

## Chapter 8

# The Effectiveness of Socrative in Learning Phrasal Verbs Among Spanish EFL Students at Three Different Levels

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The use of applications in language learning to enhance students' performance is worth exploring for its pedagogical implications. Socrative is becoming popular in second-language acquisition. Consequently, this study investigated the use of Socrative as an educational tool for learning phrasal verbs. 33 EFL students at three different levels of English (B2, C1, and C2) participated in the research, which involved reading short texts and doing vocabulary exercises on Google forms, prior to competing in quizzes on Socrative. The study aimed to examine the students' perceptions of learning phrasal verbs via quizzes and the effectiveness of Socrative for this purpose. The findings indicate that their general overview was positive, and that competing both against themselves and their peers played a significant role in their learning experience. Socrative, a user-friendly application easily accessible on any portable device, and which provides instant feedback, can be deemed a convenient tool to create an environment that can motivate and engage students in their learning context.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Digital technologies have developed quite fast recently, with more and more teachers around the world taking advantage of their benefits, especially in English language teaching, in order to enhance their students' learning experience (Afrianto, 2018; Fitriyah, 2022). A number of devices, such as the smartboard, smartphone, tablet, laptop and projectors, allow teachers to use a variety of teaching methods to keep students engaged and motivated in their learning process (Dervan, 2014). Furthermore, many students bring their own digital devices to the classroom (Bradford-Networks, 2013), which means that teachers can support their students through their mobile technology (Suárez et al., 2018) to suit their learning needs. Several applications that foster student response, namely Quizizz, Schoology, Kahoot, Edmodo and Socrative among others, have also emerged to assist teachers and learners to facilitate learning (Hussain et al., 2023) at all levels of education. Such applications play a crucial part in increasing students' motivation, enhancing peer-interaction, providing feedback, and saving time (Law et al., 2021). Motivation has been perceived as a central element in foreign language learning, since it significantly influences students' engagement and overall performance in the language (Lăpădat & Lapadat, 2024). Consequently, teachers can plan stimulating lessons by adapting these applications accordingly.

Learning vocabulary, and especially phrasal verbs, tends to be challenging for EFL students (Laufer & Eliasson, 1993; Seifoori & Ahmadi, 2017; Sinclair, 1989; Subramaniam, 2017) irrespective of their level. According to Thim (2012), phrasal verbs are considered one of the most outstanding features of the English language, and, in Cornwell's (1985) view, fundamental in order to understand and communicate with native speakers. However, the meaning of a phrasal verb cannot always be anticipated out of context; for example, 'come across someone' (verb + prepositional particle), meaning 'meet by chance'. In the context, therefore, of the present study, the absence of phrasal verbs in Spanish, as explained by Zato (2014), might pose a problem for Spanish students who are learning English as a foreign language. Additionally, the fact that phrasal verbs are not only semantically complex, but that they are also ubiquitous in both written and spoken discourse (Boulton, 2008), might discourage students from using them (Barekat & Baniasady, 2014; Laufer & Eliasson, 1993; Liao & Fukuya, 2004). Since these lexical elements form an essential part of English vocabulary (Al Nasarat, 2017), their inclusion in coursebooks is vital. Unfortunately, such classroom-based materials provide learners with overwhelming lists of phrasal verbs and their respective definitions, with students being asked to complete matching or gap-filling exercises (Rosca & Baicchi 2016); such activities result in learning by memorizing rather than contextual understanding (Gardner &

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