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All correspondence to be addressed in the name of the
Editor-in-Chief

College of Arts – University of Mosul – Republic of Iraq

E-mail: adabarafidayn@gmail.com

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Testing the Ability of Iraqi University Learners of English in Recognizing "Put" as a Multi Word Verb

Lect. Oday Talal Najeeb*

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1. Multi-Word Verbs

Multi-word verbs are verbs that consist of two, or sometimes three, words. The first word is a verb and it is followed by an adverb or a preposition or both. These adverbs or prepositions are sometimes called "particles" (Hornby, 2010:R40).

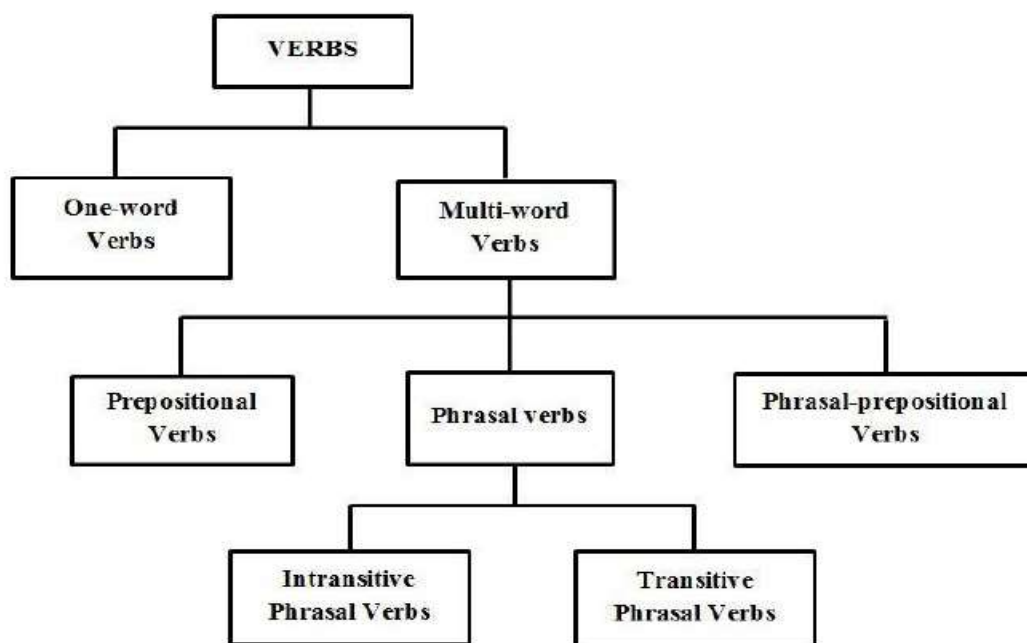
Quirk et al (1985: 1150) state that the main category of multi word verbs consists of such combinations as drink up, dispose of, and get away with, under the headings of phrasal verb, prepositional verb, and phrasal prepositional verb.

- 1. He drank up his milk. (phrasal verb)**
- 2. We disposed of the problem. (prepositional verb)**
- 3. The accused got away with everything. (phrasal prepositional verb)**

These combinations are considered as multi-word verbs only where they behave as a single unit.

* Dept. of English/ College of Arts/ University of Mosul.

Figure"1" Classification of Verbs



The most obvious difference between the prepositions and the spatial adverbs is that where prepositions require a following noun phrase as a prepositional complement, there is no such requirement for adverbs (Quirk et al, 1985:1151).

The middle particles are only ones which are acceptable in both constructions. Phrasal verbs are multi-word units consisting of a verb followed by an adverbial particle, carry out, find out, or pick up. These adverbial particles all have core spatial or locative meanings. (out, in, up, down, on, off); however, they are commonly used with extended meanings. In contrast, prepositional verbs consist of a verb followed by a preposition, such as look out, talk about, listen to. Phrasal prepositional verbs contain both an adverbial particle and a preposition, as in get away with (Biber et al, 2000: 403).

4. He carried out the plan.

5. I found out what was troubling her.

6. He was looking at her face all the time.

Phrasal verbs are multi-word units consisting of a verb followed by an adverbial particle (e.g. carry out, find out, or pick up). These adverbial particles have all core spatial or locative meanings (e.g. out, in, up, down, on, off). However, they are commonly used with extended meanings. In contrast, prepositional verbs consist of a verb followed by a preposition, such as look at, talk about, and listen to. Phrasal prepositional verbs contain both an adverbial particle and a preposition, like "get away with" phrasal verbs and prepositional verbs usually represent single semantic units that cannot be inferred from the individual meanings of the two parts. As such, they are often simple lexical verbs that have their meanings similar to multi –word verbs units (ibid, 2000:403):

- carry out – perform or undertake

- find out – discover

1.1. Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs are realizations of verbs in which the meaning of the combination manifestly cannot be predicted from the meaning of the verb and particle in isolation (Quirk et al, 1985: 1152).

7. The soldiers refused to give in.

8. She couldn't catch him on.

9. It was few moments and the situation blow up.

10. He could not put up with smoking.

Many phrasal verbs have idiomatic meanings that need to be learned. The separate meanings "put, up and with" do not add up to the meaning of "put up with" (=tolerate). However, the meaning of some phrasal verbs, such as sit down, is easy to guess because the verb and the particle keep their usual meaning.

The meaning of a phrasal verb can sometimes be explained with one-word. However, phrasal verbs are frequently used in spoken English and, if there is a one-word equivalent, it is usually more formal in style.

11. I wish my ears didn't stick out so much.

12. The garage projects five meters beyond the front of the house.

Both "stick out" and "project" have the same meaning to extend beyond a surface, but they are very different in style. "Stick out" is used in informal contexts, and Project in formal or technical contexts.

Biber et al (2000: 407) say that there are two major subcategories of phrasal verbs: intransitive and transitive. Intransitive phrasal verbs include break down, come on, shut up. Transitive phrasal verbs include bring up, carry out, find out take out, turn on, eat.

- Intransitive Phrasal Verbs:

13. Come on, tell me about Nick.

14. Oh shut up ! you're so boring.

15. Hold on ! What are you doing there.

- Transitive Phrasal Verbs:

16. Did you point out the faults on it then.

17. I ventured to bring up the project of the future.

Leech and Svartvik (1994: 336-338) show that verbs may form combinations with adverbial particle, these combinations are called phrasal verbs and they are usually informal. In some cases, phrasal verbs with objects look identical to verbs followed by a prepositional phrase. compare

18. They ran Over the bridge (crossed the bridge by running)

[verb+ preposition]

19. They ran over the cat (knocked down and passed over`)

[phrasal verb]

1.2 Prepositional Verbs

Prepositional verbs are phrasal verbs that contain a preposition, which is always followed by its nominal object. They are different from inseparable transitive particle verbs, because the object still follows the preposition if it is a pronoun. (Internet Explorer "2")

20. On Friday, we look after our grandchildren.

21. We look after them (not * look them after)

The verb can have its object, which usually precedes the preposition.

22. She helped the boy to an extra portion of potatoes.

- With pronouns:

23. She helped him to some.

Prepositional verbs with two prepositions are possible.

24. We talked to the minister about the crisis.

Quirk et al (1985: 1155) say that a prepositional verb consists of a lexical verb followed by a preposition with which it is semantically and/or syntactically associated. The preposition, as to be expected, precedes its complement.

25. Look at these pictures.

26. I don't care for James's parties.

Biber et al (2000: 414) state that prepositional verbs have two competing structural analyses. On the one hand, they can be treated as simple lexical verbs followed by a prepositional phrase functioning as an adverbial. This analysis is supported by the fact that it is usually possible to insert another adverbial between the verb and the prepositional phrase. (Internet Explorer "1")

27. She looked exactly like [Kathleen leaver].

28. I never thought much about [it].

1.3. Phrasal-Prepositional Verbs

Biber et al (2000: 423) show that the third major type of multi-word verbs has characteristics of both phrasal and prepositional verbs consist of a lexical verb combined with an adverbial particle plus a preposition. As with prepositional verbs, the complement of the preposition in these constructions functions as the direct object of the phrasal-prepositional verb. There are two major structural patterns for phrasal prepositional verbs. The first pattern contains: NP + Verb + Particle + Preposition + NP

29. Oh I shall look forward to [this] now.

30. Perhaps I can get out of [it] without having to tell her anything.

While the second pattern which is stated by Biber et al (2000: 423) contains NP + Verb + NP + Particle + Preposition + NP

31. I could hand him over to (John).

Quirk et al (1985: 1160) say that there is a further major category of multi-word verbs which is called " Phrasal-Prepositional Verbs) because they contain, in addition to the lexical, both an adverb and a preposition as particles. These combinations are largely restricted to informal English.

32. We are looking forward to your party on Sunday.

33. He had to put up with a lot of teasing at school.

The prepositional passive with such verbs is not too common, and is liable to sound cumber some, however, are normal and acceptable.

34. These tantrums could not be put up with any longer.

"tolerated"

35. The death penalty has been recently done away with.

"abolished"

36. Such problems must be squarely faced up to.

"confronted"

(Quirk et al, 1985: 1160)

1.4. Other Multi-Word Verb Constructions

Biber et al (2000: 427) explain that in addition to phrasal and prepositional verbs, there are three major types of idiomatic multi-word verb constructions. The first one includes verb + prepositional phrase combinations which have idiomatic status. These include combinations like bear in mind, come as a surprise, fall in love. Such combinations function semantically as a coherent unit that can often be replaced by a single lexical verb.

37. I have to bear in my mind the interest on my wife and family.

38. The triumph came as a surprise to many.

The second type they discuss is verb + verb combinations which involve verbs such as; make (do) and let NP go / be:

39. You have to make do, don't you.

40. Patient had to make do with ham salad.

41. He was "very reluctant" to let him go.

The third type considered in this respect is that a few semantically light verbs –such as take, make, have, and do combine with noun phrases to make a set of verbal expressions.

42. Do you want me to do your hair.

43. Yes, I'll take care of it.

44. It will take him to cut costs in the acquisitions.

45. We don't have a chance.

Quirk et al (1985: 1167) show that other multi-word verb constructions like phrasal verbs, verb-adjective combinations form cohesive units; but unlike phrasal verbs, some of them allow comparative modification.

46. John didn't put { the clothes as straight } as Meg

{ * the cat as out }

2.1 Semantic Domains of Phrasal Verbs

The semantic unity concerning multi-word verbs can often be shown by a substitution with a single-word verb "visit for" summon for "call up", "omit for", "leave out", etc. This criterion, in any case, cannot always be dependable. First we have some multi-word verbs, like "get away with" and "run out of" which cannot be paraphrased by using one word. Secondly, some of non idiomatic combinations, like "go across" (= cross) "go past" (past), and "sail around" (= circumnavigate) which can be paraphrased in such a way mentioned in the first point above.

47. Murder is a serious crime and one rarely gets away with it.

48. The car was run out of the gasoline.

Phrasal verbs can be classified by semantic domains, based on their core meanings, using the same categories as simple lexical verbs. Like single-word lexical verbs many phrasal verbs have multiple meanings. This is especially true of activity verbs, which often have secondary meanings in some other domain. The phrasal verbs "make up", "make out", "sort out", and "take in" call all refer to physical activities (Biber et al, 2000: 408).

49. So he took it in to be looked at.

50. I find myself obliged to make up ground.

Also, these phrasal verbs can be referred to mental activities as in:

51. I used to make up stories for him.

52. She held up her wrist, on it he made out a small dark bruise.

(ibid, 2000: 408)

2.2 Semantic Domains of Prepositional Verbs

It is, above all, the semantics of the prepositional verbs that make it worthwhile treating them as a special class. All the

prepositional verbs that to be considered have two characteristics. First, the verb is a verb of motion and secondly, the preposition has a meaning similar to that of the adverb of the phrasal verbs-motion plus terminus (Palmer, 1974: 230).

53. He walked across the bridge.

54. He ran up the hill.

In these sentences there is the motion-act of walking or running in relation to the bridge or the hill and the terminus position, across the bridge, up the hill.

It is argued that the preposition in such cases is essentially an "ad prep", since it functions both as an adverb and as a preposition. Syntactically it is to be compared with compound prepositions:

55. He walked across the road.

56. He walked across, across the road.

57. He walked over, across the road.

(ibid, 1974: 230)

Prepositional verbs can be classified by semantic domains based on the core meanings, with many common prepositional verbs being polysemous. This is especially the case with activity verbs often used to refer to mental activities; for example, "deal with", "get into", "go through", "look at", "return to", "arrive at", "engage in", "get at", "get through", etc.

58. I've gone through all my pockets but I still can't find my key.

59. The committee failed to arrive at a decision.

60. This book deals with methods of teaching English.

(Biber et al, 2000: 414)

3. "Put" as a Multi-Word Verb

The verb "put" is one of the complicated and vague, besides it has excessive lexical meanings. The verb put is more common in

use in English as a phrasal verb, (see appendix II). Phrasal verbs are usually used informally in everyday speech as opposed to the more Latinate verbs "to put up" rather than "to build", "to put out" rather than "to extinguish" or "to put through" rather than "to complete". Many verbs in English can be combined with an adverb or a preposition, and readers or listeners will easily understand a phrasal verb in a literal phrase. (Internet, explorer "2").

The preposition in a prepositional verb must precede its complement. Hence, we can contrast the prepositional verb call on ("visit") with the phrasal verb call up ("summon"). On the other hand, the prepositional verb allows an inserted adverb after the verb and a relative pronoun after the preposition, (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973: 349).

Some multi-word verbs consist of a verb followed by two particles. As with prepositional verbs, we can analyze these as transitive verbs with the following noun phrase as direct object. They allow pronominal questions and under certain conditions can occur in the passive. A phrasal verb can contain an adverb and a preposition at the same time. The phrasal prepositional verb like put up with (= tolerate), put down to (= attribute), and put in for (= persuade), etc. (Ibid, 1973: 351)

4.The Test

In order to arrive at the level of mastery of the students at the department of English of the three usages of put, a test has been made.

4.1 Procedure of the Test

The test has been directed to students of the fourth year/ department of English/ College of Arts, since they have much

knowledge about the phrasal verbs, Prepositional verbs, and Phrasal-Prepositional verbs, depending on the fact that they have studied them in the previous years. They were a sample of fifteen students. They have been given a form which contains eighteen sentences in which the verb put is used. The form is of three parts, A, B, C, representing the three usages of the verb " Put " i.e. Phrasal, Prepositional, Phrasal-Prepositional one. In each part of the test, the student should choose the lexical meaning that he thinks as the right by ticking one of four choices. Although the test is arranged in three parts yet, the first one which is the phrasal verbs more chosen by the students than prepositional verbs and phrasal prepositional verbs.

4.2 Results of the Test

Table -6- (Results of the Test)

No.	Sentence	C	IC
1	The farmer put up a fence around the farm.	6	9
2	Some shops put up their prices just before Christmas.	9	6
3	He is always putting his wife down.	8	7
4	The police put down the protesters.	8	7
5	I will have to put back my dental appointment till next week	1	14
6	He did not put his ideas across very well at the meeting	6	9
7	Put by for a rainy day.	5	10
8	When the firemen came, the fire had been put out.	7	8
9	The minister put forward a plan to help the homeless.	12	3

No.	Sentence	C	IC
10	We managed to put the deal through.	5	10
11	You have to put your glasses on.	7	8
12	The sudden noise put her off her game.	5	10
13	In your letter, you forgot to put in the time your plane would arrive.	4	11
14	She looks like she has put on weight.	5	10
15	He could not put up with smoking.	1	14
16	She put on a demand for a wage increase	4	11
17	What do you put her success down to?	3	12
18	Do not try to put one over on me.	4	11

Conclusions

In light of the test that has been made to the students of the fourth year, Department of English, College of Arts, in their first semester about phrasal verbs, prepositional verbs, and phrasal - prepositional verbs some discrepancies were there in the results of the test. The main reason is that the topic of "Multi-word verbs in general seems to be far from the usual use of student of language. Furthermore, it could be deduced that students have no former experience in dealing with these combinations I terms of structure and semantics

The weakness from the part of students in answering the questions of phrasal verbs can be put down to the fact that phrasal verbs have not been explained sufficiently in the first years of study, especially when their textbooks do not provide them a conclusive survey of these verbs, therefore students lack ability to deal with these combinations skillfully and readily. This topic is difficult in itself even for some advanced learners than fourth year students and

most students avoid using phrasal verbs when they have no confidence to do so.

As for prepositional verbs, the percentage of correct answers is rather higher than that of incorrect answers. this indicates that this item is not very difficult to the students and it's familiar for them to do it correctly. This might be supported by the fact that grammarians themselves like Quirk et al (1985:1155) state that these combinations are made up of a verb with a preposition which is semantically associated with it

Finally the third part of the test is concerned with phrasal – prepositional verbs the percentage of incorrect answers in the test is lower than that of the correct ones. This outcome might be traced to the fact that the verbs are not familiar to students at all. A phrasal prepositional verb although not widely used in language but students are not supposed to be very far from being able to guess the meaning of the verb, at least to a certain extent. The percentages of the test are gradual among the three parts of the test.

Although the verb in English may be considered as not that complicated to learners of English, Multi-word verbs, as the results generally show, form a problematic area to learn for students. Knowing a language means being able to deal with the structures, combinations of that language whether an easily recognized combinations such as a noun and an adjective or a more complex combinations such as multi-word verbs. The results indicate the lack of students of an obvious procedure, knowledge, feedback to deal or analyze these structures. Multi-word verbs are not so complex to be mastered by learners of English as other structures that they might be mastered by them to a better extent. The collaboration of memorization as well as adopting a way in grouping them might be a good and decisive element in improving students' knowledge of the term.

Appendix I

Identify the exact lexical meaning of the verb in each one of the following sentences by ticking the right choice, you think.

-A-

1. The farmer put up a fence around the farm.

- ☐ took off ☐ built ☐ raised ☐ ruined

2. Some shops put up their prices just before Christmas.

- ☐ reduce ☐ stop ☐ change ☐ increase.

3. He is always putting his wife down.

- ☐ flattering ☐ humiliating ☐ depressing ☐ throwing

4. The police put down the protesters.

- ☐ neglected ☐ stopped ☐ talked to ☐ pushed

5. I will have to put back my dental appointment till next week.

- ☐ procrastinate ☐ change ☐ cancel ☐ forsake

6. He did not put his ideas across very well at the meeting.

- ☐ give ☐ clear ☐ get ☐ catch

7. Put by for a raining day.

- ☐ waste ☐ throw away ☐ save ☐ distribute

8. When the firemen came, the fire had been put out.

- ☐ lit ☐ gone ☐ extinguished ☐ flamed

9. The minister put forward a plan to help the homeless.

- ☐ stop ☐ suggest ☐ deliver ☐ delete

10. We managed to put the deal through.

- ☐ forget ☐ complete ☐ cancel ☐ agree

-B-

11. You have to put your glasses on.

- ☐ break ☐ wear ☐ repair ☐ take off

12. The sudden noise put her off her game.

- ☐ disturbed ☐ confused ☐ forgot ☐ terrified

13. In your letter, you forgot to put in the time your plane would arrive.

☐ scratch ☐ include ☐ repeat ☐ take

14. She looks like she has put on weight.

☐ lost ☐ gained ☐ kept ☐ destroyed

-C-

15. He could not put up with smoking.

☐ give up ☐ sleep ☐ drink ☐ tolerate

16. She put in a demand for a wage increase.

☐ applied for ☐ claimed ☐ abandoned ☐ arouse

17. What do you put her success down to?

☐ think ☐ attribute ☐ make ☐ imagine

18. Do not try to put one over on me.

☐ offer ☐ buy ☐ stare ☐ persuade

Appendix II

-"Put" as a Phrasal Verb

Phrasal Verb	Lexical Meaning	Sentence
1- put up	build	The farmer put up a fence around the farm.
2- put up	raise	She has put her hair up.
3- put down	crush	The military government is determined to put down all opposition.
4- put down	land	The aircraft put down in a field.
5- put back	delay	The meeting has been put back to next week.
6- put back	return	If you use something, put it back.
7- put across	clear	She is not very good at putting her views across.
8- put out	extinguish	Fire men soon put the fire out.
9- put out	produce	The factory puts out 500 new cars a week.
10- put by	save	Put by for a rainy day.
11- put behind	forget	John put behind everything relate to the past.
12- put forward	suggest	The minister put forward a plan to help the homeless.
13- put through	complete	We managed to put the deal through.
14- put aside	forget	They decided to put the differences aside.
15- put away	save	She has a few thousand dollars put away for her retirement.
16- put together	prepare	I think we can put together a very strong case for the defense.
17- put towards	give money	Here is 100 \$ to put towards your ski trip.

(Hornby, 2010: 1182-83)

**Testing the Ability of Iraqi University Learners of English in Recognizing
"Put" as a Multi Word Verb**

Lect. Oday Talal Najeeb

Prepositional Verb	Lexical Meaning	Sentence
1- put on	wear	Hurry up ! put your coat on.
2- put on	fire	I'll put the kettle on for the tea.
3- put on	gain	She looks like she's put on weight.
4- put on	present	The local drama club is putting on " Macbeth "
5- put on	pretend	I think she was not hurt, she just putting it on.
6- put in	install	We're having a new shower put in.
7- put in	interrupt	Could I put in a word?
8- put in	elect	Who will the voters put in this time?
9- put in	perform	All the actors put in great performance.
10- put at	calculate	The damage to the building is put at over 11 million.
11- put off	cancel	It's too late to put them off now.
12- put off	disturb	Don't put me off when I'm trying to concentrate.
13- put off	delay	We've had to put off our wedding until September.
14- put to	cause	I hope we're not putting you to too much trouble.
15- put to	offer	Your proposal will be put to the board of directors.
16- put to	ask	The audience is now invited to put questions to the speaker.
17- put into	use	He's put all his savings into buying that house.
(Hornby, 2010: 1182-1183)		

-"Put" as a Phrasal Prepositional Verb

Prasal Prepositional Verb	Lexical Meaning	Sentence
1- put down as	consider	I'd put them both down as retired teachers
2- put down to	attribute	What do you put her success down to?
3- put down for	write name	You have been put down for the one hundred metres race.
4- put in for	apply for	Are you going to put in for that job?
5- put up to	persuade	Who put you up to writing that letter?
6- put up with	tolerate	I didn't know how she puts up with him.
7- put up for	offer	She is putting up for the election to the committee.
8- put up at	stay	We put up at a motel.
9- put over on	persuade	Don't try to put one over on me !
10- put out from	leave	We put out from Liverpool.
11- put through to	connect	Could you put me through to the manager, please?
12- put out on	serve	Please don't put yourself out on my account.
(Hornby, 2010: 1182-1183)		

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اختبار قدرة الطلبة العراقيين المتعلمين للإنجليزية على تمييز "Put" كفعل متكوّن من أكثر من كلمة

م. عدي طلال نجيب*

المستخلص

يهدف البحث إلى التطرق إلى أحد أكثر الأفعال تعقيدا في اللغة الإنجليزية من حيث القدرة على التشعب. إن للفعل "Put"؛ وبغض النظر عن استخداماته كفعل ذو كلمة واحدة؛ قابلية فذة للعمل بطريقة متنوعة جدا كفعل متكوّن من أكثر من كلمة. يعامل الفعل "Put" جنبا إلى جنب مع أفعال أخرى مثل "get, make, do" كواحد من أكثر الأفعال استخداما في اللغة الإنجليزية بإطار متعدد الكلمات. يتباين استخدام هذا الفعل كمستخدم الكلمات من كونه يكون عبارة إلى فعل يحتوي على حرف جر ومن ثم إلى فعل يكون عبارة ويحتوي على حرف جر في الوقت نفسه. إن الاستخدامات الثلاثة انفه الذكر موجودة في اللغة الإنجليزية إلى حدّ ليس باليسير وهناك قواعد معينة لاستخدامها ويتباين المعنى في كل حالة والذي هو بعيد عن معاني الكلمات المكوّنة له. إن مشكلة المعنى والتي تتمثل في عدم القدرة على استنتاجه من معرفة معنى الجزء الملازم للفعل هي السبب الكامن وراء التعقيد في استخدامات الفعل "Put".

إن الصعوبة المتأصلة في المعنى التي يشكلها الفعل "Put" باستخداماته الثلاثة تلك تتحول إلى مسألة أكثر صعوبة إذا ما طلب من متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية تمييز تلك الاستخدامات. يهدف البحث إلى اكتشاف القدرة الحقيقية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في المستوى الجامعي للوصول إلى المعنى الاصطلاحي الحقيقي لنماذج من الاستخدامات الثلاثة للفعل المقصود بالبحث. يروم البحث إلى تقديم عرض نظري لحالات مستخدمة في اللغة الإنجليزية مع تقديم أمثلة لجميع الأنواع.

* قسم اللغة الإنكليزية/ كلية الآداب/ جامعة الموصل.