Frame-semantic analysis of Self-motion verbs in Brazilian Portuguese

This paper presents a frame-semantic analysis of motion verbs in Brazilian Portuguese. Our main goal is to verify whether the Frame Semantics approach and the theoretical constructs implemented by the Berkeley FrameNet Project (Fillmore et al. 2003), such as frame elements, frame-frame relations and semantic types, are adequate to describe the semantic of Brazilian Portuguese data. In addition, this work has two other aims: the first is to examine the convergences and divergences between Portuguese and English motion verbs, focusing on verbs that may differ with respect to how the semantic of motion is lexicalized. The Portuguese translation equivalents of the senses of hike (fazer uma excursão a pé) e jog (fazer jogging) exemplify the fact that the information about the manner of motion must be supplied by a separate phrase. The second additional goal is to validate, through empirical data, the Boas’ proposal (Boas, 2008), that suggests a more fine-grained semantic analysis, refining the Frame Semantics approach by employing the notion of verb-descriptivity (Snell-Hornby, 1983). Specifically, our intent is to check the degree of descriptivity and the range of application of twenty verbs of the Self-motion frame and, consequently, the correlation between semantic elements and syntactic patterns. To reach these goals, we have extracted sentences from the COMPARA parallel corpus and the Sketch Engine. Besides the investigation of these corpora, we have consulted the dictionary definitions in order to find additional evidences for the verb-descriptivity. The analysis follows the lexicographic annotation mode, contrasting with the methodology of FrameCorp – the larger project that this work is part of. Among the issues that the FrameNet Project (Chishman et al, 2008) addresses is to provide an annotation of running text. Finally, by contrasting Portuguese and English verbs, with focus on verb-descriptivity and frames, this study carries implication for an account of the viability of Frame Semantics for crosslinguistic investigations.

References:


