Semantic Layer of the Valence Dictionary of Polish Walenty

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Abstract

This article presents the semantic layer of Walenty—a new valence dictionary of Polish predicates, with a number of novel features, as compared to other such dictionaries. The dictionary contains two layers, syntactic and semantic. The syntactic layer describes syntactic and morphosyntactic constraints predicates put on their dependants. In particular, it includes a comprehensive and powerful phraseological component. The semantic layer shows how predicates and their arguments are involved in a described situation in an utterance. These two layers are connected, representing how semantic arguments can be realised on the surface. Each syntactic schema and each semantic frame are illustrated by at least one exemplary sentence attested in linguistic reality.

The semantic layer consists of semantic frames represented as lists of pairs (semantic role, selectional preference) and connected with PLWORDNET lexical units. Semantic roles have a two-level representation (basic roles are provided with an attribute) enabling representation of arguments in a flexible way. Selectional preferences are based on PLWORDNET structure as well.

Keywords: valence, semantic frames, semantic roles, selectional preferences, Polish

1. Introduction

Walenty (Walenty, 2016), a comprehensive valence dictionary of Polish, is developed at the Institute of Computer Science, Polish Academy of Sciences (ICS PAS) within several projects, but mainly within CLARIN-PL.1

The dictionary is ment to be both human- and machine-readable; in particular, it is employed by two parsers of Polish, Świga2 (Wolński, 2004) and POLFIE3 (Patejuk and Przepiórkowski, 2012). For this reason, lexicon entries have a strictly defined formal structure. Additionally, syntactic and semantic phenomena represented therein should be attested in linguistic reality.

Walenty is composed of two main layers: syntactic and semantic. The syntactic layer was described in (Przepiórkowski et al., 2014c; Przepiórkowski et al., 2014a), whereas Przepiórkowski et al. (2014b) focuses on its phraseological component. In this paper we want to focus on the semantic layer.

While extending Walenty with the semantic layer, we had semantic parsing and textual entailment in mind. Therefore, unified representation of utterances bearing similar information is crucial.

The dictionary comprises over 15 000 entries (composed of about 84 000 schemata), with about 12 000 verbs,4 2 000 nouns, 950 adjectives and 200 adverbs. Each entry is identified by its lemma.

The semantic layer of Walenty is strictly connected with PLWORDNET (Piasecki et al., 2009), one of two Polish wordnets. PLWORDNET describes the meaning of a lexical unit by placing this unit in a network of relations (such as synonymy, hypernymy, meronymy, etc.).

2. Related works

There exist valence dictionaries connecting syntactic and semantic information about predicates and their arguments. The most famous is FrameNet5 (Fillmore et al., 2003; Ruppenhofer et al., 2006) based on a theory of meaning called Frame Semantics (Fillmore, 1976; Fillmore and Baker, 2001). It is organised around the notion of a semantic frame that is evoked by lexical units representing particular meanings of words (not only verbs). Frames are lists of semantic roles called frame elements (FEs). An exemplary frame for transfer situation being evoked by several verbs (give, donate, present, receive or even buy and sell) is presented in (1). Valence of particular verbs is represented by their valence patterns (FEs, PTs, GFs) containing corresponding phrase types (PTs) and grammatical functions (GFs) apart from frame elements. Exemplary valence patterns for verbs GIVE and RECEIVE are presented in (2) and (3), respectively.

(1) Frame

\begin{tabular}{llll}
\textbf{FEs} & \textbf{DONOR} & \textbf{THEME} & \textbf{RECIPIENT} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

(2) give

\begin{tabular}{llll}
\textbf{FEs} & \textbf{DONOR} & \textbf{THEME} & \textbf{RECIPIENT} \\
\hline
\textbf{PTs} & NP & NP & NP \\
\textbf{GFs} & Ext & Comp & Obj \\
\end{tabular}

(3) receive

\begin{tabular}{llll}
\textbf{FEs} & \textbf{DONOR} & \textbf{THEME} & \textbf{RECIPIENT} \\
\hline
\textbf{PTs} & (PP-from) & NP & NP \\
\textbf{GFs} & (Comp) & Obj & Ext \\
\end{tabular}

FrameNet contains about 800 hierarchically organised frames evoked by 10 000 lexical units.

1\text{http://www.clarin-pl.eu/en/}
2\text{http://zil.ipipan.waw.pl/Swigra}
3\text{http://zil.ipipan.waw.pl/LFG}
4\text{Walenty verbal entries cover 99.8% verb tokens in balanced NKJP subcorpus of 300M tokens, based on frequency list of automatic tagging.}
5\text{https://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/fndrupal/}
The profound comparison of the phraseological component of PDT-VALLEX and Walenty was conducted in (Przepiórkowski et al., 2016).

Figure 3: A phraseological schema of the verb UPJIAĆ SIĘ

Each schema has its assessment attached, indicating its correctness (pewny ‘certain’, wątpliwy ‘disputable’, zły ‘wrong’) and register (potoczny ‘colloquial’, wulgarny ‘vulgar’, archaiczny ‘archaic’). These assessments enable us to consider (and filter if necessary) even completely erroneous constructions, provided that they are frequently used. For instance, for HARMONIZOWAĆ ‘harmonise’, harmonizować się z czymś ‘harmonise with sth.’ is considered a

9 In contemporary Polish functioning only in this phraseeme.
wrong schema, while the correct construction is harmonizować z czynią, without the reflexive mark SIĘ, see fig. 4.

Figure 4: A screenshot with a wrong schema and its correct counterpart

In Walenty, we store only the longest schemata, i.e. the longest lists of positions that can appear together in the same utterance and the largest sets of phrase types that can be coordinated in a single position. The reason is that in Polish every position, including subject, can be elided.

4. Semantic layer

The semantic layer is composed of semantic frames. Each frame is a set of semantic arguments represented as pairs (semantic role, selectional preferences).

Each frame is connected to a meaning of a predicate. Those meanings are identified by PLWordNet lexical units (LUs). We use version 2.1 (PIWordNet, 2016). It is possible for multiple LUs to correspond to the same frame. In particular, this concerns reflexive and non-reflexive verbs, provided that they represent the same meaning (diathesis alternations, e.g., ZBIĆ and ZBIĆ SIĘ ‘break’).

On the other hand, some lexical units may be missing in PLWordNet. In such cases new LUs are added, indicated by capital letters instead of numbers following the lemma of an LU (wordnet standard), in order to differentiate them from the original wordnet LUs. Such new LUs are provided with glosses as well as synonyms or hypernyms situating them in PLWordNet structure. This will facilitate including them by PLWordNet developers.

We assume that there cannot be two identical frames for a single entry, as otherwise there would be no way to distinguish between their meanings.

Exemplary sentences are originally assigned to syntactic schemata, but they are connected to lexical units as well. Thus, they also illustrate semantic frames connected to LUs.

Similarly to schemata, semantic frames are assessed. These assessments concern meaning. Therefore, an archaic or wrong schema can be connected to a certain frame, if that schema represents an archaic/incorrect use of a syntax for some meaning. On the other hand, an archaic or wrong frame can represent an old or improper meaning of the contemporary, proper syntax. For instance, this concern verbs ADOPTOWAĆ ‘adopt’ and ADAPTOWAĆ ‘adapt’ often confused with each other.

4.1. Semantic Roles

Semantic layer of Walenty is organised around the notion of a semantic role. This notion evolved from the works of (Fillmore, 1968; Fillmore, 1971; Fillmore, 1976). While constructing the set of semantic roles, we took into consideration existing valence dictionaries, including FrameNet, VerbNet and VALLEX. The FrameNet roles are too granulated and their number is too large, whereas the Vallex roles are bound too closely with syntax. Therefore, we mainly modelled on VerbNet. In particular, apart from roles we use selectional preferences, just as in VerbNet.

Basic semantic roles are divided into two groups: main roles (Initiator, Theme, Stimulus, Experiencer, Instrument, Factor, Recipient, Result) representing situation participants, and auxiliary roles (Condition, Attribute, Manner, Location, Path, Time, Duration, Measure, Purpose) representing its circumstances. This set is supposed to cover both required verb dependants (arguments) and free modifiers (actual adjuncts). In another aspect, roles are divided into three groups: initiating group including roles describing participants that enable a situation to occur, accompanying group composed of roles describing participants that undergo or characterise the situation and ending group including roles describing participants that result from or are influenced by the situation, cf. Fig. 5. Roles have colours assigned to them in a fixed way.

Naturally some collections or roles cooccur. This in-
includes \{Initiator, Theme\},\(^{10}\) \{Initiator, Theme, Recipient\}, \{Initiator, Result\} (WRITE), \{Initiator, Theme, Result\} (BUILD) and \{Stimulus, Experience\}.

Let us consider the verb DEGUSTOWAĆ ‘taste’ representing the situation when a person (Initiator) is tasting some food (Theme), cf. Fig. 6.

![Figure 6: A screenshot with a simple frame](image)

Some roles, like VerbNet Initial Time and Final Time or Agent and Counteragent are related. In VerbNet (CLE, 2012) they are connected in the hierarchy of roles. Instead, we decided to use two level representation, composed of basic roles discussed above and role attributes. This solution is more flexible, as we do not assume in advance, which basic role may be equipped with attributes. On the other hand, the relations between roles are apparent without any external knowledge.

Therefore, basic roles can be supplemented with attributes organised into pairs Foreground, Background and Source, Goal. The first pair is used if various paraphrases change only the focus of an utterance. For instance, the situation that ‘someone exchanges something for something with someone’ involves two initiators and two themes. As Mary exchanged a dress for a jacket with Anna provides same information as Anna exchanged a jacket for a dress with Mary, we will represented them as Initiator\textsuperscript{Foreground}, Initiator\textsuperscript{Background} and Theme\textsuperscript{Foreground}, Theme\textsuperscript{Background}. Such paraphrase can involve the change of syntax. Consider the verb IRYTOWAĆ ‘irritate’ having 12 syntactic schemata in Walenty, three of them used in (4) presenting paraphrases of the same content. It involves a person experiencing irritation and a Stimulus causing it. The last can be syntactically expressed by means of two phrases or a single phrase. The corresponding frame is presented in Fig. 7.

![Figure 7: Foreground, Background attributes of role Stimulus for the verb IRYTOWAĆ](image)

The other pair of attributes (Source, Goal) is used when a direction between actants can be found (in the wide sense). The most natural example here is Location for verbs of movement, e.g. we have Location\textsuperscript{Source, Location\textsuperscript{Goal} in ‘to go from somewhere to somewhere’). However, we use them also for representing a BUYSELL situation, i.e. ‘someone buys something from someone’, ‘someone sells something to someone’. We think that this situation differs from GIVE/RECEIVE situation, as a buyer pays a seller for goods he is receiving. We assign Initiator\textsuperscript{Source}, Initiator\textsuperscript{Goal} in assumption that the direction of transferring goods is more important that the direction of transferring money.

We assume that attribute roles form genuine pairs aimed at distinguishing two occurrences of the same role in a frame, hence we forbid including only one of them in it. The only exception is Location, as the initial location is something special in spite of whether there exists the final location (and vice versa). The other reason is that we have distinguished ablative and adlative constructions on the syntax level as well, cf. (Przepiorkowski et al., 2014a, §3.4, p.2787). For instance, POCHODZIĆ ‘come from’\(^{11}\) has an obligatory source location and an impermissible goal location, cf. (5).

\begin{verbatim}
(5) pochodzić-1: Theme Location\textsuperscript{Source} subj{np(str)} {xp(abl)}
Obie panie pochodziły z Europy Środkowej. Both woman.PL come.PL,PAST from Europe Central.
‘Both women came from Central Europe.’
\end{verbatim}

4.2. Selectional preferences

Arguments, identified by semantic roles, are provided with selectional preferences (Katz and Fodor, 1964; Resnik, 1993). Unlike many other dictionaries, we do not use a fixed set of qualifiers, like abstract/concrete, solid/liquid/gaseous etc. We want to be much more precise, hence we use PLWORDNET synsets (represented by LUs) and relations to represent selectional preferences. Therefore, only dogs can BARK, we DRINK only beverages (not all liquids), and we only use bandages to BANDAGE (not every cloth).

The selectional preferences are represented as a list of elements of the following four types (elements of different

\(^{10}\)Both Initiator (WALK, BIVOUC) and Theme (SLEEP, ROT) can appear in frames independently.

\(^{11}\)Meaning to be born/raised somewhere, not to arrive from somewhere.
types can co-occur in the same list):

1. a predefined set of synsets,
2. a PWORDS synset,
3. a PWORDS relation to another argument,
4. a PWORDS relation to another synset.

The most basic way to represent selectional preferences is a direct use of PWORDS synsets. For instance, the frame of the verb AKCENTOWAĆ ‘accentuate’ (a word on the syllable) with a strictly constrained meaning is presented in Fig. 8. The complete frame including selectional preferences for (5, previous page), is presented in (6). Since country is connected neither to administrative district, nor to geographical region, it has to be considered separately.

Figure 8: A frame for the verb AKCENTOWAĆ with PWORDS selectional preferences only

(6) Theme Location Source
osoba-1 \{jednostka administracyjna-1
‘administrative district’,
obszar-1 ‘region’,
państwo-1 ‘country’ \}

However, in many situations, groups of PWORDS synsets commonly occur together in a single selectional preference. For example, both foods and drinks can be tasted or pasteurised. Similarly, both people and organisations/companies can buy, sell or store goods. As such semantically connected concepts are composed of many unrelated PWORDS synsets, we decided to add symbols representing such common combinations. For example, JADŁO ‘victuals’ represents the set \{jedzenie-1 ‘food’, napój-1 ‘drink’\}, LUDZIE ‘PEOPLE’ – {człowiek-1 ‘human’, grupa ludzi-1 ‘group of people’} and PODMIOTY ‘legal subjects’ – {człowiek-1 ‘human’, grupa ludzi-1 ‘group of people’, podmiot-2 ‘legal subject’ (grouping organisations, companies and firms)}. Their main advantages are that they can be rearranged in the future (if appropriate) and that they simplify processes of creating and reading the dictionary. Additionally, ALL means that no selectional preferences can be defined. Such predefined sets are used in frames presented in Figs. 6 and 7.

Complicated structure of PWORDS made us also introduce PWORDS relations to another synset as a way of representing selectional preferences. For instance, an Instrument for PISAC ‘write’ could be a pen, a ballpen, a pencil etc. However, in PWORDS their direct hypernym is artykuły papierowe-1 ‘writing materials’ which is evidently too wide (as it includes, e.g., ‘notebook’). They are correctly joined by the holonymy (collection) relation to przybory do pisania-1 ‘writing implements’, as this term is used in Polish only in plural.

For some predicates, arguments considered separately represent a wide class of entities, but actually they are closely related to each other. For instance, one meaning of MLEĆ ‘mill’ concerns objects moving their parts through some substance. For example, windmill can mill air with its sails, while water wheel can mill water with its blades (but not with sails as it has none). Classic selectional preferences tell us nothing about what can be used by those objects for milling, but we can clearly see that they have to be internal parts of original object. Therefore, we introduced selectional preferences determined by means of relations to another argument. Meronomy seems to be a appropriate relation here, cf. Fig. 9.

Figure 9: Selectional preferences based on relations between arguments for the verb MLEĆ

Sometimes, such a relation between arguments is not strictly defined. Let us consider the verb SKŁADAĆ SIĘ ‘consist of’. It may concern concrete objects, e.g., various devices, groups of concrete people, events having their phases, etc. Therefore, we consider a symbol RELAT meaning any close PWORDS relation between LUs occurring in text. The frame for SKŁADAĆ SIĘ is presented in (7).

(7) składać się-1

5. Connecting both layers

In Walenty, syntactic and semantic valence information are represented separately. Nevertheless, they are closely connected, but this relation is a many-to-many one. On one hand, one semantic frame can be syntactically implemented by several schemata (diathesis alternation). On the other, one schema can be used in several frames.

As mentioned before, exemplary sentences are linked to corresponding schemata (with particular phrase types used in them marked). On the semantic level, the same examples
are connected to the corresponding lexical units and, as result, they illustrate semantic frames. This dependency links schemata to frames, but such link is by all means insufficient.

We directly link semantic arguments with corresponding syntactic positions. We assume that the fact that all phrase types composing a single position can coordinate means that they cannot represent different semantic arguments, but, in various situation, not all phrase types composing a position must be connected with an argument. Similarly, not all positions must be connected with all frames adequate for a particular lemma (due to storing longest schemata).

Let us consider the verb **DATOWAĆ** ‘date’ with two meanings: **datować**-1 ‘determine time of appearance’ and **datować**-2 ‘put a date’. The first one has its reflexive counterpart as well: **datować się**-1 ‘have a determined time of appearance’. The frames corresponding to these two meanings together with schemata being realisations of one of these frames (for **datować**-1 and **datować się**-1) are presented in Fig. 10. On the left one can see semantic frames, with **PLWORDNET** lexical units connected to it just above. The roles of “active” frames are distinguished by corresponding colours. Syntactic schemata are positioned on the right. Phrase types and syntactic positions they belong to are coloured accordingly to the role they are connected to. The paraphrase could appear within the same syntactic schema, the more so as we represent the longest schemata. For example, let us consider the verb **PORASTAĆ** ‘overgrow’. The subject of the verb can be a plant (**Theme**Source) overgrowing an area (**Theme**Goal) as some layer (**Attribute**), cf. (8). In (8a) **TRAWA** ‘grass’ appears as a subject in nominative, whereas **ZBOCZE** ‘slope’ appears in instrumental (together with **DYWAN** ‘carpet’ in instrumental). Contrary, in (8b), **TRAWA** appears in instrumental, whereas **ZBOCZE** appears in nominative (an accusative object is impossible here; furthermore, there is no way to include information about **Attribute**). Therefore, the same phrase type may be used in text in two different ways.

(8) a. **Trawa** nom.sg. **porasta** overgrows **zbocze** acc.sg. **zielonym** green. **dywanem**. carpet.
   b. **Zbocze** nom.sg. **porasta** overgrows **trawą** inst.sg. **zielonym** carpet.

‘Grass overgrows a slope (with a green carpet.)’

The snapshot of the program visualisation of this entry is presented in Figure 11. Namely, NP in nominative (subject) of the upper schema [437] is used as **Theme**Source or **Theme**Goal, whereas NP in instrumental is used as **Theme**Goal or **Attribute**. We call such phenomenon **autoalternation**. It is shown on screen as duplication of syntactic positions (function line and phrase type lines). Each duplicate is connected with the frame in its own, independent way. Currently, only one autoalternation per schema is allowed.

Note that all exemplary sentences connected to the corresponding lexical units appear at the bottom. Schemata representing phraseological usage of predicates should be interpreted semantically as well. Two different cases should be considered. The simpler is when a lexicalised dependant does not change its meaning and represents a fixed form of an argument (or a modifier). This is the case for the lexicalisation **upijać się na umór** (cf. section 3.), as this shows the manner of getting drunk. There-
Therefore, na umór is treated as syntactic realisation of Manner, cf. Fig. 12. Observe that a non-lexicalised phrase type \( xp(\text{mod}) \) (from another schema) is connected with it as well. For arguments having solely lexicalised realisations selectional preferences are not provided. The other concerns a lexicalised dependant modifying the meaning of a verb.

6. Conclusions and future work

In this paper we presented the semantic layer of Polish valence dictionary Walenty, and how it is linked with the existing syntactic layer. We listed the set of semantic roles and discussed how they (together with selectional preferences) form semantic arguments and subsequently frames. Walenty is still under development. While its syntactic layer is nearly finished, the work on the semantic layer is in progress, only about 6300 (52\%) entries are semantically elaborated. In particular, integrating the phraseology in Walenty and PL\textsc{WordNet} should be developed. This concerns only the idiomatic arguments changing the meaning of the verb, like drzeć koty, ‘to squabble’ (literally ‘to tear cats’). They are represented in PL\textsc{WordNet} as separate LUs with multi-word lemmas. The word koty is not an argument here, hence the corresponding syntactic position has to be marked as a part of a lemma. Therefore, we have to generate a multi-word lemma from the morphosyntactic characteristics of its elements. The problem is that such expressions are conventionalised in a certain form (including an order) which is not represented in Walenty to the full extent, cf. (Przepiórkowski et al., 2016).

Till now, we have focused on semantic representation of verbs. The representation for other predicates is the same. The only difference is that we plan to connect derivatives, such as the noun ROZKAZ and the verb ROZKAZAĆ ‘order’ or the adjective DOJRZAŁY, the verb DOJRZEĆ ‘mature’ and the noun DOJRZAŁOŚĆ ‘maturity’, with the same frame.

In the future, we plan to use semantic information included in Walenty for multiple tasks, including semantic parsing and anaphora resolution. We also plan to further extend the resource, mainly its nominal part.

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