

9 On the Complementarity of Subject and Subject-Verb Agreement

EDIT DORON

THE PRO-DROP LITERATURE within the Government and Binding framework has been concerned with formulating the *null-subject parameter*, which distinguishes languages that allow a null subject in tensed sentences from languages that require an overt subject (see Borer 1984; Chomsky 1981, 1982; Jaeggli 1982, 1984; Picallo 1984; Rizzi 1982; and others). Italian is often treated as a paradigmatic case of a null-subject language; in tensed clauses, missing subjects such as in (1a) alternate with realized subjects, pronominal as in (1b) or lexical as in (1c).

- (1) a. ho telefonato
phone.PAST.1.SG
'I have phoned.'
- b. io ho telefonato / ho telefonato io
I phone.PAST.1.SG
'I have phoned.'
- c. Gianni ha telefonato / ha telefonato Gianni
Gianni phone.PAST.3.SG
'Gianni has phoned.'

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In the Government and Binding theory, it follows from the Extended Projection Principle that every clause has a subject. According to the view formulated in Chomsky (1982), the subject in a sentence such as (1a) is an empty category called *pro*, which has the features [+pronominal, -anaphor] and various combinations of the features [person], [gender], [number] (and possibly also [Case]):

- (2) *pro* [_{AGR} αF] ho telefonato
[αF]

Chomsky assumes a principle regulating the distribution of empty categories which states that the content of an empty category must be "identified." The content of traces for example is identified by an antecedent. The content of *pro* is identified by the AGR which governs it.¹ This is possible in a language where the inflectional system is "rich enough," which was Taraldsen's (1980) insight in formulating the *pro-drop* parameter. A variant of Chomsky's view is proposed in Borer (1986), where it is assumed that empty categories have no intrinsic agreement features at all. They must be assigned these features by other elements (such as an antecedent or AGR), so that they satisfy the requirement of identification. For example, *pro* in (2) is identified; the local AGR is rich enough to assign to *pro* the features [αF].

Both variants of the above account are based on characterizing the distribution of empty categories, in particular *pro*. This paper will suggest a different approach to the null-subject phenomenon: Null subjects are pronouns, but are not empty categories. At the syntactic level(s), null subjects are indistinguishable from pronouns. It is only considerations of Phonetic Form (PF) which determine what the phonological content of these pronouns is.

1 The Pro Account of Celtic

I will start by examining an attempt to extend Chomsky's *pro* account to another aspect of the null-subject phenomenon, namely the obligatoriness of null subjects in certain languages. It has long been noted that the Celtic languages impose a complementarity of inflected forms of the verb and overt subjects. The following examples, due to McCloskey and Hale (1984), are from Irish:

- (3) a. *chuirfinn isteach ar an phost sin*
put.COND.1.SG in on that job
'I would apply for that job.'

¹ For a definition of government, see Chomsky 1981.

- b. **chuirfinn mé isteach ar an phost sin*
put.COND.1.SG I in on that job
'I would apply for that job.'

- (4) a. **chuirfeadh isteach ar an phost sin*
put.COND in on that job
'...would apply for that job.'

- b. *chuirfeadh Eoghan isteach ar an phost sin*
put.COND Owen in on that job
'Owen would apply for that job.'

"Synthetic" forms of the verb (verb forms inflected for person and number) are used if and only if the subject is null, as in (3). "Analytic" forms of the verb (verb forms inflected for tense and mood but not for person and number) are used if and only if the subject is overt, as in (4). An additional wrinkle is the fact that synthetic forms do not exist in Irish for every person-number combination. When they do not exist, the analytic form is used together with an independent pronominal subject:

- (5) *chuirfeadh sibh isteach ar an phost sin*
put.COND you.PL in on that job
'You would apply for that job.'

But when a synthetic form exists, such as *chuirfinn*, it is in general ungrammatical to use an analytic form together with a pronominal subject:

- (6) **chuirfeadh mé isteach ar an phost sin*
put.COND I in on that job
'I would apply for that job.'

According to an analysis of McCloskey and Hale (1984), the (s-)structures of the null-subject sentences in (3a) and (4a) is as follows:

- (7) a. [_{V+AGR} *chuirfinn*] [_{NP} *pro*] isteach ar an phost sin
b. *_V [_V *chuirfeadh*] [_{NP} *pro*] isteach ar an phost sin

The ungrammaticality of (7b) follows from the fact that the analytic form *chuirfeadh* does not contain AGR; the empty category *pro* is not identified, unlike in (7a) and (2). But the ungrammaticality of (3b) is unaccounted for by the principle regulating the distribution of *pro*, which requires only that *pro* be identified, not that it is obligatory when

In other languages the pattern of complementarity is different yet again. In Chamorro, an unrelated null-subject language, the complementarity is reversed compared to Welsh. Pronouns are not allowed to cooccur with inflected verbs, whereas other overt subjects are. The following examples are from Chung (1982):

- (10) a. hu-taitai i lepblu
 read.1.SG the book
 'I read the book.'
- b. *hu-taitai yu' i lepblu
 read.1.SG I the book
- c. ha-taitai si Maria i lepblu
 read.3.SG CASE Maria the book
 'Maria read the book.'

Chamorro therefore needs a different version of the surface filter:

*[..._{AGR} αF] ...NP[+pro][αF] ...]

where AGR governs NP and NP has phonetic content.

2 An Analysis of Hebrew Agreement

The pattern of the complementarity of inflection and overt subjects in Hebrew is the same as in Chamorro:

- (11) a. etmol šama't harca'a
 yesterday hear.PAST.2.SG.FEM lecture
 'Yesterday you heard a lecture.'
- b. *etmol šama't at harca'a
 yesterday hear.PAST.2.SG.FEM you.SG.FEM lecture
- c. etmol šam'a rina harca'a
 yesterday hear.PAST.3.SG.FEM Rina lecture
 'Yesterday Rina heard a lecture.'

This section provides an analysis of the distribution of missing subjects in Hebrew which does not rely on a surface filter. I will show that the pattern in (11) follows from general principles.

I assume that the subject of both (11a) and (11b) is a pronoun, i.e., a bundle of features from among [person], [number], [gender]. Whether

identified. Something new and special to Irish has to be introduced at this point. McCloskey and Hale propose the following language specific filter:

*[..._{AGR} αF] ...NP[αF] ...]

where AGR governs NP and NP has phonetic content.

The basic generalization about the Irish agreement system, namely the incompatibility of person and number inflection with a lexical subject, is not predicted by the *pro* analysis but has to be stated ad-hoc. This is as it should be, according to McCloskey and Hale, since in different languages the pattern of incompatibility varies, giving rise to different language specific filters. One relevant case is Welsh. The Welsh agreement system is very similar to the Irish system. Welsh is a null-subject language (see (8a)), and synthetic forms are incompatible with lexical subjects (compare (8b) with (8c)). The examples in (8) are due to Harlow (1981).

- (8) a. darllenais y llyfr
 read.PAST.1.SG the book
 'I read the book.'
- b. *darllenasant y dynion y llyfr
 read.PAST.3.PL the men the book
 'The men read the book.'
- c. darllenodd y dynion y llyfr
 read.PAST the men the book
 'The men read the book.'

But unlike Irish, Welsh allows a pronoun to cooccur with the synthetic form of the verb. The following example is from Jones and Thomas (1977, 195).

- (9) 'r oeddwn i 'n cwyno
 COMP be.PAST.1.SG I in complain
 'I was complaining.'

According to McCloskey and Hale, Welsh differs from Irish in the surface filter it has. The surface filter for Welsh is specified to exclude only non-pronominals governed by AGR:

*[..._{AGR} αF] ...NP[-pro][αF] ...]

where AGR governs NP and NP has phonetic content.

There is no clitic configuration in (14), since V+AGR is dominated by VP and does not govern the subject.⁴ Since that is not a clitic configuration, Case is assigned to the preverbal pronominal subject.

Second, subject pronouns may follow the verb when the former are contrastively stressed.

- (15) etmol šama't AT harca'a
yesterday heard.2.SG.FEM YOU lecture

In this case the subject contains a feature not contained in AGR, call it [contrast]. The configuration now is (16), which is not a clitic configuration since the features of the subject are not contained in those of AGR:

- (16) ... V + [AGR[2nd][FEM][SG]] [NP[2nd][FEM][SG][contrast]] ...

Case is therefore assigned to the subject, which is realized as a stressed pronoun.

Third, a pronoun may appear as a conjunct within a subject NP. In this case neither is the pronoun governed by AGR nor is there an identity of features, since AGR agrees with the subject, not with one of its conjuncts. There is therefore no clitic configuration, and the pronoun is phonetically realized:

- (17) a. etmol šma'tem at ve-dani harca'a
yesterday heard.2.PL.MASC you.SG.FEM and Dani lecture
'You and Dani heard a lecture yesterday.'
b. ... V+[AGR[2nd][MASC][PL]] [NP[2nd][FEM][SG][ve-dani]] ...

Fourth, there is an interesting variation in the present tense: null subjects are not allowed. In the framework I propose, this indicates that for some reason a clitic configuration does not obtain. Accordingly, we expect a postverbal pronoun to be allowed, which is indeed the case:

- (18) a. axšav šoma't at harca'a
now hear.SG.FEM you.SG.FEM lecture
'You are hearing a lecture now.'
b. *axšav šoma't harca'a
now hear.SG.FEM lecture

⁴ In this case, AGR was moved from the sentence initial INFL node to a position adjoined to V in the VP. This is one way of bringing AGR and V together. Another way is described in Footnote 2.

this bundle is associated with a phonetic content or not depends on whether it is assigned Case, which in turn depends on the configuration it is in. The structure of the relevant parts of both (11a,b) is as follows:²

- (12) ... V + [AGR[2nd][FEM][SG]] [NP[2nd][FEM][SG]] ...

The configuration in (12) is an example of what I will call a "clitic configuration," i.e., a particular head+complement configuration where the features of the complement are all contained in the features of the head:

- (13) [head ... [α₁F₁] ... [α_nF_n]] ... [NP[α₁F₁] ... [α_nF_n]]

In a clitic configuration, it is the features of the head which are phonetically realized, not those of the complement. A way of stating this generalization in the theory of Government and Binding is, following Jaeggli (1982), that in a clitic configuration Case is assigned to the clitic on the head and not to the complement, therefore the complement must be phonetically null or it violates the Case Filter. It is lack of Case assignment to a phonetically realized pronoun which makes (11b) ungrammatical. The AGR features themselves can be realized as verbal inflection without a Case feature, as in (11c), where there is no clitic configuration.³

This analysis explains null subjects in Hebrew as the outcome of clitic configurations. It predicts that a null subject in Hebrew obtains in and only in a clitic configuration. This prediction is corroborated on five counts.

First, a subject pronoun may precede the verb, as in (14).

- (14) a. at šama't harca'a
you heard.2.SG.FEM lecture
b. [NP[2nd][FEM][SG]] [VP V + [AGR[2nd][FEM][SG]] ...]

² I am assuming that INFL, which contains AGR, is clause-initial in Hebrew. The verb may be fronted from its VP position and adjoined to INFL, as in (12). I have motivated these assumptions in Doron (1983).

³ AGR differs therefore from clitics which are arguments, such as the object clitics of the Romance languages, which must be assigned Case, and therefore cannot appear if Case is assigned to an overt object:

- Il l'aime (*Marie)
he her-likes
'He loves her.' (French)

(22) personal pronouns

	MASC	FEM
1st	ani	
SG	2nd ata	at
	3rd hu	hi
1st	anaxnu	
PL	2nd atem	aten
	3rd hem	hen

expletive pronouns⁵

	MASC	FEM
SG	ze	zo
PL	ele	

The structure of the relevant parts of (21) is therefore (23):

$$(23) \quad V + [{}_{AGR}[MASC][SG]] [{}_{NP}[MASC][SG]]$$

which is a manifestation of the following clitic configuration:

$$(24) \quad [{}_{head} \dots [{}_{gender}][number]] [{}_{NP}[{}_{gender}][number]]$$

Case is therefore assigned to AGR, and, as predicted, the expletive pronoun cannot follow the verb:

- (25) *margiz ze oti še dani meaxer
 annoys it me that Dani is-late

For the sake of completeness, note that there is a clitic configuration involving the expletive subject in other tenses as well, as shown in (26). In (26d), the features of the subject are contained in the features of AGR.

⁵ ze is the unmarked form; expletive pronouns marked [FEM] or [PL] are used when the sentence has a predicate nominal with the same feature. For example:

zo	xucpa	leaxer
it[FEM]	chutzpa[FEM]	to-be-late
		'It is rude to be late.'

A closer look at present tense inflection morphology reveals that it involves only the features [gender] and [number], and not [person], unlike past and future inflections, which involve all three features:

(19) šm' 'hear'

	Past	
	MASC	FEM
	1st	šama'ti
SG	2nd	šama'ta
	3rd	šama't
	1st	šama'nu
PL	2nd	šma'tem
	3rd	šam'u
	Present	
	MASC	FEM
SG	šome'a	šoma'at
PL	šom'im	šom'ot

The relevant part of the structure of (18) is therefore (20).

$$(20) \quad \dots V + [{}_{AGR}[FEM][SG]] [{}_{NP}[2nd][FEM][SG]] \dots$$

This is not a clitic configuration, unlike (10), since the features of the complement are not contained in the features of the head. Case is therefore assigned to the subject, and *pro-drop* is impossible in the present.

Fifth, the generalization that *pro-drop* is impossible in the present tense should be qualified. In case the subject is the expletive pronoun ze 'it,' as in (21a), *pro-drop* is possible in the present tense, as shown in (21b):

- (21) a. ze margiz oti še dani meaxer
 it annoys me that Dani is late
- b. margiz oti še dani meaxer
 annoys me that Dani is late
 both: 'It annoys me that Dani is late.'

The explanation lies in the fact that expletive pronouns are specified for [number] and [gender] but not [person]. Whereas personal pronouns vary according to all three features, expletive pronouns vary according to two:

is transparent in cases such as (27a). In other cases, a suppletive form replaces the V+pronoun string, as in (28a). The syntactic structures are shown in (27b) and (28b) respectively.⁷

(27) a. *chuirfeadh sé isteach ar an phost sin*
 put.COND he in on that job
 'He would apply for that job.'

b. [_V *chuirfeadh*] [_{NP} *sé*] *isteach ar an phost sin*

(28) a. *chuirfinn isteach ar an phost sin*
 put.COND.1.SG in on that job
 'I would apply for that job.'

b. [_V *chuirfeadh*] [_{NP} *mé*] *isteach ar an phost sin*

The claim is that though the verb and the pronominal subject are two distinct phrases syntactically, they form one unit morphologically and phonologically, whether it is a synthetic verb form or an analytic verb form plus a pronominal subject. Some evidence from the Ulster dialect of Irish has been kindly suggested to me by Jim McCloskey. For the purposes of applying emphatic stress, a subject pronoun is treated in this dialect exactly on a par with the inflection part of a synthetic verb form. Emphatic stress on the verb is achieved by stressing its inflectional ending, if it has one, or by stressing the pronoun:

(29) a. A: ní dhéanfainn a leithéid
 NEG do.COND.1.SG its like
 'I wouldn't do such a thing.'

B: dhéanfa
 do.COND.2.SG

'You WOULD.' ('You would too.' 'You certainly would.')

⁷ A similar phenomenon is attested (albeit rarely) in Hebrew, where there is sometimes cliticization of the subject pronoun on the verb in the present tense (remember that present tense forms are parallel to the Celtic analytic forms in that they show agreement in less features than forms in other tenses). One difference is that suppletive forms are introduced in Celtic, whereas in Hebrew the post-syntactic word formation obeys regular phonological rules: *rošéani* 'I'm afraid,' in variance with *rošéš ani*; *rošváni* 'I think,' in variance with *rošév ani*; *beturáni* 'I'm sure,' in variance with *batuar ani*.

(26) a. *ze hirciz oti še dani exer*
 it annoyed me that Dani was-late

b. *hirciz oti še dani exer*
 annoyed me that Dani was-late

both: 'It annoyed me that Dani was late.'

c. **hirciz ze oti še dani exer*
 annoyed it me that Dani was-late

d. *V + [_{AGR} [3rd][MASC][SG]] [_{NP} [MASC][SG]]*

3 An Analysis of Celtic Agreement

In the previous section I explained the phenomenon of null subjects as depending on the possibility of assigning Case to AGR, which is obligatory in a clitic configuration. This explanation undermines the justification of the filter proposed by McCloskey and Hale, and assuming that this filter is needed to uphold the *pro* analysis in general, it also undermines the *pro* analysis for null subjects.

Before turning to Celtic, I will say a few words about Italian. It seems that AGR and pronominal subjects never stand in a clitic configuration in Italian, since a pronominal subject may be realized with an inflected verb, both preverbally and postverbally (see (1b)). But the possibility of assigning Case to AGR exists, giving rise to a Caseless pronominal subject, which must therefore be null (as in (1a)). This analysis is similar to the one proposed in Rizzi (1982).

It is tempting to ascribe the total complementarity of inflection and overt subjects in Irish to obligatory Case assignment to AGR features whenever they are present. The problem is that this would force us to look for a different account for Welsh. Recall that in Welsh, pronominal subjects may cooccur with synthetic forms of the verb. But it would be desirable to offer a unified account for the Celtic languages, since they basically use the same agreement system.

An analysis that suggests itself for Celtic is the incorporation analysis, a modification of Anderson's (1982) analysis. According to this analysis, there is no AGR in Celtic at all. Verb forms are the result of "post-syntactic" morphology, which integrates V and a pronominal NP, two distinct nodes at the syntactic representation.⁶ The syntactic structure

⁶ It is also possible to formulate the equivalent of the incorporation analysis in a theory where only "lexical" morphology is available. In the terminology of the theory developed in Bresnan and Mchombo (1985), for example, Celtic languages would be said to have the "pronominal incorporation property."

When pronouns are conjoined, it is contrastive forms (or other emphatic forms) that are used, not the clitic forms:

- (33) a. mise agus tusa
I+CONTR and you+CONTR
'I and you'

- b. *mé agus tú
I and you

In example (34), the understood subject of the sentence is 'I and you,' but the inflection on the verb is first person singular:

- (34) da mbeinn -se agus tusa ann
if be.COND.1.SG CONTR and you there
'if I and you were there'

The "agreement" of the verb with the first conjunct is surprising, but our analysis accounts for it. The structure of (34) is (35), where the subject is the NP 'I and you':

- (35) da [_Vmbeadh] [_{NP}[_{NP}mise] agus [_{NP}tusa]] ann
if be.COND I+CONTR and you+CONTR there

Post-syntactic morphology replaces the string *mbeadh+mise* by *mbeinn-se*, exactly as in (31) and (32).⁹

According to McCloskey and Hale's *pro* analysis, the structure of (34) is (36):

- (36) da [_{V+AGR}mbeinn] [_{NP}[_{NP}*pro-se*] agus [_{NP}tusa]] ann
if be.COND.1.SG and you there

Conjoining an empty pronoun with a lexical NP seems to me problematic. Also, notice that the structure in (36) violates both the requirement that *pro* be identified and the filter for Irish, since AGR governs the conjoined NP and not the left conjunct. McCloskey (1985) makes a strong

⁹ The present formulation avoids a problem (pointed out by McCloskey and Hale) with Anderson's (1982) formulation of the incorporation analysis. According to Anderson's analysis, the d-structure of (34) is (35) but its s-structure is derived by a movement transformation:

- da [_{V+AGR}mbeinn-se] [_{NP}[_{NP}t] agus [_{NP}tusa]] ann

The movement rule that relates these structures violates the Coordinate Structure Constraint.

- b. A: an dtabharfaidh siad an phost dó
Q give.FUT they the job to-him
'Will they give him the job?'

- B: caithfidh SIAD
must they
'They HAVE to.'

These examples are particularly interesting. It is quite unusual for an inflectional ending to bear emphatic stress, as in (29a). This fact becomes less surprising if the inflectional ending is analyzed as an independent syntactic unit. It is also puzzling that a semantic emphasis of the verb is achieved by phonologically stressing a pronoun, as in (29b). This is explained if the verb and the pronoun are viewed as one phonological unit.

Additional evidence that the pronoun in (27) is not phonologically independent is that its distribution is limited. It appears only in environments where it can "lean to the left." For example, it cannot appear in elliptical utterances where the verb is missing:

- (30) cé atá ansin?
'Who is there?'
- mise / *mé
I+CONTR I
(from O'Siadhail (1980)⁸)

The present analysis also accounts for puzzling data having to do with coordinated subjects. Notice first that the suffix *-se* as in (30) attaches to pronouns to derive contrastive forms. This suffix also attaches to inflected forms of verbs:

- (31) chuirfínn -se
put.COND.1.SG CONTR
'I would put'

The structure of (31) is (32):

- (32) [_Vchuirfeadh] [_{NP}mise]
put.COND I+CONTR

⁸ I am grateful to Susannah MacKay for the reference.

replaces *oedd+mi*). I will provide one independent piece of evidence for this claim. Welsh allows the topicalization of the subject; the analytic form of the verb must be used in such sentences, as is to be expected:

- (40) yfi oedd (*oeddwn) yn cwyno
I be.PAST be.PAST.1.SG in complain
'It was I who was complaining.' (Welsh)

The crucial point is that the pronoun (*m*)*yfi*, the reduplicated form of *mi*, is used in (40). Assuming that it has been moved from a postverbal position, we derive independent evidence for the structure in (39).

The Breton system is very similar to the Welsh. Non-pronominal subjects cooccur only with analytic forms of the verb, but pronouns cooccur only with synthetic forms. See Stump (1984) for arguments that these pronouns are clitics with emphatic meaning.

- (41) a. bemdez e lennont eul levr '
every day PRT read.3.PL a book
'They read a book every day.'
b. bemdez e lenn / *lennont ar vugale eul levr
every day PRT read read.3.PL the kids a book
'The kids read a book every day.'
c. levriou a lennan-me / *lenn-me
books PRT read.1.SG I read I
'I read books.'

I will conclude with the discussion of two problems for the present analysis pointed out to me by Jim McCloskey.¹¹ Irish has no words for *yes* or *no*. One answers in the affirmative by repeating the verb of the question, and in the negative by repeating the verb of the question preceded by the negative particle:

- (42) Q: ar chuir tú isteach ar an phost
Q put.PAST you in on the job
'Did you apply for the job?'
A: chuir / níor chuir
put.PAST NEG put.PAST
'Yes.' 'No.'

¹¹ I am grateful to Jim McCloskey for all the data which follow in the text.

case for redefining government so that AGR in (36) governs *pro* and not the conjoined NP. But a problem remains with respect to data from Old Irish. Old Irish differs from Modern Irish in that inflected forms of the verb agree with the conjoined NP as a whole, not just with the left conjunct. As a result, in cases where the left conjunct is *pro*, its features do not match those of AGR on the verb. This gives rise to an unidentified *pro*, regardless of the definition of government. The sentence (37) is an example where the features of AGR do not match those of *pro*, at least under the reading *He and Dubthach met*.

- (37) a. conrancatar ocus Dubthach
meet.PAST.3.PL and Dubthach
'They/He and Dubthach met.'
b. [_{V+AGR} conrancatar] [_{NP} *pro*] ocus [_{NP} Dubthach]]

So far I have discussed the application of the proposed analysis to Irish. We now turn to Welsh, which is different from Irish in that pronouns may follow a synthetic verb form, as in example (9), repeated below as (38):

- (38) 'r oeddwn i 'n cwyno
COMP be.PAST.1.SG I in complain
'I was complaining.'

This example presents a problem for the view that verbal inflection is an incorporated pronoun, since both inflection and a pronoun are present. But according to the traditional analysis of Welsh (see for example, Watkins 1976), the pronouns used following inflected forms of the verb are not independent pronouns but affixes which are appended only to words which already have inflectional endings. I suggest that we view these affixes as reduplicating the pronominal subject, similarly to the Irish suffix *-se* in (31) and (32). Accordingly, the syntactic structure of (38) contains a reduplicated pronoun in subject position.¹⁰

- (39) 'r [_V oedd] [_{NP} *myfi*] 'n cwyno
COMP be.PAST I redup in complain
'I was complaining.'

A morphological rule provides the form *oeddwn-i* 'I was' to replace the string *oedd+myfi* (where the form *oeddwn* is the one which normally

¹⁰ *-fi* in *myfi* is derived by mutation from *-mi*. I am grateful to Peter Sells for this information.

- c. tuigid na haithreacha
understand.PRES.3.PL the fathers
'The fathers understand.'

It would be easy to state this exception in terms of McCloskey and Hale's filters. The filter for these West Munster dialects would be made more specific by requiring that AGR not contain the feature complex [3.PL]. In terms of our analysis, this phenomenon could be treated as a first step in introducing an agreement system into the language. It could be that the analytic forms in these dialects are marked for the feature [number]. The form *ithid* in (45b) could be an analytic form marked [PL], homophonous with the synthetic form in (45a). However, it is impossible to give a more specific analysis without further investigation of these dialects.

4 Conclusion

I have suggested in this paper that null subjects be treated as pronouns that have different phonological realizations in different environments. In Hebrew, pronouns have null phonological content in what I have called "clitic configurations." From this approach to null subjects, accurate predictions were derived about the complementarity of inflection and post verbal pronominal subjects in Hebrew. As to the Celtic languages, I have suggested they are not null-subject languages at all. Rather, the complementarity of inflection and subjects in these languages follows from inflection being an incorporated subject pronoun.

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Moreover if the appropriate synthetic form of the verb exists, it must be used:

- (43) Q: an gcuireann tú isteach ar phostannai
Q put.PRES you in on jobs
'Do you apply for jobs?'
- A: cuirim / *cuireann
put.PRES.1.SG put.PRES
'Yes.'

The present analysis treats the analytic form of the verb together with the pronoun as equivalent to the synthetic form. It therefore predicts that in case the synthetic form of the verb doesn't exist, one should use the analytic form together with the pronoun. But the fact is that if only the analytic form is used, it is impossible to add the pronoun:

- (44) Q: an gcuireann sé isteach ar phostannai
Q put.PRES he in on jobs
'Does he apply for jobs?'
- A: cuireann / *cuireann sé
put.PRES put.PRES he
'Yes.'

It is possible that the rule for answering the question in the positive is: Repeat the first lexical item in the "verb complex." The synthetic form *cuirim* 'put.PRES.1.SG' is listed in the lexicon as the suppletive form which replaces *cuireann+mé*, the latter being a string of two separate lexical items. Therefore in the case of (43) the first lexical item is *cuirim*, but in the case of (44) it is *cuireann* and not *cuireann sé* because the latter counts as two lexical items.

Another problem has to do with West Munster dialects where there is a systematic exception to the incompatibility of synthetic forms and overt subjects. In these dialects, 3rd person plural synthetic forms of all tenses can cooccur with overt subjects. For example:

- (45) a. ithid an capall
eat.PRES.3.PL the horse
'They eat the horse.'
- b. ithid siad an capall
eat.PRES.3.PL they the horse
'They eat the horse.'

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