Anchoring and word order in Basque: speaker-oriented and discourse-oriented foci

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This paper discusses the presence of two positions available for *foci* in Basque, a discourse configurational language whose word order is strongly affected by information structure.

Despite a canonical SOV order (1a), Basque constituents can surface in any possible combination, with the sole constraint of having the preverbal position occupies by the focus of the sentence. The latter forms a 'focus-cluster' with the verb which tends to appear either in a V2-like (1b) or sentence-final (1c) configuration. Previous analyses consider the former an instance of left-peripheral focus (Ortiz de Urbina, 2002), and the latter its *in-situ* counterpart, resulting from scrambling or focus-evacuation movements (Elordieta, 2001; Arregi, 2003; respectively).

(1)   a. Jonek Mireni ikusi   du   *canonical word-order*
          J.erg   M.dat see.prt aux.3sg.prs
          'Jon saw Miren'
       b. [Jonek]FOC ikusi du Mireni   *V2-like focus cluster*
       c. Mireni [Jonek]FOC ikusi du   *sentence final focus cluster*
       d. *Ikusi du [Jonek]FOC Mireni   *lack of adjacency*

In this paper, I argue that when the semantic and pragmatic import of *foci* is not merely 'new information' (i.e., the answer to a wh-question, cp. É. Kiss, 1998), their position in the clause is conditioned by different anchoring requirements. Speaker-oriented *foci* are hosted in the 'low periphery of the clause' (Belletti, 2004 a.o.), at the edge of the vP phase. Discourse oriented *foci* move to [Spec, FocP] in the left periphery (Rizzi, 1997 a.o.) to check an additional [corrective] feature present in Foc°.

The analysis investigates mirative and corrective *foci,* which strictly belong to the first or to the second category, respectively. Corrective *foci* (2a) are responsible for the correction of a previously mentioned element, employing another of the alternatives activated by the context considered true by the speaker. Conversely, mirative *foci* (2b) express the (mis-)matched between an event and the expectations of the speaker. In other words, mirative *foci* must necessarily be uttered in out of the blue contexts, while corrective *foci* require an antecedent in the discourse. This proposal predicts that the two *foci* are in complementary distribution, i.e., if a corrective focus is present, so it is an antecedent in the discourse: the condition for mirative focalization cannot be met and vice-versa. More data needs to be collected to confirm this aspect of the proposal.

(2)   a. [Jon gave Miren a red shirt]
          S1 - Jonek Eiderri kamiseta gorria eman   zion
             J.erg   E.dat   shirt.abs red   give.prt aux.3sg.pst
          S2 – MIRENI eman   zion   Jonek kamiseta
             M.dat   give.prt aux.3sg.pst J.erg shirt.abs
             'it was Miren that Jon gave a shirt to'

b. Anek ez   du   bada MILIOI BAT   irabatzi loterian
  A.erg neg aux.3sg.prs cond million one.abs win.prf lottery.loc
  'Ane won a million at the lottery!

The anchoring information is mediated by a speaker-oriented projection (SP), which entails 'point of view' as proposed in Uriagereka (1995) and Wiltschko (2014). Based on previous analyses of epistemic elements such as adverbs like *surprisingly* as hosted in projections lower than CP (Cinque, 1999, 2001; Giorgi, 2016), I argue that SP merges in the higher portion of the vP periphery. The derivations are the following (3):

(3)   a. [C [FocP Mirenij [Foc° eman zioni][T Jonek tj kamiseta ti]]]]

corrective focus (2a)

        b. [TP Aneki [SP ez du bada [FocP milioi batj [Foc° irabatzik] [vP ti tj tk loterian]]]]

mirative focus (2b)

I analyze the linear order of Basque as the result of discourse-driven syntactic operations (cp. Grewendorf-a.o. 2005). A focalized item moves to the low-peripheral focus projection to check its speaker-oriented features, or to enter in the scope of an operator-like element with such features when it does not require an antecedent to be interpreted. Conversely, it moves to the CP-periphery (Rizzi, 1997) to check the [corrective] feature present in the head of the higher focus projection.

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