

Derived vs. base generated OV*

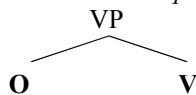
Luis Vicente

This paper provides an argument against a uniform characterisation of OV languages. It is claimed that in some languages OV orders are base generated in a head final VP structure, whereas in others they are the result of object movement à la Kayne (1994). Empirical support comes from some asymmetries between Dutch and Basque that are accommodated without trouble if these languages construct their OV orders in different ways.

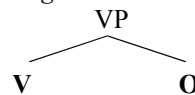
1. Introduction

One of the major typological divisions is the one between VO and OV languages. In this contribution, I want to focus on the latter group. Specifically, I want to probe into the mechanisms generating the OV order. To that end, I use the combination of adverb placement, scrambling, and extraction in two different languages, namely Dutch and Basque. Before getting started, let us review the two main analyses of OV orders, since my proposal is based on them. The first one, which I shall dub *base generated OV*, is based on the premise that the Head Directionality Parameter exists. Thus, the difference between, say, Dutch and English, is that the former is parametrised for a head final VP (1), and the latter for a head initial VP (2). This analysis, quite popular during the 80s (see Travis (1984) for West Germanic, and Ortiz de Urbina (1989) for Basque), has also been revived recently by Neeleman (1994) and Neeleman & Weerman (1999) for Dutch, and A. Elordieta (2001) for Basque.

1) *Dutch & Basque*



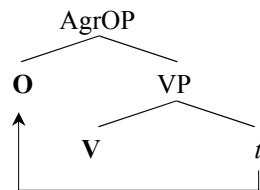
2) *English & French*



* In Boban Arsenijević, Noureddine Elouazizi, Martin Salzmann & Mark de Vos (eds.), *Leiden Papers in Linguistics* 1.1 (2004) [83-96] <http://www.ulcl.leidenuniv.nl>

A new possibility opened up with the advent of Antisymmetry (Kayne 1994) and the contemporaneous explosion in the number of functional projections. Under the hypothesis that all languages are uniformly head initial, OV orders cannot be base generated as in (1). Rather, they must involve leftward object movement across the verb, presumably to a SpecAgrOP position (3). I call this hypothesis *derived OV*. Languages with a VO order are the result of not moving the object in overt syntax –or, alternatively, of positing a subsequent movement of the verb to the left of the raised object, cf. Johnson (1991). This analysis, first advocated for West Germanic by Zwart (1993) and Kayne (1994), has been applied to Basque by i.a., Albizu (1994), G. Elordieta (1997), and Haddican (2004).

3) *Derived OV*



It seems to me that most of the theoreticians that have taken part in this debate make the hidden assumption that either (1) or (3) should suffice to account for all OV orders. That is, OV languages should universally be the result of either base generation or object movement. However, this is not a logical necessity. Takano (1996) already hints that it might well be the case that some languages are base generated OV, whereas others are derived via movement. This is what I am going to claim in the remainder of this article. The hypothesis will be that Dutch base generates its OV order in a head final VP structure, as in (1), whereas Basque OV is derived by leftward movement of the object from an underlying VO structure. A number of differences between both languages will follow from this analysis.

The article is organized as follows. In section 2, I go through the Dutch-Basque contrasts that I want to account for. In section 3, I show how the hypothesis laid out in the previous paragraph can account for those contrasts. Finally, in section 4, I explore the consequences of this analysis for the wider theory of word order and clause structure.

2. Object related asymmetries

2.1 Asymmetry #1: adverb placement

In Dutch, a sentence containing a manner adverb can display two different orders: [O Adv V] and [Adv O V].

- 4) a. ✓ Jan heeft een boek **langzaam** gelezen
 J has a book slowly read
 “Jan has read a book slowly”
 b. ✓ Jan heeft **langzaam** een boek gelezen
 J has slowly a book read

These sentences are both acceptable. They differ in their focus structures and the specificity of the object, but this need not concern us here (see de Hoop (1992) and Reinhart (1995) for more detailed discussion of this point). In contrast to Dutch, Basque allows only the [O Adv V] order.

- 5) a. ✓ Jonek liburu bat **astiro** irakurri du
 J book one slowly read AUX
 “Jon has read a book slowly”
 b. * Jonek **astiro** liburu bat irakurri du
 J slowly book one read AUX

A note of caution is necessary before moving on. Basque is a language that can make extensive use of left peripheral focus and topic positions. Therefore, (5b) can be made grammatical if we take the object to have moved to a focus position (and therefore being interpreted as narrowly focused), and the adverb and the subject to have moved to topic positions further to the left. The point here is that the grammaticality of (5b) depends on massive displacement to left peripheral positions, irrespective of the particular theory of focus and topic movement one may favour. It cannot be generated in the lower part of the clause, as its Dutch counterpart (4b). Thus, for the purposes of this paper, I will consider it ungrammatical.

Finally, I want to bring up another language that shows a similar (though not totally identical) pattern to Basque. This is Zarma, a Nilo-Saharan language spoken in Niger¹. In this language, in addition to the OV order, low adverbs (such as *gumo* ‘a lot’) must appear in post-verbal position (6a). If they appear in preverbal (6b) or pre-object (6c) position, the sentence is ungrammatical. We shall come back to Zarma in section 3.2.

- 6) a. ✓ Zankaa na hansoo kar **gumo**
 child ASP dog beat a lot
 “The child beats the dog a lot”
 b. * Zankaa na hansoo **gumo** kar
 child ASP dog a lot beat
 c. * Zankaa na **gumo** hansoo kar
 child ASP a lot dog beat

2.2. Asymmetry #2: extraction

In Dutch, extraction out of objects is possible, as shown in (7a). Extraction is also possible in the presence of a manner adverb –such as *maar al te graag*,

¹ The Zarma data are from Koizumi (1995), who in turn cites Tersis-Surgue (1981).

‘with pleasure’, literally ‘but all too gladly’. This holds irrespective of whether the object follows (7b) or precedes (7c) the adverb. Strikingly, the situation is different with time adverbs, such as *vandaag* ‘today’. If the object follows the adverb (7d), extraction is still possible. However, if the object has scrambled across the adverb (7e), extraction is blocked²:

- 7) a. ✓ [Over wie] heb jij [een gerucht *t*] gehoord?
 over who have you a rumour heard
 “Who have you heard a rumour about?”
- b. ✓ [Over wie] heb jij **maar al te graag** [een gerucht *t*] gehoord?
 over who have you but all too gladly a rumour heard
- c. ✓ [Over wie] heb jij [een gerucht *t*] **maar al te graag** gehoord?
 over who have you a rumour but all too gladly heard
- d. ✓ [Over wie] heb jij **vandaag** [een gerucht *t*] gehoord?
 over who have you today a rumour heard
- e. * [Over wie] heb jij [een gerucht *t*] **vandaag** gehoord?
 over who have you a rumour today heard

In Basque, however, objects are always islands for extraction independently of the presence/absence of an adverb, or the type of adverb (cf. Uriagereka (1998)):

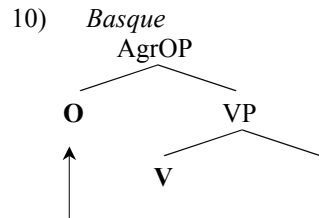
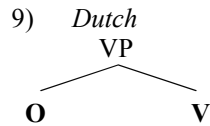
- 8) a. * [Nori buruz] entzun duzu [zurrumurru bat *t*]?
 who about hear AUX rumour one
 “Who have you heard rumours about?”
- b. * [Nori buruz] entzun duzu [zurrumurru bat *t*] **nahi gabe**?
 who about hear AUX rumour one want without
 “Who have you heard rumours about unintentionally?”
- c. * [Nori buruz] entzun duzu [zurrumurru bat *t*] **gaur**?
 who about hear AUX rumour one today
- d. * [Nori buruz] entzun duzu **gaur** [zurrumurru bat *t*]?
 who about hear AUX today rumour one

3. Deriving the asymmetries

3.1. The hypothesis

As I mentioned in the introduction, I propose that Dutch and Basque OV orders are formed differently. While Dutch simply makes use of a head final VP structure (9), Basque resorts to object movement to SpecAgrOP (10).

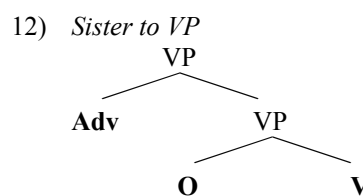
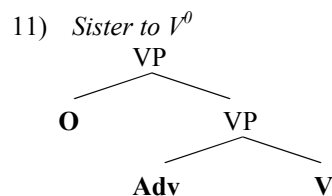
² I am grateful to Claartje van Swaaij and Willemijn Sedee for bearing with my first data questions on this issue, and to Jeroen van Craenenbroeck for helping me construct this paradigm. Note also that sentence (7c) is only grammatical with a specific reading of the object, since non-specific indefinites resist scrambling. However, as far as I can see, this does not affect my analysis.



Let us see how this hypothesis can derive the asymmetries I have presented in the previous section.

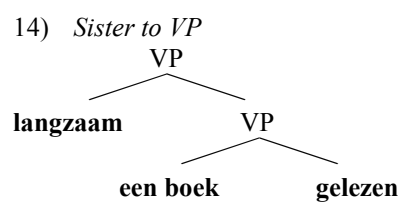
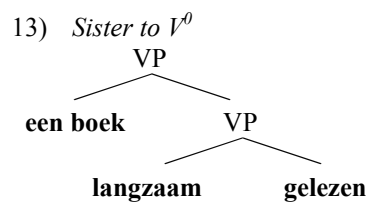
3.2. Adverb placement

Neeleman & Weerman (1999) claim that manner adverbs can be merged in two different positions: as sisters to a bare verb (11) or as sisters to VP (12)³.



If we write actual words in these structures, we can derive both orders observed in (4), repeated here:

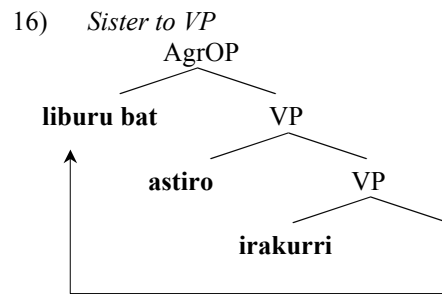
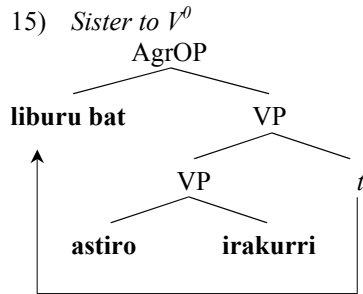
- 4) a. ✓ Jan heeft een boek **langzaam** gelezen
 J has a book slowly read
 “Jan has read a book slowly”
 b. ✓ Jan heeft **langzaam** een boek gelezen
 J has slowly a book read



The optimal assumption is that manner adverbs can also be merged in the same two positions in Basque. However, in this case, the difference would not affect linear order. Recall that we have assumed that Basque objects always raise out of VP to an Agr projection. As a consequence, they will always precede manner adverbs, independently of what their base position was.

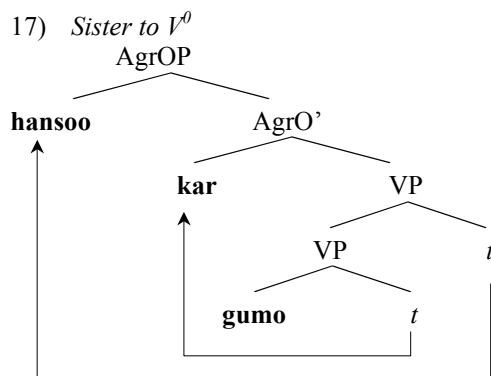
³ The nodes of these trees have all been labelled as VP for the sake of exposition, and they should not be understood as reflecting any theoretical commitment

- 5) a. ✓ Jonek liburu bat **astiro** irakurri du
 J book one slowly read AUX
 “Jon has read a book slowly”
 b. * Jonek **astiro** liburu bat irakurri du
 J slowly book one read AUX

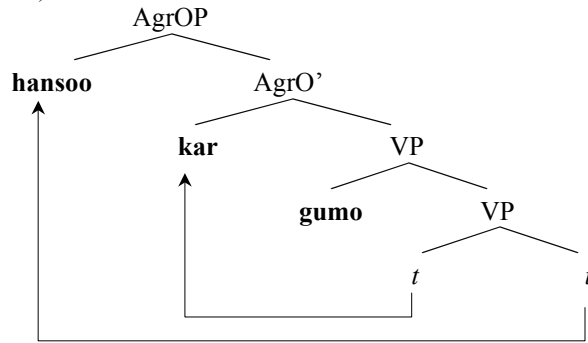


The same reasoning holds for Zarma. Remember that, in this language, on top of the OV order, manner adverbs are obligatorily post-verbal. Let us assume that Zarma objects also raise to SpecAgrOP. Then, the difference between Basque and Zarma would be that Zarma also raises the verb out of VP, whereas Basque does not. In this way, both objects and verbs necessarily precede manner adverbs in Zarma.

- 6) a. ✓ Zankaa na hansoo kar **gumo**
 child ASP dog beat a lot
 “The child beats the dog a lot”
 b. * Zankaa na hansoo **gumo** kar
 child ASP dog a lot beat
 c. * Zankaa na **gumo** hansoo kar
 child ASP a lot dog beat



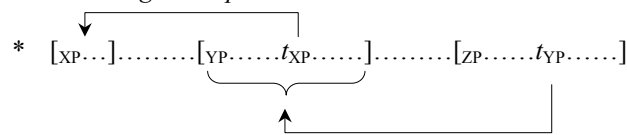
18) *Sister to VP*



3.3. Extraction

In order to account for the extraction paradigms, I am going to make use of a recurrent generalization in the literature known as the Freezing Principle, which states that it is not possible to sub-extract out of a constituent that has previously been moved (i.e., the moved constituent gets “frozen”)⁴.

19) *The Freezing Principle*



3.3.1. Basque

Under (19), the islandhood of Basque objects (see the paradigm in 8) follows. I have proposed that they obligatorily raise to SpecAgrOP. Consequently, once there, they are frozen, and further extraction is impossible⁵. One further set of data that confirms this hypothesis is presented below⁶. In Basque, finite complement clauses do not check Case. Therefore, they can appear either in post-verbal or preverbal position, as shown in (20). However, extraction out of these clauses is acceptable only if they are post-verbal (21a):

⁴ See Stepanov (2001) for a recent account and references. Note also that the Freezing Principle is not absolute, there being a few counterexamples to it. The following grammatical sentence, where extraction takes place out of a subject that has already moved to SpecIP, is due to Ross (1967):

i) ✓ [Which car] was [the roof of *t*] damaged by the explosion?

I will assume, nonetheless, that the Freezing Principle is robust enough for our purposes here (see again Stepanov (2001) for extensive evidence in this direction). I will treat it essentially as a generalisation, without any attempt at deriving it.

⁵ An identical effect is predicted for Zarma objects. However, at present I haven't any data regarding this prediction.

⁶ I would like to thank Gorka Elordieta and Ricardo Etxepare for their help with this paradigm. The same point was made by Ormazabal *et al* (1994), using three levels of embedding in affirmative clauses.

extraction out of preverbal clauses is ungrammatical (21b). This can be explained if subordinate clauses follow their selecting verb in their base position. They may optionally raise, in which case they precede the verb. However, once they have raised, they are frozen, and further extraction becomes impossible.

- 20) a. ✓Ez dut uste [Jonek liburua irakurri duenik]
 no AUX think J book read AUX.C
 “I don’t think that Jon has read the book”
 b. ✓Ez dut [Jonek liburua irakurri duela] uste
 no AUX J book read AUX.C think
- 21) a. ✓Zer ez duzu uste [irakurri duenik Jonek *t*?]
 what no AUX think read AUX.C J
 “What don’t you think that Jon has read?”
 b. *Zer ez duzu [irakurri duenik Jonek *t*] uste?
 what no AUX read AUX.C J think

3.3.2. Dutch

Turning now to Dutch, remember that in this language extraction out of objects is licit as long as they have not scrambled across a *time* adverb. The relevant paradigm is repeated below.

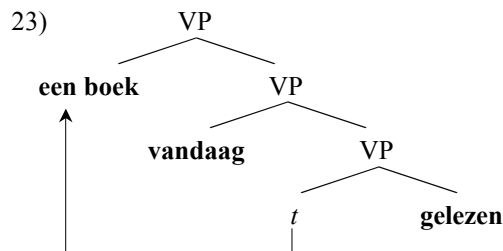
- 7) a. ✓[Over wie] heb jij [een gerucht *t*] gehoord?
 over who have you a rumour heard
 “Who have you heard a rumour about?”
 b. ✓[Over wie] heb jij **maar al te graag** [een gerucht *t*] gehoord?
 over who have you but all too gladly a rumour heard
 c. ✓[Over wie] heb jij [een gerucht *t*] **maar al te graag** gehoord?
 over who have you a rumour but all too gladly heard
 d. ✓[Over wie] heb jij **vandaag** [een gerucht *t*] gehoord?
 over who have you today a rumour heard
 e. * [Over wie] heb jij [een gerucht *t*] **vandaag** gehoord?
 over who have you a rumour today heard

Examples (7a), (7b), and (7d) seem quite unproblematic. In neither of these sentences is there evidence that the object has moved (recall that I am assuming that Dutch objects do not raise to AgrOP). Hence, extraction is licit. The main interest here lies in the contrast between (7c) and (7e). In both cases, the object has scrambled across and adverb –a manner adverb in the former example, a time adverb in the latter. However, only the former permits extraction. In the terms I have developed so far, this means that scrambling across manner adverbs does not involve movement (as I already hypothesized in section 3.2). However, scrambling across time adverbs *must* involve movement, if we are to capture the ungrammaticality of (7e).

In support of this hypothesis, note that if we try to combine a manner and a time adverb in the same clause, the manner adverb must *follow* the time adverb (22a). The reverse order is ungrammatical (22b).

- 22) a. ✓ Marie heeft **vandaag langzaam** een boek gelezen
 M has today slowly a book read
 “Today, Marie has read a book slowly”
 b. ?* Marie heeft **langzaam vandaag** een boek gelezen
 M has slowly today a book read

This contrast suggests that time adverbs are merged higher than manner adverbs. That is, while manner adverbs can be merged either to the bare verb or to VP –see (11) and (12)-, time adverbs are necessarily merged no lower than VP. The consequence is that the [O Adv V] order can only be derived via movement, as in (23). Hence, objects scrambled across a time adverb surface in a derived position and, according to (19), disallow further sub-extraction.



This analysis makes an interesting prediction with regard to a paradigm that, to my knowledge, has not been discussed before⁷. In Dutch, the adverb *snel* ‘quickly’ is ambiguous between a time and a manner reading. In the manner reading, it means “to do something in a short time”, whereas in its time reading it means “to do something immediately after a certain event”⁸. The two sentences below are ambiguous.

- 24) a. Marie heeft **snel** een boek gelezen
 M has quickly a book read
 (*manner and time readings available*)
 b. Marie heeft een boek **snel** gelezen
 M has a book quickly read
 (*manner and time readings available*)

In (24a) both readings are derived by leaving the object *in situ*. The manner and time positions for *snel* are both higher than the base position of the object, hence the ambiguity. Example (24b) is slightly different. The analysis developed so far posits that scrambling across a time adverb involves movement, as opposed to scrambling across a manner adverb. Therefore, the

⁷ I would like to thank Gertjan Postma for pointing out these data to me.

⁸ The time reading is synonymous with the adverb *gauw*.

time reading of (24b) is derived by moving the object across the adverb, whereas the manner reading is the consequence of merging the adverb below the object, without invoking movement. The correctness of this analysis is confirmed by the following minimal pair.

- 25) a. [Van welke schrijver] heb jij **snel** [een boek *t*] gelezen?
 of which writer have you quickly a book read
 “Which writer have you read a book by quickly?”
(manner and time readings available)
- b. [Van welke schrijver] heb jij [een boek *t*] **snel** gelezen?
 of which writer have you a book quickly read
(only manner reading available)

As can be seen, (25a), where the object has not scrambled across the adverb, is still ambiguous. However, in (25b), where scrambling has taken place, the time reading is lost. This asymmetry follows from what has been said so far. Assuming the Freezing Principle (19), the possibility of extracting out of the object entails that the object has not moved. In the unscrambled (25a), where the object stays in its base position regardless of the type of adverb, extraction is possible. Now, in (25b), only the manner reading is available because, as we have hypothesized, scrambling across manner adverbs does not involve movement. Hence, the object still allows sub-extraction. The time reading is blocked because it would first require movement of the object to the left of *snel*. No base generation is possible here. However, once the object has moved, further extraction is disallowed, so the subsequent wh- movement operation cannot take place. Because of this, the time reading of (25b) is blocked⁹.

3.4. A final note on object movement

In this section, I have argued that, while Basque objects must always move, Dutch objects only move (though they need not) in the presence of manner adverbials. This suggests that we are looking here at two different phenomena. In other words, why is it that object movement is obligatory in Basque, but not in Dutch?

What I want to propose is that object movement takes place for different reasons in these two languages. In particular, in Basque, it takes place for

⁹ Mahajan (1990) points out a similar paradigm in Hindi. He shows that, if the verb displays no object agreement, an adverb like *jaldii* ‘quickly’ preceding the object is ambiguous between a manner and a time reading. However, if the verb shows object agreement, the same adverb can only receive a time interpretation.

- i) Siitaa jaldii se kaam kartii thii *(no object agreement, ambiguous)*
 S quickly work do be
- ii) Siitaa jaldii se kaam kiyaa *(object agreement, only time reading)*
 S quickly work did

Mahajan explains this contrast by assuming that, in the absence of object agreement, the object stays *in situ*, hence both time and manner adverbs can precede it. However, the presence of agreement forces object raising to SpecAgrOP, with the consequence that only time adverbs can precede the object, not manner adverbs.

purely syntactic reasons, namely, feature checking. The object must move to SpecAgrOP to check Case and agreement features against the AgrO head. Therefore, the movement is obligatory, lest the derivation crashes. On the other hand, in Dutch, object movement takes place for information structure reasons. I assume that in Dutch Case and agreement can be checked against the verbal head directly, without resorting to an AgrOP projection (cf. Yatsuhiko (1999), and Bobaljik & Thrainsson (1998). Object scrambling, whether involving movement or not, is then triggered by the need to achieve a different focus structure, as argued by, i.a., Reinhart (1995) and van Gelderen (2003) (*contra* de Hoop 1992, who treats object scrambling as motivated for case reasons as well). This treatment of Dutch scrambling, especially the movement cases, requires in turn the adoption of a literal view of Bare Phrase Structure (Chomsky (1995), see Starke (2001) and Nilsen (2003) for approaches along this line). Since there is no feature checking involved, there is no attracting head either that could provide a landing site for the raised object. Therefore, the raised object must be able to simply adjoin to a node above the adverb¹⁰.

4. Outlook

In this paper, I have shown that a number of differences between Dutch and Basque follow from presence in the latter vs. absence in the former of an AgrOP projection. In this final section, I explore briefly two implications of this analysis for the wider theory of word order and phrase structure

4.1. Order and structure

If the analysis presented here is on the right track, it provides an argument against Antisymmetry, as outlined by Kayne (1994). If (some) Dutch OV orders can be generated like that in a head final VP structure, it is obviously not true that all languages are underlyingly head initial. Note, though, that one could still maintain a slightly different version of Antisymmetry (cf. Takano (1996), Barbiers (2000), Haider (2000)), where head final projections are allowed under certain circumstances. The analysis developed in this paper would still hold under any of these approaches, with only a small re-adjustment for Basque: instead of being underlyingly VO, it would be OV, the same as Dutch. The difference between Basque and Dutch would then be the same one I have proposed here: while Basque objects raise to SpecAgrOP, Dutch objects remain within VP.

¹⁰ Mark de Vos (p.c.) points out that pronouns always seem to scramble across adverbs in Dutch, and asks whether, given my reasoning, this would imply that an AgrOP is present in these cases. I do not think this is a necessary conclusion, though. To begin with, pronouns can remain unscrambled if they are focused. This behaviour is reminiscent of definite noun phrases, which have a very strong tendency to scramble, but may appear *in situ* if focused. After Reinhart (1995), we can establish a correlation between old/new information and scrambling. Definite NP and pronouns, conveying always old information, will show a strong preference to appear scrambled. However, if they happen to be focused, they remain unscrambled so as to receive stress via the Nuclear Stress Rule. In short, I do not think the distribution of pronouns requires the postulation of an AgrOP layer in Dutch.

These hypotheses, in affirming that all languages are underlyingly OV, still manage to do without the traditional Head Directionality Parameter. Under this view, VO orders are derived by verb movement to the left of the object. Note, however, that Pearson (2000a, b) has argued that Malagasy VO orders do not involve verb or object movement alone. Rather, it is the whole VP that moves around higher material. If he is right, it would mean that both VO and OV orders can be base generated, and that it will be necessary to build a certain directionality inside syntactic derivations, instead of relegating it to a (post-syntactic) linearisation component¹¹.

4.2. (Non) universality of functional projections

In this paper, I have claimed that Basque has an AgrOP projection, whereas Dutch lacks it. This idea, while contradicting work of the so-called Italian school (Rizzi (1997) and Cinque (1999) being the two major exponents), follows a line of work that assumes that functional projections are not universal, and should be learnable on a language-specific basis (Iatridou (1990), Thráinsson (1996), Bobaljik & Thráinsson (1998), Bury (2003)). More specifically, it is inspired in Bobaljik & Thráinsson's (1998) claim that some languages realize AgrSP as a projection separate from TP (e.g., Icelandic), whereas others conflate tense and agreement features within the same head (e.g., English). Similarly, I have argued that Dutch object agreement features reside in the VP itself, whereas Basque realizes them in a separate projection, AgrOP.

Bobaljik & Thráinsson also argue that the presence of AgrSP as a separate projection can be inferred from the agreement paradigm of a particular language. If subject agreement is sufficiently rich, the language will always realize AgrSP. If agreement is not rich enough, the language may or may not have an AgrSP. Its presence will have to be discovered by other means (see their article for details). Following this line of thought, we can argue that Basque will also have an AgrOP projection, since it shows rich object agreement on the auxiliary. On the other hand, Dutch object agreement is non-existent, and there does not seem to be any evidence in favour of an AgrOP –as opposed to, for instance, Zarma, where object agreement does not seem to exist either, but which, unlike Dutch, always places its manner adverbs in a post-verbal position.

Finally, note that, although lacking an AgrOP, Dutch may well have an AgrSP. The relevant data come from van Craenenbroeck's (2004) work on Dutch ellipsis. He describes the following form of ellipsis in the dialect of Wambeek.

¹¹ Pearson, in fact, argues that Malagasy lacks head movement across the board. Hence, VP movement to higher positions serves the same function as verb movement in more familiar languages (see Aboh (2003) for a similar reasoning regarding African languages). Malagasy could still be made compatible with the "universal OV" hypothesis if we assume a derivation like the following: a) the object raises out of VP; b) the remnant VP moves to the left of the object, yielding a VO order; c) the constituent containing the raised object and the remnant VP is what moves as a whole to higher positions. I will leave this issue for future work, though.

- 26) A: Marie zie Pierre geirn
 M sees P gladly
 “Marie loves Pierre”
 B: Z’en duut
 she.NEG does
 “No, she doesn’t”

In this elliptical reply, we find the verb *duun* ‘to do’, which functions as a dummy, much as its English counterpart. The interesting observation that van Craenenbroeck makes is that this verb shows subject agreement, but it cannot be inflected for tense at all. Ignoring the finer details of his analysis, he models this behaviour by arguing that Dutch features an AgrSP projection dominating TP. This type of ellipsis targets TP, but leaves AgrSP intact. Therefore, while tense features are not available, subject agreement features can still trigger the observed morphology on the verb. If both his analysis and the one I have presented here are correct, it would suggest that AgrSP and AgrOP are actually different entities (*contra* Chomsky (1993), who argued in favour of a unique AgrP category, AgrSP and AgrOP being only a notational convenience).

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