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**STUDENTS' MASTERY IN PHRASAL VERBS AT FIFTH SEMESTER STUDENTS  
OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MATARAM**

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**Abstract** - Understanding phrasal verbs is one of the serious problems in learning English for foreign learners of English. This present<sup>1</sup> research aimed to measure the mastery of phrasal verbs and elaborate the problems in using phrasal verbs by students<sup>6</sup> English Department in the University of Mataram. This study employs case study involving 40 students of English Education Department, the University of Mataram. The data were collected using a test of phrasal verbs in three categories (transparent, semi-transparent, and idiomatic) and questionnaire used to investigate problems. The collected data were then analyzed qualitatively. The result showed that that 65% students below the minimum score of 56 in the test and the result from the questionnaire showed that most students agreed lack of learning, regularity of exposure and mental barriers are their main problems.

**Keywords:** phrasal verb; mastery; case study

## INTRODUCTION

English is the most common language, which is used by people all around the world to communicate with each other. In Indonesia, many people are interested in learning English as a foreign language, because they realize that English is important. Now, English is one of compulsory lessons which is taught in schools, universities, and even in offices. Moreover, in order to master English, Indonesian as second language learner has to master the four basic skills, which are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, Indonesian learners face many difficulties in learning English. From the beginning a foreign learner has been talking using his/her mother tongue, which is profoundly embedded in him/her as a major aspect of his/her habits (Ramelan, 1984).

The first thing to learn in foreign language is vocabulary. It is impossible to comprehend a text<sup>11</sup> without understanding its vocabulary. Vocabulary is vital to language and of a critical significance to the typical language learner (Zimmerman, 1997). Nation (2001) describes the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language use as complementary: knowledge of vocabulary enables use and,

conversely, language use leads to an increase in vocabulary knowledge.

According to Webster (2004) vocabulary is a sum or aggregate of the words used or understood by a particular person, class, etc., or employed in some specialized field of knowledge. Hornby (2006) defines vocabulary as all the words that a person knows or uses and it is all the words in a particular language. Phrasal verbs are frequently found in oral and written text when learning English, because of that it is necessary to master English phrasal verbs. For Indonesian learners, English phrasal verbs are one of the obstacles in learning English.

English phrasal verbs are very depending on their context. The context in which phrasal verbs are used will decide the designated meaning of that phrasal verb. The mastery of phrasal verb is very important because phrasal verbs are frequently used in daily communication. Good mastery of phrasal verbs is very helpful to get the point of a message. The fact is English students are still struggling to understand phrasal verbs. Sometimes students have no idea what those phrasal verbs really mean, especially the unfamiliar phrasal verbs.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed mixed method, combining qualitative and quantitative research method to find out the phrasal verbs mastery and problems faced by students of English Education Program. This research was conducted at the fifth semester students of English Education Program which consist of 201 students, 56 were chosen as the sample of the study. According to Arikunto (2010) random sampling can be applied if the population is homogeneous, so that any element selected as a sample can represent the population. The students are selected using random sampling technique.

The data were collected using test to measure student's mastery on English phrasal verbs and questionnaire to find out students' problems. The test used a short story containing 31 items of phrasal verbs. The questionnaire used in this study was close-ended questions, consisting of 15 statements. The questionnaire was filled out after they finished the test. The collected data were then analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The result of the test shows that 14 (35%) from 40 fifth semester students of English Department in University of Mataram which picked randomly from 8 classes have passed the minimum grade score. This finding is supported by questionnaire of their individual perspective about phrasal verbs. The test contained 5 transparent phrasal verbs, 6 semi-transparent phrasal verbs, 20 idiomatic phrasal verbs, these three phrasal verbs classifications are based on theory by Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1999). This finding is supported by questionnaire of their individual perspective about their knowledge in phrasal verbs. After calculating the data from the test, it shows that total of students passed is out of number than students failed. There are 14 students passed the test or 35% who reached score more than 56 and the rest students or 65% failed to reach more than 56 score. The results of each classification are presented below.

Table 1. Percentage of Each Classification

No.	Test score	Categories	Number of students	Percentage
1	80 – 100	Excellent	1	2.5%
2	66 – 79	Good	2	5%
3	56 – 65	Fairly Good	11	27.5%
4	40 – 55	Low	17	42.5%
5	0 – 39	Very Low	9	22.5%

Based on the table above, there is only 1 student or (2.5%) who get 80 – 100, there are 2 or (5%) students get 66 – 79. In fact, the highest percentage is students who get 40 – 55 with 17 students (42.5%) indicated Low. There are 9 students who get 0 – 39 indicated Very Low or 22.5% of the total population. There are total 14 students (35%) who get 56 – 100 managed to pass minimum score (56) in this category.

The questionnaire in this research is close-ended form which consisted of 15 statements to discover students' personal perspective about phrasal verbs and their problems with phrasal verbs. The markings indicate how many of them (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, and (5) strongly agree with the statements given. All those 15 statements on questionnaire above are developed from the factors affecting phrasal verb difficult

by Czekala (2019). There are three factors which influence their problems with phrasal verb, they are lack of learning, regularity of

exposure, and mental barriers. The percentage of how much those factors affect students can be seen on the table below.

**Table 2.** Percentage factors affecting phrasal verb difficult

No.	Factors affecting phrasal verb difficult	Percentage				
		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Lack of learning (7)	6.78%	11.42%	33.21%	36.07%	12.5%
2.	Regularity of exposure (6)	5.84%	12.5%	33.75%	32.08%	15.83%
3.	Mental barriers (2)	11.25%	8.75%	37.5%	32.5%	10%

## Discussion

The test result shows that about 26 students failed in the test and 14 of them passed consisting of 1 student (2.5%) excellent score, 2 students (5%) get good score, 11 students (27.5%) get fairly good score, 17 students (42.5%) get low score and 9 students (22.5%) get very low score. It means that majority sample of fifth semester students of English Department of University of Mataram could not succeeding test and indicated as failed to understand phrasal verb. Although, 68% of students could answer transparent and semi-transparent phrasal verbs.

According to Czekala (2019) there are few indicators that influence student difficulties in coping with phrasal verb. Those are the lack of learning of phrasal verb, students' regularity of exposure on phrasal verb, and mental barriers (Based on the data from students' individual perspective. questionnaire). These things are the main factor that would indicate the difficulties in phrasal verb mastery.

Most of students agree that they have learned phrasal verbs in many learning subjects before but they are still not sure about their understanding or ability in phrasal verbs which taught by lecturers in the classroom. That means they are still lacking in learning phrasal verb especially studying phrasal verb independently. The lack of learning phrasal verb makes students rarely use phrasal verb in their

communication both oral and written or formal and informal situation. They also struggling in idiomatic phrasal verbs which mostly unfamiliar for them, they are still very depending on dictionary when they face phrasal verb. This kind of problem seems difficult to solve unless they learn phrasal verb independently.

## CONCLUSION

The cumulative result shows that only 14 students passed or 35% who reached up to 56 score and 36 students failed or 65% reached less than 56 score. Most of them are familiar transparent or semi-transparent phrasal verb rather than idiomatic phrasal verb showed that 27 students (68%) managed to answer majority the transparent and semi-transparent phrasal verb correctly. This conclusion is also determined by seeing the result their perception in questionnaire. According to the students' opinion in questionnaire, 57.5% agreed that they have learned phrasal verb in several learning subjects before. However the majority students are not sure that they know what exactly phrasal verb is. The students are still very depending in using dictionary when they find phrasal verb but most students agree if they find unfamiliar phrasal verb they will try to predict the meaning of that word besides using dictionary.

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