The Mastery of English Phrasal Verbs among the Students of English Education Study Program

**Belly Januarta1, Indrawati2, Muslim Ansori 3**

1 IAIN Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung

2 IAIN Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung

3 IAIN Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **ABSTRACT** |
| **Keywords:**  *Phrasal verb*  *Ability*  *Erro*r |  | The objectives of this study are to find out the mastery of English phrasal verbs in terms of their separable and inseparable types among the fifth semester students of the English education study program at IAIN Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung. The method used in this study was survey method. As many as thirty students were selected as the samples. Then the data was gathered by administering a test about phrasal verbs to the students and the researcher analyzed the results which consisted of correct answers and errors. The researcher examined the test results and found that most students made correct answers in relation to phrasal verbs with optional separation. On the other hand, the majority of errors fell under the category of phrasal verbs with obligatory separation. But, overall, the students made incorrect answers more than correct answers. By using the mean score which is 48.9 out of 100, the students can be said to have a poor level of mastery of English phrasal verbs or be classified as fail/unsatisfactory because the minimum standard of mastery is 56. |
|  |
| This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. ©2019 by author. |
| ***Correspondence:***  Belly Januarta,  Email: [bellyj@gmail.com](mailto:bellyjan@gmail.com) | | |

**Introduction**

Phrasal verbs, often referred to multi-word verbs, are a common aspect of the English language. Phrasal verbs consist of a main verb plus a particle. The term ‘particle’ has been used in order not to distinguish, as yet, between preposition and adverb (Cowan, 2008). Some phrasal verbs retain the individual meanings of the verb and the adverb/preposition (for example sit down), whereas for other phrasal verbs the meaning of the combination cannot be built up from the meanings of the individual verb and adverb/preposition, for example: catch on means ’understand’, give in means ’surrender’, turn up means ’appear, arrive’, etc (Rudzka-Ostyn, 2008). The complexity of phrasal verbs in terms of its meaning and structure challenges the students in understanding and using them in sentence. The structure of phrasal verb often makes students confused of the correct position of an object between the verb (which is mostly monosyllabic verb of movement or action) and the particle (Palmer, 2014). However, multiple meanings lie on a string of multiple-word verb (Azar, 2002). It is a common issue which sometimes cannot be tolerated and students give it up altogether.

Phrasal verbs are regarded as one of the most significant problems in terms of ESL learning (Brown, 1988; Johnson, 2017). But for university students, especially those majoring in English education study program, it is supposed to be of little difficulty, at least to some extent, in using English phrasal verbs especially in sentence that are in accordance to correct grammatical structures and in making sense of their types. Nevertheless, the fact that the syntactic set considered as seemingly arbitrary verb-particle constructions, most of the time, lead to misunderstandings. The meaning is usually unclear, although the individual verb and the particle (prepositional/adverbial) could be easily understood, but it is still confusing when both units are put together. This one problem could lead to several other problems that must be concerned with, in this regard, by those who are the students of English education study program at IAIN SAS (State Institute of Islamic Studies SAS).

This study has been conducted to draw a brief conclusion on students’ understanding of phrasal verbs by administering a test using the sample which was immediately obtained from the whole population which were the fifth semester students of English Education Study Program (because there was only one group of students of EESP from the semester, so the researcher decided to include the whole members as the sample consisting of thirty students) who took Sociolinguistics class.

During the course of the testing, the researcher observed how the participants dealt with the test items. Most of them could be seen experiencing difficulties especially on the part that they were required to complete a phrasal verb combination in a sentence with its corresponding particle, either adverb or preposition. It took some time for the students to come up with the right particle to fill in every incomplete phrasal verb. The researcher assumed that the difficulties were caused by the uncertain meaning of particles and at the same time it was supposed to put them in the right position whether before objects or after objects of the sentences or it could also be optional. The participants put in the work to guess what particle that semantically and syntactically fit in with the verb to form a phrasal verb. The fact that it led some participants to make errors such as repeatedly use the particle ‘up’ illustrates a tendency to syntactic and semantic errors.

From a brief analysis of the data obtained from the test administration, the researcher came to a conclusion that the students could hypothetically be said to have a good knowledge of phrasal verbs. However, the researcher would administer the real test by using the same sample: of the fifth semester students of EESP to discover students’ mastery of phrasal verbs which were limited to separable and inseparable phrasal verbs by analyzing students’ answers including errors made on the test.

There are several studies that are in relation with the one that would be conducted, they are as follows: First, Pahlevi authorized the thesis entitled “An Analysis of Students’ Difficulties in Mastering Verb Preposition Combinations” which deals with measuring the college students’ mastery in using verb preposition combinations and discovering difficulties faced by the college students in mastering verb preposition combinations (Pahlevi, 2010).

This study applied descriptive method in terms of research design. It was conducted with the sample consisting of 30 students (about 12%) out of 243 students of the English education department at Semarang State University.

From the data which were gathered by administering a test, it indicated that the percentages of students’ achievement were 73.50% for the use of one syllable combinations, 94.00% for the use of separable verb preposition combinations, and 78.00% for the use of inseparable verb preposition combinations.

The researcher categorized and interpreted the score of test results based on UNNES academic performance assessment. There were 7 students getting grade A (23.3%), 7 students getting grade AB (23.3%), 6 students getting grade B (20%), 5 students achieving grade BC (16.7%), 2 students getting grade C (6.7%), 1 student getting grade CD (3.3%) and 2 students getting grade D (6.7%). On average, the students’ achievement was classified as grade B. According to the mean of the results of the test which was 77.3, it could be concluded that the students have good mastery of verb preposition combinations. The lowest percentage of achievement is used to identify difficulties that students faced, such as determining the right verb and particle to form a verb preposition combination with a certain meaning, understanding the meaning of one syllable combinations, etc.

Second, Yusuf conducted a case study about students’ mastery of phrasal verbs of the Fourth Semester Students of English Department of UNNES. The purpose of this study is to measure to what extent the students have mastered English phrasal verbs and discover the problems encountered by the students in using phrasal verbs and a test was applied in the form of multiple choices for collecting the necessary data. A try-out test was carried out before administering the test.

Based on statistical analysis, the mean of the results of the test was 64.83 that brought to a conclusion that the students’ mastery of English phrasal verbs is average. In other words, the students could be said to have sufficient mastery of phrasal verbs. While from non-statistical analysis, it revealed some major difficulties which the students have, such as lack of vocabulary, the unpredictable meaning of particles, and the tendency to master inseparable phrasal verbs (Yusuf, 2007).

Another study by Army, et al. about the Ability of the students of English Study Program of Riau University in Understanding the Meaning of Phrasal Verbs.” The Objective of this research was to find out about students’ ability in understanding the meaning phrasal verbs. It applied descriptive method in terms of data analysis. There were 38 students chosen as the sample of this research. The data were quantitative and the instrument of the research was multiple choices test which consisted of 50 questions regarding the meaning of phrasal verbs. The data were analyzed by calculating the score of the students in answering the test and classifying them to a certain level using Harris formula. The results were that out of 38 students, 2 students (5.26%) were in excellent level of ability, 11 students (28.95%) were in good level of ability, 7 students (18.42%) were in average level of ability, and 18 students (42.36%) were in poor level of ability. In addition, the average score of the students in understanding the meaning of phrasal verbs was 51.37. It meant that the students’ ability. This research recommended the students to make themselves familiar with elaborated use of phrasal verbs. Students can comprehend more about the conceptualization of phrasal verbs in many contexts by practicing writing speaking that would require them to use phrasal verbs. Further research can focus on studying each subtopic in detail. Other researchers can also focus on how to overcome the high level of difficulties of English phrasal verbs materials (Army, Delfi, & Eliwarti, n.d.).

Fourth, a study by Setiani et.al., was aimed to find out the 5th semester students of English education study program of FKIP Tanjung Pura University in academic year 2013/2014 mastery level on phrasal verbs and to know in which test items the 5th semester students fail mostly in answering questions about semantic and syntactic phrasal verbs. The finding of this research showed that the students’ mastery level of semantic and syntactic phrasal verbs was low. From the result of the test, the percentage of the students’ correct answer was 44.42% and it is classified as “failing or unsatisfactory.” This research also found that the percentage of the students’ correct answer in semantic categories is 39.01% and the percentage of the students’ correct answer in answering syntactic categories is 49.82% and it means the 5th semester students of English education study program fail mostly in answering question about semantic categories of phrasal verbs (Setiani, Wijaya, & Rosnija, n.d.).

The difference between those studies and this one is on the data instrument applied. While those studies only applied test instrument for data collection, the one the researcher would conduct utilized not only test (whose purpose is to measure students’ mastery of the English phrasal verbs), but also non-test instrument, namely, interview to describe students’ difficulties in using separable and inseparable phrasal verbs. Another difference is the survey method used in this study.

This study was focused on describing students’ mastery of phrasal verbs among the fifth semester students of the English study program at IAIN SAS in using English phrasal verbs.

The objective of the study was to address the question “How far have the fifth semester students of the English education study program at IAIN SAS in the academic year 2018/2019 mastered the English separable and inseparable phrasal verbs (transitive)”

The study will benefit students and lectures in some manners. Especially for students and English learners, the information provided in the study will encourage them to be more aware of problems they have in dealing with phrasal verbs and would like to start learning further about separable and inseparable phrasal verbs and their usage. The study can also benefit lectures: it can help them make considerations in terms of the classroom setting and helping students in dealing with phrasal verbs. Other researchers interested in the same area of research can use the study as reference or to conduct a further research on the same problems.

**Method**

The method employed in this research was survey research. Survey research is used to describe specific characteristics of a larger group of persons, objects, or institutions. The researcher categorizes this research as survey research because this has characteristics of survey mentioned by Fraenkel & Wallen: 1) information is collected from a group of people in order to describe some aspects or characteristics (such as abilities, opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and/ or knowledge) of the population of which that group is part, 2) the main way in which information is collected is through asking questions; the answers to these questions by members of the group constitute data of the study, and 3) information is collected from a sample rather than from every member of the population (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2013).

To select the representative sample, the researcher uses the cluster sampling technique. This research employs this technique since, as stated by Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, the sampling unit chosen in this research is not an individual but a group of individuals who are naturally together (Ary, Jacobs, Irvine, & Walker, 2018).

Research participants of this research are the fifth semester students of the English Education Study Program at Institute Agama Islam Negeri Bangka Belitung. The students that constituted the sample of the study were drawn from one class due to the number of students in the fifth semester only covered thirty-one students. Because the population was below a hundred, therefore the researcher chose the whole number of the population as sample. They are chosen because they are assumed to have taken Syntax class which has a subtopic of discussion related to phrasal combinations. Thus, they are expected to have sufficient knowledge of the English phrasal verbs.

Because of the time limitations on conducting the research, the researcher then selected a sample with an assumption that a portion of the research participants was quite representative for studying the fifth semester students’ mastery and difficulties in using the English phrasal verbs. Then, the researcher generalized the results obtained from the sample to the population.

In this research, the researcher used a test as data instrument to find out the mastery of the participants. The result of validity measurement of 40 question items showed that 34 questions were indicated valid; for α = 5%, and r-table of critical value for two tailed significance of 40 students was 0,312. If r-count is higher than r-table, it is valid. If the r-count is lower than r-table, it is invalid. Then, the valid test items could be used as the instrument of the test.

The reliability of test was computed by the researcher using SPSS 17. The computation result of reliability test by means of Kuder-Richardson formula 20 (in SPSS, Cronbach’s Alpha) showed that the coefficient number was 0.950. It indicated that the question items were reliable because the Cronbach’s Alpha number was higher than the regulation of r-table or coefficient reliability.

The researcher measured the participants’ mastery of using the English phrasal verbs by scoring the test to get the students’ results. Then, after scoring the students’ answers, the researcher counted the final score. To obtain the final score, the total score achieved by each other is divided by the total number of items, and then the result is multiplied by 100. Then, the scores for each student are classified using a scoring category.

Furthermore, the researcher discussed the correct answers and errors committed by the participants in producing and recognizing phrasal verbs. The researcher classifies the errors and from those errors the researcher could identify the difficulties faced by the participants and explain their mastery in understanding and using the phrasal verbs.

**Results**

The data under analysis was collected from a test result administered to a group of students who were in the fifth semester majoring in English education study program of Institut Agama Islam Negeri Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung. The following data were obtained from students’ answers in the test but then were grouped according to the types of phrasal verbs that question items were structured on.

**Table 1. The Percentage of Correct Answers in Each Type of Phrasal Verbs**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Types of Phrasal Verbs** | **Total Answers** | **Total Correct Answers** | **Percentage** |
| **Separable** |  |  |  |
| Optional (11 Items) | 330 | 189 | 57.27 |
| Obligatory (14 Items) | 420 | 172 | 40.95 |
| **Inseparable ( 9 Items)** | 270 | 138 | 51.11 |

The numbers in table 1 represent students’ achievement in using and understanding phrasal verbs in the test. Based on the data, the percentage of students’ achievement in items consisting of phrasal verbs with optional separation was 57.27%. This number was resulted from the division of total correct answers in the items of phrasal verbs with optional separation and the total answers of the items. Meanwhile, the number of total answers was derived from the multiplication of items consisting of phrasal verbs with optional separation and the total number of sample students. This method of calculating the percentage of students’ achievements was applied to measure that of other students’ achievements in phrasal verbs with obligatory separation and inseparable phrasal verbs.

The percentage of students’ achievement in items consisting of phrasal verbs with obligatory separation was 40.95%. Meanwhile, the percentage of students’ achievement in items consisting of inseparable phrasal verbs was 51.11%. It is clear that only the percentage of correct answers in items consisting of phrasal verbs with optional separation that fell under the minimum standard of mastery, which is 56%. But, somehow, the percentage of correct answers for separable phrasal verbs with obligatory separation and inseparable phrasal verbs had not reached the minimum standard of mastery. From the numbers, it could be assumed that students’ ability in using phrasal verbs with obligatory separation and inseparable phrasal verbs was poor. The structure of phrasal verbs with optional separation might be (supposedly) easy for students to construct.

According to *Peraturan Akademik* or academic regulation of Institut Agama Islam Negeri Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik, the minimum standard that must be satisfied or passing grade to measure students’ mastery is C (56% of total score).

**Table 2. Students’ Passing Grade**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Score** | **Category** |
| 80-100 | Very good (A) |
| 70-79 | Good (B) |
| 56-69 | Sufficient (C) |
| 50-55 | Insufficient (D) |
| ≤ 49 | Fail (E) |

The category above is basically academic grading used to categorize students’ achievement based on score range but it was simplified to make it easier in describing students’ mastery. Students’ scores sorted according to grading category are shown in table 2.

**Table 3. The Students’ Scores Based on Grading Category**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Range of Scores** | **Category** | **Number of Students** |
| 80-100  70-79  56-69  50-55  ≤ 49 | Very Good (A)  Good (B)  Sufficient (C)  Insufficient (D)  Poor (E) | 1  2  4  7  16 |

**Table 4. The Percentage of Incorrect Answers in the Test**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Parts of  the Test | Types of Errors | Number of  Wrong Answers | Percentage |
| 1 | Associating verbs and their corresponding particles | 374 | 71.78 |
| 2 | Phrasal verb complementation | 17 | 3.26 |
| 3 | Misunderstanding phrasal verb meaning | 130 | 24.95 |
|  | Total | 521 | 100 |

From the results above, it indicates that part I of the test became the hardest for students to deal with since the percentage was above 50% of the total incorrect answers. The task of identifying particles to complete phrasal verbs in part I (production test) provided a real challenge to students where they were required to have prior knowledge about phrasal verbs to answer question items while there were no options provided.

In conclusion, the separability aspect involved in using phrasal verb is problematic for students. It has something to do with phrase structure which leads students to wrongly generalize particle position in phrasal verbs. This is exacerbated by the fact that there is no general consensus on principle regarding the formation of phrasal verb.

Furthermore, unique semantic feature of phrasal verbs presents much more difficult challenges for students since some phrases have meanings which cannot be predicted from their individual constituents. The degree of idiomaticity brings students to misunderstand context expressed by phrasal verbs in sentence.

The mastery of phrasal verbs was measured by figuring out the mean in order to classify mastery level on phrasal verbs based on minimum requirement which is 56. If the score does not reach the standard ‘sufficient’, then the students can be said to fail to have the mastery. The mean score was derived from calculating the average of the total number of correct answers achieved by students and the result was 48.9 out of 100. Based on the minimum requirement used to justify the students’ mastery of phrasal verbs in general, it can be concluded that the students’ mastery of phrasal verb is classified as fail or unsatisfactory according to the grading category outlined in table 2. Not only the conclusion indicated that students’ mastery was in poor level, but also they still had problems in dealing with phrasal verb in terms of its syntactic aspect such as separability and semantic aspect such as idiomatic meaning. It can be seen from the results of the test in each part.

In part I, the percentage of correct answers achieved by students was only 10% (7 students) on the range of 60 to 100. Below the range, there were 23 students whose scores did not reach the minimum requirement for mastery. The number suggests that most students still faced problem in, especially in the first part of the test, associating a lexical verb with a corresponding particle and particle placement.

For the second part, however, the result differed from the first one. Students made good achievement where they managed to answer test items correctly. It was 86% (26) of students who achieved scores in the range of 70-100 which is above the required sufficiency to reach mastery. The result means that most students had knowledge about the separability aspect of phrasal verbs. However some students were still found to be unaware of syntactic properties of phrasal verbs when dealing with inseparable phrasal verbs such as misplacement of direct object before prepositional particle where it should be put right after the particle.

In the last part of the test, 60% (18) of students had scores ranging from 60 to 100. Even though more than half of the students reaching the minimum requirement, the test results indicate that they failed to be aware of semantic aspect of phrasal verb which is related to idiomaticity of meaning. This failure was caused by lack of collocation awareness that made students unable identify special relationship between parts of phrasal verb. The problem eventually led students to awkwardly combine phrasal verbs with other words so that the meaning of sentence becomes unclear. The separability aspect makes it more difficult for students to deal with phrasal verbs in the third part of the test. There was a tendency to put noun object in the order of optional separable phrasal verb when it should have been in that of obligatory separable and even inseparable phrasal verbs. As a result, errors happened due to misplacement of words such as noun object and association of phrasal verb with words in appropriate manner that produce unclear meaning.

**Discussions**

The students were found to really have difficulties and problems (as assumed by analysis results on errors students made during the test) in understanding and using phrasal verbs. The first four sections of the discussion will be related to the difficulties such as the test instruction, the position of object and particle, the unfamiliarity with test questions, and the meaning of phrasal verb, meanwhile the other will talk about the problems that make the students unable to deal with phrasal verb properly which is lack of knowledge. The researcher tries to describe them below.

1. **The Test Instruction**

The students were confused with how to answer question items. The difficulty made them unable to answer the questions correctly. It occurred as a result of not understanding the test instruction provided in the question paper properly. It is proved by the results of the interview conducted by the researcher. The students tended to be confused with blank spaces that were intended to be completed by words such as particles in the first part of the test. They struggled to figure out which one of the gaps to fill first because there were two spaces in the question item (which was incomplete) where only one of them would be correct such as the case in the first part of the test. The blank spaces are tricky that they assumed that all the gaps must be filled with answers. They seemed to overlook the instruction that is also added with examples.

Along with the problem of test instruction, the unavailability of options of particles especially in the first part of the test also became a difficulty for students. They made errors such as placing the particle “up” so often to fill in the blanks. The instruction did not directly tell that there were options of particles provided to help deal with question items. However as explained before, it already comes with an example right below the test direction sentence on how to answer question item which indicates that there would be no options. It could be concluded that the students did not read and make out the test instruction properly.

1. **The Position of Object and Particle in Phrasal Verb**

Not only understanding test directions was difficulty for students, the difficulty also involved confusion in identifying the position of particle and object in sentence consisting of phrasal verb (for the case in the first and the second part of the test). The problem actually has been described in the previous section regarding the mastery of phrasal verb. But, the discussion was based on an analysis of errors resulted from the students’ test.

According to the students, they were confused with the position. For example, when dealing with the second part of the test, the direct object was misplaced before a particle instead of after the particle. It led them to make error in terms of semantic and syntactic aspects. The difficulty is associated with the students’ ability in understanding separable and inseparable phrasal verbs.

1. **Unfamiliarity with Questions Involving Phrasal Verbs**

Being unfamiliar with question type has led students to misread test questions. Some students that were interviewed admitted that they barely encountered questions consisting of phrasal verbs before. In the case of the first part of the test, other than rarely dealing with such questions, they also have to struggle to find out the correct particle by themselves to be paired with the verb. They said in the interview that they never dealt with exercises with the topics relating solely to phrasal verbs in high school. But as for the teaching of phrasal verbs in university since they are EESP students, they seemed to forget in what semester they learnt the topic. The difficulty led them to make a significant number of errors especially in the first part of the test. It is confirmed by the data on table 4.10 presenting the percentage of incorrect answers which mostly belong to the first part of the test.

1. **The Difficulty in Understanding the Meaning of Phrasal Verb**

The idiomatic meanings of phrasal verb turn out to have impacted the way students deal with using phrasal verbs. The students overlook the other way of understanding phrasal verb and only considered the compositionality or the meaning of its individual parts. They find it difficult to figure out phrasal verbs such as *look up* that has nothing to do with “the act of looking towards a higher position” especially when the verb *look* and the particle *up* are put together which creates a new meaning.

Moreover, the fact that the students’ answers on the first part of the test mostly involved the wrong association of the particle *up* also explains the difficulty in understanding the idiomatic meaning of phrasal verb. The students just guess the particle meaning based on the familiarity with multiword verbs consisting of the particle *up* such as shut up, turn up, take up and etc. During the interview, they admitted that they were not aware of the idiomaticity of phrasal verbs leading them to difficulty in identifying the correct particle.

1. **Lack of Knowledge**

The knowledge required to understanding and using phrasal verb correctly includes the conceptual awareness of how the multiword verb works in sentence and also vocabulary. In the interview, the students were asked to describe phrasal verb because they claimed that they had heard about it before. However, each of them barely gave the proper definition of phrasal verb which is a combination of two words consisting of a lexical verb and a particle/preposition. When given examples, they said that they were familiar with the phrase but did not know that it was phrasal verb. They also could not mention the types of phrasal verbs which show that their competence is poor.

How the phrase works in sentence will be better understood by learning its types. Nevertheless, the term separable and inseparable was novel to the students. It becomes challenging when there is no prescribed rule about which particle should come after a verb and the placement of direct object whether after the verb or particle. As what the students said in the interview, they were not convinced of where to place the particle because there was more than one blank spaces in the question and they were afraid that the answer would be wrong. They therefore tend to depend on their feelings to figure out a phrasal verb and to determine whether it would fit with the sentence or not. Thus, the difficulty in relation to identifying the position of particle and direct object in phrasal verb as explained in the previous section is associated with that in using separable and inseparable phrasal verb. It could be said that the students lack the knowledge of phrasal verbs in terms of its separability.

Furthermore, as discussed earlier in the prior section about students’ difficulty in understanding the meaning of phrasal verb, the way to understand phrasal verb can vary according to the context. When a particle is combined with a verb, it will bring out a new different meaning such as *put off.* The meaning of phrasal verb can be directional/spatial or idiomatic depending on the sentence. The latter has been the most difficult one for the students since it is unpredictable and also due to the absence of fixed rules on how to identify the meaning. They stated that they haven’t learned much and even never learned about the idiomatic meaning lying in phrasal verb.

The lack of knowledge of phrasal verb idiomaticity makes the students take a lot of time to understand phrasal verbs leading to error in use. Because of it, the students were also forced to rely on what multiword verbs they could recall from experiences such as having conversation, reading books or watching movies to make out and use phrasal verbs. It means that there should be a conscious, constant need to memorize a list of phrasal verbs as many as possible especially that of those whose frequency of use is high. It is important to memorize phrasal verbs and read stuff about it in order to enable the students to deal with phrasal verbs in communication easily.

**Conclusions**

Based on the findings and error analysis above, also by using the mean score, the researcher comes to conclusion that the fifth semester students of the English education study program at IAIN SAS in academic year 2018/2019 have not enough knowledge of English phrasal verbs and their mastery level of phrasal verb classified as “fail or unsatisfactory”. The analysis of errors suggested that the students have difficulty in understanding and using the phrasal verb with obligatory separation. They tend to misplace the position of particle and wrongly associate it with the verb. However, the students’ achievement in terms of the number of correct answers was mostly related to the phrasal verb with optional separation.

The results of the interview revealed that there are at least four difficulties that contribute to hindering the students from understanding and using phrasal verbs: the test instruction, the position of object and particle in phrasal verb, the unfamiliarity with questions involving phrasal verbs, and the difficulty in understanding the meaning of phrasal verb.

From the interview conducted to the five students scoring the lowest on the test, the researcher concluded that there is one problem that underlies the difficulties which is lack of knowledge.

It is suggested that the lectures recognize and take into account the difficulties faced by the students in understanding and using phrasal verb. It is expected that the recognition will lead the lectures to ensure that the students can tackle the difficulties well by emphasizing the concept of phrasal verbs in the teaching of phrasal verbs through further explanation and adequate exercises. In addition, the class should involve direct practices more as stated by the students during the interview that they could learn the phrasal verb better by practice such as conversation.

Furthermore, the students should pay attention to lectures’ explanation in the teaching and learning phrasal of verb in the class. They also are expected to participate more in the class by actively asking questions and communicating their opinion especially in relation to phrasal verbs.

In addition, the students in the interview said that the duration of class is not enough to improve their ability in understanding and using phrasal verb. Therefore, it is important for them to actively get involved in activities outside the classroom such as English club, peer to peer discussion, or any casual conversations with each other in English.

Since the research has left some things unexplored due to the small number of participants and the area of research, the researcher suggests to other researchers who are interested in the area of English grammar especially the phrasal verb that they conduct research that is related to the topic of phrasal verb in different context such as the correlation between memorizing phrasal verbs and the improvement of speaking skill or how the lack of knowledge of phrasal verb affects the students’ listening skill.

**References**

Army, F. A. F., Delfi, S. D. S., & Eliwarti, E. (n.d.). *A Study on the Ability of the Fourth Semester Students of English Study Program of Riau University in Understanding the Meaning of Phrasal Verbs*. Riau University.

Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Irvine, C. K. S., & Walker, D. (2018). *Introduction to research in education*. Cengage Learning.

Azar, B. S. (2002). *Understanding and using english grammar 3rd edition with answer key*. Pearson Education Limited.

Brown, J. D. (1988). *Understanding research in second language learning: A teacher’s guide to statistics and research design*. Cambridge University Press.

Cowan, R. (2008). *The teacher’s grammar of English with answers: A course book and reference guide*. Cambridge University Press.

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik. 2018. Peraturan Akademik Institut Agama Islam Negeri Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung. Petaling: Institut Agama Islam Negeri.

Johnson, K. (2017). *An introduction to foreign language learning and teaching*. Routledge.

Pahlevi, S. R. (2010). *AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS’DIFFICULTIES IN MASTERING VERB PREPOSITION COMBINATIONS (Case Study of the Senior Students of Semarang State University)*. Universitas Negeri Semarang.

Palmer, F. R. (2014). *The english verb*. Routledge.

Rudzka-Ostyn, B. (2008). *Word power: Phrasal verbs and compounds*. De Gruyter Mouton.

Setiani, S., Wijaya, B., & Rosnija, E. (n.d.). Students’ Mastery on Phrasal Verbs. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Khatulistiwa*, *3*(5).

Wallen, N. E., & Fraenkel, J. R. (2013). *Educational research: A guide to the process*. Routledge.

Yusuf, M. (2007). *A STUDY OF STUDENTS’MASTERY OF PHRASAL VERBS*. SEMARANG STATE UNIVERSITY.