A NOTE ON THE COMPLEMENTIZER -ELA AND LONG-DISTANCE LICENSING OF NPIs IN NAVARRO-LABOURDIN BASQUE¹

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Abstract

This article presents ample evidence from written texts that the Basque Navarro-Labourdin dialect, which lacks a contrast between the complementizers -ela and -enik in declarative sentences, uses the first one in exactly the same syntactic contexts as -enik is used in Central and Western Basque, that is to say, in the context of matrix questions and negation. Consequently, negative polarity items inside -ela complement clauses can be licensed from the upper clause; the lack of truth-value presupposition attributed to -enik sentences is also manifested with -ela clauses in this dialect.

Keywords: syntax, navarro-labourdin, complementizer, NPI, negation.

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¹ This squib goes for Iñaki Gaminde, a long life friend from AEK times since the early 80s. Zorionak, Iñaki, eta eskerrik asko euskarari emandako arnasagatik. I thank Maia Duguine, Maitena Duhalde, Céline Mounole for sharing their linguistic intuitions with me and Maider Huarte for comments on a previous draft. All remaining errors are my own. The following abbreviations are used throughout the article: IND = indicative, NEG = negation, NPI = negative polarity item, SUBJ = subjunctive.

Introduction

The purpose of this squib is rather simple: to show that Basque varieties which lack the so-called negative complementizer *-enik* and use, instead, the declarative complementizer *-ela* permit the same kind of readings and syntactic licensing as the former; evidence comes from written texts, present and past, and the intuition of several native speakers consulted. The article has the following structure: section 1 discusses the theoretical background needed to understand the relevance of the *-ela* vs. *-enik* distinction, which bears on the long distance licensing of NPIs in subordinate clauses and on the interpretation of the subordinate clauses themselves; I review Laka's (1990) original proposal, Uribe-Etxebarria's (1994), and the more recent Artiagoitia & Elordieta (2015) and Elordieta & Artiagoitia (2016) works. Section 2 presents the relevant data from the Navarro-Labourdin dialect, with an excursus on long distance licensing on NPIs in declarative sentences headed by *-en*; section 3 summarizes the conclusions.

For the purposes of this squib I assume the correctness of Zuazo's (1998 and subsequent work) classification of today's Basque dialects into Western, Central, Navarrese, Navarro-Labourdin and Souletin.² This state of affairs need not reflect the situation in previous stages of the language, where Labourdin and Low Navarrese have been considered separate dialects, with Low Navarrese even split into two separate dialects, Easter and Western Low Navarrese (cf. Bonaparte 1863); for the 19th century and previous written texts, I thus use the term *navarro-labourdin* in an inclusive way, meaning 'Low Navarrese and Labourdin' dialects.

1. Previous accounts of the -enik/-ela distribution

As is well known (Euskaltzaindia 1999), the contrast between declarative sentences headed by complementizers *-enik* and *-ela* has to do with the nature of the main sentence: if a polar element (mostly negation but also a question operator) is present in the main sentence, then *-enik* is used in the subordinate clause, but not otherwise:

- (1) Jonek esan du Miren gaixorik dago-ela.
 - 'John said that Mary is sick'
- (2) a. Jonek ez du esan Miren gaixorik dago-*enik*. 'John didn't sav that Marv is sick'
 - b. Esan du Jonek Miren gaixorik dago-enik?
 - 'Did John say that Mary is sick?'
 - c. *Jonek esan du Miren gaixorik dago-enik.
 - 'John said that Mary is sick'

The use of *-enik* is in principle restricted to Western, Central and, more marginally, Navarrese Basque (Zuazo 2014). In the rest of the dialects (presently Navarro-Labourdin and Souletin), *-ela* would be the default complementizer in all cases:

(3) a. Jonek erran du Miren eri d-ela.

² See Lakarra (2011) for a view critical of Zuazo's classification.

- 'John said that Mary is sick'
- b. Jonek ez du erran Miren eri d-ela.
 - 'John didn't say that Mary is sick'
- c. Erran du Jonek Miren eri d-*ela*? 'Did John say that Mary is sick?'

In her pioneering work, Laka (1990) states that both complementizers can be used in similar syntactic contexts and proposes that the contrast between *-enik* and *-ela* is related to a difference in presupposition. Let us take the following pair:

- (4) a. Iñigok ez du sinesten lurrak eztanda egingo du-*ela*. 'Iñigo doesn't believe that the earth will explode'
 - b. Iñigok ez du sinesten lurrak eztanda egingo du-*enik*. (Laka 1990: 211) 'Iñigo doesn't believe that the earth will explode'

In sentence (4a), the speaker asserts that Iñigo doesn't believe something which is taken to be a true fact (i.e. that the earth will explode); sentence (4b) doesn't make such a presupposition, and the earth might explode or not.

Laka (1990) further proposes that the complementizer *-enik* be treated as an inherently negative Comp_[Neg] head which may license NPIs in subordinate clauses. Evidence for this claim would come from semantically negative verbs which, apparently, resist to license object NPIs:

(5) a. *Josebak ezer ukatu. / *John denied anything b. Amaiak inork gorrotoa dio-*nik* ukatu du. / Amaia denied *that* anybody hates her

The idea is, then, that the negative feature of the complementizer head is responsible for the licensing of the NPI element inside the subordinate clause:

(6) a. Amaiak [[TP *inork* gorrotoa dio][-nik][Neg]] ukatu du. / b. I deny [that][Neg] [TP *anybody* hates her]

Characterizing *-enik* as an inherently negative complementizer, as opposed to *-ela*, provides the basis to account for the following contrast (from Laka 1990: 211):

- (7) a. * Iñigok ez du sinesten *ezerk* eztanda egingo du-[ela]. 'Iñigo doesn't believe that anything will explode'
 - b. Iñigok ez du sinesten *ezerk* eztanda egingo du-[enik][Neg]]. 'Iñigo doesn't believe that anything will explode'

In other words, it is only the complementizer *-enik*, endowed with the feature [Neg], that can license the NPI *ezerk* in the subordinate clause.

Interestingly, Laka (1990: 212) assumes for English that the complementizer *that* present in examples like (7) must have a [Neg] feature; given that the contrast between the two complementizers is undetectable (the declarative and the negative version of *that* are phonologically identical), it is also reasonable for her to assume that the English version of (4a-b) above gets interpreted as having the negative feature. She makes a

similar assumption for the Basque dialects which do not have an *-ela/-enik* contrast, but she doesn't pursue the issue any further.³

Uribe-Etxebarria (1994) shares with Laka (1990) the insight that the different interpretation of *-ela* and *-enik* complements has to do with presupposition: *-ela* complements presuppose the truth value of the proposition and no such presupposition is made with complements headed by *-enik*. But, contrary to Laka, Uribe-Etxebarria suggests that there is no need for a negatively valued complement given that inherently negative verbs may after all license NPI complements provided the right kind of noun phrase choice is made:

(8) John denied any involvement in the crime (Uribe-Etxebarria 1994: 178)

The different licensing of NPI elements inside subordinate clauses would be related to the fact that *-ela* clauses raise above negation at LF, whereas clauses headed by *-enik* remain in situ and, hence, under the scope of negation:

- (7') a. * [ezerk eztanda egingo duela]_i Iñigok ez du sinesten [ezerk eztanda egingo duela]_i
 - b. Iñigok ez du sinesten *ezerk* eztanda egingo duenik.

A similar assumption is made in Spanish with respect to the contrast between indicative and subjunctive complements to polar contexts:

- (9) a. No creo que la tierra explotará.
 - 'I don't think that the earth will[IND] explode'
 - b. No creo que la tierra explote.
 - 'I don't think that the earth will[SUBJ] explode'

The difference in presupposition made by the indicative (that the earth will explode is taken as a fact) and by the subjunctive (no presupposition) is usually connected with a difference in the scope under negation (Laka 1990, Uribe-Etxebarria 1994, Bosque 2012, and references therein); it is generally assumed that the subjunctive is in the scope of negation but that the indicative is not; this would be precisely the reason why the indicative sticks to the truth presupposition. The Basque *-enik* vs. *-ela* contrast would be handled in a similar way according to both Laka (1990: 223) and Uribe-Etxebarria (1994: 202ff).

Uribe-Etxebarria (1994) hints that *-enik* is merely the negative counterpart of the complementizer *-ena*, and that both are analyzable as complex CP-NP-DP structures, the choice of determiner being between the article *-a* and the polar partitive determiner *-ik*:

(10) a. -ena vs. -enik b.
$$[[\dots -en]_{CP} [\emptyset]_N]_{NP} [-a/-ik]_{Det}$$

³ Here are Laka's own words: "Eastern dialects like Labourdin, for instance, have a different distribution of complementizers without the option of *enik* (Oyharçabal, p.c.). I assume that these dialects are like English, in that the distinction between declarative and negative complementizers is not overt" (Laka 1990: 211).

Therefore, using *-enik* would be a reflex of the polar nature of the partitive determiner itself, well known to appear in negative and other polarity contexs (cf. de Rijk 1972).

Drawing on the previous accounts, Artiagoitia and Elordieta (2015) and, specially, Elordieta and Artiagoitia (2016) approach the -enik and -ela contrast from a slightly different perspective: they underline the fact that Basque and Spanish use the subjunctive mood in practically the same kind of lexically selected complement clauses with the exception of polarity contexts, not lexically selected. They follow Kempchinsky (2009) in assuming that lexically selected subjunctive complements have a morphosyntactic [W(orld)_{SU}] feature in ForceP according to which the truth value of the proposition is evaluated by the (upper) matrix subject. The two languages differ crucially in polarity contexts: in Spanish, the feature [W(orld)_{SU}] is identified by the mood, but in Basque identification this is complementizer -enik, endowed that feature in its lexical entry; the declarative -ela lacks that feature:

Although their account is in principle compatible with a raising analysis of *-ela* complements, Artiagoitia and Elordieta (2016) simply assume that *-ela* and *-enik* clauses have a different structure and it is the presence of the feature $[W_{SU}]$ as opposed to the $[W_R]$, which by default values the truth of the proposition according to the speaker's world-view, the one that would account for the the *-enik* vs. *-ela* contrast in Basque.

Some related simple and basic questions emerge from the previous treatments of the two complementizers: what happens in the northern varieties of Basque which lack the complementizer *-enik* altogether? More specifically:

- a. Can NPIs be licensed in *-ela* complement clauses to matrix question or negated verbs in the absence of an alleged negative complementizer?
 - b. What kind of readings do we obtain with negated -ela complements?

Laka (1990: 212)⁴ hints that Basque varieties lacking *-enik* will behave like English and, thus, will have a positive answer to question (a); with respect to question (b), Laka seems to suggest that the negative feature of the complementizer will prevail over the non-negative homophonous complementizer; hence the answer would seem to be that no truth presupposition will be made. For Elordieta and Artiagoitia (2016: 87), on the other hand, the answer to question (a) is that varieties which only have the declarative *-ela* can indeed have the same use as the complementizer *-enik* and, therefore, that NPIs can be licensed in *-ela* complements by a matrix question or negation. Nonetheless, they only provide a couple of examples.

In what follows, I present additional and abundant examples from the literary tradition in Navarro-Labourdin to show that in this dialect matrix negation or questions may license NPIs in embedded complement clauses headed by *-ela*. This in turn implies that Navarro-Labourdin Basque *-ela* is close or similar to English complementizer *that*, and that the mechanism available for NPI licensing in *-enik* clauses (be it a negative feature on the complementizer, be it lack of LF-raising, be it the presence of the [W_{su}], or some other feature like [Polarity]) must also be available in dialects which lack that

⁴ "Presumably, then, the English equivalent of (52b) [=7b above] is always interpreted as being structurally identical to (52a) [=7a above], that is, to be headed by a [Neg] complementizer, since the phonological output always matches the grammatical derivation" (Laka 1990: 212).

complementizer. For the second issue, I also present a small piece of data based on Quer's (1998) and Kempchinsky's (2009) work, which would also confirm that *-ela* clauses do not necessarily presuppose the truth value of the proposition.

2. -ela complement clauses in Navarro-Labourdin

This section presents written evidence on long distance NPI licensing in -ela clauses (§2.1), in declarative -en clauses (§2.2) typical of this dialect, and a short comment on the interpretation of -ela clauses under the scope of matrix negation (§2.3).

2.1. Long distance NPI licensing in -ela clauses

The availability of long distance NPI licensing in *-ela* declarative clauses from matrix negation or question operators seems out of the question. Here we present 21st century examples drawn from the *Contemporary Dynamic Prose* corpus; the examples refer to the negative polarity items *nehor* 'anybody' and *deus* 'anything' and are drawn from dialectal magazines or Navarro-Labourdin writers who stick to their dialectal speech even when they write in Standard Basque.

- Long distance NPI licensing with *nehor*:
- (12) Ez du iduri *nehork* pena haundirik baduela Wahid presidentaren kanporatze hortaz. (*Herria*, 2001/08/02)
 - 'It doesn't seem that anybody feels any sorry for the expelled president Wahid'
- (13) Jendeak laguntzen baitu. Ez dut aditu *nehor* izan dela... (Mexane Oxandabaratz, *Ez da musik*, Elkar, 2006, p. 219)
 - 'Because people help. I have not heard that anybody has been...'
- (14) ...eta hola mintzatuz, ez dut uste *nehork* kondenatzen ahal nuela. (Xipri Arbelbide, *Xuri-gorriak*, Elkar, 2007, p. 88)
 - "... and speaking this way, I don't think anybody can condemn me"
- (15) Jendearen isilarazteko, jokatu zuen hirugarren partida, alabaina ere, anitzek ez baitzuten uste *nehor* ere gai zitekeela Mondragones bezalako pilotari bati irabazteko. (Angel Aintziburu, *Luzaiden gaindi* 2, Elkar, 2009, p. 11). 'To make people shut up, he played the third match any way, since many people didn't believe that anybody would be able to beat a handball player like
 - Long distance NPI licensing with *deus*

Mondragones'

- (16) Zer nahi dela, nehork ez du erranen *deus* galdu dutela beren nahikeriatik. (*Herria*, 2001/11/08, p. 7)
 - 'In any event, nobody will say that they lost anything from their whim'
- (17) baina [Mahmoud Abbas] hunek ere ez du iduri *deus* gehiago erreusitzen duela Hamasan gibelarazteko. (*Herria*, 2003/06/26, p. 2)
 - "... but it doesn't seem that this [M. Abbas] can obtain anything more to make Hamas step back"

This long distance NPI licensing in declarative sentences headed by *-ela* in Navarro-Labourdin is far from being a novelty in the language; there is ample of evidence in 20th century texts, too:

• Long distance NPI licensing with *nehor*, 20th century:

- (18) Ez nuen bada uste *nehor* handirik bazitekela nere ikusteko, Goix-bideko borda zaharraren aldean (J. Barbier, *Supazter Xokoan*, 1924, p. 53) 'I didn't think anybody big would be to see me around the old shack in Goixbide'
- (19) Uste duk badela *nehor*, / Balujan, Dik ala Medor, / Ni funditzeko gai denik? (Oxobi, *Lan oroitgharri zenbait*, 1966, p. 104)
 'Do you think there is anybody in Baluja, Dik or Medor, that will be able to destroy me?'
- (20) Ez konda, nik *nehor*, edo berotuko dudala Ameriketarat, edo harat joaitetik, gibelatuko dudala (P. Larzabal, *Iru ziren*, 1962, p. 142) 'Don't count that I will send anybody to America or that I will prevent him from going there'
- (21) Itzal bat hori, nahi baduzue, bainan itzal ederra, biziki bakan ikusten dena egungo egunean, kasik nehork nehon *nehoren* gogoaren berri badakiela xuxen eta segurki ez baitu erraiten ahal (J. Hiriart-Urruty, *Mintzaira, Aurpegi: Gizon!*, 1971 [1902], p. 108)

 'A shadow, if you will, but a beautiful shadow, one that is rarely seen these days, because almost nobody can say anywhere that he knows any news of anybody's will correctly and clearly'

Oxobi's example is so far the only one I provide where the licenser of the NPI turns out to be a matrix question, not negation.

The number of similar examples with *deus* is apparently higher, as least from the evidence I have been able to gather:

- Long distance NPI licensing with *deus*, 20th century:
- (22) ...eta ez zitzautan iduritzen *deus* hoberik egiten ahal nuela. (J. Hiriart-Urruty, *Zezenak errepublikan*, 1972 [1893], p. 49)
 - "... and it didn't seem to me that I could do anything better"
- (23) Ez ginitazke bi asteren buruan, *deus* izan dela ere orroit, ez delarik bizkitartean ehun urte huntan hori baino gertakari handiagorik ikusi Frantzian. (J. Hiriart-Urruty, *Zezenak errepublikan*, 1972, p. 145) 'We would not remember in a two week period that anything has happened, since no event more important than this has taken place in the last century in France'
- (24) ...eta etzaut iduritzen *deus* beharragorik baduketala orainxe, nola *bock* bat (Jean Etxepare, *Buruxkak*, 1936, p. 93)
 - "... and I don't think that I have anything more necessary right now than a bock"
- (25) Eta, hola apailatuz, ez zaut iduritzen, *deusek* barreiatuko duela gure amodioa. (P. Larzabal, *Iru ziren*, 1962, p. 46)
 - 'And, fixed this way, it doesn't seem to me that anything will dissipate our love'
- (26) Nik ere ez nuen *deusik* sumatu eta ez nuen den gutienik sinetsi bazuela lotinantak, gau hartan, *deus* gaixtorik egiteko gogorik, ez ahalik. (P. Larzabal, Oroitzapenak, *Oroitzapenak*, 1998).
 - 'I didn't observe anything, and I did not believe at all that the lieutenant had that night any will to do anything bad, neither any power'
- (27) Ez dugu uste Beljikan berean *deus* lotsagarriagorik ikusi ginuela ahure xahar bat, bere emazte xahar ezindua eskorga batean etzanik, hari pusaka baino! (J. Elizalde *Zerbitzari*, *LVII.a gerlan*, 1995 [1914-1960]).

'We don't believe that we saw anything more embarrassing right in Belgium than a old man pushing a trolley with his handicapped wife lying down'

In many of these examples the indefinite pronoun *deus* appears with the partitive determiner -ik, which is considered itself a polar determiner in need of a syntactic licensing, as we explained above (de Rijk 1972).

In any case, examples of the kind described here go as far back as the Old and Classical Basque period (17th century), for Axular has several examples of the sort discussed here:

- (28) Zeren nola baitziren munduko lehenbizikoak, etziakiten oraiño heriotzearen berririk, etzuten *nehor* hiltzen zela ikhusi, eta halatan erraxki enganatu zituen (Axular, *Gero*, 1643, §42)
 - 'Since they were the first in the world, they didn't know yet about death, they didn't see that anybody died, and so they were easily deceived'.
- (29) Eztut edireiten ezen Iudas, Iaunaren saltzaillea, *nehork* kondenatu zuela, ez Pilatusek, ez herriak: (Axular, *Gero*, 1643, §283) 'I don't find that anybody condemned Judas, Jesus's traitor, neither Pilate, nor the people'
- (30) Ezta ez erran behar *nehor* dela bere gogora, kanpoko bere gogarakgatik, aberatstasunakgatik, ian-edanakgatik, eta ez bertze frankiakgatik: (Axular, *Gero*, 1643, §288)
 - 'It must not be said that anybody is happy due to external joys, wealthiness, food and beverages, nor because of other abundancies'
- (31) Emaztetara emana den batek, eztu uste, emaztekin segitu gabe, *nehor* bizi ahal ditekeiela (Axular, *Gero*, 1643, §325)
 - 'Someone used to frequent women doesn't believe than anybody may live without frequenting women'

For the NPI item *deus*, we can go even further back up to Archaic Basque, given these examples from the 16th century by Leizarraga:

- (32) Baina eztik irudi biktoria horretarik *deus* emendiorik ethorten zaikula, ikusirik ezen halakotz gu ezgarela hil gabe azkenzen (J. Leizarraga, *Katexismea*, 1571) 'Baina it doesn't seem that any improvement may arise from that victory once we see that we don't extinguish without dying'
- (33) Eta badaritzak hik, haren borondatearen kontra *deus* egin ahal daitela? (J. Leizarraga, *Katexismea*, 1571)
 - 'And do you consider that anything can be done against his will?'

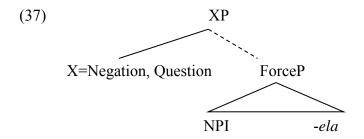
But examples of this sort are not isolated in the history of Navarro-Labourdin; here are a few more examples:

- (34) Graziak gauza guziak bihurtzen diotza Jainkoari, zeiñaganik heldu baitire: eztu uste baduela *deus* onik, ... (M. Xurio, *Jesu-Kristoren imitazionea*, 1720) 'Grace gives back all things to God, from whom they came: it doesn't believe that it has anything good'
- (35) Uste duzu *deus* hoberik badathorrela hortarik? (L. Goietxe, *Fableak edo Alegiak*, 1852)
 - 'Do you think that anything better comes from there?'

(36) Eta horiek oro ditudan arren, *deusere* badudala etzait iduri (J. P. Duvoisin, *Bible Saindua*, 1859-65)

'And though I have all of these, it doesn't seem to me that I have anything at all'

In sum, we can be sure that the following configuration:



is certainly well attested in Navarro-Labourdin from at least the sixteenth century; the NPI in question can be a subject or object (in the examples at hand) and, in the case of *deus*, it may constitute a heavier DP together with an adjective and the partitive (polar) determiner. Example (26) represents a case of even longer distance licensing of an NPI element: the NPI element is inserted in tenseless complement to a noun inside a subordinate clause

2.2. An excursus on long distance NPI licensing in clauses headed by conjecture -en

In the context of the discussion above, it is worth bearing in mind that Navarro-Labourdin (as well as Souletin) Basque uses the common wh-complementizer -en in non-interrogative, declarative, contexts. According to Lafitte (1944), the nuance introduced by this complementizer is conjecture or lack of certainty on the part of the speaker. The use of this complementizer is limited to a few lexical predicates such as baditake 'could be', uste ukan 'think, consider', and iduri 'seem'; the last two also admit -ela complement. Here are some relevant examples reported in Artiagoitia and Elordieta (2015):

- (38) a. iduri zaut ["marluza" err(a)ten d-en] (Camino 2004: 477)
 - 'It seems to me that it is said "marluza"
 - b. etzaut iduitzen [bera lotzen ahal d-en] (Camino 2004: 477)
 - 'It does not seem to me that it can burn by itself'
 - c. Ba-dita-ke [ez-t-en hain gaztia] (Epelde 2003: 194)
 - 'It could be that she is not so young'

Interestingly, whether the main verb is negated or not, this does not affect the choice of the complementizer in this case either, as the reader can verify by comparing examples (38a) and (38b). Thus, in this case too, we may wonder whether matrix negation might license NPIs in the subordinate clause. The answer seems to be affirmative:

But due to space limitations, I have kept the examples to argument NPI elements.

⁵ Long distance NPI licensing of adjuncts is also possible, of course:

⁽i) Ez dugu uste holako iatzar-aldirik ukan zuela *nihoiz* eskualdunak, guziz Bizkaiko bazterretan eta Gipuzkan (J. Etxepare, *Berebilez*, 1931)

^{&#}x27;We don't think Basque people had an awakening period like that ever, in the entire Biscay and in Gipuzkoa'

- (39) Nik ez dut uste *nehor* ari den gaur lanean debaldetan. (*Herria*, 2004/10/28, p. 6.) 'I don't think that anybody is working today for nothing'
- (40) Tallurren komandoan sarrarazi zaitutalarik, ez dut uste *nehoren* kontra bidegabekeriarik egin dutan (G. Joannateguy & M. Etxeandi, *Alemaniara deportatua*, 2003, p. 89)
 'Having introduced you in the seamstress' group, I don't think that I have done any injustice against anybody'
- (41) Uste dut hola zela. Ez dut uste *nehork* etxean atxiki dituen... (M. Oxandabaratz, *Ez da musik*, Elkar, 2006, p. 30)
 'I think it was so. I don't think anybody kept them at home'
- (42) Europako hautagaien bozkak iragan dira ezti-eztia; ez dut uste *nehork* buruko minik bildu duen aldi huntan. (Herria, 2004/06/17, p. 4) 'The elections for European candidates have gone by softly; I don't think anybody has had a headache this time'
- (43) Ikusi dugu biltzarretik hasarrean kanporatu zareztela, bainan, ez uste izan *nehorek* baduen dudarik zuen zintzotasunean. (P. Trounday, *Galerna*, Maiatz, 2012, p. 107)

 "We saw that you same out of the meeting furious, but don't think that anyhody."

'We saw that you came out of the meeting furious, but don't think that anybody has any doubt about your honorability'

In this case, I have not been able to find any example with *deus*.⁶ All these examples belong to the 21st century *Contemporary Dynamic Prose* corpus. Nonetheless, as expected, this kind of examples is found earlier on in the language:

- (44) Ez dut uste *nehork* maitatu duen Euskal-herria bihotz kartsuago batekin eta ukan fede gehiago gure etorkizunean (J. Etxepare, *Buruxkak*, 1936, p. 158) 'I don't believe that anybody loved the Basque Country with a more passionate heart and had more faith in its future'
- (45) Ez dugu uste *nehor* izan den horren gatik Jondoni Petriri harria botatu dionik: (P. Narbaitz Ardoy, *San Frantses Jatsukoa*, 1962, p. 321)
 - 'We don't believe that anybody threw a stone to Saint Peter because of that'
- (46) Bainan ez zautak iduritzen badudan *deus* arrangurarik kontzientzian. (P. Larzabal, *Antzerki Laburrak*, 1934-1966)
 - 'But I don't consider that I have any sort of complaint in my mind'
- (47) ...ez du iduri *deus*-ere baden soka horren puntan, hain da arin eta aise erabiltzen. (P. Lafitte, *Murtuts eta bertze*, 1945)
 - "... it doesn't look like there is anything at the end of the rope, it is carried so lightly and easily"

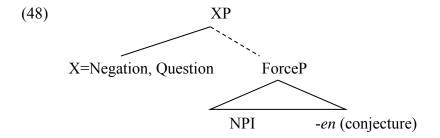
Thus, we equally find NPIs in subordinate clauses headed by -en when it has a declarative value:

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⁶ Strictly speaking, this is not true:

⁽i) Ez baitut uste sekulan deus ikasi dudan, bihotzez ez bada (P. Perurena, Trapuan Pupua, Erein, 2001, p. 108).

^{&#}x27;Because I don't think that I have ever learned anything, unless it was from the heart' However, Perurena is not a speaker of Navarro-Labourdin Basque, but of Navarrese, a dialect which also shares the use of *-en* in declarative complements (Zuazo 2014: 238).



2.3. Presupposition in -ela complement clauses

In their discussion of Catalan and Spanish subjunctives respectively, Quer (1998) and Kempschinsky (2009) show how the difference in the use of subjunctive or indicative reflects a shift in the evaluation of the subordinate proposition. Here are Kempchinsky's adaptation of Quer's Catalan examples:

- (49) a. El decano no cree que los estudiantes merezcan un premio.
 - 'The dean does not believe that the students deserve (subj) a prize'
 - b. El decano no cree que los estudiantes merecen un premio.
 - 'The dean does not believe that the students deserve (ind) a prize'

In (49a) the proposition introduced by the (subjunctive) complement may be evaluated according to the speaker's view of the world or to the upper subject's view of the world and, therefore, these two continuations are logically possible:

(50) El decano no cree que los estudiantes merezcan un premio...

a. pero yo sí lo creo

b. y yo tampoco lo creo

'but I do'

'and neither do I'

However, in (49b) above, the indicative forces the interpretation of the complement sentence according to the speaker's view. Hence, there is a contradiction in one of the continuations:

(51) El decano no cree que los estudiantes merecen un premio...

'The dean does not believe that the students deserve(ind) a prize'

a. pero yo sí lo creo

b. # y yo tampoco lo creo

'but I do'

'and neither do I'

In other words, the indicative signals that it is the speaker's view that the students do indeed deserve a prize, in which case the (51b) tag or continuation is contradictory.

The interesting point is that this contrast is reduplicated for Basque dialects which have an *-ela* and *-enik* distinction; recall that in the case of Romance polarity subjunctives Basque resorts to the indicative mood:

(52) Dekanoak ez du sinesten ikasleek saria merezi dutenik...

'The dean does not believe that the students deserve(ind) a prize'

a. baina nik bai.

b. eta nik ere ez.

'but I do'

'and neither do I'

(53) Dekanoak ez du sinesten ikasleek saria merezi dutela...

a. baina nik bai.

b. # eta nik ere ez.

'but I do'

'and neither do I'

However, the Navarro-Labourdin speakers consulted do not have a contrast here; they only use *-ela* in these cases, and this *-ela* proposition may be evaluated according to either the speaker's view of the word or the upper subject's (just like in English):

(54) Beñatek ez du sinesten jainko bat badela...

'Beñat does not believe there is a god...'

a. bainan nik bai. b. eta nik ere ez.

'but I do' 'and neither do I'

(55) Auzapezari ez zako iduritzen herriak turismo bulego berria behar duela...

'The major doesn't consider that the town needs a new tourist office...'

a. bainan eni bai.

b. eta eni ere ez.

'but I do'

'and neither do I'

In other words, as expected from the discussion in section 2.1, in Navarro-Labourdin Basque, *-ela* complement clauses in the scope of matrix negation do not necessarily presuppose the truth value of the proposition they express and, in Kempchinsky's terms, the proposition they express may be evaluated according to the matrix subject's world view or the speaker's.

3. Conclusions

This article provides ample evidence that the varieties of Basque which lack the so called negative complementizer *-enik* and, accordingly, use the general and common declarative complement *-ela* may display the same syntactic features as the former: these *-ela* complements may host NPI elements licensed by a matrix operator (be it negation or question) and are subject to the same evaluation restrictions as *-enik* complements. This, in turn, implies that (for Navarro-Labourdin Basque at least) *-ela* must optionally have whichever syntactic feature *-enik* has (negation, W[su], obligatory narrow scope or, according to Vergara's recent proposal (2017), [iPolarity]).

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