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Object Clitics and Clitic Doubling in Early Irish*

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Abstract This paper argues for an analysis of verbal object marking in Old Irish in terms of clitic pronouns, against the object agreement analysis proposed by Eska (2009) and Griffith (2011). A structure in the data which motivated the agreement analysis, where verbal object markers co-refer with a full object DP in the same clause, is instead analysed as an instance of clitic doubling, a phenomenon well-studied particularly for Romance, Balkan, and Semitic languages by more recent generative work (Preminger 2009, Nevins 2011, Anagnostopoulou 2016), but hitherto understudied for Old Irish. Syntactic tests for clitic doubling, especially from Baker & Kramer (2018), are applied to demonstrate that Old Irish instantiates clitic doubling rather than object agreement, and Old Irish is typologically compared with other clitic-doubling languages. An analysis of Old Irish's clitic doubling is put forward, incorporating object shift, Baker & Kramer's (2016, 2018) operation 'Reduce', and a proposed restriction on phrasal SpecCP in Old Irish which explains several of its syntactic properties. Finally, the implications of object clitic doubling for synchronic analysis of Old Irish's pronominal system, and its subsequent diachronic developments in Middle Irish, are explored.

1 Introduction

Old Irish's (OIr) syntax is synchronically and diachronically fascinating, bridging conservative Indo-European properties with characteristic Insular Celtic innovations. These intersect in OIr's clitic pronouns, whose understanding remains incomplete. The object clitics have received competing analyses, particularly their doubling with co-referential DPs: Eska (2009) and Griffith (2011) analyse this as verbal object agreement, the clitics having grammaticalised as agreement affixes. However, I argue the phenomenon is best understood as clitic doubling (CD) (Jaeggli 1982, Uriagereka 1995, Anagnostopoulou 2017), supported by cross-linguistic observations and generative analyses of CD, which I apply to OIr.

This paper primarily aims to provide an empirically and theoretically adequate synchronic analysis of OIr's so-called infixed/suffixed object pronouns, within the Minimalist Program (Chomsky, 1995, *et seq.*). Section 2 summarises relevant Early Irish syntax, before Section 3 evaluates previous approaches to OIr's object-doubling. Section 4 offers comparatively-oriented justification for a clitic doubling analysis,

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employing recently devised tests (Baker & Kramer 2018, Preminger 2009, Rezac 2010, Nevins 2011) for distinguishing CD from object agreement. Section 5 proposes an analysis based on Baker & Kramer (2016), integrating broader understanding of OIr, and laying groundwork for Middle Irish (MIr) developments.

2 The Data

2.1 The Early Irish corpus

OIr was a Goidelic Celtic language spoken in Ireland, attested roughly from the early-8th to mid-10th century, when MIr's onset is generally assumed; MIr continues until late-12th century Classical Modern Irish (McCone 1997: 163, Stifter 2009: 55). Surviving manuscripts' OIr was almost certainly a learned standard variety; OIr's literary tradition contains little synchronic variation, and sporadic MIr-isms (McCone 1985) suggest a conservative standard relative to contemporary spoken language. Nevertheless, the corpus largely reflects a uniform grammar, making studying OIr's system worthwhile; even if authors employed a conservative standard, we may assume this reflected some earlier spoken language stage (Stifter 2009: 60).

Most OIr contemporary manuscripts are glosses and commentaries on Latin texts, the most prominent conventionally named after their present locations: Würzburg (Wb.), Milan (Ml.), and St. Gall (Sg.); edited by Stokes & Strachan (1901). These inform most OIr description, notably Thurneysen's (1946) *A Grammar of Old Irish* (GOI) , remaining the standard reference grammar. Supplementing the glosses are other works across varied genres; many survive only in later copies, making them linguistically unreliable due to scribal modernisations (Stifter 2009: 59). Contemporary manuscripts are especially valuable, including some linguistically earlier than the glosses: the *Cambrai Homily*, and *Additamenta from the Book of Armagh* (Russell 1995: 26).

The OIr→MIr transition is somewhat arbitrarily in the mid-10th century (Russell 1995: 27). MIr differs from OIr's relative standardisation, mixing conservative OIr features, innovations that continued in Classical Modern Irish, and forms consistent with neither, some of which may be literary hypercorrections (McCone 1997: 166). OIr and MIr are grouped as 'Early Irish' (Stifter 2009: 55).

For reasons outlined above, OIr constitutes the most synchronically coherent object of study in the Early Irish period; MIr is harder to pin down and best studied diachronically. Therefore, I primarily discuss OIr, with MIr reserved for Section 5.

2.2 The verbal complex and pronominals of Early Irish

OIr is known for its verbal complex, appearing clause-initially (OIr, like almost all Insular Celtic, is VSO). This includes verbs, inflecting for tense, mood, and subject person-number agreement, and optionally includes preverbs (altering verbal semantics, particularly lexical aspect and argument structure) and conjunct particles (clausal negators, interrogative *in*, some subordinators, and some wh-words) (Bate

2024: 4). The verbal complex's first element stands prosodically separated (McCone 1997: 4):[1] if a conjunct particle is present, it occupies this slot; if not, the first preverb does; if neither are present, the verb stands initially, receiving 'absolute' rather than 'conjunct' inflection (*GOI*:350):

(1) a. With initial conjunct particle:
ní·derscigem *nech* *di* *alailiu*
not·surpass.PRS.3PL someone.ACC.SG from other.DAT.SG

'We do not surpass each other.' (Wb. 2a14; Bate 2024: 5)

b. With initial preverb:
do·rigénsat *in* *descipuil* *dechor*
PV·make.PRF.3PL the.NOM.PL disciple.NOM.PL distinction.ACC.SG

'The disciples have made a distinction.' (Wb. 7d10; Bate 2024: 5)

c. With initial verb:
caraid *cesin* *a* *maccdán*
love.PRS.3SG himself his childlike-art.ACC.SG

'He loves his childlike art.' (*Pangur Bán*; Bate 2024: 5)

Within the verbal complex, pronominal direct objects[2] (this study's focus) are expressed through what are traditionally called infixed or suffixed pronouns. These directly follow the initial element, whether conjunct particle, preverb, or verb; in all cases except the latter, the pronoun is 'infixed' (*GOI*: 255), while following initial verbs it is 'suffixed' (*GOI*: 270). 'Suffixed' forms appear unproductive; when object pronouns occur without conjunct particles or preverbs, the preferred strategy inserts semantically empty preverb *no*, hosting the 'infixed' form (*GOI*: 348; Cowgill 1987, Newton 2006):

(2) a. With conjunct particle:
*in=**da**·hierr?*
Q=**3PL**·slay.FUT.2SG

'Will you slay them?' (Ml. 77a16; Bate 2024: 8)

b. With preverb:
*imm=**a**·n-imcab*
PV=**3SG.M**·avoid.IPRF.2SG

'Avoid him' (Wb. 30d20; Bate 2024: 8)

[1] Following *GOI*, interpunct (·) separates the verbal complex's tonic syllable.

[2] When used with substantive verb 'to be', these elements mark indirect objects (with which lexical arguments employ preposition *do*), expressing 'have', e.g. *ro=**t**·bia* 'you will have' (lit. 'there will be to you') (*GOI*: 255). 1st- and 2nd-person object pronouns also mark pronominal theme subjects in passives, e.g. *ro=**b**·hícad* 'you (pl.) have been saved', *ni=**n**·incébthar* 'we will not be reproached' (*GOI*: 256). Analysing these requires considering the syntax of 'to be' and passives in OIr, impossible here due to space.

c. Suffixed with verb:
*berth=**i*** *leiss* *co cenn*
carry.FUT.3SG=3SG.M/N with.**3SG.M** to head.ACC.SG

'He will carry it with him to the end' (Wb. 23a19; Bate 2024: 8)

d. 'Dummy' *no*:
*no=**b**·carad*
PV=**2PL**·love.IPRF.3SG

'He used to love you all' (Wb. 23d10; Bate 2024: 8)

The traditional terminology presupposes some analysis. These elements' pronominal status is contested; Eska (2009) and Griffith (2011) analyse them as agreement affixes. Though I later argue for a pronominal analysis, I henceforth adopt the neutral term 'object marker' (OM), from Bantu linguistics, to avoid favouring any analysis initially (Baker & Kramer 2016: 2).

OMs' apparent 'second position' aligns with Wackernagel's (1892) Law, an observation that clitics tend to occupy clauses' second position across Indo-European. Since OIr's verbal complex is invariably initial, OMs can only attach to verbal complex elements, termed Vendryes' (1908) Restriction.

OMs' basic forms are called 'Class A' infixed pronouns (*GOI*: 259-260; McCone 1997: 10, Stüber 2017: 1208):

	Sg.	Pl.
1.	-m(m)^{N}	-n(n)
2.	-tL	-b
3.f	-s$^{(N)}$	-s$^{(N)}$
3.m	-(a)^{N}	
3.n	-(a)^{L}	

Table 1 Class A infixed pronouns[3]

There exist two other paradigms: 'Class B' follow etymologically consonant-final preverbs, characterised by prefixed /d/ (*GOI*: 257-258); and 'Class C' appear in relative clauses and after some conjunctions, characterised by the same prefix as Class B with lenition/nasalisation (McCone 1997: 13, Stüber 2017: 1208).

Before analysing the OMs, OIr's wider pronominal system warrants description. Notably, full pronouns' distribution is highly restricted: they are never verbal subjects or objects, or governed by prepositions; they are presumably ungrammatical in these positions, like Modern Irish's synthetic forms (McCloskey & Hale 1984). García-Castillero (2013b) analyses OIr's full pronouns as extra-clausal pronouns,

[3] Brackets represent components not always orthographically present. Superscripts represent mutations (lenition/nasalisation), phonological effects on subsequent segments.

signalling information-structurally marked elements (e.g. focus). They are generally restricted to copula clauses, clefts, verbless clauses, and reported speaker particle *ol*:

(3) a. Copula:
is ***si***=*ssi* *in* *tempul* *sin*
COP.PRS.3SG **2PL**=EMPH the.NOM.SG temple.NOM.SG that.NOM.SG

'That temple is you (pl.)' (Wb. 8d7; García-Castillero 2013b: 5)

b. Cleft:
is ***me***=*sse* *ro·phroidech* *doib*
COP.PRS.3SG **1SG**=emph preach.REL.PRF.1SG to.3PL

'It is I who have preached to them' (Wb. 10c20; García-Castillero 2013b: 11)

c. 'Verbless clause' (ellipsis):
apstil *i* *tossug* ***si***=*ssi* *íarum*
apostle.NOM.PL in beginning.DAT.SG **2PL**=emph after.3SG.M/N

'Apostles first, you (pl.) afterwards' (Wb. 27a5; Griffith 2011: 69)

d. With *ol*:
mad·genatar *á* *thimthirthidi* *ol*=***si***
noble·born.PST.3PL his servant.NOM.PL say=**3SG.F**

'"Blessed are his servants", says she' (Ml.90b12; García-Castillero 2013b: 28)

OIr's copula is idiosyncratic: Lash (2017) argues the 3rd-person copula is a complementiser occupying C (conjunct particles' standard position). Following *GOI* (pp. 492-493), García-Castillero (2013b: 14-16) shows full pronouns follow the copula in 'non-predicational' copular clauses, where both subject and predicate are semantically definite; if subject or predicate is pronominal, it is expressed as a copula-adjacent full pronoun (3a), but if both are full DPs, an additional 3rd-person full pronoun follows the copula, doubling the subject or predicate:

(4) a. *is*=***he*** *ar* *m-betho=ni* *far* *foirbthetu=si*
COP.PRS.3SG=**3SG.M** our life.NOM.SG=EMPH your perfection.NOM.SG=EMPH

'Your perfection is our life' (Wb. 25a24; García-Castillero, 2013b:14)

Since full pronouns are illicit as subjects, objects, and prepositional objects, they are unavailable for prosodically stressed or information-structurally marked readings, unlike many null-argument languages. Instead, so-called *notae augentes* ('emphasising particles') are used, etymologically derived from demonstratives (Schrijver 1997: 23). Their Modern Irish descendents convey contrastive stress, like other null-argument languages' full pronouns (McCloskey & Hale 1984: 493-496). Their OIr role is less clear; most assume emphasis (*GOI*: 252-253), but some argue they are

OIr's true pronouns (Greene 1973, Griffith 2011). Distributionally, they encliticise on whatever hosts the element they emphasise (subject-agreement or a pronoun):

	Sg.	Pl.
1.	-sa / -se[4]	-nai / -ni
2.	-so, -su / -siu	-si
3.m/n	-som, -sum / -seom, -sium	-som, -sum
3.f	-si	

Table 2 *Notae augentes*

(5) a. Subject *nota* with verb:
*do=n·genae=**siu***
PV=3SG.N·do.FUT.2SG=**EMPH**

'That you will do it' (Wb. 32a25; Griffith 2018: 192)

b. Object *nota* with verb:
*ro=m·leicis=**se***
PV=1SG·leave.PST.2SG=**EMPH**

'You have left me' (Ml. 44b10-11; Griffith 2018: 192)

c. With possessive:
*a=socht=**som***
3PL=silence.NOM.SG=**EMPH**

'their silence' (Ml. 92a7; Griffith 2018: 192)

d. With inflected preposition:
*indib=**si***
into.2PL=**EMPH**

'to you' (Ml. 18a8; Griffith 2018: 192)

e. With full pronoun:
*tu=**ssu***
2SG=**EMPH**

'you' (Ml. 106d2; Griffith 2018: 192)

f. With copula:
*am=cimbid=**se***
COP.PRS.1SG=captive.NOM.SG=**EMPH**

'I am a captive' (Wb. 27c22; Griffith 2018: 192)

[4] Alternates based on preceding segment (Griffith 2018: 191).

MIr eventually loses OMs, while full pronouns begin expressing direct objects. Section 5 considers these developments.

I will now consider analyses of OIr OMs. Particularly, I examine clauses where OMs co-occur with co-referential DPs, traditionally termed 'prolepsis' (*GOI*: 266). This has motivated analysing OMs as object agreement (Eska 2009, Griffith 2011); Section 3 critically evaluates these arguments. Section 4 argues along with Kern (2013) that the OMs are clitic pronouns, and that 'proleptic' pronouns instantiate clitic doubling. Section 5 advances an analysis, relating clitic doubling to OIr's other properties.

2.3 Digital corpora

Newly presented data was retrieved using POMIC (Parsed Old and Middle Irish Corpus; Lash 2014), a Penn-style syntactically parsed corpus, searchable using CorpusSearch (Randall 1999). Appendix A contains queries used.

POMIC represents multiple prose genres, spanning the late 7th to 12th centuries. Texts used for this work are those preserved in OIr contemporary manuscripts:

Text	Date (Lash 2014)	Abbreviation
Cambrai Homily	Late 600s	cam
Additamenta from the Book of Armagh	c700	arm
Lambeth Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount	c725	lc
Treatise on the Mass	c800	mass

Table 3 Texts examined

POMIC does not cover the glosses; no similarly syntactically parsed edition exists. However, POMIC suits this work's contributions: firstly, since much existing OIr analysis comes from the glosses, examining POMIC allows prior claims to be evaluated on an independent dataset. Secondly, data from the glosses on OM-doubling was collected by Lucht (1994); Lucht's data is presented alongside POMIC throughout. Nevertheless, Section 4 requires evidence for negative claims, for which the CorPH database (Stifter, Bauer, Lash, Qiu, White, Barrett, Griffith, Bulatovas, Felici, Ganly, Nguyen & Nooij 2021), containing morphological tagging of Ml. and Sg., is used. Appendix B contains CorPH queries.

3 Previous Analyses

3.1 The pronominal analysis and 'prolepsis'

As aforementioned, traditional grammars analyse OIr's OMs as clitic object pronouns (*GOI*: 255), as in other early Indo-European languages:

(6) a. Vedic Sanskrit:
*mā́=**naḥ*** *vadhīs* *indra*
NEG=**us.ACC.PL** destroy.AOR.INJ.2SG indra.VOC.SG.M

'Do not destroy **us**, O Indra!' (Ram-Prasad 2023: 32-33)

b. Ancient Greek:
*Κροῖσος=δέ=**μιν*** *ἐκάθηρε*
Croesus.NOM.SG=PTCL=**him.ACC.SG** purify.AOR.3SG

'Croesus purified **him**' (Goldstein 2016: 2)

c. Hittite:
*nu=**mu*** *ana* *dingir-lim* *ìr-ann-i* *pe-šta*
CONN=**me.ACC.SG** to deity service.DAT.SG give.PST.3SG

'He gave **me** to the deity for service' (Lyutikova & Sideltsev 2020: 53)

Etymologically, OIr's OMs derive from Proto-Indo-European pronouns (Griffith 2015: 166). This motivated traditional grammars' terminology of 'infixed pronouns', though Eska (2009: 27) points out they are not truly infixes (Yu 2007: 11-12).

OIr's OMs may double co-referential direct objects:

(7) *foilsigth=**i*** *in* *spirut* *and=som*
manifest.PRS.SUBJ.3SG=**3SG.M/N** the.NOM.SG spirit.NOM.SG in.3SG.M=EMPH
a ***rrath***
the.ACC.SG **grace.ACC.SG**

'The Spirit manifests **the grace** in him …' (Wb. 12a7; Eska 2009: 30)

These have been called 'proleptic' (*GOI*: 266), 'anticipatory' (Pedersen 1909), or 'pleonastic' (Atkinson 1887) pronouns, or 'cataphora' (Mac Coisdealbha 1976), reflecting varied views on their function, the most significant given below.

Sims-Williams (1984) analyses 'proleptic' pronouns from both a cross-linguistic and internal perspective. He states OIr 'like many other languages throughout the world […] tended to use anticipatory object pronouns' (1984: 175), principally comparing it to French right-dislocation (*Je **les** aime **les danseuses*** 'I like the dancers'). He offers two insightful observations: firstly, doubling's function 'seems to be to reinforce the definiteness of the following object, as in Semitic languages' (1984: 176), a well-known fact about clitic doubling (Kramer 2014: 602). Secondly, Sims-Williams compares (7) with 'the increasing use in Old Irish of a third person pronoun between the copula and a following definite' (1984: 197), as in (4); Section 5 explores this connection. Sims-Williams also anticipates Eska's (2009) argument, discussed below, that neuter OMs anticipating non-neuter objects indicated OMs 'functioning as a grammatical particle' rather than apposition (1984: 176). Thus, Sims-Williams identifies important properties of OM-doubling and its cross-linguistic parallels, and its evident grammaticalisation into more than just apposition in OIr.

Lucht (1994) performed more substantial work on OM-doubling, collecting Early Irish clauses containing doubling in the glosses and several other texts. Her notable conclusions are that definiteness and word-order contribute to doubling with full DPs (1994: 89): almost all doubled nominal objects are definite, and doubled object DPs are more likely than non-doubled object DPs to be non-verb-adjacent, appearing further right. From this word-order, Lucht endorses Pedersen's (1899, 1909) view of doubled DPs as a *nachträgliche Hinzufügung* ('subsequent addition') (1994:91). She claims this instantiates Givón's (1976) 'after-thought topic shift', where discourse-background topics are re-mentioned post-clausally:

(8) (Context: Once there was a wizard.)
He lived in Africa, **the wizard did**. (Givón 1976: 154)

Under this analysis, doubled DPs are adjuncts, with OMs true arguments (cf. Jelinek's 1984 Pronominal Argument hypothesis). Section 4 returns to word-order's implications. Additionally, Lucht (1994: 115-116) parallels Early Irish with French, Balkan languages, and Middle Welsh, which all allow OM-doubling, preferring it with pronominal objects. This, she observes, aligns more with MIr, since OIr bans full object pronouns; MIr is covered in Section 5.

I will now critically review more recent works' arguments (Eska 2009, Griffith 2011, 2015) for analysing OMs as object agreement. Some objections are already raised by Kern (2013); I further build on these and add additional observations, before Subsection 3.3 addresses Kern's contributions.

3.2 The agreement analysis

Though not first to claim 'infixed pronouns' are object agreement,[5] Eska (2009) attempts to conclusively demonstrate it. Eska's claim rests primarily on the doubling construction: he argues clauses can have only one referential direct object ('unless they are conjoined or in apposition', 2009: 31), and therefore that all object clitic doubling (e.g. Spanish, Modern Greek) constitutes object agreement. Thus, Eska's analysis aligns with the present work in recognising OIr's affinity to object-clitic-doubling languages, but is weakened by imprecision in not differentiating clitic doubling from object agreement.

Particularly, the central argument, that doubling necessitates an agreement analysis, runs against doubling's low frequency: in the glosses, 2.2%-10.7% of verbs with DP objects have OMs (depending on phonologically ambiguous cases) (Lucht 1994: 88). Eska (2009: 34) accounts for optionality by ascribing 'a variety of types of special discourse force, e.g. emphasis, contrast, etc.' to doubling full DPs, 'like the presence of an overt subject pronoun in a null-subject language'. However, whatever doubling's force, OM optionality is not characteristic of agreement (Corbett 2006: 14-15), but is common with clitic doubling (Kern 2013: 4). This does not contradict Eska, since he views clitic doubling as agreement, but is one of many differences between the phenomena.

[5] Eska (2009) traces this to Wagner (1959), who ascribes object agreement to contact with a pre-Celtic substrate.

Eska's other argument that OMs are 'no longer referential' (2009: 33) concerns gender agreement. He compares OIr to colloquial French (Lambrecht 1981), where subject clitics may neutralise to masculine:

(9) a. Colloquial French:
[Ma femme]$_i$ ***elle***$_i$ *est* *venue*
my.F wife.F **3SG.F** aux.3SG.PRS come.PPTCPL.F

'My wife has come'

b. Innovation in some varieties:
[Ma femme]$_i$ ***il***$_i$ *est* *venue*
my.F wife.F **3SG** aux.3SG.PRS come.PPTCPL.F

'My wife has come' (Lambrecht 1981: 40)

Neutralisation, he claims, shows conclusively that *il* is 'no longer referential' and 'now functions as inflexional material' (2009: 30). OIr's comparable phenomenon is neuter OMs doubling non-neuter nominals, relatively common (*GOI*: 266):

(10) *r=**a**·fitir* *cid* *Israhel* ***cretim*** ***do***
PV=**3SG.M/N**·know.PRS.3SG even Israel.NOM.SG belief.ACC.SG.**F** to
geintib
Gentile.DAT.PL

'Even Israel knows that the **Gentiles believe**' (Wb. 5a10; Eska 2009: 32)

Of Lucht's (1994) examples with gender-unambiguous OMs, 40% (8/20) have neuter OMs doubling non-neuter nominals (Griffith, 2011). Eska (2009: 33) analyses this as agreement neutralisation, giving neuter OMs the status of *il* in (9b), but also acknowledges Thurneysen's (1946) alternative view that this only affects 'non-personal' nouns, thus being animacy-sensitive rather than gender-sensitive agreement. However, *contra* Eska's claim that either analysis indicates referentiality loss, increased animacy sensitivity constitutes semantic agreement (Corbett 1979), not necessarily indicating loss of pronominal status. In fact, Griffith (2011: 75-76) shows this could support a referential/pronominal analysis, since other OIr pronominals similarly employ semantic agreement: McCone (2006: 261) shows deictic *í* takes masculine/feminine articles when human-referring, and neuter articles when non-human-referring, independently of grammatical gender. This also applies to OMs referencing prior antecedents (*GOI*: 266):

(11) *is=dó* *d=**a**·airilbset*
COP.PRS.3SG=to.3SG.M/N PV=**3SG.N**·ascribe.PST.3PL

'It is to him that they ascribed **it**' ('it' referring to *gním* (masc) 'the deed') (Ml. 53b11; Griffith 2011: 75)

The data contains few OM-doubled human-referring nominals, but Lucht finds 2, both doubled by non-neuter OMs (Griffith 2011: 76). Overall, then, neuter agreement being semantic rather than general neutralisation means it does not indicate OMs' referentiality loss (also concluded by Kern 2013: 3), especially considering other OIr pronominals' similar tendency. However, Eska's neutralisation may have developed in MIr, explored in Section 5.

So, while Eska insightfully compares OIr to clitic doubling cross-linguistically, his conflation of CD with object agreement and shakier arguments for non-referentiality leave room for elaboration. Eska (2009: 35) also notes that clitic doubling seems more obligatory for pronominals in OIr, and that it appears with full pronouns in MIr (2009: 35-36); discussed in Section 4 and Section 5 respectively.

Griffith (2011) builds on Eska's agreement analysis, but acknowledges gaps in demonstrating it. Griffith's contributions combine tests for clitichood (vs. affixhood) and tests for argument status. Support for OMs' non-referential agreement status comes primarily from arguing the *notae augentes* are OIr's true argument-pronouns, and secondarily that OMs display fewer clitic and argument properties than the *notae* and therefore cannot also be referential pronouns. However, Griffith's tests for clitichood/affixhood are not especially conclusive. The following criteria are used:

(12) Diagnostics of agreement-affix status for OMs (Griffith 2011: 93):

a. Both OMs and their verbal hosts undergo idiosyncratic morpho-phonological changes.

b. The OMs sometimes take part in semantic idiosyncrasies.

c. The OMs are restricted in their distribution, attaching only to the verbal complex.

d. The OMs are obligatory with pronominal objects and optional with lexical DPs.

e. The OMs can be modified by an adjacent modifier (*uile* 'all').

(12a) comes from Zwicky & Pullum's (1983) influential tests for clitichood. However, many of their tests, including morpho-phonological idiosyncrasies, are formulated as gradient rather than absolute, so only indicate status when taken together, being inconclusive alone. Further, recent work discussed in Section 4 (Preminger 2009, Nevins 2011, Baker & Kramer 2018) moves away from morpho-phonological clitichood tests towards syntactic ones, seen as more reliable. Kern (2013) raises this point for OIr, also mentioning a counterexample to (12a) from Nevins (2011: 18): Portuguese clitics show a high degree of allomorphy, while syntactically remaining clitics.

(12b) also follows Zwicky & Pullum. The OMs show semantic idiosyncrasies, some verbs lexically requiring meaningless neuter OMs: *a=**t**·baill* 'dies', *ar=**a**·chrin* 'perishes' (*GOI*: 267). Despite lacking semantic content, these are not syntactically inert (Griffith 2011: 80), alternating to Class C in relative verbs: *as=**ind**·bail* 'who dies', *ar=**ind**·chrin* 'who perishes' (Ml. 57a10). Similarly, some conjunctions (*má*

'if', *cía* 'though') lexically require Class C neuter OMs with indicative mood (*GOI*: 268-9). Griffith contrasts OMs' idiosyncrasies with the *notae*'s lack thereof, indicating OMs' affixhood rather than clitic status. He notes Marantz's (1984) observation, that idiom formation is available with inner arguments (direct objects), may instead explain these idiosyncrasies, but claims this explanation leaves the *notae*'s lack of object idioms unexplained. Readily available, though, is the explanation that the *notae*, if true pronouns, must have grammaticalised as such recently compared to OMs, which diachronically had been pronouns long enough to develop more idioms/fossilisations. This leaves semantic idiosyncrasies as an argument for OMs' agreement status less convincing.

The OMs have somewhat restricted distribution (12c) relative to general second position clitics: only verbal complex elements host OMs (Vendryes' Restriction), unlike object clitics in, for instance, Vedic, which are hosted by a variety of clause-initial elements. Conversely, Kern (2010) points out OMs display some host flexibility, attaching to conjunct particles, preverbs, and verbs, not an obvious natural class, united only by appearing verbal-complex-initially. Griffith (2011: 78) contrasts this with *notae*, which as mentioned cliticise to verbs (marking subject or object), conjugated prepositions, or possessed nouns. This comparison is unfair, however, since OMs definitionally only mark objects, and moreover could be within a pronominal paradigm alongside full pronouns, proclitic possessive pronouns, and conjugated prepositions. 'Host selection' therefore provides no meaningful comparison between OMs and *notae augentes*.

Griffith (2011: 80) admits (12d) is inconclusive, since OM-doubling's optionality is unexpected under an agreement analysis, and is characteristic of clitics. Still, Griffith maintains that, by (12d), the *notae* fit better as clitic arguments than the OMs, since they never double full DPs. However, optionality with full DPs is prototypically characteristic of clitic doubling (Suñer 1988: 397), which Griffith does not mention. Thus, attempting to fit OMs into a binary opposition of referential, argument, clitic pronouns vs. non-referential, non-argument agreement affixes misses clitic doubling's interesting properties, which lie between these and whose cross-linguistic characteristics fit OIr, as Section 4 demonstrates.

Finally, clitics being unable to be modified by 'adjacent modifiers' has been mentioned as a clitichood property (Sportiche 1998: 299), but it is unclear why this should distinguish them from affixes in a principled way. Griffith (2011: 81) employs (12e) to say *notae* never take adjacent modifiers, but OMs appear with *uile* 'all':

(13) a. *do=**s**·n-aidlibea* ***uili***
PV=**3PL**·visit.FUT.3SG **all.ACC.PL**

'He will visit **them all**' (Wb. 25d14; Griffith 2011: 81)

b. *no=**b**·cara* ***huili***
PV=**2PL**·love.PRS.3SG **all.ACC.PL**

'He loves **you all**' (Wb. 27d9; Griffith 2011: 81)

Griffith argues this makes OMs less clitic-like and therefore more affix-like. It is not obvious, however, that *uile* in (13a-13b) represents an 'adjacent modifier'. As Griffith notes, *uile* here cannot have an article because it modifies a pronoun; (13a-13b) may instead be quantifier float (Sportiche 1988), deriving the same result. Grestenberger (2012: 10) identifies an instance of OM quantifier float:

(14) *do=**s**·bér* *fo* *gin* *claidib* ***uili***
PV=**3PL**·give.FUT.1SG under mouth.ACC.SG sword.GEN.SG **all.ACC.PL**

'I will put **them all** to the edge of a sword' (*Bethu Phátraic*; Grestenberger 2012: 10)

(13a-13b) may share (14)'s structure, without the intervening material. Therefore, there is no reason why Griffith's formulation of (12e) suggests OMs are non-referential affixes.

Parallelling OMs, Griffith uses (12a-12e) to conclude the *notae* are synchronically OIr's true pronouns. He adds as especially important that a *nota* is in complementary distribution with a co-referential DP argument. This, along with *notae*'s optionality and use for emphatic force, aligns with null-subject languages' overt pronouns, Greene's (1973) influential argument. However, whatever we say about this analysis (see Section 5), it does not follow from this that OMs are agreement affixes, since clitic doubling is commonly obligatory with stressed pronouns (Suñer 1988: 394). Therefore, under Griffith's analysis it is possible that the *notae* are emphatic full pronouns, and OMs are doubling clitics which, when standing alone, mark unemphatic pronominal objects, and obligatorily double object *notae*. OMs' derivation is explored in Section 5; here it suffices to conclude that Griffith's (2011) arguments that OMs are agreement affixes are unconvincing.

Griffith (2015) presents a revised, more nuanced position: that OIr's OMs are in the middle of a grammaticalisation cline from arguments→agreement, compared to OIr's subject agreement (agreement-like), and prepositional object marking (argument-like). He concludes that, in OIr, the OM 'probably does' represent an argument, but begins to acquire agreement-like properties including 'noun-phrase doubling and a generalized marker (3SG.N)' (2015: 183). Griffith tentatively extends this diachronic proposition into MIr, hypothesising a shift towards true agreement, and suggesting investigation of MIr OMs as 'an excellent direction for future research' (2015: 184). Section 5 covers MIr, but this diachronic viewpoint does not elucidate OIr's synchronic state. To clarify what Griffith's 'middle' state represents, one must consider clitic doubling.

To conclude, imprecision limits existing analyses of OIr's OM-doubling, where clitic doubling is either conflated with object agreement or not fully examined as a possibility. More recent literature, when not assuming the pronominal/'proleptic' analysis, continues to refer to 'affixal' or 'non-referential' status of OMs (Lash 2017: 80, Eska 2017: 1239-1240, García-Castillero 2013a: 11, 2020: 32). Up-to-date generative frameworks for analysing clitic doubling, and distinguishing it from object agreement, can therefore greatly help understand OIr's situation. Before beginning

this work's application of them, I below cover Kern's (2013) identification of this issue.

3.3 The clitic doubling analysis

Kern (2013) is, as far as could be found, the only treatment of OIr OMs to explicitly identify their properties with clitic doubling, in opposition to object agreement. Following recent generative interest in distinguishing object agreement from CD, she employs tests from Preminger (2009), Rezac (2010), and Nevins (2011) for clitic doubling (see section 4.2.7–4.2.9). However, Baker & Kramer (2018: 1082-1084) argue these diagnostics are not robust; in section 4.2.4–4.2.6 I employ Baker & Kramer's alternative diagnostics, deriving from CD's fundamental properties. More importantly, Kern (2013: 4) identifies OM-doubling's definiteness/specificity restriction with that of clitic doubling (Kramer 2014: 602), a crucial insight, expanded in section 4.2.2. She also identifies flaws in Griffith's (2011) arguments for *notae* being pronouns, revisited in Section 5. Overall, Kern (2013) builds a welcome bridge between study of Early Irish and the syntax of clitic doubling, highlighting a promising direction for analysis, but as far as the present author is aware, this has received no follow-up in the literature. There is much room for elaboration, building towards a full analysis.

4 Diagnosing Clitic Doubling in Old Irish

4.1 Clitic doubling cross-linguistically

Generative work on CD, from Jaeggli (1982) onwards, has uncovered several cross-linguistic generalisations, employing multiple theoretical approaches; I here overview relevant points before comparison with OIr. CD appears in several language groups including Romance, the Balkan Sprachbund, and Semitic:

(15) a. Rioplatense Spanish:
Lo=*vimos* *a* ***Juan***
CL.ACC=see.1PL a Juan

'We saw Juan' (Jaeggli 1982: 14)

b. Greek:
Ton=*idhame* *to* ***Jani***
CL.ACC=see.1PL the John.ACC

'We saw John' (Philippaki-Warburton, Varlokosta, Georgiafentis & Kotzoglou 2004: 964)

c. Amharic:
Almaz ***tämari-w-ɨn*** *ayy-ätʃtʃ-ɨw*
Almaz.F student-DEF.M-ACC see-3SGF.S-3SGM.O

'Almaz saw the male student' (Kramer 2014: 594)

Analyses of CD vary in how similarly it is treated to canonical agreement, and the clitic's derivation. Jaeggli (1982) and Borer (1984) propose base-generation analyses within Government-and-Binding theory, but recent Minimalist work has favoured movement analyses. For example, Uriagereka (1995), following Torrego (1988), argues doubled objects generate a 'Big DP', with an additional determiner head that moves alone to clitic-position. However, the present work follows Baker & Kramer's (2016, 2018) analysis, building on Kramer (2014) and Harizanov (2014), deriving CD through combining object-shift (OS) (found in Germanic) and their new operation 'Reduce', which acts similarly to copy-deletion and reduces non-minimal DPs to D^0 heads, bleeding lower-copy deletion. This successfully derives CD's properties, with fewer stipulations: rather than arbitrarily imposing specificity requirements on agreement or generating Big DPs, for example, the specificity requirement comes from OS so needn't be separately introduced. They also account for newly observed properties of CD (restrictions on doubling quantifiers, wh-pronouns, and reflexive anaphors) by the doubling clitic being a pronoun at LF, thereby interacting with weak crossover and binding. Details of their analysis are covered and justified in Section 5, but their approach has since been applied to new languages: Yuan (2021) employs it to diagnose and explain CD in Inuktitut, contrasting closely related Kalaallisut's true object agreement, while Bárány (2025) uses their diagnoses to show Hungarian has object agreement, not clitic doubling.

Having introduced CD and established precedent for its diagnosis in particular languages, I will now show that OIr demonstrates CD, before comparing its properties to other clitic doubling languages in Subsection 4.3. Section 5 then shows desirable predictions of Baker & Kramer's (2016) analysis for OIr.

4.2 Evidence for clitic-doubling in Old Irish

4.2.1 Word-order

Before distinguishing clitic doubling from agreement, it should first be conclusively demonstrated that OM-doubling is grammaticalised in OIr, and not simply textually favoured apposition or 'after-thought topic shift', as Lucht (1994) advances from word-order.

Lucht's (1994: 90-91) word-order statistics on OMs doubling full DPs compare VO to V…O, a binary distinction of the object's verb-adjacency. She does not distinguish intervening elements, limiting the comparison's utility: OIr generally has VSO order, adverbs and PPs following objects, so intervening subjects have no bearing on object status, while intervening adjuncts indicate right-dislocated objects. Griffith (2011: 75) points this out, re-examining Lucht's tokens: 9/26 (34.6%)[6] are V(S)XO, unusual for OIr and indicating right-dislocation, while the remainder are V(S)O(X), making no indication of unusual object status.

[6] Following Griffith (2011: 76), I remove 2 of Lucht's tokens ((14), (29)), since they in fact lack OMs. Again following Griffith, for word-order purposes (5) and (24) are also omitted, because they may show heavy-NP shift.

As Griffith (2015: 179) notes, sentences without indirect objects or adjuncts are structurally ambiguous as to the object's status, since VSO could be object-in-situ or right-dislocation; this may have provided conditions for reanalysing right-dislocation as clitic doubling. Without knowing intonation of V(S)O instances of OM-doubling, we cannot conclusively determine whether they involve right-dislocation. Nevertheless, the existence of V(S)OX instances of OM-doubling unambiguously shows doubling is grammaticalised beyond merely right-dislocation: these constitute 7/26 (26.9%) of Lucht's tokens:

(16) *no=**s**·dechrigetar* *æm* *inna* *ceul* *nephgnatha*
PV=**3PL**·distinguish.PRS.3PL indeed the.NOM.PL music.NOM.PL unusual.NOM.PL
inna ***gnímu*** ***gníthi*** *trisna* *mmoltu*
the.ACC.PL **deed.ACC.PL** **done.ACC.PL** through.the.ACC.PL praise.ACC.PL
nui
new.ACC.PL

'The unusual songs indeed distinguish **the deeds done** through the new praises' (Ml. 115b2)

VOS, highly marked in OIr, also allows OM-doubling. Budassi (2019: 244-246) shows VOS only appears with an information-structurally focussed object, a topic subject, and a 'heavier' subject-constituent than object. Therefore, VOS possibly involves a rightward-shifted subject. Whatever this order's derivation (Lash 2020 proposes multiple information-structurally determined subject positions), it cannot involve an after-thought-topic-shifted object. VOS is present once in Lucht's data (17a), and twice in POMIC's *Lambeth Commentary* (17b-17c) repeating a similar formula:

(17) a. *a=**t**·suidi* ***neutur*** *i* *snaib* *anmannaib*
PV=**3SG.N**·establish.PRS.3SG **neuter.ACC.SG** in the.DAT.PL noun.DAT.PL
i *n-es* *a* *n-accomol* *fri* *neutur* *i*
in es their connection.NOM.SG with neuter.ACC.SG in
n-immognom
construction.DAT.SG

'Their connexion with a neuter in construction establishes **the neuter** in the nouns in "es"' (Sg. 66a20)

b. *is=de* *gaibth=**i*** ***a*** ***comúm***
COP.PRS.3SG=from.3SG.M/N take.PRS.3SG=**3SG.M/N** **its** **harmony.ACC.SG**
in *teistimin* *so*
the.NOM.SG text.NOM.SG this

'It is from this that this text takes **its harmony**' (lc.198)

c. *is=de* *gaibth=**i*** ***comúem***
COP.PRS.3SG=from.3SG.M/N take.PRS.3SG=**3SG.M/N** **harmony.ACC.SG**
in *teistimin* *so*
the.NOM.SG text.NOM.SG this

'It is from this that this text takes **(its) harmony**' (lc.210)

Moreover, pronominal object doubling does not seem word-order conditioned: Lucht (1994: 92-95) finds no connection, and POMIC texts show multiple VSOX tokens with doubled demonstratives:

(18) a. *au=**t**·rubert* *ind* *noebapstol* ***in***
PV=**3SG.N**·say.PRF.PST.3SG the.NOM.SG holy.apostle.NOM.SG **the.ACC.SG**
so *ō* *imbud* *a* *deserce*
this.ACC.SG from abundance.DAT.SG his charity.GEN.SG

'The holy apostle has said **this** from the abundance of his charity' (cam.26)

b. *a=**t**·ropert* *flaith* *7* *aithech* ***in***
PV=**3SG.N**·grant.PRF.PST.3SG lord.NOM.SG & vassal.NOM.SG **the.ACC.SG**
so ***huile*** *i* *tosuch* *iar* *tabairt*
this.ACC.SG **all.ACC.SG.N** in beginning.DAT.SG after confer.DAT.SG
baithis *duaib*
baptism.GEN.SG to.3PL

'Lord & vassal granted **all this** immediately after baptism was conferred upon them' (arm.1)

Overall, OM-doubling cannot be purely right-dislocation or after-thought topic shift, and therefore must be either object agreement or clitic doubling. This conclusion was reached by Eska (2009: 34), but I now demonstrate that OIr instantiates CD, not agreement.

4.2.2 Specificity

One of CD's most well-known properties is sensitivity to definiteness, specificity, D-linking, or some similar semantic/discourse property (Suñer 1988: 396-397, Kallulli & Tasmowski 2008: 10-22, Kramer 2014: 602, Yuan 2021: 164). OIr doubling's definiteness-sensitivity is also well-known (Sims-Williams 1984, Lucht 1994), and Kern (2013) already connected this to CD. Once we accept that OM-doubling is grammaticalised beyond apposition, this sensitivity is one of the clearest indicators of CD rather than object agreement. Therefore, building on observed tendencies, I here examine all possible counterexamples, showing 'specificity' (Baker & Kramer 2016: 18) applies to all OM-doubled objects, as a rule rather than strong-tendency.[7]

[7] Following Suñer (1988) and Baker & Kramer (2016, 2018), I take specificity as clitic-doubling's crucial requirement. 'Specificity' is semantic-pragmatic referentiality, i.e. specific reference. This is non-identical to morphosyntactic definiteness: English indefinites (*a book*) are ambiguous between specific and non-specific readings (Baker & Kramer 2018: 1039).

15/28 (53.6%)[8] of Lucht's gloss tokens for full DP objects have definite articles, a further 6/28 (21.4%)[9] having genitive modifiers; these are specific by default, with remaining exceptions requiring explanation. 5/28 (14.3%)[10] are verbal nouns without genitive subjects or objects, given below (19a-19e), alongside (17c) repeated as (19f):

(19) a. *r=**a**·fitir* *cid* *Israhel* ***cretim*** ***do***
PV=**3SG.M/N**·know.PRS.3SG even Israel.NOM.SG **belief.ACC.SG.F** **to**
geintib
Gentile.DAT.PL

'Even Israel knows that **the Gentiles believe**' (Wb. 5a10)

b. *r=**a**·múinset* *doib* ***buid*** ***and***
PV=3SG.N·teach.PRF.PST.3PL **to.3PL** **be.ACC.SG** **there**

'They have learned (lit.: they have taught it to themselves) **to be there**' (Wb. 5b44)

c. *ar* *d=**a**·gní* *sochuide* ***báas*** *ar* *a*
for PV=**3SG.N**·do.PRS.3SG multitude.NOM.SG **death.ACC.SG** for his
charit
friend.ACC/DAT.SG

'… for many a one **dies** for his friend' (Wb. 12b34)

d. *ní=**s**·rochret(set)* ***trogai*** ***di*** ***a*** ***tichtin***
not=**3PL**·believe.PST.3PL **misery.ACC.PL** **to** **their** **coming.DAT.SG**

'They believed not that **miseries would come to them**' (Ml. 39d3)

e. *amal* *bid* *dia* *far=**id**·gellad*
as-though cop.PST.SUBJ.3SG God.NOM.SG PV=**3SG.N**·declare.PST.SUBJ.3SG
taidchor *doib* *asin* *dóiri*
return.ACC.SG to.3PL out.the.DAT.SG captivity.DAT.SG

'As though it were God who had declared **their return** out of the Captivity' (Ml. 131d12)

f. *is=de* *gaibth=**i*** *comúem*
COP.PRS.3SG=from.3SG.M/N take.PRS.3SG=**3SG.M/N** **harmony.ACC.SG**
in *teistimin* *so*
the.NOM.SG text.NOM.SG this

'It is from this that this text takes (its) **harmony**' (lc.210)

OIr verbal nouns generally lack articles, since modifying genitives (as subjects or objects) already encode definiteness (*GOI*: 295; Stüber 2010: 388-389). Verbal nouns

[8] Lucht's (2), (5), (8), (11), (15), (16), (18), (19), (20), (21), (22), (23), (24), (25), (27).
[9] Lucht's (7), (9), (10), (13), (17), (26).
[10] Lucht's (3), (4), (6), (12), (28).

without genitives occasionally have articles, if referring to very specific events (Stüber 2010: 389), so (19a-19f)'s lack of articles appears to weaken the case for specificity. However, in each, the event/verbal noun is previously mentioned:

Example	Previous mention	
(21a)	Wb. 5a1	*...cretem do geintib...* 'the Gentiles believe'
(21b)	Wb. 5b43	*...doibsom buid and...* 'for them to be there'
(21c)	Wb. 12b34 Latin text[11]	*...et si tradidero corpus meum ut ardeam...* 'and if give up my body to burn'; full annotation reads: *.i.* in mortem *ar da-gní sochuide báas ar a charit* 'i.e. in death, for many a one dies for his friend'
(21d)	Ml. 39c34	In a general sense: *inda leu som nisroissed imned na erchrae dogrés asoinmigi acloinaib* 'they fancied neither anxiety nor want would ever reach their prosperity, the wicked men that they are' (Lash, 2024:56)
(21e)	Ml. 131d11	*...taidchor doib asindoiri...* 'return out of the captivity'
(21f)	lc. 198	With genitive: *...a comúm...* 'its harmony'

Table 4 Previous mention of OM-doubled verbal nouns

Previous mention also explains Lucht's final 2 tokens, non-verbal nouns in Sg.:[12] in (20a) *neutur* 'neuter' repeats numerous prior mentions (e.g. Sg. 65a2) and is clearly semantically specific here (discussing Latin grammar), and (20b) repeats *aimser derb* (Sg. 66b10), *aimsire deirbbæ* (Sg. 66b15) 'certain time'.

[11] Griffith (2015: 177) explains bás 'death' as 'inherently definite'. There is no need to resort to this; here it is a previously mentioned verbal noun, like other examples.
[12] Lucht's (30), (31).

(20) a. *a=**t**·suidi* ***neutur*** *i* *snaib* *anmannaib*
PV=**3SG.N**·establish.PRS.3SG **neuter.ACC.SG** in the.DAT.PL noun.DAT.PL
i *n-es* *a* *n-accomol* *fri* *neutur* *i*
in es their connection.NOM.SG with neuter.ACC.SG in
n-immognom
construction.DAT.SG

'their connexion with a neuter in construction establishes **the neuter** in the nouns in "es"' (Sg. 66a20)

b. *air* *ni=**s**·sluindi* *dies* *hic* ***aimsir*** ***deirb***
for not=3SG.F·express.PRS.3SG dies here **time.ACC.SG** **certain.ACC.SG**

'for here "dies" does not express **certain time**' (Sg. 66b18)

Previous mention encompassing all otherwise non-definite doubled nominals means specific reference plausibly covers all cases of OM-doubling, predicted by numerous accounts of clitic doubling (Suñer 1988, Baker & Kramer 2018).

POMIC gives one apparent counterexample:

(21) *cini=**d**·imbir* ***aithis***
though-not=**3SG.N**·perform.PRS.3SG **reviling.ACC.SG**

'though he does not perform **reviling**' (lc.228)

Here *aithis* 'reviling' is a bare accusative noun, doubled by OM *-d*, with no definiteness-marking and no apparent prior mention. However, here the OM is present not for object doubling, but because it is lexically required with conjunction *cía* 'though' in indicative mood (here *cini* combined with *ní*) (*GOI*: 268-269). García-Castillero (2020: 346-351) provides an account of this OM-usage's 'desemanticisation', leaving the OM non-referential. *-d* here is certainly less referential than normal doubling, evidently lacking specificity; perhaps *-d*, lexically required by *cini*, is not derived by doubling, and does not genuinely co-reference *aithis*, meaning it needn't satisfy doubling's semantic requirements.

Finally, other doubled object types (demonstratives, and Lucht's 'syntactic objects' including embedded clauses and Latin quotations) are intrinsically definite/specific in reference, fitting the pattern. Thus, specificity requirements evidently apply to all doubling constructions in OIr, which lacks a compelling explanation under object agreement, but follows from CD (Baker & Kramer 2018).

4.2.3 Optionality

Kern (2013: 4) notes that OM-doubling's optionality indicates CD more than agreement (Corbett 2006: 13-15). Lucht (1994: 88) claims 2.2-10.7% of full DP objects are doubled in the glosses. However, not all objects can be doubled: as demonstrated, doubling requires specific reference, either through definiteness or previous mention. Griffith (2015: 177-179), noticing this, estimates doubling's frequency within contexts that allow it. He acknowledges that if the crucial factor is

discourse-related, rather than syntactic definiteness, this is unknowable, requiring identifying unrecoverable discourse properties in texts. Consequently, he uses definiteness: Griffith's count for definite DP doubling in Wb. and Ml. is 4.9%-13.8% (given ambiguities). Thus, OM-doubling seems optional.

Furthermore, OM-doubling appears more obligatory with pronominals than nominals (Eska 2009: 35), showing deeper affinity to CD (Suñer 1988, Anagnostopoulou 2016). Lucht (1994: 92-95) examines pronominal doubling separately, and concludes the data supports deictic clitic *side* requiring doubling in non-neuter forms (*GOI*: 303). Moreover, Griffith (2013: 63) shows that neuter *side* (form *són/ón*), when not doubled, is better translated as 'that is' / 'i.e.' rather than independent direct object. Therefore, when used as a clitic pronominal, neuter *són/ón* shares the doubling requirement. This also appears true of the *notae*; however, whether this counts as "doubling" is unclear, because these clitics may instead be pronominal modifiers: they never appear without pronouns (clitic or full) or subject-agreement on their left in any context. For *side*, though, there is reason to analyse them as independent pronouns requiring doubling, unlike the *notae*: with conjugated prepositions (which never double full DPs Griffith 2015: 174-175), *notae* require a suffixed pronoun, while *side* may appear in its full non-clitic form *suide* with uninflected prepositions, like full DPs:

(22) a. Prepositional *nota*:
*indib=**si***
into.2PL=**EMPH**

'to you' (Ml. 18a8; Griffith 2018: 192)

b. Prepositional deictic:
co ***suide***
to **3SG.M.ANA**

'to him' (Ml. 42a6; Griffith 2018: 194)

Furthermore, the deictic series is case-marked, unlike the *notae*:

	Nominative	Accusative	Genitive
3.m	-side	-adi	-sidi / -ade[13]
3.f	-ade	-sidi / -ade	-ade / -adi
3.n	són / ón	són / ón	-sidi / -ade
3.pl	-(s)idi / -ade	-(s)idi	-adi / -ade

Table 5 Deictic clitics

This further supports analysing *side* as a pronominal argument requiring OM-doubling, rather than a pronominal modifier requiring a leftward pronoun (like

[13] Alternation follows unclear distribution (Griffith 2011: 71).

notae; see Section 5). Proper analysis of these elements remains lacking, but for diagnosing clitic-doubling, obligatory doubling with *side* aligns with CD's obligatory pronoun doubling.

Still, OIr seems odd in never doubling emphatic pronouns, found in other clitic-doubling languages:

(23) a. Inuktitut:
Jamesi-up* ***uvanga* *taku-qqau-**jaanga***
Jamesie-ERG **1SG.ABS** see-REC.PST-3SG.S/**1SG.O**

'Jamesie saw me.' ('me' unemphatic) (Yuan 2021: 170)

b. ***Uvanga*** *Taiviti-up* *taku-qqau-**jaanga*** *Carol*
1SG.ABS Taiviti-ERG see-REC.PST-3SG.S/**1SG.O** Carol.ABS

taku-nngi-&uni-uk
see-NEG-CTMP.3SG.S-3SG.O

'It's ME that Taiviti saw, not Carol.' ('me' contrastively focused) (Yuan 2021: 171)

This is unproblematic under Griffith's (2011) pronoun analysis of the *notae*, but as above this has several problems (see also Section 5). Rejecting Griffith's analysis, the alternative is that OIr is exceptional in this respect, but this is not wholly undesirable: OIr bans emphatic independent pronouns with any agreement or clitic pronouns (i.e. all argument positions), including subject-verb agreement and conjugated prepositions. Moreover, this continues to present-day Irish's synthetic forms, still using emphatic particles descended from *notae* instead (McCloskey & Hale 1984: 493-496). Thus, this property, albeit strange, seems diachronically stable, and could have applied to object clitic doubling in OIr as with subjects (true agreement) and prepositions (clitic pronouns).

4.2.4 Quantifiers

Now I apply Baker & Kramer's (2018) more precise CD diagnostics, starting with quantification: generally, universally quantified DPs cannot be doubled. There are exceptions (attributable to different interactions with quantifier raising and/or crossover conditions, 2018: 1059-1060), whose details vary cross-linguistically, but Baker & Kramer (2018: 1075-1080) maintain an underlying restriction: universally quantified DPs can only undergo CD when referencing a discourse-known set. This contrasts with object agreement, which should hold for any universally quantified DP.

Baker & Kramer's tests concern ungrammaticality, impossible to test for OIr. Instead, I will demonstrate that no attested examples violate their restrictions. Furthermore, for quantifiers, contrasts between when OM-doubling is and is not found reinforces OIr's clitic doubling properties.

(24a-24b) are the only examples from Lucht's data and POMIC of OM-doubling with universally quantified objects:

(24) a. *d=**a**·rigensi(d)* ***in*** ***so*** ***uile***
PV=**3SG.N**·do.PRF.PST.2SG **the.ACC.SG** **this.ACC.SG** **all.ACC.SG.N**

'you have done **all this**' (Wb. 9c29)

b. *a=**t**·ropert* *flaith* *7* *aithech* ***in***
PV=**3SG.N**·grant.PRF.PST.3SG lord.NOM.SG & vassal.NOM.SG **the.ACC.SG**
so ***huile*** *i* *tosuch* *iar* *tabairt*
this.ACC.SG **all.ACC.SG.N** in beginning.DAT.SG after confer.DAT.SG
baithis *duaib*
baptism.GEN.SG to.3PL

'Lord and vassal granted **all this** immediately after baptism was conferred upon them' (arm.1)

Both conform to Baker & Kramer's generalisation that doubling-permitting quantified DPs reference previously known sets, here indicated by demonstratives. Conversely, no other universally quantified objects are doubled: this was checked by querying POMIC (Appendix A) and searching Ml. and Sg. using CorPH (Appendix B). Non-D-linked universal quantifiers were never doubled:[14]

(25) a. *ad·rimfem* *7* *do·aidlibem* ***cech*** ***n-oindliged***
PV·count.FUT.1PL & PV·visit.FUT.1PL **every.ACC.SG** **single.saying.ACC.SG**
fil *in* *psalmís*
be.REL.PRS.3SG in psalm

'We will recount and go over **every single saying** that is in the psalms.' (Ml. 14d5)

b. *amal* *as* *n-e* *do·regeni* ***cech***
for cop.REL.PRS.3SG 3SG.M PV·make.PRF.PST **every.ACC.SG**
n-duil
creature.ACC.SG

'As it is He who has made **every creature**.' (Ml. 27b13)[15]

Doubling occurring with discourse-linked quantification, and never elsewhere, supports Baker & Kramer's predictions.

4.2.5 Interrogative DPs

Baker & Kramer identify CD restrictions on interrogative DPs ('what', 'which', 'who' etc.): generally, these cannot be doubled, but D-linked wh-elements may be (2018: 1060-1061, Suñer 1988: 391).

[14] Ml. 23c27 contains (24)'s 'desemanticised' OM.
[15] Other non-doubled direct-objects with *cach* 'every': Ml. 44d8, 46b10, 48d1-2, 54c30, 55c20, 99a2, 114b16; Sg. 7a4.

OIr's interrogative pronouns are less straightforward: in wh-questions, wh-pronouns are either 'weak' or 'strong' (*GOI*: 286-291): weak pronouns act as conjunct particles (26a), and strong pronouns cannot enter the verbal complex, requiring a relative cleft structure (26b):

(26) a. *cía·beir*
who·carry.PRS.3SG

'Who carries?' (*GOI*: 287)

b. *cía* *rannas* *dúib*
who divide.REL.PRS.3SG for.2PL

'Who (is it that) divides for you?' (*Lebar na Núachongbála*; *GOI*: 288)

In (26a), it is reasonable to assume weak wh-pronouns move to SpecCP (Bate 2024: 32-33) (elaboration in Section 5). Evidence of their interaction with OMs is limited, but (27a-27c) combine subject-referring weak wh-pronouns with OMs (*GOI*: 288; García-Castillero 2020: 196-197):

(27) a. *cich=**e**·brata* *cich=**e**·áig* *cich=**e**·goin*
who=**3PL**·rob.PRS.3SG who=**3PL**·drive.PRS.3SG who=**3PL**·kill.PRS.3SG

'Who takes **them** captive?, who drives **them** away?, who kills **them**?' (*Táin Bó Cúailnge*; García-Castillero 2020: 196)

b. *cich=**ib**·foroíreth*
what=**2PL**·cause.PRF.PST.PASS.3SG

'What has been caused to **you (pl)**?' (*Táin Bó Froích*; García-Castillero 2020: 196)

c. *ar·fessid* *cia=**b**·dergéni*
PV·know.PRS.SUBJ.2PL who=**2PL**·make.PRF.PST.3SG

'You may know who has made **you** …' (*The Irish Gospel of Thomas*; García-Castillero 2020: 196-197)

OMs can therefore cliticise to weak wh-pronouns, meaning if doubling is possible, this would look like (27a-27c) but with an object-referring wh-pronoun. Texts never seem to show this; object-referring weak wh-pronouns never co-reference OMs:

(28) *cía·acca*
who·see.PST.2SG

'Whom did you see?' (*Lebor na hUidre*; *GOI*: 287)

For 'strong' wh-elements introducing relative constructions, OM-doubling of object-referring interrogative DPs is similarly absent:

(29) *citné* *fo·ruar*
what.PL PV·prepare.REL.PRF.PST.3SG

'What are they which He has prepared?' (Wb. 8b5; García-Castillero 2020: 193)

Once again, POMIC and CorPH (see Appendices) show no OMs with object-referring wh-elements; evidence (though sparse) does not contradict Baker & Kramer's tests.

4.2.6 Reflexive anaphors

Baker & Kramer's final test, that reflexive anaphors cannot be clitic-doubled, applies to Amharic and Greek (2018: 1077), but is not always applicable: Spanish and Bulgarian (clitic doubling) have special reflexive object clitics, while Sambaa (object agreement) marks reflexivity with a verbal prefix. OIr is also non-applicable: it lacks reflexivity-marking, reflexive OMs identical to other uses (Stifter 2006: 123, 2009: 82):

(30) *dia=**ndam**·chondelc* *frit=su* *adǽ*
if=**1SG**·compare.PRS.SUBJ.1SG against.2SG=EMPH God.VOC.SG

'If I compare **myself** to you, o God' (Ml. 91d8)

Clitic pronominal *féin* is generally translated 'self' (*GOI*: 306), but Stifter (2009: 82) notes this is not reflexive, only emphatic. Thus, (31) does not violate Baker & Kramer's tests:

(31) *gabs=**i*** ***cadessin*** *in* *abbaith*
take.PST.3SG=**3SG.M/N** **self** as abbot.ACC.SG

'He took **himself** as abbot' (arm.109)

Cadessin is not an OM-doubled reflexive anaphor; rather, the reflexive anaphor in the argument structure is OM *-i*, and *cadessin* is an emphatic-marker modifying the OM, disambiguating between *gabsi*'s possible readings 'He$_i$ took him$_j$'/'He$_i$ took himself$_i$'.

This test is therefore non-applicable to OIr. The other two tests have difficulties due to data-scarcity and lack of ungrammaticality judgments, but their indications align with CD, for which section 4.2.1–4.2.3 provide the most compelling evidence.

4.2.7 Default forms

I now consider earlier syntactic tests for CD, which may also support my analysis. Kern (2013) applied these to OIr; I also cover them for several reasons: for completeness of argument here, to outline potential issues with these tests rendering Kern's argumentation less persuasive, and because there is more to say on OIr's results for section 4.2.9.

Firstly, Preminger's (2009) test concerns results of agreement failure: failure with agreement affixes produces 'default' forms (e.g. 3SG on impersonal verbs/with quirky subjects in Indo-European), while CD's failure yields absence of doubling. Kern (2013: 4) argues OIr's lack of apparent 'default' form, compared to commonality of non-doubling, implies CD according to this test. However, Baker & Kramer argue Preminger's test is inconclusive, since object agreement's 'default' form could be phonologically null (2018: 1084). Nonetheless, interpreting Preminger's test indicatively, it suggests CD.

4.2.8 Floating quantifiers

Kern (2013: 2-3) cites Grestenberger's (2012: 10) observation that OIr OMs license floating quantifiers:

(32) a. *do=**s**·bér* *fo* *gin* *claidib* ***uili***
PV=**3PL**·give.FUT.1SG under mouth.ACC.SG sword.GEN.SG **all.ACC.PL**

'I will put **them all** to the edge of a sword' (*Bethu Phátraic*; Grestenberger 2012: 10)

Rezac (2010) proposed this as a CD diagnostic. However, Kern (2013: 3) notes (32) needn't rule out agreement: one could claim object *pro* licenses quantifier float.

4.2.9 Tense invariance

Finally, Nevins (2011) claims if morphemes' forms vary with tense, they must be manifestations of agreement on T. OIr's OMs lack tense-dependent allomorphy, taken by Kern (2013: 4-5) to signal clitichood. However, the OMs vary with another syntactic feature, unmentioned by Kern, taking 'Class C' forms in relative clauses. Thus, OMs' forms apparently vary with Force, a C-domain feature (Rizzi 1997), aligning with their surface position: the verbal complex's pre-tonic position, on which OMs encliticise, corresponds to C (Carnie, Pyatt & Harley 1994, Carnie, Harley & Pyatt 2000).[16] According to Nevins's test, this means they manifest C-domain agreement. Section 5 accounts for this within a CD analysis.

I have shown the weight of evidence overwhelmingly favours a clitic analysis of OMs, comparing them to CD. Having demonstrated this, Subsection 4.3 considers OIr within other aspects of CD's typology.

4.3 Old Irish in the typology of clitic-doubling

Anagnostopoulou (2016), typologising Indo-European object CD, distinguishes Spanish, Romanian, and Balkan patterns, based on strictness of specificity/referentiality and animacy requirements. Unlike Spanish and Romanian, and like Balkan, Amharic

[16] This is true at least of conjunct particles; see Newton (2006), Adger (2006), Bate (2024), and Simpson (2025) for post-syntactic derivations of other patterns.

(Kramer 2014), and Inuktitut (Yuan 2021), OIr's doubling lacks animacy requirements. Animacy correlates with 'Kayne's Generalisation' (Jaeggli 1982: 20; following Kayne 1975): doubled objects requiring special prepositions. Kayne's Generalisation does not seem required for CD (Baker & Kramer 2018: 1080), arising from interaction with differential object marking.

Another point of clitic doubling variation, not discussed in depth by Anagnostopoulou, is clitic landing site. Baker & Kramer (2016) assume Amharic doubling clitics move to SpecvP, where they m-merge with v; SpecvP is standardly assumed as object shift's target (2016: 18), and Yuan (2021) concludes the same for Inuktitut. Nevins (2011: 955) argues object shift in Indo-European CD also targets SpecvP, but Baker & Kramer (2016: 18) allow that Indo-European clitic doubling may target higher positions, since clitics appear on tense-inflected auxiliaries. OIr differs from all of these, its OM attaching to C (Bate 2024: 12), constituting a new type, explained in Section 5.

Finally, connecting with C-domain landing sites, interaction between clitic doubling and second position clitics warrants discussion. As aforementioned, OIr's OMs show some verbal-complex-internal second position effect (Vendryes' Restriction), descending diachronically from Wackernagel effects. However, Bošković (2016: 4) generalises that clitic doubling is impossible with second position clitics, citing, among others, early Indo-European languages as second position systems not permitting doubling.[17] OIr is noticeably absent from his list, but it is unclear that, synchronically, its OMs are general second position clitics. OIr also has definite articles, which Bošković (2016) claims prevent second position clitics, but allow clitic doubling (2016: 4). Thus, assuming OIr's OMs are not true second position clitics, OIr fits Bošković's typology as a DP-language (definite articles, no second position clitics, permits doubling) descended from an NP-language, PIE (no definite articles, second position clitics, presumably no doubling[18]). OIr's diachrony therefore explains its synchronically marked properties, its clitics targeting the C-domain as a relic of a second position system like that in, for instance, Vedic (Ram-Prasad 2023).

Having covered OIr's clitic doubling properties, I will now offer a formal analysis of its derivation, which also explains other aspects of OIr's grammar.

5 Towards an Analysis of Early Irish Pronominals

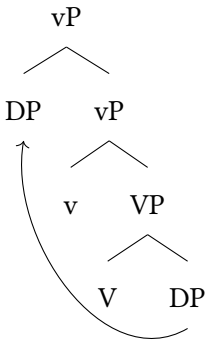
5.1 A Minimalist analysis of Old Irish object-clitics

Baker & Kramer's (2016, 2018) object clitic doubling derivation proceeds:

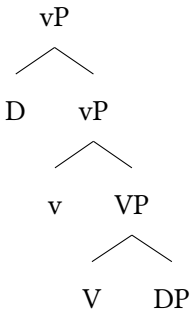
[17] Garrett (1990) and Sideltsev (2011, 2016) argue Hittite, with rich second position clitics, allowed true clitic doubling. Comparison with OIr may be fruitful, but cannot be pursued here due to space.

[18] McCone (1979: 483) argues, based on Anatolian, that PIE used proleptic object clitics with appositional objects in so-called 'amplified sentences' with VO order, similar to Jelinek's (1984) Pronominal Arguments. If true, it is unclear whether this would be true clitic doubling; this reconstruction requires re-examination.

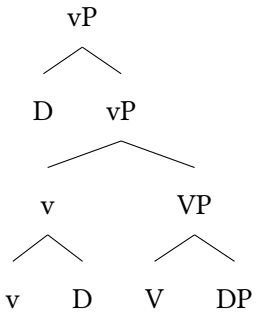
(33) a. Object DP moves to SpecvP (as a consequence of Agree between v and DP, perhaps involving object shift as an intermediate step; see below):



b. DP undergoes Reduce:



c. Reduced DP undergoes m-merger with v:



Object shift is found in Germanic, involving optional leftward movement of referential objects. OS as CD's first component (deriving optionality and specificity) was suggested by Sportiche (1996) and Anagnostopoulou (2003), and incorporated by Nevins (2011). Where Baker & Kramer's analysis departs is what undergoes OS: Nevins (2011) assumes OS operates only on clitics from base-generated Big DPs, but Baker & Kramer assume the entire object DP moves; if a non-head, it then undergoes 'Reduce' in SpecvP, following a parameterised requirement that v's specifier

be minimal. This D^0 then undergoes m-merger (Matushansky 2006)[19] with v, creating a complex v+D head. At LF, the highest D^0 is obligatorily interpreted as a distinct co-indexed pronoun, explaining restrictions on quantifiers, wh-pronouns, and anaphors, through weak crossover and binding effects. At PF, the multiple Spellout of different chain elements results from the Reduced head's non-identity with the lower DP, bleeding copy-deletion (mirroring resumptive pronouns); the lower, m-merged D^0 being pronounced (rather than the SpecvP copy) is a PF-requirement, deriving morpho-phonological clitichood (Baker & Kramer 2016: 20-22).

Their analysis succeeds in typological predictions: by separating CD's component processes of object shift, Reduce, and m-merger, they identify languages where each is present individually. They achieve this through subdividing v's EPP-feature types:

v's EPP-feature	Description	Languages
[EPP:Max]	SpecvP allows non-minimal constituents	Dutch, German, Icelandic OS
[EPP:Min]	SpecvP allows only small functional heads	French and Lubusku object clitics, Mainland Scandinavian OS
[EPP:Reduce-to-Min]	A subtype of [EPP:Min]; Reduce is available to satisfy the head-requirement	All clitic doubling languages (Amharic, Bulgarian, Greek, Rioplatense Spanish, etc.)
[EPP:Head]	Requires [EPP:Min] or [EPP:Reduce-to-Min]; v must m-merge with its specifier	Amharic, French, Lubusku; not Mainland Scandinavian, and perhaps not Bulgarian?
[EPP:Null]	No overt constituents allowed in SpecvP	English

Table 6 Baker & Kramer's (2016) EPP-feature types on v

Object CD necessarily involves [EPP:Reduce-to-Min], and optionally [EPP:Head], depending on whether clitics m-merge – they suggest Bulgarian, with morphologically freer clitics, may have CD without [EPP:Head]. However, they acknowledge Bošković's (2016: 4) claim that CD is impossible with second position clitics, and that Slavic clitic doubling only occurs in languages with 'verb-attached' clitics, including Bulgarian. Baker & Kramer (2016: 23) say if this holds, and doubling only occurs with clitics which merge with a particular functional head, then [EPP:Reduce-to-Min] may be replaced with [EPP:Reduce-to-Merge], with Reduce

[19] Baker & Kramer (2016: 5) depart from m-merger's conception as a PF-operation, suggesting it applies narrow-syntactically. Nevertheless, I retain the term m-merger for clarity, following Yuan (2021).

operating to feed m-merger rather than to satisfy [EPP:Min]. I propose going further, and removing Reduce from the EPP-parameters; I shortly show OIr evidence that Reduce's availability to satisfy [EPP:Head] varies independently of EPP-parameters themselves. Thus, Reduce needn't be available to satisfy [EPP:Head], being absent in French and Lubusku, which have m-merging object clitics that never double DPs. This sketch requires testing on more languages, but may contextualise clitic doubling within other phenomena, and helpfully constrain it typologically and diachronically, shown below with OIr.

Per this analysis, OIr objects must occupy SpecCP before undergoing Reduce and m-merger. OMs' syntactic position in C[20] is desirable, since they receive relative marking and encliticise to C-elements (they may subsequently undergo prosodic inversion; see Bate 2024: 12). OMs' C-position cannot arise by moving a complex v+D head, since verbs cannot move to C if a conjunct particle fills C (Newton 2006, Bate 2024).[21] I propose a derivation with 2 movement steps, first to SpecvP, then SpecvP→SpecCP, combining Newton's (2006) account of OIr with Kramer's (2014) suggestion for object shift's role in CD. Newton proposes Agree between C and v (2006: 75-76), suggesting OIr's C probes for tense and agreement features. Kramer (2014) assumes Amharic's v probes for phi-features, and that OMs' movement to SpecvP is triggered by Agree. Therefore, since Agree is obligatory, clitic doubling's optionality must come from elsewhere; she proposes that an initial stage of (optional) object shift, into a projection between V and v, feeds v's object agreement by moving the object into a sufficiently local configuration (2014: 622). If OS does not occur, Agree fails, which, following Preminger (2011), does not crash the derivation. For OIr, object shift to SpecvP feeds Agree between objects and C, triggering movement to SpecCP through C's EPP-requirement. Locality imposed by the Phase Impenetrability Condition (Chomsky 2000: 108), employed by Newton (2006), may be relevant: according to the PIC, to move to SpecCP the object must be a specifier of phase-head v to be accessible to the higher phase. Crucially, by assuming locality determines whether C's agreement-goal moves to SpecCP, optional OS can feed obligatory movement.

Whatever motivates objects' movement to SpecCP, this landing site feeding m-merger is a positive consequence of Baker & Kramer's (2016) analysis, because it explains OIr's lack of SpecCP material (hence its V-initiality): OIr has [EPP:Head] on C, rather than v like other object CD. Given this, OIr's status as an exceptional type of V-initial language where verbs may occupy C (Roberts 2019: 401)[22] is explained by its recent descent from a V2-like system of second position Wackernagel clitics, with the innovation of a restriction barring phrasal SpecCP.

Importantly, this predicts OIr's wh-movement, which initially seems independent: discussed in section 4.2.5, ordinary wh-movement is only possible with 'weak'

[20] I assume a unified C head for OIr (Newton 2006, Lash 2017, Bate 2024), contra Simpson (2025) below.

[21] Alternatively, one may argue OMs suggest general T→C movement, making the entire verbal complex a [v+D+T+C] head, moving its explanation to morphology. However, placing this burden on PF when syntactic explanations are available is theoretically and acquisitionally undesirable; such an approach is unsupported by previous accounts of OIr, and is not pursued here.

[22] Whether OIr retains V→C (Bate 2024), or lost it before written records (Newton 2006, Simpson 2025), is left open here, but diachronically some V→C stage is assumed.

interrogative pronouns acting as conjunct particles (i.e. C) post-movement, with other wh-questions requiring biclausal clefts. OIr's [EPP:Head] on C, independently needed for CD, immediately derives this property: non-minimal DPs undergoing wh-movement cannot occupy SpecCP, because they cannot m-merge with C, so biclausal structures host them instead. The difference from CD is that Reduce cannot remedy wh-movement, hence separating Reduce from EPP-parameters themselves. Reduce for wh-movement would produce a monoclausal variant of 'partial wh-movement' (McDaniel 1986, Barbiers, Koeneman & Lekakou 2010):

(34) ***Was*** *glaubst* *du* ***mit*** ***wem*** *Hans spricht?*
what think.PRS.2SG you **with** **whom** Hans speak.PRS.3SG

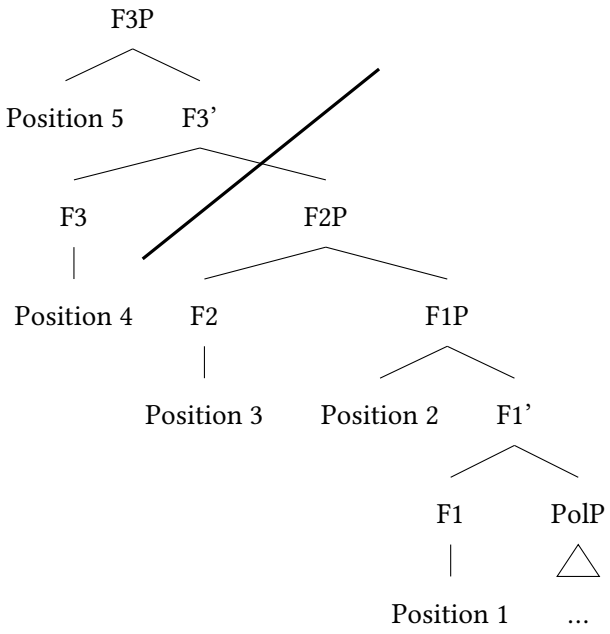
'**Whom** do you think Hans is talking to?' (McDaniel, 1986)

Partial wh-movement never attests spelled-out elements in-situ, only in medial SpecCPs (Nunes 2004: 39). Similarly, Reduce for monoclausal wh-questions would create wh-in-situ, perhaps ruling out Reduce for the same reason as partial wh-movement's lack of in-situ. Regardless, restricting phrasal SpecCP, predicted by Baker & Kramer's (2016) [EPP:Head], derives OIr's wh-questions, supporting this analysis.

Other proposed elements for OIr's SpecCP are non-conjunct-particle conjunctions (not triggering conjunct inflection, and cannot host OMs), including conditional *má*. Newton (2006: 171) argues *má* is intra-clausal, but not in C, therefore occupying SpecCP. Moreover, some conjunctions morpho-phonologically combine with C: *má*, and conjunct-particle conjunctions *co*^{N} and *cí(a)*, combine with negative conjunct particle *ní* (Carnie et al. 2000: 53), suggesting SpecCP conjunctions m-merge with C. Once again, this motivates [EPP:Head].

Not all OIr conjunctions are heads, however: temporal conjunctions/subordinators (*íarsindí* 'after', *in ta(i)n* 'when', etc.) are apparently phrasal pre-verbal non-conjunct-particles. Accounting for the range of conjunctions, Simpson (2025: 145-177) takes a cartographic approach to OIr's left periphery, postulating 3 functional projections. He does not identify these with Rizzi's (1997), leaving their identification for future research (2025: 177):

(35)



(Simpson 2025: 168)

Position	Properties	Elements
Position 1 ($F1^0$)	Standard C^0; locus of relativising and clause-typing	Negative *ní*, interrogative *in*, relative and imperative clause-typing
Position 2 (SpecF1P)	Landing site of wh-movement	Wh-pronouns (*cía* etc.), prepositional relatives with *(s)a*, conjunctions reanalysed from prepositional relatives (*dia* 'if', *ara* 'so that')
Position 3 ($F2^0$)	Conjunct-particle heads which can co-occur with negative particles	Concessive *cía*, consecutive co^N
Position 4 ($F3^0$)	Non-conjunct-particle heads	Conditional *má*, consecutive co^L, manner *amal*
Position 5 (SpecF3P)	Non-conjunct-particle temporal conjunctions, phrasal in origin	*íarsindi* 'after', *in ta(i)n* 'when', etc.

Table 7 Simpson's (2025) C-domain positions

OIr's lack of fronting (except limited wh-movement[23] and CD) suggests cartography lacks motivation here, since nothing associates different C-domain features (Top, Foc, etc.) with Simpson's heads. Moreover, Simpson's derivation of 'distance' from the verbal complex is unclear: $F2^0$ acts as a conjunct particle, but $F3^0$ does not, despite Simpson allowing that F2 may not project when absent (2025: 172). Therefore, $F3^0$ is no further from $F1^0$ than $F2^0$ is, having no additional interveners, but still is somehow blocked from the verbal complex. Some featural determinant of conjunct-particle-hood therefore seems necessary (see below), eliminating the need for separate projections.

Consequently, I propose explaining Simpson's descriptive 'positions' differently, assuming [EPP:Head] on C. I earlier argued for m-merger of Positions 2 and 3, and *má* (position 4). Therefore, Positions 2 and 3 are specifiers of C, collapsing Simpson's F1P/F2P (F2P is already odd, never needing a specifier). I argue *má*, also morpho-phonologically combining with C, likewise belongs here; it forms a natural class with Position 3 defined by m-merger. That *má* cannot be a conjunct particle requires separate explanation (likely a lexically encoded feature, whose nature is left for future work), but its morpho-phonological combination with C is unexplained by Simpson, so overall nothing is lost. This leaves F3P, which may be identified with Bate's (Bate: 30) TopP: Bate employs only TopP and CP, to explain OIr's synchronically available topic-fronting (DiGirolamo 2018). However, TopP too is unnecessary: OIr topicalisation may be extra-clausal left-dislocation, as in French, where left-dislocated topics are not moved, but base-generated in a clause-adjoined position (de Cat 2007, Wolfe 2021). This is supported by OIr's fronted topics being resumed by pronouns:

(36) a. ***intí*** ***for=a·tuit=som*** *immurgu* *a=t·bail=**side***
the.one **PV=3SG.N·fall=EMPH** however PV=3SG.N·die.3SG=**3SG.M.ANA**

'He who goes to it however, he dies' (Wb. 4d15; DiGirolamo 2018: 146)

b. ***cluiche*** ***n-aímin*** ***inmeldach*** *agta=**it*** *fir*
game.NOM.SG **pleasant** **delightful** play.PRS.3PL=**3SG.M/N** man.NOM.PL
ocus *mná*
and woman.NOM.PL

'A pleasant and delightful game, men and women play it.' (*Immram Brain* 41; Stifter 2006: 106)

Like topics, adjunct-like peripheral status may also subsume Simpson's 'Position 5' conjunctions; Newton (2006: 171) proposes that when used as subordinators,

[23] Simpson (2025: 169-170) employs phrasal SpecCP (SpecF1P) for wh-movement in prepositional relative clauses (e.g. ***as=a**·torbatha* '**out of which** they have been cut' [Wb. 5b39]), which he argues pied-pipe a PP (*GOI*: 312-313; Simpson 2025: 160-161). However, given OIr's restriction on non-head wh-movement, another explanation is needed. Bate (2024: 29) suggests alternatives, but another is available: OIr productively incorporates pronouns into prepositions (*GOI*: 272-276). Therefore, prepositional-relatives may wh-move a complex P+D head, relative-particle *(s)a* being an incorporating relative pronoun.

these are main-clausal rather than embedded left-periphery.[24] Thus, reclassifying Table 7:

Position	Properties	Elements
Type 1 (C^0)	Base-generated C heads	*ní*, *in*
Type 2 (SpecCP)	Landing site of wh-movement	Wh-pronouns, relative elements
Type 3 (SpecCP)	Externally-merged lexical conjunction/subordination heads	Conjunct particles (*cía*, co^N, *dia*, *ara*), non-conjunct particle *má*
Type 4 (extra-clausal)	Formally outside embedded clauses, adjoined to main clauses	Left-dislocated topics, phrasal conjunctions/subordinators

Table 8 C-domain positions reclassified

Therefore, accommodating Bate's and Simpson's contributions, OIr's left-peripheral elements fit [EPP:Head] on C, independently motivated through clitic doubling, wh-movement, and morpho-phonological combination of conjunct heads.

A diachronic sketch of CD's pre-OIr development is now possible. At some point in early Celtic, transitioning to obligatory V-initiality and non-articulated CP, C was reanalysed as having [EPP:Head]. This would make phrasal movement to the left periphery impossible (notwithstanding aforementioned base-generated adjoined topics); such movement would be restricted to minimal D-elements, i.e. clitic pronouns. This created necessary conditions for OIr's 'long clitic doubling' to develop: without SpecCP's minimality requirement, Reduce would never be needed derivationally, or posited by the acquirer. Following this, a reanalysis of right-dislocated objects as clitic doubling seems plausible, considering Lucht's (1994) unusually high proportion of V(S)XO (Griffith 2011: 76). Ahlqvist (1976) proposed a similar reanalysis for in-situ object pronouns in MIr: clauses with an OM and a right-dislocated object, without elements which ordinarily follow objects (PPs, adjuncts), are ambiguous as to whether objects are right-dislocated or intra-clausal, the latter requiring clitic doubling. Thus, for the innovative derivation, the acquirer hypothesises some UG-available mechanism for deriving doubling structures. Object shift, landing in SpecCP, and Reduce due to C's [EPP:Head] fit this criterion, introducing both OS and Reduce into the innovative grammar.

Eska (2009: 29, 2017: 1240) suggests Continental Celtic also allowed clitic doubling; this innovation may therefore either come from Proto-Celtic, or have independently arisen multiple times. It is promising that Eska's 2 doubling tokens are

[24] Cf. Blümel & Pitsch (2019), who similarly propose adjunct status for phrasal ('non-simplex') adverbial-clause subordinators in Germanic and Slavic.

V-initial[25], which, unlike in OIr, is an optional, marked order (Eska 2017: 1241-1242), supporting an account where [EPP:Head] on C (perhaps optionally present in Continental Celtic, or present only with V in C) is required for long clitic doubling:

(37) a. Transalpine Celtic:
sioxt=i *albanos* *|**panna*** ***extra*** ***tuđ(đon)***
?add.PST.3SG=3PL A.NOM.SG **vessel.ACC.PL** **beyond** **allotment.ACC.SG**
ccc
300

'Albanos added **vessels beyond the allotment** (in the amount of) 300' (GLG 14.20–21=RIG L–31; Eska 2009: 31)

b. Cisalpine Celtic:
aKisios arKaToKoKmaTereKos *To=**śo**=KoTe*
A.NOM.SG PV=**3SG.O.M**=give-3SG.S.PST

aTom ***Teuo-χTonion*** *eu*
border.ACC.SG.M **god-person.GEN.PL** ??

'A. A., he gave a border of gods and men.' (RIG *E–2=CIS 141=CIM 100; Eska 2009: 29)

This pathway also derives Bošković's (2016) generalisation: for acquirers to posit Reduce, a particular head must require a minimal specifier, to motivate the operation. Second position clitics, targeting high positions and never m-merging, never encounter this requirement; therefore, they will never be doubling clitics, because Reduce is never posited to derive them. In OIr, with (exceptionally) [EPP:Head] on C, Reduce became possible for C-clitics; in a prior second position clitic stage (PIE), clitics' landing sites lacked such requirements, so Reduce would never arise, making doubling impossible.

Non-doubling OMs would employ doubling's mechanism, without Reduce (since pronouns are already minimal). The lower copy is isomorphic to the higher copy and is deleted at PF, replacing object *pro* (Eska 2009, Griffith 2011) with copy-deletion. This derivation fits Bate's (2024: 12) assumption that OMs adjoin to C, allowing integration into accounts resembling his. However, OIr's lack of full pronoun doubling remains puzzling; other clitic-doubling languages allow doubling of in-situ full pronouns if emphatic, emphasis overriding copy-deletion (Baker & Kramer 2016: 23, Yuan 2021: 171). Subsection 5.2 gives an explanation involving OIr's pronominal system.

OMs' relative forms (section 4.2.9) also require explanation. This can be traced to OIr's relative complementiser, descending from SpecCP relativiser **yo(m)*, which Bate (2024: 27-28) argues became relative-head "=$Ø^{L/N}$", enclitic on C, through van Gelderen's (2004) Spec-to-head reanalysis and phonological erosion. =$Ø^{L/N}$'s mutation plus particle **de* derives the form of Class C OMs, and =$Ø^{L/N}$ triggering **de*'s

[25] (43b)'s subject is extra-clausally left-dislocated (Eska 2009: 28).

presence (present in Class B due to etymological consonants) may be a synchronically idiosyncratic phonological effect in OIr, just as $=Ø^{L/N}$ + *ní* gives opaque *ná* (Carnie et al. 2000: 53). This fits the present analysis: $=Ø^{L}/^{N}$ may remain a specifier, m-merged into C, deriving its enclitic status and morpho-phonological combination effects. M-merger, alongside OIr's complex synchronic phonological alternations, thereby explains apparent 'agreement' of OMs for relative Force: it is merely phonological processes of combined C-elements.

Thus, Baker & Kramer's (2016) clitic doubling proposal enables fuller understanding of OIr's clause: SpecCP's lack of phrasal constituents (mysterious under previous accounts) is explained by the same mechanism that derives CD. This account has several advantages over previous analyses of OMs. Firstly, it derives clitic doubling along with its properties, achieving this work's main goal, by employing existing analyses of CD cross-linguistically. CD's object shift component explains 'proleptic' pronouns' optionality and specificity, and the OM being a referential pronoun at LF explains its properties non-stipulatively, impossible using pure Agree. CD's presence despite clitics' apparent second position, violating Bošković's (2016) generalisation, is also predicted: rather than occupying their own position like standard second position clitics (e.g. Simpson's 2025: 117-119, SpecPolP), OMs' second position is synchronically epiphenomenal, resulting from enclisis on C. More generally, the clitic derivation explicitly predicts the OM is referential, not simply agreement material (*contra* Eska 2009, Griffith 2011). Secondly, it explains CD's availability by restricting phrasal SpecCP, explaining other aspects of OIr; though only sketched here, this shows promise for OIr's broader syntactic understanding. Finally, OMs' second position can be explained by combining syntactic and phonological processes, replicating Bate's (2024) success: they are in C syntactically through modified m-merger, and have a PF-requirement to be enclitic, meaning they may subsequently undergo prosodic inversion (Halpern 1992) if C is empty (as Bate proposes for preverb-initial clauses). Overall, the present proposal fills an important gap in analyses of OIr, while compatible with existing accounts.

There is room to improve this analysis further. Some components are non-essential: firstly, if a Big DP analysis of CD is preferred, Reduce may be replaced, as long as [EPP:Head] enforces minimal SpecCP. Both clitic derivations fit the data, with availability of Reduce and Big DPs being theoretically analogous. Secondly, if one prefers an expanded left periphery to explain conjunctions (rather than adjunct status advocated here), *per* Simpson (2025), this is not fatal: wh-movement targets the same (conjunct particle) head as OMs, motivating [EPP:Head] regardless, just on the lowest C-domain head.

Finally, despite Baker & Kramer's [EPP:Head] succinctly capturing OIr's C-domain, the feature itself is theoretically odd; reducing it to something independently necessary would be preferable. Since it restricts phrasal categories Merging to form a root node, labelling may provide an explanation: according to Chomsky's (2013) Labelling Algorithm, 2 phrasal categories cannot label a node (unless sharing a feature), requiring one to move. This presents a problem at the root node: since SpecCP cannot move higher, this configuration cannot be labelled. Thus, OIr's solution is forcing SpecCP to m-merge with C (undergoing Reduce if possible/necessary),

allowing C to label the root. However, phrasal SpecCP is unproblematic in V2, which has been proposed to involve unlabelled root nodes (Blümel 2017, Roberts 2019: 401-402). The question, then, is why OIr does not tolerate this, and why OIr's strict-type root node is apparently rarer than V2's looser type. If this could be pinned on independently necessary (featural) properties of C, with a robust theory of labelling, this would improve the analysis by reducing its stipulative content, but no answer presents itself within current theory. Consequently, I maintain the [EPP:Head] analysis; thus, clitic doubling is explained through a hitherto-uncaptured generalisation about OIr's C-domain.

Establishing this analysis, thereby explaining the mechanism of CD I argue for OIr, concludes this work's primary aim. The remainder considers its implications, for OIr's synchronic pronominal system, and MIr diachrony.

5.2 Implications for Old Irish pronouns

OIr contains several OM-doubling-adjacent phenomena, which the present analysis may illuminate. Firstly, copular clauses with definite subject and predicate employ a full 3rd-person pronoun following the copula (4), doubling an argument. Lash (2017) identifies the 3rd-person copula as having grammaticalised into a complementiser. Additionally, the copula never bears stress (*GOI*: 483). Assuming copula in C, clitic doubling predicts (4), by adding a PF-proviso that OMs may take phonologically stressed forms to host the copula, appearing as full pronouns. Connecting this phenomenon with CD is promising; it may have been important in causing MIr's rise of full pronouns (Roma 2000: 116, Darling, Meelen & Willis 2023). Elucidating this process, and the precise mechanism behind OMs' stressed forms with the copula, is left for future research.

Additionally, clitic pronoun doubling surfaces with proclitic possessives and genitive DPs:

(38) a. ***a*** *masse* ***in*** ***choirp***
its beauty the **body.GEN.SG**

'**the body's** beauty' (lit. 'its, the body's, beauty') (Wb. 28c25; *GOI*: 279)

b. ***a*** *ainm* ***ind*** ***fir*** ***so***
his name **the** **man.GEN.SG** **this**

'the name **of this man**' (Ml. 23d17; Griffith 2015: 181)

Griffith (2015: 181) finds these less frequent (3.2% of definite genitive phrases in Wb.+Ml.) than OM-doubling. He therefore places genitives lower on the pronoun⟶agreement 'cline' than OMs, but higher than prepositional marking which never doubles. I here sketch an account of genitive doubling, harnessing verbal/nominal isomorphism: in OIr nominals, D^0 seems to mirror C^0, never receiving stress, with articles and possessive pronouns always proclitic. In (38), we see genitive DPs follow their noun, unlike genitive pronouns, so genitive pronouns may move to D. For doubling, SpecDP may employ Reduce: (38a-38b)'s genitive DPs

move to SpecDP, Reduce, and m-merge into D. This implies [EPP:Head] on D, expected given acquirers' preference for feature-generalisation (Roberts 2007: 275, Biberauer & Roberts 2017, Biberauer 2019), perhaps because D and C are highest in their extended projections, or are phase heads.

Concerning the *notae augentes*, the present analysis is agnostic. However, Griffith's (2011) pronoun analysis has several problems: while superficially fitting CD, repairing emphatic pronouns' absence, viewing *notae* as pronouns is odd more broadly. Firstly, their distribution with prepositions is unexpected: they follow conjugated prepositions, and cannot follow un-conjugated prepositions, when prepositional suffixed pronouns otherwise never double. Griffith (2015) accounts for this by proposing the *notae* have different functions in different environments, following Bresnan & Mchombo's (1987) Lexical Functional Grammar approach, but without independent motivation, this is ad-hoc and unnecessary to explain the data. Moreover, unlike deictic *suide/side*, *notae* lack independent forms for the non-doubling prepositional context, and unlike *suide/side*, the *notae* and *féin* are not case-marked, making them less like argument pronouns. *Féin*'s distribution is especially odd for a pronoun: it appears reflexive, but its presence to mark reflexivity is optional, and it must co-occur with other person-marking (*GOI*: 306-307). Griffith (2011) does not mention *féin* when arguing *notae* are pronouns: if *notae* are pronouns, this fits *féin* as well, which is undesirable for reasons covered in section 4.2.6. Therefore, a category of emphatic pronominal modifiers including *féin* seems necessary for OIr, potentially covering the *notae* without them being pronouns. Finally, Griffith's (2011) central argument, that a *nota*'s presence is in complementary distribution with co-referential full DPs, does not necessarily indicate the *notae* themselves are pronouns (Kern 2013: 7): like *féin*, they may be pronominal modifiers. Their analysis, including of their animacy hierarchy restrictions (Griffith 2008), is left for future work (e.g. see Simpson 2025: 203-207).

Rejecting *notae* as pronouns leaves an odd lack of emphatic pronoun doubling. However, as mentioned in section 4.2.3, this aligns with OIr's general ban on full pronouns in argument positions, bringing OIr's direct objects in line with its subjects and prepositional objects. This continues into Modern Irish's complementarity system, with new 'analytic' forms alongside 'synthetic' agreeing forms, analysis of which has continued since McCloskey & Hale (1984) (e.g. Perry 2025). However, objects' pronominal complementarity apparently breaks down in MIr, the final section's focus.

5.3 Implications for Middle Irish

MIr's full object pronouns evidently pre-date OMs' complete loss; full pronouns and OMs frequently co-occur:

(39) *no=**s**·beir* *i* *n-oenchengul* *lé* ***iat*** *co*
PV=**3PL**·bear.PRS.3SG in single.bond.DAT.SG with.3SG.F **them** to
hUltu
Ulsterman.ACC.PL

'You put them into the enclosure of an enemy.' (*Lebar na Núachongbála*; Eska, 2009o:36)

However, caution is needed: later recopying of MIr texts produced modernisations. McCone (1997: 177) claims this doubling is often an artificial amalgam: later scribes added full pronouns, with OMs no longer understood. Nevertheless, Eska (2009: 35) argues pronoun doubling is synchronically productive, like non-pronominal OM-doubling. This warrants closer investigation: on one hand, pronoun-doubling aligns MIr with other clitic-doubling languages; conversely, it is unexpected given Irish's diachronically stable complementarity. Combining detailed philological work with precise formal syntactic approaches is necessary to discern productivity of MIr's object pronoun doubling.

Additionally, it has been claimed (Breatnach 1977: 83, Sims-Williams 1984: 197) that MIr's proleptic OMs lost definiteness requirements. This implies grammaticalisation towards true agreement (Griffith 2015: 184); Uriagereka (1995: 86) cites typological literature (Barlow & Ferguson 1988) on CD→agreement grammaticalisation losing definiteness requirements. However, there are complications; detailed textual study is needed to determine OMs' nature in MIr vernaculars, beyond texts' conservatism and hypercorrection. As Griffith (2015: 184) says, '[g]iven the very complicated state of MIr textual transmission, this is no easy proposition', but investigation should begin by assuming OIr had clitic doubling.

6 Conclusion

Several important points have been gained. Centrally, data and cross-linguistic comparison have shown OIr is typologically an object-clitic-doubling language. Implications include the status of full pronouns and *notae*. Secondly, analysing OIr's CD using Baker & Kramer's (2016) [EPP:Head] has proven empirically and theoretically effective: this supports Baker & Kramer's cross-linguistic analysis, and shows promise for understanding OIr's CD and clause structure in connection, though further theoretical refinement is desirable. Finally, synchronic groundwork has been laid for diachronic study of Early Irish object-marking: reconstruction concerning CD in Celtic and Indo-European, and elucidating MIr's OM loss, are both fruitful lines of future research.

Abbreviations and Glosses

<·>	Separates the pre-tonic first position of the verbal complex	NOM	Nominative
<=>	Separates the following clitics from their host: OMs, clitic pronominals, copula	ACC	Accusative
<->	separates a nasal mutation from a following vowel	GEN	Genitive
PV	Preverb (in pre-tonic position)	DAT	Dative
PRS	Present	VOC	Vocative
PST	Past	SG	Singular
FUT	Future	PL	Plural
PRF	Perfect	F	Feminine
IPRF	Imperfect	M	Masculine
SUBJ	Subjunctive	N	Neuter
PASS	Passive	EMPH	*Nota augens*
REL	Relative (verbal form)	ANA	Deictic pronominal
COP	Copula		

For non-OIr languages:

NEG	Negation	S	Subject
AOR	Aorist	O	Object
INJ	Injuctive	DEF	Definite
PTCL	Particle	ERG	Ergative
CONN	Connective	ABS	Absolutive
PPTCPL	Past participle	REC.PST	Recent past tense
CL	Clitic	CTMP	Contemporative mood

Appendices

Appendix A: POMIC queries

Instances of doubling: cam.psd, arm.psd, lc.psd, and mass.psd were searched using the following CorpusSearch query to gather instances of OM-doubling, alongside non-doubling object-referring OMs, all of which were manually checked to find examples used throughout this work:

```
I.  node: IP*
    query: (*+X* hasSister NP-OB*) OR (*+XW* iDominates NP-OB*)
```

Quantifiers: cam.psd, arm.psd, lc.psd, and mass.psd were searched using the following CorpusSearch query to find any instances of quantifiers as objects, to manually check for OM-doubling:

```
II. node: IP*
    query: (NP-OB* Dominates Q*)
```

Wh-pronouns: cam.psd, arm.psd, lc.psd, and mass.psd were searched using the following CorpusSearch query to find any instances of wh-interrogatives, to manually check for OM-doubling:

```
III. node: IP*
     query: (CP-QUE* iDominates W*)
```

Appendix B: CorPH queries

Quantifiers: For the following lemmata, each appearance within Ml. (S0006) and Sg. (S0007) which was analysed as accusative (acc) was manually checked at its Text Unit ID for the presence of OM-doubling:

I. *uile* 'all, every, the whole' (ID: 3080)

II. *cach* 'every, each, all, any' (ID: 460)

III. *cách* 'every one, each one, any one, all' (ID: 461)

IV. *cechtar* 'each of the two, either' (ID: 3643)

V. *nech* 'anyone, one, someone' (ID: 5439)

VI. *nechtar* 'either, one of two' (ID: 5440)

VII. *ní* 1 'something; nothing, anything; not' (ID: 5450)

Wh-pronouns: For the following lemmata, each appearance within Ml. (S0006) and Sg. (S0007) was manually checked at its Text Unit ID for the presence of OM-doubling:

VIII. *cía 1* 'who, what, which' (ID: 605)

IX. *cid 1* 'what, which' (ID: 8499)

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