

QUANTIFICATION AND DOMAIN RESTRICTION IN BASQUE

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Abstract

The main goal of this dissertation is to contribute to the understanding of the internal structure of Basque quantification in particular and natural language quantification in general within the framework of Generalized Quantifier Theory (see Montague (1973), Barwise & Cooper (1981), Keenan & Stavi (1986)).

Assuming that quantification in natural languages must always be contextually restricted and that quantificational domain restriction is always encoded syntactically (see Neale (1990), von Stechow (1994), Martí (2003), Stanley (2002), Stanley & Szabó (S&S) (2000)), this dissertation proposes, in line with a recent proposal put forward in Giannakidou (2004), a compositional structure for Basque strong quantifiers where the quantifier internal definite determiner is taken to act as the quantificational domain restrictor. This analysis provides support for the conclusion that the standard analysis of Generalized Quantifiers is correct (contra Matthewson (2001)). The fact that the definite article is excluded from weak quantifiers is taken as evidence for the idea that these elements are neither quantifiers nor contextually restricted, in agreement with what has

been standardly defended in the literature (cf. Milsark (1979), Partee (1988), Diesing (1992), Cooper (1996), von Stechow (1998)). Basque weak quantifiers are shown to be base generated at the predicative type (cf. van Geenhoven (1996), Landman (2002)).

The important role that the determiner plays inside quantificational expressions in languages such as Basque makes it necessary to provide an analysis of the Basque definite article -A. This dissertation claims that the article is the definite determiner everywhere (in opposition to Artiagoitia (2002)), but very flexible in its ability to type shift. This property allows us to account for the various interpretations that the article can get and concludes that existential readings of definites (that can only be obtained in some contexts) are dependent on the kind-level interpretation. For that, it is claimed that Basque is typologically in between English and French: the former makes use of bare plurals to get existential interpretations while the latter needs the definite plus the partitive preposition *de* (*du* for mass terms, *des* for plural count term) to express the same meaning; in Basque, the article is there while the preposition is not. Basque data is also claimed to provide further support for the conclusion that the position originally advocated by Carlson (1977) and extended crosslinguistically by Chierchia (1998c) must be on the right track, contra the so-called ambiguity theory defended by Wilkinson (1991), Diesing (1992), Gerstner & Krifka (1993) and Kratzer (1995).

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