

ΔiaLing-activiteiten: 2-6 oktober 2017

- **3 oktober 2017**, 11u30 in de Grote Vergaderzaal (3^{de} verdieping, Blandijn):

Dialect contact, spatial variation, and language change in the morphology of the Basque auxiliary verb Aaron Ecay (Ghent University)

In this talk, I will focus on two loci of morphological variation among Basque dialects. Basque verbs agree with arguments in the absolutive, ergative, and dative cases; both loci of variation considered in this talk concern the distribution of these morphemes in the auxiliary verb “izan” (to be/to have).

The first locus of variation is called “Differential Object Marking” (DOM). In DOM, what would in non-DOM dialects (including the standard) be an absolutive-marked (direct) object is marked with dative case and agreement is marked on the verb using a dative-agreement suffix rather than an absolutive-agreement prefix. The second variable is Dative Displacement (DD), which refers to the use of an absolutive-agreement prefix to mark agreement with a dative (indirect) object. From a the point of view of verbal morphology, then, DD and DOM are exact inverses of each other (they do differ in the effect they have in other morphosyntactic domains such as case-marking).

The talk explores the spatial distribution of variants of DOM and DD through data from the “Morfologia del verbo auxiliar vasco” dialect atlas. Based on similarity to a Spanish morphological phenomenon (also called DOM), Basque DOM has usually been analyzed as a borrowing from that language. The data confirms this analysis and further indicates that there are two areas in which DOM has been borrowed, apparently independently, into Basque – one in the West and one in the Southeast.

DD has perhaps a less regular spatial distribution: in addition to a large area of DD dialects in the central northern area (i.e. the province of Lapurdi), it has been noticed in several other seemingly unconnected localities as well. Analysis of the data reveals that these latter occurrences are associated with contact between DOM and non-DOM dialects. In addition to offering an explanation of the distribution of DD, this observation lends support to the hypothesis that linguistic innovation is (or can be) triggered when learners are faced with inconsistent or variable input in situations of language contact.

I will also discuss how data on diatopic variation can inform morphosyntactic analysis. Forms that might appear problematic (or at least in need of a specific theoretical explanation) in “syntopic” data can turn out to be an epiphenomenon of variation and change. Finally, Basque displays a variety of morphological patterns beyond those discussed in the bulk of the talk. The data in Basque dialect atlases is a rich source of fine-grained detail on the behavior of these patterns in space and (to some degree) in time. I will briefly point out other areas of the data that (potentially) interact with DD and DOM, and which might give rise to other interesting discoveries.

- **5-6 oktober 2017**, : “V3 and resumptive adverbials”-workshop in de Faculteitsraadzaal, (1^{ste} verdieping, Blandijn). Het programma kan u hier terugvinden: <http://www.gist.ugent.be/node/126>