

FONTES LINGVÆ VASCONVM

stvdia et
docvmenta



SEPARATA

Año XLV • Número 116 • 2013

Basque complex predicates and grammar change

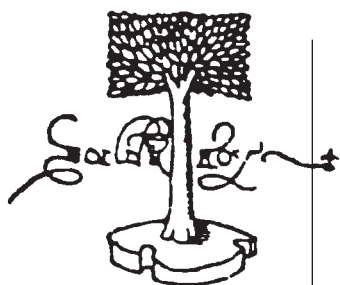
Juan Carlos ODRIOZOLA

Xabier ALTZIBAR

FONTES

LINGVÆ VASCONVM

stvdia et docvmenta



La reduplicación compleja en euskera: notas acerca de su formación y sus paralelos en otras lenguas <i>Iván Igartua</i>	5
Artzibarko aldaera deitu izanaren inguruan (7 – barnera begirako zenbait erkaketa) <i>Koldo Artola</i>	31
Iruñe ondoko euskal testu zahar berri bat <i>Ekaitz Santazilia</i>	91
‘ <i>Cer alcatte edo alcatte ondo</i> ’ Un dato para la geografía histórica del euskera en la Llanada alavesa (Axpuru y Heredia) <i>Roberto González de Viñaspre / Pedro Uribarrena</i>	121
Euskararen laguntzaile ahantziaz: *iron aditzaren historia <i>Manuel Padilla</i>	131
Basque complex predicates and grammar change <i>Juan Carlos Odriozola / Xabier Altzibar</i>	171
Biformulatzaile urruntzaileak: euskarazko diskurtso-markatzaileen hiztegia osatzeko atariko azterketa <i>Ines Garcia-Azkoaga</i>	191
Euskararen belaunez belauneko jarraipena eta hizkuntza sozializazioa Nafarroako familia euskaldunetan (1970-2012) <i>Paula Kasares</i>	209
Sobre <i>Deredia</i> , nombre original y forma usada en euskara de <i>Heredia</i> <i>Mikel Gorrotxategi</i>	235
Topónimos alaveses de base antroponímica acabados en <i>-(i)ano</i> <i>Patxi Salaberri Zaratiegi</i>	245
Bai/ez galderen pertzepzioaren aldeak informatzaileen ama hizkuntzaren arabera: euskararen prosodia gaitasuna lantzeko zenbait datu argigarri <i>Iñaki Gaminde / Asier Romero / Aintzane Etxebarria / Urtza Garay</i>	273

Año XLV
Número 116
2013

Basque complex predicates and grammar change

Juan Carlos ODRIOZOLA*
Xabier ALTZIBAR*

INTRODUCTION

This paper is based on the premise that changes in particular grammars are among the most universal phenomena in human language (Bybee *et al.*, 1994). We assume that everything undergoes change in human languages and that a particular grammar is always a frozen picture of the continuous evolution of a language system.

One of the most interesting issues in this field is that of elements functioning as they used to do and that are still available after the change is (almost) complete. That is, all particular grammars have items that are exceptions in their synchronic language systems. In these exceptional constituents, the speaker easily perceives constrictions on the free syntax of his/her own language competence, for the elements concerned are in fact functioning like the language system used to do in the past. They are usually few in number and they are not actually generated by (non-conscious) rules in the language, but instead are acquired very much as the lexicon is.

Historical linguistics research takes into account what is exceptional in a given state of the evolution of particular languages. In fact, both exceptional cases and synchronic free syntax rules provide an interesting view of general grammar changes as processes of grammaticalisation in a broad sense.

Among the products of the never-ending changes in human languages are complex predicates. The semantics of these items is often not transparent, but in certain other cases, there is something strikingly systematic in these outsiders to the system. For instance, a language may have a broad group of

* Basque Language and Communication Department. University of the Basque Country.

complex predicates with unexpected or deponent morphology and syntax; the morphology and syntax are systematic in these complexes, but only for a closed list of lexical items. That is, they may have a rather high type-frequency, without necessarily exhibiting high token-frequency (Bauer, 2001). Such cases suggest that the restricted system is an old grammatical scheme that still survives as such, but that is declining in the face of the free syntax scheme prevalent at that moment of the language.

A case in point is complex nominal and verbal predicates in Basque. The Basque verb paradigm (§ 1.1.1) is mostly made up of two-word analytical forms of the type *erortzen da* lit. ‘fall-*tzen* is’ (he/she/it falls): a lexical item *eror* precedes an auxiliary *da*. The lexical item has a range of aspectual suffixes like the imperfective *-tzen*. Auxiliaries like *da* feature agreement clitics and tense/mood marks. Basque nominal predicates like *handia da* lit. ‘big-*a* is’ (he/she/it is big) take a suffix *-a* that will be described in more detail further on in this paper (§ 1.1.2).

Nothing in today’s standard language leads us to expect verbal predicates without aspectual suffixes, nor nominal predicates without the suffix *-a*. However, a range of Basque predicate items that the speaker actually perceives as verbs have no aspectual variation (§ 2): *bizi da* lit. ‘live is’ (‘he/she lives’). Furthermore, numerous predicate items that the speaker perceives as nouns or adjectives do not take the suffix *-a*, which does appear in nominal free syntax (→§ 3): *hobe da* lit. ‘better is’ (cf. *handia da* lit. ‘big-*a* is’). Since Basque has the same inflectional material for both types of predicate (in this example the auxiliary *da*), a large number of predicates do not pattern so overtly with verbal or nominal predicates. Moreover, both types of predicate exhibit high type-frequency and many of them are even of high token-frequency.

In the literature on Basque, both verbal and nominal predicates of these types are considered as complex in that their heads joined to certain auxiliaries do not exhibit the syntax that Basque standard predicates allow. The aim of this paper is to describe the grammar change that has given rise to this situation in Basque and discuss how these holdovers illustrate the general way in which human languages change.

First, we will see that the cognitive perception of grammatical categories is based on synchronic (covert) empirical data even in the case of predicates that do not show synchronic free syntax. In fact, in the case of Basque complex predicates one could say that the difference between nominal predicates and verbal predicates is a priori a theoretical (non-empirical) concept. In other words, people who do not speak Basque could ask why some complex predicates are perceived as verbal, and why certain others are perceived as nominal, when somehow they are neutralized for today’s syntax. This paper will provide syntactical data on items like *bizi da* that function as verbs in a (covert) way that has not yet been described and those speakers are probably not consciously aware of. These descriptive data will contrast with the covert nominal syntax of items like *hobe da*.

Second, we will provide further evidence for a general picture of grammar change in which it is pertinent to consider the differential resistance of certain lexical items to change, i.e. to another type of grammaticalisation. Section 1 provides a general review of the Basque parametric features relevant to this

issue. Section 2 is concerned with the complex predicates that are still not synchronically (standard) verbs, while section 3 describes the nominal predicates of an earlier system that are still alive in the language today. Basque nominal and verbal morphology will be relevant in the comparison of the two types of items, but crucially, this paper will show new covert data about issues such as adjacency between lexical and functional (verbal/nominal) material and suffix determiners in noun phrases. Finally, section 3 suggests a way of resolving the puzzle, analysing all these complex predicates from a diachronic point of view.

In short, the two main sections of this paper will provide a more accurate description of these complex predicates, which in previous descriptions (e.g. Zabala, 2004) have not been accurately classified, because of the failure to take into account the broad phenomena that generated the verbal analytical system we have today (Aldai, 2002).

1. SOME NOTES ON THE GRAMMAR OF BASQUE

What this paper will be exploring is the changing verbal and nominal morphology in Basque. Section 1.1 provides a general view of how these operate in the language today, while section 1.2 provides data relevant to non-affirmative word order in both verbal and nominal predicates.

Section 1.1. A brief review of Basque inflectional morphology

Section 1.1.1. briefly describes the characteristics of Basque analytical verb forms, section 1.1.2 discusses nominal inflection features pertinent to this issue, and section 1.1.3. is concerned with both nominal and verbal morphology in nominal predicative clauses.

Section 1.1.1. Verbal morphology

The Basque verb paradigm is mostly constituted by analytical forms instantiated in sequences of the type in (1) (Oyharçabal, 2003):

- (1) Dantzaria erortzen da
 dancer-DET all-IMPERF. AUX. *-he*¹
 lit. 'The dancer is falling' ('The dancer (often) falls')

That is, a lexical item *eror* bearing an aspectual/temporal mark *-tzen* precedes the auxiliary *da*. The verbal root can take a range of aspectual suffixes (Alcazar, 2002; Aldai, 2002; Hualde *et al.*, 2003: § 3.5.1.1; Odriozola, 2004):

- (2) a Dantzaria erori da
 dancer-DET. fall-PERF. AUX-he
 'The dancer has fallen' / 'The dancer fell'
 b Dantzaria eroriko da
 dancer-DET. fall-PERF.-FUT. AUX-he
 'The dancer will fall'

¹ AUX.: auxiliary. DAT.: dative on nominals. DET.: determiner. ERG.: ergative on nominals FUT.: future. IMPERF.: imperfective. PST: past. PERF.: perfective. PL.: plural.

The auxiliary in (1-2) shows agreement with a unique (subject) argument case marked (default) absolutive. The other options of auxiliary clitics are ergative-dative, ergative-absolutive, ergative-dative-absolutive, absolutive-dative and absolutive (Laka, 1993: § 2). Regarding nominal morphology, the ergative case mark is the suffix *-k* while dative is the suffix *-i*. Absolutive is the default case mark. We will not express it in the nominal element of the glosses. However, the absolutive verbal agreement clitic is overt and it will be expressed in the glosses. It should be remembered that Basque case marks both direct objects (*him / her / it*) and intransitive subjects (*he / she / it*) as absolutive. The ergative agreement clitic corresponds to English *he (she / it)* glosses.

- (3) a Jonek txakurrei hezurrak ekarri dizkie
 Jon-ERG. dog-DAT bone-DET.-PL. bring-PERF. AUX.-*them*-DAT.-ERG.
 ‘Jon (has) brought the bones to the dogs’

The inflected form is shared by verbal and nominal (§ 1.1.2) predicates having the same number of arguments:

- (4) Jonek Xixka eta Peto ekarri ditu trenean
 Jon-ERG. Xixka and Peto bring-IMPERF. AUX.-*them*-ERG.-PST. train-on
 ‘Jon (has) brought Xixka and Peto on the train’

- (5) Jonek prakak luzeak ditu
 Jon-ERG. pants long-*a*-PL AUX.- *them*-ERG.-PST.
 lit. ‘Jon has the pants long’ (‘Jon’s pants are too long’)

That is, the ergative-absolutive instantiation of present *ditu* shows agreement with both the ergative and the absolutive noun phrases in each type of predicate. It may appear either to the right of a verb only inflected for aspect (4) or to the right of a nominal predicate only inflected for number (5). It should be remembered that from a standard point of view, in (4) the verb *ekarri* is what has an argument structure, whereas in (5) it is *luze* that has the argument structure. Of course, *ditu* is considered non-lexical, but scholarly tradition calls it an «auxiliary» in the case of verbal predicates, and a «copula» in the case of nominal predicates. This paper is concerned with predicates on the border between nouns/adjectives and verbs, and we will be speaking precisely about one auxiliary exhibiting one, two or three agreement clitics.

Finally it should be remarked that a third aspectual-modal item *izan* ‘been’ may intervene between the uninflected form and the auxiliary in verbal predication.

- (6) a Erori da
 fall-PERF. AUX.-*he*
 ‘He has fallen’ / ‘He fell’
 b Enparantza honetan maiz erori izan da
 square this-*in* often fall-PERF. *be*- PERF. AUX.-*he*
 ‘He has often fallen in this square’ / ‘He often fell in this square’

Oyarçabal (2003: § 3.5.4.2.1) and Aldai (2003: 202-213) describe (6b) as an option in the verb paradigm that adds an experiential or anteriority sense to (6a). Now let us see an example of Basque nominal predication:

- (7) a Zerua urdina da
 sky-DET. blue-*a* AUX.-*he*
 ‘The sky is blue’
 b Zerua urdina izan da
 sky-DET. blue-*a* *be* AUX.-*he*
 ‘The sky has been blue’ / ‘The sky was blue’

The contrasts (6a/b) and (7a/b) are absolutely different regarding tense/mood/aspect. Following Aldai, both (6a) and (6b) are an instantiation of non-present, but (6b) adds an (optional) aspect to (6a). (7a/b) is the instantiation of the contrast between the present/hodiernal past (§ 3).

In short, contemporary Basque verbal predicates are often based on an analytical verbal form constituted by an aspect-bearing lexical item and a non-lexical auxiliary with a number of agreement clitics.

Section 1.1.2. Nominal morphology

In Basque, bare NPs are not allowed in argument positions:

- (8) a *Ur edan dugu
 water drink-PERF. AUX.-*he-we*
 b Ura edan dugu
 water-DET. drink-PERF. AUX.-*he-we*
 ‘We have drunk (the) water’ / ‘We drank (the) water’

Furthermore, the attached article *-a* expressed as DET. in the glosses is required in sentences consisting of a simple NP and this is so even in cases having a non-predicative denominating function. For example a labelled jar containing sugar will necessarily have *azukrea* lit. ‘sugar-DET.’ written on it, rather than *azukre* (Odriozola, 2006: § 2.1). Regarding metalinguistic uses, Trask (2004: § 3.1.2.2.1) shows that generally speaking, when a question such as ‘What is this?’ is asked of Basque speakers to elicit a noun, they will invariably respond with a noun+article: *ura* lit. ‘water-the’ (for diachrony see Irigoien, 1984 and Azkarate & Altuna, 2001: 65-70). Trask points out that only some eastern varieties of Basque allow the use of the bare noun *ur* lit. ‘water’. That is, unlike Spanish or English, the determinerless counterpart *ur* ‘water’ is rarely used in a non-metalinguistic context.

The fact that a separate article *-a* actually exists in the conscience of the speaker is demonstrated by noting its distributional symmetry with other (non attached) determiners (9) and with quantifiers (10) (Odriozola, 2007, 2008):

- (9) Ur hura edan dugu
 water-DET. drink-PERF. AUX.-*he-we*
 ‘We have drunk that water’ / ‘We drank that water’
 (10) a Altzari asko utzi ditut
 furniture a lot leave-PERF. AUX.-*them-I*
 ‘I have left a lot of pieces of furniture’ / ‘I let a lot of pieces of furniture’

- b Bi botila ur edan ditugu
 two bottle water drink-PERF. AUX. *-them-we*
 lit. ‘We have drunk two bottle water’
 (‘We have drunk two bottles of water’ / ‘We drank two bottles of water’)

Negative clauses, interrogative clauses and certain embedded clauses all license another determiner suffix that triggers a non-specific reading (Ondarra & Odrizola, 2012). This determiner is only available for internal arguments:

- (11) a Ez da urik azaldu
 not AUX. *-he* water-DET. appear-PERF.
 ‘No water (has) appeared’
 b Ez dugu urik edan
 not AUX. *-he-we.* water-DET. drink-PERF.
 ‘We haven’t drunk any water’ / ‘We didn’t drink any water’

These types of determiner are not very common in languages geographically located near Basque. First, they are affixes. Second, they don’t obligatorily entail a specific reading. Finally, if we try to translate (10b) into English, we see that *-a* suffix-bearing noun phrases have at least two readings in the case of mass nouns: *Ura edan dugu* may mean both ‘We have drunk the water’ and ‘We have drunk water’.

Regarding number, Basque has only one overt number mark: the plural mark *-k* (12).

- (12) Altzariak utzi ditut
 furniture-DET.-PL. leave-PERF. AUX. *-them-I*
 ‘I have left the pieces of furniture’ / ‘I left the pieces of furniture’

If there is no plural mark, the reading triggered will depend on the (count or non-count) nature of the noun. Hence, (10a) above, repeated here as (13a), triggers a plural reading related to the Basque count noun *altzari* ‘piece of furniture’. On the other hand, in (13b) a singular reading is applied to the mass noun *ur* ‘water’.

- (13) a Altzari asko utzi ditut
 furniture a lot leave-PERF. AUX. *-them-I*
 ‘I have left a lot of pieces of furniture’ / ‘I let a lot of pieces of furniture’
 b Ur asko edan dugu
 water a lot drink-PERF. AUX. *-he-we*
 ‘We have drunk a lot of water’ / ‘We drank a lot of water’

Note too that both the singular (*it/he*) and plural (*them*) readings of the objects in (13) are also reflected in the object absolutive clitic of the verb.

1.1.3. Morphology of nominal predicates

Crucially, *-a* exhibits another feature that seems to be very parametric in determiners: it appears in predicates, i.e. it attaches to non-referential phrases. Let us examine this in more detail.

In argument NPs having an adjectival modifier, *-a* appears once attached to the final constituent, i.e. to the adjective.

- (14) Ardo gorria edan dugu
 wine red-DET. drink-PERF. AUX. *-he-we*
 ‘We have drunk red wine’ / ‘We drank red wine’

However, *-a* also appears in predicates overtly headed by both adjectives (15) and nouns (16).

- (15) Ardo hori gorria da
 wine DET. red-DET. AUX. *-he*
 ‘That wine is the red one’ / ‘That wine is red’
- (16) Botilan dagoen likidoa ardoa da
 bottle-POSTP. liquid-DET. Wine- DET. AUX. *-he*
 ‘The liquid that is in the bottle is wine’ / ‘The liquid that is in the bottle is the wine (I bought)’

In previous sections of this paper, we have mentioned the *-a* suffix precisely for these cases. Although it is not certain whether the *-a* in predicates is actually a determiner (Artiagoitia, 1997; Zabala, 1993), at least for phonetic reasons, hereafter glosses will have DET. in both arguments and predicates. It should be noted, however, that *-a* bearing predicates may actually be non referential, and in fact the non-referential reading is the pragmatically most common one in clauses like (15-16).

Although dialectal differences are geographically gradual, roughly speaking we can say that individual-level predicates (Kratzer, 1989) are instantiated following the model of (15-16) in all the Basque dialects: an inflected verb that in this case functions as a copula and an *-a* bearing nominal predicate.

However, stage-level predicates are differently instantiated in western and eastern dialects (Zabala, 2003). The latter take the inflected form mentioned above (17), while the former use a different copula (18).

- (17) Zerua urdin da
 sky blue AUX. *-he*
 ‘The sky is blue (now)’
- (18) Zerua urdin dago
 sky blue AUX. *-he*
 ‘The sky is blue (now)’

The hodiernal (§1.1.1.) past instantiation of (17) is repeated here as (19), while the hodiernal past of (18) can be seen in (20).

- (19) Zerua urdin izan da
 sky blue *be*-PERF. AUX. *-he*
 lit. ‘The sky has been blue (this morning)’ (‘The sky was blue this morning’)
- (20) Zerua urdin egon da
 sky blue-DET. *be*-PERF. AUX. *-he*
 lit. ‘The sky has been blue (this morning)’ (‘The sky was blue this morning’)

Therefore, the paradigm corresponding to the inflected form *da* is shared in all varieties of the language by verbal predicates and nominal predicates. However, the paradigm corresponding to the inflected form *dago* is only used in western dialects for nominal stage-level predicates. Moreover, unlike individual-level predicates, stage-level predicates don’t take the suffix *-a* in many dialects.

Section 1.2. A brief review of Basque word order

As shown in all the examples above, both affirmative and interrogative clauses in standard Basque today have an auxiliary following the aspect-inflected lexical verbal form:

- (21) a Altzariak utzi ditut
 furniture-DET.-PL. leave-PERF. AUX.-*them-I*
 ‘I have left the pieces of furniture’ / ‘I let the pieces of furniture’
- b Non utzi dituzu altzariak?
 where leave-PERF. AUX.-*them-you* furniture-DET.-PL.
 ‘Where have you left the pieces of furniture?’ / ‘Where did you let the pieces of furniture?’

On the other hand, negative clauses invert the word order, so the auxiliary appears before the lexical form.

- (22) Ez ditut altzari guztiak utzi
 not AUX.- *them-I* furniture-DET.-PL. all leave-PERF.
 ‘I haven’t left all the pieces of furniture’ / ‘I didn’t leave all the pieces of furniture’

Nominal predicates pattern syntactically with verbal predicates in both affirmative and negative clauses.

- (23) a Txakurra handia da
 dog-DET. big- DET. AUX.-*he*
 ‘The dog is big’
- b Txakurra ez da handia
 dog-DET. not AUX.-*he*. big- DET.
 ‘The dog isn’t big’

Crucially, the syntax of nominal predication in interrogative clauses is very different from that of verbal predication – i.e. nominal predicates do not precede the auxiliary:

- (24) a Nor da handia?
 who AUX.-*he* big-DET.
 ‘Who is big?’
- b *Nor handia da?
 who big-DET. AUX.-*he*

As shown above, the lexical verb appears to the left of the auxiliary in standard Basque:

- (25) a Nor erori da?
 who fall-PERF. AUX.-*he*
 ‘Who has fallen?’ / ‘Who fell?’
- b Nor da erori? (non-standard)
 who AUX.-*he* fall-PERF.
 ‘Who has fallen?’ / ‘Who fell?’

It should be pointed out that (25b) is ungrammatical in most dialects, whereas (24b) is ungrammatical in the language as a whole.

2. DEFECTIVE VERBAL PREDICATES IN TODAY'S BASQUE

Zabala (2004) has made a detailed lexicographic study of Basque complex predicates, dividing them into the following two broad groups:

- (26) Paulek hitz egin du
 Paul-ERG. word make-PERF. AUX. *-he-he*
 lit. 'Paul has made words' ('Paul has spoken' / 'Paul spoke')
- (27) a Paul urrun bizi da
 Paul far alive AUX. *-he*
 lit. 'Paul is alive far' ('Paul lives far away')
- b Hobe da horretaz ez pentsatzea
 better AUX. *-he* DET. *-about* not thinking
 lit. 'It's better not thinking about that' ('It's better not to think about that')

This paper is not concerned with predicate complexes such as that of (26), which are clearly different from (27a-b) in that they consist of two lexical elements, the second one being a light verb. The main descriptive aim of this paper is to provide evidence for the total difference in both the past and present syntax of (27a) and (27b), which are treated together in Zabala's work.

In Zabala's examples, (26)-type complexes clearly contrast with the predicates in (27a-b), where only one lexical entry (the one to the left of the auxiliary) appears. However, the lexical part of the predicate in (27) exhibits a morphological variability that is not explained in Zabala's work. In fact, Zabala doesn't make any theoretical or descriptive distinctions between copulas and auxiliaries for (27a-b), although one deduces that in (27) she is considering a large group of nominal predicates contrasting with the complex verbal predicates of (26).

The fact is that although both (27a) and (27b) share an inflected functional verb, no native speaker would give a spontaneous English translation such as 'Paul is alive far' for (27a), even if he/she made a metalinguistic effort to reflect the special syntactical behaviour of *bizi*. On the other hand, all Basque speakers would provide the English translation 'it's better' for (27b), and feel no need to find an English verbal counterpart.

The native intuition for both *bizi da* and *hobe da* must be based on various characteristics of the two items' behaviour. This paper will show that the contrastive intuition of the speaker corresponds to both a nominal/verbal contrast and to several differential characteristics that the speaker is somehow aware of. This section 2 will discuss the verbal characteristics of *bizi*-type predicates, while section 3 will be devoted to exploring the nominal characteristics of *hobe*-type predicates. Section 4 reviews previous studies and suggests that *bizi*-type predicates are holdovers from a syntax that used to be specific for stative predicates but that is now in decline under today's more general framework, which does not distinguish between stative and dynamic predicates.

Complex predicates of the *bizi*-type are subject to unexpected, irregular aspectual restrictions. *Bizi* itself cannot take the imperfective mark described above, and it expresses a non-telic aspect similar to that of 'he lives' (28).

- (28) a Paul urrun bizi da
 Paul far alive AUX. *-he*
 ‘Paul is alive far’ (‘Paul lives far away’)
- b *Paul urrun bizitzen da
 Paul far alive-IMPERF. AUX. *-he*

It should be remembered that the Basque verbal paradigm of today exhibits aspectual suffixes based on the marks in the lexical verb (29a-b).

- (29) a Dantzaria erori da
 dancer-DET. fall-PERF. AUX. *-he*
 ‘The dancer has fallen’ / ‘The dancer fell’
- b Dantzaria erortzen da
 dancer-DET. fall-IMPERF. AUX. *-he*
 lit. ‘The dancer falling is’ (The dancer (often) falls)

The fact is that today’s native speakers do perceive *bizi*-type items as verbs. Our hypothesis is that, in agreement with speakers’ intuition, there is something more in the overt syntax of these predicates that proves that they are verbs, although the stage of evolution of each *bizi*-type lexical item may be different at a given point in time. In order to prove this, we must examine some overt characteristics of these items.

Bizi-type predicates pattern with standard verbs in word order in clauses of all types. It should be remembered that standard verbal predicates follow the word order in (30) when the clause is interrogative.

- (30) a Nor erori da?
 who fall-PERF. AUX. *-he*
 ‘Who has fallen?’ / ‘Who fell?’
- b Nor da erori? (non-standard)
 who AUX. *-he* fall-PERF.
 ‘Who has fallen?’ / ‘Who fell?’

That is, the whole analytical verbal form moves to the front of the clause following the *wh*-word (Elordieta, 2001; Ortiz de Urbina, 2003). (30b) is a variation that is only possible in the grammar of some dialects and in literature.

This is the same for *bizi*-type predicates:

- (31) a Nor bizi da urrun?
 who alive AUX. *-he* far
 lit. ‘Who is alive far’ (‘Who lives far away?’)
- b Nor da urrun bizi? (non-standard)
 who AUX. *-he* far alive
 lit. ‘Who is alive far’ (‘Who lives far away?’)

Regarding the nominal morphology of argument NPs, recall that the determiner *-ik* activates one of the non-specific readings for NPs (32a). The *-a* counterpart may entail either a generic or a specific reading.

- (32) a Dantzaririk ez da erortzen
 dancer-DET. not AUX. *-he* fall-IMPERF.
 ‘No dancer falls’

- b Dantzariak ez dira erortzen
 dancer-DET.-PL. not AUX.-*they* fall- IMPERF.
 ‘Dancers do not fall’ / ‘The dancers (that we saw) do not fall’

Once again, *bizi*-type complex predicates pattern with standard verbal predicates:

- (33) a Emakumerik ez da bizi hor
 woman-DET. not AUX.-*he* alive-PERF. there
 ‘No woman lives there’
 b Emakumeak ez dira bizi hor
 woman-DET.-PL. not AUX.-*they* Alive there
 ‘Women do not live there’ / ‘The women (that we know) do not live there’

Moreover, *bizi*-type complex predicates may take any tense or mood counterpart in the auxiliary paradigm. See for instance the modal verbal form *dadin* used in embedded clauses:

- (34) Bizi dadin egin dut
 alive AUX.-*he* do-PERF. AUX.-*him-I*
 ‘I did it for him to live’

- (35) Etor dadin egin dut
 come AUX.-*he* do AUX.-*him-I*
 ‘I did it for him to come’

Finally, it should be recalled that the inflected material may take a number of clitic combinations having a given distribution with *bizi*-type items.

Hence, Basque complex predicates of the *bizi*-type are irregular in their verbal inflection morphology, but they project verbal predicates if we regard both word order and the distribution of determiners in their argument NPs.

3. DEFECTIVE NOMINAL PREDICATES IN TODAY’S BASQUE

As stated earlier, a primary aim of this paper is to distinguish between *bizi*-type and *hobe*-type complex predicates, which previous lexicographic works have lumped together. Section 2 provided two main criteria for distinguishing *bizi*-type items: word order and the morphology of predicate arguments. However, we recall that *bizi*-type complex predicates may or may not take aspect marks, whereas *hobe*-type items never do. Predicates of the *hobe*-type pattern syntactically with standard nominal predicates in clauses of all types. Remember that standard verbal predicates exhibit the word order in (36) when the clause is interrogative.

- (36) a Nor da handia?
 who AUX.-*he* big-DET.
 ‘Who is big?’
 b Zer da hobe?
 what AUX.-*he* better
 ‘What is better?’

Regarding nominal morphology, we recall that one of the non-specific readings for NPs is activated by the partitive determiner *-ik* (37a).

- (37) a Dantzaririk ez da erortzen
 dancer-DET. not AUX. *-he* fall-IMPERF.
 ‘No dancer falls’
- b Emakumerik ez da bizi hor
 woman-DET. not AUX. *-he*. alive-PERF. there
 ‘No woman lives there’

Hobe-type predicates contrast with both standard verbal predicates and *bizi*-type predicates in that they show clear restrictions on the availability of an NP bearing only a suffix determiner. The counterparts of (37) for both standard nominal predicates (38a) and *hobe*-type predicates (38b) sound odd or at least ‘literary’ in tone.

- (38) a ?Ez da txakurrik handia
 not AUX. *-he* dog-DET. big-*a*.
 ‘No dog is big’
- b *Ez da horretaz pentsatzerik hobe
 not AUX. *-he*. DET.-POSTP. thinking-DET. better

There are many ways to improve the acceptability of (38) by means of non-specific quantifiers with scope over both *txakurrik* and *pentsatzerik*, but this paper is concerned just with the minimal contrast between (37a-38a) and (37b-38b). We assume that these contrasts are empirical data related to both types of predication (Artiagoitia, 1992: 3.4.2 manuscript), whatever the formalization for \emptyset -roles and case marking.

The nominal morphology of the predicate itself is even more relevant in this issue. We have seen that *bizi*-type complex predicates may or may not take aspect marks. By contrast, *hobe*-type complex predicates not only do not take any aspect marks, but in addition, they do not function like today’s nominal predicates.

We have also said that individual-level predicates consist of an inflected verb that in this case functions as a copula and an *-a* bearing nominal predicate.

- (39) Zerua urdina da (general language)
 sky-DET. blue- DET. AUX. *-he*
 ‘The sky is blue’

However, stage-level predicates are differently instantiated in eastern (40) and western (41) dialects.

- (40) Zerua urdin da (eastern dialects)
 sky blue AUX. *-he*
 ‘The sky is blue (now)’
- (41) Zerua urdin dago (western dialects)
 sky blue AUX. *-he*
 ‘The sky is blue (now)’

That is, the former take the inflected form mentioned throughout this paper, whereas the latter take a different one. Hence the stage-level

predication scheme in (40) belongs only to eastern dialects. However, *hobe*-type predicates exhibit the behaviour of (40) in the language as a whole and take the inflected form *da* even in dialects that do not use this auxiliary for stage-level predicates. It should be remarked that this is so for both individual-level (42a) and stage-level (42b) *hobe*-type predicates.

- (42) a Hobe da horretaz pentsatzea (general language)
 better AUX. *-he* DET.-POSTP. thinking
 lit. 'It's better thinking about that' ('It's better to think about that')
- b Paul hotz da (general language)
 Paul cold AUX. *-he*
 'Paul is cold'

Finally, we have seen that *bizi*-type complex predicates pattern with standard verbal predicates and may take any tense or mood counterpart in the auxiliary paradigm:

- (43) Etor dadin egin dut
 come AUX. *-he* do AUX. *-him-I*
 'I did it for him to come'
- (44) Bizi dadin egin dut
 alive AUX. *-he* do-PERF. AUX. *-him-I*
 'I did it for him to live'

Dadin is an inflected form of the *da* type in that it only has an absolutive agreement clitic. However, it is a different auxiliary that appears mostly in embedded clauses and that semantically entails a modal reading. The distribution of *dadin* and *da* is syntactic in today's standard language, and the glosses are *is* for both in this paper. However, *hotz da* is general in the language, whereas *hotz dadin* is not available, at least in dialects that use the copula *egon*:

- (45) *Ardoa hotz dadin izotzetan egon behar du (at least in some western dialects)
 wine-det. cold AUX. *-he* ice-*on* be need AUX. *-him-he*

Crucially, western dialects use *egon* as copula in the grammatical counterparts of (45):

- (46) Ardoa hotz egon dadin izotzetan egon behar du
 wine-det. cold be AUX. *-him-he* ice-POSTP. *-on* be-PERF. need
 AUX. *-him-he*
 'The wine must be put on ice in order for it to be cold'

In short, we have shown that while some characteristics of the (nominal) inflection morphology of *hobe*-type complex predicates are not standard, we can nevertheless say that they project standard nominal predicates if we regard both word order and other morphological nominal characteristics.

Section 3. Solution of the puzzle: defective verbal predicates are coming into fashion while defective nominal predicates are old-fashioned

Both *bizi*-type predicates and *hobe*-type predicates belong to a closed set of lexical items in today's Basque. However, both are of a rather high type-frequency, meaning that the number of lexical items belonging to each type

is quite large. Moreover, most of them are very common in all varieties of the language, so we can say that they have a high token-frequency. Consequently, this paper is concerned with a field of high productivity in the sense of Bauer (2001) –a fact that does not seem congruent with the defective nature of the two types–. Indeed one could ask how native speakers manage to know both which specific predicates are the defective ones and what the syntactic rules are outside the rather non-conscious, free syntax. Our final explanations for *bizi*-type and *hobe*-type predicates can be found in sections 3.1 and 3.2., respectively.

3.1. *Aspectless bizi-type items were specific for stative predication but now the stative/non-stative morphological distinction is declining*

Aldai (2002) describes the generation of part of the Basque Tense-Mood-Aspect system in terms of grammaticalisations of pairs of lexical + non-lexical items. The grammaticalisation of these pairs (belonging to competence) occurs in performance, and as a result, the item in question becomes less lexical and more functional. In fact, Aldai points out those specific processes of grammaticalisation in most languages lead from lexical analytic expressions to more abstract morphological markers.

The author sees in (47) a preliterate grammaticalisation for the present in which an ancient locative item and a stative inflected verb took part.

- (47) Erortzen da
 fall-IMPERF. AUX. *-he*
 lit. 'He is in fall' ('He (often) falls')

Today, (47) is one of the verb forms in Basque paradigms that are instantiations of the present. In line with the general view of grammaticalisation, today's speakers do not perceive location in the lexical verb, and instead, they use this verbal form as one of the aspectual counterparts.

(48) is a grammaticalisation for the hodiernal past where the same lexical verb *eror* is involved, but the inflexional material does not correspond to a location:

- (48) Erori da
 fall-PERF. AUX. *-he*
 'He has fallen' / 'He fell'

(49) is a grammaticalisation that expresses some aspectual features that are not necessarily hodiernal:

- (49) Enparantza honetan maiz erori izan da
 square this-*in* often fall-PERF. *be*- PERF. AUX. *-he*
 'He has often fallen in this square' / 'He often fell in this square'

The third grammaticalization explored by Aldai is what he has called *bizi*-type complex predicates, where the same auxiliary is involved:

- (50) Paul urrun bizi da
 Paul far alive AUX. *-he*
 lit. 'Paul is alive far' ('Paul lives far away')

In Aldai's opinion, the rule for conveying stative presents was the *bizi*-type in (50). The set of argument structures that are available in Basque for *bizi*-type predicates is as wide as the verbal predicate's argument structures in the language today. *Bizi* itself has one argument. Complex predicates such as *nabari* lit. 'obvious', *falta* 'lack' may have either one or two arguments. *Atsegin* lit. 'pleasing', *nahi* lit. 'want', *nahiago* lit. 'more want' (i.e. prefer), *behar* lit. 'need' lit., *uste* 'belief' have a diargumental structure, where the internal argument is usually an embedded clause.

Note that we are providing English literal translations in which the predicate is either a noun or an adjective. In fact, these items share their predicate behaviour with the standard syntax of nouns and adjectives in today's Basque too. Compare (50) to (51):

- (51) Paul oso bizia da
 Paul very alive-DET. AUX.-*he*
 lit. 'Paul is very alive (lively)'

As we have said throughout this paper, the predicates in (50) and in (51) are very similar in that they cannot take aspectual markers, which are usual in today's verbal paradigm. We have seen that *bizi* itself does not take the imperfective suffix *-tzen* that is standard for conveying dynamic presents. However, Zabala (2003) has provided a large set of complex predicates where the aspectual restrictions themselves are not regular. For the irregularities of some of these verbs, see Zabala's work, where there can even be found items that do not take any aspectual mark at all.

In any case, this paper seeks to provide additional crucial data of variation in *bizi*-type predicates. First, *bizi* itself does not take imperfective *-tzen* for conveying the (stative) present, but it does in embedded clauses with verbs that select this suffix:

- (52) a Paul urrun bizi da
 b *Paul urrun bizitzen da
- (53) a *Mirenek badaki ondo bizi
 b Mirenek badaki ondo bizitzen

Second, we have said that the predicate in (50) functions like verbal predicates in today's syntax in certain respects described in this paper. It should be noted that (51) is a fully nominal predicate in today's syntax:

- (54) a Nor da bizia?
 who AUX.-*he* alive-DET.
 'Who is alive?'
 b *Nor bizia da?
- (55) #Gizonik ez da bizia (non-standard)
 man-DET. no AUX.-*he* alive-DET.

Aldai doesn't say anything explicitly about the material source of *bizi*-type predicates, but he is aware of bibliography (Azkarate & Altuna, 2001) describing how an *-a* affix determiner emerged through the preliterary evolution of the language. Furthermore, this affix is shown to extend to

non-argumental (referential) predicational structures (Irigoien, 1984), always before the literary period of the language.

Therefore, we agree with Aldai in that *bizi*-type predicates are the result of a grammaticalisation process, but furthermore we claim that the grammaticalisation had its origin in a nominal predication scheme that turned into a verbal scheme, before the preliterate extension of the suffix *-a*.

Aldai describes in detail the competition between different forms for one meaning that probably occurred in the history of the language, and he points out that the number of *bizi*-type items (50) must have been less than the number of items belonging to the dynamic scheme in (47), simply because there are fewer stative predicates.

Following Aldai's hypothesis, the stative scheme could hardly extend to dynamic predication since *bizi*-type items are not very high in type-frequency. On the other hand, dynamic predicates that at one time were specifically expressed by the scheme in (47) were of very high type-frequency, which made them more suitable for extension to stative predication.

Therefore we follow Aldai in claiming that *bizi*-type predicates were the product of a grammaticalisation process that expressed and expresses stative processes. In section 2 we have provided data supporting the idea of a verbal predicate. In this section we have made a tentative argument for the nominal origin of *bizi*-type predicates. However, the original product, which had no aspect counterparts, is probably the cause of their irregular behaviour today regarding a verbal morphology that they are still acquiring. Today *bizi*-type predicates are tending towards the dynamic verbal scheme, but they have not been (totally) involved in the extension of *-a* to any Basque nominal items. In fact, we can say that *bizi*-type predicates are still declining, in that they are acquiring more and more aspectual marks.

3.2. *Suffixless hobe-type predicates are remnants of an ancient free-syntax nominal predication*

The literature has shown that *hobe*-type predicates pattern with *bizi*-type predicates in that they are inflectionless items followed by an auxiliary.

At some stage of the language, individual nominal predicates took the affix *-a* previously generated for argumental noun phrases. So, they changed from (52a) to (52b).

- (56) a Zerua urdin da
 sky blue AUX. *-he*
 'The sky is blue (always)'
- b Zerua urdina da
 sky blue. -DET AUX. *-he*
 'The sky is blue (always)'

On the other hand, in section 3.1 we pointed out that *bizi*-type predicates belong to a time when the suffix *-a* was not extended to non-argumental positions. The fact is that *bizi*-type items function as verbal predicates in some respects, and we assume that they began turning into verbal predication before the extension of *-a* shown in (56). When the extension of *-a* started, *bizi*-type predicates were already somewhat verbal.

Meanwhile, individual-level nominal predicates took the suffix *-a*, although some individual-level predicates such as *hobe* resisted that change.

In any case, *hobe*-type items are either individual or state-level predicates. The latter are complex in that they appear in some dialects with auxiliaries that are not available for those dialects in the Basque free syntax of today. The former are complex in that they don't have the suffix *-a* required for individual level predicates in today's free syntax. In any case, they are usually (but not exclusively) monoargumental and although there are some predicates like *hobe* 'better', *berdin* 'equal', *posible* 'possible', *zilegi* 'licit', most of them are either psychological or physiological: *beldur* lit. 'fear', *lotsa* lit. 'shame', *gai* 'able', *ziur* lit. 'sure' *hotz* 'cold', *bero* 'hot', *egarri* 'thirsty'.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In the history of a particular language like Basque, we have seen that grammar change gives rise to complex predicates, and that such predicates are the product of a syntax that was free in a previous period and that doesn't function freely any longer. Moreover, speakers are somehow aware of this syntax. We have explored the evolution of two types of Basque complex predicates that in this paper have been shown to be respectively perceived as verbal and nominal in today's syntax. However, these predicates do not exhibit overt verbal or nominal syntax.

We have described in detail the behaviour in both types of predicate and we have compared them to the behaviour of verbal and nominal predicates in today's free syntax. Leaving aside the particular morphological and syntactic changes in the history of a language, we have seen that what is relevant in the description of the change is sometimes the basis of the difference between nominal and verbal predication.

Generally speaking, Basque has the same inflectional material for both nominal and verbal predicates, but it is not always easy to distinguish between what is called an «auxiliary» and what is called a «copular verb». In fact, the lexical material of complex predicates does not clearly show a verbal or nominal morphology, although the material in verbal predication takes aspectual markers while in nominal predication it takes a determiner-like suffix.

For the particular grammar of Basque, we have seen that adjacency between the lexical and the inflectional material is required in verbal predicates, whereas this is not so for nominal predicates. Moreover, the range of determiners licensed in internal arguments of nominal predicates shows more constraints than the range of determiners in arguments of verbal predication.

Therefore, we suggest that the first type of Basque complex predicates belongs to a verbal scheme that was specific for stative predication since the beginning of the literary period. It had no aspectual markers in the lexical material. However, the scheme is changing towards the dynamic verbal scheme of today's free syntax, where the verbal material exhibits a range of aspectual markers. At this point, therefore, stative/non-stative codification is disappearing in Basque, since the stative scheme is not productive anymore.

The second type of Basque complex predicates has been shown to belong to a nominal scheme that has been changing within the literary period of the language. The lexical material in these predicates does not have a determiner-like suffix, which is required in today's individual-level predicates. Nevertheless, the literature has shown that this suffix developed within the literary period, so we assume that nominal complex predicates resisted this change.

In short, complex predicates which for historical reasons do not have a clear verbal or nominal morphology have been shown to belong to a verbal or a nominal scheme, by means of word order and determiner distribution in their arguments.

REFERENCES

- ALDAI, G., 2002, *The grammaticalization of present and past in Basque*, PhD., University of Southern California.
- ARTIAGOITIRA, A., 1992, *Verbal Projections in Basque and Minimal Structure*, PhD., (manuscript).
- 1997, «DP predicates in Basque», *Working Papers in Linguistics. University of Washington*, 5, pp. 161-198
- AZKARATE, M.; ALTUNA, P., 2001, *Euskal morfologiaren historia*, San Sebastian, Elkarlanean.
- BAUER, L., 2001, *Morphological Productivity*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- BYBEE, J.R.; R. PERKINNS; PAGLIUCA, W., 1994, *The Evolution of Grammar*, Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press.
- ELORDIETA, A., 2001, *Verb Movement and Constituent Permutation in Basque*, Netherlands Graduate School of Linguistics.
- HUALDE, J.I. *et al.*, 2003, «Verbs», in *A Grammar of Basque*, J. I. Hualde; J. Ortiz de Urbina (eds.), Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter.
- IRIGOIEN, A., 1984, «Euskarazko izen sintagma mugatzailearik gabekoaz», *Euskera*, xxx (2), pp. 129-139.
- KRATZER, A., 1989, «Stage-level and individual-level predicates», in *Papers on Quantification*, E. Bach; A. Kratzer; B. Partee (eds.), NSF Report. University of Massachusetts at Amherst.
- LAKA, I., 1993a, «Unergatives that assign ergative, unaccusatives that assign accusative», in J. D. Bobaljik; Collins (eds.), *Papers on case and agreement 1, MIT Working Papers in Linguistics*, 14, pp. 149-172.
- 1993b, «The structure of inflection: A case study on X^o Syntax», in *Generative Studies in Basque Syntax*, J. I. Hualde; J. Ortiz de Urbina (eds.), pp. 21-70, Amsterdam, John Benjamin.
- ODRIOZOLA, J. C., 2004, «Verb-deriving processes in Basque», in *Inquiries into the lexicon-syntax relations in Basque. Supplements of the Anuario de Filología Vasca «Julio de Urquijo»*, B. Oyharçabal (ed.), pp. 185-223.
- 2006, «(Basque) natural phrases for artificial languages», *Andolin Gogoan: Essays in Honour of Prof. Eguzkitza*, pp. 707-724.
- 2007, «Measure Phrases in Basque», in *Studies in Basque and Historical Linguistics. In memory of R.L. Trask. Supplements of International Journal of Basque Linguistics and Philology*, 40 (1-2), J. Lakarra; J. I. Hualde (eds.), pp. 739-762.
- 2008, «Quantifying Compounds», in *Gramatika Jaietan*, X. Artiagoitia; J. Lakarra (eds.), pp. 503-518.
- ODRIOZOLA, J. C.; ONDARRA, A., 2012, «(Changing) polarity in connectors», *Euskera* (in print).
- OYHARÇABAL, B. 2003, «Tense, aspect and mood», in *A Grammar of Basque*, J. I. Hualde; J. Ortiz de Urbina (eds.), Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter.
- TRASK, L., 2003, «3.1. The noun phrase: Nouns, determiners and modifiers; pronouns and names», in *A Grammar of Basque*, J. I. Hualde; J. Ortiz de Urbina (eds.), Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter.

- ORTIZ DE URBINA, J., 2003, «Word order», in *A Grammar of Basque*, J. I. Hualde; J. Ortiz de Urbina (eds.), Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter.
- ZABALA, I., 1993, *Predikazioaren teoriak gramatika sortzailean. (Euskararen kasua)*, PhD., University of the Basque Country.
- 2003, «Nominal Predication: copulative sentences and secondary predication», in *A Grammar of Basque*, J. I. Hualde; J. Ortiz de Urbina (eds.), Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter.
- 2004, «Los predicados complejos en vasco», in *Las fronteras de la composición en lenguas románicas y en vasco*, E. Pérez-Gaztelu; I. Zabala; L. Gràcia (eds.), University of Deusto.

ABSTRACT

Basque complex predicates and grammar change

Grammar change gives rise to complex predicates, which are the product of a syntax that was free in a previous period and that doesn't function freely any longer. This paper explores the evolution of two types of Basque complex predicates that are respectively perceived as verbal and nominal in today's syntax, although they do not clearly exhibit overt verbal or nominal syntax. We will see that what is relevant in the description of the change is sometimes the basis of the difference between nominal and verbal predication. Both type of predicates will be shown to belong to a verbal or a nominal scheme, by means of word order and determiner distribution in their arguments.

Keywords: Complex predicates; grammar change; nominal and verbal predication.

LABURPENA

Euskararen predikatu konplexuak eta gramatika aldaketa

Gramatika-aldaketek predikatu konplexu deitu izan diren unitateak sortzen dituzte hizkuntzen bilakaeran zehar. Predikatu hauek sintaxi askekoak dira hizkuntzaren une historiko jakin batean, baina ez dira horrelakoak geroagoko beste une batean. Lan honek aurkeztuko dituen bi euskal predikatuak (*bizi da* eta *hobe da*), aditz-esapide deitu izan dira gure tradizioan baina hurrenez hurren, adizki- eta izenki-predikatu gisa sumatzen bide ditu egungo hiztunak. Izatez, horrelakoetan ez da ageriko adizki- edo izenki-morfosintaxi argirik, eta berez, orain arte ez dira elkarrengandik zedarriztatuta deskribatu. Beren hitz-hurrenkeran eta bai beren argumentu funtzioko izen-sintagmetako determinatzaileen banaketan aurkituko dugu izenki-predikatua/adizki-predikatua delako bereizketa horren funtsa.

Gako hitzak: predikatu konplexuak; gramatika-aldaketak; adizki- eta izenki-predikazioa

RESUMEN

Los predicados complejos del euskera y el cambio gramatical

El cambio gramatical da lugar en algunos casos a unidades lingüísticas que han sido denominadas predicados complejos. Estos predicados pertenecen a la sintaxis libre de la lengua en un momento determinado de su historia, pero esa situación desaparece definitivamente en un momento posterior. Este trabajo presenta dos predicados complejos vascos que el hablante actual respectivamente percibe como verbales y como nominales, aunque nada en su morfosintaxis lo muestre así en una primera aproximación. Serán respectivamente mostrados como verbales y como nominales en términos de orden de palabras y de distribución de determinantes en sus sintagmas argumentales.

Palabras clave: cambio gramatical; predicados complejos; predicación verbal y nominal.

