

## IS BASQUE AN S.O.V. LANGUAGE ?\*

«El euskara..., sin pisotear ley alguna de la naturaleza, tiene construcción contraria a la de otras lenguas.» (R. M. de Azkue, *Gramática euskara*, Bilbao 1891, p. 348)

Let us agree to call “major constituents” of a sentence, the subject S, the object O, and the verb V of that sentence. In some rare cases, linguists differ in their judgments about the applicability of these labels, but on the whole there is sufficient consensus among grammarians to warrant the use of these terms with no necessity of going into lengthy justifications each time they are applied. I do not mean to say that a thorough examination of the concepts “subject” and “object” would be useless —Fillmore’s paper *The case for case* contains a wealth of rather intriguing observations—, but only that our operational acquaintance with these concepts allows us to make use of them freely in most of our linguistic work.

Where the three major constituents are phonologically realized as independent elements in a sentence, it makes sense to investigate the linear order in which they are allowed to occur in a particular language. Doing so, we find notable differences between languages. Some languages allow one order only. Thus, English has the fixed order S.V.O. Deviation from this order is possible, but only in special cases, arising from inversion and topicalization processes taking place at a rather late point in the grammar. Japanese has the invariable order S.O.V. The same is true for the group of Dravidian languages (such as Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu and Kannada). In these languages there seem to be no syntactic processes that alterate the S.O.V. order under any circumstances.

An interesting situation obtains for German and Dutch, where the order is S.V.O. in main clauses, but S.O.V. in all other clauses. Different orders may still arise from secondary processes, just like in English. Many languages, however, do not seem to impose any severe restrictions on the order in which the major constituents can appear in a sentence.

Among generative grammarians these are known as “scrambling” languages. Some Indo-European languages are of this type: Sanskrit, Greek, Latin and Russian, among others. And so are many Non-Indo-European languages, e.g., most of the Uto-Aztecan languages, Walbiri, Dyirbal and many other languages in Australia and Polynesia. There is considerable disagreement among linguists as to what the correct way is to handle this so-called free word order theoretically. Curry, Hiz and Staal

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\* *FLV* 1-3 (1969), 319-351.

have argued that grammatical relations have nothing to do with linear order. If Deep Structure is defined as the level at which grammatical relations are stated, it stands to reason that linear order is not properly part of Deep Structure. From this point of view, then, scrambling languages are simpler than languages with fixed (surface) order, since the latter have a less general ordering principle than the former. For an elaboration of this view, see J. F. Staal: *Word Order in Sanskrit and Universal Grammar*. On the other hand, if we assume with Lakoff, McCawley and Ross that order is a property of deep structures (or of semantic representations), then free order languages are more complex than fixed order languages in that they contain an extra “scrambling” mechanism to effect the desired permutations of constituents.

The choice between the two theories should be an empirical matter. If we want to defend the view that order is relevant to Deep Structure, even in free order languages, there are at least two lines of argument that we could pursue:

### 1. Internal Arguments

Such arguments purport to show that the grammar of the scrambling language we are considering would gain in simplicity for one reason or another, if we assume some particular fixed order of constituents in its deep structures, and then derive the various surface orders from this basic order by appropriate syntactic transformations.

### 2. Typological Arguments

These are arguments of the following form:

- P.1. All known S.O.V. languages have property  $\alpha$ .
- P.2. No known language with a fixed order other than S.O.V. has property  $\alpha$ .
- P.3. Scrambling language X has property  $\alpha$ .

Therefore, X is an S.O.V. language in Deep Structure.

We should notice that the plausibility of the conclusion depends not only on the size of the class of known languages, but also on the nature of the property used in the argument:  $\alpha$  must be a reasonably natural property. To see this, let us take  $\alpha$  to be the property of being either an S.O.V. language or a scrambling language. For this  $\alpha$  then, P. 1. and P.2. hold, and any old scrambling language satisfies P.3. Yet, the thesis that any scrambling language is an S.O.V. language in Deep Structure, does not seem to gain any plausibility by this argument.

A typological argument for a particular language X becomes much stronger if instead of a single property  $\alpha$ , we can find a whole set of seemingly unrelated properties  $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \dots, \alpha_k$ , each of them satisfying P.1., P.2. and P.3., and such that P.4.: if a language Y has any of the properties  $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \dots, \alpha_k$ , then it has all of them. (Here too, the properties considered must all be “natural”.)

It is easy to see where the force of this argument derives from. The invariable coexistence of the properties  $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \dots, \alpha_k$ , as required by P.4. is a fact demanding

explanation. The hypothesis that  $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \dots, \alpha_k$  are all consequences of a Deep Structure S.O.V. order provides such an explanation. But then, language X too, which has these properties, must be an S.O.V. language in Deep Structure.

In our present state of ignorance, where reliable syntactic information is available for a mere handful of languages, typological arguments deserve only limited credit. But even if these arguments do not carry as much conviction as we would like them to, there is no need to ignore them altogether: they can serve, at the very least, as a useful guideline for further research.

The foregoing considerations have indicated what types of arguments could be used in an endeavour to solve the problem of how constituent order is related to Deep Structure. What we need most now are data from a variety of languages from which to actually construct such arguments. To the extent that we fail in this task, the thesis that order is foreign to Deep Structure will have gained force, the more so as, particularly in the case of free-order languages, the burden of proof must rest with those who claim that order does indeed play a role in Deep Structure. Let us therefore probe the testimony of Basque, and see what this language has to offer in the way of evidence pertaining to this issue.

While it is true that the value of a statistical approach to syntax is highly questionable, some statistical information can provide as good an introduction as any to a discussion of constituent order in Basque. In order to study the relative frequency of the various orders in Surface Structure, I have singled out three samples of text.

Sample I consists of folktales. During the period 1920-1936 a team of (mostly) native ethnologists under the able direction of Don José Miguel de Barandiarán gathered folktales and other ethnologic material from the rural Basque population in Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya. The material was originally made available in the form of loose leaflets, called *Eusko-Folklore*, which were sent out to subscribers as soon as they appeared. It has now been collected unchanged in four volumes under the title *El mundo en la mente popular vasca*, I, II, III, IV (Colección Auñamendi, N.º s. 12, 18, 27, 49, San Sebastián 1960-62). The material of sample I consists of the whole contents of volume III, with the exception of *Ukabilitxo* (pp. 88-93) and *Santa Jenobeba'ren bizitzza* (pp. 143-173), which are in verse and therefore less suitable for our purposes. These folktales have been chosen because they were written down just like the informants told them, with—rare fact—no normative preoccupations whatsoever. Chances are therefore that they represent a genuine narrative style, though perhaps of a somewhat archaic character.

Sample II consists of a number of short plays written by the contemporary Guipúzcoan author Nemesio Echániz, and published in *Euskal-Antzerkiak* (Kuliska Sorta 27-28, Itxaropena, Zarauz 1958: pp. 7-132).

Sample III consists of the stories *Mateo Falcone* (translated from Mérimée's French) and *Oillasko Iturri* by the same author, and included in the book *Euskal Antzerkiak* mentioned above (pp. 135-159).

Since we are interested in the order of major constituents under normal conditions, only very few sentences in the sample are relevant to our purpose. Interrogative and negative sentences may show special properties with regard to word order (as will be explained later on in this paper), and hence should be treated

separately. We have also left out instances of reduced clauses, i. e. sentences not containing a finite verb form. Furthermore, it is necessary that the major constituents S, O and V all be realized as independent words or word groups in the sentence. Since both subject and object personal pronouns regularly delete when unstressed, this condition throws out a large part of the material. Again, constituent order may be different if the subject or the object is sentential in nature. Such cases have been left out, but we have admitted the few utterances in which the subject or the object is modified by a relative clause. Direct quotations dependent on a verb of saying have not been considered as an object of that verb. Considering these as objects would lead to recognizing the order O.V.S. in English, as in: "*Do you feel any better now?*" asked the doctor. Indirect quotations are already excluded because of the general restriction against sentential complements.

The results of the count are:

<i>Sample:</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>II</i>	<i>III</i>	<i>Sum</i>
Total of sent. counted	209	183	67	459
S.O.V.	138	80	41	259
S.V.O.	48	67	21	136
O.V.S.	11	17	3	31
O.S.V.	5	13	1	19
V.S.O.	6	4	1	11
V.O.S.	1	2	0	3

Taking percentages we get:

<i>Sample:</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>II</i>	<i>III</i>	<i>Average</i>
S.O.V.	66	44	61	57
S.V.O.	23	37	31	30
O.V.S.	5	9	5	6
O.S.V.	2,5	7	1,5	4
V.S.O.	3	2	1,5	2,5
V.O.S.	0,5	1	0	0,5

Without attaching too much weight to these figures, we can make the following observations:

1. All six possible permutations actually occur in the material, although V.O.S. is very rare and is found only three times in the entire corpus.

2. Six out of seven utterances have the subject precede both the verb and the object (In sample II, it is only four out of five).

The grammarian Ignacio M. de Echaide betrays his not being a native speaker of Basque when he recommends the order O.S.V. (frequency 1:25) as the most elegant: «...desde el punto de vista de la elegancia, el orden no puede ser indiferente, y aun cuando se debe estudiar en cada caso particular el más conveniente, se puede aconsejar como regla general, el siguiente: paciente - agente - verbo, Ejs.: *Ogiya nik jaten det* = El pan yo como (yo como el pan), *Ni etortzen naiz* = yo vengo (Ignacio

M. Echaide, *Sintaxis del idioma euskaro*, San Sebastián 1912, p. 93). Cf. his confession in the prologue: «...luchando con el inconveniente de ser novicio en la materia, pues hace pocos años que aprendió el vascuence.» (p. 6).

3. Examples where the object starts the utterance are considerably more frequent (50 against 14) than those where it is the verb which comes first.

4. Sample II, which consist of dialogues, shows a more even distribution of the different orders than the other two samples. In other words, sample II shows the greatest stylistic variety. In the other two samples the order S.O.V. is more frequent than all the others taken together. In sample II, S.O.V. is only slightly more frequent than S.V.O. As samples II and III have the same author, the difference between them can be correlated with that between dialogue and narration.

5. In all the samples the order S.O.V. is predominant.

The reactions of native speakers confirm the conclusions reached above. All of the following sentences are considered fully acceptable. With *atzó* "yesterday", *txistulari batek* "a flute-player" (ergative case), *bost txerri* "five pig" (absolutive case), *il zituen* "(he) killed (them)", *Legazpi'n* "in Legazpia", we have:

1. Atzo il zituen bost txerri txistulari batek Legazpi'n. (V.O.S.)
2. Atzo bost txerri il zituen txistulari batek Legazpi'n. (O.V.S.)
3. Atzo il zituen txistulari batek bost txerri Legazpi'n. (V.S.O.)
4. Atzo txistulari batek bost txerri il zituen Legazpi'n. (S.O.V.)
5. Atzo bost txerri txistulari batek il zituen Legazpi'n. (O.S.V.)
6. Atzo txistulari batek il zituen bost txerri Legazpi'n. (S.V.O.)

When asked which one of these sentences they like best, native Guipuzcoan informants show a strong preference for one of the six. However, their judgments differ as to which one. Most speakers prefer 4 (S.O.V.), but 2 (O.V.S.) and 6 (S.V.O.) also find their supporters.

Notice that in sentences 1-6 we have used indefinite noun phrases rather than definite ones: "Yesterday a flute-player killed five pigs in Legazpia". This was done on purpose. Right Dislocation and Left Dislocation (for these notions see Haj Ross, *Constraints on Variables in Syntax*) are processes found in many languages. E.g., in English, we have:

This man, I have never seen him before.

He never did much good anyway, that brother of yours.

In English, the pronouns remain behind, but in Basque pronouns are usually deleted. When we, therefore, find a noun phrase in the initial or in the final position of a sentence, we will not always know in Basque whether it came to be there by Dislocation or not. Thus, in investigating constituent order in Basque, it is advisable to use indefinite noun phrases, which cannot be dislocated, or else to make sure that the sentence boundaries are duly boarded off with adverbs.

Cf. in English:

That paper, I lent it to Bill yesterday.

Yesterday I lent that paper to Bill.

But not: \*Yesterday, this paper, I lent it to Bill.

So far, we have seen that all six constituent orders are possible, and that the S.O.V. order is statistically predominant and preferred by most, though not all, speakers of Guipuzcoan Basque. Assuming now the most frequent order to be the unmarked one, and the unmarked order to be that order that preserves best the order in Deep Structure, we may take this predominance as an argument for an S.O.V. order in Deep Structure. However, the existence of obligatory syntactic transformations makes any such argument extremely weak. It is quite conceivable that the preference for the S.O.V. order is merely a matter of Surface Structure and has nothing to do with Deep Structure at all. Therefore, we will now set out to find better evidence for an underlying S.O.V. order.

### *Greenberg's Universals and Basque*

In appendix III of his paper "Some Universals of Grammar with Particular Reference to the Order of Meaningful Elements", J. H. Greenberg presents a list of linguistic universals. Three of the 45 universals are concerned with languages with "dominant" S.O.V. order, and Basque obeys all three. This is not too surprising, really, since Basque was included in the sample of thirty languages Greenberg used to arrive at his generalizations. Greenberg accordingly classifies it as "type III", that is, a language with the "dominant order" S.O.V. The relevant universals are:

4. With overwhelmingly greater than chance frequency, languages with normal S.O.V. order are postpositional.

12. If a language has dominant order V.S.O. in declarative sentences, it always puts interrogative words or phrases first in interrogative word questions; if it has dominant order S.O.V. in declarative sentences, there is never such an invariant rule.

16. In languages with dominant order V.S.O., an inflected auxiliary always precedes the main verb. In languages with dominant order S.O.V., an inflected auxiliary always follows the main verb.

Ad. 4. There are no prepositions in Basque; syntactic relations are signalled by postpositions. This is true for all Basque dialects.

Ad. 12. There is no obligation in Basque to put Wh-words at the front of the sentence. No doubt under the influence of the neighbouring Romance languages, such words are, in fact, frequently preposed. Yet, all of the following are perfectly natural Basque sentences, with the interrogative pronouns *nor* "who", *zer* "what", *nun* "where", *noiz* "when", *nola* "how":

Euria egingo zuenik nor*k* uste izan bear zuen?  
("Who would have thought that it was going to rain?")

Mutil orrek zer egin bear digu?  
("What will that boy do to us?")

Botilla auker zertan dauzkazu emen?  
("What do you keep these bottles here for?")

Arkitzeko garairik onena noiz izango da?  
("When will be the best time to find him?")

Atzo lapur ori nun ikusi zenduen?  
 ("Where did you see that thief yesterday?")

Berri ori orren ixillik nola euki dute?  
 ("How have they kept this news so secret?")

According to Haj Ross's theory of universal constraints on movement transformations, the absence of a Wh-preposing rule can also be inferred from the fact that it is possible to question a constituent inside a conjoined noun phrase, as well as one inside a relative clause:

Atzo aita ta nor joan ziran Donostira?  
 ("Yesterday father and who went to San Sebastian?")

Berrogei ta zenbat urte dituzu?  
 ("You are forty and how many years old?")

Zure aitak txapela ta zer geiago galdu zituen Bayona'n?  
 ("Your father lost his beret and what else in Bayonne?")

In these sentences, it is not possible to prepose the questioned constituent. We do not have, e.g.:

\*Zer geiago zure aitak txapela ta galdu zituen Bayona'n?

\*Zer geiago galdu zituen zure aitak txapela ta Bayona'n?

Out of a co-ordinate structure, it is only possible to question the last conjunct, not the others:

\*Atzo nor ta aita joan ziran Donostira?  
 ("\*Yesterday who and father went to San Sebastian?")

\*Atzo aita ta nor ta aitona joan ziran Donostira?  
 ("\*Yesterday father and who and grandfather went to San Sebastian?")

An explanation for this may be found in a Surface Structure Constraint having to do with *focus*, which will be discussed later on.

The following examples show questioning inside relative clauses:

Norekin zijoa neskata ikusi zenduen?  
 ("You saw the girl who went with whom?")

Noren adiskide dan neskata ikusi dezu?  
 ("You have seen the girl who is whose friend?")

Nola jantzita zegoen apaiza ikusi dezu?  
 ("You have seen a priest who was dressed how?")

Norekin ezkondua zan emakumea maite zuen mutilla etorri da?  
 ("The boy has come who loved the woman who was married to whom?")

Nor il zuen gaizkileari lagundu zion apaiza arrapatu dute?  
 ("They have caught the priest who helped the gangster who killed whom?")

Sentences like the above are especially appropriate as echo questions. But, unlike their English translations, the Basque sentences are not restricted to that function.

Ad. 16. In Guipuzcoan Basque the auxiliary always follows the main verb, with the important exception of negative and emphatically positive sentences. We have e.g.:

	joan ziñaten	: you (plural)	went.
	joango ziñateke	: you (plural)	would go.
Never:	*ziñaten joan, *ziñateke joango.		
But:	Etziñaten joan	: you (plural)	did not go. (Negation <i>ez</i> .)
	Etziñateke joango	: you (plural)	would not go.
And not:	*joan etziñaten, *joango etziñateke.		

The emphatic affirmative particle *ba* has the same property as the negative *ez*. *Ba da joan*: He has gone. Not: \**Joan ba da*.

This affirmative *ba* is different from the *ba* of conditionals; the conditional prefix *ba* does not influence word-order:

Joan bada, ez dute arkituko ("If he has gone, they won't find him.")

When the auxiliary follows the main verb, only a small number of particles can be intercalated between the two:

Joan omen ziñan	: They say that you went. (You reportedly went.)
Joan edo da	: He must have gone. (It is likely.)
Joan al da?	: Has he gone?
Joan ote da?	: Has he perhaps gone?
Joan baita (from <i>bait</i> + <i>da</i> )	: He has indeed gone. ("For he has gone".)

But whenever the auxiliary precedes the main verb, it can be separated from it by any amount of intervening material.

Lk. 15.4 "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it." This has been translated into Guipúzcoan (*Lau ebanjelioak, Arantzazu'ko prailleek egiña*) as "Zuetako iñork eun ardi badiu, eta oietako bat galdu, nor *etziñateke* larogeita emeretziak eremuan utzita galdutakoaren billa, arkitu bitartean, *joango*?"

That is, between the negative auxiliary *etziñateke* and the main verb *joango*, we find inserted: *larogeita emeretziak eremuan utzita galdutakoaren billa, arkitu bitartean*, "having left the ninety-nine in the wilderness looking for the lost one until he finds it".<sup>a)</sup>

There is some reason to suppose that in deep structures the auxiliary always follows the main verb, even in negative sentences. We have:

joan da	: he has gone.
joan baita	: for he has gone.
joan dala ikusita	: seeing that he has gone.
ez da joan	: he hasn't gone.
ezpaita joan	: for he has not gone.
etzala joan ikusita	: seeing that he has not gone.

<sup>a)</sup> This example is by no means excessive. A much longer insert between a negated auxiliary and the corresponding participle is found in *MEIG VI*, p. 58, lines 14 ff.



But we also find: *joan ez tala ikusita*: seeing that he has not gone. E.g. Yon Etxaide (*Joanak joan*): ... bere semeak ezer erantzuten etziola ikusita,... "...seeing that his son did not answer him anything,..." (p. 165).

The following sentence occurs in López Mendizabal's *Manual de conversación* and is found acceptable by native speakers:

Ara non dezuten gaur *etorriko etzala* ziozuten gizona!

("There you have the man whom you said that would not come today!")

Generally, when the complementizer suffix *-la* has been added to a negative auxiliary, it may, as a matter of free variation, either precede or follow the main verb. Thus, the following two sentences (with the main verb *irabazi* "to earn") are equally acceptable to native speakers:

Ez duela dirurik irabaziko argi dago.

Dirurik irabaziko ez duela argi dago.

("It is clear (*argi dago*) that he won't earn (*irabaziko ez duela*) any money (*dirurik*)." )

The auxiliary must follow the main verb, even in negative sentences, in the following cases:

1. In finality clauses: *joan ez dedin*, "lest he go" and not: *\*ez dedin joan*.

2. In conditionals: *joan ez bada* : if he has not gone.

*iltzen ez bada ere* : even if he does not die.

Not: *\*ez bada joan*, *\*ez bada iltzen ere*.<sup>aa)</sup>

3. When the auxiliary has a suffix other than *-la* added to it, contemporary Guipúzcoan usage shows considerable variety. Quite a few speakers preserve what seems to be the original system: an auxiliary with a suffix other than *-la* (e.g. *-lako* "because", *-nean* "when", *-neko* "as soon as") follows the main verb, in positive and negative sentences alike. Thus we have:

Aspalditik ez da etorri.

("He has not come for a long time.")

But: Aspalditik etorri ez dalako, ez dakigu bere berri.

("As he has not come for a long time, we don't know how he is doing.")

Yet, a lot of Guipúzcoan speakers also allow such auxiliary forms before the main verb. They accept also: *Aspalditik ez dalako etorri*, *ez dakigu bere berri*.

However, the first sentence, with its auxiliary postposed, is preferred by virtually all speakers. For those speakers who accept such forms at all, the extent to which preposed auxiliaries are acceptable in negative sentences may depend on the

<sup>aa)</sup> This claim holds true for Biscayan Basque only. In all other dialects a negative auxiliary may precede the main verb also in conditional clauses. Some examples are:

Gaxoa ez bada sendatzen, medikuak du errua. (Labayen, *TOE I*, 375)

If the patient does not recover, it is the doctor's fault.

Berehala ez baduzue alde egiten, ... (Garate, *Izurri*, 74)

If you do not leave at once, ...

Ez baduzu jaten, ez zara haundituko. (Satrustegi, *Ekaitza*, 192)

If you do not eat, you will not grow up.

particular suffix used. As Azkue already noticed (*Gramática éuskara*, § 772), there are speakers who allow auxiliaries with the suffix *-lako* ("because") to occur before the main verb in negative sentences, but not with the suffix *-nean* ("when").

Here we will adopt the system according to which an auxiliary with a suffix other than *-la* obligatorily follows the main verb. This is the system of the older texts in all dialects (excluding, of course, poetry and songs), it is still the system in force for many speakers of Guipúzcoan, and it is the system recommended by contemporary grammarians (See, e.g., Umandi, *Gramática vasca*, lesson 29).

The question now is how to account for this system. The facts are handled quite naturally if we assume that the auxiliary always follows the main verb (i. e., the participle) in Deep Structure, and that there is an *Aux-Movement* transformation, roughly to be described as follows:

X	—	Y	—	Participle	—	{ Neg. }	(Particle)	Aux	→
1		2		3		Emp	4		1 4 2 3

Particles are those mentioned before: *bait, al, omen, ote, edo*.

Thus we have: *Ez det ikusi, expaita etorri* ("I have not seen him, for he has not come") by applying Aux-Movement to both clauses. But we have only: *Etorri ez dalako ez det ikusi* ("I have not seen him, because he has not come") and not: *\*Ez dalako etorri ez det ikusi*, since any node that dominates Neg (Particle) Aux will also dominate *lako*, and hence the Structural Description of Aux-Movement is not satisfied.

The semantic difference and similarity between Basque *bait-* and *-lako* has a close parallel in English and German: English *for* vs *because*, German *denn* vs *weil*. And it is interesting to note that the latter words in German show a completely different syntactic behaviour, in very much the same way as *bait-* and *-lako* do in Basque. We know that, in German, a clause introduced by *weil* has the constituent order of subordinate clauses, whereas a clause introduced by *denn* always has the constituent order of a main clause. E.g.:

*Weil er schon sehr gut weiss was er tut, können Sie ihn ruhig gehen lassen.* ("Because he knows quite well what he is doing, you can safely let him go.")

Not: *\*Weil er weiss schon sehr gut was er tut, können Sie ihn ruhig gehen lassen.*

But: *Sie können ihn ruhig gehen lassen, denn er weiss schon sehr gut was er tut.* ("You can safely let him go, for he knows quite well what he is doing.")

Not: *\*Sie können ihn ruhig gehen lassen, denn er schon sehr gut weiss was er tut.*

As we have seen, in Basque the particle *bait-* does not block Aux-Movement, but the suffix *-lako* does. Should one take the analogy between the German facts and the Basque facts seriously, then it would mean that *weil* blocks Inversion and *denn* does not. That would imply that the underlying order in German is S.O.V., and that the order in main clauses is brought about by an Inversion transformation.

Unlike *-lako* the suffix *-la* does not block Aux-Movement. One way of accounting for this is to say that *-la* is stuck in by a late postcyclic rule. Another possibility is that *-la* is Chomsky-adjoined to the Aux, and hence does not destroy the Structural Description of Aux-Movement. Notice, however, that for this suffix Aux-Movement is optional, not obligatory, as it is when there is no suffix.

Finally, finality clauses do not undergo Aux-Movement for the same reason as *-lako* clauses don't: *joan dedin* ("in order for him to go", "that he may go") has a now archaic variant *joan dedintzat*, with the same suffix *-tzat* that expresses destination in noun phrases: *nere aitarentzat* "for my father". Moreover, as L. Michelena has reminded me, in the Suletin dialect the rule that deletes *-tzat* also works for noun phrases: *ene aitaren*, "for my father". Therefore, *joan ez dedin* being derived from *joan ez dedintzat*, it fails the Structural Description of Aux-Movement in the same way that *joan ez dalako* does, provided, of course, the rule of *-tzat*-Deletion follows Aux-Movement.

We have noted that whenever the auxiliary follows the participle, the two form a close syntactic unit, since only a handful of particles can be inserted between them. It is therefore natural to assume that a single node, say V (or perhaps VP) dominates both the participle and the auxiliary. From our use of the variable Y in the formulation of Aux-Movement, it follows that after its application, Aux (incorporating Neg and an optional particle) will be directly dominated by S. A preposed auxiliary, therefore, will behave like a sentence constituent, and will thus have more freedom than when still dominated by V.

This system governing the relative order of auxiliary and main verb, as just described, will be referred to as "the standard system". This standard system is adhered to quite closely in contemporary Guipúzcoan and Bizcayan texts. We also find it, with a few occasional deviations, in the older texts of all dialects. Leizarraga's New Testament Version (1571) and Axular's *Gero* observe it very faithfully. Larramendi (1690-1766), the author of the first published Basque grammar (*El imposible vencido. Arte de la lengua bascongada*, Salamanca 1729) also follows the standard system, which he partially describes in Part II, Chapter IV, § 2 of his grammar.<sup>b)</sup> It is a curious fact that the prolific writer Cardaberaz (1703-1770) does not follow the standard system at all, even though he was a contemporary and almost fellow-villager of Larramendi. Cardaberaz was born in Hernani, only 6 kms. to the north of Andoain, where Larramendi was born. Cardaberaz has the auxiliary consistently following the main verb, even when it has the negative prefix *ez*. In his book *Euskeraren berri onak* (1761), there is only one example of a preposed auxiliary:

... "guk gure Jaungoiko guzien Aita maiteagatik ta animen salbazioagatik, zer ez degu egin bear?" (... what don't we have to do for the love of our God, father of all, and the salvation of souls?).

But there are 15 examples where the auxiliary follows the main verb in a negative sentence against the standard system. E.g. in Section IV of Chapter IX: ... *ta gauz onik egingo ez dute* ("... and they won't do anything good."). In accordance with the standard system it should have been: ... *ta ez dute gauz onik egingo*, or: *ez dute egingo gauz onik*, or again: ... *ta gauz onik ez dute egingo*.

Thus, it seems that although Cardaberaz knows the rule of Aux-Movement, he prefers not to apply it.

<sup>b)</sup> Even in this work, however, there are instances of the non-standard word order: *guizonic agueri ezta* (p. 9).

L. Michelena has informed me that a few other Guipúzcoan writers of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, such as J. A. Ubillos (1707-1780) and F. I. Lardizabal (1806-1855) show the same peculiarity as Cardaberaz does. E.g., in Lardizabal's *Testamentu berriko kondaira edo historia* (Tolosa, 1855), we read sentences like: ... eta antxume bat egundaño eman ez didazu... (Chapter V, § 13) ("... and you have never given me even a kid..."). Compare *Lan ebanjelioak*, Luc. 15-29: eta antxume bat ere ez didazu inoiz eman...

Also: ...bañan inor aurreratu etzitzayon galdetzera ¿Zu nor zera? (Chapter IX, § 8) ("... but nobody approached him to ask 'Who are you?'" ) ... eta Tomas ageri etzan (Ibid.) ("... and Thomas did not appear.") However, in Lardizabal such deviations are much less frequent than in Cardaberaz: in a great majority of instances the rule of Aux-Movement is applied in accordance with the standard system.

In even more recent times, the grammarian López-Mendizabal professes a preference for leaving the auxiliary behind in negative sentences; «Si la oración es negativa pueden invertirse» (i.e. the auxiliary and the participle) poniendo el *ez* por delante: *ez da etorri*, pero jamás *da ez etorri*. En general, en estas oraciones se coloca primero el nombre verbal, después la negación y por último la flexión: *etorri ez da*. (*Manual de conversación*, 4.ed., p. 354. First published, 1908).

Yet, López-Mendizabal does not put his own recommendation into practice. In his long section *Diálogos* (pp. 166-221) there are only four examples of negative auxiliaries left behind, but there are an overwhelming number of preposed ones. Here are the exceptional instances:

Ogei urte oraindik izango ez da au egiten asi zirala. (p. 183).

"It is not yet twenty years ago that they started to build this."

Izen ori inork ezagutzen ez du. (p. 214). "Nobody knows that name."

Ta onela emango ez diote bada? (p. 216).

"And so they won't give it to him, then?"

Nere lanak uzten ez didate. (p. 218). "My work does not let me (do it)."

Cf. still, on p. 157: Zergatik erantzuten ez dezu? "Why don't you answer?"

All Guipúzcoan informants I have asked shudder from such sentences and correct them instantly according to the standard system. Moreover, apart from the few counter-examples above, López-Mendizabal's own practice also agrees with it. Now, as we have seen, Cardaberaz does not follow the standard system. But the way he deviates from it provides no argument against our hypothesis that in the underlying structure the auxiliary always follows the main verb. In fact, he brings to the surface those forms which we have postulated as underlying structures, and thus provides strong evidence for the correctness of our hypothesis.

This is not so, however, for the state of affairs in present-day Labourdin, Low-Navarrese and Souletin. Here older texts have the standard system, and the grammarian Pierre Laffite still describes it as valid in his *Grammaire basque (Navarro-labourdin littéraire)*, first ed. 1944, Bayonne. (Cf. his sections 109-119).

Yet, in contemporary writings in those dialects, the auxiliary quite often precedes the main verb, in positive as well as in negative sentences. Laffite remarks: "Excep-

tionnellement, un mot peut être mis en relief par l'inversion du bloc verbal: *Aitak du aurdiki*: C'est le père qui l'a jeté. *Aitak untzia du aurdiki*: C'est le vase que le père a jeté. Ici le relief est très accusé, même violent; et pour le traduire, le français *c'est que* est obligatoire." (op. cit. § 117.5).

Lafitte's remark probably fits an older usage; in many modern texts sentences with inversion and sentences without it occur in almost even proportion, and no particular effect of emphasis or contrast is perceptible in most of the sentences which have a positive auxiliary preceding the main verb. For example, in the book *Mari Gorri* by M.J. Minaberry, we find numerous instances of inversion without any semantic value:

Bainan, orai, zahartzen ari zela *zuen senditzen*. (p. 6)  
But, now, he felt that he was growing old.

Ondo hetako laborariak *ziren* artetan haraino *joaten*. (p. 7)  
The farmers of that area went there from time to time.

The following example, also from page 7, is especially noteworthy; first because it shows inversion and the lack of it under exactly the same conditions, and, second, because inversion takes place despite the presence of the suffix *-lakotz* (Guipuzcoan *-lako*), that, in the standard system does not even allow inversion (i.e. Aux-Movement) in negative sentences.

Ekartzen zituzten hornidura zombait, milesker erraiteko han bizi ziren serorer, heien othoitzen medioz uzta ona *egin zutelakotz*, edo ondo hetako izpiritu gachtoak *zirelakotz ihes joan*.

They brought some provisions, to thank (lit. to say thousand-thanks) the sisters who lived there, because by virtue of their prayers, they had made a good harvest, or the evil spirits of that area had fled away.

Compare: uzta ona egin zutelakotz ("because they had made a good harvest") and: izpiritu gachtoak zirelakotz ihes joan ("because the evil spirits had fled away.").

If such texts really reflect the spoken language—which P. Laffite denies—then there is no evidence here as to what the position of the auxiliary is in Deep Structure. But, as we have seen, the testimony of older writers indicate that the modern system—or lack of system—is an innovation. For Guipúzcoan and Bizcayan, however, the standard system is still in full force.

Summarizing, Guipúzcoan and Bizcayan obey all three generalizations of Greenberg's about S.O.V. languages (they are postpositional, there is no obligatory Wh-preposing, the auxiliary follows the main verb). This fact can be taken as a typological argument of the strong form: we have three seemingly unrelated properties that always go together and which appear to be characteristic of S.O.V. languages.

### Looking for internal arguments

Can we find any internal arguments for Basque being an S.O.V. language? A natural place to hunt for one is the structure of the relative clause.

All Basque dialects show relative clauses of the following form:

Aitak irakurri nai du *amak erre duen* liburua.

Father wants to read the book that mother has burned.

Cf. Aitak irakurri nai du liburua : Father wants to read the book.

Amak erre du liburua : Mother has burned the book.

Aitak ezagutzen du *auzia irabazi duen* baserritarra.

Father knows the peasant who has won the case.

Cf. Aitak ezagutzen du baserritarra : Father knows the peasant.

Baserritarrak auzia irabazi du : The peasant has won the case.

Aitak il nai du *mutillak ezurra eman dion* txakurra.

Father wants to kill the dog that the boy has given the bone to.

Cf. Aitak il nai du txakurra : Father wants to kill the dog.

Mutillak txakurrari ezurra eman dio : The boy has given the bone to the dog.

*Lendabizikoz ikusi zindudan* baratzera joan nai det.

I want to go to the garden where I saw you for the first time.

Cf. Baratzera joan nai det : I want to go to the garden.

Lendabizikoz ikusi zindudan baratzean : I saw you for the first time in the garden.

*Jaio geranak* ilko gera.: We who are born will die.

Cf. Jaio gera : We are born.

Ilko gera : We will die.

The examples show that a sentence with a finite verb can be used as a pre-nominal modifier, provided it is linked to the head noun by the relativizer *-n*.

Henri Gavel (*Grammaire basque*, p. 8-9) considers relative clauses as really being genitive constructions; i. e., he considers the relation between a relative clause and its head noun as identical to that between a genitive and the noun that it modifies. Semantically, this view seems quite plausible.

We have:

gizonak irakurri duen liburua (the book that the man has read), cf.

gizonak liburua irakurri du (the man has read the book),

just like we have: gizonaren liburua (the man's book).

Syntactically, the constructions are similar in that in both cases the modifier obligatorily precedes the head, is linked to it by a postposition and does not admit anything intercalated between the two parts of the construction. Thus: (with *gaur* 'today').

Gaur erre det gizonaren liburua. (Today I have burned the man's book.)

Also: Erre det gaur gizonaren liburua. Erre det gizonaren liburua gaur.

But not: \*Erre det gizonaren gaur liburua.

Likewise: Gaur erre det gizonak irakurri duen liburua.

(Today I have burned the book that the man has read.)

Erre det gaur gizonak irakurri duen liburua.

Erre det gizonak irakurri duen liburua gaur.

But: \*Erre det gizonak irakurri duen gaur liburua.

In several well-known languages (e.g. Chinese and Japanese) the same formative that functions as a genitive marker also accompanies relative clauses. In Basque, however, all that can be said is that the relative marker is very similar to the genitive marker. Although various authors have identified them (e.g. I. Omachevarria, *Euskera*, p. 11: «La *n* de ‘zuek jaten dezute-N ogia’ es la misma que la de ‘gure amare-N ogia’; por la que puede traducirse: el pan DE vosotros comeis.»), doing so creates serious phonological difficulties. To see that this is so, let us try to determine the underlying representation of the genitive suffix.

With the noun *biotz* (heart), *lan* (work), *mendi* (mountain), *ama* (mother) we have:

	Indetermined	Determined	Determined Plural
	I	II	III
Nominative	biotz	biotza	biotzak
Genitive	biotzen	biotzaren	biotzen
Nominative	lan	lana	lanak
Genitive	lanen	lanaren	lanen
Nominative	mendi	mendia	mendiak
Genitive	mendiren	mendiaren	mendien
Nominative	ama	ama	amak
Genitive	amaren	amaren	amen

We have not indicated here the *y*-sound, which some dialects insert between *i* and a low vowel, giving *mendiya* and *mendiyen* instead of *mendia* and *mendien*.

Faced with these forms, bascologists have talked about a euphonic *r*. Let us, accordingly, define “euphonic” as meaning “inserted by a phonological rule at a morpheme boundary”.

Van Eys asserts that the *r* is euphonic in the first column, but that in column II *r* is not euphonic, but part of the underlying form of the article, which is really *ar* and not just *a*. To support this, he cites the ergative form of the demonstrative *arek*, generally considered as the origin of the definite article. The argument, however, is circular. The form *arek* consists of a stem followed by the ergative suffix, and the status of the *r* is no more clear here than in column II. The nominative form of the demonstrative is *a* in Bizcayan, without *r*, and, suppletively, *ura* in Guipúzcoan (Cf. W. J. Van Eys, *Grammaire comparée des dialectes basques*, Paris 1879).

A. Campión criticizes Van Eys for treating the *r* differently in column I and column II, and claims that *r* is euphonic in both cases: «La aglutinación del sufijo EN al nombre definido por el artículo o al tema nominal terminado en vocal, da origen a un choque de vocales que se evita por la intercalación de *r* eufónica.» (Arturo Campión, *Gramática de los cuatro dialectos literarios de la lengua euskara*, Tolosa, 1884, p. 200).

Arotçarena (*Grammaire basque*, Bayonne 1951, § 22.3) also takes Campión’s view that *r* is euphonic in all cases.

Henri Gavel, like Schuchardt, sides with Van Eys: (About *-ar*): “L’origine de cet élément n’est pas douteuse: il ne faut y voir, suivant une hypothèse de Van Eys, que

le radical de l'un des démonstratifs euskariens" (Henri Gavel, *Grammaire basque*, Bayonne 1929, page 51). Unlike Van Eys, however, he explains the *r* in column I not as merely euphonic, but as created by analogy on column II.

Luis Michelena (*FHV*, p. 336, note 17) provides a case where analogy is clearly responsible for an intervocalic *r*. In Guipúzcoan, the word *eun* (hundred) is added to numerals ending on a vowel by means of an intervening *r*: *iru* (three), *lau* (four), *sei* (six), *zazpi* (seven), *zortzi* (eight), *bederatzi* (nine), give *irureun*, *laureun*, *seireun*, *zazpireun*, *zortzireun*, *bederatziireun*. From the evidence of other dialects we know that *iru* and *lau*, but not the others, used to end in *-r*. Thus, *irureun* and *laureun* have kept their original *r*, while the other forms have acquired it by analogy.

But these two are the only cases of a euphonic *-r*. After a high vowel, the normal euphonic segment, if there is one, is a glide that agrees in gravity with the preceding vowel (cf. *Mendiyaen*, *buruben*, where *b* spells *w*). Therefore it is not possible to have a general rule that inserts *-r* between vowels at a morpheme boundary. We then have the choice between making the *r* part of the underlying form of the first or of the second morpheme. Making it part of the first morpheme would entail that all nouns ending in a vowel would really end in *-r* (See Column I). But the definite form of *mendi* is not *\*mendira* but *mendi(y)a*. Moreover, in modern Guipúzcoan, a final *-r* would be tensed rather than dropped: *nor* (who), *nori* (to whom).

The only remaining solution is, therefore, to consider *r* as part of the second morpheme: the underlying form of *eun* is *reun*; with (weak) *r* being dropped by a general rule when it is word-initial or follows a consonant, thus accounting for the fact that no word in Basque starts with *r*. By the same token, the underlying form of the genitive suffix is *-ren*. The derivation of columns I and II is then straightforward, using the rule that drops *r* after all consonants, including even *r* itself (*nor+ren* gives *noren*, not *noren*). Initial clusters of a stop consonant + *r*, occurring in numerous Romance loanwords, can be considered as involving *r̄*, not *r*.

To derive the genitive forms of column III, we start from *biotz-a-g-ren*, (stem +art.+plur.+gen.) giving us first *biotzagen*. Now how do we get rid of the intervocalic *g*?

In the system of verb forms we have: *dek*: "you (masc) have it"; *den*: "you (fem) have it"; but: *diat* "I have it for you (masc) and *diñat*: "I have it for you (fem), and many similar cases involving second person masculine and feminine forms. That is, we have an independently motivated rule that deletes intervocalic *g*. This rule is probably restricted to affixes, since in stems there are numerous instances of intervocalic *g*. Applying this rule to *biotzagen* we get *biotzaen*, which simplifies to *biotzen* by an equally independently motivated rule. Note the form *amen*, where even the *a* belonging to the stem has disappeared (underlying form *ama-a-g-ren*).

The final devoicing rule, which we need to derive the nominative plural forms, is also independently motivated: notice e.g. the alternations: *dit* "he has it for me" and *didazu* "you have it for me" or *det* "I have it" and *dedalako* "because I have it" with the suffix *-lako*.

Thus we have argued that the facts are best handled if we assume that the underlying form of the genitive suffix is *-ren*. If the Van Eys-Gavel theory is correct, the older stage of the suffix was *-en*, and a form like *biotz-ar-en* came to be re-analysed as *biotz-a-ren*, thus causing *\*mendien* to change to *mendiren*.



Let us now try to determine the underlying form of the relativizer. We have:

Gizonak artoa ekarri du ("the man has brought the corn") and:  
 Artoa ekarri duen gizona ("the man who has brought the corn").  
 Gizona etorri zan ("the man came").  
 Etorri zan gizona ("the man who came").

The only natural way of accounting for the fact that the relativizer shows up as zero if and only if the verb form to which it is added ends in *-n*, is to say that the underlying form of the relativizer is *-n*.

Then the *e* of *duen* must be part of the stem rather than of the suffix, so that we need a vowel truncation rule to get the simple form *du*. This way, we have an explanation for the fact that the same vowel shows up with all three suffixes that can be added directly to finite verb forms (*-la*, *-n*, *-ño*). Thus in Northern Guipúzcoa (Beterri) we have: from *du*: *duela duena* and *dueño* (obs.) and in Southern Guipúzcoa (Goierri) from *du*: *duala, duana* and *duaño* (obs). In Guipúzcoa *da* gives *dala*, but in all areas East of Guipúzcoa we have the alternation: *da*, *dela*, *dena*, *deño*. Again the same vowel for all three suffixes. The alternation itself now becomes very easy to handle: *da* has as its underlying form *dae*, with the *e* dropping by vowel truncation; but with a suffix added the vowel truncation rule cannot apply and we get *den*, *dela*, *deño* by the rule reducing *ae* to *e* mentioned before. For Guipuzcoan and Bizcayan the underlying form is simply *daa*. (Michelena indeed derives *den* from *daen* historically, but analyses the latter —wrongly, I think— as *da* + *en* rather than as *dae* + *n*; cf. *FHV*, p. 117). To get *dezu* "you have it" and its relative form *dezun*, we can set up an underlying form *dezun*, or perhaps more simply, restrict the application of the vowel truncation rule to low vowels, as it seems to be needed for *a* and *e* only.

Notice furthermore the alternation *dit* "he has it for me" and *didazu* "you have it for me", which we can now analyse as *d* + *i* + *da* +  $\emptyset$  and *d* + *i* + *da* + *zu*. From these forms we will get the correct outputs if we assume that Vowel Truncation precedes Final Devoicing.

In conclusion, the underlying form of the relativizer is *-n* and that of the genitive suffix is *-ren*. Note that the difference does not depend on our decision to consider *r* part of the genitive suffix; even if we take its older form *-en*, we still cannot identify it with the relativizer *-n*.

After this excursion into Basque phonology, let us return to the syntax of relative clauses. A distinction can be made between two kinds of relative clauses: proper relative clauses and pseudo-relative clauses. In the former, the deep structure of the relative clause contains a nominal element coreferential to the head noun. (We can leave aside here the question as to whether this element is a full noun, a pronoun or something like an index). This element obligatorily disappears in the course of the derivation.

Pseudo-relative clauses are relative clauses whose deep structure does not contain an element coreferential to the head noun. They can be formed only on a rather small class of nouns, a class of nouns which have interesting verb-like properties. Consider e.g. the noun *bildur* "fear" as opposed to a noun like *mai* "table". We have:

*maia naiḡ* "I am (the)table" *mai bat naiḡ* "I am one table".

But: *\*bildurra naiḡ* *\*bildur bat naiḡ*,  
*bildur naiḡ*: "I am afraid". But *\*mai naiḡ*.

- 1a. Norbaitek bizia kenduko ote didan bildur naiḡ.
- 1b. I am afraid that someone will take my life.
- 2a. Norbaitek bizia kenduko ote didan bildurрак erotuko nau.
- 2b. The fear that someone will take my life will drive me crazy.

In the English sentence 2b. *that* is a complementizer like the *that* in 1b., as shown by the fact that it cannot be omitted nor substituted for by *which*, as relative pronouns can. In Basque, the construction of 1a. is related to that of 2a.; in both cases we find the relativizer *-n* and not the complementizer *-la*. Furthermore, as in relative clauses, the negative auxiliary does not get preposed: a variant form of 1a., with an expletive negative is: *Bildur naiḡ norbaitek bizia kenduko ez ote didan*.

It thus seems that some types of sentential complements in English are expressed in Basque by relative clauses, of the type we have called pseudorelative clauses. It might therefore be inaccurate to say that in Basque the noun *bildur* is derived from a verb, as has been claimed for the English noun *fear*. Cf. also the following genitive construction:

Ba-du nere biotzak zure otzaren bildurra.

"My heart is afraid of your coldness" (Lit. My heart has the fear of your coldness).

Apart from the special character of the head noun, pseudo-relative clauses can be distinguished from proper relative clauses by the optional presence in the former, but not in the latter, of the modal particle *ote* ("perhaps, by any chance"). We find it in all kinds of questions (yes-no, Wh, direct and indirect), in some pseudo-relatives (depending on the head noun), but not in proper relatives.

Let us now return to the order of constituents. After consulting numerous informants, I have arrived at this conclusion: In relative clauses, both the orders S.O.V. and O.S.V. are possible, and the choice between them in each particular situation is governed by the same principles (involving *focus*, see next section) that apply to independent clauses.

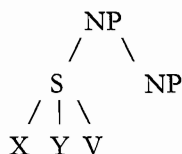
- 3a. Oso ederra zan Patxi'k Miren lenengoz ikusi zuen baratza.
- b. Oso ederra zan Miren Patxi'k lenengoz ikusi zuen baratza.  
 ("The garden in which Patxi saw Miren for the first time was very beautiful.")
- 4a. Lapurra da amak dirua eman dion gizon ori.
- b. Lapurra da dirua amak eman dion gizon ori.  
 ("That man, to whom mother has given the money, is a thief.")
- 5a. Besteren batek emaztea ostuko ote zion bildurrez bizi zan.
- b. Emaztea besteren batek ostuko ote zion bildurrez bizi zan.  
 ("He lived in the fear that somebody else would steal his wife from him.")

In 3a,b we have a restrictive relative clause on the noun *baratz* "garden". In 4a,b a non-restrictive relative clause has been added to the noun phrase *gizon ori* "that man". In 5a,b we have a pseudo-relative clause on the noun *bildur* "fear". In all these cases the *a*-sentences and the *b*-sentences are considered fully acceptable by my informants.

If the facts about relative clauses do not provide evidence for choosing between S.O.V. and O.S.V., do they at least support the contention that Basque is a verb-final language? Let us look into this carefully.

We have seen that in relative clauses the verb always comes last. It is the element to which the relativizer is attached. Relative clause formation, therefore, is easier to state if we assume that the verb is always final in deep structures. Otherwise, we need a special rule of verb-postposing, to apply to a verb inside a relative clause, before or after the relativizer has been added to it.

This argument, which is already quite weak, completely evaporates in view of the following considerations: It is clearly not enough that the verb is final in deep structures, we have still got to make sure that it stays there. Inside the S of the structure



all sorts of movement transformations can apply. In accordance with Haj Ross's Complex Noun Phrase Constraint nothing can move out of this S, but transformations can change the relative order of its constituents. In particular, we must ensure that no adverb gets placed after the verb of the relative clause (in main clauses adverbs often end sentences in Basque), and also that the V-node itself does not move, e.g. by Aux-Movement, a process often obligatory in main clauses.

Notice that the same problem arises in English relative clauses too. The present theory does not seem to block the generation of the non-sentence:

\*Yesterday Mr Arrue found the girl last week who disappeared.

from *Yesterday Mr Arrue found the girl who disappeared last week.* by the post-cyclic rule of Adverb Preposing which could apply to the adverb *last week* without lifting it out of the relative clause.

Thus, we need a mechanism to ensure that the verb stays in final position. Once we have got that, however, why cannot we use this same mechanism to get it there in the first place? One method would be to make all relevant movement transformations optional, and then use an output condition (as devised by D. Perlmutter) to reject the wrong orders. It is then quite clear that any arbitrary order in Deep Structure will do just as well as any other; indeed there is then no reason to assume any fixed order in deep structures at all.

Therefore, it is far from obvious that the structure of the relative clause in Basque supports the verb-final theory. All we can say is that it does not contradict it. More generally, the same can be said for all the facts adduced in this article. They are consistent with an underlying S.O.V. order, but they do not, strictly speaking,

require it. It is to be hoped that a study of the sentential complement system, with its various processes of subject and object raising, will provide more substantial evidence for or against the verb-final character of Basque. Such a study, however, is yet to be carried out.

### Surface Structure Constituent Order and Focus

I will conclude this article with a remark about order in Surface Structure.

With the exception of Nils M. Holmer's study *El idioma vasco hablado*, all Basque grammars are pedagogical grammars. Many of those do not talk at all about the order of sentence constituents. Since the order is to some extent free, authors of such books may well feel that students will be understood by Basques, no matter what order they put their constituents in, and so do not deem it necessary to elaborate on the issue. Their silence may also be due to the heavy concentration on morphology and the corresponding lack of interest in syntax which traditional Basque grammars are guilty of.

However, there are a few laudable exceptions. The first to discuss the order of constituents in the sentence were R. M. de Azkue (*Euskal-izkēindea, Gramática vasca*, Bilbao 1891, § 773-789) and, independently, M. de Lekuona (*La métrica vasca*, Vitoria, 1918). The epochmaking studies of S. de Altube contain the most detailed treatment of the question: *De sintaxis euskérica*, 1920 and *Erderismos*, 1929. The point is also discussed in: Zamarripa, *Gramática vasca*, pp. 15-17. P. Lafitte: *Grammaire basque*, § 112-120, Umandi: *Gramática vasca*, lesson 3 and lesson 28.

These authors invariably point out the following fact: in order to construct a Basque sentence properly, you have to know what is «el elemento inquirido» or «la palabra dominante». Cf. Umandi, *Gramática vasca*, pp. 25-26: «REGLA: "Elemento inquirido": La palabra o palabras que expresan la idea principal de la frase (aquello por lo que, explícita o implícitamente, se pregunta) van colocadas inmediatamente delante del verbo».

This is extremely interesting. There is nothing similar in the Romance languages, nor are there any grounds of logic or universal grammar<sup>c)</sup> on which to expect anything like this to be the case. This observation, then represents a genuine insight of Basque grammarians into the workings of their language.

It is worthwhile to try to explain this matter in some more detail. To translate the English sentence "Grandfather will come tomorrow" we have to know whether it is intended as an answer to the question:

Biar nor etorriko da? (or: Nor etorriko da biar?) "Who will come tomorrow?"

or as an answer to the question:

Noiz etorriko da aitona? (or: Aitona noiz etorriko da?) "When will grandfather come?"

In the first case we will have: *Biar aitona etorriko da*.

And in the second: *Aitona biar etorriko da*.

<sup>c)</sup> After the connection between focus of attention and word order had been investigated in more and more languages, it became clear that a preverbal focus position is by no means rare in the languages of the world. Hungarian, e.g., presents a system very similar to that of Basque.

For ease of discussion, we will now define the term “focus position”. In positive sentences, the position immediately preceding the whole verbal complex will be called “focus position”. Some verb-object combinations behave like a single verb:

Lapur orri biar bizia kenduko diote. “They will kill that rogue tomorrow.”

*Bizia kendu* “to take away the life” behaves as a single verb “kill”, rather than as a verb-object combination. Therefore, *biar*, “tomorrow” is in focus position here, not *bizia* ‘the life’. Compare this with:

Dirua ez ezik, bizia ere kenduko digute.

“They will take not only our money but also our lives”, where *bizia* is in focus.

In negative sentences, the position immediately following the conjugated verb form (generally the auxiliary) will be called “focus position”.<sup>d)</sup>

Lapur orri ez diote biar bizia kenduko, gaur baizik.

“They won’t kill that rogue tomorrow, but today.”

*Biar* “tomorrow” here occupies the focus position. Or, take the following example from *Euskal-Antzerkiak*, p. 46:

Jauntxo oiek alkarrekin asarre badabiltz, ez gaitzabela gu beren auzitan nastu.

“If these gentry are at loggerheads with each other, let them not mix us up in their affairs.”

Here the pronoun *gu* (us) has not been deleted because of its contrastive value and occupies focus position. As a term of semantic analysis, focus can be defined roughly as that part of the comment of (the semantic representation of) a sentence that the speaker wishes to put in contrast with other alternatives. This contrast can be explicit or implicit.

The following exchange (*Euskal-Antzerkiak*, p. 33) gives an example of explicit contrast:

*Milia* : Aita galdu nuan, bañan ama billatu zidan zeruak.

*Santxa* : Eta nik gizona galdu ta alaba arkitu nuan, Jaunari eskerrak.

*Milia* : I lost my father, but heaven found me a mother.

*Santxa* : And I, I lost a husband and found a daughter, thanks to the Lord.

In *Milia*’s utterance, *aita* and *ama* are in focus position in their respective clauses, and they are also semantically focus. The rule is that whenever there is a semantic focus, it must be in focus position. Thus, although *Galdu nuan aita*, “I lost my father” and *Zernak billatu zidan ama* “Heaven found me a mother” are good sentences, their combination

\*Galdu nuan aita, bañan zeruak billatu zidan ama.

is not, because of the contradiction between focus position and semantic focus.

<sup>d)</sup> The idea of a postverbal focus site in negative clauses was borrowed from Lafitte’s *Grammaire basque*. My later essay “Focus and Quasifocus in Basque Negative Clauses” (in this volume) was written to correct this misconception.

Likewise, in Santxa's reply (note the indeletable pronoun *nik* there) *gizona* and *alaba* (husband-daughter) are in focus position and also semantically focus.

Another example is (Father talking to mother):

Ta zuk emango diozu zukua ta nik babarrunak. (*Euskal-Antzerkiak*).

"And you will give him soup and I beans."

The point of this sentence is not that the child will eat both soup and beans, but rather that both father and mother will be involved in feeding the child. Therefore *zak* and *nik* are focussed on, not *zukua* and *babarrunak*. There is not always a contrast in parallel sentences. There may or may not be one in:

Otz onek zarrak il eta gazteak maxkaldu egiten ditu. (*Euskal-Antzerkiak*, 80).

"This cold kills the old and weakens the young."

But there certainly is none in:

Egunak gaba ta goizak arratsaldea zekarrek gupil eroan. (*Euskal-Antzerkiak*, 107).

"The day brings the night and the morning the afternoon on the crazy wheel."

Here there is no semantic focus.

Contrast is implicit when a sentence is conceived as an answer to a specific Wh-question. Then, that constituent that corresponds to the Wh-word in the question is semantic focus. This is borne out by the fact that in positive Wh-questions, the Wh-word is always in focus position. E.g.:

Zer dio Santxa andreak? : What does Mrs. Santxa say? and

Ta kondeak zer dio? : And what does the count say?

We never find: \*Zer Santxa andreak dio?

nor: \*Santxa andreak dio zer?

This may also be the reason why a sentence like:

\*Atzo nor ta aita joan ziran Donostira?

"Yesterday who and father went to San Sebastian?"

is ungrammatical. The question word *nor* "who" has to precede immediately the verb *joan ziran* "(they) went".

Atzo aita ta nor joan ziran Donostira?

"Yesterday father and who went to San Sebastian?"

Here again we have to bear in mind that a word group consisting of a verb and something else may behave like a single unit. In the following example, due to M. de Lekuona, the question word *noiz* "when" does not immediately precede the verb:

Noiz zerutik jetsi zan Jesus? "When did Jesus come down from heaven?"

Here *zerutik jetsi* "come down from heaven" is considered a single unit, and the Wh-word *noiz* is indeed in focus position. In negative questions, however, the Wh-

word is not in focus position.<sup>e)</sup> For it to be there, it would have to follow the auxiliary, which a Wh-word in Basque is never allowed to do:

Nor ikusi nai dezu?        “Whom do you want to see?”  
 Nor ez dezu ikusi nai?    “Whom do you not want to see?”

And not: \*Ez dezu nor ikusi nai?

This order is impossible in a question, although it would be all right in an answer:

Ez det Nixon lendakaria ikusi nai    “I don’t want to see President Nixon”,

where “President Nixon” occupies the focus position. Now, not all sentences can be conceived of as answers to specific Wh-questions. The sentence “The fat boy started to kiss the tall girl as soon as Sue left”, is not necessarily an answer to either

1. Who started to kiss the tall girl as soon as Sue left?
2. Whom did the fat boy start to kiss as soon as Sue left?
3. When did the fat boy start to kiss the tall girl?
4. What did the fat boy do to the tall girl as soon as Sue left?

It is more likely to be an answer to:

5. What did the fat boy do?    or even to:    6. What happened?

In such cases no particular constituent is being focussed on. There are even sentences that can hardly be conceived of as answer to a Wh-question at all:

There are no roses without thorns.

You cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs.

Therefore, although in Basque the focus must always be in focus position, we cannot reverse this statement and assert that whatever happens to be in focus position must be semantically focus. There may be no focus at all in the sentence.

In a passage of the story *Patxi ermentarie* (See: *El mundo en la mente popular vasca*, III, pp. 44-49) a devil is looking through the key hole of the door of hell to see if it is really Patxi the smith who is standing there. Thereon, Patxi pulls the devil’s eye out with his roasting spit. Then, another devil puts his ear on the key hole in order to try to recognize Patxi’s voice. Patxi, then, pulls this devil’s ear off with his tongs. The first extraction is described as:

Patxi**k** burrun**tzi**kiñ begie atâ ementzion.  
 (i.e., Patxi**k** burrun**tzi**arekin begia atera omen zion.)  
 “Patxi pulled, reportedly, his eye out with his roasting spit.”

Here *begie* “the eye” is in focus position. The second extraction is described as:

Patxi**k** tenazâkin atâ ementzion belarrie.  
 (i.e., Patxi**k** tenazaekin atera omen zion belarria.)  
 “Patxi pulled, reportedly, his ear out with the tongs.”

<sup>e)</sup> The reason being, of course, that focus position was wrongly defined. In negative clauses too, focus is located preverbally, as claimed in my “Focus and Quasifocus in Basque Negative Clauses” (in this volume).

Here *tenazákin* "with the tongs" is in focus position. Yet, semantically, it is clearly not the case that "the eye" is focussed on in the first sentence, and the instrument "the tongs" in the second. Rather, there is no focus at all, and both sentences are to be conceived as answers to the question:

What happened (after the devil had put his eye on the key hole)? or, possibly, to: What did Patxi do (after the devil had put his eye on the key hole)? These two sentences show the existence of syntactic permutation rules (or a scrambling process) with no semantic relevance. The same point is also illustrated by the following example, taken from another story of the same collection: *Lau anai umezurtzak* (op. cit. p. 113) in which four brothers try their luck in the world. We read:

Batek topau eban astronomo bat. "One met an astronomer."

And later:

Bigarrenak sastre bat topau eban. "The second met a tailor."

In the first sentence, the subject *batek* is in focus position, but in the second the object *sastre bat* is. The circumstances in the story are exactly the same in both cases; there can be no difference in semantic focus between the two sentences. They are both, therefore, without a semantic focus, and yet show a difference in constituent order.

Such examples, I think, show that it would be unwise to have syntactic rules of ordering referring to focus. The same orders of constituents seem to be possible whether or not focus is present.

It is also clear that there can be no phrase structure rule of the form (1): VC → FOC + V. Any sentence constituent (including even the verb itself) can be focussed upon, and case-marking is independent of whether a constituent is in focus or not. The only way to save rule (1) is to restrict FOC to a dummy element, to be filled in later by one of the other constituents of the sentence. But, as Chomsky has pointed out, such a solution is just a notational variant of a system which allows interpretative rules to apply to Surface Structure. For Basque, indeed, all we need seems to be a rule to the effect that focus can only be assigned to a constituent in focus position.

Thus, focus, important as it is in determining whether a particular sentence in Basque, with its particular order of elements, is appropriate to a particular situation, seems to play no role at all in the deeper levels of syntax. While the order of constituents in Surface Structure is in part determined by focus, as stated in the principle of Surface Structure Interpretation enunciated above, the issue of the order of constituents in Deep Structure remains, as yet, completely open.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I am greatly indebted to Prof. Dr. Kenneth Hale (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) for the many clarifying discussions I have had with him during the past year, to Prof. Dr. Luis Michelena (University of Salamanca) for his most valuable comments on a first draft of this article, to Prof. E. Wayles Browne for his general help and encouragement, and to numerous informants and friends all over Guipúzcoa, without whose astonishing patience this article could not have been written.



## Appendix

Two more arguments can be offered here in favour of an underlying S.O.V. order. It must be left to the reader to judge of their strength.

1. In most, if not all, types of reduced clauses, that is clauses without a finite verb form, the verb must be final. In particular, the object has to precede its verb:

Orain sagarra jan bear du. "Now he has to eat the apple."

\*Orain jan sagarra bear du.

Gaur milla duro irabazi nai ditu.

"Today he wants to earn 1000 duros."

\*Gaur irabazi milla duro nai ditu.

Cascabel'ek Urtain botatzeak arritzen nau.

"It surprises me that Cascabel beats Urtain."

\*Cascabel'ek botatzeak Urtain arritzen nau.

Atzo arriak jasotzera beartu zuen amona.

"Yesterday he forced grandmother to lift stones."

\*Atzo jasotzera arriak beartu zuen amona.

Pello asi zan Miren jotzen! "Pello started to beat Mary!"

\*Pello asi zan jotzen Miren!

Ez zait damutu liburu au idatzia. "I don't regret having written this book."

\*Ez zait damutu idatzia liburu au.

Ura pena euskera ez jakina! "What a pity not to know Basque!"

\*Ura pena ez jakina euskera!

2. The constraints on pronominalization in Basque are very much the same as in English and many other languages. Thus we have, with *berari* referring to Patxi:

Patxi'k nausiak berari milla duro ematea nai du.

"Patxi wants the boss to give him 1000 duros."

but not: (if *berak* refers to Patxi)

\*Berak nausiak Patxiri milla duro ematea nai du.

We have under the same conditions:

Nausiak berari milla duro ematea nai du Patxi'k and not:

\*Nausiak Patxi'ri milla duro ematea nai du berak.

To explain this, we must assume that the O.V.S. order is brought about by a subject-postposing transformation, following pronominalization, that takes the subject from before the object and puts it after the verb. Thus at the stage of derivation where pronominalization applies, the order must be S.O.V.