Frames-and-Constructions Analysis of Japanese and English Bilingual Children's Books

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This paper discusses a frames-and-constructions analysis of bilingual texts, a methodology for comparing frames and constructions in bilingual texts, focusing on constructions in Japanese and English that appear in a bilingual children's book. It argues that in addition to cultural and typological factors, which have been mentioned in previous analyses, constructional differences may be a cause for a mismatch in frames evoked by source and target texts, supporting Czulo's claim based on his analyses of English and German texts (Czulo 2013). Furthermore, by analyzing frame divergences and constructional divergences between Japanese and English, the paper aims to lay out a framework for building a contrastive constructicon, a repository of construction descriptions, between typologically-unrelated languages.

Frames-and-constructions analyses describe meanings and structures of sentences, focusing on the semantic frames evoked by various linguistic expressions in the sentences. Czulo (2013) regards meaning preservation in translation as the preservation of the frame whenever possible and proposes the *primacy of the frame* hypothesis: ideally the frame of the translation matches the frame of the original. He observes that picking a construction comparable in function in the target language may lead to frame shifts. That is, as the function of the constructions is a factor preferred over the exact match, constructional mismatches may lead to an overriding of the primacy of the frame principle.

This paper analyzes Japanese and English bilingual texts in the following steps: 1) identify the frames evoked by the main predicates in corresponding Japanese and English sentences; 2) if there is a frame mismatch in the two and if there is no frame integration within each, identify the constructions evoked by the two sentences; 3) identify the functions of the constructions; and 4) examine whether the two frames identified in 1) are related via any FrameNet frame-to-frame relations. The paper focuses on sentence-level general constructions.

1) J: *Henna hako ga   ochi* ^{Motion_directional} *teru   wa*
       strange box   NOM fall   RESULT PARTICLE
       (literal translation) 'A strange box has fallen.'
   → E: *Hey, here's* ^{Being_located} *a strange box*

2) J: *Thetic* construction   → E: *Here_be* construction
3) J: Presentational function   → E: Presentational function
4) The `Motion_directional` and `Being_located` frames are not related by a FrameNet frame-to-frame relation

As shown in 1), the Japanese main verb *ochiru* 'fall' evokes the `Motion_directional` frame, while the English *be* evokes the `Being_located` frame, so there is a frame mismatch. The Japanese sentence is an instance of the *Thetic* construction and the English translation exemplifies the *Here_be* construction, so there is a constructional divergence. However, a close examination of the two constructions reveals that both have the presentational function.

Analyses in the paper argue for the view that in Japanese and English bilingual texts, choosing a construction comparable in function in the target language may lead to frame mismatches, thereby resulting in an overriding of the primacy of the frame principle.

To summarize, the paper demonstrates that frames-and-constructions analyses are useful in examining bilingual texts of typologically unrelated pairs of languages. It supports Czulo's claim that a constructional divergence may be a cause for a frame mismatch, by showing examples from Japanese and English. The paper also revealed that the current FrameNet frame-to-frame relations are not sufficient to evaluate the semantic relatedness of pairs of sentences exhibiting a frame mismatch in the two languages. At the same time, the paper suggests that it is worth examining cases of frame matches as well, since such frames may be regarded as cognitively basic. Until now it has been difficult to identify comparable constructions in typologically unrelated languages. It is thus hoped that the frames-and-constructions analysis demonstrated in the paper will prove useful as a means for building a contrastive constructicon.