

Week 8

Morphosyntax of verbal inflection

December 8, 2009

1 One-place inflection

Ignore 3rd person for the time being.

Pronouns

	1 st SG	2 nd SG	1 st PL	2 nd PL
ABSOLUTIVE	ni	zu	gu	zuek
ERGATIVE	ni-k	zu-k	gu-k	zue-k
DATIVE	ni-ri	zu-ri	gu-ri	zue-i
COMITATIVE	ni-rekin	zu-rekin	gu-rekin	zue-kin
GENITIVE	ni-re	zu-re	gu-re	zu-re
...				

Intransitive verbs

	BE (EX.)	BE (LOC.)	COME	GO	WALK
ni	n-aiz	n-ago	n-ator	n-oa	n-abil
zu	z-ara	z-aude	z-atoz	z-oaz	z-abiltza
gu	g-ara	g-aude	g-atoz	g-oaz	g-abil
zuek	z-aret-e	z-audet-e	z-atoz-te	z-oazt-e	z-abiltza-te

This gives us the following generalizations:

- 1st sg. = *n*-stem
- 1st pl. = *g*-stem
- 2st, unspecified number. = *z*-stem
- plural, unspecified person. = stem-(*t*)*e*

2 Two-place inflection (I): ergative-absolutive verbs

First, we keep the ergative argument consistently 3rd sg., and we vary the absolutive argument.

$$\text{Jon}_{\text{erg}} \text{ ikusi } \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{n-au} \\ \text{z-aitu} \\ \text{g-aitu} \\ \text{z-aituz-te} \end{array} \right\}$$

“Jon has seen me/you_{sg}/us/you_{pl}”

Now we do the opposite: keep the absolutive argument constant as 3rd sg., and vary the ergative.

$$\text{Jon}_{\text{abs}} \text{ ikusi } \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{d-u-t} \\ \text{d-u-zu} \\ \text{d-u-gu} \\ \text{d-u-zu-e} \end{array} \right\}$$

“Jon has seen me/you_{sg}/us/you_{pl}”

Now we can update the generalizations.

- 1st sg. = *n*-stem (pronouns and absolutive), stem-*t* (ergative)
- 1st pl. = *g*-stem (pronouns and absolutive), stem-*gu* (ergative)
- 2st, unspecified number. = *z*-stem (pronouns and absolutive), stem-*zu* (ergative)
- plural, unspecified person. = stem-*(t)e* (pronouns, absolutive, ergative)
- 3rd, unspecified number = *d*-stem (absolutive), stem- \emptyset (ergative)

If we ignore 3rd person, which is always a tricky category, we get a quite simple schema.

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{n-} \\ \text{z-} \\ \text{g-} \end{array} \right\} \text{ stem } \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{-t} \\ \text{-gu} \\ \text{-zu} \\ \text{-e} \end{array} \right\}$$

3 Two-place inflection (II): absolutive-dative verbs

We begin in the same way as before: keep the dative argument consistently 3rd sg., and we vary the absolutive argument. Note that the presence of a dative marker triggers the presence of an *-i* in the auxiliary if the absolutive argument is singular, and *-izki* if it is plural

$$\text{Joni}_{\text{dat}} \text{ hurbildu } \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{na-tza-i-o} \\ \text{za-tza-i-zki-o} \\ \text{ga-tza-i-zki-o} \\ \text{za-tza-i-zki-o-te} \end{array} \right\}$$

“I/you_{sg}/we/you_{pl} approached Jon”

Now we do the opposite: keep the absolutive argument constant as 3rd sg., and vary the dative.

$$\text{Jon}_{abs} \text{ hurbildu} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \emptyset\text{-za-i-t} \\ \emptyset\text{-za-i-zu} \\ \emptyset\text{-za-i-gu} \\ \emptyset\text{-za-i-zu-e} \end{array} \right\}$$

“Jon has approached me/you_{sg}/us/you_{pl}”

- 1st sg. = *n*-stem (pronouns and absolutive), stem-*t* (ergative and dative)
- 1st pl. = *g*-stem (pronouns and absolutive), stem-*gu* (ergative, dative)
- 2st, unspecified number. = *z*-stem (pronouns and absolutive), stem-*zu* (ergative, dative)
- plural, unspecified person. = stem-*(t)e* (pronouns, absolutive, ergative, dative)
- 3rd sg. = *d*-stem (absolutive), \emptyset -stem (absolutive), stem- \emptyset (ergative), stem-*o* (dative).

Again, ignoring 3rd person, we don't vary the schema: we simply augment the suffixes by saying that they can be either ergative or dative, as appropriate.

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} n- \\ z- \\ g- \end{array} \right\} \text{ stem} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} -t \\ -gu \\ -zu \\ -e \end{array} \right\}$$

4 Three-place inflection

The present tense of three-place auxiliaries is defective in that it only allows a 3rd person absolutive. There is no deep reason for this, as past tenses exhibit a complete paradigm. Still, this is enough: as usual, we begin by holding the ergative argument constantly 3rd person and varying the dative.

$$\text{Jonek}_{erg} \text{ liburua}_{abs} \text{ eman} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} d\text{-i-t-}\emptyset \\ d\text{-i-zu-}\emptyset \\ d\text{-i-gu-}\emptyset \\ d\text{-i-zu-e-}\emptyset \end{array} \right\}$$

“Jon has given the book to me/you_{sg}/us/you_{pl}”

How do we know that there is a \emptyset ergative morpheme at the end of the stem? Consider what happens if we switch to a 1st person ergative (note that, in this case, we need to ignore 1st person datives, as reflexives require a different construction).

$$\text{Nik}_{erg} \text{ liburua}_{abs} \text{ eman} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} d\text{-i-zu-t} \\ d\text{-i-o-t} \\ d\text{-i-zu-e-t} \\ d\text{-i-e-t} \end{array} \right\}$$

“I have given the book to you_{sg}/him/you_{pl}/them”

And now, instead of 1st person ergative, we switch to 2nd person ergative (note that the change in 1st singular dative from *-t-* to *-da-* is likely phonologically conditioned).

Zuk_{erg} liburua_{abs} eman $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{d-i-da-zu} \\ \text{d-i-o-zu} \\ \text{d-i-gu-zu} \\ \text{d-i-e-zu} \end{array} \right\}$

“I have given the book to you_{sg}/him/you_{pl}/them”

So, in sum...

ABSOLUTIVE	STEM	DATIVE	ERGATIVE
$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{n-} \\ \text{g-} \\ \text{z-} \end{array} \right\}$		-i(zki)- $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{-da} \\ \text{-zu} \\ \text{-gu} \\ \text{-o} \\ \text{-e} \end{array} \right\}$	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{-t} \\ \text{-zu} \\ \text{-gu} \\ \text{-}\emptyset \\ \text{-e} \end{array} \right\}$

5 Homework

Figure out what the agreement morphemes in the following forms are, and provide an appropriate translation. Use the big auxiliary table that I've uploaded to the course website, if you have any problems. The lexical verbs in this exercise already appear in the handout.

Sample answer: ikusi duzu \rightarrow d_{3.sg.abs}-u_{stem}-zu_{2.sg.erg} “you have seen it”

1. ikusi nauzue
2. ikusi zaitugu
3. hurbildu natzaizue
4. hurbildu zaizkigu
5. eman dizkidate
6. eman diguzue
7. dakusagu (synthetic form of *ikusi*)
8. garamatzazue (synthetic form of *eraman* ‘to carry’; *-tza-* is number agreement with the absolutive argument).