Vocabulary Education & Research Bulletin

Winter 2021 Volume 10, Issue 2

Hello again and welcome to the Winter 2021 issue of VERB. This issue contains an article by **Aya Shiiba** investigating a cognitive linguistic approach to learning the particles in phrasal verbs.

The deadline for our next issue, the Summer 2022 issue, will be March 15th, 2022, and we look forward to your submissions. Please see the call for papers on page 18 for details.

Earlier this month we held our 2021 Symposium on Vocabulary Learning and Assessment at Doshisha University in Kyoto. Thank you all for coming out; it was great to finally meet in person again. Our morning session on vocabulary learning featured presentations by Brandon Kramer & Tohru Matsuo, Stuart Benson & Naheen Madarbakus, Michael McGuire & Jenifer Larson-Hall, and Atsushi Mizumoto with David Beglar appearing as the discussant. In the afternoon, we had presentations on vocabulary assessment by Jeff Stewart, Stuart McLean, Minkyung Kim, and Christopher Nicklin, wrapped up by Jenifer Larson-Hall's discussion. It was a successful event, and we look forward to the 2022 Symposium, which will likely be held in Fukuoka.

Michael McGuire & Jenifer Larson-Hall, VERB editors

Table of Contents

Short Articles

Aya Shiiba 2

To What Extent Does Meaning Prototypicality of the Particle of Phrasal Verbs Affect Learning?

SIG News 17

VERB Call for Papers 18

VLI Call for Papers 19

Short Paper

To What Extent Does Meaning Prototypicality of the Particle of Phrasal Verbs Affect Learning?

Aya Shiiba z8d10401@doc.kitakyu-u.ac.jp

Background

Phrasal verbs

Phrasal verbs (PVs) are composed of a verb and adverbial particle (Gardner & Davies, 2007). PVs are difficult for learners mainly because of the particle (Boers, 2000; Kurtyka, 2001). The main problems from the learners' point of view are that the particle element seems to be chosen arbitrarily, and PVs are often highly polysemous (Yasuda, 2010). One reason for this tendency towards polysemy is that particles have both spatial and metaphorical meanings. For instance, the spatial sense of *into* shows motion from outside to inside, as in *go into*, while the metaphorical sense can indicate changing, as with *turn into*.

Prototypical and Metaphorical Senses

Cognitive linguistics argue that our physical experiences of the world give rise to the image schemas underlying many linguistics expressions (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Boers, 1996; Tyler & Evans, 2003). The prototypical meanings of adverbial particles in PVs can be regarded as spatial movement (Boers, 1996). The spatial senses of up and down refer to movement in a vertical plane (examples 1-2), but these senses can be extended, using the conceptual metaphor MORE IS UP, LESS IS DOWN (3-4).

(1) I went up to the top floor.

(2) I fell down the stairs.

(3) Prices went up.

(4) I turned down the volume.

These conceptual metaphors can be understood by relating the metaphorical meanings to an image schema of the prototypical meanings.

Thanks to their conceptual simplicity, the prototypical meaning of particles in PVs should be easier to understand and employ than the metaphorical meaning (Yasuda, 2010). For instance, the meaning of *go down*: *to move down to a lower level or position* is prototypical, whilst *to decrease in value or amount* is metaphorical (Garnier & Schmitt,

2015). However, it is hoped that by using image schemas, learners can understand the ways that spatial senses can be extended, leading to eventual comprehension of abstract schemas. Boers and Demecheleer (1998) suggested that this difference can be highlighted for pedagogical purposes, which this was the focus of this study.

The Cognitive Linguistic Approach for PVs

Using the cognitive linguistic approach outlined above, Boers (2000) investigated whether metaphorical instruction would help French university students to learn PVs. The control group was not given instruction but memorized an alphabetically ordered list of PVs while the experimental group received explanations based on conceptual metaphors of particles, such as MORE IS UP; LESS IS DOWN. They filled in the blanks embedded in a reading passage with PVs (cloze test). The findings showed that raising the awareness of metaphorical thinking contributed to the learners' comprehension of PVs with a small number of particles.

Furthermore, Yasuda (2010) examined whether teaching based on metaphorical extensions of particles would help Japanese university students to learn PVs. The experimental and control groups learned 21 PVs with 5 particles (*into*, *up*, *down*, *out*, *off*). The experimental group was given a checklist with 21 PVs classified into 11 groups, each introducing a particular conceptual metaphor, such as CHANGING IS INTO (*burst into*, *turn into*), and DEFEATING/SUPPRESSING IS DOWN (*turn down*, *knock down*). Meanwhile the control group received a list of the PVs sorted alphabetically. The checklists given to both groups contained translations of each PV into Japanese. Yasuda found that conceptual metaphor instruction was more effective than simple memorization for 21 PVs with 5 particles. Yasuda also mentioned that in future research it would be good to categorize PVs into those with prototypical particles or metaphorical particles.

Aims

Previous empirical studies seem to imply that enhancing awareness of particle meanings aids comprehension, but no study has thus far investigated whether prototypical meanings of particles are understood more easily than metaphorical meanings. The research questions for this study were therefore set up as follows:

RQ 1: Does the prototypicality or non-prototypicality of adverbial particles in PVs affect learners' acquisition?

RQ 2: Can instructions based on image schemas and conceptual metaphors help learners study prototypical and non-prototypical particles more effectively?

Methods

Participants

The participants were 20 students at a university in the U.K. who had studied English for at least ten years but had lived in English-speaking countries for less than 3 years. They were all from Asian countries, such as Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and China. They were divided into two groups, a control group (N = 10) and an experimental group (N = 10).

Procedure

For the experimental group, instruction was conducted regarding prototypical and metaphorical senses of adverbial particles. Each prototypical particle was shown as an image schema. (Appendix A). Examples of eight prototypical particles (*in*, *into*, *over*, *on*, *off*, *up* and *down*) embedded in the following PVs were then presented: *shut in*, *crash into*, *get on*, *jump off*, *fall out*, *flow over*, *shoot up* and *go down*. Students were then asked to memorize the conceptual metaphoric meanings of 35 PVs, such as INTO IS CHANGING/DEEP INVOLVEMENT (Appendix B). The entire instruction time was 10 minutes Students in the control group were simply given 10 minutes to memorize a list of PVs, with an easy English definition provided for each PV (Appendix C).

All students were asked to complete a post-test (Appendix D). Ten unexposed PVs with prototypical particles were used. Twenty PVs with metaphorical particles were used, ten of which had appeared in instruction and ten of which were unexposed. These were chosen to assess the students' comprehension of metaphorical particles after the instruction based on the conceptual metaphors.

The 30 sentences were presented in a random order different to that of the teaching session so as not to promote students' memorization reflected by the teaching session. The students were allowed up to 15 minutes to complete the test.

Results

Table 1 shows the mean scores on the post-test, and a t-test found that the groups were not statistically different (t = -1.13, df = 17.12, p = 0.3).

Table 1.

Scores on post-test

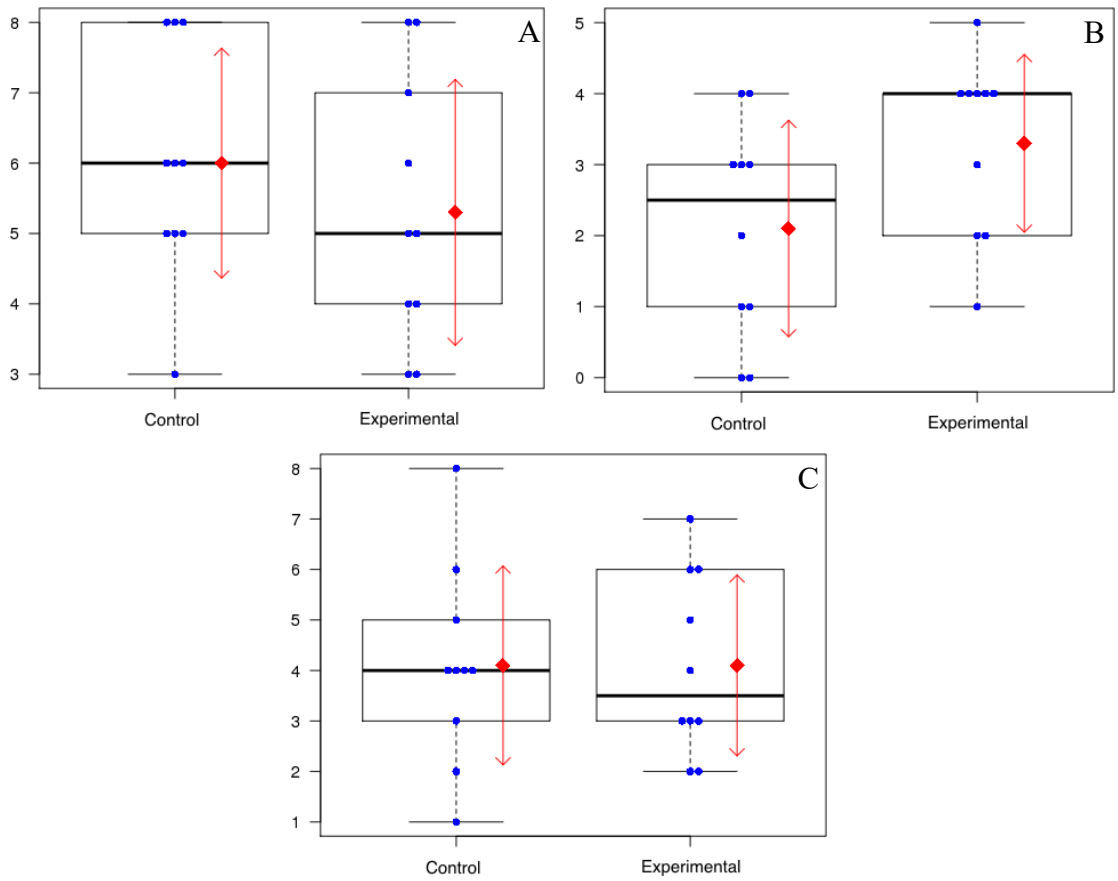
Tests	Group	N	Mean	SD
Post-test	Control	10	12.30	3.34
	Experimental	10	12.60	2.46

Table 2 shows the results by separating PVs into prototypical and metaphorical meanings. Surprisingly, the scores for prototypical PVs for both groups were lower than the scores for metaphorical PVs which had been seen in training. Cohen's *d* showed there were different effect sizes for each type of meanings ($d = 0$ for unexposed prototypical PVs, $d = .40$ for exposed metaphorical PVs, and $d = .86$ for unexposed metaphorical PVs). Although it would make sense that PVs the students were exposed to would receive higher scores, Yasuda (2010) predicted that scores of prototypical PVs should be higher than metaphorical PVs. However, it is true that comparing unexposed PVs only, participants scored lower on the metaphorical PVs than the prototypical PVs by about 2/10 points. This could imply that the conceptual metaphor approach had some small effect. The confidence intervals here show that there is no statistical difference between groups.

Table 2

Types of meanings of PVs in the post-test

Type of PVs	Group	Mean	SD	95% CI
Unexposed Prototypical	Control	4.1	1.97	[-1.77, 1.77]
	Experimental	4.1	1.79	
Exposed Metaphor	Control	6.0	1.63	[-0.96, 2.36]
	Experimental	5.3	1.89	
Unexposed Metaphor	Control	2.1	1.52	[-2.51, 0.11]
	Experimental	3.3	1.25	



Graph 1. Box plot of: (A) unexposed prototypical PVs, (B) Exposed metaphorical PVs, and (C) Unexposed metaphor PVs

Conclusion and Future Directions

The results from the study show that a cognitive linguistic approach does not seem effective for immediate learning. The present study has done what other studies, which had found differences between control and experimental groups, had done. However, the results did not agree with the findings of the other previous studies.

There is a caveat that this study was very short-term. Most students might have a challenge of retention in the short term. Moreover, although the control group could focus on memorizing the 35 PVs in their 10-minute study period, the experimental group had to consider an entirely new approach to 35 PVs in 10 minutes as well as memorize the verbs. The demands of the task in the experimental group were thus heavier and this might have resulted in a depressed result. An additional limitation is that a pre-test was not employed so some participants might have benefitted from already knowing some of the verbs.

Moreover, one might speculate that the larger number of PVs led to more confusion among the learners, but there is another issue to address. The issue is that

metaphorical extensions are not broadly generalizable. For example, although *lowering/decreasing* and *defeating/suppressing* were used for *down*, this idea for the meaning of *down* would not be applicable to the other meaning of *break down*: "Divide or separate into categories or smaller components so as to make it easier to understand or deal with" (Garnier & Schmitt, 2014, in the PHaVE List, p. 14). A new extended definition would need to be created. Then this process would have to be repeated many times to capture all of the meanings of PVs, which may pose a considerable demand on memory and mute the beneficial effect of trying to find a way to remember metaphorical meanings of PVs. Therefore, it could be that cognitive linguistic approaches are not suitable for immediate gains in knowledge, but it should be investigated whether learners given practice in the two techniques over a series of lessons might show different results.

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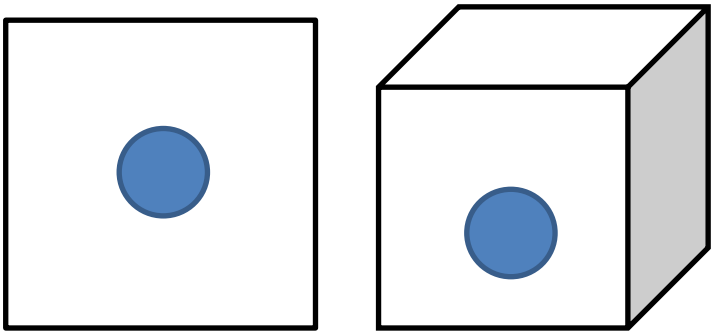
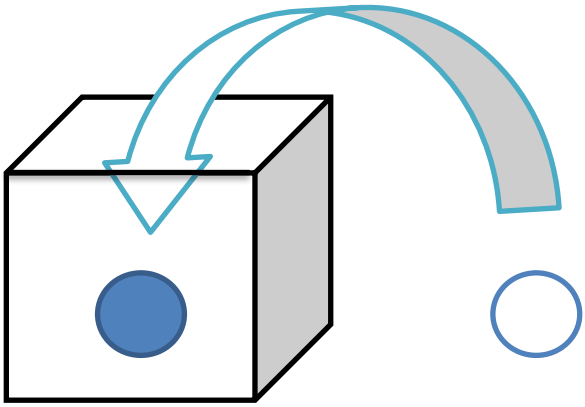
Appendix A: Image schemas for prototypical meanings

IN



INTO



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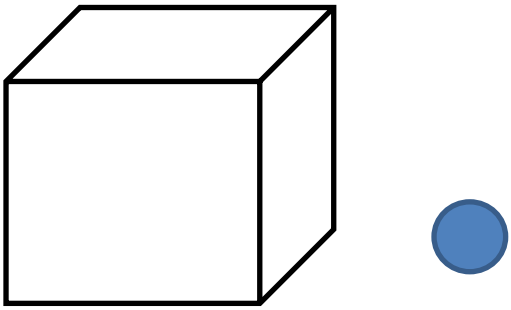

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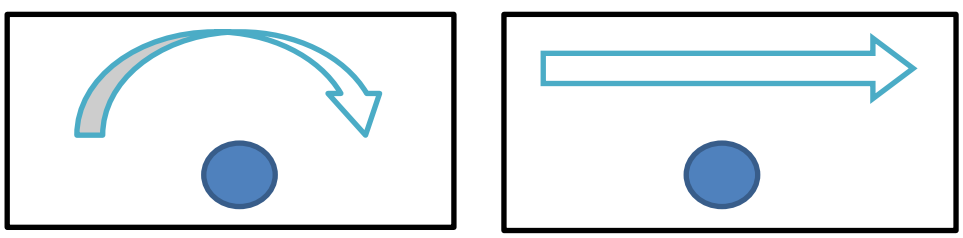

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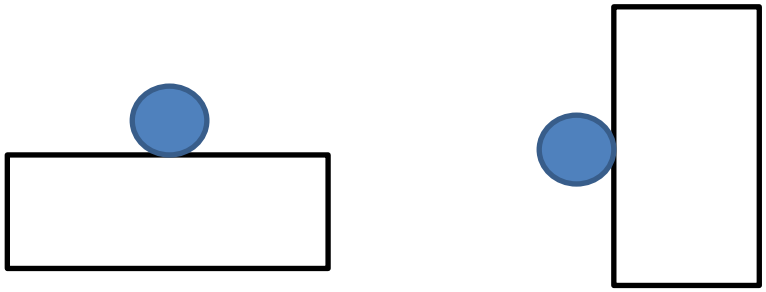

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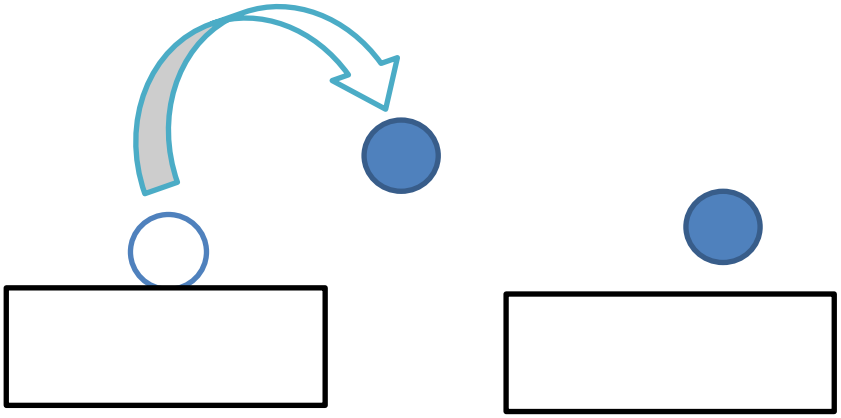
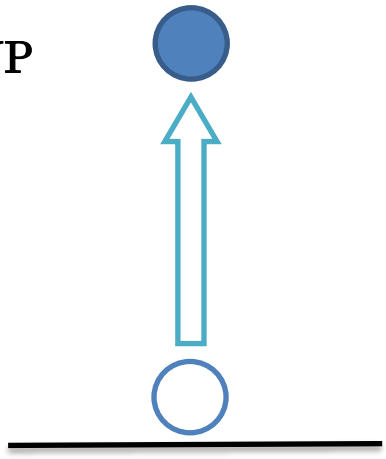
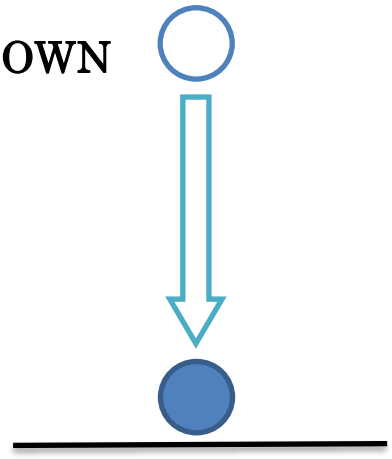


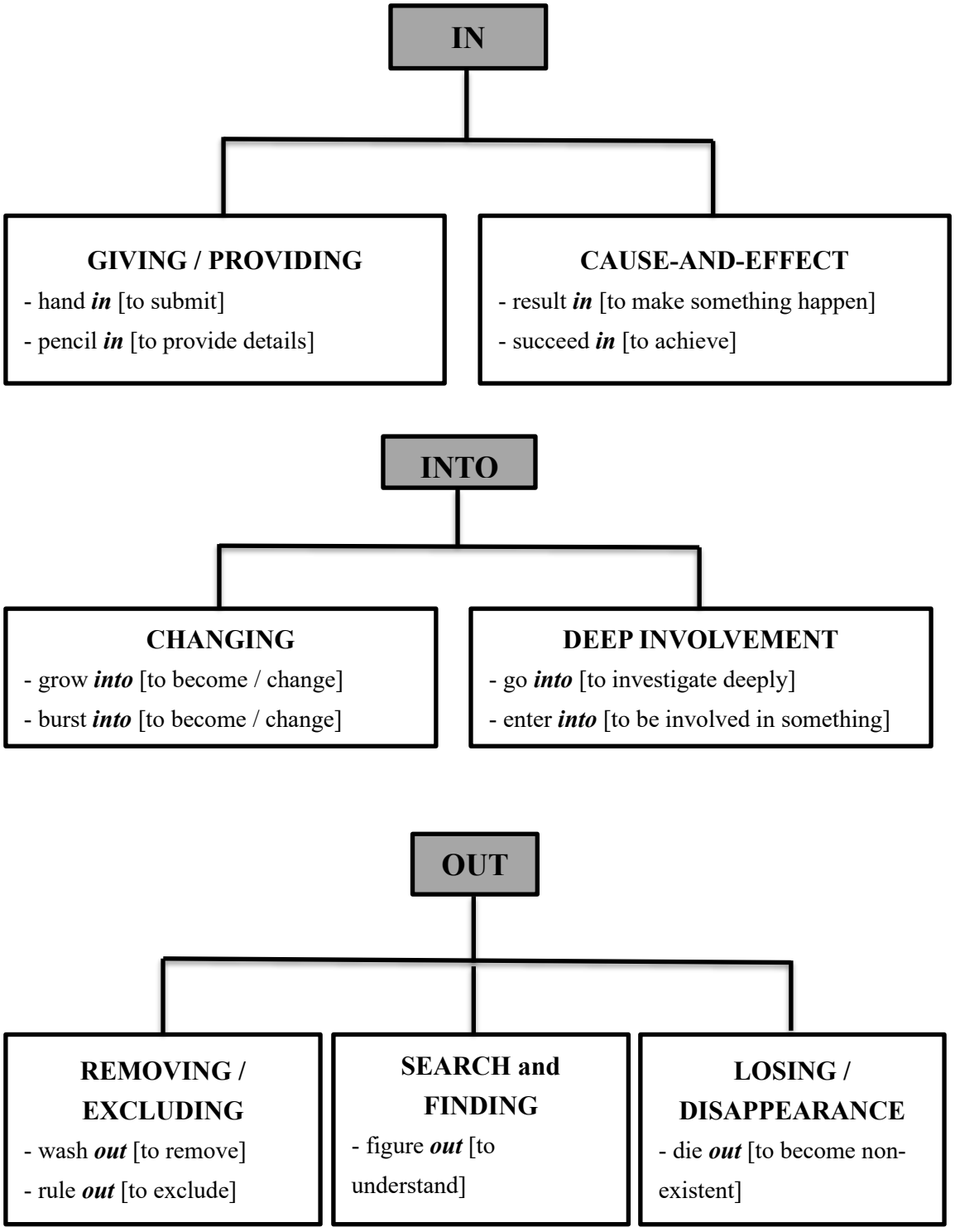
UP

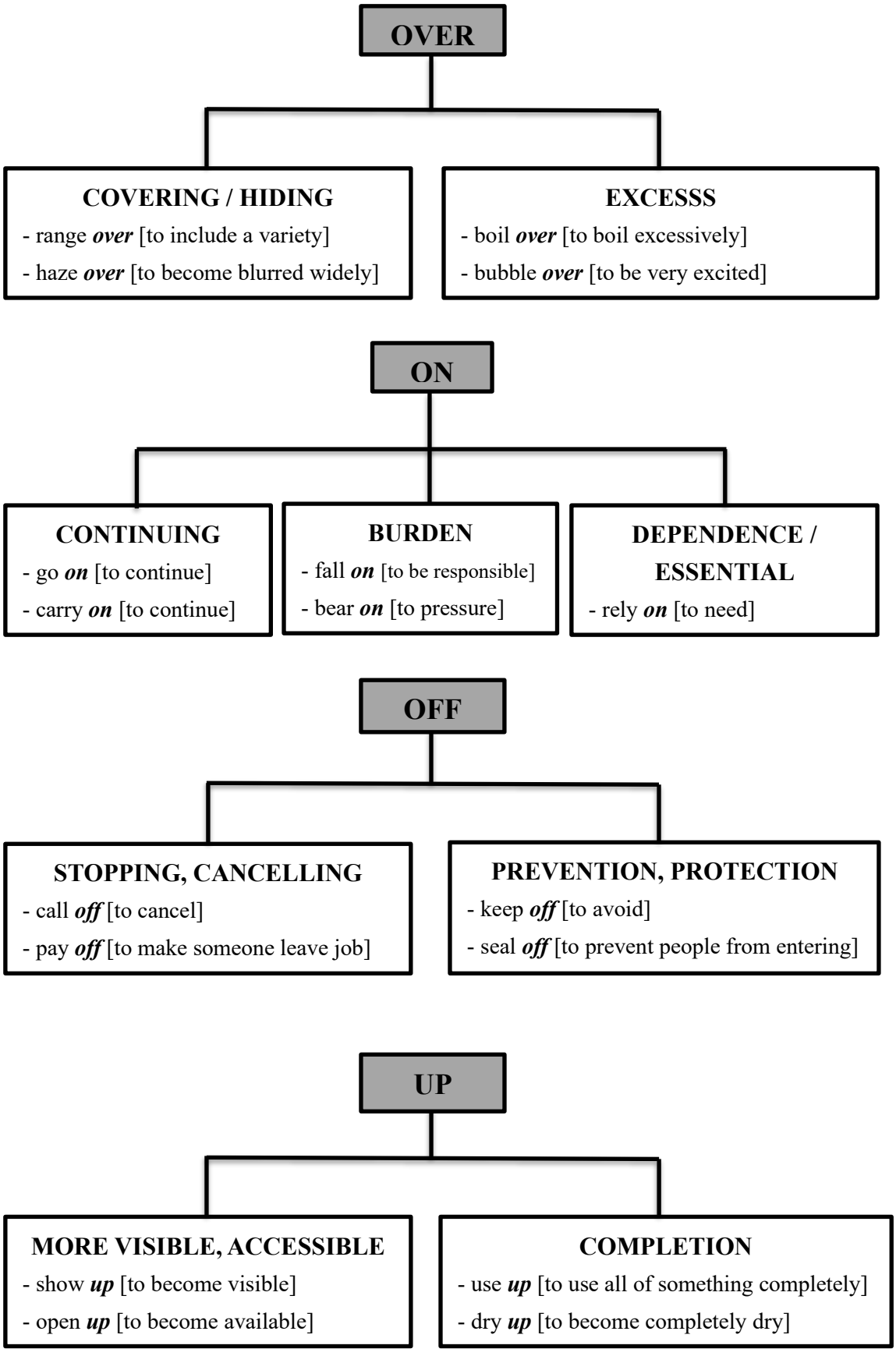


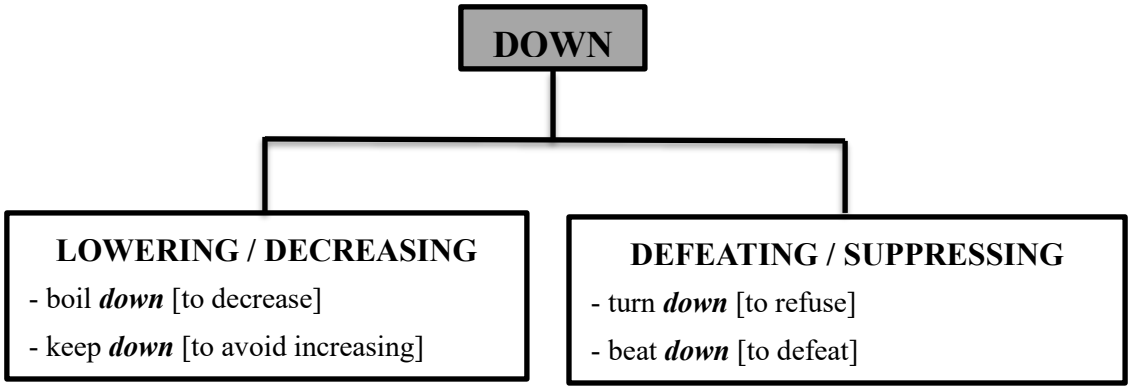
DOWN



Appendix B: Conceptual metaphors for metaphorical particles




OVER
COVERING / HIDING
- range *over* [to include a variety]
- haze *over* [to become blurred widely]
EXCESSS
- boil *over* [to boil excessively]
- bubble *over* [to be very excited]
ON
CONTINUING
- go *on* [to continue]
- carry *on* [to continue]
BURDEN
- fall *on* [to be responsible]
- bear *on* [to pressure]
DEPENDENCE / ESSENTIAL
- rely *on* [to need]
OFF
STOPPING, CANCELLING
- call *off* [to cancel]
- pay *off* [to make someone leave job]
PREVENTION, PROTECTION
- keep *off* [to avoid]
- seal *off* [to prevent people from entering]
UP
MORE VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE
- show *up* [to become visible]
- open *up* [to become available]
COMPLETION
- use *up* [to use all of something completely]
- dry *up* [to become completely dry]


DOWN
LOWERING / DECREASING
- boil *down* [to decrease]
- keep *down* [to avoid increasing]
DEFEATING / SUPPRESSING
- turn *down* [to refuse]
- beat *down* [to defeat]

Appendix C: A Checklist distributed to control group

Phrasal verb	Meaning
1. **bear on**	to pressure
2. **beat down**	to defeat
3. **boil down**	to decrease
4. **boil over**	to boil excessively
5. **bubble over**	to be very excited
6. **burst into**	to become / change
7. **call off**	to cancel
8. **carry on**	to continue
9. **die out**	to become non-existent
10. **dry up**	to become completely dry
11. **enter into**	to be involved in something
12. **fall on**	to be responsible
13. **figure out**	to understand
14. **go into**	to investigate deeply
15. **go on**	to continue
16. **grow into**	to become / change
17. **hand in**	to submit
18. **haze over**	to become blurred widely
19. **keep down**	to avoid increasing
20. **keep off**	to avoid
21. **live on**	to need
22. **open up**	to become available
23. **pay off**	to make someone leave job
24. **pencil in**	to provide details
25. **pick out**	to search and choose
26. **range over**	to include a variety
27. **rely on**	to need
28. **result in**	to make something happen
29. **rule out**	to exclude
30. **seal off**	to prevent people from entering
31. **show up**	to become visible
32. **succeed in**	to achieve
33. **turn down**	to refuse

34. **use up**	to use all of something completely
35. **wash out**	to remove

Appendix D: Fill-in-the-blank task (Immediate post-test)

Fill in the blanks with the words given below so that each sentence will make sense.

in, into, out, over, on, off, up, down

1. It was a private talk. I don't want you to go (**into**) details about what was said. **
2. The sky will clear (**up**) according to the weather forecast. Let's have a walk. ***
3. Could you pencil (**in**) a meeting for Friday morning? **
4. He was surprised to hear that he would be laid (**off**), so he needs to find a new job. **
5. She boiled the long story (**down**) to a few sentences. **
6. The little boy will grow (**into**) a fine young man. **
7. Her heart is brimming (**over**) with happiness. ***
8. The roof of the house was ripped (**off**) by the typhoon. *
9. I managed to wash (**out**) the hair dye after three washes. **
10. Be careful! Drivers must drive carefully as the road has been hazed (**over**). **
11. She glanced (**down/over**) the list. *
12. The crucial issue was brought (**up**) at the meeting. ***
13. Good education can bring (**out**) various abilities in children. *
14. Could you try to speak more clearly (**into**) the microphone? *
15. The child was dressed (**down**) in public and he felt embarrassed. ***
16. The teacher rattled (**on**) for two hours and some students fell asleep. ***
17. My mother could easily be picked (**out**) in the photo. **
18. Tiredness crept (**over**) her. *
19. The railway opened (**up**) the north of the country. **
20. He asked his secretary to fend (**off**) unwanted phone calls. ***
21. Please soak the sponge (**in/into**) the hot water. *
22. He ordered whisky to drive (**out**) the coldness. ***
23. I like travelling even if all the expenses fall (**on**) me. **
24. Tears shed (**down**) her cheeks. *
25. She left (**off**) playing the violin to answer the phone. ***
26. A new medication system will be phased (**in**) within three years. ***
27. Be careful because petrol has started to leak (**out**) from his car. *
28. It is getting dark. Could you roll (**down**) the blinds? *
29. He lapsed (**into**) unconsciousness after the accident. ***
30. I need to sew a button (**on**) my shirt. *

*Prototypical PV, **Exposed metaphorical PV, ***Unexposed metaphorical PV

SIG News:

Raymond Stubbe, editor of our journal Vocabulary Learning and Instruction, is retiring after nearly 10 years at the helm. He has been with the journal since its inception and has played an invaluable role in keeping it going with consistent, quality issues each year. He will remain on VLI's editorial board, where we can continue to benefit from his expertise and experience.

It will take a lot to fill his shoes, so we have opted for not one but two editors: Joe Vitta of Kyushu University and Chris Nicklin of Rikkyo University. Joe and Chris are well suited for the job. Joe is currently an associate editor for the International Journal of TESOL Studies and serves as an ad hoc reviewer for leading journals in the field, and as a team the two of them have published papers in some of the top journals in our field, including Modern Language Journal, Studies in Second Language Acquisition and Language Testing. We are all excited to see where they will take VLI in the future.

VERB Call for Papers

The VERB welcomes submissions related to vocabulary research and education.

Short papers are peer reviewed and may require rewriting and resubmission for acceptance. They must not exceed 1500 words, excluding references, tables, and titles. Short papers fall into the categories of completed research, ongoing research, and teaching and learning in practice.

Other submissions encouraged are classroom activities related to vocabulary, book reviews, opinion pieces, and event reports and commentary. All submissions are expected to adhere to APA 7th edition formatting guidelines.

Deadline for next issue: **March 15, 2022**
For submissions and all correspondence: <jaltvocabsig.verb@gmail.com>
Latest information: https://jaltvocab.weebly.com/publications.html

The following are guidelines for short paper submissions (please include these sections):

Completed research:	**Ongoing research:**	**Teaching and learning in practice:**
* Background	* Background	* Theoretical framework
* Aims	* Aims	* Teaching context
* Methods	* Methods	* Procedure
* Results	* Sample	* (Preliminary) Results
* Conclusions	* (Preliminary) Results	* (Preliminary) Conclusions
* Future directions	* (Preliminary) Conclusions	* Future directions
	* Future directions	

**If you are thinking about submitting, but your article doesn't fit into one of the above categories, please email us at the above address and let us know what you would like to submit, and we can work it out.

Vocabulary Learning & Instruction Call for Papers

The Vocabulary SIG's *Vocabulary Learning and Instruction* (VLI) journal is calling for submissions for an upcoming issue. Submissions will be published online upon acceptance and combined into an issue later in the year.

VLI accepts long-form research papers (2000-7000 words) and brief reports, summaries, and commentaries (2000-3000 words) related to vocabulary acquisition, pedagogy, assessment, and lexical networks.

As an open journal, content is indexed on Google Scholar and made freely available on the internet without paywalls. Authors are free to also make their work available on sites such as academia.edu and ResearchGate.

All submissions are subject to a 2-step peer-review process:

> A) Editors review manuscripts to ensure basic requirements are met, and that the work is of sufficient quality to merit external review. This process typically takes 1-2 weeks, at which point authors are informed of the outcome.
>
> B) Submissions which meet these requirements are sent out for blind peer review by 2-3 experts in the field. This process takes approximately 1-2 months. Following external review, authors are sent copies of external reviewers' comments and notified of decisions (accept, accept pending changes, revise, and resubmit, or reject).

Please see http://vli-journal.org/submissions.html for details

The VERB salutes the cooperation and hard work of our reviewers:

VERB Reviewers: Phil Bennett, Thuy Bui, David Coulson, Tomoko Ishii, Magda Kitano, Brandon Kramer, Jenifer Larson-Hall, Mimi Masson, Stuart McClean, Michael McGuire, Atsushi Mizumoto, Ian Munby, John Racine, James Rogers, Rachel Ruegg, Jeff Stewart, Raymond Stubbe, and Yuka Yamamoto.