

Two types of non-verbal predication in Modern Irish*

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Abstract:

In this paper, I present syntactic evidence from copular constructions in Irish to show that there are two distinct semantic "be" constructions: a predicative construction and an equative one.

The task of isolating different semantic structures is made especially difficult by virtue of the fact that we can have no direct evidence for them. All semantic structure is mediated through syntactic phenomena. In this paper, I discuss a case where two syntactically distinct constructions correspond exactly to a controversial semantic split. The syntactic phenomenon can only be characterized in terms of this semantic difference, thus giving relatively straightforward evidence for the underlying semantic distinction.

There are at least two current theories in the literature about the number of non-verbal predication constructions present in Universal Grammar. One view holds that there are two kinds of *be* constructions, one for equatives and one for predicatives, and these two differ in their argument structure. This view was proposed in philosophical works like Russell (1919) in the Fregean tradition, and is the approach adopted by Akmajian (1970), Higgins (1973), Zaring (1996), Rothstein (1987) and Rapoport (1987) among others:

1) *Multiple Be Analysis (MBA)*

There are two kinds of copular structures:

- a) **Predicative Structures** NP2'(NP1)
- b) **Equative Structures** EQUALS'(NP1, NP2)

In (1a), the predicative construction, one noun phrase (NP2 in 1a) serves directly as the predicate of the other: NP1, which functions as an argument. In (1b), both NPs function as arguments of an abstract copular predicate. This latter construction is supposed to equate the two NPs, whereas the former construction attributes the property described by NP2 to the argument NP1. In recent work, several authors including Partee (1986), Heggie (1988), Moro (1991, 1997), Heycock (1991, 1994), Guéron (1993), Rouveret (1995), Déchaine (1993), DeGraff (1992) and Zwart (1992) have denied the existence of equative constructions, following observations of Jespersen (1924) and Ruwet (1968). They propose instead that there is only one argument structure for copular constructions:

2) *Unified Be Analysis* (UBA)¹

NP2(NP1)

Under this analysis all copular constructions involve the predication of NP by the other, even in equative environments. These authors all claim that there is no natural language equivalent to the logical '=' (EQUALS) relation. They claim that both predicatives and equatives show asymmetries between the two NPs in copular constructions. These asymmetries are assumed to follow from an underlying subject/predicate distinction to be found in both equative and predicative constructions.²

Following in the groundbreaking footsteps of Zaring's (1996) discussion of Welsh, I show in this paper that the facts of Modern Irish copular constructions can help us to choose between these two approaches. I claim that there is significant support for the MBA. This evidence comes from the fact that Modern Irish clearly distinguishes two copular constructions in terms of word order, and that the differences between these constructions cannot be attributed to factors other than argument structure.

1. Copular constructions in Irish.

Irish has a startling array³ of constructions which are roughly equivalent to *be* in English. In example (3), we see two of these constructions⁴:

3) a) Is *dochtúir* (é) **Seamus**

COMP doctor (AGR) James

'James is a doctor'

b) Is é **Seamus** *an captaen*

COMP AGR James the captain

'James is the captain'

In the above examples, semantic predicates are shown in *italics*; semantic subjects are shown in **boldface**. Example (3a) is an example of a predicative construction; in this form, we have the complementizer *Is* immediately followed by a non-referential nominal predicate, which is in turn followed by an optional agreement morpheme and subsequently the subject. The equative construction (3b) has the subject (marked obligatorily with the preceding agreement morpheme) ordered before the definite NP predicate. After outlining some basic assumptions about Irish syntax in section 1.1, I will present an analysis of these two word orders based upon the MBA.

1.1 Some assumptions about Irish Syntax.

Before considering the evidence that these two constructions present for the MBA, it is necessary to consider two important assumptions I will be making about Irish syntax: the derivation of the basic word order and the status of the *Is* morpheme in (3) above.

1.1.1 Word order in Modern Irish

Irish is a VSO language, as is seen in (4).

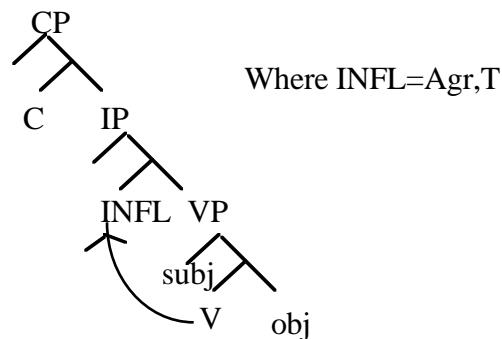
(4) Leanann an t-ainmní an briathar i nGaeilge

follow.PRES the subject the verb in Irish

'The subject follows the verb in Irish'

Following McCloskey (1983) among many others, I assume that this order is derived from an underlying SVO order. Simplifying somewhat for expository purposes, I adopt the raising analysis of VSO order proposed by Sproat (1985) among others. I assume that the surface order is derived by the head movement of V, around the surface subject, to the highest inflectional head (5), here represented as Infl.

(5)



While it is probably the case that VSO order in Irish is derived more complexly, also involving movement of the subject and object arguments, such matters would only confuse the issue under discussion in this work. I presume then, that the tree in (5) is simply a shorthand notation for a more complex structure with multiple functional categories and overt movement of the arguments. See Bobaljik and Carnie (1996), Carnie (1995), Duffield (1995), Guilfoyle (1994), McCloskey (1996a,b) among many others for discussion of such alternatives.

1.1.2 The morpheme *Is*

The second issue that we must deal with before delving into the different kinds of non-verbal copular constructions in Irish is the categorial status of the morpheme *Is* seen in the examples above. In this short section, I will discuss briefly the reasons for analyzing this morpheme as a complementizer particle, following Ahlqvist (1972), Ó Sé (1987), Doherty

(1996) and Carnie (1995). There are a great many arguments in favor of the complementizer analysis of the morpheme, and I refer the reader to the above references for more extensive discussion; in this section, I will simply present a couple of simple cases.

In traditional grammars, *Is* is often referred to as a "defective" verb (see Ó Maille 1912). From a purely descriptive perspective, as well as a historical one, there is some justification for this assumption. First, like verbs in declarative clauses, *Is* is initial in its clause. From a historical perspective, the analysis of *Is* as a verb is also understandable. In Old Irish, the *Is* morpheme was fully inflected like a verb, and shows many similarities to English "is". This is seen in (6).

6)	Am	1s	ammi	1p/	
	at/it	2s	adib/adi	2pl	
	is	3s	it	3pl	(Old Irish)

These historical and distributional arguments aside, however, there is overwhelming evidence that Modern Irish *Is* is not a verb, but is a complementizer particle.

Doherty (1996) notes that in Irish, verbs are inflected for a full range of tenses and moods, past, present, future, conditional and subjunctive. The copula is not; it only has a present/past distinction

7)	Present/Future	Past/conditional
	<i>is</i>	<i>ba</i>

This is a feature that *Is* shares with complementizers in the language. Preverbal complementizer particles also only show a past/non-past distinction.

8)	Present/Future	Past/Conditional
	ní 'neg'	níor 'neg.past'
	go 'that'	gur 'that.past'
	an 'Q'	ar 'Q.past'

Similarly, Ó Sé (1987) notes that in West Kerry Irish, there is a definite trend toward the phonological merger of the preverbal complementizer particles and *Is*. For example, older generations distinguished the question form of *Is* from the question complementizer particle, by the fact that the particle triggered the nasalization mutation on following words (indicated here by a superscript ^N), the copula did not. In the speech of most modern speakers these two have merged and both particle and copula trigger nasalization and have an identical phonological shape:

- 9) an > an^N an^N > an^N
 Q.is *Q.part*

These are only two small examples of the evidence that can be put forward in defense of the claim that *Is* is not a verb, but a complementizer. Again I refer the reader to the above mentioned sources for further argumentation.

1.2 The different kinds of *Is*.

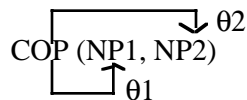
Let us now return to the issue under consideration in this paper: the number of semantic "be" constructions. Recall the basic word order facts of Modern Irish copular sentences:⁵:

- 10) a) *Is dochtúir (í) Máire*
 COMP doctor (AGR) Mary
 'Mary is a doctor'
- b) *Is í Máire an captaen*
 COMP AGR Mary the captain
 'Mary is the captain'

With the predicative construction (10a), we have the semantic predicate preceding the semantic subject. When the subject is a full NP it can optionally⁶ be preceded by a pronominal agreement morpheme which agrees with the subject. In (10b), we have an

equative *Is* construction, the predicational NP is preceded by the subject NP, which in turn is preceded by the agreeing pronominal (obligatory here). Notice that in neither case is there any verbal element equivalent to the English verb 'to be'. The MBA provides a straightforward analysis of these facts: there are two different base-generated structures for the sentences in (10). Sentence (b) is an *equative* sentence where both the NPs are arguments. Sentence (a), on the other hand, is *predicative*. Modifying slightly the proposals of Rapoport (1987) and Rothstein (1987), I propose that equatives are small clauses headed by an abstract phonologically null two place COP predicate⁷. This COP predicate assigns a theta role to each of its two arguments:

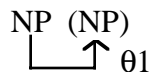
11) a)



b) $\lambda x \lambda y [\text{COP}'(x,y)]$

For the purpose of this work I will assume that the theta role assigned to the internal argument is the 'ATTRIBUTE' (θ_2), and that assigned to the external argument (θ_1) is the 'ATTRIBUTE RECIPIENT' (AR). Let us now consider the predicative structures, which have non-referring attributed properties. I treat these, following Rapoport (1987), as one place predicates. In these, the attributed property functions directly as the predicate on a single AR argument:

12) a)



b) $\lambda x [\text{NP}'(x)]$

This analysis is consistent with the semantics of the nominal attributes themselves. The predicate NP in predicatives are not referring expressions (following Doherty 1996). Both the NPs in equatives, on the other hand, are referring expressions; their argument structure is saturated and complete. Because of this, they are inherently arguments and participate in the equative construction, rather than the predicative one. There are thus two

In keeping with the above prediction, nominal predicates are not allowed with *Agus*.

- 19) *agus [é dlíodóir]
 and him lawyer
 'and he is/was a lawyer'

This is consistent then with the notion that nominal predicates in Irish bear inflectional features. Since small clauses have no inflectional complex, the inflectional features on the nominal predicates have nothing to check against, thus accounting for the ungrammaticality of (19).

In the equative construction, on the other hand, neither of the NPs is functioning as a predicate, thus neither moves. Both of them remain in their D-structure positions.

- 20) SUBJECT(AR) ATTRIBUTE
 Is Ø+é **Seamus** *an Captaen*
 COMP COP+AGR James the Captain
 'James is the captain'

If anything moves in the equative, it is the abstract COP morpheme in (21).

- 21)
- $$[_{CP} \text{Is } [_{IP} \text{INFL } [_{SC} \text{subj } [\text{COP attribute }]]]]$$
-

Some evidence for this analysis comes from the relative placement of agreement morphology in the two kinds of copular clause. In sentences with verbal predicates, we consistently have the order where agreement morphology precedes the subject NP:

- 22) Prt V + Agr S
 Ní Rith+eann Cathal
 NEG run+3S Charles
 'Charles does not runs'

Let us make the null assumption, then, that the order in (22) always obtains in Irish, and that the presence of agreement morphology before a noun in Irish is a clear diagnostic for

the subjecthood of that noun. We can also claim that the position preceding agreement morphology (immediately following any particle) is the position reserved for predicates:

23) Particle + Predicate+Agreement + Subject

In equative clauses the agreement morphology precedes both the subject and the attribute NP:

24) AGR SUBJ ATTRIBUTE

Is é Seán an platapas

COMP AGR John the platypus

'John is the platypus'

In predicatives, on the other hand, the agreement morpheme (when present) appears between the predicate and the subject NP:

25) ATTRIBUTE AGR SUBJECT

Is platapas é Seán

COMP platypus AGR John

'John is a platypus'

We thus see that in equatives, no NP is in the predicate position (between the particle and agreement heads), and both NPs (AR and attribute) are in argument positions. In contrast, in predicatives, the predicate NP appears between the particle and the agreement head (and has thus undergone head-movement). The subject follows the agreement morpheme⁸. These facts are summarized in the chart in (26):

26)

	particle	predicate	agreement	subject	other
verb	Ní <i>NEG</i>	rith <i>run</i>	+eann <i>+3S</i>	Seán <i>John</i>	
predicative	Is <i>COMP</i>	platapas <i>Platypus</i>	(é) <i>3S</i>	Seán <i>John</i>	
equative	Is <i>COMP</i>	∅ <i>COP</i>	é <i>3S</i>	Seán <i>John</i>	an platapas <i>the platypus</i>

By adopting the distinction between predicative and equative sentences, we have a straightforward account of the placement of this agreement morpheme. In the predicative construction, the predicate N⁹ raises to the highest inflectional position, thus landing between agreement¹⁰ and the particle, in a manner exactly parallel to verbs¹¹. With equatives, on the other hand, both NPs are arguments. Therefore neither of them raise to predicate position.

Given these two different predicate types, then, we have a nice account of the different word orders of the definite and indefinite attributes. They are due to different head-movement properties resulting from their different argument structures, in a manner strikingly similar to the derivation of sentences with verbal predicates.

2. "Unified" theories of copular constructions

In section 1.2, I showed that MBA account of copular construction elegantly accounts for the range of copular constructions in Modern Irish. In this section, I consider some of the so-called "Unified" (UBA) accounts of copular constructions, and demonstrate how they simply cannot transfer to Irish, or fail to account for all the facts of Irish. For similar discussion see Zaring's (1996) analysis of Welsh.

Heggie (1988), Moro (1997), and Heycock (1991, 1994) stand as some of the most recent proponents of the UBA in the literature. The focus of these works concerns a series of alternations called the canonical/inverse distinction. Consider, for example, the two sentences in (27):

- 27) a) A picture of the wall was the cause of the riot **canonical**
 b) The cause of the riot was a picture of the wall **inverse**

(27a) is typical of what Moro calls a *canonical* order (where the notional subject is in first position); (27b) is an example of a *reverse* (or *inverse*) order where what he calls the "predicate" is in initial position. Heycock defines inverse copular constructions as follows:

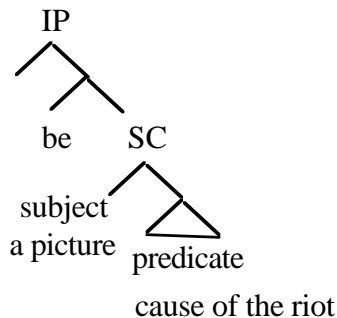
The inverse copular construction is characterized by the occurrence of an initial DP being used attributively and a postcopular DP used referentially.

Moro (1997) notes that extraction out of the second NP in these two constructions is not symmetrical:

- 28) a) (?¹²)Which riot do you think a picture of the wall was the cause of?
 b) *Which wall do you think the cause of the riot was a picture of?

To account for these facts, he claims that the underlying structure for both these sentences is (28) where *cause of the riot* is the head of a small clause with *A picture of the wall* serving as its subject.

29)



In canonical structures, the subject raises like a normal subject NP to its case position in the specifier of IP:

30) [IP[A picture of the wall]_i [[INFL was] [SC t_i [the cause of the riot]]]]

In reverse constructions, however, it is the predicative head of the small clause that undergoes head movement to the specifier of IP.

31) [IP[The cause of the riot]_i [[INFL was] [SC [a picture of the wall] t_i]]]

The cause of the extraction asymmetries is due to the fact that any extraction out of a subject NP will result in a subjacency violation. He noted that unavailability of extraction of and extraction from the inverse construction demonstrates that the two NPs in equatives are not necessarily "equal", since they show asymmetries. Informally, Moro's account of these asymmetries holds that the subject DPs are islands for extraction. In the reverse construction the second NP is the subject, not the predicate, thus any attempt to extract out of the post-copular subject position will result in a subjacency violation. Given that there seems to be a subject/predicate asymmetry in both the reversibility of NPs in predicative constructions, and in the extraction behaviors of equatives, the proponents of the UBA claim that there is no equative construction¹³ at all. Instead, for them, all copular constructions are predicative, the asymmetries falling from the subject/predicate distinction.

With the relative simplicity and explanatory adequacy of these analyses in mind, we might ask whether such an account is easily extended to the Irish constructions. For example, we might claim that the predicate-first orders of Irish predicative constructions are simply the fronting of the predicate in an 'inverse' construction. I claim that this simply is not possible. There are really two issues at stake here. First, we must see if the English canonical/inverse alternations are really of the same type as the Irish word order alternations. Second, if not, we must account for the structural asymmetries UBA supporters have posited to argue against the MBA. This is the approximate organization for the rest of this section.

First, we have the problem of positioning the agreement morpheme. Recall from section 1 above that in the predicative order (32), the optional agreement morpheme appears

between predicate and the subject. In equative constructions (33), on the other hand, the agreement morpheme appears before both NPs:

32) a) Is + predicate +agr_i + subject_j

b) Is dochtúir é Cathal

COMP doctor AGR Charles

'Charles is a doctor'

33) a) Is + agr_i + subject_j + attribute

b) Is é Cathal an dochtúir

COMP AGR Charles the doctor

'Charles is the doctor'

The position between complementizer head and agreement morphology is a privileged one in Irish syntax. Only tensed predicational material may appear there. Arguments always follow agreement morphology. The account given above, where nominal predicates head-raise to an inflectional head, accounts easily for these facts. In predicative constructions, the nominal predicate undergoes raising to the highest inflectional head, just like a verb. In equatives, both NPs are arguments, thus remain lower than the agreement morpheme. Any account given in terms of NP (i.e. specifier) movement of predicates has trouble accounting for the fact that in Irish nominal predicates, but not nominal attributes, precede the agreement morpheme.

The second piece of evidence that the predicative/equative alternation in Irish is not the same thing as the canonical/inverse alternation is the simple fact that Irish also has a inverse/canonical alternation, but only as a subset of the equative construction (34):

34) a) Is captaen (é) Séamus **Predicative**

COMP captain AGR James

'James is a captain'

b) *Is Séamus (é) captaen

COMP James AGR captain

'*A captain is James'

- c) Is é Séamus an captaen **Equative**
COMP AGR James the captain
'James is the captain' (Canonical)
- d) Is é an captaen Séamus
COMP AGR the captain James
'The captain is James' (inverse)

Since Irish has a clear equivalent to the canonical/inverse construction, it thus follows that this alternation cannot be the same as the Irish predicative/equative alternation.

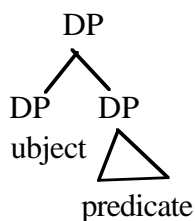
If we adopt the MBA, we might well ask how we can account for the asymmetries brought to light by proponents of the UBA. I propose that these follow from an asymmetry in argument structure rather than from the predicate/subject distinction. An underlying assumption of many of the proponents of the UBA is that an equative construction must necessarily, and by definition, be the equivalent of the logical '=' EQUALS relation. In other words, they assume that an equative construction must have a structure like that in (35):

35)



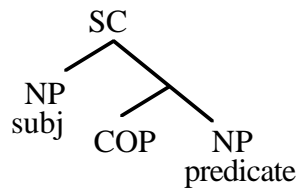
The two NPs are not distinguished structurally, thus are predicted to behave alike. They then make the (somewhat strange in my opinion) assumption that an asymmetry between two NPs is necessarily encoded in a predication relation between them. For those authors (e.g. Moro (1991, 1993) Heycock (1991, 1992)) who believe predication to be linked to argument structure and projection, this distinction is encoded in a small clause structure:

36)



There is a strong structural asymmetry between the two NPs in (36). This structural difference explains the asymmetrical behavior of the two NPs. I believe, however, that an error has been made in conflating two separate issues: i) the predicate/subject relation and ii) the structural asymmetries between the two NPs in equative clauses. It is not necessarily the case that the structural asymmetries are a result of a predicate/subject distinction. Rather, it is entirely possible that these follow from a difference in argument structure. If we take the view of equatives described above, there is a structural asymmetry between the subject NP and the attribute NP: the subject NP is generated in the specifier of the small clause headed by the COP morpheme, and the attribute is the complement. (This is presumably correlated with the different theta roles these two NPs bear.)

37)



Notice that this view of equatives does not make the claim that the two NPs are "equals" in the logical sense, but instead distinguishes a reading where one NP is predicated of another (predicative constructions) from one where two NP arguments are linked to each other in approximate equivalence by the COP morpheme. This account provides a straightforward analysis of the distribution of Irish copular constructions, yet allows for the asymmetries noted by proponents of the UBA.

3.0 Conclusion

The distribution of copular constructions in Modern Irish provides strong evidence against a unified approach to non-verbal predication. In this paper, I distinguished between three types of copular construction. I showed that given the positioning of the subject agreement morpheme in Irish there are essentially two word orders in Irish, which correlate exactly to the two different kinds of copular clause distinguished by the MBA: equational and

predicative. Further, I showed that these two word orders do not lend themselves to the kind of accounts that have been proposed by proponents of the UBA. If one makes the semantic distinction between equatives and predicatives, a straightforward analysis of the syntactic differences in word order types is provided, lending support to the underlying semantic differences between the two copular types.

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¹In much of the literature, the UBA is often called the *Predicate Raising* analysis (e.g. in Heycock 1991,1994) and in Moro (1997). I find the term *Unified Be Analysis* (following Heggie 1988) more transparent.

²For an excellent summary of the controversy between the UBA and the MBA, see Zaring (1996).

³For a comprehensive survey of kinds of copular clauses in the various Celtic languages, see Hendrick (1994).

⁴Modern Irish also has a verbal copular *Tá*, which we will not look at here. See Doherty (1996) and Carnie (1995) for extensive discussion of the distribution of the *Tá* type copular constructions.

⁵ See Stenson (1981) and Ó Siadhail (1989), and Carnie and Harley (1994) for descriptions of these orders.

⁶There is dialect variation over the presence of this optional pronoun. See Ó Siadhail (1983, 1989), Ó Sé (1995, 1987) for discussion.

⁷There are two differences between this and Rapoport's proposal. First, Rapoport posits that her '=' predicate is base generated in INFL. In an attempt to provide a parallel between equatives and predicatives and to provide an account of its theta properties, I have placed COP as the head of the small clause that contains its arguments. Second, Rapoport's analysis has a true equative nature— both NPs are equivalents with no differences between them (see the discussion below in section 3).

⁸There is one crucial difference between subjects of verbal predicates and subjects of *Is* sentences. In *Is* sentences the subject always takes accusative case. The appearance of 'accusative' case here may well be illusory, however. In Carnie (1995), I point out that the nominative/accusative case distinction in Irish is only visible in the pronominal system. Further, even there the distinction is merely the presence or absence of an /S/ (orthographic <s>): *sé/sí/siad* 'he'/'she'/'they' vs. *é/í/iad* 'him'/'her'/'them'. This marking is not necessarily a reflex of syntactic case. The <s> forms are never found anywhere except to the immediate right of a tensed verb (McCloskey and Hale 1984). For example, in coordinate NP subjects, a pronominal subject does not show up with <s>, even though it is in a nominative case position:

- i) Chuir Síle agus éisean an ríomhaire sa réaltlong
 Put.past and him.emph the computer in.the starship
 'He and Sheila put the computer in the starship'

Chung and McCloskey (1987) note that there is a strong adjacency requirement between <s>-grade pronouns and verbs; no adverbial material may intervene between the verb and these pronouns. No such constraint holds on the *é/í/iad* class of pronouns. This supports

the idea that the so-called "nominative" pronouns are not a real morphological realization of nominative case. Rather, they simply show a phonological marking of their clitic status to the verb. The "accusative" case in *Is* sentences, then, is simply a reflex of the fact that there is no verb in these sentences for the clitic subject to adjoin to.

⁹Notice here, that not only do the heads of non-verbal predicates head-raise to this position, but also the complements and adjuncts to this head:

(i) *Is amhrán a^L bhuaifidh an píobaire* “**Yellow Submarine**”

C song C play.fut. the piper

'Yellow Submarine' is a song which the piper is going to play'

This may appear at first to be evidence against a head movement analysis of the word order presented. On closer examination, as Carnie (1995) notes however, there is significant evidence that these complex elements are behaving like X⁰s. Unlike all other NPs in the language, they do not permit extraction with a resumptive pronoun strategy. Similar evidence comes from the behavior of these NPs with respect to the responsive-ellipsis phenomena discussed in McCloskey (1979, 1990). This construction involves the elision of all material not in the Infl head. Non-verbal predicates, even when complex, fulfill this requirement and remain after responsive-ellipsis. See Carnie (1995) and Doherty (1997) for discussion. See Carnie (1995) for more discussion of how to implement the idea that these complex predicates really behave like heads.

¹⁰See Rapoport (1987), Doron (1986), Heggie (1988, 1990), DeGraff (1992) and Carnie (1995) for discussion of the distribution of this pronoun in Irish, and similar ones in Hebrew and Haitian Creole.

¹¹Doherty (1996) presents some evidence that, at first glance, seems problematic for the approach outlined here. In Irish, like English, the subject of nominal predicate can bind a reciprocal within that predicate:

i) [John and Mary]_i are each other_i's bosses

ii) Is cosúil lena chéile iad

C like with-3-pl-poss each-other them

'They are like one another' (Doherty 1996)

On the basis of this data he argues that the subject of a nominal predicate in Irish must c-command (and thus be higher) than the predicate into which it binds. These facts appear problematic for the approach outlined in this paper, since the subject NP is c-commanded by the predicate head, the exact reverse of what the data predicts. The situation is not as dire as it first appears, however, considering recent proposals about movement and reconstruction. Huang (1993) claims that, for *wh*-moved constituents at least, VPs (and by extension all predicate phrases) are subject to reconstruction. I propose that we extend this notion to predicates which have undergone head movement. This extension follows naturally from the copy theory of movement found in Chomsky (1995). Under the copy theory, elements are not 'moved' *per se*. Rather, a copy of the constituent is adjoined at the 'moved to' position. Traces under this theory are not just placemarkers, but are structurally complete — although phonologically null — copies of the moved element. Under this conception of movement, the usual c-command requirement on reciprocal binding is met even when a predicate has undergone head movement. The complex element containing the reciprocal has a phonologically null, but structurally complete trace below the surface subject position. This trace is c-commanded by the antecedent head at LF, thus the condition on reciprocal binding is met.

¹²The "?" judgment here is mine, rather than that of Moro and Heycock who judge sentences as completely acceptable.

¹³By 'equative construction' here, unlike my discussion of Irish above, I mean a literal 'equals' relation where there is no asymmetry between the NPs, see below for more discussion.