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BEYOND EQUIVALENCE: TRANSLATION PRACTICES IN GLOBAL COMMUNICATION

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Traditional translation theories have long centered around the concept of equivalence, whether lexical, semantic, or dynamic, viewing successful translation primarily as the accurate transfer of meaning from a source language into a target one. While these approaches remain fundamental to translation studies, they often prove insufficient for addressing the cultural, contextual, pragmatic, and cognitive dimensions of communication in an increasingly globalized and multilingual world. Contemporary translation involves not only the rendering of linguistic forms but also the mediation of knowledge, values, social conventions, and culturally embedded patterns of interpretation. Consequently, translators must account for the conceptual structures that shape the production and interpretation of meaning across different linguistic and cultural communities.

This article examines the potential of Frame Semantics, developed by Charles J. Fillmore, as a cognitively grounded framework for international translation practices. Frame Semantics assumes that lexical units evoke structured conceptual frames representing human experience and background knowledge, enabling language users to interpret meaning without broader cognitive and cultural contexts. From this perspective, successful translation depends not merely on identifying equivalent lexical items but on activating corresponding conceptual frames that allow target audiences to interpret messages in a manner comparable to that of source-language readers. The paper demonstrates how

frame-based analysis facilitates the translation of culturally specific concepts, as well as discursive patterns that often resist traditional equivalence-based strategies.
Combining theoretical discussion with a practical case study, the article illustrates how frame alignment enhances intercultural understanding, minimizes conceptual mismatches, and promotes communicative effectiveness. It argues that integrating Frame Semantics into translation methodology allows translators to move beyond formal equivalence toward cognitively and culturally informed meaning construction. Such an approach contributes to more accurate, context-sensitive, and culturally resonant translations, reinforcing the translator's role as an intercultural mediator in global communication.

ПОЗА МЕЖАМИ ЕКВІВАЛЕНТНОСТІ: ПЕРЕКЛАДАЦЬКІ ПРАКТИКИ У ГЛОБАЛЬНІЙ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ

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Теорії перекладу тривалий час традиційно ґрунтувалися на концепції еквівалентності – лексичної, семантичної, функціональної, динамічної. Успішний переклад передусім повинен був точно відтворювати зміст вихідного тексту. Попри те, що ці підходи й досі залишаються фундаментальними для перекладознавства, вони часто виявляються недостатніми і не враховують культурних, контекстуальних, прагматичних і когнітивних аспектів комунікації в умовах дедалі більш глобалізованого, багатомовного світу. Сучасний переклад вимагає не лише передачі мовних форм, а й посередництва у транслюванні знань, цінностей, соціальних норм і культурно зумовлених моделей інтерпретації. Відтак

перекладам необхідно враховувати нові концептуальні структури, які визначають породження та сприйняття значення у різних мовних і культурних спільнотах.
У статті пропонується застосувати теорію фреймової семантики Чарльза Дж. Філлмора як когнітивно орієнтоване теоретичне підгрунтя міжкультурних перекладацьких практик. Згідно з положеннями фреймової семантики, мовні одиниці активують структуровані концептуальні фрейми, що репрезентують людський досвід і фонові знання, забезпечуючи інтерпретацію значення у ширшому когнітивному та культурному контексті. З цієї точки зору успішний переклад полягає не лише у доборі еквівалентних мовних одиниць, а й в актуалізації відповідних семантичних фреймів, які дають змогу цільовій аудиторії інтерпретувати повідомлення так, як його сприймають носії мови оригіналу. У статті показано, що фреймовий аналіз сприяє адекватному перекладу культурно специфічних понять та дискурсивних моделей, які часто не піддаються традиційним перекладацьким стратегіям, що засновані на еквівалентності.
Поєднуючи теоретичний аналіз із практичним описом конкретного дослідницького кейсу, стаття демонструє, що узгодження семантичних фреймів сприяє міжкультурному взаєморозумінню, мінімізує концептуальні розбіжності та підвищує ефективну міжмовну комунікацію. Обґрунтовується, що інтеграція принципів фреймової семантики в методологію перекладу дає змогу перейти від формальної еквівалентності до когнітивно й культурно вмотивованого конструювання змісту. Такий підхід забезпечує більш точний, контекстуально релевантний і культурно резонансний переклад, посилюючи роль перекладача як посередника міжкультурної комунікації в умовах глобалізованого світу.

Introduction of the research problem. Intensified cultural exchange and information flows are ushering in a new era of global communication, in which translation has ceased to be solely a linguistic exercise. Nowadays, it is rather the negotiation and transference of meanings across linguistic and cultural borders. Translation is never neutral. Every translation is a choice for the translator who shapes how realities are perceived, how narratives are constructed, and how power is exercised through language and across nations. For decades, equivalence has served as a gold standard in translation studies (Catford 1965; Nida 1964, 1969; Vinay and Darbelnet 1995 [1958]). Yet, it assumes a relatively stable, universal set of meanings that match across languages. In practice, cultural specificities, worldview differences, and contextual framings undermine this assumption. The new globalized reality alters the traditional equivalence-based models of translation to the point that they are no longer sufficient for increasingly complex ideologies and multimodalities.

The aim of this article is to explore translation practices through a richer, more dynamic lens. Drawing primarily on Frame Semantics theory (Fillmore 1996), it examines how translators function as active communicators rather than invisible conduits. Frame semantics theory, developed by Charles Fillmore (1996), views linguistic meaning as arising from conceptual frames, treated as structured bundles of knowledge, expectations and relationships that the words evoke. Rooted in cognitive linguistics, it posits that linguistic meaning arises from structured mental representations that organize knowledge, expectations, and relationships among concepts. Understanding a word or an utterance requires activating the appropriate frame. In translation, this shifts the focus from finding equivalent terms to reconstructing or evoking comparable frames in the target culture. Thus, in Frame Semantics framework, translation is not just a word-for-word equivalence but frame alignment across languages and cultures. By moving beyond equivalence toward a framing perspective, this article argues that every translation is inherently a re-framing – a situated intervention that carries ethical and political weight. The following sections will outline key theoretical foundations, analyze practical framing strategies with illustrative examples, and consider the implications for adequate translation practices in today's contested global landscape.

Theoretical background. Frame Semantics theory provides a useful framework within which translation decisions are made with regard to various cultural conceptualizations in the context of literary, or any other specialized translation type. Charles Fillmore introduced Frame Semantics in the 1970s and 1980s as part of his work on the FrameNet project. Frame analysis has provided many thought-

provoking visions of different problems associated with meaning construction and interpretation. The notions of frame and framing have a long and fruitful history in many humanitarian disciplines, including linguistics, psychology, and sociology. In translation, *frame* is used as an intermediating instrument between source text and target text. With every utterance, the associations that we make refer to stored cognitive models and cultural conceptualizations from which we try to call up similar experiences (Fillmore, 1996, p. 49). For Mona Baker, framing is "an active process of signification by means of which we consciously participate in the construction of reality" (Baker 2006, p. 167). Baker outlines four main framing strategies used in translation: temporal and spatial framing, selective appropriation of the textual material, framing by labelling, and repositioning of participants. She describes these as ways translators "accentuate, undermine or modify contested aspects of the narratives encoded in the source text or utterance" (ibid.). She treats framing as involving "structures of anticipation" or strategic discursive moves designed to guide interpretation, which makes her approach quite similar to frame semantics. At the same time, Baker's framework is particularly powerful for analyzing ideologically charged tests, such as news, political discourse, conflict reporting etc. For her, translators are never invisible – their choices help circulate or resist dominant narratives.

According to Ch. Fillmore, a frame is "any system of linguistic choices – the easiest cases being collections of words, but also including choices of grammatical rules or linguistic categories – that can get associated with prototypical instances of scenes" (1996, p. 209). Frame, in Fillmore's terms, consists of a group of words as well as cultural conceptualizations of the context (or situation) in which the utterance / text was created. In cognitive linguistics, such situation is called 'a script', 'a scenario' or 'a schemata' and it can be activated or triggered by any lexical unit circumscribing the frame. In this study, frame is treated as a cognitive structure that represents a stereotyped situation, event, or object, including participants, their relations, and default assumptions.

Discussion and results. The idea to employ frame semantics to translation is not a new one. For instance, in her article "Applying Frame Semantics to Translation: A Practical Example" (Rojo López, 2002), A. M. Rojo López used the principles of Frame Semantics to analyze translation of culturally specific elements and demonstrated the benefits of such an approach for the translator's task. She looked at the notions of culture, translation unit, equivalence and context through the lens of the notions of frame and frame analysis.

In the taxonomy of frames offered by A. M. Rojo López, translator might distinguish between **situational frames** referring to "information chunks related to conventional situations"; **visual frames** referring to frames that evoke a series of images, such as that of a farm or a big city; **institutional frames** referring to organizational structure of social life in a certain community, including its political, legal or educational system; and t**extual frames** referring to a reader's implicit knowledge of the way a text is structured in his or her mother-tongue (2002, p. 320).

Lexico-semantic structure of frames is rarely completely identical in different linguistic cultures, but framing becomes even more complicated when a translator deals with the cultural differences that need to be neutralized. Even if people's "prototypes", "scripts", "scenarios", or "schemas" of certain events and discourses are similar, the associations they make are often different, being based on their specific cultural conceptualizations. Therefore, these diverse situations will trigger different frames of knowledge and experience attributed to a certain cultural conceptualization. Let us proceed with the description of the case study held in one of the translation courses at Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University (Lutsk, Ukraine). The experiment involved 46 participants of C1-C2 English proficiency. The task consisted in translating a short fragment from the novel by Megan Miranda "The Perfect Stranger": "*Back when Emmy and I met, eight years earlier, the cell phone dependability had only just begun. We took photos with disposable cameras or with purchased rolls of film when the moment was big enough – got them printed at the drugstore, put them in boxes, and lost them in moves*" (Miranda, 2017, p. 73).

As it turned out, almost all of the students had problems with translating the word "*drugstore*" in its relation to the actual event described in a passage (namely, "*taking photos with disposable cameras and having them printed at the drugstore*"). A lexico-semantic frame, activated by the lexeme 'drugstore' includes such words as "drugs", "illness", "treatment", "flu", "cure", "pharmacy", "prescription", "doctor", "patient", "pharmacist" etc., though situational and visual frames characteristically represented in the minds of the native speakers of the English and the Ukrainian languages are drastically different. A visual frame of a drugstore for an American English speaker typically includes associated images such as a set of self-help rows filled with a variety of products including food, toiletries, soft drinks, and over-the-counter drugs. While a Ukrainian speaker will picture a small, brightly lit space with white walls and fluorescent ceiling lights, with the tall and wide glass-and-wood counter that runs across the entire width of the room, acting like a barricade. In the Ukrainian "*аптека*" ["*аpteka*", pharmacy] scenario, there would be a pharmacist in a white coat standing in front of the shelves packed with medicine

boxes. These differing visual elements not only help create mental representations of the setting but they also activate institutional, and social frames, with prototypical participants and their roles, as well as interactional frames, involving their communicative relations. Social or interactional frames are cognitive frameworks that shape our understanding of social behavior and relationships. They inform how we use language depending on roles, status, and interpersonal dynamics, such as the difference in interaction between a client and an assistant of an American drugstore or a pharmacist and a client of a Ukrainian "*apteka*". Institutional frames relate to the structures and systems that define both public and private life. They are tied to the societal order of various institutions, which encompasses everyday items and practices such as household objects, education, and health care, along with organization of pharmaceutical provision. Situational or visual frames can also encompass words that describe actions or gestures, allowing the audience to construct subsequent frames that convey emotions or attitudes, all triggered by an initial term or image.

Quite predictably, the majority of the respondents confessed that they had had the feeling that the Ukrainian word "*аптека*" could not have been used as a proper equivalent in this context, for they framed the action of "printing photographs" as something that could not take place in what they conceptualized as "*аптека*". The problem could be explained by the fact that in Ukraine the prototypical situational and visual frames of a "drugstore" are contradistinctive from what the representatives of American linguistic culture might have in their conceptual systems. Thus, in such a situation the use of framing technique, namely **perspectival shift** (Fillmore & Baker 2010), might serve a perfect linguistic cognitive instrument for neutralizing these discrepancies in translation. Perspectival shift enables capturing how the same underlying situation can be viewed or profiled from different viewpoints or participants' perspectives. Perspectival shifts are useful in cases where translators choose expressions that activate the same frame (or a closely related one) but alter the viewpoint, focus, or participant roles to fit the target language's conventions, cultural context, or narrative needs.

At the analyzed example, such words as "*to take photos", "disposable cameras", "purchased rolls of film", "got them printed"* activate a situational frame of an American drugstore or pharmacy, but only in the minds of the people who know what it is and conceptualize this place in such a way. For the speakers of other languages and the representatives of other cultures such framing will be difficult, as the frame activated by the mentioned lexemes will not coincide with the *"drugstore"* as a nomination of a place where this action could take place or a situational frame of a drugstore. 95 % of our respondents told us afterwards that they could not find a proper lexical unit for the English word "drugstore" in Ukrainian. 80 % of them just used the word "аптека", 8 % used the word combination "спеціальна аптека", (Eng., "*special pharmacy*"), 5 % of students offered the compound lexeme "аптека-магазин". (Eng., "*pharmacy-store*"). Students with experience of the United States, suggested to add an intratextual or extratextual gloss explaining the essence of a "drugstore" to Ukrainian readers: e.g. "американська аптека, у якій продаються ліки і продукти харчування. У ній також можна роздрукувати фотографії, купити квиток на автобус і т. ін." (Eng., "*American pharmacy where drugs and food are sold. One can also print photos or buy bus tickets there*"). Another suggested solution consisted in omission or deletion of the discussed culture-specific item due to its complicated conceptualization by the speakers of the Ukrainian language.

The stereotypical nature of the frame should trigger the entire process associated with that frame, but it is not always so. In our case, visual frame referring to the situational, interactional, and institutional frames of a "drugstore" evoked a different series of images in the minds of the speakers of the Ukrainian language which prevented the experiment group of translators to respond to the "trigger" words appropriately. Therefore, in their translations, they would have to reframe the situation in such a way that 1) it would adequately fit into the situational frame of an American drugstore; and / or 2) it would not cause cognitive dissonance in the minds of the target text readers. In this way, we can see that one frame triggers a cognitive process in which we use one image from our "repertoire" to create a chain of actions related to that event. It is the reader's ability to access those frames, and it is the translator's task to make those frames accessible, using available semiotic resources, such as descriptions, glosses, synonyms, paraphrases, similes, metaphors, idioms, etc.

Conclusions. Frame semantics offers a robust analytical framework for addressing persistent challenges in translation, particularly those stemming from missing or mismatched frames between languages. By foregrounding the conceptual structures and background knowledge evoked by linguistic expressions, translators and machine translation systems can move beyond surface-level lexical equivalence to achieve deeper semantic and pragmatic adequacy. A key insight is that frame semantics equips translators to systematically identify instances where a source-language frame lacks a direct equivalent in the target language. In such cases, strategies like selecting the closest comparable frame, employing explanatory paraphrasing, or utilizing frame-to-frame

relations (e.g. perspectival shifts) help preserve the intended meaning and communicative effect.

The approach proves especially valuable in handling cultural mismatches, including different event framing or variations in how languages structure domains like law, kinship, social practices, or places like “drugstore”. Rather than forcing literal renderings that may distort understanding, frame-semantic analysis encourages principled translation shifts that prioritize the activation of maximally similar conceptual scenarios in the target audience. Equivalence remains a useful heuristic, but it is inherently limited by its focus on functional matching. Frame semantics invites translators to operate at a deeper cognitive and cultural level, aligning not just words, but the mental models and experiential backgrounds that give those words life and sense.

Ultimately, adopting a frame-semantic approach in translation theory and practice shifts the focus from word-for-word or sentence-level correspondence to the successful evocation of comparable conceptual structures. This perspective not only improves the quality of human translations in domains such as literature, media, and specialized spheres but also advances the development of more sophisticated multilingual systems. Future research may further explore frame hierarchies and cross-linguistic frame databases to refine these techniques and broaden their applicability. As globalization intensifies, translators who master frame semantics techniques will move beyond being linguistic intermediaries to become true cultural mediators and meaning architects.

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