E 6.1: Syntax: Early Irish

1181. Baumgarten (Rolf): Discourse markers in medieval Irish texts: cė̂, cair, ni̊, and similar features.
   In Éiri 43 (1992), pp. 1–37.

   1. Functional identity of cė̂, cce, cces, and cair; 2. Origin of cair and cce; 3. cce(a)ce; 4. ni̊ insae, ni̊ ansae, ni̊ hannsa; n′insae; 5. Translation, leto style, stylistic variation; 6. cce(a)st, ceist; 7. Conclusions. Incl. index of texts referred to.


12725. García Castillero (Carlos): Old Irish tonic pronouns as extraclausal constituents.

   In Éiri 29 (1978), pp. 1–12.

    Discusses the relationship between nominal complementation and VSO structure and suggests that the Old Irish category of the verbal noun and the syntactic constructions associated with it are Celtic innovations.

3616. Lindeman (Fredrik Otto): On the origin of the nasalizing relative construction in Old Irish.

   Republ. in Lindeman studies, pp. 165-171.

1499. O’Rahilly (Cecile): Tect tuidecht.
   In Éigse 15/1 (Samhradh, 1973), pp. 1–6.

    On ‘rhyming jingles’, often consisting of nominalized imperatives, e.g. techt tuidecht, aig thaig, so̊i toí, áin tháin (áin [lí]bain in LL. 34840 corrupt); cf. sa(i)n cha(i)n, baí chaí, óc aib tuí baid - all denoting ‘(quick) movement to and fro’. Some discussion of rhyming combinations of two words in ModIr.

322. O’Rahilly (Cecile): Three notes: 1. feib (amal) as dech.

    ‘Just as, exactly as’ (not with full superlative meaning).

309. Kelly (Fergus): Two notes on final-verb constructions.
   In Celtica 18 (1986), pp. 1–12.

Greene (David) (ref.)


   Identifies an example of nasalization after relative forms of simple verbs in CHII 591:20.


   In GS Schindler (1999), pp. 19–45.
   Investigates the origin of tmesis and Bergin’s rule, the proposed genitive, and the independent dative.

   In Éru 41 (1990), pp. 27–36.


2593. Henry (P. L.): Bergin’s law and syntactical subordination in Irish.
   In ZCP 36 (1978), pp. 29–53.

   In Indogermanisch und Keltisch (1977), pp. 34–43.

   ad H. Wagner, in FS Pokorny, pp. 289-314 (BILL: 2986), and in Indogermanisch und Keltisch, pp. 204-205.


In JCeltL 3 (May, 1994), pp. 41–73.

11214. Graver (Jenny): The syntax and development of the Old Irish autonomous verb.
   In Formal approaches to Celtic linguistics (2011), pp. 41–63.

10058. Amory (Frederic): Tmesis in MLat., ON, and OIr. poetry: an unwritten notatio norræna.
   In ANF 94 (1979), pp. 42–49.


9749. Disterheft (Dorothy): Sujet et objet en irlandais ancien et moderne.
   In ICHL 5 (1982), pp. 44–53.

   Discusses the phonological properties of the Bergin’s rule construction, in particular the nasalization of the verb after an accusative singular or a genitive plural, arguing that it results from the attempt to adapt verb-initial order to residual pre-verb-initial clausal configuration.

2691. Rosén (Hannah): Periphrasis and figura etymologica in some sources of Middle Irish.
   Examines the various syntactical patterns in which the figura etymologica is attested, and argues that in the type where the verbal noun is the topic of a cleft sentence the cognate finite verb lost its lexical prominence and gave way to an auxiliary verb, thus facilitating the proliferation of the periphrastical construction with do·gni, do·beir, fo·ceird, etc.

346. Mac Cana (Proinsias): Three syntactic notes: 1. la with vn. to denote concomitant action.


   Finds an example of dative (tichtin) for nominative (tichtu).

11215. Griffith (Aaron): Old Irish pronouns: agreement affixes vs. clitic arguments.
Argues that the infixed and suffixed pronouns are verbal agreement affixes, while interpreting the *notae augentes* as pronominal arguments (i.e., as the true pronouns of Old Irish).

6374. Ó hUiginn (Ruairí): Aspects of clause subordination in the Celtic languages.

   *In ZCP* 39 (1982), pp. 78–82.


2729. Lucht (Ina): Doppelte Markierung des Akkusativs beim Transitivum im Althirischen.
   *In ZCP* 46 (1994), pp. 80–118.

Discusses the proleptic usage of the object infix pronoun, based on examples collected from Old and Middle Irish texts.

10110. Carnie (Andrew), Harley (Heidi), Pyatt (Elizabeth): The resurrection: raising to comp? Some evidence from Old Irish.
   *In SLS* 24 (Fall, 1994), pp. 85–100.

1411. McQuillan (Peter): Complementation and the subjunctive in Early Irish.

The semantic and pragmatic properties of main-clause predicates which condition the use of the subjunctive in Old and Middle Irish complement clauses.

1. Introduction to the linguistic issues affecting mood and complementation;
2. Presentation and analysis of the data;
3. Summary and conclusions.

11208. Disterheft (Dorothy): Irish complementation: a case study in two types of syntactic change.

1279. McQuillan (Peter): On the semantics and pragmatics of *cía* in Early Irish.


543. Mac Cana (Proinsias): On Celtic word-order and the Welsh 'abnormal' sentence.
   *In Éiri* 24 (1973), pp. 90–120.
1. The evidence reconsidered; A. Nominativus pendens; B. The transferred subject in Irish; C. Initial subject with non-relative verb; D. Noun-initial as mark of explanation or response; E. Noun-initial as a stylistic, quasi-rhetorical feature; F. Miscellaneous instances of noun-initial sentences; [2.] Verb-initial the primary construction in British?; [3.] Breton and Cornish word-order; [4.] The spread of noun-initial order in Southern British.


11284. Mac Cana (Proinsias): Narrative openers and progress markers in Irish.
   Discusses the use of three related fronting devices (verb-second order, nominativus pendens, and initial adverbial phrases).

17852. Stüber (Karin): do-gné-periphrasis in Old and Middle Irish.
   Suggests this category was never fully grammaticalised, and that remained marginal throughout the history of Irish; also suggests it may have belonged to a sub-literary register.

845. Disterheft (Dorothy): Purpose and consecutive in Irish.
   1. Introduction; 2. Old Irish; 3. Middle Irish; 4. From result to consecutive.

18252. Barðdal (Jóhanna), Eythórsson (Thórhallur), Frotscher (Michael), Johnson (Cynthia A.), Le Mair (Esther): Position as a behavioral property of subjects: the case of Old Irish.
   In IF 122 (2017), pp. 111–141.

463. Ó Gealbháin (Séamas): The double article and related features of genitive syntax in Old Irish and Middle Welsh.

1280. Ó hUigimn (Ruairí): Complementation in Early Irish: the verba dicendi.
   Incl. app. with collection of references to dependent noun clauses and verbal noun phrases in a range of textual sources.

   In ÉtC 18 (1981), pp. 121–133.
   Suggests that these are represented in Old Irish by two types of construction: I. intí followed by a relative verbal form in the case of Latin restrictive relatives, and II. éside as focus of a cleft sentence in the case of Latin non-restrictive relatives.

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1262. Baumgarten (Rolf): Cr(a)ide hé... and the early Irish copula sentence. 

814. Ó hUiginn (Ruairí): On the Old Irish figura etymologica. 
In Érinn 34 (1983), pp. 123–133.

Three (of four) syntactic types in Old Irish relative clauses in figura etymologica with examples where two (or more) words of a similar etymology are brought into close syntactic connection.

9535. Disterheft (Dorothy): Syntactic innovation in early Irish. 

On the rise of the prepositional construction of the verbal noun.


8149. Stüber (Karin): Mit cem, ohne` negierte Komplemente im Altirischen. 

Examines the adverbial use of phrases introduced by cem, and argues that the conditional value gave rise to the function of cem-phrases as complement clauses after evaluative predicates, subsequently spreading to other types of predicates.

19269. Ó hUiginn (Ruairí): The prepositional interrogative clause. 

Discusses the development of the prepositional interrogative relative clause in Irish, Scottish Gaelic and Manx, tracing its origin to the Early Irish period.

In Linguistic and philological studies in Early Irish (2014), pp. 131–176.


8294. Velasco López (Henar): El dativo en aposición del antiguo irlandés y la lingüística indoeuropea. 
In RSEL 30/1 (2001), pp. 145–162.

10903. Newton (Glenda): The Old Irish double system of verbal inflection: towards a synchronic analysis.
   In COPIL 2 (Nov., 2005), pp. 149–171.

2138. Lucht (Ina): Doppelse Markierung des Akkusativs beim Transitivum im Altirischen.

   In PWPL 15/1 (2009), pp. 163–172.

2696. Stefański (Witold): Der Konditionalsatz im Altirischen.


1040. Ó hUiginn (Ruairí): Notes on Old Irish syntax.

15137. Sanfelici (Emmanuela): Thoughts on Old and Middle Irish verbal nouns: the type DP doVN.
In Linguistic and philological studies in Early Irish (2014), pp. 177–201.


18316. Dedio (Stefan), Widmer (Paul): S, A, and P argument demotion with preverbal *imm-(a-N)* in Old and Middle Irish.

   Reads *ro ás nóir in n-ingin* (*LU* 3161) as *roás nóir in ingín* (with dative of apposition) and translates as ‘she grew with great beauty, the girl’, thus dismissing the claim that *ásaid* ‘grows’ is impersonal with two accusatives.

6353. Mataso vi¢ (Ranko): Adjectival phrases in Old Irish.

14805. Breatnach (Liam): On the line-break in early Irish verse, and some remarks on the syntax of the genitive in Old and Middle Irish.
   Studies the separation of head-noun and genitive across a line-break in Early Irish poetry.

   In Formal approaches to Celtic linguistics (2011), pp. 203–228.

839. Mac Cana (Proinsias): *V*aria: V. A note on the use of direct speech in *Saltair na Rann*.
   On the use of *arsé ar, arsi ar* to mark direct speech, and some modern equivalents.


11178. Lash (Elliott): The rise of O V word order in Irish verbal-noun clauses.

   In You take the high node and I’ll take the low node (1973), pp. 229–251.
Studies the use of Old Irish particles and conjunctions, focusing particularly on the ‘connective’ con.

11276. Newton (Glenda): The development of head movement: the rise of verb-initial word order in Old Irish.
   Proposes an explanation for Cowgill’s particle theory based on minimalist syntax.

4774. Eksa (Joseph): Bergin’s rule: syntactic diachrony and discourse strategy.

9743. Mac Cana (Proinsias): Word-order in Old Irish and Middle Welsh: an analogy.
   On the pattern particle-copula + subject/object + verb.

4880. García Castillero (Carlos): La sintaxis del pasivo en irlandés antiguo.

11908. Hamilton (Noel): Abairtí scoilte doibhirteartha.
   Discusses focusing strategies in early Irish.

12994. Lash (Elliott): Subject positions in Old and Middle Irish.
   In Lingua 148 (Sep., 2014), pp. 278–308.

   ad Rolf Baumgarthen in Ériu 23.235 ff.; tentatively adds a further example of the possesive cop. + inf. pron. construction (iss-um X, etc).

   Also considers Old Irish final and consecutive clauses.

7021. Holland (Gary B.): Relativization and word order in Old Irish and Vedic Sanskrit.
   In JIES 24/3-4 (Fall/Winter, 1996), pp. 323–331.

7129. Ahlqvist (Anders): The syntax of relative marking in Old Irish.

6992. Aristar (Anthony): The Old Irish relative and word order in pre-Old Irish.
   In JIES 15/3-4 (Fall/Winter, 1987), pp. 353–358.
   Statutory public lecture of the School of Celtic Studies, 1978. On syncope and the 'trisyllabic factor' in Archaic Irish verse; includes a discussion of Bergin's law.

502. Ó Cathasaigh (Tomás): On the Early-Irish prepositional relative without antecedent.

2814. Mac Cana (Proinsias): Ir. *ba marb*, W. *bu farw* 'he died'.
   Discusses the idiomatic use of copula + *marb* 'to die' (as opposed to the stative use of copula + predicative *marb* 'he is dead') and argues that it occurs in tenses other than the preterite, except in case of omission of the copula, where the idiom is confined to the past tense. Includes a collection of examples and a brief account of its substitution by competing idioms such as *teit bás*, *teit é*, *fuan bás*.

   1. Le complément de l'equatif, et emplois dérivés
   pp. 482-488: the expression of the comparative of equality in Irish.

   On the syntactic pattern of the type *X+nad*X 'X and yet not X', common to Irish and Welsh.

516. Schmidt (Karl Horst): On the prehistory of aspect and tense in Old Irish.

9006. Adger (David): Post-syntactic movement and the Old Irish verb.

8375. Acquaviva (Paolo): La funzione sintattica delle marche morfologiche di lenizione e nasalizzazione in antico irlandese.

   Particularly on the pronominalization of actants.

11707. Uhlich (Jürgen): *Sere mór do Mac Mair*.
Examine the syntax of the word *serc* in early Irish.

15989. Sanfelici (Emanuela): Le subordinate non-finite in antico e medio irlandese: il tipo DP *doNV*.

885. Disterheft (Dorothy): The syntactic development of the infinitive in Indo-European.
Contains sections on the Old Irish verbal noun (pp. 16, ‘The Celtic Verbal Noun’ 135-59) and ‘Comparison of the Infinitive in Indo-Iranian, Celtic, and Hittite’ (pp. 181-92).

16767. Ronan (Patricia): Make peace and take victory: support verb constructions in old English in comparison with Old Irish.


2084. Mac Coisdealbhá (Pádraig), Isaac (Graham R.) (ed.): The syntax of the sentence in Old Irish: selected studies from a descriptive, historical and comparative point of view. New edition with additional notes and an extended bibliography by Graham R. Isaac.