analysis reveals that apart from learners' lack of awareness of regular patterns of *fall down* and *jump down* commonly produced by native speakers, their L1 clearly plays a significant part in influencing their understanding and use of these PVs.

7.2.4   Inappropriate use of *drop down* and its relation to learners' L1

Further analysis of PVs with the AVP *down* reveals another important finding showing the influence of learners' L1 on their understanding of the PV *drop down*. The learners have inappropriately produced *drop down* instead of *fall into* (e.g. *'I *drop down* into

the pond because...'). Again, the inappropriate use of *drop down* in the above context arises due to the influence of the learners' L1, as proper verbs *drop* and *fall* are both represented by a single word '*jatuh*' in Malay. This may have influenced learners' understanding that PVs *drop down* and *fall down* also carry the same meaning and can be used interchangeably as '*jatuh*' in their L1. This understanding has clearly resulted in an inappropriate use of *drop down* in the context above. Below are examples to illustrate the use of '*jatuh*' in the learners' L1:

He *dropped* the pen.
Dia *jatuhkan* pen.

The pen *fell* onto the floor.
Pen itu *jatuh* keatas lantai.

The above discussion on the use of *drop down* by learners not only illustrates the inappropriate use of *drop down* (e.g. *'I *drop down* into the pond because...') but a similar pattern of *down + into* discussed earlier (see 7.2.2 and 7.2.3) is also replicated here. Learners' over-generalization of this structure (i.e. *down into*) indicates that they do not really understand the appropriate context in which this form is commonly used. This further suggests that PVs with AVP *down* may need further attention in language classrooms.

7.2.5 Lack of awareness of other core meanings of *go down, put down and fall down.*

Despite the misconception and over-generalization of the AVP *down* by learners, a lack of awareness of common collocates, and the influence of L1 discussed above, in general, they seem to show a good understanding and use of the core meanings of other

PVs with the AVP *down* under investigation. For instance, the core meanings of the PVs *calm down₁* (to help somebody become less upset, excited or lively), *go down₁* (physical action of a person/s moving from a higher to lower level or moving downstairs), and *put down₁* (to place something that we are holding or carrying onto a surface), which are clearly very transparent in meaning, can be easily understood by learners. However, it is rather surprising that learners are unable to use other meanings of these PVs that are also very common in the discourse of native speakers. For example, there is no instance of *go down* in the EMAS corpus being associated with *price/bill/cost*, to illustrate a decrease in cost or price of something (e.g. 'Oil prices *went down* for the first time this week'). Perhaps, a limitation in terms of the type of texts produced in the EMAS corpus (see 6.2) is one of the reasons for the non-occurrence of *go down* in this sense (i.e. *go down₂*), which frequently appears in business-related texts or journalism. Furthermore, learners may also find it difficult to associate *go down* literally with subjects like *bills, price and fees* in which no physical movement is involved and can be clearly seen. On the other hand, the meaning of *go down₁* is very transparent, as it involves physical movement, which can be clearly observed (e.g. 'We *went down* and have breakfast*'). Despite the non-transparent meaning of *go down₂*, it is expected that learners, at least those at a higher school level (i.e. F4), should already be familiar with *go down* in this sense which is very common and useful in everyday communication.

A similar problem arises in the case of the PV *put down*. Even though learners can produce *put down₁* appropriately, more than 50% of instances of *put down₁* (f=24) in the EMAS corpus are mainly associated with object nouns like *fishing rod* or *things,* as shown in the examples taken from the EMAS corpus below:

```
     asking help, we also quickly put down the fishing net and
 and then run to the spot. Amin put down his things and jump
    When we reached there, we put down our things and then
 other in alarmed. They quickly put down their fishing rods a
 Without thinking anything, I put down my things and jump i
 drowning. The boys hurriedly put down their things aside a
 was drowning to save her. They put down all their things and
    who are going fishing, they put down their fishing rods a
 shouting for help. They quickly put down their fishing rods a
    in the school. He jump while put down his fishing road, to
```

However, it is rather surprising that another core meaning of *put down₂*, which is frequently associated with object nouns like phone/telephone/receiver in native speakers' discourse, only appears twice (*f*=2) in the EMAS corpus; and this may partly due to the subject matter discussed in the EMAS texts. Both instances of *put down₂* are produced by those at a higher school level (F4) indicating that those at a lower school level are perhaps still not familiar with *put down* in this sense. Below are the two instances of *put down₂* found in the EMAS corpus:

```
 did not answer me and quickly put down the telephone engage
                                                   [SMPM-H-f4-05]


 seek for my result. After he put down his phone, he told me
                                                   [SMART-H-f4-13]
```

Thus, closer examination of *put down* shows another interesting finding: learners' understanding of *put down* differs from that of native speakers' when it involves animate objects (see 7.2.7).

As far as the PV *fall down* is concerned, the subject of *fall down* in the learner corpus is always associated with animate subjects, as shown in the examples taken from the EMAS corpus below:

```
        the riverbank, she sliped and fell down into the river. She
        Suraya pick the flowers, she fell down in to the river. Sy
        to the river. They see Suraya fell down to the river. Amin
         flowers. Suddenly her child fall down to the lake and she
         At there they see a child fall down to the lake. Without
         Suddenly, one of the girls fell down into the water. Th
        tripped over a big stone and fell down. Salmah was not a g
        ''No, we can't cause you to fall down.'' I continued. Mer
       fish. Suddenly, Mery slipt and fell down into the river. She
         the flowers, one of the girl fell down into the pond. This
```

Even though *fall down* is also very frequently associated with inanimate subjects (e.g. trousers/buildings/walls/trees) by native speakers, they do not appear at all in the learner corpus. Below are examples of *fall down* with inanimate subjects taken from the BoE corpus:

```
   perish the thought) the house does fall down, householders have to rely on
    going to keep it, but my house is falling down from too many books. <o> Push
   objects - windows, walls - or they fall down from their perches," Hassan
   to discover that the walls did not fall down when they entered the sacred
  repairs: `If we let these buildings fall down, it is an absolute waste of an
  of unused land. A row of buildings falls down in Chenaniaguine--the ground
       <p> Kenneth Williams' trousers fall down in ... most of the Carry Ons.
     he drew his gun and his trousers fell down. Boorman - who directed Marvin
    a storm the next night and a tree falls down. <F01> Oh don't spoil the
    ne night in 1678, the triple tree fell down. It was said to have been
```

This suggests that learners lack familiarity with many other common collocates of *fall down,* resulting in the non-occurrence of *fall down* with inanimate subjects in the EMAS corpus. While it is to be expected that the association of *fall down* with arguments/methods/ideas (e.g. 'It is a barren argument and *falls down* very quickly.'), and *put down* in the sense of criticizing a person or their ideas (e.g. 'She physically abused me as a child and she *put* me *down*.') are unlikely to appear in the learner corpus, learners should at least be familiar with the associations of *put down* with object collocates like phone/receiver, and *fall down* with subject collocates like trousers/ buildings/walls/bridge, as these meanings are widely used and more useful for them. Another possible explanation for the frequent association of *put down* with fishing rod/things and *fall down* with animate subjects may be due to the nature of the texts in the EMAS corpus, which is very much controlled by the given stimulus (see 6.2).

Perhaps with a larger corpus comprising wider type of texts, a more robust generalization and conclusion would be possible.

7.2.6   Incorrect grammatical structure of *calm down* with reflexive pronouns

Producing PVs, which are grammatically formed, is another problem faced by learners. In analysing all instances of *calm down* in the EMAS corpus, it is surprising that even those at a higher school level (i.e. F4) are still having problems in producing the correct form of *calm down,* particularly when it is used with reflexive pronouns (e.g. *calm down myself*). Below are examples taken from the EMAS corpus to illustrate this:

```
few second and didn't know what to do. I calmed down myself and with quick action [SMPM-
                                                                              P-f4-03]

well. When I came to school, I tried to calm down myself. Therefore, the result
                                                                       [SMART-H-f1-15]
```

However, instances of *calm down* with reflexive pronouns in the BoE corpus show that *calm myself down* is the pattern commonly produced by native speakers. Below are examples taken from the BoE corpus to illustrate the typical pattern of *calm down* involving reflexive pronouns:

```
   agitated, I just don't know how to calm myself down and relax. I just push
   it. I sometimes have to stop and calm myself down." <hl> Thug robbed dead
   a bit of a nightmare and I had to calm myself down because I knew I had a
It was so tender and I had to try and calm myself down because it was painful-
     <p> DEIDRE SAYS: You can learn to calm yourself down and de-sensitise
      you must have that period where you calm yourself down without doing
do not have a drink or take drugs to calm yourself down, <o> tell someone what
      He would have one more drink to calm himself down and then leave.
     supporter beside him told him to calm himself down. <p> Generally, he
 on the line by Gary Bollan. Ferguson calmed himself down and was especially
```

Examining a random sample of 500 concordance lines of *calm down* in the BoE corpus, it shows that *calm + reflexive pronouns + down* structure occurs less frequently in the native speakers' corpus (T-score=1.4: *calm myself down*; T-score=0.99: *calm yourself*

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down; T-score=0.99: *calm himself down*) as compared to intransitive *calm + down* (T-score=18.9). Thus, learners may have fewer encounters with the former structure than the latter one. This is perhaps one possible explanation why learners are less familiar with *calm down* involving reflexive pronouns, which leads to the production of the non-standard structure above. Most importantly, this finding further supports the claim that grammatical structure (e.g. particle movement/'separability'), is one the most challenging aspects of PVs for language learners (Trebits 2009; Siyanova and Schmitt 2007; de Cock 2006; Darwin and Gray 1999; Side 1990; Cornell 1985).

7.2.7　　　Lack of awareness of patterns that causes non-standard use of *put down*

The non-standard grammatical structure produced by learners is also found to affect the meaning of a particular sentence, which differs from what is commonly understood by native speakers. One clear example to illustrate this is the use of *put down* followed by animate objects/people (e.g. * 'The boys *put down* Adibah'). Native speakers may have understood and interpreted this sentence as an intention to either criticize the person (i.e. Adibah) or her ideas. However, looking at a longer text in which this sentence appears in the learner corpus, it was not intended to express criticism, as commonly understood by native speakers. Rather, the message that the learner was trying to convey is 'to stop carrying Adibah and put her down onto the ground'. However, *put down + somebody* is not the common structure used by native speakers to convey such meaning. Instead, *put + pronoun (her) + down* is frequently used by native speakers in this particular context. Below are instances taken from the BoE corpus to illustrate this:

```
and I had to stop feeding and put her down in the position she was in when I <p> Since
        Doran was well wrapped up I put him down on the cold linoleum and
    carried Baby Sean out of her bed and put him down with Little Patty. He was a
     but I kicked him on the shin and he hastily put me down. My mother, who had
```

Clearly, this problem can be overcome if learners are aware of the typical pattern of *put down* in this sense and aware that the use of non-standard pattern may result in conveying a message that is different from the intended one.

7.3 Results of PVs with the AVP *out*

7.3.1 Distributions of PVs with the AVP *out*

Table 49 below presents distributions of the top six LV lemma with the AVP *out* in the EMAS corpus, which include the LV lemma *go, come, pull, find, get,* and *take.* The frequency of occurrence of each lemma in both structures − LV+AVP and LV+X+AVP − is further grouped according to school level (i.e. P5, F1 and F4).

Table 57: Distributions of LV lemmas + AVP *out* in the EMAS corpus

LV lemmas	*LV + AVP out structure (f)*	*LV + X + AVP out structure (f)*	*Total No. of occurrences (f)*
go	**112**	**0**	**112**
	P5: 15	P5: 0	P5: 15
	F1: 23	F1: 0	F1: 23
	F4: 74	F4: 0	F4: 74
come	**84**	**0**	**84**
	P5: 17	P5: 0	P5: 17
	F1: 18	F1: 0	F1: 18
	F4: 49	F4: 0	F4: 49
pull	**17**	**27**	**44**
	P5: 2	P5: 8	P5: 10
	F1: 6	F1: 5	F1: 11
	F4: 9	F4: 14	F4: 23

find	**43**	**0**	**43**
	P5: 7	P5: 0	P5: 7
	F1: 9	F1: 0	F1: 9
	F4: 27	F4: 0	F4: 27
get	**32**	**7**	**39**
	P5: 2	P5: 7	P5: 9
	F1: 26	F1: 0	F1: 26
	F4: 4	F4: 0	F4: 4
take	**20**	**13**	**33**
	P5: 6	P5: 2	P5: 8
	F1: 5	F1: 4	F1: 9
	F4: 9	F4: 7	F4: 16

Table 49 above shows that the LV lemma *go* (*f*=112) is the most frequent lemma attached with the AVP *out* followed by the LV lemma *come* (*f*=84), *pull* (*f*=44), *find* (*f*=43), *get* (*f*=39), and *take* (*f*=33). The figures show that with the exception of the PV *get out*, the remaining PVs investigated above are produced more frequently by those at the higher school level (i.e. F4). The number of PV *go out* for instance, is 5 times higher by F4 learners than those in Y5, and three times higher than F1 learners. Those at a higher school level are also found to produce a larger number of instances of PVs (except PV *get out*) in both structures: LV+ AVP and LV+X+AVP. This suggests that the length of language learning does play a role in the learners' learning of PVs, and more frequent encounters with these PVs throughout the language learning process seems to help improve the learners' understanding and use of PVs.

As both *go out* and *come out* are intransitive in form it is expected that these PVs will only appear in the LV+AVP form and the non-occurrence of these PVs in such form suggests that learners are aware that the elements in *come out* and *go out* cannot be separated. The PVs *pull out, get out*, *take out* and *find out* can appear in both forms:

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LV+ AVP and LV+X+AVP, as shown in the examples taken from the BoE corpus below:

```
       hair, do a strand test first - pull out a few strands of hair and apply
  Instantly she knew what it was. She pulled it out and opened it. The children
  x 4ft oil portrait of herself. She pulled it out of its case, gasped `Mama",
     it is realistic to expect them to get out quickly because they have
 the foot. I have several times had to get out of bed, and sit up all night to
  t remember what it was, but I can't get it out of my head." Emily went to
    between 18 and 60 are eligible to take out income protection if they are
  water for about 60 seconds and then take them out of the boiling water and
   insistence that therapists actually find out what happens and has happened
 open it; if you take your time you'll find it out. It just takes time.` Well,
```

However, closer examination of these PVs in the EMAS corpus shows that *find out* only appears in the LV+AVP form, indicating that learners at all levels are more familiar with the two-word (*find out*) rather than the three-word (*find it out*) variety of this particular PV. Table 50 below shows examples of *pull out, get out,* and *take out* in the two different structures found in the EMAS corpus.

Table 58: Examples of PVs *pull out, get out* and *take out* in LV+AVP and

LV+X+AVP structure in the EMAS corpus

School level / PVs	*pull out*	*get out*	*take out*
Primary 5 (P5) LV+AVP	to hold the tall grass. Ali come and *pull out them from the water. Thee girls [SKABJ-s5-P-09]	to the river. The girl was struggling to *get out* of the river. The other girl [SRBL-P-s5-24]	time to cut the cake. Suddenly, a woman *took out* a Chocolate Cake from the kitchen [SRBL-H-s5-04]

LV+X+AVP	he dived into the lake to rescue her. He *pulled* her *out* of the water. She has [SRGK-P-s5-11]	-	Everyone in my family loves him. When we *take* him *out*, our neighbours think that [SRBL-H-s5-18]
Form 1 (F1) LV+AVP	into the lake and saved Mashita they *pulled out* Mashita and call out and [SMMA-O-f1-26]	sounding their horns continuously. I *got out* of the car with an umbrella and [SMSAB-S-f1-19] -	of continuing reading the article, he *took out* a piece of paper and a pen and [SMSAB-S-f1-30]
LV+X+AVP	as loud as possible. Swee Beng tried to *pull* Sarah *out* of the river but Sarah [SMTA-P-F1-32]		my aunt who was gasping for air and *took* her *out* from the water. My [SMTA-P-F1-09]
Form 4 (F4) LV+AVP	my energy, I jumped into the water and *pulled out* the little girl. She looked [SMPM-H-f4-08]	as soundly as baby. Both of my parents *got out* of the car and went into a whit [SMART-H-f4-07]	me. After that, I went to store room to *take out* all the equipment we wanted to [SMPM-P-f4-02]

LV+X+AVP	she was almost fainted. The young man *pulled* So Ying *out* of the lake and put [SMPM-P-f4-27]	with her persuasive power she managed to *get* me *out* of the house. We were walking [SMHK-V-f4-16]	deep. A few minutes later, I managed to *take* her *out* of the water. She was [SMPM-P-f4-15]

7.3.2   Literal and non-literal meanings of *go out, come out, pull out* and *take out*

In general, my analysis indicates that learners do not have many problems in understanding and using PVs with the AVP *out,* which are literal in meaning and usually involve physical action or movement of a person because the action can be clearly observed. For example, most instances of PVs *go out* (somebody leaves a building/room/house), *come out* (somebody appears from a place), *pull out* (to remove somebody/something from a place), and *take out* (to remove something from a container or from the place where it was/to take someone out), where meanings are very transparent, seem to be well understood and appropriately used by learners.

However, PVs that are metaphorical in meaning and do not literally involve any physical movement that can be clearly seen, or are associated with abstract nouns, seem to pose problems to learners. For instance, the association of the PV *go out* with hearts/thoughts (e.g. '...our hearts *go out* to her family and friends'); *come out* with information/report (e.g. '...the Royal College of Surgeons report *came out*, that smoking might be a no-no health wise'); *pull out* with troops/army (e.g. 'Bush reaffirmed that he intended to *pull out* US troops as soon as possible'); and *take out* with insurance/loan

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(e.g. 'It is highly recommended that passengers *take out* insurance'), which appear very frequently in the native speaker corpus, do not appear at all in the learner corpus. However, considering the learners' level of learning (i.e. primary and secondary school level), the amount of exposure to non-literal PVs, and the nature of data in the EMAS corpus itself (see 6.2), it is not surprising that such associations do not appear in the learner corpus. Apart from this finding, learners' lack of familiarity with many other non-literal PVs are also presented in Chapter 5 (see 5.2.6; 5.2.8) and other sections in this chapter (see 7.1.2; 7.1.4; 7.1.6; 7.2.5; 7.3.2).

7.3.3   Problems relating to directionality in PVs *come out* and *go out* and its relation to learners' L1

Despite the learners' good understanding and use of the literal PVs discussed above, detailed analysis reveals that there are instances in the EMAS corpus showing that learners' at all school levels (i.e. P5, F1 and F4) are having problems with the aspect of directionality in PVs. Learners' confusion with respect to directionality can be clearly seen in the inappropriate use of PVs *come out* and *go out* by learners, as shown in the examples extracted from the EMAS corpus below:

```
When we came to my grandparents house, I came out of the car and ran quickly to my
grandmother and grandfather.
                                                                    [SMART-H-f4-13]


my family and my neighbour went out from their hiding place and they said ''Happy
Birthday''to me.
                                                                    [SKAC-s5-S-25]
```

The examples above clearly demonstrate that high frequency PVs like *go out* and *come out* are still a problem for learners. In fact, learners at all school levels (P5, F1 and F4) seem to have problems relating to the directionality of the PVs *go out* and *come out*. Native speakers, however, will say *get out* instead of *come out* in the first example, and

come out instead of *go out* in the second. One possible explanation for the confusion arises due to the influence of learners' L1, as both *come out* and *go out* are represented by a single Malay word *'keluar'* regardless of direction, as shown in the examples below:

I   *came out* of   the car.
Saya   *keluar*   dari   kereta.

My family   *went out* from   their hiding place.
Keluarga saya   *keluar*   dari   tempat persembunyian mereka.

The above examples clearly illustrate that learners' understanding and use of *'keluar'* significantly influenced them into thinking that both *come out* and *go out* can be used interchangeably, as *'keluar'* in their L1. This has therefore resulted in the inappropriate use of *go out* and *come out* discussed above. Other examples illustrating the influence of learners' L1 on the use of PVs are presented in Chapter 5 (see 5.2.4; 5.2.5; 5.2.7; 5.2.8) and other sections in this chapter (see 7.1.3; 7.2.3; 7.2.4).

7.3.4   Unfamiliarity with other core meanings of *go out*, *come out*, and *take out*

Further analysis of PVs with the AVP *out* in the learner corpus also illustrates that learners are unfamiliar with many other core meanings of these PVs, which are very frequently found in the native speaker corpus. It is rather surprising that the association of *go out* with subject collocates lights/fire (e.g. '...it would take more than 24 hours before the fire *goes out*'), *come out* with subject collocates sun/moon/star (e.g. '...but at 4.30 it stopped raining and the sun *came out*.'), and *take out* with object collocate money (e.g. '...you and I could use our cards to *take out* money from any ATM machine available.'), which are among other core meanings of *go out*, *come out*, and

take out, do not appear at all in the learner corpus. Apart from the nature of the EMAS corpus itself (see 6.2), this finding may also suggest that learners are more confident in using these PVs when they are associated with physical movement of animate subjects (i.e. people) and they find it difficult to associate *come out* with inanimate subjects like sun/moon/star or to relate *go out* with lights/fire.

An analysis of the EMAS corpus shows that all instances (100%) of *go out;* and more than half (66.7%) of the instances of *come out* are associated with physical movement of a person/s, as shown in examples taken from the EMAS corpus below:

```
        One day, Afiq, Hafiz and I went out for fishing near the lake. Whil
weather was so nice, Liam Sim decided to go out with her best friend Yan Yien fo
ry good friends. One Sunday evening they go out for a walk at Taman Gelora. They
 p.m., we go to hotel and bath, After we go out to celebrate my birthday in the
  at 9.00 a.m, my parents and my brother went out. I watched a few cartoons and
6.45 p.m. Then I had a shower and then I come out of the room. I was stunned to
    I was so nervous, when I saw my mum coming out of the staff room. My mum ga
 it. Later that, a clerk from the office came out and gave teacher an envelope.
  to a room. After for a while, a doctor came out and told them that she is save
allowed in. A few hours later, my mother came out with a glittering eyes. I hug
```

As *go out, come out* and *take out* are considered as high frequency PVs (see Gardner and Davies, 2007) and very useful in everyday communication, it is expected that learners, particularly those at a higher school level, should be familiar with other core meanings and usage of *go out, come out* and *take out* discussed above, and they should have appeared more frequently in learners' texts. However, the nature of texts in the EMAS corpus itself (see 6.2) should be taken into account, which may have also contributed to the non-occurence of PVs in various senses (e.g. association of *take out* with money). Apart from that, another possible explanation for the non-occurrence of these PVs in the above sense is the lack of attention given to PVs in learners' textbooks, as reported by the teachers surveyed (see Chapter 5), which may have influenced the way PVs are treated in language classrooms (see also Chapter 8 for further discussion

of reference materials). As a result, learners' are unfamiliar with core meanings of many high frequency PVs. Thus, it is suggested that PVs like these should be explicitly addressed in textbooks and language classrooms, and understanding their core meanings should be one of the main focuses in PV lessons.

7.3.5   Unawareness of patterns in the PV *find out* and its relation to learners' lexical knowledge and L1

Learners' lexical knowledge as well as unawareness of regular patterns may have also contributed to the inappropriate use of PVs including *find out*. There are many instances in the EMAS corpus that illustrate the problems associated with the lexical knowledge of learners, and one very clear example is in the use of the PV *find out* and the LV *find*. Learners are not clear on the difference between *find out* and *find*, in terms of meanings and usage. My analysis of *find out* in the EMAS corpus shows that most instances of *find out* are appropriately used and follow a pattern that is similar to native speakers': *find out + that/'wh'* clause. However, closer examination of *find out* in the EMAS corpus reveals that there are instances in which learners use the LV *find* instead of the PV *find out* and vice versa. Below are examples taken from the EMAS corpus to illustrate this:

```
    "Nany!!". Then we turned over and to find what happened. It's the well showi
     He began to get scared. In order to find what was happening, he dived into
 heard someone screaming. They tried to find where does the sound come from and
         at the place that we were try to find where the voice from. So, we dropp
 my friend. That is not save. Better we find out one instructor. Then and train
    the semester break. While walking to find out suitable place to put our equi
```

Examining instances of LV *find* in the BoE corpus, it shows that *find* is commonly followed by a noun phrase, while the PV *find out* is usually followed by *that* or *'wh'* clause. Below are examples taken from the BoE corpus to illustrate the common pattern of LV *find* and PV *find out*:

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```
        The social services were unable to find a home for him from which he could
The reporter reviewed it and couldn't find a single factual mistake. Barnes
   to occupy it. `But we are trying to find a solution." <sect id=NEWS> <hd>
scheme recently adopted by the GEF to find new ways to protect the Brazilian
and improvement methods and trying to find alternative strategies to finish the
            for doing it, he wants to find out what the causes were for
  I'll definitely be phoning home to find out how the boys get on." <p> In the
  underpasses will be unsurprised to find out that Britain's first fatal motor
  The next step in the research is to find out why low-fat foods often taste
unbeaten survivors. Today United will find out which team bar their way to the
```

The production of the non-standard structure of *find + 'wh'* clause and *find out +* noun phrase by learners may indicate that they are not aware of their typical patterning and assume that *find* and *find out* follow similar structures, which has resulted in the inappropriate uses discussed above. Other instances with respect to learners' lack of awareness of common patterns, which resulted in inappropriate use of PVs are also presented in other sections in this chapter (see 7.1.3; 7.2.3; 7.2.7).

Besides unfamiliarity of regular patterns, learners' L1 is perhaps another possible reason for the uncertainty in the use of *find* and *find out* in the above context. Both LV *find* and PV *find out* are represented by the same root word '*dapat*' in Malay, which may have influenced learners to assume that these two language forms (*find* and *find out*) can also be used interchangeably as '*dapat*' in their L1. Below are examples to illustrate the use of '*dapat*' in learners' L1.

| At last, | I | *found* | the answer. |
| Akhirnya, | saya | *dapat* | jawapannya. |

| I | *found out* | that | the answer | was | wrong. |
| Saya | *dapati* | bahawa | jawapan itu | adalah | salah. |

In general, the findings so far reveal that L1 (i.e. Malay) plays a significant part in Malaysian learners' understanding and use of many common PVs. Further examples

illustrating the influence of learners' L1 on the use of PVs are presented in Chapter 5 (see 5.2.4; 5.2.5; 5.2.7; 5.2.8) and other sections in this chapter (see 7.1.3; 7.2.3; 7.2.4).

7.3.6   Lack of awareness of common collocates of the PVs *take out* and *take off*

Further analysis of the selected PVs with the AVP *out* also reveal that unawareness of common collocates of PVs is another possible explanation for the inappropriate use of PVs by learners. For instance, in analysing all instances of *take out* in the EMAS corpus, it is rather surprising to find a few instances showing learners' inappropriate use of *take out* instead of *take off*.

```
They ran fast and helped. Hasni Raja took out his shoe. He jumped into the river
  knows how to swim well, took out his shoes and socks. He jumped into the pond
Samy take out his shirt and immediately jumped into the river to save the girl.
```

The close meaning of *take out* and *take off* in the sense of 'removing something from its original place', may have contributed to the confusion above. However, if learners are aware of the common collocates associated to these PVs, they may be able to distinguish the different meanings and usage. The PV *take out* in the above sense is usually associated with common object collocates (e.g. knife, hammer, notebook, diary, cigarettes). Below are examples taken from the BoE corpus:

```
  Bryan goes straight to the kitchen, takes out a knife that means business and
 reaching up to the top of a cupboard takes out a jar and twists the lid off
  thing. And because when the drummer takes out a hammer between wibbles to
      in its side, through a flap. It takes out a notebook marked `American
   She opened a drawer in a bureau and took out a photograph album. Look, here
     two get back this afternoon." He took out a pack of French cigarettes and
house &hellip; right, Matt?" <p> Matt took out a pack of cigarettes, but when
  for my daughter because one teenager took out a knife and threatened her with
         Janet opened her handbag and took out a small appointment diary. Laura
         He then stopped at a fridge, took out a 600ml bottle of Coke and
```

On the other hand, the PV *take off* frequently co-occurs with more specific object collocates; usually things that we are wearing like masks, shoes, cap, ring and clothes, as shown in the examples taken from the BoE below:

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```
        sprouted. `For heaven's sake, take off those gloves," said Mrs. Barrows.
    `Iman handed over the cash. `Now take off your clothes and get in the cage,
    sounds in the quiet house. They took off their shoes and tiptoed down the
    rowing boats were chained up. He took off his shirt, wrapped it round the
    floor, a man who had just arrived took off his hat, greeted a few friends and
        in the centre. The Giant had taken off the mask that made his face a
      his desk. The job completed, he took off his glasses and started cleaning
        office. The woman told him to take off his coat and sit down and said that
    crouched and fell forward. Ned took off his canvas belt and bent over Max,
      covering his damp clothes. He takes off his boots and pours a p9int of water
```

Even though there are only a small number of instances (*f*=3) showing learners' incorrect use of *take out* instead of *take off*, this finding does provide the useful insight that confusion does appear in the use of these high frequency PVs. In fact, closer examination shows that the above examples of **take out* (instead of *take off*) were produced by learners at all school levels (i.e. P5, F1 and F4) suggesting that these PVs may also need equal attention in language classrooms. I believe that making learners aware of common collocates of *take out* and *take off* can facilitate their understanding of the correct use of these useful PVs. Apart from that, L1 influence is another possible explanation to the learners' confusion between *take off* and *take out* (see 5.2.7 and 7.4.2).

7.3.7 Inappropriate use of the preposition *from* to follow PVs *go out*, *come out*, *pull out* and *get out* and its relation to learners' L1

Apart from the findings with respect to incorrect grammatical structure of PVs presented in 7.1.4; 7.2.6; 7.2.7, a similar problem was also identified in the use of the PVs *go out, come out, pull out* and *get out*. Learners are not only having problems with the directionality of PVs (see 7.3.3), but also produced a non-standard grammatical pattern particularly in the choice of PRP that follows PVs *go out, come out*, *pull out* and *get out*. Analysing all the instances of these PVs in the EMAS corpus, learners show a great tendency to use the PRP *from* to follow these PVs (i.e. *go out/come out/pull out/get out* + from). Below are examples taken from the EMAS corpus to illustrate this:

```
    drive to their direction.  Three man came out from the car and the little girl
    Idris hmm quickly jump into the river and help her to come out from the river
 I was crossing the road, suddenly a car came out from nowhere at a high speed.
 venture to far out. After an hour, we go out from the water s the sun got ver
 remember my birthday in this year. When I go out from the room, I can see my
     into the water to save the girl. He pulled her out from the water. Then, eh
 quickly jumped into the river tried to pull her out from the river. Using al
 now drowning in the river. She tried to get herself out from the water but she
 the lake. They helped Ahmad and Nina to get out from the water. Nina was very
```

In addition, closer analysis of the PVs *come out, go out, pull out* and *get out* in the BoE corpus shows that they are frequently followed by the PRP *of* rather than *from,* as shown in the examples extracted from the BoE corpus below:

```
 falsehoods as easily as magicians pull rabbits out of tall hats. Cone, or
 and her father bent down and helped pull her out of the water. She had never
 you'd rather be outdoors. <p> Janie came out of her house, farther down, and
     but said very little. <p> As he came out of the room he said to me: `He
 roads. But he did it p. 204 <p> Helen came out of the car and up beside the
    none of you have to go out of this room tonight without a vision or go
 of white blotting paper: the words went out of my mouth and disappeared beh
 the foot. I have several times had to get out of bed, and sit up all night to
 11 February 2000 </dt> I WAS trying to get out of the car but I was rather
 reached land. `When we got out of the water, we just watched as this croc kind
```

The influence of the learners' L1 is possibly one of the main reasons for the inappropriate use of the PRP *from* to follow *go out*, *come out*, *pull out* and *get out* in the contexts discussed above. My observations of each concordance line containing these PVs in the learner corpus indicate the learners' tendency to directly translate this sentence word by word into their L1 (Malay) rather than look at the sentence as a whole. Thus, the PRP *from* is directly translated by learners into their L1 as '*dari'*. This problem is then further extended as all the three PVs – *go out, come out* and *get out* – are represented by a single word '*keluar'* in the learners' L1. Below are examples to further illustrate this:

| Dia | *keluar* | *dari* | kereta. |
| He | *came out* | **from* | *the car.* |

| Saya | *keluar* | *dari* | rumah. |
| I | *went out* | **from* | my house. |

| Mereka | *keluar* | *dari* | sungai. |
| They | *got out* | **from* | the river. |

The above examples clearly illustrate that in addition to the incorrect choice of the PRP *from* to follow the PV above, it is expected that these PVs may also be used interchangeably by learners (regardless of context) as *come out, go out* and *get out* are also represented by a single verb *('keluar')* (see also 7.3.3).

Apart from L1, learners' unfamiliarity with the grammatical pattern of *go out/come out/pull out/get out* + PRP *of,* particularly in the contexts above, is probably another reason for the non-standard structure produced. Therefore, learners may have relied on their L1 to decide on the most possible PRP to be used in that particular context, and this is when direct translation from L1 into L2 probably takes place.

7.3.8 Inappropriate grammatical structure of *pull out* and *take out* with pronouns and its relation to learners' level

Another important finding with respect to the non-standard grammatical structure by learners can also be seen in the use of the PVs *pull out* and *take out* involving pronouns. Below are examples extracted from the EMAS corpus to illustrate this:

```
to hold the tall grass. Ali come and pull out them from the water. The girls
                                                            [SKABJ-s5-P-09]

keep it in my stor. Went i want use it i take out it. I ride my bicycle to school
                                                            [SKAC-s5-S-30]
```

Instead of placing the pronouns between the LV and AVP (*pulled* them *out*/*take* it *out*), the pronoun is incorrectly placed after the AVP (*pulled out them/*take out it). Closer examination reveals that this non-standard structure most frequently appears in the texts of learners at a lower school level (i.e. P5). There is no instance of inappropriate grammatical structure of *pull out* and *take out* with pronouns, produced by learners at a

higher school level (i.e. secondary school). This suggests that producing a correct form of PVs, particularly with pronouns, is a problem to learners, especially those at the lower school level (see also 7.1.4; 7.2.6; and 7.3.8 for a similar problem). However, this problem seems to disappear when learners reach a higher level, suggesting that the length of language learning may also play a role as it allows learners to have more and frequent encounters with the correct form of PVs involving pronouns, which gradually improves their understanding and ability to produce standard forms. This finding contradicts that of Siyanova and Schmitt (2007) who found that length of exposure does not play a significant role in the learners' use of multi-word verbs. This contradictory finding is perhaps because they studied adult learners and compared length of exposure to native speakers' environment, while the present study entirely focusses on school learners in a non-native environment.

7.4   Results of PVs with the AVP *off*

7.4.1   Distributions of PVs with the AVP *off*

This section will discuss and present findings with respect to PVs with the AVP *off* found in the EMAS corpus in comparison to those found in the BoE corpus. Table 51 below presents distributions of the top six LV lemmas with the AVP *off* in the EMAS corpus, which include the LV lemma *take, show, switch*, *go, set* and *get.* The frequency of occurrences of each lemma in both structures: LV+AVP and LV+X+AVP is further grouped according to learners' forms (P5, F1 and F4), as shown below:

Table 59: Distributions of LV lemmas + AVP *off* in the EMAS corpus

LV lemmas	LV + AVP off structure (f)	LV + X + AVP off structure (f)	Total No. of occurrences (f)
take	**15**	**0**	**15**
	P5: 4	P5: 0	P5: 4
	F1: 7	F1: 0	F1: 7
	F4: 4	F4: 0	F4: 4
show	**5**	**1**	**6**
	P5: 0	P5: 0	P5: 0
	F1: 3	F1: 1	F1: 4
	F4: 2	F4: 0	F4: 2
switch	**6**	**0**	**6**
	P5: 4	P5: 0	P5: 4
	F1: 0	F1: 0	F1: 0
	F4: 2	F4: 0	F4: 2
go	**6**	**0**	**6**
	P5: 0	P5: 0	P5: 0
	F1: 2	F1: 0	F1: 2
	F4: 4	F4: 0	F4: 4
set	**4**	**0**	**4**
	P5: 1	P5: 0	P5: 1
	F1: 1	F1: 0	F1: 1
	F4: 2	F4: 0	F4: 2
get	**2**	**1**	**3**
	P5: 0	P5: 0	P5: 0
	F1: 1	F1: 0	F1: 1
	F4: 1	F4: 1	F4: 2

Table 51 shows that the PVs *take off* (*f*=15), *show off* (*f*=6), *switch off* (*f*=6), *go off* (*f*=6), *set off* (*f*=4), and *get off* (*f*=3) are the top six PVs with AVP *off* appearing in the learner corpus. Even though the number of instances of PVs with the AVP *off* is much

smaller than the PVs with the AVP *up, out* and *down*, this data can still provide some useful information with respect to the use of these PVs by learners, and, therefore, deserves further examination.

In analysing all instances of the PVs above, it shows that *show off* and *get off* are the only two PVs with the AVP *off* under investigation that appear in both LV+AVP and LV+X+AVP forms in the EMAS corpus. It is expected that *go off* will only appear in the LV+AVP form because it is an intransitive PV and does not take any object, therefore object movement is clearly impossible. Further analysis indicates that the PVs *take off, switch off,* and *set off*, which can also appear in the LV+X+AVP form, are not found in the learner corpus. However, due to the small number of instances of these PVs in the EMAS corpus, it is rather unfair to assume that learners are not familiar with this structure (LV+X+AVP). This is because closer examination of *take off,* for instance, indicates that learners at the higher school level (F4) are in fact able to produce the four-word variety (LV+X+X+AVP) of PV *take off* (e.g. '*took* my jacket *off*'/'*took* my clothes *off*'). In addition, it is difficult to say whether learners at the higher school level can produce larger numbers of these PVs as there is such a small margin in the total number of instances produced by learners at each school level (see Table 51). Clearly, future studies need to use a bigger corpus so that more information with respect to learners' use of these high frequency PVs can be obtained and more robust generalizations and conclusions can be reached.

7.4.2   Familiarity with literal and core meanings of *take off, show off* and *switch off*

Even with the small data set, a number of problems can be observed with respect to the use of PVs with the AVP *off*. My analysis indicates that despite confusion in the use of *take out* and *take off* discussed earlier (see 7.3.6), closer examination of these PVs in the EMAS corpus reveals that most instances of *take off* (f=11 or 73.3%) show the ability of learners to use this PV appropriately in the sense of removing things that we are wearing (i.e. *take off₁*). Added to that, closer analysis indicates that learners are also aware of the transitivity of *take off₁*, that it is always followed by an object (e.g. 'I quickly *took off* my shoes and jumped into the river'). In fact, all instances of *take off₁* are used transitively, indicating that learners are aware of this pattern. My analysis also indicates that *take off₁* is the only core meaning produced by learners at the secondary school level (F1 and F4). Interestingly, those at the lower school level (i.e. P5) are able to use another core meaning of *take off₂* (to leave the ground and start to fly). Below are examples taken from the EMAS corpus to illustrate this:

```
excited .  Finally when the aeroplane took off the runway, it was my greatest
                                                             [SRMP-H-s5-20]

Abdul Aziz International Airport. The plane took off north, I could see the night
                                                             [SRGK-H-s5-29]

airport with joy. I felt unplesent when it take off but it passed by. I have a
                                                             [SRBL-H-s5-20]
```

Similarly, my analysis of the PV *show off* illustrates that learners are also familiar with the core meanings of the PV *show off₁* (to show something that you own to a lot of people because you are proud of it/to impress people by making your skills or good qualities very obvious). Below are examples of *show off₁* found in the EMAS corpus:

```
brother. He thought that his brother was showing off. It was true that Aiman was
 for a walk, swimming, picnic ad we even showing off our creativity in sewing an
vanya, the stubborn one, still wanted to show off her talent which was climbing.
 saw my school friends Nany that like to show off. She and her friend were pluck
and to find what happened. It's the well showing off girl in to the river while
```

The above examples indicate the learners' awareness of the association of *show off₁*
with physical objects (e.g. bicycle, house, car), as well as its association with abstract
nouns (e.g. talent, skill, creativity). Learners' L1 may have facilitated their
understanding and familiarity with *show off₁* because this PV is represented by a similar
verb in learners' L1 *('menunjuk-nunjuk')* in both contexts. Below are examples to
illustrate this:

He	*shows off*		his new stamps collection.
Dia	*menunjuk-nunjuk*		koleksi setem terbarunya.

She	likes	to	*show off*	her swimming skills.
Dia	suka		*menunjuk-nunjuk*	kebolehannya berenang.

Learners also show a degree of familiarity with the core meanings of the PV switch *off₁*
(to stop lights/alarms/engine, etc., from working by pressing a switch), although the
frequency of occurrence is relatively low (see 7.4.3); and *set off₁* (to leave a place,
usually in order to start a journey). In fact, all instances of *switch off* and *set off* in the
EMAS corpus are associated with these senses, as shown in the examples taken from
the EMAS corpus below:

```
       I used to have every habit of switching off the alarm clock when it ri
    One night, my parents and my siblings switch off all the lamp in my house. I
   that, i am say in my heart ''why they switch off all the lamp?'' Without dall
  watch television, she always asks me to switch off the television and do my hom
 changing, the whole house is dark. They switch off the light and I can juts see
 a nearby river behind Mike's house. They set off after taking what they needed s
   which led by an experienced leader and set off at dawn. Jason and I were very
 on for two whole hours. My parents and I set off home the next day. It was a ver
       of them thanked us profusely. We then set off to our destination.
```

Undoubtedly, the meaning of *set off₁* is transparent, and the association of *switch off₁* with objects that technically have a 'switch', such as lights/alarms/engine, is clearly much easier to be learned and understood by learners. As meanings of the PVs *take off, show off, switch off* and *set off* in the above contexts are rather transparent, it is expected that learners may have less difficulty in understanding and using them. Added to that, these PVs are generally considered high frequency PVs (see Gardner and Davies, 2007), and, thus widely used, and learners may have more frequent encounters with them, which further enhances their understanding and use.

7.4.3 Unfamiliarity with other core meanings of *take off*, *switch off*, get *off*, and *go off*

Further examination of *take off, show off* and *switch off* in the EMAS indicates that these PVs appear less frequently in other senses commonly found in native speakers' discourse. While learners at a lower level (P5) are aware of the association of *take off* with aeroplanes/planes/jets (see examples in 7.4.2), it is surprising that there is no instances of *take off* in this sense (i.e. *take off₂*) produced by learners at the higher level (F1, F4). Instead, they seem to produce more transitive form of *take off₁* (f=11). Again, the subject matter discussed in the texts produced by this group of learners may have contributed to the higher number of *take off₂* by the P5 than the F1 and F4 learners (see 6.2 for the composition of the EMAS corpus).

Similarly, although learners in general seem familiar with the core meanings of *switch off₁* (see 7.4.2), surprisingly, only two instances of *switch off₁* (f= 2) in the learner corpus were produced by those at a higher school level, and none of the examples they produced are in the LV+X+AVP variation, suggesting their lack of familiarity with this

structure. It is also surprising that the PV *get off₁* in the sense 'to leave a train/bus/aircraft', which is a core meaning of *get off,* does not appear in the EMAS corpus. It is expected that learners, particularly those at the higher school level (i.e. F4), should have been familiar with the core meanings of common PVs like *take off*, *switch off* and *get off*, and more instances of these PVs in the above senses should have appeared in the learner corpus. However, the nature of the EMAS corpus itself (see 6.2) should also be taken into account for the absence of *get off₁*.

Learners' unfamiliarity with core meanings is also illustrated in the use of the PV *go off*. There are only two instances (*f*=2) of *go off₁* in the EMAS corpus being associated with *light/electrical device* to indicate they 'stop operating'. Below are instances of *go off₁* taken from the EMAS corpus:

```
playing cards game. Suddenly, the lights went off. So, we light up the candles.
   sad with it. Suddenly, all the lights go off. I thought it was out of electric
```

Association of *go off₂* with things like an *alarm/bell/bomb/gun* is another core meaning of *go off* to indicate they 'start operating by making a sudden loud noise'. There is only one example (*f*=1) of *go off* in this sense that appears in the learner corpus ('Ring!!!! The alarm clock in Ali's room *went off*'). The contradictory meanings of *go off₁* (stop operating) and *go off₂* (start operating) may have caused confusion to learners in distinguishing meanings and use of the PV *go off*, which may have resulted in a low frequency of occurrence of *go off* in these two senses in the learner corpus. Added to that, the metaphorical meaning of *go off* in these contexts in which learners may find it difficult to associate *go off* with inanimate subjects like *alarm clocks/bells/lights* may have also resulted in the infrequent occurrence of *go off* in the EMAS corpus.

Another core meaning of *go off₃* (to leave the place where you were, usually in order to do something), appears only once (*f*=1) in the learner corpus ('The next day, we *went off* to the other part of the forest'). This is rather surprising as *go off* in this context is very transparent in meaning and normally learners do not have much problem in understanding and producing PVs that involve physical movement/action of a person. Closer examination indicates that learners tend to use a more familiar single-word equivalent *leave* to replace PV *go off₃* (e.g. 'We gathered at school at 8.00 am and *leave* to Batu Feringgi about 9.00 am'). This might be one of the reasons for the less frequent occurrence of *go off₃* in the EMAS corpus. This finding is consistent with those reported in Siyanova and Schmitt (2007), Liao and Fukuya (2004), and Nesselhauf (2003) that learners show greater preference in the use of single-word equivalents than multi-word verbs. Further discussion of the non-standard use of *go off* is presented in 7.4.5.

Although the above analysis indicates learners' unfamiliarity with core meanings of the PVs *switch off, take off*, *get off* and *go off*, it is important to take into account the nature of texts produced (see 6.2) which is controlled by a given stimulus and topic, and may have not allowed learners to produce more instances of these common PVs. Thus, future research should consider larger data and a wider scope of topics to confirm this finding.

7.4.4   Unfamiliarity with non-core meanings of *show off, switch off, go off* and *take off*

Even though learners show a good understanding of *show off* in the two senses discussed earlier (see 7.4.2), it is expected that the non-core meaning of *show off₃*

provided in the *Collins Cobuild Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs* (i.e. 'if something *shows off* another thing, it makes the other thing seem more attractive or effective because it emphasizes the good qualities of that other thing') is unlikely to appear in the learner corpus. The non-transparent meaning of *show off₃* (e.g. 'white wedding dress which *shows off* the bride's bejewelled midriff') may have resulted in the non-occurrence of *show off* in this sense in the EMAS corpus. Most importantly, considering the learners' level of language learning, the nature of the EMAS corpus (see 6.2), as well as infrequent encounters of *show off* in this sense, it is not surprising that *show off₃* does not appear in the learner corpus.

Learners' unfamiliarity with non-core meanings of PVs is also illustrated in the use of *switch off₃*. Analysing the BoE corpus, native speakers also frequently associate *switch off₃* with *attention* and *behaviour,* as shown in examples taken from the BoE corpus below:

```
trouble was I found it difficult to switch off and be different at home. I
prepare my own way. That's when I switch off and get focused. But I don't
took their foot off. People just switched off and, in games like this, it is
shutting down my churning mind and switching off my twitching body. Bed
often don't like this. They get confused and switch off. The trick is to
```

However, taking the learners' level of learning into account, it is expected that *switch off₃* is unlikely to appear in the learner corpus. The metaphorical meanings of *switch off₃,* particularly when it is associated with abstract nouns like *attention* and *behaviour* may sound strange to many learners. They may find it easier and more logical to relate *switch off* with objects that technically have a 'switch', such as electrical appliances or machines but not abstract nouns like *attention* and *behaviour,* which are physically 'switchless'. Added to that, *switch off* in this sense is used intransitively (it takes no object), and learners may be less familiar with intransitive *switch off* as this form also

appears less frequently in the native speaker corpus (*switch it off*: T-score=5.35; *switch them off*. T-score=1.31) in comparison to the transitive *switch off* (T-score=20.81).

A random sample of 500 instances of *go off* in the BoE corpus illustrates that words like *bomb/weapon* are amongst the most frequent collocates of PV *go off₄,* indicating that this PV is also very frequently associated with objects that explode (e.g. bomb, gun), as shown in the examples taken from the BoE corpus below:

```
in the Philippines after a bomb went off at an American library in Manila two
      defense minister. The bomb went off as a car carrying the minister drove
 Kasell, newscaster: <p> A bomb went off at a Hindu holiday show in India
to fall forward, and the gun went off. For a second, nothing happened;
     created sound of the gun goes off. <p> It is a system which is fairer
```

However, it is to be expected that *go off* in this sense, which is very frequent in the native speaker corpus, is unlikely to appear in the learner corpus. Besides the non-literal meaning of *go off₄*, the nature of texts produced in the EMAS corpus (see 6.2), which is very much controlled by the given topics and hardly relates to things like 'weapon/bomb', are possible reasons for the non-occurrence of *go off* in this particular context.

Learners' unfamiliarity with non-core meanings of PVs is also shown in the non-occurrence of the PV *take off₃* ('*taking* somebody *off* to a particular place') in the learner corpus. Learners seem to be more familiar with the association of *take off* with inanimate objects (e.g. 'I quickly *took off* my shoes'/'the plane *took off*') rather than animate objects/people (e.g. 'every day we *took* them *off* to a big park'). The frequent association of *take off₁* with inanimate objects, particularly 'things that we are wearing', rather than with animate objects/people, might be one of the explanations for this problem. Analyzing examples of *take off₃* in the BoE corpus, it shows that *take off₃* is

always used in the *take* + somebody + *off* structure, which many learners may find difficult to produce rather than the *take* + *off* structure used in the first two senses. Learners' infrequent encounters with this structure may have also contributed to their unfamiliarity with such form and resulted in the non-occurrence of *take off* in this sense in the learner corpus.

7.4.5   Unawareness of common collocates of *go off* and *take off*

Learners' unawareness of common collocates that create the meanings of PVs can also be seen in the use of *go off*. My analysis of *go off* in the learner corpus shows instances in which learners associate *go off* with the noun *engine* (e.g. 'the car engine suddenly *went off*. I tried to start the engine.') are hardly found in the native speaker corpus. Closer examination of *go off₁* in the BoE corpus shows that frequent subject collocates of *go off₁* include nouns like *alarm, bomb, gun*, and *weapon* to express the meaning of 'start operating/functioning', as shown in the examples below:

```
   open the jar, the alarm will go off. It is light sensitive and designed
stopped cold when an alarm clock went off, certainly not part of the score.
      if you hear a car alarm going off and you see somebody opening the
 ice results in the fire alarm going off during the encore of Sproston Green.
in our office and the fire alarm went off. I don't know why it did, but nobody
 in the Philippines after a bomb went off at an American library in Manila two
    defense minister. The bomb went off as a car carrying the minister drove
 Kasell, newscaster: <p> A bomb went off at a Hindu holiday show in India
   to fall forward, and the gun went off. For a second, nothing happened;
        created sound of the gun goes off. <p> It is a system which is fairer
```

However, *go off₂* carries an opposite meaning (stop operating/functioning) when it is associated with nouns like *light/s*. Below are examples to illustrate this meaning:

```
     you, lass." She heard the bedside light go off. The room was almost dark,
       was all Greek to Hanson, but then a light went off in his head -- in
      like a child trying to see the light go off when it closes the fridge
around me as it landed. <p> When the light went off upstairs, I felt bolder. I
   of these women? Amanda's kitchen light went off when I wasn't looking. The
  life was endangered. He claimed his lighter went off accidentally as one of
    to go in and then waited till the lights went off and went down to the EXIT
the microphone & it broke down & the lights went off and the main fuse had been
    water came in the windows, all the lights went off. Mass hysteria broke out;
       time, knowing that whenever the lights went off in the kitchen at night
```

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Learners' inappropriate association of *go off* with *engine* is perhaps influenced by the meaning of *go off₂* above, and learners tend to relate *go off* with the subject noun *engine* to indicate that the engine stops working/operating. Instead of the PV *go off*, native speakers frequently used *switch off* and *turn off* to convey such meaning. Clearly this problem may not arise if learners are aware of frequent collocates of *go off* and that *go off* is hardly associated with *engine* by native speakers.

Another example to further illustrate the learners' unawareness of common collocates is shown in the inappropriate use of the PVs *take out* instead of *take off* (see 7.3.6). Apart from *take out* and *take off*, the PV *get off* is also inappropriately used by learners due to unawareness of the frequent collocates of this particular PV. Words related to transport like *bus, train, planes, helicopters* and *boat* are among frequent collocates of *get off* in the BoE corpus, which is associated with the meaning of *get off₁:* 'to leave a bus/train/aircraft'. Surprisingly, despite the transparent meaning of *get off₁*, it does not appear in the learner corpus. On the other hand, learners seem to extend collocates of *get off* to include another 'transport-related' word: *traffic jam,* as shown in the example taken from the EMAS corpus below.

```
to pick their passengers as soon as possible so that they could get off with the traffic
jam.
```

A random sample of 500 instances of *get off* in the BoE corpus shows that native speakers do not associate *get off* with *traffic jam*, instead the lexical verb *avoid* is frequently used in this particular context. Below are examples taken from the BoE corpus to illustrate this:

```
    that will help them avoid traffic jams. Every one of the Glasgow-Wide Taxi
<p> Drivers wanting to avoid traffic jams on Britain's motorways will soon
    both countries to avoid traffic jams. This will be the (main) problem of
```

This finding suggests that learners' unawareness of common collocates of PVs is another contributing factor in the inappropriate use of high frequency PVs like *get off, go off* and *take off* discussed above. In fact, there are many other examples presented in Chapter 5 (see 5.2.1; 5.2.5) and in this chapter (see 7.1.5; 7.2.3; 7.3.6) to illustrate this particular problem.

7.4.6 Inappropriate use of *go off* due to unawareness of context of use

Unawareness of the context in which PVs are commonly used is another problem faced by learners with respect to PVs. For instance, learners are not aware of the context in which the PV *go off* (start operating) and the LV *ring* are commonly used. There are a number of instances in the EMAS corpus showing the learners' tendency to use the LV *ring* with subject noun *alarm clock* in a context where the PV *go off* is more appropriate (e.g. *'* Then suddenly the alarm clock *rang*. "Oh, not again" I said'). Even though the use of the proper verb *ring* is possible, it is hardly used by native speakers in this context; instead PV *go off* is commonly used. Thus, the use of *ring* by learners in the above context makes their speech sound less natural.

A random sample of 500 instances of *go off* in the BoE corpus shows that *go off* is frequently used in situations where there is an indication of 'unexpectedness' of when the alarm starts to operate, and this is usually indicated by words like *when/before/after/then,* as shown in the examples extracted from the BoE corpus below:

```
performance in the third act when an alarm clock went off. It took several
La Traviata" was stopped cold when an alarm clock went off, certainly not part
 the bed again. <p> Then the electric alarm clock went off. It hadn't even been
  asleep and did not wake up till the alarm clock went off. On a Monday morning
   The Pope is dead." Then the Polish alarm clock went off. He had one last
        <F02> <tc text=yawns> And the alarm clock went off at the totally
```

On the other hand, the LV *ring* is commonly used in general statements in which the above indication is absent. Below are examples taken from the BoE corpus to illustrate this:

```
  Why Things Are." <p> sound of alarm clock ringing] <p> ACHENBACH:    later each day if
             they don't have alarm clocks ringing loudly beside their
vocal murmured, a sax bleating, an alarm clock ringing, a babble of
 04. In Vorhies's room, they heard an alarm clock ringing. It had been set for
```

This clearly suggests that learners are not aware of the context in which *go off* is commonly used by native speakers, which has resulted in the inappropriate use of *go off* discussed above.

7.5 Conclusion

Overall, my analysis of a total of 24 selected PVs with the AVPs *up, down, out*, and *off* discussed in this chapter has demonstrated a number of problems associated with the understanding and use of these PVs by learners. In general, learners show less difficulty in understanding and using PVs that are transparent in meaning and usage, particularly when they involve physical movement of animate objects/people. On the other hand, the low frequency of occurrence of non-literal PVs, particularly the association of PVs with abstract objects in the EMAS corpus, suggests that this type of PV is problematic for learners.

Even though learners are familiar with the core meanings of these PVs, it is rather surprising that there are a number of other common meanings that are very frequently

found in the native speaker discourse that do not appear in the learner corpus; partly may due to the nature of the EMAS corpus itself (see 6.2). Even though it is expected that non-core and metaphorical meanings of PVs are more difficult to understand, and some have meanings that are unlikely to appear in a learner corpus, core meanings are very useful for learners. Thus, it is expected that learners, particularly those at the higher school level should have been able to address these core meanings appropriately.

In general, learners' lexical knowledge, lack of 'collocational awareness' and common patterns, unfamiliarity with context of use, and, most importantly, learners' L1 are some of the possible factors that influence learners' understanding and use of these PVs. Last but not least, the subject matter discussed in the learner corpus itself (i.e. EMAS) may have also resulted in the low or non-occurrence of certain PVs under investigation. It has also been found that learners at a lower school level face more problems with PVs in comparison to those at a higher level, particularly in producing appropriate grammatical form of PVs. This suggests that the length of language learning may be one of the contributing factors to better understanding and use of PVs by language learners.

To sum up, this analysis has illustrated that, in general, Malaysian school learners do understand and produce PVs in the oral and written texts, but usage is very limited and sometimes inappropriate due to the factors mentioned above. Thus, from these corpus findings, it is hoped to improve the awareness of teachers and learners of the importance of PVs in improving communicative competence, and dealing with learners' problems with respect to usage, so that this language form will receive better treatment in language classrooms in Malaysia. Finally, as far as the research

methodology is concerned, the use of corpus data to explore PVs use amongst language learners in Malaysia, demonstrates the opportunities and importance of corpus linguistics in this kind of research.

CHAPTER EIGHT

REFERENCE MATERIALS

8.0   Introduction

This chapter will present an analysis and review of the way PVs are presented and treated in reference materials, particularly English language textbooks prescribed for Malaysian schools, as well as dictionaries commonly used by Malaysian learners of English. The investigations reported in this chapter provide useful information with respect to the deficiencies found in these reference materials, which may be responsible for some of the poor performance with PVs identified and discussed in Chapter 5 and Chapter 7.

8.1   The role of textbooks and dictionaries in Malaysian schools

In Malaysia, English language textbooks are prepared by the Ministry of Education and a standardized textbook is designed for each form in line with the national English language syllabus, which takes into account the syllabus specification for each level. It is compulsory for each learner to have this specified textbook. Even though teachers are allowed to use other supplementary materials available on the market (e.g. workbooks and reference books), these standardized textbooks are still mandatory and regarded as the main references as they follow the specific language syllabus that needs to be covered in language classrooms. It is commonly assumed that a particular language feature is of secondary importance if it is not emphasized in the syllabus. Thus, most often, this language form is either taught implicitly or totally avoided due to time constraints. Based

on my own observation and experience as a language teacher in Malaysia, I noticed that PVs generally receive less emphasis in learners' textbooks, hence the lack of attention given to this feature in language classrooms in Malaysia.

In addition to the prescribed textbooks, a 'good' dictionary is another additional source of information that is highly encouraged in language classrooms. The choice of dictionaries to be used is usually recommended by the language teachers. Even though the use of monolingual (English-English) dictionaries is always encouraged, learners seem to be more comfortable in using the bilingual versions (Malay-English or English-Malay), which is the type of dictionary frequently referred to by school learners in learning the target language. Even though on-line dictionaries are freely available, learners can rarely use them in language classrooms, mainly due to the limited access of computer facilities and networking. Generally, the use of electronic dictionaries is hardly found in language classrooms in Malaysia, particularly in schools, perhaps due to the cost and availability.

As far as the reference materials are concerned, five English textbooks (see 8.2) prescribed for secondary schools in Malaysia (i.e. F1, F2, F3, F4 and F5), and two bilingual dictionaries (see 8.3) will be analysed, and a discussion of the findings with respect to the treatment of PVs in these reference materials will be presented. A number of useful and important findings have been identified, which may also contribute to the learners' lack of understanding and inappropriate use of the PVs discussed in Chapter 5 and Chapter 7.

8.2   English language textbooks selected in the study

For the purpose of analysing how PVs are addressed and treated in the prescribed English language textbooks for secondary schools in Malaysia, the following textbooks have been selected and examined:

1. KBSM English Form 1 (KEF1) by Nesamalar Chitravelu, Nesamani Sitravelu and Hafizah binti Saman: PTS Publications & Distributors Sdn. Bhd.

2. KBSM English Form 2 (KEF2) by Rohini Shanta, Uma Kurup and Shalani Lorenz: Penerbit Mega Setia Emas Sdn. Bhd.

3. KBSM English Form 3 (KEF3) by Annie Lee, Judith Arokiasamy, Kamala Ganehsan and Jayaletchimy Veerasamy: PGI Cipta Sdn. Bhd.

4. KBSM English Form 4 (KEF4) by Annie Lee, Lyla Roberts and Magdalene Chew: PGI Cipta Sdn. Bhd.

5. KBSM English Form 5 (KEF5) by Annie Lee, Lyla Roberts and Magdalene Chew: PGI Cipta Sdn. Bhd.

8.3   Selection of learners' textbooks

The above textbooks are chosen as they are textbooks prescribed by the Ministry of Education Malaysia and are prepared and written based on the new English Language Syllabus and Curriculum Specification for different secondary school levels. In other words, they form a standardized series of textbooks that are created for use in secondary schools throughout the country. The texts have gone through a verifying process at the ministry level to ensure their quality is safeguarded. Even though other supplementary materials available in the market are allowed, these textbooks are compulsory and the

selection of other additional materials is always guided by the syllabus outlined in these textbooks.

Each textbook is divided into several chapters (12 to 16 chapters), which are arranged according to themes (e.g. people, schooldays, health or social issues, science and technology). In addition to grammar, sound system and vocabulary, these textbooks emphasize the four principal language skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing (see Appendix 7), designed "to help students become successful learners" (KEF1: xv). The vocabulary section in the textbooks mainly focuses on words related to the specified theme of a particular chapter, and, most often, they are single-word items (see Appendix 8), while multi-word items like PVs receive very little attention. As PVs are an important language feature, which students need to understand and master in order to become "successful learners" and to be fluent in English, they deserve as much attention as single-word items. The following section will further investigate how PVs are treated in these textbooks, which may influence learners' understanding and the use of this important language feature.

8.4   Treatment of phrasal verbs in the textbooks

In general, the term PV is clearly mentioned in all except one textbook (KEF2). However, even though KEF2 does not include a section discussing PVs, examples of PVs can be found on a number of pages, indicating that this feature is not totally disregarded in this particular textbook. In other words, although learners may have come across a number of PVs when using the textbooks, they may not know many other important aspects related to

PVs including the various meanings, different usages, or grammatical structures, etc. In examining all the textbooks, the vocabulary and grammar sections are the two common sections in which PVs are explicitly presented and discussed (see Appendix 9). The KEF4 textbooks have even addressed this feature explicitly in both sections (i.e. Grammar and Vocabulary). Apart from these two sections that discussed PVs explicitly, this language form is also implicitly introduced to learners in other parts of the textbooks (e.g. reading texts, guided writing activities).

8.4.1 Definitions of PVs in the learners' textbooks

As far as definition is concerned, KEF2 is the only textbook that does not provide definitions of PVs. Although textbooks for lower secondary school students (KEF1 and KEF3) provide definitions of PVs, they are somehow vague in meaning because they are defined as 'a combination of verb and preposition' (p. 150). This may result in learners assuming that combinations, such as *look at, go to, run across*, are also examples of PVs, which is not really true. Under the 'Building a word bank' section of the KEF1 textbook, the PVs *wake up* and *switch on* are defined as 'words that go together' (p. 13) and are grouped together with other non-PV combinations like *good at*. While *wake up* and *switch on* very frequently 'go together', learners may find the combination of *good at* is rather confusing. Uncertainty may arise whether *good at* really represent 'words that go together' as *wake up* and *switch on*. This is because *good at* can simply be a grammatical structure as in the combinations of *tired of*, *different to, similar to,* etc., or a collocation, as in *heavy rain*, *strong coffee, tall building,* etc., in which they have a strong co-occurrence relationship. In addition, even though *good* does have a particular meaning in the

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combination of *good at*, this is also a pattern with potential meaning shared by other combinations: adjectives + at (e.g. *bad at*, *superb at*) and nouns + at (e.g. *a disaster at, a whizz at*), which suggests it is either a meaning of *at* or a frame that includes *at*. Because of all the possible structures where *good at* may appear, treating it together with 'genuine' PVs like *switch on* and *wake up* will make learners think that PVs are just cases of preferred structures, as in the case of *good at*, rather than a combination, which is syntactically and semantically fixed.

Added to that, the vague definition of PVs as 'words that go together' (KEF1: 13) without a further explanation of the possibility of elements in PVs being separated may also result in the lack of understanding on the part of learners with respect to possible structures of PVs (e.g. *pick up* the phone, *pick* the phone *up*, *pick* it *up*). As reported in my earlier analysis of *wake up*, learners' at a lower school level in particular, have difficulty in producing the correct structure of *wake up* with pronouns (see 7.1.3). This might be associated with the vague definition of *wake up* provided in the textbook as 'words that go together'. Learners may have assumed that both elements in *wake up* must always go together and cannot be separated, which causes them to produce a non-standard structure of **wake up me.* They are not aware that elements in *wake up* are separated when they are used with pronouns (e.g. *wake* me *up*). Similarly, the PV *switch off* only appears in the form of LV+AVP (see 7.4.1). The non-occurrence of *switch off* in the LV+X+AVP pattern (e.g. *switch* it *off*) in the learner corpus might be associated with the vague definitions of PVs discussed above. Thus, it is very important that clear definitions and explanations with respect to

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'separability' of PVs, together with good examples, should be provided for students to avoid confusion and inappropriate usage.

The KEF3 textbook presents PVs in two separate chapters (Chapter 11 and 12). Chapter 11 discusses combinations of verb + preposition (LV+PRP), while combinations of verb + adverb (LV+AVP) are explained in the following chapter (Chapter 12). In the first part, PVs are explained as a combination of a verb and a preposition (p. 150). As no further explanation is provided with respect to this definition, learners may assume that any combination of LV+PRP is categorized as a PV, which is clearly not true. Many of the most frequent prepositions do not function as particles and thus the combination cannot be universally categorized as PVs (e.g. *look at, come from, look for, come with*). In fact, the examples given in this particular section of the textbook (*changed into, keep to*) are not really good examples of PVs. For instance, *changed* and *into* in 'The caterpillar *changed into* a butterfly' (KEF3) are used in their regular meanings and the combination does not 'seem to function like a single verb' (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999: 265). While transitive PVs allow movement of the particle (e.g. *pick up* the phone/*pick* the phone *up*), this is not applicable to *changed into* (*changed into* a butterfly/**changed* a butterfly *into*). In *change into a butterfly*, *into* functions as a PRP and not as a particle, and PRP *into* belongs to the direct object (a butterfly), thus the combination of *changed + into* always go together and cannot be separated (object movement is clearly impossible). Therefore, simply defining PVs as a combination of LV+PRP means learners are presented with an imprecise explanation of PVs.

Only in a later chapter of the textbook (KEF 3, Chapter 12) are learners informed that a PV may also consist of a verb and an adverb and that it has a 'special meaning' (p. 164). This definition is clearly more accurate than the one presented in the earlier chapter (Chapter 11), and should have been presented much earlier to ensure learners really understand what PVs are. Examples of PVs presented in Chapter 12 are also very clear (e.g. *hurry up, watch out, give up*) as *hurry up* for instance, is not simply a combination of regular meanings of *hurry* (to move with haste) and *up* (movement from a lower to higher level), instead *hurry* and *up* acts as a unit, the combination of which carries a particular meaning (move or do something faster). Despite the good examples of PVs provided in Chapter 12, closer examination indicates that all instances are either in imperative (e.g. 'Hurry up!'/'Watch out!') or intransitive form ('...many people were trapped inside and could not *get out*'/'...soon many people began to *join in'.*). It is rather surprising to find that no example of transitive PVs is explicitly presented to learners, which can further inform them about the separation of elements in PVs (object/particle movement). As a result, this may further convince learners that PVs are 'words that always go together' and cannot be separated, which is clearly not true for most transitive PVs. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) suggested that it is important to develop an early awareness of separable and inseparable PVs in learners because without having a clear understanding of the separation concept in PVs, learners may have a vague picture of PVs form, and, accordingly, result in inappropriate usage of this language feature.

English textbooks prepared for higher secondary school levels provide slightly longer definitions of PVs as "a verb that consists of two parts − an ordinary verb and a particle

(adverb or preposition)" (KEF4: 224). In the KEF5, PVs are simply defined as "verbs which consist of two or sometimes three words.....are often used in informal English" (p.121) and this definition is further extended as "a category of verbs consisting of two or three words which have a particular meaning" (p. 156) in a later chapter. However, this definition is again vague and may lead to confusion as no clear distinction is made between the combination of LV+PRP and LV+AVP. There is no doubt that many frequent prepositions do not function as particles, thus their combination (V+PRP) acts as a prepositional verb (e.g. *change into, keep to*) rather than a PV. The second definition of PVs as "a category of verbs consisting of two or three words which have a particular meaning" (KEF5: 156), is also not clear because this implies that many other MWUs, such as *take place, have a shower, give a hand*, *spill the beans, kick the bucket,* are also included in the category of PVs, which is clearly not true. Thus, clearer definitions should be presented to inform learners that PVs are not simply "a category of verbs consisting of two or three words which have a particular meaning"; rather, they are a combination of a LV and particle that carry a particular meaning.

Further analysis indicates that students are not only provided with a vague definition of PVs, but the use of the low frequency PV *waste away* (KEF5: 156), to illustrate an example of LV+AVP, is also not very helpful to learners as this PV has less 'utility' in an everyday setting. On the other hand, presenting learners with high frequency PVs as examples of LV+AVP combination is not only more helpful in facilitating better understanding, but learners may find them very useful and have greater 'utility' in everyday communication. For instance, the use of PVs like *take off* (remove clothing; leave the ground and fly), *pick*

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up (take somebody in a vehicle), *go off* (stop working) and *go down* (decrease) should alternatively be considered as they are highly produced by native speakers, and, undoubtedly, more useful to learners. In fact, my earlier analysis indicates that even learners at a higher school level are not very familiar with the use of these high frequency PVs, particularly in the above senses (see 7.1.2; 7.2.5; 7.3.6; 7.4.3). Thus, the inclusion of high frequency PVs should be reconsidered and deserves better attention by textbook writers.

Closer examination of the KEF4 textbook also indicates that learners at a higher school level are also presented with more information about the semantic features of PVs, which is very useful as learners can see the different types of PV (literal and non-literal PVs). However, to group *put on, stand up* and *put in* together as literal PVs is probably not very helpful because the meaning of *put on* (wear) in 'We usually *put on* new clothes on festive occasions' (p. 224) is less transparent than the other two examples given: *stand up* (e.g. '*Stand up* when a teacher comes into the room') and *put in* (e.g. 'Please *put in* some petrol when you borrow the car') (p. 224). Both *stand up* and *put in* in the above examples retain much of their original meaning, but not in *put on.* Perhaps other PVs that are more transparent in meaning should be presented as examples of literal PVs, such as *sit down, go up, come in*, which help learners to clearly see the difference between literal and non-literal PVs. At the same time, the choice of non-literal PVs should also be taken into consideration. The use of *put down* (suppressed) in 'The rebellion was *put down* by the army' (p. 224) may not be very helpful and it is doubtful that learners are familiar with the context in which *put down* is used in the above sentence. In fact, the word 'rebellion' itself

may sound strange to most learners. Perhaps, providing more meaningful examples of non-literal PVs in a more familiar context should be considered. For instance, the non-literal meaning of *go out* associated with *lights/fire* (e.g. 'It would take more than 24 hours before the fire *goes out*'), *pick up* with *habit/skills* (e.g. I want to *pick up* as many skills as possible'), or *take off* with *plane/s* (e.g. 'the plane *took off* from Bangkok'), *get off* with *bus/train/car* (e.g. 'I had panicked and *got off* the train at the wrong station') would be more useful to students, as they are very common and frequently used in everyday communication. The earlier analysis of the EMAS corpus also shows that *go up*, *pick up* and *get off* in the above senses do not appear in the learner corpus, indicating that students may be unfamiliar with many non-literal PVs that are very common (see 7.1.2; 7.3.4; 7.4.3). This certainly needs to be given equal attention by textbook writers.

Another important aspect with respect to definitions is that all textbooks, and, in most cases, provide 'latinate' definitions (Side 1990: 145) or the one-word equivalent of PVs (e.g. *put off*=postpone, *look up*=check, *give up*=surrender, *go up*=increase). The purpose of providing such definition is perhaps that 'latinate' words are easier to learn, especially if they have cognate words in the learners' L1. For instance, Malay words, such as '*bajet*', '*kopi*' , '*akaun*', '*bas*', '*motosikal*', are derived from the English words *budget, coffee, account, bus, motorcycle,* respectively, and they seem to make more sense to learners. Below are examples taken from the KEF5 to illustrate the provision of 'latinate' word in the learners' textbooks:

> **EXAMPLE**
> My father **gave up** smoking three years ago. (stopped)
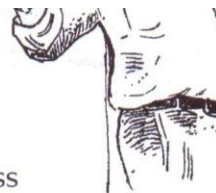
The meaning of some phrasal verbs like **fall down** are easy to guess but many have idiomatic meanings that have to be learnt.

> **EXAMPLE**
> The floor was slippery so I **fell down**. (dropped)
> I **turned down** his offer of a lift home. (refused)
> The football match was **called off** because of the thunderstorm. (cancelled)

However, although a 'latinate' definition is given, learners are not provided with information with respect to the context of use as not all PVs can be an exact replacement for their one-word equivalents. In the above example, learners may assume that *dropped* is an exact replacement of *fell down,* and, therefore, can be used interchangeably regardless of context or register, which is clearly not true. While the use of *fell down* is certainly appropriate in the above context, the one-word equivalent *dropped* is not (*The floor was slippery so I *dropped*). Similarly, the PV *called off* is less formal in register and very common in spoken discourse while *cancelled* appears in more formal written discourse. This suggests that the provision of one-word equivalents needs to be further supplemented with other important information (i.e. usage, register) to avoid assumptions that both carry exactly the same meaning and can be used interchangeably. Added to that, even though *put off* and *postpone* have a single-word equivalent in the learners' L1 (i.e. *'tangguh'*), this L1 equivalent can be used in both formal and informal discourse. This may cause learners to assume that *put off* and *postpone* are used in similar ways to *'tangguh'* in their L1. Thus, for learners to use PVs as and when they are appropriate, they first need to be well-

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informed about the appropriateness of use in a particular context or situation, and similarity or differences in the use of their L1 equivalents need to be addressed in language classrooms to increase learners' understanding of this confusing yet important language form.

8.4.2 Selection of PVs presented in learners' textbooks

In general, analysis of PVs in the learners' textbooks indicates that many PVs are presented to learners without sufficient consideration as to their frequency of occurrence in real life situations. Nation and Waring (1997) point out that frequency information ensures that "learners get the best return for their vocabulary learning effort" (p. 17) because there is a high possibility that they will frequently meet these properly selected items again in the future. Similarly, Doochin (2007), in his response to a posting on Corpora-List, commented that, "a very high frequency of occurrence is well worth stressing in an ESL class", and it is most likely that if these PVs are frequently presented to the learners, they should at least be able to understand, and, eventually, be able to use them appropriately in their written or spoken discourse. This clearly suggests that a systematic selection of a 'core of phrasal verbs' suggested by Cornell (1985) is necessary to ensure learners are presented with PVs that are most useful for them in the world outside the classroom. Perhaps the absence of any systematic selection of PVs has resulted in presenting Form 1 learners, for instance, with low frequency PVs (e.g. *dig up, dying out*). On the other hand, high frequency PVs which are problematic for learners (e.g. *go out, come out, take out*, *take off*) are not explicitly addressed in KEF1. This may be part of the reason for learners' unfamiliarity, particularly with core meanings, appropriate structure and usage of such PVs discussed in

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Chapter 5 and Chapter 7. Thus, it is important for textbook writers to take frequency information into consideration in their decision of which PVs should be presented to learners at each level. It is often suggested that the most frequent PVs should be the first to be introduced to students rather than the less frequent ones (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999; Gardner and Davies 2007; Ranta 2008; Boulton 2008), and emphasis should be given to core meanings of PVs as they are more useful to language learners: this is what is lacking in the present school textbooks in Malaysia.

Although the upper level textbooks (i.e. KEF4 and KEF5) present larger numbers of PVs and provide further explanation of the different types of PVs (literal and non-literal), detailed analysis revealed that many of the PVs presented in the earlier section discussing PVs are low frequency PVs (e.g. *put across, put by, get ahead*). Below are examples taken from the KEF4 to illustrate this:

Surprisingly, it also fails to explicitly address high frequency PVs (e.g. *go out, come out, take out, take off*), which are not discussed in the textbooks for the lower secondary school level. Even though instances of high frequency PVs appear throughout the textbooks, such as in text comprehension, no further explanation is provided to inform learners about the

core meanings and usage of such PVs. This is perhaps part of the reason for the non-occurrence of common PVs like *carry out* (do), *go up* (increase), *get off* (to leave a bus/train/aircraft) in EMAS, as well as the inappropriate use of *pick up,* and *find out*; and problems with directionality PVs like *go out*, *come out* as reported in Chapter 7.

The distribution of PVs in various text types or 'range' (Koprowski, 2005) is another criterion that deserves equal attention by textbook writers. This means that a PV that is found in a wide variety of registers and texts (spoken/written/academic/non-academic, etc.) is generally considered much more useful than a PV that only appears in one particular register or genre. In fact, Koprowski (2005) suggested that 'usefulness' is another guiding principle in the selection of PVs to be included in the learners' textbooks. In consulting the BoE corpus, the top five sub-corpora in which the PV *go out* appears include written (academic and non-academic) as well as spoken texts, indicating that this PV is widely used in various registers: compare its listing as a high frequency PV (see Gardner and Davies, 2007). Surprisingly, despite the usefulness of *go out* for learners, Malaysian textbook writers failed to explicitly address this PV in learners' textbooks. On the other hand, the low frequency PV *take after* for instance, the usage of which according to the BoE corpus is more restricted to non-academic register (radio and newspapers), is included in the KEF4 textbook. Thus, the selection of PVs used in a wider distribution and appearing in various text types will be more useful as "items selected are representative of a wide sample and so that high frequency is not merely the fortuitous result of high occurrence in a restricted area of the total corpus" (White 1988: 49).

8.4.3   Categorization of PVs in learners' textbooks

As far as the categorization of PVs is concerned, the most noticeable aspect is that many PVs in the KEF4 textbook in particular, are grouped together according to verbs, such as those with lexical verbs *put* (*put across, put down, put by, put in*) and *get* (*get across, get along, get ahead, get around*) (see example in 8.4.2 above).

Side (1990) claimed that this method of presenting PVs is a possible reason for the limited understanding of PVs among learners. In the KEF4 for instance, learners are required to use a dictionary and thesaurus in looking for meanings of a group of PVs that share the same or similar verb as above. Even though dictionaries may provide meanings for these PVs, they are sometimes not very reliable (see 8.6) and such combinations of a verb with various particles are inevitably confusing for learners. According to Nation (2000), "inclusion of similar multiword verbs at the same time should be avoided because lexical sets can lead to interference". This is true as most verbs in the construction of PVs, particularly non-literal PVs, do not retain much of their original meaning. Thus, grouping PVs according to verbs may cause more difficulty for learners as they may find that many PVs in that same verb group may have a wide range of meanings. For instance, the meanings of the PVs *get across, get ahead, get along, get around* are not closely related even though they share the same lexical verb (*get*). In fact, further analysis also revealed that these PVs do not appear in the EMAS corpus, which further supports the above claim that presenting learners with PVs associated with a particular verb does not promote better understanding and use of PVs.

Besides the problems with respect to the categorization of the PVs discussed above, learners' difficulties are compounded, as, traditionally, it is assumed that many grammatical structures and lexical items, including PVs, are 'arbitrary', and there is no particular system to help learners to understand and learn these features except through memorization (see 2.3.2). This is in fact reflected in the learners' textbooks in which learners are always provided with PVs and their one-word equivalents (e.g. *put off*=postponed, *look up*=check), or a paraphrase if there is no one-word verb equivalent (e.g. *take off*=remove something you are wearing), and learners are expected to learn meanings by heart. Memorizing PVs and their meanings without a good understanding of their usage and appropriate register may result in the non-standard use of PVs because not all one-word equivalents are exact replacements of PVs (see 8.4.1). Although examples are given in the textbooks to illustrate the meanings of PVs, no further information is provided with respect to common collocates, typical patterns, transitivity, separability, etc. (e.g. transitive *take off* is always associated with objects that we are wearing, while intransitive *take off* is commonly associated with subjects like plane/aeroplanes), which information would be very useful to help learners learn, understand and use PVs better.

With regard to the arbitrariness of the PVs mentioned above, research in the field of cognitive linguistics has revealed that "much that has been deemed idiosyncratic and arbitrary under the traditional view of language is, in fact, systematic" (Tyler and Evans: 260) (see 2.3.2, and 3.5). For instance, the meanings of a single particle in a number of PVs are closely related (Rudzka 2003: 5). AVP *off* for example, has a consistent influence on the root verb as in *break off* (become detached), to *take off* (be removed), to *turn off* (be

disconnected), which clearly illustrates that the choice of verbs and AVP *off* in this case is not random or 'arbitrary'. A similar view is presented by Marks (2005) who observes that, "in many cases the choice and combination of verbs and particles is also motivated" (http://www.macmillanandictionaries.com/MED-Magazine/July2005). This further suggests that PVs are not random, and, thus, can be taught in language classrooms, and the use of 'conceptual metaphors' help learners to understand the meanings of many idiomatic expressions like PVs (see 2.3.2, and 3.5).

The systematicity of particle meanings in PV construction is also illustrated in the *Collins COBUILD Phrasal Verbs Dictionary,* which provides a Particles Index that clearly shows "how phrasal verbs are not just arbitrary combinations of verbs and particles. Instead, they fit into the broad patterns of choice and selection in English" (p. 2). Therefore, it is suggested that instead of grouping PVs according to the lexical verbs, as what is presented in the present textbooks, it is more helpful to present them with PVs with a similar particle, because that particle fulfils the same function, which can help learners to organize their knowledge and understanding of PVs more effectively (Rudzka, 2003). Side (1990) also suggests presenting PVs in a similar way: ordering PVs according to the semantics of the particle. However, closer examination shows that this method of categorizing and presenting PVs according to particles is not implemented in any of the textbooks under investigation. This is clearly another issue that deserves further attention by textbook writers in particular.

It is also suggested that PVs can be introduced to learners by discussing them around a common theme (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman: 275). For instance, a theme related to clothes may focus on PVs like *put on, take off, wear out* and *try on*. This method of presenting PVs might be more effective than grouping them based on verbs as the PVs are semantically related. It is interesting that this method is applied in the KEF1 textbooks in which the PVs *knock down, roll down, rush out, speed up, drop off,* etc., are presented together and centred around the theme of accident (p. 52-62). This approach is perhaps a good way of introducing PVs to learners, particularly those at the lower school level. However, the selection of PVs again needs to be taken into account to ensure that learners are not presented with low frequency and less useful PVs.

In addition, to help learners learn PVs more effectively, information with respect to grammatical patterns of PVs (e.g. transitivity and separability) is clearly necessary to inform learners about possible structures of PVs. For instance, both *drop off her daughter* and *drop her daughter off* are presented to learners on the same page (KEF1: 61) without any further explanation to inform learners on the possibility of *drop off*$_1$ (to take somebody to where they want to go and leave them there) to appear in various forms depending on usage as in:

a) LV+AVP+noun (e.g. She *dropped off* her daughter)

b) LV+noun+AVP (e.g. I can *drop* Maria *off* on my way home)

c) LV+pronoun+AVP (e.g. I can *drop* her *off* on my way home)

While (b) and (c) are commonly used when the object contains information that a reader or listener already knows, (a) is frequently used when the object presents new information and thus placing the object at the end will give it more emphasis. However, presenting learners with two different structures of *drop off$_1$*, yet failing to provide sufficient information concerning the difference between them may cause uncertainty and confusion among learners. As a result, *drop off$_1$* may be used less frequently by learners. In fact, earlier analysis (see Chapter 7) indicates that the PV *drop off$_1$* does not appear in the EMAS corpus. Even though this PV is introduced and presented to learners at a relatively early stage (KEF1), the findings show that even learners at the higher school level (F4) fail to produce this PV. This clearly implies that learners do not learn this PV much, which may be due to inadequate information with respect to *drop off$_1$*.

In addition to the common meaning of *drop off$_1$* discussed above, if another core meaning of *drop off$_2$* (to sleep) is to be included in the textbook, explanation with respect to patterns is clearly necessary as this will help learners to understand the two different meanings of *drop off*. For instance, *drop off$_2$* is always used in intransitive form (e.g. 'I couldn't get to sleep, and when I did eventually *drop off,* I was assaulted by dreams'). On the other hand, *drop off$_1$* is always transitive in form, thus allowing object/particle movement and different structures of *drop off$_1$*, as shown in the examples above. This suggests the importance of explicit information with respect to PVs, particularly the regular patterns associated with different meanings of a PV. This clearly helps learners to learn and understand this language form better and use them more appropriately. It is also suggested that important

concepts like 'separability' and particle movement rule of transitive PVs should be developed at an early stage of learning (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999: 276).

In brief, so far, the above analysis has revealed that, in general, the selection of PV items to be included in the Malaysian English language secondary school textbooks is done subjectively and on a basis of intuition rather than empirical evidence, such as frequency counts based on authentic language data (i.e. corpus-based). Even though PVs are addressed in learners' textbooks, important information with respect to PVs that learners need to understand is either lacking or missing. Thus, textbook writers in Malaysia should be more careful with the selection of PVs, and, at the same time, ensure that this language form is presented to learners "in a manner that avoids unnecessary confusion and loss of time for both student and instructor" (Darwin and Gray 1999: 66).

8.4.4   PVs exercises presented in learners' textbooks

Findings with respect to the treatment given to PVs in the textbooks discussed above have shown that this language form is not highly emphasized and does not receive much attention in the present textbooks. Hence, it is expected that the amount of exercises and type of exercises with respect to PVs will also be limited. The common PV exercises found in the textbooks are filling in blanks or completing sentences (KEF1, KEF3, KEF4 and KEF5), matching (KEF3), giving meanings of PVs (KEF4) and no exercise explicitly focussing on PVs are found in the KEF2 textbook. Below are examples of the PV exercises presented in the KEF4 and KEF3:

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The KEF1 textbook, for instance, only provides five exercises (i.e. filling in blanks) that explicitly test learners' understanding of four given PVs (*call off, break down, look after* and *take off*). However, within this small number of exercises, the learners' ability to use core meanings of these PVs (e.g. *take off* [remove; to leave the ground and fly]), is not further evaluated. Although they are able to fill in answers correctly, can they really use these core meanings appropriately in their written and oral activities? Learners' understanding with respect to transitivity and object movement in *take off,* for instance, is also not evaluated. Can they distinguish common grammatical patterns of *take off$_1$* and *take off$_2$*, which differentiate the meanings between them?

In KEF4, the learners are presented with slightly more exercises on PVs, but the focus is still on either filling in blanks or completing sentences with suitable PVs. Learners may not have much difficulty in completing the exercises as the meaning or the one-word equivalents of these PVs are provided (e.g. *call off*=cancel, *break down*=stop working). Although this type of exercise is probably more suitable for learners at the lower secondary school level (e.g. F1, F2 and F3), those at the higher level should be provided with exercises that help to strengthen their understanding of what they have learnt in previous stages. For instance, providing them with more writing or speaking exercises that encourage active use of PVs will be more meaningful and useful for learners.

Closer examination of the textbooks indicates that the learners' understanding of PVs is not further reinforced in other language skills that can expose learners to the uses of PVs in other contexts or registers. Schmitt (2000) states that "meeting a word in different contexts expands what is known about it (improving quality of knowledge), and the additional exposures help consolidate it in memory" (p. 146). Surprisingly, analysis shows that no explicit practice is provided in all the textbooks to encourage and promote the usage of PVs, particularly in speaking and writing. As PVs are very common in both written and spoken discourse, in formal as well as informal situations, the inclusion of PV exercises that have both one-way communicative function (e.g. reports, academic and non-academic essays, letters) and two-way communicative function (e.g. dialogues, phone calls, interviews) would be more useful for learners, which is what is missing in the present textbooks.

Based on my own experience as a language teacher in Malaysia, I believe that with such a limited exposure and inadequate practice to PVs, it is not surprising that many common PVs that are very useful in everyday communication either do not appear in the learner corpus (e.g. *carry out* [perform], *go up* [increase], *bring up* [raise]) or are inappropriately addressed by learners (e.g. *pick up, come out, go out, take off*). The inability of learners to use PVs in a wider context also suggests insufficient exposure and lack of practice with respect to PVs. For example, most instances of *take off* by F1 learners in the EMAS corpus are only associated with the object collocate *shoes,* which is perhaps because *shoes* is the only example to illustrate the use of *take off* explicitly presented in PV exercises in the KEF1 textbook. This clearly suggests that insufficient practice, particularly in writing and speaking, is perhaps another reason why learners do not learn much of these PVs.

In addition, the exercises presented to learners at a higher school level (KEF4 and KEF5) still focus on the use of PVs in two-word variety (e.g. *take off, make up*) and none of the exercises provided in the textbooks inform learners of the possibility of PVs occurring in three-word form (e.g. *take* it *off*, *make* it *up*). As the formation of three-word form is very much related to the learners' understanding of the concept of 'separability' in PVs, it is clearly essential that they are introduced to such a concept at a very early stage of language learning (e.g. F1). Even though, for instance, the PV *wake up* appears on a number of pages throughout the KEF1 textbook, earlier corpus analysis shows the inappropriate use of *wake up* with pronouns (e.g. *'wake up* me'), particularly by F1 learners, suggests that they are unaware of the need for *wake up* to be separated when it involves pronouns (see 7.1.3, and 8.4.1). Thus, more exercises of this type should be included in the learners' textbooks.

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PV exercises that centre around a common theme are probably more meaningful to test the learners' understanding as the PVs discussed are closely related semantically (see 8.4.3). Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999: 275), for instance, suggested PV exercises in the form of a paragraph or a short passage, which focuses on a common theme as one way to practice the use of PVs. The use of common themes is also proposed by Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) in teaching 'lexical phrases', in that teachers must first provide learners with "situation centred on some needed communicative function, and offer a few simple but variable lexical phrases for dealing with that situation" (p. 118). This means that providing learners with this type of PV exercise is better than simply memorizing PVs and their respective meanings. However, caution needs to be given to the selection process and the focus should be on high frequency PVs that are worth teaching and learning as well as being more useful for learners.

In short, the above analysis has shown that despite numerous studies and research findings on the pedagogical value of MWUs (collocations, compounds, idioms, fixed and semi-fixed expressions, and PVs), the present textbooks in Malaysia do not treat this important language form (i.e. PVs) appropriately or adequately. The existing information with respect to PVs in learners' textbooks is clearly insufficient, sometimes confusing, and, most importantly, the selection process of PV items has been highly subjective, and conducted without reference to corpus data. Most often, the selection of PVs is usually based on writers' intuition, experience, and common sense, rather than real data. Finally, insufficient practice to reinforce understanding may have also influenced the learning of PVs by school learners in Malaysia and the problems they have.

8.5   Teaching of PVs in Malaysian schools

In general, the discussion of the treatment of PVs in textbooks presented above clearly shows the lack of attention given to this important language form. As textbooks are the primary source of reference in language teaching and learning in Malaysian schools, this has undoubtedly influenced the way PVs are treated in language classrooms. Teachers may assume that the teaching of PVs is of secondary importance and give it less attention. Thus, most often, PVs are taught indirectly or learners are expected to learn them on their own through 'incidental learning', which may take place outside the language classrooms, such as through extensive reading.

It is generally assumed that this language form should be explicitly presented to learners at a later stage, when they reach a higher level of language learning (e.g. at college or university level) as teaching PVs at this stage (i.e. school level) is not worth the time as they are rarely being tested (see below). However, as far as this study is concerned, I believe that PVs need to be explicitly presented to learners at a very early stage of learning to increase awareness of the importance of this feature for fluency in English, the target language. Considering this form is a significant problem area for learners, it is worth teaching them, particularly high frequency PVs, albeit perhaps the infrequent ones could be left to 'incidental learning'. Boulton (2008) also suggests that "If phrasal verbs do constitute a difficult area for learners, both semantically and syntactically, perhaps teaching for productive use could be confined to a small number of the most frequent phrasal verbs for lower level learners" (p. 585).

The findings with respect to the teaching of PVs reported in Chapter 5 also revealed that some teachers do know the importance of PVs in gaining fluency in the target language, but they only teach this feature indirectly as they are not greatly emphasized in the language syllabus and textbooks. Since the Malaysian education system is very much 'exam-oriented', the teaching of language elements frequently tested in examinations, such as reading comprehension, grammar, writing skill, are commonly given priority and regarded as core duties of language teachers. The maximum of 80 minutes each day allocated for English language lessons in Malaysian classrooms, does not give much space for teachers to focus on less frequently tested items like PVs. Analysing the Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR), a standardized public examination for the lower secondary school in Malaysia, with special reference to the English language paper from 2005 to 2009, shows that out of forty items in the whole paper, only one item (*put off*) and two items (*put forward, look up*) appear, respectively, in the 2006 and 2007 papers, which explicitly tested learners' understanding of PVs. Most surprisingly, this language feature is not even tested in the 2005, 2008 and 2009 PMR English examination papers. As PVs are less frequently tested, attention is therefore given to other language areas, such as tenses, subject verb agreement and articles.

Despite the importance of PVs for fluency in the target language (see 1.1.2), they are most often considered as an enrichment activity, and hardly discussed on their own in language classrooms due to time constraints. Cornell (1985: 273) states that limited contact with PVs is a possible reason to the unsuccessful teaching of PVs in schools. Therefore, it is not surprising that even after 11 years of learning English in schools (i.e. primary and

secondary schools), learners are still unfamiliar with many high frequency PVs, which are widely used in everyday settings, and, thus very useful for them in gaining fluency in the target language.

Apart from the reasons discussed above, misunderstandings with respect to the arbitrariness of PVs perhaps constitute another reason for the lack of attention given to PVs by language teachers. As there are no systematic or clear rules concerning how to pedagogically approach this language form, many teachers may feel uncertain and so avoid teaching PVs in language classrooms. In other words, teachers' misunderstanding and avoidance in teaching PVs may be influenced by the traditional belief that PVs are 'arbitrary', however, as I have argued in this study, PVs are not completely arbitrary (see 2.3.2; 3.5; 8.4.3), and, therefore, they can be taught systematically.

Furthermore, although some teachers may be aware that PVs can be taught in language classrooms, problems may still arise concerning what sort of PVs should be presented and introduced to learners. Most often, teachers who wish to teach this element are not even provided with a suitable selection of PVs that are useful for learners, and, hence, worthwhile teaching. Darwin and Gray (1999) comment that "very little has been done to determine frequency of particular phrasal verbs. Thus, instructors, curriculum designers, and researchers are left working with what they determine by intuition to be the most common or most needed phrasal verbs" (p. 67). This suggests the importance of a systematic selection of PVs to be included in learners' textbooks, so that teachers will not rely on their intuition or own experience and will only introduce high frequency PVs that

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are of high 'utility' and widely used in everyday communication. Boulton (2008) argues that "although frequency is not the sole criterion for deciding what to teach, it seems uncontroversial that if learners are likely to encounter a language item frequently, they should at least be able to understand it" (p. 585). In other words, without proper selection, enthusiastic teachers may end up teaching less useful PVs, and, to make matters even worse, the vague definitions and categorizations of PVs presented in learners' textbooks (see 8.4.1, 8.4.3) further complicate the task of teachers to explain this language form to learners.

Another possible reason for the lack of attention given to PVs in language classrooms is because of the status of this language form. PVs are most often considered colloquial and many school learners will hardly use them outside the language classrooms as they normally revert to their L1 for communication purposes. Thus, to these teachers, the learning value may not be worth the time spent on teaching this language feature, and, therefore, be reluctant to teach them. Another common misunderstanding among teachers is that PVs are mainly used in informal rather than formal situations or texts, and, thus, they are not considered very important. Instead, the teaching of single-word equivalents is always the main focus in language classrooms as they are very common in the formal context and considered to be more appropriate than PVs. Perhaps, many teachers are not aware of the many instances in formal situations or texts when "a phrasal verb is the most natural-sounding way of expressing a particular idea" (Fletcher 2005: LS13). Therefore, learners should be encouraged to use this form "as and when they are appropriate" (p. LS13). Below is an example taken from Fletcher (2005) to illustrate this:

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Issues *brought up* by the President of the College and by the Board of Regents shall be addressed by the Faculty Senate and, if necessary, by the Association as...   *(extracted from a college constitution document)*

The above example is taken from a very formal written text, but the writer has chosen to use the PV *brought up* rather than the one-word equivalent, *raised*, simply because the choice of PV in this context is more natural and acceptable. A mistaken belief that PVs are always used in an informal context (thus assumed not very important) is another reason for the lack of attention given to this feature in language classrooms in Malaysia.

Furthermore, many teachers may assume that the teaching of one-word equivalents is less confusing as they also have L1 (Malay) equivalents. However, it is important to note that, in many cases, the one-word verbs cannot be regarded as exact replacements for PVs, and they cannot be used interchangeably (see 2.3.3.1, 8.4.1, and 8.4.3). For instance, 'I'm *done in*' would be used in a different social context from 'I'm exhausted'; and 'My radio *picks up* America' has connotations of difficulty that the one-word equivalent *receive* lacks (Side 1990: 145). In fact, it is also inaccurate to assume that *come out* and *go out,* which have a single Malay equivalent ('*keluar*') can be used interchangeably as *'keluar'*. This is because *come out* and *go out* involves the aspect of directionality while *'keluar'* does not (see 7.3.3; 7.3.7). Perhaps this is another issue that teachers themselves are not aware of: the fact that direct equivalents of PVs do not always exist.

The above-mentioned reasons are probably some of the contributing factors why the teaching of PVs is not very successful in language classrooms in Malaysia and even learners at an advanced level are unable to use this feature appropriately.

8.6   Treatment of phrasal verbs in bilingual dictionaries

The following discussions will examine the treatment of PVs in two bilingual dictionaries commonly used by school learners in Malaysia (see below). This particular analysis is conducted to determine whether such dictionaries provide sufficient and relevant information with respect to PVs to improve learners' understanding and their productive use of this language form. The reasons for choosing these bilingual dictionaries are because they are the ones frequently used by learners in language classrooms, even though the use of monolingual dictionaries is always encouraged. Although monolingual dictionaries are available on the market and there are a few that specifically focus on PVs, this type of dictionary is infrequently acquired and used by school learners: instead bilingual dictionaries which combine both single and multi-word items in the same entry are always the most popular choice of learners. Monolingual dictionaries are usually used by learners at a higher level of learning (i.e. college or university level). This, however, is not surprising, and it has been reported that in EFL and ESL learning, beginners or learners at a lower level of learning prefer bilingual dictionaries while those at a higher level or more proficient learners frequently consult monolingual ones (Tomaszczyk 1979; Baxter 1980; Bensoussan et al. 1984).

The two bilingual dictionaries selected for examination are produced by leading publishers in Malaysia: Oxford Fajar Sdn. Bhd. and Pearson Longman Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. Besides dictionaries, they also produce many other supplementary materials, specifically for language teaching and learning in Malaysia (e.g. reference books, examination practice, techniques in answering exam questions). However, these supplementary materials are not compulsory materials in language classrooms, though learners are usually encouraged to purchase them for individual, additional practice outside classrooms. For the purpose of this study, two bilingual dictionaries that are frequently recommended by language teachers and commonly used by learners in and outside the language classrooms will be investigated. The two bilingual dictionaries are:

1) Kamus Dwibahasa Longman (KDL), 2nd edition (2009)
2) Kamus Dwibahasa Oxford Fajar (KDO), 4th edition (Joyce M. Hawkins, 2008)

In common with bilingual dictionaries generally, both dictionaries are divided into two main sections: English to Malay, and Malay to English translation. KDO has approximately 50,000 headwords and derivative words while KDL claims to have more than 50,000. More pages are allocated for the English-Malay section with 713 and 470 pages in KDL and KDO, respectively. PVs are listed under headword entries in both dictionaries. For instance, *come up* is listed under the headword *come*; *take off* can be found under the headword *take,* etc., as shown below.

As far as the KDL in the English-Malay section is concerned, PVs are presented together with L1 meanings and L2 synonyms (SYN), as shown in the example taken from the KDL below.

The KDL in this respect is very clear in its way of informing learners of two possible meanings of *pick up*, indicated by numbers (see above). At the same time, the dictionary also provides L2 synonyms or one-word verb equivalents of that particular item, which, to a certain extent, is helpful for learners as they can get the meanings of a particular PV in both L1 and L2 simultaneously. However, Side (1990) points out that this approach will cause learners to "stick to and use the latinate definition rather than the Anglo-Saxon phrasal verb, especially if it is a one-word definition" (p. 145). Analysis of the PV *pick up*

(to get better in health) in the EMAS corpus provides useful confirmation of Side's (1990) claim. No instance of *pick up* in this sense appears in the learner corpus, instead learners show great tendency to use the one-word verb *recover* (e.g. 'Izal and the girl was admitted for two days in the hospital and *recovered* very fast' [SMART-P-f4-12]). This is probably because *recover* is easier to learn, and it also has an equivalent in learners' L1 (*sembuh*), thus it seems to make more sense to learners.

However, according to Parkinson (2001), providing learners with synonyms will allow them to decide whether a phrasal verb or a single-word equivalent is the more appropriate choice. This is perhaps true in the case of advanced or more proficient learners as they may be able to decide whether PVs or one-word verbs are more appropriate to be used in a particular context. On the other hand, beginners or learners at a lower school level may have difficulty in making an appropriate choice, as they are not aware of the context or register that influences the choice between a one-word equivalent and a PV. For instance, although *resemble* ('to be similar to someone or something else') is equivalent to *take after,* the PV *take after* is only used to refer to people in the same family who resemble each other; similarly, the PV *carry out* is commonly used in a less formal register than its one-word verb *perform* ('to do something that you have a responsibility to do') (see also 8.4.1). Thus, providing PV synonyms to learners at a lower level may not be very helpful as this will increase their tendency to use the one-word equivalents, which may be less appropriate in a particular context than their PV counterparts.

Clearly, the provision of a synonym or equivalent needs to be supplemented with clear examples to illustrate differences in terms of usage and register in order to help learners in making appropriate choices, and to avoid learners, especially those at a lower school level, assuming that the one-word verb synonyms given are an exact replacement of PVs and can be used interchangeably. As examples are not provided in the dictionaries to further illustrate the context of use, this approach is probably more useful for learners in 'decoding' word meanings, such as in reading comprehension activities, but not very helpful as a learning aid to understand and encourage appropriate and frequent use of this language form for better fluency in the target language.

As far as the KDO is concerned, it simply provides a list of possible meanings of an L2 lexical item in learners' L1. However, for L2 neither synonyms or examples to illustrate the different contexts of use are provided. Below is an example taken from the KDO to illustrate this:

Even though the dictionary actually provides more meanings (e.g. three different senses of *pick up*) than KDL, these different meanings should have been presented more

systematically (e.g. use of numbers to indicate different senses) and in a more meaningful way (e.g. examples to illustrate usage) for learners to gain a better understanding of the PVs they learn. Simply listing all possible meanings in isolation suggests that learners have to learn PVs and their meanings by heart, which is less helpful in learning and understanding new lexical items, such as PVs. No doubt this approach may be useful for learners in the 'decoding' type of activities, such as reading comprehension in which the context is already provided and learners are expected to decide which meaning best matches the PVs they come across. However, learners may find it less useful for 'encoding' purposes, such as writing and speaking activities. Similar to the KDL, this particular dictionary does not provide examples to illustrate the various senses of meaning of a lexical item (see the example above).

Despite the different approaches in presenting a lexical item to learners discussed above, it is rather surprising that neither of these dictionaries provide examples to illustrate how lexical items are used in context. As many English words including PVs are polysemous and have multiple meanings, it is important that learners are provided with examples to facilitate better understanding of lexical items that they are looking for. For instance, without any example to illustrate the different meanings of *pick up* (collect), learners may not be aware of the association of *pick up* in this sense with both animate and inanimate objects, as in '*pick up* the rubbish' and '*picks up* her daughter'. As the lexical verb *pick* is presented in the same entry, and the association of *pick* with inanimate objects (e.g. flowers and fruits) is explicitly presented, it is not impossible that learners may assume that *pick up* can only be associated with inanimate objects. This is further supported by a large number

of instances of *pick up* with inanimate objects rather than animate objects produced by learners as discussed in the earlier chapter (see 7.1.2).

Apart from word meanings, Summers (1988), for instance, claims that "If they [students] do not get help over the collocations, typical context, and grammatical possibilities of the word, they may make errors" (p. 112). This suggests the importance of providing examples instead of just word meanings, so that learners are aware of the different contexts of use, common collocates, and grammatical patterns of a particular lexical item presented in a dictionary. Closer examination of the two dictionaries shows that neither of them provide examples in context to illustrate the meaning and usage of PVs, and no information with respect to grammatical pattern (e.g. aspects related to transitivity and separability of PVs) is presented. Perhaps this is another explanation for the non-standard use of many of the PVs discussed in Chapter 7 (e.g. *fall down, jump down, pick up, take off, come out*). The PV *wake up* for instance, which is listed in the KDO but not in the KDL, is simply defined as '*terjaga/terbangun*' in the learners' L1, without any example to inform learners of typical grammatical patterns, particularly when it involves pronouns. Thus, if learners refer to this dictionary, they may get the L1 definition of a PV, but not the rule with respect to object/particle movement, which is very important in learning and understanding PVs. This is another possible explanation for the inappropriate production of * '*wake up* me' instead of '*wake me* up' by learners, as discussed in the earlier chapter (see 7.1.3).

Further examination of the two dictionaries has also revealed that a number of core meanings of high frequency PVs are not provided. One possible explanation is perhaps

that, most often, the core meanings of PVs are very transparent and can be easily understood by learners simply by combining the meanings of each individual unit. However, the earlier findings (see Chapter 7) revealed that learners still have problems in using core meanings of high frequency PVs, such as *come out, go out, fall down, take off*, indicating that they should also receive equal attention in learner dictionaries. In the case of *get off,* for instance, it is rather surprising that this dictionary (i.e. the KDO) only provides one meaning, *terlepas tuduhan/dakwaan* (to receive only a small punishment after doing something wrong), which is clearly not a core meaning of *get off*. On the other hand, the core meaning of *get off* (to leave a bus/train), which is very common in native speakers' discourse and more useful to learners is not listed in the KDO. Similarly, the core meaning of *go out* (to leave a place/building) is also not given in the KDO. Below is an entry containing *get off* and *go out* taken from the KDO:

As understanding and using core meanings of common PVs is still a problem to many learners, dictionary writers in Malaysia in particular, should consider the inclusion of the core meanings of high frequency PVs in learner dictionaries together with examples to illustrate appropriate usage. It is also suggested that instead of using their own assumption and intuition, which may not always be correct, dictionary writers should make use of

corpus data to identify high frequency PVs and their core meanings to ensure that learners are provided with PVs, which are useful for them in everyday communication.

A similar example can also be found in the KDL. The PV *set up* is simply defined as *menubuhkan organisasi* (to *set up* an organization) in this particular dictionary as shown below:

Other common associations of *set up* (e.g. *set up* a structure/a piece of equipment/home/shop/business), which can be illustrated through examples are not provided to inform learners about other common meanings and usage of this PV. Thus, learners may not be aware of other core senses of *set up*, which is perhaps part of the reason for the non-occurrence of *set up* with nouns like *home, shop and business* in the EMAS corpus discussed earlier (see 7.1.5). In fact, it is even surprising that the KDO totally excludes this high frequency PV (i.e. *set up)* from its dictionary entries. The table below summarizes the occurrence of the op 20 high frequency PVs listed by Garner and Davies (2007) in both dictionaries:

Table 60: The occurrence of 20 high frequency PVs in the KDO and KDL

Phrasal verbs (PVs)	Kamus Dwibahasa Oxford (KDO)	Kamus Dwibahasa Longman (KDL)
go on	X	X
carry out	/	/
set up	X	/ (coded as noun)
pick up	/	/
go back	X	X
come back	X	X
go out	/	X
point out	/	X
find out	/	/
come up	/	X
make up	/	/
take over	/ (coded as noun)	X
come out	/	X
come on	X	X
come in	X	X
go down	X	X
work out	/	/
set out	/	/
take up	/	/
get back	X	X

* X=not listed
/ =listed

Table 52 above shows that the KDO has a slightly larger number of high frequency PVs compared to the KDL. Of all the 20 high frequency PVs, the KDO lists 12 of them, and less than half (8) are found in the KDL. This indicates that many of the high frequency PVs that are widely used by native speakers in everyday settings and thus very useful for learners are not listed in the two dictionaries investigated. Table 52 above shows that the PV *go on* is first in the list, and the *Collins COBUILD Phrasal Verbs Dictionary* provides 19 different senses of *go on* which suggests that this PV has a wide range of meanings and usage in everyday settings, and, therefore, is very useful for learners. However, this high

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frequency PV is not included in either dictionary under investigation. Similarly, the PVs *go back, come back, come in, go down, get back* are also not listed in the dictionaries, which might be a possible reason for the less frequent or inappropriate use of these PVs discussed in Chapter 5 and Chapter 7.

In addition, there is also a lack of consistency in the way the various meanings of PVs are presented in these two dictionaries. Both KDL and KDO for instance, provide literal meanings of certain PVs (e.g. *pick up*, *come out*), but not of the literal meanings of many other high frequency PVs (e.g. *look up, go out, put down, fall down*). The earlier findings reported in Chapter 7 revealed that learners are still having difficulties in dealing with the literal meanings of PVs (e.g. *go out, fall down*), suggesting that literal meanings should also receive equal attention and be included in learner dictionaries. Inconsistency can also be seen in terms of the selection of senses to be included in the dictionaries. Closer examination of the dictionaries reveals that, in most cases, the core meanings of PVs are presented but there are also instances in which core meanings are absent (see discussion above). As I am unaware of any studies carried out to list different senses of PVs based on 'coreness', the senses provided in the *Collins COBUILD Phrasal Verbs Dictionary* are therefore used as a guideline to identify those that are useful for L2 learners at a secondary school level. For instance, the association of *wake up* with *government* (see 7.1.3) is regarded as a non-core meaning and less useful for this group of learners as compared to *wake up* (being conscious from the state of sleep). Further analysis of the learner dictionaries (KDL and KDO) shows that the choice of PV form in the two dictionaries is also inconsistent. KDO presents *look up* (to find information) in the LV+AVP form (i.e.

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look up) while KDL presents it in the LV+X+AVP form (i.e. *look* something *up*). However, they do not provide any example to inform learners that *look up* can actually appear in both structures.

Another example to illustrate the inconsistency in the KDL – a rather surprising example which may even confuse learners – is the categorization of *set up ('menubuhkan organisasi'*: to *set up* an organization), which is denoted as a noun *(n)* instead of a verb *(vt)* (see the example above). This combination can appear in a noun form as *set-up* (a way of organizing something), instead of *set up* which is clearly a PV. Thus, learners who refer to this dictionary may get confused with respect to the classification of the PV *set up* above, whether it is a verb, noun or both. Similarly, although a combination of *break* and *down* can function as both a PV (i.e. *break down*) and a noun (i.e. *breakdown*), only *breakdown* (*n*) is listed in the KDL but not the PV *break down*. Even though both may share a close association with a machine or vehicle, for instance, their meanings, grammatical pattern and usage are clearly different and they should be both included and addressed separately to avoid confusion among learners. Similarly, the combination of *set* and *up* is only listed as a noun (*set-up*) in the KDO and the high frequency PV (*set up*) does not appear in the dictionary entries, perhaps due to the same reason. Below are examples to illustrate this:

In addition, it is rather surprising that some combinations are incorrectly coded. For instance, hyphenated *come-back, come-down* indicate they are nouns, but the L1 meanings presented indicate they are verbs rather than nouns, which is clearly misleading. Although a combination of *come* and *back*; *break* and *down*; *set* and *up*, etc., can function as PVs (*come back, break down, set up*) and also as nouns (*come-back, breakdown, set-up*), the differences in terms of form (hyphenated or non-hyphenated) and function (as a noun or a PV) should be clearly highlighted in the dictionary entries as this may cause confusion (particularly those at a lower school level) about the correct form of PVs. In some cases, they are clearly stated, while in others they are not.

Further analysis also indicates that various types of 'lexical phrase', such as compounds, collocations, idioms, PVs, prepositional verbs, are listed together in the same entry. For instance, in the KDO, under the headword *go*, a learner may find a compound (*go-cart*), prepositional verb (*go for*), PV (*go out, go up*), and phrasal prepositional verb (*go back on*), and other common phrase (*on the go*). Similarly, collocations (*take care of, take part, take place),* PVs (*take after, take down, take off*), and other common phrases (*take a bite, take a break*) are listed together in the same entry in the KDL, under the head word *take*. There is no indication provided to inform learners of their differences. Below are examples to illustrate this:
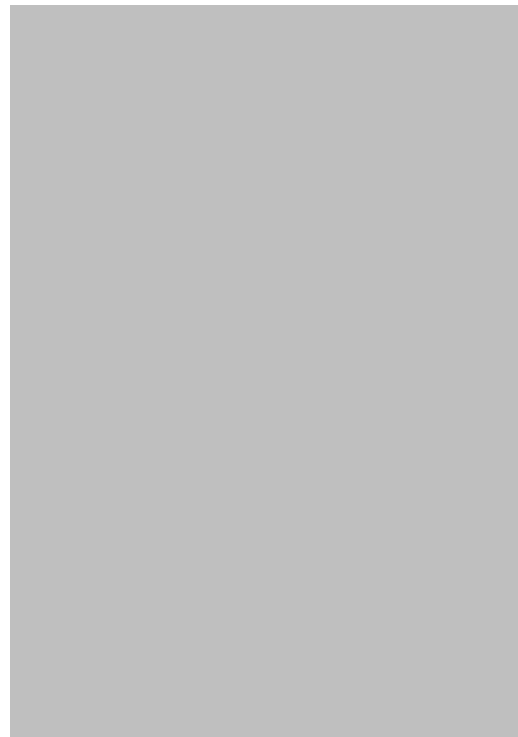
Even though an indication of transitivity is provided in the KDL dictionary entries (transitive (*vt*) and intransitive (*vi*)), advanced or more proficient learners may find this information helpful, while those at a lower level may find it meaningless unless examples are provided to illustrate this important aspect of verb use.

As far as different types of word combination is concerned, it may not be necessary to highlight their differences if the purpose of a dictionary is merely to assist learners in 'decoding' rather than 'encoding' activities. However, if it is to be regarded as a learning aid to improve fluency in the target language, clearly, further information concerning the differences is needed. Thus, having separate sections on PVs and other 'lexical phrases', or, better, a specialized bilingual PV dictionary with relevant information, such as examples to illustrate various core meanings, usage and grammatical patterns, might be more helpful for

learners. As stated earlier, with the limited period of learning English in classrooms, it is quite impossible for language teachers to discuss PVs in depth. However, with the help of more systematic and comprehensive dictionaries, learners would at least be aware of other important information with respect to PVs not addressed in classrooms.

Closer examination of the two dictionaries also indicates that neither of the publishers claim that their dictionaries are corpus-based and produced with the benefit of frequency counts, which are very helpful in identifying those PVs that are very frequent in native speakers' discourse, commonly used in everyday settings, and, therefore, most useful for learners. Poor selection will undoubtedly result in presenting less frequent and less useful lexical items, including PVs to learners. Thus, it is not surprising that many high frequency PVs (see Gardner and Davies 2007) are not found in either dictionary, instead, many low frequency PVs, which are of less 'utility' in the real world are presented to them. For instance, among the high frequency PVs with the headword *go* (*go on, go back, go out, go up, go off, go in, go round, go over, go through,* and *go along)* surprisingly, *go over* is the only PV listed in the KDL, and only three appear in the KDO: *go out, go round*, and *go up*. Similarly, out of twelve high frequency PVs with LV *come*, the PV *come along* is the only one listed in the KDL, together with a low frequency PV (i.e. *come by*). Surprisingly, the high frequency PVs *go out*, *come out, go up*, *go down*, etc., which are found to be problematic to learners (see Chapter 7), are not listed in the KDL. Below are examples to illustrate this:

In brief, analysis of the two learner dictionaries above has highlighted several shortcomings of the present dictionaries, which are commonly recommended to and used by Malaysian school learners, particularly with respect to PVs. In general, learners may find that these dictionaries are not very helpful when it comes to learning and understanding PVs because of the absence of examples or sentences to illustrate various meanings, usage and typical grammatical patterns of PVs. The lack of consistency in the way PVs are presented may even confuse learners in their effort to understand this language feature. Most importantly, the selection process of PVs to be included in the two selected dictionaries was conducted without sufficient consideration with respect to frequency to ensure that high frequency PVs, which are more useful to learners, are first presented rather than the less frequent ones.

As learners rely greatly on this type of dictionary (bilingual), especially in language classrooms, it is suggested that dictionary writers in Malaysia should consider including more information (e.g. examples, transitivity, grammatical patterns) to further facilitate learners in learning and understanding L2 lexical items, particularly PVs. Failure to do so will not only lead to confusion among learners, but, most importantly, they will not be able

to use the target language appropriately and fluently. However, it is not the intention of the present analysis to find fault in the two dictionaries above, but more towards helping dictionary writers in Malaysia, in particular, to improve the present approach of selecting and presenting lexical items, specifically PVs, to language learners. Perhaps with so much information with respect to PVs that needs to be included and explained to learners (i.e. different meanings senses, common collocates, lexico-grammatical patterns), it is suggested that publishing a separate section focussing on PVs, or a special dictionary of PVs, might be a better option. However, as far as learner dictionaries are concerned, it is rather unfair to conclude that dictionary writers are solely responsible for the inability of learners to understand and use PVs appropriately. Apart from the deficiencies with respect to PVs found in the two dictionaries above, it was also reported that Malaysian learners of English are not very good at gathering information about word meanings and use from the dictionary entry (Nesi, 1994). Thus, on the part of teachers, it might also be helpful to emphasize good dictionary skills so that learners can utilise their dictionaries more effectively.

To summarize, this chapter has revealed a number of deficiencies identified in the present reference materials (i.e. textbooks and dictionaries) with respect to PVs. It is hoped that the findings would help material providers in Malaysia in particular, to prepare better contents with respect to PVs so that learners can learn and understand this language feature better, and able to produce PVs more frequently and appropriately.

CHAPTER NINE

IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

9.0   Introduction

This chapter will discuss the implications and applications of the present study based on research findings reported in Chapters 5, 7, and 8. The discussions will not only cover pedagogical aspects, but will also include a number of suggestions to improve the current English language school textbooks and learner dictionaries commonly recommended for Malaysian school learners in the country. The final section will present comments on some limitations of the present study that could be addressed in future research. Following this, suggestions for possible future studies with respect to PVs, particularly in Malaysia will be presented.

9.1   Learners' understanding of PVs: applications and implications on teaching

Based on the findings of the present study, a number of conclusions can be drawn with respect to the learners' level of understanding and use of PVs. The findings reported in Chapter 5 have shown that, in general, although Malaysian school learners do understand PVs, their understanding of this language form, particularly those tested in the PVs test, is only at an average level (see 5.1.1). In general, results indicate that there is a relationship between students' gender and their understanding of PVs, though the value is relatively small (see 5.1.2). As far as gender and language learning is concerned, Mohamed Amin (2000), Mohd Nazali (1999) and Punithavalli (2003) found that Malaysian female students use diverse language learning strategies and use these

strategies more frequently than male students. This might be a contributing factor to their overall performance in the target language, and, therefore, it is not surprising that female learners tend to show a slightly better understanding of many aspects of the target language including PVs. Despite the small relationship, this finding is perhaps useful for teachers to increase awareness, especially amongst the male learners on the important role of PVs in language learning. In addition, teachers may also adopt suitable teaching strategies that they think may help this group of learners learn PVs better.

Similarly, as far as school level is concerned, the findings reported in Chapter 5 further revealed that although students at a higher school level (Form 4) seem to have a better understanding of the PVs tested compared to those at the lower school level (Form 2) (see 5.1.3), the analysis of effect size indicate that the value is relatively small to claim a strong relationship between students' form and their understanding of PVs (see 5.1.7). Added to that, it was also revealed that there is no significant difference in the level of understanding literal PVs between those at the higher (F4) and lower (F2) school level (see 5.1.7). In other words, this implies that school level or length of exposure to the target language seems to have no effect on the learners' understanding of literal PVs. The high number of correct responses with respect to literal PVs (see 5.1.5; 5.2.1) suggests that this type of PV present less difficulty to learners. This finding is not surprising, as literal PVs are very frequently transparent in meaning, as both elements in the PV combination retain their regular meanings, and, thus, are less difficult to understand. The analysis of effect size further confirms that there is no relationship between the literal PVs and students' form (see 5.1.7).

However, a very different result is obtained with respect to non-literal PVs, as, in general, learners are found to have a lower level of understanding with respect to non-literal PVs (see 5.2.2). The frequency analysis conducted further confirmed this: there are 6 non-literal PVs in comparison to only one literal PV in which more than 50% of the respondents responded incorrectly in the PV test (see 5.2.1 and 5.2.2). In fact, closer examination of learners' actual use of PVs in the EMAS corpus has further confirmed that learners seem to be able to use many literal PVs appropriately in contrast with the non-literal ones (see 7.1.4; 7.3.2; 7.4.2; 7.1.4; 7.3.2, 7.4.4). This finding suggests that teachers should put more emphasis on the teaching of non-literal PVs, particularly the high frequency PVs, and to focus on the meanings which are useful in everyday communication, yet many learners often struggle with (e.g. *go up* [increase], *take off* [remove], *pick up* [collect somebody], *go down* [decrease]). This finding is in fact similar to those found in Dagut and Laufer (1985), Hulstijn and Marchena (1989), and Liao and Fukuya (2004) who also reported that non-literal PVs are more difficult for language learners than the literal ones. However, while previous studies were entirely based on test results, this study integrated both PVs tests and corpus analysis in order to obtain more comprehensive findings.

Apart from gender and school level, it was found that language proficiency level is another important factor that can influence the learners' level of understanding PVs (see 5.1.4). In fact, language proficiency plays a significant role across the school levels under investigation (i.e. F2 and F4). Learners in the high proficiency group are found to have a better understanding of literal PVs and non-literal PVs than the average and low groups (see 5.1.8); this finding is consistent with those found by others (e.g. Liao and Fukuya 2004). This finding further implies that learners of similar school level, may not

necessarily have similar levels of understanding with respect to PVs. This information might be useful for teachers in their teaching preparation, as they may want to focus on different input with respect to PVs, and apply different approaches in teaching this language form to learners of different proficiency levels.

9.2   Learners' use of PVs: applications and implications on teaching

In addition to the PVs test, which provides useful information with respect to learners' understanding of PVs in general, and its relation to learners' gender, school level and language proficiency (see Chapter 5), the present study went a step further by examining the actual use of PVs by learners to identify the problems they face in understanding and using PVs, and the possible explanations for learners' inappropriate use of this language feature. In general, the findings reported in Chapter 7 indicate that learners do produce PVs in their written and spoken activities. However, the usage of this language form is very limited and very often deviates from the norm, syntactically and semantically. The results clearly show that learners at all levels under investigation have considerable difficulty in understanding and producing PVs. This finding implies that PVs deserve better treatment in language classrooms; hence, making learners aware of the PV phenomenon should be considered an important task for teachers.

A number of reasons have been identified that may contribute to the non-standard use of PVs by Malaysian learners of English (see Chapter 7). Lexical problems are among the possible reasons, as clearly illustrated in the learners' use of *pick up* instead of *pick* (see 7.2.1) as well as *find out* instead of *find* (see 7.3.5). Learners' difficulties in distinguishing *pick up* and *pick*; *find out* and *find* may also be due to semantic confusion as they may find both pairs are related in meaning and thus assume they can

be used interchangeably. Therefore, it is important for teachers to address this semantic confusion and to make learners aware of the differences in the meaning and usage of PVs, perhaps by providing them with a number of contextualized examples of these verb pairs to draw their attention to common patterns – whether or not certain PVs are more typical in speech or written texts, the syntactic environment of PVs, and words with which they normally co-occur.

In addition to lexical knowledge and semantic confusion, the findings of the present study also revealed that learners' unawareness of common patterns and collocates is another factor that contributes to the inappropriate use of PVs under investigation (see 7.1.2; 7.1.5; 7.2.7; 7.3.6; 7.4.5). The non-standard structures of many common PVs, as discussed in Chapter 7, suggest that learners are not aware of their regular patterns and common collocates. Accordingly, this may result in failure to convey the intended message or lead to different interpretations by native speakers: this is clearly illustrated in the use of the PVs *put down* and *fall down* (see 7.2.2; 7.2.7). Therefore, it is important for teachers to provide learners with contextualized examples of PVs so that they are aware of typical patterns and common collocates of PVs; for example, that the object of one sense of *take off* collocates with 'things that we are wearing', and that the pronoun is always placed in between *wake* and *up* (*wakes me up*), as well as between *calm* and *down* (*calm myself down*). Highlighting such patterns to learners may help them to distinguish the different meanings and uses of *pick up* and *pick, go out* and *come out, take off* and *take out,* etc. in a slightly different but more meaningful way. As a language teacher, I believe that learners will find it more interesting to learn lexical units through this approach rather than learning them by heart (memorization).

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The results of the corpus analysis further confirm that learners face more difficulties with non-literal rather than literal PVs (see 5.2.1; 5.2.2; 7.1.2; 7.1.4; 7.1.6; 7.2.5; 7.3.2). This is perhaps for the obvious reason that literal PVs are transparent in meaning while idiomatic ones are less transparent and metaphorical in meaning. Thus, it is suggested that teachers should pay more attention to idiomatic PVs, particularly those that are very common in English, focussing on the core meanings (e.g. *take off*=remove; *go up*=increase; *bring up*=raise; *come across*=discover), as they are more useful for learners. There is no doubt that making learners aware of how the meaning of these non-literal PVs are derived is a difficult task for teachers, as, in most cases, the meaning cannot be deduced simply by looking at individual elements in the PV combination. However, earlier discussion has shown the regularity of particle meaning, suggesting that PVs can be taught and teachers may also show learners how the meaning of many non-literal PVs can be understood by drawing attention to 'conceptual metaphors', or semantic patterning of the particles (see 2.3.2; 3.5). Such an approach may help learners to understand PVs better and they can even apply the same concept in understanding many other PVs in the target language, rather than memorizing their single-word equivalents.

Another important finding derived from the present study is that learners are not aware of many of the core meanings of PVs that are very useful to them in everyday communication (see 7.1.6; 7.2.5; 7.3.4). There is no doubt that PVs are polysemous and may have multiple meanings. Hence, it is clearly impossible for learners to understand and use all these meanings, and for teachers to teach all (or even most) of them. However, it is important for learners to at least be able to understand and use core meanings of PVs (see 3.1.1 for a discussion of core sense). Earlier findings have shown

that learners are still having problems in understanding and using the core meanings of many common PVs. Interestingly, the findings indicate that learners face less difficulty in understanding and using core meanings of PVs that involve the physical movement of a person/object perhaps because such movement can be clearly observed. Thus, *go up$_1$* (movement from a lower place to a higher one), for instance, is easily understood and appropriately used by learners, while *go up$_2$* (increase in quantity/quality), which is another core meaning of this PV, does not appear in the EMAS corpus (see 7.1.6). In relation to this, it is suggested that teachers should introduce learners to a number of core meanings of PVs that are useful for them, while those with less useful in the real world should be introduced at a later stage or when they have reached a much higher level of language learning. However, the problem then faced by teachers is obviously what should be considered as core and non-core meanings. Can teachers simply rely on their intuition and own judgement in selecting these core meanings? I am not entirely denying teachers' judgement, but such judgement should be further supported or supplemented by the powerful tool of corpus data, which helps teachers to determine core meanings based on their frequency of occurrence as well as their usefulness in the real world. For instance, a random sample of 500 concordance lines in the BoE corpus show that the most common subject-collocates of *go up* include *flames, smoke, stairs and curtain* – all of which indicate a general sense of movement from a lower to a higher place. This is followed by collocates like *petrol, prices, unemployment and rates,* which are associated with an increase in quantity/quality. This suggests that *increase* is clearly another core meaning of *go up*; and *go up* in this sense is widely used in everyday setting, suggesting its usefulness for language learners, and therefore, should be taught to learners.

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Another implication derived from the findings of the present study is the important role of explicit teaching with respect to PVs, which can help to improve the learners' understanding and use of this language form. The current teaching practice in Malaysia does not place much emphasis on PVs, and, most often, PVs are taught indirectly (see 5.4). However, it is rather unfair to put the blame entirely on teachers. This is because, as the findings presented in Chapter 5 show, one of the teachers' reasons for not teaching this language feature is due to the lack of emphasis given to PVs in the school language syllabus and reference materials, and because this language form is also rarely tested in examinations (see 5.4.5). As the common teaching practice in Malaysia emphasizes elements frequently tested in examination, PVs are usually discussed very briefly as they appear in reading comprehension or written exercises. It is undeniable that dealing with PVs as they crop up in reading or writing exercises is probably one way of introducing learners to this language form, but simply giving them the meanings of PVs is insufficient as findings reported in Chapter 7 show that learners are still unable to understand many common PVs and use them inappropriately (e.g. *go out, come out, pick up, fall down*). In addition, even though learners are always encouraged to learn PVs by themselves, for instance, through extensive reading, most often it is very difficult to get them reading L2 texts outside the language classrooms. Another question is whether they really understand PVs that they encountered in their reading. Are they able to use those encountered PVs appropriately in their written or spoken discourse? Earlier findings have shown various instances of deviant structures and inappropriate use appears in learners' actual use of PVs (see Chapter 7). This implies that the indirect teaching of PVs and extensive reading is not enough; instead, explicit teaching of PVs is required to inform learners on various aspects related to PVs (e.g. core meanings, usage, typical patterns). A number of possible approaches in teaching

PVs have been suggested by researchers of which one of the most popular is using the 'conceptual metaphor' approach (see 2.3.2; 3..3; 3.5).

The present study also revealed that the learners' L1 has great influence on the learners' use of PVs (see 5.2.3; 5.2.5; 5.2.7; 7.1.3; 7.2.3; 7.2.4). In fact, similar findings have been reported in other studies (e.g. Dagut and Laufer 1985; Hulstijn and Marchena 1989; Laufer and Eliasson 1993). The non-existence of PV structure in their L1 (Malay) may have resulted in learners, particularly those at the lower school level, producing deviant structures, in which they tend to copy their L1 structure into the L2 (see 7.1.3; 7.3.8). This implies that the syntactic structure of PVs, particularly the placement of pronouns in PV combinations, is one important aspect of PVs that deserves greater attention in language classrooms. There are also a number of PVs that are represented by a single verb in the learners' L1 (see 7.1.3; 7.2.3; 7.3.3; 7.3.7). Undoubtedly, this can influence the learners' understanding of such PVs, and results in producing non-standard structures or inappropriate use of PVs. Thus, it is suggested that the teaching of PVs should take into account learners' L1, and that explanations with respect to the meanings of PVs in both L1 and L2 need to be provided to help learners learn and understand this language form better. Comparing the L1 and L2 meanings may help to increase the awareness of learners that the PVs *go out* and *come out*, as well as *wake up* and *get up,* for instance, cannot be used interchangeably as *'keluar'* or *'bangun'* in their L1. Discussing the syntactic similarities and differences of both L1 and L2 may help learners to be more aware that they cannot simply follow their L1 structure and produce *wakes up me* or *take out it* in the L2.

As far as the teacher survey with respect to teaching of PVs is concerned, there are a number of useful findings that are worth discussion. Firstly, a small number of teachers in the survey, particularly young language teachers with just a few years of teaching experience, have reported that they do not teach this language form at all and have agreed that uncertainty about what PVs are and unawareness of the importance of PVs, are some of the reasons for not teaching them (see 5.4.5). However, due to the small number of teachers who responded to the survey, it is difficult to confirm that this is a particular problem amongst younger or less experienced language teachers. Despite this limitation, this finding should not be disregarded, as it does provide a useful insight for further investigation to be carried out with respect to the teaching of PVs in Malaysian schools. Most importantly, this preliminary finding implies the need for language teachers themselves to be well-informed and fully aware of phraseological phenomena, such as PVs and other MWUs, before they can really explain this language form to learners. It is therefore desirable for teacher training colleges to consider incorporating the teaching of phraseological units in their teacher training curriculum to increase awareness of this issue.

In addition, the traditional belief with respect to the arbitrariness of PVs may have also influenced teachers' perceptions, in that there are no clear and systematic rules to learn and understand this language form, which is clearly reflected in school textbooks and learner dictionaries (see Chapter 8). Thus, teachers are uncertain of the best way of teaching this language feature and learners are most often told to learn PVs and their meanings by heart. However, in this study I have pointed out that PVs are not 'arbitrary', and the choice of particle in PV construction is not randomly selected. In fact, the meanings of individual particles in a number of PVs are closely related and

"can be traced from a small number of literal senses to a large number of more abstract ideas" (Rundell 2005: 3). The notion of 'motivation' in PVs (see 2.3.2; 3.5) further suggests that the choice and combination of verbs and particles is neither random nor inevitable. In short, the systematicity of particle meanings and the non-arbitrariness of PV combinations imply that this particular language form can be taught, and providing learners with list of PVs to learn by heart ought to be a thing of the past. Therefore, it is very important for teachers themselves to change their perception with respect to the issue of the 'arbitrariness' of PVs.

9.3   Applications and implications for textbook writers

Apart from the lack of attention given to PVs by language teachers, as discussed above, the findings reported in Chapter 5 revealed that the majority of teachers surveyed were not happy with the present vocabulary content presented in school textbooks, particularly the coverage and treatment of MWUs including PVs, which they believed to be inadequate (see 5.3.4; 5.3.5; 5.3.6). This view is further supported by the findings reported in Chapter 8, which also revealed that PVs are not well-treated in the current English language school textbooks. Not all textbooks discuss PVs (see 8.4) and the lack of emphasis given to this form can be clearly observed, as there is only a small section in textbooks that concentrates on PVs. Even within this very small section, the definitions of PVs presented are rather vague and sometimes confusing (see 8.4.1). Most often, learners are also not provided with the right information, particularly with respect to the definition of PVs, which is sometimes misleading (see 2.3.1; 8.4.1). Having a clear definition in mind is clearly important as it is a very basic thing that learners need to know before they can go further with learning, understanding and using this language form.   In addition, information with respect to the syntactic

structures of PVs (i.e. transitivity and separability of PVs), is also absent in the present textbooks. This is another important aspect of PVs that needs to be highlighted by textbook writers, as syntactic structure seems to be one of the main problems faced by learners when using this language form (see 7.1.3; 7.3.8). In fact, it has been suggested that this important concept of separability or particle movement rule of transitive PVs needs to be introduced to learners at a very early stage of learning (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999).

Furthermore, the selection of PV examples should also be carried out more carefully to ensure that learners are provided with true examples of PVs. Thus, vague examples (e.g. *change into,* which are examples of PRPVs rather than PVs), should be avoided as this may confuse learners (see 8.4.1). Similarly, textbook writers should also be more cautious with the selection of literal and non-literal PV examples to illustrate transparency in meaning. This is to ensure that learners are presented with good examples in which the differences between literal and non-literal PVs can be clearly seen, thus avoiding further confusion (see 8.4.1). It is equally important that the examples of PVs presented to learners should also include those in transitive and intransitive forms so that learners are aware of the differences between them, particularly with respect to the movement of particle or object in transitive PVs (see 8.4.1). This finding implies the need for careful selection of PV examples by textbook writers to avoid confusion and to promote better understanding and usage.

The findings of this study also indicate that PVs are always presented together with their 'latinate' or one-word equivalents, as it is generally assumed that 'latinate' words are easier to learn, especially if they have single-word translation in the learners' L1

(see 8.4.1). However, it is suggested that providing learners with the 'latinate' or one-word equivalents should be accompanied with clear examples to inform learners that they should not treat these 'latinate' verbs as an exact replacement of PVs as they may differ in terms of context of use or registers (see 8.4.1). Moreover, presenting learners with 'latinate' words will subconsciously inform learners that PVs are 'arbitrary': that memorization is the only way of learning and understanding PVs and their meanings. However, the present study has shown that there is a system in PVs, which can help learners to understand the meanings of PVs more effectively (see above, 2.3.2; and 3.5). Clearly, this is another important issue that needs to be considered by textbook writers.

Another notable finding derived from the present study is the inclusion of low frequency PVs in learners' textbooks (see 8.4.2). It is generally agreed that one very clear guideline for the selection of PVs to be presented to learners is to include the high frequency PVs, focussing on their core meanings which are useful for learners in everyday communication. Therefore, it is time for textbook writers in Malaysia to consider the power of corpus tools in their selection process of what needs to be prioritized and introduced to learners first and what should come at a later stage. The results of the study indicate that there are many high frequency PVs, and their core senses, which are widely used in everyday communication, yet not explicitly addressed in the present school textbooks (see 8.4.2). As such PVs are very useful, but difficult for learners, they should be introduced before other PVs that are less frequently used in the real world. In addition, it is equally important for textbook writers to consider the inclusion of PVs that have a wider range of distribution and appear in various text types (academic and non-academic, formal and informal), as such PVs are also more useful

for learners than those that have very restricted usage (see 8.4.2). Perhaps, Gardner and Davies' (2007) list of the top 100 high-frequency PVs might be a very useful guide for teachers, and textbook writers in their selection of suitable PVs for learners.

As far as exercises with respect to PVs are concerned, learners at a higher school level in particular, should be provided with exercises that expose them to different variations of PVs: two-word (e.g. *pick up*), three-word (*pick* it *up*), four-word variety (e.g. *pick* their children *up*), etc. However, this is absent from the present textbooks (see 8.4.4). The ability of learners to use PV variations appropriately not only indicates their degree of understanding with respect to PVs, but also helps to increase the 'naturalness' of their speech and written work, which indirectly reflects their overall language ability. Perhaps one way to inform learners on the possible variations of PVs is by introducing them to the concept of 'transitivity' and 'separability' of PVs, which is the most important principle that learners should be aware of and understand in their effort to learn this language feature. Thus, this is another issue with respect to PV exercises that deserves further attention by textbook writers.

Moreover, activities like filling in blanks or completing sentences, matching and giving meanings of PVs are found to be a popular type of PV activity given to learners (see 8.4.4). There is no doubt that these types of exercise may suit learners at a lower school level, but those at a higher level should be provided with more exercises that can further reinforce their understanding of this language form. Thus, it is suggested that learners should be provided with the type of activities that allow greater opportunities for them to use this particular language form extensively. For instance, exercises that focus on learners' actual use of PVs either in written or oral activities, which is absent in the

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present textbooks, should be included, particularly in textbooks designed for learners at a higher school level (e.g. F4, F5). As a language teacher, I believe that this kind of exercise will not only help to strengthen learners' understanding of PVs, but, most importantly, their ability to use PVs more appropriately in order to gain fluency in English, their target language.

9.4   Implications and applications for dictionary writers

Analysis of the two bilingual dictionaries has also revealed a number of interesting points with respect to PVs. First of all, if the purpose of any particular dictionary is to decode word meanings, the provision of 'latinate' or one-word equivalents, as well as L1 translation may be very useful (see 8.6). However, if it is to be regarded as a learning aid, then inclusion of one-word synonyms should be accompanied with clear examples so that learners are aware that these 'latinate' words are not exact replacements of PVs, and that both *come out* and *go out,* for instance, cannot be used interchangeably as '*keluar'* in their L1 (see 7.3.3). While those at the higher school level may be able to decide when it is appropriate to use PVs and when it is more acceptable to use 'latinate' words, those at the lower school level may assume that one-word synonyms or L1 translations given in the dictionary can be used interchangeably irrespective of register and context of use. This perhaps needs further attention by dictionary writers.

As PVs are 'polysemous' or have multiple meanings, it is equally important for dictionary writers to provide clear examples to show learners the use of a particular PV in a number of different senses. The large number of instances of PV *pick up* (lift) with inanimate objects in the EMAS corpus (see 7.1.2), is probably due to the absence of

examples to illustrate the usage of *pick up* with animate objects (people) in the two dictionaries examined in the study. As both *pick* and *pick up* are commonly listed in the same entry, and *pick* always takes inanimate objects, learners may assume that *pick up* works in the same way as *pick* (see 8.6). This implies that examples are crucial to inform learners on the various senses that a PV may have, and, most, importantly, to make them aware that the headword (e.g. *pick*) and combination of headword + article (e.g. *pick up*) do not carry the same meaning.

In addition, the findings reported in Chapter 7 show that learners' L1 also plays a significant role in learners' understanding of PVs (see 7.1.3; 7.2.3; 7.3.3; 7.3.5; 7.3.7), thus it is essential that information with respect to the meanings and usage of PVs in both L1 and L2 are provided so that learners are aware of their similarities and differences (see 7.3.3). However, none of the dictionaries investigated provide such useful information for learners.

Another important finding is that many high-frequency PVs and their core meanings, which are widely used by native speakers in everyday settings, and, thus very useful for learners, are not listed in the dictionaries (see 8.6). Instead, PV meanings, which are less useful for learners are included (see 8.6). As the findings of the present study show that common meanings of high frequency PVs are still problematic to learners (e.g. *come out, go out, go up*), this suggests that inclusion of these PVs is necessary. This implies that the selection process of PVs in the dictionaries needs further attention from dictionary writers, and the inclusion of core meanings should be prioritized as they have wider usage. Additionally, it is rather surprising that compound words like *breakdown* and *set-up,* which function as nouns (n) appear in the dictionary, whereas

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the high frequency PVs *break down* and *set up* are not listed (see 8.6). Most importantly, none of the dictionaries under investigation claim that their dictionaries are corpus-based, which implies that the selection of PVs in those dictionaries was done according to experience or intuition of the writers, which may have resulted in selecting low-frequency PVs that are less useful for learners (see 8.6). Therefore, it is suggested that a more systematic way of selection, based on frequency counts or corpus-based dictionaries, should be implemented to ensure that learners are not only presented with high frequency PVs, but most importantly core meanings of such PVs which are useful for learners in everyday settings.

Grouping together various types of 'lexical phrases', such as compounds, collocations, idioms, PVs and prepositional verbs, in the same entry is another problem identified in the selected dictionaries, and, perhaps, is not a good way of introducing PVs to learners. As these combinations are all listed in the same entry without any indication to inform learners that they belong to different categories of word combination, learners may get confused (see 8.6). This further suggests the need for different types of dictionary that entirely focus on idioms, PVs, collocations, etc., so that all relevant information with respect to each combination can be further discussed in much greater detail (e.g. syntactic structure, common collocates, typical patterns) and reduces learners' confusion. So far, there is no bilingual PV dictionary available in the local Malaysian market that integrates the use of corpus data, includes L1 translations, and is supplemented by clear examples to illustrate patterns, various senses and usage in both L1 and L2.

As there is a lot of important information that needs to be presented to learners with respect to PVs, I would suggest that a specialized bilingual dictionary, which focuses entirely on PVs should be produced for Malaysian school learners in particular. This would provide information, such as PV synonyms, L1 (Malay) translations, grammatical aspects (transitivity and separability), common collocates, as well as examples to illustrate various senses and usage that is clearly presented for the benefit of these learners. So far, there is no such dictionary available locally that can be considered as a learning aid for school learners in learning this language form. Without such useful information, it is not surprising that learners may understand the meanings of PVs differently, and produce non-standard structures for PVs, in which usage deviates from the norms.

Finally, another finding with respect to PVs and learner dictionaries examined in the present study, which is rather surprising, is the incorrect classification given to a number of lexical items including PVs. *Set up* and *take over* for instance, which are clearly PVs are coded as a noun (n) (see 8.6), which constitutes an unacceptable mistake when preparing and publishing a dictionary, particularly for language learners.

9.5   Conclusion

The above discussion has highlighted a number of important applications and implications based on the findings reported in Chapters 5, 7 and 8. A number of deficiencies in the present scenario of language teaching and learning in Malaysia, particularly in relation to PVs, have also been discussed and presented. It is hoped that the findings of the present study will prove very useful for teachers, syllabus designers, curriculum developers, reference materials providers as well as educational policy-

makers, in further improving the current state of language teaching and learning in Malaysia, especially concerning issues related to PVs. It is hoped that the relevant parties will take into consideration the problems highlighted in the present study in order to help learners learn, understand and use this form appropriately, and, most importantly, to gain fluency in the target language, which is the aim of our national language syllabus in Malaysia, and, undoubtedly, the goal of most language learners.

9.6   Limitations of the present study and suggestions for future research

There is no doubt that despite the important and useful findings revealed in the present study, there are some limitations that need to be addressed. First, as far as respondents for the PVs test are concerned, I was unable to involve students in both residential and non-residential schools (who actually represent the majority of student population in Malaysia) due to time constraints (see 4.1.1; 4.1.2). Thus, the present study only focuses on student respondents located in selected residential schools throughout Malaysia, who are academically good. Thus, the findings cannot be generalized to all school students in Malaysia, as different results might be obtained if daily non-residential school students were included in the study. It is suggested that future research may consider including students from various school types with diverse academic background so that findings can be generalized across a much larger population.

As far as the teacher survey is concerned, the sample size is very small (47 respondents) for the present findings to be generalized to the whole teacher population in Malaysia (see Chapter 4.1.3). In addition, they also represent those teaching in residential schools, and, therefore, the results cannot be generalized to all teachers

teaching in non-residential schools in Malaysia who deal with students of various academic backgrounds. In relation to this, further statistical analysis could not be carried out due to the small sample size. Hence, it is suggested that future studies should consider involving a larger teacher population in both residential and non-residential schools, so that other statistical tests can be carried out to confirm the assumptions with respect to the issue under investigation.

Future research may also adopt similar approaches but focus on learners at a much higher level of language learning (e.g. university students) or learners from other L1 backgrounds in Malaysia (e.g. Chinese, Indians), which may be another interesting aspect to be further examined. In addition, detailed classroom observation can also be conducted to further confirm the results obtained from the self-report survey conducted in this study. Future research may conduct research to examine the use of 'conceptual metaphors' in teaching PVs in Malaysian classrooms, as the results will be very useful for language teachers to improve their pedagogical approach towards teaching this important language form. In addition, as far as the PV test is concerned, future researchers may also consider investigating other high frequency PVs, which are not examined in the present study or other PV varieties (e.g. three-word form, four-word form) to determine whether similar problems occur.

A further point relates to the EMAS corpus, since the size of this particular learner corpus is rather small (see Chapter 4), albeit still acceptable for the purpose of the present study. However, to have a larger corpus would be a great advantage for future researchers as it would provide much richer data, allowing researchers to examine many other language elements, including PVs, which are not analysed in the present study. In

addition, the texts produced by learners in the EMAS corpus are controlled by the topics given to them in the data collection process (see 6.2). This may have restricted learners' selection of lexical items, and increase their tendency to produce certain lexical items commonly associated with the given topics, and the non-occurrence of some high frequency PVs and their common senses under investigation. Thus, future research may also consider having a wider range of topics or issues in the data collection stage, which, preferably, will be conducted in a more natural setting.

However, despite all the limitations mentioned above, the results of the survey and corpus work, as well as analysis of the reference materials, have revealed many important and useful findings concerning the present scenario of vocabulary teaching and learning in Malaysian schools, particularly with respect to MWUs. As previously there had been no empirical study conducted locally to inform the relevant parties of learners' problems in understanding and using this important language form, and what needs to be done to improve learners' knowledge of PVs, it is hoped that this study, which is funded by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia (MOHE) and Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia (UiTM), will be a starting point towards such an enterprise.

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Appendix 1

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

_____

Dear students,

Thank you very much for your willingness to take part in this test. Your participation is highly appreciated. The aim of the study is to check on your understanding of English phrasal verbs. Please note that this test is **NOT** to be graded as part of your school assessment. Therefore, your cooperation and honesty is essential and will be much appreciated.

This test is completely **CONFIDENTIAL** and will only be used for the purpose of this study. The test consists of 21 questions altogether. There are 2 sections: Section A (Students' Profile), and Section B (the test questions). Instructions for each section are included in the test paper. You are given 30 minutes to complete the test. Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.

*Terima kasih di atas kesudian anda mengambil bahagian dalam ujian ini. Penglibatan anda sangat dihargai. Objektif kajian adalah untuk melihat sejauh manakah pemahaman anda tentang 'English phrasal verbs'. Untuk makluman anda, ujian ini **TIDAK** akan dinilai sebagai sebahagian daripada peperiksaan rasmi sekolah. Oleh itu, kejujuran anda dalam memberikan jawapan amatlah perlu dan sangat dihargai.*

*Ujian ini adalah **SULIT** dan hanya akan digunapakai bagi tujuan kajian ini sahaja. Masa yang diperuntukkan untuk menjawab ujian ini adalah 30 minit. Terima kasih di atas kerjasama dan sokongan anda.*

Yours sincerely,
RAFIDAH KAMARUDIN
Researcher

_____

In collaboration with and sponsored by:

QUESTIONNAIRES

SOALSELIDIK

Section A

Please tick (/) in the appropriate box.

Sila tandakan (/) dalam kotak yang berkenaan.

Form / *Tingkatan:*   2 [ ]   4 [ ]

Gender / *Jantina:*   Male / *Lelaki* [ ]   Female / *Perempuan* [ ]

English group /*Kumpulan B. Inggeris:* [ ]

School/ *Sekolah:*

SMS Selangor, Kuala Lumpur [ ]

SMS Kuala Selangor, Selangor [ ]

SMS Tuanku Jaafar, Kuala Pilah [ ]

SMS Muzaffar Shah, Melaka [ ]

SMS Sultan Mohamed Jiwa, Kedah [ ]

SMS Teluk Intan, Perak [ ]

SMS Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu [ ]

SMS Sultan Ahmad Shah, Kuantan [ ]

Section B

For Questions 1 to 20, please **CIRCLE** the answers that you think appropriate to be used in the given situation.

*Untuk soalan 1 hingga 20, sila **BULATKAN** jawapan yang anda fikir sesuai untuk digunakan dalam situasi di bawah.*

1. A: "Where is your dad?"
   B: "He's still at work and will only _____ at 6pm."
   A. turn back   B. run into   C. come back   D. get off

2. A: "I'm sorry Andrew. You need to _____ your shoes before entering the house. It's part of our culture here in Malaysia".
   B: "It's alright. I understand that."
   A. take out   B. put off   C. put down   D.   take   off

3. A: "Can you help me to solve this mathematics question?"
   B: "No problem."
   A: "I'm sorry to _____ your time."
   A. throw away   B. take up   C. give up   D. take off

4. A: "I _____ an interesting book in the library."
   B: "What book is that?"
   A: "A book on astronomy, my favourite subject."
   A. came across   B. looked up   C. looked after   D. came up

5. A: "Did you watch the football match yesterday?"
   B: "No, I didn't. They _____ the match because of the rain."
   A. called off   B. gave up   C. put out   D. took off

6. A: "When you think about it, most of your classmates will disappear from your life forever after you graduate."

   B: "Yeah, but every now and then you will _____ one of them on the street."

   A. go over   B. get back   C. come out   D. run into

7. A: "The family lost their belongings in the fire yesterday."

   B: "Yes. It's really sad. The fire engine only arrived twenty minutes later. It was too late for them to _____ the fire then, though the family was safe."

   A. break into   B. call off   C. put out   D. cut down

8. A: "Our school will organize a Health and Safety Campaign next week".

   B: "I know, students will help to _____ posters all over the school".

   A. give up   B. throw away   C. put up   D. put on

9. A: "Do you have any idea what the word AIDS _____?"

   B: "I'm not very sure. Let's find it out from the website."

   A. comes across   B. stands for   C. takes up   D. looks into

10. A: "Many people are dying of lung cancer nowadays."

    B: "Yeah. Smoking could be one of the reasons, I guess."

    A: "I hope my dad will _____ smoking."

    A. put down   B. point out   C. give up   D. throw away

11. A: "Maria is such a strong woman."

    B: "She is. She _____ her two children alone after her husband's death."

    A. got away   B. brought up   C. put forward   D. looked up

12. A: "Do you still remember our old friend Azmi?"

    B: "Yes, where is he now?"

    A: "He's in Kedah and has _____ his own firm."

    A. ran into   B. put up   C. called off   D. set up

13. A: "I don't know what this word means."

    B: "Why don't you _____ its meaning in your dictionary?"

    A. run into   B. point out   C. look up   D. put in

14. A: "What did the headmaster say at the school assembly this morning?"

    B: "He _____ the importance of hygiene to ensure good health."

    A. pointed out   B. called off   C. gave up   D. put on

15. A: "I'm sorry I hurt you. I didn't mean to say those things. I was just angry."

    B: "Just _____. I don't want to see you for a while."

    A. call off   B. go away   C. look up   D. get away

16. (in a bus)

    A: "Are you sure this is the right stop?"

    B: "I'm very sure. Let's _____ now."

    A. come across   B. look up   C. put out   D. get off

17. A: "It's very cold out there. Don't forget to_____ your jacket when you go out."

    B: "Alright mum."

    A. take off   B. look up   C. get away   D. put on

18. A: "It's very sad to hear many incidents of flash floods have been reported lately."

    B: "I heard that a committee has begun to _____ the problem."

    A. put up   B. cut down   C. point out   D. look into

19. A: "You are late today."

    B: "I'm sorry. The bus _____ again.

    A. put off   B. broke down   C. got away   D. gave up

20. A: "I'm worried about my weight."

    B: "What's wrong with it?"

    A: "The doctor advised me to _____ on what I eat."

    A. cut down   B. call off   C. run into   D. put out

21. A: "What's happening here, can somebody tell me?"

    B: "I was reading a book when he came in, then…"

    A: "_____ , tell me what happened then."

    A. Call off   B. Go on   C. Put out   D. Take out

22. A: "Are you coming for the party tomorrow?"

    B: "I don't think so. I've got to _____ to Kuala Lumpur tomorrow."

    A. get back   B. run into   C. put up   D. find out

23. A: "How's your new job?"

    B: "It's totally different from the previous one. Now, I've got so many new duties to _____."

    A. call off   B. come up   C. put out   D. carry out

24. A: "How did you _____ your English?"

    B: "I love reading. That's how, I guess."

    A. take up   B. come across   C. pick up   D. get off

25. A: "I was late to school yesterday, so I _____ a story about a traffic jam."

    B: "But did your teacher believe it at all? Better be frank next time."

    A. found out   B. got off   C. took up   D. made up

26. A: "There's a blood stain on your shirt."

    B: "I know. I've washed it many times but the stain just would not _____."

    A. come down   B. give up   C. come out   D. take off

27. A: "You look so happy. What happened?"

B: "I just _____ that I've won the essay writing competition!"

A: "Congratulations!"

A. looked back   B. came across   C. found out   D. looked up

28. A: "I couldn't finish my homework last night. The light _____ for more than three hours."

B: "Really? Just tell your teacher. She'll understand."

A. put out   B. took off   C. went out   D. got off

29. A: "I don't think Putra team can win the game. Look at the goalkeeper…he's too short!"

B: "Well, don't _____ on him. You never know."

A. look down   B. get off   C. look back   D. call off

30. A: "Looking at this picture _____ memories of my late uncle."

B: "You surely miss him a lot."

A: "I do. He was the most wonderful uncle I've ever had."

A. comes back   B. looks up   C. comes across   D. brings back

31. A: "This course is really tough and I just can't go on anymore."

B: "_____ Halim! Don't give up. I know you can do it."

A. Get off   B. Look back   C. Come on   D. Look down

32. A: "The bus is still not here. I don't want to be late again."

B: "Don't worry. I'll make sure you'll be the first to _____ when it arrives."

A. come on   B. run into   C. bring up   D. get on

33. A: "Where is your sister? I need to talk to her."

B: "She's on the phone."

A: "Aini, please _____ the phone and come here now!"

A. put down   B. take off   C. get down   D. put out

34. A: "Please go up and tell your dad to _____ now. Breakfast is ready."

    B: "Okay mum!"

    A. call off   B. come down   C. take out   D. put up

35. A: "It's been a month in Tokyo. I'm _____ to Kuala Lumpur tomorrow."

    B: "Really? Have a safe journey home!"

    A: "Thank you."

    A. going back   B. getting on   C. putting up   D. bring

36. (in the hospital)

    A: "Congratulations! Your name _____ during the school assembly this morning. You won the first place in the essay competition last month!"

    B: "What? I wish I was there to hear that!"

    A. put up   B. went out   C. came up   D. called off

37. A: "When I _____ upon my life twenty years ago, I should be thankful for what I have achieved so far."

    B: "You're right. We are so proud of you."

    A. point out   B. look back   C. come across   D. look into

38. A: "Do you know that Salina has quit her job?"

    B: "Why? What happened?"

    A: "I don't know but she has _____ a new job with a bigger company."

    A. taken on   B. run into   C. put out   D. come up

39. (in the bedroom)

    A: "Hurry up! You've got to _____ now. The school bus will be here at any time."

    B: "Okay mum…I'm ready!"

    A. run into   B. come across   C. look back   D. go down

40. A: "I don't understand the story. Can somebody help me, please?"

   B: "Well, just _____ reading it till the end. I'm sure you'll understand."

   A. carry on   B. put up   C. find out   D. get off

THANK YOU!!! *Terima Kasih!!!*

Appendix 2

_____

Dear valued respondents,

Thank you very much for your willingness to take part in this survey. Your participation is, of course, voluntary and you do not have to answer all the questions asked if you do not want to but it would be greatly appreciated if you could answer all questions honestly and answer as many as you can so that this research is as complete as possible.

The objective of this survey is to look at teachers' perceptions of the present scenario of vocabulary teaching and learning in Malaysian classrooms. Your cooperation and honesty in providing necessary information is very essential to evaluate the effectiveness of the present vocabulary component outlined in the English language syllabuses and textbooks. Your response will be treated **confidentially** at all times so you can be entirely open in your responses.

The questionnaire consists of 18 questions altogether. There are 3 sections: Section A (Teachers' Profile), Section B (7 questions) and Section C (11 questions). Instructions for each section are included in the survey.

Completing the survey should not take more than **30 minutes at most**. Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

RAFIDAH KAMARUDIN
Researcher

_____

In collaboration with and sponsored by:

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QUESTIONNAIRES

SOALSELIDIK

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Section A

Please tick (/) in the appropriate box.

Sila tandakan (/) dalam kotak yang berkenaan.

Gender / *Jantina*::   Male / *Lelaki*   ☐

Female / *Perempuan*   ☐

Years of teaching experience: < 5 years / < *5 tahun*   ☐

Pengalaman mengajar: 5 to 10 years / *5 ke 10 tahun*   ☐

> 10 years / > *10 tahun*   ☐

School name / *Nama sekolah:*

SMS Selangor, Kuala Lumpur   ☐

SMS Kuala Selangor, Selangor   ☐

SMS Tuanku Jaafar, Kuala Pilah   ☐

SMS Muzaffar Shah, Melaka   ☐

SMS Sultan Mohamed Jiwa, Kedah   ☐

SMS Teluk Intan, Perak   ☐

SMS Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu   ☐

SMS Sultan Ahmad Shah, Kuantan   ☐

Section B

Questions 1 to 6 look at your perceptions of vocabulary contents in the present English language textbooks used in language classrooms.

For each question, please **CIRCLE** only **ONE** answer according to the scale.

Soalan 1 hingga 6 melihat persepsi anda berkaitan kandungan 'vocabulary' yang terdapat dalam buku teks Bahasa Inggeris yang digunakan sekarang.

Bagi setiap soalan, sila BULATKAN hanya SATU jawapan berdasarkan skala di bawah.

Choice *Pilihan*	Meaning	*Maksudnya*
1	Strongly agree	*Sangat setuju*
2	Agree	*Setuju*
3	Partly agree	*Agak setuju*
4	Partly disagree	*Agak tidak setuju*
5	Disagree	*Tidak setuju*
6	Strongly disagree	*Sangat tidak setuju*

1. I think the vocabulary contents in the present English language textbooks help to improve learners' understanding of the language.   1   2   3   4   5   6
   Saya rasa kandungan 'vocabulary' seperti yang terdapat dalam buku teks Bahasa Inggeris sekarang dapat membantu meningkatkan pemahaman pelajar dalam Bahasa Inggeris.

2. I think the vocabulary contents in the present English language textbooks help to improve learners' fluency in their written and spoken discourse.   1   2   3   4   5   6
   Saya rasa kandungan 'vocabulary' seperti yang terdapat dalam buku teks Bahasa Inggeris sekarang dapat membantu meningkatkan kemahiran penulisan dan pertuturan pelajar dalam Bahasa Inggeris.

3. I think the vocabulary contents in the present
   English textbooks are still relevant
   to the language needs of the learners.   1   2   3   4   5   6
   Saya rasa kandungan 'vocabulary' yang
   terdapat dalam buku teks Bahasa Inggeris
   sekarang masih relevan dengan keperluan pelajar.

4. I think the vocabulary contents in the present
   English textbooks need to be improved.
   Saya rasa kandungan 'vocabulary' yang   1   2   3   4   5   6
   terdapat dalam buku teks Bahasa Inggeris
   sekarang perlu ditambahbaik.

5. I think the vocabulary contents in the present
   English textbooks put too much emphasis
   on single-word units.
   Saya rasa kandungan 'vocabulary' yang   1   2   3   4   5   6
   terdapat dalam buku teks Bahasa Inggeris
   sekarang terlalu memberi penekanan
   kepada 'single-word units'.

6. I think the vocabulary contents in the present
   English textbooks need to include more
   multi-word units.
   Saya rasa kandungan 'vocabulary' yang   1   2   3   4   5   6
   terdapat dalam buku teks Bahasa Inggeris
   sekarang perlu memuatkan lebih banyak
   'multi-word units'.

Section C

Question 7 to 17 look at your perceptions of the teaching of multi-word units in English language classrooms.

For question 7, please put a **tick (/)** in the box.

Soalan 7 hingga 17 melihat persepsi anda berkaitan pengajaran 'multi-word unit' di dalam kelas Bahasa Inggeris.

*Bagi soalan 7, sila **tandakan (/)** dalam kotak berkenaan.*

7. Do you teach multi-word units like phrasal verbs in your English language classes?

   Adakah anda mengajar 'multi-word units' seperti 'phrasal verbs' di dalam kelas Bahasa Inggeris anda?

   Yes   ☐   (If **Yes**, go to Question 8-12)

   Ya   *(Jika **Ya**, sila ke soalan 8-12)*

   No   ☐   (If **No**, go to Question 13-17)

   Tidak   *(Jika **Tidak**, sila ke soalan 13-17)*

For question 8 to 18, please **CIRCLE** only **ONE** answer according to the scale.

*Bagi soalan 8 hingga 18, sila **BULATKAN** hanya **SATU** jawapan berdasarkan skala di bawah.*

Choice *Pilihan*	Meaning	*Maksudnya*
1	Strongly agree	*Sangat setuju*
2	Agree	*Setuju*
3	Fairly agree	*Agak setuju*
4	Fairly disagree	*Agak tidak setuju*
5	Disagree	*Tidak setuju*
6	Strongly disagree	*Sangat tidak setuju*

8. I teach multi-word units because I think
   it is an important aspect of language.   1   2   3   4   5   6
   'Multi-word units' diajar kerana saya rasa
   ia satu aspek penting bahasa.

9. I teach multi-word units because I think
   it is useful for my students.   1   2   3   4   5   6
   'Multi-word units' diajar kerana saya rasa
   ia berguna untuk pelajar.

10. I teach multi-word units because I find it
    effective in improving my students'
    understanding of the language.   1   2   3   4   5   6
    'Multi-word units' diajar kerana saya dapati
    ia berkesan dalam mempertingkatkan
    pemahaman Bahasa Inggeris pelajar.

11. I teach multi-word units because I find it
    effective in improving my students' fluency
    in the language.   1   2   3   4   5   6
    'Multi-word units' diajar kerana saya dapati
    ia berkesan dalam mempertingkatkan
    penggunaan Bahasa Inggeris pelajar.

12. I teach multi-word units because of other
    reasons, please state:
    'Multi-word units' diajar kerana sebab-sebab lain.
    Sila nyatakan:

    _____

    _____

    _____

13. I don't teach multi-word units because I'm
    not sure of what multi-word units are.   1   2   3   4   5   6
    'Multi-word units' tidak diajar kerana saya
    tidak pasti tentang 'multi-word units'

14. I don't teach multi-word units because I don't
think it is an important aspect of language.   1   2   3   4   5   6
'Multi-word units' tidak diajar kerana saya
rasa ia bukan satu aspek penting bahasa.

15. I don't teach multi-word units because it is not
in the syllabus / textbooks.   1   2   3   4   5   6
'Multi-word units' tidak diajar kerana ia tidak
terdapat dalam silibus / buku teks.

16. I don't teach multi-word units because it is not
tested in tests / exams.   1   2   3   4   5   6
'Multi-word units' tidak diajar kerana ia tidak
termasuk dalam ujian / peperiksaan.

17. I don't teach multi-word units because of other
reasons, please state:
'Multi-word units' tidak diajar kerana sebab-sebab lain.
Sila nyatakan:

_____

_____

_____
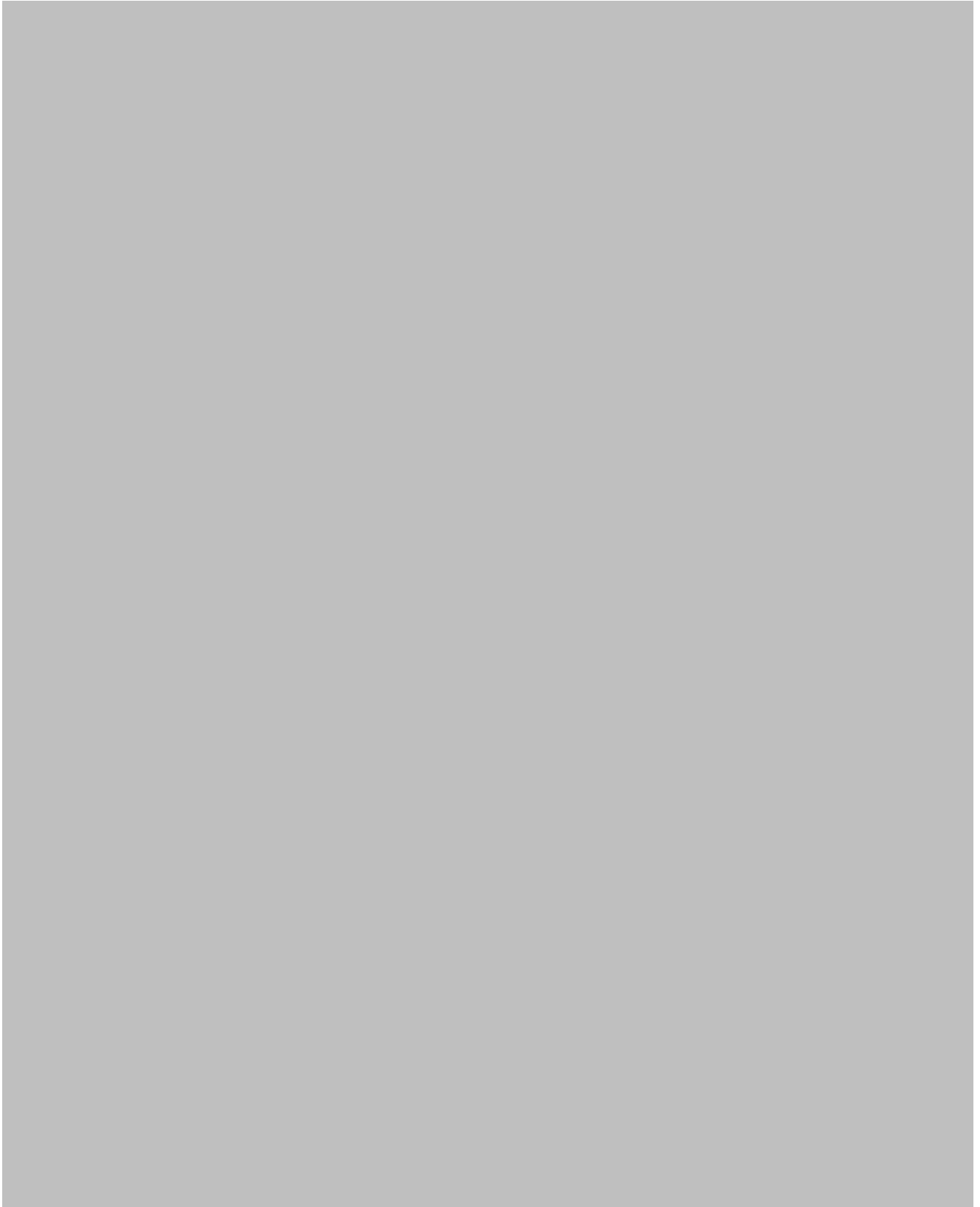
Thank you!!!

Appendix 3
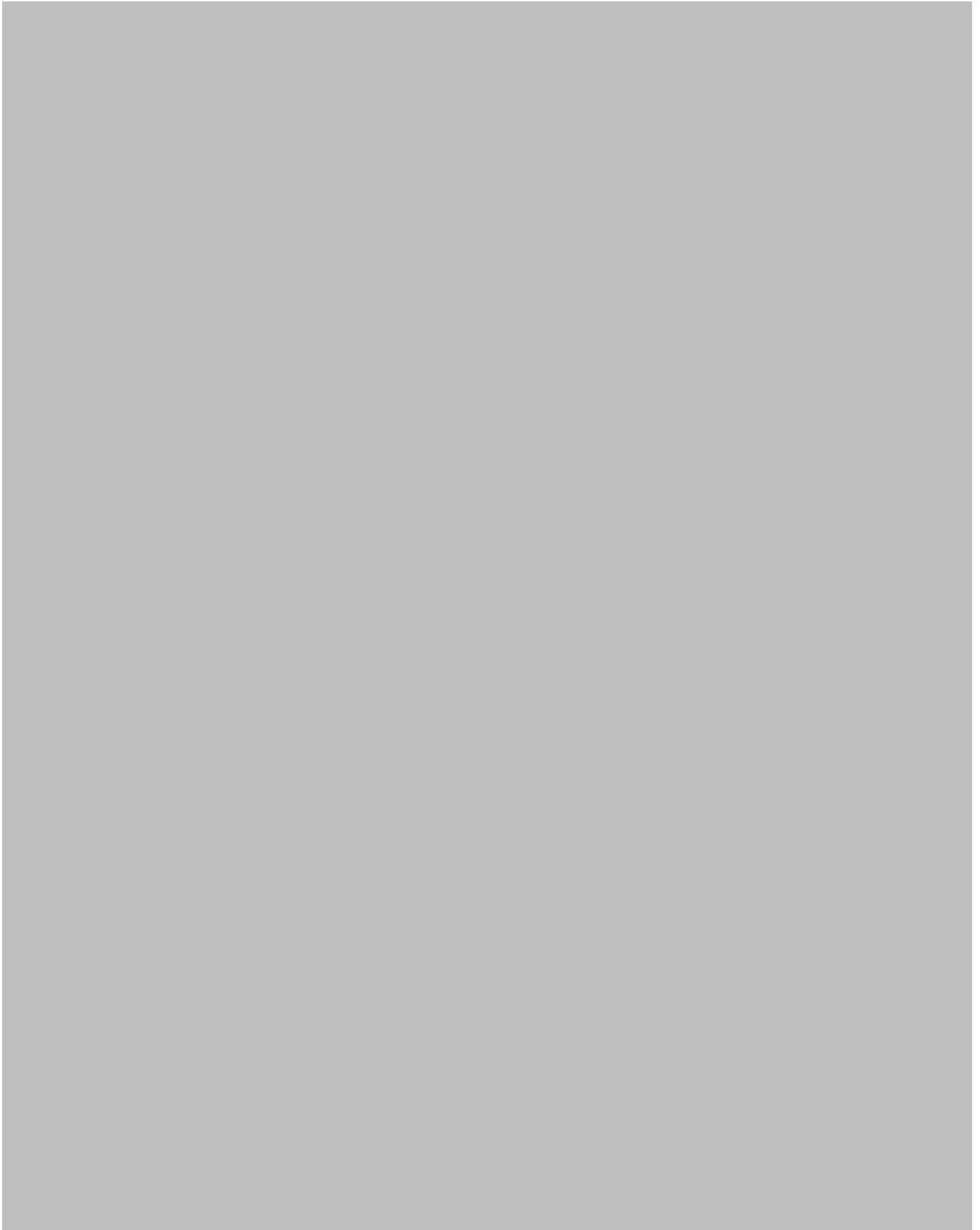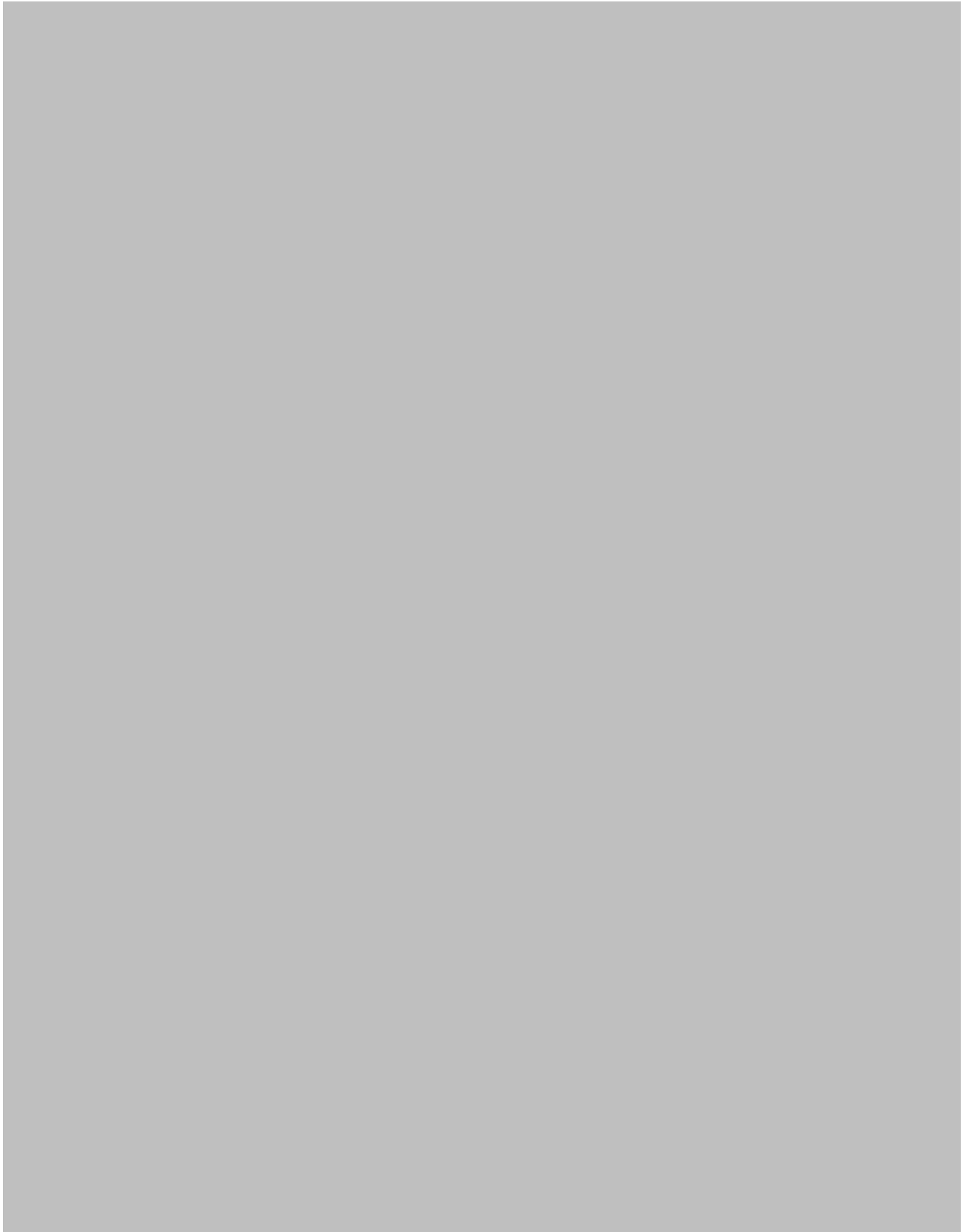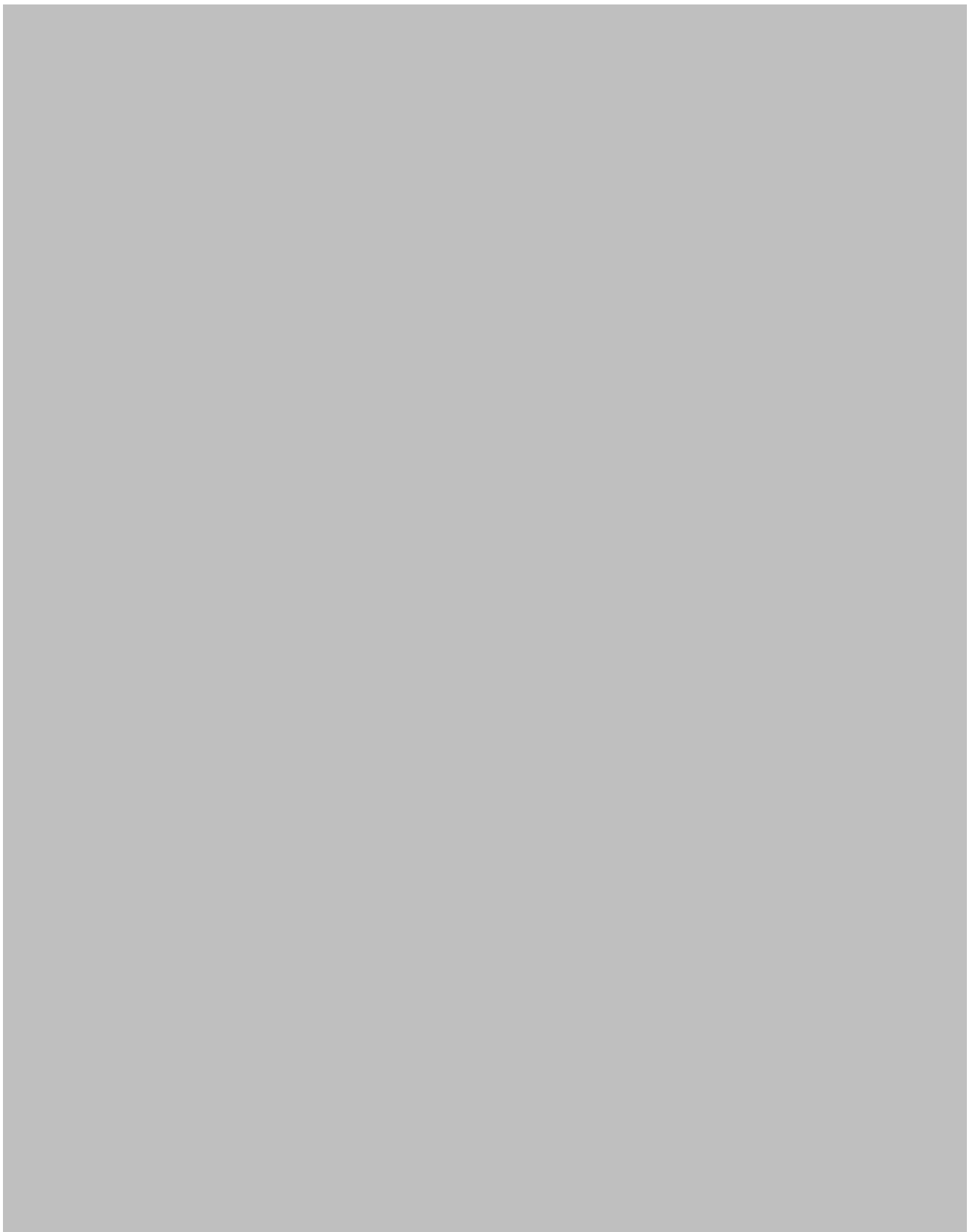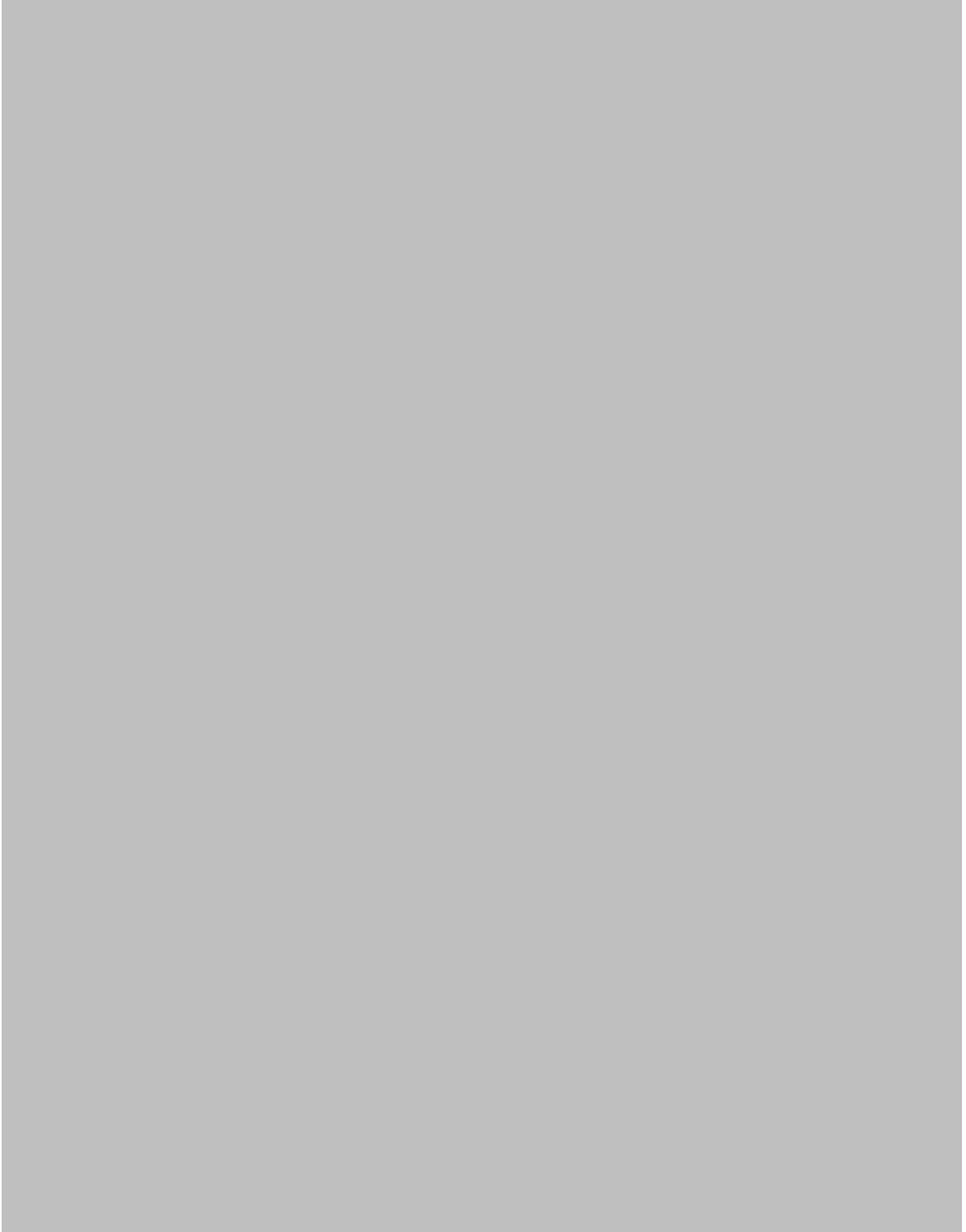
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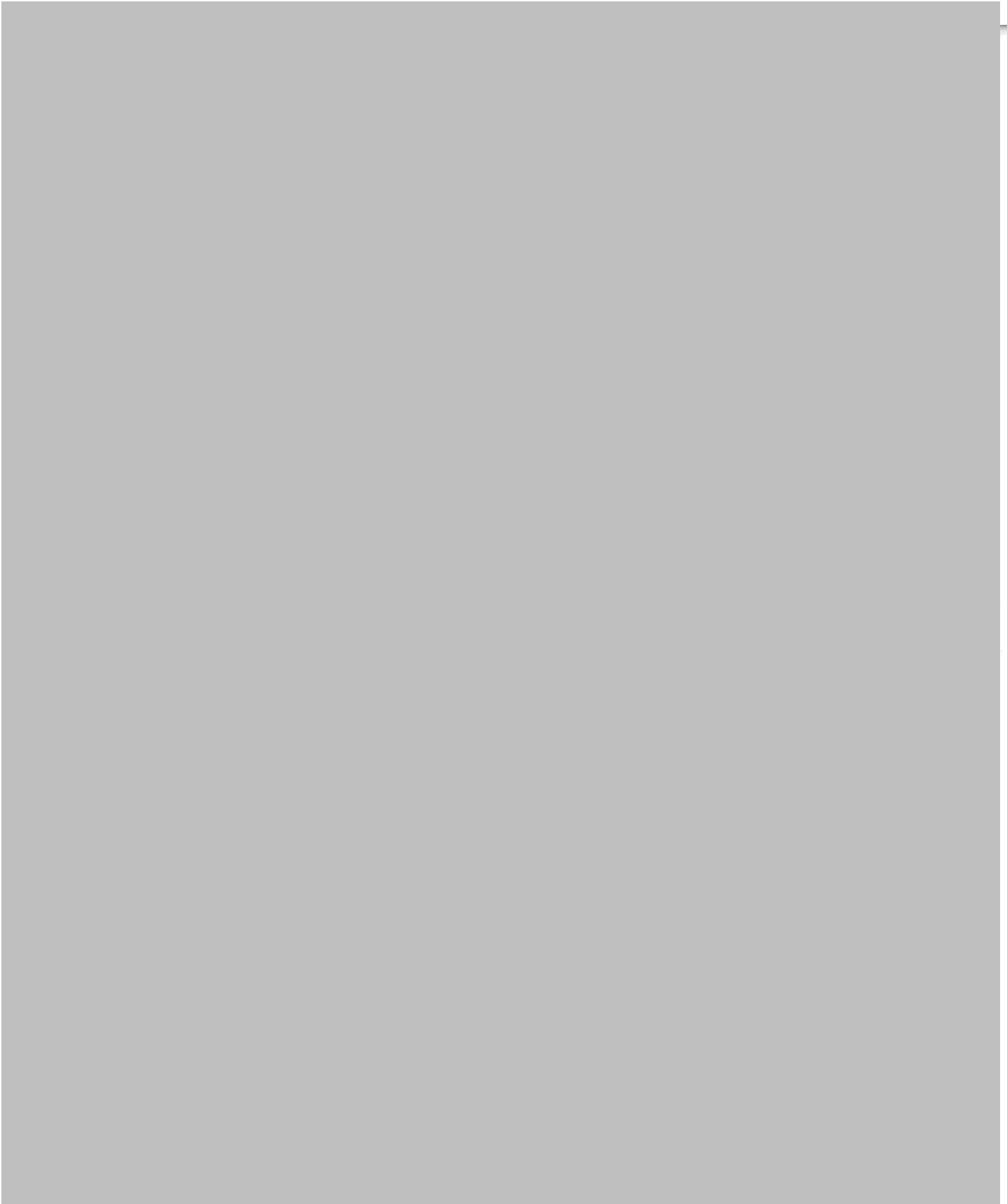
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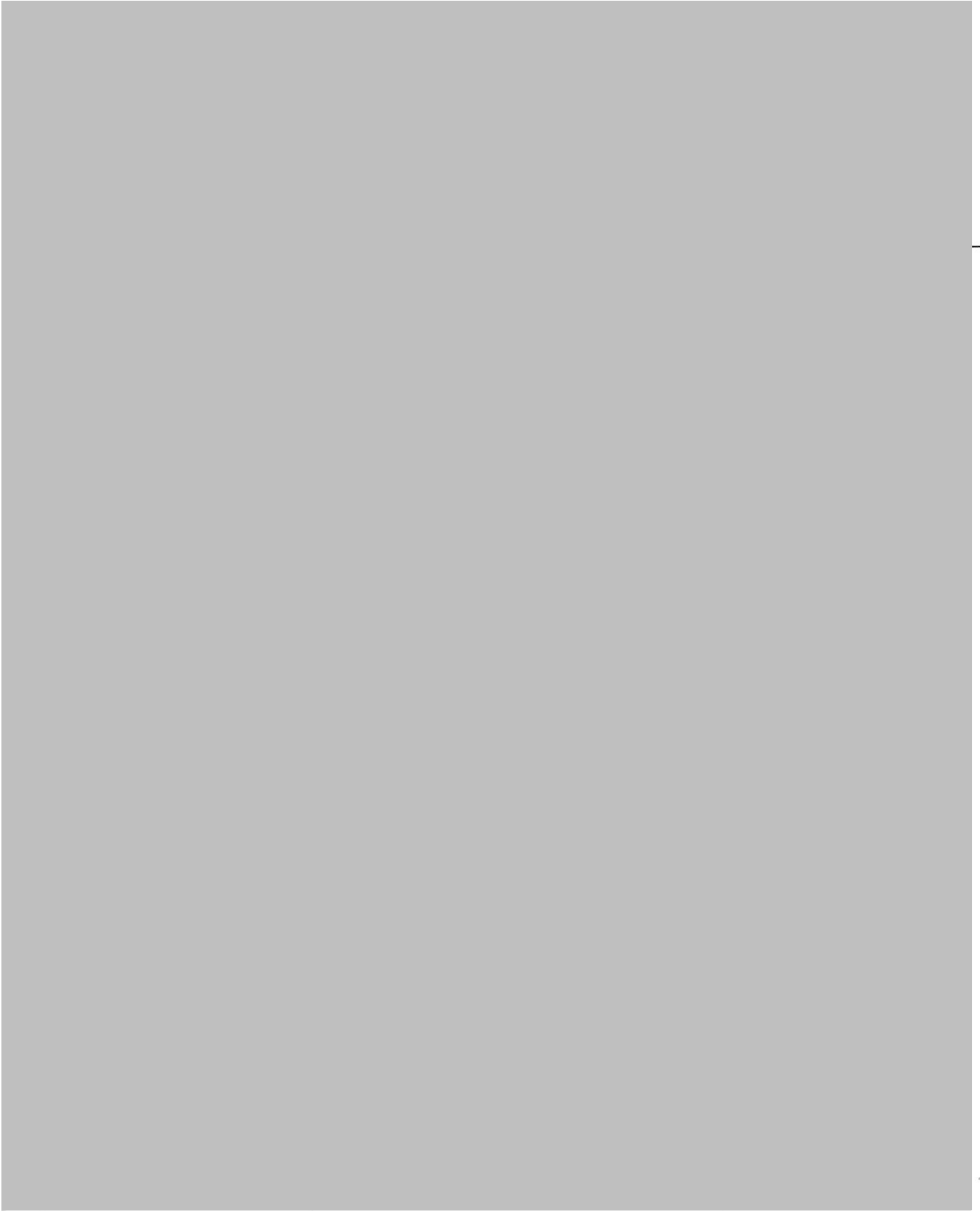
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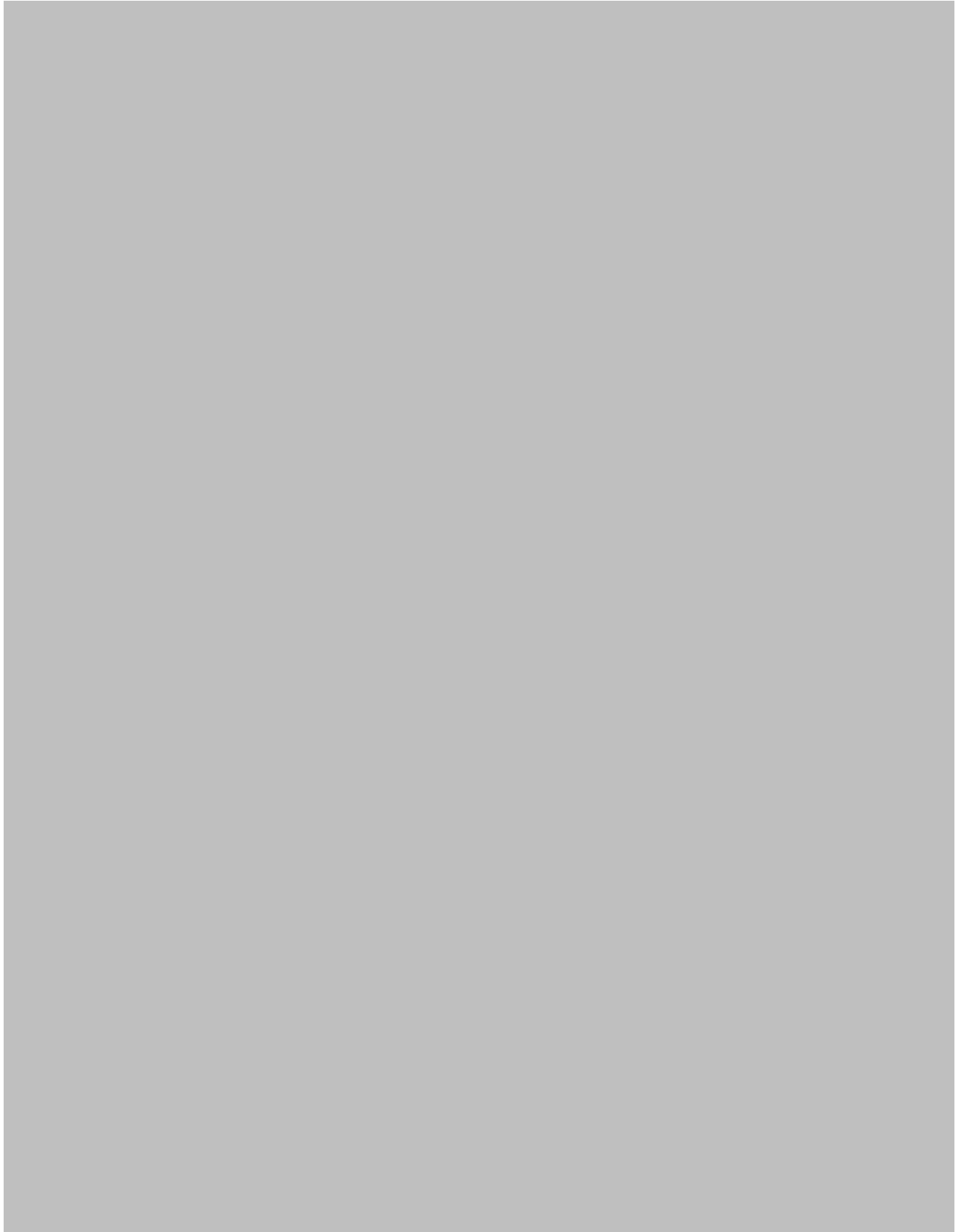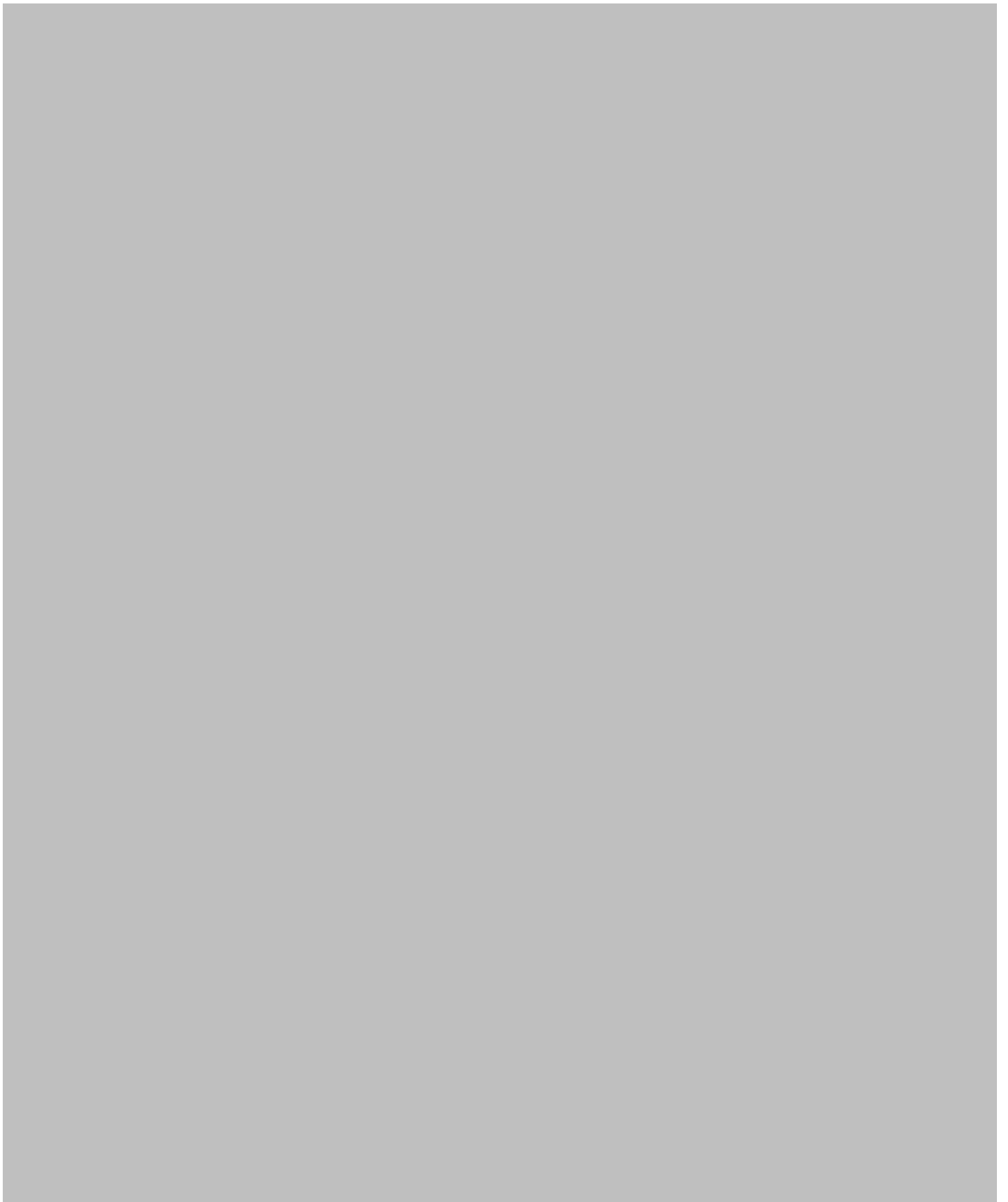
Appendix 8

Appendix 9

Appendix 10

Appendix 11