The Old Irish verbal complex as a templatic morphological structure[1]

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Abstract

This paper puts forward the idea that the notion of 'templatic' structure discussed in the linguistic literature applies to quite a number of remarkable features of the Old Irish verbal complex, a morphological structure which constitutively includes the expression of negative polarity, clause types and pronominal object argument, in addition to other grammatical categories typical of Indo-European languages such as tense, aspect, mood, diathesis, and subject pronominal reference.

Keywords: templatic morphology; Old Irish; verbal complex.

Resumen. *El complejo verbal del irlandés antiguo como una estructura morfológica templática*

Este artículo plantea la idea de que la noción de estructura 'templática' discutida en la bibliografía lingüística se aplica a un buen número de características notables del complejo verbal del irlandés antiguo, una estructura morfológica que incluye constitutivamente la expresión de la polaridad negativa, tipo de oración y un argumento pronominal de objeto, además de otras categorías gramaticales propias de las lenguas indoeuropeas, como tiempo, aspecto, modo, diátesis y referencia pronominal del sujeto.

Palabras clave: morfología templática; irlandés antiguo; complejo verbal.

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1. Introduction

This paper deals with a basically descriptive issue, namely, the extent to which the notion of 'templatic' currently considered in the linguistic literature applies to the morphological structure which represents the Old Irish (OIr.) finite verbal expression and which is usually termed verbal complex.

The basic linguistic evidence of the Old Irish period (700-900 A.D.) is the collection of contemporaneous texts included in the *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* (STOKES-STRACHAN 1901-03). It is possible to state a relatively fixed and unitary description of the verbal complex as attested in those texts, but it must be acknowledged that some specific developments which can be observed in later stages of the Irish language are already anticipated during that period. For a recent treatment of some changes in progress affecting the verbal complex during the OIr. period, see GARCÍA CASTILLERO (2015).

The verbal complex is one of the most characteristic features of the OIr. language if compared to the finite verbal expression of other Indo-European (IE) languages. Many of its features may still be observed in Brittonic, the other branch of the Insular Celtic linguistic group, and this is one of the innovations which may be assumed as having taken place in Proto-Insular Celtic (PIC), the assumable common prehistoric ancestor of both Insular Celtic branches. A good deal of the components involved in the OIr. verbal complex, such as lexical preverbs, pretonic conjunct particles such as negatives, and pronominal affixes (the clitic pronouns of traditional grammars), not to mention inflected verbal forms, may be etymologically related to elements which appear in other IE languages as more or less separate constituents of the clause. The specific feature of the Irish language (or of the Insular Celtic group) is not only that those elements have been put together into a morphological unit, but also that there has been a series of later additions, functional extensions and restrictions, among other innovations, which have developed and extended the expressive possibilities of the structure resulting from the mere univerbation of elements inherited in PIC or Proto-Celtic from previous linguistic stages. A somewhat more detailed treatment on this general issue, as well as on the secondary creation of a group of preverbal elements, can be found in GARCÍA CASTILLERO (2014).

As stated above, this paper focuses on the assumable templatic nature of the OIr. verbal complex. In order to do so, Section 2 states the basic features of templatic morphology as proposed in the relevant literature, Section 3 offers an outline of the OIr. verbal complex, and Section 4 considers some aspects of this morphologi-

cal structure which can reasonably be labelled templatic. Diachronic considerations of the type just mentioned, however, should not be kept apart from the discussion on templatic morphology. Apart from stating the main ideas of the previous Sections, Section 5 will briefly argue for the mutual importance of descriptive and diachronic discussions of this type.

2. The notion of templatic morphological structure

Giving a unitary and universal definition of templatic, either at the morphological or other levels of linguistics analysis, is not an easy task, so that it is best to begin this section with GOOD's (2011: 739) informal definition of template: 'an analytical device used to characterise the linear realization of a linguistic constituent whose linear stipulations are unexpected from the point of view of standard approaches to linguistic analysis'.

A 'layered' vs. 'templatic' opposition is therefore usually invoked, and basically the same opposition has also been termed 'motivated' vs. 'unmotivated' by MANOVA-ARONOFF (2010: 111-112). The templatic features of a given morphological structure are determined according to the degree to which its configuration contravenes well-known tendencies of morphemic linearization, which are more or less the list given by BICKEL-NICHOLS (2007: 214-216) to define the 'layered' or 'hierarchical' nature of a given morphological structure: it is expected that the linearization of the morphological elements within a given morphological structure is ruled by principles such as the strict adjacency for dependency, the selection of external allomorphs depending on inner formatives, the existence of only one basic element (or head) which determines the character of the whole expression, as well as the position for each morphological element on the basis of its function, and –as partly related to the previous feature– the more external position of inflectional elements as regards derivative ones.

SIMPSON-WITHGOTT (1986) proposed the following list of templatic morphological features, which this paper will present according to the later elaboration and discussion by STUMP (1997, 2006) and RICE (2000).

(i)   'Zero morphemes are prevalent in template morphology but not in layered morphology'.
(ii) 'Layered morphology gives rise to headed structures, template morphology does not'.
(iii) 'Layered morphology is constrained by some principle of adjacency, template morphology isn't'.
(iv) 'Layered morphology does not permit an 'inner' morpheme to be chosen on the basis of what an 'outer' morpheme will be, template morphology permits this kind of 'lookahead''.
(v)   'Layered morphology usually encodes at most one argument'.

Three observations seem pertinent at this moment. First, these features certainly do not have the same weight as diagnostics for the templatic character. Most

probably, feature (v) is not definitive, and this is perhaps why it is not included in the lists of RICE (2000: 11) and MANOVA-ARONOFF (2010: 113). As noted below, feature (i) may be found in other types of morphological structures.

Second, the interpretation of a specific phenomenon of a given language may arguably be a matter of dispute. Consider e.g. the Athapaskan 'split semantemes' or 'interrupted synthesis', to quote the terms used by SIMPSON-WITHGOTT (1986: 157), and illustrated here with their Navajo example of (1), which represent –in the opinion of those scholars– the potential violation of the Adjacency and No Lookahead Constraints, to be considered later. In this paper, I defend the idea that the so-called OIr. lexical compounds can also be interpreted as 'split semantemes', in spite of their traditional consideration as different elements. For this question, see later on Section 4.1.

(1) *di -sh -łid*
     *fire*PREF-1SG-*burn*
      'I burn it'

Finally, it is important to emphasise, following BICKEL-NICHOLS (2007: 219), that the notion of templatic applies to individual formatives rather than to entire structures. This important observation must be remembered when dealing with the OIr. verbal complex.

Probably due to the difficulties for establishing a list of criteria which may have a straightforward application, NORDLINGER (2010) employs a partially different list of templatic features for analysing the Murrinh-Patha (Australia) verbal morphology. Her list includes (i) 'lack of headed structure', (ii) 'multiple exponence', (iii) 'discontinuous dependencies', (iv) 'zero morphs', and (v) 'lack of functional unity in affix positions'. Among these, feature (iii) is more or less equivalent to the features given below as the violation of the Adjacency and No Lookahead principles.

As already stated, this paper follows SIMPSON-WITHGOTT's (1986) list of criteria, in Sections 2.1 to 2.5, but the previous observations make clear that it is advisable to use a somewhat flexible notion of templatic structure. For instance, I also consider Nordlinger's feature (v), in Section 2.6, mainly due to the fact that the OIr. verbal complex has clear examples of it.

In a wider perspective, the position adopted in this paper regarding the very existence of a templatic model agrees basically with that recently expressed by NORDLINGER (2010), who explicitly rejects RICE's (2000) claim that every feature that may be interpreted as templatic is the outcome of some kind of scopal disposition.

2.1. Zero morphemes

According to STUMP (2006: 560), 'the absence of any marking may be used to signal some property or set of properties in a system of template morphology'. He quotes the Southeastern Tepehuan verbal complex, where the absence of any marking in the specific position or slot in which other object markers appear signals the 3rd person singular object. Yet zero morphemes of that sort may be easily

found in the inflectional systems of some languages in which there are no templatic features. Consider, for instance, the classical example of the 3rd person singular of the Polish verb 'to be' (*jest*). This form, which was originally the stem *(j)es-* with the 3rd person singular ending *-t(-)*, was reanalysed as the basic stem with a zero ending in which the remaining endings are attached (e.g., 1st singular *jest-em*).

2.2. Lack of headed structure

In the basic definition of STUMP (2006: 561), a templatic structure may have more than one 'head', and not only one, as is typical in layered structures such as the Engl. words *super-sonic* and *bak-er*, where the syntactic category of each form is determined by the forms *-sonic* and *-er* respectively.

In a more elaborated formulation, STUMP (1997: 220) calls this criterion 'polydeterminacy', as a principle which goes against the idea of 'one root, one head'. Polydeterminacy may have two effects: first, 'the base expression with which an affix joins needn't be the root of a lexeme', and second, 'the attachment of an affix to a base expression yields a form whose morphosyntactic properties are jointly determined, by both the base and the affix'. Stump quotes the case of the Swahili verb of (2) in which the prefix *tu-* is not attached to the root of the lexeme 'see', but to a partially inflected form of it, the morphosyntactic properties of the verb being jointly determined by the root and the various prefixes.

(2) 2   4   7   *a*-stem
    tu- li- wa- ona
    1PL.SUBJECT-PST-2PL.OBJECT-*see*
    'we saw you (pl.)'

NORDLINGER (2010: 329) refers to the Murrinh-Patha verbal template in which inflectional and derivational morphology are 'interspersed', so that 'the standard assumption that inflectional morphology occurs outside derivational morphology […] does not apply'.

2.3. Against the Adjacency Constraint

The so-called Adjacency Constraint establishes, according to STUMP (1997: 221), that 'the addition of an affix to a base cannot be sensitive to some structurally nonadjacent element internal to that base'. The case of long-distance dependency of the Belhare (Kiranti) intransitive verbs briefly referred to by BICKEL-NICHOLS (2007: 218) may serve as an illustration. In this language, the use of the past tense marker *-att* –and not of its allomorph *-(h)e*– is decided by the presence of the negation marker *-n(i)*, which may be separated by a further morpheme, such as the dual marker *-chi* in example (3).

(3) *n-ta-at-chi-n*
    NEG-*come*-PT-DUAL-NEG
     'we two didn't come'

2.4. Against the No Lookahead Constraint

In the formulation of Stump (2006: 561), the templatic structures contravene the No Lookahead Constraint when the form of an affix in a word is 'apparently conditioned by that word's more peripheral morphology'. According to the No Lookahead Constraint, the suffixation of -*ize* to *popular* in the formation of the verb *popularize* cannot be conditioned by the subsequent addition of -*ation*.

The Fula (Niger-Congo) example quoted by Stump (2006: 561) and repeated here in (4) is particularly illustrative for the present purpose, because it involves the variation of one morpheme (the relative future active, either -*ay* or -*at*) depending on the subject agreement properties expressed by the following suffix.

(4) a. *loot-ay-mi*   b. *loot-at-aa*
        wash-REL.FUT.ACT-1SG.SUBJ   *wash*-REL.FUT.ACT-2SG.SUBJ
        'I will wash'   'you will wash'

2.5. More than one argument

Simpson-Withgott (1986: 156-157) contend that layered structures usually encode at most one argument. Stump (1997: 222; 2006: 561) offers the case of the Swahili and Southeastern Tepehuan, whereas Nordlinger (2010: 331) quotes the Murrinh-Patha verbal complex as templatic structures which include two arguments.

2.6. Lack of functional unity in affix positions

This feature is considered by Bickel-Nichols (2007: 218) and Nordlinger (2010: 331) for cases in which markers of heterogeneous functions occur in the same position in the verbal template and also in cases in which markers of the same category appear in discontinuous positions. The former possibility is exemplified in Murrinh-Patha, and implies that 'both object marking and (dual) subject number marking appear in the same position in the verbal template (i.e., position 2)'. The latter possibility may be the case quoted by Mithun (1999: 235-236) in which cislocative and translocative prefixes occur in the Iroquoian verbal template in different positions.

3. Basic description of the Old Irish verbal complex

The description of the OIr. verbal complex given in this section is based on García Castillero (2012, 2013). The first paper shows how clause type and polarity must be considered among other grammatical categories expressed in the OIr. verbal complex such as tense, diathesis, person, number, aspect and modality, apart from the expression of the pronominal subject and object of the clause. The second focuses on a specific change which was at work during the OIr. period (probably before and certainly after that period), and involved the externalisation of a grammaticalised perfective marker, the particle (-)*ro*-, within the left part of the OIr. verbal complex (i.e., in slots 1 and 3 of the scheme below). Table 1 presents the basic scheme of the OIr. verbal complex.

Table 1. Theoretical template of the OIr. verbal complex

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
conjunct particle(s) / lexical preverb	pronominal affix[1]	lexical preverb(s)	verbal stem	verbal ending	pronominal affix	*nota augens*

1. The forms given in this table as pronominal affixes (slots 2 and 6) have been termed traditionally as viz. infixed and suffixed clitic pronouns. The proposal for the consideration in terms of affixes is Eska (2010).

Whereas García Castillero (2012) gives a general overview of the grammatical functions and their specific markers included in the OIr. verbal complex and, thereby, a quite fixed picture of this morphological structure, García Castillero (2013) focuses on the noticeable positional variation of a specific marker, and proposes explaining that variation in clear and explicit diachronic terms. The process of externalisation may be viewed as a repair strategy for a situation in which the so-called 'inflection-outside-derivation' principle (as termed by Haspelmath 1993: 291) is not observed. As noted by Mithun (1999: 252), the process of externalisation (she uses the term 'reordering of morphemes') may be found in both layered and templatic structures, and it can be assumed to be one of the diachronic processes which diminishes the templatic character of a given morphological structure.

The seven slots included in Table 1 are not occupied in any OIr. verb. The radical limitation affects the presence of the pronominal affix, which may appear in either slot 2 or 6, but never simultaneously in both. The appearance of the affixal pronoun in one of those two slots depends on some stipulations which may be interpreted as templatic. This point will be explained later in section 4.3.

Apart from the radical restriction on the use of affixal pronouns, which do not appear if the active verb has no pronominal object, the only slots which will be occupied for every verb in OIr. will be slots 4 (the verbal stem) and 5 (the verbal ending). This configuration is exemplified in (5a) with a (positive) declarative clause type form of the suppletive future of *téit* 'goes', and in (5b) with an imperative clause type form of *carid* 'loves'. For more details on the implications of these forms, see García Castillero (2012).

(5) a. *rigmi* (Wb 15c23)   b. *carad* (Wb 22c19)
      4   5   4   5
      rig- -mi   car -ad
      go/FUT-1PL.DECL   *love*-3SG.IMPV
      'we will go'   'let him love'

Depending on the specific category to be expressed and on the specific lexical constituency of the involved verb, the remaining slots (namely slots 1 and 3) can also be occupied. This is further explained in section 4.1. The elements of slot 7, traditionally called *notae augentes*, may appear with any type of verbal complex, and probably serve as markers of topic continuity (in the case of the 3rd persons) or as markers of the hierarchically more animate pronominal reference included in the verbal complex (i.e., of a 1st or 2nd person reference), whether as an affixal

pronoun or as a verbal ending. Though they are conveniently marked in the linguistic glosses (as NOTA), the OIr. *notae augentes* are not considered in this paper.

One of the descriptive advantages of the schema in Table 1 is that the (main) accent of the verbal complex can be stated by means of the following simple rules: (i) if slot 3 is occupied, the accent falls on its first syllable, and (ii) if slot 3 is not occupied, then the accent falls on the first syllable of the constituent included in slot 4.

Whereas slots 2, 5 and 6 include only one element, slots 1, 3 and 4 may include more than one element, and can therefore be analysed according to a division into further units. The verbal stem of slot 4 may often be morphologically complex, that is to say, it is frequently the case that it contains clearly analysable morphological constituents. One can look at the form *nadresngabsat* quoted in (6b) below, where the form *gabs-* contains the stem *gab-* and the (weak) preterite marker *-s-*. Slot 4 is also frequently occupied by a single constituent, as in (5a,b) above. Slot 1 could possibly have up to three different elements, and slot 3 up to four, but those are maximal quantities and, more often, there are less elements in those places. Cases in which those slots include two elements are, however, relatively frequent in the OIr. texts. The form in (6a), which is from the verb *ad-cí* 'sees', has two elements in slot 1, the negative declarative particle *ní-* and the reciprocal marker *im(m)-*; the form in (6b), from the verb *as-ingaib* 'exceeds', has up to three elements in slot 3, the perfectivising particle *r(o)-* and two lexical preverbs. Note the difference between the forms of the currently attested form, which show the effect of phonological process such as assimilation and vowel elision in hiatus or by syncope on the one hand and the full form of the morphological analysis on the other.

(6) a. *nímunaccammar* (Wb 18d3)   b. *nadresngabsat* (Ml 122d8)

     1   2 3 4 5   1   3   4   5

     ní-(i)m- un- ad- ca -mmar   nad-   r(o)-ess-(i)n- gab-s -at

     NEG.DECL-RECIPR-1PL-*see-see*/PST-1PL NEG.REL-PERFV-*ex.-ex.-exceed*-PST-3PL

     'we had not seen one another'   'that they have not exceeded'

Though it is not possible to further elaborate this point, one could say that linearisation of the adduced elements in slots 1 and 3 as illustrated in (6a,b) follows the typical principle of layered structures which states that inflectional constituents –i.e. the so-called conjunct particles *ní-* in (6a) and *nad-* in (6b)– are more external than lexical-derivational ones –in this case, the lexical preverbs *ad-* in (6a) and *ess-(i)n-* in (6b).

There are other aspects in the morphological behaviour of the OIr. verbal complex, some of them involved in the examples hitherto considered, which constitute stipulations of a clearly templatic nature, however.

4. Templatic features of the Old Irish verbal complex

The main purpose of this section is to consider the templatic character of some remarkable features of the OIr. verbal complex according to the notion outlined in section 2. I do not pretend to be exhaustive in this regard.

4.1. Lack of headed structure: lexicalized verbal composition

The OIr. language provides plenty of examples of verbal complexes in which the basic lexical unit is a 'split semanteme' (to use the term of Simpson and Withgott quoted above in section 2). This is the case of the lexical compounds, which, depending on the clause type, must have a constitutive carrier of its lexical meaning in slot 1. An example is the compound *ad-cí* 'sees', seen in (6a) above; this section makes use of the frequent verb *as-beir* 'says', which in (7a) appears with the preverb *as-* and the stem *ber-* standing in strict adjacent positions. In example (7b), however, an inflectional marker such as the perfectivising particle *-ro-* is located in slot 3, i.e., between the two elements which constitute the lexical frame of the verb.

(7) a. *asberamni* (Ml 26a8)   b. *asrubartmar* (Wb 8d26)
     1   4   5   7   1   3   4   5
     as-   ber -am   -ni   as-   ru-   bar-t -mar
     say-(DECL)*say*-1PL-NOTA1PL.   *say*-PERFV-*say*-PRET-1PL
     'we say'   'we have said'

It is important to stress that such lexical compounds are highly lexicalized combinations of an ancient preverb and a verbal stem. The verbs *as-beir* 'says' and *ad-cí* 'sees' illustrate this point perfectly: *as-beir* is clearly a compound of the simple *beirid* 'brings', but it has become the basic verb of speaking in OIr., so that only the combination of those two elements expresses that basic verbal meaning; as for *ad-cí*, there is no simple verb with which this compound can be related, so that only the presence of the two elements expresses the basic action 'to see'. The fact that examples of this type are very numerous in OIr. justifies the analysis of those lexical compounds as 'split semantemes'.

In contrast with basically compound verbs like *ad-cí* and *as-beir*, the verbs *téit* and *caraid* illustrated in examples (5a,b), traditionally called simple verbs, do not have a lexical element in slot 1, though they may also include in that position pretonic elements with a grammatical function such as the relative negative particle *nad-* illustrated in (6b).

This opposition between simple and compound verb determines the expression of quite a number of grammatical categories in the verbal complex. To quote only one case which serves to illustrate the next section, the declarative clause type character is expressed by a specific ending in simple verbs –recall *rigmi* in (5a)–, whereas in compound verbs it is expressed by the unlenited character (i.e., lack of any mutation) of the initial consonant of the tonic part of the verbal complex: thus, the declarative clause type character in *as-beram*, the form of (7a), is expressed by the unlenited character of /b/ (in contrast with its lenited variant /v/, which is spelt also in the same manner in OIr.), the initial consonant of the element in slot 4.

4.2. Lack of functional unity in affix positions: slot 1 and the position of pronominal affixes

This special feature considered in Section 2.6 above can be observed in the OIr. verbal complex. In slot 1, both conjunct particles –i.e., pretonic elements with a grammatical function such as *nī-* or *nad-* in (6a,b) above respec.– and lexical preverbs –such as *as-* in (7a,b)– may appear. As stated at the end of Section 3, if conjunct particles and lexical preverbs are combined in the same verbal complex, they cannot appear in the same slot, so that the pretonic element takes slot 1 and the lexical preverb slot 3. The examples of (6) show this ordering.

As cases in which elements of the same category are expressed in different positions of the morphological structure, the other possibility considered in Section 2.6, one may adduce the different expression of the declarative clause type character just observed in the previous Section, which involves either a morphophonological feature at the beginning of slots 3 or 4 or, alternatively, a specific segmental marker, an ending, in slot 5. The different position of object pronominal affixes described below in Section 4.4 can also be considered as a case in which constituents of the same nature appear in different positions.

4.3. Zero morphs

In the OIr. verbal complex, the absence of any explicit marker is often involved in the expression of a given category. One of the clearest examples is perhaps the marking of the 3rd person singular of the passive paradigm. Whereas 1st and 2nd persons are always marked by means of the personal affix of slot 2, as in (8a) for the verb *con-erchloí* 'drives', the 3rd person singular is marked by means of the absence of a marker in the same position, as in (8b):

(8)   a. *cotomerchloither* (Sg 17a7)   b. *conerchloither* (Ml 18d19)
        1   2   3   4   5   1   2   3   4   5
        co(n)- tom-   ar(e)- cloi   -ther   con-   Ø-   ar(e)- cloi   -ther
        drive-1SG-*drive*-*drive*-PASS   *drive*-Ø-*drive*-*drive*-PASS
        'I am driven'   'he is driven'

A further case of zero morph can also be the lack of mutation which typically characterises the declarative clause type nature of the compound verbal complex. In contrast to the lack of mutation, the presence of mutation (in this case, lenition or nasalisation) expresses, in the same situation (i.e., in the case of a basically compound form), that the verbal complex is relative.

4.4. More than one argument

The OIr. verbal complex can express two pronominal arguments. The expression of pronominal objects with an intraclausal function (i.e., without an extraclausal and normally pragmatically marked function such as marked focus or contrastive topic, among others) can only be achieved by means of the pronominal affixes included in the verbal complex. The character of compound or simple is the basic requisite

which decides the slot, either 2 or 6 respectively, in which the object of the active verb is expressed. An example with the infixed pronoun, i.e. with the pronominal affix in slot 2, has been given in example (8a).

It is worth noting that the insertion of pronouns in slot 6 is subject to a number of restrictions: apart from the basic character of the verb, there must be no conjunct particles in slot 1, it must be a main declarative clause verb, and –even when all those conditions are met– only a few combinations of object pronominal affix and subject verbal ending are possible, basically when the subject of the simple verb (expressed in slot 5) is a 3rd person singular. An example of this combination for the simple verb *comalnaithir* 'fulfils' is (9a). With very few exceptions, every other combination of subject and pronominal object reference within the verbal complex must be made by locating the (object) pronominal affix in slot 2. This, in turn, has the consequence that slot 1 must be occupied even when the verb is basically simple (i.e., in the case it has no lexical preverb) and no category, such as negative polarity or polar interrogative clause type, is to be expressed. In this case, OIr. makes use of a semantically void preverb *no-* in slot 1, as in (9b), where *comalnaithir* is also involved.

(9) a. *comallaidi* (Ml 94b1)   b. *nachomalnith* (Wb 13a32)

        4   5   6   1   2   4   5

      comalla   -id   -i   n(o)- a^L-   comaln -ith

      fulfil-3SG-3SG.NEUT   PREV-3SG.NEUT-*fulfil*-2PL

      'he fulfils it'   'ye fulfil it'

The placement of the object pronominal infix is therefore subject to quite a number of conditions, and depends on the lexical constituency of the form, the clause type which is expressed, and the specific combination of the involved pronominal persons.

4.5. The Adjacency Constraint: the imperfect and the preverb no-

A further use of the preverb *no-* just mentioned in the previous section recalls the case quoted above in Section 2.3, in the sense that the presence of a given ending decides the use of an element in another non-adjacent place of the morphological structure. I am referring to the obligatory use of *no-* for basically simple verbs when they take the imperfect endings. Example (10a) gives a case of the imperfect of the simple *téit* 'goes' seen above. The particle *no-* is not necessary when the verb already has an element in slot 1, whether a lexical preverb or a conjunct particle with a specific function, as in the compound *as-beir* 'says' also quoted above, and exemplified here in (10b) with the imperfect form *asbered*.

(10) a. *noteged som* (Ml 54c18)   b. *asbered* (Ml 54c18)

         1   4   5   7   1   4   5

        no-   teg   -ed   -som   as-   ber   -ed

      PREV-*go*-3SG.IMPF-NOTA3SG.M   *say*-*say*-3SG.IMPF

      'he used to go'   'he used to say'

In both cases, the main declarative clause type nature is marked by means of the lack of any mutation in the first consonant of the tonic part of the verbal complex, as stated in section 4.2, and it could thus be argued that the introduction of *no-* is due to the fact that, for imperfect forms, the relative or main declarative nature of the verbal complex must be expressed by the mutation of the initial consonant of the element in slot 4, or by the lack thereof. In other words, the expression of the opposition between declarative and relative verbal complex is obligatorily located in the first sound of slot 4 when imperfect endings are used, also for basically simple verbs, which in other tenses employ a special set of personal endings to mark declarative and relative clause type, as in e.g. the declarative form *rigmi* in (5a).

4.6. Against the No Lookahead Constraint: Classes A and B of pronominal infixes

The pronominal affix included in slot 2 of the OIr. verbal complex varies according to the form of the previous lexical preverb in slot 1. To give a somewhat simplified version of the basic presentation of THURNEYSEN (1946: 255-262), Class B of 'infixed pronouns' (i.e., the pronominal affixes of slot 2) are formally characterised by anteposing the string *-to/a-* (also spelled *-do/a-*) to the pronominal form which is used as Class A: e.g., 1st singular Class A *-m^L-* and Class B *-to/am^L-*; 2nd singular Classes A *-t^L-* and Class B *-to/at^L-*; 1st plural Class A *-n(n)-* and Class B *-to/an(n)-*. Classes A and B mark declarative clause type and their use is basically decided by the phonotactic structure of the lexical preverb appearing in slot 1: Class A is used after lexical preverbs with the structure CV- and with two lexical preverbs with the structure (-)VC: *ar-*, *de/i-*, *imm-*, *fo-*, *ro-*, *to-*. Class B is used after most lexical preverbs with the structure (-)VC-: *for-*, *etar-*, *fris-*, *con-*, *ad-*, *aith-*, *ess-*, *in(d)-*, *oss-*. The example of (11a) belongs to the lexical compound *ar-muinethar* 'honours' and shows the 2nd person singular affix of Class A (with an additional vowel between lexical preverb and pronominal infix), whereas (11b) is a form of the verb *for-tét* 'helps' –a lexical compound of the simple *téit* 'goes' seen in examples (5a) and (10a)– which therefore has the corresponding Class B version.

(11) a. *aratmuinfersa* (ms. *arat muinfersa*) (Ml 63a3)   b. *fortattet su* (ms. *fortat tet*) (Ml 3b11)

	1	2	4	5	7		1	2	4	5	7
	ar-	at-	muin-f-	-er	-sa		for-	tat-	tet	-Ø	-su

honour-2SG-*honour*-FUT-1SG-NOTA1SG   *help*-2SG-*help*-3SG.IMPV-NOTA2SG
'I will honour Thee'   'let it help you'

In my view, this is a situation in which an external element (the lexical preverb in slot 1) decides the Class of the pronominal affix to be inserted in slot 2, and is perfectly congruent with the situation described above in Section 2.4. Phonotactic conditions of this sort are probably the type of 'prosodic and other phonological principles' that, as suggested by BICKEL-NICHOLS (2007: 219), determine or historically motivate templatic morphology.

5. Conclusion

In the discussion of the previous Section, it seems that the very existence of lexical constituents which come from the lexicalization of the combination of a preverb and a verbal stem seems to be on the basis of a number of templatic features. It should be emphasised that the structural analysis of those lexical compounds in terms of discontinuous constituents ('split semantemes') seems to be well justified, as defended in Section 4.1. This discontinuous character determines a specific position for some important morphological markers of the verbal complex such as clause type and pronominal object markers, and this stands in stark contrast with the location of the morphological elements for the same categories in simple verbs, as stated in Section 4.2. The formal strategies of simple verbs, however, are fairly restricted, as observed in Section 4.4, so that the use of slot 1 seems to have become the default strategy, as in the case of the imperfect considered in Section 4.5. In a similar vein, the relevance of the discontinuous constituents may be the reason for the formal variation observed in an internal element such as the pronominal infix in slot 2, which, as stated in Section 4.6, is decided by the nature of the element in slot 1.

The discussion on the templatic character of the OIr. verbal complex is therefore an important task which may help understanding (to some extent at least) the use of that morphological structure by real speakers. But, as anticipated at the outset, templatic structures are also worth considering from a diachronic perspective. In all probability, such a diachronic investigation begins by trying to find some sort of hierarchical relationship between the templatic features considered, much in the way of the previous summary. This summary is surely influenced by the previous knowledge of the diachronic development of the morphological structure under inspection, but this does not necessarily mean that the templatic analysis of each particular feature is biased in the same sense; quite on the contrary, the interpretation of the OIr. lexical compounds in terms of 'split semantemes' somehow departs from the traditional consideration which instead sees two (or more) isolated elements which can be compared to similar elements of other Indo-European languages, a consideration which, it must be clearly stated, is in itself not incorrect from a diachronic perspective.

The consequent analysis of the OIr. verbal complex in terms of a templatic morphological structure, which has a number of descriptive benefits, permits us to take advantage of the fact that it is a morphological structure which is diachronically transparent in many respects. With the necessary prudence, the diachronic investigation of other templatic structures with less comparative possibilities may draw some valuable lessons from this case.

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