

Focus in Basque*

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Abstract

This article presents the basic facts of focalization in Basque and reviews some of the approaches pursued in recent years. Like *w/h*-words, foci occur immediately to the left of the inflected verb, apparently in clause initial position. Also like *w/h*-words, they can be extracted to higher clauses, trigger pied-piping and seem to target the same position. The V2-like effects prompted by foci (and *w/h*-words) are difficult to analyze in a symmetric syntactic analysis because Basque is largely head-final. If the focus-verb adjacency is to be analyzed along familiar V2 lines, we need a left-headed phrase to which foci and inflected verb may move. The article reviews in detail two proposals for such phrase: CP and Laka's Sigma Phrase, pointing out the problems they raise.

1. Word Order and Focalization

Basque is a designated position focus language where focalized phrases must occur immediately to the left of the verb, although I will have to qualify this statement as we proceed. In fact, this adjacency between foci and verbal elements is one of the clearest observational features of word order in Basque, and some traditional grammarians have claimed it is the only word order restriction to be found in this language. This is so because, leaving operators of this type aside, word order is extremely flexible in Basque. However, abstracting away from numerous descriptive and analytical problems, I will follow standard assumptions and claim that the neutral basic word order is of the SOV type, with right-headed phrases.¹ Thus, the sentence in (a) can be interpreted as a neutral

statement where everything is new information, while that in (b) or (c) cannot. Rather, (1b,c) must be interpreted as containing a focalized subject:

- (1) a. Jonek eskutitza irakurri du (SOV)
 Jon letter read has
 'Jon has read the letter'
 b. Jonek irakurri du eskutitza (SVO)
 Jon read has letter
 c. Eskutitza, Jonek irakurri du (OSV)
 letter Jon read has

The position occupied by the focalized element plus verb unit is clause initial. Where, as in (c), any element precedes the focus, it is intonationally separated from the latter by a pause and interpreted as a topic, with properties rather different from foci, as we will see (for a discussion of similar effects in Hindi-Urdu, Malayalam, Western Bade and Tangale, see Kidwai (this volume), where a minimalist PF-adjunction approach is offered). In this presentation I will review first the basic data on focalization in Basque² and then some of the typical approaches that have been pursued in the last years. The discussion will concentrate on the exact structural position of both the focus and the verb. After describing the basic facts in Section 2, I will show that a) there is a single functional projection in root and embedded clauses to which both foci and *wh*-words move and b) that this position is the specifier position of the highest functional layer of the clause (Section 3). Section 4 will review some of the problems in identifying this functional projection.

2. The Basic Facts

Foci in Basque share the same distributional properties as *wh*-words: both occur in a clause initial position, optionally preceded by topics, and immediately followed by the verb and inflection. Thus, parallel to the examples in (1) we find the interrogative structures in (2):

- (2) a. Nork irakurri du eskutitza?
 who read AUX letter
 'Who has read the letter?'
 b. Eskutitza, nork irakurri du?

In both questions and focalized clauses, this movement to the left with verb second-like effects is obligatory, so that a sentence like (3) where the focalized constituent remains in situ is ungrammatical:

- (3) *JONEK eskutitza irakurri du
 Jon letter read AUX
 'It is John that read the letter'

The operator/focus adjacency is then, at least descriptively, quite similar to the residual V2 phenomena in better known languages, and I will be using this label in what follows.

Foci, like *wh*-words, can also undergo cyclic movement with bridge verbs, as in the following example:

- (4) JONEK uste dut [t esan du-ela Mikelek [t idatzi du-ela
 Jon think AUX say AUX-that Mikel write AUX-that
 eskutitza
 letter
 'It is Jon that I think Mikel has said has written the letter'

This movement seems to be cyclic, perhaps through intervening C complexes, since on top of the left adjacency with the matrix verb *uste* 'think', we also find a preferred verb initial pattern in both the most deeply embedded source clause and the intervening one. This may indicate that in each clause we find focus movement to the left periphery and left adjacency with the verb, producing an apparent verb initial pattern once the operator has moved on. Thus, the traces in the previous example stand for this probable movement of the focalized element through a functional projection we can provisionally label CP at this stage. The same pattern has been described for *wh*-words, which also produce apparent V1 effects in intervening clauses when extracted:

- (5) NORK uste duzu [t esan du-ela Mikelek [t idatzi du-ela
 Jon think AUX say AUX-that Mikel write AUX-that
 eskutitza
 letter
 'Who do you think Mikel has said has written the letter?'
 (Lit. 'Who do you think has Mikel said has written the letter?')

One difference in this area between *wh*-words and foci is that *wh*-extraction is of course obligatory in this context: the bridge verbs in (5) are all [-wh] and do

not subcategorize for an indirect question, so that the question operator is acceptable only if it takes scope over the whole sentence as a direct question. On the other hand, there is no subcategorization for focalization, and the focalized element may remain in either the embedded clause or move to the matrix. This is shown in (6) and (7):

- (6) a. Nik uste dut [MIKELEK idatzi du-ela eskutitza]
 I think AUX Mikel write AUX-that letter
 'I think that it is Mikel that has written the letter'
 b. MIKELEK uste dut [t idatzi du-ela eskutitza]
 Mikel think AUX write AUX-that letter
 'It is Mikel that I think has written the letter'
- (7) a. *Nik uste dut [NORK idatzi du-ela eskutitza]
 I think AUX who write AUX-that letter
 *'I think who has written the letter'
 b. NORK uste duzu [t idatzi du-ela eskutitza]
 Mikel think AUX write AUX-that letter
 'Who do you think has written the letter?'

(6) shows that, at least in overt syntax, the focalized element may occupy an operator position in its own clause or at a higher clause. Tsimpli (1995) shows that in Greek foci must have matrix scope at LF, regardless of their overt location. This accounts for (8), where a *wh*-word in the matrix clause cannot cooccur with a focalized element in the embedded clause:

- (8) *Pjos ipe oti tin MARIA sinantise?
 who-NOM said that the-ACC Maria met
 'Who said that met MARIA?'

If there is one single functional projection to host both *wh*-words and foci at the root level, and the embedded focalized element must take matrix scope, the two operators in (8) would be competing for the same position, accounting for the deviant status of the clause. In Basque, however, the sentence corresponding to (8) is perfectly grammatical:

- (9) Nork esan du [MIREN topatu du-ela antzoki-an]?
 who say AUX Miren meet AUX-that theater-at
 'Who said that it was Mary (s)he met at the theater?'

This might indicate, within Tsimpli's assumptions, that either a) focus in Basque

need not take matrix scope or b) that there are two different landing sites for these operators at the root level. The first option seems to be preferable, since, as (10) shows, *wh*-word and focus are incompatible in the same clause:

- (10) *Nork ikusi du MIREN antzoki-an?
 Who see AUX Mary theater-at
 'Who saw MARY at the theater'

Notice by the way that (10) also shows that absorption is not possible between the two operator types, just as it is impossible between *wh*-words and *yes/no* operators. Otherwise, one would expect (10) to be as acceptable as (11):

- (11) Nork ikusi du nor antzoki-an?
 who see AUX who theater-at
 'Who saw whom at the theater?'

Tsimpli also shows that two different positions are available in embedded clauses in Greek (12a), so that focus and *wh*-word are compatible in such contexts. In Basque (12b), though, this is as bad as (10):

- (12) a. Mu-ipan o YANIS ti agorase
 Me-told the-NOM Yanis what bought
 'They told me what YANIS bought'
 b. Galdetu didate (*JONEK) zer (*JONEK) erosi du-en³
 ask AUX what buy AUX-COMP
 'They have asked me what JOHN bought'

The focalized element may not be moved to the left periphery of these clauses, either preceding or following the *wh*-word, suggesting again there is one single position available.

The same assumptions account for the extraction facts in (13) and (14). These show that the embedded clause may include neither a focalized constituent nor a *wh*-word, since a *wh*-word has originated there, occupying the only operator position available before moving to the matrix clause:⁴

- (13) ??Zer uste du Mikelek [ETXEAN aurkitu du-ela Jonek]?
 What think AUX Mikel home-at find AUX-that Jon
 'What does Mikel think that JON has found at home?'

- (14) *??*Zer galdetu du Mikelek [NON aurkitu du-en Jonek]?*
 What ask AUX Mikel where find AUX-that Jon
 'What has Mikel asked where Jon has found'

Similarly, in (15) an adjunct may not be overtly extracted from an indirect clause:

- (15) *??ETXEAN galdetu du Mikelek [Jonek liburua aurkitu du-en]*
 home-at ask AUX Mikel Jon book find AUX-COMP
 'It is at home that Mikel has asked whether Jon has found the book'

The only possible interpretation is for the operator to originate in the matrix clause. The violation is less severe here than in other cases, and this might be related to the fact that the empty *yes/no* operator in the embedded interrogative clause in (15) does not even trigger verb movement, as opposed to *wh*-operators.

The previous facts seem to indicate that both foci and *wh*-words actually move to the same position in both matrix and embedded clauses in Basque, and that a single position is available for them in both contexts.

3. Pied-piping and Focalization

Let us assume, as in many analyses of focalization (Brody 1995; Rizzi 1997), that the relevant morphological feature that triggers movements is a strong [+F] feature which can be checked by some functional head. The parallelism between focalization and question formation leads us to expect that, in the same way as interrogative operator features can percolate up in pied-piping configurations, something similar may happen with focal operators, and in fact this is so. This property is interesting in that such percolation typically involves some feature transfer process from the highest specifier position of a projection or from a position inside that specifier. Its availability with foci (and *wh*-words) might be taken to indicate that these elements occupy a position inside the highest functional specifier position.

To begin with, let us examine simple structures where the focalized constituent occurs inside a larger phrase. Just as *wh*-words can pied-pipe constituents within which they appear, foci also can (indeed must) drag constituents that include them:

- (16) [JONEN lagunek] idatzi zuten eskutitza
 Jon's friends write AUX letter
 'JON's friends wrote the letter'
- (17) *JONEN lagunek eskutitza idatzi zuten
 Jon's friends letter write AUX
 'JON's friends wrote the letter'

In (16) the focalized constituent is the genitive modifier of the head noun, and the whole DP must occur in the initial position, left adjacent to the verbal element, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (17). The same data are found in the following two examples, where the focalized element originates deep inside the subject DP. Again, the whole constituent must occur initially and pre-verbally:

- (18) [JONEN etxe-ko teilatuak] izan ditu itoginak
 Jon's house-of roof have AUX leaks
 'The roof of JON's house (has) leaks'
- (19) *JONEN etxeko teilatuak] itoginak izan ditu
 leaks have AUX

Notice that an adjunct is being focalized here. There is evidence, though, that the focus occupies a derived specifier position in Basque, in keeping with the previous examples. Since extraction from DPs is not possible in Basque, the sentences above are in fact the obligatory patterns.

The parallelism with question formation extends to less usual pied-piping patterns, like the ones in the following examples:

- (20) [JONEK idatzi du-ela liburua] esan du Peiok
 Jon write AUX-that book say AUX Peio
 'Peio said that JON wrote the book' ('That JON wrote the book has Peio said')
- (21) *JONEK idatzi duela liburua] Peiok esan du
 Peio say AUX
- (22) [NORK idatzi du-ela liburua] esan du Peiok?
 who write AUX-that book say AUX Peio
 'Who wrote the book has Peio said?'

In (20), the embedded clause contains the subject JONEK as a focalized element. As such this occupies the position immediately to the left of the embedded verb. However, there is yet another verb-second phenomenon: the whole clause itself

must occupy the position immediately to the left of the matrix verb *esan* 'say'. When, as in (21), some element intervenes, the result is ungrammatical. (22) shows that exactly the same pattern can be found with *wh*-words. Both operator types, foci and *wh*-words, have scope over the entire structure. This is particularly clear in the case of *wh*-operators. Observe that (22) is a direct question, even though the *wh*-word still occupies a position inside the embedded clause. In fact, it could not be an embedded question, since the matrix verb here does not select interrogative complements, and such clausal pied-piping is not possible with interrogative complements. Thus, the *wh*-word must either move alone to the matrix pre-verbal position or pied-pipe the whole embedded clause to that same position. Another example of clausal pied-piping can be observed in the following examples, where the focalized constituent occurs within a relative clause. Again, the focus is preverbal with respect to the verb of the relative clause, and now the whole DP containing the noun and its modifying clause must occur immediately to the left of the matrix verb:

(23) [[JONEK idatzi du-en] liburuak] izan ditu salmenta onak
Jon write AUX-COMP book have AUX sale good
'The book that JON has written sold well'

(24) *[[JONEK idatzi duen] liburuak] salmenta onak izan ditu
sale good have AUX

(25) [[NORK idatzi du-en] liburuak] izan ditu salmenta onak?
who write AUX-COMP book have AUX sale good
'The book that who wrote had good sales?'

Notice that the possibility of focalizing or questioning inside these islands is possible because there is no extraction in the overt syntax. Thus, (26) shows the same pattern with focalization inside an adjunct:

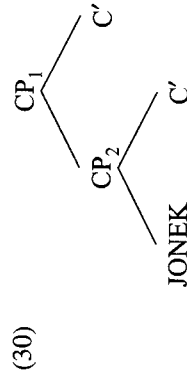
- (26) a. [MINTEGIA egin ondoren] joan ziren afaltze-ra
workshop do after go AUX dinner-to
'They went for dinner after having the WORKSHOP'
(Lit. 'After having the WORKSHOP did they go for dinner')
b. *[MINTEGIA egin ondoren] afaltze-ra joan ziren
dinner-to go AUX

One possible analysis of these structures might go as follows. It is well known that operators in the specifier position can have scope outside of that position over the phrase they specify. Some well-known instances of this phenomenon

can be observed in simpler pied-piping structures in English (27), in NPI licensing (28) and in bound pronoun variable interpretations ((29); Reinhart 1983; May 1985):

- (27) a. Whose book did you read?
b. Which author's book did you read?
*The book by which author did you read?
- (28) a. Few students knew any answer
b. Few students' parents met any professor
*The parents of few students met any professor
- (29) a. The mother of everyone saw him
b. Everyone's mother saw him
c. Every student's mother saw him (?)

Whatever the explanation, the fact seems to be that operator features in specifier positions can percolate up to the maximal projection they specify, and have therefore scope over the c-command domain of that phrase. If foci and *wh*-words occupy a specifier position of the highest relevant functional category in their clause, we would have a parallel situation. Assuming for the time being that the position to which these operators move is CP, foci and *wh*-words would also have scope over anything c-commanded by CP itself. Thus, in (20) above, the focus JONEK would move to Spec of the embedded clause CP, and the whole CP₂ itself would be pied-piped to the Specifier of the matrix CP₁, as in (30):



This position is in effect parallel to that of the negative element that licenses the NPI in the English example (28) above. Here the scope of focus is the whole root CP (the upper one). A confirmation that the embedded clause as a whole occupies the Spec,CP position can be found in the fact that the clause containing the focus can also undergo cyclic movement as in (31):

- (31) [JONEK idatzi du-ela liburuak] uste dut nik [t esan du-ela
Jon write AUX-that book think AUX I say AUX-that

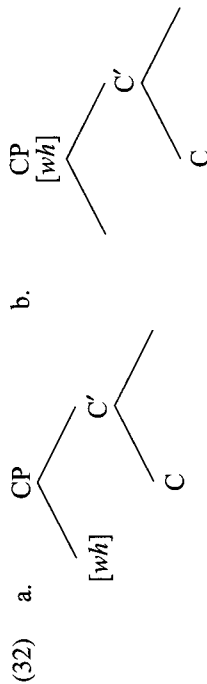
Peruk]]

Peru

'I think Peru said JON wrote the book'
(Lit. 'That JON wrote the book do I think did Peru say')

Here the whole clausal complement of *say* appears now immediately to the left not of *say* itself, but of the root *think*. Notice that we also find here the inversion effects which we claimed above to be the result of cyclic Spec to Spec movement. These facts provide some evidence that indeed the clause containing the focus ends up in the Spec of the relevant functional category, CP.⁵ In any event, and pending more refined analyses of this complex phenomenon, it seems desirable to assume that the landing site of both operators is similar, so that the mechanisms that account for clausal pied-piping in one can be extended to the other at no cost.

In Ortiz de Urbina (1993), I assumed that these structures actually involve percolation of an operator feature from Spec up to CP, in such a way that the feature actually moved, and Spec lost it:

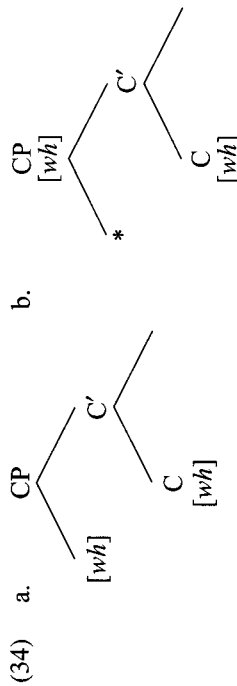


In this way, I accounted for the fact that the *wh*-word in (22) occurs inside a declarative complement of a verb that does not subcategorize for questions. The apparent mismatch between the selected [-wh] complementizer head of the complement clause and the *wh*-word in its Specifier is resolved after percolation, where the [wh] feature physically disappears from Spec and moves up to CP itself. This also explains why clausal pied-piping patterns are not possible with subcategorized questions, as in the relevant interpretation of (33):

- (33) *[Nor etorri d-en] galdetu du Jonek?
who arrive AUX-COMP ask AUX Jon
'Who has arrived has Jon asked?'

If the complement C is [+wh], the operator criterion requires that it be matched by a [+wh] element in its Specifier position. This will be possible if the *wh*-word

retains its operator feature. If the latter percolates up to CP as in the pied-piping structure in (33), a mismatch occurs with the resulting ungrammaticality:



Since focalization is not involved in selection, clausal pied-piping should be possible with foci inside embedded questions. This is so, and an interesting case is actually that of emphatic *wh*-words, which we may assume contain both a [wh] feature and a [F] feature. The former may not be percolated, as indicated, but the latter may, as shown in (35):

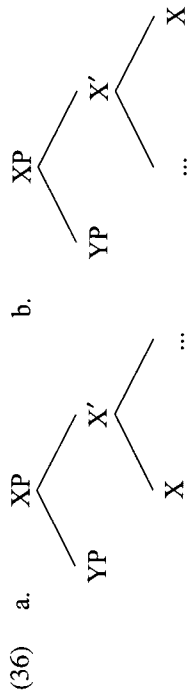
- (35) [NOR etorri d-en] galdetu du Jonek
who arrive AUX-COMP ask AUX Jon
'Jon asked WHO has arrived'
(Lit. 'WHO has arrived has Jon asked')

Again, nothing may intervene here between focus and verb. Notice that the operator feature that is being percolated here is the focal one, and the crucial difference with (33) is that (35) is not a direct question. The operator feature that has matrix scope is focalization, not an interrogative one.

4. The Analytic Problem: Head Hunting

As shown throughout the preceding description, *wh*-words and foci display many distributional similarities that must be captured somehow. Traditional grammars of Basque, since Altube (1929), also state that the two elements behave in the same way, and occupy the same position, which we have identified as left peripheral, that is, clause initial. Descriptively, the situation described above is reminiscent of residual V2 phenomena as discussed by Rizzi (1996), in the sense that we have a certain type of verb movement and adjacency only when an operator is present, and I have been pointing out the similarities by referring to the functional nodes to the left as related to CP.

However, the main problem we face when dealing with Basque lies in the fact that the language is rather thoroughly right headed. That is, V2 effects are achieved straightforwardly, in terms of structure like (36a), provided the operator and the verbal head move to the same phrase, usually identified as CP or IP, but not with (36b):



YP-X adjacency is not immediately evident in a right headed language like Basque, where absolutely all lexical material would intervene in (b) between YP and its corresponding head position X. More precisely, while focus movement to the left is easy, since targets abound in that area, the main problem is to derive the apparent verb movement to the left, because in principle one does not expect to find heads in that area. I will then concentrate on this standard research line, one which tries to identify some left-headed functional category which may serve as landing site for both operators and heads in the appropriate left periphery. Other alternatives will only be briefly mentioned later on in the text.

4.1 *Left-headed CP*

Before the proliferation of functional categories, options for left heads were severely limited, and in fact the only likely candidate I found when first looking into this problem was CP itself, linking the Basque facts with similar ones in neighboring languages like Spanish (see Ortiz de Urbina (1995) for a review). This line is possible because of the fact that Basque complementizers are not free morphemes, but bound clitics always attached to inflection. When inflection is final, they will also be final, as in (37a), but when it is not, as in many of the preceding examples and (37b), they will not either:

- (37) a. Jonek uste du [Mikelek eskutitza idatzi du-*ela*]
 Jon think AUX Mikel letter write AUX-that
 'Jon thinks that Mikel wrote the letter'
 b. Jonek uste du [MIKELEK idatzi du-*ela* eskutitza]
 'Jon thinks that MIKEL wrote the letter'

In examples like (37b), the complementizer will occur attached to the verb in second position, followed by any remaining clausal material.

I will return to the basic assumption later, but let us see first how this hypothesis can account for the data. In fact, the analysis sounds rather familiar, from work by Rizzi (1996), Brody (1990), (1995), Tuller (1992), Horvath (1995), etc. The operator feature of *wh*-words and foci in Spec,CP must be matched by a corresponding feature in the C head. This independent feature must be supplied by some head provided with that feature and moving to C. Rizzi locates the [*wh*] feature in Infl, and we can follow Horvath (1995) and Tuller (1992), and assume that the syntactic feature [Focus] can be hosted by some functional head, among them Infl itself. Thus, if Spec of CP is occupied by an element bearing an operator feature, C will have to possess that feature to agree with its specifier, and movement of the functional head hosting the feature will supply it.

These hypotheses are not enough by themselves, since the head moving to C in Basque V2 sentences like (38) is not Infl alone, but Infl and V, whether amalgamated in synthetic forms or as the complex head of periphrastic verbs:

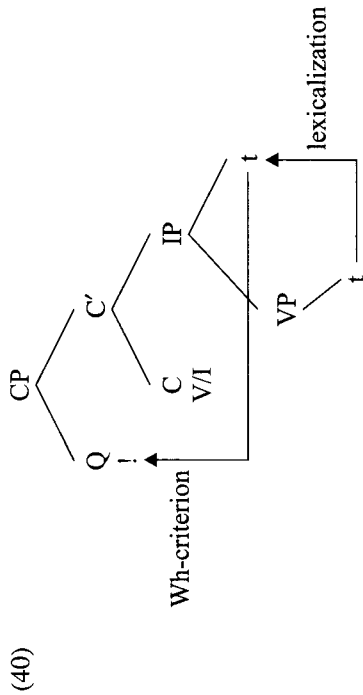
- (38) a. Zer irakurri du Jonek?
 what read AUX Jon
 'What did Jon read?'
 b. LIBURUA irakurri du Jonek
 book read AUX Jon
 'Jon has read THE BOOK'

In effect, something similar happens in the Romance languages, as in the Spanish (39), with a periphrastic verb:

- (39) a. ¿A quién ha visto María?
 who has seen Mary
 'Who has Mary seen?'
 b. *¿A quién ha María visto?

Unlike similar examples in Italian, in Basque, as well as in Spanish, the 'participle + auxiliary' unit may not be broken, and this could be captured by an extended head-to-head movement of V to C through Infl. We must therefore find a reason for V to move to Infl first; once there, further movement to C will be prompted by the Operator Criterion. For this purpose, I will adopt here the analysis of Focus phenomena developed in Tuller (1992) and Horvath (1995). The functional head hosting the syntactic features [*wh*] and [Focus] must be

LEXICALIZED in some languages, that is, a lexical head must move to it. This is achieved in Basque by head-to-head movement of V to Infl. Once the head Infl is thus lexicalized, the new complex V/I unit must move to C, where specifier-head agreement with the feature-bearing operator will satisfy the Operator Criterion. All of this is represented in (40):



We would then derive the desired adjacency and leftward movement of foci, *wh*-words and verbs. Anything to the left of Spec,CP would then be a topicalized constituent, intonationally separate from the main clausal structure.

Lexicalization of INFL, which accounts for the need to move the participle along with the auxiliary, cannot be as such considered to be a parameter, since this runs into some facts from French Basque dialects. These dialects admit Aux-to-C raising in questions and focalizations, leaving behind the lexical verb and producing V2 contexts where the second element is the auxiliary head. The two patterns are exemplified in:

- (41) a. Zer irakurri du Jonek? (Common)
 what read has John
 'What has Jon read?'
 b. LIBURUA irakurri du Jonek.
 book read has John
 'Jon has read the BOOK'

- (42) a. Zer du Jonek irakurri? (Northern)
 what has Jon read
 b. LIBURUA du Jonek irakurri.
 book has Jon read

Notice that the dialectal distribution is not V+INFL movement in some dialects versus INFL movement in the others.⁶ Rather, Southern dialects must move V+INFL in these cases, whereas northern dialects have both options. This cannot be a parameter, in the sense that the options cannot be simultaneously positive and negative. I will leave this issue open here, but I will return to what I consider to prompt the V to I movement later on. From a descriptive perspective it seems then that northern dialects show both a Romance and an English type of residual V2 pattern.

This analysis rests on the assumption of a left headed CP. There are several clause initial non-clitic subordinating elements, as in the following sentences:

- (43) Galdetu du [ea Mikel heldu d-en]
 ask AUX Mikel arrive AUX-COMP
 'He has asked whether Mikel has arrived'

- (44) Entzunik [ezen hil z-ela diruak behar zituen zapatagina...
 hearing that die AUX-COMP money need AUX shoemaker
 'upon hearing that the shoemaker who needed the money had died...'

In fact, causal *ezen* does behave like a clitic in some French Basque dialects, often attaching to the right of the first clausal constituent:

- (45) xerriak ezen lakhet du zikhinpean
 pig since like AUX in the dirt
 'since pigs like to be in the dirt'

However, at least *ezen* can be analyzed (diachronically) as phrasal, and could occupy the Spec position, rather than initial C, so these elements do not provide strong evidence in favor of independent left complementizers. The only fact that can be used in this line of research, other than the evidence in question and other cases of leftward head movement we will turn to, is that the clitic nature of real complementizing particles does not offer any strong evidence to the contrary. This is rather scant for language acquisition, as Uriagereka (1992) points out.

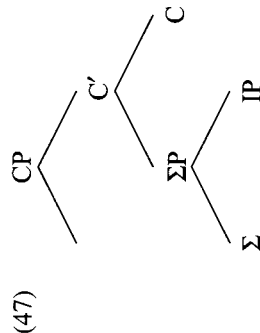
4.2 *Laka's* Σ -phrase

With the proliferation of functional categories, more possibilities emerged. The hard-core inflectional categories themselves, AGR and TNS cannot help, since they are plainly right headed. However, there is another candidate for a left head in Basque, namely, *Laka's* (1990) Σ -phrase. The main motivation for this left

functional head comes from another conspicuous movement to the left, that found in negative clauses. As the example in (46) shows the negative morpheme in root clauses appears to the left of the clause, fused with the tense-bearing element. The subject usually precedes negation, as in (b), but this is not obligatory in any way:

- (46) a. Jonek liburua irakurri du
 Jon book read AUX
 'Jon has read the book'
 b. Jonek ez du liburua irakurri
 NEG AUX book read
 'Jon has not read the book'

In order to analyze negation facts, Laka assumes a structure like that in (47):



In this account, Infl would move up to the Σ head, in order to c-command it, separating the auxiliary from the participle, which would remain in situ. We thus have another possible target for heads and phrases appropriately located in the left periphery of the clause. Although Laka does not deal with focalization *per se* or with question formation, she explicitly links this structure to one type of focalization, emphatic affirmation, so that the Σ head would be a polarity head for positive and negative poles. The positive counterpart of negative *ez* would be the prefix *ba*, diachronically related to the affirmative *bai* 'yes', exemplified in (48):

- (48) a. Ba-daki Jonek egia
 Ba-knows Jon truth
 'Jon does know the truth'
 b. Ez daki Jonek egia
 NEG know Jon truth
 'Jon does not know the truth'

These patterns are described in traditional grammars as verb focalization patterns, where this means not contrastive verb focalization, but positive emphasis similar to the one indicated in the English glosses. Observe the parallelism with negative formation, in that the inflected form, here an amalgamated synthetic form also including the root for the main verb, has been displaced to the left periphery of the clause.

There are some problems with this extension of the negative analysis to incorporate positive focalization. First, there is a certain asymmetry which may or may not be important. This is the fact that while the negative value of Σ is neutral with respect to emphasis, the positive value must be emphatic. So two parameters seem to be involved in this value of Σ : polarity plus emphasis or focalization. It may be an empirical question whether the positive pole of this head is so combined with focalization while the negative pole is not, but a priori there is a surprising asymmetry here. In fact, I think that there are empirical problems with the idea of a positive counterpart to the negative value of this head. The similarity in (48) is in part deceptive. Notice that the particle *ba* is only found in focalization of synthetic verbs, those which like the ones in (48) combine the lexical root with all of the inflectional morphemes usually carried on by the auxiliary. Focalization of a periphrastic verbal form like the one in (49a) is as in (b) rather than as in (c):

- (49) a. Jonek liburua irakurri du
 Jon book read AUX
 'Jon has read the book'
 b. Irakurri du Jonek liburua
 read AUX Jon book
 c. Ba-du Jonek liburua irakurri

The pattern in (c) does exist, but it is dialectal, restricted in distribution, and far more marked than the general one in (b). This just involves movement of the participle plus auxiliary unit to the left periphery again, as opposed to movement of the auxiliary by itself.

Finally, there is a more important empirical problem. This is that *ba* can be shown not to be by itself an emphatic marker. In fact, it shows up in a variety of contexts which do not necessarily have anything to do with emphasis. Thus, it not only shows up in emphatic affirmation, but also in yes/no questions like (50) and in existential sentences like (51) (from Oyharçabal 1984):

- (50) a. Ba-daramazu dirurik?
ba-carry money
 'Do you carry any money with you?'
 b. Ba-daki Jonek egia?
ba-knows Jon truth
 'Does Jon know the truth?'
- (51) a. Ba-da ogia (cf. *Ogia da* 'It is bread')
ba-is bread
 'There is bread'
 b. Lagunak ba-ditut
 Friends *ba-have* (cf. *Lagunak ditut* 'They are friends of mine')/'Ce sont des amis')
 'I have friends' ('J'ai des amis')

In fact, in northern dialects, this particle is also found, according to Rebuschi (1983), with synthetic verbal forms in apparently unmarked contexts. Although the previous contexts do not have much to do with emphasis, they do involve, at least arguably so, verb movement to the left of the clause, and, just like the emphatic affirmation sentences discussed by Laka, they are restricted to synthetic verbal forms. This indicates that the *ba* in emphatic affirmation, which also involves verb movement of synthetic forms, is to be analyzed along with the previous cases, rather than with negation.

What seems to be going on here is actually a problem located at the syntax/phonology interface, related to the fact that tensed forms, whether auxiliaries or synthetic verbs, are clitics in Basque. As a result, in root contexts they always cliticize to the element to the left, forming a prosodic word. So even though word order is, as indicated above, very flexible, unlike periphrastic forms, synthetic ones may not occur clause initially or form the only overt element of the utterance:

- (52) a. *Daki Jonek egia. *Daki
 knows Jon truth. (He) knows (it)
 b. Jakin du Jonek egia. Jakin du
 know AUX Jon truth. know AUX
 'Jon has found out the truth. He has found out about it'

Although I think there is also a syntactic factor of licensing of tense features involved here, I will not pursue this issue. It is enough to point out that tense-

bearing elements are clitics which require a host to their left in root contexts. Thus, the structures with this particle considered by Laka to show the positive value of the Σ head can be analyzed, along traditional lines, as verb focalization structures, which, like the constituent focalization patterns we have examined, involve verbal movement to the left periphery. The appearance of the particle is then a by-product of this movement, a last resort, language specific mechanism to provide a basis to the clitic element in initial position (see Ortiz de Urbina 1994).

Summarizing, the distribution of *ba* is both narrower and wider than that of the purported negative counterpart. It is narrower in that it is exclusively found with synthetic verbal forms, and it is wider in that it appears in a variety of structures other than positive emphasis.

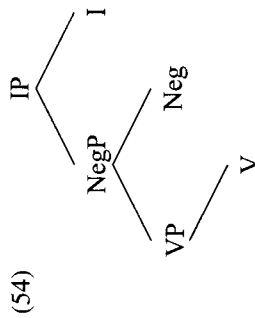
Let us pursue an analysis of these verb focalization structures along the preceding lines. As indicated above, the type of verb focalization involved here is positive emphasis, as opposed to contrastive emphasis. This means that we should perhaps not assume that the feature [+F] originates in V, if we are to maintain the same 'contrastive' interpretation for this feature throughout. Rather, we may have a positive empty operator, similar to the empty yes/no question operator, moving to the Spec position to the left and triggering the usual verb movement pattern to the head position. The particle *ba*, as usual, would supply the phonetic base for the tensed clitic.

We return now to the same problem we had before, namely, the identity of the left headed functional phrase that serves as target for these movements. We began by presenting the possibility of another such phrase in the appropriate position, namely Σ P. However, the motivation for the positive polarity value of Σ is not very compelling, as I have just shown, and with this the motivation for Σ itself is weakened. When considering negative sentences only, the main motivation for Laka's Σ head is the displacement of tensed elements to the left. But we have already seen many other such movements. We might think that we have two different landing sites to the left for tensed elements, one in negative sentences identified by Laka and a different one in other contexts which we are trying to locate, but, in a pre-Rizzi (1995) framework, this would be redundant: if it is difficult enough to motivate one, proposing two is a much more unwarranted move.

It seems to me more economical in the traditional sense to posit that we have movement to the same CP complex in all these cases — question formation, focalization and negation, and that negation does not therefore originate in that position. An alternative position for negation is that displayed in some structures where verb movement seems not to take place, as in relatives like (53):

- (53) Jonek Miren-i idatzi ez dio-n eskuitza
 Jon Miren-to write NEG AUX-COMP letter
 'the letter that John did not write to Miren'

The order of heads to the right is actually the expected one in a right headed language: V-NEG-INFL-COMP, where the latter is a clitic which may have originated somewhere else. This suggests an IP structure like (54):



Movement of NEG might be prompted by scopal reasons, picking up inflection on its way to the left-headed phrase above IP. Focalization in negative clauses follows the expected pattern: the focalized constituent is followed by the negative particle plus the auxiliary:

- (55) MIKELEK ez du ... irakurri
 Mikel NEG AUX read
 'It is Mikel that has not read ...'

This means that the negative particle can lexicalize [+F] in Infl, and the subsequent movement to the functional head serves the double purpose of producing the required feature matching in a specifier-head configuration and of assigning scope to negation.

This analysis of negation in Basque makes this language look quite similar in this respect to neighboring languages, a result which in principle looks appropriate. And the similarity might extend even further if we reconsider focalization in the light of the discussion of positive emphasis above. Notice that I showed that the particle *ba* is also found in yes/no questions with synthetic verbal forms, as illustrated in the following examples:

- (56) a. Ba-daki Jonek egia?
ba-knows Jon truth
 'Does Jon know the truth?'

- b. Irakurri du Jonek eskuitza?
 read AUX Jon letter
 'Has Jon read the letter?'

These apparent verb-initial structures pattern with the verb-second ones in focalization and question formation described above if we assume the presence of an empty yes/no operator in the relevant position, as is fairly standard. The parallelism between questions and focalized clauses is quite close, as may have been observed throughout. Both of them raise the same question of what the target is, and thus whatever we say for one should seemingly also be extended to the other.

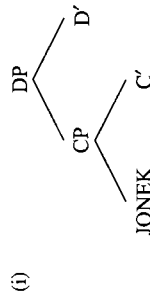
4.3 Focus Phrases

In recent years, proposals for another functional category, a Focus head projecting its own phrase, whether included in the CP complex as in Rizzi (1995) or more or less independent from it (Uriagereka 1995; Brody 1995), have provided a natural alternative worth exploring. The basic issue discussed here, the apparently exceptional phrase required by this line of research, receives a new perspective in these analyses. It may be the case that, quite generally, discourse-oriented non-lexical heads such as Topic or Focus, do not display the same directionality found in the V-related phrases, even in a 'symmetric syntax' framework like the one assumed here. A proliferated CP analysis along the lines of Rizzi (1995), then enables us to separate the clitic complementizer, which may be a finiteness marker properly belonging to a right-headed CP, from the Focus, Topic (and perhaps Force) left-headed phrases hosting operator features and may prove fruitful to account for the data presented here.

Notes

- * I would like to thank the participants at the Paris Table Ronde Internationale sur la Grammaire du Focus, and, especially, Laurie Tuller and Georges Rebuschi, for their attention and comments. Usual disclaimers apply. The following abbreviations have been used: NOM:nominative, ACC:accusative, AUX:auxiliary, COMP:complementizer, NEG:negation.
1. This general view implies that it is possible to have neutral sentences without focalized elements, a claim that has been recently challenged (Hualde, Elordieta & Elordieta 1994): in dialects where foci receive a distinct pitch accentual pattern, all sentences can be shown to contain one element so marked as focus. I will skip over this issue here.

2. While examples are given in the standard literary dialect, they primarily describe the situation found in Biscaine and Gipuzkoan dialects, unless explicitly noted otherwise.
3. In some speakers, the focalized element may occur at the end as in (i), with a correcting interpretation similar to that of echo questions.
- (i) Galdetu didate ZER erosi du-en JONEK
4. An alternative derivation where the *wh*-operator has been extracted directly over the occupied embedded specifier position, would also be ruled out as a subjacency violation
5. In the case of foci pied-piping relative clauses, as in (23), we would have to assume that the relative clause, turned into an operator-like element by the presence of the focalized element, is moved to the specifier of the DP:



6. At least in modern times. In older forms of the language, auxiliary-only fronting was also found in Southern dialects more extensively than today, when it is largely fossilized.

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