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ENGLISH PHRASAL VERBS WITH THE PARTICLES *OFF* AND *UP* AND THEIR ROMANIAN AND SERBIAN TRANSLATION EQUIVALENTS

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Abstract: *English phrasal verbs represent a specific phrasal lexeme which typically cannot be transferred directly to other languages. In addition, phrasal verbs cover a variety of meanings, from literal to idiomatic, which also presents a problem for translation. The proposed research analyzes the translation options in Romanian and Serbian, pointing to the similarities and differences between the two languages.*
Key words: *adverbial particles, English, phrasal verbs, Romanian, Serbian.*

1. Introduction

English phrasal verbs, also called particle verbs or multi-part verbs, represent a specific construction frequent particularly (but not exclusively) in colloquial speech. Different characteristics of these verbs have been studied (morpho-syntactic, semantic, pragmatic) as well as their translation equivalents in various languages. This paper focuses on their translation equivalents in Romanian and Serbian, languages which lack formal equivalents of English phrasal verbs. The research is corpus-based, with a contemporary British novel and its Romanian and Serbian translations.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. English phrasal verbs and their features

English phrasal verbs are traditionally defined as a phrasal lexeme consisting of a lexical verb and an adverbial particle functioning as its modifier (Palmer 1989, Prćić 2016). Therefore, this combination has a semantic cohesion and its components are merged into one lexical unit. In addition to phrasal verbs, in English there are combinations of a verb and a prepositional particle (traditionally called prepositional verbs) as well the three/part combination of a lexical verb, adverbial particle and a prepositional particle (traditionally called phrasal-prepositional verbs). These three multi-part verbs differ in some features, so this paper focuses on the phrasal verbs alone.

As for the morphosyntactic features of phrasal verbs, they are related the position of particle in transitive units (before or after the direct object), position of the particle in relation to the relative pronoun in relative clauses, adverbial insertion and the possibility of passivization (with transitive phrasal verbs). However, semantic features, particularly the level of idiomaticity, are more relevant for the analysis in this paper.

English phrasal verbs are phrasal lexemes with semantic coherence, but their meaning is very complex, varying from literal to extended abstract. As some authors claim (Bolinger 1971, Palmer 1989), the literal meaning typically implies motion: the verb itself denotes motion and the adverbial particle direction of that motion, that is motion-through-location, or a terminus or result (Bolinger 1971: 85) (e. g. *run away*). As for more abstract meanings, they can be divided into semi-idiomatic and idiomatic (Prćić 2016). In the semi-idiomatic combinations, the verb retains

its original meaning, while the particle extends it (e. g. *eat up*), and in the idiomatic combinations both the verb and the particle extend their meanings (e. g. *give up*).

Within the traditional and structuralist traditions, the variety of meanings of specific phrasal verbs was recorded as a taxonomy (for instance, like in *Collins COBUILD Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs*). However, unlike this taxonomy which does not specify possible links between these meanings, more modern cognitive approach tries to establish these links on the basis of conceptual metaphor, extending or mapping the meaning from the source domain to the target domain on the basis of a feature common for both domains (Lakoff 1993: 9-10). Even before the full development of cognitive theory, Bolinger (1971) wrote about related meanings of particles; for example, he writes (1971: 102-104) that the adverbial particle *away* has two semantic areas: the first literal (to/at a distance from the scene), and the second is more abstract implying intensity. Cognitive approach to phrasal verbs has also been applied by Rudzka-Ostyn (2003) and it discusses literal and metaphorical or extended meanings of particles, the former being transparent and typically denoting movement, the latter being more abstract.

3. Corpus, methodology and goals of the research

This research is based on the literary corpus with the examples from two modern British novels, the two novels (608 pages) of the Harry Potter series: *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998, abbreviated as HPC) and *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999, abbreviated as HPA), as well as their Romanian and Serbian translations. The Romanian translations are titled *Harry Potter şi Camera secretelor* (1998, abbreviated as HPC) and *Harry Potter prizonier la Aykaban* (1999, abbreviated as HPA). Both Romanian editions were translated by Ioana Iepureanu. The Serbian translations are *Hari Poter i Dvorana tajni* (1998, abbreviated as HPD) and *Hari Poter i zatvorenik iz Askaban*a (1999, abbreviated as HPAS), both translated by Vesna Roganović and Draško Roganović.

The next tables provide the data about the English part of the corpus.

Table 1: Number of examples in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

No	Particle	Number of examples	Percent
1	*off*	119	30.7%
2	*up*	269	69.3%
	TOTAL	388	100%

Table 2: Number of examples in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

No	Particle	Number of examples	Percent
1	*off*	166	34.3%
2	*up*	318	65.7%
	TOTAL	484	100%

Table 3: Number of examples in both novels

No	Particle	Number of examples	Percent
1	*off*	285	32.7%
2	*up*	587	67.3%
	TOTAL	872	100%

This research is contrastive, comparing Romanian and Serbian with the English original text, based on the structuralist approach. The basic goals of this research are: a) to determine the level of idiomaticity of phrasal verbs in the corpus; b) to analyze morpho-syntactic structure of the translation equivalents and c) to investigate the possible similarities and differences between Romanian and Serbian translation equivalents. Both languages lack direct translation equivalents and it is expected that the Romanian and Serbian equivalents would differ in terms of morphological and syntactic means used as translation equivalents, particularly when it comes to prefixation

4. English phrasal verbs with the particles *off* and *up* and their translation equivalents

This section first discusses the meanings of the English phrasal verbs with the particles *off* and *up* and then their Romanian and Serbian translation equivalents.

4.1. English phrasal verbs with the particle *off* and their translation equivalents

The phrasal verbs with the particle *off* denote a variety of meanings, which can be classified in different ways, depending on the theoretical starting point. For example, a traditional lexicographic classification lists the taxonomy like the one in *Collins COBUILD Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs* (1990: 471-473): a) departure (*slip off*), b) removal or disposal (*take off*), c) obstruction or separation (*split off*) d) rejection (shrug off), e) prevention and protection (*warn off*), f) beginning (*trigger off*), g) stopping and cancelling (*switch off*), h) decrease (*cool off*), i) completion (*round off*), j) consumption (*run of*f), k) falling asleep (*doze off*), l) displaying (*show off*), m) deception (*rip off*), n) irritation (*browned off*) and o) scolding (*tell off*).

4.1.1. Serbian and Romanian translation equivalents

Assuming that the level of idiomaticity determines the translations equivalents, the first group of examples illustrates the literal, spatial meaning of *off*:

1) a) … feeling he was going **to slip off** over the beak … (HPA 84)
   b) … osećajući da bi mogao da **preleti** preko kljuna… (HPAS 74)
   c) …simțea că e gata să **alunece** spre ciocul Hipogrifului. (HPA 105)
2) a) … and Harry was forced **to fly off** at full speed. (HPC 144)
   b) … primoravši Harija da **odleti** punom brzinom. (HPD 108)
   c) … şi Harry fu nevoit să se **îndepărteze** cu toată viteza. (HPC 83)
3) a) You know what Harry and Ron are like, **wandering off** by themselves…(HPA 46)
   b) Znaš kakvi su Hari i Ron, vole sami da **lutaju**… (HPAS 43)
   c) Doar știi cum sunt Harry și Ron! **Hoinăresc** de capul lor toată ziua… (HPA 59)

In the first three examples with the literal meaning, English phrasal verbs contain lexical verbs of motion *slip* (1a), *fly* (2a) and *wonder* (3a) and the particle *off* the physical separation or distancing in the manner denoted by the lexical verb. The Serbian translations include verbs with the prefixes *pre-* (1b) and *od-* (2b) which themselves carry the literal meaning of spatial separation; in the third Serbian translation (3b), the translators opted for the verb of motion *lutati* (3b), though the equivalent could be again the verb with the prefix *od-* (*odlutati*).

The Romanian translation equivalents include verbs with prefixes *a-* (1c) and *în-* (2c) which indicate the literal meaning of spatial separation (*DEX - Dicţionarul explicativ al limbii române.* 1998). In the third Romanian sentence (3c), the English phrasal verb was translated by the lexical verb of motion *hoinări*.

The second group of examples illustrates semi-idiomatic and idiomatic phrasal lexemes:

4) a) Harry had to admit that some of the fun **was wearing off**… (HPC 61)
   b) Hari je morao da prizna da je ponešto od te zanimljivosti **iščilelo**. (HPD 49)

c) Harry trebui să recunoască, totuşi, faptul că distracţia îşi cam **pierduse** din farmec. (HPC 35)

5) a) "She didn't want us **showing off**," said Ron sagely. (NPC 71)

b) – Nije htela da se **pravimo važni** – objasni Ron mudro. (HPD 55)

c) S-a temut să nu ne **grozăvim**… (HPC 40)

6) a) The only time Harry and Malfoy had faced each other in a Quidditch match, Malfoy had definitely **come off** worse. (HPA 70)

b) Jedan jedini put kada su se Hari i Melfoj odmerili u kvidiču Melfoj **je izvukao deblji kraj**. (HPAS 63)

c) Singura dată când s-au înfruntat direct, într-un meci de Vâjthaț, Draco **a ieșit șifonat rău**. (HPA 88)

7) a) I bet he's all excited because the Dementors are going **to finish off** Sirius … (HPA 304)

b) Kladim se da je sav ushićen što dementori idu da **dokrajče** Sirijusa... (HPAS 259)

c) Pariez că e așa de fericit numai fiindcă Dementorii urmează **să-i dea Sărutul Moriii** lui Sirius... (HPA 360)

The example (4a) contains a semi-idiomatic phrasal verb *wear off*, in which the lexical verb *wear* keeps its basic meaning, but the particle extends its spatial meaning (distancing) into the implication of decreasing; it is transferred into Serbian with a prefixed verb (*iščileti*, 4b) where the lexical meaning of the verb and the prefix convey the meaning of the original. Similarly, example (7a) is also semi-idiomatic, with the particle acquiring the implication of completing, finishing the event denoted by the lexical verb. The translation *dokrajčiti* (7b) conveys the same meaning as the English original. The remaining two examples illustrate idiomatic phrasal verbs: *show off* (5a), *come off* (6a), since both the verb and the particle acquire a more abstract meaning; the particle *off* in (5a) indicates displeasure or irritation (*Collins COBUILD Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs* 1990: 473) and in (6a) the resulting state. The translator opted for phrases *praviti se važan* (5b) and *izvući deblji kraj* (6b), because they convey the complex semantic structure of the English originals.

The Romanian translational equivalents are slightly different than the Serbian. Namely, the semi-idiomatic phrasal verb *wear off* in (4c) is translated with a perfective lexical verb *pierduse* in the past perfect tense (*mai mult ca perfectul*) (*Gramatica limbii române* 2005:433-436). The Romanian equivalent reflects the meaning of the original in the sense that implies decreasing of the notion expressed by the verb. Likewise, example (7a) is also semi-idiomatic, where the particle *off* also indicates completion of the event denoted by the lexical verb. The Romanian translation *să-i dea Sărutul Moriìi* (7c) conveys the same meaning as the English original, but with a slightly more poetical note literally translated as *to give a kiss of death*. In the examples (5a and 6a) the verbs and the particles have abstract meaning of irritation (5a) and resulting state (6a). The Romanian translation equivalents *grozăvim* (5c) and *a ieșit șifonat rău* (6c) semantically correspond to the English originals.

4.2. English phrasal verbs with the particle *up* and their translation equivalents

The particle *up* is a very frequent component of English phrasal verbs with different meanings. *Collins COBUILD Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs* (1990: 486-490) lists the following ones: a) movement and position (*run up*); b) increase and intensification (*speak up*); c) improvement and preparation (*tidy up*); d) fastening and restriction (*lock up*); e) approach (*line up*); f) disruption and damage (*mess up*); g) completion and finishing (*drink up*); h) rejection and surrender (*sell up*); i) happening and creation (*bring up*); j) collection and togetherness (*store up*); k) disclosure (*show up*) and l) separation (*cut up*). These meanings include both literal combinations (movement, position) and the more abstract ones (increase, intensification). Bolinger (1971: 98-102) writes about the directional meaning from which other (extended directional)

meanings developed: the level moving upwards, rising, can be associated with completion. So, the extended meanings include resultant condition and higher intensity.

4.2.1. Serbian and Romanian translation equivalents

We start again with the literal phrasal verbs:

8) a) Harry hissed, **springing up** and pulling Dobby back onto the bed. (HPC 11)
b) … prosikta Hari, **skoči na noge** i odvuče Dobija nazad na krevet. (HPD 13)
c) … Întrebă Harry, **stupefiat**. Îl dezlipi de fereastră şi îl aduse iar pe pat. (HPC 6)

9) a) Ron **stood up** so quickly he knocked Crookshanks's basket to the floor. (HPAS 57)
b) Ron **ustade** tako naglo da je oborio Krukšenksovu korpu na pod. (HPAS 52)
c) Ron **se ridică** atât de brusc, încât răsturnă coşul lui Șme- cherilă pe podea și profesorul Lupin scoase im niic sforăit. (HPA 73)

In (8a) and (9a), the lexical verbs with the particle *up* are the verbs of motion (*spring*) or implying motion *(stand*) and the particle clearly indicates the upward direction of that motion, as well completion of the movement. The Serbian translations are perfective momentary verbs (*skočiti,* 8b, *ustati*, 9b). Likewise, in the Romanian translation (5c) a perfective momentary verb is used (*ridică*). However, in (9c) the translator opted for a more loose descriptive translation using the adjective *stupefiat* instead of the verb *ridica*.

The next examples are semi-idiomatic or idiomatic:

10) a) I always find that **cheers** me **up**... (HPC 281)
b) Mene to uvek oraspoloži… (HPD 207)
c) Pe mine mă **înveseleşte** întotdeauna....**.** (HPC 162)

11) a) He had **patched up** his wand with some borrowed Spellotape, but it seemed to be damaged beyond repair. (HPC 81)
b) **Zakrpio** je svoj štapić nekim pozajmljenim činotejpom, ali je štapić, izgleda, bio toliko oštećen da se nije mogao popraviti. (HPD 62)
c) Îşi **lipise** el bagheta cu nişte Magicscotch, dar se pare că era distrusă de tot… (HPC 46)

12) a) Harry opened his mouth to say he was sure they'd be able **to mend** it **up** at the school, but he never even got started. (HPC 64)
b) Hari otvori usta da kaže kako će sigurno moći da ga **poprave** u školi, ali nije stigao ni da progovori. (HPD 50)
c) Harry deschise gura, vrând să spună că era sigur că o puteau **repara** la şcoală, dar nu apucă. (HPC 36)

13) a) So Harry had been **brought up** by his dead mother's sister and her husband. (HPC 4)
b) I tako su Harija **odgojili** sestra njegove pokojne majke i njen muž. (HPD 7)
c) Astfel, Harry fusese **crescut** de sora mamei lui şi de soţul. (HPC 2)

14) a) The crowd seemed to be **made up** mostly of witches around Mrs. Weasley's age. (HPC 50)
b) Gomilu su većinom **činile** veštice, vršnjakinje gospođe Vizli. (HPD 41)
c) Mulţimea părea să fie **compusă** din vrăjitoare cam de vârsta doamnei Weasley. (HPC 29)

In the phrasal verbs from the first three examples, *cheer up* (10a), *patch up* (11a) and *mend up* (12a), the particle *up* obviously does not indicate a higher position on the vertical axis, but the physical higher position is linked to a higher intensity (10a) or completion (11a, 12a) – so these examples are semi-idiomatic. In all the three cases, the translator opted for the Serbian prefixed perfective verbs (*oraspoložiti*, 10b, *zakrpiti*, 11b) and the perfective verb *popraviti* (12a), which imply intensification and completion. In the Romanian translation (10c) the verb is prefixed and

perfective (*a înveseli*). On the other hand, in the Romanian sentences (11c and 12c) the verbs are perfective and lexically correspond to the semi-idiomatic meaning of the English phrasal verbs.

The last two examples (13a and 14a) are idiomatic, because both the lexical verbs and the particle extended their meaning: the verbs (*bring, make*) acquired abstract instead of dynamic physical quality, and the particle made a shift from the meaning of a higher position to the meaning of reaching an implied goal. The Serbian translations include the perfective verb *odgojiti* (13b) and the imperfective verb *činiti* (14b). In the Romanian translations, on the other hand, perfective verbs have been used to indicate the idiomatic notion of the English phrasal verbs.

5. Conclusion

This corpus-based research, focused on the English phrasal verbs with the particles *off* and *up*, aimed at analyzing the level of idiomaticity of the phrasal verbs in the corpus and their Romanian and Serbian translation equivalents. On the basis of relevant theoretical assumptions about the level of idiomaticity, the English phrasal verbs from the corpus were divided into three groups: transparent (literal), semi-idiomatic and idiomatic. The following table presents the distribution of these levels in the corpus.

Table 4: Level of idiomaticity of English phrasal verbs in the corpus

No	Particle in phrasal verbs	Transparent	Semi-idiomatic	Idiomatic
1	*off*	75%	18%	7%
2	*up*	36%	53%	11%

The numbers indicate that that the phrasal verbs with the particle *off* kept their original meaning in a very high percent (about 75%), with the particle denoting physical horizontal movement away from a given position, separation.[1] Semi-idiomatic combinations are much less frequent and in these cases the particle denotes completion in decrease (e. g. *wear off*). The numbers for the second particle (*up*) are rather different: the highest number is with the semi-idiomatic phrasal verbs (53%) and the particle *up* indicating intensification (e. g. *cheer up*) of completion (reaching the goal of the dynamic activity denoted by the verb, e. g. *patch up*); there were fewer cases of literal vertical movement. Taking into account the entire corpus (all the English phrasal verbs both particles), transparent combinations make about 48%, semi-idiomatic about 42% and idiomatic ones about 10%.

Since the Romanian language lacks formal or direct equivalents of English phrasal verbs (Evseev 1974:28, Dumitru 1976:77), the research has shown that the English phrasal verbs form the corpus are most often translated by Romanian lexical verbs which denote telicity and completion (e.g. *a lipi, a se ridica*). Only 14% of the Romanian corpus are prefixed verbs (e.g. *a aluneca, a se îndepărta*) which convey literal meaning of the English particle. On the other hand, Romanian translational equivalents include phrases (e.g. *a ieși șifonat rău, a da Sărutul Moriìi, a pierde din farmec*) most often used to translate semi-idiomatic and idiomatic notions of the English phrasal verbs.

As expected, Serbian translation equivalents in the corpus include verbal lexemes without a prefix (e. g. *lutati*) and with a prefix (e. g. *zakrpiti, iščiliti*); prefixed verbs are frequent, particularly with the transparent and semi-idiomatic combinations, but can be found in idiomatic combinations as well, because Serbian verbal prefixes, like English particles, can denote both

[1] It goes without saying that these tendencies reflect the situation in this specific literary corpus, with the plot implying movements and changes of position, which creates the environment for literal meanings of phrasal verbs.

literal and abstract, extended meanings (Klajn 2003, Novakov 2018, Novakov 2019). In addition, Serbian translation equivalents include phrases (e. g. *spring up – skočiti na noge*). The verbal lexemes are typically (but not exclusively) perfective, because English phrasal verbs (with some exception) point to a telic quality, a reached goal.

In conclusion it can be stated that the research conducted for this paper has shown that since both Romanian and Serbian lack direct equivalents, the translations differ in terms of morphological and syntactic means used in translating, especially when it comes to prefixation. As expected, Serbian and Romanian translation equivalents in the corpus include verbal lexemes with and without a prefix. In Serbian translation, prefixed verbs are more frequent than in Romanian, especially with the literal and semi-idiomatic combinations. Unlike the Romanian translation equivalents, the Serbian equivalents can be found in idiomatic combinations as well, because Serbian verbal prefixes, like English particles, can denote abstract, extended meanings. Most translated verbal lexemes in both languages are perfective, because majority of English phrasal verbs indicate telicity and the completion of the situation.

Furthermore, both Serbian and Romanian translation equivalents include different verbal phrases which convey semi-idiomatic and idiomatic meanings of the English prefixed verbs. When it comes to semi-idiomatic and idiomatic meanings the analysis of the Romanian corpus has shown an extent of freedom of translation when compared to Serbian equivalents.

This contrastive analysis of Serbian and Romanian translational equivalents of English phrasal verbs is significant because English phrasal verbs represent specific lexemes which typically cannot be transferred directly to other languages. Moreover, English phrasal verbs denote a range of meanings, from literal to idiomatic, which also causes difficulties in translation.

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