

## Enhancing Students' Mastery On Phrasal Verbs By Applying Make A Match Technique

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### Abstract

This is Classroom Action Research (henceforth, CAR) which was mainly carried out to prove that the implementation of Make A Match technique could enhance students' mastery on phrasal verbs and to describe the students' responses towards the implementation of Make A Match technique in learning processes of phrasal verbs. This CAR was carried out in two cycles in which each cycle consisted of four phases (planning, action, observation, and reflection). The research subjects of this CAR are the fourth semester students of the English Language Education Study Program in the Academic Year of 2022/2023 at a private university in Medan consisting of 14 students. The analysis of quantitative data shows that the students' total score and mean increased continually from the pre-test, formative test, and post-test. The students' total score in the pre-test is 270 and the mean of the pre-test is 19.3; the students' total score in the formative test is 792 and the mean of the formative test is 56.6; the students' total score in the post-test is 1.072 and the mean of the post-test is 76.6. The analysis of qualitative data shows that the learning processes of phrasal verbs through the application of Make A Match technique ran very well. The class atmosphere was more alive and enjoyable after Make A Match technique was implemented so that the students were more active and motivated to learn and master phrasal verbs. It is advisable that English teachers or English lecturers apply Make A Match technique to teach phrasal verbs to their students.

**Keywords:** *Phrasal Verbs, Make A Match Technique, Classroom Action Research*

### 1. Introduction

One's vocabulary mastery significantly affects his proficiency in using a language both in spoken and written forms. Even though he is good at sentence structure but if he does not have excellent vocabulary mastery, he keeps being unable to say and write anything and the grammar knowledge will definitely be futile. Vocabulary mastery is the first and foremost aspect in learning a language. We are capable of comprehending English texts, say or write anything in English language if we have great English vocabulary mastery. Since English language is a foreign language in Indonesia, it is understandable why Indonesian learners find it challenging to understand the word meaning, particularly concerning with phrasal verbs.

A phrasal verb is defined as a verb in combination with an adverb or a preposition in which the meaning cannot always be understood as the sum of its parts (Beyer, 2007). It is essential to master phrasal verbs if we would like to reach an excellent English language level. Phrasal verbs have been frustrating for English learners because they are considered difficult to predict and memorize in terms of meaning. For instances:

1. George and Jane **broke off** their engagement.
2. It is wrong to **look down upon** someone who is less fortunate than ourselves.
3. I refuse to **put up with** his orders any longer.
4. Please, **keep an eye on** my suitcase while I buy my ticket.
5. Anyone can **get ahead** in life if he really tries hard.

Someone is able to use ordinary verbs instead of phrasal verbs, but in reality, the degree of one's English level is told by his ability in using phrasal verbs. When the above sentences are changed with ordinary verbs, they will be read like these.

1. George and Jane **stopped** their engagement.
2. It is wrong to **deprecate** someone who is less fortunate than ourselves.
3. I refuse to **tolerate** his orders any longer.
4. Please, **watch** my suitcase while I buy my ticket.
5. Anyone can **succeed** in life if he really tries hard.

Based on the first writer's experience when teaching Creative Reading subject to the fourth semester students of English Language Education Study Program in the Academic Year of 2022/2023 at a private university in Medan, she found out that many of her students faced difficulties in mastering and using phrasal verbs. When she asked her students the meaning of get in *Bahasa Indonesia*, all of them answered *mendapatkan*. But when she asked them the meanings of **get on, get off, get along, get lost, get ahead, get around, and get over**, they just kept silent. When she asked her students the meaning of call in *Bahasa Indonesia*, all of them answered *memanggil*. But when she asked them the meanings of **call up, call down, call on, call off, and call for**, they did not give any answers. When she asked her students the meaning of take in *Bahasa Indonesia*, all of them answered *mengambil*. But when she asked them the meanings of **take part, take off, take place, take after, take at one's word, take care, take charge of, and take into account**, they remained silent and looked perplexed. They eventually admitted that they seldom get acquainted with phrasal verbs. Considering the facts, it is needed to encourage and motivate the students to learn and master phrasal verbs since phrasal verbs are frequently used in both oral and written materials and play a crucial role in the English language learning.

In the context of English as a foreign language (EFL), teaching phrasal verbs might be extremely challenging for teachers. Phrasal verbs often bewilder the learners since the meaning may not be related with their individual words, and there are a great number of phrasal verbs in English language with high frequency in use (Lumbanraja, 2016). Determining effective ways of learning a new language can be regarded as one important objective of studies into language learning strategies (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Now, a relevant question to ask is: What can an English teacher/English lecturer do for his/her students so that their students are able to master and use phrasal verbs? The application of Make A Match technique might be an alternative.

Make A Match is one of effective techniques to teach vocabulary by using cards. The application of this technique is able to make students enthusiastic and motivated. Make A Match technique was developed by Lorna Curran in 1994. Make A Match is a learning system or a game that prioritizes social abilities, especially the ability to work together, interact, and think quickly by looking for partners of the cards. Teachers provide question cards and answer cards. In the classroom activities, students who hold question cards look for their pairs who hold answer cards. The students who are able to match cards are given points by their teacher. Through the implementation of Make A Match technique, the students are expected to learn in a pleasant atmosphere and able to improve their mastery on phrasal verbs. Considering the research background, the writers were interested in enhancing the students' mastery on phrasal verbs by applying Make A Match technique.

## 2. Review of Literature

### Vocabulary

Vocabulary can be defined as (1) the total number of words in a language, (2) all the words known to a person or used in a particular book, subject, etc., and (3) a list of words with their own meanings, especially one that accompanies a textbook in a foreign language. Vocabulary plays an essential role to help the students understand the meaning of words, and how words are used in sentences. That is why, students should put a lot of effort into expanding their vocabulary (Resnick in Sari, Sembiring, and Wau, 2022). Language learning cannot be separated from learning vocabulary. A good vocabulary is an essential part of effective communication (Langan in Limbong, Lumban Raja, and Sari, 2020). That is why, having excellent vocabulary mastery is a must for people to communicate either in spoken or written form. Without excellent vocabulary mastery, it is hard to construct meaningful sentences in spoken and written communication.

### The Importance of Vocabulary Mastery

In order to master the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), vocabulary becomes the basic element that should be mastered. In listening, vocabulary is the basis for the development of the other vocabularies because the words which students have heard and understood will be the basis of their speaking, reading, and writing (Br Pinem, Pangaribuan, and Sari 2021). In order to be an effective speaker, the language learner should use proper vocabularies in the well-organized sentences and utter them in correct pronunciation and appropriate fluency. In reading, one who has excellent vocabulary mastery will have excellent reading comprehension. It can be said that reading requires comprehension of the text in addition to accurately pronouncing written words (Sinurat, Sari, and Sembiring, 2017).

Thus, it is necessary for students to comprehend the words in a text that represent concepts or ideas in order to learn information from it (Pamungkas, 2021).

The hardest language skill for a student to master is writing (Gangal in Barus, Sari, and Tarigan, 2020). Gangal's statement is in line with the opinion of Bram (in Sari and Pangaribuan, 2018) who state that writing might be a very challenging language skill for learners to master in the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) and of English as a second language (ESL). In mastering writing skill, vocabulary mastery helps learners express their brilliant ideas or opinions based on the topics given. To sum up, it is obligatory for learners to enhance their vocabulary mastery for much better communication so that they are able to interact in the global communication for different objectives, like academic purposes of business goals (Khalid, 2021).

### Phrasal Verbs

McCharty and O'dell (2004) state that phrasal verbs are verbs consisting of a verb and a particle that together have a special meaning. Phrasal verbs quite often baffle the learners since the meanings may not be related with their individual words. Phrasal verbs look simple enough. They are usually combinations of simple, monosyllabic verbs and members of a set of particles. Particles are small words which are already known as prepositions or adverbs. Here are some of the most common phrasal verb particles: about, around, at, away, back, down, for, in, into, off, on, out, over, through, to, and up. Here are the most common verbs that form part of phrasal verbs: break, put, take, bring, cut, get, give, knock, look, make, pass, pick, pull, run, set, turn, break, call, come, go, and keep (Sari and Pandiangan, 2021).

Some phrasal verbs are straightforward to understand. For instance, it is not hard to understand **sit down** and **come in** because their meanings are obvious. But many phrasal verbs are idiomatic. Idiomatic means that there is no way to know what the verb and particle mean together. For example, every beginning level student learns what the words call, run, off, and out mean, but that does not help the students to know that call off means cancel or that run out means use all of something. Students try to understand the meaning from the context or clue of the sentences. For instance: "Please, put out your cigarette!". From the context of sentence, the students are able to know that the meaning is "extinguish" the cigarette.

Gillett (2011) mentions that there are four types of phrasal verbs, namely: separable, inseparable, transitive, and intransitive phrasal verbs. Talking about separable and inseparable phrasal verbs, unfortunately, there is no rule that will help students to look at a phrasal verb and always know whether it is separable or inseparable. Some phrasal verbs are separable and others are inseparable (Azar, 1941). Philips (1952) also says that phrasal verbs (two- or three-part verbs) are divided into four phrasal verbs. The four types of phrasal verbs are elaborated as follows:

### Separable Phrasal Verbs

Separable phrasal verbs can be separated by their objects. When the object is a noun, it is usually entirely optional whether the object is placed between the verb and the particle or placed after the particle. According to Azar (2003), separable phrasal verbs with a noun object can either follow the particle or come between (separate) the verb and the particle. If a phrasal verb is separable, a pronoun object comes between the verb and the particle. For instances:

1. When you have finished playing the radio, turn it off.
2. Someone left the papers on the table. I put them away.
3. The thunder woke me up.

Those sentences above mean:

1. When you have finished playing the radio, stop it.
2. Someone left the papers on the table. I discarded them.
3. The thunder awoke me.

### Inseparable Phrasal Verbs

Azar (2003) states, "Inseparable phrasal verbs are verbs that cannot be inserted by an object or separated by their object. For instances:

1. Tom comes from Alaska so that he is used to cold weather.
2. He could not figure out where he put his keys.
3. She wrote down my address.

Those sentences above mean:

1. Tom originates Alaska so that he is used to cold weather.
2. He could not determine where he put his keys.
3. She noted my address.

### Transitive Phrasal Verbs

Transitive phrasal verbs are verbs that need an object, some of those verbs are followed by prepositions. For instances:

1. I have to look after my sick grandfather. (take care)
2. An amazing storyteller is a person who is able to make up a story on the spot. (make or compose)

### Intransitive Phrasal Verbs

Intransitive phrasal verbs are verbs that do not need an object. For instances:

1. The car broke down because of the incident. (stopped functioning)
2. My mother suddenly showed up when I was on stage. (appeared)

### Make A Match Technique

To design effective processes and relevant learning materials that will help students meet the learning objective(s), teachers should be aware of the characteristics of their students (Ardiansyah and Herwiana, 2022). One of teaching techniques that can be applied in order to enhance students' vocabulary mastery is Make A Match technique. Make A Match technique is a part of cooperative learning which is developed by Lorna Curran in 1994. It is a kind of game where a teacher must prepare some cards, that is question cards and answer cards. In implementing this technique, the students are divided into two groups, that is group A and group B. Each student in each group gets one card. The students in group A get the topic cards/the question cards while the students in group B get the simple description cards/the answer cards. They have to find their partners by matching the question cards and answer cards. After they find their matches, they have to report it to the class (Arifah and Kusumarasyati, 2013).

Having a positive attitude towards language learning is crucial, as it is widely recognized as one of the most significant factors influencing language learning (Fakeye in Sari, 2016). Through the implementation of Make A match technique, the students are expected to have positive attitudes towards the learning processes of phrasal verbs. The purposes of implementing this technique are: 1) deepening the material, 2) controlling the material, and 3) edutainment (education and entertainment). Istarani (in Zawil, 2016) mentions several benefits of implementing Make A Match technique as follows: 1) Each student can be directly involved in answering a question given to them in the form of a card, 2) It can enhance students' creativity through matching the cards, 3) It can help avoid students being bored during the teaching and learning process, and 4) It can create a more interesting and enjoyable classroom atmosphere. In relation to the benefits of implementing Make A Match technique above, Suprijono (2010) states that teachers can motivate and encourage their students to be more interested and enthusiastic in learning English by using Make A Match technique. When the students are interested in the learning process, they will concentrate and participate actively in the classroom activities.

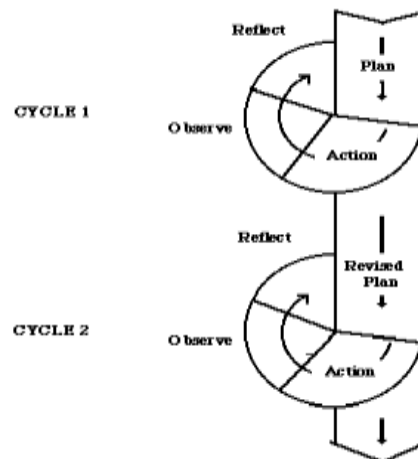
### 3. Method

This is Classroom Action Research (henceforth, CAR). Any systemic investigation carried out to learn more about how schools function, how they educate, and how well their kids learn by educators, researchers, administrators, school counselors, or other stakeholders in the teaching and learning environment is known as action research (Mills in Tambunan, Lumban Raja, and Sari, 2018). CAR begins with a question or questions about classroom experiences, issues, or challenges. It is a reflective process which helps teachers explore and examine aspects of learning teaching processes and take action to change and enhance their students' learning achievement. CAR is a method of finding out what works best in a teacher's own classroom so that he/she can improve his/her students' learning achievement. In other words, the main goal of CAR is to improve the quality of a teacher's own teaching in his/her own classroom. CAR has three major characteristics: it is carried out by practitioners (i.e., classroom teachers), it is collaborative, and it is aimed at changing things (McKay, 2006). It means that CAR can be done by a teacher in a classroom with the assistance of other teachers to discuss what and how to improve the classroom activities so that the students' learning achievement will be better.

The subjects of this CAR are the fourth semester students of the English Language Education Study Program in the Academic Year of 2022/2023 at a private university in Medan. The numbers of students in that class are 14 students, consisting of five male students and nine female students. There are two reasons why the writers chose them as the research subjects, namely: 1) The students need to upgrade their mastery on phrasal verbs since phrasal verbs are essential in spoken and written English, 2) Based on the writers' knowledge, there has never been any research about improving students' mastery on phrasal verbs by implementing Make A Match technique at the private university.

In collecting data, the writers used observation sheets, questionnaire, field notes, and tests. In analyzing data, they used descriptive and statistical techniques. In carrying out this CAR, they used CAR model which was developed by Kemmis and McTaggart (in Sari and Br Sembiring, 2019). This CAR is arranged into at least two cycles (cycle one and cycle two) in which each cycle consisted of four phases, that is planning, action, observation, and reflection. The four phases should be completely carried out in the CAR. The CAR model can be seen in the following figure.

Figure 1. CAR Model Developed by Kemmis and McTaggart



The following are the activities that were completed by the writers in cycles 1 and 2.

### Cycle I

Cycle one consists of four steps: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The four steps are obviously elaborated as follows.

#### 1) Planning

Planning refers to the proposed instructional techniques to be developed in the CAR in order to enhance the students' mastery on phrasal verbs. In this phase, the writers prepared everything which is needed during the CAR. They arranged the lesson plans related to the syllabus and prepared questionnaire and observation checklists for the teacher and the students.

#### 2) Action

The activities of teaching phrasal verbs were carried out by applying Make A Match technique. There are six meetings in cycles one and two, excluded the pre-test, formative test, and post-test.

#### 3) Observation

Observation is done at the same time with the action. The collaborator (the second writer) observed the students' activities and took notes of the situation in the class, including the students' participation when the activity was in progress. The collaborator also jotted down the problems which arose during the learning processes of phrasal verbs. All of the notes were used as consideration to carry out the next cycle.

#### 4) Reflection

Reflection is the final phase in CAR. After the observation phase, the writers made reflections in order to know what happened during the CAR and to evaluate the results of the action so that they made a decision whether to stop the CAR or to continue it to the next cycle.

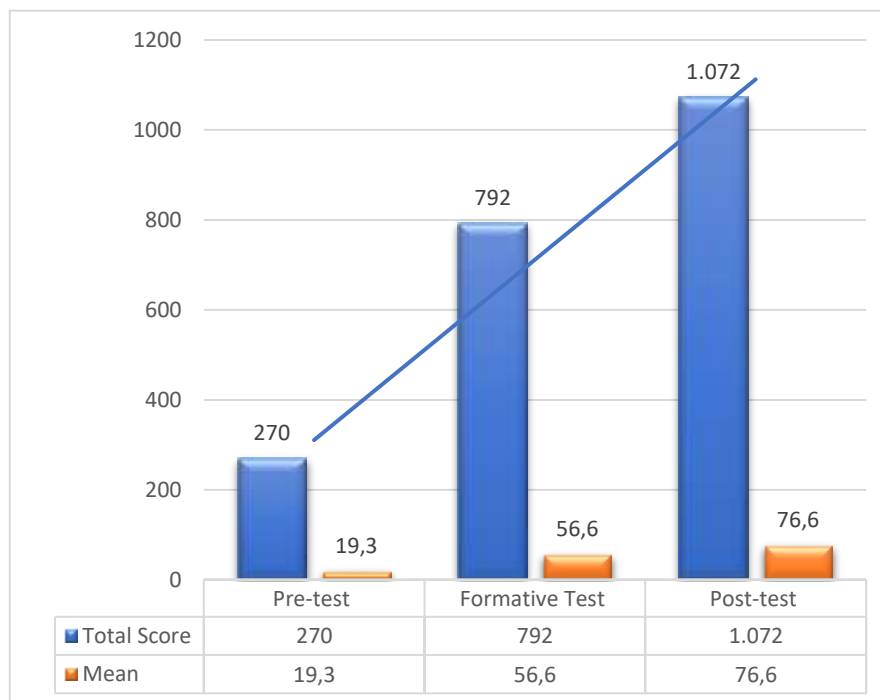
### Cycle II

After completing all phases in cycle one, the writers carried out cycle two in order to make some better improvement. This cycle was mainly focused on solving the problems found in cycle one. The second cycle also has four steps. They are: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The activities in cycle two were revised from the first cycle.

## 4. Findings and Discussion

The quantitative data were obtained from the results of the pre-test, formative test, and post-test. Each test consists of 25 questions (15 questions in the form of multiple choice and 10 questions in the form of making a match). Each test was carried out in 20 minutes. All of the research subjects were present and did all tests. The students' total score for the pre-test is 270 and the mean of the pre-test is 19.3. In the pre-test, there is no student who attained the score  $\geq 75$ . The writers gave formative test to the students. The students' total score in formative test is 792 and the mean is 56.6. Then, they gave the post-test to the students in order to find out the results of teaching phrasal verbs through Make A Match technique. Based on the result of the post-test, the writers found out that the students' total score for the post-test is 1.072 and the mean is 76.6. The results of pre-test, formative test, and formative test can be seen in the following chart.

Chart 1. The Students' Total Score and Mean for the Pre-test, Formative Test, and Post-test



The qualitative data were gained from observation sheets, questionnaire, and field notes. The analysis of qualitative data shows that the learning processes of phrasal verbs through the implementation of Make A Match technique ran very well and all the research subjects had positive responses towards the implementation of Make A Match technique in learning phrasal verbs.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the research findings, the writers drew two conclusions as follows: First, the application of Make A Match technique is effective to enhance the students' mastery on phrasal verbs. It can be seen from the analysis of quantitative data in which the mean of the students' score in the pre-test, formative test, and post-test increases continually after Make A Match technique was implemented in teaching phrasal verbs. The students' total score in the pre-test is 270 and the mean of the pre-test is 19.3. The students' total score in the formative test is 792 and the mean of the formative test is 56.6. The students' total score in the post-test is 1.072 and the mean of the post-test is 76.6. Second, the analysis of qualitative data shows that the students gave positive responses towards the learning processes of phrasal verbs through the application of Make A Match technique. They are more active and enthusiastic in learning and mastering phrasal verbs after Make A Match technique was implemented in the classroom activities. They all agree that the implementation of Make A Match technique helps them enhance their mastery on phrasal verbs.

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