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# External Arguments in Basque

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Williams (1981) proposes that there is a designated argument within the thematic structure of the verb which must be realized external to the VP, in the specifier of a functional phrase (IP). In contrast, Kuroda (1986) and Koopman and Sportiche (1988) among others propose that all the arguments of the verb are realized internal to the VP.<sup>1</sup> We argue that in Basque, all the arguments of the verb are external arguments in the sense of Williams (1981). That is, we propose a third alternative, namely, that all the arguments of the verb are projected external to the VP in the specifier positions of functional phrases and INDIRECTLY THETA-MARKED by a functional head.

We first discuss the basic properties of a Basque sentence. In section 2, we show that all the arguments in Basque, in particular the absolutive argument, must be external to the VP at S-structure. To this effect, we will discuss Agreement and pro-drop, the morphological structure of the Auxiliary, control and Case and finally wh-movement. We then argue that it is precisely this hypothesis, namely, that all the arguments of the verb must be in specifiers outside the VP at S-structure, which is incompatible with the VP-internal hypothesis. This leads us to propose that all arguments of the verb are external arguments in the sense of Williams (1981). We then propose an account of wh-movement and free word order in Basque. We conclude with a discussion of the similarities between the VP-internal and the VP-external hypothesis.

## 1. Basic properties of a Basque Sentence

### 1.1. Case

Basque has morphological ergative Case-marking. That is, subjects of transitive verbs are assigned ergative Case while objects of transitive verbs are assigned absolutive Case, as shown in (1).

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<sup>1</sup>There are various versions of the VP-internal subject hypothesis (Hale 1980, Kitagawa 1986, Speas 1986 and Zagona 1982). Our arguments against the VP-internal hypothesis for Basque hold regardless of the particular instantiations of this hypothesis.

- (1) Ni-k liburu-a- $\emptyset$  irakurri dut  
 I-ERG book-the-ABS read 3s-AUX-1s  
 'I read the book.'

The single argument of an unaccusative verb is assigned absolutive Case, as shown in (2), whereas the single argument of an unergative verb is assigned ergative Case, as in (3).

- (2) Ni etorri naiz  
 I-ABS arrive 1s-AUX  
 'I arrived.'
- (3) Maria-k hitz egin du  
 Maria-ERG word-make 3s-AUX-3s  
 'Maria has spoken.'

## 1.2. AGREEMENT AND PRO DROP

Verbal forms in Basque inflect for ergative, absolutive and dative agreement. Thus in (4), the Auxiliary agrees with all three arguments of the verb.

- (4) ni-k Jon-i liburu-a- $\emptyset$  ema-n d-ieza-io-ke-t- $\emptyset$   
 I-ERG John-DAT book-DET-ABS give-ASP 3sABS-AUX-3sDAT-MOD1sERG-TEN  
 'I can give the book to John.'

This three-way agreement licenses three-way pro-drop, as shown in (5).

- (5) pro<sub>i</sub> pro<sub>j</sub> pro<sub>k</sub> ema-n d<sub>k</sub>-ieza-io<sub>j</sub>-ke-t<sub>i</sub>- $\emptyset$   
 give-ASP 3sABS-AUX-3sDAT-MOD-1sERG-TEN  
 'I can give it to him/her.'

## 1.3. FREE WORD ORDER

Finally, Basque has free word order. The ordering of the arguments shown in (1) through (4) is the unmarked one (de Rijk 1969); it is summarized in (6).

- (6) **ERGATIVE DATIVE ABSOLUTIVE.**

Besides the unmarked ordering, the arguments can appear in any order.<sup>2</sup> Some of the marked orderings are shown in (7).

- (7) a. nik liburua Joni eman diezaioket  
 b. liburua Joni nik eman diezaioket  
 c. Joni nik liburua eman diezaioket  
 d. Joni eman diezaioket liburua nik

## 2. S-STRUCTURE

### 2.1. Agreement and pro-drop

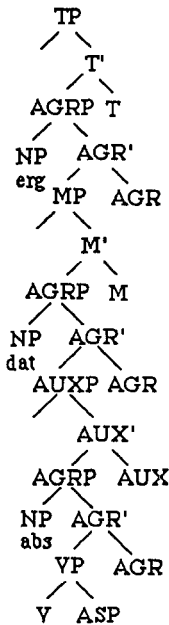
Following Pollock (1989), we assume that Agreement and Tense head distinct phrasal projections. In addition, following Chomsky (1986) and Koopman and Sportiche (1988), we assume that Agreement is a Spec-head relation. Specifically, Agreement is the

<sup>2</sup>It should be noted that there are some restrictions on word order. For instance, no constituent can intervene between the verb and the Auxiliary in non-negative sentences. See Laka (1988b) for details.

relation between the head AGR and an NP in its specifier. Given these basic assumptions and the fact that Basque has three way agreement, all arguments of the verb must be in the specifier of an agreement phrase at S-structure.

We propose that a Basque sentence has the S-structure representation given in (8), where every argument of the verb is sitting in the specifier of an AgrP. In addition to deriving agreement, the structure further allows us to correlate three way pro-drop in Basque with the pro-drop found in null-subject languages. Pro-drop is the licensing of a pro identified by a 'rich' AGR. In (8), every argument of the verb is in the specifier of a 'rich' AGR at S-structure. This relation licenses three-way pro-drop.

#### (8) S-Structure



#### 2.2. The morphological structure of the Auxiliary

The structure in (8) is an extension of the structure proposed in Laka (1988a) in order to account for the morphological structure of the Auxiliary.<sup>3</sup> In (9), we show the

<sup>3</sup>The structure in (8) differs from the structure proposed by Laka (1988a) in the presence of AGREement phrases. Given the presence of these agreement phrases, we need not ensure that Spec-head agreement takes place before head movement in order to obtain the correct ordering of agreement morphemes with inflectional heads, as in Laka (1988a).

canonical structure of the Auxiliary. We see that the order of the agreement morphemes in the Auxiliary is the mirror image of the unmarked order of arguments, which was given in (6). Laka proposed that i) the Aux, the Modal and the Tense morphemes are  $X^0$ s projecting to XPs and ii) the Auxiliary has the following hierarchical structure: Tense dominates Modal which in turn dominates Aux. She then derives the structure in (9) via head adjunction in the mapping between D-structure and S-structure.

**(9) absolutive-AUXiliary-dative-MODal-ergative-TENSE**

To derive the complex inflectional head in (9), we assume that the absolutive agreement head in (8) first left adjoins to Aux yielding prefixation of the absolutive agreement marker; this complex head then successively left-adjoins to the functional heads dominating it, yielding suffixation of all the other markers.

Hence, we must assume that the Ergative, Dative and Absolutive arguments are in the Specifier of an AgrP at S-structure to trigger the agreement the Aux picks up on its way up to Tense and, thus, derive the correct ordering of morphemes within the Auxiliary.

### 2.3. Control and Case

It has been argued in the literature that although Basque is morphologically ergative, it is syntactically accusative: the absolutive argument of an unaccusative verb behaves like the ergative, the external, argument of a transitive verb with respect to control, as shown by Levin (1983), and Ortiz de Urbina (1986).

Levin proposed that Case-assignment in Basque is determined by D-structure relations: D-structure objects get absolutive Case and D-structure subjects get ergative Case. Hence, the internal argument of the verb is governed and assigned absolutive Case by the verb whereas its D-structure subject, in Spec of IP, is assigned ergative Case. Further, Levin assumes that unaccusative verbs in Basque differ from unaccusatives in other languages in that they are able to assign Case to their object. Thus, the sole argument of the unaccusative verb in (2), its D-structure object, is assigned absolutive Case by the verb; whereas the sole argument of the unergative verb in (3), its D-structure subject, is assigned ergative Case.

The assumption that absolutive Case is assigned by the verb at D-structure and that objects of unaccusatives do not move to Spec of IP for Case reasons is problematic with respect to control.<sup>4</sup> Obligatory Control phenomena exist in Basque. As in other languages, only the subject position is controlled. Consider the following data, taken from Oyharzabal (1990).

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<sup>4</sup> The analysis that Levin gives entails that Burzio's generalization does not hold for Basque.

- (10) a. Ez dakit zer- $\emptyset$  egin  
 NEG I-know what-ABS do  
 'I don't know what to do'
- b. \*Ez dakit zer- $\emptyset$  gerta  
 NEG I-know what-ABS happen  
 'I don't know what to happen'
- c. \*Ez dakit nor-k egin  
 NEG I-know who-ERG do  
 'I don't know who to do'

As shown in (10), an overt absolutive argument is licensed in an embedded control structure only when it is an object, as in (10a). In (10b), the absolutive argument behaves like a subject and hence must be controlled; it cannot be overtly realized on a par with the ergative subject in (10c). Obligatory control in Basque is blind to morphological Case-marking: only the subject/object distinction is relevant to determining what must and what cannot be controlled.

Thus, the controlled argument of an unaccusative verb must be in a subject position. This forces Levin (1983) to assume that although lexical NPs do not move out of their D-structure position, PRO must. She assumes that PRO moves to a subject position because it cannot remain in its D-structure position since PRO is restricted to non-Case marked positions. This, however, yields a violation of the chain condition since the terminal element of the resulting chain ( $\text{Pro}_i$ ,  $t_j$ ) is in a Case-position.

What control shows us is that if absolutive Case is assigned VP internally, we lose the motivation for raising the object out of the VP. Therefore, we assume that Case is assigned uniformly outside the VP by the Agreement heads in (8) to the NPs in their specifiers. Thus, in (8), the lowest  $\text{AGR}^0$  assigns Absolutive Case whereas the highest  $\text{AGR}^0$  assigns Ergative Case.<sup>5</sup> This, moreover, unifies Case assignment and Agreement as a Spec-head relation.

#### 2.4 Wh-movement.

Finally, data from wh-movement further show us that the absolutive NP must not be in a complement position. The basic generalization with respect to wh-movement in Basque is that no lexical NP can intervene between the wh-word and the verb, as shown in (11). However, consider the contrast in (12). (12) shows that when the surface

<sup>5</sup>Ortiz de Urbina (1986) first proposed that AGREEMENT in Basque could assign absolutive Case to the sole argument of an unaccusative verb. However, to ensure that the object of a transitive verb also gets absolutive Case, he has to allow both the verb and AGR in INFL to assign the same Case.

adjacency requirement between the *wh*-word and the verb is not satisfied, extraction of an object is worse than extraction of a subject.<sup>6</sup>

- (11) a.  $Zer_i$        $pro_j$   $t_i$  *edango* *du*  
           *what<sub>i</sub>-ABS* *pro<sub>j</sub>* *t<sub>i</sub>* *drink* *it-AUX-he*  
           'What will he drink?'  
       b. *Nork<sub>i</sub>*       $t_i$   $pro_j$  *edango* *du*  
           *who<sub>i</sub>-ERG*  $t_i$   $pro_j$  *drink* *it-AUX-he*  
           'Who will drink it?'  
 (12) a. \* $Zer_i$       *Jon-ek*       $t_i$  *edango* *du*  
           *what<sub>i</sub>-ABS* *John-ERG*  $t_i$  *drink* *it-AUX-he*  
           'What will John drink?'  
       b. ?\* *Nork<sub>i</sub>*       $t_i$  *ardo-a-ø*      *edango* *du*  
           *who<sub>i</sub>-ERG*  $t_i$  *wine-the-ABS* *drink* *it-AUX-he*  
           'Who will drink wine?'

((11) and (12) are adapted from Uriagereka 1987)

In (12a), we see that when we extract an object over a lexical subject, the result is very bad. In contrast, when we extract a subject with a lexical object present as in (12b), the result is only marginal. What (12a) shows is that there is no privileged relationship between the object and the verb. In other words, objects in Basque are not lexically governed. In particular, verbs do not lexically govern their objects. What is lexical government if not Case and/or  $\theta$ -assignment by a lexical head to its sister? (12a), thus, adduces evidence for our claim that objects in Basque are outside of the VP and not **complements** of the verb. We will derive the contrasts in (12) on the one hand and in (11)/(12) on the other in section 5.

### 3. The VP internal hypothesis.

We have shown that all arguments in Basque must be outside of the VP at S-structure. The question arises now as to whether they are all inside the VP at D-structure, as the VP-internal hypothesis entails. Let us suppose that all arguments of the verb are assigned a  $\theta$ -role uniformly within the VP and then raise to the specifier of a functional category at S-structure, in order to receive Case and to trigger Agreement, as in (13).

<sup>6</sup>An analysis of the contrasts shown in (11) and (12) is proposed in Laka and Uriagereka (1986) and Uriagereka (1987).

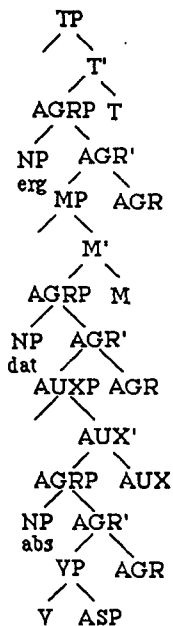




#### 4. The VP external hypothesis

Therefore, we propose that a Basque sentence has the D-structure in (14): All the arguments in Basque are external to the verb in the sense of Williams (1981).

(14) D-structure



Specifically, we propose that:

- (i) All arguments are based-generated in the specifiers of functional categories; namely AgrPs. These functional categories are extended projections of the verb (L-related projections, in the sense of Chomsky (1989 class lecture)).
- (ii) Moreover, we propose that the arguments of the verb are projected according to the thematic hierarchy, agent-dative-theme, as proposed for Japanese and German for instance (see Hoji 1985 and Webelhuth 1989).
- (iii) Further, all arguments are indirectly  $\theta$ -marked: the  $\theta$ -roles of the verb are not discharged within the VP. All the  $\theta$ -roles percolate up to inflectional heads (as in Higginbotham 1985), namely, the AGR<sup>0</sup>s in (14). The  $\theta$ -roles are then discharged in their specifier positions in accordance with the thematic hierarchy. Thus, theme is discharged first, and then dative, and finally agent.

(iv) Case is also assigned by AGR.

By claiming that Case and  $\theta$ -roles are both assigned by the same functional heads, we capture Levin's (1983) proposal that Basque only has inherent Case. That is, Case assignment in Basque is linked to thematic assignment; Case is predictable given the D-structure thematic relations. In other words, we are claiming that verbs in Basque are "defective": they are neither Case-assigners nor direct  $\theta$ -assigners.<sup>7</sup>

#### 4.1. Free word order in Basque

The structure in (14) also accounts for free word order in Basque. Following Mahajan (1990), we assume that an A-position is a potential Case or  $\theta$ -position whereas an A'-position is neither a potential Case nor a potential  $\theta$ -position. Hence, the specifiers of AgrP in (14) are A-positions whereas the Spec of TP, Spec of MP and Spec of AuxP are A'-positions.<sup>8</sup> Thus, A'-movement of the arguments from their base-position (Spec of AgrP) to any of the A'-Spec positions will yield all the possible word orders in Basque: ERG DAT ABS, ERG ABS DAT, DAT ERG ABS, DAT ABS ERG, ABS DAT ERG and ABS ERG DAT.<sup>9</sup>

#### 5. More on wh-movement:

Now, let us return to wh-movement in Basque. There is a three way contrast that requires an explanation. First, why is wh-movement licit when the arguments are dropped, as in (11) repeated in (15a, b)? Second, why is extraction of an object over a lexical NP ungrammatical, as shown in (15c) (=12a)? Finally, why is extraction of a subject in the presence of a lexical object only marginal, as shown in (15d) (=12b)?

- (15) a. Zer<sub>i</sub>            proj t<sub>i</sub> edango du  
          what<sub>i</sub>-ABS proj t<sub>i</sub> drink    it-AUX-he  
          'What will he drink?'  
      b. Nork<sub>i</sub>        t<sub>i</sub> proj edango du  
          who<sub>i</sub>-ERG t<sub>i</sub> proj drink    it-AUX-he  
          'Who will drink it?'

<sup>7</sup> Bok-Bennema and Groos (1984) have also claimed that in Eskimo, ergativity is determined by a parameter of Case-assignment: verbs in Eskimo are defective in that they cannot assign Case. See Johns (1989) for a different analysis for Eskimo also instantiating the idea that verbs in Eskimo are defective.

<sup>8</sup> We also assume that there is a NegP, following Laka (1988), which dominates TP. Thus, there are two A'-specifier positions above the highest AgrP: Spec of TP and Spec of NegP.

<sup>9</sup> We are aware of the fact that there are right-dislocation sentences such as (7d). That is, lexical NPs can appear to the right of the V-AUX complex. We do not rule out the possibility of adjunction in these cases. However, the structure and interpretation of these sentences must be examined more closely.

- c. \*Zer<sub>i</sub> Jon-ek t<sub>i</sub> edango du  
 what<sub>i</sub>-ABS John-ERG t<sub>i</sub> drink it-AUX-he  
 'What will John drink?'
- d. ?\*Nork<sub>i</sub> t<sub>i</sub> ardo-a-∅ edango du  
 who<sub>i</sub>-ERG t<sub>i</sub> wine-the-ABS drink it-AUX-he  
 'Who will drink wine?'

Recall that in Basque, the *wh*-operator must appear in a position immediately to the left of the verb, as in (16).

- (16) a. Zer edango du Jon-ek  
 what-ABS drink it-AUX-he John-ERG  
 'What will John drink?'
- b. Nork edango du ardo-a-∅  
 who-ERG drink it-AUX-he wine-the-ABS  
 'Who will drink wine?'

Following Ortiz de Urbina (1986, 87), we assume that this adjacency requirement is just another instance of the verb-second phenomena which also takes place in Spanish (Torrego 1984) and English (Chomsky 1986) interrogatives. That is, we follow Ortiz de Urbina (1986, 87) in assuming that 1) COMP in Basque is head initial; 2) the verb left-adjoins to Aux in interrogatives; and 3) head to head movement of [V+Aux] then takes places. Thus, (16a) has the following S-structure representation (irrelevant structure omitted):

- (17) CP[Zer<sub>i</sub> C[edango<sub>j</sub>+du]<sub>k</sub> TP]<sub>AgP</sub>[Jon-ek...AUXP[ AUX[t<sub>k</sub>] AgP[t<sub>i</sub> [...vp[t<sub>j</sub> what-ABS drink+it-AUX-he Jon-ERG

Why is the verb required to move to COMP in Basque?<sup>10</sup> We argue that raising to COMP takes place in order to satisfy Proper Government; specifically, the requirement that traces be governed by a lexical head. We have argued in section 2.4 that the verb does not lexically govern its object. In this respect, the object behaves like a subject which is never lexically governed by the verb. Now, a lexical head can enter into three different type of relations with NPs: it can Case-mark an NP,  $\theta$ -mark an NP, or bind an NP.<sup>11</sup> Any of these three relations satisfies what we will call  $X^0$ -government as stated in (19) below (see Cheng and Demirdash (forthcoming)). The two first options are not available in Basque since the verb does not Case-mark or  $\theta$ -mark its arguments. The third option is available only if the verb moves to a position from which it can c-command and, hence, bind its

<sup>10</sup>Note that in Basque, both the auxiliary and the verb must move to COMP, whereas in English, only the Auxiliary moves to COMP.

<sup>11</sup>The idea that lexical heads can bind (=antecedent-govern) an NP is proposed in Lasnik and Saito (forthcoming). It follows from the hypothesis in Stowell (1981) that "only  $X^0$ s can be proper governors". An  $X^0$  binds  $\alpha$  if it c-commands  $\alpha$  and is co-indexed with  $\alpha$ .

arguments. Thus, V to COMP is obligatory in (17) because it is the only way of satisfying  $X^0$ -government in Basque.

Let us now return to the three-way contrast in (15). First, when the arguments of the verb are dropped, wh-movement will always yield a well-formed representation if we assume that the complex [V+Aux] has raised to COMP. That is, if (15a) for instance, has the following S-structure representations.<sup>12</sup>

- (18)  $CP[Zer_i \quad C[edango_j + du]_k \quad TP[Agp[pro \dots AUXP[ \quad AUX[t_k] \quad Agp[t_i \quad [\dots vp[t_j$   
           what-ABS drink+it-AUX-he

Finally, how do we derive the contrast in grammaticality shown in (15c, d)? (15c) and (15d) are ill-formed because  $X^0$ -government is violated: the verb has not moved to COMP and, hence, does not c-command either of its arguments. But why is extraction of the object worse than extraction of the subject? To account for these degrees of grammaticality, we assume a version of ECP developed in Cheng and Demirdash (forthcoming) stated in (19):<sup>13</sup>

- (19)  $\alpha$  XP-governs  $\beta$  iff  $\alpha$  is an XP c-commanding  $\beta$  and  $\alpha$  is coindexed with  $\beta$ .  
        $\alpha$   $X^0$ -governs  $\beta$  iff  $\alpha$  is a lexical  $X^0$  category and  
       i)  $\alpha$   $\theta$ -marks or Case-marks  $\alpha$ ;  
       or ii)  $\alpha$  c-commands  $\beta$  and  $\alpha$  is co-indexed with  $\beta$ .

Further, we propose that:

- (20) (a) When both  $X^0$ -government and XP-government are violated, extraction yields an ungrammatical sentence.  
       (b) When  $X^0$ -government does not hold but XP-government holds, extraction yields a marginal sentence.

Given (20a), the ungrammatical (15c) must violate XP-government as well as  $X^0$ -government. On the other hand, given (20b), XP-government must hold in (15d) since (15d) violates  $X^0$ -government but is only marginal. Why is XP-government satisfied in (15d) but violated in (15c)? If we assume Rizzi's Relativized Minimality (1989), (15c) will violate XP-government if there is a potential antecedent governor (henceforth PAG) intervening between the wh-operator and its trace. Crucially, for this PAG to block A'-movement, it must be in an A'-specifier. Now, in (15c), the only possible PAG is the lexical subject, *Jonek*. Hence, the latter must be in an A'-specifier. If we extend Jelinek's (1984) analysis of lexical NPs in Walpiri to Basque, then the lexical subject, *Jonek*, is in an A'-specifier. That is, overt NPs in Basque are adjuncts base-generated in A'-specifiers,

<sup>12</sup>Note that when the arguments are dropped, there is no way of telling whether the verb is in its base-position or has adjoined to Aux and then moved to COMP. Since these sentences are always well-formed, we assume that movement to COMP has taken place, on a par with (17).

<sup>13</sup>For the exact formulation of (19) and (20) and the supporting arguments, see Cheng and Demirdash (forthcoming).

namely Spec of TP, MP and AuxP.<sup>14</sup> The arguments are the agreement morphology itself: they are the agreement clitics base-generated in A-positions (Specs of AgrPs) which incorporate into the Aux as it moves up to Tense.<sup>15</sup>

Given this analysis, the contrast in (15c) and (15d) is straightforward: extraction of the object in (15c) crosses an overt NP in an A'-position, *Jonek*, yielding a violation of XP-government. *Jonek*, being a PAG for the object trace, blocks XP-government between the wh-operator and its trace. Further, X<sup>0</sup>-government is violated. Hence, by (20a), the sentence is ungrammatical. (15d), on the other hand, has the following representation:

- (21) ?\*<sub>CP</sub> [Nork<sub>i</sub> TP[t<sub>i</sub> ardo-a edango du]]  
           who<sub>i</sub>-ERG t<sub>i</sub> wine-the-ABS drink it-AUX-he

In (21), there is nothing intervening between *nork* 'who' and its trace. Thus, XP-government is satisfied. However, the subject is not X<sup>0</sup>-governed by the verb. Hence, by (20b), the sentence (15b) is only marginal.

Thus, there are two ways of implementing our VP-external hypothesis. Overt NPs in Basque are either arguments base-generated in A-positions, as in (14); or adjuncts base-generated in A'-positions binding agreement clitics in A-positions. These clitics are the arguments of the verb. If we adopt this left-dislocation analysis of lexical NPs in Basque, we predict that overt NPs can act as specified subjects with respect to wh-movement.<sup>16</sup>

## 6. Similarities between the external and internal hypotheses

As we have stated in the beginning of this paper, Williams (1981) proposed that there is a designated argument within the thematic structure of the verb which must be realized external to the VP, in the specifier of a functional phrase (IP). In contrast, Kuroda (1986) and Koopman and Sportiche (1988) amongst others proposed that all the arguments of the verb are realized internal to the VP. Based on evidence from Basque, we have proposed a third alternative, namely, that all the arguments of the verb are projected external to the VP in the specifier positions of functional phrases. Thus, they are all external arguments. These three proposals share two assumptions: i) Arguments are projected according to a thematic hierarchy; ii) The structurally highest NP (the 'subject')

<sup>14</sup>Recall that an A'-position is a position in which neither Case or theta-role is assigned. Hence, Spec of TP, Spec of MP and Spec of Aux P are A'-positions whereas Spec of AgrP is an A-position.

<sup>15</sup>Given this analysis, there is no 'pro-drop' in Basque. That is, there are no pro's. There are only traces of incorporated clitics. Overt NPs are adjuncts which are free to appear or not.

<sup>16</sup>Note that there is no crossing effect with left-dislocation in Basque, as in other languages with clitics, such as Arabic (see Demirdash 1988). The difference between A'-movement which induces crossing and A'-movement which does not induce crossing seems to be related to whether there is independently clitics in the language. There is no crossing effect in languages with clitics, because there is no need to "recover" the information via a link between the moved element and its trace.

corresponds to the highest argument in the thematic hierarchy. The VP-internal and the VP external hypothesis share a further assumption:  $\theta$ -roles are assigned uniformly in the same manner, by the verb in the VP-internal hypothesis (direct  $\theta$ -marking), by functional heads in the-VP external hypothesis (indirect  $\theta$ -marking).

If these functional heads are in fact projections of the verb (L-related projections), then one may ask in what sense the arguments are really external to the VP.

## 7. A final speculation

Given the analysis we have proposed for Basque, what is the status of the VP-internal hypothesis? We assume that it is not universal but subject to parametric variation. The question then is Why is Basque different? If the VP-internal hypothesis is correct then INFL is a universal raising category and all languages have NP-movement. It has been argued in the literature, however, that there is no passive or raising in Basque. This follows from our analysis: there is no NP-movement in Basque because there is no trigger position for A-movement.<sup>17</sup> That is, all the arguments are outside the VP at D-structure. We claim that the parameter involved is the inability of verbs in Basque to assign Case and to directly  $\theta$ -mark their arguments.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Guilfoyle (1988) has proposed that there is no target position (i.e. there is no Spec of IP) in Irish for NP movement to take place.

<sup>18</sup>See also footnote 7 on Eskimo.

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