

"Morpheme Metathesis and Reduplication in the Basque Verb"

A Basque finite auxiliary is a complex of morphemes that follows this template:

(1) Absolutive clitic - Tense (Root) - Dative clitic - Ergative clitic

After showing how this internal structure is derived by syntactic processes (head movement, cliticization), I will discuss several deviations from the template, namely:

(2) Enclitic metathesis: a (dative or ergative) enclitic is metathesized to initial position in the absence of an absolutive clitic.

(3) Tense copying: an additional copy of tense (the root of the auxiliary) appears after the ergative enclitic.

I will argue that these phenomena are best analyzed as the result of postsyntactic operations. Unlike other postsyntactic operations discussed in the literature, they apply to word structures at a point in the derivation in which linearization has applied but in which the morphemes do not have phonological realization. This analysis provides a natural account of several properties of these operations, and of their interaction with other operations that apply in the Basque finite verb.

The data thus provide an argument for an articulated view of the postsyntactic component in which operations apply before or after linearization and before or after phonological realization. Finally, I will argue that the metathesis and copying operations discussed here are best analyzed in terms of Halle & Harris' (2005) formalism for metathesis and (partial) reduplication, by drawing important parallels with their analysis of the well-known Spanish phenomenon of unexpected placement of verbal plural inflection in the presence of enclitics:

(5) venda -n lo

sell -Pl it

"Sell it (imperative)

(6) venda -n lo (metathesis)

sell -Pl it

(7) venda -n lo -n