

L113: Coursework II (graded)

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1/Nov 2012

1 The frame semantics of “to risk” and “the risk”

The meaning of “risk” concerns a core meaning of exposure to danger. However, according to Fillmore, different aspects (frames) of this exposure can be identified if we look at which logical participants in events and situations are present in each occurrence of “risk”. Your task in this exercise is to explore groups of “risk” occurrences according to these participants. This is called “frame semantics”. Consider the following occurrences of “risk”:

- **1a.** *There was a risk of fire.*
- **1b.** *That man is a risk!*
- **1c.** *They all risked being caught in order to come to the United States.*
- **1d.** *Implementing this program runs the risk of offending our core constituents.*
- **1e.** *Some people have no problem with risking their hides every day.*
- **1f.** *I risked taking another look.*
- **1g.** *Back in his room, he risked peeking inside.*
- **1h.** *If you are a farmer, you are at risk for hearing loss caused by noise exposure in your work.*
- **1i.** *The risk to his reputation was significant.*
- **1j.** *Smoking is a health risk.*
- **1k.** *He risked a look back to check for pursuit.*
- **1l.** *There was no risk of his returning.*
- **1m.** *Putting forward new ideas risks sparking controversy if you dont frame your argument properly.*

- **1n.** *She risked a disguise since they already had a photo of her.*
- **1o.** *If she left now in broad daylight, she risked her carefully devised disguise.*
- **1p.** *They would risk all for their closest friends.*
- **1q.** *Smoking poses a risk to your health.*
- **1r.** *The most imminent risk is to our infrastructure.*
- **1s.** *Original thinkers incur greater risks to their careers than their pedestrian colleagues.*
- **1t.** *Even after the end of Apartheid we still run the risk of letting racism continue forever.*
- **1u.** *Babies who survive meningitis run the risk of disabilities.*
- **1v.** *Still debating whether this is the year to take an outsized risk, to make a strong decision, or whether “start a company” should be your New Years Resolution?*

Your tasks:

- Identify and describe the logical participants in the events and situations centered around risk (verb and noun) in sentences 1a-u. Are there semantic restrictions on the participants?
- Group the sentences above into clusters according to their frames. You may use the “risk” frames from FrameNet for this task.
- Which senses do the expressions “run a risk” and “take a risk” belong to, and why?
- The novelty of FrameNet is that it can generalise semantic frames across lexical items. Consider some of the following sentences (your choice), and whether there are participants in the situations portrayed that can be fitted into one of your frames above.
 - **2a.** *I dont think you should hazard the ascent in the dark, thats all.*
 - **2b.** *Honey is not safe for babies.*
 - **2c.** *Rogue nations are our greatest threat.*
 - **2d.** *Only the riders who endanger the whole group are left behind.*
 - **2e.** *If you carelessly chance going back there, you deserve what you get.*
 - **2f.** *There is always some danger to rich men in a bar like this.*
 - **2g.** *If he is uncertain of right and wrong, he is in dire peril of losing his immortal soul.*

– **2h.** *These unfortunate circumstances threatened to relegate Las Vegas to the status of a small desert community that could no longer support its 3000 residents .*

- Report your results on 3 pages
- Submission: Friday 9 Nov