

# Propositional Frame-Based Description of Fragments of Teleuts' Linguistic Worldview

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## Abstract

The article presents a propositional connectedness between the frame “food” and the frames “horse-breeding” and “hunting” that, jointly analyzed, make it possible to reveal the peculiarities of associative frame connectedness kept in human long-term memory and expressing the uniqueness of the linguistic worldview of every nation (Teleuts in our case) through speech, which confirms Wittgenstein’s idea of diffusiveness of natural category boundaries. The language wanting everyday words and set expressions produced by analogy to stick to one’s memory and spring up in speech uses exactly the same models for compact thematic units. This pattern shows itself in different structurally organized languages: in flexional, agglutinative and isolating languages. The paper is the first to suggest the peculiarities of verbal and non-verbal communication in the arrangement of frames.

**Keywords:** propositional structure, proposition, associative network, linguistic worldview, frame, verbal and non-verbal communication components

## 1. Introduction

Language is the most important human ability to form and use the existing knowledge about the world. When learning the objective world in the course of activities of daily living, humans record the results of cognition in a word. The accumulated knowledge recorded in a linguistic form is the linguistic worldview. So, the concept of linguistic worldview is based upon learning human notions of the world. If the world is humans and the environment in their interaction, then the linguistic worldview is the result of processing information on the environment and humans. The conceptual system represented as the linguistic worldview depends on physical and cultural experience and is directly connected with it. Every language develops a definite method of conceptualizing the world. The worldview of the nations is reflected in typical concepts, which are the main unit of mentality and are created in the act of cognition in the course of perceiving the world.

The linguistic worldview is a projection of the conceptual system of our consciousness, which includes concepts formed in the course of subject cognitive activities selected from concept units repeated in semantic word structures. Scientists agree on the point that word meanings correlate to certain blocks of knowledge, which helps to perceive the information better. Charles Fillmore (1977) and Marvin Lee Minsky (1980) call these cognitive mechanisms frames, George Lakoff (1988) calls them mental spaces, Ronald Langacker (1988) calls them cognitive areas, Teun A. van Dijk calls them models of situation (2000).

Among all the structures of knowledge representation in linguistics, most wide spread is the concept of frame as a structure meant for representing a stereotypical situation in the human cognition. It was Minsky who introduced the concept of frame into science (1975, p. 39). According to Ch. Fillmore, lexical meaning of a word

conveys a certain scene (or situation), which correlates to the frame by means of ‘perspective’ or focusing on separate elements of frame. Each frame contains many terminals that other frames are connected to. Apical levels of the frame (its core) correspond to notions characteristic of this situation (Fillmore, 1975, p. 124).

Humans are born with a “built-in” mechanism of abstract categories; these categories are either originally inherent in cognition or acquired in the first years of life, but anyway are innate in all modern humans (Chomsky, 1972). These categories are employed in propositional structures and in those propositions, which, if filled, give birth to definite semantic interpretations of the worldview. The process of forming propositional structures as universal cognitive units includes, in Wallace Chafe’s opinion, selecting objects from events and situations and assigning syntactic roles to these objects (Chafe, 1983). Propositional structures guide the human thought in employment of verbalized suggestions (propositions) in the course of categorizing the world. Arrangement of information in propositional structures and propositions is convenient for memory functioning, for its resources are saved; suggestions contained in definitions become possible thanks to presence of a predicate, which organized the frame structure. Depending on which scheme a human chooses to build a phrase, a certain “scenario”, frame, is exposed, a certain situation develops.

## 2. Method

The method of propositional frame-based modelling types of word-formation is given in (Evseyeva, 2012; Proskurina, 2008); derivative clusters, in (Osadchiy, 2007; Shabalina, 2012); word-forming niches, in (Falomkina, 2012); word-forming propositional synonymy, in (Shumilova, 2009). This method makes it possible to illustrate the employment of propositional structures in frames and show the dynamic nature of proposition representation.

Based on the above mentioned theoretical theses, the article aims to describe a fragment of Teleuts’ linguistic worldview using a dictionary entry as a source, which is presented as the frame “food” in the Propositional Frame-Based Dictionary of the Teleut Language that is in preparation for publication (the idea of compiling a dictionary belongs to L. A. Araeva (Araeva, 2008)), and using the material given in (Proskurina, 2014). Additionally, the description relies on the data from Teleut-Russian (1995) and Russian-Teleut (2002) dictionaries, expedition to villages of Belovskiy district of Kemerovo region (Bekovo, Shanda, Ulus, & Teleut) in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. If it was necessary to obtain more specific information, the author kept in touch with Teleuts over the phone from October to November 2014 when writing the article.

Addressing Teleuts’ linguistic worldview is an attempt to keep cultural traditions, peculiar features of the outlook of this nation for descendants and researchers. Teleuts belong to minor native population of the North. Its size is approximately three thousand people; most of them (about 2500) are resident in Kemerovo region. About 1500 people live in Bekovo village. The Teleut language is nonliterate (has no written language) and belongs to the family of the Turkic languages. The task to keep the Teleut language and cultural traditions is still executable, because people residing in villages Bekovo, Shanda, Ulus, and Teleut remember the traditions of their people.

The only frame that dropped out of older generation’s mind is the frame “shamanism”, but its pieces did remain. For example, three days prior to the Trinity, the most respected senior men cut young birches, make *somo*—birches, which villagers decorate with bands. There is a birch near the Cultural Centre in Bekovo, it stays there all the year round and protects the residents. The birch sap is used as food for spirits. There remained dolls too (*emegender*), family mascots. After the wedding, a young wife, together with mother and apprentice shamaness sew dolls and stores them in a secluded nook. Nobody, except for the proprietress, should see them. If a person buys a house where there are dolls, he makes a raft in spring and sends them down the river. Teleuts remember that *somdor* is a men’s mascot, *emegender* is a women’s mascot. It is custom to feed the earth, fire with morning milk from a wooden bowl, which is necessarily made only of birch. And, according to apprentice shamaness (Pavlovna & Bekovo, 1937), it is necessary to beg, pray good and bad spirits to help in treatment with *alass* (this treatment is common for both men and women). People still sacrifice: they put seven birches behind the village, make a fire, stifle a ram (not to let the ram to bleed) and boil it in a cauldron.

But Teleuts do not remember what role a shaman played in the rites of marriage. They tell, however, that a shaman was invited to a wedding. Teleuts do not remember about kama soul either. Consequently, the change of religion, transition from shamanism to orthodoxy in the 90s of the 19<sup>th</sup> century consigned the frame “shamanism” to oblivion (Araeva & Maxakova, 2014), which resulted in impoverishment of other frames as well.

Addressing the frame “food” owes to the fact that every nation has its characteristic foods and methods of preparation. Food is connected with people’s cultural traditions. The article offers an analysis of the names of Teleuts’ national dishes of cooked horse- and gopher-meat. The task is to show how frames connected in Teleuts’ consciousness are used in speech.

Teleuts led a nomadic life for a long time, that's why hunting, cattle and horse breeding were the main ways to get foods for cooking.

Teleuts have always appreciated horsemeat (*maledi*), for, according to Bekovo residents, it is pure, horses were fed with oats (*sula*), barley (*arba*), and millet (*taru*). People ate horsemeat in a certain period of the year, "Horse-meat is to be eaten in winter; in summer the meat is different, horses work." Teleuts have appreciated horsemeat for the reason that it does not congeal, so one can eat horsemeat without warming it over, so it was taken to field and hunting.

The horse assists in keeping house, it is used at hunting. To breed a good horse is a laborious and time-consuming task, that's why horsemeat is expensive and is eaten every day. As a rule, horsemeat was used to cook *tutmash* at wedding, funerals or other celebrations. Nowadays, not many villagers keep horses. But those who have horses, sell meat in winter.

Both Teleut men and women know how to slaughter a horse and how to cut the meat, "When slaughtering a horse in winter, it is left to lie (on a rubber sheet) at night after it is stabbed" (Dmitrievna & Bekovo, 1963). "When a horse was cut, it was first divided in half. Horses were cut in ten parts. No more than ten parts. Four or five was possible" (Iosifovna & Bekovo, 1940). A horse is divided into the following parts: *toshede*—breast, *avakede*—forebody, *koledede*—back part, *kabyirga*—ribs, *moyyinede*—meat and bones of the neck (the neck was cut in two parts), *arkasook*—spine (cut in five parts), *paltyirede*—meat from the gaskin, *pazhiede*—meat from the head. "The head was left to the proprietor or the one who stabbed the horse; the head was used to cook a soup. The bowels were washed and used to make a sausage; the blood was collected and used to make a blood sausage (*kan*). Horsemeat soup (*kõchõ*) was made of bones and pearl barley. Potatoes were not added" (Mazhina). Horsemeat was used to cook goulash, cutlets, and pilaf. A pie with a filling of horsemeat was a festive or funeral dish. All respondents observe that pies with a filling of gopher or horsemeat are the most delicious. Chebelkova G. V. still has a trough made of birch where meat is grinded to cook *tutmash* or a pie. "Hooves (*tuygak*) and the skin (*tere*) were not used in cooking. The tongue and cheeks were used to cook meat dumplings. Dumplings are also made of lungs with fat. It was custom to make jellied meat too" (Pavlovna & Bekovo, 1937). Horsemeat was also used to make *bäšparmak* (*tutmash*) of different parts of the horse body. Internal organs were used in cooking too, e.g. for making a sausage. Most significant were *jurõk* (heart), *õnkõ* (lungs), *ichen* (bowels), *puur* (liver).

"It is important to know what horse to stab. It is necessary to stab a non-working horse (*sogotonmai*), otherwise the meat will be stiff and not tasty. It is preferable to stab a young horse (*sanbada*)" (Semyonovna, 1937).

The horse's skin was used to make protection for a home, and it was hung on the wall.

Recollections of horsemeat dishes include background knowledge that are essential for cooking: a horse's age, its functions in owner's everyday life, fodder, the way of stabbing and cutting a horse, parts of a horse. The frame under study turns out to be closely connected with the frame "horse breeding", which in fact proves pragmatic meaning of criteria of natural categories scientifically substantiated by Wittgenstein: the natural category boundaries are diffused (Lakoff, 2004).

Teleuts' national dishes are those made of gopher meat (*ÿbranedi*). Villagers explain why the meat is good and how it is prepared, "Gophers eat grain, pure meat, they are fat and tasty. Gopher meat is salted. It is used to make a pie, a soup."

In conversation, people point out healing properties of gopher oil, "People suffering from tuberculosis drink gopher oil. Like badger oil, it helps those who have sore lungs."

Teleuts realize the uniqueness of dishes made of gopher meat, "It is most typical of us, and we used to eat gophers." They tell in detail how they caught and prepared gophers, "My husband used to take a bucket, poured water from a water body and then filled the hole up until the gopher head appeared. Then he grasped it by the neck, necessarily from the front and took the gopher out. The meat is delicious. It was used to bake a pie, to make a soup—*ÿbranüzü*; gopher meat were also salted. Today there no more gophers left. They used to be in fields, meadows earlier. Even Russians caught them, brought to us and sold in buckets. Gophers are caught in fields, cut at once and salted. They were fat, tasty. We then bought them at a low price; now if somebody catches them, sells at a high price. In winter we make a pie with a filling of gopher meat."

Gopher or horsemeat soup with pearl barley is a festive dish, it is called *kõchõ*. All other soups are called *üzü*. There are set expressions including the name of the animal, whose meat is used to cook different kinds of soup, with addition of the word *üzü*: *ÿbranüzü*—gopher meat soup, *porsuküzü*—badger meat soup.

Based on family likeness, verbal categories appear mutually connected, which explains the dynamism of human

thinking processes. The thinking processes themselves within the limits of the frame in question are guided by the propositional structure: “(subject)—action—object”, employed in verbalized judgments: “a hunder for commercial animals”, “the one who catches gophers”, “a worker who looks after horses”, “horse cutter”, “the one who divides horses into parts”. Thus, the propositional ties form an associative network present in the consciousness of native speakers of the Teleut language. This associative network helps to keep important concepts in the long-term memory of the nation. It is no accident that telling about dishes made of gopher and horsemeat Teleuts switch over to recollections connected with the above mentioned frames.

The dishes made of gopher and horsemeat were important at the wedding. There were two tables at the Teleut wedding: a men’s table and a women’s table. The women’s table was served with sweets, pastry, the men’s table was served with meat courses. The women’s table was inside the house, while the men’s table stood outside. Men made a fire, put four boards around the fire and sat down on the boards; they cooked *bäšparmak* (*tutmash*) in a cauldron. The tongue was used to make meat dumplings, gopher and horsemeat was used to make pies. But many traditions connected with cooking horsemeat and giving definite parts of the meat to definite relatives, are forgotten. The reason is that nowadays people cut rams for the wedding. The villagers remember that most honored guests were treated o good pieces of meat, whereas the head of the horse was given to the one who stabbed it.

When a child was born, again a horse was stabbed and used to cook *tutmash*.

At present, however, the frame “wedding” and “birth” does not interlace with that part of the frame “food”, which is connected with indications for gopher and horsemeat. The reason is in absence of horses in each farmstead, insignificant number of gophers in fields and in the fact that, living in the dominant Russian culture, Teleuts adopted Russian traditions. Now weddings take place in restaurants. Festivities on the occasion of birth are held at home. *Tutmash* is made of mutton, not horsemeat.

A linguistic worldview is formed of both verbal and non-verbal communication means.

Studying non-verbal components is as a rule connected with their classifications and description of functions (Konetskaya, 1997; Krym, 2004; Nikolayeva, 1969, etc.). Exploring the connection between verbal and non-verbal components from the point of view of propositional frame-based description of fragments of linguistic worldview showed the importance of non-verbal components for the employment of the frame “food”. The latter can be a way of employing both proposition and separate elements of the propositional structure. Therefore, revealing the correlation between verbal and non-verbal components of communication give a better understanding of means used for presenting the Teleuts’ linguistic worldview.

Verbal and non-verbal means are used for communication. If it is necessary to show what is needed for a certain result, informants make some physical movements. They can even do without commenting their actions. Teleuts cook without unnecessary movements, without fuss. Cognitive processes that show themselves in actions connected with the process of cooking are automatic. For example, it was interesting to watch how Raisa Dmitrievna Shadeyeva was making meat dumplings; the process was recorded from the beginning to the end. She kneaded dough with one hand, then put in a bowl and covered with a towel. Then Raisa Dmitrievna grinded meat and onion. Meat dumplings have a shape of a half moon, the edges are pinched in a braid. Dumplings with potatoes, which is also grinded, excess liquid is squeezed out, are made round. One round piece of dough is put on the other, the edges are stuck together in a braid. Each piece is rolled out with a pin individually. Dumplings are put on a board covered with a towel. Then each dumpling is dropped into hot salted water. Dumplings are slightly stirred in the saucepan. At the same time, the mistress can converse about anything, it does not distract her from cooking. Cooking always requires certain actions. But nobody hesitate. Cognitive processes at the root of the speech and cooking are unconsciously controlled by different propositional structures and do not interfere, act simultaneously. So, rolling out dough implies that the object (dough) is rolled out by the subject with an instrument (pin), which results in dumplings. At the same time Raisa Dmitrievna can explain how *tutmash* is cooked (PS “subject—action—result”), how her neighbour is doing (PS “subject—description”), etc. In this case, speech and actions connected by cooking function in parallel, because actions fully convey the information. But when R. D. Shadeyeva needs to explain when the neighbour lives, she point to the window and says her neighbour lives in the opposite house. PS is “subject—action—place”.

The correlation between verbal and non-verbal communication means is different when villagers tell about something. For instance, when telling how a horse is cut Mazhina Anna Iosifovna constantly gestures, which help she to imagine this or that part of the carcass? Speaking about dividing the neck, she points to those areas of her neck that should be cut. She also pointed to the heart, lungs, liver, shoulder, and spine. When saying that there bowels thin as threads, she makes a movement as if twisting a thin thread.

Therefore, linguistic thinking is connected not only with verbal categories, notions, and names; non-verbal components also structure the cognition of reality, extending and expanding the linguistic worldview. Gestures, mimics, and intonations help to perceive the environment in depth, to categorize it more precisely. By accompanying a verbal utterance with gestures a speaker shows their outlook, their worldview. Mixing or parallel functioning of different communicative systems in the thinking process is an integral part of categorization process.

It should be noted that there set expressions denoting meat of an animal in the Teleut language. Compare the names of meat: *yibranedi* (gopher-meat), *maledi*, *jylkyi* (horse-meat), *kushedi* (chicken-meat), *üyedi* (beef), *kastyinedi* (goose-flesh), *iljinkaedi* (turkey), *porsyikedi* (badger-meat), *chochkoedi* (pork), *koyedi* (mutton).

The lexeme *edi* means meat. Adding this word to names of animals leads to formation of the semantics “meat of an animal”. A similar situation is seen in Russian when a word denoting meat of an animal is formed with the suffix *-in/a/* and its variants *-atin/a/*, *-ovin/a/*. The difference is in that the suffix *-in/a/* is not used in speech independently as a word. An analogous situation is seen in Chinese, where *rou* is added to the name of the animal. This means that languages of different structural organizations (inflexional, agglutinative, isolating) tend to set compact thematic units, within the limits of which derivative and set expressions are form by analogy for specific formal indicator: in some cases these are suffixoides, in others these are suffixes. Consequently, the cognitive activity of a linguistic person is directed by the propositional structure “(subject)—action—result”, which is represented in different languages by one and the same proposition (verbalized judgment)—“meat of an animal”. Such employment contributes to keeping the units under study in the human long-term memory and can be used when learning foreign languages.

### 3. Results

The research made with the use of data of the nonliterate language of the minor native population of the North shows that the frames existing in Teleuts’ linguistic consciousness are associatively arranged on the basis of verbalized judgments (propositions) within the limits of propositional structures of knowledge. One and the same word can be employed in different syntactical functions as part of varied propositions and propositional structures in several frames determining their connectedness. This means that the frames appear systematically interconnected. The fact that one frame is dropped out of nation’s mind makes for modification of other frames, which leads to modification of the linguistic worldview of this nations, its outlook. Linguists’ task is to record the extant frames of minor native populations of the North, Teleuts in our case.

### 4. Discussion

The research is in the course of modern analysis of linguistic facts from cognitive points of view. Human cognition uses language within the limits of natural categories scientifically proved by L. Wittgenstein. These categories, as mentioned above, are defines in papers of foreign authors like frames, mental spaces, cognitive areas, models of situation. This research relies on perception of the frame offered by M. Minsky.

The method of propositional modelling is applied in works of both Russian and foreign scientists. In particular, the propositional approach to examining the semantics of a sentence was used by N. D. Arutyunova in the 70s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Arutyunova, 1976). G. Lakoff uses propositional modelling when describing PCM (Lakoff, 2004). When exploring mental spaces from the functional point of view, G. Dinsmore uses the method of modelling reasoning and says, ‘In each case, a context of the space can be considered as a propositional function, i.e. a function from utterance to utterance’ (Dinsmore, 1995, p. 391). Propositional frame-based modelling is used when studying how children of preschool age learn the world (Belyakova, 2012). This method is important when exploring concepts (Li, 2014).

The list of scientists who dedicated themselves to analyzing language from the point of view of categorization can be continued. These are work of A. P. Babushkin, A. N. Baranov, V. Z. Demyankov, E. S. Kubryakova, O. Y. Kryuchkova, Y. S. Stepanov, M. G. Tagayev and many other well-known scientists, which proves the topicality of the conducted research. Without categorization, a person cannot perceive the world, which, according to Whorf’s figurative expression ‘presents a kaleidoscopic flow of impressions, which must be arranged by our consciousness and, therefore, the entire linguistic system kept in our mind’ (Whorf, 1999, p. 97). Researchers of Kemerovo derivatological school use the method of propositional frame-based modelling when analyzing such mental linguistic categories as type of word-formation, word-formative niche, derivative cluster, polysemantic derivative word, word-formative propositional synonymy (links to the papers are indicated above).

It should be noted that when analyzing the data, propositional structures were used which are most abstract subject-object predicatively connected judgments characteristic for the entire mankind of the modern civilization,

which corresponds to W. von Humboldt's utterance, "The forms of *several languages* may unite into a yet *more general* form, and the forms of *all* actually do this, in that we everywhere set out simply from the *most general*: from the connections and relationships of the ideas required to designate concepts and order speech" (Humboldt, 1984, p. 74). Propositional structures are employed in verbalized judgments, propositions, together with which they show discursiveness of human thought. At the same time, propositions held captive in a specific language make it possible to reveal the peculiar features of the linguistic worldview of a specific nation.

## 5. Conclusion

The conducted research is important for both scientists and Teleut young people who are now students of Kuzbass universities. Attention paid by cultural organizations of Kuzbass (expeditions with participation of not only older generations of Teleuts; but also of youth; a verbatim performance about Teleuts prepared at Kemerovo Drama Theater, conferences devoted to studying cultural traditions of minor native populations of the North in conditions of dominant presence of the Russian culture, etc.) raise Teleuts' self-consciousness, arouses a desire to know and keep their native cultural traditions and language.

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