This study is a preliminary attempt to represent interactions between lexical units and constructions of Japanese sentences within Japanese FrameNet (Saito, Fujii, and Ohara 2008), in terms of the combined lexicon and “constructicon” currently being developed in FrameNet (Fillmore 2006). The data discussed are taken from a parallel corpus of Japanese and English.

Ohara (2007) argued that in order to look into how different languages encode the same scene, it is also necessary to make cross-references between lexical units and grammatical constructions rather than only analyzing the semantics of lexical units. This paper investigates how such cross-references can be represented in Japanese FrameNet.

In (1) below, predicates are shown in bold. In the English sentence (1a) *tied* evokes the Being_attached frame (“An ITEM is attached by a HANDLE, via a CONNECTOR, to a GOAL.”), while in the Japanese translation (1b) the verb *sibarituke* ‘bind’ may be construed as evoking the Attaching frame (“AGENT causes an ITEM to be physically connected to a GOAL.”). If we compare the semantics of the predicates only, we are forced to say that whereas the English original sentence describes a state, the Japanese translation describes an action, which is not a preferred pattern in corresponding English and Japanese sentences (cf. Ikegami 1991).

(1)  

a. *To this post a figure was tied* [Being_attached], …

b. *kono hasira ni, … ningen ga sibarituke [Attaching] te a-tta*

‘To this pillar … a person had been bound.’

The paper argues that (1b) is an instance of the Resultative construction in Japanese. In the “constructicon” of FrameNet, there are two types of construction elements (CEs): inner and outer. In the Resultative construction, as shown in (2), the inner CEs consist of Action (e.g. *sibarituke*) and Resultative_marker (e.g. *te aru*). The two inner CEs combine to form a state expression which has a valence, i.e. an outer CE: Entity. The outer CE is linked to the frame element (FE) ENTITY in the Resultative frame, which describes an ENTITY’s STATE resulting from an ACTION (Hasegawa 2005).

(2)  

*kono hasira ni, .. [ningen ga Entity] [ [sibarituke Action] [te a-tta Resultative_marker] ]

ENTITY

The paper argues that, in (2), the Resultative construction evokes the Resultative frame, which is compatible with the Attaching frame evoked by the predicate *sibarituke*. In other words, the Japanese translation (1b) describes a state, just like the English original (1a).

It is hoped that the study will give support to working out the details of the new FrameNet directions of combining lexicon and “constructicon.”