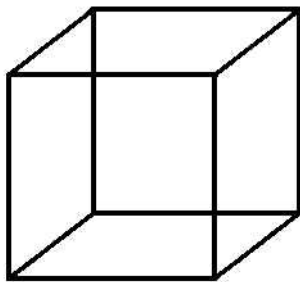
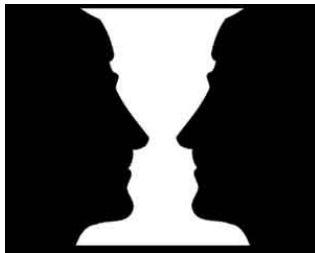


In a recent study we have proposed the framework of image schemas to explain and teach phrasal verbs to foreign learners. Compared with traditional methods as semantic fields, or even alphabetical order, we got 45% more efficiency and accuracy concerning student's use. Now, we are proposing the use of the same framework associated with gestalt perception to describe the polysemy of phrasal verbs, such as *turn in* (to go to sleep / to give back / to hand in), as well as synonym, mainly those in which there is a preposition change, such as *fill in* / *fill out* or *break up* / *break down*, without significant change in meaning.



Necker cub



Rubin's figure
we must write down the requested piece of information. In the second

Our statement is that in such cases there is a multistable perception underlying the orientation of the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL image schema, as in a Necker cub¹ or Rubin's figure (cf. Spivey, 2007, p.19), solved by gestalt perception in a figure ground decision. For instance, if we say *We started filling in the blanks*, the decision is to foreground the place we are writing down in. But if we say *We started filling out the blanks*, the decision is to foreground

the means, the pencil or pen we are using to complete the blanks. Actually, in the first case there is an association between two image schemas: SOURCE-PATH-GOAL and SURFACE, as instance of BOUNDED REGION (Peña, 2008, p.1044). The SOURCE is the pen or the pencil, the movement towards the sheet of paper is the PATH, and the SURFACE is the BOUNDED place in which

case, there is an association among three image schemas: the SOURCE (SOURCE-PATH-GOAL) now is the pen / pencil that is also a CONTAINER (ink / graphite), the PATH is the movement, and the GOAL is the SURFACE of the sheet of paper.

The context is obviously important. We can say *break up* or *break down* for the failing of a relationship (*Their marriage broke up* or *broke down*), but we must say only *break down* to hit a door or wall to the ground. As much *break up* as *break down* are under the FORCE-DYNAMICS image schema, they are interchangeable only in abstract situations. When we say: *The cops broke down the door*; there is an iconic influence to down movement. We must also have in mind that because of grammaticalization the metaphorical sense of a phrasal verb, or even of a preposition remains only in language as system, but not in language as use (cf. Steen, 2006)

We realize that this kind of description can really help the learning of polysemous and synonymous phrasal verbs by foreign students of English.

¹ The aim of the author in this chapter was to study the length of time people need to change their perceptual state from viewing the cub from above position to underneath position.

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