Johnson’s and Webster’s Treatments of the Phrasal Verb (3)

Kusuiro Miyoshi

Contents:

1 Introduction; 2 Methodology (2.1 Outline; 2.2 Defining the Concept of the Phrasal Verb; 2.3 Defining the Scope of the Analyses; 2.4 Selecting an Appropriate Edition of Johnson’s Dictionary; 2.5 Distinguishing Citations and Invented Examples); 3 Overview of Their Treatments of the Phrasal Verb (3.1 Outline; 3.2 Johnson and the Phrasal Verb; 3.2.1 Problems in the Analyses until the End of the 1960’s; 3.2.2 Review of Osselton’s Analyses in 1986; 3.3 Webster and the Phrasal Verb; 3.3.1 Historical Background and His Consideration for the Readers of the Dictionary; 3.3.2 Webster’s Sub-entries on the Phrasal Verb Added to Johnson’s); 4 Their Sources of the Citations (4.1 Outline; 4.2 Johnson’s Sources of Citations; 4.3 Webster’s Sources of Citations); 5 Webster’s Use of Biblical Citations; 6 Their Usage Labels and Notes (6.1 Outline; 6.2 Johnson’s Usage Labels and Notes; 6.3 Webster’s Usage Labels and Notes; 6.3.1 Webster’s Usage Labels; 6.3.2 Webster’s Usage Notes); 7 Conclusion; Appendix: “Sub-entries on the Phrasal Verbs in Johnson’s and Webster’s Dictionaries”.

3.3.2 Webster’s Sub-entries on the Phrasal Verb Added to Johnson’s

As mentioned at the beginning of the previous sub-section, sub-entries
on the phrasal verb in Webster’s Dictionary are more numerous than those in Johnson’s. This naturally means that Webster treated phrasal verbs which Johnson did not list in his Dictionary. In this sub-section, I will at first list up sub-entries on such phrasal verbs, and, after that, I will categorize them into three types. In performing this task, I will aim to present a broad overview of Webster’s newly-added sub-entries on the phrasal verb, as well as of his use of verbal examples there, making it possible to compare his way of supplying verbal examples with Johnson’s.

(1) Webster’s newly-added sub-entries on the phrasal verb

Webster added following 78 sub-entries for 59 phrasal verbs anew, though eliminating 3, give in to, put by and take in, which are listed in the entries on give (v.n.), put (v.a.) and take (v.n.), respectively, in Johnson’s Dictionary:

"BEAR, v.t."

bear down, bear down upon, bear on, bear through and bear up.

"BEAR, v.i."

bear down and bear in.

"CAST, v.t."

cast by and cast on.

"COME, v.i."

come down, come for and come out of (2 sub-entries).

"DO, v.t."

do with (3 sub-entries).

"FALL, v.i."

fall in with.

"GET, v.t."

get in, get on, get out (2 sub-entries), get over and get up.
“GET, v.i.”:
get at, get down, get in/into, get on, get out, get through (2 sub-entries) and get to.

“GIVE, v.t.”:
give in.

“GIVE, v.i.”:
give on.

“GO, v.i.”:
go in, go in to, go through with, go up and go with (2 sub-entries).

“MAKE, v.i.”:
make out, make up for, make up with and make with.

“PUT, v.i.”:
put on and put up to.

“SET, v.t.”:
set over (2 sub-entries).

“RUN, v.i.”:
run at, run away, run away with (2 sub-entries), run in and run up.

“RUN, v.t.”:
run out (2 sub-entries) and run up (2 sub-entries).

“TAKE, v.i.”:
take for.

“THROW, v.t.”:
throw in (2 sub-entries) and throw on.

“TURN, v.t.”:
turn down, turn in and turn out.

“TURN, v.i.”:
turn about, turn in (3 sub-entries), turn on/upon (2 sub-entries), turn out (3 sub-entries), turn over (2 sub-entries), turn to, turn under and turn up.
Webster added the sub-entries as above to Johnson's Dictionary which includes 282 sub-entries for 120 phrasal verbs in my scope.

(2) Classification of Webster's new sub-entries on the phrasal verb

Sub-entries on the phrasal verb which Webster provided anew can be divided into the following three types in accordance with his use of verbal examples:

Type 1: sub-entries in which he gave only the definition, without supplying the citation and the invented example
Type 2: those in which he gave the definition, supplying the invented example
Type 3: those in which he gave the definition, supplying the citation with the occasional invented example

In the following, I will cite examples of each of the three types, making mention of their respective features.

(I) Type 1: sub-entries on the phrasal verb with the definition alone

The following are examples of type 1 sub-entries. In these sub-entries on the phrasal verb, Webster only gave his definition as quoted, supplying neither the citation nor the invented example.

*get down* (GET, *v.i.)*:

to descend; to come from an elevation.

*get in / into* (GET, *v.i.)*:

to arrive within an inclosure, or a mixed body; to pass in; to insinuate one's self.
The number of type 1 sub-entries is 53 out of 418, the total number of sub-entries in my scope. It will be worthy to note that in many of the 53 sub-entries Webster dealt with the phrasal verb with the literary meaning, as revealed in his definitions of turn down, turn in and turn up in the examples above. It is probable that Webster provided such sub-entries for the purpose of showing the variety of the usage of the verb of high frequency related to each idiom. Besides, if Osselton’s analyses which I mentioned in Section 3.2.2 were correctly made and Johnson almost exclusively collected the phrasal verb with the figurative meaning, it can be said that Webster’s way of collecting the idiom is quite different from Johnson’s.
(II) Type 2: sub-entries with the definition and the invented example

Compared with type 1 sub-entries, type 2 generally concern the phrasal verb with the figurative meaning. Examples are:

*bear down* (BEAR, v.t.):

to impel or urge; to overthrow or crush by force; as, to *bear down* an enemy.

*bear down* (BEAR, v.i.):

to drive or tend to; to approach with a fair wind; as, the fleet *bore down* upon the enemy.

*get on* (GET, v.t.):

to put on; to draw or pull on; as, to *get on* a coat; to *get on* boots.

*get out* (GET, v.t.):

to draw forth; as, to *get out* a secret.

*get over* (GET, v.t.):

to surmount; to conquer; to pass without being obstructed; as, to *get over* difficulties: also, to recover; as, to *get over* sickness.

*make out* (MAKE, v.i.):

to succeed; to have success at last. He *made out* to reconcile the contending parties.

*run out* (RUN, v.t.):

To waste; to exhaust; as, to *run out* an estate.

*run up* (RUN, v.t.):

to increase; to enlarge by additions. A man who takes goods on credit, is apt to *run up* his account to a large sum before he is aware of it.

*turn out* (TURN, v.t.):

to drive out; to expel; as, to *turn* a family *out* of doors, or out of the house.

*turn to* (TURN, v.i.):

to be directed; as, the needle *turns to* the magnetic pole.
(III) Type 3: sub-entries with the definition and the citation

As for type 3 sub-entries, like the case of type 2, the phrasal verb with the figurative meaning is treated in them. In this type of sub-entry, Webster often supplied biblical citations, concerning which I will detail it in Section 5 entitled "Webster's Use of Biblical Citations". At the same time, in type 3 sub-entries, it is notable that Webster, based on his unique view, often utilized Johnson's citations, rather than simply copied them. The following are some examples which reveal this attitude of Webster's:

\[ J: \text{To BEAR. } v.a. \ 32. [\text{sub-entry irrelevant to the phrasal verb. K.M.}] \]

To incite; to animate.

But confidence then \textit{bore} thee on; secure
Either to meet no danger, or to find.
Matter of glorious trial. \textit{Milton's Par. Lost}, b.i.1.1175.

\[ W: \text{BEAR, } v.t. [\text{sub-entry for bear on. K.M.}] \]

to press against; also to carry forward, to press, incite or animate.

Confidence hath \textit{born} thee on.

\[ J: \text{To BEAR. } v.a. \ 8. [\text{sub-entry irrelevant to the phrasal verb K.M.}] \]

To support; to keep from falling.

A religious hope does not only bear up the mind under her suffer-
ings, but makes her rejoice in them. \textit{Addison. Spectat}.

\[ W: \text{BEAR, } v.t. [\text{sub-entry for bear up. K.M.}] \]

to support; to keep from falling.

Religious hope \textit{bears up} the mind under sufferings. \textit{Addison}.
J: To DO. v.a. 11. [sub-entry irrelevant to the phrasal verb. K.M.]
To gain a point; to effect by influence.

It is much, that a jest with a sad brow will do with a fellow that never had the ache in his shoulders. Shakesp. Henry IV.

W: DO, v.t. [sub-entry for do with. K.M.]
to gain; to effect by influence.

A jest with a sad brow will do with a fellow who never had the ache in his shoulders. Shak.

J: To GO. v.n. 12. [sub-entry irrelevant to the phrasal verb. K.M.]
To proceed in mental operations.

If we go over the laws of Christianity, we shall find that, excepting a very few particulars, they enjoin the very same things, only they have made our duty more clear and certain. Tillotson, Sermon 6.

W: GO, v.i. [sub-entry for go over. K.M.]
to examine; to view or review; as, to go over an account.

If we go over the laws of Christianity—Tillotson.

Incidentally, Webster even borrowed Johnson’s definition and citation which are in the sub-entry for make up in order to treat make up for, as:

J: To MAKE. v.n. 7. [sub-entry for make up. K.M.]
To compensate; to be instead.

Have you got a supply of friends to make up for those who are gone?
Swift to Pope.
W: **MAKE, v.i.** [sub-entry for *make up for*. K.M.]
to compensate; to supply by an equivalent.

Have you a supply of friends to *make up for* those who are gone?
*Swift.*

If I base myself on Quirk et al.'s theory, *make up for* is a "phrasal-prepositional verb", which I mentioned in Section 2.2, and not a "genuine" phrasal verb. Whichever may be, it may well be said that Webster "corrected Johnson's error" in this case. As far as I can judge, many of modern English dictionaries provide a sub-entry for *make up for*, supplying verbal examples like the one in the example above. To take one instance, in its sub-entry for "*make up for* sth", *OALD* gives the definition "compensate for something", supplying the examples "Hard work can *make up for* a lack of intelligence" and "The beautiful autumn *made up for* the wet summer".

The three types of Webster's sub-entries on the phrasal verb analyzed above show that Webster had a tendency to treat phrasal verbs in different ways in accordance with their meanings. As to the phrasal verb with the literal meaning, Webster quite often refrained from supplying the verbal example. Instead, when treating that with the figurative meaning, he made full use of his invented example as well as the citation. This attitude of Webster's will be regarded as highly systematic. In this regard, his utilization of Johnson's citations, which is seen in type 3 sub-entries, may safely be considered to represent his uniqueness, and it will be a gross misunderstanding if it is interpreted as simple copying.
4 Their Sources of the Citations

4.1 Outline

In this section, I will adopt a statistical method in analyzing the sources of the citations which Johnson and Webster supplied to exemplify the usage of the phrasal verb. In performing this task, I assume it will serve two purposes. The one is detailing my analyses in the previous section, and the other providing preliminary information for the analyses I am to make in Sections 5 and 6 where the difference between Webster’s use of biblical citations and Johnson’s, and their usage notes and labels will be dealt with, which will require the knowledge of Johnson’s and Webster’s respective tendencies in selecting sources of citations.

4.2 Johnson’s Sources of Citations

I mentioned in Section 1 that Johnson supplied 770 citations to illustrate the usage of the phrasal verb within the scope of my analyses. When these citations are investigated in relation to their sources, the following table becomes obtained which shows that he took phrases and sentences from at least 81 sources; the figures here indicate the number of citations from related sources, the letter F standing for “Frequency”.

This table reflects two notable tendencies of Johnson in his practice of supplying citations in sub-entries on the phrasal verb. On the one hand, I (2007:67–71) once analyzed that Johnson generally quoted from Shakespeare in first-order frequency, Dryden in second-order and the Bible in third-order. However, as far as his treatment of the phrasal verb is concerned, Johnson, while showing his keen interest in Shakespeare, quoted from Dryden in third-order frequency and the Bible in seventh-order. Besides, it is quite different from Johnson’s usual practice to quote from Addison, Bacon, Swift and
Locke more frequently than from the Bible. On the other hand, I (2007:84 and 135) also discussed that, within the range of entries on words for the letter L in Johnson’s *Dictionary*, citations from Shakespeare account for 15.8%, those from Dryden 11.9% and those from the Bible 6.7%. Compared with this, within the range of sub-entries on the phrasal verb, Johnson’s citations from the three sources account, respectively, for 12%, 7.6% and 3.8%, disparity among them being smaller than usual. It will be appropriate
to regard the two tendencies, as well as the high number of sources for 765 citations in total, as traces of Johnson’s extensive reading of English literature in search of the phrasal verb.

**Bibliography**

**I  Dictionaries and Other Sources**


**II  Books and Articles**


Mossé, Fernand (1947), *Esquisse d'une histoire de la langue Anglaise*. (Collection ‘Les Langues du monde’, Serie grammaire, philologie, litterature, Vol. II). Lyon: Edition I.A.C. (The 2nd edition was issued by the same publishing company in 1958. The page numbers in the text refer to the 2nd edition; I mentioned the first edition there to clarify the chronological order of its related analyses. The passages in the 2nd edition which I referred to do not differ from those in the 1st edition; this can be proved by the statements by Sledd and Kolb (1955 and 1965) which I also cited in the text.)


(1965), ‘Johnson’s Dictionary and lexicographical tradition’ in Green,


