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# Old Irish

Morphology – Part 2: The Verbal Complex



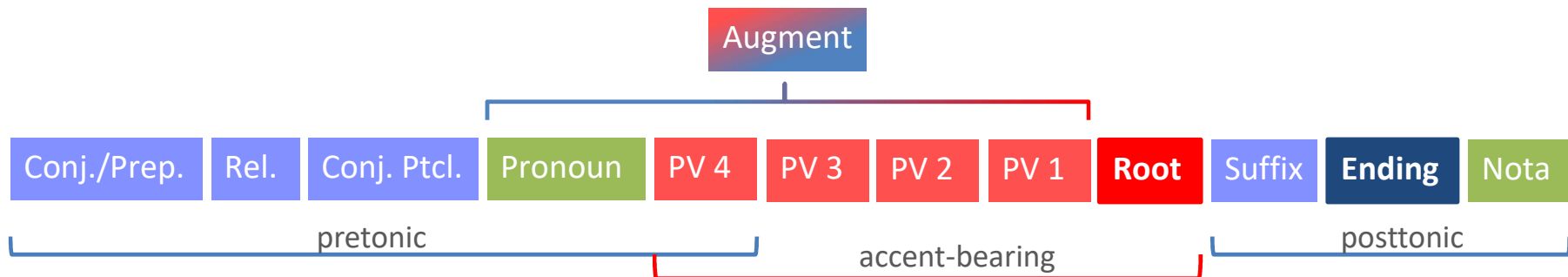
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# Roadmap

- The verbal complex
- Verb-avoidance strategies

# The verbal complex



Key:

**red:** lexical  
**blue:** grammatical  
**green:** pronominal

Conj./Prep.: conjunction or preposition

Rel.: relative marker

Conj. Ptcl.: conjunct particle (negative, interrogative)

PV: Preverb

Nota: nota augens

## A maximal verb

*lasnachan·imtherchomolfad-ni*

‘With which he would not be able to collect us together’

<i>la</i> =	preposition	<i>ro</i> =	potential augment
<i>s</i> =	relative marker	<i>com</i> =	preverb
<i>na</i> =	relative negative	<i>la</i> =	verbal root
<i>chan</i> =	infix pronoun C 1pl	<i>f</i> =	future marker
<i>im</i> =	preverb	<i>ad</i> =	3sg secondary ending
<i>to</i> =	preverb	<i>ni</i> =	1pl nota augens
<i>in</i> =	preverb		

## Simple and compound verbs

- Simple verbs, e.g.

- *gairit* 'they call' < \**gar-* + *-it*

**Root**

**Absolute  
Ending**

- Compound verbs, e.g.

- *con·gairit* 'they convoke' < \**con-* + *gar-* + *-et*
- *imm·freocrat* 'they correspond' < \**imme-* + *frith-* + *gar-* + *-et*
- *do·airngiret* 'they prophesy' < \**to-* + *are-* + *en-* + *gar-* + *-et*

Pre  
verb

**1**

((((

Pre  
verb

**2**

((

Pre  
verb

**3**

(

Pre  
verb

**4**

)))))

**Root**

**Conjunct  
Ending**

# Dependency

- Independent verbal forms, if nothing precedes the verb
- Dependent verbal forms, if verb is preceded by clause-initial ‘conjunct particles’:
  - Negative particles (*ní·, nár·,...*)
  - Interrogative particles (*in·,...*) and certain interrogative pronouns
  - Prepositional relatives
  - Certain conjunctions

## Dependency: simple verbs

	indep. position	dependent position
simple verbs	absolute	conjunct

Key:

blue: absolute endings

green: conjunct endings

- Absolute form with absolute endings
  - canu* 'I sing'
  - canaid* 'sings'
  - canmai* 'we sing'
  - canait* 'they sing'
- vs.
- conjunct form with conjunct endings
  - in-caun* 'do I sing?'
  - ní-cain* 'does not sing'
  - dia-canam* 'to whom we sing'
  - co-canat* 'so that they sing'

## Dependency: compound verbs

	indep. position	dependent position
simple verbs	absolute	conjunct
compound verbs	deuterotonic	prototonic

Key:

blue: absolute endings

green: conjunct endings

- Deuterotonic form  
with conjunct endings

*fo·loing* 'suffers'

*do·beirid* 'ye bring'

*do·ríltisem* 'we have denied'

*con·ístais* 'they would've been able'

- vs. prototonic form  
with conjunct endings

*in·fulaing* 'does ... suffer?' < \**fo-long*

*ní·taibrid* 'ye don't...' < \**to-ber-id*

*dia·derlindsem* 'to whom we...' < \**dī-ro-slond-īs-am*

*co·cóemsaitis* 'so that they...' < \**con-ís-atis*



## Surface irregularities

- Reflect underlying fossilised Indo-European structures
  - pres. *ernaid* ‘grants’ < PrimIr. \**ernaθi* << PC \**φarnati* << PIE \**p<sub>ṛ</sub>-ne-h<sub>3</sub>-ti*  
vs.
  - fut. *ebraid* ‘will grant’ < PrimIr. \**iβrāθi* < PC \**φιφrāseti* < PIE \**pi-p<sub>ṛ</sub>h<sub>3</sub>-se-ti*

## The Early Irish verb

- Firmly polysynthetic with very complex morphology of finite verbs which encodes information about
  - Subject
  - Object
  - Clausal relationships
  
- Finite verbs can be avoided via
  - Periphrastic light-verb constructions (e.g., with *do·gní* ‘does, makes’)
  - Ellipsis, esp. when conjugated preposition are present
  - Non-finite verbal noun constructions (converbs), e.g. in ‘reporting’ style

## Ad·tlochur indithim dúib!



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