



REFRAMING THE FRAME: TOWARD A SOCIO-COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE ON FILLMOREAN THEORY

REENQUADRANDO O *FRAME*: RUMO A UMA PERSPECTIVA SOCIOCOGNITIVA DA TEORIA FILLMORIANA

Aline Nardes dos Santos¹
Diego Spader de Souza²
Rove Chishman³

Abstract: This article critically revisits the notion of semantic frame in light of developments in Cognitive Linguistics and the growing adoption of sociocognitive approaches in language studies. It argues that, although Frame Semantics originated from Charles Fillmore's efforts to describe lexical meaning, its foundations have always been deeply rooted in an experiential, interactional, and social conception of meaning. The first part of the text explores the epistemological connections between Frame Semantics and the core principles of Cognitive Linguistics, emphasizing the situated, embodied, and shared nature of human cognition. Subsequently, it examines the historical trajectory of Fillmore's theory, from the distinction between cognitive and interactional frames to its interface with Lexicography through the FrameNet project. The second half of the article revisits Brazilian research that employs the notion of frame in various fields, highlighting the methodological flexibility and interdisciplinary potential of the concept. Applications that encompass both stable (cognitive frames) and dynamic (discursive and interactional frames) framing processes are emphasized, with special attention to phenomena such as reframing. Finally, the article discusses the limits and possibilities of using the concept of frame in contemporary linguistics. It concludes by advocating for critical and productive reinterpretations of Fillmorean theory, reaffirming its relevance for the analysis of social cognition in linguistic practices.

Keywords: *frame*; Cognitive Linguistics; sociocognition.

Resumo: O presente artigo propõe uma retomada crítica da noção de *frame* semântico à luz dos desdobramentos da Linguística Cognitiva e da crescente adesão a abordagens sociocognitivas nos estudos da linguagem. Defende-se, no âmbito deste trabalho, que, embora a Semântica de *Frames* tenha se originado a partir dos esforços de Charles Fillmore voltados à descrição lexical, seus fundamentos sempre estiveram profundamente ligados a uma concepção experiencial, interacional e social do significado. A primeira parte do texto apresenta os vínculos epistemológicos entre a Semântica de *Frames* e os pilares da Linguística Cognitiva, reforçando a natureza situada, corporificada e compartilhada da cognição humana. Em seguida, discute-se o percurso histórico da teoria

¹ Assistant Professor at the Federal University of Rio Grande (FURG - São Lourenço do Sul Campus). E-mail: aline.nardes@gmail.com. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9302-484X>

² Professor and Researcher at the University of Santa Cruz do Sul, affiliated with the Department of Sciences, Humanities and Education, teaching in the undergraduate program in Language and Literature and in the Graduate Program in Language and Literature Studies. E-mail: diegospader@unisc.br. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8989-4669>.

³ Professor and researcher in the Graduate Program in Language and Literature Studies at the University of Santa Cruz do Sul (UNISC). E-mail: rove.chishman@gmail.com. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2287-5548>.

de Fillmore, da distinção entre *frames* cognitivos e interacionais à interface com a Lexicografia a partir do projeto FrameNet. Na segunda metade do artigo, são revisitadas pesquisas brasileiras que empregam a noção de *frame* em diferentes campos, evidenciando a plasticidade metodológica e o potencial interdisciplinar do conceito. São destacadas aplicações que consideram tanto o enquadramento estável (*frames* cognitivos) quanto o dinâmico (*frames* discursivos e interacionais), com ênfase em fenômenos como o *reframing*. Por fim, são discutidos os limites e as possibilidades do uso do conceito de *frame* na linguística contemporânea. O artigo conclui com um chamado a releituras críticas e produtivas da teoria fillmoriana, reafirmando sua relevância para a análise da cognição social em práticas linguísticas.

Palavras-chave: *frame*; Linguística Cognitiva; sociocognição.

1 INTRODUCTION

The 5th Colloquium on Language and Cognition in Interaction, held in November 2024 at the University of Campinas (Unicamp), was dedicated to revisiting key theoretical and methodological postulates of sociocognitive approaches to language studies, as well as their current agenda within the Brazilian context. The event invited participants to re-engage with analytical paths that have been developed in response to various pressing social issues of our time. It was, above all, a fruitful dialogue that encouraged a reconsideration of analytical and methodological categories suited to the investigation of social cognition phenomena.

Within the field of Cognitive Linguistics, the concept we aim to revisit in this article is that of the semantic frame (Fillmore, 1982; 1985) — a fundamentally sociocognitive notion (Lakoff, 2004; Salomão, 2009; Vereza, 2016b) that, although originally proposed as a solution to challenges in lexical semantics (Salomão, 2009), has proven to be central to discourse-based perspectives (Turner, 2001; Croft; Cruse, 2004; Lima; Miranda, 2013; Miranda; Bernardo, 2013; Martins, 2015; Morato *et al.*, 2017; Santos; Chishman, 2021).

In this regard, addressing the social nature of semantic frames is not a novel undertaking: Charles Fillmore himself (1976, p. 23) defined the process of frame evocation as one that reflects “the experience or perception which underlies our understanding of a word” — a process inseparable from human interaction within a given sociocultural context, which is constantly being (re)framed and (re)conceptualized by speakers. This dynamic process underscores the continuum between language and experience (Fillmore, 1982).

Here, we aim to reflect on the conceptualization itself of semantic frames in contemporary linguistic studies by reexamining recent work conducted within, or in dialogue with, contemporary Frame Semantics — particularly in the Brazilian context. We trace continuities with Fillmore’s foundational texts while emphasizing the need to situate methodological approaches around the notion of frames. This effort seeks to avoid conceptual overgeneralizations that render the category vague or diffuse — a concern noted by Van Dijk (2016) in his critique of studies on social movements that adopted Goffman’s (1974) notion of frames for data analysis.

To build this line of inquiry, the next section reviews the context of Cognitive Linguistics as the theoretical foundation from which Frame Semantics shares sociocognitive postulates with other linguistic theories. The following section discusses recent Brazilian research that employs semantic frames, proposing diverse methodological approaches and paths of “[...] interdisciplinary arbitration between distinct bodies of knowledge”⁴ (Morato, 2016, p. 589), in accordance with their respective research objects. Based on this review, we then reflect on what the notion of frame evokes today — and what its potential limits may be. Finally, we present our concluding remarks.

⁴ In the original: “[...] arbitragem interdisciplinar entre saberes distintos.”

2 FRAME SEMANTICS IN THE CONTEXT OF COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS: CONVERGENCES AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Cognitive Linguistics, as a consolidated theoretical enterprise since the 1980s, emerged as a critical response to the formalist approaches that had dominated the linguistic landscape throughout the first half of the twentieth century, with particular emphasis on the Chomskyan paradigm. Its development — spearheaded by scholars such as George Lakoff, Ronald Langacker, and Leonard Talmy — is deeply rooted in a rejection of the epistemological foundations underlying Noam Chomsky's conception of cognition within his linguistic theory.

Whereas Generative Grammar draws upon the rationalist tradition of Cartesian thought — conceiving the mind as a modular structure governed by innate and universal principles — Cognitive Linguistics proposes an integrative and holistic view of human cognition. Within this new paradigm, language is understood as a cognitive capacity fundamentally intertwined with other mental faculties, such as sensory perception, motor skills, memory, and attention. Rather than operating as an autonomous system, language is conceived as a dynamic expression of cognition in interaction with the world.

From this perspective, linguistic phenomena reflect fundamental processes of categorization and conceptualization through which individuals organize, interpret, and ascribe meaning to their experiences. By emphasizing the centrality of the body, lived experience, and contextually situated language use, authors such as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980), as well as Ronald Langacker (1987), established the foundations of a theoretical model that regards language as a direct manifestation of the general cognitive capacities of the human species. This epistemological orientation situates Cognitive Linguistics within the framework of experiential realism, as articulated by Lakoff and Johnson (1999). According to this philosophical perspective, language is not an autonomous system of abstract symbols but emerges from embodied human experience — deeply rooted in the perceptual, sensorimotor, and interactive practices that shape our engagement with the world.

Lakoff and Johnson (1999) present a critique of the foundations of classical scientific realism, whose approach overlooks the role of the body-mind relationship in the constitution of knowledge. According to the authors,

The problem with classical disembodied scientific realism is that it takes two intertwined and inseparable dimensions of all experience — the awareness of the experiencing organism and the stable entities and structures it encounters — and erects them as separate and distinct entities called subjects and objects. What disembodied realism [...] misses is that, as embodied, imaginative creatures, we never were separated or divorced from reality in the first place (Lakoff; Johnson, 1999, p. 93).

By adopting this conception, Cognitive Linguistics shifts the focus of linguistic analysis to the ways through which meaning is constructed, via interaction between mind, body, and the sociocultural environment. Within this framework, semantic structure is no longer understood as a set of objective correspondences between words and the world, but rather as a dynamic, situated, and experiential process. Thus, Cognitive Linguistics advances the view that meaning is inherently dynamic: speakers do not merely convey pre-existing mental content but actively construct meaning in the communicative act itself, drawing on perspectivization strategies and linguistic choices that are shaped by context and communicative intent. Meaning is therefore situated, sensitive to social practices, cultural conventions, and the communicative goals of each interaction.

This notion is further elaborated in the work of psychologist and linguist Michael Tomasello, who emphasizes the social origins of human cognition as foundational to the emergence of language. Tomasello (1999, 2019) argues that language arises from intersubjective abilities such as joint attention, intention-reading, and cooperative interaction among individuals. In this view, language is conceptualized as a social practice developed during early childhood within interactive contexts, rather than as an innate system independent of experience. As Tomasello himself summarizes, “[...] we have the most basic structural framework of uniquely human cognition: socially shared realities and the ability to flexibly manipulate and coordinate different perspectives on aspects of those shared realities (mental coordination)” (Tomasello, 2019, p. 90).

This perspective on human cognition — centered on intentional action in variable contexts — is fundamental for understanding language as a goal-directed social practice. As Tomasello (2025, n.p.) points out, “[...] when the environment is unpredictable and there are multiple potential actions possible, what evolves is a more flexible kind of behavioral organization, namely, agentive organization [...]”. Within such organization, individuals engage in perceptual and cognitive evaluation of the problem-situation before making an informed behavioral decision — that is, a goal-oriented one. This capacity for intentional coordination across multiple perspectives underlies the situated construction of meaning and reinforces the idea that language is inseparable from the social and interactional contexts in which it is realized.

Tomasello’s (2025) evolutionary model of agency conceives of human cognition as essentially collaborative and socially regulated. By identifying uniquely human forms of agentive organization — joint agency and collective agency — the author argues that decision-making and action planning, in the human context, come to rely on interindividual coordination (Tomasello, 2014). In these shared modes of agency, two or more individuals function as a single cooperative agent, with shared goals, joint attention, and mutual regulation of actions and intentions (Tomasello, 2008). As Tomasello (2025, n.p.) asserts, “Humans have evolved to create joint and collective agencies with others, which has enabled them to construct the unique cultural niches within which all of their most complex cognitive and social capacities develop.” This dual structure — articulating individual roles with collective objectives — creates the conditions for the emergence of advanced cognitive abilities, such as perspective-taking, cooperative decision-making, and the development of social conventions and public languages for thought and regulation. Tomasello’s (2025) findings thus corroborate the shared view of meaning construction as grounded in interactional contexts. Accordingly, language is understood as a collaborative process, in which meaning emerges from the dynamic interplay between individuals.

This emphasis on the human capacity to coordinate perspectives on shared realities offers fertile ground for theories concerned with analyzing the processes of meaning construction, such as Charles Fillmore’s Frame Semantics. It is from this premise that Frame Semantics aligns itself with the foundational principles of Cognitive Linguistics.

2.1 The Emergence of Frame Semantics: Origins and Epistemological Affinities

The theory of Frame Semantics, proposed by Charles Fillmore (1982, 1985), did not initially emerge within the framework of Cognitive Linguistics. As Lakoff (2016) himself notes, Fillmore was initially reluctant to explicitly align with the nascent cognitive trend in linguistic studies. “Fillmore did not want to become a cognitive linguist at all. He was against it,” said Lakoff (2016, p. 14) in an interview with Helen de Andrade Abreu. Lakoff recalls a moment when he and Fillmore, while working together on the development of Construction Grammar, found their views on the nature of language to

conflict each other. Fillmore, who had agreed that his Frame Semantics could contribute to the theoretical foundation of the aforementioned grammar model, maintained that language was about words and how to combine them; Lakoff, by contrast, argued that language was fundamentally about cognition (Lakoff, 2016).

This divergence between two of the most influential linguists of the late twentieth century prompts the following question: if Fillmore rejected affiliating Frame Semantics with the Cognitive Linguistics enterprise, why is it nonetheless regarded as one of the most influential theoretical models within this field, consistently cited in major handbooks of Cognitive Linguistics? One might point, for instance, to *Cognitive Linguistics* (Croft; Cruse, 2004), *Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction* (Evans; Green, 2006), *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics* (Geeraerts; Cuyckens, 2007), *Cognitive Linguistics: A Complete Guide* (Evans, 2019), and the Brazilian volume *Introdução à Linguística Cognitiva* (Ferrari, 2011). The answer to this question may well be encapsulated in a single word: experience.

We now revisit Fillmore's definition of a frame: "By the term 'frame' I have in mind 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 [...]" (Fillmore, 1982, p. 111). To illustrate this definition, we can refer to the classic example of the *Commercial_Transaction* frame (Fillmore, 1982), which is evoked by lexical items such as *buy* and *sell*; the activation of the frame automatically accesses information related to the entities involved — the seller, the buyer, the product, the amount paid — as well as the dynamics between them. However, we argue that it is possible to go further.

Consider the following sentences: (i) *I don't know how we let things get to this point!*; (ii) *That's not the point — I just didn't like what she said*; (iii) *He scored 30 points in the game last night*. All three sentences include the same lexical item, the noun *point*; however, in each of them, we see different conceptual structures being activated. In (i), on the one hand, *point* evokes a *Situation* type of frame, referring to the state or condition of something; and the perspective is that something negative has been allowed to develop or escalate. In (ii), on the other hand, an *Argument* frame is activated, related to the idea of presenting and discussing viewpoints — someone is most likely responding to another speaker's argument, which has now become a "point". Finally, in (iii), *point* activates a *Scoring* frame associated with competitive games or sports. The word refers to units of measurement that quantify performance, often tied to a set of rules or achievements within a game (e.g., basketball, soccer, or video games). Understanding *point* here requires knowledge of the relevant frame: participants, objectives, rules for earning points, and cultural understanding of competition and success.

These distinct uses of the same lexical item demonstrate that meaning does not reside in the word alone, but in the knowledge structures it evokes in specific contexts. Each occurrence of *point* activates a distinct network of inferences and expectations, shaped by discursive conventions, prior experiences, and sociocognitive practices. Such semantic variability, far from representing random ambiguity, reveals the complexity of the conceptualization processes that operate in language use. Frame Semantics thus offers a theoretical framework capable of explaining how seemingly simple words acquire different shades of meaning depending on the situations in which they are used. Put

differently, Frame Semantics is a context-sensitive theory. As Koch, Morato, and Bentes (2011, p. 82-83)⁵ point out,

The notion of context, like that of social situation, framing, or frame, has to do with structures of expectation; that is, it is not something conceived a priori or independently of our sociocultural experiences. On the contrary, it depends on acts of meaning-making and, therefore, on practices that are largely mediated by language.

Following the same line of thought, Morato (2010) understands that frames point to more than a mere structuring of linguistic and conceptual knowledge; it also consists of social framings performed by speakers during interaction, in accordance with social regimes and practices. This aligns with the notion of frame used by Goffman (1974) in the field of Sociology, which served as inspiration for Fillmore (Fillmore, 1985). Thus, it is understood that the ideals characterizing Fillmore's theory demonstrate a clear convergence with the core principles of Cognitive Linguistics. The notion that linguistic meaning is not a fixed entity but results from dynamic processes of activation of shared cognitive structures corresponds to the encyclopedic and experiential conception of meaning that underpins the cognitive approach to language.

And even though Fillmore explicitly stated that the development of Frame Semantics was primarily a response to his concerns about the lack of more robust models for the semantic description of the lexicon (Fillmore, 1982), shortly thereafter, in the manuscript *Frames and the Semantics of Understanding*, published in 1985, the scholar draws a parallel between what he calls *T-semantics* (*semantics of truth*) and *U-semantics* (*semantics of understanding*). With this terminology, Fillmore proposes Frame Semantics as an alternative to the idea that words and expressions carry a fixed and pre-established semantic content on their own. In contrast to traditional truth-conditional models, his proposal views meaning as something that emerges from the speaker's engagement with broader cognitive structures, anchored in experience and shared knowledge (Fillmore, 1985). The author uses a second-language English classroom scenario to illustrate this reasoning. Fillmore (1985) notes that it would be ineffective to teach students words such as *Tuesday* in one class, *Sunday* in another, and *Saturday* in yet another; or verbs such as *buy*, *sell*, *spend*, and *pay* in isolation and at random. This is because these linguistic items belong to integrated conceptual structures — coherent experiential schemas — that tend to be acquired jointly, precisely because they frequently occur in association in real language use.

Although this shows that Fillmore recognized that frames involve conceptual structures and activate forms of experiential knowledge, his focus remained primarily on the lexical description of meaning. This interest led him, in the 1990s, to approach the field of lexicography, establishing collaborations with specialists in the field. From these partnerships — especially with the lexicographer Beryl T. Atkins (cf. Fillmore & Atkins, 1992) and the linguists Collin F. Baker and John B. Lowe (cf. Baker, Fillmore & Lowe, 1998) — the FrameNet project was born. It began to systematize the organization of the English lexicon based on frame theory and on evidence extracted from corpora.

Officially launched in 1997, the FrameNet platform (framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu) — developed at the International Computer Science Institute at the University of California, Berkeley — was designed to serve teachers, students, and researchers interested in

⁵ In the original: A noção de contexto, como a de situação social, enquadre ou frame, tem a ver com estruturas de expectativa, isto é, não se trata de algo concebido a priori e nem de forma independente quanto a nossas experiências sócio-culturais; pelo contrário, dependem dos atos de significação e, portanto, das práticas mediadas largamente por linguagem

various branches of Computational Linguistics. Since then, the project has expanded continuously, currently encompassing around one thousand semantic frames and over twelve thousand lexical units. According to the description provided by Baker, Fillmore, and Lowe (1998), it is an initiative aimed at producing frame-based semantic descriptions for thousands of English lexical items, grounded in semantically annotated examples drawn from corpora of contemporary English.

Figure 1 illustrates how these structures are presented on FrameNet using the *Attack* frame as an example. There is a definition intended to describe the represented situation, along with semantically annotated examples; the colors in the definition and examples largely correspond to the involved frame elements. In red and blue, respectively, we can see the *assailant* and the *victim* Frame Elements. Only the black label does not correspond to a frame element, instead identifying the lexical units that evoke the frame. That is, verbs such as *invade*, *attack*, and *ambush* are lexical items that activate the *Attack* frame.

Figure 1 — The *Attack* frame

Attack

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Definition:

An **Assailant** physically attacks a **Victim** (which is usually but not always sentient), causing or intending to cause the **Victim** physical damage. A **Weapon** used by the **Assailant** may also be mentioned, in addition to the usual **Place**, **Time**, **Purpose**, **Explanation**, etc. Sometimes a location is used metonymically to stand for the **Assailant** or the **Victim**, and in such cases the **Place** FE will be annotated on a second FE layer.

As soon as he stepped out of the bar he was **SET** upon by four men in ski-masks.

Is he **INVADING** Iraq just to cover other shortcomings?

Then Jon-O's forces **AMBUSHED** them on the left flank from a line of low hills.

FEs:

Core:

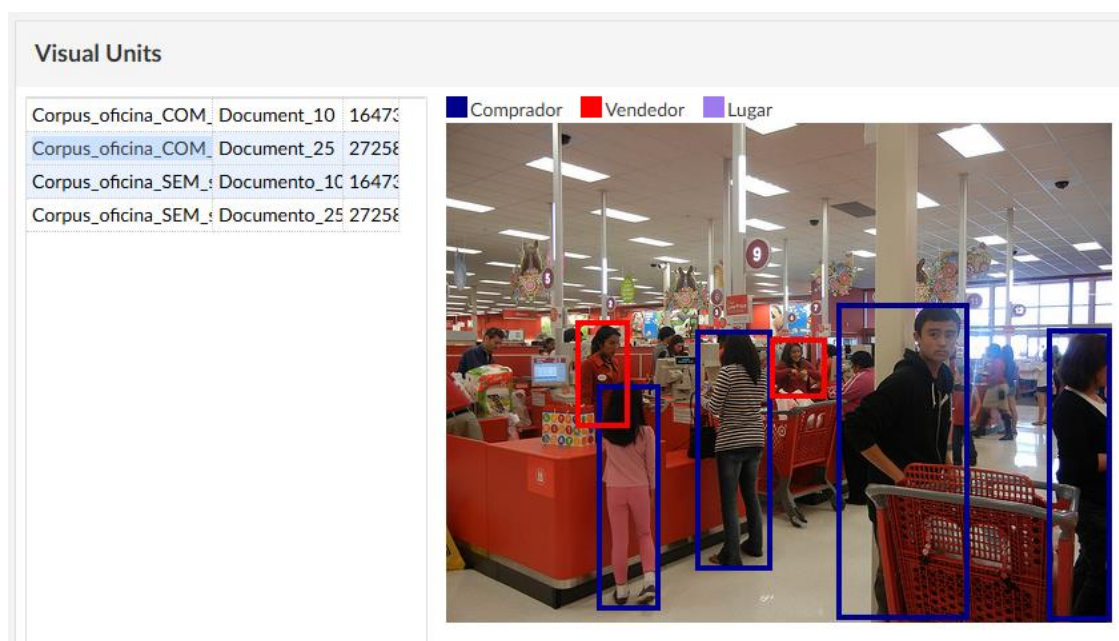
Assailant [Asl] The person (or other self-directed entity) that is attempting physical harm to the **Victim**.
Semantic Type: Sentient
The mysterious fighter **ATTACKED** the guardsmen with a sabre.

Victim [Vic] This FE is the being or entity that is injured by the **Assailant's** attack.
Semantic Type: Sentient
The mysterious fighter **ATTACKED** the guardsmen with a sabre.

Source: FrameNet (2025).

With similar goals, FrameNet Brasil (Salomão, 2009; Sigiliano; Torrent, 2019) adopts the FrameNet Berkeley lexicographical model to describe Brazilian Portuguese, focusing on the syntactic-semantic valency patterns that underlie a frame structure. The annotation process is lexicographic, that is to say, “the LUs that evoke a given frame are identified; these are then annotated, with the identification of the syntactic realization of the frame’s FEs in terms of their Phrase Types and Grammatical Functions” (Salomão; Torrent; Sampaio, 2013, p. 13). More recently, FN-Br has also incorporated visual units, thus enabling the annotation of Frame Elements in images, as shown below:

Figure 2 — Visual units within the *Comércio_pagar* frame



FrameNet Brasil (2025).

FrameNets constitute, as previously mentioned, computational applications of Frame Semantics primarily aimed at lexicographic purposes. Their methodology of semantic annotation is based on the premise that lexical items evoke frames, which manifest linguistically through relatively regular syntactic patterns. Thus, the databases organize information about verbs, nouns, and other items in association with the semantic roles they fulfill in usage contexts, resulting in a more formalized and operational model for Frame Semantics. However, it is important to highlight that the concept of frame is not limited to FrameNet implementation: discourse-oriented research has appropriated the concept more flexibly, using it as a theoretical-analytical tool to understand meaning construction in specific contexts, without necessarily incorporating all the technical and computational criteria of the platform. This is explored in the following section, based on Brazilian studies developed in this field.

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3 FRAMES AND SOCIOCOGNITION: FROM FILLMORE'S INVITATIONS TO CONTEMPORARY BRAZILIAN CONTRIBUTIONS

As discussed in the previous section, Frame Semantics has developed significantly around lexicographic-computational applications, always prioritizing an inductive

methodological approach, from words to frames. This can be seen in definitions of the theory such as the one presented in Fillmore and Baker (2010, p. 314), which state that Frame Semantics consists of “[...] the study of how, as a part of our knowledge of the language, we associate linguistic forms (words, fixed phrases, grammatical patterns) with the cognitive structures — the frames — which largely determine the process (and the result) of interpreting those forms.” In light of this, the development of the FrameNet platform focuses, in the words of Ziem (2014, p. 2), on the systematization of the “[...] the combinatorial potential, respectively the syntactic and semantic valences, of each word in each of its senses.”

Nevertheless, Fillmore’s own articles include notes on a more interactional, social dimension of his theory, although he did not further develop these and categorized them as suggestive remarks, particularly in pursuit of transversal dialogues within the field of semantic studies itself (Fillmore, 1975). For instance, in the article *Frame Semantics and the Nature of Language* (Fillmore, 1976, p. 23), the author emphasizes the contextualist approach to meaning he sought to defend, aiming to understand linguistic phenomena

[...] through a consideration of the processes of communication. A proposal that I favor is that in characterizing a language system we must add to the description of grammar and lexicon a description of the cognitive and interactional “frames” in terms of which the language-user interprets his environment, formulates his own messages, understands the messages of others, and accumulates or creates an internal model of his world.

It is worth noting that this excerpt refers to a well-known distinction that marked Fillmore’s early formulations between cognitive and interactional frames: the cognitive frames concern the epistemic domain — stable and shared — within which the speaker situates a certain linguistic use, “[...] activated in the mind of anybody who comes across and understands [...]” (Fillmore, 1976, p. 25) its respective evoker; the interactional frames, on the other hand, are associated with the immediate, online context of interaction — “[...] what is going on between the speaker and the hearer, or between the author and the reader” (Fillmore, 1982, p. 117). As discussed in Santos (2020), the development of the FrameNet platform’s frame annotation process consolidated a descriptive proposal focused on the category of frames formerly called cognitive. This distinction is not mentioned again by the author in subsequent publications.

Similarly, it is in Fillmore’s seminal texts that we find the important notion of reframing, or frame reconfiguration, a concept the author uses to reflect on changes in the processes of evoking these conceptual structures. The example provided by Fillmore (1982) concerns the differences in English between the categorizations of men and women: in the United States, as he observed, there was an age gap disparity between these categories, as males were classified as men earlier than females were classified as women. Over time, he states, some speakers began to equate the transitions girl-woman and boy-man, thus evidencing a reframing process based on the same reality and the same available lexical repertoire: “[...] what changed (for some speakers) was the underlying schematization, the motivating circumstances of the category contrasts.” (Fillmore, 1982, p. 126). In later studies, this concept becomes a tool for analyses more focused on discourse perspectives (Coulson, 2008; Vereza, 2013a; Santos, 2020).

With the aim of reflecting on possible (re)framings of Fillmorean semantic frames from a social cognition perspective, in this section we draw on a selection of studies conducted in Brazil that help us understand how the notion of frame can be applied to the analysis of different “[...] social experiences (in education [...] or in other fields, such as health, politics, security, economy, social assistance, among others) through the

discourses constructed by those who live such experiences [...]”⁶ (Lima; Miranda, 2013, p. 11). These studies reinforce an agenda shaped around the Sociocognitive Hypothesis of Language (Tomasello, 1999; Salomão, 1997; Miranda, 2001), which conceives meaning as a “[...] mental construction produced by cognitive subjects in the course of their communicative interaction [...]”⁷ (Salomão, 1997, p. 23), and emphasizes social cognition as the key to understanding the emergence of meaning in language activities (Miranda, 2001; Tomasello, 2003). This uniquely human, intersubjective capacity involves “[...] understanding and acting in the world in a joint, coordinated, and somewhat reflective manner around symbolic objects and regimes of life in society”⁸ (Morato, 2023, p. 2).

In this vein, Vereza’s studies (2013a, 2013b, 2016a, 2020) on conceptual metaphor have emphasized the continuum between cognition and discourse within what she calls the “[...] cognitive-discursive turn”⁹ (Vereza, 2016a, p. 22) in metaphor analysis — an approach that can also be extended to other sociocognitive constructs such as frames, especially in the analysis of social cognition phenomena. By pointing out different processes of “highlighting and hiding”¹⁰ (Vereza, 2016a, p. 32) used by speakers in discourse to construct their argumentative paths, the author explores the activities of conceptual perspectivization and profiling (Langacker, 1987; Croft; Cruse, 2004) from a discursive standpoint. It is worth noting how Vereza organizes her analyses around two operational dimensions: *Discourse*, with a capital “D,” referring to the “socially shared conceptual system”¹¹ (Vereza, 2013b, p. 4) — that is, corresponding to the level of semantic frame previously labeled cognitive by Fillmore (1982); and *discourse*, in lowercase, related to more episodic instances in which we may identify non-stable, online frames constructed during interaction, which underlie the mapping of similarly situated metaphors. Within this dynamic process, stable and episodic frames may intertwine¹², rendering these discursive dimensions inseparable and revealing the “[...] interdependence between cognition and discourse”¹³ (Vereza, 2013b, p. 17) in language use.

Investigations conducted by the COGITES Research Group (Cognition, Interaction, and Meaning), including studies by Morato (2010), Morato *et al.* (2012; 2017), among others, analyze interactions involving participants with aphasia or Alzheimer’s disease, highlighting the relevance of the frame construct for understanding the communicative dynamics between these individuals. Challenging biomedical models that *(de)legitimize* (Morato, 2018) individuals with such neurological conditions, these studies emphasize the continuities between semantic frames (related to prior, stable knowledge that enables subjects to understand certain expressions) and interactional frames (concerned, for example, with knowledge about turn-taking exchanges), both of which permeate meaning negotiations among interlocutors (Morato, 2010). Along the same lines, Morato *et al.* (2012, 2017) link the notion of discourse topic to that of semantic frame, aiming to outline

⁶ In the original: “[...] experiências sociais (na educação [...] ou em outros campos, como a saúde, a política, a segurança, a economia, a assistência, dentre outros) a partir dos discursos construídos por aqueles que vivem tais experiências [...].”

⁷ In the original: “[...] construção mental produzida pelos sujeitos cognitivos no curso de sua interação comunicativa [...].”

⁸ In the original: “[...] compreender e atuar no mundo de forma conjunta, coordenada e de algum modo reflexiva em torno de objetos e regimes simbólicos de vida em sociedade.”

⁹ In the original: “[...] virada cognitivo-discursiva.”

¹⁰ In the original: “realçar e encobrir.”

¹¹ In the original: “sistema conceptual socialmente compartilhado.”

¹² In Brazilian Portuguese: *entrelaçar*.

¹³ In the original: “[...] interdependência entre cognição e discurso.”

an analytical pathway that leads to a symbiotic relationship between these constructs: while the topic “reveals itself as crucial in organizing and establishing context, organizing conversational turns, and (socio)cognitive framings through which individuals interpret the world”¹⁴ (Morato *et al.*, 2017, pp. 95-96), the frame also functions as an organizer of topical progression and interactional structure (Morato *et al.*, 2012; Morato; Bentes, 2013).

The methodology developed by the COGITES Research Group has also been applied to investigations beyond the neurolinguistic domain, corroborating the relevance of the notion of frame in various research projects focused on linguistic uses in discourse. For example, Martins (2015) analyzes frames in the context of Brazilian neopentecostalism. Situating his approach within a “textual-interactive perspective,” the author begins with the identification of referential scenes (Tomasello, 1999; Morato *et al.*, 2012) — defined as “[...] a communicative event to which interlocutors’ attention is directed in an interaction”¹⁵ (Martins, 2015, p. 6). Thus, this construct is considered an intermediary link between linguistic markers and frames or, as the author explains, “[...] between language use and cognition”¹⁶ (Martins, 2015, p. 117). In turn, Parintins Lima (2019), analyzing the use of the #SomosTodosMacacos (#WeAreAllMonkeys) hashtag in online texts, investigated the agency of racism frames in a corpus of opinion articles, linking this analysis to a textual approach, i.e., considering that frames are also evoked by constructions broader than lexical units, thus “[...] allowing the emergence or implication of lexical-grammatical, semantic, and textual constructions”¹⁷ (Parintins Lima, 2024, p. 4). These studies highlight, among their contributions, “[...] collaboration toward the explicitation and analytical detailing of the linguistic and conceptual bases of racism, always anchored in human experiences”¹⁸ (Parintins Lima; Morato, 2020, p. 1658).

In the field of educational practices, studies conducted and supervised by Dr. Neusa Salim Miranda (UFJF), such as Miranda & Bernardo (2013), Lima & Miranda (2013), and Miranda & Loures (2016), among others, propose a Frame-Based Discourse Analysis aimed at investigating different interactions within Brazilian education. Initially, the group’s research focused on outlining the “map of the crisis” in basic education, analyzing frames emerging from the discourse of students and teachers in this context. Subsequently, these pathways led to action-research proposals (Miranda; Loures, 2016; Ishikawa; Miranda, 2017), which transformed the analysis of semantic frames into a diagnostic, preparatory stage to the intervention phase of classroom investigation. These studies make important contributions to the field, especially by adapting the FrameNet Berkeley frame annotation apparatus for more discursive purposes, downplaying syntactic systematizations, and prioritizing the semantic layer, with the primary goal of “[...] ‘reconstructing’ the conceptual scenes that emerge from discourse [...]”¹⁹ (Fontes, 2012, p. 37).

¹⁴ In the original: “se revela como crucial na organização e no estabelecimento do contexto, na organização dos turnos conversacionais e nos enquadres (socio)cognitivos por meio dos quais os indivíduos interpretam o mundo.”

¹⁵ In the original: “[...] um evento comunicativo para onde é direcionada a atenção dos interlocutores em uma interação.”

¹⁶ In the original: “[...] entre uso da língua e cognição.”

¹⁷ In the original: “[...] permitindo a emergência ou a implicação de construções léxico-gramaticais, semânticas, textuais.”

¹⁸ In the original: “[...] colaboração para a explicitação e detalhamento analítico das bases linguísticas e conceituais do racismo, sempre ancoradas nas experiências humanas.”

¹⁹ In the original: “‘remontar’ as cenas conceituais que emergem do discurso”.

Within this scope, we highlight the work of Lima (2014), which aimed to examine the perspectives of undergraduate students in Language and Literature programs regarding the higher education path they had chosen. The interviews were conducted at the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF), and data analysis revealed the existence of frames that, among other aspects, indicated a considerable gap between the motivations for choosing the degree and the path toward teaching. Miranda & Loures (2016), in turn, investigated the self-image of Portuguese language students in light of positive and negative classroom experiences. Through the *Self_Evaluation* frame, it was found that students often constructed a highly deprecating self-image, indicating difficulties and negative feelings related to Portuguese language classes. These research paths led to fruitful, scientifically grounded interpretations regarding the Brazilian educational crisis and the role of the Language and Literature field in this context.

Finally, we observe that such analytical proposals, in various ways, inspire and motivate the work we have been developing within the SemanTec Group (Semantics & Technology). Initially focused on semantic annotation for computational purposes, the SemanTec Group shifted its focus to the construction of frame-based specialized language dictionaries, having launched two online lexicographic resources (the Field Dictionary of Football Expressions, 2014; and the Olympic Dictionary, 2016). A third dictionary is currently under development. Also noteworthy is a research and descriptive trajectory in the field of Law, intersecting with computational and translation-related efforts. By adapting the frame description steps proposed by Fillmore & Baker (2010) and Fillmore & Petruck (2003) to its research goals, the group proposes a middle-out approach for identifying such constructs: the investigated domain is first studied, from which preliminary versions of the frames are sketched (top-down phase); next, linguistic data are analyzed and compared with this initial description, and adjustments are made based on the outcomes of this cross-analysis (bottom-up phase) (Chishman *et al.*, 2018).

Despite the primary goal of conducting linguistic descriptions for lexicographic purposes, at times the domains investigated in this context have required consideration of the more social aspects that intersect the process of selecting items for the dictionaries. This was the case in the selection of lexical units evoking frames related to Paralympic athletes in the context of the Paralympic Dictionary. Just as the biomedical model of Alzheimer's disease is predominant in society (Siman; Morato, 2016), in the Paralympic context, the framing of these athletes as high-performance professionals competes with a conceptualization of people with disabilities structured around a medical model. This model is evoked by outdated expressions, many of which are considered pejorative by social movements advocating for the rights of these groups (Oliveira, 2019). In light of this, Santos, Souza, and Chishman (2023) conducted a diachronic analysis of semantic frames that have framed Brazilian Paralympic athletes since the 1960s, identifying "[...] dynamic conceptualizations that reflect the sociocognitive tensions characteristic of the reality of Paralympic athletes in Brazil."²⁰ (Santos; Souza; Chishman, 2023, p. 2).

Drawing on the work with legal language carried out by the SemanTec Group, the study by Santos (2016) investigated conceptualizations of anencephalic fetuses in the context of ADPF 54, whose ruling by the Brazilian Supreme Federal Court in 2012 allowed for the termination of pregnancy in cases of anencephaly. From the perspective of semantic frames as structures that highlight different facets of knowledge (Ziem, 2014), the research mapped the framings of the anencephalic fetus in this context, revealing how the scientific perspective — which characterizes it as a brain-dead stillborn — was consistently distorted in favor of arguments against the ADPF. These arguments

²⁰ In the original: “conceptualizações dinâmicas que refletem os embates sociocognitivos característicos da realidade do atleta paralímpico no Brasil.”

profiled (Langacker, 2008) false conceptualizations of the anencephalic fetus as a “baby with the right to life,” thereby establishing a contest of meanings that could be systematized through frame description. In turn, the study by Santos (2020) focused on another context of reproductive rights dispute, namely the Legislative Suggestion No. 15/2014, which was debated in the Federal Senate and sought to regulate abortion through Brazil’s Unified Health System (SUS) within the first twelve weeks of pregnancy. Following the approach of Frame-Based Discourse Analysis (Miranda; Loures, 2016) and in alignment with the analytical methodology proposed by the SemanTec Group, Santos (2020) examined the intertwining (Vereza, 2013a) and (re)framings (Coulson, 2008) of semantic frames in this debate. The study identified “[...] the ways in which conservative and/or outdated conceptualizations about women and their rights are mobilized, ultimately restricting their autonomy in favor of arguments that merely touch upon — but do not refute, since they do not even address — the Legislative Suggestion proposal”²¹ (Santos, 2020, p. 10).

4 “THE FRAMING OF FRAME” IN (SOCIO)COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS: WHAT DOES THIS NOTION EVOKE TODAY?

As we seek to outline in this article, the notion of semantic frame is as multifaceted as the possibilities for multidisciplinary analyses and articulations enabled by this construct. Introduced into Linguistics by Charles Fillmore in his proposal of Frame Semantics, the term does not remain confined to this author within the field of Cognitive Linguistics — see, for instance, the well-known reflections based on the notion of frame published by Lakoff (2001, 2004), among other authors. On the other hand, it is necessary to consider that the Fillmorian frame emerges from constructs already proposed in fields such as the Social Sciences (Goffman, 1974) and computer science (Minsky, 1974), gaining, through Fillmore, its own contours relevant to his research objectives. To use a term coined by Moita Lopes (2006) when referring to the field of Applied Linguistics, the frame is born as an *(in)disciplinary* category, meaning that the uses of the term in specific contexts — pertaining to different theories and areas of knowledge — coexist with more generic mentions and appropriations, not necessarily linked to the methodological framework of Frame Semantics or other theories. This aspect can lead, as we mentioned in the introduction of this article, to overly generic, vague (Van Dijk, 2016) conceptions of frame in different contexts of analysis.

Our proposal in this section is not to exhaust or rigidly fix the possibilities of characterizing the semantic frame, but rather to revisit some of its dimensions, taking as a horizon the seminal Fillmorian works and the Brazilian research developments that we address here. It is also worth noting that we have found, in the more recent literature, some works that already map the main dimensions of the frame in a socio-cognitive context more thoroughly — for example, Siman (2015); Duque (2015; 2017); Santos (2020); and Parintins Lima (2024). Therefore, our reflections here focus on reexamining while aiming to *profile* certain aspects according to the discussion we have sought to build.

The first point we highlight, within the scope of Frame Semantics, concerns the distinction between the frame as a theoretical construct — an experiential, sociocultural, and shared structure — and as an analytical tool, applied in cognitive-linguistic studies to understand, “[...] describe and explain lexical, grammatical, and textual meaning” (Lima;

²¹ In the original: “[...] os modos pelos quais conceptualizações conservadoras e/ou retrógradas sobre a mulher e seus direitos são agenciadas, reduzindo-se sua autonomia em prol de argumentos que tangenciam — e não refutam, pois sequer abordam — a proposta da SUG.”

Miranda, 2013, p. 11). As Ziem (2014, p. 2) summarizes, “[...] frames are both cognitive structures for organizing our experience and at the same time analytical tools that can be implemented to analyse precisely these structures.” In analytical contexts grounded in Frame Semantics, for example, this tool will be operationalized according to the methodological postulates that guide scientific practice in this field, which, despite necessary adaptations, involve some fundamental aspects — such as the selection, compilation, and segmentation of a study corpus, as well as the description of the investigated frames according to linguistic patterns found in the data (Siqueira, 2013), in possible dialogue with other analytical categories.

The second aspect we consider fundamental concerns the different dimensions of frame analysis, among which we highlight two continuities already addressed in previous studies: the continuum between more stable or more immediate cognitive constructs — as seen in the phenomenon of online frames, in dialogue with offline frames (Vereza, 2013a; Farias, 2015) — and between cognitive/semantic/knowledge frames and interactional/interactive frames (Morato, 2010; Morato *et al.*, 2017), a distinction mentioned in seminal Fillmorean works and revisited in the aforementioned Brazilian studies. These studies emphasize that such categories are also “[...] interrelated in a dialectical continuum”²² (Morato, 2010, p. 100). It is also worth recalling, in this regard, the following statement by Morato (2010, p. 100) regarding views that place these dimensions in opposition: “what escapes authors who oppose semantic and interactional frames is the fact that the actions in which subjects engage during interaction are an integral part of the constitution and re-signification of semantic-conceptual frames (cf. Cienki, 2007, p. 20).”²³

Finally, and in dialogue with the previous aspects, we argue that the continuities are not limited to internal dimensions of the frame, as they are also reflected in the different interfaces with other analytical and methodological categories — such as conceptual metaphors or the notion of discourse topic — which may be brought into articulation. In various ways, recent analytical proposals in the Brazilian field of studies have relied on broader preliminary methodological steps than frame analysis itself, aiming to better understand the “[...] socio-political-cultural cognitive environment [...]”²⁴ (Koch; Morato; Bentes, 2011, p. 80) in which these sociocognitive structures emerge. One example is the proposal for (macro)contextualization of the analyzed data (Martins, 2015), based on historical, journalistic, and/or academic sources that allow the researcher to conduct a domain study (Chishman *et al.*, 2018; Santos, 2020) to be articulated with frame analysis. In this sense, Fillmorean theory has been integrated into dialogue with other frameworks, making it possible to “[...] face the challenges posed by themes that call for interdisciplinary arbitration”²⁵ (Morato, 2014, p. 294). Nonetheless, it is necessary to ensure epistemological and methodological convergence in the proposed interfaces, in order to also establish a continuum between theoretical and analytical approaches in dialogue.

5 FINAL REMARKS

In this article, we set out to revisit the notion of semantic frame as a theoretical construct and an analytical tool relevant to the study of social cognition phenomena. In

²² In the original: “[...] inter-relacionadas em um continuum dialético.”

²³ In the original: “foge aos autores que opõem frames semânticos e interacionais o fato de que as ações nas quais se engajam os sujeitos em interação são parte integrante da constituição e da re-significação dos frames semântico-conceptuais (cf. Cienki, 2007:20).”

²⁴ In the original: “[...] entorno cognitivo sócio-político-cultural [...].”

²⁵ In the original: “[...] enfrentar os desafios postos por temas que convocam uma arbitragem interdisciplinar.”

the first section, we addressed Frame Semantics as a theory situated within the Cognitive Linguistics movement, thereby sharing with other approaches in the field certain epistemological principles grounded in embodied realism, the primacy of meaning, and a socioculturally situated cognition. We also sought to recover some of Fillmore's insights that emphasize the inherently sociocognitive and interactional nature of frames, even though their initial developments were largely restricted to lexicographic and computational analyses.

Next, we reviewed a selection of Brazilian studies conducted within the scope of the Sociocognitive Hypothesis of Language, which point to the methodological flexibility of the frame construct, its fruitful articulation with other theoretical constructs, and the relevance of its scope in the investigation of social cognition phenomena. Accordingly, in the penultimate section, we outlined what we understand by the term semantic frame today, arguing that, as evidenced by the Brazilian research landscape, there are multiple interdisciplinary paths that can be pursued around this construct—as long as the necessary convergences among different theories, methodologies, and analytical categories are considered.

It is important to reiterate that, as indicated earlier in this article, we do not deny the fact that Fillmore's theory has always been deeply rooted in social, pragmatic, experiential phenomena. It even has inspired broader approaches within Cognitive Linguistics, such as the Lakovian one (Lakoff, 2004), which reframes Fillmore's concept on more philosophical, metaphorical, neuro-scientific bases (Fillmore, 2010). Parenthetically, we might add that, when asked about the differences between his and Lakoff's frames (and after observing that they agree, to some extent, on the concepts' purposes and functions), Fillmore brought the following synthesis regarding his theory: “[...] my actual work has concentrated on *how lexical units and grammatical constructions evoke frames and how the grammar tells us how the information structured by a frame gets realized in the grammar*” (Fillmore, 2010, p. 158-159, our emphasis). Considering this, when we propose to reframe his model, we seek to shift the lens towards some facets (i.e., some Frame Elements of this frame) that, although less prominent in Frame Semantic's and FrameNet's early methodological framework versions, have increasingly been brought to attention in more contemporary, discursive, frame-semantic analytical models, with the purpose of investigating relevant social-cognition phenomena.

Finally, we also reaffirm our acceptance of the invitation posed by the 5th Colloquium on Language and Cognition in Interaction — an invitation to revisit past paths that, contrary to the prevailing obsession with constant innovation, open the way to new perspectives on what we have already built and still seek to build within the field of Brazilian (Socio)Cognitive Linguistics. It was in this spirit that, in rereading Fillmore's work, we encountered, in one of his seminal texts, an expectation that the use of frames in Linguistics would become increasingly multifaceted. Although the author, in that article, was addressing more specifically the subfields of semantic studies, we take the liberty of reframing this citation to close this article, as a Fillmorean invitation to revisitations — which is so fundamental to our scientific practice in the field of Social Cognition:

I am convinced that something like the model I have been talking about will allow an integrated view of many subfields in the study of meaning and comprehension, though I will readily admit that my remarks here are little more than suggestive. Sometimes I think that what I am proposing is new, but sometimes I fear that it is exactly what everybody has been talking about all along. If it is new, it is probably too commonsensical to be impressive, and will have to undergo some careful reformulation. If, however, this is what semantic theorists have believed all along, then with this paper I am doing no more than announcing that I at last understand something about my field (Fillmore, 1975, p. 130).

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Recebido: 2/6/2025

Aceito: 22/7/2025

Publicado: 7/10/2025