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ON COPULAR SENTENCES IN IRISH AND POLISH

0. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to compare the syntactic properties of various types of copular sentences in Irish and Polish. Both of these languages possess two ways of expressing a predication relation. In Irish, this relation is expressed by two verbal elements *bí* and *is*, whereas in Polish, in addition to a regular verbal structure with *być* 'be', there occurs a pronominal construction with the item *to*. First, the morphological properties of the predicative elements are scrutinised. Then, an overview of the contexts in which each copular structure can be used is undertaken. Afterwards, the meaning of the structures in question is examined. Finally, an analysis is offered of the syntactic positions occupied by the predicative elements in the two languages examined.

1. The morphology of predicative elements in Irish and Polish

The verb *bí* behaves like other Irish verbs in that it appears in all tenses (present, past, future and imperfect)¹ and moods (conditional and subjunctive) and shows person distinctions.² Its main inflectional forms are captured in table 1 below (*cf.* Christian Brothers (1980: 112)).

Table 1³

Form	Present	Future	Past	Imperfect	Present subjunctive	Past subjunctive	Conditional
1. sg.	<i>tá mé/ táim</i>	<i>beidh mé</i>	<i>bhí mé</i>	<i>bhínn</i>	<i>go raibh mé</i>	<i>go mbeinn</i>	<i>go bheinn</i>
2. sg.	<i>tá tú</i>	<i>beidh tú</i>	<i>bhí tú</i>	<i>bhíteá</i>	<i>go raibh tú</i>	<i>go mbeifeá</i>	<i>go bheifeá</i>

¹ Irish also possesses the habitual present tense to refer to repeated actions.

² Verbs in Irish exhibit distinct forms usually only for 1st person singular and plural and only in some tenses. The presence of forms inflected for person (*viz.* synthetic forms) is determined to a large extent by the dialect (*cf.* Stenson (1981), McCloskey & Hale (1984) and Bondaruk (2001)).

³ [The paradigm of the substantive verb was slightly modified to concur with the existing standard of contemporary usage – Eds.]

3. sg.	<i>tá sé</i>	<i>beidh sé</i>	<i>bhí sé</i>	<i>bhíodh sé</i>	<i>go raibh sé</i>	<i>go mbeadh sé</i>	<i>go bheadh sé</i>
1. pl.	<i>táimid</i>	<i>beidh muid/ beimid</i>	<i>bhí muid/ bhiomar</i>	<i>bhímis</i>	<i>go rabhaimid</i>	<i>go mbeimis</i>	<i>go bheimis</i>
2. pl.	<i>tá sibh</i>	<i>beidh sibh</i>	<i>bhí sibh</i>	<i>bhíodh sibh</i>	<i>go raibh sibh</i>	<i>go mbeadh sibh</i>	<i>go bheadh sibh</i>
3. pl.	<i>tá siad</i>	<i>beidh siad</i>	<i>bhí siad</i>	<i>bhídís</i>	<i>go raibh siad</i>	<i>go mbeidís</i>	<i>go bheidís</i>

Bí belongs to irregular verbs and therefore assumes special suppletive forms depending on the type of sentence it appears in, i.e. affirmative, interrogative, negative or negative interrogative.⁴ These forms are presented in table 2.

Table 2

Form	Present	Future	Past
Affirmative	<i>tá</i>	<i>beidh</i>	<i>bhí</i>
Negative	<i>níl</i>	<i>ní bheidh</i>	<i>ní raibh</i>
Interrogative	<i>an bhfuil</i>	<i>an mbeidh</i>	<i>an raibh</i>
Negative interrogative	<i>nach bhfuil</i>	<i>nach mbeidh</i>	<i>nach raibh</i>

The verb *is* differs from *bí* in that it appears only in two tenses, namely present and past, and does not inflect for person.⁵ Like *bí* and other irregular verbs, *is* has suppletive forms which occur in affirmative, negative, interrogative and negative interrogative sentences. Its main inflectional forms are outlined in table 3 (cf. Christian Bothers (1980:113–4)).

Table 3

Form	Present	Past
Affirmative	<i>is</i>	<i>ba/b</i> ⁶
Negative	<i>ní</i>	<i>níor/níorbh</i>
Interrogative	<i>an</i>	<i>ar/arbh</i>
Negative interrogative	<i>nach</i>	<i>nár/nárbh</i>

Is represents not only an irregular verb, but also a defective one, because it lacks the imperative mood, the verbal noun, the verbal adjective and the autonomous form. On the other hand, *bí* possesses all these forms except for verbal adjective.

⁴ For regular verbs, these forms differ only as regards the particle and the mutation it triggers.

⁵ The present tense of the copula functions also as future, while its past tense form is also used as subjunctive.

⁶ In the past, the first form appears in front of words starting with a consonant, whereas the other one is found in front of words beginning with a vowel.

As regards Polish predicative expressions, only the verb *być* ‘be’ inflects, while *to* is always invariable.⁷ The verb *być* occurs in all tenses and moods and inflects for all persons in both numbers. Since *być* is an irregular verb, it assumes a number of suppletive forms, as can be seen in table 4 below (cf. Grzegorzczkova *et al.* (1998: 235)). The table shows that in the past and in the subjunctive mood, *być* has distinct forms depending on the gender (viz. masculine, feminine and neuter in the singular and virile/non-virile in the plural).

Table 4

Form	Present	Future	Past	Subjunctive
1. sg.	<i>jestem</i>	<i>będę</i>	<i>byłem/byłam</i>	<i>byłbym/byłabym</i>
2. sg.	<i>jesteś</i>	<i>będziesz</i>	<i>byłeś/byłaś</i>	<i>byłbyś/byłabyś</i>
3. sg.	<i>jest</i>	<i>będzie</i>	<i>był/była/było</i>	<i>byłby/byłaby/byłoby</i>
1. pl.	<i>jesteśmy</i>	<i>będziemy</i>	<i>byliśmy/byłyśmy</i>	<i>bylibyśmy/byłybyśmy</i>
2. pl.	<i>jesteście</i>	<i>będziecie</i>	<i>byliście/byłyście</i>	<i>bylibyście/byłybyście</i>
3. pl.	<i>są</i>	<i>będą</i>	<i>byli/były</i>	<i>byliby/byłyby</i>

Być, like the Irish *bí*, is not defective, as it possesses the imperative (*bądź*) and the present participle (*będąc*).⁸

2. Contexts of use

2.1. The distribution of Irish predicative elements

According to Stenson (1981: 94), *is* serves to express ‘essential or inherent qualities’, while *bí* is adopted to convey ‘temporal qualities, existence, location, possession and the like’. These semantic differences are reflected in the syntax of these two verbs. While the former co-occurs mainly with nominal expressions, the latter is followed by adjectival, adverbial and prepositional predicates. Although their distributions are complementary in the majority of cases, they sometimes overlap, as we shall see later.

Let us first examine the distribution of *bí*. It is used with:

1) Adjectival predicates, see (1) below:⁹

- (1) *Tá sé mór.*¹⁰
 is he big
 ‘He is big.’

⁷ *To* has a number of uses in Polish, in some of which it is inflected for number and gender (cf. Citko (2008: 263) for an overview of various uses of this pronoun).

⁸ However, *być* lacks the past participle, cf. **bywszy* ‘having been’.

⁹ The predicates are boldfaced throughout the text.

¹⁰ Examples (1)-(7) are taken from Carnie (1995: 138).

2) Adverbial predicates e.g.

- (2) *Tá Seán go maith.*
is John well
'John is fine.'

3) Prepositional predicates, e.g.

- (3) *Tá Seán i mBaile Átha Cliath.*
is John in Dublin
'John is in Dublin.'

The verb *bí* can also serve to form the progressive or perfective aspect, as illustrated in (4) and (5), respectively:

- (4) *Tá Seán ag rith.*
is John at running
'John is running.'
- (5) *Bhí an obair déanta.*
was the work done
'The work has been done.'

In the sentences above *bí* functions as an auxiliary verb, whereas the non-finite verb forms (i.e. the verbal noun in (4) and the verbal adjective in (5)) play the role of predicates.

It is important to note that *bí* never appears with nominal predicates and hence sentences like (6) below are ungrammatical:

- (6) **Tá sé dochtúir.*
is he doctor
'He is a doctor.'

Sentence (6) becomes fully acceptable if the verb *bí* is replaced by the copula *is*, as in (7):

- (7) *Is dochtúir é.*
is doctor he
'He is a doctor.'

Not only does sentence (7) exhibit a verb different from the one found in (6), but it also has a different word order, the issue which we return to in the next section.

Although nominal predicates appear mostly with the copula *is*, there is one structure in which the predicates in question can be found with *bí*. The structure involves the nominal predicate preceded by the preposition *i* 'in'



and the possessive pronoun agreeing with the subject. This kind of structure is illustrated in (8):

- (8) Tá mé i **mo scoláire**.
am I in my scholar
'I am a scholar.'

Despite the fact that sentence (8) contains a nominal predicate, it has a different meaning from the corresponding sentence with the copula provided in (9) below:

- (9) Is **scoláire mé**.
am scholar I
'I am a scholar.'

Sentence (8) has a more dynamic meaning than (9), as it implies becoming, not only static being, while (9) only signals belonging to a given class. Only the former can be used with the adverb *anois* 'now' to stress the fact of someone having attained the status of a scholar and implying that he has not always been one. Stenson (1981: 95) notes that sentences like (8) are "less absolute and more anchored in time" than those like (9).

There are two contexts in which the uses of *bí* and *is* can overlap to some extent. This happens in the case of adjectival and prepositional predicates. Although *is*, just like *bí*, can appear with these predicates, its distribution is highly limited. As for adjectival predicates, *is* can be found only with a strictly specified set, such as the following (*cf.* Carnie (1995: 139)):

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|--------------|
| (10) <i>aisteach</i> | – | 'odd' |
| <i>ceart</i> | – | 'right' |
| <i>fíor</i> | – | 'true' |
| <i>fiú</i> | – | 'worthwhile' |
| <i>iontach</i> | – | 'wonderful' |
| <i>maith</i> | – | 'good' |
| <i>leor</i> | – | 'sufficient' |

Compare for instance (11) below:

- (11) Is **maith é!**
is good he
'He is so good!'

The occurrence of *is* with prepositional predicates is also restricted. As noted by Carnie (1995: 139), *is* can appear only with the following prepositions, whose meanings correspond to those stated beside the prepositions.



- (12) *de* – ‘of’ (origin)
as – ‘out of’ (origin)
ó – ‘from’ (origin)
le – ‘with’ (possession)

The use of *is* with a prepositional predicate is exemplified in (13).

- (13) Is **le Seán** an carr.
is with John the car
‘John has a car.’

2.2. The distribution of Polish predicative elements

Whereas *bí* and *is* in Irish systematically differ as regards the category of their predicate, the former being banned from occurring with nominal predicates, the latter showing a limited distribution with PP and AP predicates, Polish predicative items *być* and *to* are subject to different distributional constraints. First of all, both can be found with nominal predicates, as can be seen in (14).

- (14) *Marek jest moim przyjacielem.*¹¹
Mark is my friend-Instr.
‘Mark is my friend.’
- (15) *Marek to mój przyjaciel.*
Mark TO my friend-Nom.
‘Mark is my friend.’

The difference between these two sentences lies solely in the case marking of the predicative DP, which bears instrumental when used with *być* in (14) and nominative when co-occurring with *to* as in (15). However, Grochowski *et al.* (1984: 145) observe that in some stylistically marked structures the predicative DP can bear nominative even after the verb *być*, compare:

- (16) *Marek jest geniusz.*
Mark is genius-Nom.
‘Mark is a genius.’
- (17) *Oni są złodzieje.*
they are thieves-Nom.
‘They are thieves.’

¹¹ The following abbreviations have been used in the text: AP – adjective phrase, AdvP – adverb phrase, DP – determiner phrase, Inf – infinitive, Instr. – instrumental, Interr. part. – interrogative particle, Nom. – nominative, PredP – predicative phrase, Rel. – relative, REFL – reflexive, and TP – tense phrase.



In the sentences above the predicative DPs have an expressive or evaluating function.¹²

As for adjectival predicates, they can be found only with *być*, as shown in (18):

- (18) *Marek jest przyjacielski.*¹³
Mark is friendly-Nom.
'Mark is friendly.'

An analogous situation obtains with adverbial predicates, as exemplified by (19):

- (19) *Czytać jest przyjemnie.*
to-read is pleasant
'It is pleasant to read.'

Likewise, prepositional predicates are attested only with *być*, as confirmed by (20):

- (20) *Marek jest w domu.*
Mark is at home
'Mark is at home.'

Sentences (18) – (20) become ungrammatical if the verb *być* is replaced by *to*, compare the following:

¹² Grochowski *et al.* (1984: 145) note that less frequently we can come across sentences like (i) below, containing a different type of noun.

- (i) *Ojciec ów był mason, demokrata i dawny major napoleoński.*
father this was freemason democrat and former major Napoleon-Nom.
'This father used to be a freemason, democrat and former Napoleon major.'

Bąk (1999: 412) observes that *być* can be followed by a nominative DP which represents a surname, as in (ii):

- (ii) *Jestem Kowalski.*
am Kowalski
'I am Kowalski.'

Moreover, a nominative DP can be used as a predicate with the PP subject headed by the P *z* 'from', cf. (iii):

- (iii) *Z niego był dobry student.*
from him was good student
'He was a good student.'

¹³ In contradistinction to nominal predicates, adjectival predicates can only be marked for nominative when following *być*. This is proven by the ungrammaticality of (i) below, where the adjective bears instrumental.

- (i) **Marek jest przyjacielskim.*
Mark is friendly-Instr.
'Mark is friendly.'



- (21) **Marek to przyjacielski.*
(22) **Czytać to przyjemnie.*
(23) **Marek to w domu.*

Although it might seem that *to* is limited to co-occurring only with nominal predicates, in fact this statement is not adequate, as *to* can also link two infinitives or a DP and an infinitive, as can be seen in the following examples:

- (24) Inf TO Inf

Chcieć to móc.
to-want TO to-be-able-to
'To want means to be able to.'

- (25) DP TO Inf

Największe szczęście kobiety to móc podobać się mężczyznom.
greatest happiness of-woman TO to-be-able be-liked REFL by-men
'The woman's greatest happiness is to be able to be liked by men.'

Wiśniewski (1990:117)

In fact, Citko (2008: 267) notes that *to* can link two identical categories, as confirmed by the sentences below:

- (26) *W domu to w domu.*

at home TO at home
'Home is home.'

- (27) *Droższe to nie zawsze lepsze.*

more-expensive TO not always better
'More expensive is not always better.'

To sum up, unlike the verb *bí* in Irish, both Polish predicative items can occur with DP predicates. However, unlike *bí* and *is*, which both can be found with adjectival and prepositional predicates, in Polish only *być* can occur in this context. Finally, while in Irish *bí* can take VP complements, only *to* in Polish can link two infinitives.

3. The meanings of copular sentences

Higgins (1973) distinguishes four types of copula sentences, i.e. predicational, specificational, equative and identificational. This paper will focus only on predicational and equative sentences in Irish and Polish.



3.1. Irish predicational and equative sentences

In Irish predicational structures the subject is definite, while the predicate is indefinite, as can be seen in the following sentences:

- (28) *Is lia é.*
is surgeon he
'He is a surgeon.'
- (29) *Is lia é Seán.*
is surgeon he John
'John is a surgeon.'

In (29) the subject *Seán* is preceded by the pronoun *é*, which agrees in phi-features with the subject.¹⁴

Equative sentences, on the other hand, signal that the two DPs linked by the copula are identical. In this case both the subject and the predicate must be definite, cf. (30) and (31):

- (30) *Is mé an múinteoir.*
am I the teacher
'I am the teacher.'
- (31) *Is é Seán an múinteoir.*
is he John the teacher
'John is the teacher.'

Just like in (29), there appears an agreeing pronoun *é* in front of the subject in (31), which this time is obligatory (cf. footnote 14).

The above examples make it clear that the two types of sentences differ not only in their semantics but also in their syntax. Predicational sentences exhibit the structure in (32), whereas the equative ones have the schematic representation in (33):

- (32) Is + predicate + subject
- (33) Is + subject + predicate

However, Stenson (1981: 104) mentions that predicational sentences in Irish can also have the structure as in (33).¹⁵ This makes sentences such as (34) below ambiguous between the two interpretations, depending on which item serves as a subject and which functions as a predicate.

¹⁴ The pronoun of this kind is found in predicational sentences in Munster and Connemara, but does not occur in Ulster (cf. Ó Siadhail (1989) and Russell (1995)).

¹⁵ In fact, Stenson uses traditional grammar terminology and refers to sentences like that as identification sentences.



(34) *Is é an sagart an múinteoir.*

is he the priest the teacher

‘The priest is the teacher/the teacher is the priest.’

(Stenson (1981: 104))

Although the word order facts just described have attracted a lot of attention in the literature (*cf.* for instance, Carnie (1995), Doherty (1996) and McCloskey (2005)), we are not going to discuss them in detail here.

In addition to the two meanings just enumerated, sentences with the copula in Irish can also convey ownership (*cf.* (13) above) and emphasis, as in (35):

(35) *Is anseo atá sé.*

is here is-Rel. he

‘It is here that he is.’

(Christian Brothers (1980: 122))

As for the verb *bí*, it is frequently used to denote:

a) existence, *cf.* (36) below:

(36) *Tá trí phearsa i nDia.*

are three persons in God

‘There are three persons in God.’

(Christian Brothers (1980: 117))

b) position, *cf.* (3) above;

c) state or condition, *cf.* (1) and (2) above;

d) possession, *cf.* (37):

(37) *Tá carr agam.*

is car at-me

‘I have a car.’

3.2. Predicational and equative sentences in Polish

Unlike in Irish, Polish predicational sentences can contain either of the copular elements. The relevant examples are given below:

(38) *Kowalski jest jednym z lekarzy rodzinnych.*

Kowalski is one of doctors family

‘Kowalski is one of GP’s.’



- (39) *Kowalski to jeden z lekarzy rodzinnych.*
Kowalski TO one of doctors family
'Kowalski is one of GP's.'

Sentence (39) clearly shows, contra Błaszczak and Geist (2000), but in line with Citko (2008), that Polish sentences with *to* are not limited to denoting equality, but can also have a predicational role.

Equative sentences, on the other hand, make use of the pronominal copula, as shown in (40) and (41):

- (40) *Papież to kardynał Ratzinger.*
Pope TO Cardinal Ratzinger
'The Pope is Cardinal Ratzinger.'
- (41) **Papież jest kardynałem Ratzingerem.*¹⁶
Pope is Cardinal Ratzinger
'The Pope is Cardinal Ratzinger.'

In addition to the two copular structures just examined, Polish exhibits a third construction which combines both *być* and *to* and is illustrated in (42):

- (42) *Marek to był mój najlepszy przyjaciel.*
Mark TO was my best friend
'Mark was my best friend.'

This structure closely mimics the properties of the sentences with *to*, since the DP predicate found in it is nominative case-marked. Furthermore, it can express both predicational and equative meanings, as shown in (43) and (44), respectively:

- (43) *Kowalski to był jeden z lekarzy rodzinnych.*
Kowalski TO was one of doctors family
'Kowalski was one of GP's.'
- (44) *Papież to jest kardynał Ratzinger.*
Pope TO is cardinal Ratzinger
'The Pope is cardinal Ratzinger.'

¹⁶ However, sentence (i) below is grammatical:

(i) *Kardynał Ratzinger jest Papieżem.*
cardinal Ratzinger is Pope
'Cardinal Ratzinger is a Pope.'

The sentence above is not equative, but predicational, and implies that cardinal Ratzinger is one of the Popes.



Unlike in Irish, where both *bí* and *is* can be used to express possession, neither *być* nor *to* convey possession in Polish, instead the verb *mieć* 'have' is adopted. The Polish verb *być* is similar to the Irish *bí* in that it can figure in structures denoting existence, cf. (45), position, cf. (20) above, and state or condition, cf. (46).

(45) *Jest wiele gatunków drzew na ziemi.*
are many species trees on earth
'There are many species of trees on earth.'

(46) *Marek jest zmęczony.*
Mark is tired
'Mark is tired.'

As regards the word order, predicational sentences with *być* allow only the word order shown in (47) below, while both predicational and equative sentences with *to* can exhibit either the sequence in (48) or in (49).

(47) subject	+	jest	+	predicate
(48) subject	+	to	+	predicate
(49) predicate	+	to	+	subject

The order in (47) can be seen, for instance, in (38) and reversing the order of the subject and predicate results in ungrammaticality, as can be seen in (50):

(50) **Jeden z lekarzy rodzinnych jest Kowalskim.*
one of doctors family is Kowalski
'One of GP's is Kowalski.'

The order present in (48) can be seen in (39), whereas the one in (49) is illustrated in (51):

(51) *Kardynał Ratzinger to papież.*
Cardinal Ratzinger TO Pope
'Cardinal Ratzinger is the Pope.'

Likewise, the sentences with both predicative items can show the word order with the predicate before the subject, as confirmed by (52) and (53):

(52) *Jeden z lekarzy rodzinnych to był Kowalski.*
'One of family doctors is Kowalski.'

(53) *Kardynał Ratzinger to jest Papież.*
'Cardinal Ratzinger is the Pope.'

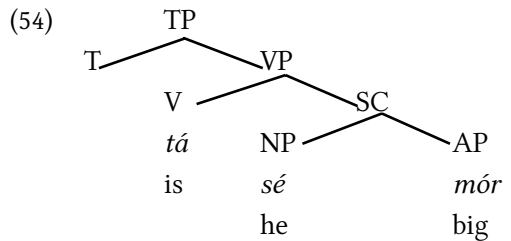


To recapitulate, since Irish allows DP predicates only with the copula verb, it conveys both predicational and equative meanings by means of the verb *is*. Polish can express these two meanings with *to*, but not with *być*, which appears only in predicational clauses. The word order in Irish predicational sentences is restricted to subject appearing before the predicate, just like in the Polish copular sentences with *być*. However, Polish predicative and equative sentences with the pronominal copula allow both subject-first and predicate-first orders.

4. The structural position of predicative elements

4.1. Where do *is* and *bí* appear in the structure?

In the literature it is commonly argued that *is* and *bí* differ as regards the structural position that they occupy. McCloskey & Sells (1988) claim that the latter is a lexical verb which takes a small clause complement and which subsequently undergoes movement to T. Compare the following:



The analysis above makes use of the symbol SC, which stands for a small clause.

The copula is commonly taken to be a functional category (*cf.*, for instance, Carnie (1995), Doherty (1996), McCloskey (2005)). The major arguments to support this claim include the following:

- (1) the copula belongs to a closed class,
 - (2) it is a stressless proclitic which is often dropped in colloquial speech, *cf.*
- (55) *(Is) as Carraig Airt é.*
 is from Carraigart he
 'He is from Carraigart.'
- (3) it is deprived of meaning and its only function is to turn non-predicative expressions, such as DPs, into predicates,
 - (4) unlike lexical verbs, it forms a single morphological unit with the preceding particle, as in (56) and (57):



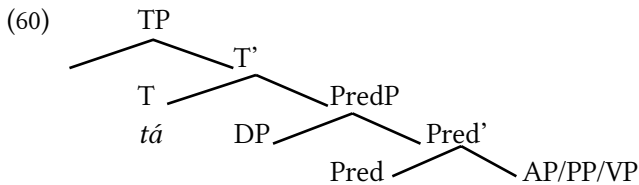
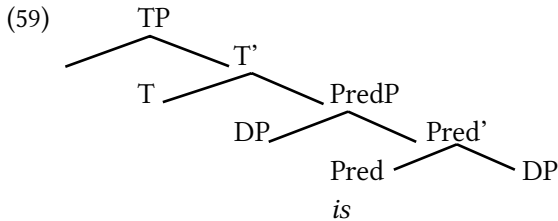
(56) *An dtuigeann tú é?*
 Interr. part. understand you it
 'Do you understand it?'

(57) *An as Éirinn thú?* (Doherty (1996:10))
 Interr. part. from Ireland you
 'Are you from Ireland?'

Whereas the interrogative particle in (56) comes in front of the lexical verb *tuig* 'understand', it does not precede the copula in (57), but rather forms a single word with it. When compared with *is*, the verb *bí* behaves like lexical verbs, as can be seen in (58):

(58) *An bhfuil tú mór?*
 Interr. Part. are you big
 'Are you big?'

The question which arises at this point is what category the two copular verbs in Irish belong to. The hypothesis entertained in this paper is that while the copula represents Pred in the sense of Bowers (1993), the verb *bí* can be classed as a T. The copula from Pred is subsequently moved to T. The schematic structural representations of the two copular constructions are given below:



The landing site of the copula in (59) seems to conform with the claim made by Doherty (1996) and McCloskey (2005), who treat the copula as T, but runs against Carnie (1995), who argues that *is* belongs to the class of Cs. The strong argument against regarding *is* as a C comes from sentences such as (61), where *is* co-occurs with the C *dá* 'if':



- (61) *dá ba Ghearmánach é*
if were German he
'if he were German'

(McCloskey (2005: 162))

The structure offered in (59) is analogous to that proposed by Adger and Ramchand (2003) for Scottish Gaelic. The issues which we leave aside here is how we can obtain the subject last word order found in predicational sentences and where the pronominal augment is placed in equative structures (cf. section 3.1).¹⁷ To account for the former question Adger and Ramchand's analysis may be adopted. According to them, in predicational structures the movement of Pred' to T underlies the subject last order. Alternatively, one can follow Carnie (1995) and assume the movement of just a predicative DP.¹⁸ As for the pronominal augment, it is considered by Carnie (1995) to be an agreement morpheme incorporated into T, which correctly predicts the order attested in sentences such as (31) above. The details concerning the two issues mentioned, however, need to be worked out.

The structure in (60) just like the one in (59) contains PredP, however, unlike in (59), the Pred head in (60) is phonologically empty and the verb *tá* is generated directly in T. The tree in (60) again mimics the proposal made by Adger and Ramchand (2003) for Scottish Gaelic and conforms to McCloskey and Sells' (1988) analysis in which *tá* takes a small clause complement (cf. (54) above). The question is why *tá* is directly merged in T. Adger and Ramchand argue that the merger of the verb *be* in T satisfies the EPP property of T, understood as in Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998), i.e. either by moving some material to Spec, TP, or to T.

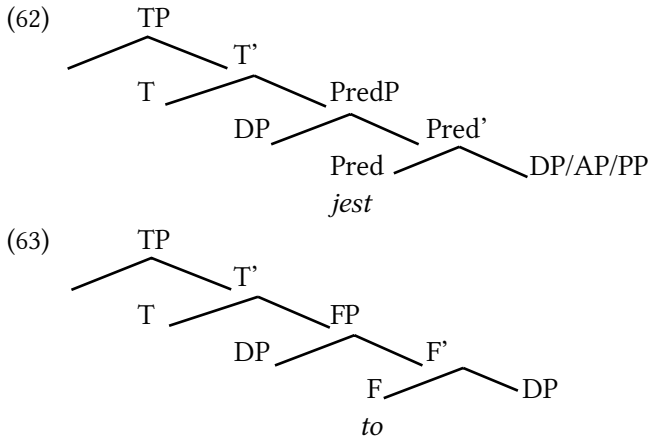
4.2. The structural position of *być* and *to* in Polish

Similarly to Irish *is* and *bí*, Polish copular items seem to occupy two distinct structural positions. While *być* may be considered a head of PredP, *to* must be placed within some other functional projection, FP. To make our discussion more concrete, let us consider the following structural representations:

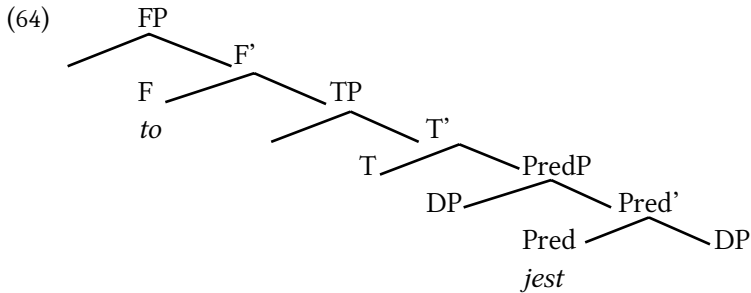
¹⁷ If we follow McCloskey (2002) and assume that subjects in Irish undergo movement to Spec, TP to satisfy the EPP, then we must posit another functional head above TP to which the verb must move from T in order to be able to derive the VSO order in finite clauses.

¹⁸ Carnie assumes that *is* occupies C and the predicative DP undergoes movement to T. The validity of this analysis is seriously undermined by the ellipsis facts discussed by McCloskey (2005).





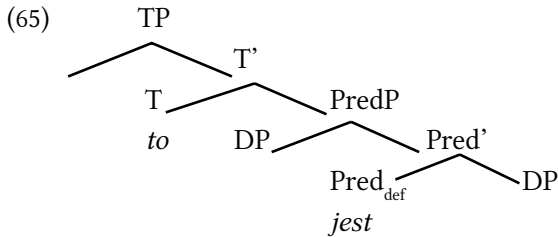
Although both structures seem to account for the basic differences between the two copular structures mentioned in the previous sections, they fail to account for clauses with both *to* and *być*, as in (43) and (44) above. The so-called dual copula sentences (cf. Citko (2008)) seem to require both these functional heads, with FP dominating PredP as determined by the word order facts. The resulting representation seems to look as follows:



The structure proposed above gives rise to a number of problems. Firstly, the TP in (64) must be generated below FP, while in (63) it appears above it. Secondly, to get the word order facts right one would have to posit not only the movement of the subject from the Spec, PredP to Spec, TP, which is mandated by the EPP, but also its further movement to Spec, FP, which seems to lack any motivation. In fact the structure similar to (64) has been offered by Geist and Błaszczak (2000), who, nonetheless, treat *być* as T generated below what they call EtoP and do not posit PredP at all.¹⁹

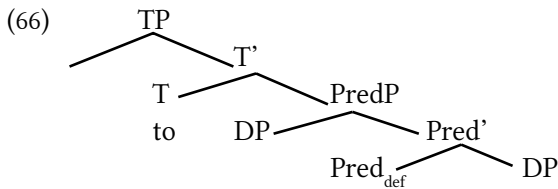
¹⁹ Geist and Błaszczak (2000) use EtoP, not ToP, because in addition to Polish, they analyse copular clauses in Russian, which make use of the element *eto*.

An alternative pursued by Citko (2008) is to treat both *być* and *to* as heads of PredP (or what she calls πP). However, while the former is equipped with a full set of features, the latter is defective (π_{def}) lacking phi-features altogether, which explains the differences in the case marking of the DP complements of the two copular elements (cf. section 2.2). The structure of dual copular sentences in her system looks like this:²⁰



The analysis reproduced above gives rise to the problem of why *to* is generated in T although it does not inflect for tense. Citko treats *to* as an expletive copula which at LF requires the raising of the verbal copula to it.

If Citko's analysis is adopted for dual copula sentences in Polish, then the structure in (63) must be modified along the following lines:



Since Citko's (2008) analysis does not run into the problems listed for the analysis presented in (64), it is going to be adopted here.

When Irish copular clauses are compared with their Polish equivalents, a striking structural correspondence emerges: Irish copula structures correspond to the Polish sentences with *być* (cf. (59) with (62)), while the Irish clauses with the substantive verb have a structure similar to the Polish sentences with the pronominal copula (see (60) and (66)). Despite the structural similarities, these structures differ semantically, since the Irish copula sentences can convey predicational or equative meanings (depending on the word order used), whereas in Polish these two meanings are typically expressed by structures with the pronominal copula.

²⁰ Citko uses πP instead of PredP. We use the latter symbol for the sake of consistency.

5. Conclusion

The paper has examined the syntactic properties of two types of copular sentences found in Irish and Polish. First, the morphology of the predicative items has been presented, followed by an overview of the selectional properties of the elements analysed. It has been demonstrated that the copula in Irish is highly restrictive in that it typically selects DP complements and can be followed by only a limited set of AP and PP predicates, while the substantive verb can co-occur with AP, PP and VP predicates. The verbal copula in Polish, on the other hand, allows DP, PP, AP and AdvP complements, whereas the pronominal one can link only two items of the same category (usually two DPs, or two infinitives). Afterwards, the realization of predicational and equative meanings in the two languages has been scrutinised. It has been noted that the Irish copula can express both these meanings, depending on the order of the subject and the predicate, while in Polish the equative meaning is attested only in sentences with *to*, but the predicative one is more widespread, found with both copular items. Finally, the structural position of the Irish and Polish predicative items has been analysed. It has been suggested that both *is* and *być* function as Pred heads, while *bí* and *to* are merged in T taking PredP as their complement. It has been noted that the structural similarities notwithstanding, the semantics of the *is* and *być* sentences on the one hand, and the *bí* and *to* sentences on the other, is different.

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O rečenicama s kopulom u irskome i poljskome

Sažetak

Cilj je ovoga rada usporediti sintaktička svojstva različitih vrsta rečenica s kopulom u irskome i poljskome. U ova dva jezika moguća su dva načina izražavanja odnosa predikacije. U irskome se taj odnos izražava pomoću glagolskih elemenata *tá* i *is*, dok se u poljskome javlja zamjenička konstrukcija s nepromjenljivim elementom *to* (usp. ruski *éto*), usporedno s pravilnom glagolskom strukturom s *być* 'biti'. Na početku rada promatraju se flektivni oblici predikativnih glagolskih elemenata, a zatim se daje detaljan pregled konteksta u kojima se može naći svaka od kopularnih struktura. Uočeno je da se u oba jezika strukture s *tá* i *być* mogu pojavljivati uz AP, PP i AdvP skupine. Razlika je, pak, između *tá* i *być* u tome što *tá* može uza se imati i VP skupinu. Razlika je i u tome što uz imenske skupine u irskome dolazi samo kopula *is*, dok su u poljskome imenske skupine dozvoljene uz obje vrste poljskih kopularnih struktura, ali uz različite padežne oznake na predikatu. U završnom dijelu rada ponuđena je analiza strukturalnih položaja irskih *tá* i *is*, te poljskih *być* i *to* s obzirom na njihove mogućnosti spajanja, semantičke razlike i poredak predikata. Zaključeno je da se irska dva glagola *biti* mogu svrstavati u istu klasu, ali se to isto ne može i s poljskima.

Ključne riječi: rečenice s kopulom, predikatna fraza, minimalistički program, supstativni glagol, kopula, zamjenička kopula

Key words: predicational and equative sentences, Predication Phrase, Minimalist Program, Substantive verb, Copula, pronominal Copula