Phrasal verbs in learner English: A corpus-based study of German and Italian students

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Abbreviations

Corpora and dictionaries

BNC	*British National Corpus*
G-ICLE	German component of the *International Corpus of Learner English*
ICE	*International Corpus of English*
ICLE	*International Corpus of Learner English*
I-ICLE	Italian component of the *International Corpus of Learner English*
LOCNESS	*Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays*
OALD	*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*

Others

CA	Contrastive Analysis
CIA	Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis
EA	Error Analysis
EFL	English as a foreign language
FL	Foreign language
FLT	Foreign language teaching
L1	A learner's first language
L2	A learner's second language
L3	A learner's third language
NL	Native language
NS	Native speaker
SL	Second language
SLA	Second language acquisition
TL	Target language

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1. Introduction: Phraseology, phrasal verbs and the foreign language learner

1.1 Phraseology: Problems of terminology and definition

Although lexis and grammar have always coexisted as research areas, under the far-reaching influence of Chomsky, syntactic analysis dominated linguistics for a long time. The lexicon used to be considered as "an appendix of the grammar, a list of basic irregularities" (Bloomfield 1933: 274) and "a repository of idiosyncrasies" (Atkins et al. 1994: 18). While grammar, as a 'closed' system, was regarded as systematic and regular and therefore analysable as a set of generalisations and rules (Sinclair (1966: 411) calls this "the precise and uncompromising machinery of grammar"),[1] many linguists thought of lexis as "an inherently messy part of our linguistic competence" (Meara 1984: 230). As the lexicon is an 'open' system where new items can (and do) enter at any time it was believed to be random, chaotic and not organisable in terms of a rule-governed system analogous to syntax. As early as the mid 1960s, however, Sinclair started to uncover patterns underlying the lexicon (cf. Sinclair 1966). The need to study the lexicon in greater detail was thus recognised at an early point in time.[2] The shift from a competence-based to a performance-based approach to language combined with the advances of computer technology has given further impetus to the study of the lexicon. Computers allow the processing of large amounts of data, and both frequent and infrequent lexical features and patterns can be studied easily by use of present-day machine-readable corpora.[3]

The study of the lexicon holds a particularly important position in relation to foreign language acquisition, as it is "the basis of accurate and fluent communication" (Rudzka-Ostyn 2003: v).[4] Several studies have shown that lexical problems prevail over grammatical ones (e.g. Dechert 1984, Schlue 1977).[5] Besides,

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[1] Obviously, there are many irregularities in the English grammar that cannot be explained by rules.

[2] Approaches to order the lexicon in terms of meaning relations had existed before. Structural semantics, for example, studies meaning by means of the notion of semantic relations; semantic field theory, developed by Jost Trier in the 1930s, considers the vocabulary of a language as areas within which lexical items interrelate and define each other.

[3] It should be pointed out, however, that not all corpora, especially smaller ones, are suitable for lexical analysis. Corpus results are determined to a large degree by corpus size. Large corpora are geared towards any kind of linguistic analysis whereas smaller ones are better suited for highly frequent lexical or grammatical structures.

[4] On the notion of fluency, cf. Lennon (1990).

[5] Meara (1984: 229) reports on a study by Blaas (1982) in which lexical errors occurred three to four times as often as grammatical ones.

foreign language students "themselves readily admit that they experience considerable difficulty with vocabulary, and once they have got over the initial stages of acquiring their second language, most learners identify the acquisition of vocabulary as the greatest single source of problems" (Meara 1980: 221). However, precisely the choice of the appropriate word or expression makes learner language more natural and native-like, an aim most advanced learners work towards. Also, as Chafe (1980: 170) puts it: "(…) the speaker's chief goal is to get across what he has in mind, and that he is not likely to be interested in grammaticality (…). The speaker is interested in the adequate verbalization of his thoughts." Although Chafe is concerned with hesitation phenomena in native speech, this aspect holds equally for the foreign language learner. All speakers want to make themselves understood, and the lexicon plays a major role in this respect.

The semantic and communicative load of an utterance is not determined by grammatical structures but by lexical choices. Grammatical errors can therefore be ignored more easily by native listeners because they usually do not distort the intended meaning as much as a wrongly selected word or expression; besides, grammatical errors need not impede communication: "Grammatical accuracy is not always essential for accurate communication" (Page 1990: 104, quoted by James 1998: 212).[6] According to a study by Santos (1988), native speakers' evaluations of lexical errors were much less favourable than evaluations of grammatical errors since "language impinges with content" (James 1998: 229).[7] The interruption of the flow of speech might also lead native speakers to "[rate] lexical errors as more disruptive and more serious than grammatical errors" (Meara 1984: 229, relating to a study by Johannson 1978).

The 'rise' of phraseological research as a sub-discipline of lexicology is a consequence of this increased interest in the lexicon. Phraseology, "the study of the structure, meaning, and use of word-combinations" (Cowie 1994: 3168), has come to

[6] However, as Albrechtsen, Henriksen and Faerch (1980: 389) observed in a study of native speakers' evaluations of spoken interlanguage, lexical errors need not hinder successful communication if semantically related words are selected, e.g. 'see television' instead of 'watch television' as the context can help to understand the intended meaning.

[7] Albrechtsen, Henriken and Faerch's (1980) study showed, however, that learner texts were evaluated positively when they contained few errors, and negatively when they contained many errors, no matter what type of error it was – lexical or syntactic.

the fore in lexical research of the English language since Bolinger pointed out that "the amount of language that comes ready made is vastly greater than supposed" (1971: xiv) and that "our language does not expect us to build everything starting with lumber, nails, and blueprint" (1979: 96).[8] Ever since it has been acknowledged that lexical items can consist of more than one orthographic word and that words can enter into relations with other words, innumerable studies have been carried out with the aim of identifying phraseological units.[9] In fact, Sinclair (1996: 82) claims that the large majority of words does not occur randomly in a text since certain constraints, e.g. register, govern the selection of words. This view is based on what Sinclair has called 'open choice principle' and 'idiom principle'. These principles explain the way in which the meaning of a text is interpreted. The 'open choice principle' is "a way of seeing language text as the result of a very large number of complex choices" (1987: 319); the 'idiom principle' states "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 analysable into segments" (1987: 320). As mentioned above, computers have proven an indispensable tool for linguistic analysis, and the corpus-based approach lends itself perfectly to the search for lexical patterns and the analysis of recurrent word sequences, i.e. those phraseological units that occur several times in a corpus (e.g. Altenberg 1998, Cortes 2002, Kjellmer 1987, Moon 1998, Sinclair 1991).

The liberal use of terms such as 'prefabs', 'chunks', 'collocations', or 'formulaic sequences', to name just a few of the terms abounding in the literature, reflects the complexity and general incoherence of this research area.[10] In the present context, only a brief introduction to this area is intended without claiming to be exhaustive. The terms 'multi-word unit', 'multi-word expression', 'phraseological unit' or 'phraseological expression' will be used as these are fairly neutral terms that do not

[8] In the Soviet Union, phraseology had developed as an independent research area as early as the 1930s. Influenced by Vinogradow's (1947) study of Russian, phraseology experienced a boom in Soviet research in the 1950s and 1960s.

[9] Some representatives of phraseological research are e.g. Biber et al. (2004), Bolinger (1979), Cowie (1997), Kjellmer (1991), Mel'čuk (1998), Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992), Oakey (2002), Pawley and Syder (1983), Sinclair (1991), or Wray (2002).

[10] Cowie (1998: 210) states that "[p]hraseology is a field bedevilled by the proliferation of terms and by conflicting uses of the same term"; Wray (2002: 9) lists more than 50 terms used for phraseological units.

refer to any particular theoretical framework; they are therefore appropriate for the present purpose.

Although there are no definite answers as to how many phraseological units are used in speech and writing – Pawley and Syder (1983: 213) believe that several hundreds of thousands of phraseological expressions are stored in an adult speaker's brain; Altenberg (1998: 102) assumes that the lexicon of adult native speakers may consist of up to 80 percent of such units, whereas Moon (1998: 57) estimates that her corpus consists of only four to five percent multi-word units[11] – it is blatantly clear that there is a large variety of them, both in the structural and stylistic sense. There are, for example, collocations consisting of two words, such as *shrug shoulders*, comparative phrases like *easy as pie*, or clauses like *how do you do*. Besides, phraseological expressions are pervasive in different registers. Amongst others, Biber et al. (1999) have identified a large number of what they call 'lexical bundles' in both conversation and academic writing, i.e. "bundles of words that show a statistical tendency to co-occur" (Biber et al. 1999: 989);[12] Kuiper (1992, 1996) and Kuiper and Haggo (1984) have identified phraseological units in the speech of auctioneers and sportscasters.

A number of linguists have attempted to categorise multi-word units.[13] Alexander (1984: 129), for example, distinguishes five major groups: idioms, in which he includes phrasal verbs, '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.[14] Gläser (1986) uses an elaborate classificatory system. She distinguishes 'nominations' and 'propositions'. 'Nominations' include

[11] Such diverse estimates result from the differences of what is counted as a phraseological unit. Moon set the significance threshold of recurring multi-word units at five words (1998: 57); the units analysed were based on existing lists from dictionaries. Altenberg counted "any continuous string of words occurring more than once in identical form" (1998: 101), without distinguishing between units of meaning and random sequences of words.

[12] Similar to Altenberg (1998), Biber et al. (1999) count both meaningful units such as *so as to* or *in light of* and accidental sequences such as *is in the* as 'lexical bundles'.

[13] The general inconsistency in this area of linguistics is reflected not only in the abundance of terms, but also in different attempts of classifications. As pointed out before, only a rough overview of different aspects of phraseology is intended here.

[14] Cf. also Alexander (1978).

restricted collocations and idioms, which have a purely denotative function; 'propositions' have pragmatic, speech-act function and are further divided into proverbs, routine formulae, quotations, etc. (cf. Gläser 1986: 49). Cowie (1994) differentiates roughly between collocations, which he defines as "associations of two or more lexemes (or roots) recognized in and defined by their occurrence in a specific range of grammatical constructions" (1994: 3169), idioms, and routine formulae. Collocations and idioms have a denotative function, while formulae work on the pragmatic level.

Diverse though these classifications may be, there are several criteria for phraseological 'membership' which distinguish such expressions from free combinations. The first, obvious, condition is their multi-word character. As was mentioned above, phraseological units consist of at least two lexemes (e.g. collocations), but can extend to entire sentences exhibiting a complex syntactic structure (e.g. proverbs). Furthermore, multi-word expressions are lexicalised, that is, they behave like a single "big word" (Ellis 1996: 111), and are stored as a whole in the lexicon. The criterion of lexicalisation goes together with reproducibility. Since phraseological expressions are stored as wholes, they are also produced as units rather than being reassembled 'from scratch', lexeme by lexeme, every time they are used. A further condition is the fixedness of phraseological units. Although only some units are entirely stable and cannot undergo any kind of transformation (such as *by and large*, which cannot be turned into *large and by*, *by or large*, or *by and huge*), all are fixed to at least some degree, either syntactically or lexically, and cannot be changed randomly. For example, while *perform an experiment* and *conduct an experiment* are both possible, **perform a survey* is not acceptable for no apparent semantic reason, in contrast to *conduct a survey* (cf. Cowie 1994: 3169). The institutionalisation of multi-word expressions is yet another determining factor of phraseological membership. Only when units are used by more than one member of the speech community do they become habitual: "the usage bears the authority of regular and accepted use by members of the speech community" (Pawley & Syder 1983: 209). One further criterion is non-compositionality or idiomaticity. The meaning of an idiomatic phraseological unit cannot be deduced from the sum of the

individual meanings of its parts[15] which argues for their being stored as units. However, as Wray (1999: 215) points out, although non-compositionality is a typical feature of phraseological expressions, it is by no means a defining one. Idiomaticity can be viewed as a continuum, with entirely opaque units at one end and entirely transparent ones at the other, the middle ground being covered by those where (at least) one element is transparent.[16] If idiomaticity were a defining feature of phraseological units, collocations[17] would have to be factored out as, although subject to various syntactic and semantic restrictions, their meaning is usually transparent. In the same vein, Pawley and Syder's (1983) 'lexicalized sentence stems' (e.g. *NP be-TENSE to keep-TENSE you waiting* or *NP tell-TENSE the truth*) and Nattinger and DeCarrico's (1992) 'lexical phrases' (e.g. *a while/month/year ago*), although fixed to some degree (*an ago month* is not possible), but semantically transparent, would have to be excluded.

That phraseological units are so diverse and frequent appears to be motivated by several factors. For example, the speaker's efforts at processing are alleviated. Instead of resorting to "the congested forum of on-line analysis" (Wray 1999: 215), where single lexemes have to be combined according to the speech situation and where text is seen "as a series of slots which have to be filled from a lexicon which satisfies local constraints" (Sinclair 1987: 320), prefabricated and habitual word-strings can be used (cf. Wray 1999: 215). One consequence is that the speaker "frees himself to attend to other tasks in talk-exchange, including the planning of larger units of discourse" (Pawley & Syder 1983: 192); a further consequence is more fluent speech (cf. Pawley & Syder 2000: 164, 195f; Hunston & Francis 2000: 271). This, in turn, reduces the task of decoding on the hearer's part. Formulaic discourse markers, for example, are beneficial to both speaker and hearer. The use of such structuring devices helps the speaker remain concentrated on his or her line of argument; at the

[15] This definition is only one aspect of idiomaticity (cf. footnote 19 for another definition). Since 'idiomaticity' is too complex to deal with cursorily ("Few linguistic concepts are as fuzzy as the notion of idiom", Skandera 2004: 13), the reader is referred to Skandera (2004) for a recent introductory article on this topic.

[16] Cf. chapter 2.1 on idiomaticity and phrasal verbs.

[17] As with other concepts in phraseological research, the notion of 'collocation' is difficult to seize, since different linguists use the same term for various constructions. Cf. Nesselhauf (2004a) for a recent discussion of concepts relating to collocations.

same time the listener is given cues as to the arrangement of the text (cf. Wray 2002: 93). Prefabs can furthermore indicate group membership (cf. Wray 2002: 74f.).[18]

1.2 Phraseology and the learner

The growing recognition that language is made up to a large extent of ready-made units consisting of more than one orthographic word has important implications for learners of English as well. The fact that chunks make the English language highly idiomatic[19] means that the learner has to dispose of a high level of awareness as to which lexical units are used by native speakers and which ones are not – what Pawley and Syder (1983) call "the puzzle of native-like selection".[20] While learners may be perfectly aware of grammatical rules and semantic restrictions, it is often difficult even for advanced learners to know "which subset of grammatically possible utterances is actually commonly used by native speakers" (Wray 1999: 468).[21] As pointed out above, there is often no logic involved when it comes to restrictions applying to phraseological units, which makes them all the more problematic for foreign language learners and can impede the successful learning and application of multi-word units. The much-cited idiom *John kicked the bucket*, for example, cannot be turned into a passive if the meaning 'to die' is to be retained (*The bucket was kicked by John* has a purely literal meaning) while the idiom *let the cat out of the bag* has a corresponding passive without change of meaning (*the cat was let out of the bag*). Learners also have to be aware that collocations such as *bits and pieces* cannot be changed to *pieces and bits*. The fact that many phraseological units have non-literal meaning complicates the matter still further; the same holds for the stylistic restrictions underlying many of these units. Apart from being able to understand the structure, meaning and stylistic nuances of phraseological units passively, it is

[18] Cf. Wray (2002: 93-102) for a more elaborate account of the different functions of multi-word units.
[19] "Idiomatisch ist das, was für eine Sprache charakteristisch oder was ihr eigentümlich ist, sie kennzeichnet" (Gottschalk 1975: 144).
[20] Cf. also Coulmas (1981: 150): "Clearly, every speech community makes only limited use of the possibilities of its language. Many well-formed expressions never occur, because they do not conform to the idiomatic preferences of the speech community."
[21] Allerton (1984: 39) points out the randomness and illogicalness of idiomatic language: "So often the patient language-learner is told by the native speaker that a particular sentence is perfectly good English…but that native speakers would never use it. How are we to explain such a state of affairs?"

mainly their active and correct usage that turns the foreign language learner into a competent speaker (cf. also Petrović 1988: 351, De Haan 1997: 226). Phraseological units are thus as important for the non-native as for the native speaker as far as fluency and comprehension are concerned (cf. above; Nesselhauf 2005a: 2). However, in spite of the significance of multi-word units, several studies have shown learners' deficits in this area. The following report is meant to point out some of the various approaches in this context. Since the area of phraseology is so vast, it is far beyond the scope of the present purpose to provide an encompassing overview of learner-related research in this field. Therefore, only some studies dealing with collocations will be addressed to exemplify different approaches.[22]

Although approaches to learner English vary considerably – for example in the number, proficiency level, and mother tongue background of subjects, or the type and amount of data – it is evident that especially advanced learners' performance is characterised by a lack of collocational knowledge. Dechert and Lennon (1989), for example, found that German advanced students of English often blended two existing L2 collocations into a new one which is grammatically acceptable but unnatural in lexical and stylistic respect. An example is *along similar laws*, a blend of *according to similar laws* and *along similar lines* (Dechert & Lennon 1989: 156).

Biskup (1992), in a comparative study of Polish and German learners of English, discovered that even though German learners overall used fewer collocations than Polish learners, they more often employed alternative strategies to translate German collocations, such as using descriptive answers, "without necessarily paying much attention to the well-formedness of the answer" (Biskup 1992: 88) (e.g. *just a coincidence* for *a pure coincidence*, cf. Biskup 1992: 89); Polish students, on the other hand, frequently gave no answer at all.

Granger (1998a) compared advanced French learners' use of collocational amplifiers such as perfectly natural or completely different to native English, focussing on patterns of under- and overuse. Her main finding in this respect is that learners on the one hand underused native-like collocations and on the other made

[22] A recent collection of studies on formulaic sequences in general is Schmitt (2004). It presents ten empirically-based studies looking into the properties and functions of formulaic sequences, emphasising their relevance for second language learners.

use of atypical combinations (cf. Granger 1998a: 152). In the same study, Granger (1998a) investigated the use of so-called 'sentence-builders', i.e. "phrases which function as macro-organizers in the text" (1998a: 154). A striking result of this study is that, compared to native English writing, French learner writing displayed an extremely high number of sequences with say (e.g. you could say that…) and think (e.g. I think that…). Granger concludes that not only underuse or lack of prefabricated units, but also excessive use leads to non-native-like English (cf. 1998a: 155).

De Cock (2000), based on Altenberg (1998), investigated highly recurrent word combinations (HRWCs) in native speakers' and advanced French learners' of English spontaneous speech and formal essay writing.[23] Contrary to the hypothesis that the learner group would use fewer HRWCs than native speakers, French learners actually used either the same amount (as is the case for sequence lengths of two and six words), or even more than native speakers (three, four, and five-word sequences). A qualitative analysis of the overuse revealed "a far more complex situation, one in which learners are overusing some particular target language (TL) sequences, underusing and misusing other TL combinations, and finally using what could be called 'learner idiosyncratic sequences'" (De Cock 2000: 58). Learners used for example a very high number of structuring devices such as *let us take an example of* or *I do not think that* (cf. De Cock 2000: 59). An example of learner idiosyncrasy is *according to me*, modelled on the combination of French *selon X*, which can be combined with any pronoun, and English *according to X*, which does not allow the selection of the first person pronoun.

Nesselhauf (2005a) is a large-scale investigation of German advanced learners' idiosyncratic use of collocations. She identified more than 2000 verb-noun collocations in her data (non-specialised, argumentative essays), of which a quarter was wrong, and a third wrong or questionable (cf. Nesselhauf 2005a: 237). Examining extra-linguistic factors such as length of exposure to English or the circumstances of text production she found that "collocations (..) do not seem to be taught in a way

[23] Although the approach of (automatically) retrieving any continuous string of words occurring above a specific frequency threshold may not be 'traditional' in the context of collocations, it is nevertheless a worthwhile undertaking as some word sequences are bound to be used more frequently than others which justifies their status as prefabricated units.

that leads to their acquisition, and mere exposure only helps to improve collocational performance to a slight degree" (Nesselhauf 2005a: 238). The intra-linguistic factor which determines the degree of difficulty most seems to be students' wish to translate German collocations word by word into English, leading to deviation in about half of the cases (2005: 238).[24]

As for the reasons why especially collocations prove such a problem for learners, Dechert and Lennon (1989) suggest that not only is, in the case of German students, "tuition aimed at enabling them to express their thoughts appropriately in a second language in various contexts, [neglecting] (..) the ability to organize and to relate thoughts coherently" (Dechert & Lennon 1989: 165), they also suggest that the teaching of the collocability of words is often neglected (1989: 165). Hausmann (1984) comes to the same conclusion and emphasises that collocation learning should be implemented besides that of word fields and semantic relations (Hausmann 1984: 406). In the same vein, Biskup (1992) puts the more creative 'risk-taking' strategy of German learners (which incidentally resulted in more mistakes) down to different teaching emphases. In Poland, more emphasis seems to be put on accuracy, whereas in Germany fluency and communication are essential concepts of foreign language teaching (cf. Biskup 1992: 88). She establishes a further factor causing problems – L1 influence. The Polish learner group overall relied more on their mother tongue than German learners (cf. Biskup 1992: 89). An interesting result of Biskup's study is the fact that Polish and German students used different types of transfer. Due to the formal dissimilarity of Polish and English, Polish learners relied more heavily on semantic similarity. German learners, on the other hand, tried to use a 'play-it-safe' strategy by using formally related words (e.g. *to crunch nuts* instead of *to crack nuts*, cf. Biskup 1992: 91). Another major aspect is the fact that, according to De Cock (2000), learners lack the awareness of "the more common, less salient and frequently used L2 multi-word building blocks" (De Cock 2000: 65). Granger's (1998a) explanation is along the same lines; she suggests that learners have "an underdeveloped sense of salience" and are not aware "of what constitutes a significant collocation" (1998a: 152). Nesselhauf, too, finds that not only are students

[24] Further studies concerned with various aspects of learner phraseology are e.g. Hasselgren (1994), Howarth (1996, 1998a), Kaszubski (2000), or Lorenz (1999).

unaware of the inherent difficulties of collocations, they also "seem to lack automatic control in the production of collocations and do not appear to use collocations to the same extent as native speakers to enhance fluency if they write under time pressure" (Nesselhauf 2005a: 238).

1.3 Aims and scope of the present study

The present study is concerned with one type of phraseological units, i.e. phrasal verbs. These multi-word verbs are, however, often not considered within the framework of phraseology although Bolinger pointed out as early as the beginning of the 1970s that "phrasal verbs are only one of the more regular, more easily described zones of neglect" (1971: xiv) in this area. Only few linguists have recognised their status as phraseological units. Lipka (1972), for example, calls phrasal verbs "collocations" in which "a simplex verb collocates with a particle" (1972: 74); Sroka (1972) calls them "verb-particle collocations" because this term does not involve restrictions concerning the unity of verb and particle. Palmer (1974) states that verb-particle combinations are subject to "severe collocational restrictions" (1974: 212). Allerton (2004) briefly comments on phrasal verbs in a study on fixed expressions, concluding that "it is difficult to place phrasal verbs as a whole either with collocations or with idioms; if they did not so clearly consist of two words, they could even be accommodated quite nicely with compound lexemes" (2004: 97). Moon (1998) is aware that phrasal verbs belong to the area of phraseology; however, for reasons of time, she excludes them from her research. So do Grant and Bauer (2004: 39): "Our reason for excluding phrasal verbs is that although many of them are idiomatic (…), they are such a large group of MWUs [multi-word units] that they merit separate and thorough research of their own." Alexander (1978: 180) lists phrasal verbs in his taxonomy of fixed expressions under 'idioms'. Gläser (1986) and Kjellmer (1991, 1994) both include phrasal verbs within the framework of phraseology, but they are not their main focus. Kjellmer's approach is particularly interesting in that his definition of collocation runs as follows: collocations are "structured patterns which recur in identical form" (1991: 116) and "such recurring sequences of items as are grammatically well formed" (1994: xiv). Against this

background, phrasal verbs could be called 'grammatical collocations'. This classification is supported by Mitchell (1958: 103): "It is the word-class approach that explains the tendency, for example, to regard the particle component of the English phrasal verb as either preposition or adverb rather than as of one grammatical piece with the verbal component", and by Palmer (1974: 213): "(…) there are syntactic features that mark off some of these [verb + particle] combinations as close-knit grammatical units." The term 'grammatical collocation' implies that phrasal verbs are at the interface of grammar and lexis since they consist of one open-class item (the verb) and one closed-class item (the particle) (cf. also Howarth 1998b: 28). The meaning of phrasal verbs is in many cases non-compositional, i.e. idiomatic, and therefore "there is no choice but to list them in the lexicon as complete units" (Jackendoff 2002: 73). As with other idioms, phrasal verbs have to be stored and learnt as a whole precisely because an idiom's meaning cannot be deduced from the individual items it consists of. Idiomatic and semi-transparent phrasal verbs thus clearly belong to the area of phraseology since other defining criteria for phraseological units are also met, such as multi-word character, lexicalisation, reproducibility, and institutionalisation (cf. chapter 1.1). However, even if the criterion of idiomaticity does not apply, phrasal verbs can be considered phraseological units, by analogy with (transparent) collocations. In transparent verb-particle combinations, the two elements co-occur just like in other types of collocations. A further dimension to the phraseological status of phrasal verbs is the fact that transitive phrasal verbs co-occur with specific context words or collocates, e.g. *carry out work/tasks/duties/studies/research* but not *carry out revenge/a race*. Their phraseological status is, however, only one aspect of the learning load that learners face in the context of phrasal verbs. Sinclair (1996: 78) even calls them "the scourge of the learner" since they present so many inherent difficulties, such as idiomaticity or polysemy. Phrasal verbs therefore present a worthy field of study as far as the foreign language learner is concerned.

The present study focuses on two different learner groups, i.e. on German and Italian advanced students of English. The corpus research is based on the German and Italian components of the *International Corpus of Learner English* (*ICLE*), the largest essay collection of advanced learners from different mother tongue

backgrounds to date and one of the few learner corpora available on CD-ROM. These two *ICLE* sub-corpora will be submitted to a detailed descriptive analysis of phrasal-verb use, focussing on lexical and stylistic aspects, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. To this end, all phrasal verbs, both transparent and idiomatic, will be extracted from the two learner corpora so that an exhaustive investigation of this aspect of learner language can be guaranteed. In order to compare learner productions with native students' writing, the control corpus complementing *ICLE*, the *Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays* (*LOCNESS*) will be analysed with respect to phrasal verbs as well. The present research thus follows Granger (1996a) in that unnaturalness of learner language, native language influence and cross-linguistic invariants will be investigated. From the methodological point of view, by comparing productions of two different learner groups not only to each other but also to a native control group, the present investigation complies with Granger's "Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis" (1996b).

With its detailed analysis of phrasal-verb use in German and Italian learner writing, the study aims at contributing a further facet to the general understanding of advanced learner language. As the present research is based on the extraction of all phrasal verbs rather than only those from a predefined list, this study goes far beyond previous research in the learner-related use of phrasal verbs both in terms of corpus size (about 250,000 words in each learner corpus) and number of different phrasal verbs. The great advantage of the present approach is that not only common, but also infrequent phrasal verbs can be investigated whereas basing the analysis on existing frequency lists would limit the analysis considerably from the start. As the data extraction yielded more than 2200 phrasal-verb tokens in the two learner corpora, the discussion and presentation of all these instances would, however, go far beyond the scope of this study. Representative examples of phrasal verbs will therefore be adduced at relevant points in the analysis. Note, however, that these examples are intended only as a selection serving to illustrate the points made; the author feels that it would put too much strain on the reader to meticulously list all instances of phrasal verbs which could be used as well.

The study is divided into seven chapters. Following this introduction, the second chapter is concerned with phrasal verbs in general terms and in relation to

foreign language learners. Theoretical aspects are discussed and a literature review on learner-related research in this area is provided. Also the syntactic, semantic, and contrastive problems English phrasal verbs present to foreign language learners in general and to German and Italian learners in particular are addressed. The third chapter explains the role of (learner) corpora for foreign language teaching and offers an introduction to the *International Corpus of Learner English*, discussing both general aspects and the potential and limitations of this large-scale learner corpus for second language acquisition. In chapter four, the methodological aspects of the present study are outlined. In this section, the computer tools relevant for the analysis are described; furthermore, the data set compiled from *ICLE* is presented in detail. Definitory aspects relating to phrasal verbs are clarified, and the methods of the data extraction are specified; the chapter concludes with the central research questions to be investigated and with the clarification of terminological aspects. Chapters five and six present the results from the quantitative and qualitative analyses; chapter seven concludes the study with the implications of the findings, both in general terms and with respect to foreign language teaching, and with perspectives for further research.

2. Phrasal verbs

2.1 General

The body of literature dealing with phrasal verbs is extensive, and the approaches taken are manifold, but research into this area has been bedevilled by a long history of definitory problems. The two major problems of definition concern the nature and grammatical status of the adverbial element and the importance of idiomaticity, i.e. non-literalness, of phrasal verbs.

Since the present study is concerned with actual learner performance rather than with a theoretical discussion of phrasal verbs, problematic issues will be addressed to the extent necessary for the aims of this study. The following discussion is therefore only intended to clarify theoretical concepts where required for the succeeding data analysis.

The very name for this type of verb is controversial. Among, e.g., "separable verb" (Francis 1958), "two-word verb" (Taha 1960, Meyer 1975), and "verb-particle combinations" (Fraser 1974), the term "phrasal verb" "appears (…) to be the winning term" (McArthur 1989: 38). 'Phrasal verb' will be the term used in this study since it also predominates in most current reference and student grammars and teaching materials.[25]

The generally incoherent terminology poses a further problem. The terminological approach to multi-word verbs in this study basically follows Quirk et al.'s (1985) division of multi-word verbs into 'phrasal verbs', 'prepositional verbs', and 'phrasal-prepositional verbs' which in turn is essentially based on Mitchell (1958). All these multi-word verbs constitute a syntactic or lexical unit functioning like a single lexical verb; they consist of a verb and one or two additional elements, generally called particles. Further subdivisions then relate to the nature of the particle. The general consensus is that in phrasal verbs it is an adverb, in prepositional verbs a preposition, and in phrasal-prepositional verbs an adverb and a preposition.

There are, however, a host of other definitions as to what a phrasal verb is. Most phrasal-verb dictionaries, e. g. Sinclair and Moon (1989), Cowie and Mackin (1993), Cullen and Sargeant (1996), and *Cambridge International Dictionary of Phrasal*

[25] Cf. e.g. Alexander (1988), Biber et al. (1999, 2002), Broughton (1990), Greenbaum (1996a), and Quirk et al. (1985).

Verbs (1997), include not only phrasal verbs 'proper' (according to Quirk et al.'s (1985) definition), but also prepositional verbs, i.e. verbs with a specified preposition such as *rely on*, and phrasal-prepositional verbs (such as *put up with*). Others (Cowie & Mackin 1975 and Courtney 1983) go so far as to incorporate verb-adjective (*lie low*), verb-pronoun (*kid oneself*), or other combinations.[26] Most non-dictionary oriented linguists however draw the line more rigidly and include only verb-adverb combinations (e.g. Biber et al. 1999, Greenbaum 1996a, Lipka 1972, McArthur 1989, Palmer 1974), but not all of them call them 'phrasal verbs' (Lipka 1972 for example uses the term 'verb-particle constructions').

As far as the non-verbal element of a phrasal verb is concerned, most linguists agree that this particle has adverbial status (e.g. Biber et al. 1999, Bolinger 1971, Cowie 1993, Greenbaum 1996a, Lipka 1972, McArthur 1989, Palmer 1974, Quirk et al. 1985). Huddleston and Pullum (2002) take a different approach, calling this element an intransitive preposition. They even refrain from using the expression 'phrasal verb' at all, on the basis that verb + particle combinations of the type *put in (an application)* do not form one syntactic constituent any more than do verb + unspecified preposition combinations such as *carry in (the chairs)*, where *in* could be replaced by *out* or *over*.

The subject of phrasal verbs is further complicated by the way idiomaticity is dealt with. The concept of non-literal meaning has always been difficult to identify, and it is no easier with respect to phrasal verbs, especially if one considers that many phrasal verbs exhibit a number of different meanings which can range from completely transparent to completely opaque.

At this point it is necessary to question the general use of the terms 'literal', 'figurative', 'transparent', 'opaque', and 'idiomatic'. These terms seem to be used in an undifferentiated way in the literature. 'Literal' is usually equated with 'transparent', and 'figurative' with 'idiomatic'; 'literal' and 'transparent' are used in opposition to 'figurative' and 'idiomatic' (e.g. Dagut & Laufer 1985, Laufer &

[26] As the scope of these dictionaries is to aid learners with verb-particle combinations in general, the inclusion of items other than 'proper' phrasal verbs is justified. Also, Cowie and Mackin (1975) do not actually use the term 'phrasal verb', they use 'verb-particle combination' instead.

Eliasson 1993, Liao & Fukuya 2004, McPartland 1989). Another relevant term used in opposition to 'transparent' is 'opaque'.

This terminological issue requires clarification. It seems obvious that opaque phrasal verbs are always idiomatic (if one accepts the definition from the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*)[27] and the general consensus that the meaning of an idiom cannot be derived from the combined meanings of its parts). However, for Quirk et al. the reverse does not seem to hold: "Putting a verb in the third category ['highly idiomatic' constructions] does not necessarily mean, however, that its meaning is completely opaque" (1985: 1163; insertion mine, B.W.). I do not agree with this view – if a construction is idiomatic, its meaning cannot be derived from the individual meanings of its elements – it is opaque.

Transparent phrasal verbs need not always be literal, although literalness always implies transparency, given that 'literal' means that the overall meaning consists of the combined literal, basic, non-figurative meanings of verb and particle.[28] Both literal and figurative phrasal verbs can be transparent and need not be idiomatic; in fact, a large number of phrasal verbs are not used in the directional, spatial, or locative sense, but have undergone a figurative meaning extension. Consider the following uses of *bring back*:

(1) He traced the source of the disease back to America, and proudly claimed that if man had not suffered from it, Europe would not have known tobacco and chocolate, which the explorers had **brought back** from the new world. (*LOCNESS*: BR-SUR-0010.2)

(2) There is a strong movement in the United States to **bring back** prayer to the schoolhouse. (*LOCNESS*: US-MRQ-0022.1)

In (1), the basic, literal meanings of the two elements are retained. (1) is transparent, i.e. its meaning is not concealed, and thus an example of a literal,

[27] *OED Online* s.v. *opaque*: "Not obvious in meaning; *esp.* (of a word) that was originally a compound or derivative but is now a simplex, and so has a meaning that cannot be deduced from its form or sound."

[28] Derived from the meaning of prepositions, the basic meanings of adverbial particles are taken to be locational, directional, spatial, or involve movement.

transparent phrasal verb. In (2), *bring* does not involve the actual, physical aspect of "to cause to come along with oneself" (*OED Online*), and *back* does not literally mean "in a direction to the rear" (*OED Online*). Starting out from the literal meanings of verb and particle, it is nevertheless easy enough to transport the literal meaning of *bring back* to the figurative level to figure out the meaning of (2). Even though it is used figuratively it is transparent and easy to understand. Table 1 below clarifies which of the different concepts go together and which do not.

Table 1: Clarification of terms: literalness, transparency, figurativeness, and opacity

	Literal	**Figurative**	**Transparent**	**Opaque**	**Idiomatic**
Literal	X	-	+	-	-
Figurative	-	X	+	+	+
Transparent	+	+	X	-	-
Opaque	-	+	-	X	+
Idiomatic	-	+	-	+	X

X: not possible; +: … goes together with …; -: …does not go together with…

It becomes clear from table 1 that transparency and idiomaticity do not match. If a phrasal verb is transparent (to whichever degree, cf. below) it cannot be idiomatic. Rather than different degrees of idiomaticity, different degrees of transparency are assumed with regard to phrasal verbs. So what some linguists call 'semi-idiomatic' (e.g. Quirk et al. 1985) will be called 'semi-transparent' in the present study.

However, it is near to impossible to mark these different degrees of transparency on a scale since the question of transparency is not entirely free of subjectivity. The example of figurative *bring back* above will be easy to understand for most speakers of English, native or non-native. In other cases, much depends on the language knowledge of the learner. To some learners, *bog down* might seem a true idiom because they do not know that *bog* means "wet soft ground", that *bog down* in its original sense means "make something sink into mud or wet ground" (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* [7]2005, henceforth *OALD*) and that it figuratively means "prevent somebody from making progress in an activity" (*OALD*).

A further problem on the transparency scale are those phrasal verbs which Quirk et al. (1985: 1162) call "semi-idiomatic" and which Celce-Murcia and Larsen-

Freeman (1999: 432) call "aspectual phrasal verbs".[29] The verbal element of these phrasal verbs in general keeps its original meaning, while the particle specifies the verb. Examples are *eat up*, *mix up, burn down, chat away*, or *play around*. Although it can be argued that such phrasal verbs are transparent due to the original meaning of the verbal element, the particle nevertheless adds a very specific dimension to the overall meaning which is not transparent. *Up* in *eat up* and *mix up* does not imply 'direction' or 'movement from a lower to a higher position' but 'entirely, completely'; *down* in *burn down* implies 'completely, entirely' rather than the directional 'from higher to lower'; neither does *away* in *chat away* mean 'distance from a place/person/situation', but rather 'heedless action'. These meanings become tangible only in textual context and in context with similar constructions.[30]

That there is room for subjective interpretations also with such aspectual phrasal verbs can be observed from the examples given by Quirk et al. (1985: 1162-1163). They state that in "*cut up* (…) the verb word keeps its meaning, whereas the meaning of the particle is less easy to isolate. In contrast, it is the particle which establishes a family resemblance (…)" (1985: 1162). Under the heading 'completion', Quirk et al. give the examples *drink up, finish up, break up,* and *use up*. To my mind, there is no difference between *cut up* and *drink up* – in both cases the verb retains its meaning, the particle adds the sense of completion: 'cut the entire piece', 'drink the entire drink'. Similarly, in my opinion, *out* in *point out* does not convey 'completion', as it does for Quirk et al. (1985: 1163). Considering that *point out* can be paraphrased as "indicate, direct attention to, show" (*OED Online*), it seems more logical that *out* implies (figurative) direction from inside (one individual) to outside (another individual).

Coming back to the question of transparency, the question arises how much sense it makes to devise a scale of transparency for phrasal verbs. Although the end points of such a scale are fairly clear-cut with literal and opaque/idiomatic phrasal verbs, the intermediate stages consist of too many shades of grey which are impossible to define clearly. Is *cut up* more or less transparent than the figurative use

[29] 'Completive' (e.g. Dagut & Laufer 1985) and 'semi-transparent' (e.g. Laufer & Eliasson 1993) are other terms used for this type of phrasal verb.

[30] If one considers "They chatted the whole evening away", "They danced the night away", and "She slept away the entire afternoon", the meaning of *away* becomes clearer.

of *bring back*, is *bog down* less transparent than *point out*? As mentioned before, a great deal hinges on language skill, the ability to detect and translate images and figurative language, and personal opinion. On the whole, therefore, an unambiguous differentiation between literal and idiomatic meanings of phrasal verbs is difficult and in some ways also futile. I agree with Bolinger (1971: 16) in that "the distinction between literal and figurative [is] viewed as secondary. The literal uses lie at the core, and figurative ones surround them at varying distances." In the present study, a clear-cut classification scheme is therefore not attempted.

One issue arising from the debate about transparency and opacity is whether to designate both transparent and opaque verb-adverb combinations as phrasal verbs, or whether to include only truly non-transparent idioms. As was shown above, the latter approach is doubtful in that a great amount of phrasal verbs display at least some transparency and are therefore, according to the present definition, not idiomatic. To give another example, *make up* in the sense of 'reach a decision' might by some linguists be classified as idiomatic because of its seeming opacity. However, this phrasal verb could be 'translated' in the following way. The verb retains the semantic component of 'produce something' (a decision), and the particle marks an end point or completion: 'a decision has been reached' – it is transparent according to the present definition. A further problem is posed by polysemous phrasal verbs like *take in* (cf. chapter 2.2.2) or *get on* (cf. chapter 5.3.2). In such cases, it is difficult to pinpoint objectively at which point the meaning of a polysemous phrasal verb is still transparent, and at which it becomes opaque.[31]

Linguists deal with the aspect of transparency and idiomaticity in different ways. Cowie and Mackin (1993), for example, exclude non-idiomatic phrasal verbs from their dictionary while most other phrasal-verb dictionaries include both literal and idiomatic phrasal verbs (e.g. Courtney 1983, Cullen & Sargeant 1996, McArthur & Atkins 1974, Sinclair & Moon 1989). Quirk et al. (1985) call non-idiomatic verb-adverb combinations such as *come back* 'free combinations'; so do Biber et al. (1999), arguing that "each element has separate grammatical and semantic status" (1999: 403). However, as a matter of fact Biber et al. (2002: 126) state that although *come back*

[31] Cf. Palmer (1974: 214): "(...) it is very difficult to draw a clear line between what is an idiom and what is not (…)."

in the sense of 'returning to a place' is usually considered transparent, it can be read in an idiomatic way as well because the multi-word unit can be replaced by a single lexical verb ('return'). On a conciliatory note Biber et al. (1999: 403) conclude that "[in] practice, it is hard to make an absolute distinction between free combinations and fixed multi-word verbs; one should rather think of a cline on which some verbs, or uses of verbs, are relatively free and others relatively fixed."

That the possibility of substitution with a single lexical verb should be a reliable criterion for idiomaticity is very much doubted by the present author. Not only can literal, transparent (and therefore unidiomatic) phrasal verbs be replaced by single verbs (e.g. *come back – return*, *go in – enter*), there are also idiomatic phrasal verbs which do not have one-word paraphrases (e.g. *run out of something*). Although Quirk et al. (1985: 1162) draw attention to the fact that substitution by a single verb may not be entirely reliable, they nevertheless name it as a possibility to discern idiomatic status of phrasal verbs. So does Cowie (1993) who, however, is less cautious in this respect and merely claims that if the whole combination can be replaced by one word it is an idiom (1993: 38). A definition of which types of multi-word verbs will be included in the present study will be given in chapter 4.4.

2.2 Phrasal verbs and the foreign language learner

2.2.1 Literature review

The literature on phrasal verbs is by and large very wide-ranging. Apart from more general discussions which take both syntactic and semantic properties of phrasal verbs into account (e.g. Bolinger 1971, Huddleston & Pullum 2002, Palmer 1974, Quirk et al. 1985), more specialised studies focus only on semantic aspects (e.g. Gorlach 2000, Lipka 1972, McIntyre 2002), on the syntax of phrasal verbs (e.g. Mahler 2002, Mitchell 1958, Sroka 1972), or on only one particular aspect of phrasal-verb syntax such as particle placement (e.g. Cappelle 2002, Gries & Stefanowitsch 2004, Szmrecsanyi 2005).[32] Multifaceted though these approaches are, considering that the present study is concerned with learner performance rather than with theories on the

[32] Gries and Stefanowitsch (2004) and Szmrecsanyi (2005) do, however, not concentrate exclusively on phrasal verbs.

semantic and syntactic aspects of phrasal verbs, only learner-related and learner-oriented research will be discussed. Problematic issues pertaining to the English phrasal verb as such were already addressed in chapter 2.1.

Learner-related research in the area of phrasal verbs falls into two groups, a purely linguistic and a didactically-oriented one. Among those studies following the linguistic line, some are only concerned with avoidance while others adopt a wider approach. The major studies from this area are discussed below. Those studies with a didactic, learner-centred orientation will then be briefly summarised as the present study's main focus is not on the teaching of phrasal verbs.

Dagut and Laufer (1985) is the first study dealing explicitly with the avoidance of phrasal verbs.[33] Based on Schachter's (1974) statement that error analysis should focus not only on what is used, but also on what is not used by L2 learners, and on Kleinmann's (1977) observation that only those items can be avoided that are actually known to learners,[34] Dagut and Laufer wanted to test their hypothesis that Hebrew-speaking university students of English avoid the active use of phrasal verbs while at the same time being passively familiar with them. They identified 15 phrasal verbs preferred by English native speakers over their one-word 'equivalents'[35] and tested learners' active use of these phrasal verbs in a multiple choice test, a translation test, and a memorisation test. The overall results showed that although learners were familiar with phrasal verbs as such, in about 50 percent, learners preferred a single over a phrasal verb. Dagut and Laufer conclude from these results that, since there is no phrasal-verb equivalent in Hebrew, learners "avoid using what they do not properly understand" (1985: 78); when given the choice, they resort to the more familiar one-word verbs instead. Thus, the absence of a similar or corresponding L2 feature in the learners' native language prevents its use in L2 production.

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[33] Sjöholm (1995: 107) reports the results of an earlier, unpublished study by McPartland (1983) who found that six Russian learners of English used significantly fewer two-word verbs than native speakers of English. Also, two-word verbs with a low degree of idiomaticity were preferred. Since the study has not been published it is impossible to make statements about McPartland's research.

[34] If a learner does not know an L2 feature and consequently does not use it, this is an indication of ignorance, not of avoidance.

[35] The problem of the synonymy of simple and multi-word verbs will be addressed in chapter 2.2.2.

Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) is a follow-up study[36] to Dagut and Laufer (1985). Dagut and Laufer concluded their article with the statement that, as phrasal verbs are a peculiarity of the Germanic languages, all learners with a non-Germanic mother tongue background will avoid phrasal verbs. Consequently, Hulstijn and Marchena base their study on the corollary that learners with a Germanic L1 background will not avoid phrasal verbs. They tested Dutch learners of English, bearing in mind that phrasal verbs present not only a syntactic, but also a considerable semantic learning load. Rather than being easy to master due to syntactic similarities of English and Dutch, their hypothesis was that Dutch learners would avoid phrasal verbs due to their complex semantics. Hulstijn and Marchena further assumed that the tendency to avoid phrasal verbs would decrease with increasing proficiency. For reasons of comparability, Hulstijn and Marchena replicated Dagut and Laufer's study, with the important difference that the proficiency levels (intermediate and advanced learners) were controlled more systematically.[37]

Although the design of the two studies may not correspond in every detail, overall results show although intermediate Dutch learners used fewer phrasal verbs than advanced students, both intermediate and advanced Dutch learners still used more phrasal verbs than Hebrew learners. Phrasal verbs thus do not seem to constitute a learning problem as such to Dutch learners. Hulstijn and Marchena's results thus provide indirect support for Dagut and Laufer (1985). However, the tendency to avoid phrasal verbs by either (intermediate) Dutch or Hebrew learners could also be due to semantic difficulties. Dagut and Laufer (1985) did not pursue this argument at all, although they classified the tested items as literal, opaque and completive. Their learners used opaque phrasal verbs least often, followed by completive phrasal verbs, in which the particle describes the result of an action (*burn down*); literal phrasal verbs were used most frequently. This finding argues for

[36] Hulstijn and Marchena (1988) and Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) report on the same experiment, but the 1988 article is less detailed.

[37] In Hulstijn and Marchena's study, each test (multiple choice, translation, and memorisation) was given to both intermediate and advanced learners in order to observe improvements between the two proficiency levels. In Dagut and Laufer's study, only the translation test was administered to two groups with different levels of proficiency. Another difference is the choice of phrasal verbs which for several reasons diverged from Dagut and Laufer (cf. Hulstijn & Marchena 1989 for details).

avoidance due to semantic difficulties, which is corroborated by Hulstijn and Marchena's (1989) data. Dutch intermediate learners preferred simple verbs with a more general meaning over phrasal verbs with a more specialised or idiomatic meaning. Furthermore, both intermediate and advanced Dutch learners avoided idiomatic phrasal verbs and those phrasal verbs similar to their Dutch counterparts, e.g. *opbrengen* and *bring up*. Structural and semantic similarity of L1 and L2 can therefore be impedimental rather than facilitating because intermediate and advanced learners believe that translating word by word can lead to mistakes.

Laufer and Eliasson (1993) take up both Dagut and Laufer's (1985) and Hulstijn and Marchena's (1989) lines of argument. Their study tests whether avoidance is due to L2-inherent semantic difficulties or structural (dis)similarities between the native and the foreign language; two groups of Swedish advanced learners of English served as informants. The research questions Laufer and Eliasson (1993) put forward are basically the same as those in the previous studies – are phrasal verbs categorically avoided by Swedish students, are there significant differences between Swedish and Hebrew learners, do Swedish learners avoid English phrasal verbs that are similar to Swedish phrasal verbs, do Swedish learners avoid opaque phrasal verbs more than transparent ones, and do Swedish students use opaque phrasal verbs more frequently than Hebrew learners?

Results were obtained by means of a multiple choice and a translation test. The data revealed that Swedish learners do not avoid English phrasal verbs categorically. This indirectly corroborates Dagut and Laufer's (1985) assumption that structural L1-L2 dissimilarity is impedimental to the acquisition of phrasal verbs (Swedish has a phrasal-verb equivalent). Swedish learners used significantly more phrasal verbs than Dagut and Laufer's Hebrew learners. Furthermore, Swedish learners not only used literal and opaque phrasal verbs in a balanced way, they used significantly more opaque phrasal verbs than Hebrew and Dutch students as well. This suggests that semantic L2 complexity is not important for the avoidance of L2 features, disproving Hulstijn and Marchena's (1989) hypothesis. Also, in contrast to Hulstijn and Marchena's Dutch learners, Swedish students did not avoid opaque phrasal verbs with a Swedish translation equivalent. Thus, "[i]diomatic meaning similarity between L1 and L2 does not necessarily induce learner disbelief and

subsequent avoidance" (Laufer & Eliasson 1993: 44). They conclude that the major factor triggering avoidance is L1-L2 dissimilarity, thus corroborating Dagut and Laufer (1985).

The most recent study focussing on phrasal-verb avoidance is Liao and Fukuya (2004), who tested Chinese intermediate and advanced learners of English. Their study is based on the previous three studies mentioned.[38] Again, research questions are concerned with the general avoidance of phrasal verbs, the role of the L1 and the role of semantic difficulty. Liao and Fukuya investigate a further factor not addressed hitherto, i.e. the influence of test type. The same three test types were used as in the other studies (multiple choice, translation, and memorisation).[39] Liao and Fukuya's results show that proficiency level, phrasal-verb type, and test type have an effect on learners' avoidance of phrasal verbs. In all three tests, intermediate students used significantly fewer phrasal verbs than advanced learners; the advanced group used nearly as many phrasal verbs as native speakers. Liao and Fukuya explain intermediate learners' avoidance by the structural differences between English and Chinese (Chinese has no equivalent to English phrasal verbs). This lends further support to Dagut and Laufer's (1985) statement that L1-L2 difference triggers avoidance. However, as the Chinese advanced students performed much better than the intermediate learners, it seems that, in the advanced group, "learning seems to have counteracted the effects of the L1-L2 differences" (Liao & Fukuya 2004: 211). Liao and Fukuya argue for "a developmental manifestation of interlanguage from avoidance to nonavoidance" (2004: 212) which is corroborated by their results. As in the previous studies, also Chinese learners used literal phrasal verbs more frequently than figurative[40] ones, independent of proficiency level and test type. Intermediate students, however, used even fewer figurative phrasal verbs than advanced learners. The fact that, again, advanced

[38] There are some differences as to the choice of phrasal verbs or the context in which the tested items are embedded (cf. Liao & Fukuya 2004 for details).
[39] As in Hulstijn and Marchena's (1989) study, each test was completed by a group of intermediate and advanced students, so that there were six groups altogether.
[40] Following Dagut and Laufer's definition (1985: 74), figurative is defined by Liao and Fukuya (2004: 197) as follows: phrasal verb "in which a new meaning has resulted from a metaphorical shift of meaning and the semantic fusion of the individual components". Figurative is thus identical with what is called idiomatic in the present study.

learners performed better than intermediate students, argues for interlanguage development.

Hulstijn and Marchena's (1989) hypothesis was that the memorisation test would supply the strongest evidence in favour of the influence of test type on learners' use of phrasal verbs since this test had been designed with a bias in favour of phrasal-verb responses. However, their results did not support this hypothesis; Dutch learners performed equally in all three tests. Liao and Fukuya (2004) tested the interaction between test type and phrasal-verb type. They found that only in the translation test did both Chinese learner groups use figurative phrasal verbs less often than literal ones. In this test, neither phrasal nor simple verbs were provided as possible answers so that students did not have any cues. Liao and Fukuya (2004: 216) interpret this result as an indicator of the impedimental nature of L2 semantic complexity on learners' use of English phrasal verbs.

Although these four studies (Dagut & Laufer 1985, Hulstijn & Marchena 1989, Laufer & Eliasson 1993, Liao & Fukuya 2004) offer instructive insights into the behaviour of different learner groups with regard to phrasal verbs, they are problematic in certain respects. Dagut and Laufer's (1985) study in particular displays essential shortcomings. First of all, Dagut and Laufer (1985) did not check in advance whether their informants actually knew the phrasal verbs in question. Rather, they acted on the impressionistic assumption of their teaching experience "that these students had come across all of the 15 phrasal verbs at some point in their education" (Dagut & Laufer 1985: 75). In the other three studies, students' (passive) knowledge of the relevant phrasal verbs had been ascertained beforehand. Since only features can be avoided that are known, Hebrew students' underuse of phrasal verbs could just as well have been caused by ignorance. Furthermore, Dagut and Laufer did not rule out factors other than L1-L2 difference before concluding that Hebrew learners' avoidance of phrasal verbs was caused by structural L1-L2 differences. In fact, the authors even failed to conclude that semantic difficulties could be the cause of avoidance, although they pointed out that figurative phrasal verbs were used much less frequently than literal ones. Their results were furthermore not backed up by statistical evidence.

The four studies have several shortcomings in common. Not only is the number of phrasal verbs tested very small (between 15 and 20), in two studies also the number of learners is fairly small.[41] The phrasal verbs tested varies; furthermore, the distribution of figurative and literal phrasal verbs is not balanced which, as Liao and Fukuya (2004: 219) point out, "may have created a certain inclination for such avoidance", i.e. the avoidance of figurative phrasal verbs. Because of the inconsistency of variables, the four studies are comparable only to a limited extent. The major shortcoming, however, is the fact that results were obtained by elicitation techniques. Although this kind of data extraction might be useful in research geared to investigate avoidance – only if learners are given the choice between a single and a phrasal verb can avoidance become apparent – it is problematic at the same time. Students were biased because they were provided with a set of possible answers. A study of the use of phrasal verbs in free production data would have reflected learners' active knowledge in a more unbiased way. As for the explanatory accounts of why phrasal verbs were avoided, one major aspect is ignored by all four studies. Apart from structural differences and semantic difficulties, teaching certainly plays a prominent role for the comprehension and production of phrasal verbs as well.

Studies dealing with learners' use of phrasal verbs but not focussing exclusively on avoidance are Yorio (1989), Sjöholm (1995), Lennon (1996), and Hägglund (2001). Yorio's (1989) results from a study on the use of idiomatic expressions in 25 ESL students' written productions are in line with the previous studies mentioned. He showed that although learners used the same number of phrasal verbs as native speakers, learners used idiomatic phrasal verbs less frequently, although his informants had lived in the United States for several years. As Yorio (1989) used free written production data from which he extracted all phrasal-verb occurrences, this study is less biased towards the use of phrasal verbs when compared to the elicitation studies mentioned above. However, it is limited in that very few learners' productions were investigated; added to that, hardly any details are presented as to which phrasal verbs were used. He only states that

[41] Liao and Fukuya tested 70 learners (but they are aware of the small number of phrasal verbs and informants (2004: 218)), Laufer and Eliasson 87. Dagut and Laufer (1985) tested 180 learners altogether, Hulstijn and Marchena (1989) 225.

learners used other phrasal verbs than natives, percentages indicating the differences between idiomatic and non-idiomatic usage. It should be added, however, that phrasal verbs were only one aspect of Yorio's (1989) paper, which is concerned with learners' avoidance of idioms in general.

Sjöholm's (book-length) investigation (1995) aims at explaining mechanisms underlying second language acquisition. More precisely, he examines how different learner-internal and -external factors affect SLA processes and under which conditions cross-linguistic influence (the influence of the L1 or L3, avoidance due to the L1) occurs. By means of a multiple choice test, he elicited empirical data from Finnish- and Swedish-speaking Finns. Using two learner groups with different proficiency levels (intermediate and advanced), Sjöholm was able to test how the number of years studying English affects phrasal-verb use. Furthermore, input factors such as quantity and quality of exposure to phrasal verbs, or the influence of a stay in an English-speaking country were taken into account. Also, as in previous studies, the different use of literal and figurative phrasal verbs was investigated in order to determine whether avoidance is likely to be influenced by structural or semantic factors.

Sjöholm's results show that both learner groups used fewer phrasal verbs than native speakers; however, Finnish-speaking students used significantly fewer phrasal verbs than Swedish-speaking learners, especially at the intermediate level. This finding confirms both Sjöholm's own and Dagut and Laufer's (1985) hypothesis that structural L1-L2 differences can impede the successful learning of phrasal verbs – Swedish has a phrasal-verb equivalent, Finnish does not. Structure is not the only determining factor, however. Swedish-speaking students also performed better on 'Swedish-based' phrasal verbs (those with a semantic equivalent in Swedish), while Finnish-speaking students avoided idiomatic phrasal verbs. This corroborates the hypothesis that structural and semantic L1-L2 distance is a hindrance to learning.[42] A further finding is that those students who had spent time abroad chose opaque phrasal verbs more frequently than those students who had received no 'natural'

[42] Sjöholm (1995: 227) points out, like Hulstijn and Marchena (1989: 249), that a general underuse of phrasal verbs could also be due to the semantic specificity of phrasal verbs. Since single verbs often have a broader meaning, they are safer to use for learners.

input. This holds for both Finnish- and Swedish-speaking learners. Quantitative input in a natural setting thus seems to further native-like performance no matter what the learner's native language.

Sjöholm's (1995) study goes far beyond previous avoidance studies. The methodology adopted is realised thoroughly, all variables are tightly controlled and very well documented. The research hypotheses he puts forward integrate several aspects relevant to second language acquisition. His research makes evident that the acquisition of phrasal verbs in a classroom setting is determined not by isolated factors but by the interaction of cross-linguistic, semantic, and input factors.

Although Lennon (1996) does not deal explicitly with phrasal verbs, his investigation of verb-choice errors by four German advanced learners of English is pertinent here. It shows that even advanced students are often overtaxed with the correct use of high-frequency verbs like *put* and *take*. Lennon's informants used phrasal-verb combinations where the choice of particle was correct but where *put* and *take* were used as 'dummy' verbs, without further semantic distinction. Lennon concludes that "learners may have a broad outline of verb meaning, but that their lexical knowledge is hazy concerning polysemy, contextual and collocational restrictions, phrasal verb combinations, grammatical environment" (1996: 35). The fact that students had more problems with the verb than with the particle implies that, in the teaching of phrasal verbs, more emphasis needs to be put on differentiating the semantics of high-frequency verbs rather than focussing too much on the particle.

Hägglund (2001) takes yet another approach to phrasal verbs. She investigates the use of phrasal verbs by Swedish advanced learners in light of stylistic awareness. Using a list of the most common phrasal verbs (cf. Biber et al. 1999: 410), she compares the Swedish component of the *International Corpus of Learner English* (*SWICLE*) to its control corpus, the *Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays* (*LOCNESS*). A further comparison is then made between *SWICLE* and the *Longman Grammar* (1999: 410). Based on the assumption that the frequency of phrasal verbs in the argumentative learner essays is closer to Biber et al.'s (1999) registers of conversation and fiction than to academic prose and news, she establishes over- and underuse patterns of these verbs. The overall results, however, disprove her

hypothesis – out of 31 verbs, Swedish learners over- or underused only twelve in comparison to native student writing; only seven phrasal verbs were over- or underused by learners when compared to the *Longman Grammar*.[43] Hägglund concludes that in general both Swedish and native students "use these phrasal verbs in a manner than [sic] bears much more resemblance to the language of news and academic prose than to fiction or conversation" (2001: 7), i.e. in the case of phrasal verbs, Swedish student writing does not display more 'spoken' than 'written' features.

The study by Hägglund (2001) is limited in that only a few phrasal verbs were investigated. Common though they may be in native English, due to the fact that they stem from a 'learner-external' source, the data can be considered elicited, albeit to a much lesser degree than in the studies reported on above. Nevertheless, this approach does not provide a clear picture of what is going on in learner writing with respect to phrasal verbs. Hägglund herself points out this weakness of her approach (2001: 8); she is furthermore aware of the small size of the corpus and the purely quantitative approach which is only the first step in a thorough corpus analysis.

To conclude the section on more linguistically oriented literature on phrasal verbs, McArthur (1989), in a brief article, summarises grammar, history, and use of phrasal verbs as well as general syntactic and semantic difficulties. McPartland (1989), equally brief, investigates those factors that make the learning of phrasal verbs so complex for non-native speakers. She concludes that apart from the influence of the L1, as evidenced by Dagut and Laufer (1985), semantic complexity plays a major role – idiomatic, non-transparent phrasal verbs are avoided more often than literal ones. She explains this 'rejection' of figurative phrasal verbs by their inherent ambiguity which might prevent acquisition. Further aggravating factors are syntactic and phonological peculiarities such as the positioning of the particle and different intonation of phrasal and prepositional verbs.[44] According to McPartland, yet another factor is involved, namely the role of input or "frequency-of-use" (1989:

[43] The finding that the two native groups, students on the one hand and professional writers on the other, displayed different writing styles is noteworthy because it highlights a general problem of corpus linguistics, namely representativeness. It should be borne in mind that no matter which native speaker corpus is used it will always reflect only a limited set of possible utterances.

[44] Learners' problems with phrasal verbs are spelt out in chapter 2.2.2.

154), which would explain why some phrasal verbs are acquired easily even though they are opaque: "the frequent occurrence of a phrasal verb in the input seems to accelerate the acquisition process, overriding semantic, syntactic, and phonological complexity" (McPartland 1989: 155). Unfortunately, this promising hypothesis is merely impressionistic and not substantiated by experimental data.

Klein's (1989, 1995a) studies are at the interface of linguistic and didactic research. While the previously reported studies concentrate on linguistic factors and neglect the practical aspect of teaching, and most didactically oriented studies are introspective and not based on empirical data, Klein (1989, 1995a) combines both aspects. His articles report findings from experimental studies tied in with teaching-related considerations. Klein (1989) conducted a corpus study with the aim of verifying the hypothesis that the correct use of verb-particle combinations is a reliable indicator of syntactic and semantic learner competence. The extraction of all verb-particle combinations from 72 essays by German intermediate learners showed that there seems to be a correlation between frequency of verb-particle combinations and marking – the more multi-word verbs were used, the better the mark given by the teacher.[45] For the present study Klein's (1989) paper is useful both from the methodological point of view and as far as the results are concerned. All studies reported on above relied on elicitation data. Klein (1989) applies a more open-minded approach and counts all occurrences of verb-particle constructions, thus gathering data which reflect actual, unbiased learner behaviour. It emerged, as in other studies, that idiomatic phrasal verbs were used less frequently than literal ones. Unfortunately, the number of phrasal verbs 'proper' in Klein's corpus is generally very small (65 altogether, which is about one quarter of all verb-particle combinations analysed); besides, he provides only percentages of his overall results, but no detailed figures for individual categories. This will make a comparison to the present study difficult.

Klein (1995a) tests the influence stylistic factors exert on German learners' active and passive phrasal-verb knowledge, more precisely how well German advanced learners know phrasal verbs which are at the informal end of the formal-informal continuum. The results of four different tests show that the informants are

[45] Whether this was done consciously or subconsciously by the teacher was, however, not ascertained.

generally well acquainted with the meanings of phrasal verbs, especially those with a German cognate. However, the more idiomatic these multi-word verbs are, the less familiar learners are with them. There is also a marked difference between passive and active knowledge: learners performed better in the receptive than in the productive tasks.

In the following, some studies concerned with didactic considerations in relation to phrasal verbs are briefly summarised.[46] Most of these studies include a discussion of learner-related difficulties of phrasal verbs, e.g. the problem of idiomaticity, style, or collocability (e.g. Cornell 1985, Cowie 1993,[47] Klein 1995a, Kurtyka 2001, Neumann & Plag 1995, Side 1990). Some of them present or discuss previously proposed models for teaching phrasal verbs in didactic literature or in teaching materials (e.g. Klein 1995b, Kurtyka 2001, Neumann & Plag 1995, Sansome 2000). Most of them also make suggestions for teaching, for example ordering phrasal verbs according to the semantics of the particle (e.g. Side 1990), emphasising the similarities and differences between the L1 and the L2 (e.g. Neumann & Plag 1995), or aiming at an active and passive list of phrasal verbs (e.g. Cornell 1985, Klein 1995b). Kurtyka (2001), inspired by Rudzka-Ostyn,[48] stresses the importance of visualisation in teaching vocabulary which can be applied to the learning of phrasal verbs as well, e.g. by using metaphors. Klein (1995b) and Sansome (2000) provide possible exercises, while Wyss (2003) makes a concrete suggestion for an entire lesson.

[46] This report does not claim to be exhaustive.
[47] Cowie (1993) is different from the other didactic studies in that he is interested in the problems of phrasal verbs as related to dictionary-making.
[48] Kurtyka (2001) seems to be based on a manuscript version of Rudzka-Ostyn (2003).

2.2.2 Phrasal verbs and the learner – "a nettle that has to be grasped"[49]

The importance of phrasal verbs in native English is stressed e.g. by Alexander (1988: 153): "the use of phrasal verbs is extremely common and a standard feature of good idiomatic English". One of the reasons why they are so popular among native speakers – "although always common in the vernacular, phrasal verbs have been growing commoner since at least the middle of the 19th century. In the 20th century they have increased phenomenally (…)" (McArthur 1989: 42) – is their potential for creativity. Bolinger (1971: xi) calls this phenomenon "an outpouring of lexical creativeness that surpasses anything else in our language." McArthur (1989: 43-44) lists several neologisms observed in newspapers and literature, e.g. *cheer down* as the opposite of *cheer up*, or *bevvy up* (*drink alcoholic beverages*), and Greenbaum (1996a: 280) states: "Phrasal verbs (…) have become a fertile field for new coinages in the twentieth century." This is due to the fact that the mere addition of a particle can equip a simplex verb with specialisation and intensification. By adding *down*, for example, a host of different meanings can be achieved. Apart from purely spatial meanings (*push down the cushions, carry down the suitcase*), *down* can adopt the meaning 'diminish, reduce in volume, size or importance', as in *boil down the syrup* or *play down the problems*; it can also signify 'bring to a stop' (*hunt down an animal*, *bring down a plane*, *wave down a car*), 'reduce to smaller parts' (*break down the figures*, *take down the engine*), or 'secure, control' (*calm down*). The phenomenon of extending meaning by the addition of an extra element, called "semantic spreading" (Bolinger 1971: 45) or "structural compensation" (Quirk et al. 1985: 1401), renders English more expressive since phrasal verbs "[denote] different aspects of the verbal notion than the corresponding simple verbs" (Brinton & Akimoto 1999: 1). The fact that phrasal verbs usually consist of high-frequency verbs and particles adds to their popularity; to the native speaker both elements are familiar and easy to manage (cf. Bolinger 1971: xii).

The popularity of phrasal verbs is made obvious by Biber et al. (1999) who prove in quantitative analyses that these multi-word units are pervasive and

[49] Cf. Cowie (1993: 38): "(…) a nettle that has to be grasped if students are to achieve native-like proficiency in speech and writing."

frequent not only in conversation, fiction and news but in academic prose as well. Their omnipresence makes them significant also for foreign language learners. As Bywater puts it:

> The plain fact is that what distinguishes the writing and, above all, the speech of a good foreign student from those of an Englishman is that what an Englishman writes or says is full of these expressions, whereas most foreigners are frightened of them, carefully avoid them, and sound stilted in consequence. Foreign students who enjoy being flattered on their English can best achieve this by correctly using masses of these compound verbs. (1969; quoted in Cornell 1985: 270)

It should be added that the mere use of "masses" of phrasal verbs does not necessarily make students' English more native-like. Rather, "[u]nderstanding and being able to use these constructions *correctly* in spoken and written English is essential if the learner is to develop a complete command of the language" (Cullen & Sargeant 1996: vii; emphasis mine, B.W.), "correctly" implying not only grammatical and semantic appropriateness, but also situational suitability.

Although the combination of verb and adverbial particle may appear trivial at first sight, learners aiming at proficiency in this field are confronted with more problems than a native speaker of English would expect. Phrasal verbs are in fact a highly complex area of the English language in several aspects, and learners have to face a number of syntactic and semantic pitfalls which make these multi-word verbs very difficult to master. These difficulties apply both to the (passive) comprehension and (active) production.

One of the many structural problems is the occasional arbitrariness of syntactic restrictions. *Set about*, for example, can only be complemented by an *-ing* form, in contrast to its near synonyms *begin* and *start*, which also take the *to*-infinitive. Another example is *come by*, which unlike its 'counterparts' *acquire* and *obtain* cannot be turned into a passive:

(3a) He came by a fortune.
(3b) *The fortune was come by.

Furthermore, some phrasal verbs look identical to verbs followed by a prepositional phrase (cf. Side 1990: 144-145):

(4a) Run over the bridge.
(4b) Run over the cat.

Only by syntactic tests can the phrasal verb be distinguished from verb + prepositional phrase (**run the bridge over* vs. *run the cat over*).[50]

The major difficulties, however, have to do with semantics. The mere fact that the first element of a phrasal verb is in many cases a high-frequency verb like *take*, *get*, or *make* proves to be the first problem. High-frequency verbs, which occur in many languages, "express basic meanings and tend to dominate different semantic fields" (Altenberg & Granger 2001: 174). Besides, they are highly polysemous which is caused by two kinds of meaning extension. On the one hand, high-frequency verbs have very general, abstract, delexicalised or grammaticalised meanings; on the other hand, they can also enter into very specialised, collocational and idiomatic relationships with other lexemes (cf. Altenberg & Granger 2001: 174). As a consequence of this wide variety of meaning, they can be problematic for learners. The following uses of *take in* serve to illustrate several points (examples from Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 284):

(5a) We'd better *take in* the children's toys.
(5b) They supplement their income by *taking in* students.
(5c) I've *taken in* your trousers because they were too loose.
(5d) Grammar *takes in* syntax and morphology but not phonology.
(5e) I thought we might *take in* a show after dinner.
(5f) I was too tired to *take in* what she was saying.
(5g) I'm not surprised he was *taken in*; he's as gullible as a child.

Many phrasal verbs have both non-idiomatic and idiomatic meanings, resulting in a cline from transparent to opaque. The meaning of (5a) is fairly easy to grasp; both verb and particle retain their original meaning. It has to be mentioned, however, that

[50] Cornell (1985: 275) lists several syntactic restrictions. They are also given in phrasal-verb dictionaries, e.g. Cowie and Mackin (1975).

the term 'phrasal verb' for this multi-word unit is debatable. Quirk et al. (1985: 1152-1153) would consider this occurrence a 'free combination', consisting of verb and adverb. Their tests include the possibility of inserting the modifying adverb *right* in between *take* and *in* (*We took the toys right in*), and placing the particle before the verb (*in we took them*). It can also be seen as a reduced prepositional phrase (*We'd better take the children's toys in [the house]*) (cf. Lipka 1972 who nevertheless classifies these kinds of multi-word verbs as phrasal verbs; Quirk et al. (1985: 662) would call the particle in such a case "prepositional adverb").

In contrast to the first example of *take in*, the meanings of (5b) to (5g) cannot be deduced from the sum of the individual meanings of verb and particle; *take in* is here used in a non-transparent, i.e. idiomatic, way. Since there is often no logic involved when it comes to deciphering the meaning of idioms, their mastery requires foreign language students either to draw on their imagination (many idioms are very pictorial and metaphorical) or to learn them by heart. In the context of phrasal verbs, this is a very demanding and confusing task, given that very common verbs, whose meanings are difficult to grasp as it is, combine productively with various particles. This can be remedied to some extent by classifying phrasal verbs according to the meaning of the particle, e.g. removal (*strain off liquid*, *take off coat*), distance in time or space (*put off a meeting*, *warn someone off*), or completion (*turn out lights*, *fill out a form* (in American English), *run out of sugar*). This approach is often more sensible than the categorisation according to the verbal element as the particle "receives the semantic focus of the sentence" (Declerck 1977: 306). In fact, the verbal meaning is transported to the particle; the particle "[expresses] the basic idea of the action and so acquires a verbal force whilst the preceding verbs (…) are confined to a modal, or instrumental function (…)" (Bacchielli 1993: 58) and "the main communicative function (…) is carried by the particle" (Side 1990: 146). *Run away* thus means 'away oneself by running', and *to stare someone down* means 'to down someone by staring' (Bolinger 1971: 49). Classifying phrasal verbs in this way is very helpful for students because they are presented systematically and logically. Bolinger (1971), Lipka (1972), and Side (1990), among others, provide such particle-oriented classifications.

The learning problem is increased by the polysemy of many phrasal verbs. Not only are there non-idiomatic and idiomatic meanings, one phrasal verb can also

have several idiomatic meanings, as the examples with *take in* illustrate. The combination of highly frequent and very 'meaning-flexible' verbs like *get, take, make, put, bring, give* or *set* and semantically elusive particles like *on, off, out,* or *up* makes for ambiguous lexical units which can confuse (and frustrate) learners. "(…) the combination of a usually very common and often monosyllabic verb with one of a small group of particles does not seem to lend itself to easy learning" (Cornell 1985: 273). *Look for* and *look after*, for example, are confused even by advanced learners as Cornell points out.

Semantic, contextual and register restrictions prove a further obstacle. Although phrasal verbs often correspond to one-word verbs, there is usually no total congruence, as the whole concept of synonymy is indeed always a question of degree: phrasal verbs "are often more specific in meaning than their "equivalents" and often carry connotations which their potential users must be aware of" (Cornell 1985: 275). To give but one example, *put up with* and its Latinate 'equivalent' *tolerate* cannot be used interchangeably: *put up with other people's opinions* conveys a certain degree of unwillingness while *tolerate other people's opinions* is more neutral. However, precisely these contextual restrictions are often swept under the carpet in teachers' and course books' explanations and definitions of phrasal verbs; students are not made aware of these restrictions. Learning the Latinate verb is easier than learning the phrasal verb, especially if it also occurs in the students' native language (cf. Side 1990: 145) or other foreign languages studied – there is only one word with one precise meaning which will be remembered more easily. Furthermore, the Latinate verb may seem more learned to students. Since it sounds more formal students may believe that the use of more 'sophisticated' words makes them appear more proficient and native-like, not being aware that in certain situations the use of a Latinate verb is inappropriate. *Stop admonishing the children* is not very likely to be heard among parents; the more colloquial *tell off* will rather be used: "They [phrasal verbs] are frequently used in preference to verbs of Classical origin, which have similar meanings but unsuitable overtones of formality, pomposity or difficulty" (McArthur & Atkins 1974: 6). Apart from the awareness of specific situational contexts, learners also have to be sensitive as to the context words with which phrasal verbs can occur. Their collocability with other lexemes is thus yet another

factor impeding easy learning. To give but one example, *they hit it off immediately* cannot be altered to **their friendship hit off immediately*.

A further complicating factor is the learners' L1 systems which may differ considerably from that of English, the language they are learning. Transfer and interference, i.e. the positive and negative influence of a learner's mother tongue on his or her target language production, have long been recognised as having great impact on foreign language acquisition. Transfer and interference processes can work on all linguistic levels, e.g. phonologically, semantically or lexically. Since the present study is primarily concerned with the use of phrasal verbs by Italian and German students of English, only the relevant structural similarities and differences of Italian and English and German and English will be considered here.

In Italian, phrasal verbs as such exist; they even behave very similarly to English phrasal verbs both with regard to syntactic structure and degrees of idiomaticity. The particle can be separated from the verb, and the (pronominal) object can be inserted in between verb and particle as in English:

(6a)	Put down the suitcase	Metti giù la valigia
(6b)	Put the suitcase down	Metti la valigia giù
(6c)	Put it down	Metti la giù
(6d)	*Put down it	*Metti giù la

As for idiomaticity, the same cline from transparent to opaque as in English can be observed:

(7a) Butta giù la chiave dal balcone. (He throws the key down from the balcony.)
(7b) Butta giù qualche parola. (He writes down some words in a hurry.)
(7c) La morte di sua moglie gli butta giù davvero. (His wife's death afflicts him terribly.)

There is, however, a great difference in use and frequency. In English, these verbs can be found in all registers (cf. Biber et al. 1999), whereas in Italian, they are mostly restricted to colloquial, spoken language (cf. Dardano & Trionfo 1997: 333). Compared to the vast amount of English phrasal verbs, the number of Italian 'verbi frasali' is very small so that there are no special dictionaries for them. Furthermore, in contrast to English, their productivity is rather low. Although Italian 'verbi frasali'

are so similar to phrasal verbs, they are not modelled on their English counterparts; rather, their origin appears to lie in Southern Italian dialects (cf. Simone 1993: 95).

In German, phrasal verbs do not exist but there is a superficially similar verb type, i.e. particle verbs. Although historically related – the inseparable-prefixed verb from which the English phrasal verb developed and which is partly retained in present-day German goes back to the common ancestor Gothic (cf. Hiltunen 1983: 41) – present-day English phrasal verbs and German particle verbs differ with respect to grammatical structure.

Syntactically, in non-finite forms of German particle verbs the particle is agglutinated to the verbal stem in preverbal position. It occurs in post-verbal position only in finite verb forms when prefix and stem are separated (infinitive: *an*ziehen; finite (present): ich ziehe *an*; non-finite (present perfect): ich habe *an*gezogen). What appears to be an independent particle in finite verb forms is in fact a detached prefix. Although this seeming correspondence of German and English (*ich ziehe an – I put on*) may tempt one to believe that "German particle verbs and English PVs [are] prime candidates for cross-linguistic identification, and thus for transfer" (Neumann & Plag 1995: 94), one has to be cautious. To name but one syntactic difference between the two, syntactic transformations applicable to English phrasal verbs do not hold for German particle verbs, e.g.

(8a)	Ich ziehe die Hose *an*.	I put the trousers *on*.
(8b)	*Ich ziehe *an* die Hose.	I put *on* the trousers.

Even if a structurally similar verbal type exists in a learner's L1, this does not mean that its L2 'counterpart' is acquired easily. "[T]here will still be problems because the associated syntactic and phonological constraints would differ from the L1 to the L2 and, from the point of view of contrastive analysis, result in negative transfer" (McPartland 1989: 153). This is in fact an additional problem for German learners. Due to the notorious asymmetry of English and German prepositions, mistaken cross-linguistic identifications are pre-programmed. As a recent study of 25 prepositional collocations of the type *responsible for*, *depend on* or *reason of/for* has shown (Waibel 2005a), even in advanced learners' productions more than half of all

mistakes are native-language induced. Not only is the particle as used by German learners often a direct translation of a German preposition, German students are also prone to "use relexifications of German complex verbs" (Neumann & Plag 1995: 96), such as *give up* instead of *hand in* for German *abgeben* (example by Neumann & Plag 1995: 97).

As for semantics, German particle verbs, like English phrasal verbs, can have both idiomatic (*aufgeben – give up*) and non-idiomatic meaning (*wegwerfen – throw away*); they can furthermore be polysemous (*aufgeben: give up (hope) – send (a letter)*). However, according to Neumann and Plag (1995: 95-96) idiomaticity need not be a hindrance to German learners' understanding and learning of phrasal verbs. Rather, "the central problem for a German learner of English is (..) to sort out the similarities and dissimilarities in the semantics of German and English verb particle constructions" (Neumann & Plag 1995: 96). They claim that similar metaphors in English and German enable Germans to transfer semantic structures from their L1 to English. Although this may be true in some cases (e.g *find out – herausfinden* or *give up – aufgeben*), the example they give is not very convincing – *run out* in the sense of *not have enough left* hardly corresponds to German *ausgehen*, literally *go out*. As for the comprehension of phrasal verbs,

> in many cases outright calquing into German is a successful learner strategy. English *give up*, or *eat up* can be directly related to German *aufgeben* and *aufessen*, respectively. Again, the fact that the particular meanings are highly idiomatic can be completely ignored since both languages use the same kind of expressions. In other cases, calquing may lead to undesired results. *Close up*, for example, expresses more or less the contrary of what is suggested by the combination of German primary counterparts *schließen* and *auf*. (Neumann & Plag 1995: 96)

Some phrasal verbs are understood by intra-lingual transfer, e.g. the analogy of *eat up* and *drink up*, while for others there is no relation to the learners' L1 (e.g. *show off*).

In sum, phrasal verbs present the foreign language learner with a host of syntactic, semantic and contrastive intricacies. As was shown in the above discussion, all learners of English alike are confronted with a verbal structure which

on the one hand is indispensable for native-like English but which on the other hand exhibits so many inherent difficulties that it becomes very demanding for learners to achieve good results. Depending on structural differences between the learners' L1 and their L2, these difficulties are further increased, while similarities between the two linguistic systems can be beneficial. A further point that should be borne in mind is that being able to understand phrasal verbs does not necessarily imply being able to use them (correctly) (cf. Cornell 1985: 270).

3. Learner corpora

3.1 General

Learner English has always interested linguists to varying degrees, but since the 1990s, when new resources for the investigation of learner English started to emerge, this interest has taken a flying leap.[51] The corpus-linguistic approach, almost omnipresent in present-day descriptive linguistics, has entered this area and opened up new possibilities for the study of learner language. One need only take a look at the increasing number of publications in this area to see the great variety of research approaches. To name but a few recent studies, Altenberg and Tapper (1998) investigate the use of adverbial discourse markers in advanced learner writing; Granger (1997) compares participle clauses in native and non-native academic writing; Ringbom (1998) researches high-frequency verbs in a learner corpus. [52]

The advent of a new generation of learner corpora in the early 1990s, marked most notably by the *International Corpus of Learner English* (*ICLE*, cf. chapter 3.3), instigated a renewed interest in the study of learner language. Present-day learner corpora are defined by Granger (2002: 7) as "electronic collections of authentic FL/SL textual data assembled according to explicit design criteria for a particular SLA/FLT purpose. They are encoded in a standardised and homogeneous way and documented as to their origin and provenance." The idea of collecting production data by foreign language students goes back to the 1970s, when Error Analysis (EA) was employed to validate empirically the hypotheses put forward by Contrastive Analysis (CA). However, there are a number of important differences between the learner data collections of EA and present-day learner language corpora.[53]

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[51] Cf. Granger (2004a: 129): "[T]he CLC [computer learner corpora] movement has recently gained new momentum and CLC projects (…) are mushrooming in all parts of the world."

[52] Others are e.g. Axelsson and Hahn (2001), De Cock (1998, 2000), Lorenz (1999), and Virtanen (1998). A bibliography on learner-corpus related studies, which is updated regularly, can be found at <http://juppiter.fltr.ucl.ac.be/FLTR/GERM/ETAN/CECL/learner%20corpus%20bibliography.html>. Note that this chapter does not claim to be an exhaustive state-of-the-art report on learner corpora.

[53] Cf. Pravec (2002) and Prat Zagrebelsky (2004) for an overview of present-day learner corpora. A further list of learner corpora can be found at <http://leo.meikai.ac.jp/~tono/lcorpuslist.html>. Also Granger (2004a) is an excellent overview of learner corpus research.

First of all, the principal aim of early learner corpora[54] was to provide a source of information about errors rather than offer the possibility of investigating the manifold aspects of interlanguage. EA researchers set out with a specific research question in mind, with the data base geared to this need. Instead of using free production data, as is done in present-day learner corpus linguistics, the text material was usually elicited by multiple choice tasks or picture stories. Errors were extracted and categorised, whereas the rest of the data was neglected: "EA researchers focused on decontextualized errors and discarded the rest of the learner's performance" (Granger 1998b: 6). Essential strategies in foreign language learning, such as the over- or under-representation of structures, went unnoticed.

Another major difference pertains to corpus size. Since 1970s' computer technology was not as advanced as today's EA text collections had to be small enough for manual compilation and analysis. This lack of sufficient data for representative corpus size entailed restricting the analysis to grammatical features. Lexical aspects were often limited to the examination of false cognates. Quantitative lexical studies, e.g. in the area of phraseology, were not feasible. A major benefit of present-day learner corpora is that, due to the possibility of compiling large samples by means of the computer, both frequent and infrequent linguistic features can be analysed easily. It should be pointed out, however, that learner corpora still not achieve the number of words of native corpora as learner data is more difficult to obtain. Not all students of a foreign language submit their homework, essays and papers electronically; and also texts produced as part of exams or classroom exercises are usually handwritten, ensuing a time-consuming manual preparation for electronic accessibility "to ensure that the original learner text is faithfully transcribed with no new errors introduced and all the original ones kept (Granger 2004a: 125). However, even if large learner corpora may be desirable as they provide a large amount of data they are not necessary for all types of learner research (cf. Granger 2004a: 125).

[54] As a matter of fact, the term '(learner) corpus' in the context of 1970s' data collections is not taken to correspond to the term 'corpus' as it is used in present-day corpus linguistics for large, computerised and systematic collections of language data. In the present context it refers to any collection of learner texts and is used interchangeably with the expression 'learner texts/data collections'.

Thanks to present-day technology, corpus data is easily accessible by automatic retrieval programmes such as concordance and frequency tools. These facilitate analyses to a great extent, even if the manual sifting of the material cannot be avoided if useful qualitative results are to be gleaned. The availability of native and non-native corpora combined with computer tools enable EFL researchers to investigate phenomena like unnaturalness or avoidance "which were never addressed in the era of EA" (Granger 1998b: 6). Tools to compare different corpora, for example, can serve to identify words which are over- or underrepresented when compared to another corpus. Granger (2004a: 128f.) further mentions the usefulness of annotation in computer learner corpus research. By and large, present-day computer learner corpora offer a whole range of research possibilities in interlanguage studies, rather than restrict the analysis to mere error counts and explanations.

Computerisation also means that learner data can be accessed more easily and more widely. Given that the corpora are available to the linguistic community different researchers can use the same data for individual purposes. This reduces the problem of incomparable results from studies based on different corpora as was usually the situation with studies from the 1970s; consequently, more reliable conclusions about learner language are possible.

An additional advantage of present-day learner corpora over 1970s' error collections is that features of (non-)naturalness in learner speech and writing can be detected more easily. The degree of (un-)idiomaticity of learner English is often reflected in the under- or overuse of specific features compared to native English. This approach to learner language is feasible only thanks to the existence of computerised corpora, since sufficiently large text samples are needed for this kind of research. Some learner corpora come with their own corpus of comparable native speaker data, e.g. *ICLE* and *LOCNESS* (*Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays*). However, even if a learner corpus is not complemented by its own control corpus, the great variety of specialised native English corpora allows research in this field. The *British National Corpus* (*BNC*) for example covers a wide variety of registers and genres of English so that corresponding categories can be found.

A further discrepancy lies in the approach to design parameters. EA corpora were compiled depending on each researcher's individual needs; data and results from different studies were thus difficult, if not impossible, to compare. There was "considerable variation in the numbers of subjects, in the backgrounds of the subjects, and in the empirical data, which come from tape-recorded samples of speech, from student writing, from various types of tests, and from other sources" (Odlin 1989: 151). It is thus almost impossible to draw general conclusions about learner language from these individualistic studies. In the present day, learner corpus variables are approached and recorded more carefully (cf. Ellis 1994: 49).[55] Through comprehensive documentation, both of informant characteristics and of corpus design, it is possible to investigate the influence of such factors as age, sex, or the learners' L1 or L3 on their performance.

In addition to describing learner language in general, learner corpora can be used to shed light on important theoretical issues in foreign language teaching and learning research. On the one hand, they can serve to facilitate the analysis of interlanguage, with the scope of identifying learner-specific problems and of devising teaching materials tailored for the actual needs of learners. The potential and limitations of native and learner corpora for foreign language pedagogy are addressed below. On the other hand, learners' interlanguage can be explored in order to detect und describe processes relevant for foreign language acquisition, such as avoidance, transfer and interference, and learner universals. In chapter 3.3, this potential will be discussed on the basis of the *International Corpus of Learner English*.[56]

[55] One example of a computer learner corpus with very homogeneous design parameters is the *International Corpus of Learner English*, which will be presented in chapter 3.3.

[56] The key issues of learner corpus linguistics are also accounted for by e.g. Granger (2002) and Prat Zagrebelsky (2004: 43-47).

3.2 The potential and limitations of using corpora in foreign language pedagogy

The usefulness of native English corpora for foreign language teaching started to be recognised in 1987, when John Sinclair published *Collins Cobuild*, the first dictionary to use authentic data from a native speaker corpus of English (cf. Leech 1997: 13). This project established an important link between language pedagogy and corpus linguistics, and it "gave rise to a whole range of EFL tools based on authentic data" (Granger 1998b: 6).[57] Also reference grammars, such as *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (Quirk et al. 1985) or *Collins Cobuild English Grammar* (Sinclair 1990) rely for the most part on examples extracted from corpus material, as does an interactive online grammar, the *Internet Grammar of English*.[58] The *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (Biber et al. 1999) is based entirely on corpus data from the *Longman Spoken and Written English Corpus*, which contains 40 million words. The advantage of using corpus-attested examples in learner dictionaries and reference grammars is obvious: instead of presenting learners with intuitive, constructed examples, 'real' language use is documented.

However, testing text-book language against real data is only one side of the coin. Efficient teaching material also needs to be based on information gathered from the analysis of non-native language. Native and non-native speakers' performances combined can form a sound basis on which to develop tools for the foreign language learner. While native speakers provide information of what is typical of their native language, learner corpora help identify specific areas of difficulty in foreign language learning. Even though this seems a logical approach to creating efficient and learner-related tools, "materials designers are content with a very fuzzy, non-corpus-based view of the needs of an archetypal learner" (Granger 1998b: 7). However, results of the co-operation between learner corpus linguistics and designers of teaching materials have emerged. Some examples of learner language-based dictionaries are the *Longman Language Activator* (1993), the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*

[57] Other mono- and bilingual dictionaries based on authentic language data are e.g. *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (*OALD*, Hornby & Wehmeier [7]2005) or *Collins German-English/English-German Dictionary* (Terrell et al. [5]2004).
[58] See <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/internet-grammar>.

(1995, 2003), the *Longman Essential Activator* (1997, 2000, cf. Gillard & Gadsby 1998: 163-70), and the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2003). While such lexicographic approaches have been developing quickly, "learner corpus data (…) have yet to find their way into EFL grammars" (Granger 2004b: 294). This is mainly due to the fact that learner data need to be fully error-tagged in order to be useful to designers of EFL grammars. Not only can error-tagging reveal overt mistakes, such as wrong verb complementation, it is also of great importance for the analysis of e.g. omission errors, "a category of errors which is entirely beyond reach if the corpus is not annotated" (Granger 2004b: 295). In spite of the fact that error annotation is a very complex and time-consuming process, work is underway – samples of the *International Corpus of Learner English* are currently being error-annotated (cf. footnote 3 in Granger 2004b). This work will hopefully lead to grammars geared specifically towards the needs of learners.

Even in the foreign language classroom itself, computers and corpora can play a – more direct – role. Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) has been making use of computer technology for more than 30 years (cf. Levi 1997: 1). The tendency to include native speaker corpora in the teaching syllabus, on the other hand, is more recent. One reason for this is that "learners know through experience or instinctively that schoolbook texts are frequently not genuine" (Amor 1999: 7); besides, learners want to know what is going on in the country they learn about at school. There are several possibilities of employing authentic language in the teaching and learning process. Granger (2007) suggests using a corpus in the same way as a grammar or a dictionary in foreign language teaching: only a single computer in the classroom is necessary to be able to solve e.g. prepositional problems by consulting native language data. A student can search for the relevant concordances (e.g. *example of* versus *example for*), trying to identify the underlying patterns. Not only will this hands-on approach motivate students, "it is a great help for teachers, most of whom are non-native teachers of English and (…) do not always have the answer to all usage-related questions" (Granger 2007: 4).

Furthermore, students can become involved more directly. They can investigate the corpus according to a specific task set by the teacher or approach the data open-mindedly, investigating topics they are interested in, such as different uses

of words in different contexts (cf. Barlow 1996: 30). "Data-driven learning" (Johns 1991) offers a new perspective for foreign language learners: "the inductive acquisition on the part of students of grammatical rules or regularities through the process of analyzing the patterns language use of specifically selected items as revealed through corpora" (Partington 1998: 6) gives learners the possibility of becoming language researchers themselves. Corpora "allow learners to problematize language, to explore texts, and to authenticate discourse independently and collectively, adding to the reality of the corpus the reality of their own experience of it" (Gavioli & Aston 2001: 244). Learners will gain a new understanding of language, becoming more aware of complexities and subtleties inherent in the foreign language. This learner-centred approach is certainly more inspiring than the mere study of what the teacher imposes and will encourage continuing research. Another way to include corpus information in teaching is that teachers analyse the corpus themselves in order to investigate actual language use, provide authentic utterances for exemplification in the classroom, or produce teaching materials tailored for a specific purpose (cf. Barlow 1996: 30).[59]

The usefulness of learner language data in the foreign language classroom is stressed by Granger and Tribble (1998: 201). The comparison of native and non-native language usage can make students aware of typical learner problems and help them resolve these difficulties.[60] This is true especially of the lexicon: "Probably best suited are co-occurrences of words, especially if the co-occurring words are adjacent, such as prepositions or complementation of verbs, nouns and adjectives" (Nesselhauf 2004b: 141). In practice, concordance lines from learner corpora can for example be given to students with the task of identifying mistakes. This is what Osborne (2004: 251) calls a "bottom-up approach". The next step would be the consultation of native corpora so that students become aware of the correct or more idiomatic solution.[61]

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[59] The following two websites provide useful examples for data-driven learning:
<http://www.geocities.com/tonypgnews/units_index_pilot.htm>
<http://www.eisu.bham.ac.uk/johnstf/ddl_lib.htm>.

[60] Cf. example task (Granger and Tribble 1998: 202-203); for an example of how students can be made aware of semantic nuances of words with similar meanings, cf. Granger and Tribble (1998: 206-207).

[61] For a more exhaustive account of the potential of learner corpora in foreign language pedagogy cf. e.g. Bernardini (2004), Granger (2002: 21-26), Mukherjee (2002, 2003), Nesselhauf (2004b, 2005b), and Prat Zagrebelsky (2004: 41-43). Aston et al. (2004) covers a variety of topics, approached from various perspectives, related to using corpora in the language classroom.

There are, however, several drawbacks to the extensive use of native and non-native corpora in foreign language teaching. First of all, many corpora are available only to a small community of linguists, while schools often lack the funds to acquire large corpora. This disadvantage can, however, be remedied to some extent in two ways. On the one hand, British newspaper archives – *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Independent*, etc. are all available on CD-ROM. On the other hand, a large number of corpora are accessible via the World-Wide Web.[62] Furthermore, easy and simply designed computer software that does not overtax the user is needed. Additionally, the teacher must be aware of which corpus serves best for which kind of investigation, how traditional and innovative teaching methods can be reconciled, and how learners are best taught to optimise their research (cf. Gavioli & Aston 2001: 245). Apart from these difficulties, further problems arise concerning teaching staff – they need to be willing to test new methods in language teaching, and if so, they need to be trained to use corpora effectively and efficiently. And even if teachers are motivated to do this, the incorporation of corpus data in the teaching process might still fail because most teacher training programmes do still not include any corpus modules (cf. Granger 2007: 5).[63] What is more, in a survey conducted by Mukherjee (2004), it emerged that only about ten percent of about 250 qualified English language teachers were familiar with corpus linguistics. There is thus clearly a need to equip teachers with skills to make use of corpora and corpus linguistics – after all, "if most teachers lack this knowledge, they cannot be expected to *exploit corpora to teach languages* nor to *teach [their students] to exploit corpora*" (Mukherjee 2004: 244; italics in original). However, if schools do not have the financial means at their disposal to include corpus work in their curriculum (some schools might even lack the technical requirements, i.e. a large enough number of computers), all efforts and open-mindedness to test innovative methods are in vain.

Carter (1998) and Cook (1998) are critical of corpus linguists' call to employ native speaker corpora in language teaching. Carter (1998: 45-47) justly exemplifies the discrepancies between actual occurring and pedagogically intended language.

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[62] The Virtual Language Centre website provides several corpora in English and other languages: <http://vlc.polyu.edu.hk/default.htm>.

[63] Cf. also Mukherjee (2004: 240): "[C]orpus-based methods have not yet exerted much influence on teaching practice in the English classroom in Germany."

Whereas an invented dialogue does not represent the naturalness of authentic language, but is easy to comprehend and reproduce, genuine examples extracted from corpora might present patterns or lexical uses that are unusual, needlessly complex and therefore futile for didactic purposes. Furthermore, 'real' language "is often messy and untidy, and embedded deeply in cultural understandings of various kinds to the point where individual words and choices of grammatical forms can be of considerable cultural significance" (Carter 1998: 48, cf. also Amor 1999: 5, Osborne 2004: 252). The belief that learners will be encouraged to perform more naturally when culturally loaded expressions are emphasised is misleading. Foreign language learners are often unaware of inherent cultural implications and so are "very likely to produce corpus-attested but contextually inappropriate language" (Cook 1998: 60). Besides, the question arises whether foreign language learners actually want to acquire native-like English (cf. Cook 1998: 60). Perhaps they simply want to be able to communicate in the foreign language. Even if native-like proficiency is the final aspiration of learners "it would still not follow that frequency and desirability are the same" (Cook 1998: 61). Highly frequent expressions are neither necessarily 'correct' nor sophisticated: "it is often the infrequent word or expression which is most powerful and most communicatively effective, and therefore most sought after" (Cook 1998: 61). What is more, authentic language frequently deviates from patterns commonly taught at school. *If*-clauses are a case in point where real English not always conforms to textbook English (cf. Mukherjee 2004: 246). Another example is the use of the perfect tense together with a past time marker which, contrary to textbook advice, is not uncommon in native English (cf. Osborne 2004: 252).

Gavioli and Aston (2001) argue that rather than imitate native speaker behaviour, learners should "interpret [corpus data] to create models of their own" (2001: 240).[64] Cook furthermore points out that real language use cannot be presented to learners in the way that it was found in the corpus, since "the description of English which emerges from corpus analysis (…) is dauntingly complex and particular" (Cook 1998: 61). Students would be overtaxed if confronted with these pieces of information. Rather, teachers need to filter and simplify their corpus

[64] For an example of how a learner can utilise a corpus in order to create a linguistic model serving his or her individual needs, see Gavioli and Aston (2001: 240-241).

examples to make them easily accessible for students. This simplification, however, would provoke a distortion of the language encountered in the corpus, possibly reducing it to examples that can just as well be constructed by materials designers and teachers in the first place.

As the above discussion illustrates, corpora might not be as good and efficient a tool in the foreign language learning classroom as is claimed by the most fervent advocates of data-driven learning. Corpus-based work in the classroom can, however, serve as an excellent and positive complement to traditional methods, even if, clearly, it cannot be considered as a comprehensive 'stand alone' methodology.[65]

However, major obstacles, such as including corpus training in the education of future teachers and motivating teachers to make use of corpus-based teaching methods in their everyday teaching, have to be overcome first before corpus-based teaching can actually be successful in the foreign language classroom. A further problem is the fact that there is still a gap between corpus linguists' and EFL teachers' perspectives. Until now, learner corpus research has usually been conducted by corpus linguists rather than SLA specialists (cf. Hasselgård 1999: 152, Granger 2004a: 134), although recently also SLA researchers have been acknowledging the usefulness of learner corpora to "empirically validate previous research findings obtained from smaller transcripts, as well as to test explanatory hypotheses about pace-setting factors in second language acquisition" (Housen 2002: 108). Considering that "[a]pplied corpus linguistics, i.e. research into the use of corpora in the EFL classroom, finds itself at the crossroads of corpus-based descriptive linguistics, SLA research and language pedagogy" (Mukherjee & Rohrbach 2006: 207), it seems logical that "the most constructive way forward is to recognise and act upon the need for empirical classroom-based action research conducted by teachers who are aware of the potential as well as the limitations of corpus linguistics" (Seidlhofer 2002: 215), bringing together corpus linguists and teaching specialists. In the same vein, Mukherjee and Rohrbach suggest that "applied corpus linguists be more aware of the language-pedagogical side of things in the EFL

[65] Cf. also Meunier (2002) for a discussion of the value of native and non-native corpora in foreign language teaching.

classroom" (2006: 211), processing results from learner corpus analyses in a way that teachers can benefit from them.[66]

3.3 The *International Corpus of Learner English* and its potential for foreign language acquisition research

The *International Corpus of Learner English* (*ICLE*), a project launched by Sylviane Granger in 1990, is the first large-scale collection of argumentative, non-specialised learner essays. The essays were produced by higher intermediate to advanced EFL university students from – at the time of writing – 20 different native language backgrounds. The international orientation of this learner corpus takes account of the fact that English is learnt and spoken all over the world. *ICLE* is a complement to the *International Corpus of English* (*ICE*), a project initiated in 1990 at the University College London. *ICE* and *ICLE* together realise a model proposed by Kachru (1985) concerning the spread and distribution of English throughout the world. While the various ICE sub-corpora cover the Englishes spoken and written by native speakers of English (the "inner circle", Kachru 1985: 12) and by speakers from countries where English is the official language (the "outer circle", Kachru 1985: 12),[67] the *ICLE* sub-corpora encompass many of those countries in which English is learnt as a foreign language (the "expanding circle", Kachru 1985: 12). The combination of these two corpus projects therefore represents the entire range of varieties of English.

Although a thoroughly planned corpus design is essential to provide any researcher with a sound basis – after all, "the results are only as good as the corpus" (Sinclair 1991: 1) – this aspect is particularly crucial in the context of learner corpora. Foreign language learners will always be heterogeneous groups even though the level of proficiency may be the same. Within one group, there may be male or female students with a different age from different social backgrounds and with different motivations to learn the language. If different parameters are applied to different groups of learners from different countries, a comparison of results would become difficult, if not impossible. In designing *ICLE*, Granger followed Ellis' (1994: 49)

[66] Cf. Mukherjee and Rohrbach (2006) on how this integration can work.

[67] For more information on *ICE* see Greenbaum (1996b) or refer to the *ICE* website at <www.ucl.ac.uk/english-usage/ice/>.

criteria for learner corpora: medium, genre, content, level of proficiency, mother tongue, and language learning experience (Granger 1996a: 15-16). Other variables are sex, region, other foreign languages, practical language experience, task setting and topic (Granger 1998b: 9-10).

These variables are all recorded on the *ICLE*-CD, the first edition of which was released in 2002 (cf. Granger, Dagneaux & Meunier 2002).[68] The great advantage of this CD lies in the opportunity for researchers to create their own tailor-made corpus since all language- and learner-related variables can be manipulated by the user via an interface. Apart from studying the *ICLE* corpus as a whole, it is thus possible to investigate the influence of factors such as sex or the experience in an English-speaking country on learner production.

Table 2 summarises the variables relevant for the *ICLE* sub-corpora:

Table 2: Design parameters for learner corpora

	Factors	**Description (Ellis 1994)**	***ICLE* (Granger 1996a)**
Language	Medium	Oral or written	Written
	Genre	Conversation, lecture, letter, essay, etc.	Essay
	Content	Topic the learner is communicating about	Argumentative, non-technical
Learner	Level	Elementary, intermediate, advanced	Advanced: undergraduate students of English in their 3rd or 4th year at university
	Mother tongue	The learner's L1	Various (cf. footnote 68)[69]
	Language learning experience	Classroom or naturalistic or a mixture of both	Classroom: EFL, not ESL learners, with some having spent some time in an English-speaking country

The target size for each national *ICLE* sub-corpus was set at 200,000 words, each sub-corpus consisting of 300 to 400 different learners (cf. Granger 1996a: 16). The essays range from 500 to 1000 words each. Compared to native corpora such as the *BNC* with its 100 million words, the *ICLE* sub-corpora are obviously relatively small;

[68] The CD contains eleven national corpora (Bulgarian, Czech, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Italian, Polish, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish). Further sub-corpora (Brazilian, Chinese, Greek, Japanese, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Portuguese, South African (Setswana), and Turkish) will be included in a later version.

[69] Refer to <www.fltr.ucl.ac.be/FLTR/GERM/ETAN/CECL/cecl.html> for the latest developments concerning the *ICLE* project.

however, as pointed out in chapter 3.1, the size of the *ICLE* corpora is very much advanced in comparison to early EA data.

In relation to corpus size and compilation criteria, the following research objectives were set for research based on the *International Corpus of Learner English*:

> (a) to uncover the factors of non-nativeness or foreign-soundingness in advanced learner writing, in areas of syntax, lexis, and discourse. (…)
> (b) to distinguish between L1-dependent features (i.e. those features which are due to transfer from the mother tongue) and cross-linguistic invariants, i.e. those features which are common to all advanced learners, irrespective of their mother tongue. (…) (Granger 1996a: 17)

Non-nativeness is a facet of learner language typical of advanced students which has not been paid much attention to in former research on learner language. Morphological or syntactic errors are a common problem for beginners and intermediate learners, whereas advanced learners often over- or under-represent specific features, which results in an unnatural, unidiomatic style. In order to detect features of "foreign-soundingness", a control corpus of native student essays called *LOCNESS* (*Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays*) was compiled.[70]

The second objective of *ICLE* research focuses on an issue of major importance in foreign language learning: the influence of the mother tongue. Selinker (1992: 17) considers transfer as "a basic, if not *the* basic, SLA learning strategy". In the same vein, Granger (1996a: 17) "[views] transfer as a key phenomenon in SLA." The direct comparison of learners from different native language backgrounds allows conclusions as to whether erroneous features in the target language can be traced back to the respective native languages, or whether they are characteristic of several groups of learners. Extensive comparative interlanguage studies of different national learner groups can therefore contribute greatly to the knowledge of SLA processes and learner universals. However, the reservations concerning the representativeness of corpora in general obviously apply to learner corpora as well (cf. Kennedy 1998: 62-66). The data used for the *ICLE* sub-corpora are naturally only a small selection of

[70] *LOCNESS* is a collection of British A-Level essays and of academic writing of British and American university students. It will be described in more detail in chapter 4.3.

all possible learner productions. Generalised conclusions about processes of foreign language learning are therefore to be considered with care. Nevertheless, on the whole *ICLE* covers a great range of native languages (cf. footnote 68); it can therefore be assumed that results are valid to a great extent for most SLA processes.

The methodology adopted by Granger (1996b) stresses the significance of contrastive analysis (CA) for the investigation of learner language.[71] However, instead of relying on the traditional contrastivist procedure of comparing the structures of a learner's native and target language (e.g. German and English), Granger adopts Selinker's (1989) model and contrasts native English with learner English. She terms this approach "Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis" (CIA): "Unlike classical CA, CIA does not establish comparisons between two different languages but between native and learner varieties of the same language" (Granger 1996b: 43). A second dimension to CIA results from the very design of *ICLE*. Not only can native English be compared with the target language variety of one learner group, e.g. the English by Finnish learners, to uncover unnatural features of learner English. It is further possible to contrast the interlanguages of several learner groups and to distinguish individual NL transfer from learner universals. Granger (1996b: 47) integrates the traditional CA model and the innovative CIA model and emphasises that a combination of both serves best for a comprehensive research of learner language. By means of CA data, hypotheses about interlanguage can be formulated. These can then be tested against CIA data. Conversely, in order to verify whether results from CIA analysis can be related to NL transfer, CA descriptions provide the necessary information.

This approach to learner language, especially if it is used with data from several national *ICLE* sub-corpora, offers promising insights into the nature of foreign language acquisition. However, although the importance of this two-way

[71] CA, i.e. the comparison of the learner's target language with his or her native language, was extensively employed in the 1960s and 1970s in order to identify problematical areas for the foreign language learner. It was supposed that structural divergence in the two languages would provoke learning difficulties, and that consequently learners "tend to transfer the forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture" (Lado 1968 [1957]: 2). The influence of the mother tongue therefore holds an important position in CA. However, as was soon evidenced by empirical evidence from EA, no more than 30% of all errors were attributable to NL influence (cf. Fisiak 1993: 317). CA was consequently relegated to a secondary position, but it was never completely abandoned.

comparison – a NL-TL comparison on the one hand, and a comparison of the performance of different learner groups on the other – was already stressed by Odlin (1989: 28), transfer studies, even within the *ICLE* framework, often content themselves with investigating the performance of only one learner group. This is also pointed out by the initiator of the *ICLE* project, Sylviane Granger: "Most studies use a CIA-type methodology and tend to involve L1-L2 rather than L2-L2 comparisons (…)" (Granger, Dagneaux & Meunier 2002: 44). If cases of suspected transfer occur, they are verified individually by quantitative evidence from other learner groups. Those aspects not explainable by native language transfer are then usually attributed to learner universals, even without further qualitative analyses (e.g. Granger & Tyson 1996). Results from such studies therefore remain speculative until further, more exhaustive validation of a comparative nature is adduced. Although in previous research more than one *ICLE* sub-corpus was used as well, this research was generally limited to quantitative rather than qualitative findings (e.g. Aarts & Granger 1998, Altenberg & Granger 2001, Ringbom 1998, Virtanen 1998). The present study, however, goes beyond by consistently comparing two different learner groups, i.e. Italian and German learners of English. For both *ICLE* sub-corpora, quantitative and qualitative analyses will be carried out, thus providing a substantial comparison of two different learner Englishes. However, the learner data will also be checked against a native student corpus (cf. chapter 4.3) so that Granger's CIA methodology is exploited to the full extent.[72]

At this point, the limitations of *ICLE*-based research should be pointed out which lie in the corpus as such. As Granger (2007: 3) herself states, *ICLE* "only targets one specific category of learners performing one specific task: essay writing", that is, the corpus is limited to one genre and one medium only. Furthermore, only one proficiency level, i.e. intermediate to advanced learners, is represented. Proficiency level is a problem in itself. Although all students are third- or fourth-year university students, there are nevertheless differences in proficiencies. In countries like Germany, the teaching of English at school has a much longer tradition than in countries of the former Eastern Bloc where Russian used to be the most important

[72] Cf. also Nesselhauf (2006) for a discussion of the potential of *ICLE* for the investigation of learner output.

foreign language studied at school. But also differences between e.g. Polish and Spanish students could be observed, with Spanish learner productions showing a lower level of proficiency than Polish ones (cf. Kaszubski 2000). The reasons for such proficiency differences are probably different teaching methods on the one hand, and a stronger motivation for students from the former Eastern Bloc to learn English on the other hand, as English is frequently equated with better job opportunities.

These disadvantages are however clearly made up for by the thorough design parameters and the large variety of different mother tongue backgrounds. What is more, work is underway to compile a spoken equivalent to *ICLE* – the *LINDSEY* corpus (*Louvain International Database of Spoken English Interlanguage*) currently counts contributors from eleven different countries and promises to be as excellent a source for spoken learner language as *ICLE* is for written learner language.[73] As for the potential of *ICLE*-based research on SLA research, especially that fact that advanced learner productions are analysed is beneficial. SLA research has generally focused on beginners, also due to the fact that advanced learner language was until now not much researched and "poorly described in the literature" (Granger 2004a: 135). With the large variety of *ICLE*-based approaches, the description of advanced learner language has progressed so much that SLA researchers can now approach the underlying theoretical generalisations.[74]

[73] Cf. <http://cecl.fltr.ucl.ac.be/Cecl-Projects/Lindsei/lindsei.htm> for more information.

[74] Cf. McLaughlin (1987: 80): "The emphasis in Interlanguage theory on description stems from a conviction that it is important to know well what one is describing before attempting to move into the explanatory realm. There is a sense that as descriptions of learners' interlanguage accumulate, answers will emerge to the larger questions about second-language acquisition."

4. Methodology

4.1 Preliminaries

The advantages of a corpus-based approach to language are evident. Examples of real and contextualised speech substitute the linguist's constructed and decontextualised examples. A great amount of available data and a variety of authors or speakers provide a more representative panorama of authentic language than any text constructed according to the linguist's needs could do. The corpus-based investigation of the writing of foreign language learners offers the opportunity to gain useful and important insights into the difficulties various groups of learners encounter at different stages of the learning process. Learner corpus linguistics can therefore contribute not only to a better understanding of learner language, but also to the improvement of teaching materials.

There are different possibilities of accessing corpus data. Granger (1998b: 16) considers the "hypothesis-finding" approach most suitable for the investigation of learner language because it allows for a wide range of possible hypotheses. The data is examined at random and the researcher analyses those aspects that strike him or her as interesting. In contrast to a "hypothesis-based" approach (Granger 1998b: 15), which commits the analyst to a specific goal, i.e. to test the hypothesis put forward, the researcher adopting the hypothesis-finding approach can decide after the first insights which aspects are worth following up.

A further methodological issue concerns the choice between the "quantitative-statistical" and "qualitative-textlinguistic" approach (Mair 1991: 67). Although the quantitative approach provides enlightening insights into e.g. the frequency of specific features, thus enabling the linguist to judge their importance in language use, it does not – unlike a qualitative reading – supply the information why this feature is used very frequently or very rarely. Rather than commit oneself to one method, Mair (1991) suggests combining both to gain a thorough understanding of language use: "The role of the corpus, after all, is not only to provide a limited and representative data-base for statistical analysis, but also to provide authentic and realistic data, the close reading of which will allow the linguist to approach grammar from a functional and discourse perspective" (Mair 1991: 77).

In the subsequent data analysis, the corpora will be considered from different perspectives. With the hypothesis in mind that, due to their manifold inherent difficulties (cf. chapter 2.2.2), phrasal verbs will be underused by learners of English, the data will first be approached from the quantitative point of view in order to discern patterns of under-representation. Subsequently, an in-depth qualitative analysis of the German and Italian *ICLE* components with respect to phrasal-verb use will be carried out. The analysis will be conducted in the spirit of Granger's "hypothesis-finding" approach although some central research questions will be borne in mind (cf. chapter 4.5); both quantitative and qualitative aspects of corpus-linguistic research will be combined in order to glean essential insights into German and Italian learners' interlanguage. Wherever possible, statistical tests will be applied in order to substantiate the significance of findings. The results of the corpus analysis will be presented in chapters 5 and 6.

4.2 The tools

In order to analyse the corpus data WordSmith Tools version 3.0 (Scott 1998) was used. This software package consists of a suite of tools for lexical analysis, two of which are especially useful for the present study: Wordlist and Concord.

Wordlist provides essential textual statistics of a corpus or sub-corpus, including the overall numbers of tokens, types and sentences, type/token ratio and average sentence length. It furthermore displays all the words of the texts chosen for examination in alphabetical order and in order of frequency. While this is very helpful with regard to quantity, it is less useful for a qualitative analysis: "The frequency list is very useful as a means of isolating words from the surrounding detail of the text so that they can be surveyed in this way, but the lack of this detail also prevents us from seeing precisely how these potential labels are actually used" (Barnbrook 1996: 65-66).

The concordance tool displays the items selected for detailed analysis in their original context, thus enabling the linguist to draw conclusions about their use: "A concordance is a list, arranged in an order specified by the user, such as the order of

appearance, of the occurrences of items in a source text, where each occurrence is surrounded by an appropriate portion of its original context" (Oakes 1998: 149).

Wordlist and Concord therefore combine well for a two-step research into quantitative and qualitative aspects of language use – Wordlist "strip[s] the words of their surrounding context so that we can concentrate on them as individual words and make decisions based on their potential linguistic behaviour" (Barnbrook 1996: 66), whereas with Concord the items identified as worth researching can be explored in their discourse context.

4.3 The data

As was already pointed out, the *International Corpus of Learner English* will be used as the database for the present study. More precisely, following the Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis (CIA) methodology described in chapter 3.3 (Granger 1996b), the German and Italian components of *ICLE* (henceforth called *G-ICLE* and *I-ICLE* respectively) will be compared to each other as well as to the native control corpus, the *Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays* (*LOCNESS*). In the following, the corpora will be presented in more detail.

Several universities collaborated in the compilation process in order to reach the target size of 200,000 words per national corpus (cf. chapter 3.3). In the case of *G-ICLE*, essays were collected at the universities of Augsburg, Basel, Dresden and Salzburg;[75] for *I-ICLE*, the data were gathered at the universities of Bergamo, Milan (La Statale and La Cattolica), Rome (La Sapienza and Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali), Turin, and the Università del Piemonte Orientale at Vercelli. *LOCNESS*, the native control corpus, consists of essays by American university students from Marquette University, Indiana University at Indianapolis, Presbyterian College/South Carolina, the University of South Carolina, and the University of Michigan; the British component is made up of British A-level essays and university student writing by students of the University of Surrey in Guildford. For the present study, the A-level essays of *LOCNESS* were excluded so as to model

[75] As an Austrian and a Swiss university contributed to the German component of *ICLE*, 'German' is taken to mean 'German-speaking', rather than implying nationality.

native speaker and learner groups as closely as possible; the native corpus thus consists exclusively of university student writing. *LOCNESS* contains a total of 297 essays, 90 by British university students, and 207 by American students.

The essays for *G-ICLE* and *I-ICLE* were selected by means of the learner profiles on the *ICLE*-CD. The search criterion was 'native language German' for *G-ICLE*, and 'native language Italian' for *I-ICLE*, resulting in 447 'German' essays and 398 'Italian' ones. Surprisingly, not only essays coded GE for German universities and IT for Italian ones came up in this search.[76] Out of the 447 essays by students with German as their native language, 14 had a country code other than GE. One was coded with DN (Dutch), 11 with FR (French), and two with SW (Swedish). In the case of Italian as native language, seven essays have a country code other than IT; four are coded with FR (French), and three with GE (German). There are two possible explanations for this. One is that some of these essays were written by foreign (German and Italian) exchange students who happened to be at the respective universities when the *ICLE* sub-corpora were being compiled; the fact that these essays were not written by Dutch, Swedish, French or German native speakers must have gone unnoticed during the compilation process. The other explanation is that some essays were written by bilingual students who rate their ability of one language over the other, but who are regular students at a German- or Italian-speaking university.

G-ICLE and *I-ICLE* were extended by 11 and 6 essays respectively which, according to the compilers, had to be discarded because "[they] did not have the necessary learner profile information" (Granger, Dagneaux & Meunier 2002: 28). However, these unspecified essays can still be found on the *ICLE*-CD, even though they are not linked with the learner profile interface. Although it is very probable that these essays were produced by native speakers of German and Italian, they will be excluded from analyses where variables such as experience in an English-speaking country come to bear. Furthermore, *G-ICLE* contains three essays where the students' native language is unspecified, but where the first language at home is German (GEAU1021, GEAU1068, GEDR1018). The total number of essays is 461 in *G-*

[76] Cf. Granger, Dagneaux and Meunier (2002: 27-28) for the coding system.

ICLE and 404 in *I-ICLE*. The essay codes are given in appendix 1; unspecified essays are listed separately.

In order to determine the total number of tokens in the corpora, WordList statistics was used. Since file headers were not deleted from the essays and since the corpora are minimally annotated with respect to quotes (<*> or <quote>), bibliographical references (<R>), and illegible words (<?> or <?word?>) (cf. Granger, Dagneaux & Meunier 2002: 19), the option 'ignore tags activated' was selected. Anything between angle brackets was thus not counted. However, since the tag for illegible words is not separated by a space from the illegible word in question, this tag was checked manually to include those words. The total number of words in *LOCNESS* is 263,974;[77] in *G-ICLE* it is 242,161; and in *I-ICLE* it is 231,385.

Table 3 summarises the information on the corpora.

Table 3: Corpus information

	Tokens total	**Number of essays**	**Average lengths of essays (tokens)**
LOCNESS	263,974	298	886
G-ICLE	242,161	461	525
I-ICLE	231,385	404	573

Due to the corpora's different sizes, figures will be extrapolated to one million words in order to guarantee comparability of data. The figure of one million words was chosen as reference point so as to obtain integers rather than fractions. Frequencies normalised to this standard will be given in all the following tables, except indicated otherwise.

4.4 The choice and extraction of phrasal verbs

The two major methodological problems in the present context concern the definition of phrasal verbs and the question of how to extract them from the corpora. As pointed out in chapter 2.1, many linguists consider only idiomatic verb-particle combinations as 'proper' phrasal verbs; combinations where each element retains its

[77] Due to technical irregularities with regard to WordSmith, the total number of words in *LOCNESS* given here differs from the total number of words in previous publications (Waibel 2005a, 2005b).

distinctive meaning are seen as free combinations (e.g. Quirk et al. 1985). Nevertheless, in the present study both literal and idiomatic verb-particle combinations will be investigated as a clear-cut differentiation between what is literal and what is idiomatic or figurative is in many cases unfeasible (cf. chapter 2.1). Therefore, constructions of the type "He walked out of the building" and "He walked out on his wife" are both considered. Although in various studies on learner use of phrasal verbs, a distinction is made between literal and figurative phrasal verbs, usually to determine the degree of learning difficulty (cf. chapter 2.2.1), no such separation will be carried out in the present research. First, as already pointed out, often no such straightforward differentiation is possible, in part due to the polysemous meanings of phrasal verbs which often fade into one another (cf. also chapter 2.1); second, as the present study is not primarily concerned with semantic aspects, the number of phrasal verbs in the corpora is too large to conduct a thorough semantic analysis.

As far as structural aspects of phrasal verbs are concerned, the present study will include those types of multi-word verbs which Quirk et al. (1985: 1150) call 'phrasal verbs' and 'phrasal-prepositional verbs', i.e. transitive and intransitive verbs plus adverbial particle, and transitive and intransitive verbs plus adverbial particle plus preposition.[78] In order to distinguish transitive phrasal verbs ("run down a friend") from the superficially identical prepositional verbs ("run down the hill"), syntactic tests as given by Quirk et al. (1985: 1167) will be applied. To include 'prepositional verbs' (verb plus preposition plus prepositional object) in the analysis would be beyond the scope of this thesis; besides, the problems learners of English have with prepositional verbs are different to those of phrasal verbs. The major problem when students use prepositional verbs is not the idiomaticity of the expression but the correct choice of preposition. As was shown in Waibel (2005a), both German and Italian learners frequently omit or insert a preposition, or choose an incorrect one, mainly due to mother tongue interference or the mix-up of two target language structures. Phrasal verbs, on the other hand, are problematic mainly due to their opaqueness. Therefore, a comparison of prepositional and phrasal verbs

[78] For the sake of readability, the term 'phrasal verb' is in the following used for both 'phrasal' and 'phrasal-prepositional' verbs.

in learner writing is a moot point, not least because prepositional verbs will outnumber phrasal verbs in any corpus.

The category 'phrasal-prepositional verbs' included in this study comprises combinations such as *look forward to*, *put up with*, and *do away with*, which are usually idiomatic, but also such combinations as *take away from*, *get out of*, or *look out of* which can be argued to consist of a verb (*take*) plus a multi-word preposition (*away from*).[79] However, since the particle in these combinations often has literal meaning, and since both literal and idiomatic combinations are considered in the present study, it is justifiable to analyse these multi-word verbs as verb (*take*) plus (literal) particle (*away*) plus preposition (*from*) and thus to include them in the analysis (cf. also Quirk et al. 1985: 1151).[80]

Table 4 sums up the types of phrasal verbs investigated in the present study:[81]

Table 4: Types of multi-word verbs included in the study

Multi-word verb	**Consisting of**	**Meaning**	**Example**
Phrasal verb	Intransitive verb + particle	Literal	Come in, Peter.
Phrasal verb	Intransitive verb + particle	Figurative	Susan finally settled down.
Phrasal verb	Transitive verb + particle	Literal	He took out the rubbish.
Phrasal verb	Transitive verb + particle	Figurative	They took in a homeless person.
Phrasal-prepositional verb	Intransitive verb + particle + preposition	Literal	A man came out of the burning building.
Phrasal-prepositional verb	Intransitive verb + particle + preposition	Figurative	Seven students came up with the correct answer.
Phrasal-prepositional verb	Transitive verb + particle + preposition	Literal	Sarah put the book back in the shelf.
Phrasal-prepositional verb	Transitive verb + particle + preposition	Figurative	He took his anger out on his wife.

[79] This analysis is favoured by the CLAWS 8 tag set which was used to automatically tag the *F-LOB* and *Frown* corpora, the 1991 and 1992 updates of the *Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen* and *Brown* corpora of British and American written English.

[80] Combinations of the type *it is out of doubt* or *to be up to date* are not considered since the particle does not have literal meaning and clearly forms a unit with the following preposition (not the verb).

[81] Only verbal uses of phrasal verbs will be paid attention to in this study. Nominal uses like "the break-up of present-day marriages" will not be considered.

Due to the fact that phrasal verbs are a highly productive area of the English language (cf. chapter 2.2.2), it is impossible to list all potential verbs which can be combined with an adverbial particle. The number of particles, however, is restricted.[82] Johansson and Hofland (1989) list 20 adverbial particles which combine with verbs to create phrasal verbs. All of them will be considered in the data analysis, together with five further particles not mentioned by Johansson and Hofland (1989) but by Quirk et al. (1985). The following is a complete list of all particles considered in the analysis; those marked by an asterisk are the ones mentioned by Quirk et al. (1985: 1151).[83]

Aback*	Around	Down	Out	Under
About	Aside	Forth	Over	Up
Across	Away	Forward*	Past	With
Ahead*	Back	In	Round	Without
Along	Behind	Off	Through	
Apart*	By	On	Together*[84]	

The extraction of phrasal verbs from the corpora poses a major methodological problem. In order to shed light on learner behaviour in this area and to receive a general impression of the quantitative use of phrasal verbs in advanced learner writing, the first step is to search for frequent and common phrasal verbs in the corpora. It is essential not to base a list of frequent and common phrasal verbs in learner writing on existing frequency lists – which would be problematic anyway as

[82] Cf. also Mitchell (1958: 105): "'Bring, come, get, go, keep, run, put, take, turn, send, fall, stand, look, set' are productive verbals of the category, but although it should be possible to establish a closed system of particles, this would hardly be practical for the verbal component."

[83] Apart from the particles given by Johansson and Hofland (1989), Quirk et al. (1985: 1151) list further particles: *above, astray, home, in front, on top, under*. In the corpora used, these did either not occur at all (*astray*) or only in prepositional uses. *Home* is excluded because it is considered to be perceived by learners as a noun rather than an adverb.

[84] *Together* will be counted as adverbial particle only when it is not in opposition to *alone*: *Live together* is not considered phrasal because it contrasts with *live alone*. Constructions like *scratch together* or *mix together*, on the other hand, will be included. In these cases, the particle cannot be substituted by *alone*; it has intensifying meaning and furthermore passes the pronoun test given by Quirk et al. (1985: 1167):

> We *scratched together* all the money we had./We *scratched* all the money we had *together*.
> We *scratched* it *together* vs. *We *scratched together* it.

Biber et al. (1999: 410) is basically the only one[85] – as such lists are usually based on native English and do not necessarily reflect learner behaviour. Therefore, on the basis of the native control corpus *LOCNESS* and the German and Italian *ICLE* sub-corpora, a list of phrasal verbs frequent in learner writing was set up in order to find out how learners in general, that is, across all eleven *ICLE* sub-corpora, use them, more specifically whether phrasal verbs are generally underused by learners of English. In chapter 5.2, the results of the quantitative analysis of these 72 items will be reported.[86] The methodological aspects of the research for this general survey will be discussed here and it will become clear that, although it is a possible approach to receive a general impression of the use of phrasal verbs in learner English, it is not sufficient for the present research's specific aim – the in-depth analysis of phrasal-verb use by two specific learner groups.

Using the WordList tool, the ten most frequent main verbs likely to form part of a phrasal verb in the native corpus *LOCNESS* and in the German and Italian *ICLE*-components were identified. They are *bring, come, find, get, give, go, keep, make, put,* and *take.* Apart from *find, give, keep,* and *make*, the verbs from the native and the learner corpora correspond to Biber et al.'s (1999: 413) list of verbs particularly productive in forming phrasal verbs; Biber et al. further list *set* and *turn*. In order to create a list of phrasal verbs likely to be common in the corpora, these verbs were then combined with *down*, *in*, *off*, *on*, *out*, and *up*. These particles are listed in Biber et al. (1999: 413) as particularly productive for the formation of phrasal verbs. The combination of all productive verbs and particles together with further frequent phrasal verbs from Biber et al. (1999: 410) resulted in a list of 72 items altogether (cf. appendix 2). These phrasal verbs were subsequently quantified using WordSmith. It is worth mentioning at this point that although this approach is very useful for a first overall, quantitative, impression, it obviously accounts only for those phrasal verbs which are likely combinations from the point of view of high-frequency verbs and high-frequency particles. All other phrasal verbs are not considered. With regard to

[85] Although Biber et al.'s list consists of only 31 highly frequent phrasal verbs it is useful in the present context because the authors investigated different registers (conversation, fiction, news, and academic prose). Leech, Rayson and Wilson (2001) is not useful for the present purpose as they analyse phrasal verbs as two individual words and not as a single multi-word item (cf. 2001: 8).
[86] Cf. also Waibel (2005b).

the research questions addressed in this study (cf. chapter 4.5) it is however essential that all actually occurring phrasal verbs both in *LOCNESS* and the German and Italian *ICLE* sub-corpora are accounted for. For the in-depth analysis of data from German and Italian students a more fine-grained approach has to be adopted; it will be presented below.

As mentioned before, the corpora are only minimally annotated with respect to quotes, bibliographical references, and illegible words, but not for parts of speech. This renders the data extraction fairly cumbersome. Starting the search for phrasal verbs on the basis of the list of particles is not practical – most of the above listed particles have the same form as prepositions, and as prepositions most of them are highly frequent in any English language corpus. The effort of disambiguating all occurrences is therefore considered too time-consuming. Even if an automatic tagger were applied to the data, it is questionable whether time and work would actually be saved. Personal experience from a project concerned with the manual post-editing of the *F-LOB* and *Frown* corpora (cf. footnote 79) has shown that automatic taggers are not very reliable in the tagging of phrasal verbs. Very often, a particle is tagged as a preposition and vice versa, or the particle is tagged as part of a multi-word preposition such as *up to*. As a consequence, the automatic annotations would have to be corrected manually. A fully automated approach is therefore not feasible.

Basing the analysis on existing lists which include more than 72 frequent and common phrasal verbs (cf. above and appendix 2) does not solve the problem, either, since not all phrasal verbs actually used by learners will be covered. As mentioned above, the purpose of the present study is to provide an exhaustive account of the way German and Italian learners use phrasal verbs. In order to reach that aim without having to go through the entire essays manually, the data will be approached in the following, semi-automatic way. First, the WordList tool will be used to generate frequency lists of all three corpora. Every word occurring in the corpora is listed there, either according to its frequency or in alphabetical order. These lists will be perused in order to filter out all possible verbs.[87] Then, the extracted verbs will be examined with the aid of the Concordance tool in order to cull

[87] In the verb list all items will be included that are potentially used as verbs but that could just as well be used as nouns or adjectives, e.g. *concern, object, claim, calm, cage, credit, delay*, etc.

all phrasal verbs from the corpora. Modal auxiliaries are not considered as these do not combine with particles; all forms of *be*, *do*, and *have* will be examined by means of a context search: Instead of searching the entire concordances of these verbs, the search will be limited by specifying a context word (the particles) within the range of five words left and right of the search word. The extracted phrasal verbs will then be analysed in the light of the research questions (cf. chapter 4.5). Although even this 'verbal' approach is somewhat laborious, it is nevertheless deemed less time-consuming than starting from particle occurrences, even if the number of possible particles may be far more limited than the number of possible verbs. Further methodological aspects crucial to the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data will be discussed in the preliminary sections of chapters 5 and 6.

4.5 Research questions

As Granger (1998b: 16) pointed out, the most advantageous access to learner language is to investigate the data with an open mind, rather than starting out from a fixed hypothesis. The subsequent data analysis will nevertheless centre around some central research questions, but at the same time it will not be restricted to these questions. The data will be analysed in their entirety, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and wherever unexpected results emerge, they will be commented on appropriately. In the following, the central research questions will be presented.

Bearing in mind the structural, semantic, and contrastive difficulties of phrasal verbs (cf. chapter 2.2.2), it is reasonable to assume that learners of English will have problems with this type of verb. The first question to address is therefore whether these inherent difficulties are reflected in a general underuse of phrasal verbs in learner writing, i.e. whether not only Germans and Italians but students in general avoid phrasal verbs due to their complex properties compared to native students. This research question will be confirmed or negated with the aid of a list of 72 common and frequent phrasal verbs (cf. chapter 4.4). The quantification of these phrasal verbs in the eleven *ICLE* sub-corpora will determine the extent to which learners use phrasal verbs; if individual phrasal verbs are underused, it will become

evident whether this under-representation is universal[88] or learner-group dependent. The results of this quantification will be presented in chapter 5.2.

A question following from a supposed underuse of phrasal verbs is whether students resort to other linguistic means instead. As students are often taught phrasal verbs in combination with their Romance one-word 'equivalents' – *tolerate* equals *put up with*, *postpone* is the same as *put off*, etc. – a look into the general vocabulary of learners will be worthwhile to see whether according Romance words feature prominently.[89]

Mother tongue interference is a keyword in any investigation of learner language; it can also go together with underuse. As was pointed out in chapter 2.2.2, the linguistic systems of Italian and German differ from English with respect to phrasal verbs. The near absence of a similar verb category in Italian is believed to lead Italian learners to employ phrasal verbs only to a minor extent. As for German learners, the seeming similarity of English phrasal verbs and German particle verbs might encourage them to use phrasal verbs more liberally, but could at the same time induce them to mistaken literal translations.

The correct and incorrect use of phrasal verbs in general will be analysed as well. The reasons for incorrect use will be examined – was the verb or particle erroneously selected, is the phrasal verb used in a wrong context, is the meaning of the chosen item too broad or too narrow? A question relating to this is learner creativity – do learners form new verb-particle combinations, or do they add new meaning to existing ones? As for correct use, it will be investigated how sensitive the use of phrasal verbs is to the contents of the essays. For example, do essays composed on a more colloquial note exhibit more phrasal verbs than those with a more formal content? Another question worth addressing is that of 'title recycling', i.e. whether students overuse phrasal verbs that occurred in a given essay title.

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[88] The present author is aware of the fact that a feature occurring in eleven different learner groups does not necessarily make it a learner universal, considering the vast amount of other possible learner groups of English. To be in line with other *ICLE*-based research, the term 'learner universal' will be used nevertheless, as the mother tongue backgrounds of the learner groups in question are not reduced to Germanic and Romance languages, but include also Slavic languages as well as Finnish.

[89] However, it should be noted that results of this kind of analysis should be considered with caution as the data stem from free production and not from multiple choice tests where students are given the choice between a phrasal verb and the corresponding single verb.

Finally, the *ICLE*-CD offers the possibility to investigate learner-related issues, as learner variables such as age, sex, or experience in an English-speaking country are recorded on the CD (cf. chapter 3.3). Considering that language proficiency in general increases after a long-term stay in an English-speaking country, the learner profiles can be used to differentiate between students who spent time abroad and those who did not and to investigate whether and to which extent a stay abroad influences phrasal-verb use. Also the use of reference tools, time pressure, and years of classroom exposure to English are likely to have an influence on learner productions in the context of phrasal verbs.

4.6 Some words on terminology

When dealing with learner language, one is inevitably confronted with terms like 'norm', 'native speaker', 'non-native speaker', 'overuse', 'underuse', 'mistake', or 'error'. These terms require some comments in relation to the present study, although an exhaustive theoretical treatment of these subject areas is not intended here.

With the spread of English from first language countries such as Britain, the United States, Australia, or New Zealand, to countries where English is second or official language, e.g. India, Singapore, or Nigeria, to the expanding circle of countries where English is used as a foreign language and as lingua franca in manifold settings (cf. Kachru 1985), defining the norm in the context of English language teaching is problematic. Apart from the British and American standards, other (second language) varieties of English have developed or are developing their own standards which could serve as models (or 'norms') for English language teaching. Furthermore, suggestions have been made to give up on native speaker norms[90] entirely and to base English language teaching for example on a kind of simplified English (e.g. Kasper 1976, Quirk 1982: 37-53), or on "English as an international language" (e.g. Seidlhofer 2000).[91] However, as far as the teaching of

[90] "[E]s hat sich in der Unterrichtspraxis gezeigt, daß *native speaker competence* als Idealnorm des FU [Fremdsprachenunterrichts] für die meisten Adressaten kein realistisches Lernziel darstellt und damit auch als normatives Relat für die Fehleridentifizierung nicht geeignet ist" (Kasper 1976: 48).

[91] The question of the norm in English language teaching has recently been discussed by Nesselhauf (2005a: 37-40).

English in Germany is concerned, the British and American standards have traditionally served as models both in school and university settings and will most probably continue to do so (Gnutzmann 1999: 165). In Italy, although "the British standard has ceased to be the only accepted model as was the case 20 years ago (…) it remains the most widespread model among secondary school teachers and students because of geographical proximity and tradition" (Prat Zagrebelsky 2002: 110).

The British and American English standards are therefore the points of reference in the present study, not least because the control corpus *LOCNESS* is made up of British and American writing. Two important aspects need pointing out. First, 'norm' is not understood as a set of absolute rules which must be followed at all costs and anything not conforming to these rules is 'wrong' or an 'error'. Rather, it is understood as a point of reference or guideline useful for orientation. Second, the student writing from the control corpus *LOCNESS* is not viewed as the norm from which learner language deviates – British and American students, in particular undergraduate students, are not fully educated with regard to their writing style, and they make mistakes just as learners of English, especially when it comes to academic writing.[92]

The terms 'overuse' and 'underuse', concepts common in learner language research, play a role in this context as well. In *ICLE*-based analyses, learner performance is usually assessed according to a native speaker norm as represented by the control corpus *LOCNESS*; an *ICLE* sub-corpus deviates from this native speaker norm if a feature is used more or less frequently by learners than by native students. However, the native essays cannot be used as the yardstick against which learner performance is measured, as student writing – as pointed out above – is not devoid of "linguistic and argumentative idiosyncrasies and shortcomings" (Ringbom 1998: 191). Ringbom suggests using the native corpus as a basis for comparison with the learner essays instead (1998: 191). Furthermore, he advocates that it is not sufficient to consider only one learner corpus: "Only if frequencies in one subcorpus deviate in the same direction from both the NS corpus and several other learner

[92] According to Bolton et al. (2002), student writing is not useful as the target norm for non-native students at all: "The target norm in academic writing, for both 'native' and 'non-native' students is better defined as academic writing itself, and the best texts for comparison are clearly those already published in international English-language academic journals" (2002: 173).

corpora can the terms 'overuse' and 'underuse' be said to be justified" (1998: 191-192). By comparing two learner corpora, this approach will be taken in the present study.

'Mistake', 'error', 'right', 'correct', 'wrong', and 'incorrect' are further precarious terms in learner language research. First of all, in the terminology used in this study, no difference will be made between (performance) 'mistakes' and (competence) 'errors', as is done for example by Corder (1967).[93] Furthermore, when terms like 'wrong' or 'incorrect' are used, no valuation is intended, that is, no judgement is passed on whether errors are good or bad, or whether they should occur or not, etc. Rather, these expressions are used to identify a deviation from what is common in the native English standard. In some cases, it will be necessary to use words like 'inappropriate', 'deviant/deviating', or 'unacceptable'; for example, if a learner uses a phrasal-verb collocation with incongruous context words, such as *carry out revenge*. Such combinations can be understood by the reader; they are, however, unnatural. It will be verified by means of standard dictionaries such as *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (*OALD*, Hornby & Wehmeier [7]2005), Terrell et al. ([5]2004), or *Langenscheidt Collins* (2004) and the World Edition of the *British National Corpus* (*BNC*) whether such collocations exist in English. Further aspects relating to this topic will be discussed in chapter 6.1.

A further controversial issue is the use of the terms 'native' and 'non-native'. While it is common practice in learner language research to refer to those who learn or have learnt English as a foreign language as 'non-native speakers', and to those who were born and raised in an English-speaking country as 'native speakers', these terms are debatable both from a sociolinguistic[94] and a purely linguistic perspective.

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[93] For an exhaustive account of error analysis, cf. James (1998). Error analysis is also treated in Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005), a general "account of how SLA researchers have set about analysing learner language, of the theoretical positions that underlie their enquiries and of the main empirical findings that have resulted from them" (2005: 2).

[94] Neither in countries of the first circle nor in those of the second circle (cf. Kachru 1985), the native/non-native division applies. In the United States, a typical native English-speaking country, a Dutch-Italian family may raise their children in both parents' mother tongues while English is the children's language at school and with their friends. In second-circle countries like India, English may have been acquired formally in a school setting and it may be the dominating language of professional communication but an Indian speaker of English will most probably have grown up with a language other than English. These examples show that there is no rigid distinction between native and non-native speakers (cf. also Cheshire 1991: 2-3, Medgyes 1992: 340-341).

Ferguson (1982: vii) goes so far as to claim that "the whole mystique of native speaker and mother tongue should probably be quietly dropped from the linguists' set of professional myths about language" because, as Medgyes (1992: 341) states, "[e]fforts to define native competence or native-like proficiency have yielded inconclusive results at best." Other linguists arguing along these lines are Rampton (1990) and Paikeday (1985). However, as Medgyes (1992) points out, alternative terms such as 'educated English speaker' or "expert speakers" and "affiliation" (Rampton 1990) "are no less spurious than the concept of the native versus non-native speaker (…) [and] have been left largely unexplained" (Medgyes 1992: 342). In the present context, therefore, the terms 'native' and 'non-native' are retained; 'non-native' is here furthermore used synonymously with 'learner'.

5. Phrasal verbs in advanced learner writing – a quantitative approach

5.1 Preliminaries

The analytical, data-based part of the present study is divided into two major parts, the quantitative and qualitative analyses of linguistic data. Before analysing the data quantitatively, some problematic points require clarification.

It was already mentioned in chapter 4.3 that the corpora have different sizes. For reasons of comparability, all figures in this and the subsequent chapters are therefore extrapolated to one million words as is common in this type of research. To facilitate reading, normalised figures are rounded. For some analyses it will be necessary to calculate with absolute, that is, not normalised, figures; when absolute figures are used it will be indicated specially.

Wherever possible, findings will be corroborated by the chi-square (χ^2) test, a statistical test for bivariate tabular analysis.[95] Further statistical tests used are One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient. These tests establish whether there is a correlation between two variants, or, to put it differently, whether there are differences in variance among independent groups. Also an independent samples t-test will be applied. The t-test assesses whether the means of two groups are statistically different from each other. This analysis is appropriate when the mean values of two independent groups are to be compared. As for the level of significance, in the present study, based on the notion of 'null hypothesis', that is, the assumption that there is no association between two variables, a distribution is assumed to be significant if p (the probability of error in rejecting the null hypothesis) is smaller than or equal to .05 ($p \leq 0.05$). If $p \geq 0.05$ the distribution is not significant. That is, if the distribution is significant, the null hypothesis is refuted; if it is insignificant it is not refuted.

A problem pertinent to the quantification of phrasal verbs is the fact that most phrasal verbs are polysemous (cf. chapter 2.2.2). This raises the question whether a phrasal verb should be quantified 'as a whole' or according to its different semantic meanings. Instead of counting all instances of *bring up*, for example, the phrasal verb

[95] For this test to be valid, absolute figures have to be used. Although most tables will provide normalised figures, results from chi-square are based on absolute figures, even though absolute figures are not listed specifically so as not to impede readability.

could be broken down into its different semantic constituents and quantified as 1. "to rear from childhood", and 2. "to introduce to general notice" (*OED Online*, s.v. *bring up*). The latter approach may be suitable if only a small number of phrasal verbs in native-speaker usage were analysed; in the context of learner data, however, the quantification according to semantic criteria is not feasible. There are too many cases in which the meaning of a phrasal verb deviates from one of the various dictionary meanings and where a clear-cut semantic differentiation is not possible. In the present study, phrasal verbs will therefore be quantified independent of inherent semantic differences.

At some points of the analysis, the terms 'overuse' and 'underuse' will be used. They refer to the fact that learners use specific phrasal verbs more or less frequently than native students. These terms are not intended to carry any notion of the inappropriateness or wrongness of learners using a phrasal verb more or less often than native students; rather, they will be used neutrally to point out differences between the learners and native students (cf. also chapter 4.6). In the attempt to explain over- and underuse, alternatives to phrasal verbs will be investigated, i.e. one-word verbs which can often be used as a synonym to a phrasal verb (cf. chapter 2.2.2). However, it should be borne in mind that the data are based on free essay writing. That is, learners may not have actively chosen the single verbs instead of the phrasal verbs. This effect can only be achieved by elicitation data, as e.g. reported in Dagut and Laufer (1985), Hulstijn and Marchena (1989), or Liao and Fukuya (2004). The search for the use of one-word synonyms of phrasal verbs is therefore understood as a mere indicator of the preference of one over the other, not least because one-word and phrasal verb can only be considered as near synonyms and not as complete ones.

Although the aim of this chapter is to present and discuss quantitative results from the corpus research, the analysis will be complemented with qualitative-interpretative observations at appropriate points as mere quantification risks losing some points important in terms of linguistic substance. As usual in this type of corpus analysis, statistical significance is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for a linguistically substantial analysis of quantitative data.

5.2 General survey: Phrasal verbs in all *ICLE* corpora

In the following, the hypothesis will be tested whether, due to their manifold semantic, syntactic and contrastive difficulties, phrasal verbs are underused by learners in general. As it is not possible to speak of universal features of learner language if only two learner groups are considered, the entire *ICLE* corpus, that is, the eleven sub-corpora recorded on the first edition of the *ICLE*-CD, was analysed with respect to phrasal verbs. Because the quantification of all phrasal-verb tokens in all sub-corpora proved unfeasible, a list of 72 items likely to be frequent was set up; textual frequencies were then established using WordSmith. In chapter 4.4, the methodological aspects of how this list was created were already discussed; the results of the analysis are presented in the following.

Figure 1 records the overall results of the quantification. The hypothesis relevant for this approach was that, due to their manifold inherent syntactic, semantic, and stylistic properties (cf. chapter 2.2.2), phrasal verbs are underused by all learner groups in comparison to native students' writing. The results from the quantification clearly contradict this assumption:

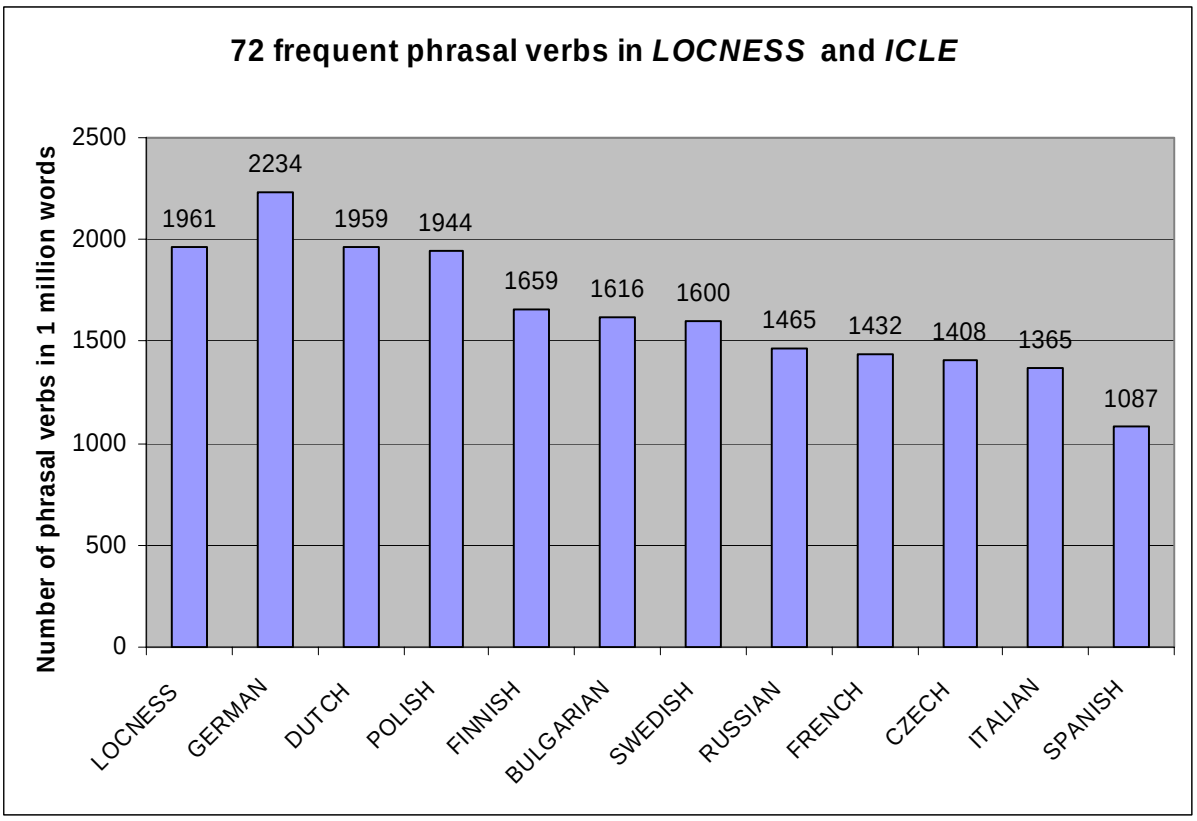

Figure 1: 72 frequent phrasal verbs in *LOCNESS* and *ICLE*

Contrary to expectations, phrasal verbs are not universally underused by advanced learners. German learners stand out from the other learner groups in that they used more phrasal verbs than native speakers. Dutch and Polish learners perform in the same quantitative range as native students while all other learner groups used fewer phrasal verbs than native students. Figure 2 below shows the differences between native students and learners more clearly. [96]

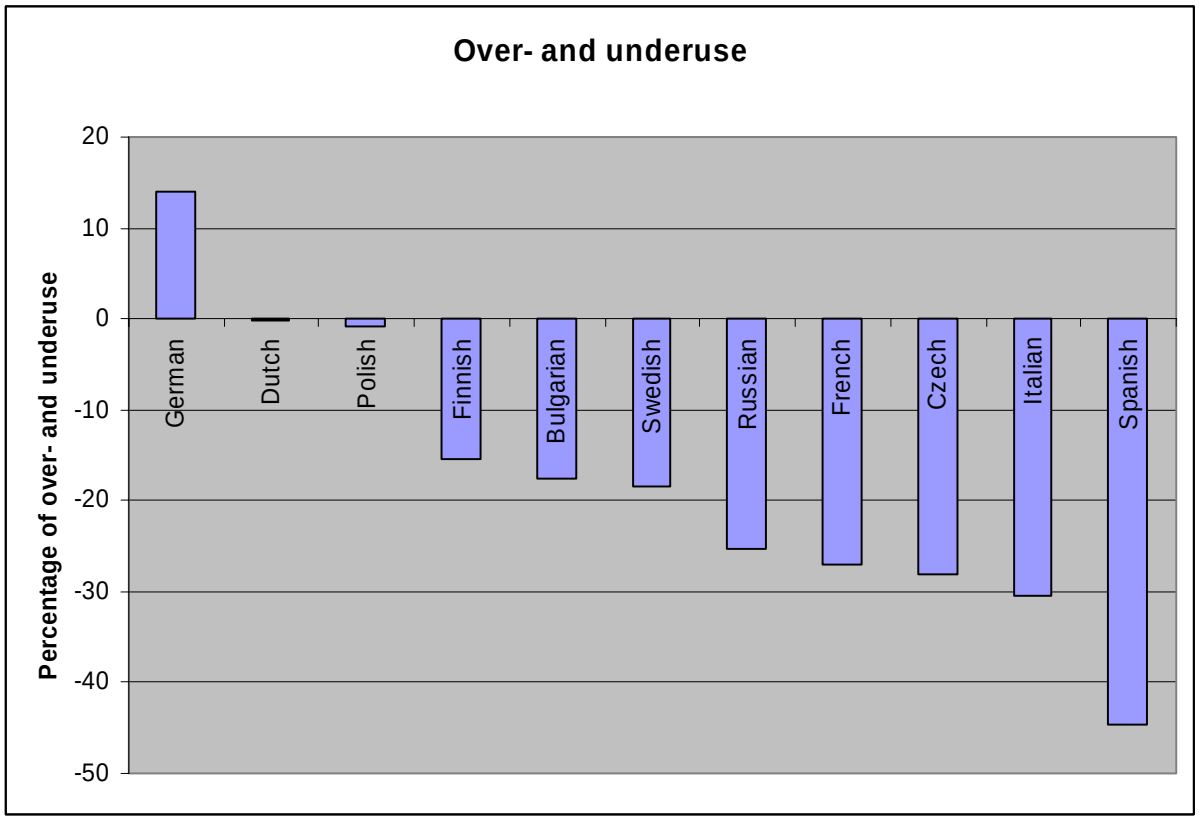

Figure 2: Extent of over- and underuse with respect to native speakers

As the hypothesis of a universal underuse of phrasal verbs in advanced learner writing does not hold, the data were reordered in order to establish how learners with native languages from the same language families performed. Figure 3 records the results.

[96] German +13.92%; Dutch -0.1%; Polish -0.87%; Finnish -15.4%; Bulgarian -17.59%; Swedish -18.41%; Russian -25.29%; French -26.98%; Czech -28.2%; Italian -30.39%; Spanish -44.57%.

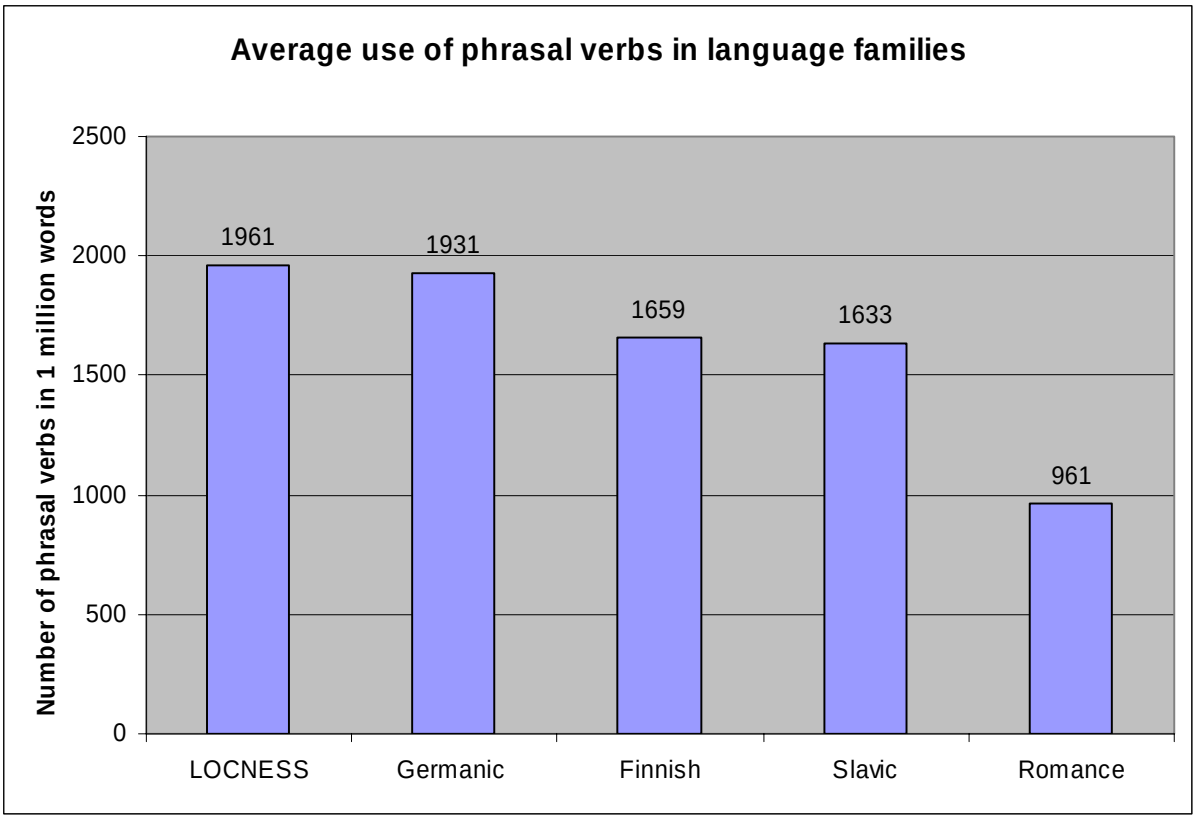

Figure 3: Average use of phrasal verbs in different language families

From this diagram it is obvious that learners with a Germanic native language background performed on a par with native students. Finnish learners and those with a Slavic background used about 300 phrasal-verb tokens less than natives; learners with a Romance native language background used only about half the number of phrasal verbs as native students. Although one can speak of an underuse by students with a Finnish and a Slavic background, the extent of underuse is much more pronounced in the writing of students with a Romance background. This striking feature is in all likelihood due to the fact that in French, Italian, and Spanish, a verb type similar to English phrasal verbs does not exist so that learners are not familiar with this type of verb from their native languages. A further possibility is that learners with a Romance native language background use more Romance-based verbs in English than other learner groups – whether this assumption holds will be tested for Italian as opposed to German learners (cf. chapter 5.3.1). That the lack of a phrasal-verb equivalent in the Romance languages causes the low frequency of phrasal verbs in Romance learners' writing is nevertheless convincing, considering that in German, Dutch, and Swedish, a verb type similar to English phrasal verbs

exists. These students are therefore familiar with this verb type and are able to use it in the foreign language. In the Slavic languages, there are neither phrasal nor particle verbs. The verbal category is structured differently to the Germanic one – verb aspect and aktionsart are marked by pre- or suffixation. In contrast to German, however, these prefixes cannot be separated from the verb. Learners with a Slavic mother tongue background are therefore not familiar with a verb type similar to English phrasal verbs. In contrast to learners from a Romance background, however, phrasal verbs are underused only little by Slavic learners. Their lacking familiarity with a construction similar to phrasal verbs is thus probably compensated for by successful teaching.

Appendix 2 documents the frequency of each phrasal verb investigated in the individual *ICLE* corpora; furthermore, over-, under-, and similar use compared to the native corpus are marked.[97] Summarising the results from appendix 2, of 72 phrasal verbs, only six were underused consistently by all learner groups. Further 15 multi-word verbs were used similarly by learners and by native students while none was consistently overused by all learner groups. Of the 72 phrasal verbs investigated, only five were overused by six or more learner groups, i.e. by more than half of all learner groups; 16 phrasal verbs were underused by six or more learner groups (cf. table 5).

Table 5: Over-, under-, and similar use in *LOCNESS* and *ICLE*

Similar use	*come around, come on, get back at, get down, go ahead, go off, go over, look up to, put in, set down, set in, take apart, take back, take down, turn in*
Underuse by all learner groups	*bring down, carry out, come about, go along, set out, take on*
Overuse by all learner groups	--
Underuse by six or more learner groups	*bring about, bring in, bring on, bring out, bring up, come off, come out, get away, go down, go in, go on, point out, put forward, set up, stand up, take out*
Overuse by six or more learner groups	*come back, come up, find out, make up, turn out*

[97] Similar use (S): +/- 10 occurrences (e.g. *LOCNESS* 10, *G-ICLE* 20, *I-ICLE* 0 = S); underuse (U): less than 11 occurrences compared to *LOCNESS*; overuse (O): more than 11 occurrences compared to *LOCNESS*.

Interestingly, there does not seem to be a difference between transparent and (partly) idiomatic phrasal verbs as far as over- and underuse patterns are concerned although, because of their non-transparent meanings, it could be expected that a larger number of idiomatic phrasal verbs are underrepresented. However, although some highly frequent idiomatic phrasal verbs such as *carry out* or *take on* are indeed underused by all learners, other opaque phrasal verbs are overused, i.e. *make up* and *turn out*. This could be due to teaching – frequent idiomatic phrasal verbs are likely to receive more attention in English language teaching than transparent ones so that students are probably as familiar with highly frequent idiomatic phrasal verbs as with less frequent semi-transparent or transparent ones and do not shy away from using them.[98]

As will be evident from appendix 2, in spite of the fact that some phrasal verbs were underused by all learner groups, the frequencies of individual phrasal verbs are so diverse in the different learner corpora that hypotheses concerning learner universals are beyond question. Even in cases where all learner groups used a specific item less often than native students, the frequencies are so diverse in the different *ICLE* corpora that one can hardly speak of universals. This is illustrated by figures 4 to 6. They chart the frequencies of three phrasal verbs which were used less frequently by all learner groups in relation to native students (*carry out*, *set out*, and *take on*).

[98] Cf. McPartland (1989: 154) who states that "the role of frequency-of-use may override the obstacles to the acquisition of phrasal verbs, even the ambiguity of figurative phrasal verbs."

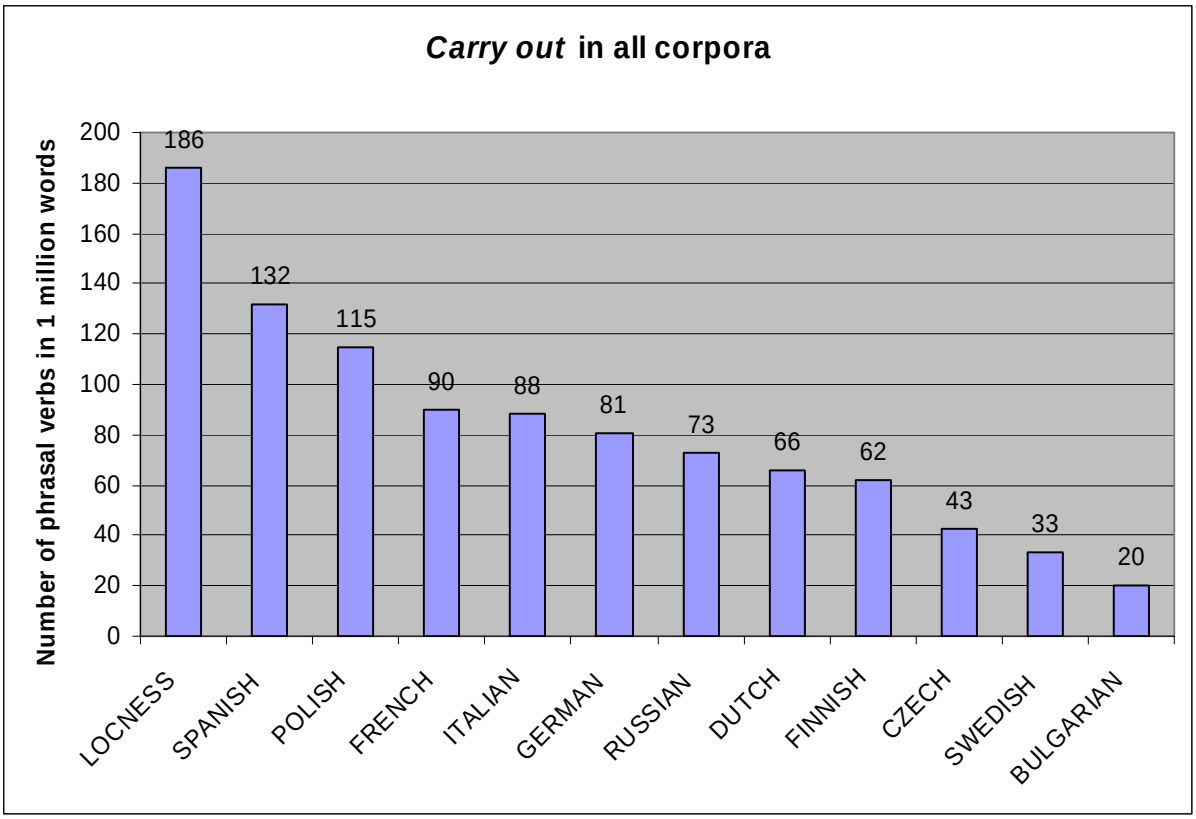

Figure 4: *Carry out* in all corpora

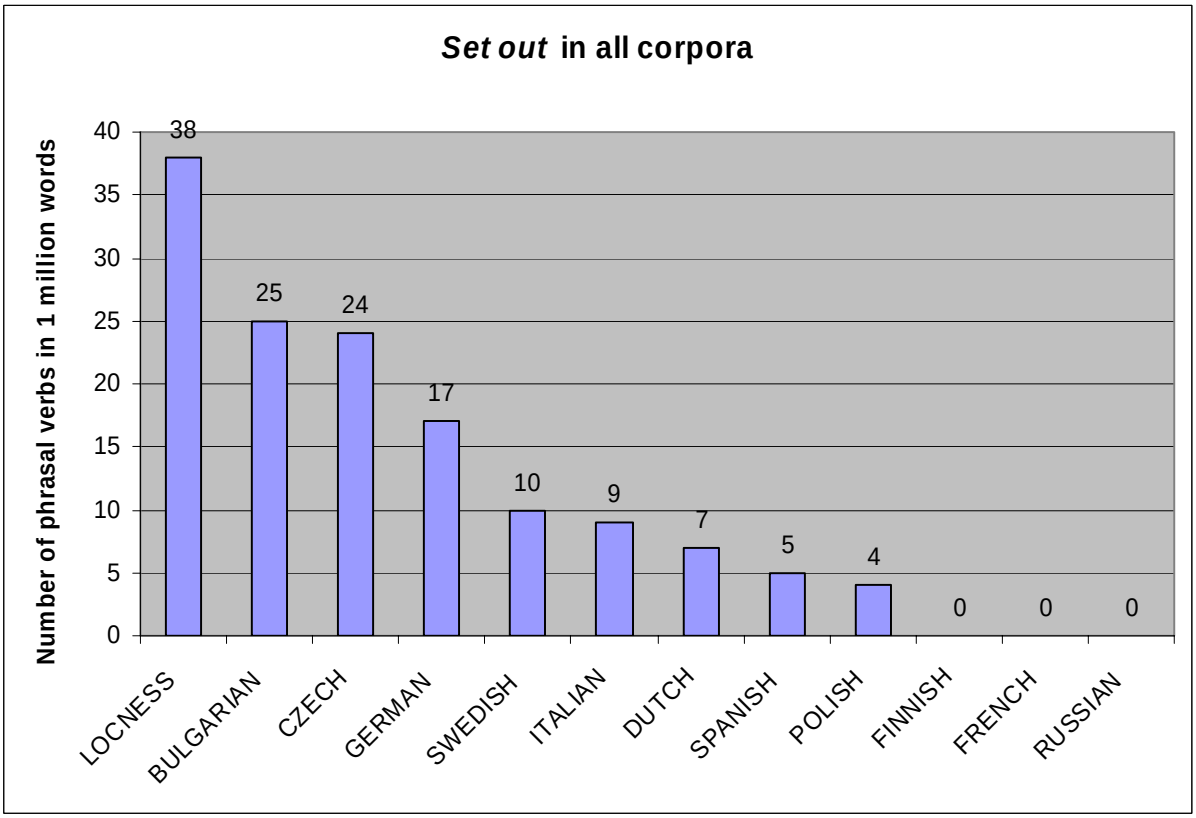

Figure 5: *Set out* in all corpora

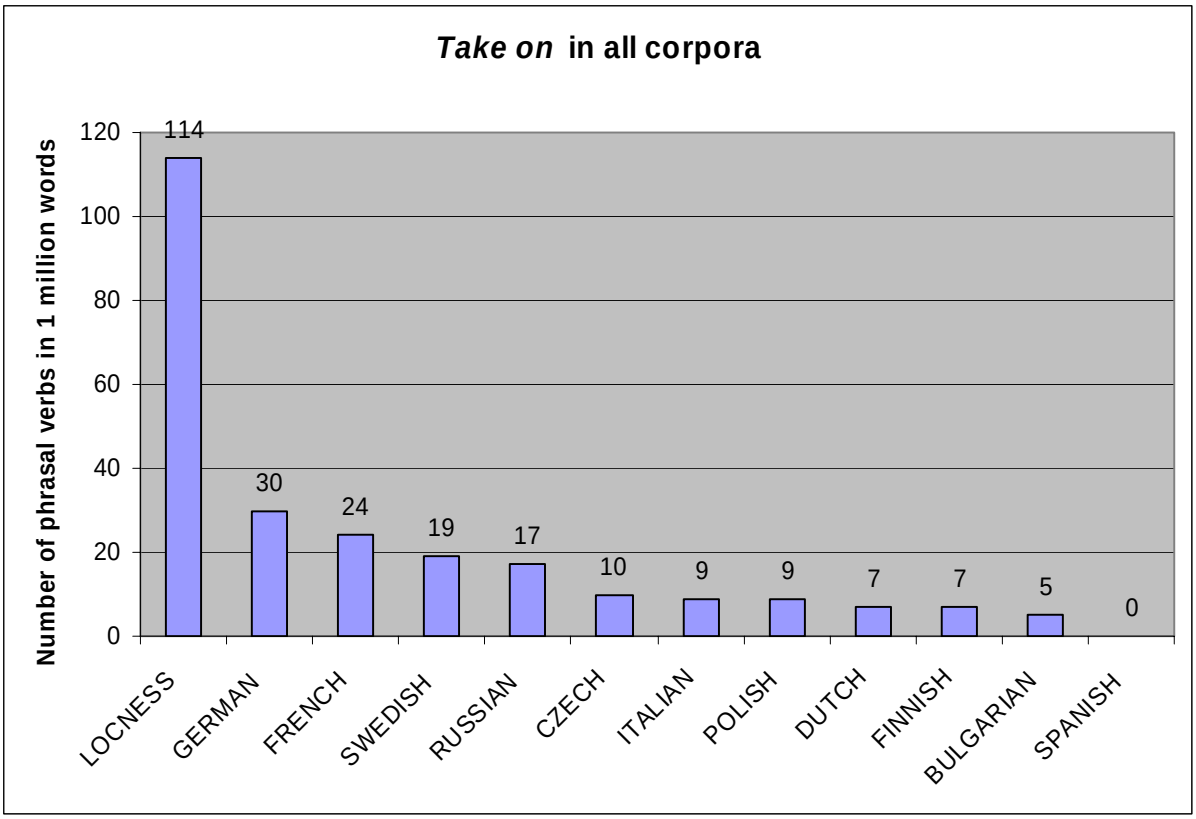

Figure 6: *Take on* in all corpora

Summarising the major results from the general survey, the hypothesis that phrasal verbs are generally used less frequently by advanced learners than by native students could not be confirmed. Although most learner groups used fewer phrasal verbs than native students, two learner groups (Dutch and Polish students) used about the same amount and one group (German students) used even more phrasal verbs than native speakers. Furthermore, among those learner groups underusing them there is strong variation, ranging from Finnish students using 15.4 percent fewer phrasal verbs to Spanish students using 44.6 percent fewer phrasal verbs than native students. It is therefore not appropriate to speak of the underuse of phrasal verbs as a universal feature of advanced learner writing. What is more, even though individual items such as *carry out*, *set out*, or *take on* were used less frequently across all learner corpora, variation within the individual learner groups is too strong to speak of a universal underuse of specific phrasal verbs, as figures 4 to 6 clearly demonstrate.

5.3 Phrasal verbs in the German and Italian *ICLE* sub-corpora

5.3.1 Overall results

As the aim of the present research is to investigate the overall use of phrasal verbs by advanced learners it is essential not only to consider common and frequent phrasal verbs but to investigate the data in a more exhaustive way. Following the methodology described in chapter 4.4, all phrasal-verb tokens were therefore extracted from the native control corpus *LOCNESS* and the German and Italian *ICLE* sub-corpora. Only in this way can an in-depth analysis of phrasal verbs in advanced learner writing be guaranteed. As an analysis of the entire *ICLE* corpus is not feasible on the basis of the methodology described in chapter 4.4, the present research focuses on two learner groups with different native language backgrounds as a case study.

The comprehensive extraction of all phrasal-verb tokens from the native control corpus and the two learner corpora corroborate the findings from chapter 5.2. Overall, German students overused phrasal verbs with respect to native students while Italian learners underused them: from the native corpus *LOCNESS*, 5197 phrasal verbs were extracted; in *G-ICLE* 6475 and in *I-ICLE* 3030 phrasal verbs were found. In terms of percentages, German learners used 24.6 percent more and Italians used 41.7 percent fewer phrasal verbs than native students.

The methodology outlined in chapter 4.4 allowed not only for the quantification of all phrasal verbs but also of main verbs in general, considering that due to lack of part-of-speech annotation, all verb occurrences had to be examined for potential phrasal-verb use.[99] This makes it possible to determine the proportion of phrasal verbs in relation to the overall amount of verbs (cf. figure 7 below). In terms

[99] Modal auxiliaries and *be*, *do*, and *have* were not quantified as modals do not combine with particles and can furthermore not be counted as independent verbs as they qualify main verbs. *Be*, *do*, and *have* would have had to be distinguished for auxiliary and main verb use (omitting auxiliary use) which, due to the lack of part-of-speech annotation, would have gone far beyond the usefulness of the study. At the same time, not to distinguish between auxiliary and main verb use would distort the overall figures as tense marking would be counted individually (e.g. "It *had been* nice" counting as two verbs). Occurrences with an adjectival character were omitted from the verb counts, e.g. *be surprised*, *be upset*. *Going to*-future occurrences were also omitted.

of percentages, the proportion of phrasal verbs with respect to the total number of verbs is 4.7 percent in *LOCNESS*, 6.2 percent in *G-ICLE*, and 2.9 percent in *I-ICLE*.[100]

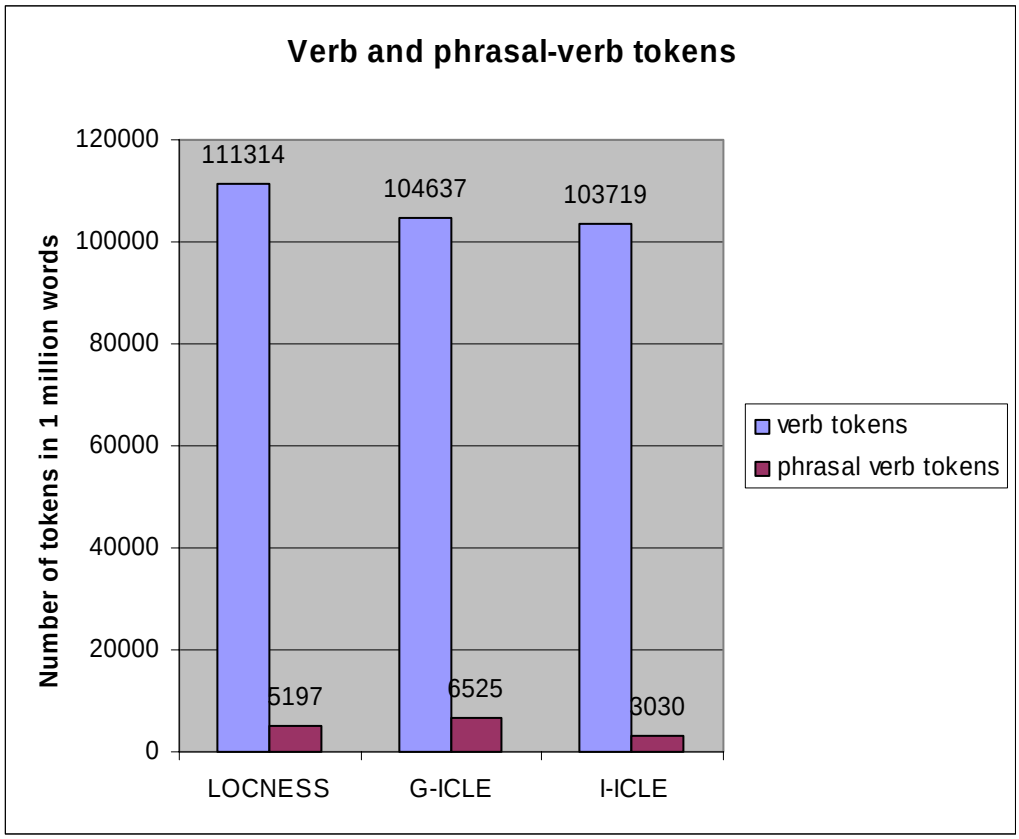

Figure 7: Verb and phrasal-verb tokens

The finding that German learners used more and Italian learners fewer phrasal verbs in relation to the overall number of verbs than native students is further corroborated by the chi-square test; the distribution is highly significant.[101]

Using the online version of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*), all verbs occurring in the two learner corpora were then checked for their etymological background, i.e. whether they are Romance- or Germanic-based. Figure 8 charts the results from this analysis.

[100] Phrasal verbs with *be*, *do*, and *have* are included in these figures although the main and auxiliary uses of these verbs were not quantified (cf. footnote 99 above). The percentage of phrasal verbs in the corpora is marginally lower if phrasal verbs with *be*, *do*, and *have* are excluded from the count (*LOCNESS*: 4.5%; *G-ICLE*: 5.9%; *I-ICLE*: 2.9%).

[101] χ^2: *LOCNESS*:*G-ICLE* p=0; *LOCNESS*:*I-ICLE* p=0; *G-ICLE*:*I-ICLE* p=0.

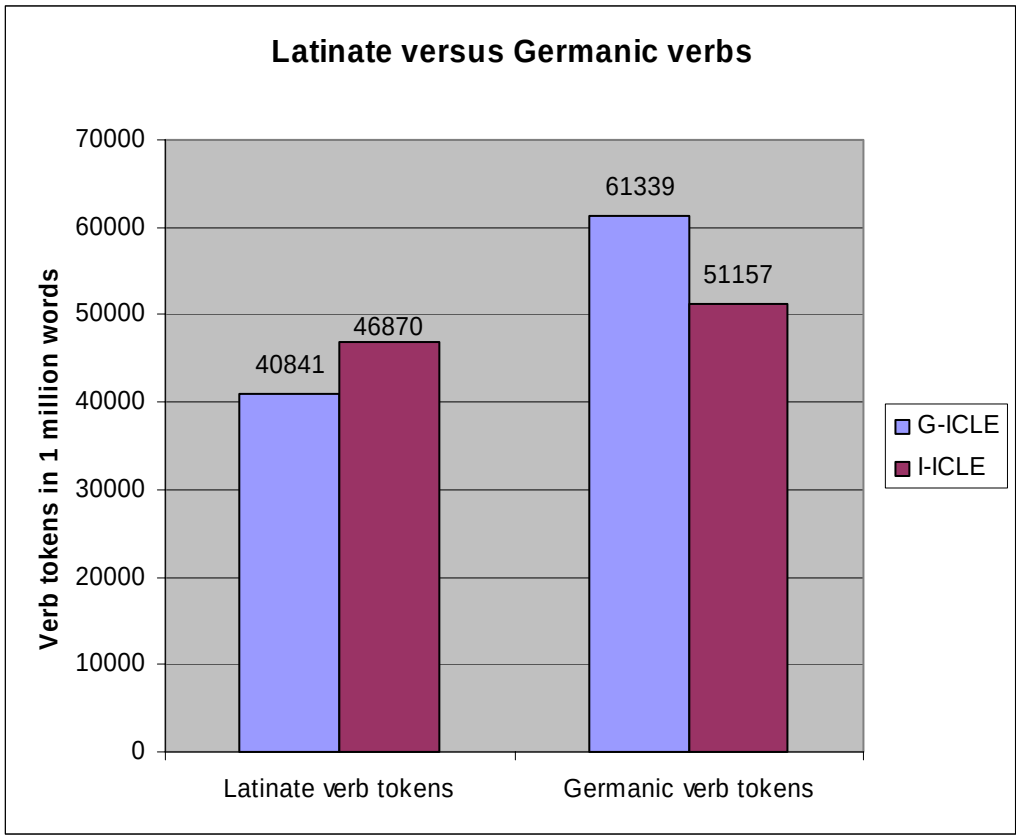

Figure 8: Latinate versus Germanic verbs (in 1 million words)

As can be expected, German students used more Germanic-based verbs than Italians, while Italian students used more Romance-based verbs than German learners; the distribution is highly significant (χ^2: p=0). Considering this result and taking into account the contrastive aspects pointed out in chapter 2.2.2, at this point the most convincing explanation for the overall use of phrasal verbs in the German and Italian *ICLE* components is clearly the influence of the learners' native languages manifesting itself in two ways. First, each student group shows a preference for those verbs which dominate their native languages. Note, however, that not only Germans used more Germanic- than Romance-based verbs overall; also in *I-ICLE* the figure for Germanic verbs is higher than for Romance ones (cf. also Granger 1996c). The difference between the two verb types is however not as pronounced in *I-ICLE* as in *G-ICLE*. As a consequence, it is logical that German students use more phrasal verbs than Italians as most phrasal verbs are based on Germanic verbs. Second, the absence of a phrasal-verb equivalent in Italian contributes to the lower frequency in *I-ICLE*, whereas a semantically similar verb type in German facilitates their use for German learners.

In spite of the fact that the total amount of phrasal verbs shows considerable variation in the three corpora analysed, the number of phrasal-verb types, i.e. the number of different phrasal verbs used, is about the same in the corpora in relation to phrasal-verb tokens, although at first glance one may get a different impression: German learners used 460, native students 421, and Italian learners 190 different phrasal-verb types. Correlating phrasal-verb types and phrasal-verb tokens, however, neither native students nor learners are more or less resourceful lexically than any of the other groups. That is, the proportion of phrasal-verb types in relation to the number of phrasal-verb tokens is about the same in the three corpora. This is borne out by the proportion of phrasal-verb types in relation to phrasal-verb tokens which shows that the variation is marginal (*LOCNESS*: 30.7%, *G-ICLE* 29.4%, *I-ICLE* 27.1%)[102] and by the chi-square test – the differences are statistically insignificant.[103] So although German students used a larger amount of phrasal verbs overall, they did not use a greater number of different ones. At the same time, Italian students used about the same proportion of different phrasal verbs as the other two groups although their overall use of phrasal verbs is conspicuously lower. That is, advanced Italian learner writing is no less diverse lexically than native or German students' writing.

[102] This is basically the same as type-token ratio (TTR). TTR is a measure of lexical creativity, that is, the higher the TTR, the more different types in relation to tokens were used in a text. The reason for not using the TTR here is that it is usually calculated on the basis of running text which does not apply in the present case as phrasal-verb types are set in relation to extracted phrasal-verb tokens and not to the learner essays as a whole.

[103] χ^2: *LOCNESS*:*G-ICLE* p=0.559; *LOCNESS*:*I-ICLE* p=0.210; *G-ICLE*:*I-ICLE* p=0.417.

5.3.2 Frequency of individual phrasal verbs

All phrasal verbs were then ordered according to how many times they occurred in the corpora. In table 6, the 25 most frequent multi-word verbs are given for each corpus.[104]

Table 6: The 25 most frequent phrasal verbs in each corpus

	LOCNESS		***G-ICLE***		***I-ICLE***	
	Phrasal verb	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**
1	*Go on*	201	*Find out*	219	*Grow up*	445
2	*Carry out*	182	*Go on*	182	*Bring up*	229
3	*Point out*	155	*Give up*	136	*Go on*	207
4	*Take away*	117	*Turn out*	120	*Give up*	134
5	*Bring up*	110	*Get up*	116	*Point out*	117
6	*Take on*	102	*Go out*	103	*Make up*	95
7	*End up*	98	*Point out*	99	*Carry out*	86
8	*Grow up*	98	*Wake up*	95	*Find out*	78
9	*Give up*	95	*Come back*	91	*Keep on*	61
10	*Bring about*	87	*Bring up*	83	*Build up*	56
11	*Find out*	72	*Go back*	83	*Turn out*	52
12	*Make up*	68	*Carry out*	78	*Carry on*	48
13	*Set up*	64	*Be away*	74	*Go out*	48
14	*Go back*	61	*Put on*	74	*Come out*	43
15	*Break down*	53	*Be over*	70	*Come back*	43
16	*Get away*	53	*End up*	70	*Sum up*	43
17	*Cut off*	45	*Sum up*	70	*Take away*	39
18	*Be out*	45	*Take over*	70	*End up*	35
19	*Bring in*	42	*Come up*	66	*Go back*	30
20	*Carry on*	42	*Get out*	66	*Bring about*	26
21	*Go out*	42	*Sit down*	66	*Put forward*	26
22	*Run up*	42	*Stand up*	66	*Come up*	22
23	*Turn out*	42	*Take up*	66	*Link together*	22
24	*Fit in*	38	*Take out*	54	*Be away*	17
25	*Get out*	38	*Be back*	50	*Fall down*	17

Although a more detailed interpretation of the qualitative use of phrasal verbs will be provided in chapter 6, some striking facts from table 6 shall be highlighted at this point.

Go on, a phrasal verb very common in conversation, fiction, and news, but less common in academic prose (cf. Biber et al. 1999: 410), is top of the list in the native corpus *LOCNESS*. This is in line with Biber et al.'s finding that this phrasal verb is

[104] The entire list of phrasal verbs according to frequency can be found in appendix 3.

"the most common phrasal verb overall in the LGSWE [Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English] Corpus" (1999: 411). While *go on* is not the most frequent phrasal verb in either *G-ICLE* or *I-ICLE*, it is nevertheless about as frequent in the two learner corpora as in the native corpus. This is possibly an indicator that the essays were written in a semi-formal rather than academic style. Contrasting the figures for *go on* with the frequencies for *continue*, one of the one-word 'equivalents' of *go on*, showed that both German and Italian learners used the phrasal-verb option significantly more often than the one-word option in comparison to native students, while there is no difference in significance between the two learner groups.[105] Two further phrasal verbs worth mentioning in this context are *carry on* and *keep on*, which mean roughly the same as *go on* and which can be paraphrased by *continue*. They are therefore included in table 7.

Table 7: *Go on* versus *continue*

	LOCNESS	***G-ICLE***	***I-ICLE***
Go on	148	120	190
Carry on	42	12	48
Keep on	0	25	61
Continue	515	91	177

Even when adding up the figures for these three phrasal verbs it is obvious that while in the native students' essays the more formal alternative outnumbers the less formal one by far, both learner groups opted for the more colloquial phrasal-verb variant. This is possibly due to the fact that learners are frequently not aware of the stylistic restrictions of certain linguistic features. The frequency differences between *go on* and *continue* are, however, less pronounced in *I-ICLE* than in *G-ICLE*. Considering that the English verb *continue* has a direct translation equivalent in the Italian verb *continuare*, this finding can be expected. Native language influence from Italian seems nevertheless not strong enough in this case to make Italian students prefer the Romance verb.

Another example of the parallel use of a one-word and a phrasal verb is *bring about*. However, in contrast to *go on*, which was used as frequently by learners as by

[105] Only those instances of *go on* are considered which can be substituted by *continue*. Significance levels of χ^2-test: *LOCNESS*:*G-ICLE* $p \leq 0.0001$; *LOCNESS*:*I-ICLE* $p \leq 0.0001$; *G-ICLE*:*I-ICLE* $p \geq 0.5$.

native students, *bring about* is underused in both learner corpora in comparison to the native corpus. Underuse frequently goes together with avoidance strategies such as the increased use of another lexical item. In the case of *bring about*, possible single-verb alternatives were therefore quantified in order to see whether learners preferred a one-word equivalent. The synonym selected for this purpose is *cause*, based on the *OED* definition of *bring about*.[106] The figures are found in table 8:

Table 8: *Bring about* versus *cause*

	LOCNESS	***G-ICLE***	***I-ICLE***
Bring about	87	33	26
Cause	492	368	596

In statistical terms, based on chi-square, Italian students clearly preferred *cause* over *bring about* when correlated with the figures for native speakers. With p=0.002, this distribution is highly significant. Comparing German learners and native students, however, no statistically significant difference emerged (p=0.113); the same holds for a correlation between German and Italian learners (p=0.113). That is, while German students behave in the same way as both Italian and native students, Italian learners deviate from native student performance and clearly prefer the single verb – in all likelihood due to native language influence from the Italian verb *causare* (*to cause*).

Although in the native corpus *LOCNESS*, the list of the most frequent phrasal verbs is headed by a very colloquial one, two phrasal verbs follow immediately which are reported by Biber et al. (1999: 410) to be common in academic prose, i.e. *carry out* and *point out*. These two multi-word verbs are among the 25 most frequent phrasal verbs in the learner corpora as well, but they are not used as frequently by the learners as by the native students:

Table 9: *Point out* and *carry out*

	LOCNESS	***G-ICLE***	***I-ICLE***
Point out	155	99	117
Carry out	182	78	86

[106] *OED Online*, s.v. *bring about*: "To cause to happen, bring to pass, occasion, accomplish, effect."

A possible explanation for these differences is that British and American students are more aware of the fact that essays written in an academic context require a specific vocabulary; they may therefore use the same phrasal verbs as scientists would do. At the same time, learners may not be aware of the stylistic implications of specific phrasal verbs, i.e. they do not differentiate between those that are very colloquial – and may thus not be ideal for essay writing – and others that are appropriate also in academic writing.

A further phrasal verb worth mentioning in the context of academic essay writing is *sum up*. It is interesting to note that in both learner corpora *sum up* features among the 25 most frequent phrasal verbs (*G-ICLE* 70 times, *I-ICLE* 43 times). As it is a common text structuring device, this phrasal verb can be expected to occur frequently in essays. In *LOCNESS*, however, it is very infrequent and occurs only four times in one million words. This raises the question of whether other text structuring devices used to conclude an argument were used by native students. A closer look at the data revealed that not all instances of *sum up* were used as a means of structuring the text. Table 10 gives the figures for the use of *sum up* as a text connector, complemented by the figures for possible alternatives, e.g. *in sum*, *in conclusion*, *to conclude/concluding*.[107]

Table 10: *Sum up, summarise* and *conclude, in conclusion*

	LOCNESS	***G-ICLE***	***I-ICLE***
To sum up/summing up	0	62	22
To summarise/summarising, in sum/in summary	8	20	4
Sum* total	8	82	26
To conclude/concluding, in conclusion	76	45	406

It is instructive to see that the German learners show a clear, statistically robust preference for formulations on the basis of *sum**[108] while Italian learners are very much in favour of phrases based on *conclude* and *conclusion*.[109] Native students clearly prefer formulations with *conclude* and *conclusion* as well but not as much as Italian students. The difference can be explained as follows: First, the frequent use of

[107] There are, of course, other concluding text connectors and structuring devices. The above are only a selection to provide a rough picture of possible alternatives.
[108] χ^2: *LOCNESS*:*G-ICLE*: p=0.00005.
[109] χ^2: *I-ICLE*:*G-ICLE*: p=0.

sum up in the learner data compared to the native data and the strikingly frequent use of *in conclusion* in the Italian data indicates that learners are intent on making the macro-structure of their essays obvious – it is striking that, apart from very few exceptions, both *sum up* and *conclude/in conclusion* are found sentence-initially. By placing these constructions at the beginning of a sentence learners want to ensure that the reader is better able to follow the line of argumentation (cf. Field & Yip 1992, quoted in Granger & Tyson 1996: 24). Second, Italian learners' obvious penchant for *in conclusion*[110] can be explained by native language influence. Similar to English *continue* and *cause* and Italian *continuare* and *causare* (cf. above), English *in conclusion* has a direct translation equivalent with the Italian expression *in conclusione*. In the present context, words of Romance origin are without doubt more favoured by Italian than by German students. German students' preference for *sum up* etc. could, on the other hand, be due to a different approach to signalling the end of a argument, i.e. to recapitulate or summarise the prior line of argumentation and restate it rather than draw – and state – conclusions from it.

The most frequent phrasal verb across the three corpora is *grow up*; it occurs more than four times as frequently in *I-ICLE* (445 occurrences) as in *LOCNESS* (98 occurrences), and about ten times as frequently as in *G-ICLE* (45 occurrences). *Bring up* is the second most frequent phrasal verb overall. It also features most often in the Italian data, being used about twice as frequently by Italians (229 occurrences) as by native students (110 occurrences), and about three times as frequently as by German students (83 occurrences). The explanation for these high frequencies in the Italian corpus requires a semantic reading of the data. The two major meanings of *bring up* are 'raise a child' and 'start to talk about a particular subject'. While in the native corpus *LOCNESS* both meanings are represented ('raise a child' = 34.5 percent, 'start to talk about a particular subject' = 65.5 percent), the semantic analysis of the Italian data showed that Italian learners used *bring up* exclusively in the sense of 'raise a child'. Also *grow up* occurred frequently in *I-ICLE* essays with titles such as "Should gay couples have the right to adopt children?" and "Single women should not be allowed to have artificial insemination". These trigger the use of phrasal verbs like

[110] *In conclusion* outnumbers *to conclude* and *concluding* by far in the Italian data – *in conclusion* makes up for 93.8 percent of the occurrences.

bring up and *grow up*, i.e. words to do with education and raising children, even if these phrasal verbs are not used explicitly in an essay title.[111] Another clear case of topic-sensitivity is *give up*, the fourth most frequent phrasal verb in the Italian data. In 61.3 percent of all cases, it occurred in essays with the title "Women with children should not be allowed to take part in dangerous sports". Although the most frequent phrasal verbs in the Italian data are clearly topic-dependent, no 'title-recycling' occurred as none of the relevant essay titles are formulated with phrasal verbs. Only in two cases an essay title in *I-ICLE* was formulated with a phrasal verb (*take away* and *call out*) but although these items were used in the relevant essays no accumulation of them was observed. The same holds for *G-ICLE* essays.

Although *give up* is very frequent in the German data, too, no such dependency on specific topics is discernible. In *G-ICLE*, *give up* occurs in essays with various topics. The same holds for *find out*, the most frequent phrasal verb in *G-ICLE*; it occurs in essays with 40 different titles. *Turn out*, the fourth most frequent phrasal verb in *G-ICLE*, is evenly distributed across 23 different essay titles, and also the occurrences of *get up*, the fifth most frequent phrasal verb are not concentrated on one or two essay titles – its distribution shows that only 28.6 percent of all occurrences of this phrasal verb were attracted by a specific essay title ("A day in the life of a prisoner"). The remaining 71.4 percent are distributed evenly across essays with twelve individual titles. The distribution of *wake up* was checked as well. Only 34.8 percent of all instances of this phrasal verb occurred in an essay with the title "Man is often said to be a Creature of Habit. How is this in the light of your experience?" It should be pointed out, however, that this percentage is somewhat distorted by the fact that all but one of the instances of *wake up* in essays with this title were produced by the same author (GEAU3016). If that essay were taken out, there would be no accumulation of *wake up* on one single essay title. Considering that the occurrences of all these very frequent phrasal verbs are distributed across various

[111] Expressed in percentages, 71.7 percent of all instances of *bring up* and 43.7 percent of all instances of *grow up* occur in essays with the title "Single women should not be allowed to have artificial insemination". Another essay title which triggered the frequent use of *bring up* and *grow up* is "Making parents pay for their children's offences would be the best way to reduce juvenile crime". 17.0 percent of all occurrences of *bring up* and 19.4 percent of all occurrences of *grow up* were found in essays with this title. Adding these figures, 88.7 percent of all instances of *bring up* and 61.3 percent of all instances of *grow up* concentrate in only two different types of essays in *I-ICLE*.

essays rather than being concentrated on only one or two essay titles, it is reasonable to expect that the same holds for the other phrasal verbs in *G-ICLE*.

How can this difference between German and Italian learners be accounted for? Topic-sensitivity has already been pointed out, and this is particularly relevant in the case of *bring up* and *grow up* in *I-ICLE*. Such phrasal verbs will always be triggered when educational matters are discussed. However, there is no need to use a phrasal verb like *give up* only in the context of 'stop practicing a dangerous sport'. A possible explanation is that Italian learners' knowledge of the use of specific phrasal verbs in different contexts is more restricted than that of German students, i.e. German learners use specific phrasal verbs in various contexts while Italian learners apply them only in very restricted contexts. Looking at reasons for this difference, two explanations are likely. First, the differences may be teaching-induced, and second – and more likely –, the similarities between e.g. English *give up* and *find out* and German *aufgeben* and *herausfinden* make it easier for German students to apply these phrasal verbs in a wide range of contexts. However, *find out* is also a fairly colloquial phrasal verb and is not used frequently in academic writing (cf. Biber et al. 1999: 410) – a register restriction of which German learners are not aware.

The fact that very colloquial phrasal verbs as *find out* and *go on* are the two most frequent phrasal verbs in German advanced learner writing may be an indicator that the style of the *G-ICLE* essays is not very formal in general. Reconsidering the data for the German learners in table 6, this assumption is further corroborated. It becomes obvious immediately that only few 'academic' phrasal verbs occur among these items (e.g. *point out*, *carry out*, and *sum up*). The great majority are colloquial – *get up*, *go out*, and *wake up* feature prominently (ranks five, six, and eight) in the German corpus while in the other two corpora they are either not even present among the top 25 phrasal verbs or are used much less frequently. These three phrasal verbs are neither very formal, nor can they be expected to occur in academic or argumentative writing. The level of formality in the different corpora will be discussed in greater detail at a later point; suffice it to say that essay titles such as "The more I get to know of people, the more I love my dog", "Tourists are a pain in the neck!", or "A housewife's lament" suggest that the character of the German *ICLE* sub-corpus seems stamped by reports about personal experiences

rather than by argumentative essays discussing the pros and cons of specific topics. This will of course be reflected in a semi-formal, more colloquial rather than a neutral, academic tone. Further examples of such rather informal phrasal verbs used for the description of personal experiences are *come back, go back, be away, put on, be over, get out*, and *be back*, among the 25 most frequent phrasal verbs in the German learner data as well.[112]

This is further corroborated when comparing the figures from *LOCNESS* and the two *ICLE* corpora with the list of some of the most common phrasal verbs in different registers from Biber et al. (1999) (cf. table 11). The relevant registers in the present context are conversation and fiction. The figures from these two registers were added because the learner essays, especially the German ones, can be argued to hover between the two.

Table 11: Phrasal verbs used in conversation and fiction (Biber et al. 1999: 410)[113]

	Biber et al. (1999)	***LOCNESS***	***G-ICLE***	***I-ICLE***
Go on	300+	201	182	207
Get up	200+	11	116	4
Sit down	140+	8	66	4
Find out	140+	72	219	78
Stand up	120+	27	66	9
Get out	80+	38	66	9
Put on	80+	11	74	0

A comparison of the figures shows that, for these phrasal verbs, German students are always closer to Biber et al.'s figures than are native and Italian students, thus substantiating the impression that the German essays are more concerned with the anecdotal account of personal experiences than with argumentative essay writing.

Another frequent phrasal verb in the German data is *stand up*. Its fairly high frequency (rank 22, 66 occurrences) can on the one hand be explained by the possibly lower formality of the German essays in general. On the other hand, the confusion of *stand up* with the more appropriate *get up*, preferred in the context of getting out of

[112] This is not to say that native students and Italian learners used exclusively academic phrasal verbs, on the contrary. Also *take away* or *keep on*, very frequent in *LOCNESS* and *I-ICLE* respectively, are not necessarily academic. Nevertheless, *put on (clothes), get up*, or *wake up* as used in *G-ICLE* are clearly markers of reports about personal experiences rather than of an argumentative style (cf. also chapter 5.3.8).

[113] The frequencies in Biber et al. (1999: 410) are defined as "over 20, over 40, over 100" etc. This is accounted for by the + -symbol in table 11.

bed, is a further very likely explanation for its frequent use. This confusion is due to mother tongue interference from German *aufstehen* which does not distinguish between 'getting up from a chair' (*stand up*) and 'getting out of bed' (*get up*). The following two examples illustrate this point:

(9) This attitude of my parents didn't change, when I began my studies. When I **stand up** at 9.03 o'clock because my lecture starts at eleven they warn me of not being too lazy. <GEAU3042>

(10) When she woke up next morning she **stood up** and went to work. <GESA5023>

To conclude this section, the analysis of the 25 most frequent phrasal verbs shows that 'academic' phrasal verbs such as *carry out*, *point out*, and *sum up* and highly colloquial ones such as *go on*, *get up*, and *go out* occur side by side in the three corpora. This co-occurrence is on the one hand due to different stylistic levels in the different essays. Especially the German essays are rather informal; this informality will of course be reflected by the overall use of colloquial phrasal verbs. On the other hand, students probably mix up different registers within one and the same essay because of their not being aware of stylistic connotations and restrictions, that is, informal phrasal verbs are used also in formal contexts. The sensitivity of individual phrasal verbs towards specific essay topics is particularly pronounced in the Italian corpus (cf. *bring up*, *give up* and *grow up*) while no such topic-dependency can be determined in the German data. There is every reason to suppose, therefore, that German advanced learners are far more confident in using phrasal verbs, applying them in a wide variety of contexts, as Italian advanced learners, who prefer using them in very restricted contexts. The most likely reason for this difference between the two learner groups is native language influence which is corroborated by the fact that in German, a verb type similar to English phrasal verbs exists (cf. chapter 2.2.2).

5.3.3 Productivity and frequency of individual verbs

A further aspect worth considering is how many different verb and particle types native students and learners used in order to form phrasal verbs; besides, following Biber et al. (1999), the productivity of verbs and particles will be investigated. Productivity refers to the potential of verbs and particles to combine to phrasal verbs, i.e. a small number of verbs may, in combination with different particles, generate a large number of different phrasal verbs; the same may apply to a small number of particles. The phrasal verbs extracted from the corpora were therefore divided into the two elements they consist of.

As for the number of different verb types, no striking differences between native students and the two learner groups emerge. Native students used 222, German students 263, and Italian students 107 different verb types. Although these figures do not seem to concur, in reality there is no statistically significant difference between the three groups,[114] just as already evidenced in chapter 5.2.1, when it comes to selecting the verbal basis for phrasal verbs.

Not only is there no variation across the corpora in the overall choice of verbs, there is also only little divergence as to the ten most productive verbs. In all three corpora, *be, bring, come, get, go, put, take,* and *turn* are among the ten most productive verbs, although their potential for generating different phrasal verbs varies (cf. figure 9 below). Predictably, the number of particles with which these verbs combine is lower in the Italian data than in the other corpora, due to the overall lower number of phrasal verbs in this learner corpus. However, the higher productivity of verbs in *LOCNESS* and *G-ICLE* does not mean that native and German students are more creative than Italian learners as the results from the chi-square test show (cf. footnote 114). Figure 9 charts the number of adverbial particles with which these highly productive verbs enter into a relation. The graph uses the figures from *LOCNESS* as its basis, that is, the verb combining with the highest number of different particles in the native corpus is listed first, and the one combining with the lowest number is listed last. The corresponding figures from *G-ICLE* and *I-ICLE* are mapped

[114] Chi-square test: *LOCNESS*:*G-ICLE* p=0.714; *LOCNESS*:*I-ICLE* p=0.644; *G-ICLE*:*I-ICLE* p=0.444.

accordingly. The entire list of all productive verbs in the three corpora can be found in appendix 4.

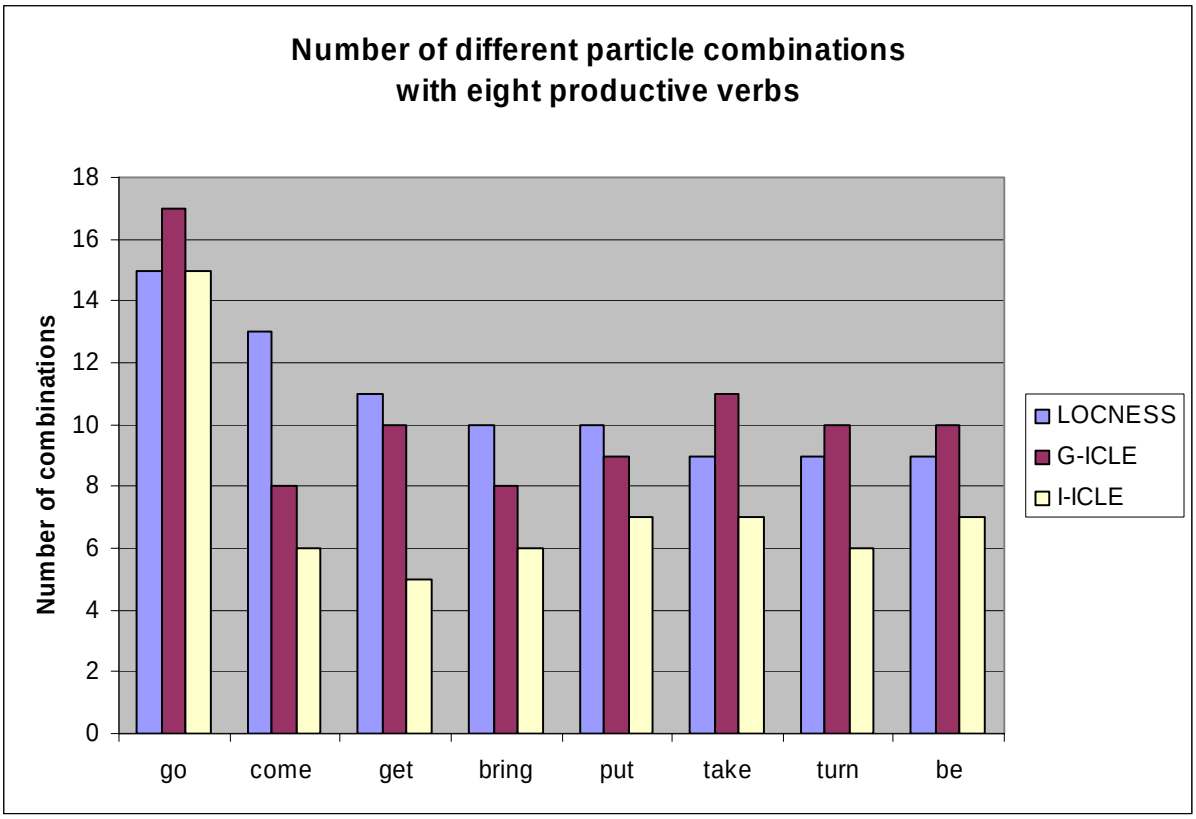

Figure 9: Number of different particle combinations with eight productive verbs

The results from the analysis of the productivity of verbs correspond to the findings from Biber et al. (1999: 413). They state that the high-frequency verbs *bring, come, get, go, put, take,* and *turn* are particularly productive when it comes to forming phrasal verbs.[115] Another productive verb listed by Biber et al. is *set* which features among the 15 most productive verbs in *LOCNESS* and *I-ICLE*, and among the 20 most productive verbs in *G-ICLE* (cf. appendix 4).

The potential of these eight verbs to combine with a large number of different particles, however, does not necessarily mean that they are also the ones used most frequently. As evident from table 6, *carry out*, *point out*, *grow up*, and *find out* are among the most frequent phrasal verbs in the three corpora. It is therefore no surprise that even though *carry, point, grow*, and *find* are not particularly productive,

[115] Biber et al. (1999) did not include phrasal verbs on the basis of main verb use of *be, do,* and *have*.

they should nevertheless feature among the ten verbs used most often as the basis for phrasal verbs.[116]

The eight highly productive verbs from figure 9 are all monosyllabic verbs of Germanic origin which are very common in English in general.[117] They feature among the 500 most frequent words in American English (cf. Francis & Kučera 1982) as well as in British English.[118] In non-native English these so-called high-frequency verbs occur frequently as well (cf. Ringbom 1998). Frequent though they may be both in native and non-native English, these verbs are nevertheless a pitfall for foreign language learners. As was already pointed out in chapter 2.2.2, high-frequency verbs like *get, put*, and *take* have very general meanings when used on their own, but can become very specialised, collocational and idiomatic as soon as they form a relationship with other lexemes (cf. Altenberg & Granger 2001: 174). Phrasal verbs are an excellent case in point – a highly frequent verb with very general meaning such as *get* enters into a relation with another lexeme such as the particle *on* and thus produces a set of very specific meanings (cf. also the various meanings of *take in*, chapter 2.2.2):

(11a) Several people *got on* at the bus stop.
(11b) They *get on* really well.
(11c) I don't think Dad will come on a walking holiday with us; he's *getting on* a bit.
(11d) You have to socialise in order to *get on* in this job.
(11e) Susan and Mark *got* it *on* last night.[119]

It is instructive to see that there are no major differences across the three student groups as to which verbs were selected most frequently as the basis for forming phrasal verbs and which ones are most productive in the three corpora.

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[116] The ten most frequent verbs in *LOCNESS* are *go, bring, take, carry, come, get, point, give, turn,* and *be*. In *G-ICLE*, they are *go, take, get, be, turn, come, find, put, bring,* and *give*. In *I-ICLE* they are *grow, go, bring, give, carry, come, point, turn, make,* and *find*.
[117] Also nearly all verbs in appendix 4 are monosyllables and of Germanic origin.
[118] Using the WordList tool of the WordSmith software, *F-LOB*, the 1991 Freiburg update of the 1961 *Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen* corpus, was checked as Johansson and Hofland (1989) do not provide an analysis of British English according to frequency, but alphabetically.
[119] Examples based on Cullen and Sargeant (1996).

5.3.4 Productivity and frequency of individual particles

Both native students and learners used about the same number of different particle types (*LOCNESS* 24, *G-ICLE* and *I-ICLE* 23). A few particles, however, occur only in the learner corpora (*past, round, without*) or in the native corpus (*across, under, with*). Also the number of different verbs with which particles enter into a relation varies considerably across the learner corpora and the control corpus. Figure 10 shows the ten most productive particles in *LOCNESS*, ordered according to the number of verbs they combine with. The diagram is complemented by the corresponding figures from *G-ICLE* and *I-ICLE*. Out of the ten particles listed in the diagram below, nine feature among the ten most productive particles in the learner corpora. In each learner corpus, however, one particle is different to the native students' list. In the German data, instead of *together*, *over* is among the ten most productive particles, and also in the Italian data *over* is one of the ten most productive particles; it combines with more different verb types than the particle *around* as listed in the native student corpus. For the sake of readability, figure 10 lists only the ten most productive particles from the native corpus according to with how many verbs they combined to phrasal verbs; the figures from the two learner corpora are listed correspondingly. The entire list of particles and their productivity across the three corpora can be found in appendix 5a.

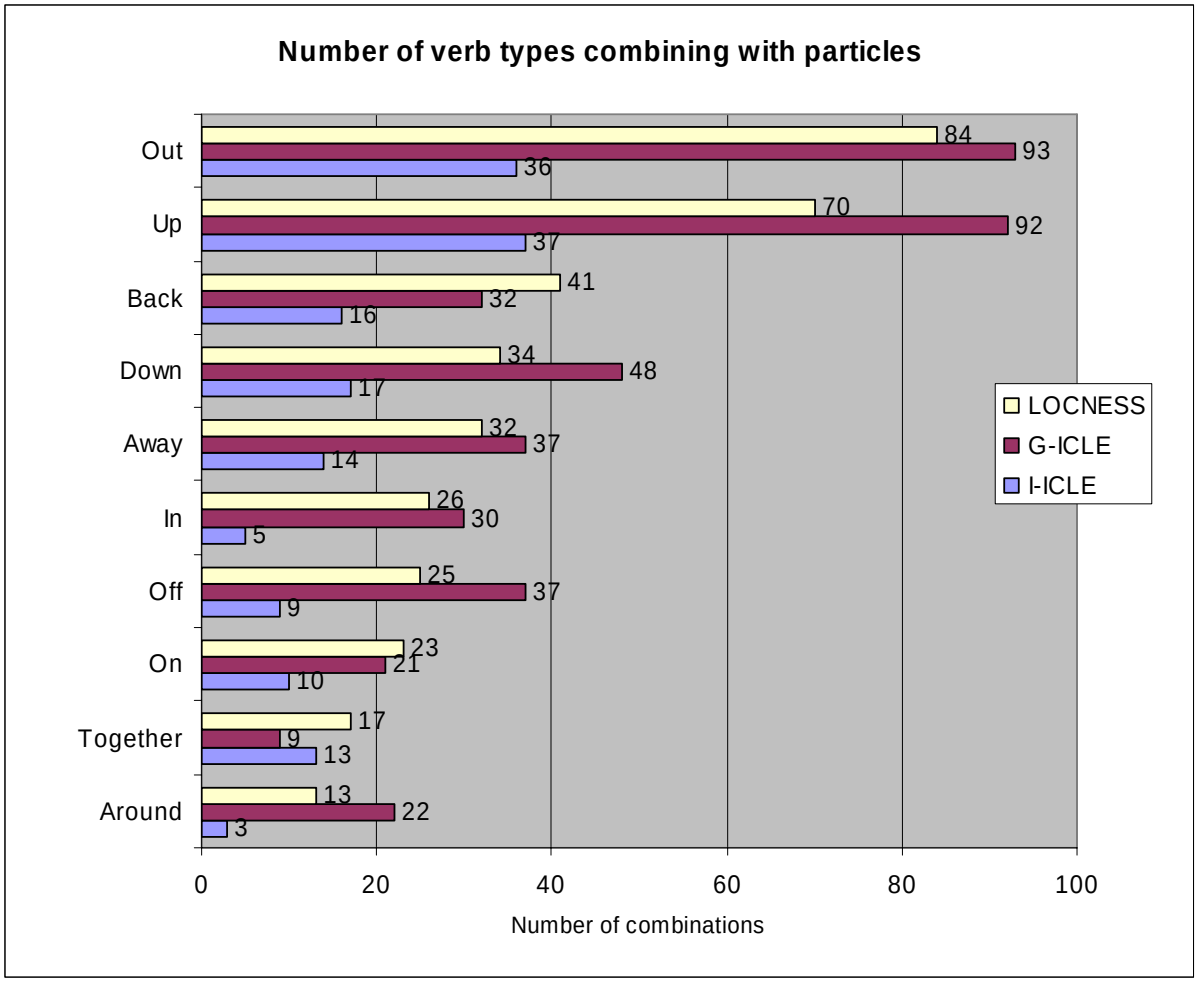

Figure 10: Number of verb types combining with particles

Out and *up* are clearly the most productive particles, combining with the largest number of different verbs. Adding the figures for *out* and *up* and relating them to the overall number of phrasal-verb types, it emerges that multi-word verbs with these two particles are the greatest source of phrasal verbs overall – they constitute more than a third of different phrasal-verb types in all three corpora (*LOCNESS* 36.6%, *G-ICLE* 40.2%, *I-ICLE* 38.4%). This is in accordance with Biber et al.'s findings. According to their research, *up* is the most productive particle when it comes to combining with lexical verbs to form common phrasal verbs, immediately followed by *out* (cf. 1999: 412f.). The finding from the present analysis deviates slightly from Biber et al.'s results in that *out* is more productive than *up* in the native control corpus.

Down is a further adverbial particle listed by Biber et al. (1999: 413) as being particularly productive. This is corroborated by the present analysis. In *G-ICLE* and *I-ICLE*, *down* is the third most productive particle after *up* and *out*; in *LOCNESS*, it

ranks fourth but combines with nearly as many different verbs as *back*, the third most productive particle in the native control corpus. Further common adverbial particles mentioned by Biber et al. are *on*, *in*, and *off*. These are also among the ten most productive particles in the data used for the present analysis as the diagram above shows. *Away*, *together*, and *around*, the remaining three particles from the list above are not mentioned in the *Longman Grammar* by Biber et al. (1999). This is possibly due to different search criteria. While in the present research all actually occurring phrasal verbs are accounted for, in the *Longman Grammar* only the most frequent ones are listed. Besides, in the present analysis also those multi-word verbs were considered which are classified as "free combinations" by Biber et al. (1999: 403).

The overall result reported in chapter 5.3.1, i.e. that German students used more and Italian students fewer phrasal verbs than native students, is visible in figure 10 as well. In all but three cases (*back*, *on*, and *together*) did German learners combine adverbial particles with a larger number of verbs than native students; Italian learners consistently combined particles with a smaller number of verbs than native students. Or, to put it differently, it is no wonder that in *I-ICLE* the number of verbs with which particles combine is far lower than in the other corpora, considering that the overall number of phrasal verbs in the Italian data is 41.7 percent lower than in the native corpus and 55.3 percent lower than in the German corpus.

In view of the potential for productivity of individual particles, it is not surprising that the most productive particles should also be the ones used most frequently. *Out, up, on, back, away,* and *down* are the six most frequent particles in *LOCNESS* and the two learner corpora, although their order in the latter differs slightly from that in the former. Table 12 shows the different frequencies of these particles, as before based on the order of frequency in *LOCNESS*. An exhaustive table listing the frequencies of all particles can be found in appendix 5b. The striking difference between the figures for Italian learners and those for German and native students is, as already pointed out above, due to the generally lower overall number of phrasal verbs in *I-ICLE*.

Table 12: The six most frequent particles

	LOCNESS	***G-ICLE***	***I-ICLE***
Out	1201	1470	588
Up	1163	1615	1266
On	508	487	376
Back	409	487	156
Away	405	392	134
Down	333	524	99

Adding the numbers of the six most frequent particles in the three corpora and relating the sum total to the overall amount of phrasal verbs in the corpora, it emerges that in all three corpora more than three quarters of all phrasal verbs consist of one of the six particles listed above. In *LOCNESS*, 77.3 percent of all phrasal verbs consist of one the six most frequent particles; this percentage is about the same in *G-ICLE* (76.8 percent) while it is even higher in *I-ICLE* (86.4 percent). So while in *LOCNESS* and *G-ICLE* about a quarter of all phrasal verbs consist of verb plus an adverbial particle other than *out, up, on, back, away,* and *down*, in the case of Italian students, there is even less variation than in the other corpora as to particle selection – only about 15 percent of all phrasal verbs are not made up of verb plus either *out, up, on, back, away,* or *down*.

Out and *up* are not only the most productive particles across the three corpora (cf. above), they are clearly also the ones used most frequently by native students and learners in the context of phrasal verbs. These two particles are the two most frequent adverbial particles in American and British English in general (cf. Francis & Kučera 1982, for British English *F-LOB* was checked, cf. footnote 79). In *LOCNESS*, these two adverbial particles occur at least more than twice as frequently as other particles; in *G-ICLE*, they are even about three times as frequent as *on*, the third most frequent particle. In the Italian data, however, the situation is different. In the case of *up*, the situation is similar to the German and the native data. Italian learners used phrasal verbs with *up* at least about three times as frequently as phrasal verbs with other particles. Multi-word verbs with the particle *out*, however, are not nearly as frequent as those with *up* although the productivity of *up* and *out* is nearly the same in *I-ICLE* – *up* combines with 37, *out* with 36 different verbs. Reconsidering table 6, this discrepancy can be explained easily. The three most frequent phrasal verbs with *up* in the Italian data are *grow up, bring up,* and *give up*. These three phrasal verbs alone

constitute 26.7 percent of all phrasal verbs in the Italian learner corpus. The three most frequent items with *out* – *point out*, *carry out*, and *find out* – on the other hand, make up for only 9.3 percent.

5.3.5 Learner-dependent use of phrasal verbs

A general trend in learner corpus linguistics is to presuppose that all learners in a learner corpus behave the same. The learner corpus researcher usually works with data based on the assumption that they are dealing with an average learner, often not considering that learner groups can be very heterogeneous as to for example age or the amount of years of learning the foreign language. Although it is important to arrive at data for the 'average' advanced learner of English to get a general impression of learner language, it should further be considered that only some learners may conform to the 'average' as defined by the linguist. Some learners may be highly proficient speakers while others may be very poor speakers of the foreign language in question. Only taken together do they turn into 'the average learner'.

This aspect can be highlighted easily in the present context. In the German and Italian *ICLE* sub-corpora, 1568 phrasal verbs were used overall in 461 essays in *G-ICLE*; 701 phrasal verbs were used overall in 404 essays in *I-ICLE* (figures not normalised). The average German learner thus used 3.4 phrasal verbs per essay; the average Italian learner used 1.7 phrasal verbs per essay. In reality, however, the following picture emerges for *G-ICLE*: Only about a quarter (24.3 percent) of the German-speaking students used the average amount of three to four phrasal verbs while about three quarters 'deviated' from the average amount. About half of the students (48.6 percent) used fewer phrasal verbs than the average (zero to two); about another quarter of the students (27.1 percent) used more than the average 3.4 phrasal verbs per essay (from five up to 21 phrasal verbs per essay).

In the Italian sub-corpus, the situation is different. The average amount of one to two phrasal verbs was used by nearly half of the Italian students (48.3 percent) while the other half used either more (more than three, 27 percent of students) or fewer (zero, 24.7 percent of students) phrasal verbs in about equal shares. So while

German students did not conform to the average in 75.7 percent of the cases, Italian learners deviated only in 51.7 percent.

As the above figures show, it is advisable to be circumspect with generalised statements about 'the average learner'. In reality, the picture can be much more varied, and one should bear in mind that one is dealing with data from different people with different linguistic backgrounds which then merge into general statements about learner language.[120]

5.3.6 The influence of L2-exposure

It can be expected that a stay in an English-speaking country in general has a positive effect on foreign language proficiency. Although the data for the present study were not compiled by the author herself and could thus not be controlled for a variable such as amount of time spent in an English-speaking country, the *ICLE*-CD offers the opportunity to pursue this research question nevertheless. All available learner data are recorded on the CD and can be accessed by means of a search screen. A disadvantage of the learner profiles is the fact that it does not become clear either from the profiles themselves or from the corpus manual for which purpose learners went abroad. There certainly is a difference between an Italian student taking a six-week holiday with an Italian friend, and between an Italian student taking part in a six-week language course on their own, without any or only with little contact with their native language.

In order to examine a possible correlation between the amount of L2-exposure (i.e. the amount of time spent in an English-speaking country) and the quantity of phrasal verbs used, a list was generated recording all essays together with the amount of months spent in an English-speaking country and the amount of phrasal verbs used in each essay. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to determine the correlation coefficient and the significance level of the correlation. Subsequently, the

[120] A comparison of individual learners' vocabulary in general would also be instructive in this respect. To investigate the differences of the type/token-ratios of each learner would however go beyond the scope of this study. As far as the use of Romance and Germanic verbs is concerned, it is likely that the generally higher use of Romance-based verbs in *I-ICLE* (cf. chapter 5.3.1) will also hold for individual learners.

data for the two learner corpora were plotted on a scatter graph. Furthermore, the essays were arranged in the following five periods, depending on the amount of L2-exposure: 0 to 0.75 months,[121] 1 to 2.75 months, 3 to 5.5 months, 6 to 11.25 months, and 12 and more months. In this way, a possible correlation can be visualised more easily.

ANOVA showed that for both learner groups there is indeed a correlation between the amount of time spent abroad and the quantity of phrasal verbs used. In the case of German learners, eta-square (η^2) is .178, that is, 17.8 percent of the variation in the amount of phrasal verbs used is explained by L2-exposure. Although this correlation is fairly weak, it is highly significant at the .000 level. This correlation is visualised by the trend line added in the scatter graph below (figure 11).

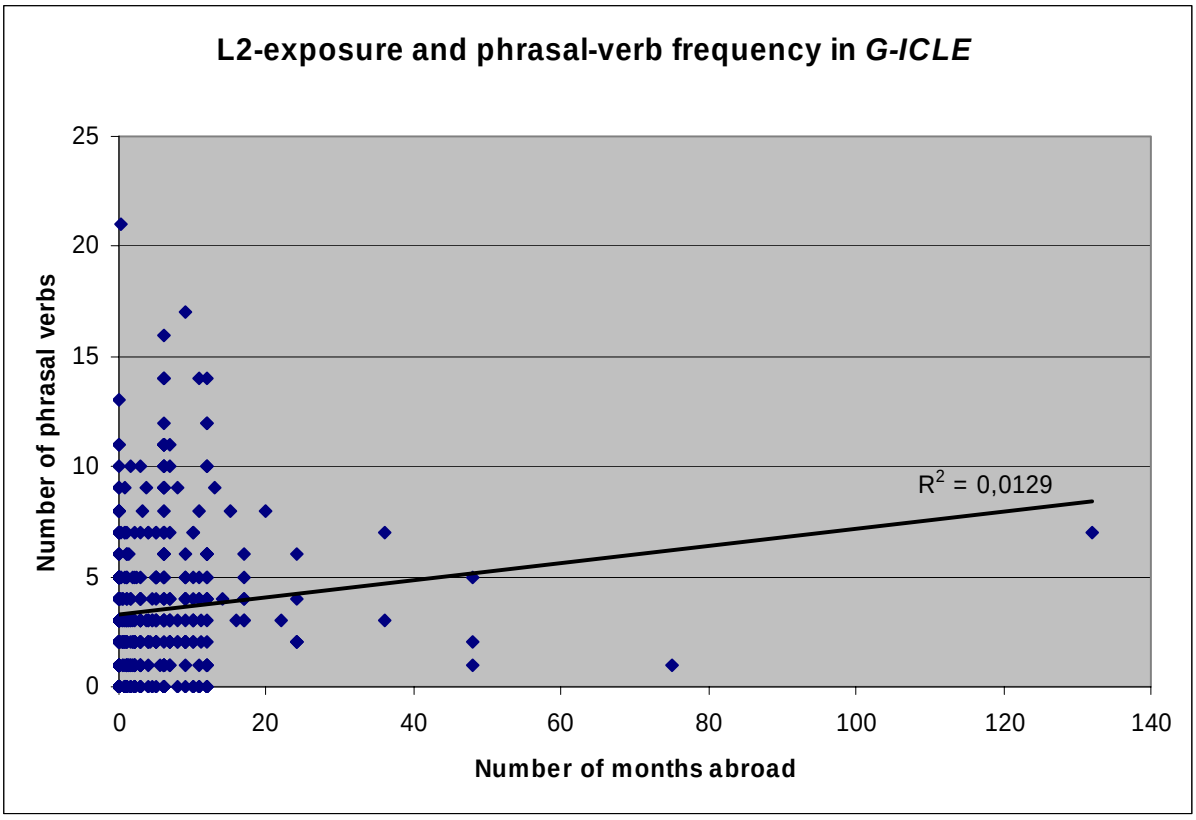

Figure 11: Correlation between L2-exposure and phrasal-verb frequency in *G-ICLE*[122]

[121] Any period shorter than one month was included in the first category because it is unlikely that a one-, two- or three-week period of L2-exposure will have an important impact on the L2-proficiency of advanced learners.

[122] R^2, the value added to the trend lines in figures 11 to 14, is the square value of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, according to the plotted points on abscissa and ordinate. Pearson's Correlation reflects the degree of linear relationship between two variables; R^2 can be interpreted as the proportion of variance of Y which is explained by the variance of X.

This correlation becomes also obvious when L2-exposure is grouped in five different periods (cf. figure 12). The ordinate charts the average amount of phrasal verbs used for each period; the trend line again shows that a correlation between L2-exposure and amount of phrasal verbs exists.

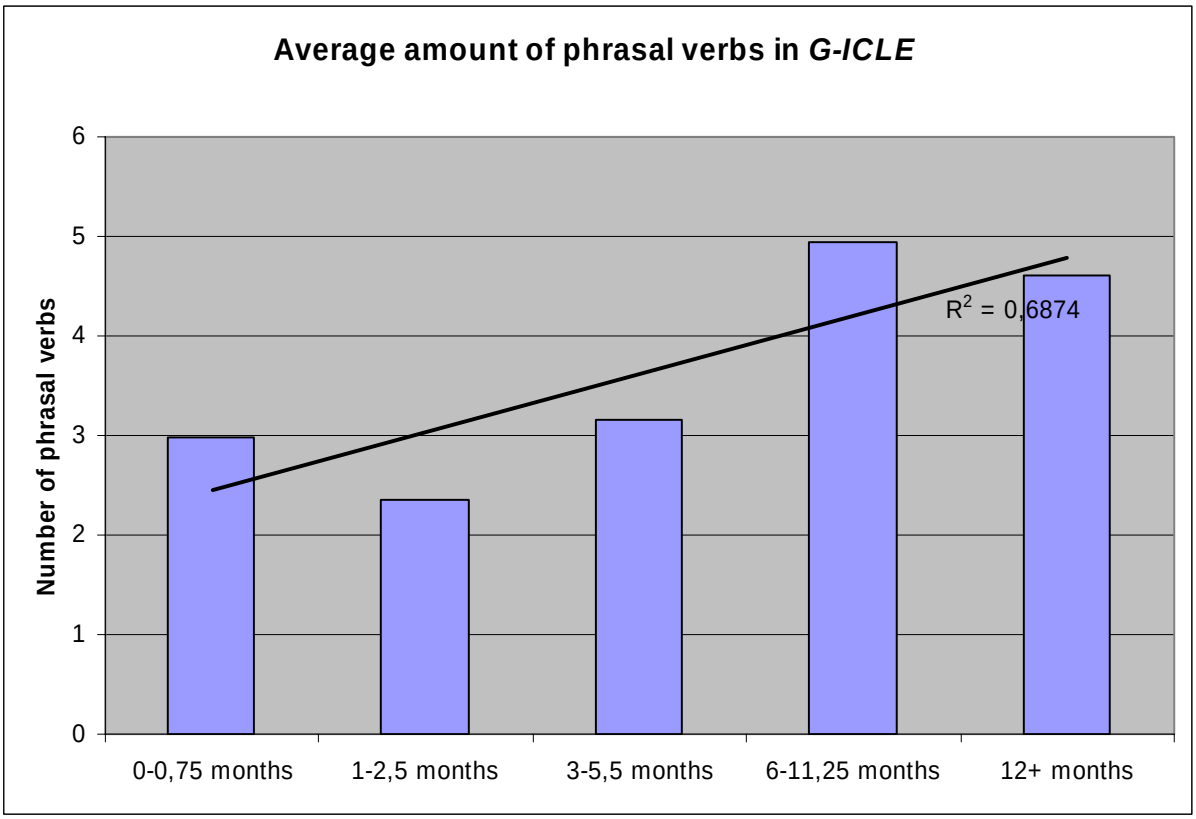

Figure 12: Average amount of phrasal verbs depending on L2-exposure in *G-ICLE*

As already mentioned, a correlation between L2-exposure and quantity of phrasal verbs exists for Italian learners as well. At η^2=.208, the correlation is slightly stronger than for German learners: statistically speaking, 20.8 percent of the variance of phrasal-verb use is due to the duration of a stay abroad. Also this correlation, however weak, is highly significant at the .000 level. The scatter graph and the diagram below (figures 13 and 14) display this correlation.

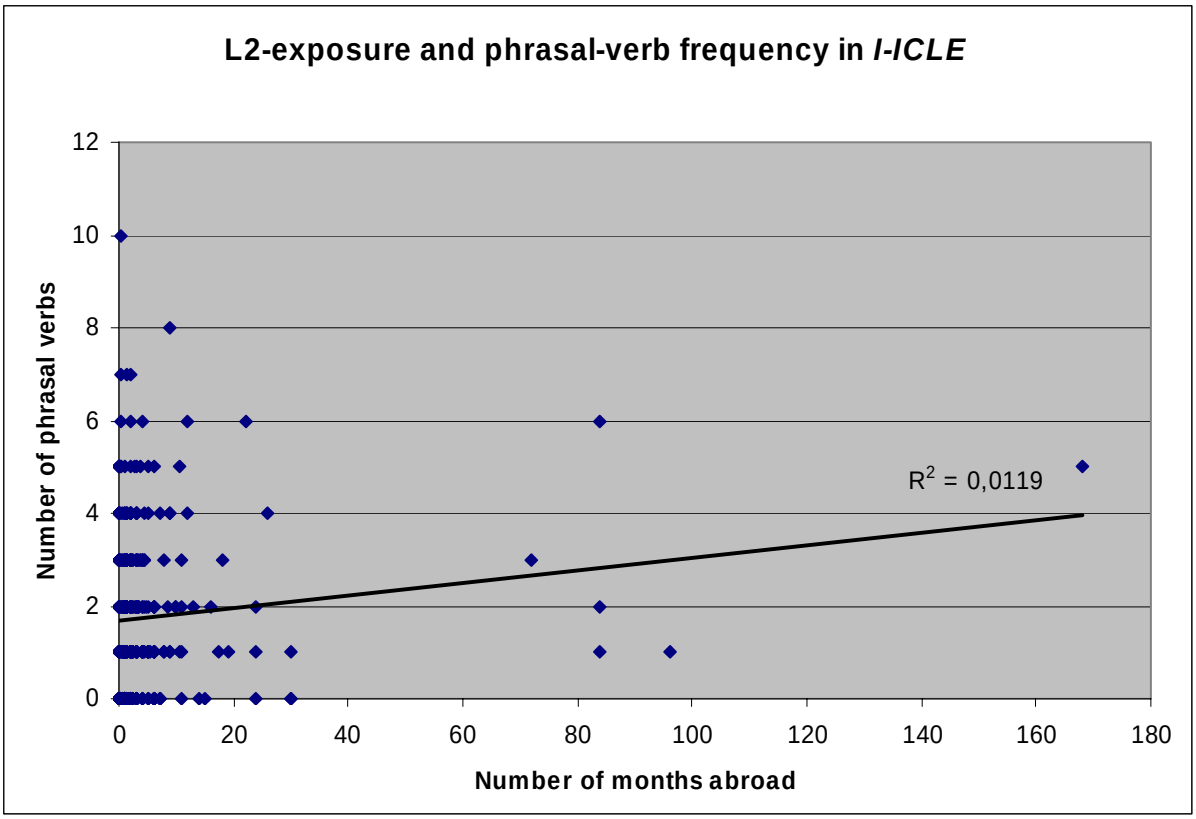

Figure 13: Correlation between L2-exposure and phrasal-verb frequency in *I-ICLE*

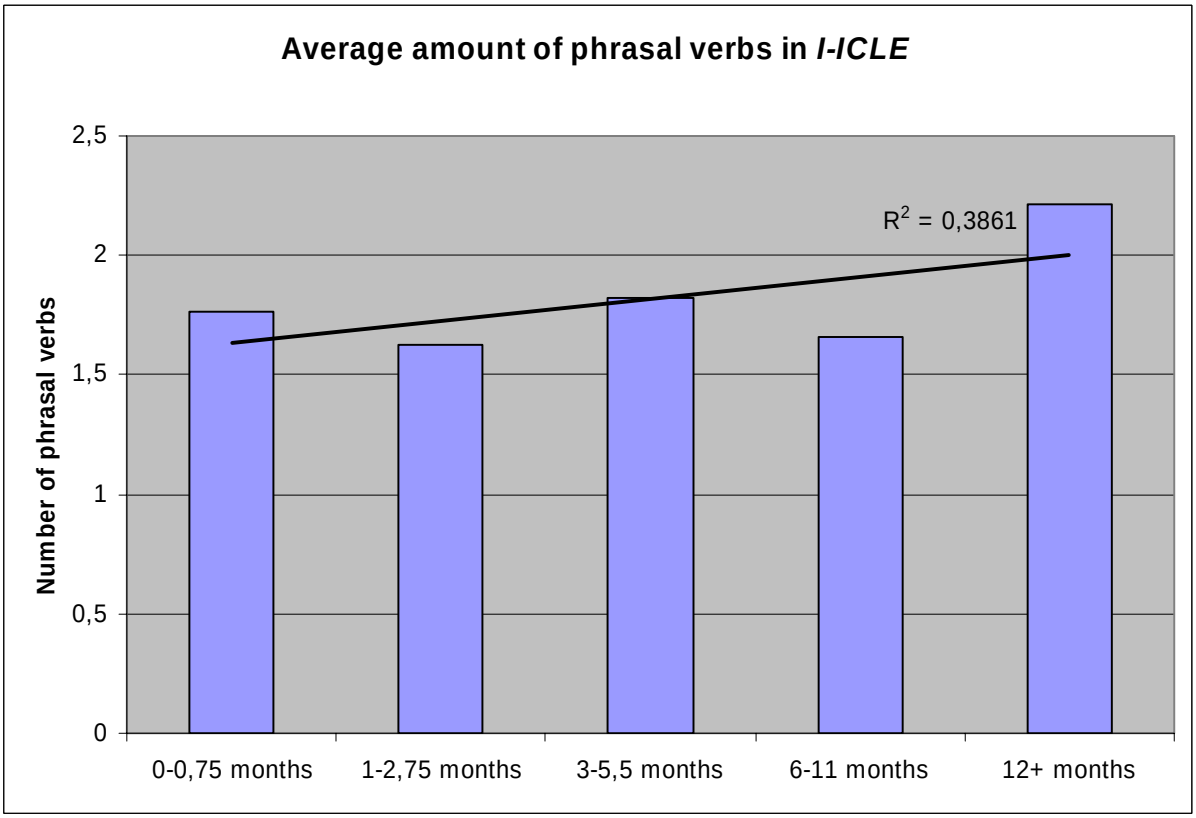

Figure 14: Average amount of phrasal verbs depending on L2-exposure in *I-ICLE*

In spite of the statistically robust correlation between L2-exposure and phrasal-verb use it should be pointed out that, at this point in the analysis, this correlation exists on a purely quantitative basis. The fact that about 20 percent of the learners used more phrasal verbs after they spent time in an English-speaking country does not necessarily mean that they are more proficient speakers or that their English is more native-like. In fact, many of these phrasal verbs may be used incorrectly or inappropriately. A great deal therefore also depends on the quality of phrasal-verb use.

Moreover, a high number of phrasal verbs in the essay of a student who spent a long time abroad need not mean that unusual or academically marked phrasal verbs like *point out* and *carry out* are used. In both Italian and German essays, contrary examples were found, i.e. essays by students who spent several months in an English-speaking country which, with respect to phrasal-verb choice, are no different from essays by students who spend only little or no time abroad. Here are excerpts from two essays by Italian students. One student spent two weeks abroad (ITTO3014), the other 84 months (ITRS1074). In both essays, seven phrasal verbs were used.

(a) Nowadays, the fact that a large number of marriages end in divorce every year is no longer shocking and, what is more, the increasing number of single-parent families is regarded as the norm. Since it is single women who **make up** the vast majority of one-parent households (most of them are divorcees), their ability to **bring up** children on their own is now widely recognized. (…) Despite the strong criticism that might come from anti-abortion activists, clergymen and political conservatives against both single women who apply for artificial insemination and clinics that **carry out** the practice, it should not be forgotten that motherhood is a right which also a single woman should be permitted to enjoy.
A major argument for the right of single women to use artificial insemination is that not all single women are such by choice. In other words, there are some cases in which married women are forced to see their marriage **break down** because they have sexual problems and cannot have intercourse. Why should these women **give up** motherhood, especially after being forsaken by their husbands?
Moreover, there is also another category of women that should be taken into account, namely widows. Even though a number of widows **end up** finding another partner and some marry again, others however remain single. (…)
In an article published in the Newsweek on 25th March, 1991, the author reports that about 20 per cent of the clients of BPAS clinics (clinics which are run by the British Pregnancy Advisory Service) are single women. This is a clear sign that more and more women feel confident of succeeding in **bringing up** a child without the help of a partner and are determined to become single parents. (ITTO3014, 0.5 months

abroad, essay title "Single women should not be allowed to have artificial insemination")

(b) (…) Line six closes with a colon which anticipates the awaited and silent appearance of man on the natural scene (v. 7-8). Like a flash of light which **comes** quickly **on** and **off**, as stressed by the perfect rhyme light/night, man's temporary stay in the world is summerised in merely 2 lines. (…)
Man appears only once again at line 12 to be dismissed and forgotten. In the last 4 lines the rhythm **speeds up** in a quick wind down towards the end. Time **is up**, the space given to each image is halved as the nights (of the stars and the angels) **come off**, colours **die down** (spring is entombed) things come to a stand still (the wind **blows out**) and man too comes quietly off stage. (ITRS1074, 84 months abroad, essay title "Discuss the poem "Sic Vita")

As the above text examples show, the student who had spent 84 months in an English-speaking country did not use more academically marked phrasal verbs than the student who spent only two weeks abroad. The same holds for two of the German essays, which, due to their lengths, are found in appendix 6a.

In conclusion, the duration of L2-exposure may be a determining factor for the greater number of phrasal verbs used for about a fifth of all essays. This correlation does nevertheless not tell us anything about the quality of phrasal-verb use in German and Italian advanced learner writing. This aspect will be discussed in chapter 6.

5.3.7 The influence of text length

When researching the German data, the impression arose that the length of the essays does not account for the number of phrasal verbs used, i.e. that text length and frequency of phrasal verbs do not correlate. This is contrary to common expectations – the longer a text, the more likely it is usually that a certain feature occurs more frequently. A further statistical test was therefore carried out to corroborate the hypothesis that in the German data, text length is no relevant variable for the frequency of phrasal verbs.

The essay tokens in *G-ICLE* range from 159 to 2098, most essays ranging between 300 and 600 words. Overall, however, the essays cover a wide range of essay lengths, as the scatter graph below visualises. The phrasal-verb frequencies in the

graph are relative frequencies, extrapolated to 1000 tokens, so that the data are comparable.

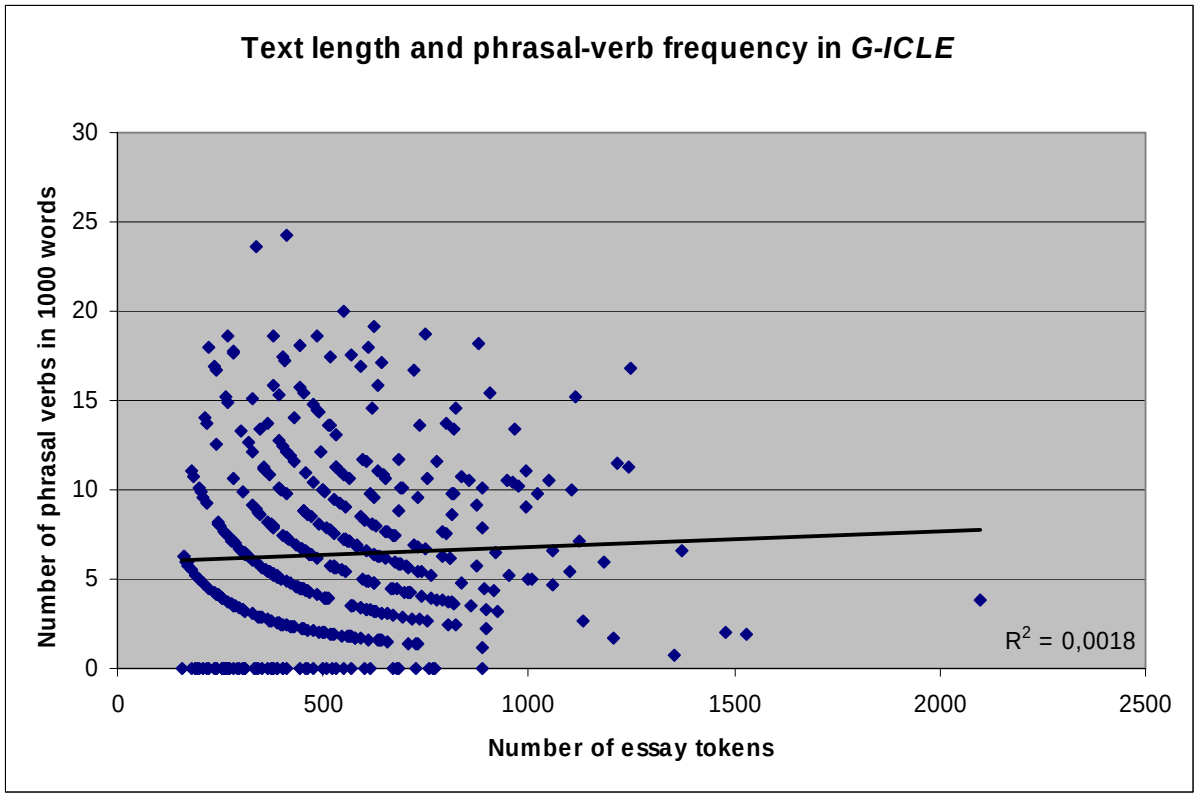

Figure 15: Correlation between text length and phrasal-verb frequency in *G-ICLE*

It is obvious from the trend line in figure 15 that there is only a very weak correlation, if at all. Indeed, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient is .043, a weak positive correlation, but statistically insignificant (p=0.183). This means that it does not matter whether an essay is short or long – in either can be a low or a high number of phrasal verbs, or, put differently, it is possible that a short essay has more phrasal verbs in it than a long one.

The same holds for the Italian corpus (Pearson's Correlation Coefficient -.03, significance level p=.275). This finding is, however, not very surprising as there is much less variety in text length when compared to *G-ICLE*. The majority of essays in *I-ICLE* are between 400 and 700 words long (cf. figure 16), with only few exceptions when compared to figure 15:

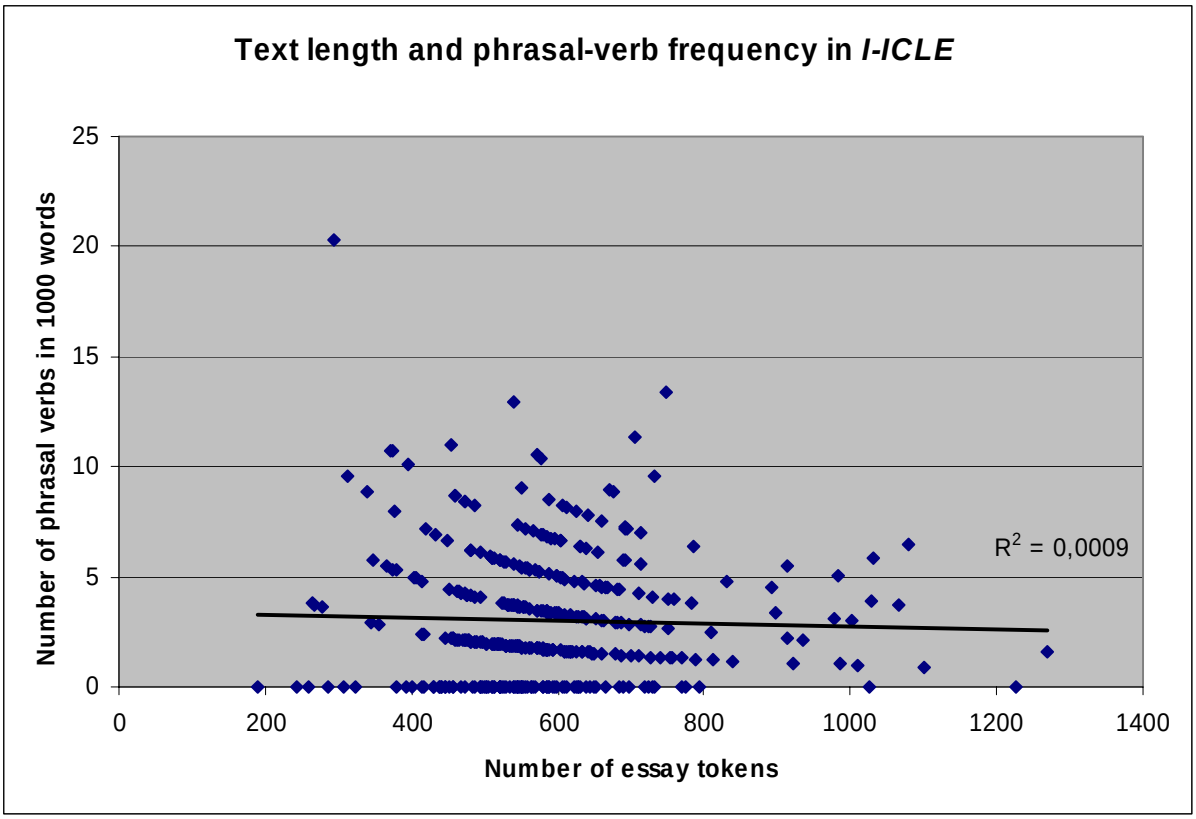

Figure 16: Correlation between text length and phrasal-verb frequency in *I-ICLE*

5.3.8 The influence of style

It was already pointed out in chapter 5.3.2 that the essays by German students seem stamped by anecdotal reports about personal experiences rather than by argumentative writing. In order to substantiate this general impression, the essay titles in *G-ICLE* were compared with those in *I-ICLE*. It emerged that a large number of essay titles in *G-ICLE* suggests a personal mark of the author. Some examples are "Someone I admire!", "English cooking is dreadful!", "Fastfood. Yum?", "Rowdy tourists are a pain in the neck", "My teenage idol", "A daughter's lament",[123] "Wine, an appraisal", or "The joys of life". Other titles suggest a descriptive nature of the essays, i.e. "A day in the life of a prisoner" or "A report about a policeman's routine day". Taking into account that a classification of essay titles based on criteria such as 'anecdotal' and 'argumentative' is subjective to a certain degree, a rough estimate would suggest that between 20 and 25 percent of all essays in *G-ICLE* suggest reports

[123] This essay title appeared in various versions, replacing "daughter" by "housewife", "cyclist", "student", or "lodger".

about personal experiences. In *I-ICLE*, on the other hand, only one title suggests a more personal description ("Describe as accurately as you can the zone within about a kilometre of where you live, explaining how you think it has changed over the last fifty or so years").

In order to investigate whether such personal essay writing is marked by the frequent use of phrasal verbs, each essay title in *G-ICLE* was juxtaposed with the number of phrasal verbs occurring in the respective essay. Contrary to expectations, however, not all 'personal' essays show a high number of phrasal verbs. In many of these essays, no or only few phrasal verbs were used. On the other hand, 20 of the 25 essays in which ten or more phrasal verbs occurred are reports about personal experiences,[124] while two are partly personal.[125] The remaining three essays with ten or more phrasal verbs do not report personal experiences but were written in informal style.[126] The number of phrasal-verb tokens used in the German data is thus to some extent due to the topic and the writing style of the essay.

To verify this statistically, the next step was to classify all *G-ICLE* essays as either 'personal/anecdotal/descriptive' or 'argumentative'; this classification is based on the essay itself and not solely on the title.[127] Appendices 6a and 6b provide examples of these two essay types. According to this categorisation, 64.4 percent of the essays in *G-ICLE* are argumentative in nature (essay type 1); the remaining 35.6 percent are anecdotal or descriptive essays about personal experiences (essay type 2). The statistical test applied is an independent samples t-test; it confirms that type 2 essays exhibit significantly more phrasal verbs than type 1 essays ($t=-6.24$, $p<.001$). On average, students who reported on personal experiences used 4.7 phrasal verbs per essay, whereas in essays of the argumentative type, only 2.8 phrasal verbs were used on average. The general impression that the *G-ICLE* essays are of personal rather than argumentative nature is thus clearly substantiated statistically; in the German data, therefore, the number of phrasal verbs used is highly dependent on

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[124] Essay codes: GEAU3003, GEAU3011, GEAU3015, GEAU3016, GEAU3017, GEAU3026, GEAU3050, GEAU3054, GEAU3063, GEAU3081, GEAU3082, GEAU3083, GEAU3088, GEAU3097, GEAU3098, GEAU4010, GEAU4012, GESA5012, GESA5021, GEBA1027.

[125] Essay codes: GEAU3013, GEAU3040.

[126] Essay codes: GEAU4013, GEBA1049, GEBA1053.

[127] This analysis was carried out only for *G-ICLE*, as only one essay title in *I-ICLE* suggests a more personal style.

essay type. As reports about personal experiences are likely to be written in informal rather than formal style, the tone of these essays will be more colloquial than in the argumentative essays, leading German students to use phrasal verbs frequent in conversation and fiction (cf. chapter 5.3.2).

5.3.9 The influence of time pressure and reference tools

A further variable recorded on the *ICLE*-CD is whether students were writing their essays under exam conditions or not, that is, whether the essays are timed or not. In order to see if time pressure is a significant variable when it comes to the frequency of phrasal verbs, the *G-ICLE* and *I-ICLE* essays were submitted to a t-test. On the basis of Nesselhauf's (2005a: 230) finding that German students writing under time pressure use fewer collocations, it was expected that the quantitative use of phrasal verbs by German and Italian learners would decrease as well given exam conditions. The distribution of timed and untimed essays is fairly balanced in *G-ICLE* (181 essays are timed, 228 are untimed); in *I-ICLE*, more essays were written under exam conditions than not (252 timed essays, 134 untimed ones). That the above hypothesis holds at least for German learners was confirmed by the t-test – on average, they used 1.08 more phrasal verbs when they did not write under time pressure; this result is highly significant at the .000 level (t=-4.323). In Italian learner writing, on the other hand, no statistical difference between timed and untimed essays emerged. Following Nesselhauf (2005a: 230), it seems that not only in the area of collocations but also in the area of phrasal verbs German learners consciously use these multi-word units to sound more native-like whereas time is no significant factor for Italian learners when it comes to producing phrasal verbs.

Exam conditions usually go together with the possibility of using reference tools such as mono- or bilingual dictionaries; that is, in an exam situation, reference tools are frequently not allowed whereas at home, liberal use of them can be made. The influence of this variable was therefore tested for the two learner groups. Again, this factor did indeed influence German learner writing. The t-test confirmed that, statistically speaking, 0.43 more phrasal verbs were employed when the use of reference tools was allowed. With p=0.028, this result is still significant; however, to

speak of a strong correlation would be out of place. It nevertheless corroborates Nesselhauf (2005a: 231) who found that slightly more collocations were used by learners working with a dictionary.[128] In Italian writing no statistical difference between the use and non-use of reference tools emerged. It should be pointed out, however, that the distribution of essays in the Italian *ICLE* is biased – only five students made no use of reference tools so that statistical tests are not meaningful.

5.3.10 The influence of school and university teaching

The last variable likely to exert influence on the quantitative use of phrasal verbs to be investigated in this study is the length of school and university teaching German and Italian learners are exposed to. The *ICLE*-CD records both the years of teaching at school and at university separately. For the present analysis, however, the time spans were added as no difference is expected if these two periods are analysed separately, especially if one considers that the teaching at school usually lasts eight to nine years whereas university teaching of the learner groups analysed lasted only three or four years.

As was the case for the influence of text length, time pressure and reference tools, no correlation emerged for *I-ICLE*; that is, as to the frequency of phrasal verbs in Italian learner writing there is no difference between students who learnt English for a longer period of time and those who spent less time studying English at school and university. In *G-ICLE*, the situation is different. German students used slightly, but significantly more phrasal verbs after more years of learning (Pearson's Correlation Coefficient .233, the correlation is highly significant at the .000 level). Contrary to Italian learners, for German learners teaching seems to have a slightly positive effect on the quantitative use of phrasal verbs. The scatter plot (figure 17) shows this correlation:

[128] Note, however, that Nesselhauf's results for time pressure and reference tools are not based on statistical significance tests but on the relative number of collocations in 1000 words.

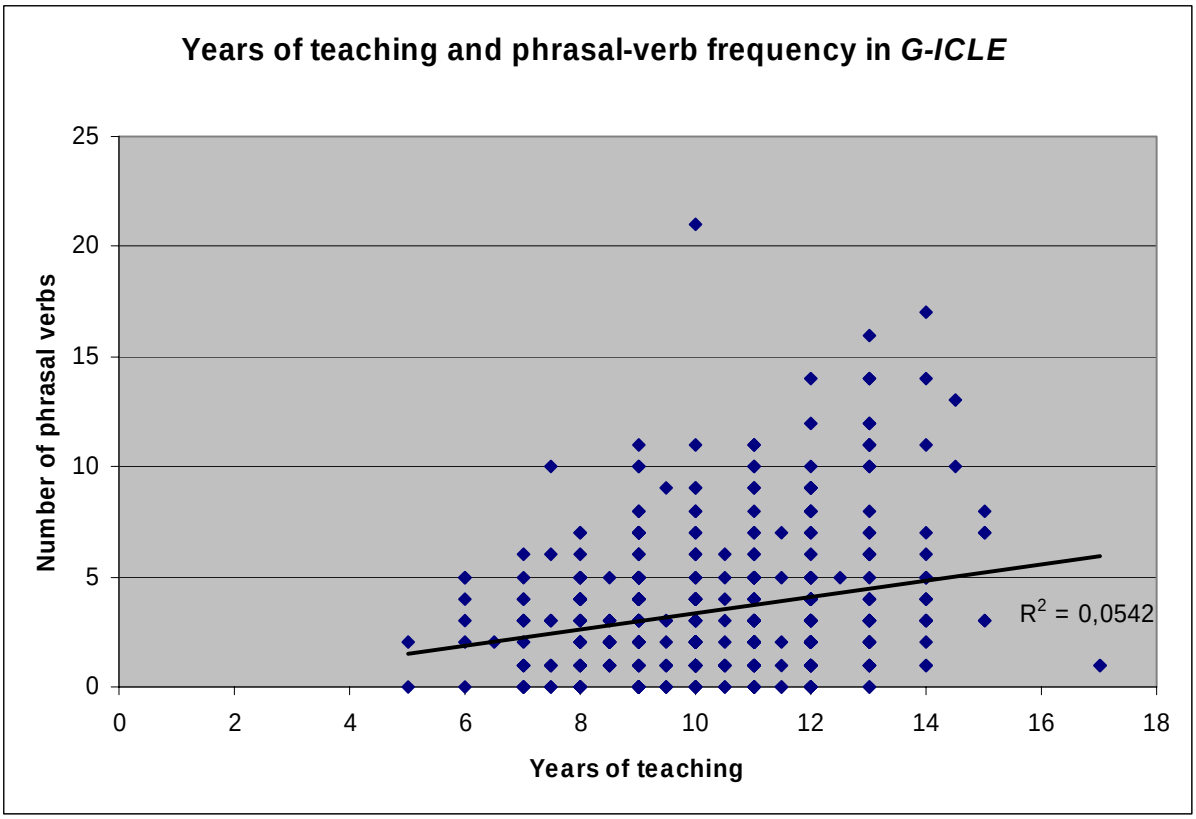

Figure 17: Correlation between years of teaching and phrasal-verb frequency in *G-ICLE*

5.4 Synopsis: The quantitative use of phrasal verbs

The quantitative analysis of phrasal verbs in learner writing yielded several insightful results. The general survey showed that, contrary to expectations, the learner groups recorded on the *ICLE*-CD do not underuse phrasal verbs in general. In terms of language families, only learners from a Romance, Slavic, or Finnish background use fewer phrasal verbs than native students while learners from a Germanic background use the same amount. Although some phrasal verbs are underused by all learner groups, one can nevertheless not speak of a universal feature as the frequencies in the various *ICLE* corpora show great differences between learner groups.

It emerged from the in-depth analysis of all phrasal verbs in the German and Italian *ICLE* components that German students over- and Italian students underused phrasal verbs in relation to native students. Considering that phrasal verbs are generally based on Germanic verbs, this is in line with the finding that German students used more Germanic-based verbs than Italians, and Italians used more

Romance-based verbs than Germans. However, although the overall number of phrasal-verb tokens is much lower in *I-ICLE* than in *G-ICLE*, the proportion of phrasal-verb types and phrasal-verb tokens is about the same in the two learner corpora. This means that advanced Italian learner writing is no less diverse lexically than German students' writing.

The analysis of the 25 most frequent phrasal verbs revealed that formal, academic phrasal verbs like *carry out, point out* and *sum up* are used side by side with more informal ones like *go on, go out,* and *get up*. Also *go on* and *continue* and *bring about* and *cause* are used by learners without the awareness of native speaker usage. Different levels of styles in different essays explain this co-occurrence, but also students' unawareness of register and connotation restrictions – informal phrasal verbs are used in formal contexts. A further finding applying only to the Italian corpus is the topic-sensitivity and topic-dependency of individual phrasal verbs (*bring up*, *give up* and *grow up*) – the most frequent phrasal verbs in *I-ICLE* are used only in very restricted contexts whereas Germans apply them in a much wider variety of contexts. This confidence is likely due to native language influence from German where a verb type similar to English phrasal verbs exists, resulting in a greater familiarity with this type of verb.

Moreover, some variables influencing the frequency of phrasal verbs were investigated. Correlating phrasal-verb frequency with L2-exposure proved fruitful – about 20 percent of both German and Italian students used more phrasal verbs after they had spent time in an English-speaking country, a weak, but highly significant correlation. Text length, on the other hand, does not have any influence on the number of phrasal verbs. For both German and Italian essays it is insignificant whether an essay is short or long – either can display a low or high number of phrasal verbs. Essay type, argumentative or anecdotal, however, is statistically significant for the number of phrasal verbs. As can be expected, more phrasal verbs occur in personal or anecdotal essays than in argumentative ones. The influence of time pressure, the use of reference tools, and the years of learning English proved statistically significant for German learners, but not for Italian ones. German advanced learners used more phrasal verbs when they did not write under time pressure; they used more phrasal verbs when they were allowed to use reference

tools; and also the duration of teaching at school and university level has a slight influence on the frequency of phrasal verbs in this learner group. In summary, with respect to the quantitative use of phrasal verbs, German advanced learner writing is more determined by external factors than Italian writing.

6. Phrasal verbs in advanced learner writing – a qualitative approach

6.1 Preliminaries

While chapter 5 was concerned with the quantitative analysis of phrasal verbs, in this chapter the data will be investigated in a qualitative way. Some aspects of the qualitative use of phrasal verbs were already discussed in chapter 5.3.2 as also a quantitative approach requires a specific qualitative follow-up for a substantial linguistic analysis (cf. Mair 1991: 67 who argues for combining the "quantitative-statistical" and the "qualitative-textlinguistic" approach; cf. also chapter 4.1). These points will not be reiterated here.

In the present chapter, several aspects will be discussed, the first two of which lie at the core of research based on the *International Corpus of Learner English* (cf. Granger 1996a: 17). Apart from an analysis of both positive and negative native language influence (chapter 6.2), attention will be paid especially to features of unnaturalness in learner language, i.e. those facets that make English sound unidiomatic – what Granger (1996a: 17) calls "non-nativeness" or "foreign-soundingness". In this context, collocational aspects of phrasal-verb use, i.e. whether learners are able to use phrasal verbs in the correct context and to combine them with the correct sort of context words, play a major role. Further facets adding to unnaturalness are wrongly selected phrasal verbs and particularly the simplified use of phrasal verbs – in the absence of a better alternative, learners make do with a phrasal verb that gets the learner's intended meaning across but creates an impression of non-idiomaticity (chapter 6.3). However, unnaturalness is not the only issue in this chapter. The creative use of phrasal verbs will be investigated as well, i.e. whether students are proficient enough to form phrasal verbs 'according to the rules' (e.g. aspectual phrasal verbs, chapter 6.4). Furthermore, general stylistic aspects with respect to phrasal verbs in the two learner corpora will be considered (chapter 6.5).

Some problematic aspects need clarification at this point. Although for the qualitative analysis an error analysis will be carried out, no definite quantification of native-language-induced, collocational, or other errors is intended for several reasons. First of all, in contrast to prepositional verbs where the preposition following the verb is either correct or incorrect (e.g. *depend *from*), phrasal verbs

present a more complicated area in that one has to deal not only with the phrasal verb itself, but also with its frequently polysemous meanings and the context in which it can be used. Judging whether the context words or collocations of a phrasal verb are 'correct' or 'incorrect', or rather 'acceptable' or 'unacceptable', depends to a great degree on the person carrying out the analysis. Resorting to native-speaker judgment does not solve the problem as also their opinions on acceptability and appropriateness will inevitably diverge in many cases,[129] and, what is more, "there is not necessarily a one-to-one relation between what native speakers find acceptable or unacceptable (…) and what they themselves produce frequently" (Nesselhauf 2005a: 53).

In order to minimise this problem and to objectivise the analysis of phrasal-verb collocates, for the present study both the *British National Corpus* (*BNC*) and phrasal-verb dictionaries (e.g. Sinclair & Moon 1989 and Cullen & Sargeant 1996) will be consulted to check the contexts in which phrasal verbs can occur. However, if a combination of phrasal verb and collocate produced by a learner does not occur in the *BNC*, this does not necessarily mean that such a combination is impossible or unacceptable. It is therefore beyond the author's intention to decide what is right or acceptable and what is wrong or unacceptable as far as phrasal-verb collocates are concerned.

A further problem pertaining to the quantification of errors is the fact that it is often hard to clearly establish a border between native language interference and wrong collocations. *Take over*, for example, has a translation equivalent in German *übernehmen* (*take* = *nehmen*, *over* = *über*), but semantically, while some senses of *take over* and *übernehmen* overlap, others do not.[130] Some examples from *G-ICLE* shall illustrate the difficulty of deciding whether an error is due to native language

[129] Cf. Corder (1981: 40): "Judgements about the appropriateness of an utterance require that we interpret it in relation to its context and the situation in which it is uttered. Appropriateness has many dimensions and cannot (…) be reduced to rules. Judgements about appropriateness must therefore be largely subjective."

[130] In contrast to German *übernehmen* which covers the concepts of "take possession of", "take on, accept something, take care of something", "continue something, take over (responsibility)" (*PONS Lexiface Professional Englisch* 2001), English *take over* is more restricted to aspects of control. Its meanings are "become bigger or more important than something else; replace something", "begin to have control of or responsibility for something, especially in place of someone else", "gain control of a political party, a country, etc.", "gain control of a business, a company, etc." (*OALD*).

influence or to the fact that the learner is not familiar with the appropriate collocates of the English phrasal verb:

(12) In most families the mother comes to see the teacher, if there are any problems with the children at school, she **takes it over** to invite friends for dinner, she looks out to visit exhibitions<sic> and concerts - so it is she, who creates social and cultural life within the family. (GEAU1062)

(13) It is a strictly personal evaluation of one's childhood and youth. Whether parents should also **take over** the role of school teachers is a different matter. (GEBA1038)

(14) Fridolin, the private detective, is nervously walking to and fro his messy office. He has just **taken over** a very delicate case: He got a "mobile- killer", a small machine with which he can disturb the phone-calls made with a mobile. (GEBA1049)

If these instances of *take over* were translated to German, *übernehmen* would be used in all examples. However, while (12) is a fairly clear instance of native language transfer, (13) and (14) are more difficult to categorise. Are they clear-cut examples of native language influence or of collocational deviations? In both instances, the concepts of 'control' and 'responsibility' play a role so that learners may have broadened the scope of *take over* to include 'role' and 'a very delicate case'. Based on dictionary definitions, in both cases *take on* would be the preferred phrasal verb in native English.

The distinction between native language influence and the creative use of a phrasal verb can be problematic, too. One example is *count up* (example (15)) which seems a typical candidate for native language interference from German *aufzählen* (*count* = *zählen*, *up* = *auf*). *Aufzählen*, however, translates as *list* or *enumerate*. In this sense, *count up* does not occur in dictionaries. Yet, when checking the *BNC*, several examples of *count up* in the sense of *list* came up. Does the learner produce (15) because he or she is familiar with common phrasal-verb patterns – in this case completive phrasal verbs like *eat up* or *cover up*, (15) being an example of creativity (cf. chapter 6.4), or is he or she transferring a German particle verb to a seemingly corresponding English phrasal verb?

(15) Unfortunately, it is true that **counting up** all catastrophes, economic, environmental and political problems as well as personal tragedies does not leave much space for admiring the world as a whole. (GESA5025)

As evident from examples (12) to (15), the rigid classification of errors and their causes is often not feasible as the boundaries between error types are frequently blurred and are thus as subject to personal interpretation as are native speaker statements about the acceptability of phrasal-verb use. As a consequence, there can be no such thing as an absolute quantification of errors in the present context. It should therefore be borne in mind during the following analysis that although phrasal verbs will be discussed in the light of collocational deviation, native language influence, and so on, this is not intended as an absolute categorisation. Rather, the examples are chosen to illustrate the points in question.

A further reason not to quantify errors or deviant usage is that German and Italian learners are not pitted against each other – to state which learner group performs better and which one is less proficient is not intended. Besides, exact percentages of error types etc. do not change the fact that mistakes are actually made. It is therefore considered more useful to rather draw attention to the weak – and strong – points of each learner group in general so that these problems can be remedied. A discussion of all phrasal-verb occurrences in the two learner corpora (more than 2200 hits altogether) would go far beyond this scope; only a selection of the most insightful examples will therefore be adduced.[131]

Syntactic problems with phrasal verbs will not be discussed in this study as only very few syntactic errors occurred. The most interesting instance is probably the following where a prepositional verb was transformed into a phrasal verb:

(16) For, when I found out that rolling down the steep road in my home town at a high speed was much more enjoyable than **going** it **down** by car, I started to train my muscles and soon found myself able to climb up steeper and steeper mountains. (GEAU3054)

[131] It should be mentioned at this point that the great majority (at least 80 percent) of phrasal-verb tokens would in all likelihood be judged acceptable by most native speakers. However, as stated above, acceptability is difficult to account for objectively; an exact overall error proportion is therefore not intended.

Also particle placement will not be an issue in this study. On the one hand, there are overall too few occurrences of the pattern *bring up NP* and *bring NP up* to make qualitative statements about the variability of particle placement.[132] On the other hand, there seem to be only little differences between native students and learners as far as particle placement is concerned. *Bring up NP*, *point out NP,* and *put on NP* are preferred by all three groups over the pattern 'verb NP particle'. An analysis of students' use of phrasal-verb syntax does therefore not seem fruitful to the purpose of this study.

6.2 Native language influence

At various points in the quantitative analysis, it became obvious that the influence of the native language has considerable impact on learners' performance (cf. chapter 5.3.2). In this chapter, this aspect will be examined in more detail, taking into account individual examples where native language (NL) influence plays a role in learner productions. The influence of the mother tongue has two sides; it can be both negative and positive. Negative influence is commonly called 'interference', positive influence 'transfer'. These terms will be retained in the present context.[133]

When comparing the frequency and use of Italian 'verbi frasali' and German particle verbs (cf. chapter 2.2.2), it seems logical that only in German essay writing will a number of native-language induced errors occur. Italian 'verbi frasali' are both rare and restricted to spoken language whereas particle verbs are pervasive in German; furthermore, the latter are semantically similar to English phrasal verbs. It is therefore obvious that the direct influence of German particle verbs on individual phrasal verbs in German learner writing should manifest itself more openly than the near absence of such a verb type in Italian which, as seen in chapter 5.3.1, resulted in the overall lower number of phrasal verbs in Italian learner writing. Indeed, various

[132] Instances like *bring it up* can obviously not be taken into account in this kind of analysis as there is no variation possible when a pronoun is used instead of a noun phrase (**bring up it*).

[133] Concise summaries of the most important aspects of transfer and interference in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) are Benson (2002) and Waibel (2003: 5-14). A more detailed, book-length, account of NL influence is Ringbom (1987). Various approaches to the processes underlying language transfer are recorded in Gass and Selinker (1992). For an account of the 'history' of transfer, refer to Selinker (1997). He offers a historical perspective on theories in Second Language Acquisition and re-evaluates important hypotheses and concepts.

interference-caused instances of phrasal verbs were found in the German data; they fall in three groups which are discussed below: the verb, the particle, or the entire phrasal verb was chosen incorrectly (examples (19) to (37)). However, also in Italian essay writing the influence of the native language on specific phrasal verbs is discernible – albeit in a more indirect way than in the German essays. Examples (17) and (18) are instances of NL interference from Italian:

(17) She could only stay at home, **grow up her children** and satisfy her husband. (ITB08001)

(18) The world is gradually evolving and traditions with it; I think it is time to **put apart** prejudices and to respect the new nature of the human beings, new concept of family included. (ITTO3023)

Grow up in (17) is used transitively. At first glance a confusion of *bring up* and *grow up* might explain this error. However, *grow up* is used 13 times as a transitive phrasal verb in the Italian *ICLE*; furthermore, there are four occurrences of *grow a child*. A mere confusion with another phrasal verb therefore seems unlikely. The reason for this incorrect use of *grow up* is NL interference from Italian; the construction corresponding to *raise a child* is *crescere un bambino* (cf. *Lo Zingarelli* 1998, s.v. *crescere*), *crescere* translating as *grow*. Apparently, the Italian students producing these thirteen instances of *grow up a child* are familiar with the semantics of *grow up* in that they use it in connection with children and education; they are however not aware of its syntactic restrictions – the fact that it is intransitive in English.

Example (18) bears witness to NL interference as well. The correct phrasal verb intended by the student is *put aside*. The actually used phrasal verb, *put apart*, can be related to the Italian expression *mettere da parte* (cf. *Lo Zingarelli* 1998, s.v. *mettere*). *Mettere* is the Italian equivalent of *put*, and *da parte* is phonetically very similar to *apart*. Obviously, although Italian 'verbi frasali' cannot be compared to German particle verbs in terms of use, frequency, and semantic similarity to English phrasal verbs, influence from Italian is nevertheless noticeable. The influence from the native language is however much stronger in German than in Italian learner writing, as the subsequent discussion of NL interference from German will evidence.

In several examples in *G-ICLE*, the selection of the verb is due to native language interference, resulting in phrasal verbs which, although existing as such in English, take on meanings diverging from their dictionary meanings. In example (19), *dawn* collocates with *break in*; the proper expression in English would be *set in*. The learner clearly resorted to German which has *hereinbrechen* as the collocate to *dawn*, (*herein* corresponding to *in*, as in *komm herein – come in*, and *brechen* corresponding to *break*). Although *break in* does exist as such, its meanings are different from the one used by the learner.[134]

(19) Talking and laughing with friends, walking through a familiar countryside when dawn **breaks in**, reading an excellent book, feeling the shelter spent by the family or a beloved person etc are moments which may seem to be trivial but are of extrodinary<sic> importance for life. (GESA5027)

Examples (20) to (22) are further typical representatives of direct translations of a German particle verb to an English phrasal verb:

(20) Butter **went out** in the course of the week and new one not bought. (GEAU1057)

(21) How to come up again when you were fallen in the snow without having to **make your skis off**. (GEAU1057)

(22) Finally as I had decided to leave my bed, to **stand up** in order to take off the receiver, I heard the well-known voice of my mother saying: (…) (GEAU1024)

In examples (20) to (22), learners used the English verb that is closest to their mother tongue – *ausgehen* meaning *run out* is translated as *go out* (*aus* + *gehen* equalling *out* + *go*), *abmachen* meaning *take off* is translated as *make off* (*ab* + *machen* → *off* + *take*), and *aufstehen* in example (22) is translated as *stand up* instead of *get up*, the preferred phrasal verb in the context of 'getting out of bed in the morning' (*auf* + *stehen* → *up* + *stand*; this mistake occurred four times, cf. also chapter 5.3.2).

[134] In this section, for the sake of readability, I will refrain from listing the various dictionary meanings of the phrasal verbs in question. The reader is referred to standard monolingual dictionaries and to specialised phrasal-verb dictionaries such as Sinclair and Moon (1989) or Cullen and Sargeant (1996). The suggested correct alternatives to the wrong phrasal verbs in this chapter are based on Terrell et al. ([5]2004).

The phrasal verbs in (23) and (24) are direct translations of the German particle verbs *zusammenkratzen* (*zusammen* + *kratzen* → *together* + *scratch*) and *runterschrauben* (*runter* + *schrauben* → *down* + *screw*); the appropriate phrasal verbs in English would be *scrape together* and *scale down*:

(23) It seemed as if journalists had **scratched together** all the bits of morbid imagination they had, to make an exclusive and thrilling story out of a few fragments of irrelevant and boring information. (GEAU3013)

(24) Meanwhile, until our consumerism has reached the dead end, we can prolong that Golden Age by **screwing down** our standards a little bit. (GEDR1019)

While all the other incorrectly translated phrasal verbs exist as such in English, *scratch together* in (23) is the only combination that is not listed in phrasal-verb or mono- and bilingual dictionaries. It does, however, occur twice in the *BNC* in the same sense as *scrape together*; the latter is nevertheless the default option with 33 occurrences in the *BNC*.

There are also some examples in *G-ICLE* where the particle can be traced back to interference from German. In (25) to (29), the English particle selected corresponds phonetically and/or semantically to the German one. All phrasal verbs used do exist as such but, as before, have meanings different from the ones assumed by the learners or do not apply to the context (e.g. in (28)).

(25) Their houses are set on fire, they're **beaten down** with bottles or baseball rags<sic> or they are even killed in fights with Neo-nazis who try to show their courage. (GEAU1069)
→ *nieder* + *schlagen* → *down* + *beat* (correct: *beat up*)

(26) As a matter of course they have to verify their choice afterwards by **drinking** all **out**. (GEAU3059)
→ *aus* + *trinken* → *out* + *drink* (correct: *drink up*)

(27) But of course, the number of such places is limited in a city center and so more and more cars arrive, making more and more noise and **give up** more and more poisoned gas - but less and less parkings can be found. (GEAU2014)
→ *ab* + *geben* → *up* + *give* (correct: *give off*)

(28) Young couples, therefore, when they get married **take up** a mortgage to buy a house and the only way they can afford this is by buying an old house and doing it up themselves. (GEAU3010)
→ *auf* + *nehmen* → *up* + *take* (correct: *take out*)

(29) I jump out of my bed, **throw over** some fresh clothes and rush down the stairs, taking two steps at one time. (GEAU1022)
→ *über* + *werfen* → *over* + *throw* (correct: *throw on*)

In two examples, a phrasal verb was used although a single verb would have been more appropriate. In (30) below, native language interference is palpable – German *zusammenkrachen* is translated as *crash together* (*zusammen* + *krachen* → *together* + *crash*). With only two occurrences in the *BNC*, *crash together* is unusual in native English; the preferred, single-verb, option would be the simple verbs *crash* or *collide*.

(30) It was quite obvious that the boys had raced over the playground, the bikes had **crashed together** and both boys fell down and hurt themselves. (GEAU3053)

The second example with a superfluous particle is *lead on* in (31) below. This use of *lead on* goes back to German *anführen* (*an* + *führen* → *on* + *lead*). *Lead on* in the sense of 'leading a group etc.' is generally only used as an imperative in English (cf. *Langenscheidt Collins* (2004) and *BNC*); in the present context, the single verb *lead* is preferable so as not to cause confusion with the primary meaning of *lead on* ('deceive').

(31) Mind you, there has been a kind of pseudo-intellectual movement in the late 60s **lead on** by irresponsible anarchists who should be jailed for having brought up a generation of hooligans, Vandals, felons. (GEAU3092)

Furthermore, several cases were found where the entire combination of verb and particle does not apply to the context in question and where interference from German is clearly discernible.[135] Again, most of these combinations exist in English

[135] Also some examples of *take over* are part of this category. As was however already pointed out in chapter 6.1, *take over* is a case where a clear categorisation as either NL interference or collocational mistake is problematic. A further example from *G-ICLE* illustrates this point: "There are few men who

but carry meanings different from the ones intended by learners. In contrast to the instances above, however, most examples in this section would be more native-like without any phrasal verb but with different constructions. Apparently, the students producing these sentences lack the necessary vocabulary skills to find suitable English translations for their German thoughts and rely on direct translations of their NL expressions:

(32) I went into several shops, but wherever I **brought forward** my request, I was confronted with such a multitude and variety of bikes that I was completely at a loss and found myself unable to make a decision. (GEAU3054)
→ *eine Bitte vorbringen* → *make a request, ask for*[136]

(33) Even if the surrogate mother **carried the baby out** sucessfully<sic> there would always be the risk of "producing" a disabled child because of the woman's illness. (GESA2005)
→ *ein Kind austragen* → *carry a child (through) to full term*

(34) The paper was on Molière - I study French literature as you might have guessed - and I sat down with my Mum's typewriter on my knees, a cup of tea on my desk and began **hammering the whole thing in**. (GEAU3088)
→ *reinhämmern* → *type in* or *punch in*

(35) There is grey hair and pink bald patches bloody everywhere. Grey strands in all shades **stand up** from behind headrests and shine forth through gaps between seats. (GEAU4013)
→ *abstehen* → *stick out*[137]

(36) Anti-authorian<sic> parents willingly **swim along** with the current and promote a permissive upbringing. (GEAU3007)
→ *mit dem Strom schwimmen* → *go with the flow*

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take over the woman's place in the household which is often a result of education and the habit of parted rolls." (GESA3014)

[136] This is a further example of ambiguous classification: An extension of *bring forward* from 'evidence', 'argument', 'proposal' to include 'request' is also conceivable.

[137] There are two further examples of this kind: "I wanted to be like him: to leave long black hair that **stands straight up** in the air, to be so cool nobody could read the happiness in your eyes." (GEAU2018); "(…) they weren't able to walk like human beings, probably because their legs couldn't carry their body's weight any longer, their arms **stood up** from the side of their bodies because of all the muscles (…)." (GEAU3049)

(37) Being incapable of swallowing one more bite to eat and feeling rather sick at the same time, Lydia and I made our way through the city-centre in order to **throw the money out** of the shop-windows. (GEAU3096)
→ *Geld zum Fenster rausschmeißen* → *go on a shopping spree*

The above examples show that the native language has an impact even on advanced learners of English. This is so in spite of stays in an English-speaking country. A comparison of the essay codes with the learner profiles recorded on the *ICLE*-CD shows that only about half of the students producing examples (19) to (37) did not have any or only little L2-exposure (0 to 3 months); the other half spent from five to 15 months abroad. So although an extended stay in the target language country might reduce the number of NL-induced mistakes it does apparently not eliminate all of them. However, as measured by the overall number of phrasal verbs in *G-ICLE* (cf. chapter 5.3.1), the proportion of these NL-induced errors in German learner writing is vanishing.

As pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, influence from the native language can be also positive, thus facilitating the learning of the foreign language. Compared to negative transfer, it is, however, much more difficult to decide whether the correct production of a target language (TL) feature is due to positive transfer or to the fact that the TL feature was mastered during the acquisition of the foreign language without any NL influence. I will therefore not try to give an account of all correct uses of phrasal verbs where the German language might have had a positive influence on learner performance. Rather, some examples of – both literal and figurative – phrasal verbs which are semantic equivalents in German and English and thus likely to have a positive and facilitative effect on learner productions are listed.

(38) *ausgleichen* → *equal out*
Communism aimed at overcoming Darwinism and tried to **equal out** the difference between the strong and the weak by treating everybody equally. (FRUL2012)

(39) *aufhängen* → *hang up*
In the meantime, I am desperately trying to fulfil my demanding role as a housewife, wipe the floor, wash the dishes, shrub the toilet, do the washing and **hang it up** for drying in the garden. (GEAU3063)

(40) *aufhalten → hold up*
By the age of 17 it started to get more and more difficult to **hold up** the process of becoming an adult. (GEAU3008)

(41) *ausbügeln → iron out*
Besides this gives them a lot of opportunities to **iron out** possible lapses in one of the exams, thus relieving them from stress and pressure. (GEAU3070)

(42) *zurücklehnen → lean back*
That evening, however, I remember Granddad **leaning back** in his redvelvet armchair and giving a melancholic sigh. (GEAU3083)

(43) *ausleben → live out*
An essential thing in this world is to enjoy prcious <sic> moments and to **live out** any mood you're in. (GESA5027)

Examples (17) to (43) have shown that the native language holds an important position in advanced learner productions, both in a negative and, in the case of German learners, a positive way. Although Italian 'verbi frasali' are by no means comparable to German particle verbs or English phrasal verbs in terms of frequency and use, NL interference is nevertheless noticeable. In German learner writing, this influence is however much more pronounced which is not surprising considering that German particle verbs and English phrasal verbs are in many cases semantically very similar.

6.3 Unnaturalness

The detection of features of unnaturalness in learner English is one of the core issues of *ICLE*-based research; as stated by Granger (1996a), one of the main objectives of the *ICLE* project is "to uncover the factors of non-nativeness or foreign-soundingness in advanced learner writing, in areas of syntax, lexis, and discourse" (1996a: 17). Unnaturalness can take the shape of e.g. lexical simplicity, syntactic monotony, lack of textual coherence, or semantic vagueness (cf. Vogel 1990: 20). So in order for learner English to be idiomatic and native-like, it has to be not only grammatically correct, but also acceptable from a native speaker's point of view and used appropriately according to the context. Or, as Sinclair (1991) puts it: "the term

'naturalness' is (..) a cover term for the constraints that determine the precise relationship of any fragment of text with the surrounding text" (1991: 6). As already pointed out in chapter 6.1, three aspects contributing to unnaturalness will be highlighted in the context of phrasal verbs – collocational deviations, the inappropriate choice of a phrasal verb, and the simplified use of phrasal verbs.

The topic of collocations in learner language has already been addressed in chapter 1.2. Several studies have shown that this is an area where learners frequently encounter problems (cf. e.g. Howarth 1996, Granger 1998a, Lorenz 1999, and Nesselhauf 2005a). In the context of phrasal verbs, collocational problems are usually due to the extension of a phrasal verb to contexts in which a native speaker would not use the same phrasal verb or no phrasal verb at all. These collocational and contextual deviations in learner English result in non-native-like, unnatural English, and although unidiomatic combinations of phrasal verb and context words may be perfectly understandable by native speakers and therefore acceptable to them, such usage nevertheless deviates from the normal use of the phrasal verb in question. In both German and Italian learners' use of phrasal verbs such collocational deviations could be observed; (44) is the first example to be discussed.

(44) This well established middle-class still didn't give women the same opportunities as men, so in the seventies due to the ferments developed feminism **broke out**. (ITRS2034)

The main collocates of *break out* in the *BNC* are *blaze* and *fire* on the one hand, and *war, fight/fighting, row, riot/rioting, hostilities, revolt, violence, rebellion*, and *dispute* on the other hand, i.e. *break out* collocates either with fire or the sudden start "of war, fighting or other unpleasant events" (*OALD*). In example (44), however, the learner uses this phrasal verb in combination with a political movement (*feminism*). This use of *break out* gives the impression that feminism is equated with violent events. Although in theory it is conceivable that the learner wanted to add an ironic touch to his or her essay by using *break out* in this context, a closer look at the entire essay rules out this possibility – the author of (44) states that he or she thinks that feminism was an important movement for Italian society. It is therefore much more likely that

the student lacks the contextual knowledge of *break out*, extending its scope to a different context.

The same holds for various examples from the concordances of *carry out*. Both German and Italian students used this phrasal verb in contexts which either do not occur at all in the *BNC* ((45) to (48)) or are rare in native English as represented by the *BNC* ((49) to (53)).

(45) First there are all the cars, lorries and ambulances **carrying out** their races. (GEAU3001)

(46) Anyway, it is also true that others<sic> problems have showed up as consequences of the fights that have been **carried out**. (ITRS2004)

(47) To life<sic> together, people need of a *power*, that protects the individuality and condemn crimes, rapes, murders and every kind of violence. But every now and then this *power*, which is **carried out** by Institutions, commits big mistakes, for examples with the introduction of capital punishment. (ITB05002)

(48) Nothing in his behaviour makes us think him to be a real killer; I think he is a common person who is **carring**<sic> **out** a private revenge. (ITRS1061)

None of these combinations is attested in the *BNC*. As in (44), insufficient knowledge of the collocational restrictions of this phrasal verb is the most likely explanation for the mistaken combination of *carry out* with *race*, *fights*, *power*, and *revenge*. The most common collocates of *carry out* in the *BNC* are *work, research, survey, experiment, investigation, duty*, and *task*. The context words in examples (45) to (48) are in no way connected to these collocates so that it is reasonable to categorise these examples as collocational deviations. The classification of (45), however, is ambiguous. Apart from collocational ignorance, influence from German 'ein Rennen austragen', similar to example (33) in 6.2 ('ein Kind austragen') could be a further likely reason for this phrasal-verb use. This illustrates again the point made in chapter 6.1 – the classification of error causes is frequently not clear-cut.

Although the combinations in examples (49) to (53) are attested in the *BNC*, they are by no means frequent in native English:

(49) Not only the President is elected by THE PEOPLE, also judges and attorneys are chosen in public elections to ensure that American jurisdiction is **carried out** according to the will of the people. (GEDR1014)

(50) Additionally it is necessary to distinguish between violence **carried out** by the state and violence carried out by individuals. (GESA4003)

(51) Despite the strong criticism that might come from anti-abortion activists, clergymen and political conservatives against both single women who apply for artificial insemination and clinics that **carry out** the practice, it should not be forgotten that motherhood is a right which also a single woman should be permitted to enjoy. (ITTO3014)

(52) Since the invention of television in the 1950ies, many technical improvements have been **carried out**. (FRUL2005)

(53) The lifes<sic> of judges in nations where death penalty is still legalized and of those people who have to **carry out** the "killing" of criminals are also destroyed in some way. (GESA4010)

Carry out jurisdiction occurs only once in the *BNC*, and *carry out violence* twice. *Carry out the practice, carry out improvements* and *carry out the killing* are slightly more frequent in native English with five, eight, and ten occurrences respectively in the *BNC*. However, when comparing the latter two (*carry out improvements* and *carry out the killing*) with the number of hits for *make (an) improvement/improvements* and *to kill* in the *BNC*, the figures of the phrasal-verb combinations are disproportionate: *make (an) improvement/improvements* occurred 270 times, the verb *kill* even 14,973 times. So although the combination of *carry out* and the context words *jurisdiction, violence, practice*, *improvements*, and *killing* are attested in native English and can thus not be considered a collocational deviation or an error in learner English, they are very rare and can, as far as frequency is concerned, not be compared to the more 'traditional' collocates of *carry out* in native English: *carry out work* is attested 776 times, *carry out research* 366 times, and *carry out a task/tasks* 224 times in the *BNC*. The question remains, however, whether German and Italian learners are actually aware of the combining potential of *carry out* or whether they merely happened to pick combinations that are also attested for native speaker usage. Considering the first set of examples of *carry out* ((45) to (48)), where none of the context words is attested in

the *BNC*, it is more likely that learners accidentally got the combination right rather than actually being aware of appropriate and attested context words of *carry out*. This impression is reinforced by further examples.

(54) But inspite<sic> of everything crime is not **laid down** within certain families. (GEDR1015)

Some collocates of *lay down* in the sense of "state officially that people must obey or use [a rule or a principle]" (*OALD*) from the *BNC* are *law, guideline, directive, rules, conventions, strategy, limit, procedure, agenda, regulations, conditions, principles,* and *standards*. *Crime* in (54) does not fit in this context. The learner producing this example obviously had the German verb *festlegen* in mind, which, in German, collocates not only with 'rules' as in English, but can also be used in the context of innate dispositions in German. In English, *lay down* does not extend to this latter meaning; example (54) is therefore a further instance of unnatural English. A more native-like expression would probably have been "crime is not in the nature of certain families."

The last two examples to be discussed in the context of collocational deviations are (55) and (56). *Make up* in (55) is combined with *proposal*, a further combination not attested in the *BNC*.[138] There are various meanings of *make up* but none of the dictionary meanings fit the context of (55) (cf. e.g. Cullen & Sargeant 1996). The more appropriate solution would have been the single verb *make*. Although *make up* collocates e.g. with *story* or *rules*, concepts where a certain amount of inventing or creating something is involved, the student producing this sentence was not aware that *make up* cannot be extended to *proposal*.

(55) Another reason why I do not agree with the proposal **made up** by the Audit Commission is that I feel it should be the last thing to do to reduce the problem of children's criminality. (ITTO1005)

[138] Also *make up a suggestion/suggestions* are not evidenced in the *BNC*.

Switch on in (56) is not found in the sense intended by the learner in the *BNC*. The common collocates of this phrasal verb are all to do with electricity – *light/lights, radio, lamp, television, ignition, engine, machine, kettle*, and *computer* to name but a few examples from the *BNC*. In the present context, the verbs *cause* or *start* would be more fitting, a simple solution the learner apparently did not think of. Instead, he or she searched for another possibility to convey the intended meaning, creating, however, an awkward impression as *switch on* is used in a context too distant from its original meaning:

(56) I see the death penalty like a legal way of revenge. In many cases it could **switch on** a series of violent events, which could be difficult to manage. (GESA4014)

As these examples of collocational deviations show, the same conclusions can be drawn in the context of phrasal verbs as Lennon (1996: 28) does in the context of high-frequency verbs: "[T]hese learners do not understand the meaning/usage boundaries obtaining among some very common verbs. In particular, they lack information as to the collocational possibilities of common verbs." In the context of the present study, the authors' knowledge of the collocational possibilities of phrasal verbs is not entirely developed. This results in combinations which are either uncommon or not used at all in native English and are thus unnatural and non-native-like.

Inappropriately selected phrasal verbs are a further factor adding to non-native-like English. In contrast to examples (44) to (56) above, where the phrasal verb transgressed the boundaries of collocability in native English, examples (57) to (64) below are marked by the incorrect choice of verb or particle. Although the phrasal verbs used in these instances do exist as such, they have a meaning different from the one intended. There are various instances of such wrong phrasal verbs in both *G-ICLE* and *I-ICLE*, and it is usually either the verb or the particle which is inappropriate in the relevant context. Examples (57) to (60) evidence these particle mistakes.

(57) Other environmental changes **brought along** by mankind which effect more people today than ever before are: smogged cities, contaminated drinking water, nuclear catastrophes, increasing natural disasters (river floodings, droughts), or more and more people having some kind of chronic diseases (hay fever, skin cancer, ...). (GEDR1019)

(58) In my opinion, it really is to be hoped that everybody tries to find as many personal joys as possible, to **live them up** and to enjoy them. (GESA5037)

(59) Every person is the result of his education, the morality he has, the experiences he made during the whole life and also the genetic *patrimony*. I'd like to **point up** the fact that mental illness is the cause of crime in few cases, or, better, evident mental disturbance (like schizophrenia, epilessy etc.) (ITRL1016)

(60) It is important to be prepared for the world of work but you can't choose a degree only to have a work, **putting by** all your inclinations. (ITRS2021)

Although the verb part is correct in the above examples, the selected particle is not fitting in the intended context. In (57), *bring about* would be the appropriate phrasal verb, meaning 'cause', whereas the actually employed phrasal verb *bring along* means 'take something or someone with you'.[139] *Live out* ('do a particular set of things that you are fated or intended to do') and *point out* ('mention something for consideration, draw to attention') would be the correct options in (58) and (59). *Put by* in (60) means 'keep or save something so that you have a supply for future use or emergencies;' correct would be *put aside* ('stop showing an attitude'). The students producing the above examples are apparently familiar with the verb part of the phrasal verb but are unaware of the particle necessary to complement the verb to produce the intended meaning.

While in examples (57) to (60) the particle provoked an error, in the following instances the verb proves to be problematic:

(61) Nobody cares about the pale, frightened faces at the windows of the burning houses, nobody cares whether the people **closed in** can escape or not and nobody thinks about their feelings and thoughts. (GEAU1072)

[139] The phrasal-verb meanings given in this section are based on Cullen and Sargeant (1996) and Sinclair and Moon (1989).

(62) We have to **place together** the situation so that we infer what sort of woman the Duchess was and what sort of man the Duke really is. (ITRS1016)

In (61), *shut in* would be more appropriate as *close in* usually means 'gradually surround a person or a place; approach or be present in a threatening way; the hours of daylight are becoming fewer' (cf. Cullen & Sargeant 1996). This error is due to the student's unawareness that although *close* on its own shares the semantics of other verbs like *lock* and *shut* (e.g. *shut/close the door*), it cannot be used interchangeably with these verbs in the intended context. Also in (62), the verb does not fit the context; *piece together* or *put together* is what the student was aiming for. Not knowing the correct phrasal verb, another one was used that, from the learner's point of view, might fit the context.

Examples (63) and (64) are not due to the lacking knowledge of verb meaning, but to the confusion with another phrasal verb; again, the particle is correct, the verb incorrect:

(63) Not only did the Wessis **put down** the Ossis; it cuts both ways, that is to say that the tears of joy the Ossis shed at the beginning turned into tears of fear and anger in 1992: "Asylantenheim set on fire in Rostock", (…) - these were the headlines of the year 1992. (GEAU3096)

(64) You can get your energy from peas, beans, cheese, and bread in the same way as from steaks. there<sic> are lots of people that feel better since they have **put away** with meat. (GEAU2049)

Put down in (63) is the result of confusion with *let down* ('fail to do what someone agreed or promised they would do, or what you expected they would do'; for the various meanings of *put down*, cf. e.g. Sinclair & Moon 1989). In (64), *put away with* is confused with *do away with* ('get rid of something, cause something to end') which would be the correct option.

These examples show on the one hand that learners are often not acquainted with the phrasal verbs that fit the intended meaning best. As a consequence, they use phrasal verbs which – if verb and particle are considered separately – are partly correct but actually mean something different, resulting in an overall wrong phrasal verb. On the other hand, even if the phrasal verbs used in examples (57) to (64)

distort the meaning of the sentence, these instances nevertheless show that learners are aware of the fact that a phrasal verb is appropriate in the circumstances, thus displaying a certain amount of vocabulary knowledge.

Yet another facet of unnaturalness in the context of phrasal verbs is the fact that learners use phrasal verbs in a simplifying way, expressing the intended meaning in very general words (cf. also Blum & Levenston 1978, Corder 1978). In both learner corpora, there are various instances of phrasal verbs which give this impression. This approach is probably due to a lack of vocabulary knowledge – the students could not think of a better expression. In the following examples from *G-ICLE* and *I-ICLE*, students opted for a 'descriptive' phrasal verb which guarantees understanding even if the outcome may not be very elegant in stylistic terms:

(65) During the 18th century the death penalty had slowly been **pushed aside** by imprisonment. (GESA4011)

(66) I when I know I have to know it in all its parts, My interest **falls down**. It's not because I don't want to study: that's because even if it's true that studying it is usefull<sic> and important, it's also true that I've to taste it, to perceive its atmosphere. (ITB14004)

(67) Nevertheless, especially during adolescence, a child begins to **go out** from the *protective circle* of his family: he begins to attend friends more frequently, he feels the necessity to amuse with his friends, going to the disco, foe<sic> example, or spending a lot of time with his fellows. (ITTO1029)

(68) Anyway it's important to be careful and critic towards the friution<sic> of explanation, which can be a weapon since somtimes<sic> critics **push their** intepretation<sic> too **forward**, giving the text meanings the author didn't even think about. (ITB06004)

(69) But, in any case, a strict religious perspective would completely discard artificial insemination, **pushing** the discussion further **back**. (ITTO3040)

Although such examples are understandable, they are by no means native-like. A native speaker of English would probably replace *push aside* in (65) by *replace* or *supersede*, *fall down* in (66) by *decrease,* and *go out* in (67) by *leave*. In (68) and (69) the whole construction needs substituting: e.g. by *go too far with their interpretation* in (68),

and *take the discussion to an earlier stage/level* in (69). These single verbs and constructions are not unusual and should be part of an advanced learner's active vocabulary. It is therefore speculation whether students could not think of a better alternative or whether they felt that a phrasal verb would be more fitting in the context. Whatever the reason, as pointed out before, the outcome is far from native-like and idiomatic English.

In the above discussion of examples, three factors which contribute to the unnaturalness of learner language in the context of phrasal verbs were considered, i.e. collocational deviations, the choice of a wrong phrasal verb, and the simplification of meaning in order to make oneself understood. These features of learner language occurred in both Italian and German essays. As far as phrasal-verb collocates are concerned, learners are unaware of collocational restrictions, combining phrasal verbs with context words which are not attested in native English (e.g. *carry out revenge* instead of *take revenge*, cf. example (48)). The discussion of wrongly selected phrasal verbs showed that, although learners may consider a phrasal verb the accurate choice in a specific environment, they are not familiar enough with the correct phrasal verbs in the context, and consequently use items which are partly or entirely incorrect (e.g. *put down* instead of *let down*, cf. example (63)). The third factor contributing to unnaturalness is the simplified use of a phrasal verb in a context where a different expression would be more fitting but where learners apparently lacked the relevant vocabulary knowledge. Consequently, phrasal verbs were used which are sufficient to describe the intended meaning, but which leave an unidiomatic impression (e.g. *my interest falls down*, cf. example (66)).

6.4 Creativity

In this section, the creativity of learner language with respect to phrasal verbs will be investigated. By creatively used phrasal verbs those phrasal verbs are intended which learners form 'according to the rules'. That is, those cases of phrasal verbs are investigated where learners fall back on existing patterns of phrasal verbs, but combine the particles with unexpected or unusual verbs so that combinations emerge which are not necessarily found in a dictionary.[140]

As previous sections were already devoted to the areas of native language influence, collocational deviations, and mistakenly selected phrasal verbs (6.2 and 6.3), these aspects will here only be touched upon where necessary. The focus of this chapter is mainly, but not exclusively, on what are generally called "aspectual phrasal verbs" (cf. e.g. Bolinger 1971: 96ff., Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman 1999: 432-433). With this type of phrasal verb, it is normally the particle which contributes "consistent aspectual meaning" (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman 1999: 432). Aspectual phrasal verbs can be divided into several types, e.g. continuative (examples are *keep on*, *play around*, *work away*), inceptive (*take off, set out, start up*), or completive (*burn down, turn off, clean up*) (cf. Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman 1999: 432-433). Such phrasal verbs are frequently created by analogy and are therefore interesting in the present context because they follow patterns which can be reproduced by learners (e.g. *on* in *keep on*, *carry on*, and *hang on* marks continuation). An exhaustive list of different aspectual phrasal verbs in the learner corpora is, however, not intended here as the present study does not focus on semantics. Rather, the most interesting examples of aspectual and creatively-formed phrasal verbs in the learner corpora will be discussed.

In order to discern patterns of aspectual phrasal verbs, the phrasal verbs will be ordered according to the different particles rather than in alphabetical order. Note that not all particles are treated as some of them do not offer themselves for the

[140] Prodromou (2003) points out that there is an unequal treatment of native and non-native speakers as far as creativity is concerned. While native speakers may transgress "the shared system" by "bend[ing] and break[ing] its rules and patterns", learners' creative use of idioms or phraseological units is, by native speakers, usually viewed as a deviation, meaning that learners are not allowed to play with the language (2003: 46).

creation of aspectual or 'new' phrasal verbs; note also at this point that only one phrasal verb from the Italian data proved interesting in the present context. This is not to say that Italian students did not use any aspectual phrasal verbs at all, but rather that they used more 'traditional' ones (e.g. *break up*, *cheer up*, or *speed up*). Therefore all but one example of creative phrasal verbs originate from the German learner corpus. Why this is so will be explained at the end of this section.

About

Phrasal verbs consisting of verb plus *about* frequently convey the notion of random, goalless motion or of aimlessness. These meanings are usually carried by the particle, not by the verb. The relevant *OED* definition of *about* runs as follows:

> In a circuitous or winding course; with frequent turnings; hither and thither; to and fro; up and down. Also, of the position of things so scattered irregularly on a surface: here and there, up and down. (*OED Online*, s.v. *about* 8)

Lindstromberg (1997: 132) points out that *about* is much older than *around* and "was once much used to express the meaning 'around, along the circumference of'." However, although *about* is older than *around*, the latter is now much more common than the former when it comes to expressing 'aimlessness'. Nevertheless, rather than being ousted entirely, *about* retains the notion of aimlessness in more formal contexts. Bolinger points this out on the basis of several examples (*stalk about* and *tiptoe about* versus *walk about* and *stroll about*) and concludes: "[The] phrasal verbs based on *about* (…) have a certain formality or quaintness" (Bolinger 1971: 62-63, footnote 2). Lindstromberg agrees on this point: "Whenever one can easily use either *around* or *about*, the former – owing perhaps to its newness – tends to be favored in colloquial speech with *about* having a slightly more formal ring to it" (1997: 139).

Bolinger's and Lindstromberg's point that *about* conveys more formality than *around* goes together with the general observation that learners mix different levels of style within one and the same text and even within one and the same sentence. That this holds for phrasal verbs with *about* as well will become clear also from the following examples with *about* in *G-ICLE*.

(70) How can you possibly restrain the energy of a ten-year old and keep him or her from **scampering about**? (GEAU3004)

(71) A bunch of kids **shouting about** in the courtyard while you are desperately trying to concentrate at your desk can make the adrenaline shoot up in your bloodstream. (GEAU3004)

(72) On top of everything, my friends didn't come to see me any more as often as they used to do during the first months of my new country life, because their enthusiasm for my little cottage and for being **chased about** by rams when going for walks had cooled off, and so they didn't find it worthwhile anymore to take the fairly long trip to my village. (GEAU4010)

(73) It has to be said that I was less likely to be identified as not belonging there than he little picture-taking creatures sending flashes all over the place while they **dashed about**. (GEAU3087)

(74) After two weeks I was so tired of **lazing about** in the sun that, even today, I wouldn't go on a holiday on an island, not even with Tom Selleck. (GEAU3098)

(75) Everybody could enjoy to live in a town like this especially children who could **romp about** and enjoy the new life! (GEAU2032)

The mixture of stylistic levels is evident in each example. Overall, the words used are not very formal and the general tone of the texts is rather colloquial. The combination with the more informal particle *around* would therefore seem more appropriate than the rather formal *about* in these contexts which results in somewhat unnatural-sounding sentences that do not match the content of the text entirely. Nevertheless, the examples also show that German learners are confident in forming 'new' phrasal verbs on the basis of an existing pattern.

Checking the *BNC*, it emerged that although most of the phrasal verbs with *about* used by learners occur in native British English as well, they are by no means frequent. *Romp about* and *shout about* do not occur at all in the *BNC*, *caper about* occurs only once, *chase about* and *laze about* four times, *scamper about* occurs five times, and

dash about occurs eight times. Only *fool about* is more frequent; it was found 20 times in the *BNC*.[141]

Romp about, one of the phrasal verbs not occurring in the *BNC* at all is particularly interesting in that a search of the Word-Wide Web showed that for *romp about*, the first entry that comes up is a German-English online dictionary listing this phrasal verb.[142] Apparently, this phrasal verb is extremely rare in native English (it is not listed in the *OED*) but does occur in (online) German-English dictionaries nevertheless.

Along

In the present context, only one meaning from the *OED Online* is relevant for the discussion of the particle *along*: "With vbs. of motion: Onward in the course or line of motion, progressively on" (*OED Online*, s.v. *along* 2.a).

In the data from *G-ICLE*, *along* was used much more frequently than in *LOCNESS* and *I-ICLE*. A possible explanation for this is the students' mother tongue, as German *entlang* and English *along* are cognates. However, only one of the examples with *along* found in the German data (example (76) below) suggests native language influence:

(76) On the other hand you also run risk of injury due to the interference of other people. Too often people thoughtlessly discard their rubbish were other **jog along**. And banana peels can be very tricky in that sense as I found out. (GEAU4012)

The meanings of examples (77) to (79), on the other hand, are in line with the *OED* definition given above; the examples show that these students are familiar with the restriction of *along* to combine with verbs of motion to express 'onward movement in the line of motion':

[141] *Move about* was not checked because of the too great number of entries in the *BNC*.

[142] This search was conducted with no language restriction. Restricting the search to web pages in English and searching the first five pages of hits, the only phrasal-verb instance of *romp about* occurred on a page from an Austrian holiday region – clearly an originally German site translated into English.

(77) Don't miss out on life! Get the experience - now! And remember: it does not matter how you **move along**. Whether you walk, skip, hop, jog, skate, crawl, cycle, toddle, roll, strut or stumble is irrelevant, as long as you don't drive. (GEAU1101)

(78) What they can't look at are gorgeous girls promenading the boulevards, smartly dressed men **strolling along**, chic ladies on the way to their offices, not to mention the historical or avant-garde facades of the urban houses (…). (GEAU1101)[143]

(79) After solemnly handing me over one of her famous presents which since my fifteenth birthday contribute to inundate a special wardrobe reserved for my dowry she resolutely **rushes along** to the table in order to grasp the biggest piece of cake, at the same time making room for the next in the row, for uncle Otto in fact, a judge who has already retired. (GEAU3033)

So, rather than assuming native language influence due to the etymological and phonological proximity in the case of *along*, it is more likely that the German students producing examples (77) to (79) are aware of the pattern 'motion verb plus *along*' and apply it adequately.

Around

The meaning of *around* is similar to that of *about* (cf. above): "*Around* tells us that a path is not straight. In other words, if the path leads towards a goal, it does not do so directly. (…) When no goal is mentioned at all, *around* may contribute to the idea of goalless motion" (Lindstromberg 1997: 135).[144] *Around* is younger than *about* – according to the *OED Online* it is rare before 1600 and does not occur in Shakespeare nor in the Bible of 1611 – and may therefore be favoured with phrasal verbs (cf. Lindstromberg 1997: 139). In examples (80) to (82) from *G-ICLE* below, the phrasal verbs with *around* are formed according to the pattern of e.g. *run around*: the verb expresses 'movement', the particle 'aimlessness'.

[143] Cf. also: "The noblemen had just disappeared into the Ritz, when a young woman, again about my age, came **strolling along**." (GEAU3087); "Everybody dances, laughs, sings, shouts, squeeks, flirts, flatters, **strolls along**, hops and feels only good." (GEAU2029)

[144] Cf. also *OED Online*: "Here and there with no fixed direction; all about, at random; as in 'to travel around,' 'to fool around'" (s.v. *around*: 5.a).

(80) She comes on Fridays at 2 o'clock p.m., when most of the people working in the bureau have already left or still **buzz around** like workaholics-depending on their average earning. (GEAU2002)

(81) Like an enormous wave caused by subaquatic earthquakes the crowd rushed in and transformed the silent and clean-kept waiting hall into an overcrowded loud and noisy market hall, where children were screaming and yelling, trying to find their mothers, men were **hurrying around** looking for a place where alcoholic drinks were sold, women were looking for souveniers. (GEAU1080)

(82) It is a place where they can run, hop and **zoom around** while you are sitting there having fun with your friends sipping, drinking, swallowing your beer. (GEAU3057)

Apart from the two semantic components of movement and aimlessness, in examples (80) to (82) a third notion is conveyed, i.e. that of hastiness. Apparently the students using these phrasal verbs feel that the mere verb does not suffice to express the notion of bustling activity. While *hurry around* occurs three times and *zoom around* seven times in the *BNC* (carrying the same notions of motion and aimlessness as in the learner examples) and are thus not at all frequent, *buzz around* is unique in the German learner corpus. Some of the German students are obviously, as seen before, familiar enough with existing English phrasal verbs to form new ones or use combinations that are unusual also in native English.[145]

However, the notion of aimlessness of the particle *around* does not apply to any kind of activity; rather it is restricted to motion. Example (83) below is therefore unusual:

(83) While the gents confine themselves to a more dignified demeanour the ladies gaily **chatter around** spreading their happy-go-lucky mood throughout the house. (GEAU3033)

Although the verb *to chatter* evokes a certain amount of aimlessness and lack of purpose, it does not imply motion, but the passing of time. The student producing this sentence was apparently not aware of these restrictions; otherwise he or she would have used the particle *away* which would have been more appropriate in this

[145] Further examples with *around* denoting 'aimlessness' in *G-ICLE* are *drive around, hang around, hurl around, jump around, lie around, move around, play around, run around, travel around,* and *walk around.*

context (cf. Jackendoff 1997 on "the 'time'-*away* construction"). In fact, in the *BNC* *chatter around* does not occur at all (*chat around* occurs once) while *chatter away* and *chat away* occur 33 and 43 times respectively.

Away

According to Bolinger (1971), the particle *away* "displays only two, fairly compact, semantic areas. The first centers about the literal meaning of "to (at) a distance from the scene," the second is aspectual – a kind of intensive perhaps definable by the legal phrase "without let or hindrance"" (1971: 102-103) or ""without restraint"" (1971: 103-104). Lindstromberg (1997) qualifies Bolinger's second meaning of *away* further, stating that *away* "typically contributes the meaning 'without end' (…) [which] is entirely consistent with *away*'s latent lack of endpoint focus" (1997: 257). Jackendoff (1997) attributes a further dimension to this meaning when *away* is combined with an expression relating to time, i.e. the duration of a process (1997: 541).

Both of these meanings can be observed in the German data. Examples (84) to (86) show phrasal verbs where the particle marks 'removal' or 'cause someone or something to leave by VERB':

(84) And not to forget the problems that with no doubt arise when you are the proud owner of a dog: You will have to clean the kitchen floor when your dog has been too lazy to do his "important task" outside, you're responsible for his education and you have to show him that the postman isn't always the enemy that it means to **bark** (or **bite**!) **away**. (GEAU1060)

(85) Second possibility, one sprints to the next fitness-center to enter ones name in one of the courses offered, in order to **sweat away** kilo by kilo by doing hard work. (GESA5045)

(86) But considering this fact from the opposite point of view I think - and most people, except for fervent enemies of alcohol hopefully will agree with me - that wine puts you into that specific mood where you can **laugh away** the more or less trivial problems of every-day life and thus it may provide new energy for the coming day back in reality. (GEAU3028)

These examples are interesting in two respects. First, the verbs *bark*, *bite*, *sweat*, and *laugh* are intransitive when used without the addition of a particle but can be made transitive by combining them with the particle *away*. Although this is not unusual in the context of the particle *away*, it is – second – not common in the native language of the learners, i.e. German. That is, the German students producing these sentences did not transfer a pattern common in their native language to the target language but created these phrasal verbs on the basis of a pattern in the English language they had already acquired.

Examples (87) to (90) are concerned with Bolinger's meaning "without restraint" and more specifically "without end" (Lindstromberg 1997) and "duration of a process" (Jackendoff 1997):

(87) I can remember that day vividly when I was **chatting away** with my friend Sonay in London. (GEAU1023)[146]

(88) When last year I went to Venice again - needless to say, of course by bike -, I thoroughly enjoyed rolling up and down the hills, **chattering away** and laughing with my friends, having a little break in a small, cosy inn now and then as well as cycling in the fresh air and bright sunshine. (GEAU3054)

(89) Further studies revealed another characteristic reaction: As they were forced to stay at home doomed **to idle their time away**, a great percentage, overcome by shame and fear, fiercely oppressed the members in their own family. (GEAU3040)

(90) What used to be the favourite occupation of the rich and the noble in earlier centuries has become a whimsical pastime reserved to those who can afford the luxury to spend one or two hours sitting at a desk and **scribbling away** on a piece of paper. (GEAU3052)

Again, an influence of the students' native language is more than unlikely as a similar way of expressing the passing of time does not exist in German. Explaining this feature by the mere experience in an English-speaking country is not satisfactory either as two of the five different authors had not spent any time abroad. This

[146] Cf. also: "I asked him where he came from, about his life, told him that I thought of it as a great accomplishment to build this house. We were **chatting away**, forgetting about the time." (GEAU1066)

construction has clearly been mastered by advanced German students of English independent of the learners' native language and independent of L2-exposure.

Off

One of the meanings of *off* relevant in the present context is the first entry in the *OED Online*: "Expressing motion or direction from a place: to a distance, away, quite away; as in *to go off*, *run off*, *drive off*" (*OED Online*, s.v. *off* 1.a).

There is one example by a German learner which follows this pattern, but is somewhat unusual:

(91) After having complained about the poor quality of the Italian cuisine - after all these rotten wobs don't even know how to make a good Wiener Schnitzel -, they **roll off** to a disco where they can be among themselves again without the local, black-haired bastards. (GEAU3071)[147]

Another very idiomatic construction with *off* was used by two German learners – *scream/shout one's head off*. In example (92), this combination is used in the usual way. In example (93), however, the verbal element varies. Instead of *scream*, *brawl* was used by the students:

(92) He always makes me let him ride on my back, let him win when we play games, let him choose the TV programme and the menu for supper, otherwise he starts **screaming his head off** and my nerves can't put up with an ear-splitting noise like that. (GEAU1055)

(93) They kept **brawling their heads off** for every trifle and felt being treated unjustly as soon as not everything happened according to their very personal special wishes respectively. (GEAU3076)

This use of the construction is unusual – in the *BNC*, *scream one's head off* occurs ten times and *shout one's head off* occurs five times while *brawl one's head off* does not occur at all. The only similar construction with *brawl* in the *BNC* is example (94):

[147] Further examples from *G-ICLE* are *dash off, dart off, drift off* and *haul off*. Another phrasal-verb pattern with *off* is 'remove something by VERB'. Examples are *chop off, cut off, rip off*, and *work off*, all from *G-ICLE*.

(94) The soldiers stayed up all night, brawling their guts out. (G1Y 942)

Apparently, the student producing example (93) knew the expression *scream/shout one's head off* but felt that *scream* or *shout* did not fit the context or did not convey his or her intended meaning so that he or she resorted to another verb probably looked up in a dictionary.[148]

On

In the present context, the continuative meaning of *on* is particularly interesting, as several phrasal verbs formed in analogy with *keep on*, *carry on*, or *hang on* were found in the German learner data. With such phrasal verbs, *on* conveys the meaning of ""continuation", or durative aspect"" (Bolinger 1971: 107; cf. also Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman 1999: 432). The *OED* gives the following definition of *on*, pointing out the continuative aspect of *on* in the context of phrasal verbs:

> With onward movement or action; continuously. Chiefly forming phrasal verbs with the sense 'to continue to do' the action being specified by the verb, as *to speak on*, *hold on*, *work on*, *wait on*. (*OED Online*, s.v. *on* 5.a)

In each of the subsequent examples ((95) – (99)), the phrasal verb could be paraphrased by 'continue to VERB'. As in other examples with different particles, the German students producing these sentences again show that they are confident in transferring an acquired pattern to new contexts.

(95) If that should not be the case there always rests possibility three, to accept oneself, to **eat on** and to persuade oneself that, "I am like I am and I cannot do anything about it". (GESA5045)

(96) Some of them looked away, others **hurried on**, but nobody did help. (GEAU1069)

[148] The learner profile on the *ICLE*-CD was checked. The student had the opportunity to use reference tools.

(97) Anyway, this is how I used to imagine my own wedding, and if this is how you imagine yours as well, please do not **read on**. I wouldn't want to put anybody off. (GEAU3098)

(98) Our love, however, was not meant to **shine on** forever. The first eclipse of the sun came about as early as on our arrival in Mallorca, where we spent our honeymoon. (GEAU3098)

There is also one example from *I-ICLE*:

(99) Thus the run-on-lines predominate and the grammatical meaning of each line does not end with the verse itself but very often **follows on** into the next. (ITRS1073)

A further example worthwhile mentioning is (100) below. *On* does not have continuative meaning here; rather, the phrasal verb *click on* is formed analogous to *switch on* or *turn on*.

(100) But unfortunatelly <sic> to write an essay is no program one could **click on** in his/her brain. (GEBA1053)

Although *click on* does occur in the *BNC* (twelve times altogether) it is not a very common phrasal verb; *switch on* or *turn on* are used more frequently in the learner corpora analysed (cf. appendix 3) so that the singular appearance of *click on* in *G-ICLE* can at least be argued to be unusual.

Over

There are only two instances worth mentioning in the context of the particle *over*:

(101) But entering in this field and politics **bristling over** with cantankerous and porcupine-like critics it is very hard to bring about or talk about solutions. (GEAU1078)

(102) Picture the scene, a throng of people in a small room, desperately trying to gain control over one of the few chairs, muffled cries of those who are **trampled over** in the stampede, others fainting due to lack of oxygen. (GEAU4001)

Bristle over in (101) is clearly a learner idiosyncrasy – in the *BNC*, *bristle* does not collocate with *over*, and no such phrasal verb is listed in any of the standard phrasal-verb dictionaries. There is no easy interpretation of this newly formed phrasal verb. Native language influence seems to be an issue only as far as the particle is concerned, *over* conveying the same figurative notion as in *boil over* (*überkochen* = *lose one's temper*). However, the dictionary meanings of the verb *bristle* ('be angry' as in 'He was bristling with anger' or 'be in a state of movement or action' as in 'The room was bristling with people'; cf. Langenscheidt Collins 2004, s.v. *bristle*, verb) do not seem to match the intended meaning which is probably along the lines of 'be teeming with'. On the other hand, when considering the 'porcupine-like critics' following the phrasal verb, not the figurative, but the literal meaning of *bristle* ("stiff hairs that grow on the back and sides of the hog and wild boar", *OED Online*, s.v. *bristle*, noun) becomes the focus of attention. In combination with 'porcupine-like critics', the student shows a great deal of imagination and creativity and transfers the literal meaning of *bristle* to a metaphorical level, which, however, is hard to understand.

Compared to this, example (102) is rather straightforward and can be explained easily. In the *BNC*, *trample over* occurs only as a prepositional verb, not as a phrasal verb. The German learner producing this example formed this phrasal verb in analogy to *run over*, thus proving that he or she is familiar with existing phrasal-verb patterns in English.

Up

Up is one of the most productive adverbial particles in general; it is probably also one of the English words with the longest entry in the *OED*.[149] According to Bolinger, it is furthermore "the particle with virtually unlimited freedom to attach, roughly comparable to that of the prefix *re-*" (1971: 101). Phrasal verbs with *up* frequently convey perfectivity in the sense of completeness or thoroughness (cf. Lindstromberg 1997: 24); Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman call this type of phrasal verbs

[149] The *OED Online* lists 33 main meanings, with various sub-divisions. In the print version of the *OED* *up* covers about 24 columns.

"completive phrasal verbs" (1999: 433). Some of these perfective or completive phrasal verbs were found in the German learner data:

(103) Every sensible person will agree that the only effective measure parents can take against hazards of this kind is to **chain their children up** in front of the shop and not to bother about their whining. (GEAU3086)

(104) But he wanted to throw me out, so I **sliced him up** with my sharp pocket knife. (GEAU2003)

(105) The interesting question is, what kind of mobile users I have to **hunt up**! Smart-looking business-men and -women in jacket and tie look responsible enough not to play round with their mobiles. (GEBA1049)

Example (103) and (104) are typical representatives of the perfective meaning of *up*. In example (105), however, one student followed the same pattern and applied the same 'rule' [verb + *up* = completion] as the students in examples (103) and (104) although the perfective particle commonly found with the verb *hunt* is *down*. Searching the *BNC*, a clear preference by native speakers of *hunt down* over *hunt up* can be observed – *hunt down* occurs 120 times, *hunt up* only five times. Nevertheless, although the variant with *down* is much more frequent than the one with *up*, the German learner producing example (105) above is aware of the completive meaning of the particle and applies it in the same way completive phrasal verbs are usually formed.[150]

A further common meaning of the particle can be described as '*up* is more', as in *turn up (the heating)*, *the prices have gone up*, etc. Some interesting examples of this usage of *up* could be found in the writing of German students:

(106) The "insiders", that is her family including me of course, know that she has got a fancy about "Freundin" not because of the latest hair-cuts, about "Brigitte" not because of the instructions to **fashion** your jeans **up** by stone-washing and colouring them - of course she reads things like that as well, but the first page she will open when starting to read is the one where you can find the weekly horoscopes on it. (GEAU3048)

[150] Further examples of completive or resultative *up* in *G-ICLE* are *bang up, beat up, call up, cheer up, clean up, clear up, cover up, dish up, lace up, open up, queue up, ring up, show up, shut up, tie up, use up, weigh up,* and *wrap up.*

(107) Instead of aiming to be a perfect woman and devote wife the modern female holds her own, and, by **toughening up** in order to endure the various pressures of being equal to men transforms into a repulsive, mannish woman. (GEAU3091)

(108) A car is also a very expensive matter considering the fuel prices which seem to **zoom up** every week or two. But one of the most important facts which speak against this vast-spread vehicle is the destruction of our environment. (GEAU1008)

(109) In the hospital he met the slender woman who was there to be **feed up**. They talked together and he told her that he was forced to make a diet and to lose weight while she told him that she was forced to eat more. (GESA5023)

(110) Just take tennis for example. It used to be an extremely unimportant sport in Germany, but was given a tremendous boost with Boris and Steffi becoming top tennis stars. Tennis courts and clubs **mushroomed up** all over the place and I stupidly enough was one of the first to follow that trend. (GEAU4012)

Fashion up can be paraphrased as 'make something more fashionable', *toughen up* as 'become tougher' and *zoom up* as 'increase, rise'. *Feed up* in example (109) is used in a very unusual way. This phrasal verb is commonly found only as a pseudo-passive (cf. Quirk et al. 1985: 1155, note [e]) with the meaning 'have enough of something'. Here, however, the verb *feed* is used in its original sense 'be given something to eat'; together with the particle, the combination is intended to mean 'be given so much to eat that one's weight increases'. *Up* is thus used with the same meaning as in the other examples, i.e. 'more'. Also in example (110), the addition of the particle intensifies the meaning of the verb *to mushroom*. The semantic component 'more' is clearly present in all examples; this shows that the students producing these examples have understood the formation of phrasal verbs with *up* and apply the 'rule' correctly – and creatively.[151]

To conclude this chapter, several examples from the German component of *ICLE* have shown that the German advanced learners producing these sentences are familiar with existing patterns of phrasal-verb formation. This familiarity is evident in the confident way the learners use and apply these patterns. In several cases,

[151] Further examples of '*up* is more' in *G-ICLE* are *add up, fill up, heap up, pile up, raise up, pump up*, and *warm up*.

particles were combined with verbs which are not necessarily defined by dictionaries as part of phrasal verbs and which in the *BNC* were non-existent or very infrequent. Three reasons are likely to explain German learners' knowledge of phrasal verbs and their confidence to transfer known patterns to create 'new' phrasal verbs. First, the teaching of phrasal verbs in the school and university setting was successful in the case of these students. Second, a large amount of exposure to the foreign language in an English-speaking country enlarged the students' proficiency in this respect. That the latter explanation does not hold is evident when relating examples (70) to (110) to the learner profiles on the *ICLE*-CD. Of the 37 students producing these examples, only ten spent more than six months abroad, while thirteen students did not spend any time at all in an English-speaking country. A third possible cause for German learners' phrasal-verb proficiency is the fact that, although German particle verbs and English phrasal verbs are structurally different and although a direct influence from the students' native language could not be manifested in examples (70) to (110), particle and phrasal verbs are semantically similar enough to facilitate the learning of English phrasal verbs for German learners in general. Effective teaching and mastering of phrasal verbs in general and positive native language transfer combined are thus probable causes for the creative potential of these German students.

As for the fact that only a single occurrence of the creative use by Italian students was noted (example (99)), the following explanations are possible. Either the reverse of German learners holds for Italian students – the distance of English and Italian with respect to phrasal verbs is too great so that Italian students are less likely than German students to cope with phrasal verbs successfully. Considering the generally lower number of phrasal verbs overall (cf. chapter 5.3.1) this is certainly a possibility. However, as was also shown in chapter 5.3.1, the proportion of phrasal-verb types with respect to phrasal-verb tokens did not differ in the three corpora analysed, i.e. Italian learners did not use of smaller number of different phrasal verbs than German learners or native students so that they could have been expected to be just as inventive as German students. A more likely explanation for the different performance of German and Italian students is the fact that due to the different focus of essays in *G-ICLE* and *I-ICLE*, German students simply had more opportunities to employ creative phrasal verbs such as *chatter away*, *stroll along*, or *brawl one's head off*

(cf. also chapter 5.3.8). This goes together with the question of style in general which will be addressed in the subsequent section. Style, positive influence from their native language and the successful transfer of known patterns to new combinations are therefore the probable causes for German students' creativity, while the 'lack' of creativity in Italian learner writing can be ascribed to language distance resulting in less confidence, but, due to stylistic differences between the two learner groups, also to fewer opportunities to use such creative phrasal verbs.

6.5 Style and expressivity

Some stylistic aspects of phrasal-verb use were already addressed in chapters 5.3.2 and 5.3.8. It emerged that the German essays are generally more anecdotal and stamped by reports about personal experiences than the essays by Italian learners, entailing an overall more informal and colloquial style in *G-ICLE*. Here, some more examples of these stylistic differences shall be given. On the whole, there are a large number of highly colloquial phrasal verbs in *G-ICLE*; in *I-ICLE*, on the other hand, no such highly informal phrasal verbs were found (cf. appendix 3). Subsequently, some examples from *G-ICLE* are listed:

(111) I don't want the elderly to kill themselves at a certain age. Nor do I want them to be marooned on three-palm-tree-desert-islands, or **banged up** behind iron bars. But sometimes I think there should be a curfew for old geezers. (GEAU4013)

(112) But what I most fanatically disapprove of are people who pretend to love nature, the wild life, our heritage, whilst all they love is to **bump off** something alive. (GEAU3072)

(113) The question is: Is capital punishment still a justified and suitable punishment for convicted criminals? The answer depends on the crime itself. Of course it is not necessary to **finish somebody off** because of shop-lifting, kidnapping or extortion. (GEAU3089)

(114) Breakfast comes and I perfectly well know of what it consists: yesterdays<sic> bread, yellowish butter and bitter coffee. I **gulp down** the black liquid, leave the rest on the plate and wait for the sleep to come again. (GESA5011)

(115) She will only calm down when he has passed our house without fumbling at the letter-box, for this means that there won't be a letter from the tax office that day telling us that additional tax has to be paid and that, should we not react within a period of five days, we will all be **hauled off** to prison. (GEAU3052)

Considering that the contents of some of these essays are indeed not intended to convey seriousness, the use of such highly informal phrasal verbs is by all means justified. Others, however, are concerned with more serious topics, as in example (113), an argumentative essay about capital punishment. To use *finish somebody off* instead of the much more neutral verb *kill* in such a context suggests a slightly airy and thoughtless approach to a serious topic. The cause for this seeming lack of gravity is, however, in all likelihood the mere fact that students mix styles liberally in one and the same essay. It is not unusual to find the formal relative pronoun *whom* in the same essay with informally contracted *she's* and *can't* (GEAU1001), or the colloquial "that's what the lamp is all about" in an essay which otherwise displays a perfectly academic writing style (GESA2011).

Such highly informal phrasal verbs doubtless add a great amount expressivity to the writing of German advanced learners. However, students achieve this effect not only by phrasal verbs as *bump off* or *bang up*, but also by extending literal notions of phrasal verbs to unusual and figurative contexts. Examples of such transfers can be found in both German and Italian learner writing:

(116) Then finally at 8 o'clock in the morning that solitary walk to the gallow<sic>. A young body, an active mind, a life to be **cut down** before its time. (GEAU4002)

(117) It seemed to become a calm day until an elderly lady entered the room and aimed at my colleague. She looked confused and nervous. He did not listen carefully to her words which **gushed out**. He finished typing the letter without talking to or looking at her. (GESA5012)

(118) More or less this is nowaday situation caused by technology and industrialization but it doesn't mean that people's dreams and imagination have been **rubbed out**. (ITRS2009)

(119) It is absolutely absurd to think that such a vast and many-faceted problem can be easily solved by ***turning off** the tap* of gun supply. (ITTO2004)

(120) Some have proposed to control the number of gun licences, to ban some kinds of weapons or to make gun ownership illegal to **weed-out**<sic> crime. (ITTO2019)

(121) It should be taken into account that the physical aspect, the language, the cultural background of a society cannot be **wiped off** so easily. (FRUC1043)

To summarise these results, as far as the stylistic aspects of phrasal-verb use are concerned, German learner writing displays a fair amount of highly colloquial and informal phrasal verbs (examples (111) to (115)) which is due partly to the lower level of formality in the German essays (cf. also chapter 5.3.8) and partly to style-insensitivity resulting in an inconsiderate mixture of colloquial and formal styles. Although this feature could not be observed in the Italian essays – due to the more formal essay contents in *I-ICLE* in general (cf. chapter 5.3.8) – German and Italian learner writing share another characteristic – expressivity, achieved by extending literal notions to unusual and figurative contexts (examples (116) to (121)).

6.6 Synopsis: The qualitative use of phrasal verbs

The present chapter has dealt with the qualitative aspects of phrasal-verb use in advanced student writing, in particular the influence of the students' native languages, unnaturalness of learner language, learners' potential to create new phrasal verbs, and style and expressivity.

As for the impact of the mother tongue, both positive and negative influence was evidenced in the two learner corpora. This was expected in particular for German students as German particle verbs are very similar to phrasal verbs. However, in the Italian essays native language interference was attested as well although Italian 'verbi frasali' cannot be compared to English phrasal verbs in terms of both frequency and use. Overall, however, due to the semantic similarity of German particle verbs and English phrasal verbs, the influence of the mother tongue is much stronger in German than in Italian learner writing.

In terms of unnaturalness, three factors were considered – collocational deviations, the choice of a wrong phrasal verb, and the simplification of meaning in

order to make oneself understood, features occurring in both Italian and German essays. Not only are learners often unaware of collocational restrictions, using phrasal verbs in combination with context words not attested in native English (e.g. *carry out revenge* instead of *take revenge*, example (48)), also wrongly selected phrasal verbs are a learner problem. Although learners may be aware of the fact that a phrasal verb would be the best choice, they do not know which phrasal verb is the most appropriate in a specific context, using phrasal verbs which are partly or entirely incorrect (e.g. *put down* instead of *let down*, example (63)). Another facet of unnaturalness is the simplified and descriptive use of phrasal verbs. In a context where a different expression would be more appropriate and where learners lack the relevant vocabulary knowledge, phrasal verbs are used which describe the intended meaning, but produce an unidiomatic and non-native-like impression (e.g. *my interest falls down*, example (66)).

The creative use of phrasal verbs was also investigated in this chapter. Several examples have evidenced that especially German students are familiar with existing phrasal-verb patterns such as *keep on, carry on*, and *hang on*. *Fashion up your jeans* (example (106)) is a case in point – learners combined verbs with particles to phrasal verbs which are not attested in phrasal-verb dictionaries and which do not exist or are very infrequent in native English as represented by the *BNC*. This potential for creativity was observed mainly in *G-ICLE*; in *I-ICLE*, the creative 'dearth' can be explained by language distance resulting in less confidence to employ phrasal verbs on the one hand; on the other, Italian students had also fewer opportunities to use such creative and colloquial phrasal verbs as the Italian essays are overall more formal.

The stylistic aspects of phrasal-verb use are characterised by a fair amount of highly colloquial and informal phrasal verbs in German learner writing, mainly due to the lower level of formality in the German essays, but also due to style-insensitivity, i.e. the mixture of colloquial and formal styles. This feature was not observed in the Italian essays because of the more formal essay contents in *I-ICLE* in general. However, apart from native language influence, collocational deviations, wrongly selected phrasal verbs, and simplification, German and Italian learner

writing shares a further characteristic – expressivity, achieved by the extension of literal notions to unusual and figurative contexts.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Review of major findings

The present study realises the aims specified for research based on the *International Corpus of Learner English* (cf. chapter 3.3). One aspect of learner writing, i.e. the use of phrasal verbs, is investigated in a consistent and in-depth comparison of the written productions of two different learner groups (Italian and German learners). Furthermore, the learner data are compared to a native control corpus. This two-way comparison – following Granger's Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis (1996b) – offers the opportunity to validate and refute hypotheses concerning native language transfer and learner universals in interlanguage immediately. Features of unnaturalness in learner language can be detected as well. Although this methodology is adopted in most *ICLE*-based research, the present study is one of the few to realise it systematically for two entire sub-corpora rather than only subsets; in addition, the corpus analysis was carried out not only with a view to quantitative, but also to qualitative aspects of phrasal-verb use. What is more, with respect to learners' use of phrasal verbs the present study is the first to extract all actually occurring phrasal-verb tokens from three matching corpora and to document the precise extent of differences to the native norm for two large learner groups.

In order to arrive at conclusions concerning learner universals, a general survey considering all eleven learner groups recorded on the *ICLE*-CD was conducted, analysing the quantitative use of frequent phrasal verbs. No learner-universal features were found, however. Although some phrasal verbs were underused by all learner groups, it is not justifiable to call this general underuse a learner universal as the frequencies for these phrasal verbs vary too much within the different *ICLE* sub-corpora (cf. chapter 5.2).

In the following, the results from the present research are summarised in terms of general similarities and dissimilarities between German and Italian advanced learners of English. The most obvious difference between the two learner groups is that German students used even more phrasal verbs than native students (+24.6%) whereas Italian students used a much lower number of phrasal verbs compared to native students (-41.7%). The overuse by German students goes together

with an increased use of Germanic verbs whereas Italian students' underuse is connected with a higher number of Latinate verbs (cf. chapter 5.3.1). Considering that phrasal verbs are in general based on Germanic verbs, the under-representation of phrasal verbs in Italian learner writing is thus not entirely unexpected, especially in view of the fact that Italian – in contrast to German – does not have a phrasal-verb equivalent in terms of frequency and use (cf. chapter 2.2.2).

The detailed quantitative and qualitative analyses showed that, apart from the great numerical difference, further dissimilarities between the two learner groups exist. In the Italian data, the most frequent phrasal verbs are highly sensitive towards the essay topic; most instances of *grow up, bring up*, and *give up* occur in very limited contexts. The German essays, on the other hand, are marked by a very informal style, resulting in an accumulation of very colloquial phrasal verbs. Contrary to the topic-sensitive phrasal verbs in *I-ICLE*, however, these are distributed across a large number of essays (chapters 5.3.2 and 5.3.8). Style-insensitivity, i.e. the mixture of formal and informal styles within the same essay, is a characteristic of German rather than Italian advanced learner writing (chapter 6.5). The influence of time pressure, the use of reference tools, and the years of learning English are determining factors for German, but not Italian learners. German students used more phrasal verbs when they did not write under time pressure, when they were allowed to use reference tools, and after more exposure to teaching at school and university level (chapters 5.3.9 and 5.3.10). Native language influence, both positive and negative, is – for obvious reasons – more prominent in German than in Italian student writing, although in the latter some interference-caused uses of phrasal verbs occurred as well (chapter 6.2). German learners' creative power to form phrasal verbs on the basis of existing phrasal-verb patterns is much more pronounced than that of Italians. This is on the one hand due to the fact that German students are more familiar with phrasal verbs because of the similarities to their native language; on the other hand, the generally higher level of formality in the *I-ICLE* essays did not provide Italian learners with as much motivation to use such (mainly informal) phrasal verbs (chapter 6.4).

However, the two learner groups also share a number of features. In spite of the divergences in terms of overall frequencies, the ratio of phrasal-verb types and

phrasal-verb tokens concurs in the two learner corpora. Although Italian learners used fewer phrasal verbs altogether, their writing is lexically no less diverse in terms of phrasal verbs than that of German students (chapter 5.3.1). A variable influencing phrasal-verb use is L2-exposure. The influence of a stay in an English-speaking country correlated positively with the number of phrasal verbs in both learner corpora – about 20 percent of both Germans and Italians used more phrasal verbs after they had spent time abroad (chapter 5.3.6). In terms of qualitative phrasal-verb use, however, L2-exposure does not seem to have an impact on learner productions (chapters 6.2 and 6.4). Text length did not influence the phrasal-verb production of either learner group (chapter 5.3.7). Unnaturalness is a common feature of advanced learner language in general, and also with respect to the present study. Collocational deviations like *carry out a race* or *make up a proposal*, the inappropriate choice and the simplifying use of phrasal verbs are features of non-nativeness shared by German and Italian students (chapter 6.3). A further common characteristic, adding a great amount of expressivity to learner writing, is the extension of literal notions of phrasal verbs to figurative contexts, such as *cut down a life* or *weed out crime* (chapter 6.5).

At this point, a few words concerning the potential and limitations of the *International Corpus of Learner English* with respect to phrasal verbs seem in order. In terms of the general aims of *ICLE*, i.e. to investigate native language transfer, learner universals, and unnaturalness, the corpus has clearly kept its promise. However, as the analysis of stylistic factors has shown, the German corpus is somewhat skewed in terms of essay type. The high number of – particularly informal – phrasal verbs in *G-ICLE* correlated significantly with essay type; in the personal and descriptive essays, a higher number of phrasal verbs were used than in the argumentative ones (cf. chapter 5.3.8). Although the variables are clearly defined for this learner corpus (cf. chapter 3.3),[152] inconsiderate sampling methods may distort results in an unexpected way. Researchers working with *ICLE* should therefore be aware that even in a tightly controlled corpus, unwelcome biases introduced during the compilation process may have an impact on the findings.

[152] It is explicitly stated in the compilation guidelines that "descriptive, narrative or technical subjects are not useful for the corpus" (cf. *ICLE*-website).

It is difficult to put the results from the present study in line with the results from other phrasal-verb studies. As Sjöholm (1995) states, data collected for second language acquisition research is characterised by high diversity ("collected in thousands of different classrooms all over the world in numerous different languages with people of different ages and backgrounds" (1995: 208)). Besides, to date no further studies on phrasal verbs based on other national *ICLE* sub-corpora that are comparable to the present one have been carried out. In previous research on phrasal verbs (e.g. Dagut & Laufer 1985, Laufer & Eliasson 1993, Liao & Fukuya 2004, or Sjöholm 1995) other kinds of data, different types of learners, and a limited number of phrasal verbs were used so that comparisons with the present study are only possible with the due reservations. One safe conclusion is that language distance, i.e. structural differences between the native and the target language, impedes the successful learning of phrasal verbs (Dagut & Laufer 1985, Sjöholm 1995) – the similarity of German particle with English phrasal verbs resulted in a confident use of phrasal verbs, whereas dissimilarities between Italian and English resulted in a salient underuse. It should, however, be pointed out that the difference between Italian and English is in this case not strictly structural, as the verb type 'phrasal verb' as such exists also in Italian. Nevertheless, considering that only few Italian 'verbi frasali' exist which are restricted to spoken language, it is reasonable to consider this a (partly) structural difference. In terms of learnability of phrasal verbs no conclusions can be drawn on the basis of the present study – only one proficiency level was investigated, and the classification of phrasal verbs in terms of transparency and idiomaticity was not attempted, either.

A further key question is the storage and processing of phrasal verbs, considering that phrasal verbs are viewed as phraseological units in the present study. However, only tentative statements in this respect can be made as *ICLE* is not designed to enable the reconstruction of the various stages of processing in text-planning and production. Also, no general conclusions for all learners of English are intended. As pointed out in chapter 1.1, some criteria for phraseological membership are storage as a whole in the lexicon, the production as a unit and the relative fixedness (i.e. no random replacement of items is possible). A further typical, but not defining feature is non-compositionality. Were it defining, collocations – which are

usually transparent – could not be considered phraseological units; transparent and semi-transparent phrasal verbs can therefore also be considered as elements of phraseology (cf. chapter 1.1).

Based on these criteria, it is highly likely that idiomatic phrasal verbs are stored as entire units in the lexicon, and that they are also produced as units – after all, the main feature of idiomatic phrasal verbs is that they are non-compositional and cannot be separated into individual elements. Considering that the error rate is overall very low in the two learner corpora analysed (cf. chapter 6.1, footnote 131), even the incorrect choice of a particle or verb element of idiomatic phrasal verbs need not speak against storage as a whole, and it is not appropriate to draw different conclusions on the basis of only few errors.

If idiomatic, non-compositional phrasal verbs are stored as units, transparent ones are likely to be stored as separate elements as both verb and particle retain their original meanings. What is more, phrasal-verb elements are exchangeable (*go/run/drive away/off/round*), evidence for their being stored and processed individually. An in-between case are semi-transparent phrasal verbs, e.g. aspectual phrasal verbs. Their defining characteristic is that the particle adds a specific meaning to the verb; while the verb is usually transparent and can be exchanged, the particle remains the same and adds its meaning also to other verbs (e.g. *eat/drink up*). Judging from the creative use of phrasal verbs as described in chapter 6.4, it is likely that such phrasal verbs are not perceived as a unit. Rather, there seems to be storage of particle meaning combined with the knowledge that the verb is variable. Although it could be argued that, on the basis of the collocational deviations encountered in chapter 6.3, storage does not seem to go beyond the phrasal-verb level (as otherwise the context words would be stored as a unit with the phrasal verb) the evidence from the present study for this assumption is too weak to stand up to scrutiny. At this point, corpus-based research such as was undertaken here needs to be usefully complemented by experimental psycholinguistic elicitation studies.

7.2 Perspectives for further research

For a comprehensive account of phrasal-verb use by learners in general more research with different *ICLE* sub-corpora needs to be carried out. A comparison of the results from the present analysis with learners from a Slavic native language seems particularly important so that not only learners with a Germanic and Romance background but also learners with a different language family background are accounted for. Also testing the German and Italian data against learner data from the Swedish and Danish and the French and Spanish *ICLE* corpora would provide more detailed knowledge about the features of these learner groups from different language families.

Nearly twenty years after the beginnings of the *International Corpus of Learner English* a large enough number of descriptive studies has been carried out on its basis that SLA specialists should be able to draw conclusions and make generalisations about advanced learner language (cf. chapter 3.3). Considering that *ICLE* was compiled with a view to describing and understanding learner language in general, findings from large-scale studies such as the present one can now be set into a wider perspective. Phrasal verbs can, for example, be integrated with research on learners' verb system. The present findings are also useful with respect to style in general and further lexical and grammatical formality markers such as overall word choice (e.g. Granger 1996c) or the use of non-finite clauses (Granger 1997) in particular. An additional relevant research area is learners' phraseology. The results from this study can be related to learners' use of collocations (e.g. Nesselhauf 2005a) and to other phraseological units in learner language such as recurrent word combinations (De Cock 2000) or formulae (De Cock et al. 1998) in order to draw conclusions about learners' acquisition of multi-word units.

In order to shed more light on the general process of acquiring and using phrasal verbs, further studies need to be conducted using corpora, also spoken ones, from learners of different proficiency levels and based on registers other than essay writing. This would also answer the question of why advanced learners use phrasal verbs without great difficulties even though they are not exposed to them in a systematic way at school (cf. chapter 7.3). In order to answer satisfactorily the

question of psycholinguistic storage, also different types of data need to be examined. Although the question of degrees of idiomaticity was deliberately left aside in the present research (cf. chapter 2.1), it is desirable to investigate this important aspect of phrasal verbs, especially in view of the fact that qualified statements about the learnability of phrasal verbs have to be based on a comparison of performance as regards transparent and idiomatic phrasal verbs.

7.3 Perspectives for applied linguistics

What are the implications of the results of the present study with respect to the learning and teaching of phrasal verbs? Considering that the great majority of phrasal-verb tokens were used in a correct or acceptable way by advanced German and Italian learners (cf. chapter 6.1, footnote 131), it seems that teaching methods with respect to these multi-word units are efficient and successful. Errors occurred only to a minor extent – in some cases, a particle, verb or the combination were wrong; also the use of phrasal verbs in connection with wrong collocates is an issue, albeit a minor one when compared to the overall number of (correct) phrasal-verb tokens. Such errors can be remedied by putting more emphasis on the contexts in which phrasal verbs can and cannot occur.[153] In the case of German learners, a useful method would certainly be a contrastive approach, as in many cases the meanings of phrasal verbs concur with the meanings of German particle verbs (cf. also Neumann & Plag 1995).[154] The example of *take over* (cf. chapter 6, examples (12) – (14)), however, has shown that the range of meaning and contexts can overlap in some cases but need not do so in all semantic aspects. These differences need specific pointing out in English language teaching.

The apparently successful teaching of phrasal verbs to advanced learners raises the question of how phrasal verbs are actually taught at school in the initial and intermediate stages. To this end, a textbook series at present commonly used in

[153] For principles of how to teach collocations in general cf. e.g. Lennon (2005) or Nesselhauf (2003, 2005a).

[154] The comparison of native and target language was recently shown to be an important learner strategy, e.g. by Lutjeharms (1999), Mißler (1999), or Wildenauer-Józsa (2004). The comparison of L1 and L2 has the effect that the learning process becomes more efficient; it also helps learners understand and internalise new L2-information.

German grammar schools during the first six years of ELT was inspected (Cornelsen *English G 2000*, *A1-A6*, edited by Schwarz 1997-2002). The results are sobering. In six years, German learners of English are confronted with only about 90 phrasal verbs, most of which are transparent (cf. appendix 7). Also exercises are few and far between – only in the fifth and sixth years of learning are phrasal verbs an explicit issue in teaching and even then overall only five exercises to practise them were found.[155] No systematic approach is discernible in these textbooks; rather, phrasal verbs are presented when they fit the context of the general topic. That lexical phrases are frequently chosen for their suitability to the overall topic or theme rather than for their frequency in and usefulness for native English was also found by Koprowski (2005: 330).[156] Also the peculiarities of phrasal verbs such as their idiomaticity and polysemy are only hinted at in textbooks. In the vocabulary sections, phrasal verbs are presented as chunks, which is obviously the correct way for learners to learn them. There is however no indication that, in terms of semantics, the elements of phrasal verbs can be separated and learnt systematically (e.g. particles of direction in transparent phrasal verbs or, with semi-transparent phrasal verbs, the common meanings of aspectual particles like completive *up* or aimless *around*).[157] These textbooks clearly reflect the view of materials designers and teachers that the teaching of phrasal verbs is not worthwhile (cf. Kieweg 2003a: 6, Sjöholm 1995: 60),[158] probably because they are considered unsystematic and – because of their occurring mainly in spoken English – not necessary for 'good' English. Also the general curriculum for German grammar schools does not put any emphasis on the teaching of phrasal verbs.[159] That this view is wrong was made sufficiently clear in the present study. The consequence for materials designers is to incorporate not only more phrasal verbs in general in textbooks, but also phrasal verbs that are frequent in native English and therefore useful for learners of English.

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[155] At least according to the textbook series and the accompanying workbooks. Additional teaching materials were not investigated as the use of these will depend on individual teachers.

[156] According to Cornell (1985: 276), the criteria for selecting phrasal verbs for teaching are idiomaticity, replaceability, restrictions, and frequency and usefulness.

[157] The variation in particle placement with transitive phrasal verbs is pointed out in the second-year textbook – only in a note in the vocabulary section, however (*English G 2000, A2*).

[158] In Germany, materials designers are usually former teachers.

[159] The 'educational standards' for grammar schools in the federal state of Baden-Württemberg were checked – each federal state in Germany regulates school-related matters individually.

How is it possible then that phrasal verbs are mastered successfully by advanced students if they are hardly confronted with them in the early stages? Apparently, the awareness and knowledge of phrasal verbs is not primarily taught and learnt in formal instruction but acquired, also informally, at later stages. The increased input of authentic English through the media as well as stays abroad and efficient teaching at universities seem to compensate for the lack of teaching at school. That a prolonged stay in an English-speaking country did indeed improve the quantitative use of phrasal verbs for about 20 percent of students was shown in chapter 5.3.6. How effective phrasal-verb teaching is at the university level was no issue in this study, as there will be great differences between individual universities which would deserve an individual study. Furthermore, an investigation of the influence of authentic language data through media or other influences after school would be a worthwhile undertaking. In the case of German learners, the positive influence from the native language, i.e. the structural and semantic similarities of phrasal and particle verbs, certainly also plays a major role. How great this influence is in reality would, however, have to be investigated by means of experimental rather than free production data. In order to put the results from the present study in a wider dimension and to investigate what is happening at the intermediate stages of language learning (i.e. between the leaving of school and the advanced level of third- and fourth-year students) further large-scale studies of phrasal verbs, based on both free-production and experimental data, need to be carried out.

Considering that phrasal verbs are mastered at the advanced stage even without systematic teaching in the initial stages, the planners of curricula and teaching materials might argue that the present approach of not teaching phrasal verbs methodically is the correct means to the end. Why overtax beginning and intermediate learners with such an intricate aspect of English vocabulary if in the long run it is mastered quite successfully anyway? However, also at the school level idiomatic English is desirable as not all students leaving school will go on to study English at university or on their own accord. Globalisation requires that such learners are also able to communicate in a successful way, and idiomaticity is an important aspect of this ability. If phrasal verbs are actually learnt without great problems by the mere exposure to authentic materials and by systematic teaching at

university there is no reason why this should not be achieved at the school level and why also beginners should be not exposed to more and especially a greater number of idiomatic phrasal verbs. Especially German beginners of English (and certainly also other learners with a Germanic language background) could profit from a contrastive approach. But there are also efficient methods to teach phrasal verbs to learners in whose native languages phrasal verbs or similar verb categories do not exist. Klein (1995a: 126) for example, states that it is useful in terms of learning psychology to teach phrasal verbs on the basis of semantic fields. He proposes two ways how this can be achieved. One method is to use the verb as the basis in order to explain how the basic meaning of the verb changes when it is combined with a particle; the second method is to present a semantic field such as 'completion' to show that this field is prototypically represented by the particle *up*. This latter option is also favoured by Side (1990). Because of the large number of particles and the frequent polysemy of phrasal verbs, Klein (1995a: 127) further suggests teaching an active (productive) and a passive (receptive) list of phrasal verbs (cf. also Cornell 1985: 276). Klein also recommends that idiomatic phrasal verbs be taught gradually – those phrasal verbs with a low level of idiomaticity are taught first; on this basis, phrasal verbs with a higher degree of idiomaticity are imparted (1995a: 127). Based on the principle that iconicity increases memorability, Kurtyka (2001) suggests combining the use of visualisation techniques and metaphors when teaching (transparent and metaphorical/idiomatic) phrasal verbs. Putting phrasal verbs in context is obviously also necessary (Klein 1995a, Side 1990). Klein provides specific examples of exercises how these theoretical issues can be transported to the classroom (1995a: 128-129). Further examples of practical exercises are found in Kieweg (2003a, b) and Kieweg and Kieweg (2003a, b).

However, not only should teaching concentrate on the phrasal verb itself, i.e. its meaning, applicability and collocational restrictions, also stylistic matters need to be addressed. In the essays analysed for the present study, the mixture of different styles within one and the same essay was obvious in several cases. As this style-mixture seems to occur as early as in essays written at school (cf. Klein 1989: 89), it deserves more attention in the teaching process so that the insensitivity towards stylistic aspects in learner writing is reduced in the long run.

It is hoped that the present study has not only provided theoretical insights into one specific area of advanced learner writing but has also contributed to a greater awareness of the necessity and feasibility to acquaint learners of English with a verb type essential for idiomatic English.

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http://www.ucl.ac.uk/english-usage/ice/
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9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Essay codes

G-ICLE

University code	Essay code	Unspecified
DNNI	5008	
FRUC	1059, 2015	
FRUL	1002, 1004, 2001, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2018	
GEAU	1001-1108, 2001-2049, 3001-3100, 4001-4014	1009
GEBA	1001-1035, 1038-1064	
GEDR	1001-1027	1027
GESA	2001-2011, 3001-3018, 4001-4013, 5001-5045	2004, 2005, 5001-5003, 5016, 5019, 5035, 5040

I-ICLE

University code	Essay code	Unspecified
FRUC	2026	
FRUC	1043, 1070, 2061	
GEBA	1036, 1037	
GESA	4014	
ITB0	1001-1002, 2001-2003, 3001-3003, 4001-4002, 5001-5005, 6001-6005, 7001-7004, 8001-8004, 9001, 10001, 11001, 12001-12004, 13001, 14001-14004	
ITMC	1001-1005	
ITMS	1001	
ITRL	1001-1020	
ITRS	1001-1079, 2001-2039	1064-1067, 2011
ITTO	1001-1039, 2001-2043, 3001-3063, 4001-4020, 5001-5008, 6001-6008	1001
ITVE	1001-1017, 2001-2011, 3001-3004	

LOCNESS

University code	Essay code	Unspecified
British students		
ICLE-BR-SUR	0001.1-0033.1	
ICLE-BR-SUR	0001.2-0024.2	
ICLE-BR-SUR	0001.3-0033.3	
American students		
ICLE-US-IND	0001.1-0021.1, 0023.1-0028.1	
ICLE-US-MICH	0001.1-0027.1, 0029.1, 0031.1-0045.1	
ICLE-US-MRQ	0001.1-0046.1	
ICLE-US-PRB	0001.1-0033.1, 0034.2-0039.2	
ICLE-US-SCU	0001.1-0006.1, 0001.2-0017.2, 0001.3-0013.3, 0001.4-0017.4	

Appendix 2: 72 frequent phrasal verbs in *LOCNESS* and *ICLE* (per 1 million words): overuse, under-use, similar use[161]

		LOCNESS	German	Italian	Bulgarian	Czech	Dutch	Finnish	French	Polish	Russian	Spanish	Swedish
	Bring about	87	30 U	26 U	90 S	19 U	88 S	33 U	66 U	98 O	13 U	49 U	33 U
U	***Bring down***	**23**	**0 U**	**4 U**	**5 U**	**0 U**	**11 U**	**7 U**	**7 U**	**0 U**	**4 U**	**0 U**	**5 U**
	Bring in	27	4 U	13 U	0 U	14 U	18 S	7 U	10 U	0 U	22 S	0 U	0 U
	Bring on	15	0 U	0 U	5 S	0 U	4 U	0 U	0 U	0 U	0 U	0 U	5 S
	Bring out	23	4 U	4 U	0 U	10 U	26 S	18 S	3 U	4 U	9 U	0 U	24 S
	Bring up	114	90 U	233 O	45 U	130 O	55 U	80 U	49 U	340 O	181 O	29 U	67 U
U	***Carry out***	**186**	**81 U**	**88 U**	**20 U**	**43 U**	**66 U**	**62 U**	**90 U**	**115 U**	**73 U**	**132 U**	**33 U**
U	***Come about***	**27**	**4 U**	**0 U**	**0 U**	**0 U**	**0 U**	**0 U**	**0 U**	**4 U**	**9 U**	**5 U**	**10 U**
	Come across	8	17 S	13 S	10 S	19 O	18 S	22 O	10 S	26 O	56 O	10 S	10 S
	Come along	11	0 U	0 U	10 S	0U	22 O	11 S	3 S	0 U	4 S	0 U	5 S
S	***Come around***	**8**	**9 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**4 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**5 S**	**0 S**
	Come back	11	47 O	18 S	10 S	34 O	26 O	7 S	28 O	34 O	13 S	34 O	10 S
	Come down	15	17 S	0 U	5 S	0 U	18 S	11 S	7 S	0 U	4 U	10 S	19 S
	Come in	4	17 O	0 S	15 O	0 S	11 S	18 O	3 S	0 S	0 S	0 S	5 S
	Come off	11	0 U	9 S	0 U	0 U	4 S	0 U	0 U	0 U	0 U	5 S	0 U
S	***Come on***	**0**	**9 S**	**4 S**	**10 S**	**5 S**	**4 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**5 S**	**0 S**
	Come out	27	9 U	44 O	20 S	19 S	11 U	22 S	7 U	13 U	4 U	5 U	0 U
	Come up	23	55 O	22 S	60 O	24 S	92 O	43 O	24 S	55 O	13 S	39 O	76 O
	Find out	72	230 O	75 S	114 O	178 O	155 O	116 O	42 U	128 O	82 S	88 O	115 O
	Get along	0	34 O	0 S	0 S	0 S	0 S	36 O	10 S	0 S	13 O	0 S	10 S
	Get away	53	21 U	9 U	15 U	14 U	26 U	43 S	10 U	17 U	26 U	5 U	33 U
S	***Get back at***	**4**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**4 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**
S	***Get down***	**0**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**4 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**5 S**
	Get off	0	0 S	0 S	0 S	10 S	0 S	14 O	0 S	0 S	0 S	0 S	5 S
	Get on	15	13 S	9 S	15 S	24 S	0 U	4 U	7 S	4 U	9 S	5 S	5 S
	Get out	30	34 S	9 U	35 S	24 S	48 O	33 S	28 S	9 U	9 U	29 S	29 S
	Get through	4	0 S	0 S	0 S	0 S	0 S	18 O	0 S	4 S	0 S	5 S	19 O
	Get up	11	124 O	4 S	5 S	48 O	0 U	11 U	7 S	9 S	17 S	5 S	33 O

[161] S: Same/similar use +/- 10 (e.g. LOCNESS 10, G-ICLE 20, I-ICLE 0 = S)
O: Over-use: more than 11
U: Under-use: less than 11

		LOCNESS	German	Italian	Bulgarian	Czech	Dutch	Finnish	French	Polish	Russian	Spanish	Swedish
	Give up	98	145 O	137 O	95 S	106 S	92 S	127 O	80 U	128 S	60 U	44 U	115 O
	Go about	11	9 S	9 S	5 S	5 S	15 S	4 S	7 S	4 S	0 U	0 U	10 S
S	***Go ahead***	**4**	**4 S**	**9 S**	**5 S**	**0 S**	**4 S**	**0 S**	**7 S**	**4 S**	**13 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**
U	***Go along***	**23**	**9 U**	**4 U**	**5 U**	**5 U**	**11 U**	**4 U**	**0 U**	**0 U**	**0 U**	**0 U**	**0 U**
	Go down	19	4 U	4 U	0 U	0 U	7 U	0 U	14 S	4 U	4 U	5 U	10 S
	Go in	0	4 S	0 S	5 S	0 S	4 S	4 S	0 S	0 S	13 O	0 S	10 S
S	***Go off***	**4**	**9 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**14 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**3 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**
	Go on	205	179 U	194 U	139 U	116 U	188 U	265 O	257 O	119 U	164 U	122 U	210 S
	Go out	34	90 O	26 S	20 U	39 S	55 O	29 S	76 O	64 O	52 O	39 S	33 S
S	***Go over***	**0**	**9 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**10 S**	**0 S**	**4 S**	**3 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**
	Go up	4	9 S	9 S	0 S	5 S	15 O	7 S	7 S	13 S	4 S	5 S	0 S
	Look up	4	4 S	4 S	0 S	10 S	4 S	4 S	7 S	4 S	4 S	0 S	24 O
S	***Look up to***	**8**	**9 S**	**0 S**	**10 S**	**5 S**	**4 S**	**4 S**	**0 S**	**13 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**
	Make up	72	30 U	97 O	80 S	72 S	85 O	94 O	94 O	94 O	65 S	59 U	95 O
	Pick up	27	38 O	0 U	45 O	29 S	48 O	22 S	0 U	21 S	9 U	10 U	24 S
	Point out	148	94 U	119 U	139 S	39 U	96 U	109 U	80 U	89 U	69 U	117 U	81 U
	Put away	0	4 S	0 S	0 S	0 S	7 S	4 S	0 S	17 O	0 S	0 S	5 S
	Put down	0	4 S	0 S	30 O	29 O	22 O	7 S	10 S	4 S	17 O	10 S	10 S
	Put forward	30	17 U	26 S	15 U	5 U	15 U	11 U	57 O	38 S	22 S	5 U	0 U
S	***Put in***	**0**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**5 S**	**5 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**4 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**
	Put off	11	34 O	0 U	5 S	19 S	15 S	0 U	17 S	13 S	9 S	0 U	0 U
	Put on	11	77 O	0 U	15 S	19 S	33 O	14 S	7 S	9 S	17 S	10 S	5 S
	Put up	19	38 O	9 S	15 S	5U	33 O	22 S	14 S	17 S	4 U	5 U	24 S
	Run out	4	26 O	9 S	5 S	5 S	15 O	33 O	0 S	26 O	0 S	5 S	5 S
S	***Set down***	**4**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**
S	***Set in***	**4**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**3 S**	**0 S**	**4 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**
	Set off	0	21 O	4 S	5 S	5 S	4 S	0 S	3 S	0 S	4 S	0 S	14 O
U	***Set out***	**38**	**17 U**	**9 U**	**25 U**	**24 U**	**7 U**	**0 U**	**0 U**	**4 U**	**0 U**	**5 U**	**10 U**
	Set up	64	17 U	9 U	20 U	24 U	77 O	29 U	38 U	38 U	17 U	39 U	29 U
	Stand up	27	68 O	9 U	10 U	10 U	22 S	25 S	17 S	4 U	34 S	15 U	10 U
S	***Take apart***	**0**	**9 S**	**4 S**	**5 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**4 S**	**0 S**	**5 S**	**0 S**
S	***Take back***	**8**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**10 S**	**10 S**	**0 S**	**7 S**	**7 S**	**0 S**	**9 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**
S	***Take down***	**0**	**4 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**5 S**
	Take in	4	9 S	0 S	5 S	0 S	18 O	11 S	3 S	26 O	9 S	5 S	14 S

		LOCNESS	German	Italian	Bulgarian	Czech	Dutch	Finnish	French	Polish	Russian	Spanish	Swedish
	Take off	11	26 O	4 S	5 S	10 S	7 S	4 S	10 S	9 S	4 S	0 S	5 S
S	***Take on***	**114**	**30 U**	**9 U**	**5 U**	**10 U**	**7 U**	**7 U**	**24 U**	**9 U**	**17 U**	**0 U**	**19 U**
	Take out	30	47 O	4 U	25 S	24 S	15 U	4 U	3 U	9 U	9 u	39 U	19 U
	Take over	27	72 O	4 U	20 S	14 U	77 O	58 O	21 S	21 S	26 S	5 U	53 O
	Take up	27	68 O	4 U	60 O	5 U	96 O	22 S	38 O	68 O	34 S	15 U	33 S
	Turn down	0	4 S	0 S	0 S	5 S	4 S	4 S	7 S	4 S	13 O	0 S	5 S
S	***Turn in***	**8**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**5 S**	**0 S**	**18 S**	**7 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**	**0 S**
	Turn on	19	9 S	13 S	30 O	91 O	18 S	43 O	28 S	43 O	60 O	29 S	10 S
	Turn out	42	119 O	48 S	269 O	19 U	103 O	51 S	76 O	149 O	125 O	29 U	138 O
	Turn up	4	26 O	4 S	0 S	5 S	11 S	7 S	3 S	9 S	9 S	0 S	19 O
	TOTAL	1961	2234 O	1365 U	1616 U	1408 U	1959 S	1659 U	1432 U	1944 S	1465 U	1087 U	1600 U

Appendix 3: All phrasal verbs according to frequency, in one million words (raw)

LOCNESS		*G-ICLE*		*I-ICLE*	
Phrasal verb	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**
Go on	201 (53)	*Find out*	219 (53)	*Grow up*	445 (103)
Carry out	182 (48)	*Go on*	182 (44)	*Bring up*	229 (53)
Point out	155 (41)	*Give up*	136 (33)	*Go on*	207 (48)
Take away	117 (31)	*Turn out*	120 (29)	*Give up*	134 (31)
Bring up	110 (29)	*Get up*	116 (28)	*Point out*	117 (27)
Take on	102 (27)	*Go out*	103 (25)	*Make up*	95 (22)
End up	98 (26)	*Point out*	99 (24)	*Carry out*	86 (20)
Grow up	98 (26)	*Wake up*	95 (23)	*Find out*	78 (18)
Give up	95 (25)	*Come back*	91 (22)	*Keep on*	61 (14)
Bring about	87 (23)	*Bring up*	83 (20)	*Build up*	56 (13)
Find out	72 (19)	*Go back*	83 (20)	*Turn out*	52 (12)
Make up	68 (18)	*Carry out*	78 (19)	*Carry on*	48 (11)
Set up	64 (17)	*Be away*	74 (18)	*Go out*	48 (11)
Go back	61 (16)	*Put on*	74 (18)	*Come out*	43 (10)
Break down	53 (14)	*Be over*	70 (17)	*Come back*	43 (10)
Get away	53 (14)	*End up*	70 (17)	*Sum up*	43 (10)
Cut off	45 (12)	*Sum up*	70 (17)	*Take away*	39 (9)
Be out	45 (12)	*Take over*	70 (17)	*End up*	35 (8)
Bring in	42 (11)	*Come up*	66 (16)	*Go back*	30 (7)
Carry on	42 (11)	*Get out*	66 (16)	*Bring about*	26 (6)
Go out	42 (11)	*Sit down*	66 (16)	*Put forward*	26 (6)
Run up	42 (11)	*Stand up*	66 (16)	*Come up*	22 (5)
Turn out	42 (11)	*Take up*	66 (16)	*Link together*	22 (5)
Fit in	38 (10)	*Take out*	54 (13)	*Be away*	17 (4)
Get out	38 (10)	*Be back*	50 (12)	*Fall down*	17 (4)
Set out	38 (10)	*Build up*	50 (12)	*Mix up*	17 (4)
Be around	38 (10)	*Bring back*	45 (11)	*Speed up*	17 (4)
Back up	34 (9)	*Grow up*	45 (11)	*Switch on*	17 (4)
Bring back	34 (9)	*Break down*	41 (10)	*Turn off*	17 (4)
Come out	34 (9)	*Look forward*	37 (9)	*Be out*	13 (3)
Put forward	34 (9)	*Mix up*	37 (9)	*Be around*	13 (3)
Start out	34 (9)	*Pick up*	37 (9)	*Fade away*	13 (3)
Build up	30 (8)	*Put up*	37 (9)	*Give back*	13 (3)
Come up	30 (8)	*Run out*	37 (9)	*Go forward*	13 (3)
Get back	30 (8)	*Break out*	33 (8)	*Go together*	13 (3)
Give back	30 (8)	*Bring about*	33 (8)	*Jump out*	13 (3)
Hold up	30 (8)	*Calm down*	33 (8)	*Put aside*	13 (3)
Look down	30 (8)	*Get along*	33 (8)	*Show up*	13 (3)
take over	30 (8)	*Keep away*	33 (8)	*Turn on*	13 (3)
Bring out	27 (7)	*Pass by*	33 (8)	*Be back*	9 (2)
Come about	27 (7)	*Pull out*	33 (8)	*Be over*	9 (2)
Come back	27 (7)	*Put off*	33 (8)	*Bring in*	9 (2)
Draw up	27 (7)	*Take on*	33 (8)	*Break up*	9 (2)
Pay off	27 (7)	*Throw away*	33 (8)	*Break down*	9 (2)
Pick up	27 (7)	*Fall down*	29 (7)	*Cheer up*	9 (2)
Speed up	27 (7)	*Fill in*	29 (7)	*Come through*	9 (2)
Stand up	27 (7)	*Get back*	29 (7)	*Come off*	9 (2)
Take up	27 (7)	*Keep apart*	29 (7)	*Cut away*	9 (2)
Break away	23 (6)	*Leave behind*	29 (7)	*Get out*	9 (2)
Bring down	23 (6)	*Look up*	29 (7)	*Get back*	9 (2)
Bring together	23 (6)	*Show off*	29 (7)	*Get on*	9 (2)

LOCNESS (cont.)		*G-ICLE* (cont.)		*I-ICLE* (cont.)	
Phrasal verb	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**
Go down	23 (6)	*Take away*	29 (7)	*Get away*	9 (2)
Open up	23 (6)	*Turn (a)round*	29 (7)	*Go past*	9 (2)
Slow down	23 (6)	*Be out*	25 (6)	*Go up*	9 (2)
Start off	23 (6)	*Come in*	25 (6)	*Go ahead*	9 (2)
Take out	23 (6)	*Cut down*	25 (6)	*Group together*	9 (2)
Throw out	23 (6)	*Dress up*	25 (6)	*Join together*	9 (2)
Turn off	23 (6)	*Jump out*	25 (6)	*Leave behind*	9 (2)
Come together	19 (5)	*Keep on*	25 (6)	*Look back*	9 (2)
Cut down	19 (5)	*Keep up*	25 (6)	*Move away*	9 (2)
Face up	19 (5)	*Look back*	25 (6)	*Open up*	9 (2)
Fall back	19 (5)	*Make up*	25 (6)	*Point up*	9 (2)
Hand over	19 (5)	*Move out*	25 (6)	*Put together*	9 (2)
Lay off	19 (5)	*Switch off*	25 (6)	*Put apart*	9 (2)
Look back	19 (5)	*Take off*	25 (6)	*Put up*	9 (2)
Pass on	19 (5)	*Try out*	25 (6)	*Set up*	9 (2)
Put up	19 (5)	*Turn up*	25 (6)	*Set out*	9 (2)
Turn on	19 (5)	*Turn on*	25 (6)	*Shoot down*	9 (2)
Wake up	19 (5)	*Wipe out*	25 (6)	*Shut up*	9 (2)
Act out	15 (4)	*Be in*	21 (5)	*Split up*	9 (2)
Bring on	15 (4)	*Cheer up*	21 (5)	*Stand up*	9 (2)
Come down to	15 (4)	*Get away*	21 (5)	*Take on*	9 (2)
Get on	15 (4)	*Lay out*	21 (5)	*Think over*	9 (2)
Hold on	15 (4)	*Look around*	21 (5)	*Turn away*	9 (2)
Keep out	15 (4)	*Set up*	21 (5)	*Turn over*	9 (2)
Move forward	15 (4)	*Slow down*	21 (5)	*Wear out*	9 (2)
Move on	15 (4)	*Switch on*	21 (5)	*Weigh down*	9 (2)
Put forth	15 (4)	*Take back*	21 (5)	*Have around*	4 (1)
Slip back	15 (4)	*Work out*	21 (5)	*Have behind*	4 (1)
Sort out	15 (4)	*Write down*	21 (5)	*Be on*	4 (1)
Turn away	15 (4)	*Beat up*	17 (4)	*Be up*	4 (1)
Break apart	11 (3)	*Blow up*	17 (4)	*Answer back*	4 (1)
Carry through	11 (3)	*Close down*	17 (4)	*Beat up*	4 (1)
Catch up	11 (3)	*Come out*	17 (4)	*Blow out*	4 (1)
Come along	11 (3)	*Face up*	17 (4)	*Burst out*	4 (1)
Come off	11 (3)	*Give in*	17 (4)	*Burst forth*	4 (1)
Drop out	11 (3)	*Go off*	17 (4)	*Bring back*	4 (1)
Explain away	11 (3)	*Go in*	17 (4)	*Bring down*	4 (1)
Get up	11 (3)	*Hang around*	17 (4)	*Bring out*	4 (1)
Get down	11 (3)	*Hold out*	17 (4)	*Break out*	4 (1)
Get ahead	11 (3)	*Lock up*	17 (4)	*Call out*	4 (1)
Give in	11 (3)	*Look down*	17 (4)	*Check out*	4 (1)
Give away	11 (3)	*Put forward*	17 (4)	*Come on*	4 (1)
Go away	11 (3)	*Put back*	17 (4)	*Compress together*	4 (1)
Go through	11 (3)	*Put together*	17 (4)	*Cut off*	4 (1)
Go by	11 (3)	*Queue up*	17 (4)	*Cut out*	4 (1)
Kick out	11 (3)	*Set off*	17 (4)	*Date back*	4 (1)
Lead away	11 (3)	*Set out*	17 (4)	*Die down*	4 (1)
Leave behind	11 (3)	*Split up*	17 (4)	*Draw together*	4 (1)
Line up	11 (3)	*Step out*	17 (4)	*Draw out*	4 (1)
Look up	11 (3)	*Tear down*	17 (4)	*Drive away*	4 (1)
Lose out	11 (3)	*Do away*	12 (3)	*Drop down*	4 (1)
Make out	11 (3)	*Be on*	12 (3)	*Face up*	4 (1)
Miss out	11 (3)	*Carry on*	12 (3)	*Fill in*	4 (1)

LOCNESS (cont.)		*G-ICLE* (cont.)		*I-ICLE* (cont.)	
Phrasal verb	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**
Move away	11 (3)	*Come down*	12 (3)	*Fly away*	4 (1)
Play out	11 (3)	*Cut off*	12 (3)	*Follow on*	4 (1)
Play out	11 (3)	*Finish off*	12 (3)	*Gather together*	4 (1)
Pull out	11 (3)	*Get ahead*	12 (3)	*Get up*	4 (1)
Put on	11 (3)	*Get on*	12 (3)	*Give out*	4 (1)
Put off	11 (3)	*Give back*	12 (3)	*Give down*	4 (1)
Rip away	11 (3)	*Go up*	12 (3)	*Give away*	4 (1)
Run out	11 (3)	*Go by*	12 (3)	*Go away*	4 (1)
Run away	11 (3)	*Hold up*	12 (3)	*Go in*	4 (1)
Seek out	11 (3)	*Hold on*	12 (3)	*Go about*	4 (1)
Set apart	11 (3)	*Lay down*	12 (3)	*Go by*	4 (1)
Sign away	11 (3)	*Look out*	12 (3)	*Go around*	4 (1)
Single out	11 (3)	*Make out*	12 (3)	*Go round*	4 (1)
Stand out	11 (3)	*Move on*	12 (3)	*Go along*	4 (1)
Take off	11 (3)	*Move away*	12 (3)	*Gush out*	4 (1)
Think out	11 (3)	*Open up*	12 (3)	*Hurry up*	4 (1)
Throw away	11 (3)	*Pass on*	12 (3)	*Issue forth*	4 (1)
Turn back	11 (3)	*Play (a)round*	12 (3)	*Jump down*	4 (1)
Turn around	11 (3)	*Push away*	12 (3)	*Jump up*	4 (1)
Walk in	11 (3)	*Put down*	12 (3)	*Keep out*	4 (1)
Watch out	11 (3)	*Put away*	12 (3)	*Keep up*	4 (1)
Write down	11 (3)	*Race down*	12 (3)	*Lay aside*	4 (1)
Do away with	11 (3)	*Run over*	12 (3)	*Leave off*	4 (1)
Back out	8 (2)	*Run around*	12 (3)	*Let back*	4 (1)
Band together	8 (2)	*Start off*	12 (3)	*Lock in*	4 (1)
Blow away	8 (2)	*Stretch out*	12 (3)	*Look up*	4 (1)
Bog down	8 (2)	*Stroll along*	12 (3)	*Look out*	4 (1)
Break out	8 (2)	*Swallow down*	12 (3)	*Make out*	4 (1)
Clean up	8 (2)	*Think over*	12 (3)	*Mess up*	4 (1)
Clear up	8 (2)	*Turn over*	12 (3)	*Mingle together*	4 (1)
Cling on	8 (2)	*Use up*	12 (3)	*Move forward*	4 (1)
Come around	8 (2)	*Walk up*	12 (3)	*Narrow down*	4 (1)
Come in	8 (2)	*Have around*	8 (2)	*Pass by*	4 (1)
Come forth	8 (2)	*Add up*	8 (2)	*Pass over*	4 (1)
Come across	8 (2)	*Breath(e) in*	8 (2)	*Place together*	4 (1)
Cry out	8 (2)	*Burn down*	8 (2)	*Pull down*	4 (1)
Cut back	8 (2)	*Break in*	8 (2)	*Push forward*	4 (1)
Die down	8 (2)	*Break up*	8 (2)	*Push back*	4 (1)
Fight back	8 (2)	*Bring together*	8 (2)	*Put back*	4 (1)
Figure out	8 (2)	*Bring out*	8 (2)	*Put by*	4 (1)
Fill out	8 (2)	*Bring forward*	8 (2)	*Raise up*	4 (1)
Follow up	8 (2)	*Call forth*	8 (2)	*Rise up*	4 (1)
Go off	8 (2)	*Catch up*	8 (2)	*Rub out*	4 (1)
Go along	8 (2)	*Chat away*	8 (2)	*Run away*	4 (1)
Hit out	8 (2)	*Chop off*	8 (2)	*Run out*	4 (1)
Hold down	8 (2)	*Clean up*	8 (2)	*Saw together*	4 (1)
Join together	8 (2)	*Come on*	8 (2)	*Send out*	4 (1)
Keep up	8 (2)	*Come around*	8 (2)	*Send away*	4 (1)
Lay out	8 (2)	*Cover up*	8 (2)	*Set off*	4 (1)
Lay down	8 (2)	*Crane out*	8 (2)	*Settle down*	4 (1)
Leave out	8 (2)	*Cross out*	8 (2)	*Show off*	4 (1)
Let down	8 (2)	*Dash out*	8 (2)	*Sit down*	4 (1)
Link together	8 (2)	*Draw together*	8 (2)	*Slow down*	4 (1)

LOCNESS (cont.)		*G-ICLE* (cont.)		*I-ICLE* (cont.)	
Phrasal verb	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**
Live out	8 (2)	*Drive around*	8 (2)	*Smooth out*	4 (1)
Look forward	8 (2)	*Drive away*	8 (2)	*Solve out*	4 (1)
Look over	8 (2)	*Eat out*	8 (2)	*Sort out*	4 (1)
Move out	8 (2)	*Fade away*	8 (2)	*Speak out*	4 (1)
Pass down	8 (2)	*Fall back*	8 (2)	*Spread out*	4 (1)
Pay back	8 (2)	*Fall over*	8 (2)	*Stand back*	4 (1)
Pick out	8 (2)	*Fill out*	8 (2)	*Start over*	4 (1)
Put together	8 (2)	*Find back*	8 (2)	*Suck in*	4 (1)
Put aside	8 (2)	*Fit in*	8 (2)	*Suck up*	4 (1)
Revert back	8 (2)	*Fly away*	8 (2)	*Switch off*	4 (1)
Roll down	8 (2)	*Frighten off*	8 (2)	*Take out*	4 (1)
Run back	8 (2)	*Get off*	8 (2)	*Take apart*	4 (1)
Rush around	8 (2)	*Give away*	8 (2)	*Take off*	4 (1)
Seize back	8 (2)	*Go over*	8 (2)	*Take up*	4 (1)
Sell out	8 (2)	*Go around*	8 (2)	*Take over*	4 (1)
Shake off	8 (2)	*Go down*	8 (2)	*Throw down*	4 (1)
Show up	8 (2)	*Gulp down*	8 (2)	*Tie together*	4 (1)
Sit down	8 (2)	*Hang on*	8 (2)	*Trace back*	4 (1)
Spring up	8 (2)	*Hang down*	8 (2)	*Travel round*	4 (1)
Stay away	8 (2)	*Help out*	8 (2)	*Try out*	4 (1)
Strike back	8 (2)	*Hurl (a)round*	8 (2)	*Turn up*	4 (1)
Take back	8 (2)	*Jump up*	8 (2)	*Wake up*	4 (1)
Tear away	8 (2)	*Jump down*	8 (2)	*Walk back*	4 (1)
Tear apart	8 (2)	*Keep off*	8 (2)	*Walk down*	4 (1)
Tie together	8 (2)	*Keep out*	8 (2)	*Waste away*	4 (1)
Trace back	8 (2)	*Kick out*	8 (2)	*Weave together*	4 (1)
Tune in	8 (2)	*Knock down*	8 (2)	*Weed out*	4 (1)
Turn in	8 (2)	*Lead up*	8 (2)	*Weigh up*	4 (1)
Turn over	8 (2)	*Lean back*	8 (2)	*Win back*	4 (1)
Walk out	8 (2)	*Lie around*	8 (2)	*Wipe off*	4 (1)
Want back	8 (2)	*Look away*	8 (2)	*Work out*	4 (1)
Whip up	8 (2)	*Make off*	8 (2)	*Wrench apart*	4 (1)
Win over	8 (2)	*March in*	8 (2)	*Write down*	4 (1)
Wipe out	8 (2)	*Miss out*	8 (2)		
Work out	8 (2)	*Move around*	8 (2)		
Be away	8 (2)	*Pick out*	8 (2)		
Be back	8 (2)	*Pile up*	8 (2)		
Be off	8 (2)	*Pop in*	8 (2)		
Be on	8 (2)	*Pull down*	8 (2)		
Be over	8 (2)	*Race up*	8 (2)		
Be up	8 (2)	*Read on*	8 (2)		
Have over	8 (2)	*Read out*	8 (2)		
Allow in	4 (1)	*Send away*	8 (2)		
Allow back	4 (1)	*Set apart*	8 (2)		
Ask back	4 (1)	*Shine on*	8 (2)		
Back off	4 (1)	*Shoot up*	8 (2)		
Bear out	4 (1)	*Show up*	8 (2)		
Beat up	4 (1)	*Shut away*	8 (2)		
Bind together	4 (1)	*Slim down*	8 (2)		
Block out	4 (1)	*Spit out*	8 (2)		
Blow out	4 (1)	*Stand aside*	8 (2)		
Boil up	4 (1)	*Start up*	8 (2)		
Bottle up	4 (1)	*Stick out*	8 (2)		

LOCNESS (cont.)		*G-ICLE* (cont.)			
Phrasal verb	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**		
Bounce back	4 (1)	*Switch over*	8 (2)		
Buckle up	4 (1)	*Take in*	8 (2)		
Break up	4 (1)	*Take along*	8 (2)		
Bring forth	4 (1)	*Take apart*	8 (2)		
Bring over	4 (1)	*Think back*	8 (2)		
Call forth	4 (1)	*Throw out*	8 (2)		
Call in	4 (1)	*Tie up*	8 (2)		
Call out	4 (1)	*Travel around*	8 (2)		
Call back	4 (1)	*Turn off*	8 (2)		
Carry away	4 (1)	*Turn back*	8 (2)		
Carry over	4 (1)	*Venture out*	8 (2)		
Check up	4 (1)	*Walk over*	8 (2)		
Check out	4 (1)	*Walk out*	8 (2)		
Chill out	4 (1)	*Walk around*	8 (2)		
Chip in	4 (1)	*Walk away*	8 (2)		
Churn out	4 (1)	*Walk down*	8 (2)		
Combine together	4 (1)	*Wash up*	8 (2)		
Come by	4 (1)	*Wind down*	8 (2)		
Contract out	4 (1)	*Work off*	8 (2)		
Cover up	4 (1)	*Wrap up*	8 (2)		
Crack down	4 (1)	*Have along*	4 (1)		
Cram in	4 (1)	*Do in*	4 (1)		
Cut up	4 (1)	*Do up*	4 (1)		
Date back	4 (1)	*Be about*	4 (1)		
Divide down	4 (1)	*Be around*	4 (1)		
Divvy up	4 (1)	*Be up*	4 (1)		
Drive out	4 (1)	*Be off*	4 (1)		
Drive around	4 (1)	*Be down*	4 (1)		
Dig up	4 (1)	*Act out*	4 (1)		
Drag up	4 (1)	*Allow in*	4 (1)		
Erode away	4 (1)	*Bang up*	4 (1)		
Fade away	4 (1)	*Bark away*	4 (1)		
Fall down	4 (1)	*Bite away*	4 (1)		
Feed back	4 (1)	*Beat down*	4 (1)		
Filter over	4 (1)	*Beat through*	4 (1)		
Fill up	4 (1)	*Bend down*	4 (1)		
Flame on	4 (1)	*Bounce up*	4 (1)		
Flare up	4 (1)	*Bounce down*	4 (1)		
Flow in	4 (1)	*Brawl off*	4 (1)		
Focus in	4 (1)	*Bristle over*	4 (1)		
Follow back	4 (1)	*Brush up*	4 (1)		
Follow through	4 (1)	*Bulge out*	4 (1)		
Free up	4 (1)	*Bump off*	4 (1)		
Gather together	4 (1)	*Burn out*	4 (1)		
Get across	4 (1)	*Buzz around*	4 (1)		
Get through	4 (1)	*Bring along*	4 (1)		
Get over	4 (1)	*Bring in*	4 (1)		
Get together	4 (1)	*Call up*	4 (1)		
Go under	4 (1)	*Call out*	4 (1)		
Go forward	4 (1)	*Call back*	4 (1)		
Go around	4 (1)	*Call in*	4 (1)		
Go ahead	4 (1)	*Call round*	4 (1)		
Go up	4 (1)	*Caper about*	4 (1)		

LOCNESS (cont.)		*G-ICLE* (cont.)			
Phrasal verb	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**		
Go in	4 (1)	*Carry away*	4 (1)		
Gouge out	4 (1)	*Chain up*	4 (1)		
Group together	4 (1)	*Chase about*	4 (1)		
Hand out	4 (1)	*Chatter around*	4 (1)		
Hand down	4 (1)	*Chatter away*	4 (1)		
Hang on	4 (1)	*Check out*	4 (1)		
Heat up	4 (1)	*Chuck out*	4 (1)		
Help out	4 (1)	*Clear up*	4 (1)		
Hold in	4 (1)	*Click on*	4 (1)		
Hold out	4 (1)	*Climb up*	4 (1)		
Hold back	4 (1)	*Close in*	4 (1)		
Hold together	4 (1)	*Come about*	4 (1)		
Hook up	4 (1)	*Cool down*	4 (1)		
Join up	4 (1)	*Cool off*	4 (1)		
Jump in	4 (1)	*Count out*	4 (1)		
Keep apart	4 (1)	*Count up*	4 (1)		
Keep together	4 (1)	*Crash together*	4 (1)		
Keep down	4 (1)	*Crawl out*	4 (1)		
Knock down	4 (1)	*Crop up*	4 (1)		
Lag behind	4 (1)	*Cry out*	4 (1)		
Lash out	4 (1)	*Cut out*	4 (1)		
Lead up	4 (1)	*Dart off*	4 (1)		
Let off	4 (1)	*Dash off*	4 (1)		
Lie ahead	4 (1)	*Dash about*	4 (1)		
Lie around	4 (1)	*Date back*	4 (1)		
Lie down	4 (1)	*Die out*	4 (1)		
Light up	4 (1)	*Dig up*	4 (1)		
Linger on	4 (1)	*Dish up*	4 (1)		
Live on	4 (1)	*Drag along*	4 (1)		
Look on	4 (1)	*Draw up*	4 (1)		
Lop off	4 (1)	*Drift off*	4 (1)		
Lure in	4 (1)	*Drift away*	4 (1)		
March in	4 (1)	*Drink out*	4 (1)		
Mark up	4 (1)	*Drive off*	4 (1)		
Measure up	4 (1)	*Drive back*	4 (1)		
Meet up	4 (1)	*Drip down*	4 (1)		
Melt together	4 (1)	*Eat on*	4 (1)		
Merge together	4 (1)	*Eject out*	4 (1)		
Mix together	4 (1)	*Erupt out*	4 (1)		
Mix in	4 (1)	*Equal out*	4 (1)		
Move ahead	4 (1)	*Fall out*	4 (1)		
Move along	4 (1)	*Fashion up*	4 (1)		
Own up	4 (1)	*Feed up*	4 (1)		
Pair up	4 (1)	*Fence round*	4 (1)		
Pass off	4 (1)	*Figure out*	4 (1)		
Pass up	4 (1)	*Fill up*	4 (1)		
Pass by	4 (1)	*Find down*	4 (1)		
Pay out	4 (1)	*Flow away*	4 (1)		
Persuade away	4 (1)	*Fob off*	4 (1)		
Pile on	4 (1)	*Fool about*	4 (1)		
Plan out	4 (1)	*Freak out*	4 (1)		
Pop up	4 (1)	*Gain back*	4 (1)		
Pile on	4 (1)	*Get through*	4 (1)		

LOCNESS (cont.)		*G-ICLE* (cont.)			
Phrasal verb	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**		
Plan out	4 (1)	*Get together*	4 (1)		
Pop up	4 (1)	*Give off*	4 (1)		
Press ahead	4 (1)	*Go ahead*	4 (1)		
Price out	4 (1)	*Go round*	4 (1)		
Print out	4 (1)	*Go along*	4 (1)		
Push aside	4 (1)	*Go about*	4 (1)		
Push back	4 (1)	*Go without*	4 (1)		
Push forward	4 (1)	*Go forward*	4 (1)		
Push out	4 (1)	*Go away*	4 (1)		
Push off	4 (1)	*Gun down*	4 (1)		
Push away	4 (1)	*Gush out*	4 (1)		
Put back	4 (1)	*Hammer in*	4 (1)		
Put away	4 (1)	*Hand in*	4 (1)		
Put in	4 (1)	*Hand down*	4 (1)		
Rain in	4 (1)	*Hand over*	4 (1)		
Reach out	4 (1)	*Hand back*	4 (1)		
Read out	4 (1)	*Hang up*	4 (1)		
Refer back	4 (1)	*Happen around*	4 (1)		
Rip off	4 (1)	*Haul off*	4 (1)		
Rip apart	4 (1)	*Heap up*	4 (1)		
Roam around	4 (1)	*Hear out*	4 (1)		
Roll around	4 (1)	*Heat up*	4 (1)		
Roll away	4 (1)	*Heave out*	4 (1)		
Round up	4 (1)	*Hire out*	4 (1)		
Rule out	4 (1)	*Hold together*	4 (1)		
Run around	4 (1)	*Hold down*	4 (1)		
Run off	4 (1)	*Hunt up*	4 (1)		
Run about	4 (1)	*Hurry around*	4 (1)		
Rush out	4 (1)	*Hurry on*	4 (1)		
Scout out	4 (1)	*Idle away*	4 (1)		
Scrape by	4 (1)	*Iron out*	4 (1)		
Scream out	4 (1)	*Jog along*	4 (1)		
Screw up	4 (1)	*Join in*	4 (1)		
Send back	4 (1)	*Jostle out*	4 (1)		
Send away	4 (1)	*Jump aside*	4 (1)		
Send out	4 (1)	*Jump away*	4 (1)		
Set in	4 (1)	*Jump around*	4 (1)		
Set aside	4 (1)	*Jump over*	4 (1)		
Set down	4 (1)	*Keep down*	4 (1)		
Shine through	4 (1)	*Kick up*	4 (1)		
Ship out	4 (1)	*Knock over*	4 (1)		
Shoot down	4 (1)	*Knock out*	4 (1)		
Shoot back	4 (1)	*Lace up*	4 (1)		
Shove off	4 (1)	*Lag behind*	4 (1)		
Show off	4 (1)	*Lapse back*	4 (1)		
Shrug off	4 (1)	*Laugh away*	4 (1)		
Shut down	4 (1)	*Lay aside*	4 (1)		
Shy away	4 (1)	*Laze about*	4 (1)		
Sign on	4 (1)	*Lead along*	4 (1)		
Sign in	4 (1)	*Lead on*	4 (1)		
Sit in	4 (1)	*Leave out*	4 (1)		
Sit back	4 (1)	*Let off*	4 (1)		
Sit around	4 (1)	*Let out*	4 (1)		

LOCNESS (cont.)		*G-ICLE* (cont.)			
Phrasal verb	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**		
Slave away	4 (1)	*Let down*	4 (1)		
Slide with	4 (1)	*Lift out*	4 (1)		
Snap out	4 (1)	*Lift up*	4 (1)		
Sneak around	4 (1)	*Limp away*	4 (1)		
Snuff out	4 (1)	*Line up*	4 (1)		
Spark up	4 (1)	*Live out*	4 (1)		
Spark off	4 (1)	*Live up*	4 (1)		
Spread out	4 (1)	*Lock in*	4 (1)		
Spur on	4 (1)	*Look ahead*	4 (1)		
Stamp out	4 (1)	*Look over*	4 (1)		
Stand around	4 (1)	*Look forth*	4 (1)		
Stand back	4 (1)	*Lose out*	4 (1)		
Stand down	4 (1)	*Lure out*	4 (1)		
Stay on	4 (1)	*Make forward*	4 (1)		
Steer away	4 (1)	*Map out*	4 (1)		
Stem back	4 (1)	*March out*	4 (1)		
Step out	4 (1)	*Mark out*	4 (1)		
Step up	4 (1)	*Melt away*	4 (1)		
Step back	4 (1)	*Moan through*	4 (1)		
Step down	4 (1)	*Move in*	4 (1)		
Step in	4 (1)	*Move along*	4 (1)		
Step forward	4 (1)	*Move back*	4 (1)		
Stress out	4 (1)	*Move about*	4 (1)		
Strewn about	4 (1)	*Mushroom up*	4 (1)		
Suck up	4 (1)	*Own up*	4 (1)		
Sum up	4 (1)	*Pass round*	4 (1)		
Swoop down	4 (1)	*Pass back*	4 (1)		
Table up	4 (1)	*Pay back*	4 (1)		
Take in	4 (1)	*Pay off*	4 (1)		
Take down	4 (1)	*Peter out*	4 (1)		
Talk back	4 (1)	*Pluck up*	4 (1)		
Throw back	4 (1)	*Plug in*	4 (1)		
Tie up	4 (1)	*Pop out*	4 (1)		
Tip off	4 (1)	*Pour out*	4 (1)		
Tone down	4 (1)	*Print out*	4 (1)		
Toss out	4 (1)	*Pull through*	4 (1)		
Train out	4 (1)	*Pull together*	4 (1)		
Travel back	4 (1)	*Pump up*	4 (1)		
Tune out	4 (1)	*Push aside*	4 (1)		
Turn up	4 (1)	*Push through*	4 (1)		
Veer away	4 (1)	*Put forth*	4 (1)		
Walk by	4 (1)	*Race around*	4 (1)		
Walk away	4 (1)	*Raise up*	4 (1)		
Walk on	4 (1)	*Reach up*	4 (1)		
Ward off	4 (1)	*Reach back*	4 (1)		
Weed out	4 (1)	*Reach out*	4 (1)		
Weigh down	4 (1)	*Refer back*	4 (1)		
Wind up	4 (1)	*Return back*	4 (1)		
Work off	4 (1)	*Ring out*	4 (1)		
Wrap up	4 (1)	*Ring up*	4 (1)		
Wear away	4 (1)	*Rip off*	4 (1)		
Be down	4 (1)	*Roll up*	4 (1)		
Do back	4 (1)	*Roll off*	4 (1)		

		G-ICLE (cont.)		*G-ICLE* (cont.)	
		Phrasal verb	**Frequency**	**Phrasal verb**	**Frequency**
		Rule out	4 (1)	*Step in*	4 (1)
		Romp about	4 (1)	*Stress out*	4 (1)
		Run away	4 (1)	*Strike back*	4 (1)
		Rush over	4 (1)	*Suck up*	4 (1)
		Rush out	4 (1)	*Sweat away*	4 (1)
		Rush in	4 (1)	*Sweep away*	4 (1)
		Rush along	4 (1)	*Swim along*	4 (1)
		Rush down	4 (1)	*Take down*	4 (1)
		Scamper about	4 (1)	*Talk back*	4 (1)
		Scratch together	4 (1)	*Tell off*	4 (1)
		Scream off	4 (1)	*Throw up*	4 (1)
		Screw down	4 (1)	*Throw over*	4 (1)
		Scribble away	4 (1)	*Throw together*	4 (1)
		Send forth	4 (1)	*Throw back*	4 (1)
		Send off	4 (1)	*Tick off*	4 (1)
		Set aside	4 (1)	*Tie in*	4 (1)
		Settle in	4 (1)	*Toughen up*	4 (1)
		Shine forth	4 (1)	*Trace back*	4 (1)
		Shoot down	4 (1)	*Trample over*	4 (1)
		Shout about	4 (1)	*Trim down*	4 (1)
		Shout down	4 (1)	*Tumble down*	4 (1)
		Shut up	4 (1)	*Tune in*	4 (1)
		Sing out	4 (1)	*Turn down*	4 (1)
		Sing along	4 (1)	*Turn away*	4 (1)
		Slice up	4 (1)	*Ward off*	4 (1)
		Smash down	4 (1)	*Warm up*	4 (1)
		Smuggle out	4 (1)	*Wash off*	4 (1)
		Sneak in	4 (1)	*Waste away*	4 (1)
		Sort out	4 (1)	*Watch out*	4 (1)
		Speed up	4 (1)	*Wedge in*	4 (1)
		Spill over	4 (1)	*Weed out*	4 (1)
		Splash up	4 (1)	*Weigh up*	4 (1)
		Splash out	4 (1)	*Whiz down*	4 (1)
		Spur on	4 (1)	*Win back*	4 (1)
		Stagger in	4 (1)	*Wipe away*	4 (1)
		Stare out	4 (1)	*Write out*	4 (1)
		Start out	4 (1)	*Zoom up*	4 (1)
		Start over	4 (1)	*Zoom around*	4 (1)
		Step up	4 (1)	*Zoom down*	4 (1)
		Step back	4 (1)		

Appendix 4: Productive[162] verbs in the corpora

LOCNESS		*G-ICLE*		*I-ICLE*	
Verb	**Combines with X particles**	**Verb**	**Combines with X particles**	**Verb**	**Combines with X particles**
Go	15	*Go*	17	*Go*	15
Come	13	*Take*	11	*Be*	7
Get	11	*Be*	10	*Put*	7
Bring	10	*Get*	10	*Take*	7
Put	10	*Look*	10	*Bring*	6
Take	9	*Turn*	10	*Come*	6
Turn	9	*Put*	9	*Turn*	6
Be	9	*Bring*	8	*Get*	5
Hold	7	*Come*	8	*Give*	5
Run	7	*Move*	8	*Break*	3
Look	6	*Jump*	7	*Cut*	3
Move	6	*Keep*	7	*Jump*	3
Push	6	*Call*	6	*Keep*	3
Set	6	*Throw*	6	*Look*	3
Step	6	*Walk*	6	*Set*	3
Break	5	*Give*	5		
Carry	5	*Hold*	5		
Keep	5	*Rush*	5		
Pass	5	*Set*	5		
Stand	5	*Break*	4		
Walk	5	*Drive*	4		
Call	4	*Fall*	4		
Cut	4	*Hand*	4		
Give	4	*Hang*	4		
Sit	4	*Make*	4		
Back	3	*Pass*	4		
Follow	3	*Pull*	4		
Hand	3	*Run*	4		
Lay	3	*Start*	4		
Lie	3	*Step*	4		
Pay	3	*Do*	3		
Rip	3	*Beat*	3		
Roll	3	*Carry*	3		
Send	3	*Cut*	3		
Sign	3	*Dash*	3		
Throw	3	*Fill*	3		
		Find	3		
		Knock	3		
		Lay	3		
		Lead	3		
		Let	3		
		Push	3		
		Race	3		
		Reach	3		
		Send	3		
		Switch	3		
		Zoom	3		

[162] Verbs combining with at least three different particles.

Appendix 5: Particles

Appendix 5a: Particle productivity (combination with X different verbs)

LOCNESS		*G-ICLE*		*I-ICLE*	
Particle	**Productivity**	**Particle**	**Productivity**	**Particle**	**Productivity**
Out	84	*Out*	93	*Up*	37
Up	70	*Up*	92	*Out*	36
Back	41	*Down*	48	*Down*	17
Down	34	*Away*	37	*Back*	16
Away	32	*Off*	37	*Away*	14
In	26	*Back*	32	*Together*	13
Off	25	*In*	30	*On*	10
On	23	*Around*	22	*Off*	9
Together	17	*On*	21	*Over*	6
Around	13	*Over*	19	*In*	5
Over	11	*Along*	13	*Forward*	4
Forward	6	*About*	12	*Around*	3
Ahead	5	*Together*	9	*By*	3
Apart	5	*Round*	7	*Apart*	3
Through	5	*Through*	5	*Aside*	2
By	5	*Forward*	5	*Behind*	2
About	4	*Forth*	5	*Forth*	2
Forth	4	*Aside*	5	*About*	2
Aside	3	*Ahead*	3	*Round*	2
Along	3	*Apart*	3	*Through*	1
Behind	2	*By*	2	*Past*	1
Across	2	*Behind*	2	*Ahead*	1
With	1	*Without*	1	*Along*	1
Under	1				

Appendix 5b: Particle frequencies in one million words

LOCNESS		*G-ICLE*		*I-ICLE*	
Particle	**Frequency**	**Particle**	**Frequency**	**Particle**	**Frequency**
Out	1201	*Up*	1615	*Up*	1266
Up	1163	*Out*	1470	*Out*	588
On	508	*Down*	524	*On*	376
Back	409	*On*	487	*Back*	156
Away	405	*Back*	487	*Away*	134
Down	333	*Away*	392	*Down*	99
Off	246	*Off*	322	*Together*	95
In	197	*Over*	252	*Off*	56
About	121	*In*	235	*Forward*	48
Together	117	*Around*	178	*Over*	39
Over	102	*Along*	95	*About*	30
Around	98	*About*	83	*In*	26
Forward	68	*Forward*	70	*Around*	22
Apart	38	*Together*	58	*Aside*	17
Through	34	*Apart*	45	*Apart*	17
Forth	30	*By*	45	*By*	13
Ahead	27	*Round*	33	*Behind*	13
By	27	*Behind*	33	*Round*	9
Along	23	*Forth*	25	*Through*	9
Aside	15	*Aside*	25	*Forth*	9
Behind	15	*Through*	21	*Ahead*	9
With	4	*Ahead*	21	*Past*	9
Under	4	*Without*	4	*Along*	4
Across	4				

Appendix 6: Text examples from *G-ICLE*

Appendix 6a: Two informal essays

GEAU3054, essay title "The pleasures of cycling":
(…) I tried to sleep now and then, but either **fell over** on my neighbour's shoulder and awoke in a shock, apologizing several times for my embarrassing behaviour, (…). During our trip, we had a break twice just next to the motorway, and it was just long enough to use the toilet in the restaurant next door and to **walk** ten metres **up** and **down** in the midst of the exhaust fumes surrounding us. (…)
Thinking back now to that trip to Venice I went on several years ago, I am reminded of a bunch of cyclists I could see at a distance through the coach windows. (…) And **thinking back** once more, it must have been exactly at that moment when I decided to become a devoted cyclist myself.
When I returned from Venice, the first thing I was resolved to do was to buy a bike of my own. However, it **turned out** that this was a much more difficult thing to do than I had ever thought it to be. I went into several shops, but wherever I **brought forward** my request, I was confronted with such a multitude and variety of bikes that I was completely at a loss and found myself unable to make a decision. (…)
While **looking around** and examining all those mountain bikes, racing bikes, bikes for long distances and fun bikes, I however developed a firm idea of what my own one should be like, (…).
At that time, I however also had to cope with several problems which cycling naturally **brings about**. (…)
These misfortunes and disappointments notwithstanding, I was firmly decided not to **give up** cycling and resolved to regard my bad experiences as an incentive instead. For, when I **found out** that rolling down the steep road in my home town at a high speed was much more enjoyable than going it down by car, I started to train my muscles and soon found myself able to climb up steeper and steeper mountains.
(…) I certainly do not have to mention that I completely **gave up** going on package holidays.
(…) When last year I went to Venice again - needless to say, of course by bike -, I thoroughly enjoyed rolling up and down the hills, **chattering away** and laughing with my friends, having a little break in a small, cosy inn now and then as well as cycling in the fresh air and bright sunshine. And whenever I **looked over** to the humming motorway, where the noisy tracks and the large coaches were rolling southward, I once more was sure of the pleasures of cycling.

GEAU4010, essay title "Only an ignorant town dweller can yearn to live in the country!":
Until about one year ago I had always lived in towns and cities. I **grew up** in a town, then I moved to the city to go to university, and finally, I found a job – in the city. (…) So I seriously started to consider to move to the countryside, and when I came across an offer for a quaint little cottage, I seized the opportunity, rented the cottage (I had always fancied quaint little cottages), and **moved away** from the city. How ignorant I had been! (…) It was going to **turn out** a big disappointment, although, in the beginning, everything **started out** fine.
(…) On my first walk through the village, I saw even more flowers everywhere, there were little lambs and little ducklings, the sky was blue, the air was mild and clean, and I kept congratulating myself on my decision to **move away** from the city. During spring, I was really happy at my new home.
(…) As I was soon able to **find out**, this was in fact the source of the smell. My neighbour's dung heap's odours wafted through my cottage on hot days that summer, and what could I do against it? (…)

Another thing that I began to realize in summer was that the local grocery shop did not only offer a very poor choice of products, but that the few things they sold were also far too expensive. The shop was admittedly quaint, but I began to be **put off** a bit by anything that was quaint, and in the end started again to do my weekly shopping in the big supermarket next to my office in the city.
One of my reasons to decide to move to the country side had been that I would have space there to **move about**, that I could take walks in the fresh air and maybe go horse-riding, whereas in the city I had attended a gym and had used the machines there to keep me in shape, which I thought was a bit of a contradiction in itself. After I had **taken up** horse-riding in my village it **turned out**, however, that I wasn't very talented for it, and after having fallen off all the horses they had (there were three of them), and also off the fat little pony that was used for children, I **gave** it **up**. (…) I would definitely **go back** to **working out** in the gym, if only there was one.
(…) On top of everything, my friends didn't come to see me any more as often as they used to do during the first months of my new country life, because their enthusiasm for my little cottage and for being chased about by rams when going for walks had **cooled off**, and so they didn't find it worthwhile anymore to take the fairly long trip to my village. (…)
(…) I have therefore decided to leave the country and to **move back** to the city as soon as possible. I want to leave behind me the noise, the stench, the boring people, and, above all, the boredom itself and the non-existant cultural life. I was an ignorant town dweller before, now I'm wiser, and soon I'll be a town-dweller again. I'm **looking forward** to it.

Appendix 6b: One argumentative essay

GESA4013, essay title: "Should death penalty be abolished?":
In my opinion "death penalty" is a very delicate topic.
Most of the European countries have abolished this kind of punishment years ago, the USA still practise it. It think this is strange because if you look around in the world, death penalty is mainly used by dictatorships but not by democracies. However, in the USA still many people are condemned to death and most of the judgements are executet. Sometimes the execution happens years after the trial. It must be a terrible torture for the prisoner to wait so long for this day that he knows will come.
When I think about death penalty, the first question that arises, is whether a judge should be allowed to condemn a person to death, even if it's a murderer, for example. Strictly speaking this seems to be the same crime again, murder, this time authorized by the law and committed by the state. That reminds me of the principle "an eye for an eye".
In my opinion killing by the state is a crime, too - especially concerning to human rights!
I also cannot understand why the execution of death penalty has to be so inhuman sometimes. The electric chair is said to be no quick "murderer".
Nobody wins anything if the prisoner is tortured to dead.
An argument for death penalty, that is often mentioned by its "fans", is the deterrence caused by it. This argument might even justify the electric chair - if it was true. Statistics will show that it is not true: There is not more criminality in states that do not practise death penalty, than there is in states that plead for this kind of punishment.
So, if this deterrencing effect doesn't really exist, what does the state win if the criminal is killed by the electric chair? What difference does it make if the murderer is killed instead of putting him to prison for all of his life? In the case of imprisonment for life the public is as save as it is in a case where the killer is sentenced to death. Or is safety not the main reason for death penalty?! I guess not!

One reason for death penalty might be the fact that a dead prisoner does not cost any money. The main reason for sentencing a person to death is something else: After a very brutal crime or a crime on a kid always drives the public very angry.
Maybe it is natural reaction of the people to feel a hunger for revenge. I think today death penalty in the USA is just used to satisfy this feelings of the public.
Wheras in dictatorships the main reason for the capital punishment is still to threaten political opponents. This is something very different because in dictatorships people are killed, not for crimes, but for their political opinions and for their fight for democracy.
But let's go back the democratic states that practise death penalty!
In my opinion, there is a big problem about death penalty that we must not forget: Even if this punishment would not be doubtful with regard to moral, there's the fact that judical errors happen - deadly errors in this case! In some of the criminal cases the state of affairs is not quite clear.
Sometimes the public and the mass media cry for a hard punishment, the accused person has already been pre-sentenced by the mass media, the judges make a hard judgement. For judges in America are elected, as far as I know, they do not want to annoy the people with a judgement that does not fit into their image of justice.
If someone is sentenced to prison for life, a judicial error cannot really be undone anymore, but the person can be set free again and the state can pay compensation for the lost years and the terrible experiences, the prisoner has made. Even if his life will never be the same because his financial situation, his family and his reputation may be ruined, he has a life in freedom, at least! (Unfortunately, in most of the cases the state does not even pay any compensation.)
In contrast to that, death penalty is the end. It cannot be undone no matter which efforts are made! Dead people, even if not guilty, can never be revived, as anyone knows.
We have to imagine the feelings of someone who is condemned to death for a crime he did not commit. IT could happen to anybody - it is "bad luck"!
Suddenly he is accused of a crime, he did not do it, he cannot believe it, but he and his family are totally helpless, he is sentenced to death. His family tries to fight the judgement, but it is executed.
Five years later it finally turns out that he was not guilty. Suddenly everyone says, "Oh, the man they killed five years ago, he was not guilty. What a pity, poor guy, poor family! But what can we do now that he is dead? It's too late. Bad luck!"
This is not a horror story. It has already happened like that, or in some cases it has been avoided in the last second.
I guess the risc of a judical error is quite big. This should be reason enough to abolish death penalty. Even if just one Person dies because of such an error, it is too much!
So, I think death penalty should be abolished because it is senseless in my opinion, the risc of judicial errors is too big and fatal, and death penalty does not follow the aim a punishment should follow today.

Appendix 7: Phrasal verbs taught at school (Cornelsen *English G2000, A1-A6*)

Be ahead
Be on
Be out
Beat up
Breathe in
Breathe out
Bring down
Bring up
Calm down
Catch up with
Check in
Check out
Come on
Cross out
Cut off
Cut out
Cut up
Dig up
Divide up
Do up
Drive off
Drive on
Drop off
Fill in
Find out
Fit in
Get along
Get back
Get in
Get off
Get on
Get out
Get up
Give out
Give up
Go away
Go off
Go on
Go out
Go up
Go/come in
Grow up
Hold on
Hold up
Hurry up
Join together
Keep away
Keep on
Knock down
Lend out
Line up
Look forward to
Look out
Look round
Look up
Make up
Mix up
Move on
Note down
Pick out
Pick up
Put down
Put in
Put on
Put up
Read out
Run about
Run out
Shut up
Sit down
Stand around
Stand back
Stand up to
Sum up
Take away
Take off
Take out
Think up
Tidy up
Tie up
Try on
Turn around
Turn down
Turn up
Walk about
Walk on
Wash up
Watch out
Work out
Write down

10. Zusammenfassung in deutscher Sprache

Die vorliegende Arbeit beschäftigt sich mit dem sprachlichen (Fehl-)Verhalten deutscher und italienischer fortgeschrittener Englischstudierender im Bereich der im Englischen weitverbreiteten Phrasenverben. Phrasenverben sind feste Kombinationen aus Verb und Adverbialpartikel wie *put off* oder *make up*. Sie zeichnen sich durch hohe Frequenz in den unterschiedlichsten Textsorten und Registern des Englischen aus und sind so ein fester Bestandteil der englischen Idiomatik. Allerdings stellen sie wegen ihrer hohen syntaktischen Komplexität und oftmals fehlenden semantischen Transparenz selbst fortgeschrittene Fremdsprachenlerner vor erhebliche Probleme. Diese müssen sich u. a. damit auseinandersetzen, dass die Bedeutung eines Phrasenverbs in der Regel nicht aus der Summe der Einzelbedeutungen besteht, dass Phrasenverben mehrere (nicht zusammenhängende) Bedeutungen annehmen können und dass sie kontextuellen Restriktionen unterliegen. Aus kontrastiver Sicht findet diese Verbenart in den jeweiligen Muttersprachen der Lerner nur bedingt Entsprechung: Im Italienischen existiert zwar ein syntaktisch und semantisch kongruenter Verbentypus („verbi frasali"); im Gegensatz zum Englischen werden die italienischen Phrasenverben aber nur im gesprochenem Kontext verwendet und auch ihre Anzahl ist sehr viel geringer. Deutsche Partikelverben ähneln den Phrasenverben oberflächlich, verhalten sich aber syntaktisch anders, da die (je nach Flexion) freistehende Partikel lediglich ein vom Stamm gelöstes Präfix ist (*weggehen – er ging weg)*. Semantisch sind Partikelverben aber mit Phrasenverben in vielen Fällen vergleichbar.

So werden italienische und deutsche Englischlernende mit einer ihnen z.T. fremden Konstruktion konfrontiert, deren Beherrschung zwar für idiomatisches Englisch nötig ist, deren Bedeutung aber im (schulischen) Fremdsprachenunterricht nicht klar genug herausgestellt wird. Dies war der Ausgangspunkt der Dissertation: Durch eine detaillierte Analyse aller im Datenmaterial (s. u.) vorhandenen Phrasenverben wurde eine genaue Beschreibung der für fortgeschrittene Lerner tatsächlich auftretenden Schwierigkeiten vorgenommen. So können die Ergebnisse als Grundlage für die Entwicklung von Lehrmaterialien dienen, die besser auf die Problematik der Phrasenverben abgestimmt sind als jene, die bisher zur Verfügung stehen. Im

Unterschied zu früheren Arbeiten, die meist das Phänomen der Vermeidung der Phrasenverben untersuchten, analysiert die vorliegende Arbeit Texte, die nicht auf den Gebrauch spezifischer, vorher festgelegter Phrasenverben spezialisiert sind und so ein neutraleres Bild der Lernerkompetenzen in diesem Bereich widerspiegeln.

Die für dieses Forschungsprojekt verwendete Datenmenge übersteigt die bisheriger Studien deutlich: als Grundlage dient ein seit 1990 existierendes Lernerkorpus, das *International Corpus of Learner English*, ein nach einheitlichen Prinzipien erstelltes Korpus von Aufsätzen fortgeschrittener Lerner mit unterschiedlichem Muttersprachhintergrund, aufbereitet für computergestützte Analysen. Ein Kontrollkorpus mit Aufsätzen britischer und amerikanischer Studierender ermöglicht Aussagen zu Über- und Unterbenutzung bestimmter Strukturen und zur Natürlichkeit von Lernersprache. Durch die auf der 2002 erschienenen CD-ROM gespeicherten Lernerprofile können zudem diverse Variablen untersucht werden.

Im Folgenden werden die Hauptergebnisse der Studie, gegliedert nach Unterschieden und Ähnlichkeiten zwischen deutschen und italienischen Lernern, zusammengefasst. Der auffälligste Unterschied ist die ungleiche Häufigkeit von Phrasenverben in den beiden Lernerkorpora. Während Deutsche eine größere Anzahl als englische Muttersprachler verwendeten, benutzen Italiener ca. 40 Prozent weniger Phrasenverben als Muttersprachler. Die Überbenutzung im deutschen Korpus geht einher mit einer größeren Anzahl an germanischen Verben, die Unterbenutzung im italienischen Korpus mit einer größeren Anzahl romanischer Verben. Wenn man bedenkt, dass die meisten Phrasenverben auf germanischen Verben basieren, und man zusätzlich in Betracht zieht, dass dem Italienischen Phrasenverben relativ unbekannt sind, überrascht es nicht, dass italienische Studierende deutlich weniger Phrasenverben benutzen als ihre deutsche Vergleichsgruppe. Ein weiterer Unterschied liegt in der Verwendung von spezifischen Phrasenverben. So benutzen Italiener die in ihrem Korpus am häufigsten vorkommenden Phrasenverben hauptsächlich in Aufsätzen mit dem gleichen Thema. Sehr häufige Phrasenverben sind bei Italienern also themenabhängig, im Gegensatz zu deutschen Lernern. Letztere verwenden aber eine deutlich größere Anzahl an informellen Phrasenverben. Dies hängt mit der Beschaffenheit des deutschen Korpus zusammen: Hier finden sich mehr Aufsätze mit

informelleren Themen als im italienischen Korpus. Doch auch insgesamt sind die deutschen Aufsätze stärker durch die Mischung verschiedener Stilebenen gekennzeichnet. Auch der Einfluss der Muttersprache ist ein Unterscheidungsmerkmal. Durch die semantische Ähnlichkeit von deutschen Partikel- und englischen Phrasenverben ist der Einfluss, positiver wie negativer, bei deutschen Lernern deutlicher zu spüren als bei Italienern. Deutsche Lerner sind zudem im Erschaffen neuer und ungewöhnlicher Phrasenverben kreativer als italienische. So verwendeten Deutsche eine große Anzahl solcher kreativer Verben, die analog zu existierenden Mustern gebildet wurden. Das Schreiben unter Zeitdruck und unter Verwendung von Hilfsmitteln korrelierte nur bei deutschen Lernern mit der Häufigkeit von Phrasenverben, genauso wie eine längere Dauer des Englischunterrichts. Für italienische Lerner sind diese Variablen nicht signifikant.

Was die Ähnlichkeiten zwischen den Gruppen betrifft, so verwendeten 20 Prozent beider Gruppen mehr Phrasenverben, nachdem die Lerner im englischsprachigen Ausland gewesen waren. Dagegen beeinflusste die Textlänge in keiner Gruppe die Produktion von Phrasenverben. Weitere Gemeinsamkeiten, die besonders die Unnatürlichkeit von Lernersprache betreffen, sind Abweichungen im Bereich der Kollokationen (z.B. *carry out *revenge*), Fehler in der Wahl des richtigen Phrasenverbs und der vereinfachende Gebrauch derselben. Außerdem verwendeten beide Lernergruppen sehr ausdrucksstarke Phrasenverben.

Die Arbeit ist in sieben Kapitel gegliedert. Das erste Kapitel beschäftigt sich mit der Phraseologieforschung im Allgemeinen und in Hinblick auf Fremdsprachenlerner; darauf folgen theoretische Grundlagen zu Phrasenverben und ein Forschungsüberblick zu Phrasenverben in der Lernersprache allgemein (Kapitel 2). Dem schließt sich eine Einführung in die Lernerkorpuslinguistik an, in der besonderes Augenmerk auf dem Potential dieses noch relativ jungen Forschungsbereichs liegt. Hier findet sich auch eine ausführliche Beschreibung des verwendeten Korpus (Kapitel 3). Im vierten Kapitel werden methodische Gesichtspunkte der Studie beschrieben; im fünften und sechsten Kapitel werden die Ergebnisse der quantitativen und qualitativen Analysen besprochen. Das siebte Kapitel schließlich fasst die Ergebnisse zusammen, zieht Schlussfolgerungen daraus und bietet einen Ausblick auf mögliche weiterführende Forschungsansätze.