
The apparent paradox of Bare Nouns in Basque-French contact

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In (Standard) Basque, overt determiners/quantifiers are mandatory for argument DPs, which cannot be bare nouns (BNs). We uncover argumental BNs (ABNs) employed in Navarro-Labourdin Basque –a variety in contact with French– which lack a referential reading:

- (1) Gin-tonic/Kleenex galdegin du.
gin-tonic/kleenex ask AUX
'They asked for a gin and tonic/Kleenex'.

ABNs emerge while neither Basque or French allows them. This paradox is solved with **an analysis where a 'borrowed' French noun is inserted in the proper name structure of Basque.**

Contact. ABNs tend to involve recent loanwords from French, in a situation of intense contact, with frequent code-switching/mixing and a long history of borrowing where loanwords are typically grammaticalized as 'marked' lexical items (Jauregi and Epelde 2011).

Degree of nativization. The further the segmental content of the loanword is from the phonological properties of Basque, the higher probability it has to be used as ABN.

Names. ABNs involve what are originally rigid designators, borrowed/used as genericized trademarks or kind-denoting proper nouns, inserted in a DP with no overt D. Names can be used as predicates in different constructions, giving different referential possibilities (cf. i.a. Burge 1973). We propose that these ABNs involve nouns which are incorporated as products' names (proper nouns). But rather than individual-specific, they are 'style' or 'kind'-denoting (Hinzen 2007).

Native syntax + late insertion. There is no syntactic innovation or transfer, but rather late insertion of vocabulary items from a second language in a proper name configuration (Grimstad et al. 2014).

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