

Andolin gogoan.
Essays in honour of Professor Eguzkitza

Beatriz Fernández & Itziar Laka (arg.)



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Specialised Discourse and the Linguistic System of Basque¹

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Abstract

This paper seeks to enhance knowledge of the linguistic system of Basque through an analysis of specialised discourse in this language. It is of particular interest to include data from this type of discourse in descriptions of the system when dealing with languages which, like Basque, are in a phase of rapid lexical and discourse development in specialised areas. The use of language in new fields of study opens up novel speech situations requiring new values in the parameters of enunciation, and therefore new types of utterance. These new uses provide abundant empirical data that can be used to confirm or falsify different hypotheses on how works the linguistic system of Basque, and linguistic systems in general. The approach adopted in this study considers specialised discourses as part of natural languages, and it also includes in the study of specialised knowledge units a linguistic communicative perspective. We analyse in this paper various examples from this perspective, examples that we think show that the use of specialised discourse in Basque has activated new values in the linguistic system and (has) given rise to a reorganisation of certain elements in the system in order to adapt them to these new language functions. We apply to our analysis a methodology that takes into account not only speakers' general competence, but also the discourse conditions influencing specialised texts. The paper concludes with a number of reflections drawn from this type of analysis which we feel should be borne in mind in applied linguistics activities aimed at lexical-discourse development in Basque.

0. INTRODUCTION

Specialised discourse is not restricted to marginal language uses by or for a small number of experts in specific fields of study. Viewed from a linguistic-communicative point of view, the term denotes all specialised texts produced by

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