

## Lexical-phraseological features of phrasal verbs and difficulties in their study

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### Abstract

Modern English language has a particularly large number of combinations of postpositions with verbs. Their number is growing steadily. This is evidenced by books, dictionaries, dedicated to phrasal verbs and their use. Along with the increasing number, the frequency of their use is also growing. This means that they perform a desired function due to their greater brevity and expressiveness. The study of phrasal verbs is one of the most difficult tasks for a person who wants to improve his or her level of the English language. Phrasal verbs that are more infrequently used in conversation have already moved to the language of the media, business and economy. Phrasal verbs have strengthened their position in the verbal lexicon of contemporary English. Having become a phenomenon of conversational level, they are essential for the communicative act, and offer unlimited opportunities to express virtually all concepts. The article investigates research into the use of the lexical set strategy for teaching phrasal verbs in Kazakhstani universities. Even though the incidence of phrasal verbs is significant in English-speaking countries, little has been written about other causes of the non-use of the forms of PVs except for avoidance. Accordingly, this study explored 302 PVs used in 60 talks by the University students. The author comes to the conclusion that a well-defined strategy for teaching and learning PVs promotes the development of students' foreign language communicative competence.

**Key words:** phrasal verb, preposition, adverb, particle, semantics, idioms, analytical forms, semantics, compound verbs, auxiliary verb

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### Introduction

For many decades, the interest of linguistic thought in the study of movement, the most amazing phenomenon in the world, and a vitally important concept of human activity does not become weaker; on the contrary, it is constantly growing. Movement in the modern world is considered to be the main feature and the main sign of life. Interpretation of movement in linguistics is the focus of attention due to the prevalence of the principles of anthropocentrism. It is considered to be one of the central problematic issues in linguistic semantics.

In English studies, phrasal verbs have been widely described as a special English language phenomenon. Linguistics has a great number of works dedicated to the determination of the status of these lexical units, with their lexical and grammatical structures, characteristic features of polysemy, the nature of the second component, their functioning in language and speech. Despite a long history of the study of phrasal verbs, interest in the lexical-phraseological phenomenon never fades. Such scholars as L. Talmy (2000), P. Cole and J. Morgan (1975), E.E. Golubkova (2013), A.Y. Aldahesh (2013), M. McCarthy and F. O'Dell (2004), S. Wang et al. (2018) and others repeatedly drew attention to the characteristics of polysemous phrasal verbs. However, a comprehensive, systematic and solid description of these recurrent syntagmatic models of the explication of movement in modern linguistics has not been provided so far. It appears to be interesting and relevant to summarize the prior observations from the perspective of anthropocentric theory after the examination of semantic changes in the semantic structure of polysemous phrasal verbs of movement

as well as methods of objectification and modification of the category of movement through space postpositions.

Phrasal verbs are one of the most complex aspects in the study of the English language. The term "phrasal verbs" was first introduced by an English linguist L.P. Smith (1957) and was recorded in the English-Russian dictionary of verb combinations published in 1986 in the USSR. Phrasal verbs, as their name suggests, refer to phraseology. Phraseology is a branch of linguistics studying phrases, i.e. word-combinations, but not all of them, only more or less stable. Phrasal verbs are compound (or composite) verbs (multi-word verbs), consisting of several words, one of which is a verb, and another (or others) is a preposition or an adverb that has the same form. For this reason, two or three words that make up a compound verb and look like a short phrase are often called phrasal verbs. Learning English presents difficulties in mastering phrasal verbs. This is because they can quickly and suddenly change their meanings, and there are so many of them. As all of the words of modern English, most verbs have either Latin (Romance) or Germanic origin. Historically, the words of Germanic origin belong to neutral or conversational vocabulary. The vast majority of phrasal verbs is based on the verbs of Germanic origin. English became abundant in foreign words that, along with native words, expressed the nuances of the same concepts. For example, the meaning of the word 'to foretell' can be expressed by the Latin word 'to predict' or the Greek word 'prophecy'. As a result, while native phrasal verbs continued to evolve naturally in the population, foreign words expanded a scholarly and scientific vocabulary. Even today, English continues to evolve along these two parallel paths. Therefore, hundreds of native English phrasal verbs have French, Latin, or Greek counterparts with very similar meanings, but with a slightly more erudite ring to them. Here are just some of these synonyms: blow up - explode; find out - ascertain; give up - surrender; go against - oppose; hand in - submit; leave out - omit; look forward to - anticipate; look up to - admire, respect; make up - fabricate; point out - indicate; pull out - extract; put off - postpone; put out - extinguish; put together - assemble, compose; speed up - accelerate; stand up for - defend.

According to the American linguist D. Bolinger (1971), until recently, the English language did not have many means to create new words based on existing ones. However, phrasal verbs have strengthened their position in the verbal lexicon of contemporary English. Having become a phenomenon of the conversational level, they are essential for the communicative act, and offer unlimited opportunities to express virtually all concepts. The number of phrasal verbs is growing every day and, at the same time, the frequency of their use is also increasing. Phrasal verbs that are more infrequently used in conversation have already moved to the language of the media, business, and economy. In addition, there are even some combinations that have replaced simple verbs with the same meaning. It is obvious that there is a significant stylistic diversity among phrasal verbs, reflected primarily in specialized dictionaries of phrasal verbs, where they are combined in different stylistic groups: formal, colloquial, and slang, but this classification cannot be called absolute, because the verbs can "jump" from one group to another. There are conversational phrasal verbs, such as the verb "to make up", which are so frequent in communication that after some time, they are starting to be used in written language, so they cannot be called spoken and should be classified as neutral.

Regarding the semantics of phrasal verbs, it should be noted that their initial value is movement in space and result of the action. Therefore, a major part of them consists of movement verbs: to get, to put, to fall, to go and many others. The polysemy of phrasal verbs is explained by semantic transfer of initial value: pull down - lower, destroy; put down - lower, underestimate the importance, criticize someone, kill (an animal) (Sinclair, 2002). Postpositions of phrasal verbs often serve to clarify the

action of a verb indicating the direction, for example: come in, go away, go out, step aside, step out, put away, put aside, go up, take off, turn over and many others. A postposition can also specify a verb aspect (telicity value): "sit" and "sit down, burn and burn down. Phrasal verbs are very common in the English language. They are actively used in everyday speech. The meanings of some phrasal verbs are intuitively understood due to the ability to make generalisations and to form new combinations out of their elements: come back - return, go away - leave, stand up - rise, etc. Other phrasal verbs have idiomatic meaning, and they should be memorized separately, for example: take after - follow someone, be like someone, look - turn your eyes in a particular direction, look for - try to find something, look after - take care of something, look up to - respect, etc. (Kalugina 2014).

The origin of phrasal verbs can be traced back to the earliest written records of Old English. At that time, prepositions and adverbs were used very literally and denoted mainly direction, location, or orientation of an object in space. For example:

- The man walked out – direction.
- The man stood by – location.
- The man held his hand up – orientation.

In addition, both adverbs and prepositions indicated the relationship of a verb and an object in a sentence:

- The woman stood by the house – location.
- The thief climbed out the window – direction.
- He hang the coat over the fire – orientation in space.

A phrasal verb is a stable combination of a verb and a preposition, a verb, and an adverb, or a verb with a particle (the term "postposition" is considered to be the most widely used in special literature), where the verb means action, and the preposition, the adverb, or the particle means its character or orientation. Many verbs depending on the postposition completely change their meanings. Being an idiom, a phrasal verb cannot be translated literally (Mahmoud 2015). However, in rare instances, a literal translation may help to understand the expression more or less. Many phrasal verbs have the value that is impossible to deduce from the values of its components, therefore, their value should be regarded as integral. In other words, the value of these units is difficult to predict. Phrasal verbs that include a preposition are known as prepositional, and phrasal verbs that include a particle are also known as a particle.

## **Materials and Methods**

English is the language of the twenty-first century. English is a language commonly used worldwide. English is the most important instrument of interpersonal and intercultural communication that allows us to develop international relations with other states. The Head of the State Nursultan Nazarbayev in his message "Kazakhstan-2050 Strategy: New Political Course of the Established State" "Kazakhstan should be recognized as a highly educated country using three languages all over the world. These are the Kazakh language is the state language, the Russian language is the language of interethnic communication, and the English language is the language of successful integration into the global economy", - as the President in his message said. English is the first universal language. The English language, which has an international character, has a huge role in understanding the socio-economic, state-dominated nations and nationalities in the history of our country. English is the world's most widely spoken language but is unusual in the fact that the vast majority of speakers are not 'native'. Of the approximately 1.5 billion people who speak English, less than 400 million use it as a first language. That means over 1 billion speak it as a secondary language. English is a global language in modern times, its role in Kazakhstan is important in the future. In this regard, the English language is popular in all areas of public life of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

University students should learn phrasal verbs because phrasal verbs are an important part in developing students' communicative skills through idiom and an easy way in which students can express their feelings. Phrase verb development improves and extends students' vocabulary, and linguistic peculiarities of the lexical units are thoroughly analyzed (Hughes, 1997).

It is hoped that the overall findings of the present study will be useful to everyone involved in the teaching and learning of the English language in Kazakhstan, and increase the awareness among students, teachers, curriculum designers and reference materials providers of the general neglect of vocabulary teaching, and the teaching of PVs in particular, which are an important language form for learners to gain fluency in English, the target language. Language teachers and learners in particular will be made more aware of the importance of this language feature for a more effective and efficient communication. Teachers may encourage learners to use this language form more frequently and perhaps can adopt better pedagogical approaches so that learners will experience more meaningful and successful learning of PVs. In addition, it is hoped that teachers will become much more aware of the usefulness of corpora as a tool in language teaching, particularly to understand the problems faced by learners in the use of any language element including PVs.

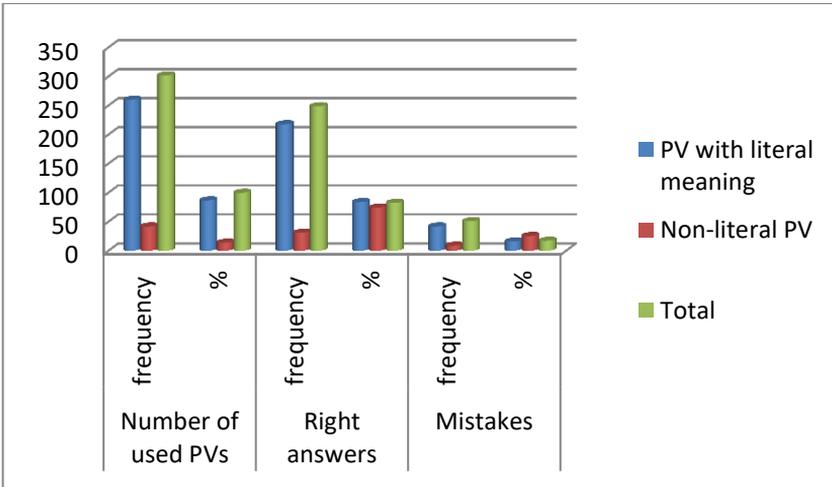
### **Results and Discussion**

Globalization of the world economy is shaping the communicative competence of those who wish to improve the quality of teaching foreign language and learn English (Kalugin 2014). Therefore, teaching a foreign language for a specific purpose is a necessary and important issue. However, the professional, communicative competence of students by mastering foreign languages requires knowledge of lexical units and official rules on speech, as well as knowledge of idiomatic units. Idioms can not be translated directly. Expressions of Idioms are well-known in the English language, especially in combination with other words and its semantic structure. During the English language learning, students have difficulty learning lexical units in a foreign language and are characterized by certain semantic and structural properties. These semantic units are daily phrasing and phrases that are generated by many errors as a result of interpersonal interference. Phrase verbs are called the "richest fund" of new words in English (Bolinger, 1971). English students are the first language students often use phrases that use new forms of verbs. "One of the 150 words spoken by pupils on the average is a phrase of verb". With regard to the frequency, English-speaking individuals are skilled at creating new phrasal verbs, so some phrasal verbs are being renewed. For example: students now use *hang out* instead of *socialize*. Now instead of *relax*, *chill out* is used (Claridge, 2000). However, phrasal verbs are not universal. Phrase verb is available in languages such as Dutch, German and Swedish, and does not exist in languages such as Hebrew and Chinese. Even though there are PVs in the language of the L1 student, it is unclear whether there is a systemic coherence between the PV in L1 and L2, depending on their idiopathic nature. Therefore, translation of phrases was limited. According to one researcher, "... Phrase verb is a syntax highlight in the linguistic world ...".

During the collection and analysis of data 60 students participated in the study. The purpose of the experiment was to learn the basics of rapid phrasal verbs and find out the reasons for the difficulties in learning the phrasal verbs. Based on the results of the students' research, a dialogue was organized and a questionnaire was organized and analyzed. Different themes were given during the process of creation (Herra, 2013).

**Table 1: Phrasal verbs used in dialogues**

Types of phrasal verbs	Number of used PVs		Right answers		Mistakes	
	frequency	%	frequency	%	frequency	%
PV with literal meaning	260	86.86	218	83.84	42	16.09
Non-literal PV	42	14.14	31	74.42	9	25.58
Total	302	100	249	82.57	51	17.43

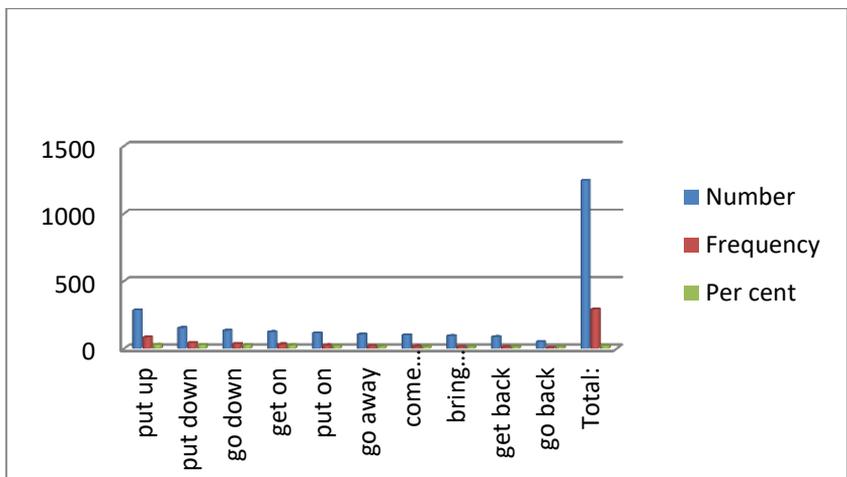


**Table 1: Phrasal verbs used in dialogues**

The table provides for the types of phrasal verbs used by students during dialogues. There were 60 conversations with 60 students in 20 questions, with a total of 302 phrasal verbs (ie 4 or 5 phrasal verbs in one interview), 260 of which were accurate (86.86%) and 42 (16.16%) idiomatic. It is interesting that the largest number of PVs are non-idiomatic semantic verbs (86.09%), correct (83.84%), incorrect (16.09%). On the contrary, the percentage of using idiomatic phrasal verbs is low (14.14%), proving that they are not used in some surveys. The data collected in this study have shown that students use phrasal verbs in their stories and most of them are correct (74.42%). However, students used non-idiomatic phrasal verbs (85.09%) 6 times more than idiomatic phrasal verbs (14.14%). According to the data collected in this study, students have used phrasal verbs in the dialogues and most of them (83.84%) correctly. The following experiments were performed by statistical analysis. In order to determine the level of development of students' exact phrase and idiomatic phrasal verbs, the test was conducted in 40 questions and the statistics of erroneous phrasal verbs were identified. (Annex 2) According to the results of the analysis, respondents answered 30% wrongly. Therefore, this analysis shows that it is difficult to learn phrasal verbs. The results are shown in Table 3 below.

**Table 2: Frequency of incorrect responses for literal PVs**

PV	Number	Frequency	Per cent
put up	284	84	29.6
put down	153	43	28.1
go down	133	36	27.1
get on	123	32	26.01
put on	114	24	21.1
go away	105	20	19
come back	100	17	17
bring back	94	15	16
get back	87	13	15
go back	50	7	14
Total:	1243	290	23%



**Table 2: Frequency of incorrect responses for literal PVs**

In the table above, about 23% of *put up* was used incorrectly; meaning of *put up*, *put down*, *go down* that the students were the most misplaced. And rarely made mistakes with *come back*, *bring back*, *get back*, *go back*.

In Task 8, students are often mistaken, more than 30% of students have given incorrect answers, and the following study was conducted to determine the problem of students' responsiveness. The phrase *put up* is given in the following order:

A: "Our school will organize a Health and Safety Campaign next week".

B: "I know, students will help to \_\_\_\_\_ posters all over the school".

A. give up B. throw away C. put up D. put on

Inappropriate use of the phrasal verb *put on*, instead of the *put up* phrase, in the context indicates that the students do not understand the difference between two phrasal verbs. Students associate this verb with some things, ie balloons and bunting. And English native speakers know that it can be used in combination with other words, such as signs and posters (Macmillan Phrasal Verbs Plus, 2005).

*We sweep the floor, put up balloons and clean our house.*

Students *put up* a poster. The manager *put up* a small sign: Closed

The use of the phrasal verb *put up* instead of the phrasal verb *put on* is another possible use of the erroneous errors - they can perceive posters and signs as typically a sticky texture on the ground, such as walls or trees. At the time, when students use *put on* and *put up*, these phrasal verbs should be regarded as "unity" rather than a combination of meaning.

The following analysis focuses on the erroneous use of idiomatic phrasal verbs that are hard to learn. The result is given in the following table.

**Table 3: Frequency of wrong answers for non-literal PVs**

<b>PVs</b>	<b>Frequency of PVs in the test</b>	<b>Mistakes</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
come across	137	74	54.01
bring up	132	67	50.75
give up	118	59	50.1
run into	109	52	47.7
come out	101	48	47.5
come up	87	42	48.3
go out	71	33	46.3
look into	63	28	45.2
call off	51	24	47.1
take on	46	22	47.8
cut down	43	20	46.5
take off	43	19	44.2
take up	42	18	42.9
set up	39	17	43.6
look back	36	15	41.7
put out	35	14	40
found out	32	12	37.5
make up	31	11	35.5
point out	28	10	35.7
look down	27	8	29.6
get off	25	7	28
stand for	23	6	26.1
break down	20	5	25
pick up	15	3	20
Total:	1353	614	45%

**Table 3: Frequency of wrong answers for non-literal PVs**

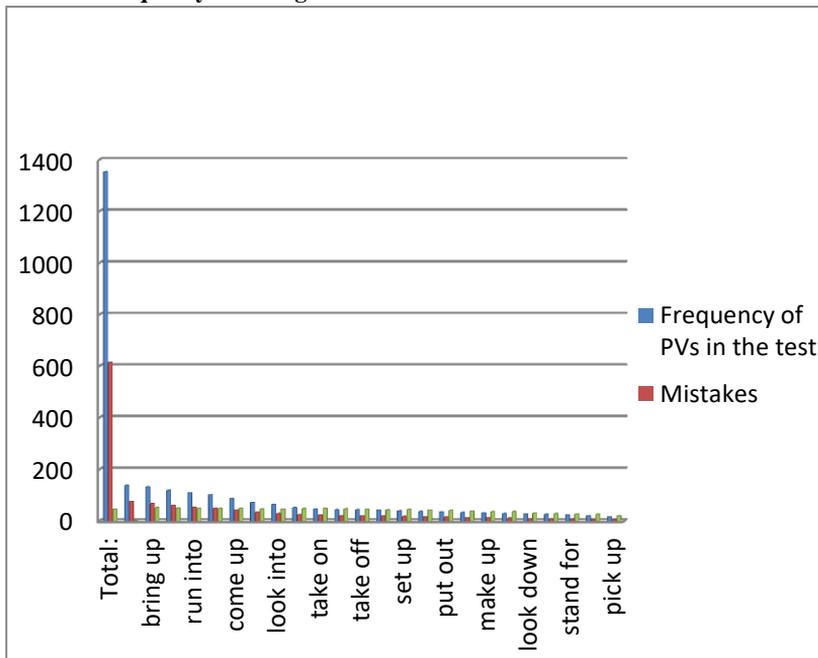
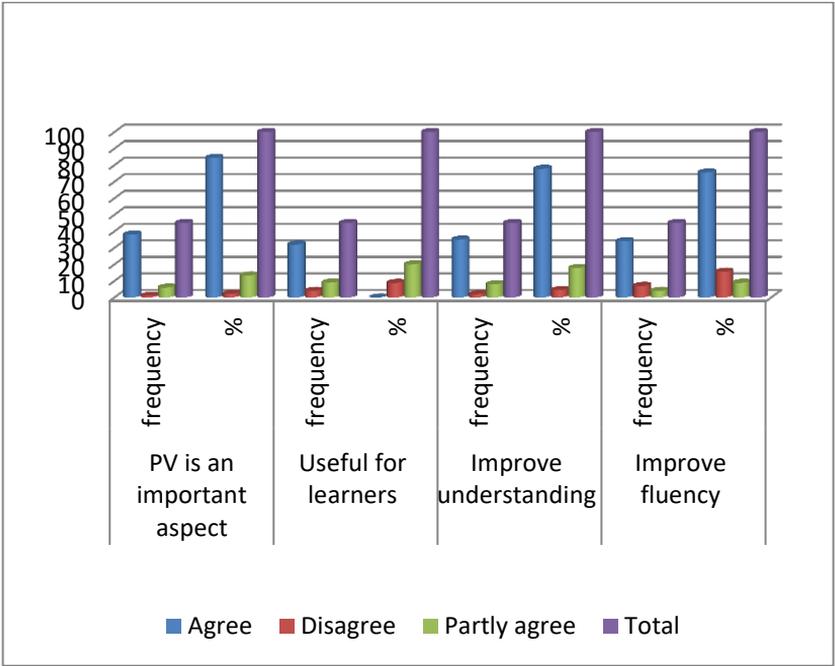


Table 3 shows that the number of incorrect idiomatic semantic verbs is greater than 45% of the literal phrasal verbs. The following idiomatic phrasal verbs were used incorrectly: come across, bring up, give up, run, come out, come up. Ultimately, these data show that idiomatic phrasal verbs for students are harder to remember than literal phrasal verbs. We have 4 questionnaires conducted by teachers. English language teachers were the respondents.

**Table 4: Reasons for teaching PV**

	PV is an important aspect		Useful for learners		Improve understanding		Improve fluency	
	frequency	%	Frequency	%	frequency	%	frequency	%
Agree	38	84.4	32	71.11	35	77.77	34	75.55
Disagree	1	2.2	4	8.8	2	4.44	7	15.55
Partly agree	6	13.3	9	20	8	17.77	4	8.88
Total	45	100	45	100	45	100	45	100



**Table 4: Reasons for teaching PV**

Table 4 states that 84% of respondents agree that English is an important aspect. According to the statistics, the answers *agree* that the high percentage of responses shows that phrasal verbs is an important aspect of language and it should be in the mandatory training system of phrasal verbs.

Finally, as far as research into PVs is concerned, there is not much attention given to this language form in Kazakhstan. In fact, no study has been conducted locally that specifically focused on the typical patterns and use of PVs in order to understand the problems faced by learners, and the possible factors in the non standard use of this language form. While the survey helps to give general information in relation to learners' understanding of some very common PVs.

**Conclusion**

In summary, phrasal verbs are an integral part of the English vocabulary. The use of such verbs is usually directed to the spoken language. Phrasal verbs in English are more than 12,000; In order to be able to speak freely in the spoken language, it is necessary to know several hundred and written words - about one thousand. The use of phrasal verbs rarely uses standard sentences to help you make your language "live" and "rich". Obviously, the popularity of phrasal verbs is related to their ease of use. For example, the phrase "to put up" means a lot of meaning: raising, building, laying (show), displaying, displaying, praying, selling, (pricing), (money) construction, packing, organizing, etc. Thus, by means of the minimal use of the original elements, many expressions can be expressed.

The analysis of the frequency of use of phrasal verbs in the English language distinguished a number of the most common phrasal verb. The most frequently used phrasal verb is the verb *pick up*. When translating the verb *take*, it should be used in its broadest sense: from literal translation - *take / pick up anything* to selecting means

of public transport. There are other meanings - *get, meet, catch, etc.* Another popular phrasal verb is 'go on' - the frequency of use of this verb is very high. It is translated in the form of order, advice - *keep going*; continuation of action; - *get out (of)* - often used with a preposition - *leave* etc. It can sound as order or advice. While expressing these meaning, the verb represents a fusion, but the so-called buzzwords (e.g. "the hell") are inserted in between; - *go back - return to anything, anywhere, to anyone*; - *come on* - is used to say: *Come on! Hurry!* etc. It also refers to *move, pass / pass, start, etc.*

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