WORKSHOP 5. FRAME SEMANTICS. CONCEPTUALISATION AND CONSTRUAL.
CONSTRUAL OPERATIONS

1. According to Ch. Fillmore, a frame is 
any system of concepts related in such a way that to understand any one of them you 
have to understand the whole structure in which it fits; when one of the things in such a 
structure is introduced into a text, or into a conversation, all of the others are 
automatically made available. (Fillmore 1982: 111). Try to interpret the notion paying 
attention to the following:

1.1 The role of experience and situation (cf. ‘words represent categorisations of 
experience’ (ibid., p. 112), words of the same semantic domain/field are not just 
individual words but rather ‘a ‘domain’ of vocabulary whose elements somehow 
presuppose a schematization of human judgment and behaviour (…)’ (ibid., 
p. 116)), provide examples;

1.2 Two types of framing: conversational context and the actual communication 
situation (ibid., p. 117);

1.3 The role of cultural context (e.g. breakfast, ibid., pp. 118-119);

1.4 The speaker’s role (intention) (ibid., pp. 120, 122).

2. Explain, how framing helps solve the problem of synonymy (cf. coast and shore or any 
other available examples) and polysemy (e.g. bachelor Fillmore 1982: 125-126; also see 

3. To what extent, if at all, according to Fillmore, is grammar involved in framing (cf. the 
example with progressive aspect, ibid., p. 123; also risk in Fillmore and Atkins)?

4. How is the notion of frame compatible with the notions of encyclopaedic knowledge, 
scripts, scenarios etc. used in cognitive linguistics literature?

5. Give your understanding of construal (a possibility to interpret the world in different 
ways) and conceptualisation (language-imposed). Do not forget the cornerstones of CL: 
general cognitive abilities and language’s dependence on other systems (perception, 
attention etc.). Consider examples (1) – (11) on p. 41 (Croft and Cruse).

6. Discuss each of the following construal operations, refer to the given examples (in 
groups):

6.1. Attention/salience

6.1.1. Selection (examples: writer, stapler, clapper; The french fries is getting 
impatient; They played lots of Mozart; She heard the piano; I’m in the phone 
book.)

6.1.2. Scope of attention and search domain (example: the money is in the kitchen, 
under the counter, in the left-hand cabinet, on the top shelf, behind the meat 
grinder)

6.1.3. Scalar adjustment (example: She ran across/through the field)

6.1.4. Dynamic attention (examples: The road winds through the valley; Boston 
Bridge collapsed vs the collapse of Boston Bridge)

6.2. Judgement/comparison

6.2.1. Categorisation/framing (examples: thrifty vs stingy)

6.2.2. Metaphor (example: to waste time)

6.2.3. Figure/ground (examples: The bike is near the house vs ?The house is near the 
bike; The lamp above the table vs The table under the lamp)
6.3. Perspective/situatedness
   6.3.1. Viewpoint (examples: in front of the tree vs behind the tree)
   6.3.2. Deixis (examples: He was coming up the steps. There was a broad smile on his face vs He was going up the steps. There was a wad of bubblegum on the seat of his pants vs ?He was coming up the steps. There was a wad of bubblegum on the seat of his pants)
   6.3.3. Subjectivity/objectivity (examples: [mother to child] Don’t lie to me! vs Don’t lie to your mother!)

6.4. Constitution/gestalt
   6.4.1. Structural schematisation (examples: leaf vs foliage; She is under the tree, The cat is under the table)
   6.4.2. Force dynamics (examples: She opened the door vs The door opened)
   6.4.3. Relationality (examples: Jill is fussy vs Jill is a fussbudget)

7. Conclusion: can you relate frame semantics and conceptualization and construal operations?

Literature:
Fillmore
Fillmore and Atkins (optional)
Croft & Cruse, 40-73.