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Abstract

This paper analyzes quasi-verb second (V₂) effects in Basque. We show that Basque instantiates a typological prediction of the most widely assumed theory of V₂, namely that V₂ is a conspiracy of an [*uV*] on a C-field head attracting the verb and an EPP feature on this same head attracting the closest satellite XP. General considerations suggest that these two features should vary independently across languages, and if so, we expect the possibility of a language with EPP movement to the left periphery but not verb movement. We argue that this combination of properties fits the V_{≥2} pattern of Basque root clauses, and develop an analysis of the left periphery of Basque root clauses that expresses these restrictions.

V_≥2 in Basque

Bill Haddican and Arantzazu Elordieta*

1 Introduction

This article focuses on verb second (V2)-like effects in Basque. V2 refers to word order patterns found in Germanic, Breton and a handful other languages, where the tense-bearing verb obligatorily appears as the second constituent from the left edge of the clause. We illustrate this pattern in the standard German example in (1a) where the inflected verb, *liest*, appears as the second constituent, to the right of *heute abend*, ‘tonight’. Word orders in which *liest* appears later in the sentence or sentence initially are poor, as illustrated in (1b,c).

- (1) a. Heute abend **liest** Niko ein neues Globi-Buch. (German, Leu 2010)
today evening reads Niko a new Globi-book
‘Tonight Niko reads a new globi Book.’
b. *Heute abend Niko **liest** ein neues Globi-Buch.
today evening Niko reads a new Globi-book
c. ***Liest** heute abend Niko ein neues Globi-Buch.
reads today evening Niko a new Globi-book

The standard contemporary view of V2, which is descended in spirit from den Besten’s early work on the topic (1983), takes V2 effects to reflect the interaction of two features: an EPP feature on a high C-field head hosting exactly one XP; and an [*uV*] feature on this same head which attracts the inflected verb (Chomsky 2000, Roberts 2004, Holmberg to appear, Leu 2010, cf. den Besten 1983). We call this the *EPP+V-raising* approach and summarize it in (2). With the further assumptions that this head takes its specifier to its left, these two features together correctly express the generalization that the inflected verb must appear in exactly second position, that is, with exactly one phrasal constituent to its left.

(2) The EPP+V-raising approach

[_{CP} XP [_C V+C_[*uV*, EPP] [...<V><XP>]]]

As Holmberg (to appear) notes, the two movement steps in (2) are, in principle, independent properties. Nothing central to current approaches to EPP movement, the left periphery, head movement generally or T-to-C movement in particular indicates that they should co-occur. The hypothesis that [EPP] and [*uV*] features on C vary independently predicts a 4-way typology across languages: (i) a language with both of these features will be a V2 language; (ii) a language with neither of these properties will have neither generalized EPP movement to C nor obligatory V movement to C as instantiated in English among many other languages; (iii) varieties with [*uV*] on C but not [EPP] will be instantiated by some verb-initial languages where verb raising is produced by head-movement to C; (iv) finally, a language with EPP movement to the left periphery, but no verb movement to C will be a “V_≥2” language, where the verb will never be able to appear in first position, and absence of obligatory V-to-C movement will mean that the verb need not appear in second position, but rather may allow additional material to intervene between it and the left edge of the clause. As far as we are aware, no published literature has described a language instantiating this possibility, which is predicted by the standard approach to V2 phenomena outlined above. The goal of this paper is to demonstrate that Basque is of this fourth type, and as such bears out a typological prediction of the approach to V2 illustrated in (2). We summarize this typology in

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Table 1.

	+EPP	-EPP
+ [uV]	V2 languages	V-initial languages
- [uV]	“V \geq 2” (Basque)	English, French, Mandarin etc.

Table 1: Featural content of “C” relevant for V2 effects

The discussion is organized as follows. Part two of this paper describes V \geq 2 patterns in Basque and compares them to canonical V2 effects in Germanic. In part three, we present an analysis of V \geq 2 adapting a Rizian analysis of the left periphery in Basque by Ortiz de Urbina (1999). Part four summarizes the discussion.

2 V \geq 2 Patterns in Basque

Similarities between constraints on the placement of the finite verb in Basque and Germanic/Breton have been mentioned in previous literature (Ortiz de Urbina 1994, 1995, Elordieta and Jouitteau 2010), however these similarities have not been thoroughly described anywhere as far as we know. In the discussion below, we review ways that constraints on word order in Basque compare to those in V2 patterns in Germanic and propose that the two phenomena should be explained in similar terms.

2.1 Exactly One Constituent to the Left of V

In the general case, Germanic languages excluding English have the property that root clauses require exactly one constituent to precede the finite verb as in (1). There are nevertheless several well-described exceptions to this pattern. First and most importantly, the V2 constraint does not apply to all root clause types. Examples (3) and (4) below show that V1 is the unmarked way of forming *yes/no* questions in Germanic as well as imperatives (Holmberg to appear).

- (3) Kennst du das Land? (German) (4) Var du tyst! (Swedish, Holmberg, to appear)
 Know-2SG you that country. be you quiet
 ‘Do you know that country?’ ‘You be quiet!’

A second exception involves topics. As shown in (5), hanging topics separated intonationally from the following clause do not count as first position elements and may appear to the left of a *bona fide* first position constituent.

- (5) Peter, ich werde ihn Morgen sehen. (German, Holmberg, to appear)
 Peter, I will him tomorrow see.
 ‘As for Peter, I’ll see him tomorrow.’

Basque is like these Germanic varieties in that, in most root contexts, the verb cannot appear clause-initially as in (6a). Note that the *V1 restriction is stricter in Basque than Germanic in that, in Basque, verb-initial patterns are unavailable even in *yes/no* questions, as in (6c).

- (6) a. *dator-Ø emakume-a. b. Emakume-a dator-Ø. c. *dator-Ø emakume-a?
 come-3SG woman-ABS woman-ABS come-3SG come-3SG woman-ABS
 ‘The woman is coming.’ ‘The woman is coming.’ ‘Is the woman coming?’

Like these Germanic varieties, Basque also makes an exception for some kinds of imperative sentences like those in (7)-(9) where an inflected imperative form appears in first position.¹ Such sentences are reminiscent of Germanic, where verbs may appear in initial position in imperative

¹The availability of clause-initial imperatives in Basque, however, is restricted to intransitive forms; transitive forms are sharply out. We set these issues aside here.

contexts with an overt subject (see (4) above).²

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| (7) Zaude isilik!
Be.2SG quiet
'Be quiet!' | (8) Zatoz gurekin!
Come.2SG we-with
'Come with us' | (9) Zoaz hemen-dik.
Go.2SG here-ABL
'Get out of here.' |
|--|--|--|

Similarly, as in Germanic, hanging topics do not count as first position elements. As shown in (10), a finite verb cannot be separated from the left edge of the clause only by a hanging topic.

- (10) Jon-Ø, *dator-Ø
Jon-ABS come-3SG
'As for Jon, he's coming.'

Importantly, however Basque differs from Germanic V2 patterns in that in many contexts including neutral declaratives, the finite verb appears sentence finally, as in (11), in a position most generative approaches have taken to be below the C-field (Laka 1990, Ortiz de Urbina 1989, 1994, Elordieta 2001).

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| (11) Jon-ek Miren-i liburua-Ø eman dio.
Jon-ERG Miren-DAT book-ABS give.PERF AUX
'Jon has given the book to Miren.' | (Neutral contexts) |
|---|--------------------|

From this perspective, Basque seems not to be a V2 language but rather a "V_{≥2}" language; that is, the finite verb in declarative root clauses need not appear in strictly second position, but cannot appear clause-initially. We return to this fact in section 3, where we consider evidence for the position of the finite verb in sentences like (11).

2.2 Different Kinds of Constituents Can Occupy the First Position

A second way in which Basque behaves like other V2 languages is that it discriminates very little in terms of the type of constituent that can be in first position. Germanic and Breton both allow for constituents of different categorial and information structural types to serve as first position elements. (For space reasons we omit discussion of these well-studied Germanic/Breton facts here and refer readers to Holmberg (to appear) and Joutteau (2010, 2008) for details.)

Basque is similarly permissive in terms of the type of constituents that can sit in first position. In the general case, new-information foci and *wh*-phrases in Basque appear to the left of the inflected verb, and such constituents may also serve as first position elements. The examples in (12) illustrate this with *etorri*, 'come', one of a closed class of synthetic verbs where the verb root and tense and agreement morphology appear on the same word. The examples show that, in such contexts, DPs, adverbials and PPs are all licit first-position elements.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| (12) a. GAUR dator-Ø Jon-Ø.
today come-3SG Jon-ABS
'Jon is coming TODAY.' | b. JON-Ø dator-Ø gaur.
Jon-ABS come-3SG today.
'JON is coming today.' | c. KOTXE-AN dator-Ø Jon-Ø.
Car-in come-3SG Jon-ABS
'Jon is coming IN THE CAR.' |
|---|---|--|

With an open class of verbs, the verb root and any aspectual morphemes appear separated from tense and agreement morphology, which appear instead on an auxiliary verb. In affirmative contexts, the verb root appears to the left of the auxiliary, and can serve as the first position element, as illustrated in (13). Focused constituents appear to the left of the verb root in affirmative contexts as shown in (14).

²A second exception is found in the speech of some (especially younger) speakers, who allow for finite-verb-initial patterns in presentational contexts, where a heavy intonational break obligatorily appears between the finite verb and the following material. We set these cases aside in the remaining discussion.

Example (23) illustrates the fact that in complement clauses in German with an overt complementizer, the finite verb appears not in second position, but rather, typically clause-finally. Other Germanic varieties, including Swedish, allow for V2 in some kinds of complement clauses as illustrated in (24) from Swedish (Heycock 2006, Julien 2008).

- (23) Sigrid glaubt dass [Waltraud (***hat**) wahrscheinlich das Buch gekauft **hat**.] (German)
 Sigrid thinks that Waltraud has probably the book bought has
 ‘Sigrid thinks that Waltraud has probably bought the book.’
 (adapted from Diesing 1990)
- (24) Jag ska säga dej **att** jag *är* inte ett dugg intresserad. (Swedish)
 I will say you that I am not a dew interested
 ‘I tell you that I am not the least interested.’
 (from Julien 2008)

Similarly, (25)-(27) show that in Basque relative clauses, adverbial clauses and factive complements, unlike in root clauses, *V1 does not apply: the verb can appear clause-initially and *ba*-insertion is unavailable.

- (25) [(***Ba**)-datorr-en] astea-Ø.
ba-come-COMP week-ABS
 ‘the coming week’ (without verum focus)
- (26) [(***Ba**)-dirudi-en]-ez, etorri-ko da.
ba-appear-COMP-as, come-FUT AUX
 ‘It appears he/she will come.’ (lit. ‘As it appears, he will not come.’ without verum focus)
- (27) Jakin/ahaz-tu dut [(***ba**)-datorr-ela]
 know.PRF/forget-PRF AUX *ba*-come-COMP
 ‘I’ve found out/forgotten that (s)he is coming.’ (without verum focus)

In complements of saying/belief and semifactive verbs such as (28), and embedded *yes/no* questions such as (29), finite verbs in initial position are also possible, though as Ortiz de Urbina (1994) notes, many speakers also accept such sentences with non-verum *ba*-

- (28) Ba-daki-t [datorr-ela] (29) Ez daki-t [datorr-en ala ez.]
ba-know-1SG come-COMP NEG know-1SG come-COMP or NEG
 ‘I know that he is coming.’ ‘I don’t know whether she’s coming or not.’
 (Ortiz de Urbina 1994)

To summarize the discussion so far, the restrictions on verb-initial patterns in Basque are reminiscent of Germanic and Celtic V2. In the next section we model this partial similarity in terms of the EPP+verb raising approach to V2 discussed above (2).

3 V_{≥2} Patterns in Basque

Following Chomsky (2000) and Roberts (2004), our analysis of V_{≥2} will be in terms of the approach summarized in (2). Again, on this approach, V2 reflects the interaction of two properties: (i) an EPP feature on a C-field head which attracts the nearest satellite XP (i.e. XP not in the clausal spine); and (ii) a [*uV*] feature on this same head which attracts the inflected verb. In this section and the next, we propose that Basque shares with canonical V2 varieties the first of these properties but lacks the second. That is, Basque lacks verb movement to the left periphery in neutral declaratives. We consider evidence for these two assumptions in turn below.

3.1 EPP Movement to C

The inventory of possible first-position elements in root clauses discussed in section 2 will follow from the sequence of left-peripheral heads illustrated in (30) together with the assumption of an EPP feature on a Speech-Act-field head which we agnostically label W. In Haddican and

Elordieta (in preparation), we assess evidence for associating *W* with speech act pragmatic features based on the interaction of *V1 and addressee agreement in some Basque dialects, which is also generally restricted to root clauses (Oyharçabal 1993). Space constraints prevent us from considering these issues in detail here.

(30) [Top* [W_[EPP] [Foc [Pol [Evid [T....]]]]]]

The sequence of heads in (30) follows much previous work in Basque and especially Ortiz de Urbina's work (1999) in assuming a Rizzian articulated left-periphery for finite clauses (Rizzi 1997, Beninca and Poletto 2004, Haegeman 2006). Most importantly, following Rizzi (1997), we assume that the pragmatics of illocutionary force and utterance main point is encoded in a sequence of left peripheral heads, one of which will be *W* (Haegeman 2006, Julien 2008). Root clauses will differ minimally from most embedded clauses in that the former will have this layer, but the latter will not, and it will be this difference that accounts for the absence of *V1 effects in embedded clauses. We assume, in particular, that this head has an EPP feature that attracts, without prejudice, the closest XP in the clausal spine to its specifier position. It is this feature that will ensure that the finite verb never appears clause-initially in root contexts. Finally, we assume that focused constituents including *wh*-phrases have a FOCUS feature and move to the spec of FocP (Ortiz de Urbina 1999, Elordieta 2001). We also posit a polarity head, *Pol*, in whose spec sit the negative morpheme, *ez*, and affirmative *ba*- (Haddican 2004, Arteatz 2011, cf. Laka 1990).⁴

We illustrate now how these assumptions combine to produce the correct word order in relevant contexts. First, consider the negative example in (15), repeated here. In this context, the negative morpheme *ez* will be the closest element to *W* and will be attracted to spec, *WP*.

(15) *Ez dator-Ø.*
 NEG come-3SG
 '(She) is not coming.'

(31) [_{WP} *ez* W_[EPP] [_{PolP} <*ez*> Pol [_{TP} *dator*]]]

The derivation of clause-initial focus sentences will proceed similarly. Consider, for example, the sentence in (12b), repeated here. When *Foc* is merged, the FOCUS-bearing constituent *Jon*, moves to the spec of FocP. *W* is merged later and *Jon* then moves its spec, as in (32).

(12) b. *JON-Ø dator-Ø gaur.*
 Jon-ABS come-3SG today
 'JON is coming today.'

(32) [_{WP} *JON*_[Focus] W_[EPP] [_{FocP} <*JON*> Foc [_{TP} *dator* ... <*JON*>]]]

In verum focus contexts such as (17), repeated here, we assume that *ba* is first merged in spec, *PolP*, and raises in turn to FocP, and subsequently to spec, *W*.

(17) *Ba-dator-Ø.*
 AFF-come-3SG
 'She IS coming.'

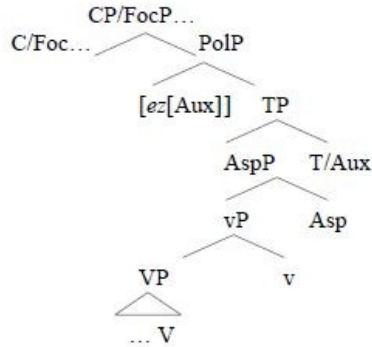
(33) [_{WP} *ba*_[Focus] W_[EPP] [_{FocP} <*ba*> Foc [_{PolP} <*ba*> Pol [_{TP} *dator* ... <*JON*>]]]]

In the spirit of Ortiz de Urbina's (1994) proposal, we assume that *ba*-support—expletive insertion of *ba*, when *V1 would otherwise be violated, is the spell out of *W* in the absence of other lexical material. Consider, for example, the sentence in (20), repeated here.

(20) *Badauzkat hiru anaia*
ba-have-1SG3PL three brother
 'I have three brothers.' (no verum focus interpretation.)

⁴Haddican (2004) argues that the negative morpheme raises to *PolP* from a *TP*-internal position. For space reasons we set aside the motivation for this assumption here.

(35) The head parameter approach



An alternative, LCA-based approach to Basque clause structure, leads to the same conclusion, as we will argue next. Specifically, Haddican (2004) proposes that the relative order of the verb and verbal dependents is derived via roll-up (iterative comp-to-spec) movement (Kayne 1994). On this approach the polarity-sensitive word order variation in (11) and (34) is determined by the constituent that raises to a left-peripheral PolP: in negative sentences, the negative morpheme *ez*, a specifier, raises to PolP, yielding the order Neg-Aux-VP.; in affirmative sentences, the extended verbal shell raises yielding the order [[SOV] Aux] (see also Etxepare & Uribe-Etxebarria 2009).

(36) An LCA-compliant approach to polarity-sensitive word order alternations.

- a. [_{WP} ... [_{PolP} [_{XP} extended verbal shell] Pol [_{TP} Aux <XP>]]] (Affirmative orders)
 b. [_{WP} ... [_{PolP} *ez* Pol [_{TP} Aux [_{XP} extended verbal shell]]]] (Negative orders)

Now, given (30), the EPP feature of *W* will trigger movement of negation or the extended verbal shell to Spec,*W*. This analysis in principle allows for the possibility that the tense-bearing verb also moves further to the same projection containing the EPP, that is, that the raised verb is in a spec-head configuration with the first position element, just as in Germanic/Celtic, etc. We illustrate this possible derivation in (37).

(37) [_{WP} *ez*[_XP verbal shell]] [_{W'} Aux+*W*_{[uV, EPP]] [...<*ez*><XP>]]]}

An obstacle to such an approach concerns the kind of material that can intervene between the tense-bearing verb and foci. Consider, for example, a sentence with a focused *XP* and a verb cluster containing a modal *behar*, ‘need’.

(38) JON-Ø etorri behar da.
 Jon-ABS come need AUX
 ‘JON must come.’

We know from previous discussion (section 2) that the focused constituent, *Jon*, counts as the first position constituent. Evidence that the focused *XP* does not form a constituent with the verb+modal distinct from the auxiliary, i.e. that it does not pied-pipe the verb+modal, comes from the fact that it can never do so in negative contexts such as (18). The verb+modal complex, unlike the focused constituent, *Jon*, therefore appears to be not within spec,*WP*, but below it. Now, for the tense-bearing auxiliary, *da*, to be in *W*, in a spec-head configuration with *Jon*, the verb root+modal will need to be a head adjunction cluster, itself adjoined to the auxiliary. But such verb clusters show word order variation that is unexpected if the main verb head-adjoins to the modal. In particular, as Etxepare and Uribe-Etxebarria (2009) note, in many central dialects the constituent containing the verb and verbal dependents in such constructions —particularly phonetically heavy ones— can appear either to the right or to the left of the modal+auxiliary

cluster, as illustrated in (39). Assuming following Etxepare and Uribe-Etxebarria (2009), that the two orders in (39) are derivationally related via some phrasal movement step—leftward movement of the [modal+aux] in (39b), for example—then the verb+modal sequence cannot be a head adjunction cluster, since otherwise the movement operation would target a non-constituent.

- (39) a. [Horr-ela-ko-a-k maiz-ago ikusi] nahi nituzke
 that-like-GEN-DEF-PL frequent-more see want AUX
 ‘I’d like to see things like that more often.’
 b. Nahi nituzke [horr-ela-ko-a-k maiz-ago ikusi]
 want AUX that-like-GEN-DEF-PL frequent-more see
 ‘I’d like to see things like that more often.’
 (Etxepare & Uribe-Etxebarria 2009)

A similar problem concerns the ability of negation and evidential particles to intervene between the tensed verb and the first position element. Consider, for example, the example in (40) with a focused subject, a negative morpheme and an evidential particle.

- (40) JON-Ø ez omen da etorr-i.
 Jon-ABS NEG EVID AUX come-PRF.
 ‘JON has allegedly not come.’

Again, here the focused constituent, *Jon*, must count as the first position constituent. For the tense-bearing verb to move to W, the auxiliary would need to have right-adjoined to *ez* — necessarily a specifier on this approach— and *omen* –a head– on its way to W, as shown in (41). This approach must then answer for the enrichment to the theory necessary to make possible head-specifier-head adjunction and explain why right-head adjunction obtains in just these cases.

- (41) [_{WP} JON_[Focus] W-Foc-ez-omen-Aux_{[FocP <JON> <Foc> [_{PolP} <ez> <Pol> [_{EvidP} <omen> [_{TP} <Aux> ... etorri]]]]]]}

To summarize, the foregoing discussion suggests that, no matter which of these two main approaches one adopts to the derivation of clausal word orders in Basque, Basque does not plausibly have verb movement to the same left-peripheral head responsible for *V1 effects.

4 Conclusion

We have argued that Basque instantiates a typological prediction of the most widely assumed theory of V₂, namely that V₂ is a conspiracy of an EPP feature on a C-field head and a verb raising feature on this same head. General considerations lead us to expect that these two features will vary independently across languages. If so, we expect the possibility of a language with EPP movement to the left periphery but not verb movement. We argue that this combination of properties fits the V_{≥2} pattern of Basque root clauses. If indeed these properties vary independently across languages, we expect a larger set of languages to instantiate this typological possibility, and we know of no others so described in the literature. Future work might usefully address this prediction.

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