Reexamining Differential Object Marking as a Linguistic Contact-Phenomenon in Gernika Basque

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Abstract

The present study aims to show that Basque Differential Object Marking (DOM) is the result of intense contact with the Basque-Spanish Leísta Dialect (BLD) and to determine the process by which Basque DOM is a contact feature. Following theories of contact-induced phenomena in variationist sociolinguistics (Poplack and Levey, 2010), theories of DOM (Aissen, 2003) and grammaticalization theory (Heine and Kuteva, 2005), the speech of 29 native speakers of Gernika Basque are examined, stratified by age and language dominance. Results from oral data show that animacy and specificity are the strongest predictors of Basque DOM, followed by person and number. In terms of language specific constraints, the use of Spanish borrowed verbs and the null object character of the language strongly favors DOM in Gernika Basque. It is proposed that Basque DOM involves a complex process of 'replica grammaticalization,' explaining the intertwined relationship between typological factors, contact-induced forces and language-specific constraints.

Keywords

Differential Object Marking – contact-induced grammaticalization – clitics – Basque – Spanish

1 Introduction

The present study seeks to investigate the distribution of Differential Object Marking (DOM) in a dialect of Basque in contact with Spanish. Coined by
Bossong (1991), DOM refers to the linguistic phenomenon in which some direct objects of transitive verbs get overtly case-marked with a different case (usually dative). In Spanish, DOM is expressed by two means: a-marking and leísmo. A-marking refers to the extension of the indirect object marker a to mark certain objects (usually animate and specific). Leísmo refers to the use of dative clitics to mark animate and specific direct objects. In the leísmo of the Spanish spoken in the Basque Country, referred to as Basque Leísmo Dialect (bld, henceforth) animate, specific direct objects are overtly marked by the preposition a and also allow clitic doubling in the form of leísmo (1a). Inanimate objects typically receive no marking (1b).

Basque Leísta Dialect

(1) a. Le he visto a Mikel.
    leísmo 1sg.have see.part dom Mikel.
    ‘I have seen Mikel.’

(1) b. He visto la casa.
    1sg.have see.part the house.
    ‘I have seen the house.’

Basque is a head-final language with ergative, absolutive and dative case markings, assigned to a syntactic function (Etxepare, 2003). Ergative is used to mark subjects of transitive and unergative verbs, absolutive for direct objects and subjects of unaccusative verbs, and the dative – (r)i is mainly used for indirect objects, benefactives or goals. Basque finite verbs are composed of a lexical verb that carries aspectual information and an auxiliary verb bearing tense, agreement and modal information. The choice of the auxiliary verb typically depends on the valency of the predicate, that is, the three arguments (subject, direct object and indirect object) are morphologically encoded in the auxiliary verb in an agreement relationship with person, number and case (Etxepare, 2003: 363). In Basque DOM, the dative marker – (r)i and the dative clitic – a- on the auxiliary verb mark indirect objects (1c) and animate direct objects (1d) but not inanimate objects as in (1e–f):

1 The following abbreviations are used in the glosses: 1, 2, 3 = first, second, third person; abs = absolutive; acc = accusative; dat = dative; df = dative flag; do = direct object; erg = ergative; io = indirect object; loc = locative; part = participle; past = past tense; pl = plural; pres = present tense; sg = singular.
Gernika Basque

(1) c. Ni-k \textit{umi-e-ri_j} \textit{erregalu-e} \textit{emon} d-o-t-s-\textit{a_r-t}.
I-erg child-the-dat gift-the.abs give 3sg.abs-root-df-3sg.dat-1sg.erg.

‘I have given the child a gift.’

(1) d. Ni-k \textit{Mikel-e-ri_i} \textit{ikusi} d-o-t-s-\textit{a_r-t}.
I-erg Mikel-vowel-dat see 3sg.abs-root-df-3sg.dat-1sg.erg.

‘I have seen Mikel.’

(1) e. Ni-k \textit{etxi-e_i} \textit{ikusi} d-o-t-o-t.
I-erg house-abs see 3sg.abs-root-1sg.erg.

‘I have seen the house.’

(1) f. *Ni-k \textit{etxi-e-ri_i} \textit{ikusi} d-o-t-s-\textit{a_r-t}.
I-erg house-the-dat see 3sg.abs-root-df-3sg.dat-1sg.erg.

‘I have seen the house.’

DOM is a widespread linguistic phenomenon; however, Basque is not typically considered a DOM language. The characteristics of Basque DOM have been attributed to intense contact between Basque and BLD (Austin, 2006). Importantly, Alberdi (2010) argues that Basque DOM is a calque from Spanish whereas Austin (2006) has suggested that it is an example of convergence with BLD. The difference between these two proposals is largely because the mechanisms of contact-phenomena remain understudied from a sociolinguistic viewpoint. Thus, the major goals of this paper are two-fold: (1) to argue that DOM in Basque is the result of contact with BLD and (2) to determine the process by which Basque DOM occurs as a result of this contact.

I build upon theories of contact linguistics put forward by Thomason and Kaufman (1988) and Thomason (2001, 2010) who suggest that contact phenomena will only be understood when complex processes that involve both internal (linguistic) and external influences (social) are accounted for. Using variationist methodologies for the study of contact-induced change (Meyerhoff, 2009), I follow a functionalist approach to language contact in which language is seen as the product of rule-governed language processing in the bilingual mind (Heine and Kuteva, 2005, 2006; Matras, 2010). In this paper, I argue that DOM
in Basque is the product of its intense contact with bld. However, I argue that it is not a calque but instead results in a replicated grammaticalization process that leads to convergence (Austin, 2006).

The present paper is structured as follows: section 2 presents the functionalist approach to contact linguistics; section 3 introduces the Basque-Spanish contact scenario. Section 4 presents a typological account of Dom cross-linguistically and specifically in Spanish and Basque. Section 5 reviews previous work on Basque Dom. I discuss the methodology used in section 6, and results in section 7. Sections 8 and 9 present an overall discussion and conclusion, respectively.

2 Contact-Induced Grammatical Change

The present study analyzes variation in Basque Dom as a product of contact between Basque and Spanish. Following the seminal work of Weinreich (1953) on contact linguistics, Thomason and Kaufman (1988) and Thomason (2001) proposed a typological model of the borrowing scale, defining social and linguistic factors as predictors for contact-induced change. Social factors that are suggested to account for contact-induced phenomena include intensity of contact, speakers’ attitudes and imperfect learning. Intensity of contact is the most important predictor of language contact influence: the stronger the intensity of contact the more likely that structural aspects will be borrowed. Regarding linguistic factors, universal markedness, feature integration and typological distance are suggested to be the strongest predictors: the more the feature is universally marked or integrated into an interlocking structure, the less likely this linguistic feature will be transferred. However, typological distance of languages plays an important role as well: if there is a set of features that are shared by some languages (i.e. pronoun drop, verbal structure) these features will be easily transferrable. However, the present study presents evidence that structural borrowing can occur even when the languages in contact are typologically distinct, as in the case of Basque and Spanish.

Although this model has been the benchmark by which contact-induced phenomena are systematically described, determining whether a feature is the result of contact or not has been the center of many scholarly inquiries. Thomason (2001, 2007:47) defines contact as a “particular linguistic change [that] is

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2 Intensity of contact is defined as the ‘cultural pressure’ exerted by one group of speakers on another (Thomason, 2001:66).
caused at least in part by language (or dialect) contact [and that] it would have been less likely to occur outside a particular contact situation”. In this regard, it is of utmost importance to determine whether changes occur primarily internally or not. Mougeon et al. (2005) and Poplack and Levey (2010) further propose that an important criterion to establish contact is to determine whether the presumed contact feature was present in a pre-contact stage. If this was the case, it is important to determine whether it was conditioned in the same way and, finally, to determine if it shows a parallelism with the source language. As far as dom is concerned, it is clear that it is a typologically common structure (Sinnemäki, 2014) and highly likely to be deemed a contact feature. However, social beliefs towards Basque dom as a residue of Spanish also remain high (Rodríguez-Ordóñez, 2013). Due to the historical and political situation of Basque in Spain, it is impossible to study Basque dom in a pre-contact stage as Poplack and Levey (2010) suggest. Using variationist methodology, the present study endeavors to determine whether Basque dom is a contact phenomenon by paying special attention to the current distribution of the phenomenon in different types of speakers.

Another important debate in the field of contact linguistics is how to describe the kinds of innovations (Aikhenvald, 2002; Silva-Corvalán, 2007; Meyerhoff, 2009; Hickey, 2010) that can be found in contact scenarios, as well as the mechanisms behind them (Thomason, 2001; Heine and Kuteva, 2005, 2006; Matras, 2010; Poplack and Levey, 2010; Poplack, Zentz and Dion, 2012; Seifart, 2012). Taking Basque dom as an example, two very different proposals have been put forward as to what kind of innovation or contact-induced outcome Basque dom may be: on the one hand, Alberdi (2010) describes it as a syntactic calque. On the other hand, Austin (2006) argues that it is an example of convergence with bld. The difference between these two proposals lies in the mechanisms or processes of contact-phenomena, which remain understudied. For instance, some have argued that code-switching could gradually result in language change (Bullock and Toribio, 2004; Backus, 2005), whereas others suggest that language integration is abrupt and code-switching has no effect (Poplack and Dion, 2012). In terms of grammatical borrowing, while some argue that grammar cannot be borrowed at all (Sankoff, 2002), it has also been postulated that certain structural innovations can be mediated by lexical borrowing (Windford, 2003:134) or even replicated, leading to a grammaticalization process (Johanson, 2002; Heine and Kuteva, 2006, 2010).

Studying these processes will increase our understanding of the intertwined and complex relationship between language universals, language variation and contact phenomena (Cornips and Corrigan, 2005; Windford, 2005; Heine and Kuteva, 2010) and provide more uniform and thorough descriptive accounts of contact-induced phenomena. More importantly, we will be able to determine
how contact affects grammatical change. The present study examines this process by uncovering the complex relationship between language universals and contact phenomena. From this, I argue that Basque DOM is not a syntactic calque of BLD, but ‘replica grammaticalization’ induced by contact.

3  Basque-Spanish Contact Scenario in Gernika

Gernika is a semi-urban town, located 34 km from the capital of the Bizkaian province of Bilbao, in the Western side of the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC) in Spain. Among the three territories that comprise the Basque Country, Basque only holds a co-official status in the BAC. Although Basque is an isolate language spoken by 800,000 people, it has been in contact with Latin and Romance languages (Spanish and French) for over 2000 years and still continues to co-exist with these majority languages in their corresponding countries. For centuries, diglossia (with no widespread bilingualism) was very common in the entire Basque territory, but since the BAC was created in 1979, Basque has shared co-official status with Spanish (Zuazo, 2005). In 1968, the newly standardized Basque (Euskara Batua ‘unified Basque’) was implemented in public schools as the primary language of instruction and a revitalization process began. This new variety became very useful not only for the development of literacy in the Basque-speaking community, but also for the Spanish monolingual speaking immigrants who settled in the greater Bilbao area in the 1960s. In the early 1980s, many Spanish monolinguals started acquiring the standard form of the language, either through full or partial immersion in Basque or extracurricular classes offered by institutions such as Euskaltegiak ‘Basque schools’. This led to a successful revitalization process, as the number of Basque speakers among the youngest generation increased from an average of 20% in 1981 to an average of almost 85% in 2006 (Eusko Jaurlaritza, 2008; Azkarate, 2012).

Monolingual Spanish immigrants not only settled in the greater Bilbao area but also in other semi-urban towns such as Gernika where industry was very prevalent in the 1960s. EUSTAT, the Basque Statistic Office, shows that the Gernika population doubled from 7,847 to 14,678 in the 1960s. Many families came from monolingual territories (Burgos, Zamora, León) to work in town and had children who were raised speaking Spanish at home but learned Basque through Basque immersion programs in the public schools. As opposed to the

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3 The other two territories are Navarre (Spain) where Basque has restricted official status and Iparralde (France) in the western half of the Département des Pyrénées Atlantiques where Basque has no official status.
greater Bilbao area, where Basque had been lost (or nearly so) before the revitalization process, Basque was still spoken in Gernika before the standardization. However, the presence of the language increased after its standardization; 61.1% of the population in Gernika showed some sort of knowledge of Basque in 1981, whereas nearly 70% of the population speaks the language natively today. In terms of education, only 30% of children were enrolled in a full Basque immersion program in 1981, whereas 100% of children are instructed entirely in Basque today (Gernikako Udala, 2002). It is also important to mention that although Basque is spoken by a high percentage of the population, Spanish is also frequently used. 35% of the population use only Spanish at home; 41% speak only Basque at home; and 22.9% of the population in Gernika reports speaking both languages at home.4

Investigation of Basque DOM in Gernika Basque opens a new opportunity for the study of contact linguistics. According to Thomason and Kaufman’s (1988) typology of contact induced phenomena, this is a contact scenario where speakers are fluent in two languages in which borrowing of structural features are more likely to happen – particularly if the relevant features are universally marked, as it is in the case of DOM.

4 Differential Object Marking

Differential Object Marking (DOM) refers to the case marking of a subset of objects that are often affected by semantic, pragmatic or referential properties of the object (Bossong, 1991; Aissen, 2003) as in (2a–b):

Gernika Basque non-DOM

(2) a. Ni-k etxi-ei ikusi dᵣ-o-t.
I-ERG house-the.ABS see 3SG.ABS-ROOT-1SG.ERG.
‘I have seen the house.’

Gernika Basque DOM

(2) b. Ni-k Mikel-e-ri ikusi d-o-ts-aᵣ-t.
I-ERG Mikel-VOWEL-DAT see 3SG.ABS-ROOT-DF-3SG.DAT-1SG.ERG.
‘I have seen Mikel.’

4 Only 0.2% is representative of other languages used at home other than Basque and Spanish.
The overt dative case marking of these objects (-ri in Basque) is dependent on the principle of prominence or syntactic markedness, which is based on animacy (Silverstein, 1976) and specificity hierarchies (Keenan and Comrie, 1977; Dixon, 1979) as in (3) and (4). These hierarchies suggest that the higher the feature (human or personal pronoun) the more likely they are to be marked.

(3) Animacy Hierarchy: human > animate > inanimate

(4) Definiteness Hierarchy: personal pronoun > proper name > definite NP > indefinite specific NP > non-specific NP

Although the principle of prominence seems rather simple, the variation found in languages with DOM makes this phenomenon a complex one. This complexity lies in whether DOM is optional or obligatory and whether it is the animacy factor, the definiteness/specificity factor or a combination of both that determines overt case marking of the direct object. For instance, human direct objects are always marked with dative – ko in Hindi but are optional with animate or inanimate objects (Mohanan, 1995; Montrul et al., 2012).

Hindi (Montrul et al., 2012: 150–151)

(5) a. *Mira-ne Ramesh-ko dekhaa.
Mira-erg Ramesh-dom saw.
‘Mira saw Ramesh.’

(5) b. *Mira-ne Ramesh dekhaa.
Mira-erg Ramesh saw.
‘Mira saw Ramesh.’

(5) c. Mira-ne vo kutte-ko dekhaa.
Mira-erg that dog-dom saw.
‘Mira saw that dog.’

(5) d. Mira-ne vo kuttaa dekhaa.
Mira-erg that dog saw.
‘Mira saw that dog.’

5 Keenan and Comrie (1977) refer to this notion as Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy.
6 Hindi – ko is also used as a referential of specificity (Butt, 1993) or definiteness (Mohanan, 1995). For a further debate, the reader is directed to de Hoop and Narashimhan (2005).
The optionality found in Hindi is slightly different from Romance languages such as Romanian and Spanish because these languages obligatorily mark objects that are both animate and specific (Leonetti, 2004; von Heusinger, 2008; de Swart, 2007). I now turn to the details regarding Spanish DOM.

4.1 Spanish DOM
In Spanish, DOM is expressed by means of two forms. The most studied form is the preposition *a*, which is often times called “prepositional accusative”, “personal *a*” or “*a*-marking”\(^7\). The preposition *a* is usually employed to mark indirect objects (as in (6)) but can also mark animate (7) and specific objects (8), both of which exemplify DOM. All Spanish dialects exhibit DOM in terms of prepositionally marking animate direct objects with *a* (albeit dialectal variation), in the sense that these examples resemble indirect objects.

Indirect object construction (Ormazabal and Romero, 2013: 304)

\[(6)\] Les recomendé un libro a los estudiantes.
\[3\text{PL.IO} \text{recommended a book to the students.}\]
\[\text{‘I recommended the students a book.’}\]

DOM with animacy (modified from Torrego, 1998)

\[(7)\] Esconde *(a) Juan /*(a) libro.
\[\text{hide DOM Juan DOM.the book.}\]
\[\text{‘Hide Juan / the book.’}\]

DOM with specificity (modified from von Heusinger 2008:6)

\[(8)\] El dentista necesita *a un ayudante /
\[\text{the dentist needs DOM an assistant /}\]
\[\text{Intended reading: ‘The dentist needs some assistant.’}\]

The second means of expressing DOM is through ‘weak’ pronominal dative clitics that appear adjacent to the verb phrase. In standard varieties of Spanish, direct objects and indirect objects take different clitics for third person singular; accusative *lo(s)/la(s)* for direct objects and *le(s)* for dative indirect objects. However, in many Spanish DOM dialects the dative clitic *le* instead of

\(7\) The study of DOM in Spanish is still an object of controversial discussion (Leonetti, 2004; von Heusinger, 2008) due to the abundant dialectal variation of ‘*a* personal’ across Spanish dialects, with ‘*a* personal’ being obligatory in some contexts but optional in others.
accusative *lo/la* is used to mark animate specific objects, as seen in (10). This phenomenon is also known as *leísmo real* (Fernández-Ordóñez, 1999).8

**Standard Varieties**

(9)  
\[
\text{Lo } \quad \text{he} \quad \text{visto} \quad \text{(a Mikel)}
\]
\[
\text{Him.ACC.CLITIC 1SG.have see.PART DOM Mikel.}
\]
\`
I have seen him / Mikel.'

**Leísmo Varieties**

(10)  
\[
\text{Le } \quad \text{he} \quad \text{visto} \quad \text{(a Mikel)}
\]
\[
\text{Him.DAT.CLITIC 1SG.have see.PART DOM Mikel.}
\]
\`
I have seen him / Mikel.'

It is crucial to remember that leísmo only appears if a marking also occurs. However, the degree in which it appears, and whether it allows clitic doubling of the NP greatly depends on the dialect of Spanish. In the following section, I detail the characteristics of the Basque-Spanish Leísta Dialect (*bld*), the syntax of which has been extensively studied (Franco, 1993; Landa, 1995; Ormazabal and Romero, 2007, 2013).

### 4.2 Basque-Spanish Leísmo Dialect (*bld*)

Animated leísmo, common in the Spanish spoken in the BAC, suggests that animate direct objects are obligatorily marked with the dative clitic *le* instead of the canonical accusative *lo*. In contrast with other leísta dialects in the Iberian Peninsula, it is common in bld to use *le* to mark animate specific direct objects regardless of their gender, as in (11) (Urrutia, 1995, 2003):

(11)  
\[
\text{Le } \quad \text{he} \quad \text{visto a Mikel /a María.}
\]
\[
\text{Him/Her.DAT.CLITIC 1SG.have see.PART DOM Mikel /DOM María.}
\]
\`
I have seen Mikel / María.'

An important characteristic of Basque Spanish is that it also allows clitic doubling9 of definite direct objects. In this regard, Ormazabal and Romero

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8 There are different types of *leísmo* that have been described in the literature. In this paper, I will only be discussing the *leísmo* spoken in the BAC. For further discussion, the reader is directed to Fernández-Ordóñez (1999), Klein-Andreu (1999), LaPesa (2000).

9 Clitic doubling is also common in Andino or Porteño Spanish but not in Standard Peninsular Spanish. (Zdrojewski and Sánchez, 2014).
(2007, 2013) argue that clitics operate as agreement markers in BLD, and not as determiners as in other dialects such as Peninsular Spanish (Bonet, 1991). Because agreement markers encode the semantic features of the object, direct object clitic le is an agreement marker of ‘a personal’. As such, Ormazabal and Romero (2007) argue that only one feature can be subject to an agree relation: animacy. Thus, it is argued that the relationship between DOM and animated leísmo in BLD is a direct one: the use of leísmo (le/les) agrees with the animate and specific direct object it encodes.10

Following studies on BLD, the present study explores how the distribution of BLD DOM affects Basque DOM, which has been put forward in previous studies (Austin, 2006). The investigation of BLD as a source of Basque DOM is important because not only is Basque Spanish a leísta variety, but it is more extensive and allows NP-doubling of the clitic, similar to Basque DOM, as shown in the following section.

4.3 Basque DOM
The first syntactic account of Basque DOM was put forward by Fernández and Rezac (2010), who proposed two principles for the study of Basque DOM: (1) syntactically, DOM objects are direct objects because they share the same argumental relations as canonical objects, and (2) morphologically, DOM objects have structural case-marking because they agree with the clitic in the auxiliary verb. These principles were corroborated by Odria (2014), who provided a syntactic account of a spoken variety of Basque (Elgoibar Basque). Furthermore, it was shown that Basque DOM is optional and behaves primarily according to the two semantic-pragmatic factors: animacy and specificity. Though Fernández and Rezac (2016) show that DOM is optional for third person humans, it is unavailable for non-humans (either animate or not). This restricted availability is also found in Gernika Basque (12–14).11

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10 An exception to this rule is shown in Urrutia (1995:251), who shows examples of extended leísmo, which refers to the use of clitic le to also mark direct objects of [-animate] nature. Albeit rare, such examples are found in Basque Spanish (though only among elderly people with low ‘sociocultural level’).

11 Examples 12a and 13a were actual spontaneous productions of the speakers. Because speakers do not produce what is not available in their grammatical system during spontaneous speech, these same speakers were contacted and asked to rate the grammaticality of 12b and 13b for illustrative purposes.
Human (female, Basque-dominant, 54)

(12) a. \( \text{Ba} \text{ Jon-e-ri}_i \text{ atrapa-tz-o}_i \) 
    So \( \text{Jon-VOWEL-DAT} \text{ catch-DF-3SG.DAT} \).
    ‘So it caught Jon.’

(12) b. \( \text{Ba} \text{ Jon} \text{ atrapa} \text{ d-e-u.} \) 
    So \( \text{Jon.ABS} \text{ catch 3SG.ABS-VOWEL-ROOT} \).
    ‘So it caught Jon.’

Non-human animate (male, Basque-dominant, 27)

(13) a. \( \text{Katajineti-e}_i \text{ ikusi-gu.} \) 
    \( \text{common.genet-the.ABS} \text{ see-1PL.ERG} \).
    ‘We have seen the common genet.’

(13) b. *\( \text{Katajineti-e-ri}_i \text{ ikusi-ts-a}_{1r}gu. \) 
    \( \text{common.genet-the-DAT} \text{ SEE-DF-3SG.DAT-1PL.ERG} \).
    ‘We have seen the common genet.’

Non-human, non-animate

(14) a. \( \text{Ni-k etxi-e}_i \text{ ikusi d}_{1r}-o-t. \) 
    \( \text{I-ERG} \text{ house-the.ABS} \text{ see 3SG.ABS-ROOT-1SG.ERG} \).
    ‘I have seen the house.’

(14) b. *\( \text{Ni-k etxi-e-ri}_i \text{ ikusi d-o-ts}_{1r}a-t. \) 
    \( \text{I-ERG} \text{ house-the-DAT} \text{ see 3SG.ABS-ROOT-DF-3SG.DAT-1SG.ERG} \).
    ‘I have seen the house.’

The person feature of the object is an important factor in the variation of Basque DOM. Varieties such as Lekeitio Basque or Elgoibar Basque that allow DOM show that it is more common to mark it with first and second person objects than third person ones (Hualde et al., 1994; Odria, 2014). Furthermore, varieties such as Dima, Arratia and Ultzama show obligatory DOM with first and second person, but it is not allowed with third person objects (Zuazo, 2003; Monoule, 2011; Fernández and Rezac, to appear). Other conditioning features
include specificity (Mounole, 2012) and tense (Yrizar 1997; Sagarzazu, 2005; Rezac, 2006).12

An important linguistic factor for the present study is the role of the pro(noun) drop parameter in the evolution of Basque DOM, as suggested in Austin (2006). Basque null objects are pronominal objects directly agreeing with the verbal complex (Ortiz de Urbina, 1989). Basque allows pro-drop for up to three arguments, as verbal morphology is a licensor of null arguments (Rizzi, 1986):

Gernika Basque (female, Spanish-dominant, 24)

(15) Øi Øj Øk konbalideu ei-tze Ø-Ø-ztj-iēr2k
    pro pro pro transfer do-PRES 3SG.ABS-ROOT-DAT-ERG-PL.ABS.
    ‘[They] transfer [them] [to me].’

Although this parameter has been given less scholarly attention in the DOM literature,13 Austin (2006) proposed that pro-drop opens a possibility to re-analyze the internal arguments of the verb. More specifically, she argues that the lack of phonological realization of pro leads to a ‘confusion’ as to whether an argument functions as a direct or indirect object, favoring the use of dative with animate direct objects as in BLD. In order to confirm this hypothesis, Rodríguez-Ordóñez (2013) conducted a study in which 19 participants rated the acceptability of Basque DOM both with null and overt animate objects. Statistical analyses showed that Basque-Spanish bilinguals from Gernika rated Basque DOM significantly more acceptable when the object was null. These results suggest that null objects do indeed play a role in the use of Basque DOM. However, possible effects of null objects on oral production across different speakers remains to be empirically demonstrated.

Finally, it is important to address the relationship that the so-called alternating verbs in Basque have with DOM. Etxepare (2003) and Fernández and Ortiz de Urbina (2010) refer to alternating verbs as those bivalent unergative verbs such as itxaron ‘to wait’, abisatu ‘notify’, lagundu ‘accompany’, which have an ergative external argument and an internal argument that alternates between

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12 According to Sagarzazu (2005), Basque DOM seems to be restricted to past tense only in Irun Basque.

13 Some languages have shown that the pro(noun) drop parameter is an important factor in the use of DOM (See Schwenter and Silva, 2002; Schwenter, 2014 for Portuguese; Morimoto, 2002 for Bantu languages).
absolutive or dative marking. Using depictive predicates as a test (McFadden, 2004), which shows that only direct objects can license secondary predicates, it has been shown that the dative argument of these verbs behaves like an indirect object, as opposed to a ‘true’ direct object as in DOM (Fernández and Ortiz de Urbina, 2012; Fernández and Rezac, to appear). For this reason, these verbs have been excluded from the present analysis.

5 Hypothesis of Convergence between Basque DOM and BLD

The first descriptivist accounts of Basque (Zubiri, 1991) identify DOM as an “incorrect” construction. Within syntactic theory, Odria (2014) and Fernández and Rezac (to appear) claim that certain syntactic factors analyses, BLD and Basque DOM are ‘strikingly’ similar in the sense that both systems allow clitic doubling (a-marking and leísmo in BLD; dative case and dative agreement in Basque) and are being affected by the same universal features: animacy and specificity. However, BLD is not affected by tense whereas Basque is, and Basque DOM is not available for inanimate objects.

Others studies have put forth the hypothesis that Basque DOM is indeed the result of intense contact with BLD. However, no consensus has been reached as to what kind of innovation Basque DOM may be. For instance, Alberdi (2010) catalogues Basque DOM as a syntactic calque from Spanish, whereas Austin (2006) argues that Basque DOM results in convergence of AGR in the agreement functional category of Basque and Spanish in terms of animacy. Based on speech samples of 4 Basque-Spanish bilinguals, Austin (2006) suggests that Basque DOM is attributable to recent demographic changes as explored above14 along with three possible internal factors: (a) gradual tendency to replace absolutive with dative agreement, (b) agreement confusion due to the pervasiveness of indirect/direct object dropping (null objects) in Basque and (c) typological tendency to differentiate human from non-human objects. These proposals are consistent with typological accounts of DOM, but whether Basque DOM is the result of intense contact with BLD, and the process by which Basque DOM has emerged as a contact phenomenon, still remains to be determined.

14 Austin (2006) suggestively claims DOM’s recency. However, traditional dialectology has already positioned its existence back to the 1860s (Zuazo, 2003). It is possible that recent demographic changes have accelerated its use.
6 Methods

6.1 Data Collection
In order to determine if bld is a possible source of Basque DOM and the process by which it has emerged, the present study uses speech samples of Basque among Basque-Spanish bilinguals gathered through sociolinguistic interviews (Labov, 2001). The data obtained from these interviews were quantitatively measured and then compared to previous studies on bld (Urrutia, 1995, 2003). A total of 29 native speakers of Basque-Spanish bilinguals interacted in Basque individually with the researcher, a native speaker of Gernika Basque, for an average of 50 minutes each. Participants were encouraged (but not restricted) to talk about anecdotes from their childhood, how they felt affected by the economic crisis in Spain and plans they may have had for the rest of the summer. Data were collected in a place of the speaker’s choice, which included their work space, their home or regularly visited cafés.

6.2 Social Factors
29 Native Basque and Spanish bilinguals were recruited from the semi-urban area of Gernika. In order to participate in the study participants had to be born and raised in the area. All participants completed a sociolinguistic language background questionnaire, eliciting information about parental linguistic background, their language use, and their self-perceived proficiency both in Gernika Basque, Standard Basque and Spanish (Gollan et al., 2012). Participants’ age and language dominance were recorded to determine the effect of bld contact and how recently it occurred.

Age is a relevant factor for the understanding of any generational changes that may have occurred within a given time construct (Bailey, 2004; Chambers, 2004). This technique allows the assessment of possible changes by comparing language used by older and younger speakers. In order to determine possible generational changes, speakers were divided into two age groups; (1) born before Franco’s dictatorship (1975, or prior; +40 years old, n = 11) and (2) born in 1976 or later (18–39 years old, n = 18). This date (as a threshold) was chosen because it was not until 1978 that Basque became a co-official language and was formally introduced in the educational system of the Basque Autonomous Community in Spain. Therefore, the first generation to be taught in Basque was born after 1976, a time when the prominence of Basque increased in the Gernika area. Therefore, it is hypothesized that if Basque DOM is a recent phenomenon as postulated by Austin (2006) and is the result of the drastic demographic and linguistic changes of the area, younger speakers will produce significantly more DOM than the older group.
Language dominance, measured in terms of intensity of contact, is the most important factor to determine any effects of features attributed to contact-induced phenomena, in this case, Basque DOM (Thomason, 2001; Mougeon et al., 2005). This factor was measured by considering language used at home, language of the parents, language used in different social domains and self-ratings of how comfortable they were speaking Basque and Spanish (Gollan et al., 2012). Most speakers considered themselves equally competent and fluent in both languages. Therefore, the factor of language use was the most deterministic of all. Participants were asked to rate their use of both languages in different social contexts on a scale of 1–5 (1 = Spanish use only, 5 = Basque use only). Those whose average self-ratings were 3.5 or higher were considered Basque dominant. Those whose average self-rating was 3.4 or lower were considered Spanish dominant. Following these criteria, 11 of the 18 younger speakers (ages 23–38) were Basque-dominant and the other seven were Spanish-dominant. In the older group (ages 52–63), seven of the 11 speakers self-rated as Basque-dominant and the remaining four were Spanish-dominant. In order to determine a contact effect on Basque DOM, it was hypothesized that Spanish-dominant speakers will use Basque DOM significantly more than the Basque-dominant group.

6.3 Coding Linguistic Factors
A total of 18 hours of natural speech data were recorded and manually transcribed using the linguistic annotator ELAN (Sloetjes and Wittenburg, 2008). Following a multidimensional approach to DOM (von Heusinger and Kaiser, 2007), data were coded for the presence or absence of DOM on two-place predicate verbs. The target verbs were transitive (e.g., ikusi ‘to see’) or used transitively (e.g., ezagutu ‘to meet/know’) in which a subject would be marked with ergative and the object would be either marked with canonical ABS or dative (DOM). Ditransitive verbs and bivalent unergatives of the itxaron-type (‘to wait’-type) were excluded from the analysis. In order to investigate what linguistic factors favor or disfavor DOM in Basque, a total of six linguistic factors were considered in the study, classified as to whether they were pertinent to a theory of DOM, specific of BLD or specific to Basque.

Semantic-pragmatic approaches to a theory of DOM have shown that the two most important factors for syntactic markedness or prominence are animacy and definiteness or specificity (Bossong, 1991; Aissen, 2003). Following this approach, direct objects were coded for these two factors pertaining to the animacy and definiteness hierarchies (Silverstein, 1976). As for the animacy hierarchy, objects were coded accordingly: (a) Animate human: neskie ‘girl’, ama ‘mother’, morroi ‘dude’; (b) animate non-human: txakurre ‘dog’, katue ‘cat’;
(c) inanimate: *telebisiñoa* ‘television’, *hormie* ‘wall’. In terms of the definiteness hierarchy, objects were coded as: (a) personal pronoun: *ni* ‘I’, *bestie* ‘the other one’; (b) proper name: Mikel ‘Michael’; (c) definite NP: *neska hori* ‘that girl’, *nire lagune* ‘my friend’; (d) Indefinite specific NP: *persona batzuk* ‘some people’; (e) Non-specific NP: *jentie* ‘people’, *inor* ‘nobody’. If Basque DOM is the result of contact, it is expected that Basque DOM will be favored for both animate and specific objects (as in Spanish).

The relevant literature has shown that factors other than animacy and specificity also play a role in DOM languages (Kiparski, 1998; Leonetti, 2004; Sinnemäki, 2014). For Spanish DOM, both person and number are grammatical features that play a role (Franco 1993; Landa 1995; Urrutia, 1995, 2003; Fernández-Ordóñez 1999). Thus, objects have been further coded for the presence of DOM pertaining to person and number: (a) first: *ni* ‘I’, *gu* ‘we’; (b) second: *zu* ‘you’, *zuek* ‘you all’; and (c) third *bera* ‘he/she’, *harek* ‘they’. If the objects were not subject or object pronouns, singular and plural objects were coded as such: (a) singular: *neska* ‘the girl’; (b) plural: *neskak* ‘(the) girls’. Based on these studies, especially Keenan and Comrie (1977), first and second person objects are expected to be marked more often (and therefore more DOM will be shown on these persons) than third person singular because they show higher markedness (prominence)\(^\text{15}\) than third person. Following studies on BLD, another prediction is that singular objects will favor Basque DOM.

Finally, in order to determine possible internal factors that may favor Basque DOM, two language specific factors were taken into account: null objects and verb origin. As hypothesized by Austin (2006) null objects have been argued to allow reanalysis of the argument structure of the verb, favoring Basque DOM. Therefore, objects were coded as to whether they were overtly expressed or null. The factor of verb origin relates to whether the transitive verb is originally Basque or borrowed from Spanish. The choice of this factor is motivated by Heine and Kuteva (2010), who argue that grammar might not be borrowed directly, but instead, grammar change is induced by the semantics of the construction itself. Previous research on Basque has shown that many lexical borrowings have been incorporated into Basque in the long historical trajectory of the contact between Basque and Romance languages (Michelena, 1987). Given this intense contact between Basque and Spanish, it is hypothesized that Basque DOM might be a consequence of verb borrowing from Spanish. Hence, it is expected that Basque DOM will be favored by Spanish verbs (*kastigatu* ‘to

\(^{15}\) Also, these two persons may also work in interaction with animacy, as first and second person objects are usually animate.
punish’ as opposed to it Basque counterpart *zigortu* ‘to punish’) showing evidence that grammar can be borrowed (or replicated) through semantics.

7 Results

7.1 Frequency of Basque DOM

A total of 798 transitive clauses or two-place predicates were used, which were distributed as follows: 670 (83.9%) occurrences of non-DOM and 128 (16.1%) occurrences of DOM. As Table 1 shows, occurrences of Basque DOM are not very common but the distribution certainly changes, according to whether a speaker is Basque-dominant or Spanish-dominant; the former group shows a 13.3% rate of DOM whereas the latter has an 7.6% increase with an overall rate of 20.9%. Although these results may suggest a contact effect, a preliminary mixed effects model of the full data set indicated that these percentages were not sufficient to reach significance between both groups ($\beta = -0.036$, $t = -0.951$, $p = 0.67$).

In order to empirically determine any possible contact effects based on language dominance (e.g. Basque-dominant or Spanish-dominant) (Tagliamonte, 2006), the data were divided based on this factor and submitted to rigorous statistical modeling, as explained below.

### Statistical Method: Mixed-Effects Models

A mixed effects logistic regression was performed using the `lmer()` function in the statistical software R (R Development Core Team, 2008) under the `lme4` package. Although logistic regression models assume that the predictors are independent from each other, it is widely known that individual variation is present in sociolinguistic data. One of the advantages of using mixed effects

|               | Non-DOM | DOM  | Total |
|---------------|---------|------|-------|
| Basque-dominant | 443 (86.7%) | 68 (13.3%) | 511   |
| Spanish-dominant | 227 (79.1%) | 60 (20.9%) | 287   |
| **Total**      | 670 (83.9%) | 128 (16.1%) | 798   |
models is that they return more reduced and accurate significance levels, as opposed to traditional binary logistic regression models that ignore individual differences or possible interactions between linguistic and social factors. Thus, in order to capture possible speaker effects and possible interactions between linguistic and social factors, two mixed-effects models were performed (one per language-dominance group) treating speaker as a random effect while all linguistic (animacy, specificity, person, number, verb type and null object) and social factors (age) were set as fixed-effects. Regarding social factors, older speakers were used as intercepts. Regarding linguistic factors, animate, specificity, first person, singular objects, Basque verbs and overt objects served as intercepts. The overall tendencies along with significances are shown in Table 2.

| Linguistic Factors | Gernika Basque (Basque-dominant) | Gernika Basque (Spanish-dominant) |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Universal semantic factors | Animacy | 33.8 % | 45.2 % |
|                     | Animacy human | 0 % | 0 % |
|                     | Animacy non-human | 10.9 % | 33.1 % * |
| Specificity | Specific | 1.3 % | 3.3 % |
|                | Non-specific | 38.1 % | 59.2 % ** |
| Basque-Spanish Dialect | Animacy and | 86.1 % * | 96.9 % ** |
|                     | Specificity | 68.4 % | 95.2 % ** |
|                     | Person | 6.1 % | 4.5 % |
|                     | Second | 15.8 % ** | 25.1 % ** |
|                     | Third | 7.1 % | 5.1 % |
| Number | Singular | 20.6 % | 50.6 % |
|           | Plural | 10.6 % | 13.5 % |
| Basque Specific | Object type | 12.1 % | 18.5 % |
|               | Null | 26.6 % | 38.5 % |
|               | Overt | 23.1 % | 53.8 % *** |
7.2.1 Statistical Results: Basque-Dominant

Results showed no statistical difference between the younger and the older group ($\beta = -0.088$, $t = -0.193$, $p = 0.46$), suggesting that Basque DOM is not as recent of a phenomenon as has been suggested. In terms of person, results show that first person objects differ significantly from third person ($\beta = -0.6511$, $t = -13.873$, $p < 0.001$) and second person objects ($\beta = 0.1531$, $t = -2.127$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that it is first person objects that mainly favor Basque DOM.

7.2.2 Statistical Results: Spanish-Dominant

In this model, age also did not reveal any significance between the older and younger group ($\beta = 0.1085$, $t = 1.728$, $p = 0.16$), further confirming that Basque DOM has been in the speech of Gernika Basque speakers longer than previously suggested (Austin, 2006). In terms of linguistic factors, the model revealed both similarities with its counter Basque-dominant group but also some small differences: both animacy and specificity showed a strong interaction with each other ($\beta = -0.177$, $t = -3.396$, $p < 0.005$). Again, person was a strong predictor in the sense that first person objects (intercept) significantly differed from third person ($\beta = -0.17538$, $t = -17.257$, $p < 0.001$); however, for this group there was no significant difference from second person objects ($\beta = -0.0355$, $t = -0.681$, $p > 0.05$). With regards to number, singular objects significantly favored Basque DOM ($\beta = 0.0772$, $t = 2.221$, $p < 0.05$) as opposed to plural objects. Finally, the most important difference between the two groups occurred in the significant interaction found with respect to verb type and object type. Spanish-dominant speakers produced significantly more instances of Basque DOM when the verb was borrowed from Spanish and when the object was null ($\beta = 0.1519$, $t = 2.589$, $p < 0.001$).

In summary, results show that animate and specific objects favor DOM mainly in the Spanish-dominant group (there was no statistical effect found in the Basque-dominant group for animate and specific objects). Basque-dominant speakers make a distinction between first and second person with regards to Basque DOM, but this distinction disappeared in the Spanish-dominant group. These results are signs of a possible contact effect between Basque DOM and BLD with respect to the neutralization effect of person agreement markers. This neutralization is more apparent in the Spanish-dominant group. Tables 3 and 4 show the clitic systems of Spanish and Basque.

As can be seen in Table 3, Basque-Spanish direct object and indirect object clitics are syncretic. In Basque, Basque-Spanish dominant speakers seem to neutralize second person verbal clitics whereas Spanish-dominant speakers extend this syncretism to first person pronouns as well, especially in the singular form. The fact that different groups show different patterns may suggest that these two persons show different featural specifications, involving
[±Participant, ±Author] features (Nevins, 2007). This provides further evidence that Basque dom is a syntactic phenomenon that is affected in the morphology (Fernández and Rezac, 2010). Finally Spanish-dominant speakers further produce more dom when the verb is directly borrowed from Spanish and the object is null (53.8%).

8 Discussion

The main purpose of the present study was to determine whether Basque dom is the result of intense contact with BLD, and if so, to determine the processes involved in its emergence, paying special attention to the relationship between language universals, language variation and contact phenomena. Taking a variationist approach to language contact, and following a four step methodological approach to identify contact phenomena (Mougeon et al., 2005), it appears that Basque dom is indeed the result of intense contact with Spanish. It
involves a process of ‘replica grammaticalization’ from BLD in which language universals along with language-specific features determine its variation, as I explain below.

8.1 Variationist Approaches to Contact Linguistics

In order to determine whether Basque DOM is the result of intense contact with Spanish, the present study took a variationist approach to language, which seeks to investigate language variation as a product of a linguistically and socially constrained system. According to Poplack and Levey (2010), it is important to determine whether the linguistic variation at hand is involved in change so that later it can be established that the change is actually determined by contact. Within this framework, change is studied from an apparent time construct or by studying generational changes in a specific time (Bailey, 2004; Chambers 2004). In the present study, age was the factor employed to determine possible generational changes. Although the results did not show age as a significant predictor for linguistic variation in the use of Basque DOM, descriptive statistics shows an apparent increase of Basque DOM among young speakers (16.9% as opposed to 7.8% in the older population). These results are compatible with Austin’s (2006) findings in terms of attributing its increase to recent sociopolitical changes. However, Basque DOM is not as recent in Gernika Basque, according to studies in traditional Basque dialectology (Zuazo, 2003). As such, the ‘older generation’ might not be the most suitable reference point for determining an effect of change (Poplack and Levey, 2010) and therefore, contact. In order to do so, studies have argued for comparing the present analysis with a pre-contact variety (Thomason, 2001; Mougeon et al., 2005; Poplack and Levey, 2010). In the case of Basque, studying a pre-contact variety would require reconstruction evidence, given the fact that Basque has been in contact with Latin for over 2,000 years with no written literary evidence until 1545. Determining the emergence of Basque DOM would require conducting a diachronic and philological analysis of texts. I leave this endeavor for future research.

Acknowledging these constraints, it is still possible to determine change by taking into consideration prescriptive descriptions of the Standardized Basque Grammar, which identifies Basque DOM an “ungrammatical” syntactic construction (Zubiri, 1999). These descriptions have had an impact on the

16 Youngest group produced 44 DOM (out of 260) as opposed to 20 DOM (out of 372) in the older group.

17 As a reviewer suggested, this task may bring some challenges given the stigmatized nature of the variant. However, stigmatization of this feature is relatively recent, at least in the dialect of Gernika Basque (Rodríguez-Ordóñez, 2013).
popular belief in the Basque Community regarding Basque DOM as a ‘barba-
rism’ (Rodríguez-Ordóñez, 2013). Based on previous descriptions of the lan-
guage, attitudinal data and descriptive statistics that show that Basque DOM
has increased about 13% in its use, I suggest that Basque DOM is an example of
linguistic change that emerged in a previous stage.

8.2 A Four-Step Methodological Framework to Contact Phenomena
The main challenge now involves determining whether changes in Basque
DOM were induced by contact or not. In doing so, I follow the four-step model
proposed by Mougeon et al. (2005) and argue that Basque DOM is indeed the
result of intense contact with BLD.

Following previous studies (Thomason, 2001; Poplack and Levey, 2010), the
first step that Mougeon et al. (2005) suggest is to determine that the innovation
feature in the recipient language (Basque) has the equivalent feature in the
source language (Spanish). As has been shown, the use of the Basque dative
marker –(r)i is predominantly used to syntactically encode the indirect object
argument of the predicate (Etxepare, 2003). Semantically speaking, the da-
tive case is marking the role of a beneficiary, goal or recipient (Ormazábal and
Romero, 2007). In the Spanish spoken in the BAC, the equivalent function is
fulfilled with the preposition ‘a’, but this preposition additionally marks direct
objects that are animate and specific in Spanish (referred to as DOM) with the
possibility of clitic doubling with dative le (leísmo). Ormazábal and Romero
(2007, 2013) argue that dative case is being licensed through agreement and
critic le is an agreement marker specified by animacy in BLD. Consistent with
our results, it can be said that it is this latter use of the dative that is being
transferred to the recipient language (Basque), a language that requires an
agreement relation between the arguments and clitics in the verbal inflection.

In steps two and three, it is necessary to determine whether these innova-
tions could be internally motivated and to consider other language varieties
that are genetically related. With regards to other varieties of Basque, previous
dialectology studies have shown that Basque DOM is widespread in Navarrese
dialects, Central (Gipuzkoan) Basque as well as Western Basque (Bizkaian)
(Zuazo, 1998; Fernández and Rezac, 2010, to appear). The commonality among
all these dialects is that they are all in intense contact with Spanish. This
literature supports the hypothesis that Basque DOM is a contact phenomenon.

18 More recent research has also shown some small instances of Basque DOM among adult
speakers (aged 40–60) in the French-speaking Basque area, attributing its presence to
migratory forces from the Spanish-speaking region (Oyharzabal, Salaberria and Epelde,
2011).
The last step, and the most important of all, involves analyzing the distribution of Basque DOM according to bilingual dominance group. The first shared property of BLD and Basque DOM concerns the interaction between animacy and specificity: in both languages, direct objects need to be BOTH animate and specific in order to be differentially marked with the dative case marker (either le, a in Spanish or –ri in Basque). Although the literature has shown that these semantic properties are universal in marking the object, they differ in how they are cross-linguistically manifested (Aissen, 2003; Sinnemäki, 2014). It is the nature of the interaction between animacy and specificity that indicates that Basque DOM is induced by Spanish. More importantly, the most significant statistical difference between both groups lies in the amount of DOM used when Spanish verbs are being borrowed into Basque and the interaction with null objects. These results raise the notion of borrowing, or more importantly, the role that borrowing has on grammatical change.

Person as a linguistic feature was a strong predictor for Basque DOM in the study presented here, but subtle differences were found between the two Basque groups that deserve special attention. In both groups, first person pronouns significantly favor Basque DOM, though only Spanish-dominant speakers show a significant effect in the second person pronouns, treating both first and second similarly. These results suggest that these grammatical persons are intrinsically different with regards to their featural properties. For instance, Ormazabal and Romero (2007, 2013) argue that Basque Spanish speakers treat animate direct object le and indirect objects similarly, but different than non-animate direct objects (lo/la). According to this analysis, the animate third person belongs to the agreement paradigm of indirect objects that contains syncretic forms for first and second person. Although my results suggest that the Basque dative case marker – (r)i has not extended to the point of complete syncretism for all persons, the second/first person is almost entirely syncretic. Spanish-dominant speakers are the ones leading this change, further supporting the premise that Basque DOM is the result of Basque-Spanish leísmo.

As previously discussed, the role that animacy plays in DOM is straightforward, but it still remains to be explained why Basque-dominant speakers produce significantly less DOM with second person objects as opposed to first person objects. This distinction involves the person features of the objects themselves (Nevins, 2007). Consolidating syntactic and morphological accounts of clitic properties in a number of languages, Nevins (2007) argues that person is built upon the features [±Participant], where a positive value indicates the referent of the pronoun to be a participant in the discourse, and [±Author], where a positive value expresses that the referent of the pronoun is the author of the discourse. These feature breakdowns are present in every
language as in (15), but the syntactic or morphological consequences may differ cross-linguistically in terms of markedness.

(15) Properties of personal clitics (Nevins, 2007: 288)

(15) a. \([+\text{Auth},+\text{Part}] = 1^{\text{st}} \text{ person}\]
    b. \([-\text{Auth},+\text{Part}] = 2^{\text{nd}} \text{ person}\]
    c. \([-\text{Auth},-\text{Part}] = 3^{\text{rd}} \text{ person}\]

Following this approach, it can be said that Basque speakers use similar strategies to mark the saliency of the object in terms of animacy; while the marked choice for Spanish-dominant speakers is [Participant] (which sets first and second person apart from third person), [Author] seems to be the marked choice for Basque-dominant speakers (setting apart first person from the other two).

8.3 **Basque DOM as Process of Replica Grammaticalization**

The second goal of this study was to determine the process by which Basque DOM is a contact phenomenon. While Alberdi (2010) suggests that it is a syntactic calque, Austin (2006) argues that it is an example of convergence with BLD. In this section, I argue instead that Basque DOM is an instance of a *replica grammaticalization* process (Matras, 2010; Heine and Kuteva, 2010) initiated by Spanish verbs and null objects of Basque that leads to convergence (Austin, 2006).

It is widely accepted that calques are a type of loan translations, which can be defined as a morpheme-by-morpheme direct translation of syntactic structures that are transferred from a source language to a recipient language (Thomason, 2001; Meyerhoff, 2009). For Basque, Alberdi (2010) makes an exhaustive typological analysis of calques, categorizing them in six types and seven subtypes. The most pertinent one here involves what he calls “morphosyntactic calques” which are defined as “any kind of calque that involves morphosyntactic issues at the level of […] verbal phrase or sentence (case-markers)” (Alberdi, 2010: 30). According to this definition, Basque DOM fits under this category; Alberdi further claims that “syntactic calques are most common when there is a function resemblance” (p. 30). According to this definition, all morphosyntactic loans would be considered calques, which is problematic for two reasons. First, this predicts that every function of the Spanish dative would be ‘transported’ into Basque, and second, it does not explain the qualitative and quantitative differences in DOM usage found between Basque-and Spanish-dominant speakers of Gernika Basque. As the data show, not every instance of BLD DOM was replicated in Basque DOM, which suggests that
it is not an abrupt mechanism (as calques are), but a gradual one. Hence, it can be said that functional resemblance is not always a calque.

Rather, I claim that Basque DOM emerges from another functionally-driven mechanism known as ‘replica grammaticalization’, which captures both the copying and differentiation (Heine and Kuteva, 2005, 2010; Meyerhoff, 2009) aspects of grammatical borrowing that occur in a gradual manner. Replica grammaticalization arises when “speakers create a new use pattern [...] that is equivalent to a corresponding category in the model language” which involves using materials from the recipient language (Heine and Kuteva, 2005, 2010: 89). One of the biggest challenges of contact-induced phenomena is to determine the difference between what constitutes contact versus system-internal processes that lead to grammaticalization, as it is often the case that this distinction largely disappears in structurally embedded phenomena (such as Basque DOM). In these cases, the ‘trigger’ of a propelling force that gradually allows the system to more closely pattern with the recipient grammar needs to be identified. As for Gernika Basque DOM, I argue that Spanish borrowed verbs and the null object category of the Basque are responsible for this ‘trigger’, and thus Basque DOM is characterized as a reanalysis process, providing support for Austin’s (2006) hypothesis.

Reanalysis is defined as “a mechanism which changes the underlying structure of a syntactic pattern and which does not involve any immediate or intrinsic modification of its surface manifestation” (Harris and Campbell 1995:61). Some researchers view reanalysis and grammaticalization as two independent processes (Kortmann and König, 1992; Haspelmath, 1998) whereas Hopper and Traugott (2003:32) argue that reanalysis is the most important mechanism of grammaticalization.19 As for Basque DOM, I argue that reanalysis and grammaticalization, although different processes, are part of the model of ‘replica grammaticalization’ proposed by Heine and Kuteva (2005). Below, I present the gradual evolution of Basque DOM via replica grammaticalization:

1. An item serves to activate language M (Spanish verbs that ‘prefer’ animate objects)
2. Thus, [+animacy] [+specificity] is inserted as an agreement encoder between argument and clitic
3. Reanalysis: null objects in Basque open a window to ‘confuse’ direct or indirect objects of those verbs, and [+animate][+specificity] is recovered through AGR in the auxiliary verb

19 For a debate on this issue see Campbell (2001).
4. Dative marker starts to be introduced in the most neutralized contexts (first and second person clitics, always animate)
5. Dative case marker extends to third person
6. Dative case marker may begin to be used with Basque verbs with similar lexical/semantic content and argument structure

In the first stage, the semantics of borrowed verbs from Spanish\textsuperscript{20} get transferred into Basque, which ‘activates’ the insertion of semantic features such as [+animacy] [+specificity] as agreement licensors. When the language allows pro drop, the speaker finds more difficulties in establishing the syntactic function of the dropped object, especially if the object is animate. This is because direct and indirect animate clitics in BLD are syncretic (Table 3). Because this syncretism is absolute for first and second person objects, which are always animate, Basque DOM is first introduced in the most neutralized contexts. As shown in Table 1, these two contexts reach almost 100% of DOM use among Spanish-dominant speakers, making DOM nearly obligatory with first and second person objects in Gernika Basque, which may be extended to third person contexts. Finally, Basque DOM may start being used with Basque verbs with similar lexical/semantic content and the same argument structure (eraman ‘to take/carry’ and mobidu = Spanish mover ‘to take/move’).

This process may explain the different dialectal tendencies of Basque DOM in terms of person. Some dialects (Dima Basque) obligatorily use DOM with first and second objects, and optionally with third person objects. Others (Arratia Basque) only use DOM with first and second person but disallow third person marking. Finally, other dialects (Lekeitio Basque) optionally use DOM with all persons (Fernández and Rezac, to appear). These dialectal differences pertain to different stages in the grammaticalization process, as there are no attested Basque dialects that obligatorily use DOM with third person objects but not first or second. This conforms to a theory of grammaticalization which suggests that “if a language has reached a given stage then it has also passed through the preceding stages” (Heine and Kuteva, 2010: 92).

The grammaticalization theory does not argue, though, that the preceding stage needs to be complete in order for the grammaticalization process to continue onto the next stage. As such, the relationship between different linguistic factors that are involved in a process of replica grammaticalization

\textsuperscript{20} Some of these verbs are: kontrateu (Spanish = contratar ‘to hire’), amenazeu (Spanish = amenazar ‘to threaten’), inbiteu (Spanish = invitar ‘to invite’). These verbs usually take animate direct objects.
of Basque DOM are not all-or-nothing. Because this process is a gradual one (Bybee, 1985), it is not necessary to find categorical results between DOM and null objects, but it is the tendencies (as shown in the statistical analysis) that will allow us to determine the stages in which a replica grammaticalization is occurring. Results showed that although both language groups use DOM with borrowed verbs and null objects, Spanish-dominant speakers borrow significantly more verbs from Spanish and therefore, use more DOM when the object is null (63%). Although there are instances in which Basque DOM is also used with Basque verbs and null objects, the percentages were much lower in both groups. Basque-dominant speakers and Spanish-dominant speakers used 20% and 26% of DOM, respectively, with Basque verbs and null objects, whereas, Basque-dominant speakers produced 23% of DOM when they borrowed Spanish verbs and the object was null as opposed to a 63% of its counter Spanish-dominant speakers.21 Therefore, it can be claimed that in order for Basque-Spanish bilinguals to produce DOM with Basque verbs, borrowed verbs from Spanish need to be marked first, in which the lack of phonological realization of the object aids the use of DOM.

Thus, the main difference between both groups was found in the earlier stages of the process: reanalysis through null objects. This suggests that it is in the first stage that contact takes place. More specifically, the ‘activation’ of the reanalysis of Basque DOM occurs in the semantics of borrowed Spanish verbs by Spanish-dominant speakers, who borrow the entire argument structure (BLD) of the system. Some may argue that this process could fit into previously described calqued patterns (Alberdi, 2010) as has been found for some Amazonian languages (Aikhenvald, 2002: 59), but it is the gradual process that discerns them. The use of pro-drop (null objects) when speakers borrow the argument structure of a verb may pose a ‘challenge’ for Spanish-dominant speakers to determine whether the silenced argument is a direct or an indirect object, a syncretism that is already established in the donor language. Thus, aided by the pro drop parameter (null objects), Basque dative is a functional replication of Spanish dative. It is then when the increase of Basque DOM extends into new contexts (Basque verbs, singular objects) that the gradual process of grammaticalization occurs, conforming to variation specific to BLD. The end result of this process (once third person animate clitics are fully specified in Basque DOM) would reflect the structural convergence between both systems (Sánchez, 2004; Austin, 2006).

21 It is possible that verb frequency plays a role in the grammaticalization process (Hopper and Traugott, 2003; Bybee, 2007; Hawkins, 2014). I leave this for future research.
9 Conclusion

Using a four-step model to identify contact phenomena and using variation-ist methodologies, the results of this study support the proposal that Basque dom is the result of intense contact with bld. Results were not able to confirm the ‘starting point’ of its emergence. Furthermore, the differences found between Basque- and Spanish-dominant speakers suggest that Basque dom is not a syntactic calque. Instead, the analysis put forward is that Basque dom is involved in a replica grammaticalization process induced by Spanish borrowed verbs and null objects of Basque, leading to a possible convergence between the two systems (Austin, 2006).

However, in order to provide more robust evidence for Basque dom as a contact phenomenon, it is important to compare the present data to those varieties of Basque which is in contact with a non-dom language such as French (Mougeon et al., 2005). Recall that every speaker of Basque is bilingual in either Spanish or French in the Basque Country, therefore, studying monolingual Basque speech is not a viable task. As such, what also remains to be studied is the variation found in other varieties of Basque in contact with Spanish, those that show obligatory dom, and compare them to the speech of Basque-French bilinguals. Furthermore, the present study has used previous syntactic accounts on the Basque-Spanish Leísmo Dialect, assuming a homogenous leísmo system within the Basque Country. The incorporation of other bilingual types, such as Basque L2 as well as the systematic study of the clitic system in Spanish, are essential to provide stronger evidence for the processes involved in the development of Basque dom. Finally, as an anonymous reviewer noted, incorporation of such analysis will also provide counterevidence to the argument that typological distance is a disincentive to grammatical influence and further explore the role that structural overlap between languages may have on contact-induced grammatical change.

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