MAIRO VERGARA
ADVANCED PHRASAL VERBS COURSE
Transcript | Lesson 14

Hi, I'm Sonja Burger, and I'm chatting to you from Paarl in South Africa. Paarl is a beautiful town at the foot of a 450-million-year old granite mountain. Today we're going to talk about three different phrasal verbs. The first one is 'pass away', the second one is 'go against' and the third one is 'put down'.

Let's start with 'pass away.' 'Pass away' has only one meaning. It is a euphemism for dying. A euphemism is a statement that describes something negative, unpleasant, harsh or blunt in a softer and milder way. We all die but for most people, coming to terms with death is one of the saddest and most difficult things they have to do. And our language reflects this because very often we avoid talking about death by its name. We use euphemistic phrasal verbs such as 'pass away', 'cross over' or 'pass on' instead of referring to death by its name directly.

If you look at the construction of 'pass away, the verb 'pass' and the preposition 'away' both have a sense of movement. It suggests a change of state, which is what death is, isn't it? So let us look at 3 different sample sentences. Number 1:

When his dad passed away, Marcello arrived too late to be at his bedside; so when his mother became terminally ill, Marcello sat at her bedside for days until she too <u>***passed away***</u>***.***

Being there at the moment of passing was very comforting for Marcello. Yes, very often when we can be there for the loved one at the moment of passing, the moment of death, there is comfort in it for us. Notice the use of the word 'passing'. It is a noun. It's actually a present, participle acting as a noun and it is a euphemism for dying. Number 2:

Before patients <u>pass away</u>, they are often aware of the loving voices and the gentle touches of their loved ones.

Now doctors who work with terminally ill patients recommend that when you walk into the room of a dying person you should quietly identify yourself and then gently touch the patient.

Number 3. Now this example comes from a personal experience I had in 2010.

My favorite English poet is John Keats. John was very, very ill at a young age with tuberculosis. He went to Rome to see if he could recuperate in the warmer climate. But <u>he passed away</u> in Rome on the 23rd of February 1821.

John Keats was only 25 when he passed away and just before he passed away, he requested that no name and no date should appear on his tombstone. Only these words: 'Here lies one whose name was written in water' Here lies one whose name was written in water. Now to me, that's an incredibly powerful metaphor for life, for how fewered and fleeting it is. Because actually, you can't write your name in water, it just disappears if you do so and seeing those words on the tombstone of John Keats' grave was a very touching experience.

The second phrasal verb is 'go against'. 'Go against' has two meanings. Number 1: to oppose someone or something and Number 2: to experience something, a judgement, a decision or an event that is to your disadvantage. Let's start with a sample sentence illustrating the first meaning:

Gabriel, please don't go against me in this decision to discipline the children; you're undermining my authority. Please support me, don't <u>go against</u> me.

So this mother wants the father to support her in her disciplinary action. She does not want him to go against her, to oppose her.

The second sample sentence:

Denying someone freedom of choice <u>goes against</u> my principles.

We often use the phrasal verb 'go against' in the context of beliefs or principles. Something goes against your beliefs or something goes against your principles.

The second meaning of the phrasal verb 'go against' is to experience something, a judgement or a decision or an event that is to your disadvantage. And I would like to read a sample sentence from a court of law.

The jury's sentiment in this trial <u>went against</u> him, right from the start.

So in this sentence, 'went against' means that the jury does not support this man. Their sentiment would be a mixture of feelings and judgements are to his disadvantage. They will probably find him guilty. The trial will go against him because the jury is against him.

The third phrasal verb is 'put down'. 'Put down' has three different meanings: to record something in writing. Number two: to suppress an uprising or rebellion and number three: to humiliate someone.

Let's start with the first meaning; to record something in writing.

<u>Put down</u> your offer in writing and I'll take it seriously.

When we put something down in writing, when we record it in writing, we make it more permanent and that is why this man wants the other person to put down his offer, his undertaking or his contract or whatever it is in writing.

Number two: to suppress an uprising or a rebellion.

During the civil war, the government brutally <u>put down</u> the rebellion.

Now just to clarify the terminology here, a civil war is fought between the people who are in the same country. A war is obviously fought between people who are in different countries. So this government brutally put down, violently oppressed the rebellion by its own people.

Number 3: to humiliate someone. And let's take a workplace example; I'll read it to you.

My colleague constantly <u>put me down</u> at work by making sarcastic remarks and humiliating jokes at my expense.

Now those of you who have been in the workplace will know that people often use sarcasm and biting humor to put down others to humiliate them. And by doing so, they gain social power over them. Two people who were excellent at putting each other down were the very wealthy Lady Nancy Asta and the forceful British Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill. This is how the story goes: apparently Lady Asta – Nancy – said to Winston "Winston, if you were my husband, I'd poison your tea." And Winston's reply was "Nancy, if I were your husband, I'd drink it".

So that's all for today. When you use these three phrasal verbs, 'pass away', 'go against' and 'put down' in the future, be aware of the different meanings they could have and of their context. Goodbye'