

## Evaluating Frame Semantics as a methodology to describe how new words replace old words

According to Fillmore's now classic paper 'Frame semantics' (2006[1982]), frame semantic research offers a way of characterizing principles for new words and phrases. The overall aim of this paper is to evaluate frame semantics as a methodology to describe and understand how new words replace old words, denoting loaded concepts. Minority groups and old and new labels used to describe these groups are in focus. The chosen concept is 'people with disabilities'. The data have been gathered from news paper texts, information texts from health institutions, and normative texts from governmental organizations such as Language Council of Sweden 1969–2009. Fillmore writes that alternate framing occurs when there is a desire to highlight some aspects of the situation and hide others. The terms for 'people with disabilities' have changed during the past 40 years. The new terms have evolved mainly as a result from lobbyism from interest organizations, who have considered the old terms derogative and/or misleading. Thus, the term *utvecklingsstörd* (literally 'disturbed in his/her development'), has been replaced by *funktionshindrad* (literally 'functionally restrained'), which, in its turn, has been replaced by *person med funktionsnedsättning* (literally 'person with a functional reduction'). The framing has altered, from describing the person as disturbed or restrained to the person having a reduction. The form, consequently, has changed from using participles *störd* 'disturbed' and *hindrad* 'restrained' to using a preposition phrase *med funktionsnedsättning* 'with a functional reduction'. However, it can be discussed whether the new terms are merely what Fillmore calls "relexicalizing unchanged frames". This means that a new fresh term is used, but the old attitudes and values remain the same. In an even broader perspective, still using Fillmore's methodology, a question can be posed as to why the very category 'person with disability' is relevant for the speech community. Some recent texts try to avoid the category, reframing the situation for example by describing locations as *tillgängliga för alla* 'available for everybody'. It is suggested that this discussion must relate to "We" and "the Other" (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin 2001) where "the Other" is someone who deviates from the norm. The study shows that Fillmore's frame semantics are still powerful tools, which raise relevant questions, in order to shed light on and discuss principles for new words and phrases.

Ashcroft, Bill, Griffiths, Gareth & Tiffin, Helen. 2001. *Key concepts in post-colonial studies*. New York : Routledge.

Fillmore, Charles. 2006. Frame semantics. In: Geeraerts, D. (ed.), *Cognitive Linguistics. Basic readings*. Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter. Pp. 373–400. Originally published in *Linguistics in the morning calm*. 1982. Linguistic society of Korea (ed.), Seoul: Hanshin Publishing Company. Pp. 111–137.