

# *Breaking away from the mould?*

A corpus-based study of the development of Aktionsart, transitivity and argument structure in phrasal verbs with *away* in English

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## Abstract in Norwegian

Denne masteroppgaven undersøker hvordan engelske fraseverb med partikkelen *away*, ‘bort’ (som i *break away*) har utviklet seg i britisk engelsk i perioden ca. 1470 til ca. 2000, spesielt med hensyn til aksjonsart, transitivitet og argumentstruktur. Fraseverb er verb som består av et verb og en partikkel. Denne partikkelen er et adverb eller en preposisjon brukt som adverb. Termen partikkel brukes om funksjonsord som ikke nødvendigvis blir brukt i sin opprinnelige funksjon, men som fremstår som en del av en innholdsfrase der den ikke spiller hovedrollen. I et slikt fraseverb kan verbet beholde sin opprinnelige betydning, men den tilføyde partikkelen kan også føre til endret betydning av verbfrasen. Partikkelen kan altså ha stor betydning for innholdet i frasen den er en del av. I tillegg kan partikkelen forsterke eller endre det indre aspektet (aksjonsart) i verbfrasen.

I denne studien av utviklingen av fraseverb med *away*, har jeg brukt to forskjellige korpus. Ett dekker tiden 1474-1699 som sammenfaller omtrent med tidlig moderne engelsk, og det andre inneholder tekster fra 1980- og 1990-tallet. Studien er diakronisk, og selv om en periode på ca. 250 år ikke er dekket av korpusene, viser resultatene fra de forskjellige perioder om noen av variablene har endret seg eller ikke i løpet av tidsperioden som er dekket og i løpet av mellomtiden. Formålet med studien er først og fremst å undersøke om og hvordan aksjonsart, transitivitet og argument struktur har endret seg fra tidlig moderne engelsk til dagens engelsk og om noen av disse endringene sammenfaller og påvirker hverandre. Derfor er likheter og forskjeller mellom de forskjellige periodene vektlagt og ikke nødvendigvis hvordan de har oppstått.

Hovedfunnene i analysen viser at aksjonsart i fraseverb med *away* har holdt seg stabilt resultativ gjennom hele den tidlig engelske perioden og stor sett også i dagens engelsk med unntak av en svak tendens til durativ aksjonsart der partikkelen ikke gir uttrykk for sted. Funnene viser også at flere fraseverb med *away* er intransitive i moderne engelsk og at de opptrer i færre passive setninger. I tillegg er det generelt flere agentargumenter i moderne engelsk, men også flere temaargumenter i intransitive setninger.

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## Abbreviations and conventions

BNC	British National Corpus
EEBO	Early English Books Online
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
KWIC	Keyword in context
OE	Old English (c. 600-1125)
ON	Old Norse (c. 700-1350)
EME	Early Middle English (c.1100-1300)
ME	Middle English (c. 1125-1500)
EModE	Early Modern English (c. 1500-1750)
PDE	Present Day English (c. 1950- )
NP	Noun phrase
O	Object
PV	Phrasal verb
PP	Prepositional phrase
UTAH	Uniformity of Theta Assignment Hypothesis
V	Verb
VP	Verb phrase
vP	Little vP-shell
>	is higher > is lower



# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Aim and scope

The aim of this study is to investigate how phrasal verbs with *away* (PV *away*) have changed from Early Modern English (EModE) until Present Day English (PDE) with respect to aspect, transitivity, and argument structure. Phrasal verbs consist of a verb and an adverbial particle, and the particle is normally a spatial adverb such as *ahead*, *away*, *down*, *out*, *up*, etc. The meaning of a phrasal verb may be identical to the meaning of the verb on its own, but often the particle intensifies, adds aspectual value to, or changes the meaning of the verb to such an extent that it is necessary to know the idiom to understand the meaning. Consider the examples in [1-3]:

[1] ‘...she and the Queen had always happily **nattered away** for hours while out riding...’

*The Daily Mirror*. 1992, [BNC]

[2] Patterson **waved away** my stupid question.

*Angel touch*. Ripley, Mike. 1991 [BNC]

[3] We **broke up** after I met her mother, who walked into the room in which I was sitting...

*Scotsman Leisure material* [BNC]<sup>1</sup>

In [1] the particle *away* has an intensifying function as it strengthens an already durative meaning whereas in [2], *away* adds the aspectual value resultative to the verb. In [3], on the other hand, the addition of the particle *up* changes the meaning of the predicate completely, and the meaning cannot be understood by the individual constituents.

Phrasal verbs have existed in the English language for a long time. There is some disagreement as to the extent phrasal verbs were used in Old English (OE), but influential

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<sup>1</sup> The emphases in all examples are mine unless otherwise stated.

studies acknowledge their existence in OE albeit with a spatial or directional meaning (Brinton 1988:186-187) as shown in [4]:

- [4] On Pæm geara **asprong up** Eƿna fyr (on Sicilium)  
on that year burst forth Etna fire (on Sicily)  
'Etna on Sicily erupted that year.'

*King Alfred's Orosius* (c 890) (gleaned from Hiltunen)

Phrasal verbs occurred alongside the more common prefixed verb forms and the particles and prefixes had much the same functions (Lamont 2005:1) as in [5]:

- [5] Ðo he steah to heuene swo þat his apostles..mit eien bihielden hwu  
though he rose to heaven so that his apostles with eyes beheld how  
he **upwende**.  
he up-went  
'Though he rose to heaven so that his apostles could see with their own eyes how  
he ascended.'

*Trin. Coll. Hom.* 23 (c1200) [OED]

Despite their long history, phrasal verbs and other complex verbs have been frowned upon by linguistic purists who have claimed that the simplex forms are to be preferred as the more complex forms are imprecise, informal and show lack of education or are even a sign of linguistic laziness (Kennedy 1920:33-34 and Brinton, 1996:189). However, attitudes toward complex verb forms have changed, and in the last half century a plethora of dictionaries and grammars in addition to textbooks on phrasal verbs in English for foreign learners have been published (cf. Kovàks 1998:113). Linguists have similarly become more interested in them, and complex verbs have been the subject of both diachronic and synchronic research. Although *away* is a high frequency unit and very productive in forming phrasal verbs, there are, to my knowledge, no studies exclusively concerned with phrasal verbs with *away* and the impact *away* has on aspect, transitivity, or argument structure.

This study is not confined to one theoretical framework, but draws on the works of several linguists with different interests and different approaches. However, the works of linguists such as L.J. Brinton (1988) and E. van Gelderen (2018) have been particularly influential as their diachronic research of aspect, argument structure, and transitivity provides important insight to the development of English verbs from OE to PDE in general and thus has helped hypothesise the development of phrasal verbs with *away*.

The data for this study are collected from Early English Books Online (EEBO) and the British National Corpus (BNC). EEBO consists of a variety of text genres and their concordance with spoken English in the time period is discussed in chapter 3.1. The data extracted from BNC will be restricted to the fiction-prose genres as these are closest to actual occurring language.

## **1.2 Research questions and hypotheses**

This study aims to map how PVs *away* have changed from the 16th and 17th century to the last decades of the 20th century with respect to aspect, transitivity, and argument structure. Both simplex and complex verb forms may change in meaning, aspect, transitivity, and argument structure over time. In addition, the elements that are acceptable in forming compositional verb forms change and this may also apply to what verbs may combine with the particle *away* to form PVs with *away*. Furthermore, some intransitive verbs may be used transitively, and transitive verbs may become even more transitive or indeed intransitive (Quirk et al. 1985:115). As arguments are assigned by the verb, both aspect and transitivity play a part in theta-role assignment. Thus, both transitivisation and detransitivisation affect the argument structure of a verb and lead to argument augmentation or argument reduction. However, this sequence of events can just as well be reversed as argument augmentation or reduction affect the transitivity of a verb (Eitelmann & Haumann 2015). According to van Gelderen (2018:iix) ‘the argument structure of a verb changes in predictable ways’, and this is probably applicable to aspect and transitivity too.

As the focus of this thesis is the development of PVs *away* with respect to aspect, transitivity, and arguments structure in British English from approximately 1500 to 2000, the research questions and hypotheses pertain to these issues, and they are as follows:

### **Research questions:**

1. Does Aktionsart (inner aspect) in clauses with PVs *away* change over time? If it does, how does it change?
2. Does transitivity in clauses with PVs *away* change over time? If it does, how does it change?
3. Does argument structure in clauses with PVs *away* change over time? If it does, how does it change?
4. What kind of verbs combine with *away* to make phrasal verbs? Do verb types change over time? Does *away* impose restrictions on combinations with regards to origin, motion, spatial meaning, and compositionality?
5. Will some of or all these changes follow clear patterns?

### **Hypotheses:**

1. Phrasal verbs became more productive in LateME and EModE at least in part because of the added Aktionsart value. The Aktionsart value of *away* started out as resultative, but with increased productivity *away*, will be more frequent with other Aktionsart values in PDE.
2. Simplex verbs may undergo transitivity changes over time and phrasal verbs will by analogy follow the same pattern.
3. As transitivity changes, the argument structure will also change as transitivity affects number of arguments. It is also possible that theta-roles change.
4. As phrasal verbs are productive and the number of native verbs the particles may combine with are finite, the number of derivatives and loanwords that combine with *away* will increase over time. This also means that newer phrasal verbs will have more syllables. Furthermore, the spatial meaning of the particle will weaken, the ratio of motion verbs will decrease, and the phrasal verb structure will be extended to more verbal bases.
5. As language changes rarely happen arbitrarily, the changes in aspect, transitivity and argument structure will (presumably) form a pattern.

### **1.3 Outline of thesis**

The thesis contains four chapters. In chapter 2 the theoretical background of the study is presented. First, the origin and development of phrasal verbs are described before the

phrasal verb is defined. Next, I explain the difference between aspect and Aktionsart and continue with identifying transitivity and argument structure and demonstrate how they are connected. Chapter 2 also outlines the origins and development of the spatial adverb *away* and explains the ‘time-*away*’ construction. Chapter 3 contains a description of the corpora and the method of data collection. In addition, I explain various challenges in the analysis before presenting the results. The remainder of chapter 3 is dedicated to a discussion of the findings. Chapter 4 is the last chapter where I summarise the findings and relate them to the research questions from chapter 1.

## 2 Theoretical background

In this section I identify phrasal verbs and trace the origin and development of the particle *away*. Furthermore, I give an outline of theories concerning aspect, transitivity, and argument structure. Section 2.1 discusses and delimits the term phrasal verb and in addition traces the historical development of phrasal verbs from OE. Section 2.2 concerns aspect and Aktionsart and describes the two and the difference between them. Section 2.3 explains transitivity and argument structure whereas section 2.4. looks at the origin and development of the adverb particle *away*. Finally, section 2.5 is dedicated to the description of the ‘time-*away*’ construction.

### 2.1 Phrasal verbs

The construction at hand has been termed *separable verbal compound* (Curme 1931 and Kruisinga 1932), *verb-adverb combination* (Wood 1955), *discontinuous verb* (Live 1965), and *verb-particle construction* (Lipka 1972) to name but some (cf. Kovács 1998:118). However, in recent times the most common term is *phrasal verb* as used by Quirk et al. (1985) amongst others. The term phrasal verb is not without problems as it emphasises the importance of the verb and thus reduces the importance of the particle. According to Talmy’s typology (1985 in Cappelle 2007:42), English is a satellite-framed language. This means that information about the ‘action’ that is just as, or more, important than the information conveyed by the verb, can be found outside the verb in a satellite, e.g. a particle. Consider the sentences in [6] and [7]:

[6] She’d be daft to **turn down** this opportunity.

*Maggie Jordan. Blair, Emma. 1990 [BNC]*

[7] Because of Frankie she had graciously **rejected** the opportunity of a lifetime.

*Frankie. Highsmith, Domini. 1990 [BNC]*

Example [6] shows a phrasal verb with a verb and a satellite that gives significant information about the direction or ‘path’ of the verb, thus modifying or altering the meaning of it whereas this information is inherent in the Latinate simplex verb in [7]



which is typical of more verb-framed languages such as e.g. Spanish. Thus, the term phrasal verb does not place sufficient emphasis on the particle.

The term particle is also problematic because it ‘betrays a lack of serious interest in the words it denotes. Particles form the waste-basket category of grammar’ (Cappelle 2007:41). It is a term reserved for units that are small and difficult to classify and thus diminishes the importance of the adverbial part of the phrasal verb which can add or alter meaning, and change the transitivity and argument structure of a verb as shown in [8] and [9]:

[8] He **laughed** uproariously and slapped the driver on the back.

*Bell in the tree. The Glasgow story.* Chisnall, Edward. 1989 [BNC]

[9] When he broke his back he **laughed it off** and told Lotus he was fit for a test drive.

*Esquire.* London: 1992 [BNC]

In [8] the verb *laughed* is intransitive and in [9] the added particle *off* alters the meaning and changes the transitivity status and argument structure of the verb. The fact that the particle is stressed and not the verb, is a further indication of its importance. Hence, particles ‘are powerful elements, both semantically and syntactically’ (Capelle 2007:42). Despite these objections, both phrasal verb and particle are useful in want of better terms, and they are both readily understood by most. Phrasal verb has become the general term (Brinton & Akimoto 1999:3) and it has the advantage that ‘it indicates that the construction is a phrase, not a one-word unit’ (Hiltunen 1983:17). The word class of the postverbal part is a matter of debate so a neutral term like particle is also convenient.

### 2.1.1 Origin and development

Phrasal verbs can be traced back to OE, but there are different views on the extent of their existence at the time, and Kennedy (1920:12) claims that their use was ‘practically nil’ whereas Konishi (1958:117 in Brinton 1988:186) says their use was ‘slight’. Distinguishing phrasal verbs from e.g. preverb compounds in OE is not an easy task as OE does not indicate word division and because stressed preverbal particles are common in OE and non-existent in PDE (Brinton 1988:186). Hiltunen (1983:19) also acknowledges that phrasal verbs in OE ‘ought to be given a considerably wider

interpretation there than in MnE, because of structural differences ... Furthermore, the distinctions between the types of phrasal constructions in OE are not clear-cut'. He also points out that the use of syntactic and semantic tests to identify phrasal verbs is limited in OE. Nevertheless, several linguists, amongst others Hiltunen (1983:98), Denison (1985:39) Brinton (1988:217), Brinton & Akimoto (1999:9), and Los et al. (2012:139), are positive that phrasal verbs were well established in OE although not frequent and with mostly spatial or locative meaning.

While an established structure in OE, phrasal verbs were not very productive, and prefixed verbs were the most common structure. The meaning conveyed and functions performed by the prefixes varied and some could carry different meanings depending on the verb they were attached to as is also the case with particles in PDE. The prefix *be-* is a case in point as shown in example [10] - [12]:

[10] Seo æftre [ea] Ethiopia land and liodgearð **beligeð** uton.

that second [river] Ethiopia land and garden/yard encompasses without

'The second river encircles the whole land of Ethiopia.'

*Genesis A* (1931) 229 (OE) [OED]

[11] He asende þa and **beheafdode** Iohannem.

he sent then and beheaded John

'He ordered then (that her request be granted) and had John beheaded...'

c1000 *West Saxon Gospels: Matt. (Corpus Cambr.)* xiv. 10 [OED]

[12] Ðah an castel beo wel **bemoned** mid monne.

though one castle is:SUBJ well manned with men

'Though a castle is well manned.'

*Lamb. Hom.* 23 (c1175) [OED]

*Be-* originally meant 'about' and this meaning is retained although weakened in many words prefixed by *be-* today. This development had already started in OE, but in [10] the original meaning is very much intact. Furthermore, in OE *be-* often had a privative function meaning 'off' as in [11], whereas *be-* in [12] (although a sense of 'about' is still present) has a more intensifying function (OED *s.v.* *be-*, Hiltunen 1983:48-49, Elenbaas 2007:124 and Los et al. 2012:178-179).

The transition from prefixed verb to phrasal verbs meant the separation of the prefix and its positioning in postverbal position as can be seen with *up(-)* which functions as both a prefix in [13] and particle in [14]:

[13] Sume feollon on stænihte..and hrædlice **upsprungon**.

some fell on stony... and suddenly up-rose

‘Some fell on rocky places, ...and sprang up quickly’

*c1000 West Saxon Gospels: Matt. (Corpus Cambr.) xiii. 5 [OED]*

[14] Hyse (...) **hof** his agen hrægl hondum **up**.

Young-man heaved his own garment with-hands up

‘The young man lifted his garment with his hands.’

*Riddle 54 4 OE [OED]*

However, some prefixes do not have a corresponding particle, as is the case with *be-*, and some particles do not have a corresponding prefix as is the case with *away*. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, *away* as postverbal particle is first attested in c921(OED *s.v. away*) as shown in [15]:

[15] Pa forleton hie þa burg and **foron aweg**

then left they that:ACC castle and went away

‘Then they left the castle and went away.’

*Anglo-Saxon Chron. (c 921) (Earle 106) [OED]*

Most prefixes were already unproductive in OE, thus rendering OE a transition period where prefixes were gradually superseded by phrasal verbs as the dominant structure. Particles found in OE include *adun* ‘down’, *aweg* ‘away’, *forþ* ‘forth’, *up* ‘up’ and *ut* ‘out’ (Fischer et al. 2004:182 and Los et al. 2012:144), and they could appear both before and after the verb (Fischer et al. 2004: 140-141). Still, both Fischer et al. (2004:145) and Los et al. (2012:140) claim that verb particles are ‘virtually restricted to preverbal position’ and ‘very dominantly preverbal’, respectively, albeit that the ‘odd personal pronoun, adverb or particle may occur on the right’ (Fischer et al. 2004:149). Examples of both are given in [16] and [4], here repeated as [17]:

[16] gif hio ne bið hrædlice **aweg adrifen**

if it not is quickly away driven

‘if it is not quickly driven away’

*King Alfred’s West Saxon Version of Gregory’s Pastoral Care* (c 890)

(gleaned from Fischer et al.)

[17] On Pæm geare **asprong up** Eƿna fyr (on Sicilium)

on that year burst forth Etna fire (on Sicily)

‘Etna (on Sicily) erupted that year.’

*King Alfred’s Orosius* (c 890) (gleaned from Hiltunen)

The transition was not completed until the mid-13th century (Hiltunen 1983:92, Denison 1985:47 and Los et al. 2012:140), and the persistence of prefixed verbs in this period is perhaps due to OE having, at least, a combination of OV and VO word order. By contrast, in PDE VO is the only possible word order, a shift which favoured a postverbal position (Denison 1985:48, Brinton & Akimoto 1999:23 and Los et al. 2012:140). Hiltunen (1983:94-101), Denison (1985:47-54) and Brinton (1988:189), amongst others, list several possible reasons for the decline in prefixal marking which started before the OE period, suggesting that it was caused by several concurrent phenomena, some of which I shall describe.

One reason was that most prefixes had already undergone semantic and functional weakening in OE, as is the case with the prefixes *a-* (‘out’) and *ge-* (denoting completion), and this is most evident when a verb has both a prefix and a particle that reinforces it as shown in [16] and [17] above (Los et al. 2012:146). The prefixes were unstressed, and this, combined with loss of content and phonetic reduction, was at least partially responsible for their weakening (Hiltunen 1983:97, Denison 1985:46-47 and Brinton 1988:190). This breakdown of the prefixal system necessitated another way of expressing spatial and aspectual meanings, and OE saw a general increase in the use of adverbs that could carry stress, a stress pattern conducive to phrasal verbs (Denison 1985:48 and Los et al. 2012:146).

Another probable reason for the decline of the OE prefix system is the aforementioned shift in word order from OV to VO. The particle was moved to postverbal position, and this structure became predominant at the same time as VO word order in EME (Hiltunen 1983:101, Fischer et al. 2004:161 and Los et al. 2012:153). What

propelled this shift is a matter of debate. Fischer et al. (2004:151-161) suggest that OE has an underlying VO structure and that the surface VO structure was a morphologically driven change which was boosted by other linguistic factors such as more relative clauses and adverbs in postverbal position. The syntactic change resulted in a ‘sharp shift in the position of particles’ (Elenbaas 2007:211) and Hiltunen (1983:92) notes that ‘one cannot avoid the impression of the prefixes having been swept away almost overnight. The suddenness of the change is remarkable in view of the longish and stable OE period’. Old Norse (ON) already had VO word order and lost their Germanic prefixes early (Denison 1985:53). Phrasal verbs were also more widespread in ON than in OE, and most linguists acknowledge Scandinavian influence as a contributor, but are unsure as to what degree (Emonds & Faarlund 2014:62-72, Lamont 2005:2, and Fischer 1992:386).<sup>2</sup> The two languages have probably developed similarly with respect to the same functional pressures (Denison (1985:53) and most authors seem to agree with Hiltunen (1983:43) that ‘[a]t most, Scandinavian phrasal constructions acted as catalysts, stimulating the development of the postverbal type, and thereby contributed to the loss of prefixes in English.’

Other reasons for the shift from prefixed verbs to phrasal verbs could be French and Latin influence that gave ME loanwords and affixes that competed with the OE prefixes (Los et al. 2012: 176). Also a shift in stress patterns favouring the postverbal adverbs with lexical weight may have played a role. Fischer et al. (2004:18) stress that grammar change very often can be seen ‘on the surface as a cluster of changes’, thus changes should not be considered in isolation.

It is possible that the particles in OE phrasal verbs exhibit some extended meaning beyond the spatial/directional and locative (Hiltunen 1983:147-149, Denison 1985:43 and Brinton 1988:218). Elenbaas (2007:216) claims that ‘the particle has a completely transparent meaning’ in most cases and in his search for completive *up* Denison (1985:45) finds ‘no clear OE examples ..., unless mixed in with a spatial meaning or well-attested

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<sup>2</sup> Emonds & Faarlund (2014:62-72) see both the shift in word order and the decline of prefixes and influx of phrasal verbs in this period as an indication of ME being Anglicised Norse and not a modified version of English, a controversial view that is outright rejected by, eg. Bech & Walkden 2016. [https://bibsys-almaprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=TN\\_cdi\\_webofscience\\_primary\\_000374241300003&context=PC&vid=UBB&lang=no\\_NO&search\\_scope=default\\_scope&adaptor=primo\\_central\\_multiple\\_fe&tab=default\\_tab&query=any,contains,walkden%20bech&mode=Basic](https://bibsys-almaprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=TN_cdi_webofscience_primary_000374241300003&context=PC&vid=UBB&lang=no_NO&search_scope=default_scope&adaptor=primo_central_multiple_fe&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,walkden%20bech&mode=Basic).

metaphorical development of a spatial meaning’. Nevertheless, both Hiltunen (1983:148-149) and Brinton (1988:218-225) see the beginnings of both aspectual and metaphoric use in OE phrasal verbs. According to Brinton this is particularly true of the group of verb particles that have no corresponding prefix such as *up*, *ūt*, *onweg/aweg*, and *ofdūne/adūne*. She gives the following example of figurative use of *onweg* shown in [18]:

- [18] *Pa sona æfter Pon gewat onweg seo costing*  
 then soon after that went away that temptation  
 ‘Then soon after that the temptation disappeared’  
 GDPref and 3[c] 30.236.14 (gleaned from Brinton)

Brinton also stresses that some spatial meaning normally is retained in the particles, but concludes that ‘both the semantics and the syntax of the phrasal verb appear to be quite well-developed even in Old English, especially with the particles *of*, *ford*, *ofdūne*, *onweg*, *up* and *ūt* (Brinton 1988:225).

In ME there is both an increase in the sheer number of phrasal verbs (Hiltunen 1983:125) and clearer examples of both aspectual and metaphoric use as can be seen in [19] and [20]:

- [19] *& dide him gyuen up ðat abbotrice of Burh*  
 and did him give up that abbacy of Burh  
 ‘and made him give up the abbacy of Peterborough’  
*Peterborough Chronicle* (c1155) (gleaned from Denison)
- [20] *Pis thoghte sulde [...] occupy þe in meditacyon vntil it passe away*  
 this thought should occupy you in meditation until it passes away  
 ‘this thought should occupy you in meditation until it passes away’  
*Rolle Psalter 42.14* (gleaned from Hiltunen)

In [19] ‘there is no plausible spatial meaning to be attributed to *up*, and in a manuscript of known provenance’ (Denison 1985:46) and in [20], although not completely developed, the ‘connotation “pass out of existence”, “die” is very close’ (Hiltunen 1983:196). Although some spatial meaning could be said to remain, it may be argued that

both examples are resultative and metaphorical.<sup>3</sup> Denison (1985:47) sees the disuse of prefixes as Aktionsart marking of the verb as the main reason for the emergence of completive *up*. Fischer (1992:386) states that ‘[t]he most notable new development in Middle English, involving prepositions, is the emergence of phrasal verbs like *to give up*, in which the particle may be a preposition or an adverb. They almost completely replace the Old English prefixed verbs’ and in this period the particle also becomes fixed in post-verbal position. Phrasal verbs were productive in ME, but their development was probably slowed down for a while because of semantic competition from French loan verbs which were more prestigious (Lamont 2005:2, Fischer 1992:398, Brinton 1988:187 and Kennedy 1920:13). However, phrasal verbs were highly productive by the fifteenth century (Lamont 2005: 2 and Fischer 1992:398), showing ‘real strength, although it is evidently part of the language of the common man, even as it has been ever since’ (Kennedy 1920:13). In ME new verb-particle combinations appeared and the telic function of the particles became more prominent. Also, the position of the pronominal object before the particle was established in this period (Fischer et al. 2004:203-204). Furthermore, phrasal verbs were more often used figuratively with the occasional occurrences of idiomatic use (Brinton 1988:225-226). Thus, new phrasal verbs continued to be coined in ME and, in addition, metaphoric and aspectual use of phrasal verbs increased. From EModE to PDE the use of phrasal verbs reached new levels both with regards to frequency and productivity (Lamont 2005:2), probably propelled by ‘the firm basis these segmentalized constructions have in English usage and, more importantly, the naturalness of their development. Both are characteristic of the increasingly analytic character of English’ (Brinton 1996:193). In PDE there is consequently an abundance of phrasal verbs ranging from fully compositional and transparent to fully idiomatic and moreover expressing aspect or enforcing meaning.

### **2.1.2 Delimitation of the phrasal verb**

Phrasal verbs have the same properties as simplex verbs semantically and may express actions, states, and processes. Furthermore, they may be either transitive or intransitive

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<sup>3</sup> *Gave up the abbacy* and *passe away* both indicate an end point, i.e. resultative, and they are also metaphorical as one cannot physically hold up an abbey with the intention of giving it away, nor can a thought physically disappear.

as well as assigning semantic (theta) roles. Phrasal verbs are also similar to prepositional verbs in many ways. They both consist of a verb and an additional unit, i.e. an adverb or a preposition (sometimes two in the case of prepositional verbs), they are common, there is often a shift of meaning that cannot be deduced from the individual parts, and they can most often be substituted by a simplex verb form (Payne 2011:152-154). The most prominent distinction between prepositional verbs and phrasal verbs is the possibility of separating the verb and the particle when phrasal verbs are used transitively. Consider the examples of a prepositional verb in [21a] and a phrasal verb in [22a]:

[21a] ...with little prospect of natural children, we **applied for** adoption all the sooner.

[21b] \*...with little prospect of natural children, we **applied** adoption **for** all the sooner.

*Wheelbarrow across the Sahara.* Howard, 1990 [BNC]

[22a] My job is to **back up** the man with the ball...

[22b] My job is to **back** the man with the ball **up**...

*Daily Mirror* 1985-1994 [BNC]

In prepositional verbs, the preposition must be adjacent to the verb (cf. [21a] vs. 21b). In phrasal verbs, however, the adverb particle *up* can be placed after the direct object as in [22b]. [22b] is not only completely acceptable both syntactically and semantically, it is also synonymous with [22a].

The particles that are used to form complex verbs are mainly spatial adverbs, e.g. *aback, ahead, away, back, home, on top, out*, etc. and prepositions, e.g. *against, at, beside, for, from, into, like, of, upon*, etc. or particles that fall into both categories, such as *about, above, across, after, along, around, by, down, in, off, on, over, up*, etc. (Quirk et al. 1985:1151). As already mentioned, it can be difficult to determine which word class a particle belongs to, and Hiltunen (1983:22) notes that ‘the boundary between prep. and adv. functions is not so much a matter of either-or as one of degree.’ Quirk et al. (1985:1151) concord with Palmer (1974:221) that ‘the difference between prepositions and adverbs (and so between prepositional and phrasal verbs) can be formally established by the fact that the preposition will always precede the noun phrase whereas the adverb may follow it.’ The main criteria for identifying phrasal verbs are thus that they consist of a verb and a particle which is an adverb, or a preposition used as an adverb, and that



the particle is separable so it may be placed both before and after the direct object when the phrasal verb is used transitively as shown in [23] and [24]:

[23] ...a mixture of tiredness and terror that Jackie might **give away** their secrets made her callous.

*A twist of fate.* Scobie, Pamela. 1990 [BNC]

[24] General Peter can be trusted not to **give much away**.

*The Daily Mirror.* 1992 [BNC]

When the direct object is a pronoun, on the other hand, it *must* precede the particle (Quirk et al. 1985: 1153) as shown in [25]:

[25] Too busy to **back him up**, I was.

*Just another angel.* Ripley, Mike.1989 [BNC]

The situation is not all that clear, however. Phrasal verbs may also be intransitive, in which case the criterion of separability is inapplicable. In addition, there are many phrasal verbs where the meaning is not necessarily different from the meaning of the verb on its own, but where the particle adds e.g. aspectual/Aktionsart value or acts as an intensifier. In her study of transitive phrasal verbs with the particle *out* in PDE, Garcia-Vega (2011:77) found that in 92 of 200 entries the particle could be omitted without changing the meaning of the verb. However, this means that in more than half of the instances, the meaning does change if the particle is omitted. In fully idiomatic phrasal verbs, the meaning changes or the sentence becomes unacceptable if the particle is left out. Phrasal verbs thus move along a continuum from fully compositional to fully idiomatic and idioms must be listed in the lexicon (Jackendoff 1997:540) whereas transparent, compositional phrasal verbs or ‘free combinations ... are non-idiomatic constructions where the individual meanings of the components are apparent from their constancy in possible substitutions’ (Quirk et al. 1985:1152). Garcia-Vega (2011:76) suggests that an optional particle in a phrasal verb (*out* in her case) implies ‘some type of aspectual or intensifying interpretation to the simple verb and [the phrasal verbs] are thereby viewed as compositional’.

In this study the criteria for identifying phrasal verbs are based on the criteria proposed by Quirk et al. (1985:1166-1167) and Lamont (2005:4-5):

- A) Particle movement: the particle of a phrasal verb can stand either before or after the noun phrase following the verb, but that of the prepositional verb must precede the noun phrase. When the noun phrase following the verb is a personal pronoun, the pronoun precedes the particle in the case of a phrasal verb but follows the particle in the case of a prepositional verb.
- B) Adverb intervention: an adverb (functioning as adjunct) can often be inserted between verb and particle in prepositional verbs, but not in phrasal verbs, an exception being manner adverbs which can intervene between verb and particle.
- C) Spoken stress: the particle of a phrasal verb is normally stressed whereas prepositions are unstressed. The stress signals significance as the particle intensifies or adds aktionsart value or changes the meaning of the verb.
- D) Translation/synonymy: phrasal verbs can be translated with a simplex (often Latinate) verb.
- E) Passivisation: transitive phrasal verbs can be rendered in the passive, whereas inversion of subject and object complement in a prepositional phrase most often seems illogical or odd.

Although useful, these criteria have their limitations. A) is inapplicable when the construction is intransitive. B) also has its limitations as there are instances of adverbs such as *right*, *straight* before the particle (Quirk et al 1985:1153) and, as mentioned, also manner adverbs may appear in this position (Jackendoff 1997:536). In EModE there are also other units that may intervene, e.g. PPs. C) is normally reliable in spoken language even though there are instances of stressed prepositions in emphatic speech. These are not frequent, and in intransitive phrasal verbs spoken stress is an important identifying criterion as most other criteria are inapplicable. In written material, though, one has to look for Aktionsart value and possible changes in the meaning of the verb. D) is not entirely reliable as some prepositional verbs may be translated with simplex verbs. E) is not reliable on its own since prepositional verbs are found, and increasingly so, in the passive (Lamont 2005:5). Consequently, it is often necessary to apply more than one

criterion to determine whether a complex verb is a phrasal verb or not. It is also wise to keep in mind that it is (often) impossible ‘[t]o assess the meaning of idiomatic constructions and items such as *make up*, which are semantically empty in isolation, [...] unless collocations are considered’ (Lipka 1972:72-73). In other words, one cannot consider the meaning of a phrasal verb in isolation from its arguments. Likewise, one and the same phrasal verb may have more than one meaning depending on whether the reading is compositional or not. In his study of phrasal verbs with *up*, Machonis (2008:204) found that 64% out of 721 *up* expressions were ambiguous. The majority of these, i.e. 60%, had only two or three homonyms, but 20% had four or five. There were also instances with nine or ten homonyms, e.g. *throw up*, and *pick up* yielded ‘at least fourteen different meanings’ (Machonis 2008:204). Examples [26]-[28] show *knock out* expressing different meanings depending on compositionality and arguments:

[26] ...finally striking the landlady and **knocking out** all her front teeth.

*Highland journey: a sketching tour of Scotland*. Hedderwick, Mairi. 1992 [BNC]

[27] ... threw a real punch and **knocked** Raft **out** cold.

*Hollywood rogues*. Munn, Michael. 1991 [BNC]

[28] For instance, you can **knock out** a Quick Report simply by filling in the blanks...

*What personal computer: the ultimate guide to choosing and using*. 1993 [BNC]

In [26] the particle is obligatory and the meaning of *knock out* is transparent and literal whereas [27] is semi-transparent as *knock out* also involves a physical punch. However, the particle (in addition to the object and the resultative *cold*) makes the phrasal verb more idiomatic and the meaning is to render unconscious. In [28] the phrasal verb is fully idiomatic and only comprehensible through coercion, i.e. we are forced to interpret it, and because of the object we understand that it means to produce a text very quickly. In all the examples the arguments and the context are needed and more specifically ‘[t]he difference in meaning is by and large determined by the nature of the object rather than the subject’ (Machonis 2008:200). Consequently, each phrasal verb in the data must be considered and identified based on its context.

## 2.2. Aspect and aktionsart

Although not systematic, ‘there is a general perception that phrasal verbs have something to do with the expression of verbal aspect’ (Brinton 1985:157). As mentioned in section 2.1 it is possible that OE phrasal verbs in some instances carried aspectual meaning (Hiltunen 1983:147, Denison 1985:43 and Brinton 1988:225), but the occurrences are most often ambiguous and perhaps more than being aspectual they have a ‘resultative connotation’ (Hiltunen 1983:147). Clear aspectual use of phrasal verbs was not established until ME, and Brinton (1987:192) describes the development as a metaphorical shift from concrete to abstract and spatial to aspectual. Despite their inconsistency, phrasal verbs are a productive method of expressing aspect in English, and the addition of a particle to a simple verb is thought to lend perfective meaning (*drink up, calm down, wait out, die off, pass away, carry through, bring about, put over*), ingressive meaning (*hurry up, lie down, doze off, set out, pitch in, go away*), or continuative/iterative meaning (*hammer away, drive on*) (Brinton 1988:4) The aspectual value of phrasal verbs and how particles increase or decrease this value are consequently of interest. Some particles have received much attention, notably *up* (e.g. Denison 1985, Rodriguez-Puente 2013) and *out* (e.g. Garcia-Vega 2016), and others not so much, hence the focus on the aspectual impact of the particle *away* in this thesis.

### 2.2.1 Aspect

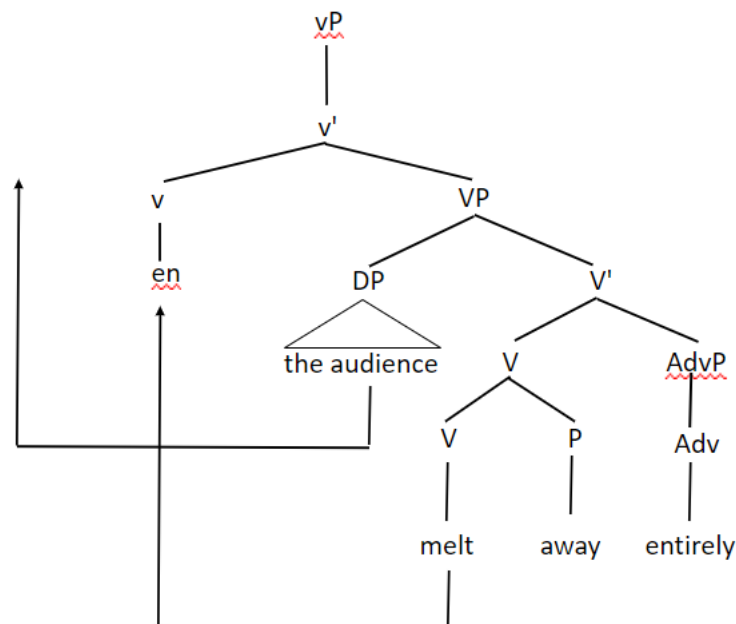
There are many different views on aspect and what is comprised by the term semantically and grammatically. Furthermore, there is little agreement on which terminology to use, in fact Bache (1997:13) states that ‘(o)ne striking feature of the work being carried out in aspectology and related areas at the moment is the embarrassing lack of a rigid, generally accepted nomenclature.’ The discussion of aspect revolves both around what exactly it is that aspect conveys and how it is conveyed. Some linguists are mostly concerned with the overt grammatical forms whereas others find the semantic properties more interesting. Irrespective of focus, the study of aspect is particularly challenging in English as ‘formal markers of aspect are not predominant in the verb ... and since lexical markers of aspect do not appear to constitute a coherent system’ (Brinton 1988:1). Thus, formal markers on the verb tend to express tense, not aspect, rendering English a *tense* language rather than an *aspect* language. However, aspectual auxiliary verbs, i.e. *be* and *have* may be used to

express aspect in combination with the progressive morpheme *-ing* and the perfective morpheme *-en* (often realised as *-ed*) attached to the main verb (Newson et al. 2006:197-198). Another possible manner of expressing aspect is by adding particles (cf. section 2.1).

The term aspect is applied to a variety of phenomena and the confusion arises very much from the fact that there has been ‘a tendency, once aspect has been distinguished from tense, to refer to all verbal categories that are neither tense nor mood as aspect’ (Comrie 1976:6). However, for the purpose of this thesis it is necessary to arrive at a definition which is applicable in an analysis. Although some linguists have refrained from using the term *Aktionsart* on the grounds that it has been used to label two different, albeit related, aspectual concepts (Comrie 1976:6-7), this term will be used in this thesis in addition to aspect. The reason for this is that the term aspect as used in general seems to mainly cover two separate phenomena which on the one hand concern the speaker’s viewpoint or perception of an event and on the other hand the inherent nature of an event. Even though the terminology varies there is a general consensus in the work of several linguists, e.g. Hopper & Thompson (1980:271 *aspect* and *Aktionsart*), Brinton (1985:158, 1988:3 *aspect* and *Aktionsart*), Smith (1991: 3-182 *viewpoint aspect* and *situation aspect*), Bache (1997:12, 199-258 *aspect* and *action*), (Newson et al. 2006 *grammatical aspect* and *lexical aspect*), and van Gelderen (2018:18-19 *inner aspect* and *outer aspect*) amongst others, that differentiating between the two is necessary and the term *Aktionsart* is sufficiently distinctive and accurate for the purpose of this thesis.

Aspect means ‘the action of looking at’ (OED *s.v. aspect*) and Comrie (1976:3) defines aspect as ‘different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation’. Thus, aspect concerns ‘the focus with which the locutionary agent represents situations’ (Bache, 1997:210). A situation may be viewed as perfective or imperfective. Perfective is used when the situation is regarded as a complete whole without reference to any of the temporal parts of that situation whereas imperfective, is used when the speaker wishes to pay special attention to one of the temporal parts, e.g. the beginning, the middle, the end, duration, etc. In addition, if the situation is viewed as imperfective, aspect also indicates whether the situation is viewed as e.g. habitual or continuous (Comrie: 1976:16-32). In English ‘the encoding of grammatical aspect is complex’ (Newson et al. 2006:155), but it is most often connected to the progressive and

nonprogressive forms of the verb although this is a considerable simplification as ‘the meaning of the Progressive has extended well beyond the original definition of progressivity as the combination of continuous meaning and nonstativity’ (Comrie, 1976:38). Grammatical, or outer, aspect ‘provides information relevant to viewing the event from the outside’ (van Gelderen 2018:19) and is marked in the syntax. The verb moves from the V position to support the aspectual morphemes *-ing* and *-en* which may be viewed as a kind of light verbs and as such are found outside the VP (in the vP) (Newson et al. 2006:201). However, English stems cannot support more than one overt morpheme, and as the verb is unable to move further, it needs a supporting auxiliary, *be* in the progressive and *have* in the perfective (Newson et al. 2006:220). Consequently, outer aspect is in a higher position in the vP and cannot assign theta-roles. In contrast, Aktionsart, i.e. inner aspect, ‘is directly pertinent to the meaning of the verb’ (van Gelderen 2018:19) and is internal to the fully thematic verb. As such it is found inside the lower, main VP, which is where theta-roles are assigned (Newson et al. 2006:160-161 and van Gelderen 2018:23). A sentence containing a PV *away* in the perfective is rendered in a tree diagram (modelled on Newson et al. 2006:201-204) for expository purposes in Figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1:** Tree diagram of ‘The audience *had melted away* entirely.’

*A little lower than the angels.* McCaughrean, Geraldine. 1987. [BNC]

In the tree diagram in Figure 2.1 we see that the main verb has moved to the lowest aspectual morpheme *-en* (realised as *-ed*) and that the Theme has moved to subject position to receive case (Newson et al. 2006:202).

There is considerable interaction between aspect and Aktionsart. Aspect (outer) has an impact on verb meaning and thus how we interpret Aktionsart (Brinton 1988:38-45). According to van Gelderen (2018:2): '[p]erfective aspect helps emphasize the telic nature and imperfective aspect the durative nature of an event', and aspect is also 'systematically correlated with the degree of Transitivity of the verb' (Hopper & Thompson 1980:271) and thus its arguments (cf. section 2.3).

### 2.2.2 Aktionsart

Aktionsart is a term borrowed from German meaning 'kind of action' (Comrie 1967:6-7, Brinton 1988:3 and Bache 1997:12, 217). Aktionsart differs from aspect in that it refers to an inherent, objective quality of the situation as 'it concerns the given nature of the event and not the perspective of the speaker' and therefore 'the distinction between aspect and aktionsart is crucial' (Brinton 1988:3). Bache argues that action, which is known as Aktionsart, 'is not simply a category alongside other verbal categories such as tense, aspect, mood, etc. ..., *action* is one of the primary semantic categories to be investigated in a theory of language' (1997:12; original italics). He even claims that action is more central than both tense and aspect because a speaker cannot 'express a situation which is not subject to a characterization in terms of type of situation', but it 'is quite possible to conceive of, or think about, situations without necessarily locating them in time or assigning any representational focus to them' (Bache 1997:212). Although he is wary of the term Aktionsart, Comrie (1967:41) acknowledges the existence of inherent aspectual properties that 'interact with other aspectual oppositions'. One such inherent aspectual opposition is between durativity for situations that last a given period, whether long or short, and punctuality for situations that are momentarily and thus have no internal structure. Punctual situations have the opposition of semelfactive where only one momentary event is expressed as in [29] and iterative where a momentary event is repeated as in [30] (Comrie: 1976:41-42):

[29] With this she **knocked away** the snow from the lettering

*The Challenge book of brownie stories.* Moss, Robert. 1988 [BNC]

[30] Now, on a tennis court, you can **hammer away**.

*The house of women.* Cookson, Catherine. 1993 [BNC]

Durative events are either telic or atelic. The former have a goal or an end point where the action is completed as shown in [31], whereas the latter do not have an end point and can, unlike telic situations, be stopped at any time without affecting the truth of the proposition as shown in [32]:

[31] So, while (-----) the electrician **is making** a new connection, we (...)

[Several editions of *Link* – the house journal of the Pauls group] [BNC]

[32] We were happy, we were delighted and we were **singing**.

*The Daily Mirror.* [BNC]

According to Comrie (1976:44) the telicity of a situation can be tested thus: ‘if a sentence referring to this situation in a form with imperfective meaning (such as the English Progressive) implies the sentence referring to the same situation in a form with perfect meaning (such as the English Perfect), then the situation is atelic; otherwise it is telic’. Garey (1957:105 in Brinton 1988:26) suggests another test for the telicity of a situation: ‘if one was *verbing* but was interrupted while *verbing*, has one *verbed*? If the answer is ‘yes’, the situation is atelic, but if the answer is ‘no’, it is telic’. In [32] it is true that ‘we’ have sung regardless of when ‘we’ stopped, but the electrician in [31] has not made a new connection if he stopped in the process. Consequently, [32] is atelic whereas [31] is telic.

Another inherent aspectual opposition demonstrated by Comrie (1976:48-51) is that of stative and dynamic situations. Put simply, in stative situations all temporal parts of the event may be the same, but dynamic situations necessarily involve change. Similarly, a punctual situation as in [29] necessarily involves change. Here the situation changes from not having *knocked away* the snow to having done so, and it is consequently dynamic. Durative situations can be both stative and dynamic as shown in [33] and [34], respectively:



[33] I do **know** his name, as it happens.

*Other people's blood.* Kippax, Frank. 1993 [BNC]

[34] We **swam** in a pool beneath magnified dragonflies.

*Pea soup.* Reid, Christopher. 1983 [BNC]

To *know* somebody's name is a constant situation from its inception and is thus stative, but to *swim* involves constant movement in the water, and is thus dynamic.

Brinton (1988:23-27) similarly demonstrates 'the binary distinctions' in the description of Aktionsart using very much the same terminology as Comrie and distinguishing stative vs. non-stative, punctual vs. durative and telic vs. atelic. Furthermore, she finds Vendler's typology of verb types most appropriate for Aktionsart categorisation. The four verb categories are defined by the presence or absence of four semantic features, i.e. stative, durative, telic and voluntary (Brinton, 1988:27-9). Verbs consequently belong to either the category of state, activity, accomplishment, or achievement. Even though her categorisation of Aktionsart is based on these semantic features, Brinton points out a number of weaknesses, most notably Vendler's failure to acknowledge aspect markers as an important contribution to overall aspect and 'the role played by nominal arguments and nuclear prepositional phrases in aktionsart meaning' (Brinton, 1988:29). According to Brinton (1988:168) particles mostly express telic/resultative Aktionsart and the particles that are used most often this way are *up*, *down*, *out*, and *off*. However, *through*, *over*, and *away* may also express resultative as shown in [35]:

[35] The heavy downpour had **washed away** the surrounding soil to reveal the fossils.

*Independent* 12 Feb. 2007 [OED]

Particles may also express durative Aktionsart, and this is particularly the case with *along*, *away* and *on*, which behave rather different than other particles (Brinton 1988:175, also cf. section 2.4). This we have seen in [1] and [30], here rendered as [36] and [37], respectively:

[36] ‘...she and the Queen had always happily **nattered away** for hours while out riding...’

*The Daily Mirror*. 1992, [BNC]

[37] Now, on a tennis court, you can **hammer away**.

*The house of women*. Cookson, Catherine. 1993 [BNC]

In both [36] and [37] the situation is durative, but in [37] the situation is also iterative, i.e., it describes a repeated punctual/momentary event.

Smith (1991:5-6) also stresses the importance of including both viewpoint and situation aspect in the overall aspectual meaning in a sentence. However, at the same time she maintains that ‘the two types of information are independent’. Smith distinguishes five situation types: states, activities, accomplishments, semelfactives and achievements, thus differing from Vendler and Brinton only in the addition of semelfactive as a separate category. Again, the situation types, or categories, are determined by the presence or absence of, in this case three, semantic features, namely static (vs. dynamic), telic (vs. atelic) and durative (vs. instantaneous or punctual) (Smith, 1991:27-33).

Other approaches to Aktionsart categorisation of verbs can be exemplified by Bache (1997:218-21). He agrees that many verbs typically express durative situations, e.g. *run, build, love*, or punctual situations, e.g. *knock, cough, fall*, but considers it misleading to use terms like durative verbs or punctual verbs. As the situation type is also very much determined by factors such as morphology, syntax and context it is more appropriate to ‘talk about verbs having a certain *actional potential*. Thus, for example, verbs like HIT, DROP, START, etc. have a clear punctual potential whereas verbs like RUN, WRITE, DISCUSS, etc. have a clear durative potential’ (Bache 1997:221; original italics). Bache’s approach has many strong points regarding the categorisation of aspect, and Aktionsart in particular. It is rather complex though, and too much so for a thesis that also investigates transitivity and argument structure. In addition, although Bache differs somewhat from the more traditional linguists, it is reasonable to say that his theory shares most distinctions related to the category of Aktionsart and he likewise stresses that context must be considered when identifying aspect.

As mentioned, van Gelderen distinguishes between inner and outer aspect, and it is the inner aspect that is ‘directly pertinent to the meaning of the verb’ (2018:19). Inner

aspect thus corresponds to situation aspect or Aktionsart. She also refers to Vendler's four-way typology of +/- duration and +/- telicity, but adds the aspectual category stativity. According to van Gelderen Aktionsart/inner aspect can be divided into three different aspectual categories that express manner, result, and state, respectively. Manner relates to process, duration and unboundedness and is (normally) expressed by durative verbs. Result conveys change of state and telicity and is expressed by telic verbs, and states are, of course, expressed by stative verbs. Another way of identifying durative and telic predicates is by using a diagnostic test involving NP adverbials. Durative predicates can be modified by a *for*-NP adverbial and telic predicates can be modified by an *in*-NP adverbial. States, on the other hand, are typically incompatible with the progressive and the imperative (van Gelderen 2018:20-21). Even so, by adding lexical units like clauses or particles, it is possible to change the Aktionsart of the verb so that a sentence with e.g. a durative verb, *eat*, can express a telic situation as shown in [38]:

[38] While crackling flames **eat up** the beams.

*Pink rock and postcards*. Little, Edith. 1987, [BNC]

Particles are a case in point regarding Aktionsart. Most scholars stress the telic function of particles, especially in phrasal verbs with the particle *up* (Denison 1985:62, Brinton 1988:38, 163 and Rodriguez-Puente, 2013:249). However, particles may also strengthen an already present Aktionsart meaning and not necessarily a telic one as shown in [1], here repeated as [39], where the particle *away* strengthens the durative meaning of the situation:

[39] ‘...she and the Queen had always happily **nattered away** for hours while out riding...’

*The Daily Mirror*. 1992, [BNC]

[39] also exemplifies the diagnostic test for durative which says that durative predicates can be modified by a *for*-NP adverbial.

As already mentioned, particles are most often associated with telic (and perfective) aspect as in e.g. *drink (it) up*, *pass out*, *die down*, *push away*, etc. According to Cappelle (2007:45) many of these events have an (external or internal) incremental

theme, meaning that an entity either gradually comes into existence or gradually ceases to exist, or it changes position as a result of the event following a path to completion. In the words of Smith (1991:35) ‘Resultatives focus on the end of the chain; resultative constructions extend the lexical span of a verb constellation with a resultative complement’. In [2], here repeated as [40], the NP functioning as direct object is also a resultative complement:

[40] ‘...a few gentle taps to **chip away** the edge is enough.

*Do it yourself.* Milton Keynes: Link House Lts. 1992 [BNC]

Unless there is a resultative complement, *away* may also be durative, but in [40] both the particle *away* and the resultative complement contribute to the resultative interpretation of the sentence. Nevertheless, in his study, Capelle (2007:47) found that although a majority of phrasal verbs were telic, the simplex verbs in most cases were also telic so the particle did not have a resultative effect.

### 2.2.3 Last words on aspect and Aktionsart

It has been mentioned earlier in this section that there is no coherent system of lexical markers expressing aspect in English. Bache (1997:224) states that the ‘action category is seldom realized as a regular major morphosyntactic grammatical category in particular verb systems. Derivational morphology, lexical periphrasis, and grammatical subsystems with restricted scope of application seem to be typical ways of expressing actionality’. Thus, Aktionsart meaning should be determined by sentences rather than individual verbs or verb phrases as ‘situation type is signalled by the verb and its arguments’ (Smith 1991:5-7). Brinton (1988:26) finds this particularly true for telic expressions which in her opinion ‘underscore(s) the need for talking of “predications” rather than “verbs”, for frequently the goal is expressed by a nominal object, while the verb itself refers to an atelic situation, e.g. *sing* vs. *sing a song* vs. *sing songs* and *run* vs. *run to the shore*’. Comrie (1967:45) also stresses that ‘situations are not described by verbs alone, but rather by the verb together with its arguments (subject and object),’ as will be examined in the following section.

### 2.3 Transitivity meets argument structure

The acceptability of a sentence does not rely on correct syntax alone, the sentence must also make sense on a conceptual, or semantic, level, i.e. the participants in an event and their relation to the meaning of the verb is just as important. There is thus a distinction between the well-formedness of a sentence and its acceptability (Radford 1988:11). In any clause structure theory ‘the main verb is the one that wholly or largely determines what form the rest of the structure will take’ (Quirk et al. 1985:53). On a syntactic level the transitivity of a verb refers to the obligatory functions attached to it, and on a semantic level the argument structure of a verb refers to the semantic roles, or theta-roles, assigned by the verb. Some linguists distinguish between grammatical (or syntactic valence) and semantic valence (Payne: 2011:303) where grammatical valence ‘refers to the number of core arguments present in any given clause’ and semantic valency ‘refers to the number of participants in the discourse world scene conventionally evoked by a verb’. On this (functionalist) view the grammar valence in [29], here repeated as [41], equals 2:

[41] With this she **knocked away** the snow from the lettering.

*The Challenge book of brownie stories.* Moss, Robert. 1988 [BNC]

This is because there are two core arguments present, i.e. the subject (*she*) and the direct object (*the snow*). Van Gelderen (2018:11) also defines valency as ‘the number of arguments a verb has’ and describes transitive verbs as having (at least) two arguments and intransitive verbs as having one argument. Transitivity does not include the subject, and intransitive verbs are not followed by a direct object and consequently have only one nominal argument which functions as the subject. Traditionally, transitivity is a threefold classification (Quirk et al. 1985:53), and transitive verbs can be divided into different types of transitives according to the number and type of complement they require. Monotransitives take one nominal complement which functions as a direct object and has two arguments. Ditransitives take two nominal complements, that is, an indirect object in addition to the direct object and consequently has three arguments. The latter is also known as the double object construction (Newson et al. 2006:186). Furthermore, there are complex transitive verbs which take both a nominal complement and a prepositional complement and other verbs which take adjectival or adverbial complements. Finally,

some verbs take clauses as complements (Newson et al. 2006:23). The analysis for this thesis showed no data with PV *away* having double object construction or obligatory complements with adjectival or adverbial function. The first is not surprising as a PV *away* with double object construction would sound ungrammatical. The latter can probably be explained by *away* already having an adverbial or adverbial-like function (providing a path) even though it is part of a construction. i.e. the phrasal verb. Thus, PVs *away* require only one obligatory nominal complement if requiring a complement at all. The analysis in this thesis will only count the obligatory complements (whether nominal or not) and not adjuncts as they are not necessary to understand the full meaning. This is because sentences in EModE can be exceedingly long and complex. Thus, including complements that are not obligatory would be beyond the scope of the thesis.

English also has many labile verbs, i.e. verbs that can be used both transitively and intransitively (van Gelderen 2018:77), and this is also the case with many phrasal verbs such as *wash away* which is intransitive and transitive in [42] and [43], respectively:

[42] [the ramparts] continued to **wash away** in streams of yellow-brown water.

*The siege of Krishnapur.* Farrell, J.G. 1988 [BNC]

[43] But all that hate can't **wash away** the guilt.

*A midsummer killing.* Barnes, Trevor. 1991 [BNC]

A particle may have a transitivising effect on the verb as shown with *dream* in [44]:

[44] I just **dream away** the time,...

*Jane Eyre: Oxford Bookworms edition.* West, Clare & Bronte, Charlotte. 1990. [BNC]

However, particles may also make a verb less transitive as shown in [45] or not change its transitivity (but the meaning) as shown in [46]:

[45] We eventually **took off** at about 0620 hrs. and everything went according to plan.

*Malta: The hurricane years 1940-41.* Malizia, Nicola; Cull, Brian; Shores, Christopher. 1987 [BNC]

[46] I **took off** my jacket and set about clearing up dead birds.

*Nudists may be encountered.* Scott, Mary. 1991 [BNC]

When an added particle transitivises an intransitive verb, this may also change the meaning of the verb. Consider the difference in meaning in [47] and in [48]:

[47] ..., seeing that many **live** long without the Vertues of the body:..

*Aristotle's Rhetoric. Aristotle. Anaximenes, of Lampsacus. 1686. [EEBO]*

[48] I'll never **live it down**.

*The ladykiller. Cole, Martina. 1993 [BNC]*

Without the particle *live* as used in [47] is an intransitive verb which may be followed by a prepositional phrase or an adverb, but not normally a noun phrase. In [48] the particle *down* is added, and a transitive structure is the only possibility. It should be noted that many intransitive verbs like *live* may be used transitively, e.g. for the purpose of emphasis as shown in [49], in this case to stress a particular circumstance of life:

[49] Well, ten years I inhabited that nightmare, **living it** day and night.

*Chung Kuo book 2: The broken wheel. Wingrove, David. 1990 [BNC]*

In modern linguistics the notion of transitivity has been extended and Hopper and Thompson (1980:251) have suggested a transitivity hypothesis that firstly claim that it has 'a number of universally predictable consequences for grammar, and 2) that the defining properties of Transitivity are discourse-oriented'.

**Table 2.1:** Parameters of transitivity in Hopper and Thompson (1980:252)

	HIGH	LOW
A. PARTICIPANTS	2 or more participants, A and O	1 participant
B. KINESIS	Action	Non-action
C. ASPECT	Telic	Atelic
D. PUNCTUALITY	Punctual	Non-punctual
E. VOLITIONALITY	Volitional	Non-volitional
F. AFFIRMATION	Affirmative	Negative
G. MODE	Realis	Irrealis
H. AGENCY	A high in potency	A low in potency
I. AFFECTEDNESS OF O	O totally affected	O not affected
J. INDIVIDUATION OF O	O highly individuated	O non-individuated

Table 2.1 shows Hopper and Thompson's parameters of transitivity (1980:252). On this view transitivity goes beyond aspect and argument structure, and clauses have different degrees of transitivity according to how many high or low scores they have. Transitivity is 'a matter of carrying-over or transferring an action from one participant to another' and 'it can be broken down into its component parts, each focusing on a different facet of this carrying-over in a different part of the clause' (Hopper & Thompson 1980:253). The score thus determines whether a clause should be characterised as more or less transitive. As Hopper and Thompson (1980:254) admit, this can paradoxically lead to a transitive clause being deemed less transitive than an intransitive clause.

Although Hopper and Thompson's parameters are quite complex and will not be used in this thesis, they illustrate neatly that Aktionsart play a part in transitivity, and also Capelle (2007:45) claims that it is 'important to remember that telicity may be linked with transitive verbs (even if these verbs may have intransitive uses) and that atelicity may be linked with intransitive verbs'. He concedes that this is a sweeping statement as there are numerous examples to the contrary, e.g. *read a book*, *push a pram*, etc. and cognate objects such as *sing a song* which function as resultative complements. Nonetheless, there is a general notion that telic events normally involve someone or something that is affected by the event, and an object may function as a resultative complement. Thus, there is normally a direct object and if not, an internal argument, i.e. a Theme which may be realised as both subject and direct object (cf. section 2.2.2).

One should remember that subjects and objects, whether direct or indirect, are grammatical functions which 'are defined as positions in the English sentence, in that any element which sits in those positions will be interpreted as subject and object respectively no matter if this makes sense or not' (Newson et al. 2006:75). The acceptability and meaning of a sentence are determined by what arguments are assigned by the verb, and as stated previously, both aspect and transitivity as well as the definiteness of the arguments have an impact on the argument structure. In addition, all this may change because of an added particle (Garcia-Vega 2011:77).

The argument structure as well as the Aktionsart of a verb is 'part of the prelinguistic conceptual structure... that (is) handed over to the syntactic structure' (van Gelderen 2018:6). Linguists have different numbers of and names for theta-roles, but I



have chosen to use the theta-roles identified and described by van Gelderen (2018:15) which are shown in table 2.2:

**Table 2.2:** *Theta-roles in van Gelderen (2018:15)*

- a. **Agent** an animate entity that deliberately brings about an event

<b>Causer</b>	entity responsible for (initiating) an event
<b>Experiencer</b>	an animate entity that experiences the event
<b>Theme</b>	person or object undergoing the action or prompting a sensory or emotional state
<b>Goal</b>	animate entity that the event is done to or for
<b>Result</b>	resulting state
b. <b>Path</b>	path of event
<b>Manner</b>	manner of the event
<b>Instrument</b>	instrument through which the event occurs

The arguments listed in 2.2a. are central whereas the arguments in 2.2b. are more optional and have an adverbial function (van Gelderen 2018:15). Some would object that *Patient* is not included as a theta-role in this table, but the distinction between Patient and Theme is a matter of affectedness (Newson et al. 2006:172). They both undergo action, but a Patient changes in some way as a result and a Theme does not (van Gelderen 2018:15), and in this table and in my analyses in this thesis, the Patient theta-role is incorporated in the Theme theta-role. In EModE sentences tend to be (exceedingly) long and complex and so the analysis is limited to obligatory arguments because of time restrictions.

Theta-roles are given from the predicate to the arguments in a process called theta-role assignment which takes place on a conceptual, prelinguistic level referred to as D-structure (Newson et al. 2006:106). At this non-linguistic stage an event is conceptualised, i.e. the cognisor has a notion of who is doing what to whom (or what). There are three principles that govern the assignment of theta-roles. One is the Theta Criterion which states that ‘each argument must bear one and only one theta-role, and each theta-role is assigned to one and only one argument’ (Chomsky 1981:36 in van Gelderen 2018:15 and Newson et al. 2006:109), thus providing a matching number. The second is the Locality Condition on Theta-role which states that theta-roles cannot be assigned over long distances, but must be assigned to the specifier or the complements of a predicate (Newson et al. 2006: 107-109), and the third is the Uniform Theta-role

Assignment Hypothesis (UTAH) proposed by Baker (1988 in Baker 1997:74-79 and Newson et al. 2006:107) which states that a theta-role ‘is assigned in the same structural configuration in all structures in which it is present’ (Newson et al. 2006:107-108). This means that even though one semantic role can have different grammatical functions in the syntax, some theta-roles are associated with particular grammatical functions, e.g. an Agent is normally the subject in a clause, and a Theme is normally the object (van Gelderen 2018:15). Also Baker (1997:76) states that ‘there is wide agreement that agents rather than themes are chosen as subjects in most languages’. This holds true because theta-roles are ranked in a Thematic Hierarchy based on their animacy. Different hierarchies have been suggested, but they adhere to the same principle, and van Gelderen proposes the following:

Agent > Causer > Experiencer > Theme > Goal

‘The higher an argument is on the Thematic Hierarchy, the higher it is in the tree and the earlier it is pronounced’ (van Gelderen 2018:16-17). Indeed, the linking theory in Chomsky’s Principles and Parameters Theory claims ‘(i) that agents are always (underlying) subjects, and (ii) ”subject” is a structural notion – it is a position in a phrase structure that is outside the VP ... and hence “higher than” (c-commanding) the position of the patient/object’. Consequently, there is a relationship between syntactic functions and theta-roles, but an ‘NP that represents the theme and starts out as the direct object of the verb may become the subject if there is no other subject in the linguistic representation (Baker 1997:73). There are two possible reasons for this. One is that there is no Agent or Causer in the conceptual representation as is the case with unaccusative verbs, the other that the Agent or Causer was suppressed, as is the case with passive verbs. Thus, in passive constructions a Causer or an Agent is missing or adverbialized and so the Theme is moved and raised to subject position (van Gelderen 2018:14). This transformation is shown in [50-52]:

[50] A twig **snapped**.

*The killing frost*. Hayden Thomas. 1991 [BNC]

[51] *My tent* **was blown away**, and some of my stuff with it.

*Stormy petrel*. Stewart, Mary. 1992 [BNC]

[52] The window **broke** because a ball hit it.

*Understanding children*. Ed. Hughes, M and Grieve, R. 1992 [BNC]

According to Newson et al. (206:106) ‘the way an element is interpreted in terms of its thematic status indicates its D-structure position and thus if something is interpreted as an object it will be in an object position at D-structure’. This can be seen e.g. in passive structures as shown in [51] where *my tent* sits in subject position at S-structure, but the thematic relationship is that of an object because *my tent* does not *do* what the predicate describes but is *affected* by it. Thus, *my tent* is in object position at D-structure, but has undergone movement so that it sits in subject position at S-structure. To identify thematic roles, or theta-roles, we must look at the D-structure of the sentence and see what roles are assigned by the predicate/verb. In [51] the predicate is used in the passive voice and can only have one nominal argument realised as the subject. Only transitive verbs can be used in the passive in English, but even without knowing this as a rule, we also know that someone or something must have caused *my tent* to be blown away so at D-structure *my tent* is interpreted as the object of the sentence which would then be: x blew *my tent* away.

This example illustrates that even though all participants in an event may be affected by this event, when conceptualising it ‘human cognizers typically focus on one or the other ... [t]his participant is taken to be the “theme” or “patient” of the event’ (Baker 1997:73). Also Machonis (2008:200) stresses that ‘the difference in meaning is by and large determined by the nature of the object rather than the subject’, i.e. the meaning is (normally) determined by the Theme (or Patient), which is why languages use case to express how the object of a verb is affected (van Gelderen 2018:13). However, this is part of the ‘linking problem’ which consists in finding regularities in the way ‘participants of an event are expressed in surface grammatical forms’ (Baker 1997:73-75). As aspect, transitivity and argument structure are inextricably linked together, this is a ‘chicken and egg’ problem: the verb assigns theta-roles, however, the verb has aspect which controls transitivity and theta-roles are also governed by the transitivity of the verb.

One apparent exception to the UTAH seems to be the *psych*-verbs which involve mental perception, cognition, and emotion as shown in [53]:

[ 53] It not only **frightens** me, it **repels** me.

*The big glass.* Josipovici, Gabriel. 1991. [BNC]

In [53] the Theme subject sits higher than the Experiencer object, thus seemingly violating the UTAH. However, the subject may be viewed as a Causer, in which case it correlates with the UTAH. With subject Experiencers *psych*-verbs are normally stative, but they can also be resultative as can be seen in [44], here rendered as [54]:

[54] I just **dream away** the time,...

*Jane Eyre: Oxford Bookworms edition.* West, Clare & Bronte, Charlotte. 1990. [BNC]

Here the Theme argument is realised as a resultative object and this together with the particle *away* changes the Aktionsart value of the sentence to resultative instead of stative.

The clause in [54] also illustrates that it is the construction and not the verb on its own that licenses the direct object. Cappelle (2007:49) suggests that verb-particle constructions like this have a predictable pattern. Telic (resultative) verb-particle structures are normally transitive, and if they are intransitive, they are unaccusative. However, there is a difference between compositional (and usually spatial) and idiomatic phrasal verbs. Whether literal or metaphoric, when the phrasal verb is spatial, the ‘undergoer’, i.e. the Patient/Theme, is licensed by the construction, not the verb. Thus, the Theme realised as the direct object in [54] is grammatically correct only because the added particle makes it so. The same is true for the unaccusative sentence in [55]:

[55] The whole street **washed away**?

*Maggie Jordan.* Blair, Emma. 1990 [BNC]

When there is a purely aspectual meaning to the verb-particle construction, the object is normally licensed independently by the verb, and the transitivity of the verb is thus not affected by the added particle (Cappelle 2007:50). There are some exceptions to this, but these verb-particle combinations are limited in number. Durative (atelic) verb-particle combinations are usually intransitive, but unlike resultative phrasal verbs with spatial meaning, durative verb-particle combinations with spatial meaning, normally do not affect the argument structure. The verb will normally be intransitive independent of the particle. On the other hand, if the particle is non-spatial, the argument structure is often affected. However, this is mostly the case when the verb has an intransitive use on its own.

This section has illustrated the interdependency of transitivity and argument structure. One is manifest at S-structure, i.e. transitivity, and the other is present at D-structure, i.e. argument structure. However, there is a Thematic Hierarchy which ensures that ‘certain thematic roles show up in certain syntactic positions’ (van Gelderen 2018:15). We have also seen that an added particle may or may not alter a verb’s Aktionsart and transitivity, and thus its argument structure and that there are patterns at work in this, too.

#### 2.4 The particle (adverb) *away*

Originally *away* was a prepositional phrase consisting of the preposition *on* and the noun *way*. *On* could sometimes have the form *an*, but was most often spelled *on*, and had roughly the same meaning and function as PDE *on*. *Way* originally had a more concrete meaning than is associated with its modern usage and referred to a physical path or road though it was also used figuratively. The noun normally occurred as *weg*. Thus, in OE one can find examples like [56]:

[56] Pa wildan hors sceoldan yrnan **on** hearde **wegas** on westene, ond him  
the wild horses should run on hard roads in wilderness and them  
þa lima eall tobrecan.  
those limbs all tear-apart.

‘The wild horse should run on hard roads in the wilderness and tear apart his limbs.’

OE *Old Eng. Martyrol.* (9<sup>th</sup> century) [OED]

However, through univerbation, a lexicalisation process where a word combination become a single word (Brinton & Traugott 2005:48-49), this prepositional phrase was reduced to *onweg* and *aweg* already in OE. *Aweg* became increasingly the preferred form and in EME would appear as both *aweg* and *aweig*. In later ME these forms gave way to *awei*, *away* and *awai*. There were many regional variations of both *way* and *away*, but I will not go into these as they are of no importance to the topic of this thesis. In OE *away* was used both as a separable verbal prefix, particularly in subordinate sentences and

complex verbal phrases as seen in [16] repeated here as [57] and in postverbal position as seen in [15], here repeated as [58]:

[57] gif hio ne bið hrædlice **aweg adrifen**

if she not is quickly away driven

‘if it is not quickly driven away’

*King Alfred’s West Saxon Version of Gregory’s Pastoral Care.*

(c 890) H. Sweet (ed.)1871 (gleaned from Fischer et al.)

[58] Ða forleton hie þa burg and **foron aweg**

Then left he the castle and went away

‘Then he left the castle and went away.’

*Anglo-Saxon Chron.* (c 921) (Earle 106) [OED]

In ME *away* is found in postverbal position unless placed in front of the subject for emphasis, i.e. locative inversion, as is also the case in PDE in e.g. ‘and away she goes’.

According to OED (OED *s. v.* *away*), the adverb *away* is used in numerous ways and in various combinations. I shall, however, limit the description to include those that are relevant when forming phrasal verbs. Thus, *away* may express ‘motion or direction from a place: to a distance, to some other place; so as to be absent’ (e.g. *go away*). In addition, *away* may express ‘separation from attachment, contact, or inclusion: off, aside’ (e.g. *break away*), occasionally ‘into an appropriate place for storage and safekeeping’ (e.g. *put away*) or as ‘deprivation, or loss’ (e.g. *take away*). Furthermore, *away* may express the transition from one state to another, most often a gradual change to a diminishing state or one of ceasing to exist (e.g. *die away*) and also movement which results in (literal or figurative) partial rotation (e.g. *turn away*). Finally, *away* may express ‘continuous persistent action’ (e.g. *sing away*).

Live (1965: 436-7) suggests that with *away* and *back* ‘it is difficult to differentiate their locative use from their combinatory effects’. On her view *away* expresses iterative or durative in phrasal verbs like *hammer away (at)* and *eat away (at)* and the inchoative in imperative phrasal verbs such as *Fire away!* According to Bolinger (1971:110) phrasal verbs ‘present a semantic gradient from highly concrete meanings of direction and position to highly abstract meanings akin to aspects.’ However, *away* ‘displays only two, fairly compact, semantic areas. The first centers about the literal meaning of “to (at) a

distance from the scene,” the second is aspectual’, and the aspectual meaning is seen as an intensive which can be described as ‘without let or hindrance’ (1971:102-103). Bolinger claims that the first meaning can be both literal and figurative and that it can occur with both transitive and intransitive verbs such as *run away* and *put away*. The aspectual meaning, however, which can be either iterative or inceptive, normally only occurs with intransitive verbs as in *work away*. Iterative aspect can be seen in [59] where *away* expresses repetition of the action ‘hit with a hammer’ and inceptive aspect can be seen in [60] where *away* expresses the beginning of the action ‘voice the messages’:

[59] Often George came in at five o’clock in the morning to **hammer away** at the pirate ship in the carpenter’s shop.

*An awfully big adventure*. Bainbridge, Beryl. London: Duckwoth & Company Ltd. 1990 [BNC]

[60] ‘Would you give Bill some messages?’ I asked. **Fire away**. I’ll write them down.’

*The edge*. Francis, Dick 1989 [BNC]

Brinton (1988:175) views this as testimony that *away* occasionally (and *on* and *along* normally) expresses aspectual distinctions rather than Aktionsart. They mark continuative and iterative as they portray ‘a situation which may otherwise have stopped as continuing, or they portray the situation as repeated’. Furthermore, it is the Aktionsart quality of the verb that determines the aspectual meaning of the particle. Thus, if the verb expresses a resultative or punctual situation or an inherently iterative situation, *away* assumes an iterative meaning, and if the verb expresses a durative situation, *away* assumes a durative meaning as shown in [59] above and [61]:

[61] Feeling depressed they **worked away** for the rest of the night.

*The adventures of Endill Swift*. McDonald, Stuart. Edinburgh: Canongate Pub. Ltd. 1990 [BNC]

Jackendoff (1997:539) also sees *away* as a primarily continuative or iterative aspect marker when occurring by itself, i.e. when not transitive. In constructions like [59] and [61] the particle indicates that the subject ‘kept on V-ing’. However, if substituted by a transitive verb, the situation is different as shown in [62] and [63]:

[62] The heavy downpour had **washed away** the surrounding soil to reveal the fossils.  
*Independent* 12 Feb. 2007 [OED]

[63] Returns on savings fall, while inflation **eats away** the value of their money.  
2010 *Independent* 17 July 56 [OED]

In [62] and [63], the introduction of an object changes the function and meaning of the particle and *away* indicates a result, rendering the construction resultative. Brinton (1988:163) suggests that ‘the aspectual meaning of particles such as *up, down, off, over, out, through,* and *away* is better understood as an aktionsart meaning, namely that of expressing the goal or endpoint of a situation’. Thus, rather than expressing the completion or resulting state of an action, the abovementioned particles have a telic function transforming the activity into an accomplishment as does *away* in [62] and [63].

Out of the approximately twenty particles there are several that are more prolific than *away* in forming phrasal verbs, e.g. *out, up, on, back, down, in, over,* and *off* (Gardner & Davies, 2007:349). These particles are also more versatile as they may combine with a greater number of verbs and may assume a greater number of meanings. The fact that *away* is not to be found on the list of the 100 most used phrasal verbs is a testimony to that (Gardner & Davies, 2007:352). Live (1965:436-7) likewise observes the limitations of *away* in combining with verbs, but most linguists regard it as a productive particle which not only increasingly combines with new verbs, but also acts as a verbaliser, i.e. adding the particle *away* can change a word from another word class into a verb. Consequently, although one syllable, common verbs such as *blow, go, run, steal, write,* etc. constitute the majority of verbs combining with *away* to form phrasal verbs, one can also see examples with more uncommon verbs and Latinate verbs as shown in [64] and [65]:

[64] And today they will **jet away** for a dream honeymoon in Barbados sponsored by Caribbean Gold.

*The Daily Mirror.* 1992 [BNC]

[65] ...because the kids all walk over that bridge now, they're **eroding away** the bank,  
*Parish Council meeting Rec.* on 21 Apr 1993 [BNC]



## 2.5 The ‘time’-away construction

One category of phrasal verb with *away* merits special attention and that is the ‘time’-*away* construction. The term was coined by Jackendoff (1997:534), and although this construction shares many features with resultatives in which *away* is one of numerous possible particles (cf. section 2.2) and the *way*-construction, ‘the time-*away* construction has syntactic and semantic peculiarities of its own’ (1997:534). In the ‘time’- *away* constructions, *away* is the only possible particle as shown in [66]:

[66] He wants to sit at a table outside, even though it's pouring, and we **chat away** the afternoon over a pot of mint tea and a massive plate of fish and chips.

*The Eternal Sunshine of Harry Styles* 28.08.2019 Rolling Stones [BNC]

Syntactically one peculiarity is the fact that it ‘contains an intransitive verb followed by an apparently unlicensed NP plus the particle away’ and ‘the argument structure of the VP is licensed not by the verb, as in the usual situation, but by the construction itself’ (Jackendoff 1997:534). Thus, many different verbs can be used, but they must be intransitive. Furthermore, it is not possible to have a postverbal NP, only the time phrase as shown in [67a] and [67b]:

[67a] and 100 friends will be **dancing the night away** with the rich and famous at Stringfellows nightclub in London.

*The Daily Mirror*. London: 1992. [BNC]

[67b] \* and 100 friends will be **dancing salsa the night away** with the rich and famous at Stringfellows nightclub in London.

As with other phrasal verbs *away* can occur before and after the NP particularly if the NP is long. The particle may also be modified (in which case inversion is impossible). Consider examples [68a-c]:

[68a] In fact the whole place seemed geared towards just what she and Dr Russell were doing now -- sipping cool drinks and **dreaming** the afternoon **away**.

*A private arrangement*. Darcy, Lilian. 1993 [BNC]

[68b] In fact the whole place seemed geared towards just what she and Dr Russell were doing now -- sipping cool drinks and **dreaming away** the afternoon.

[68c] In fact the whole place seemed geared towards just what she and Dr Russell were doing now -- sipping cool drinks and **dreaming** the afternoon entirely **away**.

Other indications that these constructions are phrasal verbs (Jackendoff 1997:536), is that they can be subjected to passivisation and tough movement as shown in [69] and [70] (although the latter may be a stretch) in addition to the position of manner adverbs which is identical to that in other phrasal verbs as shown in [68c] above:

[69] The afternoon was entirely **dreamt away** by Dr Russel and her.

[70] The afternoon that had scared her so was fortunate for her **to dream away**.

According to Jackendoff this is all evidence of ‘the time expression in the ‘time’-*away* construction being in direct object position, as if it usurps this position so that the verb itself cannot license an NP there. Moreover, *away* is a particle, indistinguishable in syntax from an ordinary verb particle’ (1997:536).

Also semantically does the ‘time’-*away* construction have some distinct properties. Not only must the VP express an atelic situation, but the subject must also be an Agent (act volitionally). Additionally, the verb must refer to an activity, not a state, and, more subtly, there is often a sense of wasting time or ‘using the time up’ (Jackendoff 1997:537-9). In conclusion, although the ‘time’-*away* construction has distinct properties both regarding syntax and semantics, it is treated as a resultative, transitive construction in this thesis.

## 2.6 Some concluding remarks

This chapter has investigated what phrasal verbs are, how they developed from OE to PDE, and the manifold functions they have. They can alter a verb’s meaning and Aktionsart, intensify both and also change the verb’s transitivity and argument structure. We have also seen that there is a difference between Aktionsart and aspect, i.e. inner aspect and outer aspect. Outer aspect is marked in the syntax and is found outside the VP (in the vP). It expresses how the event is viewed from the outside, that is whether it is

completed or not (van Gelderen 2018:19), and for this purpose, English verbs have aspectual morphemes marking perfective or progressive forms. The Aktionsart of a verb pertains to its basic meaning which assigns theta-roles. In this thesis three Aktionsart values are identified and used as variables, namely stative, durative, and resultative. Furthermore, this chapter has examined transitivity and argument structure and how they interrelate with each other so that some syntactical functions are associated with certain thematic roles and that these follow a Thematic Hierarchy which is based on animacy. The last part of the chapter has dealt with the origin and development of the particle *away* before looking into the ‘time’-*away* construction.

### **3. Method, and results**

In this chapter I present the corpora that have yielded the data for this study and explain the method that has been used to extract tokens and arrive at the results. Furthermore, I present my findings and discuss them. As this is a diachronic study of the development of PVs *away* from EModE to PDE, I have chosen Early English Books Online (EEBO) and The British National Corpus (BNC) to extract relevant data. In Section 3.1 I describe the EEBO corpus and the BNC with regards to size, time period covered and text genres which make up the corpora and, in the case of the BNC, which genres have been chosen as source of data extraction and the reasoning behind. For the EEBO there is additionally a brief account of possible discrepancies between spoken and written language in EModE. Section 3.2 outlines the method used when compiling the data and the variables that were analysed. I also discuss some of the occurrences that might be ambiguous or unclear for different reasons and explain how I have arrived at the relevant analytic decision. In section 3.3. the results of the analysis of both EEBO and BNC are presented and compared, and section 3.4. discusses these results and relate them to theory in chapter 2.

#### **3.1 The Corpora**

The corpus of Early English Books Online (EEBO) is part of the SAMUELS project (2014-2016), and the texts were collected by the Text Creation Partnership. I have used the ‘open source’ version which is available on <https://www.english-corpora.org>. It consists of 755 million words in 25,368 different texts from phase 1 of the collection of EEBO which was collected 2001-2009. The texts are printed in Britain and British North America with a few exceptions printed elsewhere, but the language in question is British English. The texts in EEBO are collected from a variety of sources such as books, pamphlets, broadsides, and thus cover different genres, e.g. fictional prose, official documents, and, of course, religious texts. A slight shortcoming of EEBO is that the genres of the texts are not listed in the search. However, the time period extends from the 1470s to the 1690s, a period which corresponds roughly with the EModE period (c.1500-1750), and as such, it is appropriate for the objective of this thesis. Although the description of the EEBO says 1470 to 1690s, there are individual years appearing after

the decades on the search page, and the intention was to also investigate PVs *away* in this period. However, it was not possible to do searches for individual years. Every time I tried, either nothing happened, or I was directed to a page saying ‘There was an error on this page. The server administrator has been notified and will investigate.’ I have no other sources available that would cover this period and also be manageable and affordable and have therefore decided to accept this although it unfortunately skews the periods of analysis. I will return to this in section 3.2.

EModE was a time of linguistic change, and one area that underwent change, was the vocabulary. It was a period of extensive borrowing from other languages such as French, Greek and other European languages. However, the main source of loanwords was Latin, and although some Latin words can be found in the everyday vocabulary (e.g. *album*, *miser*), it should be noted that ‘the vast majority are the kinds of words that are introduced into a language through the medium of writing rather than in speech’ (Barber 2011:179). Still, new English words were mostly coined by way of traditional methods of word formation such as affixation, conversion (zero derivation), and compounding, and these were most often everyday words as opposed to the Latin loanwords (ibid.182-183). Another area of change during EModE was grammar as can be seen in e.g. competing inflections such as *-eth* and *-es* in third person singular, the appearance of the pronoun determiner *its*, and the use of the dummy auxiliary *do* which was not restricted as today, i.e. *do* could be used unemphatically in an affirmative declarative sentence, and inversion and periphrastic *do* were used interchangeably in negative and interrogative sentences (ibid. 188-191). Yet another area of change in EModE was pronunciation. Especially vowels underwent great changes in the 15th and 16th centuries. The main change (the Great Vowel Shift) was a change in quality to a more closed vowel sound and/or to a vowel glide (ibid. 191). There were also other sound changes, both in vowels and consonants, but it would be too detailed to go into and not pertinent to the analysis in this paper so I will not expand on these. A consequence of all the changes that started before EModE was a mismatch between the pronunciation and the spelling which already in ME was ‘somewhat variable and unsystematic, as a result of a mixture of native and Anglo-Norman traditions, and the lack of a written norm’ (Görlach 1991:45). Consequently, there was a call for spelling reforms in EModE by e.g. Sir John Cheke, John Hart, and Richard Mulcaster, and between 1540 and 1640 spelling became more and

more regulated (ibid. 50-55). Written EModE became relatively uniform by the end of the period, and the recommendation was that written English should mirror the spoken language of London (ibid. 13). Nevertheless, there is great variation in spelling and other linguistic aspects between the written texts from the early 1500s to the mid-1600s. In addition, as Görlach (1991:12) points out, ‘direct evidence of the spoken English of the time is very scarce...and the standardizing effect of editing must also be reckoned with’. Additionally, the grammar of written EModE is problematic. According to Barber (1976:112) ‘the Englishman of 1550 had no English dictionary; and similarly he had no grammar of English. If he saw a book entitled *Grammar* he would know that it was a grammar of Latin’. In the late 16th century and throughout the 17th century, several English grammars were published, but they were all heavily inspired by Latin grammars which were the norm for educated people (ibid. 113). As a result, it is difficult to know how closely matched spoken and written syntax in EModE are, and also pronunciation and spelling. Unlike the present, the ability to write was not common and the need to write and thus switch from spoken to written language did not occur as often as in our modern society. Consequently, there is probably a wider gap between spoken and written language in EModE than in PDE, and particularly in the syntax (Görlach 1991:12). However, EEBO is as good a source as any as there are, to my knowledge, no available sources that are known to be closer to spoken EModE irrespective of genre. The spelling and writing reforms that were introduced in time were mostly modelled on spoken language, and the increasing status of the English language also led to a more English-based grammar so that written EModE gradually, at least, deviates less from the spoken language.

The British National Corpus (BNC) was created by the BNC Consortium which was led by the Oxford University Press, and the building of the corpus was carried out over a period of three years (1991-1994). The BNC has been incorporated in the <https://www.english-corpora.org> and is freely available online. The BNC contains 100 million words of both spoken and written modern British English in many different genres, e.g. newspapers and periodicals, academic books and popular fiction, essays of various kinds, published and unpublished texts which cover all manners of topics. The written texts make up 90% and the spoken transcribed texts make up the remaining 10%. As the BNC is a synchronic corpus consisting of only PDE collected from the late 20th

century, it lends itself to the aim of this thesis which is to investigate linguistic development by comparing an older version of English with PDE. With its vast number of texts and thus vast amount of occurrences of *away*, it is necessary to limit the search in the BNC to a manageable size. I have chosen to limit the search to the fiction section on the grounds that the language in fictional texts resembles naturally occurring language more than in other genres, except for spoken language itself.

### 3.2 Searches in EEBO and BNC

In both EEBO and BNC I have used the search word *away* in a KWIC search, i.e. *keyword in context*, to allow for manual interpretation and analysis of the collocation to identify phrasal verbs as opposed to verbs followed by a pure adverb or preposition. In the EEBO corpus the idea was to extract the 50 first occurrences per 50-year time window. As the texts are grouped according to decade, I have extracted 10 occurrences per decade. To randomize I have chosen every tenth occurrence of PV *away* in the data, and if this is not a PV *away*, i.e. it is a verb or another word category followed by *away* which clearly functions as an adverb only and not a particle as seen in [71], I have chosen the next occurring PV *away*. The examples in [71] and [72] show how this distinction may be realized. In [71] *away* is part of the adverbial phrase *only feet away* whereas in [72] *away* is part of the phrasal verb *stepping away*:

[71] But he stood only feet **away**, towering above her.

*Hunter' harem*. Rees, Eleanor. 1992. [BNC]

[72] You don't mean that,' she said, stepping **away** from him.

*The titron madness*. Bedford, John. 1984. [BNC]

When doing a KWIC search, the program will sort the results alphabetically somehow, and if nothing has been selected, it will default to the three words directly to the right of the search word. Thus, all words appearing adjacent to, and then once and twice removed from *away* in a search, will start with the letter *a* as the first letter and will appear in alphabetical order. I found that this approach put undue limitations on the complements and adjuncts appearing after the search word and thus the possible results. Hence, I decided to sort entries by selecting words both to the left and the right. I investigated both

selecting word number 3 and word number 2 both to the left and to the right of the search word and found that this did not make any difference to randomness so it was a matter of settling on one of them, and I chose to select word number 2 both to the left and the right of the search word. As I have chosen every tenth occurrence the spread became wide enough to show a random variation even with alphabetical restrictions.<sup>4</sup> The period covered in EEBO is the 1470s to the 1690s. However, the first publication is from 1474 and the last from 1699. As mentioned in section 3.1, the last period was also meant to cover a fifty-year period, but because of the problem with extracting data from individual years after 1699, the last period covers approximately 30 years. To keep the data in balance, I have extracted ten occurrence per decade in this period too, and consequently, this period contains 30 occurrences. Also, when selecting decades, they cover e.g. 1550 to 1559, 1560 to 1569 and so on. It has therefore been necessary to use time periods such as 1474-1519, 1520-1569 and 1670-1699 when sorting the data however unpleasing this is both to the mind and the eye.

In the BNC the method of extracting data has been the same, i.e. to choose every tenth occurrence of *PV away* in the data, and if this is not a *PV away*, the next occurring *PV away* is chosen. As mentioned above, all texts in the BNC, both spoken and written, are collected from the late twentieth century. I found that my earliest data was from 1979 and the latest from 1993, although the majority were from 1989 to 1993. To match the data from the EEBO where there are ten occurrences from every decade, I have extracted 75 instances of *PV away* from the BNC as it roughly covers a fifteen-year period. Every now and then the BNC crashed, and I had to do the KWIC search again. I would then start counting from the last example line, e.g. 141 and go to 151. As only 200 occurrences would appear, I had to enter a new search when the 20 occurrences were 'used up'. To be on the safe side, I compared all the examples to make sure I did not use the same example more than once.

The data sentences were exported manually from EEBO and BNC, respectively, and imported to Excel. Each time period in EEBO has its own Excel sheet to keep the

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<sup>4</sup> In addition to these modifications, it was also important to make sure that the sections were properly marked, i.e. to click KWIC again, to make the marking grey and not green. If not, the hits would appear in consecutive order by year and publication. As many authors represented in the EEBO publications, particularly in the 1400s and 1500s are very prolific and their works are of considerable length, this could lead to many instances of *PV away* being from the same year and the same author and consequently not random enough.



results from each period separate and thus facilitate the comparison of the results between the different periods. The data from the BNC were similarly imported to one Excel sheet. The variables in the analysis of PVs *away* have been chosen in accordance with the research questions in chapter 1.2. All the data were analysed manually, and the variables that were examined in the analysis are listed in Table 3.1:

**Table 3.1:** Variables for the analysis of PVs *away*

	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Observed value</b>	<b>Numeric code</b>
1.	Aktionsart	Stative, durative, resultative	1, 2, 3
2.	Particle effect on Aktionsart	None, intensifying, changes Aktionsart	1, 2, 3
3.	Aspect (outer)	None, perfective, progressive	1, 2, 3
4.	Transitivity	Intransitive, transitive	1, 2
5.	Particle effect on transitivity	None, detransitivising, transitivising	1, 2, 3
6.	Argument structure	Agent, Causer, Experiencer, Theme, (Goal, Result)	1, 2, 3, 4, (5, 6)
8.	Separated particle	No, yes	1, 2
9.	Motion verb	No, yes	1, 2
10.	Spatial meaning	Literal, figurative, none	1, 2, 3
11.	Voice	Active, passive	1, 2
12.	Compositionality	Compositional, semi-transparent, idiomatic	1, 2, 3
13.	Syllables in verb base	1, 2, (3)	1, 2, (3)
14.	Verb base	Native, derivative, loanword	1, 2, 3

All variables are mapped to see whether they change over time. They all have two or more possible realisations, and each observed value has a numeric code which corresponds to it to facilitate matching the results of one variable with another. The variables in Table 3.1 can be explained as below:

*Aktionsart* - The observed values of Aktionsart are stative, durative, and resultative.

*Particle effect on aktionsart* - This variable has three possible realisations, and the particle may have no effect on the aktionsart, it may function as an intensifier, or it may change the Aktionsart value of the verb. It should be noted that as an intensifier,

the particle may strengthen both the meaning of the verb and the Aktionsart of the verb. In this analysis the strengthening of Aktionsart is examined.

*Aspect (outer)* - The outer aspect can be either perfective or progressive and must be marked in the syntax with *-en (-ed)* and *-ing*, respectively and also (normally) with the auxiliary *to have* or *to be*. Simple present and simple past are unmarked aspect.

*Transitivity* - PVs *away* can be either intransitive or transitive. As explained in chapter 2.3 there are no ditransitive or obligatory complex transitive occurrences in the data. Thus, the analysis only distinguishes between intransitive and transitive verbs.

*Particle effect on transitivity* - This variable has two possible realisations. The particle may have no effect on the transitivity, or it may alter the transitivity of the verb, i.e. transitive or detransitive it.

*Argument structure* - The analysis of argument structure of the PVs *away* will identify and count the obligatory theta-roles in Table 2.2., i.e. Agent, Causer, Experiencer, Theme. Goal and Result are not found as obligatory arguments in the data, and are thus not included in the result tables and figures.

*Separated particle* - This variable indicates whether the particle is adjacent to the verb or whether it is positioned after the object of the sentence. An inserted adverb is not counted as a separating element.

*Motion verb* - The observed value of this variable will be either a motion verb or a non-motion verb, and a motion verb indicates a change of location (unaccusative) or a controlled motional process (unergative) (van Gelderen 2018:66).

*Spatial meaning* - The observed value of this variable will be literal, figurative or none.

*Voice* - In passive structures an Agent or Causer is lost and (normally) a Theme is moved to subject position. Thus, voice affects the S-structure, i.e. the position and number of arguments. The variable is realised as active or passive.

*Compositionality* - Phrasal verbs can be transparent and literal, semi-transparent, or fully idiomatic.

*Number of syllables in verb base* - The lexical verb that combine with *away* to form phrasal verbs are most often common words with one syllable. If the number of derivatives and non-native verbs, i.e. loanwords, that combine with *away* increases over time, newer phrasal verbs will possibly have more syllables.

*Origin of verbs* - Originally only native verbs of motion were used in phrasal verbs, but over time loanwords and more complex and uncommon verbs are increasingly used to form phrasal verbs. Based on information from searches in OED and Online Etymology Dictionary, the analysis distinguishes between native words, derivatives, and loanwords. Many loanwords entered ME from French and Latin and these are listed as loanwords. If the origin is uncertain (e.g. the verb *mould*), but present in ME the verb is listed as native.

In the search for PVs *away*, most instances of a verb followed by *away* are considered a PV *away*, and the identification and analysis of the variables need some clarification as they may appear vague or ambiguous for various reasons. One such example can be found in [72]:

[72] ‘Rachel **looked away**.’

*Ungoverned passion*. Holland, Sarah. 1993 [BNC]

In this sentence it could be argued that this is just a case of a verb being followed by an adverb and not a PV *away*. It is difficult to determine whether an intransitive construction is a phrasal verb or not as most criteria are not applicable. Since the verb is intransitive, it is not possible to separate the particle from the verb with an object. Also, there are no simplex words that can translate *look away* (e.g. ‘to avert one’s eyes’ or ‘look in another direction’), and lastly, as it is intransitive, it cannot be rendered in the passive. However, as discussed in chapter 2.1.2, the particle receiving spoken stress, and in addition changing or adding Aktionsart value, is sufficient for the construction to qualify as a phrasal verb. In *looked away* the particle alters both the meaning and the Aktionsart value, as *look away* has a somewhat opposite meaning to *look (at)*, and the particle changes the Aktionsart to resultative whereas *look* on its own is durative. Thus, if *away* receives spoken stress and the particle minimally adds Aktionsart value, I will consider it a particle in a PV *away*. In the following I shall comment on some occurrences where the identification or analysis may be unclear for other various reasons.

One occurrence which could be construed as PVs *away*, can be found in [73]:

[73] Charlie pays as little as he can **get away** with.

*Rain.* Gallagher, Stephen. 1990 [BNC]

In [73] *get away* may look like a phrasal verb, but to express the whole meaning it is necessary to include the preposition *with*. It is therefore a phrasal-prepositional verb, and as both the adverb *away* and the preposition *with* are necessary to express the meaning it is also an idiomatic expression (cf. chapter 2.1.2).

One phrasal verb that needs some consideration is found in [74]:

[74] **Keep away** from me!

*A little lower than the angels.* McCaughrean, Geraldine. 1987 [BNC]

*Keep away* has been interpreted as stative as it means to continue the status quo of ‘staying away’. However, this example illustrates another challenge which is to ascertain what theta role is assigned by the verb. In imperatives there is an unpronounced subject (a second person pronoun which could be inserted) that must be counted, but a question arises as to the volition of the subject since the imperative must be interpreted as an order. The question is thus whether the implicit subject should be counted as an Agent or a Theme. Assuming that the subject can choose to follow orders or face the consequences, i.e. freely do or not do what they are ordered or asked to do, unpronounced subjects in imperative sentences will be treated as Agents.

Other examples that are somewhat ambiguous are found in [75] and [76] which have similar constructions:

[75] The motor throttled up and the car **screamed away**.

*Murder forestalled.* Chester, Peter. 1990. [BNC]

[76] Just keep a low profile,' Bodo said, as he started the engine and **roared away**.

*Bury the dead.* Carter, Peter. 1986. [BNC]

These PVs *away* could be interpreted as durative analogous with ‘V-ing away’ (cf. chapter 2.2.2), but they are most likely resultative as in ‘drove away so fast that the engine screamed or roared’. In these instances, the verbs *screamed* and *roared* function as both motion and manner verbs and *away* is the result. In [76] there is another ambiguity in that

one would think that it is the car that *roared away*. However, in this sentence there is an Agent (*Bodo*) who makes the car *roar* as opposed to [75] where the argument is a Theme.

In [77] there are two possible readings depending on interpretation of *blown away*. If interpreted compositionally, Bella is hypothetically being ‘blown away physically’, if interpreted as an idiomatic expression, Bella is ‘flabbergasted’. As I do not have access to the wider context, I must guess and have settled on it being a compositional PV *away* on the assumption that this is what is funny (I could, of course, be wrong as someone’s surprise can be funny as well).

[77] He laughed again, seeming to find the idea of Bella being **blown away**, irresistibly funny.

*Strawberries and wine*. Nash, E. 1993. [BNC]

Another element that needs clarification, is subordinate finite *for*-clauses. Normally, they must have an overt subject to include a (finite) verb as in [78], and in that case they are causal:

[78] (the impostinnynge) in the forsayd maner dronke of the same water / is good for them that be fallen / and haue congeled blode in the body **for it withdryueth away**

*The vertuose boke of distyllacyon of the waters of all maner of herbes*. Brunschwig, Hieronymus. 1528 [EEBO]

[79] Your God would not thank you for **throwing away** your life.

*Foxbat*. Cave, Peter. 1979 [BNC]

In [79] we see another type of subordinate clause introduced by *for* and with a prepositional complement, i.e. a clause with a nominalised verb ending in *-ing*. However, in the subordinate clause the gerund behaves in the same manner as a verb, and in this case a PV *away* where the unexpressed subject is coreferential with the subject in the main clause.<sup>5</sup> Thus, internally it behaves like a verb and assigns theta-roles. It is therefore included in the analysis. This applies to non-finite clauses introduced by *by* as in [80] too:

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<sup>5</sup> ‘When the *-ing* construction contains a direct object or an adverbial and is therefore unambiguously clausal, the usual interpretation is that there is an implicit link to the superordinate subject’ (Quirk et al. 1985:1065).

[80] how strangely did a creature (...), believe a serpent before a maker, and was so miserably cheated as to suppose that by **casting away** gods image, he should become the more like him?

*Israels prayer in time of trouble with Gods gracious answer thereunto.* Reynolds, Edward. 1649 [EEBO]

In [81] the verb *died* is resultative on its own. The particle *away* is also resultative, but it adds a temporal value to the ‘dying event’ by prolonging it for a bounded period of time. The result being the same, i.e. that the crowd stopped making noise, it is still a resultative construction, and although the particle must be said to have an effect, it is not intensifying the resultative Aktionsart so it is labelled ‘none’ in the analysis.

[81] The baying of the crowds **died away**.

*A little lower than angels.* McCaughrean, Geraldine. 1987. [BNC]

In [82] *away* is found in pre-verbal position. In this thesis it has been stated that the particle is found in post-verbal position, either adjacent to the verb or separated from it only by a direct object or, less often, an adverb. However, in OE it was common to have particles before the verb (cf. chapter 2.1.1 and example [16]), and although we have seen that particles became fixed in post-verbal position during ME (cf. chapter 2.1.1), the example in [79] is possibly a remnant of this. If not, it could also be an idiosyncrasy on the part of the author, but either way, it will be regarded as a PV *away* in the analysis.

[82] ...let vs nowe consume the ryde of them / that none **away escape**

*The hystorye, sege and dystruccyon of Troye.* Lydgate, John. 1513. [EEBO]

At first glance the examples, [83] and [84], seem to be passive constructions as the auxiliary is *to be*, but they are cases of perfective BE in active constructions:

[83] for this sayth not onely hys mayster saynte austayne, oute of whose rule and relygyon frere barons **is ronne away**

*The second parte of the co[n]futation of Tyndals answere in whyche is also confuted the chyrche that Tyndal deuyseth.* More, Thomas. 1533 [EEBO]

[84] whan he thys beest hath slayne and the gayler gotten hath a barge and of hys wyues  
treasure gan it charge and toke hys wife, and eke her suster fre and by the gayler,  
and with hem al thre **is stole away** out of the lande by nyght and to the countre of  
enupye

*The works of Geffray Chaucer newlye printed, with dyuers works which  
were neuer in print before.* Chaucer, Geoffrey. 1542 [EEBO]

According to van Gelderen (2018:31) ‘in older English, ..., the auxiliary *have* is used when an Agent is involved with transitives and unergatives and *be* when a Theme is involved with unaccusatives’. During ME, more specifically around 1350, periphrastic perfect *have* supersedes the formerly more prominent variant with *be*, and whereas *have* allows different readings (but does not favour resultative), the *be* perfect is restricted to resultative reading (McFadden 2017:3-4). [83] and [84] are both resultative, and thus fit this pattern. Also, the argument structure follows observed patterns so that both clauses with PVs *away* contain Theme arguments. In [83] the *rule and relygyon* (of *mayster saynte austayne*) is the reason (i.e. Causer) why *frere barons* (Theme) **is ronne away** and in [84] the NP *al thre* is the Theme as they are not initiating events themselves. Although less used than *have*, the actual disappearance of *be* perfect did not start until 1800 (McFadden 2017:7).

The type of construction in [85] seems unusual for the period. In fact, it is the only such occurrence in the data from EEBO, and it is possible that this is an early version of the ‘time’-*away* construction demonstrated in chapter 2.5:

[85] e are expert pluk vp our harts, aduersite i ou pray this dolorus drede, expell and  
**do away** sum tyme hereon to think

*The xiii. bukes of Eneados of the famose poete Virgill translattet out of  
Latyne verses into Scottish metir.* Virgil. Douglas, Gawin. 1553 [EEBO]

In PDE the ‘time’-*away* construction requires the verb to be intransitive. The verb must also be followed by an NP which is licenced by the construction and not the verb, and only a time phrase is allowed, not a postverbal NP, thus yielding phrases like e.g. *sleep the evening away*. This is not the case in [85] where the verb, *do*, is transitive. However, we have seen in some of the examples that the grammatical conventions were different in

EModE, and functions could be realised differently from PDE, i.e. with different grammatical forms. The VP expresses an atelic situation, and the subject is an Agent, and although there is no sense of wasting time, quite the contrary one might say, it is not unthinkable that this can be the beginnings of a ‘time’-*away* construction. In keeping with the conclusion of chapter 2.5, the occurrence in [85] is analysed as a resultative, transitive construction.

In the next occurrence, [86], the phrasal verb is *while away*, another ‘time’-away construction, but the dilemma is different:

[86] If he plays games to **while away** the tedious time, thought Cadfael, he plays them by noble rules,...

*The holy thief.* Peters, Ellis. 1993 [BNC]

The question here is whether the particle changes the transitivity of the verb or not. When using *while* as a verb it only allows the phrasal verb construction with *away* as a particle and cannot function as a simplex verb or with another particle. As mentioned above, the ‘time’-*away* construction in PDE requires an intransitive verb which is rendered transitive by the construction. However, it is the particle which allows *while* to function as a verb at all and as such only as a transitive verb. In OED *while* is listed as an obsolete transitive verb meaning ‘to occupy or engage (a person) for a time, or for the time’ or ‘to keep it up, “stick it out”’ (s.v. *while*). In the first instance the object would be a personal pronoun, often reflexive, and in the second it would be *it*. The first occurrence of the former listed in OED is from 1606, and there is only one occurrence of the latter from 1617. This concurs with the Online Etymological Dictionary which states that *while* as a verb occurred around 1600 as a derivation of the noun *while* (s.v. *while*). Around 1630 the meaning changed ‘to cause (time) to pass (without dullness)’ which still stands. A search in EEBO covering all periods yields no occurrences of *while* as simplex verb. As *while* historically is transitive and there is no intransitive *while* in PDE, I have settled on the particle not transitivity the verb in this case.

Another ambiguous example appears in [87] where *and* contributes unclarity to the sentence. However, this sentence appears three times in different contexts in the



corpus, but in the same publication, and in the other two there is no *and* before *take away salvation*, only a comma (,) or a comma preceded by the word *note*:

[87] i am gods instrument but for a time, it is he must give increase, and yet preaching is necessary: for, take away preaching, and **take away** salvation

*The preaching bishop reprovng unpreaching prelates.* Latimer, Hugh.1661 [EEBO]

Thus, I think this is a case of implicit subject (second or third person pronoun), i.e equal to ‘if you (or one) take away preaching, etc.’ Thus, this is a conditional subordinate clause followed by a main clause and the argument structure is Agent and Theme (twice, but only counted as one).

In the next occurrence, [88], it is not clear whether the PV *away* is compositional, semi-transparent or idiomatic:

[88] ...your elders coueyted to haue don **away** that dignite for the pryde of the counceyllours...

*Boecius de consolacione philosophie* (Boethius) Chaucer, Geoffrey. 1478. [EEBO]

In PDE *do away*, often in combination with *with*, means ‘to get rid of’, and there is probably a similar meaning here. Although figurative use is found increasingly already in ME, it is not common to find such idiomatic expression as early as the 1470s so we are most likely looking at a compositional PV *away* where *don* has a causative meaning similar to ‘make’.

In the next two occurrences, [89] and [90], we have the same PV *away*. However, there is a difference between them as [89] is compositional and literal and [90] is semi-transparent and used figuratively:

[89] and he spured hym soo sore that the horse **ranne away** with hym

*Here begynneth the first volum of sir Iohan Froyssart of the cronycles of Englande, Fraunce, Spayne, Portyngale, Scotlande, ...* Froissart, Jean. 1523 [EEBO]

[90] ... he **runne away** and fled fornication...

*Sermons very fruitful, godly, and learned, preached and sette forth by Maister Roger Edgeworth 1559* [EEBO]

In both [89] and [90] the particle in *run away* (*ranne away* and *runne away*) alters the Aktionsart and the meaning. In [88] the meaning is literal in that the horse literally ‘ran away’. *Run away* is one of the PVs *away* that seems to have become a relatively fixed expression quite early, and in most cases, it has the meaning of *escaping* or *fleeing* someone or something whether this is concrete or abstract. In [90] the PV *away* also appears in conjunction with *fled* which is synonymous with the phrasal verb *run away*. Furthermore, as *he* (‘Joseph’) is running away from *fornication*, it is reasonable to assume that he is vigorously resisting sin rather than physically running from someone or something (although one cannot be entirely certain) so it is a conceptual escape.

In [91] we have the phrasal verb *turned away*. This is also a PV *away* which, in addition to keeping its literal meaning, early on was used figuratively, and this is also the case in this example where ‘turning away’ from God is an abstract event although a spatial sense remains:

[91] ...: if thou hadst neuer **turned away**, then hadst thou had no ned to haue turned to againe:...

*Fiftie godlie and learned sermons diuided into fiue decades, conteyning the chiefe and principall pointes of Christian religion.* Bullinger, Heinrich. 1577. [EEBO]

In [92] there are two possible interpretations of the argument structure of the PV *away*. It can either be *the soule* that is drawn away in which case *the soule* is the Theme and the subordinate clause *something here below* is the Causer. Another possible interpretation is that it is *something here below* that is drawn away. In this case *something here below* is the Theme in a subordinate clause. Either way *drawne away* assigns a Theme argument. However, as EModE does not always conform to the grammar of PDE, and because it makes most sense semantically, I believe the first to be the case.

[92] ... the soule suffers 5: it selfe by something here below to be **drawne away** from god...

*The soules conflict with it selfe, and victory over it self by faith a treatise of the inward disquietments of distressed spirits,* Sibbes, Richard. 1635. [EEBO]

It is unusual to find elements other than the object in transitive phrasal verbs or an adverb between the verb and the particle in both transitive and intransitive phrasal verbs. However, these restrictions were not necessarily observed in EModE as we can see in [93]:

[93] so she **ascappid** by the thamse from them **away** that wer hir emnys:

*Here begynnys a schort [and] breue tabull on thes cronicles...*(no author) 1485 [EEBO]

In [93] there are two PPs between the verb and the particle, and besides there is a relative clause belonging to one of them appearing after the particle. I still claim that this is an occurrence of a PV *away* because EModE did not adhere to the same grammatical rules as PDE, and it is more common to find more elements such as adverbial phrases of various types and relative clauses between the verb and the particle in EModE than in PDE.

The next occurrence, [94], demonstrates that sometimes it is not enough to have the whole sentence to determine how to interpret the whole meaning. In [94] there are clues to a figurative meaning in the *Boat of Night*, but it is not entirely evident whether the particle in this PV *away* should be interpreted as spatial in a literal or figurative sense. The wider context reveals the text to be about a prematurely dead queen, thus the meaning is figurative.

[94] She was taken **away** too early in the Boat of the Night.

*City of dreams.* Gill, Anton. 1993. [BNC]

In this section I have identified and described the different variables that are included in the analysis. I have also demonstrated some of the challenges that have surfaced while analysing the data and explained the reasons for their analysis. In section 3.3 the results are synthesised and described, and I attempt to identify some correlations.

### 3.3 Results in EEBO and BNC

There are 14 variables in the analysis (cf. Table 3.1), and even though all the variables are related to the nature of phrasal verbs, some variables are more closely related than others. These are presented in the same table when space allows it for the purpose of recognizing possible correlations. Some tables contain both number of occurrences and

percentages, and some results are presented in two tables, one with absolute numbers and one with percentages. This is done for easier reading because percentages are important as there are two periods with deviating numbers in the data, namely 30 occurrences in EEBO from the period 1670-1699 and 75 occurrences in BNC from the period 1979-1993. For the same reason I have rounded any digital numbers in the percentages to whole numbers following the rule that digitals up to, but below 5 are rounded down and digitals from 5 and above are rounded up to the nearest whole number. There are a few exceptions to this where the decimals for the results are kept in the table. This is because the calculations of percentage numbers resulted in numbers with the decimal 5 (e.g. 4.5), and so any manipulation of the figures would lead to inaccuracy.

The first results presented can be seen in Table 3.2 where numbers and percentages relate the findings of Aktionsart in EEBO and BNC.

**Table 3.2:** Aktionsart in EEBO and BNC

	1474-1519		1520-1569		1570-1619		1620-1669		1670-1699		1979-1993	
	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	30 hits	%	75 hits	%
<i>Stative</i>	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%
<i>Durative</i>	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	5%
<i>Resultative</i>	50	100%	49	98%	50	100%	50	100%	30	100%	69	92%

Table 3.2 shows that the Aktionsart is resultative in almost all occurrences regardless of period as four out of five periods in EModE have a 100% score for resultative Aktionsart. There is only one occurrence which is not resultative in the data from EEBO, and this exception is found in the period 1520-1569 where the score is 98%. This occurrence has stative Aktionsart, and the phrasal verb in question is *kepe hym away*. The data from BNC show a 93% score for resultative Aktionsart, i.e. 69 out of 75 occurrences. There were six exceptions, two stative and four durative. One stative sentence contains the same phrasal verb as the EModE occurrence, namely *keep away*, and the other is *staying away*. In contrast to EEBO, there are four occurrences with durative Aktionsart in BNC, and they all contain different verbs.

Table 3.3 presents the numbers for particle effect on Aktionsart in EEBO and BNC.

**Table 3.3: Particle effect on Aktionsart in EEBO and BNC**

	1474-1519		1520-1569		1570-1619		1620-1669		1670-1699		1979-1993	
	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	30 hits	%	75 hits	%
<i>None</i>	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	4%
<i>Intens</i>	33	66%	27	54%	26	52%	32	64%	18	60%	45	60%
<i>Change</i>	17	34%	22	44%	24	48%	18	36%	12	40%	27	36%

The numbers for particle effect on Aktionsart show that the particle rarely has no effect at all on the Aktionsart. Again, there is only one occurrence in the data from EEBO (2%), and this is in the same phrasal verb as with the previous variable, i.e. *kepe hym away*, where the verb is stative regardless of the added particle. A similar pattern is found in the data from BNC. There are three occurrences where the particle has no effect on the Aktionsart, and two of these are *keep away* and *staying away* which are stative, and the third is *died away* which was discussed in section 3.2 (example [81]). In all periods, from 1474 to 1993, the particles with intensifying effect outnumber the particles that change the Aktionsart, and in all periods the percentage of intensifying effect lies between 52% and 66%. The lowest percentage is found in the 1570-1619 period and the highest in the 1474-1519. Thus, there is no discernible pattern of development here. If we look at the verbs where the particle changes the Aktionsart, they are all durative, e.g. *run*, *carry*, *drive* etc. without the particle and change to resultative with the particle. This applies to all the data both in EEBO and BNC.

In Table 3.4 we can see the numbers and percentages for marked outer aspect in EEBO and BNC.

**Table 3.4: Marked outer aspect in EEBO and BNC**

	1474-1519		1520-1569		1570-1619		1620-1669		1670-1699		1979-1993	
	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	30 hits	%	75 hits	%
<i>None</i>	46	92%	42	84%	44	88%	42	84%	24	80%	56	75%
<i>Perfective</i>	4	8%	6	12%	4	8%	6	12%	3	10%	7	9%
<i>Progressive</i>	0	0%	2	4%	2	4%	2	4%	3	10%	12	16%

The majority of PVs *away* both in EEBO and BNC are unmarked for outer aspect. The percentage varies from 75% to 92% with the lowest percentage in BNC and the highest in the earliest period of EEBO, i.e.1474-1519. The periods between vary from 80% to 88% percent in no particular order. The reason for the drop in unmarked forms cannot be found in the numbers for perfective as the percentage is stable through all periods with 8% both in the first, the last, and in one of the middle periods. The increase in marked outer aspect is found in the progressive, and here the difference could be noteworthy. In the earliest period, 1474-1519, there are no PVs *away* in the progressive. In the next four periods in EEBO there are 4% (two occurrences in each of the first three) or 10% (three occurrences in the last). In BNC, on the other hand, 16% of the PVs *away* are in the progressive (12 out of 75 occurrences). Most of these, 8 out of 12, are found with resultative Aktionsart, but 3 of them are used with durative Aktionsart, and 1 in a stative event (*staying away*). It should be noted that most *-ing* forms in the EEBO are nominalisations of verbs in subordinate clauses.

In Table 3.5 the results related to transitivity in EEBO and BNC are presented, and Table 3.6 shows the distribution of active and passive voice in EEBO and BNC. The variables are presented together as they interact.

**Table 3.5: Transitivity in EEBO and BNC**

	1474-1519		1520-1569		1570-1619		1620-1669		1670-1699		1979-1993	
	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	30 hits	%	75 hits	%
<i>Intrans.</i>	24	48%	18	36%	30	60%	18	36%	17	57%	53	71%
<i>Trans</i>	26	52%	32	64%	20	40%	32	64%	13	43%	22	29%

The numbers for EEBO in Table 3.5 do not suggest any systematic development of transitivity. The highest percentage of transitives in EEBO, 64%, is found in the 1520-1569 and 1620-1669 periods which, as Table 3.6 shows, also have a low percentage of passive constructions with 22% and 26%, respectively. However, all periods in EEBO have a markedly lower percentage of passive than active constructions ranging from 20% to 37%, showing a slight tendency of increasing in numbers, at the same time as the balance between intransitives and transitives shifts from period to period. The numbers

in BNC are more clear-cut. Most PVs *away* are intransitive with 71% to 29% transitive, and as many as 92% of the constructions are active as opposed to 8% passive.

**Table 3.6: Voice in EEBO and BNC**

	1474-1519		1520-1569		1570-1619		1620-1669		1670-1699		1979-1993	
	50	%	50	%	50	%	50	%	30	%	75	%
	hits		hits		hits		hits		hits		hits	
<i>Active</i>	40	80%	39	78%	34	68%	37	74%	19	63%	69	92%
<i>Passive</i>	10	20%	11	22%	16	32%	13	26%	11	37%	6	8%

In Table 3.7 we see the numbers and percentages for particle effect on transitivity in EEBO and BNC.

**Table 3.7: Particle effect on transitivity in EEBO and BNC**

	1474-1519		1520-1569		1570-1619		1620-1669		1670-1699		1979-1993	
	50	%	50	%	50	%	50	%	30	%	75	%
	hits		hits		hits		hits		hits		hits	
<i>None</i>	50	100%	49	98%	49	98%	48	96%	28	93%	65	87%
<i>Detrans</i>	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%	7	9%
<i>Trans</i>	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	2%	2	7%	3	4%

Table 3.7 shows that a clear majority of particles have no effect on transitivity. In EEBO the percentage for no effect shows a slight consecutive drop from 100% in 1474-1519 via 98%, 98%, and 96% to 93% in the 1670-1699 period. In BNC the percentage is lower, i.e. 87%, and in itself this has little significance. However, 13% of the particles in BNC have an effect, and 9% of these (7 occurrences) have a detransitivising effect. There are only two occurrences in all the periods in EEBO combined that are detransitivising and four occurrences with transitivising effect in the same time span. In contrast, there are three occurrences of transitivising effect in addition to the 7 with detransitivising effect in BNC which covers a mere 15-year period.

In Tables 3.8 and 3.9 the overall distribution of arguments is presented. Table 3.8 shows the distribution in absolute numbers, and Table 3.9 shows the percentages.

**Table 3.8:** Overall argument distribution in absolute numbers in EEBO and BNC

		Intransitives				Transitives		
		Agent	Causer	Exper.	Theme	Agent+ Theme	Causer+ Exper	Causer + Theme
1474-1519	50 hits	9	0	0	15	20	0	6
1520-1569	50 hits	4	0	1	13	21	0	11
1570-1619	50 hits	8	1	0	21	13	0	7
1620-1669	50 hits	3	0	1	14	26	1	5
1670-1699	30 hits	4	0	0	13	8	0	5
1979-1993	75 hits	31	0	0	22	20	1	1

Because transitivity and argument structure are mutually dependent (as discussed in chapter 2.3) and to facilitate interpretation, argument structure is divided into two groups according to transitivity, and the order follows the animacy hierarchy of the UTAH that was presented in chapter 2.3. As also shown in chapter 2.3 and Table 3.1, there are other possible arguments, but only those found in the data are presented in Tables 3.8 and 3.9.

**Table 3.9:** Overall argument distribution in percentages in EEBO and BNC

		Intransitives				Transitives		
		Agent	Causer	Exper	Theme	Agent+ Theme	Causer+ Exper	Causer + Theme
1474-1519		18%	0%	0%	30%	40%	0%	12%
1520-1569		8%	0%	2%	26%	42%	0%	22%
1570-1619		16%	2%	0%	42%	26%	0%	14%
1620-1669		6%	0%	2%	28%	52%	2%	10%
1670-1699		13%	0%	0%	43%	27%	0%	17%
1979-1993		41%	0%	0%	29%	27%	1%	1%

Although the total number for arguments in both intransitive and transitive constructions varies for each group, the numbers show tendencies.<sup>6</sup> To make the numbers even more transparent, I have made separate tables for intransitives and transitives in Tables 3.10 and 3.11, respectively.

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<sup>6</sup> As the calculations resulted in decimals below 0,5 and I chose not to manipulate the numbers, the percentages for BNC 1979-1993 thus only add up to 99%.



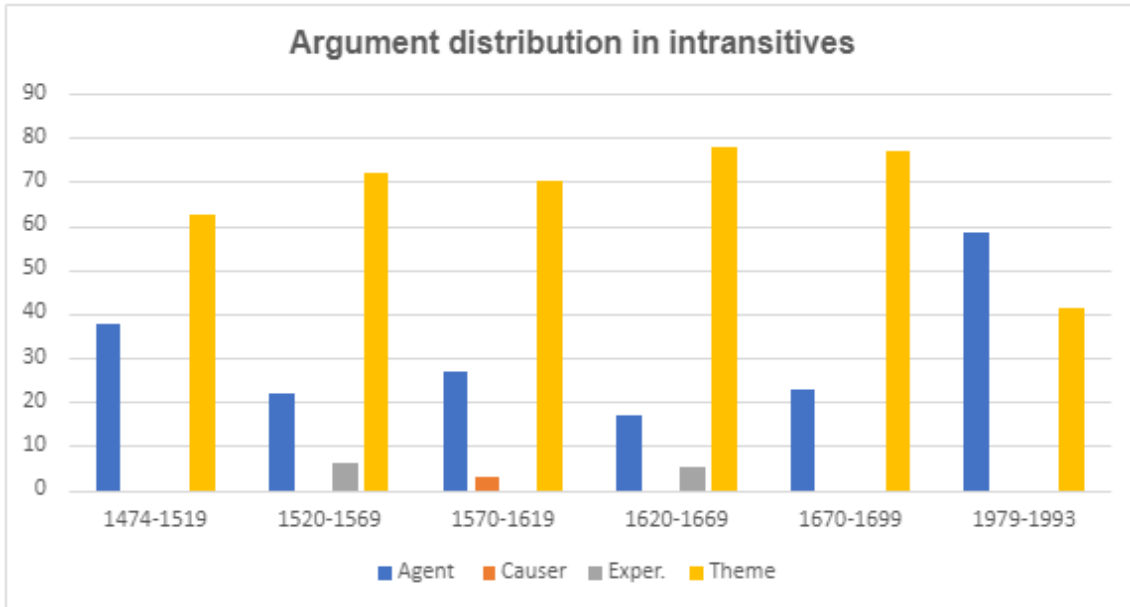
Intransitives have only one argument, and in the data both from EEBO and BNC there are four different nominal arguments: Agent, Causer, Experiencer, and Theme. The distribution can be seen in Table 3.10.

**Table 3.10:** *Distribution of arguments in intransitives in EEBO and BNC*

	<b>1474-1519</b>		<b>1520-1569</b>		<b>1570-1619</b>		<b>1620-1669</b>		<b>1670-1699</b>		<b>1979-1993</b>	
	24	%	18	%	30	%	18	%	17	%	53	%
	hits		hits		hits		hits		hits		hits	
<i>Agent</i>	9	37.5%	4	22%	8	27%	3	17%	4	23%	31	58.5%
<i>Causer</i>	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Exper.</i>	0	0%	1	6%	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Theme</i>	15	62.5%	13	72%	21	70%	14	78%	13	77%	22	41.5%

In Table 3.10, starting with the lowest number, we see that there is only one occurrence of Causer argument in the intransitive constructions in all the data, and this is found in the 1570-1619 period. It is unusual to find a Causer in an intransitive construction, and the occurrence would not be grammatical in PDE. Similarly, there are only two occurrences of Experiencer argument in the intransitive group, also these found in EEBO in 1520-1569 and 1620-1669. Consequently, there are no Causer or Experiencer arguments in intransitives in the BNC data. Looking at Agent and Theme arguments, the situation is different as they comprise almost all arguments. In EEBO the percentage of Theme arguments is always markedly higher than that of Agent arguments, ranging from 62.5% to 78%. In BNC the result is different with 41.5% Theme arguments against 58.5% Agent arguments, the majority thus being Agents. The differences are visualised in Figure 3.1 where we see clearly that the difference in number of Theme and Agent arguments in EEBO is considerable, and that the numbers in BNC constitute a substantial change from EEBO.

Most PVs *away* in the data regardless of period are resultative, and resultative is connected to Theme arguments (van Gelderen 2018:27-28). Themes are also linked to passives as Themes are the highest arguments in passives and thus become subjects.



**Figure 3.1:** Argument distribution in intransitives in EEBO and BNC

In 34% to 48% of all the PVs *away*, it is the particle which renders the construction resultative. Without the particle, the verb in these constructions is durative, and durative is linked with Agent arguments. In Table 3.11 the correlation between argument and Aktionsart of the verb without added particle is listed, and the table also includes the correlation between argument and Aktionsart paired with passive or active constructions. The Causer and Experiencer arguments are excluded as they are very few and will not shed light on any development. As numbers are few, I have not included percentages here.

**Table 3.11:** Arguments and Aktionsart without particle in intransitives in EEBO and BNC

	Agent argument	Aktionsart - particle	Voice	Theme argument	Aktionsart -particle	Voice
1474-1519 24 hits	9	6 resultative 3 durative	0 passive	15	11 resultative 4 durative	8 passive 2 passive
1520-1569 18 hits	4	1 resultative 3 durative	0 passive	13	6 resultative 7 durative	5 passive 5 passive
1570-1619 30 hits	8	3 resultative 5 durative	0 passive	21	12 resultative 9 durative	8 passive 8 passive
1620-1669 18 hits	3	1 resultative 2 durative	0 passive	14	9 resultative 5 durative	8 passive 4 passive
1670-1699 17 hits	4	1 resultative 3 durative	0 passive	13	8 resultative 5 durative	6 passive 5 passive
1979-1993 53 hits	31	9 resultative 20 durative 2 stative	0 passive	22	14 resultative 8 durative	5 passive 0 passive

The number of Agent arguments is low in EEBO, but Table 3.11 shows that, except for the EEBO period 1474-1519, the tendency is to have more durative verbs than resultative verbs with Agent arguments. All constructions with Agent arguments are also active. With Theme arguments the Aktionsart of the verbs is more evenly distributed, but Theme arguments seem to favour resultative verbs. However, the most striking difference lies in the number of passive constructions with Theme arguments as there are just as many or more passives with resultative verbs than with durative.

The transitives in the data both from EEBO and BNC are ditransitives, thus containing two nominal arguments. Three different combinations were found in the data: Agent + Theme, Causer + Experiencer, and Causer + Theme. The distribution can be seen in table 3.12 which contains both absolute numbers and percentages.

**Table 3.12:** *Distribution of arguments in transitives in EEBO and BNC*

	1474-1519		1520-1569		1570-1619		1620-1669		1670-1699		1979-1993	
	26 hits	%	32 hits	%	20 hits	%	32 hits	%	13 hits	%	22 hits	%
<i>Agent + Theme</i>	20	77%	21	66%	13	65%	26	81%	8	62%	20	91%
<i>Causer + Exper.</i>	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%	1	4,5%
<i>Causer + Theme</i>	6	23%	11	34%	7	35%	5	16%	5	38%	1	4,5%

In transitives, again starting with the lowest number, there are only two occurrences of Causer + Experiencer argument structure, one in EEBO and one in BNC. Thus, there is no apparent difference in the distribution. There are also similarities regarding the distribution of Agent + Theme and Causer + Theme in that both EEBO and BNC have a considerably higher percentage of Agent + Theme structures than Causer + Theme. However, in EEBO the percentage of Causer + Theme structure varies from 16% to 38%, with three periods in the thirties, and in BNC there is only 4,5%, i.e. one occurrence. The Agent + Theme structure has a different distribution with 91% in BNC and 62% to 81% in EEBO with three periods in the sixties. The pattern is thus similar to the intransitives with BNC having more Agent arguments than EEBO. Due to time constraints, I have not analysed the correlations in argument structure, Aktionsart without particle, and voice in transitives.

Table 3.13 shows the distribution of motion verbs vs. non-motion verbs in PVs *away* in EEBO and BNC. The distribution of high frequent motion verbs in combination with *away* is also shown in alphabetical order. To be included in the table, the motion verbs must account for 5% or more in at least one of the periods.

**Table 3.13:** Distribution of motion verbs combining with *away* in EEBO and BNC

	1474-1519	1520-1569	1570-1619	1620-1669	1670-1699	1979-1993
Percentage	86%	76%	90%	86%	87%	59%
Hits	43	38	45	43	26	44
Different motion verbs	16	16	18	18	13	23
<i>Back</i>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%
<i>Bear</i>	9%	3%	0%	2%	0%	0%
<i>Carry</i>	2%	11%	9%	12%	12%	0%
<i>Cast</i>	5%	5%	2%	2%	15%	2%
<i>Drive</i>	7%	13%	11%	2%	8%	2%
<i>Fall</i>	2%	3%	7%	2%	8%	2%
<i>Go</i>	12%	3%	4%	0%	0%	7%
<i>Put</i>	14%	16%	2%	5%	0%	6%
<i>Run</i>	0%	5%	7%	2%	0%	9%
<i>Take</i>	16%	24%	29%	44%	27%	9%
<i>Turn</i>	7%	3%	7%	2%	0%	11%

The numbers in Table 3.13 show that the ratio of motion verbs is quite stable throughout the EEBO periods with percentages ranging from 76% to 90%, in inconsecutive order, thus not indicating any systematic development. The percentage in BNC is markedly lower with 59%, i.e. 17% below the lowest percentage in EEBO.

The most common motion verb in EEBO is *take* which outnumbers the other motion verbs by ranging from 16% to 44% in all periods. The verb *put* is a close second in the first two periods of EEBO, but the percentage decreases noticeably after that while the percentage of *take* increases in the same period. Other motion verbs with a fairly high overall percentage in EEBO are *carry*, *drive* and to a certain degree *cast* with an average of 9%, 8%, and 6%, respectively. It should be noted that one of the 5 occurrences of *drive* (in different forms) that constitute the 13% in the EEBO period 1520-1569 is *withdrive*. In BNC the number of different motion verbs is not very high considering that there are 75 occurrences of PVs *away* in the data. However, the distribution of the 23 different motion verbs is more even as the highest percentage is 11% and the others range from

2% to 9% disregarding the verbs in the table that are not used in BNC. *Bear* with the meaning of ‘carry’ as used in EEBO is considered archaic in PDE (OED *s.v bear*).

Even though there are few occurrences of non-motion verbs compared to motion verbs, I have chosen to include Table 3.14 which shows the distribution of non-motion verbs in PVs *away* in EEBO and BNC.

**Table 3.14:** *Distribution of non-motion verbs combining with away in EEBO and BNC*

	1474-1519	1520-1569	1570-1619	1620-1669	1670-1699	1979-1993
<i>Percentage</i>	12%	24%	10%	14%	13%	41%
<i>Hits</i>	6	12	5	7	4	31
<i>Different non-motion verbs</i>	5	10	4	6	4	25

Table 3.14 shows that the distribution of non-motion verbs varies considerably more than that of motion verbs. The verb *do* appears in four of the EEBO periods, and *get* appears in two EEBO periods and in BNC. Other verbs that occur in PVs *away* in both one period in EEBO and in BNC, are *fade*, *keep*, *melt*, *sweep*, and *wash*. Other than that, most non-motion verbs in the data occur only once.

Table 3.15 demonstrates how spatial meaning in PVs *away* is distributed, and it distinguishes between literal, figurative, or no spatial meaning. Table 3.15 also includes an overview of the compositionality of PVs *away* and differentiates between (fully) compositional, semi-transparent, and (fully) idiomatic.

**Table 3.15:** *Particle meaning and compositionality in PVs away*

		1474 - 1519		1520 - 1569		1570 - 1619		1620 - 1669		1670 - 1699		1979 - 1993	
		50 hits	%	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	30 hits	%	75 hits	%
<i>Particle meaning</i>	Lit	31	62%	24	48%	29	58%	30	60%	14	47%	52	69%
	Fig	19	38%	26	52%	21	42%	20	40%	16	53%	19	25%
	None	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	5%
<i>Compositionality</i>	Comp	43	86%	41	82%	41	82%	44	88%	22	73%	63	84%
	Semi-t	7	14%	9	18%	9	18%	6	12%	8	27%	10	13%
	Idiom	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%

Table.3.15 shows that all particles in EEBO have some spatial meaning whether literal or figurative. Again, the percentages vary. Literal meaning ranges from 47% to 62%, and figurative meaning from 38% to 53% accordingly, both in inconsecutive order. Thus, there is no pattern suggesting a systematic change. In BNC there is a slight difference in that 5% of the particles do not carry any spatial meaning at all. Looking closer at this group, we see that there are 4 occurrences of non-spatial meaning in the particle, and these are the same 4 PVs *away* that express durative Aktionsart, 3 of which also had progressive outer aspect. The last PV *away* with durative Aktionsart and non-spatial meaning is found in a subordinate *to*-clause. The particles in these constructions all act as intensifiers of the durative Aktionsart. It should be noted that the percentages regarding spatial meaning of the particle in the data from BNC (1979-1993) in Table 3.15 do not add up to 100%. This is because all calculation of the percentages resulted in having the decimals 33 (i.e. 69.33, 25.33, and 5.33), and instead of manipulating the numbers, I complied with the system of rounding up or down and left the total figure incomplete.

Table 3.15 shows that a clear majority of the occurrences both in EEBO and BNC are fully compositional, ranging from 73% in the last period of EEBO to 88% in the 1620-1669 period and with 84% in BNC. Accordingly, there are low percentages of semi-transparent PVs *away* ranging from 12% to 27% in EEBO as there are no clearly idiomatic PVs *away* in these data. In BNC there are 2 occurrences of idiomatic PVs *away*. These make up only 3% of the total percentage, but as there are no occurrences of idioms at all in EEBO, they are possibly significant. The percentage of semi-transparent PVs *away* in BNC is 13%.

Table 3.16 includes an overview of the origin of verb base and number of syllables in verb base. Origin of verb base distinguishes between native verbs, loanwords, and derivative verbs, and number of syllables distinguishes between one and two syllables as there were no verbs with more syllables combining with *away* in the data. The numbers in Table 3.16 show that most verbs combining with *away* are native verbs. This applies to all periods in EEBO and BNC. The percentage ranges from 67% in the latest period of EEBO to 91% in BNC. In EEBO it is the first and the middle period which are closest to the BNC percentage so, again, there is no discernible development in EModE. As there are no derivatives in either of the periods, BNC also has the lowest percentage of

loanwords with 9%, and EEBO has an average of 22% loanwords ranging from 16% to 33%.

**Table 3.16:** Origin of verb bases and number of syllables in verb bases in EEBO and BNC

		1474-1519		1520-1569		1570-1619		1620-1669		1670-1699		1979-1993	
		50	%	50	%	50	%	50	%	30	%	75	%
		hits		hits		hits		hits		hits		hits	
<i>Origin</i>	Nat	42	84%	38	76%	42	84%	39	78%	20	67%	68	91%
<i>verb</i>	Loan	8	16%	12	24%	8	16%	11	22%	10	33%	7	9%
<i>base</i>	Deriv	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<i>No. of</i>	1 syll	45	90%	42	84%	44	88%	41	82%	26	87%	73	97%
<i>syll.</i>	2 syll	5	10%	8	16%	6	12%	9	18%	4	13%	2	3%

Almost all loanwords combining to form PVs *away* in the data, whether in EEBO or BNC can be traced to Latin and entered English during ME via French (e.g. *chase, escape, vanish, carry, pass, convey, jostle, depart, dispatch, pray, force*). However, three verbs, of which two only occur in EEBO, are borrowed from other languages. Two are borrowed from ON, *skared* (OED *s.v. scare*) which is used only once and *cast* (OED *s.v. cast*) in different forms which occur 10 times across all EEBO periods and once in BNC. The last verb is *skoureth* which, although originally from Old French, entered ME from Middle Dutch according to OED (*s.v. scour* as in ‘cleanse or polish by hard rubbing’). Some loanwords that combine with *away* are not motion verbs such as *pray, force, scour, and scare*, and they only appear once. In contrast, as we have seen, some of the motion verbs account for high percentages of the overall number.

Table 3.16 also shows that in EEBO between 10% and 18% of verb bases have two syllables as opposed to all others which have one. The native verbs with two syllables are *affright, withdrive, and wither*, the first two being monosyllabic words with added prefixes. The loanwords with two syllables are *carry, convey, depart, dispatch, escape, jostle, and vanish*. In contrast, there are only two verbs in the BNC data with two syllables in the verb base constituting an overall 3%, and they are both durative non-motion verbs. One is native, *burrow*, and one is a loanword, *chatter*. All other verbs have a monosyllabic base form, and as we have seen, 91% are native.

Table 3.17 is the last table in the analysis, and it demonstrates to what extent particles are separated from the verb in in PVs *away* in EEBO and BNC.

**Table 3.17:** Distribution of separated and non-separated particle in PVs *away* in EEBO and BNC

		1474-1519		1520-1569		1570-1619		1620-1669		1670-1699		1979-1993	
		50 hits	%	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	50 hits	%	30 hits	%	75 hits	%
<i>Separated particle</i>	Yes	11	22%	10	20%	3	6%	10	20%	3	10%	18	24%
	No	39	78%	40	80%	47	94%	40	80%	27	90%	57	76%

In Table 3.17 we see that the number of separated particles is low compared to the number of non-separated particle. Even so, the numbers vary, and in EEBO the highest percentage of separated particle is found in the earliest period, i.e. 1474-1519, with 22%, and the lowest is found in the middle period, i.e. 1570-1619, with 6%. As the percentage in BNC is 24%, we see that the differences between periods in EEBO is greater than that between the highest percentage in EEBO and BNC. The average for EEBO is 16%, which is 8% lower than BNC.

### 3.5 Discussion

Many of the variables examined in this study have remained surprisingly stable, particularly in EModeE, but some also into PDE. In this section I will comment on and discuss the results from section 3.3, and I will try to do so in the order in which they are presented, but as variables and thus the results sometimes interact, it may be useful to discuss them together.

In the following the results from Tables 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 are discussed. The first table shows the results for Aktionsart, and only one of 230 occurrences of PV *away* in EEBO is not resultative, i.e. more than 99% are resultative. In BNC 93% of the occurrences are resultative, and particularly in view of the nearly 300-year gap between EEBO and BNC, this seems noteworthy. However, the data in EEBO cover roughly the same time span, and this points to a stable meaning at D-structure in accordance with van Gelderen (2018:2) who states that most verbs retain their inner aspectual structure throughout the history of English'. This also seems to apply to PVs *away*.

ME saw the emergence of clear aspectual usage of phrasal verbs, and in Table 3.3 we see that the particle, in accordance with Capelle's study (2007:47), in most cases, both in EModE and PDE, intensifies the already existing Aktionsart in the simplex verb which is resultative. If we look at the verbs where the particle changes the Aktionsart, they are all durative, e.g. *run*, *carry*, *drive* etc. without the particle, and change to resultative with



the particle. This applies to all the data both in EEBO and BNC, and it concurs with what has been stated by, amongst others, van Gelderen (2018:19), that an added particle to a durative verb adds telicity, thus rendering the construction resultative. Brinton (1988:163) also suggests that *away* most often expresses an endpoint or result, i.e. resultative Aktionsart, but additionally observes that particles may express durative Aktionsart, and that is particularly the case with *along*, *away* and *on*, which behave rather different than other particles (Brinton 1988:175 and cf. chapter 2.4). As will be discussed below, there are some occurrences (5%) in BNC where the particle expresses durative Aktionsart, and in these cases the particle intensifies an already present durative Aktionsart.

One of the differences between EEBO and BNC is the use of progressive outer aspect. Out of 230 occurrences there are 9 with the progressive *-ing* ending, none in the first period, 4% (2 occurrences) in each of the three next periods, and 10% (3 occurrences) in the last. In BNC there are 16% marked progressive forms. According to van Gelderen (2018:235) progressive aspect is not marked in OE, and in ME and EModE it is not necessary. The *-ing* form appeared in ME as an adjective form, but in the 15th century it was used as a progressive inflection. This form was rare, and also in the 16th century it was ‘employed rather sparingly’ (Visser 1946:248 in van Gelderen 2018:238). By the turn of the century the choice between simple and progressive form with *-ing* was optional, but the ending was gradually more needed, and in the 19th century it became obligatory (van Gelderen 2018:238-239). This may explain the increased use of progressive outer aspect in both the latter period of EEBO and the even higher percentage in BNC and also how progressive is linked to durative Aktionsart in PDE. Outer aspect influences the way we interpret Aktionsart, i.e. outer aspect may emphasise or coerce it (Brinton 1988:38-45, van Gelderen 2018:ix & 2 and cf. chapter 2.2.1), and with the durative occurrences in BNC, the progressive form emphasises the durative Aktionsart. Most occurrences with marked outer aspect both in EEBO and BNC are perfective. As this aspect is used when a situation is viewed as complete, it is natural that it is more frequent with resultative Aktionsart. Nevertheless, 75% of PVs *away* in BNC and an average of 86% in EEBO are not formally marked for aspect, thus reflecting the absence of a coherent system of lexical markers in English (Brinton 1988:1 and van Gelderen 2018:245).

The next paragraphs are dedicated to the results in Tables 3.5-3.12 and Figure 3.1. PVs *away* do not allow double object construction. Furthermore, as *away* already has an adverbial function, the phrasal verb does not require an obligatory adverbial complement. Consequently, Table 3.5 shows that PVs *away* in EEBO and BNC are either intransitive or (mono)transitive. In EModE transitivity is quite stable in its unpredictability. The numbers of intransitives and transitives move up and down interchangeably independent of period, the lowest percentage of intransitives in EEBO being 36% in two periods and the highest being 60%. In PDE the numbers are more clear-cut. Most PVs *away* are intransitive with 71% to 29% transitive. In EModE some of this may be explained by the number of passive constructions in the different periods as there is a certain correlation between intransitives and passive constructions in the latter periods. However, as many as 92% of the constructions in BNC are active as opposed to 8% passive, suggesting that the correlation between intransitivity and passive voice is weaker in PDE than in EModE. According to van Gelderen (2018:111) it is difficult ‘to determine a basic valency because of the extensive number of labile verbs’ in Modern English. However, the numbers of intransitives in both EEBO and BNC are unexpected as amongst others Capelle (2007:45-49) links telicity (resultative) with transitive verbs, particularly with telic verb-particle constructions. Nevertheless, many transitive verbs were lost towards Modern English, not only because of the increase in labile verbs, and additionally, intransitives ‘are renewed by motion verbs of all kinds..., light verbs and particles’ (van Gelderen 2018:57).

In EEBO the number of particles that affect transitivity is low. There are 4 transitivising and 2 detransitivising particles in the whole data collection, an average of less than 3%. However, 13% of the particles in BNC have an effect. Out of these 9% (7 occurrences) have a detransitivising effect and the remaining 4 % (3 occurrences) are transitivising. These numbers are also low, but considering the short period covered by BNC, this may suggest that the particle *away* at least has a stronger detransitivising effect in PDE than in EModE.

For intransitives in EModE the argument structure in all periods follows the same pattern with a markedly higher proportion of Theme arguments than Agent arguments. The difference in numbers is not so remarkable in the first period, but it is still noteworthy, and even counting this first period, the average percentage of Theme arguments in intransitives in EEBO is 72%. The main reason for this high percentage is passive

constructions as they make up 93 % of the intransitives with Theme arguments. In contrast, all intransitives with Agent arguments are active constructions in EEBO. In PDE the picture is different in more than one way. First, the majority of intransitives have Agent arguments with 58.5% to 41.5% Theme arguments. Secondly, even with 22 occurrences of Theme arguments, only 23% of these are passive constructions. This could point to the loss of intransitives in earlier English that has already been mentioned as passive constructions require transitive verbs, and also to their renewal in PDE (van Gelderen (2018:56-57) and perhaps an increased use of unaccusative verbs. One should not jump to conclusions here, though. As PVs *away* are mostly resultative, they involve some affectedness, and it is the object, whether in D-structure or S-structure, that is affected. Thus, Themes most often emerge as the subject of an accusative verb in intransitives (Capelle 2007:44-45 and van Gelderen 2018:28).

There are some similarities between the argument structures in intransitives and transitives. However, here the dominant argument structure is found in all periods including BNC, and it is Agent + Theme ranging from 62% to 91%. Additionally, there is a noteworthy difference between EModE and PDE as the discrepancy between percentage of Agent + Theme structure and other structures is far wider in BNC than in EEBO. Causer + Theme argument structure is represented with 16% to 38% in EEBO, and with only one occurrence of Causer + Theme structure and one Causer + Experiencer in BNC, PDE again has more Agent arguments than EModE. The numbers suggest that there has been a change in the intervening years between the periods in EEBO and BNC, but I will not make suppositions about what has happened here except suggest that one possible reason could be thematic hierarchy (cf. chapter 2.3), which sometimes is responsible for the reanalysis of a verb's argument structure (van Gelderen 2018:4). To summarise briefly, in PDE there are less passives, more intransitives, and more Agent arguments both in intransitives and transitives than in EModE.

The next part looks at the results from Tables 3.13-3.14. The ratio of motion verbs is stable in the data covering more 200 years in EEBO having an average of 83% for all periods. The percentage in BNC, on the other hand, is 59%, and this suggests that the connotation of motion is no longer as strong, thus permitting more non-motion verbs in combination with *away* in PDE. Still, motion verbs are quite robust in English and are often renewed, mostly through internal change such as extended meaning,

denominalisation, and affixes (van Gelderen 2018:66-68). Consequently, most motion verbs have native origin, and English motion verbs are manner of motion verbs unlike most Latinate motion verbs which are path verbs (e.g. *depart*, *vanish*, etc.). This may explain the resilience of spatial meaning in the particle *away*, whether literal or figurative, as seen in Table 3.15, where all particles have spatial meaning in EEBO and a mere 5 percent do not in BNC. Unlike loanwords from French where the path often is described by the verb, the particle provides a path for the motion verbs of native origin.

Some motion verbs have a higher frequency than others, e.g. *carry*, *drive*, *take*, *put*. This applies to all periods, but different verbs are more evenly distributed in PDE than in EModE. The distribution of non-motion verbs, on the other hand, shows a different pattern. Apart from the light verbs *do* and *get* which appear three and four times, respectively, other non-motion verbs only occur once or twice in PVs *away*. Again, the use in PDE differs from that of EModE. There are both more occurrences of non-motion verbs in PVs *away* and considerably more variation in verbs, suggesting that even though the non-motion verbs may be less restricted than motion verbs in EModE, they are even less so in PDE.

Turning to Table 3.15 and the meaning of the *away* particles, we find that in addition to having Aktionsart value, they all have spatial meaning in EEBO, literal or figurative. Similarly, 95% of particles in BNC have spatial meaning. The ratio of literal and figurative varies somewhat with the literal meaning ranging from 47% to 62% in EModE and reaching 69% in PDE. One would expect that there were more purely aspectual particles in PDE, but although *away* is a productive particle, its limitations in combining with verbs and assuming meanings have been highlighted (Gardner & Davies 2007:349 and Live 1965:426-437). It is possible that the resilience of the spatial meaning plays a part in the restricted use.

If we look at the 5% of particles with no spatial meaning in BNC, they are found in PVs *away* that have both durative Aktionsart and in 3 out of 4 instances progressive outer aspect. They are also intransitive both with or without the particle, which is purely intensifying the already present Aktionsart, and this concurs with the findings of Capelle (2007:52) that durative verb-particle combinations with non-spatial particle retain the transitivity of the simplex verb.

Table 3.15 also shows that there are no clearly idiomatic PVs *away* in EEBO, and that there is a stable ratio between literal and figurative through all periods with mostly compositional PVs *away*. In BNC the picture is mainly the same, but with 2 occurrences of idiomatic PVs *away*. These are small numbers, but could potentially point to a slow, or recent, change in the compositionality of PVs *away*. Again, this lingering compositionality or semi-transparency may be caused by the already mentioned resilience of spatial meaning in *away*. Or it could be the other way. Nevertheless, most particles intensify Aktionsart, and sometimes change the meaning of a verb, but this is normally figuratively so the connection to spatial meaning is there.

Table 3.16 shows that there are no derivational verbs in the corpora, and most verbs combining with *away* are native verbs both in EModE and PDE. In EEBO the percentage varies from 67% to 84%, and in BNC it is 91%, which is somewhat unexpected. As mentioned with motion verbs, native motion verbs are manner verbs that often need an added path to become resultative, a role filled by a particle. Most motion loanwords are Latinate path verbs, e.g. *escape*, *vanish*, and here the particle becomes redundant. Still, only 59% of verbs combining with *away* in BNC are motions verbs, and the numbers combined mean that the majority of the 41% non-motion words in BNC are native as well. We have seen that non-motion verbs have more variation than motion verbs, thus this tells us that more native verbs combine with *away* with both Aktionsart value and spatial meaning.

In EEBO the percentage of disyllabic verbs are higher than in BNC where only two verbs in the data (3%) have two syllables in the verb base. Most disyllabic verbs are motion verbs from French, and these are not found in BNC. They may have been used analogous with native motion verbs, but as they are path verbs, the particle was superfluous, and, consequently, the particle disappeared in these combinations. As both disyllabic verbs in BNC are durative non-motion verbs remaining durative with the added particle, and all motion verbs have a monosyllabic base, it suggests that restrictions on motion verbs that may combine with *away* in resultatives are stricter in PDE than in EModE. However, we have seen examples in chapter 2 where the verbs in PVs *away* have both foreign origin and several syllables. Among these are also some path verbs. Perhaps the path is not so salient anymore and so needs intensifying. As this seems to be a recent phenomenon, these PVs *away* are perhaps more present in informal and spoken PDE.

The possibility of separating verb and particle by an intervening object is one of the defining characteristics of phrasal verbs (cf. chapter 2.1.2). One might thus expect that separated particle occurred quite frequently, and perhaps that it would occur more often in PDE than in EModE as phrasal verbs are productive. However, the percentages in EModE vary considerably, and the numbers show no significant difference between EModE and PDE as the percentage in PDE is only 2% higher than the highest in EModE. In fact, there is greater differences between the periods of EEBO than between EEBO and BNC. If, on the other hand, we look at the average percentage for EModE which is 16%, the discrepancy is wider with 8%. Nevertheless, it would be unwise to draw any conclusions from this. It would be interesting to investigate whether there are any correlations between separated particle, definiteness, and Aktionsart but time constraints do not allow it.

In the consideration of results in EEBO, one should keep in mind that changes in the latter part of EEBO may reflect changes in written English and not necessarily changes in spoken English as there were several reforms aimed at bridging the gap between the two which could be considerable due to the idolisation of the Latin language (cf. chapter 3.1).

## 4 Conclusion

In this chapter I summarise the results from chapter 3 and relate them to the research questions and hypotheses that were presented in chapter 1.2. In addition, I will point at shortcomings in the thesis before suggesting areas for further research.

In the following I correlate the results of the analysis with the research questions and hypotheses by number:

1. The results suggest that Aktionsart in clauses with PVs *away* have changed to some extent over time. There was only one occurrence of stative Aktionsart and no occurrences of durative in the data from EEBO. In the data from BNC there were occurrences of both stative and durative Aktionsart, the latter twice as many as the former. Additionally, the particle more often affected the Aktionsart than was the case in EEBO. This suggests that Aktionsart is more productive and that the particle *away* affects Aktionsart more in PDE than in EModE. The results also point to a tendency of using the progressive with durative Aktionsart in PDE, and that the particle is more likely to intensify durative Aktionsart in PDE than in EEBO.

2. The results show that transitivity in clauses with PVs *away* change over time. There are more intransitive PVs *away* in PDE than in EModE. The change is even greater when the number of passive constructions in EModE is considered, suggesting that the correlation between intransitives and passive voice is weaker in PDE. The numbers are small, but when the particle affects transitivity, it is mostly detransitivising in PDE as opposed to EModE where the few particles with effect are mostly transitivising. Again, the numbers are small, but there is possibly a new development with more particle effect on transitivity in PDE, and as such more often a detransitivising effect.

3. The results show that argument structure in clauses with PVs *away* change over time. The number of Agent arguments is considerably higher in PDE than in EModE. This can mostly be explained by the number of passive constructions in EModE. Thus, the most important change for intransitives is possibly the increased number of Theme arguments

in active constructions in PDE. There is also a change in argument structure in transitives. Both EModE and PDE favour Agent + Theme structure and have very few Causer + Experiencer structures, but the number of Causer + Theme structures in the results decrease from EModE to PDE at the same time as the Agent + Theme structure increases. The numbers are too small to draw conclusions, but there are undoubtedly more Agent arguments in PDE than in EModE both in intransitive and transitive constructions, and this suggests a change in argument structure.

4. The results suggests some changes over time in what kind of verbs may combine with *away* to make phrasal verbs. However, not all changes are as expected. The hypothesis predicted an increased number of derivatives and loanwords in combination with *away*. That did not happen. In neither EModE nor PDE are there any derivative verbs. Furthermore, the number of loanwords decreases in PDE compared to EModE. However, a wider variety of verbs are used in PDE, and this applies to a considerable higher proportion of non-motion words in PDE, but also to a more even distribution of different motion verbs than in EModE which tends to favour a limited number. This increased number and variety does not result in more verbs with more syllables which was expected. On the contrary, the percentage of one syllable verbs is higher in PDE, possibly pointing to the informal nature of phrasal verbs. The spatial meaning of *away* is more robust than was expected as all particles in EModE and most in PDE are spatial in a literal or figurative sense. However, a small number of particles (5%) in PDE does not have spatial meaning, and among them we also find the only occurrences of idiomatic PVs *away* with an even smaller number (3%). Even though few, they occur in plural and so suggest a different pattern in PDE. To summarise there are less motion verbs and more verbal bases in PDE, but also more one syllable native verbs in combination with *away* in mostly compositional PVs *away* where the particle retains a spatial meaning. However, some changes in spatial meaning and compositionality can be seen in PDE.

5. It seems fair to say that not much happened with PVs *away* in the course of EModE, which is a bit surprising considering the many linguistic reforms in grammar and spelling which were aimed at reflecting the spoken language more than the heavily Latin influenced grammars of the earlier period in EModE. Most characteristics also lasted into



PDE, e.g. the vast majority of resultatives. However, we have seen that there are some small changes which seem to be correlated and which might point to some tendencies. In PDE there are fewer passive constructions than in EModE and more Agent arguments overall, but also more Theme arguments in intransitives. Furthermore, PDE have fewer motion verbs than EModE and more verbal bases are used to form PVs *away*. In contrast to EModE, PDE also have instances of PVs *away* with durative Aktionsart where the particles have no spatial meaning and act as intensifiers of durative Aktionsart. Most of these have progressive aspect as well. Progressive is also used noticeably more in PDE than in EModE.

#### **4.1 Shortcomings**

In retrospect there are several things that could have been done differently. The original plan was to have 100 occurrences per time period and also the double amount of data in BNC, i.e. 150 occurrences, but because of time constraints I decided to reduce the number. The results in this analysis are thus based on a limited number of data, and every occurrence affect the percentage quite strongly. As such they point to tendencies rather than provide evidence. Consequently, only where the results are corroborated by findings in other studies can we be confident that they are reliable. There are also variables in the study that have not been correlated or investigated in depth (e.g separated particle and its correlation to definiteness, Aktionsart etc.), but again, time constraints made it necessary to prioritise. Allowing for time constraints, another solution could have been to include fewer variables and keep the original amount of data. Then the results would be more reliable at the same time as being manageable. On the other hand, some interdependencies might go unnoticed. In hindsight I also see that the presentation of some variables would have benefited from a different arrangement in the tables. However, time did not allow further experimentations and investigation.

As has been discussed in chapter 3.1, there is possibly a considerable gap between spoken and written English, particularly in the first half of the EModE period, and the data are consequently not completely reliable. As reforms in the written language intended to bridge that gap, the results from the latter part are probably more trustworthy. There is also a gap between 1699 and 1979 of nearly 300 years which is a considerable period in terms of language change. Although there are no massive differences between

EModE and PDE, some differences are significant enough to suggest that the changes could be visible in the language of the intervening years.

Another possible shortcoming is the number of texts in the different periods of EEBO as most texts in the EEBO corpus are from the 1600s. Only 110 texts are from the 1400s, that is 1474-1499. In the 1500s there are 2937 texts, and in the 1600s there are more than 20,000 texts. Thus, the balance between periods is uneven. However, as mentioned above, the latter part of EEBO is probably closer to spoken English at the time, and the study suggests that not much happened with PVs *away* in the years of EModE.

#### **4.2 Further research**

The results of the analyses in this thesis point to interesting tendencies, but as has been mentioned, more data would tell a more reliable story. In addition to looking at more data, there is the nearly 300-year gap between 1700 and 1980 that needs to be investigated to understand the overall picture of the development of PVs *away*. I have recently learned about the *Penn Parsed Corpus of Modern British English* which covers the years 1700 to 1914. It would be interesting to have access to this corpus and find out what happened to PVs *away* during these years as this would link the two periods in this thesis together and possibly show transitions and patterns that are not visible in the analysis provided here. Furthermore, it would be of interest to see whether there are more patterns to be discovered between the different variables that have not been correlated in this analysis, and variables that have not been included such as how definiteness in objects correlates with Aktionsart and outer aspect in transitives, or how the increased number of intransitives influences the distribution of unergative and unaccusative verbs in clauses with PVs *away*.

Another topic for research could be newer words combining with *away*. We have seen that there are differences between loanwords from ME and later loans. Many French loanwords from ME are not used in combination with *away* anymore, and there are many intriguing questions that could be answered, e.g. what do newer loanwords have in common, what kind of verbs are they, and what is their origin. Other possible questions relate to their Aktionsart and how this is affected by the particle. There are also questions pertaining to what (possible) combinations are out there. Some infrequent and unusual constellations were demonstrated as examples in chapter 2, but did not appear in the data

for this thesis (unfortunately). Questions that merit some attention are what do these verbs have in common with regards to Aktionsart, transitivity and argument structure, how many of them are motion/non-motion verbs and how does the particle function in combination with them.

Also motion verbs in phrasal verbs are of interest as ‘the renewal of motion verbs is phenomenal’ (van Gelderen 2018:68). Are the new motion verbs manner, path, or other? As they are mostly native, are they semantic extensions, denominalisations, or formed with affixes?

Finally, another area for research could be a cross-linguistic study comparing the development and use of PVs *away* with the Norwegian equivalent, i.e. phrasal verbs with *bort* and *vekk*. As mentioned in chapter 2.1.1, ON and OE developed similarly in some ways, and it is possible that ON influenced the development of English to a certain degree. However, today the opposite is very much the case, and the development of phrasal verbs with *away* and *bort/vekk* would be of interest, and also to what extent English has influenced Norwegian phrasal verbs in modern times.

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