

Title	Unaccusativity and the subject pronoun in Middle and Early Modern Irish
Creators	Hoyne, Mícheál
Date	2020
Citation	Hoyne, Mícheál (2020) Unaccusativity and the subject pronoun in Middle and Early Modern Irish. <i>Celtica</i> , 32. pp. 145-181. ISSN 0069-1399 (Accepted Version)
URL	https://dair.dias.ie/id/eprint/1104/

UNACCUSATIVITY AND THE SUBJECT PRONOUN IN MIDDLE AND EARLY MODERN IRISH*

ABSTRACT

This article examines Middle and Early Modern Irish sentences like *in mairenn hé?* ‘does he live?’ and *do-chádar d’éag uile iad* ‘they all died’ in which the subject pronoun has the form normally associated with the subject of a passive-impersonal verb or the direct object of a transitive verb. References to this construction in the Classical Modern Irish grammatical tracts are discussed first, Middle and Early Modern Irish examples are then presented, and their syntax and semantics are investigated. It is argued that the subject in these sentences is not the semantic agent and that this motivates the use of these pronominal forms. This construction is then placed in a wider typological context. Finally, attention is drawn to a possible precursor construction in which the subject pronoun takes the form of an infix.

INTRODUCTION

1 The following couplet is cited twice in the Classical Modern Irish grammatical tracts:

(1) *Do bhádar dá dhuine dhéag*
’s do-chádar d’éag °uile °íad (IGT III 123 = BST 241.11)

‘They were twelve in number and they all met their deaths.’

No copy of the full poem from which the Bardic grammarians extracted this half-quatrain is now extant, to my knowledge, but the scribe of the copy of IGT III–IV in TCD MS H 2.17 (1319/2/7) attributes it to Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh (d. 1387) (Hoyne 2019: 46). In the first line, the predicate of 3 pl. *do bhádar*, past tense of the substantive verb, is *dá dhuine dhéag*, an example of the so-called ‘nominative of accompaniment’ (T. F. O’Rahilly 1941: 245–6).¹ The focus of this paper is the construction *do-chádar... iad* in the second line. *Do-chádar... iad* is an analytic construction, in which an impersonal verbal form (formally identical with the 3 person but devoid of any personal force in and of itself) is combined with a personal pronoun. In (1) the impersonal verb *do-chádar* matches the pronoun in number; such concordance is noteworthy in the Early Modern Irish period, as we will see. The pronoun itself is disjunctive; subject pronouns normally follow the verb. In addition, the form of the pronoun is interesting: in place of the usual 3 pl. subject pronoun after an active verb (*siad*),

¹*This article arises out of a discussion of the marking of verbal-noun arguments during Prof. Barry Lewis’s weekly seminar on the Welsh bardic grammars, held in the Institute in Michaelmas Term 2019. I am grateful to Prof. Lewis for discussion and for supplying references to relevant Welsh scholarship (§37), and to Prof. Ruairí Ó hUiginn and the anonymous reader for helpful feedback. I am especially indebted to Prof. Damian McManus for his careful reading of a draft of this paper, for supplying examples (20), (21), (29), (32)–(34) and (43) and other additional material, and for suggesting important improvements. I revised this paper in April 2020, when libraries were closed, and I thank my colleagues Dr Christina Cleary and Dr Andrea Palandri for helping me access material I would otherwise have been unable to consult. All the errors, omissions and infelicities of this paper are my responsibility alone.

When referring to ‘verb’ below, I mean to exclude the copula *is*, *ba*, *budh* etc. and other verb-like particles (such as *ol/ar* ‘says’) from consideration. In this paper, I use the term ‘impersonal’ to refer to the 3 sg. (or pl.) verbal form in the analytic construction. For the passive or autonomous verb, the term ‘passive-impersonal’ is preferred. Where relevant, *uaim* (roughly ‘alliteration’) between two words is indicated by °, rhyme by a colon (*bean : fear*). Invented sentences which are certainly or possibly ungrammatical are marked *; in cases where an invented sentence is certainly grammatical, I have not marked it in this way. Where the reference follows both an Irish quotation and the English translation, the translation is that of the cited publication; where the reference follows the Irish quotation only, the translation is mine. In Old Irish, this construction called for the dative rather than the nominative (GOI §251.2).

we have here the form more commonly found as subject to a passive-impersonal verb or as direct object to an active transitive verb (*iad*).

BST

2 In *IGT* III, example (1) above is given to demonstrate the form of the 3 pl. simple past of the verb *téid* ‘goes’ (*do-chádar* : *bhádar*); there is no comment on the syntax or morphology of the pronoun. In *BST*, it is introduced as part of a discussion of concordance between the verb and a pronominal subject (*BST* 240.17–241.11). The core of the relevant passage in *BST* is the following rule:

*Dénmhus neith innsne é *7 í as .c. res gach n-éininsgne achd muna thí barr nó focal eatarra, *7 a-dearar nach athruigheann le barr mur do-ní le focal. Agus a dénmhus neith féin ris gach n-éininsgne ó thig ní eatarra.*

‘A 3 sg. of a verb is the correct form before (nom. of) any personal pronoun unless an enclitic or a word be between them, and it is said that the way in which a pronoun changes with an enclitic differs from the way in which it changes with a word and the verb with its person-endings may occur before any personal pronoun when something comes between them.’ (*BST* 241.2–5; McManus 2017: 226 n. 36)

3 The analytic form of the verb in Classical Modern Irish is normally third singular. As a free-standing or synthetic verbal form, *do-cháidh* means ‘he/she/it went’. It can, however, be employed impersonally: the 3 sg. of a verb can serve as a kind of default form which may be combined with an explicit subject pronoun, so that one finds the likes of *do-cháidh mé* ‘I went’ (in place of synthetic *do-chádas*), *do-cháidh sé* ‘he went’ (with the addition of an explicit subject pronoun) and *do-cháidh siad* ‘they went’ (in place of synthetic *do-chádar*) (Greene 1958). There are some restrictions on the use of 3 sg. forms in this manner, however: with simple verbs, only the suffixless form of the past may be used; *do mhol sé* ‘he praised’ is correct but **molais sé* and **do mholasda(i)r sé* are not (*SnaG* IV §7.30), a restriction which probably reflects the fact that the suffixless form was the ordinary preterite/perfect form, the other forms belonging to the literary register only (but see fn. 14 below). In the passage from *BST* cited in §2 above, I would translate *barr* as ‘suffix’ rather than as ‘enclitic’ for this reason (cf. *BST* 236.20). *BST* 241.2–5 does not allow for the likes of *a-táid siad* ‘they are’, in which the analytic construction is employed but the 3 person impersonal verb is marked as plural in concordance with the 3 pl. subject pronoun. Such agreement is sometimes found, however (see the relevant notes in *BST* and *SnaG* IV §7.30 and fn. 2 below).

4 Following the passage in *BST* cited above, 3 sg. *do-cháidh* cannot be used with a subject pronoun belonging to any other person unless the pronoun immediately follows the verb. Even if it were metrical, **do-cháidh ... iad* could never be read for *do-chádar... iad* in (1) because the pronoun is disjunctive. *BST* 241.2–5 mandates the likes of **do-chádas... mhé* ‘I went’, **do-chádhais... thú* ‘you went’, etc. In other words, *do-chádar... iad* is analysed as an instance of obligatory agreement between the verb (3 pl. *do-chádar*) and the person of the pronoun (3 pl. *iad*); it is understood (or rather misunderstood) as a synthetic not an analytic construction. This explains why (2) is marked *cóir* ‘correct’ by the grammarian, while (3) is labelled *lochtach* ‘faulty’:

(2) *Mar thánuig go h°Eamhuin °é
ránuig sé Thealaigh Dá Thí .c. (BST 241.6)*

‘As he came to Eamhain, he obtained Tealach Dá Thí [i.e. the kingship].’

(3) *Mar thánuig go h°Eamhuin °ibh*
ránuig sibh mheadhair nach mair .l. (BST 241.7–8)

‘When you (pl.) came to Eamhain, you obtained mirth that does not last.’

To conform to the rule set out in *BST* 241.2–5, a 2 pl. verbal form like *tángabhair* would be required in place of 3 sg. *tánaig* in (3) because the disjunctive subject pronoun is 2 pl. (*ibh*). This would not be metrical, of course.

5 Synthetic constructions with a superfluous disjunctive subject pronoun like **tángabhair... ibh* are without parallel in the history of Irish syntax. In examples (2) and (3), the verb *tánaig* is really impersonal. When the analytic construction developed in the Middle Irish period, person was marked by the pronoun only, and number was further indicated in the form of the verb only when the impersonal verb was combined with a 3 pl. pronoun (*ní biat síat* ‘they will not be’, for example, where both *biat* and *síat* are 3 pl.) (*SnaG* III §10.19; McCone 1997: 177). By the Early Modern Irish period, even this instance of agreement was breaking or had broken down, so that a 3 pl. pronoun could follow immediately after a 3 sg. impersonal verbal form (*ní bhia siad*).² When the subject pronoun was disjunctive, however, it seems the Middle Irish pattern of obligatory number-agreement between verb and pronoun in the 3 pl. survived into the Early Modern Irish period, as illustrated by *do-chádar... iad* in (1).³ By the

² Though the likes of *a-táid siad*, *creidid siad* etc. occur in manuscripts, no rhyming examples have been noted (McManus 2017: 227 n. 36). Cf. the use of the 3 person impersonal in a relative clause after a subject antecedent in Classical Modern Irish. Though the grammarian responsible for *BST* 219.2 was aware of the use of the 3 pl. impersonal verb in a relative clause after a plural nominal subject antecedent (*na fir a-táid ’san bhaile* ‘the men who are in the settlement’), he considered this faulty (*lochtach*), allowing only *na fir a-tá ’san bhaile* (in which the impersonal relative is formally 3 sg.). For the situation in Middle Irish and in Early Modern Irish prose, see *SnaG* III §14.3 and IV §7.33 respectively.

³ I know of only one instance where the impersonal verb occurs with a 3 pl. disjunctive pronoun but does not agree with it in number, viz. (28) below, *nó co táir ... iad* ‘until they meet their end’. *Táir* is 3 sg. present subjunctive (and also future) to *tarnaig/tairnig* (also *do-arnaig/do-airnig*) ‘comes to an end, wears away’ (see Hoyne 2018a: 113–14). This highly defective verb is treated in *IGT* III §9. No non-3 sg. forms are authorised by the tract (but see the examples cited in Hoyne (2018a: 114), if they do indeed belong to this verb). In the version of *IGT* III preserved in RIA MS E iv 1 (Cat. 751), we read *táir .l. iollradh ’na bheól, *7 aderar gurab .c. ‘táir mo ghiobuil’ do chanamhain*, ‘it is faulty for *táir* to have a plural in front of it [i.e. coming after it as subject], and it is said that *táir* (3 sg.) *mo ghiobail* (nom. pl.) “my clothes will wear out” is correct as an anomalous construction’. In other words, given the gap in the paradigm, it appears that 3 sg. *táir* was sometimes used where a 3 pl. form would otherwise be expected. The specification by the grammarian that a plural cannot follow this particular verb presumably reflects the fact that it was possible for *táir* to have a plural subject antecedent as the verb in the following relative clause would regularly be 3 sg. (cf. *a-táid na fir* but *na fir a-tá*, fn. 2 above). (28) occurs in a prose text, but *IGT* III 140 and 141 prove that some poets did indeed combine *táir* and a plural subject: *Biaidh nó go táir taisi an rígh / ar an Síil gCaisi* [i.e. *gCais-se*] *gráin gliadh*, ‘These descendants of Cas will fear battle until the remains of the king fade away’ (*IGT* III 140); *Slega reamra re headh n-áigh / táir le fear mBearba acht a mbuaidh*, ‘In the course of battle thick spears will be worn out by the hero of Bearbha but their victories [will endure]’ (*IGT* III 141). Both of these examples are marked faulty (*lochtach*) in the tract. Regarding the first, it is important to note that *IGT* II §180 gives *taise* as *plurale tantum* and it is presumably taken as a plural in *IGT* III also. However, as Damian McManus points out to me, the unknown author of this particular citation may have regarded *taise* as singular. In this he would have had the support of no less an authority than Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe, in one of whose poems we find *A dhuine ó ndeachaidh a bhean, / oslaig an uaigh ’nar cuireadh; féacha mar tá a taisé a-nois / na mná caise do charois* ‘O you man whose woman has died, open the grave in which she was buried; see what the smoothness of the ringleted woman looks like now’, where *taise* is the subject of a 3 sg. verb (*tá : mná*) (Williams 1980: poem 20.37cd). Williams takes *taise* as ‘smoothness’, but in this context ‘remains’ is far more likely to be the true meaning. For other

early sixteenth century, when *BST* were compiled, at least one grammarian had over-generalised this limited concordance-rule: *do-chádar... iad* was interpreted as an example of the verb agreeing not only in **number** but also in **person**, and this ‘rule’ was extended artificially to other persons. It is telling that the author of *BST* 240.17–241.11 had no metrical examples to hand to justify his putative **tángabhair... ibh*.

6 In examples (1), (2) and (3) the disjunctive pronoun is the subject of an intransitive verb, but the grammarian responsible for *BST* 240.17–241.11 makes clear that his supposed rule applied to transitive verbs as well. Indeed, this section of the tract begins with three pairs of transitive sentences (*BST* 240.17–241.1).⁴ Each consists of the verb *meallaidh* ‘seduces’ with a pronominal subject and pronominal object, but in the first iteration of the sentence the word-order is VSO, in the second VOS. The grammarian states that the change of word-order does not alter the meaning; both versions have the same sense (*ó éinchéill*). The first pair is *mealluidh mé thú, meallaidh tú mé*, ‘I seduce you’. To accord with the rule set out in *BST* 241.2–5, we should really expand the suspension stroke in the second sentence as *meallaim* and read *meallaim thú mhé*.⁵ The second pair is *mealluidh tú mhé, meallae mhé thú* ‘you seduce me’, where *meallae* is the 2 sg. synthetic present indicative ‘required’ by the disjunctive 2 sg. subject pronoun.⁶ In the third example, we have *mealluidh síad mhé, meallaidh mhé iad*, ‘they seduce me’. Though the suspension stroke here is dotted, it should probably be understood as 3 pl. *meallaid* to agree with the 3 pl. disjunctive pronoun *iad*.

7 The grammarian concludes these sample sentences with the observation:

.c. mur sin uile ar gach énaimsir achd gurab é ‘do ghonfadh mé [MS mhé (?)] sibh’ nó ‘do ghonadh mé sibh’ as .c. ann ó nach fuil cuid ag innsigne sibh don dá aimsir[-]sin.

‘That is correct in every tense except that it is *do ghonfadh mhé sibh* [‘you (pl.) would wound me’] or *do ghonadh mhé sibh* [‘you (pl.) wounded me’] that is correct, since the 2 person plural does not have a particular form in those two tenses’.

The point is that, as there is no 2 pl. synthetic verbal form in the secondary future or past habitual, *do ghonfadh* and *do ghonadh* respectively are not obliged to agree with the disjunctive subject pronoun in the same way as 2 sg. present indicative *meallae* in *meallae... thú* or 3 pl. future indicative *meallfaid* in *meallfaid... iad*; synthetic forms were available for the latter two but not the former.⁷ Perhaps the example at *BST* 241.9–10 was meant to illustrate this point, but the tract must be corrupt here, as the same half-quatrain is given twice with only minor spelling variation, once marked correct (*.c.*) and once faulty (*.l.*).⁸ It reads

(4) *do ghonfadh Mhóir °sibh le °sleidh*

‘faults’ in Mac Con Midhe’s poetry, see McManus (2017: 216–17, 220–1, 223–4) and Hoyne (2019a: 30–2). Note also that the noun-phrase *a taise ... na mná ...* contains both a possessive pronoun and the article; cf. Mac Con Midhe’s ‘violation’ of the double article constraint (Hoyne 2019a: 32 n. 24).

⁴ Given the difficulty of interpreting this passage as published, I have consulted the manuscript and indicate in the quotations below where the editor, Lambert McKenna, has expanded a suspension stroke. Though I disagree with McKenna on some points in this paper, my admiration for his pioneering investigations of the Tracts and Irish bardic poetry more generally remains.

⁵ For the forms of the 1 and 2 sg. pronouns with a lenited initial in Classical Modern Irish, see §§28–9 below.

⁶ McKenna emended MS *meallae* to *meallaidh*.

⁷ No synthetic forms of the 2 pl. of the past habitual or secondary future are attested in Middle Irish manuscripts (*SnaG* III §12.2). Cf. also Roma (2000: 116, 130).

⁸ Incidentally, the reading *Choimhidh* printed in *BST* 241.10 is a slip for MS *Choimdhidh*.

ní libh do-chóidh ón Choimdhidh

‘you (pl.) would wound Mór with a spear; you would certainly not be left unpunished for it by the Lord’⁹

This citation may originally have been labelled *lochtach* in the tract. In *do ghonfadh Mhóir sibh*, the personal name *Mór* is clearly marked as accusative (*Mhóir : do-chóidh*), meaning that *sibh* is the subject pronoun. As the subject pronoun is separated from its verb, our grammarian might have preferred that it have the same form as the corresponding subject pronoun of a passive-impersonal verb or direct object pronoun of an active transitive verb (*ibh*); if we read *ibh*, however, the *uaim* with *sleidh* is ruined. Against this interpretation, it should be noted that earlier our grammarian (at least as transmitted to us in the sole manuscript copy) registered no objection to *do ghon(f)adh mhé sibh* (*BST* 240.20–1).

8 Whatever about the grammarian’s interpretation of (4), similar objections can be raised to his treatment of transitive verbs as were raised in §5 with regard to intransitive verbs. There are no authentic examples of transitive synthetic constructions with redundant disjunctive subject pronouns marked like the subjects of passive-impersonal verbs or the direct objects of transitive active verbs at any stage of the Irish language: the likes of *meallae... thú* do not occur in texts. Our grammarian has extended the same person-concordance rule that he extrapolated from intransitive examples like *do-chádar... iad* – namely that verbs inflect to agree with the person of their disjunctive subject pronouns – to transitive constructions. Though the source of (4) is not now known, it seems genuine. The syntax of the pronominal subject in (4) is quite distinct from that in (1), (2) and (3), however. The pronoun in (4) has the normal subject form. True, it appears to be disjunctive, but this is no more than metrical licence. Underlying (4) is the ordinary prose sentence *do ghonfadh sibh Mhóir le sleigh*. This is warped for metrical purposes to provide end-rhyme (*sleigh : Choimdhidh*), internal rhyme (*sibh : libh*) and alliteration (*sibh... sleigh*) in the appropriate places. We must distinguish between conjunctive pronouns (like *sibh* in *do ghonfadh sibh*) that are artificially separated from their verb for metrical purposes and pronouns that are genuinely disjunctive in ordinary language. As we will see, the subject pronouns in (1), (2) and (3) could be disjunctive in prose as well as poetry. Our grammarian may even have been aware that his interpretation of these sentences was open to criticism. His observation *a-dearar nach athruigheann le barr mur do-ní le focal* ‘it is said that the way in which a pronoun changes with a suffix differs from the way it changes with an [intervening] word’ (*BST* 241.2–5) may be a somewhat crude reference to an alternative analysis, in which the genuinely disjunctive *do-chádar ... iad* and the ‘originally’ conjunctive *do ghonfadh Mhóir sibh* were distinguished, the former showing a ‘change’ of the subject pronoun (*siad > iad*) with a suffix (the ending of the inflectional form *do-chádar*), the latter showing no such change with an interposed word (*Mhóir*).

RUDIMENTA GRAMMATICAE HIBERNICAE

9 The author of *Rudimenta Grammaticae Hibernicae* also had occasion to cite (1) (Mac Aogáin 1968: ll. 2029–40). In a discussion of agreement between the verb and the subject pronoun, which may be based on the passage in *BST* discussed above or something similar, he notes that the 3 sg. of the verb is used with every person in the analytic construction, and

⁹ I take the second line as an example of the idiom *ní théid X le Y* ‘Y does not go unpunished for X’ (*eDIL* s.v. *téit* IV.13(b)), in which *do-chóidh* is a modal preterite used with the sense of the conditional (see Quin 1974: 45–8).

explicitly faults the double-marking of person when the pronoun follows immediately after the verb: *do mharbh siad* and *do mharbhadar* ‘they killed’ are correct but *do mharbhadar siad* ‘they killed’ is not. The author specifies ‘immediately’ (*Dixi ‘immediate’ ...*) because he is aware of the likes of *do-chádar ... iad* in (1). He informs us that this construction is felt to be less elegant (*sed id minus eligans videtur*), presumably because of the redundancy it entails.

10 Sadly, neither *BST* nor *Rudimenta* comment on the form of the pronoun in (1). As already noted, we might expect the subject pronoun of an active verb like *téid* ‘goes’ to have the form *siad* rather than the vowel-initial form associated more commonly with the role of subject to a passive-impersonal verb or direct object to an active transitive verb. This is also the case in (2), where we have the ‘object’ pronoun *é* rather than *sé*, and (3), where we find *ibh* rather than *sibh*. Indeed, the author of the *Rudimenta* classifies *é*, *ibh* and *iad* as ‘accusative’ pronouns elsewhere in his grammar (Mac Aogáin 1968: l. 1114). That the vowel-initial pronouns are authorial in (1), (2) and (3) is confirmed by *uaim*.

11 Semantically, there can hardly be any doubt that *é*, *ibh* and *iad* do indeed refer to the subject in these examples. In (1), *téid X d’éag* can only be construed as an intransitive construction; there is no vacant slot for a direct object. The syntax of (1) further confirms this conclusion. It is well known that the placement of the pronominal object is quite fluid in Irish (Ahlqvist 1976; *SnaG* III §10.15; Bennett, Elfner and McCloskey 2015): it can occur immediately after the verb which governs it and any accompanying subject or at some point later in the clause, after a prepositional object or adverb. This applies too to the pronominal subject of the passive-impersonal verb. No matter where the object pronoun is placed in the sentence, however, the verb never inflects to match the object in number. The very fact that there is concord in number between verb (*do-chádar*) and pronoun (*iad*) in (1), therefore, leaves no doubt as to the role of the pronoun. While it was no longer obligatory for an analytic verb to agree in number with a conjunctive 3 pl. subject pronoun in the Early Modern Irish period, such agreement is still met with on occasion (the likes of *a-táid siad*). An even closer parallel to the agreement between verbal number and the number of the 3 pl. subject pronoun in *do-chádar ... iad* is provided by the ‘preterite passive plural’ in Classical Modern Irish (for which see McManus 1992), where we find the likes of *do díoghluid ... iaidseín* ‘they were avenged’, in which both the passive-impersonal verb and its disjunctive subject pronoun are 3 plural.

12 The following is a list of examples from Middle and Early Modern Irish texts of the construction seen in (1), (2) and (3) above.¹⁰ In compiling this list, I have drawn on *eDIL* and previous discussions of this construction and related matters, in particular Ahlqvist (1976), Breatnach (*SnaG* III), Dillon (1932: 64), Greene (1958, 1972), McManus (*SnaG* IV) and Roma (2000: 127–8). No claim is made to comprehensiveness.

FURTHER EXAMPLES

13 The following examples are found in contemporary Middle Irish manuscripts and are cited in *SnaG* III §10.19.

¹⁰ The construction examined here was, of course, impossible in Old Irish. For the purposes of this article, I classify as Middle Irish some texts which are thought to go back to the Old Irish period but in the form in which they are transmitted to us show later linguistic features.

(5) *cīa do-lluid i n-écaib hī*¹¹ (LL 25447, Metrical *Dindsenchas*)

‘Though she died’

(6) *Ro bátar acá aslach for Pelias Iasōn do marbad arnāch tīssad friss hē* (LL 30874–5, *Togail Troí*)

‘They were urging Pelias to kill Jason so that he would not come to oppose him’

(7) *da-fuit lessium hé* (LL 31217, *Togail Troí*)

‘He [Giron] fell by him [Hercules]’

(8) *Ocus Mani in marend hé* (LL 33927, *Tochmarc Ferbae*)

‘And Maine, does he live?’

(9) *Tuitfid ónd fíach é* (LL 38590, *Bórama*)

‘He [Áed mac Ainmerech] will die by the raven’¹²

14 From Middle Irish texts in later manuscripts, the following have been noted.

(10) *rom-icfa lá, a Dé in doluid*

atá ar conair °é im °aigid (Meyer 1907: 216, quatrain 9cd; from a poem on death attributed to Cormac mac Cuillenáin)

‘[Death] will come to me one day, O God of the toll; it is on its way to meet me’¹³

(11) *nī roerchōidigestar dō hí* (Preface to Secundius’s Hymn in the *Leabhar Breac*)¹⁴

‘it [the fire] did not hurt him [Míliuc]’ (Stokes 1887: ii 392–3)

(12) *Acht masa i n-uamas an catha Troianna rohairged in fi[d]ceall ní torracht hÉrinn and sin í* (Middle Irish *Cath Maige Tuired*)

‘But if *fidchell* was invented at the time of the Trojan war, it had not reached Ireland yet’ (Gray 1982: §69)

¹¹ This example is from syllabic verse and there is *úaimm* between *écaib* and *í*. I have not marked *úaimm* here, however, as it is not found in every line of this short poem. In the longer poem from which (10) is excerpted, *úaimm* is found in almost every line and I feel justified therefore in marking *úaimm* in the usual way.

¹² This refers to a prophecy that a raven will attack Áed.

¹³ Or perhaps, following *eDIL* s.v. *dolud* and taking *in doluid* as nominative, ‘The toll will come to me some day, O God’.

¹⁴ Note that the impersonal form here has the deponent ending *-estar*. In Classical Modern Irish, it is normally the suffixless 3 sg. past tense that combines with a conjunctive pronoun, but see McManus (2017: 226–7) for *térnastar sé* (*IGT* III 157). This rule may not have applied with a disjunctive pronoun, in the same way that in Classical Modern Irish **do-chádar siad* was incorrect but *do-chádar ... iad* was permitted.

(13) *gur ben a lám dē, co raib hī isind achad ina fíadnaisi* (Thurneysen 1935: 10; Rawlinson B 512 version of *Scéla Mucce Meic Da Thó*)¹⁵

‘and it [the cast of the spear] chopped his hand off, so that it was on the grass in front of him’¹⁶

(14) *ocus dá lá déc ro baí immuigh hī* (from ‘Stories from the Law-Tracts’)

‘and she [Taidell] was away twelve days’¹⁷ (Dillon 1932: 46, 57)

(15) ‘*Ragaid duitsiu hī, ar Mac Rethi* (from ‘Stories from the Law-Tracts’)

‘“Thou shalt have her,” said Mac Rethi’¹⁸ (Dillon 1932: 47, 57)

(16) *Mā tāit tall iat [...]* (CIH 68.35–6, commentary on *Bretha Comaithchesa*)

‘If they [the cattle] are within the field [...]’ (ALI iv 86–7)

(17) *Mās re rē na fochraice tāinic amuigh hē, dēnait in fine a imfulung gu tī in rē* (CIH 77.7–8, commentary on *Bretha Comaithchesa*)

‘If it is before the term of the hire he [the deserter] has come outside,¹⁹ the family shall support him until the expiration of the time’ (ALI iv 134–5)

(18) *.i. don eisert, *7 iar rē na focreca tāinic amuich hē ann sin* (CIH 199.30–1, commentary on *Bretha Comaithchesa*)

‘that is, to the deserter, and that applies if it is after the term of hire he comes in (?)’

(19) **7 is ē cuit in acht and, uair noco bīa comroind uirri-side, nō noco bīa itir hī nō cor dībda in fine uile* (CIH 216.10–12, commentary on *Din Techtugad*)

‘And the force of “except” here is, because there is no division of this *cumhal*; or it shall not exist at all until all the tribe shall have become extinct’ (ALI iv 42–3)

(20) *mas edh adeir in banfiadnaisē nuccun uil fuithi itir hī, in choibchi do breith di-si* (commentary on a fragmentary Old Irish law-text)

‘if the female witness says she is not suffering from it [*lecc dīcce* ‘incurable stone’] at all, the bride-price is to be given to her’ (Kelly 2014: §10e)

(21) *Mas edh adeir in ben atā in fuil mīsta uirri *7 adeir in fear nuccun uil uirri hī, is ed dleghar banfiadnaisē dā indsaigidh* (commentary on a fragmentary Old Irish law-text)

¹⁵ *Raib* is no doubt for *raibe*.

¹⁶ Cf. *co mbert a lāim dē, co mboī for lár* in Thurneysen’s edited text.

¹⁷ She had been kidnapped by the wizard Cotrebe.

¹⁸ Literally, ‘she will go to you’. Mac Rethi has agreed to give his daughter in marriage to the poet Trusc.

¹⁹ Better ‘has come in’, reading *a mmaig*, i.e. ‘returned home’? The *eisert*’s land has been let out after he has absconded.

‘If the wife says that she is menstruating, and the husband says that she is not, it is necessary to seek female witness’ (Kelly 2014: §11bc)

(22) ‘[...] *7 *inní ro bóí a menmain ind óclaig,*’ ar Caílte, ‘*ní raibe a n-aicned dūinde eisseíc*’ (Stokes 1900: ll. 6034–5, *Acallam na Senórach*)

“[...] and that which the warrior planned to do,” said Caílte, “it was something we did not expect”²⁰

(23) *7 *nā bīth a menma rissin fiannaigecht trē bithu intí nach tibra a ail *7 a urraind* [read *urlaind*] ar *siūt nóco torchair lib hé*’ (Stokes 1900: ll. 6039–40, *Acallam na Senórach*)

“and let the *fian* never think that it knows the mind of any man who will not give over his spear-head and spear-shaft (?),” said he [Finn] “until such time as he has fallen by you”

15 The following example from the twelfth-century Irish *notitiae* in the Book of Deer is problematic.

(24) *do-raten ri Colum Cille sí* (Jackson 1972: 30, ll. 5–6)

‘it pleased Colum Cille’

The pronoun *sí* refers back to acc. *cathraig*, here a potential site for a future ecclesiastical settlement rather than an actual existing monastery. *Sí* is postponed in a manner more commonly associated with the object pronoun (or the pronominal subject of the passive-impersonal), but morphologically the pronoun itself retains the standard conjunctive form. Greene (1972: 169, 1973: 123) suggested that *sí* in (24) is hypercorrect for *í* and as such was evidence that in Scotland *í* was already the normal subject pronoun with an active verb at this date. It has been suggested by Ahlqvist (1976: 174) and Ó Sé (1996: 23–4), however, that *sí* here is a late survival of a pronominal form that only subsequently died out in Scotland.²¹ Whether we read *sí* or *í*, the syntax justifies including (24) in this survey.

16 In my experience, the construction under discussion is not very common in the prose of the Early Modern Irish period with the exception of the verb *tarla* ‘happened’ (see §18). I have noted the following example in the Annals of Connacht:

(25) *Do cētloit Tuathal Constapla na nGall *7 do toit le Taichlech hē* (AC §1225.24)

²⁰ More literally, ‘that was not in our mind’. The curious anaphoric morpheme *-séic* is not found in contemporary Middle Irish manuscripts, but cf. *-sáic* and *-sidéic* (*SnaG* III §10.22) and note *eissidéic* in the *Acallam* (Stokes 1900: l. 4833).

²¹ It is, of course, uncontroversial that the Irish spoken in Scotland would have had 3 sg. fem. *sí* in its early history, and *sí* (and other *s*-initial pronominal forms) may well have survived into the Middle Irish period in Scotland before being levelled out entirely in favour of the vowel-initial forms. Ó Sé (1996: 23–4) confuses the issue in his discussion of (24), however. Examples such as *fāgas i* (but *fāgaidh e*) in modern Eastern Lewis may or may not point to the possible survival of the **conjunctive** subject pronoun *sí* at a late stage in Scotland, but they do nothing to alleviate the suspicion that **disjunctive** *sí* in (24) is hypercorrect. The nature of the evidence allows no definitive conclusion.

Mac Airt renders (25) into English as ‘the Constable of the Galls was first wounded by Tuathal and then slain by Taichlech’. This translation makes both verbs passive. I would translate rather ‘Tuathal wounded the Constable of the Galls first and he [then] fell by Taichlech [Tuathal’s brother]’. The Annals of Connacht in their present form were probably written in the early sixteenth century, though this entry may well preserve a contemporary early-thirteenth century syntagm. In the closely related, late-sixteenth century Annals of Loch Cé, the sentence that concerns us has been altered to *do thoit sē la Taichlech* (ALC i 286).

Three additional prose examples are identified and discussed by Roma (2000: 127–8). Two are from the Glenmasan version of *Oidheadh Chloinne hUisnigh* (Mac Giolla Léith 1993: 66–79).

(26) *co rabatar co subach sobrach [so]menmnach uile iat*

‘so that they were all in good and cheerful and high spirits’

(27) *as geis doitsi fled d’fhāgbāil nō co táirsi[o]dh í²²*

‘it is forbidden for you to leave a feast until it has finished’

Roma also draws attention to an example from *Cath Finntrágha* (C. O’Rahilly 1962):

(28) *nó co táir lim iad uili*

‘until they all meet their end by me’²³

17 The following instances of this construction have been noted in Classical Modern Irish poetry (see especially *SnaG* IV §9.1) in addition to (1), (2) and (3) above. The relevant *uaim* is marked in the usual way.

(29) *Luath cuach go nglaindigh fa ghnaoi
luath a cruach ó Chailligh Dé;
tarra i gceann an einigh °í
ní fearr do bhí i n°Eimhir h°é.*

‘Readily in all graciousness does Cailleach Dé bestow her goblet with bright wine and quickly sink her corn-stack; she is devoted to generosity [better ‘she has come to be at the pinnacle of generosity’] – it was not more lavish in Eimhear.’ (*AiD* 1.9)

(30) *Do bhí an baile gan bheannach
go raibhe °í ag °Éireannach (IGT II 490 = III 882)*

‘The settlement was without a blessing until it was in the hands of an Irishman’

(31) *níor ghiall a meadhair do mhnaoi,
gur fhaoi lé triar d°fhearaihb °í*

²² As correctly analysed by Roma, *táirseadh* is 3 sg. past subjunctive. For the defective verb *tairnig/tarnaig* (also *do-airnig/do-arnaig*) ‘comes to an end, wears away’, see fn. 3 above.

²³ Cecile O’Rahilly suggested reading *nó co táir lim iad uile [do mharbhadh]* ‘until I finish killing them all’, but Roma (2000: 128) correctly argues that this emendation is unnecessary. For the 3 sg. impersonal verb with a 3 pl. pronoun, see fn. 3 above.

‘she [St. Anne] yielded to no woman in dignity and married three husbands’ (*IBP* 21.3cd = *IGT* III 325)

(32) *Tadhg Mág Aonghusa fhuair gnaoi,
rug buaidh d’ú °Aonghusa °í*

‘Tadhg Mac Aonghusa enjoys (his folk’s) favour – this has brought all success to the scion of Aonghus’ (*Magauran* 2.46ab)

(33) *Siur ar dtoghuine i dtigh Dé
siur sin dán roghuire an rí
banógh nach bean mar gach mnaoi
do bhaoi seal ar °anshógh °í.*

‘This sister, our loved one in Heaven, she to whom the Lord is nearest, maid different from all women, was for a time in anguish.’ (*PB* 13.8)

(34) *Do-chóidh gu Raílinn an rí
saelim nách tí gan fh°óir h°é (IGT III 326)*

‘The king has gone to Raoilinn;²⁴ I believe he will not come back without a host.’

(35) *Cia úaibh do agaill an rí
an uair do bhí °againn °é (IGT III 570)*

‘Who of you did the king speak to while he was still among us?’²⁵

(36) *A Í Bhríain a bhranáin Chaisil,
cuimhnigh an teagusg tug mé,
gan bheith ar seól na ríogh romhad,
ná bíodh na sgeól °orad °é.²⁶*

‘O O Briain, thou chessman of Caiseal, remember the teaching I gave thee, “let it not be said of thee that thou dost not imitate the career of the kings before thee”’ (*BST* 210.1–3/12a25–7/42b1–2)

(37) *Crann na haithne tré iomadh
– a aithne is ann do cailleadh –
do chuir sé mnaoi dar milleadh
do bhaoi i gcinneadh h°é d’°aingéal (DiD 10.4)*

‘Through envy it was there, [at] the Tree of Knowledge, that his commandment was violated; he sent a woman to destroy us, it was fated that an angel should bring this about’²⁷

²⁴ For the declension of *Raoilinn*, gen. *Raoileann*, in Classical Modern Irish, see *IGT* II §129.

²⁵ Or perhaps ‘while we still had him’.

²⁶ *BST* reveals that this half-quatrain was sourced from a poem beginning *I dTeamhraigh ríoghthar rí Éireann*, but no copy of the entire poem is extant, to my knowledge.

²⁷ More literally simply ‘it was fated for an angel’.

(38) *Art Aoinfhear nó Oilioll Ólom*
ór fh°ás °eision

‘Art the Lonely or Oilill Bare-ear, from whom he [Maol Ruanaidh Ó Cearbhaill] is sprung’ (TD 34.31ab)

(39) *Inghean Méig Shamhradháin sheing*
dá daghraláimh do-°éid °inn

‘Daughter of graceful Mág Shamhradháin – we flee to her kindly hand’ (*Magauran* 9.28ab)

(40) *Do biadh inn mar duine ndaor*
mar nār aomh sinn luigi a lāmh.

‘We would be like a base person because we did not consent to swear by his hands.’ (Ó Cuív 1999: quatrain 23cd)

(41) *Do chruthaigh Dia diadha an obair*
Éabha is Ādhamh ór fh°ás °ibh

‘He created – holy work! – Adam and Eve from whom ye come’ (*Dán Dé* 31.8ab)

(42) *Atāmaid mar bhudh lind lān*

o rānaig ind co Siuān. (Ó Macháin 1998: 42, quatrain 56cd)

‘We are like a full pool since we came to Siuán’

In the last example, *uaim* requires reading *sinn* for *ind*, but it may be significant that *ind* was introduced in the course of transmission.

18 In poetry and prose, examples with *tarla* (< OIr *do-rala*, suppletive to *do-cuirethar*), which in Early Modern Irish is felt to be the past tense of *teagaibh* ‘happens’ (< OIr *do-ecmaing*) (*IGT* III §2), are common. Very occasionally examples are met with after other forms. In addition to the examples below, see also (29) above.

(43) ‘*Nā tegmad thū do nech inā nech duit ō sō gu brāth*’

‘“Do thou meet no one, and let no one meet thee hence for ever” ’ (Life of Feichín) (Stokes 1891: 248–9)²⁸

(44) *Clanna Somhuirle, síol nGofraidh,*
ór ghin tú, nár thaisigh bhú,
a lubhghort cuir, a chráobh abhla,
sáor gach fuil ó a ttarla thú.

²⁸ Better ““May you not encounter anyone and may no-one encounter you ...””.

‘The House of Somarled, the Race of Godfred, whence thou art sprung, who did not store up cattle, O fresh-planted orchard, O apple-branch, noble is each blood from which thou comest’ (*IBP* 45.29)

(45) *Coineasgar do-chuaidh a-mach;
tarla °é ar an °each riabhach*

‘On the evening he went forth; he happened upon a bridled steed’ (*GB* 9.11)

(46) *A shlógh fhir na n-abhra ndubh,
gé tharla °ibh ag °ól fhleadh*

[...]

‘O troop of the dark-browed hero, though ye are now drinking banquets [...]’
(*Magauran* 29.8ab)

(47) *dā tegmadh h°é a n-°uathadh sluaigh* (*Cia chosnas clann Dálaigh?*, RIA MS 24 P 25, Cat. 475, 79r, p. 151, quatrain 26b)

‘if he happened to be with a small host (?)’

(48) *fágbhuim rat[h] cloinne *7 conāigh *7 búaidh náithis *7 ninnsgne *7 nurlabhra
*7 nealadhan ar gacháon coimheóllfus *7 thoibhéobhus mo chíoscháin *7 nach
leigfidh mo mhaoir do shárughadh a naónionadh ina tteigeōbhadh é*

‘I lay the blessing of offspring and good fortune, and all benefits of happiness, of sex [better ‘speech’], of ready speech and of sageness on each who shall fulfil and levy my tribute, and permits not my steward to be attacked in any place in which he may happen to be’ (Gwynn 1911: 100–1, *Life of Lasair*)

19 This paper is concerned primarily with Middle and Early Modern Irish, but it should be mentioned that reference has been made to sporadic examples of the construction under discussion in the later language. As an example of a postponed subject pronoun the following spoken example is cited by Bennett, Elfner and McCloskey (2015: 66).

(49) *nuair do chuaigh i dtalamh iad* (Póirtéir 1996: 12)

‘when they [the potatoes] went into the ground’

The speaker was Seán Mac Mathúna from Co. Clare, who was born c. 1876.

SYNTAX AND PHONOLOGY

20 It will be noted that almost all the examples of the construction under discussion here are intransitive. In Middle Irish (in a non-contemporary manuscript) an exception is (12), where we have a verb of motion (*-toracht*, the preterite of *do-roich*) and a destination as direct object (acc. *Érinn*). While *do-roich* is, indeed, transitive here, we should note that in terms of thematic roles, it is similar to an intransitive construction like (2). In (2), as in (12), we have a destination as object (thematically, this could be labelled ‘Goal’); semantically, *go hEamhain* in (2) and *Érinn* in (12) fulfil the same function in the verbal predicate, even though they are formally distinct (the former a prepositional object, the latter a direct object). Semantically, a

transitive verb of motion like *do-roich* in (12) is quite distinct from a transitive verb like *gonaid* ‘wounds, slays’, the direct object of which would be classified thematically as ‘Patient’: in *gonaid X Y*, the argument Y is at the receiving end of the action in a way that Y is not in *do-roich X Y*; furthermore, in *gonaid X Y*, the direct object changes state in a way that Y in *do-roich X Y* does not.²⁹

That this construction was normally **intransitive** in Middle Irish has been recognised by others (Dillon 1932: 64; *SnaG* III §10.19, McCone 1997: 177). It has sometimes been stated that Classical Modern Irish allowed the disjunctive passive-impersonal subject/direct object pronoun in the role of subject in active **transitive** clauses, but sure examples are difficult to find. *eDIL* s.v. 1 sí VIII and Greene (1958: 111) give *rug báire ar gach aonlocht í* (*DiD* 32.5d) as an example of the subject pronoun *í*, but the pronoun in question could belong to the copular clause (*bean ... í*) and accordingly may not be the subject of the verbal predicate *rug báire*, which is a relative clause with *bean* as its antecedent:

(50) *bean nach tug náire dá naomhthacht
rug báire ar gach aonlocht hí* (*DiD* 32.5cd)

‘She [St. Margaret] was a woman who was not ashamed of piety, who triumphed over every fault’³⁰

(32) cannot be explained away though. It contains another idiomatic expression with *beiridh*, viz. *beiridh X b(h)ua(i)dh* ‘X triumphs’. Formally, this expression is transitive, but *beiridh ... b(h)uaidh* is a single lexical unit: *buaidh* is not a true semantic object in (32) (neither is *báire* in (50), whatever the function of the following pronoun). Whatever thematic role we assign *buaidh* in (32) (or *báire* in (50)), neither ‘Theme’ or ‘Patient’ would be appropriate. *Beiridh ... b(h)ua(i)dh* is quasi-intransitive.³¹

²⁹ For the accusative of destination in Irish and Welsh, see Mac Cana (1990).

³⁰ On this occasion I have only considered examples in which the pronoun certainly is in the role of subject; I have excluded some ambiguous examples from consideration. For instance, Damian McManus draws my attention to *A cluasa da-beir don bodhor / blodh do mirbuilbh [meic Dé] / is cur luith [read lúidh] i mbund in bac(h)aigh / súil don dull gu n(f)ac(h)aigh ē* (*ABM* 345.8). I take it that *do-bheir* in line *a* is historical present and that the miracles here were supposedly performed by Christ on earth. It seems more likely to me that *é* in line *d* is an object pronoun. I would translate, ‘He gave hearing to the deaf man and put the power of movement into the foot of the cripple, he gave sight to the blind man so that he could see Him – these are just some of the miracles of the son of God!’ However, it is by no means impossible that *é* is a subject pronoun here, and that miraculous healing more generally is meant, in which case one might translate the last line simply as ‘he gives sight to the blind man so that he has [since] been able to see’. As we will see, this latter interpretation does not contradict the analysis of this construction presented below.

McKenna (*Magauran*, note on l. 1012) draws attention to two potential examples of our construction that I have not included in the list above. In *is iad ro fhíll ag baidhbh Bhreagh / na hairm do bhean inn ó fhíor*, ‘the weapons we take from foe, they are shrinking back in presence of the Raven of Breagha’ (*Magauran* 29.22cd), I would interpret *inn* as a direct object and translate ‘the very weapons that saved us from a [hostile] man, it is they which have bent because of the [exertions of] the Raven of Breagha’. Similarly, in *déana mar do fhógair inn: / tógaihb sgéala do sgríbhinn*, ‘Do as I have declared and display the message of your document’ (*GB* 18.5cd), I would translate ‘Do it, as it has [supposedly] outlawed us [poets]: reveal the contents of your document’, which seems to me to make better sense in the context. The context is the poet’s challenge to a cleric who claims that he has a papal bull prohibiting bardic poetry.

Incidentally, I have argued recently that the poem from which this last half-quatrain is cited, the famous *A theachtair thig ón Róimh*, is not in fact the work of Giolla Brighde Mac Con Míche (Hoyne 2019a: 38–41). I would like to take this opportunity to register two slips in that paper. At p. 42, I refer to a ‘forthcoming’ publication by Gordon Ó Riain: this is in fact Ó Riain (2016: 166–73). On p. 57, in discussing the analytic construction with past-tense forms of *do-ní*, I should have noted that *IGT* III §1 disapproves of *do-róna* as a 3 sg. form. With regard to *caidhead/caidhid* (p. 53 n. 75), see *BST* 1aa22–4, 11b22–6.

21 It could be argued that the examples of *teagaimh/tarla* are not, in fact, intransitive. Historically, both *do-cuirethar* and *do-ecmaing* are, indeed, transitive, and the sense ‘happens’ develops in an impersonal construction (*dom-chuirethar* ‘it puts me’ > ‘I happen to be, etc.’, *dom-ecmaing*; cf. *atom-chomnaic*). However, at an early period *teagaimh/tarla* are found as intransitive verbs (see the relevant entries in *eDIL*). As the verb *teagaimh* and its adopted past-tense are commonly found with conjunctive subject pronouns (*tarla sé* etc.) and equipped with a full set of synthetic forms (*teagmhaim* ‘I happen ...’, *tarladh* ‘I happened’ etc.) in Classical Modern Irish, there can be no doubt about their intransitivity.³²

Synchronically then, with the partial exceptions of (12) and (32), all examples of this construction in both Middle and Early Modern Irish are in fact intransitive.³³

22 While the subject pronoun in this construction is often separated from the verb, (8), (13), (27), (30) and (38)–(48) illustrate that this is not always the case, as has already been noted by Breatnach (*SnaG* III §10.22). In this regard, our subject pronouns behave like passive-impersonal subject/direct object pronouns, as noted above (§11).³⁴ In poetry, metrical exigencies undoubtedly played a part in the placement of the pronoun, but the occurrence of the pronoun at a point later in the clause cannot be conditioned by metrical considerations in (6), (7), (9), (11)–(12), (14)–(26), (28) (or (49)). We are dealing, of course, with written evidence, and whatever phonological distinctions there were in Middle and Early Modern Irish between the conjunctive subject pronouns (like *siad* in *do-cháidh siad*) and their disjunctive counterparts (*iad* in *do-chádar ... iad*) beyond their surface differences cannot be determined with absolute certainty. Be that as it may, some reasonable speculation is possible. Greene (1973: 122–8) argues convincingly that the conjunctive subject pronouns of the analytic construction were normally unstressed enclitics; they can be analysed as pronouns or as suffixes (*do-cháidh siad* = *do-'cháidh-siad*). In syllabic poetry, all independent pronouns count as fully stressed words, of course, something which allows *sibh* in (4) to rhyme and participate in *uaim* and to be separated from the verb to which it would have been enclitic in ordinary speech (*do 'ghonfadh ... 'sibh* for *do-'ghonfadh-sibh*). Greene attributes this artificial system of accentuation to the fact that the basic rules of syllabic poetry were devised in the Old Irish period, prior to the emergence of the analytic construction, when independent pronouns were indeed always fully stressed (see §24 below). Bearing this in mind, even in (8), (13), (27), etc., we are justified in referring to the subject

³¹ Cf. Mod. Ir. *faigheann X bás*, which in the perfect can behave like an intransitive verb (*tá X fachta bás*, not **tá bás fachta ag X*) (Doyle 2004).

³² With impersonal constructions such as *dom-chuirethar*, *dom-ecmaing* and *atom-chomnaic*, we should also note *-fil*, which is in origin an impersonal transitive verbal form but is suppletive to the substantive verb. The subject of the substantive verb is expressed by an infixed object pronoun with *-fil* in Old and Middle Irish (*ním fuil* ‘I am not’) and a nominal subject is marked as accusative (*ní fil maccu* etc.) even into Classical Modern Irish (*SnaG* III §12.191; IV §3.2(a)). In Middle Irish it develops personal inflection (1 sg. *-fuilim* etc.).

³³ Another false Classical example is given in *eDIL* s.v. 1 é VIII: *Dál féirleabtha d'inghin é / imridh sé éinbhearta is í* (*JGT* II 1113), ‘He is the reason a young woman makes a tryst in a bed of grass; he makes the same moves as her’ or ‘as she does’. The pronoun *í* is a disjunctive pronoun employed independently in syntactical ellipsis. *Imridh sé éinbhearta is í* is an example of brachylogy; it represents a shortened version of **imridh sé éinbhearta is imreas sí* ‘he makes the same moves as she makes’. The same sort of ellipsis is allowed with the conjunction *ioná*. For example, *is fearr imreas sé ioná(s) í* for **is fearr imreas sé ioná imreas sí* would be perfectly grammatical. Cf. Hoyne (2017: 169–73). For the honorand’s irresistibility to women in Bardic poetry and in particular his outdoor trysts with women, see McManus (2009: 93–5). For the erotic connotations of board-games in contemporary poetry, see Greene (1955).

³⁴ For Modern Irish, Bennett, Elfner and McCloskey (2015) demonstrate that the movement of the object pronoun rightwards in a clause is entirely insensitive to semantic and discourse factors and is instead conditioned by the demands of phonological phrasing (a ‘binarity’ requirement). This analysis may hold for the earlier language also. Note that nominal subjects can also occur later in the clause in the earlier language (see Lash and Griffith 2018: 116–31) (see also fn. 49 below).

pronoun as disjunctive (*in mairend hé ≠ in-'mairend-é*). Like the passive-impersonal subject/direct object pronoun, the subject pronoun of the construction under discussion here was not enclitic to the verb but could move around quite freely even, we can assume, in ordinary speech. Even when it occurs immediately after a verb, the subject pronoun in our construction is disjunctive in the sense that it is not enclitic to the verbal complex in the way a suffix is.³⁵

23 What about the semantics of sentences like *do-chádar ... iad?* Does the use of the passive-impersonal subject/direct object pronoun in the role of subject after an active intransitive verb convey something that would not be expressed by the bare synthetic *do-chádar* or the standard analytic *do-cháidh siad?* In order to clarify the semantic distinction involved, it may be helpful first to give a brief overview of the history of the independent pronoun in Irish.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE INDEPENDENT PRONOUN IN IRISH

24 The only stressed pronominal forms in normal Old Irish were nominative,³⁶ and these were found exclusively as predicates after the copula (*is mé* ‘it is I’) and interrogatives (*cía tussu?* ‘who art thou?’) or independently in non-verbal clauses (*apstíl i tossug, sissi íarum* ‘Apostles first, ye afterwards’) (*GOI* §§406–8). The pronominal subject of an active verb could only be expressed morphologically in the form of the verb itself (*do-gníú* ‘I do, am doing, etc.’, *do-gní* ‘you/he/she/it does’), though the appropriate *nota augens* could be used ‘to reinforce the pronominal concept’ where necessary (*GOI* §401). Old Irish had no independent accusative pronouns. A pronominal direct object was indicated by infixing an unstressed pronoun into the verbal complex (*GOI* §409f.), as in *rom gab* ‘he has taken me’; **ro gab mé* is unknown in Old Irish. This infixing was also used to indicate the subject of the passive-impersonal verb, except in the 3 person singular and plural.

25 The forms of the independent pronoun in Old Irish (ignoring *notae augentes*) are as follows (*GOI* §405).

1 sg.	<i>mé</i>
2 sg.	<i>tú</i>
3 sg. m.	<i>é</i>
3 sg. f.	<i>sí</i>
3 sg. n.	<i>ed</i>
1 pl.	<i>sní</i>
2 pl.	<i>sí</i>
3 pl.	<i>é</i>

2 pl. *sib* (a reduplicated form of *sí*) is already found in the Würzburg Glosses (*GOI* §§405, 448).

26 The functions of the independent pronoun began to increase in the Middle Irish period. It had established itself in copular clauses like *roba lesmac dí é* ‘he was a stepson of hers’ (earlier *ba lesmac-som dí* with *nota augens* to clarify the pronominal reference) as early as *Saltair na Rann* (c. 988). By the eleventh century, it is found with the passive-impersonal (*fritháilter misi* ‘let me be looked after’, for earlier *fritom-áilter* with a 1 sg. infix; *tucad hí*

³⁵ In the foregoing, I do not mean to suggest that ‘object’ pronouns were always or even normally fully stressed in ordinary Middle and Early Modern Irish.

³⁶ Voc. *a thusu* (Sg. 204b6), as Thurneysen notes, is a Latinism created to parse Lat. *o tu*.

‘she was brought’, for earlier *tucad* without any explicit pronoun or with enclitic *-si*) and in combination with or replacing the infixed direct object pronoun of transitive verbs (*ra marb hé* ‘he killed him’, for earlier *ra marb* with a nasalising infix; *ro baist hí* ‘he baptised her’, with the new 3 sing. pronominal form *í*, for earlier *ros baits*) (*SnaG* III §§10.14–17; McCone 1997: 176–7). As we have seen, these same forms occur as the subjects of intransitive verbs: *da-fuit leis-sium hé* ‘he falls at his hand’ (earlier *do-fuit* without explicit pronominal reference). The more general use of a 1 and 2 person pronoun (sg. or pl.) or a 3 sing. pronoun to indicate the subject of the verb after a 3 sg. verbal form and of the 3 pl. pronoun after a 3 pl. verb in the same function was slower to develop, though it is certainly met with in Middle Irish (*ragaid missi* ‘I will go’ beside *ragat-sa*; *ní biat síat* ‘they will not be’, with the new 3 pl. subject pronoun *síat*, beside synthetic *ní biat*) (*SnaG* III §10.19, McCone 1997: 177).

27 The Middle Irish forms of the independent pronoun are given below (again omitting the forms combined with emphatic/contrastive suffixes). We will return later to the issue of the distribution of A- and B-forms, labels borrowed from *SnaG* IV §9.1.

	A	B
1 sg.	<i>mé</i>	
2 sg.	<i>tú</i>	<i>thú</i>
3 sg. m.	<i>sé</i>	<i>é</i>
3 sg. f.	<i>sí</i>	<i>í</i>
3 sg. n.	<i>sed</i>	<i>ed</i>
1 pl.	<i>sinn</i>	
2 pl.	<i>sib</i>	
3 pl.	<i>síat</i>	<i>íat</i>

Some of the changes undergone by the independent pronouns in the Middle Irish period have already been mentioned in the preceding paragraph. A variant form of the 1 sg. pronoun, *mí*, is attested (*SnaG* III §§10.13, 14, 21).³⁷ Where the 2 sg. pronoun follows the copula and the initial is not de-lenited after a homorganic consonant (e.g. *ní thú* but always *is tú*), where it follows a passive-impersonal verb or where it functions as the object of an active verb, the form *thú* is sometimes found. Alongside 3 sg. m. *é* a new form *sé* developed (through re-segmentation of *is é* and analogy with *sí*), and this also resulted in neuter *sed* (*SnaG* III §10.13). The reverse process led to the development of 3 sg. fem. *í* alongside historical *sí*. The 3 pl. pronoun *síat/íat* (< *eat*, i.e., 3 pl. *é* + suffix *-at*) emerged with the same variation of initial letter found in its singular counterparts (*SnaG* III §10.20). In addition, the innovative 1 pl. pronoun *sinn* was back-formed from the emphatic/contrastive form *sinni*,³⁸ and *sib* entirely ousted 2 pl. *sí*.

28 By the end of the Middle Irish period, *sinn* had developed a variant without the initial *s*- (*SnaG* III §10.20), and by the Early Modern Irish period (perhaps earlier but the form is not attested in Middle Irish manuscripts), the 2 pl. pronoun also had a form with vocalic initial

³⁷ Though never written with a long vowel, this form is attested in the Book of Leinster. I assume on the basis of Breatnach (2003) that Middle Irish could not have tolerated a final short vowel in a stressed monosyllable without some following enclitic. It is not beyond the realms of possibility that by the end of the Middle Irish period stressed monosyllables ending in a short vowel were emerging, if changes such as *-th > /Ø/* had already begun (see Hoyne 2016: 197), but it seems unlikely that stressed monosyllables ending in a short vowel were found before the thirteenth century. It should also be noted here that the 1 sg. B-form *mhé* attested in Early Modern Irish may well have existed in the Middle Irish period (cf. *thú*), but because of contemporary orthography this cannot be determined.

³⁸ *Sinni* itself resulted from metathesis in *snini*, a dissimilated form of *snisni* (reduplicated *sní*) (*GOI* §448).

like the 3 person pronouns.³⁹ The following are the forms of the independent pronoun found in Classical Early Modern Irish (*SnaG* IV §9.1):

	A	B
1 sg.	<i>mé</i>	<i>mhé</i>
2 sg.	<i>tú</i>	<i>thú</i>
3 sg. m.	<i>sé</i>	<i>é</i>
3 sg. f.	<i>sí</i>	<i>í</i>
3 sg. n.		<i>eadh</i>
1 pl.	<i>si(o)nn</i>	<i>i(o)nn</i>
2 pl.	<i>sibh</i>	<i>ibh</i>
3 pl.	<i>siad</i>	<i>iad</i>

By the Early Modern Irish period, then, each person had at least two independent pronominal forms (with the exception of the vestigial neuter pronoun, which has lost its variant in *s-*).

29 As the independent pronoun established itself in its new environments in Middle Irish, the functional distribution of A- and B-forms became more clear-cut. Middle Irish texts still show some A-forms in environments where – thinking teleologically – the modern reader might expect B-forms (see, in particular, *SnaG* III §10.20). By Early Modern Irish the system had become more well-defined. The A-forms of the pronoun are normally found in the role of subject immediately after a verb; the syntax of the B-forms is more flexible. The A-forms are conjunctive; the B-forms disjunctive. The B-forms are generally used to indicate the subject of a passive-impersonal verb and the direct object of an active transitive verb. They may also be used, as we have seen, for the pronominal subject of an intransitive verb. It will be argued below that the use of the B-form in the latter instance is semantically conditioned. When used with an active verb, whether transitive or intransitive, the A-forms may designate the semantic Agent, though this is not always the case. On the other hand, the B-forms of the pronoun are unambiguously and clearly Not Agent. In other words, the use of the B-forms with an intransitive verb is a highly marked construction that indicates the lack of agentivity on the part of the subject in the act described by the verb.⁴⁰

SEMANTICS

³⁹ Middle Irish orthography does not allow us to determine whether the final consonant of *sinn* was always palatalised at that stage of the language. As noted above, *sinn* is in origin a back-formation from *sinni*. Although *-nai* is sometimes found in Old Irish (Carney 1941–3: 223–4), in Middle and Early Modern Irish the 1 pl. *nota augens* is always *-ni/-ne*. The forms of the 1 pl. independent pronoun with non-palatalised *-nn*, like those with the palatalised final, were back-formed from *sinne*, but in the case of *sionn* the consonant preceding the *nota augens* was de-palatalised; *sinne* was felt to be the result of *sionn* + *-ne* just as, for example, *ar mbeannaicht-ne* is the result of *ar mbeannacht* + *-ne*.

⁴⁰ On the present occasion I am not concerned with the use of the pronoun except as an argument of a full verb (active or passive). The distribution of A- and B-forms of the pronoun in other environments is still somewhat fluid in Middle Irish, but again by Early Modern Irish the distribution has become more rigid. In Early Modern Irish, the B-forms are the only independent pronouns found outside of a verbal predicate, i.e. not as the subject or direct object of a full verb. This distribution is to be expected given that these forms are disjunctive. Exceptionally, after copula *is* and the conjunction *agus/is* (which has also absorbed Old Irish *os*) both the A-forms in *s-* and the corresponding vocalic B-forms are found, but this variation is found only after unstressed elements in *-s-*: as the copula *is* is proclitic, the prosodic word *isé*, with stress on the second syllable, could be analysed as either *is é* or *is sé*. The verb-like particle *ar* ‘says, said’ also allows the A-forms. This is probably a legacy of an original *sé* ‘this’ of *olsé*, as my colleague Dr Christina Cleary points out to me, though some have seen the *s-* as secondary. For *olsé*, see Quin (1960), Breatnach (2003) and Sims-Williams (2019: 92–4).

30 As mentioned above, one of the functions of the B-forms of the pronoun in both Middle and Early Modern Irish was to designate the subject of the passive-impersonal verb. Another was to signify the object of a transitive verb. Having discussed the rise of the independent pronoun in these environments in the Middle Irish period, McCone (1997: 177) writes: ‘It was but a small step from passive to quasi-passive intransitive types like *da:fuit leis-sium hé* (LL 31217) “he falls at his hand” [= (7)] and then to an intransitive active construction such as *arnach:tíssad friss hé* (30875) “that he should not come against him” [= (6)].’ While I do not agree with McCone’s analysis of the second example in the quotation, his term ‘quasi-passive intransitive’ is a useful starting point for understanding the use of the B-form pronouns in the construction we have been examining. What the direct object of a verb and the subject of the passive-impersonal verb have in common semantically is that they do not bring about the action described by the verbal predicate; rather they undergo it and may or may not change state as a result. Viewed in terms of semantic roles, both are normally Theme or Patient, not Agent (cf. §20). Semantically, many of the pronominal subjects in (1)–(3), (5)–(49) have a similar role vis-à-vis their verbal predicates as the pronominal subjects of the passive-impersonal verbs and the direct objects of transitive verbs. Consider (7) again.

da-fuit lessium hé

‘He [Giron] falls by him [Hercules]’

Da-fuit X means ‘X falls, dies violently’ here. This telic, dynamic verbal predicate is not an action consciously undertaken by the subject in the same way that the physical action described by *gonaid X Y* is; the subject undergoes the action described (dying violently) like the object of a transitive verb (the Y of *gonaid X Y*) or the subject of the passive-impersonal (*gonair/gonta(i)r X*) and the subject changes state (becomes dead). Similarly, in (1) the verbal predicate *téid X d’éag* ‘X dies’ does not describe an act brought about by the deliberate effort of X. In fact, seven of our examples have to do with dying (1, 5, 7, 9, 23, 25, 28). The atelic, stative verbal predicate of (8), *mairid* ‘lives, survives’ could be considered an antonym of *da-fuit* and the like, but semantically they have common ground – it is a predicate which does not describe a volitional act. Cf. also (35), probably from a lost elegy on a dead noble.

*Cia úaibh do agaill an rí
an uair do bhí againn é?*

‘Who of you did the king speak to while he was among us?’

In (35), ‘while he was among us’ has the force ‘while he was still alive’. Similarly, the verb *fásaidh* ‘grows, springs (from)’ in (38) and (41) does not describe a willed action – Ó Cearbhaill in (38), for example, had no control over whether or not he was born let alone from what stock. By definition, *teagaimh* ‘happens’ implies no agency on the part of the subject.

31 The subjects of the verbs of dying, living and happening discussed in the previous paragraph were all human. While a human may choose to undertake a voluntary action like that described by the verb *gonaid* in a way that he or she cannot undertake the continued state described by *mairid* (8) or the change of state described by *téid d’éag* (1), inanimate subjects are not in a position to consciously undertake an action at all: they can never be true Agents. In (11) the subject pronoun *í* refers back to *lassair* ‘flame’.

nī roerchōidigestar dō hí
'it did not hurt him'

In the anecdote in question, Míliuc is miraculously preserved from the harmful effects of a fire. Even if we ignore the question of whether the verb *airchóitigid X do Y* 'X harms, injures Y' implies deliberate action on the part of its subject in general, there is no doubt that a flame, while certainly capable of causing harm, is incapable of choosing whether or not it does so. The flame may be the subject of the verb *airchóitigid*, but it is not a semantic Agent. Obviously this applies too to other inanimate or abstract subjects in the list above: Death (10), the game of *fidchell* in (12), the severed hand in (13), the division of property in (19), the stone of (20), menses in (21), the secret intention of the warrior in (22), the pieces of land in (24) and (30), the feast of (27), the virtue of generosity (29), the state of not following in one's ancestors' footsteps in (36), the temptation of Eve in (37) and the potatoes of (49). This may also be relevant to the cattle of (16), who are lower on the animacy scale than human Agents, though the substantive verb certainly allows a non-agentive reading (see §33).

32 In §30, we looked at examples of our construction in which the verb describes a non-voluntary action (dying, living, growing, happening) and in which the human subject cannot be thought of as exercising agency in relation to the verbal predicate. In §31, we addressed the general lack of agency of inanimate subjects. Even when the subject of a verb is human (or otherwise highly animate), an action may or may not be volitional. Compare, for example, the following two sentences in English: 'I slipped through security and went on deck' and 'I slipped on the wet surface and went overboard'. In the former, 'I' is the subject of 'slipped through' and 'went on deck', and also the thematic Agent. But in the latter, 'I' is the subject of two non-volitional actions and cannot be thought as deliberately bringing the actions about. The verb 'goes' can describe a purposeful or non-purposeful act in different circumstances. In *téid X d'éag* (1), X is certainly not an Agent. In (15), the subject pronoun *í* refers to the speaker's daughter, whom he has agreed to give to the poet, Trusc, in marriage.

'Ragaid duitsiu hí,' ar Mac Rethi

"'She will go to you,'" said Mac Rethi'

In a society in which arranged marriage is practised, the bride-to-be – who is not named once in the story – is not conceived of as an Agent. She will go to live with Trusc, but it was not her decision that she should go but her father's. She occupies the role of Theme (she undergoes the action). Dillon's translation of *ragaid duitsiu hí* as 'Thou shalt have her' has something to recommend it. Presumably the poet who composed the poem from which (31) is excerpted was thinking of St. Anne fulfilling a role rather like the unnamed daughter of Mac Rethi in (15): *gur fhaoi lé triar d'fhearaibh í*, 'and [she] married three husbands'. St. Anne is the subject of this example, but the use of the B-form of the pronoun indicates that she was not imagined as the Agent of the act described by *faoiidh X le Y* 'X sleeps with, marries Y'. The poet is not necessarily suggesting that she was married off against her will, but she is not imagined as an active participant in the arrangement. To convey this into natural English, one might emend Bergin's translation above to a passive construction, 'she was married to three men' (cf. Mac Airt's translation of example 25). Contrast the following example of the same verb from the Book of Ballymote version of *Togail Troí* (cited in *eDIL* s.v. *foid*):

(51) *ō ro grādaig Telamōn Esiōna d'aī sī leis*

‘since Telamon loved Hesione, she took up with him’

In (15) and (31), the pronouns are marked morphologically as Not Agent. In (51), we have to do either with an independent pronoun (*sí*) or a suffix (*-sí*) (*SnaG* III §10.19; cf. Roma 2000: 115). Either way, Hesione is imagined as an Agent who has made a conscious decision based on the knowledge that her husband-to-be loves her. If we were to read the B-form of the pronoun here the meaning would change significantly: **ó ro grádaig Telamón Eisióna d’fhaí leis í* might best be rendered into English as ‘since Telamon loved Hesione, she was married off to him’; Hesione’s active consent and the role her husband-to-be’s love for her played in her decision-making have been deleted by substituting the B-form (thematically Not Agent) for the A-form, which alone is compatible with the semantic role Agent.

33 The substantive verb, when not used as part of a periphrastic progressive construction (*a-tú ag déanamh neith*), is normally stative not dynamic: it describes the subject’s state; it does not generally describe a volitional action on the part of the subject. It appears in particular from (14), (26), (33) and (40) that our construction could be used with the substantive verb to underscore the fact that the state described was not the result of deliberate action by the subject. Taidell, a poet’s daughter in a legal anecdote (14), has been kidnapped by the wizard Cotrebe: *go ruc in ingen leis aill ar áis aill ar égin*, ‘[he] carried off the girl partly by consent partly by force’ (Dillon 1932: 47, 57). However much Taidell consented to her abduction or not, it was Cotrebe who was responsible for her being away from home for twelve days. Taidell is not an Agent bringing about this state of affairs, hence the use of form of the pronoun associated with the passive or direct object (*ro baí immuigh hÍ*). Similarly, the Virgin Mary did not cause her own state of misery in (33), and the hypothetical patron-less poet of (40) would hardly have wished for or deliberately brought about his own degradation. The guests at the feast in (26), having been well plied and supplied, experienced a more pleasant state of affairs, but it was nonetheless not of their own making. As mentioned above (§31), the cattle of (16) may not have been conceived of as having any agency in their own right.

34 The remaining examples which have not been discussed are verbs of motion, in particular *tic/tig* ‘comes’ (2, 3, 4, 17, 18, 34), *téid* ‘goes’ (39) and *rig* ‘arrives’ (42).⁴¹ We have already seen instances where the subject of *téit/téid* is not the semantic Agent of the action it describes. *Tic/tig* can have senses which do not allow for a semantic Agent – ‘comes about, takes place, happens’, for instance (*eDIL* s.v. *do-icc* II (a)). In (6), one might indeed translate *arnách tíssad friss hé* as ‘that he should not come against/oppose him’, following McCone (see §30), but this rendering might imply Agency on the part of the subject, which would be inconsistent with the thematic function of the B-form of the pronoun in other examples (Not Agent). Instead, I would prefer a translation like ‘that he would not come to oppose him’, where ‘come to’ has the same sense as ‘come to’ in ‘he will come to no good’, or ‘so that he would not end up opposing him’. In examples like (2), we should perhaps understand *mar thánuig go hEamhuin é* as meaning something like ‘when he came to be in Eamhain’. With regard to (17) and (18), Prof. Lewis points out to me that the focus is on the actions to be taken by the *fine* ‘kin-group’ with regard to the *eissert* ‘one who neglects his holding’, and this may be a further motivation for the use of the ‘accusative’ pronominal form in reference to the *eisert*: his agency or non-agency is not the focus of attention in the passage.

⁴¹ Note, however, that in this last instance, the poet had *ránaig sinn*, though *ránaig inn* is found in the manuscript.

35 While the use of the B-form of the pronoun in an intransitive construction like (2) indicates that the subject is **not** agentive, it does not follow that every instance of the corresponding A-form or, indeed, a synthetic construction without any independent pronoun is necessarily agentive. For example, though inanimates and abstracts cannot be thought of as true Agents, it does not follow that they cannot be referred to using the standard conjunctive subject pronouns even when the verb in question is intransitive. The pronoun *sé* in (52) refers to *ar ghabhabhair do ghné an chróigh* ‘what you got of the colour of saffron’. This pronominal form is not confirmed by alliteration, but there seems no reason to doubt the reading.

(52) *Ar ghabhabhair do ghné an chróigh
do-chóidh sé ar alamhuin úaibh. (IGT II 318)*

‘What you got of the colour of saffron, it faded away to alum on you.’

The subject of (52) has no more agency than the flame that spared Míliuc in (11). It has already been mentioned that *teagaimh* ‘happens’, *tarla* ‘happened’ are found with both A- and B-form subject pronouns and in the synthetic construction (§21): given the semantics of the verb, it seems unlikely that there is any great distinction in meaning between *tarla sé*, *tarla é* or synthetic *tarla/do-rala*. Returning to the idiom *téid X d’éag* (1), I have one fifteenth-century example in Classical Modern Irish of the pronoun *sí* used in this phrase, and, while it is not confirmed by alliteration, the editor notes no variant readings in this regard.

(53) *Fan gcroich mar do chuaidh dá hiomchar
an t-aodhaire ór theich an tréad
ní ’n-a beathaidh do bhí Muire
's ní dheachaidh sí uile d’éag.*

‘When the shepherd left by His flock, suffered the Cross, Mary was no longer in life, and yet died not.’ (PB 9.33)

The phrase can also be used without an independent pronoun at all. Both (54) and (55) come from a late-sixteenth-/early-seventeenth-century poem (Breatnach 1999), but earlier examples of the same type are attested (*eDIL* s.v. *éc*). The plural subject of (54) is abstract.

(54) *Ceól agus imirt is ól,
Mac Muiris do budh mór clú,
cosmhail ris an dán a gcor,
do chuadar d’éag dá dhol súd.*

‘Mac Muiris of high renown – owing to his death music and play and carousing too have departed; their plight is like that of poetry.’ (quatrain 9)⁴²

(55) *Dá mbeinnsi im chompánach chóir,
an beangán glóir atá im chionn
do rachuin d’éag mar mo dhán,
ga fearr damh cách dá chur riom.*

⁴² More literally, ‘Music, playing and drinking [...] their downfall is like that of poetry: they have died out owing to his death’.

‘If I were a true companion I would die like my art. Of what avail to me is the modest glory attending me that is wished upon me by everyone?’ (quatrain 12)

Similarly, the cattle of (16) are designated by a B-form pronoun in that example (*atáit ... íat*), but in similar sentences a little later in the same passage of commentary, the pronoun does not occur and the subject is expressed on the verb alone (*atáit*). To fully understand why a synthetic or analytic variant was chosen on a particular occasion, we would have to consider the discourse function of a pronoun as against a verbal ending + *nota augens* or a bare verbal ending. I attempt no such analysis on this occasion.⁴³ The point being made here is only that the B-form pronoun is not obligatory when the non-agentive subject is not expressed by a noun-phrase: A-form pronouns do occur in these environments and non-agentive subjects can also be expressed synthetically. The only claim made in this paper is that the construction in (1) and the likes highlights the non-agentivity of the subject when that subject is expressed by a pronoun; it is not being suggested that the subject is a thematic Agent wherever this construction could have been used and was not.⁴⁴ The decision to avail of this construction or not may have been conditioned by semantic or pragmatic factors, issues of register and (in poetry) metrical requirements. Change over time may also play a role.

36 Our construction marks the non-agency of the subject of an intransitive verb by employing the same form of the pronoun as that which is used to designate the subject of the passive-impersonal verb and the direct object of a transitive verb. We have seen that this is semantically justified. Syntactically, an intransitive sentence with a B-form pronoun is more similar to a passive-impersonal sentence than a transitive one in that the passive-impersonal and the intransitive verb have only one obligatory argument. In addition, in both types of sentence the morphosyntactic marking of the thematic function Not Agent is normally possible only when the subject is pronominal. I have no examples of the nominal subject of an intransitive verb being marked accusative to make salient its lack of agency: to my knowledge, **ragaid in mnaí duitsiu* is not found despite the grammaticality of (15) *ragaid duitsiu hí*. The ‘subject’ of the passive-impersonal verb is sometimes marked as accusative in Middle and Early Modern Irish (*SnaG* III §5.2; Hoyne 2018: 396–7 and the works cited there),⁴⁵ but this is not the norm despite the use with the passive-impersonal of subject pronominal forms that are formally and thematically identical with pronominal direct objects.⁴⁶ McCone (1997: 177) is probably right therefore in seeing a direct link between the emergence of independent subject pronouns with the passive-impersonal and the ‘quasi-passive intransitive’ construction.

TYPOLGY

37 We have seen that the defining characteristics of our construction are that (a) the verb is normally intransitive, (b) the subject is a pronoun that is syntactically and morphologically identical with the passive-impersonal subject pronoun/direct object pronoun (but see example 24), and (c) the subject is not the semantic Agent of the verb. To my knowledge, it was Elisa

⁴³ See the topic accessibility hierarchies set out in Roma (2000: 144) and the discussion there.

⁴⁴ As Prof. Lewis points out to me, we can compare English ‘finds oneself’ or ‘happens to be’, which are highly marked non-agentive constructions. The use of a less marked equivalent, however, does not necessarily imply agency.

⁴⁵ In addition to the examples cited in the publications referenced above, Damian McManus draws my attention to *ABM* 96.28d: *dream lé múchthar gach móirchiaigh (: ngliaidh)*, ‘a group [poets] by whom every great confusion [in learning] is cleared up’, where *ciaigh* is acc. sg.

⁴⁶ Contrast also the accusative case-marking of a nominal subject after *-fil* (see fn. 32 above).

Roma (2000: 127–8) who first suggested that use of the B-form pronouns in examples like those gathered above is related to the **unaccusativity** of the verbs involved. Verbs whose subjects are not semantic Agents can be classified as ‘unaccusative’, making use of a term first introduced into wider linguistic discourse by Perlmutter (1978); those intransitive verbs whose subjects are volitional Agents are ‘unergative’. The Irish language in the Middle and Early Modern period is in most respects a **nominative-accusative** language: broadly speaking, the nominal subjects of transitive and intransitive verbs are distinguished morphologically (by initial mutation and case-marking) and/or syntactically (by word-order) from the nominal direct objects of transitive verbs.⁴⁷ With respect to pronouns, however, the Irish language in this period shows some clear **ergative** features. In an ergative system, the subject of an intransitive verb and the direct object of a transitive verb will be marked in the same way; the subject of an intransitive verb behaves differently from the subject of a transitive verb. The morphosyntax of the pronominal subject in Irish can be described as a ‘split’ (or more accurately ‘fluid’) intransitive system.⁴⁸ This is certainly not without parallel in other languages. For example, Dakota Sioux is a split ergative language in which the same set of pronouns is regularly used to mark the subject of an unaccusative verb and the object of a transitive verb (Pinson 1990: 79–81; Riggs 1893: 13–14; cf. Perlmutter 1978: 165–6). *Wanowan* ‘I was swimming’ is an unergative verb, *m-ištima* ‘I was sleeping’ is an unaccusative verb; the subject pronoun in the former is *wa-*, while the subject pronoun in the latter is the same as the object pronoun *ma-* in *A-ma-ya-p^ha* ‘you hit me’. Irish differs from a split ergative language like Dakota in that the ergative-type marking of the subject of particular intransitive verbs is not obligatory. A comparandum is provided by Middle Welsh. In marking the arguments of intransitive verbal nouns, Middle Welsh also shows a more fluid type of unaccusative/unergative split. The logical subject of an unaccusative verb is normally marked by a possessive pronoun or by a genitive construction (see *eu hanuot* lit. ‘their originating’ in the following example).

Ac wynteu a dywedassant eu hanuot o lys Arthur.

‘And they said that they were from Arthur’s court.’

The logical subject of an unergative or transitive verb on the other hand is indicated by the preposition *o* (see *uarchogaeth* ‘riding’ + 3 sg. masc. *ohonaw* below).

Yr ymdidan yssyd yn dywedut uarchogaeth ohonaw ... nny doeth hyt y vanachlawc.

‘The story says that he rode ... until he came to a monastery.’

At least with some verbs, it was apparently possible in Middle Welsh to select between an unaccusative or an unergative reading. Consider *mynet o’th tad* lit. ‘going by your father’ below.

... dan amot mynet o’th tad ... y wrha y’r amherawdyr Arthur ...

‘... on condition that your father ... go to pay homage to Emperor Arthur ...’

⁴⁷ The accusative case-marking of the direct object was on the wane in the Middle and Early Modern Irish period, of course.

⁴⁸ A ‘split’ ergative language is – crudely put – one in which some constructions can be analysed as nominative-accusative, others as ergative-absolutive. The label ‘fluid’ is preferable in a case like that discussed here in that the split is not clear-cut but subject to specific pragmatic and semantic conditions (see Manning 1995: 172).

In the example above, the logical subject could have been indicated perfectly grammatically by *mynet dy dad*. It has been argued that in instances where *o* is used with a verbal-noun argument which otherwise might be marked by a genitive phrase or a possessive pronoun ‘the subject is conceived of as being agentive’. In the specific example just given, the preposition may be used ‘to highlight the conscious and deliberate nature of going to pay homage’, whereas ‘zero-marking (*mynet dy dad ...*) would merely state the change of location’ (Borsley, Tallerman and Willis 2007: 327–8; cf. Manning 1995: 189–91). If this interpretation is correct, it is the unergative reading of an optional unaccusative/unergative verb that is more marked in Middle Welsh verbal-noun clauses, while in Irish, the unaccusative construction *ragaid í* is more salient than the unmarked variant *ragaid sí*; further, Middle Welsh can distinguish between unaccusative and unergative readings of verbal nouns but not of finite verbs, whereas the Irish pronominal strategy discussed here is relevant only to finite sentences. Whatever about these differences between the Middle Welsh and Middle/Early Modern Irish systems, on the present occasion it is sufficient to note that the kind of fluid ergativity attested in the Irish pronominal system is not unparalleled.⁴⁹

38 It may be no more than an accident of the evidence that so few examples of the Irish unaccusative construction examined in this paper contain a 1 or 2 person pronoun and that the 1 sg. is not found at all. Most of our texts are 3 person narratives, but, even if we had a broader range of texts, it may be that in ordinary discourse the 1 and 2 persons were not often employed in sentences that emphasised lack of agency as commonly as other persons. As we saw earlier, inanimate objects cannot be true Agents. Humans can occupy different thematic roles, but in normal discourse, humans are more likely to be Agents than, say, Patients, and the first and second person pronouns in particular are more likely to occupy the role of Agent than any other thematic function. This is captured by Silverstein’s Animacy Hierarchy (1976), a version of which is given below (from Griffith 2008: 61–2).

1 pronoun > 2 pronoun > 3 pronoun > proper noun > human > animate > inanimate

We must also, of course, reckon with the difficulties of interpreting the data. If Middle Irish *ro-fitir mē* (LL 33503) ‘I knew’ were an example of our construction, for instance, it would be impossible to recognise it as such. The pronoun occurs immediately after the verb, but that does not mean it could not be disjunctive, as we saw earlier (§22). Furthermore, even if Middle Irish had a B-form of the 1 sg. pronoun (Classical Modern Irish *mhé*), contemporary Middle Irish orthography would not have distinguished between this and the A-form *mé*. In any event (3), (39)–(44) and (46) are sufficient proof that our construction was not confined to the 3 person alone. If we are prepared to accept that the B-type subject pronoun with an unaccusative verb had as its precursor an infix pronoun, we may also have an additional 2 sg. example.

THE INFIXED SUBJECT PRONOUN

39 Given the similarity of our construction to the passive-impersonal (§36), it would be worth investigating whether examples are found in which the subject pronoun of an intransitive verb is marked as Not Agent by infixing it in the same manner as the subject of the passive

⁴⁹ For unaccusativity in Early Irish syntax, specifically as it relates to verbal agreement with co-ordinate subjects, see Lash and Griffith (2018). For unaccusativity in Modern Irish syntax, see McCloskey (1996) and Doyle (2004).

verb (or, indeed, the direct object of an active transitive verb). In his edition of *Scéla Mucce Meic Da Thó*, Thurneysen (1935: 27) drew attention in the notes to the following sentence:

(56) **Dot·luid** i mbernai armo cheannsa

He remarked: ‘The impersonal construction *do-t·luid* for “thou camest” is uncommon but not without parallels’. He proceeded to connect this example with idioms of *téit* and *do-icc* combined with the preposition *do*, such as *tic dī co aos togai* ‘she comes to the age of choice’. In a brief note in the second volume of this journal, M.A. O’Brien (1952–4: 216) gave further examples of the idiom *do-icc do X Y* in connection with *dot-luid* and sought to clarify its meaning:

[...] Thurneysen equates the two constructions personal and impersonal and translated *dot·luid* ‘you came’. But, as is clear from the two examples given by Thurneysen and the seven quoted above, there is the important distinction that the impersonal forms always imply lack of volition on the part of the logical subject. I suggest translating *dot-luid i mbernai ar mo cheannsa* ‘it came to your turn to face me in the gap’ more especially as this sentence is immediately preceded by *Tānacais-siu dano* ‘you came’.

I broadly agree with O’Brien on the semantics of *dot-luid*, but I would suggest an alternative analysis of the infix. Both Thurneysen and O’Brien appear to assume that the infixed 2 sg. pronoun in *dot-luid* had dative force, that *dot-luid* was equivalent to *do-luid duit* (cf. *SnaG* III §10.3). While this interpretation is certainly possible, (56) could be analysed in the same way as the unaccusative construction with an independent pronoun that has been the focus of this paper and translated ‘you came to be in the gap before me’. In other words, we could take *dot-luid* to be equivalent to *do-luid tú* with impersonal *do-luid* and 2 sg. infixed *-t* as a subject pronoun. The same analysis might hold for (57) also.

(57) *Mar at-chúala Eua in sain,*
reba adchosain Ádaim,
dos·fuit for *lār*, *luid i ssás,*
is bec nā dechaid díanbās.

‘When Eve heard that, Adam’s outbursts of reproach, she fell to the ground, she was trapped, she nearly died speedily.’ (Greene and Kelly 1976: ll. 1717–20, *Saltair na Rann*)

It has been suggested that the infix of (57) *dos·fuit* is ‘without real meaning’ (McCone 1997: 175; cf. Strachan 1904: 170). Certainly, because the verb is intransitive, we cannot imagine an impersonal like *dom-chuirethar*. Strictly speaking, the infix is indeed unnecessary: one could read simply *do·fuit*. But like its later analogue with an independent B-type subject pronoun *do·fuit ... í*, the infixed subject pronoun of (57) lends the expression a slightly different shade of meaning: morphosyntactically viewed *do·fuit* is neutral as to whether the act described was volitional or not; *dos·fuit* and *do·fuit ... í* make explicit that the subject did not exercise agency in relation to the verbal predicate.

40 Three further examples of an apparently meaningless infix in contemporary Middle Irish manuscripts may be instances of our unaccusative construction with an infixed subject pronoun.

(58) *Doslū Mac Cēcht iar sin hi Conachta co ndernad a leges i mMaig Bréngair.*
(LU 7979–80, *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*)

‘Mac Cécht escaped after that into Connacht and he was given medical treatment in Mag Bréngair.’

(59) *Fer bethadh nó élúthach argni dina curadaib ra chathaig ic comét na cathrach nīn érlá acht atrullai di rennaib gā *7 di ardéssaib claideb* (LL 31378–80, *Togail Troí*)

‘Any man left standing or survivor of the warriors who fought protecting the city, he did not make it out alive unless he escaped from the points of spears and the very tips (?) of swords.’

(60) *Doslúiset Ulaid assede co hInis Ulad* (LL 38580, *Bórama*)

‘The Ulaid escaped from there to Inis Ulad.’

We have seen that a verb of motion like *do-tét* (56) or *do-fuit* (57) may be unaccusative or not and that the subject pronoun may be infixed if the former meaning obtains. If (58) and (60) are examples of this construction, the subject is marked twice – by a masc. sg. infix (-s) and the proper name *Mac Cécht* in (58) and by a 3 pl. infix (-s) and the proper noun *Ulaid* in (60).⁵⁰ Given that the subject infix of intransitive *as-luí* ‘escapes, makes it out alive’ is morphologically and syntactically equivalent to the subject infix of a passive-impersonal verb or the direct object infix of a transitive verb, this double-marking is not necessarily problematic. Cf. the likes of *rod bí int aingel ... Iácób* ‘the angel struck Jacob’ (*Saltair na Rann* 3049, cited in *SnaG* III §10.1), where -*d* is an infixed direct object co-referential with *Iácób*.⁵¹ I have no examples to hand with the passive-impersonal verb, however.⁵²

41 It is generally accepted that *Scéla Mucce Meic Da Thó* is fundamentally Old Irish in date, but it survives only in later copies and has undergone a certain amount of linguistic modernisation. (57) might indicate that the unaccusative construction seen in these examples was in existence by c. 988, though the manuscript itself, Rawlinson B 502, is later in date (late eleventh/early twelfth century) and the infix is not metrically confirmed. It seems likely that the infixed subject pronoun of the passive-impersonal provided the main model for this construction as it did for the later independent pronominal construction that probably emerged (in the literary language at least) after the eleventh century when the independent subject pronoun is first seen in use after the passive (*SnaG* III §10.15). For the history of the

⁵⁰ For the 3 sg. masc. infixes -*n* and -*s* in Middle Irish, see *SnaG* III §10.6.

⁵¹ Some examples are ambiguous as to whether the infix is genuinely proleptic (*SnaG* III §10.1) or a mere relative marker (*SnaG* III §11.36), as Prof. Ruairí Ó hUiginn reminds me. The infixed -*d* of *cip hé nod marba ... Cāin* ‘whoever kills Cain’ (*Saltair na Rann* 1993, cited in *SnaG* III §10.1) is a case in point.

⁵² Though the case distinction is not marked, I assume that *Mac Cécht* is nominative in (58) like *Ulaid* in (60), while *Iácób* should be acc. in *rod bí int aingel ... Iácób*. Cf. *ragaid ... í* but not **ragaid in mnaí* (§36 above). Our construction is distinct in this respect from the double-marking of the accusative in a sentence like *nís toirche in muicc* (acc.) *fon indas-sin* ‘you will not get the pig in that way’ discussed by Lucht (1994). If a passive-impersonal sentence with explicit nominal subject and co-referential infix were extant, it would provide a better parallel in this respect for (58). The use of 3 person infixed pronouns for the subject of the passive-impersonal is already attested in *LU* (McCone 1997: 175; *SnaG* III §11.40).

analytic construction in general, it is significant that (56) is an example of the 3 sg. used as an impersonal with the pronoun of another person.⁵³

42 In his compelling account of the origin of the analytic construction, Greene (1958) pointed out that the copula *is* functions less like a true verb in Old Irish than a demonstrative particle. Its de-personalisation is reflected in the fact that *am fer* is possible in Old Irish ('I am a man') but not **am in rí* 'I am the king', in place of which a reprise construction is necessary (*is messe in rí*, etymologically 'the king, it is me'). In Middle Irish, the personal forms of the copula (*am*, *at*) began to give way to what is in effect the combination impersonal *is* + infixed subject pronoun + predicate: *isam fer* 'I am a man'. The infixed subject pronoun of the copular phrase functions like the infixed subject pronoun of the passive-impersonal. The 3 sg. pronominal subject of the copula and the passive-impersonal was not normally expressed except by the relevant *notae augentes* (*is fer-som* 'he is a man'). From the beginning of the eleventh century, the individual 3 sg. independent pronouns began to take the place of their respective *notae augentes*, so that *is fer-som* was replaced by *is fer é* – a process that probably began with the 3 sg. fem., where there was a minimal distinction between the suffix *-si* and the independent pronoun *sí* (*is ben-si* > **is ben sí*), though this use of *sí* (as opposed to the later *í*) is not actually attested in Middle Irish manuscripts (*SnaG* III §10.14). *Isam fer* became *is fer mé* by analogy with *is fer é*. Part of the spread of the independent pronoun then was the extraction of infixed pronouns from within the copular verbal complex (see McCone 1997: 18–19) and their translation to post-verbal position. Now that the infixed *-am* of *isam fer* had become the independent and disjunctive *mé* of *is fer mé*, the way was free for the subject infixes of the passive-impersonal to make the same transition. It is at this point that we also find our unaccusative construction with an independent pronoun, and, as suggested above, the independent pronoun there may have developed out of the infix in *dot-luid* and similar sentences. The direct object infix of the active transitive verb then underwent the same change.⁵⁴ Finally, the transformation of the 3 sg. suffix into an independent subject pronoun affected active verbs. As has been pointed out by Liam Breatnach (*SnaG* III §10.19), the most likely starting point was again the 3 sg. fem.: it was a short journey from *a-tá-si* to *a-tá sí*. The slot occupied by *sí* could then be filled with any other pronoun, except in the 3 pl. which could only combine with an impersonal verb inflected like a synthetic 3 pl. verb (*ní biat síat*).⁵⁵ The fact that the passive-autonomous and unaccusative verbs were found with independent subject pronouns may have contributed to the pressure for active verbs to adapt to the analytic construction also. As we saw (§§24–9), the language eventually furnished itself with two sets of independent pronouns – one for the subjects of passive-autonomous

⁵³ Given the diachronic argument made here, I have confined myself on this occasion to a discussion of Middle Irish examples of the unaccusative construction with infixed (proleptic) subject pronoun found in contemporary manuscripts. Some of the examples registered by Strachan (1904: 170) of infixed *-s* with 'no apparent force' from manuscripts later than the twelfth century can certainly be analysed as instances of this construction. I would also note that, just as the infixed subject pronoun of the passive-autonomous and the infixed object pronoun remained part of the scholar's literary register along with their independent counterparts down to the collapse of the bardic order in the seventeenth century and long after they had vanished from ordinary speech, we do not need to assume a definite watershed in the case of our unaccusative construction with all examples with an infixed subject pronoun belonging to an earlier period than those with an independent pronoun.

⁵⁴ Of course, just as synthetic and analytic verbal forms both found a place in the literary register, whatever the precise distribution may have been in the spoken language of the time, we find both infixed and independent pronouns in these environments in our sources down to the end of the Early Modern Irish period.

⁵⁵ In a thought-provoking paper on the spread of the analytic construction, Roma (2000: 118–19, 140–2) proposes a different but to my mind less convincing account of the spread of the independent subject pronoun. Roma's starting point is a sentence like *tusa ruccad* 'it is you who was born', where *tusa* is a cleft with a deleted copula (i.e. it is equivalent to *is tusa ...*). Pace Roma (2000: 118–19), it does not seem to me that 'it was but a small step from *tusa ruccad* to *ruccad tusa*'. On the other hand, Roma's lucid account of the pragmatic factors which might have encouraged the spread of the 3 sg. pronouns in particular is more convincing (ibid: 142–7).

and unaccusative verbs and the direct object of active transitive verbs, and another for the subjects of active verbs more generally.

43 If the analysis of (56)–(60) above is accepted, a small part of the rise of the independent subject pronoun and the analytic construction has been overlooked. The earliest independent subject pronouns with active verbs, as we have seen, are the ‘quasi-passive’ or unaccusative type. Semantically, these partially overlap with the passive-impersonal; structurally, they are identical with it. Take *not-sōerfaider* ‘you will be saved’ (*Saltair na Rann* 3806), for instance. *Sōerfaidir* without an infix is a 3 sg. form (‘he/she/it will be saved’), but outside of the 3 sg. it functions as an impersonal. It is only the addition of an infixed subject pronoun that lends the construction person here: *-sōerfaider* has voice and tense but no person. *Dos-fuit* ‘she falls’ (57) or *dot-luid* in (56) have the same structure: in both, we have an impersonal 3 sg. verbal form (active not passive in morphology, quasi-passive in meaning) which acquires personal reference by means of an infix. In other words, the use of the 3 sg. form of an active verb as an impersonal or zero-form with a subject pronoun that marks person and number may not be an innovation of the analytic construction with an independent pronoun in the eleventh century. It has been argued that it was probably found already with unaccusative verbs prior to the emergence of ‘the quasi-passive’ type *da-fuit ... hé*; the subject pronoun was simply infixed as with a passive-impersonal verb (*dot-luid*).⁵⁶

44 The independent subject pronoun spread first to environments where we later regularly find only the B-forms; the pronoun is the result of the transformation of pronominal suffixes (*is fer-som > is fer é*) and the extraction of infixed pronouns from their verbal complexes (copula *isam fer > is fer mé*; passive-impersonal *not-sōerfaider > sōerfaidir thú*; unaccusative *dos-fuit > do-fuit î*). The spread of the independent subject pronoun to the environments where we eventually find only the A-forms is later and involves only the transformation of 3 sg. pronominal suffixes (*a-tá-si > a-tá sí*) and the analogical spread of the new independent pronouns to other persons. Be that as it may, the crucial role of the passive-impersonal (and also the copula) in the formation of the analytic construction is still reflected in the concord-rules of both the A- and B-forms. In early Middle Irish, when the analytic construction was taking root, one still finds the copula inflecting for number before a 3 pl. pronoun (*it é*) (*SnaG* III §10.13) and the passive-impersonal was regularly inflected for number in the 3 pl. (*SnaG* III §11.40). This lies behind the obligatory agreement-rule whereby a 3 pl. subject pronoun took a 3 pl. impersonal verb in Middle Irish (McCone 1997: 177). As we saw, this concord-rule lingered on into the Early Modern Irish period in the unaccusative construction, so that we find the likes of *do-chádar ... iad*, with which we began this investigation.

ABBREVIATIONS

AC	A. Martin Freeman (ed.), <i>Annála Connacht: the Annals of Connacht (A.D. 1224–1544)</i> (Dublin, 1944).
AiD	L. McKenna (ed.), <i>Aithdioghluim Dána</i> , ITS 37/40 (London, 1939/40).

⁵⁶ I have no examples to hand but one would expect that the impersonal verb in this construction would be inflected 3 pl. with a 3 pl. infixed subject pronoun. In this it would contrast with the likes of impersonal *dom-chuirethar* and *atom-chomnaic*, and also impersonal *-fil*, which should remain 3 sg. regardless of the number of the infixed subject/object. Note also here constructions with a 3 sg. verb and a logical subject indicated by a prepositional phrase like *madmaid ar X* ‘X is routed, put to flight’ (Lash and Griffith 2018: 135–8); the construction *a-tá de X* ‘there are X’ (ibid.: 98–9); and the reflexive construction with *imma-* + 3 sg. verb, in which the logical subject of the action can be expressed by a prepositional phrase (e.g. *co ’mma-muirfe doib* ‘so that they will kill one another’) (O’Brien 1938: 234–4).

ALC	W.M. Hennessey (ed.), <i>The Annals of Loch Cé</i> , 2 vols (London, 1871).
ALI	W. N. Hancock et al. (eds), <i>Ancient Laws of Ireland</i> , 6 vols (1865–1901).
Dán Dé	L. McKenna (ed.), <i>Dán Dé: The Poems of Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh, and the Religious Poems in the Duanaire of the Yellow Book of Lecan</i> (Dublin, [1922]).
DiD	L. Mac Cionnaith (ed.), <i>Dioghluim Dána</i> (Dublin, 1938).
IBP	O. Bergin (ed.), <i>Irish Bardic Poetry</i> (Dublin, 1970).
LCAB	T. Ó Donnchadha (ed.), <i>Leabhar Cloinne Aodha Buidhe</i> (Dublin, 1931).
Magauran	L. McKenna (ed.), <i>The Book of Magauran/Leabhar Méig Shamhradháin</i> (Dublin, 1947).
PB	L. McKenna (ed.), <i>Philip Bocht Ó hUiginn</i> (Dublin, 1931).
TD	E. Knott (ed.), <i>The Bardic Poems of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn</i> , ITS 22/23 (London, 1922/6).

REFERENCES

- AHLQVIST, A. 1976: ‘On the position of pronouns in Irish’, *Éigse* 16, 171–6.
- BENNETT, R., ELFNER, E. and MCCLOSKEY, J. 2015: ‘Pronouns and prosody in Irish’, in L. Breatnach, R. Ó hUiginn, D. McManus and K. Simms (eds), *An XIV Comhdháil Idirnáisiúnta sa Léann Ceilteach, Maigh Nuad 2011: Imeachtaí / Proceedings: XIV International Congress of Celtic Studies, Maynooth 2011* (Dublin), 19–74.
- BORSLEY, R. D., TALLERMAN, M. and WILLIS, D. 2007: *The Syntax of Welsh* (Cambridge).
- BREATNACH, L. 2003: ‘On words ending in a stressed vowel in Early Irish’, *Ériu* 53, 133–42.
- BREATNACH, P. B. 1999: ‘A poem on the end of patronage’, *Éigse* 31, 79–88.
- CARNEY, J. 1941–3: Review of M. Joynt (ed.), *Contributions to a Dictionary of the Irish Language. N-O-P fasciculus*, *Éigse* 3, 223–6.
- DILLON, M. 1932: ‘Stories from the Law-Tracts’, *Ériu* 11, 42–65.
- DIXON, R. M. W. 1996: *Ergativity* (Cambridge).
- DOYLE, A. 2004: ‘“The king is dead”: unaccusative verbs in Irish’, in J. Carey, M. Herbert and K. Murray (eds), *Cín Chille Cúile: Texts, Saints and Places. Essays in Honour of Pádraig Ó Riain* (Aberystwyth), 105–15.
- GRAY, E.A. 1982: *Cath Maige Tuired*, ITS 52 (London).
- GREENE, D. 1955: ‘*Un joc grossier* in Irish and Provençal’, *Ériu* 17, 7–15.
- , 1958: ‘The analytic forms of the verb in Irish’, *Ériu* 18, 108–12.
- , 1972: Review of Jackson 1972, *Studia Hibernica* 12, 167–70.
- , 1973: ‘Synthetic and analytic: a reconsideration’, *Ériu* 24, 121–33.
- GREENE, D. and KELLY, F. 1976: *The Irish Adam and Eve Story from Saltair na Rann. Volume I: Text and Translation* (Dublin).
- GRIFFITH, A. 2008: ‘The animacy hierarchy and the distribution of the *notae augentes* in Old Irish’, *Ériu* 58, 55–75.
- GWYNN, L. 1911: ‘The Life of St. Lasair’, *Ériu* 5, 73–109.
- HOYNE, M. 2016: ‘On stressed monosyllables ending in a short vowel in Classical Modern Irish’, *Celtica* 28, 186–200.
- , 2017: ‘Early Modern Irish miscellanea’, *Ériu* 67, 169–86.
- , 2018: *Fuidheall Áir: Bardic Poems on the Meic Dhiarmada of Magh Luirg c. 1377 – c. 1637* EMITS 1 (Dublin).

- , 2018a: ‘*Seacht bpearsain fhichead uair mé: a poem on the optative subjunctive in a copy of Irish Grammatical Tracts III–IV*’, *Ériu* 68, 99–127.
- , 2019: ‘*IGT/BST citations and duplicate entries: the ascriptions in the H 2.17 copy of IGT III–IV*’, *Ériu* 69, 41–53.
- , 2019a: ‘Transmission, metre and language: some observations on the poetry of Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe’, in P. Riggs (ed.), *Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe: The Poet and His Craft*, ITS Subsidiary Series 31 (Cork), 24–71.
- JACKSON, K. 1972: *The Gaelic Notes in the Book of Deer* (Cambridge).
- Kelly, F. 2014: *Marriage Disputes: A Fragmentary Old Irish Law-Text* Early Irish Law Series 6 (Dublin).
- LASH, E. and GRIFFITH, A. 2018: ‘Coordinate subjects, expletives and the EPP in Early Irish’, *Journal of Celtic Linguistics* 19, 87–156.
- LUCHT, I. 1994: ‘Doppelte Markierung des Akkusativs beim Transitivum im Altirischen’, *ZCP* 46, 80–118.
- MAC AOGÁIN, P. 1968: *Graiméir Ghaeilge na mBráthar Mionúr* Scríbhinní Gaeilge na mBráthar Mionúr 7 (Dublin).
- MAC CANA, P. 1990: ‘On the accusative of destination’, *Ériu* 41, 27–36.
- MAC GIOLLA LÉITH, C. 1993: *Oidheadh Chloinne hUisneach*, ITS 56 (London).
- MANNING, H. P. 1995: ‘Fluid intransitivity in Middle Welsh: gradience, typology and “unaccusativity”’, *Lingua* 97, 171–94.
- MEYER, K. 1907: ‘Neue Mitteilungen aus irischen Handschriften’, *Archiv für celtische Lexicographie* 3, 215–47.
- MCCLOSKEY, J. 1996: ‘Subjects and subject positions in Irish’, in R. D. Borsley and I. Roberts (eds), *Syntax of the Celtic Languages* (Cambridge), 241–83.
- MCCONE, C. 1997: *The Early Irish Verb*, second edition, Maynooth Monographs 1 (Maynooth).
- MCGREGOR, W. B. 2010: ‘Optional ergative case marking in a typological semiotic perspective’, *Lingua* 120, 1610–36.
- MCMANUS, D. 1992: ‘The preterite passive plural in *BST*’, *Éigse* 26, 13–19.
- , 2009: ‘Good-looking and irresistible: the hero from Early Irish saga to Classical poetry’, *Ériu* 59, 57–109.
- , 2017: ‘Fault-finding in the Grammatical Tracts’, in G. Ó Riain (ed.) *Dá dTrián Feasa Fiafraighidh: Essays on the Irish Grammatical and Metrical Tradition* (Dublin), 199–231.
- O’BRIEN, M. A. 1938: ‘Varia II’, *Ériu* 12, 236–44.
- , 1952–4: ‘An impersonal construction in Old Irish’, *Celtica* 2, 216.
- Ó CUÍV, B. 1999: ‘Elegy on Féilim mac Maghnusa Méig Uidhir ob. 1487’, *Celtica* 23, 261–8.
- Ó MACHÁIN, P. 1998: *Téacs agus Údar i bhFilíocht na Scol* (Dublin).
- O’RAHILLY, C. 1962: *Cath Finntrágha*, MMIS 20 (Dublin).
- O’RAHILLY, T. F. 1941: *Desiderius*, reprinted 1955 and 1975, MMIS 12 (Dublin).
- Ó RIAIN, G. 2016: ‘*Táinig an tráth nóna: old age in Classical Irish religious verse*’, in C. Breatnach and M. Ní Úrdail (eds), *Aon don Éigse: Essays Marking Osborn Bergin’s Centenary Lecture on Bardic Poetry (1912)* (Dublin), 155–92.
- Ó SÉ, D. 1996: ‘The forms of the personal pronouns in Gaelic dialects’, *Éigse* 29, 19–50.
- PERLMUTTER, D. M. 1978: ‘Impersonal passives and the unaccusative hypothesis’, *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Berkley Linguistics Society* 38, 157–89.
- PINSON, T. M. 1990: ‘Possessor ascension in Dakota Sioux’, *Work Papers of the Summer Institute of Linguistics* 34, 75–96.
- PÓIRTÉIR, C. 1996: *Glórtha ón Ghorta* (Dublin).

- QUIN, G. 1960: ‘Old-Irish *ol* “inquit” ’, *Celtica* 5, 95–102.
 —, 1974: ‘The Irish modal preterite’, *Hermathena* 117, 43–62.
 RIGGS, S. R. 1893: *Dakota Grammar, Texts and Ethnography* (Washington).
 ROMA, E. 2000: ‘How subject pronouns spread in Irish: a diachronic study and synchronic account of the third person + pronoun pattern’, *Ériu* 51, 107–57.
 SILVERSTEIN, M. 1976: ‘Hierarchy of features and ergativity’, in R. M. W. Dixon (ed.), *Grammatical Categories in Australian Languages*, 112–71 (Canberra).
 SIMS-WILLIAMS, P. 2019: ‘The quotatives Old Irish *ol/olsé* and Middle Welsh *heb/hebyr*’, *Celtica* 31, 90–123.
 STRACHAN, J. 1904: ‘The infix pronoun in Middle Irish’, *Ériu* 1, 153–79.
 STOKES, W. 1887: *The Tripartite Life of Patrick* [...], 2 vols (London).
 —, 1891: ‘Life of S. Féchín [*sic*] of Fore’, *RC* 12, 318–53.
 —, 1900: ‘Acallam na Senórach’, *Irische Texte* 4, 1–438.

MÍCHEÁL HOYNE

Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies