

## Verbs of FALLING: additional lexical oppositions

The subdomains of FALLING manifested by the four macro-frames are not semantically homogeneous; there are some semantic distinctions within every macro-domain that can be lexicalized with the help of peripheral dedicated verbal items. For example, within the frame of falling from an elevated surface (frame 1) the following dedicated verbs are found denoting such additional oppositions:

1. **Falling from a considerable height**, cf. Chinese 坠 *zhui*, Ex. (1).

2. **Falling of some special Trajectors**, or the verbs conflating Motion and Figure, in terms of (Talmy, 1972, 1974, 1985):

a. Precipitation (cf. English *It's raining*)

b. Drops of a liquid (cf. English *It's dripping*; German *tropfen* versus dominant *fallen*)

(1) Mandarin Chinese

一架 法国 飞机 坠 入 亚得里亚海。

*yī jià fǎguó fēijī zhuì rù yàdéliyǎhǎi*

one CLF France airplane fall enter Adriatic\_Sea

‘A French plane plummeted into the Adriatic Sea.’ (Kholkina & Qiang Si, 2020, p. 912, ex. 22)

The frame of loss of vertical orientation (frame 2) opposes falling of **animate Trajectors (mainly humans) and non-animate ones**. For example, in Adyghe, loss of vertical orientation of a human being is colexified with falling from an elevated surface (the verb *-fe-*), while the dedicated verb *wəḵʷerejə-* denotes change of spatial orientation for inanimate vertical objects (cf. also the Aghul system described below).

In addition to it, some languages elaborate the subdomain of “human” falling in more detail and distinguish **falling backwards on one’s back versus falling forwards**, cf. examples (2a) and (2b) from Tundra Nenets.

(2) Tundra Nenets<sup>1</sup>

a. Falling forwards:

*mən’ jit-h t’indi-wq*

I water-DAT fall-REFL\_CONJ.1SG

‘I fell into the water face down.’

<sup>1</sup> For the examples from Tundra Nenets we thank P.P. and E.K..

b. Falling backwards:

*p'et'a     jit-h             l'asej-q*

Peter     water-DAT   fall-REFL\_CONJ.3SG

‘Peter fell into the water on his back.’

Within the frame of detachment (frame 3), the opposition of **loose versus tight contact** is attested, cf. Tigrinya (Bulakh, 2020), where loss of a loose contact is expressed by the dominant verb of falling (*wädäkä*), and loss of a tight contact is denoted by the dedicated verb *moläkä*

(3) Tigrinya

a. Loss of a loose contact:

*gämäd   kab             mänṭälṭäli     wädiḳu*

rope     from     hook             fall.PF.M.3SG

‘A rope fell down from hook’. (Bulakh, 2020, p. 691, ex. 60)

b. Loss of a tight contact:

*ʔanä     zi-sämmärkuwwo                     mīsmar             moliḳu*

1SG     REL-nail.PF.SBJV.SBJ.1SG.OBJ.M.3SG   nail             slip\_off.PF.M.3SG

‘The nail which I nailed (into a wall) fell out.’ (Bulakh, 2020, p. 692, ex. 65)

The frame of crashing down (frame 4) lexically distinguishes **the crashing of buildings versus riverbanks versus bridges**, as in Amguema Chukchi: *peqetatak* – crashing down of a building (this verb also denotes loss of vertical orientation), *eretək* – collapsing of a riverbank (also denotes falling from an elevated surface), *pirqək* – falling of a bridge; also used about layers such as ice or floor (Kozlov & Kasyanova, 2020).

## Abbreviations

1 — first person, 3 — third person, CLF — classifier, DAT — dative, M — masculine, OBJ — object, PF — perfective, REFL\_CONJ — reflexive conjugation, REL — relative, SBJ — subject, SBJV — subjunctive, SG — singular.

## References

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