

## Subjects, ellipsis, and the EPP in a VSO language

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October 26th 2009

### VSO Order

- (1) a. Sciob an cat an t-eireaball den luch.  
cut the cat the tail off-the mouse  
'The cat cut the tail off the mouse.'  
b. Bhéarfaidh mé an t-airgead do Chaoimhín i nDoire inniu  
give [FUT] I the money to Kevin in Derry today  
'I'll give Kevin the money in Derry today.'

(2) Verb < Subject < Object < Oblique Arguments < Adverbials

Irish does not tolerate svo order as an alternative:

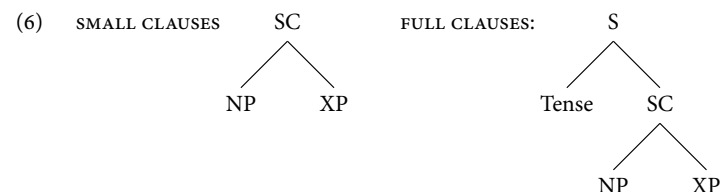
- (3) a. \*Na gasraí chonaic capall mór bán ansin inné.  
b. \*Mé bhéarfaidh an t-airgead do Chaoimhín i nDoire inniu.  
c. \*An cat sciob an t-eireaball den luch.

### A Little History

Chung and McCloskey (1987): SMALL CLAUSES:

- (4) a. Ó tharla eisean chomh druidte sin,  
since happen [PAST] him so closed DEMON  
'since he happened to be so closed' EB171  
b. má tharla é fuar amuigh an oíche seo  
if happen [PAST] it [ACC] cold out this-night  
'if it happened to be cold out tonight' TGC139  
c. ó tharla é san uisce agus san aer  
since happen [PAST] it [ACC] in-the water and in-the air  
'since it happened that it was in the water and in the air' TD303  
d. ba mhinic iad ag tógáil tithe sna bailte móra  
was often them build [PROG] houses in-the towns big  
'they were often building houses in the big cities' SGC21

- (5) a. Bhí an t-ardeaspag ag teacht. É gléasta go niamhrach, agus  
be [PAST] the archbishop come [PROG] him dressed resplendently and  
é á thiomáint i Mercedes  
him being-driven in  
'The archbishop was coming. He was dressed resplendently and he was  
being driven in a Mercedes (*lit* him dressed resplendently and him being  
driven in a Mercedes). SRO19  
b. Mhair sé ina aonar, é singil, é neamhspleách  
live [PAST] he alone him single him independent  
'He lived alone—single and independent (*lit* him single; him indepen-  
dent)' GLL97



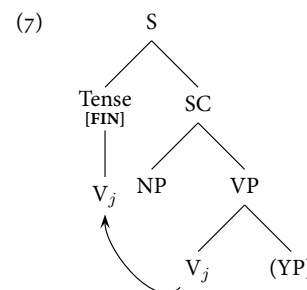
OUTCOME 1: When XP is not VP, a non-verbal predicational ('copula') clause with the 'copula' a realization of the Tense element.

OUTCOME 2: When XP is VP and Tense is finite, v and Tense amalgamate in the position of Tense (giving vso order).

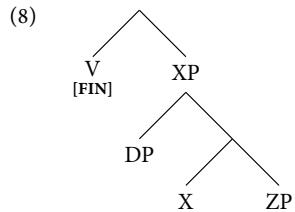
OUTCOME 3: When XP is VP and Tense is nonfinite, no such amalgamation takes place, and the outcome is a subject-initial order (correct).

### Finite Clauses

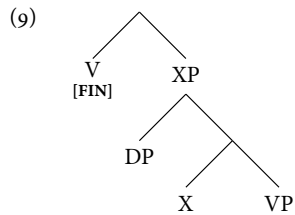
For finite clauses then, we have (7), yielding vso order:



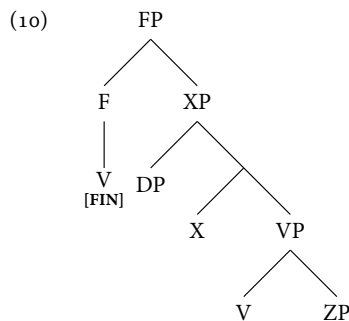
**MODERNIZATION STEP ONE:** Make the phrase structure well-behaved:



**MODERNIZATION STEP TWO:** If at the heart of every clause there is a predicational nexus, we will actually want (9), where *x* is a member of whatever closed class category it is that mediates the relation between the predicate and its subject:

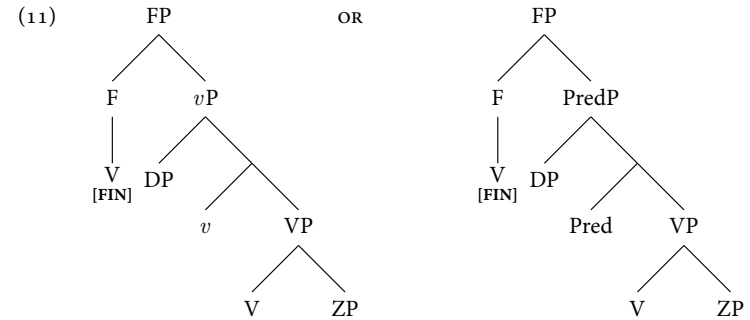


**MODERNIZATION STEP THREE:** And if *vp*'s are headed by *v*'s, then the verb (or a sub-part of the verb) does not originate in initial position, and as a consequence, (9) will be more like (10):



The amalgam of *v*, *x*, and *F* being the strange object we call too casually an 'inflected verb'.

**MODERNIZATION STEP FOUR:**



We are now close to modern conceptions—the verb itself introducing internal arguments, a closed class category (of which *vp* is the complement) introducing the external argument, that in turn contained within a series of closed-class categories projected from items used to express negation, tense, aspect, modality etc.

### Claims and Questions

**C1:** The structure of a *vso* clause in Irish is as indicated in (12), with a major constituency break following the inflected verb:

(12) [ Verb Subject Object Oblique ]

**C2:** The inflected verb is distributed across at least three distinct syntactic positions in a *vso* clause in Irish.

**Q1:** In what way does Irish differ from other languages such that *vso* order emerges as the order of its finite clauses? Where is the inflected verb in hierarchical structure? What is the syntax of subjecthood in Irish?

**Q2:** In what sense, or to what extent, does this line of analysis represent a genuine deepening of understanding? How can we answer the sceptical voice?

**THE SCEPTICAL VOICE:** All you are doing is playing out the moves of a predictable and self-validating game. You believe that grammatical relations are structurally determined so you say what you have to say to make that work out. You believe that prominence relations are structurally defined, so you say what you need to say to make that work out as well. At no point have you managed to escape from the loop of your own assumptions.

## Claims

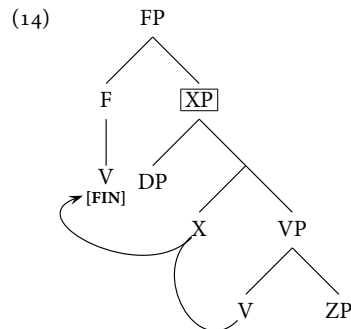
**CLAIM 1:** unintuitive, but correct (see Appendix 2):

1. Right Node Raising
2. Conjunction and Disjunction
3. Certain focus constructions (the semi-negative and pseudo-clefting)
4. Responsive Ellipsis

## Responsive Ellipsis

- (13) a. Dúirt siad go dtiocfadh siad, ach ní tháinig ariamh.  
 say [PAST] they c come [COND] they but NEG come [PAST] ever  
 'They said that they would come but they never did.'
- b. Beidh muid connáilte, nach mbeidh?  
 be [FUT] we frozen NEG INTERR c be [FUT]  
 'We'll be frozen, won't we?'

McCloskey (1991), Goldberg (2003): Elision of the complement of the head to which the verbal complex raises (the boxed constituent of (14)), with the verb raising out of the ellipsis site and therefore surviving:



### PROPERTIES OF RESPONSIVE ELLIPSIS

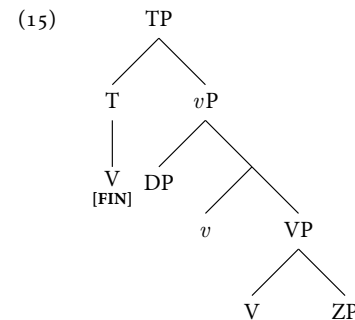
1. In its distribution, range of functions, and array of formal properties, it mirrors point for point those of VP ellipsis in English: see below and McCloskey (1991).
2. There is a verbal identity requirement (the root of the elided verb must be the same as the root of the verb of the antecedent).
3. CLAIM TWO also supported, as a consequence

## Taking Stock

Lots of support for (11) and for the empirical generalization it derives, but: How do we flesh out (11) and thereby answer the two questions above?

## Initial Try

An obvious proposal is (15):



- \* There is no raising of the subject
- \* The *v/v* amalgam fuses with Tense to create an inflected verb
- \* On this view: Responsive Ellipsis just **is** VP ellipsis. Which is pleasing, because:

The properties of responsive ellipsis mirror point for point those of VP ellipsis in English:

1. used in the same range of contexts (including in tag questions)
2. requires a linguistic antecedent
3. supports strict and sloppy readings of elided pronouns
4. can 'apply backwards'
5. supports antecedent-contained ellipsis

See McCloskey (1991) for detailed discussion and exemplification.

But why may the subject remain in situ?

1. Case and agreement licensing in place (under *c*-command, governed by locality)
2. EPP is inactive and therefore there is no raising to SPEC,TP

## Signs of Inactivity of the EPP

### The Salient Unaccusatives

- (16) a. Laghdaigh ar mo neart.  
lessened on my strength  
'My strength waned.'
- b. Neartaigh ar an ghaoth.  
strengthened on the wind  
'The wind strengthened.'
- c. Bhisigh ar an aimsir.  
improved on the weather  
'The weather improved.'
- (17) a. Tá ag laghdú ar mo neart.  
is decrease [PROG] ar my strength  
'My strength is decreasing.'
- b. Tá ag neartú ar an ghaoth.  
is strengthen [PROG] on the wind  
'The wind is strengthening.'
- (18) a. Laghdaíonn i gcónaí ar mo neart.  
lessens always on my strength  
'My strength always lessens.'
- b. Níor éirigh go fóill le haon pholaiteoir ón deisceart  
NEG-[PAST] rose yet with any politician from-the south  
'No politician from the south has yet succeeded.' CPR 101
- c. mhéadaigh arís ar líon Chraobhach an Chonartha  
increased again on number branches the league  
'The number of branches of the (Gaelic) League increased again.' DAD 16

### Impersonal collocations

- (19) a. Beidh daor ort.  
be [FUT] expensive on-you  
'You'll be sorry.'
- b. Bhí thiar air  
was back on-him  
'He was behind (with his work).' SD 63
- c. ó tháinig ann don Chonradh  
from came in-it to-the League  
'When the League came into existence.'

## Impersonal Passives

### The PERFECTIVE PASSIVE:

- (20) a. Tá íoctha ag an gcomhlacht as an mbille  
is paid by the company out-of the bill  
'The company had paid the bill.' G 211
- b. Bhí glaoite ag a chompánach ar na Gardaí  
was called by him companion on the police  
'His companion had called for the police.' SD 199
- c. go bhfuil sgartha aici leis na fearaibh  
c is separated by-her with the men  
'that she had separated from the men' DA 129
- d. ní raibh féachta ar a' dtaobh eile aige  
NEG was looked on the side other by-him  
'He hadn't looked on the other side.' LSUE 83
- (21) a. nuair a bhí tráite síos uaidh  
when c was ebbed down from-it  
'when the tide had ebbed down from it' LAN 36
- b. Ach chion tú anois . . . conus a tá iompuighthe amach aige  
but see [PRES] you now how c is turned out by-him  
'but now you see how he has turned out' L 120
- c. Ach ní raibh tosuighthe i gceart fós ag an ngeimhreadh  
but NEG was begun right yet by the winter  
'but the winter hadn't yet properly begun' U 265
- d. nuair a bheadh préamhaithe i gceart acu sin  
when c be [COND] rooted properly by-them DEMON  
'when those (trees) would have taken root properly' IC 61
- e. Tá mairte agam agus sin é m' iomard.  
is survived by-me and that it my misfortune  
'I have survived and that is my misfortune.' AGMTS 215

### Optionality of Raising (McCloskey (1986))

- (22) a. thaibhsigh súile na deilbhe di a bheith iompaithe dearg  
appeared eyes the statue to-her be [-FIN] turned red  
'The eyes of the statue appeared to her to have turned red.' LG 160
- b. Thaibhsigh dó na soilse a bheith níos boige  
appeared to-him the lights be [-FIN] more softer  
'The lights appeared to him to be softer.' LG 179

## However ... Not so Easy

Extensive evidence that the subject in fact raises out of *vp*.

### VP PERIPHERAL ADVERBS

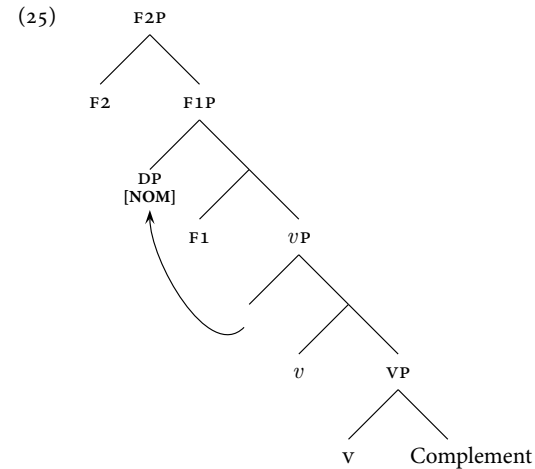
- (23) a. Níor fhág puinn bád riamh an t-oileán seo  
 NEG-PAST left no boat ever the island DEMON  
 ‘No boat ever left this island’ CFC 129
- b. Ní chríochnóhadh sé choíche é  
 NEG finish [COND] he ever it  
 ‘He would never finish it.’ COC 13
- c. níor ghaibh éinne riamh ó shuin a’ bóthar  
 NEG-PAST went anyone ever since the road  
 ‘Nobody ever travelled that road ever again.’ LSUC 62

### A LOWER SUBJECT POSITION IN FAMILIAR CONTEXTS, McCloskey (2009)

- (24) a. ní raibh riamh díospóireacht fá na nithe seo  
 COP[NEG] was ever debate about the things DEMON  
 ‘there was never any debate about these things’ PNG 187
- b. Bhí chomh maith mórchuid daoine ann ná faca riamh  
 be [PAST] as well many people there NEG C saw [S<sub>1</sub>] ever  
 cheana.  
 before  
 ‘There were also many people there that I had never seen before.’ FI  
 236
- c. Bíonn i gcónaí fearthain ann Lá ’le Pádraig.  
 be [PRES-HABIT] always rain in-it St. Patrick’s Day.  
 ‘There is always rain on St. Patrick’s Day.’

Therefore:

- (i) there are at least two postverbal subject-positions, one low (reserved for indefinites and typical of existential constructions) and one high.
- (ii) Semantic and discourse-properties of the higher position are just those of the English (pre-verbal) subject position (McCloskey (2001)).
- (iii) But the finite verb does not raise to c (McCloskey (1996); Carnie (1995)).
- (iv) Therefore the subject must raise (in the general case) to a position in the inflectional layer (above *vp*), but below c.
- (v) And the verb must raise to its left, but not as far as c.
- (vi) Therefore what is needed is something at least as complex as (25):



☞ There are (at least) two distinct projections between *v* and C—F1 and F2.

☞ The ‘inflected verb’ is an amalgam of the root, the verbalizer *v*, and the information expressed in F1 and in F2 respectively.

☞ The most prominent case-less nominal in *vp* must raise<sup>1</sup> to the specifier of F1.

☞ Hence vso order.

☞ Hence the evidence for raising of the subject.

And we face at least the following challenges:

CHALLENGE 1: Can we give an account of what F1 and F2 of (25) are, that has some grounding (internal to the language and within some reasonable typological landscape)?

CHALLENGE 2: What now is the status of the EPP? In particular: can we arrive at an understanding of the EPP, which will let us simultaneously understand the observations about obligatory raising to the nominative position, and the observations which suggest that EPP is inactive in the language? These bodies of observation seem, on the face of it, to lead to contradictory conclusions (that the EPP is and is not active).

CHALLENGE 3: Can we still understand Responsive Ellipsis as being the formal and functional analog of *vp* ellipsis in English?

<sup>1</sup>Except in existential structures!

## The Syntax of Negation in Nonfinite Clauses

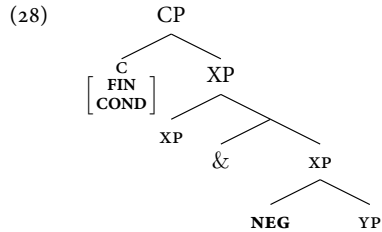
*gan* (homophonous with the preposition meaning ‘without’):

- (26) B’fhearr liom *gan* iad mé a fheiceáil ag caoineadh.  
 I-would-prefer C NEG [-FIN] them me see [-FIN] cry [PROG]  
 ‘I’d prefer that they not see me crying.’

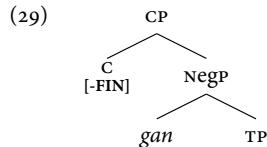
Usually taken to be a complementizer, but this is unlikely, given (27):

- (27) Má chailleann tú agus *gan* eisean do mharbhadh  
 if lose [PRES] you and C NEG [-FIN] him you kill [-FIN]  
 ‘if you lose and he doesn’t kill you’ ACO 473

(27) suggests that the marker of negation in nonfinite clauses is at the left edge of a constituent which is not CP but which is rather the complement of c:



Word-like left edges in this heavily head-initial and head-marking language are normally heads, suggesting (29) for nonfinite clauses:



There is, in addition, evidence for an A-position to the left of negation, in which dative subjects are licensed (see McCloskey (2001) for the details):

- (30) Conas d’ aonaránach *gan* a bheith ag braistint aonarach?  
 how to solitary-person C NEG [-FIN] be [-FIN] feel [PROG] solitary  
 ‘How could a solitary person not feel solitary?’ AGMTS 102

## The Syntax of Negation in Finite Clauses

Always on c. Each complementizer has a ‘negative’ form which may never co-occur with any other expression of negation: *ní* and *cha* in root clauses, *nach* in embedded clauses.

- (31) a. Creidim go gcuirfidh sí isteach ar an phost.  
 I-believe c put [FUT] she in on the job  
 ‘I believe that she’ll apply for the job.’  
 b. Creidim nach gcuirfidh sí isteach ar an phost.  
 I-believe NEG c put [FUT] she in on the job  
 ‘I believe that she won’t apply for the job.’
- (32) a. Creidim gu-r chuir sí isteach ar an phost.  
 I-believe C-[PAST] put she in on the job  
 ‘I believe that she applied for the job.’  
 b. Creidim ná-r chuir sí isteach ar an phost.  
 I-believe C NEG-PAST-[PAST] put she in on the job  
 ‘I believe that she didn’t apply for the job.’
- (33) a. An gcuirfidh sí isteach ar an phost?  
 INTERR put [FUT] she in on the job  
 ‘Will she apply for the job?’  
 b. Nach gcuirfidh sí isteach ar an phost?  
 NEG INTERR c put [FUT] she in on the job  
 ‘Won’t she apply for the job?’
- (34) a. an post a-r chuir tú isteach air  
 the job C-[PAST] put you in on-it  
 ‘the job that you applied for’  
 b. an post ná-r chuir tú isteach air  
 the job NEG-[PAST] put you in on-it  
 ‘the job that you didn’t apply for’

The conditional complementizer: *má* positive; *mur(a)* or *mun(a)* in the negative.

- (35) a. Má chuireann sí isteach ar an phost ...  
 if put [PRES] she in on the job  
 ‘if she applies for the job, ...’  
 b. Muna gcuireann sí isteach ar an phost ...  
 if-not put [PRES] she in on the job  
 ‘if she doesn’t apply for the job, ...’

## Determining the form of Negative Complementizers

c clearly bears a feature [NEG] at least for morphophonological purposes.

How does c acquire the feature [NEG]?

- (i) As a matter of inherent lexical specification?
- (ii) As a consequence of raising of a lower independent head Neg to c, as in Guilfoyle (1990), Duffield (1995)?
- (iii) What is the relation between the expression of negation in finite and nonfinite clauses?
- (iv) Is negation actually (in semantic terms) expressed on c?

Consider (36):

- (36) Mur dtéighinn agus iad cailleadh, mhuirbhfeadh siad mé.  
 if-not go [COND] [S<sub>1</sub>] and them lose [-FIN] kill [COND] they me  
 'If I were not to go and they were to lose, they would kill me.' SHS 132

CRUCIAL: Formally, negation is expressed on the conditional complementizer in (36); but semantically its scope is limited to the left conjunct. The logical form of (36) is (37):

- (37)  $[[\neg p] \& [q]] \rightarrow [r]$

suggesting the LF syntax in (38):

- (38)
- 

with coordination at the level of the complement of c (finite clause with nonfinite clause) and negation **ONLY** in the left conjunct.

The correct analysis, therefore, seems to be as in (39):

- (39)
- 

That is:

- (i) c may bear an uninterpretable NEG feature
- (ii) which must be eliminated via agreement
- (iii) with the semantically potent expression of negation in the head-position of its complement

(38), then, has the structure in (40):

- (40)
- 

The relation between c and  $\Sigma$  in (40) is an instance of left-conjunct agreement, not of head movement (that would involve a violation of the Coordinate Structure Constraint).

The probe is realized phonologically, the goal is not (an instance of head-marking?).

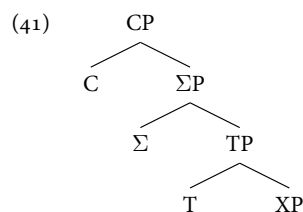
## Summing Up

The semantically potent negation is in a position below *c* but above *TP*. Negation, however, in finite clauses is morphologically realized in *c*.

*c* may bear an uninterpretable Neg feature which in turn enters into an Agreement relation with the semantically potent Neg head immediately below it (indicated in (39) by way of the arrowless curve).

In nonfinite clauses, Neg (morphologically *gan*) is realized in the lower (Neg) position of (39) (note the parallel with verb placement).

On the assumption that there is a more general  $\Sigma$ -head (of which Neg is one realization), we generalize (39) to (41) (Laka (1990), Zanuttini (1997), Cheng et al. (1996), Ladusaw (1992), Martins (1994), Potts (2002)):



## And Now the Obvious Move

Verb movement in Irish finite clauses is raising to the  $\Sigma$  head. The parallel with *VP* ellipsis in English is restored:

(42) You CAN smoke in these rooms, but we suggest that you not.

(Martins (1994); Lobeck (1995); Potsdam (1997))

## Probing Further

(43) Cuir síos é. Ní rachaidh sé síos.  
 put down it NEG go [FUT] it down  
 'Put it down.' 'It won't GO down.'

Structures like (43) are curious in two ways:

1. the subject unexpectedly survives ellipsis (see (45) below)
2. a weak pronoun is stressed

3. it is not the pronoun which is the semantic focus (bare pronouns otherwise can never bear focal stress)
4. in semantic terms, it is the verb which is focussed

PROPOSAL: Weak subject pronouns incorporate, forming a prosodic word, with the preceding finite verb.

In fact this is uncontroversial: lots of phonological evidence for a close phonological bond between the finite verb and a following pronominal subject.

Independently we know that stress goes to the right edge of a phonological phrase:

- (44) a. bád  
 boat  
 'a boat'  
 b. bád mór  
 boat big  
 'a large boat'

Consider now (45):

- (45) a. Mar sin ní raibh tú ag iarraidh jobannaí a chur i mbaol?  
 then NEG be [PAST] you try [PROG] jobs put [-FIN] in jeopardy  
 'So you weren't trying to put jobs at risk?'  
 b. O, ní raibh MÉ, ní raibh MÉ.  
 oh NEG was I NEG was I  
 'Oh, I was NOT; I was NOT. (Radio interview)

The verbal complex in (45) must contain an expression of negative polarity, which is available for contrastive focus. It is presumably in virtue of this focus that elision of its complement takes place.

But equally:

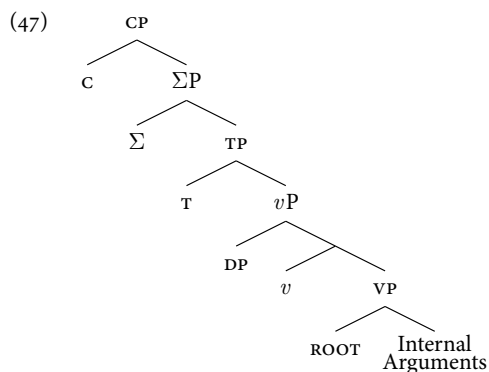
- (46) O, bhí MÉ, bhí MÉ.  
 oh was I was I  
 'Oh, I WAS; I WAS.'

The verbal complex in (46) must, by parity of reasoning, contain an expression of (positive) polarity, which is available for contrastive focus. It is in virtue of this focussing that elision of the complement of  $\Sigma$  take place.

It follows that there must be an expression of polarity bundled up with the inflected verb. We thus have support for the conclusions that the verb raises to a  $\Sigma$  head and that responsive ellipsis (note the term) is in fact elision of the complement of  $\Sigma$ .

## Pulling the Threads Together

The structure of clauses in Irish:



### FINITE CLAUSES:

1. the verbal ROOT, *v*, the marker of Tense, and the marker of Polarity are amalgamated in the position of  $\Sigma$  (the expression of polarity in the clause) yielding VSO order
2. the most prominent nominal in the domain of T (usually) raises to the specifier of T—driven at least in part by the fact that T has the EPP property
3. Responsive ellipsis is elision of the complement of  $\Sigma$  (in Irish and in English); in this way we begin to understand why Responsive Ellipsis in Irish and VP Ellipsis in English are the same thing (formally and in the range of functions they serve)

### NONFINITE CLAUSES:

1. verbs do not raise
2. obligatory Object Shift (understood as raising of the highest nominal in VP to an extra specifier of *v*)
3. the most prominent nominal in the domain of T raises to the specifier of T—driven at least in part by the fact that T bears the EPP property
4. hence SOVX order
5. dative subjects are, in addition, licensed by the polarity head  $\Sigma$  in nonfinite clauses and raise to its specifier position (optionally in at least some varieties)

## Status of the EPP

A CLAIM: Irish is a language in which the EPP is ‘inactive’; this is the property that makes its clauses look and feel different

QUESTION 1: What now is the status of the claim and of the observations that lead to it?

QUESTION 2: What does the theoretical landscape in which we now find ourselves look like?

## History of Thinking about the EPP

### A PHRASE STRUCTURAL STIPULATION:

$$S \longrightarrow NP VP$$

CHOMSKY 1982:

The specifier of Infl must be filled.

### EARLY MINIMALISM:

strong and weak features

### MATURE MINIMALISM

A quasi-selectional feature:

The EPP property of a (functional?) head H is satisfied iff H has a specifier not licensed by its selectional requirements.

Therefore:

1. material satisfying the EPP cannot be semantically integrated in the specifier in which it resides, therefore:
2. it must be either:
  - (a) empty of semantic content (an expletive), or
  - (b) raised from a position where it has already been semantically integrated

AN IMPORTANT GENERALIZATION: the EPP is a property of many (functional) heads. It exists as a general mechanism to facilitate displacement to phase edges (ultimately for semantic and information structure purposes)

AN IMPORTANT CONSEQUENCE OF THE GENERALIZATION: Our expectation will be that in the general case EPP will be an optional property of certain heads (especially the phase-defining heads).

## Back to Irish

EPP is an optional property of T in Irish: when it can be satisfied, it has to be satisfied.

In this, Irish is rational, normal, and conforms to theoretical expectation. (English, on the other hand, remains deeply weird.)

## An Important Preliminary

Is raising of the subject in Irish a function of pure EPP-driven movement, or does the EPP property work in tandem with another feature or features?

The fact that it only targets nominals suggests that it is linked with the Case system. Therefore:

1. Finite T licenses nominative case on the most prominent nominal in its local command domain.
2. Non-Finite T licenses accusative on the most prominent nominal in its local command domain.
3. The case-licensing property of T is paired with the EPP property.
4. Hence the facts.

## Latin

- (48) a. *Homerus caecus fuisse dicitur.*  
 Homer [NOM] blind [NOM] to-have-bee is said  
 ‘Homer is said to have been blind.’
- b. *Homerum caecum fuisse dicitur.*  
 Homer [ACC] blind [ACC] to-have-been is-said  
 ‘Homer is said to have been blind.’

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## Appendix 1: Evidence for the Constituency Claim

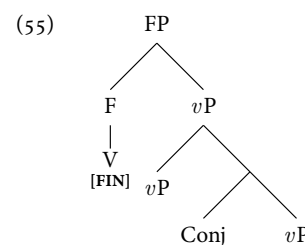
### Right Node Raising

- (49) ... (C) (Neg) V Conj V [ Subject Complements ... ]
- (50) Ba chóir go ndéanfadh, agus dhéanfadh, pairlimint náisiúnta  
 COP[PAST] proper C would-do and would-do parliament national  
 Éireannach dliithe a rith nár ...  
 Irish laws enact [-FIN] NEG C  
 ‘A national Irish parliament should, and would, enact laws that ... ODR2  
 297
- (51) Is é mo thuairim ná fuil, nó gur beag má tá, aon bochtán  
 COP[PRES] it my opinion NEG C is or C-[PAST] little if is any pauper  
 sa pharóiste ná fuil roinnt dá chuid aige  
 in-the parish NEG C is portion of-his possessions at-him  
 ‘It is my opinion that there is not, or that there is hardly, a single pauper in  
 the parish who does not have a portion of his wealth’ S 111
- (52) Is annamh a bhí, má bhí ariamh, bean amuigh ag an  
 COP[PRES] seldom c was if was ever woman out at the  
 rialtas ar na hócáidí sin  
 government on those occasions  
 ‘Only rarely, if ever, did the government put forward any women candidates  
 on these occasions’ CF 64
- (53) Níl agus ní raibh ariamh, ar seisean, aon tír eile sa  
 is-not and NEG was ever said-he any country other in-the  
 domhan inchurtha le Sasana  
 world comparable with England  
 ‘There is not, nor had there ever been, he said, any country in the world com-  
 parable to England.’ T 70

- (54) B'fachtas dom go mbíodh, agus go bhfuil fós, na Beanna Arda mar  
 seemed to-me that used-to-be and that are still the cliffs high like  
 phluid mhór thart orm.  
 blanket great around on-me  
 ‘It seemed to me that the Great Cliffs had been and were still like a great  
 blanket around me.’ NGTTS 87

### Coordination

THE EXPECTED PATTERN:



- \* with across the board raising (and therefore sharing) of the verbal complex to F  
 \* but with distinct (un-shared) subjects, and therefore an ultimate outcome of:

- (56) Verb [ Subj Obj Complements ] & [ Subj Obj Complements ]

ATTESTED PATTERNS ONE: conjunction

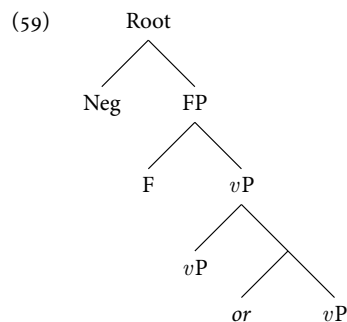
- (57) a. Thug Peats dhá leathchoróin dom agus Geraldeen leathchoróin dom.  
 gave two half-crown to-me and half-crown to-me  
 ‘Pats gave me two half-crowns and Geraldeen gave me a half-crown.’  
 ABFS 23
- b. nuair a thosuigh na crainnte dá leagan treasna an bhóthair agus na  
 when c began the trees be-felled across the road and the  
 droichid dá gcur i n-aer  
 bridges be sent in air  
 ‘when the trees began to be felled across the road and the bridges to be  
 blown into the air’ ONH 11
- c. Nuair a bhíodh roinnt capall ceannaithe acu agus díolta  
 when c was an-amount horses sold by-them and paid  
 astu  
 for-them

- ‘when some horses had been bought by them and paid for’ s 120
- d. Nuair a bhí na turais sin déanta agus dulta ann agus  
when c was the journeys DEMON completed and gone there and  
tagtha as arís  
come back  
‘when those journeys had been completed and (people) had gone there  
and had come back’ LDS 135

ATTESTED PATTERNS TWO: disjunction

- (58) a. ní thearn sé a dhath ar aon duine ariamh ná aon duine ariamh  
NEG did he anything on any person ever or any person ever  
a dhath air  
anything on-him  
‘He never did anything to anyone and nobody ever did anything to him.’  
SRNF 51
- b. nuair nach dtáinig siad ar ais ná scéala ar bith uathu  
when NEG C came they back or news any from-them  
‘When they did not come back and no news of them came back’ LAOCHAS  
134
- c. Níor thug an t-Údarás aon chabhair dúinn, nó an  
NEG-[PAST] gave the Authority any help to-us or the  
Chomhairle Chontae aon tacaíocht dúinn.  
County Council any support to-us  
‘The Authority didn’t give us any help and the County Council didn’t give  
us any support.’ RNG 23-2-05

The schematic structure for (58):



1. with disjunction in the scope of negation
2. and the examples therefore equivalent to a conjunction of negations (De Morgan's Law)
3. with no plausible source on an ellipsis analysis

## Focus Constructions

### The Semi-negative Construction

- (60) a. Cha raibh ach ceithre phingin agam.  
NEG was but four penny at-me  
‘I had only fourpence.’
- b. Níor chuala mé go fóill acht na ballaí ag magadh orm.  
NEG-[PAST] heard I yet but the walls mock [PROG] on-me  
‘All I heard yet was the walls mocking me.’ UMI 37

The particle *ach* (‘but’) attaches to some constituent within the scope of negation, and the ultimate effect is that of *only*.

- (61) a. Ní raibh ach na ceisteanna freagartha agam, nuair a ...  
NEG be [PAST] but the questions answered by-me when C  
‘No sooner had I answered the questions, when ...’ ACS 167
- b. Ní raibh ach mo chloigeann sa doras agam nuair a ...  
NEG be [PAST] but my head in-the door at-me when C  
‘I had only just put my head in the door when ...’ STL 245
- c. garda óg ná raibh ach an Teampall Mór fágtha aige  
policeman young NEG C was but Templemore left by-him  
‘a young policeman who had only just left Templemore’ AGMTS202

### Pseudoclefts

- (62) [ *What was* [ *but* [ Subject ... ] ] ]

the focus particle attaches to a constituent which consists of everything but the verb.

- (63) a. cad a bhí ach Coláiste úr Gaeilge i ndiaidh a fhoscladh i gCathair  
what c was but College new Irish after open [-FIN] in City  
Nua Eabhraigh  
New York  
‘What should it be but a new Irish College to have just opened in New  
York City.’ CDC 63

- b. Cad a bhí ach an bia roinnte aici agus an bainne tabhartha dos  
what c was but the food divided by-her and the milk given to  
na boicht aici  
the poor by-her  
'What should it be but that she had distributed the food and given the  
milk to the poor' GOG 279

## Appendix 2: The Data-Base

- \* a collection of 9600 or so examples
- \* coded for 250 syntactic features
- \* searchable by script (for morphosyntactic feature and dialect)
- \* representing all the major dialects, including many now extinct, the oldest from the end of the 19th century
- \* 264 published texts represented, not including items taken from radio broadcasts, newspapers, or periodicals.
- \* The average page-length of the published texts is 217.94, suggesting an overall 'corpus'-size of roughly 20 million words

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