Shifting Identities:
The Metaphorics of Nature-Culture Dualism
in Western and Basque Models of Self

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> Modernism is to us as water to a fish.
> Spreknak (1999: 217)

> … the word does not forget where it has been and can never wholly free itself from the dominion of the contexts of which it has been a part.
> Bakhtin (1973: 17)

Abstract

The paper is divided into two major parts, preceded by a short introduction. The first section consists of a theoretical discussion that examines the role of the dualist model and its accompanying dichotomous metaphorics in the development of Western ontology, epistemology, and personhood with particular emphasis on the nature/culture and body/mind dyads along with the role played by them as 'root metaphors'. This section also explores the notion of 'relational epistemology', van Dijk's (2002) Common Ground and Habermas's (1994) *Lebenswelt*. The second section of the study deals with the way certain Basque conceptual frames of reference relating to personhood are undergoing change and reorganisation in Euskara, the Basque language, under the influence of the Western modernist model. The goal of the paper is to demonstrate the role that metaphor studies in cognitive linguistics could play in increasing awareness of the linguistically embedded character of this Western ontology ─ the manner in which these habits of thought are deeply imprinted in language. In short, the Western ontology with its nature/culture dichotomy is rendered visible and even exotic, that is, from the perspective of these non-Western relational epistemologies.

Der vorliegende Beitrag besteht aus zwei Hauptteilen, denen eine kurze Einführung vorangestellt wird. Im ersten Abschnitt wird im Rahmen theoretischer Überlegungen die Rolle beschrieben, welche das dualistische Modell und die damit einhergehende dichotomische Metaphorik bei der Entwicklung der westlichen Ontologie, Epistemologie und Persönlichkeit (*personhood*) spielen, wobei den Dichotomien 'Natur/Kultur' und 'Körper/Geist' sowie der von diesen übernommenen Funktion als Basismetapher (*root-metaphor*) eine besondere Beachtung zukommen soll. Des Weiteren werden in diesem Abschnitt die Begriffe der 'relationalen Epistemologie', van Dijks (2002) Common Ground und Habermas' (1994) *Lebenswelt* erläutert. Im zweiten Abschnitt wird dargelegt, wie gewisse baskische conceptual frames bezüglich der Persönlichkeit (*personhood*) im Euskara, der baskischen Sprache, aufgrund des Einflusses westlicher modernistischer Modelle einem Wandel und einer Neuordnung unterworfen sind. Ziel der Studie ist es, die Rolle aufzuzeigen, die die kognitiv-linguistische Metaphernforschung einnehmen kann, um das Bewusstsein zu schärfen für die sprachliche Einbettung der westlichen Ontologie sowie für die Art und Weise, wie diese Denkgewohnheiten (*habits of thought*) in der Sprache verankert sind. Zusammenfassend lässt sich festhalten, dass die westliche Ontologie mit ihrer 'Natur/Kultur'-Dichotomie dort sehr deutlich zum Vorschein kommt und geradezu exotisch erscheint; letzteres insbesondere aus der Perspektive der nicht-westlichen relationalen Epistemologien.

1. Introduction

This paper represents another attempt at exploring data from a larger research project, first reported in Frank and Susperregi (2001) and Frank (2001), in which an overview of the traditional Basque cultural schemas and the common European ones, i.e., the Western modernist ontological model, was presented. In the case of the Western model, these schemas consist of a set of interlocking and hence mutually reinforcing polar dyads (cf. Diagram 1).

NATURE	CULTURE
BODY	MIND
EMOTION	REASON
WOMAN	MAN
ANIMALS	HUMAN BEINGS
LOW	HIGH
BAD	GOOD
MOON	SUN
NIGHT	DAY
BLACK	WHITE
DARKNESS	LIGHT
CROOKED	STRAIGHT

Diagram 1. Expanded Set of Western interlocking Root Metaphors (based on the lexicon of English). Source: Adapted from Frank/Susperregi (2001: 143).

These dyads reflect the underlying hierarchical ontological ordering that structures certain 'root metaphors' found in Western thought (Olds 1992). It should be emphasised that the metaphoric understandings coded into the Western model form sets of asymmetric polarities, although with mutually reinforcing, conceptual frames. For this reason, the culture/nature dualism sets culture above nature, while the mind/body dualism places mind above body. Then just as the polarity of reason/emotion can be identified with masculine/feminine, culture/nature stands for a gendered

dualism of masculine/feminine. Stated differently, the metaphoric set of culture/mind/reason/masculine has its counterpart in nature/body/emotion/feminine. In this sense, the dyads represent examples of Aristotelian 'proportional metaphors', that is, analogies in the form of A is to B what C is to D. Therefore, since in the case of a proportional metaphor its mapping must always apply reciprocally to either of its co-ordinate terms, each individual component of the dyad sets in Diagram 1 is available as a highly complex and expansive metaphoric resource.[1] Moreover, although the reciprocity holding between the dyads, i.e., their status as proportional metaphors, is clearly culturally grounded and hence historically bound, recognition of this fact is not easy to achieve.[2] This is because of the epistemic authority afforded to these concepts, an effect that, in turn, is derived from the central role played by these metaphors in structuring Western thought, epistemology, ontology, and personhood.[3]

In recent years increasing attention has been paid to the development and/or recovery of conceptual frames capable of challenging and overcoming these deeply embedded, hierarchically organised dualities that continue to characterise Western thought. As Lakoff and Turner have observed, the worldview known as "the Great Chain [of Being] itself is a political issue. As a chain of dominance, it can become a chain of subjugation" (Lakoff/Turner 1989: 213).[4] Specifically I refer to efforts aimed at discovering a way to move out of an ontology grounded in a logic of dualities, and more concretely, to the difficulties posed by the deeply embedded, dyadic conceptual frame known as mind/body, formerly soul/body, and its conceptual twin, the polarity

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[1] Cienki (1999: 190) has commented on similar bipolar oppositions, citing Ivanov/Toporov's (1965) discussion, saying that they are "reminiscent of what Ivanov and Toporov call 'semiotic modeling systems', pairs of oppositions which often co-align in a coherent way within a culture, and what van Leeuwen-Turnovcová (1991, 1994, and elsewhere) discusses as 'cultural paradigms'".

[2] For an excellent example of being trapped inside the Western dichotomous epistemology, i.e., by assuming its universality, cf. Ortner (1974).

[3] In speaking of Western epistemology, ontology and personhood, it should be kept in mind that there are a variety of cultures in the so-called West, just as in the case of non-Western cultures, e.g., individualism seems to be a fundamental ideology in the United States (cf. O'Toole 1998), whereas more relational forms of personhood are found in other parts of the Western world. Nonetheless, rather than using a collective category such as Euro-American (cf. Edge 1998, 2000), I prefer to continue to utilize the more conventional terminology, while being fully cognizant of the fact that I am speaking of prototypical constructions, e.g., generalities based on data derived from the lexicon of English, rather than on concrete lived realities for, as Markus has amply demonstrated, selves are rooted in cultural worlds, but these worlds frequently overlap and can even conflict. For a more nuanced view, cf. Markus et al. (1997); Markus/Kitayama (1991).

[4] For another discussion of the Great Chain metaphor as it is developed from the point of view of cognitive linguistics, cf. Barcelona (2002: 263-264).

of culture/nature. Although many scholars have documented the evolution of these concepts *within* Western thought, particularly the dyads of mind/body, male/female, and more recently, culture/nature,[5] less attention has been paid to gaining a perspective on them from the *outside*. Indeed, as Descola and Pálsson have noted:

> Deconstructing the dualist paradigm may appear as just one more example of the healthy self-criticism which now permeates anthropological theory. […] If such analytical categories as economics, totemism, kinship, politics, individualism, or even society, have been characterized as ethnocentric constructs, why should it be any different with the disjuncture between nature and society? The answer is that this dichotomy is not just another analytical category belonging to the tool-kit of the social sciences; it is the key foundation of modernist epistemology. (Descola/Pálsson 1996: 12)

Perhaps one of the most important and insightful explorations of the role of the nature/culture (society) dichotomy in Western thought is found in Latour's (1993) work. Briefly stated, these dichotomous concepts have served two major purposes in ordering Western thought. First, they have allowed the hierarchical division of human and other(s) to function as 'innate' and 'universal', initially under the guardianship of theological foundationalism, i.e., God's plan and a vertically oriented cosmology, then later simply as the Law of Nature. This transition in the model occurred during the Enlightenment and coincided roughly with the period in which absolute monarchies were loosing their grip on Europe. As a result, a new type of foundationalism was required, reflected in Linneaus' choice of the Great Chain of Being as the classifying mechanism for all of nature and humankind (cf. Schiebinger 1993). Thus, in this new type of foundationalism, social hierarchies were based, not on God's plan, but rather on an unchanging and universalist concept referred to as nature: justifications of existing inequalities were based on the hierarchical order attributed to nature and, in turn, dictated by it. Similarly, in the 18th and 19th centuries, pre-Darwinian socioeconomic thought provided the ground for both Darwin's 'competition' metaphor and for the same type of metaphors in the works of Spencer and other so-called Social Darwinists. Thus, although commonly viewed as mutually exclusive opposites, these two antithetical concepts are linked and mutually reinforcing: the nature/culture antithesis has played a major role in Western thought, where nature is used to justify culture, the

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[5] Among the most provocative studies of the ontological concepts of culture/nature as they have been used in the dualist paradigm are Descola/Pálsson (1996); Evernden (1992); Laqueur (1990); Latour (1993); Merchant (1980); Schiebinger (1993); Williams (1978: 11-20, 1982: 67-102).

prevailing socioeconomic order, while at the same time, the prevailing socioeconomic order, culture, is mapped onto this reified entity, things-in-themselves, called nature. In this conceptual circularity lies the reason for this dyad's key foundational role in modernist epistemology (cf. again Latour 1993).

In this respect, the traditional Basque cultural model differs in many respects from the conception encountered in the Western model. Indeed, the ontological and epistemological foundations of the Basque model, as well as the concept of personhood (self, selfhood), have far more in common with those relational models identified among non-Western peoples and analysed by Ingold (2000). Bird-David (1999) has proposed the term 'relational epistemology' to refer to the metaphysics found in such societies.[6] Given the similarity between certain aspects of the Basque and non-Western models and keeping in mind the geographical emplacement of the Basque language, these Basque understandings could be referenced as European exemplars from an earlier indigenous cosmology. At the same time the Basque model provides us with ready access to an *outside* vantage point, which geographically is still inside Europe, a topic that will be examined in detail in the third part of this paper.

2. Theoretical Considerations

As Howell (1996: 127) has commented,

> [t]he properties of these dualities have not been held to be of equal value: humans are superior to animals, mind is superior to body, just as thinking is to feeling [...]. Furthermore, the mind and mental processes have been recharged as characteristically male qualities and bodily and emotional concerns as female ones (cf. also Merchant 1980; Schliebinger 1993).

In short,

> [w]hen we further consider a dominant strand of thinking which holds that mind is cultural and body is natural, we find ourselves within the familiar western schema. Such a view is, of course, to be regarded as just one ethnographic example of how humans may construct meaning about their own identities and environments. It is, however, an approach which has universalistic ambitions and it has proved peculiarly resistant to challenges (Howell 1996: 127).

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[6] Olds (1992) calls for the rejection of 'the metaphysics of hierarchical ontology' in favor of a 'relational ontology' and encourages an active search for alternative root metaphors to replace the dichotomous presuppositions currently in place.

The question, then, arises as to the relationship of these proportional metaphors to the larger issue of ideology and worldviews.[7] Speaking of the relationship holding between discourse, knowledge and ideology, van Dijk (2002: 2) has made the following pertinent observation:

> In other words, in my theoretical framework it would simply be inconsistent to assume that all knowledge is ideological. Rather, I propose that each culture has a Common Ground of generally shared, undisputed, and hence un-ideological or pre-ideological knowledge.

Following Ingold (2000), I would suggest that rather than referring to what is present in this Common Ground as 'knowledge', a more accurate characterization of its rather diffuse nature might be better achieved through the choice of the term 'understandings', and, further, that these 'understandings' contribute to the implicit conceptual consensus found in a given population of speakers, community or society. Bourdieu's notion of *doxa* echoes a similar preoccupation with this discursive Common Ground or underlying consensual field, and how it serves to structure speech acts. "The doxa", as summarized by Swartz (1997: 232), "refers to the fundamental assumptions and categories that shape intellectual thought in a particular time and place and which are generally not available to conscious awareness of the participants". For our purposes, the adjective 'intellectual' in Swartz's definition can best be deleted. Bourdieu's (1990) portrayal of the relationship between orthodoxy, heterodoxy and doxa is illustrated by means of the following diagram:

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[7] Over the past decade, with respect to the existing boundaries of the current research paradigm in cognitive linguistics, there has been heightened concern with increasing disciplinary cross-fertilization. The belief that cognitive linguistics could be enriched by closer contact with and awareness of theoretical formulations from critical discourse analysis (Koller 2002), cognitive psychology (Gibbs 1997; Emanatian 1997) and cognitive anthropology (Kimmel 2002) has a corollary in the fact that the latter fields would also benefit from having a firmer grasp on the instruments of analysis provided by cognitive linguistics and particularly what Koller (2002: 14-29) refers to as 'classical cognitive metaphor theory', as articulated, for example, in Lakoff/Johnson (1980), and epitomized by the following quote referring to experientialism: "[…] the nature of our bodies and our physical and cultural environment imposes a structure on our experience […]. Recurrent experience leads to the formation of categories, which are experiential gestalts" (1980: 230).
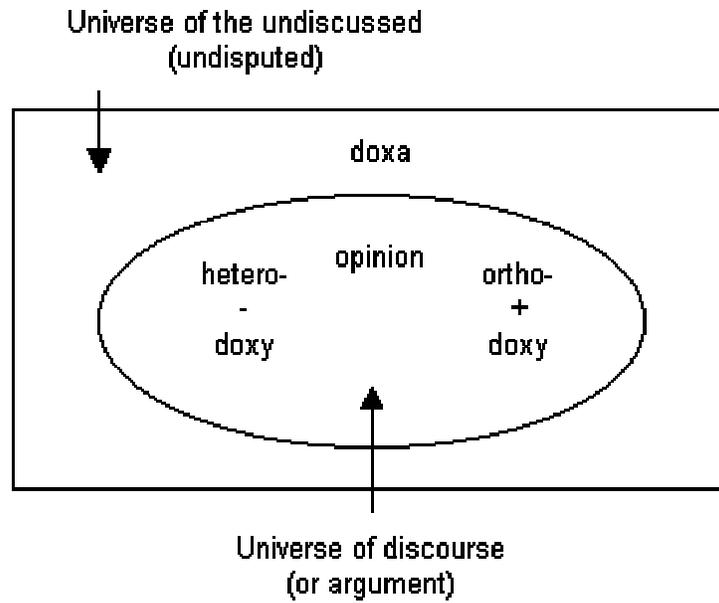
Diagram 2. Bourdieu's 'universe of the undiscussed' or doxa. Source: Demeterio (2001).

Van Dijk's (2002) definition of this Common Ground can be compared to the following position statement, dating from 1980, which typifies the tenets of 'classic cognitive metaphor theory' (cf. Koller 2002: 14-29) and reveals their similarity to positions held by those working in critical discourse analysis and cognitive anthropology:

> In other words, what we call 'direct physical experience' is never merely a matter of having a body of certain sort; rather, every experience takes place within a vast background of cultural presuppositions. It can be misleading, therefore, to speak of direct physical experience as though there were some core of immediate experience which we then 'interpret' in terms of our conceptual system. Cultural assumptions, values, and attitudes are not a conceptual overlay which we may or may not place upon experience as we choose. It would be more correct to say that all experience is cultural through and through, that we experience our 'world' in such a way that our culture is already present in the very experience itself[8] (Lakoff / Johnson 1980: 57).

At the same time, van Dijk's concept of Common Ground resonates strongly with the notion of *Lebenswelt* or 'lifeworld' as proposed by Habermas. As Schattenmann (forthcoming) has

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[8] This articulation can be compared to the definition given by Varela/Thompson/Rosch (2000 [1991]: 172-173) of *embodied action*: "Let us explain what we mean by this phrase *embodied action*. By using the term *embodied* we mean to highlight two points: first, that cognition depends upon the kinds of experience that comes from having a body with various sensorimotor capacities, and second, that these individual sensorimotor capacities are themselves embedded in a more encompassing biological, psychological and cultural context." Cf. also Dreyfus (1979); Ziemke (2001); Ziemke/Sharkey (2001); Zlatev (2003).

succinctly explained in his study: "The lifeworld is the invisible and indispensable background of everything we do and of everything we are (of everything, to be more precise, that is not purely biological)." Thus, the lifeworld can be understood as some sort of non-thematic knowledge that is characterized by an 'unmediated certainty', a 'totalizing power' and a 'holistic constitution'; it is composed of cultural patterns, legitimate social orders and personality structures, forming complex contexts of meaning (Habermas 1997: 2ff.; 1982: 594). Moreover, we can think of it "as represented by a culturally transmitted and linguistically organized stock of interpretative patterns" (Habermas 1997, II: 124)"[9]

In addition,

> [t]his stock of knowledge supplies members with unproblematic common background convictions that are assumed to be guaranteed; it is from these that contexts for the processes of reaching understanding get shaped […]. Every new situation appears in a lifeworld composed of a cultural stock of knowledge that is *always already* familiar (Habermas 1997, II: 125).

In this way the lifeworld represents the large but limited space within which communication and understanding are possible. It is the background of communicative action (Habermas 1982: 593):

> Its status is different from that of other 'world-concepts'. In its immediate certainty, totalizing power and holistic nature it is not something we can reach an understanding about – because it is itself the pre-condition of understanding. To be sure, the components of the lifeworld are embodied in some form, they have a material substrate: the cultural knowledge in symbolic forms, in things of daily use, technologies, theories, words, books and documents no less than in actions; the social orders in institutions and all webs of normatively regulated practices and customs; the personality structures in the human body itself (Schattenmann forthcoming).

Nevertheless, or exactly because of this, there is no escape from the lifeworld as such: "Communicative actors are always moving within the horizon of their lifeworld; they cannot step out of it" (Habermas 1997, II: 126). There is no 'beyond': the lifeworld itself is the 'extramundane' position and the 'transcendental' site (Habermas 1997, II: 126). As Schattenmann (forthcoming) observes: "The lifeworld is a reservoir of commonplaces and taken-for-granteds (*Selbstverständlichkeiten*) that can never be questioned as a whole, but only

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[9] This statement brings to mind Goodenough's (1957: 167) often cited definition: Culture is "whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members". Here the expression 'communicative competence' could be substituted for 'culture' in Goodenough's definition without significant loss of meaning or applicability.

individually. It is like a boat at sea that can only be repaired one plank at a time" (cf. also Habermas 1994).[10] However, this notion of a lack of a 'beyond' holds only as long as one's point of view is restricted to one's own local *Lebenswelt*, to the constraints of one's own communicative *conceptual horizon*, as Bakhtin (1981: 269-295) has rendered this cognitive aspect of communicative acts. Stated differently, only when we are confronted with a different conceptual horizon, as expressed by a (radically) different culture and language, can we begin to reflect back on our own. When this communicative encounter takes place the possibility opens up for a type of recognition and a new sensitivity to the nature of one's own Common Ground, a process of understanding that might be compared to Gadamer's (1975 [1960]) notion of a *Horizontverschmelzung* (fusion of horizons).

In these attempts to bring into view and explore the conceptual horizon offered by the alternative paradigm that Ingold (2000) calls 'an ontology of dwelling', and which Hornberg (1996: 45) refers to as 'contextualism', while Bird-David (1999), as noted, speaks of a 'relational epistemology', researchers have begun to investigate the intentional worlds of non-Western peoples. In such cosmologies we encounter a systematic absence of the ontological dualism characteristic of Western thought of which the dichotomy of nature and culture is the prototypical instance, alongside that of body and mind. In contrast, in the non-Western ontologies studied by Ingold, as well as in the Basque ontological model, the human condition is taken to be that of "a being immersed from the start, like other creatures, in an active practical, perceptual engagement with constituents of the dwelt-in-world" (Ingold 2000: 42), as shown in Diagram 3.

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[10] The similarities between the positions of van Dijk and Habermas can also be seen in Habermas (1994: 66) who starts with "the assumption that communicative action is also embedded in a lifeworld which provides risk-absorbing coverage in the form of massive background consensus. The explicit communicative accomplishments are made from within this horizon of shared, unproblematical convictions; the disquiet that arises from experience and critique runs up against, so it would seem, the broad and imperturbable, subterranean rock of consensus-providing interpretive patterns, loyalties and proficiencies. […] Prereflexive knowledge, which backs communication without itself becoming a topic, has first to be distinguished from knowledge, which is *concomitantly-thematized* in speech-acts. […] *Strictly unthematic* knowledge is to be distinguished from merely concomitantly-thematized knowledge by the fact that it cannot be retrieved simply by a transformation due to a shift from a participant's to an observer's perspective. Rather unthematic knowledge requires a kind of presuppositional analysis [emphasis in the original]."
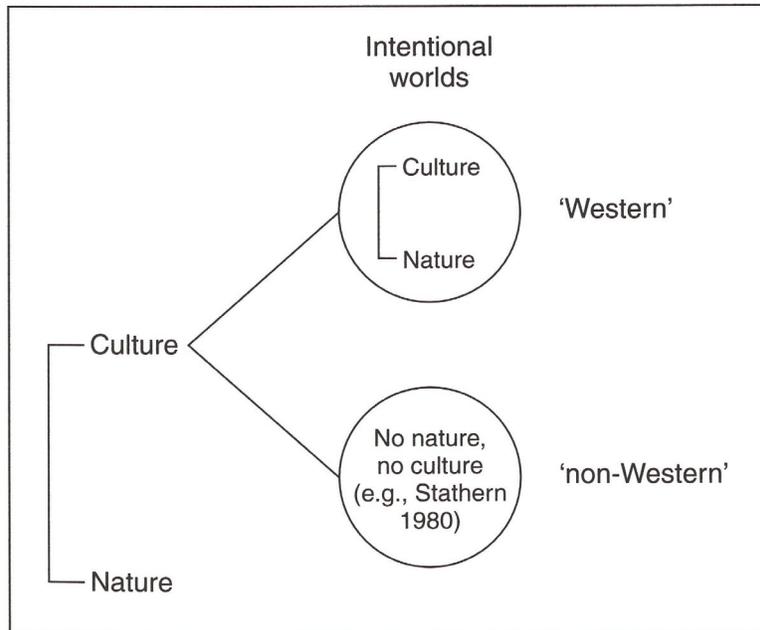
Diagram 3. A comparison between 'non-Western' and 'Western' intentional worlds assumes the primacy of the Western ontology, with its dichotomy between nature and culture, or between physical substance and conceptual form. Source: Ingold (2000: 42).

Next, in Diagram 4 we can appreciate that in the non-Western economy of knowledge (lower diagram) there are not two hierarchically oriented worlds, of nature and society, but rather a single heterarchical one.[11] "Within this one world, humans figure not as composites of body and mind, but as undivided beings, 'organism-persons', relating as such both to other humans and to non-human agencies and entities in their environment" (Ingold 2000: 47). Accordingly, a language such as Cree has no indigenous word "corresponding to our term 'nature', nor does it have any equivalent of 'culture' that would make it a special province of humans" (Scott 1989: 195). A similar situation holds for Basque, where the terms employed to translate these two concepts, 'nature' and 'culture', are drawn from Romance sources. In other words, the Western ontology creates a separate (lower) space for organism-environment interactions (cf. Ellen 1996), while the relational intentional world does not.

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[11] Reminiscent of 'the web of life' metaphor (cf. Capra 1997), 'heterarchy' refers to a form of organisation resembling a network, a fishnet or weaving. As a concept utilised frequently in reference to complex systems theory, cybernetics, neural nets, contemporary theories of organisational governance, complex societies, ecofeminism, etc., heterarchy can be understood to refer to an organisation that has subset plurality within a system without a dominant/subordinate ranking (cf. Ehrenreich/Crumley/Levy 1995). For one of the most elaborated discussions of the nature/culture dichotomy from the point of view of 'networks' and 'translation', cf. Latour (1993).
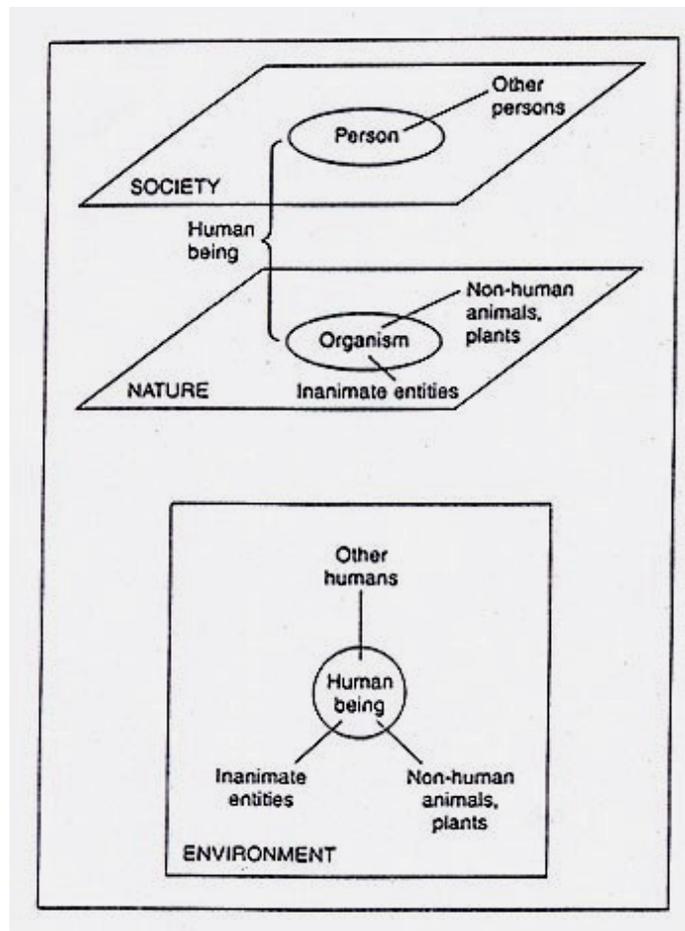
Diagram 4. Western anthropological (upper) and hunter-gatherer (lower) economies of knowledge. Source: Ingold (2000: 46).

Moreover, according to Ingold, from the point of view of the non-Western ontology, the self is not the captive subject of the standard Western model, enclosed within the confines of a body, and entertaining its own conjectures about what the *outside* world might be like. On the contrary, the self exists in its ongoing engagement with the environment: it is *open* to the world, not closed in. As Ingold emphasises, this contrasts with the model of the person that identifies the self with an interior intelligence, the conscious mind, enclosed by its physical container, the body (Ingold 2000: 100). In short, the non-Western model of self is relational and the self is set up by virtue of one's positioning in the world. As a result, any inner-outer dichotomy, container-contained, "with the human skin as boundary, is psychologically irrelevant" (Hallowell 1955: 88).[12]

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[12] Hallowell's comment coincides with Geertz's observation on the 'unbounded self': "The Western conception of the person as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic center of awareness, emotion, judgment, and action organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively both against other

As Ingold (2000), Ellen (1996) and earlier Hallowell (1955, 1960) have observed, these non-Western ontologies of self and personhood are relational, not closed off: the body is not a container separating self from the world, but rather the self is in-the-world, while the world in question is a heterarchical one, rather than hierarchical. In this respect we can contrast the entailments of the Great Chain – relating to personhood – with these non-Western understandings (cf. Olds 1992). Certainly, the current, dominant Western version of personhood should be understood as historically situated and, hence, subject to modification. Indeed, it is closely associated with modernism itself: the conception of human identity as involving a radical mind/body split, a radical dualism between humans and nature, and the notion that the human is an individual, autonomous thing, a bounded social entity. As Morris (1999: 82) has reflected, "[t]hese conceptions, of course, largely came out of Cartesian metaphysics and the bourgeois liberal theory of the 17th century and were intrinsic as ideologies to the rise of capitalism." In other words, in terms of the history of the conceptions of personhood, we are talking about liberal (humanist) subjectivity and its accompanying notions of identity: autonomy, rationality, self-governance, freedom to act in one's self-interest, etc. These concepts, in turn, deal with the formation of the liberal self-regulating subject, the individual of classical political economy, the (ideal) citizen of representative democracy, a model that emphasizes agency with the subject as the locus of control and choice.[13]

In this sense, the model of dominance implied by the culture/nature and mind/body dichotomies has taken on a particular shape: just as culture is superior to nature so mind controls body. And, as Habermas has suggested, the lifeworld in question, represented here by the set of dualist proportional metaphors discussed previously, cannot be easily modified. It is too embedded in the Common Ground, and, therefore, almost invisible to the majority of speakers.[14] For this reason

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such wholes and against its social and natural background is, however incorrigible it may seem to us, a rather peculiar idea within the context of the world's cultures" (Geertz 1983: 59). Cf. also Smith (1985); Johnson (1985).

[13] For a highly interesting and innovative attempt at analyzing the socio-cultural embeddedness of 'ecological narratives', cf. Journet (1991).

[14] Here the supra-individual (inter-subjective) constitution of language itself comes into play, living, as it does, both at the level of 'unitary language' and at the level of 'individual' (socio-)linguistic practice. This tension or dynamic sets into motion changes brought about through the interplay of Bakhtin's (1981) two forces, one constituted by the centripetal (unitary and monologic) aspects of language and the other by the centrifugal (individual and heteroglossic) aspects of it. Schattenmann (forthcoming) offers the following relevant commentary: "In this respect, the 'transcendental' lifeworld [of Habermas] is similar to what Charles Taylor [1989, Chapter 2, esp. 36–39] calls our 'transcendental' dependence on 'webs of interlocution': we can change the web, but we cannot do without one

we can argue that this historical and culturally situated Common Ground is structured, in part, by certain metaphors that are relatively stable, enduring and pervasive and which, in turn, both support and are supported by non-linguistic activities, i.e., social practices, of the culture in question.[15] In this sense, when this metaphoric repertoire acts in *congruence* with the non-linguistic mappings, it sets up a strong resonance with them (Emanatian 1999). The resonance is activated by the fact that the concepts themselves, e.g., mind/body, culture/nature, function as 'memory-banks' (Ngũgĩ 1986) with respect to the Common Ground.

However, in reference to the metaphorical and non-metaphorical aspects one often finds the co-existence of contradictory schemas, that is, *incongruence*, within this Common Ground. For example, while the culture/nature : male/female analogy has frequently been a site of contestation, far fewer have tried to overcome the culture/nature divide.[16] Thus, we may speak of a *scale of congruence,* following Emanatian (1999: 212): "At one end of the scale, we find congruence across many dimensions of a cultural model, metaphorical and otherwise." Yet, at the same time, in other sectors, societal change can provoke incongruent features: words and concepts whose canonical meanings undergo shifts or which become self-consciously contested. When this occurs the metaphor or concept in question no longer resides in doxa, in the 'universe of the undiscussed (undisputed)', but rather comes into focus and becomes available for conscious analysis. In this sense, there is a direct linkage, reciprocity, between linguistic and extralinguistic social context and practice. In short, each speech act, each utterance, is a means by which these supra-individual (inter-subjective) concepts of identity as well as those of individual

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[…]. It is interesting to note that language plays a central role in Habermas' and Taylor's argument and that both mention Wittgenstein and Wilhelm von Humboldt in this context." For further commentary concerning this issue, cf. Habermas (1994).

[15] These, of course, fall roughly into a category that has been referred to in various ways, e.g., as 'root metaphors' (Pepper 1942) and as 'constitutive' or 'generative' metaphors (Smith 1985), often with emphasis on their value as a heuristic. Cf. Kimmel (2002: 47-50) for more discussion of the concept of a metaphor's *scope*, i.e., the overall power a metaphor exercises within a given conceptual system and how much it governs other elements of it. On this view, the broad scope of the nature/culture dichotomy and its metaphoric entailments is a particularly good example of a highly embedded and hence, resistant dyad belonging to the set of dualities under analysis.

[16] It should be noted that in the case of societies demonstrating relational epistemologies, this dichotomy is not present; either there is no word for what we understand as 'nature' or the individual's relationship to the surrounding world with all of its inhabitants, animate and inanimate, tends to be categorized in a radically different fashion (cf. Descola/Pálsson 1996; Bird-David 1999). Thus, the Western ontological divide between nature and culture is non-existent (as well as the particular Western hierarchy of values and dominance associated historically with this dyad and its metaphoric instantiations).

identity are sustained and/or modified, as will be further demonstrated in the final section of this paper.

In summary, as Ellen (1996: 103) notes,

> [t]hat conceptions of nature vary historically and ethnographically, and are, therefore, themselves intrinsically cultural, is so widely asserted nowadays that it is often assumed to have become a self-evident anthropological truth.

However, the way in which these 'conceptions of nature' interact epistemologically with the rest of the received conceptual frames of a given culture is still not entirely clear. In Western thought, as we have seen, the culture/nature distinction reappears as a central device for the ordering, in semantic matrixes, of contrastive properties and attributes, including the notion of self. Furthermore, these oppositions, these proportional metaphors, are heuristic in that they permit valid inferences, i.e., inferences in consonance with the Western (modernist) ontology, from new material gathered in the same or neighbouring societies. This heuristic function becomes more complex when the speaker is bilingual and must switch back and forth between two differently structured Common Ground*s*, as we shall now see.

3. Shifting identities: Examples of reanalysis of structures

This section deals with the way certain traditional Basque conceptual frames of personhood are undergoing change and reorganisation in Euskara, the Basque language. As we shall discover, these structures which are clearly grounded in an earlier relational epistemology and, hence, in an earlier preexisting European ontology, continue to be coded into the Basque language and culture (cf. Frank and Susperregi 2001; Frank 2001). In addition, these conceptual frames are manifest in and supported by specific lexical, morphological and syntactical structures found in the Basque language itself. In this section it will be argued that the changes which have taken place and are taking place in these linguistic structures are the result of attempts, still not fully successful, on the part of some Basque speakers to appropriate epistemological understandings of self that are coded into the Western modernist model by mapping them over into Basque.[17] It will be alleged

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[17] Following Bird-David (1997: S68), I use 'modernist' to signal the ideas and practices that dominated the Euro-American cultural landscape from the 17th to the 20th century as well as to designate the autonomous, non-relational subject/object self-concept that accompanies them. This set of dichotomous categories and their associated binary

that the shifts in question result from the cumulative impact of utterances produced by bilingual Basque speakers who are increasingly exposed to the norms of the Western dichotomous model in a variety of formal and informal settings, e.g., television, movies, electronic media as well as through the systematic translation into Basque of the classics of Western philosophy and literature. In these transfer situations the value system embedded in this Western modernist paradigm, i.e., in its epistemology, ontology and personhood, has regularly been presented to these speakers as the prestige model, reflecting modernity, scientific rigor and progress, in short, liberal humanist subjectivity. For this reason, today Basque speakers must move back and forth between two different kinds of Common Ground and in negotiating this cognitive bridging they tend to drag cultural presuppositions back and forth, also.

These conceptual shifts are especially prevalent among younger bilingual Basque speakers whose exposure to Western cognitive models of science and philosophy in formal settings is also extensive. Previously these speakers were exposed to the Western model primarily through the dominant Spanish and/or French language media and texts where the model was, therefore, associated with non-Basque identities. Today, in contrast, the Basque language media and school system tend to incorporate the Western model, often quite unconsciously, as these materials are now being translated directly into Basque. Similarly, younger Basques are usually relatively fluent in English and as a result have direct access to English language media.

Moreover, it is noteworthy that, overall, younger bilingual speakers who are more dominantly bilingual in Spanish or French than in Basque, e.g., those who have acquired their knowledge of the Basque language primarily in formal settings, are more inclined to opt for the Western coded structures and to find them more acceptable and psychologically comfortable. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that the indigenous Basque conceptual frames are quite unfamiliar to a person acculturated in the Common Ground of the Western cognitive model for the latter includes a metanarrative with a strong vertical spatial orientation, i.e., hierarchical order. As we have seen, this emphasis on hierarchy, rather than heterarchy and equality,[18] serves to separate

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thought patterns has been referred to also by the terms 'dualism' and 'naturalism' and referred to as forming a 'dualist' or 'naturalist paradigm' (cf. Descola/Pálsson 1996; Evernden 1992; Strathern 1996: 139-151).

[18] For a detailed discussion of the way the concept of Basque equality is directly integrated into traditional social relationships and, more importantly, embodied in the mathematics governing the production of the heterarchical ordering of these relationships, cf. Ascher (1998, 2002: 127-159). In the case of complex cultural models, such as

and position one dyadic element above the other, mind over body, culture over nature and, in the process, it promotes modernist assumptions such as the autonomy of the individual, a psychology of being in which individual self-determination, freedom and liberty are extolled, rather than the embeddedness of self, extended communal identity, interdependence and contingency (cf. Barber 1996: 156-168). In short, the Basque model has no facile counterpart for those acculturated in the Western norms and situated within the Western Common Ground, given that the former norms are based on a different ontological foundation. At the same time, while the Western model is dominant, indeed, hegemonic in nature, until recently little attention has been paid to analysing and/or defining the Common Ground characteristic of Basque language and culture, that is, to search for the more significant concepts which are automatic, unconscious, effortless, fixed, conventional, substantial, believed and lived by (Demeterio 2001).

At this juncture we can turn our attention to three data sets based on examples taken from contemporary usage in Euskara. Each data set consists of variants of a single morpho-syntactic structure which, although synchronically collected, i.e., all of the variants represent utterances that are contemporaneous, the variants can be situated along a diachronic axis that then serves to map the cognitive path taken by the structure over time: the way in which speakers have reanalysed the structure in question. In other words, we are documenting variation associated with the structured heterogeneity of these items in a single speech community (cf. Croft 2000: 166–232).

For the purposes of these language internal comparisons, speaker populations have been divided into two groups, designated as A and B, where examples from group A reflect a Western modelling of the symbolic order, and those of group B the Basque, or more generally indigenous, relational epistemological stance. The comparisons reveal the manner in which semantico-referential interpretations of the utterances of group A demonstrate a reanalysis of the indigenous morphosyntactic structures so that the end result is a framing more in consonance with the Western model described by Ingold (2000).[19] As Croft (2000: 173) has pointed out, much of the

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equality, in which metaphor is only one 'constituent', Emanatian's (1999) work on determining the degree of *congruence* between systematic cultural metaphor and non-linguistic symbolism, i.e., between linguistic and non-linguistic mapping, would be useful.

[19] The examples and descriptive lexical materials discussed here are drawn from the author's own research and fieldwork in Euskal Herria over the past twenty-five years, discussions with Basque writers and linguists, as well as a

variation in sociolinguistic studies has been shown or is hypothesised to represent language change in progress. In this case, we will observe that the shift, the choice of one variant over another, is linked to the speaker's intentional and/or nonintentional alignment with the Common Ground of either the Western or the Basque model. Although the specific motivations on the part of a given speaker for choosing one form over another are complex, the cumulative effect of the choices at the level of the speech community in question can be tracked. We might assume that among these motivations is the fact that the speaker often adjusts her conventions of speaking in order to identify with the community of the hearer, to show solidarity with the group. In this case, it is not unusual for the same speaker to use different variants of the same linguistic structure (cf. Croft 2000), i.e., the speaker is not necessarily committed to one variant because she *consciously* believes it reflects more faithfully the Common Ground of the Western model or the Basque one. Finally, it is clear that dialectal differences also often play a role in these choices.

3.1. The concept '*gogo*'

The concept of '*gogo*' comprises all of the following Western concepts simultaneously: 'memory, desire, appetite, thought, affection, pleasure, consciousness, spirit, mind, will.'

(1a)   *Nik gogoratu dut*

         I-Erg. remembered it have.

Group A Basque speaker's interpretation: "I have remembered it."

(1b)   *Niri gogoratu zait*

         [It] me-Dat. [toward] '*gogo*' has come. [*gogo* + *ra* 'allative ending' + *tu* 'infinitive verbal marker']

Group B Basque speaker's interpretation: "It has come to/occurred to my *gogo*."[20]

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[20] Another variant, although outside the scope of this brief study, involves the use of the instrumental case ending to mark the object that is interacting with 'gogo', for example, as in *Ni horretaz gogoratzen naiz* "I remember that", where *horretaz* represents the medial demonstrative with an instrumental ending.

Commentary:

A facile gloss into English of (1b) as 'it has come to [my] mind' would give a false impression of similarity between the two models since 'mind' in the Western model functions in an entirely different framework of interlocking polarities. Hence, these Western polarities obviate the identification of 'bodily embedded' notions of 'appetite' and 'sensation' with those of 'thought' and 'mind'. Rather the Western model sets up 'mind' as separate and cerebral, remote and above bodily produced notions of appetite and sensation. In the case of *gogo*, it does not have an association with any specific part of the body, i.e., it is not located 'between the ears' (cf. Ziemke 1999: 89).

The Western model of personhood (1a) positions the ego self as the active agent. In the Basque inter-subjective relational model (1b), the active agent of (1a), the "I", is portrayed as a passive, although fully sentient, participant in the event: an 'experiencing body' (Abram 1996a: 125).

3.2. The concept '*lo*'.

In the indigenous intentional frame, the concept '*lo*' refers to 'sleep' understood as an active agent.

3.2.1. Ego-centred agency of the Western model, based on group A speaker's (incorrect) interpretation:

(2a)   *Nik lo hartu dut.*

       I-Erg *lo* taken have.

Group A Basque speaker's (etymologically incorrect) interpretation: "I have taken *lo*."

English gloss: "I have gone to sleep/I have fallen asleep."

(2b)   *Nik lokartu dut.*

       I-Erg *lokartu* have.

Group A Basque speaker's (etymologically incorrect) interpretation: "I have taken *lo*".

Such speakers appear to understand the verbal compound *lokartu* as a phonological variant of *lo hartu,* i.e., as shown in the previous example (2a).

Spanish Gloss: "*Yo me he dormido* (intransitive verb)."

English Gloss: "I have gone to sleep/I have fallen asleep."

3.2.2. Interactive dialogic agency of the Basque relational model, based on group B speaker's (correct) interpretation of the compound *lokartu* as composed of *loak hartu*:

(3a)   *Ni loak hartu nau*.

me-Abs sleep-Abs-Erg taken has [n-au-$\varnothing$ = 1Sg-Abs-Aux-1SgErg]

Group B Basque speaker's (correct) interpretation: "Sleep has taken me."

Spanish gloss: "*Yo me he dormido* (intransitive verb)."

English gloss: "I have gone to sleep/ I have fallen asleep."

(3b)   *Ni lokartuta naiz/nago*

I-Abs sleep-taken [resultative state] am.

Group B Basque speaker's (correct) interpretation: "I am in the state resulting from being taken by sleep; literally, I am sleep-taken." Curiously, this variant is understood to carry the meanings of being sleepy, dull, numbed, nodding off. It is viewed as an ongoing process leading to falling fully asleep.

(4)   *Ni lokartua naiz/nago*.

I-Abs sleep-taken-AbsSg am.

English literal translation: "I am the one whom sleep has taken."[21]

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[21] Although it is common to hear *ni lokartu naiz* alongside *ni lokartuta naiz/nago* and *ni lokartua naiz/nago*, it is not entirely clear whether speakers using the variant *ni lokartu naiz* are interpreting *lokartu* as a 'fully lexicalized plain verb', as Oyharçarbal (1997) refers to it, or whether the speakers are still aware of the intrinsic and, hence, residual ergativity of the compound. Even more Western influenced forms have developed, such as *lo naiz* and *lo nago*, to render the notion of "I am asleep". These appear to be calques of *yo estoy dormido* (Sp.) where *lo* stands in for the Spanish past participle *dormido*. At the same time a fully Western oriented expression *lo egin,* literally, 'to make sleep', has developed in which there is a reversal of the type of agency found in the Basque model. In the case of *lo naiz*, the expression sounds totally bizarre to some native speakers since in the absence of the inessive ending, it literally means "I am sleep". Other speakers tend not to reach over cognitively to Spanish, identifying *lo* with the past participle *dormido*, as in *estoy dormido*. Rather they prefer the more widespread form *lotan nago* which makes use of the inessive ending -*tan* and, thus, is one that we could gloss as "I am in the state/engaged in the activity of sleep".

This morphosyntactical variant (4) appears to refer more to being in the state of having been taken by sleep, rather than to the sensations produced from an ongoing process in which sleep is taking you (away); sleep is overwhelming you.

Oyharçabal (1997) has made the following observations about this example, namely, that in some dialects the transitive form is used most of the time: *loak hartu nau* (the stative meaning is implicit); in other dialects the passive resultative form is the one that is used most frequently: *loak hartuta nago*. In still other dialects the passive construction *loak hartuta* was reanalysed and ended up being lexicalised as a plain verb (*lokartu*). For example in Low Navarrese we can say *laster lokartuko niz* ('soon I shall fall asleep'), with a future participle and without having the sensation that the *-k* within the verb could be an ergative. This verb also exists in some Southern dialects as *loakartu*, along with *lo hartu*. The first elements of the verbal compound *loakartu* can be unpacked, quite simply, as *lo-a-k* where *-a-* can be understood as a definite article, although based (historically) on a distal demonstrative form still alive in the language, and the following *-k* stands for the ergative suffix.

Commentary:

While *gogo* seems not to be associated with any physical location, the same is not true of *lo*. Indeed, the entity or agent in question is closely linked with the temple and/or a zone in the middle of the forehead, as is demonstrated by *loki*, from *lo-ki as* well as *lotoki*, 'temple', composed of *lo-toki*, literally, '*lo*-site/place', perhaps understood originally as the place where *lo* resided. With respect to this conceptualisation of 'sleep', the writings of Merleau-Ponty provide us with an interesting analogy. As a forerunner of the concept 'relational epistemology', Merleau-Ponty spoke of the living, attentive body which he called 'body subject', conceived not as a closed, bounded object, but rather as a living entity open and indeterminate, with boundaries more like membranes than barriers (Abram 1996a: 46; Abram 1996b).

As Abram has observed, "Merleau-Ponty's notion of the flesh of the world, along with his discoveries concerning the reciprocity of perception, bring his work into startling consonance with the worldviews of many indigenous, oral cultures" (Abram 1996: 69) and, quite obviously, with the non-Western relational epistemology described by cognitive anthropologists such as

Ingold (2000), Howell (1996) and Bird-David (1999). Moreover, when speaking about this stance, the analogy Merleau-Ponty used was that of sleep. As Abram (1996: 54-55) explains:

> In this ceaseless dance between the carnal subject and its world, at one moment the body leads, at another the things. In one luminous passage, which suggests the profound intimacy of the body's preconceptual relation to the sensible things or powers that surround it, Merleau-Ponty writes of perception in terms of an almost magical invocation enacted by the body; and the body's subsequent 'possession' by the perceived.

Specifically, Merleau-Ponty (1962: 214) states:

> The relations of sentient to sensible are comparable with those of the sleeper to his slumber: sleep suddenly comes when a certain voluntary attitude suddenly receives from outside the confirmation of which it was waiting. I am breathing deeply and slowly to summon sleep, and suddenly it is as if my mouth were connected to some great lung outside myself which alternately calls forth and forces back my breath. A certain rhythm of respiration, which a moment ago I voluntarily maintained, now becomes my very being, and sleep, until now aimed at […], suddenly becomes my situation.

In the Basque case there is reason to believe that the semantic field of *lo* is intimately connected to notions of 'tying, binding, grasping, seizing' as in *lotu,* 'to tie, bind, grasp, seize', a verb composed of *lo-tu* where *-tu* is a verbal marker, literally, 'to *lo*'. The expression *logune* from *lo-gune*, literally, '*lo*-space, opening (in time or space)', refers to the 'temple' but metonymically also to an 'obligation, commitment' (cf. Azkue 1969 [1905–6], I, 550-556). These meanings suggest that the indigenous Basque ontology produced an intentional world in which 'sleep' was understood as an active agent, specifically, as an entity that seized or otherwise immobilised the 'sleeper'. We might note in passing that in English we also speak of 'being tied up' to refer to a (prior) obligation or commitment.

3.3. The concept '*gose*'

In reference to these intralingual variants we see that the same structure is used to describe a larger set of bodily sensations: the bodily sensation is portrayed as the agent while the consciousness of the individual plays the role of the patient, the entity affected. For example, in Basque the English expression "I am hungry" or the Spanish "*Tengo hambre*" ("I have hunger") is rendered as:

(5)   Ni goseak naiz/nago

I-Abs hunger-AbsErg [resultative state] am.

The above expression has perplexed more than one student of Basque since *goseak* could be interpreted, incorrectly, as a plural, i.e., as 'the hungers', and, as a result, the overall meaning would end up being glossed as: "I am the hungers". The explanation lies in the fact that *ni goseak naiz/nago* derives from *ni goseak jota naiz/nago,* literally, 'I am hunger-struck', in which the term *jota* comes from the verb *jo* 'to strike, hit, play (as an instrument)' although *jota* is often omitted. The addition of the suffix *-ta* converts the verbal expression *jo* into an adverbial participle phrase. While speakers of western dialects of Basque will argue that in this case *jo* 'to strike, hit' is the appropriate verb, speakers of eastern dialects often allege that the unstated verb is *hartu* 'to take' (Agirre 1997; Oyharçabal 1997). While there is disagreement over the verb in question, this same assignment of agentive roles is commonly utilised across dialects to speak of sensations such as hunger, heat, cold, etc. Having said this, we must acknowledge the fact that in this community of Basque speakers there are those, who for reasons not entirely understood, have reanalysed *ni goseak naiz* and turned it into *ni gose naiz*, as if the noun *gose* 'hunger' were functioning as an adjective modifying the subject.[22]

Commentary:

A concrete example of the confrontation between the two worldviews is found in the comments of the following Internet message, written by a college-educated professional in his late twenties whose knowledge of Basque although extensive, is still that of a second-language learner, a *euskaldun berria (*'a new Basque speaker'), who learned Basque at school (cf. Agirre 1997). Stated differently, as will be seen, his ontological grounding is situated inside the Western intentional world. As part of a discussion that one of the other list members, also a *euskaldun berria*, initiated relating to *lo*, this first individual offered the following contribution, written originally in English:

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[22] Further research into this topic could shed more light on the psycholinguistic factors that have contributed to production of variants such as *ni lo nago* used to mean 'I am sleepy, sleeping' which, as has been suggested, could be a calque of the Spanish *estoy dormido,* as well as to expressions such as *ni gose naiz,* literally, 'I am hunger', which does not appear to correspond to the Spanish *tengo hambre,* literally, 'I have hunger', although it does seem to be the way that the Spanish expression is being translated into Basque by this group of bilingual speakers.

> I have heard *loak artzen zaitu* [sic] meaning that *you become slept against your will* [emphasis added], but it is seldom used. The most common is *lokartu naiz*, 'I have become slept' and *lokartzen naiz*, 'I am about to sleep' (this use of *-tzen* for future is not standard) [in the original]. I am not sure why this verb became intransitive, but many sensitive verbs have this usage [with an intransitive auxilary in *naiz*, e.g., as *lokartu naiz*], *egarri naiz, gose naiz* […].

The comments of this *euskaldun berria* demonstrate that he prefers the lexicalized verb *lokartu* to *loak hartu*, since, for him, the latter implies an improper loss of agentive control, namely, becoming 'slept against your will'. Nevertheless, he carefully translates *lokartu naiz* as if it were also transitive, i.e., as 'you become slept', a rather odd sounding phrase in English to say the least, that is, when viewed exclusively through the interpretative frame of the Western model. Although the speaker translates *lokartu naiz* into English as meaning 'I have become slept', he doesn't appear to fully recognise the embedded nature of *loak hartu* in the utterance.[23]

At the same time, the speaker in question might be viewed as typical in attempting, through recourse to analogy, to overcome his confusion about *lokartu naiz*, that is, by drawing on other forms which have undergone a similar cognitive shift, e.g., *goseak naiz > gose naiz* and *egarriak naiz > egarri naiz*. In this fashion the propagation of the shift can be accelerated, in part, by speakers justifying a change in one expression drawing on a similar structural change in another, however, without conscious recognition of the fact that the changes themselves respond to a more complex set of cognitive factors and, ultimately to a shift in the concept of selfhood, that is, in the adoption on the part of the speaker, no matter how momentarily or unconsciously, of the Western non-relational epistemology and an acceptance of the Common Ground associated with it. Similarly, over time the cumulative effect of these individual choices, these individual utterances, impact the unitary language ─ are absorbed into the overall system ─ and, as a result, that (now altered) unitary language begins reflecting back a subtly different sense of personhood to future

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[23] Nonetheless, the speaker in question senses that there is something wrong with his associating an implication of a future action in the case of *ni lokartzen naiz*, given that *-tzen* forms the present progressive tense of a verb and, as such, in Basque it is not used to refer to a future action. Clearly, while *lokartu* has been reanalysed, even in its lexicalised form, the verb retains the shadow of its old self: the role of *lo* as an active principle. In short, the expression *ni lokartu naiz* has the old transitive subject and verb at work inside it. The only element lacking in the recuperation of the indigenous Basque version is: 1) the replacement of the intransitive auxiliary *ni naiz* 'I am' with *ni nau* (i.e., *ni lokartu nau*) and hence *ni*, that is, 'I', becomes the direct object of the verb *nau*; 2) the addition of the ending *-ta* that would convert the expression into an adverbial participle phrase: *ni lokartuta naiz* 'I am sleep-taken'; or 3) the addition of the definite article *–a*: *ni lokartua naiz* 'I am (the) sleep-taken (one)'.

speakers of the language, naturalising the change and, therefore, serving to justify further conceptual shifts.

4. Conclusion

Hopefully, this paper has served to clarify the role that metaphor studies, when supplemented by insights from cognitive linguistics, could have in increasing awareness of the linguistically embedded nature of this Western non-relational epistemology: the manner in which these habits of thought, this 'universe of the undiscussed', have become deeply entrenched in language. At the same time, there has been recognition of the need to become consciously aware of the fact that non-Western relational epistemologies tend not to share the same asymmetrical dualism which characterises the Western model. The epistemology, ontology and personhood embedded in the Western model are not universal. Hence, in the case of these other communities, the dichotomous thinking that in the 20th century required body and mind to be rejoined, was never present: the two were never separated – conceptually – in the first place. For example, a review of the literature on 'embodiment' will show that the role played by the other polar dyads of this Western set of interlocking schemata is rarely mentioned, e.g., the dyad of culture/nature (cf. Csordas 1990, 1994, 1996). Therefore, the inherent relationship holding between the culture/nature : mind/body analogies, as well as their historically bound character, tend not to be brought into clear focus (cf. Brightman 2002). Rather, the term 'embodiment' is often celebrated as a means of radically reshaping and finally overcoming Western Cartesian dualism (Gordon 1988; Strathern 1996: 177-204). While this position, at times rather triumphalist, assumes the battle has been won with the unification of mind and body, from the point of view of these non-Western positionalities, this is a Pyrrhic victory at best.

At the same time, I would argue that the relationship – posited by the same Western ontology – between this newly unified entity, composed of the mind/body dyad, and its so-called 'environment' (nature) with which it is said to 'interact', has not been sufficiently problematised by those of us working in cognitive linguistics.[24] At this stage, such neglect is somewhat

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[24] In this sense, those working in fields such as cognitive anthropology, cognitive psychology, biosemiotics and AI appear to be somewhat more advanced in terms of explicitly theorizing these issues, e.g., giving more emphasis to notions of sociocultural situatedness. Cf. Ziemke/Sharkey (2001); Zlatev (2003).

surprising given that the Western ontological model is based on proportional metaphors, an interlocking and hence mutually reinforcing set of asymmetric polarities in which the mind/body dyad goes hand in hand with that of culture/nature. So if any significant reordering is to be achieved, all the members of the set need to be problematised together. Thus, another of the goals of this study has been to render these interlocking aspects of the Common Ground of Western thought with its culture/nature dichotomy more visible, even exotic, that is, when the polar dyads are viewed from the *outside*, from the perspective of these non-Western relational epistemologies. In short, we can see that the heuristics of the two metaphoric systems are incommensurate and, consequently, their translation (*metaphora - metaphorein*) requires the elaboration of a self-conscious interpretive grid, not a totalising or hegemonic one (Latour 1993). That is, what is needed is an interpretive frame without universalist pretensions (Descola/Pálsson 1996; Ellen 1996; Howell 1996; Kimmel 2002: 108-111, 162-165).

The need for sensitivity to be exercised in cross-linguistic and, hence, in cross-cultural investigations, specifically, the need to recognize this culturally and historically bound aspect of metaphor, was clearly laid out by Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 22): "The most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture". And, further, as is currently the case with the Western hierarchical ontology,

> [these] values listed above hold in our culture generally – all things being equal. But because things are usually not equal, there are often conflicts among these values and hence conflicts among the metaphors associated with them. To explain such conflicts among values (and their metaphors), we must find the different priorities given to these values and metaphors by the subculture that uses them (Lakoff/Johnson 1980: 23).

In conclusion, the increasing concern with establishing an alternative, relational ontology along with its corresponding (and inevitable) value-laden metaphorics is representative of a shift in identities – in ontological and epistemological allegiances – on the part of certain sectors operating inside as well as outside the parameters of the Western cultural model. Yet, with respect to the Basque exemplars, at this juncture we cannot predict which stance will ultimately prevail.

Acknowledgements

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