Conceptual and lexical correspondence in the development of a frame-based resource for the Brazilian legal language

Anderson Bertoldi
Thaís Domênica Minghelli
Rove Chishman

Applied Linguistics Graduate Program
# SEMANTEC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PhD. Prof. Rove Chishman (PPGLA/CNPq)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD. Prof. Anderson Bertoldi (PPGLA/CAPES/PNPD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD. Prof. Sandro Rigo (PIPCA/CNPq)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Doctorate Students**
- Carla Krieger
- Thaís Domênica Minghelli
- Carolina Muller
- Rita do Carmo

**Master`s students**
- Denis Araújo
- Eliane Iensen
- George Mileski
A frame-based resource for the Brazilian legal language.

Emphasized aspects:

- The contrastive methodology to develop Brazilian legal frames;

- The mismatches between conceptual and linguistic level noticed in the contrastive analyses;

- The pros and cons of using such methodology to develop a terminological resource based on Frame Semantics.
METHODOLOGY

(1) Selection of FrameNet frames, which describe legal events or are related to legal domain;

(2) Contrastive study of such frames, searching for correspondences in the conceptual and linguistic levels;

(3) Selection of examples to illustrate occurrences of LU in Portuguese.
Law is a social-oriented science and due to this legal terms may not find equivalents in another language, in another legal system.

There can be different levels of correspondence of legal frames from one legal culture to another.

Contrastive methodology allows seeing that.
FrameNet Criminal_process frame & Brazilian Criminal_process frame

- Different equivalence levels between frames;
- Frame equivalence involves:
  - Conceptual correspondence (How close are the legal events being compared?)
  - FE correspondence (How similar are the participant`s roles in both frames?)
  - Lexical correspondence (How is the legal concept`s translation?)
The simplest correspondence case

The FrameNet frame Try_defendant &

The Brazilian Try_defendant frame

- Equivalent frames;
- Describe similar legal events;
- Correspondent:
  *FE
  *LU evoking the frames
Try_defendant

**Legal event:**
A **DEFENDANT** is tried by a **JURY** or **JUDGE** in a **COURT** for **CHARGES**. This frame perspectivalizes the general Trial frame.

**Frame elements:**
- **CHARGES**
- **DEFENDANT**
- **GOVERNING_AUTHORITY**
- **JUDGE**
- **JURY**

**Lexical Units:**
- try.v

---

**Brazilian Legal Frame**

Try_defendant

**Legal Event:**
The Try_defendant frame describes the trial of a **DEFENDANT** who is charged of a crime. A **JURY** is responsible for evaluating the **CHARGES** and deciding whether the **DEFENDANT** is guilty or not-guilty.

**Frame elements:**
- **CHARGES**
- **DEFENDANT**
- **GOVERNING_AUTHORITY**
- **JUDGE**
- **JURY**

**Lexical Units:**
- Julgar.v
A more complex correspondence case

The FrameNet frame Notification_of_charges & The Brazilian frame Notification_of_charges

- **Correspondence on lexical level**
  (charge/acusação/ indictment/pronúncia)

- **Lack of correspondence on the legal event**
  (Notification of charges & Denúncia)
  (Judge & Prosecutor)
FrameNet

Notification_of_charges

Legal event:
The judge or other court officer (the ARRaign_AUTHORITY) informs the ACCUSED of the CHARGES against him/her, i.e. the alleged actions and the relevant laws.

Frame elements:
ACCUSED
ARRaign_AUTHORITY
CHARGES

Lexical Units:
accuse.v,
charge.n,
charge.v,
indict.v,
indictment.n

Brazilian Legal Frame

Charging (Denúncia)

Legal Event:
The Charging frame represents a legal event in which the prosecution, PROSSECUTION_AUTHORITY, charges the ACCUSED.

Frame elements:
ACCUSED
PROSSECUTION_AUTHORITY
CHARGES

Lexical Units:
Acusar.v
Acusarção.n
Acusar.v
Pronunciar.v
Pronúncia.n
# Notification_of_charges

**evoking two different frames**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corresponded LE: Charge n. <strong>Acusação n.</strong></th>
<th>Corresponded LE: Indictment n. <strong>Pronúncia n.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acusação</strong> evokes the charging frame</td>
<td><strong>Pronúncia</strong> evokes a preliminary judge’s decision frame</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The most critical correspondence case

The FrameNet frame *Arraignment*

- A hearing session in which the accused enters a plea in response to the charges;
- Lack of a correspondence in the Brazilian Law;
- Difficulty of establishing lexical and conceptual equivalence.
**FrameNet**

Arraignment

**Legal event:**
At a court hearing, a **DEFENDANT** is informed of the **CHARGES** against him or her, (usually) enters a plea, and a decision is made by a **JUDGE** as to the amount of bail, if any.

**Frame elements:**
**CHARGES**
**DEFENDANT**
**JUDGE**

**Lexical Units:**
arraign.v,
arrangement.n

---

**Brazilian Legal Frame**

No corresponding frame

**Legal Event:**
No corresponding legal event in Brazilian criminal process.

**Frame elements:**
No frame elements

**Lexical Units:**
No corresponding lexical units
No corresponding lexical units
The variability of legal frames

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A more universal frame</th>
<th>A more specific frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legality_frame</strong></td>
<td><strong>Criminal_process</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This frame describes the status of an action with respect to a code of laws or rules.</td>
<td>This frame describes a legal procedure and varies in American and Brazilian legal culture.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An explanation for this variation in conceptual and linguistic levels must be cultural exchanges between legal systems.
A frame-based resource for the Brazilian legal language

Contrastive methodology has pros and cons

- Conceptual & linguistic similarities:
  Facilitates finding equivalents
  The development of monolingual/bilingual resources

- The limitation of contrastive methodology:
  The limited number of legal frames, once FrameNet is not a terminological database.
Developing a Civil Law frame
Thank you for your kind attention!

rove@unisinos.br

andersonbertoldi@yahoo.com

thaisdomenica@hotmail.com