A new nanosyntactic approach to Basque Adpositions: Describing Complex Directional Adpositions

Etxeberria, J.

There has been no consensus when it comes to determine the items that are part of the adposition category in Basque. Most descriptive works (Laffite 1944, Villasante 1978, Hualde 2003a, de Rijk 2008) agree that there is a delimited set of locative postpositions named as "locative cases" or "nominal-inflection". However, there have been more difficulties to define the postpositions outside this paradigm. Typically, a division between referential nouns (e.g., *goi, behe, aurre, atze)* and invariable postpositions (e.g., *-tik kanpo, -tik barna*) has been proposed (Hualde 2003a, de Rijk 2008, Etxepare & Oyharçabal 2012), but the status of the items from each group remains unclear.

In this sense, the aim of this work is to better define the subgroups within this category. After considering the most relevant morphosyntactic and semantic properties, I establish three main subgroups for Basque, simple locative adpositions (e.g. *-ra, -tik*), axial parts (e.g. *azpi, gain*, *aurre*) and Complex Directional Adpositions (e.g. *-ra arte, -tik kanpo*). These Complex Directional Adpositions are formed by the combination of a primary adposition and an axial part item that no longer encodes a referential point in the Ground. This subgroup allows lexicalising semantic nuances of the direction of the motion that otherwise cannot be expressed by a simple locative adposition from the paradigm.

In addition, I have proposed a grammaticalization chain that connects these subgroups among each other*. For most of the cases, the following pattern is attested, (body part terms) > Axial Parts > Complex Adpositions > Simple Adpositions.*

At last, I have adopted the nanosyntactic approach (Svenonius 2006, Fábregas 2007, Pantcheva 2011, Romeu 2014) to shed the divergences between complex adpositions and axial parts. Following Pantcheva's (2011) Decomposition of Path model, I propose that in order to lexicalize complex adpositions a further number of syntactic terminals is needed. For example, BoundP allows lexicalising complex Terminative paths (such as *-ra arte*), while RouteP and ScaleP lexicalise complex Route paths (such as *-tik zehar*, *-tik barna*).