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TO THE ISSUE OF USING PHRASAL VERBS IN ENGLISH

In Present-Day English a phrasal verb is a verb that takes a complementary in particle. According to Cambridge dictionary “a phrasal verb” is a phrase that consists of a verb with a preposition or adverb or both, the meaning of which is different from the meaning of its separate parts: for example, the verb “to stand” – stand up, stand up for, stand down, stand by, stand for, stand in, stand out; the verb “to turn” – turn up, turn down, turn in, turn out, turn on, turn off, turn away, turn over.

A *phrasal verb* means “a phrase that consists of a verb with a preposition or adverb or both, the meaning of which is different from the meaning of its separate parts” (1). You may need to try to guess the meaning from the context, or, failing that, look it up in a dictionary. But when and why do English speakers use them?

One source pointed that Old English generally did not possess phrasal verbs as they are found in Present-Day English. But the other one said it begins back when other languages – French and Old Norse – began to influence Middle English. That period started with the invasion of the British Isles in 1066 by William the Conqueror, the Duke of Normandy. As we know, William Shakespeare works, written in Early Middle English, include over 5,744 phrasal verbs. There were small particles, preposition or prefixes, placed before verbs in Middle English which can change their meaning. We still use prefix “for” as in “*forlorn*”. The word “lorn in” Old English meant “lost”. Adding the prefix “for” to the word “lorn” makes up another one as “*forlorn*”, which means “lonely” or “sad”. But nowadays, these prefixes started to disappear.

In Modern English, we use phrasal verbs more often in informal language. The reason for that practice goes back to the time when French influenced English. English speakers thought that French words, or words of Latin origin, were polite or cultured. When you want to speak more formally, you can use a single word of Latin or French origin instead of most phrasal verbs. For example, the phrasal verb “look over” can be replaced by “review”. Another general fact about phrasal verbs is that British English uses different ones from American English. At one time, British English speakers used phrasal verbs much less often than American English speakers. Formal language is more common when we write; informal language is more common when we speak. We use formal language in situations that are serious or that involve people we don’t know well. Informal language is more

commonly used in situations that are more relaxed and involve people we know well.

There is no convenient rule to distinguish acceptable from unacceptable phrasal verbs in formal English; it is simply a question of how firmly established in the language they have become. For example, to *turn down* ‘reject’ is more acceptable than to *turn up* ‘appear’; to *bring about* ‘cause’ is more acceptable than to *bring off* ‘succeed’. Even when two phrasal verbs mean much the same thing, one can still be more formal than the other. For example,

Albert Einstein came up with the theory of relativity (informal)

Albert Einstein put forward the theory of relativity (formal)

I told him to chill out (slang)

I told him to calm down (acceptable)

The same phrasal verb can even be formally acceptable with one meaning and not with another. *Carry on* is acceptable to mean ‘proceed’ or ‘continue’, but not to mean ‘bicker’, and there are similar differences in the uses of *fill in*, *put down*, *take off* and *turn out*.

English is a developing language where today’s colloquial often becomes tomorrow’s standard, but academic essays and other formal scripts are not the places to push the boundaries. Phrasal verbs should consequently be used with care, and it is particularly advisable to avoid the latest imports from the United States where they are both more common and more acceptable.

References

1. <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/ru/phrasal-verb>
2. <http://www.macmillandictionaries.com/MED-Magazine/October2005/34-Feature-PV-Spoken-Written.htm>

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ЮРИДИЧНА АНГЛІЙСЬКА МОВА

Юридична англійська мова формувалась під впливом цілого ряду історичних подій. По суті, юридична англійська мова – це суміш мов, що дали початок і англійській мові загального вжитку. Після Нормандського завоювання у 1066 році, французька стала офіційною мовою в Англії. Проте, французька переважно була мовою керівного