

FOFC as a PF phenomenon: Evidence from Basque clausal embedding

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The Final-over-Final Condition (FOFC) precludes head-initial phrases from being immediately dominated by a head-final phrase in their extended projection (cf. Holmberg 2000; Biberauer et al. 2014 (BHR); Sheehan et al. 2017).

Overview. I analyze Basque finite embedded clauses, integrated in a configuration which is in principle problematic for the FOFC, since it potentially involves head-initial structures dominated by head-final phrases. I put in evidence a series of ‘compliance strategies’ that circumvent FOFC-violations, showing how they point towards FOFC being a requirement head-final phrases being immediately dominated by head-final phrases with *overt* material.

Theoretical background. BHR characterize FOFC as a narrow syntactic phenomenon, deriving it from the way structure-building takes place. In turn, Sheehan (2011, 2013, 2017) develops a model where FOFC effects result from how syntactic structures are linearized at PF (cf. also Tokizaki & Kuwana 2013; Etxepare & Haddican 2017; Branam 2019). Only the latter predicts that PF-operations taking place before linearization could affect FOFC-compliance.

Word order in Basque: background. The classical analysis of Basque phrase-structure is one which is FOFC-compliant (cf. BHR), with head-final orders in FinP and below, and head-initial orders above FinP. The latter heads are not overt, but trigger movement of V/v/Neg/T/Fin in contexts of negation, wh-questions and focalization (cf. Ortiz de Urbina 1989, 1994; Laka 1990; Etxepare and Haddican 2017). Thus whereas declaratives are SOV (1a), negative/interrogative/focal clauses display ‘residual V2 effects’ (1b) (cf. Rizzi 1996):

- (1) a. Gizonak leihoa ireki **zuen**.
man window open AUX
b. {Ez **zuen**} gizonak leihoa ireki *{ez **zuen**}.
NEG AUX man window open NEG AUX
The man didn’t open the window.

Data. Unlike in root clauses (1b), in relative clauses (RC) the finite verb (+ Fin complementizer) is obligatorily clause-final, even in contexts of negation, wh-questions and focus (2a) (Oyharçabal 2003). However, this requirement is lifted when the modified NP is null (2b):

- (2) a. [*{ez **zuen**} leihoa ireki {ez **zuen**}] gizon-a
NEG AUX.C window open NEG AUX.C man-D
the man who didn’t open the window
b. {ez **zuen-a**} leihoa ireki {ez **zuen-a**} ∅
NEG AUX.C-D window open NEG AUX.C-D
the (one) who didn’t open the window

Clausal complements (CC) tend to allow non-final V, with some variation in acceptability across speakers (cf. Artiagoitia 2003; Etxepare 2003; Artiagoitia & Elordieta 2017):

- (3) Jonak [leihoa {ez **dela**} ireki {ez **dela**}] erakusten du.
Jon window NEG AUX.C open NEG AUX.C show AUX
Jon shows that the window was not opened.
(4) [_{CP} Nork [_C erakusten du] [_{FinP} *t_{wh}* [leihoa ez **dela** ireki] *t_{V+v+T+Fin}*]]?
who show AUX window NEG AUX.C open
Who shows that the window was not opened?

Finally, clausal adjuncts do not display a unified behavior. The generalization, I show, is that with an overt final P the verb is obligatorily final, but not with a P on the left, or with a complementizer-like (or cliticizing) subordinator (Artiagoitia 2003; Etxepare 2003):

- (5) a. [*{Ez **den**} leihoa ireki {ez **den**}] *arren...*
 NEG AUX.C window open NEG AUX.C even.if
 Even if the window wasn't opened...
- b. *Nahiz eta* [{ez **den**} leihoa ireki {ez **den**}]...
 even if NEG AUX.C window open NEG AUX.C
 Even if the window wasn't opened...
- c. [{Ez **denez**} leihoa ireki {ez **denez**}]...
 NEG AUX.ENEZ window open NEG AUX.ENEZ
 Since the window wasn't opened...

Analysis. Assuming with Sheehan (2011, 2013), Biberauer & Sheehan (2012) that strong islands constitute linearization domains, and that ECs and their selecting heads must therefore comply with the FOFC, I expose a variety of compliance strategies displayed in the above data. A non-trivial consequence is that FOFC is a PF phenomenon (Sheehan 2011, 2013, 2017), sensitive in particular to phonological overttness. **1. Copy-deletion.** The clause-final position of the (Neg +) verb in (2a) or (5a) can be accounted for in terms of copy-deletion (cf. Sheehan 2011 ff.). Their copies in the head-complement order in the left peripheral domain of the EC are in violation of FOFC when dominated by a D or P to their right. Here, spelling out the lower copies in head-final position ‘repairs’ the violation. **2. Null/No dominating head to the right.** (2b) shows that when, in the absence of overt material in the NP, the determiner *-a* cliticizes onto the RC’s closer head *Fin* (cf. Trask 2003), it evacuates the head position dominating the RC, freeing it from the requirement on realizing final heads. Similarly, (5c) features an empty P head and (5b) a head-initial P, thus both are FOFC-complying. **3. Stranding by V-movement.** Movement of matrix V to the head-initial domain of the clause in contexts of negation/wh-/focus-movement of other material leaves no overt final head dominating the CC in (4). **4. Pied-piping to SpecCP.** BHR show that \bar{A} -movement is FOFC-exempt. I argue that precisely preverbal CCs such as (3) are focal, realized in matrix SpecCP, and thus excluded from the scope of FOFC. As expected, preverbal CCs can only be preceded by topicalizable material:

- (6) [_{TopP} Jonek/*zerbait erek [_{CP} [leihoa ez **dela** ireki] [_C erakusten du] [_{FinP}]]].
 Jon/something too window NEG AUX.C open show AUX
 Jon/something shows that the window was not opened.

Extensions. (I) I show that as expected, when forced into a non-A’, post-negation position, CCs require final V. **(II)** Clausal pied-piping or extraposition are not available within DPs/PPs. As predicted, non-final V is never allowed in CCs of Ns/Ps.

Conclusion. Basque clausal embedding brings an apparently disharmonic configuration to the discussion of FOFC: a head-initial CP dominated by a head-final phrase. The observed four strategies that give grammatical outputs provide evidence for FOFC as a post-syntactic condition (without appealing to a differential approach to its typology, *pace* Elordieta & Haddican 2017).

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