
INVESTIGATING TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE PHRASAL VERBS ON
MOANA 2 MOVIE: A STUDY OF THEIR MEANINGS AND USAGE

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas penggunaan frasa verba dalam film Moana 2 dengan fokus pada struktur gramatikal dan maknanya. Tujuannya adalah untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis frasa verba berdasarkan bentuk gramatikal serta menjelaskan makna yang muncul dari penggunaannya dalam kalimat. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif dengan data berupa 46 frasa verba dari naskah film. Analisis struktur mengacu pada klasifikasi transitif dan intransitif serta keterpisahan menurut Anggraeni (2022), sedangkan makna dikaji berdasarkan lima kategori dari Anggraeni (2024): movement, completion, duration, punctual, dan communication. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar frasa verba berbentuk intransitive-inseparable. Kategori movement dan completion paling dominan (masing-masing 17 data), diikuti oleh punctual (7), duration (3), dan communication (2). Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa frasa verba tidak hanya membentuk struktur kalimat, tetapi juga memperjelas makna tindakan atau peristiwa dalam dialog dan narasi.

Kata Kunci: Frasa Verba, Struktur Gramatikal, Makna, Moana 2

Abstract

This study examines the use of phrasal verbs in the Moana 2 movie, focusing on their grammatical structures and meanings. The aim is to identify the types of phrasal verbs based on their grammatical forms and to explain the meanings that emerge from their usage in context. A descriptive qualitative method was employed, with 46 phrasal verbs collected from the movie's script, including both dialogue and narration. Structural analysis refers to the classification of transitive vs. intransitive and separable vs. inseparable verbs, as proposed by Anggraeni (2022), while semantic analysis is based on five meaning categories by Anggraeni (2024): movement, completion, duration, punctual, and communication. The findings show that most phrasal verbs are intransitive and inseparable. Movement and completion are the most dominant categories (17 occurrences each), followed by punctual (7), duration (3), and communication (2). These results indicate that phrasal verbs not only contribute to sentence structure but also clarify the meaning of actions or events in both dialogue and narration.

Keywords: Phrasal Verbs, Grammatical Structure, Meaning, Moana

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital era, animated movies are no longer viewed solely as entertainment for children. They have evolved into cultural products that reflect social values, cultural perspectives, and language use. Through the combination of narrative, visual elements, and spoken dialogue, animated movies convey messages in ways that closely resemble natural spoken communication, not only through character dialogue but also through narrative language used in the script. From a linguistic point of view, they demonstrate how sentence constructions and verbal expressions function in real conversational settings, especially in the way verbs and particles combine to form meaning (Ekinici, 2017, p.17).

As cited in Ismaili (2013, p.122), several scholars argue that movies allow language learners to observe the social dynamics of communication in authentic interaction. As noted by Kabooaha (2016, p.253), movies provide access to naturally occurring language used in everyday interaction, making them valuable for observing real speech patterns. Therefore, animated movies serve as valuable linguistic data for analyzing phrasal verbs in naturally occurring discourse.

Among the various linguistic features found in animated movie dialogue, phrasal verbs stand out as particularly important. These expressions are frequently used in spoken English and act as complete grammatical units that carry specific meanings in everyday conversations. In animated movies, especially those produced by Disney, phrasal verbs naturally appear in character interactions, making the dialogue sound more expressive and relatable.

According to Pavesi et al. (2024, p.267), movie dialogue is designed to reflect real-life communication, particularly through the use of multi-word expressions like phrasal verbs. Zago (2021, p.170) supports this view by stating that, although movie scripts are written in advance, they are carefully created to imitate the style and rhythm of natural spoken interaction.

To understand how phrasal verbs work in such dialogue, it is necessary to look at both their structure and their meaning. Anggraeni (2022, p.55-58) classifies phrasal verbs into two types based on their syntactic structure: transitive and intransitive. In addition to understanding their structure, it is also important to explore the meanings that phrasal verbs express in context. Anggraeni (2024, pp.54-72) categorizes the meanings of phrasal verbs into five types: movement, duration, completion, punctual, and communication.

This study investigates the structure and meaning of phrasal verbs in the movie *Moana 2*. All data are taken from narration and dialogue in the film, which contains many examples

of natural language use. In this study, the term usage refers to how phrasal verbs are applied in relation to their grammatical structure and intended meaning. The classification of phrasal verbs in this research follows the categories proposed by Anggraeni.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach, which is appropriate for analyzing language as it appears in real-life use. Qualitative research is intended to explore how meaning is formed and understood through language, especially when the objective is to describe patterns rather than quantify them. Creswell (2014, p.4) states that qualitative research focuses on understanding the meaning individuals or groups give to human experiences. In this study, the aim is to examine how phrasal verbs function in spoken language, using the movie *Moana 2* as a source of natural dialogue. This approach allows the researcher to describe linguistic features as they appear, without altering the original data or introducing outside variables. It also offers flexibility to explore language forms as they are used in real conversation.

The descriptive method complements the qualitative approach by allowing for detailed observation and explanation of language phenomena. According to Miles et al. (2014, p.7), descriptive qualitative research emphasizes the use of observation and narrative description to highlight key features of a phenomenon. Here, phrasal verbs are treated as linguistic units whose structure and meaning are examined based on how they appear in the movie script. This design allows the study to focus on identifying how phrasal verbs operate grammatically and semantically in the data. The term usage in this study refers to how phrasal verbs are used in terms of their grammatical form and the roles they play in the dialogue and narration of *Moana 2*. The structural analysis looks at whether phrasal verbs are transitive or intransitive, and whether they are separable or inseparable.

In addition to examining structure, this study also investigates how phrasal verbs express meaning based on the way the verb and particle interact in the sentence. This involves observing how different combinations represent certain actions or ideas in the scene. Feist (2016, pp.3–4) explains that the meaning of language is shaped by the interaction between form and use, influenced by grammar and the speaker's intention. This analysis does not focus solely on literal or idiomatic labels, but rather on how each phrasal verb contributes to the intended message of the character. By combining structural and meaning-based analysis,

this study aims to present a clear understanding of how phrasal verbs are used in natural spoken English.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the analysis of 46 phrasal verbs found in the script of *Moana 2*. Each phrasal verb is examined based on its grammatical structure, referring to Anggraeni (2022), and its meaning classification, based on Anggraeni (2024). The analysis is divided into two parts: the first focuses on structural classification (transitive-separable, transitive-inseparable, and intransitive-inseparable), while the second discusses the meaning of each phrasal verb according to its usage in the film.

A. Classification of Phrasal Verbs

1 . Transitive - Separable

Datum 1

Narrator: "Moana swings from one side of the canoe to the other, as she picks up speed."

The phrasal verb pick up is composed of the verb pick and the particle up. It is a transitive form because it has an object, speed, which receives the action. The structure is separable since the object can appear between the verb and the particle, as in picks speed up. In this sentence, the object comes after the particle, which is also correct. Both positions are grammatically acceptable and provide flexibility in expression. This kind of structure allows writers or speakers to place focus where needed, either on the object or the action. The separable nature of this verb makes it useful in various narrative styles. It is often used in descriptions involving movement, progress, or increase. Because of these features, pick up is classified as a transitive-separable phrasal verb.

2 . Transitive – Inseparable

Datum 10

Narrator: "Moana tries to keep up with Gramma Tala, but she's out of sync."

The phrasal verb keep up with is made up of three components, the verb keep, the particle up, and the preposition with. It is classified as a transitive phrasal verb since it is followed by the object Gramma Tala. Structurally, it is inseparable, meaning the object must come after the complete phrase without interruption. Reconstructing the sentence as keep Gramma Tala up with results in an ungrammatical and unnatural form. The verb, particle, and preposition function together as a fixed unit. Such forms are not flexible in terms of word order and do not allow the object to appear in the middle. This type of structure is commonly

found in multi-word verbs with prepositional endings. The fixed sequence helps ensure grammatical accuracy and prevents misinterpretation. Based on this structure, keep up with is categorized as a transitive-inseparable phrasal verb.

3 Intransitive - Inseparable

Datum 14

Narrator: "A small shell washes up on the shore."

The phrasal verb washes up is composed of the verb wash and the particle up, functioning together as a single unit. It is intransitive because there is no direct object following the verb to receive the action. The sentence is already complete and meaningful without needing an additional noun after the phrasal verb. Structurally, this phrasal verb is inseparable, which means that the particle up must stay directly after the verb and cannot be moved. A construction such as washes the shell up would be grammatically incorrect in this context, as it introduces a direct object and changes the sentence into a transitive form. The particle and verb are closely connected and work together to convey a complete action. Inseparable phrasal verbs like this one rely on fixed word order for clarity and correctness. The verb phrase is stable in form and does not allow variation in the placement of its parts. Therefore, washes up is categorized as an intransitive-inseparable phrasal verb.

A. Meaning of Phrasal Verbs

1 . Movement

Datum 6

Kele: "Just take me back to land!"

The phrasal verb take back here means to return someone to a previous location. Kele is asking to be brought to land, implying he was taken away from it. The verb take indicates movement or transfer, while back emphasizes a return to an earlier place. This combination shows physical movement in reverse. The urgency in Kele's tone reveals his strong desire to leave the current place and go back. It suggests an attempt to undo a past action. Such expressions often appear when someone wants to restore a previous state. According to Anggraeni (2024), phrasal verbs with back usually convey a returning motion, especially when combined with verbs of movement like take.

2 . Duration

Datum 20

Moana: "Ya can't stay in there forever."

The phrasal verb *stay in* refers to the act of remaining within a place over a continued period. Moana's line suggests a prolonged state of inactivity or avoidance. The verb highlights a condition that extends through time rather than occurring instantly. The particle *in* emphasizes being confined within a space. This expression fits the duration category, as defined by Anggraeni (2024), because it conveys a sustained action without immediate change. Emotionally, it may imply hesitation, fear, or reluctance to leave one's comfort zone. The utterance serves as a prompt for the listener to break out of a passive state and take initiative. The meaning here is not physical movement but the extended duration of a static condition. Overall, the phrasal verb reflects the need for progress after staying in place for too long.

3 . Completion

Datum 3

Moana: "I just have to figure out how to find those stars."

The phrasal verb *figure out* means to understand or solve something after thinking about it. In this sentence, Moana is trying to find a way to understand a method or direction. The verb *figure* alone suggests thinking or working with ideas, but the particle *out* adds the sense of reaching a result. It shows that a process of problem-solving has a clear finish. The phrase often appears when someone is searching for answers or solutions. It also suggests mental effort followed by clarity or realization. This type of expression is common in scenes where a character learns something important. The focus is on completing the process of understanding. Based on Anggraeni (2024), *figure out* belongs to phrasal verbs expressing completion in meaning. This phrasal verb frequently appears in dialogues where characters express realization or discovery, highlighting its role in narrative development.

4 . Punctual

Datum 15

Narrator: "The eyes look around---what is this strange place?"

The phrasal verb *look around* means to quickly look in several directions, especially when entering a new or unfamiliar area. In this sentence, the narrator describes how someone reacts to a strange environment by moving their eyes to observe what is nearby. The verb *look* expresses the act of using sight, while *around* adds the idea of turning attention in many directions. According to Anggraeni (2024), this phrasal verb belongs to the punctual category because it happens instantly and is finished in a short time. It shows a moment of instinctive curiosity or alertness when something unexpected appears. The action does not

involve deep thinking or focused searching, but rather a quick and automatic response. This type of verb is often found in scenes that show a sudden change in place or atmosphere. It helps the audience understand the character's immediate feeling of confusion or surprise. The use of look around also signals that the character is trying to make sense of their situation without needing to speak.

5 . Communication

Datum 5

Narrator: "He breaks it down for her."

The phrasal verb breaks down in this sentence means to explain something by making it simpler and easier to understand. The verb break gives the sense of dividing or separating something, and down adds the idea of reducing it into basic or smaller parts. The narrator shows that the speaker is helping the listener by turning a difficult idea into something more clear. According to Anggraeni (2024), this verb belongs to the communication category because it is used in an effort to transfer understanding through spoken language. It often appears in moments of teaching, guiding, or solving problems. The speaker is not just stating facts but taking the time to make sure the other person understands. This also shows a careful and helpful attitude in communication. The phrasal verb helps create a connection between the speaker and the listener. It shows that communication is not only about giving information, but also about making sure it is received well. In narration, it helps present a learning moment in a natural and supportive way.

Table 1. Structure and Meaning of Phrasal Verbs

Meaning Category	TS	TI	II	Total
Movement	5	1	11	17
Duration	0	1	2	3
Completion	4	3	10	17
Punctual	0	1	6	7
Communication	1	0	1	2
Total	10	6	30	46

Note:

TS : Transitive-Separable

TI : Transitive-Inseparable

II : Intransitive-Inseparable

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

This study examined 46 phrasal verbs from the script of *Moana 2*, taken from both narration and character dialogue. Each phrasal verb was classified based on its grammatical structure into four types: transitive separable, transitive inseparable, intransitive separable, and intransitive inseparable. The most frequent type was intransitive inseparable, with 29 examples. Transitive separable verbs appeared 11 times, while transitive inseparable occurred 6 times. No intransitive separable forms were found, suggesting that inseparable patterns are more common in narrative, especially when actions do not require direct objects.

The phrasal verbs were also grouped by meaning into five categories: movement, completion, duration, punctual, and communication. Movement and completion were the most common, each with 17 examples. These categories reflect key themes in the film, such as action and change. Punctual meaning was found in 7 data, duration in 3, and communication in 2. This shows that verbs expressing action and progress are more frequently used in the film's dialogue and narration.

The findings show that phrasal verbs in *Moana 2* serve more than just grammatical functions. They help express emotion, mark progress, and add rhythm to the story. Some describe quick actions or sudden shifts, while others show steady development or the completion of a goal. When used effectively, phrasal verbs support the flow of conversation and help shape the scene. Understanding them requires attention to both structure and meaning as they appear in real use.

This study highlights how language in film reflects natural English. The use of phrasal verbs in *Moana 2* shows how narrative and language work together to support character development and plot. For learners and researchers, this provides valuable insight into how English is spoken in everyday settings. Studying how these verbs function in full sentences can improve comprehension and deepen language awareness. These findings may serve as a useful reference for future studies focusing on language in media or film.

Suggestions

This study was limited to one animated film. Future research could explore phrasal verbs in other sources such as novels, drama series, or films from different genres to identify broader patterns. Studies may also focus on specific types, such as only transitive verbs or verbs with movement meaning, to gain more focused results. Using various sources can provide a clearer picture of how phrasal verbs are used across different forms of English.

For language learners and teachers, film scripts can be an effective learning resource. Dialogues in films offer real examples of how phrasal verbs are used in daily conversation. Watching scenes with subtitles helps learners connect meaning and grammar more naturally. Teachers can use short film clips in the classroom to support listening, vocabulary, and grammar lessons. This method brings together visual and spoken language in a way that makes learning more practical and engaging.

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