

# The Celtic Languages

2nd edition

Edited by  
Martin J. Ball and Nicole Müller

ROUTLEDGE LANGUAGE FAMILY SERIES

# THE CELTIC LANGUAGES

*The Celtic Languages* describes in depth all the Celtic languages from historical, structural and sociolinguistic perspectives with individual chapters on Irish, Scottish Gaelic, Manx, Welsh, Breton and Cornish.

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**Dr Martin J. Ball** is Hawthorne-BoRSF Endowed Professor, and Director of the Hawthorne Research Center, at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. He is also Honorary Professor at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, and has over 120 academic publications. Among his books are *The Use of Welsh*, *Mutation in Welsh*, and *Welsh Phonetics*.

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# PREFACE

It is now sixteen years since the first edition of this collection appeared. In that time the sociolinguistic status of the modern Celtic languages has changed considerably and, also, our knowledge of the historical languages has increased. Further, the contemporary languages have developed such that new linguistic descriptions of them are also needed. For this second edition we have reorganized the first part of the book. We now have five chapters in Part I. James Fife's description of the typological aspects of the Celtic languages is followed by a scene-setting historical account by Joseph Eska of the emergence of these languages. Then a chapter each is devoted to Continental Celtic (Joseph Eska and D. Ellis Evans), Early Irish (David Stifter) and Old and Middle Welsh (David Willis).

As in the first edition, Parts II and III are devoted to linguistic descriptions of the contemporary languages (in the case of Cornish and Manx, these descriptions contain considerable historical background, with the modern revived languages dealt with in a later chapter). Part II covers the Goidelic languages, with chapters by Dónall P. Ó Baoill on Irish, William Gillies on Scots Gaelic and George Broderick on Manx. Part III deals with the Brythonic languages, and the chapters are authored by Gwenllïan Awbery (Welsh), Ian Press (Breton) and Ken George (Cornish).

Part IV is devoted to the sociolinguistic situation of the four contemporary Celtic languages and, as in the previous edition, a final chapter describes the status of the two revived languages Cornish and Manx. Tadhg Ó hIfearnáin provides a sociolinguistic analysis of contemporary Irish, and the status of Scots Gaelic is described by Ken MacKinnon. The sociolinguistics of Welsh is covered by Robert Owen Jones and Colin H. Williams, and that of Breton by Lenora Timm. The final chapter on revived Manx and Cornish is co-authored by Ken George and George Broderick.

The first edition of this collection was fortunate to have been able to draw on the leading Celtic linguistics scholars of the day. For this second edition we were luckily able to call on some of these same scholars to update their contributions. However, some of the original authors were no longer active in the field, but we have again been fortunate to attract scholars of the highest reputation to provide replacement chapters together with the new chapters of Part I.

We would like to express our gratitude to Routledge for commissioning a new edition of this collection and for their support during the process of assembling it. Our hope is that this volume will provide a resource for all scholars working with the Celtic languages, whether from a historical, linguistic or sociolinguistic viewpoint.

Martin J. Ball and Nicole Müller  
*Lafayette, Louisiana*



PART I

# **HISTORICAL ASPECTS**



# TYPOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE CELTIC LANGUAGES

*James Fife*

This book is concerned with the structure and status of the Celtic languages. At first glance this may appear to give the work a very definite focus. However, the question of what constitutes a 'Celtic' language is not as straightforward as linguists may suppose. This is because there are at least three different approaches to defining what is meant by such terms as 'Celtic', 'Romance' or 'Slavic'. Historically all three approaches have been applied to the Celtic languages, each successive view further refining and narrowing the scope of enquiry. These are: an ethnological approach; a genetic approach; and a typological approach.

The original, and to some minds the only proper, use of the term 'Celtic' derives from the name *Keltoi* used by Greek geographers of the mid-first millennium BC for a people inhabiting parts of Central Europe. The first reference to this people is in the *Ora Maritima* of Festus Rufus Avienus, proconsul of Africa in AD 336, based on a Greek original of the sixth century BC, though accounts of the Celts occur also in works by Hecataeus of Miletus (c. 500 BC), Herodotus (450 BC) and Aristotle (c. 330 BC). Extensive descriptions are found in Polybius (second century BC) and in Poseidonius (first century BC); the latter was a major source for later accounts by Diodorus Siculus and Strabo, and may have influenced Caesar's *Gallie War* (see Tierney 1964).

The *Keltoi* of the Greeks appear to equate with an archaeological record which reveals the existence of a war-like, iron-working culture originating in Central Europe, but eventually spreading throughout the length of the southern half of the continent. The Celts are associated with the material remains designated phases C and D of the Hallstatt culture (eighth to early fifth centuries BC). This phase gave way to a more flamboyant and wealthy successor known as the La Tène culture (late fifth to early first century BC), in whose style many of our greatest treasures of 'Celtic' art were produced. See Dillon and Chadwick (1972) for general background.

As the practitioners of La Tène culture made their political, economic and martial presence felt on the classical world, they began to appear in Roman histories and military reports. To the Romans they were known as *Galli* and acknowledged as a fearsome adversary who settled *en masse* in the vale of Lombardy, set the Etruscan state tottering, and sacked Rome in 390 BC. During the course of the fourth and third centuries, the Celts established themselves in areas stretching from the British Isles to Asia Minor.

It seems certain enough now that the Roman *Galli* and the Greek *Keltoi* were one and the same nation. However, the ancients apparently did not fully recognize the ethnic unity of the Celts (indeed, Caesar states that even the three parts of Gaul were linguistically disparate). Thus they were most often referred to by individual tribal designations

(the Aedui, the Belgæ, the Helvetii, the Boii), sharing certain culture traits (for example, religious institutions and a warrior aristocracy). Their linguistic unity was occasionally remarked upon: Tacitus notes the similarity of the British and Gaulish languages, and St Jerome states that Galatian reminded him of the Gaulish dialect of the Treveri. Thus 'celticity' originally was more a matter of being the scion of a particular cultural and historical heritage rather than an explicit recognition of linguistic affiliation.

Rapidly as the Celts spread their language and culture over the map of Europe, just as rapidly they declined again. The Celtic-speaking populations of Spain, Gaul and Northern Italy came under the sway of Rome before the fall of the Republic and eventually assimilated to Latin, though some pockets survived a remarkably long time (witness the still extant Galatian speakers in the fourth century AD).

The corner of *Romanitas* where Celtic languages held on the longest was, of course, Britain. There the native language survived long enough to spread back to the continent and develop into languages of rule in several medieval states before they all started a continuing decline initiated with the loss of political independence and economic isolation in the sixteenth century. Interestingly, the fate of those who had remained beyond the pale of Roman rule differed little from that of those who were for centuries controlled by Rome. Irish, Manx and Scots Gaelic remained vital and viable languages through the millennium following Roman collapse, but eventually began a sad decline with the advent of the centralized state and capitalism.

If we look then at 'Celtic' as referring to the languages of peoples descended from the ancient *Keltoi* and *Galli*, as was once the case, we come up with a very varied group. For if present-day speakers of Irish and Welsh are to be united with those of Gaul by reason of heritage, the very same can be said of today's speakers of Hiberno- or Cambro-English. While the ethnological approach does capture the continuity of the development of the Celtic peoples, a process one might describe as a 'cumulative de-Celticity' (cf. Hawkes 1973), it does very little to discriminate the speech communities in a linguistically useful manner. In this sense, modern French is a 'Celtic' language, as it organically (i.e., via contact) partakes of the original Celtic heritage. Though one occasionally still meets with such a use of 'Celtic' (as with the efforts by Galician nationalists towards admission into the Celtic League), it has limited usefulness for modern linguists.

The genetic sense of what is a 'Celtic' language is clearly related to the ethnic in that it treats as Celtic any language lineally descended from the reconstructed proto-language. Of course we are still fraught with problems in deciding what constitutes lineal descent: is Scots not a descendant (perhaps on the 'distaff' side) of Gaelic? But we are at least on ground more familiar and acceptable to the modern linguist. The genetic criterion, while retaining the mechanism of inheritance, has switched focus to specifically linguistic features instead of populations or cultures.

This is the sense of 'Celtic' with which linguists are well acquainted and which appears to have a firm foundation in scientific evidence. Since the early days of modern comparative grammar, Celtic languages have had an important place in the development of the reconstruction of Indo-European. The seminal study by Zeuss (1853), revised edition (1871), is considered the fountainhead of modern research into diachronic Celtic. In the century and a half since Zeuss, much discussion and emendation of the structure of the Celtic language family and its relation to other Indo-European languages has taken place. Despite the lively debate, there are a number of basic questions still unresolved. One of the most hotly debated issues was the so-called Italo-Celtic hypothesis, that is, the theory that Celtic and Italic formed a *Sprachbund*, similar to that sometimes proposed for Baltic and Slavic. The argument, centred on isolated features such as the form of demonstratives and

the use of deponents/passives in \*-r, has raged back and forth for decades. For the past 40 years, the theory appeared to be out of fashion and Celtic and Italic were viewed as separate branches, but recent studies have breathed some new life into Italo-Celtic (see chapter 2).

The internal structure of the family has been just as controversial. The principal proposals for divisions, which ultimately are not necessarily competing theories, are the pseudo-geographic division into Insular and Continental Celtic and the more linguistically based division into P and Q Celtic languages. For further discussion of these theories, see Eska's discussion below in chapter 2. Here we make only a few orientating observations.

Despite the nomenclature, the Continental–Insular division is not a truly geographic one. In the first place, it is a misnomer to refer to Breton as geographically insular after some 1,500 years of residence on the continent. Second, there is not necessarily an implication that the geographic division has any strong correlation with actual linguistic features. That is to say, while it is true that the Insular Celtic languages share many traits, their counterparts do not appear to have many specific characteristics which group them together in opposition to the former; 'continental' really is a catch-all for 'non-insular'. In truth, the division here is based rather on a significant gap in the attestational tradition between the earliest forms of Celtic manifested on the continent in inscriptions and classical sources and the later corpus of materials native to, and still extant in, the British Isles and Brittany, among other scattered locales in various parts of the world (for example, the Scots Gaelic community in Nova Scotia and the Welsh settlement in Patagonia). As indicated in chapter 2, the fragmentary records of the earliest forms of Celtic languages are confined exclusively to the continent, and only in that evidentiary sense is it proper to speak of these languages as forming a common grouping within the Celtic languages.

The Continental subgroup is considered to consist of various languages or dialects attested in highly varied degrees of completeness. The main languages/dialect-clusters recognized are (in decreasing order of attestation) Gaulish, Hispano-Celtic (or Celtiberian), Lepontic and Galatian. The areas where these languages are attested or known to have been centred are roughly the area of Gaul, northern and eastern Spain, north-east Piedmonte and the region of Asia Minor around the present-day city of Ankara. Evidence suggests that Gaulish and Celtiberian had several dialects (indeed Lepontic is sometimes treated as a dialect of Gaulish), but the evidence is so limited as to make any subgrouping a matter of speculation.

Insular Celtic is recognized to have two branches, the Goidelic or Gaelic branch, and the British, Brythonic or Brittonic branch. The former consists of Irish and other descendants of Old Irish, viz. Manx and Scots Gaelic, which are on occasion distinguished from Irish by being grouped together as Eastern Gaelic. The British branch consists of Welsh, Cornish and Breton; the latter two are sometimes considered to form a southwestern subgrouping. In addition to these languages, all of which are described in the grammatical sketches in chapters 6–11 of this collection, the Insular group contains a sparsely attested Brythonic language called Cumbric, spoken in Cumberland and southern Scotland. This language appears to be close to Welsh and seemingly survived into the tenth century.

One other linguistic group of Britain to be noted is the Picts. Their language, listed by Bede as one of the five languages of Scotland, is so sparsely attested that it is difficult to determine its affiliation. The suggestions run from treating it as pre-Indo-European to being a fully fledged Celtic language (of the P-Celtic variety), or even a mixture of both. Whatever its precise relationship to the Celtic languages, it most likely died out soon after the fall of the last Pictish kingdom in the ninth century.

The second main theory on division of the Celtic family is more linguistically oriented and cuts across the Continental–Insular divide. This grouping is based on the reflex



of proto-Celtic *\*k<sup>w</sup>*, which in the P-Celtic languages loses its velar quality and becomes a voiceless labial stop, but in Q-Celtic retains the velar point of articulation. Based on this diagnostic, the Brythonic languages now group with most Gaulish dialects, while Goidelic patterns with Hispano-Celtic and a few dialects of Gaul. As Schmidt points out (1993: 74), a few other features corroborate this phonological criterion.

The genetic definition of Celtic is certainly based on sound scientific principles. Yet it does not yield completely satisfactory results. For instance, the inability to decide the optimal subgrouping persists despite all the decades of discussion. There do seem to be linguistic traits favouring a P/Q split, but then how does one explain the many shared features among the Insular languages? Schmidt (1993) suggests this is due to convergence, but it is not clear that the sociolinguistic situation of the Insular languages provided the degree of contact which would allow widely separate branches to converge so extensively. Furthermore, the shared features are not of the sort that fit well into a straightforward borrowing scenario. When it comes right down to it, the common features of the Insular languages are more numerous than those which underlie the P/Q distinction. For this reason, for example, the insular languages are treated as a common genetic grouping; see chapter 2.

The question of how best to divide the family into subgroups depends on an analysis of the common *features* of the proposed groupings. It is these features which allow one to form a definition of ‘Celtic’ on the basis of the third criterion, typology.

Increasingly linguistic science has provided sufficient empirical and theoretic knowledge about human languages that we can now venture to say something about universal features and the different parameters along which grammatical systems vary. Between the commonality and the variation, patterns build up so that we can begin to speak of language types. We can explore the typology of a group of languages simply by asking the general question, ‘What significant linguistic features are typical of or unique to this group?’

In asking this question of the Celtic languages, we are faced with a difficult evidentiary problem: our knowledge of the great bulk of the grammatical features of any of the Continental languages is too limited to make any reliable generalizations. The status for all but a handful of the features discussed below in regard to any of the Continental languages, even Gaulish, the most well-attested of them, is too uncertain or completely unknown. For example, Eska and Evans in chapter 3 discuss the wide variation in one of these features for which we have some information: basic word-order. But even here our conclusions must be tempered by considerations of the circumscribed corpus and its highly restricted range of rhetorical modes (most are dedicatory inscriptions or mere graffiti and connected discourse is rare). For this reason a meaningful discussion of the typology of Celtic requires one to confine attention primarily to the so-called neo-Celtic languages, the languages attested in the post-Roman era.

The discussion is broken down into a mostly descriptive part divided into features relating to phonology, morphology and syntax, and a second section which attempts to place these features in a hierarchy of typicality as relates to linguistic ‘celticity’.

## PHONOLOGY

The phonetic inventories of the Celtic languages, while possessing some remarkable features, do not yield many major shared idiosyncracies. Commonality exists mostly in the appearance of a paired voiced–voiceless stop series and stop–fricative series. This pairing

of segments on the axes of voicing and continuance is central to the major typological feature of initial mutations.

The types of phonological rules operating in the various languages are not especially noteworthy for deriving typological features. To take one example, all Celtic languages have stress fixed on a particular syllable, regardless of its syllabic structure or morphological status, but in one branch the target syllable is absolute and in the other it is relative. The Goidelic languages favour initial stress, though there are notable exceptions and differences between dialects (particularly in Irish). Consequently, in most Gaelic languages, affixation does not result in stress movement. In Brythonic, the stress is relative in that in present-day Welsh and Breton, the usual locus of stress is the penultimate syllable (again there are dialectal variants), but the stress will shift to a new penult upon suffixation: Welsh /ával/ 'apple', /avál + ai/ 'apples'. Thus there are few generalizations regarding phonological stress across the Celtic languages, apart from its fixed locus.

The phonological feature (if that is what it is) which typifies the Celtic languages is the existence of an elaborate system of **initial mutations**. This term refers to the use of alterations to the initial phoneme of words. The mutations in Celtic are claimed to have arisen originally due to an external sandhi process having a purely phonological motivation. However, by the time of our earliest texts in Insular Celtic, the process had become fully grammaticalized, since for the most part the phonological triggers for the alternations had disappeared following the loss of final syllables. This process is posited to have been completed sometime during the sixth century (Jackson 1953). Although the basic patterns of Celtic mutations stem from this period, mutation behaviour has by no means remained static since then, with new mutations and triggers arising and old ones disappearing.

The nature of mutations as a morphophonological device is a highly neglected field, and no general theoretical discussion of the phenomenon has been produced, despite the fact that the process is known to appear in a number of disparate languages (but see the major discussion of Welsh mutation in Ball and Müller 1992). Martinet (1952) and Ternes (1977) have drawn attention to the parallels between Celtic mutations and similar phenomena in Romance. Oftedal (1985) treats the case of Canary Island Spanish and alludes to mutation-like processes in a number of languages from Modern Greek to West African Fula. Apparent mutations also occur in Amerindian languages, e.g., Northern Paiute. Although the mutation process is not unique to Celtic, it is certain that no other language group has developed it into the pervasive and productive system we see in Goidelic and Brythonic. This makes it one of the most distinctive of Celtic traits.

What is so curious about this important typological feature is that there is almost no evidence for it from the Continental corpus (see Gray 1944). This could conceivably be due to orthographic insensitivity (for example, the script of the Botorrita inscription fails to distinguish voicing of stops), just as later medieval texts of the Insular languages also often fail to recognize mutations which we know were present. However, the received theory that mutations resulted from a much later development following apocope in the neo-Celtic languages is inherently inconsistent with the existence of mutations in Gaulish or Celtiberian. This is also inherently contradictory with the hypothesis that Goidelic is a very early ramification from the Common Celtic stock (see Schmidt 1993). At the very least, it is largely inconsistent with what must be a much older division between the two branches of Insular Celtic. Despite this, as I show below, the functional isomorphy between mutation systems in the Insular languages is striking and, if associated with any other feature, would immediately suggest common inheritance.

One of the common structural traits of the Insular mutations is that they involve similar phonological alternations. The core of the system in both branches affects mostly

stop consonants whereby the voiceless stops become either voiced or spirantized, and the voiced stops become either spirantized or nasalized. The different languages divide these basic processes in different ways, but on the whole, mutation involves one or a combination of these shifts. Thus in Irish, there are two mutation rules which function as grammatical units: one called Lenition which consists of the spirantizing operation, and a second, called Eclipsis, which combines the voicing and nasalizing operations. See chapters 4 and 6 this volume. By comparison, Welsh is usually described as having three mutation rules, with voicing and spirantizing combined into one so-called Soft Mutation, while the spirantizing and nasalizing effects also operate as independent mutations (see chapters 5 and 9). The nasalizing operation is not found (or only sporadically found) in Breton and Cornish (see chapters 10 and 11 below) and has developed differently in Scots Gaelic (chapter 7), but otherwise, the effects given in (1), in one combination or another, are reflected in all the languages, as detailed in (2).

- (1)  $X \rightarrow$                        $[+vc]$               (a)  
                                       $[+cont]$           (b)  
                                       $[+nas]$           (c)
- (2) Irish                                       $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{Scots Gaelic} \\ \text{Manx} \end{array} \right\}$       Lenition [(1b)]; Eclipsis [(1a) + (1c)]
- Welsh                      Soft [(1a) + (1b)]; Spirant [(1b)]; Nasal [(1c)]
- Breton                      Lenition [(1a) + (1b)]; Spirant [(1b)/(1a)]; Mixed [(1a) + (1b)]
- Cornish                      Lenition [(1a) + (1b)]; Spirant [(1b)]

The Goidelic languages are most consistent, having generally the same two rules. Brythonic has a core Soft/Lenition rule and a Spirant mutation (reserved for voiceless stops), which in Breton also voices in one instance ( $/t/ \rightarrow /z/$ ).

In addition to these changes, all mutation systems in Celtic involve some prefixing of consonants (usually either  $/n/$  or  $/h/$ ) to vowel-initial words under circumstances similar to where consonants are mutated. Thus Welsh feminine possessive pronoun *ei* normally triggers Spirant mutation on the initial consonant of the following noun, but prefixes  $/h/$  if it is vowel-initial, e.g., *cath* ‘cat’, *ei chath* ‘her cat’, *ei hafal* ‘her apple’. Also all languages possess (or at one time possessed) a process of consonantal strengthening by either geminating or devoicing in certain environments. In Cornish and Breton these so-called profections can be said to have achieved the status of independent mutations.

Not only are the actual phonological manifestations of the Celtic mutations highly comparable (cf. Hamp 1951), but there is a striking coincidence of grammatical triggers for the various mutations. According to the standard account, all these derive from instances where close syntactic units gave rise to phonological sandhi which later became grammaticalized as exponents of that syntagm. Whatever the original motivation for the alternation, the categories triggering mutations have remained remarkably similar in the two branches over the intervening one and a half millennia.

One universal locus for mutations in Celtic is after the article. All neo-Celtic languages possess definite articles; Breton also has indefinite articles. Articles trigger one of the language’s mutation rules in varying, though roughly similar, grammatical environments. The most ironclad of these is mutation (invariably involving the language’s (1b) rule) of feminine singular nouns after the article. Though individual languages may possess minor

qualifications of this rule (for example, in Irish the rule holds true only for nominative case nouns and in Breton there are phonological restrictions), all require some mutation marking of feminines after articles. While in some cases masculine nouns may be marked after the article (for example, Irish genitive singulars and Breton plurals), these mutations are always in complementary distribution to the feminine markings (feminine genitives do not mutate in Irish and only /k/-initial feminine plurals mutate in Breton). From this it is clear that mutation is an important semiotic exponent of gender in all Celtic languages.

This mutation of feminine nouns is matched by a related universal trait of using the same mutation marking on adjectives modifying feminine singular nouns. Thus, just as Breton will lenite the feminine noun *merc'h* 'girl' after either article, yielding *ar/ur merc'h* 'the/a girl', the language also requires the adjective *bras* 'big' to undergo lenition if following a feminine noun: *ar/ur merc'h vras*. Once again, mutation serves as a major manifestation of gender distinctions.

Also as regards nouns, both genders are targets of varying mutation effects as part of the marking of pronominal possession. That is, in all Celtic languages, different arrays of mutations are employed to help distinguish the person and number features of the possessing pronoun. While the form of the pronoun can assist in signalling these features, in some cases it is the mutation alone which disambiguates.

It is interesting to compare the Welsh and Irish systems in this respect. Both languages have possessive pronouns corresponding to first, second and third person in the singular and plural; in the case of the third-person singular, there is a gender distinction as well ('his/her'). The literary forms of these pronouns are set out below in (3).

(3)	Welsh	Irish
1 sg.	fy	mo
2 sg.	dy	do
3 sg. m.	ei	a
3 sg. f.	ei	a
1 pl.	ein	ár
2 pl.	eich	bhur
3 pl.	eu	a

It should be noted that despite the orthography, the third-person forms are all pronounced alike in Welsh and Irish, as are all the plural forms in some dialects of Irish. Thus the phonological form of the pronouns is only partially distinctive in both. What distinguishes these, especially the homophonous forms, is their complementary mutation effects. The applicable mutations are indicated in (4).

(4)	Welsh	Irish
1 sg.	nasal	lenition
2 sg.	soft	lenition
3 sg. m.	<i>soft</i>	<i>lenition</i>
3 sg. f.	<i>spirant</i>	<i>no mutation</i>
1 pl.	no mutation	eclipsis
2 pl.	no mutation	eclipsis
3 pl.	<i>no mutation</i>	<i>eclipsis</i>

While Irish, due to secondary changes, has an unresolved ambiguity in the plural, the homophonous third-person pronouns in both languages are successfully distinguished by manipulation of the various mutation oppositions available in the languages. In Welsh, the singular is distinguished from the plural by the latter being non-mutating; the singular genders are differentiated by employing separate mutations. Likewise in Irish, all three mutational oppositions (lenition, eclipsis and non-mutation) are pressed into service to distinguish the pronouns. What is noteworthy about this instance is that it shows that, despite the differences in choice of available options, the two languages are identical in their semiotic use of mutation to signal the three semantic oppositions in the third-person pronoun. Thus the italicized entries in (4) exhibit the minimal opposition necessary to convey the message of gender and number distinction. Examples like this suggest mutations represent more than mere inherited phonological alternations; they show that both languages also inherited the concept of *functional exploitation* of these markings for making significant grammatical distinctions.

Celtic languages also use mutations to mark objects of prepositions. At a minimum, they distinguish a set of prepositions which mutate nominal objects from a set which does not. For example, in Breton the prepositions *da* 'to' and *war* 'on' are associated with lenition of their objects, but *goude* 'after' is not. More elaborately, Scots Gaelic and Welsh make multiplex classifications of prepositions by mutation effects: the former distinguishes eclipsis, leniting and non-mutating prepositions and Welsh has leniting, spirantizing, nasalizing and non-mutating groups.

Mutation of the preposition itself occurs at least colloquially in most Celtic languages. Thus in Irish, the preposition *dó* 'to' is lenited in speech: *dhom* 'to me'; in Welsh *trwy* 'through' occurs as *drwy*. This is related to the common tendency for adverbials to mutate in all Celtic languages as part of the grammatical marking of the adverb category. Again in Irish we have the inherently lenited adverbials *thuas* 'above', *dháiríre* 'seriously', *choíchin* 'never', and in Welsh the permanently mutated *weithiau* 'sometimes', *gartref* '(at) home', and *lan* 'up'. In the Vannes dialect of Breton, the adjective *mad* 'good' is lenited to mark its use as an adverbial.

As relates to the use of mutation with verbs, one usage which appears universal is the association of mutations with different particles. As indicated below, Celtic makes use of several particles in its syntax, pre-verbal particles for tense, interrogation and negation, as well as at least two subordinating/relativizing particles. Invariably the negative particle causes a mutation which distinguishes it from the positive form of the verb (which usually has the radical initial). Not all languages retain the use of interrogative particles, but those that do, assign them a mutation effect, even when the overt particle is suppressed. Combined negative-interrogative particles may have mutation effects of either (like an interrogative in Irish, like a negative in Welsh).

All Celtic languages distinguish two subordinating particles by their mutation effects (and sometimes by form as well). Very roughly, one particle is used for direct relatives (subject or object targets in lower clause) and another for indirect or oblique relatives (relativization on some other case role constituent). For instance, in Irish the former particle causes lenition on the verb and the latter causes eclipsis; in Breton, the former causes lenition and the latter the so-called mixed mutation. In Welsh the choices are respectively lenition and non-mutation.

Mutation plays a prominent role in derivational morphology. Generally, certain prefixes in all the Celtic languages trigger some sort of mutation. Prefixes occasionally can be distinguished by the (internal) mutation effects they cause on the stem. In Welsh, for example, the prefix *am-* means 'around, about' when it causes soft mutation on the stem,

but is a negative when it causes nasal mutation. Mutations have a similar effect in compounding. Mutation is the usual morphological concomitant of compounding, the second element of a compounding normally being lenited. Again, in some instances, the presence or absence of mutation distinguishes different types of compounds. For example, in Welsh, the presence of soft mutation on the second element of a compound signals a so-called Proper Compound, as in *llawforwyn* 'handmaiden' [*llaw* 'hand' + *morwyn* 'maiden']; non-mutation is indicative of an Improper Compound, as in *gwr cath* 'tom cat' [*gwr* 'man' + *cath* 'cat']. See Morgan (1952: 19–20).

One final shared use of mutation among the Celtic languages is its association with the vocative. Thus in Irish we find lenition following the vocative particle *a*; Soft mutation occurs in such instances in Welsh, even though the particle has gone out of contemporary usage; see Morgan (1952: 421–4).

This brief survey of the major areas where the Celtic languages possess identical or similar mutation environments underlines the centrality of the process to each of the languages individually, as well as the significance of this trait as a typological feature for the family as a whole. It highlights, not an absolute identity of effects and triggers, but a functional equivalence which suggests that mutation is a *construct* that is actively manipulable, not just a static inheritance. Whatever its precise status in the Continental corpus, mutation reveals itself as one of the unique diagnostics of Celtic languages.

## MORPHOLOGY

Without getting into specifics of shared, inherited desinences, the Celtic languages have a number of morphological categories and processes in common. One has already been mentioned, the distinction of masculine and feminine **gender**. The gender distinction is recognized by different mutation effects, but also by alternate forms of some numerals (particularly for 'two') and, of course, by choice of anaphor. Grammatical gender is assigned by natural gender, form of the noun and by semantic fields (e.g., time periods, seasons, rivers, etc.). A neuter gender was once distinguished, but has since disappeared.

A striking morphological trait of Celtic is the presence in both Insular branches of **inflected, or conjugated, prepositions**. In addition to being mutation triggers on full noun phrases, most common prepositions in all these languages fall into one of a number of conjugations for expressing pronominal objects. Examples of this from each of the languages are given in (5).

- (5) Irish: *le Cáit* 'with Cáit': *liom* 'with me'  
 Manx: *ec fakin* 'seeing (lit. 'at seeing')': *ayd* 'at you'  
 Scots Gaelic: *fo dhuine* 'about a man': *fodha* 'about him'  
 Welsh: *trwy Gymru* 'through Wales': *trwyddi* 'through her'  
 Breton: *da Vrest* 'to Brest': *din* 'to me'  
 Cornish: *yn tus* 'in men': *ynne* 'in them'

This trait appears to be confined to the two branches of the Insular languages, since no sign of this sort of formation appears in Continental texts. Apart from some sporadic agglutinations of preposition and pronoun, for example, Spanish *conmigo*, the Celtic languages appear to be unique in this morphological feature.

There are several features of the verbal paradigm which are typical of Celtic languages. Certain tense/aspect oppositions are naturally similar due to the inherited nature

of the endings, but there have also been parallels in secondary developments of the transmitted material. Thus in both branches there has developed an **interplay between the subjunctive, future, imperfect and habitual**. In Irish the future and habitual have collapsed in some dialects; in Scots Gaelic and Manx, the imperfect has merged with the subjunctive and conditional paradigms. In all the Brythonic languages the imperfect and past subjunctive are identical, while in Breton and Cornish the subjunctive has taken over the function of the future. Both the past imperfect/conditional and the future/subjunctive in both branches tend to develop habitual functions. The semantic basis for this interplay is discussed in Fife (1990: 170–88), but the similar interweaving of future, subjunctive, imperfects and habitual is a common trait among all the present-day Celtic languages. See Wagner (1959) for a general discussion.

Another shared trait in the verbs is the presence in the paradigm of the **‘impersonal’ or ‘autonomous’ verb form**. Basically, all Celtic languages possess an impersonal form for each tense which is neutral as to the person and number features of the subject. So Welsh *dysg + ais* ‘I taught’ in first-person singular contrasts with the impersonal form *dysg + wyd* ‘one taught’. While this form can often be translated as a passive (‘is taught’), the ending also occurs with intransitive verbs, as with Irish *táthar* ‘they/people are’. The impersonal paradigm is an important inherited feature from Indo-European, since it partakes of the *\*-r* ending which also appears in Italic, Tocharian and Hittite. The actual usage of these forms has diverged significantly over time (in Welsh these have become rather literary constructions, but they are everyday forms in Irish), but the presence of a special verbal inflection for an unspecified subject is another particular feature of Celtic. See Fife (1985 and 1992a) for a discussion of the Welsh forms.

The Celtic verb does not have a fully fledged infinitival form, but makes use of a quasi-nominal form called the **verbal noun** or verb noun. These are non-finite forms of the verb which act grammatically like nouns, but retain semantic functions associated with verbs. Two common uses for the verbal nouns are as elements in complementation of clauses and as part of the periphrastic constructions. See Gagnepain (1963) for general discussion.

A common complementation device in Celtic is to use the verbal-noun form of the subordinate verb. For instance, in Irish, the idiom ‘in order to’ is expressed by using the verbal noun as the complement of a prepositional phrase using *le* ‘with’: *Tá Cáit anseo le teach a phéinteáil* ‘Cáit is here to paint a house (lit. Cáit is here with a house its painting)’, using the verbal noun form *péinteáil* ‘painting’.

The nature of the Celtic periphrases is discussed more below, but consider here the Breton example *Ni a zo o vont da Vrest* ‘We are going to Brest’ using the verbal noun *mont* ‘going’ to form the progressive periphrasis. Though performing many of the functions of an infinitive, the verbal nouns of Celtic have a range of uses from gerunds to full nominals, making them very flexible parts of speech.

Most Celtic languages also make use of certain verbal adjectives, the most widespread being a perfective/passive participle. This form has wide currency in the Gaelic languages and Breton, but has limited productivity in Modern Welsh.

A final feature which can be mentioned is that Celtic makes frequent use of **Ablaut** as a morphological device. Just as the Celtic consonantal system assumes a protean aspect through mutation, the vowels of Celtic are often equally fluid in signalling grammatical information. For example, Irish *fear* ‘man’, pl. *fir*; *mear* ‘quick’, comp. *mire*; *muir* ‘sea’, gen. *mara*; in Welsh, *car* ‘car’, pl. *ceir*; *caraf* ‘I will love’, past tense *cerais*; Breton *ezel* ‘member’, pl. *izili*. The historical results of Umlaut and other vowel affections have left the Celtic languages with an active system of internal morphological markers in addition to their affixation and mutation devices.

## SYNTAX

Without doubt the typological feature of Celtic which has attracted the most attention recently and which is central to an explanation of several subsidiary features is the appearance of **VSO (verb–subject–object) basic word-order**. Although the evidence extant from the continent shows at most that VSO was one possible option in Gaulish (see chapter 3), all the earliest records of both branches of Insular Celtic show these languages to be strongly VSO. In fact, this apparently anomalous order (at least within the Indo-European context) was formerly seen as a major argument for a significant pre-Indo-European substrate in Celtic; see Wagner (1959). Today, given what we know of word-order typologies and implicational universals, such a claim is untenable, since it is not merely the order of the main constituents which would need to be borrowed, but all the implicational features related to VSO order. For Celtic languages are not just VSO by virtue of their arrangement of verb, subject and object, but because of their consistent patterning as VSO in accordance with the observations of Greenberg (1966) and subsequent proposed universals. Thus despite suggestions that some Celtic languages or stages thereof show non-VSO basic order, those arguments do not stand up to scrutiny; see Fife and King (1991) and Fife (1992b) for argument that Middle Welsh is not verb-medial and Timm (1989) for the same argument as regards Modern Breton.

Having a certain basic word-order implies certain other grammatical features. In his article, Greenberg noted the Celtic languages as prime examples of the main VSO category (1966: 108). Of the five universal features distinct for VSO languages (Universals 3, 6, 12, 16 and 19), the Celtic languages follow faithfully the typological implications. Thus Celtic languages are all prepositional, have SVO as an alternate order, have initial interrogative particles, place WH-words before the verb, have the main verb after the auxiliary and have post-head modification as the main format. Celtic languages conform to other universals, like the tendency for VSO languages to have special relative forms of the verb proposed in Downing (1978) (for example, Irish uses *bheas* for *bheidh* ‘will be’ when it occurs in a relative clause and Welsh has the special form *sydd* for the verb ‘to be’ used only in relative clauses).

Celtic languages follow their typological implication by having alternate verb-medial order. It appears that these instances of fronting of non-verbal constituents can be explained in functional terms as a mechanism for structuring information in the clause through topicalization and focus. See, for example, Timm (1991), Poppe (1991). The deviation from VSO by such structures is therefore explicable by grammatical function and is not indicative of a non-verb-initial basic order.

One apparent exception to the verb-first rule is the presence of certain **preverbal particles**. As indicated above, Celtic languages make use of preverbal particles to signal either subordination or illocutionary force of the following clause. In all these languages at least two, mutation-distinguished subordinators/relativizers appear, as well as separate preverbal particles for negation and interrogation and occasionally for affirmative declarations. Goidelic languages have a variant form of a particle *do*, which is part of the marking of the preterite tense; the particle is reduced to *d’* before vowels and elided before consonants, but not before triggering mutation on the verb. It is theorized that the fixed initial position of these particles may have originally attracted the verb to this place in the clause.

As examples, Irish distinguishes a direct relative formed with the leniting relativizer (*feicim an fear a bheas anseo* ‘I see the man who will be here’) from an indirect relative using an eclipsing relativizer (*feicim an fear a mbeas a mhac anseo* ‘I see the man whose



son will be here'). The Welsh equivalents are: *rwy i'n gweld y dyn a fydd fan hyn* and *rwy i'n gweld y dyn y bydd ei fab fan hyn*, with soft and non-mutation choices respectively.

Welsh has the full range of illocutionary particles: *a* for interrogation, *fe/ mi/ y(r)* for affirmative declaratives, and *ni* for negatives; the first two cause Soft mutation, the third Mixed mutation: *A fydd y dyn fan hyn?* 'Will the man be here?'; *Fe fydd y dyn fan hyn* 'The man will be here'; *Ni bydd y dyn fan hyn* 'The man will not be here'. The use of these particles has in some ways eroded in all the languages, but they are an active part of the standard grammatical system in each.

An interesting concomitant of particle syntax in Celtic is the appearance of a pronominal series known as the **infixed pronouns** which are most frequently used in association with the particles. The infixation of a pronoun between the particle and verb is evidenced in Gaulish and was a very regular feature of Old Irish. The use of infixes has fairly well disappeared from present-day Gaelic languages, except for fossilized verb forms originally containing the infixes. The use of infixed pronouns has, however, continued in Welsh and Breton. In Welsh the infixed accusative forms are found following preverbal or subordinating particles, as in (6a, b), but there are also similar genitive forms found encliticized to other items besides particles, as in (6c). In Breton the infixes are productively involved in the formation of the 'to have' periphrasis, as in (6d).

- (6a) *Fe'm gwelodd ddoe.*  
 part.-me saw yesterday  
 'He saw me yesterday.'
- (b) *Aeth y dyn a'th welodd ddoe.*  
 went the man rel.part.-you saw yesterday  
 'The man who saw you yesterday went.'
- (c) *Dangoswch hwn i'w deulu.*  
 show this to-his family  
 'Show this to his family.'
- (d) *Me am eus lennet al levr-man.*  
 I part.-me is read the book-this  
 'I have read this book.'

The use of infixes is increasingly literary in Welsh, but continues in full force in its limited appearance in Breton. While the clitic-incorporation behaviour in Romance languages provides a partial parallel, the Celtic infixed pronouns stand apart by their antiquity and exclusive association with particle syntax.

The construction illustrated by (6d) is one example of the universal trait of Celtic of **lacking a simple verb for the imperfect 'have' process**. In all Celtic languages 'to have' is formed by a composite construction. In Cornish as well as Breton this was done via the use of the verb 'to be' in the third-person singular and a dative pronoun encliticized to the verbal particle; in Breton this pronoun is now often doubled by an independent subject pronoun, as in (6d). This construction was also evidenced in early Welsh, but the modern construction involves the verb 'to be' plus the preposition 'with', as in (7a). The Goidelic languages all partake of a similar construction using the equivalent preposition *ag* 'at', as in the Irish example in (7b).

- (7a) *Mae llyfr newydd gyda fi/gennyf.*  
 is book new with me/with-me  
 'I have a new book'.

- (b) *Tá leabhar nua agam.*  
 is book new at-me  
 'I have a new book.'

In most languages this construction, in addition to expressing regular possessive senses, takes part in various idiomatic expressions, for example, Irish *tá a fhios agam* 'I know (lit. I have its knowledge)' and in Breton is used to form the periphrastic perfect tense for transitive verbs, as in (6d). Each language does possess a simple verb for expressing perfective possession 'get' (Ir. *faigh*, W *cael*, Br. *kaout*).

The BE + preposition construction to express possession is akin to a number of **complex structures** used in all Celtic languages to express particularly verbal tense, voice or aspectual distinctions. For instance, Irish, Welsh and Breton all possess periphrastic progressive structures consisting of the verb 'to be' and the verbal noun of the progressive verb governed by a preposition, as in (8).

- (8a) Irish: *Tá mé ag léamh an leabhair.*  
 is I at reading the book  
 'I am reading the book.'

- (b) Welsh: *Rw i'n darllen y llyfr.*  
 am I-in reading the book  
 'I am reading the book.'

- (c) Breton: *Me a zo o lenn al levr.*  
 I part.is at reading the book  
 'I am reading the book.'

The particular preposition used can vary to produce different semantic as shown by the Welsh examples in (9).

- (9a) *Mae e wedi darllen y llyfr.*  
 is he after reading the book  
 'He has read the book.'

- (b) *Mae e ar ddarllen y llyfr.*  
 is he on reading the book  
 'He is about to read the book.'

- (c) *Mae e heb ddarllen y llyfr.*  
 is he without reading the book  
 'He has not read the book.'

This feature of Celtic has sometimes been cited as the origin of the English periphrastic progressive structure, allegedly arising from a BE + preposition structure of the sort *He is a-coming*. The prepositional periphrases are found in very early Insular evidence and

have increased in usage in the post-medieval period. There is no evidence for such structures in the Continental corpus, though.

The proper analysis of these structures is still controversial. In Fife (1990: 307–442) it is argued that in Welsh they are simple preposition + verbal noun structures. This claim is bolstered by the fact that universally the composite forms in Celtic are used with the substantive version of the verb ‘to be’, i.e., the form used with normal prepositional phrases. All Celtic languages distinguish by function, and at least partially by form, the **two versions of BE verbs** traditionally labelled substantive (or existential) and copula. In some instances the formal distinction is confused through the conflation of the inherited Indo-European BE-roots in *\*bheu-* and *\*es-* respectively. For example, Irish *is* represents the present-tense copula, but in the past tense takes the form *ba*. But in some cases the distinction is carried by secondary development from an independent verb, such as Irish *tá*, from the verb ‘to stand’ (cf. Sp. *estar*).

The two BE verbs in Celtic behave as expected: the existential is used to predicate existence, location and temporary/non-inherent qualities, while the copula expresses identity, equation and permanent/inherent qualities. The distinction in usage is illustrated by (10).

- (10a) Scots Gaelic: *Tha Iain ann.*  
                           ‘Iain is there.’ [existential]  
                           *Is i seo do phiuthar.*  
                           ‘This is your sister.’ [copula]

- (b) Breton: *Emaon amañ.*  
                           ‘I am here.’ [existential]  
                           *N’eo ket ma zad-kozh.*  
                           ‘He is not my grandfather.’ [copula]

The syntax of the two functions of BE also marks them as separate linguistic entities, even when they are encoded by the same verb. The substantive verb behaves much as any other verb in the language (though in Breton, the existential is the only verb that can stand at clause-initial position in a positive declarative), but the copula often exhibits idiosyncratic behaviour. In Irish, for example, the copula merges with certain subordinating particles and lacks person and number conjugation. In Welsh, the copula demands some sort of fronting for topicalization and the copula never stands in initial position. Formerly, in both Irish and Welsh, the copula and its predicate formed a constituent, with the subject moved rightward to the end of the clause. This formation still exists in Irish, but is reserved for an emphatic connotation: *Is deas é* ‘It’s nice!’ See Watkins and Mac Cana (1958) for discussion of Celtic copular structures.

Several features common to Celtic languages obviously stem from the VSO typology (prepositions, post-nominal adjectives). One feature which is not noted in discussions of implicational universals but which appears nonetheless to be related to post-head modification is the **bifurcated demonstrative structure**. All Celtic languages use constructions to express the demonstrative notions ‘this’, ‘that’ and ‘that over there’ which have the format [art. N-dem.], that is the demonstrative is encliticized to a definite noun. The examples in (11) illustrate.

- (11a) Irish: *an bord sin*  
                   the table that  
                   ‘that table’

- (b) Manx: *ny deiney sho*  
 the men this  
 'these men'
- (c) Cornish: *an bys-ma*  
 the world-this  
 'this world'
- (d) Breton: *al lenn-hont*  
 the lake-yonder  
 'yonder lake'

A seemingly related phenomenon is the use of suffixed pronominal supplements. These **confirming or supplementary pronouns** normally occur encliticized to verbal endings and prepositional inflections, but they are also frequently employed as supplements to the possessive pronoun complex in a format analogous to the demonstratives: [poss. pron. N supp. pron]. Examples in (12) show the use of these supplements in Welsh for verb, preposition and noun, while (13) gives further examples of the latter construction.

- (12a) *Fe welo i.*  
 Part. see I  
 'I see.'
- (b) *Anfonodd lythyr ata' i.*  
 sent letter to:me I  
 'He sent a letter to me.'
- (c) *Dyma fy llyfr i.*  
 here my book I  
 'Here is my book.'
- (13a) Irish: *Sin é a tuairim sise.*  
 that he her opinion she  
 'That's her opinion.'
- (b) Breton: *N'eo ket ma levr-me.*  
 not-is neg. my book-I  
 'It is not my book.'

While the use of clitic pronouns to supplement person/number inflections is not an uncommon phenomenon, their use to form nominal agreement complexes is more unusual and likely related to the Celtic demonstrative format in (11).

A final common feature of Celtic nominal syntax is the **use of singulars and/or special forms of counted nouns**. Normally the singular is used with all numerals, though a few common nouns also have special forms used only with numeric quantities. To use Welsh as an illustration, the noun *cath* 'cat', pl. *cathod*, uses the singular with all numerals: *dwy gath* 'two cats', *deugain cath* 'forty cats', *pum can cath* 'five hundred cats'. However, the noun *blwyddyn* 'year', pl. *blynnyddoedd*, uses the special form *blynedd* with numerals: *dwy flynedd*, *deugain mlynedd*, etc. Though other languages sometimes use singulars

in counting (especially in measurements: *five foot three inches*), the pervasiveness of the phenomenon in Celtic justifies viewing it as typological for the family.

We have now considered quite a number of shared features of the neo-Celtic languages ranging over various areas of grammar. Of course all languages have numerous common features; this is the basis of the modern study of universals. But certain features by virtue of their uniqueness and their typicality among a language group qualify as diagnostic of that group. The features just described can be arranged in a hierarchy reflecting their value in identifying 'celticity' in a linguistic-typological sense. As a first approximation, we would propose the grouping of features shown below in (14) according to whether they present strong, medium or weak evidence distinguishing the Celtic languages.

- (14a) *Weak*
  - gender
  - Ablaut
  - copula/substantive 'to have'
  - tense
  - verbal nouns
  
- (b) *Medium*
  - demonstratives
  - impersonals
  - infixes
  - periphrasis
  - noun-numeral syntax
  
- (c) *Strong*
  - word order
  - mutation
  - particles
  - inflected prepositions

The features listed under (14a) should be considered weak diagnostics of Celtic languages because they have low uniqueness, even when their typicality is high. Gender distinctions are of course widespread among languages other than Celtic. The use of gender, though typical of Celtic, is not unique. What is perhaps more distinctive is the *ways* in which the Celtic languages express gender distinctions, rather than the categorization itself. Similarly, Ablaut is very wide-ranging in Indo-European, though its utilization in Celtic is perhaps above average. The same can be said of the copula/existential dichotomy, especially as it is at least partially built on an inherited opposition. Other languages, even Indo-European ones (e.g., Russian), use periphrastic expression for 'to have', though most languages of western Europe exhibit separate lexical verbs. The tense distinctions, though peculiar to Celtic by their particular combination, do not present any unique verbal features which can serve as typological indications, as the aspectual distinctions of Slavic do. Again, though use of verbal nouns in place of infinitives is typical of all Celtic languages, the distinction between verbal noun and infinitive is really one of degree and so does not truly set these languages apart from those with less nominally oriented non-finite verbals.

The medium group in (14b) are more distinctive as well as universal among the Celtic languages. These would be under the strong category but for indications that the formations are not unknown in related languages (and therefore perhaps largely inherited traits),

or could easily arise spontaneously in diverse languages. Thus post-nominal determiners are very unusual, though parallels in determiner-suffixing are also known from North Germanic and the Balkan linguistic area. The impersonal verb forms were originally extant in three other branches of Indo-European, but Celtic is the only one to have retained them. Infixing in the classical form is very unusual (at least among Indo-European languages), but is not too far afield in theory from modern Romance clitic incorporation, which shows that a tendency to agglutinate anaphors with the verbal core is perhaps a general question not unique to Celtic. Periphrastic tenses (especially passives or perfects) are found in several languages, though the Celtic use of prepositional periphrases is more distinctive and consistently employed. As just mentioned, the numeral-singular noun constructions are sporadic in comparison to the universality and obligatoriness of that format in Celtic. Though parallels to these features can indeed be found, their utilization in Celtic sets them apart from the comparanda.

Finally, the features listed in (14c) are highly diagnostic of Celtic, particularly within the Indo-European family. Verb-initial order is not unique among the world's languages, but it is definitely a minority order. As mentioned, no other Indo-European language possesses this word-order typology and therefore its presence in Celtic makes it a strong distinguishing feature. The mechanics of mutation have been discussed at some depth above. This overview of the pervasive nature of mutations and their centrality to the grammars clearly shows this to be one of the major typological features of the family. The use of particle-based syntax is not utterly unique in Indo-European (cf. the question particle *czy* of Polish), but the particles which still exist in Celtic (or at least their mutation effects) remain a strongly functional part of Celtic grammar. The replacement of the elaborate Indo-European correlative pronoun system with a simple dual particle distinction is surely a major development in the evolution of the present-day languages. A few sporadic examples to one side, the active system of inflected prepositions in Celtic likewise stands out as both unique and uniform in Celtic.

It will be noted that only one of the four strong features in (14c) (viz. particles) is securely attested for Continental Celtic. Although VSO does appear, its status there is uncertain in view of the scanty data, and the less unusual (in Indo-European) order of SOV may be the unmarked order. Mutations and inflected prepositions are seemingly absent. By the same token, some of the weaker features in (14) (e.g., Ablaut, gender, copula, some tenses, infixed pronouns) are indeed seen in Gaulish or Celtiberian inscriptions. It is altogether curious that the features which, upon a synchronic typological comparison, are the *least* distinctive for neo-Celtic languages are the only features reasonably demonstrable as shared with the Continental varieties. Is this a result of evidentiary poverty, or have the Insular languages undergone a significant typological shift over the centuries? Certainly we can see that, compared with the early Celtic languages, the modern languages are far less synthetic and much more analytic in structure. But this is hardly a trend confined to Celtic.

The fact that, on a typological level, the Insular languages seem to possess more traits with one another than they do with the ancient languages of the continent prompts much rumination concerning the interface of our synchronic analytical tools and our diachronic methods, about mechanisms of language contact which could account for the shift, and our understanding of linguistic evolution and processes of language change, which could also account for this development without appeal to outside influence.

The discrepancies among the various models of what is a 'Celtic' language point up nagging and complex questions on assumptions forming the foundations of our discipline. The study of these languages provokes us to find answers. So far, it appears that each of

these three approaches to defining celticity has something to offer. Given the strong integrative trend of our age, it is perhaps not too daring to venture a prediction that the most satisfactory model will be one that partakes in proper measure of all three approaches. Maybe only then will we gain a more comprehensive and adequate picture of what it means to be a Celtic language.

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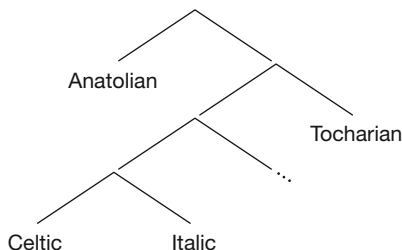


## CHAPTER 2

# THE EMERGENCE OF THE CELTIC LANGUAGES

*Joseph F. Eska*

The Celtic languages form a subgroup of the Indo-European language family,<sup>1</sup> which is thought to have existed *c.* 4000 BCE. The most recent rigorous work on the structure of the Indo-European family tree is the computational approach employed by Ringe et al. (2002), which has the Anatolian languages, followed by the Tocharian languages, branching off first, followed by a branch that eventually yielded the Celtic and Italic languages, as set out in Figure 2.1.<sup>2</sup>



*Figure 2.1* The oldest portion of the Indo-European family tree

Ringe et al. (2002: 101) are non-committal as to whether Celtic and Italic formed a cohesive subgroup, usually termed ‘Italo-Celtic’, though they note that the limited evidence is fairly solid. The notion of an Italo-Celtic subgroup goes back to the mid-nineteenth century, but has largely been out of favour since Watkins (1966). In a masterful article, Cowgill (1970) attempted to re-establish the notion of Italo-Celtic, but few at the time were willing to be persuaded. Recent work by Jasanoff (1997) and Schrijver (2003, 2006: esp. 48–53) on the verbal system, however, in addition to that by Ringe et al. (2002), makes it seem that the prospects of Italo-Celtic as a linguistic entity are very good.

Significant discoveries of Continental Celtic linguistic records since the 1960s have considerably changed our picture of proto-Celtic from that reconstructed almost solely on the basis of the Insular Celtic languages. Earlier reconstructions resulted in a proto-Celtic that looked considerably altered from proto-Indo-European, but data combined from both Continental and Insular Celtic now reveal, for example, that the unmarked configuration of the

clause was S(ubject) O(bject) V(erb), e.g., early Cisalpine Celt. [<sub>S</sub> *uvamoKozis Plialeθu*] [<sub>IO</sub> *uvlTiauiōPos ariuonePos*] [<sub>DO</sub> *siTeš*] [<sub>V</sub> *TeTu*] (*CIS* 65 = *CIM* 180), and that there were eight cases in the singular of the nominal flexion: thus Hispano-Celtic has *o*-stem nom. -*os*, acc. -*om*, dat. -*ui*, abl. -*us*, loc. -*ei*, to which we can add Cisalpine Celt. gen. -*oiso* and -*i*, Transalpine Celt. instr. -*ov* = -*u/* (in εσχεγγλίου (*RIG* \*G-154)),<sup>3</sup> and Old Irish (OIr.) voc. *fir* 'man' < \**uīre*. Within the flexional morphology of the noun, losses, replacements, and syncretisms attested in Insular Celtic are now seen to have been, at most, only just beginning, if that, in proto-Celtic. We now know that the proto-IE *o*-stem gen. sg. in \**-osjo* survived into proto-Celtic, e.g., Cisalpine Celt. *Plioiso* (*CIS* 80 = *CIM* 153), that the *ā*-stem flexion was continued unaltered, e.g., Hispano-Celt. nom. sg. -*a*, acc. -*am*, dat. -*ai*, gen. -*aś*, abl. -*as*, and that the consonant-stem dat. sg. in \**-ei* was not replaced by loc. sg. \**-i* in some parts of Celtic until after the break-up of the proto-language, e.g., Cisalpine Celt. *Piuonei* (*CIS* 26 = *CIM* 36). The end result is that proto-Celtic now looks much like other early-attested Indo-European languages.

The proto-Celtic speech area is usually located in the central European Alps. It is important not to think of proto-Celtic as a linguistic monolith, but as a dialectally diverse speech community whose geographical extent was changing and eventually expanding prior to the dispersal of Celtic speech throughout much of Europe and into Asia Minor. Thus, many sound changes, for example, are attested in all of the known Celtic languages, e.g., the labialization of proto-IE \*/g<sup>w</sup>/ > proto-Celt. \*/b/, the de-aspiration of proto-IE \*/b<sup>h</sup> d<sup>h</sup> ǵ<sup>h</sup> g<sup>h</sup> g<sup>w</sup>h/ > proto-Celt. \*/b d g g<sup>w</sup>/,<sup>4</sup> and the development of the proto-Indo-European syllabic nasals to \*/aN/ in proto-Celtic. These are changes that began at a focal point and spread throughout the entirety of the proto-Celtic speech continuum. Other changes began at some focal point and spread, but not throughout the entirety of the proto-Celtic speech area. The clearest example of this is that the shortening of long vowels before a final nasal did not reach that part of the proto-Celtic speech area that was to break away to become Hispano-Celtic,<sup>6</sup> but a subsequent sound change, the raising of proto-IE \*/o/ > proto-Celt. \*/u/ in final syllables, did. This is the only way to account for the fact that proto-IE gen. pl. \**-oh<sub>2</sub>om* (on which see Ringe 2006: 73) > pre-proto-Celt. \**-ōm* became -*um* in Hispano-Celtic, e.g., *aPuloCum* 'of the Abuloci' (*MLH* K.16.1), but -*/on/* elsewhere in Continental Celtic, e.g., Cisalpine Celt. *TeuoxTonion* 'of gods and men' (*RIG* E-2 = *CIS* 141 = *CIM* 100) and Transalpine Celt. *neddamon* 'of neighbours' (*RIG* L-50), and proto-Insular Celtic, e.g., Old Irish *fer* < \**uiron* (Eská 2006).<sup>7</sup> Other changes, such as the loss of proto-IE \*/p/ between vowels, seem to have been well along towards completion prior to the break up of proto-Celtic. It mostly is continued by Ø throughout the attested languages, but was not fully complete in view of early Cisalpine Celt. *uvamo* 'highest' (*CIS* 65 = *CIM* 180) < \**upamo*-, in which ⟨v⟩ represents a labial fricative. The conditions for still other changes, such as the monophthongization of proto-IE \*/ej/ > /e:/, which is attested to at least a very small extent in all of the Celtic languages and is regular in Transalpine Celtic and Insular Celtic, are likely to have been present in proto-Celtic, too.

It is usually assumed that the first language to have broken away from the proto-Celtic speech continuum is Hispano-Celtic.<sup>8</sup> This is mostly on the basis of changes that occurred in the rest of Celtic in which it did not share. Thus, proto-Celt. \*/st/ is continued unchanged in Hispano-Celtic, e.g., Hispano-Celt. *PoušTom* 'cow stable' (*MLH* K.1.1 A4) < \**g<sup>w</sup>ou-sto*-, while it has evolved to the tau Gallicum phoneme<sup>9</sup> elsewhere in Celtic, e.g., Cisalpine Celtic pronominal *išos* (*CIS* 119 = *CIM* 106) < \**istos*, and Hispano-Celtic preserves the stressed and fully inflected relative pronoun, e.g., masc. nom. sg. *ioś* (*MLH* K.1.1 A10), while it has become an uninflected clitic subordinating particle elsewhere,

e.g., Transalpine Celt. *DVGIIONTI=JO* ‘who serve’ (*RIG* L-13).<sup>10</sup> It is not possible to know whether such changes took place while the proto-Celtic speech continuum was still intact, but did not reach that part which was to become Hispano-Celtic, or occurred only after Hispano-Celtic broke away. Hispano-Celtic also evinces innovations not shared by any other Celtic language, e.g., the treatment of proto-IE \*/s/ between vowels as something other than straightforward continuance or weakening to Ø,<sup>11</sup> an *o*-stem gen. sg. in *-o*, and probably the development of a feminine paradigm in nom. sg. *-i*, gen. sg. *-inoš* beside well-attested masculine nom. sg. *-u*, gen. sg. *-unoš*, but these, of course, are not diagnostic of an early departure from the proto-Celtic speech community, as they simply might not have spread very far from their respective focal points, or, in the case of the latter two features, the other Celtic languages may have lost them.

The Celtic of ancient Italy and adjacent Switzerland has traditionally been classified into two languages, ‘Lepontic’ and ‘Cisalpine Gaulish’, the former spoken in a circumscribed area in the northern Italian lake district, the latter to the west and south in lower-lying areas. Eska (1998b), however, argues that the distinction is a false one and that the geographical peripherality and generally earlier dating of the ‘Lepontic’ records accounts for the minor differences between it and ‘Cisalpine Gaulish’. Thus, ‘Lepontic’ continues proto-Celt. *-m/* in final position, e.g., *uinom* ‘wine’ (*CIS* 128 = *CIM* 48), whereas ‘Cisalpine Gaulish’ has *-n/*, e.g., *loKan* ‘vessel’ (*RIG* \*E-5 = *CIS* 142 = *CIM* 277), ‘Lepontic’ can form patronymic adjectives with the exponent *-alolā-*, which is unknown in ‘Cisalpine Gaulish’, and ‘Lepontic’ has both *o*-stem gen. sg. *-oiso* (earlier), e.g., *χosioiso* (*CIS* 113 = *CIM* 74), and *-i* (later), e.g., *ašKoneTi* (*CIS* 21 = *CIM* 38), but ‘Cisalpine Gaulish’ only the latter, e.g., *esaneKoTi* (*RIG* E-1 = *CIS* 140 = *CIM* 97). Under such a view, all of the Celtic of ancient Italy can be denoted by the term ‘Cisalpine Celtic’.

There are few distinctive features that would indicate that Cisalpine Celtic followed Hispano-Celtic in breaking away from the proto-Celtic speech community,<sup>12</sup> but that it did so can be extrapolated from the fact that it participated in some innovations not shared in by Hispano-Celtic, while it did not participate in some innovations that occurred in later-attested Celtic. Among the former are the evolution of proto-Celt. \*/st/ > the tau Gallicum phoneme, e.g., Cisalpine Celt. *Kozis* ‘guest’ (*CIS* 65 = *CIM* 180) < \**g<sup>h</sup>ostis* beside the Latinized Transalpine Celtic theonym *DIRONA*[E] (*CIL* xiii 3662) < \**ster-*, and the acquisition of a third-person plural past tense exponent in *-s*, e.g., Cisalpine Celt. *KarniTus* (e.g., *CIM* 95) beside Transalpine Celt. *IOVRVS* (*RIG* \*L-12). Among the latter are the merger of *ā*-stem nominal flexional endings with those of the *ī*-stems, e.g., Cisalpine Celt. *ā*-stem acc. sg. *Pruiam* (*CIS* 119 = *CIM* 106) beside Transalpine Celt. acc. sg. *seuerim* (e.g., *RIG* L-98 1<sup>a</sup>8) to nom. sg. *seuera* (1<sup>a</sup>12), and the monophthongization of proto-IE \*/ej/ > /e:/ in final position, e.g., Cisalpine Celt. *n*-stem dat. sg. *aTilonei* (*CIS* 12 = *CIM* 13) beside Transalpine Celt. *i*-stem dat. sg. *VCVETE* (*RIG* L-13).

There are a fair number of innovations which demonstrate that Transalpine Celtic,<sup>13</sup> Goidelic and Brittonic are to be grouped under a single node on the Celtic family tree. Among these are the merger of *ā*-stem nominal flexional endings with those of the *ī*-stems, e.g., Transalpine Celt. gen. sg. *paullias* (*RIG* L-98 1<sup>a</sup>12) to nom. sg. *paulla* (1<sup>a</sup>10) beside OIr. gen. sg. *túaithe* ‘of a tribe’ < \**tōttas* to nom. sg. *túath* < \**tōtā*, and the syncretism of inherited dat. pl. *-bo* by instr. pl. *-bi*, as in Transalpine Celt. *GOBEDBI* ‘to the smiths’ (*RIG* L-13) (on which see Eska 2003: 105–12) beside OIr. *túathaib* < \**tōtābi*. The real question has been whether this node on the tree then broke into Transalpine Celtic and proto-Insular Celtic as in Figure 2.2, or into Gallo-Brittonic and Goidelic, as in Figure 2.3.

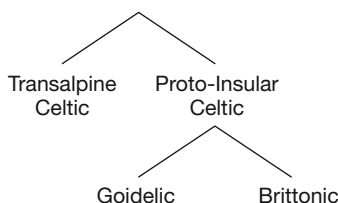


Figure 2.2 Transalpine and Proto-Insular Celtic

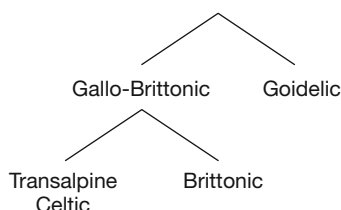


Figure 2.3 Gallo-Brittonic and Goidelic

There are arguments to be made in both directions, but, since the most important diagnostic for determining subgrouping is common innovations, especially those that are unusual or not easily replicable, it is my view that one must postulate a proto-Insular Celtic node in the Celtic family tree. There are two remarkable innovations that Goidelic and Brittonic share to the exclusion of Transalpine Celtic which necessitates this view. The first is the development of the dual flexional paradigm of verbs in the Insular Celtic languages, whereby one form of the verb is used when the verb is in absolute initial position in the clause and another when it is preceded by any of a class of so-called ‘conjunct particles’, among which are included negators, complementizers, connectives, and preverbs. This system is especially robust in Old Irish, in which simplex verbs bear ‘absolute’ endings when in absolute initial position in the clause, e.g., *beirid* ‘s/he bears’, but ‘conjunct’ endings when preceded by a conjunct particle, e.g., *ní-beir* ‘s/he does not bear’, and compound verbs bear ‘deuterotonic’ or ‘prototonic’ stress in a similar way, e.g., *do-beir* ‘s/he gives’ vs. *ní-tabair* ‘s/he does not give’, respectively. Though not robust in Brittonic, the system clearly existed there, too, as exemplified by the Middle Welsh gnomic maxim *trenghit golut, ny threingk molut* ‘wealth perishes, fame does not perish’, with absolute *trenghit* vs. conjunct *treingk*. However the origin of this system is to be accounted for,<sup>14</sup> there is not the slightest indication of its presence in the not insignificant Transalpine Celtic linguistic record.

The second is the grammaticalization of the proto-Indo-European verbal adjective in *\*-to/ā-* to function as the passive preterite form in the verbal paradigm, e.g., OIr. *breth* ‘was carried’ < proto-Celt. *\*bri-to-* and MW *llas* ‘was killed’ < pre-proto-Celt. *\*slad-to-*. Transalpine Celtic continued the proto-Indo-European usage unaltered, as evinced by numerous personal names, e.g., Latinized *Cintugnatus* ‘first born’. In the face of such innovations as these, which could hardly be said to be easily replicable, it is hard to deny the postulation of a proto-Insular Celtic node in the family tree.

The final stages of the emergence of the Celtic languages are not in any dispute. Goidelic divided into a western branch consisting of Irish and an eastern branch consisting of Scottish Gaelic and Manx after the expansion of Goidelic speakers into the Isle of Man and Scotland in the fifth century CE. Brittonic is now thought to have remained a unity longer, Old Welsh, Old Cornish and Old Breton probably not having truly been discrete languages, but varieties of what may be termed 'Old Brittonic'. As Brittonic differentiated, it divided into a northern branch, now represented by Welsh, and a south-western branch consisting of Cornish and Breton.

## ABBREVIATIONS

*CIL* = *Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum*

*CIM* = Morandi (2004)

*CIS* = Solinas (1995)

*MLH K* = Untermann (1997: 349–722)

*RIG E* = Lejeune (1988: 1–54)

*RIG G* = Lejeune (1985)

*RIG L-1*–\*16 = Lejeune (1988: 55–194)

*RIG L-18*–\*139 = Lambert (2002)

## NOTES

- 1 It is perhaps better labelled as the 'Indo-Anatolian' in light of significant differences between the Anatolian languages of ancient Asia Minor and the rest of the family.
- 2 See further Nakhleh et al. (2005) and Warnow et al. (2006) for subsequent work in this framework which factors in homoplasy, i.e., parallel development, and borrowing.
- 3 Villar (1993–5) proposes that some Hispano-Celtic coin legends in *-u* are instrumental singular.
- 4 With the merger of proto-IE \*/j/ and \*/g/ as proto-Celt. \*/g/.
- 5 N = any nasal consonant.
- 6 Also known as Celtiberian.
- 7 So also Schrijver (2006: 53), but he orders the two sound changes in the opposite order, which must be an error.
- 8 Though Uhlich (1999: 298–9) very tentatively suggests that 'Lepontic' may have been the first language to break away.
- 9 See Eska (1998a) for a review of scholarship on the tau Gallicum phoneme.
- 10 We must note, however, that Cisalpine Celtic does not provide any evidence for its position with regard to this change.
- 11 The precise phonological development is still a keen matter of research. Proposals include /z/ (Villar, e.g., 1993), /ts/ (Ballester 1993–5), and /z/ (Prósper, in Villar and Prósper 2005: 163–91).
- 12 Two innovations that differentiate Cisalpine Celtic from the rest of the family at this point in its history are the regular assimilation of homomorphic nasal + voiced plosive groups, e.g., *alKouinos* (*CIS* 21 = *CIM* 38) < \**yindo-*, and the regular effacement of nasals before voiceless plosives and heteromorphic voiced plosives, e.g., *KuiTos* (*RIG E-1* = *CIS* 140 = *CIM* 97) ← Lat. *Quintus* and *anoKoPoKios* < \**-kom-bog-* in the same inscription.
- 13 Also known as Transalpine Gaulish.
- 14 Considerations of space do not allow me even to begin to rehearse the proposed theories here.

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## CHAPTER 3

## CONTINENTAL CELTIC

*Joseph F. Eska and D. Ellis Evans*

INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

Despite the relative slimness of its corpus in comparison with that of the Insular Celtic languages, Continental Celtic has attracted the attention of leading scholars since the inception of the scientific study of the Celtic languages. One of the primary reasons for this, of course, is the fact that, for all of the problems that face us about the emergence of Celtic from some pre-Celtic Indo-European stratum (as well as the associated question of the relative age of Celtic), it provides the oldest evidence available to us of the early Celtic linguistic record. The early pioneers of the study of Continental Celtic, like the specialists of today, recognized that, despite the great difficulties inherent within the subject, there are important rewards to be won.

The sources of Continental Celtic are widespread across Europe and Asia Minor and date from various periods, which makes them all the more difficult to use (see Lejeune 1972b: 266 and 1978 for general guidelines on the dating of Continental Celtic texts, though note that the dates of a number of Cisalpine Celtic inscriptions have been moved back). In general, they are fragmentary, though a number of fairly lengthy connected texts have been discovered since the mid-1960s, which have made the study of the subject both more challenging and more rewarding. Their linguistic importance arises, of course, from the fact that they antedate the much more copious and vital Insular Celtic corpus by, in some cases, over a millennium. It is imperative, then, that we analyse and edit every single scrap that has come down to us, for just one example of some feature may have survived (cf. the remarks of Evans 1983: 41 and Hamp 1984: 184 n. 8) – or, indeed, may be attested in a linguistic context which permits an analysis that may cast light on the interpretation of other forms.

It is now common for scholars to segment the corpus of Continental Celtic into various subgroups such as Hispano-Celtic (also commonly known as Celtiberian), Gaulish, Lepontic, Galatian, Noric, etc.<sup>2</sup> How many such subgroups may have existed in antiquity, as Greene (1966: 123) has noted, we do not (and cannot) know. The relationship of these subgroups to each other is still a matter of intense investigation, as is, also, the relationship of Continental Celtic as a whole to Insular Celtic.<sup>3</sup> The earliest securely identified inscriptions date from the beginning of the fifth century BCE and are engraved in adaptations of local scripts (Iberian in Spain and Etruscan in Italy, but also Massiliote Greek in Gallia Narbonensis),<sup>4</sup> while inscriptions subsequent to the Romanization of the specific locale are engraved in Roman characters. The question of when Continental Celtic ceased to be spoken in various regions remains very uncertain (see Evans 1955: 174–81

and 1979: 525–8). We probably must envision a protracted period of bilingualism (cf. Adams 2003: 184–200), which led to the formation of a *Mischsprache* in some cases, for example, in the late Transalpine Celtic inscriptions with Latin and Greek adstrata that have been discussed by Meid (1980) and Dröge (1989).

The primary corpus of Continental Celtic is composed of inscriptions and graffiti on stone (principally buildings and monuments), metal plaques (usually bronze or lead, but zinc is also known), domestic implements, ceramic wares, and coin legends. Secondary sources include lexical items recorded by classical or medieval writers, collected for Cisalpine and Transalpine Celtic by Whatmough (1933: 178–202 and 1949–51: *passim*, respectively) and for Galatian by Weisgerber (1931a: 159–65) and Freeman (2001), Celtic words borrowed into Latin (Schmidt 1967, Gernia 1981, André 1985, and Lambert 2003a: 204–6) and substrate words (general collections include Thurneysen 1884, Hubschmid 1949, and Fleuriot 1991); see also Dottin (1920: 72–9) and Lambert (2003a: 197–203) on Celtic substrate words in French, Corominas (1956 and 1976) in Spanish, and Silvestri (1981) and Campanile (1983c) in Italian. And see further Schmidt (1983b), who discusses the question of language contact in Transalpine Gaul. The secondary sources will not be discussed further in this survey, though this is not to diminish their importance.

The primary sources are engraved in Iberian (see Figure 3.1), Etruscoid (see Figure 3.2),<sup>5</sup> Greek (capitals) and Roman (both capitals and cursive) scripts; Campanile (1983a) provides a useful survey. The use of the Iberian and Etruscoid scripts brings about particular difficulties in the interpretation of Continental Celtic inscriptions.

The Celtic adaptation of the Iberian script denotes non-sibilant obstruents with moraic characters, i.e., each character contains an inherent vocalism; thus, there are five characters to denote, for example, /t/ plus each of the five vowels, respectively. Resonants, i.e., the vowels, nasals, liquids and glides, and the sibilant(s),<sup>6</sup> are denoted by segmental characters. Such a system, of course, creates problems for the writing of groups of non-sibilant obstruents plus liquid, which are common in the Celtic languages; thus *Tīrīś* (*MLH* K.1.1 A6), which represents accusative /tri:s/ ‘three’, must make use of a ‘dead’ vowel which anticipates the quality of the following organic vowel (cf. De Bernardo Stempel 1996 and Eska 2007b). The occlusive characters, moreover, are not distinguished for voicing;<sup>7</sup> thus, for example, the same character may represent /t/ or /d/,<sup>8</sup> and hence is transcribed

a = 𐌀	Ca = 𐌁	Pa = 𐌂	Ta = 𐌃	m = 𐌄	n = 𐌅
e = 𐌆	Ce = 𐌇	Pe = 𐌈	Te = 𐌉	l = 𐌊	f = 𐌋
i = 𐌌	Ci = 𐌍	Pi = 𐌎	Ti = 𐌏	ś = 𐌐	s = 𐌑
o = 𐌒	Co = 𐌓	Po = 𐌔	To = 𐌕		
u = 𐌖	Cu = 𐌗	Pu = 𐌘	Tu = 𐌙	rn = 𐌚	rn = 𐌛
(a)				(b)	

Figure 3.1 (a) The standard shapes of the eastern school of writing in the Celtic adaptation of the Iberian script; (b) the shapes of the nasal characters in the western school of writing



K = 𐌀	P = 1	T = X +	m = 𐌚 M	n = 𐌛
x = 𐌔		θ = 𐌚	l = 𐌌	r = 𐌒
a = 𐌶 𐌷	e = 𐌺	i = 𐌙	o = 𐌚	u = 𐌜 s = 𐌾 š = 𐌿
z = 𐌿	v = 𐌶			

Figure 3.2 The Lugano script

by neutral ⟨T⟩. See Untermann (1997: 379–85) for a discussion of the script, and de Hoz (1983) on the origin and evolution of the script.

The Lugano script is segmental, but shares some of the characteristics of the Iberian script. A single character is employed to represent both the voiced and unvoiced members of the plosive series, i.e., ⟨T⟩ = /t/ or /d/,<sup>9</sup> and there are two sibilant characters (transcribed ⟨s⟩ and ⟨š⟩, respectively; the phonemic value of the latter appears to be somewhat variable). See Lejeune (1971: 8–27, 1987, 1988a: 3–8) for discussion of the Lugano script.

One may also note that, in addition to the difficulties of interpretation arising from the employment of the Iberian and Lugano scripts discussed above, there always exists the possibility, in any script, of encountering archaizing or hypercorrect orthography.

The corpus of Continental Celtic can no longer be said to be insubstantial, as new finds are continually being made, and the series of significant finds since the mid-1960s fosters the hope of more to come. The on-going analysis of these texts, short as well as long, continues to add appreciably to our knowledge of early Celtic linguistic history. Indeed, as has been expressed by Schmidt and Hamp (recorded in Hamp 1990: 306–7), the more we learn about Continental Celtic, the more Brugmannian Celtic becomes, i.e., the more it looks like what we expect of an old Indo-European language.

There have already been a number of surveys on the subject of Continental Celtic, most of which are still valuable and worth consulting. Weisgerber (1931b (= 1969: 11–85)) conducted a survey before most of the lengthier inscriptions had been discovered. It was here that he first brought into use the more accurate term *Festlandkeltisch* (Continental Celtic) in preference to a monolithic ‘Gaulish’ to describe the Celtic linguistic records of continental Europe. Evans has often (1977, 1979, 1983, 1993) discussed the field of Continental Celtic in wide-ranging essays emphasizing both the difficulties and rewards of the subject. Schmidt (1979) pays particular attention to the interrelationships of the known Continental Celtic languages with reference to features that he considers to be important for assigning the relative chronology of the emergence of the various Celtic languages, and assesses what we know of Continental Celtic grammar in (1983a). In a series of articles, Meid (1998, 1999, 2000, 2002) reviews recent scholarship on Continental Celtic, and Eska (2004) presents a sketch of the grammatical features of the Continental Celtic languages. Readers should also note the proceedings of two conferences specifically on Continental Celtic (Meid and Anreiter 1996, Lambert and Pinault 2007).<sup>10</sup>

Here it will only be possible to describe the nature of each epigraphical tradition, its composition and extent, and a selection of the most important linguistic features.

## HISPANO-CELTIC

It was not until a ground-breaking article by Tovar in 1946 (= 1949: 21–60) that it was demonstrated that some of the linguistic records of the ancient Iberian Peninsula, particularly those from the region known as Celtiberia, were to be identified as Celtic. In 1955, Lejeune gathered together and analysed the then known Celtic materials of the ancient Iberian Peninsula in as exemplary a fashion as possible at the time. Less philologically oriented is Schmoll's (1959) monograph, which discusses the Celtic records in the context of other pre-Roman, non-Celtic but Indo-European, languages of the Peninsula. Today, the standard corpus with analysis of all of the linguistic records of the ancient Iberian Peninsula is Untermann's *Monumenta linguarum Hispanicarum*. The first volume (1975) includes coin legends, a number of which are Celtic. The second volume (1980) is a collection of the inscriptions from southern France that are engraved in the Iberian script, only one of which is Celtic (*MLH* B.3.1 = K.17.1). The bulk of the Hispano-Celtic corpus is collected in the fourth volume (1997: 349–722). The first part of the fifth volume is a dictionary by Wodtko (2000) of Hispano-Celtic forms published in *MLH*. In (2001), Jordán Cólera gathered together inscriptions published after *MLH* came out, and subsequent discoveries are now generally published in the periodical *Palaeohispanica*. Almagro-Gorbea (2003) is a recent collection of all of the ancient inscriptions, including Hispano-Celtic, in the collection of the Real Academia de la Historia. In more recent years, there have been several surveys devoted specifically to Hispano-Celtic and its speakers. Untermann (1983) and Tovar (1986) set the linguistic records in a cultural, historical, and archaeological context, while de Hoz (1986) presents a very comprehensive discussion of Hispano-Celtic inscriptions according to type, and also comments in great detail on particular features of the language. Publications specifically devoted to linguistic features are Gorrochategui (1994) and Villar (1997). Jordán Cólera (2004) is a handbook of the language with a commentary on most known inscriptions. Finally, numerous articles on the philology and linguistics of Hispano-Celtic may be found in the proceedings of a regular conference on the ancient languages and cultures of the Iberian Peninsula (Jordá et al. 1976; Tovar et al. 1979; de Hoz 1985; Gorrochategui et al. 1993; Villar and d'Encarnação 1996; Villar and Beltrán 1999; Villar and Fernández Álvarez 2001; Velaza Frías et al. 2005).

As mentioned above, Hispano-Celtic inscriptions are engraved in the semi-segmental, semi-moraic Iberian script, and, to a lesser extent, in Roman characters. They have been discovered mostly in the region bordered by Burgos in the west and Zaragoza in the east.

The most important single member of the Hispano-Celtic corpus is, unquestionably, the first inscription on a bronze table from Botorrita,<sup>11</sup> with its 125 words of connected text on Face A and sixty-one words on Face B. Face B is agreed to be a list of fourteen names since the persuasive analysis of Motta (1980a). Here we find the common Celtiberian onomastic formula of a personal name in the nominative singular, followed by a family group name in the genitive plural, followed by the father's name in the genitive singular, followed by a functionary title in the nominative singular,<sup>12</sup> and the place of origin in the ablative singular (presumably only included when the individual was not a native of the immediate vicinity), e.g., *aPulu lousoCum uŕeisunoŕ PinTiŕ aCainas* (*MLH* K.1.1 B4-5). The opinion has often been expressed that the series of names on Face B may be a list of witnesses to the text promulgated on Face A.

The text on Face A has attracted the attention of numerous scholars who made early attempts at a cohesive interpretation. Others have preferred to comment on individual points and passages. In more recent years, comprehensive studies have been undertaken

by Eska (1989b), who lists all earlier bibliography on the subject, Eichner (1989), Meid (1993) and Prósper (2008). As one might expect with a text of the attractiveness and difficulty of the inscription of Botorrita, though it has received much attention, there remain many points of disagreement about its interpretation.

The inscription on Face A has usually been interpreted as either a *lex sacra*, i.e., a law warning against the desecration of a sacred place, or a *lex municipalis*, i.e., a law in effect in a local community (or local communities), though Bayer (1999), on the basis of the content of Latin Botorrita II inscription (Fatás 1980), interestingly proposes that it is concerned with water rights. It is generally agreed that a series of prohibitions occurs early in the text, though there are many other aspects of the structure and interpretation of the text that are still in dispute. Linguistically, the text is important not only for the phonological and morphological information that it provides, but also for the evidence regarding early Celtic syntax, which, as a lengthy, connected text, it provides. These linguistic features will be discussed below.

Two other substantive inscriptions have been discovered at Botorrita. Botorrita III (MLH K.1.3) is a large bronze tablet composed of some 550 words. When first discovered, scholars anticipated a quantum leap forward in our knowledge of Hispano-Celtic, especially with regard to syntax, but following an opening sentence of ten words, the four columns are composed mostly of names. The primary edition is by Beltrán et al. (1996). Botorrita IV is a small bronze fragment engraved on both sides, Face A bearing about thirty-five words or fragments of words, Face B about 20. Some of the lexis is the same as that of Botorrita I, but little can be said of its content. The primary edition is by Villar et al. (2001); cf. further Adrados (2002).

The most common type of Hispano-Celtic inscription that is extant today is the *tessera hospitalis*, which indicates the existence of a pact between two parties, typically an individual (or family group) and a community. They have been discussed recently by de Hoz (1986: 66–77, 1988: 201–5) and Jordán Cólera (2004: 237–93). These inscriptions vary in length from a single word to the twenty-six words of the inscription from Luzaga (MLH K.6.1), the latter recently studied by Meid (1994b: 38–44), Jordán Cólera (2004: 312–19) and Prósper (in Villar and Prósper 2005: 351–64), and indicate the parties participating in the pact and occasionally words that indicate explicitly that the object upon which the inscription is engraved is a *tessera hospitalis*.

We possess a single clear example of a Hispano-Celtic funeral inscription from the Balearic island of Ibiza (MLH K.16.1). It is composed of an example of the Celtiberian onomastic formula as described above (though with the place of origin indicated by a nominative singular adjectival form), viz., *TiřTanoř aPuloCum leTonTunoř Ce PeliCioř*.

At the site of Peñalba de Villastar, a number of texts in Roman characters were discovered engraved on the rock face of a mountain. A lengthy inscription of nineteen words appears to be directed to the Celtic god Lugus. It has most recently been studied by Prósper (2002a) and Jordán Cólera (2005). A number of shortish graffiti were also found at the site, some of which are Latin in language (including a quotation of ll. 268–9 from Book II of Virgil's *Aeneid*). They typically comprise personal names, though we do find at least one individual designated by the title *VIROS VERAMOS* 'highest man' (MLH K.3.18); perhaps it is the name of a political office.

A small number of inscriptions are extant on various types of ceramic wares, vases, jars (usually shards of these), loom weights, a spindle whorl and dice. They typically indicate the names of family groups, though in the case of the inscription on the spindle whorl (MLH K.7.1), we apparently have a verbal statement, which, unfortunately, has not yet been satisfactorily interpreted. These inscriptions have been collected by Untermann

(1990: 369–72) and Jordán Cólera (2004: 210–27) and are also discussed by de Hoz (1986: 58–60).

Finally, coin legends are collected by Untermann (1975) and Jordán Cólera (2004: 181–209).

Among the syntactic facts that can be established for Hispano-Celtic is that the basic configuration of constituents in the unmarked clause was S(ubject) O(bject) V(erb) (see Schmidt 1976: 53–8), which is the same as that reconstructed for proto-Indo-European. We have evidence for a nominal case system of at least six cases in the singular flexion (nominative, accusative, genitive, dative, ablative, locative).<sup>13</sup> There is no sign of an instrumental plural *\*-Piś* encroaching on dative plural *-Poś*, as occurred during the history of Transalpine Celtic and in Old Irish. In the syntagm *ne=PinToṛ* (MLH K.1.1 A10), we have our only Celtic token of a negator immediately preceding a non-initial verb, rather than being fixed in clause-initial position. In *iomui liśTaś TiTaś sisonTi*, *śomui iom aśsnaś PionTi* (MLH K.1.1 A7), we find the correlative construction that has been reconstructed for proto-Indo-European preserved unaltered. The verbal form *řo=PiśeTi* (MLH K.1.1 A8) may provide us with an early token of preverbal *ro-* used with a subjunctive verb to indicate potentiality (cf. Thurneysen 1946: 343 on Old Irish). It is interesting to note that, whereas the enclitic connective *=Cue* is attached to each member of a co-ordination in the first inscription from Botorrita (MLH K.1.1) and the inscription from Luzaga (MLH K.6.1),<sup>14</sup> it is used singly in the long inscription from Peñalba de Villastar (MLH K.3.3). Hispano-Celtic also preserves other connectives such as *uTa/vTa* (cf. Skt. *utā*) and to (cf. OHitt. *ta*) that are completely unknown or attested only vestigially in Insular Celtic. In certain cases, it is possible to compare cognate forms in languages with larger corpora in order to ascertain the syntactic rules regulating the usage of such function words (Eska 1990a: 105–7).

The difficulties presented by the Iberian script, which have been discussed above, sometimes impede the interpretation of phonological and morphological evidence. In the area of phonology, many of the sound changes expected in a Celtic language are attested, e.g., proto-IE *\*/p/ > ∅* in *řo-* < *\*pro-* and the labialization of proto-IE *\*/gʷ/ > /b/* in *PouśTom* (MLH K.1.1 A4) < *\*gʷou-sto-*. However, some sound changes typical of the later-attested Celtic languages either have not occurred, e.g., the shortening of long vowels before final nasals, as in genitive plural *-um -/u:m/* < proto-IE *\*-ōm* < *\*-oh<sub>2</sub>om* (Eska 2006b), or appears to be in progress, e.g., the proto-Indo-European diphthong *\*ej/* is preserved in all positions, not monophthongized to */e:/* as in Insular Celtic, as in *śleiTom* (MLH K.1.1 A3) < *\*slej-to-* and *śafniCiei* (MLH K.1.1 A9) < proto-IE thematic locative singular *\*-ej*,<sup>15</sup> but a few forms do show the monophthongization having taken place, e.g., dat. sg. *STENIONTE* and *GENTE* (MLH K.11.1) < *\*-ej* < *\*-ej<sub>2</sub>i*.

In the area of morphology, Hispano-Celtic evinces a number of features that are otherwise unknown in Celtic. Probably the most celebrated is the thematic genitive singular in *-o*, which was discovered by Untermann in 1967 (revised in 1999). It appears to have been created in analogy with the inherited pronominal flexion (Prosdocimi 1991: 158–9, Eska 1995: 37–42). It also seems possible that Hispano-Celtic created a feminine nominal class in nom. sg. *-i*, gen. sg. *-inos* after a masculine class in nom. sg. *-u*, gen. sg. *-unos* on the basis of nom. sg. feminine names such as *Caři* beside gen. sg. *elCinoś* in the Botorrita III inscription (MLH K.1.3). Apparent genitive plural forms in *-iśum* and *-aum* in the *i-* and *a-* stems are surprising and find no parallels elsewhere in Celtic.

The indefinite pronoun *ośCues* (beside the recently published *iśCues* in the first Hispano-Celtic inscription discovered to be engraved on a lead plaque (Lorrio and Velaza 2005; Prósper 2007)) and the as yet inadequately interpreted pronouns *osaś* and *osiaś*,

which appear to be formed from the same stem, find no parallels elsewhere in Celtic. The same can be said of the apparently demonstrative pronoun *šTena* (the same phonological string is attested as a feminine name on the Botorrita III inscription (*MLH* K.1.3)), though it may ultimately be connected to other Continental Celtic demonstratives built from the stem *\*isto-* (Eska 1991).

It is possible that the heteroclititic suffix *\*-uer/n-* is attested in dative singular verbal abstracts in forms such as *Taunei* (with unexpected nil-grade vocalism, which must represent a levelling of paradigmatic ablaut, as also found in the Luwian verbal abstract in *-una* (in place of expected *\*-uana*); see Eska 2006a: 85).<sup>16</sup> Such a formation is found elsewhere in Hittite, Vedic and Greek. And it is possible that the form *ueřTaToš* (*MLH* K.1.1 A8) contains the desinence *\*-tos*, which is used to form adverbs indicating motion whence in Sanskrit, Greek and Latin; the only token in Insular Celtic is OIr. *acht* 'except; only' < *\*ek-tos*.

Hispano-Celtic confirms for us the existence of an independent relative pronoun based upon the stem *io-* in early Celtic. In the first inscription from Botorrita (*MLH* K.1.1), we find masculine nom. sg. *ioš*, masculine dat. sg. *iomui*, and feminine acc. sg. *iaš*. Elsewhere in Celtic, this pronoun is attested only as a clitic subordinating particle. Likewise confirmed by Hispano-Celtic is that Celtic generalized the demonstrative stem *\*so-* at the expense of the stem *\*to-*; various forms of this pronoun are attested. Hispano-Celtic may also provide early tokens of *ā*-subjunctives in the forms *ašeCaTi* and *CuaTi* from the Botorrita I inscription (*MLH* K.1.1) (both of which occur in strings of otherwise subjunctive verbs), the origin of which has long been under discussion.

Finally, Hispano-Celtic may attest a number of examples of primary verbal desinences. Unfortunately, the moraic nature of the plosive characters obscures whether verbal forms in 3. sg. *-Ti* and 3. pl. *-nTi* actually represent *-/ti/* and *-/nti/* or merely contain a dead, phonologically null, vowel. It is worth noting, however, that the long inscription from Peñalba de Villastar (*MLH* K.3.3) has a verbal form in Roman characters, viz., *SISTAT*, which appears to show apocope of primary *\*-i* (though Meid 1994a: 392–3 and Isaac 2004a: 50–5 take the form to continue the proto-IE imperfect).

Before turning to Cisalpine Celtic, a few words may be said about the status of Lusitanian, Tartessian and Galician, pre-Roman languages spoken in the west of the ancient Iberian Peninsula. The corpus of Lusitanian is composed of five inscriptions of some length (three collected in Untermann 1997: 723–58, the others published by Villar and Pedrero 2001 and Villar and Prósper 2003), a number of short inscriptions, and a substantial amount of onomastic materials, all engraved in Roman characters. Untermann (1987) has argued that Lusitanian and Hispano-Celtic should be regarded as dialects of the same language, and has expounded grammatical and lexical evidence in defence of his thesis. Most other scholars who have examined the question, however, regard Lusitanian as a language separate from Hispano-Celtic and would probably agree with Tovar's statement that the resemblances between Lusitanian and Hispano-Celtic should be attributed to '*un proceso de fusión y de acercamiento entre dos lenguas de origen diferente, aunque pertenecientes a la familia lingüística indoeuropea*' (1985: 231). The most complete study of the Lusitanian and Galician linguistic documents is Prósper (2002b). The corpus of some seventy Tartessian inscriptions from the extreme south-west of the ancient Iberian Peninsula, collected by Untermann (1997: 93–348), have been very tentatively mooted by the same author to be Celtic in language (1995); cf. De Bernardo Stempel (2007: 151–2).

## CISALPINE CELTIC

The linguistic materials of Italy have traditionally been viewed as belonging to two languages, viz. Lepontic<sup>17</sup> and Cisalpine Gaulish. It now seems clear, however, that they are one language, Lepontic in northern Italy and Switzerland comprising a geographically peripheral and generally earlier attested variety (Eska 1998a). In this work, they are referred to jointly as Cisalpine Celtic.

The corpus of Cisalpine Celtic inscriptions has been collected most recently by Solinas (1995) and, more fully, by Morandi (2004). Motta (2000, 2001a, 2001b) offers a commentary on a number of the inscriptions. Uhlich (1999, 2007) studies many of the features of 'Lepontic'.

The corpus is limited in both size and scope. The most common type of text, by far, is the funeral inscription, which is attested on stone or on vases, with the name of the deceased in the nominative, dative or genitive case. Other such inscriptions on stone bear the nominative singular form *Pala* and the name of the deceased in the dative (they are collected by Eska and Mercado 2005: 162–3).

There are also several more lengthy inscriptions of the funeral type. A vase discovered in Carcegna (CIS 122 = CIM 94) bears the inscription *meTelui maešilalui uenia meTe-liKna ašmina KrasaniKna*, which not only gives the name of the deceased in the dative, but also the names of the two dedicants in the nominative.

An inscription on a stone slab discovered in Vergiate (CIS 199 = CIM 106) is unquestionably of the funeral type and, spectacularly, a poem. It bears the accusative singular form *Palaṃ*, the nominative of which has been mentioned above. The entire text is *PelKui Pruiaṃ Teu KariTe išos KaḷiTe Palaṃ*. We find the name of the deceased in the dative and that of the dedicant in the nominative, as expected, but also two transitive verbs accompanied by their respective object nouns in the accusative. Poetic effects in the inscription include ring composition characterized by the first two consonants in the first and last words being a labial plosive and a lateral liquid, internal rhyme between the verbs *KariTe* and *KaḷiTe*, chiasmic structure in which the subjects and verbs of the two clauses are bracketed by the two objects, and distraction of the normal SOV clausal configuration of early Cisalpine Celtic. All of these have been discussed by Eska and Mercado (2005).

A noteworthy addition to the funeral inscriptions is that from Oderzo (CIM 271; Eska and Wallace 1999) in ancient Venetia, which reads *padros pompeteguaioš kaialoišo* 'P. of the five tongues, son of K.' It had previously been considered to be Venetic in language, though containing some Celtic onomastic elements.

Two inscriptions employ a verb derived from a cognate of OIr. *carn* 'a heap of stones marking a grave'. The Latin–Celtic bilingual inscription from Todi (RIG \*E-5 = CIS 142 = CIM 277) has two instances of third-person singular preterite *KarniTu* which translate *LOCAVIT* and *LOCAVIT ET STATVIT*, respectively. And a monolingual inscription from S. Bernardino di Briona (RIG E-1 = CIS 140 = CIM 97) has third-person plural preterite *KarniTus*.<sup>18</sup>

Another token of a funeral inscription, from Voltino (CIM 233; Eska and Weiss 1996), takes the form of a 'talking stone': *TETVMVS SEXTI DVGLIAVA SAŠADIS to=me=declai oblada natina* 'Tetumus (son) of Sextus (and) Dugiava (daughter) of Sašadis (are buried here); Obalda, (their) dear daughter, set me [i.e., the monument] up'.

There are also two somewhat lengthy dedicatory inscriptions in the Cisalpine Celtic corpus. The text of an inscription engraved upon a vase that was discovered in a tomb in Ornavasso (CIS 128 = CIM 48) is *laTumarui saPsuTai=Pe uinom našom*. We find the names of the two dedicatees, a male and a female, in the dative connected by the enclitic

connective  $=Pe < *k^we$ , followed by the noun phrase *uinom našom* in the nominative singular, which has been persuasively interpreted by Lejeune (1971: 74–6) as ‘Naxian wine’; thus the translation: ‘For L. and S., Naxian wine.’

The second dedicatory inscription is engraved upon stone and was discovered in 1966 in Prestino (*CIS* 65 = *CIM* 180). The text reads *uvamoKozis Plialeθu uvlTiauiPos ariuonePos siTeš TeTu*. Its basic structure may be straightforwardly analysed as the name of the dedicant *uvamoKozis Plialeθu* in the nominative, followed by the name of the dedicatees *uwlTiauiPos ariuonePos* in the dative, the objects of the dedication, *siTeš*, in the accusative, and a third-person singular preterite verb. The inscription presents a number of phonological issues which will be discussed below. Recent analyses have been conducted by Eska (1998c) and Markey and Mees (2003).

In the Latin-Celtic bilingual inscription from Vercelli (*RIG* \*E-2 = *CIS* 141 = *CIM* 100), we seem to have a monument indicating a donation of land and delimiting its boundaries. There do not seem to be any certain analogues elsewhere in Continental Celtic.

There are also a number of coin legends engraved in the Lugano script. They have been collected and analysed by Lejeune (1971: 124–32), Marinetti and Prosdociami (1994) and Arslan (2000).

As a general rule, the linguistic evidence of the ‘Lepontic’ portion of the Cisalpine Celtic corpus bears more archaic features than the ‘Cisalpine Gaulish’ portion, as one might expect of a speech variety spoken in a remote area. In the area of syntax, the inscription of Prestino (*CIS* 65 = *CIM* 180) exhibits archetypal SOV clausal configuration, while the inscription of Vergiate, as a text evincing features of verbal art, has been considerably altered for poetic effect. These two inscriptions present all of our secure evidence for verbal syntax in early Cisalpine Celtic.<sup>19</sup> In the nominal case system, de Hoz (1990) has argued that a number of forms in *-u* *-u/*, which have usually been interpreted as *n*-stem nominative singulars, are *o*-stem genitive singulars, in which Indo-European *o*-stem ablative singular  $*-ōd > -ū$  has taken over the function of the genitive via syncretism, but Eska (1995: 33–7) argues that the traditional analysis is the correct one. Eska and Wallace (2001) have shown that the inherited *n*-stem dative singular ending *-ei* was being replaced via syncretism by locative *-i* during the early Cisalpine Celtic period.

Owing to the small size of the corpus of Cisalpine Celtic, our discussion of phonological and morphological features can only be very limited. In the area of phonology, we note that while Indo-European  $*k^w$ , as in Transalpine Celtic, eventually became */p/*, e.g.,  $=Pe$  (*CIS* 128 = *CIM* 48) ‘and’  $< *k^we$ , there are some early forms, e.g. *Kualui* (*CIS* 29 = *CIM* 25) and *Kuašoni* (*CIS* 20 = *CIM* 26), which may not show the change.<sup>20</sup> As in Transalpine Celtic, the group  $*/st/$  has evolved to the tau Gallicum phoneme in *išos* (*CIS* 119 = *CIM* 106)  $< *istos$  and *-Kozis* (*CIS* 65 = *CIM* 180)  $< *g^hostis$ <sup>21</sup> (note the different graphemes employed to denote this phoneme), but some developments that have been completed in Transalpine Celtic are still in progress in (early) Cisalpine Celtic. For example, though proto-IE  $*/p/$  is otherwise lost in attested Celtic, the character  $\langle v \rangle$  in *uvamoKozis* (*CIS* 65 = *CIM* 180)  $< *upamo-$  appears to continue the phoneme in an altered form (Eska 1998c argues that the character represents a labial fricative), and proto-IE  $*/ej/$  has become */e/* in medial position in *Teu* (*CIS* 119 = *CIM* 106) (if it is correctly identified as continuing  $*dejuō$ ), but is preserved in final position, e.g., in *aTilonei* (*CIS* 12 = *CIM* 13). We also find that certain developments that are virtually complete in Transalpine Celtic and later Cisalpine Celtic have not started in ‘Lepontic’, e.g., IE  $*/m/$  is preserved in final position in all attested tokens, while, aside from two archaic or archaizing tokens of acc. sg. *δεξαντεμ* (*RIG* G-27 and 148) in Transalpine Celtic, it has become */n/*.<sup>22</sup>

In the area of morphology, the early Cisalpine case system, so far as it is attested,

preserves the inflexional endings that have been reconstructed for proto-Celtic, save that inherited *o*-stem nominal nominative plural *\*-ōs* has been replaced by pronominal *-oi*, e.g., *TanoTaliKnōi* (RIG E-1 = CIS 140 = CIM 97). Five tokens of *o*-stem gen. sg. *-oiso*, which continues proto-IE *\*-osjo* by crossing with pronominal gen. pl. *\*-oīsōm* (so Eska 1995: 42) as attested in Hsp.-Celt. *soisum* (MLH K.1.3 Ü), are attested in early Cisalpine Celtic, beside later-attested *-i*. In the verbal system, Cisalpine Celtic has developed an innovatory *t*-preterite from the inherited Indo-European imperfect, e.g., *KariTe* (CIS 119 = CIM 106) < *\*kr̥-je-t*, to which third-person singular perfect *-e* has been affixed, and *KarniTu* (RIG E-5 = CIS 142 = CIM 277) < *\*karne-je-t*, to which a perfectivizing third-person singular exponent *-u* has been affixed. The third-person plural of the latter is attested as *KarniTus* (RIG E-1 = CIS 140 = CIM 97 and CIM 95) with an, as yet, unexplained third-person plural ending *-s*. It has been suggested that this ending, which replaced those inherited from the proto-Indo-European aorist and perfect systems, and which is affixed directly to that of the third-person singular, has been borrowed from the nominal flexion. Such a borrowing, however, would be extremely unusual. A possible source in the verbal system would be the third-person plural perfect ending reconstructed for proto-Indo-European as *\*(é)rs* by Jasanoff (1994: 150).

## TRANSALPINE CELTIC

Transalpine Celtic refers to the Celtic of Transalpine Gaul. Though the term ‘Gaulish’ is frequently employed refer to both all of Continental Celtic from Transalpine Gaul and to the non-‘Leponitic’ inscriptions of Cisalpine Gaul, it is clear that so-called ‘Cisalpine Gaulish’ not only differs from the Celtic of Transalpine Gaul, but belongs with ‘Leponitic’ (Eska 1998a).

A new corpus of ‘Gaulish’ inscriptions, including ‘Cisalpine Gaulish’, has been assembled by a team of scholars under the title *Recueil des inscriptions gauloises*. The first volume (Lejeune 1985a) is a collection of 281 Transalpine Celtic inscriptions engraved in Hellenic capitals, the majority of which come from immediately around the area of Marseilles. It is supplemented by Lejeune (1988b, 1990, 1994b, 1995), Lejeune and Lambert (1996) and Lambert (2003b). The first fascicule of the second volume (Lejeune 1988a) contains the ‘Cisalpine Gaulish’ inscriptions and the inscriptions in Roman capitals, to which add Lambert (2001). The second fascicule contains the non-monumental inscriptions, many of which are engraved in the difficult Roman cursive script (Lambert 2002). The third volume (Duval and Pinault 1986) is devoted to the calendar of Coligny and the much less copious fragments of another calendar from Villards d’Héria. The fourth volume (Colbert de Beaulieu and Fischer 1998) contains the coin legends, which are engraved in both Hellenic and Roman characters. Finally, although not formally part of the *Recueil des inscriptions gauloises*, we must mention that Marichal (1988) has collected and analysed the graffiti from La Graufesenque, the site of a great *terra sigillata* factory in the first and second centuries AD, in a similar format.<sup>23</sup> Lambert (2003a) is a handbook of the language with a commentary on select inscriptions, and Delamarre (2003) is a useful dictionary.

There are a limited variety of types of inscriptions in the Transalpine Celtic corpus. One of the most common types is the dedicatory inscription. Among these, attested only in Hellenic script, is a series of twelve inscriptions built around the core syntagm δεδε βατου δεκαντεμ/ν ‘offered/dedicated a tithe in gratitude’, to which the name of the dedicant in the nominative and a divine dedicatee in the dative may be added.<sup>24</sup> This series



has been collected and analysed by Szemerényi (1974), to which compare Lejeune (1976). Another series of twelve dedicatory inscriptions is centred around the third-person singular preterite verb  $\text{IEVRV}$ ,  $\text{EIOQOV}$  (other forms of this verb are attested, viz., third-person plural  $\text{IOVRVS}$  (*RIG* \*L-12), as well as *ieuri* (*RIG* L-67) and  $\text{EIOQAI}$  (*RIG* G-528), whose etymology has long been uncertain). This series usually indicates the name of the dedicant in the nominative, often the name of the dedicatee in the dative, and sometimes that of object dedicated in the accusative. The inscriptions of this series known through 1980 have been collected and analysed by Lejeune (1980). There are other dedicatory inscriptions in which a different verb is employed, e.g., *legasit in buscilla sosio legasit in alixie magalu* (*RIG* L-79) 'B. placed this in A. for M.' (so Eska 2003a), or in which no verb is present, e.g.  $\text{ATEC ATEMAQOVNTI ONNAQOVNI}$  (*RIG* G-122) 'A. (dedicated this) to A. son of O.' These are structured in much the same fashion as the  $\text{DEDE-}$  and  $\text{IEVRV-}$  series.<sup>25</sup>

One of the more interesting Transalpine Celtic linguistic documents is a bronze calendar discovered in Coligny in 1897. It dates from the end of the second century CE (Duval and Pinault 1986: 35–7) and had been shattered, presumably by those who deposited it; about 150 fragments are now extant. It covers a period of five years of twelve months each, plus two intercalary months. The months are divided into halves of fourteen or fifteen days, and are comprised of a total of twenty-nine or thirty days. There are about sixty linguistic forms attested on the calendar, including the names of the months. Many of the words are very abbreviated, and, therefore, difficult to interpret. A very detailed, though, of course, tentative study of all aspects of the calendar has been conducted by Duval and Pinault (1986). They also discuss the small number of fragments of a calendar from Villards d'Héria, which seems to have been identical in type to the calendar of Coligny.

A number of what, for present purposes, may be called popular inscriptions are attested in the Transalpine Celtic corpus. Among these are a variety of inscriptions engraved upon drinking vessels, e.g., *neddamon delgu linda* (*RIG* L-50) 'I (i.e., the vessel) hold the drinks of neighbours'. Meid (1980) has discussed a number of later attested inscriptions, including some engraved upon spindle whorls, which express a variety of human sentiments such as the wish for a drink (e.g., *RIG* L-112) or amorous desire (*RIG* L-119). In the *De medicamentis liber* of Marcellus of Bordeaux, there are preserved, beside those in Latin and Greek, some charms which have been taken to be in Transalpine Celtic; some of them have been studied by Fleuriot (1974), Meid (1980: 10–12), and Koch (1983: 207–8 and 211). There are also a number of inscriptions on rings (*RIG* L-123-31) whose interpretations are very uncertain.

Marichal (1988) has gathered over 200 graffiti, to which add *RIG* L-31-\*48, engraved in Roman cursive from the first and second century CE *terra sigillata* factory at La Graufesenque. These comprise various accounting records which are engraved upon shards of pottery. The graffiti provide us with a near-complete set of ordinal numerals from 'first' to 'tenth' and are otherwise remarkable for preserving a record of two languages, Transalpine Celtic and Latin, in close contact (see Adams 2003: 184–200). A large number of potters names, both Latin and Celtic, are also preserved among the graffiti. We may also mention at this point a series of inscriptions containing the third person singular preterite verb  $\text{auuot/avovot}$  (a number of other orthographies are attested, as well), some of which are attested among the graffiti (other tokens are listed in *RIG* L-18-23). Based upon external evidence, the verb probably means 'made'; a new etymology for this difficult form has been proposed by Lambert (1987a: 527–8).

We may now turn to the most significant of the Transalpine Celtic inscriptions, which are all engraved in Roman cursive. The inscription of Chamalières (*RIG* L-100) is engraved upon a lead tablet and is composed of around sixty-four words. It was

discovered in 1971 in a sacred spring into which it had been deliberately deposited. The inscription is, no doubt, of magical content. Most commentators now take it to be a *defixio*, a popular type of curse tablet, but, in our view, the structure of the text, in which the protagonists – including an individual designated as the *adgarion* ‘invoker’ – are named<sup>26</sup> and a contrast between an in-group (i.e., *snj* ‘us’) and an out-group (i.e., *sos* ‘them’) is made, suggests that the text was performed during an initial ritual of some kind (Eska 2002). Other detailed studies have been conducted by Fleuriot (1976–7, 1979, 1980b), Lambert (1979, 1987b, 1996: 51–65, 2002: 269–80), Schmidt (1979–80: 286–9, 1981), Henry (1984), Koch (1985: 35–7), and Kowal (1987). Others, such as Lejeune (in Lejeune and Marichal 1976–7: 160–8), Meid (1986: 48–55, 1989: 27–31 and 37–8), De Bernardo-Stempel (2001) and Mees (2007), have preferred to investigate individual points and passages. There is still a considerable portion of the text whose interpretation is in dispute; the inscription of Chamalières, nonetheless, is extremely important for the study of Transalpine Celtic grammar, significant points of which are discussed below.

In 1983, another lengthy inscription engraved upon both sides of two lead tablets was discovered at Larzac (*RIG* L-98). It is composed of over 160 words, though some damage has occurred around the edges of the text, which, consequently, cannot be read continuously. There has not been much progress in the interpretation of the inscription, though it appears that the text records the imprecations of two, perhaps female, magicians. To date, the only detailed interpretations of the entire text have been attempted by Fleuriot and Lambert (in Lejeune et al. 1985: 138–55 and 155–77, respectively; see also Lambert 1996: 65–82, 2002: 251–66) and Meid (1996). Schmidt (1990a; see also 1996) has attempted an analysis of Face 1a only, and others such as Lejeune (in Lejeune et al. 1985: 118–38), Hamp (1987, 1989), Lindeman (1988) and Koch (1996) have dealt with individual points. As one would expect, an inscription of such length is extremely valuable for the study of Transalpine Celtic grammar, though one must be careful of Latinisms in the text (see Lejeune’s comments, in Lejeune et al. 1985: 134–6). These are discussed below.

The most recent major discovery is the inscription of Châteaubleau (*RIG* L-93), which was found in 1997. It comprises eleven lines of text engraved on a tile before it was fired and may date from as late as the first half of the fourth century CE. It has not received extensive attention to date, but initial indications are that it may be a marriage contract. The only full treatment to date is Lambert (1998–2000). Schrijver (1998–2000) discusses specific linguistic points.

One further lengthy text that will be mentioned is engraved upon a fragment of a ceramic plate discovered in Lezoux (*RIG* L-66). It is composed of around forty-eight words (or fragments of words) over eleven unconnected lines. Thus far, this inscription has not received as much attention as its length would suggest that it deserves. It has been treated by Fleuriot (1980a: 127–44), who believes that the text concerns eating, Meid (1986: 45–8), who believes that the text forms a collection of moral statements, maxims, or practical learning, and McCone (1996), who sees the lexis of the inscription as being military in content. Obviously, such discrepancy in analysis begs further investigation.

We have listed only a sample of the most important and principal types of Transalpine Celtic inscriptions that are extant today. We stress that, owing to restrictions of space, those that have resisted classification because of difficulties of interpretation, and others too fragmentary to classify, have not been mentioned.

When one examines the surface configuration of constituents in the unmarked Transalpine Celtic clause, one finds a variety of patterns. To be sure, the basic order in most texts is SVO,<sup>27</sup> e.g., [<sub>S</sub> MARTIALIS DANNOTALI] [<sub>V</sub> IEVRV] [<sub>IO</sub> VCVETE] [<sub>DO</sub> SOSIN CELICON] (*RIG* L-13) ‘M. son of D. offered this edifice to U.’, but the inscription of Larzac, in particular,

seems to show some vestiges of an earlier SOV configuration (Schmidt 1990a: 18–19), though these may be due to effects of verbal art. Tokens of surface verb-initial configuration are attested also in clauses in which the verb is in the imperative mood (with deletion of the subject pronoun), the subject pronoun is phonologically null, or the verb has been raised for a discourse function such as emphasis, contrast, etc. One other very important type of clause with surface verb-initial configuration in Transalpine Celtic is that in which a clitic object pronoun or subordinating particle is present, e.g., *sioxt=i albinos panna extra tuđ ccc* (GLG 14.20-1 = RIG L-31) ‘A. added vessels beyond the allotment (in the amount of) 300’ (so Eska 1994b) and *dvgljonti=jo vcvetin in alisija* (RIG L-13) ‘who serve U. in A.’, respectively. This is due to a restriction placed upon the operation of Wackernagel’s Law (1891), whereby such clitics must occupy second position in the clause, such that only the verb and other elements of the verbal complex were permitted to serve as the host of such clitics. This is now known as Vendryes’ Restriction (1911–12; see also Dillon’s 1943 amendment and Eska 1994a). It is noteworthy that this is a feature of both branches of Insular Celtic, and one that is widely thought to be the principal motivation behind the development of basic surface verb-initial configuration in Insular Celtic.

Transalpine Celtic provides us with insights into the evolution of the case system in Celtic. The inherited dative plural ending *-bo* < *\*-b<sup>h</sup>os* is well attested, e.g., *atrebo* (RIG L-15) ‘father’ and *ματρεβο* (RIG G-64, 203) ‘mother’, but instr. pl. *-bi* < *\*-b<sup>h</sup>is* has encroached upon the functions of the dative plural in *gobedbi* (RIG L-13) ‘smith’ (cf. Eska 2003b: 105–12) and *sviorebe* (RIG L-6) ‘sister’. It is significant that no Transalpine Celtic inscription contains both *-bo* and *-bi*. It is difficult to know whether the *o*-stem dative singular endings in *-ūi* and *-ū* represent an encroachment of inherited instrumental *-ū* upon dative *-ūi*, or whether the former is the result of the apocope of *-i* from the latter.

Two other syntactic constructions that may be mentioned now are that the stressed relative pronoun with stem *io-* attested in Hispano-Celtic is found as an uninflected clitic subordinating particle in Transalpine Celtic, and that it is possible that the dative of possession construction with the verb ‘be’ found in Insular Celtic occurs in the syntagm *tj edi* (RIG L-51).

Since Transalpine Celtic is attested over a period of several centuries, we can observe a number of phonological developments in progress. As mentioned above, it is possible that *o*-stem dative singular *-ūi*, e.g., *αδγεννουι* (RIG G-208), has been apocopated to *-ū* in *celicnu* (RIG L-51). In the *ā*-stem paradigm, dat. sg. *-āi*, e.g., *εοξεγγαι* (RIG G-146), is attested early, but is later attested as *-ī*, e.g., *βηλησαι* (RIG G-153) (probably through a stage *\*āi*), and accusative singular *-av* is attested in *ματικαν* (RIG G-151), but has evolved to *-im*<sup>28</sup> in the inscription of Larzac (RIG L-98), e.g., *seuerim* (1a8, 2a9, 2b10–11) is the accusative of nominative *seuera* (1a12, 1b10).<sup>29</sup> Further phonological developments in progress are the evolution of */e/* > */i/* / *\_N(T)*<sup>30</sup> (Evans 1967: 392–3 collects a number of tokens) and the evolution of the diphthongs */ew/* and */ow/*; generally, */ew/* fell together with */ow/*, which subsequently tended towards monophthongization to */o/* and later to */u/*; thus we find *teut-*, *tout-*, *tot-* and *tut-* all orthographically attested in the etymon for ‘tribe’ (Evans 1967: 267–9). Phonological developments that were probably completed prior to the first attestation of Transalpine Celtic include proto-IE *\*e/* to */e/*, e.g., dat. sg. *vcvete* (RIG L-13) < *\*-eḱ* < *\*-eḱej* by haplology, the shortening of long vowels before final nasals, e.g., gen. pl. *ματρων* (RIG G-519) < *\*-ōm*, and the development of the coronal fricative<sup>31</sup> known as the tau Gallicum, denoted orthographically by a variety of graphemes, from groups of coronal consonants, e.g., *addēdilj* (RIG L-100) < *\*ad-sed-* (see Evans 1967: 410–20). Finally, we may mention that Evans (1967: 400–3, 1977: 78, 1979: 527–9, 1983: 31–2) provides a conspectus on the various views on so-called lenition in Transalpine Celtic.

The morphology of the Transalpine Celtic nominal and verbal systems shows a number of innovations. In the masculine *o*-stem nominal flexion, inherited nom. pl. *\*-ōs* has been replaced by pronominal *\*-oi* (attested as *-ī* after monophongization), and in the genitive singular (also neuter), *-ī* is an innovation shared with Cisalpine Celtic. In the *ā*-stems, inherited gen. sg. *-ās*, which is preserved in Hispano-Celtic and Cisalpine Celtic, has been replaced by the ending of the *iā*- or *vrkī*-paradigm, viz., *-iās*, e.g., *paullias* (RIG L-98 1a12) is the genitive to nominative *paulla* (1a10), a development also found in Insular Celtic (see the remarks of Prosdocimi 1989b). In the inscription of Larzac (RIG L-100), an innovative series of *ā*-stem genitive plurals in *-anom* occurs, e.g., *bianom* (1a1) 'woman' and the pronoun *eianom* (1a2), in place of expected *\*-om* (see Hamp 1987 and Lindeman 1988). It is also worth mentioning that Transalpine Celtic may well attest at least two tokens of nouns inflected for the masculine *o*-stem nominative dual in VERGOBRETO (RIG M-226) and *cassidan(n)o* (GLG 11.1, 19.2) (see Lejeune 1985b: 275–80 and Cowgill 1985: 24–5).

A substantial amount of innovation has also occurred in the Transalpine Celtic verbal system. In the preterite system, as in Cisalpine Celtic, a third-person singular *t*-preterite has been formed by the affixation of *-u* (and possibly *-e*) to the inherited imperfect ending *-t*, which led to the re-analysis of the *-t*- as a preterital exponent and its extension throughout the remainder of the paradigm (Schmidt 1986: 177–8; see further Eska 1990b), e.g., *καρνιτου*[<sup>?</sup><sup>32</sup>] (RIG G-151) 'set up a grave' < *\*karne-īe-t + -u*. This ending seems also to have been affixed to *t*-preterite forms that are etymologically connected to the Insular Celtic *t*-preterite, which continues the *s*-aorist, if *toberte* (RIG L-70) is from *\*to-ber-s-t + -e* (Meid 1963: 84, 1977: 122).<sup>33</sup> Another type of affixation has also occurred in certain Transalpine Celtic *s*-preterites. The regular development of such forms can be seen in third-person singular *prinās* (GLG 46.24 = RIG L-32) 'bought', with final *-s* = *-ss/* < *\*-s-t*. Evidently, however, owing to potential confusion with the second person singular in *-s/*, *-it* < thematic third-person singular *\*-et* was affixed in the third person to recharacterize it as third person, e.g., *legasit* (RIG L-79) (Schmidt 1983a: 79, 1986: 167–8), whence *-ss/*- was extended throughout the remainder of the paradigm. The same development occurred, of course, in both branches of Insular Celtic.

In addition to these innovative formations in the Transalpine Celtic preterite system, a new third-person plural ending *-s*, as in Cisalpine Celtic, replaced those inherited from the Indo-European aorist and perfect systems, e.g., *τοvrvs* (RIG \*L-12).

It is noteworthy that Transalpine Celtic may also attest a token of an *ā*-subjunctive in the second person singular form *lubijas* (RIG L-36).<sup>34</sup> A further token may be attested in one of the charms by Marcellus of Bordeaux, which are usually assumed to be in Transalpine Celtic, viz., *axat*, which probably continues *ag-ā-t*, with ⟨*x*⟩ denoting the lenited allophone of /*g*/ (Fleuriot 1974: 65) in quasi-phonetic orthography, probably proximate phonetic [ɣ]; cf. *luxē* beside *luge* in the inscription of Chamalières (RIG L-100) (Eska 2002: 52).

As in Insular Celtic, deponent verbs were not uncommon in early Celtic, and it is worth noting that several such forms are attested in Transalpine Celtic, e.g., first-person singular present indicative *uelor* in the charms of Marcellus of Bordeaux and first person singular future *MARCOSIOR* (RIG L-117). Transalpine Celtic also attests a number of participial forms; in the inscription of Larzac (RIG L-98), we find the *nt*-participles still functioning as such, e.g., *tigontias* (1a4) and *sagitontias* (2a8–9). Such participles have been lexicalized as nouns in Insular Celtic. A participle in *\*-mno-* appears to be attested in a few forms (De Bernardo Stempel 1994). The *tó*-participle has also preserved its original function as attested in numerous personal names, e.g., Latinized *Cintugnatus* 'first born', while in Insular Celtic it has been regrammaticalized as a passive preterite (see Schmidt 1988).

We finish our discussion of Transalpine Celtic with a few words about the language spoken in Roman Britain (cf. Fleuriot 1988). The corpus is small, composed almost entirely of onomastic materials. The language of the coin legends has been analysed by De Bernardo Stempel (1991). Late British has also been treated by Jackson (1954) and Schmidt (1990b). Some British words are embedded in the Latin writing tablets discovered at Vindolanda on Hadrian's Wall (on which see, e.g., Bowman and Thomas 1983), but there is little other linguistic material that can securely be labelled as British. The supposed British third-person singular verbal form GNAT (*RIG* \*L-26) tentatively identified by Fleuriot (1978: 614–15) and Meid (1981) has now been claimed to be a ghost word by Campanile and Letta (1984). Finally, the first of two inscriptions discovered at Aquae Sulis (Bath) (*RIG* \*L-107, \*L-108) has been treated in a highly interesting way by Schrijver (2005: 57–60).

## OTHER VARIETIES OF CONTINENTAL CELTIC

Very modest amounts of Galatian, from central Asia Minor, and Noric, from the Balkans, are attested.

The corpus of Galatian as it was then known has been gathered together by Weisgerber (1931a), but it has been compiled more recently by Freeman (2001), though it is missing some forms – nom. pl. ἀδες ‘feet’, acc. pl. ἰόρκους and nom. pl. ἰόρκες ‘wild deer’, nom. pl. μανιάκαι ‘torques’ (probably a borrowing from Persian) – which are listed by Delamarre (2003). It consists exclusively of glosses recorded by classical writers and onomastic materials. It is not really worthwhile for the purposes of this chapter to attempt to list the significant linguistic features of Galatian, since only individual lexical items are attested, and, as Weisgerber (1931a: 170) notes, the Greek script and the Hellenizing influence of the classical Greek writers distort the phonological and morphological value of the forms that are attested. In general, we may say that Galatian tends to share the developments that are attested in Transalpine Celtic; see Weisgerber (1931a: 169–75) for a cautious summary of what we can say about Galatian phonology and morphology. Schmidt (1994) is a more recent, but more general, survey.

In eastern Europe and the Balkans only a few short inscriptions may be found. Two were discovered at Grafenstein in Austria (*RIG* \*L-95, \*L-96) and one at Ptuj in Slovenia (Eichner et al. 1994). Personal names from the region with Celtic elements are treated by Meid (2005) and Wedenig and De Bernardo Stempel (2007).

## ONOMASTICS

An early collection of onomastic materials (including all of Old Celtic from the continent, as well as Ogam and British) was gathered together by Holder in three volumes (1896, 1904, 1907). Cousin (1906: 346–489) is a supplement.<sup>35</sup> Holder, however, often errs on the side of overinclusiveness, and there is much contained in it that is definitely or probably not Celtic.

There has recently been a large amount of work on the toponyms of the ancient Celtic world. Sims-Williams (2006) specifically looks at them with the goal of trying to establish the frontier of Celtic speech in the ancient world. Raybould and Sims-Williams (2007a) examine personal names with the same intention.<sup>36</sup> The proceedings of two conferences on the Celtic toponyms found in the *Geography* of Ptolemy have recently

appeared (Parsons and Sims-Williams 2000; de Hoz et al. 2005). As part of this project, Isaac (2004b) has published a CD-ROM with etymological analysis of the onomastic elements.<sup>37</sup>

For the Iberian Peninsula, divine, ethnic and personal names, often embedded in Latin inscriptions, have been collected, in a great number of works, by Albertos Firmat (e.g., 1966, 1972, 1976, 1979, 1983). Untermann has also done a large amount of work on names and their geographic distribution (e.g., 1962, 1965). More recent work has been done by Luján (1996). Motta (1980b) has analysed all of the onomastic elements found in the first Hispano-Celtic inscription discovered at Botorrita (*MLH* K.1.1) and in the Latin inscription discovered at the same site, which is now known as the Tabula Contrebiensis. García Alonso (2003) examines the toponyms in Ptolemy's *Geography* with the ambitious goal of trying to establish linguistic boundaries in the ancient Iberian Peninsula.

For Transalpine Celtic, the onomastic materials (particularly personal names) have been collected by Schmidt (1957) and Evans (1967) to which now add Luján (2003). There are many personal names recorded in Whatmough (1949–51) which are now much more accessible thanks to Delamarre's (2004) index.

## ABBREVIATIONS

*CIM* = Morandi (2004)  
*CIS* = Solinas (1995)  
*GLG* = Marichal (1988)  
*MLH A* = Untermann (1975)  
*MLH B* = Untermann (1980)  
*MLH K* = Untermann (1997: 349–722)  
*RIG E* = Lejeune (1988a: 1–54)  
*RIG G* = Lejeune (1985a)  
*RIG L-1* \*16 = Lejeune (1988a: 55–194)  
*RIG L-18* \*139 = Lambert (2002)  
*RIG M* = Colbert de Beaulieu and Fischer (1998)

## NOTES

- 1 A tremendous amount of literature on Continental Celtic has appeared since the first edition of *The Celtic languages* was published in 1993. Owing to limits of space, bibliographical references presented herein are far from complete, especially with regard to older literature.
- 2 In view of the fact that these designations undoubtedly referred to continua of dialects, we prefer to use the geographical designations such as Hispano-Celtic, Cisalpine Celtic, Transalpine Celtic, etc.
- 3 The matter of the Celtic family tree will not be taken up in this chapter. While it is generally agreed that Hispano-Celtic broke away from the proto-Celtic speech community first, at the other end of the tree, scholars are divided as to whether Transalpine Celtic, Goidelic and Brittonic branched into Transalpine Celtic and Insular Celtic or into Gallo-Brittonic and Goidelic. In our view, the former is correct (Eska, forthcoming).
- 4 That the Celtic text in the Latin–Celtic bilingual inscriptions of Vercelli (*RIG* \*E-2 = *CIS* 141 = *CIM* 100) and Todi (*RIG* \*E-5 = *CIS* 142 = *CIM* 277), and the partially Latinized inscription of Voltino (*CIM* 233; Eska and Weiss 1996) is engraved in the local Etruscoid script, while the Latin(ized) text is engraved in Roman characters, suggests that a tradition of literacy in Celtic

All but one inscription is engraved in the so-called script of Lugano; the inscription from Vol-  
tino (*CIM* 233; Eska and Weiss 1996) is engraved in the Sondrio script.

7 At least, not normally; Jordán Cólera (2005) makes an interesting case for the introduction of a voicing distinction in six inscriptions.

9 Though note that the characters  $\langle\theta\rangle$  and  $\langle\chi\rangle$  were added to the script in some inscriptions in order to introduce a voicing or manner distinction in the coronal and dorsal series of plosives, respectively. Thus, for example, in the inscription of Prestino (*CIS* 65 = *CIM* 180),  $\langle T\rangle = /d/$  in the verbal form *TeTu*, which continues either the root *\*deh<sub>3</sub>-* ‘give’ or the root *\*d<sup>h</sup>eh<sub>1</sub>-* ‘set, put’, while  $\langle\theta\rangle = /t/$  in *Plialeθu*, probably */b<sup>h</sup>lialletu/*, as per Lejeune (1971: 59). And in the inscription of Vercelli (*RIG* \*E-2 = *CIS* 141 = *CIM* 100),  $\langle K\rangle$  represents both */k/* and */g/* in *arKaToKo(K)maTereKos* */ar<sup>h</sup>g<sup>h</sup>at<sup>h</sup>okomater<sup>h</sup>ekos/*, while  $\langle\chi\rangle$  represents the lenited allophone of */q/*, probably proximate phagetic  $[\chi]$ , in *Teuq/Tonion* < proto-Celt. *\*gdonio-* ‘person’.

11 Beltrán and Tovar 1982: 41–55 provide excellent photographs.

13 Villar (1993–5) also interprets some coin legends as appearing in the instrumental singular.

15 Though it must be noted that the digraph <ei> is also employed to represent /e/ < \*/i/ in unstressed syllables; cf. *áreCoṛaTa* (MLH A.52.7) beside *áreiCoṛaTiCoś* (MLH A.52.3).

16 Though some prefer to see the suffix *\*-men-* here, with lenition of putative *\*-mn-* > *-un-*.

18 *KarniTus* is attested a second time in a fragmentary inscription from Gozzano (*CIM* 95).

20 Though, of course, these forms could contain /q<sup>w</sup>/.

21 Motta (1983: 67–71) has suggested another etymology.

23 Some of the graffiti, including those not discussed by Marichal, are contained in Lambert (2002: 83–146).

25 Prosdocimi (1989a) very plausibly suggests that *RIG* \*G-154, which he segments as *ουαπισουνου σο νεμετος κομμου εοχεγγιλου*, is a dedicatory statement constructed as a passive sentence, rendered as ‘This *nemetos* (is dedicated) to V. by K. son of E.’

26 Unlike *defixiones*, in which, as a disreputable form of magic, the intended victim(s) of the curse, but not its agent(s), are named.

- 27 Eska (2007a) now argues that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the unmarked clausal configuration of Transalpine Celtic was SVO with the null subject parameter.
- 28 The final *-m* of one hand in the inscription of Larzac is due to Latin influence.
- 29 The accusative singular form  $\delta\epsilon\chi\alpha\nu\tau\epsilon\mu/\nu$  (e.g., *RIG G-27*) 'tithe' has been taken by Szemerényi (1974: 277–81) as an *ā*-stem (cf. Old Irish *ā*-stem *dechmad*) that has adopted *vṛkī*-flexion, i.e., acc. sg. *\*-m̄* > *-em*. But we may note that Cowgill (1975: 49) suggests that Primitive Irish *\*-an* (< *\*-ām*) > *-en* in final position, which would also explain the Transalpine Celtic ending. Alternatively, the raising of the vowel may be due to the nasality of the preceding consonant. Other explanations have been offered by Lejeune (1984: 133–6), De Bernardo [Stempel] (1984), and Prosdocimi (1986). Szemerényi (1991: 310) has, more recently, controversially sought to resolve matters by concluding 'that *dekanteml-en* is simply the Greek (Ionic-Attic) acc.  $\delta\epsilon\chi\acute{\alpha}\tau\eta\nu$ , with only slight adjustment to the Gaulish ordinal (*-nt-*) and the Gaulish case-ending (*-m*, later *-n*)'. Cf. Lejeune's (1994) reply.
- 30 N = any nasal, T = any plosive.
- 31 The precise manner of articulation of the tau Gallicum is a matter of considerable dispute; see Eska (1998b) for a review of the literature.
- 32 Owing to damage of the stone, it is uncertain whether a pluralizing *-ς* has been lost.
- 33 The reading of the first character of this form is controversial.
- 34 It is uncertain because both ends of the inscription are broken, leaving the context unknown.
- 35 Cousin's supplement has now been reprinted (Aberystwyth: CMCS Publications, 2006). The reprint is accompanied by a CD containing a searchable version of Holder's headwords by Ll. Dafis and A. Gohil and indices to Whatmough (1949–51) by X. Delamarre and G. R. Isaac.
- 36 Raybould and Sims-Williams (2007b) is an accompanying volume which collects Latin inscriptions in which Celtic personal names are embedded. A similar collection is Delamarre (2007).
- 37 Also worth noting is Isaac's (2002) CD-ROM of the Celtic toponyms in the *Antonine Itinerary* with etymological analysis.

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# EARLY IRISH

*David Stifter*

The term ‘Early Irish’ as used here embraces the various stages of the Irish language from prehistoric times until the twelfth century AD, of which the Old Irish stage is the best known. The period under review here is framed by two terminal points of great cultural significance, the advent of Christianity in the third or fourth centuries and, in the twelfth century, ‘Europeanization’ through the Anglo-Norman invasion and the church reform. For a general history of the Irish language, see Greene 1966.

The native designation for the language in Old Irish was *Goídelc*, a derivative of *Goídel* ‘Irishman’; both terms are early medieval loans from British. The earlier self-designation of Irish and the Irish is unclear. In Latin the language was called *Scottica* (*lingua*) after the early medieval Latin name for the Irish, *Scotti*. In historical linguistics the term ‘Goidelic’ is used, especially in comparison and contrast with ‘Brittonic’ or ‘Brythonic’, the British branch of Insular Celtic, and the Continental Celtic languages. Reflecting the major changes undergone by the language during this time-span, the following main phases can be distinguished (cf. also Greene 1977, Koch 1995, Russell 2005):

Early Goidelic:	c. pre-4th century
Primitive Irish:	c. 4th–6th centuries
Archaic Irish:	c. 7th century
Old Irish:	c. 8th–9th centuries
Middle Irish:	c. 10th–12th centuries

A broad correlation of these phases can be made with types of sources. The Early Goidelic phase before the dawn of the Christian era is accessible only in reconstruction, apart from a handful of local and tribal names in Ptolemy’s *Geography* II 2 (De Bernardo Stempel 2000: 100–102) that rather pose questions than provide answers, as is typical of such evidence. The small corpus of Primitive Irish is attested exclusively in inscriptions on stone written in the alphabet known in Old Irish as *Ogam* /oɣəm/ (Modern Irish *Ogham* /o:m/). Archaic Irish is an early variant of Old Irish. It is directly tangible only in stray names and words in Latin texts, but a considerable portion of texts, poetical and prose, that survive in much later manuscripts probably originate in this period. Old Irish is directly attested in the vernacular glosses and marginalia found in Latin vellum manuscripts of the eighth and ninth centuries. Middle Irish, the transitional period from the one standard language, Old Irish, to the other, Modern Irish, is the medium of several great medieval Irish

manuscripts, the earliest of which date from the twelfth century. After 1200 we speak of 'Early Modern Irish'. This chapter will be concerned mainly with an account of the classical Old Irish language. Short sections at the beginning and at the end will be devoted to Primitive and Middle Irish.

Since the early medieval period, the language has not been confined to the island of Ireland alone, but has expanded to the west and north of Britain, to the Isle of Man, and to islands north of Britain, perhaps as far as Iceland. The native literature contains ample evidence for traffic and interaction between the parts of the early Irish-speaking world, but apart from a few lapidary inscriptions no records of Goidelic from outside Ireland have survived from before the beginning of the modern period.

Early Irish is a dynamic field of study where a considerable amount of coal-face work in lexicography, diachronic and synchronic grammar, philology, and literary studies has still to be done, and important linguistic tools are still wanting. Many texts are still awaiting their first scholarly edition. Because of its structural and grammatical extravaganzas, Early Irish, having been studied preponderantly by historical linguists, is also a worthwhile object for the application of modern linguistic theories.

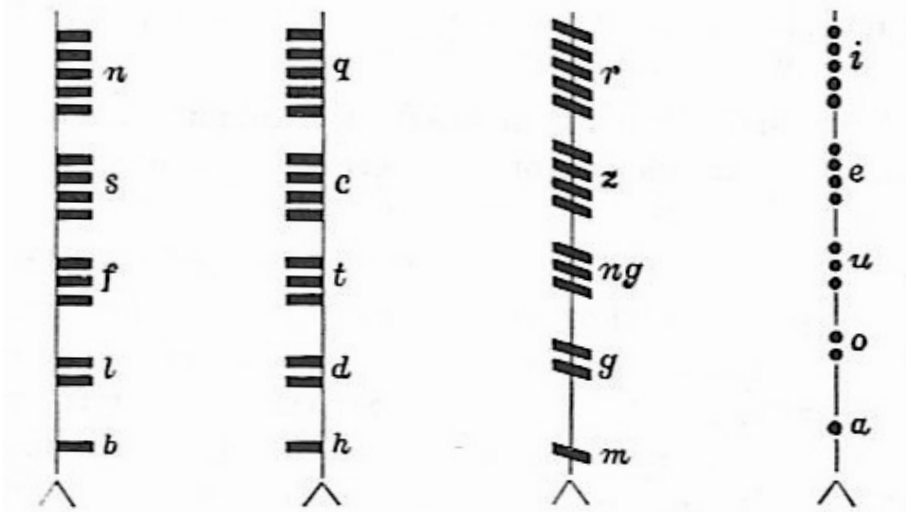
## PRIMITIVE IRISH

The written record of what is incontrovertibly Irish begins with epigraphic evidence in the fourth or fifth centuries, the putative date of the earliest Ogam inscriptions. The inscriptions are found on standing stones with a sharp vertical edge which serves as a base-line for the incised letter-forms of the Ogam alphabet. Its characters consist of strokes or notches positioned in relation to the base-line, as shown in Figure 4.1. In its oldest form the alphabet comprises twenty characters. Fifteen consonants are represented by three groups of one to five strokes incised to the right, left or across the edge of the stone. Five vowels are created by groups of one to five depressions, directly in the vertical edge itself. Consonant signs are frequently geminated with somewhat unclear motivation (but see Harvey 1987). The texts known up to then are edited in Macalister (1945); more recent findings are collected in McManus (1991), who also sheds light on the material and historical aspects of Ogam. Ziegler (1994) describes the language of the Ogam inscriptions. The Ogam stones from Britain are discussed by Sims-Williams (2003). An online database for Ogam was begun at: <http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/ogam/frame.htm> (Gippert 1996–2001).

The brief texts typically contain a personal name, followed by a patronymic or gentilic name, all in the genitive case. Very rarely more information is given, as in this late example:

QRIMITIR RON[A]NN MAQ COMOGANN  
 '[stone] of the priest Rónán, the son of Comgán'

Such minimal texts yield data only for phonology and, to a very limited degree, nominal morphology. Typologically, Primitive Irish is an inflected language with overt endings, akin in its grammatical system rather to ancient Indo-European languages than to Old Irish as known from the manuscript tradition. The corpus of Primitive Irish is meagre: around 400 stones are known, in Ireland (more than 75 per cent), and in Britain (see the map in McManus 1991: 46, 48). Most scholars are agreed that the creators of Ogam drew on a knowledge of Latin grammatical discourse. Letters unnecessary for the notation of Irish sounds, such as <p> and <x>, are omitted. A distinction between vowel *u* and



*Figure 4.1* The Ogam alphabet and its medieval transliteration. Source: Thurneysen (1946: 10) by permission of the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, School of Celtic Studies

consonant *w* is added. An idiosyncratic, but perhaps phonologically motivated, ordering of the vowels is introduced. The shortcoming of the Latin alphabet to reflect the length opposition in vowels has been retained in Ogam. The actual cradle of Ogam may have been the Irish settlements in Britain (Charles-Edwards 1995: 722). The practice of making Ogam inscriptions continued over perhaps 200 years and waned in the sixth or seventh centuries. Absolute dating of the Ogam inscriptions is not feasible, as no named individual has so far been reliably identified as a historical figure. A relative dating can be achieved by establishing a chronology of the sound-changes reflected in the inscriptions.

## PHONOLOGY OF PRIMITIVE IRISH

The traditional values of the letters, preserved in medieval manuscripts, are not necessarily original, i.e. they are neither those of the period in which the script was devised, nor those of the early period of the inscriptions themselves. That this is so is revealed by the allocation of the value *F* to the third letter. In Irish–British bilingual stones, however, this symbol is equated with Latin *V*, and historical reconstruction shows that its realization must have been */w/*. Three other values – *H*, *NG*, and *Z* – which do not occur in any inscription, are also suspect. On structural and etymological grounds scholars are agreed that the letter transliterated *NG* originally stood for the voiced labio-velar */gʷ/*. For *H* and *Z* the original values */j/* and */sʲ/* have been suggested (McManus 1991: 36–8, 85). Applying these values to the first three groups in Figure 4.1 above gives the new transliteration as in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Modified transliteration of Ogam consonantal symbols

5. N	10. Q	15. R
4. G	9. C	14. S <sup>T</sup>
3. W	8. T	13. G <sup>w</sup>
2. L	7. D	12. G
1. B	6. J	11. M

Since the sounds now assigned to the three problem letters H, Z, NG were lost at an early date, it would appear that Ogam was developed for a stage of the language anterior to that of even the oldest inscriptions. Accordingly the fourth century is taken as *a terminus post quem non* for the invention of the system (McManus 1991: 41). On this basis the consonantal phonemic system of the earliest Ogam inscriptions can be drawn up, as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Consonantal phonology of Early Primitive Irish

	plosive	nasal	fricative	glide	liquid
bilabial	b	m		w	
dental	t d	n			l r
alveolar			s (s <sup>l</sup> )		
palatal				j	
velar	k g				
labiovelar	k <sup>w</sup> g <sup>w</sup>				

The nasals and liquids could also be geminated. There is a gap in the phonological system in that *p* is absent through its loss in the Common Celtic period. In loanwords, *p* is substituted by the nearest sound available, the labiovelar *k<sup>w</sup>*, e.g. VulgLat. \**prebiter* ‘priest’ → PrimIr. QRIMITIR (delabialized in OIr. *cruimther*).

There are ten vowels, short and long *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, and two diphthongs, written *ai* and *oi* (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 Vowels of Early Primitive Irish

	front	back
close	i i:	u u:
mid	e e:	o o:
open		a a:

During the period of the Ogam inscriptions the Irish language underwent a series of radical sound changes that led to a complete transformation of the phonemic system. However, the constraints of the spelling system precluded the explicit expression of many of these changes, especially lenition and palatalization. The (deducible) phonology of the latest stones overlaps with that of the earliest manuscript Irish.

## OLD IRISH

Old Irish is the earliest period of Irish – or of any Celtic language – for which the extant record is sufficiently full and varied to permit a full synchronic description. Its great significance for both Indo-European and Celtic linguistics derives from the facts that under a heavily modernized phonological veneer resides morphology that in certain regards is very archaic, and that at the same time the language can serve as a model for all younger Insular Celtic languages, in that their notorious syntactic, morphophonemic, and morphological peculiarities are present in a systematic manner and can thus be studied as if in a nutshell.

Despite being a large-corpus language, only a very small and thematically restricted portion of what survives of the Old Irish textual production is contained in manuscripts of the period. The three most important collections of these are not kept in Ireland, but on the European continent. They are known by the present locations of the manuscripts: Würzburg (Wb.), Milan (Ml.), and St Gall (Sg.), containing glosses on the Pauline Epistles, a commentary on the Psalms, and Priscian's *Institutiones* respectively. The glosses are edited in Stokes and Strachan (1901–3). This body of primary source material is large enough to have formed the basis of all grammatical descriptions of Old Irish so far, in particular Thurneysen (1946), the standard grammar of Old Irish. Even today, most linguistic studies of Old Irish start with the glosses. The language established on the basis of these primary sources furnishes a yardstick with which to assess the abundant literary production of the medieval period, which belongs to a wide range of genres (historical, legal, narrative, religious, both in prose and poetry). However, this very considerable body of texts survives in vellum and paper manuscripts from much later periods only, from the twelfth century onward, becoming numerous only in the modern period (surveys of the literature are Ó Cathasaigh 2006 for Old Irish and Ní Mhaonaigh 2006 for Middle Irish). The evidence of later manuscripts for the original forms of texts must be treated with caution, as the process of repeated copying can give rise to errors and conscious or unconscious linguistic modernization. In effect, in many texts older and newer forms stand inextricably side by side, which renders them less suited as a source for grammatical descriptions than the glosses, despite the latter's very dry content.

Apart from Thurneysen 1946, Pedersen 1909–13, Lewis and Pedersen 1961 and McCone 1994 are useful descriptions of the whole grammar of Old Irish. Strachan 1949 serves as a quick reference book for inflectional forms. The lexicon of Old and Middle Irish is collected in the *Dictionary of the Irish Language* (DIL); its publication as an electronic online resource has been a great boon (eDIL at <http://www.dil.ie/index.asp> = Toner 2007). For the Würzburg glosses, a special dictionary was compiled by Kavanagh (2001). A similar dictionary for the Milan glosses is in the process of completion (Griffith and Stifter (forthcoming)), and others may follow. The publication of an etymological dictionary of Old and Middle Irish, *Lexique étymologique de l'irlandais ancien*, has been going on since 1959 (Vendryes et al. 1959–). Modern introductions to Old Irish for beginners are McCone (2005), Stifter (2006), and Tigges and Ó Béarra (2006). Collections of electronically processed texts are *CELT* (*Corpus of Electronic Texts*) at <http://www.ucc.ie/celt/>, *Thesaurus Linguae Hibernicae* at <http://www.ucd.ie/tlh/>, *The Celtic Digital Initiative* at <http://www.ucc.ie/academic/smg/CDIL/>, and *The Celtic Literature Collective: Irish Texts* at [http://www.maryjones.us/ctexts/index\\_irish.html](http://www.maryjones.us/ctexts/index_irish.html). Images of Irish manuscripts are accessible at *ISOS (Irish Script on Screen)* at <http://www.isos.dias.ie/> and at *Early Manuscripts at Oxford University* at <http://image.ox.ac.uk/>.

Since this is a synchronic description of the language, diachrony will be kept to a

minimum. It must be kept in mind, though, that Old Irish is almost prototypical for a language whose grammatical behaviour cannot be described adequately by synchronic rules. The bewildering complexities of some of its grammatical subsystems, especially that of verbal morphology, become transparent only when viewed from a diachronic position, and in order to understand allomorphic variation correctly it is essential to work with underlying forms and their often quite dissimilar surface representations; e.g., both *do-sluindi* /do'slun'di/ '(s)he denies' and negated *ní-díltai* /'d'i:lti/ '(s)he does not (*ní*) deny' regularly reflect the same diachronically underlying structure \**dī-slonđiθ*, the variation being triggered by a difference in stress pattern. Only the broad outlines of Old Irish grammar can be sketched here. Subtle details – in which the language abounds – have to be glossed over.

There is little or no trace of synchronic variation in the Old Irish literary tradition, what variation exists being mostly stylistic rather than geographical (Kelly 1982, McCone 1989). This presupposes either the early adoption of a specific local variety as the basis for a standard, or the early codification of a standard grammar. The sporadic appearance already in the glosses of features of phonology, morphology and syntax which only become prominent in the Middle Irish period after the tenth century (McCone 1985), suggests that the dominant register in these texts is a conservative literary standard at some remove from the spoken language, and perhaps one generation older than the earliest attested texts.

Old Irish is a consistent VSO and head-initial language: apart from sentence-initial verbs, it has adjectives and genitives following their head nouns, prepositions and post-posed relative clauses. The verb has attracted many functional elements of the sentence into its domain. Old Irish is a pro-drop language. It is predominantly dependent-marking, but where pronouns are involved it has become head-marking (Griffith 2008b). Old Irish distinguishes the three grammatical genders masculine, feminine, neuter. Among nouns it distinguishes three numbers, singular, dual, and plural, while adjectives, pronouns and verbs only make the two-way distinction of singular and plural. It is an inflecting language, but while the inflection of verbs is largely achieved in a traditional manner by the addition of overt fusional endings, in the domain of nouns there is a marked tendency for inflection being effected by changes of the root vowels, by alternations in the quality (palatalization vs. non-palatalization) of final consonants, by mutational effects on other words, and by complex combinations of all these, e.g. nom. sg. *in fer trén* /in f'ɛr t're:n/ 'the (*in*) strong (*trén*) man (*fer*)' vs. nom. pl. *ind fīr thréuin* /ind i'ɹ θ'r'e:wni/ 'the strong men'. In fact, erosion of inflection has already set in in Old Irish: among personal pronouns, inflection is no longer found, but has been replaced by a very different system where the syntactical position determines the form and function of the pronouns.

The basic lexical stock of Old Irish is inherited from Indo-European and Common Celtic, but the language contains also strata of (probably prehistoric) loans from unidentifiable sources (e.g. Schrijver 2000, 2005, Mac Eoin 2007), and, in the historic period, numerous loans from Latin (McManus 1983), British Celtic (mainly Welsh), and, in the later period, from Norse (Sommerfelt 1962). English and French loans are rare in Old Irish and become numerous only in Middle Irish and later.

## PHONOLOGY

By a cursory inspection, the sound systems of Early Primitive Irish and of Old Irish hardly resemble each other. This is due to a great number of major sound changes, which the

language witnessed mainly in the fifth and sixth centuries, roughly at the same time when the British languages were similarly affected. The contemporaneous Ogam inscriptions are valuable in this respect because they directly reflect some of the transformations that the language went through prior to the emergence of Old Irish. Occasionally the changes can be illustrated by one and the same name from different periods. The name that is written *gen. LUGUDECCAS* on an early Ogam stone (CIIC 263) is found as *LUGUDUC* on a late one (CIIC 108). The differences are due to *apocope*, i.e. the loss of the final syllable, and to *vowel reduction* in the third syllable. In the corresponding OIr. form *Luigdech* we note yet further changes: the middle vowel has undergone *syncope*, i.e. has been elided, and the word-internal cluster has become *palatalized*. What is only partly revealed by the spelling is that all internal consonants have been subjected to *lenition*: the original velar stop *C /k/* has become the corresponding fricative *ch /x/*, likewise the stops *G /g/* and *D /d/* have been fricativized to */ɣ/* and */ð/*, although this is not immediately visible. With these three forms, almost all major pre-Old Irish sound changes have been illustrated.

The diachronic developments that led from Proto-Indo-European via Common Celtic to Old Irish are sufficiently well understood (the most important of these are conveniently summarized in McCone 1996). Only fine tuning remains to be done in some cases. Important developments are the extensive, albeit not entire, loss of final syllables (apocope), loss of medial vowels (syncope) and concomitant consonant changes, lenition and – to a lesser degree – nasalization, metaphony of vowels before other vowels (raising and lowering) and palatalization. The cataclysmic series of phonological changes had the double effect of transforming the phonemic inventory as a system and of transforming the character of the language as a whole. These two sides of one coin are best treated separately.

## The sound system

The two processes – lenition and palatalization – multiplied the number of consonantal phonemes. While Primitive Irish had thirteen (or fourteen) such phonemes, Old Irish has forty-five.

Lenition ('softening', from Lat. *lenis* 'soft') as a historical process means the reduction in the energy employed in the articulation of obstruent sounds and in consequence their fricativization: *t, k, b, d, g > θ, x, β, ð, γ*. The opposition unlenited vs. lenited was at first allophonic, but became phonemic with the losses of final and medial syllables (apocope and syncope). This affected all Primitive Irish single stops between vowels and most stops between vowels and *l, n, r*, whether in medial, initial or final position. The continuants *s* and *m* became *h* and *β* respectively. Although not originally part of this package, *p, w, l, r, n* were also integrated into the resultant binary opposition unlenited vs. lenited. The marginal lenition of the loan phoneme *p (> φ?) > f* was introduced in analogy to the other voiceless stops. For the liquids and *n*, a different strategy was chosen. The inherited articulation was reinterpreted as the lenited member of the oppositional pair; in unlenited positions, the liquids and *n* were strengthened and merged with their inherited geminated counterparts. The precise phonetic effect of this strengthening cannot be recovered, but it is likely to have involved length, tenseness or fortis gemination. Thus *n, r, l* gave rise to *n̄, r̄, l̄*. Finally, *w* behaved in yet an entirely different way. In unlenited initial position it became *f* by sandhi-phenomena. In some unlenited internal positions it merged with *β*, but otherwise, especially when lenited, it was ultimately lost. For that reason, the lenited member of the oppositional pair involving *f* is zero, *Ø*. The only consonant standing outside the opposition unlenited vs. lenited is *ŋ*, which can only appear in unlenited contexts. The effects can be gauged by the changes undergone by a number of early Latin loan words, as shown in Table 4.4.



Table 4.4 Lenition of *b, k, d, g, m, t* in early Latin loans

<i>lebor</i> /lʲeβər/ ‘book’	< <i>liber</i>
<i>bachall</i> /baxəl:/ ‘crozier’	< <i>bacula</i>
<i>muide</i> /muðʲe/ ‘vessel’	< <i>modius</i>
<i>faigen</i> /fayʲən/ ‘sheath’	< <i>vagina</i>
<i>sollumun</i> /sol:uβʲun/ ‘festival’	< <i>sollemne</i>
<i>srathar</i> /sr:aθər/ ‘pack-saddle’	< <i>strātūra</i>

All consonants also stand in a binary opposition of non-palatalization (neutral quality) vs. palatalization, except for *h*, for which this cannot be demonstrated. The palatalized sounds are the marked members of the opposition; because of its markedness, the feature palatalization, which is traditionally referred to as consonant quality, has been spreading beyond its original confines throughout Irish-language history. Conversely, consonants in unstressed words such as the copula, prepositions, particles, etc. were depalatalized in early Old Irish. As in the case of lenition, palatalization was originally allophonic, but gained phonemic status after apocope and syncope. For word-initial consonants an allophonic status of palatalization must be assumed until the Middle Irish period, but for simplicity’s sake the opposition will be presupposed here also in this position. Consonant clusters must be of the same quality, which in the case of secondary, i.e. non-inherited, clusters depends on the type of vowel lost between the consonants. Syncopated and apocopated *a* and *o* depalatalized the surrounding consonants, *e* and *i* palatalized them. *u* basically behaved like *a* and *o*, but caused palatalization if it in turn was followed by a palatalized consonant. Older scholarship distinguished a third, velarized series of consonant quality (marked ‘’) beside the neutral and palatalized series, but the evidence advanced in favour of this hypothesis is better interpreted as forms with a distinct vowel quality *u* beside neutral, i.e. non-palatalized, consonants, e.g. *techtugud* ‘taking possession’ = /tʲextuɣuð/, not /tʲextʷəɣʷəðʷ/.

Less pervasive changes between Primitive and Old Irish, which nonetheless altered the overall appearance of the system, are: loss of the labio-velars *kʷ* and *gʷ* through delabialization and merger with the corresponding velar stops; loss of *j*; merger of *sʼ* (if it ever was a phoneme) with *s* word-initially and with *ss* word-internally. The gap in the labial series was filled by the development of a new Irish *p* word-internally through internal processes and word-initially through the adoption of Latin and British loanwords. A new phoneme *ŋ* arose from the simplification of *ng* = /ŋɡ/ during the Old Irish period. The foregoing processes resulted in the sound inventory shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Consonantal phonology of Old Irish

	plosive	nasal	fricative	liquid
labial	p b pʲ bʲ	m mʲ β̃ β̃ʲ	f β βʲ β̃	
dental	t d tʲ dʲ	n: n nʲ ñ	θ ð θʲ ðʲ	l: l lʲ l̃ r: r rʲ r̃
alveolar			s sʲ (= ʃ?)	
velar	k g kʲ gʲ	ŋ ŋʲ	x ɣ xʲ ɣʲ	
glottal			h	

IPA-signs are used here to render the OIr. sounds. However, in scholarly literature on Old Irish different, proprietary notational systems are often used that are better suited to visualize the systemic character of the OIr. phonemic inventory than IPA is. For example, in Stifter (2006: 16–19), Greek letters are used for all lenited sounds ( $\phi$ ,  $\theta$ ,  $\chi$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\delta$ ,  $\gamma$ ,  $\lambda$ ,  $\rho$ ,  $\mu$ ,  $\nu$ ) except for  $h$ , and Latin lower-case letters stand for the unlenited sounds, even for the liquids and nasals ( $l$ ,  $r$ ,  $m$ ,  $n$ ). In other systems of transcriptions lenited  $b$  is written  $v$ , and  $\bar{v}$  stands for lenited  $m$ ; the unlenited liquids and nasals are written  $L$ ,  $R$ ,  $N$ . Consonants of the palatalized series are frequently marked with the diacritic  $^j$  instead of  $^i$ .

The vowel system is comparatively simple (see Table 4.6). At the core is a standard inventory of five vowels, which all participate in length opposition (here marked with  $:$ , but often macrons are used, e.g.  $\bar{a}$ ). Especially in the case of  $a$ , it may be that the opposition was not only one of length, but was also accompanied by one of openness. It is possible that there were two different, albeit non-contrasting, long- $e$  phonemes at least in early Old Irish, but they eventually merged. The central, neutral vowel schwa is short only. It is possible that there was a rounded, front short vowel  $\alpha$  (or  $\epsilon$ ), but its marginal existence can only be inferred from the graphic alternation  $ai$ ,  $au$ ,  $e$ ,  $i$  in some words, an alternation that is difficult to explain otherwise. The existence of  $y$  as an allophon of  $u$  before front vowels can only be reconstructed for Primitive Irish. Its survival into Old Irish is possible, but cannot be demonstrated.

Table 4.6 Vowels of Old Irish

	front	back
close	i i: (y) e:	u u:
mid	e (œ) (ɛ:)	ə o o:
open	a	ɑ:

Old Irish is rather rich in diphthongs, but most of these were eliminated during the Old and Middle Irish periods (cf. Greene 1976, Uhlich 1995): of the inherited diphthongs,  $a(:)w$  (perhaps with a mid-long or long vowel  $a$ ) early became  $o:$ ;  $oj$  and  $aj$  fell together towards the end of the Old Irish period and were eventually monophthongized in a long  $e$ -like vowel, which remained distinct from  $e:$  and is reflected by different outcomes in the modern dialects. Only  $iə$  and  $uə$  have survived until today. Besides, in Archaic Irish the short vowels  $a$ ,  $e$ ,  $i$ ,  $o$  combined with  $u$  to give new diphthongs, which eventually were all eliminated by shifts in the syllable peaks and were monophthongized to short (!) vowels. In particular, the outcome of short  $aw$ , which became  $u$ , is different from inherited  $a(:)w$  above. Early Old Irish tolerated hiatuses when the first vowel belonged to the stressed syllable, cf. the minimal pair *fíach* /fʲiəx/ ‘debt’ vs. *fíach* /fʲi.əx/ ‘raven’. Already during the Old Irish period hiatus sequences merged either with diphthongs or with long vowels.

The vowels are not evenly distributed. In the stressed internal syllable all vowels and diphthongs except schwa occur, but in unstressed, non-final syllables only schwa and short  $u$  are possible. Long vowels do occur, but are fairly rare in this position. In unstressed absolute final position, only short vowels are possible. In stressed absolute final position vowels are automatically lengthened (Breatnach 2003). Pretonic syllables are yet another

story, because in them only a reduced inventory *i – a – u* is found. Although the vowel inventory as such had remained stable from Primitive Irish, there is a distinct difference in the functional weight awarded to that class of sounds. In Primitive Irish the phonological load lay evenly balanced on consonants and vowels alike, but distributional restrictions in the use of the vowels in Old Irish, especially the loss of the independent quality of short vowels in unstressed internal syllables and the concomitant introduction of schwa as a phoneme, resulted in a system where consonants were given greater phonological prominence than vowels. Ongoing neutralizations and erosions in the distributional rules for vowels throughout the attested history of Irish continued to shift the load further towards the consonants.

The above sound inventory of Old Irish is an idealization. The phonological system was constantly undergoing subtle restructurings that eventually led to the transformation of Old Irish to Middle Irish.

### Stress

OIr. stress is non-contrastive and cannot be used to award prominence to a phrase. It is dynamic and fundamentally fixed on the first syllable of a word. To this there are systematic exceptions: adverbs which have their origins in the merger of the article or prepositions and a nominal form bear the stress on the first syllable of the latter, e.g. *indíu* /indʲiːw/ ‘today’ (= article + a case form of ‘day’), *imallé* /iməlˈeː/ ‘together’ (= preposition ‘around’ + article + a word for ‘side’). More importantly, verbal forms that have any element (conjunctions, verbal particles, lexical preverbs) before their root syllable bear the stress on the second element of the entire ‘verbal complex’, whether this be the root or a preverb. In modern normalized orthography the position after which the verbal stress falls is indicated by a raised dot · or a hyphen – or a plain space (e.g., *ad-cí*, *ad-cí*, *ní accaí*). Articles, prepositions, conjunctions and various types of pronouns and pronominals are unstressed. Indeed, these can be regarded as pro- and enclitic to stressed words. Early Irish scribes used to write unstressed elements without separation from adjoining stressed words, a practice not followed by modern editors.

### MORPHOPHONEMICS

Several of the major diachronic phonological rules mentioned at the beginning acquired synchronic grammatical functions, putting a stamp on Irish which it retains to the present. What to all extents and purposes must have been a language of average Indo-European typology was converted into a rather different system, non-Indo-European by outward appearance, in which modifications of initial and final consonants as well as of internal syllables play a key morphological role. Some of these sound rules have wider structural implications: palatalization and the two major types of initial mutation, lenition and nasalization. They have repercussions beyond the remit of phonology, to the extent that what started out as allophonic variations in consonantal quality acquired morphophonemic status when the conditioning factors disappeared with the loss of final syllables. Other changes, syncope and metaphony, have a rather restricted capacity of making morphological distinctions, but are all-pervading nevertheless.

## Palatalization

The role of palatalization and the loci where it could apply were constantly spreading in the prehistory of Old Irish (Greene 1973, McCone 1996: 115–19). Of particular relevance for the present section is that the apocope of inherited inflectional endings in Primitive Irish had left certain traces on the rest of the word, depending on whether the lost syllable had contained a back or a front vowel. While in the former case the remaining, now final consonant retained its neutral quality, in the latter case the consonant acquired a distinctive palatalized colour. What had before been a difference in endings, e.g. nom. *\*karrah*, gen. *\*karri* ‘cart’, was transformed into a functionally loaded difference of quality, nom. *carr* /kar/, gen. *cairr* /karʲ/. In that manner, palatalization was established as a morphophonologically relevant process and in consequence it received prominence in other positions, as well. In some cases, difference in quality is concomitant with overt morphemes, e.g. nom. *cnáim* /kna:β/ vs. gen. *cnáma* /kna:βal/ ‘bone’, or *beirid* /bʲerʲəðʲ/ ‘(s)he carries’ vs. *berait* /bʲerəðʲ/ ‘they carry’, where the quality of root-final *r* alternates. Palatalization, having thus acquired high phonological prominence as a morphological marker in Old Irish, has been spreading ever since to positions where it has no etymological or morphological justification.

## Mutations

A notorious feature of all Insular Celtic languages is the extensive employment of phonemic consonant mutations, i.e. of variations in word-initial position, to carry morphological distinctions, but nowhere are these so fundamentally entrenched in all aspects of grammar as in Old Irish. The mutations operate across word boundaries, but not usually beyond phrase boundaries (NP, PP, the so-called verbal complex): in NPs, an overt element *X* mutates a following element *Y*. Mutations inside the verbal complex are more complicated because *X* may not always be overt. The origins of the initial mutations are external sandhi phenomena in Primitive Irish, which had allophonic status until the loss of final syllables.

The mutations are triggered by the preceding words in lexical concatenations. Three types of mutations can be distinguished: lenition, nasalization (also: eclipse), aspiration (see Table 4.7). In this description, the mutational property of a form or category is indicated by superscript <sup>L</sup> for lenition, <sup>N</sup> for nasalization, and <sup>H</sup> for aspiration. Only lenition and nasalization find partial graphic expression in Old Irish, while aspiration remains entirely unexpressed in writing. It can only be inferred from Middle Irish orthographic practices and from Modern Irish grammar. Aspiration is also much more limited in effect than the other two mutations, in that it prefixes *h* to word-initial vowels after some forms of the article and – probably – after some inflectional endings, after the possessive *a*<sup>H</sup> ‘her’, after the prepositions *fri*<sup>H</sup> ‘towards’, *la*<sup>H</sup> ‘with, by’ and after the negative copula *ní*<sup>H</sup> ‘it is not’, e.g. *a ires* /a hirʲəs/ ‘her belief’, *fri Éirinn* /fri he:ʲənʲ/ ‘towards Ireland’, *ní é* /nʲi: he:/ ‘it is not he’. It is unclear whether some formal categories that appear to have no mutational effect in Old Irish do in fact cause aspiration, e.g. the negative particle *ní* ‘not’, or vowel-final preverbs.

Lenition affects only consonants. For the relationship between, and the nature of, unlenited and lenited sounds see the section on the sound system above. Nasalization has effects on fewer consonants, but also on vowels. Nasalization of vowels is realized by prefixing *n-*. Nasalization of consonants is something of a synchronic misnomer, as only in the case of voiced stops a homorganic nasal is prefixed: *b* > *mb*, *d* > *nd*, *g* > *ng*. Voiceless stops and *f* are voiced: *p* > *b*, *t* > *d*, *c* > *g*, *f* > *β*. Liquids and nasals are not affected by

nasalization, but sometimes they are doubled in spelling in nasalizing contexts, just as in aspirating contexts. This doubling must not be misunderstood as phonemic gemination.

Table 4.7 Initial mutations in nouns (only such positions are indicated where phonetic and/or graphic variation between radical and mutated form occurs)

Radical	Lenited (a <sup>L</sup> ‘his’)	Nasalized (a <sup>N</sup> ‘their’)	Aspirated (a <sup>H</sup> ‘her’)
<p> /p/ <i>penn</i> ‘pen’	<ph> /f/ <i>a phenn</i>	<p> /b/ <i>a penn</i>	
<t> /t/ <i>tech</i> ‘house’	<th> /θ/ <i>a thech</i>	<t> /d/ <i>a tech</i>	
<c> /k/ <i>catt</i> ‘cat’	<ch> /x/ <i>a chatt</i>	<c> /g/ <i>a catt</i>	
<b> /b/ <i>bó</i> ‘cow’	<b> /β/ <i>a bó</i>	<mb> /mb/ <i>a mbó</i>	
<d> /d/ <i>dam</i> ‘ox’	<d> /ð/ <i>a dam</i>	<nd> /nd/ <i>a ndam</i>	
<g> /g/ <i>gell</i> ‘pledge’	<g> /ɣ/ <i>a gell</i>	<ng> /ŋg/ <i>a ngell</i>	
<f> /f/ <i>fer</i> ‘man’	<f f Ø> Ø <i>a ffer</i>	<f> /β/ <i>a fer</i>	
<s> /s/ <i>serc</i> ‘love’	<s s> /h/ <i>a šerc</i>		
<s> /s/ <i>siur</i> ‘sister’	<f ph> /f/ <i>a fiur, phiur</i>		
<m> /m/ <i>macc</i> ‘son’	<m> /β/ <i>a macc</i>	<m mm> /m/ <i>a (m)macc</i>	<m mm> /m/ <i>a (m)macc</i>
<n> /n/ <i>nert</i> ‘strength’	<n> /n/ <i>a nert</i>	<n nn> /n/ <i>a (n)nert</i>	<n nn> /n/ <i>a (n)nert</i>
<l> /l/ <i>lebor</i> ‘book’	<l> /l/ <i>a lebor</i>	<l ll> /l/ <i>a (l)lebor</i>	<l ll> /l/ <i>a (l)lebor</i>
<r> /r/ <i>ríge</i> ‘kingdom’	<r r> /r/ <i>a ríge</i>	<r rr> /r/ <i>a (r)ríge</i>	<r rr> /r/ <i>a (r)ríge</i>
vowel: <i>ubull</i> ‘apple’		<n-> /n/ <i>a n-ubull</i>	<Ø> /h/ <i>a ubull</i>

## Syncope

Another diachronic change that transformed into an important synchronic rule is that of syncope. Syncope as a historic process required that after the loss of inherited final syllables the vowel of every second, non-final syllable was deleted. The rule operated almost mechanically; syncope failed to apply only rarely, when the resulting cluster would have been too awkward to pronounce. In synchronic terms this means that when an extra syllable is added to a form (or when, in verbal morphology, a grammatical element is added at the beginning of or inside a form), a new syllable count has to be made for the new form and, if it is found to have three or more syllables, the vowels of all eligible syllables have to be elided, e.g. *dígal* ‘revenge’ + adjectival suffix *-ach* → *díglach* ‘vengeful’.

The matter is complicated by several additional rules and by the fact that the rule applies to the diachronically underlying forms, not to synchronic surface representations. For example, the superlative (suffix *-em*) of *toisech* ‘leading’ is *toisechem*, seemingly with lack of syncope. But syncope has taken place regularly on the underlying form *\*towisechem* (loss of *i* with concomitant change of *w* > *j*), just as it has on *\*towisech*, the form underlying the adjectival base. Syncope often entails several other changes, the most important of which are palatalization and its counterpart depalatalization, diverse assimilation processes, and delenition. These sometimes conspire to create quite drastic allomorphy, especially among verbs. For example *im-soat* and *ní-impat* both reflect the same underlying form *\*ambi-sowat* ‘they turn’, but in the latter form the negative particle *ní* has been prefixed. This entails a change in the syncope pattern, as a result of which the underlying root *\*sow* remains without surface representation.

Syncope is an all-pervading phenomenon in the grammatical system of Old Irish,

operating in inflection and derivation alike. Throughout the history of the medieval Irish language, its rules were surprisingly faithfully adhered to, despite the extremely opaque allomorphy it produced. Syncope is a morphophonological process that marginally acquired morphological functions in its own right (e.g., Ó Cruaíoch 1997). For example, different syncope patterns were generalized in Old Irish to create a morphological distinction between deponent (= middle) and passive verbal forms, a formal difference that cannot be reconstructed for the earlier stages of the language (McCone 1997: 74–81); in a small segment of noun inflection, syncope was suppressed to distinguish animate from inanimate *t*-stems (Stifter forthcoming).

## Metaphony

Metaphony refers to changes of – predominantly stressed short – vowels. One of the fundamental aspects of Old Irish metaphony is the alternation of short *e* and *o* with *i* and *u* (raising) and, antithetically, of *i* and *u* with *e* and *o* (lowering). Such alternations are frequently concomitant to alternations in consonant quality, e.g. *fer* /fēr/ ‘man’, but *fir* /fīr/ ‘men’. Another frequent morphophonemic process is the insertion of *u* or *w* (*‘u*-infection’) after another short vowel, e.g. *biru* /bīru/ ‘I carry’, but *ní-biur* /bīwr/ ‘I carry not’. Other metaphonic alternations are much more restricted, to the effect that sometimes they look like lexical properties. The triggers for these alternations are diverse morphological categories, which elude a simple, systematic description.

## ORTHOGRAPHY

For writing Old Irish in manuscripts, the native, monumental Ogam script was not used, but the Latin alphabet was adapted (Ahlqvist 1994). The art of Latin writing was spread with the Christianization of Ireland in the fifth and sixth centuries (cf. Lapidge and Sharpe 1985, O’Sullivan 2005). Just how soon the Roman alphabet was adapted for writing continuous Irish texts on vellum, is in dispute: the sixth or seventh centuries have been suggested. By the ninth century Irish had ousted Latin as the chief medium of written communication in monastic schools (Byrne 1984: xix). All the primary sources for both Old and Middle Irish, and what we know of the origins of the secondary sources, point to the monasteries as the *loci scribendi* of the greater part – if not of all – of Early Irish writing. Old Irish is written in Insular minuscule, a script which combines features of Roman half-uncial and cursive. While most letters look familiar to modern eyes, the forms of *g*, *r*, *s* are Irish creations. The Tironian note 7 is employed for *ocus* ‘and’. The full stop indicates the end of clauses and sentences.

The Latin alphabet, of which only the 18 letters *a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, t, u* were used by Irish scribes (*x* is a marginal variant of the trigraph *chs*), is especially unsuited for rendering the phonemic system of Old Irish with its more than sixty phonemes (including diphthongs). This means that each letter has to bear the functional load of expressing around four different phonemes. This is achieved by an elaborate system where the meaning of a letter is dependent on its position (initial, medial, final) within a word or phrase and where several letters have diacritic functions beside their phonemic value. In Old Irish, the letter *h* has only diacritic function, but at least by Middle Irish it came to express /h/, which had remained unexpressed before.

Nevertheless, OIr. orthography is far from forming a consistent system, numerous sub-areas of it remain ambiguous. This system of writing persisted into the twelfth century

when finally it was superseded by a system where stops were consistently denoted by a single letter or digraph, irrespective of the position. The rules for writing vowels, however, have remained until today.

### Consonant signs

In absolute initial position, disregarding mutational effects within a phrase, all stops are unlenited and written with the expected letters:

*penn* /pʲen/ 'pen'  
*tír* /tʲiːr/ 'land'  
*coin* /konʲ/ 'dogs'  
*bán* /bʲaːn/ 'white'  
*dér* /dʲeːr/ 'tear'  
*gol* /gol/ 'weeping'

A deviation from the standard Latin values is the deployment of *p*, *t*, *c* in final and inter-vocalic position for the voiced stops /b/, /d/, /g/, and of *b*, *d*, *g* and *m* for the voiced fricatives /β/, /ð/, /ɣ/, /β/. This peculiarity of Old Irish orthography is due to the pronunciation of British Latin to be presumed for early missionaries. The local British pronunciation of Latin will have reflected the process of British ('soft') lenition, which unlike Irish voiced the voiceless stops (while sharing the lenition of voiced stops into fricatives). As the Latin orthography was not accommodated to those sound changes, the Latin spelling taught to the Irish by British scholars will have remained conservative in form, while carrying the new sound values:

*ap* /ab/ 'abbot'  
*topur* /tobur/ 'well'  
*bot* /bod/ 'penis'  
*fotae* /fode/ 'long'  
*óc* /oːg/ 'young'  
*ocus* /ogus/ 'and'  
*dub* /duβ/ 'black'  
*lebor* /lːeβər/ 'book'  
*fid* /fʲið/ 'wood'  
*fidach* /fʲiðəx/ 'wooded'  
*mag* /may/ 'plain'  
*maige* /mayʲe/ 'plains'  
*lám* /lːaːβ/ 'hand'  
*domun* /doβun/ 'world'

The same convention applies word-initially to voiced consonants lenited in initial mutation:

*in ben* /in βʲen/ 'the woman'  
*a dán* /a ðaːn/ 'his craft'  
*dí gail* /di ɣaʲ/ 'from valour'  
*mo maicc* /mo βakʲ/ 'my sons'

And it applies word-initially to voiceless consonants nasalized in initial mutation:

*co pecthaib* /ko bʲekθəβʲ/ ‘with sins’  
*in teinid* /in dʲenʲəðʲ/ ‘the fire (acc.)’  
*ar catt* /ar gat/ ‘our cat’

In internal and final position after *r*, *l* and *n* this convention does not always apply: *derc* can represent both /dʲerg/ ‘red’ and /dʲerk/ ‘hole’; *altae* can be read as /alte/ ‘(s)he was reared’ or as /alde/ ‘they who rear’. One has to know what is meant. The lenited counterparts of /k/ and /t/ are expressed by means of the digraphs *ch* and *th*. The same practice is eventually extended to /p/:

*oíph* /ojf/ ‘beauty’  
*sephainn* /sʲefənʲ/ ‘(s)he played (an instrument)’  
*dí phartaing* /fartəɲʲgʲ/ ‘(made) out of red leather’  
*bith* /bʲiθ/ ‘world’  
*cathair* /kaθəɲʲ/ ‘city’  
*a thecosc* /θʲegəsk/ ‘his instruction’  
*tech* /tʲex/ ‘house’  
*fiche* /fʲixʲe/ ‘20’  
*ón chridiu* /xʲiʲiðʲu/ ‘from the heart’

Unlenited voiceless stops, /p/, /t/, /k/, finally and medially can be indicated by doubling the consonant signs:

*sopp* /sop/ ‘wisp’  
*bratt* /brat/ ‘cloak’  
*ette* /etʲe/ ‘wing’  
*ícc* /i:k/ ‘payment, cure’  
*peccad* /pʲekəð/ ‘sin’

But this is not consistently maintained, with *sop*, *brat*, *pecad* and *íc* also being permissible spellings. A consistent use of consonant gemination is found in the case of liquids and *n*. Here the double letter in medial and final position marks the unlenited sound, as in the following minimal pairs:

<i>corr</i> /kor/ ‘heron’	vs.	<i>cor</i> /kor/ ‘putting’
<i>toll</i> /tol/ ‘hole’	vs.	<i>tol</i> /tol/ ‘desire’
<i>caillech</i> /kalʲəx/ ‘nun’	vs.	<i>cailech</i> /kalʲəx/ ‘cock’
<i>cenn</i> /kʲen/ ‘head’	vs.	<i>cen</i> /kʲen/ ‘without’

In the case of /m/ optional doubling may indicate non-lenition in final and internal position:

<i>cam(m)</i> /kam/ ‘crooked’	vs.	only <i>om</i> /oβʲ/ ‘raw’
<i>cum(m)ae</i> /kume/ ‘shape’	vs.	only <i>cuma</i> /kuβʲə/ ‘sorrow’

In initial position, and in many consonantal groups, single *r*, *l*, *m* and *n* express the strong articulation, but inside phrases, after elements that do not cause lenition, geminated spelling may indicate non-lenition. Needless to say that the optionality of these orthographic rules



leaves much room for ambiguity, e.g. *a llebor* for /a lʲeβər/ ‘her/their book’, but *a lebor* for /a lʲeβər/ ‘his book’ and /a lʲeβər/ ‘her/their book’. In Early Old Irish, *nd* and *mb* stand for /nd/ and /mb/ respectively, but during the Old Irish period they become monophonemic /n:/ and /m:/, a change which renders them freely interchangeable allographs of *nn* and *m(m)*.

Beginning in Late Old Irish, lenition of *f* and *s* is marked by a superposed punctum delens, *f̊* = Ø and *s̊* = /h/. Before that, lenition was not indicated orthographically. Occasionally a punctum stands over *m* and *n* when they are the product of the nasal mutation. In that way *ingen* /iŋiʒʲən/ ‘nail’ could be distinguished from *ingen* /iŋiʒʲən/ ‘daughter’.

### Vowel signs

The letters *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u* represent the vowels /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /u/. Vowel length is indicated, if at all, by the use of the acute accent, i.e. *á*, *é*, *í*, *ó*, *ú*. The diphthong /oj/ is written *óe* or *oí*, /aj/ is written *áe* or *aí*, /iə/ is expressed by *ía*, /uə/ by *úa*. This is an idealization; the length-mark may or may not be written on any element.

The greatest challenge in OIr. orthography is to give graphic expression to palatalization. This is achieved by a complex, but nevertheless deficient, system in which vowel signs are employed as diacritics to indicate the quality of the neighbouring consonants. The main pillars of this system are the support vowels *i*, which before a consonant usually indicates its palatalization (e.g. *beirid* /bʲeɾiəðʲ/ ‘(s)he carries’ or *gobainn* /goβənnʲ/ ‘smiths’), and *a*, which after a consonant usually indicates its non-palatalization (e.g. *carmai* /karmi/ ‘we love’). Closely connected with this is the spelling of schwa /ə/ that depends on the quality of the surrounding consonants. If both consonants are non-palatalized, *a* stands for schwa, e.g. *molad* /moləð/ ‘praise’. If the first one is palatalized, but the second one not, *e* is used, e.g. *claideb* /klaðʲəβʲ/ ‘sword’; in the reverse case *ai* or *i* is used, e.g. *canaid* or *canid* /kanəðʲ/ ‘(s)he sings’. If both consonants are palatalized, *i* is used, e.g. *claidib* /klaðʲəβʲʲ/ ‘swords’. When next to a labial, schwa tends towards roundness and can be written *o* or *u*. The letter *e* serves as a support vowel before word-final *a* and *o* after palatalized consonants, e.g. *doirsea* /dorʲsʲə/ ‘doors’, *toimseo* /toɪʲsʲə/ ‘measure (gen.)’. Notwithstanding the aporias already inherent in the system, these rules are rarely consistently applied.

### NOMINAL MORPHOLOGY

The nominal class includes nouns, adjectives, and pronouns. Pronouns, special in many respects, will be treated separately. Old Irish has a definite, but no indefinite, article. Article, nouns and adjectives are inflected for gender, number and case. The three genders, masculine (m.), feminine (f.), neuter (n.), are grammatical, not natural. There are three numbers: singular (sg.), plural (pl.) and dual (du.), but adjectives have no special dual forms and use the plural instead. The dual is always accompanied by the numeral ‘2’, i.e. m. *da*<sup>L</sup>, f. *dí*<sup>L</sup>.

Five cases are formally distinguished: nominative (nom.), vocative (voc.), accusative (acc.), genitive (gen.), prepositional (prep.). The nominative denotes the subject (agent in active, patient in passive sentences), the predicate of the subject, and is used for topicalization. The vocative is the form of address and is always preceded by the particle *a*<sup>L</sup>. The accusative denotes the direct object and has – to a lesser degree – adverbial meanings (direction, temporal extension); to the latter belongs its use after certain prepositions. The genitive indicates various attributive, adnominal relations, including possession, and

it has qualificatory function. In all earlier grammars, the prepositional has been called dative. This is inappropriate because it lacks the prototypical dative function, i.e. it does not mark the indirect object. Its preponderant use is as complement after certain prepositions. Only in a few restricted contexts can it be used independently, i.e. without preposition: to denote the object of comparison after the comparative, and in petrified phrases with instrumental or comitative meaning. In poetry independent prepositionals occur more often, usually with instrumental or locative force.

It is not entirely appropriate to speak of case 'endings', but for want of a better expression (such as German *Ausgang*) the term will be retained here. Inflection is achieved by a complex interaction of morphophonemic processes of which the addition of overt endings is only one and perhaps not the most important aspect. Equally important, or more so, are the mutational effects that case forms exact on following words, and the patterns of alternations in the quality of final consonants. Metaphonic changes within inflected words are rather concomitant in nature.

The system tolerates a certain amount of homomorphy: there is a special ending for the vocative only in the singular of the masculine *o*- and *jo*-stems. Everywhere else, the vocative is identical in form to the nominative in the singular, and to the accusative in the plural. In feminine words, the accusative and prepositional singular are always identical (notwithstanding a difference in the mutational effects); in all neuters, nominatives and accusatives are always identical. In the dual there are only three sets of forms: nominative–vocative–accusative, genitive, prepositional. The prepositionals dual and plural are always identical, notwithstanding a difference in the mutational effects.

The basic form of the article is *in* (*a*<sup>N</sup> for neuter nom./acc. sg.) with a variety of allomorphs that depend on the inflectional category and on the initial of the following word. The article is proclitic to its noun. It is not used in the vocative. It coalesces with primary prepositions, e.g. *fo* 'under' + acc. sg. *in*<sup>N</sup> → *fon*<sup>N</sup>, *ar* 'in front' + prep. sg. *in*(*d*)<sup>L</sup> → *arin*(*d*)<sup>L</sup>. Between non-leniting prepositions and the article *s* is inserted, e.g. *fri*<sup>H</sup> + acc. pl. *inna*<sup>H</sup> → *frisna*<sup>H</sup>, *co*<sup>N</sup> + prep. sg. *in*(*d*)<sup>L</sup> → *cossin*(*d*)<sup>L</sup>. The definite article may introduce a new topic that has not been mentioned before (Ronan 2004). The rule that in nominal phrases that consist of more than one noun only a single definite word – on the right hand side – may be present, is not as strictly followed in Old Irish as it is in the modern language (Ó Gealbháin 1991, Roma 2009).

### Nominal stem-classes

Nouns are classified according to stem-classes. Their names are historical, conventionally taken from Indo-European; they do not describe synchronic stem formants. There is a rough formal dichotomy between vocalic (*o*, *ā*, *jo*, *ḡā*, *ī*, *i*, *u*) and consonantal (dental: *t* and *d*, *nt*; guttural: *k*, *g*, *nk*; nasal: *n*, *men*; *r*, *s*) stem-classes. The stem-classes have certain predilections for gender: *o*-, *jo*-, and *u*-stems are masculine or neuter, *ā*-, *ḡā*-, *ī*-stems are feminine, *n*-stems are masculine or feminine, *men*- and *s*-stems are neuter. All other classes can be any gender. The inflectional patterns of the stems are exemplified in the tables below.

#### Vocalic stems

The *o*-stems and to a lesser degree the *ā*-stems display many alternations especially in the quality of their root vowels. These alternations cannot be easily captured in synchronic rules and are not represented in the tables below. The examples in Table 4.8 are: *ech* m. 'horse', *scél* n. 'tale', *céile* m. 'client', *cride* n. 'heart', *guth* m. 'voice', *dorus* n. 'door', *súil* f. 'eye', *muir* n. 'sea', *túath* f. 'people', *guide* f. 'prayer', *inis* f. 'island', *méit* f. 'size'.

Table 4.8 Declension of nouns: the vocalic stem-classes

Class	o, masc.	o, neut.	jo, masc.	jo, neut.
sg.				
nom.	<i>ech</i>	<i>scél<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>céile<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>cride<sup>N</sup></i>
voc.	<i>eich<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>scél<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>céili<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>cride<sup>N</sup></i>
acc.	<i>ech<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>scél<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>céile<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>cride<sup>N</sup></i>
gen.	<i>eich<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>scéuil<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>céili<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>cridi<sup>L</sup></i>
prep.	<i>euch<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>scéul<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>céiliu<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>cridiu<sup>L</sup></i>
pl.				
nom.	<i>eich<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>scél<sup>L</sup>, scéla</i>	<i>céili<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>cride<sup>L</sup></i>
voc.	<i>echu<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>scél<sup>L</sup>, scéla</i>	<i>céiliu<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>cride<sup>L</sup></i>
acc.	<i>echu<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>scél<sup>L</sup>, scéla</i>	<i>céiliu<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>cride<sup>L</sup></i>
gen.	<i>ech<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>scél<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>céile<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>cride<sup>N</sup></i>
prep.	<i>echaib</i>	<i>scélaib</i>	<i>céilib</i>	<i>cridib</i>
du.				
n. v. a.	<i>da<sup>L</sup> ech<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>N</sup> scél<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>L</sup> chéile<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>N</sup> cride<sup>N</sup></i>
gen.	<i>da<sup>L</sup> ech<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>N</sup> scél<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>L</sup> chéile<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>N</sup> cride<sup>N</sup></i>
prep.	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> n-echaib<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> scélaib<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> céilib<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> cridib<sup>N</sup></i>
Class	u, masc.	u, neut.	i, m./f.	i, neut.
sg.				
nom.	<i>guth</i>	<i>dorus<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>súil<sup>(L)</sup></i>	<i>muir<sup>N</sup></i>
voc.	<i>guth</i>	<i>dorus<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>súil<sup>(L)</sup></i>	<i>muir<sup>N</sup></i>
acc.	<i>guth<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dorus<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>súil<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>muir<sup>N</sup></i>
gen.	<i>gotho/a<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>doirse/a<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>súlo/a<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>moro/a<sup>H</sup></i>
prep.	<i>guth<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>dorus<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>súil<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>muir<sup>L</sup></i>
pl.				
nom.	<i>gothae/ai<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>dorus<sup>N</sup>, doirse<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>súili<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>muire<sup>L</sup></i>
voc.	<i>guthu<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>doirse<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>súili<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>muire<sup>L</sup></i>
acc.	<i>guthu<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>dorus<sup>N</sup>, doirse<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>súili<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>muire<sup>L</sup></i>
gen.	<i>gothae<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>doirse<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>súile<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>muire<sup>N</sup></i>
prep.	<i>gothaib</i>	<i>doirsib</i>	<i>súilib</i>	<i>muirib</i>
du.				
n. v. a.	<i>da<sup>L</sup> guth<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>N</sup> ndorus<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dí<sup>L</sup> súil<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>N</sup> muir<sup>N</sup></i>
gen.	<i>da<sup>L</sup> gotho<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>N</sup> ndoirse/a<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>L</sup> súlo/a<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>N</sup> moro/a<sup>N</sup></i>
prep.	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> ngothaib<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> ndoirsib<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> súilib<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> muirib<sup>N</sup></i>

Class	ā, fem.	jā, fem.	ī, fem.	ī (short), fem.
sg.				
nom.	<i>túath</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>guide</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>inis</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>méit</i> <sup>L</sup>
voc.	<i>túath</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>guide</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>inis</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>méit</i> <sup>L</sup>
acc.	<i>túaithe</i> <sup>N</sup>	<i>guidi</i> <sup>N</sup>	<i>insi</i> <sup>N</sup>	<i>méit</i> <sup>N</sup>
gen.	<i>túaithe</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>guide</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>inse</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>méite</i> <sup>H</sup>
prep.	<i>túaithe</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>guidi</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>insi</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>méit</i> <sup>L</sup>
pl.				
nom.	<i>túatha</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>guidi</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>insi</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>méiti</i> <sup>H</sup>
voc.	<i>túatha</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>guidi</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>insi</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>méiti</i> <sup>H</sup>
acc.	<i>túatha</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>guidi</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>insi</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>méiti</i> <sup>H</sup>
gen.	<i>túath</i> <sup>N</sup>	<i>guide</i> <sup>N</sup>	<i>inse</i> <sup>N</sup>	<i>méite</i> <sup>N</sup>
prep.	<i>túathaib</i>	<i>guidib</i>	<i>insib</i>	<i>méitib</i>
du.				
n. v. a.	<i>dí<sup>L</sup> thúaithe</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>dí<sup>L</sup> guidi</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>dí<sup>L</sup> inis</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>dí<sup>L</sup> méit</i> <sup>L</sup>
gen.	<i>da<sup>L</sup> thúaithe</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>da<sup>L</sup> guide</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>da<sup>L</sup> inse</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>da<sup>L</sup> méite</i> <sup>L</sup>
prep.	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> túathaib</i> <sup>N</sup>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> nguidib</i> <sup>N</sup>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> n-insib</i> <sup>N</sup>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> méitib</i> <sup>N</sup>

### Consonantal stems

The declension of consonant stems is by and large more uniform than that of the vocalic stem-classes. One common feature of almost all stem-classes is that the eponymous consonant is visible only in the oblique cases, and absent in the nominative singular. This rule does not apply to *r*-stems, which display the *r* everywhere, and to *s*-stems, where *s* is nowhere to be seen. The nominative singular may end in a vowel or a consonant. Feminine nouns lenite in the nominative singular, masculines don't. Some *k*-, *t/d*-, *n*- and *m*-stems distinguish two basic variants of the prepositional singular: a long form, identical to the accusative (the form in the tables below), and a short form, usually identical to the nominative. Since the availability of the short prepositional is almost a property of individual lexemes, they are not indicated in the tables. Some *n*-stems further distinguish two allomorphs of the short variant, one that goes with the nominative, and another one in *-e<sup>L</sup>*, e.g. *toimtiu* 'opinion' has *toimtin*, *toimtiu* and *toimte* side by side. The *n*-stems have been treated by Stüber (1998), some dental stems by Irslinger (2002). The examples in Table 4.9 are: *sail* f. 'willow', *rí* m. 'king', *fili* m. 'poet', *carae* m. 'friend', *dét* n. 'tooth', *brithem* m. 'judge', *ainm* n. 'name', *athair* m. 'father', *tech* n. 'house'.

Table 4.9 Declension of nouns: the consonantal stem-classes

Class	k, m./f.	g, m./f.	t/d, m./f.	nt, m./f.	nt, neut.
sg.					
nom./voc.	<i>sail</i>	<i>rí</i>	<i>fili</i>	<i>carae</i>	<i>dér<sup>N</sup></i>
acc.	<i>sailig<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>ríg<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>filid<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>carait<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dér<sup>N</sup></i>
gen.	<i>sailech</i>	<i>ríg</i>	<i>filed</i>	<i>carat</i>	<i>dét</i>
prep.	<i>sailig<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>ríg<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>filid<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>carait<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>dét<sup>L</sup></i>
pl.					
nom.	<i>sailig</i>	<i>ríg</i>	<i>filid</i>	<i>carait</i>	<i>dét<sup>L</sup></i>
acc./voc.	<i>sailgea<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>ríga<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>fileda<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>cairtea<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>dét<sup>L</sup></i>
gen.	<i>sailech<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>ríg<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>filed<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>carat<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dét<sup>N</sup></i>
prep.	<i>sailgib</i>	<i>rígaib</i>	<i>filedaib</i>	<i>cairtib</i>	<i>détaib</i>
du.					
n. v. a.	<i>di<sup>L</sup> sailig<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>L</sup> rí<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>L</sup> filid<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>L</sup> charait<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>N</sup> ndér<sup>N</sup></i>
gen.	<i>da<sup>L</sup> sailech<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>L</sup> rí<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>L</sup> filed<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>L</sup> charait<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>N</sup> ndér<sup>N</sup></i>
prep.	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> sailgib<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> rígaib<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> filedaib<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> cairtib<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> ndétaib<sup>N</sup></i>
Class	n, m./f.	men, neut.	r, m./f.	s, neut.	
sg.					
nom./voc.	<i>brithem</i>	<i>ainm<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>athair</i>	<i>tech<sup>N</sup></i>	
acc.	<i>brithemain<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>ainm<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>athair<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>tech<sup>N</sup></i>	
gen.	<i>britheman</i>	<i>anmae<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>athar</i>	<i>tige<sup>H</sup></i>	
prep.	<i>brithemain<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>anmain<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>athair<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>taig<sup>L</sup></i>	
pl.					
nom.	<i>britheman</i>	<i>anman<sup>L</sup>, anmanna</i>	<i>aithir</i>	<i>tige<sup>L</sup></i>	
acc./voc.	<i>brithemna<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>anman<sup>L</sup>, anmanna</i>	<i>aithrea<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>tige<sup>L</sup></i>	
gen.	<i>britheman<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>anman<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>aithre<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>tige<sup>N</sup></i>	
prep.	<i>brithemnaib</i>	<i>anmannai<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>aithrib</i>	<i>tigib</i>	
du.					
n. v. a.	<i>da<sup>L</sup> brithemain<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da n-ainm<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>L</sup> aithir<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>N</sup> tech<sup>N</sup></i>	
gen.	<i>da<sup>L</sup> britheman<sup>L</sup></i>		<i>da<sup>L</sup> athar<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>da<sup>N</sup> tige<sup>N</sup></i>	
prep.	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> mbrithemnaib<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> n- anmannai<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> n-aithrib<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>dib<sup>N</sup> tigib<sup>N</sup></i>	

*Arbor* n. 'corn', gen.sg. *arbae*, prep. *arbaim* is special in that it drops the *r* of the nominative/accusative and inflects as an *n*-stem elsewhere. A handful of nouns cannot be included in one of the preceding classes. The two most important of these are *ben* f. 'woman' and *bó* f. 'cow', see Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 Declension of nouns: *ben* and *bó*

Class	ben, fem.	bó, fem.
sg.		
nom.	<i>ben</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>bó</i> <sup>L</sup>
voc.	<i>ben</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>bó</i> <sup>L</sup>
acc.	<i>mnaí</i> <sup>N</sup> (old: <i>bein</i> <sup>N</sup> )	<i>boin</i> <sup>N</sup>
gen.	<i>mná</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>bó</i> <sup>H</sup>
prep.	<i>mnaí</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>boin</i> <sup>L</sup>
pl.		
nom.	<i>mná</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>baí</i> <sup>H</sup>
voc.	<i>mná</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>baí</i> <sup>H</sup>
acc.	<i>mná</i> <sup>H</sup>	<i>baí</i> <sup>H</sup>
gen.	<i>ban</i> <sup>N</sup>	<i>bó</i> <sup>N</sup>
prep.	<i>mnáib</i>	<i>búaib</i>
du.		
n. v. a.	<i>dí</i> <sup>L</sup> <i>mnaí</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>dí</i> <sup>L</sup> <i>baí</i> <sup>L</sup>
gen.	<i>da</i> <sup>L</sup> <i>ban</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>da</i> <sup>L</sup> <i>bó</i> <sup>L</sup>
prep.	<i>dib</i> <sup>N</sup> <i>mnáib</i> <sup>N</sup>	<i>dib</i> <sup>N</sup> <i>mbúaib</i> <sup>N</sup>

## Adjectives

Attributive adjectives follow their nouns. Only a few inflected adjectives that function as determiners precede the noun. If normal adjectives are moved before the noun, they lose inflection and are compounded with the noun; for some adjectives this is the only possible construction, e.g. *óen*- 'one', *sen*- 'old', *droch*- 'bad', *dag*-, *deg*- 'good', etc. Adjectives agree in gender, number (plural substitutes dual) and case with their head nouns. Almost all adjectives fall into one of four large groups that can be recognized by the final sound of the base form: *o/ā*-adjectives end in a non-palatalized consonant (e.g. *mór* 'big'), *io/īā*-adjectives in *-e* (*buide* 'yellow'), and *i*-stem adjectives in a palatalized consonant (*maith* 'good'). The slightly rarer *u*-stem adjectives have a *u* before their final consonant (*dub* 'black'). There are only residues of consonantal stems. In the first two groups, *o*- and *īo*-declension is used in conjunction with masculine or neuter nouns, and *ā*- or *īā*-declension with feminines. The declension of adjectives parallels that of nouns, but already in our earliest sources a certain amount of convergence and reduction has set in, a tendency that continues into Middle Irish. There are fewer distinctive forms in plural and singular. While in the earliest period masculine *o*-stem adjectives inflect exactly like nouns,

the ending *-u* of the acc. pl. soon gives way to *-a*, the general nom./acc. pl. ending of feminines and neuters of that class, and eventually the nom. pl. follows suit. In the *jo/jā-*, the *i-*, and the *u-*adjectives such unification is already in place: the nom./voc./acc. pl. of all genders is *-i*. In the singular of *i-*adjectives, apart from the mutational effects, inflection has virtually been given up. Only the feminine gen. sg. ends in *-e*. The singular of the *u-*adjectives is also moving towards this state. In the gen. sg. and in the feminine acc./prep. the endings of the *o/ā-*adjectives are used. Everywhere else the base form appears, while the mutational effects remain.

Fully inflected like nouns, and with the appropriate article added, substantivized adjectives can express various meanings ranging from abstract concepts to concrete objects. The main strategy of forming adverbs is to combine the article with the prepositional singular of the neuter substantivized adjective (*in maith* 'well'). This is later supplanted by a construction involving the preposition *co*<sup>H</sup> 'until' (*co mmaith*).

### Comparison of adjectives

Aside from the basic positive degree, there are three degrees of comparison that are formed by suffixation: the comparative ('more X than') with the suffix *-(i)u*, the equative ('as X as') in *-aithir*, and the superlative ('most X') in *-e/am*, e.g. *dían* 'swift' → *déinithir*, *déiniu*, *déinem*, or *ard* 'high' → *ardaithir*, *ardu*, *ardam*. All suffixes have a raising effect on the root vowel, where applicable. The basic concepts *accus* 'near', *becc* 'small', *il* 'many', *lethan* 'broad', *maith*, *dag-* 'good', *már*, *mór* 'great, much', *oac* 'young', *olc*, *droch-* 'bad', *remur* 'thick', *sír* 'long', *trén* 'strong' are irregular; they either lack one of the degrees of comparison or build them from reduced or suppletive bases. All three suffixal degrees of comparison are indeclinable and cannot be used attributively. They can only serve as the predicate of the copula. In order to make up for the lack of attributive constructions, relative clauses have to be used: *ingen álaind* 'a beautiful girl' → *ingen as áildem* 'the girl that is most beautiful'. The object of comparison after the equative is expressed by the accusative, after the comparative by the plain prepositional.

In addition to the suffixal formations, there are further degrees of comparison formed by prefixation: the excessive ('too X') with the prefix *ro-*, the elative or absolute superlative ('very X') with the suffixes *ér-*, *der-*, *rug-*, *ro-*, and, again, the equative with *com-*, in which case the object of comparison is introduced by the preposition *fri*<sup>H</sup>.

### NUMERALS

The fundamental overview of Old Irish numerals is Greene (1992). The cardinal *óen* '1' is compounded with the counted noun; m.n. *da*<sup>L</sup>, f. *dí*<sup>L</sup> '2', m. *trí*<sup>H</sup>, n. *tre*, f. *teoir* '3', m.n. *cethair*, f. *cethéoir* '4' are fully inflected adjectives and agree in gender, number, and case with the nouns. *Cóic*<sup>L</sup> '5', *se*<sup>H</sup> '6', *secht*<sup>N</sup> '7', *ocht*<sup>N</sup> '8', *noí*<sup>N</sup> '9', *deich*<sup>N</sup> '10' are uninflected. As determiners, the numerals stand before the counted nouns. The higher decades, hundreds and thousands are nouns and govern the gen. pl.: *fiche* '20', *trícha/o* '30', *cethorcha/o* '40', *coíca/o* '50', *sesca/o* '60', *sechtmoga/o* '70', *ochtмага/o* '80', *nócha/o* '90' are masc. nt-stems; *cét* '100' is a neuter o-stem, *míle* '1000', a loan from Latin, a feminine *jā*-stem. When the numerals are substantivized, a particle *a*<sup>H</sup> precedes them; for '2' *dáu/dó* is then used. Combinations of digits and decades are formed by adding *deac* (later *déc*) 'teen' after the counted noun, e.g. *trí laích deac* '13 warriors', or the genitive of all higher decades, e.g. *noí n-aidchi fichet* '29 nights'. For '1' + decades, or for higher

numerals, the preposition *ar*<sup>L</sup> is used: *bó ar fichit* '21 cows', *coíca salm ar chét* '150 psalms'. For fractions, we find special words for *leth* (o, n) 'half' (often compounded), *trian* (o, n) 'third', *cethramthu* (n, f) 'quarter'. Other fractions make use of constructions with the ordinals.

The ordinals, except for *tánaise*, are ordinary adjectives, but they are preposed to their nouns: *cétnae* or *cét* '1st', *tánaise* '2nd' and *aile* 'other', *triss*, *tress* '3rd', *cethramad* '4th', *cóiced* '5th', *seissed* '6th', *sechtmad* '7th', *ochtmad* '8th', *nómad* '9th', *dechmad* '10', *óenmad* . . . *deac* '11th', *fichetmad* '20th', *tríchatmad* '30th', *cétmad* '100th'.

For counting 'men', a special personal numeral series exists: *óenar* 'one man', *triar* 'three men', *cethrar* '4', *cóecar* '5', *sesser* '6', *mórfesser* '7', *ochtar* '8', *nóenbor* '9', *deichenbor* '10'. These words are compounded neuter o-stem abstracts with *fer* 'man' as second compound member, except for *dias* (ā, f) 'two men, a pair'. Later the use of the personal numerals is extended to other human beings. The numeral series for things is: *úathad* (o, n) 'single thing, singular number', *déde* 'two things', *tréde* '3', *cethardae* '4', *cóicde* '5', *séde* '6', *sechtae* '7', *ochtae* '8', *noíde* '9', *deichde* '10' (all: jo, n). Grammatically these numerals are treated as singulars, e.g. *gatais cethrar echu Pátraic* 'a four-men group stole (sg.) Pátric's horses'.

The inherited decimal system is well attested in computistical literature, which is based on Latin models. More at home in the native literature is the vigesimal system, the cornerstones of which are constructions such as *da fichit* '2 × 20 = 40', *trí fichit* '3 × 20 = 60'. A pronounced liking for multiples can be observed in other combinations: *dá secht* '2 × 7 = 14', *trí cóecait mac* '3 × 50 = 150 boys'.

## PRONOUNS AND PRONOMINALS

Compared with its 'cousin' Indo-European languages, the pronominal system of Old Irish stands far apart. What must have been inherited has been widely reduced, in form and in categories. It is particularly striking how few stressed and/or inflected forms can be found. At the same time, the formal and categorial variation has been greatly expanded by the rise of new items, very often particles, with pronominal signification (see Schrijver 1997). Wide use is made of clitic or affixed elements that would be devoid of semantics if isolated from their context. In this overview not only will a distinction be made between pronouns and pronominals, but the former will also have to be subdivided according to their morphological and syntactical properties. Independent pronouns will have to be distinguished from dependent, clitic or affixed pronouns, and among the latter infixed and suffixed pronouns will have to be studied separately, not to mention their subdivisions, or the various clitic particles that defy a straightforward description. One common feature is that outside the 3 sg. the pronouns make no gender distinction. Relative pronouns are entirely absent: relativity in Old Irish is a verbal affair, not a pronominal one.

### Independent personal pronouns

Independent personal pronouns (Table 4.11) have a very restricted role in the language. They are only used in a single construction, as predicates after the copula *is*, when the pronoun is topicalized: *is mé* or *is messe* 'it is I (who . . .)'. In this construction, they are incorporated in the predicate. Subject pronouns find no formal expression in Old Irish because they are inherent in the inflectional endings of verbal forms. Beside the simple independent pronouns a variant augmented by the *notae augentes* (see below) is found.



Sometimes these amplified forms are used for emphasis or contrast. Independent pronouns are felt to be singular substantives, e.g. *ní sní dud-rigni* ‘it is (sg.) not we who has (sg.) done it’. Only in the 3 pl. is the verb also plural, e.g. *it hé cretite* ‘it is (pl.) they who believe (pl.)’. Sometimes the 1 pl. and 2 pl. show *constructio ad sensum*, though, e.g. *it* (or *is*) *sib ata chomarpi* ‘it is (sg. or pl.) you who are (pl.) heirs’. A neuter pronoun can refer to a phrase as a whole, e.g. *ra-fítir cretim do geintib* ‘he knows it (neut.), the pagans believe’ (no gender agreement of the proleptic pronoun with fem. *creitem* ‘belief’). In predicative sentences, the gender of pronouns is attracted to what follows immediately, e.g. *is ed tobchétal nime in torainn* ‘the thunders, it (neut. sg.) is the trumpet-song of heaven’; or *Críst didiu, is sí in chathir* ‘Christ, then, she (!) is the city’.

Table 4.11 Independent personal pronouns

Person	Independent	Emphatic
1 sg.	<i>mé</i>	<i>messe</i>
2 sg.	<i>tú</i>	<i>tussu</i>
3 sg. m.	<i>(h)é</i>	<i>ésom</i>
3 sg. f.	<i>sí</i>	<i>síssi</i>
3 sg. n.	<i>(h)ed</i>	—
1 pl.	<i>sní</i>	<i>snisni, snini, sinni</i>
2 pl.	<i>sí</i>	<i>sissi, sibsi</i>
3 pl.	<i>(h)é</i>	<i>ésom</i>

Personal pronouns – general

Apart from the syntactically restricted forms mentioned in the previous paragraph, Old Irish does not have personal pronouns as a stressed class of words. Instead, for pronominal subjects the verbal endings alone suffice; where there is a two-part subject, one pronominal, the other non-pronominal, only the latter is explicitly mentioned, the other one implied by the plural ending, e.g. *con-ráncatar ocus Dubthach* ‘they met (he) and D.’ For pronominal objects uninflected clitic or fusional elements are used that need the support of another element, which is not necessarily stressed itself. These dependent pronouns developed from inherited, unstressed pronouns that coalesced with the preceding stress-bearing elements, sometimes amplified by further particles. In spite of their unitary origins, the personal pronouns display great allomorphic variation, which historically depended solely on the phonological context, but which has been realigned synchronically with other triggers. First of all, there is a dichotomy between infixed and suffixed pronouns. The four types of infixed pronouns occur only within the verbal complex, the two types of suffixed pronouns after simple verbs and as complements after primary prepositions (again with great allomorphic variation). With verbs, personal pronouns preponderantly mark the patient of a verbal action, but they can also carry the function of the indirect object (‘dative’). Sometimes the pronominal affixes proleptically refer to overt nominal objects; this has been interpreted as object agreement marking by Eska (2009).

## Infixed personal pronouns

Object pronouns that are governed by verbs are infixed inside the ‘verbal complex’, that is, they immediately follow the first element (preverb, grammatical particle, sentence particle, conjunction) of the verbal complex, preceding the stressed syllable.

The distribution of the four different types of infixed pronouns is governed by phonological, syntactical and lexical rules: class A infixes are used in main clauses after preverbs that historically ended in a vowel (*ar·*, *do·*, *fo·*, *imm·*, *ro·*), after the negative *ní·* and after the empty particle *no·*, which serves as a dummy support for pronouns in the case of simple verbs. Class B is used after preverbs that historically ended in a consonant (*ad·*, *as·*, *con·*, *etar·*, *fris·*, *for·*, *in·*). Class C is used in relative constructions, after certain conjunctions and after the interrogative particle *in·*. The fourth variant is used after the negative *ná·*, *nád·*, which is used in questions, in the imperative and in relative constructions.

Class A infixes are added after the supporting element. The 3rd sg. m. and n. pronoun *-a<sup>N/L</sup>* replaces *-o*, disappears after *ní* and appears as *e* or *a* after *ar·* and *imm·*. The mutational effects remain, e.g. *na-chain* ‘(s)he sings it’, *fos-longam* ‘we endure them’. Class B is characterized by /d/, written *d* or *t*, before the pronoun proper. When attached to consonants other than *r*, it merges with these, e.g. *atom-chiud* ‘you see me’, *forda-caun* ‘I teach her’. Class C is characterized by /ð/ (delenited to /d/ after *n*), written *d*, before the pronoun, e.g. *nod-chain* ‘who sings it’, *arnda-fulsam* ‘so that we may endure them’, *indam-accaid* ‘do you see me?’. The fourth variant resembles class C, but has *ch* instead of *d* before the pronoun proper, e.g. *nachin-ben* ‘do not beat us’, *connach-n-accam* ‘so that we do not see him’. There is great variation in the spelling of the vowels; in Table 4.12 a wildcard vowel is used.

Table 4.12 Infixed pronouns

Person	A	B	C	nach-
1 sg.	<i>-m<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>-d/tom<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>-dom<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>-cham<sup>L</sup></i>
2 sg.	<i>-t<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>-tot<sup>L</sup>, -t<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>-dat<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>-chat<sup>L</sup></i>
3 sg. m.	<i>-a<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>-t<sup>N</sup>, (-ta<sup>N</sup>)</i>	<i>-id<sup>N</sup>, -did<sup>N</sup>, -d<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>-ch<sup>N</sup></i>
3 sg. f.	<i>-s<sup>(N)</sup></i>	<i>-d/ta<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>-da<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>-cha<sup>H</sup></i>
3 sg. n.	<i>-a<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>-t<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>-id<sup>L</sup>, -did<sup>L</sup>, -d<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>-ch<sup>L</sup>, -chid<sup>L</sup></i>
1 pl.	<i>-n(n)</i>	<i>-d/ton(n)</i>	<i>-don(n)</i>	<i>-chan(n)</i>
2 pl.	<i>-b</i>	<i>-d/tob</i>	<i>-dob</i>	<i>-chib</i>
3 pl.	<i>-s<sup>(N)</sup></i>	<i>-d/ta<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>-da<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>-cha<sup>H</sup></i>

## Suffixed personal pronouns

For suffixed pronouns after prepositions, see below. After 3 sg. and – to a lesser degree – 1 pl. and 3 pl. simple verbs, personal pronouns may be suffixed, that is, added after the ending (Breatnach 1977). The addition of the pronoun causes syncope, where applicable. Suffixed pronouns are particularly common after *táth\** ‘there is’ (otherwise unattested as a simple verb), where the pronouns mark the indirect object instead of the usual direct object (Table 4.13).

Table 4.13 Suffixed pronouns

Person	Suffixed
1 sg.	<i>táthum</i>
2 sg.	<i>táthut</i>
3 sg. m.	<i>táthai</i>
3 sg. f.	<i>táthus</i>
3 sg. n.	<i>táthai</i>
1 pl.	<i>táthunn</i>
2 pl.	<i>táthub</i>
3 pl.	<i>táthus</i>

After 1 pl. and 3 pl. verbs, the neuter suffixed pronoun is *-it*, e.g. *guidmit* ‘we ask for it’.

Possessive pronouns

Attributive possessive pronouns (Table 4.14) precede, as uninflectable proclitics, the noun they qualify. They usually merge with preceding prepositions which thereby may undergo phonological changes, e.g. *diar* ‘to our’ < *do* + *ar*. The stressed forms, which occur in predicative position or are used as substantives, often have partitive force. The proleptic use of possessive pronouns is not uncommon, e.g. *a masse in choirp* ‘the (lit. its) beauty of the body’.

Table 4.14 Possessive pronouns

Person	Possessive	Stressed
1 sg.	<i>mo<sup>L</sup>, m’</i>	<i>muí, muisse</i>
2 sg.	<i>do<sup>L</sup>, t’</i>	<i>taí</i>
3 sg. m.	<i>a<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>áe, aí</i>
3 sg. f.	<i>a<sup>H</sup></i>	<i>áe, aí</i>
3 sg. n.	<i>a<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>áe, aí</i>
1 pl.	<i>ar<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>náthar, nár</i>
2 pl.	<i>for<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>sethar, sár</i>
3 pl.	<i>a<sup>N</sup></i>	<i>áe, aí</i>

Notae augentes

Any of the before-mentioned pronouns, plus subjects encoded in verbal forms, can be optionally augmented by pronominal clitics, called *notae augentes* for want of a better term. These are added at the end of the accentual unit to which the pronouns belong. In previous grammars they have been described as emphatic or contrastive. However, it has been shown that they cannot have fulfilled these functions because their distribution follows a hierarchy of animacy, and does not comply with pragmatic necessities. They seem to function like personal pronouns in head marking languages, reinforcing an already present pronominal element (Griffith 2008a, 2008b). The addition of a *nota augens* does not cause syncope.

Table 4.15 *Notae augentes*

Person	<i>nota augens</i>
1 sg.	-sa, -se
2 sg.	-su, -siu
3 sg. m.	-som, -sem, -sium
3 sg. f.	-sí
3 sg. n.	-som, -sem, -sium
1 pl.	-ní
2 pl.	-sí
3 pl.	-som, -sem, -sium

### Deictic and demonstrative pronouns

Formally similar elements serve as demonstrative and deictic markers. Sequences of article and noun can be augmented by enclitic adverbial particles of place that have demonstrative force, e.g. *in cú-so* ‘this dog’, *inna ingine-sin* ‘of that girl’, etc.

position	adverb
proximal	-sa, -so; -se, sea-, -seo
medial	-sin (usually anaphoric)
distal	tall, ucut

Emphasis is added by placing *í* before the particle. Deictic *í* turns an article into a substantive, e.g. *donaib í* ‘to those’, *ind í-siu* ‘this one (fem.)’, *a n-í-sin* ‘that (aforementioned) thing’. *So* and *in so*, *se* and *in se*, *sin* and *in sin*, and *suide* (jofjā, neuter nom. acc. *sodain*) are also used substantively. The latter has anaphoric force and has an enclitic, unstressed variant *side*, neut. *són* and *ade*, *ón* with loss of *s*.

In principal, any adverb of place can be added after article + noun for local qualification. Among adverbs of place, Old Irish distinguishes morphologically between fixed position (e.g. *sund* ‘here’), direction towards (*ille* ‘hither’), and origin (*de-siu* ‘from here’). Frequently, *t-* is prefixed to adverbial bases (e.g. *úas* ‘above’) to indicate where something is (*túas* ‘above’), *s-* indicates the direction towards (*súas* ‘upwards’), and *an-* the direction from where something is coming (*anúas*). Other bases that behave like this are: *ís* ‘below’, *air* ‘in front, east’, *íar* ‘behind, west’. Bases with partly exceptional behaviour are *all* ‘there, beyond’, *dess* ‘south’, *túaid* ‘north’ and *echtair* ‘outside’.

### Interrogative and indefinite pronouns

The system of OIr. interrogative pronouns is curiously underdeveloped. At the heart of the system lies the stressed pronoun *cía* (general and masculine), feminine *cist<sup>L</sup>*, *cessi<sup>L</sup>*, pl. *ciné* ‘who is?’, neuter *cid<sup>L</sup>* ‘what is?’, with its unstressed variant *ce*, *cí*, *cía*. Combined with substantives in the nominative, these pronouns correspond to adverbial interrogatives of other languages, e.g. *cía airm* ‘what is the place → where?’, *cía chruth* ‘what is its manner → how?’. The simple unstressed variant is incorporated into the verbal complex and functions as the subject and object, even as adverbial object, and as indefinite ‘whoever, whatever’. All other stressed interrogative forms or complexes are nominatives and

predicates of copular sentences. With verbs other than the copula, relative constructions must be used, e.g. *cía rannas dúib?* ‘who is it who divides for you?’. Other interrogative pronouns occupy a marginal position: *coich* ‘whose?’, *cair* ‘what for?’, *can* ‘whence?’, *cote*, pl. *coteet*, *cateat* ‘of what sort?’, and the particle *co<sup>H</sup>* ‘how? of what sort? where? wherein consists?’, which is incorporated in the verbal complex.

Indefiniteness is also expressed by the preverbal particle *cecha*, *cacha* ‘whosoever, whatsoever, all that’, and by the predicative expression *sechi* ‘whatsoever he, she, it is’.

## Pronominals

Pronominals are determiners that have pronoun-like semantics. They vary in grammatical category and behaviour. Some are substantives, some adjectives; some are both but are reduced in shape when used adjectivally. Some adjectives follow their noun, others precede it. Although pronominals are largely inflected, a trend towards loss of inflection is observable.

*innonn* (*sinonn*): ‘the same’, used only predicatively without gender distinction. Post-posed *cétnae* also means ‘same’.

*féin*, *fadéin*, *céin*, *cadéin*: emphatic (not reflexive) ‘-self’, follows its noun. It displays a great variety of uninflected forms that cannot be reproduced here. In the end, *féin* wins out.

*aile*: ‘other’, follows its noun. The neuter nom. acc. sg. is *aill*; its reduced form, invariant to gender and case, is *ala* e.g. in *indala* ‘the one’ (as opposed to ‘the other’).

*alaile*, *araile*: substantival form of *aile*, neuter nom. acc. sg. is *alaill*, *araill*. The plural *alaili* also means ‘some, certain’.

*nach*: adjectival ‘any’, precedes its noun, strongly reduced in inflection. The neuter nom. acc. sg. is *na<sup>H</sup>*.

*nech*: substantival ‘someone, anyone; something, anything’, in negative contexts ‘nobody, nothing’. The neuter nom. acc. sg. is *ní*. The plural is supplied by *alaili*.

*cach*, *cech*: adjectival ‘each, every’, precedes its noun, strongly reduced in inflection.

*cách*: substantival ‘everyone’; cf. also substantival, uninflectable *cechtar* ‘each (of two)’.

## Prepositions

Primary prepositions are autosemantic; they cannot be further analysed. OIr. prepositions govern the prepositional and/or the accusative cases. Almost every preposition has its particular mutational property; the distinction between leniting prepositions and all others is important in contexts where the prepositions merge with other elements (article, possessive pronouns, relative particle).

Prepositions governing the prepositional case: *a<sup>H</sup>* ‘out of’, *co<sup>N</sup>* ‘with’, *di<sup>L</sup>* ‘of, from’, *do<sup>L</sup>* ‘to, for’, *fiad<sup>L</sup>* ‘in the presence of’, *íar<sup>N</sup>* ‘after’, *ís* ‘below’, *ó*, *úa<sup>L</sup>* ‘from’, *oc* ‘at’, *ós* ‘above’, *re<sup>ri<sup>N</sup></sup>* ‘before’.

Prepositions governing the accusative: *al*, *ol* (rare) ‘beyond’, *amal<sup>L</sup>* ‘as, like’, *cen<sup>L</sup>* ‘without’, *co<sup>H</sup>* ‘to, till’, *echtar* (rare) ‘outside’, *etar<sup>L</sup>* ‘between’, *fri<sup>H</sup>* ‘towards, against’, *imm<sup>L</sup>* ‘around, about’, *inge* (rare) ‘except’, *la<sup>H</sup>* ‘with’, *sech* ‘past, beyond’, *tar*, *dar* ‘across’, *tri<sup>L</sup>* ‘through’.

Prepositions taking both cases, the prepositional indicating position, the accusative direction: *ar<sup>L</sup>* ‘for, in front of’, *fo<sup>L</sup>* ‘under’, *for* ‘on, upon’, *i<sup>N</sup>* ‘in, into’.

In addition, Old Irish is rich in secondary prepositions, i.e. semantically extenuated collocations of primary prepositions and nouns (e.g. *ar bélaib* ‘before the lips’ → ‘in

front of'), or petrified case forms of nouns (e.g. *dochum* 'towards', a reduced prep. sg. of *tochimm* 'the act of stepping'). Secondary prepositions govern the genitive, e.g. *dochum inna rígnae* 'towards the queen'; when combined with pronouns they take possessives instead of personal affixes, e.g. *a ndochum* 'towards them', *ardo bélaib* 'in front of you'.

### Inflection of prepositions

It is a peculiarity of the Insular Celtic languages that the primary prepositions have merged in prehistoric times with unstressed pronouns, which in the process have become strongly reduced affixes. The resultant prepositional-pronominal complexes possess a fully developed, systematic inflection for number and person, and in the 3 sg. also for gender. They are usually called prepositional pronouns or, imprecisely, conjugated prepositions. Prepositions that govern both the accusative and the prepositional make that distinction in the inflected forms only in the 3rd persons. These complexes are only to some extent analysable as to their component parts; only a rough inventory of the 'endings' of these forms can be given (Table 4.16).

Table 4.16 Pronominal endings of prepositions

Person	Ending
1 sg.	-(u)m(m)
2 sg.	-(u)t
3 sg. m., n.	see below
3 sg. f.	-e (acc.), -i (prep.)
1 pl.	-(u)n(n)
2 pl.	-ib
3 pl.	-u (acc.), -ib (prep.)

No rules can be given for the 3 sg. masculine and neuter endings. These are lexem-specific. From a historical perspective, most of them continue fused masculine and neuter pronouns, but some are the mere prepositions, petrified in adverbial use. In the 3 sg. f. the consonant before the ending -e is devoiced or geminated, where possible, e.g. *for* 'on' → *forrae* 'upon her'. In the 3rd plural the consonant before the ending -u is devoiced or geminated, where possible, e.g. *imm* (< \*imbi) 'around' → *impu* 'around them'. Only a few model paradigms can be given here: *do* + prep. 'to, for', *la* + acc. 'with', *i* + prep./acc. 'in, into' (Table 4.17).

Table 4.17 Model inflected prepositions

Person	Singular	Plural
1st	<i>dom, dam</i>	<i>dún(n)</i>
2nd	<i>duit, dait</i>	<i>dúib</i>
3rd m./n.	<i>dó</i>	<i>doaib, dóib</i>
3rd f.	<i>dí</i>	

Person	Singular	Plural
1st	<i>lemm, liumm</i>	<i>linn, lenn</i>
2nd	<i>lat</i>	<i>lib</i>
3rd m./n.	<i>leis, lais</i>	<i>léu</i>
3rd f.	<i>lee</i>	

Person	Singular	Plural
1st	<i>indiumm</i>	<i>indiunn</i>
2nd	<i>indiut</i>	<i>indib</i>
3rd m./n. acc.	<i>ind</i>	<i>intiu</i>
prep.	<i>and</i>	<i>indib</i>
3rd f. acc.	<i>indi</i>	
prep.	<i>inte</i>	

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Over the course of time pronominal prepositions suffered attrition; Old Irish is richer in them than the modern language is. The distinction between accusative and prepositional forms was abandoned.

VERBAL MORPHOLOGY

What is best called the ‘verbal complex’ (see McCone 1997: 1–19) is the most difficult and most challenging section of Old Irish grammar. Verbal morphology is only one aspect of this. The verbal complex is everything that falls in the accentual domain of the verb. This includes not only the inflected verbs, but also any preverbs, so-called conjunct particles, i.e. sentence-modifying elements, conjunctions, as well as various grammatical and pronominal prefixes, infixes, and suffixes. The notorious complexities besetting the Old Irish verb, however, derive not so much from the many component parts of the verbal complex, but are rather due to the intricate morphology and its bewildering wealth of forms, a wealth that seems to border on the absence of rules. Some of the apparent irregularities become transparent only diachronically. It is one of the most outstanding features of Old Irish that it preserves distinctions and categories that made sense several thousand years in the past, but which can only be regarded as opaque alternations in synchronic terms (e.g. the future *ebraid* of the verb *ernaid* ‘to bestow’, which was regular as long as PIE *\*p* was present in the language). Still, the number of changes and restructurings that have taken place in the verbal system should not be underestimated. One must not mistake Old Irish verbs for a quarry of Proto-Indo-European morphology. The system is characterized by just as much innovation as conservation. The Old Irish verbal system is strongly non-Indo-European in appearance, but it is transparently Indo-European in origin.

The complexities of the verbal system are also the result of a proliferation of morphological alternants and categories that are synchronically devoid of function or semantic information. Unlike the nominal system, where there is an incipient tendency towards analytic constructions, especially in adverbial expressions, the verbal system is decidedly synthetic. Old Irish is a pro-drop language: the subject is expressed by the verbal endings alone and never by independent subject pronouns. Pronominal objects are also

marked within the verbal complex; Eska (2009) therefore characterized the Old Irish verb as 'polypersonal'.

Verbs display a striking propensity towards compounding with up to four preverbs before the root. The expanding use of preverbs can be exemplified by 1 sg. *fo-timmdiríut*, composed of *fo* 'under', *to* 'to', *imb* 'around', *di* 'from', and the root *reth-* 'to run', which translates Latin *suffio* 'I fumigate'. Semantic information being thus shifted from the roots towards the preverbs, the role of the roots has been enervated in consequence. This is on the one hand reflected in the fact that in many synchronic stem allomorphs the roots are no longer visible or are heavily truncated. On the other hand, a diachronic result of this is the reduction of the number of inherited roots (Wodtko 2007) and the high proportion of compound verbs in relation to simple verbs. Suppletion, i.e. the existence within a paradigm of two or more different lexical roots, is not as pronounced in Old Irish as one would be inclined to believe after having been first exposed to its verbal system (Veselinović 2003). The citation form of Old Irish verbs is the 3 sg. present indicative. When in the following the citation form of a verb is meant it will be translated with the English infinitive. When the 3 sg. present is meant, the English s-form will be used. The formal inventory of the Old Irish verbal system is too rich to give a comprehensive description here. Instead it will be attempted to outline the fundamentals.

### The verbal categories

The Old Irish finite verb is multi-dimensional, i.e. it encodes many different grammatical dimensions (see Table 4.18). The distribution of formal markers and the structure of categorial information, however, are very unevenly balanced. For example, the modal category subjunctive is expressed by a separate stem to which the default endings are added, whereas the modal category imperative consists of separate endings added to the default stem variant. In the preterite, some formations have a separate preterital ending set, and others use the primary endings, but whereas everywhere else in the system primary endings are contrasted with secondary endings, this is not so in the preterite. Or, to cite a last example, whereas in all other classes the passive voice is marked by separate endings, in the preterite a combination of a special stem and special endings serves the same end.

The semantic or content dimensions of Old Irish finite verbs are 'person and number', 'tense and aspect', 'mood', 'voice', 'relativity', and 'perspectivity'. Strictly speaking, 'object pronominality' could also be included as a dimension of its own, since object personal pronouns can only be encoded as infixes or suffixes on the verb. For practical reasons, however, they have been discussed in the section on pronouns. In addition, finite verbs also encode the purely morphological dimensions 'deponentiality' and 'dependency', both of which possess no semantic content and which, being redundant, were eliminated in the course of Irish-language history. Perspectivity and object pronominality are optional dimensions, that is, marking the verbs in these dimensions imparts additional information to an already complete verbal form. All other dimensions are obligatory: a full verbal form inherently carries relevant information concerning those dimensions, even if occasionally one or more of those categorial oppositions may be neutralized.

*Person and number:* This is a fusional, i.e. non-agglutinative category, the two dimensions of which cannot be formally separated. This dimension is given morphological expression by the personal endings. All finite verbs are obligatorily marked for subject person and number. The three persons '1st – speaker', '2nd – addressee' and '3rd – person, object, matter', and the two numbers 'singular' and 'plural' are indicated. Dual subjects take plural verbs. As for concord in number, the verb typically agrees with



the grammatical number, although *constructiones ad sensum* are possible. There is no unmarked member in this dimension, although there is a very slight tendency for singular persons to lack formal marking. Verbs are indifferent as to gender, e.g. *caraid* is 'he/she/it loves'. The gender distinction in the 3 sg. can only be conveyed by the optional use of *notae augentes*: masculine *caraid-sem* 'he loves' and feminine *caraid-si* 'she loves'.

*Mood*: Old Irish distinguishes the two universal modalities 'realis' and 'irrealis'. The realis indicates that something belongs to the known, experienced world (or that the speaker believes so), the irrealis speaks of imagined, desired worlds. The realis is grammatically represented by the 'indicative' mood. It is the unmarked category of this dimension and it is further split into the three tenses past, present and future (see further under *tense and aspect*). The irrealis is represented by the moods 'imperative', 'conditional', and 'subjunctive' (McQuillan 2002: 246). The imperative is the mood for immediate orders. Morphologically it stands apart in the verbal system (reminiscent of the vocative in the nominal system, to which it is conceptually related) because it is indifferent to the dimensions relativity, perspectivity and dependency. The conditional refers to a hypothetical event that is or was contingent on another set of circumstances. In this sense it expresses potentiality and irreality. The conditional vacillates around the margins of mood and tense and aspect in that it also supplies a future for a past frame of reference. The subjunctive characterizes a verbal action as to some degree removed from factuality; therefore its semantic range goes from the expression of wishes over uncertainty to irreality. There are two formal categories of subjunctive, the 'present subjunctive' and the 'past subjunctive'. The former fulfils the functions of the subjunctive in a present or future frame of reference, the latter in a past frame of reference. By necessity, the latter is further removed from reality. In complement clauses that depend on verbs of saying, commanding or thinking, the modal meaning of the subjunctive has receded in favour of being a mere marker of subordination.

*Tense and aspect*: This category ultimately comprises two different dimensions, which for practical reasons cannot be separated. Old Irish distinguishes the three tenses 'present', 'past' and 'future'. The present is encoded by the morphological category 'indicative present', which additionally can give expression to events without time reference ('generic action') and to past events ('historical present'). Future events must be encoded by the morphological category 'future'. By necessity, the future touches on the irrealis mood. In the past, an aspectual distinction is made between a perfective 'preterite' and an imperfective 'imperfect'. The preterite denotes actions that were completed in the past; it is frequently used for narrative purposes. The imperfect encodes repeated or customary action in the past. Strictly speaking, there is no unmarked member in this category. However, there is a tendency during the later Old and Middle Irish periods for the underlying stem of the present tense to become the default stem and to provide the derivational basis for all other stems.

*Voice (or diathesis)*: This is a binary dimension, comprising the two categories 'active' and 'passive'. The active voice is the semantically unmarked member of the opposition and finds two formal expressions, the so-called 'active endings' and the 'deponent endings' (see *deponentiality* below). There are special active endings for all persons and numbers. The passive voice is marked with special endings only on 3rd persons. The 3 sg. passive functions also as an impersonal form and as such supplies the passive voice for the 1st and 2nd persons in constructions with infixed object pronouns. Every Old Irish verb, even intransitives, can be passivized, if only to create an impersonal form. It is possible but not obligatory to mention the agent of a passivized transitive verb in prepositional phrases.

*Relativity*: Old Irish finite verbs can take on the two states 'non-relative' and 'relative'. Non-relative is the unmarked member of the binary opposition. Relative means that

the clause which is headed by the relative verb stands in a subordinate relationship of some sort to another clause. Relativity is marked by an intricate system of morphological, morphophonological and pronominal means. The imperative does not participate in this opposition in that it is non-relative per default.

*Perspectivity*: All finite verbs except for imperatives can be 'augmented' to change the perspective by which speaker and audience look at a verbal action. In effect, however, perspective augmentation is very rare in the future and conditional. In particular augmentation means that a perfective (resultative) or potential meaning is added to the plain verbal action, e.g. *as-beir* '(s)he says' vs. augmented *as-robair* '(s)he can say', or *as-bert* '(s)he said' vs. *as-rubart* '(s)he has said'. Typically a grammatical element, usually the preverb *ro*, is pre- or infixes to a given verbal form, but other preverbs or different strategies (stem suppletion) are also possible, e.g. *lod* 'I went' vs. *do-cuad* 'I have gone'.

*Deponentiality*: Every Old Irish verb belongs to one of two categories of a binary opposition, one characterized by 'active endings', the other by 'deponent endings'. While for the first type of verbs there is no adequate name, those of the second type are called 'deponents'. Non-deponent verbs are the unmarked members of the opposition. The term 'active endings' must not be mistaken with the active voice. Both active and deponent endings are active in voice, the difference being of an entirely formal, redundant nature. Deponent endings typically resemble their active counterparts with an additional *r* at the end, e.g. non-dep. *car-ait* 'they love' vs. dep. *mol-aitir* 'they praise', or *gád-Ø* 'I prayed' vs. *gén-ar* 'I was born'. A few verbs are 'semi-deponents', that is, some of their stems go with active endings, others with deponent endings. The active endings are the unmarked members of the opposition. In all categories that use secondary endings the opposition in deponentiality is neutralized. Already at the beginning of the Old Irish period the decline of the deponents as a class has set in and verbs that originally must have been deponent have adopted active endings. This dimension is eventually eliminated from the language. Diachronically deponents continue verbs with middle inflection. But whereas in Indo-European the middle voice indicated some sort of self-centred verbal action and thus contrasted functionally with the active, in Irish this has become a non-functional, merely lexical property that has to be known for each verb separately.

*Dependency*: The last grammatical dimension of the Old Irish verb is also of a purely formal, non-functional nature, and it is again binary. All verbal forms except for imperatives, which behave wholly idiosyncratically in this regard, are either 'independent' or 'dependent'. The conditioning factor is the absence or presence of clause-initial so-called conjunct particles: the various negative particles, alone or in combination, the interrogative particles, certain interrogative pronouns, prepositional relatives, and certain conjunctions. A verbal form preceded by one of those elements is dependent. The independent forms are the unmarked members of the opposition. How the distinction between independent or dependent is realized will be described in a separate paragraph below.

Table 4.18 The dimensions and categories of the Old Irish verb

Modality	Mood	Tense/asp.	Grammatical category	vc.	dpn.	psp.	rel.	dpd.
realis	indicative	present	present indicative	±	±	±	±	±
		past pf.	preterite	±	±	±	±	±
		past ipf.	imperfect	±	Ø	±	±	±
		future	future	±	±	(+) –	±	±
irrealis	conditional	Ø	conditional	±	Ø	(+) –	±	±
	subjunctive	present	present subjunctive	±	±	±	±	±
		past	past subjunctive	±	Ø	±	±	±
	imperative	Ø	imperative	±	±	–	–	Ø

Key: ‘grammatical category’ lists the traditional names of the categories; pf. = perfective aspect, ipf. = imperfective aspect, vc. = voice, dpn. = deponentality, psp. = perspectivity, rel. = relativity; dpd. = dependency; ± = the grammatical category can appear in both states of the binary dimension; – = the grammatical category can only appear in the unmarked member of the dimension; Ø = the grammatical category is indifferent to this dimension.

Stems and endings

Most, but not all, of these categories are expressed by combinations of the two fundamental formative elements stem and ending. There are five stems for finite verb forms: present stem, subjunctive stem, future stem, preterite stem, preterite passive stem. All of these have a large variety of morphologically very divergent sub-classes, which will be discussed in separate paragraphs. The stem of the non-finite past participle and verbal of necessity is almost always derivable from the preterite passive stem and is here not counted as separate. A sixth stem underlies the non-finite verbal noun. There are six groups of ending sets: a morphologically divergent group of primary ending sets, and the rather unitary sets of secondary endings, suffixless-preterital endings, mixed preterital endings, imperative endings, and passive preterite endings. The stems and endings are not arbitrarily combinable. There are numerous restrictions on which stems can go with which endings. They combine in roughly the following way (Table 4.19) to give the basic tense and mood system of Old Irish.

Table 4.19 Combinations of stems and endings

	primary	suff. /mixed pret.	secondary	imperative	pret. pass.
pres. stem	pres. ind.		imperfect	imperative	
subj. stem	pres. subj.		past subj.		
fut. stem	future		conditional		
pret. stem	preterite	preterite			
pret. pass.					pret. pass.

## Dependent and independent verbal forms

There are two entirely different ways of expressing the grammatical dimension of dependency. The choice of the method depends on yet another formal criterion, namely whether a verb is simple or compounded. Simple verbs consist of a verbal root or stem plus ending, e.g. *gairit* 'they shout' (*gar-* + *-it*), whereas in compound verbs the verbal root or stem is preceded by one or more lexical preverbs, e.g. *do-acrat* 'they plead' (*to-ad-* + *gar-* + *-et*). In verbal categories that take primary endings, simple verbs at the head of their clause appear in the so-called absolute form in independent position, carrying absolute endings, e.g. *canaid* '(s)he sings', but they appear in the so-called conjunct form in dependent position, carrying conjunct endings (indicated by italics in the diagram below), e.g. *in-cain* 'does (s)he sing?'. Compound verbs appear in the so-called deuterotonic form in independent position, and in the so-called prototonic form in dependent position, both of which carry exclusively conjunct endings:

	independent position	dependent position
simple verbs	absolute	<i>conjunct</i>
compound verbs	deuterotonic	prototonic

Among the features which contribute most richly to the proliferation of forms in the verbal system of Old Irish is the system of double inflection that results from the distinction between absolute and conjunct endings in the primary endings and in the passive preterite. This morphologically redundant system is probably an inheritance from the Insular Celtic period (whether this be conceived of as a genetic node or as a period of interaction between the languages in Britain and Ireland). Old and Middle British languages retain a few traces of a similar system, but nowhere is it so fully alive as in Old Irish. The origins of the system are disputed, but it is largely uncontested that it is somehow connected with the rise of the verb-initial word order in the Insular Celtic languages (see the contributions in Karl and Stifter 2007: 301–402, McCone 2006). Consequently, no trace of a comparable system has so far been found in the Continental Celtic languages, which are not verb-initial. In categories that use secondary endings (imperfect, past subjunctive, conditional) the opposition between absolute and conjunct inflection is neutralized in favour of conjunct forms by the rule that all independent simple verbs are compounded with the semantically empty preverbal particle *no-*. In the active voice of suffixless-preterital endings and in parts of the mixed preterital endings there is no formal distinction between absolute and conjunct inflection, but the opposition between dependent and independent forms is not neutralized.

For compound verbs, which have no absolute-conjunct distinction in the endings, an even more complicated system of syntactically governed accent shifts has been devised. In independent position, compound verbs are stressed on their second element, that is, after their first preverb (in this respect, simple verbs augmented by the grammatical particle *ro* also count as compound verbs), e.g. *fo-loing* /fo'lon̪ˠiɲ/ '(s)he suffers'. Therefore, these forms are called 'deuterotonic' (Greek *deuteros* 'second', *tonos* 'accent'). This is the citation form. If any conjunct particle comes to stand before the verbal form, the stress shifts one position to the left onto the first preverb, e.g. *ní-fulaing* /n̪ˠi:'fulon̪ˠiɲ/ '(s)he does not suffer'. Therefore, these forms are called 'prototonic' (Greek *protos* 'first', *tonos* 'accent'). The verbal complex as such, which encompasses everything that falls in the accentual domain of the verb, is still stressed on the second element. The shifting accentuation leads to quite remarkable variations in the surface representations of the verbs. It is

here that the complex synchronic morphophonemic alternations come into play that were discussed in the section on OIr. phonology. In particular, divergent patterns of metaphony and of syncope with its concomitant changes of assimilations, etc., changes that all apply to the underlying forms, lead to heavy morphological alternations in the surface verbal system, e.g. *do-beram* vs. *ní-taibrem* ‘we (don’t) bring/give’ < \**to-ber-am*, *con-ístais* vs. *ní-cóemsaitis* ‘they would (not) have been able’ < \**cum-īs-atis*, or *as-robrat* vs. *ní-érbarat* ‘they may (not) say’ < \**eks-ro-ber-at*.

### The ending sets

All of the previously mentioned ending sets consist of endings for active and passive voice (only 3 sg. and 3 pl. in the latter); all except for the secondary endings include non-deponent (‘active’) and deponent ending series; and all except for secondary and imperative endings have special relative endings for the 3 sg., 1 pl. and 3 pl. persons. In addition to this, in the primary and the mixed-preterital ending sets there is a distinction between absolute and conjunct endings, but only with simple verbs. All other verbal forms know only a conjunct ending series. The absolute 2 pl. is very often missing from attested paradigms. Without doubt this is due to pragmatic reasons and does not reflect a structural gap. Therefore, the maximum Old Irish verbal paradigm can be represented by the template in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20 The maximum OIr. verbal paradigm

<b>pers.</b>	<b>add. cat.</b>	<b>abs.</b>	<b>conj.</b>
1 sg.		+	+
2 sg.		+	+
3 sg.		+	+
	rel.	+	—
	pass.	+	+
	pass. rel.	+	—
1 pl.		+	+
	rel.	+	—
2 pl.		(+)	+
3 pl.		+	+
	rel.	+	—
	pass.	+	+
	pass. rel.	+	—

### Primary endings

‘Primary endings’ is a cover-term for a quite diverse range of inflectional series. For practical reasons, it will be useful to group them in several classes with some internal variation. Although the passive endings are part of the primary ending sets, they are rather unitary across the board and have therefore been taken out of the paradigms, to be discussed separately. It should be noted that due to the quirks of Old Irish orthography there is much more spelling variation in the endings than can be indicated in these tables. In particular, the spellings of the vowels in the tables reflect those of the central examples of each class, e.g. those of the present I-class typically appear after non-palatalized

consonants. There is, however, always the possibility that the endings appear after a consonant of the opposite quality. The spellings of the vowels then change accordingly. This is only specifically indicated for the s-preterite endings where there is a fundamental distinction between non-palatalized endings with W1-verbs and palatalized ones with W2-verbs. But in principle, the same variation can apply everywhere. Furthermore, with endings of the shape -CV there is usually also a variant with a vowel before the consonant. The distribution of the allomorphs depends on the syncope pattern.

The first group is that which comprises the present ending classes Ia and Ib and the so-called a-ending set (Table 4.21). While the latter and the first two are not specifically related, they are similar enough to group them together. Blank slots in the tables mean that the forms are exactly like the corresponding ones in the left-most class. The ending *-ub* of the 1 sg a-ending set is exclusive to the f-future.

Table 4.21 Primary endings – present I and a-endings

	Present Ia		Present Ib		a-endings	
	abs.	conj.	abs.	conj.	abs.	conj.
1 sg.	<i>-aim(m)</i>	<i>-aim(m)</i>			<i>-a</i>	<i>-Ø; -ub</i>
2 sg.	<i>-ai</i>	<i>-ai</i>			<i>-ae</i>	<i>-ae</i>
3 sg.	<i>-aid</i>	<i>-a</i>		<i>-Ø</i>		
rel.	<i>-as</i>	–				
1 pl.	<i>-mai</i>	<i>-am</i>				
rel.	<i>-mae</i>	–				
2 pl.	<i>-thae</i>	<i>-aid</i>				
3 pl.	<i>-ait</i>	<i>-at</i>				
rel.	<i>-tae, -aite</i>	–	<i>-tae</i>			

The ending classes present IIa and IIb and i-future are closely related. Present class III stands apart (see Table 4.22). It shares much more with the s-ending set than with the other present ending classes. The notation ‘<sup>j</sup>-Ø’ means that the form ends in the palatalized stem-final consonant; ‘u-inf.’ means that an *u* is inserted before the stem-final consonant; ‘raising’ means that the vowel before the stem-final consonant is raised, if possible. Raising is a concomitant feature in many ending categories, but only here is it of disambiguating importance.

Table 4.22 Primary endings – presents II and III

	Present IIa		Present IIb		i-future		Present III	
	abs.	conj.	abs.	conj.	abs.	conj.	abs.	conj.
1 sg.	-iu, -im(m)	-iu, -im(m)			-iu	-iu	-u	-Ø (+ u-inf.)
2 sg.	-i	-i			-e	-e	-i	i-Ø (+ raising)
3 sg.	-id	-i		i-Ø			-id	i-Ø
rel.	-es	—					-as	—
1 pl.	-mi	-em					-mai	-am
rel.	-me	—					-mae	—
2 pl.	-the	-id					-the	-id
3 pl.	-it	-et					-ait	-at
rel.	-te, -ite	—	-te				-tae	—

The three sub-types of the s-ending class (s-preterite, s-subjunctive, s-future) are much more uniform than Table 4.23 would suggest. The *s* is that of the stem. The main difference, the presence (or not) of a vowel between the *s* and the ending, is just an automatic consequence of divergent syncope patterns, just like the difference in palatization of the *s*.

Table 4.23 Primary endings – the s-endings

	s-preterite (s I)		s-subjunctive (s II)		s-future (s III)	
	abs.	conj.	abs.	conj.	abs.	conj.
1 sg.	-s(i)u	-us	-su	-s, -us	-sea	-us
2 sg.	-s(a)i	-s <sup>i</sup>	-si		-si	
3 sg.	-s <sup>i</sup>	-Ø				
rel.	-as, -es	—	-s		-es	
1 pl.	-s(a)immi	-sam, -sem	-smai	-sam	-simmi	-sem
rel.	-s(a)imme	—	-smae		-simme	
2 pl.	?	-s(a)id	-ste	-sid	-ste	-sid
3 pl.	-s(a)it	-sat, -set	-sait	-sat	-sit	-set
rel.	-s(a)ite	—	-stae			

The primary deponent endings (Table 4.24) are fairly uniform (provision being made for the variation after non-palatalized and palatalized stem-final consonants). The present subset and the subset corresponding to the a-ending set differ only in the 1 sg. The s-deponent ending set stands further apart.

Table 4.24 Primary endings – deponent endings

Present deponent endings		a-deponent endings	s-deponent endings	
abs.	conj.		abs.	conj.
1 sg. <i>-ur</i>	<i>-ur</i>	abs. & conj.: <i>-ar, -er</i>	?	<i>-s(i)ur</i>
2 sg. <i>-ther</i>	<i>-ther</i>		?	<i>-ser</i>
3 sg. <i>-ithir, -idir</i>	<i>-athar, -adar, -ethar, -edar</i>		<i>-stair, -stir</i>	<i>-star</i>
rel. <i>-athar, -adar, -ethar, -edar</i>	—		?	—
1 pl. <i>-(m)mir</i>	<i>-a(m)mar, -(m)mer</i>		<i>-sammar</i>	<i>-sammar, -semmar</i>
rel. <i>-mmar, -mmer</i>	—		?	—
2 pl. <i>-the</i>	<i>-id</i>		?	<i>-sid</i>
3 pl. <i>-itir</i>	<i>-atar, -etar</i>		<i>-sitir</i>	<i>-satar, -setar</i>
rel. <i>-atar, -etar</i>	—		?	—

There are three sub-types of primary passive endings for the present, subjunctive and future (Table 4.25). Those formations that have the primary s-preterite endings in the active voice build their passive on a different stem and with different endings (see below).

Table 4.25 Primary endings – passive endings

	Passive I		Passive II		Passive III	
	abs.	conj.	abs.	conj.	abs.	conj.
3 sg pass.	<i>-thair</i>	<i>-thar</i>	<i>-air</i>	<i>-ar</i>	<i>-estir</i>	<i>-estar</i>
pass. rel.	<i>-thar</i>	—	<i>-ar</i>		<i>-estar</i>	—
3 pl pass.	<i>-tair, -aitir</i>	<i>-tar, -atar</i>			<i>-sitir</i>	<i>-setar</i>
pass. rel.	<i>-tar, -atar</i>	—			<i>-setar</i>	—

### Secondary endings

The secondary endings are very regular. Their origins are one of the bigger mysteries of Irish historical linguistics. The same caveats as before apply to the spelling of the vowels and to possible vowels before endings of the shape -CV (Table 4.26).



Table 4.26 Secondary endings

Secondary endings	
(conj.)	
1 sg.	-(a)inn
2 sg.	-th(e)a
3 sg.	-ad, -ed
pass.	-th(a)e
1 pl.	-m(a)is
2 pl.	-th(a)e
3 pl.	-t(a)is
pass.	-t(a)is

*Suffixless-preterital endings*

In the so-called suffixless-preterital endings no distinction is made between absolute and conjunct endings in the singular. In the plural a few absolute forms are attested, but it is not clear whether they are old or innovatory. The addition of the deponential endings *-ar* and *-air* does not cause syncope of the preceding verbal form (Table 4.27).

Table 4.27 Suffixless-preterital endings

Suffixless-preterite		Deponent	
abs.	conj.	abs.	conj.
1 sg.	-Ø	-ar	
2 sg.	-Ø	-ar	
3 sg.	j-Ø	-air	
rel.	-e	?	—
1 pl.	-(am)mar, -mir?	-(am)mar, -mir?	-(am)mar
rel.	?	?	—
2 pl.	-id	-id	
3 pl.	-tar, -tir?	-tar, -tir?	-tar
rel.	?	?	—

*Mixed preterital endings*

This small class has endings that resemble the primary present class III in the singular, and the suffixless-preterital endings in the plural (Table 4.28).

Table 4.28 Mixed preterital endings

	<b>abs.</b>	<b>conj.</b>
1 sg.	?	-Ø ( <i>u</i> -infection)
2 sg.	?	i-Ø
3 sg.	-Ø	-Ø
rel.	- <i>e</i>	—
1 pl.	?	-( <i>am</i> ) <i>mar</i>
rel.	?	—
2 pl.	?	- <i>id</i>
3 pl.	- <i>atar</i>	- <i>atar</i> , - <i>tar</i> , - <i>at</i>
rel.	- <i>tar</i> , - <i>atar</i>	—

*Imperative endings*

An exotic feature of the Old Irish verbal system is that it knows imperative forms for all persons, active and passive, including the rare 1 sg. There are separate endings only for the 2 sg. and 3 sg. (Table 4.29), the imperatives of all other persons are identical in form to the corresponding dependent present indicative.

Table 4.29 Imperative endings

<b>Imperative endings</b>	
2 sg.	-Ø
3 sg.	- <i>ad</i> , - <i>ed</i>

*Preterite passive endings*

The endings are attached to the dental (or reflex of a dental) of the stem. Traditionally the dental plus the endings below together are analysed as the preterite passive endings (Table 4.30).

Table 4.30 Preterite passive endings

	<b>Preterite passive</b>	
	<b>abs.</b>	<b>conj.</b>
3 sg pass.	-( <i>a</i> ) <i>e</i>	-Ø
pass. rel.	-( <i>a</i> ) <i>e</i>	—
3 pl pass.	-( <i>a</i> ) <i>i</i> ?	-( <i>e</i> ) <i>a</i>
pass. rel.	?	—

Verbal stems

There is a rather clear-cut distinction between so-called ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ verbs (Table 4.31), using terminology borrowed from the study of the Germanic languages. With weak verbs, the different verbal stems are derivable from each other by predictable, productive rules. The stem formations are unpredictable with strong verbs. Verbal stems are formed most commonly by suffixation (subjunctive in *a* or *s*, future in *f*, preterite in *s* or *t*), but also by reduplication of the initial of the root (*li-* → future *lili-*; *mad-* → preterite *memad-*), or vowel alternations (*ber-* → future *bér-*; *reth-* → preterite *ráth-*). Weak verbs form their tenses and moods by suffixes, strong verbs by suffixes, vowel alternations (ablaut) and reduplication. Weak verbs have s-preterites, a-subjunctives, and f-futures. With strong verbs, the non-present stem formations depend on the underlying, abstract root shape. Historically the strong verbs are those inherited from Indo-European, their formations are likewise inherited (the verbal roots and formations are listed and analysed in Schumacher 2004; cf. also McCone 1991). They are primary, i.e. underived from nouns or adjectives, whereas the weak verbs are frequently denominative.

Table 4.31 Weak vs. strong verbs

	Weak	Strong
Subjunctive stem	<i>a</i>	<i>s, a</i>
Future stem	<i>f</i>	<i>s, é</i> , reduplication
Preterite stem	<i>s</i>	<i>s, t</i> , ‘suffixless’, reduplication, long vowel
Passive preterite	= pres. + <i>-th</i>	ablaut + dental

The present stems and the present tense

Eight major types of present stems can be distinguished: W(eak) 1 and 2, S(trong) 1, 2 and 3, and H(iatus) 1, 2 and 3. The classification is that of McCone (1997: 21–5). An older, widespread classification is that of Thurneysen (1946: 352–8). The two systems can be equated with each other in a concordance as shown in Table 4.32.

Table 4.32 Concordance of McCone’s and Thurneysen’s classifications of verbs

McCone	Thurneysen
W1	AI
W2	AII
H1	AIII -a-
H2	AIII -i-
H3	AIII -o/u/e-
S1	BI/III
S2	BII
S3	BIV/V

One formal difference between weak and strong verbs is that in the 3 sg. conjunct weak verbs end in a vowel, strong verbs in the root final consonant. There are deponent verbs in the W1 and W2 classes, very few in S2, S3 and the H-verbs, and none in S1. They all take the present deponent endings. The present stems are of importance for the basic classification of the verbs, in particular because the stem class says something about their diachronic morphology. But the formation of the verbal stems outside the present stem correlates only weakly with the distribution of present stems.

W1 has a non-palatalized stem-final consonant throughout the paradigm. For the present tense, it uses the primary present Ia and passive I endings, e.g. *móraid* '(s)he praises'. W1 verbs are often called *ā*-verbs. Most verbs borrowed from Latin are inflected as W1 verbs.

W2 has a palatalized stem-final consonant throughout the paradigm and uses the primary present IIa and passive I endings. W2 verbs are often called *ī*-verbs. There are two subtypes. W2a is the main type, e.g. *millid* '(s)he destroys'. W2b has *u* or *o* in the root syllable, e.g. *roithid* 'to make run'. The difference between the two subtypes is of significance only outside the present stem. Because of the productivity of verbs with the denominative suffix *-aigidir*, deponents are specifically frequent among W2 verbs, e.g. *foilsigidir* 'to make public'.

The main distinguishing feature of S1 is an alternation in the consonant quality of the root final consonant. In the main sub-type S1a, it is palatalized in the 2 sg., 3 sg. and 2 pl., but non-palatalized in all other forms, including relatives and passives, e.g. 3 sg. *geilid* '(s)he grazes', but 3 sg. relative *gelas* 'who grazes'. Sub-class S1c features a nasal in the present stem that is absent in all other stems, e.g. *bongaid* 'breaks' with preterite *bobaig* 'broke' vs. S1a *cingid* 'steps' and preterite *cechaing* 'stepped' with an *n* that belongs to the root. S1 verbs take present III and passive II endings. S1 verbs are often called thematic verbs.

S2 has a palatalized root final consonant throughout the paradigm, e.g. *gairid* '(s)he calls'. It takes present IIb and passive I endings, with occasional forms belonging to the passive II ending set.

The rather small S3 class is distinguished by a stem-final nasal that is absent outside the present. The nasal-less root often ends in *-i*, which is of importance for the non-present stem formations, e.g. *lenaid* 'to follow', root *li-*. The present-stem marking nasal is non-palatalized in all verbs except for *ro-cluinethar* 'to hear' where it is palatalized throughout. S3 verbs take present Ib and passive II endings.

The roots of hiatus verbs end in vowels, in contrast to W and S verbs. The endings are added directly to the root-final vowel. When the ending begins with a vowel, a hiatus is the result, hence the name of the class, e.g. *at-taht* /a'ta.əd/ 'they are'. Hiatus verbs basically use the present IIb and passive I ending sets; the schwa of the ending is typically written with *a*.

The root vowel of H1 is *a*, the 3 sg. conjunct is the plain *-á* of the root, e.g. *at-tá* 'he, she, it is'.

The root vowel of H2 is *i*, the 3 sg. conjunct ends in *-í*, e.g. *·bí* 'he, she, it is usually'.

H3 comprises all other root vowels, i.e. *e*, *o*, *u*; forms are very rare. Often the 3 sg. conjunct ends in the plain, long root vowel, e.g. *·scé* '(s)he vomits', but occasionally an *i*-diphthong can be found, e.g. *im-soí* '(s)he turns around' (root *so-*).

## Imperfect

All present stems take the secondary endings to form the imperfect. In general, the stem final consonant retains the quality which it has in the present tense, but S1 verbs show a

stronger inclination towards palatalization, e.g. 1 pl. *no-beirmis* 'we used to carry'. Simple verbs without a conjunct particle before them are compounded with the meaningless pre-verb *no-*.

## Imperative

Imperatives add the imperative endings to the present stem. For the imperative of compound verbs only prototonic forms are used, except when object pronouns are infixed, e.g. 3 sg. (*ná*)-*taibred* 'let him/her (not) give!' vs. *da-bered* 'let him/her give it!'. A handful of verbs are irregular in the 2 sg. in that they use the subjunctive, e.g. *dénae* 'do!'.

## The subjunctive stems and the present subjunctive

There are three different formations of subjunctive stems: a-subjunctive, e-subjunctive, and s-subjunctive.

The a-subjunctive is the productive formation. It is formed by all weak verbs, by H1, H3, and S3 verbs, and by those S1 and S2 verbs that do not form an s-subjunctive. In the case of the weak and the hiatus verbs, the a-endings and passive I endings are added to the same stem that is used in the present indicative. This means that, for example, with W1 verbs present indicative and present subjunctive are identical in form except for the 1 sg. and 2 sg. W2b verbs have *o* in their roots in the subjunctive. In the case of S3 verbs, the a-endings are added to the nasal-less root, e.g. 3 sg. *riaid* '(s)he may sell' vs. *renaid* '(s)he sells'. In the case of S1 and S2 verbs, the root final consonant is non-palatalized throughout the subjunctive paradigm, e.g. 2 sg. *gabae* 'you may take' vs. *gaibi* 'you take'. S1c verbs have the root vowel *e* in the subjunctive, e.g. 3 sg. *ní-mera* '(s)he may not betray' vs. *ní-mairn* '(s)he doesn't betray'.

The rare e-subjunctive is only found among H2 verbs. It is formed by exchanging the *ilf* of the present stem by *elé*, e.g. *do-gné* '(s)he may do' vs. *do-gní* '(s)he does'. When the root is shifted out of the stressed position, the endings are reduced and become identical in form to the a-subjunctive, e.g. *ní-déna* '(s)he may not do'.

The s-subjunctive is one of the most curious morphological categories of Old Irish. It is formed by S1 and S2 verbs whose roots end in a dental or velar stop or in *nn*. The root-final consonant is replaced by *s(s)* to which the primary s-subjunctive (s II) and passive II endings are added. This change is accompanied by various changes of the root vowels (like lengthening) and other processes, which are too divergent to enumerate here, e.g. 1 sg. *ní-gess* 'I may not pray' vs. *ní-guidiu* 'I do not pray', 1 pl. *líasmai* 'we may jump' vs. *ling-mai* 'we jump'. The most remarkable forms are found in the 3 sg. conjunct. It is endingless, in fact even the *s* of the subjunctive stem is dropped. When the root vowel is stressed, it appears in lengthened form, e.g. 3 sg. *ní-sé* 'may (s)he not sit' vs. *ní-said*. But when the root vowel is shifted out of stressed position, it is either reduced to a short vowel or, more often than not, dropped altogether. The root is then reduced to the mere initial consonant, e.g. *in-ful* 'should (s)he suffer?' vs. *fo-ló* 'may (s)he suffer' from *fo-loing* '(s)he suffers' (root *long-*), or *op* vs. *as-bó* from *as-boind* 'to refuse' (root *bond-*). In the odd case, the root may be completely lost, e.g. *comuir* vs. *con-rí* from *con-ric* 'to meet' (root *ic-*). Needless to say, these forms are most challenging to anyone trying to read an Old Irish text.

## Past subjunctive

The past subjunctive is formed by adding the secondary endings to the subjunctive stem. Simple verbs without a conjunct particle before them are compounded with the meaningless preverb *no-*.

## The future stems and the future

There are seven different formations of future stems: f-future, s-future (unreduplicated and reduplicated), i-future (reduplicated and the *íu*-variant), and a-future (reduplicated and the *é*-variant). Besides, a handful of verbs use suppletive formations.

The f-future is the productive future formation of Old Irish and finally ousts all others. It is formed by almost all W1 and W2 verbs, by most H3 verbs, and by stray verbs from other classes. The stem is formed by adding the suffix *-if-/ib-* to the present stem. The f-future takes the a-ending set and passive I endings. Because of the effects of syncope the vowel of the suffix is usually not visible. In the earliest period the suffix caused palatalization of the root-final consonant, but in W1 verbs this effect was undone under influence from the present stem, e.g. 1 sg. *móirfea* 'I will praise', but later *mórfa*.

Almost all verbs that form an s-subjunctive also form an s-future. One subtype, the unreduplicated s-future, which is formed by seven roots with a basic short *e* in the present and subjunctive stems, is absolutely identical to the s-subjunctive. The reduplicated subtype takes s-future (s III) and passive III endings. The stem is formed by reduplicating the stem of the s-subjunctive. 'Reduplication' means that the initial consonant of the root is doubled, with a vowel intervening between them. The reduplicating vowel is *i*. Reduplication is lost when two or more preverbs precede the root. The consonant after the reduplicating vowel, i.e. the root-initial consonant, is lenited, e.g. 3 sg. *gigis* /gʲiʲəʃ/ '(s)he will pray', beside s-subjunctive *geiss*, from *guidid* 'to pray'. In the 3 sg. conjunct, the *s* of the stem and very often the vowel before it disappear, e.g. *ní-gig* '(s)he will not pray'. There are special rules for almost every verb that belongs here.

The i-future is formed by verbs whose roots end in *i*, i.e. H2 verbs and almost all S3 verbs. It takes i-future and passive I endings. The reduplicated subtype encompasses all eligible verbs whose roots begin with a single consonant. This consonant is reduplicated using *i* as reduplication vowel, and the endings are added right after the root-initial consonant, e.g. 3 pl. *ririt* 'they sell' from *renaid* 'to sell' (root *ri-*). The *íu*-subtype is formed by words whose roots begin with a sequence of stop + liquid or nasal. It is formed by inserting *íu* (the synchronic reflex of diachronic reduplication) between the two initial consonants; the endings are added right after the second consonant, which is non-palatalized, e.g. 3 sg. relative *gúlas* 'who will follow' from *glenaid* 'to follow' (root *gli-*).

The a-future comprises all other verbs and a handful of verbs that one would expect to find in other classes. It takes the a-ending set and passive I endings. This stem formation enjoys a limited productivity and spreads during Irish-language history. It is not easy to give a simple description of the first subtype, the reduplicated a-future. Like in the case of the reduplicated s-future, special rules have to be observed for almost every verb. The basic rule is that the first consonant of the root is reduplicated with *i* or *e*. If the reduplication vowel is *e*, the root final consonant is non-palatalized, but it is typically palatalized if the vowel is *i*, e.g. 3 sg. deponent *gignithir* '(s)he will be born' from *gainithir* 'to be born', but 1 sg. *cechna* 'I will sing' from *canaid* 'to sing'. The second subtype is the *é*-future. Like in the case of the *íu*-variant of the i-future, the long *é* that replaces the vowel of the

root conceals prehistoric reduplication, e.g. 3 pl. *bérait* 'they will carry' from *beirid* 'to carry', or 2 sg. *do-génae* 'you will do' from *do-gní* 'to do'.

### The conditional

The conditional is formed by adding the secondary endings to the future stem. Simple verbs without a conjunct particle before them are compounded with the meaningless pre-verb *no-*.

### The preterite stems and the preterite

There are five major types of preterite stem formation: the plain s-preterite and the reduplicated s-preterite, the t-preterite, and the suffixless preterite with two major subtypes, reduplicated and long-vowel preterite. In addition, a few verbs have irregular formations.

The s-preterite is the productive preterite stem formation of Old Irish and finally ousts all others. It is formed by all weak verbs, by most H3 verbs and a few others. The stem is formed by adding the suffix *s* to the present stem. In W2b verbs, the root vowel becomes *o* and the root-final consonant becomes non-palatalized almost everywhere. It takes the s-preterite endings for verbs with active endings, e.g. 3 sg. *carais* '(s)he loved' from *caraid* 'to love', and s-deponent endings for deponent verbs, e.g. 3 sg. *ní-corastar* '(s)he did not put' from *-cuirethar* 'to put'. In the active endings, the 3 sg. conjunct is endingless except for W2a verbs which have *-i* in the earliest period, e.g. *ní-filli* and *ní-fill* '(s)he did not bend' from *fillid* 'to bend'. The reduplicated s-preterite is formed by H1 and most H2 verbs. It is formed by reduplicating the first consonant of the root, using the reduplicating vowel *e*, and adding the s-preterite endings at the end. In the 3 sg. conjunct these verbs end in the root vowel. In the case of roots with two initial consonants, the reduplication is usually not to be seen on the surface, e.g. 3 sg. *do-génai* '(s)he did' from *do-gní* 'to do'.

The t-preterite is formed by all strong verbs whose roots end in a liquid, by a few whose roots end in *g*, and by two verbs with roots ending in *m*. It is formed by adding the suffix *t* to the root. The mixed-preterital endings are added to the suffix, e.g. 3 pl. *celtatar* 'they hid' from *ceilid* 'to hide'.

The so-called suffixless preterite has its name from the fact that changes only occur in front of or inside the root, but no suffix is added to it. It comprises all other strong verbs. The suffixless-preterital endings immediately follow the root. It will suffice here to describe the two major subtypes, the reduplicated and the long-vowel type, each of which has its own subdivisions. The main reduplicating type uses *e* as reduplicating vowel, e.g. 1 pl. *lél-gammar* 'we licked' from *ligid* 'to lick'. Other variants have *i* (e.g. 3 sg. *cich* '(s)he wept' from *ciid* 'to weep'), *o* (e.g. *in-lolaig* 'it occupied' from *in-loing* 'to occupy') and *a* (e.g. 3 sg. relative *cachnae* 'who sang' from *canaid* 'to sing') as reduplicating vowels. Although the other subtype, the long-vowel preterites, historically also continues reduplicated formations, synchronically the preterite stem is formed by substituting the root vowel by a long vowel. There is the á-type (e.g. 3 sg. *táich* '(s)he fled' from *teichid* 'to flee'), the í-type (e.g. 1 pl. *fichimmir* 'we fought' from *fichid* 'to fight'), and various other minor types (*úa*, *é*, *íu*, *íu*, etc.).

A handful of important verbs use suppletive stems. For their inflection typically the suffixless-preterital endings are used.

## Preterite passive stem

In the formation of the preterite passive stem one can distinguish between ‘weak’ formations that look like being derived from the present stem and ‘strong’ ones that build directly on the root. In either case, the endings are those specific to the preterite passive. In the case of W- and H-verbs, the preterite passive stem is formed by adding the suffix *-th* to the present stem. This is also the formation taken by a few strong verbs. W2b verbs show *o* in their root. Apart from most H-verbs, in the 3 sg. conjunct schwa appears before the dental fricative and the latter is voiced, e.g. 3 sg. *carthae* ‘(s)he was loved’ vs. *ní-carad* ‘(s)he was not loved’ from *caraid* ‘to love’.

Most strong verbs, however, have a ‘strong’ formation of the preterite passive stem. Roots ending in a vowel + liquid metathetize this sequence before the suffix *-th*, e.g. 3 sg. *do-breth* ‘was brought’ from *do-beir* ‘to bring’ (root *ber-*). In verbs with roots ending in a nasal, the nasal merges with the suffix to yield /d/, written *t*; the preceding vowel is lengthened, e.g. 3 pl. *ní-céta* ‘they were not sung’ from *canaid* ‘to sing’ (root *can-*). In verbs with roots endings in a dental or *nn*, these sounds merge with the suffix to yield *s*(s), e.g. *messaie* ‘it was judged’ from *midithir* ‘to judge’ (root *med-*). Finally, after roots ending in a velar the suffix appears as /t/, the velar becomes *ch* or is dropped after *r*, e.g. *ní-bocht* ‘it was not broken’ from *bongaid* ‘to break’ (root *bug-*).

## The past passive participle and the verbal of necessity

Formally closely connected with the preceding is the past passive participle or verbal adjective. In most cases it is formed by adding the ending *-(a)e* of the *jo-/jā*-adjectives to the dependent form of the preterite passive-stem, e.g. *céte* ‘sung’. In those verbs with liquid metathesis in their roots the vowel before the dental is *i*, not *e* as in the preterite passive, e.g. *brithie* ‘carried’.

The so-called verbal of necessity or gerundive is only used predicatively in the sense ‘has to be X-ed’. It basically uses the same stem as the past passive participle, but it has the uninflected ending *-(a)i*.

## The verbs ‘to be’

‘Being’ is expressed in Old Irish by a relatively wide range of expressions with a variety of syntactic and semantic structures (Ó Corráin 1997). In morphology and syntax, the language distinguishes two different verbs ‘to be’. For the use as copula, that is, in predication, the irregular verb *is* is used. It links the immediately following predicate (an adjective, noun, or pronoun) with the subject and has no semantic value of its own. The copula is unlike any other Old Irish verb in that it is unstressed. It merges with any preceding sentence particle and it is proclitic to the predicate. The subject comes in third place, e.g. *is aicher in gáeth* ‘the wind (*gáeth*) is sharp (*aicher*)’. Any particle that would normally be affixed to a verb is added after the predicate, e.g. *am cimbid-se* ‘I am a prisoner’. In fronting constructions, the copula has also the function to award emphasis to a constituent of the sentence. Despite being unstressed, the copula is fully inflected and is marked for all verbal dimensions. It belongs to none of the verbal classes outlined above; its idiosyncratic forms are too numerous to be listed here (see Thurneysen 1946: 483–492; Strachan 1949: 72–73; Stifter 2006: 386). The copula is often omitted on the surface, in particular when no indicator of tense is required.



The so-called substantive verb has the semantics of existence, presence, being in a certain condition. It is often used with prepositional phrases and adverbs. In certain constructions it can also take on functions of the copula, a tendency that increases in Modern Irish. The substantive verb behaves like an ordinary verb and is fully stressed. In the present indicative, two forms are distinguished, an unmarked form *at-tá* (inflected as a H1 verb), e.g. *at-tó oc precept* 'I am preaching (right now)', and a marked, habitual form *biid* (H2), e.g. *bíth a menmae fri seilg* 'his mind is constantly set on hunting'. Apart from suppletive forms, of which a great number can be found in this verb (e.g. *·fil*, *·feil* after conjunct particles, *fil(e)* as relative, *ro-ngab*, *·dixnigedar*, *do-coisin*), outside the present only the stem of *biid* is found, but lacking the habitual connotation.

'Being' and 'having' are correlated in Old Irish. Lacking a verb for 'to have', the language expresses the concept of possession in terms of spatial proximity by pronominal and locative constructions with the substantive verb or with the copula, e.g. *nín-tá* 'there is not to us = we have not', *táthut* 'you have', *at-tá limm/dom/ocum* 'there is with me, to me, by me', *is limm* 'there is with me'.

## Augmentation

Except for the imperative, all Old Irish verbs can be marked for the dimension that I termed 'perspectivity' above, that is, with the addition of the perspective marker a verbal action is looked upon from a different, non-contemporary angle. The two perspectives thus expressed are retrospective (resultative, perfective) and prospective (potential) (McCone 1997: 93), e.g. 3 sg. *ní-epert* '(s)he did not say' vs. *ní-érbart* '(s)he has not said' or 1 sg. *ní-epur* 'I do not say' vs. *ní-érbur* 'I cannot say'. Because typically an already complete verbal form is augmented by a particle, adding a marker of perspectivity is called 'augmentation', a term introduced by McCone in the most comprehensive description of the process (1997: 91), and verbal forms thus affected are called 'augmented'. In traditional grammars, augmented forms are called 'perfective'. The morphology is identical for both perspectives. In practice, augmentation of either type is very frequent with preterites, subjunctives and the present tense (in descending order), and very rare with futures and conditionals. In subordinate clauses, augmented forms can express anteriority in relation to the matrix clause. The Old Irish system of augmentation, which is a purely grammatical process in synchronic terms, has developed from a system where the addition of various lexical particles conferred verbal aspect.

By far the most common type of augmenting is to add the grammatical particle *ro*. In Old Irish it is pre- or infixes before the root, very often right within the preverbal chain, thereby causing disruptions of the syncope pattern, e.g. 1 pl. *gesmai* 'we would pray' vs. *ro-gessam* 'we may pray', or 3 pl. *do-ecmallsat* 'they collected' vs. *do-érchomlasat* 'they have collected'. Verbs with the lexical preverb *cum*, whose second element begins with a consonant other than *f*, use *ad* as augment, e.g. 2 sg. *con-tolae* 'you would sleep' vs. *con-atlae* 'you may sleep'. Because of syncope, it may disappear on the surface, its presence only being betrayed by the different syncope pattern, e.g. *ní-cotlae* 'you would not sleep', vs. *ní-comtalae* 'you may not sleep'. The augment *cum* is restricted to a few compounded S1 and S3 verbs, e.g. 3 sg. *in-fid* '(s)he told' vs. *in-cuaid* '(s)he has told'. In some verbs augmentation is achieved by root and/or stem suppletion, or other preverbs are used, e.g. from *mligid* 'to milk' we find 1 sg. augmented preterite *do-ommalg* 'I have milked', or 3 sg. *fo-caird* '(s)he put' vs. *ro-lá* '(s)he has put'. *Do-beir* 'to give, bring' is special in that it has two different augmented stems for its different meanings, i.e. *do-rat* '(s)he has given' and *do-ucc* '(s)he has brought'. Some verbs are indifferent to augmentation,

especially those that are already compounded with *ro* as a lexical, not a grammatical pre-verb, e.g. *ro-icc* 'to reach'.

The positional behaviour of the particles, in particular of *ro*, is highly intricate (McCone 1997: 127–161). The tendency within Old and Middle Irish is for *ro* to replace all other types of augmentation, and for the particle *ro* to be placed progressively closer to the beginning of the verb, e.g. earlier *con-atail* vs. later *ro-c(h)otail* '(s)he has slept'.

## Relativity

Old Irish is very remarkable in that fundamentally it does not indicate relativity by overt relative pronouns or particles. Instead it indicates relativity on the verbs that head relative clauses. All finite verbal forms except imperatives can be so marked. Imperatives are usually replaced by subjunctives in relative constructions (but see Ó hUiginn 2002). 'Relative constructions' are opposed to non-relative 'main-clause constructions'. In descriptions of Old Irish, the term 'relative construction' is employed in a wider sense than usual and subsumes all kinds of subordinate clauses in which 'relativity', i.e. subordination, is in some way formally marked. This includes relative clauses in the narrow sense, complement clauses, as well as various types of clauses introduced by conjunctions. Some conjunctions, however, take main-clause constructions.

Relativity is marked by a complex set of morphological, syntactical, and lexical means. It can be formally expressed by:

1 *Relative inflectional endings*. The absolute inflection of simple verbs has special relative endings in the third persons, and in the 1 pl., e.g. 3 sg. *caras* 'who loves, whom loves' vs. *caraid* '(s)he loves'. When relativity is expressed by those endings, this is to the exclusion of all other means of relative marking.

2 *Relative mutation*. Verbal forms that are not capable of taking special relative endings, that is, 1 sg. and the second persons of simple verbs and all verbs with conjunct inflection, as well as verbal forms that are not dependent on a conjunction or preverbal particle, mark relativity by either leniting or nasalizing the stressed portion of the deuterotonic verbal form. For that purpose, simple verbs are compounded with the empty particle *no-*, e.g. 2 pl. *no-charaid* 'that what you love' vs. *carthae* 'you love'. Due to the spelling rules, the mutations are not always visible in the written text, e.g. 3 sg. *do-beir* /do'βer/ 'that what (s)he brings/gives' vs. *do-beir* /do'βer/ '(s)he brings/gives'. The difference between so-called 'leniting' and 'nasalizing relatives clauses' is syntactic and semantic; see the section on syntax below.

3 *Class C infixed pronouns*. Verbs in relative constructions, as well as verbs after conjunctions that require relative constructions, use class C infixed pronouns, e.g. *nod-chara* 'who loves it' vs. *na-chara* '(s)he loves it'. There are some restrictions on this rule: in proper relative clauses, the use of class C pronouns is obligatory only when the pronoun is a third person, e.g. *nodom-chara* and *nom-chara* 'who loves me' vs. *nom-chara* '(s)he loves me'.

4 *Relative negation*. Verbs in relative constructions use the negative particles *ná-*, *nád-*, and *nach-* before infixed pronouns. They are merged with preceding conjunctions, e.g. *arnacham-roilgea* 'that he may leave me not'.

5 *Relative particle*. Only when the verb of the relative clause is governed by a preposition, i.e. in prepositional relative clauses, do we find something that could be called an overt relative particle. It has the shape *-(s)a<sup>N</sup>* which is added directly to the clause-initial preposition. A dependent verbal form follows the relative preposition. After leniting prepositions the particle appears without the *s*, e.g. *dia-tá* 'from which is'. When the *s* is present, the *a* may be optionally elided, e.g. *fris-tardam* 'against which we can give'.

Negatives and infixed pronouns follow the preposition, e.g. *asnacha-tucad* ‘out of which he would not have brought them’.

6 *When the relative clause is dependent on pronominal ‘that which’, the neuter article  $a^N$  is used.* Although the article is strictly speaking part of the matrix clause, it can be (and indeed was) interpreted as a relative marker.

### Verbal noun and *do*-infinitive

The non-finite formations past passive participle and verbal of necessity were discussed above. The most important non-finite form of the Old Irish verb, however, is the verbal noun. It is a verbal abstract, that is, it only shares the semantics with the corresponding verb, but otherwise it behaves syntactically like any noun (Gagnepain 1963). It is fully inflected, it can appear in any position where nouns occur, and – the most important difference to the infinitives of most European languages – when transitive, it governs objects in the genitive, not in the accusative, e.g. *tabart díglae* ‘the bringing of revenge = to bring revenge’. Subjects are encoded by the prepositions *do*<sup>L</sup>, *la*<sup>H</sup>, *ó/úa*<sup>L</sup> (Müller 1999). Pronominal objects are expressed by possessive pronouns, e.g. *mo sérc do Día* ‘God’s love to me’ (!), or *dum fortacht húait-siu* ‘for my help from you = that you help me’. In the case of intransitive verbs, the subject may be expressed by the genitive or possessive pronoun, e.g. *turbál gréine* ‘the rising of the sun’, or *a thíchtu* ‘his coming’.

The formation of a verbal noun to any given verb is unpredictable. Sometimes verbal nouns consist of the mere verbal root, e.g. *ás* ‘the growing, growth’ to *ásaid* ‘to grow’, or *rád* ‘the speaking, speech’ to *ráidid* ‘to speak’. Sometimes the verbal noun is suppletive, e.g. *serc* ‘the loving, love’ to *caraid* ‘to love’, or *dígal* ‘revenge’ to *do-fich* ‘to revenge’. The common method, however, is to derive the verbal noun from the verbal root by suffixation. A frequent suffix is *-ad*, *-iud*, which is usually employed with weak verbs, e.g. *léiciud* to *léicid* ‘to let go, to leave’. A plethora of other suffixes is found especially among strong verbs. The suffix *-ál*, which has become productive in Modern Irish, is restricted to *gabál* and compounds in Old Irish, from *gaibid* ‘to take, to seize’.

A frequent use of verbal nouns is after various prepositions to form adverbial phrases or nominal complements of verbs. The construction with the preposition *oc* ‘at, by’ to indicate contemporary action, which provides the present continuous in Modern Irish, is only just incipient in Old Irish, e.g. *bíu-sa oc irbáig* ‘I am continuously boasting’.

Although Old Irish has no morphological infinitive, it has developed a syntactic equivalent in the construction *do* ‘to, for’ + verbal noun. This so-called ‘*do*-infinitive’ is used in a very similar manner to the English *to*-infinitive, e.g. *is ferr ainm do dénum de* ‘it is better to make a noun out of it’ (Stüber 2009).

## SYNTAX

In all periods of its attestation Irish has been a consistent VSO language. V is best considered not as the plain verb, but as the verbal complex, which incorporates pronouns and sentence-modifying particles including negatives, interrogatives, certain preverbal conjunctions, etc. The verbal complex may only be preceded by a few preclausal conjunctions such as *má* ‘if’, *úare* ‘because’, *ocus* ‘and’, etc. Additional constituents (adverbs, prepositional phrases) follow after the object, e.g. *benaid Cú Chulainn omnai ara ciunn i suidiu* ‘C. Ch. cuts down (*benaid*) a tree (*omnai*) before them (*ara ciunn*) there (*i suidiu*)’. This order is disrupted on the surface only if one of the basic constituents S and/or O is

pronominal. It is then drawn into the verbal complex. The subject is expressed by the verbal ending alone, pronominal objects by affixed pronouns, e.g. *con-sreng in curach dochum poirt* 'he (Ø) pulls (*con-sreng*) the boat (*in curach*) to the port'; *dos-géni de chri cen madmann* 'he (Ø) made (*do-géni*) them (-s) of clay without breaking'. In predicative sentences, the unstressed copula together with the immediately following predicate occupies the V-position, e.g. *it gilithir snechtae in di dóit* 'the two arms (*in di dóit*) are (*it*) as bright as snow (*gilithir snechtae*)'.

As expected, adjectives and dependent genitives follow their head noun. Only determiners, i.e. possessive pronouns, some pronominals, and numerals, precede their head noun, e.g. *téora aidchi* 'three nights', *nach lebor* 'each book'. Relative clauses always follow their head.

These rules are valid for Old Irish prose, which doubtlessly reflects the spoken standard language. In the so-called *retoiric* style, a stylized language found in poetry and early laws, other rules obtain. Genitives and adjectives may precede the noun, the verb – separated from sentence-modifying particles – may be placed at the end of the sentence (the so-called Bergin's rule construction, whereby the verb appears in its dependent form; Bergin 1938), or compound verbs may stand in tmesis, i.e. the first preverb separated from the rest of the verb, e.g. . . . *nád n[D]é deragam* ' . . . that we may not avenge God' (prose order: *nád-nderagam Día*). This style is also accompanied by a reduced role of the article and a greater prominence of prepositionless adverbial expressions, e.g. *dim láim rígdaí brechtaib ban mberar* 'from my royal hands he is carried away by incantations of women' (in prose order: *berair dim láim . . .*). In extreme examples the position of almost all elements can be reversed, e.g. *fairrge al druim dánae fer* 'a bold man over the sea's ridge' (in prose order: *fer dánae al druim fairrge*). It is disputed how much of this style is truly archaic, i.e. continues prehistoric word ordering rules, or how much of it is archaizing, artificial, perhaps crafted after the model of Latin syntax (see Corthals 1999, Eska 2007).

### Constituent movements

The basic word order can be disrupted by diverse movements of the constituents or of parts of the constituents (see, e.g., Mac Giolla Easpaig 1980, Mac Coisdealbha 1998). At the sentence level, Old Irish knows two major rules of constituent movements: rightward and leftward.

Rightward movement of 'heavy' constituents serves discourse-pragmatic purposes, in order to keep the fundamental structure of the sentence transparent. No further syntactic rules apply. Constituents that consist of more than two parts are moved to the right margin of the sentence in accordance with Behaghel's Law of Increasing Terms if the underlyingly successive constituent is considerably shorter, e.g. [*ní-foircnea*]<sub>V</sub> [*in fíni*]<sub>O</sub> [*ithe neich di anúas*]<sub>S</sub> 'eating something of it from above does not put an end to a vine', or [*imm-folngi*]<sub>V</sub> [*inducbáil*]<sub>O</sub> [*dó*]<sub>PP</sub> [*in molad ro-mmolastar Día*]<sub>S</sub> 'the praise by which he has praised God causes glory to himself', or in a predicative sentence: [*bíid*]<sub>cop./v.subst.</sub> [*duine*]<sub>S</sub> [*slán ocus fírián*]<sub>Pred</sub> 'man is sound and righteous'. In the latter case, the substantive verb must be substituted for the copula. Even constituents themselves can be so split, e.g. [*(ní)-gáid*]<sub>V+S</sub> [*do Día*]<sub>PP</sub> [*dígail*]<sub>x</sub>]<sub>O</sub> [*for Saul*]<sub>PP</sub> [*xinna n-olc do-rigéni-side fris*] 'he did not pray to God for vengeance on Saul for the bad things he had done to him'.

The purpose of leftward movement is topicalization by fronting. This discourse-oriented process entails special syntactic constructions. Any part of the sentence, even the verb and subordinate clauses, may be emphasized by promotion to the fronted position. The fronted phrase is introduced by an appropriate form of the copula, the rest of the sentence follows

in a relative construction, e.g. *is óenfer gaibes búaid diib* 'it is one man who takes victory from them' (non-emphatic: *gaibid óenfer búaid diib*), or *is do thabairt díglae beirid in claidib-sin* 'it is to inflict vengeance that he carries this sword' (non-emphatic: *beirid in claidib-sin do thabairt díglae*). For the possible types of relative constructions see the relevant section below. This type of construction is called cleft sentence.

Another subtype of leftward movement is the *nominativus pendens* ('hanging nominative') construction. In it, the emphasized part of the sentence is promoted to the front, where it is placed in the nominative, without being introduced by the copula. The rest of the sentence follows in a non-relative construction, the emphasized part is resumed by an appropriate pronominal element, e.g. *cluiche n-aímin inmédach, agtairt fir ocus mná* 'a pleasant and delightful game, men and women play it'.

Leftward movement as a regular process is also found with adjectives. In ordinary prose, an adjective may be promoted to the position before its head noun. In this case, however, the two are compounded, the adjective remains uninflected, and the two words form an accentual unit, the adjective bearing the stress, e.g. *fírbrithem* 'a just, truthful judge' vs. *bretha fíra* 'just judgements'. Some adjectives can only appear in this type of construction.

### Subordination and co-ordination

In the narrative style of the sagas, Old Irish displays a predilection for co-ordinating sequences of short self-contained sentences. Nowhere can be found intricately subordinated periods of the type known from Latin. Nevertheless, relative constructions are very prominent in Old Irish (see the following paragraph), and other types of subordinate clauses are not unknown. Subordinate clauses that are somehow removed from reality (expressing wishes, orders, etc.) take the subjunctive mood, very often augmented. All conjunctions used for co-ordination and subordination are listed in the relevant section below. Some of the subordinating conjunctions appear artificial and may be calqued on Latin, e.g. *lase* 'when' (< *la* 'with' + *se* 'that') after Latin *cum*.

There is a tendency in the language to substitute subordinate clauses (complement clauses, various adverbial clauses) by converb constructions, i.e. constructions of temporal and modal prepositions + verbal nouns (VN). Well-known examples of this are *oc* 'at, by' + VN to describe continuous, contemporary action and *iar* 'after' + VN for past actions, e.g. *fecht do Pátraic oc ingaire cáirech* 'once for Pátraic at herding sheep = once when Pátraic was herding sheep', or *ná-scarad frit iar chreitim* 'let her not part from you after believing = when she has started to believe'. The negative equivalent to *oc* is *cen* 'without' + VN, e.g. *is ingir lem cen chreitim dúib* 'it grieves me that you are not believing'. The preposition *do* 'for' can substitute final clauses, but it takes on a life of its own and becomes a downright infinitival construction in Irish, e.g. *húare nád-rogaíd uisce do thinnaccul* 'because he had not asked for water to be given = that water be given'. An example for the use of the VN as complement of verbs of saying is *is airi as-beir-som a ept doib* 'it is therefore that he says that they said it'.

### Relative constructions

Old Irish has different types of relative constructions, depending on the relationship between the antecedent, i.e. the relativized head, and the relative clause. The basic types are leniting and nasalizing relative clauses (for the latter see McCone 1980, Ó hUiginn 1986).

- 1 When the head is the subject of the relative clause (= subject antecedent), or when it is a neuter object pronoun, a leniting relative construction follows.
- 2 When the head is the object (= object antecedent), there follows a nasalizing relative construction. In the course of time, the leniting relative construction takes over this function.
- 3 In the early period, a relative construction could also express genitival or various adverbial relations, corresponding to the use of the independent prepositional case (Breatnach 1980).
- 4 When the antecedent, i.e. the head, provides certain adverbial concepts (time, manner, extent, instrument) for the relative clause, a nasalizing relative construction follows. Likewise several adverbial conjunctions require nasalizing relative constructions.
- 5 In the *figura etymologica*, when the antecedent is the verbal noun of the relative verb, a nasalizing construction is used (Ó hUiginn 1983).
- 6 Complement clauses can be introduced by nasalizing relative constructions, but main-clause constructions may also be used (Ó hUiginn 1998).
- 7 When the antecedent is in a prepositional construction within the relative clause, but not in the matrix clause, a prepositional relative construction is used.
- 8 When a prepositional phrase has been fronted for emphasis (= prepositional antecedent), the relativity of the rest of the sentence finds no formal expression, but a straightforward main-clause construction is used.

The difference between leniting and nasalizing constructions does not apply to those relative verbal forms that are distinguished by separate relative endings. But even in these cases the nasalization of nasalizing construction may be indicated on the initial of the verbs.

## Conjunctions

In the following list of Old Irish conjunctions, superscript <sup>L</sup> and <sup>N</sup> mean that the conjunction lenites/nasalizes the initial of the immediately following element, irrespective of the type of clause. Superscript <sup>RN</sup> means that a nasalizing relative clause follows the conjunction. This may very often be substituted by a non-relative construction. Where a conjunction is not marked <sup>RN</sup>, a non-relative main clause construction follows it. 'Independent' or 'dependent' mean that independent or dependent verbal forms follow the conjunction.

### *Copulative and disjunctive conjunctions*

#### Independent:

- 1.1 *ocu(i)s<sup>L</sup>*; *os* 'and' (the normal connector of co-ordinated phrases and clauses)
- 1.2 *scéo<sup>L</sup>*, *scéu<sup>L</sup>* 'and' (only in early poetry and *retorics*)
- 1.3 *-ch* 'and' (only in early texts, usually suffixed to proclitics)
- 1.4 *noch* 'and; however' (sometimes used at the head of a main clause as an emphatic form of 'and'; more often used in adversative or causal meaning, accompanied by *ém*, *ám* 'indeed', *immurgu* 'however' or *colléic* 'yet')
- 1.5 *sech<sup>(L?)</sup>* 'and' (combines two parallel clauses)
- 1.6 *eter ... ocus<sup>L</sup> ... (ocus<sup>L</sup> ...)* 'and' (links parallel elements into a larger unit)
- 1.7 *sech* 'however, that means' (usually followed by the copula)
- 1.8 *emid<sup>(RN?)</sup> ... emid<sup>(RN?)</sup>* 'as well ... as' (on its own *emid* means 'nearly; as it were')

- 1.9 *no*<sup>L</sup>, *nó*<sup>L</sup>, *nu*<sup>L</sup>, *nú*<sup>L</sup> ‘or’  
 1.10 *rodbo*<sup>L</sup>, *rodbu*<sup>L</sup>, *robo*<sup>L</sup>, *robu*<sup>L</sup> ‘either . . . or’  
 1.11 *airc*, *airg(g)* ‘or’  
 1.12 *cenmithá*<sup>RN</sup> or independent clause ‘besides that’

### *Temporal conjunctions*

#### Independent:

- 2.1 *in tain*<sup>RN</sup>, *in tan*<sup>RN</sup>, *tan*<sup>RN</sup> ‘when’  
 2.2 *a*<sup>N+RN</sup>, neg. *an(n)a*<sup>RN</sup>, with *ro*: *arru*-<sup>RN</sup>, *anru*-<sup>RN</sup> ‘when, while’  
 2.3 *lase*<sup>RN</sup> ‘while, when; rarely: whereas’  
 2.4 *céin(e)*<sup>RN</sup> ‘as long’  
 2.5 *ó*<sup>L</sup> ‘since; after; because’  
 2.6 *íarsindí* ‘after’  
 2.7 *resíu*, *risíu* ‘before’ (followed by an augmented subjunctive; later followed by <sup>RN</sup>)

#### Dependent:

- 2.8 *dia*<sup>N</sup> ‘when’ (only with the narrative preterite)

### *Consecutive and final conjunctions*

#### Independent:

- 3.1 *co*<sup>L</sup>, *coní* ‘so that, in order that’  
 3.2 *afameinn*<sup>RN</sup>, *abamin*<sup>RN</sup> ‘if only’  
 3.3 *dano* ‘then; so, also’  
 3.4 *didíu* ‘then; now’  
 3.5 *trá* ‘now, therefore, then’

#### Dependent:

- 3.6 *co*<sup>N</sup>, *con*<sup>N</sup>, *con(n)a*, *con(n)ac(h)on* ‘until; so that; in order that, that (explicative)’  
 3.7 *ara*<sup>N</sup>, neg. *arna*, *arná*, *arnac(h)on* ‘(so) that; in order that; that (explicative)’

### *Conditional conjunctions*

#### Independent:

- 4.1 *ma*<sup>L</sup>, *má*<sup>L</sup>, neg. *maní* ‘if’  
 4.2 *acht* ‘provided that; if only’ (followed by an augmented subjunctive)

#### Dependent:

- 4.3 *dia*<sup>N</sup> ‘if’ (in positive conditional clauses with the subjunctive)

### *Causal conjunctions*

#### Independent:

- 5.1 (*h*)*óre*<sup>RN</sup>, *húare*<sup>RN</sup> ‘because, since’  
 5.2 *fo bíth*<sup>RN</sup> ‘because’  
 5.3 *dég*<sup>RN</sup> ‘because’  
 5.4 *ol*<sup>RN</sup>, neg. *ol ní* ‘because’  
 5.5 *a(i)r*<sup>(L)</sup> ‘since, for’

### *Adversative conjunctions*

#### Independent:

- 6.1 *cammaib*, *cammaif* ‘however, nevertheless’  
 6.2 *immurgu* ‘however’  
 6.3 *acht* ‘but, except’ (in the context of negative clauses also ‘only’)  
 6.4 *cía*<sup>L</sup>, *cé*<sup>L</sup>, neg. *cení*, *cení*, *cini* ‘although, even if; also: that (explicative)’

Dependent:

6.5 *in*<sup>N</sup> ... *in*<sup>N</sup> ... 'be it ... or be it ...'

6.6 *in*<sup>N</sup> ... *fa*<sup>L</sup> ... 'be it ... or be it ...'

### Comparative conjunctions

Independent:

7.1 *amal*<sup>RN</sup> 'as; as if'

7.2 *feib*<sup>RN</sup> 'as; as if'

7.3 *in chruth*<sup>RN</sup> 'so, as'

7.4 *is cumme*<sup>RN</sup> 'it is the same as if' (the compared clauses linked by *ocus*)

### Negation and interrogation

All negatives of Old Irish are conjunct particles, that is, the dependent form of a verb follows. The negatives are part of the verbal complex and always precede the stressed portion of the complex. The main-clause negative particle in declarative sentences is *ní·* with its variant *nícon·* (later *nocha·*, *nacha·*). In all other types of sentences and clauses (before imperatives, in relative constructions), the negative is *na·*, *ná·*, *nad·*, *nád·*, *nacon·*, with many variants (Ó hUiginn 1987). In relative constructions, the particle has mutating effects, depending on the type of relative. When pronouns are infixed, the stem *nach-* is used. The negatives merge with preceding particles or conjunctions. When a conjunction requires a non-relative main-clause construction, *ní·*, *ni·* is used, e.g. *mani·* 'if not', *ceni·* 'although not', otherwise the forms with *a* appear, e.g. *arná·* 'in order that not', *ana·* 'when not', etc.

The interrogative particle of Old Irish is the conjunct particle, *in*<sup>N</sup>, negative *innád*<sup>N</sup>. It always comes before the stressed portion of the verbal complex.

### WORD FORMATION

Old Irish is not only rich in inflectional morphology, but also in derivational morphology. The language is always open to forming new words from existing ones whenever the need arises. In the nominal domain, two major strategies are found: suffixation and composition. By the addition of derivational suffixes to existing words, a nominal stem can either be transferred into a different semantic class, e.g. agent noun *druí* 'druid' (inflectional stem *druíd-*) → abstract *druídecht* 'druidry', or abstract *flaith* 'lordship, rule' → agent noun *flaithem* 'ruler', or a different part of speech can be derived from it, e.g. noun *menmae* 'mind' → adjective *menmnach* 'mindful', or adjective *lúthmar* 'swift' → noun *lúthmairecht* 'agility'. The derivation of adjectives is especially common with the suffixes *-dae* and *-a/ech*. In composition, two (rarely more) independent lexical items are combined under a single stress to form a new lexical item whose meaning typically extends beyond that of a simple combination of the meaning of the base elements. Only the last element is inflected. The major types of Old Irish compounds are determinative compounds, i.e. where the first element qualifies the second, e.g. *fírbretha* 'true judgements' (*fír* 'true' + *bretha* 'judgements'), possessive compounds, i.e. compounds that attribute the quality that is expressed by the members of the compound to an external entity, e.g. *cambšrón* 'crooked-nosed one' (*camb* 'crooked' + *srón* 'nose'), and dvandva-compounds, i.e. two elements that are connected in some sense, e.g. *cennainim* 'head and soul' (*cenn* 'head' + *ainim* 'soul'). For nominal morphology in general, see De Bernardo Stempel (1999); abstracts with dental suffix are treated in Irslinger (2002), nasal stems in Stüber



(1998). Productive adjective formations are treated in Russell (1990) and Wodtko (1995). Uhlich (1993: 78–139) and Stüber (2006) discuss the types of nominal compounds with special reference to OIr. personal names.

In the verbal system, prefixation and suffixation are the main word-forming strategies. Prefixation works only within the class of verbs. In this process, which diminishes in importance during the Old Irish period, one or several items of the closed class of lexical preverbs are added in front of an existing verbal stem, compounded or not, e.g. *soid* ‘to turn’ (root *so-*) → *im-soí* ‘to turn round’ (stem *imm-so-*), or → *do-intai* ‘to turn back’ (stem *to-inde-so-*). Suffixation typically turns a non-verbal stem (noun or adjective) into a verbal stem, the synchronically most important suffix for this is *-aig-*, which inflects as a deponent W2 verb, e.g. *menmae* ‘mind’ → *menmnagaidir* ‘to think, judge, deem’.

## MIDDLE IRISH

Middle Irish does not refer to a uniform, let alone standardized, linguistic entity, but it is rather a term of convenience for the transitional period between two linguistic standards, Old Irish and Modern Irish. Middle Irish is a cover term for a heterogeneous set of restructurings, engendered by a complex interaction of phonological developments and morphological levelling. Two factors were responsible in major ways to bring about the changes from Old to Middle and then on to Modern Irish. Phonological erosion among unstressed vowels led to the loss of grammatical distinctions and categories which in turn necessitated the restructuring especially of the nominal and pronominal sector. The complexities and redundancies of the Old Irish verbal system lent themselves almost naturally to drastic simplifications and regularizations. It must not be overlooked, though, that a number of the features which seem characteristic of the language of the tenth–twelfth centuries are already sporadically attested in the Old Irish glosses (McCone 1985) and may be assumed for the spoken language of that time. The simplification of morphological complexities was already under way in Old Irish.

Middle Irish scribes and authors strove for the Old Irish standard, which they must have learned in school, but they were not always successful and so produced countless hypercorrect forms. It is not always easy to say whether a particular Middle Irish form, especially in the verbal system, was *sprachwirklich* (used in the spoken language) at some stage, or whether it is an artifact of an erring scribe. In that sense it must be remembered that anything recorded here as typically Middle Irish is not to be seen as distinguishing it in essence from Old Irish, but that it is rather an option in Middle Irish that can be added to an Old Irish fundament. The old and the new system are inextricably interwoven.

Since there are no profound syntactical changes from Old to Middle Irish a special section for syntax has been omitted. Those changes that result from newly developed categories and formations will be referred to in the morphological sections.

With no full grammar of Middle Irish existing, the best descriptions are Breatnach (1994), McCone (1997: 163–241; 2005: 173–217), and Jackson (1990: 73–140; for one particular tale).

## PHONOLOGY AND ORTHOGRAPHY

The sound inventory is fundamentally similar to that of Old Irish, albeit due to neutralizations the positional distribution and relative frequency of occurrence of some sounds

have changed. Most consequential is the reduction to schwa of all those unstressed vowels which had previously possessed a distinct quality in Old Irish, i.e. vowels in pre-tonic syllables and vowels in absolute final position. Less disruptive for the grammatical system are other changes such as loss of hiatuses by merging them into monophthongs or diphthongs, the reduction of the number of diphthongs, and shifts in the syllable peaks from the originally stressed vowels to the on-glide of the following consonant, e.g. *duine* 'person', Old Irish /dun<sup>i</sup>e/ > /du<sup>i</sup>n<sup>i</sup>e/ > Middle Irish /d<sup>u</sup>in<sup>i</sup>ə/, or *fer* 'man', Old Irish /f<sup>e</sup>r/ > /f<sup>e</sup>r/ > Middle Irish /f<sup>a</sup>r/. Disyllabic proclitics lose an initial vowel, e.g. the article *inna* > *na*. The consonants are less affected by changes. The changes *nd* > *nn*, *mb* > *mm*, *ld* and *ln* > *ll* had already begun in Old Irish. In late Middle Irish lenited *d* and *g* merge in /ð/ and /ɣ/. Voiceless initial stops of unstressed words are voiced. Attempts have been made by Carney (1983) to date the sound changes that separate Old from Middle Irish.

The traditional orthography of Old Irish remains remarkably stable until the end of the twelfth century, i.e. until the end of the Middle Irish period, although it was fairly historical by that time. The main deviations from the earlier standard lie in frequent spelling confusions of those sounds that had merged, e.g. *nd* and *nn*, or *oi/ai/uí*, etc.

## NOMINAL MORPHOLOGY

During the Middle Irish period the neuter gender loses more and more ground until it finally disappears altogether from the language. Most old neuter nouns are assigned to the masculines.

There is a tendency to confuse accusatives and nominatives, with one of the two winning out in different inflectional classes and in different numbers. In the plural of consonant stems this means that quite distinct and strongly marked inflectional endings arise. This change (in the singular), together with the loss of neuters, leads to a considerable reduction of grammatical prominence for the nasal mutation.

The loss of a distinct quality of final vowels has the effect that in the *jo*- and *jā*-stems all case distinctions except for the prep. pl. are lost. The situation is remedied by taking over the new, amplified endings of the *t*-stems in the plural.

Eventually all these changes, and others, conspire to build a system where the main distinction lies between a singular and a plural form. Less important are further oppositions within the numbers between a 'casus rectus' (the old nominative and accusative) and a genitive, and between the 'casus rectus' and a 'casus obliquus' (after prepositions), marked in the plural by *-(a)ib*. The inherited distinctions of nominal stem-classes become very blurred.

In the adjectival declension, a system is approached where there is a distinction made mainly between singular and plural, the latter characterized by an added schwa (*-a* or *-e*). The ending *-(a)ib* of the prepositional plural is given up, as in the article.

In adjective gradation, the equative in *-ithir* is replaced by that with the prefix *com-*. The superlative is given up as a morphological category, the comparative taking over its function. The distinction between the two grades is effected by syntactic means. Adverbs are formed with the preposition *co*<sup>H</sup>.

## NUMERALS, PRONOUNS AND PRONOMINALS

The main change among numerals is the loss of gender distinctions in the numbers 2–4, the masculine forms winning out everywhere. Personal numerals can be construed with a qualifying gen. pl., e.g. *tríar láech déc* ‘thirteen warriors’.

Apart from a certain amount of morphological changes, the most important development involving independent personal pronouns is the gradual expansion of their syntactic functions also to those of object and subject pronouns of finite verbs. These personal pronouns have a preference for sentence-final position. This is a substantial step away from the grammatical system of Old Irish that entirely did without pronouns of that kind.

Nevertheless, infixed pronouns continue to be used regularly in the written standard. The three classes A–C influence each other formally, especially in the shapes of the third-person pronouns. Occasionally there is confusion between the different classes. Because of the formal similarity of 1 sg. and 2 sg. pronouns with the corresponding possessive pronouns, the 1 pl. and 2 pl. possessive pronouns lend their shape also to the infixed pronouns.

A consequence of the loss of the neuter gender and of the further reduction of unstressed vowels was that verbs with infixed 3 sg. neuter pronouns were no longer correctly understood. Instead they were analysed as unmarked verbal forms and were generalized as such, thereby introducing obligatory but meaningless lenition into the stressed portion of the verbal complex, e.g. Old Irish *at-beir* /əd'βeɪrʲ/ ‘(s)he says it’ > /əd'βeɪrʲ/ ‘(s)he says’, or *ní-thabair* /nʲi:ʲθaβəɪrʲ/ ‘(s)he does not carry it’ > ‘(s)he does not carry’. The phonological opposition between main-clause and lenited-relative verbal forms is thereby eroded.

The unstressed prepositions suffer phonological attrition, leading to the merger of some, e.g. *ar* ‘before’, *iár* ‘after’, *for* ‘upon’ > /ər/. The stressed counterparts with suffixed pronouns are less affected, but a certain amount of levelling of the allomorphs in the ending sets occurs. The distinction between prepositions that take the accusative and those that take the prepositional breaks down.

## VERBAL MORPHOLOGY

Of all subsections of grammar, the verbal system experiences the most pervasive changes during the Middle Irish period. The complex and non-transparent allomorphy paves the way for an almost complete breakdown of the system, which is rebuilt on a much simpler basis. Naturally, these changes occurred in a slow, piecemeal fashion, taking many detours and by-passes. They cannot be retraced here, but only the main directions of the developments shall be sketched. A detailed account of what happened to the verbal system in Middle Irish can be found in McCone (1997: 163–241).

The dimensions of the Irish verb are reduced. Perspectivity is ultimately lost by the facts that preterites augmented by *ro* oust their non-augmented counterparts, thereby eliminating any contrast between resultative and non-resultative verbal forms, and that potential augmentation is given up in favour of lexical means of expressing possibility. The dimension of deponentiality is also lost by the demise of the deponent ending set, a development that already sets in during the Old Irish period; the active endings spread to earlier deponent verbs. The deponent endings remain only in the 1 sg. conjunct a-subjunctive *-ar* and in the 3 sg. s-preterite *-astar*, and, because they are more highly distinctive, oust their non-deponent counterparts.

The most important structural novelty is the generalization of the weak pattern of stem-formation also to strong and hiatus verbs, with a predictable formation of the f-future, a-subjunctive, s-preterite and preterite passive stems on the basis of the present stem. Beside the f-future, the é-future enjoys limited productivity. In the past, the opposition between unaugmented preterites and augmented perfects is given up in favour of the latter, which become a general past. *Ro* ousts all other augments and eventually becomes a mere past tense particle. From instances with a petrified neuter infixed pronoun, *ro*, like the negative particle *ní*, acquires an obligatory leniting effect.

Verbal inflection is further unified and the intricacies of the system drastically reduced by a gradual elimination of compound verbs. On the basis of either the dependent stem variant or the verbal noun, new simple verbs are created. Old deuterotonic verbal forms disappear from the language.

The loss of the distinct quality of final vowels does not have such profound effects in verbal morphology as in other sectors of the grammar, but in a limited number of personal endings, distinctions between persons are erased. This leads to the introduction of a number of new endings: 3 sg. present conjunct *-a/enn*; 1 pl. absolute *-mait*; 1 sg. future conjunct *-a/et*. In the s-preterite plural the endings of the suffixless preterite are introduced. Across the board, there is a tendency towards a uniform inflection for all verbs.

The entirely deviant inflection of the copula is restructured by making the 3 sg. the basis to which personal endings similar to suffixed pronouns are added.

As for relative marking, nasalizing relative constructions are replaced by leniting ones. Only the 3 sg. in *-a/es* remains of the separate relative verbal forms, and the petrified class C neuter infixed pronoun can be used as a relative marker.

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# OLD AND MIDDLE WELSH

*David Willis*

## INTRODUCTION

The Welsh language emerged from the increasing dialect differentiation of the ancestral Brythonic language (also known as British or Brittonic) in the wake of the withdrawal of the Roman administration from Britain and the subsequent migration of Germanic speakers to Britain from the fifth century. Conventionally, Welsh is treated as a separate language from the mid-sixth century. By this time, Brythonic speakers, who once occupied the whole of Britain apart from the north of Scotland, had been driven out of most of what is now England. Some Brythonic speakers had migrated to Brittany from the late fifth century. Others had been pushed westwards and northwards into Wales, western and south-western England, Cumbria and other parts of northern England and southern Scotland. With the defeat of the Romano-British forces at Dyrham in 577, the Britons in Wales were cut off by land from those in the west and south-west of England. Linguistically more important, final unstressed syllables were lost (apocope) in all varieties of Brythonic at about this time, a change intimately connected to the loss of morphological case. These changes are traditionally seen as having had such a drastic effect on the structure of the language as to mark a watershed in the development of Brythonic. From this period on, linguists refer to the Brythonic varieties spoken in Wales as Welsh; those in the west and south-west of England as Cornish; and those in Brittany as Breton. A fourth Brythonic language, Cumbric, emerged in the north of England, but died out, without leaving written records, in perhaps the eleventh century.

Brythonic is known to linguists through comparative reconstruction of Welsh, Breton and Cornish. The phonological development of the language can also be corroborated by the evidence of place names, both those borrowed into English at an early date and those attested in Latin sources, and by the development in Brythonic languages of Latin loanwords, whose original form in Latin is generally known with a fair degree of accuracy.

There are no written records of Welsh from the first two hundred years or so of its existence, from the mid-sixth to the mid-eighth century. The language at this time is conventionally referred to as Primitive or Archaic Welsh. As with Brythonic, Primitive Welsh is known through place names in Latin sources, through place names borrowed into English and through internal reconstruction. Internal reconstruction based on later attested stages of Welsh can also be attempted.

Old Welsh (OW.) is the period from the mid-eighth century down to the middle of the twelfth century. The earliest extant written Welsh comes from the memorial inscriptions on the eighth-century Tywyn Stone (Williams 1972 [1949]). The oldest continuous text is the



Surexit Memorandum. This is one of eight additional entries (mostly memoranda of gifts and similar records) added to the Latin Book of St Chad, currently in the cathedral library in Lichfield. It records the settlement of a land dispute between Tudfwlch son of Llywyd and Elgu son of Gelli. Jenkins and Owen date the text to the period 830–50 (Jenkins and Owen 1983/4). Other instances of Old Welsh in contemporary manuscripts survive in glosses on other Latin texts such as the notes on weights and measures (*De mensuris et ponderibus*) in the Oxoniensis Prior (Ox. 1) manuscript (edited in Williams 1930), dating to around 820 (Williams 1935); the glosses on Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge ms. 153 (see Lemmen 2006, Stokes 1873); and glosses on Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* book 1, also in the Oxoniensis Prior manuscript.

The Juvencus manuscript contains glosses in Welsh on Latin texts and two poems in Old Welsh amounting to twelve stanzas (the Juvencus poems or *englynion*) (edited by Haycock 1994, Williams 1980 [1933]). The main manuscript dates from the second half of the ninth century. Glosses in Latin, Welsh and Irish were added in the tenth century.

The longest piece of continuous Old Welsh prose is the Computus fragment, dealing with calculations concerning the calendar, perhaps dating from around 920 (Williams 1927).

Welsh names in Latin sources, such as Gildas's *De Excidio Britanniae*, Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* and various Latin saints' lives, continue to be of use, but the names tend to appear in Latinized forms that obscure phonological developments in Welsh.

The charters in the twelfth-century *Book of Llandaff* (*Liber Landavensis*) also fall into the Old Welsh period, traditionally marking its endpoint. They were probably composed in the 1120s to bolster the claims of the bishop of Llandaff in various land disputes (Davies 1973, 1979: 2). Although charters purporting to date from the sixth century are actually much later compositions, many appear to have been compiled using earlier material with orthography reflecting phonological features going back to the mid-sixth century (Sims-Williams 1991).

Mention must also be made of the extensive poetry of the Cynfeirdd ('the earliest poets'), which, although surviving only in manuscripts from the Middle Welsh period, contains material that must have been composed during the Old Welsh period. This work includes poetry attributed to the poets Aneirin (*Canu Aneirin* or the *Gododdin*) and Taliesin (*Canu Taliesin*), the poetic cycle *Canu Llywarch Hen* and the prophecy *Armes Prydain*.

Middle Welsh (MW.), the language from the mid-twelfth century onwards (Evans 1964: xvi), is richly attested in a large body of texts, including both native and translated tales and romances, legal codes, chronicles, saints' lives and other religious texts, medical and scientific works, and an extensive corpus of fixed-metre poetry.

The native narrative tradition is attested primarily through the collection of tales and romances known as *The Mabinogion*. These tales survive in the two great manuscript compilations of Middle Welsh literature, the *Red Book of Hergest* (compiled in Glamorgan, 1382–c. 1410, the chief scribe named as Hywel Fychan ap Hywel Goch) and the *White Book of Rhydderch* (compiled c. 1350) (Huws 1991). Their composition in written form is somewhat earlier. The first to be composed was probably *Culhwch ac Olwen* ('Culhwch and Olwen'), which shows linguistically archaic features and whose original composition has been dated to c. 1100 (Bromwich and Evans 1997: xxvii).

Translated tales include those relating to Charlemagne now known as *Ystoria de Carolo Magno*, the prose Arthurian romance *Ystoriaeul Seint Greal*, the account of the Trojan wars in *Dares Phrygius*, and *Ystoria Bown de Hamtwn*, among others. These are mostly fairly free translations or adaptations of works in French (*Otinell*, *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*, *Le Chanson de Roland*, *La Queste del Saint Graal*, *Perlesvaus*, *La Geste de Boun de Hamtone*, etc.) or Latin (the pseudo-Turpin chronicle *Historia Caroli Magni*).

In terms of sheer quantity of material, the largest body of Middle Welsh comes from various versions of the medieval Welsh laws, with some thirty-six Welsh law manuscripts surviving from before 1500 (Charles-Edwards 1989: 99–102). Law manuscripts tend to be linguistically more innovative than native literary texts, probably because they were constantly copied, updated and re-edited. The laws exist in three main, partly regionally based redactions, the northern *Llyfr Iorwerth*, the southern *Llyfr Blegywryd*, and the *Llyfr Cyfnerth*, associated with the south and the midlands. Although individual manuscripts may not show regional affiliations in the way that these broad divisions suggest, regional associations of the laws do allow us more direct access to dialect variation than Middle Welsh texts generally offer.

The native poetic tradition, which continued to develop with the poetry of the *Gogynfeirdd* ('the fairly early poets', also known as *Beirdd y Tywysogion*, 'Poets of the Princes'), is useful for the study of initial-consonant mutation, since patterns of alliteration demonstrate mutations (such as /d/ > /ð/) that were never, or only inconsistently, marked in the orthography. The linguistic conservatism of this poetry has also been useful for reconstructing earlier stages, particularly in verbal morphology (Rodway 2002 [1998]). The later *cywyddwyr* poets (*Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* 'Poets of the Gentry'), from the fourteenth century onwards, are linguistically more innovative while remaining faithful to a strict poetic tradition, and their work provides some evidence for linguistic change in progress.

The most striking difference between Old and Middle Welsh is the introduction of radically new orthographic conventions for Middle Welsh. However, recent research has shown that the assumption of a radical shift in orthographic practice in the twelfth century is too simplistic and that regional differences also play a significant role. Some phonological changes from Old to Middle Welsh are also striking: loss of the voiced velar fricative /ɣ/, for instance. In morphology and syntax, the transition between Old and Middle Welsh, in so far as we can tell from the limited access to Old Welsh syntax in particular, involves mostly changes in preferences rather than absolute innovations. The system of absolute and conjunct verbal inflection, already obsolescent in Old Welsh, is more or less dead by the start of the Middle Welsh period; patterns found with the verb 'to be' shift in frequency; and certain nominal and verbal inflections are replaced.

The end of the Middle Welsh period is harder to define than the beginning. Simon Evans defines Middle Welsh as running to the end of the fourteenth century (Evans 1964: xvii), making a further distinction within Middle Welsh between early Middle Welsh, c. 1150–c. 1250, and late Middle Welsh, c. 1250–1400. Current usage generally regards 1500 as an arbitrary convenient cut-off point for Middle Welsh (Russell 1995: xviii). Early Modern Welsh, from 1500 to 1700, marks a transitional period in which various innovations begun at the end of the Middle Welsh period reach their full effect.

The overview presented in this chapter is necessarily selective. For fuller overviews of specific aspects of Old and Middle Welsh, see Evans (1964) and Morris-Jones (1913) (general), Jackson (1953) and Schrijver (1995) (phonology) and Borsley et al. (2007: 286–337) (syntax).

## PHONOLOGY

### Vowels

#### *The Brythonic system*

Late (West) Brythonic is reconstructed with the system of vowel phonemes shown in Figure 5.1 (Sims-Williams 1990, 1991).

	Front		Back
High	i: i	ʊ:	u
	e: e	(ə ə)	o
	ɛ:	ɔ:	
Low		a	

Figure 5.1 The vowel phonemes of Late (West) Brythonic

Examples are given below. Most of the vowels continue unchanged into Welsh. Note, however, that there is no correlation between original vowel length in Brythonic and that in Modern Welsh due to the reorganization of vowel length known as the ‘new quantity system’. On /ə/ and /ə/, see the section on stress and pitch accent below. Note that reconstructions given in the course of this chapter are generally of (earlier) (Common) Brythonic and do not necessarily reflect this vowel system.

#### Long vowels

- /i:/ ModW. *cig* ‘meat’ (cognate with OIr. *cícce* ‘flesh’), *gwin* ‘wine’ (loan from Latin *vīnum*), *cil* ‘corner’ (OIr. *cúl*) (/i:/ arises from inherited /i:/ and /u:/, plus Latin loans with -ī-);
- /e:/ (diphthongizes to /ui/) *llwyd* ‘grey’ (the first element in Brythonic *Letocetum* /le:toke:tum/ ‘Lichfield’);
- /ɛ:/ (diphthongizes to /oi/) *coed* ‘trees’ < \*kɛ:to- (second element in *Letocetum*), *hoedl* ‘life’ < \*sɛ:tlo- (< \*saitlo-);
- /ɔ:/ (diphthongizes to /au/ in stressed syllables) *llawn* ‘full’ < Late Brythonic \*lɔ:mo- < la:mo- (OIr. *lán*), *mawr* ‘big’ < \*mɔ:r- (OIr. *már*), *caws* ‘cheese’ (Latin *cāseus*) (arises from earlier /a:/ and nonfinal /o:/);
- /ʊ:/ *Llun* ‘Monday’ (Latin (*dies*) *Lūnae*), *ffurf* ‘form’ (Latin *fōrma*), *budd* ‘use, value’ < \*boud- (OIr. *búaid*), *cul* ‘narrow’ < \*koilo- (OIr. *cóil*) (arises from monophthongization of various diphthongs, plus Latin loans with -ō- or -ū-).

The vowel /ɔ:/ shortened to [ɔ] in pretonic syllables, for instance, Latin *Natālicia* > Primitive Welsh \*/nɔðɔlig/, ‘Christmas’ (ModW. *Nadolig*) shown by the short vowel in the first syllable when this word is loaned into Old Irish as *Notlaic*. With diphthongization of /ɔ:/ and subsequent allophonic reallocation of length (see below), this led to the creation of a new phoneme /ɔ/ (secondary split), which subsequently merged with /o/.

#### Short vowels (may lengthen in later Welsh)

- /i/ or /i:/ *sych* ‘dry’ (Latin *siccus*), *byd* ‘world’ (OIr. *bith*), *gwyn* ‘white’ (OIr. *find*) (also arises from i-affection, see below);
- /e/ *ebol* ‘foal’ (OIr. *ech*) ‘horse’, *hen* ‘old’ (OIr. *sen*);
- /a/ *anadl* ‘breath’ (OIr. *anál*), *aradr* ‘plough’ (OIr. *arathar*);
- /o/ *rhod* ‘wheel’ (OIr. *roth*);
- /u/ *ffrwd* /fru:d/ (< /u/) ‘stream’ (OIr. *sruth*).

The vowel /i/ was originally a high front unrounded vowel, but backed to /i/ in Welsh. Both symbols will be used according to historic context. New instances of /u/ arise from

the raising of /o/ before a nasal plus stop, a single nasal or a liquid plus stop, for instance, ModW. *mwng* 'mane' (OIr. *mong*). Similar raising occurs with front vowels before a nasal, such that /e/ raises to /i/, for instance, ModW. *myfyr* 'meditation' (Latin *memoria*).

### *The new quantity system*

Although vowel length was contrastive in the Brythonic system just described, a re-organization of the vowel system redistributed long and short vowels in an allophonically predictable way. This redistribution, termed the 'new quantity system', has been dated to the late sixth century by Jackson, or slightly earlier, to the first half of the sixth century, by Sims-Williams (1990) (also McCone 1996: 145–65). As a result, all vowels could be allophonically long or short according to context.

In stress-bearing monosyllables, vowels became long before single consonants (except /m/) and short before clusters or /m/:

- (1) [ʊ:] > [ʊ] in *ffurf* 'form' (Latin *fōrma*)
- [ʊ:] > [ʊ] in *clust* 'ear' (OIr. *clúas*)
- [i:] > [i] in *sych* 'dry' (Latin *siccus*)
- [e] > [e:] in *hen* 'old' (OIr. *sen*)

Long /nn/ and /rr/ counted as clusters. In inherited vocabulary, full words could not end in a voiceless stop; however, when word-final voiceless stops emerged later, vowels before them were short, as today. It is unclear whether vowels were short or long before /h/.

The result of the new quantity system was to make vowel length in early Old Welsh predictable from context, and therefore non-phonemic, although allophonic differences in vowel length nevertheless existed.

### *Diphthongizations*

The long mid vowels /e:/, /ɛ:/ and /ɔ:/ diphthongize to /ui/, /oi/ and /au/ in early Welsh (sixth to eighth century (Jackson 1953: 293–6, Sims-Williams 1991: 47–9)). Diphthongization of the front vowels /e:/ and /ɛ:/ occurs in all environments; diphthongization of /ɔ:/ is witnessed only in final (stressed) syllables, all pretonic instances of /ɔ:/ having already shortened to [ɔ], which does not diphthongize.

Coupled with shortening of pretonic /ɔ:/ to [ɔ], diphthongization of /ɔ:/ creates alternations between /o/ and /au/. For example, ModW. *llaw* /<sup>h</sup>lau/ 'hand' (OW. /<sup>h</sup>lauβ/ < \*/lɔ:m/) shows the development of /ɔ:/ in stressed syllables, as against *llofrudd* /<sup>h</sup>lovrið/ 'murderer' (Primitive Welsh /<sup>h</sup>ɔv'rʉð/) with the same first element ('hand' plus *rhudd* 'red'), attesting the development of /ɔ:/ in unstressed syllables, where it shortens to [ɔ], escapes diphthongization giving Modern Welsh /o/. Compare also *brawd* 'brother' ~ *brodyr* 'brothers', *llawr* 'floor' ~ *lloriau* 'floors' and *mawl* 'praise (noun)' ~ *moli* 'praise (verb)'.

### *A-affection and i-affection*

Various vowel harmony sound changes that occurred in Brythonic have significant effects on later Welsh morphology. I-affection causes vowels to raise in syllables preceding a high front vowel, and a-affection causes vowels to lower in syllables preceding a low vowel.

Both go back to late Brythonic and are common to Welsh, Cornish and Breton. The first to occur was a-affection, a change which lowered Brythonic \*/i/ and \*/u/ in stressed, penultimate syllables to /e/ and /o/ respectively if the following syllable contained \*/a:/ or, in Latin loanwords, \*/a/ or \*/a:/. For example, \*/birra:/ > MW. *berr* 'short (fem.)', as against \*/birros/ > MW. *byrr* 'short (masc.)'; Latin *regula* > Welsh *rheol* 'rule'. Since

many feminine nouns and adjectives ended in \*/a:/, this introduced vowel alternations signalling gender.

I-affection is more complex, occurring in two stages. The first stage, known as final i-affection, affects vowels in penultimate syllables preceding an ending containing /i:/ or /j/. Such vowels raise, becoming either /i/ (mostly) or /ei/. Affection of /a/ before /j/ yields /ei/; affection of /a/ before /i:/ and of /o/ before /j/ may yield either /i/ or /ei/; affection in other cases yields /i/:

- (2) /a/ > /ei/      \*bardī > *beirdd* ‘bards’, \*aljōs > MW. *eil* ‘second’  
 /e/ > /i/      \*are pennī ‘at the end of’ > *erbyn* ‘against’ (but *pen* ‘head’)  
 /o/ > /i/      \*kornī > *cyrn* ‘horns’ (but *corn* ‘horn’), \*donjos > *dyn* ‘man’ (Irish *duine*)  
 /o/ > /ei/      \*korkjo- > *ceirch* ‘oats’ (Ml. *coirce*)  
 /u/ > /i/      Latin *cuneus* > \*kunjus > *cŷn* ‘chisel’

Variants with /i/ and /ei/ sometimes co-exist, for instance, Brythonic \*alarkī gives both MW. *elyrch* /elirx/ and *eieirch* /eleirx/ ‘swans’. With diphthongs, more complex results obtain.

Internal i-affection is later, affecting vowels in all syllables. Before a syllable containing /i/ or /i:/, /a/ and /o/ become /e/; before a syllable containing /j/, the vowels /a/, /o/ and /e/ become /ei/:

- (3) /a/ > /e/      Latin *salsīcius* > *selsig* ‘sausage’, \*klamito- > *clefyd* ‘sickness’  
 /a/ > /ei/      \*kaljākos > *ceiliog* ‘cockerel’ (Irish *cailech*), \*klamiones > *cleifion* ‘sick people’  
 /e/ > /ei/      /heb/ + /-jau/ > *heibio* ‘past’ (*heb* ‘without’)  
 /o/ > /e/      Latin *molina* > *melin* ‘mill’, \*omijos > *efydd* ‘bronze’ (OIr. *umae*)  
 /o/ > /ei/      /mox/ + /-jad/ > *meichiad* ‘swineherd’ (*moch* ‘pigs’, Ml. *muccaid*)

Any vowel resulting from final i-affection may itself condition internal affection. Hence ‘double affection’ – affection in two successive syllables, the first internal affection, the second final affection – may occur. Examples include \*anatjo- > *enaid* ‘soul’ and \*karantijo- > MW. *kerennyd* ‘relatives’ (*car* ‘relative’).

A-affection destroys the context for (bleeds) i-affection, and hence must have been complete before i-affection occurred (\*sabrīna > Welsh *Hafren* ‘River Severn’, not \*\**Hefren*). Jackson (1953: 573–618) dates a-affection to the first half to middle of the fifth century, final i-affection to late fifth or early sixth century, and internal i-affection to the seventh century. Both a-affection and final i-affection are triggered by vowels in word-final syllables which were lost (apocope), and hence must precede the loss of word-final syllables.

### *The early Welsh vowel system*

The diphthongizations and the new quantity system (plus merger of /o/ and /ɔ/) create the vowel system shown in Figure 5.2, which was reached by the eighth century and basically survived the whole of the Old Welsh period and much of the Middle Welsh period.

### *Stress and pitch accent*

Late Brythonic had penultimate stress, which became word-final stress as the result of the loss of word-final syllables. In Old Welsh, the stress accent shifted back to the penultimate syllable, although the pitch accent remained word-final, resulting in the dissociation of stress and pitch accent characteristic of Welsh today.

	Front		Back
High	i	i ʊ	u
	e	(ə ɵ)	o
Low		a	

Figure 5.2 The early Welsh vowel system

Sound changes that differentiate final syllables, including the only syllable of monosyllabic words, from nonfinal syllables are generally dated to before the Old Welsh accent shift, whereas those which differentiate penultimate syllables and the only syllable of monosyllabic words from other syllables are generally dated to after it. The following changes target syllables according to their stress before the accent shift, hence must predate it:

1 Unstressed high vowels /u/ and /i/ weaken in nonfinal syllables, first to [ɵ] (rounded mid-central vowel) and [ə] (unrounded mid-central vowel, schwa) respectively, ultimately merging as [ə]. That is, /u/ and /i/ survive in stressed monosyllabic words, but reduce in nonfinal syllables of polysyllabic words. Since these are the unstressed syllables before the accent shift, this change must predate it. The sound [ɵ] already existed as the outcome of /o/ in unstressed prefixes such as \*kom- > OW. *com-* /kɵβ/, MW. *kyf-* /kəv/ in OW. *cimadas* /kɵβaðas/ ‘appropriate’ (ModW. *cyfaddas*). The reduction of /u/ created new instances of it in such words as OW. *celell* /kɵtɛl/ ‘knife’ > MW. *kyllell* /kətɛl/ (< Latin *cultellus*). New schwa arose in such words as *dynion* /dənjon/ ‘men’ (singular *dyn* /dɪn/ ‘man’).

2 Initial /s/-clusters /sp st sk/ develop a prothetic neutral vowel, schwa, as in MW. *yspeil* ‘plunder’, *ystaueil* ‘room’ and *yscriennu* ‘write’. This schwa may subsequently become stressed as a result of the stress shift (as it does in *yspeil*). If schwa had developed after the accent shift, the shift would have left the stress on the final syllable in the affected words. This rule remains productive in the Middle Welsh period, and a prothetic schwa is added to loans into Middle Welsh if they begin with an affected consonant cluster.

3 Old Welsh /ei eʊ/ become /ai ai/ in Modern Welsh in stressed monosyllables and in final syllables, that is, in syllables that were stressed before the shift. This is difficult to date, because Middle Welsh spelling is generally traditional and retains spellings with <ei eu> in both shifted and unshifted environments. Jackson (1953: 686–7), assuming phonetically gradual change, dates its beginnings to the late tenth or early eleventh century, with full lowering of the vowel to [ai ai] reached in the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries. This gives rise to alternations between /a/ and /e/ as the initial element of diphthongs according to stress, with /a/ occurring in final syllables, and /e/ elsewhere:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (4) /ai/ /sain/ <i>sain</i> ‘sound’                    | /seineg/ <i>seineg</i> ‘phonetics’                     |
| /ai/ /hai/ <i>haul</i> ‘sun’                           | /heilog/ <i>heulog</i> ‘sunny’                         |
| /ken/ <i>hedlaiθ</i> / <i>cenhedlaeth</i> ‘generation’ | /kened/ <i>leiθol</i> / <i>cededlaethol</i> ‘national’ |

Two changes are sensitive to stress as it occurs in Modern Welsh, so postdate the accent shift:

1 Loss of /h/ (or, viewed alternatively, voicing of the voiceless nasals /ŋ<sup>h</sup> ŋ<sup>h</sup> ŋ<sup>h</sup>/ with accompanying loss of aspiration) occurs in all syllables except word-initially in monosyllables, and in the onset of the penultimate syllable. That is, /h/ is lost everywhere except at the beginning of a word and at the beginning of the stressed syllable. Thus we find loss of /h/ in *brenhin* > *brenin* 'king', where it is post-tonic, but in the plural *brenhinod* 'kings' it remains, because /h/ is at the start of the stressed syllable.

2 Monophthongization of /au/ to /o/ (partly reversing the previous diphthongization, see the section on diphthongization above) occurs in syllables that were post-tonic after the accent shift, that is, in the final syllable of polysyllabic words, such as *achaws* /'axaus/ > /'axos/ 'cause' or *parawt* /'paraud/ > /'parod/ 'ready'. This gives rise to alternations where the same morpheme appears in a monosyllabic word and in the final syllable of a polysyllabic word, for instance, *llaw* 'hand': *dwyllo* (< *dwyl* 'two' plus 'hand') 'hands'. Merger of /au/ and /o/ in post-tonic syllables leads to the loss of contrast in the minimal pair *yscawl* /'æsgaul/ 'ladder' ≠ *yscol* /'æsgol/ 'school', both now *ysgol* /'æsgol/ (Morris-Jones 1913: 95). The interaction of the diphthongization of /ɔ:/ to /au/ and the monophthongization of /au/ to /o/ means that /au/ arises and survives only in syllables that were stressed both before and after the accent shift, that is, in stressed monosyllables. This is, disregarding certain cases where /au/ has been restored analogically or prescriptively, the modern distribution of /au/. Middle Welsh orthography does not normally indicate this change and represents the vowel as <aw> whether reduced or not, but sporadic examples of spellings with <o> do occur, for example, *dio*t 'drink' (YSG 3115) for expected *diaw*t. Jackson (1953: 298–9) dates the change to the late eleventh century on the basis of examples of spellings with <o> for earlier /au/ in the eleventh-century *Book of Llandaff*. However, Sims-Williams (1991: 63–71) has shown that the overall distribution of these spellings is consistent with their being archaisms (conservative spellings for earlier /ɔ:/) rather than early indications of innovation. The only secure evidence is relative chronology: since the conditioning environment requires nonfinal stress, this change must postdate the accent shift.

The date of the accent shift has been the subject of dispute. Jackson (1953: 687, 99) dates it to the eleventh century, coincidentally the same time as in Breton and Cornish. Morris-Jones (1913: 48) thought it occurred in early Middle Welsh (twelfth to early thirteenth century). Conversely, Watkins (1972, 1976) considers it to have occurred much earlier than this, perhaps in the ninth century, this view being supported by McCone (1996: 20). Much depends on whether spellings with <o> in the late Old Welsh *Book of Llandaff* are archaisms, reflecting the language before /ɔ:/ > /au/, or innovations, early indications of /au/ > /o/. The latter would point to an earlier date for the accent shift, the former to a later date.

Watkins links other reductions to the accent shift. Reduction of /nt/ to /n/ occurs in Welsh word-finally in unaccented monosyllables (*kyn*(t) 'before', *gan*(t) 'with' and *san*(t) 'saint') and in final syllables of polysyllabic words (*dyffryn*(t) 'valley' and *arian*(t) 'silver'), but not in stressed monosyllables. This suggests that it is conditioned by the absence of stress after the accent shift. Examples of spellings without <t> occur in the ninth-century Juvenius poems. This supports an Old Welsh (ninth-century) date for the accent shift.

### Vowel length

The new quantity system redistributed vowel length in a predictable way. However, a contrast in vowel length subsequently re-emerges in later stages of Welsh as the result

of a number of independent changes that alter the conditioning environments for vowel length:

- i the contrast between /nn/ and /n/ and /rr/ and /r/ is given up. This makes vowel length in monosyllabic words unpredictable, since both short and long vowels now occur before /n/ and /r/, for instance, [penn] > [pen] 'head' but [he:n] 'old' remains (Hamp 1956: 36);
- ii loss of word-final /y/ after a consonant (see the section on word-final glides below) creates new short vowels before single /r/ and /l/, for instance, *dal* /dalɨ/ 'hold' > /dal/ but *tâl* /ta:l/ 'payment' remains;
- iii contraction of two syllables creates new long vowels, for instance, MW. *kant* /ka:nt/ 'they will get' (< root /ka/ + ending /ant/) (contrast *kant* 'he, she sang' /kant/);
- iv later loans, particularly from English, create further contrasts of the type in (i), for instance, *ton* /ton/ 'wave' (< /tonn/): *tôn* /to:n/ 'tone' or *lon* /lon/ (< /lonn/) 'happy (soft mutation)': *lôn* /lo:n/ 'lane'.

Even after these changes, vowel length is in practice rarely contrastive.

Subsequent sound changes limited to northern varieties lengthen short vowels in monosyllables before /s/ plus a stop and before /tʰ/, for instance, *trist* /trist/ > /tri:st/ 'sad' or *swllt* /su:t/ > /su:tʰ/ 'shilling'. Before /t/ in monosyllables, vowels are today short in northern varieties (*pell* /pe:t/ 'far' and *twll* /tu:t/ 'hole'), and variable in southern varieties (/pe:t/ but /tu:t/). Jackson (1953: 477) suggests that southern varieties have lengthened these vowels and therefore that Old and Middle Welsh had short vowels here, but the evidence is unclear.

#### *Merger of /ɨ/ and /ʉ/*

The vowel inventory of stressed syllables remained largely unchanged in Middle Welsh. The most significant development concerns the distinction between /ɨ/ and /ʉ/, which was lost in all contexts during Middle Welsh, the two merging as [i]. Rounding survived longer in stressed syllables than in unstressed syllables. Evans (1964: 2) dates unrounding of /ʉ/ in unstressed final syllables to the 'late Middle Welsh period', evidence for which comes from confusion of <u> and <y> from the fourteenth century onwards: <u> for historical /ɨ/ in *euruchweith* 'work of goldsmiths' (KAA 66), *vy mrodur* 'my brothers' (YSG 2153); <y> for historical /ʉ/ in *gyrry* 'drive' (KAA 562).

In monosyllables before /x/, rounding was retained as an off-glide written <w>, so spellings such as *ywch* /iwx/ (FfBO 32.2) (earlier *uch*) 'higher' indicate that /ʉ/ had merged with /ɨ/ (Hamp 1966). This creates the modern alternation between /iw/ in stressed monosyllables versus /i/ elsewhere, for instance, *uwch* 'higher' and *buwch* 'cow', but *uchel* 'high' and *buchod* 'cows'.

#### *Epenthetic schwa*

Epenthetic schwa develops in Old and Middle Welsh between two consonants in word-final position in the sequences:

- 1 consonant + /r l n/ (MW. *pobyl* 'people')
- 2 /rm rv lm lv/ (*baryf* 'beard')
- 3 /ðv/ (*dedyf* 'law')



This epenthetic schwa is treated as nonsyllabic in Middle Welsh poetry, although it evidently was syllabic in speech. In some cases the epenthetic vowel assimilates to the vowel in the previous syllable.

Consonants

Inventory of consonant phonemes

The consonant phonemes of Old and Middle Welsh are given in Table 5.1. The following points should be noted with respect to the consonantal phoneme inventory:

1 The Old and Middle Welsh labial fricatives were probably bilabial [ɸ β], in contrast to Modern Welsh, where they are labiodental [f v] (Evans 1964: 9, Morris-Jones 1913: 22). Evidence for this conclusion comes from words with alternations between spellings suggesting [w] and spellings suggesting [v] or [β], for instance, MW. *kywoeth* ‘wealth’ with [w] and *kyfoeth/kyuoeth* with [v] or [β] or MW. *diw Ieu* ‘Thursday’ as against *Difyeu*. In some words, there is variation in modern dialects between [w] and [v], for instance, *cawod* (southern) or *cafod* (northern) ‘shower’. This variation is easier to account for assuming earlier variation between [w] and [β] than between [w] and [v]. Middle Welsh /β/ normally arises from lenition of earlier /m/ or /b/, hence the simplest historical development would give rise to a bilabial rather than a labiodental fricative. Adjacent to /u/ and occasionally /ʷ/, the voiced labial fricative sometimes drops in Middle Welsh, as in *dwr* for *dwfyr* ‘water’, *Annwn* for *Annwuyn* ‘Annwn, the Celtic underworld’ or *daru* for *daruu* ‘happen (third person sg. past)’. This development would be more easily motivated if the sequence in question were [uβ] and [βʷ] respectively rather than [uv] and [vʷ]. However, the more familiar symbols /f/ and /v/ will be used where the place of articulation is not at issue.

2 The soft mutation of /m/ is reckoned initially to have been a nasalized voiced labial fricative (probably bilabial) /β̃/. In Old Welsh, the outcome of soft mutation of /m/ is written <m> and distinguished from the outcome of soft mutation of /b/, written <b>. This suggests that /β̃/ remained distinct from /β/ until around 1100, when nasality was lost and both merged as [β] (later [v]). In placenames borrowed into English, /β̃/ always appears as /m/ until the seventh century (*Thames*), from which time both /m/ (*Tamar*, *Frome*) and /β̃ ~ v/ (*Devon*) are found. Jackson (1953: 480–95) interpreted this as meaning that /β̃/ was strongly nasalized before this time, but weakly nasalized thereafter. Another possibility is that nasalization was optional, as in present-day Breton, from that time.

Table 5.1 Old and Middle Welsh consonant phonemes

	Stop	Nasal	Fricative	Continuant
labial	p b	m m̥ <sup>h</sup>	ɸ β (β̃)	w
dental	t d	n n̥ <sup>h</sup>	θ ð	
alveolar			s	ʃ l̥ <sup>h</sup> r
postalveolar			ʃ	j
velar	k g (g <sup>w</sup> )	ŋ ŋ̥ <sup>h</sup>	x (χ)	

3 The consonants /g<sup>w</sup>/, /t<sup>h</sup>/ and /m<sup>h</sup> n<sup>h</sup> ŋ<sup>h</sup>/, although phonetically sequences of two sounds as in Modern Welsh, often function as single units in the phonological system.

4 The fricative /ʃ/ is a Middle Welsh innovation, from loanwords such as *siaced* 'jacket', *siambr* 'chamber' or *siarad* 'speak', and later also from the change of /s/ to /ʃ/ before /i/ in some varieties.

5 Old Welsh had a voiced velar fricative /ɣ/ which was lost by the start of Middle Welsh. It is indicated in some environments in Old Welsh orthography as <g>, for instance, in word-final position after /i/ in *Gelhig* /getiɣ/ 'Gelli (personal name)' and in *guetig* /gwediɣ/ or *guotig* /gwodiɣ/ 'after(wards)' (ModW. *wedi*). It was lost in all contexts over an extended period from the sixth to the ninth century (Jackson 1953: 469–70).

### *Initial-consonant mutations*

Like Modern Welsh, Old and Middle Welsh had a system of initial-consonant mutations, according to which the initial segment of a word, if one of nine mutable consonants, changed in certain morphosyntactic environments. At one time, these changes were phonologically conditioned, a consonant undergoing a change if the preceding word ended in a vowel, a nasal or /s/ or /k/. At word boundaries, the conditioning environments were lost, in many cases with the loss of final syllables. The phonological changes remained, however, and were reinterpreted as having lexical or grammatical triggers, appearing after certain items (prepositions, numerals, pronominal proclitics) or in certain grammatical environments (associated for instance with gender or with various subject or object positions).

Although there are significant historical differences in the morphosyntactic environments in which the mutations are found (see the section on the syntax of mutation below), the phonological changes that instantiate the mutations are largely the same at all periods. There are three mutations, soft, aspirate and nasal:

#### (a) under soft mutation:

voiceless stops shift to voiced stops (/p t k/ > /b d g/), for instance, MW. *penn* > *benn* 'head', *ty* > *dy* 'house', *cath* > *gath* 'cat';

voiced stops shift to fricatives (/b d g/ > OW. /β ð ɣ/, MW. /β ð/ and zero), for instance, MW. *bed* /be:ð/ > *ved* /βe:ð/ 'grave', *da* /da/ > *da* /ða:/ 'good', *glas* > OW. *glas* /ɣla:s/, MW. *las* /la:s/ 'blue';

/m/ shifts to a nasalized voiced bilabial fricative /β̃/, which later merges with /β/ (ModW. /v/), for instance, MW. *mab* /ma:b/ > OW. *mab* /βa:b/, MW. *vab* /βa:b/ 'son';

/l/ shifts to /l/, for instance, MW. *llad* > *lad* 'kill';

/r<sup>h</sup>/ shifts to /r/, not indicated in Middle Welsh orthography, for instance, MW. *rann* /r<sup>h</sup>ann/ > *rann* /rann/ 'part';

(b) aspirate mutation shifts voiceless stops to fricatives (/p t k/ > /φ θ x/), for instance, *penn* > *phenn* /φenn/ 'head' (ModW. /fen/), *ty* > *thy* 'house', *cath* > *chath* 'cat';

(c) nasal mutation shifts voiceless and voiced stops to the corresponding nasals (/p t k/ > /m<sup>h</sup> n<sup>h</sup> ŋ<sup>h</sup>/ and /b d g/ > /m n ŋ/), for instance, MW. *penn* /penn/ > *uym penn* /və<sup>h</sup>m<sup>h</sup>enn/ 'my head', *teulu* /teulu/ > *uyn teulu* /və<sup>h</sup>n<sup>h</sup>eulu/ 'my family', *korf* /korφ/ > *uym korf* /və<sup>h</sup>n<sup>h</sup>orφ/ 'my body', *brawt* /braud/ > *uym brawt* /və<sup>h</sup>m<sup>h</sup>raud/ 'my brother',

*diua* /di:βa/ *uyn diua* /və'ni:βa/ '(to) destroy me', *gallu* /gaɫu/ > *uyg gallu* /və'ŋaɫu/ 'my ability'.

The most significant difference between Old and Middle Welsh is that the result of soft mutation of /g/ is /ɣ/ in Old Welsh, whereas /g/ disappears under soft mutation in both Middle and Modern Welsh. In Old Welsh, the soft mutations of /m/ and /b/ were probably kept distinct as /β/ and /β/ respectively. In Middle Welsh, the outcome of mutation was the same for both /m/ and /b/, namely /β/ (corresponding to ModW. /v/).

Mutation caused problems for Old and Middle Welsh orthography. Soft mutation of /d/ and /tʰ/ is never marked; soft mutation of other consonants is marked inconsistently. Nasal mutation is marked using several different systems (Watkins 1965, 1968).

Phonetically, the sound changes leading to soft and aspirate mutation are lenitions, that is, weakening of articulation. These lenitions are of one of two types: either changes involving relaxation of the vocal folds (voicing) or changes involving weakening of the manner of articulation from stop to fricative (spirantization). The sound changes leading to nasal mutation are assimilations of stops to preceding nasal consonants.

*Soft mutation* Soft mutation is the result of lenition of stops in intervocalic position and before /r/ or /l/. In these contexts, Brythonic voiceless stops became voiced stops (intervocalic voicing) and voiced stops and /m/ became fricatives (voiced spirantization) in all varieties of late Brythonic. Latin loanwords into Brythonic are treated in the same way as native vocabulary. These changes occurred both in word-internal position and across word boundaries:

word-internally:

Latin *catēna* > ModW. *cadwyn* 'chain' ([t] > [d] intervocalically);

Latin *vitrum* > *gwydr* 'glass' ([t] > [d] before [r]);

Latin *fides* > *ffydd* 'faith' ([d] > [ð] intervocalically);

Brythonic \*gabros > *gafr* ([b] > [v] before [r]).

across word-boundaries:

Brythonic \*tekos > ModW. /te:g/ *teg* 'fair', but, after a feminine noun, \*tabarnā tekā > /tavarn de:g/ *tafarn deg* 'fair tavern';

Brythonic \*mammā > /mam/ *mam* 'mother', but, after \*esjo 'his', \*esjo mammā > /i vam/ *ei fam* 'his mother'.

In general, the conditioning environment for soft mutation in word-initial position disappeared with the loss of final syllables in late Brythonic (mid-sixth century). The phonological alternations associated with these sound changes were retained and reinterpreted as part of the grammatical system. Hence, for instance, soft mutation originally triggered by the vocalic ending of a feminine adjective became established as a grammatical feature of an adjective after a feminine noun. Reorganization of the morphosyntactic environments for soft mutation continues throughout the history of Welsh, soft mutation spreading analogically to environments that were not originally intervocalic or disappearing from environments that were originally intervocalic. On the syntax of soft mutation, see the section on this topic below.

*Aspirate mutation* Aspirate mutation arose as the result of sound changes that turned voiceless stops into fricatives (voiceless spirantization) in the following environments:

- 1 voiceless geminates > fricatives, for instance, Latin *cloppus* > ModW. /klo:f/ *cloff* 'lame', Brythonic \*kattos > /ka:θ/ *cath* 'cat', \*brokkos > /bro:x/ *broch* 'badger';
- 2 voiceless stops after /r l/ became fricatives, for instance, Latin *purpura* > ModW. /porfor/ *porffor* 'purple', Brythonic \*artos > /arθ/ *arth* 'bear', Latin *calcem* > /kalx/ *calch* 'lime' (this change also affects voiced stops, for instance, Brythonic \*bardos > /barð/ *bardd* 'poet');
- 3 voiceless stops after word-final /s k x/ became fricatives, via the following developments:

/-s p/ >	[-h p]	>	[pp]	>	[ϕ]	>	/f/
/-s t/ >	[-h t]	>	[tt]	>	/θ/		
/-s k/ >	[-h k]	>	[kk]	>	/x/		

In certain environments where a preceding word ended in /s k x/, this last change gave rise to aspirate mutation, for instance:

Brythonic \*esjās tegos > ModW. /i θi/ *ei thŷ* 'her house' (*tŷ* 'house') via the change /-s t/ > /θ/;

Brythonic \*sweks tabarnās > MW. /xwe θavarn/ *chwe thafarn* 'six taverns' (*tafarn* 'tavern') via the change /-s t/ > /θ/;

Brythonic \*ak tortā > ModW. /a θorθ/ *a thorth* 'and a loaf' (*torth* 'loaf') via the change /-k t/ > /θ/.

The original triggering consonant disappeared in the sound change, and the alternation between /p t k/ and /f θ x/ became morphosyntactic, triggered by a range of lexical items including *ei* 'her', *chwe* 'six' and *a(c)* 'and'. Aspirate mutation fails to arise in some contexts with a preceding \*/s/ in Brythonic, for instance, an adjective after a masculine noun does not undergo aspirate mutation: \*eskopos tekos > ModW. /esgob te:g/ *esgob teg* 'fair bishop' not \*\*/esgob θe:g/ (Isaac 2004: 65–6, Thomas 1990). This is probably because, unlike changes leading to soft mutation, the change leading to aspirate mutation occurs only within a phonological word, between a clitic and a free form, but not between two stress-bearing words (Koch 1989: 126–8).

*Nasal mutation* Nasal mutation arises by sound changes which assimilate stops to a preceding nasal, which itself coalesces with the following word (nasal assimilation). This occurred both word-internally and between proclitics and their hosts and between numerals and their nouns. For instance, in word-internal position, we find \*windos > MW. *gwynn* 'white' and \*santeros > *hanner* 'half'. After the negative suffix *an-*, we find *an- + tec* > MW. *anhec* 'unfair' and *an- + doeth* > MW. *anoeth* 'unwise'. With a proclitic, we find Brythonic \*men tegos > ModW. *fy nhŷ* 'my house' with nasal mutation of *tŷ*.

There were two separate nasal assimilations, and this has an effect on the distribution of nasal mutation. Assimilation of voiced stops to a preceding nasal (/mb nd ŋg/ > /m(m) n(n) ŋ(ŋ)/) occurred earlier than assimilation of voiceless stops to a preceding nasal (/mp nt nk/ > /m<sup>h</sup> n<sup>h</sup> ŋ<sup>h</sup>/). Jackson dated the former to the late fifth century, the latter to the eighth or early ninth century. Evidence comes from items that trigger nasal mutation only with a following voiced (not voiceless) stop. Proclitics, such as *fy(n)* 'my' and *yn* 'in',

were not affected by loss of final syllables and hence ended in /n/ throughout this time. Stress-bearing numerals, such as \*sextan ‘seven’, \*nawan ‘nine’ and \*decan ‘ten’, however, lost their final syllable, hence ended in /n/ when voiced nasalization arose but not when voiceless nasalization arose. Therefore, in Middle Welsh, only a restricted group of nouns, all beginning with a voiced stop, undergo mutation after these numerals: *seith mu* ‘seven cattle’ < *bu* ‘cattle’, *seith nyn* ‘seven men’ < *dyn* ‘man’.

*Relative ordering of the sound changes leading to mutation* These lenitions are largely common to all Brythonic languages. Since soft mutation is triggered by vowels in final syllables that were lost in Brythonic, voicing and voiced spirantization must precede the loss of final syllables that served to integrate them into the grammatical system. Latin loans into Brythonic from the Roman period all undergo these lenitions, both word-internally and across word boundaries, for instance, Latin *medicus* with intervocalic [d] > Welsh *meddyg* ‘doctor’ with [ð]. Early loans from Brythonic and British Latin into Irish are subject to Irish lenition ([t] > [θ] etc.) but not to Brythonic lenition. For instance, British Latin *Patricius* ‘Patrick’ appears in early Irish as *Cothriche* and Latin *puteus* (> Welsh *pydew*) gives Old Irish *cuithe* ‘pit’ [kuθʲə], both manifesting Irish lenition of [t] > [θ], but not British lenition of [t] to [d]. These facts suggest that intervocalic voicing occurred after the end of the Roman administration and after the period of the earliest loans into Irish. Soft mutation appears to have been initially uniform across all the Brythonic languages, whereas the distribution of aspirate mutation was partially different in Welsh as against Breton and Cornish from the start: aspirate mutation occurs after *ma* ‘my’ in Breton, but nasal mutation developed in this context in Welsh. Nasal mutation is unique to Welsh. This all suggests that soft mutation arose first, with aspirate and nasal mutation arising later.

The traditional view of the development of aspirate mutation (Isaac 2004, Jackson 1953, 1960, Koch 1989) is that above: voiceless fricatives arise from former geminate voiceless stops; aspirate mutation arises when the final element of a proclitic (typically one ending in /s/ or /k/) weakened and coalesced with the initial voiceless stop of a following word to form a new geminate voiceless stop, which then underwent voiceless spirantization like an original geminate. Greene (1956, 1966) rejected this, arguing that, after the voicing of intervocalic voiceless stops, the distinction between the remaining voiceless single stops and the voiceless geminates was lost, the two filling what he saw as a typological gap in the phonological system, the slot for single voiceless stops. This amounts to degemination of the geminate member of the opposition, hence, for instance, \**brokkos* > \**brokos* ‘badger’ and \**kattos* > \**katos* ‘cat’. These remaining voiceless stops underwent another weakening, again in intervocalic position. There were two main ways in which stops could escape early intervocalic voicing but nevertheless be subject to voiceless spirantization:

- i intervocalic voicing had not affected geminates, hence former geminates remained voiceless stops and were now subject to the change, hence \**littera* > \**litera* > MW. *llyther* /l̪əθer/ ‘letter’;
- ii after certain proclitics that, after the loss of final syllables, ended in a vowel, voiceless stops now found themselves in intervocalic position, for instance, \**esjās kattos* > \**i kat* > MW. *y chath* /i xa:θ/ ‘her cat’.

Jackson and Greene agreed that voiceless spirantization followed the loss of final syllables. However, for Jackson, proclitics ending in /s/, /k/ etc. created new geminates

before the loss of final syllables (and hence the changes were sensitive to consonants subsequently lost). These new geminates then underwent voiceless spirantization after the loss of final syllables. For Greene, all the relevant changes postdate the loss of final syllables.

Jackson (1960) noted a problem for Greene's approach. After loss of final syllables, many former geminates, having degeminated to single voiceless stops, find themselves in word-final position. They undergo voiceless spirantization, but it is unclear why this should be, since they are not intervocalic. It is also unclear what differentiates them from voiceless stops in absolute initial position, which do not undergo voiceless spirantization unless they are preceded by an appropriate proclitic. Hence, Greene needs the development *\*kattos* > *\*katos* > *\*kat* > *kaθ* (MW. *cath* 'cat'); however, the final /t/ is not intervocalic, so the development of *\*kat* > *\*kaθ* is unmotivated. If some measure were introduced to enable this [t] to undergo voiceless spirantization, it is unclear why that measure would not apply also to the initial stop, yielding the unwanted form *\*<sup>h</sup>xaθ*. Essentially, the problem here is that voiceless spirantization must apply before loss of final syllables to allow the former geminate to undergo it, but it is only the loss of final syllables that creates new proclitics ending in a vowel. This contradiction cannot be resolved.

Thomas (1990) proposes an account in the spirit of Greene's work, agreeing with Greene that voiceless stops were protected from intervocalic voicing either by being geminate or by following /t/ or /l/. However, he suggests that voiceless spirantization preceded loss of final syllables, occurring in contexts where new instances of single stops in intervocalic position had arisen. For standard cases of aspirate mutation, he proposes that loss of word-final /s/ or /k/ created new instances of intervocalic stops. Hence, he would propose the development *\*esjās kattos* > *\*ejā katto* (loss of /s/) > *\*ejā kato* (degemination) > *\*ejā xaθo* (voiceless spirantization) > MW. *y chath* /i xa:θ/ (loss of final syllables) 'her cat'.

These proposals are summarized in Table 5.2 (for fuller discussion, see Ball and Müller 1992, Greene 1956, 1966, Harvey 1984, Isaac 2004, Jackson 1960, Koch 1989, 1990, Russell 1985, Thomas 1990).

*Table 5.2* Accounts of the sound changes leading to the development of soft and aspirate mutation in Welsh

<b>Jackson</b>	<b>Greene</b>	<b>Thomas</b>
intervocalic voicing	voiced spirantization	voiced spirantization
voiced spirantization (simultaneous)	intervocalic voicing	intervocalic voicing
new geminates (-s t- > -h t- > tt, -k t- > tt etc.)	degemination	loss of final /s/ and /k/  degemination
loss of final syllables	loss of final syllables	voiceless spirantization (t > θ etc. in word-internal position)
voiceless spirantization (tt > θ etc.)	voiceless spirantization (t > θ etc. between vowels and after /t/ or /l/)	loss of final syllables

### *Provection*

When a sequence of two obstruents comes together, either through loss of a vowel or through new derivation (typically compounding), the sequence is subject to some changes. With two stops, there is devoicing, either of the entire cluster (sometimes reversing soft mutation), or of the first element, for instance, *lled* ‘half’ + *tŷ* ‘house’ > *llety* ‘lodging’ or *wyneb* ‘face’ + *pryd* ‘appearance’ > *wynepryd* ‘countenance’, *dig* ‘angry’ + *-der* > *dicter* ‘anger’, *pob* ‘every’ + *peth* ‘thing’ > *popeth* ‘everything’. These changes began to be active in late Brythonic and remain productive in Middle Welsh, in some cases even across word boundaries.

In clusters before an /h/, a voiced obstruent devoices, for instance, /drug/ ‘bad’ + /hin/ ‘weather’ > *drycin* /drəkin/ ‘bad weather’, /duvr/ ‘water’ + /hint/ ‘course’ > *dyffryn(t)* /dəfrin(t)/ ‘valley’. This devoicing before /h/ occurs regularly in the equative and superlative forms of adjectives and in the subjunctive (see the sections on adjectival and verbal morphology below).

### *Loss of word-final voiced fricatives*

In word-final position, the two voiced fricatives /v ð/ are subject to loss. The date of the loss varies enormously according to phonetic context and from word to word. In some contexts, loss of /v/ dates to the Old Welsh period and is universal in Middle Welsh: in monosyllables after /u/ (*du* ‘black’, *cu* ‘dear’), in monosyllables after /au/ (*llaw* ‘hand’, *daw* ‘son-in-law’) and in polysyllables after /u/ (for instance, in the third-person plural preposition ending *-uf* /uʋ/. In the verbnoun ending *-if*, final /v/ is attested in Old Welsh, but not in Middle Welsh (OW. *erchim* /erxiv/ ‘ask’ > *erchi*, OW. *molim* /moliv/ ‘praise’ > *moli* ‘praise’) (Jackson 1953: 417, 697).

Loss of word-final /ð/ also goes back to Old Welsh, for instance, *triti* /trəði/ ‘third’ (Comp.) corresponding to ModW. *trydydd* /trədið/ and *issi* /əsi/ ‘is (relative)’ corresponding to ModW. *sy(dd)* /si:/ or /si:ð/. Loss is earliest after high unrounded vowels. In the ending of the second-person singular of the present tense *-yd* /ið/, loss of /ð/ is fixed early on, giving the normal Middle Welsh form of the ending *-y* /i/. Forms without indication of /ð/ are found sporadically throughout Middle Welsh, for instance, *eiste* /leiste/ ‘sit’ (O 73, 78; PKM 10.20, 11.19) corresponding to modern *eistedd* /leisteð/. Variability remains in many of these items to this day. Loss of /ð/ in other positions is also found; for instance, OW. *di* ‘to’ /ði/ develops into MW. *y* /i/ with loss of /ð/ in initial position.

New epenthetic /ð/ develops between two high vowels in southern varieties in the latter half of the Middle Welsh period, as in the fourteenth-century example *ydy vrawt* ‘to his brother’ (Hafod 1, 2b, Thomas 1950–2002).

### *Development of word-final glides*

Brythonic word-final /g/ after /r/ and /l/ becomes /x/ in Old Welsh, for instance, Brythonic \*selg- ‘hunt’ appears in Old Welsh in *helcha* ‘hunting’. This /x/ became a glide in Middle Welsh, perhaps first [j], then what is usually described as nonsyllabic schwa [ɤ]. In word-final position, this glide either vocalizes to /a/ or is deleted; for instance, *daly* /dalɤ/ ‘hold’ becomes *dala* /dala/ or *dal* /dal/; *hely* /helɤ/ ‘hunt’ becomes *hela* /hela/ or *hel* /hel/; *eiry* /eirɤ/ ‘snow’ becomes *eira* /eira/. Where the vowel in the previous syllable is /u/, the new vowel assimilates to it, yielding /u/ rather than /a/, as in *bwry* /burɤ/ ‘throw’ > *bwrw* /buru/. A glide /j/ is retained in inflected forms of these words, for instance, MW. *dalyei* ‘held (third person sg. impf.)’ or *bwryei* ‘threw (third person sg. impf.)’. Vocalization to /a/ belongs to the Middle Welsh period as witnessed by spellings with <a>, for instance,

*hela* ‘hunt’ (PKM 1.4, 1.5, 1.10), *dala* ‘hold’ (PKM 19.19, 58.17, 60.16). More conservative spellings with <y> are common, perhaps reflecting dialect differences rather than mere orthographic conservatism. Spellings suggesting deletion (rather than vocalization) of the final glide are also attested. Middle Welsh poetry almost always treats the glide as nonsyllabic, words such as *daly* and *hely* counting as monosyllabic.

Word-final /w/ vocalizes in monosyllabic words, for instance *cadw* /kadw/ ‘keep’ > *cadw* /kadu/ and *enw* /enw/ ‘name’ > *enw* /enu/. In polysyllabic words, word-final /w/ is lost, for instance, MW. *keuynderw* /kevnderw/ ‘cousin’ > ModW. *cefnider* /kevnder/. Sometimes word-final /w/ is eliminated by metathesis, for instance *gwarchadw* ‘guard (v.)’ > *gwarchawd* > *gwarchod* (sixteenth century). Morris-Jones dates vocalization of /w/ to /u/ to the fifteenth century (Morris-Jones 1913: 53). Loss of final /w/ in polysyllables is also attested from then.

/xw/ > /hw/

The development of word-initial /xw/ to /hw/ is attested in Middle Welsh, being characteristic of southern texts. Spellings with <chw>, <hw> and <wh> are widely distributed in Middle Welsh texts and are usually interpreted as indicating variability within the language. Forms in /w/ are found today in southern dialects, and it is reasonable to suppose that this is a development from the /hw/ type. Spellings such as <chw> are characteristic of northern Middle Welsh, while spellings with <hw> or <wh> are characteristic of southern texts.

## MORPHOLOGY

### Nominal morphology

As in Modern Welsh, nouns in Old and Middle Welsh inflect for number but not for case. A full paradigm of five cases (nominative, accusative, genitive, dative and vocative) can be reconstructed for Brythonic. The loss of final syllables would have weakened this system considerably, erasing most case endings. Traditionally it was assumed that loss of final syllables was sufficient to eliminate all case morphology. More recently, a number of linguists have noted that loss of final syllables would not have eliminated the case system entirely: distinctions would have survived in the form of vowel alternations, initial consonant mutations and, in some cases, distinct endings. Hence a certain amount of analogical loss of case endings must be posited to reach the attested caseless system of Old and Middle Welsh (Greene 1971, Hamp 1975–6, Koch 1983). Koch has gone so far as to suggest that significant attrition of the case system had already begun before the loss of final syllables.

A few vestiges of the former case system survive. The Old Welsh form *nym* /niβ̥/ in *gwas nym* ‘abode of heaven’ (CA 233) is an isolated example, *nym* being a plausible genitive of *nef* /neβ̥/ ‘heaven’. Fossilized case endings remain in such other words as ModW. *erbyn* ‘against’ (*pen* ‘head’), *yfory* ‘tomorrow’ (*bore* ‘morning’), *y llynedd* ‘last year’ and *eleni* ‘this year’ (*blwyddyn* ‘year’), and MW. *bry* ‘up’ and *obry* ‘down’ (*bre* ‘hill’). They are also found in some place names, for instance, *Caerdydd* ‘Cardiff’ < MW. *Kaer Dyf*, with *kaer* ‘fortress’ plus *Tyf*, genitive of *Taf* ‘River Taff’ (Koch 1983: 227).

Plural morphology, on the other hand, is fully productive. As in Modern Welsh, the two major devices for forming plurals involve vowel alternation or the addition of one of various plural suffixes. The vowel alternations are essentially the same as those found in Modern Welsh:



- (5) /a/ > /ei/      *bard* ~ *beird* 'poets' (rarely /a/ > /i/)  
 /e/ > /i/      *Gwydel* ~ *Gwydyl* 'Irishmen'  
 /o/ > /i/      *corn* ~ *cyrn* 'horns', *unben* ~ *unbyn* 'chieftains'  
 /u/ > /i/      *bwlch* ~ *bylch* 'gaps' (alongside *bylcheu*)  
 /ai/ > /ei/      *baed* ~ *beid* 'boars'  
 /oi/ > /ui/      *croen* ~ *crwyn* 'skins, hides'

More complex patterns arise in nouns containing sequences of these vowels, for instance, *dafat* ~ *defeit* 'sheep' with /a . . . a/ > /e . . . ei/ or *askell* ~ *eskyll* 'wings' with /a . . . e/ > /e . . . i/. These vowel alternations arise because the most frequent class of Brythonic nouns (o-stems) formed their plural in /i:/, which triggered i-affection of the root vowel in the plural, before itself being lost with the loss of final syllables. Hence singular *\*bardos* > /barð/ but plural *\*bardī* > /beirð/. The singular therefore generally shows the original root vowel.

The main plural suffixes are the following:

- (6) -ed /eð/      *bys* ~ *byssed* 'fingers'  
 -(y)eint      *ney* ~ *neyeint* 'nephews'  
 -(y)eit      *mackwy(f)* ~ *mackwy(f)eit* 'squires'  
 -et /ed/      *merch* ~ *merchet* 'girls, daughters'  
 -(y)eu      *clust* ~ *clust(y)eu* 'ears'  
 -i      *arglwyd* ~ *arglwydi* 'lords'  
 -oed /oið/      *llu* ~ *lluoed* 'forces, hordes'  
 -(y)on      *arwyd* ~ *arwyd(y)on* 'signs'  
 -ot /od/      *llew* ~ *llewot* 'lions'  
 -yd /ið/      *kors* ~ *korsyd* 'marshes'

These endings are the remains of former noun-class suffixes added outside the nominative singular in Brythonic, for instance, Brythonic *\*katus* 'battle' (u-stem) > MW. *kat* /kad/ in the singular, whereas plural *\*katowes* > *kateu* /kadeu/ 'battles'; cf. also *\*lukos* 'mouse' (t-stem) > MW. *llyg*, plural *\*lukotes* > *llygot* 'mice'.

The variation between endings with -y- /j/ and those without is partially lexical and partially dialectally determined, the forms with /j/ being more characteristic of northern texts for some items (Russell 1990, Thomas 1992, 1993, Willis 2005). This variation extends also to other derivational suffixes and even to some non-suffixed items.

Addition of these endings may result in vowel alternations. These may be triggered historically in any of the following ways (Evans 1964: 29–31, Morris-Jones 1913: 210–13):

- (i) by internal i-affection of the stem vowel in the plural, triggered by the /j/ in the ending. This occurs (inconsistently, perhaps only with inherited noun-ending combinations) with the endings -y, (y)on, -yd and -(y)eit, for instance, *mab* ~ *meibyon* 'sons', *maes* ~ *meysyd* 'fields' and *penkerd* ~ *penkeirdyeit* 'chief poets';
- (ii) by sound changes linked to a shift in the stressed syllable, for instance, *pwnn* /u/ ~ *pynnu* /ə/ 'loads, burdens' or *llawr* ~ *lloryeu* 'floors';
- (iii) by i-affection of the stem vowel in the singular, but not in the plural, triggered by an original singular ending containing an /i:/. For instance, singular *\*natri* > ModW. *neidr* /neidr/ 'snake' but plural *\*natrijās* > *\*nadrejās* (voicing and a-affection) > *nadredd* /nadredd/ 'snakes'. Most commonly, this leads to an alternation between singular /ei/ and plural /a/ when an ending is added, for instance, *adein* ~ *adaned* 'wings' or *lleidr* ~ *lladron* 'thieves'.

A few nouns have singulars derived from monomorphemic plural forms by adding the singulative suffix *-yn* (masculine) or *-en* (feminine), for instance, *adar* 'birds' ~ *aderyn* 'bird', *syr* 'stars' ~ *seren* 'star'.

The distribution of the endings does not reflect the inherited system: the ending *-(y)eu*, in particular, spread analogically to many nouns that did not originally use it. In many cases, the Brythonic singular and plural forms would have fallen together, obliterating any morphological distinction between singular and plural. In these cases, there is always analogical extension of some other pattern. Hence, Latin *medicus* ~ *medicī* would be expected to give the form *medyg* /meðig/ in both singular and plural in Middle Welsh. However, the *-on* suffix was extended to it to create a new distinct plural form *medygon*.

The distribution of the suffixes is essentially arbitrary, and some nouns shift from one suffix to another or are variable. For instance, contrast MW. *dinessyd* (also *dinasoed*) 'cities', *eglwysseu* 'churches' and *gwlatod* 'countries' with ModW. *dinasoedd*, *eglwysi* and *gwledydd*. The ending *-od* has tended to generalize for nouns denoting animals, for instance, Middle Welsh predominantly has *baed* ~ *beid* 'boars', *bwch* ~ *bychau* 'bucks', *kath* ~ *katheu* 'cats' and *iwrch* ~ *iyrch* or *ieirch* 'roedeer', but Modern Welsh has *baeddod*, *bychod*, *cathod* and *iyrchod*. Vowel alternation has been lost more frequently than it has spread. A number of plural forms with vowel alternations only in Middle Welsh have since died out, for instance, *cloch* ~ *clych* 'bells' (now *clychau* or *clochau*), *croes* ~ *crwys* 'crosses' (now *croesau*), *esgob* ~ *esgyb* 'bishops' (now *esgobion*), *maen* ~ *mein* 'stones' (now *meini*), *paladr* ~ *peleidr* 'spear, ray' (now *pelydrau*), *pont* ~ *pynt* 'bridges' (now *pontydd*) and *sant* ~ *seint* 'saints' (now *seintiau*).

Certain plural suffixes attested in Old Welsh or in Middle Welsh poetry have died out. Among these are *-awr* (*bydinawr* 'armies', ModW. *byddinoedd*; *llavnavr* 'blades', ModW. *llafnau*) and *-ein* (*enuein* (MC) 'names', ModW. *enwau*; *cemmein* (Ox. 1) 'steps', ModW. *camau*). The ending *-ed* /eð/ has been replaced by *-oedd* /oið/ in many cases, for instance, MW. *brenhined* 'kings', *tired* 'lands' and *ynyssed* 'islands', as against ModW. *brenhinoedd*, *tiroedd* and *ynysoedd*.

Where a new analogical plural arose, it was not extended to use after numerals. This led to the creation of patterns with a singular after a numeral but a new analogical plural in other contexts, for instance, *dyn* 'person', *dynion* 'people' (new analogical plural) but *tri dyn* 'three people', with the regular development of the former plural, now homophonous with the singular. This pattern was generalized as the norm by the time of Old and Middle Welsh, so that, in general, nouns appear in the singular after numerals.

With a few nouns, an inherited plural distinct from the singular was retained, but used only after numerals, an analogically reformed plural being found in other contexts. This is the case with *mab* 'son', where the inherited plural *meib* (< \*/mapi:/) is used after numerals, whereas a newly formed suffixed plural *meibyon* is found elsewhere. Matters are complicated by the former existence of a dual as well as a plural, limiting use of certain former plural forms after 'two'.

This results in a subsystem with a small group of nouns, mainly denoting family relations or animals, that have special forms for use after certain numerals. The patterns are regular until the collapse of the system in the sixteenth century. Four patterns are found, varying according to whether the numerative form is the same as the ordinary plural or different, and whether the numerative form is used after 'two' or not. Typical examples are given in Table 5.3.

Old and Middle Welsh retain two genders, masculine and feminine. A number of nouns have shifted gender since Middle Welsh. A shift from masculine in Middle Welsh to feminine in Modern Welsh occurs with *braich* 'arm', *chwedl* 'tale, story', *damwain* 'case,

incident', *dinas* 'city' and *grudd* 'cheek'. The reverse shift is found with *gwirionedd* 'truth', *rhyddid* 'freedom', *person* 'person', *llyn* 'lake' and *llys* 'court'.

Table 5.3 Forms of nouns after numerals in Middle Welsh

Class	Singular	Numerative form used after 'two'?	Numerative form distinct from plural?	After <i>dau</i> (m.) or <i>dwy</i> (f.) 'two'	After higher numerals	Plural	Gloss
I	<i>brawt</i>	+	+	<i>broder</i>	<i>broder</i>	<i>brodyr</i>	'brother'
II	<i>merch</i>	+	–	<i>merchet</i>	<i>merchet</i>	<i>merchet</i>	'girl'
III	<i>mab</i>	–	+	<i>mab</i>	<i>meib</i>	<i>meibyon</i>	'son'
IV	<i>gwr</i>	–	–	<i>gwr</i>	<i>gwyr</i>	<i>gwyr</i>	'man'

**Pronominal morphology**

Pronouns vary primarily according to strong–weak syntactic position, with some differentiation of case among clitics. Paradigms for the main series (excluding reduplicated and conjunctive pronouns) are given in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4 Main personal pronouns in Middle Welsh (soft mutation triggers marked as <sup>S</sup>; aspirate mutation triggers as <sup>A</sup> and nasal mutation triggers as <sup>N</sup>)

		Dependent		
	Independent	Accusative (object)	Genitive (possessive)	Affixed
first sing.	mi	'm	vy <sup>N</sup> ('m)	i (ui after /v/)
second sing.	ti	'th <sup>S</sup>	dy <sup>S</sup> ('th <sup>S</sup> )	di (ti after /t/)
third sing. masc.	ef	'e (h-), -s	y <sup>S</sup> ('e <sup>S</sup> )	ef
third sing. fem.	hi	'e (h-), -s	y <sup>A</sup> ('e <sup>A</sup> )	hi
first plur.	ni	'n	yn ('n)	ni
second plur.	chwi	'ch	ych ('ch)	chwi
third plur.	wy(nt)	'e, -s	eu ('e)	wy(nt)

In 'strong' syntactic positions, such as topicalized subject position or after an uninflected preposition, independent forms of pronouns appear. These exist in three series, simple, reduplicated (emphatic) and conjunctive (contrastive). In 'weak' syntactic positions, such as postverbal subject or direct object position or postnominal possessor position, affixed forms appear. Simple and conjunctive forms of these exist, with reduplicated pronouns being rare here in canonical Middle Welsh.

In later Middle Welsh, the reduplicated pronouns lose much of their emphatic force, and appear in contexts where little emphasis is perceptible. This leads to the situation in informal Early Modern Welsh where reduced forms of the reduplicated pronouns (such as *yfi* for *myfi* 'I' or *ynhwy* for *hwynt* 'they') are used interchangeably with the simple pronouns. Ultimately the result is the merger of the reduced reduplicated and simple

paradigms of pronouns in spoken Welsh. Forms derived from Middle Welsh reduplicated pronouns survive as ordinary pronouns in some person–number combinations. In the third person plural, the reduced reduplicated pronoun *nhw* (< *ynhwy* < *hwynt*) completely ousts the simple pronoun (*h*)*wy(nt)*. Characteristic of northern dialects is the replacement of the simple second person pronoun *ti* by a reduced reduplicated pronoun, *chdi*, a dissimilation in contexts such as *â chdi* < *a thdi* < *a thydi* ‘with you’.

Genitive and accusative object clitics also exist. Genitive clitics are used as the object of a nonfinite verb or as a possessor in a noun phrase. Accusative clitics are used as the object of a finite verb. In both cases, doubling of a clitic with a dependent pronoun is possible, the two possible combinations being clitic alone or clitic . . . dependent pronoun. Example (7) shows the use of these pronouns in various contexts. The clause-initial topicalized subject is independent *mi* ‘I’; the object of *rodaf* ‘give’ is expressed as a dependent accusative pronoun and an affixed pronoun *’th . . . di* ‘you’; the possessor of the noun *lle* ‘place’ is expressed as a dependent genitive pronoun and an affixed pronoun *’m . . . i* ‘me, my’. Usage is largely parallel to conservative Modern Welsh.

- (7) . . . *mi a ’th rodaf di y ’m lle i yn Annwbyn* . . .  
 1S.IND PRT 2S.ACC put.PRES.1s 2S.AFF in 1S.GEN place 1S.AFF in Annwfn  
 ‘. . . I shall put you in my place in Annwfn . . .’ (PKM 3.8)

### Adjectival morphology

Many Old and Middle Welsh adjectives inflect for gender and number. Plural adjectives are formed using the same means as found with nouns:

- i vowel alternation (conditioned by i-affection): *bychan* ‘small (singular)’ ~ plural *bychein*;
- ii the suffix *-(y)on*: *coch* ‘red (singular)’ ~ plural *cochion*.

The suffix *-(y)on* often causes a vowel alternation, either triggered by changes associated with stress, as in *tlawd* ~ *tlodion* ‘poor’, or by internal i-affection *dall* ~ *deillyon* ‘blind’.

Gender is indicated by vowel alternation. Adjectives with root vowels /i/ or /u/ substitute /e/ and /o/ respectively in the feminine, for instance, *byrr* ~ *berr* ‘short’ or *trwm* ~ *trom* ‘heavy’. This alternation is due to a-affection caused by a Brythonic feminine ending *-ā*.

Adjectives inflect for three degrees of comparison: equative (‘as quick’), comparative (‘quicker’) and superlative (‘quickest’). The respective endings are *-(h)et* /hed/, *-ach* /ax/ and *-(h)af* /hav/, for instance, *coch* ‘red’, *cochet* ‘as red’, *cochach* ‘redder’ and *cochaf* ‘reddest’. The /h/ of the equative and superlative triggers devoicing of a preceding stop or cluster containing a stop, for instance, *kalet* /kaled/ ‘hard’ ~ *kalettet* /kaleted/ ‘hardest’, *budr* ‘dirty’ ~ *butraf* ‘dirtiest’. This does not occur in the comparative, hence MW. *kaledach* /kaledax/ ‘harder’. Devoicing from the equative and superlative spreads to the comparative in Modern Welsh, examples being found in late Middle Welsh (Evans 1997: 180).

### Verbal morphology

Verbs inflect for four tenses, present, past, imperfect and pluperfect. The subjunctive mood exists in two paradigms, present and imperfect. There is also an imperative mood. Example paradigms for a regular verb, *caru* ‘love’, are given in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5 Middle Welsh paradigm of the regular verb *caru* 'love'

	<b>Present</b>	<b>Past</b>	<b>Imperfect</b>	<b>Pluperfect</b>
first sg.	<i>caraf</i>	<i>kereis</i>	<i>carwn</i>	<i>carasswn</i>
second sg.	<i>kery</i>	<i>kereist</i>	<i>carut</i>	<i>carassut</i>
third sg.	<i>car</i>	<i>(carawd)</i>	<i>carei</i>	<i>carassei</i>
first pl.	<i>carwn</i>	<i>carassom</i>	<i>carem</i>	<i>carassem</i>
second pl.	<i>kerwch</i>	<i>carassawch</i>	<i>carewch</i>	<i>carassewch</i>
third pl.	<i>carant</i>	<i>carassant</i>	<i>kerynt</i>	<i>carassynt</i>
impersonal	<i>kerir</i>	<i>carwyt</i>	<i>kerit</i>	<i>carassit</i>

	<b>Present subjunctive</b>	<b>Imperfect subjunctive</b>	<b>Imperative</b>
first sg.	<i>car(h)wyf</i>	<i>car(h)wn</i>	–
second sg.	<i>ker(h)ych</i>	<i>car(h)ut</i>	<i>car</i>
third sg.	<i>car(h)o</i>	<i>car(h)ei</i>	<i>caret</i>
first pl.	<i>car(h)om</i>	<i>car(h)em</i>	<i>carwn</i>
second pl.	<i>car(h)och</i>	<i>car(h)ewch</i>	<i>kerwch</i>
third pl.	<i>car(h)ont</i>	<i>ker(h)ynt</i>	<i>carant</i>
impersonal	<i>car(h)er</i>	<i>ker(h)it</i>	<i>carer</i>

A number of forms show vowel alternation (historically due to i-affection) where the verb stem contains an appropriate (low or mid) vowel. Productive vowel alternation due to i-affection is subject to analogical levelling. MW. *menegi* 'show, indicate' has underlying stem /manag/ alternating with /meneg/ in contexts that trigger i-affection, hence *managaf* 'I show' but the verbnoun *menegi* and *menegwch* 'show!' (second plural imperative). Here, the i-affected stem generalized to give *myneg-* /māneg/ throughout the paradigm (ModW. *mynegaf* 'I will show'). In most other cases, levelling is to the stem with the non-affected vowel.

#### *Innovation in the present tense*

Certain present-tense endings found in Old Welsh are given up entirely in Middle Welsh. In the first person singular, some verbs in Old Welsh have an ending *-if*, for instance, *gwelif* 'I see' (*CLIH* 1.4a) or *gwneif* 'I do' (*CA* 11). In the second person singular, the ending was originally *-yd* /ið/, found sporadically in Old and early Middle Welsh. By Middle Welsh, the normal form is *-y* /i/. Later, there is anticipatory assimilation of the final vowel to the vowel of the following subject pronoun *di*, hence MW. *kery di* /keri di/ 'you love' > ModW. *ceri di* /keri di/. The same anticipatory assimilation happens in the imperfect in the second person singular, for instance, MW. *karut ti* 'you loved' becomes *carit ti*. A third person singular present or perhaps future suffix *-(h)awt* occurs largely in Old Welsh poetry, dying out thereafter (Isaac 1996: 368–71).

The most significant developments are those in the third person singular. Here the inherited system had a form identical to the stem, with, in many cases, a vowel alternation (i-affection caused by original /i:/ in a lost ending). This gives us familiar i-affection alternations as illustrated in (8) (nonfinite and third person singular present tense forms given).

- (8) /a/ > /ei/      *galw* ~ *geillw* 'calls', *seuyll* (stem *saf-*) ~ *seif* 'stands'  
 /e/ > /ei/      *dywedut* ~ *dyweit* 'says'

/e/ > /i/	<i>gwelet</i> ~ <i>gwyl</i> 'sees'
/o/ > /i/	<i>colli</i> ~ <i>cyll</i> 'loses', <i>torri</i> ~ <i>tyrr</i> 'breaks'
/au/ > /eʷ/	<i>tewi</i> (stem <i>taw-</i> ) ~ <i>teu</i> 'is silent'
/au/ > /i/	<i>adaw</i> ~ <i>edy</i> (also <i>edu</i> ) 'leaves'

These alternations are found only in verbs containing relevant vowels. Many verbs with a stem vowel /a/ fail to alternate, hence *caru* ~ *car* 'loves' or *talw* ~ *tal* 'pays'. In a few cases, the alternation spreads analogically, hence earlier *parhau* ~ *par(h)a* 'continues, lasts' and *bwyta* ~ *bwyta* 'eats' without the alternation are replaced in literary texts by *pery* and *bwyty*, with it. In *gallul/gallael* 'be able', the vowel alternation is lost, with MW. *geill* 'is able' giving way to variation between *geill* and *gall* in Early Modern Welsh.

This formation meant that a number of verbs had third person present tense forms ending in *-a*. For instance, *gwneuthur* 'do' had stem *gwna-* /g<sup>w</sup>na/ and hence conjugated in the present tense as *gwnaf*, *gwney*, *gwna* etc. Denominal verbs formed using the suffix *-ha-* all followed this pattern, for instance, *bwyta* 'eat' (< *bwyd* 'food' plus *-ha-*), conjugating *bwytaf*, *bwyty*, *bwyta*. Paradigms such as these gave rise to a morphological reanalysis in the third person whereby *-a* was treated not as part of the stem, but as an inflection marking third person singular. By Middle Welsh, this ending had already spread, particularly to other denominal verbs. Examples include *gwassanaethu* 'serve' ~ *gwassanaetha*, *kerdet* 'walk' ~ *kerda* and *damunaw* 'wish' ~ *damuna*.

The present-tense paradigm has shifted semantically to become modal future in sense in modern spoken Welsh. In Middle Welsh, it covers both present and future reference, including the modal range that it is restricted to today. The specialization to a modal meaning is due to the innovation of aspectual periphrases that have replaced the present-tense forms in their former core uses (Haspelmath 1998, Poppe 1996).

In the modal-future sense, a new ending *-iff* emerges in the third-person singular. This arises from a reanalysis of the paradigm of the verb *caffael* 'get' (stem variably *caff-*, *cah-*, *ca-* as a result of the merger of two different verbs (Hamp 1954)), conjugated *caff*/*caffaf* 'I get', *keffyl/key* 'you get', *keiff*. In varieties where a paradigm of the form *caf*, *key*, *keiff* predominated, the stem could be treated as *ca-* /ka/, with endings *-af*, *-y*, *-iff* (the last two inducing vowel alternation). Initially this reanalysis gives rise to new forms of *mynet* 'go' (*eiff* 'he, she will go' instead of *a*) and *gwneuthur* 'do' (*gwneiff* 'he, she will do' instead of *gwna*). In Middle Welsh, only the conservative system limited to *keiff* is found, but innovative *aiff* (1 Samuel 26.6, 1588 Bible) and *gwnaiff* (PMA 41.12, 1595) are common by the late sixteenth century. Later *-iff* spread to almost all verbs in colloquial Welsh. A shift to *-ith* has taken place in northern Welsh dialects. This appears to be based on a dissimilation in verbs containing a labial fricative, for instance, *tyfiff* 'he, she will grow' > *tyfith*, followed by generalization of *-ith* to verbs not containing a labial.

#### *The absolute-conjunct system of verbal inflection*

Remnants of an earlier system, shared with Old Irish, that distinguished 'absolute' and 'conjunct' verbal endings can be found in Old Welsh prose and poetry (Isaac 1996: 354–8) and in some archaizing Middle Welsh poetry. The present-tense absolute endings in the third person singular are *-it*, *-yt* and *-(h)awd* (the last perhaps future); in the past, we find *-essid*. The original syntactic distribution can be seen clearly in example (9). The absolute verbal form *pereid* 'continues' appears in sentence-initial position, whereas after a particle, in this case the negative marker *ny(t)*, the conjunct form of the same verb, *para* (with aspirate mutation to *phara*) appears.

- (9) *Pereid*                      *y*   *rycheu*. *Ny phara*                      *a*   *'e*                      *goreu*.  
 continue.3S.ABS the furrows NEG continue.3S.CONJ REL 3MS.ACC make.PAST.3S  
 'The furrows remain. The one who made them does not remain.' (CLIH 11.87b–c)

The absolute–conjunct system is not manifested in Middle Welsh prose, but the poetry of the Gogynfeirdd shows moderately consistent use of old absolute forms for morphologically simple verbs in clause-initial position (Rodway 2002 [1998]). It seems likely that the system was destroyed by the rise of verb-second syntax, since that ensured that all verbs followed a particle, thereby increasing the frequency of contexts requiring conjunct forms. Morphologically, it is the conjunct forms that survive in the third person, while the absolute forms survive in the first and second persons.

### *The formation of the past tense*

In the past tense, the third person singular is characterized originally by an s-ending (the 's-preterite', derived historically from the Indo-European sigmatic aorist), variably *-as*, *-es*, *-is* or *-wys*. The choice is not free, but is determined by the verb, as follows:

- (a) use *-es* if the root vowel is /a/, for instance, *daly* 'hold' > *delis*, *diengyd* 'escape' (stem *dianc-*) > *diengis*, *erchi* 'ask' (stem *arch-*) > *erchis*, *galw* 'call' > *gelwis*, *menegi* 'show' (stem *manag-*) > *menegis*;
- (b) use *-is* if the root vowel is /o/ or /oi/, for instance, *agor* 'open' > *agores*, *anuon* 'send' > *anuones*, *colli* 'lose' > *colles*, *cyuodi* 'rise' > *cyuodes*, *dangos* 'show' > *dangoses*, *dodi* 'put' > *dodes*, *rodi* 'give' > *rodes*, *torri* 'break' > *torres*;
- (c) with a few lexically specified verbs, use *-as*, for instance, *caffael* 'get' > *cauas*, *gwelet* 'see' > *gwelas*;
- (d) otherwise (except for strong verbs and t-preterites, see below) use *-wys*, for instance, *eisted* 'sit' > *eistedwys*, *trigaw* 'live, dwell' > *trigwys*, *gellwng* 'release, drop' > *gellyngwys*, *cysgu* 'sleep' > *cysgwys*, *medylyaw* 'think' > *medylwys*, *treulaw* 'spend' > *treulwys* etc.

A small group of verbs use a dental ending in the third person singular of the past tense (the 't-preterite'). These verbs include *canu* 'sing' > *cant*, *kymryt* (stem *kymr-*) 'take' > *kymrth*, *diffryt* 'defend' > *differth*, *mynet* (stem *a(g)-*) 'go' > *aeth*, *dyuot* 'come' > *doeth*, *deuth* and *gwneuthur* 'do' > *gwnaeth*.

Another small group manifests an alternation in the root vowel to form the past third person singular. This is an ablaut alternation, akin to those found in Germanic strong verbs, with a lengthened o-grade in the past tense. Essentially two patterns of alternation are found in Middle Welsh, namely /e/ ~ /aw/ (where /aw/ derives Common Celtic \*ā, Indo-European \*ō) and /u/ ~ /ū/. The first pattern is found in MW. *gwaret* 'protect', past tense first person singular *gwaredeis*, third person singular *gwarawt*; and *dywedut* 'say', past tense *dywedeis*, *dywawt*, both with /ed/ ~ /aud/ ablaut alternation. The second pattern is illustrated by *dwyn* 'bring' (stem *dwg-* /dug/), past tense *dugum*, *duc* with /ū/. Although a very minor pattern in Old Welsh, the first of these alternations forms the basis of a re-analysis that leads to the creation of the most productive pattern of past tense morphology in late Middle Welsh. The second type of alternation has been lost, being replaced by regular formations. Hence MW. *duc* 'he, she brought' is replaced by the regular re-formation *dygodd* in Modern Welsh.

Finally, there are a few remnants of old reduplicated past tenses in Middle Welsh. Reduplicated *kigleu* (< \*ki-klow) survives as the irregular third person past of *clybot*

'hear'. It is replaced in Early Modern Welsh by an analogical re-formation based on the past tense of the verb 'be' (*bu*), namely *clybu*, and, soon afterwards, by a regular past-tense form *clywodd*. On the Indo-European background of the forms mentioned in this section, see Watkins (1962).

*Innovation of -odd in the third person singular past*

A new ending *-awd* /auð/, later /oð/, emerged in Old Welsh. This is related to verbs originally showing an ablaut vowel alternation in the third person singular of the past tense. The original pattern is attested in *godiwedyt* 'catch up, overtake', past tense first person singular *godiwedeis*, third person singular *godiwawd* with /eð/ ~ /auð/ ablaut alternation and no inflection. With some of these verbs, analogical levelling of the root is assumed to have occurred or is attested. An ablaut past tense of *llad* 'kill' is reconstructed as (attested) first person singular *lledeis* and (unattested) third person singular *\*llawd*. Subsequent analogical levelling reintroduces the root *llad* into the third person singular of the past, giving the earliest attested form of the past tense of this verb, namely *lladawd* (CA 196 *ladawd*, CA 372, 427 *ladaut*). Old Welsh uses the *-awd* ending sparingly, but this verb is always found with past tense *lladawd*. It therefore seems likely that the re-formation *lladawd* opened the way for a re-analysis of precisely this verb as stem *llad* plus ending *-awd*, this reanalysis giving rise to a new ending *-awd* as a productive way of forming the past tense. Although the verb *godiwedyt* also manifests the right preconditions for the change, namely a past tense, *godiwawd*, in *-awd*, it seems unlikely that this verb is the source of the initial reanalysis, since the irregular past tense *godiwawd* survived longer, the re-formed past *godiwedawd* being a Middle Welsh (not Old Welsh) innovation (Isaac 1996: 337–9, Morris-Jones 1913, Pedersen 1909–13: ii. 380, Rodway 1998: 91–4, Watkins 1986). Another verb, *eisted* 'sit' may also have fitted the preconditions for the change, possibly once having had a past tense *\*eistawd*, but this cannot be demonstrated conclusively.

In Middle Welsh, the new suffix *-awd* coexists alongside the other s-preterite formations. In Old Welsh and in earlier Middle Welsh, the s-preterite is the norm, and *-awd* is limited to a small group of verbs. In later Middle Welsh, a dialect split emerges, with southern texts maintaining the traditional pattern, and northern texts showing extensive analogical extension of *-awd* to almost all verbs. In general, where *-awd* spreads, it replaces the suffix *-wys*, which disappears almost entirely from the Middle Welsh-speaking area, while the other suffixes *-as*, *-es* and *-is* are considerably more resilient. In the thirteenth century, *-awd* had made little impact, s-preterite forms being the norm everywhere. However, by the second half of the fourteenth century, *-awd* was usual throughout the north. This impression of a fairly rapid transition between the two forms in northern varieties is corroborated by the poetry of the Gogynfeirdd from this period: up to 1300, *-wys* predominates, but falls off sharply thereafter (Rodway 1998). The picture in the south by this time is more complex, with some manuscripts showing full retention of s-preterites, while others show full use of *-awd*. Thomas (1992, 1993) has suggested that this too reflects a dialect division, with *-awd* being characteristic of the south-west and the s-preterite being characteristic of the south-east, roughly corresponding to the modern dialect division. It seems unlikely that things are as straightforward as this. *Llyfr yr Ancr* (*The Book of the Anchorite*), written at Llanddewibrefi, Ceredigion, in the southern dialect area in 1346, shows the innovative system, that is, with *-wys* having been to a large extent replaced by *-awd*, while *-as*, *-is* and *-es* retain essentially their historical distribution (Evans 1958). On the other hand, Llanstephan 116, known to have been written at Llanwenog, some 20 km south-west of Llanddewibrefi, in the mid-fifteenth century



(Huws 2000: 61), maintains the s-preterite almost entirely. While it is possible that the isogloss between the two forms ran through southern Ceredigion at this time, dividing the two locations, some kind of stylistic variation also seems a plausible hypothesis, with the *-awd* inflection already being regarded as more prestigious and therefore used beyond the boundaries of its dialect base. By the seventeenth century, we can more certain: the evidence of court depositions in slander cases makes it clear that the s-preterites survived in the south-east only, retreating slightly since then (Awbery et al. 1985, Awbery 1988).

### *Irregularities*

The verb *bot* 'be' is highly irregular in Middle Welsh. Its paradigms are given in Table 5.6. It has two additional paradigms not found with most regular verbs, namely the future and the conditional (traditionally termed also 'consuetudinal present' and 'consuetudinal past' because of their use to express habitual meaning).

The verbs *mynet* 'go', *dyuot* 'come' and *gwneuthur* 'do', and to a lesser extent *caffael* 'get', share a series of irregularities, and influence one another analogically. We have already seen that the first three are member of the small group of t-preterite verbs that form their past tense with a dental suffix in the third person singular (hence *aeth*, *daeth* and *gwnaeth* respectively). *Mynet*, *dyuot* and *gwneuthur* are also alone in having an additional perfect-tense paradigm, formed from the past-tense stem plus the present tense of the verb 'be'. For instance *dothwyf* 'I have come' < *doeth-* (past-tense stem of *dyuot* 'come') plus *wyf* 'I am'.

Further shared peculiarities involve the subjunctive, where a suppletive stem is used (*el-*, *del-* and *gwnel-* respectively) and where the usual *-o* ending in the third person singular present subjunctive is absent (hence the forms are *el*, *del* and *gwnel*). This ending is, however, introduced analogically from other verbs in the sixteenth century, giving innovative forms *elo*, *delo* and *gwnelo*.

Table 5.6 Paradigm of *bot* 'be' in Middle Welsh

	<b>Present</b>	<b>Past</b>	<b>Imperfect</b>	<b>Pluperfect</b>	
first sg.	<i>wyf</i>	<i>buum</i>	<i>oedwn</i>	<i>buasswn</i>	
second sg.	<i>wyt</i>	<i>buost</i>	<i>oedut</i>	<i>buassut</i>	
third sg.	<i>yw, mae, oes, ys</i>	<i>bu</i>	<i>oed</i>	<i>buassei</i>	
first pl.	<i>ym</i>	<i>buam, buom</i>	<i>oedem</i>	<i>(buassem)</i>	
second pl.	<i>ywch</i>	<i>buawch</i>	<i>oedewch</i>	<i>(buassewch)</i>	
third pl.	<i>ynt, maent</i>	<i>buant, buont</i>	<i>oedynt</i>	<i>buassynt, buessynt</i>	
impersonal	<i>ys</i>	<i>buwynt</i>	<i>oedit</i>	<i>(buassit, buessit)</i>	
	<b>Pres. subj.</b>	<b>Impf. subj.</b>	<b>Imperative</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Conditional</b>
first sg.	<i>bwyf</i>	<i>bewn</i>	–	<i>bydaf</i>	<i>bydwn</i>
second sg.	<i>bych</i>	<i>beut</i>	<i>byd</i>	<i>bydy</i>	<i>bydut</i>
third sg.	<i>bo</i>	<i>bei</i>	<i>bit</i>	<i>byd</i>	<i>bydei</i>
first pl.	<i>bom</i>	<i>beym</i>	<i>bydwn</i>	<i>bydwn</i>	<i>bydem</i>
second pl.	<i>boch</i>	–	<i>bydwch</i>	<i>bydwch</i>	<i>bydewch</i>
third pl.	<i>bont, bwynt</i>	<i>beynt</i>	<i>bint</i>	<i>bydant</i>	<i>bydynt</i>
impersonal	<i>byther</i>	<i>bythit</i>	<i>(byder)</i>	<i>(bydir)</i>	<i>bydit</i>

These verbs also share an irregularity in the pluperfect, where they use the past-tense stem plus the imperfect of the verb *bot* ‘be’, for instance, *gwnaeth-* past tense (t-preterite) stem of *gwneuthur* ‘do’ plus *oedwn* ‘I was’ of *bot* ‘be’ > *gwnathoedwn* ‘I had done’. Such forms are normal in Middle Welsh. In late Middle Welsh and Early Modern Welsh, this pattern spreads analogically to *caffael* ‘get’, hence we find *kawssloed* ‘he had got’ (YSG 1116), and even forms with analogical changes to the stem on the pattern of the other verbs, such as *kassloedit* ‘had been got’ (YSG 5552) and *kathoedd* ‘he had got’ (NLW 13075B: YAL 79v.22). In Modern Welsh, however, these forms are entirely replaced by innovative forms based on the past tense stem + the endings of the imperfect. For instance, *gwnathoedwn* ‘I had done’ is replaced by *gwnaethwn* and *athoed* ‘he, she had gone’ is replaced by *aethai*.

In the past tense of *gwneuthur* ‘do’, there is variation between paradigms with the stem *gwnaeth-* and *goruc-*. The two paradigms are given in Table 5.7. In practice, most Middle Welsh text manifests a mixed system. The *goruc-*forms are rare outside of the third person and the impersonal, but in these forms, they dominate in many Middle Welsh texts. A typical actual paradigm is given in the final column of Table 5.7. The *gwnaeth-*paradigm is innovative, being modelled analogically on the paradigms of the t-preterites (*mynet* ~ *aeth* ‘go’ and *dyuot* ~ *doeth* ‘come’). Old Welsh shows more consistent use of the *goruc-*paradigm than later Welsh.

Table 5.7 Past tense of *gwneuthur* ‘do’ in Middle Welsh

	Past I	Past II	Typical attested
first sg.	<i>gwneuthum, gwnaethom</i>	<i>gorugum</i>	<i>gwneuthum</i>
second sg.	<i>gwneuthost, gwnaethost</i>	<i>gorugost</i>	<i>gwneuthost</i>
third sg.	<i>gwnaeth</i>	<i>goruc</i>	<i>goruc, gwnaeth</i>
first pl.	<i>gwnaetham, gwnaethon</i>	<i>gorugam</i>	<i>gwnaetham</i>
second pl.	<i>gwnaethawch</i>	<i>gorugawch</i>	<i>gwnaethawch</i>
third pl.	<i>gwnaethant, gwnaethont</i>	<i>gorugant</i>	<i>gorugant, gwnaethant</i>
impersonal	<i>gwnaethpwy</i>	<i>gorucpwy</i>	<i>gorucpwy, gwnaethpwy</i>

#### Other developments

Some Middle Welsh verbs have a third person singular imperfect in *-(y)at /jad/*. The forms *gwydyat* ‘knew’ from *gwybot* (stem *gwyd-*) and *adwaenat* ‘knew, recognized’ from *adnabot* (stem *adwaen-*) remain in Middle Welsh, but are replaced by more regular formations, *gwyddai* and *adwaenai* in Early Modern Welsh by the sixteenth century.

A number of verbs show reanalysis of the verb noun ending as part of the stem. Hence *aros* ‘wait’ was originally stem */arhol/* + verb noun ending */s/*, but later the stem was treated as being */arhos/*, hence *arhoaf* ‘I wait’ is replaced by *arhosaf*. The same occurs with *darllen* ‘read’ (*darlleaf* ‘I read’ replaced by *darllenaf*) and *arwein* ‘lead’ (earlier *arwedawd* ‘he, she led (past)’ replaced by *arweiniodd*).

#### Prepositional morphology

Most prepositions in Old and Middle Welsh inflect for number and person. A sample paradigm is given in Table 5.8. The inflections are the result of incorporation of an earlier pronominal object into the preposition as an ending. One consequence of this is that prepositions agree only with pronominal objects. The resulting endings resemble person-

number endings on verbs in form. Certain endings re-form in the course of Middle Welsh by analogy with verbal endings, making the correspondence even closer.

In early Middle Welsh, the third plural ending is *-u* /*u*/ or *-ud* /*uð*/. By analogy with verbal paradigms, /*nt*/ is added in the early Middle Welsh period, creating forms in *-unt* /*unt*/, such as *arnunt* ‘on them’ or *udunt* ‘to them’.

Table 5.8 Paradigm of preposition *ar* ‘on’ in Middle Welsh

	Singular	Plural
First person	<i>arnaf</i>	<i>arnam</i>
Second person	<i>arnat</i>	<i>arnawch</i>
Third person masc.	<i>arnaw</i>	<i>arnadut, arnunt</i>
Third person fem.	<i>arnei, erni</i>	

Some prepositions have a different stem when inflected, for instance, *am* ‘about’ and *o* ‘of, from’, but, when inflected, *amdan-* (*amdanaw* ‘about him’) and *ohan-* or *ohon-* (*ohanaw, ohonaw* ‘from him’) or *onad-* (*onadu, onadunt* ‘from them’). In Modern Welsh, *onadunt* ‘from them’ has been analogically replaced by the form *ohonynt*, taking the stem *ohon-* from the third-person singular. The remaining forms have generally survived.

As in Modern Welsh, a number of prepositions add a dental consonant in the third person, hence *yn* ‘in’ and *heb* ‘without’, but *yndaw* ‘in him’ and *hebdaw* ‘without him’ with added /*d*/ and /*ð*/ respectively. In two cases, with *gan* ‘with’ and *y rwng* ‘between’, the nature of the dental is dialectally variable, forms with /*t*/, such as *gantaw* ‘with him’, being characteristic of southern Middle Welsh and forms with /*θ*/, such as *ganthaw*, being characteristic of northern varieties. *Y rwng* ‘between’ has three stems in the third person, again distributed geographically, with /*ð*/, /*θ*/ and /*t*/. Hence we find variation between *y rydaw* (south-east), *y ryngthaw* (north) and *y ryngtaw* (south) ‘between him . . .’ in Middle Welsh texts (Thomas 1992, 1993, Willis 2005: 109–11).

SYNTAX

Word order

Verb-second

Middle Welsh prose manifests verb-second word order in affirmative declarative main clauses. This pattern involves some phrase in initial position (pragmatically representing old information/a topic) followed by a preverbal particle, followed by the verb and any other constituents in the order verb – subject – object. The basic template is given in example (10).

- (10) phrase (topic) – preverbal particle *a* or *y(d)* – finite verb – (subject) – (object)

The clause-initial constituent may instantiate by any phrasal category (noun phrase, non-finite verb phrase, adjective phrase) or grammatical function (subject, direct object, object of preposition, possessor, adjunct). A selection of examples is given in (11) to (15).

- (11) *A [r guyrda] a doethant y gyt y wneuthurkynnadeu at Pwyll . . .*  
 and the noblemen <sub>PRT</sub> come.PAST.3P together to make.INF messengers to Pwyll . . .  
 ‘And the noblemen came together to make a delegation to Pwyll . . .’ (PKM 1.12–13)

- (12) [*Y dyd hwnnw*] *a dreulwys trwy digrifwch a llywenyd...*  
 the day that PRT spend.PAST.3S through merriment and happiness  
 'And he spent that day in merriment and happiness ...' (PKM 7.1-2)
- (13) *A [r pump wraged hynny]... a anet udunt pum meib.*  
 and the five women these PRT be-born.PAST.IMPERS to.3P five sons  
 'And five sons were born to these five women.' (PKM 48.2-3)
- (14) [*Troi yn y hol*] *a oruc ef...*  
 turn.INF after.3SF PRT do.PAST.3S he  
 'He turned after her ...' (PKM 12.1-2)
- (15) [*Yskynnu*] *a oruc Pwyll ar y uarch...*  
 mount.INF PRT do.PAST.3S Pwyll on 3MS horse  
 'Pwyll mounted his horse ...' (PKM 11.27)

The choice of preverbal particle is rigidly determined by the nature of the preverbal constituent. The examples in (11) to (15) demonstrate that the particle *a* (with soft mutation of the initial consonant of the verb) is chosen if the topic is one of the following types of constituent: a subject, as in (11); a direct object, as in (12); the object of a preposition, as in (13); a nonfinite verb phrase, as in (14); or a lone nonfinite verb, as in (15). Another particle, *y* (*yd* before a vowel) is used with an adverb, as in (16), or with a prepositional phrase complement of a verb, as in (17).

- (16) [*Yna*] *y doethant wynteu attaw ef.*  
 then PRT come.PAST.3P they.CONJ to.3MS him  
 'Then they came to him.' (PKM 74.22)
- (17) [*Y 'r llys*] *y doethant...*  
 to the court PRT come.PAST.3P  
 'They came to the court ...' (PKM 10.11)

Finally, (18) shows the syntax with a preposed predicative adjective phrase (or predicative noun phrase). Here there is no particle, but the verb undergoes soft mutation (*buwyf* > *uwyt* in this case).

- (18) ... *a [llawen] uwyt wrthaw...*  
 and happy be.PAST.IMPERS to.3MS  
 '... and they were happy towards him ...' (PKM 13.18)

These patterns have been extensively investigated for the canonical Middle Welsh prose texts. It is clear that the verb-second pattern, although traditionally termed the 'abnormal sentence', is overwhelmingly the most frequent word-order type for affirmative declarative main clauses in Middle Welsh, accounting for more than 90 per cent of such clauses in all texts studied (Poppe 1989, 1990, 1991a, 1991b, 1993, 2000, Watkins 1977/8, 1983/4, 1988, 1993, 1997, Willis 1998).

The origin of the verb-second pattern of Middle Welsh has been the subject of some dispute. It is unlikely to be inherited from Common Celtic, usually reconstructed as verb-initial, and seems to be a Brythonic innovation. It is not even clear to what extent the

verb-second pattern was used in Old Welsh. Both Old Welsh prose and poetry contain examples of the verb-second order, using the preverbal particles in the same way as later texts. Examples from *Canu Aneirin* are given in (19) to (22), paralleling the basic Middle Welsh structures given in (11), (12), (16) and (18) respectively:

- (19) *Mab Sywno a werthws e eneit er wyneb grybwylyeit.*  
 son Sywno PRT sell.PAST.3S 3MS soul for honour mention  
 'The son of Sywno sold his soul for the mention of honour.' (CA 212–14)
- (20) *Med a dalhei.*  
 mead PRT earn.IMPF.3S  
 'He earned his mead.' (CA 22)
- (21) *E am lavnawr coch gorrwawr gwrnwn dwys dengyn ed*  
 along-with blades red great dark-sockets close steadfast PRT  
*emledyn aergwn.*  
 fight.IMPF.3P heroes  
 'Along with red blades, in great dark sockets, in close ranks, steadfastly heroes fought.' (CA 76–7)
- (22) ... *a gwenwyn vu.*  
 and poison be.PAST.3S  
 '... but it was poison.' (CA 69)

We can therefore be sure that the verb-second syntactic pattern had developed by the Old Welsh period. However, it is not statistically dominant in the way that it is in Middle Welsh. In prose, verb-initial word order is most frequent, with the verb-second pattern in a minority (Watkins 1987). In poetry, the verb-second pattern coexists with a number of other word order patterns: SVO with no particle, OVS with no particle, VOS and SOV.

Lewis (1942) noted that object clitics once intervened between verbal prefixes (pre-verbs) and the verb as in Old Irish. This is found in early Welsh poetry:

- (23) *Deus dy-m-gwares.*  
 God PRT+1S+SAVE.PRES.SUBJ.3S  
 'May God deliver me.' (BT 41.2)

If the verb lacked a prefix, the particle *a* was inserted to host the object clitic:

- (24) *Llawurydet am dwe.*  
 sadness PRT+1S seize.PRES.3S  
 'Sadness seizes me.' (H 111.7)

Lewis suggested that the particle began to be used even when no object clitic was present, giving rise to the order subject – *a* – verb, characteristic of the verb-second order. This seems unlikely for two reasons. First, it assumes that SVO word order already existed as an option before the change took place, but the evidence for this is weak. Second, the verb-second pattern does not concern only fronted subjects. This hypothesis gives no account of how it arose with other types of fronted constituent, nor how *y(d)* and soft mutation came to be possible in place of *a*.

A much more likely hypothesis is that the verb-second order arose from an earlier cleft structure. Clefts with the copula *ys* are occasionally encountered in Middle Welsh:

- (25) ... *ys da a gedymdeith [a golleisti].*  
           be.PRES good of companion PRT lose.PAST.2S+you  
           ‘... it is a good companion that you have lost.’ (PKM 56.27)

The second part of these structures has the form of a relative clause, bracketed in (25). A reduced form of cleft sentences such as (25) gave rise to a focus construction traditionally known as the ‘mixed sentence’. This construction, illustrated in (26), is very similar to the verb-second pattern, the choice of particle between the focus element and the verb being identical.

- (26) *Mi a ’e heirch...*  
       I PRT 3FS.ACC seek.PRES.3S  
       ‘It is I who seek her.’ (CO 562)

In later Welsh, the focus pattern and the verb-second pattern come to be distinguished by agreement: a fronted subject agrees with the verb in the verb-second pattern, but not in the focus pattern. However, this distinction is observed only rather sporadically in Middle Welsh, suggesting that the two structures actually diverged from a common source. A semantically bleached form of this focus construction may have developed into Brythonic, becoming available both where the initial element was contrastively focused and where it expressed a familiar topic element in the discourse. Once available, the topicalization structure increased in frequency to the point where it became the normal word order in Middle Welsh. If this is the origin of the verb-second order, then it straightforwardly accounts for why the particle chosen is always the same one that would be found in the equivalent relative clause (Willis 1998: 97–101). This hypothesis (essentially that argued for by Evans 1968: 311–14) is similar to the earliest view of the development of the verb-second pattern, namely that it was the result of the influence of the cleft, focus pattern in (25) and (26) on a pre-existing SVO order (Richards 1938: 104–9).

The orders found in Old Welsh poetry have been variously regarded as archaisms pointing to an earlier period of free word order (Lewis 1942), or have been attributed to poetic licence (Greene 1971: 9). Greater importance should clearly be attributed to prose as more likely to reflect spoken usage. Therefore a mixed system should be posited for Old Welsh, with verb-initial and verb-second patterns co-existing. The Old Welsh remnants of a distinction between absolute verb forms for use in initial position and conjunct verb forms for use after particles also suggest that verb-initial word order was at one time possible.

Comparative evidence is also relevant. Middle and Modern Breton and Cornish agree with Middle Welsh on almost every detail of the verb-second pattern. Strikingly they use cognate particles in exactly the same way as Middle Welsh does, and Middle Breton at least allows long-distance fronting of topic phrases in patterns very similar to Middle Welsh (Borsley et al. 2007: 290–3). There is only one significant difference between the languages, namely that, in Middle Welsh, the verb often shows person–number agreement with a topicalized subject, whereas in Breton (of all periods) and in Cornish it does not, appearing instead in a default third person form. Such striking general syntactic similarities are strong evidence that the verb-second pattern should be reconstructed for late Brythonic.

Another important issue is the status of the verb-second order in Middle Welsh. Some

linguists have doubted whether the pattern is representative of spoken Middle Welsh at all. This doubt is based on a reluctance to believe that an earlier verb-initial grammar could have been entirely replaced by a verb-second one in Middle Welsh affirmative main clauses only to give way once more to a verb-initial grammar in Modern Welsh. Mac Cana, for instance, has claimed that the verb-second order was introduced from a southeastern dialect of Welsh into the literary language, where it achieved great popularity, dying out when it went out of fashion in Modern Welsh (Mac Cana 1973, 1979, 1991, 1992). Others have taken up this view (Fife 1988, Fife and King 1991). The link with south-eastern dialects is intended to account for the fact that remnants of the verb-second order survived in these dialects and to explain why Breton and Cornish manifest the same patterns.

Nevertheless, there is good evidence that verb-second orders were natural in Middle Welsh and were not a literary fashion. All the patterns illustrated above in (11) to (18) have exact parallels in Middle Breton. It seems odd that users of a Middle Welsh literary language could successfully learn such a system and use it flawlessly in almost exactly the same way as Middle Breton writers with whom they had little or no contact. Furthermore, many aspects of the grammar of Modern Welsh presuppose the verb-second order as their starting point (the preverbal particles *mi* and *fe*, grammatical fossils such as *efallai* 'perhaps') and the transition from the verb-second system to the verb-initial system of Modern Welsh can be shown to have taken place smoothly from late Middle Welsh into Early Modern Welsh (see below).

#### *Expletive subjects*

Middle Welsh had an expletive subject *ef*, roughly comparable to English *there* or German *es*, restricted to the clause-initial topic position of verb-second main clauses. It appears when the clause otherwise lacks a syntactic topic:

- (27) *Ef a gyhyrdawd ac ef [gwr gwineu mawr]*  
 it PRT meet.PAST.3S with him man auburn large . . .  
 'There met with him a large auburn-haired man . . .' (P 52.21)

The distribution of expletive *ef* is restricted in Middle Welsh to contexts typical of expletive subjects in other languages. It appears in presentational contexts, as in example (27) above, where *gwr gwineu mawr* is new information to the discourse and hence not a possible candidate to appear in the leftmost topic position. In this case, the range of verbs used is fairly limited, being predominantly change of state verbs (unaccusatives), particularly motion verbs. This same restriction applies to English *there*, and since the restrictions are similar in the two languages, it is usually possible to translate these cases with English *there*. It also appears as the subject of impersonal forms of verbs, as in (28), and with extraposed clausal subjects, as in (29). These are all common positions for expletive subjects in other languages.

- (28) *Ef a dywetpwyd idaw . . .*  
 it PRT say.PAST. IMPERS. to.3MS  
 'It was said to him . . .' (direct speech follows) (PKM 80.9–10)

- (29) . . . *ac ef a uu agos [bot calaned yn yr ymsaghwynnw].*  
 and it PRT be.PAST.3S near be.INF corpses in the crush that  
 ' . . . it was almost [the case] that there were corpses in that crush [i.e. people almost died in that crush]. ' (O 546)

In combination with the verb, *gallulgallael* 'be able', on the basis of sentences such as (30), the expletive subject has given rise to the adverb *efallai* 'perhaps' in Modern Welsh.

- (30) *Ef a allei... y eni ef o 'r Wŷry...*  
 it PRT be-able.IMPF.3S 3MS be-born.INF he of the Virgin  
 'It could be that [i.e. perhaps] he was born of the Virgin ...' (YCM 31.2)

There are two significant later developments. First, in late Middle Welsh, the expletive subject appears with a much wider range of verbs, including transitive verbs, where a translation using English *there* is out of the question:

- (31) ... *ef a gyll llawer gwrda y eneit.*  
 it PRT lose.PRES.3S many nobleman 3MS soul  
 '... many a nobleman will lose his life.' (YSG 372–3)

Second, a variety of forms of the expletive pronoun begin to appear, including some based on the strong (reduplicated) form of the masculine third person singular pronoun, *efo*, as in the Chronicle of Elis Gruffudd (c. 1490–c. 1552):

- (32) ... *yvo a wnaeth ych Gras chwi lwyr gam a myui...*  
 it.REDUP PRT make.PAST.3S 2P grace you entirely mistake with me.REDUP  
 '... your Grace wronged me entirely ...' (CEG 318.8–9)

In its alternative form, *efe*, the strong form of the expletive gives rise to the modern affirmative verbal particle *fe* (Willis 1998: 170–5, 2007: 450–4). Reinterpretation of the pattern in (32) as containing a verbal particle followed by the verb rather than as containing a subject pronoun in initial position also creates a new type of VSO-clause, thereby furthering the innovation of verb-initial syntax.

#### *The demise of the verb-second rule*

In early Middle Welsh, the particle *a* may be omitted before the imperfect of the verb *bot* 'be' (that is, *oed* instead of *a oed*), but is otherwise consistently used. In a few cases, particularly in later Middle Welsh, *a* is omitted before a verb beginning with /a/, and such cases are common from the end of the fifteenth century. Omission spreads to a position before a consonant slightly later, but is well attested by the mid-sixteenth century:

- (33) ... *a jessu gwnnwys yolwc y vynydd...*  
 and Jesus rise.PAST.3S 3MS+gaze up  
 '... and Jesus raised his gaze ...' (DE 402.10–11, 1550–75)

This has two important ramifications for the history of the language. First, omission of these particles destroys the verb-second system. In particular, omission of the particle *y(d)* before an adverb, in sentences such as (34), obscures the fact that the adverb is in topic position and the verb is necessarily in second position.



- (34) *Ac ynna gouynno[dd] hi Jddo ef pa ddelw J gollyngei ef J*  
 and then ask.PAST.3S she to.3MS him what way PRT release.IMPF.3S he 3MS  
*veisdyr ynhydd...*  
 master PRED+free  
 'And then she asked him how he would release his master...' (YT 74.9, 1540s)

From such sentences, it could be inferred that the adverb was a purely optional element, and a grammatical system was abduced in which verbs were freely available in initial position. This seems to be what happened, as attested by the rise of absolute verb-initial clauses, such as (35), which become much more frequent in the sixteenth century.

- (35) *Gorvüost ar dy elynion...*  
 overcome.PAST.2S on 2S enemies  
 'You overcame your enemies...' (RhG i.22.28–30, c. 1514)

Second, preverbal subject pronouns now appeared directly before the verb, and, once verb-initial orders became common, their status as pronouns was obscured. When compared with examples such as (35), main clauses like the one in (36) could be interpreted as verb-initial if *mi* were treated not as a pronoun, but as a verbal particle.

- (36) *Mi vydaf dat ido...*  
 I be.FUT.1S father to.3MS  
 'I shall be a father to him...' (KL1B 8.10, 1551)

This has led to the innovation of *mi* as an affirmative verbal particle, used with any person-number combination of the verb today (Willis 1998, 2007).

## Negation

Main-clause sentential negation is marked in Middle Welsh using the particle *ny* (*nyt* before a vowel), which appears in preverbal, usually sentence-initial position:

- (37) *Ny welei ef y twrwf rac tywyllt y nos.*  
 NEG see.IMPF.3S he the commotion before dark.EQ the night  
 'He could not see the commotion because the night was so dark.' (PKM 22.23)

In embedded clauses, the negation marker is clause-initial *na* (*nat* before a vowel):

- (38) *A phan welas na thygyei idaw y hymlit...*  
 and when see.PAST.3S NEG avail.IMPF.3S to.3MS 3FS pursue.INF  
 'And when he saw that it was no use pursuing her...' (PKM 9.23–4)

Another particle *na* (this time *nac* before a vowel) is used to negate imperatives and in negative responses to questions.

In late Middle Welsh a reinforcing negative adverb *dim* emerges from the indefinite pronoun *dim* 'anything' (Willis 2006):

- (39) *A Lawnslot a dywawt nat arhoei ef dim.*  
 and Lancelot PRT say.PAST.3S NEG wait.IMPF.3S he at-all  
 'And Lancelot said that he would not wait at all.' (YSG 1259)

Its frequency remains fairly low throughout Middle Welsh. However, it has generalized to become the main marker of negation in Modern Welsh, having completely ousted the preverbal marker in the spoken language. This same pronoun also participates in another development, the grammaticalization of *dim o* (originally 'anything of') as a quantifier 'any' in late Middle Welsh. Whereas in early Middle Welsh, *dim o* is fairly infrequent and usually has a partitive sense ('any of'), in later Middle Welsh, it is more frequent and often appears in contexts such as (40) where a partitive use seems improbable. It may also be used to reinforce negation of a nonfinite verb, as in (41).

- (40) *A mi a wnn na wrthyt ef dim ohonat ti...*  
 and I PRT know.PRES.1S NEG refuse.PRES.3S he any of.2S you.s  
 'And I know that he will not refuse you ...' (YSG 1423)

- (41) *Ny elleis i yrys deng mlyned dim o 'r kerdet.*  
 NEG can.PAST.1S I since ten years any of PERF walk.INF  
 'I have not been able to walk for ten years.' (YSG 5608)

These innovations represent the first stages of a development that has led to the innovation of a new negative marker *mo* (reduced form of *ddim o*), used to negate definite objects and, to a lesser extent, nonfinite verbs in Modern Welsh.

### Subordinate clauses

Finite complement clauses are generally marked using the particle *y(d)*:

- (42) *...mi a tebygaf y byd gwr idi yn y lle...*  
 I PRT suppose.PRES.1S PRT be.FUT.1S man to.3FS in the place  
 'I think that he will be her man soon ...' (P 63.20–1)

Word order in finite subordinate clauses is generally verb – subject – object. As in Modern Welsh, if a complement clause expresses an affirmative past-tense event, it is formally nonfinite even though it expresses a finite sense. Hence, the embedded clause in (43) contains a nonfinite verb *dyuot* 'come' rather than a finite past-tense verb.

- (43) *pa bryd y tybygy di dyuot Gereint yma?*  
 what time PRT suppose.PRES.2S you come.INF Geraint here  
 '... when do you think that Geraint came here?' (G 465–6)

### Case marking in nonfinite clauses

Nonfinite clauses also occur as the complements to prepositions such as *gwedy* 'after' and *kyn* 'before', and as free-standing narrative main clauses in certain circumstances. In all of these contexts, they exhibit 'ergative' patterns of case-marking that differ radically from anything found today. The relevant ergative characteristic is that a single device is used for marking the direct object of transitive verbs and the subject of certain intransitive verbs, with a different device being used for the subject of a transitive verb. In (44),

the verb in the embedded clause is transitive *adnabot* 'recognize'. Its subject, *y urawt* 'his brother' is marked using the preposition *o* 'of'; its object receives no special marking.

- (44) *pan wybu ef adnabot o 'y urawt y uedwl...*  
 when know.PAST.3S he recognize.INF of 3MS brother 3MS thought  
 '... when he realized that his brother had read his mind ...' (PKM 68.9)

If the object is pronominal, it appears as a genitive clitic, *y* in (45), as is normal for the object of a nonfinite verb:

- (45) *Ac yna y gyrchu o 'r marchawc ef yn llityawc...*  
 and then 3MS.GEN attack.INF of the knight him PRED fierce  
 'And then the knight attacked him fiercely ...' (P 14.18)

Contrast this with the pattern in (43) above. In (43), the verb in the embedded clause is intransitive *dyuot* 'come' and its subject, *Gereint*, is not marked in any special way. If the subject is a pronoun, it appears as a genitive clitic, just like the transitive object in (46):

- (46) *A phan wybuwy eu medwi wynteu...*  
 and when know.PAST.IMPERS 3P.GEN become-drunk.INF 3P.CONJ  
 'And when it became known that they had become drunk ...' (PKM 36.13)

Intransitive verbs in fact split into two groups: unaccusative (change-of-state) verbs follow the pattern just described, whereas unergative (action) verbs, such as *marchogaeth* 'ride', follow the pattern for transitives:

- (47) *A gwedy marchogaeth onadunt mwy no hanner milltir ohonei...*  
 and after ride.INF of.3P more than half mile of.3FS  
 'And after they had ridden more than half a mile away ...' (YSG 25–6)

Which of the two patterns is used can sometimes depend on the degree of agentivity ascribed to the subject: if a subject is viewed as actively carrying out the action of the verb, then the transitive/unergative pattern is used, whereas a non-active subject will be marked using the intransitive pattern (Lewis 1928: 182–4, Manning 1995, Morgan 1938, Richards 1949–51).

### *I-clauses*

Late Middle Welsh sees the rise of a new type of nonfinite clause. Here, the subject is marked with what was originally the preposition *y* 'to' (ModW. *i*):

- (48) *A gwedy udunt vwyta...*  
 and after to.3P eat.INF  
 'And after they had eaten ...' (FfBO 49.2–3)

Such clauses are attested but rare in earlier texts. They are found in late Middle Welsh as the complements of prepositions and epistemic verbs, and therefore compete with the pattern described in the section on case marking in nonfinite clauses above. For instance, example (48) could also have been expressed as *gwedy bwyta ohonunt* (after eat.INF of.3P), using the preposition *o* to mark the (agentive) subject. This type of *i*-clause, which

expresses a real action in the past, seems likely to have arisen via omission of a verb such as *darfod* 'happen, finish', which is used frequently in Middle Welsh in similar contexts, and which probably became bleached of any original perfective sense (Morgan 1938, Richards 1949–51):

- (49) ... *a chynn daruot idaw ymgueiraw yn y gyfrwy*...  
 and before happen.INF to.3MS settle.INF in 3MS saddle  
 '... and before he had finished settling himself into his saddle ...' (PKM 10.26–7)

Another type of *i*-clause is found in Modern Welsh. This type expresses a generic or future action which has not actually taken place. In Middle Welsh, clear examples of this are rarer than the first type, but some are found:

- (50) ... *a thi a wediwn ar yt atdeb ynni a uyd byw hwnn*  
 and you PRT pray.PRES.1P on to-you answer.INF to-us PRT be.FUT.3S alive DEM  
 '... and we pray to you for you to answer us whether he will live ...' (FfBO 45.26–7)

It appears to have emerged from a reanalysis of the complement of such predicates as *peri* 'cause', *erchi* 'ask' or *reit* 'necessary'. These typically took a prepositional phrase headed by *y* 'to' as a complement followed by a nonfinite control clause, as illustrated for *peri* in (51) and for *reit* in (52).

- (51) *A minheu a baraf [idaw ef] [uynet y sseghi y bwyt...]*  
 and 1S.CONJ PRT cause.PRES.1S to.3S him go.INF to trample.INF the food  
 'And I will make him go and trample down the food ...' (PKM 15.11–12)

- (52) ... *reit yw [in] [gerdet yn bryssur]*  
 necessary be.PRES.3S to-us walk.INF PRED quick  
 '... it is necessary for us to walk quickly.' (PKM 71.1)

Example (53) demonstrates for *reit* that the prepositional phrase headed by *y* is a constituent and can be used independently of the nonfinite clause that follows:

- (53) *Reit oed [im] [wrth gynghor]...*  
 necessary be.IMP.3S to-me at advice  
 'I needed advice ...' (PKM 49.16–17)

In environments such as (51) and (52), the prepositional phrase headed by *y* was reanalysed as the subject of the embedded nonfinite clause, creating a new type of nonfinite clause which spread to contexts, such as that in (50), where the preposition was not selected by the verb in the main clause (Lewis 1928, Miller 2004).

#### *Embedded focus clauses*

Embedded focus (cleft) clauses are marked with one of three embedded focus markers, *panyw*, *y may* or *taw*, and manifest verb-second order. This variability is not well understood, although it is clear that *taw* is rare and southern and that *panyw* dies out in the sixteenth century, leaving only *mai* and *taw* in Modern Welsh. Example (54) shows two embedded focus clauses. The first is marked by *panyw* followed by the focused element *o'm anuod inheu* 'against my will' followed by a particle and the verb; the second

is marked with *y may*, again with the focused element in initial position and the verb in second position.

- (54) *menegwch ydaw [p]an yw o 'm anuod inheu y*  
 indicate.IMPER.2P to.3s FOCUS of 1s disagreement 1s.CONJ PRT  
*gwnaethpwynt hynny; ac y may brawt un uam a mi a wnaeth hynny*  
 do.PAST.IMPERS this and FOCUS brother one mother as me PRT do.PAST.3s this  
 '... convey to him that it was against my will that this was done and that it was my  
 half-brother who did it.' (PKM 33.21–3)

Focus is also marked in 'if'-clauses, where a focus complementizer *os* alternates with a nonfocus complementizer, variously *o(t)* or *o(r)*.

### The syntax of mutation

The distribution of the three initial consonant mutations, soft, nasal and aspirate, had largely been determined by the Old and Middle Welsh period. Most mutations are triggered by specific lexical items and this list has remained fairly stable since the Middle Welsh period. Grammatical mutations associated with gender have also remained stable: feminine singular nouns are associated with receiving and triggering soft mutation in largely the same environments as in Modern Welsh.

There are a few areas, however, where Middle Welsh operates substantially differently from Modern Welsh. The most important concerns direct object mutation (Morgan 1952: 182–233). In Modern Welsh, the direct object of a finite verb undergoes soft mutation in most contexts, while, in straightforward cases, the subject does not. This rule did not operate in Middle Welsh. Instead, certain verb forms trigger soft mutation on an immediately following noun phrase, irrespective of whether it is a subject or an object. So, for example, imperfect and pluperfect verbs ending in *-ei* trigger soft mutation on both an immediately following subject, in (55) (*Bendigeituran* becomes *Uendigeituran*) and on an immediately following object, in (56) (*marchauc* becomes *uarchauc*). On the other hand, past-tense verbs in *-awd* or *-wys* do not.

- (55) *Ny angassei Uendigeituran eiryoet ymywn ty.* (/b/ > /v/)  
 NEG contain.PLUPERF.3s Bendigeidfran ever inside house  
 'Bendigeidfran had never fitted inside a house.' (PKM 31.12)
- (56) ... *ef a welei uarchauc* ... (/m/ > /v/)  
 he PRT see.IMP.3s knight  
 '... he saw a knight ...' (PKM 2.3)

Where both subject and object are overt in VSO word order, the mutation of the object is determined by the nature of the subject, with a pronominal subject triggering soft mutation on the object, even with a verb that does not otherwise trigger mutation:

- (57) *hyt nat edewis ef wr byw* (/g/ > ø)  
 until NEG leave.PAST.3s he man alive  
 '... until he did not leave any living man ...' (PKM 42.24)

These rules represent a reorganization of the system that would be expected on the basis of Brythonic phonology, since these mutations do not straightforwardly occur in environments where the previous word once ended in a vowel. The shift to Modern Welsh represents a further reorganization, making mutation subject more regularly to syntactic factors.

Other differences concern adjectives. As in Modern Welsh, Middle Welsh adjectives normally undergo soft mutation after a feminine singular noun. However, they also mutate in two other contexts. A comparative adjective mutates after any noun if the clause is negative, as shown in (58); and an adjective mutates if the noun is preceded by the numeral 'two', as shown in (59) (*march* 'horse' is masculine).

- (58) *Ny wydwn i varch gynt...* (/k/ > /g/)  
 NEG know.IMPF.1s I horse faster  
 'I never knew a faster horse...'  
 (PKM 10.8–9)

- (59) *deu varch vawr* (/m/ > /v/)  
 two horse big  
 'two big horses'  
 (YSG 3094–5)

The former mutation is the result of the reduction of an earlier relative clause in this context (Evans 1964: 43–4). The latter is the regular development of the Brythonic dual endings. Both mutations disappeared in Early Modern Welsh.

### Copular constructions

Use of the copula shows significant change through the Old and Middle Welsh periods. Typical of the Old and early Middle Welsh period is use of the copula (present *ys*, imperfect *oed*) in the order copula – *predicate* – ***subject***. Throughout this section, predicates are marked in italics and subjects are marked in bold italics.

- (60) *Oed melynach y fenn no blodeu y banadyl.*  
 be.IMPF.3s yellower 3FS head than flowers the broom  
 'Her head was more yellow (blond) than the flowers of the broom.'  
 (CO 490)

In embedded nonfinite clauses, a different pattern is used from the outset. Brythonic had developed a predicate marker *y(n)*, probably from an oblique (dative or instrumental) form of the definite article (Richards 1934: 107–12, Watkins and Piette 1962: 295–300). By Old and early Middle Welsh, this had become obligatory to mark the predicate in nonfinite clauses (as well as to mark adverbs and secondary predicates). The order found is copula – *predicate* – ***subject***, as in finite clauses:

- (61) ...a gwedy bot y barawt yr ystauell...  
 and after be.INF PRED ready the room  
 '... and after the room was ready...'  
 (PKM 36.8–9)

In finite clauses, both main and embedded, there is variation between the older pattern in (60) and an innovative pattern with the predicate marker. However, when the predicate marker is used in finite clauses, the order is reversed, as copula – ***subject*** – *predicate*:

- (62) ... ac y mae y enw yn parawt.  
 and PRT be.PRES.3S 3MS name PRED ready  
 '... and his name is ready.' (PKM 76.18–19)

The pattern in (62) increases in frequency in the Old and Middle Welsh periods, ousting the pattern in (60) by the end of Middle Welsh. Later in Middle Welsh, the word order from finite clauses with *yn*, namely, *copula* – *subject* – predicate, is generalized over to nonfinite clauses, giving the order found today:

- (63) Ac yr bot y bobyl yn anifeilyeid ...  
 and although be.INF the people PRED animals  
 'And although the people are animals ...' (FfBO 41.16)

## CONCLUSION

We have seen how Old Welsh emerged from the ancestral Brythonic language via a series of wide-ranging sound changes, largely shared with Breton and Cornish, that had a profound impact on the phonology of the language. These changes include the loss of final syllables, the reorganization of vowel length and stress and the innovation of initial consonant mutations. Substantial morphological changes, including the loss of case and an absolute–conjunct distinction in verbal inflection, accompanied these changes. In the later period, Middle Welsh phonology goes through a period of relative stability, with innovation shifting to the realms of morphology, and especially syntax, with the break-up of verb-second word order and significant reorganization of nonfinite and copular clauses having a profound effect on the structure of the language.

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- CEG 'Disgrifiad Elis Gruffudd o'r cynadleddau a fu rhwng Harri VIII a'r ymherodwr Siarl V a rhyn-gddo a Ffrances I, Brenin Ffrainc, yn 1520'. Ed. Thomas Jones. *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 18 (1960): 311–37.
- CLIH *Canu Llywarch Hen*. Ed. Ifor Williams. 1935. Cardiff: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru.
- CO *Culhwch ac Olwen. An Edition and Study of the Oldest Arthurian Tale*. Ed. Rachel Bromwich and D. Simon Evans. 1992. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
- DE 'Darnau o'r Efengylau'. Ed. Henry Lewis. *Y Cymmrodor*, 31 (1921): 193–216.
- FfBO *Ffordd y Brawd Odrig*. Ed. Stephen J. Williams. 1929. Cardiff: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru.
- G *Ystorya Gereint Uab Erbin*. Ed. Robert L. Thomson. 1997. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.
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- PKM* *Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi.* Ed. Ifor Williams. 1930. Cardiff: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru.
- RhG* *Rhyddiaith Gymraeg.* Vol. I: 1488–1609. Ed. T. H. Parry-Williams. 1954. Cardiff: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru.
- YCM* *Ystoria de Carolo Magno.* Ed. Stephen J. Williams. 1930. Cardiff: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru.
- YSG* *Ystoryaeu Seint Greal.* Ed. Thomas Jones. 1992. Cardiff: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru.
- YT* Gruffydd, Elis. *Ystoria Taliesin: The Story of Taliesin.* Ed. Patrick K. Ford. 1991. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

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PART II

# THE GOIDELIC LANGUAGES



# IRISH

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## INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a description of Modern Irish phonology, morphology, syntax and spelling conventions. The evidence provided has been based mainly on material available through linguistic publications since 1900. These publications outline in various detail reliable linguistic descriptions covering phonetic/phonological material, morphological rules and syntactic patterns as well as semantic and sociolinguistic information relating to modern usage. Other materials referred to from time to time cover earlier periods of the language from 1200 onwards. Early Modern Classical Irish had developed and cultivated a standard form of the language for a period of approximately 450 years. This standard language has been described, interpreted and written about in great detail by Ó Cuív (1973, 1980) and McManus (1994a, 1994b) in particular. We are fortunate in having a large body of linguistic material describing all essential elements of this standard language which has survived in manuscript form. This material, termed *Irish Grammatical Tracts*, was edited and published by Osborn Bergin in a series of supplements in *Ériu* 8–10, 14, 17 (1916–55).

There is some uncertainty as to when the Modern Irish period began, as witnessed by the works of Greene (1966), McManus (1994a, 1994b) and Ó Cuív (1973, 1979 and 1980) in particular. The conservative nature of Irish writing and the conventions followed in bardic poetry compositions make it difficult to assess the quality and nature of the Irish linguistic system among the general uneducated population in the period 1200–1650. The same rigid standard was not applied to the written prose of the same period. Editing conventions have also followed conservative lines and on the whole apply older spelling conventions and rules in editing texts from the period. It would have been equally possible to adapt more ‘modern’ spellings which would convey the synchronic state of Irish among the general population during the period and provide a truer picture of the changing linguistic scene on the ground. Such conventions did emerge in editing later literary materials which were written after the breakdown of the bardic schools system in the first half of the seventeenth century.

I refer in the following pages to the work of scholars dealing with this period, which we can call Early Modern Irish, whenever it was felt appropriate to do so. As already stated, the present chapter is based on linguistic materials, books and articles which were published in the period 1900–2007. On the whole, they describe the modern synchronic state of Irish as exemplified in the spoken dialects of the twentieth century.

## PHONOLOGY AND ORTHOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION

Modern Irish orthography is the result of various efforts over time to represent diachronic developments within the language over a period of more than 1,600 years. These changes can be phonetic, phonological or morphological in nature and each plays a pivotal role in speech production and understanding and hence must be represented in writing in an unambiguous way. This has not always been an easy task and even today readers must use a combination of reading transfer skills and interpretations to translate spelling into their corresponding speech patterns. The standardization of spelling, which has been an ongoing process since the mid 1920s, culminated at the end of the 1950s in the provision of a prescriptive recommended standard written form for vocabulary and grammar (Ó Murchú 1977, Ó Baoill 1988, Ó Riain 1994). This was the first major revision of Irish orthography since the heyday of the bardic schools in 1200–1650. Its acceptance was greatly enhanced by the publication of the Department of Education's *Handbook* (1958), de Bhaldraithe's *English–Irish Dictionary* (1959) and the Christian Brothers' *Grammar* (1960), all of which were written in the revised standard spelling.

### The consonant system

Irish has two sets of consonant sounds, which are contrastive or phonemic and need to be distinguished in both writing and speech. One set of consonants can be labelled palatalized, the other velarized. This contrast arose in the prehistorical period and continued and was further developed and consolidated during the Old Irish period, 600–900. The distinction is based on various phonetic parameters – place of articulation and tongue height. The latter is the distinctive feature which differentiates each set of consonants. In the production of palatalized consonants the front part of the tongue is raised towards the hard palate, accompanied by a simultaneous co-articulation using the tip/blade/back of the tongue or lips. Velarized consonants are articulated in a similar way except that the back of the tongue is raised towards the soft palate or velum during production. This dichotomy gives the Irish consonants a specific and definite acoustic timbre, which is not easy for learners to acquire.

In this chapter we will mark only one set of these consonants, namely, the palatalized set, by using a raised /h/, in accordance with IPA usage. The velarized set will be left unmarked. The IPA has specific symbols in certain cases to differentiate velarized and palatalized velar stops and fricatives and in these cases we follow the IPA recommendations. It is reasonably easy to find contrastive pairs where the essential difference is carried by the quality of the consonants. Thus we have contrastive pairs of the following type, where the first word has a palatalized consonant which contrasts with its velarized counterpart in the second word. Irish spelling informs the reader about the quality of each consonant in the following way. All consonants preceded or followed by *ilí* or *elé* in writing are palatalized.<sup>1</sup> When they are followed or preceded by *alá*, *oló* or *ulú*, they are velarized. In our first example *teacht* given below, the first 't' is palatalized and the last 't' is velarized. In the word *tacht*, both 't' sounds are velarized. Similarly, *c* in *cead* is palatalized and *c* in *cad?* is velarized.

<i>teacht</i> /tʰaxt/, 'coming'	:	<i>tacht</i> /taxt/, 'choke'
<i>cad?</i> /kad/, 'What?'	:	<i>cead</i> /cad/, 'permission'
<i>fuair</i> /fuəɪ̯/, 'got'	:	<i>fuar</i> /fuəɪ̯/, 'cold' <sup>2</sup>
<i>cáis</i> /ka:ʃ/, 'cheese'	:	<i>cás</i> /ka:s/, 'case'

In clusters of two or more consonants, all consonants agree in quality – they are either all palatalized or all velarized e.g. *ceist* ‘a question’, *beilt* ‘a belt’, *strioc* ‘streak, stripe’ where ‘*st*’, ‘*lt*’ and ‘*str*’ are all palatalized and *olc* ‘bad’, *stróic* ‘tear’ where ‘*lc*’ and ‘*str*’ are velarized. In sequences of post vocalic ‘*rt*’ and ‘*cht*’, ‘*r*’ /*l*/ and ‘*ch*’ /*x*/ are always velarized, even where the following ‘*t*’ is palatalized. Similarly, word initially the ‘*s*’ in ‘*sp*(*r*), *sm*, *sf*’ sequences is always velarized no matter what the quality of the following consonants.

Table 6.1 illustrates by way of minimal or near minimal pairs the full set of phonemic contrasts among the consonant system of modern Irish. It should be noted that there is only one phoneme /*h*/ and the borrowed phonemes /*ʃ*/ and /*ʒ*/ do not have corresponding velarized equivalents.

Table 6.1 Velarized and palatalized contrasts in Modern Irish

Spelling	Phonemes	Examples
b	/b/ and /bʲ/	<i>buí</i> ‘yellow’, <i>bí</i> ‘be!’
c	/k/ and /c/	<i>cad?</i> ‘what?’, <i>cead</i> ‘permission’
ch	/x/ and /ç/	<i>loch</i> ‘a lake’, <i>oíche</i> ‘night’ <sup>1</sup>
d	/d/ and /dʲ/	<i>dó</i> ‘two’, <i>go deo</i> ‘forever’
dh	/ɣ/	<i>dhá</i> ‘two’
f	/f/ and /fʲ/	<i>go fóill</i> ‘yet’, <i>feoil</i> ‘meat’
g	/g/ and /gʲ/	<i>óga</i> ‘young (plural)’, <i>an óige</i> ‘youth’
h, th, sh	/h/	<i>hata</i> ‘a hat’, <i>thit</i> ‘fell’, <i>shuigh</i> ‘sat’
j	/dʒʲ/	<i>jab</i> ‘a job’, <i>jíp</i> ‘a jeep’
l	/l/ and /lʲ/	<i>biolar</i> ‘watercress’, <i>mil</i> ‘honey’
ll	/l̪/ and /l̪ʲ/	<i>lón</i> ‘lunch’, <i>leon</i> ‘a lion’ <sup>2</sup> <i>balla</i> ‘a wall’, <i>buille</i> ‘a stroke’
m	/m/ and /mʲ/	<i>maoin</i> ‘wealth’, <i>mín</i> ‘soft’
n	/n/ and /nʲ/	<i>anam</i> ‘a soul’, <i>ainm</i> ‘a name’
nn	/n̪/ and /n̪ʲ/	<i>nach</i> ‘do you not?’, <i>neach</i> ‘a being’ <sup>3</sup> <i>Anna</i> ‘Anne’, <i>bainne</i> ‘milk’
ng	/ŋ/ and /ŋʲ/	<i>long</i> ‘a ship’, <i>loingeas</i> ‘a fleet of ships’
p	/p/ and /pʲ/	<i>paca</i> ‘a packet’, <i>peaca</i> ‘a sin’
r	/r/ and /rʲ/	<i>fuair</i> ‘cold’, <i>fuair</i> ‘got’
rr	/r̪/	<i>corr</i> ‘edge’, <i>farraige</i> ‘sea’ <sup>4</sup>
s	/s/ and /sʲ/	<i>cás</i> ‘a case’, <i>cáis</i> ‘cheese’
t	/t/ and /tʲ/	<i>tacht</i> ‘choke’, <i>teacht</i> ‘coming’
v, bh, mh	/β/ and /βʲ/	<i>an-bhuí</i> ‘very yellow’, <i>bhí</i> ‘was’, <i>vóta</i> ‘a vote’ <sup>5</sup>

#### Notes

- 1 The sound /ç/ is heard word initially in all dialects but is weakened to /h/ intervocalically except in the dialects of North Connacht and Ulster. In some dialects the historical fricative has been deleted altogether.
- 2 Initial *l* is identical in pronunciation with intervocalic and word final *ll* in those dialects which differentiate between the pronunciation of single *l* and double *ll*. Thus the *l* in *lón* ‘lunch’ and the *l* in *líon* ‘fill’ are identical to the double *ll* of *balla* ‘a wall’ and *buille* ‘a stroke’, respectively. The initial *l* of the preposition *le* ‘with’ and its conjugated forms *liom* ‘with me’, *leat* ‘with you’ etc. is pronounced as an alveolar palatalized lateral.



- 3 The pronunciation of word initial *n* and intervocalic or word final *nm* is identical to the description for *l* and *ll* as outlined in the previous footnote.
- 4 This sound has been recorded for Donegal Irish and was probably the norm throughout Ulster when Irish was a vigorous spoken language throughout the province. It is a velarized trilled /r/ made against the back of the alveolar or teeth ridge. Initially, this sound occurs in such words as *rámha* ‘an oar’, *Ruairí* ‘Rory’ and *rí* ‘a king’. A three way contrast occurs in the speech of many speakers between the r-sounds in *corr* ‘edge’, *cuir* ‘put!’ and *ag cur* ‘putting’. This applies only to northern dialects as the contrast is reduced to two in the other dialects.
- 5 The written *v* before *a*, *o* or *u* can denote either a velarized bilabial /β/ consonant as found in Munster Irish and in parts of South Connacht or a /w/ similar to the English ‘w’ in *with*, *award* etc.

Various other consonants have appeared in recent dictionaries as a result of borrowing or transliteration of technical international vocabulary. The following consonants must now be included as part of the phonemic system of modern Irish (*An Foclóir Póca*: /z/, /ʒ/, /w/ and /j/ in words such as *zú*, *puzal*, *xileafón*, *wigwam* and *yó-yó*.<sup>4</sup>

Articulation of consonants

The three major dialects of Irish have a common core of consonant phonemes. However, some dialects have maintained more phonemic contrasts and in many cases the phonetic realization of consonants differs from one dialect to the next. Table 6.2 outlines the major contrasts for all dialects and describes the mode and place of articulation. Those consonants outside the common core are in italics. The description of the consonantal sounds that follows below is meant to give a general overview of the marked differences between the major dialects.

Table 6.2 Consonants of Irish

Mode of articulation	Labial	Dental	Alveolar	Alveo-palatal	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	b b <sup>j</sup> p p <sup>j</sup>	d t		d <sup>j</sup> t <sup>j</sup>	t̪ c	g k	
Fricative	β β <sup>j</sup> φ φ <sup>j</sup>	s		ɟ tʃ	ɲ ç	ɣ x	h
Nasal	m m <sup>j</sup>	<i>n̪</i>	n n <sup>j</sup>	ɲ	ɲ <sup>j</sup>	ŋ	
Lateral		<i>ɬ</i>	ɭ ɭ <sup>j</sup>	ʎ			
Trill			r				
Tap			r̥ r <sup>j</sup>				

Bilabial consonants

The velarized bilabial consonants of Irish are exo-labial with protruding lips and tend to be accompanied with a strong /w/ glide. This rounding is more pronounced in Ulster and affects surrounding vowels. The palatalized counterparts tend to be endo-labial and have tensed drawn back lip position. This is more pronounced in Connacht and Munster

dialects, especially before back vowels. I have used the bilabial symbols for the fricatives as this is the most common articulation in the modern dialects. There is a tendency, however, to replace the voiceless bilabial fricatives with labiodentals under the influence of English–Irish bilingualism. This change has been avoided in Connacht and Ulster dialects in the case of the velarized [β] which is now pronounced as [w] in these dialects.

#### *Dental/alveolar consonants*

The prevailing evidence would seem to indicate that the velarized plosives /d, t/ and the fricative /s/ were originally dental consonants. They are blade articulated consonants and while the blade of the tongue touches the alveolar ridge, the front of the tongue tends to rest against the upper teeth. Recent changes in Munster dialects favour alveolar articulation (Ó Cuív 1944, Breatnach 1947, Ó Sé 2000). Among the *l*- and *n*-sounds there is great variation from one dialect to another. Mayo and Ulster dialects tend to maintain the historical four way contrast, two velarized and two palatalized consonants in each case. Southern Connacht and Clare dialects have reduced the contrast to three – two palatalized consonants and one velarized (de Bhaldraithe 1944, Wagner 1958). Munster (apart from Clare) maintains only a two-way contrast – one elarized and one palatalized for each of *l* and *n*.<sup>5</sup> The *r*-phonemes also maintained a four-way contrast originally. This was reduced to three very early in the history of the language as the trilled velarized /r/ and its palatalized counterpart /rʲ/ merged as one, namely, /r/. Since no modern dialect has maintained the four-way contrast, we can only make educated guesses about how the trilled palatalized /rʲ/ was pronounced. However, a three-way contrast has been recorded by several authors for Donegal–Sommerfelt (1922), Wagner (1959) and Ó Baoill (1996) among others. The trilled velarized /r/ is a post alveolar consonant with the tip of the tongue touching the alveolar ridge several times during its production. It is also longer in articulation than the short tapped /r/ in words such as *cár* ‘teeth’ and *orm* ‘on me’. Although short vowels are lengthened before /r/ in Donegal Irish e.g. *carr* /kɑ:r/ ‘a car’, a contrast is maintained with *cár* /kɑ:r/ ‘teeth’. The quality of the stressed long vowel is also coloured by the following consonant, being much further back before /r/.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Alveo-palatal consonants*

The original palatalized plosive /dʲ/ and /tʲ/ and /ʃ/ were articulated with the blade of the tongue against the alveolar ridge and the front resting against the lower teeth, which is still the case in Connacht and Ulster. Munster dialects favour a more alveolar pronunciation (Ó Sé 2000). The contrast between alveolar /n/ and /tʲ/ for example and alveo-palatal /ɲ/ and /ʃ/ has been lost in Munster dialects except for areas of County Clare.<sup>7</sup> In certain areas of North Mayo, South Donegal and Arranmore Island, there is a strong tendency for /dʲ/ and /tʲ/ to become the affricates /dʒ/ and /tʃ/ as reported by Wagner (1959, 1968) and Mac An Fhailigh (1968). All dialects use similar pronunciation in the recent English loanword, e.g. *jab* ‘a job’, *Jimí* ‘James’, *tsip* ‘a chip’. /ʃ/, while similar to English ‘sh’ in *she*, *wish*, *ash* etc., is much more strongly palatalized in Irish and gives a different acoustic impression. Irish *sí* ‘she’, *síor* ‘longlasting’ and English ‘she, sheer’ sound very differently to the ear.

#### *Palatal consonants*

Irish has a range of palatal consonants which contrast with their velar counterparts. The degree of palatalization accompanying these consonants varies slightly from one dialect to another, being more fronted in northern dialects. The IPA symbol for the palatal nasal is /ɲ/, which I have used to denote the alveo-palatal *n*-sound in *tinn* ‘sick’, *cruinn*

'round, accurate' and *cruinnigh* 'collect'. The symbol /ɲ/ has been used to denote the palatalized fronted velar nasal. The voiceless /ç/ has a tendency to be reduced to /h/ in intervocalic and postvocalic environments in almost all dialects. Furthermore, once it has been reduced to /h/, it is subject to deletion in South Connacht dialects. An example of this reduction is the Cois Fharraige realization of *oíche* /i:/ < /i:hə/ < /i:çə/ 'a night'. Its strong fricative pronunciation inter- and postvocally is now confined to North Connacht and West Ulster dialects. In initial position when /ç/ is the result of lenition, its fricative realization is fairly uniform in all dialects. The voiced counterpart /j/ retains its fricative realization in initial consonant clusters e.g. *ghread* /jɹəd/ 'beat (past tense)' but its realization elsewhere has less friction and is often phonetically [j] e.g. *dhíol* [ji:t̪] 'sold', *dhóigh* [ʲo:j] 'burnt'.<sup>8,9</sup>

### *Velar consonants*

The velar plosive consonants have strong secondary velarization and sound quite different from their English counterparts in *go*, *God*, *comb* and *cold*. The velar consonants are not phonetically conditioned as in English and may appear before both front and back vowels. Hence the pronunciation of the initial consonant of *Gael* 'an Irish person' and *cat* 'a cat' in Irish and the realization of the equivalent lexical items in English is very striking.<sup>10</sup> The pronunciation of the fricative /ɣ/ is found only in initial position (where it is grammatically conditioned) and at the beginning of a second or subsequent element of a compound e.g. *ghlac* 'accepted', *ollghairdeas* 'great joy', *drochdhuine* 'an evil person'. The sound /x/ has a variety of pronunciations. It is pronounced with strong friction in initial position in all dialects e.g. *chaith* 'spent', *an chuach* 'the cuckoo'. Outside of Ulster, it maintains its strong friction in all contexts. In Ulster dialects, however, it is only weakly pronounced word finally, being reduced to /h/ and tends to be deleted in many subdialects e.g. *cladach* /'kɫadax̥ > 'kɫadah > 'kɫada/ 'the seashore'. In intervocalic position, it often maintains its strong fricative pronunciation even in Ulster (Ó Dochartaigh 1987). The velar /ŋ/ phoneme does not occur initially in the basic form of words but is lexically or grammatically conditioned e.g. *cluichí na nGael* 'the games of the Irish' and there is very little variation from one dialect to another.

### **Initial consonant changes**

These are generally known as lenition and eclipsis in Irish grammars and in much of the recent linguistic literature. It took scholars and linguists rather a long time to come to an agreement as to how these changes were to be represented in writing in an unambiguous fashion.

### **Lenition**

Lenition occurred historically in word initial position and to single consonants intervocalically. All plosive consonants, including the bilabial nasal *m*, were replaced by their corresponding fricatives in terms of place of articulation. Strongly articulated *ll*, *nn* and *rr* became lax and identical in pronunciation to single *l*, *n* and *r*.<sup>11</sup> The sibilant *s* became *h* and the bilabial fricative *f* was totally lost. These internal changes have played a significant role in altering the appearance of lexical items in the subsequent history of the language.

These changes were not shown in writing in a consistent way until the end of the twelfth century or so. Lenited sounds are now shown by adding *h* after the historical plosive from which they have been derived. In this way we get *bh*, *ch*, *dh*, *gh*, *ph* and *th*

representing the lenited forms of *b*, *c*, *d*, *g*, *p* and *t*. Similarly, *fh*, *mh* and *sh* represent the lenited forms of *f*, *m* and *s* respectively.<sup>12</sup> In intervocalic position, many of these lenited consonants have been weakened further, some have become vocalized and in some cases they have been deleted altogether. This was a long and slow process which has been ongoing from the twelfth century or perhaps earlier in many cases. Some of the processes are still not quite complete in some dialects. A series of orthographical reforms since the 1930s has succeeded in eliminating all consonants that have become silent since the thirteenth century. In this way, modern Irish spelling represents to a large degree the pronunciation current in Gaeltacht areas for some two centuries or more.

While the majority of fricatives occurring in Modern Irish have been created by initial morphophonemic changes, there are a small number of fricatives which are maintained in non-initial position. They are *bh*, *ch* and *mh* in words such as *ábhar* 'material', *cliaabhán* 'a cradle', *saibhir* 'rich', *achar* 'area', *loch* 'a lake', *bocht* 'poor', *oíche* 'night', *amháin* 'one, only', *lámh* 'a hand', *an fómhar* 'the autumn' and *uimhir* 'a number'.<sup>13</sup>

We have referred above to the origins of lenition. As the historical phonetic context in which lenition took place has long been removed, the environments in which it takes place in Modern Irish are varied and complex. In reality, both native speakers and learners must not only master the morphophonemic rules of lenition but must also memorize the non-phonetic environments which trigger these changes. They include lexical items such as prepositions, the singular article *an*, the vocative particle *a*, various numerals, syntactic sequences of noun clusters, preverbal particles and relative clause markers as well as initial changes indicating various tenses and moods. The following selection will give the reader some indication of the complexity of these changes, their creative role in the syntactical and semantic structure of modern Irish, and their part in the formation of grammatical structures.

### *Prepositions*

*ar* 'on, about', *de* 'of, from', *do* 'to, for', *faoi* 'under, about' and *ó* 'from, since' e.g. *ar/do Shíle* 'on/to Sheila', *de shíor* 'continuously', *faoi ghlas* 'under lock and key, locked', *ó mhaidin* 'since (this) morning'.

### *The article*

The article *an* lenites when used with feminine nouns in the nominative singular e.g. *an bhean* 'the woman' and in the genitive singular of masculine nouns e.g. *teach an bháid* 'the boathouse'.<sup>14</sup>

### *The vocative particle*

The particle *a* is used in addressing people in speech or writing and causes lenition e.g. *A Shéamais, a chara* 'Dear James'.

### *Numerals*

The numeral 1–6 preceding the singular form of the noun: *trí chat* 'three cats', *sé mhí* 'six months'.<sup>15</sup>

### *Nominal phrases*

(a) When two or more nouns or noun phrases follow consecutively, the first consonant of the second element is lenited. This is usually the case (a) when the second noun phrase qualifies the first and the first noun is feminine: *tine mhóna* 'a turf/peat fire', (b) when the second noun is definite: *carr Mháire* 'Mary's car', *seoladh Fhoras na Gaeilge* 'Foras

na Gaeilge’s address’ and in longer sequences *doras charr Mháire Dhónaill* ‘Máire Dhónaill’s car door (lit. The door of the car of Máire daughter of Dónall)’.

(b) Adjectives are lenited after feminine nouns and in the genitive singular and nominative plural of masculine nouns e.g. *bean bhreá* ‘a fine woman’, *teach an fhir mhóir* ‘the big man’s house’ and *na cait bhána* ‘the white cats’.

(c) The second element in compound constructions is lenited e.g. *drochmhaidin* ‘a bad morning’, *an-mhaith* ‘very good’ *An Príomh-Bhreitheamh* ‘The Chief Judge’.

*Possessives*

The singular possessives *mo* ‘my’, *do* ‘your’ and *a* ‘his’ lenite the initial of the following noun: *mo/do/a bhean* ‘my/your/his wife’.

*Verbal morphology*

(a) The negative particles *ní*, *níor* and *char*, the conjunction *má*, the interrogative *ar* all lenite a following verb e.g. *ní chuirim* ‘I don’t put’, *níor/char bhuail sé* ‘he didn’t hit’, *má thugaim* ‘if I give’.

(b) The past and conditional forms of the copula cause lenition on a following noun or adjective e.g. *ba mhaith leo* ‘they would like’.

(c) The initial consonants of all verbs denoting past and imperfect tenses and the conditional mood are lenited e.g. *bhí sí* ‘she was’, *bhínn ann* ‘I used to be there’, *cheannóinn iad* ‘I would buy them’.

(d) Lenition also follows the direct relative clause particle *a* e.g. *an bhean a phós* ‘the woman who got married’.

In Table 6.3 we give examples and the pronunciation of all lenited consonants.

Table 6.3 Lenited consonants

Basic consonant	Lenited form	Examples
b /b/, /bʲ/	bh /β/, /βʲ/	<i>bhog</i> / βog/ ‘moved’, <i>bhí</i> /βʲi:/ ‘was’
c /k/, /c/	ch /x/, /ç/	<i>mo chat</i> /mə xat/ ‘my cat’, <i>an cheist</i> /ən çesʲtʲ/ ‘the question’
d /d/, /dʲ/	dh /ɣ/, /ɣʲ/	<i>mo dhán</i> /mə ɣa:n/ ‘my poem’, <i>dhíol</i> /j̥i:tʲ/ ‘sold’
f /f/, /fʲ/	fh (deletion)	<i>an-fhuar</i> /an uər/ ‘very cold’, <i>an fheoil</i> /ən o:ʲ/ ‘the meat’
g /g/, /ɟ/	gh /ɣ/, /ɣʲ/	<i>ghoid</i> /ɣiðʲ/ ‘stole’, <i>mo ghé</i> /mə ɟe:/ ‘my goose’
l /l/, /lʲ/	l /ʎ/, /ʎʲ/	<i>mo lámh</i> /mə ʎa:v/ ‘my hand’, <i>lig</i> /ʎiɟʲ/ ‘allowed, let’
m /m/, /mʲ/	mh /β/, /βʲ/	<i>an-mhór</i> /an βo:x/ ‘very big’, <i>mo mhéar</i> /mə βe:ɾ/ ‘my finger’
n /n/, /nʲ/	n /n/, /nʲ/	<i>A Nóra</i> /ə no:rə/ ‘Norah’, <i>nigh siad</i> /nʲi siəd/ ‘they washed’
p /p/, /pʲ/	ph /pʰ/, /pʰʲ/	<i>A Phádraig</i> /a pʰa:drəɟʲ/, ‘Patrick’, <i>an phian</i> /ən pʰiən/ ‘the pain’
r /r/, /rʲ/	r /r/, /rʲ/	<i>a Ruairí</i> /ə ruərʲi/ ‘Ruairí’, <i>a rí</i> /ə rʲi:/ ~ /ə :ri:/ ‘king’
s /s/, /sʲ/	sh /h/, /çʲ <sup>2</sup> /	<i>mo shúil</i> /mə hu:ʲ/ ‘my eye’, <i>A Shéamais</i> /ə he:məsʲ/ ‘Séamas’, <i>shíúil</i> /çʲu:ʲ/ ‘walked’
t /t/, /tʲ/	th /h/, /çʲ <sup>3</sup> /	<i>thóg</i> /ho:g/ ‘lifted’, <i>thiar</i> /hiər/ ‘in the west, behind’, <i>cúig thiúb</i> /ku:ɟ çu:b/ ‘five tubes’

## Notes

- 1 These changes apply only to Donegal Irish among speakers of a certain age (50+). The change to palatalized [ɲ] is rare and occurs in very few words. A velarized *r* sound seems to be the rule word initially.
- 2 The general rule is that 'sh' is pronounced as /h/. However, historically before back vowels *ó* and *ú* and in the lenited form of the name *Seán*, palatalized 'sh' is realised as /ç/. Other proper names whose lenited first consonant is pronounced as /ç/ include *Seonaf* 'John(ny)', *Seoirse* 'George' and *Siobhán/Siuán* 'Joan'. In speech, therefore, one cannot distinguish between palatalized lenited 'ch' and the above phonetic realization of 'sh'.
- 3 The normal lenited form of 't', whether palatalized or velarized, is /h/. However, as in the case of 'sh' above, 'th' before /u/ or /u:/ is often realized as /ç/ in words such as *tiúb* 'a tube', *tiubh* 'thick, obtuse', *tiús* 'thickness', etc.

*Other lenition changes*

There are several other changes which need to be mentioned here as they occurred historically in similar environments to lenition.

The most common of these is the replacement of initial *s* by *t* in pronunciation in a lenited environment when the article *an* precedes feminine nouns e.g. *an tsióg* /ən ʃi:ɔ:g/ 'the fairy' (< *sióg* 'a fairy'), *an tsúil* /ən tu:l/ 'the eye' (< *súil* 'an eye') and *an tseanbhean* /ən ʃanʲan/ <sup>16</sup> 'the old woman' (< *seanbhean* 'an old woman'), *ar an tsráid* 'on the street' (< *sráid* 'a street'). The original *s* is maintained and the *t* is placed in front of it. This is similar to the way in which eclipsis is marked in Irish spelling.

This same change occurs in the genitive singular of masculine nouns e.g. *hata an tsagairt* 'the priest's hat' (< *sagart* 'a priest').

In the nominative and accusative singular of masculine nouns a similar *t*-consonant is used before nouns beginning with a vowel e.g. *an t-iasc* 'the fish', an *t-airgead* 'the money'. The letter *h* /h/ is prefixed to words beginning with a vowel in the following environments: (i) in the plural of nouns e.g. *na huaisle* 'the nobility' (< *uaisle* 'nobility'), (ii) in the genitive singular of feminine nouns e.g. *poll na heochrach* 'the key hole' (< *eochair* 'key'), (iii) after the possessive 3rd person singular feminine particle *a* e.g. *a hainm* 'her name', (iv) after the prepositions *le* 'with' and *go* 'to' e.g. *go hÉirinn* 'to Ireland', *le hÁine* 'with Áine', <sup>17</sup> (v) after the ordinal numbers except *céad* 'first' e.g. *an tríú háit* 'the third place'.

**Eclipsis**

Eclipsis, often also called nasalization, is the second type of initial consonant change. Historically, the initial plosive sounds and *f* were altered due to the influence of a preceding word ending in a nasal consonant. The voiced plosives *b*, *d* and *g* became their corresponding nasal equivalents *m*, *n* and *ng*. When words began with a vowel, the influencing nasal was retained as *n* and the voiceless plosives *c*, *p*, *t* and the fricative *f* became their corresponding voiced counterparts *b*, *d*, *g* and *v*.

In the case of eclipsis, the resulting changes are now shown by writing the new derived sound in front of the basic underlying consonant. This is why the name *urú* (eclipsis) is used to denote this change – the new consonant sound is written as if it were eclipsing the original sound<sup>18</sup> and replacing it in speech. Thus *mb*, *nd* and *ng* denotes the morpho-phonemic change and the writing indicates that the original consonant is to be ignored and replaced by the eclipsing consonant, namely *m* and *n*. In the case of *g*, it is to be replaced by the velar sound /ŋ/ indicated by the spelling *ng*.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, the consonants *c*, *p*, *t* and *f* become *gc*, *bp*, *dt* and *bhf* under the same conditions and the newly derived sounds are /g/, *b*, *d* and *v*/. The consonant *n*- is written before vowels.

The origin of eclipsed consonants has already been discussed. As with lenition, the original phonetic environment in which eclipsis took place has been removed and the environments in which it takes place have become varied and complex. Both native speakers and learners must not only master the morphophonemic rules of eclipsis but must also memorize the non-phonetic environments which trigger these changes. In the modern language the historical changes are now conditioned by preverbal particles, plural possessives, the complementizers *go* and *nach*, the conjunctions *dá* ‘if’ and *mura* ‘if not, unless’, the interrogative particle *an?*, the plural of the article *na* ‘the’ in the genitive plural, the preposition *i* ‘in’ and following simple prepositions plus the singular article *an*.

In Table 6.4 we give examples and the pronunciation of all eclipsed consonants as well as the eclipsing of vowels.

Table 6.4 Eclipsed consonants and vowels

Basic consonant	Eclipsed form	Examples
b /b/, /bʲ/	mb /m/, /mʲ/	<i>ár mbád</i> /aːr maːd/ ‘our boat’, <i>i mbia</i> /ə mʲiə/ ‘in food’
c /k/, /c/	gc /g/, /ɟ/	<i>a gcótaí</i> /ə ɡoːti/ ‘their coats’, <i>i gcéin</i> /ə ɟeːn/ ‘abroad, far away’
d /d/, /dʲ/	nd /n/, /nʲ/	<i>i ndán</i> /ə nːaːn/ ‘in a poem’, <i>go ndéantar</i> /ɡə ɲeːntər/ ~ /ɡə nʲeːntər/¹ ‘may it be done’
f /f/, /fʲ/	bhf /β/, /βʲ/	<i>ní bhfuair</i> /nʲiː βuə/ ‘didn’t get’, <i>i bhfeabhas</i> /ə βʲaus/ ‘improved, improving’
g /g/, /ɟ/	ng /ŋ/, /ŋʲ/	<i>i ngar</i> /ə ŋaːr/ ‘nearby’, <i>seacht ngé</i> /sʲaxt ŋ ɟeː/ ‘seven geese’
p /p/, /pʲ/	bp /b/, /bʲ/	<i>a bpáistí</i> /ə baːsʲtiː/ ‘their children’, <i>i bpian</i> /ə bʲiən/ ‘in pain’
t /t/, /tʲ/	dt /d/, /dʲ/	<i>i dtosach</i> /ə dːosəx/ ‘at the beginning’, <i>i dteach</i> /ə dʲax/ ‘in a house’
Basic vowels	Eclipsed form	Examples
i/í, e/é, iə	in, n- /ɲ/~/nʲ/²	<i>in Éirinn</i> /ə nʲeːrʲəp/ ‘in Ireland’, <i>go n-éaga mé</i> /ɡə ɲeːɡə mʲeː/ ~ /ɡə nʲeːɡə mʲeː/ ‘until I die’, <i>in iasc</i> /ə nʲiəsk/~/ə ɲiəsk/ ‘in fish’
a/á, o/ó, u/ú, ua	in n- /n̪/, /n̪ʲ/	<i>in Albain</i> /ə naʲəbənʲ/~/ə n̪əbənʲ/, <i>go n-óla tú</i> /ɡə noːʲə tuː~/~/ /ɡə n̪oː ʲə tuː/ ‘until you drink’, <i>in ualach</i> /ə nuəʲəx/~/ə n̪uəʲəx/ ‘in a load’

Notes

- 1 Those dialects that differentiate three or four nasal consonants tend to have the dental and palato-alveolar sounds word initially as the eclipsed form of /d/ and /dʲ/, respectively. Munster dialects use only /nʲ/ as they generally differentiate only between one velarized and one palatalized ‘n’ sound.
- 2 The preposition *i* + the eclipsing *n* are written as one word in the standard language. The *in* tends to be unstressed and the *n* is conjoined to the next word in the spoken language. The initial vowel of the following word determines the secondary quality of *n*, that is whether it is realized as a palatalized or a velarized consonant.

## THE VOCALIC SYSTEM

### Long vowels

All dialects of Irish contrast long and short vowels. Long vowels are normally marked in writing by an acute accent over the lengthened vowel – hence we get *í* /i:/, *é* /e:/, *á* /a:/~ /a:/,<sup>20</sup> *ó* /o:/ and *ú* /u:/. Several digraphs are also used to indicate a long vowel, namely, *ae* /e:/ and *eo* /o:/.<sup>21</sup> The spelling *ao* may also indicate a long /e:/ in Munster, /i:/ in Connacht and parts of Donegal and /u:/ in most of Ulster.<sup>22</sup> Trigraphs of the type *aoi* /i:/, *aei* /e:/ and *eoi* /o:/ are pronounced as long vowels. The *i* preceding the final consonant indicates that that consonant is palatalized e.g. *caoin* ‘cry’, *Gaeil* ‘Irish people, Gaels’ and *feoil* ‘meat’. The *aoi* spelling in the vast majority of cases indicates an /i:/ pronunciation. There are, however, exceptions where this pronunciation indicates the original vowel spelled *ao* e.g. *tús an tsaol* /tʰʉs ə te:l/ in Munster Irish. This /e:/ pronunciation is very common in verse and song from all dialects. In Ulster ‘ao’ in general indicates an unrounded vowel /u:/ before a velarized consonant in words such as *caora* ‘a sheep’, *daor* ‘expensive’ and *maol* ‘bald’. This pronunciation is maintained before palatalized consonants whether derived e.g. *níos daoire* ‘more expensive’ < *daor* ‘expensive’, *treo na gaoithe* ‘direction of the wind’ < *gaoth* ‘wind’ or in original words e.g. *saoire* ‘holiday’, *aois* ‘age’. The spelling is always *aoi* and the *i* merely indicates that the following consonant(s) is/are palatalized as indicated by the examples given above. This shows how the palatalized/velarized contrast among consonants is used to make important semantic and grammatical distinctions e.g. singular and plural of nouns *Gael/Gaeil* ‘Irish person/Irish people’, comparative forms of the adjective *saor/níos saoire* ‘cheap/cheaper’ and between various forms of verbs e.g. *siúil* ‘walk (imp.)’, *ag siúl* ‘walking’.<sup>23</sup>

There is overall agreement among linguists about the number of long vowel phonemes which are distinguished in all dialects. There are 5/6 long vowels, depending on whether one argues for one or two low *á* vowels. The long *á* vowel can be realized as a lower fronted /a:/ or a back unrounded /ɑ:/.<sup>24</sup> The following represent extra contrasts found in certain varieties of Ulster Irish. The most important of these is the contrast between an open and closed ‘o’ type /ɔ:/ and /o:/, respectively. The following pairs illustrate this important contrast:

*tóg* /tɔ:g/ ‘lift’, *óg* /ɔ:g/ ‘young’,  
*tabhair* /tɔ:ɾ/ ‘give’, *tóir* /tɔ:ɾ/ ‘pursuit, chase’.

This historical contrast has been augmented by the diachronic change which converts the intervocalic sequence /aβə/, to /o:/ in words such as *cabhair* (also spelled *cobhair* in the earlier language) ‘help, assistance’, *leabhar* ‘a book’ and *domhain* ‘deep’. In the latter case the intervocalic historical /β/ may have been a nasalized /β̃/. Many other words having intervocalic fricatives such as *dh* and *gh* now also have a /o:/ sound in Ulster Irish e.g. *bodhar* ‘deaf’, *foghlaim* ‘learning, education’. Similarly, a contrast exists in many Ulster dialects between a rounded high back /u:/ and a high unrounded /u:/ in pairs of the following type:

*cúl* /ku:l/ ‘back’, *caol* /ku:l/ ‘thin’  
*umhail* /u:l/ ‘attention’, *aoil* /u:l/ ‘of lime (genitive case)’.<sup>25</sup>



## Short vowels

There is much disagreement about the ‘real’ number of short vowel contrasts in Modern Irish. Some commentators, following the generative grammar line, have reduced the contrast to three (Ó Siadhail and Wigger 1975, Ó Siadhail 1989). Others follow a more conservative line and offer a five-short-vowel system, corresponding to the five long vowels mentioned above /i, e, a, o and u/, plus the neutral vowel /ə/ (Ó Sé 2000).<sup>26</sup> This may not fit the Ulster Irish vowel system as in many subdialects of this region the vowel inventory has been expanded (Ó Baoill 1997).

As with the long vowels, there is a contrast between a closed /o/ and an open /ɔ/ type vowel, as shown by the following minimal or near minimal pairs:

*lofa* /ʌohə/ ‘rotten’, *cothú* /kɔhu/ ‘nourishment’  
*bothaigh* /bohɪ/ ‘cowsheds’, *rothaí* /rɔhɪ/ ‘wheels’

In a similar fashion unrounded /u/ may contrast with back /ʊ/ as in *cioth* /cuɪh/ ‘a shower’ and *tiubh* /tʰuɪm/ ‘dense, thick’.

Furthermore, some of the subdialects of Donegal have developed a contrast between a tense and lax high front vowel as in the following pairs:

*dinnéar* /dʲɪnar/ ‘a dinner’, *tinn* /tʲɪn/ ‘sick’  
*jimí* /dʒimʲi/ ‘James’, *d’imigh* /dʲimʲi/ ‘departed, left’

## Diphthongs

All dialects share a common core of four diphthongs /iə/, /uə/, /ai/ and /au/.<sup>27</sup> The first two are generally expressed in writing by ‘*ia(i)*’ and ‘*ua(i)*’ in such words as *Dia* ‘God’, *siar* ‘westward’, *rua* ‘redhaired’ and *suas* ‘upwards’. The spellings *iai* and *uai* generally express morphological changes where the postvocalic consonant is palatalized, but it may also be a non-derived form. Similarly, a palatalized consonant following *iai* or *uai* in its basic form may become velarized, in which case the spelling reverts to ‘*ia*’ or ‘*ua*’. The following examples illustrate both processes:

*cuan* /kuən/ ‘a harbour’ >> *béal an chuain* /bʲeːɫ ə xuənʲ/ ‘the mouth of the harbour’  
*Brian* /bʲɾʲiən/ ‘Brian’ >> *Ó Briain* /oː bʲɾʲiənʲ/ ‘O’Brien’  
*bliain* /bʲlʲiənʲ/ ‘a year’ >> *lár na bliana* /ʔaːr nə bʲlʲiənʲ/ ‘the middle of the year’  
*ríal* /rʲiəlʲ/ ‘a rule’ >> *buail* /buəlʲ/ ‘beat!’

The /ai/ and /au/ phonemes have for the most part been derived from a combination of a basic /a/ vowel and the vocalization of historical voiced fricatives immediately following this basic vowel.<sup>28</sup> Intervocalic fricatives were often deleted, resulting in the lengthening or diphthongization of a preceding vowel. The following fricatives were subject to these two processes at different historical periods – velarized and palatalized *dh* /ð/ and /ðʲ/, which later merged with velarized and palatalized *gh*, /ɣ/ and /ɣʲ/ respectively, towards the end of the Middle Irish period (c. 1200). This merger contributed to the development of the /ai/ phoneme in words such as *ladhar* ‘a toe, a fork’, *feidhm* ‘a need’, *aghaidh* ‘a face’ and *leigheas* ‘a cure’. The available evidence would seem to indicate that the vocalization took place after the two fricatives had merged.<sup>29</sup> The vocalization of the bilabial

fricatives, velarized and palatalized *bh* /β/ and /βʲ/ and *mh* /β̃/ and /β̃ʲ/, respectively, resulted in the creation of the /au/ phonemes.<sup>30</sup>

Table 6.5 gives a list of the vocalic phonemes which form the common core shared by all dialects of Irish.

Table 6.5 Vowels of Irish

Phonemic symbol	Spelling	Meaning
/iːr/	<i>íor</i>	a satire
/eːr/	<i>aer</i>	air
/aːr/~/ɑːr/	<i>ár</i>	destruction
/oːr/	<i>ór</i>	gold
/uː r/	<i>úr</i>	new, fresh
/φuər/	<i>fuair</i>	cold
/iər/	<i>iar</i>	ex-
/φaurə/	<i>fabhra</i>	eyelash
/lairə/	<i>ladhra</i>	toes
/tʲiʲ/	<i>tít</i>	fall!
/tʲe/	<i>te</i>	hot
/tʲax/	<i>teach</i>	a house
/dʲox/	<i>deoch</i>	a drink
/tʲuβ/	<i>tiubh</i>	dense, thick
/ə/	<i>a</i>	vocative particle

## Epenthetic vowels

As with other languages, certain consonant clusters are not tolerated in Modern Irish and need to be broken up. This is done by inserting an epenthetic vowel between the two consonants involved. Except for the clusters containing *ch*, the two consonants are generally voiced. The vowel inserted is usually [ə] between clusters of velarized consonants and [ɪ] between palatalized clusters.<sup>31</sup> It should be noted that the epenthetic vowel is inserted only after stressed short vowels in a preceding syllable. When the preceding syllable has a long vowel or diphthong, an epenthetic vowel is not inserted.<sup>32</sup> Table 6.6 will give an idea of the clusters common to all dialects that allow an epenthetic vowel.

Table 6.6 Clusters allowing an epenthetic vowel

Consonant cluster <sup>1</sup>	Examples
<i>lb, lbh, lch, lg, lm, lmh, lp</i> and <i>lf</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>Albain</i> 'Scotland', <i>seilbh</i> 'possession', <i>Ó Gallchóir</i> 'Gallagher', <i>bolg</i> 'the belly', <i>salm</i> 'psalm', <i>colpa</i> 'the calf of the leg'
<i>nb, nbh, nch, nm, nmh</i>	<i>leanbh</i> 'a baby/child', <i>seanchaí</i> 'a storyteller', <i>ainm</i> 'a name', <i>ainmhí</i> 'an animal'
<i>rb, rbh, rch, rf, rg, rm, rp</i>	<i>gearb</i> 'a scab', <i>garbh</i> 'rough', <i>dorcha</i> 'dark', <i>dearfa</i> < <i>dearbhithe</i> 'definitely', <i>airgead</i> 'money', <i>gorm</i> 'blue'

## Notes

- 1 In southern Irish dialects we find an epenthetic vowel in such words as *seachrán* 'the act of wandering', *seomra* 'a room', *carn* 'a cairn' and after *an-* 'very' in such words as *an-mhaith* 'very good', *an-chaithe*

'very worn'. They are often written *seacharán*, *seomara*, *caran*, *ana-mhaith* and *ana-chaite* in non-standard spelling. Such pronunciation is often indicated in seventeenth-century Munster poetry and prose writings. Words such as *carn* 'a cairn' and *dorn* 'a fist' tend to have a long vowel or diphthong in other dialects.

- 2 In clusters such as *lp*, *lf*, *rp* and *rf* one would not expect an epenthetic vowel as the second consonant is voiceless. However, when the *p* and *f* in such clusters are derived from a historical sequence of *bth* /bh/, *bhth* or *mhth* /βh/, we can claim that the epenthetic vowel was introduced before the deletion of /h/. This /h/ had caused the devoicing of *b* and *bh* to *p* and *f*, respectively. *Th*, which was historically a voiceless fricative /θ/, changed to /h/ around the end of the twelfth century. In words such as *corp* 'a body', *alp* 'a lump' and *oirfideach* 'a musician' where the voiceless consonants *p* and *f* are original, there is no epenthetic vowel. In words such as *glórmhar* 'glorious' and *pianmhar* 'painful', no epenthetic vowel is inserted between *r/n* and *mh* because the preceding stressed vowel is long or a diphthong (which is the equivalent of a long vowel.)

## WORD STRESS

The general tendency in Modern Irish dialects as a whole is to stress the first syllable of a word. There is a small class of lexical items (no more than twenty in number) which show non-initial stress in all dialects e.g. *amháin* 'one, once', *arís* 'again', *amárach* 'tomorrow', *imniu* 'today'. However, various dialects show different treatments of non-initial long vowels. Ulster Irish tends to shorten all long vowels in non-initial syllables e.g. *bradán* > *bradan* /'bradan/ 'a salmon', *galún* > *galun* /'gaʎun/ 'a gallon'. Connacht Irish maintains long vowels in second and subsequent syllables e.g. *galún* /'gaʎu:n/ 'a gallon', *seoltóir* /'sʊ:ʔto:ɾʲ/ 'a sailor'. Munster Irish on the other hand often stresses long vowels in non-initial syllables. If a word contains a long vowel in its second syllable, that syllable is stressed e.g. *scadán* /skə'da:m/ 'a herring', *seoltóir* /'sʊ:ʔto:ɾʲ/ 'a sailor'. A long vowel in a third syllable is stressed if all preceding vowels are short e.g. *peileadóir* /pʲeʎə'do:ɾʲ/ 'a footballer'. Similarly, the *-ach-* sequence in a second syllable attracts stress if the preceding syllable is short e.g. *gealach* /jə'tax/ 'a moon', *mallacht* /mə'tax/ 'a curse' but not in *eolach* /'o:ʔax/ 'knowledgeable'. O'Rahilly (1932: 86–93) claims that this change occurred due to the influence of Norman French from the twelfth century onwards. However, in the same book he admits that French influence is not sufficient to explain all such stress shifts (1932: 92–3, 109–12). Recent attempts to account for this stress shift in Munster Irish tend to trace the origin of the shift to tensions within the language system itself and the rise of long vowels in second syllables, which upset the equilibrium that existed previously (Blankenhorn 1981, Ó Dochartaigh 1987 and Ó Sé 1989).

## MORPHOLOGY

Modern Irish has a large number of morphological changes, including initial consonant mutations, associated with the following grammatical categories: nouns, adjectives, verbs, prepositions, pronouns, articles, demonstratives and following numerals. The creation of compound words is also a productive process and involves initial consonant mutations on the second or subsequent subpart of the compound. The general rule is that the gender of compound words is dictated by the gender of their final element, e.g. *seanbhad* < *sean* + *bád* 'an old boat' has masculine gender – *bád* 'a boat' being a masculine noun; similarly, *leathbhróg* 'one shoe (of a pair)' is feminine – *bróg* 'a shoe' being a feminine noun. Some compounds, however, do not follow this rule and the gender of such compounds is

different from the gender of the final component. In such cases, the compound word has a different genitive singular and nominative plural form. The second component may also show a spelling difference in the modern standard language, reflecting the new declensional change, e.g. *loch* 'a lake', a feminine noun, has a genitive singular *locha* ~ *loiche* and the plural forms *locha* ~ *lochanna*. This word is also the second element of *fuarlach* 'flooding from heavy rainfall' < *fuar* 'cold' + *loch* 'a lake'. The genitive singular and nominative plural of *fuarlach* is *fuarlaigh*. The flectional system of Old and Middle Irish was largely retained almost intact in the standard language of Early Modern Irish c. 1200–1650 (Ó Cuív 1973). Various descriptions of the modern Irish dialects of the twentieth century (de Bhaldraithe 1953, Wagner 1959, Lucas 1979, Ó Sé 1995, 2000, Ó Baoill 1996, Ó Murchú 1998 and Ó Buachalla 2003) indicate that the inflectional endings of nouns have to a large extent been abandoned except for initial consonant mutations. However, it appears that the modern dialects have preserved many of the inflectional endings in fossilized idiomatic expressions, proverbs etc., for us to be able to recover most of the extant endings previously in use.

### Noun morphology

The tendency shown by modern Irish usage is to have clear plural endings, to use the initial consonant mutations to mark the following cases: the singular and plural of the vocative and genitive and the dative singular. In the standard written language and in conservative speech, many of the previous case endings are maintained.

While two types of plural endings are extant in Irish, termed weak and strong endings, the tendency is overwhelmingly in favour of the strong endings. By way of explanation, Irish grammars have divided nouns into five declensional categories. The defining criterion for admission to each category is the form of the genitive singular ending, as follows:

- 1st declension >> genitive singular ends in a palatalized consonant e.g. *capall* > *capaill*, 'a horse', *crann* > *crainn* 'a tree', *éadach* > *éadaigh* 'clothes'
- 2nd declension >> genitive singular ends in a palatalized consonant + 'e' e.g. *fuinneog* > *fuinneoige* 'a window', *amharclann* > *amharclainne* 'a theatre'.
- 3rd declension >> genitive singular ends in a velarized consonant + 'a' e.g. *dlíodóir* > *dlíodóra* 'a lawyer', *iasacht* > *iasachta* 'a loan'.
- 4th declension >> genitive singular is identical to the nominative singular form e.g. *cailín* > *cailín* 'a girl', *ainmhí* > *ainmhí* 'an animal'.
- 5th declension >> genitive singular ends in velarized *-ch*, *-d*, *-(n)n* and *-r* e.g. *cathair* > *cathrach* 'a city', *cara* > *carad* 'a friend', *abhainn* > *abhann* 'a river', *athair* > *athar* 'father'.

The 1st declension has in the majority of cases plural endings marked by palatalizing the final consonant, while many of the nouns in the 2nd declension create plurals by adding *-a* to the singular.<sup>33</sup> Those two types of plural formation have been termed 'weak plurals' in Irish grammars. All other plural endings have been categorized as strong plurals. They include the following *-(e)acha*, *-(e)anna*, *-(a)í*, *-t(h)a* and *-t(h)e*.<sup>34</sup> All nouns placed in the 3rd, 4th and 5th declensions take strong plural endings.<sup>35</sup> There are a small number of irregular nouns (about ten in number) which have not been placed in any declension e.g. *dia* > gen. sg. *dé* > pl. *déithe* 'God', *lá* > gen. sg. *lae* > pl. *laethanta* 'day', *teach* > gen. sg. *tí* > pl. *tithe* 'a house' (*Gramadach na Gaeilge agus Litriú na Gaeilge – An Caighdeán Oifigiúil* 1958/1975: 23–4).

### Adjectival morphology

The adjective normally follows the noun it qualifies.<sup>36</sup> When used attributively, it agrees with the preceding noun in gender, number and case. There is great variation across dialects, and agreement with the literary standard language is not always one to one.<sup>37</sup> The following examples outline the various agreements and changes in the modern dialects.

Nom. sg.	Gen. sg.	Nom. pl.	Gen. pl.
<i>an fear mór</i>	<i>an fhir mhóir</i>	<i>na fir mhóra</i>	<i>na bhfear mór</i> ‘the big man’
<i>an chloch bheag</i>	<i>na cloiche bige</i>	<i>na clocha beaga</i>	<i>na gcloch beag</i> ‘the little stone’

We can see from the second example that the article *an* exercises its influence on the following feminine noun by the process of initial mutation whereby *cloth* ‘a stone’ is changed to *chloch*. The noun in turn causes the following adjective to be mutated from *beag* ‘small’ to *bheag*. No such changes apply to the masculine *fear*. The other inflected forms also agree in case and number. The eclipsis in the genitive plural applies to the initial consonant of all nouns, and lenition is always the rule after nouns ending in a palatalized consonant as in *na fir mhóra*.

The declension of adjective plus noun combinations is quite a regular exercise in classrooms up to and including University level. However, work on different corpora produced by native speakers has shown that the attributive use of adjectives is avoided in common everyday speech (Ó hUallacháin 1966). This is achieved by using the predicative form of the adjectives in different constructions. This has been remarked on by different authors in the context of trying to find natural settings and examples where adjectives are used attributively (Wagner 1959: §473, de Bhaldraithe 1953: 117–24, Ó Sé 2000: 141–7).

The three degrees of comparison of the adjectives are constructed as follows in the modern language.

#### Equative

The most common and productive way of creating equative forms in present day Irish is to use the following formula – *chomh* + adjective + *le* + noun, e.g. *chomh milis le mil* ‘as sweet as honey’. In such constructions *chomh* is unstressed. In the examples given in (i) below, *comh* and the following noun/adjective have equal stress.

Use of the following devices is also possible to convey similar meanings:

- (i) *Bí* + *comh* + noun/adjective, e.g. *Tá siad comhaois* ‘They are the same age’, *Bhí siad comhard comhíseal* ‘They were of equal height and width’.
- (ii) Copula + *comh* + noun, e.g. *Ba comhaoisigh iad* ‘They were the same age’.
- (iii) *Bí* + prefix *in-* + genitive of a following noun + *le*, e.g. *Tá sí incheoil leat* ‘She is as fine a musician as you are’.

#### Comparative and superlative

There is no difference in form between the comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives in Modern Irish, due to the falling together of the two Old Irish endings *-(i)u* and *-em* and the subsequent reduction of *-(i)u* to the neutral vowel /ə/. Irish now expresses the comparative degree by using either of the following constructions, one using the verb of existence, the other the copula:

- (i) *Tá sé níos báine ná bainne*, or  
 (ii) *Is báine é ná bainne*.  
 'It is whiter than milk.'<sup>38</sup>

The superlative degree can only be expressed using a copular construction as in the following:

- (iii) *Sin an rud is fearr* 'That is the best thing'

It should be pointed out here that adjectives denoting degrees of comparison are not inflected and this has been the case during all periods of the language. They are used only predicatively and a sentence such as (iii) above could be given the literal translation 'That is the thing that is best'.

Although adjectives used predicatively were inflected and agreed fully with their corresponding nouns in earlier periods of the language, diachronic change has brought about different replacements. First of all, the copula has been replaced by the substantive verb and verb–subject agreement has been dropped. Similarly, the predicative adjective has dropped all agreement features with the subject. We are now left with sentences of the following type in the modern language where the subject *na páistí* 'the children' is in the plural and the verb *tá* and the adjective *óg* in the singular:

- (iv) *Tá na páistí óg* 'The children are young'

## NUMERALS

In defining the cardinal numerals in Irish, one must distinguish between absolute use where no noun follows the numeral and the use of numerals with accompanying nouns. In the former case, the forms of the numerals are given below. They are normally preceded by the particle *a* which prefixes *h* to vowels,<sup>39</sup> but otherwise there are no changes.

1 <i>aon</i>	2 <i>dó</i>	3 <i>trí</i>	4 <i>ceathair</i>	5 <i>cúig</i>
6 <i>sé</i>	7 <i>seacht</i>	8 <i>ocht</i>	9 <i>naoi</i>	10 <i>deich</i>

They are also used in mathematical calculations of addition, subtraction, division and multiplication: e.g. *a dó is a trí sin a cúig* 'two and three is five', *a dó faoina cúig sin a deich* 'two by five is ten', *a naoi lúide a sé sin a trí* 'nine minus six is three'. When counting something concrete the forms for two and four change to *dhá* and *ceithre*. Numerals always precede the nouns they qualify. The standard language dictates that the noun following numerals be in the singular but all dialects use both singular and plural forms after numerals. When the singular form of a noun is used, it is lenited after 3–6 and eclipsis is the rule after 7–10. However, when the plural forms are used they are left unchanged after 3–6 and eclipsed after 7–10. The following are illustrative examples:

<i>trí chat</i> 'three cats', <i>seacht mbó</i> 'seven cows'	(singular only)
<i>cúig chathaoir/cathaoireacha</i> 'five chairs'	(singular or plural)
<i>naoi gcoinneal/gcoinnle</i> 'nine candles'	(singular or plural)

Adjectives accompanying nouns preceded by numerals are in the plural form. If the noun is in the singular the adjective is lenited. Plural nouns leave the adjective unlenited. The following illustrate the different usages:

*trí chat dhubha* ‘three black cats’, *seacht mbó bhána* ‘seven white cows’  
*cúig clocha beaga deasa* ‘five beautiful little stones’, *deich mbliana móra fada* ‘ten extremely long years’

The numbers ranging from 11–19 are composed of a combination of the cardinal numbers given above and the word *déag*. While the cardinal number precedes the noun, *déag* is placed after the noun. *Déag* also has a lenited form *dhéag* which follows singular nouns ending in a vowel.<sup>40</sup> The rules for lenition and eclipsis are the same as for cardinal numbers. The following illustrate the various usages.

*trí chapall déag* ‘thirteen horses’, *seacht mbosca dhéag* ‘seventeen boxes’

However, when a plural form of a noun is used dialectically, whether it be a diachronic or synchronic form, there is no lenition after a noun whose plural form ends in a vowel, e.g. *ceithre lámha déag* ‘fourteen hands’, *seacht gcathaoireacha déag* ‘seventeen chairs’. This is also the case in the standard language when nouns having a historical plural form are used with numerals, e.g. *ceithre bliana déag* ‘fourteen years’, *naoi n-uaire déag* ‘nineteen times’.

Nouns following numerals ending in ‘zero’ are followed by what appears to be the nominative singular form<sup>41</sup> e.g. *fiche duine* ‘twenty people’, *daichead mála* ‘forty bags’, *céad vóta* ‘one hundred votes’, *míle saighdiúir* ‘one thousand soldiers’.

Despite the promotion of the decimal system through the use of the literary language in education, the spoken language still prefers the use of the old vigesimal system based on units of twenty. This is particularly true of numbers between 21 and 99, e.g. *duine is fiche* ‘twenty-one people’, *cúig bliana is trí fichid* ‘sixty-five years’. The influence of English is also present through the use of the loanwords *scór* ‘twenty, score’ and *péire* ‘two of something’ e.g. *ocht mbliana is ceithre scór* ‘eighty-eight years (old)’, *péire capall* ‘a pair of horses’. There is a strong tendency in the traditional dialects to use English in expressing dates and in denoting sums of money.

## Personal numbers

Since the Old Irish period, Irish has had a specific system of personal numbers which are used when counting people. This is how they appear in modern Irish:

1 <i>duine</i>	2 <i>beirt</i>	3 <i>triúr</i>	4 <i>ceathrar</i>	5 <i>cúigear</i>
6 <i>seisear</i>	7 <i>seachtar</i>	8 <i>ochtar</i>	9 <i>naonúr</i>	10 <i>deichniúr</i>
11 <i>aon duine dhéag</i> <sup>42</sup>	12 <i>dhá dhuine dhéag/dáréag</i>	13 <i>trí dhuine dhéag</i>		
17 <i>seacht nduine dhéag</i>	20 <i>fiche duine</i>			

Historically, the personal numbers 3–10 are compounds of the cardinal numbers plus *fear* ‘a man’ e.g. *seachtar* = *seacht* ‘7’ + *fear* ‘seven people’. When the initial *f* of *fear* is lenited, as it is wont to be in compounds, it disappears leaving *ear*. Modern Irish has *duine* ‘a person’ to denote ‘one person’.<sup>43</sup> Counting from 11 to 19 is similar to the situation with the cardinal numbers. As the initial numbers in 11–19 are identical to the cardinal numbers, they initiate the same processes as those we described above for the cardinals.

Lenition follows the numbers 11–16 and eclipsis 17–19, as shown by the examples given above. The use of *déag/dhéag* is as outlined for the cardinal numbers. The use of *déag* is illustrated below:

*ceithre easpag déag* ‘fourteen bishops’, *ocht n-easpag déag* ‘eighteen bishops’

## Ordinals

Ordinals in Irish precede the noun. If we ignore the first three ordinals, the rest all end in *-(i)ú* in Modern Irish. They are followed by the singular form of the noun and prefix *h* to nouns beginning with a vowel. Here are some illustrative examples:

*an ceathrú duine* ‘the fourth person’, *an cúigiú háit déag* ‘the fifteenth place’

For ordinals above twenty, the traditional formula is as follows:

*an seachtú duine is fiche* ‘the twenty-seventh person’  
*an cúigiú caibidil is seasca* ‘the sixty-fifth chapter’

For ease in mathematical teaching, a different ordering sequence is used with the central noun coming at the end, as indicated below:

*an seasca cúigiú caibidil* ‘the sixty-fifth chapter’

Ordinals 1–3 show more variation in Modern Irish and each has at least two forms. I list them below:

*an chéad/ an t-aonú* ‘the first’, *an dara/ an tarna/ an darna* ‘the second’  
*an treas/ an tríú* ‘the third’

*An chéad* is the most common way of translating English ‘first’. *Aonú* and *an t-aonú* are used to denote 11th, 21st, 31st etc., e.g. *an chéad áit* ‘the first place’, *an t-aonú háit déag* ‘the eleventh place’, *an t-aonú lá fichead* ‘the twenty-first day (of the month)’. Similarly *treas* is limited in usage and can only translate English ‘third’; it cannot be used in translating ‘thirteenth’ or ‘twenty third’. The following exemplify each usage:

*an treas áit/ an tríú háit* ‘the third place’, *an tríú duine déag* ‘the thirteenth person’,  
*an dara mac* ‘the second son’, *an dara lá is fiche* ‘the twenty-second day’

## ADVERBS

In Modern Irish, adverbs are formed from adjectives by placing the particle *go* before the adjective e.g. *maith* ‘good’ > *go maith* ‘well’, *deas* ‘nice’ > *go deas* ‘nicely’. There are other adverbs with no underlying adjectival root e.g. *go dona* ‘badly’, *go minic* ‘often’. The particle *go* is often omitted especially when qualified by other modifiers, e.g. *measartha mór* ‘reasonably big’, *breá ard* ‘fine and tall’ as compared with *go measartha* ‘reasonable’ and *go breá* ‘fine’ (de Bhaldraithe 1953: §401, Ó Sé 2000: §755). All dialects of Irish often have a tendency to use adjectives on their own in an adverbial function,



e.g. *ag ól trom* ‘drinking heavily’, *ina luí socair* ‘lying quietly’, *phós siad óg* ‘they married young’, *ag caint ard* ‘talking loudly’. The comparative form of the adjective which we have already discussed above can also be used adverbially. This comparative form is preceded by a comparative particle which historically is based on the combination of the neuter pronoun *ní* plus *as* a relative form of the copula. There is a corresponding past tense/conditional form *níba*. Both *níos* and *níba* can be combined with the comparative form of adjectives and used predicatively as adverbs. This predicative use of the adverb takes place mostly with the substantive verb but may also be used with many other verbs as well e.g. *Bhí siad anseo níba luaithe* ‘They were here earlier’, *Shiúil sé níos gaiste* ‘He walked faster’. Irish is very fond of fronting words and phrases for emphasis and adverbs of degree are no exception to this tendency. They can be found with and without the particle *go* and they are followed by a direct relative clause,<sup>44</sup> e.g. *Ní (go) rómhaith a thuigim thú* ‘I don’t understand you too well’. There is and has been a great tendency in Irish to use normal adjectives for emphasis, and in these circumstances they function adverbially. These have also contributed to the colour and character of Irish English as Irish has formed a substratum from which bilingual speakers have drawn throughout the history of bilingual contact in Ireland, a period of some 400 years and still ongoing. Here are some illustrative examples:

*Tá sé iontach deacair* ‘It is extremely difficult’ – *iontach* = ‘wonderful, surprising’,  
*Bhí sí fiáanta láidir* ‘She was very strong’ – *fiáanta* = ‘wild, fierce’ Ir.E. She was wild strong.

Irish also has a more neutral prefix *an-* which expresses the same meaning, e.g. *Tá sé an-deacair* ‘It is very difficult’. Repetition of the prefix denotes increased emphasis, e.g. *Bhí sé an-an-mhaith* ‘It was really really good’.

### Directional and locational adverbs

There are many other features of adverbial use that could be touched upon, but as space is of the essence, perhaps we should focus on one of the most characteristic features of Irish, namely, the use of directional adverbs to convey subtle and important semantic and pragmatic differences. These usages have been common in both the written and spoken registers of Irish for more than a millennium and a half. Some of their peculiarities also form part of the intuitions of Irish English speakers in appropriate contexts. Adverbs of direction adhere to a very compact and coherent set of rules when describing movement (a) to and from set geographical locations and (b) away from and towards the location of the speaker. Similarly, a set of forms, which are syntactically and semantically related to the directional adverbs, are used in defining the location of people and objects. The proper use of these directional adverbs has been a challenge to learners and even to competent bilingual speakers.

The position of the speaker is pivotal to all usages. Movement to and from the speaker is the focus at all times – such usages can also be imagined, that is to say, that in order to be properly understood, the speaker sets the scenario where the position of all participants is fixed for the rest of the discourse. This helps the audience to understand the context in which a story is placed and related. This type of situation is very similar to the use made in sign language of preset positions to facilitate various narratives.<sup>45</sup> The creation of the particular lexical items to indicate the various directions follows a specific pattern as shown by the following:

Table 6.7 Directional adverbs

Lexical root	Direction away from speaker	Direction towards speaker	Defined position	Undefined position
<i>uas</i> 'above'	<i>suas</i>	<i>anuas</i>	<i>thuas</i>	<i>suas</i>
<i>íos</i> 'below'	<i>síos</i>	<i>aníos</i>	<i>thíos</i>	<i>síos</i>
<i>iar</i> 'to the west'	<i>siar</i>	<i>aniar</i>	<i>thiar</i>	<i>siar</i>
<i>oir</i> 'to the east'	<i>soir</i>	<i>anoir</i>	<i>thoir</i>	<i>soir</i>

The following demonstrate particular usages.

(a) When the speaker is downstairs:

*suas an staighre* 'up the stairs', *anuas an staighre* 'down the stairs', *thuas staighre* 'upstairs'

(b) When the speaker is upstairs:

*síos an staighre* 'down the stairs', *aníos an staighre* 'up the stairs', *thíos staighre* 'downstairs'

(c) Spatial movement to the east/west:

*Chuaigh sé siar* 'he went westwards', *tá sé thiar* 'he is in the west', *tiocfaidh sé aniar* 'He will come from the west'

(d) Undefined position:

*Tá sí thuas ansin* 'She is up there (defined place)' (The place can be seen or pointed out) *Tá sí suas ansin* 'She is up there (undefined place)' (The place cannot be seen or pointed out).<sup>46</sup>

For other geographical positions and relationships, the lexical items shown in Table 6.8 are used.

Table 6.8 Other geographical positions

Lexical root	Direction away from speaker	Direction towards speaker	Defined position	Undefined position
<i>all</i> 'beyond'	<i>sall, anonn</i>	<i>anall</i>	<i>thall, abhus</i>	<i>anonn</i>
<i>tuaidh</i> 'north'	<i>ó thuaidh</i>	<i>aduaidh</i>	<i>ó thuaidh</i>	<i>ó thuaidh</i>
<i>eas</i> 'east'	<i>ó dheas</i>	<i>aneas</i>	<i>theas, ó dheas</i>	<i>ó dheas</i>

*Sall/anonn* and its related forms are used when one is referring to positions removed from the speaker and on the far side of certain geographical or manmade features such as rivers, seas, hills, bridges etc., e.g. *sall/anonn go Meiriceá* 'over to America', *anall*

(*ar*) *an droichead* ‘across (on) the bridge’, *thall ag an doras* ‘over at the door (defined position)’, *abhus anseo* ‘over here (beside the speaker)’, *Tháinig siad aduaidh ar maidin* ‘They came from the north this morning’, *siar ó dheas* ‘south westwards’, *anonn ansin* ‘over there somewhere (undefined position)’. There are many other intricacies involved in the use of directional adverbs which cannot be entered into here. For further details see Ó Baoill (1975: 144–61).

PREPOSITIONS

Modern Irish has inherited most of the prepositions of O.Ir. These simple prepositions can appear on their own, with the definite article *an/na* or with personal inflectional endings.<sup>47</sup> When not inflected, they may appear on their own or with the definite article *an/na*. Most preposition + article combinations cause lenition or eclipsis on a following singular noun, e.g. *ar an bhád/mbád* ‘on the boat’.<sup>48</sup> Plural nouns are left unchanged, e.g. *ar na báid* ‘on the boats’. In some dialects, remnants of the dative singular form of feminine nouns have been recorded, e.g. *ag an fhuinneog/bhfuinneog* ‘at the window’ < *fuinneog* ‘window’, *píosa den mhuic* ‘a piece of the pig’ < *muc* ‘a pig’.<sup>49</sup>

In the transition to Mod. Ir., many simple prepositions have been reconstructed and have been replaced by forms which correspond to the 3rd person singular masculine, e.g. O.Ir. *oc* ‘at’ > Mod. Ir. *ag* /eɣ/<sup>50</sup> from *aige* ‘at him’, O.Ir. *co* ‘to’ > Mod. Ir. *chuig* from *chuige* ‘to him’. Mod. Ir. is also very fond of creating compound prepositions, usually consisting of a preposition + noun sequence, e.g. O.Ir. *os* ‘above’ > Mod. Ir. *os cionn* ‘above’, O.Ir. *imm* ‘about, around’ > Mod. Ir. *timpeall*, O.Ir. *iar* ‘after’ > Mod. Ir. *i ndiaidh/tar éis*.

As every student of Modern Irish knows, one must master the ‘conjugated prepositions’ in order to be clearly understood and communicate effectively. The following paradigms show the various forms for *ag* ‘at’, *ar* ‘on’, *as* ‘from’ and *do* ‘to’:

Table 6.9 Conjugated prepositions

Number	ag ‘at’	ar ‘on’	as ‘from, out of’	do ‘to’
1 sg.	<i>agam</i>	<i>orm</i>	<i>asam</i>	<i>dom</i>
2 sg.	<i>agat</i>	<i>ort</i>	<i>asat</i>	<i>duit</i>
3 sg. masc.	<i>aige</i>	<i>air</i>	<i>as</i>	<i>dó</i>
fem.	<i>aici</i>	<i>uirthi</i>	<i>aisti</i>	<i>di</i>
1 pl.	<i>againn</i>	<i>orainn</i>	<i>asainn</i>	<i>dúinn</i>
2 pl.	<i>agaibh</i>	<i>oraibh</i>	<i>asaibh</i>	<i>daoibh</i>
3 pl.	<i>acu</i>	<i>orthu</i>	<i>astu</i>	<i>dóibh</i>

We have already mentioned that *gan* ‘without’ has lost all pronominal inflection. *Idir* ‘between, among’ also has an incomplete paradigm, retaining only plural forms in most cases. All dialects seem to have retained the plural endings when expressing the meaning ‘among’ e.g. *eadrainn* ‘among us’, *eadraibh* ‘among you (pl.)’, *eatarthu* ‘among them’ as in *Roinn muid eadrainn iad* ‘We divided them among ourselves’. Ulster Irish has retained the plural forms for the meaning ‘between’ where the other dialects seem to prefer to use simple pronouns after *idir*, e.g. *eadrainn agus an teach* ‘between us and the house’. Connacht usage seems to prefer *idir muid agus an teach*.

## Compound prepositions

Many Irish prepositions are made up of two constituents – a preposition plus a noun – and are generally followed by the genitive case.<sup>51</sup> These are relatively frequent and productive within the language system and play a major role in the creation of relative clauses and non finite clauses containing a verbal noun. Here are some examples that show the various usages:

*i ndiaidh* ‘after’, *i ndiaidh an turais* ‘after the journey’, *i ndiaidh imeacht chun an bhaile* ‘having returned home’ (Ir.E. after returning home), *i ndiaidh a raibh ráite leis* ‘despite all that had been said to him’, *de réir na scéalta* ‘according to the stories’, *faoi cheann seachtaine* ‘in a week’s time’.

Simple prepositions are always unstressed. However, the second element of compound prepositions, being always a noun in origin, bears stress. There are three one word prepositions that act in a similar way to compound prepositions, namely, *chun* ‘to, towards’, *timpeall* ‘around’ and *trasna* ‘across’, the last two bearing stress, e.g. *trasna an bhóthair* ‘across the road’. In Irish, many simple prepositions combine with verbs to create new meanings. In many instances such prepositions end up being used adverbally and become part of the regular lexicon. In these cases, the inflected third person singular masculine is used. The following are typical examples:

*Bhí an ghrian ag dul faoi* ‘The sun was setting’ < *faoi* ‘under’ (Note the masculine gender of *faoi* despite *grian* being feminine.)  
*Tá mé ag baint lá de* ‘I am taking it day by day’ < *de* ‘from, off’  
*Cha raibh a leithéid ann* ‘There was no such person/thing’ < *i* ‘in’  
*Chaith do shúil uait* ‘Look around you’ < *ó* ‘(away) from’

## PRONOMINAL USAGE

Table 6.10 The Modern Irish pronominal and possessive forms<sup>1</sup>

Number	Personal pronouns		Possessive forms	
	Unemphatic	Emphatic	Unemphatic	Emphatic
1 sg.	<i>mé</i>	<i>mise</i>	<i>mo</i> + lenition	<i>mo</i> + lenition + <i>-sa/-se</i>
2 sg.	<i>tú/thú</i>	<i>tusa/thusa</i>	<i>do</i> + lenition	<i>do</i> + lenition + <i>-sa/-se</i>
3 sg. masc.	<i>sé/é</i>	<i>seisean/eisean</i>	<i>a</i> + lenition	<i>a</i> + lenition + <i>-san/-sean</i>
3 sg. fem.	<i>sí/í</i>	<i>sise/eise</i>	<i>a</i> + ‘h’ before vowels	<i>a</i> + ‘h’ before vowels + <i>-sa/-se</i>
1 pl.	<i>sinn, muid</i>	<i>sinne, muidne</i>	<i>ár</i> + eclipsis	<i>ár</i> + eclipsis + <i>-na/-ne</i>
2 pl.	<i>sibh</i>	<i>sibhse</i>	<i>bhur</i> + eclipsis	<i>bhur</i> + eclipsis + <i>-sa/-se</i>
3 pl.	<i>siad/iad</i>	<i>siadsan/iadsan</i>	<i>a</i> + eclipsis	<i>a</i> + eclipsis + <i>-san/-sean</i>

Note

- 1 When two different forms are given separated by a comma, it means that they are legitimate variants. When two forms are separated by a solidus, the second is the accusative form. The *tú/thú* distinction is

found only in Connacht and Ulster dialects. It should be pointed out that all forms beginning with 's' e.g. *sé, sí, siad* are subject forms – the forms without 's' e.g. *é/í/iad* are used in all other positions.

One of the salient developments of the Irish pronominal system has been the ever increasing independent use of pronouns, where previously they had been infixed or suffixed to the verb when acting as subject or object of that verb. In Mod. Ir. personal pronouns are normally unstressed in unmarked descriptive sentences. In various types of narrative and in certain interchanges, however, they can be stressed. The importance of the distinction lies in the fact that the long vowels retain their full length and quality when stressed, and are short or half long when unstressed.<sup>52</sup> Pronouns are always stressed when they are used as predicates of the copula, e.g. *Is tú/tusa mo mhac* 'You are my son'. In such sentences both *tú* and *tusa* carry equal stress. However, in unmarked statements pronouns whether subject or object receive only very light stress.<sup>53</sup> The following short sentences illustrate the unstressed/stressed (in bold) usage:

unstressed *Tá mé anseo* 'I am here', *An bhfuil tú réidh?* 'Are you ready?'  
 stressed *An **tú** Dónall?* 'Are you Dónall?' , *Is **mé*** 'Yes, I am'  
 unstressed and stressed pronoun sequence: *Ní rachaidh sí* 'She won't go',  
*Rachaidh **sí*** 'She will (don't you worry)'

When there is a need to emphasize a pronoun in unmarked statements, the emphatic form must be used. These emphatic forms are stressed in a similar way to nouns, e.g. *D'aithin Dónall t(h)ú* 'Dónall recognized you' contrasts with *D'aithin Dónall t(h)usa* 'Dónall recognized **you**'.<sup>54</sup>

O.Ir. had a third person singular neutral pronoun *ed*, which survives in modern Irish. It is now, in the revised literary standard, spelled *ea* but the older spelling *eadh* would suit many Ulster dialects better as its dialectal pronunciation is /a/ only in areas of South Donegal.<sup>55</sup> Connacht and Munster dialects have copular classification sentences of the type, e.g. *Duine breá is ea é* 'He is a fine person', *Múinteoir is ea í* 'She is a teacher'<sup>56</sup> (de Bhaldraithe 1953: 88–106, Ó Sé 2000: 340–63). This type of sentence is unknown in Ulster where the substantive verb plus the preposition *i* 'in' in its appropriate grammatical form is used instead e.g. *Múinteoir breá atá ann* 'He is a fine teacher'.

Ulster and Connacht also have copular sentences of the type (*Is*) *duine breá é*, which more or less corresponds in meaning to *Duine breá is ea é*. This latter sentence has a fronted or focused constituent *Duine breá* followed by a relative copular sentence.

With regard to possessives, there are different strategies to denote possession. The most common strategy is to use the possessive pronouns outlined in Table 6.10 with their various mutations and emphatic forms, e.g. *mo bhean* 'my wife', *mo bheansa* '**my** wife (emph.)', *a dteach féin* 'their own house', *a dteachsan* '**their** house (emph.)'. Many Connacht dialects use only *a* + eclipsis for all the plural forms e.g. *An bhfuil a ndóthain airgid agaibh?* 'Do you (pl.) have enough money?' In order to help differentiation, a new strategy has evolved whereby nouns are qualified by the emphatic form of the personal pronoun, e.g. *a mbróga muid/sibhse/siadsan* 'our/your (pl.)/their shoes'.

The use of *cuid* 'part, portion, share' with possessive pronouns and followed by the genitive of nouns, is also a major strategy for indicating possession in Mod. Ir. The use of *cuid* is on the increase as one moves from Munster northwards towards Ulster. We therefore get pairs such as the following with identical meaning:

*mo ghruag/mo chuid gruaige* 'my hair', *m'fhéasóg/mo chuid féasóige* 'my beard'

There are various classes of nouns which do not allow the use of the possessive pronouns on their own and have to be accompanied by *cuid*. Some of these classes are listed below:

- (a) Food, e.g. *mo chuid bainne/tae/feola* 'my milk/tea/meat'
- (b) Wealth, e.g. *do chuid airgid/talaimh/féir* 'your money/land/hay'
- (c) Languages, e.g. *bhur gcuid Gaeilge/Béarla/Fraincise* 'your Irish/English/French'
- (d) Occupation, e.g. *ár gcuid múinteoireachalteagaisc/ceoil* 'our teaching/instruction/music'
- (e) Effort, e.g. *a cuid oibre/ama/trioblóide* 'her work/time/trouble'

This usage has been extended to other domains within Ulster Irish, e.g. *mo chuid súile/lámha/deartháireacha* 'my eyes/hands/brothers'.<sup>57</sup> A further interesting development in the Ulster dialects is the use of double genitives in expressing possession, e.g. *cuid airgid Dhónaill* 'Dónall's money', *cuid eallaigh an fhir seo* 'This man's cattle'.<sup>58</sup>

The following usages are also worthy of mention: (a) the use of the demonstratives *seo/sin* 'this/that' plus the preposition *ag* as in *an carr seo agamsa* 'this car of mine', *an teach sin agaibhse* 'that house of yours'; (b) in referring to one object of many belonging to someone, the possessed noun is indefinite and followed by *de* 'of' + *cuid* 'part, share', e.g. *carr de chuid Dhónaill* 'one of Dónall's cars'. When people are involved, use is made of the prepositions *do* 'nearness in relationship' or *le* 'belonging to', e.g. *mac leis/dó* 'a son of his', *cara leis/dó* 'a friend of his'. The use of the formula in (a) has been extended even further in Ulster Irish and is now one of the principal ways of expressing possession. In this latter usage, the phrase *seo agam(sa)* > *s'agam(sa)* where the initial *s* is always velarized /s/. This applies to all persons, e.g. *an leabhar s'agam* 'my book', *an t-airgead s'acu* 'their money', *an fear s'aici* 'her husband'. The possessive forms are also used with compound prepositions, e.g. *i ndiaidh* 'after' > *i mo dhiaidh* 'after me', *os cionn* 'above' > *os ár gcionn* 'above us', *in éadan* 'against' > *in bhur n-éadan* 'against you (pl.)'. Mod. Ir. *féin* expresses the idea of 'self' and 'own'. It follows the personal pronoun and possessive noun phrases and receives stress e.g. *tú féin* 'yourself', *do mhuintir féin* 'your own people'.

When subject pronouns became detached from their verbal complex around the eleventh century, a further development took place whereby these pronouns could also now act as objects, as shown by Mod. Ir., *brisimid iad* 'we break them'. While some of the Irish pronouns had specific accusative forms, nevertheless, the order of the constituents within an Irish sentence became fixed as verb, subject, object. This created a semantic ambiguity in sentences containing pronouns undifferentiated for nominative/accusative forms, e.g. *an fear a chonaic mé* 'the man that I saw/the man that saw me'. However, no such ambiguity arose in sentences of the following type, e.g. *an fear a chonaic sé* 'the man that he saw', *an fear a chonaic é* 'the man that saw him'. This applies in all dialects. In Ulster and Connacht a similar distinction is made between *tú/thú* 'you (sg.)', e.g. *an fear a bhuail tú* 'the man that you beat' and *an fear a bhuail thú* 'the man that beat you'.

## INTERROGATIVES

*Cé* is the form of the personal interrogative pronoun in Mod. Ir., e.g. *Cé (hé) sin?* 'Who is that (person)?' Before relative clauses it may stand alone or precede a definite noun or noun phrase, e.g. *Cé a bhí ann?* 'Who was it?', *Cén teach a raibh sé ann?* 'What house was he in?' When prepositional interrogatives are used, they are normally placed at the

head of their clause, e.g. *Cé leis a raibh tú ag caint?* 'To whom were you talking?'<sup>59</sup> The non personal forms *Cad é?*, *Céard?* stand on their own, e.g. *Cad é a rinne sé?* 'What did he do?', *Céard a dúirt siad?* 'What did they say?'

In a similar way to pronominal *Cé?*, adverbial interrogatives such as *Cé/Cá?* 'Where?' may occur on their own or they may combine with a following noun, e.g. *Cá raibh sibh?* 'Where were you?', *Cáit/Cá háit a bhfaca tú iad?* 'Where did you see them?', *Cén chaoi a bhfuil sibh?* 'How are you (pl.)?'

The positive interrogative particles in Mod.Ir. are *An?* + eclipsis, *Ar?* + lenition (Past Tense only) and the corresponding negatives are *ná*,<sup>60</sup> *nach* + eclipsis and *nár* + lenition (Past Tense/Preterite only), e.g. *An dtuigeann tú?* 'Do you understand?', *Ar chuala tú sin?* 'Did you hear that?', *Nach dtuigeann tú é?* 'Do you not understand it?', *Nár chuala tú?* 'Did you not hear?'

## DEMONSTRATIVES AND THE DEFINITE ARTICLE

Irish has a three-way deictic referential demonstrative system. *Seo* refers to proximity to the speaker, *sin* to an area removed from the speaker but within sight and *siúd/úd* to a third position removed from both *seo* and *sin*. They act as demonstrative adjectives when combined with a definite noun phrase e.g. *an doras seo* 'this door', *an chathaoir sin* 'that chair (over there)', *an leabhar úd* 'The book you mentioned'.<sup>61</sup>

The Irish definite article has only two distinct forms *an/na*. They precede the noun. *An* is the singular form and *na* is either a genitive singular feminine form or is the plural form (both genders). Irish has never had an indefinite article and unqualified nouns act as indefinites. The definite article *an* causes lenition of feminine nouns, e.g. *an chearc* 'the chicken', and of masculine nouns in the genitive singular e.g. *taobh an bháid* 'The side of the boat'. Plural *na* causes eclipsis of all genitive plural nouns and prefixes *h* to vowels in other case forms e.g. *luach na mbád* 'The price of the boats', *ar na hoileáin* 'On the islands'.

The genitive singular feminine *na* also prefixes *h* to vowels e.g. *tús na hoibre* 'The beginning of the work'.

Definite nouns, whether qualified by the article or by a possessive pronoun, cannot be preceded by another definite noun in Mod. Ir. e.g. *teach an dochtúra* 'The doctor's house', *aois do mháthar* 'Your mother's age' but not *\*an teach an dochtúra*, *\*an aois do mháthar*.

## THE VERBAL SYSTEM

The Modern Irish verbal system is a complex one both in its expression of semantic distinctions and in its morphology. It distinguishes three moods, indicative, imperative and subjunctive.

### Conjugation

The following paradigms illustrate the various forms of the indicative mood. Other moods are illustrated below. The recommended standard forms are given on the left and the dialectal historical forms, which have not been included in the standard, appear to the right in parentheses.

The verbal endings appearing in each tense are according to whichever conjugation the verb belongs to. All one-syllable verbs, two-syllable verbs ending in  $-(e)áil$ <sup>62</sup> and a small number of two-syllable verbs, which are not syncopated (lose their second syllable) when a third or fourth syllable is added, belong to the first conjugation. All other two-syllable verbs belong to the second conjugation.<sup>63</sup>

Table 6.11 Verbal paradigms, indicative mood

### Present

#### Conjugation 1

1 sg.	<i>ólaim</i> 'I drink'	<i>brisim</i> 'I break'	<i>sábhálaim</i> 'I save'
2 sg.	<i>ólann tú (ólair)</i>	<i>briseann tú (brisir)</i>	<i>sábhálann tú (sábhálair)</i>
3 sg.	<i>ólann sé/sí</i>	<i>briseann sé/sí</i>	<i>sábhálann sé/sí</i>
1 pl.	<i>ólaimid/ólann muid</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>brisimid/briseann muid</i>	<i>sábhálaimid/sábhálann muid</i>
2 pl.	<i>ólann sibh</i>	<i>briseann sibh</i>	<i>sábhálann sibh</i>
3 pl.	<i>ólann siad (ólaid)</i>	<i>briseann siad (brisid)</i>	<i>sábhálann siad (sábhálaid)</i>
Aut.	<i>óltar</i>	<i>bristear</i>	<i>sábháiltear</i> <sup>2</sup>

#### Conjugation 2

1 sg.	<i>ordaím</i> 'I order'	<i>ceanglaím</i> <sup>3</sup> 'I tie'
2 sg.	<i>ordaíonn tú (ordaír)</i>	<i>ceanglaíonn tú (ceanglaír)</i>
3 sg.	<i>ordaíonn sé/sí</i>	<i>ceanglaíodh sé/sí</i>
1 pl.	<i>ordaímid/ordaíonn muid</i>	<i>ceanglaímid/ceanglaíonn muid</i>
2 pl.	<i>ordaíonn sibh</i>	<i>ceanglaíonn sibh</i>
3 pl.	<i>ordaíonn siad (ordaíd)</i>	<i>ceanglaíonn siad (ceanglaíd)</i>
Aut.	<i>ordaítear</i>	<i>ceanglaítear</i>

### Imperfect

#### Conjugation 1

1 sg.	<i>d'ólainn</i>	<i>bhrisinn</i>	<i>shábhálainn</i>
2 sg.	<i>d'óltá</i>	<i>bhristeá</i>	<i>shábháilteá</i>
3 sg.	<i>d'óladh sé/sí</i>	<i>bhriseadh sé/sí</i>	<i>shábháladh sé/sí</i>
1 pl.	<i>d'ólaimis</i>	<i>bhrisimis/bhriseadh</i>	<i>shábhálaimis/shábháladh muid</i>
2 pl.	<i>d'óladh sibh</i>	<i>bhriseadh sibh</i>	<i>shábháladh sibh</i>
3 pl.	<i>d'ólaidís/d'óladh siad</i>	<i>bhrisidís/bhriseadh siad</i>	<i>shábhálaidís/shábháladh siad</i>
Aut.	<i>d'óltaí</i>	<i>bhristí</i>	<i>shábháiltí</i>

#### Conjugation 2

1 sg.	<i>d'ordaínn</i>	<i>cheanglaínn</i>
2 sg.	<i>d'ordaíteá</i>	<i>cheanglaíteá</i>
3 sg.	<i>d'ordaíodh sé/sí</i>	<i>cheanglaíodh sé/sí</i>
1 pl.	<i>d'ordaímis/d'ordaíodh muid</i>	<i>cheanglaímis/cheanglaíodh muid</i>
2 pl.	<i>d'ordaíodh sibh</i>	<i>cheanglaíodh sibh</i>
3 pl.	<i>d'ordaíodh siad</i>	<i>cheanglaíodh siad</i>
Aut.	<i>d'ordaí</i>	<i>cheanglaí</i>



**Past/preterite****Conjugation 1**

1 sg.	<i>d'ól mé (d'ólas)</i>	<i>bhris mé (bhriseas)</i>	<i>shábháil mé (shábhálas)</i>
2 sg.	<i>d'ól tú (d'ólais)</i>	<i>bhris tú (bhrisis)</i>	<i>shábháil tú (shábhálais)</i>
3 sg.	<i>d'ól sé/sí</i>	<i>bhris sé/sí</i>	<i>shábháil sé/sí</i>
1 pl.	<i>d'ólamar/d'ól muid</i>	<i>bhriseamar/bhris muid</i>	<i>shábhálamar/shábháil muid</i>
2 pl.	<i>d'ól sibh (d'ólabhair)</i>	<i>bhris sibh (bhriseabhair)</i>	<i>shábháil sibh (shábhálabhair)</i>
3 pl.	<i>d'ól siad (d'óladar)</i>	<i>bhris siad (bhriseadar)</i>	<i>shábháil siad (shábháladar)</i>
Aut.	<i>óladh</i>	<i>briseadh</i>	<i>sábháladh</i>

**Conjugation 2**

1 sg.	<i>d'ordaigh mé (d'ordaíos)</i>	<i>cheangail mé (cheanglaíos)</i>
2 sg.	<i>d'ordaigh tú (d'ordaís)</i>	<i>cheangail tú (cheanglaís)</i>
3 sg.	<i>d'ordaigh sé/sí</i>	<i>cheangail sé/sí</i>
1 pl.	<i>d'ordaíomar/d'ordaigh muid</i>	<i>cheanglaíomar/cheangail muid</i>
2 pl.	<i>d'ordaigh sibh (d'ordaíobhair)</i>	<i>cheangail sibh (cheanglaíobhair)</i>
3 pl.	<i>d'ordaigh siad (d'ordaíodar)</i>	<i>cheangail siad (cheanglaíodar)</i>
Aut.	<i>ordaíodh</i>	<i>cheanglaíodh</i>

**Future****Conjugation 1**

1 sg.	<i>ólfaidh mé (ólfad)</i>	<i>brisfidh mé (brisfead)</i>	<i>sábhálfaidh mé (sábhálfad)</i>
2 sg.	<i>ólfaidh tú (ólfair)</i>	<i>brisfidh tú (brisfir)</i>	<i>sábhálfaidh tú (sábhálfair)</i>
3 sg.	<i>ólfaidh sé/sí</i>	<i>brisfidh sé/sí</i>	<i>sábhálfaidh sé/sí</i>
1 pl.	<i>ólfaimid/ólfaidh muid</i> <i>(ólfam)</i>	<i>brisfimid/brisfidh muid</i> <i>(brisfeam)</i>	<i>sábhálfaimid/sábhálfaidh muid</i> <i>(sábhálfam)</i>
2 pl.	<i>ólfaidh sibh</i>	<i>brisfidh sibh</i>	<i>sábhálfaidh sibh</i>
3 pl.	<i>ólfaidh siad (ólfaid)</i>	<i>brisfidh siad (brisfid)</i>	<i>sábhálfaidh siad (sábhálfaid)</i>
Aut.	<i>ólfar</i>	<i>brisfear</i>	<i>sábhálfar</i>

**Conjugation 2**

1 sg.	<i>ordóidh mé (ordód)</i>	<i>ceanglóidh mé (ceanglód)</i>
2 sg.	<i>ordóidh tú (ordóir)</i>	<i>ceanglóidh tú (ceanglóir)</i>
3 sg.	<i>ordóidh sé/sí</i>	<i>ceanglóidh sé/sí</i>
1 pl.	<i>ordóimid/ordóidh muid</i> <i>(ordóm)</i>	<i>ceanglóimid/ceanglóidh muid</i> <i>(ceanglóm)</i>
2 pl.	<i>ordóidh sibh</i>	<i>ceanglóidh sibh</i>
3 pl.	<i>ordóidh siad (ordóid)</i>	<i>ceanglóidh siad (ceanglóid)</i>
Aut.	<i>ordófar</i>	<i>ceanglófar</i>

**Notes**

- 1 The pronoun *sinn* 'we' can also be used as a standard form according to Ó Dónaill's 1977 dictionary. He gives the following example – *Tá sinn go léir anseo* 'We are all here.' Whenever the pronoun *muid* is used in other tenses, the reader may assume that it can be replaced by *sinn*.
- 2 The vagaries of the spelling of each ending are due to the application of the Irish rule '*caol le caol agus leathan le leathan*' which is merely a spelling convention standardized by the poets some 800 years ago. Broad/velarized consonants (those called *leathan* above) must be preceded and followed by vowels from the group *a/á, o/ó, u/ú*. Slender/palatalized consonants (those called *caol* above) must be

preceded or followed by vowels from the group *i/í, e/é*. Thus, the endings *-(a)im/-im* and *-(e)ann/-ann*, respectively, are pronounced the same despite the spelling.

3 This verb often retains its second syllable in some dialects, e.g. *ceangalaím*, etc.

## Tense and mood

In certain respects the tense/aspectual distinctions in Irish are not unlike those found in English. Both languages seem to have a progressive/non-progressive distinction throughout the verbal systems. As Irish does not possess a verb HAVE, it has had to devise ways of dealing with and expressing semantic distinctions, which are an integral part of the English verbal system through the use of 'HAVE'. It has at times succeeded and at other times the comparison is not quite complete. Much of this has been accomplished by the use of the verb *bí* 'to be' in combination with the preposition *ag* 'at'. One must be careful of prescribed grammars and their recommendations as they tend to centralize and standardize distinctions found in dialects and across dialects. However, as we move into the study of mood in Irish much of the parallelism between Irish and English breaks down. These matters will be discussed in more detail below.

### *Habitual versus punctuality*

The Irish verb distinguishes between progressive and habitual action in the present and imperfect tenses. The habitual can also be interpreted as generic in nature and depends for its interpretation on the semantic load carried by particular verbs. The verb endings denoting habitual action in the present tense are *-(e)ann* and *-(a)íonn*.<sup>64</sup> The following examples show the distinctions made in the present tense.

- (1) *Tá Seán ag scríobh litir fhada.*  
'Seán is writing a long letter.'
- (2) *Scríobhann Seán litir fhada gach lá.*  
'Seán writes a long letter every day.'
- (3) *Itheann coiníní féar.*  
'Rabbits eat grass.'

The punctuality of sentence (1) is expressed by the form *Tá*, although part of a periphrastic formation which contains a progressive form. Sentences (2) and (3) denote repeated or habitual action and (3) also has a generic connotation. As the verb *bí* 'to be' has a static and habitual form, whether combined with the verbal noun or occurring on its own, it can differentiate between present and habitual progressive action, as in:

- (4) *Tá Dónall anseo inniu.*  
'Dónall is here today.'
- (5) *Bíonn Dónall anseo go minic.*  
'Dónall is often here.'
- (6) *Tá Seán ag caint le Síle.*  
'Seán is talking to Síle.'

- (7) *Bíonn Seán ag caint le Síle.*  
'Seán talks to Síle.'

A similar distinction is maintained in referring to past activities, between the preterite, the narrative tense which denotes a single act, and the imperfect/past habitual, which describes actions that take place habitually or intermittently over a long period of time. Thus we get the following contrasts: *bhí* 'was' / *bhíodh* 'used to be', *d'ól* 'drank' / *d'óladh* 'used to drink' as in the following:

- (8) *Bhí sé ag caint ort inné.*  
'He was talking about you yesterday.'
- (9) *Bhíodh sé ag caint ort go minic.*  
'He used to talk about you often.'

The only verbs which do not participate in this contrast are those relating to the senses, namely, verbs of seeing, speaking, hearing, etc., which in general have to express the punctual/habitual distinction by means of the habitual endings only. Here are some examples:

- (10) *Cluinim t(h)ú.*  
'I hear you (now).'
- (11) *Cluinim go minic é.*  
'I often hear it.'

However, there have been new developments within the verbal system which would indicate that sentences such as (12) below can also be interpreted as denoting habitual or continuous activity. This is in all likelihood a pragmatic interpretation arising from the innate meaning of certain verbs.

- (12) *Tá Seán ag ól go trom.*  
'Seán drinks/is drinking heavily.'<sup>65</sup>

There are also some indications that the continuity/habitual meaning is being extended to the so-called 'emotional' verbs. Here are some examples of this usage from Donegal:

- (13) *Tá mé á fheiceáil le fada.*  
'I have often seen it over the last while.' (Lit. I have been seeing it for some time)
- (14) *Níl sé mo chluinstin.*  
'He doesn't hear me.' (Lit. He is not hearing me.)

The contrast between progressive and non progressive action pervades the entire verbal system. It is found in the present, preterite, past habitual and future tenses. Each tense has its own distinctive endings and/or initial mutations. Tense formation has changed very little in its essentials over time. Verb root modification is through internal alteration or suffixation. This creates the tense-stem. Personal endings denoting person and number are added to this stem. The Mod. Ir. regular verbal stem remains in almost all essentials the

same for all tenses. Verbs beginning with a vowel or *f* + vowel prefix a *d*<sup>66</sup> in the preterite, imperfect and conditional mood e.g. *D'imigh sí* 'She left', *D'fhoghlaim sí an dán* 'She learned a lot'.

### Perfect constructions

The perfect tends to report the speaker's comments on an action or to present a particular viewpoint. Irish has both a progressive and a non-progressive perfect. The latter can be interpreted as a stative perfective, which tends to focus on the completion of the action. This type is expressed by a periphrastic sequence of the substantive verb plus the verbal adjective,<sup>67</sup> as in the following examples:

- (15) *Tá siad briste.*  
'They are broken.'
- (16) *Tá mo dhinnéar ite agam.*  
'I have eaten my dinner.' (Lit. Is my dinner eaten by me.)

The distribution of these forms is also of interest. Ulster dialects in general do not tolerate the creation of verbal adjectives from intransitive verbs and some irregular verbs, which are so common in the other two major dialects of Connacht and Munster. Thus we do not get forms of the type e.g. *tagtha* 'arrived', *dulta* 'gone', *tabhartha* 'given', *feicthe* 'seen' in Ulster speech.<sup>68</sup>

The meaning of perfect in general linguistics has been variously defined (Comrie 1976). Such definitions may not suit particular languages but nevertheless they provide a platform for discussion. One observation about the Modern English perfect is that it is best described as referring to the continuing relevance of some previous action. Pairs of sentences can be found in Irish which also back up this interpretation as shown by 17–18 below.

- (17) *Tá mo sparán caillte agam.*  
'I have lost my purse.'
- (18) *Chaill mé mo sparán.*  
'I lost my purse.'

The implication conveyed by (17) is that the *sparán* 'purse' has not turned up, whereas (18) carries no such implication. In this way, one could argue that the true function of this type of perfect, in both Irish and English, is to form a kind of 'extended present' which unites some previous action with the time of the utterance which refers to it. Much has been written about this stative type construction in recent years (Greene 1979, Ó Sé 1992, 2004), but there is no general agreement about whether or not they should be considered 'perfectives'. The real argument about sentences such as (17) is whether their meaning is to be regarded as stative or active. If stative, a more appropriate translation might be 'I have my purse lost!', whereas, if the meaning is 'active', a better translation would be 'I have lost my purse'. However, if one were to add an adverbial phrase to (17), then its interpretation as a stative is beyond argument:

- (19) *Tá mo sparán caillte agam le mí.*  
 'My purse has been lost for over a month.'

It is fairly clear that the focus point in (19) is to show that the purse is in the state of being lost for a month and that it still has not been located. There is a problem associated with its translation into English. The interpretation revolves around the word *agam* 'at/by me' and the phrase *le mí* 'for a month'. Different claims have been made about the role of the preposition *ag* 'at/by' which underlies *agam*. It has been argued by some that it marks an agent and hence they propose that we have a type of 'perfect or stative passive': McCloskey (1996: 159–64, 1998: 165–9). Greene (1979) has called the construction 'perfective'. Other researchers have argued that the meaning expressed by the entire phrase is basically active (Ó Sé 1992: 39–67, 2004: 181–6). While much of the basic information has been made available, there is still a need for more in-depth analysis before any final conclusions can be reached on the matter.

### Perfect progressives

Modern Irish has a second periphrastic formation, which has also been assigned to the category of perfect. It also involves the use of the substantive verb combined with the verbal noun. This verbal noun corresponds to both the infinitive and the gerundial *-ing* of English and it is preceded by either of the phrases *i ndiaidh/tar éis* 'after'. In a recent article Ó Sé (2004) gives a comprehensive overview of the 'After' perfect across the Gaelic dialects. A typical example is given in (20) below.<sup>69</sup>

- (20) *Tá mé i ndiaidh/tar éis carr a cheannacht.*  
 'I have (just) bought a car.'

Sentences such as (20) have been labelled 'recent perfects' (Greene 1979) and in studies of Irish English, which has a similar construction, they have been called 'hot news perfect' Harris (1985, 1991) and Odlin (1991).<sup>70</sup> All who have written on this matter agree that sentences such as (20) are indeed perfect.

As we have already mentioned, the progressive/non-progressive distinction is one of the hallmarks of the Modern Irish tense/aspect system. Combinations of the progressive and perfect forms are therefore to be expected. This is achieved by using the infinitival form of the substantive verb followed by the verbal noun, as in (21):

- (21) *Tá siad i ndiaidh a bheith ag caint leis.*  
 'They have (just) been talking to him.'

Past, future and conditional forms can be derived by changing the auxiliary form *Tá* to *bhí*, *beidh* and *bheadh*, respectively.<sup>71</sup>

In conclusion, one can say that standard English has had a strong influence in helping to extend the use and frequency of certain aspectual distinctions in Irish, some of which were at least until very recently rare or infrequent. This has been due mostly to the increasing bilingual status of its speakers and perhaps undue influence from standard educational forms of English. Irish English has had less of an influence, as much of what gives Irish-English its different character has been borrowed from Irish over a period of almost four centuries.

## Future projection

The future tense in Modern Irish is marked by defined suffixes, which denote future actions or intentions. While the use of the future tense marker on the verb refers to a whole action, there are parallel structures identical to those already discussed for the present and past tenses which focus on the completion of the action or on the ongoing stages of the action being performed. The contrast is shown below in (22) and (23).

- (22) *Scríobhfaidh sí an litir ar maidin.*  
'She will write the letter in the morning.'
- (23) *Beidh sí ag scríobh na litreach ar maidin.*  
'She will be (in the process of) writing the letter in the morning (and won't have time to talk to us).'

Future intention can also be expressed by using (a) the construction '*ag gabháil a*' plus a verbal noun or (b) the prepositions *le* 'with' and *chun* 'to' with non finite forms of the verb. Sentences (24) and (25) illustrate these usages:

- (24) *Tá sí ag gabháil a scríobh na litreach ar maidin.*  
'She is going to write the letter in the morning.'
- (25) *Tá sí leis/chun an litir a scríobh amárach.*  
'She intends to write the letter in the morning.'

The agent in sentence (25) has the option of changing his/her mind. However, there is a strong possibility that the intended action in (24) will be carried out. The prepositions *le/chun* in (25) are identical to the prepositional conjunctions used in purpose clauses. Irish has a further feature whereby the speaker may focus on the continuity of the predicted action rather than on its completion. In such cases the infinitival/gerundial form of the verb 'to be' is used, as in (26).

- (26) *Tá siad le bheith ag canadh ag an cheolchoirm amárach.*  
'They intend to sing at the concert tomorrow.'

Such sentences are extremely common in predicting or forecasting future weather conditions. This is shown in (27).

- (27) *Tá sé le bheith ag cur sneachta tráthnóna.*  
'It's going to snow this evening.' (Lit. To be snowing.)

## THE MOOD SYSTEM OF IRISH

The aim of this section is to describe the lexical, morphological and grammatical resources available in the language to indicate mood. Irish has three non-indicative moods, namely, imperative, conditional and subjunctive. Information about the morphological system and the expression of semantic distinctions, as well as possible combinations of tense and mood morphology, will also be examined.

## The imperative mood

This mood is used with commands, requests or to express incitement. There is no common imperative marker and all persons, including an impersonal marker,<sup>72, 73</sup> have a specific ending. Negation is expressed by the general particle *ná* which precedes the verb. Two different paradigms are given below, one for each of the two conjugations in Irish.

Table 6.12 Verbal paradigms, imperative mood

### Conjugation 1

1 sg. <i>ólaim</i> ‘Let me drink’	<i>brisim</i> ‘Let me break’	<i>sábhálaim</i> ‘Let me save’
2 sg. <i>ól</i>	<i>bris</i>	<i>sábháil</i>
3 sg. <i>óladh sé/sí</i>	<i>briseadh sé/sí</i>	<i>sábháladh sé/sí</i>
1 pl. <i>ólaimis/óladh muid</i>	<i>brisimis/briseadh muid</i>	<i>sábhálaimis/sábháladh muid</i>
2 pl. <i>ólaigí<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>brisigí</i>	<i>sábhálaigí</i>
3 pl. <i>ólaidís/óladh siad</i>	<i>brisidís/briseadh siad</i>	<i>sábhálaidís/sábháladh siad</i>
Aut. <i>óltar</i>	<i>bristear</i>	<i>sábháiltar<sup>2</sup></i>

### Conjugation 2

1 sg. <i>ordaím</i> ‘Let me order’	<i>ceanglaím</i> ‘Let me tie’
2 sg. <i>ordaigh</i>	<i>ceangail</i>
3 sg. <i>ordaíodh sé/sí</i>	<i>ceanglaíodh sé/sí</i>
1 pl. <i>ordaímis/ordaíodh muid</i>	<i>ceanglaímis/ceanglaíodh muid</i>
2 pl. <i>ordaígí</i>	<i>ceanglaígí</i>
3 pl. <i>ordaídís/ordaíodh siad</i>	<i>ceanglaídís/ceanglaíodh siad</i>
Aut. <i>ordaítear</i>	<i>ceanglaítear</i>

#### Notes

- 1 Various other forms are to be found in the spoken dialects e.g. *ólaig/ólaig, ceangalaig* etc. For Munster Irish see Ó Sé (2000: 150–274). In Ulster and Connacht Irish, both *-igí* and an *-í* ending exist side by side although the *-igí* ending has become the more common. This *-í* ending has developed from the historical *-(a)idh* ending of the 2nd plural. When *dh* and *gh* coalesce in the twelfth century, *-(a)igh* > *-í*. Hence we get *fanaí* and *fanaigí* as possible 2nd plural forms of *fan* ‘wait!’ (O’Rahilly 1932: 58–64).
- 2 The spelling differences for the different endings are the result of Irish spelling conventions and have no consequences for pronunciation. Thus each of the pairs *-aim/-im*, *-adh/-eadh*, *-aimis/-imis*, *-aigí/-igí* and *-aidís/-idís* are pronounced the same. The endings beginning with *i* or *e* that the preceding consonant is palatalized. The velarized/palatalized dichotomy carries phonemic status in Irish. The 2nd singular imperative forms the root of the verb in Irish. All other moods and verbal forms are derived from it through the addition of various endings and initial consonant mutations.

## Functions of the Irish imperative

Irish, as we have seen above, has grammaticalized all persons as many other languages do (Palmer 1986: 109–11). These endings contain joint realizations of both person and mood. However, the second person singular has zero marking and is to be regarded as the unmarked directive. The use of the imperative is largely restricted to main clauses but there is evidence that it can occur in subordinate clauses particularly if preceded by

another imperative in the main clause: Ó hUiginn (2001). Here are some examples from modern Irish of the use of the imperative.

Verbs of telling and saying are often used in requests for information.

- (28) *Inis dom cá bhfuil an cruinniú.*  
'Tell me where the meeting is taking place.'

It is reasonably expected that specific requests and orders should be carried out immediately or within a very short time-span. The Irish imperative does not grammaticalize immediate fulfilment and its interpretation is open. Any action therefore can be deferred as in the following example.

- (29) *Imigh chun an bhaile anois.*  
'Go home now.'

Palmer (1986: 109) reports that many languages have specific 1st and 3rd person forms for exhortation as is indeed the case for Irish. What is not clear is whether or not these 1st and 3rd person forms should be accorded the same status as the unmarked 2nd person, whose directive has to be carried out by someone other than the speaker. Here are two typical examples.

- (30) *Bíodh sí anseo amárach ar a trí.*  
'She is to be here tomorrow at three o'clock.'
- (31) *Fágaimis uainn é mar scéal.*  
'Let's drop the whole story.'

When the speaker wishes a certain course of action, the use of the 3rd person imperative is similar to the optative usage as found in the subjunctive.

- (32) *Duine ar bith atá ag teacht, leanadh sé Dónall.*  
'Whoever is coming, (let him) follow Dónall.'

As we discussed earlier, a feature of Irish grammar is the use of impersonal/autonomous forms of all verbs including *bí* 'to be', as imperatives. These forms are used for generalized instructions where no agent is specified.

- (32) *Óltar an tae seo.*  
'Let this tea be drunk (Someone should drink this tea).'

Note the following line from a well-known song with two different imperative forms, an impersonal form and a 3rd person singular non-specific form.

- (33) *Líontar domsa an crúiscín agus bíodh sé lán.*  
'Let the jug be filled for me up to the brim.'



### The future as an imperative

The future tense generally has predictive emphatic force and this is certainly the case in Modern Irish. This seems also to have been the case in Old and Middle Irish (McQuillan 2002: 30–2). In terms of semantic content, the future can be considered a more marked directive than unmarked 2nd person imperatives. However, the use of the future in giving directions is quite common in the dialects of Donegal where one might have considered the imperative more appropriate. Similar usage has been reported for the Irish of Carna, Co. Galway (Ó Curnáin 2007: 886). The following example from Donegal shows a combination of future and imperative forms. As the example is rather long, I give a morpheme to morpheme translation.

- (34) *Rachaidh tú síos godtí an droichead, tiontaigh ar thaobh*  
 Go-FUT you down to the bridge turn-IMP-2 sg on side  
*do lámhe deise, leanfaidh tú cosán cúpla*  
 your hand-GEN SG. right-GEN-SG. follow-FUT you a path few  
*céad slat, tá an teach istigh sna crainn.*  
 hundred yard IS-PRES the house inside in.the tree-PL.  
 ‘Go down to the bridge, turn right, follow the path for a few hundred yards, the house is there in among the trees.’

Many adverbs and several prepositions, which may indicate direction or movement either towards or away from the speaker, are often employed in Irish with the force of imperatives.

- (35) *Amach leat.*  
 ‘Out you go.’
- (36) *Chugat an mhuc.*  
 ‘Beware of the pig.’ (Lit. Towards you (may well be coming) the pig.)

### Imperatives in concessive clauses

One of the functions of imperative forms of all verbs in Irish is to introduce concessive conditional clauses. The forms used are generally in the 3rd person but the 1st person is also often found with such usages.

- (37) *Bíodh siad ann nó ná bíodh, ná labhair leo.*  
 ‘Whether they are there or not, don’t speak to them.’
- (38) *Cuireadh sé nó ná cuireadh, rachaidh mé ann.*  
 ‘Whether it rains or not, I’m going to go there.’

## THE SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD

Givon’s (1995) analysis of the subjunctive as a subset of *irrealis* in language in general seems much more attractive and promising in helping us to get a better understanding of the evolving relationship in Irish between the conditional and subjunctive moods and the strong historical tendency within the language of moving towards the conditional right up to the present day. Throughout the history of Irish there has been a coherence about the appearance of mood in a variety of different subordinating or dependent contexts.

## The verbal morphology

Before proceeding further with the various usages and functions of the subjunctive, it is better to outline briefly the various morphological features of the two subjunctives in Irish. They are conveniently referred to in Irish grammars as the present and the past subjunctive, respectively.<sup>74</sup>

Table 6.13 Verbal paradigms, subjunctive mood

### Present subjunctive

#### Conjugation 1

Default case <sup>1</sup>	<i>Go n-óla/Nár óla</i>	<i>Go mbrise/Nár bhrise</i>
1 pl.	<i>Go n-ólaimid/Nár ólaimid</i>	<i>Go mbrisimid/Nár bhrisimid</i>
Aut.	<i>Go n-óltar/Nár óltar</i>	<i>Go mbristear/Nár bhristear</i>

#### Conjugation 2

Default case	<i>Go n-ordaí/Nár ordaí</i>	<i>Go gceanglaí/Nár cheanglaí</i>
1 pl.	<i>Go n-ordaímid/Nár ordaímid</i>	<i>Go gceanglaímid/Nár cheanglaímid</i>
Aut.	<i>Go n-ordaítear/Nár ordaítear</i>	<i>Go gceanglaítear/Nár cheanglaítear</i>

### Past subjunctive

#### Conjugation 1

1 sg.	<i>Dá n-ólainn</i>	<i>Dá mbrisinn</i>
2 sg.	<i>n-óltá</i>	<i>mbristeá</i>
3 sg.	<i>n-óladh sé/sí</i>	<i>mbriseadh sé/sí</i>
1 pl.	<i>n-ólaimis/n-óladh muid</i>	<i>mbrisimis/mbriseadh muid</i>
2 pl.	<i>n-óladh sibh</i>	<i>mbriseadh sibh</i>
3 pl.	<i>n-ólaidís/n-óladh siad</i>	<i>mbrisidís/mbriseadh siad</i>
Aut.	<i>n-óltáí</i>	<i>mbristí</i>

#### Conjugation 2

1 sg.	<i>Dá n-ordaínn</i>	<i>Dá gceanglaínn</i>
2 sg.	<i>n-ordaíteá</i>	<i>gceanglaíteá</i>
3 sg.	<i>n-ordaíodh sé/sí</i>	<i>gceanglaíodh sé/sí</i>
1 pl.	<i>n-ordaímis/n-ordaíodh muid</i>	<i>gceanglaímis/gceanglaíodh muid</i>
2 pl.	<i>n-ordaíodh sibh</i>	<i>gceanglaíodh sibh</i>
3 pl.	<i>n-ordaídís/n-ordaíodh siad</i>	<i>gceanglaídís/gceanglaíodh siad</i>
Aut.	<i>n-ordaítí</i>	<i>gceanglaítí</i>

#### Note:

These forms can be used with any of the separate pronouns, including *muid/sinn* 'we'. The *-(i)r* ending, which we have already seen in other tenses for the 2nd singular, can also be used in the present subjunctive e.g. *go mbrisir* 'may you break'. The following example of a second conjugation verb *go gceanglaí* *r lár an tí* 'May you be tied down (not be able to move) in the middle of the house' is given by Ó Sé (2000: 268).

### Usage

The present subjunctive in Irish functions as an optative or 'volative' (Palmer 1986: 116) conveying hope or a realizable wish. Originally it was augmented by *ro* but now and since the ninth century by *co/go*. These usages are exemplified in the following.

- (39) *Go dtaga do ríocht.*  
'Thy kingdom come.'
- (40) *Nár laga Dia thú.*  
'More power to you!' (Lit. May God not weaken you.)

Irish is particularly fond of the mood sequence – imperative in a main clause and the present subjunctive in a following subordinate clause. This was also the case as far back as Old Irish, the subordinate clause now always introduced by *go*.

- (41) *Fan go dtaga d'athair*  
'Wait until your father comes.'

The present subjunctive is often used in subordinate clauses in Irish to denote purpose and reason. The main clause verb often takes the future tense though not exclusively so. These sentences also express a strong likelihood that the action mentioned will take place.

- (42) *Rachaidh mé chun an aonaigh go gceannaí mé bó.*  
'I will go to the fair (in order) to buy a cow.'
- (43) *Gabh síos go bhfeice tú í.*  
'Go down (in order) to see her.'

## NON-FINITE STRUCTURES

There is a strong tendency, which has been accentuated since the Old Irish period, to use non-finite verbal noun constructions in subordinate clauses. They often replace original subjunctive structures (Genee 1998: 440–52 and Ó hUiginn 1998: 136ff.).

- (44) *D'ordaigh sé an príosúnach a thabhairt chuige.*  
'He ordered that the prisoner be brought to him.'

### **Go as a temporal conjunction**

*Go* in Irish introduces time 'until' clauses. The future context is provided by the use of an imperative or of a future tense form.

- (45) *Fanfaidh mé go raibh siad réidh.*  
'I'll wait until they are ready.'

In the course of its history from Old Irish onwards, the evolution of more explicit conjunctions to express purpose and time is one of the most striking and enduring features of Irish syntax. These changes have been referred to in the literature as pragmatic strengthening (Hopper and Traugott 1993: 87–93). This overt expression of meaning is a sign of renewal and change. In the following examples the original *co/go* conjunction is strengthened by *nó* 'or' and *sa dóigh* 'in the way'. These 'new' augmented conjunctions can be interpreted as either purpose or result clauses and can be translated by 'since/because'.

- (46) *Cha dtéim ann nó go mbí/raibh an lá ann.*  
‘I won’t go there until/unless it is morning time.’
- (47) *Ólaigí an deoch sa dóigh nach dtige an aicíd oraibh.*  
‘Drink the medicine so that you are not struck by the disease.’

The dichotomy found in Old Irish between the use of the subjunctive or a verbal noun construction following certain kinds of verbs in purpose clauses (Disterheft 1985: 115) is also to be found in the modern language.<sup>75</sup> The Ulster dialect seems to maintain the use of both constructions, while the other two main dialects, Connacht and Munster, prefer the use of finite subordinate clauses introduced by augmented/unaugmented conjunctions. The following illustrate the Ulster usage.

- (48) *D’imigh siad chun an bhaile á ní féin.*  
‘They went home to wash themselves.’
- (49) *D’imigh siad chun an bhaile go nódh siad iad féin.*  
‘They went home in order to wash themselves.’

The use of the subjunctive form in (49) indicates an *irrealis* situation where there is some uncertainty about whether or not the action will be/was carried out. Such uncertainty does not apply to (48) where the speaker assumes that the action will be/has been carried out.

### The development of *ach(t) go*

The *ach(t) go* conditional conjunction is another of the augmented forms which still survive into the modern period and its history is duly outlined by Ó Buachalla (1972). It can be followed by all tenses and by both the subjunctive and conditional moods. It has a specific time reference with the meaning ‘when, as soon as’ and has been attested in all of the three main dialects.<sup>76</sup>

- (50) *Ní bhogfaidh sí ach go mbí sí cinnte.*  
‘She won’t move until she is certain.’
- (51) *Ach gurb é gur labhair tú, bhí tú buailte agam.*  
‘Had you not spoken, I would have struck you.’

### Temporal clauses in Modern Irish

In some dialects the actual number of distinctive subjunctive forms is confined to a limited set of frequently used verbs such as *bí* ‘be’, *déan* ‘do’, *faigh* ‘get’, *tar* ‘come’ and *téigh* ‘go’. It is also the case that subjunctive forms tend to be possible only when they are immediately governed by certain complementizer markers such as *go* and its negative *nach*. LASID 1958–69 is a detailed source for the distribution of subjunctive time clauses.

LASID and other sources would seem to indicate the following realizations pertaining to the living speech in Irish-speaking areas of mid-twentieth century Ireland. Donegal representing North-West Ulster speech shows a preponderance of subjunctive forms, although increasing use of the future of the verb ‘to be’ is to be found in future-projecting

*go*-clauses. The drift away from the use of the subjunctive is highest in North-East Donegal, whereas with the verb ‘to be’ there is a much wider distribution of non-subjunctive forms throughout all of Donegal. Subjunctive and non-subjunctive forms are fairly evenly distributed in Connacht dialects. However, the subjunctive of the verb ‘to be’ is more likely in North Connacht dialects, with Southern Connacht dialects tending towards the future, and this is supported and validated by Ó Curnáin (1996: 490 and 2007: 1230). Across Munster dialects the subjunctive of the verb ‘to be’ has been unattested, being replaced by the future. Other verbs show a more even distribution of the subjunctive although even here the distribution of the subjunctive and non-subjunctive forms is fairly mixed. The following examples indicate the complexity of the realizations of subjunctive and non-subjunctive forms.

- (52) *Fan go bhfagha/bhfaighidh mé mo mhála.*  
‘Wait until I get my bag.’

- (53) *Is gearr go dtaga/dtíge/dtiocfaidh sí.*  
‘She will be here shortly.’

### Conditional sentences

In examining Irish conditionals, three types can be identified on the basis of the connectives that may be chosen to mark them. When there is an *if* type relationship, modern Irish employs both *má* and *dá* to grammaticalize this conditional relationship. Both conjunctions operate across the actual and non actual (*realis* and *irrealis*) domains of reference. *Cé/Gidh go* are used in the creation of concessive conditionals and they also operate across actual and non-actual domains. Restrictive conditionals with the restrictive meaning *only if* are introduced by *ach* and *ach má*.

- (54) *Má bhí sé ann ní fhaca mise é.*  
‘If he was there I didn’t see him.’
- (55) *Dá mbíodh/mbeadh sé ann, chuirfinn ceist air.*  
‘Had he been there, I would have asked him.’

*Má* is obligatory in all variants of Irish rather than optional in some and is normally followed by the non conditional forms of the verb. The future indicative is disqualified from the condition clause where prediction is inherently impossible and is replaced by the habitual present. The verb in the main clause carries the future tense.<sup>77</sup>

- (56) *Má ólann tú an deoch, déanfaidh sí maith duit.*  
‘If you take the drink, it will do you good.’

### The conditional and new markers

The ongoing trend away from the use of the subjunctive and its replacement by the conditional continues unabated within the modern language. Therefore, the subjunctive is restricted to the use of older markers. Such new introductory phrases as *ar eagla go* ‘for

fear that/in case', *sa dóigh go* 'in order that', *chun/le go* 'so that' and many others are now almost universally followed by the conditional.

- (57) *Chuaigh mé i bhfolach ar eagla go bhfeicfeadh sé mé.*  
'I went into hiding in case he should/would see me.'

### Negative conditionals

Irish possesses two conjunctions to introduce negative conditional main clauses. First, there is the standard form *mura* and its dialect variant *muna*, both followed by similar initial mutation alternations. Second, the forms *murach/murab é* are used in the sense of 'if it were not for . . .'. In the case of *mura/muna* they may be followed by either the subjunctive or conditional mood, or indeed by any other tense. Usage is dictated mostly by the sociolinguistic and pragmatic context in which sentences are uttered.

- (58) *Mura n-óladh sí é, bheadh tart uirthi arís.*  
'If she didn't drink it, she would be thirsty again later.'
- (59) *Mura mbeinn tinn, rachainn ann.*  
'If I weren't sick, I'd go there.'

The use of *murach/murab é* is illustrated in sentences (60) and (61).<sup>78</sup> The conjunctions are normally followed by the complementizer *go/gur*, except for copular sentences.

- (60) *Murab é go dtáinig siad aréir.*  
'Unless they arrived last night.'
- (61) *Murach gur labhair mé, bhuaifí mé.*  
'If I hadn't spoken, I would have been beaten.'

### *Realis-irrealis continuum*

Certain usages of the conditional mood can be viewed along the *realis-irrealis* axis, through the use of the conjunctions *má* and *dá*, respectively. However, the most common use of the conditional in modern Irish is non-referential in nature and indeed in many cases there is no condition attached to its usage. Two recent papers, Wigger (2005) and Eshel-Benninga (2007), have focused on this fact, based on speech and writing corpora from the Connacht (Galway) dialect of modern Irish.<sup>79</sup> The following exemplify the use of the conditional mood on its own without any perceived condition attached to its use or to be implied.

- (62) *Chomh maith díreach is dá mbeinn ag éisteacht leis.*  
'Almost as good as if I were listening to him.'
- (63) *An mbeadh briseadh fiche punt agat?*  
Q be-COND change twenty pound at.you  
'Would you have twenty pounds change?'

### The conditional in indirect speech

Reported or indirect speech, whose basic form was uttered using the future tense, is communicated through the use of the conditional. This type of communication is common and productive.

- (64) *Dúirt siad go mbeadh siad ann.*  
'They said they would be there/present.'

### OTHER DIACHRONIC CHANGES

Irish has shown a tendency for movement away from the use of the subjunctive in what have been called in the literature 'indefinite concessives' (Thompson and Longacre 1985: 198, König 1986: 231). The subjunctive has been replaced by future tense or conditional forms.<sup>80</sup> The choice has to do with whether or not *irrealis* is to be marked. If so, *irrealis* tends to be marked by the use of the conditional. I give below examples of both usages.

- (65) *Cibé duine a rachas ann, chan mise é.*  
'Whoever goes there, it won't be me.'
- (66) *Dá bhfaighinn duine agaibh a choimeádfadh an teach dom.*  
'If I were to/could get one of you to take care of the house for me.'

### Conjunction and complementizer sequences

In Modern Irish, mood harmony between sequential clauses follows fairly predictable lines. They can be summarized as follows:

<i>Protasis</i>		<i>Apodosis</i>
Past subjunctive	>>	Conditional mood
Conditional mood	>>	Conditional mood

- (67) *Dá mbíodh airgead agam, bheinn ceart go leor.*  
'If I had money, I would have been all right.'
- (68) *Dá ndíolfá an teach, bheadh airgead agat.*  
'If you sold/were to sell the house, you would have money.'

There is a strong tendency in the modern language to replace the finite subordinate clause with a non-finite clause containing the verbal noun construction, contrary to Old Irish usage. It parallels similar developments elsewhere in the diachronic syntax of the language.

- (69) *Dá rachfá chun cainte léi agus do scéal a mhíniú di.*  
'If you were to talk to her and explain your story to her.'

### Impersonal/autonomous constructions

Irish has impersonal/autonomous endings for each tense, including periphrastic tenses. There has been much debate as to whether or not they should be classified as passives (McCloskey 1996, 2007, MacCana and Ó Baoill 1997, Stenson 1981: 148–9, Ó Sé 2006). The construction is labelled in various ways in Irish grammars but I propose to adhere to the term autonomous throughout the present discussion. There is general overall agreement that the Irish autonomous is not passive in the sense of such English constructions as *The mouse was caught by the cat*. The corresponding Irish sentence is ungrammatical and this is indicated by the asterisk below.

(70) \**Beireadh ar an luchóg ag an chat.*

Irish does not allow agents to co-occur with such autonomous forms when the agent is a human being or when it has the characteristic feature [+ animal].<sup>81</sup> Such sentences are fine without the agent and are fully grammatical.

(71) *Beireadh ar an luchóg.*

Irish, therefore, must revert to the active forms of the verb in order to convey the meaning expressed by (70) above.

When the object of the verb is a pronoun, it appears in the accusative form. The accusative forms are distinguished from the nominative forms only in the 3rd singular and plural in all dialects, e.g. *sé/é* 'he/him/it', *sí/i* 'she/her/it' and *siad/iad* 'they/them'. Ulster and Connacht dialects make a similar distinction in the 2nd singular pronoun *tú* 'you (nom.)' and *thú* 'you (acc.)'.

(72) *Buaileadh iad/thú.*  
'They/you were beaten.'

It should be pointed out that when the 'agent' is non human or does not have the characteristic feature [+ animal], it can co-occur with verbs in the autonomous form. It is generally preceded by the preposition *le* in such contexts.

(73) *Leagadh le carr é.*  
'He was knocked down by a car.'

The use of *le* in autonomous sentences should be compared with the instrumental use of *le* in sentences of the following type.

(74) *Ghearr sí an t-arán le scian.*  
'She cut the bread with a knife.'

The verb of existence takes autonomous endings in all tenses and moods. Such autonomous forms may occur on their own in replies to questions or more commonly with the progressive form of the main verb.

(75) *Bítear ag caint air.*  
'It is (being) talked about habitually.'



THE VERBAL NOUN

The use of the verbal noun in non finite clauses in Irish has been the subject of many contributions in the last three decades using insights from modern linguistic theories. A very useful summary of the issues involved is to be had in McCloskey (2006). The verbal noun in Irish fills the role undertaken by infinitives and gerundives in other languages. Verbal nouns are formed by the addition of affixes to a basic root and these affixes have basically remained unchanged from the Old Irish period (Thurneysen 1946: §§ 721–37, *Graiméar Gaeilge na mBráithre Críostaí* 1960: 243–5). The most regular endings are *-(e)adh* and *-(i)ú*. The former is affixed to verbs of the first conjugation, while the latter is attached to verbs of the second conjugation e.g. *briseadh* < *bris* ‘to break’, *moladh* < *mol* ‘to praise’, *míniú* < *míni*gh ‘to explain’. Verbal nouns also act as nouns and are declined as such, having genitive singular and nominative plural forms, as in the following examples.

Table 6.14 Verbal nouns

Verbal noun	Genitive singular	Plural
<i>briseadh</i>	<i>briste</i>	<i>bristeacha</i>
<i>moladh</i>	<i>molta</i>	<i>moltaí</i>
<i>míniú</i>	<i>mínithe</i>	<i>mínithe</i>

The verbal noun is used in Modern Irish to differentiate a large number of semantic distinctions across a variety of contexts and pragmatic situations. They are touched on briefly below, under particular headings.

(a) *ag + verbal noun*

This is by far the most common use of the verbal noun. In its unmarked representation, the noun immediately following the verbal noun is in the genitive case. Its initial consonant may or may not be lenited.<sup>82</sup> This construction has become part of the regular morphological development of the aspectual system of Modern Irish and helps form the periphrastic structures by combining with the verb of existence. The latter carries all the time markings and can be used with all tenses and moods.

- (76) *Tá siad ag baint mhóna/na móna.*  
‘They are cutting turf/the turf.’ (Lit. at the cutting of turf/the turf.)

(b) *a/á + verbal noun*

In constructing relative clauses of various types, the verbal noun is preceded by *a* or *á*,<sup>83</sup> followed by the appropriate initial changes on the initial consonant of the verbal noun.<sup>84</sup> The distinction is based on an active/passive dichotomy, the long *á* being associated with passive constructions. The following illustrate the active/passive distinction.

- (77) *Sin an teach atá sí a thógáil.*  
‘That is the house she is (in the process of) building.’
- (78) *Sin an teach atá á thógáil (aici).*  
‘That is the house that is being built (by her).’

The use of *á* is not confined to relative clauses. It occurs in unmarked passive structures as seen in the next example.

- (79) *Bhí na tithe á ndíol ag Síle.*  
 'The houses were being sold by Síle.'

The use of *a* + verbal noun serves to denote purpose or intention in a variety of contexts.

- (80) *Chuaigh siad a chodladh go luath.*  
 'They went to bed early.' (lit. with the intention of sleeping)

Northern dialects are particularly fond of this construction to indicate future intention. These normally follow verbs of action/movement as the main verb. In such constructions the *a* is replaced by *dh* before vowels, which is a reflection of a historical *do*.

- (81) *D'imigh siad a dh'iascaireacht.*  
 'They went fishing.' (lit. with the intention of fishing)

These dialects distinguish between purpose/intention and concomitant action as indicated by the use of *ag* with the verbal noun.<sup>85</sup>

- (82) *D'imigh sé ag damhsa.*  
 'He was dancing as he left.'
- (83) *D'imigh sé a dhamhsa.*  
 'He went dancing.' (lit. with the intention of dancing)

Ulster dialects also preserve an older construction which indicates purpose and intention through the use of *a*. This older construction tends to be replaced by the use of the prepositions *le/chun* in the other dialects. Ulster dialects use both constructions.

- (84) *Tháinig sé a cheannach na bó.*  
 'He came to buy the cow.'
- (85) *Tháinig sé leis/chun an bhó a cheannach.*  
 'He came in order to/to buy the cow.'

(c) *Non-finite clauses with verbal nouns*

Verbal nouns preceded by *ag* are usually followed by their complements in the genitive case. However, the history of the language indicates a movement away from this construction to one containing *a* (<*do*) in non finite clauses, which act as the object of the main clause. The subject of the verbal noun precedes it in all dialects and in northern dialects both the subject and object may be fronted. An exception is the indirect object construction with the preposition *do*. The following illustrate the various usages.

- (86) *Bhí sé ag ól an fhíona.*  
 'He was drinking the wine.'

- (87) *D'iarr siad an t-airgead a thabhairt do Sheán.*  
'They asked that the money be given to Seán.'
- (88) *Ba mhaith léi an teach a dhíol.*  
'She would like to sell the house.'
- (89) *Ba mhaith léi Seán an teach a cheannach.*  
'She would like Seán to buy the house.'<sup>86</sup>

With intransitive verbs, there is only one preposed element. They would be expected to carry the nominative case. However, one of the quirks of Modern Irish grammar is that a pronominal element such as a pronoun would seem to be marked for accusative.<sup>87</sup>

- (90) *Dúirt sé iad/na páistí fanacht.*  
'He asked that they/the children stay.'

This type of non finite construction has been the subject of intensive discussion and debate in a large number of articles by various authors: McCloskey (1984, 1987, 1996, 2007), McCloskey and Chung (1987), Noonan (1992). As already mentioned, the verbal noun is also used with such phrases as *i ndiaidh* and *tar éis*, both meaning 'after', to construct sentences with perfective meaning.<sup>88</sup>

- (91) *Tá siad i ndiaidh/tar éis carr úr a cheannach.*  
'They have (just recently) bought a new car.'

It should be noted also that object non finite verbal noun phrases following a verbal noun construction with *ag* are not marked for genitive. This is contrary to the situation in the earlier language.<sup>89</sup>

- (92) *Bhí sí ag iarraidh an doras a oscailt.*  
'She was trying to open the door.'

Other important prepositions/conjunctions such as *gan/ach* are used with the verbal noun to indicate negation. Research has shown that these elements indicate a syntactic boundary between the main clause and the non finite clause containing the verbal noun and furthermore that the non finite clause forms a syntactic unit: McCloskey (1984), McCloskey and Chung (1987).

- (93) *Dúradh liom gan labhairt.*  
'I was asked not to speak.'
- (94) *Iarradh orainn gan tine a lasadh.*  
'We were asked not to light a fire.'
- (95) *Ní raibh rogha againn ach labhairt (leis).*  
'We had no option but to speak to him.'
- (96) *Ní raibh rogha againn ach an teach a dhíol.*  
'We had no option but to sell the house.'

Other important prepositions/prepositional phrases used with the verbal noun to express important semantic distinctions include the following: *réidh/ullamh le, ar tí, ag . . . do, ar . . . do* and many others too numerous to mention. *Réidh/ullamh le* and *ar tí* for example indicate that an action is imminent or that there is an intention to carry out some action.

- (97) *Tá mé réidh le himeacht/ar tí imeacht.*  
'I am about to go/leave.'

A very important role is played by the combination of the prepositions *ag + do* and *ar + do* with verbal nouns to indicate the difference between concomitant action and sequential action, respectively.<sup>90</sup> This distinction is illustrated by the following sentences.

- (98) *Ag teacht isteach dó, bhuail sé leis na mic léinn.*  
'As he was coming in, he met the students.'
- (99) *Ar theacht isteach dó, labhair sé leis na mic léinn.*  
'Having come in, he spoke to the students.'

The history of Irish shows a movement away from the use of subordinate clauses to verbal noun constructions in non main clauses. While all dialects use such constructions, it would seem that they have a more common currency in Ulster dialects. Both finite and non finite constructions are still to be found in all dialects and are optional for a wide variety of clauses (*Graiméar Gaeilge na mBráithre Críostaí* 1960: 262).

## VERBAL ADJECTIVES/PARTICIPLES

Modern Irish has a past participle construction which it has inherited from Old Irish. It is also referred to as a verbal adjective as it can function as an adjective and is so described in Irish grammars. It is formed by the addition of the suffixes *-tha/-the*. This 'th' was originally a voiceless dental fricative but became [h] around the end of the twelfth century. This 'th' was delenited after *ch*, alveolar and dental/alveodental consonants namely, *d, n, nn, l, ll, s, t* and *th*, both velarized and palatalized e.g. *crochta* 'hanged', *creidte* 'believed', *dúnta* 'closed', *teannta* 'tight, tighened', *ólta* 'drunk', *geallta* 'promised', *briste* 'broken', *títe* 'fallen' < *tit* and *ite* 'eaten' < *ith*. The original 'th' is maintained in writing after other consonants e.g. *scríofa* < *scríobhtha* 'written', *feicthe* 'seen', *cumtha* 'composed', *tógtha* 'lifted'. As can be seen from the examples, both transitive and intransitive verbs form verbal adjectives. This process was confined to transitive verbs in Old Irish and this is the case in Ulster Irish until the present day. The verbal adjective/participle is indeclinable in Modern Irish.<sup>91</sup> It has the following usages:

- (a) as an attributive adjective e.g. *fuinneog bhriste* 'a broken window', *bóthar crochta* 'a steep road'.
- (b) as a predicative adjective with the substantive verb and certain other verbs, e.g. *Tá an doras oscailte* 'The door is open', *Bhí an fhuinneog briste* 'The window was broken', *Fág an doras dúnta* 'Leave the door closed'.
- (c) combined with the substantive verb to form aspectual contrasts within the verbal system as discussed earlier. They generally portray perfective meanings, e.g. *Tá an teach tógtha* 'The house has been/is built',

- (d) combined with the copula to produce a passive participle of necessity. This process is no longer productive e.g. *Ní tógtha ort é* 'You are not to be blamed for it', *Ní maíte air é* 'He is not to be envied for it'.
- (e) combined with various prefixes such as *do-* 'difficult, impossible', *in-* 'possible' and *so-* 'easy, possible' e.g. *doléite* 'unreadable', *inite* 'edible', *so-athraithe* 'adjustable' to create adjectival forms e.g. *bia inite* 'edible food'. These same forms can be used predicatively with the copula or the substantive verb e.g. *Tá sé sofheicthe* 'it is visible', *Is inmolta an gníomh é* 'It is a deed to be recommended'.

## THE COPULA

The role of the copula in Modern Irish is syntactic, linking two noun phrases or a noun phrase and an adjectival phrase. It does not of itself signify any semantic function, but only predication. It does not have any personal forms, and is reduced to two tenses – present and non present. The latter can be past or conditional, both having identical forms.

The various forms of the copula are all unstressed. They perform the following semantic functions in the language: (a) to create classifier sentences, (b) to produce equative sentences, (c) to generate cleft sentences denoting emphasis or focusing on a particular word or phrase, (d) used in sentences where the predicate is an adjective, and (e) in certain idiomatic expressions with prepositional phrases.

(a) The following are examples of classifier sentences:

- (100) *Is/Ní múinteoir é.*  
'He is/is not a teacher.'

- (101) *Ba/Níor mhúinteoir é.*  
'He was/was not a teacher.'

(b) The following are examples of equative sentences. Both the subject and the predicate are definite noun phrases in such sentences. Notice the use of *í* in the second sentence, agreeing with the subject *Máire*. The use of such pronouns as dummy predicates is compulsory in both writing and speech.

- (102) *Is/Ní tusa an múinteoir.*  
You are/are not the teacher.
- (103) *Is í/Ní hí Máire an múinteoir.*  
'Máire is/is not the teacher.'

(c) The use of cleft sentences is a very common construction in the modern language. The copula introduces the cleft and is followed immediately by the element(s) to be emphasized or given focus. Almost all constituents can be emphasized or focused in this way.<sup>92</sup> Here are some examples.

- (104) *Is iad a rinne é.*  
'They are the people who did it.'

(105) *Is ar maidin a tháinig sí.*

'It was in the morning time that she arrived.'

(106) *Ba liomsa a labhair sé*

'I was the one he spoke to.' (Lit. was with-me that spoke he)

(d) When the predicate is an adjective and the subject a definite noun phrase, the copula is also employed.

(107) *Is maith an scéal é.*

'It's good news.'

(108) *Ba mhór an trua.*

'It was a great pity.'

However, when the predicate is an indefinite noun phrase which is qualified by an adjective, it normally follows the subject.

(109) *Is duine deas í.*

'She is a nice person.'

(e) Finally, the copula is obligatory in certain idiomatic sentences where the predicate is a prepositional phrase, partly because there is a semantic contrast with sentences containing the verb of existence.

(110) *An leat é?*

'Is it yours?'

(111) *An bhfuil sé leat?*

'Have you got it with you?'

(112) *Is fútsa é.*

'It's up to you.'

(113) *Tá sé fútsa.*

'It's under you/You are sitting on it.'

## THE SUBSTANTIVE VERB

During the Middle Irish period and afterwards, the verb 'to be' came to replace and compete with the copula in expressing several of its functions. This is particularly true in the predication of certain adjectives e.g. *Bhí an lá tirim* 'The day was dry'.<sup>93</sup>

However, from the Middle Irish period also, the substantive verb has come to be used more extensively in classifier sentences. This has been accomplished by combining the preposition *i* 'in' with a possessive pronoun preceding the predicate. The predicate has marked agreement with the subject of the sentence.<sup>94</sup>

- (114) *Tá Dónall ina mhúinteoir.*  
'Dónall is a teacher.'

- (115) *Bhí siadsan ina dtiarnaí.*  
'They were the landlords.'

Such sentences occur in all varieties of Irish and Scottish Gaelic, but seem to be more prevalent in Northern dialects. It should be pointed out that sentences of this type indicate a position or state achieved by the subject. They are used particularly when the predicates involved indicate certain roles and occupations which have been acquired. They contrast with copular sentences, which indicate a more permanent inborn state, although the different types can be interchanged in many contexts. The following try to illustrate the type of contrasts that exist. The first pair are interchangeable while the second pair are not.

- (116) *Is sagart é/Tá sé ina shagart.*  
'He is a priest.'

- (117) *Is fear gorm é/\*Tá sé ina fhear ghorm.*  
'He is a black man.'

The first pair (116) are interchangeable because they refer to the period after which the person referred to as *é* was ordained. In the second pair (117), the feature of being 'a black man' is permanent or part of the individual from birth and therefore the use of *Is* is compulsory. This type of permanency cannot be expressed by the structure containing the substantive verb. This is illustrated still further by using inanimate objects in copular sentences. Such objects have been created by humans and therefore have their permanent form from the beginning e.g. *Is cóta é seo* 'This is a coat'. It is not possible to use the construction with the substantive verb to convey the same meaning.

The structure involving the use of the substantive verb can also be used with temporal expressions indicating times of the day, unexpected weather conditions and other conditions which arise at particular times.

- (118) *Tá sé ina shamhradh.*  
'Summer has arrived.'

- (119) *Tá sé ina chogadh.*  
'It's war.'

This construction also allows various inversions when there is a need to emphasize the predicate e.g. *léachtóir atá ionam* 'I am a lecturer' (lit. 'A lecturer that is in me'), *Níl ann ach amadán* 'He is only a fool' (lit. 'There is not (anything) in him but a foolish person').

### Omission of the copula

In every period of the language, there has been a tendency in particular circumstances to omit the copula at the very beginning of a sentence. Omission occurs with all subjects whether they are singular or plural and in the two main types of copula constructions mentioned above e.g. *Dochtúirí an bheirt* 'The two of them are doctors', *Ise an príomhoide* 'She is the principal'.

## WORD ORDER AND SYNTAX

Irish has verb–subject–object as its basic order in main and subordinate clauses. This also holds true for negative clauses and for questions. In these cases the negative and interrogative particles precede the main verb.

- (120) *Ní fhaca mé iad.*  
‘I didn’t see them.’

- (121) *An bhfaca tú Bríd?*  
‘Did you see Bríd?’

When interrogative pronouns are used they precede the main verb followed by a relative clause. Such clauses may be direct or indirect.<sup>95</sup>

- (122) *Cé a bheas ag an damhsa?*  
‘Who will be at the dance?’

- (123) *Cé a mbeidh tú ag bualadh leis?*  
‘Who will you be meeting?’

Adverbs, prepositional phrases and quantifiers such as *uile/uilig* phrases are more flexible with regard to word order but tend to be placed towards the end of a sentence.

- (124) *Chonaic mé Seán ar an aonach sna Doirí Beaga inné.*  
‘I saw Seán at the fair in Derrybeg yesterday.’

The last three lexical items can be rearranged in any order and the sentence will still remain grammatical.

The quantifier *uile/uilig* has similar properties although caution is needed in order to know where it should be placed.

- (125) *D’ith Seán na húlla uilig inné.*  
‘Seán ate all the apples yesterday.’

- (126) *D’ith Seán na húlla a fuair sé uilig inné.*  
‘Seán ate all the apples he got yesterday.’

In copular sentences the prevailing order is copula – predicate – subject.

- (127) *Is beag a gcuid airgid.*  
‘They have very little money’ (lit. ‘Is small their money’)

As already discussed, the above word order types can be disturbed and rearranged when the speaker decides to place particular focus or emphasis on any constituent within a sentence. Such rearrangements have been referred to as *cleft* sentences in linguistic publications and have been the focus of detailed research in the recent past. The constituent to be emphasized or focused is moved to the beginning of the sentence and introduced by the appropriate form of the copula. The rest of the sentence is in the form of a relative clause.



### Coordinate structures

Phrases and sentences can be linked through the use of a variety of co-ordinating conjunctions, as follows:

- (a) Using *agus* 'and' (often reduced to *is*, 's) e.g. *Seán agus Séamas* 'John and James', *mise is tusa* 'You and I'.
- (b) Using *nó* 'or' and *ach* 'but, except' in positive sentences e.g. *Anna nó Síle* 'Ann or Sheila', *An mbeidh tú ann nó nach mbeidh?* 'Will you be there or not?', *Ní raibh ann ach Seán* 'There was no one there but John.'
- (c) When two negative clauses occur within a sentence, they are linked by the conjunction *ná* 'nor' e.g. *Ní íosfaidh sé ná ní ólfaidh sé* 'He will neither eat nor drink.'

### Subordination and relativization

Irish relative clauses have been the subject of a series of studies over the past thirty years using insights from modern linguistic theory. These studies have made a substantial contribution to the development of the theory and will continue to do so in the future. The main interest lies in the way Modern Irish dialects portray the intricate relationships that can exist between main clauses and relative clauses and the further revelations arising from the study of non finite clauses, in particular McCloskey (1985), McCloskey and Sells (1988), McCloskey (1990), Noonan (1992), Duffield (1995).

In the Old Irish period there were more special relative forms than there are in Modern Irish. All dialects have direct and indirect relative forms. Direct forms refer to a nominative/accusative relationship, and indirect forms refer to accusative, dative and genitive/possessive relationships. In positive clauses, both are introduced by the particle *a*. However, in direct clauses *a* is followed by lenition but in indirect clauses eclipsis is the rule.

While all dialects have direct and indirect relative clause verbal forms, special relative forms used in direct relative clauses are preserved only in Connacht and Ulster dialects. These take the ending *-(e)as* or some form thereof.<sup>96</sup> They are used in positive clauses only, as the negative relative marker *nach* takes eclipsis without the *-(e)as* ending. The following are representative examples.

- (128) *An teach a thógfad siad.*  
'The house they will build.'
- (129) *Sin an dath a bhíos air.*  
'That is its colour.' (Lit. That the colour that is on it.)
- (130) *An t-uisce a shús sé'.*  
'The water that it absorbs.'
- (131) *An teach nach dtógfaid siad'.*  
'The house they will not build.'

Direct relative clauses expressing nominative/accusative relationship are often ambiguous and differentiating between them depends on context alone. This has been the case since the accusative endings disappeared from the language in the Middle Irish period. If the following example is taken out of context, then it is impossible to tell the subject from

the object: e.g. *an duine a bhuaill an tiománaí* 'The person who hit the driver/The person whom the driver hit.'<sup>97</sup>

Indirect relative clauses are introduced by the particles *a* in positive sentences and *nach* in negative sentences in all tenses and moods, except the past tense. Both particles are followed by eclipsis of the verb. The forms *ar* and *nár* are used with the past tense and are followed by lenition. The following example arises from a genitival relationship.

- (132) *Sin an fear ar thug siad a mháthair abhaile.*  
'That is the man whose mother they brought home.'

When there is a dative type relationship expressed through the use of a preposition, indirect relative clauses are used. They take two forms: (a) the basic form of the preposition precedes the relative marker at the head of the relative clause and (b) the preposition in the form of a prepositional pronoun appears at the end of the relative clause and agrees in number and gender with its antecedent noun. The former type is found in all dialects and historically is the older construction. However, in many of the modern dialects the two forms compete with each other and type (a) is in danger of being replaced by type (b).<sup>98</sup>

- (133) *An bhó ar a raibh muid ag brath/An bhó a raibh muid ag brath uirthi.*  
'The cow we were depending on.'

Similarly, other subordinate clauses e.g. comparative, temporal, are introduced in the same way as those described above. Temporal clauses seem to allow both lenition and eclipsis, particularly in Connacht and Ulster dialects, as shown by the following examples.

- (134) *An lá a chonaic/bhfaca mé iad.*  
'The day I saw them.'
- (135) *An tseachtain a bheidh/mbeidh sí anseo.*  
'The week she will be here.'

Most subordinate clauses which introduce indirect speech, causal, temporal, purpose, resultative and concessive clauses are formed using the complementizer *go* and its negative counterpart *nach* followed by eclipsis of the verb. They are also often preceded by a conjunction or a preposition acting as a conjunction.

- (136) *Dúirt sé nach bhfaca sé an carr.*  
'He said that he didn't see the car.'
- (137) *Tháinig siad go bhfeicfeadh siad í.*  
'They came in order to see her.'

In introducing conditional clauses, *má* and *dá* and their negative counterpart *mura/muna* (preterite *murar/munar*) are used but without the use of *go/nach*.

- (138) *Labharfainn leis dá mbeinn ann.*  
'I would speak to him if I were there.'

### Responses

Modern Irish does not have separate words for 'Yes' and 'No' and instead it must resort to repeating some form of the verb in its positive or negative form. The most natural responses repeat the verb without any personal markings unless they are suffixes.

#### (139) *An mbeidh tú ann?*

'Will you be there?' *Beidh* (unmarked future form) or *Bead* (1st sg.).<sup>99</sup>

### Verbless sentences

There are many instances where sentences appear without a verb. They can be categorized as follows:

- a Copula sentences, e.g. *Sin an fear* 'That is the man', *Seo duit* 'Here you are'.
- b Adverbs as commands, e.g. *Isteach libh!* 'In you (pl.) go', *Aníos leat* 'Up you come (towards me)', *Anois thú* 'Now, it's your turn'.
- c Prepositions in exclamatory phrases, e.g. *Chugat an mhuc* 'Beware of the pig (lit. Towards you the pig).', *Uait* 'Towards the left/Away from you.'
- d Prayers, e.g. *Dia linn* 'God bless us', *Maigh ó inniu* 'My goodness!'.

## LANGUAGE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

It is fair to say that the most important and far-reaching measure adopted in the past eighty years in this context has been the standardization of Irish spelling and grammar. This has been discussed by various scholars over the years including Mac Mathúna (2008), Ó Baoill (1983, 1988, 1999, 2001), Ó Glaisne (1965), Ó Murchú (1977, 1978), Williams (2002). Individuals and groups of researchers working in different institutions over the past three decades or more have published continuously on many aspects of the Irish language. They cover such issues as Irish and national identity, language in music, literature and the media, attitudes towards Irish, Irish in the Gaeltacht, the teaching and learning of Irish, the importance of place-names research, the learning of Irish as a first language, registers and their role in Irish drama and media, the importance and success of the Irish medium education programmes in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland spearheaded by Gaelscoileanna and Gaeloiliúint, who were the co-ordinating bodies for all-Irish-medium education in both jurisdictions<sup>100</sup> and the publication of various descriptions of the language and speech of the remaining Gaeltacht areas. The most recent large scale study of Irish in the contemporary Gaeltacht areas is by Ó Giollagáin et al. (2007). The government responded by setting up a Select Committee of ministers to implement and address the recommendations of this report, and to report by the end of 2008. The government has also announced that it is to prepare and hopes to implement a twenty-year language policy to expand and strengthen Irish as a community language and to increase its daily usage among those who have communicative competence in the language. A small group of national and international experts, five in all, have been recruited by Fiontar at Dublin City University to undertake this task and report to the government by the end of 2008. The publication of the report has been promised by government by the end of 2009.

Foras na Gaeilge have also announced that the work on a new English/Irish dictionary has begun and it is estimated that it will take a period of five years to complete. Some

of the contractual arrangements have been put in place, and future work will focus on the multifaceted nature of this bilingual dictionary and bring together a team of linguistic and lexicographic experts to see the work carried to a successful conclusion.

Despite various shifts in the ideological processes at work in Ireland, all recent socio-linguistic research points to the fact that national identity remains at the core of the justification for the revival of the Irish language. This is the main reason that people learn Irish and support its promotion by the state and other bodies. It is certain that the relationship which exists between the language, its culture and national identity will change and redefine itself. There are many new ethnic groups and languages spoken by thousands of new immigrants who have come to Ireland in the past decade. Irish speakers must now find new ways of addressing and approaching the many new issues about to confront them and they must explore new and more effective way to help preserve the key elements of an old and rich cultural heritage.

As we enter the third millennium, Irish is changing rapidly. It has shown very noticeable trends in its morphological and syntactical makeup and this is likely to continue. The written standard language is now well established at all levels of communication and discourse. However, it needs to be modified and continuously monitored so as to relate to the spoken language (especially a standard spoken form) in a meaningful way. New vocabulary and terminology has broken new ground and the language has reached a stage where it can express a wide range of complicated intellectual and scientific ideas. The language in the Gaeltacht has not kept pace with these rapid changes in vocabulary development but through the media of radio and television and the advent of a daily and weekly newspaper, its speakers are developing a new and dynamic competence and confidence in the use of Irish. Much of the complicated morphology of the verb and noun will be replaced in time by simpler, more regular forms with the least number of added inflections. This in turn is likely to be heavily influenced by the English language and its relatively few grammatical endings, since all Irish speakers are to one degree or another bilingual. It is estimated that 98 per cent of Irish speakers are second-language learners and they in turn initiate other changes within the language system based on their own interlanguage and fossilization of language forms. The genitive form of nouns will be eliminated and 'strong' plural forms (those that add suffixes such as *-(a)í*, *-(e)acha*, or *-(e)anna* to the singular form) will be on the increase; the subjunctive mood, the use of dependent and independent forms of the verb, and the distinction between direct and indirect relative clauses will become obsolescent. These changes are already well on their way and written convention will have to follow suit. Borrowing of English vocabulary and syntax will continue and increase. Initial morphophonemic changes, however, seem as entrenched as ever and set to hold firm for the foreseeable future. Much more levelling is likely to take place as Irish becomes a more general means of communication among the general population. Perhaps that is the price we have to pay to ensure the survival of the language. Let us hope that it will all be worthwhile.

## NOTES

- 1 There are some exceptions to this rule. Words having an 'ae' digraph have velarized consonants only e.g. *Gael* /ge:l/ 'an Irish person'. The plural of *Gael* is *Gaeil* /ge:ɪʲ/, where the 'i' indicates that the final 'l' is now palatalized. Initial 'r' in such words as *rí* 'a king', *rith* 'run' etc. is velarized.
- 2 The initial 'f' sound is often bilabial in nature and could be transcribed as /β/.

- 3 /s/ is pronounced as [ʃ], similar to 'sh' in English *she*, *dish*, etc.
- 4 It is interesting that the voiceless affricate /ts/ has not been incorporated into the orthographical system although all dialects have been reported as having such a sound in vocabulary items borrowed from English. They include such words as *tseic* 'cheque', *tsip* 'chip' and *hitseáil* 'hitching'. The problem of using a unitary /tʃ/ or /dʒ/ phoneme has been avoided by applying the historical rule which changed /dʒ/ to /ʃ/ in the proper names such as *Séamas* 'James', *Seán* 'John' and other vocabulary items, borrowed more than five centuries ago. In intervocalic position the unitary /tʃ/ becomes two sequential phonemes with metathesis /ʃtʰ/ as in the surname *de Róiste* 'Roche' and words of the type *meaitseáil* 'match'. This leaves a gap in the phonemic system underlying the standard spelling as there is no voiceless phoneme corresponding to /dʒ/.
- 5 This reduction of contrasts among nasal and lateral phonemes is probably old – perhaps dating as far back as 1200 at least. Standard Classical Irish poetry of the period 1200–1650 divided Irish phonemes into different classes. The dental and alveo-palatal nasals and laterals belonged to one group while alveolar *l* and *n* belonged to another. However, in certain circumstances, namely, between vowels and following long vowels, the dental and alveo-palatal group could make perfect rhyme with consonants from the group to which the alveolar set belonged. This would seem to indicate that the contrast between dental and alveolar nasals and laterals had ceased to exist in the living language of the thirteenth century. Its disappearance was hastened still further because sequences of a stressed short vowel followed by dental or alveo-palatal consonants in words such as *craán* 'a tree', *caill* 'loss', *poll* 'a hole' were now being realized as long vowels or diphthongs. Thus the earlier contrast, for example, between *geall* 'promise' and *geal* 'white', which depended on the different quality of the final consonants, became a contrast between a long vowel/diphthong in the first word and a short vowel in the second. This reduced significantly the wordload being carried by the original contrast as indicated by the spelling *ll* and *l* in the minimal pair quoted above.
- 6 This /t/ pronunciation is also found in *farraige* 'sea', *tarraing* 'pull' and before dental and alveo-palatal consonants e.g. *ard* 'high', *airde* 'height', *táirne* 'a nail', *Art* 'Art (a person's name)', *Tarlach* 'Charlie'.
- 7 In certain Cork dialects historical /p/ has become palatal /pʲ/ e.g. *tinn* 'sick', *intinn* 'mind, intention', Ó Cuiv (1944), Wagner (1958). In the Ballymacoda area of East Cork as reported by Ó Cuiv (1951) and Wagner (1958), there is a further development whereby original long dental or alveo-palatal consonants have a /d/ or /dʲ/ inserted after them in words such as *coill* 'a wood' > *coilld*, *aifreann* 'a Mass' > *aifreannnd* etc. The application of this process probably took place before the general merging of alveolar and dental/alveo-palatal consonants in Munster Irish.
- 8 In these circumstances, it is merely following the fate of intervocalic /h/ from earlier /θ/, which is prone to deletion in many dialects e.g. *bóthar* /bo:t/ < /bo:hər/ < /bo:θər/.
- 9 It should be pointed out that in words such as *dóigh* 'burn', *léigh* 'read', final *gh* is realized as [j] in Munster dialects and is deleted in many South Connacht dialects.
- 10 This presents a difficulty for English speakers. First of all they need to learn that the fronting of velar consonants so common in English does not apply in Irish, e.g. the *g* of *guí* 'a prayer' and the *c* of *Caoimhe* ('Caoimhe', a girl's name) and of *scannán* 'a film' are not fronted. It takes a lot of practice to acquire this rule and get away from the influence of English phonotactics.
- 11 This change is now common only in Connacht and Ulster dialects. The double consonants *ll* and *nn* are dental blade articulated in those dialects that distinguish *ll* from *l* and *nn* from *n*. The single consonants *l* and *n* are alveolar articulated consonants where the tip of the tongue touches the alveolar ridge. This distinction is no longer maintained in Munster dialects. Ulster seems to have retained this distinction best where a set of four l-phonemes and four n-phonemes were retained, two palatalized and two velarized consonants in the case of each consonant (Sommerfelt 1922, Wagner 1968, Ó Baoill 1979, 1996). This four-way distinction has also been retained in the dialects of Mayo and north Connacht generally (de Búrca 1958, Wagner 1968, Mac an Fhailigh 1968). The dialects of west Galway and Cois Fharraige, in particular, seem to maintain only a three-way contrast, the distinction between velarized *lll* and *nnn* having been lost through the merging of *l* and *n* with *ll* and *nn* respectively (de Bhaldraithe 1944).

- 12 At an earlier period of the language, lenition was shown only on voiceless plosives and this was done by adding *h* to each consonant. Lenition of *s* and *f* was indicated by placing a suprascript point above the consonant, to give *ś* and *ḥ*. Later on this suprascript was placed over all affected consonants and was in general use down to the early 1960s. It has once again been replaced by *h*, due to the use of the Roman alphabet on keyboards. However, as computer programs today can easily translate the suprascript tick or dot over letters to *h*, the earlier script may once again become fashionable in some forms of writing and personal and other communication.
- 13 These fricatives have been better preserved following long vowels and diphthongs in most dialects. Munster Irish deletes the /β/ of *lámh* 'a hand' in the plural *lámha*, giving the pronunciation /tʰa/.
- 14 The rule is blocked in certain cases, namely, when the following word begins with *t* or *d*, e.g. *an teanga* 'the language', *an duais* 'the prize' and *eochair an dorais* 'the door key'.
- 15 The numbers 3–6 are often used with the plural of nouns. In such cases there is no initial change e.g. *trí cearca* 'three hens'.
- 16 Note that the rule applies to feminine words with a prefix beginning with *s* e.g. *seanbhean* 'an old woman'. On the phonetic level, the *n* of the article *an* 'the' tends to agree in mode of articulation with the following *t*, so that both *n* and *t* are palatalized or alternatively both are velarized. The *t* is a remnant of the voiced *d* of the article written *indlint* in Old Irish. As the *s* became *h* by lenition, it devoiced this preceding *d* and thus became *t*, e.g. *int shúil*. The *t* became attached to the following word through morphophonetic fusing and is now written *an tsúil*.
- 17 This rule does not apply in all dialects although prescribed in the recommendations of An Caighdeán Oifigiúil (1958).
- 18 This is the original meaning of *urú* – the traditional term used in Irish grammars and by earlier linguists for a period of over a thousand years.
- 19 All consonants whether velarized or palatalized participate in these morphophonemic changes. In Modern Irish, both lenition and eclipsis are conditioned by preceding particles, possessives, verbal morphology, prepositions and so on.
- 20 It is generally argued that there is only one long *á* phoneme. It has front and back allophones depending on the phonetic context. Taking all the evidence from the extant dialects into account the historical long *á* seems to have been a low back unrounded vowel /ɑ:/. Generally speaking, the vowel is fronted in the vicinity of palatalized consonants. In many parts of Ulster long *á* is a low front or mid low vowel even in the context of velarized consonants. It seems that this fronting has been a historical process which is still ongoing in various dialects of North-West Donegal in particular. In some of these dialects the long *á* vowel is /æ:/ even in such words as *ál* 'a brood', *bán* 'white', *bláth* 'a flower', *cár* 'teeth' and *cnámh* 'a bone'.
- 21 The *eo* spelling denotes a short vowel /o/ in a small number of words: *seo* 'this', *deoch* 'a drink' and *eochair* 'a key'.
- 22 The digraph *ao* represents three different pronunciations and covers all dialectal variations. That is why it has been retained in the standard spelling. Historically, *ao* represented a long retracted front mid vowel similar to /e:/. It is thus heavily influenced by the surrounding velarized consonants, which is the normal environment in which it occurs in words such as *aon* 'one', *daor* 'expensive', etc. However, the original sound has been raised to a high vowel and maintains its unrounded feature. Ulster dialects in general have an unrounded high back vowel in words such as *caol* 'slender, thin', *saor* 'cheap', etc. In South Donegal and in the Ros Goill dialect of North Donegal, there is a tendency to front this vowel to /i:/. Again it is retracted due to the influence of the surrounding velarized consonants. This is the case throughout Connacht as well although the historical /e:/ can also be heard in a limited number of words. This is particularly so in songs and poetry.
- 23 Here we have another example of a triphthong *iúi* pronounced as /u:/. The spelling convention where *i* appears on either side of *ú* indicates that the preceding and following consonants, namely *s* and *l*, are to be pronounced as palatalized consonants. The reader should check the spelling table for further examples of trigraphs indicating a single long or short vocalic pronunciation.

- 24 The phonetic variants of *á* are clearly influenced by surrounding consonants, being generally more fronted in the environment of palatalized consonants giving the phonetic realizations [a:] and [æ:] and being pronounced much further back in the environment of velarized consonants, giving [ɑ:] and [ɔ:]. See also footnote 20 above.
- 25 The exceptions are those dialects where unrounded /u:/ has been fronted and now belongs to the long /i:/ phoneme. These subdialects are found mainly in the southern half of Donegal and in Ros Goill in the north of the county.
- 26 This is what is to be understood from the various phonetic/phonemic descriptions from the modern Irish dialect monographs published by the School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies (DIAS) – Ó Cuív (1944), de Bhaldraithe (1945), Breathnach (1947) and Mac An Fhailigh (1968).
- 27 The quality of the final vowel of the /iə/ and /uə/ diphthongs and of the initial vowel in the /ai/ and /au/ diphthongs may vary from one dialect to the next and indeed within dialects. The phoneme /iə/, for example, may be pronounced [ia], [iə] and [iæ]. /au/ may be realized as [au], [æu], [ɔu] and [ɑu]. Despite this variation no new phonemic contrasts have arisen. Note, however, the reference to various developments in the dialects of Munster outlined above. Ó Sé (2000) describes a fifth phonemic contrast among the diphthongs in the Irish of West Kerry. The contrast is between the /iə/ and /ia/ phonemes. The latter is a new development in the dialect, being derived from the original long /e:/ vowel in words such as *éan* 'a bird', *béal* 'a mouth' and *féar* 'grass'. He describes it as follows: 'It has a beginning point somewhere between Cardinal Vowel 1 and Cardinal Vowel 2 and an end point close to Cardinal Vowel 4 in the speech of conservative speakers. It is a slightly higher vowel close to [ɐ] in the speech of others' (p. 25: my translation).
- 28 It should be pointed out that /ai/ and /au/ diphthongs have arisen in many dialects in single syllable words ending in *m*, *nn*, *ll*, *rr* and *ng* and in polysyllabic words where these consonants are followed immediately by another consonant e.g. *caill* 'to lose', *caillfear* 'will lose', *coill* 'a wood', *coillte* 'woods', *poll* 'a hole', *poill* 'holes', *pollta* 'punctured, perforated', *cam* 'crooked' and *camfaidh* 'will bend'. The change does not take place in polysyllabic words derived from the above when followed immediately by a vowel e.g. *caillim* 'I lose', *pollaim* 'I puncture, perforate', *ama* genitive of *am* 'time' and in basic non-derived words such as *amadán* 'a fool', *annamh* 'seldom', etc. The above changes are mainly confined to Munster and Southern Connacht dialects but the changes are not uniform throughout these dialects. The word *poll* 'a hole' has an /au/ diphthong in both Munster and South Connacht dialects. A contrast has been reported for West Muskerry (Ó Cuív 1944) between the diphthong /əu/ in *com* 'a glen, a mountain recess' as opposed to /au/ in *cam* 'crooked'.
- 29 The dialects of Ulster generally prefer to convert the vowel + voiced fricative sequence to a long vowel. Hence the words *ladhar* 'a toe, a fork', *aghaidh* 'a face' and *feidhm* 'a use' tend to have a retracted long vowel [ɛ:] similar to the type found in *é* 'him', *cé?* 'who?'.
- 30 The resulting diphthong in the latter case is often nasalized /äü/ and may form a contrast with /au/ at least in some of the surviving dialects.
- 31 The Irish situation is very different from that obtaining in Scottish Gaelic where the colouring of the epenthetic vowel is often a copy of the immediately preceding stressed vowel. Similar pronunciation can be heard in parts of Donegal and may be a recent introduction.
- 32 The age of this rule of epenthesis is hard to pin down owing to the conservative nature of Irish writing and the reluctance of the literary classes to admit its existence. Nevertheless, traces of the process can be seen in spellings of the following types from as early as the Old Irish period e.g. *orm/oram* 'on me'.
- 33 All nouns in the first declension end in a velarized consonant e.g. *capall* 'a horse', *bád* 'a boat', *coileach* 'a rooster' and have the following plural forms *capaill*, *báid* and *coiligh*, where the final *i* indicates a following palatalized consonant. However, certain nouns, which have been placed in the first declension prefer to take strong plural endings in agreement with the spoken language e.g. *carr* > *carranna* 'a car', *stad* > *stadanna* 'stop', *cineál* > *cineálacha* 'a type', *laoch* > *laochra* 'hero'. Many nouns in the second declension also end in a velarized consonant and again the majority take the plural ending *-a* in the written language e.g. *fuinneog* >

*fuinneoga* 'a window'. As with the first declension nouns, a number prefer the strong endings in the plural: *slat* > *slatacha* 'a stick'. All other nouns in the second declension (most of which end in a palatalized consonant), take strong plural endings e.g. *ceist* > *ceisteanna* 'a question', *bainis* > *bainseacha* 'a wedding'.

- 34 These plural endings have been derived from the endings of the consonantal stems in Old Irish.
- 35 There is a great tendency in all dialects to have double plural endings in many cases, that is to say, there is an agglomeration of several endings e.g. *-(e)anna* + *-í* as in *ceisteannaí* 'questions', *-acha* + *-í* as in *barúlachaí* 'opinions'.
- 36 There are a small number of adjectives which precede the noun e.g. *ard-*, *deá-*, *droch-*, *sean-* as in *ardrí* 'a high king', *deáthuairisc* 'a good report', *drochobair* 'bad work' and *seanbhean* 'an old woman'.
- 37 Some dialects do not inflect some adjectives in the plural and this is particularly true for adjectives ending in *-(e)ach* e.g. *gníomhach*, *gaelach*. (See de Bhaldraithe 1953: §§230–34, Ó Sé 2000: 147.)
- 38 The *níos* preceding the comparative form is said to be a combination of *ní* + *is* 'a thing that is'. The comparative form has various endings depending on the basic form of the adjective e.g. *bán* 'white' > *níos báine*, *fada* 'long' > *níos faide*, *gorm* 'blue' > *níos goirme*, *eolach* 'knowledgeable' > *níos eolaí*, *cóir* 'fair, just' > *níos córa*, *breá* 'fine' > *níos breátha*. There are a small number (between 10 and 15) of irregular adjectives.
- 39 This is the rule as expressed in the standard language. However, the use of *a* is not absolute in all dialects e.g. *trí agus trí sin sé* 'three and three is six'.
- 40 The rule about the *déag/dhéag* variation, as prescribed in the standard language, is an attempt to bring together the main usages. Dialectal usage does not always adhere to the rule and *dhéag* is often heard after nouns, both masculine and feminine, e.g. *trí theach dhéag* 'thirteen houses', *cúig fhuinneog dhéag* 'fifteen houses'. As with the cardinal numbers, *dó* and *ceathair* become *dhá* and *ceithre* when used with nouns e.g. *a dó dhéag* 'twelve', but *dhá dhuine dhéag* 'twelve people'.
- 41 Certain numerals in Old Irish were followed by the genitive plural form of a noun. Since many nouns had identical forms in the nominative singular and genitive plural, this rule was applied through analogy to these nouns and hence we get the nominative singular following numerals.
- 42 The number *aon* does not lenite words beginning with *d* and *t* e.g. *aon Teachta Dála amháin* 'one member of Parliament', *aon Dia amháin* 'one God', but *aon bhean amháin* 'one woman'.
- 43 This was not the case in O.Ir. where *oenar* derived from *oen* '1' + *fer* was the form used. This word has been restricted in the modern language to the meaning 'alone' and hence had to be replaced. *Beirt* is also a new replacement for *dias* of O.Ir. The origin of *beirt* has been much debated: Ó Cuív (1957), Greene (1968), Ó Buachalla (1976). Its literal meaning was probably 'bundle'. *Dias* survived into the modern period as *dís*, which was an old dative singular form. It has been replaced everywhere in Ireland by *beirt* but survives in Scottish Gaelic.
- 44 Irish distinguishes between direct and indirect relative clauses. They will be discussed further below. Both direct and indirect clauses are introduced by the relative marker *a*. Following the direct relative the verb is lenited but it is eclipsed in indirect relative clauses.
- 45 For further discussion of the situation pertaining to sign languages the reader is referred to Ó Baoill and Matthews (1998).
- 46 One can stress both lexical items in *thuas ansin* 'defined position' or leave them unstressed. When the speaker wishes to point out the defined position, he/she will normally stress each part of the lexical phrase. If the speaker does not wish to point out the defined area, then both parts of the phrase are left unstressed. On the other hand, *suas ansin* 'undefined position' is never stressed and can never be pointed out as it is out of sight.
- 47 O.Ir. *cen* 'without', Mod.Ir. *gan*, has lost its pronominal inflection and governs independent pronouns, e.g. *gan tú* 'without you (sg.)'.
- 48 Ulster Irish prefers the rule of lenition after all prepositions while the other dialects in general prefer to use eclipsis. Historically, lenition and eclipsis denoted different states of affairs – the former denoting location, the latter movement: Irish Grammatical Tracts 1 (IGT I). At a later stage, different dialects went their separate ways, Ulster and Scottish dialects preferring lenition, Connacht and Munster applying the eclipsis rule.



- 49 In some dialects, the dative form has replaced the nominative as the basic form of the noun and hence the palatalizing rule has been made redundant. This process seems to apply to Connacht dialects more than others. The standard literary language has by and large ignored the new nominative forms and has not prescribed in its grammar the application of this process of marking feminine nouns as dative.
- 50 *Ag* is pronounced as if written *aig* [eɪ] – [ɪ], as the pronunciation indicates.
- 51 The compound *ar nós* 'in the manner (of)' according to de Bhaldraithe (1953: 229) is generally followed by the nominative of a following object pronoun, e.g. *ar nós muid féin* 'like ourselves'. Other dialects prefer the genitive or possessive form, e.g. *ar nós an tsaol* 'like everyone else', *ar mo nós féin* 'like myself'.
- 52 When unstressed, the long vowels in *mé, tú, sé, é, sí* and *í* are shortened. They may also lose their quality, e.g. [e:] becomes [e] or [ɛ]. In many Ulster dialects it becomes [a] and a similar reduction is found in Scottish Gaelic. Likewise, *siad* [ʃiəd] 'they' becomes [ʃid] in *Tá siad anseo* 'They are here'.
- 53 Ó Sé (1996) discusses the various forms of the personal pronouns and their usage within Gaelic dialects.
- 54 English tends to show emphasis by stressing the pronoun marked in bold. Irish does not do this as it has access to a series of emphatic forms.
- 55 *Ea* is generally pronounced [a] or [æ] in most dialects. *Is* tends to be lengthened to [æ:] in South Galway dialects. In many Ulster dialects, it is pronounced [əu] or [ei(h)] through various historical processes whereby historical final *dh* was vocalized.
- 56 Munster Irish seems to have lost the normal word order copula sentences, which are common in the other dialects, e.g. *(Is) dochtúir í* 'She is a doctor' and replaced them with the focused/fronted *is ea* type.
- 57 These exist side by side with the traditional usage without *cuid*, e.g. *mo shúile/lámha/dhear-tháireacha*. It would also seem that the form of the genitive plural following *cuid* has been abandoned in favour of a form equivalent to the nominative plural in the case of *súil/lámh*. This means that they and many other nouns have joined the strong plural class where the forms of the nominative plural and the genitive plural are identical.
- 58 This new development sits side by side with the following equivalent expressions, which are common to all dialects, e.g. *airgead Dhónaill* 'Dónall's money', *eallach an fhir seo* 'This man's cattle'.
- 59 The prepositional pronoun (in bold italics) may also be placed at the end of the sentence, e.g. *Cé a raibh tú ag caint leis?* Dialects vary as to which option they prefer and for some prepositions there are no options. This question has been of great interest to generative linguists and those interested in Chomsky's Extended Standard Theory (McCloskey 1985, McCloskey and Sells 1988, McCloskey 1990).
- 60 *Ná* is confined to Munster Irish. It does not change the initial of the following verb but prefixes *h* before vowels, *Ná tógfá é?* 'Would you not lift/take it?', *Ná hólfa deoch?* 'Would you not have a drink?'
- 61 *Siúd/Úd* refers to a third space similar to the English word *yonder*, e.g. *Tá sí thall ansiúd* 'She is over yonder'. *Úd* may also be used in a referential deictic role, which refers back to something or someone already mentioned in a previous narrative and it may be used with proper names e.g. *An Dónall úd* 'That Dónall you mentioned or told us about a while ago'.
- 62 Verbs ending in *-(e)áil* have increased in number due to the intensive contact between Irish and English during the past four centuries. The vast majority of verbs borrowed from English take this ending and their conjugation is very regular.
- 63 The verbs whose imperative 2nd singular ends in *-(a)igh* are by far the most common among the second conjugation verbs.
- 64 For clarification of the spelling differences, the reader is referred to the section on conjugation.
- 65 This seems to be characteristic of Connacht and Ulster dialects at present. It may be an internal change in the language itself but the influence of English cannot be ruled out. More detailed investigation is needed before we can reach any definite conclusions on the matter.

- 66 This consonant is velarized or palatalized according to the pronunciation of the following vowel. Back vowels are preceded by a velarized /d/ e.g. *d'ól sé* 'He drank', and front vowels by a palatalized /dʲ/ e.g. *d'éistfinn* 'I would listen'. In some cases the process is applied before historical vowels which are no longer pronounced e.g. palatalized /dʲ/ in *d'iompair siad é* 'They carried him'. The *i* of *d'iompair* is no longer realized phonetically but its former realization as a front vowel or glide causes the palatalization of *d'*, /dʲ/.
- 67 This was the situation until very recently. Of late, speakers have created new verbal adjectives as they feel the need to use them. They may also be influenced by other dialects through access to radio and television through the medium of Irish, particularly Raidió na Gaeltachta and Teilifís na Gaeltachta, now TG4. More and more people are being educated in third-level institutions and universities and hence come into contact with other dialectal forms in both speech and writing. As a result of all this influence, Ulster forms such as *feiciste/feiciste* 'seen', *fáighte* 'found' and others can be heard in day to day speech.
- 68 A more detailed summary of this construction in Irish English is to be found in Filppula (1999: 99–110).
- 69 This points to a substratum heavily influenced by the Irish language during intensive periods of bilingualism in the transition from Irish to English. A typical example would be *I'm after spending a lot of money on this car and it still doesn't work*, which would be rendered in Standard English as *I have spent a lot of money on this car, and it still doesn't work*.
- 70 The conditional form of the verb in Irish is marked for 1st and 2nd singular and 1st and 3rd plural in almost all dialects. The unmarked form *bheadh* occurs elsewhere and before nouns e.g. *Bheadh sé ann/ Bheadh Dónall ann* 'He would be there /Dónall would be there'.
- 71 This, no doubt, is due to the patterns of bilingualism obtaining in Ireland at various times during the past four centuries or so. The influence seems strongest in the expansion of aspectual differences parallel to those formed in English by the use 'to have'. This is also seen very clearly in the underdifferentiation which takes place between the use of the impersonal forms and the verbal adjectives. Irish distinguishes clearly between an action (use of autonomous forms) and a state (use of verbal adjective constructions) e.g. *Dúntar an doras ar a naoi a chlog* 'The door is closed at nine o'clock' (present autonomous) versus *Bíonn an doras dúnta ar a naoi a chlog* 'The door is closed at nine o'clock' (denoting the state of being closed). As English does not distinguish grammatically/syntactically between the two types of 'closed', bilingual Irish speakers seem not to make the traditional distinction of action versus state in their translation from English to Irish, and replace the use of the autonomous with the periphrastic stative structure. This is commonplace in everyday speech and on radio and television.
- 72 These impersonal endings are identical with the impersonal endings found with the habitual present tense of both conjugations of the verb. Their semantic interpretation, however, is quite different.
- 73 Similar examples are to be found in McQuillan's discussion of the subjunctive and other moods in Old and Middle Irish: McQuillan (2002: 26–7).
- 74 It should be noted that both subjunctives are preceded by various particles and complementizers such as the negative markers *ná/nár/nára* 'may . . . not', the complementizer *go* 'may, until, so that' and the conditional marker *dá* 'if'. These are given in the conjugations in order to make the examples look more natural. Thus *Go n-óla* means 'May someone drink' and *Nár óla* 'May someone not drink'. Similarly, *Dá n-ólaínn* is translated as 'Had I drunk/Were I to drink'.
- 75 The original distribution was that motion verbs governed verbal noun constructions while non-motion verbs took subjunctive clauses.
- 76 The phonetic realization of *ach(t)* *go* is normally [axə] in all dialects. However, in Ulster dialects, particularly Donegal, the *g* of *go* is often heard as in examples (50) and (51) [ax gə].
- 77 In Munster, usages such as *má bheadh* (*má* + conditional form) have been attested in speech and in written sources. As far as I am aware, they are unknown in other dialects.
- 78 *Murach* is a combination of *mura* 'if not' and the conjunction *ach* 'but', giving the meaning 'if it were not', 'had X not . . .'
- 79 Wigger's paper was delivered at a symposium in honour of Máirtín Ó Briain in Galway in October 2005. It gives a great deal of information about the use of the conditional and its frequency, based on the material in his own book *Caint Ros Muc* (2004). This in turn has been

based on the large database of colloquial speech collected by Hans Hartmann in the Ros Muc area of West Galway. The second paper was delivered at the XIII International Congress of Celtic Studies in Bonn in July 2007 by Eshel-Benninga. Her Irish materials were based on evidence from Pádraic Ó Conaire's novel *Deoraíocht*.

- 80 For more detailed discussion and examples relating to this change see McQuillan (2002: 200–23).
- 81 Historically the agent was marked by one of three prepositions *ag* 'at, by', *le* 'with/by' and *ó* 'from'. In Modern Irish all three are used to denote agents in different constructions/environments: Ó Sé (2007).
- 82 There is great variation across, and even within, dialects regarding this rule, and prescriptive grammars and dictionaries struggle to come to an agreement about this operation. A summary of the kind of variation involved is to be found in Ní Dhónaill (1970: 1–9). Note that we are talking about indefinite nouns only, those not preceded by the definite article, possessive pronouns etc.
- 83 Historically this *á* is derived from a combination of either *ag* + *a* or *do* + *a*.
- 84 The changes applying to the initial consonant of the verbal noun after *á* are regulated by the gender of its antecedent. Masculine nouns cause lenition, feminine nouns cause no change to the initial consonant but prefix *h* to verbs beginning with a vowel. Plural nouns cause the verbal noun to be eclipsed.
- 85 In other dialects this type of contrast is extremely rare or has been lost entirely.
- 86 This sentence type tends to have a finite clause introduced by the complementizer *go* in the non Ulster dialects e.g. *Ba mhaith léi go gceannódh Seán an teach*.
- 87 There is some disagreement in the literature about what the nominative/accusative forms of pronouns mean. It is true that the use of the pairs *tú/thú*, *sé/é*, *sí/í* and *siad/iad* is in complementary distribution, the nominative forms (the first in each pair) appearing immediately after the main verb, the accusative forms elsewhere. However, as McCloskey (1984) has argued persuasively, they are best thought of as being accusative. In the earlier language of Old and Middle Irish, preposed nominal phrases were similarly inflected according to the case marking required by the general syntax.
- 88 Such perfective meanings were expressed by various prefixes in Old Irish and particularly by the prefix *ro-*: Thurneysen (1946: 339–48). Since the early Modern Irish period the role of *ro-* has been taken over by *i ndiaidh/tar éis*.
- 89 One would expect *an doras* to be in the genitive form *an dorais* after *ag iarraidh*. However, the language has moved away from using the genitive in such constructions.
- 90 These phrases have a similar role to the converbs so common in the languages of South-East Asia, the Caucasian languages and others spoken in the former Soviet Union to express similar, and many other, meanings. The concomitant construction is one of those substrate elements that have been borrowed into Irish English e.g. *He was there and I coming in*.
- 91 This was not the case in Old Irish where the past participle could be inflected for different cases.
- 92 The one exception is the verbal phrase. As Irish is a verb initial language, a clash occurs between the copula in its function in cleft sentences and the appearance of the verbal phrase. Verbs are clefted by using a copular phrase followed by a direct relative clause e.g. *Is amhlaidh a thit sé* 'He actually fell (what actually happened to him was that he fell)', *Is é rud a d'imigh sé* 'He actually left'.
- 93 This may be due in part to the fact that *bhí* 'was' can be emphasized whereas *ba*, the past tense of the copula, cannot receive stress.
- 94 In the two examples given, lenition and eclipsis of the first consonant of *múinteoir* and *tiarnaí* indicate that the subjects they refer to are 3rd singular masculine and 3rd plural, respectively.
- 95 The indirect clause can place prepositional pronouns either at the end of the sentence or immediately following the relative pronoun. This latter seems to be the more common word order.
- 96 Owing to the peculiarities of the Modern Irish spelling system, this *-(e)as* is reduced to *-s* following a long vowel e.g. *an té a bhrisfeas/ólfas/cheannós é* 'He who will break/drink/buy it'.
- 97 In the unmarked case, the reader will assume that the first person mentioned carried out the action but, as I have indicated, it could be interpreted in a different way.

- 98 Note that *ar* is the basic form of the preposition in the first sentence and that *uirthi* is the 3rd person singular feminine agreeing with its antecedent *bó* 'a cow'. As the substantive verb has a special dependent form *raibh* in the past tense, it is used in indirect relative clauses.
- 99 If one wishes to emphasize that one definitely intends to be present, then it is quite appropriate to use a separate pronoun with strong stress in the answer *Beidh mé* 'I certainly will.'
- 100 This role has been taken over by *Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta* (The Council for all-Irish Medium Education) which was set up in Northern Ireland in 2000 and by *An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta* (The Educational Council for Gaeltacht and the Irish Medium Sector). *The International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* has recently (2007) published a special issue on Ireland under the editorship of Dr John Harris of Trinity College Dublin. It contains a series of articles by experts in the field.

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## CHAPTER 7

## SCOTTISH GAELIC

*William Gillies*

## INTRODUCTION

Gaelic was brought into north-western Scotland by settlers from Ireland – around the year 500 AD according to the traditional dating. In the centuries that followed, Gaelic ousted Pictish in the north-east and subsequently became established in the south-west and south-east of what is now Scotland, as the Gaelic kings of the Scots annexed the British kingdom of Strathclyde and the northern part of the Anglian kingdom of Northumbria. This expansionist phase lasted until the twelfth century. Thereafter Gaelic gave way gradually to Scots in the Lowlands (though it continued to be spoken in Galloway until the seventeenth century) and around the north-east coast until, by c. 1400, there emerged a consciously bi-cultural nation in which the Gàidhealtachd ('Gaeldom') coincided with the physical Highlands and Islands, as opposed to the Scots-speaking remainder of Scotland – the 'Lowlands' or Galldachd.

As those early Scottish Gaels lost touch with Ireland and met new linguistic neighbours (including, from the ninth century, Norse speakers in the Hebrides and far north), independent Scottish linguistic developments doubtless began to take place, and Kenneth Jackson's vision (1953) of an undifferentiated pan-Goidelic dialect surviving until the thirteenth century is no longer tenable (Gillies 1994, Ó Buachalla 2003). Direct testimony from the 'Old' and 'Middle' periods (seventh to eleventh century) is almost wholly lacking, though progress has been made on some fronts by linguistic reconstruction. In the better attested Early Modern period (twelfth to seventeenth century) the extant manuscript literature uses the pan-Gaelic educated dialect 'Classical Irish', in which vernacularisms are, in general, rare. However, the early sixteenth-century *Book of the Dean of Lismore* offers a glimpse of the extent to which one (Perthshire) dialect had developed by then. Modern Scottish Gaelic texts occur in bulk only from the seventeenth century on, though the earliest genres attested show signs of relative antiquity. These texts consist mainly of poetry. While their language is by no means colloquial in the sense that some of the Scottish Gaelic forms in the Dean's Book are colloquial, they are indubitably vernacular when compared with the latest productions in the Classical literary language, with which they were roughly contemporary.

The Linguistic Survey of Scotland, which began collecting Scottish Gaelic dialect material in the early 1950s, found indigenous Gaelic speakers in almost all the areas forming 'the Highlands' as defined above: from Sutherland and parts of Caithness in the north,

to Braemar and East Perthshire in the east, to Kintyre and Arran in the south. While the geographical limits of the Gàidhealtachd had thus remained pretty stable for several centuries, its consistency had altered considerably: depopulation and linguistic attrition in the southern, eastern and central Highlands have caused the Gaelic centre of gravity to move steadily north-westwards over the past 150 years. Today Gaelic is a community language only in the Islands and on parts of the western seaboard. (There are, however, Gaelic émigré communities in the Lowland cities and overseas, most notably in Nova Scotia, the diaspora of the nineteenth-century Highland Clearances.)

Scottish Gaelic speakers are keenly aware of dialectal distinctions at both local and wider levels. Some of these have demonstrably been in existence for centuries. Studies of several individual dialects exist (e.g., Borgstrøm 1937, Oftedal 1956, Dorian 1978, Ó Murchú 1989, Ternes 2006). Although the dialectology of Scottish Gaelic is yet to be written, it is possible to discern some of the axes of dialectal differentiation. These include a central: peripheral opposition, whereby the West Central Highlands from North Argyll to Wester Ross and the Western Isles are united against the most northerly, easterly and southerly dialects (cf., Jackson 1968, Dilworth 1995/6). The central group combines many of the best-known Scottish Gaelic phonological innovations with a conservative inflectional system, and provides the great majority of Gaelic speakers nowadays.

The variety of Scottish Gaelic described below represents an attempt to take advantage of this correlation between West Coast-Hebridean Gaelic and the literary norm which emerged in the nineteenth century and is enshrined in most dictionaries and grammars. It is, in the last resort, a synthetic variety – in effect ‘standard’ Scottish Gaelic – based on the practices of the majority of active Gaelic speakers who come from the ‘central’ area.<sup>1</sup>

As regards linguistic description, our approach to phonology recognizes that the Scottish Gaelic dialects as a whole present a welter of surface variety concealing a high degree of regular development from a Common Gaelic base. To describe at a moderately abstract level enables us to make statements which can mediate between the traditional grammars and the more rigorously descriptive treatments in the dialect monographs. Given our overall aim of capturing the practical homogeneity of the ‘central’ dialects, a comparable approach has been adopted for morphology and syntax, and for similar reasons. Since the description of Scottish Gaelic is in a fairly primitive state in many important ways, we shall describe the language in a fairly traditional way, so as to provide a link with what is available in the grammars, while at the same time trying to ensure that points of significance to comparative or general linguistic discussion are duly highlighted.

## Scottish Gaelic orthography and pronunciation<sup>2</sup>

Modern Scottish Gaelic orthography is founded on that of Classical Irish as established and practised by the Gaelic literati in the Early Modern period. It was consistent and phonemically transparent. Some Scottish Gaelic features were incorporated as the modern standard evolved in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, but others went unrecognized (Black 1994). As a consequence, Scottish Gaelic orthography bears a complex, though still basically regular relationship to the vernacular language. Minor orthographical revisions have been introduced since the 1980s. These are reflected in recent dictionaries and grammars (see note 1), and in what follows. The most obvious innovation is the dropping of *é* and *ó*, leaving *è* to do duty for both [e:] and [ɛ:] and *ò* for both [o:] and [ɔ:].

The most obvious divergences between Scottish Gaelic sounds and spellings are as follows.

1 Scottish Gaelic uses purely graphic vowels to signal consonant quality. Where  $C'$  = a palatalized consonant and  $C^{\text{v}}$  = a velarized consonant, /aC'/, /oC'/, /uC'/ and /eC'/ are written *ai*, *oi*, *ui*, *ei*; /eC'/ and /iC'/ are written *ea*, *io*; /C'o/ and /C'u/ are written *eo*, *iu*; and similarly with long vowels. Note that vowel affection, both allophonic and phonemic, can be associated with consonant quality: for example *each* 'horse' is [ɛx], *eich* 'horses' is [eç]. Additionally, some  $C^{\text{v}}$  :  $C'$  oppositions have undergone secondary developments; e.g., //s' : s'/ has become /s : ʃ/ in all dialects. It is still expedient to regard this as a  $C^{\text{v}}$  :  $C'$  opposition in view of its morphophonemic vitality; e.g., *bàs* represents [b̥a:s], i.e., 'death' (nom.), *bàis* represents [b̥a:ʃ], 'death' (gen.).

2 Scottish Gaelic uses a set of consonant digraphs to represent fricatives: for example, *bh* for /v/, *gh* for /ɣ/. (This practice originates in the fact that pairs of stop and homorganic fricative stand in morphophonemic opposition in initial position; e.g., {b ~ v} has generated *b ~ bh*.) Voiced fricatives are liable to reduction or loss in intervocal, pre-consonantal or final position in the modern language (see below), but this is not reflected in the orthography.

3 The digraphs which represent such reduced or lost intervocal fricatives are also used, somewhat capriciously, to represent acoustically similar 'vowel (+ light or partial constriction) + vowel' sequences of a different origin, i.e., where there is historical hiatus. Thus disyllabic [fi(h)əx] 'raven' (OIr. *fiach*) is written *fitheach* just as disyllabic [ʃi(h)əy] 'thrust' (OIr. *sithad*) is written *sitheadh*. Contrast monosyllabic [fiəx] 'debt' (OIr. *fiach*), written *fiach*.

4 The central Scottish Gaelic dialects have developed a series of long vowels or diphthongs in syllables where historically short vowels preceded certain consonants or consonant groups. These lengthenings are to a considerable extent ignored by Scottish Gaelic orthography; e.g., *ard* beside *àrd* 'high' with [a:] before the *rd*-group. In other VCC syllables epenthetic vowels have developed: again, these are mostly ignored by the orthography; e.g. *arm* 'army' with [aram].

5 The inherited opposition of voiced : voiceless stops has in most Scottish Gaelic dialects become effectively an opposition of voiceless unaspirated : voiceless aspirated. Orthography does not recognize this. Thus *gad* /gad/ 'withy' approximates to [kat], while *cat* /kat/ 'cat' approximates to [k<sup>h</sup>a<sup>h</sup>t] or similar.

The values assigned in the following tables are crude phonetic ones. For fuller details see especially Borgstrøm 1937 and 1940, Oftedal 1956 and Ternes 2006.

#### *Vowel spellings and vocalic sounds*

Table 7.1. refers to stressed (i.e., initial) syllables. In most unstressed syllables the vowel is /ə/, but /a/ is common as the outcome of historic long vowels and diphthongs. Variation in vowels is associated mainly with contiguous consonants or consonant groups, especially the following: /R/ and *r*-groups; /m L N ŋ/; /ɣ/ (i.e., *gh/dh*) and *y*-groups; /v/ (i.e., *bh/mh*) and *v*-groups. For exemplification of these points, and of the development of epenthetic vowels within some clusters, see below, 'Phonology'.

Table 7.1 Orthography and pronunciation: stressed vowels

Spelling	Specimen values		Alternative values	
a	[a]/[a]	<i>balla, cat</i>	[a:] [au] [ə] [ɔ:]	<i>barr</i> (or <i>bàrr</i> ) <i>mall; samhradh</i> <i>lagh</i> <i>adhbhar</i>
ai	[a]	<i>baile</i>	[a:] [ai] [e]/[ɛ] [ə] [ɔi]	<i>cairdean</i> (or <i>càirdean</i> ) <i>saill; aibhne</i> <i>air, cait</i> <i>taigh</i> <i>faighneachd</i>
à (eà)	[a:]/[a:]	<i>làmh (feàrr)</i>		
ài	[a:]	<i>sgàin</i>		
ao	[u:]	<i>gaol</i>		
aoi	[u:]	<i>sgaoil</i>	[ɔi]	<i>laoigh</i>
e	[ɛ]/[e]	<i>dheth</i>		
è	[e:]	<i>dè</i>		
ea	[ɛ]/[e]	<i>bean, beag</i>	[(ɛ)a:] [eu] [ə] [ɔ:]	<i>fearr</i> (or <i>feàrr</i> ) <i>ceann; geamhradh</i> <i>feadh</i> <i>teaghlach</i>
èa	(see eu, ia)			
eà	(see à)			
ei	[e]	<i>eich</i>	[ei]	<i>seinn</i>
èi	[e:]	<i>tèid</i>	[ɛ:]	<i>sèimh</i>
eo	(see o)			
eò	(see ò)			
eòì	(see òi)			
eu	[e:] [ɛ:/ia]	<i>feum</i> <i>beul</i> (or <i>bial</i> )	[ɛ:]/[ia]	<i>meud</i> (or <i>miad</i> )
i	[i]	<i>lite</i>	[i:]	<i>till</i>
ì	[i:]	<i>tide</i>		
ia	[iə] [ia/ɛ:]	<i>iasad</i> <i>bial</i> (or <i>beul</i> )	[ia] [ia]/[ɛ:]	<i>sian</i> <i>miad</i> (or <i>meud</i> )
io	[i]	<i>smior</i>	[(i)u:] [(i)u] [iə] [iə]	<i>lionn</i> <i>sionnach</i> <i>tiodhlaic</i> <i>crioch</i>
ìo	[i:]	<i>pìos</i>		
o (eo)	[ɔ] [o]	<i>loch (deoch)</i> <i>bog</i>	[ɔ:] [ɔu] [o:]	<i>torr</i> (or <i>tòrr</i> ) <i>toll</i> <i>sobhrach</i> (or <i>sòbhrach</i> )
oi	[ɔ]	<i>oir</i>	[ɔ:] [ə] [ɔ:]	<i>comhradh</i> (or <i>còmhradh</i> ) <i>goid</i> <i>oirnn</i>

			[əi]	<i>toill; oighre</i>
ò (eò)	[ɔ:]	òl ( <i>ceò</i> )		
	[o:]	mòr		
òì (eòì)	[ɔ:]	dòigh ( <i>eòin</i> )		
	[o:]	còig		
u (iu)	[u]	luch ( <i>fliuch</i> )	[u:]	<i>null; ughdar</i> (or <i>ùghdar</i> )
ua	[uə]	usal		
	[ua]	uan		
uai	[ua]	uainn		
ui	[u]	tuit	[ui]	<i>druim; cuibhle</i>
	[ɰ]	tuig		
ù (iù)	[u:]	ùr ( <i>diùlt</i> )		
ùì (iùì)	[u:]	ùir ( <i>ciùil</i> )		

### *Consonant spellings and consonantal sounds*

Scottish Gaelic consonant phonemes mostly contain a palatalized and a non-palatalized or velarized member. Orthographically the former is always flanked by *e* or *i*, the latter by *a*, *o* or *u*. In intervocal positions the doubled spellings *ll*, *nn*, *rr* represent the fortis sounds, while *l*, *n*, *r* represent the lenis sounds of Common Gaelic; contemporary pronunciation transforms these oppositions in various ways.

A narrow transcription would have to indicate that [t d] are dentals; [p t k] are post-aspirated [p<sup>h</sup> t<sup>h</sup> k<sup>h</sup>] in initial position, pre-aspirated [p<sup>h</sup> t<sup>h</sup> k] or [hp ht xk] at the close of stressed syllables. The devoicing of historical /b d g/ is positionally determined; generally it is partial in initial position and complete in internal and final positions. (Voiced allophones occur in contact with nasals: see below, 'Sandhi and related phenomena'.)

The devoicing of stops at the close of stressed syllables is to some extent paralleled in the continuants. Thus the /v/ of *damh* 'ox, stag' may be realized as [f], and the /l/, /n/ and /r/ of *mol*, *bun* and *cor* may be devoiced (or progressively devoiced) in final position. Of the nasals, those denoted [ɲ] and [ɲ] below are typically tongue-spread inter-dental sounds, respectively velarized and palatalized, while [n] is typically a light tongue-tip dental or post-dental sound, lacking the hollow quality of [ɲ]. Of the laterals [ɬ] is dental, strongly velarized, while [ʎ] is dental, strongly palatalized; [l] is a light, tongue-tip alveolar sound. Of the *r*-sounds [ɾ] is an alveolar trill with a dark, hollow quality, and [r] an alveolar flap. The symbol [Z] denotes an historical *r*-sound which nowadays shows wide dialectal variation, from a lightly trilled and perceptibly palatalized true *r*-sound to [z], [j], a dental spirant, or even a [l].

See 'Phonology' for discussion of the more important combinatory modifications, including retroflex allophones of sounds clustered with *r*-sounds; the treatment of initial *cn*- as *cr*-, etc.; combinations of /h/ with resonants; and clusters closing with historical /t/.

Note that in Table 7.2 an asterisk (\*) preceding a word-internal graphic spirant denotes an original hiatus word in which the graphic spirant is a dummy one in historical terms. For [G], [I], [J] and [W], see note 2.

Table 7.2 Orthography and pronunciation: consonants

Spelling	Word-initial value		Non-initial value	
b	[b̥]	<i>bog</i>	[p]	<i>cab</i>
	[b̥] ([b̥I])	<i>binn</i> ( <i>beò</i> )	[p] ([Ip])	<i>glib</i> ( <i>lùib</i> )
bh	[v]	<i>bhog</i>	[v]	<i>sàbh</i>
	[v] ([vI])	<i>binn</i> ( <i>bheò</i> )	[W]	<i>dubh, abhainn, so*bhadh</i>
			[v] ([Iv])	<i>sibh</i> ( <i>dhuibh</i> 'to you')
			[J]	<i>dhuibh</i> 'black', <i>luibhean</i>
c	[k <sup>h</sup> ]	<i>cat</i>	[ <sup>x</sup> k]	<i>bac, faca</i>
	[c <sup>h</sup> ]	<i>cinn, ceann</i>	[ <sup>ɛ</sup> c]	<i>faic, faicinn</i>
ch	[x]	<i>chat</i>	[x]	<i>loch</i>
	[ç]	<i>chinn</i>	[ç]	<i>bruich</i>
d	[d̥]	<i>dath</i>	[t]	<i>ad</i>
	[d̥ <sup>ɜ</sup> ]	<i>deoch</i>	[t <sup>ɪ</sup> ]	<i>maide, caraid</i>
dh	[ɣ]	<i>dhath</i>	[G]	<i>feadh, modhail, ca*dha</i>
	[j]	<i>dhia</i>	[J]	<i>ùidh, uidheam, I*dhe</i>
f	[f]	<i>fàg</i>	[f]	<i>lof, cofaidh</i>
	[f] ([fI])	<i>fill</i> ( <i>feall</i> )		
fh	- ([I])	<i>fhàg</i> ( <i>fheall</i> )		
g	[g̊]	<i>gabh</i>	[k]	<i>fàg, fàgail</i>
	[ʃ̊]	<i>gin, geall</i>	[c]	<i>tuig, thuige</i>
gh	[ɣ]	<i>ghabh</i>	[G]	<i>leagh, leaghaidh, o*gha</i>
	[j]	<i>gheall</i>	[J]	<i>laigh, slighe, ai*ghear</i>
h	[h]	<i>h-uain</i>		
	[h] ([hI])	<i>h-éisg</i> ( <i>h-eòin</i> )		
l	[t̪]	<i>loch</i>	[t̪]	<i>mol, eala</i>
	[ʎ]	<i>leabaidh</i>		
	[l]	( <i>mo</i> ) <i>leabaidh</i>	[l]	<i>buil, baile</i>
ll			[t̪]	<i>ball, balla</i>
			[ʎ]	<i>buill, buille</i>
m	[m]	<i>mac</i>	[m]	<i>am</i>
	[m] ([mI])	<i>minn</i> ( <i>mionn</i> )	[m] ([Im])	<i>im</i> ( <i>caim</i> )
mh	[v]	<i>mhac</i>	[v]	<i>tàmh</i>
			[W]	<i>sàmhach, reamhar,</i> <i>leo*mhann</i>
	[v] ([vI])	<i>mhinn</i> ( <i>mhionn</i> )	[v] ([Iv])	<i>nimh</i> ( <i>làimh</i> )
			[J]	<i>cnuimh, uimhir, aimhleas</i>
n	[n̥]	<i>nuadh</i>	[n]	<i>bun, òran, fine</i>
	[n̥]	<i>nighean, neach</i>	[n̥]	<i>duine</i>
	[n]	( <i>dà</i> ) <i>neach</i>		
nn			[n̥]	<i>ann, Anna, fearann</i>
			[n̥]	<i>loinn, innear, fearainn</i>
p	[p <sup>h</sup> ]	<i>poca</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> p]	<i>map, lapach</i>
	[p <sup>h</sup> ] ([p <sup>h</sup> I])	<i>pinn</i> ( <i>peann</i> )	[ <sup>ɛ</sup> p] ([I <sup>ɛ</sup> p])	<i>cipean</i> ( <i>suipeir</i> )
ph	[f]	<i>phoca</i>		
	[f] ([fI])	<i>phinn</i> ( <i>pheann</i> )		
r	[r̥]	<i>rud, rionnag</i>	[r]	<i>car, caran, adhbhar</i>

			[Z]	<i>air, aire</i>
rr			[ʀ]	<i>barr, barrachd, oirre</i>
s	[s]	<i>sad</i>	[s]	<i>as, agus, asam</i>
	[ʃ]	<i>siod</i>	[ʃ]	<i>ais, taigeis, uisge</i>
sh	[h]	<i>shad</i>		
	[h] ([hj])	<i>shiod</i> ( <i>shiubhail</i> )		
t	[tʰ]	<i>taigh</i>	[ʰt]	<i>at, bratach</i>
	[tʰ]	<i>teine, tiugh</i>	[ʰtʰ] / [ʰtʰ]	<i>ait, bruichte</i>
th	[h]	<i>thaigh</i>	[h] ([G/W])	<i>math (giu*thas)</i>
	[h] ([hj])	<i>thig (thiugh)</i>	[h] ([J])	<i>bith (fi*theach)</i>

PHONOLOGY<sup>3</sup>

Vowel system<sup>4</sup>

*Vowels in stressed syllables* Long and short varieties of the Gaelic vowels occur: *ubh* /u(h)/ ‘egg’ beside *ùth* /u:(h)/ ‘udder’. In stressed syllables long or short vowels may occur: *bata* /ˈbatə/ ‘stick’ beside *bàta* /ˈbatə/ ‘boat’; in unstressed syllables only short vowels normally occur.

Stressed vowels (long or short) can occur in oral and nasal varieties: *bàs* /ba:s/ ‘death’ beside *tàmh* /tā:v/ ‘rest’. Nasality developed in contact with historical /m/, /n/, /N/, /ŋ/ and /ĩ/, but the synchronic rules for its occurrence have also been determined by both psychological pressures and physiological constraints, whose effects differ dialectally in their details (cf., Ó Maolalaigh 2003a; Ternes 2006: 103–18). The opposition is neutralized in unstressed vowels.

Vowel sequences of two types are found, diphthongal and hiatus: for example, *fiach* /fiəx/ ‘debt’ with [fiəx] beside *fi\*theach* /fiəx/ ‘raven’ with [fi(h)əx] or [fi²əx]. Under suitably contrastive conditions hiatus sequences are disyllabic, diphthongal sequences are monosyllabic. The syllabic distinction is sometimes minimal, but the contrast may be maintained at the level of intonation. (See, for example, Oftedal 1956: 25; Ternes 2006: 129–45.)

Scottish Gaelic vowel system (stressed syllables)

i:	u(:)	u(:)
e(:)	ə(:)	o(:)
ɛ(:)	a(:)	ɔ(:)

Examples:

i	<i>thig</i>	/higˈ/	‘come’	u	<i>ruig</i>	/Ruɡˈ/	‘reach’	u	<i>luch</i>	/Lux/	‘mouse’
e	<i>deich</i>	/dˈexˈ/	‘ten’	ə	<i>tagh</i>	/təɣ/	‘choose’	o	<i>gob</i>	/gob/	‘beak’
ɛ	<i>each</i>	/ɛx/	‘horse’	a	<i>lach</i>	/Lax/	‘wild-duck’	ɔ	<i>loch</i>	/Lɔx/	‘loch’
i:	<i>cìr</i>	/kˈi:rˈ/	‘comb’	u:	<i>daor</i>	/du:r/	‘dear’	u:	<i>ùr</i>	/u:r/	‘fresh’
e:	<i>feum</i>	/fe:m/	‘need’	ə:	<i>adhradh</i>	/ə:rəɣ/	‘praying’	o:	<i>mòr</i>	/mɔ:r/	‘big’
ɛ:	<i>sèimh</i>	/ʃɛ:v/	‘mild’	a:	<i>làr</i>	/La:r/	‘floor’	ɔ:	<i>òr</i>	/ɔ:r/	‘gold’

## Notes on the vowel system

At the phonemic level the language is relatively homogeneous, the main divergence from the above pattern being the non-differentiation of /u:/ from /ə:/ in the southern dialects. Some phonemes are of relatively restricted occurrence, notably /o:/, /ɛ:/, /u/. Certain contrasts may be hard to pin down in individual dialects, e.g., /e : ɛ/, /ɔ : o/. For the shortening of long vowels before hiatus and for the lengthening or diphthongization of short vowels before certain consonants and consonant groups see below, 'The syllable and syllable length'.

There is a considerable amount of sub-phonemic variation among vowel sounds, both inter- and intradialectal. (For variation in the reporting practices of scholars see Hamp 1988.) It owes much to the heavy semantic burden assigned to consonant quality at the onset or closure of stressed syllables. Its effects are most marked in the case of short vowels, but are by no means confined to them.

The Gaelic dialects may differ also as to the location of phoneme boundaries, and of the principal allophones of the phonemes. Globally speaking, the phoneme /a/ can yield a wide variety of realizations in the [æ-a-ɑ] sector. Conversely, [æ] may require to be assigned to /ɛ/ or to /a/.

Some dialectal variation is well enough established to be enshrined in the written language, for example, *mios* and *meas* 'esteem' (with /i/ and /e/ respectively); but often it is not, for example, *coileach* 'cock' (with /ə/ or /a/). Doublets within the same dialect arising from earlier differentiations of this sort are not infrequent, for example, *soitheach* 'vessel' gives rise to /sɛ(h)əx/ 'dish' and /sə(h)əx/ 'boat' in some dialects (Borgstrøm 1940: 141). Morphological incentives are sometimes discernible, for example, *cat* 'cat', pl. *cait*, usually yields /kat : kət/, whereas the unrelated pair *at* 'swell' and *ait* 'funny' usually appear as /at/ and /at'/.

*Diphthongs* Two main sorts of diphthong occur: diphthongs closing with /i/ or /u/, and diphthongs closing with /ə/ or /a/. The first sorts arise from earlier sequences of  $\check{V}\check{C}$  or  $\check{V}CC$  and are firmly established in the central Gaelic dialects, but less developed in some southern, eastern and northern dialects. The incidence and structural setting of the *i*- and *u*-diphthongs are discussed below, 'The syllable and syllable length'. The second sorts arise from the breaking of earlier long vowels: Early Gaelic /uə/ and /iə/ from inherited /o:/ and /e:/; and /ia/ from a still ongoing development affecting certain occurrences of Early Modern Gaelic /e:/. Where /ia/ alternates with /e:/ the central dialects have a higher proportion of breakings than the southern, eastern and far northern ones (Jackson 1968).

Examples:

ei	<i>seinn</i>	/ʃeiN'/	'sing'	eu	<i>ceann</i>	/k'euN/	'head'
əi	<i>roinn</i>	/RəiN'/	'divide'	ou	<i>tonn</i>	/təuN/	'wave'
ai	<i>caill</i>	/kaiL'/	'lose'	au	<i>rann</i>	/RauN/	'verse'
ui	<i>suim</i>	/suim/	'interest'				
iə	<i>liath</i>	/L'iə(h)/	'grey'	ia	<i>eun/ian</i>	/e:n/, /ian/	'bird'
uə	<i>tuath</i>	/tuə(h)/	'north'				

Other, more localized occurrences of diphthongs include /iə/ for standard /i:/, for example, /L'iən/ is quite widespread beside /L'i:n/ 'net'; and Lewis /əi/, /əu/ developing from /i:/, /u:/ before 'heavy' consonants or consonant groups, e.g., *tinn* /t'əiN'/ 'sick', *sunnd* /səuNd/ 'happiness' for standard /t'i:N'/, /su:Nd/. For diphthongs involving vocalic elements



generated by the depalatalization of previously palatalized labials and /h/ see below, ‘Notes on the obstruent system’.

*Vowels in unstressed syllables* In unstressed syllables the range of vocalism is much reduced. Basically, inherited short vowels appear as /ə/ and inherited long vowels (including /iə/ and /uə/ and reductions of certain syllabic complexes involving lost spirants) appear as /a/. Thus *atharrachadh* ‘changing’ is /ʔahəRəxəy/, *amadan* ‘fool’ (earlier *amadán*) is /ʔamədan/, *fearail* ‘manly’ (earlier *fearamhail*) is /ʔfəralʔ/. Some quite widely occurring examples of unstressed /a/ are harder to explain historically; e.g. *galar* ‘illness’ (earlier *galar*).

The repertoire is strengthened by /i/ and /u/ in unstressed open syllables. These result mainly from earlier combinations of /ə/ + spirant, e.g., *cuiridh* /kurʔi/ ‘will put’, *air beulaibh* /biaLu/ ‘in front of’. Compare also *slánaighear* /ʔsLəniə/ (with /i/ < /əyʔ/) ‘saviour’, *brìtheamhan* /brʔihuən/ (with /u/ < /əv/) ‘judges’. Various originally non-native words, for example: *Màiri* ‘Mary’ and *Glaschu* ‘Glasgow’, swell this group. (See Ó Maolalaigh 2003b.)

Syncope of post-tonic vowels is found fairly regularly in paradigms and word derivation, and new consonant clusters thus created undergo standard modifications; for example, *càirdean*, plural of *caraid* ‘friend’, has /a:/ before the *rd*-group.

Examples:

<i>fosgail</i>	‘open’	<i>fosglaidh</i>	‘will open’
<i>doras</i>	‘door’	<i>dorsan</i>	‘doors’
<i>lughad</i>	‘smallness’	<i>lùghdaich</i>	‘diminish’

Sometimes etymological consciousness acts as a counter; for example, *craobh-sgaoileadh* ‘broadcasting’ had developed a by-form *craosgladh* by the eighteenth century, but the longer form has prevailed in the age of radio ‘broadcasting’.

Apocope of final /ə/ is widespread dialectally, for example, *mise* ‘I, me’ becomes /miʃ/ in many areas. Less frequently met with is the addition of unhistorical /ə/, as in *caraide* for *caraid* ‘friend’. While this last phenomenon is usually to be explained on analogical grounds, a prosodic motivation may underlie the addition of /ə/ to many loanwords from English; for example, *drama* /dramə/ beside *dram* /draum/ ‘dram (of liquor)’.

Consonant system<sup>5</sup>

The Common Gaelic consonantal system inherited by Scottish Gaelic was as follows.

	Explosive	Fricative	Continuant
Labial	p b	f v ɸ	m
Dental	t d	(θ) (ð) s	N n L l R r
Post-dental	k g	x ɣ h	ŋ

In this system each consonant had two members, C<sup>+</sup> and C<sup>-</sup>. Among the continuants /N/, /L/ and /R/ mostly represent the outcome of old assimilations, e.g. *\*-sn-* > *-nn-*, *\*-ln-* > *-ll-*, etc. A gap opened up in the dental fricative area as a result of the merger of Middle Irish /ð/ with /ɣ/ and of Middle Irish /θ/ with /h/. At the morphophonemic level the Common Gaelic consonants ordered themselves in pairs, e.g., {p : f}, {N : n}. This system is basically intact in Scottish Gaelic, though surface changes tends to obscure the regularity.

## Obstruent system

The Scottish Gaelic obstruent system is set out in Table 7.3. Broad phonetic equivalents have been added to facilitate comparison with Table 7.2, 'Orthography and pronunciation: consonants'. Note that the nasalized labial fricative /ṽ/ of the Common Gaelic system does not figure in this array; for phonemic description it has seemed more effective to associate inherited nasality with the adjacent stressed vowels to which it has spread or transferred itself.<sup>6</sup> For the glottal stop [ʔ] see below.

Table 7.3 Scottish Gaelic obstruent system (cf. Table 7.2, Orthography and pronunciation: consonants)

//p̣̀	ṕ̣	ḅ̀	ḅ́	f̣	f̣́	ṿ̀	ṿ́//		
/p	p(j)	b	b(j)	f	f(j)	v	v(j)/		
[p	p	b̥	b̥	f	f	v/W	v/W/J]		
//ṭ̀	ṭ́	ḍ̀	ḍ́					ṣ̀	ṣ́//
/t	ṭ́	d	ḍ́					s	ʃ/
[t	ṭ̞	d̥	d̥̞					s	ʃ]
//ḳ̀	ḳ́	g̣̀	ǵ̣	x̣̀	x̣́	ɣ̣̀	ɣ̣́	ḥ̀	ḥ́//
/k	ḳ́	g	ǵ̣	x	x̣́	ɣ	ɣ̣́	j	h(j)/
[k	c	g̥	g̥̞	x	ç	ɣ/G	j/J	j	h/J]

Examples:

<i>pòg</i>	/pɔ:g/	'kiss'	<i>fòd</i>	/fɔ:d/	'sod'
<i>piuthar</i>	/pju(h)ər/	'sister'	<i>fiodh</i>	/fiʏ/ or /fjəʏ/	'wood'
<i>bochd</i>	/bɔxk/	'poor'	<i>bhuam</i>	/vuəm/	'from me'
<i>binn</i>	/bi:N´/	'melodious'	<i>(mo) bhean</i>	/vɛn/	'(my) wife'
			<i>mheall</i>	/vjauL/	'deceived'
<i>taigh</i>	/təj/	'house'	<i>soc</i>	/sɔ(x)k/	'snout'
<i>tiugh</i>	/t´u(ɣ)/	'thick'	<i>sean</i>	/ʃɛn/	'old'
<i>dachaidh</i>	/daxi/	'home'			
<i>deoch</i>	/d´ɔx/	'drink'			
<i>caob</i>	/kʉ:b/	'dollop'	<i>(a) chaoidh</i>	/xəi/	'forever'
<i>ceò</i>	/k´ɔ:/	'mist'	<i>(a´) cheò</i>	/x´ɔ:/	'(of the) mist'
<i>gasda</i>	/gasta/	'excellent'	<i>ghabh</i>	/ɣav/	'took'
			<i>(a) dhùnadh</i>	/ɣu:nəʏ/	'(to) shut'
<i>geansaidh</i>	/g´ɛnsi/	'jersey'	<i>gheall</i>	/j̥auL/	'promised'
			<i>dhiùlt</i>	/j̥u:LT/	'refused'
			<i>ionnsaich</i>	/j̥ū:səx´/	'learn'
			<i>thog</i>	/hog/	'lifted'
			<i>shuidh</i>	/huj/	'sat'
			<i>thionndaidh</i>	/hju:Ndaj/	'turned'
			<i>shiubhail</i>	/hju əl/	'travelled'

### Notes on the obstruent system

Status of /j/. /j/ attains phonemic status through bi-segmental treatment of *i* before certain non-palatalized consonants and groups (e.g., *ionnsaich* /iNsəx'/ as /juNsəx'/ or /jü:səx'/) and through weakening of /ɣ'/ (e.g., *taigh* /taɣ'/ giving /təj/).

Status of /p' b' f' v'/. For present purposes the Common Gaelic palatalized labials may be said to have developed as follows: where P = a labial consonant, initially /P'/ gives /P/ before remaining front vowels, e.g., *beud* 'harm' = /b'e:d/ = /be:d/, but otherwise /Pj/ (sometimes realized as /P/ + a semi-vocalic glide or vowel), e.g., *beàrn* 'gap' /b'eRN// yields /bjə:RN/ (sometimes [b'ə:RN] or [b'əaRN]). Closing stressed syllables /P'/ has given /jP/ > /iP/, or /P/ with compensatory vowel change, e.g., *lùib* '(of a) bend' /Luib/, *dhàibh* 'to them' /ɣaiv/, *cnàimh* 'bone' /krāiv/ or /krēiv/, *cnaip* '(of a) lump' /krē(h)p/. Internally and closing unstressed syllables /P'/ gave /P/, often with compensatory vowel affection, but occasionally /jP/ > /iP/, e.g., *caibe* 'spade' /kəbəl/, *Raibeart* (earlier *Roibeart*) 'Robert' /Rəbərɾt/; exceptionally *suipèir* 'supper' /suipər/ (realized with [uɕp], i.e., with devoicing of /j/ before /p/). For articulatory distinction (specified in terms of lip tension) of the labials in contact with front vowels in stressed syllables see Borgstrøm 1940: 18–19 and MacAulay 1966. For discussion of the phonemic status and realization of the glides see Ternes 2006: 27–43.

Status of /h'/. A development comparable to that of the labials has taken place, resulting in either loss of palatalization or bi-segmental realization as /hj/ or /h/ + vocalic glide or vowel; for example, *na h-eòin* /nə'hjɔ:N'/ 'the birds' appears as [nə'hjɔ:N'], [nə'h'ɔ:N'] or [nə'hɔ:N'].

Status of pre-aspiration. The Scottish Gaelic dialects show two sorts of realization of the sequences /Vp Vt Vk// in stressed syllables, one being symmetrical (i.e., [p t k], [h<sup>t</sup> p<sup>t</sup> h<sup>k</sup> k] or [xp xt xk]) and the other asymmetrical (i.e. [p t xk] or [hp, ht, xk]). Of these the 'standard' treatment for our purposes is the last, including as it does the Hebrides other than Lewis (which has [h<sup>t</sup> p, h<sup>t</sup> k]). These sequences are here assigned the phonemic values /hp, ht, xk/, though it is clear that a monophonemic interpretation could be sustained, for example, in the case of Lewis. For discussion see Ternes 2006: 44–54.

Status of glottalization. The glottal stop [ʔ] is generally regarded as a southerly feature in Scottish Gaelic, but in fact extends well into the central area. It occurs in two principal environments: (a) intervocally in hiatus words, e.g., *ogha* [oʔə] 'grandson', *tughadh* [tuʔəɣ] 'thatch'; (b) pre-consonantly where a member of the lenis series of consonants follows a short vowel, e.g., *uile* [uʔlə] 'all'. (The latter type occurs only in a restricted way outside the southerly 'homeland' of glottalization.) Perhaps [ʔ] should be regarded as an allophone of a hiatus phoneme or prosodeme; it certainly needs refinement in terms of the type of glottal feature involved. See Shuken 1984, Dilworth 1995–6, Watson 1996, Ternes 2006: 129–45, Jones 2006.

The articulation of the voiced fricatives /ɣ/, /v/, etc., is noticeably more lax in non-initial positions, leading in some dialects/positions to vocalization or loss: hence their specification as [W], [G] and [J] above. Compare the examples *slànaighear* (with /əɣ'ə/ > /əjə/ > /iə/) and *britheamhan* (with /əvəl/ > /əwəl/ > /uə/) cited above, and see further below, 'Consonant clusters'.

For details of consonantal realization beyond the skeleton account given above, 'Scottish Gaelic orthography and pronunciation', see the dialect monographs of Borgstrøm, Oftedal and Ternes cited in the References.

## Resonant system

The development of the Common Gaelic resonant system in Scottish Gaelic is set out in Table 7.4, in which the arrows (↗ ↘ ↙ ↚) indicate the ways in which some of the inherited oppositions have continued, while other distinctions have collapsed.

Table 7.4 Scottish Gaelic resonant system (cf. Table 7.2, Orthography and pronunciation: consonants)

//m`	m´	N`	N´	n´	n`	ŋ`	ŋ´//
↙	↙	↙	↘	↗	↘	↙	↙
/m	m(j)	N	N´	n		ŋ(g)	ŋ(g´/)
[m	m	ɲ	ɲ	n		ŋ(g)/ɣ	ŋ(ʃ)/j]
//L`	L´	L´	L´	R`	R´	r`	r´//
↘	↗	↙	↙	↘	↗	↙	↙
/	L	L´	l	R		r	r´/
[	ʟ	ʟ	l	ɾ		r	Z]

### Examples:

- m *muir* /mur´/ 'sea'; *meall* /mɛuL/ or /mjauL/ 'lump'
- N *nàbaidh* /Na:bi/ 'neighbour'; *Annag* /aNag/ 'Annie'
- N´ *neach* /N´ɛx/ or /N´ax/ 'person'; *bainne* /baN´ə/ 'milk'; *duine* /duN´ə/ (but also /dʉnə/) 'man'
- n (*mo*) *nàbaidh* /na:bi/ '(my) neighbour'; (*dà*) *neach* /nɛx/ or /nax/ '(two) people'; *canach* /kanəx/ 'bog-cotton grass'; *fine* /finə/ (but also /fiN´ə/) 'clan'
- ŋ *long* /Lɔŋ(g)/ 'ship'; *teanga* /t´ɛŋ(g)ə/ or /t´ɛɣə/ 'tongue'
- ŋ´ *cuing* /kuiŋ´(g´)/ or /kūj/ 'yoke, asthma'; *aingeal* /aŋ´əL/ or /äjəL/ 'angel'
- L *loch* /Lɔx/ 'loch'; *balla* /baLə/ 'wall'; *cala* /kaLə/ 'harbour'
- L´ *leannan* /L´ɛNan/ or /L´aNan/ 'lover'; *gille* /g´iL´ə/ 'lad'
- l (*mo*) *leannan* /lɛNan/ or /laNan/ '(my) lover'; *sileadh* /ʃiləɣ/ 'rain(ing)'
- R *ràmh* /Ra:v/ 'oar'; *Barraigh* /baRaj/ 'Barra'; *rionnag* /RuNag/ 'star'
- r *car* /kar/ 'turn'; *caraid* /karəd´/ 'friend'
- r´ *cuir* /kur´/ 'put'; *aire* /ar´ə/ 'attention'

## Notes on the resonant system

The old system of fortis : lenis oppositions has been transformed in most dialects. Though a few dialects have retained the four-way split in laterals and/or nasals, none have four *r*-phonemes. Where morphological motivation exists the contrast which was once carried by the fortis : lenis opposition may be reinforced or replaced by the use of different vowel allophones; for example, Oftedal reported (*dà*) *ràmh* [d̪a: r̪a:v] '(two) oars' beside *ràmh* [r̪a:v] 'oar' (1956: 26). A general tendency for the more southerly dialects to have

a less rich inventory than, for example, the Hebridean dialects is cut across, in parts of Argyll, by the consistent use of the glottal stop /ʔ/ in association with the historically non-fortis sounds, for example, *duine* [dʊʔnə] ‘man’ beside *duinne* [dʊpnə] ‘for us’. See below, ‘Morphophonemics’.

In the system set out above //mˈ// has undergone the same process of development as the labial obstruents, for example, *meud* /mˈe:d/ ‘size’ yields /mɛ:d/ or /miad/; *leum* (earlier *léim*) ‘leap’ appears as /Lˈe:m/; *caim* ‘bent’ (gen. sg. m.) is /kaim/; *caime* ‘id.’ (gen. sg. f.) is /kəmə/; *Uilleim* ‘William!’ (voc.) is /uLˈam/.

Of the nasals //nˈ// has been redistributed between /Nˈ/ and /n/ in the central dialects, for example, *duine* ‘man’ usually has /Nˈ/; but *fine* ‘clan’ tends to have /n/ in the northerly varieties (though /Nˈ/ is commoner in southern varieties). The velar nasal //ŋ// yields /ŋ(g)/ or /ɣ/, as in *teanga* ‘tongue’ /tˈɛŋ(g)ə/ or /tˈɛɣə/. Among the laterals //L// and //l// have merged; to write /L/ rather than /l/ accords with the commonest practice of Scottish Gaelic scholars. Of the *r*-phonemes initial /Rˈ/ is not found in any dialect, and apparently merged with /R/ at a fairly early date.

The syllable and syllable length

Stressed syllables may contain long or short vowels, for example, *mi* /mi/ ‘me’, *cat* /kat/ ‘cat’, *trosg* /trɔsk/ ‘cod’ have short vowels; *clì* /kli:/ ‘left’, *òr* /ɔ:r/ ‘gold’, *fàisg* /fa:ʃk/ ‘squeeze’ have long vowels. Under certain circumstances historically short vowels may be lengthened or diphthongized, and this process is an important source of long syllables in the central dialect area. The following patterns are found.

Type 1

Historic  $\check{V}C \rightarrow \bar{V}C$  where C = a member of the old fortis series of resonants other than /R/, i.e., /L/, /N/, /m/, /ŋ/. The standard outcomes are given in Table 7.5.

Table 7.5 Vowel lengthening before nasals and laterals

Historic vowel		Before /Cˈ/		Before /Cˈ/	
i	u	(j)u:	u:	i:	ui
e	o	ɛu	ɔu	ei	əi
a		au		ai	

Examples:

<i>lionn</i>	/Lˈu:N/	‘beer’	<i>till</i>	/tˈi:Lˈ/	‘return’
<i>ceann</i>	/kˈɛuN/	‘head’	<i>seinn</i>	/ʃeiNˈ/	‘sing’
<i>am</i>	/aum/	‘time’	<i>(An) Fhraing</i>	/Raiŋˈgˈ/	‘France’
<i>tom</i>	/tɔum/	‘knoll’	<i>Goill</i>	/gəiLˈ/	‘foreigners’
<i>(a-)null</i>	/Nu:L/	‘over, away’	<i>suim</i>	/suim/	‘esteem’

This development is not universal in Scottish Gaelic. It is only partially effective in some southern dialects, and in others it does not take place. Nor does it occur uniformly; for example, the more northerly Hebridean dialects diphthongize the product of /iCˈ/ and /uCˈ/ as /əi/, /ɔu/, e.g., *till* becomes /tˈəiLˈ/, *null* becomes /NɔuL/.

The process is conditioned by syllabic environment: it operates under VC# and VC<sub>1</sub>C<sub>2</sub>

(unless this falls under Type 3 below), but not under VCV; e.g., *Gall* /gauL/ 'foreigner', *Gallda* /gauLdə/ 'anglified', *Gallach* /gaLəx/ 'from Caithness'; cf. also *cum* /ku:m/ 'keep!', *cumte* /ku:mt'ə/ 'would be kept', *cumaidh* /kumi/ 'will keep'.

### Type 2

Historic  $\check{V}C(C) \rightarrow \check{V}C(C)$  where  $C(C)$  = either fortis /R/ or /R/ followed by a homorganic consonant, i.e., *rn*, *rl*, *rd*, *rs*. (For the combination /rt/, which usually has a different sort of outcome, see below 'Voice', under 'Sandhi and related phenomena'.) The standard outcomes are given in Table 7.6.

Table 7.6 Vowel lengthening before r-sounds

Historic vowel		Before /R/		Before /R < R'/	
i	u	(j)u:	u:	(j)u:	u:
e	o	(ɛ)a:	ɔ:	(ɛ)a:	ɔ:
a		a:		a:	

### Examples:

<i>tiùrr</i>	/t'u:R/	'high tide mark'	<i>siùrsach</i>	/ʃu:Rsəx/	'whore'
<i>ceàrr</i>	/k'a:R/	'wrong'	<i>méirleach</i>	/mja:Rləx/	'thief'
<i>càrn</i>	/ka:RN/	'cairn'	<i>càirdeas</i>	/ka:Rd'əs/	'friendship'
<i>còrd</i>	/kɔ:Rd/	'please'	<i>òirleach</i>	/ɔ:Rləx/	'inch'
<i>Mùrdag</i>	/mu:Rdag/	'Murdina'	<i>ùird</i>	/u:Rd'/	'hammers'

The treatment is not wholly uniform: certain dialects tend to diphthongize (e.g., *òrd* /auRd/ 'hammer') or to insert an epenthetic vowel (e.g., *dòrn* /dɔRəN/ 'fist').

Lengthening before /R/ alone is environmentally conditioned, as with the nasals and laterals: e.g., *geàrr* /g'a:R/ 'cut', *geàrrte* /g'a:Rt'ə/ 'would be cut', *Geàrrloch* /g'a:Rləx/ 'Gairloch', but *gearraidh* /g'aRi/ 'will cut', *gearradh* /g'aRəy/ 'cutting'. Lengthening before /RC/ takes place regardless of syllabic environment, e.g., *beàrn* /bja:RN/ 'gap', *teàrnadh* /t'a:RNəy/ 'descending'.

The allophones of /R/ found before homorganic consonants are noteworthy: they tend to be retroflex and to include retroflexion in the homorganic consonant; indeed, in some dialects /Rd/, /RN/, /Rl/, /Rs/ are simplified to [d], [ŋ], [l], [s] with no perceptible *r*-colouring, while /Rd/ may also appear as [(<sup>1</sup>)ʃtʃ/] or similarly.

### Type 3

Historic  $\check{V}C_1C_2 \rightarrow \check{V}C_1\check{V}C_2$  where  $C_1$  = a resonant and  $C_2$  = a non-homorganic continuant or historical voiced stop. See Table 7.7 (overleaf) for the main combinations found.

Table 7.7 Consonant clusters which provoke epenthetic vowels

	+ b	+ g	+ bh/mh	+ gh	+ ch	+ s	+ r	+ l	+ n	+ m
r +	rb	rg	rbh/rmh	rg h	rch					rm
l +	lb	lg	lbh/lmh	lg h	lch					lm
n +	nb		nbh/nmh	ngh	nch					nm
m +					mch	ms	mr	ml	mn	

Examples:

r +	<i>borb, dearg, marbh, dorgh, dorch</i> <i>a, arm</i>
l +	<i>Alba, tilg, dealbh, duilghe, salchar, calma</i>
n +	<i>cainb, meinbh, conghlas, eanchainn, ainm</i>
m +	<i>timcheall, aimsir, imrich, imleag, immidh</i>

Examples of Type 3 can be found where C<sub>2</sub> = a lost spirant or similar; e.g., *anf hainn* /ʌna,əN'/ ‘feeble’ < *an-* (intensive) + *fann* ‘weak’. Here the syllabic shape of the word must have been set before the loss of C<sub>2</sub>: cf., *gainmheach* /gɛnɛ(ʋ)əx/ ‘sand’. See note 4 and below for the phonological representation of epenthetic vowels.

The epenthetic (also termed ‘intrusive’ or ‘svarabhakti’) vowel tends to echo the root vowel, except where the colouring imparted by its flanking consonants is too powerful to permit this. The commonest outcomes are given in Table 7.8.

Table 7.8 Main patterns of vowel epenthesis

Historic vowel		Before C`C`		Before C`C´	
i	u	i/ə__ə	u__u	i__i	u__u/i
e	o	ɛ__a	ɔ__ɔ	e__i	ə__ə/i
	a		a__a		ɛ__ə/i

Note that Type 3 does not occur after historical long vowels, e.g., *àrmann* ‘warrior’ has /a:Rmən/.

Examples:

<i>iomchaidh</i>	/iməxi/	‘fitting’	<i>tilg</i>	/t´ilig´/	‘throw’
<i>dearg</i>	/d´ɛrag/, /d´arag/	‘red’	<i>meirg</i>	/mer´ig´/	‘rust’
<i>calma</i>	/kaLamə/	‘brave’	<i>tairbh</i>	/tɛr´iv/	‘bulls’
<i>borb</i>	/bɔrəb/	‘fierce’	<i>doirbh</i>	/dɔr´iv/	‘difficult’
<i>Murchadh</i>	/muruxəɣ/	‘Murdo’	<i>builg</i>	/bulig´/	‘bags’

Although this type of syllable is clearly disyllabic in phonetic terms, it is associated with the same held or rising tone as is found in monosyllables with long vowels. This, together with the perception of native speakers that svarabhakti words are monosyllabic, has led to its interpretation as phonemically monosyllabic: see Borgstrøm 1940: 153; Oftedal 1956:

29. That is, *arm* ‘army’ /ara:m/ has been linked with *am* /aum/, and *àrd* /a:Rd/ rather than with *Calum* /kaLəm/ or *aran* (older *arán*) /aran/. Note, however, that this treatment is not universal in Scottish Gaelic: epenthesis of a fixed /ə/ with normal tone is found in some of the southerly dialects. (See further ‘Intonation’.)

#### Type 4

$\check{V}C_1C_2 \rightarrow \check{V}C_2$ , where  $C_1$  is a spirant (/v/ or /ɣ/, written *bh/mh* or *dh/gh*) which is lost with lengthening or diphthongization of the short vowel. The standard outcomes are given in Table 7.9.

Table 7.9 Vocalization of historic spirants

iv	(j)u:	<i>siùbhlach</i> ‘nimble’	iv’	i:	<i>lìbhrig</i> ‘deliver’
ev	ēũ	<i>geamhradh</i> ‘winter’	ev’	ēĩ	<i>geimhlean</i> ‘chains’
av	āũ	<i>samhradh</i> ‘summer’	av’	ai	<i>aibhne</i> ‘(of a) river’
ov	ō:	<i>còmhraidh</i> ‘conversation’	ov’	ōĩ	<i>doimhne</i> ‘depth’
	o:	<i>sòbhrach</i> ‘primrose’			
uv	u:	<i>ùbhlach</i> ‘apples’	uv’	ũĩ	<i>cuimhne</i> ‘memory’
iɣ	i:	<i>ìò(dh)bairt</i> ‘sacrifice’	iɣ’	i:	<i>(nas) rìghne</i> ‘tougher’
eɣ	ə:	<i>teaghlach</i> ‘family’	eɣ’	e:	<i>feum (feidhm)</i> ‘need’
aɣ	ə:	<i>adhbhar</i> ‘reason’	aɣ’	ai	<i>saidhbhir</i> ‘rich’
oɣ	o:	<i>bodhradh</i> ‘deafening’	oɣ’	əi	<i>oidhche</i> ‘night’
uɣ	u:	<i>ùghdar</i> ‘author’	uɣ’	ui	<i>buidhnean</i> ‘groups’

Variant treatments are sometimes found, for example, Islay /sɛvərəɣ/ for *samhradh* ‘summer’; but for the most part the vocalization of preconsonantal spirants is standard and clearly long established in vernacular Scottish Gaelic.

Note the parallel tendency for /N/ and /L/ to be vocalized in the same way as the spirants: /N/ before /s/, /L/ and /r/, and /L/ before /s/; e.g., *dannsa* /dāūsə/ ‘dance’, *Fionnlagh* /fjū:Ləɣ/ ‘Finlay’, *bannrainn* (for historic *ban-rìoghain*) /bāūrəN’/ ‘queen’, (*Loch*) *Aillse* /aiʃə/ ‘(Loch) Alsh’.

### Shortening of historically long vowels

A category of short syllables from historic long vowels occurs where these preceded hiatus, for example, *chì* /x’i:/ ‘sees’ beside *chitheadh* /x’i|əɣ/ ‘would see’; *cnò* /krɔ:/ ‘nut’ beside *cnothan* /krɔ|ən/ ‘nuts’. This can include hiatus brought about by the weakening of spirants, e.g., *làmh* /Lə:v/ ‘hand’, pl. *lamhan* /Lā|ən/ beside *lāmhan* /Lə:(v)ən/ and /Lā:ən/. This phenomenon awaits comprehensive investigation.

### Syllabification

In monosyllables, syllabic boundaries and word boundaries coincide. For polysyllables it is reckoned that syllabification is based on the prime unit VC rather than CV, that is, that *diochuimhneachadh* ‘forgetting’ is to be analysed as /d’i:x ən əx əɣ/ (e.g., Oftedal 1956: 30). Compare, however, *cagnadh* /kagnəɣ/ ‘chewing’, where CVCC|VC seems forced and CV|CCVC might have been expected to show the word-initial change /gn → gr/; we



would appear to be dealing with CVC|CVC in these and similar combinations (e.g., *fasgnadh* /fasknəy/ 'winnowing').

### Consonant clusters

*Word-initial groups* The following groups occur:

- |     |    |     |      |      |      |      |
|-----|----|-----|------|------|------|------|
| (1) | bl | br  | (mn) | pl   | pr   |      |
|     | dl | dr  |      | tl   | tr   | (tn) |
|     | gl | gr  | (gn) | kl   | kr   | (kn) |
| (2) | vl | vr  | (vn) | fl   | fr   |      |
|     |    |     |      | (hl) | (hr) | (hn) |
|     | yl | yr  | (yn) | xl   | xr   | (xn) |
| (3) | sp | spl | spr  |      |      |      |
|     | st |     | str  |      |      |      |
|     | sk | skl | skr  |      |      |      |
| (4) |    |     | sl   | sr   | sn   | sm   |

Note that groups consisting of initial /Cn/, except for /sn/, are usually realized as /Cr/ with the following vowel nasalized; for example, *mnathan* 'women' is usually /mrã|ən/, *gnè* 'species' /gr'ɛ:/. The groups listed under (2) are the lenited equivalents (see Morphophonemics) of those in (1), except that /fl/ and /fr/ can also function as radical clusters, for example, *fraoch* /frux:xl/ 'heather' as well as (*mo*) *phrionnsa* /fr'ũ:sə/ '(my) prince'. The groups /hl/, /hn/ and /hr/ (which relate morphophonemically (a) to /tl/, (/tn/), /tr/, and (b) to /sl/, /sn/, /sr/) are commonly realized as [l, n, r], that is, with loss of the initial /h/. The groups *sl-* and *sn-* have /sL(˘)/ and /sN(˘)/; the group *sr-* is realized as [str] in northern central dialects.

*Word-internal groups* The following groups occur:

1 The clusters listed as occurring word-initially under (1) and (3) above; plus /xl, xr, xn/ as in (2) above; plus /xk/ (written *chd*). Note that groups with /-Cn-/ preserve the /n/ in medial position, and that internal /sr/ does not become /str/. The other clusters occurring initially under (2) do not normally appear medially, since syllables of the shape //Vvl// or //Vyl// normally vocalize the fricative.

2 Groups of resonant + stop or resonant + resonant:

lp	lt	lk		ld		(ln)	(lr)
rp	rt	rk		rd	rl	rn	
mp	nt	nk	mb	nd	ng	(nl)	(nr)

Note that the gaps in this array are caused by epenthesis having developed in /lb/, etc. The bracketed combinations occur in a limited way, for example, where non-acclimatization of loanwords, etymological consciousness or paradigm pressure may have balked the normal processes of simplification or epenthesis.

3 Complex groups combining sequences from groups (1) and (2) occur; e.g., /-mpr-/ , /-ntr-/ , /-ndr-/ , /-ltr-/ , /-rsp-/ , as in *imprig* ‘flit’, *inntrig* ‘enter’, *Anndra* ‘Andrew’, *altrap* ‘accident’, *farspag* ‘black-backed gull’. Note, however, that vocalization or epenthesis can simplify such clusters, e.g., *connspaid* /kɔ̃ʊspadʲ/ ‘dissension’, *garbhlach* /g̊araɲLəx/ ‘rough ground’.

*Word-final groups* The following groups are commonly attested:

sp	lp	rp	mp			
st	lt	rt	nt	rd	rn	
sk	lk	rk	nk			xk

See below for the realization of, e.g., the /lk/ in *olc* ‘evil’ as [lɣk] or similar.

### Sandhi and related phenomena

*Harmonization within consonant clusters* In tolerated clusters (that is, where neither simplification nor epenthesis is provoked), the following main adjustments and assimilations take place.

#### Palatalization

In general, historical clusters are either non-palatalized or palatalized throughout, e.g., *cosgas* /kɔskəs/ ‘expense’, *uisge* /uʃkʲə/ ‘water’. When secondary clusters are created by morpheme addition or syncope in derivational or paradigmatic contexts assimilation is normal. Such assimilations are usually anticipatory or ‘leftwards’; e.g., *abhainn* ‘river’, gen. *aibhne*; *miosa* ‘worse’, *miste* ‘the worse for’.

An exception is provided by the *-te* morpheme which expresses the conditional impersonal-passive: *cumte* ‘would be kept’, *dèante* ‘would be done’. Compare also the past participle passive suffix *-te* (where, however, an alternate form in *-ta* is found, e.g., *dèanta*, *dèante*, ‘done’); *feàrrde* /fja:Rdʲə/ ‘the better for’, where /R/ resists palatalization; and the contrastive pronominal suffixes *-sa* (1 sg.), *-se* (3 sg. f.), etc., which maintain their form irrespective of the quality of what comes before them, e.g., *mo mhàthair-sa* ‘my mother’, *dhèanainn-sa* ‘I would do’; *a làmh-se* ‘her hand’.

In initial clusters note that palatalization does not always extend to the first element in the cluster; e.g., *grian* ‘sun’ with /grʲ/.

#### Voice

The pre-aspiration of historic voiceless stops closing stressed syllables is to some extent paralleled in words concluding with resonant + voiceless stop. That is, the treatment of final /VC/, as [V(V)C], [V<sup>h</sup>C] or [Vx C], is mirrored in the treatment of, for example, *olc* /ɔLk/ ‘evil’, which can appear as [ɔɫʰk], [ɔɫ<sup>h</sup>k] or [ɔɫxk]. On the other hand, where the resonant is a member of the old fortis series /L N R m ŋ/, the opposite tendency is in evidence, and the stop can become at least partially voiced. Thus *calltainn* /kauLtəNʲ/ ‘hazel’ has [tɔ] whereas *sult* /sult/ ‘fat’ has [ʰt]. Gaelic orthography mirrors this feature inconsistently. It is reflected correctly in, for example, *Galldachd* ‘Lowlands’ (with [tɔ], cf. the *-ll* of *Gall*) as opposed to *Gàidhealtachd* ‘Highlands’ (with [ʰt] cf. the *-l* of *Gàidheal*), where both have the same abstract noun suffix *-tachd*; but the /N<sup>d</sup>/ of *cinnteach* ‘sure’ (with [ɲ<sup>d</sup>]) is not reflected in the spelling.

The realization of /rt/ is varied and idiosyncratic (though compare /rd/), for

example, [tʃt], [ʃt] or [t] (in the last case with the loss of the palatalized/non-palatalized distinction).

The inherited cluster /xt/, spelled *chd*, shows a different sort of assimilation, appearing in Modern Scottish Gaelic as /xk/. (Evidence for the earlier treatment may be seen in place names in *Auchter*-, from *uachdar* 'top, upper part'.)

*Sandhi in compounds, set phrases and unbound speech* To a greater or lesser extent the word-internal contact rules also operate in compounds and within the phrase.

### *Close compounds*

Here word-stress is initial and the word-internal sandhi rules are in general operative. Thus *seanmhair* /ʃʲɛnaˌvaɪ/ 'grandmother' (etymologically *sean* 'old' + *màthair* 'mother') generates an epenthetic vowel just like *seanchas* /ʃʲɛnaˌxəs/ 'lore'. A useful contrast can be drawn between close or proper compounds and what may be termed loose compounds, using some further combinations involving *sean*. Thus *seannduine* /ʃʲɛuNˌd̪uːnə/ 'old man', *seanntaigh* /ʃʲɛuNˌt̪aɪ/ 'old house' and *sean(a)charaid* /ʃʲɛnaˌxarəd/ 'old friend' may occur with initial stress and internal sandhi rules operative, but also with double stress as *seann duine*, *seann taigh* and *seann charaid*.<sup>7</sup> The 'double stressed' category involve the special set of phrase-sandhi rules known as the initial mutations (for which see below 'Morphophonemics').

### *Set phrases*

Examples of assimilation and accommodation matching word-internal treatment may be found wherever set formulas with fixed stress are used, for example, *aon uair deug* /əˌnaɪˈd̪ˌiˌak/ 'eleven o'clock' may have [ɾd̪<sup>3</sup>] or [(<sup>4</sup>)z̪d̪<sup>3</sup>] or [d̪], that is, with the same treatment of /rdl/ as in *feàrrde* etc.; compare *Ceann Loch Gilb* [k̪ˈɛuˌt̪ɔx ˈg̪ˌil̪iˌb] 'Loch-gilphead', with the same treatment of /nl/ as in *Fionnlagh* [f̪j̪uˌt̪aɪ], etc.<sup>5</sup>

To a certain extent, too, these effects may appear in uncontextualized, 'normal' speech as a species of *liaison*, that is, any special features about the treatment of the junction of the set phrase *bràthair-cèile* 'brother-in-law' are likely to be heard also in *abair cèilidh!* 'what a party!' See further below 'Morphophonemics', which provides further context for this strong tendency in the language.

## Stress

Gaelic is a stress-timed language in which word-stress plays an important part in defining phrase and sentence structure.

A distinction may be drawn between words capable of bearing stress (though they need not bear full, or indeed any stress) and words not capable of bearing stress. The latter category includes simple prepositions and conjunctions, the definite article, possessive adjectives and similar; they are treated as proclitic to stress-bearing words (which include nouns, adjectives, pronouns, verbs, etc.). Thus the distinction between unmarked 'my hand' and contrast-marked 'my hand' cannot, in Gaelic, involve stressing the possessive adjective *mo* 'my'. Scottish Gaelic has *mo làmh* /məˈLɑːv/ 'my hand' and *mo làmh-sa* /məˈLɑː(v)sə/ 'my hand'. Again, Scottish Gaelic *is tù am fear* /(\ə)sˈtuː (\ə)mˈfɛr/ does duty for 'You are the one' and 'You are the one'. Here one could clarify meaning in various ways if context did not make things sufficiently clear, but stressing the copula *is* is not an option.

Vowels in pre-tonic syllables follow basically the same rules as for post-tonic positions. However, some prepositions whose historic vowel is preserved by the presence of

stressed forms in the pronominal paradigms have helped to preserve a slightly greater diversity, for example, *fo* 'under' with /fɔ/, /fa/ (cf., earlier *fò*, *fá*, etc.); compare also the negatives *cha* /xal/, *nach* /nax/.

In stressable words one stress occurs, falling on the initial syllable: for example, *deis-ealachadh* /d'ɛʃaləxəy/ 'preparing', *atharrachaidhean* /'ahəRəxiən/ 'changes'.

In the case of compounds there is an element of variability, where prosodic and/or psychological factors such as etymological consciousness may be involved (cf., note 7). Thus *comh* + *dùnadh* 'con-clusion' currently yields *co(mh)-dhùnadh* /kɔ'yunəy/ and *codhunnadh* /'kɔyunnəy/; *comh* + *lionadh* 'com-pletion' yields *co(mh)-lionadh* /kɔ'l'i:nəy/ and *coilionadh* /'kɔl'ənəy/ 'completing, completion'; cf. *co(mh)-lìonta* /kɔ'l'i:ntə/ and *coileanta* /'kɔl'əntə/ 'complete, fulfilled', plus, with specialization of meaning, *coimhleanta* /'kɔil'əntə/ 'perfect (mentally or physically)'. Normally, however, a single treatment predominates, giving *either* initial stress with post-tonic reductions, as in *banntrach* (*ban-* + *treabhthach*) /'bauNtrax/ 'widow', *clann-mhac* /'klaNəvaxk/ 'sons, male children', or a stressless or de-stressed proclitic followed by the stress-bearing word, as in *bana-mhoraire* /bana'ɔrər'ə/ 'Countess', *clann-nighean* /klaN'ni:ən/ 'female children, girls'.

The availability of the latter treatment enables Gaelic to deal with imported words with non-initial stress, as in *buntàta* /bɔN'tatə/ 'potato(es)', *sineubhar* /ʃə'nɛ:vər/ 'gin', *mailisidh* /ma'liʃi/ 'militia', *Caitriona* /ka'tr'i:ənə/ (or similar) 'Catherine', etc.

Noun, verb or adverb phrases contain at least one fully stressed word, as in *mo mhàthair* /mɔ'və:hər/ 'my mother'; *cha do dh'fhalbh i* /xə dɔ 'ʃaLəv i/ 'she did not go'; *am-màireach* /ə'ma:r'əx/ 'tomorrow'.

When two or more stress-bearing words occur in such a phrase subordination usually takes place, with lower-ranked stresses bearing secondary or reduced stress, for example, *an taigh beag* 'the bathroom' (lit., 'the little house') becomes /ən,təi 'beg/ or even /(ə)N tə 'beg/.

Subordination is not essential: double or even treble stressing can occur, as in (A) *mhic an Diabhail!* /('ə) 'vik əN 'd'iəl/ 'Son of the Devil!'; *Call Mòr Ghathaig* /'kauL 'mɔr 'ʃaləg/ 'the great Gaick disaster'. However, the standard pattern is represented by the following examples:

<i>am balach beag</i>	the little boy
<i>ceann an rathaid</i>	(the) end of the road (i.e., the road-end)
<i>am balach beag bìodach</i>	the tiny wee boy
<i>fear an taigh mhòir</i>	(the) man of the big house (i.e., the laird)

There is a strong tendency for the phrase-final stress to predominate. In a more refined analysis it would be plausible to distinguish secondary and tertiary stress in examples like the third: cf., Ó Murchú (1989: 67–71).

Sentence stress involves an extension of the phrase-stress principles. A sentence must contain at least one full or primary stress. Stressed syllables may become partially or wholly de-stressed through proximity to higher ranking stresses, especially the nuclear stress (marked " in the following examples).

<i>'Bhris mi i</i>	I 'broke it.
( <i>')</i> <i>Bhris 'mis' i</i>	'I broke it.
<i>'Bhris mi mo "chas</i>	I 'broke my "leg.
( <i>')</i> <i>Bhris 'mise mo "chas</i>	'I broke my "leg.

## Intonation

Tonality has not figured prominently in Scottish Gaelic scholarship hitherto. However, tonal contrasts demonstrably occur in at least some environments in some dialects, and their extent and status clearly deserve further investigation. In the central dialects, historically monosyllabic words which have developed epenthetic vowels give phonetically disyllabic words whose tonal shape resembles that of monosyllables with a long vowel. For example, *arm* /ara<sup>h</sup>m/ 'army' has a rising pitch continuing over both vowels, and contrasts with *Calum* /kaLəm/ 'Malcolm' and *aran* /ara<sup>h</sup>n/ 'bread', which have the falling tone associated with 'normal' stressed initial syllable and unstressed second syllable. Similar contrasts occur in dialects which do not mark hiatus with /h/ or /ʔ/, e.g. between long-vowel monosyllables like *bò* 'cow' and historical disyllables like *bodha* 'submerged reef'. See further Oftedal 1956: 27–29 (where words like *arm* are taken as phonemically monosyllabic), and especially Ternes 2006: 129–45.

Intonation patterns are of undoubted importance in the construction of phrases and sentences. They involve both affective usage and systematic syntactic effects. They, like tonality, have yet to be properly studied for the language as a whole. See, however, Oftedal 1956: 36; Ó Murchú 1989: 72; and especially MacAulay 1979, whose findings permit some preliminary generalizations. It is expedient to distinguish three significant pitch levels (high, mid and low) associated with stressed syllables, and three final contours (rising, falling and sustained). Different configurations may be employed to express attitudinal nuances (e.g., surprise, acceptance or rejection, sarcasm). Differences in the steepness of pitch fluctuation play a part in this system, which may thus overlap descriptively with the free 'dramatic' exploitation of pitch height and tone duration in affective usage. Different configurations may also result from flexibility of tone placement designed to emphasize a selected element in a sentence, though limitations on stress placement mean that Gaelic is less versatile than British English in this respect. Final contours have a special (though not an exclusive) association with the indication of sentence type. Thus a falling contour may indicate affirmation with finality ('topic closed') where a rising contour would indicate uncertainty and invite a response, and a sustained contour would indicate non-finality ('I'm not finished yet').

## MORPHOPHONEMICS<sup>8</sup>

Scottish Gaelic, like the other Celtic languages, shows grammaticized reflexes of the prehistoric phrase-sandhi rules which gave rise to initial mutations. Essentially, where a certain degree of word-binding existed, the initial sound of a following word was affected by the final sound of an immediately preceding word, with results analogous to the treatment of the same sequences in word-internal positions. More particularly, the three significant word-juncture environments of the prehistoric system (i.e., -V C-, -N C- and -C C-) are reflected in the Scottish Gaelic options of lenition, nasalization and non-mutation respectively.

### Lenition

Lenition (often called 'aspiration' in Scottish Gaelic grammars) gave rise to the morphophonemic correspondences given in Table 7.10.

Table 7.10 Scottish Gaelic initial lenition

Phonemes		Spellings	
Radical	Lenited	Radical	Lenited
p	f	p	ph
t	h	t	th
k	x	c	ch
b	v	b	bh
d	γ	d	dh
g	γ	g	gh
m	ṽ	m	mh
f	Ø	f	fh
s	h	s	sh
L	l	l	l
N	n	n	n
R	r	r	r

*Notes on lenition* The initial groups /sk/, /sm/, /sp/, /st/ are not subject to lenition. For the lenition of *s-* by the definite article see below, ‘Mutation by the definite article’.

The Common Gaelic oppositions /L ~ l/, /R ~ r/, /N ~ n/ are preserved to varying degrees in the Scottish Gaelic dialects. At the morphophonemic level the central dialects show the following alternations: /N ~ n/ and /N' ~ n'; L' ~ l/, /R ~ r/; phonetically [ɲ] ~ [n] and [ɲ] ~ [n]; [ʃ] ~ [l]; [ʃ] ~ [r].

The opposition /f/ : Ø extends to /fl/ : /l/ etc. The groups /hl, hn, hr/, the lenited equivalents of /sl/, /tl/ etc., are simplified to /l/, /n/, /r/ in some dialects.

*Blocking of lenition* Lenition reflects the circumstances of prehistoric phonology, for example, the lenition in *nighean mhath* ‘good girl’ originated when *nighean* was \**inigenā*, and its final vowel made the *m-* of \**matīs* intervocal, and hence subject to lenition, like the *-g-* of \**inigenā* or the *-t-* of \**matīs* within the word. Where, however, the loss of old final syllables brought together consonants which were homorganic, the result was a blocking of the lenition rules, just as, e.g., word-internal *-tt-* or *-nd-* resisted lenition. The rule of non-lenition in such circumstances survives in many set phrases and locutions in Modern Scottish Gaelic; though it in its turn is now being superseded by a renewed generalization of the lenition rules. Thus lenition is blocked in *nighean donn* ‘brown(-haired) maiden’ (in a song; contrast *nighean dhona* ‘bad girl’ in ordinary speech); *Clann Dòmhnaill* ‘Clan Donald’ (in a set phrase; contrast *clann Dhòmhnaill* ‘Donald’s children’ in ordinary speech); *MacCoinnich* (but now also *MacChoimnich*) ‘Mackenzie’. Compare also non-lenition of *thu* ‘you (sg.)’ after verb-forms ending in *-s* or dentals: e.g., *bidh tu* (but *gum bi thu*), *ma bhios tu*, *is tù* etc.

## Nasalization

Nasalization (or ‘eclipsis’) in Modern Scottish Gaelic is not directly comparable to that of Modern Irish. This has usually been explained as the result of secondary developments on the Scottish side; see, however, Ó Maolalaigh 1995–6 for an alternative account. The ‘Irish’ type of nasalization involves the voicing of /p t k/ to /b d g/ and of /f/ to /v/, and

the replacement of radical /b d g/ by the homorganic nasals /m n ŋ/, in positions where a closely related preceding word had terminated in a nasal in prehistoric times, for example, \**sechtan kattī* ‘seven cats’ gave rise to *seacht gcait* /ʃɛxt gat/, rather as word-internal -*nk*-lies behind the /g/ in *cogadh* ‘war’ (< *con* ‘with’ + *cath* ‘battalion’).

For Scottish Gaelic we must recognize a different treatment in which the fusion of closing nasal and initial obstruent either did not take place or ceased to take place. This was the intuitive perception of the eighteenth-century founders of vernacular Scottish Gaelic orthography who broke with tradition to write *nan eilean* ‘of the islands’ (Ir. *na n-oileán*), *nam beann* ‘of the bens’ (Ir. *na mbeann* with /m/) and *nan cat* (Ir. *na gcat* with /g/). This Scottish system (‘ScG1’) is set out in Table 7.11.

Table 7.11 Scottish Gaelic initial nasalization (ScG1)

Radical	Nasal	Written	Radical	Nasal	Written
p	mp	-m p-	b	mb	-m b-
t	nt	-n t-	d	nd	-n d-
k	ŋk	-n c-	g	ŋg	-n g-
f	mf	-m f-			

The Gaelic dialects show two types of further development from the starting point of ScG1, which itself survives wholly or partially in some dialects. In ScG2 the distinction between voiced and voiceless remains distinctive, as in Lewis, where -*m p*-, -*n t*-, -*n c*- are realized as /mh nh ŋh/; and -*m b*-, -*n d*-, -*n g*- as /m n ŋ/, e.g., *am balach* /(\ə) maLəx/ ‘the boy’, *nan cat* /nə ŋhat/ ‘of the cats’, *seann taigh* /ʃɛuN həj/ ‘old house’, etc. In ScG3 the voiced/voiceless distinction can be overridden by a tendency for nasals to voice following consonants, giving /mb nd ŋg/ for both sets of stops. Here the aspirated: non-aspirated distinction can prevent *an caol* (with [ŋh]) and *an gaol* (with [ŋg]) from becoming homophonous (see Borgstrøm 1940: 78–9 and 173–4).

*Notes on nasalization* The non-coalescence of nasal and obstruent in ScG1 meant that situations where nasalization ‘proper’ occurs in Irish were open to the same treatment as any other final nasals preceding initial obstruents; that is, the same treatment could apply to *an cat* (Ir. *an cat*) as to *nan cat* ‘of the cats’ (Ir. *na gcat*).

The relationship between the Irish system and the Scottish Gaelic systems is not wholly clear. That the Irish type was once present in Scotland in some contexts can be inferred from fossil forms with /v/ for nasalized /f/, e.g., *a-bhàn* ‘down’, *a-bhos* ‘over here’, *a bheil* ‘is . . .?’, *Beinn-a-bhaoghla* (or similar) ‘Benbecula’, which all conceal nasalized *f*:- \**a bhfán*, \**a bhfus*, \**a(n) bhfeil*, \*. . . *na bhfadhla*. These examples are challenging because in general initial *f*- drops out of the nasalization system in Modern Scottish Gaelic, except in certain Perthshire dialects which realize -*m f*- as /v/ and -*n s*- as /z/. On the other hand, scattered examples of these /v/ and /z/ forms are already present in the *Book of the Dean of Lismore*.

Other mutations

*Non-mutation* Non-mutation may be viewed as an outcome with the same status as lenition or nasalization when it occurs within the phrase, i.e., in a situation where one

of the latter mutations could have been a possible outcome; for example, *a caraid* 'her friend' beside *a charaid* 'his friend', where *a* 'his' is followed by lenition, *a* 'her' by non-mutation. Note that non-mutation of consonants corresponds to the prefixing of *h-* to vowels, e.g., (*a*) *athair* 'his father' beside *a h-athair* 'her father'; *na h-eòin* 'the birds' corresponding to the non-mutation in *na coin* 'the dogs'.

*Mutation by the definite article* The definite article *an* can be followed by non-mutation (*a(n) saor*), lenition (*a(n) mhàthair*) or nasalization (*nam beann*), depending on case, number and gender. In dialects which show the ScG2 and ScG3 varieties of nasalization, grammatical non-mutation after the article is replaced by nasalization of those sounds which show it, according to the rules given above (e.g., *an taigh* 'the house' becomes /əN hāj/ under ScG2 or /əN dāj/ under ScG3).

The treatment of words with initial *s-* is peculiar. The article having had the prehistoric shape *\*sind-*, cases of *\*sind-* ending in a vowel, when they were followed by an initial *s-*, gave rise to the juncture *-nd + h-*, which gave /nt/. This is represented orthographically by *an t-s-* in Scottish Gaelic and phonologically by /ənt/, e.g., *mac an t-saoir* 'son of the joiner, Macintyre'. Dialects with ScG2 and ScG3 treat this *t-* like any other *t-*, i.e., ScG2 as /nh/, ScG3 as /nd/.

*Rules for the mutations* Mutations do not occur at every word junction within the sentence, but only within the following phrasal environments:

- 1 the verb complex, including pre-verbal particles but *not* the immediately following subject;
- 2 the noun phrase (which may be the subject or object of a sentence or, if preceded by a preposition, in an adverbial role), including qualifiers preceding or succeeding the noun or preceding an adjective;
- 3 certain adverbial phrases (frequently disguised cases of the last).

The principal occurrences of lenition are as follows.

### *Nouns*

the definite article (nom. sg. f.; dat. sg. m. and f.; gen. sg. m.)

possessives *mo*, *do*, *a* 'his'

prepositions *do*, *fo*, *bho*, *mar*, *tro(imh)*, *ro(imh)*, *de*, *mu*; and *gun* before non-homorganic sounds

vocative particle *a*

numerals *aon*, *dà*, *a' chiad*

preceding nouns, in certain cases when the following noun is a genitive qualifying the first

certain proposed adjectives, principally *deagh*, *droch*, *sean(n)*

### *Adjectives*

preceding nouns (nom. sg. f.; dat. sg. m. (when def. art. precedes) and f. (always); gen.

sg. m., any plural forms ending with a palatalized consonant)

intensive particles *glé*, *ro*, *sàr*, *fìor*

negative and intensive prefixes *neo-*, *mì-*, *an-*, etc.

*bu* (past tense of copula)



*Verbs*past tense marker *do*negative particle *cha(n)*relative pronoun *a* 'who, which, that', including conjunctions involving *a* (e.g., *nuair a* 'when'); relative pronoun *na* 'that which, all that'; the conjunction *ma* 'if'

The principal occurrences of nasalization are as follows.

*Nouns*the definite article *an/am* (nom. sg. m.; gen. pl. m. and f.)the prepositions (*ann*) *an/am*; and *gun* before homorganic soundsthe possessives *ar* 'our', (*bh*)*ur* 'your (pl.)', *an/am* 'their'*Verbs*

Verbs are nasalized by:

the interrogative particle *an/am*the conjunctions *mun/mum*, *gun/gum*the relative pronoun *an/am* 'whom, which' after prepositions

Note that, in addition to the above cases, when a leniting word ending in a nasal has lenition blocked by a homorganic initial consonant, nasalization takes place; e.g., *aon taigh*, *seann duine*. (The treatment of nouns after the article, referred to above, is a special case of this.)

*Notes on the mutations* While some of the above rules reflect the original, phonologically conditioned rules for the occurrence of mutation, others are plainly the result of analogical and restructuring processes over a long period, for example, *le balach beag* 'with a little boy' but *leis a' bhalach bheag* 'with the little boy', where there is no phonological reason for the adjective *beag* to be affected by the presence or absence of a preceding definite article.

Certain adverbials, prepositions and particles undergo 'spontaneous' lenition, e.g., *d(h)omh* 'to me', *t(h)roimh* 'through', *cheana* 'already'. But the apparently spontaneous lenition of the genitive plural of all nouns in the absence of the definite article, e.g., *dhaoine* 'of men' shows the generalization of lenition from those cases where lenition of a dependent noun was demanded by the case and number of the headnoun, a requirement nowadays applicable only to adjectives.

Certain other morphophonemic alternations take place within limited fields; mention may be made of a tendency within the irregular verbs for an opposition /h/ ~ /d/ to emerge, where /h/ characterizes absolute/independent forms and /d/ characterizes conjunct/dependent forms, e.g., *thubhairt*: *dubhairt* (usually written *tubhairt*) 'said', *fhuair* (with initial /h/): *duair* (written *d'fhuair*) 'got'.

**MORPHOLOGY<sup>9</sup>****The nominal system**

Scottish Gaelic uses inflectional distinctions to mark number, gender and case in nouns, adjectives and the definite article. These may involve the addition of a suffix (e.g., *bròg*

'shoe', pl. *brògan*), qualitative change in a final consonant (e.g., *balach* 'boy' with /-əx/, pl. *balaich* with /əx'/), vowel affection (e.g., *duine* 'man', pl. *daoine*), or a combination of these strategies (e.g., *meur* 'finger', pl. *meòirean*). On the basis of these distinctions, Scottish Gaelic nouns are here divided into five classes: see below.

*Number* Scottish Gaelic distinguishes *singular* and *plural* number. In addition, distinct *dual* forms are a marginal survival in conservative Gaelic in Class 1B nouns and feminine adjectives:

<i>an aon bhròg bheag</i>	the one little shoe
<i>an dà bhròg bhig</i>	the two little shoes
<i>na trì brògan beaga</i>	the three little shoes

Some grammatically singular nouns denote groups of beings or things. They may either lack a plural form or assign a specialized meaning to it if they have one, for example, *aodach* 'clothes' is grammatically singular, but a specialized plural *aodaichean* 'sets or suits of clothes' occurs. Note that *clann* 'children' and *feadhainn* 'ones, people' may in current speech be followed by plural adjectives, as in *an fheadhainn bheaga* (or even *na feadhainn* with plural article) 'the little ones'.

*Case* While it is clear that Scottish Gaelic is gradually eliminating its case distinctions, the nominative : genitive opposition is still an important one in most noun classes. More marginal is the status of the vocative (confined to 1A nouns) and of the dative (practically confined to 1B nouns) as inflectional categories; while the historic accusative survives only at the morphophonemic level in the occurrence of so-called 'prepositions governing the nominative' (as in *mar an ceudna* 'likewise, in the same way', *eadar am bàrd agus . . .* 'between the bard and . . .').

*Gender* Scottish Gaelic distinguishes the grammatical genders *masculine* and *feminine*, by means of morphophonemic effects (for example, *balach beag* : *nighean bheag*, where *balach* is masculine and *nighean* is feminine), and to a certain extent by noun class (e.g., class 1A nouns like *fear*, gen. sg. *fir*, nom. pl. *fir* are masculine) and word-shape (e.g., *caileag*, like other nouns with the suffix *-ag*, is feminine).

There are many examples of dialectal gender variation (e.g., *bùth* (m. or f.) 'shop', *muileann* (m. or f.) 'mill'), some of which reflect divergent treatment of old *neuter* gender nouns. While there is a general correspondence between male/female and masculine/feminine gender (e.g., *coileach* (m.) 'cock', *cearc* (f.) 'hen'; *gobhar* (m. or f.) 'goat' or 'nanny-goat', this is not invariable, for example, *boireannach* 'woman' (lit. 'female person') is masculine because the class of nominal derivatives in *-ach* to which it belongs is masculine.

#### *Noun classes: preliminary notes*

Scottish Gaelic nouns are traditionally specified (and will be specified here) on the basis of nominative singular, genitive singular and nominative plural, the minimum information needed to predict all the forms of a noun. The reason why nominative plural has to be cited is that large-scale reorganization of plural classes has taken place in recent centuries.

The inflectional strategies employed in nominal morphology are: (a) alternation between non-palatalized and palatalized quality in final consonants; (b) addition of case- or number-marking suffixes; and (c) combinations of these strategies. (The strategies originate in the inflections of Common Gaelic, ultimately Indo-European declensions.)

Changes in final consonant quality may affect the preceding vowel (e.g., *fiadh* /fɪəɣ/ 'stag', pl. *fèidh* /fɛj/; *mil* /mil/ 'honey', gen. *meala* /mɛLə/). Addition of a syllabic suffix may be accompanied by syncope of an internal syllable (e.g., *bràthair* 'brother', pl. *bràithrean*). The phonological rules for vowel-lengthening or diphthongization may also be brought into play by inflectional suffixation, e.g., /a: ~ a/ in *bàrr* 'top', pl. *barran*; /a ~ a:/ in *caraid* 'friend', pl. *càirdean*.

The following classification attempts to capture the current facts in a dynamic situation in which an inflected declensional system is moving towards a caseless one in which only number is marked. The 'spontaneous' lenition of the genitive plural (above, 'Notes on the mutations') in, e.g., *ainmean dhaoine* 'men's names' beside *ainmean nan daoine* 'the men's names' is not indicated in the paradigms that follow.

### *The Scottish Gaelic noun classes*<sup>10</sup>

The following noun classes have been abstracted from the practice of the more conservative dialects of the modern spoken language. Classes 1–4 terminate in a consonant, Class 5 in a vowel. In Class 1 the nominative singular : genitive singular relation is C : C'; in Class 2, C' : C; in Class 3, C : C; in Class 4, C' : C'. Note that nominative plural forms are *typical of*, rather than *obligatory for* the class concerned.

#### **Class 1 nouns (C: C' ± ending, as in each (m.) 'horse', bròg (f.) 'shoe', ugh (m.) 'egg')**

	<b>1A</b>		<b>1B</b>		<b>1C</b>	
	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
Nominative	<i>each</i>	<i>eich</i>	<i>bròg</i>	<i>brògan</i>	<i>ugh</i>	<i>uighean</i>
Genitive	<i>eich</i>	<i>each</i>	<i>bròige</i>	<i>bròg(an)</i>	<i>uighe</i>	<i>u(i)gh(ean)</i>

#### *Notes on Class 1*

- 1A Numerous, including many common and basic nouns and some of the most productive suffixes. All *masculine*. 1A nouns alone have distinct vocative forms: e.g., *balach* 'boy', *a bhalaich!* 'boy!'; *balaich* 'boys', *a bhalacha(ibh)!* 'boys!'.  
 1B Numerous, including many common and basic nouns and some very productive suffixes. All *feminine*. Polysyllabic 1B nouns usually make their genitive singular by palatalization alone: e.g., *caileag* 'girl', gen. sg. *caileig*. 1B nouns alone have distinct dative singular forms, e.g., *le bròig* 'with a shoe', *le caileig* 'with a girl'. The 1B genitive singular ending *-e* appears as *-eadh* in some dialects, e.g., *bròigeadh* 'of a shoe'.  
 1C Not numerous, though including some basic vocabulary items. All *masculine*.

#### **Class 2 nouns (C': C ± ending, as in bràthair (m.) 'brother', sùil (f.) 'eye', iuchair f. 'key')**

	<b>2A</b>		<b>2B</b>		<b>2C</b>	
	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
Nominative	<i>bràthair</i>	<i>bràithrean</i>	<i>sùil</i>	<i>sùilean</i>	<i>iuchair</i>	<i>iuchraichean</i>
Genitive	<i>bràthar</i>	<i>bràithrean</i>	<i>sùla</i>	<i>sù(i)l(ean)</i>	<i>iuchrach</i>	<i>iuchraichean</i>

*Notes on Class 2*

- 2A A small group, largely confined to the kinship terms for ‘mother’, ‘father’, etc. Both genders.
- 2B A relatively small and non-productive group. Mostly *feminine*.
- 2C A relatively small group, though capable of expansion in some dialects, e.g., *suipeir* (f.) ‘supper’, gen. *suipeir* or *suipearach*. All *feminine*.

**Class 3 nouns (C : C ± ending, as in rud (m.) ‘thing’, guth (m.) ‘voice’, luch (f.) ‘mouse’)**

	<b>3A</b>		<b>3B</b>		<b>3C</b>	
	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
Nominative	<i>rud</i>	<i>rudan</i>	<i>guth</i>	<i>guthan</i>	<i>luch</i>	<i>luchainn</i>
Genitive	<i>rud</i>	<i>rud(an)</i>	<i>guth(a)</i>	<i>guth(an)</i>	<i>luchainn</i>	<i>luch(ainn)</i>

*Notes on Class 3*

- 3A Two main classes fall under this heading: (a) mostly *masculine* monosyllabic nouns, including many very common ones, many loanwords, and numerous refugees from Class 1 and Classes 3B and 3C; (b) numerous *feminine* polysyllabic abstract nouns in *-achd*, e.g., *rìoghachd* ‘kingdom’.
- 3B Largely monosyllabic, largely *masculine*; a declining category tending to lose inflection and join Class 3A.
- 3C A small group of survivors of what was once a larger element in the noun repertoire, tending to join Class 3A.

**Class 4 nouns (C' : C' ± ending, as in cìobair (m.) ‘shepherd’, prìs (f.) ‘price’)**

	<b>4A</b>		<b>4B</b>	
	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
Nominative	<i>cìobair</i>	<i>cìobairean</i>	<i>prìs</i>	<i>prìsean</i>
Genitive	<i>cìobair</i>	<i>cìobairean</i>	<i>prìse</i>	<i>prìs(ean)</i>

*Notes on Class 4*

- 4A Both genders; *masculine* examples include agent-nouns in *-air*, *-eir*, *-ir*, while *feminine* examples include many polysyllables in *-idhl/-igh* and verb-nouns in *-ich*. There is some uncertainty as to the line between 4A and 4B nouns, e.g., *Gàidhlig*, gen. *Gàidhlig* (4A) but also occasionally *Gàidhlighe* (4B). Hypercorrection may be at work here.
- 4B Almost all *feminine*, except for a few old neuters which have become masculine, e.g., *taigh*, gen. *taighe* ‘house’. As in Class 1B, the genitive singular feminine ending *-e* appears as *-eadh* in some dialects.

**Class 5 nouns (nouns ending in a vowel, as in còta (m.) ‘coat’, cnò (m.) ‘nut’, gobha (m.) ‘blacksmith’)**

	<b>5A</b>		<b>5B</b>		<b>5C</b>	
	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
Nominative	<i>còta</i>	<i>còtaichean</i>	<i>cnò</i>	<i>cnothan</i>	<i>gobha</i>	<i>goibhnean</i>
Genitive	<i>còta</i>	<i>còtaichean</i>	<i>cnò/cnotha</i>	<i>cnothan</i>	<i>gobhainn</i>	<i>goibhnean</i>

*Notes on Class 5*

- 5A Polysyllables ending in /ə/, written *-a* or *-e*. Extremely numerous; receptive to loan-words and to defections from other Classes. *Both genders* common; masculines include the agent suffixes *-(a)iche* and *-(a)ire*. Disyllabic feminines in /-ə/ may form genitives in *-eadh* as in Class 1B. In such cases they may also form dative singular in *-idh*, e.g., *lèine* (f.) ‘shirt’, gen. *lèine(adh)*, dat. *lèine/lèinidh*. (The *-idh* ending recurs sporadically in feminines of Class 1B and 3B, e.g., *bùth* ‘shop’, dat. *bùthaidh*; cf., note 11)
- 5B Monosyllables in an open long vowel. Limited in number, *both genders*. (The *-th-* in the declensional form of these nouns is orthographic, as these words have hiatus – whence the vowel shortening.)
- 5C Uncommon survivors (mostly *feminine*) of a once more numerous class.

*Irregular nouns* A small number of very basic nouns cannot be fitted into the above scheme. See Scottish Gaelic grammars or dictionaries for *bean* (f.) ‘woman’, gen. *mnà mnatha(dh)*; *bò* (f.) ‘cow’, gen. *bà*; *cù* (m.) ‘dog’, gen. *coin*.

*Main sources of the Scottish Gaelic noun classes* The Modern Scottish Gaelic noun classes derive in historical terms from the vocalic and consonantal declensions of Early Irish, as given in the chart:

1A m. <i>o</i> -stems	3A m. <i>o</i> -, <i>u</i> -stems etc. f. <i>ā</i> -stems etc.	5A m. <i>io</i> -stems f. <i>iā</i> -stems
1B f. <i>ā</i> -stems	3B m./f. <i>u</i> -stems	5B various
1C n. <i>o</i> -, <i>u</i> -stems	3C m./f. consonantal stems	5C m./f. <i>n</i> -stems
2A m./f. <i>r</i> -stems	4A m./f. <i>i</i> -stems f. <i>ī</i> -stems	
2B m./f. <i>i</i> -stems	4B f. <i>i</i> -, <i>ī</i> -stems n. <i>s</i> -stems	
2C m./f. <i>k</i> -stems		

Note that many nouns with old consonantal stems have joined new classes by generalizing an oblique case-form, for example *darach* (m.) ‘oak tree’ (earlier *dair*, genitive *darach*)

joins Class 1A; *caraid* (m.) 'friend' (earlier *cara*, accusative-dative *caraid*) and *rìgh* (m.) 'king' (earlier *rí*, accusative-dative *rìgh*) join Class 4A.

*The plural forms of the noun* Plurals are formed by palatalization of final consonant(s), by addition of a distinctive ending, or by a combination of changed final consonant quality and added ending.

Plurals formed by palatalization are usually identical with genitive singular forms, and can involve the same vowel affections, e.g., *bòrd* (m.) 'table', gen. sg. and nom. pl. *bùird*. Polysyllables are liable to syncope where a syllabic ending is added and a viable cluster results, e.g., *leabhar* (m.) 'book', pl. *leabhraichean*, but *seanair* (m.) 'grandfather', pl. *seanairean*.

The following are the most common plural formations:

+ -an/-ean	<i>cas</i> : <i>casan</i>	$C > C'$	<i>cat</i> : <i>cait</i>	$C > C' +$	-ean	<i>ugh</i> : <i>uighean</i>
	<i>taigh</i> : <i>taighean</i>			$C' > C +$	-an	<i>cnàimh</i> : <i>cnàmhan</i>
+ -(a)ichean	<i>bàta</i> : <i>bàtaichean</i>					
+ -(e)achan	<i>balla</i> : <i>ballachan</i>					
+ -(e)annan	<i>am</i> : <i>amannan</i>					
+ -tan/-tean	<i>cuan</i> : <i>cuantan</i>					
	<i>baile</i> : <i>bailtean</i>					

Many nouns admit more than one plural form, especially when the dialects are taken into account, e.g., *ràmh* 'oar', pl. *ràimh/ràmhan*; *uair* 'hour, time', pl. *uairean/uaireannan* 'hours, times' (with specialization of meaning); *bùth* 'shop', pl. *bùthan/bùithtean*.

The more morphologically complex plural endings tend to be associated with elimination of case inflection, e.g., *beathach* 'beast', nom. pl. and gen. pl. *beathaichean*, beside *sionnach* 'fox', nom. pl. *sionnaich*, gen. pl. *sionnach*. For the powerful Class 1A group one can normally say that if genitive singular = nominative plural then genitive plural = nominative singular.

*Incidence of the plural formations* Although plural forms are, strictly speaking, non-predictable, there are nevertheless correlations between noun classes and particular plural formations:

-(e)an	Commonest of all plural endings. Regular in 1B, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B and 5B; found also in 1A ( <i>eilean</i> , pl. <i>eileanan</i> ); 2A ( <i>seanair</i> , pl. <i>seanairean</i> ); 5A ( <i>gille</i> , pl. <i>gillean</i> ).
-(a)ichean	Regular in 2C, extremely frequent in 5A (both native and loanwords); also found in 2A ( <i>màthair</i> , pl. <i>màthraichean</i> ).
-(e)achan	Frequent in 5A, both native and loanwords.
-(e)annan	Fairly frequent in 3A ( <i>modh</i> , pl. <i>modhan/annan</i> ), 3B ( <i>am</i> , pl. <i>amannan</i> ), 4B ( <i>pàirc</i> , pl. <i>pàirceannan</i> ) and 5A ( <i>oidhche</i> , pl. <i>oidhcheannan</i> ).
-t(e)an	Limited mainly to monosyllables in -l, -n, and disyllables in -le, -ne, as in <i>cuan</i> , pl. <i>cuantan</i> (1A); <i>gleann</i> , pl. <i>gleanntan</i> (1C); <i>sgoil</i> , pl. <i>sgoiltean</i> (4B); <i>baile</i> , pl. <i>bailtean</i> (5A); <i>lèine</i> , pl. <i>lèintean</i> (5A).

Palatalization	Regular in, and distinctive of 1A.
Palatalization + <i>-ean</i>	Regular with 1A nouns in <i>-adh</i> ( <i>cogadh</i> , pl. <i>cogaidhean</i> ) and 1B nouns in <i>-ach</i> ( <i>mòinteach</i> , pl. <i>mòintichean</i> ); found also in 1C ( <i>ugh</i> , pl. <i>uighean</i> ).
Palatalization + <i>-ichean</i>	Occasional, as in <i>abhainn</i> , pl. <i>aibhnichean</i> (4B).
De-palatalization + <i>-an</i>	Occasional, as in <i>cnàimh</i> , pl. <i>cnàmhan</i> (2B).
De-palatalization + <i>-annan</i>	Occasional, as in <i>druim</i> , pl. <i>dromannan</i> (2B).

The definite article

The definite article is always proclitic to a following noun, with the result that (a) it itself is liable to reduction, and (b) there are morphophonemic consequences, both lenition and nasalization being involved. The article is also inflected for case and number. It is hence somewhat protean, especially at the surface level. The forms of the definite article are given in Table 7.12.

Table 7.12 The definite article in Scottish Gaelic

	Before vowels			Before consonants		
	Masculine singular	Feminine singular	Plural	Masculine singular	Feminine singular	Plural
Nominative	<i>an t-</i>	<i>an</i>	<i>na h-</i>	<i>an<sup>n</sup></i>	<i>an*</i>	<i>na</i>
Genitive	<i>an</i>	<i>na h-</i>	<i>nan</i>	<i>an*</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>nan<sup>n</sup></i>
Dative	<i>an</i>	<i>an</i>	<i>na h-</i>	<i>an*</i>	<i>an*</i>	<i>na</i>

The form *an\** causes lenition of velar and labial consonants, but not of the dental series *d-*, *t-*, *l-*, *n-*, *r-*, where homorganic blocking of lenition takes place. The treatment of *s-* after *an\** is complex: in cases of *s* + vowel and *sl-*, *sn-*, *sr-* the special mutation /*s* → *t*/ takes place, e.g., *sùil* (f.) ‘eye’, *an t-sùil* /əN tu:l/ ‘the eye’. (The initial groups *sp-*, *st-*, *sg-*, *sk-*, *sm-* resist any change, as always, e.g., *an sgeir* (f.) ‘the rock’.)

The form *an\** is normally pronounced /ə/ and written *a’* before lenited consonants, e.g., *a’ chailleach* (f.) ‘the old woman’. The treatment of lenited *f-* reflects the fact that *fh-* is Ø. Words in *f* + vowel are treated as though they began with a vowel, and words beginning with *fh-*, *fr-* as though they began with *l-*, *r-* respectively.

The forms *an<sup>n</sup>* and *nan<sup>n</sup>* interact with following consonants as follows:

- 1 The final nasal becomes /ŋ/ before velars and /m/ before labials, the latter assimilation being recognized by standard Scottish Gaelic orthography, e.g., *am balach* (m.) ‘the boy’, *nam balach* ‘of the boys’.
- 2 In the speech of many dialects the ‘new’ nasal mutations (i.e., ‘ScG2’ and ‘ScG3’ as described above, ‘Morphophonemics’) affect following stops, while elision (or assimilation followed by simplification) of the final nasal is normal before *l-*, *n-*, *r-*, *m-*, *f-*, *s-*; e.g., *an taigh* /ən ‘təj/ (normally with [Nd] or [Nh]) ‘the house’; *an sgoil* /ə ‘skɔl/ ‘the school’; *am fraoch* /ə ‘fru:x/ ‘the heather’.

- 3 In the case of the dental series *d-*, *t-*, *l-*, *n-*, *r-*, *s-*, the nasalizing treatment is extended to cases where the article is *an*\* with homorganic blocking of lenition, for example, *an tìde* (f.) 'the weather' may show /nt/ → /nd/ or /nh/. Similarly, masculine nouns with *an t-* /ənt/ before a vowel are treated in the same way as nouns with initial dental, for example, *an t-am* (m.) 'the time' can show /nt/ → /nd/ or /nh/ by nasalization just like *an tom* 'the hillock'. The same is true where *an*\* precedes /t/ mutated from radical *s-*, e.g., *an t-sròn* (f.) 'the nose'.

For detailed examples of definite article plus noun combinations see the handbooks, e.g., Borgstrøm 1937: 168–70 and 1940: 94–5, 182–3; Oftedal 1956: 205–8.

### The adjective

The predicative adjective is indeclinable. The attributive adjective may be inflected for case, number and gender, though it is subject to the same pressures towards morphological simplification as the noun. Three Types may be distinguished.

In their singular inflection, adjectives resemble *either* Class 1A (m.) and Class 1B (f.), *or* Class 4A (m.) and 4B (f.), *or* Class 5A (both genders). The plural declension of adjectives is idiosyncratic from this point of view, the practical distinction being rather between monosyllabic and polysyllabic adjectives.

In some positions (e.g., nominative singular feminine) the adjective is lenited by a preceding noun wherever lenition is possible; in the following paradigms examples are used which show this lenition orthographically. In certain other positions (e.g., dative singular masculine) lenition occurs in a more restricted way: here, examples with orthographically visible lenition are used, but the *-h-* of lenition is enclosed in brackets. The operative rules appear in Table 7.13.

Table 7.13 The adjective in Scottish Gaelic

	Type I		Type II		Type III
<i>Masculine singular</i>					
nom.	<i>dubh</i>	<i>salach</i>	<i>glic</i>	<i>soilleir</i>	<i>fada</i>
gen.	<i>dhuibh</i>	<i>shalaich</i>	<i>ghlic</i>	<i>shoilleir</i>	<i>fhada</i>
dat.	<i>d(h)ubh</i>	<i>s(h)alach</i>	<i>g(h)lic</i>	<i>s(h)oilleir</i>	<i>f(h)ada</i>
voc.	<i>dhuibh</i>	<i>shalaich</i>	<i>ghlic</i>	<i>shoilleir</i>	<i>fhada</i>
<i>Feminine singular</i>					
nom.	<i>dhubh</i>	<i>shalach</i>	<i>ghlic</i>	<i>shoilleir</i>	<i>fhada</i>
gen.	<i>duibhe</i>	<i>salaich(e)</i>	<i>glice</i>	<i>soilleir(e)</i>	<i>fada</i>
dat.	<i>dhuibh</i>	<i>shalaich</i>	<i>ghlic</i>	<i>shoilleir</i>	<i>fhada</i>
voc.	<i>dhubh</i>	<i>shalach</i>	<i>ghlic</i>	<i>shoilleir</i>	<i>fhada</i>
<i>Plural (both genders)</i>					
nom.	<i>d(h)ubha</i>	<i>s(h)alach</i>	<i>g(h)lice</i>	<i>s(h)oilleir</i>	<i>f(h)ada</i>
gen.	<i>dubha</i>	<i>salach</i>	<i>glice</i>	<i>soilleir</i>	<i>fada</i>
dat.	<i>d(h)ubha</i>	<i>s(h)alach</i>	<i>g(h)lice</i>	<i>s(h)oilleir</i>	<i>f(h)ada</i>
voc.	<i>dubha</i>	<i>salach</i>	<i>glice</i>	<i>soilleir</i>	<i>fada</i>



*Declension of adjectives* The paradigms in Table 7.12 show maximal inflection; see Syntax (Noun phrase) for certain reductions in the range of inflectional variation. Type I consists of adjectives terminating in a non-palatalized consonant (cf., noun classes 1A/1B), e.g., monosyllabic *dubh* 'black', polysyllabic *salach* 'dirty'. Type II adjectives close in a palatalized consonant (cf., noun classes 4A/4B), e.g., monosyllabic *glic* 'wise', polysyllabic *soilleir* 'clear'. Type III adjectives close in /ə/, written *-a* or *-e* (cf., noun class 5A), e.g., *fada* 'long'.

In the dative singular masculine lenition is conditioned by the presence or absence of the definite article, e.g., *le balach beag* 'with a little boy', *leis a' bhalach bheag* 'with the little boy'.

In the nominative and dative plural lenition is conditioned by the form of the preceding plural noun: lenition follows plurals with palatalization of final consonant (mostly 1A masculine nouns), but not plurals formed by addition of *-an* etc., e.g., *balaich bheaga* 'little boys' (to *balach*), *gilean beaga* 'little lads' (to *gille*).

The genitive singular feminine ending *-e* in monosyllabic adjectives may also appear as *-eadh* (cf., feminine 1B nouns) in phrase-final position (see note 11). By contrast, the genitive singular feminine in polysyllabic nouns usually loses its termination, especially in phrase-final position.

The dual form of the adjective is unstable, showing vacillation between 'singular' and 'plural' forms, e.g., (*an*) *dà chat m(h)òr/m(h)òra* (m.) '(the) two big cats', (*an*) *dà chois bhig/bheaga* (f.) '(the) two little feet'.

The palatalized : non-palatalized alternations in adjective declension may lead to vowel affection. The sorts that occur are the same as occur with 1A/1B nouns, e.g., *liath* : *lèith(e)* 'grey', and are limited to Type I.

*Comparison of adjectives* Each adjective has a comparative form used to express the comparative and also the superlative degree, the difference being a matter of syntax. The form of the comparative, which is indeclinable, is usually identical with the genitive singular feminine of the positive degree, e.g., *dubh* : *duibhe*, *glic* : *glice*, *salach* : *salaich(e)*. For the constructions involved in *tha Iain nas duibhe* and *is duibhe Iain* 'John is darker', as opposed to *is e Iain as duibhe* 'John is darkest', see below, 'Noun-phrase syntax: Adjectives'. Several of the commonest comparative forms are irregular: see Scottish Gaelic grammars for *math* : *feàrr* 'good : better', *dona* : *miosa* 'bad : worse', *mòr* : *motha/mò* 'big : bigger', *beag* : *lùgha* 'small : smaller', etc.

Gaelic also possesses a set of forms based on the comparative + *de* 'of it', used to express 'the better for . . .' etc. Most of these are now uncommon, but *feàirrde* 'the better for' and *misde* 'the worse for' are common enough. Older Scottish Gaelic grammars sometimes call these forms the 'second comparative'.

The same grammars further allege 'third comparatives', citing forms like *daoiread* (< *daor* 'dear'). These are abstract nouns whose connection with the comparative seems to be simply that they can (or could once) be used in idioms to express 'getting dearer' (*a' dol an daoiread*), etc.

## The numerals

The Scottish Gaelic numerals 1–10 appear in four series, as follows: Series A, cardinals as used to qualify a noun; Series B, cardinals as used when no noun is specified (e.g., when counting); Series C, ordinals; Series D, personal numerals ('one person', 'two people', etc.), confined to the numerals 1–10.

**The Gaelic numerals: 1–10**

	<b>Series A</b>	<b>Series B</b>	<b>Series C</b>	<b>Series D</b>
1	<i>aon ghille</i>	<i>a h-aon</i>	<i>a' cheud ghille</i>	<i>aonar</i>
2	<i>dà ghille</i>	<i>a dhà</i>	<i>an dar(n)a gille</i>	<i>dithis</i>
3	<i>tri gillean</i>	<i>a trì</i>	<i>an treas gille</i>	<i>triùir</i>
4	<i>ceithir gillean</i>	<i>a ceithir</i>	<i>an ceathramh gille</i>	<i>ceathrar</i>
5	<i>còig gillean</i>	<i>a còig</i>	<i>an còigeamh gille</i>	<i>còig(n)ear</i>
6	<i>sia gillean</i>	<i>a sia</i>	<i>an siathamh gille</i>	<i>sianar</i>
7	<i>seachd gillean</i>	<i>a seachd</i>	<i>an seachdamh gille</i>	<i>seachd(n)ar</i>
8	<i>ochd gillean</i>	<i>a h-ochd</i>	<i>an t-ochdamh gille</i>	<i>ochd(n)ar</i>
9	<i>naoi gillean</i>	<i>a naoi</i>	<i>an naoidheamh gille</i>	<i>naoinear</i>
10	<i>deich gillean</i>	<i>a deich</i>	<i>an deicheamh gille</i>	<i>deichnear</i>

The numerals 11–19 employ an indeclinable adjectival *deug* ‘teen’:

**The Gaelic numerals: 11–19**

	<b>Series A</b>	<b>Series B</b>	<b>Series C</b>
11	<i>aon ghille deug</i>	<i>a h-aon deug</i>	<i>an t-aona gille deug</i>
12	<i>dà ghille dheug</i>	<i>a dhà dheug</i>	<i>an dar(n)a gille deug</i>
13	<i>trì gillean deug</i>	<i>a trì deug</i>	<i>an treas gille deug</i>
↓	↓	↓	↓
19	<i>naoi gillean deug</i>	<i>a naoi deug</i>	<i>an naoidheamh gille deug</i>

The numerals 20–99 employ the noun *fichead* ‘twenty, a score’:

**The Gaelic numerals: 20–99**

	<b>Series A</b>	<b>Series B</b>	<b>Series C</b>
20	<i>fichead gille</i>	<i>fichead</i>	<i>am fheadamh gille</i>
21	<i>gille air fhichead</i>	<i>aon air fhichead</i>	<i>an t-aona gille fhichead</i>
22	<i>dà ghille air fhichead</i>	<i>dhà air fhichead</i>	<i>an dar(n)a gille fhichead</i>
↓	↓	↓	↓
39	<i>naoi gillean deug air fhichead</i>	<i>naoi deug air fhichead</i>	<i>an naoidheamh gille deug air fhichead</i>
40	<i>dà fhichead gille</i>	<i>dà fhichead</i>	<i>an dà fhheadamh gille</i>
41	<i>dà fhichead gille 's a h-aon</i>	<i>dà fhichead 's a h-aon</i>	<i>an dà fhheadamh gille 's a h-aon</i>
↓	↓	↓	↓
60	<i>trì fhichead gille</i>	<i>trì fhichead</i>	<i>an trì fhheadamh gille</i>

The numerals 100–999 employ the noun *ceud* ‘(a) hundred’, e.g., *ceud (gille) ’s a h-aon* ‘a hundred and one (lads)’; *an ceudamh gille ’s a h-aon* ‘the hundred and first lad’, etc. The numerals from 1,000 employ the noun *mìle* ‘(a) thousand’, and the numerals from 1,000,000 employ the noun *muillean* ‘(a) million’, both employed in the same way as *ceud*. Note that 100–199 can also be expressed in scores using *fichead* ‘twenty’.

The dual form, which is only found after *dà* ‘two’, is identical to the singular except in the case of feminine 1B nouns, where (in conservative speech) it is identical to the dative singular form, e.g., *aon chas* ‘one foot’, *dà chois* ‘two feet’.

Besides *treas*, the forms *tritheamh* and *treasamh* are also found for ‘third’.

The numerals *ceud*, *mìle* and *muillean* are followed by the singular. Historically they were followed by the genitive plural, since *fichead* etc. are nouns (‘a score’, etc.); the coincidence of nominative singular and genitive plural in the powerful Class 1 noun category has generated the synchronic rule.

Several variant constructions are employed with the larger numbers. Note in particular the tendency for Series B to take over from Series A, e.g., *ceithir mìle deug*, *dà fhichead ’s a trì deug de ghillean* ‘fourteen thousand and fifty-three (of) lads’.

There is a tendency in some dialects for Series D to be used for all animate beings, and not just human beings.

Pronouns and pronominals

*Personal pronouns as subject or object of verb* These may occur with or without the contrastive force imparted by the deictic suffixes *-sal/-sel/-san*. The contrastive forms usually receive at least secondary stress. The non-contrastive forms may occur stressed or unstressed. The forms most commonly found are given in Table 7.14.

Table 7.14 The Gaelic personal pronouns

Person	Non-contrastive		Contrastive	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1	<i>mì, mi</i>	<i>sinn</i>	<i>mise</i>	<i>sinne</i>
2	<i>t(h)ù, t(h)u</i>	<i>sibh</i>	<i>t(h)usa</i>	<i>sibhse</i>
3 (m.)	<i>è, e</i>	<i>iad</i>	<i>esan/eisean</i>	<i>iadsan</i>
3 (f.)	<i>ì, i</i>		<i>ise</i>	

Fully stressed non-contrastive forms occur most frequently with the copula, e.g., *is mì* / (ə)s ‘mì:/ ‘I am, it is me’, and in the ‘assertive’ usage, e.g., *cha dèan thù* ‘oh no, you won’t (do that)’. (See Questions and Answers.)

The pronunciation of unstressed *e*, *iad* is frequently /a/, /ad/, i.e., with the regular Scottish Gaelic treatment of historical unstressed long vowels/diphthongs.

The old neuter pronoun *eadh* ‘it’ survives in petrified form with the copula, *’s eadh* or *seadh* ‘well, yes, indeed’ (lit. ‘it is it’), negative *chan eadh*.

*Personal pronouns governed by prepositions* There are no independent dative forms of the pronouns. Instead we find sets of conjugated prepositions in which preposition and pronominal have coalesced permanently, e.g., *aig* ‘at’, *agam* ‘at me’. The most widely used ‘prepositional pronouns’ are given in Table 7.15.

Table 7.15 The Gaelic prepositional pronouns

	Singular				Plural		
	1	2	3 (m.)	3 (f.)	1	2	3
<i>aig</i> 'at'	<i>agam</i>	<i>agad</i>	<i>aige</i>	<i>aice</i>	<i>againn</i>	<i>agaibh</i>	<i>aca</i>
<i>gu</i> 'to, towards'	<i>thugam</i>	<i>thugad</i>	<i>thuige</i>	<i>thuice</i>	<i>thugainn</i>	<i>thugaibh</i>	<i>thuca</i>
<i>as</i> 'out of'	<i>asam</i>	<i>asad</i>	<i>as</i>	<i>aiste</i>	<i>asainn</i>	<i>asaibh</i>	<i>asta</i>
<i>(ann) an</i> 'in, into'	<i>annam</i>	<i>annad</i>	<i>ann</i>	<i>innte</i>	<i>annainn</i>	<i>annaibh</i>	<i>annta</i>
<i>le</i> 'with'	<i>leam</i>	<i>leat</i>	<i>leis</i>	<i>leatha</i>	<i>leinn</i>	<i>leibh</i>	<i>leotha</i>
<i>ri</i> 'to, against'	<i>rium</i>	<i>riut</i>	<i>ris</i>	<i>rithe</i>	<i>rinn</i>	<i>ribh</i>	<i>riutha</i>
<i>air</i> 'on'	<i>orm</i>	<i>ort</i>	<i>air</i>	<i>oirre</i>	<i>oirnn</i>	<i>oirbh</i>	<i>orra</i>
<i>eadar</i> 'between'	—	—	—	—	<i>eadarainn</i>	<i>eadaraibh</i>	<i>eatarra</i>
<i>(bh)o</i> 'from'	<i>(bh)uam</i>	<i>(bh)uat</i>	<i>(bh)uaidh</i>	<i>(bh)uaipe</i>	<i>(bh)uainn</i>	<i>(bh)uaibh</i>	<i>(bh)uapa</i>
<i>fo</i> 'under'	<i>fodham</i>	<i>fodhad</i>	<i>fodha</i>	<i>foidhpe</i>	<i>fodhainn</i>	<i>fodhaibh</i>	<i>fodhpa</i>
<i>mu</i> 'about'	<i>umam</i>	<i>umad</i>	<i>uime</i>	<i>uimpe</i>	<i>umainn</i>	<i>umaibh</i>	<i>umpa</i>
<i>ro(imh)</i> 'before'	<i>romham</i>	<i>romhad</i>	<i>roimhe</i>	<i>roimhpe</i>	<i>romhainn</i>	<i>romhaibh</i>	<i>romhpa</i>
<i>tro(imh)</i> 'through'	<i>tromham</i>	<i>tromhad</i>	<i>troimhe</i>	<i>troimhpe</i>	<i>tromhainn</i>	<i>tromhaibh</i>	<i>tromhpa</i>
<i>d(h)e</i> 'of, off'	<i>dhiom</i>	<i>dhiot</i>	<i>dheth</i>	<i>dhith</i>	<i>dhinn</i>	<i>dhibh</i>	<i>dhiùbh</i>
<i>do/dha</i> 'to, for'	<i>dhomh</i>	<i>dhuut</i>	<i>dha</i>	<i>dhi</i>	<i>dhuinn</i>	<i>dhuibh</i>	<i>dhàibh</i>

Exceptions are rare, e.g., *eadar mi fhìn is tu fhèin* 'between myself and yourself'; *seach mi fhìn* 'by comparison with me', *mar mise* 'like me'.

Strong analogical forces have operated, and continue to operate, within the system of prepositional pronouns, and also within the orthographical system which attempts to reflect the spoken forms and paradigmatic tensions. The forms and spellings given here are merely the most widely current in the central group of dialects. For example, the forms *annam*, etc., corresponding to *(ann) an*, are often pronounced with initial /u/ and sometimes written *unnam*, etc. (reflecting earlier *ionnam*, etc.).

*Genitive relation and personal pronouns* There are no independent genitive (or 'possessive') pronouns in Scottish Gaelic, expressions involving 'mine', etc., being rendered by means of prepositions, e.g., *is leam-sa sin* or *tha sin leam-sa* 'that is mine' (lit. 'that is with-me'). There are, however, possessive adjectives, e.g., *mo (chat)* 'my (cat)'. Their forms are given in Table 7.16.

Table 7.16 The Gaelic possessives

Person	Before consonants		Before vowels	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1	<i>mo</i> *	<i>ar</i>	<i>m'</i>	<i>ar n-</i>
2	<i>do</i> *	<i>ur</i>	<i>t'</i>	<i>(bh)ur n-</i>
3 (m.)	<i>a</i> *	} <i>an</i> <sup>n</sup>	<i>(a)</i>	} <i>an</i>
3 (f.)	<i>a</i>		<i>a h-</i>	

These forms are always unstressed. To express the equivalent of English 'my cat' Gaelic makes use of the deictic particles (see below, 'Demonstratives and deixis'), e.g., *mo chat-sa* /mə'xatsə/. Alternatively, Gaelic uses the formula 'definite article + noun + *aig*', e.g., *an cat agam-sa* (lit. 'the cat at-me'), where *agam-sa* can be fully stressed. The two locutions have a considerable overlap, but are not identical in their application: the contrast is one of intimacy vs. distance, for example, *mi fhìn 's mo bhean* 'my wife and I', but *a' bhean agam* 'that wife of mine'. (There would be something odd about *an ceann agam* for 'my head' in normal circumstances.) Where there is semantic unconcern, syntactic manageability and prosody may enter into the choice of locution.

Nouns with initial *f*- + vowel preceded by leniting possessives are treated as though they begin with a vowel, e.g., *m'fhalt* /maLt/ 'my hair'; cf., *mo fhradharc* /mə'rə̀rk/ 'my (eye)sight'.

First- and second-person plural *ar* and (*bh*)*ur* appear before vowels as *ar h-* and (*bh*)*ur h-* in some dialects. Third-person plural *an*<sup>n</sup> is /əŋ/, /əN/, /əm/ before velar, dental and labial stops respectively. In most dialects it is reduced by elision (or assimilation) to /ə/ before *l*-, *n*-, *r*-, *s*-, *f*-. (It is conventionally written *am* before *p*-, *b*-, *m*-, *f*-.)

The sequence 'preposition + possessive + noun', which juxtaposes two unstressed words in pre-tonic position, gives rise to various elisions, syncopes and similar accommodations. Thus the sequence *gu* + *a* + *bhràthair* becomes /gə'vra:hər'/, traditionally written *gu 'bhràthair* or *g'a bhràthair*, and in the current revised orthography *gu bhràthair* or *ga bhràthair*. The combination of '(ann) *an* + possessive' regularly gives 'nam /nam/ or 'na *mo* /namə/, 'nad /nad/ or 'na *do* /nadə/, etc. for 'in my', 'in your', etc. Similar forms occur when a contamination product of *do* 'to, for' and *aig* 'at' + possessive is used with verbal nouns, e.g., 'gam (or *dham*) *bhualadh* 'striking me' (lit. 'for/at my striking'). The forms 'nam, 'gam, etc., are written *nam*, *gam*, etc., in the revised orthography.

### Relative pronouns

#### 'Direct' (subject/object) relation

Scottish Gaelic uses *a*\* 'who, whom, which' irrespective of gender or number, as in *am fear a chunnaic mi* 'the man who saw me/whom I saw'; or *na*\* 'those who/whom/which', as in *mharbh e na chunnaic e* 'he killed all that he saw/that saw him'.

#### 'Indirect' (dative) relation

Scottish Gaelic uses (*s*)*an*<sup>n</sup> irrespective of gender or number, as in *an t-àite anns an cuir mi e* 'the place in which I shall put it', *an duine aig am bi e* 'the person with whom it will be'. (The *s*-element appears only after the prepositions *gu*, *ri*, *le* and (*ann*) *an*.) As a common alternative, Scottish Gaelic uses the direct relative pronoun *a*\* syntactically: *am fear a bha mi a' bruidhinn ris* 'the man to whom I was talking' (lit. 'the man who I was talking to him'). See 'Relative clauses' below.

#### Genitival relation

Scottish Gaelic has no word corresponding to English 'whose', but uses a variety of idioms to express this relationship, e.g., *am fear a bha mi a' bruidhinn ri 'athair* 'the man whose father I was speaking to' (lit. 'the man who I was speaking to his father'). See 'Relative clauses' below.

*Interrogative pronouns* Scottish Gaelic has two interrogative pronouns: *cia/cò* 'who?, whom?, which?' (any person and number) and (*gu*) *dè* 'what?'. Of *cia* and *cò*, the latter is the prevailing spoken form.

Datival and genitival relations are expressed by *cò* + prepositional pronoun 3rd singular masculine, e.g., *cò bhuaidh* 'from whom?', *cò leis* 'with whom? whose?', e.g., *Cò bhuaidh a fhuair thu e?* 'From whom did you get it?' (lit. 'Who (is it) from him that you got it?').

When the interrogative pronoun is co-ordinated with a noun, *cò* is used: *Cò am fear a ghabhas mi?* 'Which one shall I take?' (lit. 'Which (is) the one (which) . . .?').

Some common combinations have formed permanent compounds, e.g., *ciamar* 'how?' (lit. 'what like?'), *cuime* 'why?' (lit. 'in aid of what?', cf., *uime* 'about him/it'); with nouns: *càite* 'where?' (lit. 'what place?', cf. *àite* 'place'). See 'Questions and answers' below.

### *Demonstratives and deixis*

Scottish Gaelic has three fully stressable demonstrative pronouns: *seo* 'this' (with primary connotations of 'here', 'now', 'about to be mentioned'); *sin* or *sean* 'that' (with primary connotations of 'there', 'just there', 'just mentioned'); and *siod* 'that' (with primary connotations of 'over there', 'previously mentioned'). They involve a person-correlated gradation from nearness to remoteness, as do the adverbials *an seo* 'here' etc. (see 'Adverbs of place' below). However, there is also pressure towards a binary 'this/that' opposition, which enables *sin* and *siod* to be contrasted on another plane, in setting or revising the intimacy/formality level of discourse.

Demonstrative adjectives corresponding to *seo*, *sin*, *siod* are formed in conjunction with the definite article:

<i>an gille seo</i>	this lad
<i>an cù sin</i>	that dog
<i>an taigh ud</i>	that ('yon') house

The demonstrative elements may be treated as enclitics, cf., *-sa*, a fully cliticized alternative to *seo*, as in *am fear-sa* /ə 'fɛrsə/ 'this man'. Equally, *seo* and *sin* can bear the phrase stress when the deictic element is strong, e.g., *am fear seo* /ə fɛr 'ʃə/. Note also the frequently occurring periphrasis *am fear (a) tha (an) seo*, lit. 'the man who-is-here', e.g., *Bhruidhinn mi ris a' bhodach a bha (an) seo* 'I spoke to this old fellow', lit. 'old man who-was-here'.

Forms ultimately related to the demonstratives are used to create emphatic-contrastive suffixes for pronouns or their equivalents, e.g., *mise* 'I, me', *agam-sa* 'at me', *mo chat-sa* 'my cat', *chanainn-sa* 'I would say', where in each case the 'I, me' is underlined, or someone else's claims are implicitly rejected, or the existence of other parties who could be interested is loaded into the conversation. The relevant forms are as follows:

*The Gaelic emphatic-contrastive suffixes*

Person	Personal pronoun	Prepositional pronoun	Possessive	Synthetic verb
1 sg.	<i>mise</i>	<i>agam-sa</i>	<i>mo mhac-sa</i>	<i>chanainn-sa</i>
2 sg.	<i>t(h)usa</i>	<i>agad-sa</i>	<i>do mhac-sa</i>	
3 sg. (m.)	<i>esan</i>	<i>aige-san</i>	<i>a mhac-san</i>	
3 sg. (f.)	<i>ise</i>	<i>aice-se</i>	<i>a mac-se</i>	
1 pl.	<i>sinne</i>	<i>againne</i>	<i>ar mac-ne</i>	<i>chanamaid-ne</i>
2 pl.	<i>sibhse</i>	<i>agaibh-se</i>	<i>(bh)ur mac-se</i>	<i>canaibh-se</i>
3 pl.	<i>iadsan</i>	<i>aca-san</i>	<i>am mac-san</i>	

Here *sinne* and *againne* are simplifications of *sinn-ne* and *againn-ne* respectively. Note the absence of adjustment to consonant quality on either side of the morpheme boundary in *chanainn-sa*.

**The verbal system**

*Person, number and voice* Scottish Gaelic recognizes first, second and third person and singular and plural number in the pronominal paradigm. This enables the Scottish Gaelic verb to be basically analytic, the distinctions of number and person being carried mainly by the subject; e.g., *buailidh mi* : *buailidh tu* 'I will strike : you will strike', *buailidh e* : *buailidh iad* 'he will strike : they will strike'. At the same time Scottish Gaelic contains a few synthetic forms, and these were once more numerous. The commonest are:

First-person singular conditional:	-(a)inn, e.g., <i>dhèanainn</i> 'I would do'
First-person plural imperative:	-(e)amaid, e.g., <i>dèanamaid</i> 'let us do'
First-person plural conditional:	-(e)amaid, e.g., <i>dhèanamaid</i> 'we would do'
Second-person plural imperative:	-(a)ibh, e.g., <i>dèanaibh</i> 'do!'

Scottish Gaelic distinguishes active and passive voice, the latter being expressed either by special impersonal-passive forms or by periphrasis, e.g., *dhùin iad* 'they closed', *dhùin-eadh iad* 'they were closed'; *bha iad air an dùnadh* or *chaidh iad a dhùnadh* 'they were closed' (lit. 'they were on/after their closing' or 'they went its closing'). The synthetic impersonal-passive forms are:

Future -ar: <i>dèanar</i>	'will be done, one will do'
Conditional -te: <i>dhèante</i>	'would be done, one would do'
Past -adh: <i>rinneadh</i>	'was done, one did'

Note the absence of adjustment to consonant quality on either side of the morpheme boundary in *dhèante*. However, in some dialects the conditional impersonal-passive ending has become *-ist(e)*, e.g., *dhèanaiste* 'would be done, one would do'. This form has developed from the *-ich-te* of denominative verbs in *-ich*.

The Scottish Gaelic impersonals parallel the semantics of French *on* and German *man*, and are vital in spoken Gaelic, despite some pressure from the English second-person singular impersonal ('this is how you do it') and third-person plural without specific reference

(‘this is how they do it’). The impersonal-passive forms express the passive voice unambiguously only when an agent is explicitly mentioned, e.g., *rinneadh e* ‘one did it/it was done’, *rinneadh an t-òran le Iain* ‘the song was made by John’. Scottish Gaelic grammars tend to call these forms passives, but their occurrence with intransitive verbs forbids us to take this as their primary definition, e.g., *thigear* ‘one comes’, *thathar* ‘one is’.

A small group of Scottish Gaelic verbs are (or can be) used without an expressed subject, for example:

<i>dh’fhairtlich orm</i>	‘I failed’	(lit. ‘(it) failed on me’)
<i>thàinig orm</i>	‘I was obliged to’	(lit. ‘(it) came on me’)
<i>shoirbhich leam</i>	‘I succeeded’	(lit. ‘(it) prospered with me’)

*Tense, mood and aspect* The Scottish Gaelic verb distinguishes *indicative* and *imperative* mood, e.g., *tha (e)* ‘(he) is’: *biodh (e)* ‘let (him) be’. Subjunctive forms occur marginally: see ‘Subjunctives’ below. The verb has three non-periphrastic tense/aspect forms. For *gabh!* ‘take!’ we have *(do) ghabh* ‘took’, *gabhaidh* ‘will take/takes’ and *ghabhadh* ‘would take/used to take’. Of these, *ghabh* is a simple preterite, but also corresponds to the English perfect tense, e.g., *ghabh mi mo bhiadh* ‘I have taken (= eaten) my food (and now I am going out to play)’. (This is to be distinguished from the perfective *tha mi air mo bhiadh a ghabhail*, with the connotation ‘I have finished my meal’ or ‘I have had my meal’.) *Gabhaidh* has two distinct meanings: a simple future, and a habitual present. *Ghabhadh* mirrors this in secondary sequence, yielding a secondary future or ‘future in the past’, and a habitual past which Scottish Gaelic grammars sometimes misleadingly call ‘the imperfect’ or even ‘the subjunctive’. Certain verbs, including verbs expressing perceptions, use the future-tense forms to express a non-habitual present, e.g. *chì mi* ‘I see/can see’ as well as ‘I shall see/habitually see’; *saoilidh mi* ‘I think, suppose’.

The substantive verb *tha* ‘is’ has an additional contrast between *tha* ‘is at the present time’ and *bidh* ‘is as a rule’. Periphrastic use of *tha* + verbal noun (on which see further below and ‘Verb-phrase syntax’) enables the other verbs to express ‘is doing at the present time’, and the central role of this verb has helped to establish the single action : repeated action opposition as a general feature. (Formal mergers, between the earlier present and future, and between the earlier imperfect and secondary future tenses, constitute the second main source of the Modern Scottish Gaelic situation.) The basic tense/aspect relationships expressed by the Scottish Gaelic verb may hence be set out as in Figure 7.1, using *bi* ‘be’ and *gabh* ‘take’.

Two contrasts are involved. These may be generalized as in Figure 7.2, in which the *vertical* plane ABDC contrasts actualized (AB) and not yet actualized (CD) actions in present (AC) and past (BD) contexts; while the *horizontal* plane ABFE contrasts single (AB) and repeated (EF) actions in present (AE) and past (BF) contexts.

The historical mergers of the present and future, and of the imperfect and secondary future, are reflected in those irregular verbs in which different dialects have generalized one or the other to represent the double-duty Scottish Gaelic category, for example, Scottish Gaelic *dhèanadh* or *nitheadh* ‘would do/used to do’, where Early Modern Gaelic had *do-ghèanadh* ‘would do’ and *do-(gh)nìeadh* ‘used to do’. The Early Modern past subjunctive had come to be formally indistinguishable from the imperfect indicative, which may help to explain why Scottish Gaelic grammars sometimes call the Scottish Gaelic secondary future/habitual past ‘the subjunctive’.

Tense/aspectual differentiation also takes place on a different plane, provided by combinations with the shape: ‘verb “to be” + preposition + verbal noun’. Three main types of



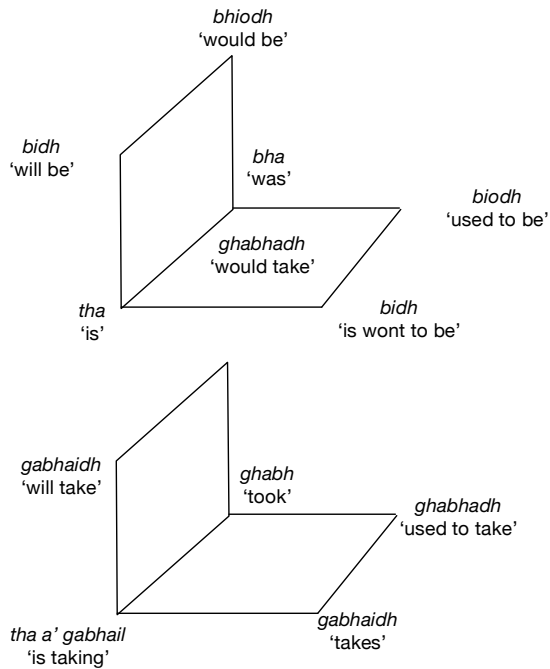


Figure 7.1 Forms and meaning of the Gaelic verb

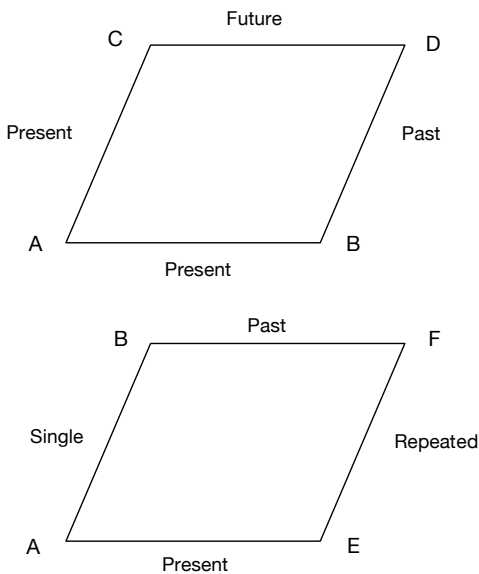


Figure 7.2 Tense/aspect relation of the Gaelic verb

activity are contrasted: *progressive* ('engaged in doing something'); *prospective* ('about to do something'); and *perfective* ('having completed doing something'). Thus with *a(i)g* 'at', *tha i ag òl* 'she is (engaged in) drinking' (lit. 'at drinking'); with *gu* 'towards', *tha mi gu fannachadh* 'I am on the point of fainting' (lit. 'towards fainting'); with *air* 'on, after', *tha mi air tilleadh* 'I have returned' (lit. 'on/after returning'). The use of these forms, especially the progressive ones, is important in Modern Scottish Gaelic; for the syntactic implications when the verb has an 'object' see 'Verbal Noun Phrases' below.

Other prepositions or equivalent locutions are quite commonly used in the contexts just described, for example:

*progressive*: *ri* 'to, against', with stronger iterative/durative connotations than *a(i)g* in most dialects; *a(g) sìor*- 'continually';

*prospective*: *an impis* 'on the point of'; *a(g) dol a\** 'going to'; *ri* 'needing to' (gerundive, e.g., *tha sin ri* (') *dhèanamh fhathast* 'that still requires to be done');

*perfective*: *an dèidh* 'after', *air ùr*- '(having) just/newly'.

Combining these aspectual markers with periphrastic use of the verb *tha* enables Scottish Gaelic to capture many nuances achieved within the English 'tense' system, e.g., *bha mi air dùsgadh* expresses the pluperfect 'I had awoken'.

*Flexion* Scottish Gaelic is not usually reckoned to possess conjugations as such, though the phonological rules generate some definable subgroups, for example, where disyllabic roots augmented by a syllabic ending undergo syncope of the second syllable, as in *fosgail* 'open!', *fosglaidh* 'will open'; or where root syllables closed by a heavy consonant or consonant group show vowel-length alternations correlating with the presence or absence of a syllabic suffix, as in *cum* /ku:m/ 'keep', *cumaidh* /kumi/ 'will keep'. Compare also the occurrence, in some dialects, of future and secondary future forms in *-(e)achaidh* and *-(e)achadh* (elsewhere *-(a)ichidh*, *-(a)icheadh*) among the common class of denominative verbs in *-(a)ich*. The irregularity of the so-called irregular verbs (see below) consists largely of suppletion, e.g., *bheir* 'gives, will give', *thug* 'gave'.

On the other hand, it is necessary to distinguish three sorts of flexion shared by all verbs, termed *independent* (or 'absolute'), *dependent* (or 'conjunct') and *relative*, e.g., *gabhadh am fear* 'the man will take', *an gabh am fear?* 'will the man take?', *am fear a ghabhas* 'the man who will take'. While preverb alternation differentiates the flexion classes throughout the paradigm, alternating verbal endings occur only in the future/habitual present *-(a)idh*: -Ø: *-(e)as*. The relative ending *-(e)as* alternates specifically with the independent ending *-idh*, and those irregular verbs which do not have *-idh* do not have *-as* either, e.g., *chì am fear* 'the man will see', *am fear a chì* 'the man who will see'. The irregular verbs contain a small number of instances in which a different stem is used for dependent flexion; e.g., *chì*: (am) *faic*. In these cases the relative goes with the independent against the dependent stem form.

*Paradigm of the independent verb forms*

	<b><i>gabh</i> ‘take’</b>	<b><i>cuir</i> ‘put’</b>	<b><i>caidil</i> ‘sleep’</b>	<b><i>tòisich</i> ‘begin’</b>
<i>Indicative</i>				
Future/habitual present	<i>gabhaidh</i>	<i>cuiridh</i>	<i>caidlidh</i>	<i>tòisichidh</i>
2 future/habitual past	<i>ghabhadh</i>	<i>chuireadh</i>	<i>chaidleadh</i>	<i>thòisicheadh</i>
(Simple) past	<i>ghabh</i>	<i>chuir</i>	<i>chaidil</i>	<i>thòisich</i>
<i>Imperative</i>				
(2 singular)	<i>gabh</i>	<i>cuir</i>	<i>caidil</i>	<i>tòisich</i>

The imperative second-person singular provides the citation forms for Scottish Gaelic dictionaries, and the ‘root’ or ‘base’ form for Scottish Gaelic grammars.

The synthetic verb-forms noted above in certain positions are under some pressure, with analytic alternatives well established in many dialects.

The apparently spontaneous lenition of the independent simple past and secondary future/habitual past forms commemorates an earlier leniting pre-verbal particle *do*\*, reduced in pre-tonic position to *a* before consonants and then lost. (This particle is still visible when the verb begins with a vowel or *f*- + vowel; e.g., *òl* ‘drink’, *dh’òl* ‘drank’, *dh’òladh* ‘would/used to drink’; *fàg* ‘leave’, *dh’fhàg* ‘left’, etc.)

*Paradigm of the independent, dependent and relative forms*

	<b>Independent</b>	<b>Dependent</b>	<b>Relative</b>
Future/habitual present	<i>gabhaidh</i>	<i>(nach) gabh</i>	<i>a ghabhas</i>
2 future/habitual past	<i>ghabhadh</i>	<i>(nach) gabhadh</i>	<i>a ghabhadh</i>
(Simple) past	<i>ghabh</i>	<i>(nach) do ghabh</i>	<i>a ghabh</i>

Dependent imperative forms only occur after the direct negative *na*. The verb-form is unchanged from the positive, e.g., *gabh* ‘take!’ *na gabh!* ‘don’t take!’. Relative forms do not occur. See also ‘Commands’.

Initial mutations may occur after pre-verbal particles taking the dependent forms, e.g., *cha ghabh* ‘will not take’. Lenition follows the *a* which characterizes relative flexion.

As a synchronic rule for the Scottish Gaelic verb, the lenition of consonants is paralleled by the prefixing of *dh’* to vowels and lenited *f*- + vowels, e.g. *nach do dh’òl*, *a dh’òlas*, *a dh’òladh*, *a dh’òl*, beside *nach do ghabh*, *a ghabhas*, *a ghabhadh*, *a ghabh*.

The alternation seen in independent *gabhaidh* : dependent ( . . . ) *gabh* reflects the absolute : conjunct opposition of Early Irish.

**Irregular verbs**

*bi* ‘be’: pres. *tha* (dep. *(f)eil*), fut. *bidh* (dep. *bi*, rel. *a bhios*), 2 fut. *bhiodh* (dep. *biodh*), past *bha* (dep. *robh*)

copula *is* ‘is’: pres. *is* (dep. coalesces with pre-verbal particle and becomes invisible; rel. *as*), other tenses *bu* (dep. *bu*)

*dèan* ‘do’: fut. *nì* (dep. *dèan*), 2 fut. *dheanadh* or *nitheadh* (dep. *deanadh*), past *rinn* (dep. *do rinn*)

*faic* ‘see’: fut. *chì* (dep. *faic*), 2 fut. *chitheadh* (dep. *faiceadh*), past *chunnaic* (dep. *faca*)

*thoir* ‘give’: fut. *bheir* (dep. *toir*), 2 fut. *bheireadh* (dep. *toireadh*), past *thug* (dep. *tug*)  
*abair* ‘say’: fut. *their* (dep. *abair*), 2 fut. *theireadh* (dep. *abradh*), past *thuirt* (dep. *tuirt*)  
*thig* ‘come’: fut. *thig* (dep. *tig*), 2 fut. *thigeadh* (dep. *tigeadh*), past *thàinig* (dep. *tàinig*)  
*rach* ‘go’: fut. *thèid* (dep. *tèid*), 2 fut. *r(e)achadh* (dep. *r(e)achadh*) or *thèigheadh* (dep. *tèigheadh*), past *chaidh* (dep. *deachaidh* or *deach*)  
*faigh* ‘get’: fut. *gheibh* or *gheobh* (dep. *faigh*), 2 fut. *gheibheadh* or *gheobhadh* (dep. *faigheadh*), past *fhuaire* (dep. *d’fhuaire*)  
*cluinn* ‘hear’: fut. *cluinnidh* (regular), 2 fut. *chluinneadh* (regular), past *chuala* (dep. *cuala*)  
*beir* ‘bear’: fut. *beiridh* (regular), 2 fut. *bheireadh* (regular), past *rug* (dep. *do rug*)  
*ruig* ‘reach’: fut. *ruigidh* (regular), 2 fut. *ruigeadh* (regular), past *ràinig* (dep. *do ràinig*)

*Responsives* In certain commonly occurring verbs special *pausa* forms are found in so-called responsive usage (cf., ‘Questions and answers’). These differ from the unmarked sentence-initial forms in cases where the unmarked form incorporates a reduction (for example, of an old hiatus) or is liable to de-stressing (for example, where the verb is used as a quasi-auxiliary and the primary stress of the phrase is permanently associated with some other element). The commonest occurrences are with the verb *tha* ‘is’, and are given in Table 7.17.

Table 7.17 Stressed and unstressed forms of the verb *tha* ‘is’

	Normal		Responsive	
	Independent	Dependent	Independent	Dependent
(Simple) present	<i>tha</i>	<i>chan eil</i>	<i>thà</i>	<i>chan eil</i>
Future/habitual present	<i>bidh</i>	<i>cha bhi</i>	<i>bithidh</i>	<i>cha bhì</i>
(Simple) past	<i>bha</i>	<i>cha robh</i>	<i>bhà</i>	<i>cha robh</i>
2 future/habitual past	<i>bhiodh</i>	<i>cha bhiodh</i>	<i>bhitheadh</i>	<i>cha bhitheadh</i>

With other verbs, note unmarked *chaidh*, (*cha*) *deach* ‘went’, responsive *chathaidh* (i.e., with hiatus) or *chàidh*, (*cha*) *deachaidh*; unmarked *thuirt*, (*cha*) *tuirt* ‘said’, responsive *thubhairt*, (*cha*) *tubhairt*; unmarked *dheanadh*, (*cha*) *deanadh* ‘would do’, responsive *dhèanadh*, (*cha*) *dèanadh*.

These forms may also be found in other classes of marked utterance, including the ‘assertive’ usage (see ‘Personal pronouns’ above); e.g., *ach thà mi mar sin* ‘but I (really) am like that’ (where ‘that’ is known). Many Gaelic writers, and some Scottish Gaelic grammars, use the longer and shorter spellings indiscriminately.

*Defective verbs* Scottish Gaelic has a small number of verbs which show only a single form or a limited range of forms, e.g., *arsa/orsa* ‘said, says’; *tharla* ‘happened’; *theab* ‘almost did (X)’, as in *theab mi tuiteam* ‘I almost fell’, with *tuiteam*, verbal noun of *tuit* ‘fall’.

*Non-finite verb forms and derivatives* A verbal noun (perhaps better a ‘verb-noun’) is attached to each verb. It signifies ‘the act or fact of breaking/being broken (or whatever)’ and can, subject to certain restrictions, be used as a noun. That is, it has case, number and gender and can be qualified by adjectives, etc. Thus *seas* ‘stand’, *seasamh* ‘(act of)

standing'; *till* 'return', *tilleadh* '(act of) returning'. The verbal noun is neutral as to voice, for example, *briseadh na cloiche* can mean, according to context, 'the breaking (e.g., John's breaking) of the stone' or '(the fact of) the stone's being broken (by John)'. The form of the verbal noun is not predictable, though some rules of thumb apply (see 'Derivational morphology' below). It is most frequently used in conjunction with other verbs, especially the verb *tha* 'is', to express progressive action and other aspectual nuances.

The preposition *a\** (a reduced form of *do* 'to, for') can be used with the verbal noun in a construction resembling the English infinitive in cases like *tha mi a' dol a choimhead* 'I am going to watch'. Frequently, however, the English infinitive corresponds to the Scottish Gaelic verbal noun itself, for example, 'I want to watch' is *tha mi ag iarraidh coimhead*; 'I would prefer to stand' is *b'fheàrr leam seasamh*. The verbal noun of the verb *tha* 'is', i.e., *bith* 'being' is used only as a noun ('being, existence') in Modern Scottish Gaelic and *a bhith* does duty for verbal constructions requiring either verbal noun or 'infinitive', e.g., *is toigh leam a bhith an seo* 'I like being/to be here'.

A verbal adjective is formed from many (but by no means all) Scottish Gaelic verbs. It corresponds to the English past-participle passive, and is formed by the addition of *-ta/-te* to the base form of the verb, e.g., *pòs* 'marry', *pòsta* 'married'; *bris* 'break', *briste* 'broken'. In some cases a non-palatalized root-final consonant is permitted to co-exist with the palatalized form of the ending, e.g., *dèante* (beside *dèanta*) 'done, completed'.

## Other parts of speech

*Prepositions* Scottish Gaelic makes constant use of a set of simple prepositions, backed up by a set of prepositional phrases, to introduce adverbial extensions of all sorts. A substantial proportion of the most common verbal ideas is expressed by a relatively small number of verbs used with different prepositions.

Most prepositions are invariable in form. (Compare, however, *ri* : *ris an*, *ann* : *anns an*, etc., where the preposition once ended in a consonant which fused with the now lost *s-* of an early form of the definite article.) Their pre-tonic position renders them liable to reduction, for example, *do* 'to' and *de* 'from' become /ɣə/ or simply /ə/. On the other hand, several protective strategies have been evolved: a preposition may be reduplicated (for example, *do dh'* or *a dh'* from *do/de*, *ann an* from *an*), or the third-person singular masculine prepositional pronoun form may be used as the preposition (e.g., *troimh, air, dha*), or a more distinctive 'compound preposition' (see below) may be used in preference to the simplex (e.g., *mu dhèidhinn* for *mu* 'about'), or the last two processes may be combined (e.g., *seachad air* for *seach* 'past', *thairis air* for *thar* 'over').

'Compound prepositions' or prepositional phrases are of two sorts: (a) (preposition + noun + preposition (e.g., *timcheall air* 'around', *a bharrachd air* 'in addition to'), and (b) (preposition +) noun (e.g., *timcheall* 'around', *air cùlaibh* 'behind'). The second sort is naturally followed by the genitive. Some apparent examples of simple prepositions governing the genitive are disguised examples of this category (e.g., *far* 'off', earlier *a (= de) bhàrr*; *chun* 'towards', earlier *dochum*).

Prepositions combine variously with pronouns and possessives: for details see 'Pronouns and pronominals' above.

*Adverbs* Adjectives may be converted to adverbial use by prefixing *gu* (*gu h-* before vowels), e.g., *rinn thu gu math* 'you did well', *leum e gu h-obann* 'he leapt suddenly', *tha mi gu math* 'I am well'. The prefix is usually omitted if another prefix, such as an intensive, is present, e.g., *rinn thu glé mhath* 'you did very well', *tha mi glé mhath* 'I am very

well' (as well as 'I am very good'). Note that some *gu*-adverbials have a different origin, e.g., *gu bràth* 'forever' (lit. 'until Judgement', i.e., a preposition + noun combination).

The demonstratives *seo*, *sin* and *siod* are paralleled by *an seo*, *an sin* and *an siod* 'here', 'there' and 'yonder'. Many other adverbials are formed by prefixing *an*, e.g., *an-diugh* 'today' (involving the obsolete \**di*- 'day'), *an còmhnaidh* 'always' (involving the extant but now disassociated noun *còmhnaidh* 'staying'). The origins of adverbial *an* are various.

Various other combinations, some transparent and some not, have attained the status of adverbs in the language, e.g., *mu seach* 'alternately', (*a*-)*riamh* 'ever', *mu thràth* (properly *mar thà*) 'already'.

Certain locative adverbial oppositions have combined with a rest/motion opposition to give adverb-families as follows. (Note that 'here' and 'there' mean 'over here' and 'over there', that is, with relational nuance, in this context.)

	'up'	'down'	'in'	'out'	'here'	'there'
motion towards	( <i>a</i> -) <i>suas</i>	( <i>a</i> -) <i>sìos</i>	<i>a-steach</i>	<i>a-mach</i>	( <i>an seo</i> )	( <i>an sin/siod</i> )
motion from	<i>a-nuas</i>	<i>a-nìos</i>			<i>a-null</i>	<i>a-nall</i>
rest	<i>shuas</i>	<i>shìos</i>	<i>a-staigh</i>	<i>a-muigh</i>	<i>a-bhos</i>	<i>thall</i>

Usage is as follows: *thig a-nuas* 'come down', *théid mi suas* 'I will go up', *tha e shuas* 'he is up (aloft)'. Note, however, that for most speakers of contemporary Scottish Gaelic *a-nìos* 'up (from below)' has been replaced by *a-nuas*, which hence means 'towards the speaker, in an up/down context'. Similarly, *a-staigh* is encroaching on the domain of *a-steach* with many contemporary speakers.

A comparable system was built around the compass points *thiar*, *thear*, *tuath*, *deas*, etc., e.g., *gaoth an iar* 'west wind' (lit. 'wind from the west'). However, usage has adapted this system in various directions in the modern dialects. It seems likely that *a-staigh* and *a-steach* have also provided the model for several further adverbial developments in the language, e.g., *as tìr* 'in the country', *as t-earrach* 'in the spring', *as t-samhradh* 'in the summer'.

*Preverbals* Since the Scottish Gaelic verb heads its clause, conjunctions may come into contact with it, and hence fall to be described as preverbals along with such verb modifiers as negatives and interrogatives; see 'Verb-phrase syntax' below.

Interrogative *an*, neg. *cha(n)* and interrogative negative *nach* may head principal clauses, e.g., *An/Nach till thu? Tillidh/Cha till*. 'Will you/Won't you return? Yes, I will/No, I won't.' They are followed by *dependent* flexion: see 'Questions and answers' and 'Negation' below. *Cha* lenites lenitable consonants other than *d*, *t* (most dialects) and *s* (some dialects), and appears as *chan* before lenited vowels and pre-vocalic *f*. *An* is a nasalizing particle and appears as *am* before labials. *An* + *do* (past-tense marker) yields /Nə/ (sometimes written *na*) in speech. *Nach* causes lenition of initial *f*. See 'Notes on the mutations' above for irregular verb-forms in /h/, mostly written *th-*, which mutate to /d/ after *cha*, *an* and *nach*.

Interrogative *an*, interrogative negative *nach* and various conjunctions may head subordinate clauses, e.g., *Saoil an tig e?* 'I wonder whether he will come' (lit. 'Suppose, will he come?'), (*ag ràdh*) *gun tig e* '(saying) that he will come', (*Falbh*) *mun tig e* '(Go) before he comes'. This category also includes the relative pronoun *an*, that is, the form used after prepositions, e.g., (*an seòmar*) *anns am bi e* '(the room) in which he will be'; and the interrogative *càite*, e.g., *Chan eil fhios càit' an tèid e* 'There's no knowing where

he will go'. All these are followed by dependent flexion.

The relative pronouns *a* and *na*, together with the interrogative pronouns other than *càite*, demand *relative* flexion in the following verb. They are joined by several conjunctions based on *a* (e.g., *nuair a* 'when', lit. 'the hour that') or modelled on this group (e.g., *ged a* 'although', *ma* 'if'), e.g., *am fear a sheinneas* 'the man who sings', *innis dhomh cò (a) sheinneas* 'tell me who will sing', *innis dhomh nuair a sheinneas e* 'tell me when he sings', *chan éisd mi ma sheinneas e* 'I shan't listen if he sings'. See further 'Subordination' below.

### Derivational morphology

**Nouns** The generic/descriptive *-ach* of adjectives (see below) is frequently used substantivally, e.g., *seirbhiseach* 'servant' (*seirbhis* 'service'), *Leòdhasach* 'Lewisman' (*Leòdhas* 'Lewis'). Such nouns are mostly masculine 1A, but note feminine 1B *cailleach* 'old woman' (cf., early *caille* 'veil') and *gainmheach* 'sand(s), sandy place' (*gaineamh* 'sand').

Diminutive suffixes include *-anlean* (m. 1A) alternating with *-ein* (m. 4A), and *-ag* (f. 1B), e.g., *balachan* 'wee laddie' (*balach* 'boy'), *uircein* 'piglet' (early *orc* 'pig'), *Annag* 'Annie' (*Anna* 'Anne'). These suffixes also occur with generic/descriptive force, e.g., *aonaran* 'loner' (*aonar* 'one person'), *bròinean* 'pathetic male', *brònag* 'pathetic female' (*bròn* 'sorrow').

Agent-suffixes include *-airl-eir* (m. 4A), *-aire* (m. 5A), *-adair* (m. 4A), *-aiche* (m. 5A), e.g., *clachair* 'mason' (*clach* 'stone'), *fidhleir* 'fiddler' (*fidheall* 'fiddle'), *piobaire* 'piper' (*piob* 'bagpipes'), *seinneadair* 'singer' (*seinn* 'sing'), *sgeulaiche* 'story-teller' (*sgeul* 'story').

Abstract suffixes: *-e* (with palatalization of preceding consonant; f. 5A), e.g., *gile* 'whiteness' (*geal* 'white'), *gainne* 'scarcity' (*gann* 'scarce'); *-achd* (f. 3A), e.g., *bàrdachd* 'poetry' (*bàrd* 'poet'), *rioghachd* 'kingdom' (*righ* 'king'); *-ad* (f. 3A or m. 1A), e.g., *gluasad* 'moving, movement' (*gluais* 'move'), *tighead* 'viscosity' (*tiugh* 'thick'); *-as* (m. 1A), e.g., *donas* 'evil' (*dona* 'bad'), *gliocas* 'wisdom' (*glic* 'wise'); *-(a)ich* (f. 4B), e.g., *casadaich* 'coughing' (*casad* 'cough'), cf. *-adaich* in *gliogadaich* 'clinking' (*gliog* 'clink'). The modification of final *-th* in adjectives to *-s* in abstract nouns may also be mentioned, e.g., *blàth* 'warm', *blàs* 'warmth'. Doubled suffixation is not uncommon, e.g., *dorchadas* 'darkness' (*dorch(a)* 'dark').

**Verbal nouns** Suffix *-(e)adh*, e.g., *mol: moladh* 'praise', *bris: briseadh* 'break'; with depalatalization of preceding consonant, e.g., *buail: bualadh* 'strike', *tòisich: tòiseachadh* 'begin'. This is by far the commonest verbal-noun suffix.

Suffix *-aill-eil*, e.g., *fàg: fàgail* 'leave', *tilg: tilgeil* 'throw'; with *-tail*, e.g. *fan: fantail* 'wait'. This is a favoured suffix in certain dialects.

Suffix *-inn*, e.g., *faic: faicinn* 'see'; with *-sinn*, e.g., *creid: creidsinn* 'believe'; with *-tinn*, e.g., *cluinn: cluinntinn* 'hear'; with *-tainn*, e.g., *fan: fantainn* 'wait'; with *-eachdainn*, e.g., *tòisich: tòiseachdainn* 'begin'. The last mentioned is a favoured suffix in some dialects.

Suffix *-amh*, e.g., *dèan: dèanamh* 'do'.

Zero suffix, e.g., *òl: òl* 'drink', *leum: leum* 'jump'; with depalatalization of final consonants, e.g., *fuirich: fuireach* 'stay', *ceannaich: ceannach* 'buy'.

Dialectal variation is not uncommon, e.g. *dèanadh* beside *dèanamh*.

*Adjectives* Suffix *-(e)ach*, e.g., *creagach* 'rocky' (*creag* 'rock'), *muldach* 'depressed' (*mulad* 'depression'), etc.; *Albannach* 'Scottish' (*Alba* 'Scotland', gen. *Albann*), etc. This is by far the commonest and most productive adjectival suffix.

Suffix *-aill-eil*, e.g., *fearail* 'manly' (*fear* 'man'), *ainmeil* 'famous, namely' (*ainm* 'name'), *sàrachail* 'wearisome' (cf., *sàraich* 'weary, wear down').

Suffix *-mhor*, e.g., *lìonmhor* 'numerous' (*lìon* 'number'). This is common in literature, but not now productive.

Suffix *-dal-ta*, e.g., *grànda* 'ugly' (*gràin* 'loathing'), *seunta* 'bewitched, shy' (*seun* 'charm').

Suffixes *-arra*, *-anta*, *-alta*, *-asta* and similar, e.g., *fosgarra* 'frank' (cf., *fosgail* 'open'), *lasanta* 'passionate' (*las* 'kindle', *lasan* 'flame, anger'), *sìobhalta* 'civilized', *drabasta* 'obscene'.

*Verbs* Zero-suffix, from adjectives, e.g., *fliuch* 'moisten, wet' (id., 'wet'), *glan* '(make) clean' (id., 'clean'); from nouns, e.g., *toll* 'pierce' (id., 'hole'), *lùb* '(make to) bend' (id., 'bend').

Suffix *-ich*, from adjectives, e.g., *tiormaich* '(make) dry' (*tioram* 'dry'), *àrdaich* 'raise' (*àrd* 'high'); from nouns, e.g., *grunn(d)aich* 'wade' (*grunn(d)* '(sea-)bottom'), *riaraich* 'satisfy' (*riar* 'desire'). Note also *-sich*, e.g., *làimhsich* 'handle' (*làmh* 'hand'), *-n(a)ich*, e.g., *crìochnaich* 'finish' (*crìoch* 'end').

Suffix *-ig* (common in English loanwords), e.g., *buinnig* 'win'. This suffix is highly productive in technological and bilingual contexts.

*Compounding rules* Compounding is relatively restricted in Scottish Gaelic. Nominal or adjectival elements may be found prefixed to nouns, including verbal nouns. Examples: *meanbh-chuileag* 'midge' (*meanbh* 'mini' + *cuileag* 'fly'); *blàth-chridheach* 'warm-hearted' (*blàth* 'warm' + *cridhe* 'heart' + *-ach* adj. suffix); *féin-riaghladh* 'self-government' (*féin* 'self' + *riaghladh* 'ruling', verbal noun of *riaghail* 'rule'); *deann-ruith* 'headlong rush' (*deann* earlier 'smoke, fire' + *ruith* 'running', verbal noun of *ruith* 'run'), *dealbh-chluich* '(theatrical) play' (*dealbh* 'shape' + *cluich* 'play(ing)'). Compounding is freer in poetry, and in modern bureaucratic and similarly restricted contexts.

A few compounding elements are productive, e.g., *ban-* 'female', as in *Bain-tighearna* 'Lady', *ban-Fhrangach* 'Frenchwoman'. Note also the prefixes *so-* 'good, easy', *do-* 'bad, difficult', *mì-* 'mis-', the negatives *neo-* and *an-*, and the intensive *an-*; e.g., *so-chreidsinn* '(easily) believable', *do-thuigsinn* 'unintelligible', *mì-chleachdadh* 'misuse', *neo-àbhaisteach* 'unusual', *ana-ceartas* 'injustice', *anfhaoinn* 'feeble' (*fann* 'weak').

## SYNTAX

### Noun-phrase syntax

*Simple noun-phrase structure* The fixed order of elements in a basic noun phrase is as follows:

(Article)	+ (Numeral)	+ Noun	+ (Adjective)
<i>na</i>	<i>trì</i>	<i>taighean</i>	<i>ùra</i>
the	three	houses	new



The elements are built up as follows:

<i>taighean</i>	houses	<i>trì taighean</i>	three houses
<i>taighean ùra</i>	new houses	<i>trì taighean ùra</i>	three new houses
<i>na taighean ùra</i>	the new houses	<i>na trì taighean ùra</i>	the three new houses

The position '(Adjective)' may be taken by a noun in the genitive case used adjectivally, e.g., *taighean samhraidh* 'summer houses', *taighean soluis* 'lighthouses'. Where a comparative or superlative adjective is involved the position '(Adjective)' is filled by a copula phrase, e.g., *na taighean as àirde* 'the tallest houses' (see below, 'Adjectives').

Possessives and demonstratives involve the following modifications:

With possessive adjectives:

*mo thaighean ùra* 'my new houses'  
*mo thrì taighean ùra* 'my three new houses'

With definite article + *aig*:

*na (trì) taighean ùra agam*  
 'my (three) new houses' (lit. 'the (three) new houses at-me')

With demonstratives:

*na (trì) taighean (ùra) seo/sin/ud*  
 'these/those/yon (three) (new) houses'

In 'possessive + demonstrative' noun phrases the following order is adopted: *an taigh (ùr) sin aige* 'that (new) house of his'. The pronominal/adjectival *fhéin* 'self, own' is used as follows:

*an taigh fhéin* the house itself  
*mo thaigh fhéin* my own house  
*an taigh sin fhéin* that house itself  
*an taigh seo agam fhéin* this house of my own

**Complex noun phrases** 'Noun dominating Noun' noun phrases are strongly favoured by Scottish Gaelic, e.g., 'the house on the brae' or 'the man with the telescope' are most naturally rendered '(the) house of the brae', '(the) man of the telescope'. The fixed order of elements is:

Headnoun	+ (Article)	+ Dependent noun
<i>ceann</i>	<i>an</i>	<i>duine</i>
(the) head	(of) the	man

Note also: *ceann Iain* 'John's head', *ceann an duine bhit sin* 'that little man's head', *taigh mòr an dà Shasannaich ud* 'yon two Englishmen's big house', etc.

The article is deleted before a definite head noun qualified by a definite dependent noun. Compare *ceud mhìos an Earraich* '(the) first month of the Spring', where the noun-phrase rule overrides the rule that ordinal numerals be accompanied by the definite article. This type of noun phrase is to be distinguished from examples like *taigh samhraidh* 'summer house' above, where genitive *samhraidh* has become purely adjectival in a fixed

phrase, with the result that *an taigh soluis* and *an taigh samhraidh* are perfectly acceptable. The article deletion rule holds good for more complex noun phrases of this type, e.g., *mullach taigh a' mhinisteir* 'the roof of the minister's house', lit. '(the) roof (of the) house (of) the minister'.

Where English uses 'a son of John' to include the possibility of contrast with other sons of John, Gaelic uses a prepositional phrase: *mac aig Iain* (lit. 'a son of Iain') or similar. The same type of strategy is used to deal with 'that son of John': *am mac sin aig Iain* or similar.

Complex 'Noun dominating Noun' phrases also involve a genitive suppression rule whereby only the last noun in the chain is permitted to go into the genitive. Thus:

<i>làmh an doruis</i>	the handle of the door ( <i>dorus</i> , 1A)
<i>làmh dorus an taighe</i>	the handle of the door of the house ( <i>taigh</i> , 4B)
<i>làmh dorus taigh na mnatha</i>	the handle of the door of the house of the woman ( <i>bean</i> , irreg.)
<i>làmh dorus taigh bean Sheumais</i>	the handle of the door of the house of the wife of James ( <i>Seumas</i> , cf. 1A)

At the same time there is in Scottish Gaelic a tendency (as in English) to break such sequences as the last, where expedient, by internal bracketing of, for example, *dorus taighe* 'house-door' or *làmh doruis* 'door-handle'.

*Simplification of the case system in spoken Scottish Gaelic* Contemporary Scottish Gaelic tends to eliminate genitives, that is, to rely on syntax alone (in effect, word order) to specify noun-phrase relations. Thus, for example, masculine 1A nouns, with their chiasmic paradigm of 'nominative singular = genitive plural, genitive singular = nominative plural' are now under pressure (especially in the absence of the definite article) to conform to the simple 'all singular vs. all plural' paradigms of Class 5A etc. Thus, *ceann fir* 'a man's head' tends to become *ceann fear*, and *cinn fhear* 'men's heads' becomes *cinn fir*. Features like the genitive suppression rule just described are instrumental in this process (e.g., *ceann fear na feusaig*, lit. 'the head of the man of the beard', is regular in 'correct' Scottish Gaelic); indeed the genitive suppression rule may be seen as an early manifestation of the tendency. Note also a comparable tendency to baulk genitives when a relative clause follows, for example, *a' lorg fear* ('correct' ScG *fir*) *a chuidicheas* 'searching for a man who will help', or even *a' lorg am fear* ('correct' ScG *an fhir*) *a chunnaic mi* 'searching for the man whom I saw'. The ambivalence in this respect of countless 5A nouns (e.g., *an duine*, gen. sg. *an duine*), together with the various consonantal and vocalic declensions which have joined noun Classes 3A and 4A, assists these developments to gather momentum.

While the genitive singular feminine ending *-e* of noun Classes 1B and 3B and adjectives has generally been eliminated in polysyllables (see above, 'Declension of adjectives'), a new set of phrase-based rules operates, at least temporarily, in some of the Hebridean dialects. In monosyllables *-e* is retained, and, in phrase-final position, is strengthened to *-eadh*, e.g., *grian* 'sun', gen. *grèine(adh)*.<sup>11</sup> The genitive forms of *a' bhanntrach* 'the widow' and *a' chlann* 'the children' with the adjectives *beag* 'small' and *gaolach* 'loving' are given in Table 7.18.

Table 7.18 Forms of the genitive singular feminine

Literary Gaelic	Conservative spoken Gaelic	Progressive spoken Gaelic
<i>na banntraiche</i>	<i>na banntraich</i>	<i>a' bhanntarach</i>
<i>na cloinne</i>	<i>na cloinne(adh)</i>	<i>a' chlann</i>
<i>na banntraiche bige</i>	<i>na banntraich bhig</i>	<i>a' bhanntarach bheag</i>
<i>na cloinne bige</i>	<i>na cloinne bigeadh</i>	<i>a' chlann bheag</i>
<i>na banntraiche Barraiche</i>	<i>na banntraich Bharraich</i>	<i>a' bhanntarach Bharrach</i>
<i>na cloinne gaolaiche</i>	<i>na cloinne gaolaich or na cloinn ghaolaich</i>	<i>a' chlann ghaolach</i>

Note here (a) the influence of surface concord (e.g., *na banntraich bhig*); (b) the association of phrase-final position (and phrasal stress) with the appearance of the *-eadh* ending; and (c) the fact that the ‘conservative spoken’ column does not represent *the* intermediate position in a simple progression from ‘literary’ to ‘progressive’, but merely *one* intermediate position which happens to be well attested and comparatively coherent. See note 10 and, for further discussion and exemplification, MacAulay 1978.

Given that *fh-*, the lenited correlative of *f-*, has the value Ø, the language has long supported doublets of the type *eagal*: *feagal* ‘fear’, *aithnich*: *faithnich* ‘recognize’, based on the ambiguity of genitive *an (fh)eagail*, negative *chan (fh)aithnich*, etc. One can view the extension of this process, for example, in the paradigm of *feumaidh* ‘must’, where *an (fh)eum?* is common beside *am feum?* in contemporary Gaelic. The process can also be seen at work in definite article + noun combinations, e.g., progressive Gaelic *an fhear* beside *am fear* ‘the man’. The same may be said of words in *s-*, where old doublets like *side*: *tide* ‘weather’ are now joined by the likes of *an t-saor* beside *an saor* ‘the joiner’; and so with the masculine: feminine opposition of *an t-*: *an* in nouns with initial vowel, where there is a tendency to generalize one or the other. It would seem that these developments betoken a threat to the mutation system which underpins the gender category in Scottish Gaelic (cf. MacAulay 1986).

*Further syntactic points relating to noun-phrase constituents*

*The definite article*

The definite article may be used with abstract nouns or nouns used abstractly, especially if they lack a distinctive abstract suffix (e.g., *An Gaol* ‘Love’, beside *Cràbhachd* ‘Piety’); with seasons and periods of the year (e.g., *An Céitean* ‘May-time’, *An Geamhradh* ‘Winter’); with certain place names (e.g., *An Fhraing* ‘France’, *A’ Chuimrigh* ‘Wales’); and similar.

*The noun*

Scottish Gaelic employs a special syntax for proper names. In the genitive case, masculine personal names are ‘spontaneously’ lenited and treated, where possible, as 1A nouns, e.g., *Seumas* (‘James’): *taigh Sheumais*, *Donnchadh* (‘Duncan’): *mac Dhonnchaidh*; feminine personal names in most dialects are not lenited, but treated as 1B nouns where possible, e.g., *Peigi* (‘Peggy’): *taigh Peigi*, *Annag* (‘Annie’): *croit Annaig*; place names of both genders are lenited, e.g., *Barraidh* (‘Barra’, f. 4A): *muinntir Bharraidh*, *Baile a’ Chaolais* (‘Ballahulish’, *baile* m. 5A): *drochaid Bhaile a’ Chaolais*. Where the definite article is the first element in a place name its requirements take precedence over the above, e.g., *Am*

*Bràigh* ('Braes' in Skye, m. 4A): *muinntir a' Bhràighe*, *An t-Òban* ('Oban', m. 1A): *Baile an Òbain*, *Na Lochan* ('Lochs' in Lewis, *loch* m. 3A): *Sgìre nan Loch*.

### Pronouns and pronominals

'One', 'ones' are expressed by means of *fear* (m.), *té* (f.), depending on the grammatical gender of the Gaelic word referred to, for example, *té bheag* 'a little one', e.g., 'a small whisky', where the referent is *gloinne* (f.) 'glass'; *seo am fear agam-sa* 'this is my one' (e.g., *leabhar* (m.) 'book'). The plural (both genders) is *feadhainn*, a feminine noun originally meaning 'company, group'. It is sometimes treated as though it were a plural noun, e.g., *na feadhainn bheaga* 'the little ones (= children, fishes, or whatever)'.

Scottish Gaelic possesses a number of pronominals whose syntax cannot be treated here. See Scottish Gaelic grammars s.v. *càch*, *gach*, *uile* ('all, each, every', etc.); *eile*, *càch*, *a chéile*, *còrr* ('other, others, each other', etc.); *cuid*, *feadhainn* ('some'); *cuid* ('both, either'); *sam bith*, *gin/duine* ('any').

### Adjectives

Adjectives may be used attributively or predicatively. In the latter case (on which see below, 'The simple sentence') they are always indeclinable, for example *tha a' chuileag gorm* 'the fly (*cuileag*, f.) is blue', beside *tha cuileag ghorm an sin* 'there is a blue fly there'.

Attributive adjectives follow their nouns, with the exception of a small number of common adjectives which precede and form quasi-compounds with their nouns, e.g., *seann chù* 'an old dog', *droch thìde* 'bad weather', *deagh dhuine* 'an excellent fellow'.

Adjectives may be concatenated directly or with the help of *is* or *agus* 'and', *is* being used especially where two closely co-ordinated epithets are linked, e.g., *dubh is geal* 'black and white'.

Adjectives may be preceded by modifiers/intensifiers, which are syntactically of two sorts: (i) compounding, as *ro* 'too', *glè* 'very', *fìor* 'truly', e.g., *duine ro(-)ghlic* 'an excessively wise man'; and (ii) non-compounding, as *caran* 'somewhat', *uamhasach* 'terribly', e.g., *duine caran bodhar* 'a slightly deaf man'. The latter sort do not lenite, nor do they undergo lenition, even when they appear in lenition positions, e.g., *oidhche fuathasach dorch* 'a dreadfully dark night' (contrast *oidhche dhoineannach dhorcha* 'a tempestuous dark night').

Comparative and superlative are expressed by using the comparative/superlative form of the adjective as follows. (For morphology see above, 'Comparison of adjectives'; for the sentence patterns involved see below, 'The simple sentence'.)

<i>tha X nas (duibhe) na Y</i>	X is (blacker) than Y
<i>is (duibhe) X na Y</i>	X is (blacker) than Y
<i>is e X as (duibhe)</i>	X is (blackest)
<i>am fear/té as (duibhe)</i>	the (blacker/blackest) one

The presence of *nas* always signals the comparative, whether a comparand is expressed or not. Where *as* is concerned, context disambiguates. Any ambiguity in *gach fear as duibhe na 'chéile* (lit. 'each one that is blacker than the next one', but really equivalent to 'all the blackest ones') enters at the stage of translation to English.

Note that the forms *nas*, *as* contain the copula (see above, 'Irregular verbs' and below, 'The copula: constructions'). In past or habitual past/conditional context *na bu* and *a bu* are used: *bha i na b'fheàrr an dé* 'she was better yesterday'; but *nas* and *as* often occur irrespective of tense.

The forms *misde*, *feàirde* ('the better for', 'the worse for') are used as follows:

<i>is fheàirde duine gaire</i>	a man is the better for a laugh
<i>cha bu mhisde mi sin</i>	I wasn't (any) the worse for that

Equative expressions appear as follows: *cho X ri Y*, e.g., *cho dubh ri gual/ris a' ghual* 'as black as (the) coal'.

### Numerals

The definite article is always used with ordinals, and may be used with the 'counting series' (see above, 'Numerals', Series B), e.g., *an t-aon*, *na dhà*, *na trì*, etc. (Contrast *an dà ghille*, where the dual article, like the noun, is similar to the singular rather than the plural form.)

Noun phrases involving *deug* 'teen' accommodate it as follows: *na trì gillean beaga deug sin*, though escape strategies by periphrasis are common in more complex cases.

The noun *fichead* 'score' is followed by the singular (historically the genitive plural of 1A, 1B and similar nouns), for example, *fichead gille* 'twenty lads', earlier 'a score of lads'. The constructions employed with *fichead* vary widely in the dialects and literature: well-established alternatives to the forms given under 'Numerals' above include *trì is fichead* and *fichead 's a trì* beside *trì air fhichead*, and *trì gillean fichead* beside *trì gillean air fhichead*.

### Verb-phrasal syntax

*The verb-complex* The verb-complex contains the following constituents in the following fixed order:

(Conjunct/relative particle) + (Tense marker) + Verb + (Emphatic/contrastive suffix or subject pronoun)

Examples:

<i>cuir!</i>	put!	<i>an cuir</i>	will (she) put?	<i>an do chuir</i>	did (I) put?
		(i)?		(mi)?	
<i>chuir (sinn)</i>	(we) (did) put	<i>na cuir!</i>	do not put!	<i>anns an do chuir i</i>	in which she (did) put
<i>chuirinn-sa</i>	I would put	<i>gun cuir</i>	that (they) will put	<i>(am fear) a chuireas</i>	(the one) who will put
		(iad)			

Scottish Gaelic exploits the verbal noun in conjunction with the verb *tha* 'is' and various other verbs as auxiliaries to express many aspectual and situational nuances. In these cases the auxiliary undergoes the syntactic modifications proper to the verb, although the verbal noun carries the bulk of the semantic load. Thus, beside *thàinig mi* 'I came', *shuidh mi* 'I sat (down)', *bhuail mi* 'I struck', we find *bha mi* 'I was' + various prepositions + verbal noun, for example:

<i>bha mi a' tighinn</i>	I was coming ('at coming')
<i>bha mi air tighinn</i>	I had arrived ('on/after coming')
<i>bha mi airson tighinn</i>	I wanted to come ('for coming')
<i>bha mi gu(s) tighinn</i>	I was on the point of coming ('towards coming')
<i>bha mi nam shuidhe</i>	I was sitting/seated ('in my sitting')
<i>bha mi gam bhualadh</i>	I was being/getting hit ('for/at my hitting')
<i>bha mi air mo bhualadh</i>	I had been hit ('on/after my hitting')

With other verbs as auxiliary:

<i>rinn mi suidhe</i>	I sat down ('made a sitting'); <i>dèan</i> 'do'
<i>thàinig orm gèilleadh</i>	I had to give in ('it came on me to submit'); <i>thig</i> 'come'
<i>gabhadh e dèanamh</i>	it is feasible/can be done ('will take doing'); <i>gabh</i> 'take'
<i>chaidh agam air tilleadh</i>	I managed to get back ('went with me on a returning'); <i>rach</i> 'go'
<i>chaidh Iain a bhualadh</i>	John was hit ('went his/its striking'); <i>rach</i> 'go'
<i>fhuair mi air tilleadh</i>	I managed/was able to get back ('got on returning'); <i>faigh</i> 'get'

In constructions involving *tha* + preposition + possessive + verbal noun, an instructive ambiguity may occur where (a) the verb is transitive and (b) the possessive refers to the subject of *tha*. Whereas *bha mi ga bhualadh* is unambiguously 'I was hitting him', *bha mi gam bhualadh* can mean either 'I was hitting myself' or 'I was being hit', depending on context.

There are some signs of encroachment by the periphrastic construction at the expense of the 'simple' tense of the verb. Thus certain verbs tend, irrespective of semantic considerations, to occur only in the periphrastic construction, e.g., (*ag*) *amharc* 'looking'. Again, some common expressions are found with the periphrastic construction where this would not be expected, e.g., *tha mi a' smaoineachadh (gun)* 'I think (that)' (lit. 'I am thinking'), where the progressive should convey a meaning like 'I am pondering', while 'I think that . . .' might be expected to attract the simple tense, as in fact happens with the alternative verb 'to think': *saoididh mi* 'I think, I suppose'. But in general the distinctions between, e.g., *fairichidh mi* 'I feel (he's not as friendly as he used to be)', *tha mi a' faireachdainn* 'I feel (better today)' and *bidh mi a' faireachdainn* 'I (sometimes) feel (he's concealing something)'/I feel (better in the earlier part of the day)', are well understood, if not always exploited, by Gaelic speakers.

A further group of auxiliary verbs and copula phrases expressing modality is dealt with below, 'The modal auxiliary verbs'.

*Status of the verbal noun* The verbal noun is in the first instance a noun. Thus *tha mi ag òl drama* 'I am drinking a dram' is literally 'I am at (the) drinking of a dram', and 'dram' is formally in the genitive case. Similarly, *tha mi a' dol a bhriseadh na cloiche* 'I am going to break the stone' has 'to/for (the) breaking of the stone' and *cloiche* (nom. *clach*) is in the genitive. The previously noted tendency in contemporary Gaelic for genitives to be replaced by nominatives in such positions is operative here as part of the simplification of the nominal system.

The verbal noun may appear as the subject or object of a verb, or as a nominal predicate in copula sentences, for example, *rinn mi suidhe* 'I sat', *feumaidh mi suidhe* 'I must sit', *is fheàrr dhomh suidhe* 'I had better sit' (lit. 'is-best for me (a) sitting'). This has important syntactic consequences when the verbal noun has an 'object': for sentences of the type *feumaidh mi sin a dhèanamh* 'I must do that' see below, 'Verbal-noun phrases'.

*Participials, infinitives, gerundives, etc.* Scottish Gaelic does not possess participles (other than the semi-productive past participle passive in *-te*), but uses various constructions, mostly involving the verbal noun, where English uses participles. Thus 'I saw John sitting' and 'I saw John hitting Mary' are dealt with as follows:

*chunnaic mi Iain (is e) na shuidhe*      I saw John (and he) in his sitting  
*chunnaic mi Màiri (is i) a' bualadh Iain*      I saw Mary (and she) at (the) striking (of) John

Scottish Gaelic, like English, has a fixed formula for expressions of intention/futurity using 'going to', e.g., *tha mi a' dol a dhùnadh an dorais* 'I am going to close the door' (lit. 'to/for (the) closing of the door'). This construction may be used with *thig* 'come', for example, *thàinig mi a chàradh an dorais* 'I've come to fix the door', and with semantically similar verbs and phrases.

Necessity and possibility/capacity may be expressed by *ri* + verbal noun (e.g., *tha sin ri dhèanamh fhathast* 'that still remains to be done'), or by idioms involving auxiliary verbs (e.g., *gabhadh sin dèanamh* 'that can be done'), or by the modal verbs *feumaidh/faoadaidh* 'must/may'. Note also the prefixes *so-*, *do-*, *ion-* used with the verbal noun or past-participle passive of certain verbs, e.g., *so-chreidsinn* 'intelligible, easy to understand', *do-chreidsinn* 'unintelligible, hard to understand', *ionmholta* 'praiseworthy'. (These prefixes are of strictly limited application in ordinary speech.)

*The modal auxiliary verbs* 'May/might' and 'must' are expressed standardly by the verbs *faoadaidh* and *feumaidh* respectively, for example:

<i>faoadaidh tu falbh</i>	you may go	<i>feumaidh sinn fuireach</i>	we must stay
<i>dh'fhaodadh e tighinn</i>	he might/might have come	<i>dh'fheumadh e sin a dhèanamh</i>	he needed/would need/would have needed to do that

*Feumaidh* and *faoadaidh* only occur in the future/habitual present and the conditional/habitual past tenses, cf., perhaps Scottish English 'you'll need to', 'you'd need to'.

Sentences of the type 'you must be cold' are expressed by a subjectless use of *feumaidh* + *gu(n)* 'that', e.g., *feumaidh gu bheil thu fuar* 'you must be cold', *feumaidh gun tàinig i* 'she must have come'. Literally, this idiom states '(it) must (be) that . . .', cf., *dh'fhaodte gu(n)* 'it might be/might have been that', used where English uses 'maybe'. Scottish Gaelic also uses an extended construction with *a bhith* 'to be', *feumaidh/faoadaidh e (a) bhith gu(n)* 'it must/may be that . . .'.

Scottish Gaelic possesses a wide range of alternative idioms to cope with the situational complexities of modality. Thus within the field of capacity/capability for action we may contrast:

<i>bha mi air chothrom a dhol ann</i>	I was able to go (I had the opportunity to go)
<i>bha mi air chomas a dhol ann</i>	I was able to go (I had all that was necessary to enable me to go)
<i>bha e air mo chomas a dhol ann</i>	it was within my capacity to go
<i>bha e comasach dhomh a dhol ann</i>	it was possible for me to go
<i>b'urrainn dhomh a dhol ann</i>	I could go/could have gone

*Syntax of the verbs 'to be'* The verb *tha* is an 'irregular verb' (i.e., its tenses, etc., involve suppletion: see above, 'Irregular verbs'). It also differs from other verbs in possessing an 'extra' tense, the instantaneous or non-habitual present, and in the fact that its possession of this extra tense is exploited to create a progressive for other verbs, with *tha* as auxiliary.

The verb *is* is 'irregular' in the same sense, but also syntactically, inasmuch as it is always stressless and proclitic to a following nominal or pronominal element, or to a stress-bearing topicalized element in a cleft sentence, for example:

<i>is math sin</i>	/ (ə) s 'ma 'ʃin/	'that is good' (lit. 'is-good that')
<i>is mì</i>	/ (ə) s 'mì:/	'it is me' (lit. 'is-me')
<i>is i seo do phiuthar</i>	/ (ə) s i 'ʃo də 'fju ər/	'this is your sister' (lit. 'is-she-here your sister')

Note that the dependent present form of the verb *is* is 'invisible' in that it has become absorbed by the preceding conjunct particles. Thus, beside *is e* 'he/it is' we find *an e?* 'is he/it?', *nach e?* 'isn't he/it?', *chan e* 'he/it isn't'. For further details see Scottish Gaelic grammars. The independent form of the copula is itself often omitted in speech, e.g., *math thu!* 'you're good!' (lit. 'good you'); *mì fhìn a tha ann* 'it is (I) myself' (lit. 'myself who is here'); *saighdear a bha ann* 'he was a soldier' (lit. 'a soldier which he was'). Where it does remain, the form *is*, being always proclitic, tends to lose its vowel, e.g., *is mì* becomes /smi:/. With the third person singular masculine pronoun *è/e* the pronunciation /ʃe(:)/ is usual, and the pronunciation with /ʃ/ is extended to the commonly occurring (*i*) *s iomadh* 'it is many'. The vowel of the past-tense form *bu* is elided before vowels, as in *b'e*, *b'i*, etc.

### Adverbial-group syntax

In a sentence of standard type VS(O)Adv (see below) the adverbial group Adv is very often a transparent prepositional phrase, e.g., *bhuail mi Iain air an t-sròin* 'I struck John on the nose'. Many adverbs of place, time, etc., are derived from old prepositional phrases, e.g., *a-staigh* 'inside, indoors', relates to *taigh* 'house'; *am bliadhna* 'this year' to *bliadhna* 'year', *a-riamh* 'ever' to (obsolete) *riamh* 'before him/it'. For adverbs formed from adjectives by preposing *gu* (another preposition in origin), and for the development of 'systems' of related adverbs, see above, 'Adverbs'.

There is a degree of freedom with regard to the positioning of Adv, for example, *am bitheantas* 'in general, generally' is preposed for stylistic reasons in the sentence *Am bitheantas cha nochd iad gu madainn* 'Generally they don't show up until morning'.

Where adverbials have to be co-ordinated with nominal elements a 'bridging' element is often found, for example, 'the children of today' or 'today's children' is *clann an là an-diugh* (lit. '(the) children of the day today'); 'last night's storm' is *stoirm na h-oidhche an raoir* (lit. '(the) storm of the night last night'). Cf., also *Uibhist a' chinn a-tuath* 'North Uist' (lit. 'Uist of the end to the north') beside *Uibhist a-tuath*, which is commoner nowadays; *an taobh a-deas* 'the south (side)', *an àird an ear* 'the East'.

The element *ann* 'in it, there' is needed to complete some expressions involving certain verbs, most notably the verb *tha* 'is'; and to complete certain sorts of statement, most notably in conjunction with the copula *is*. Note the following usages:



- 1 *Dh'fhàg mi an càr ann* 'I left the car there' (where 'there' is an already specified or known location), as opposed to *Dh'fhàg mi an càr an sin* 'I left the car *there* (and not somewhere else).'  
*Tha Iain ann* 'John is there (in a location already specified).'  
*Thèid mi ann am màireach* 'I'll go (on a journey or to a place already specified) tomorrow.'
- 2 *Tha an t-uisge ann* 'It is raining' (lit. 'the rain is in it').  
*Tha Dia ann* 'There is a God', 'God exists', lit. 'God is in it'.  
*... a h-uile fear a tha ann* 'absolutely everybody' (lit. 'every one who is in it').
- 3 *Dè (a) tha ann?* 'What is it?' (lit. 'What-is-it (that) is in it?')  
*Is e nighean bheag a tha ann* 'It is a little girl' (lit. 'it is a little girl that is in it').  
*Chan eil ann ach a' ghaoth* 'It is only the wind' (lit. 'there is not in it but the wind').

For more about sentences of type (3) see below, 'The cleft constructions'.

### The simple sentence

**Word order** The standard order of elements in the Scottish Gaelic sentence is VSOAdv, for example:

<i>chunnaic</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>Iain</i>	<i>an-dè</i>
saw	I	John	yesterday
V	S	O	Adv

The Adv element may appear as Adv1 + Adv2 + . . . , for example, where adverbials are used to specify both time and place:

<i>chunnaic</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>làraidh</i>	<i>aig a' chidhe</i>	<i>an-dè</i>
saw	I	(a) lorry	at the quay	yesterday

Adv very frequently consists of preposition + verbal noun, as in *chunnaic mi Iain a' tighinn* 'I saw John coming'.

Certain verbs are or can be used without an expressed subject, e.g., *dh' fhairtlich orm* 'I failed' (lit. 'failed on me'); *shoirbhich leam* 'I prospered' (lit. 'prospered with me'); *ciamar a chaidh dhut?* 'how did you get on?' (lit. 'how went for you?'). Sentences of the 'voici/voilà' type may interpose the deictic element between V and S, e.g., *Tha (an) seo Iain a' tighinn* 'Here's John coming'. (But *Seo Iain a' tighinn* is also regular in this context.) Where O is a personal pronoun it tends to be put in final position, i.e., after Adv, e.g., *Chunnaic mi air an tràigh e* 'I saw him on the shore'. (But *Chunnaic mi e air an tràigh* is also acceptable and common.) Sentences of the type *Tha iad seòlta na Frangaich* 'The French are smart' (lit. 'They are smart the French') are not uncommon in speech. These may be explained in terms of the attrition of the copula, the elimination of synthetic verb-forms, or similarly.

**The copula: constructions** The copula provides, at least superficially, a series of exceptions to the Simple Sentence word-order rules. The following constructions are recognized:<sup>12</sup>

1 Copula + subject + predicate: *is tù am balach* 'you are the boy'. Here the predicate is always grammatically definite and the subject is identified with it: cf., *cha mhì thù is cha tù mì* 'I am not you and you are not me'. Where the subject is a noun or demonstrative it is anticipated by the appropriate pronoun, e.g., *is e Iain am fear* 'John is the man' (lit. 'it-is-he John the man'); *is i do phiuthar an té dhonn* 'your sister is the brown(-haired) girl' (lit. 'it-is-she your sister etc.');

*is e seo mo mhac* 'this is my son' (lit. 'it-is-he-here my son'). The form *is e* tends nowadays to be generalized at the expense of *is i* and *is iad*, e.g., *is e na gilleán* for the more 'correct' *is iad na gilleán* 'the lads are'. This use of *is e* is sometimes extended to cases of copula + pronoun, e.g., *is e mise* (usually with *se*, as above) beside *is mise* 'it is I'; *is e sinne* 'it is we/us'.

2 Copula + predicate + subject: *is math thu* 'you are good' (lit. 'is-good you'). Here the predicate is always grammatically indefinite. The subject is classified as a member of the class denoted by the predicate, which is thus adjectival in character, and normally consists of an adjective nowadays, though sentences of the types *is iasgair thu* 'you are a fisherman' and *is iasg sgadan* 'herring (*sgadan*) is a (type of) fish' also occur. But at the present time these sorts of sentence are standardly dealt with by cleft constructions, e.g., *is e iasgair a tha annad*, lit. 'it is a fisherman that is in you'; and even adjective predicates have largely been reassigned to the substantive verb *tha*, e.g., *tha thu glic* 'you are wise'.

3 Copula + predicate + subject 1 + subject 2: *is math am balach thu* 'what a good boy you are' (lit. 'is-good-the-boy you'). This 'double focus' type is of relatively limited occurrence.

In these *cleft sentences* (on which see further below, 'The cleft constructions') the augmented form *is e* ('it is it') is used when nominal elements (noun, pronoun or demonstrative) follow the copula and *is ann* ('it is in it') in all other cases. Thus:

<i>Is e Iain a thàinig</i>	It is John who has come
<i>Is (e) mise a thàinig</i>	It is I who have come
<i>Is e seo an rud a chaill mi</i>	This is the thing that I lost
<i>Is ann an seo a bha i</i>	It is here that she was (i.e., this is where she was)
<i>Is ann an raoir a bha i an seo</i>	It was (lit. 'is') last night that she was here
<i>Is ann beag a tha iad</i>	It is small that they are (i.e., they really are small)

In sentences of these sorts tense concord is 'correct', though decreasing in use, for example, *B'e Iain a thàinig* 'It was John who came' tends to become *Is e Iain a thàinig*. Note also that the copula itself can be deleted, e.g., *Mise a thàinig*, *Seo an rud a chaill mi*, etc.

*Repartition between substantive and copula constructions* The substantive verb *tha* is always used in sentences of the VSAdv type, for example:

<i>Tha mi an seo</i>	I am here
<i>Tha mi gu math</i>	I am well
<i>Tha mi a' falbh</i>	I am going away
<i>Tha mi ann</i>	I am here (or 'I am' = 'I exist')
<i>Tha an t-uisge ann</i>	It is raining (lit. 'the rain is in it')
<i>Tha taigh agam</i>	I have a house (lit. '(a) house is at me')

The copula *is* is always used in sentences of the following sorts (typically sentences of identification and definition):

<i>Is mise an duine</i>	I am the man
<i>Is mise Iain</i>	I am John
<i>Is mise do bhràthair</i>	I am your brother
<i>Is mise mac a' mhinisteir</i>	I am the minister's son
<i>Is mise am fear a chunnaic thu</i>	I am the one whom you saw
<i>Is mise (am fear) as fheàrr</i>	I am the best (one)
<i>Is e seo an duine</i> , etc.	This is the man, etc.
<i>Is e Iain an duine</i> , etc.	John is the man, etc.

In sentences of this type, where two specified entities are equated, both *Is e am fear a chunnaic thu am fear as fheàrr* and *Is e am fear as fheàrr am fear a chunnaic thu* are competent. (They differ in focus: in the former 'the best one' is identified as 'the one you saw'; in the latter, 'the one you saw' is identified as 'the best one'.) Note, however, that in this construction Scottish Gaelic always places demonstratives and pronouns in the 'highlighted' position, that is, *is e seo an duine* 'this is the man' is the only competent formulation; and similarly *is e do phiuthar* 'she is your sister'. (Demonstratives and pronouns can become the non-highlighted element in the equation in cleft constructions, on which see below.)

In some other sentence types both *tha* and *is* are found, for example:

<i>Tha sin math</i>	That is good
<i>Tha sin leam</i>	That is mine (lit. 'is with-me')
<i>Tha sin nas fheàrr</i>	That is better
<i>Tha mi nam oileanach</i>	I am a student (lit. 'in my student')
<i>Is math sin</i>	That is good
<i>Is leam sin</i>	That is mine (lit. 'is with-me')
<i>Chan fheàrr seo na sin</i>	This is no(t) better than that
<i>Se oileanach a tha annam</i>	I am a student (lit. 'student that is in-me')

The normal descriptive/classificatory construction nowadays is *tha* + S + adjective; poetry is less constrained, and shows many examples of the construction *is* + adjective + S. (The earlier repartition associated *tha* with transient, superficial characteristics, *is* with permanent, inherent attributes.) The copula construction survives in a good number of set phrases like *is math sin*, where 'that' is assigned to the known class of 'good things', as opposed to *tha sin math*, where 'that' is evaluated as being 'good' in a present context.

*Tha* cannot be followed by a noun or noun equivalent as predicate. (There are marginal exceptions to this rule, e.g., '*Tha thu trang*.' '*Tha mi sin*.' 'You are busy.' 'I am that'.) Hence Scottish Gaelic has recourse to *tha mi nam* . . . 'I am in my . . .', etc. Note also, for 'I am one of the students', *tha mi air fear de na h-oileanaich* (lit. 'I am on one of . . .'), where the sort of statement to be made suggests the use of *tha*, but *tha* cannot be followed directly by a noun predicate.

Where alternative constructions involving *tha* and *is* occur, nuances of meaning are in principle to be expected. The following contrast would appear to be valid: *Tha e na oileanach ach chan e oileanach a tha ann* 'He is (registered as) a student but he is not a student

(by disposition)'. Cf., also *Tha mi nam Ghàidheal* 'I am a Gael', which suggests 'I am being a Highlander', 'I am putting on my Highland act' rather than 'I am a Gael (by birth, heredity, etc.)', which would require *Is e Gàidheal a tha annam*.

*The cleft constructions* A sentence of the type *Tha Màiri a' dol dhachaidh air an tràna an nochd* 'Mary is going home on the train tonight' can be clefted with the augmented copula forms *is e* or *is ann* to emphasize specific elements in the sentence:

<i>Is i</i> (or <i>is e</i> ) <i>Màiri a tha a' dol . . .</i>	It is Mary who . . .
<i>Is ann a' dol dhachaidh a tha Màiri . . .</i>	It is going home . . .
<i>Is ann dhachaidh a tha Màiri a' dol . . .</i>	It is home that . . .
<i>Is ann air an tràna a tha Màiri a' dol . . .</i>	It is on the train . . .
<i>Is ann an nochd a tha Màiri a' dol dhachaidh . . .</i>	It is tonight . . .

Similarly with *Tha i bochd* 'She is poor':

<i>Is i a tha bochd</i>	It is she who is poor
<i>Is ann bochd a tha i</i>	It is poor she is

And so also with *Chunnaic mi thu* 'I saw you':

<i>Is mi a chunnaic thu</i>	It is I who saw you
<i>Is tù a chunnaic mi</i>	It is you whom I saw

The main verb of a simple sentence can also take part in a special variation on the cleft construction, which lends weight or emphasis to the whole of the utterance to follow, for example:

*Is ann a tha Màiri a' dol dhachaidh air an tràna an nochd*  
'(We hoped that the girls would stay for the party but) *as it turns out* Mary is going home . . .'

The sentence type *Is e oileanach a tha annam* 'I am a student' (lit. 'it is a student that is in me') has the form of a cleft sentence, but is nowadays unmarked. (*Tha oileanach annam* is not competent, though *Chan eil annam ach oileanach* 'I am only a student' (lit. 'There is not in me but a student'), is acceptable and regular.) Many dialects revitalize the topicalization by using the construction *Se th'ann X* 'Isn't he an X!', 'What an X he is!' (lit. 'What he is is an X'). In some dialects the construction is *Se th'ann ach X*, with *ach* 'but', i.e., '(What) is he but an X'.

## Questions and answers

A statement like *tha thu a' falbh* 'you are going' may be turned into a question in two ways: (a) by intonation (see above, 'Intonation') with a rising final contour; or (b) by preposing one of the interrogative particles *an* or *nach* (see above, 'Preverbals'), with consequent change from independent to dependent flexion. Thus:

<i>Tha thu a'falbh?</i>	You're going, then?
<i>Am bheil thu a'falbh?</i>	Are you going?
<i>Chan eil thu a'falbh?</i>	You're not going, then?
<i>Nach eil thu a'falbh?</i>	Aren't you going?

Questions may also be posed using the interrogative pronouns. These are followed by relative flexion except for *càit?* 'where?', which is followed by dependent flexion:

<i>Cò (a) bhios an seo?</i>	Who will be here?
<i>Dè (a) rinn thu?</i>	What did you do?
<i>Carson a thàinig thu?</i>	Why did you come?
<i>Cuin a thilleas sinn?</i>	When shall we return?
<i>Ciamar a nì thu sin?</i>	How will you do that?
<i>Càit am bi sinn?</i>	Where will we be?

Here *Càit an* is historically 'What place (is it) *in which* . . .', whereas the others are modelled on the locution 'Who/What/Which (is it) *that* . . .'. The dependent flexion which follows *càit* is thus in reality that proper to dative relative clauses, for which see below, 'Relative clauses'.

For negative questions *nach* is used, with dependent flexion:

<i>Cò nach creideadh i?</i>	Who would not believe her?
<i>Carson nach tàinig thu?</i>	Why did you not come?

Where the interrogative is co-ordinated with a noun the construction is as follows:

*Cò am fear a bhios an seo?* Which (is the) one (who) will be here?

To ask 'With whom?', 'To whom?', etc., one can say either *Cò ris an robh thu a' bruidhinn?* 'Who (is it) to whom you were speaking?' or *Cò ris a bha thu a' bruidhinn?* 'To whom (is it) that you were speaking?'. Here the third singular masculine prepositional pronoun form *ris* 'to him/it' coincides with the form of the preposition *ri* used before the indirect relative pronoun *an*. Where these forms are dissimilar the second construction is preferred, e.g., *Cò ann a bha thu?* 'What (regiment) were you in?', *Cò bhuaidh a fhuair thu e?* 'Who did you get it from?'.<sup>1</sup>

Scottish Gaelic does not have simple 'Yes' and 'No'. Direct answers to questions employing the interrogative particles are formed by repeating the verb and tense of the question (with or without a negative particle, as appropriate), for example:

<i>Am bheil thu sgìth?</i>	Are you tired?
<i>Thà/Chan eil.</i>	Yes/No (lit. 'am/amn't).
<i>An dèan thu sin?</i>	Will you do that?
<i>Nì/Cha dèan.</i>	Yes/No (lit. 'will do/won't do').
<i>Nach tigeadh e?</i>	Wouldn't he come?
<i>Thigeadh/Cha tigeadh.</i>	Yes/No (lit. 'would come/wouldn't come').
<i>An do dh'fhalbh i?</i>	Did she go?
<i>Dh'fhalbh/Cha do dh'fhalbh.</i>	Yes/No (lit. 'did go/didn't go').

A direct answer of this sort is, of course, only one of the possible responses to such a question. *Am bheil thu sgìth?* 'Are you tired?' could be answered *Chan eil mi sgìth a-nis* 'I am not tired now' (or 'I don't know', or whatever). But when direct responses are used they employ the distinctive subjectless pause-forms as shown above; see above, 'Responsives', for formal differences between these and normal verb-flexion.

Answers involving the cleft constructions can be deployed in responsive mode, e.g. *Am bheil thu sgìth?* can be answered by *Is mì (a) thà* 'I certainly am', *Is mì nach eil* 'I certainly am not'. An exception to the above rules occurs when the assertive forms of the personal pronoun are used (see above, 'Pronouns and pronominals'), e.g., *Nì mise sin dhut. Cha dèan thu!* 'I'll do that for you. Oh no, you won't!'

Although these forms are termed responsives, that is not a wholly adequate term, since they are also used when one reinforces one's own statement, or questions it, or restates it in a new tense:

<i>Rinn sinn glé mhath, rinn.</i>	We did very well, (so we) did.
<i>Chan eil sin idir dona, chan eil.</i>	That is not bad at all, (no, it) isn't.
<i>Bha mi math, nach robh?</i>	I was good, wasn't (I)?
<i>Cha robh mi toilichte, is cha bhi.</i>	I wasn't pleased, and (I) won't be.

In copula sentences the response forms to *an e* and *an ann* are *is e* and *is ann*. Similarly, with idioms like *an aithne dhut?* 'do you know?' (lit. 'is it knowledge to you?'), the responsive is *is aithne*. With personal pronouns, *an tù?* 'are you?' demands *is mì* 'I am'. The copula is always stressless and needs to be supported by a word capable of bearing stress.

The form *seadh* 'yes, well, uh-huh' is also employed in responses where the form of the question does not supply a suitable starting point for a direct response, and also for purposes of general corroboration. Its negative is *chan eadh*. It is historically a combination of the copula plus the obsolete neuter pronoun *eadh* 'it'.

Responses to questions involving the interrogative pronouns are not constrained to the same degree, but the responsive mode is employed frequently enough, for example, *Cò (a) bha a-staigh? Bhà Iain agus Seumas.* 'Who was at home? John and James (were).' A generalized *Thà* is also common, e.g. *Càit an do dh'fhàg mì e? Thà air a' bhord.* 'Where did I leave it? On the table.'

## Commands

The imperative forms of the verb are used to express direct commands:

<i>bì glic!</i>	be wise!
<i>na bì gòrach!</i>	don't be stupid!
<i>falbhadh e!</i>	let him go!
<i>dèanamaid e!</i>	let's do it!

The construction of *tha* + *a(g)* + verbal noun can be used in the imperative as in the indicative, e.g., *bì (a') falbh* 'be going' (i.e., 'get on your way'), *na bì (a') dèanamh sin* 'don't be doing that' (i.e., 'stop doing that') as opposed to *falbh!* 'go!', *na dèan sin!* 'don't do that!'.

The third-person imperatives are not very common; the first-person plural is common, but the synthetic form often gives way to an analytic one, for example, *dèanadh sinn!* 'let us do!'. The emphatic-contrastive suffix *-se* occurs frequently with the second person plural imperative, e.g. *dèanaibh-se e!* 'you (people) do it!'; but in the singular *dèan-sa!* has mostly given way to *dèan thusa e!* 'you do it!'.<sup>1</sup>

Gaelic has a number of special command forms of various origins, e.g., *trobhad* and *tugainn* 'come (here)'; *thalla* 'go (away)'; *siuthad* 'on you go'; *ist* 'hush', etc.

## Negation

Scottish Gaelic uses the conjunct particle *cha(n)* before finite verbs in principal clauses:

<i>cuiridh mi</i>	I shall put	<i>cha chuir mi</i>	I shall not put
<i>chuir mi</i>	I (did) put	<i>cha do chuir mi</i>	I did not put

For negative commands the form *na* is used:

<i>dèan sin</i>	do that	<i>na dèan sin</i>	don't do that
<i>abair sin</i>	say that	<i>na h-abair sin</i>	don't say that

The non-mutation which follows *na* extends to de-lenition in the case of those irregular verbs with imperative in *th-*, that is, *thoir* and *thig*: *na toir*, *na tig*, if these do not participate in the special /h ~ d/ mutation mentioned above, 'Notes on the mutations'.

In negative questions the conjunct particle *nach* is used:

<i>nach cuir thu?</i>	will you not put?	<i>nach do chuir thu?</i>	did you not put?
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In all subordinate clauses *nach* is used:

<i>ag ràdh gun/nach cuir e</i>	saying that he will/will not put
<i>a' faighneachd an/nach robh mi fuar</i>	asking whether I was/was not cold
<i>a chionn 's gun/nach robh mi trang</i>	because I was/was not busy

This rule includes relative clauses, where *nach* functions as negative + relative pronoun, for example, *am fear a bhios deiseil* 'the one who will be ready', beside *am fear nach bi deiseil* 'the one who will not be ready'. This in its turn includes the disguised relative clauses involved when interrogative pronouns are used, for example, *cò (a) chuireas* 'who (is it that) will put?' but *cò nach cuir* 'who will not put?'.

Preverbal particles may not be used with verbal nouns. In order to express negation with verbal noun phrases (see below) the preposition *gun* 'without' is used, as follows:

<i>dh'iarr e orm a bhith sàmhach</i>	he asked me to be silent
<i>dh'iarr e orm gun a bhith fadalach</i>	he asked me not to be late

With phrases like *gun tilleadh dhachaidh* 'not to return home', *gun sin a dhèanamh* 'not to do that', *gun an cù a leigeil a-mach* 'not to let the dog out', *a bhith* (i.e., the verbal noun of *tha*) is often added to such phrases, e.g., *gun a bhith (a') tilleadh dhachaidh*, *gun a bhith (a') dhèanamh sin*, *gun a bhith (a') leigeil a-mach a' choin*.

All the negatives can be used with *ach* 'but' to express 'only, merely':

<i>chan eil ann ach gille</i>	he is only a lad
<i>thubhairt mi nach fhaca mi ach an cù</i>	I said that I had only seen the dog
<i>na gabh ach na feadhainn bheaga</i>	take only the little ones
<i>dh'iarra i orm gun ach Seumas a thoirt leam</i>	she asked me to bring only James

Similarly all the negatives can be used with words like *duine* 'man', *gin* '(living) creature', *dad* '(minimal) thing' to express 'anybody', 'anything':

<i>chan eil duine ann</i>	there is nobody there
<i>cha robh gin dhiubh air fhàgail</i>	none of them was left
<i>na toir sin do dhuine</i>	don't give that to anybody
<i>gun dad air ach a bhrògan</i>	without anything on (him) but his shoes

### Co-ordination

Scottish Gaelic possesses a small group of non-subordinating conjunctions. They precede the verb which heads a following clause, but do not provoke dependent flexion, for example, *cuiridh mi agus buainidh mi* 'I shall sow and I shall reap'.

'and': Scottish Gaelic uses *agus* or *is*, the latter especially when two formally or conceptually similar clauses are conjoined, e.g., *dh'fhalbh mi sa' mhadainn agus ràinig mi Glaschu mu mheadhon latha* 'I departed in the morning and I reached Glasgow about mid-day'; *dh'fhalbh mi is thill mi san aon latha* 'I departed and returned on the same day'.

'or': Scottish Gaelic uses *no/na* or *air neo*, the former where formally or conceptually similar alternatives are juxtaposed, e.g., *falbhaidh mi no fuirichidh mi* 'I shall (either) go or stay'; *falbhaidh tusa no falbhaidh mise* '(either) you will go or I will go'; *bheir mi leam thu air neo bidh tu fadalach* 'I shall take you with me, or (else) you will be late'. A hybrid *neo* is often heard for *no* nowadays; the variant *na* has a longer history in the language.

'but': Scottish Gaelic uses *ach*, as in *thuit mi ach dh'éirich mi* 'I fell but I got up'.

'for': Scottish Gaelic uses *oir* as in *thill mi, oir bha mi a' fàs fuar* 'I returned, for I was getting cold'. The conjunction *a chionn* 'because' can also be used in this way.

'so': Scottish Gaelic traditionally uses expressions like *mar sin*, *a-réisd* 'thus, hence, accordingly', e.g., *chan eil duine eile ann; mar sin tha mi fhìn a' fuireach a-staigh* 'there is nobody else around; accordingly, I myself am staying in'. However, one may hear English *so* infiltrating the Gaelic of younger speakers nowadays, for example, *chan eil duine eile ann, so tha mi fhìn a' fuireach a-staigh*.

### Subordination

Scottish Gaelic is a relatively paratactic language, but several important modes of subordination exist. The most common is by means of *subordinating conjunctions* which modify the flexion of the immediately following subordinate verb from independent to dependent or relative. Word order within the clause is not affected by subordination. (See, however, 'Verbal-noun phrases' below for an exception to this general rule.)

Subordinate clauses may precede or follow the principal clause:



*a chionn 's gun tàinig thu faodaidh tu fuireach* because you have come you may stay  
*faodaidh tu fuireach seach gun tàinig thu* you may stay since you have come

'Sequence of tenses' is observed, e.g., the 'secondary' correlate to 'primary' *tha e ag ràdh gun tig e* 'he is saying that he will come' is *bha e ag ràdh gun tigeadh e* 'he was saying that he would come'.

The use of dependent or relative flexion after conjunctions is fixed. The repartition may appear somewhat arbitrary, for example, in temporal clauses we have *mun cuir e* 'before he puts' (dependent) but *nuair a chuireas e* 'when he puts' (relative); in conditional clauses *mur sguir e* 'if he does not stop' (dependent) but *ma sguireas e* 'if he stops' (relative). Historical re-structurings lie behind some of these synchronic inconsistencies.

The conjunction *gun* 'that' (neg. *nach* 'that . . . not') plays a strategic role insofar as numerous 'complex conjunctions' are based on it, e.g., *a chionn 's gun* 'because, because of the fact that', *a dh'aindeoin 's gun* 'despite the fact that'.

*Object clauses* ('noun clauses') These are introduced by *gun* (neg. *nach*):

*thubhairt mi gun robh mi fuar* I said that I was cold  
*thubhairt mi nach robh mi fuar* I said that I was not cold

These clauses can function as subject or predicate to the copula:

*is truagh nach eil thu glic* it is a pity that you are not wise  
*is e gun robh mi cho fuar a thug orm tilleadh* it was (lit. 'is') the fact that I was so cold that forced me to go back

*Indirect questions* In Scottish Gaelic these simply prepose the 'questioning' verb to the direct question, altering the tense from primary to secondary sequence if appropriate:

*dh'fhaighnich e dhomh an robh mi deiseil* he asked me whether I was ready (lit. 'was I ready')  
*dh'fhaighnich mi cò (a) bha a-staigh agus cò nach robh* I asked who was in and who was not

The sequence 'whether . . . or . . .' is realized variously. For 'whether', *cò aca* or *eadar an* may be used, for example, *cò aca dh'fhuirichinn no dh'fhalbhainn* or *eadar am fuirichinn no am fhalbhainn* 'whether I would stay or go'. To express 'or not' Gaelic uses *no nach* or *gu/gus/agus nach*, e.g., *cha robh mi cinnteach an robh iad a-staigh no/gus nach robh* 'I wasn't sure whether they were in or not'.

*Adverbial clauses* Various types are found, and the list in Table 7.19 is by no means exhaustive. Note that in this and the following sections [B] = 'followed by dependent flexion'; [C] = 'followed by relative flexion'.

Table 7.19 Gaelic conjunctions

Type of clause	Conjunction	Example
time	<i>(a)n uair a</i> [C] 'when'	<i>thàinig mi nuair a chuala mi an naidheachd</i> 'I came when I heard the news'
	<i>(bh)o</i> [B or C] 'since'	<i>tha treis bho thàinig/bhon tàinig e</i> 'it is a while since he came' <i>is fhada bho nach fhaca mi thu</i> 'it is (a) long (time) since I saw you' (lit. 'haven't seen you')
	<i>mun, mus, mas</i> [B] 'before'	<i>dh'fhalbh sinn mun do dh'èirich a' ghrian</i> 'we departed before the sun rose'
	<i>gun, gus an</i> [B] 'until'	<i>fuirich gus an till mi</i> 'wait until I return'
place	<i>far an</i> [B] 'where'	<i>fàg e far an do chuir mi e</i> 'leave it where I have put it'
manner	<i>mar a</i> [C] 'as, like'	<i>dèan mar a thogras tu</i> 'do as you wish'
	<i>mar gun</i> [B] 'as though'	<i>dèan mar gun robh thu as do rian</i> 'act as though you were out of your mind'
cause	<i>a chionn 's gun</i> 'because' [B]	<i>thàinig mi a chionn 's gun cuala mi an naidheachd</i> 'I came because I heard the news' [cf. also <i>air sgàth 's gun</i> , <i>air sàilibh 's gun</i> , <i>ri linn 's gun</i> , etc., with similar meanings]
purpose	<i>airson gun</i> [B] so that, in order that'	<i>rinn mi sin airson gum biodh cothrom agam bruidhinn riut</i> 'I did that in order to have a chance of speaking to you' [cf. also <i>a chum 's gun</i> , <i>gus gun</i> , etc., with similar meanings]
	<i>mun, mus, mas</i> [B] 'before, to prevent'	<i>rinn mi sin mus cuireadh i stad orm</i> 'I did that before she could stop me'
	<i>gun fhios nach</i> [B] 'for fear, in case'	<i>rinn mi sin gun fhios nach cuireadh i stad orm</i> 'I did that in case she should stop me'
result	<i>air chor 's gun</i> [B] 'so that, in such a way that'	<i>thàinig barrachd dhaoine a-steach, air chor 's gun robh cuideachd mhath an làthair</i> 'additional people came in, so that there was a good company present' [cf. also <i>gus an</i> [B] with similar meaning]
condition	<i>ma</i> [C] 'if'	<i>thig mi ma bhios sin freagarrach</i> 'I shall come if that is (lit. 'will be') appropriate'
	<i>nan</i> [B] 'if, supposing'	<i>thigeadh e nam biodh feum air</i> 'he would come if he were needed'
	<i>mur(a)</i> [B] 'if not, unless'	<i>mur bi mise ann cha bhi Màiri ann</i> 'if I am not there Mary will not be there' <i>mur òl thu sin cha bhi thu slàn</i> 'unless you drink that you will not be healthy'
concession	<i>ged a</i> [C] 'although'	<i>thàinig mi ged a bha mi trang</i> 'I came although I was busy' [cf. also <i>fiù 's ged a</i> 'even though', <i>a dh'aindeoin 's gun</i> 'in spite of the fact that', etc.].
	<i>ged nach</i> [B] 'although . . . not'	<i>thàinig mi ged nach robh mi deiseil</i> 'I came although I was not ready'

*Miscellaneous adverbial clauses* Indefiniteness ('whoever', etc.) is marked by a somewhat protean element placed before the relevant conjunction. The most common representations are *air bith*, *as bith*, *ga brith* or *gum bith*, *ge b'e* or *ge bè*; e.g., *gheibh sinn e ga brith càit am bi e* 'we shall get him wherever he is (lit. "will be")'.

Correlatives ('as . . . as', etc.) are expressed by *cho . . . is a* [C]. Whereas simple equatives have the shape *cho (dubh) ri X* 'as (black) as X', correlative sentences have the shape *tha X cho (dubh) is a tha Y* 'X is as (black) as Y is'. Note also *air cho math 's a bha iad*, *a dh'aindeoin cho math 's a bha iad* 'however good they were' (lit. 'against/despite so good as they were'). Where, however, an adverbial relationship is also present, *is gun* [B] is used, for example, *bha an tìde cho dona 's gun robh agam ri tilleadh* 'the weather was so bad that I had to turn back'; compare also *beag 's gun robh iad, ghlèidh sinn iad* '(as) small as they were, we kept them' (i.e. 'however small they were', 'despite their small size', etc.).

### Relative clauses

#### Subject/object relation

<i>a</i> [C]	<i>an taigh a thog Iain</i> <i>na taighean a bha fuar</i> <i>am bràthair a bu shine</i>	the house that John built the houses which were cold the brother who was oldest (i.e., the oldest brother)
<i>nach</i> [B]	<i>an taigh nach do thog e</i> <i>na taighean nach robh fuar</i>	the house which he did not build the houses which were not cold
<i>na</i> [C]	<i>dh'ith i na chunnaic i</i> <i>theich na bha a-staigh</i>	she ate what she saw (i.e., all that she saw) (all) those who were inside fled

#### Dative relation

Preposition + <i>an</i> [B]	<i>am fear ris an robh mi a'</i> <i>buidhinn</i> <i>an té don tug mi luaidh</i>	the man to whom I was speaking the girl to whom I gave love
Preposition + <i>nach</i> [B]	<i>daoine aig nach eil</i> <i>tiocaidean</i>	people who do have tickets
Preposition + <i>na</i> [C]	<i>bhuidhinn mi ris na bha</i> <i>a-staigh</i>	I spoke to everybody who was in

Note that dative relation can also be expressed by means of the subject/object construction: either *am fear a bha mi a' buidhinn ris*, *an té a thug mi luaidh dhi*, *daoine nach eil tiocaidean aca*; or, with invariable third singular masculine prepositional pronoun, *na cuspairean a bhios sinn a' beachdachadh air* 'the subjects we shall be thinking about'. The subject/object construction is especially common with unusual or complex prepositions, for example, *na fir a bha sinn a' buidhinn man déidhinn* 'the men whom we were talking about/about whom we were talking'.

*Genitive relation* This is expressed by means of various subject/object or dative constructions, there being no direct Scottish Gaelic equivalent to English 'whose'. Thus *am fear a thàinig 'athair* 'the man whose father came' (lit. 'the man who his father came'); *am fear*

*a bu leis an taigh* ‘the man whose house it was’ (lit. ‘the man who the house was his’: cf., *bu leis an taigh* ‘the house was his’); *am fear leis an robh an taigh* ‘the man whose house it was’ (lit. ‘the man with whom the house was’: cf., *bha an taigh leis* ‘the house was his’); note also *am fear leis am bu leis an taigh*, with the same meaning, a hybrid construction based on the last two examples.

*Verbal-noun phrases* The verbal noun may be employed as argument to a wide variety of verbs and verbal expressions, such as:

<i>feumaidh mi falbh</i>	I must go
<i>is urrainn dhomh snàmh</i>	I can swim
<i>tha mi airson smocadh</i>	I want to smoke
<i>tha agam ri tilleadh</i>	I have to return
<i>smaointich mi air tilleadh</i>	I thought of returning

An important qualification must be made if the verbal action specified by the verbal noun itself has an ‘object’. While one can say *smaointich mi air briseadh na cloiche* ‘I thought about the breaking of the stone’ (i.e., the fact), if ‘breaking the stone’ is the object of the ‘thinking’ process a different construction is used:

*smaointich mi air a’ chlach a bhriseadh*      I thought about breaking the stone

Note that *cloich*, the dative of *clach*, is not used, as it might be in the prepositional phrase ‘on the stone’; here *a’ chlach a bhriseadh* is bracketed. This construction has sometimes been called the ‘accusative and infinitive’ construction in supposed imitation of Latin grammarians. Further examples:

<i>feumaidh mi sin a dhèanamh</i>	I must do that
<i>is urrainn dhomh Iain fhaicinn</i>	I can see Iain
<i>tha agam ris an taigh fhàgail</i>	I have to leave the house
<i>smaointich mi air sin innse dha</i>	I thought of telling him that

When a pronoun is the ‘object’ of the verbal action specified by the verbal noun the construction is unchanged if the pronoun is emphasized, for example, *am bheil thu airson mise fhaicinn?* ‘do you want to see me?’. If, however, the pronoun is not so reinforced, Scottish Gaelic uses the possessive, for example, *am bheil thu airson ar faicinn?* ‘do you want to see us?’ (lit. ‘our seeing’); and this variety of the construction can also be used with emphasized possessives, for example, *am bheil thu airson m’fhaicinn-sa?* ‘do you want to see me?’.

While historically this construction is explained as containing ‘(I must) that for doing’, ‘(I can) John for seeing’, etc., its realization in Scottish Gaelic suggests a reinterpretation as ‘(I must) that-its-doing’, ‘(I can) John-its-seeing’, etc., i.e., with the third-person singular masculine possessive ‘his/its’ generalized.

## Subjunctives

The subjunctive is no longer productive in Scottish Gaelic, though examples are common enough in literature and in some colloquially surviving set phrases. Its form is identical with that of the conditional/habitual past tense, except in the substantive verb *tha*, whose

subjunctive is *robh*. It is always preceded by *gun*, which may here be taken to stand for '(would) that' or similar, for example:

<i>'gun tigeadh Do Rìoghachd'</i>	'Thy kingdom come'
<i>gu(n) sealladh Sealbh oirn</i>	may Providence look (kindly) upon us
<i>guma fada beò thu</i>	long may you live (where <i>guma</i> = <i>gum</i> + <i>bu</i> 'may be')
<i>gu(n) robh math agad</i>	thank you (lit. 'may you have good')

An optative 'if only X would happen' may be formed by means of *nan* 'if' or *nach* (negative interrogative), for example, *nan tigeadh e dhachaidh* 'if (only) he would come home', *nach tigeadh e dhachaidh* 'would he not (please) come home'.

### Variation: parameters and trends

The differing social, economic and religious history of Gaelic speakers in different parts of the Gàidhealtachd is reflected in a considerable degree of inter-dialectal variation. Some of this derives from earlier linguistic factors such as the Norse presence in the Isles and on the western seaboard. Other divergences reflect differing linguistic choices made by separate groups of speakers in a context of grammatical simplification and, more recently, lexical impoverishment.

The main agents of change at work in the contemporary Scottish Gaelic context are (a) dialect death in peripheral areas, leading to change in the centre of gravity of Gaelic speaking and its consistency; (b) the decline of an old literary and high-register language founded on traditional religious and literary norms, and its replacement with a new model owing more to education, commerce/technology and the media; and (c) increased penetration of English into the fabric of Gaelic speaking. For these and similar reasons, the Gaelic side of the Linguistic Survey of Scotland, mounted by the University of Edinburgh in the 1950s, found it necessary to reject lexical in favour of phonetic isoglosses for the purposes of distinguishing the Gaelic dialects in general (cf., Gillies 1992); see Grand 1995–6 for some features showing Hebridean lexical differentiation.

The main result of the contraction of the Gàidhealtachd in the present century has been to give greater prominence to the dialects of the Hebrides, whose speakers nowadays supply the great majority of teachers, broadcasters, writers and administrators. The Hebridean dialects are on the whole pretty homogeneous, apart from some rather obvious differences between Lewis and the rest in phonology and intonation patterns. The elimination of some of the more radically different dialects dotted around the periphery of the Gàidhealtachd has effectively decreased the amount of variation in the language as a whole. The Hebridean dialects are also relatively conservative, and this would appear to have had a stabilizing effect on the norms of public and written Gaelic at least.

The decline of the old high registers has led to impoverishment of the language which is only partially redressed by increased interdialectal exposure arising out of increased social mobility and media penetration. It manifests itself in uncertainty as to 'correct' forms – mutations, genders, plurals, pronunciations and so forth – together with a good deal of simplification and a modicum of hypercorrection. Some major changes in the status of the mutations, in the noun phrase and in verbal-noun syntax would appear to be under way among younger speakers; they may be part of the price to be paid if Gaelic is to be spoken by future generations.

In those areas where Gaelic is strong, official encouragement and sponsorship have resulted in a favourable re-drawing of some linguistic boundaries, and as a result the

language may now be heard more freely in public situations, both formal and informal, than for a long time previously. Conversely, in those areas where Gaelic is weak it has tended to become increasingly restricted in use, although the details of this decline vary considerably from community to community. The prevalence of television in all corners of the Gàidhealtachd has ended the older pattern whereby Gaelic-speaking children were virtually monoglot until they went to school. Nowadays, virtually all children are bilingual, and most are more fluent in English than Gaelic, when they go to school. Current Gaelic educational thinking has to take this as its starting point.

### Lexical structure, etc.

Scottish Gaelic would appear to have retained, or reasserted, its inherited Goidelic characteristics pretty well over the long period since it first began to develop within a Scottish context and in contact with non-Goidelic neighbours. British (including Pictish) and Norse loanwords in the language are relatively few, as are early lexical borrowings from English (that is, from the period of Northern Old English down to that of Middle Scots). The question of Norse influence on the phonology of Lewis Gaelic or more widely has been raised, but alternative perspectives are possible. Again, possible Scottish Gaelic/Welsh parallels in, for example, verbal categories and structure and in verb-phrase syntax, have been pointed out over the years, and further investigation may add to the tally; but the significance of these parallels has yet to be determined.

In more recent centuries (and especially from the seventeenth century to the present) the exposure of Gaelic to external forces has become increasingly marked. The subject matter of poetry enables us to chronicle the importation of terms relating to (for example) military matters and luxury goods, and it is to be inferred that borrowing also took place at more popular levels, both along the Highland Line and within the Gàidhealtachd proper. This process has continued down to the present day.

While loanwords of long standing have been assimilated to Gaelic norms, and are sometimes difficult to recognize, more recent importations appear in unassimilated form. 'Naturalized' loanwords include:

- 1 *seacaid* (f. 4A) 'jacket' [ʃɛxkatʃ] or [ʃaxketʃ] or similar, i.e., with [ʃ] by sound substitution as the nearest radical initial to the [dʒ] or [ʒ] of the original; [ʃa]/[ʃɛ] taken to imply //s'e// for morphophonemic purposes; pre-aspiration of [k] closing a stressed syllable; and assimilation of the final [ɛt] of the original to the groups of feminine nouns in /ətʃ/ (as in *drochaid* 'bridge') and /atʃ/ (as in *òraid* 'speech').
- 2 *balla* (m. 5A) 'wall' [bʌtə], where /b/ was the nearest radical initial to /w/; the /b/ and the /l/ are devoiced and velarized respectively in accordance with Gaelic norms, and final /ə/ is added in order to create a syllabic structure in which the -al- sequence heard in the original could best be accommodated.

It is noticeable that the tolerance for 'alien' sounds and shapes has increased over the years: for example, we now have semi-naturalized words like *jotair* 'jotter' with [dʒ], *wèire* 'wire' with [w]. This tolerance extends to morphology, for example, in the use of English -(e)s plurals: *na Tories* beside *na Tòraidhean* 'the Tories', whereas at an earlier period '(the) Whigs' had been borrowed as a feminine (singular) abstract noun with full assimilation: *a' Chuigse* 'the Whiggery'. Compare also the freedom with which English verbs are borrowed with the addition of the termination -ig, for example, *hoover-ig* 'hoover', *react-ig* 'react'. (But not all of these are recent; *libhrig* /L'ir'ig/ and *liubhair*

/L'ul'ər/, both 'deliver', and *buinnig* /buN'ig'/ 'win' show full naturalization features.) The 'default' verbal-noun ending in *-(e)adh* and the distinctive plural noun endings *-(a)ichean* and *-(e)achan* have likewise become receptive to neologisms involving English loans.

English also makes its presence felt in other ways, for example, precipitating calquing, diglossia and other symptoms of instability in Gaelic idiom and expression. This 'second front' will be increasingly important in the future, and the question of internal erosion of the language is, or should be, a matter of the utmost concern to language planners and teachers. (See Gillies 1980, MacAulay 1986, MacDonald 1986, Quick 1986, Lamb 1999.)

## Conclusion

In historical, Celtic, philological terms Scottish Gaelic has been seen as innovative (or debased!) in the field of morphological simplification (for example, in verbal tense system, in the loss of old synthetic endings and in the decline of various declensional types), but conservative in several aspects of phonology – most obviously in the preservation of internal and final spirants in various positions.

In synchronic, general linguistic terms Scottish Gaelic is noteworthy for its complex phonetics and for the extent to which the phonological niceties can have grammatical significance – perhaps especially in the complexity of noun-phrase inflection, where the placing of a preposition before a combination of definite article, noun and adjective can trigger inflectional shifts at a surprising number of points. Of equal interest are the tense/aspect system, the special status and roles of the verbs *tha* and *is*, and the balance between ergative and non-ergative constructions.

As things stand, Scottish Gaelic is a language in the organic sense: for example, in its possession of dialects and registers (including a literary tradition and a developed faculty for abstract reasoning) and in its capacity (so far, at least) to take on board the mass of technical and technological vocabulary associated with modern life. Scottish Gaelic is also a language in the differential sense of the word: while one can point to linguistic features which link the Southern Highlands and Northern Ireland they cannot compare with the bulk and embeddedness (i.e., at the more fundamental structural levels of morphology and syntax) of the features which distinguish Scottish Gaelic from Irish. While Scottish Gaelic and Irish are, of course, Goidelic dialects in genetic terms, there has grown up over the past few centuries a practical and psychological intelligibility barrier between Irish and Scottish Gaelic speakers, beyond what they experience when dealing with the most divergent varieties of their own language.

For centuries Scottish Gaelic has been said to be dying, and has received not a few nudges to help it on its way to that end. While the general level of understanding as to the predicament and worth of minority languages is now higher than before, it still remains to be seen whether, despite loaded prognostications about language death, Gaelic can retain the attractiveness and uniqueness in the minds of Gaelic speakers which alone will guarantee it a future in the twenty-first century.<sup>13</sup>

## NOTES

- 1 Both grammars and dictionaries of Scottish Gaelic present difficulties for the modern scholar, owing to the long shadow cast by early works whose aim was to teach 'grammar' to, and improve the English understanding of users who were native speakers of Scottish Gaelic. Our practice is to use '(ScG) Grammars/Dictionaries' to signify the collective teaching of these works. Among such 'traditional' grammars reference may be made to Duncan Reid, *Elementary Course of Gaelic* (Glasgow, 1913: Maclaren; repr. Stirling, 1971: An Comunn Gàidhealach) and George Calder, *A Gaelic Grammar* (Glasgow: Maclaren, 1923; repr. Gairm, 1972). More recent and 'modern' treatments are those of M. Byrne, *Gràmar na Gàidhlig* (Stornoway 2002: Acair) and W. Lamb, *Scottish Gaelic* (2nd edn, Munich, 2003: LINCOM). Among 'traditional' Scottish Gaelic dictionaries reference may be made to Edward Dwelly, *The Illustrated Gaelic-English Dictionary*, 2nd edn (Glasgow: Maclaren, 1920; repr. Gairm, 1973) and Malcolm MacLennan, *A Pronouncing and Etymological Dictionary of the Gaelic Language* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1925; repr. Stornoway: Acair/Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1979). More recent publications include C. Mark, *The Gaelic-English Dictionary* (London 2004: Routledge) and A. Watson, *The essential Gaelic-English dictionary* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001).
- 2 Our phonetic usage follows IPA practice as far as possible. (For phonological usage see notes 3-5.) Transcriptions are broad. The following transcriptional points should be noted:
  - i [◌̥] indicates a degree of devoicing in historical voiced stops.
  - ii [ɲ] and [ɾ] parallel [ɬ] in being dark, hollow, velarized sounds.
  - iii Scottish Gaelic needs to distinguish between palatal fricative and frictionless continuant. [j] is used here for the former, [j̥] for the latter, e.g., *ghiùlain* 'carried' [ju:ɬap̥], *iùl* 'guidance' [ju:ɬ]. (See Oftedal 1956: 113-14, Hamp 1988: 14 and Ternes 2006: 33-4 for the issues involved.)
  - iv Glottalization: the symbol [ʔ] is used without differentiation as to articulatory characteristics; when it appears in consonant articulation it is treated segmentally and placed before the consonant. Both these practices beg questions raised by Shuken 1984; cf. Jones 2006.
  - v Our supra-dialectal approach breaks down at certain points, given the limitations of space, where there is too much environmentally conditioned variation or too much interdialectal disagreement (or both) for a 'specimen' value to be assigned. In such cases an upper-case letter is used idiosyncratically, as follows:
 

[G] = a spectrum of values from voiced velar fricative [ɣ], as found in initial position, through [ɣ̥] (sometimes strengthened to [g] in final position) to [h] or [ʔ] or Ø;

[J] = a spectrum of values from voiced palatal fricative [j], as found in initial position, through [j̥] or vocalization (as [i]) to [h] or [ʔ] or Ø;

[W] = a spectrum of values from voiced labial fricative [v], as found in initial position, through [w] or vocalization (as [u]) to [h] or [ʔ] or Ø;

[I] in post-consonantal position = [j] or an off-glide or vowel showing allophonic variation according to the height of the following vowel (e.g., *beò* [b̥jɔ:] representing [b̥jɔ:] or [b̥ɔ:] or [b̥eɔ:]); in pre-consonantal position [I] = [i] forming a diphthong with the preceding vowel (e.g., *lùib* [t̥uip̥], representing [t̥uip̥] or similar);

[Z] = the scatter of dialectal realizations for historical-phonological /r̥/, on which see below.

(Note that upper-case 'V' and 'C' are used in their conventional sense at all levels of description to denote 'any vowel' and 'any consonant' respectively.)
- 3 In phonological description our general intention is to be as informative as possible; i.e., to be as respectful towards phonetic reality as is consistent with phonological coherence. The basic level of description is a surface phonological one; where a more abstract representation is needed (for example, where the surface phenomena are unhelpfully divergent) double slashes '// //' are employed. Informativeness has at the same time been taken to imply clarity. Accordingly, our transcriptions omit phonological features which are both inferrable from



rules already given and irrelevant to the feature currently under discussion. Thus, for example, vowel nasality ('~') is shown when being discussed in its own right and where relevant to other developments, but not for general citation purposes in other sections; see note 6.

- 4 Note the following special transcriptional points relating to the Scottish Gaelic vowel system:
  - i The symbol 'l̥' is used to differentiate vowel sequences which contain hiatus from those which do not.
  - ii Sequences of root vowel + consonant + svarabhakti vowel are marked 'VCV', e.g. /m̥ara,v/ for *marbh* 'dead'.

These usages give token recognition to suprasegmental features of Scottish Gaelic which cannot be treated properly here.

- 5 Note the following special transcriptional points relating to the ScG consonant system:
  - i The symbol 'ç' is used, in accordance with established Goidelic practice, to denote palatalized consonants: e.g., [x : ç] becomes /x : x'/. (Note, however, that /j/ is used in preference to /s'/ for the palatalized equivalent of /s/ for general citation purposes, although //s'// is of course needed at the abstract level.) The symbol 'v' is used similarly, though only at the abstract level, to denote velarized consonants. While the surface opposition is taken as being /C/ : /C'/, i.e., neutral (unmarked) : palatalized (/l/), at the abstract level //C'// (= 'palatalized') is opposed to //C// (= 'velarized').
  - ii Traditional Celticists' practice has been followed in regard to the historical voiced and voiceless stops, which are here transcribed /b d g/ and /p t k/, although their principal allophones are all voiceless in Modern Scottish Gaelic.
  - iii L, N and R, the abstract symbols used by Celtic scholars to denote the historical fortis series of resonants, are used here to denote certain resonant phonemes in Modern Scottish Gaelic. Although this is in keeping with Goidelic practice, and practically expedient, an element of arbitrariness is involved in their assignation, on account of structural remodeling in this area.
- 6 In the Phonology section vowel nasality is marked in those cases where it is (i) historically predictable (e.g. where a nasal consonant has been vocalized before another consonant, as in *ionnsaich* /iũ:səx'/ 'learn', or rhotacized following another consonant, as in *cnoc* /kr3xk/ 'hill'); and (ii) standardly present in contemporary Gaelic.
- 7 Although it is hard to capture a clear-cut polarization between the two treatments there are distinctions of meaning, for example, *bha an 'seanntaigh glé fhuar* 'the old house (= the house we used to live in) was very cold', *bha an 'seann 'taigh glé fhuar* 'the old house was very cold' (= 'the house was very cold, as one would expect an old house to be'). The appearance of the form *seann* before vowels (e.g., *seann eòlaich* 'old cronies') and before non-homorganic consonants (e.g., *seann chàirdean* 'old friends') shows generalization of the form expected when historic *sean* is followed by homorganic voiced consonants (e.g., *seann daoine* 'old people'), where the juncture //n + d// would have been interpreted as /Nd/.
- 8 The following account should be compared with the more elegant and economic formulation in Hamp 1951.
- 9 Note the following special transcriptional points relating to Scottish Gaelic morphology and syntax:
  - i An asterisk (\*) following a cited form indicates that that form is followed by lenition of a succeeding initial consonant.
  - ii A raised n (<sup>n</sup>) following a cited form indicates that that form is followed by 'nasalization' of a succeeding initial consonant.
- 10 The following account, and the treatment of noun phrase syntax below, draws on the perceptive analysis in K. C. Craig's 'South Uist Gaelic' (unpublished BLitt. thesis, Glasgow University, 1955) in several respects. See also Whyte 1988.
- 11 The dental endings had clearly expanded from their base in nouns with original dental declensions (e.g., *beatha* 'life', gen. *beathadh*) at a time before pressure on the case system started to be felt. This spread is also reflected in the Mod ScG plurals in *-tan* and *-tean*, and those in *-achan* and *-ichean*, earlier *-adha(n)*, *-idhe(an)*.
- 12 In this section the forms *Is e* and *Is ann* are used in preference to '*S e* and '*S ann* or *Se* and *Sann*.

It is to be understood, however, that where *e* and *ann* function as arguments to the copula (Ahlqvist 1978) the pronunciations /ʃɛ/ and /sauN/ are standard.

- 13 In revising this chapter I have taken advantage of a number of valuable corrections and suggestions from Professor Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh and Ms Morag Brown, whose help I acknowledge with warm thanks. Remaining imperfections are my own.

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# MANX

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## INTRODUCTION

Manx is one of the three Celtic languages belonging to the Goidelic group. It is a descendant of Old and Middle Irish and departs, along with Scottish Gaelic, from Irish in the Early Modern Irish period (thirteenth century) and parts with Scottish Gaelic itself in the fifteenth century.

The arrival of Goidelic into Man seems to have taken place, as part of the fourth- to fifth-century Irish expansion into adjacent Britain, around AD 500 where (in Man) it ousted a British language apparently spoken there (Jackson 1953: 173). Its early history in Man is obscure, but it survived four centuries of Scandinavian presence (c. 925 to 1266). From 1289 to 1334 Man was contended for in Scottish–English rivalries, and from 1334 to 1405 it was the property of several Anglo-Norman magnates who retained the title ‘King and Lord of Man’. From 1405 to 1736 Man found itself in the possession of the Stanley lords of Knowsley (near Liverpool), after 1485 styled ‘Earls of Derby’ and from 1521 (if not before) ‘Lords of Man’. From 1736 to 1765 Man was in the hands of the anglicized Dukes of Atholl, thereafter an appendage to the British Crown through purchase. Gaelic in Man survived these periods also.

Though there is likely to have been a bardic tradition in Man supported by a native Gaelic-speaking aristocracy before and during the existence of the Manx Kingdom of the Isles (c. 950–1266) (Ó Cuív 1957: 283–301), this is unlikely to have continued under a non-Gaelic-speaking hierarchy probably from the start of the fourteenth century. Though the language of administration from that time would also have been non-Gaelic, it was nevertheless found necessary, for example, for Bishop John Phillips (1604–1633) to translate the Anglican Book of Common Prayer (*PB*, c. 1610), into Manx, and for Bible translations (published 1748–75, last edition of the complete Bible 1819, of the New Testament (NT) 1825) and a Manx version of the Prayer Book (last published 1842) to be made. These facts make it clear that up until the latter date at least the bulk of the ordinary Manx people spoke Manx, or at least felt more at home in that language.

Given the absence from the fourteenth century of a Gaelic-speaking hierarchy and educated class capable of sustaining by its patronage learning and literature, restriction in the life of the ordinary people to the most everyday activities would likely explain the impoverishment of the Manx vocabulary, as exemplified in the available dictionaries. Even with the time span of the written record (early seventeenth century to present) a decline in inherited Gaelic vocabulary is attested.

The oldest continuous text in Manx is that of Phillips (see above) dating from the early seventeenth century, but this did not find its way into print until 1894. Manx first appeared in print in 1707 in Bishop Thomas Wilson's bilingual *Principles and Duties of Christianity*, known as *Coyrle Sodjeh* 'further advice'; thereafter throughout the eighteenth century, a number of works, mostly of a religious nature, including the Manx Bible translation were published. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries a number of secular traditional songs in manuscript form appeared (some later in print), which could be regarded as original native material. Included in this corpus of original Manx must be the ten thousand or so lines in verse of largely unpublished carvals, or religious folksongs, seemingly dating in origin from the Reformation (though in manuscript form of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century date). From the late nineteenth century we have, perhaps as the last example of native vernacular Manx, the folklore stories and reminiscences of Ned Beg Hom Ruy (Edward Faragher of Cregneash, 1831–1908), published in 1981–2.

Although Manx ran parallel with Irish until the thirteenth century and with Scottish Gaelic until the fifteenth century, as noted above, its evolution thereafter became more progressive, while at the same time preserving archaisms from Old and Middle Irish, lost in other branches of Gaelic. The social and political factors which cut Manx off from its sister dialects helped this more progressive evolution which made available a variety of alternative constructions and innovations, especially in the verbal system (see pp. 323–30 below), but which do not entirely displace the old. For our purposes here we may distinguish three periods of Manx:

- Early Manx (EMx): seventeenth century; essentially that of Phillips' Anglican Book of Common Prayer translation, c. 1610.
- Classical Manx: (CMx): eighteenth century; essentially that of the Manx Bible translation (1744–75).
- Late Manx (LMx): nineteenth–twentieth century; essentially that of Ned Beg Hom Ruy and the last of the native Manx speakers (c. 1840–1974).

The following account is based on Classical Manx, with occasional references to Early Manx and Late Manx.

## ORTHOGRAPHY

The separation of Manx for various social and political reasons from a written Gaelic literature and tradition in Ireland and Scotland resulted in any remaining Gaelic tradition in Man being continued orally. When it became necessary, therefore, to write in Manx, what was essentially an Early Modern English-based orthography was devised, since writing in Man had for long years been associated with administration and therefore with English. Such an orthography is likely to have been devised by the clergy for their sermons, because of their obvious close contact with the ordinary Manx-speaking public. Though the earliest surviving piece of continuous Manx exists in *PB* (see above), where the orthography adopted employs 'continental' values for its vowels, the fact that contemporary criticism did not welcome such 'innovations' suggests that an earlier orthography had been current, which was probably a forerunner of that in use later on, to be found in the rendering of Manx place-names from the fifteenth century onwards.

The Early Modern English-based conventions used in Manx orthography disguise the connection between radical and lenited/nasalized consonants, which is obvious in Gaelic

spelling, but they have the advantage of revealing the vocalization of fricatives, svara-bhakti vowels, and lengthening or diphthongization of monosyllables before unlenited liquids and nasals, not apparent in the traditional spelling. Manx orthography, however, does not distinguish clearly palatalized consonants.

Since the devising of the Manx orthography, Manx pronunciation has shown some deviation, and it is now quite often the case that the orthographic form of a given lexical item does not accurately represent its pronunciation. However, Manx orthography does try to represent in different orthographic form items having an identical pronunciation but a different meaning.

## PHONOLOGY

### Vowels

#### *The short vowel phonemes in Manx*

The short vowel phonemes in Manx may be sketched as follows:

	Front	Back
High	i	u
Mid	e	ə o
Low		a

The more Late Manx fell into disuse the greater the uncertainty and consequent destabilization in the realization of the phonemes. This has resulted in a wider range of allophones for each phoneme than was probably originally the case and, to an extent, an overlapping of allophonic variants between the phonemes. In addition original short vowels may be secondarily lengthened, and, though not so prevalent, original stressed long vowels may be shortened.

The range of possibilities in LMx for each of the short vowels is as follows: /i/ = [i], [ɪ], [i] varying freely with /i:/, /e(:)/, /u(:)/, /o/, /ə/, /a/, particularly in stressed monosyllables or initially stressed syllables of polysyllables:

/kl[i:]/, /kl [ø:]s'/, /kl [e:]s'/ 'ear'  
 /t'[i]t/, /t'[ɪ]t/, /t'[ε]t/, /t'[e]t/, /t'[ø]t/ 'coming'  
 /t'[ɪ]vət/, /t'[ʊ]vət/, /t'[ɔ]bət/ 'well'

/e/ = [e], [ɛ], [ε], in LMx varying freely with /u/, /ə/, /ε:/, /i/, /a/ in stressed monosyllables or in initial position:

/b[e]n/, /b[ε]n/ 'woman'  
 /g[e]ik/, /g[ɛ]ik/ 'Manx language'  
 /d'[ɛ]nu/, /d'[ɪ]nu/, /d'[a]nu/, /d'[u]nu/ 'doing'

/a/ = [a], [æ]. In stressed or unstressed initial syllables there may in LMx be free variation with /o/, /e/, /i/, /ə/ especially in the environment of laterals and nasals, or before /x/, and /a/ and /a:/:

/t'[a]s/, /t'[æ]s/ 'heat'  
 /r[a]m/ 'a lot'  
 /t'[a]lax/, /t'[ɔ]lax/ 'hearth'

/[a]mənax/, /[ɪ]mnax/, /[ɛ]mnax/ 'late'  
 /f[æ]mərəx/, /f[ø]mərəx/ 'seaweed'  
 /kl[a]sˈtən/, /kl[a:]sˈtən/ 'hearing'

/o/ = [o] [ɔ], [ɑ]. In initial position or in stressed monosyllables, there may in LMx be free variation with /u/, /a/, /i/, /e/, /o/:

/g[o]l/, /g[ɔ]l/, /g[ɑ]l/ 'going'  
 /f[ɔ]d/, /f[ɛ]d/, /f[i]d/ 'can'  
 /t[ɔ]lu/, /t[ɑ]lu/ 'land'

/u/ is normally advanced and poorly rounded. In LMx there is sometimes [ʊ] or [y], varying with /o/:

/p[u]nt/, /p[ʊ]nt/ 'pound'  
 /sˈl[u]xt/, /sˈl[y]x/ 'progeny'  
 /sˈɑ:s[u]/, /sˈɑ:s[o]/ 'standing'

/ə/: [ə] usually in unstressed position. In LMx sometimes [ɪ] after palatal /n/, /l/:

/k[ə]ˈrɛn/ 'sandal'  
 /ba:lˈ[ə]/, /ba:lˈ[ɪ]/ 'town'  
 /dunˈ[ə]/, /dunˈ[ɪ]/ 'man'

in stressed position /ˈkənəs/ 'how'.

However, /ə/ may be realized as [ø], [ø:] (i.e. with a degree of lip-rounding) in the environment of laterals, vibrants, dentals, voiceless fricatives, nasals and velars, representing retraction, advancement or raising of the other vowel phonemes, but with some lip rounding → [ø], [ø:]

/rɪd/, /r[ø]d/ 'thing'  
 /be:r/, /b[ø:](r)/ 'road'  
 /ɑ:rd/, /[ø:]rd/ 'high'  
 /klɪs/, /kl[ø:]s/ 'ear'  
 /su:s/, /so:s/, s[ø:]s/ 'upwards'  
 /trɪməd/, /tr[ø]məd/ 'weight'  
 /ke:x/, /k[ø:]x/ 'wild'

### *The long vowel phonemes*

The long vowel phonemes in Late Manx are:

	Front	Back
High	i:	u:
Mid	e:	ə: o:
Low	a:	

For long varieties of /ə/ as [ø:] see above. As with the short vowel phonemes and for the same or similar reasons we have in LMx a wide range of allophonic variance.

/i:/ = [i:], [ɪ:]. In LMx in free variation with /i/, /ə/, /e:/, /u:/, /ei/, /ai/, /iə/.  
 /fr[i:]l'/, /fr[ɪ:]l'/' keeping'  
 /[i:]m/, /[ɪ]m/ 'butter'  
 /g[i:]l/, /g[ɪ]l/, /g[ɛ:]l/, /g[y:]l/, /g[ø:]l/, /g[u:]l/ 'coal'  
 /kl[i:]/, /kl[ɛi]/, /kl[ai]/ 'playing'  
 /b[i:]l/, /b[iə]l/ 'mouth'

/e:/: [ɛ:], [e:], [ɛ:]  
 /ɛ:s/, /e:s/, /ɛ:s/ 'moon'

Some lexical items demonstrate more close realizations, others more open ones suggesting an original distinction between /e:/ and /ɛ:/, fallen together as one phoneme in Late Manx. For example, under more constrained conditions /ɛ:s/' 'age' and /ɛ:s/' 'rest, ease' would have formed minimal pairs. The same could be said of /o:/ ~ /ɔ:/ (see below).

In stressed monosyllables and initial stressed syllables there may be variation with /e/, /i(:)/, /a:/, /o:/, /ə:/:

/[e:]dax/, /[e]dax/, /[i]dax/ 'clothing'  
 /[ɛ:]lin'/, /[o:]lin'/, /[a:]lən'/' fine'

/a:/ = [a:], [a:], in LMx in free variation with /a/, /e(:)/, /o(:)/, /ai/:

/n'[a:]t/, /n'[a:]t/ 'strength'  
 /[a:](r)gəd/, /[ɛ:](r)gəd/, /[a:](r)gid/ 'money'  
 /[a:]l'/, /[ai]l'/' fire'

/o:/ = [o:], [ɔ:], [ɑ:]

/n [o :]/, /n [ɔ:]/, /n [ɑ:]/ 'new'

As with /e:/ more close realizations are restricted to some and more open to other items, suggesting the two contrasting phonemes /o:/ and /ɔ:/ that could have given the near minimal pairs /bo:l/ 'place' (cf. Ir. *ball*): /bo:ldən/ 'May' (cf. ScG *Bealtuinn*).

In stressed monosyllables and initial stressed syllables there may in LMx be free variation with /o/, /a(:)/, /u:/, /e:/, /ə/ (before /r/):

/l [ɔ:](r)t/, /l[ɛ:]t/ 'speaking'  
 /p [ɔ:]t/, /f[u:]rt/(lenited) 'harbour'

/u:/ as with /u/ is normally advanced and poorly rounded in its articulation. In LMx it may be realized as [y:], [øu], and vary freely in stressed monosyllables/initial stressed syllables with /u/, /o(:)/, /i(:)/, /eu/, /au/:

/k [u:]nlax/ 'straw'  
 /d [u:]/, /d [y:]/, /d [øu]/ 'black'  
 /l'[u:]rid/, /l'[u]rid/' length'  
 /l'[u:]ris'/, /l'[ɔ:]ris/' by'  
 /d'[u:]/, /d'[øu]/ 'today'



The vowels /a/, /e/, /ə/ can form both i- and u-diphthongs, /o/, /u/ only i-diphthongs, while /i/, /u/ can form ə-diphthongs. These last are later developments resulting in the weakening of /r/, e.g., /mi:r/ ‘morsel’ → /mi:ə/, /mu:r/ ‘big’ → /mu:ə/. Except in monosyllables before /l, r/, the i- and u-diphthongs result from the vocalization of palatal and labial (occasionally dental) spirants. /iə/ and /uə/ are subject to monophthongization, e.g., /biəl/, /bi:l/ ‘mouth’, /ku:əg/, /ko:g/ ‘cuckoo’. Quite often the first element of a diphthong can be long.

Consonants

The consonant phonemes of Manx may be illustrated as follows:

	Labial	Dental alveolar	Palatal	Palatal velar	Velar	Glottal
Voiceless stops	p	t	t´	k´	k	
Voiced stops	b	d	d´	g´	g	
Nasals	m	n	n´		ŋ	
Laterals		l	l´			
Vibrant		r				
Voiceless	f	s	s´	(x´)	x	h
Fricatives						
Voiced fricatives	v			(ɣ´)	(ɣ)	
Semivowels	w		j			

As can be seen, the consonant system demonstrates an opposition between neutral and palatal articulation in the stops and fricatives, though no longer in the labials. The four-way system in Old Irish /L, N, R/ involving double phonemic contrast: (a) neutral-palatalized /L:L´, l:l´, N:N´, n:n´, r:r´/; (b) fortis-lenis /L:l, L´:l´, N:n, N´:n´, R:r, R´:r´/ has developed into a two-way system for /L, N/ and a single phoneme for /R/, viz /l:l´, n:n´, r/, though traces of palatal /r/, viz [r´], are found. Original /θ/ and /ð/ fell in with /h/ and /ð/ (both neutral and palatal) respectively. However, since the latter part of the eighteenth century a new [ð] has been created by modified articulation of /t, d, s/ in intervocalic position. Palatalization in association with high front vowels is weak, but with back and low front vowels it is quite pronounced as if C + [j]: /k´iŋ/ ‘heads’, /k´om/, [kjo:n] ‘head’. Palatalized /t´/ and /d´/ are realized as the affricates [t´s´], [d´z´] respectively.

The consonant clusters of Manx and their distribution can be sketched as follows:

Initial	Medial	Final
/sp-/	/-sp-/	
/spr-/		
/spw-/		
/sk-/	/-sk-/	
/skr-/		
/st-/	/-st-/	
/str-/		
/s´t´-/	/-st´-/	/-s´t´/
/sl-/	/-l-/	
/sl´-/	/-sl´-/	
/sm-/		
/sn-/	/-sn-/	

/pl-, pr-, pw-/	
/tr-/	
	/-tl-/
/kl-, kl'-/	/-kl-/
	/ks-/
/kw-/	
/bl-, bl'-/	
	/-bd-/
/br-/	
/bj-/	
/bw-/	
/dr-/	
	/-dl-/
/gl-/	/-gl-/
	/-gn-, -gn'-/
/gr-/	
/fl-, fl'-, fr-, fj-/	
/mr-, mj-, mw-/	
	/-mb-, -mn-, -mf-/
	/-nd-/
	/-ŋ(g)-/
	/-ŋk-, -nl-/
	/-nm-, -nr-, -ntr-/
	/-nd'-/
	/-nt-, -ntr-/
	/-nv-/
	/-ns-, -ns'/
	/-rt-, -rd'-/
	/-rt-, -rt'/
	/-rp/
	/-rk-/
	/-rk/
	/-rd-/
	/-rd/
	/-rg-/
	/-rg/
	/-rm-/
	/-rn-/
	/-rn/
	/-rl-, -rl'-/
	/-lt-, -l't'-/
	/-lt-, -l't'/
	/-lb-, -l'd'-/
	/-lb/
	/-lg-/
	/-lg/
	/-ls-/
	/-l't'-/
	/-lt-/
	/-lk/
	/-ls-, -l'f-, -lt-/
	/-xl-/
	/-xt-/
	/-xt/

The earlier initial clusters /kn, gn, tn, dl, tl/ had by the end of the seventeenth century fallen in with /kr, gr, tr, gl, kl/ e.g. EMx *knaid*, CMx *craid* 'mockery', *gnwis* : *grooish* 'face', etc. By the beginning of the eighteenth century original /sr/ had largely fallen in with /str/

and medial /sk, s'k'/, with one or two exceptions, had fallen in with /st, s't'/, e.g. G. *eas-buig* 'bishop' → Mx. *aspit*. Final /t/ after /s/ and /x/ tends to be lost, the latter as early as the seventeenth century, though preserved in the standard spelling. In monosyllables the original length in unlenited /L/, /R/, /N/, /m/ is transferred to the preceding vowel either increasing its length or forming a u-diphthong, e.g. *kione* 'head' (G. *ceann*) [kjo:n].

Other modifications include preocclusion, the development of a weak variety of the corresponding voiced stop before final /m/, /n/ and /ŋ/ in stressed monosyllables, generally causing shortening in original long vowels /tro:m/ 'heavy' → /trobm/, /k'o:n/ 'head' > /k'odn/, /loŋ/ 'ship' → /logŋ/. In addition there is a tendency to replace /g/ with /d/ in proclitics: /gə/ 'that' → /də/; /gəs/ 'to' → /dəs/; /gən/ 'without' → /dən/.

Devoicing to an extent in Manx had also taken place, particularly in final unstressed palatalized /-g'/, viz. G. *Pádraig* → Mx. *Perick*, *easbuig* 'bishop' → *aspick*.

## Stress

Stress in Manx normally falls on the first syllable. However, this can be disturbed by the following factors:

- 1 Derivative suffixes containing an original long vowel may draw the stress to them, for example (nouns) /-e:n/, /-e:g/, /-e:g'/ /-e:r/ and (verb nouns) /-e:l/, resulting from shortening of the initial stressed syllable: /bo:ge:n/ 'sprite' > /bə'ge:n/. However, disyllables containing an originally short stressed initial syllable will have any originally long second syllable shortened: /'bega:n/ 'a little' → /'began/, with the stress remaining on the first syllable.
- 2 The vocalization of labial spirants in medial position when the stress did not immediately follow (as in (1)) produced long vowels by crasis in originally unstressed syllables to which the stress was attracted: Mx *tarroogh* 'busy' (G *tarbhach* /tarəvax/) > Mx /ta'ru:x/; also the adjectival suffix /o:l'/: Mx *reeoil* 'royal' (G *rígheamhail*) > Mx /ri:o:l'/.
- 3 Loanwords from Anglo-Norman show final stress in association with length: Mx *vondéish* /von'de:s'/ (< AN *avantage*) 'advantage', but would help establish the disturbance rather than initiate it. The chronology for such disturbances would seem to fall in the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries.

## Mutations

The main morphophonological pattern of Manx, as with other Insular Celtic languages, is the system of consonant replacement in initial position in nouns, adjectives and verbs. In certain environments the distinctive features which make up certain of the consonants or consonant clusters are wholly or partially replaced, and the result shares an articulatory position with the radical consonant. Such replacements are systematic and can be predicted for certain environments: definite article; preposition + article; some possessive particles; some adverbs; one or two numerals; etc. (see below).

In common with Irish and Scottish Gaelic, two forms of initial replacement are discernible in Manx: lenition and nasalization (eclipsis). Lenition essentially spirantizes bilabials, labiodentals, dentals and velars, and prefixes /h/ to vowels. Nasalization voices /p, t, k, f/ and eclipses /b, d, g/ and prefixes /n/ to vowels. The system (including palatalized variants) for initial single consonants could be sketched as follows:

Radical	/p t t' k k' b d d' g g' m f s s'/
Lenited	[f h, xh/ x' v y y'/j y y y'/j v ø h h/x']
Nasalized	[b d d' g g' m n n' ŋ ŋ' v]

### Examples of lenition

1 After the definite article governing an original feminine in nominative/accusative (except in dental consonants):

*ben* /bedn/ 'woman': /ən 'vedn/ 'the woman'  
*sooil* /su:l'/ 'eye': /ən 'tu:l'/ 'the eye'

2 In the genitive of masculines:

*poosey* /pu:sə/ 'wedding': /kærə 'fu:si/ 'wedding reel'

3 In the prepositional (dative) case of both genders:

*baatey* /be:də/ m. 'boat': /əsə 've:də/ 'in the boat'  
*ben* /ben/ f. 'woman': /erə 'ven/ 'on the woman'

4 In the vocative (also of adjectives):

*graih meen* /grai 'mi:n/ 'dear love': /ɣrai 'vi:n/ 'dear love!'

5 In the genitive of proper names:

*Juan* /d' uən/ 'John': *Thie Yuan* / tai 'juən/ 'John's house'

6 After the possessive particles /mə/ 'my', /də/ 'your' (sg.), /ə/ 'his' (or elements containing them):

*thie* /tai/ 'house': /mə 'hai/ 'my house'  
*cadley* /kadlə/ 'sleep': /nə 'xadlə/ 'in his sleep'

7 After the prepositions *dy* /də/ 'to' (with verb nouns), and *dy* /də/ 'of'

*cheet* /t'it/ 'coming': /də 'hit/ 'to come'  
*bee* /bi:/ 'food': /pə:t də 'vi:/ 'some (of) food'

8 In adjectives following a feminine noun:

*mooar* /mu:r/ 'big': /ben 'vu:r/ 'big woman'

9 Sometimes in adjectives following an internal plural containing vowel change:

*fer-coyrlee* /fer 'ko:rl' i/ 'adviser': /fir 'xo:rl' i/ 'advisers'

## 10 In adjectives after qualifying adverbs:

*mie* /mai/ 'good': /fi: 'vai/ 'very good'

11 In verbs in the future relative, preterite, independent conditional, and usually in verb nouns after *er/er/* 'after' where nasalization was once universal:

*fakin* /fa:gin'/ 'seeing': /er 'va:gin' / > /er 'na:gin' / 'after seeing' (with *n* to break hiatus), *G\*ar bhfaicinn* → *\*ar n-fhaicinn*.

*Examples of nasalization*

## 1 Following plural possessives or object particle and elements incorporating it:

*thie* /tai/ 'house': /nən'dai/ 'our, your, their house'

*fakin* /fa:gin' / 'seeing' /dən 'va:gin' / 'at our, your, their seeing' (i.e., seeing us, you, them)

*cadley* /kadlə/ 'sleeping': /nən 'gadlə/ 'in our, your, their sleeping'

## 2 After the genitive plural of the definite article in nominal phrases or fossilized examples in place names:

*clagh* /klox/ 'stone': /k'eru nə 'glox/ 'quarterland of the stones' (farm name)

## 3 In verbs affecting only voiceless consonants after the following particles:

zero sign of interrogative: *\*fel* 'is': /vel/;

after *cha* /ha/ 'not': /ha 'vel/ 'is not' (in speech /ha 'nel/ with lenition);

after *dy* /də/ 'that': /də 'vel/ 'that is';

after *nagh* /nax/ 'that not': /nax 'vel/ 'that is not';

after *mannagh* /manax/ 'if not': /manax 'vel/ 'if is not';

after *roish my* /ro:s' mə/ 'before': /ro:s' mə 'd'em 'ro:m/ 'before I go my way' (Job 10:21);

after *dy* /də/ 'if' (conditional): /də 'vodax s'u d'enu s'en/ 'if you could do that'.

*Prefixing of /h/ and /n/*1 /h/ is prefixed to the genitive feminine singular noun after the definite article: *oie* /i:/ 'night': /fud nə 'hi:/ 'all through the night';2 To the plural of a vocalic anlaut after the definite article (although not written in the orthography): *uinnagyn* /unjagən/ 'windows': /nə 'hunjagən/ 'the windows';3 After the third-person singular feminine possessive and elements containing it: *ayr* /e:r/ 'father': /ə 'he:r/ 'her father'.*Final mutation*

Final mutation in Manx manifested itself as palatalization of dentals, nasals and laterals in internal plurals (o-stems):

*kayt* /ket/ 'cat': /ket'/ 'cats'  
*ean* /je:n/ 'lamb': je:n'/ 'lambs'  
*shiaull* /s'oi:/ 'sail': /s'oi:/ 'sails'

However, as the palatal element became indistinct (possibly due to contact with English where final /-n'/ and /-l'/ at any rate are not found), so did the distinction between singular and plural, thus giving rise to suffix plural forms.

## MORPHOLOGY

### Nouns: gender, number, case

#### Gender

Nouns may be divided into two genders: masculine and feminine; the former is unmarked. In Manx, nouns can essentially be regarded as masculine unless there is evidence to suggest they are not. Any gender distinction appears in the third-person singular personal pronoun, but even here discrepancies are frequent, as the notion of 'it' is almost exclusively expressed by *eh* /e/ 'he, him'.

#### Number

The Old Irish declensions according to stem formations are reflected in Manx only in the contrast of two types of plural: internal (or attenuated) and suffix. The former continue or imitate original *o*-stem plurals: /fer/ 'man, one' pl. /fir/; the latter the rest, with occasional continuation of original consonant stem formation infixed before the common plural suffix -yn/ən/: /su:l/ 'eye'/su:l'ən/ (original *i*-stem), /karə/ 'friend' pl. /kə:rd'z'ən/ (original stem in -t, pl. /karəd'/).

#### Case

In the singular the nominative, accusative and dative have fallen together, generally under the old nominative: /'karə/ 'friend' (original accusative/dative /karid'/), but occasionally under the old accusative or dative: /tai/ 'house' (old dative, old nominative /t'ex/). The vocative is the common case lenited with or without the prefixed particle /ə/: /karə/ 'friend', vocative /ə'xarə/.

The genitive singular survives in a limited number of examples, usually with the suffix /ə/ (*a*-, *i*-, *u*-stems) and generally feminine: /muk/ 'pig', genitive singular /nə 'muk'ə/ (with definite article).

Occasionally masculine genitives are found, usually in nouns in /-ax/ or nouns/verb-nouns in /-əl/, with genitive in /-i/: /olax/ 'cattle' genitive /o(:)li/, /pu:sə/ 'marrying', genitive /pu:si/. But these are found almost exclusively in nominal phrases: /tai 'o:li/ 'cow-house', /karə 'fu:si/ 'wedding reel'. Except for examples such as the above the genitive is not used in all cases where it would be expected, so /d'erə ən 'ka:gə/ 'end of the war', not /d'erə ən 'ka:gi/. In general the genitive, when it appears, occurs in set phrases: /foltə 'xiŋ/ 'hair of his head' (nominative /k'o:n/), /sa:ən 'kloi/ 'stone vessels' (nominative /klox/), or in /fer/ 'man' + verb-noun to express agent: /fer 'insi/ 'teacher' (lit. 'man of teaching', nominative /insax/).

Apart from traces of genitive plurals having the same form as the nominative singular (as in *o*-stems): (placename) /t's'uvərt nə 'ga:vəl/ 'well of the horses' (nominative singular /ka:vəl/), and of dative plurals in /-u/ in phrasal prepositions and adverbs: /er'bi:lu/ (Gaelic *ar béalaibh*) 'in front of', there is only one common case in the plural.

## Adjectives

Adjectives usually follow the noun they qualify and are usually invariable as to gender and case, though there may be lenition in an attribute to a feminine noun: /mu:r/ 'big', /ben 'vu:r/ 'a big woman'. However, a handful, mainly monosyllabic, may form a plural in /ə/ in attributive position only: /dun'ə 'mu:r/ 'a big man', pl. /de:n'ə 'mu:rə/. In nominal use adjectives in /-ax/ and one or two other o-stem types may form a plural by a vowel change: /pekax/ 'sinner', pl. /peki/, 'sinners'; /bakax/ 'lame'/ nə 'baki/ 'the lame'. For adjectival prefixes see the section on noun phrases below, pp. 342–3.

With regard to comparison, the framework is a relative clause introduced by the copula /s/ (rarely the past /bə/ + adjective when attributive), and relative /nə/ + copula + adjective when predicative, usually without any modification of form: /glo:'ro:l/ 'glorious', /nəs 'glo:'ro:l/ 'more glorious'. In such cases, however, the periphrastic construction with /smu:/ 'greater, more' + positive form of the adjective is normal: /nəs 'mu: glo:'ro:l/ 'more glorious'. Modification, when it does occur (in monosyllables), usually involves raising of the stem vowel + palatalization of the following consonant + suffix in /ə/: /s'en, s'an/ 'old', /nə 's'in'ə/; adjectives in /-ax/ generally substitute /-i/: /bert'ax/ 'rich', /nəs 'bert'i/ 'richer'. Irregular comparison also occurs: /mai/ 'good', /nə 's'er/.

There is no distinction between comparative and superlative. The former is indicated by /na/ 'than' /ti nə 's'in'ə na mis/ 'he is older than I', the latter when the noun followed by the compared adjective is definite /ən fer 's'er/ 'the best man, one'.

The equative is expressed with /xa/ + adjective + /as/: /xa 'rar as muk/ 'as fat as a pig'. If the equative is followed by a pronoun, /ris/ replaces /as/: /ha 'rau klag uns manin' hama ris/ 'there wasn't a bell in Man as good as it'.

## Numerals

In Manx numbers are found in a cardinal or ordinal mode, with or without accompanying noun.

### *Cardinal numbers without a noun*

Numbers 1–20 (when counting):

- 1 *nane* /ne:n/ (South), /na:n/ (North)
- 2 *jees* /d'i:s/
- 3 *tree* /tri:/
- 4 *kiare* /k'e:r/
- 5 *queig* /kweg/
- 6 *shey* /s'e:/
- 7 *shiaght* /s'a:x/
- 8 *hoght* /ho:x/
- 9 *nuy* /ni:/ (South), /nei/ (North)
- 10 *jeih* /d'ei/
- 11 *nane jeig* /ne:n d'eg/
- 12 *ghaa yeig* /'ye: jeg/
- 13 *tree jeig* /tri: d'eg/
- 14 *kiare jeig* /k'e:r d'eg/
- 15 *queig jeig* /kweg d'eg/
- 16 *shey jeig* /s'e: d'eg/

- 17 *shiaght jeig* /s'a:x d'eg/  
 18 *hoght jeig* /ho:x d'eg/  
 19 *nuy jeig* /ni d'eg/  
 20 *feed* /fid/

From 11 to 19 stress falls on the first element of the compound, as teens are regarded as single units. From 20 to 40 the units (and teens) come first, followed by *as feed*, 'and twenty':

- 21 *nane as feed* /ne:n əs fid/  
 22 *jees as feed* /d'i:s əs fid/  
 23 *tree as feed* /tri: əs fid/  
 24 *kiare as feed* /k'e:r əs fid/, etc.  
 31 *nane jeig as feed* /ne:n d'eg əs fid/  
 32 *ghaa yeig as feed* /ɣe: jeg əs fid/  
 33 *tree yeig as feed* /tri: d'eg əs fid/  
 34 *kiare jeig as feed*, etc. /k'e:r d'eg əs fid/

From 21 onwards the stress falls on the last element of the compound:

- 40 *daeed* /daid/ (i.e., 'two twenties')

From 40 to 60 the same procedure applies:

- 41 *nane as daeed* /ne:nəs 'daid/  
 50 *jeih as daeed* /d'eɪ əs 'daid/  
 55 *queig jeig as daeed* /kweg d'eg əs 'daid/

From 60 onwards the twenties come first:

- 60 *tree feed* /tri: 'fid/ (i.e., three twenties)  
 67 *tree feed as shiaght* /tri: fidəs 's'a:x/  
 70 *tree feed as jeih* /tri: fidəs 'd'eɪ/  
 79 *tree feed as nuy jeig* /tri: fidəs 'ni:d'eg/  
 80 *kiare feed* /k'e:r 'fid/ (i.e., 'four twenties')  
 96 *kiare feed as shey jeig* /k'e:r fidəs 's'e:d'eg/  
 100 *keead* /ki(:)d/, /k'ɪ(:)d/

50 may also be expressed as *leih-cheead* /l'e: 'xi:d, ki:d/ lit. 'a half hundred'. *Leih* normally occasions lenition.

After 100 the hundreds come first:

- 101 *keead as nane* /ki:dəs'ne:n/  
 110 *keead as jeih* /ki:dəs'd'eɪ/  
 120 *keead as feed* /ki:dəs'fid/



Counting by the score can also occur but is not normally used after 200:

120 *shey feed* /s'ɛ: fid/

180 *nuy feed* /ni: fid/

When expressing multiples of 100, *keead* remains in the singular:

300 *tree keead* /tri:'ki:d/

574 *queig keead tree feed as kiare jeig* /kweg 'ki:d tri:fidəs 'k'ɛ:rd'ɛg/

999 *nuy keead kiare feed as nuy jeig* /ni: 'ki:d k'ɛ:r fidəs 'ni: d'ɛg/

1000 *thousane* /tau'se:n/ S, /tau'sa:n/ N

Years are expressed as follows:

1992 *nuy keead jeig kiare feed as ghaa yeig* /ni: ki:d d'ɛg k'ɛ:r fidəs 'ɣe:jeg/

#### *Cardinal numbers with a noun*

From 1 to 10 the numeral precedes the noun; *un* /un/ replaces *nane* and *daa* /de:/, *jees*. *Troor* /tru:r/ may be used for 'three', though *jees* and *troor* mean 'two persons' and 'three persons' respectively, and are therefore used on their own. *Un* and *daa* occasion lenition (except in sandhi situations comprising homorganic consonants) and are followed by the singular of the noun.

*un vaatey* /un've:də/

'one boat'

*un dooinney* /un'dun'ə/

'one man'

*daa ghooiney* /de: wun'ə/

'two men'

*shey baatyn* /s'ɛ: 'be:dən/

'six boats'

*yn jees oc* /ən d'is ok/

'the two of them'

The phrase *ny neesht* /nə'ni:s'/, lit. 'in their twosome', is used to mean 'both'.

*ren shin ny neesht tuittym sheese* /ren s'in nə 'ni:s' tud'əm 's'is/ 'the two of us fell down'.

From 11 to 19 the noun is sandwiched between the compound elements:

12 men: *daa ghooiney yeig* /de: wun'ə 'jeg/ (with stress on the final element)

19 boats: *nuy baatyn jeig* /ni: be:dən d'ɛg/

From 21 to 59 the foregoing is followed by *as feed*/*as daeed*

39 boats: *nuy baatyn jeig as feed* /ni: be:dən d'ɛg əs 'fid/

54 boats: *kiare baatyn jeig as daeed* /k'ɛ:r be:dən d'ɛg əs daid/

After *feed* (and its compounds), *keead* and *thousane*, the noun appears in the singular:

*feed baatey* /fid 'be:də/

'twenty boats'

*daeed dooinney* /daid 'dun'ə/

'forty men'

*keead blein* /ki:d 'ble:n/

'a hundred years'

Nouns of measure, for example, *laa* /le:/ ‘day’, *punt* /punt/ ‘pound’, are usually found in the singular:

*kiare laa* /k'ɛr 'le:/ ‘four days’  
*nuy punt jeig* /ni: punt 'd'eg/ ‘nineteen pounds’

However, in Late Manx the noun (in the plural) can stand outside the numerical compound, but is preceded by the preposition *dy* /dɔ/ ‘of’:

*jeih as feed dy laadyn* /d'ei əs fid dɔ 'le:dən/ ‘thirty loads’.

Both *feed* and *keead* can themselves appear in plural forms to mean ‘scores’, ‘hundreds’ respectively; they also take the preposition *dy*: *feedyn dy shenn sleih* /fidən dɔ s'a:n 'slei/ ‘scores of old people’; *keeadyn dy akeryn* /ki:dən dɔ 'e:kərən/ ‘hundreds of acres’.

### Ordinal numbers

The ordinal numbers in Manx are as follows:

1st	<i>yn chied</i> /ən 'k'ed/
2nd	<i>yn nah</i> /ən 'na:/
3rd	<i>yn trass</i> /ən 'trɔ:s/, <i>yn treeoo</i> /ən 'tri:u/
4th	<i>yn chiarroo</i> /ən k'ɛru/
5th	<i>yn whieggoo</i> /ən hwegu/
6th	<i>yn cheyoo</i> /ən t'ɛ:u/
7th	<i>yn chiaghtoo</i> /ən t'a:xu/
8th	<i>yn hoghtoo</i> /ən hɔ:xu/
9th	<i>yn nuyoo</i> /ən 'ni:u/
10th	<i>yn jeihoo</i> /ən 'd'ɛu/

The ordinal forms precede the noun. *Yn chied* and *yn nah* occasion lenition (except, in the case of *chied*, in circumstances of homorganic inhibition).

*yn chied vaatey* /ən k'ed 've:dɔ/ ‘the first boat’  
*yn chied dooinney* /ən k'ed 'dun'ə/ ‘the first man’  
*yn hoghtoo laa* /ən hɔ:xu 'le:/ ‘the eighth day’

In compounds the noun comes after the first element (excluding the definite article):

11th	<i>yn chied vaatey jeig</i> /ən k'ed ve:dɔ 'd'eg/
12th	<i>yn nah vaatey yeig</i> /ən na: ve:dɔ 'jeg/
13th	<i>yn trass/treeoo baatey jeig</i> /ən trɔ:s, tri:u be:dɔ 'd'eg/
20th	<i>yn feedoo baatey</i> /ən fidu 'be:dɔ/
21st	<i>yn chied vaatey as feed</i> /ən k'ed ve:dɔ əs 'fid/
30th	<i>yn jeihoo baatey as feed</i> /ən d'ɛu be:dɔ əs 'fid/
31st	<i>yn chied vaatey jeig as feed</i> /ən k'ed ve:dɔ d'eg əs 'fid/
40th	<i>yn daeedoo baatey</i> /ən daidu 'be:dɔ/
59th	<i>yn nuyoo baatey jeig as daeed</i> /ən ni:u be:dɔ d'eg əs 'daid/
60th	<i>yn tree feedoo baatey</i> /ən tri: fidu 'be:dɔ/
80th	<i>yn kiare feedoo baatey</i> /ən k'ɛr fidu 'be:dɔ/

100th	<i>yn cheeadoo baatey</i> /ən ki:du 'bɛ:də/, etc.
273rd	<i>yn nah cheeadoo baatey tree feed as tree jeig</i> /ən na: ki:du bɛ:də tri: fidəs 'tri:d'eg/

*Blein* /ble:n/ 'year', pl. *bleeaney* /blinə/, *bleeantyn* /blintən/; *bleeaney* is used after numerals which do not attract the singular form:

*kiare bleeaney* /k'ɛ:r 'blinə/ 'four years'

*bleeantyn* is used in other circumstances:

*ram bleeantyn* /ra:m 'blintən/ 'many years'

## Fractions

The most commonly used elements in this class are *lieh* /l'e:/ 'half' and *kerroo* /k'ɛru/ 'quarter': *lieh-ayrn* /l'e: 'a:rn/ 'a half share'. *Lieh* also occasions lenition (see above).

*Dy lieh* /də 'l'e:/ is used to express 'and a half' after a whole number, with or without accompanying noun:

<i>oor dy lieh</i> /u:r də 'l'e:/	'an hour and a half'
<i>jeih punt dy lieh</i> /d'ei punt də 'l'e:/	'ten and a half pounds'

*Lieh* can also be used to express one of something of which there are usually two:

*lieh vaggie* /l'e: 'va:gəl/ '(having) one testicle'

*kerroo yn thunnag* /k'ɛruən tunag/ 'a quarter of the duck'

In Late Manx *kerroo* can also take the preposition *dy* 'of':

*kerroo dy guiy* /k'ɛru də gei/ 'a quarter goose'

## Telling the time

On the hour is expressed as follows:

seven o'clock	<i>shiaght er y chlag</i> /s'ax ɛrə 'kɫag/
eleven o'clock	<i>nane jeig er y chlag</i> /nɛ:n d'eg ɛrə 'kɫag/
midday	<i>munlaa</i> /mun 'lɛ:/
midnight	<i>mean oie</i> /mɛn 'i:/

The half-hour is expressed with *lieh* /l'e:/ plus *lurg* /lug/, /lig/ 'after', half past six *lieh oor lurg shey* /l'e: u:r lug 's'e:/. The quarter to or past the hour is expressed with *kerroo* + *gys* /gəs/ or *dys* /dəs/ 'to', or with *lurg*:

a quarter to nine	<i>kerroo gys nuy</i> /k'ɛru gəs 'ni:/
a quarter past three	<i>kerroo lurg tree</i> /k'ɛru lug 'tri:/

Minutes to and past the hour are expressed by *gys*, *dys* and *lurg*; but also include the singular of *minnid* ‘minute’:

twenty to eight *feed minnid dys hoght* /fid minid dəs 'ho:x/

seventeen minutes past ten *shiaight minnid jeig lurg jeih* /s'ə:x minid d'eg lug 'd'ei/

## The article

The article in Manx can only be definite. There is no indefinite article: *baatey* /be:də/ ‘boat’ or ‘a boat’.

The forms of the definite article are:

Singular: *y* /ə/, *yn* /ən/, /in/; fem. gen. *ny* /nə/ (occasional)

Plural *ny* /nə/; in Late Manx *y*, *yn*.

The forms *y*, *yn* are used fairly indiscriminately before nouns with consonantal anlaut.

In nominative position: *yn fer* /ən 'fer/ ‘the man, the one’; *y/yn conney* /ə, ən 'konə/ ‘the gorse’;

in genitive position in original (Manx) masculine nouns or nouns treated as masculine *y/yn* occasions lenition; in Late Manx failure of lenition may occur: *ayns mean y vaatey* /uns mɛ:n ə 've:də/ ‘in the centre of the boat’; also found in Late Manx is: *ayns mean y baatey* (without lenition) /uns mɛ:n ə 'be:də/;

in dative position (with preposition; lenition occasioned, but can fall out in Late Manx): *ayns y vaatey* /uns ə 've:də/ ‘in the boat’ (in Late Manx: *ayns y baatey* /uns ə 'be:də/).

The form *yn* is found prefixing a noun with vocalic anlaut: *yn eeym* /ən 'im/ ‘the butter’, *yn ennym* /ən 'enəm/ ‘the name’, *toshiaght yn ouyr* /tos'əx ən 'auər/ ‘at the start of autumn’ (with lenition after *yn*); rad. *fouyr* /fauər/ ‘autumn’, *ayns yn aer* /unsən 'a:/ ‘in the air’.

With raised front vowels prefixed by a prosthetic /j/ both forms are found: *dys y eest-agh* /dəsə 'jistax/ ‘to the fishing’, *yn eeast* /ən 'ji:s/ ‘the fish’. In original feminine nouns with S + V anlaut, e.g., *sooill* /su:l' / ‘eye’, *t-* (originally part of the definite article) can eclipse the initial *s-*: *yn tooill* /ən 'tu:l'/. The same occurs in oblique cases with original masculine nouns or nouns treated as masculine with S + V anlaut: *jerrey yn touree* /d'ərə ən 'tauri/ ‘end of the summer’, rad. *sourey* /saurə/ ‘summer’, *ayns y tourey* /unsə 'taurə/ ‘in the summer’.

*t-* can also appear prefixed to *shenn* /s'ə:n/, /s'edn/ ‘old’ plus original feminine in nominative position: *yn çhenn ven* /ən t's'edn 'vedn/ ‘the old woman’.

/sl-, sl'-/ becomes /tl-, tl'-/ in the dative singular: *yn slieau* /ən sl'u:/ ‘the mountain’, *er y thieau* /erə tl'u:/ ‘on the mountain’, though often we find /kl-, kl'-/ for /tl-, tl'-/ in this position: /erə kl'u:/. In Late Manx, however, failure of this substitution is found: *jerrey yn saurey* /d'ərə ən 'saurə/ (also with non-inflection in the genitive); *ayns y sourey* /unsə 'saurə/, *er y slieau* /erə sl'u:/, etc., *yn sooill* /ən 'su:l'.

Following an open syllable in an unstressed word, *yn* is usually reduced to 'n, with its vowel merging with that (the final) of the preceding word: *ta yn coraa eck* . . . > *ta'n coraa eck* /tan kə're: ek/ ‘her voice is . . .’. But the full form can also appear, especially before consonants: *ta yn bouin aym gonnagh* /ta ən bo:dn em gonax/ ‘my heel is sore’.

If the vowel in *ta* or *va* (present/past of the substantive verb) is long, i.e., stressed, no elision takes place: *ta yn moddey gounstyrnee* /t'e: ən mɑ:də g'əunstərnɪ/ 'the dog is barking'.

After diphthongs the vowel of the article is not elided: *ec oaie yn ven echey* /ek ei ən vedn egə/ 'at his wife's grave'.

The feminine genitive form *ny* is restricted to nominal phrases of a fossilized nature, given that in Classical Manx and Late Manx substantives are largely treated as masculine even if obviously feminine, as in the preceding example.

*doid ny h-oie* /dʊ:əd nə 'hi:/ 'darkness of the night'  
*eaghtey ny marrey* /i:xtə nə 'ma(:)rə/ 'surface of the sea'  
*ghiass ny greiney* /t's'a:s nə 'grɛ:n ə/ 'heat of the sun'

#### *Uses with plural nouns*

The usual form of the article used for plurals in whatever case is *ny* /nə/, and is unstressed.

*ny claghyn* /nə 'kla:xən/ 'the stones'  
*v'eh ceau ny claghyn* /vɛ 'k'eu nə kla:xən/ 'he was throwing the stones'  
*er oirr ny claghyn* /ɛr 'o:ɪ nə 'kla:xən/ 'on the edge of the stones'  
*er ny claghyn* /ɛr nə 'kla:xən/ 'on the stones'

However in Late Manx the singular form *y*, *yn* is also found in association with plurals irrespective of case.

*yn gaaueyn* /ən 'ga:uən/ 'the blacksmiths' (nom./acc.)  
*ayns yn boayllyn cair* /usən bo:lən 'k'ɛ:r/ 'in the right places' (dat.)

#### *Other uses of the article*

The article *y*, *yn* is found with *Nollick* /nolik/ 'Christmas': *Laa yn Nollick* /lɛ:ən 'nolik/ 'Christmas Day'. However, in Late Manx, it is difficult at times to decide whether the article is present or not: *Laa (yn) Nollick* /*Laa'n Ollick* /lɛ: nolik/. Here /n/ may be felt to belong to the article rather than the noun, and so the form *Ollick* is also found: *yn Laa Ollick* /ən lɛ: 'olik/, with the article preceding the whole phrase.

The singular article, as would be expected, is used with numerals having the function of a single noun: *yn jees jin* /ən d'is d'in/ 'the two of us'. It is also used with demonstratives in association with nouns: *ayns y theihll shoh* /unsə 'te:l s'ɔ:/ 'in this world'.

The article is found with the prepositional pronoun *ec* in expressions of definite possession: *yn thie ain* /ən tai ain/ 'our house' (lit. 'the house at us'). It is usually omitted from its noun in constructions containing a definite genitive: *feayraght yn earish* /fɛ:ɪr ək ən ɪrɪs/ 'the coldness of the weather'. In Late Manx, probably due to influence from English, it can be present: *woish yn raad yn booa* /wʊs'ən rɛ:d ɪn bu:ə/ 'out of the way of the cow'.

The article with persons, usually relatives, or with parts of the body can take on the meaning of a possessive adjective: *va'n jishig an yn shuyr as mee hene* . . . /vɑn d'is'ig' asən s'ur as mi 'hi:n . . . / 'my father and my sister and myself . . .' (note final position of *mee hene*; normally this would take first position); *shen yn red vad jannoo leshyn laueyn* /s'en ən rɪd vad 'd'unu les'ən 'leuən/ 'that's what they'd be doing with their hands'.

The singular article is also used in titles: *Yn Sushtal scruiit liorish yn Noo Mian* /ən

sust'al skrut' l'ouris'an nu: 'maïən/ 'the Gospel written by Saint Matthew'. In Late Manx it is usually found omitted: *Saggyrt Qualtragh* /sa:gət 'kwaltərax/ 'Parson Qualtragh'. But it is retained in designations following the personal name: *Paul yn Ostyl* 'Paul the Apostle', *Caine y Lord* /ke:n ə 'la:d/ 'Caine the Lord'.

The plural article *ny* is found in phrases containing the numerals with definite meaning: *ny tree guillyn* /nə tri: gil'ən/ 'the three boys'.

## Verbs

In Manx the verb has two voices: active and passive, and three moods: indicative, subjunctive, and imperative. It can express the following tenses: simple/habitual present, future, simple/habitual past, imperfect, preterite, conditional, perfect, future perfect, pluperfect, past conditional.

The person is indicated by a pronoun, though in first-person singular and plural future, first-person singular conditional inflectional forms are used. The inherited distinction between independent and dependent is well preserved in the auxiliaries and in the eight irregular verbs. The various tenses can be demonstrated by the substantive and auxiliary verb *ve* /ve/: 'being'.

### *Paradigms of the auxiliary verbs ve 'be' and jannoo 'do'*

*ve* /ve/: 'be, act of being'. Verbal noun

	Singular	Plural
<i>Simple/habitual present</i> 'I am', etc.		
Independent	1 <i>ta mee</i> /tami/, <i>taim</i> /taim/ 2 <i>t'ou</i> /tau/ 3m. <i>t'eh</i> /ti/ 3f. <i>t'ee</i> /tei/, /tai/	1 <i>ta shin</i> /ta s'in/ 2 <i>ta shiu</i> /ta s'u/ 3 <i>t'ad</i> /tad/
Dependent	<i>vel</i> /vel/ <sup>1</sup>	
<i>Future</i> 'I will be', etc.		
Independent	1 <i>beeym</i> /bi:m/ 2 <i>bee oo</i> /bi:u/ 3m. <i>bee eh</i> /bi:a/ 3f. <i>bee ee</i> /bi:il/	1 <i>beemayd</i> /bi: mäd'/ 2 <i>bee shiu</i> /bi: s'u/ 3 <i>bee ad</i> /bi: ad/
Dependent	<i>bee</i> /bi:/	
Relative	<i>vees</i> /vi:s/	
<i>Simple/habitual past, preterite</i> 'I was', etc.		
Independent	1 <i>va mee</i> /vami/ 2 <i>v'ou</i> /vau/ 3m. <i>v'eh</i> /vi/ 3f. <i>v'ee</i> /vei/, /vai/	1 <i>va shin</i> /va s'in/ 2 <i>va shiu</i> /va s'u/ 3 <i>v'ad</i> /vad/
Dependent	<i>row</i> /rau/, /reu/	

*Conditional* 'I would be',

*Imperfect* 'I used to be', etc.

*Independent*

1 *veign* /vi(:)n'/?

1 *veagh shin* /vi(:)x s'in/

2 *veagh oo* /vi(:)xu/

2 *veagh shiu* /vi(:)x s'u/

3m. *veagh eh* /vi(:)xi/

3 *veagh ad* /vi(:)xad/

3f. *veagh ee* /vi(:)xi/

*Dependent*

*beign* /bi:n'/, *beagh* /bi(:)x/

*Perfect* 'I have been', etc.

1 *ta mee er ve* /tami ə've:/, etc.

*Future perfect* 'I will have been', etc. (rare)

1 *beeym er ve* /bi:m ə've:/, etc.

*Pluperfect* 'I had been', etc.

1 *va mee er ve* /vami ə've:/, etc.

*Past conditional* 'I would have been', etc.<sup>3</sup>

1 *veign er ve* /vi(:)n' ə've:/,  
etc.

*Imperative*

*bee* /bi:/ *beejee*, *beeshiu*  
/bi:d'il/, /bi:s'u/

#### Notes

1 With negative particle also *cha nel* /ha 'nel/, as well as *cha vel* /ha 'vel/ (literary).

2 The form is conditional, the pronunciation that of the old imperfect in both the independent and dependent.

3 See also the section on the verb phrase, pp. 343–6.

*jannoo* /d'anu/, d'enu/, /d'inu/, /d'unu/ 'do, act of doing'. Verbal noun

*Future independent*

*Future dependent*

1 sg. *neeym* /n'i:m/

1 sg. *jeanym* /d'inəm/

2, 3 sg. *nee* /n'i:/

2, 3 sg. *jean* /d'in/

1 pl. *neemayd* /n'iməd'/

1 pl. *jeanmayd* /d'inməd'/

2, 3 pl. *nee* /n'i:/

2, 3 pl. *jean* /d'in/

Preterite independent and dependent: *ren mee* /ren' mil/, etc.

*Conditional independent*

*Conditional dependent*

1 sg. *yinnin* /jinin'/

1 sg. *jinnin* /d'inin'/

2, 3 sg. & pl. *yinnagh* /jinax/

2, 3 sg. & pl. *jinnagh* /d'inax/

Imperative: sg. *jean* /d'in/, pl. *jean-shiu* /d'ins'u/, *jean-jee* /d'ind'i:/, Past participle: *jeant* /d'int/.

#### Paradigms of the regular verb

*tilgey* /tilgə/ 'throw, act of throwing'. Verbal noun

The periphrastic tenses of this and any other regular verb can be formed with the auxiliaries *ve* and *jannoo*.

*Future independent*

- 1 sg. *tilgym* /tilgəm/  
 2 sg. *tilgee oo* /tilgi-u/  
 3 sg. m. *tilgee eh* /tilgi-e/a  
 3 sg. f. *tilgee ee* /tilgi-i/  
 1 pl. *tilgmayd* /tilgməd'/  
 2 pl. *tilgee shiu* /tilgi s' u/  
 3 pl. *tilgee ad* /tilgiad/  
 Relative: *hilgys* /hilgəs/

*Preterite independent*

- 1 sg. *hilg mee* /hilg-mi/  
 2 sg. *hilg oo* /hilg-u/  
 3 sg. m. *hilg eh* /hilg-e/a  
 3 sg. f. *hilg ee* /hilg-i/

*Conditional independent*

- 1 sg. *hilgin* /hilgin'/  
 2 sg. *hilgagh oo* /hilgax-u/  
 3 sg. m. *hilgagh eh* /hilgax-e/a  
 3 sg. f. *hilgagh ee* /hilgax-i/  
 1 pl. *hilgagh shin* /hilgax s'in'/  
 2 pl. *hilgagh shiu* /hilgax s' u/  
 3 pl. *hilgagh ad* /hilgaxad/

*Future dependent*

- 1 sg. *dilgym* /dilgəm/  
 2 sg. *dilg oo* /dilgu/  
 3 sg. m. *dilg eh* /dilge/a  
 3 sg. f. *dilg ee* /dilgi/  
 1 pl. *dilg mayd* /dilg mäd'/  
 2 pl. *dilg shiu* /dilg s' u/  
 3 pl. *dilg ad* /dilgad/

*and dependent*

- 1 pl. *hilg shin* /hilg s'in'/  
 2 pl. *hilg shiu* /hilg s' u/  
 3 pl. *hilg ad* /hilgad/

*Conditional dependent*

- 1 sg. *dilgin* /dilgin'/  
 2 sg. *dilgagh oo* /dilgax-u/  
 3 sg. m. *dilgagh eh* /dilgax-e/a  
 3 sg. f. *dilgagh ee* /dilgax-i/  
 1 pl. *dilgagh shin* /dilgax s'in'/  
 2 pl. *dilgagh shiu* /dilgax s' u/  
 3 pl. *dilgagh ad* /dilgaxad/

First-person singular in the future and conditional independent and dependent can also have emphatic forms: fut. indep. *tilgym's* /tilgəms/ cond. indep. *hilgin's* /hilgins/ cond. dep. *dilgym's* /dilgəms/ fut. dep. *dilgin's* /dilgins/.

First-person plural in the future independent and dependent may sometimes be found with an emphatic form, namely, *tilgmayds* /tilgmədz/, etc., but if it appears it is usually found with the pronoun *main*, i.e., *mainyn* /mɪnən/: *tilgmainyn* /tilgmɪnən/, confined essentially to Northern dialects.

Imperative: sg. *tilg* /tilg/, pl. *tilg-shiu* /tilg s' u/; or older *tilg-jee* /tilg d'i:/. Verbal adjective: *tilgit* /tilgit'/.

Regular verbs with initial vowel or f-, e.g., *ee* /i:/ 'eating' (stem *ee-* /i:/), *faagail* /fə'ge:l/ 'leaving' (stem *faag-* /fə:g/) are conjugated as follows:

*ee* /i:/ 'eat, act of eating'. Verbal noun

*Future independent*

- 1 sg. *eeym* /i:əm/  
 2 sg. *ee oo* /i:-u/  
 3 sg. m. *ee eh* /i:-a/  
 3 sg. f. *ee ee* /i:-i/  
 1 pl. *eemayd* /i:məd'/  
 2 pl. *ee shiu* /i: s' u/  
 3 pl. *ee ad* /i:-ad/

*Future dependent*

- 1 sg. *n'eeym* /ni:əm/  
 2 sg. *n'ee oo* /ni:-u/  
 3 sg. m. *n'ee eh* /ni:-a/  
 3 sg. f. *n'ee ee* /ni:-i/  
 1 pl. *n'eemayd* /ni:məd'/  
 2 pl. *n'ee shiu* /ni: s' u/  
 3 pl. *n'ee ad* /ni:-ad/



The *-ee-* of the stem absorbs the *-ee* of the Future Independent. However, in practice the auxiliary *jannoo* is used here: *neeym gee* /n'ím 'g'í:/ with the preposition *ag* attached to the verb-noun.

Relative: *eeys* /i:əs/

Preterite independent, dependent: *d'ee mee* /d'i: mi/, etc.

*Conditional independent*

1 sg. *eein* /i:ən'/

2, 3 sg. *eeagh* /i:ax/

pl. *eeagh* /i:ax/

Imperative: sg. *ee* /i:/, pl. *ee-shiu* /i:s'ú/, *ee-jee* /i:d'í:/

Verbal adjective: *eeit* /i:ɪ'/

*Conditional dependent*

1 sg. *n'eein* /ni:ən'/

2, 3 sg. *n'eeagh* /ni:ax/

pl. *n'eeagh* /ni:ax/

*faagail* /fə'ge:l'/ 'leave, act of leaving'. Verbal noun

*Future independent*

1 sg. *faagym* /fə:gəm/

2, 3 sg. *faagee* /fə:gi/

1. pl. *faagmayd* /fə:gmad'/

2, 3 pl. *faagee* /fə:gi/

*Future dependent*

1 sg. *n'aagym* /nə:gəm/

*v'aagym* /və:gəm/

2, 3 sg. *n'aag* /nə:g/

*v'aag* /və:g/

1. pl. *n'aagmayd* /nə:gmad'/

*vaagmayd* /və:gmad'/

2, 3 pl. *n'aag* /nə:g/

*v'aag* /və:g/

Preterite independent, dependent: *d'aag mee* /də:g mi/ etc.

*Conditional independent*

1 sg. *aagin* /ə:gin'/

2, 3 sg. & pl. *aagagh* /ə:gax/

*Conditional dependent*

1 sg. *n'aagin* /nə:gin'/

*v'aagin* /və:gin'/

2, 3 sg. & pl. *n'aagagh* /nə:gax/

*v'aagagh* /və:gax/

Imperative: sg. *faag* /fə:g/, pl. *faag-shiu* /fə:g s'ú/, *faag-jee* /fə:g d'í:/ Verbal adjective: *faagit* /fə:git'/.

*cooinaghtyn* /ku:n'axtən/ 'remember, act of remembering'. Verbal noun. Stem *cooinee* /ku:n'í/.

Verbs in *-agh-* with verb noun in *-agh* /-ax/, *-aghey* /-axə/, *-aghyn* /-axən/, *-aght* /-ax/, *-aghtyn* /-axtən/ convert *-agh-* into *-ee-* to form the stem. This absorbs the *-ee* of the future independent.

*Future independent*

1 sg. *cooineeym* /ku:n'íəm/

2, 3 sg. *cooinee* /ku:n'í/

1 pl. *cooineemayd* /ku:n'íməd'/

2, 3 pl. *cooinee* /ku:n'í/

Relative: *chooinys* /xu:n'əs/, /ku:nəs/

Preterite independent and dependent: *chooinee mee* /xu:n'í mi/, /ku:n'í mi/

*Future dependent*

1 sg. *gooineeym* /gu:n'íəm/

2, 3 sg. *gooinee* /gu:n'í/

1 pl. *gooineemayd* /gu:n'íməd/

2, 3 pl. *gooinee* /gu:n'í/

*Conditional independent*1 sg. *chooineein* /ku:n'í-in'/2, 3 sg. & pl. *chooineeagh* /x/ku:n'iax/Imperative: sg. *cooinee* /ku:n'í/ pl. *cooinee-shiu* /ku:n'í s'ú/, *cooinee-jee* /ku:n'id'í/.Verbal adjective: *cooinit* /ku:n'it'.*Conditional dependent*1 sg. *gooineein* /gu:n'í-in'/2, 3 sg. & pl. *gooineeagh* /gu:n'iax/Verbs in *-agh-* and an initial vowel or *f-* are conjugated as follows:*ynsaghey* /insaxə/ 'learn, act of learning'. Verbal noun. Stem *ynsee* /insi/*Future independent*1 sg. *ynseeym* /insiəm/2, 3 sg. *ynsee* /insi/1 pl. *ynseemayd* /insiməd'/2, 3 pl. *ynsee* /insi/*Future dependent*1 sg. *n'ynseeym* /ninsiəm/2, 3 sg. *n'ynsee* /ninsi/1 pl. *n'ynseemayd* /ninsiməd'/2, 3 pl. *n'ynsee* /ninsi/Preterite independent and dependent: *dynsee mee* /dinsi mi/, etc.*Conditional independent*1 sg. *ynseein* /insi-in'/2, 3 sg. & pl. *ynseeagh* /insiax/Imperative: sg. *ynsee* /insi/, pl. *ynsee-shiu* /insi s'ú/, *ynsee-jee* /insi d'í/.Verbal adjective: *ynsit* /insit'.*Conditional dependent*1 sg. *n'ynseein* /ninsi-in'/2, 3 sg. & pl. *n'ynseeagh* /ninsiax/*follaghey* /folaxə/ 'hide, act of hiding'. Verbal noun. Stem *follee* /foli/*Future independent*1 sg. *folleeym* /foliəm/2, 3 sg. *follee* /foli/1 pl. *folleemayd* /foliməd'/2, 3 pl. *follee* /foli/*Future dependent*1 sg. *n'olleeym* /noliəm/*v'olleeym* /voliəm/2, 3 sg. *n'ollee* /noli/*v'ollee* /voli/1 pl. *n'olleemayd* /noliməd'/*v'olleemayd* /voliməd'/2, 3 pl. *nollee* /noli/*vollee* /voli/Relative: *ollys* /oləs/Preterite independent and dependent: *d'ollee mee* /dolimi/, etc.*Conditional independent*1 sg. *olleein* /oli-in'/

2, 3 sg.

& pl. *oleeagh* /oliax/*Conditional dependent*1 sg. *nolleein* /noli-in'/,*volleein* /voli-in'/2, 3 sg. *nolleeagh* /noliax/,& pl. *volleeagh* /voliax/Imperative: sg. *follee* /foli/, pl. *follee-shiu* /foli s'ú/, *follee-jee* /foli d'í/.Verbal adjective: *follit* /folit'.

*Paradigms of the irregular verbs**cheet* /t'it/, /t'et/ 'come, act of coming'. Verbal noun*Future independent*1 sg. *higgym* /higəm/2, 3 sg. *hig* /hig/1 pl. *higmayd* /higməd'/2, 3 pl. *hig* /hig/*Future dependent*1 sg. *jiggym* /d'igəm/2, 3 sg. *jig* /d'ig/1 pl. *jigmayd* /d'igməd'/2, 3 pl. *jig* /d'ig/Preterite independent: *haink* /heŋk/, /hiŋk/; dependent: *daink* /deŋk/, /diŋk/.*Conditional independent*1 sg. *harrin* /harin'/

2, 3 sg.

& pl. *harragh* /harax/*Conditional dependent*1 sg. *darrin* /darin'/

2, 3 sg.

& pl. *darragh* /darax/Imperative: sg. *tar* /tar/, /tai/, pl. *tar-shiu* /tar s'ul/, *tar-jee* /tar d'ii/.*clashtyn* /klas't'an/ 'hear, act of hearing'. Verbal noun*Future independent*1 sg. *cluinnym* /klunəm/2, 3 sg. *cluinee* /kluni/1 pl. *cluinnmayd* /klunməd'/2, 3 pl. *cluinee* /kluni/*Future dependent*1 sg. *gluinnym* /glunəm/2, 3 sg. *gluin* /glun/1 pl. *gluinnmayd* /glunməd'/2, 3 pl. *gluin* /glun/Relative: *chluinnys* /xlunəs/, /klinəs/.Preterite independent: *cheayll mee* /xi:l mi/, etc.; dependent: *geayll* /gi:l/*Conditional independent*1 sg. *chluinnin* /xlunin'/

2, 3 sg.

& pl. *chluinnagh* /xlunax/*Conditional dependent*1 sg. *gluinnin* /glunin'/

2, 3 sg.

& pl. *gluinnagh* /glunax/Imperative: sg. *clasht* /klas't/, pl. *clasht-shiu* /klas't s'ul/, *clasht-jee* /klas't d'ii/.Verbal adjective: *cluinnit* /klun'it'.*coyrt* /kort/, *cur* /kur/ 'give, put, send, act of giving, putting, sending'. Verbal noun*Future independent*1 sg. *verrym* /verəm/2, 3 sg. *ver* /ver/1 pl. *vermayd* /verməd'/2, 3 pl. *ver* /ver/*Future dependent*1 sg. *derrym* /derəm/2, 3 sg. *der* /der/2 pl. *dermayd* /derməd'/2, 3 pl. *ver* /ver/Preterite independent: *hug* /hug/; dependent: *dug* /dug/.*Conditional independent*1 sg. *verrin* /verin'/

2, 3 sg.

& pl. *veragh* /verax/*Conditional dependent*1 sg. *derrin* /derin'/

2, 3 sg.

& pl. *derragh* /derax/Imperative: sg. *cur* /kur/, pl. *cur-shiu* /kurs'ul/, *cur-jee* /kurd'ii/Verbal adjective: *currit* /kurit'.

*fakin* /fa:gin/ 'see, act of seeing'. Verbal noun

*Future independent*

1 sg. *heeym* /hi:m/

2, 3 sg. *hee* /hi:/

1 pl. *heemayd* /hi:məd'/

2, 3 pl. *hee* /hi:/

*Future dependent*

1 sg. *vaikym* /vakəm/

2, 3 sg. *vaik* /vak/

1 pl. *vaikmayd* /vakməd'/

2, 3 pl. *vaik* /vak/

Preterite independent: *honnick* /honik'/; dependent: *vaik* /vak/.

*Conditional independent*

1 sg. *heein* /hi:in'/

2, 3 sg. *heeagh* /hi:ax/

*Conditional dependent*

1 sg. *vaikin* /vakin'/

2, 3 sg. *vaikagh* /vakax/

Imperative: sg. *jeeagh* /d'i:x/, *cur-my-ner* /kur mə n'ér, n'ær/ or /kurmə n'arr / pl. *jeeagh-shiu* /d'i:x s'ú/  
*jeeagh-jee* /d'i:x d'i:/ *cur-shiu my ner*, n'arr /kur s'ú mə n'ér, n'ær/ *cur-jee my ner*, n'arr /kurd'i: mə  
n'ér, n'ær/

Verbal adjective: *fakinit* /fa:ginit'/.

*geddyn* /gedn/ 'get, act of getting', *feddyn* /fedn/ 'find, act of finding'. Verbal noun

*Future independent*

1 sg. *yioym* /jo:m/

2, 3 sg. *yioiw* /jou/

1 pl. *yiowmayd* /jo:məd'/

2, 3 pl. *yioiw* /jou/

*Future dependent*

1 sg. *noym* /no:m/

*voym* /vo:m/

2, 3 sg. *now* /nou/

*vow* /vou/

1 pl. *nowmayd* /no:məd'/

*vowmayd* /vo:məd'/

2, 3 pl. *now* /nou/

*vow* /vou/

Preterite independent: *hooar* /hu:ɹ/; dependent: *dooar* /du:ɹ/.

*Conditional independent*

1 sg. *yioin* /jo:n'/

2, 3 sg.

& pl. *yioghe* /jo:x/

*Conditional dependent*

1 sg. *noin* /no:n'/

*voin* /vo:n'/

2, 3 sg.

& pl. *noghe* /no:x/,

*voix* /vo:x/

Imperative: sg. *fow* /fou/ pl. *fow-shiu* /fou s'ú/, *fow-jee* /foud'i:/.

Verbal adjective: *geddinit* /gedənit'/, *feddinit* /fedənit'/.

*goll* /gol/ 'go, act of going'. Verbal noun

*Future independent*

1 sg. *hem* /him/, /hem/

2, 3 sg. *hed* /hid/, /hed/

1 pl. *hemmayd* /himəd'/, etc.

2, 3 pl. *hed* /hid/, /hed/, etc.

*Future dependent*

1 sg. *jem* /d'im/, d'em/

2, 3 sg. *jed* /d'id/, /d'ed/

1 pl. *jemmayd* /d'iməd'/, etc.

2, 3 pl. *jed* /d'id/, /d'ed/, etc.

Preterite independent: *hie* /hai/; dependent: *jagh* /d'ax/.

Imperative: sg. *gow* /gou/, *immee* /imi/; pl. *gow-shiu* /gous'ú/, *gow-jee* /goud'i:/, *immee-shiu* /imis'ú/,  
*immee-jee* /imid'i:/.

*gra* /gre:/ ‘say, act of saying’. Verbal noun

*Future independent*

1 sg. *jirrym* /d’irəm/

2, 3 sg. *jir* /d’ir/

1 pl. *jirmayd* /d’irməd’/

2, 3 pl. *jir* /d’ir/

*Future dependent*

1 sg. *n’arrym* /n’arəm/,

*jirrym* /d’irəm/

2, 3 sg. *n’arr* /n’ar/,

*jir* /d’ir/

1 pl. *n’armayd* /n’arməd’/,

*jirmayd* /d’irməd’/

2, 3 pl. *n’arr* /n’ar/,

*jir* /d’ir/

Also *abbyrym* /abərəm/, etc. (indep.), *nabbyrym* /nabərəm/, etc. (dep.)

Preterite independent and dependent: *dooyrt* /du:rt/.

*Conditional independent*

1 sg. *yiarrin* /jarin’/

2, 3 sg.

& pl. *yiarragh* /jarax/

*Conditional dependent*

1 sg. *niarrin* /n’arin’/

2, 3 sg.

& pl. *niarragh* /n’arax/

Imperative sg. *abbyr* /abər/, pl. *abbyr-shiu* /abər s’u/, *abbyr-jee* /abər d’i:/.

Verbal adjective: *grait* /gre:t’/.

## The verb-noun

The verb-noun is a non-finite part of the verb. It is formed by adding a suffix to the verb stem, the most common being *-ey* /ə/; *-aghey* /axə/.

*dooin* /du:n’/ ‘shut’ > *dooney* /du:nə/ ‘shut, act of shutting’ (see below)

*follee* /fəli/ ‘hide’ > *follaghey* /fəlaxə/ ‘hide, act of hiding’ (see p. 327)

Other suffixes used include the following:

*-agh* /ax/: *ettil* /etil’/ ‘fly’ > *etlagh* /etlax/ ‘act of flying’ (with syncope)

*-tyn* /tən/: *ben* /ben/ ‘touch’ > *bentyn* /bentən/ ‘touching’

*-al* /əl/: *cre(i)d* /kred’/ ‘believe’ > *credjal* /kred’əl/ ‘believing’

*-t* /t’/: *freggyr* /fregər/ ‘answer’ > *freggyrt* /fregərt’/ ‘answering’

*-dyn* /dən/: *giall* /g’al/ ‘promise’ > *gialdyn* /g’aldən/ ‘promising’

*-yn* /ən/: *jeeagh* /d’i:x/ ‘look’ > *jeeaghyn* /d’i:xən/ ‘looking’

*-eil* /e:ɪ/: *leeid* /l’i:d/ ‘lead’ > *leeideil* /li’d’e:ɪ/ ‘leading’

*-ys* /əs/: *togher* /to:ɣər/ ‘wind’ > *togherys* /to:ɣərəs/ ‘winding’

*-oo* /u/: *shass* /s’as/ ‘stand’ > *shassoo* /s’a(:)su/ ‘standing’

*-iu* /ju/: *toill* /tol’/ ‘deserve’ > *toilliu* /tol’u/ ‘deserving’

*-lym* /ləm/: *chaggil* /t’agil’/ ‘gather’ > *chaglym* /t’agləm/ ‘gathering’ (see below)

*-chyn* /t’ən/: *toill* /tol’/ ‘deserve’ > *toillchyn* /tol’t’ən/ ‘deserving’

The application of the suffix often causes depalatization of the final stem consonant with or without consequential vowel change:

*bwoaill* /bu:l/ 'strike' > *bwoalley* /bu:lə/ 'act of striking'  
*dooin* /du:n/ 'shut' > *dooney* /du:nə/ 'shutting' (see above)  
*freill* /fre:l/ 'keep' > *freayll* /fri:l/ 'keeping'  
*crie* /krai/ 'shake' > *craa* /kre:/ 'shaking'

Occasionally the verb-noun is identical with the stem:

*caghlaa* /kox'le:/ 'change, changing'  
*creck* /krek/ 'sell, selling'  
*insh* /ins'/ 'tell, telling'  
*lhaih* /l'eil/ 'read, reading'  
*jarrood* /d'ə'ru:d/ 'forget, forgetting'

Stems in *-ee* / *-i* have their verb-noun in *-agh-* / *-ax-* / (see pp. 326–7).

The truly nominal nature of the verb-noun, whereby its object when a substantive is in the genitive, is found in the following famous example in Manx:

*Shooyll ny dhieyn* /s'u:l nə daieɲ/ 'walking (of) the houses', i.e. 'begging'

Here we have a genitive plural indicated by eclipsis after the definite article. Another instance of the nominal character of the verb-noun is its use with the definite article: *ec yn cheet echey* /egən 't'it egə/ 'at his [Christ's] coming'.

#### *Uses of the verb-noun*

1 The verb-noun, preceded by the remnants of the preposition *\*ag* 'at', coalesced with verb-nouns with consonantal anlaut (e.g., *\*ag jannoo* > *jannoo* 'doing'), but surviving as *g-* attached to verb-nouns with vocalic anlaut (cf. *\*ag ee* > *gee* 'eating'), forms the present participle. As such in periphrastic tenses it takes the nominative/accusative of the direct object, whether a noun or pronoun:

*ta mee fakin ny thieyn*  
 /ta mi 'fa:gin' nə 'taieɲ/  
 'I see/am seeing the houses'

*ta mee fakin ad*  
 /ta mi 'fa:gin' ad/  
 'I see/am seeing them'

(see also above).

2 The verb-noun can express the preterite or pluperfect in subordinate clauses with *erreish* or *lurg* 'when/after'.

2.1 *erreish*2.1.1 With *erreish* as a simple preposition:

*tra v'ad erreish bee*  
 /tre: vad e're:s' 'bi:/  
 'when they had eaten' (lit. 'when they were after food')

2.1.2 *erreish* can also appear after *tra* 'when' and be followed by the object + y + verb-noun:

*tra v'eh erreish ny goan shoh y loayrt*  
 /tre: ve: e're:s' nə go:n s'o: ə 'lo:rt/  
 'when he had spoken these words' (lit. 'when he was after these words to speak')

2.1.3 With *erreish* + *da* + verb-noun

*erreish dhyt loayrt*  
 /e're:s' dət' 'lo:rt/  
 'after you have/had spoken'

2.1.4 To reinforce the past tense, however, *v'er* is inserted before the verb-noun to form a sort of perfect infinitive:

*erreish da v'er niee ny cassyn oc*  
 /e're:s' de: ver 'n'i: nə kasən ok/  
 'after he had washed their feet'

*lurg* 'after' can also replace *erreish*:

*lurg dooin cheet back woish y cheayn*  
 /lərg du:n' t'ət 'bak wis'ə 'xidn/  
 'after we had returned from the sea'

*lurg da Nebuchadnezzar v'er chur ersooyl ayns cappeeys Jeconiah*  
 /lug de: N. ver 'xur ə'su:l us'ka:vɪəs J./  
 'after N. had sent J. into captivity'

3 To express an expexegetic infinitive in Manx the verb-noun is preceded by *dy* /də/ (occasionally *y* /ə/) 'to' (+ lenition). This construction is used to avoid a subordinate clause involving a subjunctive:

3.1 *hemmayd stiagh dy chur shilley er y chenn ven*

/heməd' 's't'a:x də kor 's'il'ə erə t'en vedn/  
 '(we'll) let us go in and visit (lit. 'in order to visit, put a sight on') the old woman'

3.2 In Late Manx *dy* is found with *son* as a sort of reinforcement:

*ren eh cur yn soilshey sterrym dom son dy gholl thie*  
 /ren a kurən sail's'ə 'sterəm dum sondə gol 'tai/  
 'he gave me the storm lamp to (lit. 'for to') go home' (i.e., 'in order that I may get home')

3.3 In Late Manx *le* can be used with the verb-noun to express purpose:

*cha nel shin geddyn yn un traa le baghey ayns y seihll shoh*  
 /ha nel s'in gedn ən un tre: le 'be: ə usə 'se:l' s'oi/  
 'we don't all get the same time to live/for living in this world'

3.4 Also with *dys* / *dys* y:

*v'ad goll dys y gheddyn skaddan*  
 /vad gol dusə g'edn' 'sk'adan/  
 'they'd go to get (lit. 'for the getting (of)') herring'

3.5 Explanatory and other clauses in Classical Manx can be expressed by a sort of accusative and infinitive construction, with the accusative having an antecedent in the main clause:

*guee ad er, eh dy uirraght mâroo*  
 /gwi: ad er 'e: də urax me:ru/  
 'they begged him to stay with them' (lit. 'they begged on him, him to stay (lit. 'that he should stay') with them')

4 with *dy* /də/ + passive participle + verb-noun to express purpose:

*nagh vel fys ayd dy vel pooar aym dy dty chrossey?*  
 /na vel fis ed də vel 'pu:r ems də də 'xrosə/  
 'don't you know that I have the power to crucify you?' (lit. 'for your crucifying')

5 *dy* + verb-noun can also be used to express the deliberative (cf. Eng.):

*cha s'aym's c'red dy ghra*  
 /ha sims kirəd də 'gre:/  
 'I don't know what to say'

6 In Late Manx prepositions *ayns* and *roish* are also used in association with verb-nouns:

6.1 *ayns* in the expression of a noun clause:

*ren eh tayrtyn ad ayns geid yn conningyn*  
 /ren e tɑ:rtən ed us geid ən kurən'ən/  
 'he caught them (in) poaching rabbits'



6.2 *roish* + verb-noun to replace an inflected tense:

*roish goll dy lhie*  
 /ros'gol də 'ləi/  
 'before going to bed'

7 The preposition *ry* (latterly *dy*) + verb-noun can express a present passive:

*cha row eh ry gheddyn*  
 /ha reu e rə 'gedin' / (LMx without lenition)  
 'he was not to be found'

*t'eh ry ghra dy dug ee daue mysh shey jeig punt* (LMx; in CMx *shey punt jeig*)  
 /ti rə 'gre: də dugi deu mus' 's' e: d'eg punt/  
 'it is said that she gave them sixteen pounds'

Here *ry ghra* has the tone of a present impersonal passive.

8 The negative used with a verb-noun is *gyn* /gən/ or *dyn* /dən/

*dooyrt mee rish dyn jannoo eh*  
 /du:t mi ris' dən 'd'enu a/  
 'I told him not to do it'

*shoh yn arran ta cheet neose veih niau dy vod dooinney gee jeh, as gyn baase y gheddyn*  
 /s'or(x)an aran ta t'it 'nu:s vei 'n'au də vod dūn' d'gi: de: as gən 'be:s ə yedn/  
 'this is the bread which comes from heaven, that man can eat of it so that he does not die'

**The verbal adjective**

The verbal adjective, or past participle, has the normally inflected forms of *-t*, *-it*, cf. *jeant* /d'ent/ 'done', *currit* /kurit' / 'put'. An older form in *-jei* /d'ə/ (Ir. *-te*) survives in *cailjei* \*/kail'd'ə/ 'lost' (now *caillt* /kal't' /) and *sailjei* /sail'd'ə/ 'salted': *skaddan sailjei* /skadan 'sail'd'ə/ 'salted herring'.

The verbal adjective is used:

1 predicatively with the substantive verb *ta* and the prepositional pronoun *ec* to form the perfect tenses. The meaning is active.

*v'eh jeant echey jea*  
 /ve d'ent egə 'd'e:/  
 'he did/had done it yesterday' (lit. 'it was done at him')

*t'eh jeant echey hannah*  
 /ti 'd'ent egə 'hanə/  
 'he has done it already' (lit. 'it is done at him')

*bee eh jeant echey mairagh*

/bi: e d'ent' egə 'me:ɾax/

'he will have done it (by) tomorrow' (lit. 'it will be done at him')

2 predicatively with *ta* to indicative a state:

*ta'n dorrys jeiht*

/tan dɔrəs 'd'eit'/

'the door is shut'

3 with *geddyn*:

*t'eh geddyn poost jiu*

/ti gedn 'pu:s d'u:/

'he's getting married today'

– a calque on the English idiom.

4 attributively:

*yn dorrys jeiht*

/ən dɔrəs 'd'eit/

'the closed door' (i.e., the back door)

## Pronouns, possessive particles and prepositional pronouns

### Pronouns

The personal pronouns are found in simple and emphatic forms, the latter normally used for emphasis, contrast, or as the antecedent of a relative clause, though in Late Manx they can appear in place of the simple forms.

Singular		Plural	
1	<i>mee</i> /mi/, <i>mish</i> /mis'/	1	<i>shin</i> /s'in/, <i>shiny</i> /s'inyən/
2	<i>oo</i> /u/, <i>uss</i> /us/	2	<i>shiu</i> /s'u/ <i>shiuish</i> /s'us'/
3m.	<i>eh</i> /e, i/, <i>eshyn</i> /es'ən/	3	<i>ad</i> /ad/, <i>adsyn</i> /adsən/
3f.	<i>ee</i> /i/, <i>ish</i> /is'/		

These function both as subject and direct object, though *mayd* /məd'/, found in the future only, serves only as subject.

### Possessive particles

The corresponding possessive particles are:

Singular		Plural	
1	<i>my</i> /mə/ <sup>L</sup>	1	<i>nyn</i> /nən/ <sup>N</sup>
2	<i>dy</i> /də/ <sup>L</sup>	2	<i>nyn</i> /nən/ <sup>N</sup>
3m.	<i>e</i> /ə/ <sup>L</sup>	3	<i>nyn</i> /nən/ <sup>N</sup>
3f.	<i>e</i> /ə/ <sup>0</sup>		

First- and second-person singular and third-person masculine singular occasion lenition (L), and first-, second- and third-person plural, nasalization (N) in the following noun (see also section on mutation above pp. 312–15).

*Prepositional pronouns*

The personal pronouns combine with simple prepositions in seven declensional forms, and as with the personal pronouns, emphatic varieties also occur.

*ec* /ek/ ‘at’

Singular		Plural	
1	<i>aym</i> /im/ <i>aym's</i> /ims/, /iməs/	1	<i>ain</i> /ain/ <i>ainyn</i> /iŋən/
2	<i>ayd</i> /ed/ <i>ayd's</i> /eds/	2	<i>eu</i> /eu/ <i>euish</i> /euis'/
3m.	<i>echey</i> /egə/ <i>echeysyn</i> /egəsən/	3	<i>oc</i> /ok/ <i>ocsan</i> /oksən/
3f.	<i>eck</i> /ek/ <i>eck's</i> /eks'/		

A similar pattern emerges for nominal prepositions, though the personal element appears as an infixed possessive particle:

*(er) son* ‘for’

Singular		Plural	
1	<i>er-my-hon</i> /ermə'hon/		
2	<i>er-dty-hon</i> /erdə'hon/	1, 2, 3	<i>er-nyn-son</i> /ernən'son/
3m.	<i>er-e-hon</i> /erə'hon/		
3f.	<i>er-e-son</i> /erə'son/		

To distinguish between the first-, second- and third-person plural, inflected forms of *ec* would sometimes be attached /ernənsən 'ain/ ‘for us’, /ernənsən 'eu/ ‘for you’, /ernənsən'ok/ for them. This more analytic form developed in Late Manx and in many of the nominal or phrasal prepositions came to replace the inflected forms:  
*son* 1 sg. *son aym* /sonem/, 2 sg. *son ayd* /soned/, etc.

For emphasis the ‘s of the first- and second-person singular of the simple prepositional pronoun could be attached to the nominal element in the phrasal preposition *er-my-hon's* /ermə'hons/, ‘for me’ and to other nouns following the possessive: *my yishig's* /mə'jis'igs/ ‘my father’. The ‘s is also found attached to the verbal inflections of first-person singular of the future and conditional: *hem's* /hems/ ‘I will go’, *yinnin's* /jinins/ ‘I would do’, while to the first-person plural future, *yn* /ən/ is usually attached: *mayd* < *mainyn* /miŋən/ (EM \**meidjyn* \*/meid'ən/).

*Paradigms of prepositional pronouns*

Emphatic suffixes are: 1 sg. 's, 2 sg. 's, 3 sg. m. -syn, 3 sg. f. -ish, 1 pl. -yn, 2 pl. -ish, 3 pl. -syn.

*ass* /as/ 'out of'

Singular		Plural	
1	<i>assym</i> /asəm/	1	<i>assdooyn</i> /asdu:n'/
2	<i>assyd</i> /asəd/	2	<i>assdiu</i> /asd'u:/
3	<i>ass</i> /as/	3	<i>assdaue</i> /asdou/
3m.	<i>assjeh</i> /asd'e:/		
3f.	<i>assjee</i> /asd'i:/		

The third-person singular masculine *assjeh*, the feminine *assjee* and all plural forms are modelled on *da* (qv).

*ayns* /uns/ 'in'

Singular		Plural	
1	<i>aynym</i> /unəm/	1	<i>ayndooyn</i> /u:ndu:n'/
2	<i>aynyd</i> /unəd/	2	<i>ayndiu</i> /u:nd'u:/
3m.	<i>ayn</i> /u:n/ /o:n/	3	<i>ayndaue</i> /u:ndou/
3f.	<i>aynjee</i> /u:nd'i:/		

The third-person singular feminine and plural forms are modelled on *da* (qv).

*da* /de:/ 'to'

Singular		Plural	
1	<i>dou</i> /dou/	1	<i>dooyn</i> /du:n'/
2	<i>dhyt</i> /dit'/	2	<i>diu</i> /d'u:/
3m.	<i>da</i> /de:/	3	<i>daue</i> /dou/
3f.	<i>jee</i> /d'i:/		

*ec* /ek/ 'at'

see above, p. 336.

*er* /er/ 'on'

Singular		Plural	
1	<i>orrym</i> /orəm/	1	<i>orryn</i> /orin'/
2	<i>ort</i> /ort/	2	<i>erriu</i> /eriu/ /eru/
3m.	<i>er</i> /er/	3	<i>oroo</i> /oru/
3f.	<i>urree</i> /uri/		

*fo* /fo/ ‘under’

Singular		Plural	
1	<i>foym</i> /fum/	1	<i>foin</i> /fo:n’/
2	<i>foyd</i> /fud/	2	<i>feue</i> /feu/
3m.	<i>fo</i> /fo/	3	<i>foue</i> /fou/
3f.	<i>foee</i> /fo:i/		

*gollrish* /goris’/ ‘like’

Singular		Plural	
1	<i>gorrym</i> /gorəm/	1	<i>gorrin</i> /gorin’/
2	<i>gorryt</i> /gorət/	2	<i>gorriu</i> /goriu/ /goru/
3m.	<i>gollrish</i> /goris’/	3	<i>gorroo</i> /goru/
3f.	<i>gorree</i> /gori/		

*gys* /gəs/, *hug* /hug/ ‘to, towards’

Singular		Plural	
1	<i>hym</i> /hum/	1	<i>hooin</i> /hu(:)n’/
2	<i>hood</i> /hud/	2	<i>hiu</i> /heu/
3m.	<i>huggey</i> /hugə/	3	<i>huc</i> /huk/ /hok/
3f.	<i>huic</i> /huk/ /hok/		

*harrish* /haris’/ /heris’/ ‘over’; a compound of *rish*

Singular		Plural	
1	<i>harrym</i> /harəm/	1	<i>harrin</i> /harin’/
2	<i>harryd</i> /harəd/	2	<i>harriu</i> /haru/
3m.	<i>harrish</i> /haris’/		<i>harrishdiu</i> /haris’d’u:/
3f.	<i>harree</i> /hari/	3	<i>harrystoo</i> /haristul/

The second- and third-person plural forms are partly modelled on *da* (qv)

*jeh* /d’e:/ ‘of’

Singular		Plural	
1	<i>jeem</i> /d’i:m/	1	<i>jìn</i> /d’i:n/
2	<i>jeed</i> /d’i:d/	2	<i>jiu</i> /d’u:/
3m.	<i>jeh</i> /d’e:/	3	<i>jeu</i> /d’eu/
3f.	<i>jee</i> /d’i:/		

*lesh* /l'es'/ 'with'

<b>Singular</b>		<b>Plural</b>	
1	<i>lhiam</i> /l'am/ /l'em/	1	<i>lhinn</i> /l'in'/
2	<i>lhiat</i> /l'at, l'et/	2	<i>lhiu</i> /l'eu/
3m.	<i>lesh</i> /l'es'/	3	<i>lhieu</i> /l'iu/
3f.	<i>lhee</i> /l'ei/		

*liorish* /l'ouris'/ 'by'; a compound of *rish* (qv)

<b>Singular</b>		<b>Plural</b>	
1	<i>liorym</i> /l'ourəm/	1	<i>liorin</i> /l'ourin'/
2	<i>liort</i> /l'ourt/	2	<i>lieriu</i> /l'e:ru/
3m.	<i>liorish</i> /l'ouris'/	3	<i>lioroo</i> /l'ouru/, /l'o:ru/
3f.	<i>lioree</i> /l'ouri/		

*mârish* /me:ris'/ 'with, in company with'; a compound of *rish* (qv)

<b>Singular</b>		<b>Plural</b>	
1	<i>mârym</i> /me:rəm/	1	<i>mârin</i> /me:rin'/
2	<i>mayrt</i> /mæ:rt/	2	<i>meriu</i> /me:ru/
3m.	<i>mârish</i> /me:ris'/	3	<i>mâroo</i> /me:ru/
3f.	<i>mâree</i> /me:ri/		

*rish* /ris'/ 'to, towards'

<b>Singular</b>		<b>Plural</b>	
1	<i>rhym</i> /rum/	1	<i>rooin</i> /ru:n'/
2	<i>rhyt</i> /ræt/	2	<i>riu</i> /ru:/
3m.	<i>rish</i> /ris'/	3	<i>roo</i> /ru:/
3f.	<i>r'ee</i> /ri:/		

*roish* /ro:s'/ 'before'

<b>Singular</b>		<b>Plural</b>	
1	<i>roym</i> /ro:m/ /ru:m/	1	<i>roin</i> /ro:n'/
2	<i>royd</i> /ro:d/	2	<i>reue</i> /reu/
3m.	<i>roish</i> /ro:s'/	3	<i>roue</i> /rou/, <i>rhymboo</i> /rumbu/
	<i>rhymbiu</i> /rumbu/		
3f.	<i>roee</i> /ro:i/, <i>rhymbée</i> /rumbi/		

*veih* /vei/, *voish* /wus'/ 'from'

Singular	Plural
1 <i>voym</i> /vu:m/, /wu:m/	1 <i>voin</i> /vu:n'/, /wu:n'/
2 <i>voyd</i> /vu:d/, /wu:d/	2 <i>veue</i> /veu/, /weu/
3m. <i>voish</i> /wu(:)s'/	3 <i>voue</i> /vu:/, /wu:/
3f. <i>voee</i> /vui/, /wui/	

The following are nominal prepositional pronouns; in some cases only the noun is found.

*With preposition*

*erskyn* /er'ski:n/ 'above'

Singular: 1 *er-my-skyn* /ermə'ski:n/, 2 *er-dty-skyn* /erdə'ski:n/, 3m. *er-e-skyn* /erə'ski:n/,  
3f. *er-e-skyn* /erə'ski:n/

Plural: *er-nyn-skyn* /ernən'ski:n/

*mychione* /mə'x'eun/, /mə'k'eun/ 'concerning'

Singular: 1 *my-my-chione* /məmə'x'eun/ etc., 2 *my-dty-chione* /mədə'x'eun/, 3m. *my-e-chione* /mə'x'eun/ etc., 3f. *my-e-kione* /mə'k'eun/

Plural: *my-nyn-gione* /mənən'g'eun/

*son* /son/ 'for the sake of'

Singular: 1 *er-my-hon* /ermə'hon/, 2 *er-dty-hon* /erdə'hon/, 3m. *er-e-hon* /erə'hon/, 3f. *er-e-son* /erə'son/

Plural: *er-nyn-son* /ernən'son/

In nominal prepositional pronouns such as the above, one finds in Late Manx particularly the possessive object particle replaced by the personal forms of *ec* on the analogy of the periphrastic possessive construction, for example, instead of *my-my-chione* we find *mychione aym*, *er-e-hon* > (*er*)*son echey*, etc. (cf. above).

This construction is commonly found in the plural for clarity, where the inflected form is unclear: *my-nyn-gione* > *mychione ain*, *eu*, *oc*.

The following can also be similarly treated:

*my noi* /mə'nai/ 'against'

Singular: 1 *my noi aym* /mə'nai em/, 2 *my noi ayd* /mə'nai ed/, 3m. *my noi echey* /ma'nai egəl/, 3f. *my noi eck* /mə'nai ek/

Plural: 1 *my noi ain* /mə'nai ain/, 2 *my noi eu* /mə'nai eu/ 3 *my noi oc* /mə'nai ok/

*mygeayrt* /mə'gi:rt/ 'around'

Singular: 1 *mygeayrt aym* /mə'gi:rt em/, etc.

*mygeayrt-y-mysh* /mə'gi:rtə'muʃ/ 'round about'

Singular: 1 *mygeayrt-y-moom* /mə'gi:rtə'mum/, 2 *mygeayrt-y-mood* /mə'gi:rtə'mud/,  
3m. *mygeayrt-y-mysh* /mə'gi:rtəmus'/, 3f. *mygeayrt-y-mooee* /mə'gi:rtə'mui/

Plural: 1 *mygeayrt-y-mooiin* /mə'gi:rtəmun'/, 2 *mygeayrt-y-miu* /mə'gi:rtəmu/,  
3 *mygeayrt-y-mool* /mə'gi:rtəmu/

*Without a preposition*

*cour* /kauər, keuər/ ‘for’

Singular: 1 *my chour* /mə 'xauər/, /mə 'kauər/, 2 *dy chour* /də 'xauər/, /də 'kauər/ 3m. *ny chour* /nə 'xauər/, /nə 'kauər/, 3f. *ny cour* /nə 'kauər/ (rare)

Plural: *nyn gour* /nən 'gauər/

*fud* /fud/ ‘among’

Plural only: *nyn vud* /nə 'vud/

With *ec*: *nyn vud ain*, *eu*, *oc* /nə 'vud ain, eu, ok/

*fegooish* /fə'gu:s'/ ‘without, in the absence of’

Singular: 1 *m'egooish* /mə 'gu:s'/, 2 *dt'egooish* /də 'gu:s'/, 3m. *n'egooish* /nə 'gu:s'/, 3f. *ny fegooish* /nə fə'gu:s'/ (rare)

Plural: *nyn vegooish* /nən və'gu:s'/

Often with *ec*: *fegooish echey* /fə'gu:s' egə/, etc.

*lurg* /lɜrg/ ‘after’

Singular: 1 *my lurg* /mə 'lɜrg/, *dy lurg* /də 'lɜrg/, 3 *ny lurg* /nə 'lɜrg/

Plural: *nyn lurg* /nə 'lɜrg/

*ny yei* /nə 'jei/ ‘after’ (no simple prepositional form)

Singular: 1 *my yei* /mə 'jei/, *dy yei* /də 'jei/, *ny yei* /nə 'jei/

Plural: *nyn yei* /nə 'jei/

Frequently with *ec*: *nyn yei ain* /nə jei ain/, etc.

*mastey* /mastə/ ‘among’

Plural only: 1 *ny mast'ain* /nə 'mastain/, 2 *ny mast'eu* /nə 'masteu/, 3 *ny mast'oc* /nə 'mastok/

*noi* /nai/ ‘against’

Singular: 1 *m'oi* /m'ai/, 2 *dt'oi* /d'ai/, 3 *m. noi* /nai/, 3f. *ny hoi* /nə 'hai/

Plural: *nyn oi* /nə 'nai/

Frequently with *ec*: *noi aym* /'nai em/, etc.

*trooid* /tru:d/ ‘through’

Singular: 1 *my hrooid* /mə 'hru:d/, 2 *dy hrooid* /də 'hru:d/, 3m. *ny hrooid* /nə 'hru:d/, 3f. *ny trooid* /nə 'tru:d/ (rare)

Plural: *nyn drooid* /nən 'dru:d/

‘Towards’ (= meeting) can be expressed by *çheet* ‘coming’ plus *quaiyl* /kwe:l'/(Ir. *cómhdháil*) with appropriate preceding possessive particle:

Singular: 1 *my whaiyl* /mə 'hwe:l'/, 2 *dy whaiyl* /də 'hwe:l'/, 3m. *ny whaiyl* /nə 'hwe:l'/  
3f. *ny quaiyl* /nə kwe:l' (rare)

Plural: *nyn guaiyl* /nən 'gwe:l' /

For example:

*bee eh çheet my whaiyl mairagh*

/bi: a t'it mə 'hwe:l' 'me:rex/

‘he’ll be meeting me (lit. ‘coming my meeting’) tomorrow’



In Late Manx this construction has largely been replaced by *meeiteil* /mə'de:ɪ/ (<Eng. 'meet' + vn. ending *-eil*) + the prepositional pronoun *rish*.

### Demonstratives and *hene* 'self'

The demonstratives *shoh* /s'ɔ:/ 'this', *shen* /s'en/ 'that', *shid* /s'id/ 'yonder' and *hene* /hi:n/ 'self' can be attached to all pronominal forms (*hene* becomes *pene* after *-m*): *mee hene* /mi 'hi:n/ 'myself', *er-my-hon hene* /er mə 'hon 'hi:n/ 'for my part', *orrym pene* /orəm 'pi:n/ 'on myself', while *hene* following a possessive expresses 'own': *my hie hene* /mə 'hai 'hi:n/ 'my own house'.

In the singular the demonstratives can serve also as pronouns in a non-personal sense *ta shen mie dy liooar* /ta 's'en mai də'l'u:ə/ 'that's all right'. But in the plural they require the third-person plural pronoun *ad shen* /ad's'en/ 'those, those ones' *roo shen* /ru's'en/ 'to those'.

In the imperative singular and second-person plural, emphasis is expressed by the attachment of the emphatic form of the respective personal pronouns to the imperative form: *jean uss eh* /d'en 'us e/ 'you (sg.) do it', *trog-jee shiuish eh* /trog d'i 's'us' e/ 'you (pl.) lift it'.

## SYNTAX

### The noun phrase

The noun itself is the minimum element of a noun phrase. It is usually found with other elements. The sequence of elements in the noun phrase is: preposition – article or possessive particle – numeral – adjectival prefix – noun – adjective modifier – adjective – demonstrative. The article is definite only (see above p. 321). The numeral may be split (see pp. 318–20).

The adjectival prefixes are limited and include:

<i>ard</i> /a:rd/, /ə:rd/ 'high, main, chief':	<i>ard valley</i> /a:rd 'vaɪl'ə/ 'city';
<i>drogh</i> /dɾox/ 'bad':	<i>drogh vraane</i> /dɾox 'vɾe:n/ 'bad women';
<i>shenn</i> /s'an/ 'old':	<i>shenn ven</i> /s'an 'vedn/ 'old woman';
<i>reih</i> /rai/ 'choice':	<i>y reih dooinney</i> /ə rai dun 'ə/ 'the best man'.

The adjectival modifiers are also limited:

<i>feer</i> /fi:r/ 'very':	<i>feer vie</i> /fi:r 'vai/ 'very good';
<i>lane</i> /ledn/ 'quite':	<i>lane vie</i> /ledn 'vai/ 'quite well';
<i>braew</i> /breu/ 'fine':	<i>braew vie</i> /breu 'vai/ 'very well';
<i>ro</i> /ro:/ 'too':	<i>ro vooar</i> /ro: 'vu:ɾ/ 'too big';
<i>mie</i> /mai/ 'very':	<i>mie chiune</i> /mai 'x'u:n/ 'very calm'.

The demonstratives require the article before the noun: *ny deiney shoh* /nə de:n 'ə 's'ɔ:/ 'these men'. An alternative to the possessive particle + noun is the (more common) periphrastic article + noun + *ec*:

*my hie* /mə 'hai/ 'my house' > *yn thie aym* /ən 'tai im/ lit. 'the house at me'.

The article is not used with a noun + definite or indefinite dependent genitive (whether marked or unmarked: *jerrey yn chaggey* /d'ɛrə ən xɑ:gəl/ 'the end of the war', *jerrey caggey* /d'ɛrə kɑ:gəl/ 'end of war' (see p. 315).

### The verb phrase

The verbal phrase may be a single item, or, more commonly, a phrase in which the verb conveys the tense with the person usually represented by a pronoun, or in which the tense is conveyed by an auxiliary verb.

The distinction between independent and dependent verbal forms is well maintained in Manx in the auxiliaries and small group of eight irregular verbs. (See above pp. 323–4.)

Inflected tenses are: future, conditional/past subjunctive and preterite.

#### *The future*

The future first singular is inflected, *-ym* /əm/, the remaining persons have *-ee* /i/ (independent) and zero (dependent) with pronoun *mayd* /məd'/ (in Late Manx, also *main* /main/, *shin* /s'in/) in the first-person plural. The relative has *-ys* /əs/. Using *tilgey* /tilgəl/ 'act of throwing, casting', as an example.

Independent: *tilgym, tilgee oo, eh, ee, mayd, shiu, ad*  
 Dependent: *cha dilgym, cha dilg oo, eh, etc.*  
 Relative: *hilgys*

#### *The conditional/past subjunctive*

The conditional first-person singular has *-in* /in/, the rest *-agh* /ax/ + pronoun (1 pl. *shin*; in Late Manx also *main*), with permanent lenition in the independent and nasalization in the dependent form:

Independent: *hilgin, hilgagh oo, eh, ee, shin/main, shiu, ad*  
 Dependent: *cha dilgin, dilgagh oo, eh, etc.*

#### *The preterite*

The preterite has no personal inflections, no independent–dependent contrast (except in some irregular verbs), and is permanently lenited. The dependent form may preserve the preterite particle *d'*:

Independent: *hilg mee, oo, eh, etc.*  
 Dependent: *cha dilg mee, oo, eh, etc.*

#### *The imperative*

The imperative is used in commands and exhortations and exists in the second-person singular and second-person plural only, the singular with zero inflection, the plural with the suffix *-jee* /-d'i:/, sometimes *-shiu* /-s'u:/: 2 sg. *tilg*, 2 pl. *tilg-jee* / *tilg-shiu*.

In the third-person singular and plural and the first-person plural, the corresponding construction is usually *lhig* /l'ig/ 'let, allow' (always singular) + 3 sg. m. *da* /de:/ 'to him', *jee* /d'i/ 'to her', 1 pl. *dooin* /du:n'/ 'to us', 3 pl. *daue* /dau/ 'to them' + verbal noun *lhig dooin tilgey* 'let us throw'.

*The auxiliary ve 'be'*

The auxiliary *ve* has inflected forms (see the section on verbs above pp. 323–4). The present and preterite are used to express the present and imperfect of other verbs by means of the preposition *\*ag* ‘at’ (reduced to *g-* before vocalic anlaut, zero before consonants) and the verbal noun.

Present:	<i>ta mee tilgey</i> ‘I am throwing, I throw’
Imperfect:	<i>v’ad tilgey</i> ‘they were throwing, used to throw’

The perfect, future perfect, past conditional and pluperfect are formed with *er* /*er*<sup>L</sup>/ (*er*<sup>N</sup> usually with /*t*/ or /*t’*/ anlaut) in place of *\*ag*:

Perfect:	<i>ta mee er dilgey</i> ‘I have thrown’
Future perfect:	<i>tra veesmayd er dilgey</i> ‘when we (will) have thrown’
Past conditional:	<i>veign er dilgey</i> ‘I would have thrown’
Pluperfect:	<i>va mee er dilgey</i> ‘I had thrown’

These tenses of the perfect series are found in common use.

*The auxiliary jannoo ‘do’*

The second auxiliary *jannoo* /*d’enu*/ has also an independent existence and is fully inflected. (See above, p. 324, for paradigms.)

As an auxiliary *jannoo* provides an alternative to the four inflected tenses, its own forms governing the verb-noun as a direct object, with *g-* prefixed to an initial vowel.

Future:	<i>neeym tilgey</i> ‘I will throw’ = <i>tilgym</i> (though the inflected form can also have the force of a habitual present), lit. ‘I will do a throwing’.
Preterite:	<i>ren mee tilgey</i> = <i>hilg mee</i> , lit. ‘I did a throwing’.
Conditional:	<i>cha jinnagh eh tilgey</i> = <i>cha dilgagh eh</i> , lit. ‘I would not do a throwing’.
Imperative:	<i>jean tilgey eh</i> ‘throw it!’, lit. ‘do a throwing it’.

As a result there is no compulsion to use the inflected forms of any verb except the two auxiliaries, and the preference for this analytical form grew almost to exclude the other, particularly in Late Manx. The auxiliary *jannoo* may be used with *jannoo* itself: *ren mee jannoo eh* ‘I did it’, lit. ‘I did a doing it’. (For the forms of the direct object see the section on the simple sentence below, pp. 348–52).

*The passive*

With the exception of *ruggyr* /*rugə*/ ‘is born’ (used also as a preterite, Ir. *rugadh*), the formation of the passive in Manx is comprised of an analytical construction taking three forms:

1 *ve* + past participle

The passive can be formed with any tense of *ve* plus the past participle with suffix *-it* or *-t*. This construction is quite common in Late Manx.

*v’eh tilgit* ‘it was thrown’, *v’eagh eh er ve tilgit* ‘it would have been thrown’.

## 2 *ve + er + possessive pronoun + verbal noun*

In the early and middle period the preferred construction was *er + appropriate possessive pronoun in concord with the subject (but gradually becoming fixed in the third-person singular masculine form) + verb-noun*: *va mee er my hilgey* 'I was thrown', lit. 'I was after my throwing', *v'ee er ny tilgey* 'she was thrown', *v'ad er nyn dilgey* 'they were thrown', > *va mee / v'ee / v'ad er ny hilgey*, etc., imperative *bee-jee er nyn dilgey*. In the perfect series *t'ad er ve er nyn dilgey* 'they have been thrown', lit. 'they have been after their throwing', *veagh eh er ve er ny hilgey* 'he would have been thrown', *bee shiu er ve er nyn dilgey* 'you (pl.) will have been thrown', *v'ad er ve er nyn dilgey* 'they had been thrown' are less common, the present series often sufficing as a replacement.

## 3 *Goll + er + verb-noun*

A third possibility is to use *goll /gol/ 'going' + er + verb-noun*: *hem er tilgey* 'I will be thrown' (lit. 'I will go after throwing'), *hie eh er tilgey* 'he was thrown', *t'eh goll er tilgey* 'he is thrown', *v'ad goll er tilgey* 'they were thrown'; no imperative.

### *The direct object*

The varied structure of the verbal phrase generates a variety of treatments of the direct object.

### *The simple verb*

The simple verb treats the nominal and pronominal objects alike: *hilg eh yn shleiy* /hilge ən s'lei/ 'he threw the spear', *hilg eh eh* /'hilge-a/ 'he threw it'.

With the auxiliary *ve*, the order is as above with a nominal object: *v'eh tilgey yn shleiy* 'he was throwing the spear'. A pronoun object can either follow the verb-noun: *v'eh tilgey eh*, or be infixed in a prepositional phrase before the verb-noun *v'eh dy hilgey eh*, the final *eh* supporting *dy* 'at its' (lit. 'he was at its throwing'). The complete paradigm would be:

1 sg.	<i>v'eh dy my<sup>L</sup> hilgey</i> /vi: dəmə 'hilgə/	1, 2, 3, pl.	<i>v'eh dyn<sup>N</sup> dilgey</i> /vi: dən 'dilgə/
2 sg.	<i>v'eh dy dty<sup>L</sup> hilgey</i> /vi: dədə 'hilgə/	or 1 pl.	<i>v'eh dyn<sup>N</sup> dilgey shin</i> /vi: dən 'dilgə s'in'/
3 sg. m.	<i>v'eh dy<sup>L</sup> hilgey</i> /vi: də 'hilgə/	2 pl.	<i>v'eh dyn<sup>N</sup> dilgey shiu</i> /vi: dən 'dilgə s'u/
3 sg. f.	<i>v'eh dy tilgey</i> /vi: də 'tilgə/	3 pl.	<i>v'eh dyn<sup>N</sup> dilgey ad</i> /vi: dən 'dilgə ad/

As can be seen there is no need for reinforcement by the personal pronoun after the verbal noun in the first- and second-person singular because the meaning is clear. However, the third-person singular masculine has become the norm for both genders, making clarification necessary.

For the plural forms, because the same form is used for all three persons, specification of the person via the personal pronoun was thereafter necessary:

*ta mish dyn goyrt shiu magh/*  
/ta mis' dən go:rt s'u 'max/  
'I send you out' (Luke 10:3)

Already in Classical Manx the third-person singular was becoming the general form for all persons:

*ta mish dy chasherickey mee hene*  
 /ta mis' də xas'ərikə mi 'hi:n/  
 'I am making/I make myself holy'

This led to the use of the personal pronouns in each case; *dy* would then fall out because unstressed (with return to the radical):

*v'eh dy my hilgey > v'eh dy hilgey mee > v'eh tilgey mee*

The alternative with *dy* is more common when the object precedes the verb: *shoh ta mee dy ghra* 'this I say', or in a relative clause when the relative is accusative: *cha nel mee toiggal ny t'eh dy ghra* 'I don't understand what (that which) he is saying'. In the perfect series both noun and pronoun follow the verb-noun: *t'ad er dilgey yn shleiy* 'they have thrown the spear', *t'ad er dilgey eh* 'they have thrown it'. But in a relative clause with preceding object Early Manx/Classical Manx include the object pronoun: *shoh yn shleiy t'eh er ny hilgey* 'this is the spear he has thrown' (lit. '... is after its throwing'). However, the ambiguity in *t'eh er ny hilgey* which could mean 'he has thrown it' or 'he has been thrown' led to this construction falling into disuse; it persisted longer in the first and second persons: *t'eh er my hilgey* 'he has thrown me'.

In Late Manx the pronominal object of a verb-noun can be expressed by the periphrastic construction on the analogy of the ordinary noun:

*ta shin fakin ain hene aeg foast*  
 /ta s'in fa:gin' ain 'hi:n 'e:g fo:s/  
 'we are seeing ourselves young still'

In Classical Manx this would be expressed as *ta shin dyn vakin shin hene aeg foast* (see with *tilgey* above).

With the auxiliary *jannoo*, the noun object can either follow the verbal noun: *ren eh tilgey yn shleiy* 'he threw the spear' (lit. 'he did a throwing the spear'), or be placed before it: *ren eh y shleiy y hilgey* (lit. 'he did the spear to throw'). In a relative clause with preceding object the *y* /ə/ is found included: *shoh yn shleiy ren eh y hilgey* 'this is the spear which he threw' (lit. 'this is the spear, he did its throwing'). The pronoun has three options:

- 1 It may take the possessive form before the verb-noun: *ren eh y hilgey eh* (with supporting *eh* as above); more common in the first and second persons.
- 2 It may be treated in the same way as the noun: *ren eh eh y hilgey* (lit. 'he did it to throw'), common in Classical Manx.
- 3 Or it may follow the verb-noun: *ren eh tilgey eh*. This came to be the more common use in Late Manx.

## The modals

### Ability

1 *fod* /fod/: Ability can be expressed with *fod* in all its inflected forms: *cha noddym jannoo eh*, *cha noddym eh y jannoo* /ha nodəm d'enu ə/, /ha nodəm 'e: ə 'jenu/ 'I cannot

do it', *oddagh shin coayl eh /odax s'in' ko:l a/* 'we could lose him', *cha dod mee jannoo eh / ha dod mi d'enu a/* 'I couldn't do it'. *fod* has no verb-noun.

2 *jarg /d'eg/*: This is found only in its dependent form: *cha jargin goll /ha d'egin 'gol/* 'I couldn't go', *cha jarg shiu fakin red erbee /ha d'eg s'u fa:gin' ridə'bi/* 'you can't see anything'.

3 *abyl /e:bəl/*: Most common in the Late Manx period. It is used with *ve* and can be followed by the infinitival *dy*: *v'ad abyl jannoo red erbee /vad e:bəl d'enu ridə'bi/* 'they could/were able to do anything', *t'ad abyl dy chreck red erbee /tad e:bəl də kre:k ridə'bi/* 'they're able to sell anything'.

4 *son /son/*: Common in Late Manx: *cha row eh son loayrt Gaelg edyr /ha rau i son lo:rt gil'k' eda/* 'he wasn't able to speak Manx at all'. Earlier this would have meant 'he wasn't for (didn't want to) speaking Manx at all'.

Ability can also be expressed by the future: *c'red neemayd gre? /kirəd n'i:məd' gre/* 'what can we say?'

#### Possibility

In Manx this is expressed with *foddee /fodi/* 'perhaps' (lit. 'it may be') + *dy* + dependent: *foddee dy vel eh aynshoh /fodi də 'vel e u'so:/* 'perhaps he is here'; in the negative with *nagh* + dependent: *foddee nagh bee eh aynshoh jiu /fodi nax bi: e u'so: 'd'u/* 'perhaps he won't be here today'.

#### Permission

This is usually expressed by *lhiggey /l'igə/* mostly found as an imperative *lhig dooin goll /l'ig du:n' 'gol/* 'let us go' (see also the section on the imperative above). It can also be expressed by *kied /k'ed/* 'permission': *va kied echey goll thie /va k'ed egə gol 'tai/* 'he had permission to go home'.

#### Necessity

This is mostly expressed with a copula construction: *sheign /saidn/* (all tenses), or occasionally with *beign* (past): *sheign dooin goll /saidn du:n' 'gol/* 'we must go', *cha neign dooin goll /ha 'naidn du:n' 'gol/* 'we don't/didn't have to go'. In Late Manx *foarst /fo:s/* (< Eng. 'forced') was quite often used: *v'ad foarst faagail y vaatey /vad 'fo:s fə'ge:l'ə 've:ɔd/* 'they had to leave the boat'.

#### Obligation

Obligation is expressed by *lhisin /l'isin'/* (1st pers. sg.), *lhisagh /l'isax/* (with other persons): *lhisagh oo goll thie /l'isaxu gol 'tai/* 'you should go home'. Absence of obligation can be expressed with the copula + *cummey /kumə/* 'equal, indifferent' + personal forms of *lesh*:

*s'cummey lhiam eh*

*/skumə l'am e:/*

'it doesn't matter to me' (lit. 'it is equal with me it')

or of *da*:

*s'cummei dou beagh keead punt aym*  
 /skumə dou bi:x ki:d 'punt em/  
 'I don't mind/wouldn't mind if I had a hundred pounds'

It can also be expressed with the negative of *ve* + *feme* /fe:m, febm/ 'need' + prepositional pronoun *ec*:

*cha row feme oc goll*  
 /ha rau febm ok gol/  
 'they didn't have to go'

## Adverbs

Adverbs are formed from the adjective by prefixing *dy* /də/ to the positive form: *ren eh dy mie* /ren e də 'mai/ 'he did well'. Certain adverbs of manner do not take *dy*, namely, *ghelleeragh* /t'ə'li:rax/ 'quick', *doaltattym* /dɔ:l'tad'əm/ 'sudden', *kiart* /mie dy liooar /k'at, mai də 'l'u:r/ 'right, good enough', *myr shoh*, *myr shen* /mə's'ɔ:/, /mə's'en/ 'like this /that'. The compared adverb takes the same form as the predicative of the adjective. In relative clauses, however, the compared adverb may be replaced by the compared adjective attached to the antecedent:

*yn fer share ren eh*  
 /ən fer 's'e:r ren e/  
 '(it was) the best man (who) did it'

## The simple sentence

### Normal word order

The normal order of elements in the simple sentence and in clauses of a complex sentence is: verb + subject + direct object + indirect object. Adverbial elements are more mobile and can occur at the beginning or end of this series: *hug eh yn skian da'n dooinney* /hug e ən skidn dən 'dun'ə/ 'he gave the knife to the man'. *Dy tappee hug eh yn skian da'n dooinney* or *hug eh . . . da'n dooinney dy tappee* 'quickly . . .' or '. . . quickly'. The verb is in absolute initial position only in affirmative single-clause sentences, otherwise it is preceded by: co-ordinating conjunctions: *agh hilg mee eh* /ax hilg mi a/ 'but I threw it', subordinating conjunctions: *tra hilg mee eh* /tre: hilg mi a/ 'when I threw it', the negative: *cha hilg mee eh* /ha 'hilg mi a/ 'I did not throw it', the interrogative: (ø) *vel eh tilgey eh* /vel e 'tilgə a/ 'is he throwing it?', the negative interrogative: *nagh vel oo tilgey eh?* /nax na velu tilgə a/, and the like. Except for the negative it is possible for reasons of style to place other elements in initial position: *da'n dooinney hug eh yn skian* /dən 'dun'ə hug e ən skidn/ 'to the man he gave the knife', *yn skian hug eh da'n dooinney* /ən skidn hug e dən 'dun'ə/ 'the knife he gave to the man'.

*With the substantive verb*

With the substantive verb the usual order is verb + subject + complement (for example, adjective, adverb, prepositional phrase):

*t'eh agglagh*  
/ti: 'aglax/  
'it is awful'

*t'eh dy mie*  
/ti: də 'mai/  
'he is well'

*t'eh ayns y thie-oast*  
/ti: usə tai 'o:s/  
'he's in the ale house'

When used absolutely without predicate, the position of the predicate is filled by the third-person singular masculine prepositional pronoun *ayn* /u:n/ 'in it':

*ta laa braew grianagh ayn*  
/ta: le: breu 'griənax u:n/  
'there's a fine sunny day in it' (Manx-English)

In indicating a state of affairs or function (e.g. a job) the indefinite predicate noun appears usually with the substantive verb in the following formula: *ta* + subject + *in* plus possessive particle coalesced + predicate:

*t'eh ny<sup>L</sup> wooiney mie*  
/ti:nə wun'ə 'mai/  
'he's a good man' (lit. 'he is in his good man')

*t'eh ny<sup>L</sup> chadley*  
/ti:nə 'xadlə/  
'he is asleep' (lit. 'in his sleeping')

*ta shin nyn<sup>N</sup> gadley*  
/ta s'in' nən 'gadla/  
'we are asleep' (lit. 'in our sleeping')

Usually there is concord in the coalesced possessive particle, but in Late Manx particularly this has become generalized in the third-person singular masculine irrespective of the person or number of the antecedent:

*ta mee my veshthey > ny veshthey*  
/ta:mi mə 'ves't'ə, nə 'ves't'ə/  
'I am drunk' ('I am in my drunkenness')



*With the copula*

Apart from its primary functions of emphasis and in the construction of compared adjectives, the copula is much less used than the substantive verb and lacks a complete range of tense forms. The paradigm could be sketched as follows:

	<b>Independent</b>	<b>Dependent</b>
Present/future	<i>is /is/, she /s'e/</i>	<i>nee, /ni:/, re /re:/</i>
Relative	<i>'s</i>	
Past conditional	<i>by, b' /bə/</i> (in set phrases only)	<i>by, b' /bə/</i>

The order is: verb + complement + subject:

*is/she Manninagh mish*  
*/is/s'e: 'manənax mis'/*  
 'I am a Manxman' (lit. 'is/is-it a Manxman I')

or with relative as subject:

*she Manninagh ta mish*  
*/s'e: 'manənax ta 'mis'/*  
 'it is a Manxman which I am'

The use of past-tense form *by, b' /bə/* in set phrases would include the following:

*cha b' lhiass /ha'blas/* 'was not necessary, no need' (pres. *s' lhiass*, + *da*)  
*cha b' lhiass dhyt jannoo shen*  
*/ha'blas dət d'enu s'en/*  
 'there was no need for you to do that'

*cha b' lhoys /ha'blo:s/* 'dared not' (pres. *s' lhoys* + *da*)  
*cha b' lhoys dhyt ennym kayt y ghra er boayrd y vaatey*  
*/ha'blo:s dət' enəm'ket ə gre: er 'bo:rd ə 've:də/*  
 'you dared not mention the name of a cat on board the boat'

Only in the present affirmative can the copula be omitted before the demonstrative and (emphatic) personal pronoun (though not in Early Manx):

*shoh yn ree*  
*/s'ox ən 'ri:/*  
 'this/here (is) the king'

*eshyn yn ree*  
*/es'ən ən 'ri:/*  
 'he (is) the king'

but:

*cha nee eshyn yn ree*  
 /hani: es'ən ən 'ri:/  
 'he is not the king'

Note here that in definite copula sentences the positions of the complement and subject are reversed.

The zero copula is also found, though with declining frequency, when two nominal groups are equated:

*Juan Mooar yn fer share*  
 /d'uən 'mu:r ən fer 's'e:r/  
 'Big John is the best man'

In Late Manx the zero copula is often replaced by the substantive verb: *ta Juan Mooar yn fer share*, a situation not yet found in Irish or Scottish Gaelic, so far as is known.

### Questions

In the absence of 'yes' and 'no' equivalents in Manx, an affirmative or negative response is conveyed by repeating the verb of the question in the affirmative or negative, and in the same tense, in its minimal form: *daink oo aynshoh riyer?* /deŋku ə'so: 'raiər/ 'did you come here last night? *haink /heŋk/* 'yes', *cha daink /ha 'deŋk/* 'no', *vel oo skee?* /velu 'ski:/ 'are you tired?' *ta /te:/* 'yes', *cha nel /ha 'nel/* 'no'.

### Coordination

Coordination linking two items or main clauses together has three main representatives in Manx: *agh /ax/* 'but', *as /əs/* 'and', *ny /nə/* 'or':

*hie mee hene ayn, agh cha jagh Juan eddyr*  
 /hai mi 'hi:n u:n ax ha 'd'ax d'uən edə/  
 'I myself went, but John didn't at all'

*va kiare jeu ayn as vad gobbyr feer chreoi*  
 /ve k'e:ə d'eu u:n əs vad gobə fi: xrei/  
 'there were four of them and they were working very hard'

*son laa ny jees*  
 /son 'le: nə d'is:/  
 'for a day or two'

### Subordination

Subordinate clauses are introduced by their various conjunctions, followed by simple or (in the future) relative verb forms: *my /mə/* 'if', *tra /tre:/* 'when', *derrey /derə/* 'until': *my vees eh goll, hem mārish* /mə 'vi:s e gol' hem 'me:ris/ 'if he goes (will go) I'll go with him'. *dy /də/* 'that', *nagh /nax/* 'that not', either solo or in phrasal conjunctions: *er-yn-oyr/er-y-fa dy/nagh* 'because, because not' *ge dy/nagh* 'although' are followed by dependent forms:

*hie eh dy valley, er-yn-oyr dy row eh çhing*  
 /hai e də 'va:l'ə erən 'o:r də rau e t'ɪŋ/  
 'he went home because he was sick'

*Relative clauses*

Relative clauses can be either proper (or direct) or improper (indirect). In direct relatives the relative is nominative or accusative, the affirmative form of which is zero and the negative *nagh*: *eshyn yn dooinney ren jannoo eh /es'ən ən dun'ə ren d'enu a/* 'he is the man (who) did it'; *eshyn yn dooinney nagh ren jannoo eh /es'ən ən dun'ə nax ren d'enu a/* 'he is the man (who) did not do it'. When the relative includes the antecedent, i.e., 'that which', etc., or when it follows *ooilley /ul'u/* 'all' the form it takes is *ny /nə/, ta mish loayrt shen ny ta mee er n'akin \*/ta mis' lo:rt s'en nə ta mi e 'na:gin'/* 'I speak that which I have seen' (John 8. 38). In indirect relative clauses in which the relative is governed by a preposition the appropriate form of the prepositional pronoun is used, either before the verb (in its dependent form) or at the end of the relative clause with zero affirmative relative particle (+ independent form of verb), negative *nagh*:

*yn baatey ayn row mee*  
*/ən 'be:də u:n 'rau mi/*  
 'the boat in which I was'

or

*yn baatey va (earlier row) mee ayn*  
*/ən 'be:də vami u:n/*  
 'the boat I was in'

*yn baatey nagh row mee ayn*  
*/ən be:də na 'rau mi u:n/*  
 'the boat I was not in'

When the relative is genitive the appropriate possessive appears in the relative clause:

*yn dooinney ta e vac marroo*  
*/ən dun'ə ta: ə 'vak 'maru/*  
 'the man whose (lit. 'his') son is dead'

*The subjunctive*

The present subjunctive has no special forms. It is expressed either by the present or future indicative with the meaning of an indefinite future: *choud as ta mee bio /haudəs tami bjo:/*, *choud's veem's bio /haudəs vi:ms bjo:/* 'as long as I am alive'.

With a jussive meaning the dependent future after *dy /də/* or alone can be used: *dy jig dy reeriaght /də 'd'ig də re'ri:əx/* 'thy kingdom come', *kiangl mayd eh /k'əŋlməd'a/* 'let us bind him'.

For the substantive verb and copula separate forms are found, usually in imprecations or expressions of appreciation: (substantive verb) *shee dy row mârin /s'i: də rau me:rɪn/* 'peace be with us', (copula) *gura mie ayd / eu /gurə 'ma:i ed, eu/* 'thank you'. The past subjunctive is expressed by the conditional.

## Dialect variation

Given that any major dialect differences exist at all, two main areas could be sketched. North (parishes north-west of the central mountain chain, and Maughold on the south-east side) and South (the rest). The differences are not great, but could be briefly summarized as follows:

OIr. /a:/, /o:/ → Mx /e:/([ɛ:], retained in the North as /a:/)

<i>raad</i> ‘road’	/ra:d/N, /re:d/S	ScG <i>rathad</i>
<i>laa</i> ‘day’	/la:/N, /le:/S	Ir. <i>lá</i>
<i>arrane</i> ‘song’	/a <sup>1</sup> ra:n/N, /a <sup>1</sup> re:n/S	Ir. <i>amhrán</i>

Ir. *ao(i)*, *ua(i)* realized in Manx usually as /i(:)/, with rounding to [y(:)] or retraction to [u(:)] or [ʊ(:)] in the South

<i>ao</i>	<i>geay</i> ‘wind’ /gi:/N, /g [u:]/ /g [y:]/S	Ir. <i>gaoth</i>
<i>ua</i>	<i>feayr</i> ‘cold’ /fi:r/N, /fu:r/S	Ir. <i>fiar</i>

Loss of medial spirants, more prevalent in the North

<i>baghey</i> ‘living’	/bi:a/N, /bɛ: [ɣ] ə/S	cf. OIr. <i>bethugad</i>
<i>jeeaghyn</i> ‘looking’	/d <sup>1</sup> i:ən/N, /d <sup>1</sup> i: [ɣ] ən/S	cf. ScG <i>deuchainn</i>

Differences in vocabulary: in certain respects preferences are different in the North from the South; though southern forms are sometimes found in the North, but not vice versa.

	North	South
‘awful’	<i>atchimagh</i> /a(:)t <sup>1</sup> s <sup>1</sup> imax/	<i>agglagh</i> /aglax/
‘talking’	<i>loayrt</i> /lo:rt/	<i>taggloo</i> /ta:lu/
‘boat’	<i>saagh</i> /se:ɣ/	<i>baatey</i> /bɛ:də/
‘we’	<i>main</i> /main/	<i>mayd</i> /məd <sup>1</sup> /

Differences in pronunciation of the same item are also found:

	North	South
<i>unnane</i> ‘one’	/ <sup>1</sup> anan/	/ə <sup>1</sup> ne:n/
<i>jannoo</i> ‘doing’	/d <sup>1</sup> unu/, /d <sup>1</sup> anu/	/d <sup>1</sup> enu/
<i>foast</i> ‘yet’	/fo:s/ cf. Ir. <i>fós</i>	/huəst/ cf. ScG <i>fhathast</i>
<i>lurg</i> ‘after’	/l <sup>1</sup> ig <sup>1</sup> /	/lug/

## LEXICAL STRUCTURE

The main corpus of the Manx vocabulary is Common Gaelic as found in Old, Middle, and Early Modern Irish. Later on Manx shares survivals of forms found in Scottish Gaelic, but absent from Modern Irish. However, contact with outsiders induced additional material into the vocabulary, and four main phases can be discerned: Latin, Old Norse, Anglo-Norman and Romance, and English. It is not always easy to distinguish the source in

every case, as Latin examples may be of various periods and the later ones indistinguishable from Romance. In addition Old Norse examples found also in English dialect may have come in along with distinctively English items after the Scandinavian period. Similarly Anglo-Norman and Romance items found their way on a large scale into English and could have come into Manx via that route. In reality we can therefore only speak approximately of ultimate origins without being too specific about when and how.

### Latin elements

The Latin element comes first in time (fifth to sixth century) in a primarily ecclesiastical context, probably already embedded in the vernacular of the first Christian missionaries, and it finishes early (c. eighth century):

<i>agglis</i> '(body of) church' /aglis'/	< <i>ecclesia</i>
<i>aspick</i> 'bishop' /aspik/, /a:spit/	< <i>episcopus</i>
<i>bannaght</i> 'blessing' /banax/	< <i>benedictio</i>
<i>Caisht</i> 'Easter' /ke:s't/	< <i>Pascha</i>
<i>keesh</i> 'tax' /ki:s'/	< <i>census</i>
<i>lioar</i> 'book' /l'or:/	< <i>liber</i>
<i>paish</i> 'passion' /pes'/	< <i>passio</i>
<i>saggyrt</i> 'priest' /sagərt/	< <i>sacerdos</i>
<i>straid</i> 'street' /stred'/	< <i>strata</i>

### Old Norse elements

Old Norse comes next (tenth century), acquired directly from speakers of that language in areas of experience or expertise, for example, fishing, seamanship, but their total impact on Manx is minimal, probably even less so if some of these items came into Manx via northern Middle English.

<i>aker</i> 'anchor' /akər/	< <i>akkeri</i>
<i>baatey</i> 'boat' /be:də/	< <i>bátr</i>
<i>baie</i> 'bay' /bei/	< <i>vágr</i>
<i>garey</i> 'garden' /ge:rə/	< <i>gardhr</i>
<i>ronsaghey</i> 'ransack' /ronsaxə/	< <i>rannsaka</i>
<i>uinnag</i> 'window' /unjag/	< <i>vindauga</i>

### Anglo-Norman and Romance elements

Anglo-Norman and Romance material is present in Manx in considerable quantity, as it is also in English (and Irish) and although there were opportunities for direct acquisition, given the same borrowings occur also in English and Irish, these routes may be regarded as the most likely, more probably from England given that Man fell into that orbit during the fourteenth century. Many of the acquisitions from this source, not surprisingly, relate to administration and governance.

<i>ammys</i> 'homage' /aməs/	< <i>hommage</i>
<i>boteil</i> 'bottle' /bə'd'e:l'/	< <i>bouteille</i>
<i>cashtal</i> 'castle' /kas't'əl/	< <i>castel</i>

<i>conaant</i> 'covenant' /kə'ne:nt/	< <i>covenant</i>
<i>danjeyr</i> 'danger' /dan'd'e:r/	< <i>danger</i>
<i>entreil</i> 'enter' /en'tre:l/	< <i>entrer</i>
<i>foayer</i> 'favour' /fo:r/	< <i>faveur</i>
<i>jinnair</i> 'dinner' /d'i'ne:r/	< <i>diner</i>
<i>shirveish</i> 'service' /s'ər've:s/	< <i>servise</i>
<i>vondeish</i> 'advantage' /von'de:s/	< <i>avantage</i>

## English elements

Lastly there is English, not always distinguishable from Old Norse and heavily saturated by French. Many of the English borrowings would have come in as from the fifteenth century from the entourage of the Stanley lords and later from merchants.

<i>ansoor</i> 'answer' /an'su:r/	< <i>answer</i>
<i>boayrd</i> 'table' /bo:rd/	< <i>bord</i> (? < ON)
<i>crout</i> 'trick' /kreut/	< <i>craft</i>
<i>fordrail</i> 'afford' /fo'rdre:l/	< <i>afford</i>
<i>gamman</i> 'sport' /gamən/	< <i>gamen</i>
<i>jeebin</i> 'nets' /d'i:bən/	< <i>deeping</i>
<i>laccal</i> 'wanting' /la:l/	< <i>lack</i>
<i>roddan</i> 'rat' /rodan/	< <i>ratton</i>
<i>shelliu</i> 'spit' /s'elu/	< <i>salve</i>
<i>stampey</i> 'stamping, treading' /stambə/	< <i>stamp</i>

## CONCLUSION

Following the Scandinavian period and after the passing of Man into the English orbit in 1334, but especially after 1405, English began to establish itself as the language of administration and law, and of the towns, where it existed alongside Manx without displacing it. Because of the island's isolation and because the few English settlers, needed for their sustenance, to cultivate the goodwill of the Manx people, the small world in which Manx existed was thus protected.

This protected world became more and more exposed to English from c. 1700 onwards owing to a changing set of circumstances brought on essentially by the 'running trade' (smuggling). Participation in this activity led to compulsory purchase of the manorial rights of Man by the British government on behalf of the Crown in 1765, leading in turn to an impoverishment in the island which resulted in emigration of Manxmen (and others) in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Simultaneous immigration of English speakers c. 1800–20 and further emigration from the Manx heartland during the nineteenth century began to tilt the balance in favour of English, c. 1840–80.

The advent of and increase in tourism and a more organized system of education imported from England during those years hastened this trend, so that those born to Manx households c. 1860–80 became the last generation to receive Manx from the cradle.

The shift away from Manx towards English is reflected in the Manx–English contact situation in which the latter comes to have an increasing influence on Manx, for example, in the substitution of English for native words, adaptation of English syntax and calques, English suffixes on native words, etc., mostly it seems during the course of the nineteenth

century. Nevertheless, Manx had an enormous capacity to absorb foreign elements into its phonological and morphological systems (cf. also the section on vocabulary in 'Lexical structure', above pp. 354–5), and it was able to sustain an effective *Abwehrkampf*, in spite of heavy pressure from English, to the very end.

The passing of Manx as a community language took place c. 1860–1900/10, with the last native speakers living through the first three-quarters of the twentieth century, decreasing in number gradually towards the end, concluding with the death of Ned Maddrell, the last reputed native speaker, on 27 December 1974.

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PART III

# **THE BRYTHONIC LANGUAGES**





# WELSH

*Gwenllian Awbery*

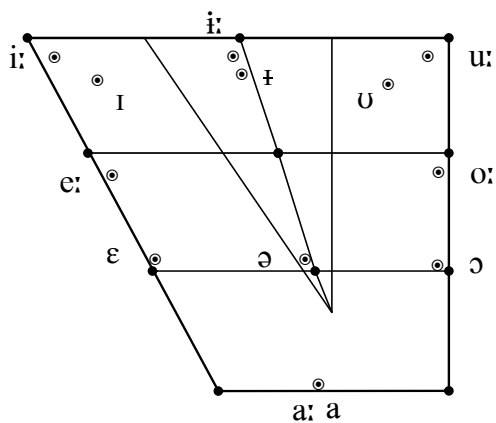
The focus of this chapter is on the structure of modern Welsh, looking in turn at the phonology, grammar and lexicon of the language as it is used today. As might be expected, a language spoken by over 500,000 people displays considerable variation in usage, with both simple geography and more complex issues of register and social background contributing to the mix. The picture which emerges here will, it is hoped, outline the structure of the language in general terms, but also indicate where differences exist between the Welsh of different areas or different social contexts.

## PHONOLOGY

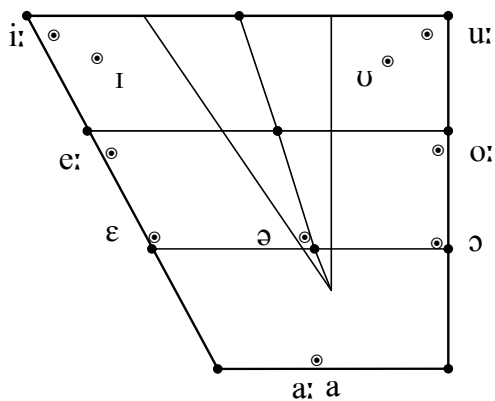
There is in Welsh no single high status accent, and it is accepted that one will be able to tell where a native speaker comes from by listening to the way he or she speaks. In the discussion of the phonological structure of the language which follows, it will therefore be necessary to make frequent reference to regional variation. In addition, there are some features of pronunciation which derive from the difference between careful and casual speech, and which are found in the usage of speakers from all parts of Wales.

### Simple vowels

The most complex system of simple vowels is found in north Wales, and is shown in Figure 9.1. Contrastive long and short vowels are found in six articulatory positions: high front unrounded /i:/, *i*/, high central unrounded /i:/, *ɨ*/, high back rounded /u:/, *u*/, mid front unrounded /e:/, *ɛ*/, mid back rounded /o:/, *ɔ*/, and low /a:/, *a*/. There is additionally a short mid central vowel /ə/, with no equivalent long vowel. In south Wales the vowel system is less complex, with no high central vowels, as shown in Figure 9.2. Northern high central vowels are realized in the south as high front vowels, so that northern /'di:/ 'black' and /'bɨ:/ 'short' correspond to southern /'di:/ and /'bɨ:/ 'house', are homophones in the south, both being realized as /'ti:/. A further simplification of the vowel system is found in south-west Wales, in parts of Pembrokeshire, as shown in Figure 9.3. Here the short central vowel is dropped, and is replaced by one of the high vowels, the choice of a front or back vowel



*Figure 9.1* The simple vowels of Welsh in north Wales



*Figure 9.2* The simple vowels of Welsh in south Wales

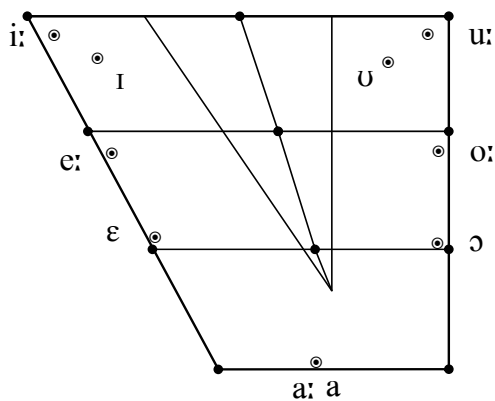


Figure 9.3 The simple vowels of Welsh in south-west Wales

depending on a complex set of phonological and morphological factors. For instance /kənar/ 'early' becomes /kɪnar/, /bəguθ/ 'to threaten' becomes /bu:guθ/, and /kəski/ 'to sleep' is found as both /kɪski/ and /kʊski/. There is one additional vowel, found only in occasional loans from English, a long half-open back rounded vowel /ɔ:/, as in /lɔ:n/ 'lawn'. It is marginal to the vowel system of Welsh, and plays no part in the patterns of alternation and contrast outlined below.

All vowels, except the mid central vowel /ə/, are found as contrastive long and short pairs. This length contrast, however, appears only in certain contexts; elsewhere it is neutralized and vowel length is predictably long or predictably short. Length is contrastive in stressed syllables, but the details vary as between monosyllables and stressed penultimates, and there are geographical variations to take into account as well. In monosyllables a vowel followed by a single liquid or /n/, may be either long or short.

/mo:r/ 'sea' ~ /tɒr/ 'group', /ta:n/ 'fire' ~ /ran/ 'part'

The vowel is predictably long in an open syllable, or where it is followed by a voiced stop, or a voiced or voiceless fricative other than /θ/. Followed by a voiceless stop, /m/ or /ŋ/, it is predictably short.

/da:/ 'good', /he:b/ 'without', /ha:v/ 'summer', /no:s/ 'night',  
/tɒp/ 'silly', /kɒm/ 'valley', /ʃɪp/ 'ship'

The patterns described so far hold for all parts of Wales, but there are two contexts in which north and south differ. A vowel followed by the voiceless lateral fricative /ɬ/ is predictably short in the north but predictably long in the south.

/gweɬ/(N) ~ /gwe:t/(S) 'better'

A vowel is long in the north, but short in the south, before a cluster consisting of a fricative and a stop. Before any other cluster the vowel is short in all areas.

/ku:sk/(N) ~ /kʊsk/ (S) 'sleep', /gwa:t/(N) ~ /gwaɬ/(S) 'hair',  
/pɒnt/ 'bridge', /tɒrθ/ 'loaf', /barn/ 'judgement'

In south Wales the stressed penultimate syllable displays similar, though not identical, patterning. Both long and short vowels are again found before a single liquid or /n/.

/a:raɬ/ 'other' ~ /ka:ɛg/ 'stone', /ka:nɒl/ 'middle' ~ /ɛnɬ/ 'to win'

Long vowels are found in an open syllable, and before a voiced stop, a voiced fricative and most voiceless fricatives. Vowels before /s/ and /θ/, which are long in monosyllables, are consistently short in the penultimate. Short vowels are found before a voiceless stop, /m/ and /ŋ/ and before a consonant cluster.

/ti:ɛn/ 'cloth', /ka:ɛr/ 'chair', /me:ðɒl/ 'to think', /sa:χɛ/ 'sacks',  
/hɒsan/ 'sock', /aʔan/ 'out'  
/aɛɐb/ 'to answer', /kɒmɒl/ 'cloud', /aŋɔr/ 'anchor', /gɒrmɒd/ 'too much'

In north Wales this pattern breaks down. In the north-west all vowels in penultimate syllables are realized as short, regardless of what follows. In the north-east and mid-Wales, there appears to be free variation of length in penultimate syllables, again regardless of what follows.

Vowels in unstressed syllables are consistently short in all parts of Wales, with no trace of the patterning described above. It is important, however, to note that since word stress is on the penultimate syllable of a multisyllabic word, regardless of its morphological structure, the 'same' vowel will frequently be found in both stressed and unstressed syllables in related forms. If it shows up in a stressed syllable then it will display contrastive or predictable length as described above; if it shows up in an unstressed syllable then it will be predictably short. Compare for instance the related forms below, as pronounced in a southern accent.

/a:ra:v/ 'slow', /a'ra:vi/ 'to slow down'

In /a:ra:v/ the first vowel is in the stressed penultimate and contrastively long, the second is in the final unstressed syllable and predictably short. In the related form /a'ra:vi/ the previously unstressed final vowel is now in the stressed penultimate, and predictably long, while the other two vowels are in unstressed syllables and predictably short. Length is not a consistent feature of a particular vowel, merely a potential which is realized in appropriate circumstances.

Turning to the detail of phonetic realization, it is clear from Figures 9.1–9.3 that for the most part the paired long and short vowels differ not only in length but also in articulation, with the open vowel being generally a little more open and centralized than the long vowel. The low vowels, however, do not follow this pattern. The short vowel /a/ is usually low central, and the long vowel varies as between a central and a rather more back articulation, as [a:] or [ɑ:]. Exceptionally, in an extensive area of mid Wales and in the south-east the long vowel is realized as a heavily fronted and slightly raised [æ:] in monosyllabic forms, giving for instance ['tæ:d] rather than ['ta:d] 'father'. This realization is not found in the stressed penultimate, giving rise to alternations such as ['tæ:d] 'father' and ['ta:dɔl] 'fatherly'.

Long vowels are fully long only in monosyllables, and are a little shorter in the stressed penultimate, though still distinct from short vowels. In the case of mid vowels there are further, geographically based differences as to how they are realized in penultimate syllables. In the south-west, we find a half open allophone in words where the final syllable contains a high vowel; in the south-east such words have a half close allophone.

['mɛ:ðɔl] (SW) ~ ['mɛ:ðɔl] (SE) 'to think'  
 ['gɔ:vm] (SW) ~ ['go:vm] (SE) 'to ask'

If the final syllable contains a mid or low vowel, on the other hand, the half close allophone is found in all parts of south Wales.

['se:rɛn] 'star', ['o:gɛd] 'harrow', ['se:bɔn] 'soap', ['he:naɣ] 'older'

In unstressed syllables short vowels vary in articulation. Closer realizations such as [i], [ɪ], [e], [o], and [u] and more open realizations such as [ɪ], [ɪ̃], [ɛ], [ɔ] and [ʊ] are both found in closed syllables, though high vowels appear to favour the closer realization in open syllables. The low vowel is consistently [a].

Not all constraints are related to vowel length. There are other restrictions which seem essentially arbitrary. One relates to the contexts in which the mid central vowel /ə/ may appear. In all those parts of Wales where the /ə/ vowel is found it may only appear in non-final syllables, and even then only if it is followed by a consonant. It is acceptable in the stressed penultimate, and also in an unstressed nonfinal syllable.

/ˈkəvan/ ‘whole’, /ˈəskavn/ ‘light’  
/kəˈneia/ ‘harvest’, /kəˈmərjad/ ‘character’

It may not appear in a monosyllable or in the final syllable of a longer word. The only exceptions are a number of unstressed monosyllables, which effectively function as clitics attached to the following word.

/əˈga:θ/ ‘the cat’, /əŋˈka:ni/ ‘singing’

Exceptionally, in parts of the south-west, the /ə/ vowel is found in monosyllables, but even here it is ruled out from the final syllables of longer forms.

/ˈbəθ/ ‘never’, /ˈbər/ ‘short’

A second restriction also relates to final syllables, but is geographically limited. In most of Wales both the mid front vowel and the low vowel can appear freely in an unstressed final syllable and are contrastive in this position. In two areas, the north-west and the south-east, this is not possible; the mid front vowel /ɛ/ is ruled out, and is regularly replaced in this context by the low vowel.

/ˈamsɛr/ ‘time’ ~ /ˈkənar/ ‘early’ (general)  
/ˈamsar/ ‘time’ = /ˈkənar/ ‘early’ (NW, SE)

This restriction holds only of the overt final syllable; if a suffix is added, moving the affected vowel into penultimate position, there is no problem and the mid front vowel resurfaces.

/ˈamsar/ ‘time’ > /amˈsɛri/ (NW) ~ /amˈse:ri/ ‘to time’ (SE)

## Diphthongs

As with simple vowels, so with diphthongs, and it is in north Wales once again that the system is at its most complex. There are three distinct sets, as shown in Figure 9.4a–c (overleaf). In the first set, the diphthong closes towards a high front position, and the first element is always short. In the second set, the diphthong closes towards a high back position, and again for the most part the first element is short; two of these diphthongs however, /eʊ/ and /aʊ/, have a long first element if they appear in a monosyllable with no following consonant:– [ˈte:ʊ] ‘fat’, [ˈtə:ʊ] ‘hand’. In the third set, the diphthong closes towards a high central position and in two, /eɪ/ and /aɪ/, the first element is always short. The remaining three diphthongs /a:ɪ/, /u:ɪ/ and /o:ɪ/ have a long first element in monosyllables, as in [ˈha:ɪl] ‘generous’, [ˈtʰu:ɪr] ‘complete’ and [ˈo:ɪr] ‘cold’. In stressed penultimates and unstressed syllables the first element of a diphthong is predictably short, following the pattern already described for simple vowels.

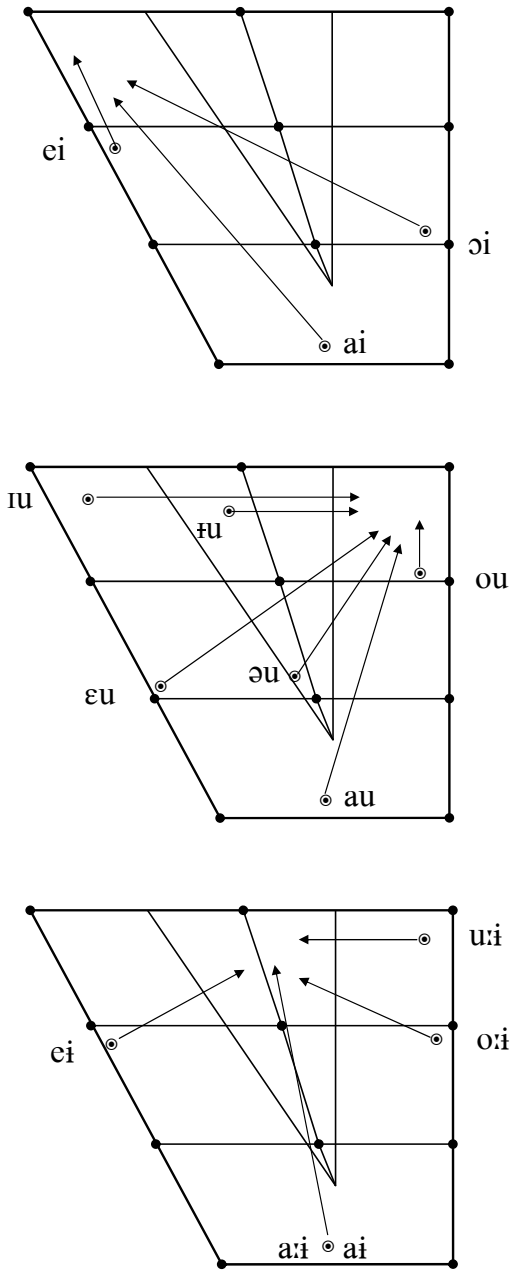


Figure 9.4a–c The diphthongs of Welsh in north Wales

In south Wales the system is simpler, as shown in Figure 9.5a–b (overleaf). Just as there are no simple high central vowels in the south, so too there are no diphthongs closing towards a high central position, and the only northern diphthong starting in a high central position /ɪu/ is missing as well. Diphthongs in the south close either towards a high front or a high back position, and the first element is always short. The correspondances between the northern and southern systems are on the whole straightforward. Where a northern diphthong has a high central first or second element, this in the south normally has the corresponding high front element; northern /'krei/ 'to create' for instance corresponds to southern /'krei/, and northern /'biu/ 'to live' to southern /'biu/. Equally, where there is a long first element in the north this is short in the south; /'tʉ:ɪd/ 'grey' and /'tʉa:u/ 'hand' in the north correspond to /'tʉɪd/ and /'tʉau/ in the south.

The position of the diphthong in the word is relevant in both north and south Wales. Three diphthongs – /ai/, /ai/ and /a:i/ – do not appear in nonfinal syllables. If one of these appears in a monosyllable and is then shifted into a nonfinal syllable through the addition of a suffix, the situation is resolved very simply; in each case the low first element is raised to mid front.

/sain/ 'sound' ~ /seɪnjə/ 'to sound'  
/hail/(N), /hail/(S) 'sun' ~ /heilɔg/ (N), /heilɔg/ (S)

The opposite situation holds for the diphthong /əu/ which has a mid central first element. Like the simple vowel /ə/, the diphthong /əu/ is found only in nonfinal syllables. In south-west Wales, where there is no /ə/, the diphthong /əu/ is not found either, and is replaced by a range of different diphthongs.

/kləuɛd/ (general) ~ /kluɛd/ 'to hear' (SW)  
/təuð/ (general) ~ /tɛuð/ 'weather' (SW)

There are in fact further geographical variations in the diphthong system. Northern /a:i/ and /o:i/ are realized predictably as /ai/ and /ɔi/ in formal, careful speech in the south; in natural, informal speech, however, they become monosyllables.

/gwa:iθ/ (N) ~ /gwaiθ/ (S formal) ~ /gwa:θ/ (S informal) 'worse'  
/o:ɪr/ (N) ~ /ɔɪr/ (S formal) ~ /o:r/ (S informal) 'cold'

In mid Wales and the south-east the long low vowel in /gwa:θ/ is realized dialectally as [æ:] to give [gwa:θ]. In the south-west the long vowel in /o:r/ is replaced by a range of different forms, giving /o:ɛr/ in Cardiganshire, /u:ɛr/ and /we:r/ in Pembrokeshire.

One final feature of the diphthong system relates to the difference between careful and casual speech, rather than to geographical variation. There is a tendency for diphthongs found in the unstressed final syllable in careful speech to be replaced by simple vowels in casual speech, so that for instance /o:i/ and /ɔi/ become /ɔ/.

/blə'nəðɔið/(N) ~ /blə'nəðɔið/ (S) 'years' > /blə'nəðɔð/

The most widespread instance of this alternation is that found with /ai/ and /ai/, as in the case of the plural inflection, and here the process is further complicated by geographical dialect variation. In most of Wales these final unstressed diphthongs are simplified to /ɛ/;



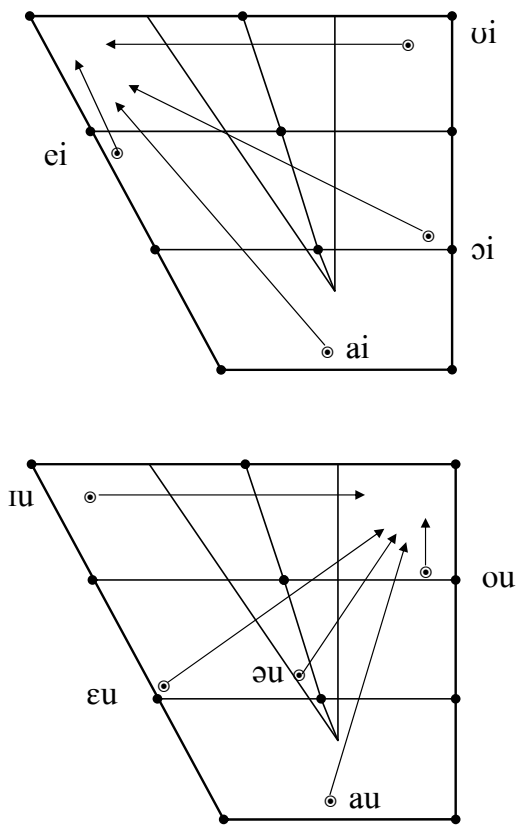


Figure 9.5a–b The diphthongs of Welsh in south Wales

in the north-west and the south-east, where /ɛ/ is not possible in an unstressed final syllable, they become /a/.

/ʔevrai/ (N) ~ /ʔevrai/ (S) ‘books’ > /ʔevrɛ/ (general) ~ /ʔevra/ (NW, SE)

Consonants

The consonants of Welsh are shown in Table 9.1. The core consonant system of Welsh has paired voiced and voiceless stops in bilabial /p, b/, alveolar /t, d/ and velar /k, g/ positions, and paired voiced and voiceless fricatives in labiodental /f, v/ and dental /θ, ð/ positions. A number of further voiceless fricatives have no corresponding voiced equivalents /s, ʃ, χ, h/. One of these, the voiceless lateral fricative /ɬ/ is unusual for western European languages and forms something of a stereotype for Welsh, appearing in many place names, such as ‘Llangollen’ /ɬaŋˈgɔɬɛn/. There are additionally three voiced nasals /m, n, ŋ/, two liquids /l, r/ and two glides /j, w/. The choice of a northern or southern

vowel system has no influence on the patterning of consonants in Welsh, and to avoid confusion, the examples quoted in the discussion which follows will all be given in a form characteristic of a southern accent.

*Table 9.1* The consonants of Welsh

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Palato-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Voiceless stop	p			t			k		
Voiced stop	b			d			g		
Voiceless fricative		f	θ	s, ʈ	ʃ			χ	h
Voiced fricative		v	ð	z					
Voiceless affricate					tʃ				
Voiced affricate					ʤ				
Nasal	m			n			ŋ		
Liquid				l, r					
Glide	w					j			

There are constraints on where in the word individual consonants may appear. In initial position a rather odd selection of consonants is ruled out, namely /x/, /ð/ and /ŋ/. It is difficult to explain this particular set of restrictions, and otherwise individual consonants from each class may appear freely alone in initial position.

/to:/ 'roof', /du:r/ 'water', /su:n/ 'noise', /vɛl/ 'like', /mɛrɣ/ 'girl', /ra:d/ 'cheap', /ja:r/ 'hen'.

In the south, and particularly the south-east, there is a tendency to drop initial /h/.

/he:n/ (general) ~ /e:n/ (S) 'old'

The examples above are all monosyllables, but longer words behave identically, and this is true also of the constraints on final position discussed next.

In final position in the word, /h/ is ruled out completely. Otherwise all consonant types appear freely.

/tɒp/ 'silly', /ma:b/ 'son', /pe:θ/ 'thing', /ko:v/ 'memory', /ʃɪp/ 'ship', /me:l/ 'honey'

There is a tendency in many areas to drop a word-final /v/, and in the south-west a tendency to drop word-final /ð/.

/ˈtre:v/ ~ /ˈtre:/ ‘town’  
 /ˈklaʊð/ ~ /ˈklaʊ/ (SW) ‘hedge’

On the account given here, the two glides /j/ and /w/ do not appear in final position either, but this is in fact a construct of the way diphthongs are normally handled. The high off glide of a diphthong could easily be reanalysed as a consonantal glide, and on this view forms such as /ˈbaɪ/ ‘fault’ and /ˈʔau/ ‘hand’ would be rather /ˈbaj/ and /ˈʔaw/ with a glide in final position.

Medially, there are two constraints on what may appear, both of which relate to the position of stress in the word. The first of these again concerns /h/, which may only appear in medial position if it immediately precedes a stressed vowel; here again there is a tendency to drop /h/ in the south, and particularly in the south-east.

/oˈhɛrwið/ ~ /oˈɛrwið/ (S) ‘because’

The second constraint is found only in the south-east. In most parts of Wales a voiced stop may appear freely in medial position, following a stressed vowel, but in the south-east this voiced stop shifts to the corresponding voiceless equivalent. However, if a further syllable is added, moving the stress, the voiced stop reappears.

/aːgɔr/ ~ /aːkɔr/ (SE) ‘to open’ > /aːgoːrux/ ‘you (pl.) open’

Otherwise, the full range of consonant types may appear in medial position, between vowels. The position of word stress is irrelevant. It may precede the medial consonant, as in the examples below, but the same choices are available if it follows. Also irrelevant is the morpheme structure of the word, which may consist of a single morpheme or contain morpheme boundaries.

/aːtɛb/ ‘to answer’, /ˈkaːdu/ ‘to keep’, /ˈkəfɔrð/ ‘to touch’, /ˈaːval/ ‘apple’, /ˈkaːnɔl/ ‘middle’, /ˈkaːlɔn/ ‘heart’

The reservations noted above over glides are valid here too. A form such as /ˈʔauɛr/ ‘lots’ may be analysed as containing a diphthong with an offglide, as has been done here, or alternatively as a sequence of a vowel and consonantal glide /ˈʔawɛr/.

Some details of phonetic realization vary geographically. In parts of mid Wales and the south-east, the velar stops /k/ and /g/ may be palatalized in word-initial position, when they appear before /a/, giving for instance [ˈkʲaus] ‘cheese’ and [ˈgʲalu] ‘to call’. The lateral /l/ is generally realized as a dark [ɫ] in the north, but as a clear [l] in the south. Those stops shown in Table 9.1 as having an alveolar articulation, together with /l/ and /n/, are in fact alveolar only in the south, and are in the north all dental, so that northern [t, d, n, ɲ, ʃ] correspond to southern [t, d, n, l]. More generally voiceless stops are heavily aspirated, particularly before a stressed vowel, and ‘voiced’ stops are only weakly voiced. In medial position, following a stressed short vowel, a single consonant is slightly lengthened.

Only the roll /r/ has markedly distinct allophones, being voiceless in word-initial position, as in [ˈɾan] ‘part’, but voiced in medial or final position, as in [ˈaːraʃ] ‘other’ or [ˈmoːr] ‘sea’. There is a complication here, however, arising from the borrowing of words from English which have an initial voiced [r] such as [ˈreis] ‘rice’. In many of these forms the initial [r] remains voiced, and is thus in contrast with the voiceless [ɾ] normal in initial

position in Welsh. This then gives rise to an additional contrast, which is not part of the original consonant system of Welsh. Dialectally in south Wales, and particularly in the south-east, in the area where initial /h/ is dropped, so too is the voiceless allophone [ɾ] replaced by the voiced form [r]. As a result the allophonic alternation [ɾ]~[r] is lost and the roll is realized as a voiced form in all contexts.

The remaining consonants derive in part from the behaviour of loans from English, and in part from the distinction between careful and casual speech. The voiceless fricative /s/ forms part of the core consonant system, but the voiced equivalent /z/ is found only in loans from English such as /'zu:/ 'zoo', and even then only in south Wales. In the north these words have the native /s/. The affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ are found in loans from English such as /'tʃɪps/ 'chips' and /'dʒam/ 'jam'; the fricative /ʃ/ also appears corresponding to English /tʃ/, /dʒ/ and /ʒ/ in loans, as in /'ʃaʊns/ 'chance', /'ʃa:n/ 'Jane' and /'ʃu:r/ 'sure'. These last three consonants are not, however, confined to loans from English and appear in native Welsh words in casual speech. Where careful speech has a /d/ or /t/ followed by an unstressed high front vowel or a front glide, casual speech often converts this sequence to an affricate. The fricative /ʃ/ is also found in native Welsh words in casual speech, where it replaces a sequence /sj/ in careful speech.

/di'o:geɪ/ > /'dʒo:geɪ/ (casual) 'safe'  
 /'kɔtjai/ > /'kɔtʃɛ/ (casual) 'coats'  
 /'keisjɔ/ > /'keiʃɔ/ (casual) 'to try'

An extension of this tendency is the replacement of /s/ by /ʃ/ in casual speech in south Wales if it appears before or after a high front vowel.

/si:r/ ~ /'ʃi:r/ (S casual) 'shire'  
 /mi:s/ ~ /'mi:ʃ/ (S casual) 'month'

### Consonant clusters

A wide range of consonantal clusters is found in Welsh. In word-initial position a stop or a fricative may be followed by a liquid, though not every potential combination is found. There are, for instance, no clusters of this kind with the fricatives /θ/, /ð/, /χ/ or /h/ as the first element

/plant/ 'children', /'braud/ 'brother', /'flax/ 'flash', /'vri:/ 'up above'

A stop may also be followed by a nasal, though the only combination found here is /kn/.

/'knai/ 'nuts'

A stop may follow /s/, and a liquid may be further added to give a three-consonant cluster. Note that the voicing contrast in stops is neutralized following /s/ to give an unvoiced, unaspirated form.

/sku:d/ 'waterfall', /'skre:x/ 'scream'

There are also two rather different types of cluster, both involving the glide /w/. In the first of these, it follows /χ/ to give /χw/. This cluster is found throughout Wales in careful speech, but dialectally in the south it is replaced by /hw/, and in the south-east the /h/ is often dropped, to give /w/ alone.

/χwe:χ/ 'six' (general) ~ /hwe:χ/ (S) ~ /we:χ/ (SE)

The second cluster type consists of /g/ followed by the /w/ glide, and then optionally by /n/ or a liquid, though there is a tendency in the more complex clusters to drop the glide.

/gwɛld/	'to see'
/gwneid/ ~ /gneid/ ~ /neid/	'to do'
/gwrando/ ~ /grando/	'to listen'

In careful speech there is one exceptional form with initial /dw/, but this is usually modified in casual speech, presumably because the cluster is felt to be odd. In the south it becomes /gw/, falling together with the other clusters of this kind, and in the north it becomes /d/ with a single consonant.

/dweid/ ~ /gweid/ (S) ~ /deid/ (N) 'to say'

Medially a wide range of clusters consisting of two consonants is possible. Stops and fricatives may form clusters, which usually agree in voicing.

/kaptɛn/ 'captain', /ragvɪr/ 'December', /askɔrn/ 'bone'

Either may be preceded or followed by a nasal or liquid; in most cases a nasal will be homorganic to a following stop, but not necessarily to a following fricative, and where the nasal follows the stop or fricative there are no such constraints.

/daŋgos/ 'to show', /hamðɛn/ 'leisure', /ɛgni/ 'energy', /dɔvnaχ/ 'deeper',  
/ardal/ 'district', /mɔrθɔl/ 'hammer', /ɛbrɪʔ/ 'April', /kɔvlɔg/ 'salary'

Nasals and liquids too may form clusters, in any order.

/kɔmni/ 'company', /gɔrmɔd/ 'too much', /kanran/ 'percentage', /kɔrlan/  
'sheepfold'

A glide too may follow any other consonant type, and if the second element of a diphthong were counted as a glide, then this too would be found before all consonant types.

/gwatwar/ 'to mock', /hɪχjɔ/ 'to throw', /pɛnjɔg/ 'intelligent', /arwain/ 'to lead'

Once again /h/ is exceptional, and may only appear before a stressed vowel, with a preceding nasal consonant.

kən'heiaɪv/ 'harvest', /əŋ'hi:d/ 'together'

Clusters of three consonants are rather more tightly constrained. The fricative /s/ may be followed by a stop and then a liquid; a nasal consonant may be followed by a stop, and a liquid or a glide.

/əsprɪd/ 'ghost', /kaskli/ 'to collect'  
/məntɹɔ/ 'to dare', /kampwaiθ/ 'masterpiece'

In final position the situation is rather more complicated. First there are clusters which may appear with no difficulty. A stop may follow a fricative, a nasal or a liquid; a fricative or a nasal may follow a liquid.

/pask/ 'Easter', /pɪmp/ 'five', /gweld/ 'to see'  
/kɔrð/ 'to meet', /darn/ 'piece'

Other types behave differently. A cluster which may not appear in final position in a monosyllable, is nevertheless acceptable medially if an inflection is added to the original form. The problem is solved by modifying the unacceptable cluster in final position, breaking it up with an epenthetic vowel identical to the original vowel of the word. Where there is a diphthong rather than a simple vowel, it is the offglide which is copied to break up the cluster.

/\*'pɔdr/ > /'pu:du/ 'rotten' ~ /'pədri/ 'to rot'  
/\*'soudl/ > /'soudul/ 'heel' ~ /'sɔdlɛ/ 'heels'

Clusters which are dealt with in this way include a stop followed by a liquid, as in the examples shown above, and also a stop followed by a nasal.

/\*'gwadn/ > /'gwa:dan/ 'sole of shoe' ~ /'gwadnɛ/ 'soles of shoes'

In the north these are the main cluster types affected, but in the south the constraint is more extensive, holding also a fricative followed by a liquid or a nasal.

/\*'kɛvn/ > /'ke:vɛn/ 'back' ~ /'kɛvnɛ/ 'backs'  
/\*'tɪvr/ > /'tɛvrɪ/ 'book' ~ /'tɛvrɛ/ 'books'

The use of epenthetic vowels to break up clusters which would otherwise appear in final position extends in some cases, idiosyncratically and with regional variation, to other cluster types.

/hɛlm/ > /'he:lɛm/ 'corn stack' ~ /hɛlmi/ 'corn stacks'  
/aml/ > /'amal/ 'frequent' ~ /'amlax/ 'more frequent'

Regionally, there are other strategies which serve the same purpose. In north-east Wales occasional examples switch the order of consonants to avoid the problem.

/\*'sɔvl/ > /'sɔlv/ (NE) 'stubble'

In the south-west, on the other hand, there is a tendency to replace /v/ in unacceptable clusters with /u/; the diphthong thus created survives in some cases even when an inflection is added, and it is no longer in final position.

/\*'kɛvn/ > /'kɛun/ 'back' ~ /'kɛunɛ/ 'backs'

Where the problem arises in longer words, the strategy adopted is the deletion of one of the offending consonants. The choice of which consonant to delete is idiosyncratic, and varies from word to word. If an inflection is added, the cluster resurfaces.

/\*'fɛnɛstr/ > /'fɛnɛst/ 'window' ~ /fɛ'nɛstri/ 'windows'.

/\*'anadl/ > /'anal/ 'breath' ~ /a'nadli/ 'to breathe'

### Stress and intonation

Word stress in polysyllabic forms is normally on the penultimate syllable, and if an additional syllable is added to the word the stress shifts to the penultimate of the resulting form. This process is recursive, and regardless of how many additional syllables are added, word stress still ends up on the penultimate syllable of the final word form. As a result, words which are closely related in meaning will often have word stress in a different place, and stress will often appear on a syllable which is not part of the original word at all, but rather an inflectional morpheme.

/əʃ<sup>1</sup>kri:vɛn/ ~ /əʃkri<sup>1</sup>vɛnið/ ~ /əʃkrivɛ<sup>1</sup>nəðjɔn/  
'writing'            'secretary'            'secretaries'

A stressed penultimate syllable which moves into a pre-stress position and loses its stress in this way may even be dropped. This does not occur in every case and is a feature of casual rather than formal speech.

/l'a:dar/ ~ /l'dɛ:rim/            /l'hɔsan/ ~ /l'sa:nɛ/  
'birds'            'bird'            'sock'            'socks'

Monosyllables normally have word stress, but when additional syllables are added, giving a polysyllabic form, stress appears on the penultimate syllable of this new form.

/l'di:n/ ~ /l'dənɔl/ ~ /də<sup>1</sup>nɔlriu/  
'man'            'human'            'humanity'

Certain monosyllabic grammatical items, such as the definite article, are never stressed and are always attached to the following word as a clitic.

/ə<sup>1</sup>di:n/            /ə<sup>1</sup>əʃkrivɛ<sup>1</sup>nəðjɔn/  
'the man'            'the secretaries'

In a minority of forms word stress is found on the final syllable. This occurs in some types of compounding, where the phrasal structure of the compound appears to influence the final position of word stress.

/maŋ <sup>1</sup> gi:/	/pɛm <sup>1</sup> bloið/
'grandmother'	'birthday'

It also occurs where a vowel-final stem is followed by a vowel-initial inflection, and the two vowels combine, to form a long vowel or a diphthong, which is then stressed.

/ <sup>1</sup> bu:a/ > /bu <sup>1</sup> a:i/
'bow' 'bows'

Some loans from English retain the stress pattern which they have in English, and in such cases stress may also be found either on the final syllable or on the pre-penultimate.

/kara <sup>1</sup> van/	/ <sup>1</sup> pɔlisi/
'caravan'	'police'

Secondary stress occurs where two or more syllables precede the main word stress. Counting back from the main stress towards the beginning of the word, the second syllable takes secondary stress.

/ <sup>2</sup> bendi <sup>1</sup> gɛdɪg/	/ <sup>2</sup> agɔ <sup>1</sup> sai/
'wonderful'	'to approach'

Secondary stress is also found in certain compounds, and distinguishes them from related phrasal forms which lack the semantic specialization of the compound. In the phrase both words have full stress; in the compound, the first has secondary stress. There is no clear agreement on whether Welsh also displays tertiary stress.

/ <sup>1</sup> ti: <sup>1</sup> ba:χ/	/ <sup>2</sup> ti: <sup>1</sup> ba:χ/
house small	house+small
'a small house'	'a toilet'

Comparatively little work has been carried out on intonation in Welsh, and this on a limited range of material, so that it is difficult to generalize on the patterns found. It has been suggested that nuclear tones, which appear on the most salient syllable of an utterance and the unstressed syllables which follow it, include the following: low fall, high fall, low rise, high rise, full rise, rise-fall, low level, high level. There is, however, disagreement over the detail of this analysis, some accounts suggesting that fewer distinct nuclear tones are needed. The most distinctive feature of intonation in Welsh relates to the part of the utterance preceding the nuclear tone, where the 'saw-toothed' pattern is common. Each of the salient syllables in the sequence is followed by a set of rising unstressed syllables; the next salient syllable is on a slightly lower pitch than the previous one, though again followed by rising unstressed syllables; and so on with each salient syllable slightly lower, with a tail of unstressed rising syllables. It appears that this tendency for unstressed syllables to rise in pitch is very common in Welsh, in contrast to English where the unmarked case is a slight fall in pitch.



ORTHOGRAPHY

The orthographic system of Welsh is summarized in Table 9.2. It is often claimed that the orthography of Welsh is ‘phonetic’, by which is meant that there is a clear and simple relationship between the spoken language and its written form. While this relationship is indeed more straightforward than is the case for instance in English, there are nevertheless a number of complications and inconsistencies, which will be outlined below. In addition there is the issue of regional variation in phonology. Where the orthography reflects phonological distinctions made in the north but not in the south, southerners must learn the correct written conventions by rote; where the orthography reflects distinctions made in the south but not in the north, the same holds for northerners. Most native speakers will admit to uncertainties with respect to at least some aspects of the orthography, and this may well contribute to a widespread lack of confidence in using the language in contexts where mastery of formal written Welsh is needed.

Table 9.2 The orthography of Welsh

<i>Consonants</i>	/p/ p	/ð/ dd	/m/ m
	/b/ b	/s/ s	/n/ n
	/t/ t	/ʎ/ ll	/ŋ/ ng
	/d/ d	/z/ s	/l/ l
	/k/ c	/ʃ/ si, sh	[r], [r] rh, r
	/g/ g	/ʒ/ ch	/w/ w
	/f/ ff, ph	/h/ h	/j/ i
	/v/ f	/tʃ/ tsh	
	/θ/ th	/dʒ/ j	
<i>Vowels</i>	/i:/, /ɪ/ i	/o:/, /ɔ/ o	/ə/ y
	/e:/, /ɛ/ e	/u:/, /ʊ/ w	
	/a:/, /a/ a	/ɛ:/, /ɛ:/ u, y	
<i>Diphthongs</i>	/ei/ ei	/au/ aw	/ai/ au
	/ai/ ai	/ou/ ow	/a:ɪ/ ae
	/ɔi/ oi	/tu/ uw, yw	/o:ɪ/ oe
	/iu/ iw	/əu/ yw	/u:ɪ/ wy
	/eu/ ew	/ei/ eu	

So far as the consonants of Welsh are concerned, there is for the most part a clear one-to-one correspondence between contrastive phonological units and orthographic forms. Perhaps the most striking feature of this system is the widespread use of digraphs, including the doubling of consonantal symbols as in *dd*, *ff* and *ll*, and the addition of *h* as in *ch*, *ph*, *rh*, and *th*. In only a few cases does the system deviate from a straightforward correspondence between phonology and written form. The voiceless labiodental fricative /f/ is normally represented by *ff*, as in *ffordd* ‘road’, *hoffi* ‘to like’ and *rhaff* ‘rope’. If the /f/ appears in word-initial position as a result of the Aspirate Mutation, however, then it is written with a *ph*, as in *ei phlant* ‘her children’. In no other case does the orthography take account of whether a consonant appears in the citation form of a word or as the result of a consonantal mutation. Again, in only one case is allophonic variation taken into account,

where the voiced [r] and voiceless [ɾ] are written respectively *r* and *rh*. This is not a clear case, however, as the introduction of loans from English has meant that there is now a contrast between voiced and voiceless rolls in initial position, as in *rhan* 'part' and *reis* 'rice'. Only one phonological distinction is not marked in the orthography, with /ŋ/ and /ŋg/ both being written as *ng*; it is not possible to tell from the written form that *angen* 'need' represents /'aŋen/ while *dangos* 'to show' represents /'daŋgos/.

The marginal consonants, found in loans from English and informal or dialectal usage, are represented by a mixture of symbols borrowed from English and adaptations of existing Welsh orthographic conventions. The English symbol *j* is used for /dʒ/, both in loans such as *jam* 'jam' and in informal or regional Welsh usage such as *jogel* (standard *diogel*) 'safe'. The voiceless equivalent /tʃ/ is written as *tsh* as in *cwtsh* 'cuddle'. The English symbol *z* is not used for /z/, which is written consistently with *s* as in *sŵ* 'zoo', reflecting the assimilated northern pronunciation of this form. The fricative /ʃ/ in loan words is usually written *si* where it precedes a vowel, as in *Siân* 'Jane' or *pasio* 'to pass'. This sequence is, however, ambiguous and may be read as either /ʃ/ or /si/, and so to avoid confusion, in final position the orthographic form *sh* is used, as in *ffresh* 'fresh'. In southern dialect usage the consonant /s/ shifts to /ʃ/ when preceding or following a high front vowel, and in such cases too the symbol *sh* is used to represent it, as in *shir* (standard *sir*) 'county' or *mish* (standard *mis*) 'month' when intending to reflect natural spoken usage.

Turning to the core vowel system, the orthography takes no notice of vowel length and uses the same symbol for the long and short vowel of each pair, with *a* for instance representing both /a:/ and /a/. Here too there are a few complications. Two different orthographic symbols are used to represent /i:/ and /ɪ/, namely *y* and *u*. Originally these appear to have represented slightly different vowels, but the phonetic distinction has long been lost and they differ only with respect to certain morphophonemic alternations, which will be discussed later. Words where /i:/ and /ɪ/ are represented by *y* undergo these rules, and words where they are represented by *u* do not. In south Wales, of course, there are no /i:/ or /ɪ/ vowels and the symbols *y*, *u* and *i* all represent /i:/ and /ɪ/. The symbol *y* in fact also represents the mid central vowel /ə/, though here confusion is lessened by the distribution of the symbol in the word. In a word final syllable *y* represents /i:/ and /ɪ/, or /i:/ and /ɪ/ in the south; in a nonfinal syllable it represents the mid central vowel /ə/. Compare the use of *y* in a form such as *ynys* 'island', where there is no confusion at all as to the meaning of the symbol in each syllable. Unstressed monosyllabic clitics, which behave essentially as nonfinal syllables attached to the following word, also have *y* representing the mid central /ə/, as in *y bachgen* 'the boy'. The symbol *o* is used for the loan English vowel /ɔ:/ and it is not distinguished in writing from Welsh /o:/ and /ɔ/.

Where vowel length is predictable, there is no problem and it is not marked. Where it is contrastive two different strategies emerge. In monosyllables a long vowel is marked by a circumflex accent and a short vowel is left unmarked, giving a contrast for instance between *tŵr* 'tower' and *twr* 'crowd'. This is, however, not done systematically and there are numerous exceptions; these may either involve a contrastively long vowel which is not marked by a circumflex accent, such as *hen* 'old', or a vowel which does have an accent although its length is predictable, as in the case of *tŷ* 'house'. There is also a length contrast in the stressed penultimate, in the south if not in the north. Here it is marked by doubling of the consonant following a short vowel, as in *ennill* 'to win' and *carreg* 'stone'; the long vowel is left unmarked, as in *canu* 'to sing' and *arall* 'other'. Contrast is also possible before /l/, but this is never doubled in the orthography, since doing so would lead to confusion with the symbol *ll* used to represent /l/. In marking length contrasts in

penultimate syllables the orthography follows the south, rather than the north. This is the only point at which the south preserves a distinction now lost in the north, and it is the only point where the orthography diverges from northern usage.

Diphthongs are represented by a sequence of two vowel symbols, one for the starting point and one for the offglide, and it is the full northern system of diphthongs which is reflected in the orthographic system, though there is no systematic marking of length differences in the initial segment. On the whole the symbols used for simple vowels are found here too, and the same complications are found over the high central element, be it in initial position or as an offglide. The initial element /ɪ/ in the diphthong /ɪu/, or /ɪu/ in the south, may be represented by either *y* or *u*, as in *cyw* 'chick' or *Duw* 'God', while in nonfinal syllables such as *tywallt* 'to pour' *yw* represents /əu/. The offglide /i/ is variously spelled *u*, *y* and *e*. The offglides /i/ and /u/ are consistently represented by *i* and *w*, and these same symbols are also used for the consonantal glides /j/ and /w/, as in *iâr* 'hen' and *wedi* 'after'.

Normal word stress on the penultimate syllable is not marked. Where word stress is exceptionally on a final syllable this may be shown by means of an accent, either a circumflex accent as in *cytûn* 'in agreement', or an acute accent as in *coffáu* 'to commemorate'. This does not happen in every case, however, as can be seen from examples such as *ynghyd* 'together' and *paratoi* 'to prepare'. One further accent used is the diaeresis, as in *amgaeëdig* 'enclosed' or *glöwr* 'collier', in order to clarify that this is a sequence of distinct simple vowels rather than a diphthong. The diaeresis always appears on the vowel of the stressed penultimate syllable.

## MORPHOPHONOLOGICAL VARIATION

The most striking type of morphophonological variation in Welsh, as in all the Celtic languages, is the highly developed system of initial consonant mutation, whereby the beginning of a word changes according to the lexical or grammatical context in which it appears. There are also, however, morphophonological rules which give rise to vowel alternations, and a set of complex alternations affecting a range of monosyllabic grammatical items.

### Initial mutations

There are three sets of initial consonant mutations, known as the Soft Mutation (SM), the Nasal Mutation (NM) and the Aspirate Mutation (AM). They emerged naturally, as a result of normal speech processes, as early as the fifth and sixth centuries, but have become fossilized over the years and are now essentially arbitrary. They are shown in Table 9.3, both in terms of the phonological units involved and orthographically. The Soft Mutation subsumes a number of varied phonological changes. Voiceless stops shift to the corresponding voiced stop, with the exception of /g/, which is simply dropped; voiced stops shift to the most closely related voiced fricatives; /m/ shifts to the most closely related voiced fricative /v/; /t/ and [r] are voiced to /l/ and [r]. The Nasal Mutation affects only stops. Voiced stops shift to the corresponding nasal; voiceless stops too shift to the corresponding nasal, though here with an aspirate offglide as in /mh, nh, ñh/. These initial clusters are found only as the result of Nasal Mutation, and appear nowhere else. The Aspirate Mutation affects only voiceless stops, which shift to the most closely related voiceless fricatives. There is, in addition, a related rule which involves the addition of /h/

before a word initial vowel or glide. The Soft Mutation is used in a wide variety of different contexts, while the other mutations are more restricted in scope. In the discussion which follows, the focus of attention is not on the detail of these phonological changes but rather on the contexts which trigger initial mutation, and the examples given will be in orthographic form.

Table 9.3 The initial mutations of Welsh

### Phonological changes

Soft	Nasal	Aspirate
/p/ > /b/	/p/ > /mh/	/p/ > /f/
/t/ > /d/	/t/ > /nh/	/t/ > /θ/
/k/ > /g/	/k/ > /ŋh/	/k/ > /χ/
/b/ > /v/	/b/ > /m/	
/d/ > /ð/	/d/ > /n/	
/g/ > zero	/g/ > /ŋ/	
/m/ > /v/		
/ʎ/ > /l/		
[r] > [r]		

### Orthographical changes

Soft	Nasal	Aspirate
p > b	p > mh	p > ph
t > d	t > nh	t > th
c > g	c > ngh	c > ch
b > f	b > m	
d > dd	d > n	
g > zero	g > ng	
m > f		
ll > l		
rh > r		

Lexical contexts are the most straightforward. Specific lexical items require the immediately following word to undergo one of the initial consonant mutations. The isolation form *plant* 'children', for instance, will undergo the SM following *dy* 'your' (sg.), the NM following *fy* 'my', and the AM following *ei* 'her'.

*dy blant*                      ~ *fy mhlant*                      ~ *ei phlant*  
 'your (sg.) children'      'my children'              'her children'

The mutation is in each case an arbitrary and unpredictable feature of the triggering lexical item. Homophonic items may trigger different mutations, as when *ei* 'her' triggers the AM, as shown already, but *ei* 'his' triggers the SM.

*ei phlant*                      ~ *ei blant*  
 'her children'              'his children'

Equally, where a single lexical item varies in form according to the context, it will still trigger the same mutation; *ei* 'her' changes its form and is realized as *w* following the preposition *i* 'to/for', but nevertheless still triggers the AM.

<i>ei phlant</i>	~	<i>i'w phlant</i>
'her children'		'to/for her children'

In almost every case a lexical item may trigger only one mutation. Exceptionally, the negative particles *ni* and *na* trigger both the SM and the AM; if the following verb has an initial voiceless stop, then we find the AM, while any other mutatable consonant undergoes the SM.

<i>Na chei.</i>	<i>Na fydd.</i>
not may.2 sg.	not will-be.3 sg.
'You may not.'	'He/she will not.'

The lexical items which trigger mutations include personal pronouns, prepositions, numerals, conjunctions, preverbal particles, predication markers and adverbs modifying adjectives. One striking feature of lexical contexts of this kind is that the mutation may be found in cases where the actual lexical trigger has been dropped and is not realized overtly in the sentence. The interrogative preverbal particle *a*, for instance, triggers SM of the following verb. It may be freely dropped in informal speech, but the mutation triggered by it remains.

<i>A fydd amser?</i>	<i>Fydd amser?</i>
Q will-be.3 sg. time?	will-be.3 sg. time?
'Will there be time?'	'Will there be time?'

Grammatical contexts are more varied, but all trigger the SM. In several cases, for instance, the mutation is sensitive not only to the presence of a specific lexical item but also to features such as gender and number. Following the definite article, a m.sg. noun such as *bachgen* 'boy', remains in citation form while a f.sg. noun such as *merch* 'girl' undergoes SM. Plural nouns retain the citation form, regardless of gender.

<i>y bachgen</i>	~	<i>y ferch</i>	~	<i>y bechgyn</i>	~	<i>y merched</i>
'the boy'		'the girl'		'the boys'		'the girls'

This sensitivity to features such as gender and number extends to contexts where there is no specific lexical item involved, but rather a more general grammatical pattern. An adjective following a f.sg. noun, for instance, undergoes SM, regardless of the identity of the noun or the adjective concerned. An adjective such as *bach* 'little' accordingly appears in SM form following a f.sg. noun such as *merch* 'girl'. If the noun is pluralized, there is no mutation. Nor is there if the noun is masculine, either singular or plural.

<i>merch fach</i>	~	<i>merched bach</i>	~	<i>bachgen bach</i>	~	<i>bechgyn bach</i>
girl little		girls little		boy little		boys little
'a little girl'		'little girls'		'a little boy'		'little boys'

Other contexts triggering mutations refer more generally to aspects of sentence structure, and often involve relatively complex considerations. The direct object of an inflected verb undergoes SM, and this regardless of whether the subject of the sentence is overt or dropped.

*Gwelais (i) fachgen.*  
saw.1 sg. (I) boy  
'I saw a boy.'

Only the first word in the direct object can undergo SM, and where another, nonmutatable item comes first, the definite article for instance, then the mutation is blocked. It is blocked too if the direct object appears in sentence-initial position in a stressed sentence.

<i>Gwelais (i) y bachgen.</i>	<i>Bachgen a welais (i).</i>
saw.1 sg. (I) the boy	boy that saw.1 sg. (I)
'I saw the boy.'	'It was a boy that I saw.'

In semantically related forms with a verb noun rather than an inflected verb, the object is not mutated, and neither is the object of an impersonal verb.

<i>Dw i wedi gweld bachgen.</i>	<i>Gwelwyd bachgen.</i>
am.1 sg. I perf. see boy	saw.impers. boy
'I have seen a boy.'	'A boy was seen.'

The relevant context may also involve the word order of the sentence, where a change from unmarked to marked word order may trigger SM. Unmarked word order for instance requires an initial verb, followed by the subject, and then any other items such as a PP. If the PP is moved to the left, so that it immediately follows the verb and precedes the subject, then the displaced subject undergoes SM.

<i>Mae llyfr gen i.</i>	<i>Mae gen i lyfr.</i>
is book with me	is with me book
'I have a book.'	'I have a book.'

It has been assumed so far that all words are equally vulnerable to mutation, but this is not in fact the case. Personal names usually withstand mutation, even in contexts where this might be expected, and although Welsh-language place names are freely mutated, there is considerable reluctance to mutate place names which are perceived as 'foreign' such as *Birmingham* or *Tokyo*. Such mutations are considered odd, and are possible only in jokes which are playing with language conventions. Genuine Welsh names for places outside Wales, such as *Llundain* 'London' or *Rhufain* 'Rome' are freely mutated, and there is a grey area where place names such as *Paris* and *Patagonia* are acceptable in mutated form even though they are not actually native Welsh forms. Some lexical items, such as *braf* 'fine', never undergo mutation, and this in an apparently arbitrary way. Loans from English on the whole undergo mutation freely, and an item such as *car* 'car' appears in all mutation forms. This happens less readily in the case of loans with initial *g*, such as *garej* 'garage' where SM would require loss of the *g*, and forms such as *\*ei arej* 'his garage' appear on the whole only in jokes. In informal speech the affricate *tsh* in loans from English is sometimes incorporated into the SM, with an item such as *tships* 'chips' realized

with *j* in some contexts, such as *siop jips* 'chip shop'. The voiced equivalent *j* does not display SM, even in informal speech.

The pattern of mutations described above is that found in the standard written language. In regional dialect, there are differences. Informal south Wales usage appears to be gradually abandoning the use of the NM and the AM, though this trend is by no means complete. A place name such as *Caerdydd* 'Cardiff' will undergo the NM after the preposition *yn* 'in' in the standard language, but the SM in southern dialect.

<i>ying Nghaerdydd</i> (standard)	~	<i>yn Gaerdydd</i> (S)
'in Cardiff'	~	'in Cardiff'

The conjunction *a* 'and' triggers the AM in the standard language, but in the south the citation form is often retained.

<i>a Chaerdydd</i> (standard)	~	<i>a Caerdydd</i> (S)
'and Cardiff'	~	'and Cardiff'

These are typical of a series of apparently unrelated individual changes, all of which are gradually moving southern dialect away from the traditional, standard system towards something rather simpler consisting only of the citation form and the SM. Note that the overall phonology of southern dialect has implications for the mutations, over and above the systematic simplification described above. In those areas where initial /h/ is regularly dropped, the aspirated nasals of the NM are ruled out too, and /p, t, k/ shift not to /mh, nh, ŋh/ but to /m, n, ŋ/. As a result there is no distinction between the NM forms of the voiced and voiceless stops, and the mutated forms of *Bangor* and *Pontypridd* fall together. The rule adding /h/ to an initial vowel or glide is not found dialectally in this part of Wales, for the same reason. And in this same area, since there is no voiceless initial [r̥], this part of the SM is no longer relevant.

In the north the situation is different. Here the mutation system is expanding rather than being simplified. Specifically, there is evidence of the AM being extended to initial nasals and liquids, in words such as *mam* 'mother' and *lamp* 'lamp'. These are shifting to the aspirated equivalents, in contexts where the AM is already found, such following *ei* 'her'.

<i>ei mham</i>	<i>ei lhamp</i>
'her mother'	'her lamp'

The aspirated nasals resemble those found as NM of voiceless stops, but the aspirated liquids are new clusters, not found elsewhere in the language. The tendency to draw English loan forms into the mutation system is also more widespread in parts of the north, where words with initial *tsh* such as *tships* 'chips' and those with initial *j* such as *job* 'job' sometimes undergo the NM.

<i>fy nships</i>	<i>fy njob</i>
'my chips'	'my job'

Where the standard language preserves irregularities, these are often tidied up in regional dialect. In the standard language, for instance, a number of SM rules do not apply to words with an initial *ll* or *rh*. A f.sg. noun such as *llaw* 'hand' would be expected to undergo SM following the definite article, but in fact fails to do so, and appears as *y llaw* 'the hand'.

In regional dialect exceptions of this kind are often rationalized, giving the more regular form *y law*. Occasionally too examples of what appear to be ‘double mutation’ are found in regional usage. A form such as *pobl* ‘people’ is found not only in the expected SM form following the definite article as *y bobl* ‘the people’, but also as *y fobl*. It appears that the initial *p* has been subject to SM to give *b* and that this too has been mutated to give *f*. Since these examples are comparatively rare, it seems likely that the original SM form has been reanalysed as a citation form, and the SM then reapplied in due course.

### The centralization rule

This rule is essentially arbitrary, and though it can be described in phonological terms, it is not in the modern language the result of purely phonological processes. In many words a high back vowel changes to a central vowel when an additional syllable is added to the word.

*tŵr* ‘tower’ > *tyrau* ‘towers’  
*twr* ‘crowd’ > *tyrru* ‘to crowd’

This does not occur in every case, and other words retain the original vowel unchanged.

*cwd* ‘bag’ > *cwdyn* ‘bag’  
*twp* ‘silly’ > *twpsyn* ‘silly person’

A similar change affects many words which contain a high central vowel in north Wales, realized as a high front vowel in the south. This too changes to a central vowel when an additional syllable is added, though the actual phonological change is not so obvious here, since the orthographic symbol *y* represents a high vowel in the final syllable but a central vowel in nonfinal syllables.

*dyn* ‘man’ > *dynion* ‘men’  
*tyn* ‘tight’ > *tynnu* ‘to pull’

Again the rule applies in some cases but not in others, and where it fails to apply, the orthographic symbol *u* is used.

*cul* ‘narrow’ > *culach* ‘narrower’  
*punt* ‘pound’ > *punnoedd* ‘pounds’

Words which have the high front vowel in both north and south Wales, and which contain the orthographic symbol *i*, do not undergo this rule.

*tir* ‘land’ > *tiroedd* ‘lands’  
*gwisg* ‘dress’ > *gwisgo* ‘to dress’

Both long and short vowels undergo this rule, though the resulting central vowel is always short. It applies only where the original vowel is followed by a consonant or a cluster, and never affects forms such as *tŷ* ‘house’ or *llw* ‘oath’ where there is no consonant following the vowel. It is not confined to monosyllabic forms, but also affects words where the high central or high back vowel is in the final syllable.



*gwenyn* 'bees' > *gwenynen* 'bee'  
*pentwr* 'pile' > *pentyrau* 'piles'

For the most part the rule behaves identically with respect to high central and high back vowels. There is one interesting difference, however, between them which shows up in polysyllabic forms with identical vowels in both the final and the penultimate syllable. Where a high back vowel appears in both positions, the two become central vowels at the same time, as an additional syllable is added.

*cwmwl* 'cloud' > *cymylu* 'to cloud over'

With high central vowels, however, the rule operates recursively, affecting the penultimate vowel first, and then the final vowel only when an additional syllable is added. The use of *y* for both vowels is confusing, but the normal conventions hold here; in *ynys* the first *i* is to be interpreted as a central vowel, the second as a high vowel, while in *ynysu* both are central vowels.

*ynys* 'island' > *ynysu* 'to isolate'

### Monosyllabic grammatical items

The form of certain 'grammatical' items changes predictably according to the context in which they appear. The definite article, and certain conjunctions, particles and pronouns are affected by a range of phonological, syntactic and lexical factors which determine the exact form of the item in each case. The resulting patterns are often complicated and unpredictable, and are found in the formal, standard language as well as in informal registers.

In some cases the crucial consideration is what follows. The conjunction 'and', for instance, appears as *ac* before a vowel but as *a* before a consonant.

<i>afal</i>	<i>ac</i>	<i>oren</i>	~	<i>ci</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>chath</i>
apple	and	orange	~	dog	and	cat
'an apple	and an	orange'	~	'a dog	and a	cat'

Clearly the phonological environment is important here, but it is not in fact the only relevant factor, since *ac* is found before a consonant in the case of certain lexical items.

<i>ac</i>	<i>felly</i>	<i>bydd</i>	<i>angen</i>	<i>mynd</i>	<i>yno</i>	<i>heno</i>
and so	will-be	need	go	there	tonight	
'... and so it will be necessary to go there tonight'						

The negative sentence-initial particle displays a similar pattern of alternation, appearing as *nid* before a vowel but as *ni* before a consonant.

<i>Nid</i>	<i>oes</i>	<i>angen</i>	<i>mynd</i> .	<i>Ni</i>	<i>fydd</i>	<i>angen</i>	<i>mynd</i> .
not is	need	go		not will-be	need	go	
'There is no need to go.'				'There will be no need to go.'			

Here again, however, there are complications. Exceptionally, the particle appears as *ni* before a vowel if the vowel is in word-initial position through the effect of the SM; *gall*

'can' (3 sg. pres.) undergoes SM to give *all*, but the particle behaves as if the consonant were still there and appears as *ni*.

*Ni all neb fynd.*  
not can no-one go  
'No-one can go.'

Conversely, where a stressed element is moved to the beginning of the sentence, the particle appears as *nid* even before a consonant.

*Nid merch Siân sydd yn y côr.*  
not daughter Siân is in the choir  
'It's not Siân's daughter who's in the choir.'

In other cases the pattern of variation relates to the preceding context. The three homophonous *yn* forms – the continuous aspect marker, the complementizer and the preposition *yn* 'in' – are all sensitive to the preceding context. They appear as *yn* following a consonant, but as *'n* where they follow a vowel.

*Bydd yn canu'n y cyngerdd.*  
will-be (he/she) contin. sing in the concert  
'He/she will be singing in the concert.'

*Mae'n canu'n y cyngerdd.*  
is (he/she) contin. sing in the concert  
'He/she is singing in the concert.'

A number of possessive pronouns behave similarly, and in some cases there are further complications. The possessives *ei* 'his' and *ei* 'her', for instance, both appear as *ei* following a consonant, but as *'i* following a vowel. However, if they appear following the preposition *i* 'for/to' they take the form *'w*. Once again both phonological and lexical factors are involved.

*am ei blant ~ gyda 'i blant ~ i 'w blant*  
about his children ~ with his children ~ to/for his children  
'about his children' ~ 'with his children' ~ 'to/for his children'

Dialect variation may also be relevant, with forms such as *i'w blant* being replaced in southern dialect by the nonstandard equivalent *iddi blant*. The definite article is the only item which takes account of both the preceding and the following context. If there is a preceding vowel then it appears as *'r*. If not, then it appears as *yr* before a vowel and as *y* before a consonant.

*gyda 'r plant ~ am y plant ~ am yr ysgol*  
with the children ~ about the children ~ about the school  
'with the children' ~ 'about the children' ~ 'about the school'

One further complication is worth noting. Where two 'grammatical' items follow each other, the rules described above sometimes apply in an unexpected way. It might be

expected, for instance, that the sequence *ac eich* 'and your' would be accepted as it stands. The conjunction *ac* here is followed by a vowel, and the possessive *eich* 'your' follows a consonant. No change appears necessary. In fact, however, both items change, to give the wholly unexpected form *a'ch* 'and your'. The form *a* 'and' now appears before a consonant, and the form *'ch* follows a vowel. Somehow the rules have gone into overdrive, and each has applied on the assumption that the other has already done so. It is not clear why this should be the case, but it is a regular feature of such sequences of grammatical items in Welsh.

*eich mam a 'ch tad*  
 your mother and your father  
 'your mother and father'

## MORPHOLOGY

There is a rich pattern of inflectional morphology in Welsh, affecting verbs, prepositions, nouns, adjectives, numerals and determiners. Person, number, gender and tense/aspect are all relevant. Derivational morphology is also productive, generating a wide range of related forms.

### Inflectional morphology

The inflections found in the spoken language are different in some details from those of the standard written language, and in recent years it has become acceptable to use these variants in writing, where the situation calls for an informal style. In the discussion which follows, the forms of the standard, literary language are given, and where informal usage differs this is noted.

#### *Verbs*

The inflections on verbs vary according to the nature of the subject NP. The system is at its richest when the subject NP is a pronoun, as the verbal inflection displays agreement for both person and number. There are distinct forms for 1st, 2nd and 3rd person, in both the singular and the plural, as can be seen from the past tense forms of *rhedeg* 'to run'.

*rhedais* 'I ran', *rhedaist* 'you (sg.) ran', *rhedodd* 'he/she ran', *rhedasom* 'we ran',  
*rhedasoch* 'you (pl.) ran', *rhedasant* 'they ran'

The pronoun subject may appear in the normal subject position, immediately following the verb but it may equally well be dropped, leaving a gap in this position.

*Rhedais (i) drwy'r ardd.*  
 ran.1 sg. (I) through the garden  
 'I ran through the garden.'

The Welsh pronoun system distinguishes between masculine and feminine in the 3 sg, but verbal inflections do not. As a result dropping a 3 sg. pronoun subject results in a certain ambiguity, which can only be resolved from the wider context.

*Rhedodd drwy 'r ardd.*  
 ran.3 sg. (he/she) through the garden  
 'He/she ran through the garden.'

Agreement with a following noun subject is limited, in that the verb always appears with a 3 sg. inflection, and this regardless of whether the subject is singular or plural.

*Rhedodd y bachgen/y bechgyn drwy'r ardd.*  
 ran.3 sg. the boy/the boys through the garden  
 'The boy(s) ran through the garden.'

There is in addition a further inflectional form, known traditionally as the impersonal, which acknowledges the existence of an unspecified subject, but provides no further information about it: *rhedwyd* 'X ran'. A verb displaying an impersonal inflection always appears alone, and is never followed by an overt subject.

*Rhedwyd drwy'r ardd.*  
 ran.impers. through the garden  
 'X ran through the garden.'

Verbal inflections also specify the tense and aspect of the sentence. Most lexical verbs have a choice of three different forms – the present, which is semantically often more of a future, the imperfect, and the past. These are illustrated here by the relevant 1 sg. forms of *rhedeg* 'to run'.

*rhedaf* 'I run/will run', *rhedwn* 'I was running/used to run', *rhedais* 'I ran'

There is a fourth inflection, the pluperfect, but this is found only in very formal, literary registers of Welsh.

*rhedaswn* 'I had run'

A wider range of tense and aspect distinctions is found in the case of *bod* 'to be' – a straightforward present, a future which is also a habitual present, a straightforward imperfect, a habitual imperfect, and a past.

*wyf* 'I am', *byddaf* 'I will be/I habitually am', *oeddwn* 'I was', *byddwn* 'I used to be', *bûm* 'I was'

Here again there is additionally a pluperfect form which is used only in formal, literary registers of Welsh.

*buaswn* 'I had been'

Compound verbs which contain *bod*, such as *adnabod* 'to know a person/place' and *gwybod* 'to know a fact' share some, though not all, of these tense and aspect possibilities. A small number of verbs are defective, and do not appear in all the expected tense and aspect forms.

Occasionally verbal inflections may take account of factors not usually relevant. The 3 sg. present form of *bod* 'to be' is exceptional in this way. The normal, unmarked case is *mae*, but in a range of sentence types which include copulas with a preposed complement, negatives and questions, it is realized rather as *yw*. Where the sentence negates or questions the existence of an indefinite subject, the verb form is *oes*. And finally in a relative clause we find *sydd*. Similar patterning holds of the corresponding plural forms. Such a complex set of inflections is rare, however.

Subjunctive inflections are found only in the Present/Future and the Imperfect, and are not widely used, being confined in modern usage to a small number of productive constructions, such as unreal conditional clauses following *pe* 'if'.

*pe bai mwy o amser gennym ni ...*  
 if were more of time with.1 pl.us ...  
 'If we had more time ...'

They also appear in fixed expressions, such as wishes.

*Duw faddeuo i ti!*  
 God forgive to you  
 'May God forgive you!'

For the most part Imperative forms are identical to those found in the Present/Future Indicative, with *cenwch* being used to express both the statement 'you.pl. sing', and the command 'sing.2 pl'. In the 2 sg. the forms used differ; in a statement we find *ceni* 'you. sg. sing' but in the imperative *cân* 'sing.2 sg'. There is additionally an Impersonal Imperative form, conveying the view that something should happen, but not specifying who is to carry out this action, as in *caner* 'sing.impers'.

The verb is not always inflected, and in many contexts one finds rather the uninflected verb noun (VN). This conveys only the lexical meaning of the verb, and conveys no features of tense or aspect, and no information as to the person or number of the subject. The form of a verb-noun is unpredictable and irregular. It may correspond to the stem of the inflected verb, or minor phonological alternations may occur.

*dangos* 'to show' ~ *dangosais* 'I showed'  
*cyffwrdd* 'to touch' ~ *cyffyrddais* 'I touched'

There are also some very irregular forms, where the verb-noun has no obvious link to the inflected forms.

*mynd* 'to go' ~ *aethum* 'I went'  
*dod* 'to come' ~ *daethum* 'I came'

### Prepositions

Prepositions are inflected when followed by a pronoun object, and the inflections reflect the person, number and gender of this pronoun. There are distinct forms for 1st, 2nd and 3rd person in the singular and plural, and in the 3 sg. there are distinct forms for masculine and feminine. The range of possibilities is illustrated here by the forms of *at* 'to'.

*ataf* 'to me', *atat* 'to you.sg.', *ato* 'to him', *ati* 'to her', *atom* 'to us', *atoch* 'to you.pl.', *atynt* 'to them'

The pronoun object may appear in the normal position following the preposition, or it may be dropped, leaving a gap in this position.

*Ysgrifennodd y ferch ato (fe).*  
wrote the girl to.3 sg. m. (him)  
'The girl wrote to him.'

There is no equivalent of the impersonal inflection found with verbs, and it is not possible to indicate that there is an unspecified prepositional object, about which no further information can be given. If the object of the preposition is a noun, then there is no inflection and the preposition appears in citation form.

*Ysgrifennodd y ferch at y brifysgol.*  
wrote the girl to the university  
'The girl wrote to the university.'

A few prepositions such as *gyda* 'with' do not inflect, and remain in citation form regardless of what follows.

*gyda fi* 'with me', *gyda ni* 'with us', *gyda chi* 'with you.pl.', *gyda'r plant* 'with the children'

A very few prepositions are sensitive to the definiteness of the following noun. The form *yn* 'in' appears only before a definite NP, and conversely *mewn* 'in' is found only before an indefinite NP.

*yn yr ystafell arall* ~ *mewn ystafell arall*  
in the room other ~ in room other  
'in the other room' ~ 'in another room'

Dialectally in parts of south Wales, another pair of forms displays a similar alternation, with *ar* 'on' appearing only before definite NPs and *acha* 'on' before indefinites. In the standard language *ar* is found in all contexts.

### Nouns

Nouns are marked for number, and for the most part have distinct forms for singular and plural. The basic form of the noun is usually the singular, and it may be pluralized by the addition of a suffix, or by a suffix and a changed vowel.

*afal* 'apple' ~ *afalau* 'apples'  
*iaith* 'language' ~ *ieithoedd* 'languages'

A substantial minority of nouns display the reverse pattern, whereby the plural form is basic, and the singular is formed through the addition of a suffix, or a suffix and a changed vowel.

*moch* 'pigs' ~ *mochyn* 'pig'  
*dail* 'leaves' ~ *deilen* 'leaf'

In some cases there is no obvious basic form, as singular and plural are each marked with a suffix.

*cwningen* 'rabbit' ~ *cwningod* 'rabbits'

Or the distinction between singular and plural is marked by a changed vowel, with the singular traditionally regarded as the basic form.

*ffordd* 'road' ~ *ffyrdd* 'roads'

Most nouns have only one plural form, but there are exceptions. In some cases one form is typical of the formal, standard language while the other is found in informal usage or regional dialect. The noun *blwyddyn* 'year', for instance, has the standard plural form *blynyddoedd* 'years', but the informal/regional plural *blynyddau* is also in common use. In other cases the situation is more complicated as the singular form in fact represents two homophonic nouns, each of which has a different plural. The singular form *cyngor* 'council/advice' is thus pluralized as *cynghorau* 'councils' and *cynghorion* 'words of advice'.

Not all nouns, however, have both a singular and a plural form. Many abstract nouns such as *tywydd* 'weather' have no plural, and neither do many mass nouns such as *bara* 'bread'. In other cases the lack appears to be an idiosyncratic feature of the individual lexical item. The northern forms *nain* 'grandmother' and *taid* 'grandfather' pluralize readily, to give *neiniau* 'grandmothers' and *teidiau* 'grandfathers', but the equivalent southern items *mamgu* 'grandmother' and *tadcu* 'grandfather' have no plural form. There is clearly no semantic basis for this gap, and it appears that the internal compound N + Adj structure of these nouns interferes in some way with pluralization. The reverse situation holds with respect to the plural form *gwartheg* 'cattle', which has no natural singular equivalent, so that referring to a single beast requires the use of a more specific singular form, such as *buwch* 'cow', *tarw* 'bull' or *llo* 'calf'. Gaps of this kind are not a permanent, unchanging feature of the language, however. Traditionally it was assumed, for instance, that the plural form *rhieni* 'parents' had no singular equivalent, but today the singular *rhiant* 'parent' is used freely in contexts such as *rhiant sengl* 'single parent'.

For the most part the choice of plural marker is arbitrary, but occasionally one appears to have a semantic link. The affix *-od*, for instance, is usually found with nouns referring to animals, as in *llewod* 'lions', *cathod* 'cats', *buchod* 'cows'. The link is not found in all cases, however, and is by no means uniform. Some animals such as *ceffylau* 'horses' are pluralized with other suffixes, and some items such as *babanod* 'babies', which are not animals, take the suffix *-od*.

All nouns in Welsh are either masculine or feminine, and this classification affects their behaviour with respect to a range of grammatical rules. It is not, however, marked overtly in most cases. There is nothing in the form of the word which will reveal that *mynydd* 'mountain' is masculine, while *afon* 'river' is feminine. A few affixes are gender-specific, as for instance the singular suffixes *-yn* (m.) and *-en* (f.). Thus *aderyn* 'bird' is masculine, while *deilen* 'leaf' is feminine. A small number of words such as *cyngerdd* 'concert' have variable gender, being accepted as both masculine and feminine in standard usage. Normally words referring to a male living being, whether human or not, are masculine and words referring to a female are feminine. Grammatical gender, however, does not always

correspond to real-life sex. The masculine noun *eryr* 'eagle' may refer to a bird of either sex, as may the feminine noun *mwyalchen* 'blackbird'. In the case of human beings most examples of this kind involve a masculine noun which can refer not only to men or boys but also to women or girls, as with *plentyn* 'child', *meddyg* 'doctor' or *swyddog* 'officer'.

### Adjectives

The number and gender features of nouns, described above, have important implications for adjectives, which still display residual patterns of agreement with nouns, in both number and gender. The basic form of the adjective is normally the singular, and the plural may be formed either by the addition of a suffix, or the addition of a suffix and a changed vowel.

*du* (sg.) ~ *duon* (pl.) 'black'  
*trwm* (sg.) ~ *trymion* (pl.) 'heavy'

In other cases only a changed vowel distinguishes the singular and plural forms.

*arall* (sg.) ~ *eraill* (pl.) 'other'

Where gender is marked in adjectives, it always involves a changed vowel.

*tlws* (m.) ~ *tlos* (f.) 'pretty'

An adjective may then agree in number with a plural noun, but this is rare in the modern language, and only *arall* 'other' regularly pluralizes in a fully natural way. For the most part plural adjectives are confined to fixed idiomatic phrases.

*mwyar duon*  
 berries black (pl.)  
 'blackberries'

They do appear still in specialized registers such as the Welsh of the Bible, but are felt to be stiff and old-fashioned. In modern usage a plural noun may appear freely with a singular adjective.

*llygaid glas*  
 eyes blue (sg.)  
 'blue eyes'

Equally, in predicative position, a plural noun subject will normally take a singular adjective. If the adjective is pluralized, the effect is old-fashioned and literary in the extreme.

*Mae'r cymylau yn ddu/\*dduon*  
 is the clouds comp black (sg.)/\*black (pl.)  
 'The clouds are black.'

Gender agreement too is increasingly rare in modern Welsh, though a small number of adjectives appear naturally in both forms.



*pellter byr ~ taith fer*  
 distance short (m.) journey short (f.)  
 'a short distance' 'a short journey'

Here again, for the most part the feminine forms are confined to fixed idiomatic phrases, or old-fashioned, Biblical style.

*buwch goch gota*  
 cow red short (f.)  
 'ladybird'

In predicative position, too, the masculine form is normal even when referring to a feminine noun subject, and a feminine adjective is odd and old-fashioned.

*Mae 'r ferch yn gryf / \*yn gref*  
 is the girl comp strong (m.) / \*strong (f.)  
 'The girl is strong.'

Adjectives are marked in Welsh for four degrees of comparison – basic, equative, comparative and superlative. In some cases this is done by means of suffixes, which are attached to the basic form, and in others by the use of independent adverbial forms.

*Mae 'r bachgen cyn gryfed /mor ddiog â fi*  
 is the boy as strong.eq. /as lazy as me  
 'The boy is as strong/as lazy as me.'

*Mae 'r bachgen yn gryfach /fwy diog na fi*  
 is the boy comp. stronger/more lazy than me  
 'The boy is stronger/lazier than me.'

*Hwn yw 'r bachgen cryfaf /mwyaf diog*  
 this is the boy strongest /most lazy  
 'This one is the strongest/laziest boy.'

In some varieties of informal Welsh there is mixing of the two types, with forms such as *mor gryfed* 'as strong' where both the equative suffix and the equative adverbial appear together. There are in addition a number of irregular adjectives where the equative, comparative and superlative cannot be predicted from the basic form.

*da* 'good', *cystal* 'as good', *gwell* 'better', *gorau* 'best'

These irregular forms are often replaced in regional dialect and informal speech by regularized equivalents. The adjective *hen* 'old', for example, has traditional irregular forms such as *hŷn* 'older' and *hynaf* 'oldest', but in informal speech these are often replaced by *henach* and *henaf*. Adjectives denoting degrees of comparison have no distinct forms marking number or gender.

### Numbers

Gender agreement with a following noun is found only in three numerals, *dau* (m.) / *dwy* (f.) 'two', *tri* (m.) / *tair* (f.) 'three', *pedwar* (m.) / *pedair* (f.) 'four'.

*tri bachgen* ~ *tair merch*  
 three (m.) boy ~ three (f.) girl  
 'three boys' ~ 'three girls'

All other numerals have one form only and take no account of gender.

*ugain bachgen* ~ *ugain merch*  
 twenty boy ~ twenty girl  
 'twenty boys' ~ 'twenty girls'

Note that the noun following a numeral is itself always singular, although clearly referring to more than one entity. The number system in Welsh is complex and will be explored in more detail later (see pp. 419–22).

### Demonstratives

Demonstratives display agreement with nouns in number, and in the singular in gender too. The difference is expressed in all cases by a change in the vowel.

*y bachgen hwn* ~ *y ferch hon* ~ *y plant hyn*  
 the boy this (m.sg.) ~ the girl this (f.sg.) ~ the children these (pl.)  
 'this boy' ~ 'this girl' ~ 'these children'

The usual loss of agreement in the modern language is found here too, however, in the tendency in less formal usage to replace *hwn* ~ *hon* ~ *hyn* with *yma* 'here', which shows no agreement at all.

### Pronouns

Distinct pronouns are found for 1st, 2nd and 3rd person in both singular and plural. In the 3 sg. they also distinguish masculine and feminine; there is no gender distinction in the 1st and 2nd person, nor in the 3rd person plural.

*fi* (1 sg.), *ti* (2 sg.), *ef* (3 sg. m.), *hi* (3 sg. f.), *ni* (1 pl.), *chi* (2 pl.), *hwy* (3 pl.)

The pronoun forms shown here are known traditionally as Independent Pronouns, and are used in contexts where they stand alone in the sentence. They appear, for instance, in the object position in a simple VSO sentence.

*Gwyliodd y ferch ef yn ofalus.*  
 watched the girl him carefully  
 'The girl watched him carefully'

They also appear in sentence-initial position when fronted under contrastive stress, as the answer to a question, and after a noninflecting preposition.

*Chi ddarllenodd y llythyr.*  
 you.pl. read.past the letter  
 'It's you that read the letter.'

*Pwy ddarllenodd y llythyr? Fi.*  
 Who read.past the letter? Me  
 'Who read the letter? Me.'

... *gyda ni*  
 ... with us  
 '... with us'

There are, alongside these simple independent pronouns, two other forms which are used similarly but have additional semantic features. The first set, known as conjunctive pronouns, imply an element of contrast, as *mimau* (1 sg.) 'I on the other hand/I also'. The second set, the reduplicative pronouns, are used to convey stress, as *myfi* (1 sg.) 'me, and not anyone else'.

Where the pronoun follows an inflected form, repeating the information already provided, its form is slightly different. The 1 sg. pronoun, for instance, appears not as *fi* but rather as *i* when following a verbal inflection.

*Darllenais i lyfr diddorol*  
 read.1 sg. I book interesting  
 'I read an interesting book.'

Similarly this is the form found following a prepositional inflection.

*Ysgrifennodd y ferch ata i.*  
 wrote the girl to.1 sg. me  
 'The girl wrote to me.'

Pronouns in this position can, as noted above, be optionally dropped, as the information they convey is, for the most part, already provided in the preceding inflection.

Two other sets of pronouns are rather more distinctive. A possessive pronoun must precede the head noun, and these have a very different form.

*fy* 'my', *dy* 'your (sg.)', *ei* 'his', *ei* 'her', *ein* 'our', *eich* 'your (pl.)', *eu* 'their'

This possessive may appear alone, or there may be a further pronoun form, semantically identical to the possessive, which follows the head noun, and takes the same form as those pronouns which follow an inflection.

*fy lyfr (i)*  
 my book (me)  
 'my book'

Interestingly the object of a VN takes the form of a possessive, and so too does the pronoun subject of the VN *bod* 'to be' in nominal clauses where the VN replaces the inflected verb.

*Mae 'r ferch wedi fy ngweld (i).*  
 is the girl perf. my see (me)  
 'The girl has seen me'.

*Dywedodd Ifan ei bod (hi) wedi mynd.*  
 said Ifan her be (she) perf. go  
 'Ifan said that she had gone.'

These possessive pronouns are replaced in certain kinds of nonstandard usage by the independent pronouns. The independent pronoun appears following the head noun in the position normal to a full NP.

*llyfr fi*  
 book me  
 'my book'

Similarly the independent pronoun appears following the VN, in the same position as a full NP object would appear, and following the VN *bod* where a full subject NP would normally appear.

*Mae 'r ferch wedi gweld fi.*  
 is the girl perf. see me  
 'The girl has seen me.'

*Dywedodd Ifan fod hi wedi mynd.*  
 said Ifan be she perf. go  
 'Ifan said that she had gone.'

This usage with VNs is common in informal speech, and long established in dialect. With nouns it appears to be a more recent development, characteristic of children's speech, and is widely condemned as unacceptable.

One further variant occurs where a possessive pronoun preceding a Noun or VN cliticizes to a preceding word, and the form taken is again distinctive.

*'m* (1 sg.), *'th* (2 sg.), *'i* (3 sg. m.), *'i* (3 sg. f.), *'n* (1 pl.), *'ch* (2 pl.), *'u* (3 pl.).

This may happen, for instance, following a conjunction such as *a* 'and'.

*fy llyfr a 'm nodiadau*  
 my book and my notes  
 'my book and notes'

Similar forms are found where the pronoun object of a VSO sentence is moved into clitic position following a sentence-initial particle.

*Fe 'm gwelodd y ferch.*  
 pos. me saw the girl  
 'The girl saw me.'

Here too there may be a semantically identical pronoun copy following the noun or VN, or in the original object position.

Regardless of the precise form of the pronoun and where it appears in the sentence, certain patterns of usage hold throughout the language. The 2nd person forms *ti* and *chi* can both be used when speaking to a single individual, and have the effect of marking the relationship either as close and friendly, or as more formal and respectful. The 2 sg. form *ti* is used when speaking to a friend or colleague, a close relation or a child; the 2 pl. form *chi* is used when speaking to a comparative stranger, or someone whose status requires respect, such as a manager in the workplace. In regional dialect additional levels of closeness or formality can be expressed. In north Wales the pronoun form *chdi* expresses closeness and informality, alongside *ti*. In parts of south and west Wales the 3 sg. pronouns, *fe* and *hi*, are used when addressing another person, though the effect of this usage appears to vary. In some areas *fe* and *hi* are felt to mark a closer and more informal relationship than *ti*, while in others *ti* is the more familiar form.

Usage of gender-marked 3 sg. pronouns is straightforward. The masculine pronoun *ef* 'he' may refer back to a semantically masculine noun such as *bachgen* 'boy' or to an arbitrarily masculine noun such as *tŷ* 'house'; equally the form *hi* 'she' may refer back to a semantically feminine noun such as *merch* 'girl', or to an arbitrarily feminine noun such as *ystafell* 'room'. Where the grammatical gender of the noun does not match the real-life sex of the person referred to, pronoun usage will be in terms of real-life sex, as here where the masculine noun *meddyg* 'doctor' is used of a woman.

*Mae'r meddyg yn dweud y bydd hi'n barod mewn munud.*  
is the doctor contin. say that will-be she comp. ready in minute  
'The doctor says that she will be ready in a minute.'

There is no neutral pronoun in Welsh, corresponding to 'it' in English. Where the 3 sg. pronoun is semantically empty, as in sentences commenting on the time or the weather, Welsh consistently uses *hi* 'she'.

*Mae (hi) 'n heulog.*  
is (she) comp. sunny  
'It's sunny.'

This too is the form used if a nominal clause has been moved to the right leaving a gap in subject position.

*Mae (hi) 'n amlwg y bydd angen mwy o amser.*  
is (she) comp. clear that will-be need more of time  
'It's clear that more time will be needed.'

The forms shown above are characteristic of formal, standard Welsh. In the spoken language and informal writing *ef* (3 sg. m.) is replaced by regionally marked forms, *fo/o* in north Wales and *fe/e* in the south. The forms *fo/fe* are used if the preceding word ends in a vowel, while *o/e* are used if the preceding word ends in a consonant. The form *hwy* (3 pl.) is also characteristic of formal, written Welsh, and is replaced in most informal usage by *nhw*. Informal speech in south Wales replaces the 1 sg. possessive pronoun *fy* by *yn*.

### *Cymraeg Byw*

In the 1960s a view developed that some aspects of the inflectional morphology of formal, written Welsh were far removed from the natural spoken language and were causing difficulties for children learning to read in school and for adults learning Welsh as a second language. It was decided to recommend a slightly simplified set of forms, closer to natural spoken Welsh, to be used in materials aimed at children and adult learners, to bridge the gulf between informal speech and formal literary conventions. This move aroused considerable controversy at the time, but since then the forms recommended have gradually been accepted into normal use, especially where the written material is relatively informal.

The changes involved relate in part to the use of informal pronoun forms such as *fe/e* in the south and *fo/o* in the north, and *nhw* rather than *hwy*. They also involve the use of non-literary inflections, as for instance the 1 pl. and 3 pl. inflections on verbs. The traditional literary forms have different inflections for these two forms; when the pronoun subject is dropped they are still different, and there is no confusion.

<i>cawsom (ni)</i>	<i>cawsant (hwy)</i>
got.1 pl. (we)	got.3 pl. (they)
'we got'	'they got'

The Cymraeg Byw forms have identical inflections for these two forms, as is natural in the spoken language, and as a result it is no longer possible to drop the pronoun subject. This is not an artificial development, but reflects the usage of the spoken language, where subject pronouns are generally retained.

<i>cawson ni</i>	<i>cawson nhw</i>
got.1 pl. we	got.3 pl. they
'we got'	'they got'

Other verbal inflections are affected, and so too are the inflections on prepositions. Some forms which were felt to be overly literary, such as the impersonal form of the verb, were simply dropped.

These conventions are still evolving, but it is worth bearing in mind that different levels of formality are now found in written Welsh, and that it is no longer felt that only the literary, traditional standard is acceptable.

### **Derivational morphology**

Derivational morphology is very productive in Welsh, with widespread use of both prefixes and suffixes. Prefixes modify the meaning of the basic word, but generally preserve the original part of speech; a noun remains a noun, an adjective is still an adjective and a verb still a verb, though a small number of prefixes do change the part of speech of the basic word, for the most part changing a noun into an adjective.

<i>marchnad</i> 'market'	>	<i>archfarchnad</i> 'supermarket'
<i>llawn</i> 'full'	>	<i>gorllawn</i> 'overfull'
<i>digwydd</i> 'to happen'	>	<i>cyd-ddigwydd</i> 'to coincide'

<i>angen</i> 'need'	>	<i>diangen</i> 'unnecessary'
<i>môr</i> 'sea'	>	<i>tanfor</i> 'submarine'
<i>oed</i> 'age'	>	<i>cyfoed</i> 'of the same age'

Many suffixes also preserve the part of speech of the basic word, while modifying its meaning.

<i>gair</i> 'word'	>	<i>geirfa</i> 'vocabulary'
<i>oer</i> 'cold'	>	<i>oerllyd</i> 'chilly'
<i>gorwedd</i> 'to lie'	>	<i>gorweddian</i> 'to laze about'

It is common, however, for suffixes to change the part of speech of the basic word. A noun may become an adjective or a verb; an adjective may become a noun or a verb; a verb may become a noun or an adjective.

<i>eglwys</i> 'church'	>	<i>eglwysig</i> 'ecclesiastical'
<i>pysgod</i> 'fish'	>	<i>pysgota</i> 'to fish'
<i>tawel</i> 'quiet'	>	<i>tawelwch</i> 'quietness'
<i>byr</i> 'short'	>	<i>byrhau</i> 'to shorten'
<i>trin</i> 'to treat'	>	<i>triniaeth</i> 'treatment'
<i>derbyn</i> 'to receive'	>	<i>derbyniol</i> 'acceptable'

Nor is this process limited to one affix only. Several suffixes may be added in turn, gradually extending the basic word.

<i>môr</i> 'sea'	>	<i>morwr</i> 'sailor'	>	<i>morwriaeth</i> 'seamanship'
<i>gwlad</i> 'country'	>	<i>gwleidydd</i> 'politician'	>	<i>gwleidyddiaeth</i> 'politics'
<i>gwas</i> 'servant'	>	<i>gwasanaeth</i> 'service'	>	<i>gwasanaethu</i> 'to serve'

It does not appear possible for more than one prefix to be added to the same basic word, but it is common to find both a prefix and a suffix in the same form. Usually it appears that the suffix has been added first, and then the prefix.

<i>canol</i> 'middle'	>	<i>canoli</i> 'to centralize'	>	<i>datganoli</i> 'to decentralize'
<i>llwyth</i> 'load'	>	<i>llwytho</i> 'to load'	>	<i>gorllwytho</i> 'to overload'
<i>môr</i> 'sea'	>	<i>morio</i> 'to sail'	>	<i>mewnforio</i> 'to import'

In other cases it is not so clear which of the affixes is added first, as alternative derivations can be constructed.

<i>cof</i> 'memory'	>	<i>cofio</i> 'to remember'	>	<i>anghofio</i> 'to forget'
<i>cof</i> 'memory'	>	<i>angof</i> 'forgetfulness'	>	<i>anghofio</i> 'to forget'

Affixation is not the only way in which new words are created in Welsh; there is also extensive use of compounding. In the case of nouns there are two distinct types of compound. In the first type, two elements combine into a single word, which has the normal penultimate word stress, and the meaning of the compound is often not predictable from the meaning of the individual elements.

<i>bron</i> 'breast'	+	<i>braith</i> 'speckled'	>	<i>bronfraith</i> 'thrush'
<i>tafod</i> 'tongue'	+	<i>iaith</i> 'language'	>	<i>tafodiaith</i> 'dialect'
<i>cefn</i> 'back'	+	<i>tir</i> 'land'	>	<i>cefnidir</i> 'background'

In the second type of compounding the elements which are combined remain as separate words, each with its own word stress, but here again the overall meaning is not necessarily predictable from the meaning of the elements which appear.

<i>tŷ</i> 'house'	+	<i>bach</i> 'little'	>	<i>tŷ bach</i> 'toilet'
<i>tân</i> 'fire'	+	<i>gwyllt</i> 'wild'	>	<i>tân gwyllt</i> 'fireworks'
<i>bad</i> 'boat'	+	<i>achub</i> 'save'	>	<i>bad achub</i> 'lifeboat'

There are indeed cases where the same elements may be combined in either way, to convey the same meaning.

<i>tro</i> 'turn'	+	<i>pwll</i> 'pool'	>	<i>trobwll</i> 'whirlpool'
<i>pwll</i> 'pool'	+	<i>tro</i> 'turn'	>	<i>pwll tro</i> 'whirlpool'

Compound verbs too may appear either as a single word or as a phrase, and where the phrasal type occurs it is usually a sequence of two verbs, one after the other.

<i>llon</i> 'happy'	+	<i>cyfarch</i> 'to greet'	>	<i>llongyfarch</i> 'to congratulate'
<i>hap</i> 'chance'	+	<i>chwarae</i> 'to play'	>	<i>haphchwarae</i> 'to gamble'
<i>llafar</i> 'spoken'	+	<i>canu</i> 'to sing'	>	<i>llafarganu</i> 'to chant'
<i>crafu</i> 'to scratch'	+	<i>byw</i> 'to live'	>	<i>crafu byw</i> 'to live in poverty'
<i>pisio</i> 'to piss'	+	<i>bwrw</i> 'to rain'	>	<i>pisio bwrw</i> 'to rain heavily'
<i>beichio</i> 'to cry'	+	<i>crio</i> 'to cry'	>	<i>beichio crio</i> 'to sob'

Compound adjectives usually consist of a single word, with a single word stress.

<i>boch</i> 'cheek'	+	<i>coch</i> 'red'	>	<i>bochgoch</i> 'rosy cheeked'
<i>byr</i> 'short'	+	<i>pwyl</i> 'sense'	>	<i>byrbwyl</i> 'hasty'
<i>llaw</i> 'hand'	+	<i>trwm</i> 'heavy'	>	<i>llawdrwm</i> 'heavy handed'

One result of the readiness with which Welsh creates new words through affixation and compounding is that words which are semantically related are also similar in form. The vocabulary as a whole is therefore much more transparent than is the case in English, which relies heavily on the use of loan elements of Greek and Latin origin. As an example of this, take the following items, all of which in Welsh are derived from the basic word *gwaith* 'work', alongside their English equivalents, which are much less obviously related.

<i>gweithio</i>	'to work'
<i>diwaith</i>	'unemployed'
<i>gweithgarwch</i>	'activity'
<i>cydweithio</i>	'to co-operate'
<i>prif weithredwr</i>	'chief executive'



## SYNTAX

There is a long-established standard form of Welsh syntax, based in the main on the Welsh of the Bible. Regional variation in the spoken language does exist, and forms are accepted in casual registers which differ from this literary standard. In the discussion which follows, the traditional, literary standard is taken as the norm, but where there are clear differences in regional dialect or casual usage this is noted.

### Word order

Word order in Welsh is relatively rigid, and basic simple sentences display VSO word order. An inflected verb appears in initial position, followed in turn by the subject and the object, with PPs or adverbs following these core elements.

*Rhedodd y bachgen drwy'r ardd.*  
ran the boy through the garden  
'The boy ran through the garden.'

*Darllenodd y ferch y llythyr yn ofalus.*  
read the girl the letter carefully  
'The girl read the letter carefully.'

The verb may optionally be preceded by a particle overtly marking the sentence as a positive statement, though this makes no difference to the meaning. There is a tendency for the particle to take the form *mi* in north Wales, and *fe* in the south, though there is some variation.

*Mi redodd y bachgen drwy'r ardd.*  
pos. ran the boy through the garden  
'The boy ran through the garden.'

*Fe ddarllenodd y ferch y llythyr yn ofalus.*  
pos. read the girl the letter carefully  
'The girl read the letter carefully.'

Not all simple sentences, however, display this straightforward VSO pattern. The range of tense and aspect combinations which can be expressed by inflected verbs is limited, and others are expressed through the medium of a different sentence type – the periphrastic sentence. In these an inflected form of *bod* 'to be' appears in initial position, followed by the subject. This in turn is followed by an aspect particle, either *yn* (continuous) or *wedi* (perfective), an uninflected verb form which is known traditionally as the verb noun (VN), and then the object. PPs or adverbs again follow these core elements.

*Bydd y bachgen yn rhedeg drwy'r ardd*  
will-be the boy contin. run through the garden  
'The boy will be running through the garden.'

*Mae'r ferch wedi darllen y llythyr yn ofalus.*  
 is the girl perf. read the letter carefully  
 'The girl has read the letter carefully.'

Here too a particle may appear in sentence-initial position, making no difference to the meaning of the sentence, though the detail of which particle is found varies according to the specific form of *bod* used.

*Fe fydd y bachgen yn rhedeg drwy'r ardd.*  
 pos. will-be the boy contin. run through the garden  
 'The boy will be running through the garden.'

*Y mae'r ferch wedi darllen y llythyr yn ofalus.*  
 pos. is the girl perf. read the letter carefully  
 'The girl has read the letter carefully.'

An adjectival or nominal complement appears following the subject or object, and is introduced by the complementizer *yn*, which is homophonous with, but distinct from, the continuous aspect marker *yn* already mentioned. Note that only indefinite NPs may appear in this position. The position over definite complements will be discussed later, in the section on Stress and Fronting.

*Mae'r llyfr yn ddiddorol.*  
 is the book comp. interesting  
 'The book is interesting.'

*Penododd y pwyllgor Aled yn brifathro.*  
 appointed the committee Aled comp. headmaster  
 'The committee appointed Aled headmaster.'

Word order in NPs is also rigid. The definite determiner appears in initial position, and may be followed in turn by a numeral and one of a small number of adjectives which precede the noun. There is no indefinite determiner in Welsh.

<i>y ddau hen lyfr</i>	<i>dau hen lyfr</i>
the two old book	two old book
'the two old books'	'two old books'

Most adjectives follow the noun, and there may be a sequence of more than one. They may co-occur freely with those elements which precede the noun.

*y ddau hen lyfr mawr trwm*  
 the two old book big heavy  
 'the two big heavy old books'

A demonstrative must co-occur with a definite determiner, but itself appears in final position, after all other elements.

*yr hen lyfr mawr hwn*  
the old book big this  
'this big old book'

Other modifying elements, such as Ns, VNs and PPs follow the noun, in the same position as adjectives.

*y llyfr lluniau*  
the book pictures  
'the picture book'

*y papur ysgrifennu*  
the paper write  
'the writing paper'

*y ddrama gan Islwyn Davies*  
the play by Islwyn Davies  
'the play by Islwyn Davies'

Possessives also follow the head noun, but in this case there is no overt determiner in initial position in the NP. If the possessor is indefinite, the whole NP is indefinite; if the possessor is definite, the whole NP is definite.

<i>llyfr plentyn</i>	<i>llyfr y plentyn</i>
book child	book the child
'a child's book'	'the child's book'

If an adjective is modified, the position of the modifier is lexically determined. Some items such as *iawn* 'very' follow the adjective, while others such as *rhy* 'too' precede, and this is true both for adjectives in complement position, and those within a NP.

*Mae'r llyfr yn ddiddorol iawn.*  
is the book comp. interesting very  
'The book is very interesting.'

*llyfr diddorol iawn*  
book interesting very  
'a very interesting book'

*Mae'r llyfr yn rhy ddrudd.*  
is the book comp. too expensive  
'The book is too expensive.'

*llyfr rhy ddrudd*  
book too expensive  
'too expensive a book'

## Verb nouns

The uninflected verb, or VN, is widely used in a variety of different contexts. As already noted in the previous section, certain tense and aspect features cannot be expressed by an inflected verb; they are instead realized by an inflected form of the verb *bod* ‘to be’ and an aspect marker, with the lexical verb realized as a VN.

*Mae Ifan yn darllen y llythyr.*  
is Ifan contin. read the letter  
‘Ifan is reading the letter.’

*Mae Ifan wedi darllen y llythyr.*  
is Ifan perf. read the letter  
‘Ifan has read the letter.’

Inflected forms of *gwneud* ‘to do’ may also be combined with the lexical VN to convey a range of tense and aspect meanings, particularly in relatively informal registers.

*Fe wnaif i ddarllen y llythyr.*  
pos. will-do I read the letter.  
‘I will read the letter.’

*Fe wnaeth e ddarllen y llythyr.*  
pos. did he read the letter  
‘He read the letter.’

In north Wales usage the past tense may be expressed by the form *ddaru* with a following VN. *Ddaru* derives from the past tense of *darfod* ‘to happen’, which has become fossilized as a past tense marker in the north, and does not change to reflect person or number.

*Ddaru mi ddarllen y llythyr.*  
happened me read the letter  
‘I read the letter.’

*Ddaru hi ddarllen y llythyr.*  
happened she read the letter  
‘She read the letter.’

VNs are used freely as the subject or object of the sentence, or the object of a preposition.

*Mae 'n rhaid defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
is comp. necessary use computer  
‘It’s necessary to use a computer.’

*Bwriada Ifan ddefnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
intends Ifan use computer  
‘Ifan intends to use a computer.’

*Mae Ifan am ddefnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 is Ifan for use computer  
 'Ifan would like to use a computer.'

In none of these examples is there an overt subject attached to the VN, either because it is unspecified, or because it is identical to that of the sentence as a whole. Where it is necessary to specify the subject, this is found in a PP as the object of the preposition *i* 'for', and the VN is then subject to initial mutation.

*Mae 'n rhaid i chi ddefnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 is comp. necessary for you use computer  
 'It's necessary for you to use a computer.'

*Bwriada Ifan i chi ddefnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 intends Ifan for you use computer  
 'Ifan intends you to use a computer.'

*Mae Ifan am i chi ddefnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 is Ifan for for you use computer  
 'Ifan would like you to use a computer.'

The VN is also used optionally in conjoined sentences where the second clause has the same subject as the first, and the two clauses have the same tense and aspect features. The verb of the second clause may be retained in full or reduced to a VN, with neither the subject nor the tense and aspect of the second conjunct marked overtly, as they are entirely predictable from the first clause.

*Agorais y drws ac edrychais allan.*  
 opened.1 sg. (I) the door and looked.1 sg. (I) out  
 'I opened the door and looked out.'

*Agorais y drws ac edrych allan.*  
 opened.1 sg. (I) the door and look out  
 'I opened the door and looked out.'

In longer, more complex conjoined sentences where the same subject and the same tense and aspect features are found in every clause, all but the first inflected verb may be reduced in this way to a VN, with no overt marking of the subject or tense and aspect.

*Agorais y drws, edrychais allan, a gwelais yr eira.*  
 opened.1 sg. (I) the door, looked.1 sg. (I) out, and saw.1 sg. (I) the snow.  
 'I opened the door, looked out and saw the snow.'

*Agorais y drws, edrych allan, a gweld yr eira.*  
 opened.1 sg. (I) the door, look out, and see the snow.  
 'I opened the door, looked out and saw the snow.'

VNs are also used in nominal and adverbial clauses of certain types, and in passive sentences. These constructions will be discussed in later sections.

## Negation

Negation may be expressed by a negative particle *ni/nid* in sentence-initial position, which triggers initial mutation of the verb.

*Ni allaf fynd yno.*  
not can (I) go there  
'I can't go there.'

This pattern is typical of the formal, written language, but is not the only way in which negation may be expressed in Welsh. In informal usage the particle is dropped, though the mutation it triggered remains, and an alternative negative particle *ddim* 'not' follows the subject.

*Alla i ddim mynd yno.*  
can I not go there  
'I can't go there.'

Where the verb is transitive, a sentence-initial negative particle has no effect on the direct object, which appears in the normal position and undergoes the expected SM.

*Ni chafodd y bachgen frechdan.*  
not got the boy sandwich  
'The boy didn't get a sandwich.'

Where *ddim* appears following the subject and preceding the object, in the informal equivalent, there are complications. An indefinite object merely follows *ddim*, and is no longer subject to SM.

*Chafodd y bachgen ddim brechdan.*  
got the boy not sandwich  
'The boy didn't get a sandwich.'

A definite object may also simply follow *ddim*, but is more often found in a PP, following the preposition *o* 'of', and the sequence *ddim o* is frequently abbreviated to the rather opaque form *mo*.

*Chafodd y bachgen ddim o 'r brechdan.*  
got the boy not of the sandwich  
'The boy didn't get the sandwich.'

*Chafodd y bachgen mo 'r brechdan.*  
got the boy not-of the sandwich  
'The boy didn't get the sandwich.'

Where an element is stressed and moved to the beginning of the sentence, the initial particle *nid* is always used. In informal, substandard usage it may be replaced by *ddim*, but here *ddim* must appear in initial position, not medially.

*Nid y bachgen oedd yn bwyta brechdan.*  
not the boy was contin. eat sandwich  
'It wasn't the boy who was eating a sandwich.'

*Ddim y bachgen oedd yn bwyta brechdan.*  
not the boy was contin. eat sandwich  
'It wasn't the boy who was eating a sandwich.'

A completely different type of negation, using the verb *peidio* 'to stop' as a negative marker, is found in the imperative. In old-fashioned, Biblical registers it is possible to negate an imperative by using a sentence-initial particle, but this is not a natural form in the contemporary language.

*Na ladd!*  
neg kill 2 sg.  
'Thou shalt not kill!'

In the modern language an inflected form of *peidio* appears as the main verb of the sentence, and the lexical verb is an uninflected VN. In the standard language the VN appears as the object of the preposition *â*; informal usage drops the *â*, but otherwise the sentence is identical.

*Ewch i 'r gwely!*  
go.2 pl. to the bed.  
'Go to bed!'

*Peidiwch (â) mynd i 'r gwely!*  
stop.2 pl. (with) go to the bed  
'Don't go to bed!'

On occasion the inflected form of *peidio* may appear alone, where the lexical verb is clearly understood from the context, as for instance when a child is doing something dangerous or socially unacceptable.

*Paid!*  
stop (2 sg.)  
'Don't!'

This pattern of negation using *peidio* is also found with uninflected VNs; and here again it may be used alone where the context makes clear the identity of the missing VN which should follow it.

*Mae 'n rhaid i chi fynd i 'r gwely.*  
is comp. necessary for you go to the bed  
'It's necessary for you to go to bed.'

*Mae 'n rhaid i chi beidio â mynd i 'r gwely.*  
 is comp. necessary for you stop with go to the bed  
 'It's necessary for you not to go to bed.'

*Hoffwn i fynd i 'r gwely, ond gwell i fi beidio.*  
 would-like I go to the bed, but better for me stop  
 'I'd like to go to bed, but I'd better not.'

Regional dialect in south Wales displays a wide variety of different negative forms. In parts of west Glamorgan and eastern Carmarthenshire the form of the negative particle is *nage* rather than *ni/ni*.

*Nag w i 'n gwybod.*  
 not am I contin. know  
 'I don't know.'

In much of the south, however, a very different pattern is found, with *sa/so* in sentence-initial position, and this regardless of the person and number of the subject.

*So i 'n gwybod.*  
 be.pres-not I contin. know  
 'I don't know.'

*So ni 'n gwybod.*  
 be.pres-not we contin. know  
 'We don't know.'

*So chi 'n gwybod.*  
 be.pres-not you contin. know.  
 'You don't know.'

In the south-west, in Pembrokeshire, this initial element is inflected to agree with the pronoun subject in person and number, and in the 3 sg. in gender too, not only in the present tense as here, but also in other tense and aspect forms.

*Sana i 'n gwybod.*  
 be.pres.1 sg.-not I contin. know  
 'I don't know.'

*Sanon ni 'n gwybod.*  
 be.pres.1 pl.-not we contin. know  
 'We don't know.'

*Sano fe 'n gwybod.*  
 be.pres.3 sg. m.-not he contin. know  
 'He doesn't know.'

*Seni hi 'n gwybod.*  
 be.pres.3 sg. f.-not she contin. know  
 'She doesn't know.'



The forms illustrated above all have a pronoun subject, but there is also a regionally distinct form in the south-west where the subject is a noun. The particle *ddim* here appears before the subject rather than after it, as is normal in the standard language.

*Welodd ddim y plant y ci.*  
saw not the children the dog  
'The children didn't see the dog.'

## Questions and answers

Word order does not differ as between a statement and the corresponding Yes/No question. Such questions are marked rather by a particle which appears in sentence-initial position, immediately before the inflected verb. This may remain overt, or be dropped, and in either case the verb is subject to initial mutation.

*Gwelodd y bachgen y ddamwain.*  
saw the boy the accident  
'The boy saw the accident.'

*A welodd y bachgen y ddamwain?*  
Q saw the boy the accident?  
'Did the boy see the accident?'

*Welodd y bachgen y ddamwain?*  
(Q) saw the boy the accident?  
'Did the boy see the accident?'

If the particle is dropped and the verb does not have a mutable initial segment, there is no overt marker of the question, beyond the appropriate intonation pattern.

*Aeth y bachgen i 'r ysgol?*  
(Q) went the boy to the school  
'Did the boy go to school?'

Welsh has no straightforward set of responses, corresponding to Yes and No in English, and in order to formulate the correct answer one must know what the question was. If the question contains an inflected verb in the past tense, the response will be a single word *Do* 'yes' or *Naddo* 'no', and this regardless of the person and number of the verbal inflection.

*Welodd hi 'r ddamwain? Do/Naddo.*  
(Q) saw she the accident? did/not-did  
'Did she see the accident? Yes/No.'

*Welsoch chi 'r ddamwain? Do/Naddo.*  
(Q) saw you the accident? did/not-did  
'Did you see the accident? Yes/No.'

Other tense and aspect combinations require the answer to echo the form of the verb used in the question, but the answer does not usually contain an overt pronoun subject. The negative particle here takes the form *na/nac*, not *ni/nid*.

*Ydy Siân yn barod? Ydy/Nac ydy.*

(Q) is Siân comp. ready? is/not is

'Is Siân ready? Yes/No.'

*Oedd Siân yn barod? Oedd/Nac oedd.*

(Q) was Siân comp. ready? was/not was

'Was Siân ready? Yes/No.'

In the case of some lexical verbs the answer may be formed with *gwneud* 'to do' rather than the lexical verb itself.

*Ddaw 'r prifathro i 'r cyfarfod? Gwneith/Nac wneith.*

(Q) will-come the headmaster to the meeting? will-do/not will-do

'Will the headmaster come to the meeting? Yes/No.'

Where the question is in the 2nd person, the answer is – for pragmatic reasons – in the 1st person, while preserving the appropriate tense and aspect features, and vice versa.

*Fyddi di 'n barod? Byddaf / Na fyddaf.*

(Q) will-be you comp. ready? will-be.1 sg./ not will-be.1 sg.

'Will you be ready? Yes/No.'

*Ydw i 'n daclus? Wyt / Nac wyt.*

(Q) am I comp. tidy? are.2 sg. / not are.2 sg.

'Am I tidy? Yes/No.'

Note that where the response is negative, there is always a sentence-initial particle, and when *ddim* appears it strengthens the particle rather than replaces it.

*A gaf i frechdan? Na chei.*

(Q) get I sandwich? not get.2 sg.

'Can I have a sandwich? No.'

*A gaf i frechdan? Na chei ddim.*

(Q) get I sandwich? not get.2sg. not

'Can I have a sandwich? No indeed.'

Where a specific element is questioned, this appears in sentence-initial position, and the rest of the sentence takes the form of a relative clause with this item as its antecedent. The initial particle takes a different form, and the answer is *Ie* 'Yes' or *Nage* 'No'. Here again the particle may be omitted, and intonation is the only indication that this is a question.

*Ai Siân gafodd y wobr? Ie/Nage.*

(Q) Siân (rel.) got the prize? yes/no

'Was it Siân got the prize? Yes/No.'

*Siân gafodd y wobr? Ie/Nage.*  
 (Q) Siân (rel.) got the prize? yes/no  
 'Was it Siân got the prize? Yes/No.'

Similarly Wh-questions have a wh-pronoun in sentence-initial position and the rest of the question appears as a relative clause with this as its antecedent. The answer consists of a lexical item, supplying the information requested.

*Pwy fydd yn dod i 'r cyfarfod? Pawb.*  
 who (rel.) will-be contin. come to the meeting? Everyone.  
 'Who will be coming to the meeting? Everyone.'

*Beth ddwedaist ti? Dim.*  
 what (rel.) said you? Nothing  
 'What did you say? Nothing.'

*Pryd y bydd y cyfarfod yn dechrau? Am saith.*  
 when that will-be the meeting contin. start? At seven.  
 'When will the meeting start? At seven.'

## Passives

There are two distinct ways in which an active sentence may be passivized in Welsh. The first of these is normally referred to as the Impersonal form. The verb appears with an impersonal inflection, and the object follows it. The subject of the active form may appear in a PP, as the object of the preposition *gan* 'by', or it may simply be missing.

*Gwelwyd y ddamwain gan y bachgen.*  
 saw.impers. the accident by the boy  
 'The accident was seen by the boy.'

*Gwelwyd y ddamwain.*  
 saw.impers. the accident  
 'The accident was seen.'

Where the object of an active verb undergoes initial mutation, the object of the impersonal verb does not; in the example below the mutated form *ddamwain* appears in the active, while the citation form *damwain* appears in the impersonal.

*Gwelodd y bachgen ddamwain.*  
 saw.3 sg. the boy accident  
 'The boy saw an accident.'

*Gwelwyd damwain.*  
 saw.impers. accident  
 'An accident was seen.'

Impersonal forms can appear freely in a wide range of different sentence-types, with a prepositional object, a VN as object, and even an intransitive construction.

*Soniwyd am y ddamwain*  
 spoke.impers. about the accident  
 'The accident was spoken about.'

*Bwriedid mynd.*  
 intend.impers. go  
 'It was intended to go.'

*Rhedwyd at y môr.*  
 ran.impers. to the sea  
 'X (unspecified) ran to the sea.'

It is not always clear in fact that it is appropriate to refer to them as 'passives' rather than merely a verbal inflection which allows one to omit reference to the subject of the verb. The PP which spells out the subject of the active, following *gan* 'by', is natural in transitive forms with a NP object, but less so in other sentence types.

The second type of passive involves the use of an auxiliary verb *cael* 'get', which functions as the inflected verb of the passive sentence, and takes as its subject the NP which was the object of the active form. The lexical verb of the active appears as an uninflected VN, and is preceded by a possessive pronoun referring back to the new subject NP. There is no further pronoun following the VN.

*Gwelodd y bachgen y ddamwain.*  
 saw the boy the accident  
 'The boy saw the accident.'

*Cafodd y ddamwain ei gweld (\*hi) gan y bachgen.*  
 got the accident its see (\*it) by the boy  
 'The accident was seen by the boy.'

The original subject of the active appears in a PP, as the object of the preposition *gan* 'by', but this may be omitted so that the focus is only on the verb and the original object.

*Cafodd y ddamwain ei gweld.*  
 got the accident its see  
 'The accident was seen.'

The *cael* passive is almost totally confined to transitive verbs, and is only marginally acceptable where there is a prepositional object. In such forms the preposition is inflected to agree with the subject NP and the possessive pronoun preceding the VN.

*Soniodd y bachgen am y ddamwain.*  
 spoke the boy about the accident  
 'The boy spoke about the accident.'

*Cafodd y ddamwain ei sôn amdani.*  
 got the accident its speak about.3 sg. f.  
 'The accident was spoken about.'

Other forms do not permit a *cael* passive. Intransitive verbs cannot be passivized in this way, and even transitive verbs are ruled out if the object of the verb is a VN.

### Nominal clauses

Where a clause appears as the subject or object of the main verb, it will normally be introduced by the particle *y* 'that', followed by the inflected verb of the nominal clause. An object clause appears in the normal position for an object NP, following the subject of the main clause.

*Clywodd Ifan y byddai Siân yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 heard Ifan that would-be Siân contin. use computer  
 'Ifan heard that Siân would be using a computer.'

A subject clause appears at the end of the sentence, not in normal subject position, and there may be a semantically empty pronoun *hi* 'she/it' in the normal subject position of the main clause.

*Mae (hi) 'n amlwg y bydd Siân yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 is (it) comp. clear that will-be Siân contin. use computer  
 'It's clear that Siân will be using a computer.'

Where the verb of the nominal clause is *bod* 'be' and is in the present or imperfect tense, however, a different construction is found. The inflected form is replaced by the uninflected VN *bod*, and as a result the distinction between present and imperfect is lost. The particle *y* 'that' is not used.

*Mae 'n amlwg bod Siân yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 is comp. clear be Siân contin. use computer  
 'It's clear that Siân is using a computer.'

*Clywodd Ifan fod Siân yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 heard Ifan be Siân contin. use computer  
 'Ifan heard that Siân was using a computer.'

In a further construction, found only where the past tense is understood, the subject is the object of the preposition *i* 'for', the verb appears as an uninflected VN, and the VN is subject to initial mutation.

*Clywodd Ifan i Siân ddefnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 heard Ifan for Siân use computer  
 'Ifan heard that Siân used a computer.'

Where the clause is negative, a negative particle appears in clause-initial position. This is similar to the negative particle found in simple sentences, but not identical, *na/nad* rather than *ni/nid*.

*Clywodd Ifan na fyddai Siân yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 heard Ifan that-not would-be Siân contin. use computer  
 'Ifan heard that Siân would not be using a computer.'

*Mae (hi) 'n amlwg na fydd Siân yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 is (it) comp. clear that-not will-be Siân contin. use computer  
 'It's clear that Siân will not be using a computer.'

In such negative clauses the shift from an inflected present or imperfect form of *bod* 'to be' to the uninflected VN does not occur. The inflected form is retained, and is preceded by a negative particle.

*Mae 'n amlwg nad yw Siân yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 is comp. clear that-not is Siân contin. use computer  
 'It's clear that Siân is not using a computer.'

*Clywodd Ifan nad oedd Siân yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 heard Ifan that-not was Siân contin. use computer  
 'Ifan heard that Siân was not using a computer.'

The use of *ddim* to express negation in informal registers is found in nominal clauses as well as in simple sentences, but is considered substandard. Where *ddim* is used, the shift to the uninflected VN *bod* is retained.

*Mae 'n amlwg bod Siân ddim yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 is comp. clear be Siân not contin. use computer  
 'It's clear that Siân is not using a computer.'

*Clywodd Ifan fod Siân ddim yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 heard Ifan be Siân not contin. use computer  
 'Ifan heard that Siân was not using a computer.'

The clause type with an uninflected VN, used in the past tense, cannot as such be negated and this choice is not available if the clause is negative.

If the nominal clause is a question, then the same particle as in simple sentences appears in clause-initial position.

*Mae 'n ansicr a fydd Siân yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 is comp. unclear Q will-be Siân contin. use computer  
 'It is unclear whether Siân will be using a computer.'

*Gofynnais a fyddai Siân yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 asked.1 sg. (I) Q would-be Siân contin. use computer  
 'I asked whether Siân would be using a computer.'

The verb is always inflected, and the present and imperfect forms of *bod* 'to be' are not changed to the uninflected VN.

*Mae 'n ansicr a yw Siân yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 is comp. unclear Q is Siân contin. use computer  
 'It is unclear whether Siân is using a computer.'

*Gofynnais a oedd Siân yn defnyddio cyfrifiadur.*  
 asked.1 sg. (I) Q was Siân contin. use computer  
 'I asked whether Siân was using a computer.'

### Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses are introduced by a subordinating conjunction which is followed by the inflected verb. Some conjunctions, such as *pan* 'when', trigger mutation of the verb; others such as *os* 'if' do not.

... *pan fydd y plant yn canu* ...  
 ... when will-be the children contin. sing ...  
 '... when the children sing'

... *os bydd y plant yn canu* ...  
 ... if will-be the children contin. sing ...  
 '... if the children sing' ...

In other cases the particle *y/yr* 'that' follows the conjunction and appears before the inflected verb.

... *pryd y bydd y plant yn canu* ...  
 ... when that will-be the children contin. sing ...  
 '... when the children sing' ...

If a clause is negative, a negative particle appears in clause-initial position, immediately following the conjunction, and replacing *y/yr* where this appears in the positive form.

... *pan na fydd y plant yn canu* ...  
 ... when not will-be the children contin. sing ...  
 '... when the children will not be singing' ...

... *pryd na fydd y plant yn canu* ...  
 ... when not will-be the children contin. sing ...  
 '... when the children will not be singing' ...

In many cases, however, forms which would in other languages be adverbial clauses, consist in Welsh of a preposition and an uninflected VN. The subject is omitted if it is identical to a NP in the main clause; otherwise it follows the preposition *i* 'for' and the VN is subject to initial mutation.

*Caeodd Ifan y drws cyn defnyddio 'r cyfrifiadur.*  
 shut Ifan the door before use the computer  
 'Ifan shut the door before he used the computer.'

*Daeth Ifan yma cyn i Siân ddefnyddio 'r cyfrifiadur.*  
 came Ifan here before for Siân use the computer  
 'Ifan came here before Siân used the computer.'

Negation of such clauses is through the use of *peidio* 'to stop'.

... *er iddo ddarllen y llythyr...*  
 ... although for-him read the letter  
 '... although he read the letter' ...

... *er iddo beidio â darllen y llythyr...*  
 ... although for-him stop with read the letter  
 '... although he did not read the letter' ...

### Relative clauses

There are two types of relative clauses. Where the relative clause itself is a simple VS(O) sequence, and the antecedent noun corresponds to the subject or object of the clause, the relative pronoun *a* 'who/which/whom/that' replaces this subject or object. It appears in clause-initial position, and the following verb is subject to SM.

... *y bachgen/y bechgyn a ddaeth i 'r cyfarfod*  
 ... the boy/the boys who came.3 sg. to the meeting  
 '... the boy(s) who came to the meeting'

... *y bachgen/y bechgyn a welais i ddoe*  
 ... the boy/the boys who saw I yesterday  
 '... the boy(s) whom I saw yesterday'

The relative pronoun *a* remains identical in form regardless of whether the antecedent noun is singular or plural. Where it is the subject of the relative clause, the verb is consistently 3 sg., again regardless of whether it refers to a singular or plural antecedent noun. It is in fact possible to have ambiguous forms where it is not clear whether the relative pronoun *a* is referring to the subject or object of the clause. In reality, of course, the wider context makes it clear which reading is correct and there is no problem.

... *y bachgen a welodd y ferch*  
 ... the boy who saw.3 sg. the girl  
 '... the boy who saw the girl' [*a* = subject]  
 '... the boy whom the girl saw' [*a* = object]

The *a* pronoun is frequently dropped with no effect on the meaning of the clause, particularly in informal registers, though the mutation on the following verb remains.

... *y bachgen welais i ddoe*  
 ... the boy (who) saw I yesterday  
 '... the boy whom I saw yesterday'



The second type of relative clause is found in all other contexts. The antecedent noun may, for instance, correspond to the object of a preposition, a possessive within a NP, or the object of a VN. In such forms the clause is introduced by the particle *y/yr* 'that', and a pronoun replaces the noun in its original position.

... *y bachgen y soniais i amdano (\*fe)*  
 ... the boy that spoke I about.3 sg. m.  
 '... the boy I spoke about'

... *y bachgen y gwelais i ei waith (\*e)*  
 ... the boy that saw I his work  
 '... the boy whose work I saw'

... *y bachgen yr hoffwn i ei weld (\*e)*  
 ... the boy that would-like I his see  
 '... the boy I would like to see'

In such forms the preposition is inflected to agree with the pronoun but there is no pronoun following the preposition; the possessive precedes the head noun or VN, but there is no overt pronoun following this.

The same two types of relative clause are found in periphrastic relative clauses. Where the antecedent corresponds to the subject of such a clause, the relative pronoun *a* is found, and may as usual be dropped.

... *y bachgen (a) fydd yn dod i 'r cyfarfod*  
 ... the boy (who) will-be contin. come to the meeting  
 '... the boy who will be coming to the meeting'

One irregular form, *sydd* 'who is', is used when the verb *bod* 'be' is in the present tense, and this with both singular and plural nouns. The pronoun *a* is not found with this inflection of *bod*, which is as it were already marked as a relative form.

... *y bachgen/y bechgyn sydd yn dod i 'r cyfarfod*  
 ... the boy/the boys who-is contin. come to the meeting  
 '... the boy(s) who is/are coming to the meeting'

Where the antecedent corresponds to the object of the clause, however, this is now the object of a VN, and the second type of relative clause is found. The relative clause must be introduced by *y/yr* 'that', and a pronoun replaces the noun.

... *y bachgen yr oeddwn i wedi ei weld (\*e)*  
 ... the boy that was I perf. his see  
 '... the boy that I had seen'

Other forms, where the antecedent corresponds to the object of a preposition or a possessive in a NP, also require this type of relative clause.

...y bachgen yr oeddwn i wedi sôn amdano (\*fe)  
 ...the boy that was I perf. speak about.3 sg.  
 '... the boy I had spoken about'

...y bachgen yr oeddwn i wedi gweld ei waith (\*e)  
 ...the boy that was I perf. see his work  
 '... the boy whose work I had seen'

Where a relative clause is negated, it is introduced by a negative particle *na/nad*. This replaces the relative pronoun *a* 'who' in the first type, and replaces *y/yr* in the second.

...y bachgen na ddaeth i 'r cyfarfod...  
 ...the boy not came to the meeting...  
 'the boy who did not come to the meeting'

...y bachgen nad oeddwn i wedi gweld ei waith...  
 ...the boy not was I perf. see his work...  
 ... 'the boy whose work I hadn't seen'...

Relative clauses with the negation system, using *ddim*, are also found, but are considered substandard.

...y bachgen oeddwn i ddim wedi gweld ei waith...  
 ...the boy was I not perf. see his work...  
 ... 'the boy whose work I hadn't seen'...

### Stress and fronting

Where an element in a sentence is contrastively stressed, it is moved to the beginning of the sentence, and the rest of the sentence takes the form of a relative clause with this element as its antecedent. The patterns found in the case of ordinary relative clauses hold here too, so that where the subject or object of a simple VSO sentence is fronted, the relative pronoun *a* 'who/which/whom' is used, and may be optionally deleted.

*Y bachgen (a) ddaeth i 'r cyfarfod.*  
 the boy (who) came to the meeting  
 'It was the boy who came to the meeting.'

*Y bachgen (a) welais i ddoe.*  
 the boy (who) saw I yesterday  
 'It was the boy whom I saw yesterday.'

Where another constituent is fronted, the relative clause begins with *y/yr* 'that', and there is a pronominal marker in the original position. The preposition is inflected, and a possessive pronoun precedes the head noun, but in neither case is a pronoun found following the preposition or noun.

*Y bachgen y soniais i amdano (\*fe)*  
the boy that spoke I about.3 sg. m.  
'It was the boy I spoke about.'

*Y bachgen y gwelais i ei waith (\*e)*  
the boy that saw I his work  
'It was the boy whose work I saw.'

These fronted constructions differ from the normal run of relative clauses, however, in that a wider range of items may appear in stressed position at the beginning of a sentence than would normally be possible as the antecedent of a relative clause. A pronoun may be stressed and fronted, and in such cases the relative pronoun *a* continues to take the usual 3 sg. inflection of the verb, ignoring the person and number features of the fronted item.

*Fi (a) welodd y bachgen.*  
me (who) saw.3 sg. the boy  
'It was I who saw the boy.'

A whole PP or Adverb may be fronted, and where this happens the clause begins with *y/yr* and nothing remains behind in the original position.

*Am y bachgen y soniais i.*  
about the boy that spoke I  
'It was about the boy that I spoke.'

*Ddoe y gwelais i 'r bachgen.*  
yesterday that saw I the boy  
'It was yesterday that I saw the boy.'

In order to stress the verb contrastively, it is fronted as an uninflected VN and behaves as the object of the auxiliary verb *gwneud* 'to do/to make', which carries the verbal inflection of the sentence. If the verb to be fronted is transitive, then the direct object will be moved with it and cannot be left behind.

*Gwranddo (a) wnes i.*  
listen (that) did I  
'What I did was listen.'

*Gweld y bachgen (a) wnes i.*  
see the boy (that) did I  
'What I did was see the boy.'

Periphrastic sentences behave as expected, the relative clause patterns being those normal for such forms. If the subject is fronted, then the relative pronoun *a* is used, though it may be omitted, and the irregular form *sydd* is used if the verb *bod* is 3 sg. present.

*Y bachgen (a) fydd yn dod i 'r cyfarfod.*  
the boy (who) will-be contin. come to the meeting  
'It's the boy who will be coming to the meeting.'

*Y bachgen sydd yn dod i 'r cyfarfod.*  
 the boy who-is contin. come to the meeting  
 'It's the boy who is coming to the meeting.'

Other constituents, such as the object of the VN, are found with a relative introduced by *y/yr* and a pronoun marker in the original position.

*Y bachgen yr oeddwn i wedi ei weld (\*e).*  
 the boy that was I perf. his see  
 'It was the boy that I had seen.'

The phrase which includes the aspect marker and the following VN, together with its direct object if there is one, may be fronted as a whole. In such forms, the perfective marker *wedi* remains overt, but the continuous marker *yn* is dropped.

*Wedi gweld y bachgen yr oeddwn i.*  
 perf. see the boy that was I  
 'What I had done was see the boy.'

*Gwyllo 'r bachgen yr oeddwn i.*  
 (contin.) watch the boy that was I  
 'What I was doing was watching the boy.'

Sentences which contain a complement phrase raise another set of issues. The subject may be contrastively stressed and fronted, and it is followed by the usual relative clause pattern.

*Ifan (a) fydd yn flinedig.*  
 Ifan (who) will-be comp. tired  
 'It's Ifan who will be tired.'

If the complement is fronted, complications arise. A complement which consists of a noun or a noun phrase may be fronted, dropping the complementizer *yn*.

*Athro fydd Ifan.*  
 teacher will-be Ifan  
 'It's a teacher that Ifan will be.'

*Athro da fydd Ifan.*  
 teacher good will-be Ifan  
 'It's a good teacher that Ifan will be.'

If the complement consists of an adjective only, then it may be fronted in north Wales, but not in the south.

*Blinedig fydd Ifan.*  
 tired will-be Ifan  
 'It's tired that Ifan will be.'

In south Wales usage it is only possible to front an adjective if it appears qualifying an empty noun such as *un* 'one', but here the adjective is understood as referring to a permanent characteristic of the person concerned rather than a temporary state. If the verb *bod* 'to be' is in the present tense then the form *yw* is found with a fronted complement.

*Athro da yw Ifan*  
teacher good is Ifan  
'It's a good teacher that Ifan is.'

Only indefinite NPs may follow the complementizer *yn* and take part in the processes outlined above. Where the complement is a definite NP, it may only appear in a fronted construction, though either order is acceptable.

*\*Mae Ifan yn bennaeth yr adran.*  
is Ifan comp. head the department  
'Ifan is the head of department.'

*Pennaeth yr adran yw Ifan.*  
head the department is Ifan  
'It's the head of department that Ifan is.'

*Ifan yw pennaeth yr adran.*  
Ifan is head the department  
'It's Ifan who is the head of department.'

Where an element is fronted in this way in a subordinate clause, the particle *mai* 'that' appears in clause-initial position before the fronted element. In south Wales *mai* is replaced by *taw*, but the sentence structure is identical. If the fronted element is negative, *mai* is replaced by *nad*.

*Clywodd Ifan mai Siân fydd yn defnyddio 'r cyfrifiadur.*  
heard Ifan that Siân will-be contin. use the computer  
'Ifan heard that it is Siân who will use the computer.'

*Clywodd Ifan nad Siân fydd yn defnyddio 'r cyfrifiadur.*  
heard Ifan not Siân will-be contin. use the computer  
'Ifan heard that it is not Siân who will use the computer.'

Forms where *nid* or *ddim* follows *mai* are found, but are considered substandard.

*Clywodd Ifan mai nid/ddim Siân fydd yn defnyddio 'r cyfrifiadur.*  
heard Ifan that not Siân will-be contin. use the computer  
'Ifan heard that it is not Siân who will use the computer.'

Where a fronted element in a subordinate clause is questioned, the particle *ai* appears in clause initial position.

*Gofynnodd Ifan ai Siân fydd yn defnyddio'r cyfrifiadur.*  
 asked Ifan whether Siân will-be contin. use the computer  
 'Ifan asked whether it is Siân who will use the computer.

## Numbers

The traditional numbering system of Welsh is complex and has been replaced for many purposes in current usage by a simpler, decimal system. These are shown, side by side, in Table 9.4. The numbers 1–10 are common to both systems. The number may immediately precede the noun, which is always singular in this context. Alternatively the number may be followed by a PP, where the noun appears as the object of the preposition *o* 'of', and in this position takes the plural form.

Table 9.4 The numerals of Welsh

Traditional numbers	Decimal numbers
1 <i>un</i>	
2 <i>dau/dwy</i>	
3 <i>tri/tair</i>	
4 <i>pedwar/pedair</i>	
5 <i>pump</i>	
6 <i>chwech</i>	
7 <i>saith</i>	
8 <i>wyth</i>	
9 <i>naw</i>	
10 <i>deg</i>	
11 <i>un ar ddeg</i>	<i>un deg un</i>
12 <i>deuddeg</i>	<i>un deg dau</i>
13 <i>tri ar ddeg</i>	<i>un deg tri</i>
14 <i>pedwar ar ddeg</i>	<i>un deg pedwar</i>
15 <i>pymtheg</i>	<i>un deg pump</i>
16 <i>un ar bymtheg</i>	<i>un deg chwech</i>
17 <i>dau/dwy ar bymtheg</i>	<i>un deg saith</i>
18 <i>deunaw</i>	<i>un deg wyth</i>
19 <i>pedwar/pedair ar bymtheg</i>	<i>un deg naw</i>
20 <i>ugain</i>	<i>dau ddeg</i>
21 <i>un ar hugain</i>	<i>dau ddeg un</i>
22 <i>dau/dwy ar hugain</i>	<i>dau ddeg dau</i>
23 <i>tri/tair ar hugain</i>	<i>dau ddeg tri</i>
24 <i>pedwar/pedair ar hugain</i>	<i>dau ddeg pedwar</i>
25 <i>pump ar hugain</i>	<i>dau ddeg pump</i>
26 <i>chwech ar hugain</i>	<i>dau ddeg chwech</i>
27 <i>saith ar hugain</i>	<i>dau ddeg saith</i>
28 <i>wyth ar hugain</i>	<i>dau ddeg wyth</i>
29 <i>naw ar hugain</i>	<i>dau ddeg naw</i>
30 <i>deg ar hugain</i>	<i>tri deg</i>
31 <i>un ar ddeg ar hugain</i>	<i>tri deg un</i>
32 <i>deuddeg ar hugain</i>	<i>tri deg dau</i>

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33	<i>tri/tair ar ddeg ar hugain</i>	<i>tri deg tri</i>
34	<i>pedwar/pedair ar ddeg ar hugain</i>	<i>tri deg pedwar</i>
35	<i>pymtheg ar hugain</i>	<i>tri deg pump</i>
36	<i>un ar bymtheg ar hugain</i>	<i>tri deg chwech</i>
37	<i>dau/dwy ar bymtheg ar hugain</i>	<i>tri deg saith</i>
38	<i>deunaw ar hugain</i>	<i>tri deg wyth</i>
39	<i>pedwar/pedair ar bymtheg ar hugain</i>	<i>tri deg naw</i>
40	<i>deugain</i>	<i>pedwar deg</i>
60	<i>trigain</i>	<i>chwe deg</i>
80	<i>pedwar ugain</i>	<i>wyth deg</i>
100	<i>cant</i>	

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<i>saith bachgen</i>	~	<i>saith o fechgyn</i>
seven boy	~	seven of boys
'seven boys'	~	'seven boys'

The numbers 2, 3, and 4 have distinct masc. and fem. forms, while the rest are gender-neutral. A number may trigger mutation of a following noun, and may itself vary in form depending on whether the noun is consonant- or vowel-initial.

From 10 onwards the traditional system is complex. Numbers are formed on 10 as a base until 15, and on 15 as a base until 19, with 20 a distinct new lexical item; 18 is exceptional, being formed as a multiple of 9. From 20 onwards the system operates in units of 20, repeating the forms used from 1 to 20 as appropriate, until it reaches 100. The core units 40, 60 and 80 are multiples of 20. Some of these numbers are single words, and display the same patterns as above.

<i>ugain bachgen</i>	~	<i>ugain o fechgyn</i>
twenty boy	~	twenty of boys
'twenty boys'	~	'twenty boys'

Many of these numbers, however, are phrases formed of more than one word, and here the singular noun must appear inside the number phrase, following the first element. The pattern where a plural noun appears in a PP following the number is unaffected.

<i>saith bachgen ar hugain</i>	~	<i>saith ar hugain o fechgyn</i>
seven boy on twenty	~	seven on twenty of boys
'twenty-seven boys'	~	'twenty-seven boys'

The decimal system which is now used in many contexts is simpler. Numbers are formed on 10 as a base until 20 is reached, then on 20, then on 30 and so on until 100 is reached. All are phrases consisting of more than one word. It is possible for a single noun to immediately follow one of these numbers, but the most natural pattern is for a plural noun to appear in a PP following the number.

<i>dau ddeg saith bachgen</i>	~	<i>dau ddeg saith o fechgyn</i>
two ten seven boy	~	two ten seven of boys
'twenty-seven boys'	~	'twenty-seven boys'

There are a small number of exceptional forms. The number 50 is often *hanner cant* 'half a hundred', and 150 is similarly *cant a hanner* 'a hundred and a half'. An alternative system, relying on subtraction rather than addition or multiplication, is old-fashioned and Biblical but still marginally available.

*cant      namyn    un*  
hundred less      one  
'ninety-nine'

The traditional number system is still in normal use in certain contexts. When telling the time *un ar ddeg* 'eleven' and *deuddeg* 'twelve' are used for the hours, *ugain* 'twenty' and *pump ar hugain* 'twenty-five' are used for minutes.

*Mae 'n      bum munud    ar    hugain    wedi    un ar ddeg.*  
is (it)comp. five minutes on twenty after eleven  
'It's twenty-five past eleven.'

It is normal too for traditional numbers to be used in referring to a person's age, and it is worth noting that where a number has a fem. form this must be used, as the noun counted is *blwydd* 'year', which is a f.sg. noun. This noun may be present or dropped, but the feminine form of the number stays.

*Mae'n                  dair                  (blwydd oed).*  
is (he/she) comp. three (f.) (year old)  
'He/she is three (years old).'

Similarly traditional numbers may be used in contexts such as referring to prices and writing cheques.

*tair punt    ar    hugain*  
three pound on twenty  
'twenty-three pounds'

The use of traditional numbers in these last two contexts is restricted, however, by the pragmatic consideration that the more complex the number, the harder it is to use and to understand. There comes a point, different for each individual, where traditional numbers are dropped and the modern decimal system is used instead.

*Mae'n      saith deg    saith.*  
is (he/she) comp. seven ten seven  
'He/she is seventy-seven.'

*saith deg saith o    bunnoedd*  
seven ten seven of pounds  
'seventy-seven pounds'

The modern decimal numbers are used consistently in the context of school mathematics, and it seems likely that they were first developed in this context as the difficulty of teaching mathematics through the medium of Welsh using the traditional system became



apparent. Indeed older Welsh speakers, who were not educated through the medium of Welsh, often use English numbers to avoid having to deal with the more complicated forms of the traditional Welsh system. The decimal numbers are also used in several other contexts, ranging from reading out the number of a hymn in a religious service to announcing the score after a rugby match, and referring to historical decades such as *y dauddegau* 'the twenties'. It seems likely that their use will spread further, for instance into the context of telling the time, as the use of digital clocks makes concepts such as 'twenty past' and 'twenty-five past' obsolete, and the use of 24 hour clocks increases the need to refer to numbers beyond 11 and 12.

Ordinals are formed from the traditional numbers by the addition of a suffix. The ordinal *cyntaf* 'first' follows the noun, but all others precede it.

<i>y tro cyntaf</i>	~	<i>y seithfed tro</i>
the time first	~	the seventh time
'the first time'	~	'the seventh time'

Where the number is a phrase, the suffix appears on the first element of the phrase and the noun follows this.

<i>y seithfed tro ar hugain</i>
the seventh time on twenty
'the twenty-seventh time'

These ordinals are used in a number of contexts, including dates and historical centuries. The number in a date is always masculine as the noun counted is *dydd* 'day', a m.sg. noun; as *canrif* 'century' is a feminine noun, the number in this context is always feminine.

<i>Ionawr y trydydd</i>
January the third
'January the third'

<i>y bedwaredd ganrif ar bymtheg</i>
the fourth century on fifteen
'the nineteenth century'

Years are referred to by using either decimal numbers or a sequence of simple numbers between 1 and 9.

<i>mil naw cant dau ddeg a thri</i>
thousand nine hundred two ten and three
'1923'

<i>un naw dau tri</i>
one nine two three
'1923'

## LEXIS

The vocabulary of Welsh is for the most part Celtic in origin, but over the years a large number of items have been borrowed from other languages. Native Celtic forms are found in a wide range of contexts, in core areas of the vocabulary. These include many colour terms, food items, names for farm animals, and kinship terms, of which only brief examples can be given here.

*du* 'black', *gwyn* 'white', *llwyd* 'grey', *glas* 'blue', *melyn* 'yellow'  
*bara* 'bread', *llaeth* 'milk', *cig* 'meat', *afal* 'apple', *halen* 'salt'  
*buwch* 'cow', *dafad* 'sheep', *ci* 'dog', *moch* 'pigs', *iâr* 'hen'  
*tad* 'father', *mab* 'son', *merch* 'daughter', *cefnider* 'cousin', *modryb* 'aunt'

Loans from Latin are found already in the Welsh of very early manuscripts, and it seems likely that some of them may go back as far as the Roman occupation. Latin would then have been the high status language in a diglossic situation, and it is normal for extensive borrowing to occur in such cases. The words taken in from Latin are varied. Some may reflect new ways of living and building techniques, while others are less easily explained.

*pont* 'bridge', *ystafell* 'room', *fffenestr* 'window', *braich* 'arm', *coch* 'red'

However, most loans from Latin reflect the place of Latin as the language of learning and religion through until the Reformation, and Welsh vocabulary in these fields is overwhelmingly of Latin origin.

*llyfr* 'book', *ysgol* 'school', *ysgrifennu* 'to write', *dysgu* 'to teach/learn', *llythyren* 'letter of the alphabet'  
*eglwys* 'church', *plwyf* 'parish', *pregethu* 'to preach', *pechod* 'sin', *Nadolig* 'Christmas'

Loans from English also begin to appear in Welsh at a comparatively early stage. In some cases, such as *fferm* 'farm', Welsh speakers are aware of such items as loans, but others have become so well integrated into the language that their English origin has been forgotten.

*hosan* 'sock' (< 'hose'), *bwrdd* 'table' (< 'board'), *ffordd* 'road' (< 'ford'), *tarian* 'shield' (< 'targe')

The diglossic situation which resulted from the Act of Union, with English as the language of law, administration and business in turn led to the borrowing of a large number of words into Welsh. New ideas and goods tended to come into Wales from England, along with the associated words. In many cases the word derives ultimately from some other language, but has been borrowed into Welsh at second hand through English.

*trên* 'train', *tractor* 'tractor', *beic* 'bicycle', *bws* 'bus', *ffôn* 'telephone'  
*te* 'tea', *coffi* 'coffee', *tatws* 'potato', *banana* 'banana', *cangarw* 'kangaroo'

A tendency to borrow English words, even when there is a Welsh word available with the same meaning, is felt to be a problem which may ultimately threaten the lexical identity of

the language, and is widely condemned. In many cases the English loan word is characteristic of informal registers, with the Welsh equivalent felt to be more 'correct' and suitable for formal usage.

<i>oergell</i> (formal)	~	<i>ffrij</i> (informal)	'fridge'
<i>mwynhau</i> (formal)	~	<i>joio</i> (informal, southern)	'to enjoy'

In other cases, however, the English loan has become the normal form, and the equivalent Welsh word has an old-fashioned feel to it.

<i>brwsh</i> (normal)	~	<i>ysgubell</i> (old-fashioned)	'brush'
<i>banc</i> (normal)	~	<i>ariandy</i> (old-fashioned)	'bank'

Borrowing words is only one way of expressing new meanings. There has always been an alternative approach within Welsh, whereby new words were created to meet new needs from native elements. As discussed earlier in the context of derivational morphology, compounds may be formed from two distinct words, which occur independently in the language, or an inflection may be added to an existing word.

<i>prifysgol</i>	'university'	<	<i>prif</i>	'main'	+	<i>ysgol</i>	'school'
<i>pleidlais</i>	'vote'	<	<i>plaid</i>	'political party'	+	<i>llais</i>	'voice'
<i>geiriadur</i>	'dictionary'	<	<i>gair</i>	'word'	+	affix	
<i>cymdeithaseg</i>	'sociology'	<	<i>cymdeithas</i>	'society'	+	affix	

There is currently a need to expand the vocabulary in a systematic way to deal with continuing innovation in the fields of science and technology. Borrowing still occurs, particularly from international vocabulary of Latin or Greek origin.

*digidol* 'digital', *mathemateg* 'mathematics', *cemeg* 'chemistry'

But the creative use of compounding and affixation figures largely in this process.

<i>rhyngrwyd</i>	'internet'	<	<i>rhwng</i>	'between'	+	<i>rhwyd</i>	'net'
<i>cyfrifiadur</i>	'computer'	<	<i>cyfrif</i>	'to count'	+	affix	

In order to ensure that usage is consistent, particularly in the context of school teaching and examinations, committees suggest and approve new forms. There are often, however, different words in existence at any one time, where public interest in a topic is keen. One cannot wait for a committee to decide what the word should be, and so competing forms appear, a sign of the linguistic creativity of those wishing to discuss the new field in Welsh.

<i>gwefan</i>	'website'	<	<i>gwe</i>	'web'	+	<i>man</i>	'place'
<i>safwe</i>	'website'	<	<i>safle</i>	'site'	+	<i>gwe</i>	'web'

The vocabulary of Welsh is subject to considerable dialect variation. In many cases there is a clear difference in usage between north and south Wales, though the exact position of the boundary varies from one item to another.

*allan* (N) ~ *mâs* (S) ‘out’  
*rŵan* (N) ~ *nawr* (S) ‘now’  
*gwario* (N) ~ *hala* (S) ‘to spend’

Other items present a more complex picture and there are a number of different words, each characteristic of specific parts of the country.

*gwrych* (N) ~ *shetin* (MidW) ~ *clawdd* (SW) ~ *perth* (SE) ‘hedge’  
*hogan* (NW) ~ *geneth* (NE) ~ *lodes* (MidW) ~ *merch* (S) ~ *croten* (S) ~  
*roces* (SW) ‘girl’

Sometimes it is the meaning of a word which varies, so that it is understood differently in different parts of Wales.

*llaeth* = ‘buttermilk’ (N) ~ = ‘milk’ (S)  
*brwnt* = ‘rough’ (N) ~ = ‘dirty’ (S)  
*tywyll* = ‘dark’ (general) ~ = ‘blind’ (SW)

The Welsh Bible was originally translated by a clergyman from north Wales, Bishop William Morgan, who naturally tended to use those words which were familiar to him in northern usage. The Bible then became for many years the basis for the standard language, and a tendency developed to consider northern words as in some way ‘better’ than their southern equivalents, and more appropriate to the formal, written registers. As a result, for instance, to this day a southerner will say *mâs* ‘out’ but feel constrained to write *allan*. This is not true in every case, and no one will concede that the northern forms *nain* ‘grandmother’ and *taid* ‘grandfather’ are in any way better and more acceptable than their southern equivalents *mamgu* and *tadcu*. It does, however, contribute to a certain lack of confidence among many southern speakers, who may explain their reluctance to use Welsh in a formal situation with the comment *Dyw’n Gwmrâg i ddim yn ddigon da*. ‘My Welsh isn’t good enough’.

## FURTHER READING

The outline given in this chapter of the structure of Welsh is necessarily brief, and a more detailed introduction to various aspects of the language may be found in the works listed below.

### General introduction

Watkins, T. A. (1961) *Ieithyddiaeth*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

### Phonetics, phonology, initial mutations

Ball, M. J. and Jones, G. E. (eds) (1984) *Welsh Phonology*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Ball, M. J. and Müller, N. (1992) *Mutation in Welsh*, London and New York: Routledge.

Ball, M. J. and Williams, B. (2001) *Welsh Phonetics*, Lewiston/Queenstown/Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press.

## Syntax and morphology

- Awbery, G. M. (2004) 'Welsh', in Arnaud, P. J. L. (ed.) *Le Nom Composé: Données sur Seize Langues*, Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, pp. 303–27.
- Borsley, R. D. and Jones, B. M. (2005) *Welsh Negation and Grammatical Theory*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
- Borsley, R. D., Tallerman, M. and Willis, D. (2007) *The Syntax of Welsh*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
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- Jones, M. and Thomas, A. R. (1977) *The Welsh Language: Studies in its Syntax and Semantics*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
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## Dialect variation

- Thomas, A. R. (1973) *The Linguistic Geography of Wales*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
- Thomas, Beth and Thomas, P. W. (1989) *Cymraeg, Cymrâg, Cymrêg: Cyflwyno'r Tafodieithoedd*, Cardiff: Gwasg Taf.
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## Dictionaries

- Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru: A Dictionary of the Welsh Language* (1950–2002) Cardiff: University of Wales Press; 2nd edition (2003–).
- Griffiths, B. and Jones, D. G. (1995) *The Welsh Academy English–Welsh Dictionary*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

# BRETON

*Ian Press*

## PREAMBLE

The following sketch of Breton is highly constrained, and abridged; it may, however, provide a useful point of departure and reasonably reflect a once relatively very strong Celtic language. Imperative are firm measures creating a public and official presence for the language, the revival of widespread Breton-speaking among the young, and the strengthening of intergenerational continuity. Constraint implies the presentation of a ‘unified’ Breton, which is not necessarily impoverished and characterless. Breton is ‘felt’ to be one. Much variation will be come across, but the language is there.

## A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Breton is an ‘Insular Celtic’ language, i.e. a Celtic language of the British Isles transplanted to the European Continent. It is also a P-Celtic language. There may have been a small, and residual, population of Gauls, Continental Celts, when the Briton (later ‘Breton’) immigration occurred, say, between the fourth and the eighth centuries AD. Such a residual population may partly explain the divergent *Gwenedeg/Vannetais* Breton of the south-east. Figure 10.1 shows the traditional administrative divisions of Brittany.

Drawing particularly on Hemon 1975: 1–2, it may be noted that this early period up to the eighth century affords no documents, merely a few latinized names. The period roughly from the ninth century to the eleventh century is referred to as that of Old Breton (Fleuriot 1964a and 1980) and presents isolated words, notably person and place names, in glosses, cartularies, and Latin lives of saints. The eastern boundary of Breton-speaking Brittany settles, after some expansion and recession, to roughly the area from Sant Brieg/St-Brieuc in the north to the Gwilen/Vilaine estuary in the south. Linguistic movement west since then has been slight, the essential change being the fragmentation of the language within its core area, beginning quite early but accelerating since the early nineteenth century (see Figure 10.2).

Middle Breton might be said to cover the eleventh century to the first half of the seventeenth century. Notable is the *Catholicon*, a Breton–French–Latin dictionary of 1499 by Jehan Lagadeuc. This is a period of intense Romance influence, particularly lexical influence, e.g. *brav* – *brave* ‘beautiful, handsome’, *asamblez* – *ensemble* ‘together’, *eurus* – *heureux* ‘happy, fortunate’, *stagañ* – *attacher* ‘to attach’.

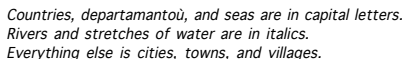
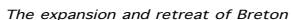


Figure 10.1 Administrative divisions of Brittany



*Figure 10.2* The expansion and retreat of Breton

From the mid-seventeenth century Modern Breton may be seen to be in place, though a sub-division or divisions may be appropriate for this period. Important is Julien Maunoir's *Le Sacré Collège de Jésus* (1659), accompanied by a grammar and a 'French-Breton' dictionary. This builds on orthographic reforms, e.g. the removal of some unnecessary letters, the reflection of mutations, and the introduction of *c'h* as distinct from *ch*. There might be arguments in favour of a sub-division in the early nineteenth century with the works of J. F. Le Gondec: *Grammaire celto-bretonne* (1807) and *Dictionnaire celto-breton* (1827).

Here the spelling system, based on Breton as spoken in the Leon (north-west) area, is firmed up, e.g. *k* for *c* and *qu*, *z* for [z], and a beginning is made on reducing the number of superfluous French borrowings, authentic components of popular Breton though many may have been. Since then there is essentially a refinement of the language.

Breton nonetheless remains largely deprived of a public presence, is massively fragmented, has a predominantly ageing population, and thus is highly at risk. Numbers of speakers vary enormously, depending on how a speaker is defined. Le Boëtté 2003 offers a very useful study, suggesting 257,000 speakers.

## DIALECTS

There are traditionally seen to be four dialects: *Kerneveg*, *Leoneg*, *Tregerieg*, and *Gwenedeg*, with the first three reckoned to be relatively much closer to each other (see Figure 10.3). Hemon 1975: 2 notes that ‘some linguistic features have little to do with the boundaries of the dioceses’, but feels that the division is generally acceptable (one might also mention the *Goelo(ù)* dialect, in the extreme north-east – see Le Coadic n.d.). Their names are abbreviated as *K*, *L*, *T*, *Gw*. The presentation here essentially focuses on the first three, though the standard pretends to cover the whole language (*Gwenedeg*, focusing on Ros-trenn-Pondi–Gwened–Kemperle, retains a strong identity, but note the extension of the standard on the new web-site for Vannes/Gwened: <http://br.mairie-vannes.fr/>). *Leoneg* provided the modern base in the early nineteenth century; there is currently some rise in public use and teaching of the *Kerneveg* ‘dialect’, as centred on Karaez/Carhaix, and it is sometimes reckoned *Tregerieg* is particularly vibrant. One talks of the Montroulez/Morlaix, Gwengamp/Guingamp, Karaez triangle as a core area.

Humphreys 1990: 131 very aptly writes:

I have deliberately broken with the traditional diocesan labels of Breton dialects with their overall efficiency little exceeding 50 per cent and their undue suggestion of discreteness. They seem particularly inappropriate as viewed from Carhaix, at the centre of the broad Median Zone which crosses the country from sea to sea on the north-east–southwest Tréguier–Quimper axis and whose diversities are overshadowed by a unity readily noted by naive native-speakers (Falc’hun 1963).

Hewitt 2002: 31 also refers to this and to ‘standard literary usage, which is based on the highly divergent “peripheral” dialects of Leon (NW) and Gwened (SE)’. One might also cite Humphreys 1978:

D’abord il [the Fañch dialect described here] révèle, mieux peut-être que tout autre dialecte, les distorsions de la classification diocésaine traditionnelle qui, malgré les travaux du Chanoine Falc’hun, est encore souvent prise au pied de la lettre. Il appartient à la vaste zone de transition qui sépare le Léon du Haut-Vannetais, mais si on le compare à l’ensemble de cette aire centrale on ne peut qu’approuver l’observation d’un paysan de Maël-Pestivien ‘muioh gwenedour zo ‘barzh’ – il contient plus de vannetismes.

So we might see transitional zones between Leon and the centre and between the centre and Gwened, doubtless more pronounced in the case of the latter. There are many excellent descriptions of Breton dialects, and they should be consulted, e.g. Bothorel 1982,



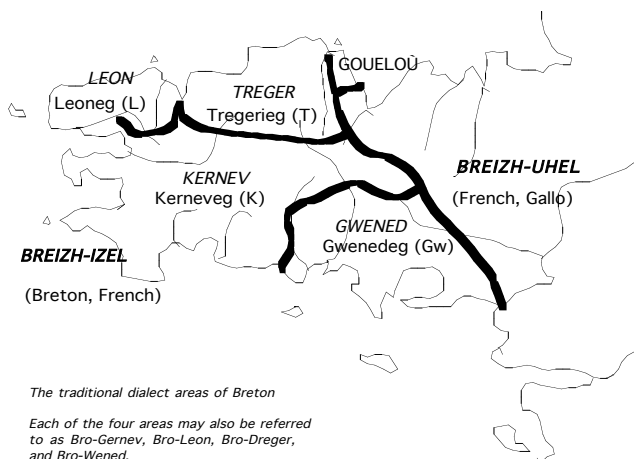


Figure 10.3 The traditional dialect areas of Breton

Hammer 1969, Humphreys 1978 and 1985, Jackson 1960–1, McKenna 1976–81, Plourin 1982, Sinou 1999 and 2000, Sommerfelt 1920, Ternes 1970, and Wmffre 1998 – note too the excellent grammars by Guillevic and Le Goff 1902 (*Gwenedeg*) and Le Clerc 1986 (*Tregerieg*), Gros' works (1970, 1976, 1977), the invaluable atlases by Le Roux 1927 and Le Dû 1972, Plourin 2003 and 2005, and the very numerous and valuable other studies, e.g. by Hewitt, Stephens, and Timm.

## ORTHOGRAPHY AND PHONOLOGY

### Orthography

See Denez 1975: 1 for a heartfelt statement about recent arguments over Breton orthography. It seems as if the *peurunvan* 'unified' orthography is prevailing, with the use of *skolveurieg* (the 'orthographe universitaire') and the *etrerannyezhel* (the 'interdialectale') somewhat reduced. The *peurunvan*, which arose during the Second World War, is also known as *zedacheg*, because of its acceptance of the digraph *zh*, and as *KLTGw*, because it reflects an attempt to bring all 'four dialects' together. It is a derivative of *KLT*, created in the early twentieth century by the *Entente des écrivains bretons* (1908). This orthography brought the three 'closer dialects' together, *Gwenedeg* retaining its orthography. Whatever the non-linguistic details, the creation of the *peurunvan* was a significant step. It was, however, not politically in favour and in the 1950s the *skolveurieg* was devised. The *etrerannyezhel* orthography was devised in the early 1970s to bring the *peurunvan* and *skolveurieg* together and was used by Fañch Morvannou in the original Assimil course. However, the *peurunvan* seems to have taken root.

The *peurunvan* orthography is used here. Its set of symbols, in the order as found in a dictionary, is as follows (with very approximate transcriptions):

*a, b, ch, c'h, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, t, u, v, w, y, z*  
 [a, b, ʃ, x, d, e, f, g, h, i, ʒ, k, l, m, n, o, p, R, s, t, y, v, w, j, z]

To these may be added *eu* [ø], *ou* (and *où*) [u], *gn* [ɲ], (*i*)*lh* [ʎ] (or [j]), and *zh* [z] or [h]. Now and then *c*, *q*, and *x* occur. To be added is *ñ*, which is not pronounced and most often indicates that the immediately preceding vowel is nasalized.

The consonants may all be named by adding *e* (pronounced close), or *e* (pronounced rather open) may be placed before *l*, *m*, *n*, *r*, *lh*, *gn*, *f*, *s*, *c'h*, with *h* as *hach* and *z* as *zed* (Kervella 1947/1976: 10). The digraph *zh* is generally [z], though in *Gwenedeg* [h] is more frequent – the digraph indicates a choice between *z* and *h*.

The alphabet is very similar to English, but note that there are *ch* and *c'h*, which come between *b* and *d* (there is arguably no *c*, which is replaced by *k*). *H* is usually pronounced, much as in English, but, as in English, it may be dropped, sometimes obligatorily (e.g. *ha* 'and', *he* 'her', *ho* 'your, you (object pronoun, possessive)'), and generally in certain dialects. It might be noted that *c'h* will tend to be [h] except when absolute word-final (i.e. before a pause or silence), when it will tend to be [x]. What is written *z* is very often silent word-internally and finally. Much of what one sees written might be pronounced 'as if French', but one should be careful, i.e. however 'inauthentic' the pronunciation of many *néo-bretonnants*, it may be seen as better than no Breton at all (this very point is made by Davalan I 2000: 30). Wmffre 2007, an absolutely invaluable work, came to the author's attention too late to be taken into account.

## Phonology

A great deal of useful information on the pronunciation of Breton may be obtained from Kervella 1947/1976 and Davalan 2000-2001-2002 (the latter is in addition the source of much information on the mutations).

Vowels occur long and short: unstressed vowels are always short (one may also come across unstressed long vowels, see Humphreys 1978: E); stressed vowels may be either long or short: a following voiceless sound (*k*, *s*, etc.), or what are written as geminate consonants, e.g. *nn*, *ll*, *rr*, *mm* (and *m*), plus some other groups, are preceded by short vowels – otherwise the vowel is long. A 'problem' point is the case of stress-bearing monosyllabics ending in a consonant (for example *kazh* ['ka:s]) – in most cases the vowel is long, suggesting a voiced following consonant; the vast majority of descriptions consider the following consonant voiceless, but in what does *kazh* 'cat' end? It may depend on dialect, but one may see it as voiceless lenis, i.e. certainly with a 'hint' of voice – the present writer was corrected, in a meeting with Frañsez Kervella, when he pronounced *bras* 'big' with a voiceless [s].

In *KLT* the stress is overall on the last-but-one syllable (except in stressable monosyllabics) and is very salient (in *Gwenedeg* notably the stress is overall final). There are a few words where the stress is final – these are usually compounds. Here are a few examples adapted from Press 1986: 26–7 (for a fuller list see Kervella 1947/1976: 50 or Hemon 1972: 94–9):

- a Nouns: *abardaez* 'evening', *itron* 'lady, Madame', *gwinegr* 'vinegar', *Pantekost* 'Pentecost';
- b Adjective: *fallakr* 'rascally, evil';
- c Present-tense situative forms of *bezañ* 'to be': *emaon* 'I am', etc.;
- d The first and second persons of the *i* 'conjugation' of prepositions: *ganin* 'with me', *diouzhoc'h* 'from you';
- e Adverbs, pronouns, prepositions: *abred* 'soon' (most often), *antronoz* 'the following day', *avat* 'but, however', *dalc'hmat* 'constantly', *disul* 'next/last Sunday', *e(n)*

*ta* 'so', *evel* 'like', *evit* 'for', *fenoz* 'tonight', *ouzhpenn* 'in addition', *pelec'h* 'where', *warc'hoazh* 'tomorrow', *zoken* 'even';

- f Place-names: mostly consisting of an unstressed first component, e.g. *Ploul/Plol/Pleu-*, *Lan-*, *Kastell-*, *Ker-*, *Meilh-*; if the second and last component is monosyllabic, then the place-name is end-stressed, e.g. *Plogoñv* 'Plogoff', *Lanveur* 'Lanmeur', *Kastellin* 'Chateaulin', *Kerlaz* 'Kerlaz'.

The close vowels *i*, *u*, and *ou* tend to be pronounced similarly whether stressed or unstressed; they vary only in being long or short; thus basically [i], [y], and [u]: *inizi* [i'ni:zi] 'islands', *bruzun* ['bry:zyn] 'crumbs', and *louzoù* ['lu:zu] 'herbs, weeds'. All three may be nasalized: *fiñval* 'to move', *puñs* 'well' (both these may be opened somewhat, or denasalized); *ou* is only positionally nasalized, e.g. *koun* ['kū:n] 'memory'.

The open vowel *a* may seem less open and retracted when in a monosyllable (and thus normally long), e.g. *kazh* ['kas]. In monosyllables where it is short, it is open, e.g. *fall* ['fall] 'bad', *tach* ['taʃ] 'nail' (here the final consonants are fortis). Its articulation comes in-between when penultimate stressed and long, e.g. ['ka:lɛt] 'hard'. Nasalized it tends to be [ã], e.g. *tañva* ['tañva] '(to) taste'. Nasal vowels proper tend not to be long, though [ã:] may occur (Ternes 1992: 431 sees their quantity as predictable except in the case of [ã]).

The mid vowels, namely those written *e*, *o*, *eu*, occur long and short and may in addition vary in degree of openness and closedness. Trépos 1968: 10–11 summarizes the variation well. Basically, they may be closed, thus [e], [o], and [ø], only if they are long (and, almost always, stressed), e.g. *bed* 'world', *dor* 'door', and *neud* 'thread'. Both *e* and *o* may close so far as becoming [i] and [u] respectively. In a few words *e* may be closed and short: *pesk* 'fish', *Brest* 'Brest', and *bet* 'been, had'. They will be less closed when unstressed (in some dialects, see Wmffre 1998: 8–11, there may be vowel neutralization in the post-tonic position, with emergence of a schwa, a weak schwa, or even elision). They may also be less closed when stressed in some words, whether long or short: *ler* 'leather', *tost* 'near', *treust* 'rafter' – it is difficult to define this positionally, but it seems to happen before *r* on its own, *sk*, *st*, and absolute word-finally, e.g. *ro!* 'give!' They are open (there may be variation) before *c'h*, the semi-consonants *y*, *w*, or before *l* and *r* reinforced by another consonant: *sec'h* 'dry', *merk* 'mark', *eien* 'sources', *kelc'h* 'circle', *n'oc'h ket* 'you aren't', *golvan* 'sparrow', *teuc'h* 'worn-out', *seurt* 'sort, type', *Meurzh* 'March'.

Regarding sequences of vowels, *ae* often tends to become a long mid *e*, except in Leon and slightly east and south, where it may invert to the two-vowel sequence *ea* (thus [aj, ɛi, ɛa, ɛ]); *ao* often tends to become *o*, sometimes very closed (thus [aw, o], but also [ɔ]); *aou* tends to be [aw] or, perhaps preferably, [ɔw], and *eo* tends to be [ew] (sometimes [ɛw]) (if it is the 3PS of *bezañ* 'to be', it may be [ew, e, ɛ, ə]). Overall, *o* and *ou* before a vowel will be pronounced [w] (almost always when after *k* and *c'h*), e.g. *gloan* 'wool', *koad* 'wood', *klouar* 'tepid'; *eu* before a vowel will tend to be [y], e.g. *leue* (but [w] is possible here too, as indeed is [ø]) – particularly in Leon vowel sequences starting in *o*, *ou*, *eu* will tend to remain bisyllabic, and this can be the general rule in certain words). One might note here the sounds spelt *v* (always [v] absolute word-initially). Much depends on the dialect. Rarely we have consistent [v]; in the south-east we may tend to have [y]; it may be pronounced [w] except before front vowels. Overall, after *l*, *r*, *n*, and *z* it will tend to be pronounced [o], e.g. *mezv* 'drunk' (as will be ending *av*, e.g. *divalav* 'ugly'), and in the north and north-west, perhaps reflecting the standard, there is hesitation between [v] and [w], with a tendency to disappear after a nasal, e.g. *skañv* 'light' [ã(ð/w)]. After vowels it will as a rule be pronounced [w], e.g. *piv* 'who', *brav* 'beautiful', *tev* 'stout'. Absolute

word-finally in verbal forms *v* will tend to be pronounced [v] or [f], depending on how one interprets the absolute word-final consonant (see elsewhere in this section).

A vowel + *n* is not a nasal vowel – the vowel acquires a nasal twang, but the nasal consonant remains; *ñ* indicates nasality of the preceding vowel (depending, e.g. on dialect, there may be no nasalization).

A vocalic system for the literary language may be as follows (Ternes 1992: 431):

	oral vowels			nasal vowels		
	front	central	back	front	central	back
HIGH	i	y	u	ĩ	ỹ	ũ
MID	e	ø	o	ẽ		õ
LOW		a			ã–ã:	

Summarizing, with a little more detail, long vowels are stressed and followed by silence or by voiced or voiceless lenis, short vowels are unstressed, or stressed and followed by fortis. Marginal elements are given in parentheses. Orthographic symbols are italicized. Thus:

	oral vowels			nasal vowels		
	front	central	back	front	central	back
HIGH	i <i>i</i>	y <i>u</i>	u <i>ou</i>	(ĩ) <i>ĩñ</i>	(ỹ) <i>ũñ</i>	(ũ) <i>ouñ</i>
MID-CLOSE	e <i>e</i>	ø <i>eu</i>	o <i>o</i>	ẽ <i>eñ</i>		õ <i>oñ</i>
MID-OPEN	ɛ <i>e</i>	œ <i>eu</i>	ɔ <i>o</i>	ẽ <i>eñ</i>	œ <i>euñ</i>	
LOW		a <i>a</i>			ã <i>añ</i>	

The Breton diphthongs can be seen as vowel + [j], [w], [ɥ], e.g., *kaer* ['kajr] 'fine, beautiful', *paotr* ['pawt(r)] 'lad', *eeun* ['ɛwn] 'simple, direct'. In the first two cases there is often contraction. The 'weaker' vowel of the third case could also be [ɥ], a fronted, palatal variant of [w] (i.e. a labial palatal approximant), typically occurring before or after front vowels. The sequences *oa*, *oue* overall tend to [wa], [we]; in such instances the vowel, if stressed, will then be long or short as normal. The group *oua* may be disyllabic; such cases are rather infrequent, e.g. *gouarn* '(to) steer, govern', *douar* 'land, earth'. The group *oe* is very rare, e.g. the native root *loen* [oe] or [we:] 'animal'.

A consonantal system for the literary language may be as follows (Ternes 1992: 431):

	labial	dental	palatal	velar	pharyngeal
ORAL STOPS	b, p	d, t		g, k	
FRICATIVES	v, f	z, s	ʒ, ʃ	x	h
RESONANTS	m	n	ɲ		
		l	ʎ (or [j])		
		r (or [ʀ], or [ʁ])			
	w, ɥ		j		

The voiced and voiceless palatal fricatives are written *j* and *ch*; the velar fricative is written *c'h*. The palatal nasal and velar are written *gn* and *lh* (*ilh* unless a syllabic *i* precedes), and as *ni* and *li* before a vowel other than *i*, e.g. *bleniañ* 'to drive', radical *blegn*, 1PS preterite *blegnis*, 3PS preterite *blenias*; *heuliañ* 'to follow', radical *heuilh*, 1PS preterite *heulhis*, 3PS preterite *heulias*. The labial semi-consonant is written *w* or *ou* (occasionally *v*); the palatal semi-consonant is written *y*, *i* inter-vocalically, and *i*

following a consonant and before a vowel, e.g. *gwelet* 'to see', *gouel* 'feast', *ya* 'yes', *ray* 'will do', *eien* 'sources', *skolioù* 'schools'. The group *où* tends these days to be pronounced [u], but there is dialectal variation. The other consonants are written as in the transcription.

Consider below a fuller, more problematic, exposition. Here the hyphen designates absolute word-initial position (fortis), geminates designate fortis, 'S' denotes a syllabic, and [vh] is an optional denotation of the voiced result of the *spirantization* mutation (also to be found in some roots and to be found particularly in Leon). 'Pharyngeal' may also cover 'Laryngeal', and 'Labial' covers 'Bilabial and 'Labio-dental'. A question mark denotes uncertainty (the two consonants concerned are often seen as [h]).

	labial	dental	palatal	velar	pharyngeal
ORAL STOPS	b, bb- pp, b̥, p b̥, p	d, dd- tt, d̥, t d̥, t		g, gg- kk, g, k g, k	
FRICATIVES	v, vv- ff, vh/y, f v, f	z, zz- ss, z̥, s z, s	ʒ, 33- ʃʃ, ʒ, ʃ j, ch	ɣɣ-?, xx, ɣ̥?, x c'h	h, hh-  h
RESONANTS	mm mm, m	nn, n nn, n ll, l ll, l rr, r (or uvular R) rr, r	j gn, ni + S λ lh, li + S		
	w, q ou/w		j S + i + S, y		

The front rounded semi-consonant [ɥ] occurs often when a following or preceding vowel is front. There tends to be palatalization of velar stops before front vowels and after *i* (leading to affrication). Thus *k* in *keno* 'good-bye', and both consonants in *kig* 'meat'.

The principal problems in proposing a system of sounds for Breton seem to concern the place of the correlations of strength (fortis: lenis), voice (voiceless: voiced), and quantity (note that the *long* fortis vowel may be seen as followed by a *short* lenis consonant, and vice versa; where the vowel is unstressed, there is vocalic blurring plus a weak voiceless consonant).

The assumption is that all absolute word-initial consonants, and consonants mutated by *protection* (see the following section), are fortis. Note that fortis includes both voiceless and voiced consonants, the latter tending towards the former. A nice example, if somewhat emphatic, might be *Va Doue!* 'My goodness!', where we may hear a fortis *t* beginning *Doue* 'God'. Now, absolute word-final consonants after an unstressed vowel are weak (= lenis) and voiceless. After a stressed (and usually long) vowel, i.e. notably in monosyllabic words, they are lenis; the prevailing view sees them as *voiceless*, but what there may really be is something between voiced and voiceless (note the present author's 'mistake' regarding *bras*, reported earlier in this section). The vowel, itself, will be long, thus *kazh* 'cat' [kʰaz̥] or *bras* 'big' [brʰaz̥]. However, there are monosyllabic words with a fortis consonant after a stressed short vowel, e.g. *kas* 'to send' [kass] (other examples include *tap* 'catch', radical of *tapout* 'to catch' and *pak* 'pack', radical of *pakañ* 'to pack'). So it may, at this point, be simpler overall to accept distinctive vocalic quantity and set aside consonantal strength, replacing it with voice, neutralized absolute word-finally and realized

there as voiceless. That individual dialects, and some views of the standard, present more complex pictures is a separate issue.

Now note that the sounds [k], [p], and [m] (the last whether spelt *mm* or *m*), the semi-consonants [w] and [ɥ], and *n* and *l* when absolute word-initial and when written as *nn*, *ll* (and *r* for the standard language) are themselves fortis. Word-internally this only manifests itself when preceded by a stressed short vowel. Stressed vowels will also be short before the sequences *nt*: *hent* 'road', *nk*: *trenk* 'bitter', before consonantal groups beginning with a fortis, e.g. *kastell* 'castle', and before *r* and *l* followed by a stop, a fricative, or [j] (= [ɣ]), e.g. *park* 'field', *marc'h* 'horse', *skolioù* 'schools', *sturiañ* 'to steer' (long in singular *skol* and in *stur* 'rudder') (Trépos 1968: 12).

Kervella 1947/1976: 12 gives a series of examples of long and short vowels: *tal* 'forehead' – *dall* 'blind', *mel* 'honey' – *mell* 'big, . . .', *gwir* 'true' – *grik!* 'shhh!', *rod* 'wheel' – *koll* 'to lose', *ruz* 'red' – *rust* 'abrupt', *meud* 'thumb' – *treust* 'rafter', *trouz* 'noise' – *dous* 'sweet'.

Kervella 1947/1976: 23 also cites the following to indicate the importance of the fortis:lenis distinction:

*Emañ e garr e gar Landerne* 'His car(t) is at Landerne station';  
*Gwisket e oa e du eus e du* 'For his part he was dressed in black';  
*An heol a bar e barr an neñv* 'The sun shines in the zenith'.

In the first example the first *g* is lenis (lenited, from *karr*), the second is fortis; in the second example the first *d* is fortis, the second lenis (lenited, from *tu*); in the third example the first *b* is lenis (lenited, from *par*), the second is fortis. The words concerned are minimal pairs. Falc'hun 1951: 44, 66 cites similar examples, e.g. *an hini naetañ*, *an hini lousañ*, *an hini ruz* 'the cleanest, dirtiest, reddest one', with lenis if the reference is feminine, fortis if masculine. Particularly noteworthy is Falc'hun 1951: 67:

*Ro e lod dezhañ, hag he lod dezhi* 'Give his share to him, and her share to her';  
*Ro he lod dezhañ, hag e lod dezhi* 'Give her share to him, and his share to her'.

Both *e* 'his' and *he* 'her' are pronounced the same; after the former we have lenition, while after the latter the absolute word-initial fortis remains (and in some dialects there may be aspiration).

The situation remains complicated. What of other consonants? Thus *an hini mat* 'the good one (masculine)' – *an hini vat* 'the good one (feminine)'; *an hini paour* 'the poor one (masculine)' – *an hini baour* 'the poor one (feminine)'. The fortis:lenis distinction is *m*:*v* for the first and *p*:*b* for the second. The second we might be happy seeing as a voice distinction (and it will work for several pairs). The first, however, is complicated by the fact that *m* is always fortis, *v* reflecting original lenis *m*, so here, perhaps, we do have a fortis:lenis pair. Thus lenis *b*, *d*, *g* are mutations of fortis *p*, *t*, *k*; lenited *b*, *d*, *g*, however, are *v* [v], *z* [z], *c*'*h* [h].

Falc'hun 1951: 19 remains extremely persuasive:

C'est que cette opposition de durée est rigoureusement réglée sur l'opposition entre consonne forte et consonne faible après la voyelle. Cette dernière opposition paraît être la seule sentie du sujet parlant: l'opposition de durée dans les voyelles n'en est pour ainsi dire qu'un aspect, une consonne forte ne pouvant être précédée que de voyelle brève sous l'accent, et une consonne faible de voyelle longue. Ainsi n'étudiera-t-on la durée des voyelles qu'avec le système consonantique.

However, Ternes's consonantal system, with its six pairs correlated for voice, also has much to recommend it. It may be argued that [n], [l], and [r] remain correlated for strength and that the other consonants are fortis ([m, ʎ, ɲ, w, ɸ, j]) – one of the six pairs, [f, v], may be marginal, [v] usually being lenis, and more might be said about the status of [f] (and [v]), [s, z], [ʃ, ʒ], and [x, h] (as regards the first three of those pairs, they may be voiced even if spelt *f, s, ch* absolute word-initially; this overrules lenition (see the following section), and there will be words with the voiceless pronunciation exclusively (not least groups involving *st, sp, sk* – and there are words where *s-* is pronounced as if *ch-*). The vowels then become distinctively long or short under stress.

Needless to say, words only occasionally occur in isolation and word boundaries can be difficult to identify in Breton. A final consonant after stress will be pronounced voiced if immediately followed by a word beginning in a vowel: *mat eo* 'that's fine' (if the following word begins in *h*, *h* will drop and a final stop or fricative will be pronounced voiceless, e.g. *pod-houarn* 'iron pot'). Kervella 1947/1976: 35 notes that if the first word ends in voiceless *k, t, p, f, s, ch*, or *c'h*, then a consonant beginning the following word will be strengthened, e.g. *bep gwech* [bep 'kweʃ] 'every time' (the consonant will be voiced if the first ends in voiced *g, d, b, l, m, n, r*, or semi-consonantal *y, v*), though two identical consonants will tend to yield a fortis geminate, e.g. *ed du* [e'ttɥ] 'buckwheat'; *d* tends to strengthen, even after *z*, e.g. *kreisteiz* 'south' (in the spelling) from *kreiz* + *deiz* (reflected in the mixed mutation). However, Ternes 1992: 437 considers that '[T]wo adjacent stops or fricatives, one word-final, the other word-initial, both become voiceless', and this is usually accepted. The situation is quite complex.

It makes sense to note Morvannou 1978–80 I: 187 who, for all the variation within the whole of Breton, states:

[. . .] il est un point sur lequel tous les dialectes et tous les parlers sont d'accord, c'est celui de la prononciation, et notamment sur la quantité longue ou brève des voyelles, et sur la sonorisation des sourdes en finale de mot suivi de voyelle [( . . .)]. Sur ces caractéristiques fondamentales de la phonétique du breton, il n'y a pas de variante dialectale [( . . .)].

## MUTATIONS

Breton is typical of Celtic languages in having initial consonantal mutations. These are originally phonetic changes. Breton officially has four of them: *lenition* ('soft'; note the term as a nominal derivation of lenis, i.e. fortis consonants becoming lenis), the *spirant* mutation (or *spirantization* or 'fricative'), *provection* ('strong' or 'reinforcing' or fortis), and the *mixed* mutation (part of *lenition* + part of *provection* – *léniprovection*, as termed by various writers). The passing of time has meant that they are now more morphological and syntactic, and even distinctive, than phonetic.

In many cases the mutations may reflect a pause or the subordination of one sub-group (i.e. some measure of emphasis) to another. For example, the preposition *war* 'on' causes a contact (i.e. automatic or non-distinctive) lenition. That is, the very fact of its governing a nominal element causes lenition in the initial consonant of the nominal element. So, in *war toenn/doenn an ti* 'on the roof of the house' there is either *war toenn an ti* (emphasis of *toenn an ti* 'the roof of the house') or *war doenn an ti* (a single unit, with greater prominence of *war*). The possessive construction in this phrase creates the potential for inhibition of the contact mutation. All the same, note that Kervella 1947/1976:

102 compares *war vor* ‘at sea’ with *war morioù ar C’hreisteiz* ‘on the southern seas’, the first almost adverbial, much more bound, and the second with a ‘heavier’, potentially autonomous, phrase after *war*. There is something comparable in *tud Breizh* or *tud Vreizh* ‘(the) people of Brittany’, the name of the country standing out more in the former (and there is a discernible pause) (also from Kervella 1947/1976: 102). It is useful also noting phrases such as the following, given by Kervella 1947/1976: 102: *ur gazez vihan c’hlas* ‘a small, grey mare’ (regular lenition of *bihan* ‘small’ and *glas* ‘grey (here)’) as against *ur gazez bihan ha glas* ‘a small and grey mare’, where the adjectives are detached, almost appositive.

Lenition	Written	Not written
FORTIS	<i>p t k b d g gw m</i>	<i>f s ch c’h n l r</i>
		[ʃ] [x]
	↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓	↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓
LENIS	<i>b d g v z c’h w v</i>	<i>f s ch c’h n l r</i>
	[h]	[v][z][3] [h]

Those which are not written are sometimes seen as optional. *Lenition* is by far the most common mutation, and may even be extending its range.

Dinstinctive lenition is caused by:

(a) The definite and indefinite articles. The definite article is *an, al, ar*; the indefinite article is *un, ul, ur*. Lenition occurs where the noun is feminine singular or masculine human plural. Non-feminine-singular and non-masculine-human-plural nouns in *k-* change the *k-* to *c’h-* after the article. Note that *d > z* does not occur after the articles.

Among the exceptions are masculine plural human nouns in *-où*, e.g. *tadoù* ‘fathers’, *priedoù* ‘spouses/husbands’, *testoù* ‘witnesses’, and feminine singular *plac’h* ‘girl’.

There are situations where an adjective precedes a noun (superlative, numeral, pejorative adjective, emphatic adjective, augmentative adjective). Here there is as a rule no mutation, but *k-* becomes *c’h-*.

In the case of the days of the month the mutation does occur: *ar gentañ* ‘the first’ (also *(d’)ar c’hentañ* ‘(on) the first’), *ar bemp* ‘the fifth’.

Some examples:

*kelaouenn* ‘magazine’ – *ar gelaouenn* ‘the magazine’ (feminine singular) *kelaouennoù*

‘magazines’ – *ar c’helaouennoù* ‘the magazines’ (feminine plural);

*keloù* ‘news’ – *ar c’heloù* ‘the (piece of) news’ (masculine singular);

*toenn* ‘roof’ – *an doenn* ‘the roof’ (feminine singular);

*tad* ‘father’ – *an tad* ‘the father’ (masculine singular);

*tadoù* ‘fathers’ – *an tadoù* ‘the fathers’ (masculine human plural – those in *-où* = exceptions);

*pig* ‘magpie’ – *ur big* ‘a magpie’ (feminine singular);

*pig* ‘pick’ – *ur pig* ‘a pick’ (masculine singular);

*kelenner* ‘teacher (female)’ – *ar gelenner* ‘the teacher (female)’ (feminine singular);

*kelenner* ‘teachers (female)’ – *ar c’helennerez* ‘the teachers (female)’ (feminine plural);

*kelenner* ‘teacher’ – *ar c’helenner* ‘the teacher’ (masculine singular);

*kelennerien* ‘teachers’ – *ar gelennerien* ‘the teachers’ (masculine human plural);

*karr* ‘cart’ – *ar c’harr* ‘the cart’ *kirri* ‘carts’ – *ar c’hirri* ‘the carts’ (masculine);



(b) The unmarked position of the adjective in Breton is after the modified noun. After feminine singular (including *plac'h*) and masculine human plural nouns (except those in *-où*) lenition may occur. If the noun ends in *l, r, m, n*, non-consonantal *v*, or a vowel, then the whole range of lenitable consonants is affected (i.e. including, optionally, *d > z*; *d* tends not to change after dentals, and never after the article, as stated above, and its lenition is completely absent from *Tregerieg*); otherwise, only *b, m, d, g, gw* beginning the adjective are lenited. Here are some examples, from Press 2004: 30–1:

fem. - <i>r b</i> -	<i>kador vras</i>	<i>ar gador vras</i>	<i>kadorioù bras</i>	<i>ar c'hadorioù bras</i>
fem. - <i>l d</i> -	<i>taol zu/du</i>	<i>an daol zu/du</i>	<i>taolioù du</i>	<i>an taolioù du</i>
masc.	<i>ti bihan</i>	<i>an ti bihan</i>	<i>tiez bihan</i>	<i>an tiez bihan</i>
fem. - <i>m k</i> -	<i>mamm-gaer</i>	<i>ar vamm-gaer</i>	<i>mammoù-kaer</i>	<i>ar mammoù-kaer</i>
fem. - <i>c'h k</i> -	<i>merc'h-kaer</i>	<i>ar verc'h-kaer</i>	<i>merc'hed-kaer</i>	<i>ar merc'hed-kaer</i>
fem.irreg. <i>m</i> -	<i>plac'h vat</i>	<i>ar plac'h vat</i>	<i>plac'hed mat</i>	<i>ar plac'hed mat</i>
masc. <i>hum.</i>	<i>paotr mat</i>	<i>ar paotr mat</i>	<i>paotred vat</i>	<i>ar baotred vat</i>
masc.hum.irreg.	<i>tad-kaer</i>	<i>an tad-kaer</i>	<i>tadoù-kaer</i>	<i>an tadoù-kaer</i>
masc. <i>k</i> -	<i>ki bihan</i>	<i>ar c'hi bihan</i>	<i>chas bihan</i>	<i>ar chas bihan</i>
fem. - <i>z b</i> -	<i>nizez vihan</i>	<i>ar nizez vihan</i>	<i>nizezed bihan</i>	<i>ar nizezed bihan</i>
fem. - <i>z t</i> -	<i>nizez tev</i>	<i>ar nizez tev</i>	<i>nizezed tev</i>	<i>ar nizezed tev</i>

(Meanings: 'big chair, blackboard, small house, mother-in-law, daughter-in-law, good girl, good boy, father-in-law, small dog, little niece, fat niece'.)

(c) Lenition occurs also after the pronominal determiner *unan* (if feminine) + adjective and (*an*) *hini* (if feminine) + adjective: *unan kozh/unan gozh* 'an old (person)'; *an hini kozh/an hini gozh* 'the old person', masculine and feminine respectively. The plural of (*an*) *hini* is (*ar*) *re*, which will always be followed by lenition. This also applies to the demonstrative pronouns (Kervella 1947/1976: 277 notes it even after the masculine singulars, though this seems at most optional): *hemañ, ho(u)mañ, ar re-mañ* 'this (masculine, feminine, plural)'; *hennezh, ho(u)nnnezh, ar re-se* 'that (masculine, feminine, plural)'; *henhont/hennont, ho(u)nhont/honnont, ar re-hont* 'that (yonder) (masculine, feminine, plural)'. In the plural *-mañ/-sel/-hont* are separable and may be attached to the adjective. If there is more than one adjective, in a mutable situation, then they may all be mutated; but mutation here is obligatory or likely (depending on emphasis and pause) only in the first adjective. If there is more than one modified noun, the noun closer/closest to the adjective determines the mutation. Some examples:

*hemañ bras/vras – houmañ vras* 'this big person'; *hennezh paour – hounnezh paour* 'that poor person'; *ar re-mañ baour* 'these poor people'; *ma merc'h vihan kaer/gaer* 'my beautiful little daughter';

(d) First components in compound words tend to cause mutations under the same conditions as with adjectives. There are, however, exceptions. And here it is even more a case of giving a word list. See, for example, Kervella 1947/1976: 92–4; Desbordes 1983: 105–6; Trépos 1968: 40–2 and in the *Morphosyntax* section.

Contact lenition is caused by (there are dialectal variations here and there):

- i the possessive adjectives *da* 'your' (second person (singular)), *e* 'his' (both are also object pronouns): *belo* 'bicycle' – *da velo* 'your bicycle';

- ii several prepositions, notably *a* 'from', *da* 'to', *dindan* 'under', *diwar* 'from', *dre* 'through', *war* 'on';
- iii the plural pronominal determiner/specifier (*ar*) *re* + adjective 'the . . . (ones)', e.g. *brav* 'beautiful' – *ar re vrav* 'the beautiful ones'; *bihan* 'little' – *ar re vihan* 'the little ones';
- iv the quantifier (*an*) *holl* + noun 'all the [. . .]' (this may be overruled if *holl* is preceded by a word requiring another mutation, e.g. *he holl flijadur* 'all her pleasure' (*plijadur*); but 'regular' *tud* 'people' – *an holl dud* 'all the people';
- v certain so-called verbal particles: *a*, *na*, *ne*, e.g. *me a vo* 'I will be' (*bo*); *goulenn* 'to ask' – *me a c'houlenn* 'I ask'; *dont* '(to) come' – *eñ a deuy/zeuy warc'hoazh* 'he'll come tomorrow';
- vi the reflexive particle *en em*, e.g. *en em zibab* 'to sort things out' (*dibab* 'to choose');
- vii the gerundial particle *en ur* + verbal noun, e.g. *en ur ziskuižhañ* 'while resting' (*diskuižhañ*); *bale* 'to walk' – *en ur vale* 'while taking a walk'; not to be confused with the verbal particle and progressive aspect marker *o* (see under the mixed mutation);
- viii the optative particles *da*, *ra* + future (*da* is preceded by the 'subject'; it never comes first), e.g. *pardonñ* 'to forgive' – *Doue d'e bardono* (noun + optative particle + object pronoun + future) 'May God forgive him'; *meuliñ* 'to praise' – *ra veulimp Doue* (optative particle + 1PP future + noun) 'May we praise God';
- ix certain conjunctions: *aba* 'since', *endra* 'while', *pa* 'when, if', *pe* 'or' (the first three are followed by a verb, the fourth by a nominal element, in this context), e.g. *dont* 'to come' – *aba zeuas* 'since he came' (*deuas*); *pa zeuy* (conjunction + 3PS future) 'when/if s/he comes' (literally 'will come'); *pe velen* 'or yellow/blonde' (*melen*);
- x certain adverbs, e.g. *gwall* 'very', *hanter* 'half', *re* 'too', *seul . . . , seul . . .* 'the more . . . , the more . . .' (the first two are followed by a nominal element (*hanter* usually only plurals); the third by an adjective, and the fourth by a comparative adjective), e.g. *gwall vras* 'very big' (*bras*), *hanter voutailhadoù* 'half bottles', *re goant* 'too pretty' (*koant*), and *seul vihanoc'h*, *seul welloc'h* 'the smaller the better' (*bihanoc'h*, *gwelloc'h*);
- xi the numeral *daou/div* (masculine/feminine) 'two'. In the literary language *tri/teir* (masculine/feminine) 'three', *pevar/peder* (masculine/feminine) 'four', *nav* 'nine' are followed by the spirant mutation, but generally they are followed by lenition, but within the spirant context, i.e. of *p*, *t*, *k*, only. An example: *den* 'person' – *daou zen* 'two people';
- xii the 'verbal preposition' or defective verb *eme*: *eme* 'says/say/said', e.g. *eme Vona* 'said Mona'; *eme Ber* 'said Peter';
- xiii the interrogative *pe* 'what, which', e.g. *pe velo?* 'which bicycle?'; *deiz* 'day' – *pe zeiz eo hiziv?* 'What day is it today?';
- xiv adverbial particle: *ez-/en-/er-* (mutations here are incomplete), e.g. *ervat* 'well' (*mat* 'good').

It may be noted here that the mutation tends to be minimal if the contact word ends in *n*, *l*, *r* and the mutated word begins in *n*, *l*, *r*. There is some avoidance too of *d* becoming *z* [z], particularly in *dont* 'to come', *dleout* 'to owe, have to'. As already noted, lenition of *d* is altogether absent from *Tregerieg*.

Among exceptional cases of lenition may be noted the following:

- i the phrasal verbs: *ober vad* 'to benefit' (*mad*; literally 'to do good') and *ober van* 'to feign' (*man*; when negative may convey a lack of concern or awareness);

- ii *tra* 'thing' is masculine but mutates and causes mutations as if feminine, e.g., *daou dra vat* 'two good things' (lenition of *mat*, but not *div*). Several other nouns behave similarly;
- iii *pet*? 'how much/many?' (+ singular) and all numbers except *un* 'a(n), one', *tri* 'three', *pevar* 'four', *pemp* 'five', *nav* 'nine', *mil* 'thousand' mutate *bloaz* 'year' (masculine) to *vloaz*;
- iv *re* 'pair' (masculine) lenites the following noun, e.g. *ur re votoù* 'a pair of shoes' (*botoù*);
- v The masculine dual causes mutation, while the feminine dual does not. This has received an ingenious explanation in Denez and Urien 1980: 3–26: note masculine *daou lagad glas* 'two blue eyes' or *daoulagad c'hlas* 'blue eyes (dual)' and feminine *div skouarn vras* 'two big ears' or *divskouarn bras* 'big ears (dual)'. The dual can therefore be differentiated by a reversal of the mutations. However, this reversal does not always happen;
- vi In possessive constructions the words *ti* 'house' and *ki* 'dog', both masculine, may lenite the following noun;
- vii *pep* 'each, every', used in adverbial expressions, becomes *bep*, e.g. *bep ar mare* 'every now and then', *bep miz* 'every month';
- viii The second parts of men's names, whether they are adjectives, second components in a compound, or surnames, may be lenited. This may happen too after *Sant* 'saint', with regard to *m-/g-/gw-*. Note *Erwan ger* 'Dear Erwan' (*ker*) in correspondence;
- ix Ones difficult to explain, e.g. *Yaoubask* 'Maundy Thursday'.

Kervella 1947/1976: 84–94 and 97–102 has been drawn on here and the reader with Breton is recommended to refer to it for a comprehensive set of data.

Spirantization				Provection				The Mixed Mutation			
F	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>k</i>	F	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>kw</i>	F	<i>t</i>	
	↓	↓	↓		↑	↑	↑	↑		↑	
L	<i>f</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>c'h</i>	F	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>gw</i>	F	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>
	[v]	[h]								↓	<i>g</i>
										↓	<i>gw</i>
										↓	<i>m</i>
									L	<i>v</i>	<i>c'h</i>
											<i>w</i>
											<i>v</i>
											[h]

*Spirantization* is caused exclusively by the pronouns (possessive and direct object) *va* or *ma* 'my, me', *he* 'her', and *o* 'their, them', by the forms *am* and *em* 'me', *d'am* 'to my; to me' (where "me" is an object pronoun)', and *em* 'in my', and by the numerals *tril teir* 'three (masc./fem.)', *pevar/peder* 'four (masc./fem.)', and *nav* 'nine'. In the spoken language there is an archaic variant (Davalan I 2000: 113) with voiceless reflexes (note therefore that in the standard language we actually have spirantization plus lenition). (In the case of the numerals there is a strong tendency to have lenition instead – but only of *p*, *t*, and *k*.) As for the pronouns, there is some distinctiveness here, since *o* sounds the same as *ho* 'your, you (2PP)', which causes provection, and, though not immediately apparent as distinctive (they do not overlap), *he* sounds the same as *e* 'his, him', which causes lenition. This may, however, be distinctive, since *valma* and *o* behave differently from *he* in the spoken language: the former tend to voice *s-*, *ch-*, *f-*, and *c'h-* ([s, ʃ, f, x] > [z, ʒ, v, h] – note that [x] tends to become [h]), while the latter never voices them and as a rule devoices [z, ʒ, v] > [s, ʃ, f] (and [m, n, l] may become [hm, hn, l] – in a way, this is also reflected in *he* becoming *hec'h* before a vowel). So we may have distinctiveness here, i.e.

*e sac'h* 'his bag' with [z] as against *he sac'h* 'her bag' with [s]. Note that *k* may become [x] or, more often, [h] after *hor* 'our, us' (in the spoken language *hor* very often voices [s, ʃ, f] to [z, ʒ, v]), and some dialects have *hom* alone, which behaves like *ma*). Some examples:

*penn* 'head': *va fenn* 'my head', *he fenn* 'her head', *o fenn* 'their head(s)';  
*tad* 'father': *va zad* 'my father', *he zad* 'her father', *o zad* 'their father';  
*kalon* 'heart': *va c'halon* 'my heart', *he c'halon* 'her heart', *o c'halon* 'their heart';

Compare *e benn* 'his head', *e dad* 'his father', *e galon* 'his heart'.

*ti* 'house': *em zi* 'in my house', *park* 'field': *d'am fark* 'to my field' (the *p > f* mutation may not occur), *kavout* 'to find, meet': *d'am c'havout* 'to find/meet me';  
*tri fenn*, *pevar zad*, *peder c'halon*, *nav fenn*, etc.

*Provection* is caused by *ho* 'your, you (2PP)' and *az*, *d'az*, *ez* 'your, you (2PP – equivalents of *am*, etc. above)' (*ez* sometimes becomes *en da*). Note that *ho* becomes *hoc'h* before a vowel. Davalan I 2000: 114 notes that in the spoken language [s, ʃ, f, x] are never affected here (one doesn't expect them to be, but they often seem unstable), [z, ʒ, v] are normally [s, ʃ, f], and [m, n, l] may become [hm, hn, l]. We thus see some bridging between *Spirantization* and *Provection*. Some examples:

*bro* 'country': *ho pro* 'your country' – *ez pro* 'in your country';  
*dent* 'teeth': *ho tent* 'your teeth' – *ez tent* 'in your teeth';  
*goulenn* 'question': *ho koulenn* 'your question' – *ez koulenn* 'in your question';  
*gwelet* 'to see': *deut eo d'ho kwelout* 'he's come to see you' – *deut eo d'az kwelout* 'he's come to see you'.

Remember the distinctive character of this mutation as in such pairs as *o gwaz* 'their man/husband' – *ho kwaz* 'your man/husband', *o bro* 'their country' – *ho pro* 'your country', *o dent* 'their teeth' – *ho tent* 'your teeth'. *Ho* and *o* are homophonous.

The *Mixed Mutation* is caused by the verbal particle *e* (placed after the first element of the phrase and before the verb, when the first element is neither the subject nor the direct object (if appropriate) of the main verb, nor the verbal noun in the periphrastic conjugation), the present participle particle *o* (sometimes written *é*) (placed before the verbal noun), and the conjunction *ma* 'if, that'. Note that *e* may become *ez*, *ec'h* or possibly *e y* before a vowel: *ez eus* 'there is/are', *ez an* and *ec'h an* 'I go', and possibly *e yan* 'I go'. There is no voicing of [s, ʃ, f]. Some examples:

*goulenn* 'to ask': *ma c'houlenn* 'if/that [...] ask(s)';  
*gwelet* 'to see': *o welet* 'seeing';  
*dont* 'to come': *o tont* 'coming';  
*bevañ* 'to live/be alive': *e vev* 'live(s)';  
*meuliñ* 'to praise': *e veul* 'praises'.

Compare *ouzh o gwelet* 'seeing them', *ouzh ho kwelet* 'seeing you', demonstrating distinctiveness (the particle *o* becomes *ouzh* before an object pronoun; it becomes *oc'h* before a verbal noun beginning with a vowel).

Last of all, an oddity, most likely a case of assimilation: *dor* 'door' (fem.): *an/un nor*.

In *Tregerieg* we also have *an nen*, a ‘nasal’ mutation of *den* ‘man, person’, here used in the sense of a generalized person.

A superscript ‘L’, ‘S’, ‘P’, or ‘M’ will often be inserted to indicate an element causing a mutation.

## MORPHOSYNTAX

### Articles

Breton has indefinite (singular only) and definite articles. Nouns also occur without articles. The articles change according to the consonant or vowel which follows; thus, for the definite and the indefinite: *al* and *ul* before *l*; *an* and *un* before vowels, *n*, *d*, *t*, *h*; *ar* and *ur* otherwise. They do not change for gender or for number. They cause lenition in immediately following feminine singular and masculine human plural nouns (with some exceptions) – all other nouns beginning in *k*- will change the *k* to *c’h* (on the whole pronounced [h]). The preposition *e* ‘in’ and the definite article coalesce as *el*, *en*, and *er* (very often *e* is replaced by *e-barzh*, which becomes ‘*ba*’ (written variously, and combinable with the definite article, viz. *ban neizh* ‘in the nest’), but this is, alas, ‘not recommended to be over-used’ and in any case does not always replace *e*. Some examples:

*al loar* ‘the moon’, *al liorz* ‘the garden’; *an oabl* ‘the sky’, *an noz* ‘the night’, *an den* ‘the person’, *an ti* ‘the house’, *an hañv* ‘summer’; *ar gwaz* ‘the man’, *ar c’hi* ‘the dog’ (*ki*), *ar penn* ‘the head’.

Regarding the use of the definite article, a number of nouns used in a general sense do not attract the article (rather like English), e.g. *kêr* ‘town’: *e kêr* ‘in/to town’ (compare the more specific *er gêr* ‘at home, “in the homeplace”’, *d’ar gêr* ‘(to) home’), and the names of meals, e.g. *debriñ koan* ‘to eat supper’, *da dijuni* ‘at/for breakfast’. Regarding *kêr* (this may extend to related location terms, e.g. *bourk* ‘village’, *lann* ‘heath’ – Favereau 1997b: 21–2) in the meaning ‘town’ there are certainly exceptions, and one may note the use of the definite article in place-names, e.g. *ar Gêr Veur* (to some extent this is when *kêr* is qualified – and one may have the indefinite article, e.g. *ur gêr gozh* ‘an old town’; this also applies to names of meals). Names of countries are used without the article unless their ‘French’ form is used, e.g. *Afrika* but *an Afrik* ‘Africa’, and plurals of names of inhabitants in *-iz* as a rule are not used with the article, e.g. *Breizhiz* ‘(the) Bretons’, but in certain constructions it may be obligatory, e.g. *an holl Vreizhiz* ‘all the Bretons’ (i.e. with *holl*). It may also be left out before a comparative or superlative preceding a noun (historically less common in the latter case), e.g. *bihanañ bag* . . . ‘the smallest boat . . .’. Hemon 1975: 120 notes a tendency towards omission where a concrete noun is used in a partitive sense, e.g. *Roet en deus din mel* ‘He gave me (some) honey’, and where two nouns are linked by *ha* ‘and’, e.g. *peoc’h ha brezel* ‘peace and war’. We also have omission in proverbs and fixed expressions, e.g. *Gwelloc’h skiant evit arc’hant* ‘Better wisdom than money’, *labourat dour* ‘to work the soil’ (Hemon 1975: 120 and Favereau 1997b: 24). Note too *an aotrou Kemener* ‘Mr Kemener’, but without the article when addressing the person: *Aotrou Kemener!* ‘Mr Kemener!’ More details follow below on the obligatory omission in a definite possession, e.g. *dour ar mor* ‘the water of the sea’, cf. *an dour-mor* ‘the sea water’ (Favereau 1997b: 28) (also names of months, e.g. *miz C’hwevrer* ‘February’, doubtless a possessive construction, viz. ‘the month of February’). Overall, except where omission is obligatory, some variation will be noted (and the description here is very partial).

The indefinite article is left out in expressions of time involving *bloaz* 'year' and *miz* 'month', e.g. *bloaz yaouankoc'h* 'a year younger', as well as in a good number of fixed expressions. It is also absent in the plural/collective, which in itself conveys a sense of partitiveness, though after a negative the noun may be preceded by the preposition *a<sup>L</sup>* 'of': *Debriñ a ran krampouezh* 'I eat crêpes' – *Ne zebran ket a grampouezh* 'I don't eat crêpes' (this may even occur with negative existential 'to be' and a few presentative verbs: *n'eus ket a dud o tebriñ krampouezh* 'there aren't any people eating crêpes', *ne deu ket a douristed da welet an iliz* 'no tourists come to see the church' (Hewitt 2002: 23)).

The articles may be used before nouns felt to be plurals and denoting pairs (this is very common) or indefinite quantities (this is rather rare): *ul lunedoù* 'a pair of spectacles', *ur stalaf(i)où* 'a pair of shutters', *An dud a oa eno!* 'There were tons of people there!' (lit. 'The people there were there!').

## Nouns

### General

There are two genders (masculine and feminine) and, basically, two numbers (singular and plural), reflecting singular and plural forms in the verb. However, there are singulatives, to emphasize one item of something which is more often mass/collective, e.g. *logod* 'mice' – *ul logodenn* 'a mouse', *pour* 'leeks' – *ur bourenn* 'a leek'. Note that the singulatives are feminine and that the nouns from which they derive normally count as plural for agreement, e.g. *al logod ne gavont ket ar fourmaj* 'the mice, they don't find the cheese' (*gavont/kavont* = 3PP present of *kavout* 'to find'). And there are also non-count nouns, e.g. *bara* 'bread', i.e. things you don't normally count, which count as singular for verbal agreement. On top of this, there are plurals proper, generalizing plurals, and duals, which count as plurals for verbal agreement when it arises.

The plural is formed by endings, e.g. *penn* 'head' – *pennoù* 'heads', internal change + endings, e.g. *yalc'h* 'purse' – *yilc'hier* 'purses', internal change only, e.g. *dañvad* 'sheep' – *deñved* 'sheep (plural)' (the internal change reflects a lost ending), and suppletives, e.g. *den* 'person' – *tud* 'people, family, parents'. Sometimes there are multiple plurals, thus *park* 'field', with *parkoù* and *parkeier* – the latter may be seen as a 'generalizing plural', but the situation may be more complex. The dual is somewhat transparent, namely the numeral for 'two' prefixed to (and sometimes blended with) the noun, thus masculine *daouarn* 'hands' from *dorn* 'hand' and feminine *divskoaz* 'shoulders' from *skoaz* 'shoulder'. Here are some examples:

- a with an ending: *an tra/où*, *ar poan/ioù*, *ar gwazh/ioù* ('things, pains, streams');
- b ending plus internal vowel change: *ar yilc'hier* (*ar yalc'h*), *ar filzier* (*ar falz*), *ar gerent* (*kerent*) (*ar c'har* (*kar*)), *ar vibien* (*mibien*) (*ar mab*), *ar reier* (*ar roc'h*), *ar gwenneien* (*ar gwenneg*), *an inizi* (*an enez*; the plural of *enezenn* 'island' is *enezennoù*) ('purses, sickles, relations, sons, rocks, sous/'coppers', islands');
- c internal only: *an elerc'h* (*an alarc'h*), *ar venec'h* (*ar manac'h*), *an eskern* (*an askorn*), *an dent* (*an dant*), *an deñved* (*an dañvad*), *ar c'hezeg* (*kezeg*) (*ar gazez* (*kazeg*)) ('swans, monks, bones, teeth, sheep, mares' – *kezeg* is probably more properly a generic plural, 'horses', of *marc'h* 'horse'; in the meaning 'mares' there are several other forms);
- d 'oddities': *an aotro(u)nez* (*an aotrou*), *an tiez* (north) or *an tier* (south) (*an ti*), *al laeron* (*al laer*), *ar gwrazez* (*gwreg* = *ar wreg*), and the suppletives *ar chas* (*ki* = *ar c'hi*), *tud* = *an dud* (*an den*) ('gentlemen, houses, thieves, women, dogs, people').

Note that the internal-only, parisyllabic, plurals involve the change of an *a* or *o* to *e*. There is something similar where the ending, *-ien*, *-ier*, *-e(z)*, *-i*, *-ent*, is maintained (the *-i* [j] of the first two is required, though the real ending is *-en* (sometimes *-(i)on*), *-er*). The non-suppletive ‘oddities’ themselves might well come under nouns with an ending and an internal vowel change. Note that *-c’h* and *-g* are likely to drop. As for nouns with an ending only, there are a good number of endings and it may be best to learn them as they are encountered, but the most common ones are *-(i)où*, *-ien*, *-ed*. The endings *-ien* and *-ed* are typical of animates, the former of masculines and the latter of both masculines and feminines, e.g. *kelenner* ‘teacher’ – *kelennerien* ‘teachers’, *paotr* ‘boy’ – *paotred* ‘boys’, *kelennerez* ‘teacher (feminine)’ – *kelennerezed* ‘teachers (feminine)’ – note that the ‘ending’ *-ezed* is so common that it has become a feminine animate plural ending itself, e.g. *itron* ‘lady, madame’ – *itronezed*, and by back formation a singular may come to end in *-ez*, e.g. *maeron* ‘godmother’ with plural *maeronezed*, which has given new or optional singular *maeronez*.

The ending *-(i)où* is extremely common; it is not used for animates, except for a very few masculines, e.g. *tad* ‘father’ – *tadoù*, which escape the usual *lenition* of masculine animate plurals. The question which then arises is: when is *-i* inserted? The simplest response is that this is likely to occur when the final sound of the singular is a vowel, *l*, *r*, *n*, or *z* – this is identical with *-ien* and *-ier*, though the *-i* here is absorbed when the singular ends in *-i*, e.g. *an ti* ‘house’, *an tier*. But there are exceptions, e.g. *ur mail* – *mailoù* ‘email(s)’, and there may be variation. The ending *-ioù* is also common when the noun ends in *-nt* or *-d*; this is not obligatory, but if it does apply it causes palatalization, which may be reflected in the spelling: *hent* ‘road’ – *hentoù* or *henchoù* (or *heñchoù*), *rod* ‘wheel’ – *rodoù* or *rojoù*. This may be observed also in nouns in *-z*, e.g. *kroaz* ‘cross’ – *kroazioù* or *kroajoù*. The ending *-où* is attached to the diminutive suffix *-ig*, thus *-igoù*, irrespective of the plural of the source noun, thus *paotr* ‘boy, lad’ – *paotred*: *paotrig* – *paotredigoù*. The ending *-ed* is also found in a few inanimates, e.g. *real* ‘a real’ (unit of currency) – *realed*, *dornerez* ‘threshing machine’ – *dornerezed* (characteristic of the many machine names in *-ez*), and a few individual nouns, e.g. *biz* ‘finger’ – *bizied*. The ending *-ien* (also found in the form *-(i)on*, *-(i)an*) is typical of agentive nouns in *-er* and *-our*, e.g. *kemener* ‘tailor’ – *kemenerien*, *marc’hadour* ‘merchant’ – *marc’hadourien*, but note also *kalvez* ‘carpenter’ – *kilvizien* (note too the vowel alternation), *mael* ‘servant’ – *mevelien*, *mab* ‘son’ – *mibien*, and the unusual but standard *laer* ‘thief’ – *laeron*, *Saoz* ‘Englishman’ – *Saozon*, and, leaving animates, *kraf* ‘stitch’ – *krefen*, among a few others. Some adjectives used as nouns also attract this ending: *paour* ‘poor’ – *ar beorien* ‘the poor’. The ending *-i* (remember that it is often accompanied by alternation of the immediately preceding vowel) affects nouns ending in *-(i)ad* and *-ed*, e.g. *houad* ‘duck’ – *houldi*, nouns in *-el(l)*, e.g. *kastell* ‘castle’ – *kastilli* (also at least the plural forms *kestell* and *kastelloù*), *ezel* ‘member’ – *izili*. The form *-idi* very often becomes *-iz*, especially in names of groups of inhabitants, e.g. *Tregeriad* ‘Treger person’ – *Tregeriz*, *Breizhad* ‘Breton’ – *Breizhiz*.

The partitive in Breton is conveyed by the noun on its own, thus *bara* ‘some bread’, *kelennerien* ‘(some) teachers’ (it may be preceded by *a<sup>L</sup>* ‘of’ after a negative verb).

For a detailed treatment of the Breton plural there is no better source than Trépos 1957 (or a more concise but very useful presentation in Trépos 1968: 68–70).

### *Singulatives and collectives*

Collectives abound in Breton and are applied to anything which we cannot count at first sight, e.g. clouds, stars, trees, . . . and mice. So we have: *koumoul*, *stered*, *gwez*, *logod* ‘clouds, stars, trees, mice’; with the definite article *ar c’houmoul*, *ar stered*, *ar gwez*, *al*

*logod* (note that they behave as if masculine). To indicate ‘one’ we add *-enn*, thus obtaining the *singulative*: *ur goumoulenn*, *ur steredenn*, *ur wezenn*, *ul logodenn*. These are feminine singulars. The collectives count as plurals: *Al logod n’emaint ket en ti* ‘The mice aren’t in the house’ (revealed by the 3PP form of the verb, *emaint*).

It is possible even to pluralize the singulatives, by adding *-où* to them, thus: *deil* ‘leaves’ (collective) – *delienn* ‘leaf’ – *deliennoù* ‘leaves’ (individualized) – *deil* also has a plural *delioù*. To some extent this is confined to particular words, and may be subject to dialectal variation, but it is the sort of potential within the language which may be exploited. Similar are *ster* ‘stars’ (collective) – *stered* ‘stars’ – *steredenn* ‘star’ – *steredennoù* ‘stars’ (individualized) and *bleuñv* ‘flowers’ (collective) – *bleunioù* ‘flowers’ – *bleunienn* or *bleuñvenn* ‘flower’ – *bleuniennnoù* ‘flowers’ (individualized). Slightly different, note, for instance, *enez* ‘island’, used in place-names, e.g. *Enez-Vriad* ‘Bréhat’, but *enezenn* ‘island’, plural *enezennnoù*, and *pesk* ‘fish’, plural *pesked*, but another singular, *peskedenn*, derived from *pesked*.

### Mass nouns

Breton has mass, non-count nouns: *Dour zo* ‘There’s some water.’ In this use the word *dour* is a mass noun and singular. In *un dour zo amañ*, with the indefinite article, the sense may be ‘there’s a stream here’. Other examples are *bara* ‘bread’, *mel* ‘honey’, and *te* ‘tea’. It can be possible to derive forms in *-enn* from these, e.g. *dourenn* ‘liquid’, *plouzenn* ‘(piece of) straw’ (from *plouz* ‘straw’), *geotenn* ‘blade of grass’ (from *geot* ‘grass’) – these too are singulatives and feminine, and may have plurals, e.g. *geotennoù* ‘blades of grass’. Note also the effect of stress displacement on *-où* (the graphy *où* with a grave accent may indicate that it may break under stress to *aou*): *louzoù* ‘herbs (medicinal, “weeds”)’ – *louzaouenn* ‘herb, weed’ (but there is no change if this latter word is given its own plural and the stress moves: *louzaouennnoù*). Such networks can become quite complex, e.g. *ke(he)l* ‘information’, with a collective or plural *keloù* ‘news, “piece of news”’, and its own plural *keleier* ‘items of news’, and the singulative *kelaouenn* ‘item of news’ or, more often now, ‘magazine’!

A few rather short nouns may acquire the singulative suffix, the form derived being somehow more concrete, e.g. *dir* ‘steel’ (masculine) – *direnn* ‘dagger’ (feminine), *lod* ‘part, share’ (masculine) – *lodenn* ‘part, share’ (feminine), and *enez* ‘island’ (see the preceding section) – *enezenn* ‘island’ (both feminine). The source form may become specialized, thus *lod* may acquire the indefinite sense ‘some’, ‘others’. The singulative suffix may also be added to plurals, with the result that the original singular may fade: *pesk* ‘fish’, plural *pesked*, new ‘singular’ *peskedenn*. This applies particularly to things or beings associated with groups; another example is *logod* ‘mice’, ‘singular’ *logodenn*, with the original singular lost.

### The dual

This category is largely peculiar to certain parts of the body and refers to ‘pairs’. It has masculine (*daou-*) and feminine (*div-*) forms (thus it is a compound form, using the numeral ‘two’) – there may be some contraction. Here are some examples (based on Favereau 1997b: 54–7): first masculines, uncontracted and contracted, then feminines, uncontracted and contracted (there is some variation in the spelling of certain forms):

<i>lagad</i> – <i>daoulagad</i> ‘eyes’	–	<i>ilin</i> – <i>daouilin</i> ‘elbows’
<i>dorn</i> – <i>daouarn</i> ‘hands’	–	<i>glin</i> – <i>daoulin</i> ‘knees’
<i>askell</i> – <i>divaskell</i> ‘wings’	–	<i>brec’h</i> – <i>di(v)vrec’h</i> ‘arms’
<i>bronn</i> – <i>di(v)vrinn</i> ‘breasts’	–	<i>jod/boc’h</i> – <i>divjod/divoc’h</i> ‘cheeks’



<i>froen</i> – <i>divfroen</i> ‘nostrils’	–	<i>kazel</i> – <i>divgazel</i> ‘armpits’
<i>morzhed</i> – <i>divorzhed</i> ‘thighs’	–	<i>pognez</i> – <i>divbognez</i> ‘wrists’
<i>skoaz</i> – <i>divskoaz</i> ‘shoulders’	–	<i>skouarn</i> – <i>di(v)skouarn</i> ‘ears’
<i>gar</i> – <i>divhar/divesker</i> ‘legs’ <sup>1</sup>		

Note that *daou zorn* is possible, but then these two hands no longer have to belong to the same body (of course, they may do, with, for example, an expressive or emphatic nuance) – the same goes for *div c’har* ‘two legs’ (these are often with possessives – think of English ‘Just look at your two poor hands!’). From this it follows that all these nouns also have plurals, e.g. *lagadoù* ‘(some) eyes’, *dornioù* ‘(some) hands’, etc. (and the duals may have their own plurals: *daoulinoù* – referring, e.g. to people each on his/her knees). ‘Feet’ is among the more frequently encountered ‘duals’ which seem to offer options: *troad* ‘foot’, dual or plural *treid* (rather more common) and *daoudraod*. As noted, masculine duals (but not feminines) as a rule lenite appropriate adjectives, e.g. *daoulagad c’hlas* ‘blue eyes’, cf. *diskoaz bras* ‘big shoulders’. Although this last feature might be seen as ‘standard’, exceptions are often encountered.

It might be added that forms like *botoù* ‘(a pair of) shoes’, *loeroù* ‘(a pair of) stockings/socks’ might also be seen as duals. To talk of several pairs, there are *boteier*, *loerieer*, in form generalizing plurals. To refer to a single shoe or stocking there are *botez* and *loer*. This ending interacts with singulatives, e.g. *gwalenn* ‘ring’ – *gwalennoù* ‘rings’ or, generalizing, *gwalinier*. And if there is an *r* already in the base noun, the ending may (though it does not have to) take the form *-iel*, e.g. *korn* ‘horn’ – *kerniel* (or *kernier*) – this ending is not restricted to duals: *forn* ‘oven’ – *ferniel* (*fernier*).

### Word-formation in nouns

Breton word-formation may first be illustrated by reference to a couple of suffixes: *-(i)ad* marks content (sometimes duration): *dorn* ‘hand’ → *dornad* ‘handful’, pl. *-où*. It is rather like French suffix *-ée*. Also like *-ée* is the suffix *-vezh*, which indicates duration (very often it comes after the indefinite article or a numeral): *deiz* ‘day’ → *devezh* ‘day’, *sul* ‘Sunday’ → *sulvezh* ‘Sunday’, and *bloaz* ‘year’ → *bloavezh* ‘year’ – ‘Happy New Year!’ = *Bloavezh mat!* Thus *Noz vat!* is often ‘goodbye’ in the evening, while *Nozvezh vat!* may convey the hope you have a good night.<sup>2</sup> The first suffix may be added to the second, in which case the noun tends to be followed with what the ‘day’ is full of, e.g. *un devezhiad labour* ‘a day of work’, *un nozvezhiad karantez* ‘a night of love’! A nice greeting for the festive season is: *Bloavezh mat ha ti dilogod!* ‘A Happy New Year and a house without mice!’

First, here are a few other suffixes (fully understanding these requires use of a dictionary to identify the root) (some data from Favereau 1997b: 73–82, including prefixes):

- adeg* (feminine; collective/lasting action): *c’hoarzhadeg* ‘bouts of laughter’, *lazhadeg* ‘massacre’;
- adenn* (feminine; individual/punctual action): *ober un neuñviadenn* ‘to go for a swim on one’s own’;
- adur* (masculine; concrete result): *gwalc’hadur* ‘washing’; *plijadur* ‘pleasure’ is the sole feminine;
- aj* (borrowing): *beaj* ‘journey (feminine)’, *bugaleaj* ‘childhood (masculine)’;
- amant* (borrowing): *gwiskamant* ‘article of clothing’, *batimant* ‘building; ship’;
- an* (animates): *amprevan* ‘insect’, *korrgan* ‘elf’ (often with diminutive *-ig* incorporated);

-*añs* (feminine; abstract borrowings): *demeurañs* ‘abode’;  
 -*ant* (mainly adjectives): *badeziant* ‘baptism’;  
 -*ded* (feminine; deadjectival): *eürusted* ‘happiness’;  
 -*der* (masculine; deadjectival, more common than -*ded*): *uhelder* ‘height’;  
 -*eg* (feminine; place planted with X): *balaneg* ‘expanse of broom’; also *brezhoneg* ‘Breton’, *enezeg* ‘archipelago’, inter alia;  
 -*egezh* (feminine; abstraction): *anaoudegezh* ‘acquaintance’, *gouiziegezh* ‘knowledge’;  
 -*elezh* (feminine; abstractions from adjectives in -*el*): *santelezh* ‘holiness’;  
 -*ell* (mainly masculine; borrowings; objects): *kontell* ‘knife’, *kastell* ‘castle’;  
 -*enn* (feminine; singulative): *pizenn* ‘pea’; exceptions include *plankenn* ‘plank’, *tevenn* ‘dune’;  
 -*entez* (mainly deadjectival): *karantez* ‘love’, *furenteze* ‘wisdom’;  
 -*er* (masculine; agent): *labourer* ‘worker’;  
 -*erell* (feminine; from -*ell*; instrument): *gwinterell* ‘spring’;  
 -*erezh* (masculine; from -*er*; activity): *labourerezh-douar* ‘agriculture’;  
 -*ez* (feminine – female): *kemenerezh* ‘seamstress, couturière’;  
 -*ez(h)* (feminine; deadjectival; quality): *dondez* ‘depth’, *furnezh* ‘wisdom’;  
 -*idigezh* (feminine; mainly abstract and literary): *laouenidigezh* ‘gaiety’, *pinvidigezh* ‘wealth’;  
 -*igell* (feminine; denominal/deverbal objects): *karrigell* ‘wheelbarrow’;  
 -*ijenn* (feminine; deadjectival): *teñvalijenn* ‘darkness’  
 -*iri* (feminine; abstract): *koantiri* ‘prettiness’;  
 -*iz* (feminine; close to -*iri*): *koantiz* ‘prettiness’, *yaouankiz* ‘youth’;  
 -*nezh*: (feminine): *furnezh* ‘wisdom’;  
 -*ni* (feminine): *kozñni* ‘old age’;  
 -*od* (feminine; also -*id*; planted area): *onnod* ‘grove of ash-trees’;  
 -*oni* (feminine; abstract): *kasoni* ‘hatred’;  
 -*oniezh* (feminine; abstract; from -*oni*): *steredoniezh* ‘astronomy’;  
 -*or* (feminine; state): *sec’hor* ‘drought’;  
 -*our* (masculine; agent, like -*er*): *micherour* ‘worker’, *marc’hadour* ‘merchant’;  
 -*ourezh*: (feminine – may be masculine; from -*our*): *marc’hadourezh* ‘merchandise’;  
 -*ouriezh* (feminine; intellectual activity): *prederouriezh* ‘philosophy’;  
 -*va* (masculine; related to *ma*; also -*van*): *c’hoariva* ‘theatre’.

Secondly, prefixes include (note lenition in the first four sets of examples):

*ar-* (nearby): *argoad* ‘area close to woodland’, *arvor* ‘coastal area’;  
*em-* (reflexive/reciprocal): *emgann* ‘battle’, *emvod* ‘reunion, meeting’;  
*gour-* (‘super’) *gourmarc’had* or *gourvarc’had* ‘supermarket’ (sometimes mixed up with  
*gou-* ‘sub-’ *gougomz* ‘to murmur’);  
*ken-* (co-, various spellings): *kenvreuriezh* ‘fraternity’, *kendalc’h* ‘congress’;  
*peur-* (complete): *peurrest* ‘remains’;  
*peus-* (‘-ish’): *peusfollentez* ‘semi-insanity’;  
*rag-* (‘pre-’): *ragistor* ‘prehistory’.

### Compound nouns

Useful to bear in mind here is how the plural is formed. In *pod-houarn* ‘iron pot’ (note that *houarn* ‘iron’ is adjective-like) the plural is *podoù-houarn*; in *tour-tan* ‘lighthouse (lit. “tower-fire”)’ the composition seems to have faded and the plural most often *tour-tanioù*

– the same may go for *pod-houarn* as the position is flexible. In *rod-karr* ‘cartwheel’ there may be *rodoù-karr* or *rodoù-kirri* (double plural), the latter focusing equally on the idea of ‘carts’. One also notes *rodoù-karr bihan* ‘little cartwheels’ and *rodoù karr bihan* ‘wheels on a little cart’ (Trépos 1957: 78–81).

### *The diminutive*

The most common, and only productive, diminutive suffix is *-ig*: *paotr* ‘boy’ – *paotrig* ‘little boy’. Most interesting is that for the plural both the base noun and the suffix pluralize: *ar baotredigoù* ‘the little boys’ (*ar baotred* ‘the boys’). Occasionally this doesn’t happen, and is standard in a few words, e.g. *ur madig* ‘a sweet’ – *madigoù* ‘sweets’. The plural form of the suffix is always *-où*.

### *Possession*

Focus here is first on two constructions: (1) *the girl’s hat*, i.e. *the hat of the girl*; (2) *a girl’s hat* (i.e. either *a* or *the hat of a girl*).

For the first, switch *the girl’s hat* round into *the hat of the girl* and remove the first *the* and the preposition *of*. This construction is characterized by both possessed and possessor being definite, so it covers *Nolwenn’s hat* too. If ‘hat’ is *tog* and ‘the girl’ is *ar verc’h*, ‘the girl’s hat’ will be *tog ar verc’h*. Note too: *togoù pep merc’h* ‘each girl’s hats’, *bagoù kalz tud* ‘many people’s boats’, *levr ma mamm* ‘my mother’s book’, *kazetenn houmañ* ‘this woman’s newspaper’, *sal-debriñ o hini* ‘their [e.g. house’s] dining room’ (roughly ‘the dining room of theirs/their one’s’, the reference of ‘theirs’ presumably clarified from the context), thus using possessors defined by various quantifiers, possessives, and pronouns. And *Nolwenn’s hat* will be *tog Nolwenn*. Trépos 1957: 78 gives a nice example of multiple possession (orthography adapted): *dorioù bras kastell kaer merc’h henañ roue kozh Bro-Spagn* ‘The great doors of the beautiful castle of the eldest daughter of the old king of Spain (lit. “doors big castle beautiful daughter eldest king old Spain”)’.

As for the second (*a girl’s hat*), it may be as if *a girl’s* (note how the indefinite article goes with the ‘possessor’) is an adjective (it is used in an indefinite or generic sense), as in *a houseboat*; Breton will tend to tack the noun on, e.g. *un tog merc’h*; in the second reading, if there is something definite about ‘hat’, i.e. it’s a specific one, then *tog ur merc’h* is to be used. There is no reason why this cannot be *an tog merc’h* ‘the girl’s hat’ (= ‘the hat of a girl’, as in *un tog merc’h*) either – quite clear in Breton, but in English care is needed with the intonation.<sup>3</sup> Using nouns as adjectives is very widespread in Breton. Note how English creates a compound noun; Breton may do this too, e.g. *ur rod-karr* ‘a cartwheel’ (or ‘a car wheel’) – the use of the hyphen here may reflect a need to link the two components and avoid ambiguity, e.g. *rod-karr Yann* ‘Yann’s cartwheel’ – *rod karr Yann* ‘The wheel of Yann’s cart’ – a slight pause in the appropriate place removes the ambiguity in the spoken language. Note too various other types of indefinite: *an ti-laezh* ‘the dairy’ (lit. ‘the house-milk’), *ur vag-pesketa* ‘a fishing boat’ (lit. ‘a boat-fishing’ – *pesketa* is a verbal noun, identical to the ‘infinitive’), *un tour-tan* ‘a lighthouse’ (lit. ‘a tower-fire’). The first component is the one which will reflect number, e.g. *ar rodoù-karr* ‘the cartwheels’; but occasionally ‘incorrect’ (but encountered, even if not approved) forms occur, e.g. *an tour-tanioù* instead of *an tourioù-tan* ‘the lighthouses’. The second component may even be pluralized as well as the first; in such a case attention is balanced over both components, e.g. *ar rodoù-kirri*. Trépos 1957: 79 suggests that *rodoù-karr* has the singular *ur rod-karr*, while *rodoù-kirri* has the singular *rod ur c’harr*. Attributive adjectives follow the group, e.g. *un tour-tan uhel* ‘a high lighthouse’.

Moving on, possessive constructions also very often use a preposition before the

possessor. Drawing on Trépos 1957: 81–3, note that in *ur rod karr*, the component *karr* is subordinate and indefinite; it simply qualifies slightly the meaning of *rod*. If the possessor is definite, then a preposition may be appropriate: *ur rod eus e garr* ‘a wheel of his cart’ (lit. ‘a wheel from his cart’). There are also quite a few expressions using *a* ‘of’: *tud a vor* ‘seafolk’, *ur plac’h a spered* ‘an intelligent girl’ (‘a girl of intelligence’), *ur marc’h a zen* ‘a person as strong as a horse’ (‘a horse of [a] man’). In a group such as *ur werennad vat a win* ‘a good glass of wine’ rather than the equally correct *ur werennad-win vat*, the separating-out of the noun *gwin* and use of a preposition simplifies or analyses what is otherwise quite a compact and complex sequence. And there would be also, with a quite different meaning, conveyed by order and mutation, *ur werennad a win mat* ‘a glass of good wine’! When something has several identical or similar items, the preposition *eus* ‘from, out of’ may convey selection: *dorioù eus an ti* ‘doors of the house’, *un nor eus an ti* ‘a door of the house’, but not *an nor eus an ti* ‘the door of the house’ (note how indefiniteness here stretches also to numerals other than ‘one’: *div zor eus an ti* ‘two doors of the house’ – ‘the door’ suggests only one, or perhaps a special, particular door; *an nor eus an ti* might be seen as reflecting *Gwenedeg*, which would have *an nor ag an ti* (*ag* = *a* + vowel (*a* instead of *eus*) in *Gwenedeg*)). Note similarly: *an hanter eus an tud* ‘the half of the people’, *an hini yaouankañ eus ar vevelien* ‘the youngest of the servants’ – thus in the cases of parts or fractions and pronouns. Normally it is possible to use *eus*, but with certain nouns another preposition may be necessary; thus *ar maez*, *ar maezioù* ‘countryside’ requires *diwar*: *un den diwar ar maez* ‘a person from the countryside’. The preceding examples concern inanimates; with animates it is usually the preposition *da* which is used, e.g. *ur verc’h da Yann* ‘a daughter of Yann’s’, *un askell d’al labous* ‘one of the bird’s wings’, *mab da Fañch eo* ‘He’s Fañch’s son’ (note the absence of an article before *mab*, here a predicate associated with the copula *eo*).

Breton has other very common and fascinating ways of conveying possession, e.g. *Mari zo yen he zreid* ‘Mari’s feet are cold’, lit. ‘Mari is cold her feet’ – the alternatives *Treid Mari zo yen* and *Yen eo treid Mari* are both grammatically fine. In the first example *Mari* may be seen as the focus or as slightly brought into relief.

## Adjectives

### General

Adjectives have no endings reflecting gender or number, though one often notes *kaezh* – plural *keizh* ‘poor’, e.g. *tud keizh* ‘poor folk’ (it is actually a noun, meaning ‘humble, unfortunate person’). Adjectives almost always follow the noun – the few which may precede may be pejorative or augmentative, e.g. *ur c’hozh ti* ‘a wretched house’ (*kozh* otherwise = ‘old’; note *ur gozh dor gozh* ‘a dilapidated old door’); note too *ur gwir darv-mor* ‘a real sea-wolf’ (*gwir* ‘true’ preposed = ‘veritable’; when it causes lenition, or lenites itself, is a complex issue). There are some nouns which may be prefixed and have an augmentative sense, e.g. *pezh*, *pikol*, *mell*: *pezhioù traoù* ‘big things’, *ur mell ti* ‘a large house’, *ur pezh pikol tour* ‘a great big tower’ – note they will take a plural ending if appropriate and may be combined, e.g. *ur mell pezh gwerennad sistr fresk* ‘a great big glass of cool cider’. One may create feminine nouns from adjectives, e.g. *foll* ‘mad’ – *ur follez* ‘a mad woman’, but only *dougerez*, feminine form of the noun *douger*, may be used as an attributive adjective: *ur vaouez dougerez* ‘a pregnant woman’ (*dougen* ‘to carry, bear’) (Favereau 1997b: 83). We also find set expressions, sometimes with lenition, e.g. *e berr gomzoù* ‘in a few words’ (*komz* ‘word’).

However, adjectives undergo lenition, within certain constraints, after singular

feminine nouns and plural masculine human nouns. See above, under *Mutations*. First, here are some examples of forms:

simple	diminutive	'as X as' ken...ha(g)	comparative	superlative	'how/what a!'
<i>bras</i>	<i>brazik</i>	<i>bras</i> ( <i>kement ha</i> )	<i>brasoc'h</i>	( <i>ar</i> ) <i>brasañ</i>	<i>brasat</i>
<i>pizh</i>	<i>pizhik</i>	<i>pizh</i>	<i>pishoc'h</i>	( <i>ar</i> ) <i>pishañ</i>	<i>pishat</i>
<i>gleb</i>	<i>glebik</i>	<i>gleb</i>	<i>glepoc'h</i>	( <i>ar</i> ) <i>glepañ</i>	<i>glepat</i>
<i>mat</i>	<i>madik</i>	( <i>ken</i> ) <i>koulz ha</i>	<i>gwell(oc'h)</i>	( <i>ar</i> ) <i>gwellañ</i>	<i>gwellat</i>
<i>drouk/fall</i>	<i>drougik/fallik</i>	<i>ken gwazh ha</i>	<i>gwashoc'h/gwazh</i>	( <i>ar</i> ) <i>gwashañ</i>	<i>gwashat</i>
<i>hir/pell</i>	<i>hirik/</i> <i>pellik</i>	<i>keit ha</i> ( <i>ken hir/pell ha</i> )	<i>hiroc'h/pelloc'h</i>	( <i>an</i> ) <i>hirañ/</i> ( <i>ar</i> ) <i>pellañ</i>	<i>hirat/</i> <i>pellat</i>
<i>meur a</i> <i>kalz (a)</i>	<i>kalzik</i>	<i>kement ha</i>	<i>muioc'h (a)</i>	( <i>ar</i> ) <i>muiañ</i>	—
<i>kent</i>	—	<i>kerkent</i>	<i>kentoc'h</i>	( <i>ar</i> ) <i>c'hentañ</i>	—
<i>diwezh</i>	—	—	—	( <i>an</i> ) <i>diwezhañ</i>	<i>diwezhat</i>

The first three adjectives are regular; the meanings are 'big, precise, wet, good, bad/evil, long/far'. The last four are *meur a* + singular 'several', *kalz* 'much, many', *kent* 'before, as soon as, rather/sooner, (the) first', and *diwezh* 'end, (the) last'. *Mat*, *hir*, and *fall* may have regular forms. The 'diminutives' tend to become adverbs.

*Gradation: comparative, superlative, exclamative, equative*

Comparatives and superlatives are formed via the suffixes *-oc'h* and *-añ*, which cause provection (extended by analogy to the comparative from the superlative, and perhaps from the exclamative), e.g. *gleb* 'wet' – *glepoc'h* 'wetter' – *glepañ* 'wettest', *skuizh* 'tired' – *skuishoc'h* 'more tired' – *skuishañ* 'most tired' – this is not always reflected in the orthography, e.g. with *l, n, r*: *don* 'deep' – *donoc'h* 'deeper' instead of *donnoc'h*; also *hiroc'h* above, alongside *berr* short' – *berroc'h* (*e* usually remains long here). Note how in monosyllabic adjectives, a long vowel in the positive will shorten before the proected consonant, something not always noted in spelling, e.g. *bras* 'big' – *brasoc'h* 'bigger' – *brasañ* 'biggest'. Note the diminutive suffix, e.g. on the comparative: *pelloc'hig* 'a little bit further'. With the past participle and recent borrowings one may form the comparative similarly, e.g. *karetoc'h* 'more beloved', *difisiloc'h* 'more difficult', but it is more common to find the positive here, preceded by *muioc'h* 'more': *muioc'h karet*, *muioc'h difisil*. To convey 'less X than' see the equative below; possible is *nebeutoc'h* 'less' + positive, but this is considered incorrect.

The comparative will normally follow the qualified noun, and lenite as appropriate; but it may also precede, in which case the article will be omitted and there is no lenition: *gwennoc'h bara* 'whiter bread'; and note the quantitative/adverbial: *muioc'h a vara* or *muioc'h bara* 'more bread'. Here are a few examples of various constructions involving the comparative: *klañvoc'h-klañv* or *klañvoc'h-klañvañ* 'more and more ill' (perhaps the latter, with the superlative as second component, is becoming more common); *seul vuanoc'h*, *seul well* 'the quicker the better', *seul vui e labour*, *seul vui e c'hounez* 'the more he works, the more he earns' (note lenition); *kalz/pell keroc'h* 'much/far more expensive'.

Comparatives are followed by  *eget* 'than' (mainly Leon) or, more often these days,

*evit* 'for, than'. These two words, prepositions, will be followed by a noun phrase or, if a clause follows, by *ma* (or *a*) + verb, e.g. *koshoc'h eget/evit ma c'hoar* 'older than my sister', *abretoc'h evit/evit ma krede* 'sooner than (s)he believed'.

The superlative may precede the qualified noun, in which case the definite article is absent; these are often set expressions: *brasañ plijadur am eus-me bet* 'The greatest pleasure I've had'; *gwashañ tud* 'the worst people', but *ar c'hentañ gwech* 'the first time' – note that there is no reflection of the 'expected' lenition here, only automatic changes occasioned by elements preceding the superlative, e.g. *k* must become *c'h* after an article (as if *gwech* were not feminine singular). If the definite article is there, then the superlative most often follows the qualified noun and lenition will occur as expected, e.g. *ar vag vihanañ* 'the smallest boat' (*bag* is feminine, modified by *bihanañ*). If a superlative precedes a feminine singular or a masculine plural human noun, then lenition as a rule does not take place, but may, and indeed will if a noun is understood, e.g. *ar gentañ (hini)* 'the first (one)', with feminine singular reference; and note where a numeral is present: *an div gaerañ plac'h* 'the two most beautiful girls' (after a numeral the noun remains in the singular; but no lenition of the noun) (Favereau 1997b: 91). Past participles may form the superlative, as they form the comparative, and diminutives are possible, e.g. *gwellikañ* 'roughly the best'. Constructions to note include: *an abretañ ('r) gwellañ* 'the sooner the better; as soon as possible'; *gwashañ ma c'hall* 'the worst possible'; *gwellikañ ma c'hallen* 'the best I could manage'; *en o c'haerañ* 'in their finest clothes ("at their most beautiful")'; *diouzh e wellañ* 'as best he could ("from his best")'; *ar peurluviañ* 'the majority, most part'; *peurliesañ* 'most often, as a rule' – note how these shade over into adverbs (an adjective in itself may function as an adverb). And the superlative may convey an exclamation, e.g. *Gwellañ amzer!* 'What fine weather!' (Favereau 1997b: 92–3).

But adjectives may also form an exclamative, in *-at*, e.g. *Kaerat deiz!* 'What a beautiful day', which also causes provection. More often (the synthetic form lingers in Goueloù and Treger) this is done analytically, e.g. *Nag un deiz kaer!* or, literally 'How beautiful is the day!', *Pegen kaer eo an deiz!*; *Na bras eo an nor!* 'How big the door is!' (even *Na pegen bras eo an nor!*). If the exclamation is based on a noun, then *pebez* or *peseurt* is used, e.g. *Pebez* *belo!* 'What a bike!', *Peseurt* *trouz!* 'What a din!'

Briefly returning to the superlative, the absolute superlative may be conveyed by the attachment of various elements to the positive, e.g. *-meurbet*, *-tre*, *-kenañ*, *-kaer*, *-bras* (*ec'hon-meurbet* 'extremely vast', *mat-tre* 'very good', *yen-kenañ* 'very cold', *bihan-kaer* 'really small', *brav-bras* 'very pleasant'), plus many set expressions involving different parts of speech affixed, e.g. *tomm-berv* 'boiling hot', *fall-du* 'very bad' (*du* 'black'), *mezv-dall* 'blind drunk', *gwenn-erc'h* 'snow-white'; and an adjective may be repeated, e.g. *berr-berr* 'very short' (Favereau 1997b: 93–4).

There are relics of an equative, e.g. *kement* 'as much', *keit* 'as long/far', *koulz/kenkoulz* 'as good/well' (*ha* = 'as'), but most often this is now done analytically, with *ken* + adjective + *ha(g)* 'as X as . . .' – this, with a negative verb, also normally covers the comparative of inferiority, viz. 'not as X as . . .' = 'less X than . . .'. If a clause follows, then *ha* becomes *ha ma* + verb. Thus: *ken sot hag e vreur* 'as silly as his brother', *ken oadet ha ma soñjemp* 'as elderly as we thought'. *Ken* may have forms *ker* and *kel*, varying like the definite and indefinite articles. Note: *ken bras-se* 'as big as that', *ken abred-mañ* 'as soon as this' (see the section on the demonstratives), *ken bras all* 'as big', *ken bihan ha ken bihan* 'as small as each other'. *Ken* also means 'so' as in *ken bras* 'so big'.

*Word-formation in adjectives*

A general point to be borne in mind is that Breton will very often use a noun as an adjective, e.g. *tud Vreizh* rather than *tud vreizhek* 'Breton people', or one may have prepositional phrases, e.g. *a-bouez* rather than *pouezus* 'powerful (lit. "of-weight")'.

## (i) Selected prefixes:

Note that the prefixes may cause lenition and may also be used to form other parts of speech – the adjectives themselves may come from those other parts of speech.

*am-*: *amwir* 'apocryphal' (*gwir* 'true');

*ar-/er-*: *argilus* 'recalcitrant' (from the noun *argil*, which is from *kilañ* 'to recoil, move back');

*berr-*: *berrbadus* 'ephemeral' (*padout* 'to last');

*dam-/dem-*: *damdost* 'quite close/near' (*tost* 'near'), *damvelen* 'yellowish' (*melen* 'yellow, blond');

*daou-/div-*: *daougornek* 'with two horns' (*daoul/div* 'two'; *korn* 'horn', with the suffix *-ek*);

*de-*: *dedennus* 'attractive' (from *tennañ* 'to pull, draw', with the suffix *-us*);

*di-, dis-*: *didruez* 'pitiless' (*truez* 'pity'), *disheñvel* 'dissimilar' (*heñvel* 'similar');

*em-*: *empennadet* 'stubborn' (related to *penn* 'head');

*ez-* (*-er-, en-*): *ez-vev* 'alive' (*bev* 'alive');

*fall-*: *fallgontant* 'unhappy, dissatisfied' (*fall* 'bad'; *kontant* 'content');

*gou-*: *gouraouet* 'slightly hoarse' (*raouañ* 'to become/make hoarse'); *goudomm* 'tepid' (*tomm* 'hot');

*gour-*: *gourhen* 'very old' (*hen* 'old, ancient', mainly restricted to *henañ* 'elder, eldest');

*gwir-*: *gwirvoudek* 'real' (*bout* 'to be' (a form of the infinitive, usually *bezañ*));

*hanter-*: *hanter-gousket* 'half-asleep' (*hanter* 'half'; *kousket* 'to sleep');

*he-*: *hegarat* 'kind' (*karout* 'to like, love'); *helavar* 'eloquent' (*lavaret* 'to say');

*hir-*: *hirbadus* 'long-lasting' (*hir* 'long'; *padout* 'to last');

*holl-*: *hollc'halloudek* 'omnipotent' (*galloud* 'power');

*kef-/kev-*: *kefleue* or *keveleue* 'pregnant (of a cow)' (lit. 'with calf', *leue* 'calf');

*kel-, kem-, ken-*: *kelvezek* 'with lots of walnut-trees' (*kelvez* 'walnut-trees'); *kempredel* 'contemporary' (*pred* 'moment; meal'); *kendalc'hus* 'who perseveres' (*derc'hel* 'to hold', *kenderc'hel* 'to continue');

*mar-/mor-*: *marlouet* 'greyish' (*louet* 'grey'); *morgousket* 'dozy, sleepy' (*kousket* 'to sleep');

*peur-*: *peurvloaz* 'annual, which lasts a year' (sense of completion; *bloaz* 'year');

*peus-/peuz-*: *peuskozh* 'quite old' (*kozh* 'old'); *peuzheñvel* 'quite similar' (*heñvel* 'similar');

## (ii) Selected suffixes (sometimes the whole word is borrowed):

*-abl/-apl*: *kredapl* 'credible' (*krediñ* 'to believe');

*-ant*: *bervidant* 'boiling' (*birviñ* 'to boil');

*-ek*: *genaouek* 'open-mouthed; someone with a big mouth' (*genou* 'mouth');

*-el*: *santel* 'holy, saintly';

*-et*: *siet* 'defective' (*si* 'defect' – also *siek*);

*-iat*: *gaouiat* 'mendacious' (*gaou* 'lie');

-ik: *aonik* 'timorous' (*aon* 'fear') (in other words, here not a diminutive suffix);  
 -ous: *tagnous* 'nasty, scabby' (*tagn* 'moth, ringworm; stingy');  
 -ubl/-upl: *posubl* 'possible';  
 -us: *talvoudus* 'useful' (*talvoud* 'value').

## Adverbs

Adjectives may be used as adverbs without any formal change being made (in reality, of course, only a few actually do regularly function as adverbs), and may be joined to each other, semantics permitting: *Brav-spontus em eus kavet anezhañ* 'I found him really well', *brav-brav* 'really fine', *prestik-prest* 'very soon'. Favereau 1997b: 100 cites examples where there is a semantic shading, e.g. *Deus disourisi* 'Make sure you come!' – *disourisi* 'carefree, heedless'. Perhaps the majority of adverbs are composite, mainly made up of a preposition (very often elided in speech) plus a noun, adjective or verb (Favereau 1997b: 101). Thus we have: *a-bezh* 'entirely', *a-du* 'in favour (of something), for', *a-enep* 'opposed (to something), against', *a-bell* 'from afar', *a-dost* 'from nearby', *a-greiz-holl* 'all of a sudden', *a-hend-all* 'otherwise', *alies* 'often', *a-nebeudou* 'imperceptibly, bit by bit'; *e-barz* 'inside', *e-berr* and *emberr* 'soon' (e.g. *ken emberr!* 'see you soon!'), *e-krec'h* 'above', *e-kichen* 'nearby', *e-maez* and *er-maez* 'out(side)', *e-sav* 'standing'. Rather like the composite adverbs in *e(n)*- we have ancient ones in *end*-, e.g. *end-eeun* 'actually', cf. *en-eeun* 'straight on', even (though adapted) *eta* – *enta* 'then, "donec"'. And *en* may change: *er(-)vat* or *vat* 'well', *ez-c'hlas* 'still/yet green'. Favereau 1997b: 102–3 also gives adverbs in *war*- and *di*-: *war-c'horre* 'on the surface', *war-dro* 'around', *war-blaen* 'horizontally', to which one might add *warc'hoazh* – *arc'hoazh* 'tomorrow'; *debistig* 'without difficulty, mishap', *diseblant* 'without noticing, realizing'.

Here are a few other adverbs (many others will be found elsewhere in the chapter) (unless marked otherwise, by underlining, the stress is final): *adarre* 'again', *c'hoazh* 'still, yet', *dija* 'already', *abred* 'early, soon', *ataw* 'always', *dalc'hmat* 'constantly', *diouzh* 'immediately', *evelkent* 'all the same', *fenoz* 'this coming evening', *heno(a)zh* 'now, this evening', *gwechall* 'formerly, in the past', *moarvat* 'very probably', *emichañs* 'probably', *raktal* 'immediately', *zoken* 'even'. Favereau 1997b: 103 notes adverbs including an enclitic; here the stress is regular, e.g. *amañ* 'here', *aze* 'there', *bremañ* 'now' (and 'diminutive' *bremaik* 'soon'), *biken* 'never (future)', *hiziv* – *hirio* 'today', *kentoc'h* 'rather, sooner, preferably', *marteze* 'perhaps', *neuze* 'then', *goude* 'after(wards)', and usually final in *bepred* 'always' and *biskoazh* 'never'. Some of these, and other, adverbs, will be found as prepositions.

As for the ordering of adverbs, place comes before time, e.g. *N'on ket bet eno gwech ebet* 'I've never been there'; they will also come outside the core of the verb phrase, notably where we have a compound tense form, e.g. *Ne ra mann ebet, gwech ebet* 'He never does nothing', *N'on ket bet morse* 'I've never been [there]'. And: *E gwirionez, 'm eus labouret adarre, alies, ataw, a-wechoù, c'hoazh, dreist-holl, ivez . . . dija* 'In truth I have again, often, always, sometimes, still, especially, also . . . already worked . . .' (all, slightly adapted, from Favereau 1997b: 104). Note that *dija* always comes last.

## Pronouns

### Personal pronouns

There are three singular and three plural persons. The 'strong' or independent forms tend to be used for emphasis: *me*, *te*, *eñ* and *hi*, *ni*, *c'hwí*, *int*: *din-me* 'to me' (*din* 'to me'), *Er gêr*



*e oan(-me) dec'h* 'I was at home yesterday', (*Me*) *n'ouzon ket* 'I don't know', *Hi eo* 'It's she', *Setu me* 'Here I am', *Er skol e oa, hag eñ klañv* 'He was at school, in spite of being ill', *C'hwi a lenn ar gazetenn* 'You read the newspaper'. The object pronouns take the form of possessives or more often these days of 'conjugated' forms (the 'new' forms below) of the preposition *a* 'of': *Ma digarezit – Digarezit ac'hanon* 'Forgive/Excuse me'. The new forms may derive from a partitive sense. One may come across the independent pronouns as object pronouns: *C'hwi am boa gwelet e kêr* 'I saw you in town = "It's you I saw in town"'. The possessive pronouns cause lenition, the spirant mutation, and provection. Here is a table:

	<b>strong</b>	<b>proclitic</b>	<b>enclitic</b>	<b>new form</b>	<b>inflections</b>
1PS	<i>me</i>	<i>am-em- 'm/va-ma<sup>S</sup></i>	<i>-me</i>	<i>ac'hanon</i>	<i>-n</i>
2PS	<i>te</i>	<i>az-ez- 'z<sup>P</sup>/da<sup>L</sup></i>	<i>-te</i>	<i>ac'hanout</i>	<i>-t (-z, -s)</i>
3PS <sup>f</sup>	<i>hi</i>	<i>he<sup>S</sup>/hec'h</i>	<i>-hi</i>	<i>anezhi</i>	<i>zero</i>
3PS <sup>m</sup>	<i>eñ</i>	<i>e<sup>L</sup>-en</i>	<i>-eñ</i>	<i>anezhañ</i>	<i>zero</i>
1PP	<i>ni</i>	<i>hon/hor/hol</i>	<i>-ni</i>	<i>ac'hanomp</i>	<i>-mp</i>
2PP	<i>c'hwi</i>	<i>ho<sup>P</sup>/hoc'h</i>	<i>c'hwi/-hu</i>	<i>ac'hanoc'h</i>	<i>-c'h (-t)</i>
3PP	<i>i, int</i>	<i>o<sup>S</sup></i>	<i>-i(nt)</i>	<i>anezho</i>	<i>-nt</i>
NON-PERS.	<i>an nen</i>	—	—	—	—

We must note in particular the sequence *C'hwi a lenn ar gazetenn* 'You read the paper'; here there is a certain insistence on the personal pronoun – it is in principle not as neutral as in French. We shall learn more about this construction when we study the verb.

There is variation in Breton regarding the usage of the second person pronouns – in an extensive area in the south only *c'hwi* is used. See, for example, Morvannou 1978–80 I: 252–3 for a useful sketch.

Regarding the object pronouns, usage is as follows:

	<b>+ np</b>	<b>+ verbal noun/infinitive</b>	<b>+ past participle</b>	<b>+ finite verb form</b>
<i>ma, va</i>	+	+	+	—
<i>da</i>	+	+	+	—
<i>e</i>	+	+	+	—
<i>he(c'h)</i>	+	+	+	—
<i>hon, hor, hol</i>	+	+	+	+
<i>ho</i>	+	+	+	+
<i>o</i>	+	+	+	+

The forms *am, em, 'm, az, ez, 'z, en* are used before finite verb forms. Moreover, the use of *ma, va*, and *da* is overruled before NPs and verbal nouns if the pronouns are preceded by *da* 'to' and (NPs only) *e* 'in', when we have *da'm* (or *d'am*), *em, da'z* (or *d'az*), and *ez*. In the spoken language we do tend these days to get such forms as *da ma* 'to my . . .' (and sometimes before finite verb forms). Some examples:

*ma zad* 'my father', *va gwelet a ra* 'he sees me', *ma gwelet o deus* 'they saw me', *eñ am gwel* 'he sees me', *a-benn arc'hoazh em gwelo* 'he'll see me tomorrow', *da'm c'havout* 'to find me', *em zi* 'in my house';  
*da dad* 'your father', *da welet a ra* 'he sees you', *da welet o deus* 'they saw you', *eñ az kwel* 'he sees you', *a-benn arc'hoazh ez kwelo* 'he'll see you tomorrow', *da'z kavout* 'to find you', *ez ti* 'in your house';  
*e dad* 'his father', *e welet a ra* 'he sees him', *e welet o deus* 'they saw him', *eñ en gwel*

‘he sees him’, *a-benn arc’hoazh en gwelo* ‘he’ll see him tomorrow’, *d’e gavout* ‘to find him’, *en e di* ‘in his house’;  
*he zad* ‘her father’, *he gwelet a ra* ‘he sees her’, *he gwelet o deus* ‘they saw her’, *eñ he gwel* ‘he sees her’, *a-benn arc’hoazh he gwelo* ‘he’ll see her tomorrow’, *d’he c’havout* ‘to find her’, *en he zi* ‘in her house’;  
*hon tad* ‘our father’, *hor gwelet a ra* ‘he sees us’, *hor gwelet o deus* ‘they saw us’, *eñ hor gwel* ‘he sees me’, *a-benn arc’hoazh hor gwelo* ‘he’ll see me tomorrow’, *d’hor c’havout* ‘to find us’, *en hon ti* ‘in our house’ (*hon* changes like the article, but *hon* may be used as sole form; the only change it causes is of *k* to *c’h* after *hor*);  
*ho tad* ‘your father’, *ho kwelet a ra* ‘he sees you’, *ho kwelet o deus* ‘they saw you’, *eñ ho kwel* ‘he sees you’, *a-benn arc’hoazh ho gwelo* ‘he’ll see you tomorrow’, *d’ho kavout* ‘to find you’, *en ho ti* ‘in your house’;  
*o zad* ‘their father’, *o gwelet a ra* ‘he sees them’, *o gwelet o deus* ‘they saw them’, *eñ o gwel* ‘he sees them’, *a-benn arc’hoazh o gwelo* ‘he’ll see them tomorrow’, *d’o c’havout* ‘to find them’, *en o zi* ‘in their house’.

All these may be replaced by the new, ‘conjugated’ forms, the only notable constraint being that such forms may not occur clause-initially.

To create possessive pronouns we place the object-pronoun forms before *hini* (singular) and *re* (plural): *ma hini* ‘mine’, *ho re* ‘yours’, with enclitic or prepositional reinforcement: *ma hini-me* – *ma hini din(-me)* ‘mine’. Note also *ma-unan*, *da-unan* ‘myself, yourself’ (there are other shapes of this form), etc., *e-unan-penn* ‘on his own’, *hon-daou* ‘the two of us’.

## Demonstratives

Demonstrative adjectives are conveyed by the attachment of enclitics which, as expected, do not affect stress, e.g. *an ti-mañ* – *an ti-se* – *an ti-hont* ‘this (by me), that (by you), that (by him) house’ (as a rule, the demonstrative particle will be affixed to an attributive adjective: *ar c’hañz bihan-se* ‘that little cat’). Demonstrative pronouns may be conveyed by *se* ‘that’ and *an dra-mañ* – *an dra-se* – *an dra-hont* ‘this, that (by you), that (by him)’ for inanimates and *hemañ*, *hennezh*, *henhont* ‘this, that (by you), that (by him) (masc.)’, *ho(u)mañ*, *ho(u)nnnezh*, *ho(u)nhont* ‘id. (fem.)’, *ar re-mañ* – *ar re-se* – *ar re-hont* (pl.) for animates and inanimates. It may be that the masculines cause lenition of following adjectives, e.g. *hemañ gozh* ‘this old man’, though Favereau 1997b: 118 does not confirm this; with the plurals, an attributive adjective may come last, on its own, or have the demonstrative particle suffixed to it – if the latter it will be subject to lenition: *ar re-mañ bras* and *ar re vras-mañ* ‘these big ones’ (Favereau 1997b: 118 considers the former of these two more frequent).

We can relate these to various adverbs, e.g. *amañ* ‘here’, *aze* ‘there’, *ahont* ‘there’ (plus *di* ‘there (motion)’ and *eno* ‘there (no motion)’), where the place is not visible), and *bremañ* ‘now’, *neuze* ‘then, “alors”’. Note too *du-mañ* ‘around here, among us, at our place’, alongside *du-se* and *du-hont*. Also *alemañ* ‘from here’ and the related *alese* and *aleshont* (and other forms, for visible and not visible).

The determinatives *hini* and *re* may be quite close to demonstratives, e.g. *an hini gozh* ‘the old person (fem.)’, *an hini gozh-mañ* ‘this old person (fem.)’, *ar re vras* ‘the big ones’ (*re* as determinative is not stressed, except by default before the demonstrative enclitics; in Treger *re* most often takes a plural form *reoù*) – this attachment of the enclitic is possible only if there is an adjective. *Hini* may be used indefinitely, in which case it is always masculine: *hini melen* ‘some lager (light beer)’.

## Interrogatives

Included here are interrogative adjectives and adverbs as well as pronouns. Note too that interrogatives will tend to come first in sentences, given that information being sought, and that information once it has been given, tend to occupy that place in the Breton sentence.

First, the pronouns:

*piv?* ‘who, whom’, *petra?* ‘what?’ (end-stressed), and *pehini?*, plural *pere?* ‘which one(s)?’ (stressed on *re*).

Given that these may stand as subjects or direct objects, they will then with verbs other than *bezañ* ‘to be’ and *kaout* ‘to have’ as such be followed by the verbal particle *a<sup>L</sup>* before the verb (except when negated). If indirect, i.e. preceded by a preposition, they will be followed by the particle *e<sup>M</sup>* (various other forms before a vowel) before the verb (again, except when negated). The situation with *bezañ* and *kaout* can be slightly different. Some examples:

*Piv a zibabo al levr?* ‘Who will choose the book?’

*Piv a gavint er gêr?* ‘Whom will they find at home?’

*Gant piv ez aimp da Kemper?* ‘With whom will we go to Kemper?’

*Da biv ho peus kaset al lizher?* ‘To whom did you send the letter?’

(Negative: *Piv ne zibabo ket al levr?*, *Piv ne gavint ket er gêr?*, *Gant piv n’aimp ket da Kemper?*, *Da biv n’ho peus ket kaset al lizher?*)

*Petra a lavaront?* ‘What do they say?’ (Negative: *Petra ne lavaront ket?*)

*Pehini a brenot?* ‘Which one will you buy?’ (Negative: *Pehini ne brenot ket?*)

Compare *Piv eo?* ‘Who is it?’ and *Piv (a) zo o vont d’ar gêr?* ‘Who is going home?’ (Negative: *Piv n’eo ket?*, *Piv n’emañ ket o vont d’ar gêr?*), and *Piv emaoc’h o klask?* ‘Who’re you looking for?’

Secondly, the adjectives (*pe* is not stressed):

*pe . . . ?* or *peseurt . . . ?*, *petore . . . ?* ‘what . . . ?’

*Pe liv eo X?* ‘What colour is . . . ?’; *Pe oad ‘peus?* ‘How old are you? (lit. “What age do you have?”; also *Pe oad oc’h?*, using *bezañ*); *Peseurt ti?* ‘What (sort of) house?’ (*peseurt* is particularly common).

*pet (a) . . . ?* and *pegement a . . . ?* ‘how much/many . . . ?’

*pet* is constructed with a singular count noun: *pet den?* ‘how many people?’, *pet eur eo?* ‘what time is it?’ (stress on *pet* given *den* and *eur* are monosyllabic); *pet a dud?* ‘how many people?’ with *a<sup>L</sup>* ‘of’ focuses on a mass, a whole, while *pet den* focuses more on individuals. *Pegement a* is followed by a plural: *pegement a dud?* – equivalent to *pet a dud?* On its own it means ‘how much?’, and with that meaning it may also be followed directly by a noun in the singular, or mass noun: *Pegement bara o deus gwerzhet hiziv?* ‘How much bread have they sold today?’ *Pet* may be followed by a plural verb (this depends on the construction): *Pet bugel o deus skrivet ul lizher d’o zud?* ‘How many children have written a letter to their parents?’

*pegeit?* ‘how far, how long?’: *Pegeit amzer?* ‘How much time?’; *Pegeit zo da Lannuon?* ‘How far is it to Lannuon?’ (lit. ‘How far is there to Lannuon?’).  
*pegen* . . . ? ‘how . . .’: *Pegen yaouank?* ‘How young?’ (related to its exclamative sense).

Thirdly, the adverbs (*pe* is not stressed; given that the first four of the following are clearly adverbs, a verb following them will, in the positive, be preceded by *e*<sup>M</sup>):

*pelec’h?* ‘where?’ – we may be more specific, viz. *e-pelec’h* or *ba pelec’h?* ‘in which place?’, *da belec’h?* ‘where to?’, and *eus pelec’h?* ‘where from?’, e.g. *Pelec’h e vo ar c’hendalc’h?* ‘Where will the congress be?’ (In *Gwenedeg* forms are based on *e-menn*.)

*penaos?* ‘how?’: *Penaos e vo graet al labour-mañ?* ‘How will this work be done?’ Very common is the expression *peseurt mod?*: *Peseurt mod e teuimp a-benn da echuiñ al labour?* ‘How will we manage to finish the work?’

*perak?* ‘why?’ (‘lit. what for?’) (often *d’ober petra?* ‘for what purpose’ (‘lit. to do what?’)): *Perak ne fell ket deoc’h dont ganin d’ar fest-noz?* ‘Why don’t you want to come to the *fest-noz* with me?’

*pegoulz?*, *pevar?*, *peur?* (also *pe da goulz?*, *pe da vare?*) when?: *Pegoulz e vo echu ho romant?* ‘When will your novel be finished?’

*ha(g)* . . . ? and *daoust* (*ha(g)* (-*eñ*)) . . . ? (optional interrogative particles): the first, which has no effect on the structure of the underlying sentence, may be seen as somewhat archaic nowadays: *Ha deuet int dija?* ‘Have they already come?’ More common is the model *Daoust ha graet en deus e venoz sikour ac’hanomp?* ‘Has he decided to help us?’ (still no effect on the structure of the underlying sentence). *Daoust hag-eñ e*<sup>M</sup>, however, requires that a finite verb form immediately follow the particle (the particle may be replaced by *ne* if the verb is negative; this fixed structure perhaps generalizes the question): *Daoust hag-eñ e vint e Rospez a-benn arc’hoazh?* ‘Will they be in Rospez tomorrow?’ And note *Daoust piv a fell dezhañ ober un droidadig war an enezenn?* ‘Is there anyone wants to have a walk on the island?’ In other words, *daoust* may simply signal a question, even if there is an interrogative there – essentially, *piv* or whatever replaces *ha* here.

One may precede these questions with statements of the sort *N’ouzon ket* ‘I don’t know’, *Goulennet em eus* ‘I asked’, and they do not change; *ha* and *hag-eñ* (without *daoust*) provide the model for indirect questions (‘if’ = ‘whether’ structures) – the latter requires *e*<sup>M</sup> + finite verb form after it.

Regarding answering yes-no questions: *ya* and *nann* are used only to confirm a positive or a negative question respectively. To negate a positive question, the finite verb of the question is echoed negatively: *O chom ba Kemper emaoc’h?* – *N’emaon ket* ‘Do you live in Kemper?’ – No, I don’t’ (the verb *ober* ‘to do’ may be used). To contradict a negative question, the usual answer is *eo* or *geo*, but echoing is possible here too, and the use of *ober*: *Ne lennont ket?* – (*G*)*eo/Greont* ‘Don’t they read?’ – ‘Yes, they do’.

### *Indefinites*

Favereau 1997b: 135–45 has been drawn on here.

‘other’: *all* is stressed and follows the noun, pronoun, or numeral which it qualifies: *ar vag all* ‘the other boat’, *ur paotr all* ‘another boy’, *hounnezh all* ‘that other woman’, *ar re-hont all* ‘those others’, *tri all* ‘three others’; note the expression *Biskoazh kemend-all!* ‘Never heard/seen the like!’, thus its use also in equative expressions, e.g. *bara ken se’ch*

*all* ‘bread as stale as all that’. We must also note *an eil* . . . *egile* ‘one another’ (masculine and mixed), *an eil* . . . *eben* (feminine): *an eil a gaoze gant egile* ‘they chat to each other’.

‘little, few, a little, a few’: *nebeud* (adjective *nebeut*) means ‘little, few’ and with the indefinite article ‘a little, a few’, thus *nebeud* ‘*oa a dud* ‘there weren’t many folk’, *nebeut amzer* ‘little time’, *un nebeud* ‘*m eus naon* ‘I’m a little hungry’, *un nebeut tud* ‘a few people’ – there is some hesitation here, e.g. *un nebeud a dud* ‘a few people’ too; note too *nebeutoc’h* ‘less’ and *an nebeutañ* ‘the least, minimum’, *d’an nebeutañ* – *da nebeutañ* – *da vihanañ* ‘at least’. For ‘a little’ one might also use *un tammig*, e.g. if one speaks a little Breton.

‘half’: *hanter* is an adjective, a noun, and an adverb, e.g. *un hanter bloavezh* ‘half a year’, *un hanter eus ar miz* ‘half the month’, *hanter-vezv* ‘half drunk’ (lenition of *mezv* ‘drunk’ in this compound), *un hanter koshoc’h* ‘twice as old’.

‘several’: *meur a<sup>L</sup>* + singular, e.g. *meur a vaouez* ‘several women’, *meur a hini* ‘several people’ (note *meur a zen ne oa ket* or *ne oant ket*, i.e. either a singular or a plural verb, thus interpretable as plural); note the related *ne* + verb (*ket*) *nemeur* ‘scarcely’: *me n’ouzon ket nemeur* ‘I scarcely know’.

‘each, all’: *pep* ‘each, every’, as in *pep unan* ‘each one’, *e pep lec’h* ‘everywhere’, lenited in adverbs, e.g. *bep bloaz* ‘every year’, *bep an amzer* ‘every now and then’, *bemdez* ‘every day’, *bepred* ‘constantly, always’, *bep a briz* ‘with a prize each’ (distributive construction); *kement* starts off as an equative ‘as big’, but develops a sense of ‘all, every’ especially, and preferably, when introducing a subordinate clause, e.g. *kement tra a oa el liorz* ‘everything that was in the garden’; *kement-se* ‘all that’, *kement-mañ* ‘all this’, *kement ha lâret* ‘so as to say, just to say’, *dek kemend-all* ‘ten times more’ (note a certain variation in the spelling); *holl<sup>L</sup>* ‘all’, e.g. *an holl* or *an holl dud* ‘everyone’, *an holl spont* ‘all the terror’, *ma holl flijadur* ‘all my pleasure’ (note the discontinuous spirantization caused by *ma*), *prenet em eus anezho holl* ‘I bought them all’, and also *holl an dud* ‘everyone’; *tout* or *toud* is very widespread: *tout an traoù* ‘everything’; and we have *a-bezh* or *en* + possessive + *pezh*, e.g. *ar vourc’h a-bezh* or *ar vourc’h en he fezh* ‘the whole village’ (‘of a piece’), *n’int ket prest a-bezh* ‘they aren’t entirely ready’.

‘much, many, more, a lot’: *kalz* ‘much, many’ is placed before what is quantified, e.g. *kalz bara* ‘much bread’, *kalz chas* ‘lots of dogs’ – *a<sup>L</sup>* may come after it, especially where an accompanying verb is negative, thus *ne oar ket kalz a dra* ‘he doesn’t know much’; very common is *ur bern* ‘a pile of’, e.g. *ur bern levrioù* ‘lots of books’; we also find the diminutive of *kalz*, *kalzig* in the sense ‘quite a few’, and similarly *forzhig*, e.g. *evañ a reont forzhig* ‘they drink quite a bit’. Semantically related we have (*e*)-*leizh a<sup>L</sup>* ‘lots of’, e.g. *leizh a gizhier* ‘lots of cats’, and *leizh an ranndi* ‘the flat full’, and *lies* in *lies gwech*, *a-lies a wech* ‘many a time’. Note too *ouzhpenn* ‘more than, as well as’, e.g. *ouzhpenn houidi* ‘not just ducks, more than ducks’, *ouzhpenn ma oa skuizh* ‘as well as being tired (lit. “more than that he was tired”)’. Somewhat related might be *gwall*, preposed and causing lenition and with a sense, here, of ‘lots, very, extremely’, e.g. *gwall gousket* ‘fast asleep’.

‘no more’: here we cannot yet add another use of *ken*: *n’eus (ket) ken* ‘there’s no more’. See the next section, on ‘none’.

'none': *ebet* (from *er bed* 'in the world'), is postposed to a singular (non-mass, count) and has created a whole range of negatives: *ki ebet* 'no dog', *den ebet* 'no one' (also *den, nikun*), *gwech ebet* 'never' (also *james, morse, biskoazh* (past only), *biken* (future only)), *tra ebet* 'nothing' (also *netra, mann*; even *netra ebet*, something found with other negatives); note too *neblec'h* 'nowhere', *ken* 'no more, no longer'. Where a verb accompanies, the verb will have the particle *ne* or *na*, but *ket* may not be necessary: *ne welan den* or *ne welan ket den*. Whether or not to include *ket* can be quite difficult; in a sense, if an element needs to be close to the verb, then *ket* may be omitted, e.g. *N'in ket da Gemper ken* and not *N'in ken da Gemper* 'I shan't go to Kemper any more', *N'eo ket bet morse e Pariz* and not *N'eo morse bet e Pariz* 'He's never been to Paris'. To be borne in mind too is *neb*, adjective *nep* 'no one, anyone', but also with the sense 'anyone', e.g. *neb a oar* 'anyone knows'; note *neptu, neblec'h* 'nowhere'.

'one, some, any': *an nen*, e.g. *ne blij ket d'an nen* 'that is not liked'; thus it may be slightly pompous, like English 'one'. It stands apart from the non-personal (Hewitt 2002: 1, 15 refers to them as 'impersonal') verb forms in *-er, -ed*, etc. and the passive, of which the latter is spreading at the expense of the former. 'Some, any' (not the partitive) is conveyed particularly by the post-position to a noun or pronoun of *bennak*, end-stressed and never lenited: *un dra bennak* 'something', *unan bennak* 'someone'; it may convey approximation: *un (e-pad) miz bennak* '(during) about a month'. Note its use with interrogatives: *piv bennak* 'whoever', *petra bennak* 'whatever' (it may, especially as *petra bennak ma<sup>M</sup>*, mean 'although', but there is also the perhaps more common *daoust ma, evit ma*, among other possibilities, e.g. *petra bennak ma'z eo gwir* 'although it is true'. In the case of *evit ma* (which may also mean 'in order that'), note the very useful alternatives, using the personal forms of prepositions, *evidon da vezañ klañv* and *evit din bezañ klañv* 'in spite of me being ill' for *evit ma'z on klañv*. These two constructions with the verbal noun (here *bezañ*) can be used to replace many subordinating conjunctions involving *ma*.

'enough': *awalc'h* follows adjectives and nouns, e.g. *koant a-walc'h* 'quite pretty', *tiez a-walc'h* 'enough houses'. With verbal nouns it begins to acquire a sense of 'quite well, quite readily, indeed': *Gouzout a-walc'h a ran* 'I indeed know'; and note the nuance in *n'oc'h ket a-walc'h evit kompren* 'you can't really understand' (the negative of *bezañ* 'to be' plus *evit* + verbal noun is a common way of conveying 'can't'; note too *n'eus ket moian* 'impossible', and *moian/tu zo din* + verbal noun 'I can, have the opportunity to')). If the sense approximates to a direct object, then *trawalc'h* may be used more: *trawalc'h 'feus labouret* 'you've done enough work', not to mention *Trawalc'h!* 'Enough!'

'too': *re<sup>L</sup>* – note that this word will be stressed (unlike the pronominal *re*) when preceding a monosyllabic non-clitic: *re vras* 'too big'; note pre-posing of an adjective after it: *re vras koll* 'too great a loss' (*bras* 'big'). This word is also an old neuter, leniting as if feminine, meaning 'pair, series': *tri re votoù* 'three pairs of shoes'.

'such, same': *hevelep* is common here: *an hevelep tra* 'the (self-)same thing', *un hevelep tra* 'such a thing' (note the pre-position), *hevelep tad hevelep mab* 'like father like son'. But perhaps more general is *memes*: *ar memes tud* 'the same people', and note *ar wirionez memes* 'truth itself'. A common alternative meaning 'such' is *seurt* (pre-posed) or *seurt-se* (post-posed), e.g. *ur seurt gwaz* or *ur gwaz seurt-se* 'such a man'.

## Numerals

### Cardinals

Numerals are followed by nouns in the singular, the noun coming after the unit in compounds, though there are prepositional constructions available in *a* plus the plural (after the whole numeral) with a stronger mass nuance (we can even have this construction after *unan* ‘one’, though it is more likely to be used with higher numerals). The system, for 1–100, is mainly vigesimal; it may remain so up to 200 and even 240. Certain numerals cause lenition and the spirant mutation (the latter tends to be replaced by lenition, but only of *t*, *k*, and *p*). Here is a table, with examples using the nouns *ti* – *tiez* ‘house(s)’, *kazh* – *kizhier* ‘cat(s)’, *penn* – *pennoù* ‘head(s)’, *paotr* – *paotred* ‘boy(s)’, *levr* – *levrioù* ‘book(s)’, *plac’h* – *merc’hed* ‘girl’ (note the general pattern of the last in the sense ‘girl’; *merc’h* (singular) may most often be ‘daughter’):

0	<i>mann</i> , zero; with a singular count noun, postpose <i>ebet</i> : <i>ti ebet</i> ‘no house’.
1	<i>unan</i> (also <i>un</i> ) – replaced by <i>unlurlul</i> when occurring with a noun, though it will remain quite prominent, and stressed if the noun is a monosyllable and the emphasis is on ‘one’ (the stress position also overall goes for other monosyllabic numerals): <i>ur paotr</i> or <i>unan a baotred</i> .
2	<i>daou</i> <sup>L</sup> (masc.), <i>div</i> <sup>L</sup> (fem.): <i>daou di</i> , <i>daou gazh</i> , <i>daou benn</i> or <i>daou a diez</i> , <i>daou a gizhier</i> , <i>daou a bennoù</i> (and so on, for other numerals, with this construction).
3	<i>tri</i> <sup>SL</sup> (masc.), <i>teir</i> <sup>SL</sup> (fem.): <i>tri zi</i> , <i>tri c’hazh</i> , <i>tri fenn</i> .
4	<i>pevar</i> <sup>SL</sup> (masc.), <i>peder</i> <sup>SL</sup> (fem.): <i>pevar zi</i> , <i>pevar c’hazh</i> , <i>pevar fenn</i> .
5, 6, 7, 8	<i>pemp</i> , <i>c’hwec’h</i> , <i>seizh</i> , <i>eizh</i> : <i>pemp ti</i> , <i>c’hwec’h kazh</i> , <i>seizh penn</i> .
9	<i>nav</i> <sup>SL</sup> : <i>nav zi</i> , <i>nav c’hazh</i> , <i>nav fenn</i> .
10–19	<i>dek</i> , <i>unnek</i> , <i>daouzek</i> , <i>trizek</i> , <i>pevarzek</i> , <i>pemzek</i> , <i>c’hwezek</i> , <i>seitek</i> , <i>triwec’h</i> , <i>naontek</i> : <i>dek ti</i> , <i>unnek kazh</i> , <i>daouzek penn</i> ; <i>dek levr</i> or <i>dek a levrioù</i> .
20, 21 . . .	<i>ugent</i> , <i>unan warn-ugent</i> , . . . : <i>ugent ti</i> , <i>un ti warn-ugent</i> or <i>unan warn-ugent a diez</i> (note the position of the prepositional phrase).
30, 31 . . .	<i>tregont</i> , <i>unan ha tregont</i> , . . .
40, 41 . . .	<i>daou-ugent</i> , <i>unan ha daou-ugent</i> , . . .
50, 51 . . .	<i>hanter-kant</i> , <i>unan ha(g) hanter-kant</i> , . . .
60, 61 . . . 70, . . . 79	<i>tri-ugent</i> , <i>unan ha tri-ugent</i> , . . . <i>dek ha tri-ugent</i> , . . . <i>naontek ha tri-ugent</i> : <i>unnek plac’h ha tri-ugent</i> or <i>unnek ha tri-ugent a merc’hed</i> .
80, 81, . . . 99	<i>pevar-ugent</i> , <i>unan ha pevar-ugent</i> , . . . <i>naontek ha pevar-ugent</i> .
100, 101, . . . 110	<i>kant</i> , <i>kant unan</i> , <i>unan ha kant</i> . . . <i>kant dek</i> or <i>dek ha kant</i> , . . . : <i>kant ti</i> , <i>kant dek ti</i> or <i>dek ti ha kant</i> ; <i>ur paotr ha kant</i> or <i>kant ur paotr</i> or <i>kant unan a baotred</i> .
120, 121 . . .	<i>kant ugent</i> or <i>c’hwec’h-ugent</i> , <i>kant unan-warn-ugent</i> or <i>unan ha c’hwec’h-ugent</i> .

130	<i>kant tregont</i> or <i>dek ha c'hwec'h-ugent</i> , . . .
190	. . . <i>kant dek ha pevar-ugent</i> or <i>dek ha nav-ugent</i> , . . .
199	. . . <i>kant naontek ha pevar-ugent</i> or <i>naontek ha nav-ugent</i>
200–900	<i>daou c'hant</i> ( <i>daou gant</i> in Gw.), <i>tri c'hant</i> , <i>pevar c'hant</i> , <i>pemp kant</i> , <i>c'hwec'h kant</i> , <i>seizh kant</i> , <i>eizh kant</i> , <i>nav c'hant</i> .
1000	<i>mil</i> .
1200	<i>mil daou c'hant</i> or <i>daouzek kant</i> (the latter, using the hundreds, is normal between 1001 and 1999)
(in the year) 1984	( <i>er bloaz</i> ) <i>mil nav c'hant pevar ha pevar-ugent</i> or <i>naontek-kant pevar ha pevar-ugent</i> .
2000, 3000, . . .	<i>daou vil</i> , <i>tri mil</i> , . . .
1,000,000	<i>ur milion</i> (also <i>ur milion</i> ) – constructed with <i>a</i> + plural and seen as a noun; this also goes for higher units.

The cardinals may also be used as if nouns, e.g. *ar pevar-se* ‘those four’, *pemp kozh* ‘five old ones’, *div goant* ‘two pretty women’, *unan* or *un’ dalvoudus* ‘a useful one (referring to a feminine noun; *talvoudus* “useful”)', even *unan goañv* ‘a winter one’ (referring to something masculine, say, *tog* ‘hat’) – there is, however, a tendency to lenite after numerals from ‘three’ and above. Lenition is found when referring to the date: *Ar bed emamp?* ‘What date is it?’ – *Ar bevarzek eo* ‘It’s the 14th’ (possibly *ar bevarzeg*, seeing the numeral as a noun); the exception is the 1st, with *ar c’hentañ*. This lenition may be a reflection of the earlier case system.

Note also *bep a dri* ‘three of each’, *a-drioù* ‘by threes’, *pemp-ha-pemp* ‘five by five’.

Approximation may be conveyed by using the indefinite article, e.g. *un eizh mizvezh* ‘around eight months’; alternatively one may use *bennak*, thus *eizh mizvezh bennak*; or even *un eizh mizvezh bennak*. This may be done analytically, e.g. using *war-dro* ‘about, around’.

### Ordinals

The ordinals are varied in their behaviour in relation to gender and mutation: *kentañ* – *unanvet*, *eil* – *daouvet/divvet*, *trede* – *trivet/teirvet* (alternatives), *pevar* – *pevarvet/pedervet* (alternatives), *pemp* or *pempvet* (these two are simply alternatives), *c’hwec’hvet*, . . . – from *c’hwec’hvet* simply add *-vet*.

Most ordinals when attributive will come before the noun – in the standard, written, language they do not mutate (except for *k-*, which must change to *c’h-* after an article), though in the spoken language they tend always to lenite (if appropriate), whatever the gender of the noun. If used pronominally, they lenite according to gender: *an trivet* – *an deirvet* ‘the third (one)’. As for *kentañ*, it may be attributive before or after the noun; Davalan I 2000: 129 gives *ar wezh kentañ* – *ar c’hentañ gwezh* (note the absence of mutation in the latter, which may also mean ‘the next time’; *gwezh* is an alternative to *gwech*, which is feminine); it tends not to be used pronominally (*ar c’hentañ* – *ar gentañ*), but only with the pronominal determiner: *ar c’hentañ hini* (for both genders) or *an hini kentañ* – *an hini gentañ*. The definite article may also be left out with ordinals: *kentañ tra* ‘the next/first thing’, *kentañ a gasin dezhañ a vo . . .* ‘the first thing I send him will be . . .’ *Unanvet* will tend to be used in compounds. *Eil* comes on its own or pre-posed; there is no lenition after it: *an eil eo* ‘it’s the second’, *an eil kendalc’h* ‘the second congress’, *un eil emvod* ‘a second meeting’. It may appear as *eilvet*; and *daouvet/divvet* may be more common in



compounds. *Trede* and *pevare* may reflect gender by leniting as normal: *ar pevare gwech* or *ar bevare gwech* ‘the fourth time’, but they may be replaced by *trivet*, etc. The remaining ordinals behave as indicated at the beginning of this paragraph.

One may mention the fractions: *hanter* ‘half’, *kard* ‘quarter’, *trederenn* ‘third’. Another form found for ‘quarter’ is *palefarzh* (related *daoufarzh* ‘two-thirds’, *trifarzh* ‘three-quarters’). The word *lodenn* ‘part’ is also used with ordinals for fractions, e.g. *un dekvet lodenn*, as well as *un dekvedenn* ‘a tenth’. Note *eizh kemend-all* and *eizh gwech kemend-all* ‘eight times more’.

## Prepositions

Prepositions on the whole come before the noun they govern and have special personal forms. Some prepositions are themselves followed by prepositions when they govern personal pronouns, and others, compounds, insert a possessive between their components. If they cause mutations, prepositions (mainly several of the simple and most frequent ones) cause lenition. Some examples follow (note signs of provection in the third-person forms) – note that the first and second persons reflect the present tense (first group) and future tense (second group; formerly present subjunctive) forms of *bezañ* ‘to be’, and that the third person forms reflect affixed third-person pronouns.

*evit* ‘for, than’: *evidon*, *evidout*, *evitañ* – *eviti*, *evidomp*, *evidoc’h*, *evito/evite*;

*e(n)* ‘in’: *ennon*, *ennout*, *ennañ* – *enni*, *ennomp*, *ennoc’h*, *enno/enne*;

*a* ‘of’: *ac’hanon*, *ac’hanout*, *anezhañ* – *anezhi*, *ac’hanomp*, *ac’hanoc’h*, *anezho/anezhe*.

*da* ‘to’: *din*, *dit*, *dezhañ* – *dezhi*, *dimp*, *deoc’h*, *dezho/dezhe*;

*gant* ‘with’: *ganin*, *ganit*, *gantañ*, *ganti*, *ganeomp/ganimp*, *ganeoc’h*, *ganto/gante*;

*ouzh* ‘against, . . .’: *ouzhin*, *ouzhit*, *outañ* – *outi*, *ouzhimp* (*ouzhomp*), *ouzhoc’h*, *outo/oute*;

For ‘in’ Davalan III 2002: 238 also suggests ‘*ba*’ ‘*non*’, ‘*ba*’ ‘*nout*’, ‘*ba*’ ‘*n’añ*’, ‘*ba*’ ‘*ne*’i, ‘*ba*’ ‘*nomp*’, ‘*ba*’ ‘*noc’h*’, ‘*ba*’ ‘*ne’o/’ba*’ ‘*ne*’ (he does not recommend over-use of this, and his spellings must be provisional!)

Personal pronouns are often attached to the first and second persons: *ouzhimp-ni*, etc.; to the third persons are added *e-unan* ‘himself’, *hec’h-unan* ‘herself’, *o-unan* ‘themselves’, e.g. *dezhañ e-unan* ‘to him’.

Note that the third person plural form very commonly occurs as *-e* instead of *-o*.

Here are some of the most important prepositions, arranged according to type – it is to be borne in mind that there is much variation:

(i) the *evit* type (the *-d/-t-* provection is mentioned where it occurs):

*a* (*eus*) > *ac’hanon* (third person: *anezhañ*, *anezhi*, *anezho/anezhe* – this preposition is very important);

*a-raok* > *araokon* (and *araozon*) ‘before me’;

*dindan* > *dindanon* ‘under me’;

*dirak* > *dirakon* (and *dirazon*) ‘in front of me’;

*diwar* > *diwarnon* ‘from me’ (note the inserted *-n-*);

*dre* > *drezon* ‘through me’ (note the inserted *-z-*);

*e*, *en* > *ennon* ‘in me’;

*eget* > *egedon* 'than me' (note provection/contraction in the third person: *egetañ*, *egeti*, and *egeto*);  
*etre* > *etrezomp* 'between (us)' (note the inserted -z-);  
*evel* > *eveldon* 'as, like me' (note inserted -d-, and provection in the third person: *eveltañ*, *evelti*, *evelto*);  
*hep* > *hepdon* 'without me' (note provection in the third person: *heptañ*, *hepti*, and *hepto*);  
*hervez* > *hervezon* 'according to me';  
*nemet* > *nemedon* 'except me' (note provection/contraction in the third person: *nemetañ*, *nemeti*, and *nemeto*; very useful, e.g. *ma breur nemetañ* 'my very brother');  
*war* > *warnon* 'on me' (note the inserted -n-; the third person forms may insert *ezh-*, i.e. *warnezhañ*, *warnezhi*, *warnezho*).

(ii) the *gant* type:

*da* > *din* 'to, towards, for me' (third person: *dezhañ*, *dezhi*, and *dezho*);  
*digant* > *diganin* 'from me';  
*diouzh* > *diouzhin* 'from me' (third person: *dioutañ*, *diouti*, and *diouto*; first person plural normally *diouzhimp*);  
*ouzh* > *ouzhin* 'against, towards, at/to me' (third person: *outañ*, *outi*, and *outo*; first person plural normally *ouzhimp*).

Note end stress here in the first and second persons.

(iii) Examples of prepositions conjugated with the help of other prepositions:

*a-dreñv* 'behind' + *da* > *a-dreñv din* 'behind me';  
*betek* > *betek* + *e(n)* > *betek ennon* 'until, as far as (me)';  
*e-barzh* > *e-barzh* + *e(n)* > *e-barzh ennon* 'inside me, within me' (this may also be found with noun phrases, e.g. *e-barzh en ti* 'in the house').

(iv) Incorporation of a possessive to give the personal forms, e.g.

*e-lec'h* > *en he lec'h* 'instead of her'; *e-kichen* > *en hor c'hichen* 'near us';  
*diwar-benn* > *diwar ma fenn* 'about me'; *a-zivout* > *war ho tivout* 'concerning you';  
*war-lerc'h* > *war da lerc'h* 'after you'.

Some prepositions have no personal forms, e.g. *aba* 'since', *adalek* 'since', *e-pad* 'during', *eus* 'from', which is replaced here by *a*, and *goude*, where there were forms with possessives, e.g. *em goude* 'after me', *en e c'houde* 'after him', but where now one might use *war-lerc'h* instead.

Many prepositions are used with the third-person singular feminine ending to convey a neuter, or neutral form. Such expressions are very common; here are a few examples (note that some have a temporal or meteorological sense):

*Miz Even* 'oa *anezhi* 'We were in June';  
*Glav* 'oa *anezhi* 'It was raining/rain was in the air';  
*Deomp de'i* 'Let's get down (lit. "go") to it!';  
*Hiziv emañ an deiz kentañ a viz Eost anezhi* 'Today's the first of August'.

Similar and useful here are structures like *en e goazez* ‘sitting, seated’ (*Kit en ho koazez!* ‘Sit down!’), *Mont a ran em c’hoazez* ‘I sit down’, *en e sav* ‘standing, stood up’, *en e aes* ‘at one’s ease’, *warlen e led* ‘stretched out’, *en en c’hourvezh* ‘lying down’, *en e gluch* ‘squatting’, *en e blom* ‘upright’, *war e du (mat)* ‘in a good mood’, *en e bezh* ‘all, altogether’, *war e giz* ‘back’. One simply varies the possessive (and the mutation).

*Eus* ‘from’ (it often replaces *a* in *KLT*), as mentioned above does not have ‘conjugated’ forms (other than those of *a*) – it tends to enjoy a complex relationship with *ouzh*, which may give also *diouzhin*, *deusouzhin*, . . .; and there is the form *deus* or *deuzh*, with *deuzoudon*, *deuzoudout*, *deuzoutañ* – *deuzouti*, *deuzoudomp*, *deuzoudoc’h*, *deuzoutoldeuzoute* (Davalan II 2001: 132 – even Davalan warns against over-confusion here and recommends trying to stick to the standard).

And here are a few useful expressions with common prepositions (this is an enormously rich topic and only the briefest taster can be given here):

(i) *ouzh* ‘at, against’ (attachment, conformity): *stagañ ouzh* ‘to attach to’, *heñvel ouzh* ‘similar to’; *sentiñ ouzh* ‘to obey’, *fachet ouzh* ‘angry with’, *kaout kas ouzh* ‘to feel aversion for’, *miret ouzh unan bennak dala ober un dra bennak* ‘to prevent (someone) from doing something’.

(ii) *gant* ‘with’. Note its meaning ‘by’ in passives:

*Kemeret eo bet ar gontell gant al laer* ‘The knife has been taken by the thief’;  
*Hennezh zo bet sikouret gant e amezeg da adlivañ ar vogereñn* ‘He’s been helped by his neighbour to repaint the little wall’;  
*Ar babig-se zo mounounet gant e vamm-gozh* ‘That baby is spoilt by its grandmother’.

Breton favours the passive: *Kollet he deus Mari he filoù* ‘Mari has lost her batteries’ is fine, but *Kollet eo he filoù gant Mari* lit. ‘Lost is her batteries by Mari’ seems more authentic. Note too: *diskenn gant an derezioù* ‘to go down the steps’; *pignat gant ar skeul* ‘to climb up the ladder’; *gant an tren* ‘by train’.

‘Bring’ and ‘take’ may involve *gant*: *deut eo e draoù gantañ* ‘he’s brought his things (lit. “come is his things (subject) with him”)’ – *aet eo e draoù gantañ* ‘he’s taken his things (lit. “gone is his things (subject) with him”)’ (the latter can even convey ‘steal’ or ‘eat/drink’: *Mont a ra kalz bara ha gwin ganin* ‘I eat a lot of bread and drink a lot of wine’). It is used for possession, even alongside *kaout* ‘to have’: *N’em eus ket a arc’hant ganin* ‘I don’t have any money on me’. It is very important in conveying possession or control (not ownership). Note also the expressions:

*Petra a yelo ganit?* ‘What’ll you have? (lit. “What will go with you?”)’; *Kaset eo he faner ganti* ‘She’s taken her basket (lit. “Taken/Sent is her basket with her”)’.

We find *gant* too after verbs conveying the notions of asking and receiving: *goulenn gant* ‘to ask (someone a question)’ (also *digant* (request)); it may also express manner or reason:

*mervel gant an naon* ‘to die of hunger’, *krenañ gant an aon* ‘to tremble with fear’.

Like *da*, *gant* is used in several impersonal expressions. They may in fact be synonymous, with the nuance that with *gant* there is a greater sense of control. Thus:

*dav e vo ganin* ‘I shall have to’; *kerse e vo gantañ* ‘he will regret’; *mar plij ganeoc’h* ‘if you please’; *kenkoulz eo ganto mont diouzhtu* ‘it’s as well if they went – they’d better go immediately’; *gwelloc’h eo din ober an dra-se* ‘it’s better for me to do that’ (*ganin* here gives a sense of ‘prefer’).

And there are many set phrases:

*glav a zo ganti!* ‘it’s raining’; *mont a reas gant e hent* ‘he went on his way’; *Petra a zo ganit?* ‘What’s up with you?’ (or ‘What’re you doing?’; ‘What have you got?’); *E-pelec’h emamp ganti?* ‘Where are we up to?’; *Chañs vat ganeoc’h!* ‘Good luck to you!’; (*hag*) *echu ganti!* ‘(and) that’s an end to it!’

(iii) *da<sup>L</sup>* basically means ‘to’, but has lots of idiomatic uses. One thing to be borne in mind is that it cannot be used when going *to a person*; in such a situation *davet* is used.

Note *da bemp eur* ‘at five o’clock’, *d’an ampoent* ‘at the moment’, *d’ar Sul* ‘on Sundays’ (also found without the article: *da Sul*), *da nebeutañ*, *da vihanañ* ‘at least’, *da skouer* ‘for example’, and *d’ar red* ‘at a run’.

It is used, as expected, with verbs of communication or a sense of ‘giving’: *reiñ* ‘to give’, *skrivañ* ‘to write’, *lavaret* (often contracted to *lâret*) ‘to say’, *diskouez* ‘to show’, *displegañ* ‘to explain’. Particularly useful is its use with verbs such as *kavout*, *fellout!* *faotañ*, e.g., *me a gav din* ‘I think, it seems to me’, *me a felllfaot din* ‘I want [to]’.

It indicates personal ownership: *Ar c’harr a zo dezhi* – *Da Nolwenn eo ar c’harr* ‘The car is hers/Nolwenn’s’. And it is constructed with a few adjectives, e.g., *ingal eo din* ‘I don’t mind (lit. “it’s equal to me”)’.

It is very common before a verbal noun: for instance after *derc’hel*, *dalc’h* ‘to keep on X-ing’, e.g. *Derc’hel a rin da geginañ*, . . . ‘I’ll carry on cooking. . .’. Other examples:

*Emañ-hi o hastañ d’an ti-gar*, *diouzhtu-kaer he deus un treñ da dapout* ‘She’s rushing to the station, she has a train to catch immediately’  
*N’eo ket chomet da labourat?* ‘Didn’t he stay to work?’

Note constructions such as *daoust da Soaz da vezañ klañv* ‘in spite of Soaz’s being ill’ (or *evit* rather than *daoust da*). And, to avoid all the personal forms of the verb: *ha hi da serriñ he daoulagad* ‘and she closed her eyes’.

Finally, *dav/ret eo da Bêr* ‘Pêr must’, *mall eo dezho* ‘they are in a hurry’ (also *war: warn(ezh)o*), *tomm eo dezhi* ‘she’s hot’ (but *anoued/riv am eus* ‘I’m cold’), *fall e oa da Soaz* ‘Soaz didn’t feel well’, *mat e vefe deoc’h* ‘it would be good for you to . . .’. And much more. Note too: *Arabab (eo) deoc’h butunat!* ‘Don’t smoke!’ (lit. ‘It is prohibited to you to smoke’).

(iv) *e*, *en* (*en* occurring before *n*, *t*, *d*, *h* or vowels) conveys ‘at, in, within, to’ before the place where one is, which one is entering – even with verbs of movement: *e Landreger* ‘in Landreger’, *mont en ti* ‘to enter the house’, *mont e kêr* ‘to go to town’ (but *mont da greiz-kêr* ‘to go to the town centre’). Some feel that *e* is used only in stationary situations. *Elen* and *e-barzh* (*ba*) (very common for ‘in’) may be differentiated, *e*, *en* as ‘in/at’ and *e-barzh* as ‘in the interior of’: *en ti* ‘in the house, at home’, *e-barzh an ti* (also *e-barzh en ti*) ‘inside the house’.

(v) *war*<sup>L</sup> has a general meaning ‘on’ and is paired with *diwar* ‘from’. Useful expressions include *mont war droad* ‘to be on foot’, *war yun* ‘without having had any breakfast’, *tizh/mall/pres a zo warnon* ‘I’m in a hurry’. Before a verbal noun it can have an augmentative sense: *mont war goshaat* ‘to be getting older’ (*koshaat* ‘to get older’). As *war a* followed by a personal form of a verb, it has the sense ‘so far as . . .’: *war a glevan* ‘so far as I’ve heard/know’, *war a lavarar* ‘so far as people say’.

Favereau 1997b: 407–49 gives lots more information.

## Verbs

### *Verbal and other particles*

Traditionally there are two verbal particles:

- a*<sup>L</sup>: after the subject, the direct object, the infinitive in the periphrastic construction, and the antecedent of ‘who, which’;
- e*<sup>M</sup>: after the indirect object, adverbs, the complement of ‘to be’, and to introduce noun clauses.

Both may be elided; the mutation remains, and in some dialects the two particles may even merge and cause lenition; in the NE-SW Central dialects *e* seems moribund and replaced by *a* (Hewitt 2002: 31).

The following should be mentioned:

- ni*<sup>L</sup>: intensive or emphatic, following any emphasized word or phrase (negated by placing *n’eo ket* before the emphasized word or phrase);
- na*<sup>L</sup>: after the antecedent of ‘who, which’ and in the imperative;
- ne*<sup>L</sup>: after the subject, the direct object, the indirect object, adverbs, and introducing noun clauses (negator);
- o*<sup>M</sup>: before the verbal noun (= progressive with *bezañ* ‘to be’, i.e. = the present participle); it becomes *oc’h* before a vowel or *h* beginning the verbal noun and *ouzh* if the verbal noun is preceded by an object pronoun; in part of Treger and elsewhere, notably the south-east and spreading, it is replaced by *é*;
- en ur*<sup>L</sup>: before the verbal noun (= the gerund – conveying an accompanying action, with the same subject as the main verb);
- ha* + sentence: interrogative (no effects on word order) (also *daoust ha*);
- ma*<sup>M</sup>: introducing adverbial clauses (may be preceded by prepositions, e.g. *evit ma* ‘in order that, in spite of’) (in some dialects it lenites);
- ra*<sup>L</sup>: the optative (plus the future tense; or *da*, if the subject comes first).

### *An overview of the verb*

Leaving aside for the moment *bezañ* (also *bout*) ‘to be’ and *kaout/endevout* ‘to have’, verbs have different manifestations depending on the emphasis, insistence, focus, or topicalization within the utterance. There is a periphrastic, a synthetic, a radical/apersonal/analytic, and a progressive form. There are three singular forms, three plural forms, and a neutral, general, or non-personal form (for this last see Hewitt 2002: 1, 38; he sees it as implying an indeterminate human subject; they are not passives, since they may not be constructed with an agentive phrase). There is a present tense, an imperfect tense, a preterite (least rarely in the third person and largely restricted to the written language), a future tense (formerly the present subjunctive), various compound past tenses, various

progressive and habitual forms (involving *bezañ*), and two conditionals (a potential and a hypothetical (*irrealis*), formerly the imperfect subjunctive and pluperfect indicative respectively).

Present participles and gerunds are formed by preceding the verbal noun by particles (*o<sup>M</sup>* and *en ur<sup>L</sup>* respectively: *En ti e oan o labourat* ‘I was working in the house’ – *Emaon o tont eus Kemper* – *Me zo o tont eus Kemper* ‘I’m coming from Kemper’ – *O sellet e oan ouzh an tele en ur skrivañ ul lizher* ‘I was watching TV writing a letter’). Compare *Gwelet em eus anezhañ o vont kuit* ‘I saw him leaving [= him leaving]’ – *Gwelet em eus anezhañ en ur vont kuit* ‘I saw him while I was leaving’. Perhaps *Yann a oa diaes e galon o kuitaat e vro* ‘Yann felt ill at ease leaving his “country”’ (Morvannou 1978–80 I: 287) nicely indicates that *Yann* is not the subject. Note too *Oc’h azezañ e teui a-benn* ‘By sitting down (= “If you sit down”), you’ll manage it’.

The verbal noun may be identical with the radical or base, which is the core form of the verb, or (setting aside prefixes) may have a suffix, which has to be removed to find the radical. Occasionally, there are differences between the radical on its own and its form in the verbal noun, e.g. *gounit* ‘to win’, radical *gounez*, *derc’hel* ‘to hold’, radical *dal’ch* (an alternative verbal noun is *del’cher*, where there is less of a difference); *reiñ* ‘to give’, radical *ro*; *tevel* ‘to be silent’, radical *tav*; and there are orthographic questions with verbs with the verbal noun in *-iañ*, when the *i* is *jot* and palatalizes the preceding consonant. The various forms will be looked at below.

Prefixes do not have an effect here; examples of prefixes include *de-* ‘towards the speaker’, e.g. *kas* ‘to take, send’, *degas* ‘to bring’, *ad-* ‘repetition’, e.g. *moulañ* ‘to print’, *advoulañ* ‘to reprint’, *di-* ‘un-’, e.g. *kreskiñ* ‘to grow’, *digreskiñ* ‘to diminish’, *gwiskañ* ‘to dress’, *diwiskañ* ‘to undress’; *dis-* ‘negates’, e.g. *prizañ* ‘to evaluate, esteem’, *disprizañ* ‘to scorn’; *ken-/kem-* ‘co(n)m- (and equivalents)’, e.g. *derc’hel* ‘to hold, “-tain”’, *kenderc’hel* ‘to continue’, *pouezañ* ‘to weigh’, *kempouezañ* ‘to balance, settle’; *en-/lem-* ‘in’, e.g. *gervel* ‘to call’, *engervel* ‘to summon, invoke’. Note that lenition is often caused.

The verbs for ‘to go’, ‘to do’, and ‘to know’ (and to some extent ‘to come’) have certain irregularities. The verbs ‘to go’ and ‘to do’, respectively *mont* and *ober*, are extremely similar; the radical of *mont* is *a*, and that of *ober* is *gra*. As for *gouzout* ‘to know’, the irregularity (or variation) is greater: *goar*, *gouez*, *goui*. As for *dont* ‘to come’, the standard radical is *deu*, but further east we have *da*.

The verb *bezañ* ‘to be’ has numerous forms in the present, less in the other tenses, conveying identification (*Yann on* ‘I’m Yann’), process/location/situation (*Emaon o vont da Kemper* ‘I’m going to Kemper’), frequency/habit (*Komzet e vez brezhoneg amañ* ‘Breton is spoken here’), indefinite (‘there is/are’: *Tud zo el liorzh* – *El liorzh ez eus/zo tud* ‘There are people in the garden’) – the ‘rule’ here is that *zo* is used if what there is/are comes first, but *zo* is often used as in the second example, and *Bez’ zo* is common, thus *Bez’ zo tud el liorzh*, and subject-first (= analytic, apersonal): *Me zo o vont da Kemper* ‘I’m going to Kemper’. Useful is it to compare *Tud zo deuet* – *Deuet ez eus/zo tud* ‘There are people in the garden’ with *An dud zo deuet* – *Deuet eo an dud* ‘The people have come’.

The verb *kaout* ‘to have’ may alternatively be conveyed by *bezañ* ‘to be’ with prepositional constructions with *gant* (‘having something “on” one’) and *da* (indicating ownership), but a special verb has been created out of forms of the verb ‘to be’ with pronominal forms. This is the only verb in Breton which displays full agreement between itself and the subject: *Me am eus* ‘I have’, but *Me a lenn* (not *Me a lennan*) ‘I read’. This verb (if it is a verb), and *bezañ* ‘to be’, is used in the formation of compound tenses and of the passive voice. The alternative verbal noun or infinitive *endevout* is strictly speaking a third person singular masculine form, as will be seen later.

All verbs other than *kaout* display no agreement if the subject is independently expressed, unless the verb is negative and at the same time a form referring to the subject precedes the verb: *Me zo* 'I am', *Me a lenno* 'I'll read (*lenno* is the third person singular future)', but *Me ne vin ket er gêr* 'Me, I shan't be at home'.

Reflexives are rendered by the particle *en em* placed in front of the lexical verb ('dress, wash', etc.; it is not an auxiliary) and causing lenition: *En em gavout a rin gant Soazig* 'I'll meet Soazig' (lit. 'I'll find myself with Soazig'). *En em* replaces the particle *a* or *e*.

### More detail

#### (a) Forms of verbs other than *bezañ* and *kaout*

There are very few irregular verbs (*ober* 'to do', *mont* 'to go', *gouzout* 'to know'), and one may feel that even they are barely irregular. The basic pattern is a verbal noun (sometimes referred to as the infinitive), e.g. *reded* 'to run' – from this we find the base or radical (it may be identical with the verbal noun). Here it is *red*. That form gives us the basic form of the imperative (i.e. base + zero); add *-it* for the plural or formal form, and *-omp* for 'let's'. It is also the base on which everything else is formed. Let us look at a variety of verbal-noun forms, bearing in mind that there will be variation over the Breton-language area and will be other suffixes. Look for regularities (and irregularities) in behaviour in what follows.

verbal noun	radical	meaning	notes
<i>komz</i>	<i>komz</i>	to speak	suffix-less
<i>kemer</i>	<i>kemer</i>	to take	suffix-less
<i>gortoz</i>	<i>gortoz</i>	to wait	suffix-less
<i>lenn</i>	<i>lenn</i>	to read	suffix-less
<i>selaou</i>	<i>selaou</i>	to listen (to)	suffix-less
<i>hadañ</i>	<i>had</i>	to sow	the most common suffix
<i>kanañ</i>	<i>kan</i>	to sing	the most common suffix
<i>skrivañ</i>	<i>skriv</i>	to write	the most common suffix
<i>studiañ</i>	<i>studi</i>	to study	the <i>i</i> is vocalic (stressed if penultimate)
<i>heuliañ</i>	<i>heuilh</i>	to follow	radical spelling where ending in <i>i-</i> (= <i>l</i> and <i>n</i> )
<i>bleniañ</i>	<i>blegn</i>	to drive	radical spelling where ending in <i>i-</i> (= <i>l</i> and <i>n</i> )
<i>glebiañ</i>	<i>gleb(i)</i>	to wet	<i>glebi</i> where ending starts in <i>a</i> , <i>e</i> , <i>o</i>
<i>debrñ</i>	<i>debr</i>	to eat	note the <i>e</i> does not change
<i>terriñ</i>	<i>torr</i>	to break	note the change
<i>serriñ</i>	<i>serr</i>	to close	no change
<i>deskiñ</i>	<i>desk</i>	to teach/learn	no change
<i>kregiñ</i>	<i>krog</i>	to begin	change
<i>echuiñ</i>	<i>echu</i>	to end	no change
<i>birviñ</i>	<i>berv</i>	to boil	change
<i>treiñ</i>	<i>tro</i>	to turn	note the change
<i>goleiñ</i>	<i>golo</i>	to cover	the change in <i>-eiñ</i> is regular
<i>teiñ</i>	<i>to</i>	to roof	as above
<i>sellet</i>	<i>sell</i>	to look	straightforward (many verbs in <i>-et</i> have been given in the standard in <i>-out</i> , but this is disappearing)
<i>gwelet</i>	<i>gwel</i>	to see	straightforward
<i>klevet</i>	<i>klev</i>	to hear	straightforward
<i>lavaret/lâret</i>	<i>lavar/lâr</i>	to say	as above

<i>gwellaat</i>	<i>gwell(a)</i>	to get better	the <i>-a</i> may drop, particularly with certain endings; this ending indicates something augmentative or iterative and fortifies a preceding consonant: <i>gwashaat</i> 'to get worse'
<i>lakaat</i>	<i>lak(a)</i>	to put	as above
<i>labourat</i>	<i>labour</i>	to work	this ending indicates an action
<i>avalaoua</i>	<i>avalaoua</i>	to collect apples	this suffix indicates collecting and fortifies
<i>merc'heta</i>	<i>merc'heta</i>	to womanize	as above, cf. <i>merc'hed</i> 'girls'
<i>huchal</i>	<i>huch</i>	to shout	this ending often indicates a sound
<i>kaozeal</i>	<i>kaoze</i>	to chat, speak	as above
<i>teurel</i>	<i>taol</i>	to throw	note the change where a verbal noun is in <i>-el</i> or <i>-er</i>
<i>sevel</i>	<i>sav</i>	to r(a)ise	as above
<i>gervell/gelver</i>	<i>galv</i>	to call	as above
<i>genel</i>	<i>gan</i>	to give birth to	as above
<i>lezel/lezer</i>	<i>lez</i>	to let	an exception
<i>dougen</i>	<i>doug</i>	to carry	a rare ending
<i>goulenn</i>	<i>goul</i>	to demand	very often 'to ask' in its radical form
<i>c'hoarvezout</i>	<i>c'hoarvez</i>	to happen	such verbs are usually based on <i>bout</i> 'to be'
<i>gallout</i>	<i>gall/gell</i>	to be able	irregular lenition to <i>h-</i> after <i>ne</i> : <i>n'hellan ket</i> 'I can't'
<i>erruout</i>	<i>erru</i>	to arrive	as above
<i>c'hoarz'hin</i>	<i>c'hoarzh</i>	to laugh	a rare ending
<i>redek</i>	<i>red</i>	to run	a rare ending
<i>laerezh</i>	<i>laer</i>	to steal	a rare ending
<i>gounit</i>	<i>gounez</i>	to win	unique
<i>mont</i>	<i>a</i>	to go	'irregular'
<i>ober</i>	<i>gra</i>	to do	'irregular'
<i>dont</i>	<i>deu, da</i>	to come	anomalous
<i>gouzout</i>	<i>goar,</i> <i>gouez,</i> <i>goui</i>	to know	anomalous

In the Central area many verbs in *-añ* and *-iñ* are in *-o* instead, but this is not currently a feature of the standard.

Setting aside the last four verbs (in part, since overall they behave like other verbs), the only problems which arise are the additions of endings to radicals ending in vowels other than *e*; here we may drop the final vowel or have contractions. An illustrative table is in order, first of endings (the last two are the two conditionals), namely the three singular persons, the three plural persons, and the neutral, general, or non-personal form, all added to the radical:

present:	<i>-an, -ez, -ø (-a), -omp, -it, -ont, -er</i>
future:	<i>-in, -i, -o, -imp (-fomp), -ot (-fec'h), -ont (-font), -or</i>
imperfect:	<i>-en, -es, -e, -emp, -ec'h, -ent, -ed</i>
preterite:	<i>-is, -jout, -as, -jomp, -joc'h, -jont, -jod</i>
potential:	<i>-fen, -fes, -fe, -femp, -fec'h, -fent, -fed</i>



- hypothetical: *-jen, -jes, -je, -jemp, -jec'h, -jent, -jed*  
 imperative: 2PS *-ø* (radical), 3PS *-et*, 1PP *-omp*, 2PP *-it*, 3PP *-ent* (the negative imperative is *na<sup>L</sup>* + verb + *ket*, etc. or use is made of *arabat* plus the verbal noun)  
 past participle: *-et* (the only exception, apart from *bezañ* and *kaout*, with *bet* (regular, from *bout*), is *deut* alongside regular *deuet* from *dont*)

Now for actual examples (various tenses are given, to illustrate what may happen):

- lenn* *lennan, lennez, lenn, lennomp, lennit, lennont, lenner* (present)  
*kanañ* *kanin, kani, kano, kanimp (kanfomp), kanot (kanfec'h), kanint (kanfont), kanor* (future)  
*debriñ* *debren, debres, debre, debremp, debrec'h, debrent, debred* (imperfect)  
*heuliañ* *heuilhis, heuilhjout, heulias, heuilhjomp, heuilhjoc'h, heuilhjont, heuilhjod* (preterite)  
*glebiañ* *glebis, glebjout, glebias, glebjomp, glebjoc'h, glebjont, glebjod* (preterite)  
*studiañ* *studian, studiez, studi, studiomp, studiit, studiont, studier* (radical *i* = syllabic) (present)  
*lakaat* *lakafen, lakafes, lakafe, lakafemp, lakafec'h, lakafec'h, lakafent* (potential – replace *-f-* with *-j-* for the hypothetical; thus the radical is as a rule *laka*, in which case *i* is inserted before *o*, e.g. 3PS future *lakaio*; this often happens with verbs whose radical ends in a vowel; in speech the *-a* of the radical is often pronounced *e*)  
*merc'heta* *merc'hetan, merc'hetez, merc'heta, merc'hetomp, merc'hetit, merc'hetont, mercheter* (present; in such verbs we may have a regular conjugation on the radical *merc'heta* or a conjugation on the radical *merc'het* except for 3PS present and 2PS imperative *merc'heta*)  
*mont*: *an, ez, a, eomp, it, eont, eer; in, i, aiolay/yelo, aimp, eot, aint, eor; aen, aes, ae, aemp, aec'h, aent, aed; is, ejout, eas, ejomp, ejoc'h, ejont, ejod; afen, etc.; imperative = kae (or kerzh from kerzhout 'to walk'), deomp or eomp, kit (or kerzhit), negative n'a ket, n'eomp ket, n'it ket* (2PS, 1PP, 2PP; 3PS and 3PP = *aet, aent*); past participle *aet* (after the particle *a* we often have preposed *y-*; *e* becomes *ez* or *ec'h*; *ne* may become *n'* or other forms before a vowel).  
*ober* *gran, grez, gra, greomp, grit, greont, greer; grin, gri, graiol/gray, graimp, greot, grait, greor; graen, graes, grae, graemp, graec'h, graent, graed; gris, grejout, greas, grejomp, grejoc'h, grejont, grejod; grafen, etc.* (the *g* is most often absent through lenition – original the forms were *gwr-*, so *g* dropped through lenition and *w* was deleted; regular lenition occurs, e.g. *adc'hraet* 'redone'; note how close this verb is to *mont*).  
*gouzout* *gouzon, gouzout, goar, gouzomp, gouzoc'h, gouzont, gouzer; gouezin, gouezi, gouezo, gouezimp, gouezot, gouezint, gouezor; gouezen, etc. or gouien, etc.; gouezis, gouezjout, gouezas, gouezjomp, gouezjoc'h, gouezjont, gouezjod; goufen, etc.; gouijen, etc.; past participle gouezet* (there is more variation here, including forms based on the radical *goar*; the *g-* is usually absent in finite forms; otherwise regular lenition may occur; note there is 'contamination' with *bezañ* 'to be' in the present).

*dont* *deuan, deues, deu, deuomp, deuit, deuont, deuer; deuin, deui, deuiol/deuy, deuimp, deuiot, deuint, deuior; deuen, etc.; deuis, deujout, deuias, deujomp, etc.; deufen, etc.; imperative deus (regular when negative: na zeul/deu ket, or na zeuez/deuez ket using the present instead), deuomp, deu(i)t.*

(b) The verbs *bezañ/bout* 'to be' and *kaout/endevout* 'to have'

The first verbal noun in each pair is more commonly encountered; the latter of each is more frequent in the east, with *bout* quite common in the centre; the habitual or frequentative forms are a regular conjugation of *bezañ*, and the past participle, *bet*, shared by both verbs, is derived from *bout* (in the compound tenses *bezañ* uses itself as auxiliary and *kaout* uses itself, e.g. *bet on* 'I have been' – *bet em eus* 'I have had'). *Kaout* is a reduction of *kavout* 'to find'. The two verbs are exceptionally complex, *kaout* being a derivative of *bezañ*, essentially 'to be to someone'.

First, a paradigm of *bezañ*:

	radical	analytic	habitual	situative	synthetic	indefinite
<i>bezañ/bout</i>	<i>bez</i>	(a) <i>zo</i>	<i>vezan</i>	<i>emaon</i>	<i>on (oun)</i>	–
		(a) <i>zo</i>	<i>vezez</i>	<i>emaout</i>	<i>out</i>	–
		(a) <i>zo</i>	<i>vez</i>	<i>emañ</i>	<i>eo eus</i>	
		(a) <i>zo</i>	<i>vezomp</i>	<i>emaomp</i>	<i>omp</i>	–
		(a) <i>zo</i>	<i>vezit</i>	<i>emaoc'h</i>	<i>oc'h</i>	–
		(a) <i>zo</i>	<i>vezont</i>	<i>emaint</i>	<i>int (eus)</i>	
		((a) <i>zo</i> )	<i>vezer</i>	<i>emeur</i>	<i>oar/eur</i>	–

Future: *vin, vi, vo, vimp, viot/vioc'h, vint, vior* (also *vezin*, etc., which looks habitual but is not necessarily so);

Imperfect: *oan, oas, oa, oamp, oac'h, oant, oad*;

Imperfect situative: *edon, edos, edo, edomp, edoc'h, edont, edod*;

Imperfect habitual: *vezen, vezes, veze, vezemp, vezec'h, vezent, vezed*;

Preterite: *voen, voes, voe, voemp, voec'h, voed*;

Subjunctive: *ven, ves, ve, vemp, vec'h, vent, ver* (rare, often optative; see Favereau 1997b: 250–2);

Conditionals: potential *vefen*, etc. and hypothetical *vijen*, etc. (the other endings as in the regular imperfect);

Imperative: *Bez!, Bezet!, Bezomp!, Bezit!, Bezent!*;

Past participle: *bet*.

The habitual conveys a very general frequency or repetition, not a specific one; one even finds it in the 'progressive', e.g. *Me a vez o lenn* 'I'm often/repeatedly reading'. There is an understandable floating between it and the non-personal form (strictly speaking, the non-personal is not habitual), and between the non-personal form *oar/eur* and the non-personal form of the habitual, *vezer*, which will often prevail.

The situative emphasizes specific time and place, thus covers progressive. In much of the Breton-speaking area only the third-person forms of the present exist. The only constraint on their usage is that the subject may not precede the affirmative forms, thus *\*me emeon* and *\*Nolwenn emañ* must be *me (a) zo* 'I am' and *Nolwenn a zo* 'Nolwenn is' (or *Emaon* and *Emañ Nolwenn* respectively). The imperfect situative is restricted to the Leon area and to the standard.

The indefinite serves to convey 'there is' and in the present we mainly have *zo*, both

after what there is and after, say, an adverb, e.g. *Bara zo en ti* and *En ti zo bara* ‘there’s bread in the house’, though the standard prefers *En ti ez eus bara* for the second. The negative has *N’eus ket a vara en ti* or *N’eus ket bara en ti* ‘there’s no bread in the house’, or *N’eus kontell ebet en ti* ‘there isn’t a knife in the house’ (for count nouns) – typically the negated verb comes first. One may discern the roots of ‘to have’ here – see below. For all the other tenses, and for the habitual present, one uses the analytic form, identical with the third person singular, preceded by *a* or *e*: *Bara a vo en ti*, *En ti e vo bara*, *Ne vo ket a vara en ti*, *Ne vo kontell ebet en ti*.

The ‘synthetic’ is just as synthetic as the habitual and the situative, so might perhaps better be seen as the ‘identifying’, and copular, form; it can be seen that the situative is in most persons the identifying form preceded by *ema-* (in the third persons we have *ema-* plus a pronoun – *emañ* is strictly speaking masculine, and one comes across *emei* for the feminine). With the exception of the situative forms, the synthetic forms must come second in the sentence, although one may come across them introduced, sentence-initially, by *e*, and they may occur sentence-initially in responses to yes/no-questions (most often negative): *Vioc’h ket?* – *Bin* ‘Won’t you be?’ – ‘Yes, I will’. This also happens with *ober* ‘to do’, *mont* ‘to go’, *dont* ‘to come’, *gouzout* ‘to know’, and *kaout* ‘to have’.

The analytic/apersonal forms are used where the subject is independently expressed – the one apparent exception is where the subject precedes a negative form, thus *Me ne oan ket* ‘Me, I wasn’t’; one may argue that the ‘subject’ here is not actually the subject.

Secondly, a paradigm of *kaout* (this is very incomplete and a little uncertain in some of the spoken spellings – I vary ‘other’ and ‘spoken’ to broaden the examples given; see the notes after the paradigm for an expansion and explanation):

present neutral			present habitual		future	
s/do+	other	spoken	s/do+	other	s/do+	other
<i>am eus</i>	<i>em eus</i>	<i>'m eus</i>	<i>am bez</i>	<i>em bez</i>	<i>am bo</i>	<i>em bo</i>
<i>ac'h eus</i>	<i>ec'h eus</i>	<i>'peus/'feus</i>	<i>az pez</i>	<i>ez pez</i>	<i>az po</i>	<i>ez po</i>
	<i>en deus</i>	<i>'neus</i>	<i>en dez</i>	<i>en dez</i>	<i>en do</i>	<i>en do</i>
	<i>he deus</i>	<i>'deus/'neus</i>	<i>he dez</i>	<i>he dez</i>	<i>he do</i>	<i>he do</i>
	<i>hon eus</i>	<i>neusomp</i>	<i>hor bez</i>	<i>hor bez</i>	<i>hor bo</i>	<i>hor bo</i>
	<i>hoc'h eus</i>	<i>'peus</i>	<i>ho pez</i>	<i>ho pez</i>	<i>ho po</i>	<i>ho po</i>
	<i>o deus</i>	<i>neusont</i>	<i>o dez</i>	<i>o dez</i>	<i>o do</i>	<i>o do</i>

imperfect neutral			imperfect habitual		conditional i (potential)	
s/do+	other	spoken	s/do+	spoken	s/do+	other
<i>am boa</i>	<i>em boa</i>	<i>'moa</i>	<i>am beze</i>	<i>'meze</i>	<i>am befe</i>	<i>em befe</i>
<i>az poa</i>	<i>ez poa</i>	<i>'poa/'foa</i>	<i>az peze</i>	<i>'pezel'eze</i>	<i>az pefe</i>	<i>ez pefe</i>
	<i>en doa</i>	<i>'noa</i>	<i>en deze</i>	<i>'neze</i>	<i>en defe</i>	<i>en defe</i>
	<i>he doa</i>	<i>'doa/'noa</i>	<i>he deze</i>	<i>'dezel'neze</i>	<i>he defe</i>	<i>he defe</i>
	<i>hor boa</i>	<i>moamp</i>	<i>hor bez</i>	<i>mezemp</i>	<i>hor befe</i>	<i>hor befe</i>
	<i>ho poa</i>	<i>'poa</i>	<i>ho pez</i>	<i>'peze</i>	<i>ho pefe</i>	<i>ho pefe</i>
	<i>o doa</i>	<i>noant</i>	<i>o dez</i>	<i>nezent</i>	<i>o defe</i>	<i>o defe</i>

Imperative: *'Z pezl!*, *Hor bezet!*, *Ho pe(ze)t!* (2PS, 1PP, 2PP respectively)

Past participle: *bet*.

For the Conditional II (hypothetical) replace *-efe* with *-ije*. The 2PS also has forms in *f-*, and *az*, *ez* may precede.

The above is a set of indefinite forms of *bezañ* with traces of the particles *a* and *e*, infixed object pronouns, and various assimilations/mutations and insertions operating between the pronouns and the indefinite forms – underlying *eus* may be *beus* (which is found). There may too be *dev-* added in the third persons – clearly there in the present, viz. *en deus*, *he deus*, *o deus*, e.g. *en devez*, thus *devo*, *devoa*, *deveze*, *devefe*, *devije*. The second person singular is particularly variable, with forms in at least '*c'h*', '*z*', '*f*', and '*t*'. Note in particular that there is a certain tendency to assimilate *kaout* to other Breton verbs by taking the third person singular masculine as 'analytic' form; note too that there may be synthetic forms in the first person plural and third person plural, usable unless the 'subject' precedes (there are more manifestations of those synthetic forms than given). This assimilation is important as it indicates a verbalization of *kaout*, which otherwise one might wish to see as a set of expressions coming under the verb *bezañ*.

No non-personal forms have been given; on the whole *ez eus* and other indefinites of *bezañ* are used for this.

Emphasis of possession may be conveyed by placing *bez'* in front of the verb, e.g. *Bez' em boa amzer* 'I really had time' (Favereau 1997b: 217; slightly adapted). We will come across this again when we look at word order.

Extremely useful is a little summary table given by Favereau 1997b: 218 (slightly adapted):

	<b>littéraire</b>	<b>populaire</b>
1PS	' <i>m</i> ( <i>b-</i> )	' <i>m-</i>
2PS	' <i>c'h</i> +/' <i>z</i> <i>p-</i>	' <i>f-/t-</i>
3PSM	<i>en d</i> ( <i>ev</i> )-	' <i>n-</i>
3PSF	<i>he d</i> ( <i>ev</i> )-	' <i>n-</i>
1PP	<i>hon/hor b-</i>	<i>m . . . Vmp</i>
2PP	<i>ho</i> ( <i>c'h</i> ) +/ <i>ho p-</i>	' <i>p-</i>
3PP	<i>o d</i> ( <i>ev</i> )-	<i>n . . . int</i>

Bearing in mind that the 2PS and 2PP forms in *c'h* apply only to the present neutral, one affixes to the hyphen or inserts where we have '+' or '...' *eus*, *o*, *oa*, *e*, *ez*, *eze*, *efe*, *ije*. The 'V' indicates insertion of an appropriate tense/mood element.

Recall that 'to have' is very often conveyed by *bezañ da unan bennak* 'lit. "to be to someone" (ownership)' and *bezañ gant unan bennak* 'lit. "to be with someone" (on one's person)'.

### (c) Using Breton verbs

The analytic or apersonal is used where the subject is independently expressed. We may first exemplify this with instances where the subject precedes an affirmative verb; one might argue as to whether this is indeed the subject or not, since it may convey a certain insistence on the 'subject'; however, since the subject is not otherwise, i.e. in the verb, expressed, it seems acceptable. Thus, taking the verb *reded* 'to run', with radical *red*, we have:

*me, te, eñ, hi, ni, c'hwi, int a red* 'I, you, . . . read(s)'

Given the particle *a* and its role in relatives, one might see this as 'I am the one who runs'. Note a few instances where we have this in what seem like impersonal expressions: *Me a fell din chom hep kousket* 'I want not to sleep', *Me a gave din e . . .* 'I thought that . . . /It

seemed to me that . . . ' (from *fellout* and *kavout*; the subject is conveyed by *da* + X; note the negative infinitive: *chom hep* 'to remain without', also *tremen hep* 'to pass without', as well as *nompas*, all followed by the verbal noun).

For the future we add *-o*, for the imperfect *-e*, for the preterite *-as*, and for the conditionals *-fe* and *-je*. These are all third person singular forms.

Note too, with the subject expressed elsewhere (this is almost exclusively with third-person subjects):

*El liorz e c'hoarie ar vugale* 'The children played in the garden';

*Al levr a lenno Yannig ha Mona* 'Yannig and Mona will read the book'.

In the negative, if a third-person plural subject precedes, we use the synthetic form (see below):

*Al laboused ne nijont ket* 'The birds, they don't fly', but *Ne nij ket al laboused* 'The birds don't fly'.

The argument that the preposed subject is not in fact the subject is more telling here; the subject is actually in the verb ending. As an aside on the direct object of a negated verb, note the following: *N'emaon ket o lenn al levr* 'I'm not reading the book' – *N'emaon o lenn levr ebet* 'I'm not reading a book' (count noun) – *N'emaon ket o lenn ul levr* 'I'm not reading one book' (i.e. probably 'several') – *N'emaon ket o tebriñ bara* or *a vara* 'I'm not eating (any) bread' (mass, non-count).

So far the verb has not come first – as a rule it must come in second place in Breton; cases where it comes first are rare – clear such instances are where we have the imperative: *Deomp d'ar gêr!* 'Let's go home!' and in positive responses to negative questions: *Ne vo ket er skol?* – *Bo* 'Won't he be at school?' – 'Yes, he will'. One might argue for verb-first when the situative is used: *Emaomp o chom e Landreger* 'We live in Landreger/Tréguier'; related are expressions with, for example, *bezañ* 'to be', *gallout* 'to be able', *mont* 'to go', and *rankout* 'to have to': *E vin er gêr* 'I'll be at home', *E c'hall bezañ* 'Maybe', *E rankan chom amañ* 'I have to remain here', *Ec'h a da Gemper* 'He's going to Kemper/Quimper'. Note that we still need a particle.

The verb may seem to come first in the periphrastic; here we use *ober* 'to do' as auxiliary, and the subject is in the auxiliary unless independently expressed):

*redek a ran, a rez, a ra, a reomp, a rit, a reont, a reer* (plus the various tenses and moods of *ober*).

But note *C'hoari a ra ar vugale* 'The children play', with the apersonal because the subject is independently expressed.

In the periphrastic there is a slight insistence on the lexical meaning of the verb. We notice something similar, more insistent, in the construction *bez'e* + verb, e.g. *Bez'e raint o menoz mont da Vro-Saoz* 'They'll decide to go to go to England' (lit. 'They'll make their idea to go to England').

Note a transitive verb: *Lenn a ran al levr* 'I read the book' – in other words, the direct object (this can be extended to any other verbal complement) comes after the whole periphrastic. One may certainly have *Lenn al levr a ran*, doubtless closer to the construction's origin, but it may tend to be somewhat insistent on or emphatic of the constituent *lenn al levr*.

If the subject isn't expressed, we put endings on the verb (this is the synthetic) – this may have a certain 'habitual' or 'timeless' sense, like English 'I read' rather than 'I'm reading' (see below). Thus:

Present: *redan, redez, red, redomp, redit, redont*;  
 Future: *redin, redi, redo, redimp, redot, redint*;  
 Imperfect: *reden, redes, rede, redemp, reded'h, redent*;  
 Preterite: *redis, redjout, redas, redjomp, redjoc'h, redjont*;  
 Conditionals I and II: the imperfect *-e-* preceded by *f* or *j*.

Of considerable importance is the progressive, in which any finite tense or mood form of *bezañ* may be used alongside the present participle. This is most notable, perhaps, with the situative, e.g. *Emañ Soazig o naetaat he dilhad* 'Soazig is cleaning her clothes'; subject-first we have *Soazig (a) zo o naetaat he dilhad*; negative simply have *n'emañ ket* in both sentences. Notable are instances where semantic differences of meaning have crept in, e.g. *Emaon o chom amañ* 'I live here' – *Amañ e choman* 'I'm staying here, not moving' (*chom*); *Eno e oa o teskiñ* 'He was on a course there' – *Deskiñ mat a ra* 'He's learning/learns well' (*deskiñ*); *Un davarn eo emañ o terc'hel* 'He runs a bar' – *En e zorn e talc'he ur gontell* 'He was holding/held a knife in his hand' (*derc'hel*); *O labourat emañ e ti Leclerc* 'She works at Leclerc' – *Yannig a labour mat* 'Yannig's working/works well' (*labourat*) (Favereau 1997b: 237–8). Hewitt 2002: 3 notes the Breton progressive as appearing 'to lay stress on "control by the subject"'.

Breton has a series of compound or perfect tenses, e.g. 'I have/had/will have done', constructed with the past participle and an appropriate form of the verb *kaout* or *bezañ* as auxiliary; even the habitual forms may be used, e.g. *Pa'm bez evet ur banne sistr* 'Whenever I've drunk some cider; Usually when I've drunk some cider'. The past participle is formed by adding *-et* to the radical, e.g. *redet* from *red*, radical of *reded* 'to run'. The auxiliary is selected rather as in French. The actual meaning may be closer to English usage, namely that a use of the present tense of the auxiliary will refer to something done today or habitually; the pluperfect auxiliary will refer to something set in the more remote past (see Favereau 1997b: 254 and his references to Humphreys 1995). Thus:

*Gwelet em eus Yann hiziv* 'I've seen/saw Yann today' – *Gwelet em boa Morwenna dec'h*  
 'I saw Morwenna yesterday'

The present may be used: *Aet e oan da Gastell-Paol dec'h* or *Aet on da Gastell-Paol dec'h* 'I went to St Pol de Léon yesterday' (lit. 'Went I-was/I-am to Kastell-Paol yesterday', with *bezañ*).

In the case of intransitives, as just given, one may have the choice, with some sense of *kaout* when an act or action is emphasized and *bezañ* when a state (or a change thereof) or result is emphasized – it is very fine, a question of what one wishes to emphasize. Thus Favereau 1997b: 267 gives several examples, among them *Kouezhet on en e gichen* 'I fell near him (and doubtless was lying there)' – *Kouezhet em eus en ur zont* 'I fell on coming (a part of the action)'.

Different from French, we have this in reflexives too. Favereau 1997b: 265–6 gives *En em glevet hon eus* 'We have had a good discussion' – *En em glevet omp* 'We have agreed, are agreed'. Overall he notes that *kaout* is far more frequent, except for certain verbs, e.g. *en em gavout gant unan bennak* 'to find oneself (with), meet someone', with *bezañ*. This may come down to dialect (Hewitt 2002: 3).

Note the very common ‘super-compound’, which may emphasize something being finished (Favereau 1997b: 256): *Lennet em eus bet al levr-se* ‘I’ve long since read that book’ – *Bet on bet e Montroulez* ‘I’ve been to Montroulez’. Note too the use of *ober* in an insistent sense: *Evañ ar gwin en deus graet* ‘He’s done drink the wine’ and the useful construction *Me zo bet hag e neuen bemdez* ‘There was a time I swam every day’.

Regarding the order of the past participle and the auxiliary, the latter will almost always come second, i.e. *Komzet he deus gant he c’hoar* or *Hi he deus komzet gant he c’hoar* or *Gant he c’hoar he deus komzet* ‘She spoke to her sister’; *N’he deus ket komzet gant he c’hoar* ‘She didn’t speak to her sister’ (the negative particle comes first, even if elided).

The conditionals can be quite difficult; overall the potential is more frequent, given it refers to something present, possible, while the hypothetical reflects something which didn’t happen and remains mentally remote (to some extent the latter is more alive in set expressions). Apart from this, note that in a conditional sentence the conditional is used in both halves (except when the indicative is used; note that *e* must precede the apodosis):

*Ma teufe da welet ac’hanomp, e vefen laouen* ‘If he came to see us, I’d be pleased’;

*Ma’m bije gelllet prenañ an ti-se, e vijen aet da chom ennañ* ‘If I’d managed to buy that house, I’d have gone to lived in it’;

*Ma teu a-benn arc’hoazh, e roin dezhañ ma holl levrioù* ‘If he comes tomorrow, I’ll give him all my books’.

Note that the examples manifest a tendency for the potential to be used to convey simple tenses and the hypothetical to convey compound or perfect tenses (also noted by Hewitt 2002: 2–3).

Note a phrase such as *e c’hallfe bezañ* ‘could be’, and note how a non-past (this includes the ‘present perfect’) in a main clause will favour a potential, while a past in a main clause will favour a hypothetical:

*Me a gred e teufe* ‘I think he’d come’, cf. *Me a grede e teuje* ‘I thought he’d’ve come’ (Hemon 1972: 59)

If there is a sense of desire or of an order, then the future will normally be used, e.g. *Fellout a ra din ma teuo* ‘I want him to come’ (Hemon 1972: 59);

*Goulenn a ran ma vo musik* ‘I demand there be music’ (Favereau 1997b: 274; corrected).

and compare:

*Aon en deus na zeufent ket* ‘He’s afraid they won’t come’ (Hemon 1972: 59) (*na* tends to replace, or be an alternative for, *ma ne*).

Favereau 1997b: 247 usefully compares *ma vije brezel* ‘if there were war (but there won’t be)’ with *ma vefe brezel* ‘if there were war (and there may well be)’.

There is also the conditional conjunction *mar*; it does not cause any mutation and is not followed by the conditional: *mar plij (deoc’h)* ‘please’ (Favereau 1997b: 275 notes that it is very common with the verbs of wishing *karout* and *goul* (lenites to (*h*)*oul* and to be kept separate from *goulenn*, radical *goulenn* ‘to ask, demand’), ability (*gallout*), and knowing (*gouzout*), plus *ober* and *bezañ*: *mar karit* ‘if you wish’, *mar goul* . . . ‘if he wants to . . .’,

*mar gallont* 'if they can', *mar gouezen* 'if I knew', *mar bez glav* 'if there's any rain', *mar bez tu* 'if the opportunity arises'.

## Conjunctions

Breton has co-ordinating, contrasting, and separating conjunctions. When they link verbs, special rules may apply regarding the order of words after the conjunction; for example, after *ha* 'and' and *pe* 'or' the word order is as in a main clause (this also goes for several others, e.g. *met* and *hogen* 'but'), i.e. they do not force a particular order on what follows: *Deut on hag aet on d'am gwele* or *Deut on hag ez on aet d'am gwele* or *Deut on ha d'am gwele on aet* 'I came and went to bed'. *Ha* also means 'if, whether' and is followed by a free order; if replaced in an indirect question by *hag-eñ*, then the particle *e* must follow, itself immediately followed by the verb: *N'ouzon ket ha dont a ri* – *N'ouzon ket hag-eñ e teui* 'I don't know if you'll come'.

Subordinating conjunctions ('why, because, until, without', etc.) are mainly but by no means exclusively compound, as in French *pour que*, etc. When linking finite forms of verbs (i.e. not followed by the verbal noun), they involve the verbal particles *ma* and *e* (before a vowel they may become *ma'z* or *ma'h* and *ez* or *ec'h* (the spelling with *h* and *c'h* may vary)) and these particles must be followed immediately by the verb (unless there is a pause, when the order becomes free). An example with *e* is *perak e* 'why'. Here are a very few of those which end in the particle *ma*<sup>M</sup>. A few have *na<sup>L</sup>* instead of *ma* (without negating the verb unless *ket* or another appropriate word is there too). And there may be other possibilities regarding the following particles.

<i>e-lec'h ma</i>	where
<i>pa</i>	when(ever)
<i>dre ma</i>	while
<i>e-keit ma</i>	while, as long as
<i>abaoe ma</i>	since
<i>bep gwech ma</i>	every time, whenever
<i>goude ma</i>	after, once
<i>a-raok ma</i>	before
<i>kerkent ha ma</i>	as soon as
<i>ken ma/na, betek ma</i>	until
<i>a-boan ma</i>	scarcely, hardly
<i>dre ma, abalamour ma</i>	because
<i>o vezañ ma, peogwir e</i>	because
<i>evit ma</i>	in order that, so that
<i>gant aon na</i>	for fear that, lest
<i>e doare ma</i>	so that
<i>hep ma/na</i>	without
<i>daoust ma, petra bennak ma</i>	although
<i>ha pa, zoken ma</i>	even if
<i>ma, mar, pa</i>	if
<i>gant ma</i>	provided
<i>e ken kaz ma</i>	in case

The negative is straightforward, i.e. *ma ne* + verb + *ket* (or appropriate element).

An alternative, where the conjunction begins with a preposition, is to replace *ma* with



*da*. This gives two possibilities: *a-raok ma teuas* ‘before he came’ may become *a-raok dezhañ dont* or *araozon da zont*, and *evit ma’z eas* ‘in order for him to go’ may become *evit dezhañ mont* or *evitañ da vont*. A noun may replace the pronoun in this construction, e.g. *a-raok da’m zad mont* and *a-raok ma zad da zont* ‘before my father came’.

Relative, or adjective, clauses (‘who, which’) are rendered by the use of the verbal particle *a<sup>L</sup>* (or *hag a*, usually with an indefinite antecedent, i.e. normally non-restrictive (Favereau 1997b: 347)) or the verbal particle *ma<sup>M</sup>*, usually where the relative is inanimate and indirect or prepositional (‘to which, under which’). The particle *a* may disappear, though the lenition it causes does not. For the negative *a* is replaced by *na<sup>L</sup>* . . . , and *hag a* by *ha ne<sup>L</sup>* . . . Some examples:

*An dud a glaskomp* ‘The people (whom) we’re looking for’ – *Un den hag a labour amañ* ‘A man who works here’ – *Ar paotr a oan o kaozeal gantañ* ‘The boy (whom) I was chatting with’ – *An ti ma’z emañ o chom ennañ* ‘The house (which) I live in’ (note the optional prepositional phrase *ennañ*, third person masculine singular because it refers to the masculine noun *ti*, picking up on *ma*); *O kaozeal e oan gant ur paotr hag a anavezan mat (anezhañ)* ‘I was chatting to a boy (whom) I know well’ (a resumptive prepositional phrase as in the preceding example – more common in that example and where the verb of the subordinate clause is negative). Note: *Setu ar gwaz ho kwelas* ‘Here’s the man who saw you’, *Ma mamm eo en em zibabo* ‘It’s my mother who will sort things out’, i.e. *a* disappears before a pre-posed object pronoun and the reflexive particle. (Note that sometimes personal forms of *a* may seem to mean ‘as for . . .’, e.g. *Tud ar vro-mañ zo tud hegarat anezho* ‘The folk of this region are kind folk’, *Hemañ n’eo ket medisin anezhañ* ‘This fellow isn’t a doctor’).

Negated: *An dud na glaskomp ket*; *Un den ha ne labour ket amañ*; *Ar paotr na oan ket o kaozeal gantañ*; *An ti ma n’emañ ket o chom ennañ*; *O kaozeal e oan gant ur paotr ha n’anavezan ket mat (anezhañ)*; *Setu ar gwaz n’ho kwelas ket*; *Ma mamm eo n’en em zibabo ket*.

Note *N’eo ket me a werzho al levrioù* ‘It’s not I who’ll sell the books’ – *Me eo na werzhin ket al levrioù* ‘It’s I who will not sell the books’ (positive relative clause with analytic verb; negative relative clause with synthetic verb, in both cases with antecedent preceding).

Noun clauses are introduced by *e<sup>M</sup>* + the finite verb (*ne<sup>L</sup>* . . . if negative). Both, particularly *e*, may be lost in speech, but the mutation will remain. Examples:

*Lâret em eus e oan e kêr dec’h* ‘I said I was in town yesterday’ (negated: *Lâret em eus ne oan ket e kêr dec’h*); *Sur eo hon eus kavet al lizher* ‘It’s certain we’ve found the letter’ – *Sur eo ez peus kavet al lizher* ‘It’s certain you’ve found the letter’;

There is no particle with ‘to have’, though the pronominal form in the first and second person singular may reflect *a* and *e*. Note that a sense of doubt (often with a negative main verb) may mean we find the potential conditional in the subordinate clause – if the main verb is in the past, the hypothetical (*irrealis*) conditional will be used. We may also have the verbal noun:

*Goulennet en deus diganin mont d’ar skol-veur* ‘He asked me to go to the university’.

And we may have simple juxtaposition: *A gav din . . . Fañch a vo en ti-kêr* ‘I think . . . Fañch will be in the town hall’.

## Word order

The basic or neutral word order of Breton is often seen as VSO, i.e. *verb + subject + object* (by ‘verb’ is meant finite verb) – that is actually probably rather rare, but it is essentially the word order found in the more structurally dependent contexts, e.g. subordinate clauses. It is also said that the word order is ‘free’, something which means that there is relative freedom over the choice of initial constituent, the order of the remaining constituents depending largely on that choice (Hewitt 2002: 5). Of the samples below, the ‘neutral’ simple sentences have a slight emphasis on the action (and may be seen as VSO):

- Subordinate: *A gav din e kavo Yannig e levr el liorzh* ‘I think Yannig’ll find his book in the garden’;
- ‘Neutral’: *Lenn a ra Yannig ul levr er gegin* (also, with perhaps slightly more emphasis on the verb action: *Bez’e lenn Yannig ul levr er gegin*; in both these one is tempted to see the whole of both *lenn a ra* and *bez’e lenn* as the verb);
- ‘Who?’: *Yannig a lenn ul levr er gegin*;
- ‘What?’: *Ul levr a lenn Yannig er gegin* (such sentences, with a focused nominal object and an expressed nominal subject, are felt by Hewitt 2002: 6–7 to be rare, there being some dialectal variation);
- ‘Where?’: *Er gegin e lenn Yannig ul levr* (last four = ‘Yannig reads a book in the kitchen’).

In the first example, *a gav din* is an expression meaning ‘it seems to me’. The negative here is provided by simply negating the verb, here *A gav din ne gavo ket Yannig e levr er gegin*.

It is possible to say *Yannig a ra lenn ul levr . . .*, but here the meaning will be ‘Yannig gets a book read . . .’, namely a sort of causative.

The *bez’e* construction is very common: *bez’ez eus kalz loened war ar maez* ‘there are lots of animals in the countryside’ (*bez’zo* is possible here too), *bez’e oa bugale e ti* ‘there were children in the house’, *bez’em bo teir boutailhad win ruz* ‘I’ll have three bottles of red wine’; but note that it comes first, does not occur in the negative, and that the particle is lost before forms of *kaout* ‘to have’ (unless one sees it incorporated in *em*, *ez*, etc.). Translation of all these forms can be difficult – the *bez’e* construction may be reflected by *bien* in French. One may also hear *Lenn al levr a ra Yannig* ‘Yannig reads the book’, but there may be some insistence on the whole action there.

In synthetic forms, the subject may be brought into relief by suffixation of the personal pronoun: *-me*, *-te*, *-ni*, and *-c’hw*i or *-hu*: *Al levr a lennan-me* ‘I read the book’; in the third-person singular the pronoun may be written separately. Such relief, in third-person singular and third-person plural negated verbs in particular, may also be conveyed by adding *anezhañ*, *anezhi*, and *anezholanezhe*: *Ne welint netra anezho* ‘They see nothing, them’. Note the similar *An tasmantoù n’eus ket anezho* ‘Ghosts don’t exist’ (Morvannou 1978–80 II: 331; adapted to *peurunvan*).

Particularly interesting is the intensive or emphatic particle *an hini* or *’ni*. Trépos 1968: 195 sees this as replacing the verbal particle, but it is probably more a consequence of elision: *’ni* or *an hini* corresponds to *an hini a* ‘the one which’ (the emphasis may be strengthened by *eo*, namely *’ni eo a* ‘it’s the one which’), and is followed by lenition because of the particle *a*. It may be used even when what is being emphasized is

not a subject or direct object (and thus the relative sense is not crucial – see the examples below). At the same time, it does correspond to a relative-clause structure in that an emphasized plural or first or second person still gives a third-person singular verbal form, i.e. we have a reflection of the original meaning ‘the one’ and in any case we have the apersonal (analytic) conjugation, thus *al levrioù a oa war an daol a welan bremañ er gegin* ‘the books which were (lit. “was”) on the table I now see in the kitchen’ (if negative it would be *na oant ket*, given the antecedent precedes). Some examples (note the negatives):

*E c’hoar ’ni ’oa* ‘It was his sister’;

*E c’hoar ’ni ’gano warc’hoazh* ‘His sister will sing tomorrow’ (lenition of *kano*);

*E c’hoarezed ’ni ’gano warc’hoazh* ‘His sisters will sing tomorrow’;

*Warc’hoazh ’ni ’gano e c’hoar* ‘His sister will sing tomorrow’ (note the emphasized adverb);

*N’eo ket e c’hoar ’ni ’gano warc’hoazh* ‘His sister won’t sing tomorrow’;

*N’eo ket c’hoarzhin ’ni eo* ‘It isn’t a case of laughing’;

*Riv ’ni ’m eus, n’eo ket aon* ‘It’s cold I am, not afraid’ (lit. ‘cold I have, it isn’t fear’).

Emphasis may also be achieved by placing the emphasized element first, after *evit* ‘for’ (here ‘as for’): *Evit war varc’h, n’eo ket deuet, ’vat* ‘He’s certainly not come on horse-back’. Note too the final *avat* or ‘*vat*, a sort of final ‘but’: *E dad eo ’vat* ‘It’s definitely his father’.

Summarizing, on the basis of Trépos 1968: 272–5 (used by Favereau 1997b: 330–1), note the sentence *Perig zo o klask e vreur er c’hoad* ‘Perig is looking for his brother in the wood’, a sentence with a mass of information. Here there is no real insistence on *Perig*, the subject, coming first, it is more a question of distributing the information around the sentence. If we wanted to emphasize *Perig*, we would have *Perig ’ni (eo) zo o klask e vreur er c’hoad*. If we wish somewhat to insist on the fact of what is going on, we may have *Emañ Perig o klask e vreur er c’hoad* or, even more so, *Bez’ emañ Perig o klask e vreur er c’hoad*. Or, if it is the action that interests us, we have *O klask e vreur er c’hoad emañ Perig* or *O klask e vreur emañ Perig er c’hoad* (reflecting a slight ambiguity in the sentence); if it’s the brother, then *E vreur emañ Perig o klask (anezhañ) er c’hoad*, or if it’s the place, then *Er c’hoad emañ Perig o klask e vreur*. And note the different reading of *Perig emañ e vreur o klask anezhañ er c’hoad*, where *Perig* cannot be the subject (not permitted before *emañ*) and is echoed in *anezhañ*. Emphasis and insistence may come out in sentences which are less laden with information. Favereau gives a less heavy sentence (though he does not draw attention to this), for ‘I’m reading a novel’ (slightly adapted – Favereau notes some elisions):

*Emaon o lenn ur romant – O lenn ur romant emañ – Bez’ emañ o lenn ur romant – Ur romant emañ o lenn – Me zo o lenn ur romant – Ur romant a lennan (bemdez ‘every day’) – Lennet e vez ur romant ganin (bemdez) – Ur romant ’ni emañ o lenn – Me ’ni zo o lenn ur romant – O lenn ’ni emañ ur romant – to which one may add emañ-me, . . .!*

Favereau is rather suspicious of playing with such patterns, something very close to the ‘spirit of Breton’ and overdone in some textbooks. He sees *insistence* in the subject placed first as a reflection of grammar and textbook tradition, noting that most often the subject comes immediately before or after the verb: *Dont a rae ar paotr d’ar gêr – Ar paotr*

*a zeue d'ar gêr* 'The boy came/was coming home' (second example added). Elsewhere Favereau *does* say that the subject is placed first only when 'on veut alors le mettre en exergue ou en relief' (Favereau 1997b: 289)!

We might refer too to Favereau's corpus, where over half the examples are of simple sentences, the smaller part divided between the various types of subordinate clauses (Favereau 1997b: 289) – he refers to Le Clerc and Trépos, the former writing of the 'staccato' character of Breton, with independent clauses piling up, and the latter writing of the morphological wealth and the flexibility of Breton syntax, used subtly by native speakers. He cites Kervella 1947/1976's three golden rules of the Breton sentence: (i) first, the element or elements on which one wishes particularly to insist; (ii) second, the conjugated verb; (iii) avoid starting a sentence with a conjugated verb (after the particles *a* and *e*). For Favereau 1997b: 290–2 the structure *Adjective/Adverb* + *ε* + *Verb* (+ *Subject*) (+ *Object*) (*Adjective/Adverb* really means anything but the direct object) is extremely common and 'neutral', 'non-emphatic' (55 per cent of the examples analysed by him): *Pres eo Yann* 'Yann is ready', *Bremañ e oar skrivañ* 'Now he knows how to read', *O lenn emaint* 'They're reading'. Favereau 1997b: 297 cites Kervella's *Me a wel sklaer* as, for Kervella (and entirely reliable), the equivalent of *Me, gwelout a ran sklaer* 'Me, I see clearly'. For Favereau 1997b: 297 the subject coming first can reflect a 'construction logique' in the sense that such an order helps to distribute the information (especially when there is a good deal of it, as in the earlier examples) around the sentence (and there may be an inclination to place a subject first in many languages) – French influence may have a part in this, but it is nonetheless a construction potential within Breton.

To close, reference may be made again to important constructions very often used in Breton.

First, reflecting possessive constructions, note Denez 1971: 44, who gives: *Me zo morzet va izili ouzhin* 'My limbs have gone numb' (lit. 'I "am" benumbed my limbs against-me'), *Me zo klañv va fri* 'There's something wrong with my nose' (lit. 'I "am" ill my nose'), *Me zo savet ar gwad d'am fenn* 'The blood has gone to my head' (lit. 'I "am" raised the blood to my head'), and *Me zo ponner va c'halon ganin* 'My heart is heavy' (lit. 'I "am" heavy my heart with-me') (compare the relatively neutral *Morzet eo va izili*, *Klañv eo va fri*, *Savet eo ar gwad d'am fenn*, and *Ponner eo va c'halon*). Davalan III 2002: 145–50 explores these too – he gives *Te zo du da vlev* and *Te eo du da vlev* 'Your hair is black' (lit. 'You "is" black your hair'), both correct but the former 'plus ancienne' and *a* being normally used in other tenses: *Te a oa du da vlev pa oas yaouankoc'h* 'Your hair was black when you were younger'. More examples (from Davalan): *Yann ac'h eus dispignet e arc'hant* 'You've spent Yann's money' (lit. 'Yann you've spent his money'), and *Ho moereb hoc'h eus tennet ho teod warni?* 'Did you pull out your tongue at your aunt?' (lit. 'Your aunt you've pulled-out your tongue onto-her?'). And note *Unanig bennak a oa aesoc'hik an traoù ganto eget ar re all* 'Some found it easier than others' (lit. 'Some one was easier the things with-them than the other ones', Morvannou 1978–80 I: 206–7).

Slightly different, note an 'impersonal expression' like *Fellout a ra din mont d'ar gêr* 'I want to go home' (lit. 'Want I-do-to-go home'), very common as *Me a fell din mont d'ar gêr*. Similar is the use of *soñjal* 'to think': *Soñjal a ran e V* 'I think that . . .', but *Me a soñj din e V* is more idiomatic. Note other impersonals, all indicating 'involuntary phenomena, no control by patient' (Hewitt 2002: 25), e.g. *kavout a ra din* 'I think, it seems to me', *degouezhout a ra din* 'I happen to', *tomm eo din* 'I'm hot', *ret eo din* 'I must', *mat eo din* 'I am happy to', *gwelloc'h eo din* 'it's better for me', *gwelloc'h eo ganin* 'I prefer' (from Davalan III 2002 (see below)) we have *Gwelloc'h dit bezañ deuet* 'It'd've been better if you'd come'; *Gwelloc'h eo ganin debriñ galetez* 'I prefer to eat galettes' – *Gwelloc'h eo*

*ganin an istorioù karantez* ‘I prefer love stories’), *tapout a ra ganin* ‘I’m in luck’, and the vulgar (and arguably not impersonal) *sevel a ra din/ ganin* ‘I get a hard-on’.

Note also a selection of passives: *Gant piv eo bet prenet ar velo-se deoc’h?* ‘Who bought you that bike?’ (lit. ‘By whom has been bought that bike for-you?’), *Diwisket eo e roched gant Ronan* ‘Ronan took off his shirt’ (lit. ‘Taken-off is his shirt by Ronan’; Morvannou 1978–80 I: 155), *Echu eo ma devezh ganin, n’eus ken nemet un nebeud diotachoù d’ober* ‘I’ve finished my day’s work, just have a few bits and pieces to do’ (lit. ‘Finished is my day by-me, . . .’, Morvannou 1978–80 I: 165; *echu* is one of several ‘past participles’ conveying a state; to emphasize the action the expected form is used, thus *echuet*, from *echuin*), *Ha setu graet ho soñj ganeoc’h?* ‘Have you decided?’ (lit. ‘And behold done your idea by-you?’ – the auxiliary is often left out, Morvannou 1978–80 I: 220), *Petra ’vez graet eus an dra-se?* ‘What’s that called?’ (lit. ‘What is made of that thing?’),

Worth noting too is how Breton will very often place phrases of the type ‘I think’, ‘I bet’, ‘I hope’ at the end, e.g. *Diwezhat eo, ’m eus aon* ‘I think it’s late’ (lit. ‘Late it-is, I fear’ – note how Breton uses *kaout aon* in a weak semantic sense, as often in English; Morvannou 1978–80 I: 95), *Prest int, ’gav din* ‘I think they’re ready’ (lit. ‘Ready they-are, seems to-me’).

From the final lessons of Davalan III 2002 note the invaluable: *Dleet e vefe* + verbal noun ‘One ought to . . .’, *Dleet e vefe dit* + infinitive ‘You ought to . . .’, *Ne vefe ket dleet dit* + verbal noun ‘You oughtn’t to . . .’, and examples such as, and easily built on, *Dis-tagañ evel m’eo dleet* ‘To pronounce as you ought to’, *Ne oa ket dleet dit ober an dra-se* ‘You oughtn’t to have done that’, and *Dleet e vije dit bezañ asantet* ‘You ought to have accepted’ (using *dleout* ‘to have to, to owe’). Note *Ret eo din* ‘I am obliged to . . .’ – *Dav eo din . . .* ‘It’s preferable if I . . ., I ought to . . .’ It’s possible to use *dleout* in a personal, less ‘idiomatic’, way: *Ne dlefen ket bezañ nac’het* ‘I oughtn’t to have been refused’ (note *dleout* resists lenition). And: *Darbet e oa din bezañ kouezhet* ‘I almost fell’ (lit. ‘failli it-was to-me to-have fallen’ – the perfect infinitive uses *bezañ* as auxiliary).

So much more remains to be said.

## NOTES

- 1 *Divesker* might perhaps be set aside; the feminine word *esker*, pl. *-ioù* is no longer used except as a name for one of the parts of a boat: ‘prop, stay, strut’.
- 2 *Noz vat!* may more often be a greeting after 5 pm and *Nozvezh vat!* a farewell later!
- 3 In this particular expression *merc’h* may more correctly be a simple indicator of category, namely *a lady’s hat* – quite a complex issue, since *a lady’s hat* is ambiguous, whereas *ladies fashions*, with *fashions* as a ‘collective’ (against *hat* as more definite and inviting less a category than a precise, in this case sexual, definition), is clearer – it is worth trying various nouns and combining them with *lady’s* and *ladies* (or *ladies’!*).

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The Internet addresses of the Université de Haute Bretagne/Rennes 2 and the Université de Bretagne Occidentale are, respectively: [www.uhb.fr](http://www.uhb.fr) and [www.univ-brest.fr](http://www.univ-brest.fr). Particularly useful is that of the *Ofis ar brezoneg*: [www.ofis-bzh.org](http://www.ofis-bzh.org). Well worth looking at are Gwagenn TV: [gwagenn.tv](http://gwagenn.tv), [blog.gwagenn.tv](http://blog.gwagenn.tv) and *Setu Breizh*, the *Tele Kreiz Breizh*: [setubzh.blogspot.com](http://setubzh.blogspot.com).

There are many more; input 'kervarker', 'bremaik', 'Breton language', 'state of Breton', etc. into a search engine.

To learn Breton by correspondence, contact Skol OBER: [www.skolober.com/index.php?yezh=0](http://www.skolober.com/index.php?yezh=0)

## CHAPTER 11

# CORNISH

*Ken George*

## CHRONOLOGICAL PHASES OF CORNISH

The subject of this chapter is Traditional Cornish, which came into existence in about AD 600, as a direct development of the south-western dialect of Late British; it was spoken until about 1800, when it ceased to exist as a living community language. A residual knowledge of scraps of the language lasted throughout the nineteenth century (Lyon 2001). In the early twentieth century, Cornish was revived, and this form (Revived Cornish) is dealt with in chapter 16.

It is usual to divide the history of Traditional Cornish into four phases:

- 1 Primitive Cornish (PrimC) is the name given to the earliest phase of the language, approximately AD 600 to 800, which has no written records.
- 2 Old Cornish (OldC) refers to the phase from 800 to 1200, the later date being chosen to be sure of including the *Vocabularium Cornicum* (see the section on sources below).
- 3 Middle Cornish (MidC) lasted from 1200 to c. 1575. The second half of this phase contains 75 per cent of the extant traditional corpus.
- 4 Late Cornish (LateC) lasted from c. 1575 to 1800. It is sometimes referred to Modern Cornish, by analogy with Modern English, Modern French, etc., but this term is considered inappropriate, because of the special position of present-day Cornish as a revived language. In this chapter the term Late Cornish will be used, in which the word *late* means both ‘tardy’ (Fr. *cornique tardif*) and ‘defunct’. The boundary between Middle Cornish and Late Cornish is not clear-cut: phonologically, the transition period was 1550 to 1600; orthographically (see section below on orthography), there was overlap from about 1540 to as late as 1640. The play *Creacon of the World* (1611) is treated here as belonging to Middle Cornish.

## AN OUTLINE OF THE EXTERNAL HISTORY OF CORNISH

### Other works

Brief histories of Cornish have been published by Hooper (1969), Simon Evans (1969) and by Beresford Ellis (1971) in English, by Piette (1959) in Breton, and by Sutton (1969) in Esperanto. More extended works are a semi-popular book by Beresford Ellis (1974)

and the first two parts of a projected trilogy (Fudge 1982 and Pool 1982). For general histories of Cornwall, the reader may wish to compare the different approaches taken by Halliday (1959), Payton (1992) and Angarrack (2002).

### 600 to 900: Celtic kingdom

The oldest part of the history of Cornish is also the most obscure, but useful references are Pearce (1978) and Thomas (1986).

In 577, the Saxons won the battle of Dyrham, near Bath, and soon afterwards their westward expansion cut communication by land between the Celtic speakers in Wales and those in the south-west peninsula. The Saxons advanced south-westward, so that by c. 725, the whole of the peninsula except Cornwall was occupied. The relative ease with which this was achieved may be due to the partial depopulation of Devon as a result of the second migration to Brittany, c. 650 (Fleuriot 1980).

During the period 700 to 900, Cornwall was ruled by a series of kings, among whom we know the names of Gerent (*fl.* 710), Dungarth (drowned c. 875), and 'Ricatus' (early tenth century). The Welsh text *Brut y Tywysogyon* (see Phillimore 1888) tells of a battle at *Heil* won by the Cornish c. 722; and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (Plummer 1892–99) relates a Saxon victory over a combined force of Cornish and Danes at Hingston Down, just west of the Tamar, in 838.

### 900 to 1050: Saxon province

In the year 936, Athelstan fixed the boundary between the Saxons and the Celts as the River Tamar. In the north-east of Cornwall, however, the effective boundary was the River Ottery; this is shown by the fact that only 5 per cent of the places in the triangle between the two rivers and the sea have Cornish names (see Figure 11.1). In the tenth century, the Saxon apparatus of local government was introduced: Cornwall was divided into six hundreds, five of them having Cornish names. Although Athelstan appointed a bishop with a Cornish name, the Bodmin Gospels (see sources section below) show that the Roman Catholic rite now superseded the Celtic Catholic rite. The dominance of the Saxon overlords is illustrated by the names of the masters and serfs in the glosses of the Bodmin Gospels; most of the masters had Saxon names, and most of the serfs had Cornish names.

### 1050 to 1300: under the Normans

The increasing dominance of English was halted by the Norman invasion. After 1066, English found itself between the Norman-French spoken by the ruling classes and the Cornish spoken by the mass of the population. Latin was used for official documents, and by the clergy in church services; but priests had to know Cornish in order to preach and to hear confessions.

Cornwall was diverse, not only linguistically, but also demographically. Beside the Cornish majority, there were English, Irish, Normans, Flemings and Bretons. In places, the Bretons formed more than 10 per cent of the population; they were found not only in positions of authority, since a great many had come over with William the Conqueror, but subsequently among the lower classes, since wages were higher in Cornwall than in Brittany (Jenkin 1992). This leads us to suppose that Cornish and Breton were still sufficiently close as to be mutually intelligible. Communications between Cornwall and Brittany were

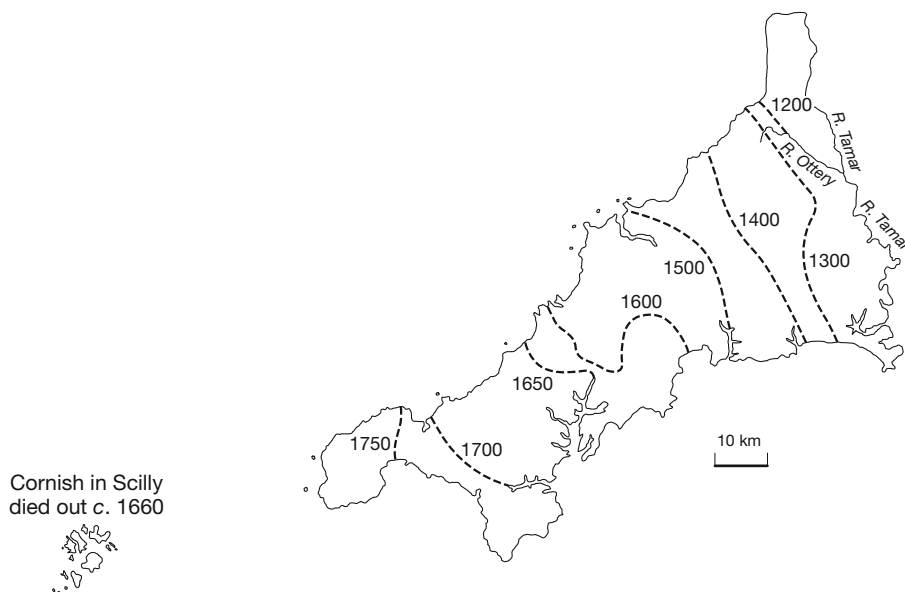


Figure 11.1 The westward retreat of traditional Cornish

rapid (one day's voyage compared with at least six days' ride to London). Saunders (1984) compared the Cornu-Breton linguistic continuum to Anglo-American which developed half a millennium later.

### 1300 to 1500: the heyday of Cornish

The heyday of Cornish was the late Middle Ages. Mystery plays in Cornish were performed at open-air theatres. The sites of about thirty of these *plenys an gwary* have been identified in mid- and west Cornwall.

In the fourteenth century, English displaced Norman-French and to some extent Latin: ironically, its cause was advanced by three Cornishmen.

During the same period, some twenty towns began to grow in Cornwall. Certain of these in mid- and west Cornwall have Cornish street-names, indicating that the language was not confined to rural areas.

### 1500 to 1650: decline of the language

Maps produced during Tudor times, and expressions such as *Anglia et Cornubia*, show that Cornwall was considered, at least by some, as separate from England. Three unsuccessful attempts were made by the Cornish to assert their separate status (Stoyle 2002):

- i the rising of 1497;
- ii the Prayer-Book 'Rebellion' of 1549;
- iii the War of the Five Nations (usually termed the Civil War), 1642–6.

The Reformation was the prime cause of the decline of Cornish, and marked the end of an era. In particular:

- a traditional ties with Brittany were severely reduced after 1532, when that country was linked to France;
- b the college of Glasney, where the mystery plays are believed to have been composed, was suppressed in 1545;
- c English was introduced into religious services in 1549.

In 1560, the Church recommended that the teaching of catechism in Welsh and Cornish be made lawful. In the event, the necessary act was passed only for Welsh. The Bible was never translated into Cornish.

During the war of 1642–6, Cornwall, for the most part Royalist, was invaded thrice by the Parliamentary forces (Coate 1963). The consequent disruption is sometimes held to be a factor in the decline of Cornish, but it should be remembered that all but the last invasion affected only the east of Cornwall, where Cornish was no longer spoken at this date. Interestingly, Cornish was used as a ‘secret’ language by troops in the war.

### 1650 to 1750: the Newlyn School

Sermons in Cornish were preached at Landewednack until about 1678; about this time the last of the monoglots were dying out, so that subsequently there was no need to preach in Cornish. It was to be over 250 years before the language would again be used in a sermon.

A group of educated men living in and around Newlyn realized that Cornish was doomed, and worked during the years 1660 to 1730 to record its last stages. They collected songs and stories, wrote poems, translated portions of scripture, and corresponded with one another in Cornish. Into their midst came in 1701 the great Celtic scholar Edward Lhuyd. He spent four months in Cornwall, collecting as much of the language as he could (Williams 1993); and later he published some of his findings (Lhuyd 1707).

### 1750 to 1800: demise

Cornish speakers were so few in number that Borlase (1758) wrote that the language had ‘altogether ceased, so as not to be used anywhere in conversation’. Had he ventured but ten kilometres from his home in Ludgvan, he could have heard Cornish still in use. This was left to an English antiquary, Daines Barrington, who ‘discovered’ a number of Cornish speakers in Mousehole, notably Dolly Pentreath (d. 1777), reputedly the last traditional native speaker. She was, however, outlived by speakers such as William Bodinar, who had learned Cornish as a second language. In 1776 Bodinar wrote the poignant comment:

*Nag es moye vel pager po pemp en dreau nye ell clapia Cornoack leben,  
pobel coath pager egeñce blouth, Cornoack ewe all neceaves gen poble younk.*  
‘There are no more than four or five in our village who can speak Cornish now,  
old folk of fourscore years. Cornish is all forgotten by young people.’

Evidence on the final expiration of traditional Cornish is lacking. By 1800, at the latest, the language had ceased to be used as a means of communication.

Demographic history of Cornish

Table 11.1 (taken from George 1986b) gives an estimate of the number of Cornish speakers. Figure 11.1 shows the westward retreat of the eastern boundary of the area where Cornish was spoken; the western part is based on Spriggs (2003), and the eastern part (which is less definite) on George (1986b) and Holmes (2003). The map and table indicate:

- a the early settlement by the Saxons in the north-east of Cornwall;
- b the faster rate of retreat during the phase of Late Cornish (~ 30 km per century) compared with that during the Middle Ages (~ 10 km per century);
- c a maximum of between 30,000 and 40,000 Cornish speakers during the period 1200–1550, that is, a sufficiently large number to support the performances of the mystery plays.

Table 11.1 Estimated numbers of Cornish speakers

Year	P	Q	C	Year	P	Q	C
1050	16,000	15,000	95%	1450	62,000	33,000	54%
1100	21,000	20,000	94%	1500	69,000	33,000	48%
1150	28,000	26,000	93%	1550	76,000	30,000	40%
1200	35,000	30,000	86%	1600	84,000	22,000	26%
1250	43,000	34,000	79%	1650	93,000	14,000	15%
1300	52,000	38,000	73%	1700	106,000	5,000	5%
1350	48,000	32,000	67%	1750	140,000	very few	>0%
1400	55,000	34,000	61%	1800	192,000	nil	0%

Key: P = estimated total population of Cornwall; Q = estimated number of Cornish speakers; C = estimated percentage of population who spoke Cornish.

SOURCES

A full description of the extant Cornish literature then known is to be found in Jenner (1904: 24–46). The following is a list of the more important sources, with their usual abbreviations.

Old Cornish

- ‘List of Saints’ (c. 925): a list of forty-eight Brittonic names;
- ‘Bodmin Manumissions’ (c. 950–1150): the names of Cornish people, written in the margins of a Latin Bible dating from the tenth century;
- Vocabularium Cornicum* (VC.) (c. 1200): a Latin–Cornish glossary containing 961 entries arranged thematically, based on a Latin–English glossary written about 100 years earlier by Aelfric.

## Middle Cornish

‘Charter Endorsement’ (c. 1375): forty-one lines of verse, which were discovered by Jenner in 1877, written on the back of a land-charter dated 1340;

*Pascon agan Arluth (MC)* (c. 1400): a moving poem describing the Passion of Christ, referred to in English as ‘The Passion Poem’, or as ‘Mount Calvary’, a name given by Davies Gilbert (1826);

‘The *Ordinalia*’ (*Ord.*) (c. 1425): a cycle of religious plays, originally apparently four in number, but only three of which are extant. These are:

*Origo Mundi (OM)*: a sequence of scenes from the Old Testament, from the Creation to the building of Solomon’s Temple;

*Passio Christi (PC)*: the Temptation of Christ, and the events of Holy Week as far as the Crucifixion; six short passages were extracted from *MC.*, as described by Murdoch (1979).

*Resurrectio Domini (RD)*: the Resurrection, Ascension, plus the Death of Pilate.

The fourth play (if it ever existed) concerned the childhood of Christ. This gap has been filled by a recent composition (George 2006b). The *Ordinalia* were almost certainly written at Glasney College, Penryn. They have received more attention than any other Cornish literature, for example, in the form of modern translation (Harris 1969, Kent 2006) and dramatic criticism (Longworth 1967, Bakere 1980, Murdoch 1993). They contain material from extra-biblical sources, particularly the Legend of the Rood (Halliday 1955).

*Beunans Ke (BK)* (?c. 1450): a recently discovered work (incomplete), based on the Life of St Ke, patron saint of Kea parish, apparently a two-day play; the first day concerns Ke in Cornwall, and the second is about King Arthur, being based on Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britanniae*.

*Beunans Meriasek (BM)*, by Radulphus Ton (1504): a dramatized account of the Life of St Meriasek, patron saint of Camborne, designed for a two-day performance. The play is set in Brittany, Cornwall and Rome, and its themes are intertwined in an apparently disjointed manner.

‘Tregear Homilies’ (*TH*) (c. 1558): a translation from English of twelve Catholic homilies written by Bishop Bonner in 1555, and the most extensive piece of Cornish prose in the traditional corpus.

*Sacrament of the Altar (SA)*, a thirteenth homily, probably translated from English by Thomas Stephyn in 1576.

*Creacon of the World (CW)*, by William Jordan (1611): the first part of a play meant to last for two (or more) days. It covers the events in Genesis, from the Creation to the Flood, and includes a few passages taken from *Origo Mundi*.

## Late Cornish

‘John of Chyannor’, by Nicholas Boson (c. 1660): a version of the international folk-tale ‘The Servant’s Good Counsels’. A manuscript of sections 1 to 14 exists in John Boson’s hand, and the whole tale was printed by Lhuyd (1707: 251–3) in his own orthography, with a translation into Welsh;

*Nebbaz Gerriau dro tho Carnoack*, by Nicholas Boson (c. 1670): a description of the contemporary plight of Cornish, with a translation into English;



Translations from the Bible, by William Rowe (c. 1690): translations of Genesis 3, the Ten Commandments, Matthew 2 and Matthew 4, by a native Cornish speaker;  
Translation of Genesis 1, by John Boson (c. 1720);  
Letter of William Bodinar (1776): letter about the state of the language, and how Bodinar came to learn it.

In addition, mention must be made of the dictionaries by Lhuyd (1707) and Pryce (1790); although not works of literature, they contain words not found elsewhere. Lhuyd’s work is based partly on his research among Cornish speakers in 1701; Pryce’s work is substantially that of Tonkin, whom he plagiarized.

Secondary sources

VC, MC, the *Ordinalia* and CW were known to Lhuyd, and Tonkin’s hand-written copies of them were used by Pryce (1790) in his dictionary. Stokes and Norris published printed editions of these works, and of BM, in the nineteenth century. Nance produced typescript editions of the plays, but published only extracts. In the magazine *Old Cornwall* he published numerous pieces from Late Cornish. More recent editions of the Cornish texts are listed in Table 11.2.

Table 11.2 Most recent editions of the principal Cornish texts

	Year of discovery	Cornish Language Board’s editions	Other recent editions
‘List of Saints’	c. 1938		Olson & Padel 1986 <i>TN</i>
<i>Vocabularium Cornicum</i>	c. 1695	Calvete 2005 <i>TKEN</i>	Graves 1962 <i>TEN</i>
‘Charter Endorsement’	1877	Edwards 1999 <i>TKN</i>	Toorians 1991 <i>TEN</i>
<i>Pascon agan Arluth</i>		Edwards 1993 <i>TKEN</i>	Woodhouse 2002 <i>TE</i>
The <i>Ordinalia</i>		Edwards 2004a <i>TKEN</i> 1999b, 2000	
<i>Beunans Ke</i>	1999	George 2006a <i>TKEN</i>	Thomas & Williams 2007 <i>TREN</i>
<i>Beunans Meriasek</i>	1869	Edwards 1996 <i>TKEN</i>	Combella-Harris 1985 <i>TEN</i>
Tregear Homilies	1948	Edwards 2004 <i>TKE</i>	Bice 1994 <i>T</i>
<i>Sacrament of the Altar</i>	1948	Edwards 2004 <i>TKE</i>	Bice 1994 <i>T</i>
<i>Creacon of the World</i>		Edwards 1998 <i>TKEN</i>	Neuss 1983 <i>TEN</i>
Work of the Bosons			Padel 1975 <i>TEN</i>
Bodinar’s letter			Pool & Padel 1976 <i>TEN</i>

Key: *T* = original text; *K* = version in *Kernewek Kemmyn*; *R* = reconstructed version; *E* = English translation; *N* = notes

Metrics

None of the extant texts shows such strict rules of versification as do Middle Breton verse with internal rhymes and Middle Welsh verse with *cynghanedd*. Most of the lines are heptasyllabic, but lines of four syllables are sometimes used to increase the pace, for dramatic effect. In *BK*, there are a few lines with five syllables. Most of the stanzas are based on one of three rhyming schemes: *abababab* (all but one in *MC* have this pattern), *aabccb* and *ababcddc*; for details see Bruch (2005). Over 25 per cent of the rhymes in *BK* are double (i.e. the last two syllables rhyme); the number of double rhymes in each of the other works is less than 5 per cent.

Most of the limited range of Late Cornish verse is in rhyming couplets. Only Lhuyd seems to have been more adventurous, when he tried writing an *englyn* in Cornish.

Place-names

A considerable amount of information about Cornish is to be found in the historical forms of place-names. These were collected by Gover (1948), not always accurately. The elements found in the names were discussed by Padel (1985), who has also examined the origins of the names on the 1:250,000 map (Padel 1988).

ORTHOGRAPHY

Traditional Cornish had four distinct and different orthographies (those of Old Cornish, Middle Cornish, Late Cornish and Edward Lhuyd), and the first three of these were based to a greater or lesser extent on contemporary English orthography.

Until c. 1050, Old Cornish shared a common Brittonic tradition of orthography (ultimately based on that of Latin) with Old Breton and Old Welsh, and it is in this system that the Saints' List was written. The *Vocabularium Cornicum*, however, shows the influence of Old English spelling, especially in the use of the graphemes <þ> (thorn) for /ð/ and <p> (wynn); see Table 11.3.

Table 11.3 Correspondences between phonemes and graphemes in VC

/i i e a ɔ u œ y/	<i, y i, y e a o u u o, u, ue, e>
/ej aj ɔj uj/	<ei, ey ai oi, oy ui, uy>
/iʷ iw ew aw ɔw/	<no data iu eu au ou>
/p t k/	<p t k before consonants and a, o, u; ch before e, i, y>
/b d g/	<b d-, -d-, -t g-, -g-, -c>
/f θ x/	<f, ff, ph th, h, t, d, hth, ht, dth ch, h, gh, hc, g, þ>
/v ð ɣ/	<u, f d, t, dh, th, þ g, h>
/m n l r/	<m n l r>
/mm nn ll rr/	<mm, m nn, n ll, l rr, r>
/s h j w/	<s h i þ>

Middle Cornish spelling (see Table 11.4) shows variations from text to text which reflect the practice of the scribes rather than phonological changes; for example, for /ð/, *MC* uses

<3>, whereas <th> is more common in the *Ordinalia*. The English convention is especially apparent in the spelling of Middle English loanwords.

Table 11.4 The orthography of Middle Cornish

Phonemes	Commonest grapheme (others in brackets)
<b><i>Straightforward cases</i></b>	
/i; ɛ; a/	y (i, e, ey); e; a (ay)
/ɔ; œ; y/	o (oy); u (ue, eu, e); u
/ɛj; aj; ɔj/	ey (y); ay (ey); oy
/iʷ; iʷ; ɛʷ/	yw (ew); ew (yw); ew (eu, ev)
/aʷ; ɔʷ; yʷ/	aw (au, av); ow (ou, ov); ew (ev, u)
/j; w/	y; w
/jɪ/	ij in past participles
/p; t; b; d/	p; t; b; d
/kw; hw/	qu (qw); wh (w)
/f, θ, h/	f; th; h
/ð; x; tʃ/	th (3); gh (h); ch
/m; n; l; r/	m; n; l; r
<b><i>Cases which vary according to what follows</i></b>	
/k/	c (k) before a, o, u, l, r; k before e, i, y
/dʒ/	i (j) before a, o, u; g before e, i, y
/z/	s (as /dʒ/ before high front vowels)
<b><i>Cases which vary according to stress</i></b>	
/o/	o (oy) stressed, u (o) unstressed
/u/	ou (ov) stressed, ou (o, u) unstressed
<b><i>Cases which vary according to position</i></b>	
/i/	y (i) initially and medially, y finally
/g/	g initially and medially, k finally
/pp; tt; kk/	pp (p); tt (t); ck (k, kk) medially: p (pp); t (tt); k (ck) finally
/v/	v initially: v (f, u) medially: f (ff) finally
/ʃ/	sch (sh, s) initially: sc (s, ss, sch, sh) medially: sch finally
/mm; nn; ll; rr/	mm (m); nn; ll; rr medially: m; n; l (l); r finally

Seventeenth-century Late Cornish orthography (Table 11.5) looks very different. This is principally because the Late Cornish writers (apart from Lhuyd, Keigwin and Tonkin) were unfamiliar with the Middle Cornish texts, and so were uninfluenced by them. Again, they wrote using the English spelling conventions of the time, but after Lhuyd came to Cornwall, they were sometimes influenced by his system, and wrote, for instance, *Tîr* 'land' rather than *Teere*, and *diuadh* 'end' instead of *duath*.

Table 11.5 Correspondences between phonemes and graphemes in Late Cornish

Phonemes	Lhuyd's spelling	Vernacular spelling
/i: e: a: ɔ: u:/	î ê â ô û	i, ee, ee-e e, ea, e-e a, a-e o, oa u, oo
/i e a ɔ u/	i e a ɐ u	i e a o u
/ə/	ÿ	various, often u
/ej aj ɔj/	ei ai oi	ey, i, i-e, y-e ay, ai oy, y
/iʷ ɛʷ aʷ ɔʷ/	iʷ ɛʷ aʷ oʷ	ew ew aw ow
/j w/	i ʷ	y, i u, w
/p t k/	p t k	p t c before a, o, u, l, r; k before e, i, y
/b d g/	b d g	b d g, -k when unstressed
/f θ x s ss/	f th χ s ss	f th h s ss
/v ð h z/	v dh h z	v dh, th h z
/ʃ tʃ dʒ/	sh tsh dzh	sh ch g, gg, j, dg
/m n l r/	m n l r	m, mm n, nn l, ll r, rr

An idea of the differences between them is afforded by Figure 11.2, but these differences reflect more than just orthography. The versions in revived Cornish, and the Middle Cornish orthography on which they are based, reflect also an earlier phonology and syntax.

Because there were four historical orthographies, and none of them was fixed (apart from Lhuyd's), some scholars have found it difficult to choose which spelling to use for examples of individual words. In this chapter, examples from Middle Cornish are usually given using the commonest spelling found in the *Ordinalia*, and those from Late Cornish are often given in Lhuyd's system. Also used, mainly in the sections on syntax and lexis, is the system currently in widespread use in revived Cornish (*Kernewek Kemmyn*), distinguished by **bold italic type**.

Figure 11.2 Examples of Cornish orthography

- (a) Middle Cornish (regularized)  
*yn termyn us passijs yth ese trygys yn S. Levan*  
*den ha benen yn tyller crijs chy an horth*  
*han whel a gothas scant hag yn meth an den then wreK*  
*my a vyn mos the whylas whel the wul*  
*ha why a yl dendyl agas bewnans omma*
- (b) Late Cornish (as written by Edward Lhuyd, 1707)  
*En termen ez passiez tēra trigaz en St. Levan,*  
*dēn ha bennen en teller kreiez Tshei an hwr.*  
*Ha an hʷel a kʷdaz skent: Ha með an dēn ðv̄e ʷrêg:*  
*me a vedn mēz ðv̄hʷillaz hʷel ðv̄il;*  
*ha hʷei el dendel 'gʷz bounaz ʷbma.*
- (c) Late Cornish (as re-written from Lhuyd's version by Boson)  
*En termen ez passiez thera Trigaz en St. Levan;*  
*Dean ha Bennen en Tellar creiez chei a Horr.*  
*Ha an Weale a Kothaz scant: ha meth a Dean da an wreag;*

*mee a ved'n moze Da whelaz weale da weele;*  
*ha whi el dendel gose bounans obba.*

(d) Revived Cornish (Unified orthography of R. M. Nance, 1929)  
*Y'n termyn us passyes, yth-esa trygys yn Synt Leven*  
*den ha benen, yn tyller cryes Chy an Horth.*  
*Ha'n whel a-godhas scant; hag yn-meth an den dhe'n wreck,*  
*'My a-vyn mos dhe whylas whel dhe wul,*  
*ha why a-yl dyndyl agas bewnans omma'.*

(e) Revived Cornish (*Kernewek Kemmyn*)  
*Y'n termyn eus passys, yth esa trigys yn Sen Leven*  
*den ha benyn, yn tyller kriys Chi an Hordh.*  
*Ha'n hwel a goedhas skant; hag yn-medh an den dhe'n wreg:*  
*'My a vynn mos dhe hwilas hwel dhe wul,*  
*ha hwi a yll dendil agas bywnans omma'.*

(f) English translation (by R. M. Nance 1929)  
*In the time that is past, there were dwelling in St Levan*  
*a man and a woman, in a place called Chyannor [House of the Ram].*  
*And the work fell scarce; and said the man to the wife:*  
*'I will go to seek work to do,*  
*and you can earn your living here'.*

PHONOLOGY

Overview of the phonological history of Cornish

Lewis' (1946) description of the sounds of Middle Cornish is too superficial and too influenced by Welsh to be very useful. For the sounds of Old Cornish, see Haywood (1982). A detailed study of Cornish phonology has been made by the present author (George 1984, 1986a). The major developments are summarized in Table 11.6.

Table 11.6 Major developments in the phonological history of Cornish

Phase	Development	Date	Did this happen in Breton?	Welsh?
PrimC > OldC	internal i-affection	c. 700	yes	yes
	svarabhakti	c. 850	yes	spoken
	merger of /ui/ and /oi/	c. 900	partially	no
	shift of accent	c. 1050	partially	yes
OldC > MidC	assibilation	c. 1225	no	no
MidC > LateC	pre-occlusion	c. 1575	no	no
	prosodic shift	c. 1600	no	no

Williams (1995) presented a view of Cornish phonology in which the prosodic shift (i.e. the reduction of three vowel-lengths to two) was dated at least three centuries earlier than in Table 11.6; he also suggested that pre-occlusion (i.e. the sound-changes [nn] > [dn] and

[mm] > [bm]) was dialectal. These unconventional views were contested by Dunbar and George (1997), and shown to be unfounded by Chaudhri (2007).

**Development of vowels and diphthongs from Primitive to Old Cornish**

The system of vowels and diphthongs in Primitive Cornish, inherited from British and therefore practically the same in Primitive Breton and Welsh, was as follows:

Vowels		i-diphthongs		u-diphthongs	
/i/	/y/	/u/		/ui/	/iu/
/ɪ/					/iʊ/
/e/	/ə/	/ei/	/əi/		/eu/    /əu/
/ɛ/		/ɛi/		/ɔi/	/ɛu/    /ɔu/
		/ω/		/ʊi/	/ωu/
/a/			/ai/		/au/

The following changes took place before the date of the principal Old Cornish text (*Vocabularium Cornicum*):

*Internal i-affection, c. 700*

In polysyllables, the occurrence of /i/, /ɪ/, /e/, /ə/ or /j/ in a following syllable caused the following changes in vowels in the preceding syllable: /e/ > /ɪ/, /a/ > /e/, /o/ > /ə/, /u/ > /ə/. Similar changes occurred in diphthongs. Examples are given in Table 11.7.

*Svarabhakti in final syllables, c. 850*

An epenthetic vowel developed in words which ended in either:

- a vowel + liquid or nasal consonant + /w/, e.g. [ˈmarw] ‘dead’; or
- b vowel + consonant + liquid or nasal consonant, e.g. [ˈladr] ‘thief’.

The epenthetic vowel was at first [ɛ] in both cases, so that the two examples became [ˈmarɛw] and [ˈladrɛ] respectively. The inserted vowel sometimes counted as a syllable for the purposes of metre, but not for the purposes of stress. Other examples are given in Table 11.8.

*Further changes*

- 1a /e/, /ə/ and /ɛ/ merged in Old Cornish /ɛ/.
- b /ei/, /əi/ and /ɛi/ merged in Old Cornish /ei/.
- c /eu/, /əu/ and /ɛu/ merged in Old Cornish /ɛu/.
- 2a In most cases, /u/ and /ɔ/ merged in Old Cornish /ɔ/ (but they generally remained separate in Welsh and Breton).
- b /ui/ and /ɔi/ merged in Old Cornish /ui/ (but remained separate in Welsh and partially separate in Breton).
- 3a /ω/ was fronted to [œ:], and became Old Cornish /œ/.
- b /ωu/ > /ɛu/.

In at least two words, Old Cornish *neid* ‘nest’ and *dreis* ‘briars’, PrimC /ɪ/ > /ei/.

Table 11.7 Examples of internal i-affection

Agent	Source	Primitive	Cornish	Example	Meaning
		before	after		
<b>Change /ε/ &gt; /i/</b>					
/i/	British * <i>cam-sent-iko-</i>	/kammhentiɡ/	/kammhɪntiɡ/	OldC <i>camhinsic</i>	hurtful
/ɪ/	British * <i>impenniones</i>	/impennjɔn/	/impɪnnjɔn/	OldC <i>impinion</i>	brains
<b>Change /a/ &gt; /e/ &gt; OldC /ɛ/</b>					
/i/	British * <i>callîa</i>	/kalli/	/kelli/	OldC <i>kelli</i>	grove
/ɪ/	British * <i>clamito-</i>	/klaɹɪd/	/kleɹɪd/	OldC <i>clewet</i>	sickness
/e/	British * <i>alarki-</i>	F /alerx/	/elerx/	OldC <i>elerhc</i>	swans
/ə/	British * <i>ascurni</i>	F /askørn/	/eskørn/	OldC <i>eskern</i>	bones
/j/	British * <i>caliâco-</i>	/kaljɔɡ/	/keljɔɡ/	OldC <i>chelioc</i> <sup>1</sup>	cock
<b>Change /ɔ/ &gt; /ə/ &gt; OldC /ɛ/</b>					
/i/	British Latin <i>molîna</i>	B /molin/	/məlin/	OldC <i>melin</i>	mill
/ɪ/	British * <i>monijo-</i>	B /mɔnið/	/mənið/	OldC <i>menit</i>	mountain
/ə/	British * <i>Cornouîa</i>	/kørnɔw/	/kørnɔw/	MidC <i>kernov</i>	Cornwall
/j/	British * <i>doli-enn-</i>	/dɔljenn/	/dəljenn/	OldC <i>delen</i>	leaf
<b>Change /u/ &gt; /ə/ &gt; OldC /ɛ/</b>					
/i/	British * <i>gulbîno-</i>	B /gulβin/	/gəlβin/	OldC <i>geluin</i>	beak
/ɪ/	British * <i>corcio-</i>	B /kurkið/	/kərkið/	OldC <i>cherhit</i>	heron
/j/	British * <i>culion-enn-</i>	/kuljɔnenn/	/kəljɔnenn/	OldC <i>kelionen</i>	fly

Notes: *B* means that <ɔ> is recorded in examples in Old Breton; *F* means that final as well as internal i-affection has taken place.  
1 This word developed unusually, to MidC *culyek*, where \**kelyek* would have been expected.

Table 11.8 Examples of svarabhakti (mainly from Old Cornish)

Final consonant	/-n/	/-l/	/-r/
Preceding consonant			
/-b/		<i>pobel</i> <i>discebel</i>	<i>keber</i> <i>cober</i> <i>gober</i>
		‘people’ ‘disciple’	‘rafter’ ‘copper’ ‘reward’
/d/ or /ð/	<i>goden</i> ‘sole’ <i>hethen</i> ‘bird’	<i>kinethel</i> <i>banathel</i>	<i>lader</i> <i>aradar</i>
		‘nation’ ‘broom’	‘thief’ ‘plough’
/-g-/		<i>kelegel</i>	<i>hweger</i>
/-v-/			‘chalice’ <i>gauar</i> <i>liuer</i>
			‘mother-in-law’ ‘goat’ ‘book’
/-st-/		<i>bistel</i> <i>guistel</i>	<i>lester</i> <i>fenester</i> <i>mester</i> <i>kenter</i>
		‘gall’ ‘hostage’	‘vessel’ ‘window’ ‘master’ ‘nail’

The resulting system of vowels and diphthongs in Old Cornish was:

Vowels		i-diphthongs		u-diphthongs	
/i/	/y/	/u/		/ui/	/iu/
/ɪ/			/ei/		/ɪu/
/ɛ/		/ɔ/		/eu/	/ɔu/
	/œ/		/œi/		
	/a/		/ai/		/au/

Development of vowels and diphthongs from Old to Middle Cornish

Stressed vowels

If the Old Cornish system of stressed vowels is arranged thus:

i	y	u
ɪ		*
ɛ	œ	ɔ
	a	

it will be seen that \* marks a gap therein. This was filled c. 1350 by the collapse of the diphthong /ui/, giving the Middle Cornish nine-member system:

/i/	/y/	/u/
/ɪ/		/o/
/ɛ/	/œ/	/ɔ/
	/a/	

Unstressed vowels

In closed syllables, three of the nine stressed vowels had no unstressed counterparts; these were:

- a /œ/, which was reduced to [ɛ]; in the termination [-œk] in place-names, this change occurred between 1150 and 1300, with a central date of c. 1225 (George 1992);
- b historical /i/ was realized as [ɪ]; i.e. the difference between /i/ and /ɪ/ was neutralized;
- c historical /y/ was realized as [ɪ]; i.e. the difference between /y/ and /ɪ/ was neutralized.

In open syllables, there were effectively only four unstressed vowels, since /œ/ had been reduced to [ɛ]; and /ɪ/, /y/, /o/ and /u/ were so marginal as to be practically non-existent. This is summarized in Table 11.9.



Table 11.9 Unstressed vowels in Middle Cornish

Historical phoneme in stressed monosyllables	in unstressed post-tonic syllables of polysyllables	
	<i>Closed syllables</i>	<i>Open syllables</i>
/i/	> /ɪ/	/i/
/ɪ/	/ɪ/	marginal
/ɛ/	/ɛ/	/ɛ/
/a/	/a/	/a/
/ɔ/	/ɔ/	/ɔ/
/o/	/o/	marginal
/u/	/u/	marginal
/æ/	> /ɛ/ c. 1225	> /ɛ/ c. 1225
/y/	> /ɪ/	marginal

Diphthongs

In the i-diphthongs:

- 1 /ei/ remained stable.
- 2 Unstressed [ai] > [a] before 1100.
- 3 Monophthongization occurred c. 1350:
  - (a) /ai/ > /ɛ/, e.g. OldC *trait* ‘beach’ > *treth*.
  - (b) /ui/ > /o/, e.g. OldC *buit* ‘food’ > *bos, boys*.
  - (c) /uia/ > [ɔ], e.g. OldC *hoet* ‘duck’ > *hos*.
- 4 A new phoneme /ai/ was introduced in loan-words from Middle English, e.g. *payn* ‘pain’; this was spelled indiscriminately <ay> and <ey>.

There were thus only three i-diphthongs in Middle Cornish: /ei/, /ai/ and /ɔi/.

Rhymes in Middle Cornish show that the reflex of the OldC triphthong /uiw/ was recognized as being separate from the w-diphthongs.

Enhanced and secondary affection

An enhanced affection /a/ > /ɪ/ apparently occurred:

- 1 in the first and second persons of the present subjunctive and the impersonal of the imperfect subjunctive of verbs with infinitives in -e and -ye; e.g. in the common phrase *del om kyrry* ‘as thou mayest love me’;
- 2 in the third person singular of the present indicative of certain other verbs, e.g. *ef a yll* ‘he can’.

In a number of words, Old Cornish /ɛ/ in the sequence /-ɛLCV/ suffered secondary affection to /ɪ/, this being caused by /i/, /ɪ/ or /j/ in the following syllable; e.g.

with PrimC /ɛ/	<i>termyn</i> > <i>tyrmyn</i>	‘time’
with PrimC /a/ > /ɛ/ > OldC /ɛ/	<i>henwys</i> > <i>hynwys</i>	‘named’
with PrimC /ɔ/ > /ə/ > OldC /ɛ/	<i>kelmys</i> > <i>kylmys</i>	‘bound’

Compared with the secondary affection in Breton, this phenomenon was more restricted (it appears as partially text-dependent), it apparently occurred later, and its product was /ɪ/ rather than /i/, so that the subsequent change /ɪ/ > /e/ eliminated its effects.

## Development of vowels and diphthongs from Middle to Late Cornish

### Stressed vowels

- 1a In stressed open monosyllables, [-i:] behaved similarly to [-i:] in English; i.e. it became a diphthong, e.g. *chy* ‘house’ > *chei*, *choy*.
- b Otherwise, /i/ remained stable, e.g. LateC *Chreest* [ˈkri:ʃt].
- 2a Finally, /ɪ/ > [i:], e.g. *my* ‘I’ > *mî*.
- b Otherwise, /ɪ/ was lowered, and merged with the reflex of Middle Cornish /e/ c. 1650; e.g. *bys* ‘world’ > *bêz*.
- 3 /ɛ/ became closer, approximately [e:], and sometimes broke to [eə], e.g. LateC *dêan* ‘man’.
- 4 /a/ remained stable, e.g. *tas* ‘father’ > *tâz*.
- 5a When short and stressed before liquids and nasals, /ɔ/ fell together with the reflex of Middle Cornish short /o/, in [ɣ], e.g. *forthow* ‘roads’ > *furrow*.
- b Otherwise, /ɔ/ remained stable, e.g. *dos* ‘to come’ > *doaz*.
- 6 The realization of /o/ became closer: to [u:] when long (e.g. MidC *coys* ‘wood’ > *kûz*) and to [ɣ] when short.
- 7 The few words containing Middle Cornish [u:] may have become diphthongized to [au].
- 8 /œ/ became unrounded c. 1525, thereby falling together with the reflex of Middle Cornish /ɛ/, e.g. *mur* ‘great’ > *mêr*.
- 9a Finally and before /x/, [y:] > [iu:] as in English, e.g. *bugh* ‘cow’ > *biuh*.
- b In other environments, /y/ became unrounded, and fell together with the reflex of Middle Cornish /i/; in closed monosyllables, this occurred c. 1625, e.g. *tus* ‘men’ > *tîz*.

The Late Cornish system of stressed vowels was a simple one of five members, but with the breakdown of the quantity rules c. 1625 (see below), the phonemicity passed from the consonants (a Brittonic trait) to the vowels (as in English). There were therefore ten vocalic phonemes in Late Cornish:

/i(:)/                  /u(:)/  
/e(:)/    /ɔ(:)/  
/a(:)/

### Unstressed vowels

- 1 /i/, which occurred only in final position, remained stable; e.g. *pygy* ‘to pray’ > *pidzhi*.
- 2 /ɪ/ > Late Cornish /e/ c. 1650; e.g. -ys (past ptcl.) > -ez.
- 3a When unstressed finally, /ɛ/ > [a] c. 1475; e.g. verbal ending -e > -a, place-name *Hendre* > *Hendra*.
- b In final unstressed closed syllables, /ɛ/ > /a/ c. 1525; e.g. -ek (common adj. ending) > -ack.
- c Pre-tonically, /ɛ/ > [ə] c. 1600, with subsequent loss; e.g. *kerenge* ‘love’ > *carenga* > *crenga*.
- 4 /a/ remained stable.

- 5a When unstressed finally, /ɔ/ > /a/ c. 1525; e.g. *thotho* 'to him' > *thotha*.  
 b In final unstressed closed syllables, /ɔ/ > /a/ c. 1575; e.g. *aswon* 'to know' > *adzhan*.  
 c Pre-tonically /ɔ/ > [ə] > [V];<sup>1</sup> e.g. *bohosek* 'poor' > *broadjack*.  
 6 In many cases, /u/ > /a/.

### Diphthongs

- 1 /ɔi/ and /ei/ were often spelled <i>, but this probably reflects a sound-change in English rather than in Cornish, after Middle English [i:] had become a diphthong.  
 2 /ai/ remained stable.  
 3 /iu/ remained stable.  
 4 /iu/ > /eu/.  
 5 /eu/ remained stable, but was spelled <ow>.  
 6 /au/ > [ɔ:]  
 7a When stressed before a consonant, /ɔu/ remained stable.  
 b When stressed before a vowel, /ɔu/ > /u:/; e.g. *lowen* 'glad' > *looan*; or it was smoothed, e.g. *mowes* 'girl' > *mɔz*.  
 c When unstressed finally, /ɔw/ > [ə].

### Development of consonants and semi-vowels from Primitive to Old Cornish

The consonants and semi-vowels in Primitive Cornish were:

/p/	/t/	/k/	/j/	/w/	/ww/
/b/	/d/	/g/	/s/	/h/	
/β/	/ð/	/ɣ/	/mm/	/nn/	/ll/
/f/	/θ/	/μ/	/n/	/l/	/r/

The voiceless occlusives /p, t, k/ had two allophones: [p, t, k] initially and in consonant groups; [pp, tt, kk] between vowels, arising from syncope of various groups. Finally, these phonemes could occur only in groups.

- 1 The bilabials /β/ and /μ/ became [v] and [ṽ] respectively, c. 650, and have been re-labelled /v/ and /ṽ/.  
 2 /ɣ/ was lost almost everywhere, remaining only in the groups /lɣ/ and /rɣ/.  
 3 The group /ww/ was lost, becoming [gw] c. 925, and subsequently [g] in some cases.

The resulting set of consonants and semi-vowels in Old Cornish was:

/p/	/t/	/k/	/j/	/w/	
/b/	/d/	/g/	/s/	/h/	
/v/	/ð/	/ɣ/	/mm/	/nn/	/ll/
/f/	/θ/	/x/	/v/	/n/	/l/

### Development of consonants and semi-vowels from Old to Middle Cornish

#### Assibilation of dental occlusives

This major change serves more than any other to separate Cornish from Breton and Welsh. [t] in the groups [lt] and [nt], except when followed by /VL/ or /VN/, was assibilated c. 1275 according to place-names. Likewise, medial and final [d], both by itself and in the

groups [ld], [nd] and [dw], became assimilated in similar phonetic environments, c. 1325 according to place-names. The product of the assimilation was most commonly written <s>; this is taken to mean [z] except for <-ns> and <-ls> in absolute final, when it was [s]. Before high front vowels, it was written <g> or <i> in some texts, which indicates palatalization; Williams (1990) assumed that it meant [ðʒ], but it may have been [ʒ]. Examples are given in Table 11.10.

Table 11.10 Examples of assibilation and palatalization in Cornish

<i>OldC</i>	Phonetic environment	<i>MidC</i>	<i>English</i>	Cognates	
				<i>Breton</i>	<i>Welsh</i>
/d/	finally	<i>tas</i>	'father'	<i>tad</i>	<i>tad</i>
	medially before high front vowels	<i>pysy, pygy</i>	'to pray'	<i>pediñ</i>	<i>pedi</i>
	medially otherwise	<i>crysaf</i>	'I believe'	<i>kredan</i>	<i>credaf</i>
/nt/	finally	<i>sans</i>	'saint'	<i>sant</i>	<i>sant</i>
	medially before high front vowels	<i>synsy, syngy</i>	'to hold'	<i>sentiñ</i>	—
	medially otherwise	<i>kynsa</i>	'first'	<i>kentañ</i>	<i>cyntaf</i>

#### *The effect of loan-words from Middle English*

Some of the many loan-words from Middle English were accommodated to the Cornish sound-system, but others were not. Thus some loan-words had [p, t, k] following half-long and long vowels (e.g. *duk* 'duke, leader', pl. *dukys*); see the quantity rules, below: and [t] and [d] were re-introduced after vowels in final position (e.g. *stout* 'bold', *led* 'leads'). New oppositions were thus set up, causing what were previously allophones to assume phonemic status:

- 1 /p, t, k/ versus /pp, tt, kk/;
- 2 finally after vowels, /p, t, k/ versus /b, d, g/.

The inventory of consonantal phonemes in Middle Cornish was:

/p/ /t/ /k/    /pp/ /tt/ /kk/    /tʃ/ /dʒ/ /j/ /w/  
 /b/ /d/ /g/    /s/ /ss/ /h/    /ʃ/  
 /v/ /ð/    /z/    /mm/ /nn/ /ll/ /rr/  
 /f/ /θ/ /x/    /ff/ /θθ/ /xx/    /m/ /n/ /l/ /r/

#### **Development of consonants and semi-vowels from Middle to Late Cornish**

##### *Semi-vowels*

- 1 Initially, /j-/ and /w-/ were in variation with zero; e.g. *yethewon* ~ *eʒewon* 'Jews', *worth* ~ *orth* 'at'.
- 2 In words other than verbal nouns in -ya, [ssj] > [ʃj] > [ʃ] and [tj] > [tʃ], e.g. *gwaytyas* 'to expect' > *quachas*.
- 3 [w] was lost from [zw], e.g. *aswon* 'to know' > *adzhan*.

##### *Spirant consonants*

- 1 <v> varied with <w> in several words, e.g. MidC *cafus* 'to get' ~ LateC *kawaz*. It is not clear whether this represents a sound-change, or an attempt to represent a sound which was neither [v] nor [w].

- 2a Medially after a stressed vowel, [θ] in the groups [rθ] and [lθ] was lost, or reduced to [h]; e.g. *gortheby* 'to answer' > *gurryby*.
- b Finally after a stressed vowel, [rθ] > [rfi] c. 1625 > [r]; e.g. *warbarth* 'together' > *uarbarh* > *worbar*.
- c Finally after an unstressed vowel, [θ] was lost c. 1575 after /r/, and occasionally otherwise; e.g. *lowarth* 'garden' > *looar*.
- d Otherwise, /θ/ remained stable; e.g. *coth* 'old' > *coath*.
- 3a After a stressed vowel, [rð] > [rr]; e.g. *kerthes* 'to walk' > *kerres*.
- b Otherwise, /ð/ remained generally stable; e.g. *arluth* 'lord' > *arleth*.
- 4a Intervocally, after stressed /t/ and /y/, /x/ was lost; e.g. *byghan* 'small' > *bean*.
- b Finally after vowels, [x] > [fi] > [V]; e.g. *flogh* 'child' > *flôh* > *flô*.
- c /x/ in /-lx/ and /-rx/ either became /θ/ c. 1525; e.g. *Carnmargh* 'horse's rock-pile' > *Carnmarth*; or an epenthetic vowel developed; e.g. *molgh* 'thrush' > *mola*.
- d /-rx-/ > [-rr-]; e.g. *arghans* 'silver' > *arrance*.
- 5 /h/ remained stable.

#### Other consonants

- 1a In a few words, /z/ > [r]; e.g. *yth esov vy* 'I am' > *thera vee*; *gasas* 'he left' > *garaz*.
- b In some words, the reflex of Old Cornish /s/ was palatalized to [dʒ]; e.g. MidC *vynsa* 'he would' > LateC *vendzha*.
- c Otherwise, /s, ss, z, ʃ, tʃ, dʒ/ remained generally stable.
- 2 Pre-occlusion: /mm/ > [bm] and /nn/ > [dn] c. 1575; subsequently [-bm-] > [-bb-] and [-dn-] > [-dd-].
- 3 [n] was lost in the groups [ns], [nz] when unstressed; e.g. *trystyns* 'sadness' > *trystys*.

#### New lenition

In Late Cornish, as in some dialects of Breton, [f-] and [s-] became voiced to [v-] and [z-] when preceded or followed by /m, n, l, r/ or a vowel. A notable example is the place-name *Penzance* < MidC *Pensans* 'holy head'; note that *penn* is masculine, indicating that this 'new lenition' obeyed slightly different grammatical rules from 'old lenition'. Later, [v-] and [z-] were found even in absolute initial, e.g. *fals* 'sickle' > *voulz*.

#### Stress

There is very little textual evidence as to how Cornish was stressed. Evidence from place-names suggests that the pattern was the same as in Breton (though not the *Gwenedeg* dialect thereof). We may surmise that, in common with Breton and Welsh, the normal stress in polysyllables was originally on the ultimate syllable, and that it changed, perhaps c. 1050, to the penultimate. Unpublished work by Keith Bailey on stress in Middle Cornish verse suggests that, as in Welsh, the stress-accent was usually on the penultimate syllable, but the pitch-accent remained on the ultimate.

#### Stress in monosyllables

- 1 Monosyllabic nouns and verbs were normally stressed.
- 2 The definite article, possessive adjectives, verbal particles, conjunctions and prepositions were normally unstressed.
- 3 The suffixed pronouns (personal enclitics) and certain words such as Middle Cornish *us* 'is' were sometimes stressed and sometimes unstressed.

### *Normal stress in polysyllables*

The primary stress fell on the penultimate syllable, and a secondary stress fell on the fourth and sixth syllables from the end. This applied to most polysyllables, including close compounds.

### *Double stress*

In the following cases of disyllables, both syllables were stressed, the second bearing the primary stress:

- 1 loose compounds;
- 2 noun and adjective, e.g. *den bras* [dɛ:n'bra:z] 'big man';
- 3 place-names of the type noun + qualifier, e.g. *Penzance* [pɛn'zans]

Antepenultimate stress occurred in:

- 1 words of three syllables or more containing an epenthetic vowel, e.g. *banathel* ['banaðəl] 'broom';
- 2 certain loan-words from English, e.g. *oratory* ['ɔratri].

Ultimate stress occurred in the following cases:

- 1 where longer forms had been shortened, e.g. *yma* [ɪ' ma :] 'there is, there are', verbs in *-he*;
- 2 numerous adverbs and prepositions, e.g. *ynweth* [ɪn' wɛ:ð] 'also', *avel* [a'vɛ:l] 'as';
- 3 compounds of *war* 'on' and *na-* (negative prefix), e.g. *warnans* [wa'nans] 'downwards', *nahen* [na' hɛ:n] 'any other';
- 4 certain loan-words from English, e.g. *attes* [att'ɛ:z] 'at ease'.

## **Quantity of vowels**

### *The quantity rules of Old and Middle Cornish*

In British, as in Classical Latin, vowels were long or short intrinsically. This system broke down in the late sixth century, and was replaced by one in which the length of vowels depended upon their phonetic environment. These rules were:

- 1 In unstressed syllables, all vowels were short.
- 2 In stressed syllables, vowels preceding consonant groups and double consonants were short.
- 3 In stressed syllables, vowels preceding single consonants were long in monosyllables and of mid-length in polysyllables.

The length of vowels was thus dictated by the stress and by the nature of the following consonants.

### *Weakening of the quantity rules in Middle Cornish*

The rules were weakened by certain loan-words from Middle English, which had half-long (or even long) vowels preceding voiceless consonants (e.g. *cota* 'coat', *frut* 'fruit'). Whereas previously, single consonants (except for /f, θ, s/) were necessarily phonemically

voiced, and double consonants (except for /mm, nn, ll, rr/) were voiceless, this was now no longer the case.

*The new quantity rules in Late Cornish*

Whereas Middle Cornish possessed three degrees of vowel-length, Middle English had only two, long and short. *Circa* 1600, the Cornish quantity system changed so as to conform more to the English system. This prosodic shift eliminated the half-long vowels, which usually became short. This is most evident in words containing /n/, in which the spelling changed from <n> to <nn>; e.g. MidC *benyn* [ˈbɛnɪm] > LateC *bennen* [ˈbɛnɛn].

**Sandhi**

*Sandhi in Middle Cornish*

The incidence of consonantal phonemes which could occur finally and initially in Middle Cornish is given in Table 11.11.

*Table 11.11* Incidence of consonantal phonemes in Middle Cornish

		Native		Found only in loan-words	
Finally	Phonemically voiced	/b, g/		/p, t, k/	/pp, tt, kk/
		/v, ð/		/d/ /dʒ/	/bb, dd, gg/
	Phonemically voiceless	/f, θ/			/ʃ/
Initially		/x, s/			
	Phonemically voiced	/p, t, k/	/v, ð/	/dʒ/	
		/b, d, g/			
	Phonemically voiceless	/f, h, s/		/tʃ/ /ʃ/	

The rules of external sandhi applicable to these phonemes may be surmised with the help of spellings such as those given in Table 11.12. The rules are made more complicated by the phonemes which occur only in loan-words. They may be written thus:

- 1 The following were invariably voiceless: /p, t, k/; /pp, tt, kk/
- 2 The following were invariably voiced: /m, n, l, r/; /mm, nn, ll, rr/, /bb, dd, gg/
- 3 The following remained voiced before or after a vowel, a nasal or a liquid, and in absolute initial; but otherwise may have been unvoiced: /b, d, g/, /v, ð, dʒ/
- 4 The following may have been partially voiced (by new lenition) before or after a vowel, a nasal or a liquid; but otherwise remained voiceless: /h, ʃ/, /f, θ, x, s/

Examples in external sandhi are given in Table 11.12.

Table 11.12 Unvoicing of initial consonants in external sandhi

Initial consonant	Final consonant	/b-/	/d-/	/g-/
	/-b/		Phrase <i>pup tyth</i> /pœb dið/ 'every day'	
OldC /-nt/	Pl.n. <i>Nanpean</i> /nant bixan/ 'small valley'		Pl.n. <i>Nantrisack</i> /nant dreiseg/ 'thorny valley'	Pl.n. <i>Nantquitho</i> /nant gwıð-/ 'valley of trees' <i>quitho</i> is thought to be a double pl.
/-g/	Pl.n. <i>Carplight</i> /kryg bleið/ 'wolf barrow'			Pl.n. <i>Carrick Calys</i> /karreg galez/ 'hard rock' (nullified lenition)
/-z/ < OldC	Pl.n. <i>Ponspretall</i> /pœnz prittel/ 'brittle bridge'		Pl.n. <i>Striddicks</i> /riz dreiseg/ 'thorny ford'	Pl.n. <i>Trecorm</i> /riz gœrm/ 'dun ford' with replacement of <i>rys</i> by <i>tre</i> .
/-t/				
/-z/ < OldC				
/-d/				
/-s/	Phrase <i>crowspren</i> /krœs prenn/ 'cross of wood' which, being a close compound, would normally have lenition		Pl.n. <i>Restowrack</i> /rœs dœreg/ 'watery spur' with replacement of <i>ros</i> by <i>rys</i> .	
/-θ/	Pl.n. <i>Porthpean</i> /pœrθ bixan/ 'small harbour' NB <i>porth</i> is masculine		Phrase <i>benna tu</i> /bœnnaθ dyo/ 'blessing of God'	Pl.n. <i>Porthcovrek</i> /pœrθ gœvrig/ 'rivulet harbour'

Notes: Pl.n. = place-name

The phonemic representations apply to MidC, except where shown.

The same rules applied internally within words and word-compounds, for example:

<i>goffyth</i>	'he shall know'	/gœðvið/	/ðv/ > [ff]
<i>wehffes</i>	'sixth'	/hwexvɛz/	/xv/ > [ff]
<i>ractho</i>	'for him'	/ragðɔ/	/gð/ > [kθ]

### Sandhi in Late Cornish

The following place-names suggest that in Late Cornish it was common for the second, if not both, of the consonants at a boundary to be voiced; i.e. there was a tendency for the above rules of sandhi to break down:

<i>Rosegooth</i>	< MidC <i>ros gof</i>	'promontory of a smith' cf. <i>Rosko</i> in Breton
<i>Creegbrawse</i>	< MidC <i>cruk bras</i>	'large barrow'
<i>Porthgwidenn</i>	< MidC <i>porth gwyn</i>	'white cove' cf. Port Quin on north coast.



Ref. no.	Name											
1	(none)	pp	tt	kk	bb	dd	gg	mm	nn	ll	rr	ɣw
2	lenition	b	d	g	β	ð	ɣ	μ	n	l	R	w
3	spirantization	f	θ	x								
4	provection				pp	θθ	kk					
5	lenition-and-provection				f	tt	xx	f				hw

The changes [x] > [fi], [μ] > [v], [β] > [v], loss of [ɣ], and [ɣw] > [gw] > [g] meant that the mutation table changed to the following in Middle Cornish (Table 11.14).

Table 11.14 Mutations in Middle Cornish

Ref. no.												
1	pp	tt	kk	bb	ðð	dd	mm	nn	ll	rr	g	ɣw
2	b	ð	g	v	ð	∇	v	n	l	w	w	w
3	f	θ	fi									
4				pp	tt	kk						
5				f	tt	xx	f				hw	hw

Table 11.15 shows the frequency with which mutations were shown in writing.

Table 11.15 How often were mutations indicated by the spelling?

Text	%	Mutation	no.	%	Mutation	no.	%
MC	94	2 p > b	1192	48	3 p > f	118	69
OM	87	2 t > d	1252	68	3 t > θ	169	83
PC	80	2 k > g	2179	64	3 k > h	222	44
RD	77	2 b > v	2680	93	4 b > p	142	91
BM	74	2 d > ð	2011	75	4 d < t	306	83
BK	91	2 g > ∇	901	74	4 g > k	309	79
TH	76	2 g > w	3427	90	5 b > f	539	100
SA	65	2 m > v	1697	91	5 m > f	97	97
CW	93	2 tʃ > dʒ	74	19	5 g > h	334	94
vLC	59				5 d > t	248	95
Lh.	73						

vLC means 'vernacular Late Cornish'; Lh. means Lhuyd's writings.

For the 5th state mutation, developments of /f/ and /h/ were taken as indicating that the mutation had taken place; this gives very high scores.

Table 11.16 shows common cases of each of twenty-one written mutations. Eighteen of these also applied to loan-words ([tʃ] > [dʒ] exclusively so); these, of course, are analogous, since the original causes of the mutations had disappeared some eight centuries before the loan-words were borrowed.

Table 11.16 Examples of initial mutations

Mutation	Common examples	Examples in loan-words
<i>Lenition</i>		
p > b	<i>bobel</i> 'people'	<i>basconn</i> MC.012 'passion'
t > d	<i>das</i> 'father'	<i>dastye</i> (3 cases) 'taste'
k > g	<i>golon</i> 'heart'	<i>gryst</i> (15 cases) 'Christ'
b > v	<i>vyth</i> 'will be'	<i>vody</i> (11 cases) 'body'

---

d > ð	<i>thu</i>	‘God’	<i>thama</i>	(5 cases)	‘mother’
g > V	<i>allaf</i>	‘I can’	<i>alye</i>	(7 cases)	‘Galilee’
m > v	<i>vyn</i>	‘he will’	<i>vercy</i>	(68 cases)	‘mercy’
gw > w	<i>welas</i>	‘he saw’	<i>wandre</i>	(10 cases)	‘wander’
tʃ > dʒ	(not applicable)		<i>janjyas</i>	(BK38.11)	‘changed’

**Spirantization**

p > f	<i>fen</i>	‘head’	<i>faynys</i>	(3 cases)	‘pains’
t > θ	<i>thas</i>	‘father’	<i>themtya</i>	(3 cases)	‘tempt’
k > h	<i>holon</i>	‘heart’	<i>hothman</i>	(3 cases)	‘comrade’

**Provection**

b > p	<i>pewa</i>	‘living’	(no examples found)		
d > t	<i>tos</i>	‘coming’	<i>tesevya</i>	(TH50v)	‘deceiving’
g > k	<i>cul</i>	‘doing’	<i>cokya</i>	(BK04.83)	‘fooling’
gw > kw	<i>queles</i>	‘seeing’	<i>quandre</i>	(5 cases)	‘wandering’

**Lenition-and-provection**

b > f	<i>fo</i>	‘may he be’	<i>yn felen</i>	(OM2653)	‘horribly’
d > t	<i>tue</i>	‘comes’	<i>towtys</i>	(CW0797)	‘doubted’
g > h	<i>hallo</i>	‘may he be able’	(no examples found)		
m > f	<i>fyn</i>	‘wishes’	<i>fery</i>	(BM1901)	‘merry’
gw > hw	<i>whon</i>	‘I know’	(no examples found)		

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*Pseudo-mutation*

Because [v-] did not occur in Cornish other than as the result of lenition of [b-] and [m-], loan-words containing [v-] were sometimes interpreted as lenited forms; e.g. *bylen* < MidE *vylen* < OldF *vilein* (ModE *villain*), LateC *budgeth* ‘face’ < MidE *visage* < OldF *visage* (ModF *visage*); cf. ModB *beskont* ‘viscount’, ModW *ficer* ‘vicar’.

*Substitution of [b-] in root forms*

In Late Cornish, [b-] was substituted for [m-] in a number of words, no doubt as the result of incorrect de-lenition of the forms in [v-]; e.g.

Middle Cornish		Late Cornish
<i>melyn</i>	‘mill’	<i>belin</i>
<i>Melender</i> (surname)	‘miller’	<i>belender</i>
* <i>meskel</i>	‘mussels’	<i>besl</i>
* <i>menowes</i>	‘awl’	<i>beneuas</i>

To these may be linked the substitution of [b-] for [f-] in Lhuyd’s *beisdar* for Middle Cornish *fenester* ‘window’, which shows that the product of new lenition of [f-] was indeed the same as the product of old lenition of [b-] (and [m-]), viz. [v-]; for a more detailed survey of this feature and of pseudo-mutation, see Chaudhri (2007).

*The nasal mutation*

There is evidence for an initial nasal mutation [d-] > [n-] in only two words, after the definite article. These are *an nor* (and its compound *an norvys*) ‘the world’ from *dor* ‘ground’; and \**an navas* ‘the sheep’, from *davas*, found in the place-name *Porranavas* 1729 (modern form Port Navas), and strikingly confirmed by the reverse spelling *cabm-thavas* for Middle Cornish \**camneves* ‘rainbow’, in which the second element ‘heavens’

has been mistaken for \**navas* ‘sheep’, and the more usual mutation *thavas* applied. The same sound-change is seen in *unnek* ‘eleven’ = *un* + *deg*.

### *The triggering of mutations*

Although mutations were originally phonological in nature, they may be treated grammatically, and may be said to have been provoked in the following circumstances in Middle Cornish.

Lenition occurred principally:

- after the definite article *an* in all feminine singular nouns and in masculine plural nouns denoting persons:
- in the first adjective following a feminine singular noun, or a masculine plural noun denoting persons:
- after the particles *a*, *na*, *ny*, *re* (but not with the verb *bos*) *yn un*, and the prefix *om*;
- after the possessives *the* ‘thy’, *y* ‘his’;
- in feminine nouns after *un* ‘one’;
- after the numerals *dew* and *dyw* ‘two’, which were themselves lenited by *an*;
- after the following words:
 

<i>mar</i>	so	<i>a</i>	of	<i>pan</i>	when
<i>pur</i>	very	<i>war</i>	on	<i>erna</i>	until
<i>re</i>	too	<i>the</i>	to	<i>del</i>	as
		<i>dre</i>	through	<i>kettel</i>	as soon as
				<i>fatel</i>	how
- occasionally after *hep* ‘without’; e.g. *hep wow* ‘without a lie’

Spirantization occurred:

- after the possessives *ow* ‘my’, *hy* ‘her’, *aga* ‘their’;
- after the numerals *tri* and *teyr* ‘three’.

Provection occurred:

- after the present participial particle *ow*;
- after the conjunctions *mar*, *a* ‘if’.

Lenition-and-provection occurred:

- after the verbal particle *y* and the conjunction *may* ‘so that’;
- after the words *kyn* ‘though’, *maga* ‘so’, *ple*, *py* ‘where’, *pur* ‘when’;
- after the particle *yn*, which forms adverbs from adjectives;
- after the possessive *th* ‘thy’ and object pronoun *th* ‘thee’ (modified form).

## MORPHOLOGY

### Articles

Having been *en* in Old Cornish and early Middle Cornish, the definite article became *an* c. 1400; phonemically this was /ann/, but being unstressed, was realized as [an]. In Late Cornish, there was a tendency for the definite article to be realized as [a].

There was no indefinite article, though *un /ynn/* > LateC *idden* was used in the sense ‘a certain’.

Nouns

The gender of most nouns was the same as that of their Breton and Welsh cognates; 77 per cent of nouns were masculine and 23 per cent were feminine.

The only inflections were plural suffixes. Plurals were formed from singular nouns by:

i adding a suffix; the commonest plural suffixes are shown in this table:

Suffix	Singular	Meaning	Plural
-ow	<i>lavar</i>	‘saying’	<i>lavarow</i>
-yow	<i>ger</i>	‘word’	<i>geryow</i>
-on	<i>lader</i>	‘thief’	<i>ladron</i>
-yon	<i>gwas</i>	‘servant’	<i>gwesyon</i>
-es	<i>pysk</i>	‘fish’	<i>puskas</i>
-yer	<i>pren</i>	‘timber’	<i>prennyer</i>

- ii internal change of vowel, e.g. *davas* ‘one sheep’, *deves* ‘several sheep’;  
iii both (i) and (ii), e.g. *mab* ‘son’, *mebyon* ‘sons’.

Most loan-words from Middle English had plurals in *-is*, *-ys* or *-s*; e.g. *tormentoris*, *doctours*; but some were sufficiently well assimilated to acquire native suffixes, e.g. *karpentoryon*.

There was a tendency in Late Cornish to rationalize plural noun suffixes to *-ow* or to *-s*, e.g. Middle Cornish *meyn* ‘stones’ was replaced by Late Cornish *minow*, *\*scryforyon* ‘writers’ by *screffars*.

Singular nouns were formed from collective nouns by the addition of *-en* (morphologically *//-enn//*), e.g. *guel* ‘rods’, *guelen* ‘rod’. There were a few suppletive plurals, e.g. *den* ‘man’, *tus* ‘men, people’. Abstract nouns were formed using the suffixes *-(y)ans*, *-ter/-der* and *-neth* (George 1993).

Demonstratives

The singular demonstrative pronouns are given in Table 11.17. The shortened forms were used before *yv* ‘is’ and *o* ‘was’. The plurals were *an rema* ‘these (ones)’, *an rena* ‘those (ones)’

Table 11.17 Demonstrative pronouns

	Gender	Shortened form	Full form	
		<i>Middle Cornish</i>	<i>Middle Cornish</i>	<i>Late Cornish</i>
‘this (one)’	m.	<i>hem, hemm</i>	<i>hemma, helma</i>	<i>hebma</i> > <i>ebah</i>
	f.	<i>*hom, holm</i>	<i>homma, holma</i>	
‘that (one)’	m.	<i>hen, henn</i>	<i>henna</i>	<i>hedna</i> > <i>hedda</i>
	f.		<i>honna</i>	<i>*hodna</i> > <i>hodda</i>

The demonstrative adjectives were expressed using the suffixes *-ma* and *-na*, which are reductions of *omma* ‘here’ and *ena* ‘there’; e.g. *an bysma* ‘this world’, *an denna* ‘that man’. A third suffix, *-hons* ‘yonder’ is attested but is very rare.

Adjectives

Most adjectives followed the noun; those which preceded it (e.g. *hen* ‘old’, *tebel* ‘evil’) caused lenition of the noun. Except for a few isolated cases (Padel 1979), adjectives were invariant as regards number.

The superlative ending was *-a* < PrimC /ʔhap/ < Brit. *\*samos*; the [h] was assimilated by the preceding consonant, causing unvoicing where appropriate. The comparative took the form of the superlative, the latter being distinguished by the use of *an*; e.g. *tek* /teɡ/ ‘fair’, *tecca* ‘fairer’, *an tecca* ‘fairest’.

Pronouns

The personal pronouns are displayed in Tables 11.18 and 11.19. The reduced unstressed forms *-ma* and *-ta* arose from division of the double forms *\*-ma vy* and *-ta gy*. The reduced form *-va* also came from the double form.

In Late Cornish, the reduced form *-ma* was interpreted as *-m-a*, and upon loss of *-a*, gave such forms as *theram* ‘I was’, *ni ellam* ‘I cannot’.

Table 11.18 Principal forms of personal pronouns in Middle Cornish

		1 sg.	2 sg.	3 sg. m.	3 sg. f.	1 pl.	2 pl.	3 pl.
Independent		/mi/my, <i>me</i>	/ti/ty, <i>te</i>	/ev/ef, <i>eff</i>	/hi/hy	/ni/ny	/hwi/why, <i>wy</i>	/i/y
Enclitic	simple	<i>vy, ve</i>	<i>gy, ge sy,</i>	<i>ef, eff</i>	<i>hy</i>	<i>ny</i>	<i>why</i>	<i>y</i>
	stressed		<i>sche</i>					
	simple			<i>e, a</i>	<i>y</i>			
	unstressed							
	double (re-	<i>*me vy</i>	<i>tegy</i>	<i>eef</i>	<i>hyhy</i>	<i>ny ny</i>	<i>whywhy</i>	<i>*ynsy</i>
	duplicated)	<i>evy</i>						
	reduced	<i>-ma</i>	<i>-te, -ta</i>	<i>-va, -fe</i>				
Possessive <sup>1</sup>		<i>ow, ov</i>	<i>the, 3e</i>	<i>y</i>	<i>hy</i>	<i>agan</i>	<i>agas</i>	<i>aga</i>
Infixed		<i>m</i>	<i>th</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>gan</i>	<i>gas</i>	<i>s</i>

Table 11.19 Principal forms of personal pronouns in Late Cornish

		1 sg.	2 sg.	3 sg. m.	3 sg. f.	1 pl.	2 pl.	3 pl.
Independent		[ˈmi:] <i>mî, mee</i>	[ˈtʃi:] <i>chee</i>	[ˈe:v] <i>eave, e</i>	[ˈhej] <i>hei</i>	[ˈnej] <i>ny, nei</i>	[ˈhwej] <i>why, huei</i>	[anˈdʒej] <i>eye an jye</i>
Enclitic	simple	<i>vî, vee</i>	<i>chee</i>	<i>eave, e</i>	<i>hei</i>	<i>ny,</i>	<i>why, huei</i>	<i>eye, gy an</i>
	stressed					<i>nei</i>		<i>jye</i>
	reduced	<i>-ma</i>	<i>-ta</i>	<i>-va</i>				
Possessive <sup>1</sup>		<i>a</i>	<i>tha, de</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>gun</i>	<i>guz, goz</i>	<i>go</i>
Infixed		<i>m</i>	<i>th</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>gon</i>	<i>ges, gis</i>	<i>s</i>

Note:  
1 The possessive adjectives were often omitted in LateC.

Personal endings

Personal suffixes were found in pronominal prepositions and in verbal paradigms. The combination of suffixes and enclitics gave several sets of personal endings, which provided numerous options when composing poetry (Table 11.20).

Table 11.20 Combination of suffixes and enclitics

Personal ending			Example of	
Suffix	Enclitic	Code	Pronominal preposition	Verbal paradigm
Full	(none)	{O}	<i>genef</i> ‘with me’	<i>welyth</i> ‘seest thou’
Full	simple stressed	{S}	<i>genef vy</i> ‘with <b>me</b> ’	<i>ylly gy</i> ‘mayest thou’
Full	simple unstressed	{U}	<i>genaffa</i> ‘with me’	<i>glowe</i> (2 syll.) ‘he hears’
Full	double	{D}	<i>thynny ny</i> ‘with <b>us</b> ’	<i>wyls a vy</i> ‘ <b>I</b> saw’
Full	reduced	{R}	<i>genama</i> ‘with me’	<i>garsesta</i> ‘wouldst thou like’
Reduced	double	{d}		<i>thuthte gy</i> ‘camest thou’
Reduced	reduced	{r}		<i>welte &gt; welta</i> ‘seest thou’
(none)	simple stressed	{N}	<i>thege</i> [ðə’dʒi:] ‘to thee’	

The combination of the full suffix and the reduplicated enclitic (e.g. *a welyth tegy* {D} ‘seest thou?’) could be reduced in either or both of two ways:

- i loss of the original suffix *-yth*, giving *a welte gy* {d};
- ii interpretation of the second stressed syllable of the reduplicated enclitic as the simple stressed enclitic, giving *a welyth te* {R}; both giving *a welte* {r}.

When the final sound of the suffix approximated the initial sound of the enclitic, assimilation could take place, leading to re-modelling. For example, *esof vy* ‘I am’ became *esaf vy* with the sound change [ɔ] > [a]; assimilation gave *esa ve* (TH); *esa* was then confused with the 3rd sg. imperfect of the long form of *bos*. Such developments show the close links between morphology, phonology and syntax.

Prepositions

As in the other Celtic languages, many prepositions were conjugable. The commonest of these were Middle Cornish *gans* ‘with’ and *the* ‘to’, whose conjugations were irregular.

Table 11.21 Conjugation of *gans* ‘with’

	Earlier Mid C	Later Mid C	Lhuyd	New forms	Meaning
1 sg.	<i>genef, gene</i>	<i>genaf, gena</i>	<i>genev</i>	<i>gen a vee</i>	‘with me’
2 sg.	<i>genes</i>	<i>genas</i>	<i>genez</i>	<i>gena chee</i>	‘with thee’
3 sg. m.	<i>ganso</i>	<i>gansa</i>	<i>gonzha</i>		‘with him’
3 sg. f.	<i>gensy</i>	<i>gensy</i>	<i>gunsi</i>		‘with her’
1 pl.	<i>genen</i>	<i>genan</i>	<i>gennan</i>	<i>genna nei</i>	‘with us’

2 pl.	<i>genough</i>	<i>geno</i>	( <i>genoux</i> )	<i>gena why</i>	‘with you’
3 pl.	<i>ganse</i>	<i>gansa</i>			‘with them’
		<i>gansans</i>	<i>gunzhanz</i>		

The first vowel in the forms for the 1st and 2nd persons was sometimes spelled <y>, especially in *PC* and *RD*. As a result of the sound-changes [ɔ] > [a] and [ɛ] > [a], the 3rd sg. m. and 3rd pl. persons became indistinguishable (in *BK*, *gansa* was used for both); to resolve this ambiguity, a new form for the 3rd pl. suffix was used from *TH* onwards; this was *gansans*. The ending *-ans* may be taken from the 3rd pl. verbal ending *-ans* < *-ons*. Lhuyd’s *genoux* is a re-spelling of the Middle Cornish, rather than a contemporary form.

In Middle Cornish, enclitics could be optionally appended to the pronominal prepositions (see Table 11.21); e.g. *genef* and *genef vy* both meant ‘with me’. The forms with enclitics were less common (only 12 per cent of the examples). In Late Cornish, those for the 1st and 2nd persons were re-interpreted as *gen* + *a* + pronoun, which may account for the Late form *gen* for earlier *gans*. Conjugations of other common prepositions are given in Tables 11.22 and 11.23.

Table 11.22 Conjugation of the ‘to’

	Earlier Mid C	Later Mid C	Lhuyd	New forms {N}	English
1 sg.	<i>thym</i> <i>thymmo</i>	<i>thym</i> <i>thybma</i>	<i>dhebm</i> ( <i>dhymmo</i> )	<i>tha vee</i> (CW->)	‘to me’
2 sg.	<i>thys</i> <i>thyso</i>	<i>thys</i> <i>thyza</i>	<i>dhiz</i>	<i>thege</i> (BK->)	‘to thee’
3 sg. m.	<i>thotho</i>	<i>thotha</i>	( <i>dhodho</i> )	<i>thoth eff</i> (TH->)	‘to him’
3 sg. f.	<i>thethy</i>	<i>thethy</i>	( <i>dhydhi</i> )		‘to her’
1 pl.	<i>thyn</i>	<i>then</i>	( <i>dhyn</i> )	<i>tha ny</i>	‘to us’
2 pl.	<i>thyugh</i>	<i>theugh</i>	<i>dhi’u</i>	<i>ze wy</i> (MC->)	‘to you’
3 pl.	<i>thethe</i>	<i>thetha</i> <i>thothans</i>	<i>dhedhynz</i>		‘to them’

The by-forms *thymmo* and *thyso* arose by analogy with the 3rd sg. m. *thotho*, according to Williams (1995).

Table 11.23 Representative conjugations of pronominal prepositions in Middle Cornish

	a type	o type (direct)	o type (with dental)	y type
	<i>war</i> ‘on’	<i>yn</i> ‘on’	<i>rag</i> ‘for’	<i>orth</i> ‘at’
1 sg.	<i>warnaf</i>	<i>ynnof</i>	<i>ragof</i>	<i>orthyf</i>
2 sg.	<i>warnas</i>	<i>ynnos</i>	<i>ragos</i>	<i>orthys</i>
3 sg. m.	<i>warnotho</i>	<i>ynno</i>	<i>ragtho</i>	<i>orto</i>
3 sg. f.	<i>warnethy</i>	<i>ynny</i>	<i>rygthy</i>	<i>orty</i>
1 pl.	<i>warnan</i>	<i>ynnon</i>	<i>ragon</i>	<i>orthyn</i>
2 pl.	<i>warnough</i>	<i>innow</i> (TH)	<i>ragough</i>	<i>orthowgh</i> (BK)
3 pl.	<i>warnethe</i>	<i>ynne</i>	<i>ragthe</i>	<i>orta</i> (OM)



also	also	also	also
<i>dywar</i> ‘off’	<i>dre</i> ‘through’	<i>a ugh</i> ‘above’	<i>dyworth</i> ‘from’
<i>a</i> ‘from’	<i>yndan</i> ‘under’	<i>dres</i> ‘beyond’	
	<i>yntre</i> ‘between’	<i>hep</i> ‘without’	
	<i>ages</i> ‘than’	<i>ryp</i> ‘beside’	

Numerals

The syntax of the Celtic vigesimal system scarcely changed in Cornish, so that Table 11.24, which shows the cardinal numerals at various points in the history of the language, is interesting more from a phonological than a morphological point of view. The column labelled ‘Boorde’ refers to the notes taken in 1542 by Andrew Boorde, a non-Cornish speaker, on a visit to Cornwall; his versions of the teen numerals are doubtful.

Table 11.24 Examples of the spellings of the cardinal numbers

	Middle Cornish	Boorde	17th century	Lhuyd	Other Late Cornish
1	<i>onan, onyn</i>	<i>ouyn</i>	<i>onyn</i>	<i>ʊonan</i>	<i>wonnen</i>
2 m.	<i>dev, dew</i>	<i>dow</i>	<i>deaw</i>	<i>dêau</i>	<i>deu, deau</i>
2 f.	<i>dyv, dyw</i>	—	<i>dew</i>	<i>diu</i>	<i>diu</i> <sup>1</sup>
3 m.	<i>try</i>	<i>tray</i>	<i>try</i>	<i>trei</i>	<i>try</i>
3 f.	<i>tyr</i>	—	<i>tayr</i>	<i>tair</i>	—
4 m.	<i>peswar</i>	<i>peswar</i>	—	<i>padzhar</i>	<i>pager</i>
4 f.	<i>peder</i>	—	<i>pidder</i>	—	—
5	<i>pymp</i>	<i>pimp</i>	<i>pypm</i>	<i>pemp</i>	<i>pemp</i>
6	<i>*whegh</i>	<i>whe</i>	<i>whea</i>	<i>huîh</i>	<i>wheeth</i>
7	<i>seyth</i>	<i>syth</i>	<i>zith</i>	<i>seith</i>	<i>sith</i>
8	<i>eth</i>	<i>eth</i>	—	—	—
9	<i>naw</i>	<i>naw</i>	<i>naw</i>	<i>naû</i>	<i>naw</i>
10	<i>dek</i>	<i>dec</i>	<i>deake</i>	<i>dêg</i>	<i>deege</i>
11	<i>vnnek</i>	<i>unec</i>	<i>ednack</i>	<i>idnack</i>	<i>idnac</i>
12	<i>dowzek</i>	<i>dowec</i>	<i>dewthack</i>	—	<i>douthack</i>
13	<i>*tredhek</i>	<i>tredeec</i>	<i>tarnack</i>	<i>tardhak</i>	<i>tarthack</i>
14	<i>*peswarthek</i>	<i>peswardeec</i>	<i>puzwarthack</i>	<i>pazuardhak</i>	<i>pedgwarthac</i>
15	<i>pymzek</i>	<i>pypmdeec</i>	<i>punthack</i>	<i>pemdhak</i>	<i>pemthac</i>
16	<i>*whetek</i>	<i>whedeec</i>	<i>wheytack</i>	<i>huettag</i>	<i>wheetaeck</i>
17	<i>*seytek</i>	<i>sythdeec</i>	<i>zitack</i>	<i>seitag</i>	<i>sitack</i>
18	<i>*etek</i>	<i>ethdeec</i>	<i>itack</i>	<i>eitag</i>	<i>ithac</i>
19	<i>nowsag</i>	<i>nawdeec</i>	<i>naunsack</i>	<i>nowndzhak</i>	<i>nounjack</i>
20	<i>vgens</i>	<i>igous</i>	<i>ugens</i>	<i>igans</i>	<i>iggans</i>
100	<i>cans</i>	<i>kans</i>	<i>cans</i>	<i>kanz</i>	<i>canz</i>
1000	<i>myl</i>	<i>myle</i>	<i>myellm</i>	—	<i>meele</i>

Notes

1 The masculine and feminine forms lasted into Late Cornish; see George (2007).

The first four ordinal numbers were:

- 1 Middle Cornish *kynsa* > Late Cornish *kensa*.
- 2 In place of *eyl* (found only in expressions such as *an eyl y gila* ‘each other’, Middle Cornish *nesse* > Late Cornish *nessa* (lit. ‘nearer, next’) was used. The loan-word *second* is also found, especially in TH.
- 3 Middle Cornish *tryge* [ˈtrɪʒɛ] > *tredzha* (Lhuyd) represents the palatalized development of a word corresponding to Breton *trede* and Welsh *trydydd*. The commoner *tresse* was formed by analogy with *nesse*.
- 4 Middle Cornish *peswore* > Late Cornish *padgurra*.

No feminine forms for ‘2nd, 3rd 4th’ are attested. After ‘4th’, the suffix *-ves* was applied to the cardinal number.

Fairly regular verbs

Most verbs in Middle Cornish can be classified into four conjugations:

- 1 those with an infinitive in *-e* (later *-a*);
- 2 those with an infinitive in *-el*;
- 3 those with an infinitive in *-y*;
- 4 other fairly regular verbs

although the differences between them are far less marked than in the conjugations of Latin verbs, and the ‘irregularities’ classes 1 to 3 are nearly all predictable. These four classes had seven tenses and the general structure {*mutation*} + *stem* + {*vowel affection*} + *ending*. The mutation of the initial letter of the stem depends on the preceding element (see section on syntax). The incidence of vowel-affection of the verbal stem is summarized in Table 11.25. The three entries in each cell refer to classes 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

Table 11.25 Vowel-affection in verbal stems

Mood → Tense →	Indicative				Subjunctive		Imperative
	Pres. I	Impf. II	Pret. III	Plupf. IV	Pres. V	Impf. VI	
1 sg.	000	0AA	AAA	000	EAA	000	—
2 sg.	AAA	0AA	AAA	000	EAA	000	000
3 sg.	0AA	0AA	0A0	000	0A0	000	0AA
1 pl.	AAA	0AA	AAA	000	EAA	000	AAA
2 pl.	0AA	0AA	000	000	000	000	0AA
3 pl.	0AA	0AA	000	000	000	000	—
Impersonal	AAA	—	0AA	—	—	—	—

The personal suffixes for the seven tenses, and the number of cases found in the corpus, are given in Table 11.26, As shown in Table 11.18 above, these suffixes could be combined with the enclitics to give a whole range of personal endings.

Table 11.26 Personal suffixes of regular verbs

<b>I Present/future indicative</b>							
	<i>No.</i>	<i>Earlier forms</i>		<i>Later forms</i>		<i>Substitutions</i>	
1 sg.	676	-af, -aff	/-av/	-a	/-a/		
2 sg.	241	-yth	/-ið/	-eth	/-eð/	-ys	/-is/
3 sg.	3038	-∇	/-∇/				
1 pl.	129	-yn	/-in/	-en	/-en/		
2 pl.	129	-ough <sup>1</sup>	/-ɔwx/	-ogh	/-ɔx/	-eugh	/-ex/
3 pl.	86	-ons	/-ɔns/	-ans	/-anz/		
Imp.	26	-yr	/-ir/				
<b>II Imperfect indicative (of most verbs)</b>							
	<i>No.</i>	<i>Earlier forms</i>		<i>Later forms</i>		<i>Substitutions</i>	
1 sg.	41	-en	/-en/	-an	/-an/		
2 sg.	9	-es	/-es/	-as	/-as/		
3 sg.	350	-e	/-e/	-a	/-a/		
1 pl.	13	-en	/-en/	-an	/-an/		
2 pl.	14	-ywwgh, -eugh <sup>1</sup>	/-ɛwx/	-ow	/-ɔw/		
3 pl.	26	-ens	/-ens/	-ans	/-ans/		
<b>II Imperfect indicative (of verbs in -el and some in -es, -us, -y)</b>							
	<i>No.</i>	<i>Earlier forms</i>		<i>Later forms</i>		<i>Substitutions</i>	
1 sg.	10	-yn	/-in/				
2 sg.	2	*-ys	/-is/	-ez, -iz			
3 sg.	90	-y	/-i/			e > -a	/-e/ > /a/
1 pl.	4	*-yn	/-in/			-en > -an	/-en/ > /-an/
2 pl.	0	*-eugh <sup>1</sup>	/-ɛwx/				
3 pl.	10	-ens	/-ens/			-ons	/-ɔns/
<b>III Preterite</b>							
	<i>No.</i>	<i>Earlier forms</i>		<i>Later forms</i>		<i>Substitutions</i>	
1 sg.	139	-ys, -is	/-is/				
2 sg.	102	-sys, -cys	/-sis/				
3 sg.	1075	-as <sup>2</sup>					
1 pl.	43	-syn	/-sin/				
2 pl.	38	-sough, -sowgh	/-sɔwx/			-seugh	/-sɛwx/
3 pl.	57	-sons	/-sɔns/	-sans	/-sans/		
Imp.	6	-ys		-yz			
<b>IV Pluperfect/conditional indicative</b>							
	<i>No.</i>	<i>Earlier forms</i>		<i>Later forms</i>		<i>Substitutions</i>	
1 sg.	82	-sen	/-sɛn/	-san	/-san/	In the auxiliary verbs <i>gallus</i> and <i>mynnes</i> , /dʒ/ was substituted for /s/ as the tense marker.	
2 sg.	13	-ses	/-sɛs/				
3 sg.	252	-se	/-sɛ/	-sa	/-sa/		
1 pl.	15	-sen	/-sɛn/	-san	/-san/		
2 pl.	6	-syugh	/-sɛwx/				
3 pl.	21	-sens	/-sɛns/				

**V Present/future subjunctive**

	<i>No.</i>	<i>Earlier forms</i>	<i>Later forms</i>		<i>Substitutions</i>	
1 sg.	42	-yf	/-iv/			
2 sg.	159	-y	/-i/			
3 sg.	521	-o	/-ɔ/		-a	/-a/
1 pl.	50	-yn	/-ɪn/		-e (3)	/-ε/
2 pl.	56	-ough, <sup>1</sup> -owgh	/-ɔwx/		-en > -an <sup>3</sup>	/-ɛn/ > /-an/
			-ogh, -ow		-eugh <sup>3</sup>	/-ɛwx/
			/-ɔw/			
3 pl.	38	-ons	/-ɔns/		-ans	/-ans/
Imp.	35	-er	/-ɛr/			

**VI Imperfect subjunctive**

	<i>No.</i>	<i>Earlier forms</i>	<i>Later forms</i>		<i>Substitutions</i>	
1 sg.	61	-en	/-ɛn/		-an	/-an/
2 sg.	27	-es	/-ɛs/		-as	/-as/
3 sg.	136	-e	/-ɛ/		-a	/-a/
1 pl.	30	-en	/-ɛn/		-o <sup>3</sup>	/-ɔ/
2 pl.	6	-eugh	/-ɛwx/		-an	/-an/
			-owgh, -ogh <sup>1</sup>		-an	/-an/
			/-ɔwx/ > /-ɔx/			
3 pl.	14	-ens	/-ɛns/		-ans	/-ans/
			-ons <sup>3</sup>			/-ɔns/

**VII Imperative**

	<i>No.</i>	<i>Earlier forms</i>	<i>Later forms</i>		<i>Substitutions</i>	
1 sg.	—	—	—			
2 sg.	1451	-V, -a <sup>4</sup>	/-V/, /-ɛ/			
3 sg.	116	-es	/-ɛs/		-ens > -ans <sup>5</sup>	/-ɛns/ > /-ans/
1 pl.	94	-yn	/-ɪn/			
2 pl.	651	-eugh, -ugh <sup>1</sup>	/-ɛwx/		-owgh, -ogh	/-ɔwx/ > /-ɔx/
			-ans			
3 pl.	70	-ens	/-ɛns/		-ans	/-ans/

## Notes:

- 1 There were two endings for the 2nd pl., /-ɔwx/ and /ɛwx/. Both were subject to later reduction: the diphthongs became vowels, i.e. [ɛw] > [ɛ] and [ɔw] > [ɔ]; and the spirant [-x] was weakened to [-θ], to [-h], or lost altogether. Fourteen of the 16 possible combinations are found. Both endings are found in the 2nd pl. in all seven tenses, but not in equal numbers, as this auxiliary table shows:

<b>Tense</b>		<b>I</b>	<b>II</b>	<b>III</b>	<b>IV</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>VI</b>	<b>VII</b>
/ɔ/ type	Mid C	72	4	9	—	29	3	270
	Late C	23	—	6	—	3	—	41
/ɛ/ type	Mid C	22	3	14	1	3	3	219
	Late C	1	4	—	3	—	—	18
Unified		-ough	-eugh	-sough	-seugh	-ough	-eugh	-eugh

Nance's rationalization for his Unified Cornish probably represents the original endings. The confusion between the two endings in some tenses arose because of a tendency for unstressed [ɛw] to change to [ɔw].

- 2 Verbs in -el and some in -y had their preterite in /-is/ -ys; in Late Cornish, there was a tendency to substitute -as.
- 3 Not a phonological development, but confusion between the present and imperfect subjunctive.
- 4 Occasional ending.
- 5 The 3rd pl. ending was substituted for the 3rd sg.

The irregular verb *bos* ‘to be’

This was a mixture of:

- i an incomplete verb (the ‘short form’) containing two ‘vowel tenses’;
- ii an incomplete verb (the ‘long form’) containing two ‘vowel tenses’;
- iii a verb with stem /bið-/ , having the usual seven tenses.

Tables 11.27 to 11.29 show the short and long forms; they give not only the verbal suffixes, but also the results of their combining with enclitics. In Late Cornish, there was a tendency in the long form for all persons in both present and imperfect tenses to be conflated and simplified to *era* + personal pronoun.

Table 11.27 The short form of *bos* ‘to be’

	Present		Late Cornish	Imperfect		Late Cornish
	Middle Cornish			Middle Cornish		
1 sg.	<i>of, off</i>	/ɔv/	<i>o ve</i>	<i>en</i>	/ɛn/	—
2 sg.	<i>os</i>	/ɔz/	<i>ooz</i> <i>osta</i>	<i>es</i>	/ɛz/	<i>eze</i>
3 sg.	<i>yu, yv, yw</i>	/ɪw/	<i>ew</i> <i>ewa</i>	<i>o</i> <i>ova</i>	/ɔ/	<i>o</i> <i>ova</i>
1 pl.	<i>on</i>	/ɔn/	—	<i>en</i>	/ɛn/	—
2 pl.	<i>ough, owgh</i>	/ɔwx/	—	<i>eugh</i>	/ɛwx/	—
3 pl.	<i>yns &gt; ens</i>	/ɪnz/	<i>ens</i>	<i>ens</i>	/ɛnz/	<i>ênz</i>

Table 11.28 Present tense of the long form of *bos* ‘to be’

Middle Cornish development				Late Cornish	Lhuyd
<i>No enclitic</i>					
1 sg.	<i>esof</i>	<i>esaf</i> <sup>L</sup>			<i>ezhov</i>
2 sg.	<i>esos</i>	<i>esas</i> <sup>L</sup>			<i>ezhoz</i>
3 sg.	<i>us, eus</i>	<i>es</i> <sup>U</sup>		<i>ez, es</i>	<i>ez</i>
	<i>usi</i>	<i>usy</i>	<i>vgy</i> <sup>P</sup>	<i>igge</i> <sup>U</sup>	<i>odzhi</i>
	<i>yma</i>	<i>em</i> <sup>L</sup>		<i>ma</i>	<i>ema</i> <sup>L</sup> , <i>ma</i>
1 pl.	<i>eson</i>	<i>esan</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>eran</i> <sup>LR</sup>		
2 pl.	<i>esough</i>	<i>esow</i>		—	<i>Ezou’</i>
3 pl.	<i>usons</i>	<i>esan</i> <sup>L</sup>		—	<i>idzhenz</i>
	<i>ymons</i>	<i>ymowns</i>	<i>e movns</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>mouns</i>	<i>ymônz</i>
<i>Simple stressed enclitic</i>					
1 sg.	<i>*esof vy</i>	<i>*esaf vy</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>esa ve</i> <sup>LA</sup>	<i>era vee</i> <sup>LRA</sup>	<i>era vî</i> <sup>LRA</sup> <i>era tshî</i>
1 pl.	<i>eson ny</i>	<i>esan ny</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>eran ny</i> <sup>LR</sup>	<i>erany</i> <sup>LRA</sup>	<i>era nî</i> <sup>LRA</sup> <i>ydzhin nyi</i>
2 pl.	<i>esough why</i>	<i>egow why</i>		<i>era why</i> <sup>LRA</sup>	<i>era hui</i> <sup>LRA</sup>
3 pl.	<i>*usons y</i>	<i>esans y</i> <sup>L</sup>		—	<i>idzhan dzhei</i>

*Unstressed enclitic*

1 sg.			<i>erama</i> <sup>LRA</sup>
			<i>eram</i> <sup>LRA</sup>
	<i>*esosta</i>	<i>esta</i>	<i>esta</i>

*Re-duplicated enclitic*

2 sg.	<i>*esos tegy</i>	<i>esta ge</i>
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Notes:

L means lowering: unstressed [ɛ] > [a] and [ɔ] > [a]; stressed [i] > [e].

U means unrounding: [œ] > [ɛ] and [y] > [i].

R means that the first consonant was rhotacized.

A means that the final sound of the verbal suffix was lost.

P means that the first consonant was palatalized.

Table 11.29 Imperfect tense of the long form of *bos* ‘to be’

Middle Cornish development				Late Cornish	Lhuyd
<i>No enclitic</i>					
1 sg.	<i>esen, egen</i>	<i>esan</i> <sup>L</sup>		<i>eram</i> <sup>LR</sup>	<i>Ezen</i>
2 sg.	<i>eses</i>		<i>egas</i> <sup>LP</sup>	—	<i>Ezzez</i>
3 sg.	<i>ese</i>	<i>esa</i> <sup>L</sup>	<i>ega</i> <sup>LP</sup>	<i>era</i> <sup>LR</sup>	
1 pl.	<i>esen</i>		<i>ega</i> <sup>LP</sup>	—	<i>Oezyn</i> <sup>1</sup>
2 pl.	<i>eseugh</i>			—	<i>Oezy</i> <sup>1</sup>
3 pl.	<i>esens</i>	<i>esans</i> <sup>L</sup>		<i>erang</i> <sup>R</sup>	<i>Oezenz</i> <sup>1</sup>
<i>Simple stressed enclitic</i>					
1 sg.	<i>*esen vy</i>				
1 pl.	<i>*esen ny</i>				
2 pl.	<i>*eseugh why</i>				
3 pl.	<i>*esens y</i>	<i>esans y</i> <sup>L</sup>			

Notes:

1 may have been made up by Lhuyd.

L means lowering: unstressed [ɛ] > [a] and [ɔ] > [a]; stressed [i] > [e].

R means that the first consonant was rhotacized.

P means that the first consonant was palatalized.

*b-tenses*

Tenses I (present habitual and future), II (imperfect habitual) and VII (imperative) were regular. The irregular tenses are given in Table 11.30, in which examples in *b-* and *f-* have been re-written with *v-*.

Table 11.30 Irregular *b*-tenses of *bos* ‘to be’ in Middle Cornish

Tense ->	III	IV	V	VI
1 sg.	<i>vuef, vuf</i> > <i>vef</i>	<i>vyen</i> > <i>vyan</i>	<i>vyf</i>	<i>ven</i>
2 sg.	<i>vues, vus</i> > <i>ves</i>	<i>vyes</i> > <i>veas</i>	<i>vy</i>	<i>ves</i>
3 sg.	<i>vue</i> > <i>ve</i>	<i>vye</i> > <i>vya</i>	<i>vo</i>	<i>ve</i>
1 pl.	<i>vuen</i> > <i>ven</i>	<i>vyen</i>	<i>veyn</i>	<i>ven</i>
2 pl.	<i>veugh</i>	<i>vyeugh</i>	<i>veugh</i>	<i>vyugh</i>
3 pl.	<i>*vons</i>	<i>*vyens</i>	<i>vons</i>	<i>vens</i>

Compounds of *bos*

The following Middle Cornish verbs were all based to a greater or lesser extent on *bos*:

<i>gothvos</i>	‘to know how to’	<i>aswonvos</i>	‘to know’ (a person)
<i>wharfos</i>	‘to befall’	<i>darfos</i>	‘to happen’
<i>tylly</i>	‘to owe’	<i>clewes</i>	‘to hear’

Other irregular verbs

The verb *gul* ‘to do, to make’

Tables 11.31 and 11.32 show the paradigm of this verb in its lenited form, except where only other forms are attested. In Middle Cornish, the verb is attested in almost all tenses and persons. The much-reduced situation in Late Cornish is illustrated by the entries marked with superscript ‘N’ (for Newlyn School) in Table 11.32; only tenses I, III and VII are reasonably represented.

Table 11.31 Paradigm of *gul* ‘to do’ in Middle Cornish

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
1 sg.	<i>wraf</i> <sup>0</sup> <i>wrama</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>wren</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wrug</i> <sup>0</sup> <i>wruga</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>wrugaf</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>wrussen</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wryllyf</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>rellen</i> <sup>0</sup>	—
2 sg.	<i>wreth</i> <sup>0</sup> <i>wreta</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>wres</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wrussys</i> <sup>0</sup> <i>wruste</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>grusses</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wrylly</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wrelles</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wra</i> <sup>0</sup>
3 sg.	<i>wra</i> <sup>0</sup> <i>wrefa</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>wre</i> <sup>0</sup> <i>wrefe</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>wrug</i> <sup>0</sup> <i>wruge</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>wresse</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wrello</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wrella</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>gwrens</i> <sup>3</sup>
1 pl.	<i>wren</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>*wren</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wrussyn</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wressan</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wryllyn</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wrellen</i> <sup>0</sup>	
2 pl.	<i>wreugh</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>*wreugh</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wrussough</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>*wrusseugh</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wrellough</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>*wrelleugh</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wreugh</i> <sup>0</sup>
3 pl.	<i>wrons</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wrens</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>russons</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>wrussens</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>rellens</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>rellens</i> <sup>0</sup>	<i>gwrens</i> <sup>0</sup>
Imp.	<i>wrer</i> <sup>0</sup>	—	—	—		—	

Note: 0–3 are explained in the notes to Table 11.32.

Table 11.32 Paradigm of *gweel* 'to do' in Late Cornish

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
1 sg.	' <i>urehâv</i> <sup>L0</sup> <i>ra me</i> <sup>N1</sup>	*****	<i>rig</i> <sup>N0</sup>	' <i>urussen</i> <sup>L0</sup>	' <i>uryllif</i> <sup>L0</sup>	*****	——
2 sg.	' <i>ûrei</i> <sup>L0</sup> <i>raze</i> <sup>N5</sup>	*****	<i>restah</i> <sup>N1</sup>	' <i>urusse</i> <sup>L0</sup>	' <i>urylli</i> <sup>L0</sup>	*****	<i>ra</i> <sup>N0</sup>
3 sg.	<i>ra</i> <sup>N0</sup>	<i>gurei</i> <sup>L0</sup>	<i>reeg</i> <i>wraze</i> <sup>N5</sup>	' <i>ressa</i> <sup>L0</sup>	' <i>urrello</i> <sup>L0</sup> <i>reffo</i> <sup>N4</sup>	*****	<i>gure</i> <sup>L0</sup> <i>gwrens</i> <sup>N3</sup>
1 pl.	' <i>urên</i> <sup>L0</sup>	*****	' <i>rygon</i> <sup>L2</sup>	' <i>uressen</i> <sup>L0</sup>	' <i>urellon</i> <sup>L0</sup>	*****	<i>Guraun</i> <sup>L0</sup>
2 pl.	<i>rewe</i> <sup>N0</sup>	*****	' <i>rygo</i> <sup>L2</sup>	' <i>uresseh</i> <sup>L0</sup>	' <i>urelloh</i> <sup>L0</sup>	*****	<i>re'au</i> <sup>N0</sup>
3 pl.	<i>gurânz</i> <sup>L0</sup>	<i>rehanz</i> <sup>N</sup>	' <i>rygan</i> <sup>L2</sup>	*****	' <i>urellon</i> [z] <sup>L0</sup>	*****	<i>Gwrens</i> <sup>N0</sup>
Imp.	*****	——	——	——			

Notes:

The dashes indicate parts of the paradigm which do not exist grammatically; the asterisks represent parts of the paradigm which theoretically existed but were not attested.

N Data from the Newlyn School.

L Lhuyd's forms; some are re-spellings of Middle Cornish, and some may be his own invention.

0 The 'standard' Middle Cornish conjugation, on which Nance's Unified paradigm was based.

1 Forms in which the enclitic *te* was combined with the stem.

2 A preterite in which the 3rd sg. form *wrug* was used as the stem.

3 Substitution of the 3rd pl. for the 3rd sg.

4 Lhuyd's present subjunctive forms have been re-spelled from Middle Cornish. The only genuine Late Cornish form is an analogy on the basis of *dheffo* 'may he come'.

5 In Late Cornish, the 3rd sg. preterite auxiliary 'did' was distinguished from 'made' by using *wraze* for the latter; this form spread to the 2nd sg. imperative.

### *The verbs mos 'to go' and dos 'to come'*

Like *bos* 'to be', these two verbs consisted of an irregular mixture of two original verbs. They each had an explicit perfect tense, which was subject neither to particles nor to mutation.

### *The verb am bues 'to have'*

This verb was used less than its counterpart in Breton, but more than its counterpart in Middle Welsh. Its structure was:

1st and 2nd persons	verbal particle	+	infix pronoun	+	3rd sg. of <i>bos</i> (stressed)	
3rd persons	verbal particle	+	infix pronoun	+	3rd person marker <i>de-</i>	+ 3rd sg. of <i>bos</i> (unstressed)

It could be used in both verbal and nominal styles, but not in the interrogative, responsive nor imperative modes. See Table 11.18 for the infixed pronouns. The third-person marker *de-* lenited the following [b] to [v], and was itself unvoiced to [t] after *-s*, and palatalized to [dʒ] after *-n*. The third-person singular forms of *bos* were as follows:



Tense →	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Future	Impf. of habit
Stressed	[ˈbœ:s]	[ˈbɔ:]	[ˈbœ:]	[ˈbrɛ]	[ˈbɔ:]	[ˈbɛ:]	[ˈbrɔ̃]	[ˈbrɔ̃ɛ]
Unstressed	[vɛs]	[vɔ]	[vɛ]	[ˈvrɛ]	[vɔ]	[vɛ]	[vɪð]	[ˈvrðɛ]

Note that tenses I and II acquired a [b-] by analogy, except in the second-person singular. Thus the present tense was:

1 sg.	[amˈbœ:s]	1 pl.	[aganˈbœ:s]
2 sg.	[aθˈœ:s]	2 pl.	[agasˈpœ:s]
3 sg. m.	[anˈdʒɛˈvɛs]	3 pl.	[asˈtɛˈvɛs]
3 sg. f.	[asˈtɛˈvɛs]		

Some examples from Middle Cornish are:

*banneth an tas re ges bo (OM2585)*  
‘the blessing of the Father may you have!’

*ef an geuyth war an chal (PC1181)*  
‘he shall have it on the jowl’

*a wul drok nyn gefe meth (RD1785)*  
‘he never had shame of doing evil’

*vyngsans ren geffo amen (RD2085)*  
‘may he have vengeance, amen!’

*alemma numbus gvaya (BM4098)*  
‘hence I cannot move! (lit. have no movement)’

By the time of *BK*, this verb had acquired personal endings, e.g. *ny fethyth* ‘thou hast not’ instead of the earlier *ny fyth*. The paradigms of *am bues* and *bos* became very similar, and confusion resulted in Late Cornish, e.g. *me a vee owne* ‘I had fear’.

SYNTAX

Introduction

There is no direct evidence concerning Old Cornish syntax, since none of the sources consists of continuous prose. Presumably it closely resembled that of Old Breton (Fleuriot 1964).

The grammar of Middle Cornish by Lewis (1946) has been translated into German (Zimmer 1990) and Dutch, but apparently not into English; the original Welsh version contains many errors, which were the subject of a complaint by A. S. D. Smith (Hooper 1977). Brown (2001) is the definitive grammar of revived Cornish, which because of its detailed treatment is useful to students of Middle Cornish. The presentation of verbal syntax is amplified in George (1991). For Late Cornish grammar, see Wmffre (1998).

## Syntax of clauses containing finite verbs

Clauses may be classified according to:

- 1 the structure of the clause – verbal or nominal;
- 2 the presence or absence of an auxiliary verb.

In *verbal* clauses, the verb (either main or auxiliary) was inflected according to person as well as tense (as in Latin); a personal pronoun subject was not expressed, but was implicit in the personal ending of the verb. The verb was preceded by a leading element, and followed by an optional enclitic pronoun, which emphasized the subject. This structure applied to all possible modes, as shown in Table 11.33.

*Table 11.33* Modes of expression in verbal clauses in Middle Cornish (using main verb and unemphatic word-order)

Mode	Particle	Standard clause	Meaning	Notes
+ve statement (main)	<i>y</i>	<i>hedhyw y prenaw</i>	today I buy	1
-ve statement (main)	<i>ny</i>	<i>ny brenav</i>	I buy not	
+ve statement (secondary)	<i>∇ or y</i>	<i>pan brenav</i>	when I buy	2
-ve statement (secondary)	<i>ny or na</i>	<i>pan ny brenav</i>	when I buy not	
+ve command	<i>∇</i>	<i>pren!</i>	buy!	
-ve command	<i>na</i>	<i>na bren!</i>	buy not!	
+ve question	<i>a</i>	<i>a brenydh?</i>	buyest thou?	
-ve question	<i>a ny</i>	<i>a ny brenydh</i>	buyest thou not?	3
+ve answer	<i>∇</i>	<i>prenav</i>	yes	4
-ve answer	<i>na</i>	<i>na brenav</i>	no	4
+ve wish	<i>re</i>	<i>re brenno!</i>	may he buy!	

Notes:

- 1 Cases of the *y*-particle starting an affirmative statement (main clause) are extremely rare; *y* was usually preceded by an adverb (word, phrase or clause).
- 2 Some conjunctions were followed by the particle, e.g. *ma* ‘that’ (in the form *may*); others were followed directly by the verb, e.g. *pan* ‘when’, *mar* ‘if’, *del* ‘as’.
- 3 Evidence from BK suggests that *dar ny* was an alternative interrogative negative particle.
- 4 Whereas in Middle Cornish, ‘yes’ and ‘no’ were expressed by using the verb in question, in Late Cornish, *îa* and *na* were used.

In *nominal* clauses, the verb was inflected only according to tense, and within an individual tense the verb (either main or auxiliary) remained invariant (as in Esperanto), taking the form of the third-person singular; a personal pronoun subject was expressed, and preceded the verb. This structure applied only to affirmative statements.

Thus Middle Cornish was remarkable in that clauses containing affirmative statements could be structured in two quite different ways. The two structures are illustrated in Table 11.34 for the present tense of *prena* ‘to buy’, using both the main verb and the auxiliary verb *gul*.

Table 11.34 Types of clauses in affirmative statements

	Verbal structure (-ve statement)		Nominal structure (+ve statement)	
	main verb only	with auxiliary	main verb only	with auxiliary
1 sg.	<i>ny brenav</i>	<i>ny wrav prena</i>	<i>my a bren</i>	<i>my a wra prena</i>
2 sg.	<i>ny brenydh</i>	<i>ny wredh prena</i>	<i>ty a bren</i>	<i>ty a wra prena</i>
3 sg.	<i>ny bren</i>	<i>ny wra prena</i>	<i>ev a bren</i>	<i>ev a wra prena</i>
1 pl.	<i>ny brenyn</i>	<i>ny wren prena</i>	<i>ni a bren</i>	<i>ni a wra prena</i>
2 pl.	<i>ny brenowgh</i>	<i>ny wreugh prena</i>	<i>hwi a bren</i>	<i>hwi a wra prena</i>
3 pl.	<i>ny brenons</i>	<i>ny wrons prena</i>	<i>i a bren</i>	<i>i a wra prena</i>

Clauses containing an auxiliary verb

In these, the main verb took the form of the verbal noun, and the auxiliary could be either verbal or nominal. It is helpful to divide the common auxiliary verbs between, on the one hand, *mynnes* ‘to wish’, *gallus* ‘to be able’, and *gothfos* ‘to know how to’; and on the other, *gul* ‘to do’, since the latter adds but little to the meaning of the sentence. Indeed, there seems to be little difference between the direct *my a wel* ‘I see, I shall see’ and the periphrastic *my a wra gweles* ‘I do see, I shall see’.

Analogical re-modelling in Late Cornish

In Middle Cornish, the enclitics were optional and emphatic, but in Late Cornish they took on the semantic load. For instance, in the Middle Cornish phrase *ow lyver vy* ‘my book’, the meaning ‘my’ became transferred from *ow* to *vy*, making *ow* redundant and giving Late Cornish *levar vi*; the grammatical change here was analogical; if one could say *lyver Jowan* ‘John’s book’, then why not *lyver vy*?

The same analogical re-modelling took place in, and hastened the demise of, verbal clauses. For instance, *ny wel ev* ‘he sees not’ (verbal particle + verb + enclitic) was re-interpreted as having the same syntax as *ny wel an den* ‘the man sees not’ (verbal particle + verb + subject).

Word-order in sentences

An analysis of clauses in *Beunans Meriasek* (George 1991) showed that the most common structures were those with a main verb: verbal in negative statements and nominal in affirmative statements. The commonest word-orders are shown in Table 11.35. According to Lyon and Pengilly (1987), the commonest word-orders in Late Cornish included those numbered 1, 3 and 5 in the table.

Table 11.35 The commonest word-orders in *Beunans Meriasek* (statements in main clauses)

Subject	Object	Structure	Ref.	Example	Meaning	BM
pronoun	None	nominal	1	<i>my a wel</i>	I see	69%
		verbal	2	<i>ny welav</i>	I do not see	68%
	Pronoun	nominal	3	<i>my a's gwel</i>	I see it	85%
		verbal	4	<i>ny's gwelav</i>	I do not see it	60%
	Noun	nominal	5	<i>my a wel an gath</i>	I see the cat	57%
		verbal	6	<i>ny welav an gath</i>	I do not see the cat	56%
noun	None	nominal	7	<i>an den a wel</i>	the man sees	90%
		verbal	8	<i>ny wel an den</i>	the man does not see	65%
	Pronoun	nominal	9	<i>an den a's gwel</i>	the man sees it	63%
		verbal	10	<i>ny's gwel an den</i>	the man does not see it	60%
	Noun	nominal	11	<i>an den a wel an gath</i>	the man sees the cat	100%
		verbal	12	<i>ny wel an den an gath</i>	the man does not see the cat	68%

The percentages refer to the proportion of occurrences of the given word-order relative to the total number of possible ways of expressing the meaning in the sixth column.

### Subordination

There were five types of subordination in Middle Cornish, as follows:

	Subordinate clause	Subject	Verb	Structure and standard example
1	+ve statement	Pronoun	Vowel tenses of <i>bos</i>	Possessive pronoun + verbal noun <i>ev a grys ow bos klav</i> 'he believes that I am ill'
2	+ve statement	Noun	Vowel tenses of <i>bos</i>	Verbal noun + subject + complement <i>ev a grys bos Yowann klav</i> 'he believes that John is ill'
3	+ve statement	Any	Any other than vowel tenses of <i>bos</i>	y particle + conjugated verb <i>ev a grys y hwelav an gath</i> 'he believes that I see the cat'
4	+ve statement	Any	Any other than vowel tenses of <i>bos</i>	Subject + <i>dhe</i> + verbal noun <i>ev a grys my dhe weles an gath</i> 'he believes that I see the cat'
5	-ve statement	Any	Any	<i>na(g)</i> + subordinate clause <i>ev a grys na welav an gath</i> 'he believes that I do not see the cat'

Type 3 may be taken as subordination of the verbal structure; type 4 of the nominal structure. The following examples are taken from *Passio Christi*:

- |            |  |  |
|------------|--|--|
| (1) PC0490 | <i>yn sur ef a wothfye y bos hy<br/>peghadures</i>   | surely He would know that she is a<br>sinner   |
| (2) PC0607 | <i>ha gueytyeugh bos tus parys</i>   | and mind that men are ready  |
| (3) PC0138 | <i>yma scrifys yn lyfryw yn pup<br/>maner y coth thys gorthyes the<br/>dev hay hanow</i>       | it is written in the Scriptures that in every<br>way it behoves thee to worship thy God<br>and His name      |
| (4) PC2034 | <i>bythqueth re beu vs geneugh<br/>war pask my the ase though vn<br/>prysner hay thelyffre</i> | it has always been with you that at the<br>Passover I should give up to you one<br>prisoner, and release him |
| (5) PC0604 | <i>ha guet na veny tollys</i>  | and mind that we are not cheated   |

To these was added a sixth type, in which the word *fatell*, originally ‘how’, took on the meaning ‘that’; in this example, the English is that of Bonner:

- (6) TH01v    *Rag why a res vnderstondia ha*    for this you must moost certainly beleue  
*cresy fatell ew an dewses spuris*    that the godhed is a spiritite

The word *fatell* was often reduced to *tell*, e.g. from Rowe’s translation of Genesis 3:  
*preg laule theeze tellestah en noath?* ‘who told thee that thou wast naked?’

Similarly, the word *hedre*, originally ‘while’, also lost its first syllable, and took on the meaning ‘that’, becoming *tre* or *ter* in Late Cornish, e.g. again from Rowe:

*pereg Jesus clowaz tero Jowan towlaz tha bressen* ‘when Jesus had heard that John was  
cast into prison’. The two words *del* and *tre* may have been confused.

Type 1 (the possessive pronoun + *bos*) developed personal endings:

- (a) directly, e.g. *ow bosa* (instead of *ow bos*) at PC1120;
- (b) with a *y* particle, e.g. *y bosans y* (instead of *aga bos*) at TH19v.

In Late Cornish, types 4, 5 and 6 remained (Lyon and Pengilly 1987).

### The subjunctive mood

There were originally two tenses in the subjunctive mood, the present and the imperfect.

The present subjunctive was used:

- 1 to express a wish, e.g. *ow thas ker gorthys re bo* ‘my dear Father, may He be adored!’
- 2 in indefinite future statements, e.g. *pan vo ow soppye* ‘when he is supping’
- 3 after generalities, e.g. *Suel a vyanno bos sylwys* ‘whoever may wish to be saved’
- 4 after superlatives, e.g. *me an herth guel ha gyllf* ‘I shall shove it as best I can’
- 5 after *may* ‘so that’, when used to express purpose in the future, e.g. *me a ra the  
cris amme may hallough y asswonvos* ‘I will kiss Christ so that you may recognize  
Him’

- 6 after *pysy* 'to pray', *erghy* 'to command', *gwytha* 'to take care'; e.g. *me a pys ragovgh ow thas may fevgh sylwys* 'I pray my Father for you that you may be saved'.

The imperfect subjunctive was used:

- 7 after an unlikely or impossible supposition, e.g. *ny gewsy dre geryte [lemen] rag cafos ran vras an pencon mar a calle* 'he was not speaking out of charity, but in order to get a large share of the proceeds, if he could';  
 8 after *may* 'so that', when used to express purpose in the past; e.g. *3e worte vn lam beghan y 3eth pesy may halle* 'from them a small leap He went, that He might pray'.

The two subjunctive tenses soon became confused. In Late Cornish, the subjunctive remained only in a few stock phrases: e.g. (case 1) *en chei lebma vo dean koth* 'in a house where there may be an old man'; case 8 may be represented by *mal dha va prêv* 'that he might prove'.

## DIALECTAL AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC VARIATIONS

Next to nothing is known about these in traditional Cornish. There may have been dialects, but only N. Williams (1995) has been obliged to postulate their existence in order to justify his views on Cornish phonology. For example, pre-occlusion (see section on phonology above) is evident in Cornish texts dated post c. 1575, and in place-names west of a line from St Austell to Perranzabuloe. Conventional wisdom links these two pieces of evidence, in that this line marked the eastern boundary of the Cornish-speaking area at that date. Williams has a much more convoluted explanation, based on minority spellings. He believes that the opposition between /n/ and /nn/ was removed in the eastern part of Cornwall (according to him up to the Tamar) before the date of his alleged prosodic shift (the twelfth century), but this change did not take place in the western part (where we now find place-names with <dn>). He thus postulates two dialects: an eastern one in which historical /n/ and /nn/ were no longer distinguished, and a western one in which /nn/ suffered pre-occlusion soon after the prosodic shift, giving a phonetic contrast [n] v. [d<sup>n</sup>], which became fully developed in the sixteenth century to [n] v. [dn], the latter becoming 'visible' as <dn>. An examination of place-names containing historical stressed /-nn-/ during the period 1175 (assumed date of alleged prosodic shift) to 1575 (date of first appearance of <dn>) throws light on this matter. If Williams were correct, then in the eastern zone one would expect these names to be spelled in an indiscriminate mixture of <nn> and <n>, because the difference between /n/ and /nn/ had supposedly been effaced: whereas in the western zone (where <dn> is found), one would expect them to be spelled (almost) exclusively with <nn>. The results show the following:

	western zone	eastern zone
<nn>	109 cases (81%)	105 cases (83%)
<n>	26 cases (19%)	22 cases (17%)

There is no significant difference between the proportions in the two zones, showing that the alleged dialects are not required to explain pre-occlusion.

The Late Cornish phase would have provided the sociolinguist with plenty of interesting material from semi-speakers and terminal speakers. The social stigma attached to

Cornish was such that Nicholas Boson’s mother in about 1650 forbade the servants to speak Cornish to him. Thus his Cornish was not that of a native speaker; the same may be said of most of the Newlyn School, with the notable exception of William Rowe. Edward Lhuyd’s partially reconstructed Cornish received short shrift from the Newlyn School: Oliver Pender wrote to William Gwavas in 1711:

*Rag na algia clappia na screffa Curnoack peccara why.*  
*Thera moy Gembrack peath rig ea gweele.*  
‘For he could neither talk nor write Cornish like you.  
What he did was more Welsh’.

LEXIS

An analysis of the sources of root-words in the traditional lexicon without taking frequency into account (upper part of Table 11.36) suggests that there were as many loan-words from English as there were native Celtic words. Since, however, the frequency of occurrence of most loan-words is low, any estimate which does take frequency into account shows the Celtic element to be always dominant (lower part of Table 11.36).

Table 11.36 Proportions of the lexicon deriving from various sources

	Celtic	Latin	English	French	Other
<b>Text</b>					
<b><i>Without taking frequency into account</i></b>					
Entire traditional corpus	42%	14%	42%	2%	
<i>Vocabularium Cornicum</i>	73%	19%	5%	2%	1%
Works of William Rowe	84%	4%	11%	1%	<1%
<b><i>Taking frequency into account</i></b>					
Words occurring > 100 times in corpus	86%	8%	6%	<1%	<1%
Entire traditional corpus, weighted	90%	2%	8%	<1%	

These figures exclude words whose origin is disputed or hybrid.

The loan-words may be divided into three categories:

- i fully assimilated into Cornish (German *Lehnworte*): e.g. *redya* ‘to read’.
- ii partly assimilated (German *Fremdworte*): most of these, like *onderstondya*, are found in the Tregear Homilies. It seems that Tregear could not be bothered to find Cornish equivalents for the English in the works by Bishop Bonner which he was translating.
- iii unassimilated words and phrases (German *Gastworte*): e.g. *by my sowle, boniour*.

It is sometimes difficult to categorize a particular word; frequency of occurrence helps, but is not an infallible guide: for example, the tautologous *kethsam* occurs more than 100 times in the Tregear Homilies, but in no other text; was it in common use? The word *certen* (numerous variant spellings) occurs more than 100 times in Middle Cornish, but is unattested in Late Cornish.

## NOTE

- 1 The symbol ∇ represents zero sound.

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PART IV

**THE  
SOCIOLINGUISTICS  
OF THE CELTIC  
LANGUAGES**



# IRISH-SPEAKING SOCIETY AND THE STATE

*Tadhg Ó hIfearnáin*

## DEMOGRAPHICS AND CENSUS DATA

The people of Ireland have a complex relationship with the Irish language. Until the middle of the nineteenth century Irish was widely spoken throughout the country, but even before the watershed of the Great Famine in the 1840s, a linguistic and cultural division of labour had appeared whereby Irish speakers were predominantly found in rural areas and in farming, unskilled or family-based professions socially and economically peripheral to the largely anglophone economy of the growing urban areas, industry and large farms. In the copper mines in the Béalra peninsula of west Cork, for example (Verling 1996), an area which was very strongly Irish speaking until late in the nineteenth century, all those involved in heavy physical activity were local Irish-speaking Catholics, but the engineers and managers were English-speaking Protestants. It is true that a small number of literate and educated Irish speakers were gradually joining the emerging professional and middle classes throughout the country in this period, but those who retained Irish and passed it on to their children while going through this cultural and economic change were the exceptions. Amhlaoibh Ó Súilleabháin was a school teacher who married into a family with a business in a small town in the south of Co. Kilkenny in the first half of the century. He kept an extensive diary, largely in Irish, from 1827–34 (McGrath 1936, 1937; Ó Drisceoil 2000) in which he documents his thoughts and activities as a local organizer for Daniel O’Connell’s Catholic Emancipation movement and as a member of the middle class in this rural town in a rapidly anglicizing area. He clearly shows how as an Irish speaker he was an exception among his social peers, but that the lower classes and the rural poor in the region were Irish speaking. Like other literate Irish speakers of the period, he was a school teacher who was a son of a school teacher and most probably belonged to one of a restricted number of learned families with roots in the old Gaelic order of the seventeenth century that had carried on the literary tradition by re-applying their inherited skills as scribes, teachers or composers of popular song. There is no evidence that he brought up his own children as Irish speakers, and Irish had disappeared as a native community language in the area within two generations.

In the absence of census data before 1851, we have to rely on reports for government agencies and contemporary estimates, which were made with various agendas, for the number of Irish speakers in the country. Ó Cuív (1951: 77–93) and Hindley (1990: 8–17) estimate from contemporary sources that in 1800 the south-western province of Munster

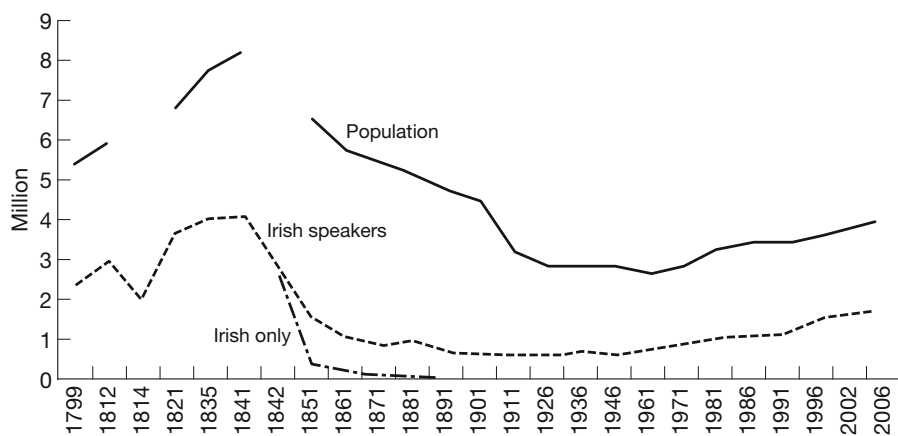


Figure 12.1 Irish speakers in Ireland. Sources: as in Hindley (1990: 15) for 1799–1842 and census of population for 1851–2006

and the western province of Connacht had undoubted Irish-speaking majorities, as did those parts of Ulster which were outside the main areas of seventeenth- to eighteenth-century Protestant settlement, Irish being the most widely used language in Donegal, parts of Tyrone, south Co. Derry, Monaghan, Fermanagh, Armagh and north-east Co. Antrim. The Leinster–Ulster border areas were also majority Irish speaking, as was the south of Leinster as far east as western Co. Wexford. In the small remaining areas, including mid-Leinster to Dublin and the eastern coast, with the possible exception of the most heavily Protestant areas of eastern Ulster, native Irish speakers were still to be found, but most probably in communities where English had recently become dominant (see Figure 12.1).

The most striking feature of the first half of the nineteenth century is the steep decline in the number of people described as monolingual speakers of Irish (Figure 12.1). All the estimates before the introduction of a language question in the census were compiled with a particular aim in mind, ranging from the challenges for primary education to social development. With the exception of Stokes's estimate in 1799, which was gauging the need for provision of Protestant scripture in Irish for evangelical work, most of the commentators assume that the majority of the Irish-speaking population is also unable to speak English. This monolingual core collapses to the extent that by the third quarter of the century only around 6 per cent of Irish speakers have no English, and these are undoubtedly older people. By the mid-nineteenth century, then, the Irish-speaking population had become largely a bilingual speech community. Some children continue to be brought up monolingually to this day and more than a century later there are still sizable numbers of people who are more comfortable in Irish than in English, but for at least the past 150 years every Irish-speaking community has had contact with, and been obliged to manage, the two languages.

*Table 12.1* Numbers of Irish speakers in the general population (Sources: as in Hindley (1990: 15) for 1799–1842 and census of population for 1851–2006)

	<b>Population</b>	<b>Irish speakers</b>	<b>Irish only</b>
1799	5,400,000	2,400,000	800,000
1812	5,937,856	3,000,000	
1814		2,000,000	
1821	6,801,827	3,740,000	
1835	7,767,401	4,000,000	
1841	8,175,124	4,100,000	
1842		3,000,000	2,700,000
1851	6,552,365	1,524,286	319,602
1861	5,798,564	1,105,536	163,275
1871	5,412,377	817,875	103,562
1881	5,174,836	949,932	64,167
1891	4,704,750	680,174	38,121
1901	4,458,775	641,142	
1911	3,221,823	619,710	
1926	2,802,452	540,802	
1936	2,806,925	666,601	
1946	2,771,657	588,725	
1961	2,635,818	716,420	
1971	2,787,448	789,429	
1981	3,226,467	1,018,413	
1986	3,353,632	1,042,701	
1991	3,367,006	1,095,830	
1996	3,479,648	1,430,205	
2002	3,750,995	1,570,894	
2006	3,956,964	1,656,790	

Table 12.1 presents estimates of the Irish-speaking population from 1799 to 1842, and the census of population returns from then onwards. The first census to ask specifically about language was that of 1851, and such a question was asked every ten years from then until 1911. There was no census in 1921 due to the political situation in the country. In 1925 Coimisiún na Gaeltachta (1926) undertook a language census in those areas which were believed to be Irish speaking. When the census resumed in 1926 it contained a question on Irish, which was repeated in 1936 and 1946. Meanwhile in Northern Ireland, no question on Irish was asked from the time of Partition in 1922 until 1991. That question was repeated in the most recent census of 2001. Files from the Department of the Taoiseach in the National Archives show that the Central Statistics Office (CSO) had been opposed to asking questions about Irish from the 1940s as they did not believe the information gathered to be useful, and as a result no question was included in the general census for 1956. This was, however, the year in which the Department of the Gaeltacht was set up and as



part of the brief to determine the geographical area in which the Department should function, a special report was prepared by the CSO that asked census enumerators to state whether each townland in which they gathered the questionnaires was Irish speaking, partially Irish speaking or not Irish speaking. (The census question resumed in 1961 to 1981, and then in every five-yearly census since: 1986, 1991, 1996, 2002 and 2006. The census of 2001 was postponed until 2002 as part of the national plan to avoid an outbreak of foot and mouth disease which had affected much of the neighbouring United Kingdom that year.) Ó Gliasáin (1996) points out that the nature of the census question has changed to reflect the priorities of the authorities over time. From 1851 to 1871 the question was asked in relation to education levels. The enumerator was asked to say whether the person could 'Read', 'Read and Write', or 'Cannot Read', which – given the context – must refer only to literacy in English, and then to add as a footnote 'Irish' for someone who spoke Irish but not English or the words 'Irish and English' to the names of those who could speak both languages. It is widely believed that the numbers of Irish speakers and of monolingual Irish speakers for these early national censuses are greatly underestimated due to the methodology of the data collection. The unmarked nature of English continued in the censuses of 1881–1911, where the words 'Irish' or 'Irish and English' were to be entered next to the names of those who could speak only Irish or who had both languages, spaces next to those who spoke only English being left blank. There was a tendency to continue to underestimate the number of Irish speakers in this way until possibly the late 1890s when Conradh na Gaeilge (The Gaelic League), founded in 1893, became a major cultural and political force in the country, causing more people to have the confidence to claim to be Irish speakers. The 1891 census, which was taken on the cusp of the revival culture but at a time when the vast majority of Irish speakers had acquired the language at home from their parents and communities rather than through the revival movement, is probably the most accurate in giving us a picture of where native Irish was still spoken as the politics and ideologies of ethnic nationalism started to exercise themselves.

The 1926 census was unique in asking whether speakers were native Irish speakers or not, a practice that has not been repeated. The fundamental belief that Irish is the native language of the whole of the Irish nation is enshrined in the language ideology that has dominated political and cultural discourse in independent Ireland and among the nationalist population in the north. This ideology was particularly strong in the years following the foundation of the state, and still has wide currency. Recently, some 14 per cent of Irish people claimed that Irish was their 'mother tongue' in the Eurobarometer survey on the knowledge of languages in the European Union (Eurobarometer 2003), despite the fact that only some 2 per cent of the population speak it on a daily basis. From 1926 until 1991 the census asked whether people could speak only Irish, could speak both languages, or could read but not speak Irish, implying a strong passive knowledge acquired through education. In 1996 the question changed to ask whether or not the respondent could speak Irish and if so whether they spoke it 'daily', 'weekly', 'less often' or 'never'. This was further amended in the 2006 census which also asked whether daily speakers also spoke the language outside the education system, as it was felt the actual frequency of usage was being hidden in the school-age cohorts by the fact that Irish is taught daily at school. As opposed to the emphasis on frequency of usage in the southern census of population, the Northern Ireland census of 1991 and 2001 has concentrated on the self-reported language skills of speakers, asking a series of questions yielding statistics that tell us that a respondent: 'Understands spoken Irish but cannot read, write or speak Irish', 'Speaks but does not read or write Irish', 'Speaks and reads but does not write Irish', 'Speaks, reads, writes and understands Irish', or 'Has no knowledge of Irish'.

According to the 2006 census (CSO 2007) in the Republic, 41.9 per cent of the population over three years old claim to be able to speak Irish. In all, 1,203,583 people claim to speak Irish outside the school system and a further 453,207 speak Irish at school. It is probable that up to 80 or even 90 per cent of the population has some knowledge of Irish because they attended school within the state. In 1993 the National Survey on Languages found that 82 per cent of the population claimed some ability to speak Irish, though over half of those said that they only had the odd word or could say a few simple sentences. Similar figures were obtained in the national surveys of 1973 and 1983 (Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin 1994: 5), and have been repeated in numerous opinion polls and market research studies. Despite the amount of passive knowledge and the large number who claim an ability to speak Irish in the census data, in 2006 only 72,148 persons spoke the language daily outside the education system (CSO 2007, calculated from Table 35 and Table 36). The Gaeltacht had a population of 92,777 that year of whom 91,862 were over the age of three and consequently for whom statistics on Irish-language ability and frequency of usage were gathered. Of these, 64,265 (70 per cent) spoke Irish and 22,515 (24.5 per cent) Gaeltacht residents spoke Irish on a daily basis outside the education system. These figures show that although the Gaeltacht has by far the greatest concentration of Irish speakers by ability and by frequency, it accounts for only a little under one-third of daily Irish speakers in the country. There is substantial variation in ability and practice within the Gaeltacht, where some regions are very strongly Irish speaking while others are almost indistinguishable from non-Gaeltacht areas, but for most of the habitual speakers who are dispersed throughout the country the Gaeltacht represents a core language area with which many have family links and longstanding friendships.

In Northern Ireland 167,490 people (10.4 per cent of the resident population) claimed some combination of the language skills set out in the census of 2001. A total of 75,125 claimed to be able to speak, read, write and understand Irish. The figures from the north and from the Republic give different kinds of information, the northern data showing claimed abilities in productive and passive skills and the Republic's data refining the general ability question with a broad frequency of usage category. Both show the complex relationship of the Irish people to the historical native language of the country. There are relatively small core groups of habitual speakers, some of whom are concentrated in particular geographical areas, and a very much larger group of people who have a wide range of passive and productive skills in Irish which they use on a less frequent basis. This chapter concentrates on the relationships of the habitual speakers, predominantly in the Gaeltacht, to the status accorded the language nationally, and on the often mismatched ideology and practices that this entails.

## IRISH-LANGUAGE POLICY

It is impossible to isolate the question of the Gaeltacht from general Irish-language policy as on an ideological level it has been one of its keystones since the foundation of Saorstát Éireann (The Irish Free State) in 1922. State policy in the Gaeltacht is based on economic planning, be that the development of agriculture before 1956 or the creation of local industry and the attraction of foreign manufacturers since that time. There has been little or no direct planning for the development of the Irish language itself in these regions either at linguistic or social levels, the state having only addressed the substantive language issue when trying to determine where exactly Irish was spoken as the main community language in order to implement its socio-economic policies. The work of the

first Gaeltacht Commission in 1925–6 was thus primarily to delimit the Irish-speaking areas as an economic planning zone, something which was repeated in 1956 when the inter-party government of the day created a separate ministry for the Gaeltacht. The 1956 delimitation of the Gaeltacht was carried out internally by the government without setting up any commission of inquiry, a second Coimisiún na Gaeltachta not being convened on these questions until 2000. Although the second government Gaeltacht Commission report (Coimisiún na Gaeltachta: 2002) is markedly different from earlier exercises in many ways, and contains the recommendation that a research unit in sociolinguistics and language planning be created, it too is primarily concerned with status issues, including a new delimitation of the Gaeltacht to include only areas where more than half of the population use Irish on a daily basis. This second Commission clearly understood that the Gaeltacht had slipped from its central position in national Irish-language policy considerations, and so its recommendations 6 and 7 call on the government to set out policies that will affirm the revival of Irish as a national language and to prepare and operate a National Plan for the language with defined aims in which the role of the people of the Gaeltacht will be clear. The Commission thus wants the Gaeltacht to come again to the fore in government language policy. Whether or not this will happen, Gaeltacht issues cannot be separated entirely from any other policy which impacts on language matters. Indeed, as a region with little local empowerment and marginal political weight on the national stage, the Gaeltacht exists as an administrative entity only because the state language ideology believes it should.

Ó Riagáin (1997), in his analysis of its development in the twentieth century, believes Irish-language policy to be concentrated in four fields: education, public administration, language standardization, and the Gaeltacht. Three of these are status planning issues, only standardization being concerned with linguistic corpus planning. To these one should add a fifth area, that of public service broadcasting and the regulation of the private broadcasting sector. As a public service that did not exist in Ireland prior to independence, broadcasting presented the challenge of creating a role for Irish within a new area of policy and practice instead of simply Gaelicizing an already existent structure in the way that education and the public service were to be tackled. These five fields together are the main areas in which governments can have a direct and immediate influence on language management in the population. Ó Riagáin (1997: 7–27) suggests that these fields have in turn known four broad periods of action, from the first period before political independence where policy was formulated in the aims of the language movement, through three stages since the foundation of the state, reflecting initial development (1922–48), stagnation and retreat (1948–70) and ‘benign neglect’ since 1970.

While such an analytical framework is attractive and useful, it is helpful to understand language policy and its effect on the language habits of the population in more fluid terms. National policies towards Irish since the 1920s have fluctuated from taking bold initiatives to having a reactive stance, representing a shifting ideology which although constantly addressing the Irish language and ready to give it a more or less prominent position in state discourse, has also continuously sought to redefine the role allotted to the language in order to reflect what governments perceived to be the prevalent attitudes among the people at the time. Whereas national surveys have consistently shown that few people want the language to die out, that most support its retention in the schools and are generally in favour of government aid to the Gaeltacht and to Irish promotional organizations (Ó Riagáin and Ó Glasáin 1994), and indeed while most of the English-speaking population ideally would like to be bilingual, the revival of Irish as the principal language of communication in the country is not a concern of the majority of the people, and

probably never has been since the major language shift towards English in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In a country where populist consensus politics are to the fore, it cannot be surprising that Irish governments are rarely under pressure on Irish-language issues from the mass of the population but instead adopt a sympathetic, sometimes paternalistic attitude towards Irish speakers within and outside the Gaeltacht. In these circumstances the history of Irish-language policy and its effect on society is the story of a predominantly English-speaking government and civil service in an overwhelmingly English-dominant state with a central discursive commitment to Irish that manifests itself with varying degrees of engagement over time, often exhibiting formalized forms of cultural and linguistic ideology. The underlying reasoning behind the language policy has been the same throughout the history of the state: there is a desire to enable the whole population to learn and preferably speak Irish, the only indigenous language of the nation once spoken by the great majority, and to stop the Gaeltacht from disappearing entirely as an Irish-speaking or bilingual community.

It is indeed possible to determine distinct periods in Irish-language policy, as Ó Riagáin suggests, but these reflect changes in emphasis as the different strands that have always been present assert themselves. For example, the factors which differentiate the policies of the 1970s from earlier periods, such as the observation of the state's withdrawal from initiatives in language matters and the loosening of the position of compulsory Irish in the school system and public service while continuing to support initiatives from the voluntary sector, were not new. Papers in the National Archives, Department of the Taoiseach files, show that such a policy was being discussed between government departments as early as the 1930s, and that pressure for change actually came from within the public service more than from the general public or from politicians. For example, an internal commission into aspects of the civil service which sat just ten years after independence, from 1932 to 1935, was against the obligation for new recruits to speak Irish, particularly at higher grades, because its members believed that the rule 'militated against obtaining an adequate supply of good candidates' (*Commission of Inquiry into the Civil Service 1932–35*, 35: 104), and in a letter from the Local Appointments Commission to the Taoiseach on 11 May 1949 (NA DT, S15811B) which states that 'we are of [the] opinion that the Gaeltacht areas should be revised and redrawn to conform with reality,' the authors did not lose the opportunity to reiterate earlier suggestions that the requirement for public servants to be able to speak Irish be abolished.

What the fluidity of the situation highlights is that whereas governments have rarely changed their general policies because they perceived no demands from the majority to do so, they frequently change the details or emphasis after lobbying articulated by small groups who may be concerned with only one aspect of the language policy, particularly educationalists and civil servants, many of whom are actually employees of the state. Indeed, it is easy to see that if the state has broad policy themes which enjoy general support rather than explicit rules defined by statute, it is only small interest groups that have the motivation to tackle it and press for change. These groups, be they in favour of or against aspects of language policy, play a role disproportionate to their size in the conduct of the state's action on language matters.

As an alternative to Ó Riagáin (1997), especially from the perspective of the Gaeltacht, one can see that there have been not three but four periods in Irish-language policy since the foundation of the state in 1922. Although the dates might be different, the thrust of the two earlier periods corresponds to those first identified by Ó Riagáin. The period from the early 1970s was not, however, one of 'benign neglect' but a repositioning of the language ideology followed by an emergence of new explicit actions since the early 1990s with

regard to broadcasting, education, legal status in Ireland and the European Union, and the future of the Gaeltacht, all showing that the state now thinks of Irish in terms of a minority language-group issue on the one hand and as a cultural heritage issue on the other. These four phases do not represent changes in essential policy priorities, but rather the emergence of the dominance of different strands and nuances which have always animated the state's conduct, reflecting the constant central ideology but expressing it in ways that were most acceptable to the people in each period. The following discussion thus sets out four periods of language management since the foundation of the state: 1. 1922–56: The foundations of Irish-language management; 2. 1956–72: Redefinitions of the role of the state; 3. 1973–92 Consultation and reacting to pressure from the roots; 4. 1992 to the present: Linguistic minority rights and cultural heritage. In each case the position of Irish in society is discussed in the context of the major changes in the actions of the national collective, being the actions of the state and the opinions and deeds of the Irish- and non-Irish-speaking populations.

## 1 1922–56: THE FOUNDATIONS OF IRISH-LANGUAGE MANAGEMENT

There is an underlying paradox in Irish-language in society that permeates all aspects of language management. Irish is a minority language in Ireland yet does not have any formal kind of minority status, the state interpreting it instead as the real native language of all Irish citizens, as if it had been forgotten and is waiting to be liberated through the will of the people and action of their government. Three hundred years ago very few people in the country could speak any English at all, but the rapid language shift that occurred during recent centuries left only about 18 per cent of the population able to speak Irish at the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus, although Irish is the only 'native' language spoken in Ireland, by the time the Irish Free State gained its independence from the United Kingdom, the majority of the 'native' people no longer spoke it. As Ireland is a democracy, this means that Irish-language policy is, and in effect has always been, determined by, or at least with the acquiescence of, those who do not actively speak it.

Unlike state or local government-assisted attempts to revive minoritized languages in other European countries, in Ireland it has been state strategy to resolve the question of the language's minority situation by seeking to establish Irish as the 'national language'. Throughout history other polities have also established a minority language or a particular dialectal variety as that state's official language, as in the definition and promotion of standard Italian in Italy for example, or in de-colonized countries in Africa, Asia and Oceania that chose one local language, for example a form of Swahili or a pidgin, to become the state language. However, in all of these circumstances the chosen language or dialectal variety was that of a culturally or economically dominant minority, most frequently both. Apart from a small group of intellectuals, in 1920s Ireland as a result of two and a half centuries of social, economic and political marginalization, speakers of Irish were almost exclusively restricted to the lowest socio-economic sector in society, the rural poor. Indeed, it was not really the small number of speakers of Irish which was the major factor in this first period of activity on the language issue by the Irish state, but the fact that there were so few people whose main language was Irish in any influential roles within social, political, economic, educational, administrative or broadcasting fields. There were very few native Irish speakers in the main political parties or employed in the public service until much later. Indeed, although opinions on the actual status of Irish and on its decline were gathered from Irish speakers during the work of *Coimisiún na*

Gaeltachta from 1925 to 1926, and again during the public hearings of *An Coimisiún um Athbheochan na Gaeilge* (the Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language) from 1958 to 1963, at no stage until the last quarter of the twentieth century were the Irish-speaking people of the Gaeltacht centrally involved in the decision-making process in regard to language matters that has so deeply affected the life of their communities.

Whereas many years of language policies have not resulted in the restoration of Irish as the majority language, it was during this early period that they moulded the way in which Irish people regard the language and caused them to gradually modify their view of the nature of bilingualism. They also fundamentally changed the linguistic division of labour. As a result, Irish speakers are now to be found at all levels of society and in all parts of the country. While the Irish-speaking communities in the Gaeltacht may still contain a number of the rural poor, the 2006 census reveals the profile of Irish speakers in wider society to be strongest in the urban educated middle-income bracket. It is clear that from a sociolinguistic perspective it is the ethos reflected in the national policy, and the broadly supportive attitude of the majority who are not Irish speakers, that slowed if not entirely stopped decline in the Irish-speaking parts of the national territory, and makes it acceptable to spend large sums of money on a language which is habitually spoken by only such a small proportion of the population. Significant majorities of the population in all three national surveys on language attitudes over the past thirty years (Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin 1994) seem relatively comfortable with the current situation, and so in a country where populism and consensus frequently determine government policy, there is little pressure for change in this respect, despite obvious shortcomings from the point of view of those interested in reversing language shift. This situation of widespread linguistic awareness and passive support for the status of the language at the national level has its roots in the actions taken in this first stage.

## GAELICIZING THE ADMINISTRATION

The body of documentary evidence in the National Archives, Oireachtas debates, and published literature all point to a constant dialectic in Irish government between government ministers, politicians and popular opinion on one hand who are in favour of Irish-language revival on a philosophical level and the corps of the state's public administration – the civil service – on the other, who have to a large extent successfully resisted incorporation into the dominant ideology. Whereas politicians and the public might have been in favour of Irish, they did not have any requirement to speak it, of course, whereas this would not have been a choice for state employees, who frequently questioned the rationale and aims of such a policy. Many schemes to Gaelicize the Irish civil service, some through obligation and others by persuasion, were implemented during this first formative period. Most of them have been withdrawn or have fallen into abeyance since. The first of the compulsory elements came in 1925 when Irish was made necessary for open recruitment competitions to join the service at the general level, a policy that was later reinforced between 1927 and 1931 when the civil service entrance examination included elements in written and spoken Irish. From that time a test in spoken Irish, intended to be at a higher or professional standard, was also to be taken by all candidates for permanent positions in the second year of their probationary period. In 1937 language tests were introduced for all those who had spent five years in the service to ensure that they were able to carry out their official functions and duties in Irish, and in 1945 promotion from the general or clerical grade required an examination in Irish.

Although professional and technical grades in the civil service were never obliged to have a knowledge of Irish unless it was immediately relevant to their post, from 1935 onwards priority was given to candidates for employment or promotion who had a knowledge of Irish but were otherwise equally qualified. It is not surprising that governments of this period tried to establish Irish usage among their own employees. It was one of the few areas outside education where they could have a direct influence on language choice. Even in the education sector, as discussed below, the state could dictate policy only in the primary sector and in teacher training. Ó Riagáin (1997: 18) points out additionally that at the time nearly 60 per cent of the labour force were employed in agriculture, mostly on family-run farms, and citing Breen et al. (1990: 55) says that probably half of the work-force were self-employed, employed within family-run enterprises, or were employers themselves. In such circumstances the civil service was one of only a few areas which could provide new Irish-speaking middle-class professionals. For a number of reasons, this relatively robust policy met with astonishingly little success in Gaelicizing the civil service.

The 1920s were a period of great turbulence in Ireland. The foundation of the independent state was followed by a bitter civil war, with the first peaceful transition of power from the Pro-Treaty parties which ran the Free State throughout the 1920s to Fianna Fáil, the party formed out of the main group who had opposed the Treaty, after the general election of 1932. Existing institutions were disturbed as little as possible by the government under W. T. Cosgrave from 1923 until 1932. During this early period many of the civil servants who had been in post during the British regime remained in their positions. Despite the official policy, little pressure was put on those already employed or on those in professional or technical grades to adopt Irish. As the civil service is a pyramid structure with fewer employees at the higher levels than at the bottom, and as it had been long established, the English-speaking environment was naturally always stronger in the upper levels. Any new Irish-speaking recruit ascending the promotional scales would be unlikely to have a lasting effect on these conservative strata. The importance of Gaelicizing the civil service, and the failure to do so in any meaningful way, is apparent from the Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language report, which tries to put a positive gloss on what had been achieved by 1959, despite pointing out that the Irish examinations for joining or being promoted within the civil service actually applied only to about one-third of the total personnel, mostly in the clerical and general grades:

Owing to the large numbers employed in the public service (28,000, of whom half work in the Capital), and the wide range of its dealings with the public, the language revival can be extensively aided or retarded by the greater or lesser use of Irish on the part of its personnel. When a native government assumed control of it in 1922, the machinery of administration remained substantially as it had under the British regime, and it was only with the lapse of time that a nucleus of a few thousand public servants possessing a competent knowledge of the national language was built up.

. . . Thus, by 1959, almost 4,000 (14% of the total) were recorded as having a fluent knowledge of the language and a further 14,000 (50% of the total) had a reading knowledge of it.

(Coimisiún um Athbheochan na Gaeilge 1963: 22)

Indeed, even if there was as much as 14 per cent of the public sector able to speak Irish, the same source reveals that leaving aside the Irish-using sections, in 1956 less than 2 per cent of official business was conducted in Irish, while the voluntary use of Irish outside

those sections was insignificant. The Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language conducted its own survey on the subject at the beginning of 1961 and found the position not to be appreciably different.

Less than 0.5% of the existing public servants are employed in sections in which at least three-quarters of the work is in Irish, and less than 3% in sections in which between one-quarter and three-quarters of the work is in Irish. Indeed, outside the Department of the Gaeltacht, of which the personnel is small in number, and, to a lesser extent, the Department of Education, the amount of Irish used is negligible.

(Coimisiún um Athbheochan na Gaeilge 1963: 23)

The lack of opportunity to use Irish in the civil service and the reluctance of civil servants to use what Irish they had were a constant source of concern to those pushing the status of Irish. In response to this and in addition to the obligation to have a working knowledge of Irish, Cumann Gaodhlach na Stát-Sheirbhíse [The civil service Irish Society] was set up in 1926 and organized cultural and social events in Irish. In 1933, following recommendations from Coiste Gaeltachta na Comh-Aireachta [The Cabinet Gaeltacht Committee] that civil servants be given an extra week's paid leave per year if they were to spend two weeks in the Gaeltacht on a recognized language course, the Department of Finance actually allowed them an extra week of unpaid leave to attend a two-week course. Although the scheme was built on a sweetener, that the politicians thought this to be of potential benefit is evidence for a slightly more positive attitude towards Irish on the part of civil servants. This was markedly different from the distrust openly displayed by the governments of the 1920s which saw civil servants as a fifth column in language matters and a potential source of anglicization of the Gaeltacht. In the well-known exclamation by Eamán de Blaghd, Minister for Finance from 1923 until 1932, when the idea of sending civil servants to the Gaeltacht was first mooted: 'If Civil Servants assemble or are assembled in great numbers in the Gaeltacht, they should be dispersed, if necessary, by machine guns' (Kelly 2002: 105).

The civil service thwarted many initiatives to Gaelicize it from within. Coiste Gaeltachta na Comh-Aireachta was founded in June 1933 with the purpose of finding ways to improve both the economy of the Gaeltacht and the position of Irish in the public service generally. They made their recommendations on 24 October of that year, and these included reserving posts in secretarial and clerical functions. Although this was not particularly radical, all its recommendations met with the same fate being passed from body to body until they were either watered down or abandoned:

Cuireadh faoi bhráid na Roinne Airgeadais iad, uaithi sin go dtí an Coiste Idir-Rannach i dtaobh na Gaeilge sa Státseirbhís agus uaidh sin go dtí an Coimisiún i dtaobh na Gaeilge sa Státseirbhís. Tá samplaí eile den phróiseas seo ann go bhféadfadh moltaí áirithe ciorcal iomlán timpeall a dhéanamh idir ranna éagsúla stáit. Ba ghnách leis an Roinn Airgeadais dearcadh coiméadach a ghlacadh, is léir.

[They were submitted to the Department for Finance, from there to the Inter-Departmental Committee on Irish in the civil service and from there to the Commission on Irish in the civil service. There are other examples of this process whereby particular recommendations could make a full circle round various government departments. It is clear that the Department of Finance usually held a conservative view.]

(Ó Riain 1994: 38)



The last major effort in this period to bring Irish into the operations of the civil service was the setting up of another internal commission, *Coimisiún i dtaobh na Gaeilge sa Stát-sheirbhíis* [The Commission on Irish in the civil service], on 13 November 1936 with a brief to devise the structures that would allow the planning necessary to spread the use of Irish in the public service, and to observe the implementation of such plans. The commission's secretary made visits to every office in Dublin and Galway and issued ten reports from the beginning of 1937 until 1939, when those working in the commission were transferred to other duties because of what was in Ireland called the 'Emergency' of 1939–45 (Ó Riain 1994: 38–9).

The dominance of senior staff employed since the pre-independence era is only one of the possible explanatory factors for the way in which political efforts at Gaelicization of the public service were frustrated. Ó Riain (1994) gives examples of how individuals who were once Irish-language activists were moulded into the dominant view within the public service, and shows how this mould was never really broken in favour of a new vision. The civil service seems to have always resisted any role in planning for the status of Irish, and resented its imposition. This is in part due to the inertia of any large organization run by the state, but can also be attributed to some of the otherwise commendable values inherited by the service from Britain, whereby their role was to serve the public, who were predominantly English-speaking by this stage, rather than be part of state planning. In the 1920s and 1930s Irish was the primary language of a group of the rural poor and of a small number of mostly urban revival speakers. Domains of usage in trades and professions, academia, and all aspects of politics and public administration had not yet been reclaimed for Irish. However weak the public service may have been in its adoption of Irish, even the low percentages of ability achieved in the first twenty years were ahead of the general population. Ignoring their role in language status planning generally and the fact that Gaelicizing the service was only part of a plan for general revival, civil servants frequently complained that they were being asked to provide services for which there were little or no demand. The minority who came through the new recruitment system were in fact among the most literate Irish speakers in the country. The majority of native speakers from the Gaeltacht regions only became generally literate in the language along with the rest of the population through the schools. Nevertheless, the civil service both nationally and locally is part of one of the most important power structures in the state. The public service is the face of government for the individual. The inability of government to normalize the position of Irish among its own employees and to provide all services, orally as well as in written form, undermines any efforts to achieve full Irish-language literacy and reconquest of sociolinguistic domains in the Gaeltacht itself as there was then, and remains now, a tacit acceptance there that one must conduct business with the state and all semi-state bodies and agencies in English unless dealing directly with Irish-language affairs. The civil service argument for a lack of demand for Irish-language services thus becomes a self-fulfilling fact, state employees in reality relying on the English-language abilities of Irish speakers.

## EDUCATION

Societal bilingualism in Ireland, particularly in the nineteenth century just prior to independence for the greater part of the country, was a transitional state and can be characterized as a rapid process of language replacement as Irish-speaking communities became absorbed into the major market economy, changing in one or two generations

from monolingual Irish to monolingual English speakers. The average Irish person's experience of bilingualism was thus that it was inherently unstable and that linguistic co-existence was probably not possible, and possibly not even desirable; facts that coloured both state policies on language and the attitude towards Irish of substantial parts of the population. It seems clear that the new state's ideology alone, driven by romantic nationalism, was not enough to make a population which had previously, albeit subconsciously, decided to make the shift to English reverse their decision.

In the early education policy, announced almost immediately upon independence as described in detail by Ó Buachalla (1988) and Kelly (2002), the state did not try to establish popular bilingualism but instead wanted Irish to replace English gradually as the language of instruction. However, neither the majority of the pupils nor their teachers were initially able to comply, having been trained during the pre-independence regime and having undergone the popular language shift to English. To remedy this situation Irish gradually became the medium of instruction in the state's primary teacher training colleges, and four secondary level preparatory schools were established in the Gaeltacht to feed into the teacher training sector. The number of subjects taught at primary school was reduced to allow for teachers' competence to improve, and the new teachers from the Irish-medium colleges were gradually brought in to educate the younger children. The policy had noticeable effects by the mid-1930s, when 25 to 30 per cent of schools were in effect Irish-medium immersion schools for children whose home language was English. A further 25 per cent taught more than two subjects through the medium of Irish, meaning that more than half of the state's schools had become to some extent Irish-medium. The four teacher training colleges, St Patrick's Training College, Drumcondra and Our Lady of Mercy Training College, Carysfort, both in Dublin, Mary Immaculate College of Education, Limerick and the de la Salle College in Waterford had all become almost entirely Irish-medium institutions by the 1930s (Kelly 2002: 68–73).

The *coláistí ullmhúcháin* [preparatory colleges] were a central part of the education policy from their foundation in 1927 through to their running down from 1939 and eventual closure in 1960. They fulfilled a number of purposes with regard to language policy, if not necessarily towards general educational achievement. They were designed to be Irish-medium boarding schools whose pupils were to go on to be trained as primary school teachers in the training colleges. The Department of Education decided to create these special schools in 1926, and the first three of the seven schools, three for Catholic boys, three for Catholic girls and a mixed one for Protestants, opened in 1927. All were in operation by 1930. As Kelly (2002) has calculated, they originally catered for about 25 pupils each, but by the early 1930s had a running total of between 550 and 600 pupils enrolled. No new students were accepted into the colleges from 1939 until 1942, because the number of qualified teachers was already more than needed. It was during this period that the fate of the colleges was sealed when the necessity to have special colleges of this nature was questioned given the apparent success of the ordinary schools in providing quality applicants to the teacher training colleges. On re-opening their doors they only slowly filled up anew before the Minister for Education announced, in 1958, that entry to teacher training would be by Leaving Certificate results and interview only, and no places would be guaranteed for pupils from the *coláistí ullmhúcháin*. They were eventually closed or converted to ordinary secondary schools in 1960.

During their existence they played an important role in bringing the language revival movement into close contact with the native Irish-speaking population, while for the first time setting an attainable professional goal that was directly linked to their home language for young Gaeltacht people. Five of the seven preparatory colleges were located

in the Gaeltacht regions and so provided a visible focus for communities that were quite isolated at the time, as well as the ancillary jobs associated with any institution. In the south-western province of Munster, Coláiste Íde was in the Corca Dhuibhne Gaeltacht in Kerry and Coláiste na Mumhan, although originally set up in 1928 in Mallow in Co. Cork, moved to Coláiste Íosagáin in Baile Bhuirne in the west Cork Gaeltacht area of Múscraí in 1940. The western province of Connacht was host to Coláiste Éinde in na Forbacha, in the Cois Fharraige Gaeltacht region of Co. Galway and Coláiste Mhuire in Tuar Mhic Éadaigh in southern Mayo. In Ulster, the town of Fál Carrach in the Donegal Gaeltacht was home to Coláiste Bhríde. It is widely believed to this day, particularly outside the Gaeltacht and especially in the English-dominant areas bordering it, that places in these colleges were solely for Gaeltacht pupils. A source of some resentment and subject of attacks from those against the language revival, it was not true. In fact only about one-quarter of places were in any way reserved for pupils from the Fíor-Ghaeltacht as half of the places were reserved for candidates who achieved the highest grade possible in the oral Irish examination, and of those, half were reserved for the Gaeltacht applicants. Nevertheless, Gaeltacht primary teachers were encouraged to put forward their best students and even received financial rewards if their pupils were accepted or showed promise in the entrance examination. In most years well over a quarter of the students were indeed from the Gaeltacht. Successful candidates from low-income families also received a small subsistence grant to encourage them to complete their studies. These were important privileges at a time when secondary level education was generally neither free nor universally available. The students spent four years in these preparatory colleges before going on to the training colleges. The coláistí ullmhúcháin have undoubtedly had a lasting effect on the Gaeltacht population. They introduced individuals and families in the Gaeltacht and in rural areas generally to secondary and further education during a period when this was more often the reserve of a more privileged class. They also began a trend for Gaeltacht people to become involved in the teaching profession, not just specializing in Irish language and literature, which has lasted well through the decline of the coláistí ullmhúcháin and through to the present day when Irish is no longer a compulsory part of the Leaving Certificate exam and is no longer a required subject for entry into the public service nor to some of the state's third level institutions.

The state was directly responsible only for the compulsory primary education sector in this period, and so could not directly determine the ethos for secondary schools. However, a 'carrot' rather than 'stick' policy to encourage Irish at the secondary level was instigated with a pass in Irish in the national Intermediate and Leaving Certificate school examinations being mandatory, as it was for entry to the colleges of the National University and teacher training colleges, as well as lower grades in the public service.

The state, or at least the *classe politique* if not the body of the civil service, set great store by the ability of the schools to teach fluency in Irish to their pupils and so enthused them with a love for the language that would make them choose to use it once they graduated. This aim was articulated from well before independence and was developed during the first phase of language policy, which ended around 1956 with the formal definition of the Gaeltacht. The schools had evidently been achieving significant results and with some enthusiasm: the numbers claiming in the census to know Irish were taking a steady climb. Perhaps the qualified success in education only further highlighted the frustration felt by the politicians over their inability to convert the public service mind-set to encourage the use of Irish, and so engendered even more emphasis on schooling. Éamon de Valera, one of the key figures in twentieth-century Irish politics and staunch supporter of

Gaelicization, exemplifies this in a letter dated 30 October to his Fianna Fáil party colleagues at the 1952 Ard-Fheis [annual conference]. He was Taoiseach at the time, but was unable to attend because he was in Utrecht, the Netherlands. The letter is bilingual, and the following are extracts from the English text only:

During the last 30 years much has been done to provide the mechanical aids by which anyone who desires to do so can learn the national language and equip himself to use it for the general purposes of ordinary life . . .

. . . the objective . . . general use of the language can only come from the schools.

. . . For some years I have felt that [a] stocktaking was necessary, but hesitated to say so in public as reflection on new ways would be seized by those who disliked the language as defeat.

. . . but I am now convinced that this must happen.

. . . Emphasis should now be on speech.

(National Archives, Department of the Taoiseach, S1380A/S15562)

As well as its emphasis on the responsibility of schools, the letter displays an attitude against compulsion to use Irish in daily life, instead saying that the role of the state is to provide society with the structures that will enable the individual to learn and choose to use Irish if so desired. It also admits to disappointment that not many were choosing to do so, and that some reconsideration would be necessary.

Although the promotion of Irish enjoys cross-party support in the main, the attitude towards state intervention in the sociolinguistic situation has varied in important details over time. Fianna Fáil was not returned to office during the period 1948–51 and again between the 1954 general election and 1957, but was replaced by the Inter-Party Governments headed by Fine Gael. The first of these consisted of Fine Gael, the Labour Party (including the temporary break away National Labour), Clann na Talmhan (focusing on small farmers's issues) and Clann na Poblachta. Clann na Poblachta, which united socialists and republican strands as an alternative to Fianna Fáil hegemony, was on the rise, and it was arguably to stop the momentum it had gained in bi-elections that Fianna Fáil called the snap general election in 1948. There were tensions between the liberal wing and more nationalist/republican wing from early on in the party, and although they all wanted to oust Fianna Fáil, in the long-term they were not comfortable with supporting a Fine Gael-led government either. In a compromise with Clann na Poblachta, the Inter-Party government was led by Fine Gael's John A. Costello, rather than their party leader, General Richard Mulcahy, who many republicans resented because of his actions on behalf of the Free State government during the Civil War. Many believed that the Inter-Party Governments had less than solid credentials on the language revival issue and did not want to carry it forward. The question had come to a head during the first three years of the Inter-Party Government. In its October 1949 edition the Irish-language magazine *Comhar* had reported that the President of University College Dublin, the biggest university in the country, was opposed to the state's Irish-language policies and had said that in fact nobody in the government believed in the revival either. This led to the following exchange in the Dáil which subtly underlines some of the emerging differences between the political parties despite the denial of any change by the Taoiseach of the day:

**Con Lehane (Clann na Poblachta, Dublin South-Central)** asked the Taoiseach whether, in view of published statements to the effect that neither the present Government nor any of its predecessors believe in the revival of the Irish language and

that Ministers who are public advocates for the language say privately that its revival is impossible, he proposes, on behalf of the Government, to take any steps to repudiate the imputations of bad faith implicit in the statements.

**The Taoiseach (John Aloysius Costello, Fine Gael):** I have consulted the person who, according to the published report to which the Deputy evidently refers, is alleged to have made the statements mentioned in the question, and I have been assured by him that the report is a garbled version of what he said and that he entirely repudiates it. I feel, therefore, that it is scarcely incumbent on me to make any statement arising out of the report; but, nevertheless, I welcome the opportunity afforded to me by the Deputy's question of saying that the Government consider the revival of the Irish language to be a primary and fundamental aim of national policy. We have not deviated from the pursuance of that aim since we assumed office, and we have no intention of deviating from it in the future.

**Con Lehane:** Would the Taoiseach agree that it is time that the anti-Irish language attitude of mind displayed by the authorities of University College, Dublin, was radically altered so that the Government's policy may be more actively effected?

**The Taoiseach:** I do not know that there is any foundation for the allegation made by the Deputy, but I think I should say that I ought not to be asked to answer in this House for what is done or said outside the House. Government policy can be questioned in the House, but I have no responsibility for matters not directly related to Government policy.

**Éamon Kissane (Fianna Fáil, Kerry North):** Is it still the opinion of the Clann na Poblachta Party that teaching through the medium of Irish is mental murder?

**Con Lehane:** That was never the opinion of Clann na Poblachta.

**Seán MacEntee (Fianna Fáil, Dublin South-East):** It certainly was before the election.

(Dáil Éireann, vol. 118, 6 December 1949)

The suspicion that something was afoot to change state policy and that it was not being shared openly with Deputies continued throughout that government. Nearly a year later the Taoiseach refused to set up an independent or cross-party committee on the revival of Irish, insisting that, 'So far as the revival of Irish can be assisted by state action, I am satisfied that the appropriate instrument for that purpose is the Government' (Dáil Éireann, vol. 123, 15 November 1950).

When the Inter-Party Government returned to power in May 1954 it published an agreed Programme for Government, which contained the commitment to establish a separate ministry for the Gaeltacht, rather than have Gaeltacht and Irish-language matters spread across all areas of policy and governance. Sensing that change was in the air and seeking assurances about the government's commitment to Irish in education, on 17 May 1955 in Dáil Éireann Éamon de Valera asked General Richard Mulcahy, now Minister for Education:

If he will state, in as precise terms as possible, so that there may be an end to uninformed criticism in the matter, what are his Department's regulations and attitude with regard to the teaching and use of the Irish language in primary schools; and if he will indicate the extent to which actual practice is in conformity with departmental views and directives.

(Dáil Éireann, vol. 150, 17 May 1955)

General Mulcahy gave a very extensive reply, which sought to reaffirm the general position of Irish in education at the end of this first phase of language policy. He identified the ideology of the majority consensus in his opening remarks, in saying 'The attitude of my Department with regard to the teaching of the Irish language by primary schools derives from the national consciousness', before giving a list of all the recommendations, Public Notices, Circulars and Acts that were still in operation. The general situation is summarized in points 5 and 6 of the Minister's reply:

5. Irish itself is, therefore, an obligatory subject in every national school and the use of Irish as a teaching medium in the schools is determined by certain specified conditions according to the particular circumstances of each school. The amount of time devoted each day or each week to the teaching of Irish and the use of Irish as a teaching medium varies according to the size of the school, the number of teachers, and the particular circumstances of the school.

6. With regard to the Deputy's inquiry as to the extent to which actual practice is in conformity with departmental views and directives, I should like to say that in my opinion any lack of conformity that there is arises from a failure, or perhaps, I should say, an inability, to realise the aims and objectives of the policy indicated in the different documents to which I have referred, rather than from an effort to achieve these aims in cases where the circumstances do not warrant their implementation.

The Department's inspectors encourage the extension of the use of Irish as a teaching medium wherever the conditions permitting of its use are fulfilled, but owing to a certain atmosphere of thoughtlessness and apathy outside the school, progress in the restoration of Irish as the medium of instruction and intercourse frequently falls short of the stated objective.

If the expressed national policy in relation to the Irish language is to be realised, the work of the schools must receive a due measure of encouragement and support from the general public outside the school.

This is not to say that considerable progress in the revival of the language has not been achieved. For instance, the latest available figures show that of a total of 4,876 national schools, Irish was the sole medium in 490, of which 179 were in the Fíor-Ghaeltacht and 183 (including schools solely for infants) in the English-speaking districts. In another 1,901 schools Irish was the sole medium of instruction in two or more consecutive classes or standards but not throughout the whole school, and in a further 2,459 schools Irish was the medium of instruction in some class or classes and/or in some subject or subjects other than Irish. These three groups together give a total of 4,850 which means that there were only 26 schools in which all subjects were taught through English. But it is necessary to mention that the use of Irish in infants' classes influences these figures to a considerable extent.

(Dáil Éireann, vol. 150, 17 May 1955)

In re-emphasizing the importance that the government attached to compulsory Irish as a subject and Irish-medium education for the language revival, and in citing some of the achievements in the educational sector, the minister's reply nonetheless has a slightly hollow ring to it. It refers to the inability to achieve the policies' objectives, and the apathy towards the revival outside the school, which in turn had an adverse effect on the schools' possible achievements. This statement was made at a time when some 10 per cent of schools were teaching solely through Irish, 39 per cent teaching at least half the curriculum through Irish and only 0.5 per cent still using English only. Such figures could not have been achieved in the face of popular opposition to the policy, and despite the protestations of a small minority, there is little to show that the people were seeking any change. The decline in the presence of Irish in schools from this peak in the 1950s happened not through active conflict or antagonism but because the founding language ideology of the state was running into the reality that while the people whose parents and grandparents had turned to English did want to learn Irish anew and have their children speak it, they did not want to reject English. State language ideology promoted Irish revival and monolingual schooling. The lack of any planning for societal bilingualism and, in contrast, for particular domains for public usage of Irish beyond school and symbolic nationalism undermined the fundamental philosophy as it forced an unnecessary and unreasonable conflict between Irish and English, which after centuries of language shift away from Irish and the reinforcing links of family and friends in the English-speaking world, Irish would never win. As the language ideology was essential to Irish statehood it had to remain, but the foundations for the position of the Irish language in modern Irish society having been laid, the enthusiasm for revival simply seems to have lost steam.

One of the salient differences between the Irish and Hebrew language revivals (Ó Laoire 1999) is that those who chose to speak revived Hebrew rarely had to contend with their parents and grandparents who spoke another language, either because they had sadly been killed during the Second World War, or simply because they were very far away from the Middle East. Hebrew also offered a new lingua franca to Jews from many different language backgrounds. In Ireland not only were the older generations often still present and often living in the same house or neighbourhood, but they carried with them the psychological trauma of having themselves, or a recent generation of their family, become English-dominant speakers, rejecting Irish even if not on a conscious level. Accepting or even welcoming Irish at school, even as a medium of instruction, was not the same as making the effort essential to reverse the language shift and actually spend one's life as a language-learner trying to annul the decision of one's antecedents. As long as the state ideology did not attack their personal confidence and sense of worth, the people were in favour of it. The majority continue to be so.

Some of these popular attitudes were summed up neatly in an openly nationalist editorial in the *Leader* newspaper in 1944, commenting on a debate on language policy between Éamon de Valera and General Mulcahy in Ennis, Co. Clare, and on what groups within the population the editor saw opposing the language revival. The editor believed that both Catholic and Protestant citizens who opposed the revival would support it if they thought it would succeed. It was the credibility of the planning which was the problem and the absence of positive arguments for revival beyond the national cause:

Practical opposition to the saving of Irish would continue regardless. Opposition is from three groups:

1. Fanatical, quiet opposition from a serious group of unwavering enemies of Irish nationality of disproportionate influence vis-à-vis their number.

2. Shoneen Catholics. A substantial group who instead of national feeling have inordinate admiration for Great Britain and the United States of America and who think it would be a great advance if all the peoples of the world dropped their own languages and adopted English. But they would not fight against Irish.

3. Fluctuating opposition to the revival of Irish from people who would really prefer to have Irish saved but who resent anything that even in the slightest degree affects their interests or self-esteem. In our opinion government must always be on the alert to ensure that existing minority opposition is never by ill-conceived reasons or by over-haste swollen into majority opposition . . . But there is no need for the snail-like inaction as Mr. De Valera's government has heretofore been.

(*Leader*, 14 October 1944)

By 1956 all the main strands of state action on Irish had been designed and implemented, and the results were mixed. The ideology that had been thus expounded over the first 34 years of the state's existence was the philosophical basis for all that followed, but having highlighted its own limitations led to some consolidation of action in the Gaeltacht and not a little torpidity in the rest of the country.

## 2 1956–72: REDEFINITIONS OF THE ROLE OF THE STATE

The 1950s saw substantial change and innovation in the way the state interacted with the population with regard to Irish. It was during this period that the Gaeltacht was first defined by statute in order to set out the geographical area action for the new Department of the Gaeltacht. The handbook of the standardized language, *An Caighdeán Oifigiúil*, was also published. As Ó Riagáin (1997) has argued, the state policy in Irish status planning and education went into stagnation and retreat, but this period also saw the rise of new forms of Irish-language pressure groups in the Gaeltacht in particular.

### THE GAELTACHT

The Irish word *Gaeltacht* is a collective noun which has both a concrete and an abstract meaning. The standard Irish–English Dictionary (Ó Dónaill 1977: 601) defines it as 'Irishry', 'Irish (-speaking) people', and 'Irish-speaking area'. An earlier, but still current dictionary (Dinneen 1927: 507) goes into slightly more detail, including 'the state of being Irish or Scotch; Gaeldom, Irishry, the native race of Ireland; Irish-speaking district or districts'.

Historically, as in Dinneen's definition, the word has no plural, there being only one Gaelic people and one region where they live, albeit not a contiguous one. However, contemporary use of the word to define spatially separated Irish-speaking communities within the Irish State has led to the increasing use of a plural form, *Gaeltachtaí* or 'Gaeltachts', as if each area were a separate unit. There is no doubt, least of all in the minds of the different Gaeltacht communities themselves, that there are important cultural differences between the designated Gaeltacht territories, arising from their varied social and economic histories, geographical dissimilarities, dialect differences, and the relative strength of Irish as a community language in each place. Nevertheless, the plural form reflects the



concrete association of the word with the state's administration of distinct geographically defined parts of the country rather than an affirmation of local cultural identities, and as such is simply an adaptation of English-language usage. Figure 12.2 shows the geographical extent of the Gaeltacht as defined by Statutory Instrument in 1956 and augmented by Statutory Instruments of 1967, 1974 and 1982.

Even if Hindley (1990: 208) was ever correct in the opinion he formed while visiting the Gaeltacht in the 1960s and 1970s that 'People think of themselves as Donegal people, Kerry folk, Cork people, people from Mayo or Galway, but never as Gaeltacht



Figure 12.2 The Gaeltacht (defined 1956–82)

people', it is certainly no longer the case. People will always have multiple identities, but one of them is belonging to the Gaeltacht, both as a region and as a community. Of many unifying factors which promote a common identity among all Gaeltacht people, three institutions have been mentioned time and again in my own fieldwork: Údarás na Gaeltachta, the Gaeltacht development authority, seventeen of whose twenty members are elected from the various regions; Raidió na Gaeltachta, which the people clearly feel to be their own although it is a national radio station; and, especially among the younger age groups; Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta, the annual inter-Gaeltacht Gaelic football competition. These are organizations which the Gaeltacht people either set up themselves or in which they participate directly, displaying a strong sense of collective identity.

In general, the traditional understanding of the Gaeltacht as a community and the use of the word by the state to mean particular districts co-exist harmoniously. Occasionally, however, the two concepts collide. For example, shortly after Údarás na Gaeltachta erected roads signs inscribed with 'An Ghaeltacht' on or around its boundaries in 1999, one informant from Baile Mhic Íre at the eastern end of the Múscraí Gaeltacht in west Cork expressed the opinion that they were wrong to mark out his own area for visitors in such a way: 'Tá an t-uafás daoine go bhfuil an Ghaoluinn aca anso, ach tá an Ghaeltacht thiar i gCiarraí.' [Lots of people speak Irish here, but the Gaeltacht is west in Kerry.]

This could be interpreted simply as the informant believing that the official Gaeltacht boundaries were wrong, but a more accurate translation taking into account the notion of the Gaeltacht being a community of speakers might be that, 'west Kerry is where the Irish-speaking population live (i.e. Gaeltacht), although there are a lot of us here among the English speakers too, and so the road sign is not completely accurate.'

The use of the word Gaeltacht to mean the geographical area where Irish, or indeed Scottish Gaelic, is spoken is difficult to attest before the nineteenth century, and really only comes to the fore at the start of the twentieth century when it was used by the romantic nationalist language revivalists of Conradh na Gaeilge [The Gaelic League]. The parallel meaning of Gaeltacht as an ethnolinguistic group, or the culture associated with it, is the only one present in earlier literature. It is possible that the term had its genesis in opposition to its antonym, *Galltacht*, which may predate it and was certainly in use by the fourteenth century (Ó Torna 2000). Indigenous ethnic groups the world over often give names to their neighbours before adopting a distinctive name to describe themselves. The ethnic name used historically by the natives of Ireland, Scotland and Mann to describe themselves, *Gael* (plural *Gaeil*), for example, is in origin a loan word adopted from the neighbouring Brittonic Celtic languages, spoken in western Britain and in Brittany, during the early middle ages. The *Gaeil* themselves referred to all foreigners as *Gall* (plural *Gaill*). The description of all those of non-Gaelic origin as *Gaill* continued in native usage right into the modern period, but does not appear to be a primarily linguistic classification. Despite the fact that many of them had become a constituent part of Irish-speaking society for centuries, often actually dominating certain political and cultural aspects of it, the descendants of Viking settlers, Anglo-Normans, English and others who came to Ireland from the tenth century onwards were referred to constantly as *Gaill* both by the native literary classes and by themselves (Ó Mianáin 2001). The word *Galltacht* referred to the non-Gaelic people and to their attributes, although it had a secondary territorial meaning as 'places where the Gaill live'. Some of these Gaill would have been thoroughly Gaelicized, others utterly foreign in language and socio-political organization. In a line from an eighteenth-century poem, for example, the northern poet Séamas Dall Mac Cuarta laments the fact that his friends have abandoned him 'ó d'athraías uaibh chun na Galltacht' suas [since I left you to go up to the Galltacht] (Ó Torna 2000: 56).

Although in this instance the Gaeltacht is definitely a place, in context it undoubtedly means 'among the Gaill' and has cultural or political overtones as the poet is feeling cut off from his old (Gaelic) friends.

The intellectual construction of the Gaeltacht as a symbol and as a perceived bastion of native Irish language, a culture which had elsewhere been soiled by centuries of contact with English, was central to the romantic nationalist ideology of the nineteenth-century Irish-language revivalists. The places where Irish was widely spoken were generally called 'the Irish-speaking districts' by the pre-Gaelic League revivalists (Ó Murchú 2001), but from the time the League was established in 1893 and turned into a mass popular movement, the word Gaeltacht, with variant spellings, was the word used almost exclusively in both the Irish and English languages in revivalist publications such as *Iris-leabhar na Gaedhilge* and *An Claidheamh Soluis* (Ó Torna 2000: 58–9). The change in terminology reflects the change in emphasis and in the geographical position of the language between the time of the early revivalists and the start of the twentieth century. In the mid-nineteenth century Irish was still spoken as a native language in much of the country and so the aims of the activists were both to teach literacy to Irish speakers and to encourage those who had no Irish or whose families had recently abandoned it to take it up again. The notion of the Gaeltacht as solely on the western seaboard and as a place for language learning and cultural holidays in beautiful scenery was less immediate in the nineteenth century as Irish was still to be found in most of the country and revivalists in many inland areas and even on the edge of urban centres would have been able to hear Irish spoken near their homes, even if not by all age groups in all districts. By the turn of the century, with the exception of isolated rural areas and individual elderly people scattered throughout the country, the physical location of the Gaeltacht on the western and southern seaboards and in mountain areas became more obvious.

In practice the state had recognized the existence of the Gaeltacht as a particular cultural and socio-economic zone where Irish was spoken, implicitly since its foundation, and explicitly since the publication in 1926 of the *Statement of Government Policy on the Recommendations of the Commission* (Saorstát Éireann 1926), in response to the report of the Gaeltacht Commission which sat between 1925 and 1926. The Gaeltacht was not in fact defined by statute until the end of 1956, when a new government department for the region, Roinn na Gaeltachta, was established and the Gaeltacht Areas Order, 1956 (Statutory Instrument No. 245 of 1956) was published to set out the geographical areas in which the new ministry was to have jurisdiction.

The definition of two sorts of Gaeltacht set out in the 1926 government policy document area as 'Irish-speaking districts' where 80 per cent or upwards of the population was Irish-speaking and 'Partly Irish-speaking districts' where Irish speakers formed 25 per cent to 79 per cent of the population was adopted by the government as a 'convenient working arrangement' (Saorstát Éireann 1926: 4). These definitions were taken directly from the Report of Coimisiún na Gaeltachta, and are more widely known by the terms used therein, *Fíor-Ghaeltacht* [true Gaeltacht] and *Breac-Ghaeltacht* [dappled, middling or partial Gaeltacht] respectively. Thirty years prior to the creation of the separate ministry, the government had decided the Minister for Fisheries would act as the co-ordinating authority for Gaeltacht services and the Executive Council would 'continue to deal with the co-ordination of departmental activities in relation to the growth and spread of the Irish Language generally' (Saorstát Éireann 1926: 30). The Minister for Fisheries took on the portfolio of the Land Commission at the same time as responsibility for the Gaeltacht, and given the socio-economic slant of much of what was in the Statement of Government Policy, the combination of responsibilities may have seemed

logical. However, government intervention in the language question in the Gaeltacht operated in other important areas too, notably education, local government and administration, and improvement of housing and infrastructure. These areas were handled by other government departments. As the definition of the Gaeltacht was not statutory until 1956, despite the efforts for co-ordination between the various ministries and agencies, a government memorandum prepared for the Taoiseach dated 19 January 1956 (National Archives, Department of the Taoiseach, S15811A) suggests that as many as twelve different understandings of where the Gaeltacht was to be found were in circulation at the time, from the first official definition which is contained in the Local Offices and Appointments (Gaeltacht) Order, 1928 through Acts on housing, school meals, vocational education, to the different operating structures of the Garda Síochána [police force] and the defence forces. The main geographical definitions of the Gaeltacht for these different purposes before 1956 have been mapped in Ní Bhrádaigh, McCarron, Walsh and Duffy (2007), and show the considerable variation. Although the 82 recommendations contained in the 1926 Gaeltacht Commission's *Report* are directed primarily at language use in state agencies, including the judiciary, post offices, police and military, none of the suggested policy areas could have been accepted or implemented by the state in the absence of the national discourse on language revival.

It was intended in 1926 that the Fíor-Ghaeltacht areas should be administered through Irish alone and that all education there would also be in Irish only. In the breac-Ghaeltacht, areas physically surrounding the core areas, administration and education was to be developed rapidly towards Irish-medium provision. The rest of the country was an area targeted for full language revival rather than language preservation and development. The underlying ideology was one of a belief in language revitalization at the national level, with more or less specific plans according to the presence of Irish as a community language at local level. These geographical divisions were not meant to be set in stone, but to change in favour of Irish, with the breac-Ghaeltacht and the rest of the country to become fíor-Ghaeltacht in the course of time.

The Gaeltacht Areas Order (1956) uses the townland as a unit, since that is the traditional rural land division that most of the population recognize, and it lists these as whole or parts of the smallest administrative areas used by the state, the district electoral divisions, as 'determined to be Gaeltacht areas for the purposes of the Ministers and Secretaries (Amendment) Act, 1956 (No. 21 of 1956)', being the Act which set up the Department of the Gaeltacht. Although public opinion in Ireland generally assumes that the Gaeltacht was defined as those areas where Irish was the primary community language, this definition is hard to sustain under close examination. Indeed, although the reason for the existence of the Gaeltacht as a statutory area is linguistic, from 1956 it was far from being an exclusively Irish-speaking or even bilingual community. The area it encompassed contains many townlands where Irish was certainly spoken, but as a minority language.

The Gaeltacht area, so defined, was a result of a special language census by the CSO of households that were deemed to be in the Gaeltacht in 1956 by one or more of the dozen or so definitions that had been identified as being in use. This special census, basically a report by the house-to-house enumerators who collected the general census of population forms that year, was then further verified by selected re-examination visits by three specially selected school inspectors, and further referral to government experts. The original draft of the Gaeltacht map prepared on 8 September 1956 (available in the National Archives, S15811B), included core areas where Irish speakers were in a clear majority, typically surrounded by larger areas that were recommended to be kept under review 'for

potential inclusion'. Hence, the proposed definition of the Gaeltacht prepared internally for the government already recognized that language ideology and management were the driving forces in describing the Gaeltacht rather than the more objective criteria of actual language ability and practice. When the government's Order was made, on 21 September 1956, nearly all the 'potential areas' were included, as were some contiguous townlands that had not previously even been considered for possible inclusion. Figure 12.3 illustrates in detail the mapping of one particular Gaeltacht region. It is the Múscraí region, which is located in western Cork. The map shows the townlands (light lines) within each electoral division (bold lines) according to the 1956 draft and actual order. The areas marked as '3' are areas of small population on the edge of electoral divisions which were included, but which are not mentioned in the early draft. Similar maps could be prepared for other regions too. Figure 12.3 also shows the small expansion of this Gaeltacht region in 1982, which essentially extended it to include nearly the whole parish of Cill na Martra.

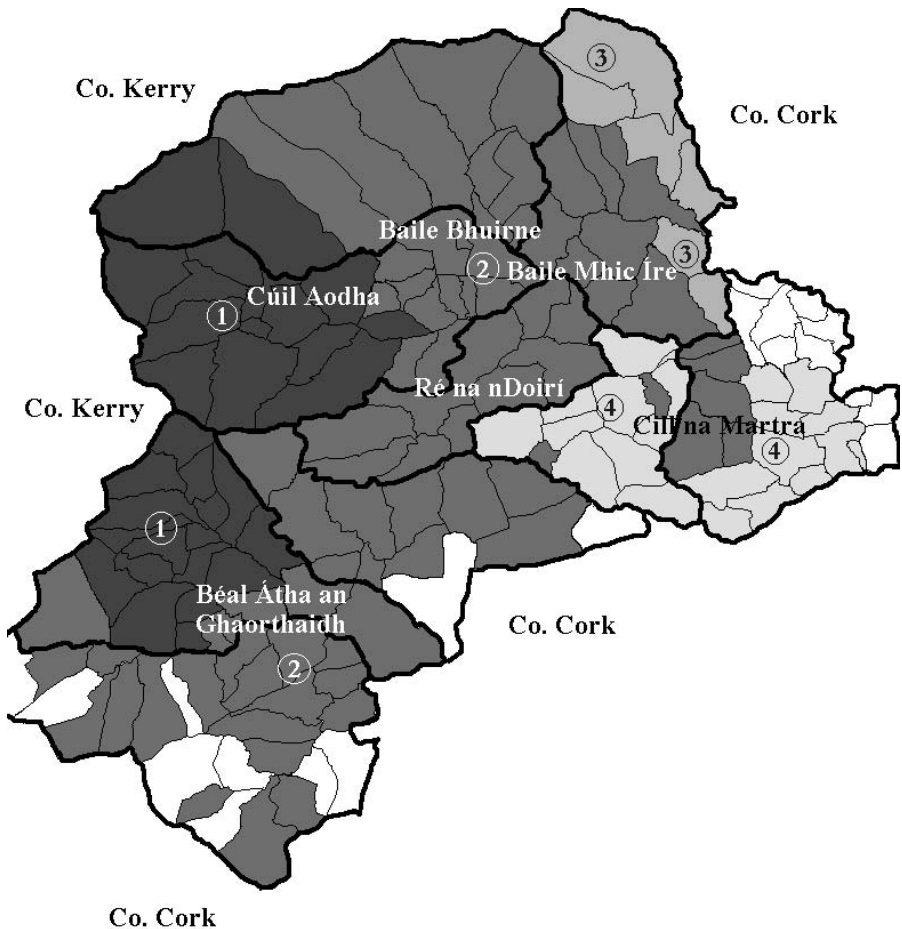
The only exclusions of Irish-speaking areas from the original draft appear to be isolated townlands where Irish was observed to have been spoken as a native language but that were not contiguous to core Gaeltacht areas, a fact which further confirms the Gaeltacht boundaries to be driven by a policy for area language management, or the intention to develop such plans, rather than being simply linguistic reservations for the management of a residual bilingual population.

The inclusion of these linguistically peripheral areas was not entirely cynical nor illogical. Most of the secondary schools were located in these areas as they tended to be in the villages and small towns that were population centres, but where the English language had made most advances since the mid-nineteenth century. Equally, inclusion of such areas meant that many parishioners were not separated from their churches, and sports fields and other amenities remained within the jurisdiction of the Gaeltacht and so could benefit from subsidy and improvement as amenities for the Irish-speaking population. All this sought to maintain the rural communities to which the Irish-speaking communities belonged and to bring them under one government ministry responsible for their economic and social development, which were still seen as the primary context for linguistic preservation and expansion. The central, though ambiguous, status of Irish as a community language, particularly in the geographical margins of the core Gaeltacht areas was confirmed by the wording used by government when further extending the Gaeltacht boundary to some adjacent areas in 1967, 1974 and 1982 (Statutory Instruments 200/1967, 192/1974 and 350/1982):

Whereas the areas specified in the Schedule to this Order are substantially Irish speaking areas or areas contiguous thereto which, in the opinion of the Government, ought to be included in the Gaeltacht with a view to preserving and extending the use of Irish as a vernacular language.

The emphasis is plainly on the Gaeltacht as a planning area where Irish is to be preserved and *extended*, even to areas which are contiguous to areas where it is spoken by a substantial part of the population.

There is thus a complex relationship to Irish in the official Gaeltacht. Since 1956 it contains regions where Irish is still a major, if not entirely dominant, community language and others where Irish is the first language of only a very small percentage of the local population. Gaeltacht community language policy, taken according to Spolsky (2004) and Shohamy (2006) as being the people's beliefs about and practices with regard to Irish, to English, to bilingualism and language questions generally, and specifically the status and



*Figure 12.3* Defining Gaeltacht: Múscraí, Co. Cork, 1956–82. Outline map of the District Electoral Divisions (bold outlines) showing all townlands included in Gaeltacht Areas Orders, 21 September 1956 and 2 December 1982 which were:

- 1 Recommended as Gaeltacht in draft of 8 September 1956.
- 2 Recommended in draft to be kept under review for potential inclusion.
- 3 Included in Gaeltacht Areas Order of 21 September but not in the 8 September draft.
- 4 Added by Gaeltacht Areas Order, 2 December 1982.

Source: Statutory Instruments 21 of 1956 and 350 of 1982; National Archives File S15811B.

roles of the languages, is a multifaceted combination of the national process of language shift towards English that has taken place, the communities' own conscious or accidental bucking of the trend, and the region's position as the target of specific language policies since the foundation of the Irish state.

The creation of the new department in 1956 was controversial at the time, although

supported by most of the non-governmental lobby in favour of Irish such as Conradh na Gaeilge [the Gaelic League] and Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge [the National Congress for Irish], even if there were arguments throughout the mid-1950s as to whether it should have its main offices in Dublin or in the west. By defining the Gaeltacht as a much smaller area than that suggested in 1926, and limiting it in most cases to the areas where Irish was still relatively strong, if not dominant, it was the government's intention to use fewer resources more efficiently. On removing responsibility for dealing with a major part of the state's Irish speakers from other offices and departments, one of the results of the policy was to remove any remaining necessity to have civil servants in all the government ministries who were able to speak Irish well and who would have had a professional interest in serving the Irish-speaking population. Although giving the Gaeltacht and hence language matters a seat at the cabinet table, the concentration of Irish-language affairs in the one ministry has gradually removed the language from much of the rest of the public service.

The new Minister for the Gaeltacht continued to address the region as an economic planning area with action on the language situation itself playing only a peripheral role in its development. The argument used in the 1950s that a separate minister would have brought strength to Gaeltacht interests at inner government level has been undermined as since Roinn na Gaeltachta was established in 1956 it has only sporadically been assigned its own full minister. It has frequently either been merged with other departments or shared a minister in such areas as the Department of the Taoiseach, Education, Lands, Industry and Commerce, Finance, Fisheries and Forestry, Arts, Culture, Heritage, Islands, Community and Rural Affairs. Far from achieving a higher profile for the Gaeltacht through association with bigger portfolios, as might be argued, it has generally been peripheralized and, with some notable exceptions, been run by a junior minister or to all intents and purposes left to the civil service.

The ring-fencing of the Gaeltacht and the resultant management technique is an example of how state ideology had evolved by this time, for although the political parties differed in many nuances on their approach to the question then, and indeed still do, there is consensus on the broad issues. This is probably in fact due to the side-lining of the language question since 1956, when it really became the concern of only the Departments of the Gaeltacht and of Education. Where there is broad consensus, there is little debate as a non-controversial issue will not come to the fore in national politics. As we have seen, the language question is not a key concern for the majority of the population, who are happy to support the teaching of Irish in schools and want to preserve the Gaeltacht. The Gaeltacht population itself was too small to apply pressure successfully, and in this period had developed into a culture dependent on state largesse.

Defining the Gaeltacht was only the first step in a new policy line that formally closed the ideology of national language revival based on geographical expansion of the Gaeltacht areas. The inter-party government which devised the new Gaeltacht policy was undoubtedly going to address the broader question, but was short lived. It was replaced in 1957 by another Fianna Fáil administration under Éamon de Valera, who retired in favour of Seán Lemass in 1959. The party remained in government until 1973. Although more conservative on Irish-language issues, and still nominally in favour of Irish-language revival, the new government did not set about dismantling Roinn na Gaeltachta to reintegrate Irish policy across government, or about redefining the Gaeltacht regions in a major way to include even weaker areas. Although reluctant to abandon general revival, de Valera had himself already stated that some stocktaking on the issue was necessary.

## REDEFINING TARGETS

The retreat from state-sponsored Irish-language immersion education was marked in this period. Ó Riagáin (1993) believes there to be evidence that the generalized Irish-medium policy was not popular in the 1960s and probably earlier, but this may be attributable to the frustration felt that revival was not being achieved as outlined above. By the mid-1960s the immersion and bilingual primary schools, which had already dropped back to less than a quarter of schools, were openly attacked by some prominent academics, such as MacNamara (1966), who believed immersion programmes were damaging from an educational perspective and that children from the Gaeltacht were not mastering English and mathematics at an acceptable level for their needs in the English-speaking world, in Ireland or the countries to which they would emigrate. Although these findings were refuted at the time, and immersion and minority language programmes have been widely praised since, the comments came at a time when the state had already shown itself to have abandoned commitment to language revival through the schools, and parents and school boards had been moving away from it too. There was certainly a need for more research on methodology and pedagogical techniques in teaching Irish, but this problem was regarded in the public eye as being inseparable from the question of Irish-medium education for Irish learners and Irish speakers. When the voluntary movement for Irish-medium education, *Gaelscoileanna*, was set up in 1973 to found new schools and lobby for Irish-medium education there were only a handful of Irish-medium schools left outside the Gaeltacht.

There had always been sporadic opposition in the *Oireachtas* to compulsory Irish in schools and for some public service posts but in general there had been overwhelming consensus on these ideological issue until the 1950s. In that decade parliamentary questions and debates on the issue became more common and much more widely discussed, from a few questions in the early period to a whole day in the *Seanad* in 1955 (*Seanad Éireann*, vol. 45, 2 November 1955). Opposition deputies in the *Dáil* became more strident. In a series of debates in 1958, for example, Noel Browne, who had been *Clann na Poblachta* Minister for Health in the first Inter-Party government, articulated the belief that the people no longer supported many aspects of the revival policies. In reply, de Valera pointed out that the people had already agreed to the status of Irish by general plebiscite when approving the Constitution in 1937. The Taoiseach also restated his interpretation of the importance of compulsory Irish in schools as it was the only way to ensure that young people would have access to the language and so be able to make informed choices about using it in their adult life. Thus the state is now being portrayed as a facilitator in language revival rather than trying to impose it. Once again, one can see the roots of the current ideology. Dr Browne's statements that there was widespread hostility towards the language, that its teaching was seen to have no advantage and that there was much cynicism about the matter may have been exaggerated and due in part to the nature of political cut and thrust, but until then all policy emanated from government. Although elected and so governing on behalf of the people, no consultation with the population on the details of language policy had taken place.

Such a consultation was announced in the *Seanad* on 30 January 1958 as the government response to the question about what should be done to revive Irish after more than a generation of revival-based ideology. It was to be the first example since the 1925 Gaeltacht Commission of how Irish governments have delegated matters of advice on policy and even their implementation to outside agencies. They were thus able to show that they were interested in reform and the development of new ways to address



the problem, but were able to distance themselves from the responsibility of the primary research and the necessity to accept the implications of any conclusions they had reached.

An Coimisiún um Athbheochan na Gaeilge [The Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language] was established by the government in July 1958, with the following terms of reference:

Having regard to the position at present reached in the endeavour to secure the restoration of the Irish language, to consider and to advise as to the steps that should now be taken by the community and the state to hasten progress towards that end.

(Coimisiún um Athbheochan na Gaeilge 1963: vii)

The word 'restoration' rather than 'revival' of Irish had been used as early as the nineteenth century, but it gained currency at this time. The word used in the Irish-language documents is *athbheochan*, meaning 're-animation' which can be translated by either English word. Whereas 'revival' implies bringing a moribund language back to life, 'restoration' might be interpreted as returning the living but marginalized language to its high status. We also 'restore' paintings and ancient ruins in order to make them attractive in museums and for heritage tourism.

The Commission worked for exactly five years. It was made up of thirty-two members, two of whom were women, who were drawn mainly from academia, the language movement and some political figures from the early revival years including Earnán de Blaghd. It produced two Interim Reports, on television and on the provision of textbooks for Irish-language secondary schools in 1959. These were not published at the time, but are included in the appendices to *An Tuarascáil Deiridh* (1963), which was also published in a summarized English version in the same year. Their report is organized under thirty-four headings, and contains 288 recommendations dealing with the role of the state and the people, the language in the machinery of the state, the Gaeltacht, education, media and general society including family and the Church. The Commission's document is an expression on behalf of the revivalists as to what structures could be set in place and what attitudes should prevail for the restoration of Irish. It is obvious that it was compiled over the five-year period rather than prepared in 1963, as many of its recommendations in regard to the Gaeltacht in particular had already been implemented or were merely restatements of government practice, with some small degree of difference in detail. It is in fact a summary of the prevailing attitude towards language revival in powerful circles until the mid-1950s, a description of the actual state of affairs, and a long list of recommendations as to how to reinforce and continue with state action on the language.

Although reference is made to standardization and linguistic development, the Commission's *Final Report* (1963) is concerned primarily with the status issues of restoration, and how the language's position in civil society from government and public service through education to media could be enhanced. The government's extensive 181-page reply to the *Final Report*, set before both Houses of the Oireachtas as a White Paper in January 1965 (*Rialtas na hÉireann* 1965), is much more nuanced and tends towards cautious implementation of some aspects of the recommendations on a non-obligatory basis. The government chose to 'recommend' and encourage the Commission's recommendations to third parties rather than to turn them into Orders, while promising to progressively implement most of those recommendations directed at its own machinery and employees but without giving any timescale. It is in this paper that overt reference to promoting

Ireland as a bilingual society rather than aiming at re-Gaelicization first finds official expression.

It is this document which formed the basis for policy until the 1990s, and still underlies many aspects of it. It is concrete evidence of the state's disengagement from direct action on language promotion and an adoption of a favourable but passive approach to Irish-language issues.

## STANDARDIZATION

The development of the Official Standard, an *Caighdeán Oifigiúil*, was driven by the needs of statehood and the role ascribed to Irish as the national and first official language by the constitution. Its development conforms closely to the stages of language planning in Haugen's model (1959), based on Norwegian, with which it was contemporary. The modern standard's origins are in the cultural nationalist movement of the nineteenth century, and it represents another fundamental paradox in Irish-language management. The revival movement was built on an ideological commitment to the revitalization and development of *caint na ndaoine*, 'the speech of the people', a dialectally diverse language with an impoverished spread of domains of usage, as a unified national language. The full version of the standard was first published in 1958 (*Rannóg an Aistriúcháin* 1958). It is still the authoritative handbook, although there are frequent debates about its reform, for example Ó Ruairc (1999), Ó Baoill (2000), Williams (2006). The 1958 volume covers mainly grammar and orthography, complementing a document published some eleven years earlier which dealt only with spelling reform (*Rialtas na hÉireann* 1947). By the 1970s the standard spelling and grammar were firmly established as the only authoritative variety in the state administration and education, the key domains of Irish-language policy.

The standard Irish handbook is officially anonymous. It is the work of *Rannóg an Aistriúcháin*, the 'Translation Section', which is a service of the Houses of the *Oireachtas*, being the *Dáil* [National Representative Assembly], *Seanad* [Senate] and *Oifig an Uachtaráin* [the President's Office]. Séamas Daltún was the main author of the final work, which was compiled under great pressure in about eighteen months before its publication, based on the substantial work of Daltún's predecessors, particularly Tomás Page, and the experience of the members of *Rannóg an Aistriúcháin* over many years. The handbook's origins, and so those of the standard itself, are thus in the need for internal consistency in the provision of Irish versions of government and legislative documentation. The first version of the full standard was published in 1953 with the more tentative title of *Gramadach na Gaeilge – Caighdeán Rannóg an Aistriúcháin* [*Irish Grammar – The Translation Section's Standard*]. This was seen by *Rannóg an Aistriúcháin* as the first step in a national consultation about the standard. They write (*Rannóg an Aistriúcháin* 1958: viii) that the opinions and suggestions that they received as a result of that publication formed the basis for the next draft which was itself then given to unnamed people, whom they knew to be interested in grammar and who had expertise in the field.

The handbook declares further that 'helpful advice was given by native speakers from all the Gaeltacht areas, from teachers, and from other people who had particular knowledge of the language, and it was agreed with the Department of Education that this booklet should be published as a standard for official usage and as a guide for teachers and the general public' (translation from *Rannóg an Aistriúcháin* 1958: viii). The standard was thus developed by a small group of language professionals who sought

advice from unnamed experts and acquaintances for the specific purposes of government administration. Having developed this useful tool for internal use, it was crucially then adopted by the Department of Education, and so guaranteed its central position through schooling.

The standard is constructed on four basic principles, translated here from Rannóg an Aistriúcháin (1958: viii):

- 1 As far as possible not to accept any form that does not have good authority in the living language of the Gaeltacht.
- 2 Choose the forms which are most widely used in the Gaeltacht.
- 3 Give appropriate importance to the history and literature of the Irish language.
- 4 Seek regularity and simplicity.

Although these guidelines show that Gaeltacht Irish varieties played a key role in the founding ideology of the standard, and the authors themselves say that all its forms and rules comply with the usage of good Irish speakers in 'some part' of the Gaeltacht, each of the decisions on the standard form can be contested. For example, no definitions are given of 'good authority'. Even though employing the most widely used form of a word or grammatical structure may seem democratic, it is not stated whether this means a word which is understood most widely throughout the country, or that which is used by the largest number of Gaeltacht Irish speakers. The latter might leave the authority consistently with the dialect(s) of Conamara, which although only one part of the Gaeltacht, contains about half of all of the Gaeltacht's Irish speakers.

While setting out its preferred forms, the standard professes not to impose itself as the only acceptable form of the language:

Tugann an caighdeán seo aitheantas ar leith d'fhoirmeacha agus do rialacha áirithe ach ní chuireann sé ceartfhoirmeacha eile ó bhail ná teir ná toirmeasc ar a n-úsáid. [This standard gives recognition to particular forms and rules but it does not remove the validity of other correct forms, nor does it forbid their usage.]

(Rannóg an Aistriúcháin 1956: viii)

However much the authors may have wished to reconcile the existence of the standard with the continued vitality of the regional dialects, the two have not co-existed in total harmony. The dialects, being the native forms of Irish, have continued to lose their vitality as part of a well-documented language shift that continues in the Gaeltacht, while they benefit from negligible recognition from the education system and state agencies. The decline of the dialects is not simply a coincidence but in part the consequence of the promotion of the standard as a prestige form. It has its roots in the national language ideology.

Niall Ó Dónaill, a native of the Donegal Gaeltacht in the north-west of the province of Ulster, was an intellectual and creative writer, but also a state-employed translator and lexicographer. He was the chief editor of the Irish-English Dictionary, *Foclóir Gaeilge-Béarla*, first published in 1977 and still the standard reference. He was an active member of the milieu that was working to produce the standard in the 1950s, and was one of its champions. In his provocative and highly influential essay on the development of Irish, *Forbairt na Gaeilge* (Ó Dónaill 1951), he clearly articulates his belief that although Irish must be careful to cultivate its native roots, it should be cut and pruned to make it develop in more useful ways:

Is cosúil teanga le habhaill. Is é an bás di scaradh lena fréamhacha, ach is troimide a toradh na géaga a bhearradh aici. [A language is like an apple tree. Break its roots and it dies, but its fruits are heavier for cutting its branches.]

(Ó Dónaill 1951: 12)

Ó Dónaill makes the point forcefully in this work that the future of Irish is in the cities and on the national stage, and that the promotion of the dialects through an over-indulgence of *caint na ndaoine* [the speech of the people] is a danger to its progress:

Is é bun agus barr mo scéil go gcaithfear foréigean a dhéanamh ar chanúnachas leis an teanga Ghaeilge a shlánú. [The basis of my message is that we must assault dialectal traits/fondness for dialects if the Irish language is to be saved.]

(Ó Dónaill 1951: 56)

Nevertheless, Niall Ó Dónaill himself observed the power that the standard quickly acquired some thirty years later when editing a modern edition of a book by an author from his own area that was written in the early twentieth century. Writing in the literary and current affairs magazine *Comhar*, he commented on some local dialect forms which clearly were correct and held authority locally, but which were now frowned upon by editors as being illegitimate or displaced by the standard:

Ní ‘ceartfhoirmeacha eile’ a bhí iontu, ag cuid mhaith de lucht eagair na Gaeilge, ach foirmeacha réamhchaighdeánacha ar fáisceadh an muinéal go reachtúil acu sna caogaidí i dTeach Laighean. [Many Irish-language editors decided they were not ‘other correct forms’, but pre-standard forms whose necks had been legislatively wrung in the 1950s in Leinster House – seat of the Dáil and Seanad]

(Ó Dónaill 1981: 21–2)

It is clear that although the authors of the standard explicitly stated that they did not intend to undermine any dialectal form which had a historical basis and was part of the living language of the Gaeltacht, after having been adopted by the education system and by all the state agencies, the standard took on its own dynamic to become the only acceptable form in most domains of written Irish usage. The fact that the standard is primarily a written variety has also led to a diglossic situation for the varieties of Irish in the Gaeltacht, where spoken Irish takes as its basis the regional dialect, while all forms of written language tend towards the standard, as this is what is to be found in textbooks and in most published material. Although the standard is flexible to the extent that local dialect words and idioms can be used in a standardized text, there is an observable dualism in its application, the point which Ó Dónaill (1981) highlights. Although many forms are ‘acceptable’, clearly standard usage has determined the ‘preferred’ forms, for schools and official documentation. The association of the standard with written Irish and the popular perception of its prescriptive nature are especially cause for concern in populations where the local variety has been weakened through language shift and dialect attrition. As the standard variety of Irish has not developed as a spoken variety outside school-learner circles, it challenges regional dialects but does not offer a complete alternative model, in effect imposing a form of silence on native dialect speakers.

Written standards unavoidably reduce variation and create new hierarchies of linguistic prestige. The standard is an essential tool for the continued development of Irish as a national language. It has served the national language community well, and as a

result, modern Irish is now a highly developed and subtle medium which is regularly employed to discuss all contemporary issues from politics, intellectual and academic questions through legislature and governance to all facets of daily life. However, in the Gaeltacht Irish is endangered as a community language and the power of the standard as a prestige written variety itself contributes to the multifaceted process of linguistic endangerment because of the ambiguity of a target language for Gaeltacht speakers faced with a shift or revitalization scenario (Ó hIfearnáin 2008). Language management has been shown to consist of sustaining or changing language practices and ideologies of the speaker community to achieve certain linguistic goals (Spolsky 2004). In the case of Irish, the evidence would suggest that creators of national language policies should seek a compromise that would reinforce intergenerational transmission of the local variety through schooling so as to avoid conflict in the target variety and to encourage community language development. This would, however, require a change in the driving language ideology of the national collective to accommodate the uncoded yet deeply rooted language ideology of the Gaeltacht in a productive way that would not undermine the national development of Irish that the national standard has manifestly facilitated.

## **DEVELOPING IRISH BROADCAST MEDIA**

That broadcasting was seen as an essential element in language revival and state building in the first period is clear from the fact that the first government White Paper on Broadcasting was published at the end of 1923, as soon as the civil war had died down and nearly two years before the establishment of a body as fundamental as the first *Coimisiún na Gaeltachta* in 1925. The decision to set up a national broadcasting company, under the direction of the Postmaster-General, then responsible for Posts and Telegraphs, was taken in March 1924. The Postmaster-General, J. J. Walsh, clearly believed that as an independent state Ireland should have a national broadcasting station as a tool to develop the country as 'an independent, self-thinking, self-supporting nation in every respect' (Gorham 1967: 12), although he did say in response to the three-month debate as to whether or not a private company should run it that any kind of Irish station would be better than no Irish station at all. Given the thrust of Irish revival policy at the time and the principle that to keep people thinking about Irish it must be heard regularly and talked about, the effect on a population of listening only to the BBC was unpalatable. Clearly the Irish state was keen to use radio as a way to show Ireland's difference from Britain and establish the parameters of cultural policy at the heart of the revived nation, yet while 2RN, Radio Éireann's first channel, came on air in Dublin in 1926, it was another seven years before it became a truly national radio station (Pine 2001). When the Athlone transmitter came on line in June 1932 and the radio went national, it was to broadcast the Eucharistic Congress, a spectacular event when the Irish Catholic Church hosted an international gathering of thousands of clergy and laity. As Gorham (1967) has shown, broadcasting in 1930s and 1940s reflected very much the national myth. Ethnic distinctiveness was broadcast in a diet of Irish music and songs, Catholic religious programming, Gaelic Athletics Association matches, Irish politics, Irish-language programmes and programmes for Irish learners. This was not unusual for the time and comparable to the content of other European national broadcasters. There is nothing to say that the population did not enjoy these programmes. Although Irish-language programming was central to the ethos of the new station, it suffered at a number of levels. It

seems to have been under-funded in relation to English-language productions (Watson 1997: 214), and was thinner on material and audience feedback. This is, of course, understandable given the professional and marginal economic status of Irish speakers in this early period.

Watson believes that there was for a while a possibility that an Irish-medium channel could have been established in this period, but it came to nothing:

In 1935 T. J. Kiernan was appointed Director of the radio station. He encouraged the formation of a committee in each county to which he would offer broadcasting access. The first committee formed was in Galway, where they hoped access would result in the establishment of some kind of Irish language station. When this was not forthcoming the committee lapsed.

(Watson 1997: 228)

The idea that Radio Éireann, the national broadcasting service, should set up a television station had been mooted as far back as 1926. As soon as the state had decided to set up a television station the question of Irish-language television was put on the table, where it stayed throughout the period, thanks to the efforts of tireless pressure groups such as Gael-Linn (discussed below) under the leadership of Dónall Ó Móráin and the work of the Joint Committee of Gaelic Bodies.

By the time that the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs announced in 1959 that television and radio would be operated by one company under a semi-state board, it had already been decided that this television would seek revenue not simply through a licence fee and state subsidy but also through commercial sponsorship and advertising. In the economic climate of the time there may have been little choice. The fact that this broadcasting authority was to be a semi-state board is important as this marks the beginning of a rift between direct state control and the broadcasting company. Once the RTÉ [Radio Telefís Éireann] Board (the name given to this semi-state body) had been established, as long as they functioned within the parameters of the establishing Act the government could no longer interfere with regard to Irish-language programming or in any other broadcasting area. The Act itself, in the image of the times, simply says that Irish should be used, but without any defining parameters with regard to programming. Under the margin note 'General duty with respect to national aims', the Broadcasting Authority Act (1960), Article 17 states:

In performing its functions, the Authority shall bear constantly in mind the national aims of restoring the Irish language and preserving and developing the national culture, and shall endeavour to promote the attainment of these aims.

(Acts of the Oireachtas 1960: Vol. 3)

In the years before the creation of the RTÉ Board there had been a chance that a language organization could have been contracted to make Irish-language programmes for the new television service, if not in fact to be central to the establishment of the service itself. An organization founded in 1953 to promote and develop Irish through teaching, publishing and making records of song and music, and which had considerable experience in making news-reels and short films, Gael-Linn, made a detailed submission on the case for Irish-language broadcasting in 1958. The Posts and Telegraphs Committee examining such submissions rejected their proposal on two grounds. Firstly they thought the financial aspects to be naïve. Secondly, they feared that Gael-Linn would use the

television station exclusively in pursuit of their own political aims in favour of language revival whereas the committee assumed that the Irish public wanted light entertainment. Nevertheless, Gael-Linn re-submitted their proposal with a renewed financial plan in 1959. The submission was taken seriously and considered at cabinet level before being rejected on the grounds, given by Leon Ó Broin, Secretary for Posts and Telegraphs, that Gael-Linn did not have the expertise. Dónall Ó Móráin, founding chairman and chief executive of Gael-Linn, argued that in fact politicians were afraid of granting a television franchise to Gael-Linn or any other non-state Irish-language organization because of their concern over the possible political opposition such a body might offer. In an interview with Savage (1996), Ó Móráin maintained that there were 'fears that awarding the franchise to Gael-Linn would have given us a special position in the community which could provide a political threat sooner or later. Many politicians cannot see that for some of us there are more things in heaven and earth than seats in parliament' (Savage 1996: 198).

The Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language had also identified the importance of television for the language, and issued an eight-page *Interim Report on Television* on 20 March 1959 to coincide with the ministerial decision to set up a new broadcasting authority that would oversee the creation of an Irish television station. The Commission advocated that the new channel should be used to redress what it believed was the state's reluctance to fully embrace the language revival, to create a dynamic service that would revitalize the national language. The *Interim Report* stopped short of asking that the new service be an Irish-medium one, preferring to request a 'progressive extension of the use of Irish in television programmes' in its *Final Report* (Coimisiún um Athbheochan na Gaeilge 1963: 135). It concluded that if the state failed to act in the interests of the restoration of Irish in setting up the new channel, the effort to save the language is would be doomed to failure.

Although from the beginning RTÉ Television has always produced quality Irish-language and bilingual programmes, it is the semi-commercial nature of the organization which has always been a challenge to devoting major resources to Irish and to making such programming available to peak-time audiences. For although RTÉ was the only television channel based in the Republic and so had no competition in the greater part of the country well into the 1980s, the majority of the potential audience was and is in Dublin and along the east coast, where viewers could receive the growing number of British channels, including the new commercial ones, from across the Irish Sea or from transmitters in the eastern part of Northern Ireland. Competition was thus for both revenue and audience share, the two being intimately linked. Inevitably this led to a marginalization of Irish-language programming. General financial constraints meant that Irish-made programmes were also in the minority.

In March 1969 a group in the Galway Gaeltacht formed Gluaiseacht Chearta Sibhialta na Gaeltachta [The Gaeltacht Civil Rights Movement]. Historian Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh described them:

A group of articulate young radicals suddenly found its voice and began demanding policies to arrest the dissolution and disappearance of its own community. These Gaeltacht radicals were generally well-educated, and like similar groups in Northern Ireland, were part of the global dynamics of youth politics and civil rights movements of the late 1960s.

(Ó Tuathaigh 1979: 113)

They had many aims to improve their communities and the position of Irish, but it was the eighth item in their constitution which became the most important battle and forced the government, through the RTÉ Board into action to create in the Gaeltacht a radio station for all the Irish speakers in the country (Ó Glaisne 1982: 10).

These activists had recognized Irish speakers as a minority and the Irish language as a minority issue. As citizens of the state they also believed that proper media presence was their right. This was indeed a radical departure for the time, and substantially different from the traditional state discourse on the nature of Irish speakers in society. *Gluaiseacht Chearta Sibhialta na Gaeltachta* proceeded to set up a pirate radio station, *Saor-Raidió Chonamara* [Free Radio Conamara], which broadcast from 28 March until 5 April 1970. Although the authorities quickly closed it down, the pressure from the Gaeltacht population and the proof that even a group of amateurs could set it up and run it made the case against an Irish-medium station untenable. There is no doubt that it was in response to this initiative that *Raidió na Gaeltachta* was established in 1971, by the RTÉ authority on the recommendation of the government. As *Raidió na Gaeltachta* was set up as a division of RTÉ, no legislation was required. *Raidió na Gaeltachta* went on air in April 1972, and gradually expanded to a national service with its headquarters in Conamara and two regional studios in the north-west and the south-west. Smaller studios have been and are being developed in some of the smaller Gaeltacht areas, and *Raidió na Gaeltachta* has access to RTÉ studios around the country. English was not permitted on the radio in speech, although English song-lyrics have been allowed in recent years. Unlike the main English-language RTÉ radio stations, RTÉ *Raidió na Gaeltachta* does not carry commercial advertising. This can be seen as a foil against the easy dominance of mass-audience English programming as outlined above, as well as a principled stand on the language issue. Banning English, not other languages, as Ó Drisceoil (1996) has discussed, is also an example of how *Raidió na Gaeltachta* can present a heady and often confusing mix of linguistic radicalism and comfortable conservatism. *Raidió na Gaeltachta* has a very loyal adult audience throughout the Gaeltacht and has achieved considerable audiences nationally; that it claims that market research has shown these to be in growth. In the 1993 National Survey on Languages, 4 per cent of the population said that they listened to *Raidió na Gaeltachta* daily or a few times a week, while a further 11 per cent tuned in less often. This is remarkable for a minority language radio station which is often accused of being a local station broadcast nationally. Since May 2001 the station has been available on the internet, and listeners throughout the world can now listen to live-streaming or podcasts.

The setting up by the state of a radio station for the Gaeltacht was the result of political acumen and direct action by a small group of determined individuals. This action at the end of the 1960s and early 1970s brings us into the third phase of language ideology and action.

### 3 1973–92: CONSULTATION AND REACTING TO PRESSURE FROM THE ROOTS

In the early 1970s Ireland officially changed to a decimal currency system, and in 1973 joined the European Economic Communities, later to become the European Union, as part of its first expansion from six to nine member states. There have been substantial changes in Irish socio-economic life since those momentous years. Ireland has joined the wealthier economies of the world. There have been consequent changes in popular attitudes to the



Irish language and hence in the government's essentially reactive policy decisions. The influence of European legislation and thinking on Ireland has been all-pervasive, and generally received in a positive way by government and citizens.

As a small peripheral European economy, Ireland is also a particularly open one, easily influenced by international trends in employment practices and by upturns and downturns in the global economy. As in other parts of Europe there has been a decline in the public sector, meaning that the state's potential linguistic influence on a large percentage of the workforce has also declined. In some respects Ireland was ahead of the posse with respect to privatization, having few directly controlled state companies but many autonomous semi-state bodies which were then, and continue to be, owned or principally owned by the state yet operate in the private sector. The 1970s also saw an expansion of higher education, including the foundation of universities in Limerick and north Dublin, and institutes of technology and regional technical colleges around the country. Participation rates grew rapidly in secondary and tertiary education, areas where the state has always influenced rather than dictated language policies.

In 1970 the Committee on Irish Language Attitudes Research (CILAR) was set up. It produced its report in 1975. Unlike the Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language, a group of experts and concerned individuals which reported twelve years earlier on ways in which they thought the language could still be revived, CILAR was a government sponsored research exercise to gather data on attitudes towards Irish in the general population, and to assess to what extent the public supported the state's Irish-language policies. By 1975 the only remaining explicit policy that affected the whole population was the compulsory study of Irish at school, although a general ethos in favour of a role for Irish in society remained, including its official status and public symbolic usage, as well as subsidies to Irish-language publications and programming and economic support for the Gaeltacht because of the numbers of Irish speakers who lived there.

In 1975, as CILAR submitted its report, the government further delegated language policy issues by setting up Bord na Gaeilge, which was given statutory status three years later. This semi-autonomous state agency was to promote the Irish language, have the general functions of developing, co-ordinating, reviewing and assisting measures and procedures relating to Irish, and advise the government and statutory bodies on matters relating to the language (Bord na Gaeilge Act, no. 14 of 1979).

The movement towards surveying popular opinion on the language issue since the 1970s while simultaneously setting up semi-state bodies outside government to deal with policy direction is evidence not just of disengagement from revival policies, but is also in agreement with a general European trend away from compulsion in language policies to one loosely based on reaction to the perceived needs of a minority. This could be interpreted as a process of democratization in that it is the state's perception of popular attitudes and minority rights which now drives the language policy in Ireland, such that it exists. Indeed, it is tempting to describe west European policies towards autochthonous minority languages as generally being of 'benign neglect', a term which has been used in relation to many state policies across the developed world since the 1970s. This is not, however, the appropriate way to describe Irish policy in the 1970s and 1980s. There is, of course, a certain inconsistency inherent in the term 'benign neglect' in the Irish case which may not be true for the practice of continental European states. In the 1970s continental states such as France, Spain and Italy began to evolve away from oppression of indigenous ethnolinguistic groups towards tolerance and even support for the actions of language activists from those communities, but since the 1920s Ireland had taken most action in favour of Irish out of the hands of the campaigners and enthusiasts

and embedded it in the actions of the state. Having assumed near total responsibility for all aspects of both status and corpus language planning, the state had almost silenced the language movement born in the late nineteenth century by integrating its aims into government policy, and then funding all initiatives through the national purse. This action removed the ability of language activists to exert pressure on the authorities in coherent ways while simultaneously creating a culture of dependence in the Gaeltacht regions. Having created such a structure, distancing itself from good husbandry of policy can only really be described as negligence. The policies pursued from the 1970s through the early 1990s can only be described as benign in that the state did not articulate a conscious opposition to the protection and promotion of Irish and continued to respond favourably to calls to action from those sections of the community that were able to get its attention. Essentially this means that the state reacted supportively to the minority who actively set up Irish-language schools and sought services and media in Irish rather than actually leading the way itself, as it would have done in the 1930s. For example, it responded to pressure from a challenge in 1969–70 by the Conamara-based Gaeltacht Civil Rights Movement by setting up Raidió na Gaeltachta as an RTE service in 1970, which started broadcasting in 1972. On the other hand, it was pressure from within the civil service itself which led the state to remove the obligation for new employees to pass an Irish examination in their probation test (Department of Education, Circular 9/74), a point of view which is expressed by civil servant representatives in letters in several internal government memoranda held in the National Archives dating from the introduction of the rules in the 1920s. It may still be easier to see this as an expression of government desire at the time to remove the compulsory study of Irish as it dropped the necessity to pass Irish in order to be awarded the school Intermediate and Leaving Certificate in 1973. In the same year in negotiating accession to the European Communities, Ireland asked that Irish be designated an official language of the body, but that this would only entail the translations of the founding and accession Treaties. This less than full official status is reported to have astonished other member states (Ó Laighin 2008: 258) who opposed it, but who eventually yielded to Ireland's insistence. The ambiguous official status of Irish as an official language for treaty purposes only, but not as an official or working language for all other purposes, continued until it became a full official language of the European Union on 1 January 2007 when it became one of 23 official languages. Had it been official in 1973, it would have been one of only seven. The action was brought about by an organized campaign, energized by changes in the state's language management policies within Ireland in that period, including the Official Languages Act (2003). It was in 2004 that the government announced that it would seek official status for Irish in the European Union, in the context of a major expansion of EU membership and consequently of official languages, including in particular Maltese, which has a relatively small number of speakers within a bilingual environment.

The state received little challenge from the public at large to its general stance at the time. The National Survey on Languages in 1993, the national survey conducted by Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann in 1983, and the Committee on Irish Language Attitudes Research survey in 1973 (Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin 1994) all showed that citizens wanted Irish revival to happen but not necessarily to participate in that revival on a personal basis. If the 1970s saw a withdrawal of the state from initiatives in Irish-language promotion and revival, it is in the same period that self-motivated groups within the population, both inside and outside the Gaeltacht, emerged. The state maintained ultimate power through its ability to support or withhold finance for projects that came to it looking for funds, but because of the continuing grounded ideology in favour of the promotion of

Irish these activists were able to push the state into supporting Gaeltacht radio and a new Irish-medium schools movement as well as the foundation of a number of new publishing companies and written media during the 1970s and 1980s. Governments were not quick to react and normally required proof of popular support for the initiatives in question, albeit in a passive way from the broadly English-speaking population. For example, around 70 per cent of the population in all three national surveys on languages from the 1970s to the early 1990s thought that the government should provide all-Irish schools wherever the public wanted them, but only one-third or less would have sent their own children to them if they were available (Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin 1994: 26–7). The state does not found Irish-medium schools, but comes to the support of parent and teacher groups who do so. As the proportion of children attending Irish-medium schools has not reached one-third this survey information highlights the passive, even consumerist nature of support for the sector in the general population. The Irish-medium schools movement is the best illustration of the democratization of Irish-language issues outside the Gaeltacht. The schools, which have grown rapidly in number since the early 1970s, enjoy cross-party political support and are to be found in nearly every county. Some of the founders of the schools were always sceptical about the depth of this encouragement and saw it as cynical, allowing the state a paternalistic role for which it got credit, but which absolved it of the need for a policy of its own.

The revival of Irish-medium schooling started in 1973 with the founding of the *Gaelscoileanna* organization, then known as *Coiste Náisiúnta na Scoileanna LánGhaeilge* [The National Committee of Irish-medium Schools]. It brought together the people who had set-up their own schools to campaign for state funding and recognition by the Department of Education. Since *Bord na Gaeilge* came into being in 1978 it has received an annual grant towards funding its activities, which include working as an intermediary between the Department and the schools, discussing planning and recognition criteria, advising schools on educational and social matters, and co-ordinating joint activities between schools. Although it stands out for its zeal in establishing new schools, it has gradually grown to include most of the *modhscoileanna* [Model Schools] and *A-scoileanna*, those primary and secondary schools which were founded as Irish-medium schools by the state during the 1920s and 1930s, or which converted to that status, and a number of Gaeltacht schools which have welcomed its expertise. It currently has a membership of 168 primary and forty-three post-primary schools outside the Gaeltacht, of which thirty-two primary and four secondary are in Northern Ireland. The schools are spread throughout the country, but with a particular concentration in large urban areas. This is not surprising as the schools are rarely the only one in a neighbourhood and so a critical mass of population is always needed in order to make the Irish-medium choice viable. Steadily building in number through the 1970s and early 1980s, the number of new schools surged forward in the late 1980s and during the 1990s, before slowing down again in recent years. Although some of the schools are small and rural or in small towns, it is naturally easier to set up in an area with a concentrated population. Geographically, Irish-medium schooling is densest in the south-western province of Munster, in Co. Dublin, in Northern Ireland and in Co. Galway. The schools are set up by parents who seek a particular style of education for their children, the central theme of which is the Irish language. In urban areas the schools tend to be grouped at opposite ends of the socio-economic scale, either in wealthy suburban settings or in areas with above average unemployment and low incomes. It is the parental commitment which is their driving force rather than any aspect of state language policy. Indeed, in Northern Ireland and in the marginalized urban settings of the south, although the schools sought integration into the mainstream and

its accreditation and funding, it was their opposition to state practice that was one of the strongest motivations.

Not all of the Irish-medium schools are recognized by the Department of Education and Science. In 2008 there were officially 139 Gaeltacht schools and 130 Irish-medium primary schools outside the Gaeltacht. The Department also recognizes forty-one Irish-medium secondary schools nationally as well as twenty more that teach at least one subject through Irish. The Gaeltacht schools, many of which are small national schools, are all officially Irish-medium, but in fact this is not always the case as some of them, especially post-primary schools in the small towns within the official Gaeltacht, are English-dominant. The main difference between Gaeltacht schools of all types and the Irish-medium schools in the rest of the country is the background of the pupils. In reply to a questionnaire sent in March 2002, Gaelscoileanna in the south-western region estimated that at most 5 per cent to 10 per cent of the pupils spoke Irish as their home language, and some schools had no home-Irish speakers at all, whereas virtually all Gaeltacht schools have a significant number of pupils who have a completely or partially Irish-speaking domestic background.

The number of children who come from completely Irish-speaking homes has diminished in most of the Gaeltacht, and in some of the weaker Irish-speaking areas was never as many as half the pupils. In addition, the Gaeltacht has experienced several types of migration which affect its school-age population. Historically, the economy has led to migration of the youth who when returning, if they were able to do so, may have brought with them partners who did not speak Irish well and young children who may have spent some of their early years in exclusively English-speaking environments, elsewhere in Ireland, or very commonly in the United Kingdom or North America. In some schools in the 1970s and 1980s when job opportunities became available in the Gaeltacht, very large numbers returned home. This was especially the case in Donegal, Mayo and Galway, even if migration to and from these areas had always been a social reality. In 1987 in one school in Acaill, in Co. Mayo, over half the top class were born in England (Hindley 1990: 86), although undoubtedly also natives of the area. The problem is not so important in every region, but in reply to a questionnaire in 2002, most schools in the Gaeltacht areas in the southwest said that returned migrants make up between 10 and 25 per cent of pupils in each class. Several of the Kerry schools pointed out that with the closure of some small schools and the emerging patterns of commuting to work in the urban centres, they now include places outside the official Gaeltacht in their catchment areas. On top of these issues, the Gaeltacht now has a substantial immigrant population who come mostly from European countries, including Britain, France, Spain, the Netherlands and Germany. Some schools say that although they are not in every class, as many as 10 per cent of children may come from these backgrounds. In view of these varied linguistic problems, and the fact that many teachers felt that Gaeltacht schools were significantly different from the immersion style and needs of Gaelscoileanna, they formed their own organization, Eagraíocht na Scoileanna Gaeltachta [the Gaeltacht Schools Organization].

Although this third phase in Irish-language policy displayed considerable initiative on the part of Irish speakers in the Gaeltacht and organization of the revival movement around the Irish-medium schools, it also illustrates how particular groups have been able to use the system in their favour rather than openly challenge the dominant ideological and power structures within the state. Irish-medium schooling, the successful campaign for Raidió na Gaeltachta, the thriving Gaeltacht co-operative movement and Gaeltacht-based publishing companies established during this period are all testaments to the vigour of Irish-speaking society, but ultimately all sought state approval and government

funding. Power resides ultimately in the government and in the machinery of the state, not with the Irish-speaking population who are too small in number to have a significant impact and economic weight. Habitual Irish-speaking citizens are a tiny minority, many of them living in the Gaeltacht with its state-sponsored industries or working in professions in the public or semi-state sector. Nearly all Irish speakers are also skilled bilinguals, quite capable of living in wider society and dealing with the state and all its agencies in English. From the start of the 1970s when governments started to try to identify what the people wanted to do about Irish by surveying opinion and setting up semi-autonomous bodies to suggest ways to promote the language, through the piecemeal and then systematic recognition of new Irish-medium schools in the 1980s, the state took a back seat and took no initiatives that were not prompted by direct action or cajoling from interest groups. By the early 1990s a new understanding of how to manage the language question had thus become ensconced that allowed the state apparatus to continue with the basic tenets of language revival ideology, but at the same time delegate responsibility for this to bodies such as Bord na Gaeilge, which since 2001 along with the state's Irish-language publishing company An Gúm and An Coiste Téarmaíochta [The Terminology Development Committee] is part of an all-Ireland body called Foras na Gaeilge.

As a result of sitting back and letting the situation incubate in this way for twenty years, the state hatched a new understanding that Irish speakers are a cultural and linguistic minority, while the majority must still be able to learn the language as it is part of their heritage which carries sentimental and ceremonial value. Governments have come to manage Irish now as a dual issue. The Irish-speaking population, by upbringing or by conscious choice, is composed of people from the Gaeltacht and elsewhere who form a cultural minority. The bulk of the population might still aspire to become Irish speakers, but their relationship with the language is one of cultural heritage, seeing Irish as an ethnic marker. The state is thus no longer actively engaged in attempts at reversing language shift, but overtly aims to support those who try to do so. To an extent this detaches the Irish language from the nationalist, structuralist discourse of the earliest policy phases. The removal of Irish from the centre stage of political rhetoric to the more peripheral and non-essential sphere of cultural leisure and consumer heritage also facilitated cross-border co-operation in language matters. Little by little governments have dismantled the remaining areas of compulsion in the state sector which deals with the whole population while simultaneously creating new services and agencies to deal with the Irish-speaking minority.

#### **4 1992 TO THE PRESENT: LINGUISTIC MINORITY RIGHTS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Much of the requirement for compulsory Irish in the state sector has now been set aside. Irish is no longer required for applicants to the civil service. School pupils no longer need to sit the Irish examination for the Leaving Certificate, and a certificate in proficiency in Irish is no longer required from newly qualified secondary school teachers except if they intend to work in the Gaeltacht or in an Irish-medium school. When state-owned companies have been privatized, as the telecommunications and mobile phone companies Eircom and Eircell were in 2000, the necessary legislation contained no obligation to continue to provide services in Irish. Other state-owned utilities may well follow.

While one aspect of current state language policy is the relaxing of its self-imposed obligations and compulsory study in a variety of fields, it has nevertheless now become

active in defining its own role in the promotion of Irish by embracing non-governmental groups and protecting the position of Irish by promoting the rights of its speakers. The new policy ethos is especially evident in Irish-medium education, the establishing of dedicated services for Irish speakers such as a television station, and in legislating to provide services for Irish speakers from state agencies, companies and other bodies.

The Education Act (1998) set up a new statutory body with responsibility for most aspects of Irish-medium education. An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta [Council for Gaeltacht and Gaelscoil Education] has both an advisory and a support role in the planning and co-ordination of textbooks and learning aids and the development of policies to facilitate education through Irish in primary and post-primary schools. Bringing together the Department of Education and Science, Gaelscoileanna and Eagraíocht na Scoileanna Gaeltachta, it was formed in December 2001 and first met in March 2002. The removal of some of the educational and financial uncertainty from the many other burdens of the Irish-language educational support sector and the promise of investment in materials and training is undoubtedly advantageous to them. While guaranteeing a special position for Irish-medium education by institutionalizing and giving authority to what were previously pressure groups the state has, however, also effectively taken back power over the sector and compartmentalized the issue by removing this aspect of schooling from the mainstream of the Department's work. Any such body requires compromise from the language movement on the one hand and the tools of the state on the other.

An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta has commissioned important studies on issues in Irish-medium schooling, and the effectiveness of the offering. One of the most important was a wide-ranging study of the present state of Irish Gaeltacht schools (Mac Donncha et al. 2005), which highlights the very different experience of Gaeltacht schools which serve communities of mixed language abilities and the non-Gaeltacht Gaelscoil sector. The report divided Gaeltacht schools into three categories according to the percentage of Irish speakers in their area: Category A where this was over 70 per cent, B with 40 to 69 per cent and C where there were less than 39 per cent Irish speakers. It identified the fact that the majority of Gaeltacht schools are small and consequently find it hard to accommodate the wide spectrum of linguistic abilities among the pupils. It also identified the problem that Gaeltacht schools, like Gaeltacht policy institutions generally, are being supported within a system that was designed to sustain the English-medium sector, and is ill-adapted for Gaeltacht needs. The report analysed the medium of instruction in the schools and found that in the A category schools (thirty-nine of the 129 Gaeltacht primary schools) the majority of teaching was in Irish, as was the case in the twenty-one B category schools. In the C category schools, however, English is the only medium in about half of classes. Of the twenty-seven post-primary schools in the Gaeltacht nine were A category, seven were B and eleven were C. Despite the fact that pupils' fluency in Irish in the sector was quite high, ranging from 95 per cent in A schools through 71 per cent in the B schools to 54 per cent in the C schools, Irish-medium teaching in post-primary schools was shown to be in crisis. Several schools were teaching in English only, and even schools in Category A areas were teaching 10 per cent or more through English. The report concludes with recommendations on educational support services, resources, definitions of Gaeltacht schools and their future sizes and the integration of schooling with other aspects of language management or planning. Above all it points out that the findings represent an established pattern that needs the most urgent attention.

## IRISH-LANGUAGE BROADCASTING IN THE NEO-LIBERAL ERA

In his study of the establishment of the Irish-language television channel, Watson (2003: 127) says that broadcasting in Irish has to navigate between opposing ideologies that promote their own nexus of ideas and behaviour. Modern neo-liberalism expects commercial viability, while the traditional ideology which drove the creation of the channel supports the promotion and restoration of Irish. The 1990s saw the expansion of private commercial television and of local and community radio. The Radio and Television Act of 1988 which governs the terms for applications for a licence to the Independent Radio and Television Commission (IRTC) does little more to emphasize the obligation to provide Irish-language programming than earlier Broadcasting Acts:

(2) In the consideration of applications received by it and in determining the most suitable applicant to be awarded a sound broadcasting contract, the Commission shall have regard to –

...

(d) The quantity, quality, range and type of programmes in the Irish language and the extent of programmes relating to Irish culture proposed to be provided.

(Radio and Television Act, 1988: Part III, Section 2 (d))

Under Part IV, Section 18(1) of the same act these conditions also apply to television broadcasting licences, while Part IV, Section 18(3)(a) reinforces this, stating that any new television service must 'have special regard for the elements which distinguish that [Irish] culture and in particular the Irish language'. So, although the legislation governing the attribution of licences requires the private television and radio stations to contribute to Irish culture, there is no stipulation that there must be Irish-language programming. All the Act requires potential broadcasters to do is to demonstrate their ability or intention to produce programmes with an Irish content, at the time of the application. It is unlikely in the present climate that the state or the courts would attempt to revoke an operator's licence over non-compliance with the pro-Irish 'spirit of the legislation'. It is on this understanding that licences were awarded to many new radio stations and one new television station during the 1990s.

It is very difficult to pinpoint precisely the moment when the decision was taken to establish a dedicated Irish-language television channel. Sporadic attempts to persuade the authorities to build an Irish service had occurred from as early as 1926 and Irish-language pressure groups, long dissatisfied with RTE's offerings, had been particularly active in the late 1980s. Between 1986 and 1987 one group actually broadcast some programmes from a 'pirate' television transmitter at Cnoc Mordáin in Conamara, which as Ó Ciosáin (1998:21) has highlighted, not only presented a bold challenge to the authorities but also showed that the Department of Finance's arguments throughout the earlier periods that the costs of setting up such a service and training technicians would be prohibitive were themselves spurious. Arguing that an Irish-language television service could be run cheaply may not have been a wise strategy, but the group's main idea was to demand the service as a right and to physically challenge the government to do something about it by taking the law into their own hands. The various campaign groups combined to form An Feachtas Náisiúnta Teilifíse [the National Television Campaign] in 1989. With the change in the newly emerging state view by the early 1990s the campaigners were pushing at open doors. This was reinforced by two key ministers, Máire Geoghegan-Quinn (Minister for Communications 1991–3 and Minister

for the Gaeltacht in an earlier government) and Michael D. Higgins (Minister for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht in 1993–7, with a brief gap during a change in government) being Irish-speaking elected representatives from the constituency which contains the major Conamara Gaeltacht, itself home to An Feachtas Náisiúnta Teilifíse. This was not a revolutionary development on the European stage. Wales had already established S4C, which in a bizarre twist had even been coming into homes in parts of Ireland on multi-channel services. Scottish Gaelic had a television commissioning service. People were aware of Catalan and Basque television services in the Iberian peninsula, and even France appeared resolutely to be developing services in some of its 'regional' languages. The only really critical opposition seems to have come from RTÉ. In its reply to the 1995 Green Paper on Broadcasting, which effectively set up Teilifís na Gaeilge (TnaG) as a subsidiary of RTÉ, it welcomed the station because 'the Irish-speaking population requires for the health of its own public sphere a dedicated television channel of its own' (RTÉ 1995: 29). The company was, however, clearly resentful of the fact that it would be losing authority in programming decisions while still being required to provide one hour a day of programming in Irish and to share news and current affairs with the new channel.

RTÉ saw its Irish-language radio subsidiary Raidió na Gaeltachta as complementary, but obviously saw TG4 as potential competition and favoured a 'separate and independent status and management for Teilifís na Gaeilge' (RTÉ 1995: 28–9). This idea fits well with the now dominant philosophy of separating Irish-language services and agencies from generalist state bodies. Having been given definition by the Broadcasting Act 2001, TG4 was finally separated from RTÉ on 1 April 2007. The independence of the channel was accompanied with increased government funding: 35.663 million for 2008. Broadcasting six hours of Irish-language programming every day in a full 24-hour schedule, the channel is widely identified as offering one of the best value for money services of its kind in Europe, and claims a 3 per cent viewership in the very crowded Irish television market. The future of Irish-language television and relations between broadcasting companies, like all other aspects of life in the Irish-language, will probably depend on the future goodwill of government and the civil service as well as of the companies themselves. It currently has full support across the political spectrum, and enjoys wide support as an entity even among those who rarely watch it.

## LEGAL STATUS, LANGUAGE SERVICES AND RIGHTS

Irish has had a central constitutional standing since independence. Article 4 of the 1922 Constitution proclaimed Irish as the 'National Language' of the Free State, recognizing English also as an 'official language'. The constitution currently in force, *Bunreacht na hÉireann* [Constitution of Ireland] of 1937, contains a more sophisticated formulation:

Article 8.

- 1 The Irish language as the national language is the first official language.
- 2 The English language is recognised as a second official language.
- 3 Provision may, however, be made by law for the exclusive use of either of the said languages for any or more official purposes, either throughout the state or in any part thereof.

(*Bunreacht na hÉireann*, 1937)



Bunreacht na hÉireann is a bilingual document. The Irish text takes precedent in any dispute, and studies have shown that there is some divergence between the two (Ó Cearúil 1999, 2002). With regard to the status of Irish in law, however, it is setting out what was seen as the official situation in 1937. It is not a Bill of Rights for Irish speakers, nor does it openly express the desire to improve the position of Irish by encouraging its revival. These political-social aims are part of the long-standing ideology, but are not part of the state's Fundamental Law. The real legal position of Irish has been determined by jurisprudence. Ó Máille (1990: 1–20) has observed that the range and scope of the language rights of Irish speakers is actually quite narrow. Until the enactment of the Official Languages Act 2003, only court cases and judicial decisions have established what the position was. A person who wished to use Irish in court had a constitutional right to do so, but could not compel another party, including the judge, to do likewise. Persons wishing to conduct official business in Irish should not be put to additional expense for so doing. Official documentation must be available in both official languages, although the time limit set for producing a version in the second language was not set. The obligations of the state towards the Irish language in the important fields of broadcasting, education and publishing, to name but three fields, were not defined either by the Constitution or by legislation, and so a future government could change the supportive position if it so wished.

It was in keeping with the compartmentalizing of policy evident since the early 1990s into linguistic rights and heritage issues that the state should seek to codify its own and the citizen's rights and obligations in this area. Again it is possible to talk in terms of the state rather than simply the government, as although the 1997–2002 Fianna Fáil-led government set about drafting the legislation, from the outset it was guaranteed all-party support. The ideological consensus has been re-affirmed. The Bill to provide the Official Languages Act was a long time in gestation, having been promised before the 1997 general election and only published between the announcement of the May 2002 election and polling day. Despite being couched in the language of equality, the focus of the Bill was obviously the promotion of the official usage of Irish by framing the responsibilities of the state and of all the public companies and agencies under its power with regard to dealings with Irish speakers. The main aims are summarized as follows in the explanatory memorandum which was published with the Bill in April 2002:

#### *Purpose of Bill*

The general purpose of the Bill is to promote equality for the Irish and English languages as the official languages of the state and to provide for language rights of the citizen in his or her relationship with the state.

(Explanatory and Financial Memorandum  
Official Language (Equality Bill), 2002)

The Official Languages Act was signed into law in July 2003. It covers the obligations of all public companies and bodies with regard to provision of services in Irish in three ways: statutory obligations, including written correspondence with the public and the production of information and annual reports; obligations under orders issued by the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs with regard to stationery, signage, oral announcements and advertising; obligations based on language schemes agreed between the public body and the office of the Coimisinéir Teanga (the language commissioner, a post set up under the Act). The main emphasis is on these schemes as they determine the action of public bodies under the Act, and are audited. Walsh and McLeod (2008) offer

an insightful analysis of the first wave of these schemes and the complex question of how they respond to perceived demands for Irish-language service, or might eventually stimulate it.

## THE FUTURE DEFINITION OF THE GAELTACHT

This chapter has shown that the Gaeltacht has been a central part of the story of language management since the independence of the state. For ideological reasons it was loosely defined until 1956, when it was defined by Statutory Instrument for the purposes of giving a geographical area of responsibility to the Department of the Gaeltacht, and since 1979 to *Údaráis na Gaeltachta*. Despite the actions of the state and the interest of the general population in the Gaeltacht, Irish has continued to decline as the major community language, and this is underlined by Mac Donnacha et al. (2005) in the state of Irish in schooling. I have argued (Ó hIfearnáin 2007, 2008) that language planning which focuses on national concerns has not been properly adapted for Gaeltacht settings, and although it has the aim of strengthening Irish as the home and community language, by its inappropriate application by emphasizing Irish-only usage for home and school and the use of the national standard variety in literacy practice without explaining this approach to the population, it may actually be having the opposite effect. Many of the factors which caused the decline in Irish ability and usage that have been documented since the nineteenth century are also still in play.

In response to a research commission from the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Ó Giollagáin et al. (2007) produced recommendations for the future direction in Gaeltacht language policy. Statistical analysis of the percentage of daily Irish speakers from the census combined with the results of *Scéim Labhairt na Gaeilge*, a scheme which awards a grant to Irish-speaking households and which is subject to inspection from the ministry thus giving an indication of the real number of habitual Irish speakers, enabled the research team to identify three categories of Gaeltacht region, very similar to the schooling categories defined by Mac Donnacha et al. (2005). It was shown that there were broadly three community linguistic dynamics identifiable. In Category A regions, 67 per cent were daily speakers, Category B had 44 to 66 per cent daily speakers, and Category C had fewer. A number of statistical exercises showed this categorization to be robust. The report, which is currently being considered by a Cabinet committee, seeks to establish the Gaeltacht as areas of integrated language planning and management based on the needs of these communities, categorized by their daily speaker numbers. Such language management would entail the communities themselves, through various agencies, taking on responsibilities for plans that would have an impact on schooling, spatial planning, business, and language development schemes for home and community language practice. While it is not yet certain what the government – and indeed the Gaeltacht community – response will be to the proposals, the nature of the study illustrates the way in which the Irish state, through government and community agency, has now moved beyond the imposition of policy in the first stages of language management through an extended period in which policy was determined by perceived response to public demand, to the stimulation of demand from the Irish-speaking minority for provision to this final part of the current stage in language policy where communities are being invited to become the agents of their linguistic future. In order for the Irish-speaking communities to take on this role, be they in the Gaeltacht or spread throughout the country, they will need to develop their own mechanisms to instigate change. This is the greatest

challenge and, paradoxically, will require intervention and facilitation by government on behalf of the people.

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# SCOTTISH GAELIC TODAY

## Social history and contemporary status

*Kenneth MacKinnon*

### GAELIC IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Scotland's linguistic history is complex. Its original inhabitants in early historical times spoke a form of early Welsh – although what the northern Picts spoke is conjectural (Jackson 1955). The Gaelic language originally came to Scotland *c.* AD 500 with the expansion of the Northern Irish kingdom of Dál Riata into the western Highlands and Islands of Scotland (Bannerman 1974). The expansion of this settlement, and the subsequent absorption of the Pictish kingdom in northern Scotland, the British kingdom of Strathclyde in south-western Scotland, and part of Anglian Northumbria in the south-east, established a largely Gaelic-speaking Scottish kingdom roughly coterminous with present-day Scotland by the eleventh century. Place-name evidence attests to this: names of Gaelic origin are found throughout Scotland, and only in the Anglian south-east borders, and Norse north-eastern Caithness and the Northern Isles, are they sparse (Nicolaisen 1976). Here Norse settlement brought about the development of the Norn language, which lingered in Shetland until the eighteenth century.

Celtic Christianity gained influence throughout this area from the coming of Columba from Derry to Iona in 563, and this missionizing 'Celtic' Church first brought literacy and learning not only to the Gaelic Scots and their near neighbours but to much of England also (Green 1911: 43–8). From the reign of Malcolm Canmore (1059–96), Gaelic lost its pre-eminence first at court; then among the aristocracy to Norman French influences; and subsequently in the Lowlands, through the establishment of English-speaking burghs in eastern and central Scotland, to English or Scots.

In the medieval period the British speech of Strathclyde was superseded first by Gaelic (Thomson 1968: 57), and subsequently by Scots, the West Germanic language which developed from the Anglian speech of the Lothians. Language shift from Gaelic to Scots proceeded across eastern Scotland and the western Lowlands, with Gaelic probably becoming extinct in south-western Scotland by the eighteenth century (Lorimer 1949–51).

By the seventeenth century Gaelic had retreated to the Highlands and Hebrides, which still retained much of their political independence, Celtic culture and social structure. These differences came to be seen as inimical to the interests of the Scottish and the subsequent British state, and from the late fifteenth century into the eighteenth a number of acts of the Scottish and British parliaments aimed at promoting English-language education first among the aristocracy and subsequently among the general population; at outlawing the

native learned orders; and finally at disarming and breaking the clans and outlawing Highland dress and music.

In the nineteenth century, contemporaneously with the notorious 'Highland Clearances', which involved the enforced migration of the crofting population in many of the Highland estates, a popular and successful voluntary Gaelic schools system came into being. This was superseded after legislation in 1872 by a national English-medium school system in which Gaelic had very little place. Some measure of security was given to the crofting community by legislation in 1886. Despite the extension of the franchise and the development of local government, recognition of Gaelic was initially very slow in coming. Yet throughout the nineteenth century there had been vigorous calls for a place for Gaelic in public life as well as in education. Withers (1988: 336) quotes a tract of 1828 seeking official use of Gaelic in 'the courts and other places of business'. Gaelic had a central place in the religious life of the Highlands and in religious revivals. The language was a political medium in the land agitation of the latter part of the nineteenth century, and calls for its official recognition were made in evidence to the Napier Commission inquiry into the condition of the crofting community in 1883. A survey of Highland school boards in 1876 revealed a 'distinct majority in favour of including Gaelic in the curriculum', which met with some permissive response from the Scottish Education Board, but little positive action by the Board or its inspectors (Smith 1983: 259–60).

From 1904 it was possible to take Gaelic as a 'specific subject', and the 1918 Education Act provided for Gaelic to be taught 'in Gaelic-speaking areas', but these were undefined and in practice very little was provided in terms of Gaelic education. However, by the mid-twentieth century some instrumental acknowledgement of Gaelic had been made by the Highland county education authorities, and from 1958 Gaelic began to be used as an initial teaching medium in the early primary stages in Gaelic-speaking areas. The language could be studied as an examination subject in parity with other languages at the secondary stage. Since 1882 it had been possible to take Gaelic as part of a university degree in Celtic. Some significant developments in Gaelic education have occurred since the mid-1970s such as the bilingual education schemes in the Western Isles and Skye, and the introduction of Gaelic as a second language at primary level. After its creation in 1975, the Western Isles authority, Comhairle nan Eilean, introduced a bilingual administrative policy, and bilingual schemes in primary education. However, in 1979 its nerve failed and it did not extend this to the secondary stage. In other Scottish regions, such as Highland and Strathclyde, bilingual primary education was making some headway in this period, and from 1985 Gaelic-medium primary education was initiated in two schools: at Inverness and Glasgow. By 2008–9 these had increased to 60 schools with 2,206 pupils.

The neglect of Gaelic in the education system after 1872 resulted in the language surviving as an oral rather than a literary medium for many of its speakers. The purpose of school was to promote English literacy. Thus traditional Gaelic literacy was associated with a religious culture which emphasized Bible reading, home worship and the singing of the Metrical Psalms. Calvinism has promoted Gaelic literacy, and in the strongholds of the Free Church and Free Presbyterian Church, where Protestantism, supportive education policies and high incidence of Gaelic speakers have combined, Gaelic literacy can be compared with English literacy levels, as in northern Skye, rural Lewis, Harris and North Uist. Gaelic literacy is lower in Catholic South Uist and Barra, as the religious culture has not emphasized the Gaelic scriptures as has Calvinism. This effect can also be shown as between Gaelic speakers in mainland Catholic and Protestant areas (MacKinnon 1978: 65–7). In the 1981 census, 56.2 per cent of all Gaelic speakers had claimed to be able to read Gaelic, and 41.6 per cent to write it. In the 2001 census, despite the contraction of the

language group, these proportions had increased to 66.4 per cent and 53.0 per cent respectively (Census 2001, Table UV12), indicating some success of Gaelic education policies. However, the practice of writing Gaelic – even for personal letters – is very rarely undertaken, and among older Gaelic speakers, and in areas where the language is not taught in the schools, Gaelic speakers' writing ability is weak.

Baker (1985: 22–40) has observed that in Wales higher levels of Welsh literacy associate significantly with language retention. There is some census evidence that this is also true for Gaelic. In the author's analysis of the 1981 census results, Gaelic reading and writing levels correlated significantly with intergenerational language maintenance in Skye and Western Isles enumeration districts (MacKinnon: 1987a).

## THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE GAELIC SPEECH COMMUNITY

In 2001 speakers of Scottish Gaelic of all ages numbered 58,969. Speakers aged three years and over totalled 58,652. Some 15,723 (or 26.81 per cent) resided in Na h-Eileanan Siar, the Western Isles council area. Some 5,301 (or 9.04 per cent) resided in the Inner Hebrides and Clyde islands. Some 11,956 (or 20.4 per cent) resided in the mainland Highlands, and 25,672 (or 43.8 per cent) in the rest of Scotland or Lowland area. Thus almost half of Scotland's Gaelic speakers were resident outwith the traditional Highlands and Islands area or Gaidhealtachd (Census 2001 Gaelic Report, Table 3). Since the end of the nineteenth century the language group had contracted to some 23.05 per cent of its former size, and migration had considerably changed the distribution of the language group nationally. Numbers and percentages for corresponding areas in 1891 comprised 41,742 (16.4 per cent) resident in the Outer Hebrides; 33,851 (13.3 per cent) in the Inner Hebrides and Buteshire; 121,970 (47.9 per cent) in the mainland Highlands; and 56,852 (22.4 per cent) in the rest of Scotland/Lowland area, respectively (Census Scotland 1891, Gaelic Return, Table 1, pp. 2–18).

In 1891, 164,436 or 64.6 per cent of all Gaelic speakers lived in Gaelic-majority areas, where Gaelic speakers numbered more than 50 per cent of the local population. These areas comprised the Outer and Inner Hebrides *in toto*, the mainland Highlands (excepting north-eastern Caithness, the eastern fringes and larger towns), and much of Buteshire. A more significant proportion is the 70 per cent (or more precisely 70.7 per cent) incidence level which characterizes areas where there is a greater than 50 per cent likelihood of local Gaelic speakers meeting on an everyday basis and using their language. These areas are thus Gaelic-predominant or Gaelic majority-usage areas. In 1891, 123,848 (48.7 per cent) of all Gaelic speakers lived in such areas, which then comprised the Outer Hebrides, Isle of Skye and Inner Hebrides, northwestern, western and central Highlands.

The corresponding situation in 2001 is very different. Gaelic-majority areas comprised the northern tip of Skye and 11 of the Western Isles' 16 census wards (home to 11,777 Gaelic speakers: 20.1 per cent of the national total), and Gaelic-predominant or majority-usage areas comprised only five of them (with 4,774 Gaelic speakers: 8.1 per cent of the national total).

Up until the end of the twentieth century, local native Gaelic speakers, chiefly of the older generation, could still be commonly found in all the western coastal areas of the Highlands. There were also still some vestiges of native Gaelic in most parts of the mainland Highlands, even in Highland Perthshire. However, such has been the rate of language shift in Gaelic communities that it is now highly questionable whether such a thing



as a Gaelic-speaking community is likely to last much longer, and whether local native speakers will be encountered over much of the remaining traditional Gaelic area, notwithstanding the considerable recent improvements in institutional support for the language discussed below.

The near majority of Gaelic speakers who were resident outwith the traditional Highlands and Islands area in 2001 cannot be said to constitute a true Gaelic-speaking community. They may form networks or share some aspects of social life through the language, but their working lives and most other aspects of living will be conducted through English. In terms of airtime the Gaelic media are a tiny proportion of what is available, and Gaelic-medium education is far from being available to all who want it. However, the Greater Glasgow area was home to about 10,000 Gaelic speakers in 2001 (with 9,965 Gaelic speakers in Glasgow and its contiguous council areas.) This provides a local concentration of Gaelic speakers which makes Gaelic provisions a great deal more feasible and economic. In 2005 Glasgow initiated an entirely Gaelic-medium all-through school (followed two years later by Inverness), and there are initiatives to create Gaelic social centres in both cities, and also in Edinburgh. Figure 13.1 (opposite) illustrates the changing proportion of Gaelic speakers between Highland and Lowland areas since 1881.

Figure 13.2 (p. 592) similarly illustrates the changing proportion of Gaelic speakers in local areas of over 70 per cent, 50–69 per cent, 25–49 per cent, national average to 25 per cent, and below the national average incidence.

See also the maps in Figures 13.3, 13.4, 13.5 and 13.6 (pp. 593–6), which illustrate the changing distribution of Gaelic speakers nationally.

Almost all parts of the traditional *Gaidhealtachd* still had a proportion of Gaelic speakers greater than the national average in 2001. But it can no longer be said, as some still do who should know better, that Scotland's Gaelic speakers are to be found mainly in the Hebrides and north-west coastal fringes. Today, the majority are in fact elsewhere in Scotland, resident in areas which could not be described in any sense as Gaelic in either present-day or recent historic character.

The problems which result from this distribution pattern of Scotland's Gaelic speakers mean that historically contacts within the Gaelic speech community have been particularly difficult. The Highland mainland is mountainous and deeply indented by the sea. Thus the small Gaelic populations of the western glens and peninsulas have been very much isolated from one another. The islands are today typically connected by modern lines of communication, not so much with one another as through ferry ports on the west coast with road and rail links to the Lowland cities. In the past (prior to the 1975 local government reforms) Highland administrative areas had typically encompassed both thoroughly Gaelic island and west-coast areas with the more populous and anglicized east-coast areas – as in the former Highland counties. In these and other ways, the Gaelic areas have in the past been further divided from one another, and mutual contacts between them have been reduced. The roles of the present-day broadcasting and education services, and the policies of local administration are thus of particular importance in overcoming these difficulties. Because almost half of all Gaelic speakers are now located within an urban, Lowland milieu, communications and educational policies are crucial to the survival of the language nationally.

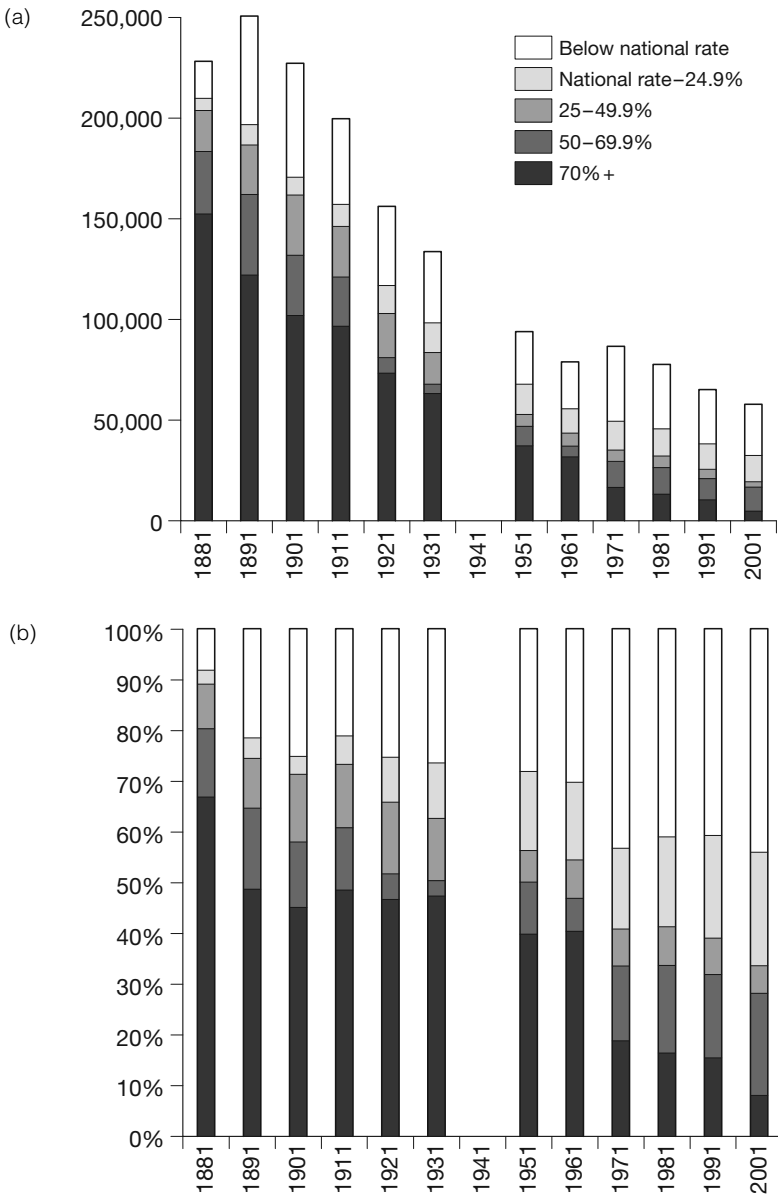
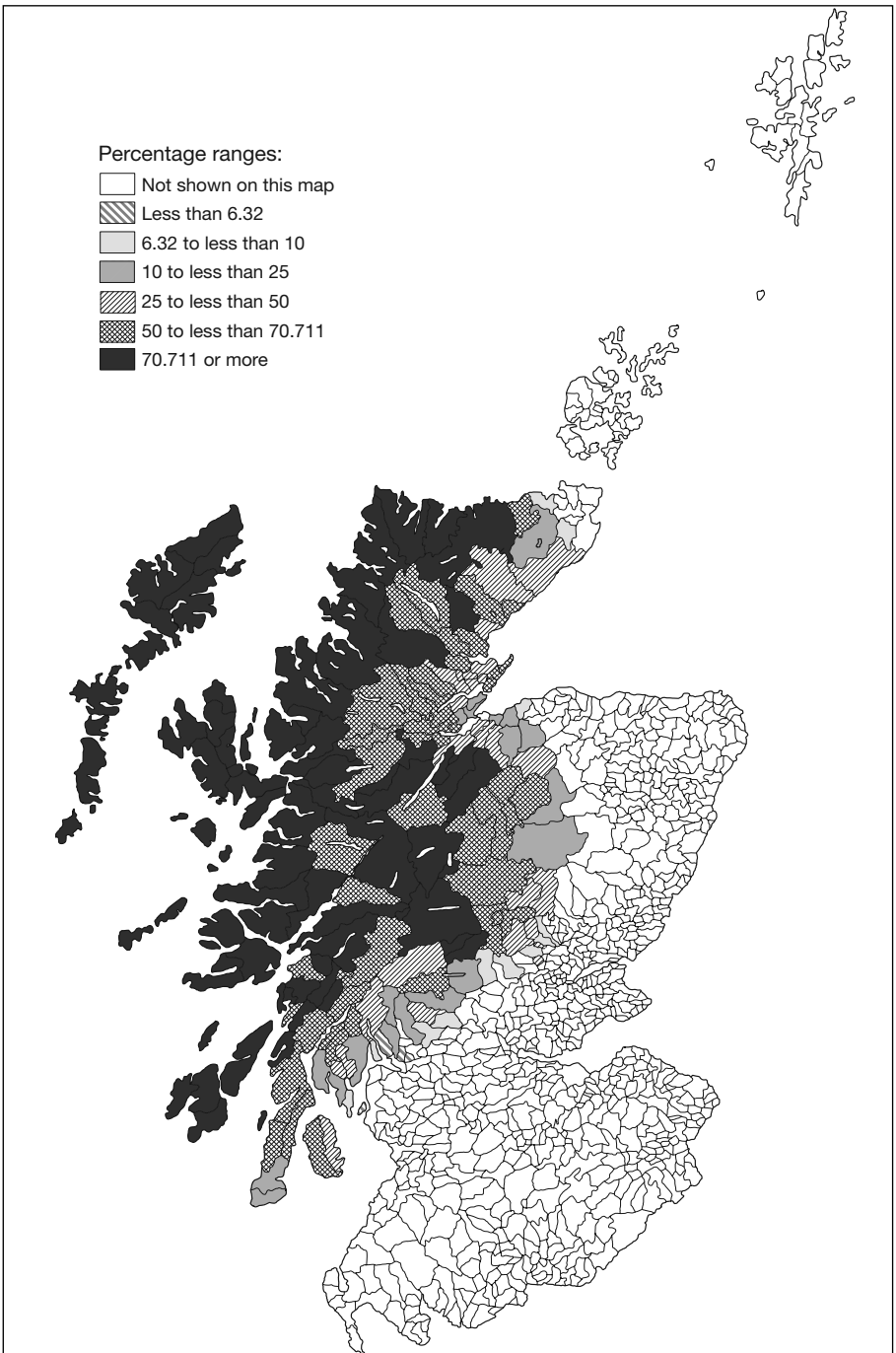


Figure 13.1 Gaelic speakers by area of incidence 1881–2001 (a) numerical, (b) percentages



Figure 13.2 Gaelic speakers in Highland and Lowland areas 1881–2001 (a) numerical, (b) percentages. Source: GROS 1931 census, Table 54; 1961 Gaelic Report, Table 3; 1971 Gaelic Report, Table A; 1981 census LBS, p. 9, Table 40; 2001 Gaelic Report, Tables 1 and 3



*Figure 13.3* 1891 census: persons aged 3 and over able to speak Gaelic, as a percentage of total population, by civil parish. Source: General Register Office (Scotland) 2008



Figure 13.4 Size and location of Gaelic populations: 1891 census Scotland

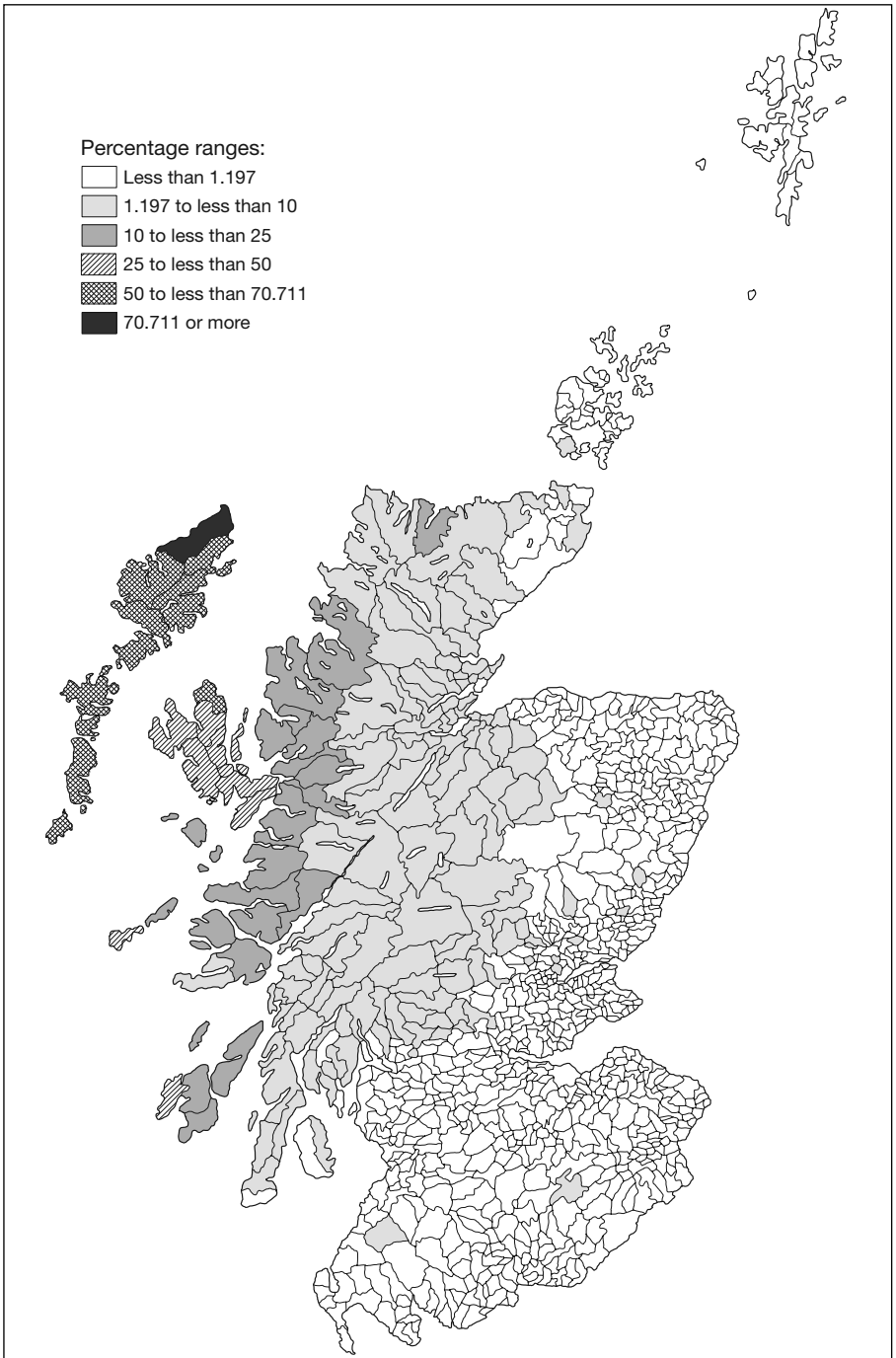


Figure 13.5 Map 2001 census – parishes. Source: General Register Office (Scotland) 2008

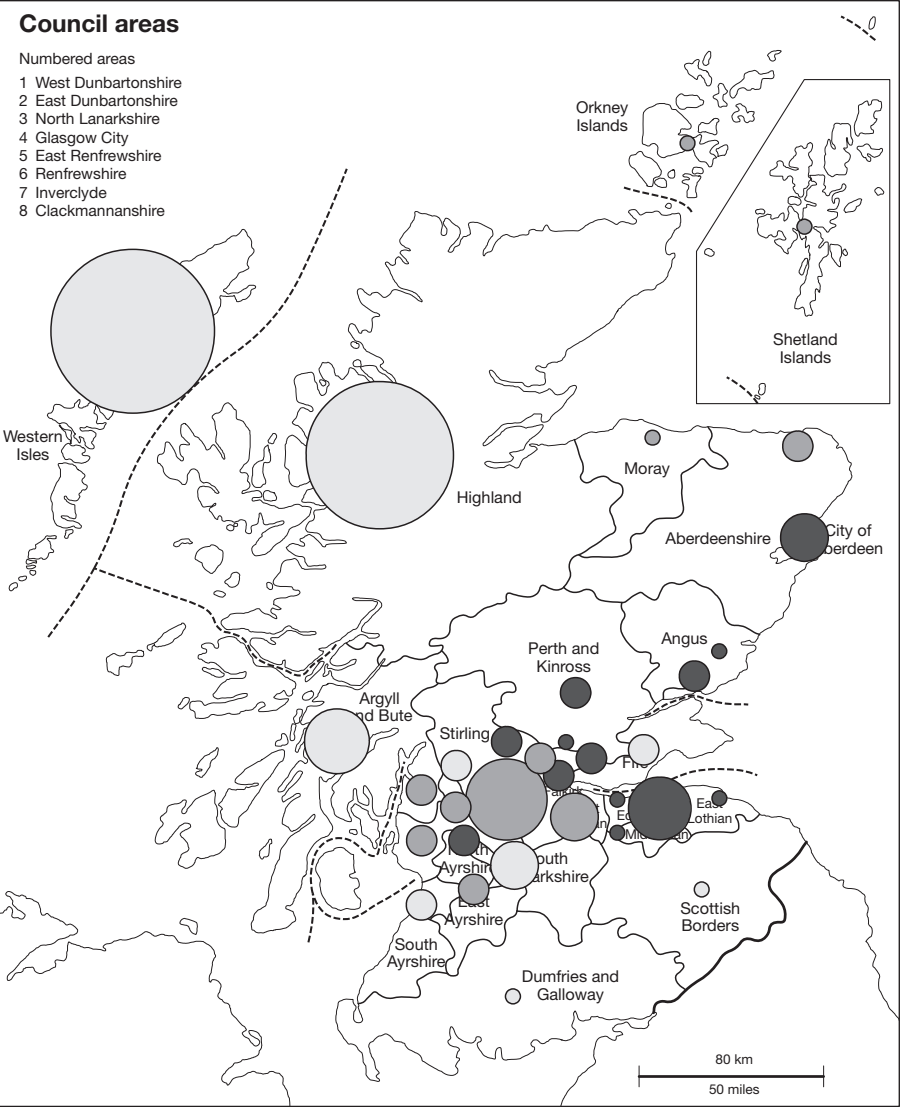


Figure 13.6 Map 2001 census – council areas. Source: base map supplied by General Register Office (Scotland), data from 2001 census plotted by K. MacKinnon 2008

## DOMAINS OF USAGE: GAELIC IN THE COMMUNITY

Gaelic usage is typically diglossic, and its character has been studied in a number of Gaelic communities. In terminally Gaelic East Sutherland, Dorian (1981b: 112) reported Gaelic being used in high domains (such as the church), and English in low domains (doubtless the family). In a study of a rapidly weakening Gaelic community in Mull (Dervai), although not focusing on diglossia itself, Dorian reported on the unfavourable reactions of non-Gaelic speakers to 'exclusionary' use of Gaelic – and of its value to Gaelic speakers (Dorian 1981a: 176–7).

Diglossic usage of Gaelic and English was examined in studies in Harris in the early 1970s (MacKinnon 1977: 143–57), in Barra and Harris in the late 1970s (MacKinnon and MacDonald 1980: 91–100; MacKinnon 1985a: 73), and in Skye and the Western Isles in the late 1980s (MacKinnon 1988a, b). The general pattern emerging from these various studies seems to indicate that community usage of Gaelic might often stand up better than family usage – especially where children's schoolwork and peer-group and sibling exchanges are concerned. The religious domain was weakening and might not function much longer as the bulwark for the language that it once was. In strongly Gaelic communities Gaelic predominated in most work domains – especially crofting – and in exchanges with older relations. Local post offices and shops could be pivotal domains for community usage, and where these had been taken over by non-Gaelic-speaking incomers (as in southern Skye) Gaelic would rapidly retreat to within the family.

Although the three surveys were not undertaken with identical test instruments, the questions were sufficiently similar for some degree of comparison over time and place to be feasible. The details of the Isle of Harris survey undertaken in 1973 (from MacKinnon 1977: 150–2, 155–6) provide a profile in some detail of 55 family and community speech situations, and the extent to which Gaelic or English predominated in the whole sample of 85 Gaelic-speaking adults and in its younger and older generations (see Table 13.1 and Figure 13.7, p. 600).

*Table 13.1* 'Demesne-extension' of Gaelic among Gaelic-speaking adults, Harris 1973 (N = 85). Source: MacKinnon 1977: 150–2, 155–6

Rank order	Speech activity in which Gaelic may be used	Members of sample engaging in the activity who claim to use Gaelic alone	Inter-generational language shift*	Numbers of individuals engaging in the activity
1	To older relations	96.0	2.8	74
2	To parents	95.8	2.6	71
3	To spouse when alone	92.1	25.0	63
4	To older people locally	86.5	19.0	74
5	When on own croft working	84.5	22.4	71
6	For family prayers and worship	83.8	11.6	80



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7	When on croft work with others	79.4	17.8	63
8	To a missionary	78.1	4.2	73
9	To family at home (generally)	78.1	23.4	82**
10	To a church elder	77.8	5.7	72
11	To other members of family (not spouse or parents)	76.8	22.8	73**
12	For praying to yourself	74.7	19.4	83
13	At township or grazing meeting	72.2	20.5	54
14	To younger people locally	69.9	21.9	73
15	To younger relations	68.5	18.0	73
16	To minister	68.5	9.5	73
17	At church meetings	68.0	31.3	78
18	For quarrelling or 'telling-off' locally	66.7	2.4	75
19	In post office	66.3	10.5	83
20	To shopkeepers or van drivers	66.2	6.6	74
21	For local shopping	65.5	23.0	84
22	To a Gaelic-speaking stranger, same age and opposite sex	64.3	10.8	70
23	To a Gaelic-speaking stranger, same age and same sex	63.4	11.2	71
24	For explanations to children	63.0	6.6	73
25	To children (misbehaving)	63.0	12.2	73
26	To fellow-workers at workplace	62.9	11.5	62**
27	To others at work	62.9	48.1	70**
28	To children about morality	62.9	21.0	70
29	To a foreman at work	62.8	27.3	43
30	To a nurse	59.5	10.4	74
31	When buying petrol	58.6	16.7	58
32	To a schoolteacher	55.6	16.3	72**
33	At a public entertainment	54.7	-1.7	75
34	To the district clerk	54.2	28.0	72

35	When discussing a child with teachers	50.0	4.8	70**
36	When dreaming	49.4	21.3	81
37	On public transport	49.4	2.4	81
38	In a club or society meeting	45.9	4.0	66
39	To a workman at your door	45.5	-17.6	66
40	To a local councillor	47.2	9.5	73**
41	For swearing	44.6	8.5	56
42	At a sports or recreation meeting	43.1	14.6	58
43	For discussing local problem with a councillor	42.3	-15.6	78**
44	To a shopkeeper you do not know	42.5	21.5	73
45	When counting to yourself	36.2	16.9	83
46	To a crofting assessor	24.6	2.6	57
47	To waiter in hotel or café	23.2	0.6	69
48	To travelling salesman	22.4	0.9	67
49	To an inspector	17.4	-6.9	69
50	To a telephone operator	16.4	-4.3	73**
51	To a telephone operator on Harris exchange	15.2	-7.7	79**
52	In the bank	13.8	-2.2	80
53	To a policeman	13.0	-6.7	69
54	To a doctor	10.8	7.3	74
55	In a letter to one of the family	2.5	5.9	81
	Mean incidence of use of Gaelic only	55.6		
	Mean extent of intergenerational shift		10.9	

## Notes

\* Intergenerational language shift represents the difference between the percentages of the older (over 60) and younger (under 40) respondents who claimed to use Gaelic only in each situation. Negative value indicates shift in favour of Gaelic.

\*\*The closeness of results in these cases provides some internal validation of the exercise as the closely synonymous questions are derived from separately administered questionnaires.

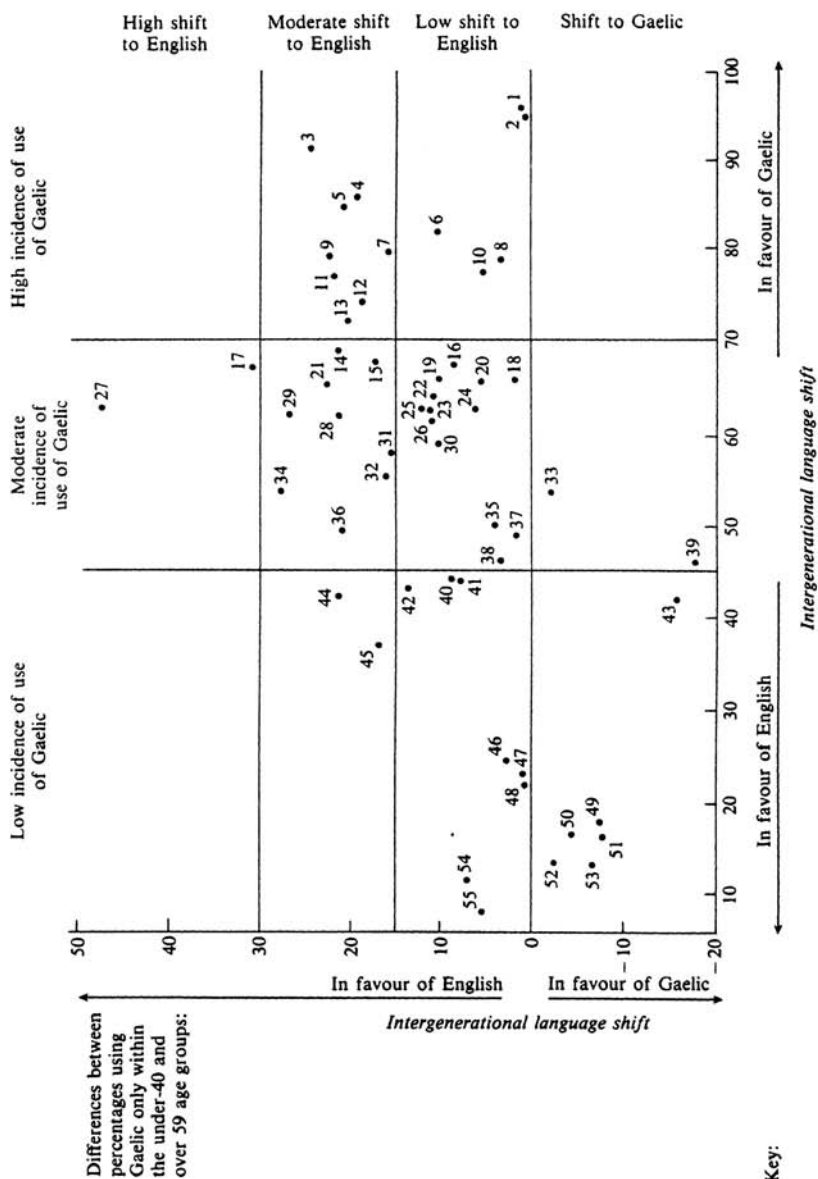


Figure 13.7 Intergenerational language shift: Gaelic-speaking adults Harris 1973. The speech situations are numbered in Table 13.1. Source: MacKinnon (1977: 150–2, 155–6)

High shift to English		Moderate shift to English	Low shift to English	Shift to Gaelic
Low incidence of use of Gaelic	Moderate incidence of use of Gaelic	High incidence of use of Gaelic		
	27 people at work 17 church meetings			
44 unfamiliar shopkeeper 45 counting	34 district clerk 29 foreman 21 shopping 36 dreaming 15 young relations 32 teacher 31 buying petrol	3 spouse when alone 9 family at home 11 other family 5 when working on own croft 13 township meetings 12 personal prayer 4 old people 7 croft (others)		
42 sports meeting 41 swearing 54 doctor 55 letter writing 46 crofting assessor 48 travelling salesman 47 waiter	26 workmates 25 children (misbehaving) 23 stranger same age and sex 22 stranger same age, opp. sex 30 nurse 40 councillor 24 children (explanations) 20 shopkeepers/vandriers 35 teacher (re: child at school) 38 club or society 37 public transport 18 quarrelling	6 family prayers 10 church elder 8 missionary 1 older relations 2 parents		
52 bank 50 telephone operator 53 policeman 49 inspector 51 telephone operator (Harris exchange) 43 councillor (local problem)	33 public entertainment 39 workman at door			

← Intergenerational language shift ————— In favour of English ————— In favour of Gaelic →

Figure 13.7 (continued)

There is some indication that among the younger (under-40) generation some of the diglossic patterning was breaking down, with a shift towards Gaelic in some of the more modern domains, and in exchanges in public entertainments.

The surveys in Barra and South Harris in 1978 did not cover as many speech situations, but an attempt was made to elicit details regarding language usage in respondents' families of origin. Thus a more diachronous impression of intergenerational language shift could be derived. The details are illustrated in Figures 13.8 on pp. 603–4 and 13.9 on pp. 605–6.

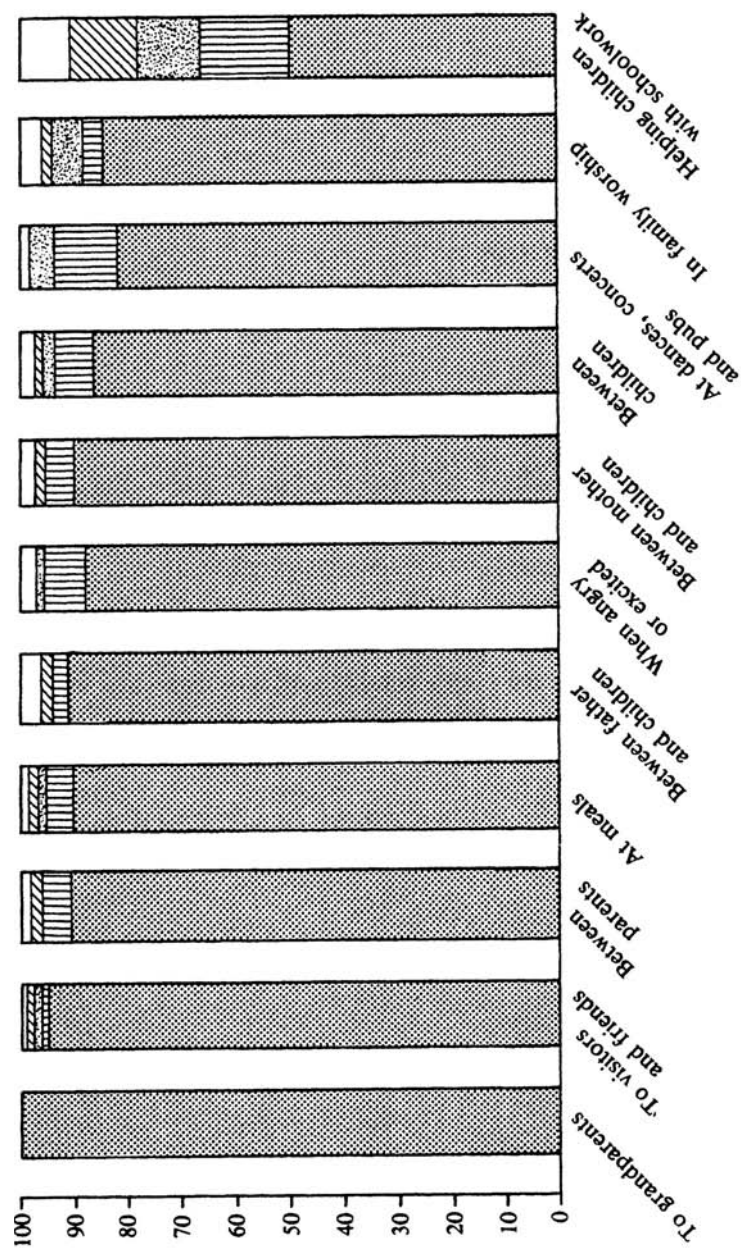


Figure 13.8a Western Isles (Barra) 1978 survey - Gaelic usage in family of origin. Source: MacKinnon and MacDonald, Appendix: 2-4

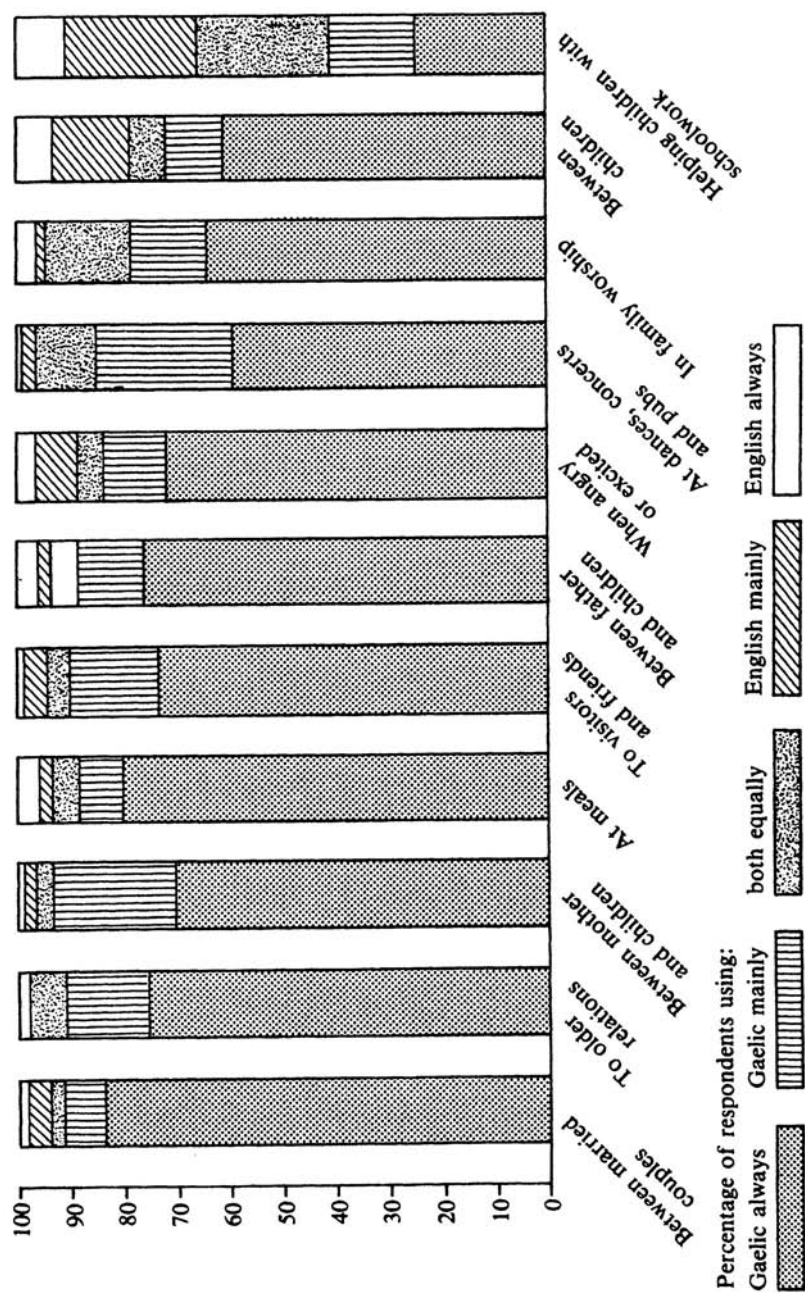


Figure 13.8b Western Isles (Barra), 1978 survey – Gaelic usage in present-day family. Source: MacKinnon and MacDonald, Appendix: 2–4

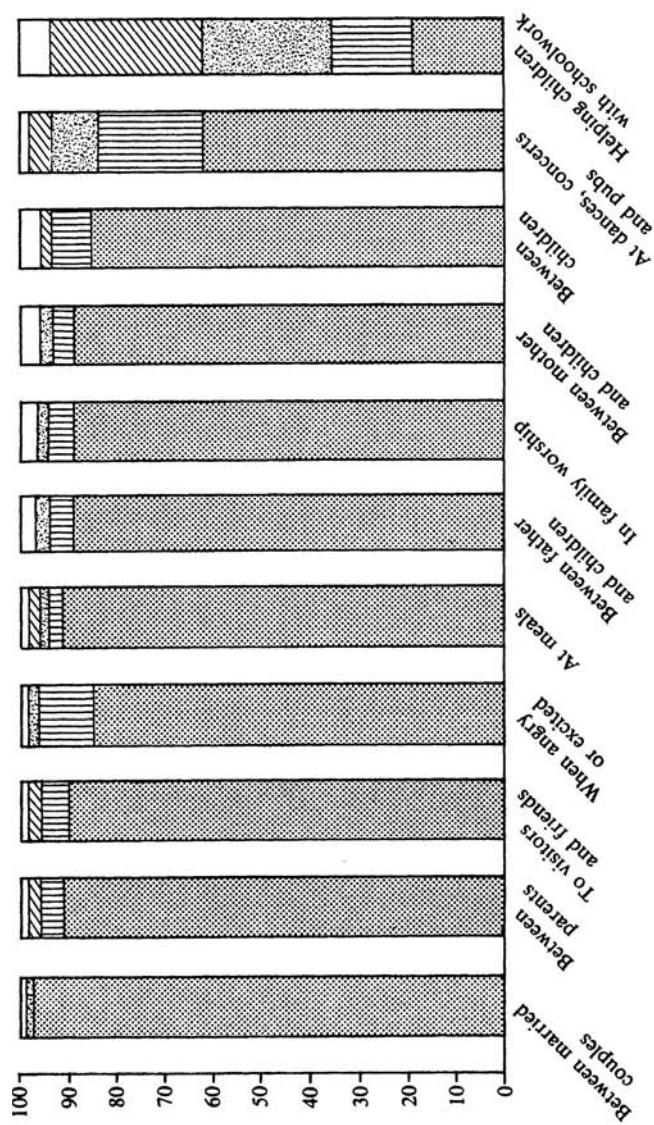


Figure 13.9a Western Isles (Harris), 1978 survey Gaelic usage in family of origin. Source: MacKinnon and MacDonald, Appendix: 2-4



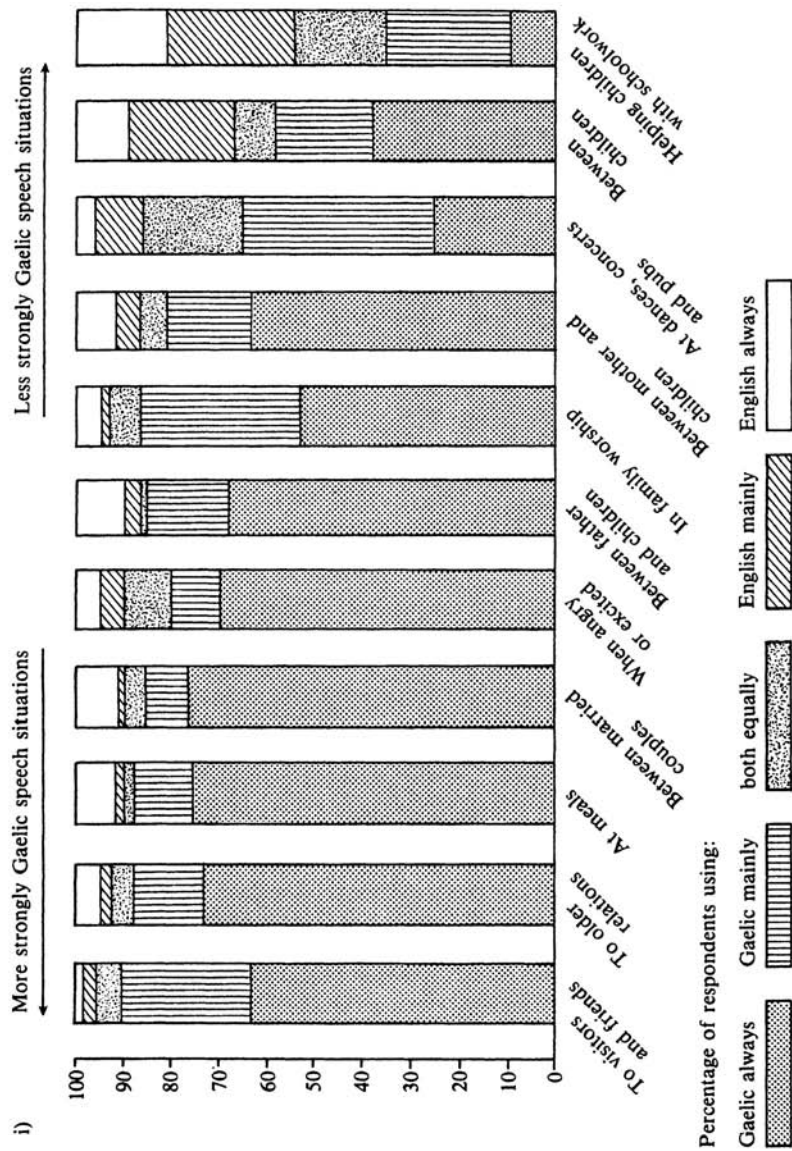


Figure 13.9b Western Isles (Harris), 1978 survey – Gaelic usage in present-day family. Source: MacKinnon and MacDonald, Appendix: 2–4

These details are subsumed into a 'Gaelic usage score' in Tables 13.2 and 13.3, where a response of 'Gaelic always' is weighted as one, and 'Gaelic often' as a half. The scores are expressed as percentages of totals of responding Gaelic speakers in the samples. There were 106 fully fluent native Gaelic speakers in the Barra sample, and 96 in South Harris. The speech situations are presented in the order of greatest-to-least intergenerational language shift from Gaelic to English. In both island samples the usage of Gaelic was well nigh universal in almost every speech situation in respondents' original families, excepting helping children with schoolwork, and at public entertainments. Intergenerational language shift from Gaelic to English was strongest in both samples among children, and quite strong also in the domains of worship and public entertainment. In this process the family can be clearly seen as a conserving institution – but if community usage slackens it will clearly be by itself an insufficient institution for language maintenance.

*Table 13.2* Gaelic usage and intergenerational language shift, Isle of Barra, 1978 (N = 106). Source: MacKinnon and MacDonald 1980, Appendix: 2–4

Speech situation	Mean Gaelic usage scores in:		Intergenerational usage change (language shift)
	original family	present family	
Helping child with schoolwork	58.3	32.9	–25.4
Between children	90.0	65.5	–24.5
To grandparents/older family members	100.0	84.4	–15.6
At dances, concerts and pubs	87.3	71.7	–15.6
In family worship	87.1	71.6	–15.5
With visitors and friends	95.3	81.0	–14.3
When angry or excited	92.0	77.9	–14.1
Between father and children	93.3	82.2	–11.1
Between mother and children	92.5	82.3	–10.2
Between parents/married couple	92.5	86.6	–6.8
At mealtimes	92.9	88.7	–4.2

*Table 13.3* Gaelic usage and intergenerational language shift, South Harris, 1978 (N = 96). Source: MacKinnon and MacDonald 1980, Appendix: 2–4

Speech situation	Mean Gaelic usage scores in:		Intergenerational usage change (language shift)
	original family	present family	
Between children	91.6	55.2	–36.4
At dances, concerts and pubs	75.6	49.3	–26.3
In family worship	94.3	71.9	–22.4
When angry or excited	94.8	77.1	–17.7
With visitors and friends	95.8	79.2	–16.6
Between mother and children	93.8	78.1	–15.7
Between father and children	94.3	83.3	–11.0
At mealtimes	95.8	84.9	–10.9
Between parents/married couple	96.4	86.4	–10.0
Helping child with schoolwork	27.2	22.7	–4.5
To grandparents/older family members	100.0	98.6	–1.4

The third survey, undertaken in 1986–8 in the Isle of Skye, shows this with particular clarity. Gaelic to English-language shift was acute in the south and east of the island, and Gaelic language maintenance was stronger in the north and west. Table 13.4 (opposite) presents data on a basis similar to Tables 13.2 and 13.3 for 16 similar speech situations among the 81 Gaelic speakers in the whole Isle of Skye sample (MacKinnon 1988a: 12).

*Table 13.4* Gaelic usage and intergenerational language shift – Isle of Skye, 1986–8 (N = 81). Source: MacKinnon 1988a: 12, Table 3.1

Speech situation	Mean Gaelic usage scores in:		Intergenerational usage change (language shift)
	original family	present family	
Between child and grandparents	98.5	35.0	–63.5
Adult explaining to child	85.5	22.5	–63.0
Between brothers and sisters	88.0	25.5	–62.5
Between father and child	93.5	39.0	–54.5
Between parents and child	93.5	40.0	–53.5
Between children and friends	81.5	30.0	–51.5
Between mother and child	92.0	41.5	–50.5
Helping child with schoolwork	53.0	16.0	–37.0
Between married couple	96.0	62.5	–33.5
At mealtimes	92.5	62.0	–30.5
When counting	64.0	34.0	–30.0
When angry or excited	87.0	67.0	–20.0
To animals or pets	95.5	76.5	–19.0
Between parents and older generation	99.5	83.0	–16.5
When thinking	83.5	67.0	–16.5
With neighbours and friends	–92.5	76.5	–16.0

Comparative data for the Western Isles in the 1986–8 survey are presented in Figure 13.10.

The strong impression in comparing the situation in Skye and the Western Isles in 1986–8 with Barra and South Harris ten years earlier, and the Isle of Harris five years earlier still, is of much stronger intergenerational language shift. The 1986–8 survey, however, looked at more inner-speech situations and in these Gaelic was being better maintained, as it was with friends, neighbours and the older generation.

If these surveys are indeed typical of their then Gaelic-speaking communities, the intergenerational changes in diglossic usage patterns indicated something of the process and dynamics of language shift. Speech exchanges with and between children represented

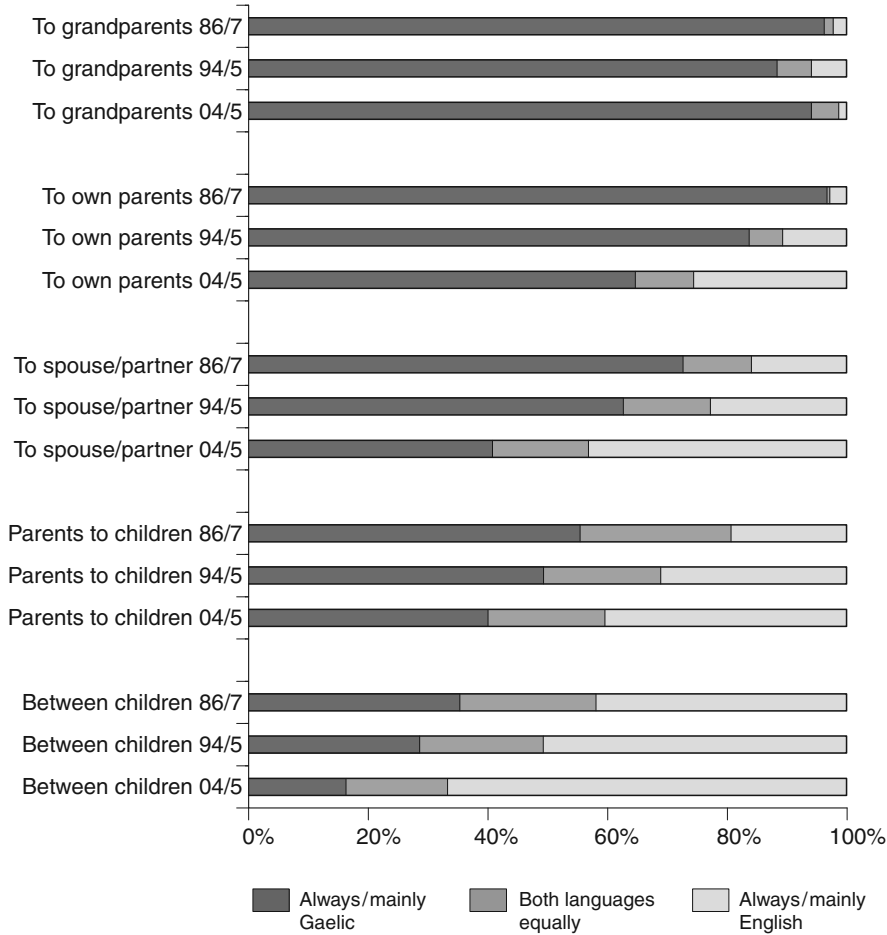


Figure 13.10 Intergenerational language shift: Western Isles' Gaelic speakers at successive surveys, 1986–8 (N = 224), 1994–5 (N = 130) and 2004–5 (N = 254)

the situations of greatest shift to English, schoolwork always having represented a domain within which English predominated. However, it is not only the school which has thrust English as an intrusion into the social life of the Gaelic community. Worship seems to have started to do the same. The use of English in both family worship and Sunday school shows two potential areas of internal weakening of the Gaelic ‘demesne’, or social area within which the language predominates (MacKinnon 1977: 148f.).

Public events are similar situations within which Gaelic speakers increasingly see themselves constrained to use English. This is illustrated in the comparison with Gaelic usage scores among Gaelic speakers in the more Gaelic north and west, and the more anglicized south and east divisions of Skye in Table 13.5.

*Table 13.5* Gaelic usage in media and community, Skye Gaelic speakers, 1986–8 (N = 81). Source: MacKinnon 1988a: 19–25

<b>Speech situation</b>	<b>Mean Gaelic usage scores among Gaelic speakers</b>		
	<b>Skye N &amp; W (N = 52)</b>	<b>Skye S &amp; E (N = 29)</b>	<b>Skye total (N = 81)</b>
Gaelic radio programmes	88.0	94.6	90.5
Gaelic TV programmes	84.8	89.3	86.5
With church elder	89.3	84.2	82.8
In crofting activities	84.2	75.0	82.0
At prayer meetings	72.2	37.5	64.3
Gaelic press articles	60.3	71.2	63.5
With minister	80.9	26.9	61.6
At work	56.5	64.7	60.0
With local nurse	70.7	31.1	57.1
At social events	61.3	46.0	55.4
With crofting assessor	57.9	33.3	52.0
At township meetings	61.1	31.3	51.9
At church services	58.5	39.6	51.5
With local councillor	42.5	60.0	48.3
Reading Gaelic Bible	56.4	35.2	47.7
With child's teacher	53.6	39.3	46.4
Gaelic concerts, plays	35.0	58.9	43.6
At post office	57.6	15.5	41.3
Reading Gaelic books	26.9	24.1	25.8
When shopping locally	23.8	20.8	23.1
To doctor	27.7	1.7	17.8
With bank teller	12.5	4.0	9.3
Writing letter in Gaelic	9.1	7.4	8.3
With local officials	1.5	2.9	2.0
With DHSS/tax officials	1.3	2.4	1.7
With local policeman	0.0	1.8	0.7

The decay of Gaelic usage in the religious domain in the more anglicized south and east division of Skye was apparent in the responses to reading the Gaelic Bible, language used at church services and prayer meetings, and in exchanges with ministers. Use of Gaelic within the media stood up well, although there was some slippage in the crofting domain (croft work, township meetings and crofting assessors).

The items in Table 13.5 are rank ordered from those in which Gaelic most strongly predominates to those in which English is almost universally used among the Gaelic speakers in the 1986–8 Skye adult-population sample of 145 locally registered electors.

The low usage scores for reading Gaelic books and writing Gaelic letters undoubtedly reflect the low priority given to Gaelic literacy in schooling until very recently. The low Gaelic usage scores associated with the post office in Skye south and east, and for shopping locally in both divisions reflect the takeover of these small businesses by non-Gaelic-speaking outsiders. The low scores associated with local professionals and officials reflect the fact that very few of them are Gaelic-speaking – and even with those few who are, the predominating use of English is very strongly associated with their office. The local education system has become much more supportive of Gaelic since the mid-1970s, especially at the primary stage, and Gaelic literacy is taken seriously as an aspect of language maintenance. Although there have been some supportive public utterances from time to time in connection with other public services (e.g., the police), until there is some concerted policy of recruitment and placement of Gaelic speakers in Gaelic-speaking areas, these services will continue as strongly anglicizing factors in local life. The exception here is in local nursing, where district nurses and midwives have typically been local or Gaelic-speaking.

Support for Gaelic policies was also examined in this survey, and the results for Western Isles respondents are presented in Table 13.6.

*Table 13.6* Attributes associated with Gaelic policies support scores (Western Isles Survey 1986–88)  
(a) from *Language-Maintenance and Viability Project 1986–8. Western Isles Gaelic Speakers* (N = 224). Source: MacKinnon 1994a; Support: ESRC G00232328

Language usage	Grand-parents		Own parents		Spouse/partner		To children		Between children	
	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)
Gaelic always/mainly	212	95.9	212	96.4	117	72.7	80	55.2	45	35.5
Both langs equally	3	1.4	1	0.4	18	11.2	37	25.5	29	22.8
English always/mainly	6	2.7	7	3.2	26	16.1	28	19.3	53	41.7
Total responding	221	100.0	220	100.0	161	100.0	148	100.0	127	100.0
Non-responding	3		4		63		76		97	

(b) From *Euromosaic Project National Gaelic Speaker Survey 1994–5*. *Western Isles Gaelic Speakers* (N = 130). Source: Euromosaic 1995. Support: EU Task Force Resources Humaines/Euromosaic project

Language usage	Grand-parents		Own parents		Spouse/partner		To children		Between children	
	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)
Gaelic always/mainly	195	88.2	107	83.6	45	69.2	38	49.4	18	28.6
Both langs equally	12	5.5	7	5.5	12	15.8	15	19.4	13	20.6
English always/mainly	14	6.3	14	10.9	19	25.0	24	31.2	32	50.7
Total responding	221	100.0	128	100.0	76	100.0	77	100.0	63	100.0
Non-responding	39		2		54		63		67	

(c) From *Western Isles Language Plan Project 2004–5*. *Western Isles Gaelic Speakers* (N = 254). Source: WILPP 2005; Support: W. I. Gaelic Language and Culture Forum. Analysis and Presentation Copyright © 2008 K. MacKinnon, SGRÙD Research.

Language usage	Grand-parents		Own parents		Spouse/partner		To children		Between children	
	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)
Gaelic always/mainly	639	8.66	136	64.76	71	40.80	67	33.84	27	17.42
Both langs equally	32	4.70	20	9.52	28	16.09	42	21.21	26	16.77
English always/mainly	10	1.47	54	25.72	75	43.11	89	44.95	102	65.81
Total responding	1,016	100.00	210	100.00	174	100.00	198	100.0	155	100.00
Non-responding	335		298		80		56		99	



## GAELIC IN SCHOOLING AND THE FAMILY

The trends that continued and accelerated rapidly through the later twentieth century clearly imply that the concept of providing educational and cultural support for Gaelic only in the traditional 'Gaelic-speaking areas' has been substantially overtaken by events. This was realized by young Gaelic-speaking parents across Scotland in the early 1980s. Provision of primary bilingual education and of Gaelic as a 'second language' was failing to reach the majority of its potential Gaelic public. Although it produced census effects of growth of Gaelic among children of school age (as shown in Figures 13.11–13.16, pp. 615–20), these effects were limited to the areas where these facilities existed (see Figure 13.17, p. 621), and did not produce an overall growth of Gaelic speakers among young people nationally which came anywhere near the levels necessary for maintenance of the language group.

A pre-school Gaelic organization, Comhairle nan Sgoiltean Àraich (CNSA), was established in 1982 and had considerable success in establishing Gaelic pre-school units, or *croileagain*. By 1990–1 there were 1,420 children enrolled in Gaelic-medium pre-school groups, and by 1994–5 the number had increased to 2,600. In 1990–1 education authority Gaelic nurseries commenced, and further figures for CNSA pre-school groups have not been published. However, these developments at preschool level were potentially producing Gaelic-speaking children in sufficient numbers to regenerate the language group.

On the other hand, there was a substantial shortfall in transfer to Gaelic-medium primary units, which were not provided in sufficient numbers to cope with such levels of demand, and in fact growth in this sector stalled in the later 1990s/early 2000s. Despite some growth of provision of Gaelic-medium secondary provision in this period, the substantial shortfall of Gaelic-medium primary children transferring to Gaelic-medium secondary education continued. As constituted at present, Gaelic education is able to do little more than slow down the rate of attrition of the Gaelic community. Although some small census growth among young people can be demonstrated, it is of the order of a 'blip on the chart' and not yet be at a level which would overcome the decline of Gaelic transmission in the family.

To overcome the losses of Gaelic speakers from all causes in 1991–2001 there would have needed to have been at least a cohort of 733 Gaelic-medium children per school year proceeding through all educational sectors from pre-school to secondary. In 2007–8) Gaelic nurseries were catering for 718 pre-school children, with an unknown number in CNSA pre-school groups. Together these may well have been producing the necessary numbers for language-group maintenance and transfer to the primary sector. However, in 2007–8) the average year cohort in Gaelic-medium primary schooling was 309, and the numbers in the first two years of secondary schooling were 143 and 108 respectively. Even if these figures are augmented with the 248 and 208 'Gaelic-fluent' children, the system is producing less than half the numbers necessary for language-group maintenance.

The situation in the family is crucial for the maintenance of Gaelic, and currently family structures cause considerable difficulties for the intergenerational transmission of the language. In 2001 there were 13,906 households with Gaelic-speaking adults throughout Scotland. Of these, only 2,855 had two Gaelic-speaking adults (i.e. in most cases, of two Gaelic-speaking parents.) These comprised only 20.5 per cent of all households with Gaelic speakers, and only 68.4 per cent of their children aged 3–15 years were being brought up to speak Gaelic. In addition there were 257 other 'couple families' and 257 'multiple households' together comprising 3.70 per cent of all households with Gaelic-speaking adults. These were probably multiple generational or extended families of various types. The other 'couple families' were transmitting Gaelic to 82.0 per cent of

Number (1000s)	% of total population	Males	Age group	Females	% of total population	Number (1000s)
10.5	0.208		#	#	0.697	35.1
22.5	0.448		#	#	1.108	55.8
50.9	1.011		#	#	1.819	91.6
83.2	1.652		#	#	2.389	120.3
105.7	2.099		#	#	2.683	135.1
114.4	2.273		#	#	2.717	136.8
138.4	2.749		#	#	3.005	151.3
139.6	2.771		#	#	2.981	150.1
139.5	2.770		#	#	2.904	146.2
141.3	2.806		#	#	2.917	146.9
149.5	2.969		#	#	2.995	150.8
180.4	3.584		#	#	3.541	178.3
172.2	3.420		#	#	3.376	170.0
199.8	3.967		#	#	3.865	194.6
227.8	4.523		#	#	4.345	218.8
218.2	4.333		#	#	4.111	207.0
176.3	3.502		#	#	3.338	168.1
158.3	3.144		#	#	2.981	150.1
2428.5	48.229				51.772	2606.8

\* estimation: partition of over-75s proportional to age-and sex-group totals in Scottish population.

Figure 13.11 Scotland 1981: age and sex structure of national population. Sources: Registrar General (Scotland), 1983: p. 4, Table 2; Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, 1983

[illegible]

\*estimation: partition of over-75s proportional to age-and sex-group totals in Scottish population.

*Figure 13.12* Scotland 1981: age and sex structure of Gaelic population. Sources: Registrar General (Scotland), 1983: p. 4, Table 2; Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, 1983

Number	Males						Females						% of Gaelic population	Number
	Age group			Percentage of usually resident Gaelic population			Age group			Percentage of usually resident Gaelic population				
	% of Gaelic population	Males	Females	% of Gaelic population	Males	Females	% of Gaelic population	Males	Females	% of Gaelic population	Males	Females	% of Gaelic population	Number
155*	0.544*	# # #	# # #	85 +	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	1.313*	374*
292*	1.025*	# # #	# # #	80-4	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	2.092*	596*
594*	2.085*	# # #	# # #	75-9	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	3.247*	925*
863	3.029	# # #	# # #	70-4	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	4.005	1,141
891	3.128	# # #	# # #	65-9	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	3.447	982
772	2.710	# # #	# # #	60-4	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	3.166	902
988	3.468	# # #	# # #	55-9	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	3.394	967
883	3.099	# # #	# # #	50-4	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	2.920	832
847	2.973	# # #	# # #	45-9	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	2.815	802
852	2.991	# # #	# # #	40-4	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	2.805	799
775	2.720	# # #	# # #	35-9	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	2.506	714
941	3.303	# # #	# # #	30-4	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	2.762	787
763	2.678	# # #	# # #	25-9	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	2.313	659
888	3.116	# # #	# # #	20-4	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	2.317	660
1,108	3.889	# # #	# # #	15-19	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	3.696	1,053
1,229	4.314	# # #	# # #	10-14	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	4.230	1,205
899	3.156	# # #	# # #	5-9	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	3.152	898
235	0.825	(=2.062 0-4)	# # #	3-4	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	0.765	218
13,975	49.054	(=2.062 0-4)	# # #	0%	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	# # #	50.946	14,514
		4%	3%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%	3%	4%			

\*estimation: partition of over-75s proportional to age-and sex-group totals in Scottish population.

*Figure 13.13* Scotland 1981: areas with bilingual primary Gaelic teaching schemes. Age and sex structure of Gaelic population. Sources: Registrar General (Scotland), 1983: p. 22, Table 40; pp. 4–9, Table 2

Number	% of Gaelic population	Mailes	Age group	Females	% of Gaelic population	Number
81*	0.691*		85 +	# # # # #		191*
161*	1.372*		80-4	# # # # #		287*
342*	2.916*		75-9	# # # # #		463*
427	3.641	# # # # #	70-4	# # # # #	# # # # #	521
428	3.649	# # # # #	65-9	# # # # #	# # # # #	502
401	3.419	# # # # #	60-4	# # # # #	# # # # #	421
400	3.410	# # # # #	55-9	# # # # #	# # # # #	430
391	3.334	# # # # #	50-4	# # # # #	# # # # #	406
343	2.924	# # # # #	45-9	# # # # #	# # # # #	393
389	3.317	# # # # #	40-4	# # # # #	# # # # #	374
348	2.967	# # # # #	35-9	# # # # #	# # # # #	353
298	2.541	# # # # #	30-4	# # # # #	# # # # #	366
297	2.532	# # # # #	25-9	# # # # #	# # # # #	268
212	1.807	# # # # #	20-4	# # # # #	# # # # #	287
228	1.944	# # # # #	15-19	# # # # #	# # # # #	319
459	3.913	# # # # #	10-14	# # # # #	# # # # #	562
150	1.278	# # # # #	5-9	# # # # #	# # # # #	181
27	0.230	# # # # #	3-4	# # # # #	(= 0.490 0-4)	23
5,382	45.886	(= 0.575 0-4)	Percentage of usually resident Gaelic population	4% 3% 2% 1% 0% 1% 2%	54.113	6,347

\* estimation: partition of over-75s proportional to age-and sex-group totals in Scottish population.

Figure 13.14 Scotland 1981: areas with second language primary Gaelic teaching schemes. Age and sex structure of Gaelic population. Sources: Registrar General (Scotland), 1983: p. 22, Table 40; pp. 4-9, Table 2

Number	% of Gaelic population	Males	Age group	Females	% of Gaelic population	Number
236*	0.586*		85+		1.405*	565*
453*	1.126*		80-4		2.196*	883*
936*	2.327*		75-9		3.451*	1,388*
1,290	3.208		70-4		4.132	1,662
1,319	3.280		65-9		3.690	1,484
1,173	2.917		60-4		3.290	1,323
1,388	3.451		55-9		3.474	1,397
1,274	3.168		50-4		3.078	1,238
1,190	2.959		45-9		2.971	1,195
1,241	3.086		40-4		2.917	1,173
1,123	2.792		35-9		2.653	1,067
1,239	3.081		30-4		2.867	1,153
1,060	2.636		25-9		2.305	927
1,100	2.735		20-4		2.355	947
1,336	3.321		15-19		3.411	1,372
1,688	4.197		10-14		4.394	1,767
1,049	2.608		5-9		2.682	1,079
262	0.651		3-4		0.599	241
19,357	48.130				51.869	20,861

\* estimation: partition of over-75s proportional to age-and sex-group totals in Scottish population.

Figure 13.15 Scotland 1981: all areas with primary Gaelic teaching schemes. Age and sex structure of Gaelic population. Sources: Registrar General (Scotland), 1983: p. 22, Table 40; pp. 4-9, Table 2



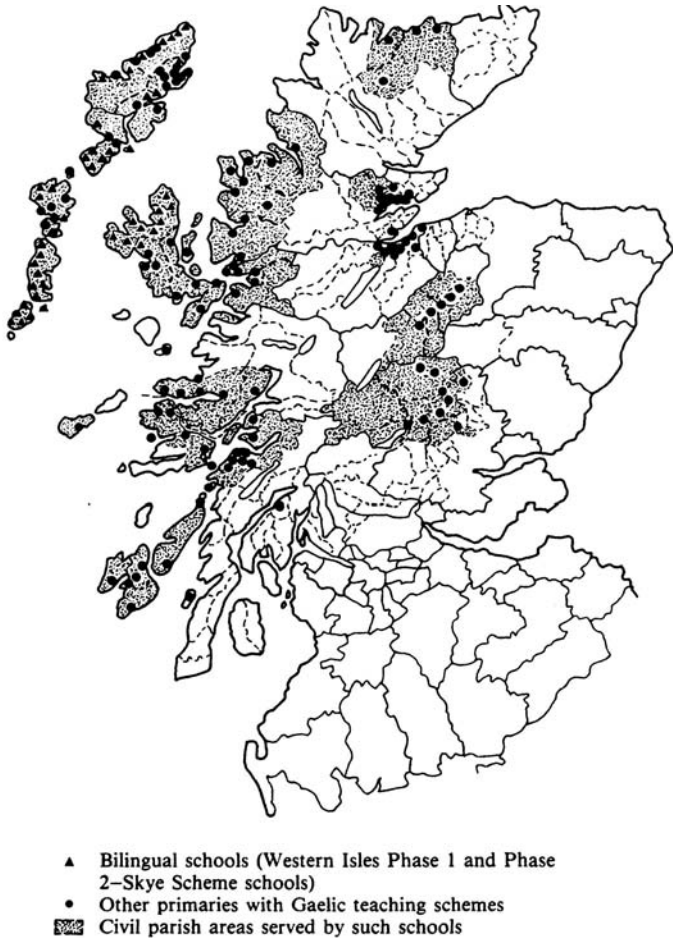


Figure 13.17 Primary schools with Gaelic teaching schemes in 1981

their children, and the 'multiple families' to 65.3 per cent. Thus the total of 3,369 families where all adults spoke Gaelic, 2,001 of their 2,900 children or 69.00 per cent spoke the language. Transmission rates were much lower among Gaelic-speaking lone-parent households. There were 1,757 such cases, among whom 528 of their 1,524 children (or 34.6 per cent) were being brought up to speak the language (Census Scotland 2001, Table S143). Transmission rates and proportions of all Gaelic-speaking adult families were higher in the more strongly Gaelic areas, such as the Western Isles and Skye and Lochalsh, but still with very considerable shortfalls in terms of transmission rates. If current policy initiatives are at all serious in seeking to maintain the numbers of Gaelic speakers and Gaelic-speaking communities, this must be the key priority action area. And the second priority must be availability of Gaelic schooling for the children of partially Gaelic families whose parents want it.

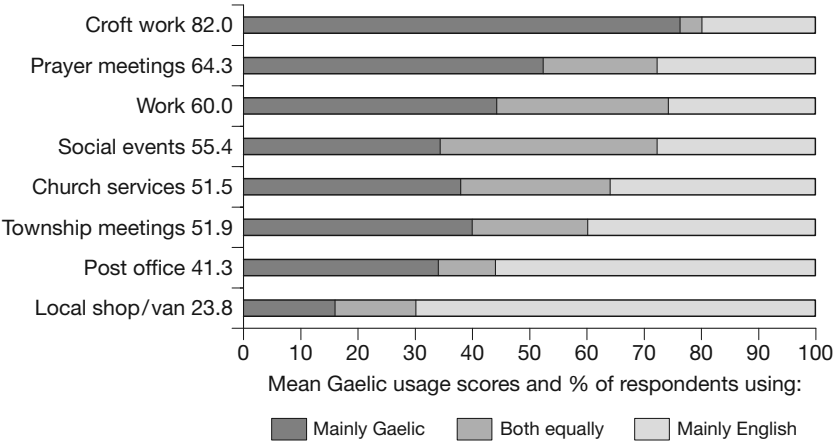


**SURVEYS OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY GAELIC USAGE IN THE WESTERN ISLES: 1986–8, 1994–5, 2004–5**

A survey of Gaelic language maintenance in the Western Isles was undertaken in 1986–8 in parallel to the study in Skye discussed above. The results have been reported in detail elsewhere (MacKinnon 1991, 1994). Further studies were undertaken in 1994–5 as part of the Euromosaic Project study of Gaelic speakers in Scotland (MacKinnon 1998, 2000a and b, 2001), and of the general population, Gaelic speakers, and recent incomers for the Western Isles Language Plan Project (WILPP) in 2004–5 (MacKinnon 2006, 2007). These studies enable some successive comparisons to be attempted of Gaelic usage in the family and community. In general they show the above trends to have been rapidly accelerating.

Language usage within the family among Gaelic speakers in the Western Isles in 1986–8 is detailed in Table 13.6 above and in Figure 13.10, which compared the questions on family usage common to both surveys. It will be apparent that this, the most strongly Gaelic area in Scotland, has been undergoing rapid and accelerating language shift. Gaelic usage has declined intergenerationally between reported usage in family of origin and present-day family, and sequentially over the decade between the two surveys. In comparison with the situation a decade later the noticeable decline in usage levels in all family situations is conspicuously apparent.

This trend continues strongly in the results of the surveys conducted in 1994–5 as part of the Euromosaic Project (MacKinnon 1998, 2000a and b, 2001), and in comparison with the survey ten years later in 2004–5 conducted by the Western Isles Language Plan Project (WILPP 2005, MacKinnon 2007). In both of these surveys common questions were asked, although the methodology was different. The earlier survey comprised 130 Gaelic-speaking subjects quota-ed for area, age, gender and occupation. The later survey was systematically sampled from the electoral roll as a whole, from which the 254 Gaelic speakers were separately analysed. With these provisos of comparability, the rate of language shift was such that the strong rate of decline continued to be abundantly apparent. (See Figures 13.18 to 13.21.)



*Figure 13.18a* Gaelic usage in community and media: Isle of Skye Gaelic speakers, 1986–8 (N = 81) – in community situations

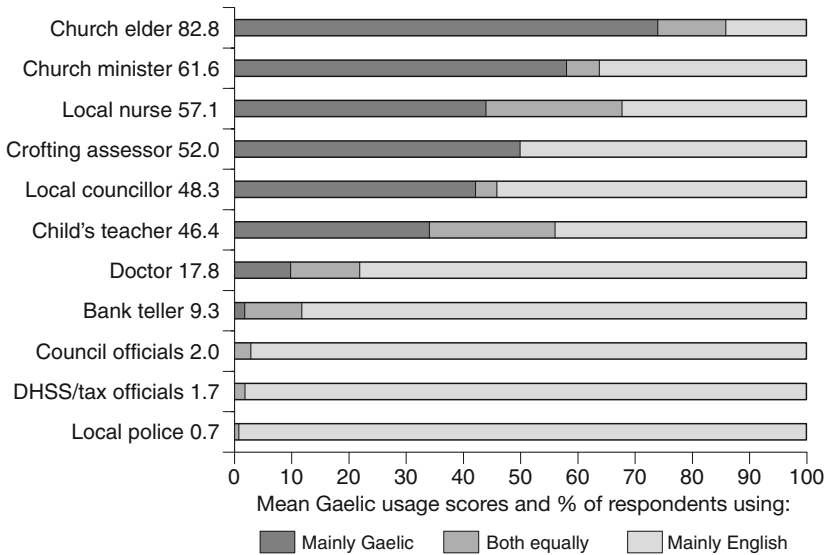


Figure 13.18b Gaelic usage in community and media: Isle of Skye Gaelic speakers, 1986–8 (N = 81) – community figures

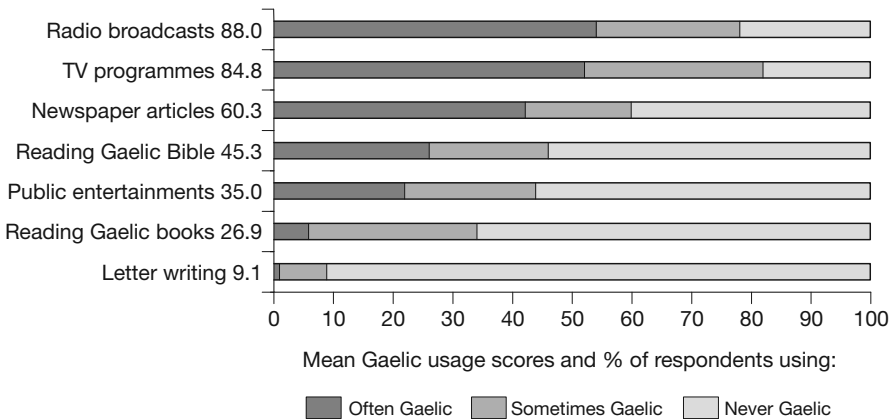


Figure 13.18c Gaelic usage in community and media: Isle of Skye Gaelic speakers, 1986–8 (N = 81) – media/entertainments

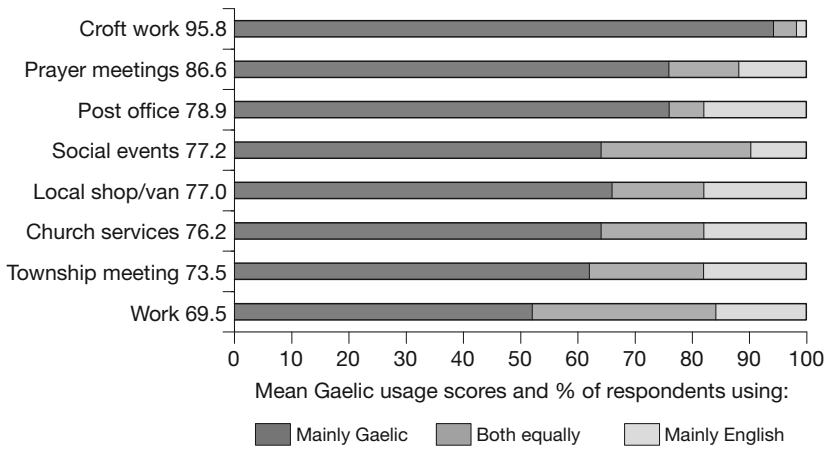


Figure 13.19a Gaelic usage in community and media: Western Isles Gaelic speakers, 1986–8 (N = 222) – in community situations

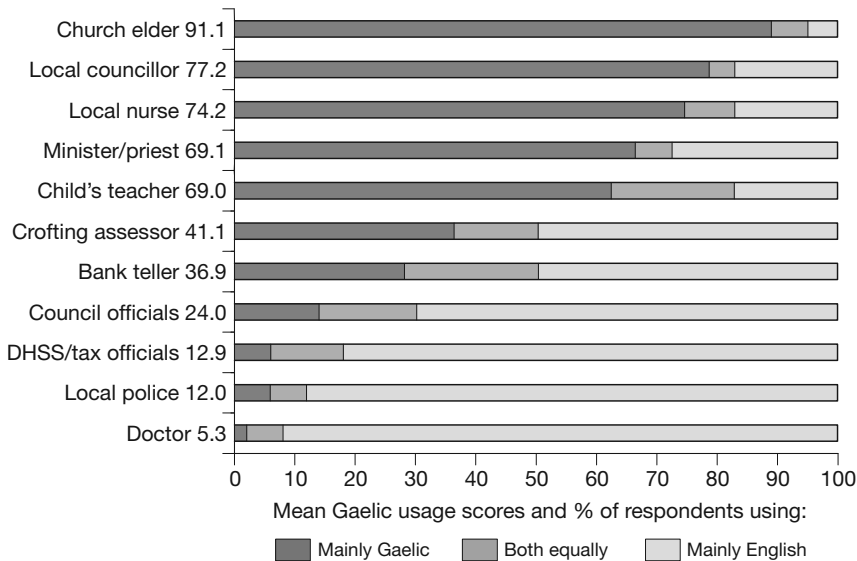


Figure 13.19b Gaelic usage in community and media: Western Isles Gaelic speakers, 1986–8 (N = 222) – community figures

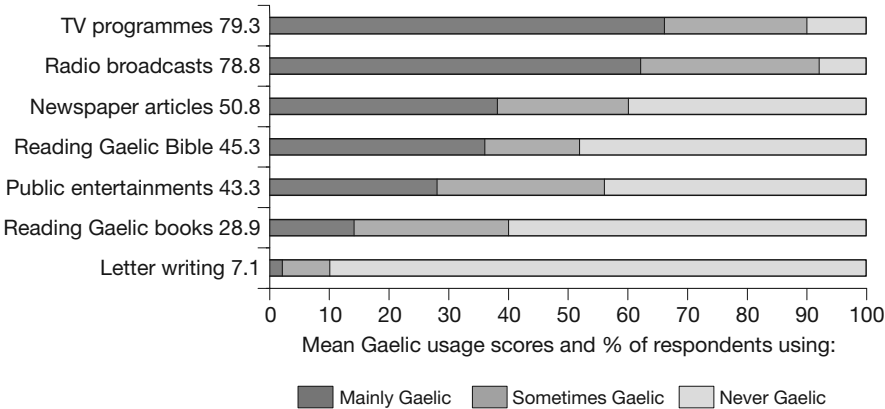


Figure 13.19c Gaelic usage in community and media: Western Isles Gaelic speakers, 1986–8 (N = 222) – media/entertainments

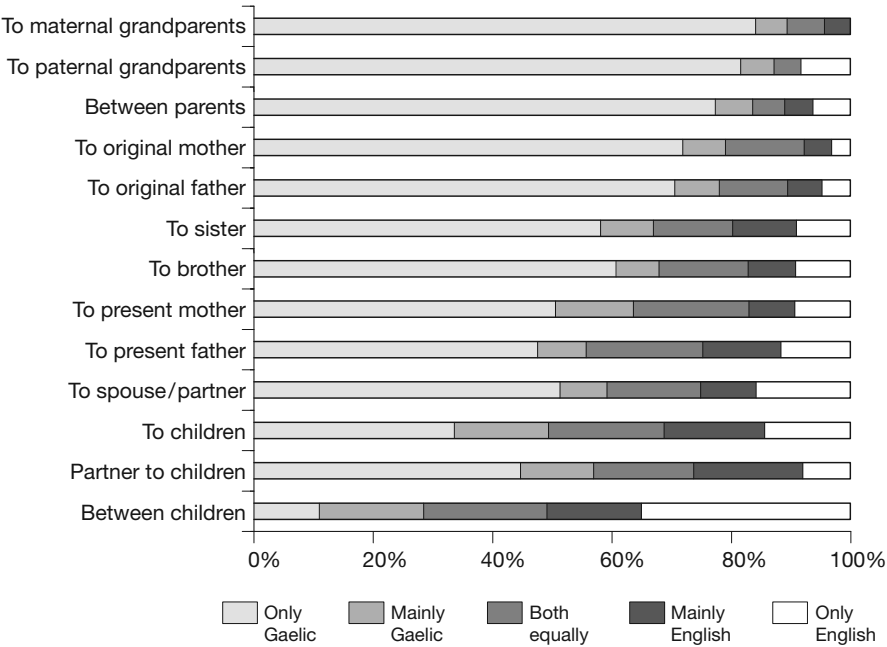


Figure 13.20a Western Isles: language use in family, 1994–5 (Euromosaic Survey N = 130) – numerical

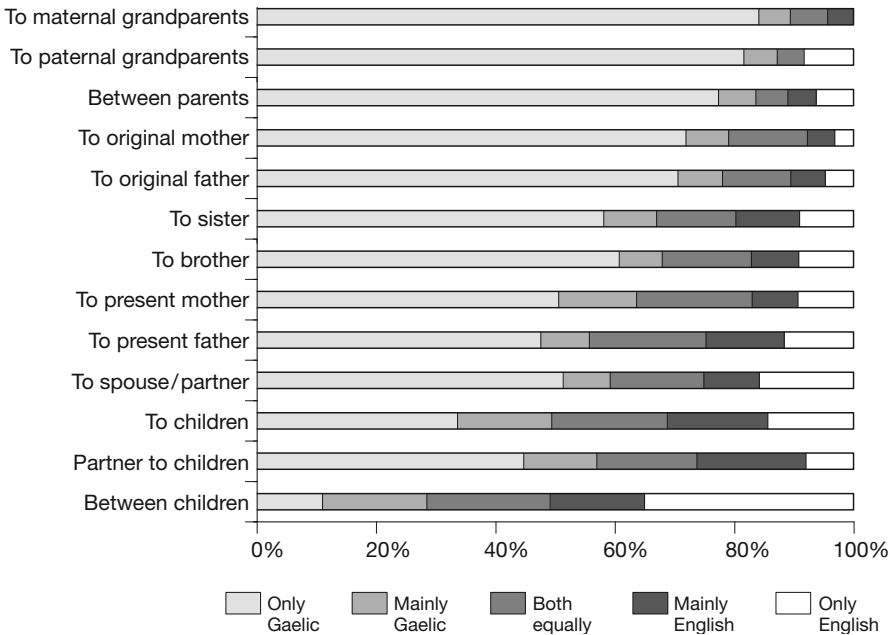


Figure 13.20b Western Isles: language use in family, 1994-5 (Euromosaic Survey N = 130) – percentages

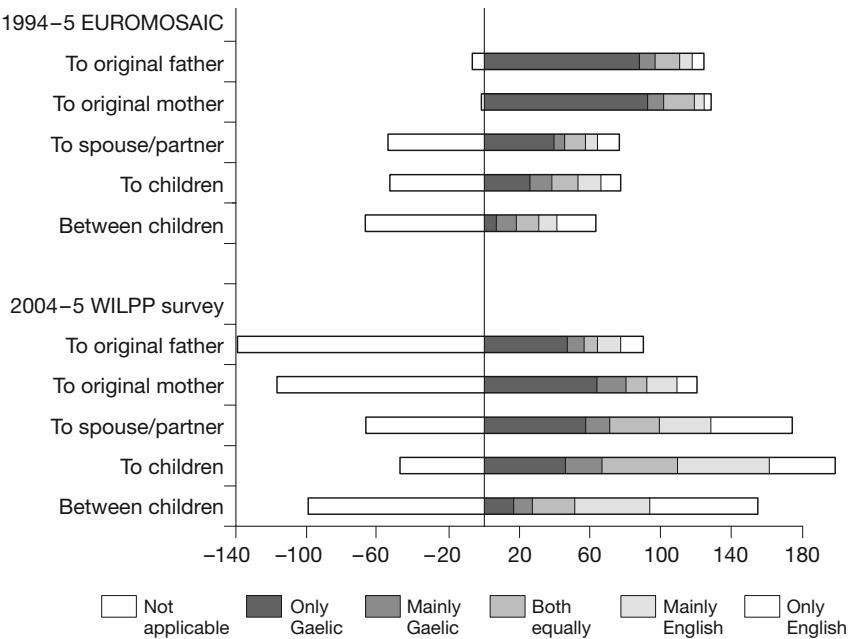
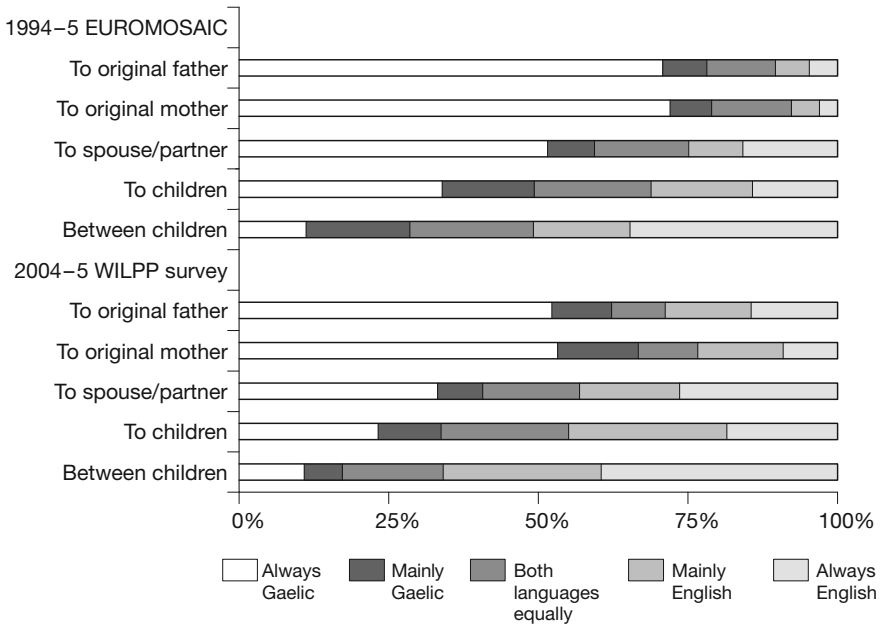


Figure 13.21a Western Isles: language use in family – Gaelic speakers, 1994-5 and 2004-5 – numerical



*Figure 13.21b* Western Isles: language use in family – Gaelic speakers, 1994–5 and 2004–5 – percentages

Both surveys explored use of Gaelic in a range of community speech situations. The Euromosaic survey examined language use in 30 speech situations in 1994–5. Figure 13.22a illustrates nine situations which were strongly Gaelic: retail activities, clergy, buying a newspaper, asking the time, buying petrol, councillor, teacher, car repair and pub. Figure 13.22b illustrates ten situations which were moderately strong for Gaelic: hairdresser, restaurant meal, machine repair, bank, social worker, library, solicitor, sports activities, doctor and paying the water bill. Figure 13.22c illustrates eleven situations in which use of Gaelic was minimal: police, buying CD, tax and DSS offices, theatre, reporting gas leak or power cut, dentist, phone operator, eye test and booking a holiday.

The WILPP survey ten years later in 2004–5 examined 16 of these situations. It was decided not to bother with the weakest situations in 1994–5. Figure 13.23a illustrates the eight situations with the higher use of Gaelic: clergy, councillor, retail activities, buying a newspaper, car repair, buying petrol, teacher and hairdresser. Figure 13.23b illustrates the eight situations with lower use of Gaelic: drinking in pub, machine repair, library, sports activities, asking the time, meal in restaurant, bank manager and doctor.

The rapid weakening of Gaelic speakers' use of their language over this ten-year period is very obvious. Recent initiatives to extend the range and use of Gaelic within the Western Isles communities clearly imply a priority to encourage Gaelic speakers to use their language to the extent they were doing so ten years previously. It also means that the circumstances would need to be created in which this was possible, and that encouragement and support would need to be effectively forthcoming for these uses to be enhanced in the present-day community.

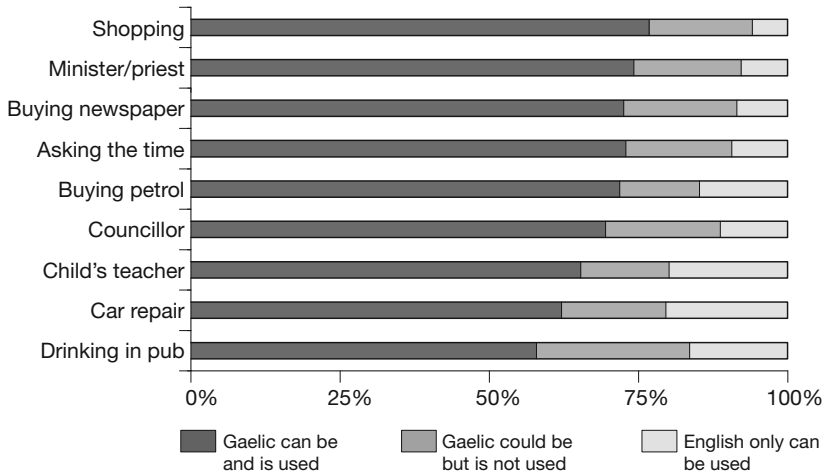


Figure 13.22a Western Isles: language use in community, 1994–5 (Euromosaic Survey N = 130) – higher Gaelic use levels

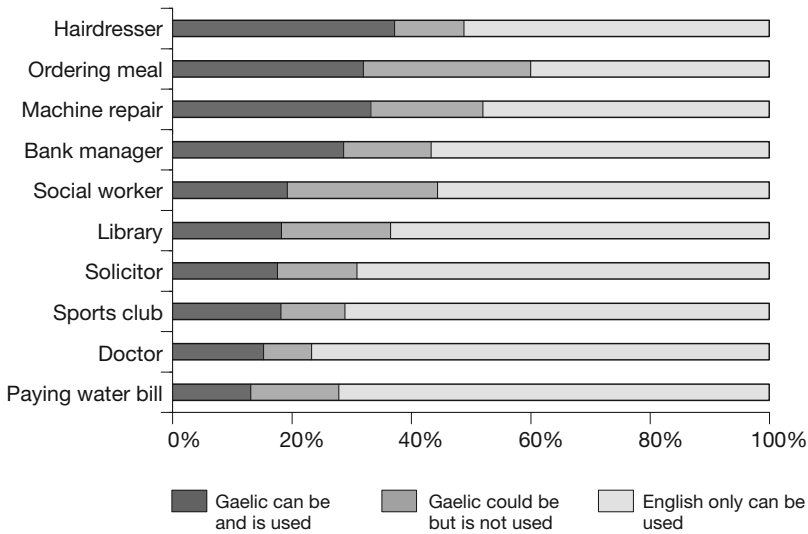


Figure 13.22b Western Isles: language use in community, 1994–5 (Euromosaic Survey N = 130) – moderate Gaelic use levels

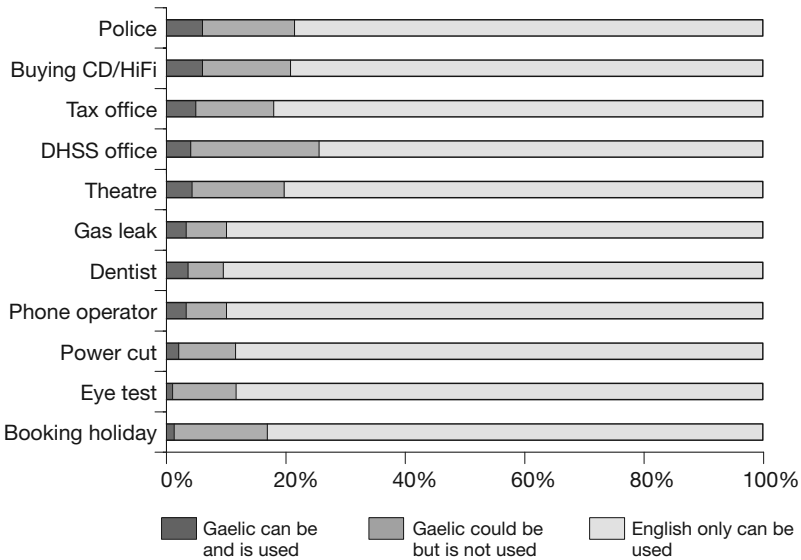


Figure 13.22c Western Isles: language use in community, 1994–5 (Euromosaic Survey N = 130) – minimal Gaelic use levels

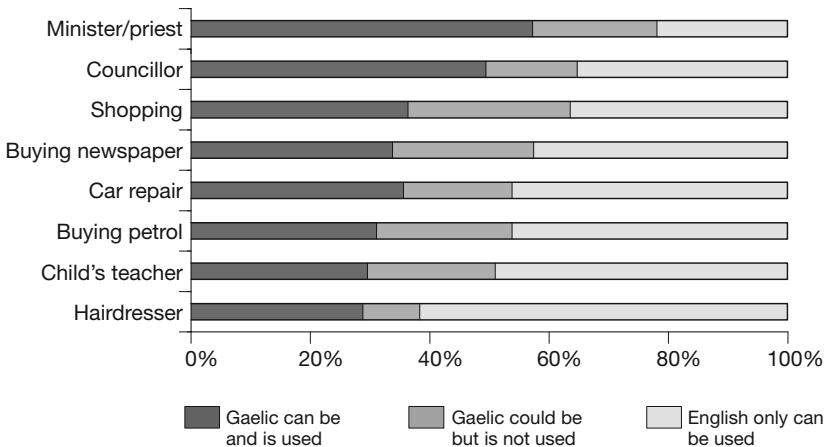


Figure 13.23a Western Isles: language use in community, 2004–5 (WILPP survey N = 254) – higher Gaelic use levels



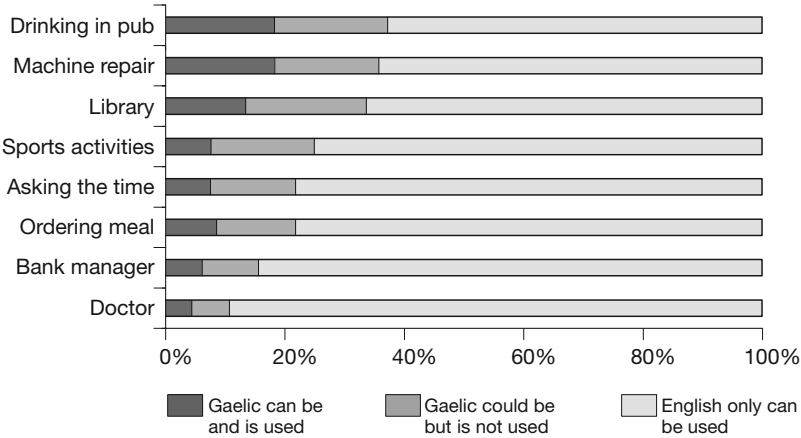


Figure 13.23b Western Isles: language use in community, 2004–5 (WILPP survey N = 254) – lower Gaelic use levels

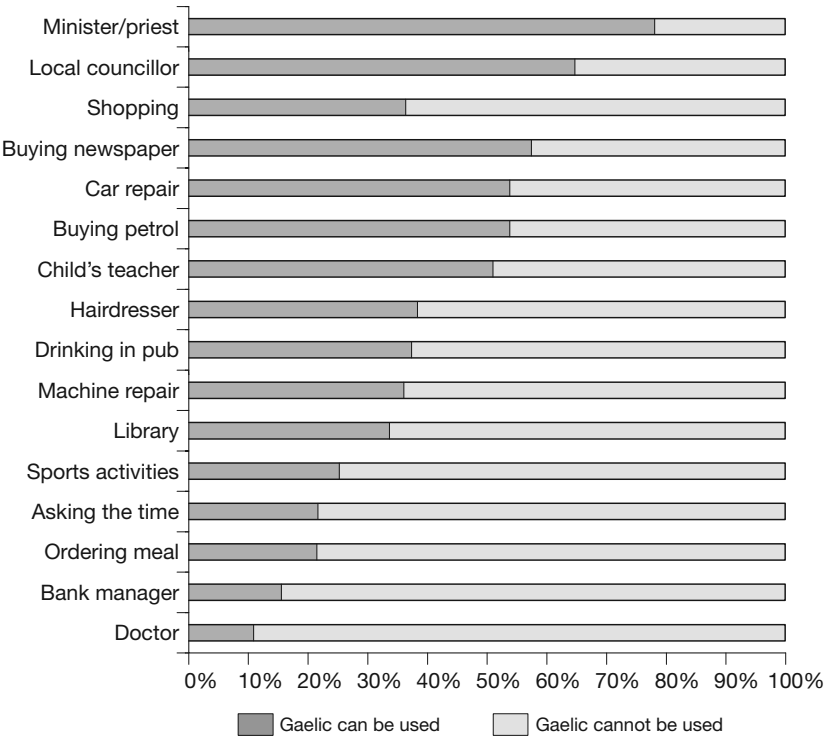
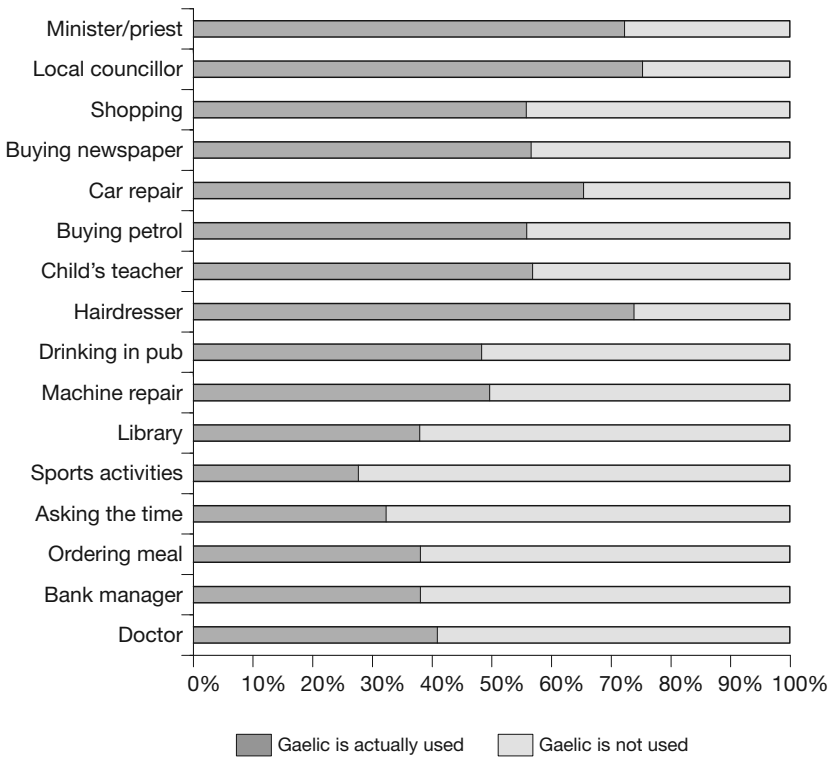


Figure 13.24a Western Isles: Gaelic speakers in community, 2004–5 (WILPP survey N = 254) – possible Gaelic language use in community situations



*Figure 13.24b* Western Isles: Gaelic speakers in community, 2004–5 (WILPP survey N = 254) – actual Gaelic language use in community situations

Figure 13.24 (a and b) indicates the difference between possible and actual Gaelic language use in these sixteen speech situations. There is a tendency for the situations where Gaelic is the more possible to be stronger in actual use. But the only situations in which use of Gaelic was reported as being used by more than 40 per cent of the respondents were with a hairdresser, a local councillor, or with clergy. On this measure personal grooming has overtaken the Church (– but very marginally: do not read too much into it). Another touchstone of changing times was in asking a stranger the time. In 1994–5 this was the fourth strongest situation for use of Gaelic. Ten years later it had become the fourth weakest.

In many of these speech situations Gaelic cannot now be used because the significant person addressed cannot speak Gaelic. Often this is because key positions are not held by a Gaelic speaker. As Gaelic fails to be used in the community, this is not only because a non-Gaelic-speaking incomer holds a position in local professional and commercial life, but because such positions are coming to be held by younger and non-Gaelic-speaking locals. If shops and post-offices are local focal points where people can speak the community language, this changes as soon as a non-Gaelic speaker takes them over. If these key facilities for the language are to remain places where Gaelic can be and is used, then there must be some means whereby these businesses can be acquired by Gaelic speakers from the community.

## LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE: INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Provisions for Gaelic in education and public life have improved considerably since work was done for the first edition of this book to 1993. As was then noted, Gaelic provision in education in the late nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries was tokenistic at best. By the late twentieth century there were bilingual administrative and educational policies in the Western Isles, and some place for Gaelic in administration and schooling in the then Argyll and Bute District and the Highland, Tayside and Strathclyde Regions. Some significant developments in Gaelic education have occurred since 1975, such as bilingual education in the Western Isles and Skye. A national attitude survey on Gaelic commissioned by An Comunn Gaidhealach in 1981 (MacKinnon 1981) paved the way for important advances for Gaelic in the 1980s in public life and education. Building on the introduction of Gaelic as a second language at primary level, Gaelic-medium primary units were introduced from 1985 and Gaelic nursery schools in 1988. By the late twentieth century there were bilingual administrative and educational policies in place in the Western Isles, with Gaelic-medium schooling making headway in Argyll and Bute, Highland, Strathclyde and Tayside Regions, and the successor local authorities have continued these policies.

At this period, Gaelic had entered the school system in three distinct ways. In the Western Isles and Skye (and in some measure, Tiree) primary education had become bilingual. Since 1958 Inverness-shire and Ross-shire had developed the use of Gaelic as an initial teaching medium in the early primary stage in the Gaelic areas. From 1975 the new Western Isles authority developed a pilot bilingual teaching project in thirty-four of its then fifty-nine primary schools, which after 1981 was extended to almost every school as its general policy. A similar scheme has been adopted by Highland Region, first for northern Skye and in the mid-80s for the whole island, covering all twenty primary schools.

Gaelic was by 1987 also taught as a second language in seventy primary schools elsewhere in Highland Region, thirty in Argyll under Strathclyde Region, and eighteen in Highland Perthshire under Tayside. In all these cases, primary Gaelic teaching schemes, whether bilingual or second-language, can be shown to have some stabilizing effect upon the speech community and to enhance the local profile of the language (see Figures 13.11–13.16 above; and MacKinnon 1984a, 1986). Gaelic was also taught as a second language in about 40 secondary schools in these areas, and three others in Central, Grampian and Lothian Regions (1987 figures).

The third type of schooling is Gaelic-medium education. This was first introduced after parental pressure in Glasgow and Inverness: both essentially urban centres out-with the Gaidhealtachd. Gaelic-medium units were established in two schools in 1985 (MacIllechiar, in Hulbert 1985: 28–33). Subsequently, similar units were established in six further schools in the Western Isles and Skye. In all, thirty-seven Gaelic-medium units had been established by 1992. The impetus for such schools came from a very successful Gaelic playgroups movement, getting under way from about 1982, and in the following five years establishing a national organization. A total of 100 playgroups and parent-and-toddler groups in both Gaelic-area and urban locations had been established by 1992, with more currently projected (Scammell, in Hulbert 1985: 21–7).

By the turn of the century, demands for all-Gaelic, Gaelic-medium schools were following upon increasing demand for Gaelic-medium education. This has resulted in a fourth model for Gaelic schooling. In 2006 an all-through Gaelic-medium school was initiated in Glasgow, followed in 2007 by another in Inverness. Calls for similar provision in the Western Isles have not to date (2009) proved successful, although there is now further discussion of three other such schools in the Highland council area.

The peculiarity of Gaelic education has been that it has developed vigorously at the primary and pre-primary stages, but been particularly poorly developed except as a second language at the secondary stage. There were pilot schemes in the Western Isles, and a bilingual secondary education unit opened in Glasgow in 1988. There might have been a bilingual secondary project in the Western Isles leading on directly from bilingual primary schooling, but the council's nerve failed in 1979, and the scheme was remitted. When the council resolved to continue, the government had changed and the Scottish Education Department insisted on the delaying tactic of an independent evaluation of the primary scheme. This eventually reported (Mitchell et al. 1987), but no corresponding secondary bilingual project has followed. Meanwhile the Western Isles has internally funded a more limited project at Lionel in Lewis, and in 1988 the six-year Lionacleit secondary opened, serving the Uists, in which Gaelic was promised a high profile. In 1985 the government initiated a specific grant fund for Gaelic education – initially of £250,000 – and by 1991–2 this had grown to over £2.2 million which greatly assisted such projects. By 2007–8 the fund stood at £5.46m.

There are yet further anomalies in Gaelic education. Although pupils can proceed through Gaelic-medium primary education, most cannot yet undertake the secondary stage through the medium of Gaelic. However, since 1983 they could receive a tertiary education through the language, at Sabhal Mór Ostaig Gaelic College in Skye, which was recognized by the Scottish Education Department and validated by the Scottish Vocational Education Council, initially to undertake full-time HND courses through the medium of Gaelic in Business, Computing and Gàidhealtachd Studies. The Gaelic College has proceeded to develop Gaelic-medium degrees which can now be taken also at other constituent colleges of the University of the Highlands and Islands Millennium Institute. Since the 1880s there have been university Celtic degree courses taught through English – at Edinburgh, Glasgow and at Aberdeen which also offers a single honours MA in Gaelic Studies with modern emphasis.

Also in 1987, a database project was established at Sabhal Mór Ostaig, the Gaelic college in Skye. Such a development was long overdue as academic departments of Celtic had tended to concentrate on historical rather than contemporary lexicography. The Gaelic Department of the BBC has always played an important role in this respect – and many Gaelic neologisms in common use today were introduced in broadcasting.

In 1987, Aberdeen and Dundee Colleges of Education merged as Northern College, and Gaelic teacher training was to alternate in successive years with Jordhill at Glasgow. This would have drastically affected the future supply of registered teachers of Gaelic – and of other subjects through Gaelic. There have, however, been improvements in the provision of teacher training for Gaelic and Gaelic-medium teachers, and from 2006 there have been distance-learning schemes which have eased but not yet entirely met the shortage of specialist teachers of Gaelic and Gaelic-medium.

Since 1891 the principal Gaelic promotional organization was for many years An Comunn Gaidhealach ('The Highland Association'), and since 1892 it has been responsible for organizing the annual Gaelic cultural festival, the National Mòd. It has been active in educational, publishing and cultural fields. With the appointment of a professional director in 1966, it involved itself in socio-economic issues and in much more active political pressure on both central and local government. In the mid-1980s these roles in public life and education, together with youth work and the media, were taken up by a new organization, CNAG (Comunn na Gàidhlig, 'The Gaelic Association') funded by the then Highlands and Islands Development Board, a governmental development agency. This has left An Comunn Gaidhealach with a purely cultural remit. A Gaelic Arts Officer,

funded by the Scottish Arts Council, was appointed in 1987 to run the National Gaelic Arts Project, *Proiseact nan Ealan*. Concurrently, the Board both assisted the newly established Gaelic playgroups organization, *Comhairle nan Sgoiltean Àraich*, and helped to establish a Gaelic learners' organization, *Comunn Luchd-Ionnsachaidh*.

Since the 1980s the political parties have given increasing attention to Gaelic, with the Scottish Labour Party and the Scottish National Party coming out with what are arguably the most articulate policy statements. Official statements of government policy on the language were made by the Secretary of State in 1985 (at a CNAG conference at *Sabhal Mór Ostaig*) and by a Scottish Office spokesman in 1987 (at the Celtic Film Festival in Inverness). The statement went little beyond unspecific general support. There were then almost no examples of central governmental official usage of Gaelic. After some direct action campaigning the government has acceded to bilingual road-signs in Skye – and Gaelic-only signs in the Western Isles. In the 2000s these have been extended to main roads on the Highland mainland.

Since 1963 a government-assisted Gaelic Books Council has considerably stimulated Gaelic publishing. The first all-Gaelic magazine, *Gairm*, has appeared regularly since 1952 and developed a publishing business. After 200 issues it was succeeded by *Gath* in 2003. Other ventures in Gaelic publishing have included a bilingual fortnightly paper in the late 1960s; a book club in the early 1970s (both now defunct); and, most recently, the *Acair* publishing house at Stornoway formed by a consortium chiefly for educational material, and chiefly in Gaelic. There are Gaelic features in local newspapers such as the *Oban Times*, *West Highland Free Press*, *Inverness Courier*, and *Stornoway Gazette*, and the weekend supplement of *The Scotsman*. In recent years a monthly all-Gaelic newspaper supplement *An Gàidheal Ùr*, has been published in the *West Highland Free Press*.

Until it became an early victim of local government and Arts Council economies, a Gaelic theatre company, *Fir Chlis* ('The Northern Lights') based in the Western Isles toured annually between 1978 and 1982. The 7.84 Company has subsequently toured with bilingual productions – but its grant was axed by the Scottish Arts Council in 1988, and its chief executive/playwright resigned. Amateur Gaelic drama has become a vigorous and popular scene over the past decade, and a new Gaelic theatre company, *Ordag is Sgealbag* ('Thumb and Forefinger'), was formed in 1990, and subsequently, *Tosg* ('Emissar'), and *Meanbh-chuileag* ('Midge'). A Gaelic community film unit *Sùil* ('Eye') in the 1970s developed into the Celtic Film Festival with headquarters in Inverness. In 1987 a professional Gaelic film and video unit, *Fradharc Ùr* ('New Vision') was established in Lewis and was training young Gaels in film and video production. The announcement early in 1990 of a £9.5 million annual fund for a Gaelic Television service on ITV greatly stimulated the formation of further independent production companies. This initiative was overseen and funded by the Gaelic Television Committee, and following influential media reports this developed into the Gaelic Broadcasting Committee (1996), and then into Gaelic Media Services (2003) and MG Alba (2008). In 2008 a dedicated digital television channel, BBC Alba, commenced broadcasting.

Gaelic is very differently associated with the various Highland churches. Catholicism and Episcopalianism were successively the original religions of the Gaelic people around and after the time of the Scottish Reformation. These persuasions survive in quite well-defined areas: Catholicism in South Uist and Barra in the outer islands, in Moidart and Morar on the western mainland, and in the central Great Glen and Strathglass in Easter Ross (these latter much reduced by the Clearances); and Episcopalianism in Lochaber and Glencoe (where regular Gaelic services survived into the mid-twentieth century). The

spread of Presbyterianism as the established Church of Scotland throughout the Highlands has been well charted by Withers (1984, 1988) and Durkacz (1983). Initially its efforts were associated with bringing English-language education to the Gaelic community, the suppression of Jacobitism and acceptance of economic improvements (Campbell 1950, Durkacz 1983).

In the mid-nineteenth century the legitimization of the Highland Clearances by the Established Church was undoubtedly a major factor in the Disruption of 1843 when the Free Church seceded and became the major popular church in the Highlands and Islands (Hunter 1974). In 1893, a further secession from the Free Church resulted in the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church, which is more fundamentalistically Calvinist, and still well represented in the more remote and strongly Gaelic communities, as in Lewis and Harris. Further splits occurred in both churches in the late twentieth century.

The Protestant churches, notably the Church of Scotland, have designated parish charges which are 'Gaelic essential' and 'Gaelic desirable'. These have tended to diminish over the years – and with difficulties of availability of sufficient Gaelic-speaking ministers for effective 'call' by the Gaelic congregations, there have been vacant charges and non-Gaelic speakers filling 'Gaelic desirable' pulpits. Gaelic is now very weak in Highland Episcopalianism but a revised Gaelic mass was authorized in 1974, and occasional Gaelic services have been held. The Roman Catholic authorities seem to have the most effective policy for directing Gaelic-speaking priests to Gaelic-speaking charges in the diocese of Argyll and the Isles. A revised Gaelic liturgy was available in 1963, and there has subsequently been the universal introduction of the vernacular mass, and the adoption of Gaelic as the language of worship for Gaelic congregations. In recent years the Free Presbyterians have reported acute difficulty in attracting Gaelic speakers into the ministry, and have interpreted this in connection with the doctrine of predestination as God's indication of the extinction of the Gaelic language. Nevertheless their island congregations are probably the most strongly and ethnically Gaelic of all the local churches (MacKinnon 1994: 124; 2000b: 616–17). The religious culture of all the Presbyterian churches emphasizes the reading of scripture, home worship, and in their services the singing of the Gaelic metrical psalms. Traditional Gaelic literacy has thus been high among all adherents. As church-going has been near universal in the most strongly Gaelic communities, there has been a reinforcement of religion, with Gaelic literacy and language in the most strongly Gaelic communities of northern Skye, Lewis, Harris and North Uist.

## **GAELIC LANGUAGE-GROUP VIABILITY IN CENSUS PERSPECTIVE: 1961–2001**

The Gaelic speech community is on the whole an ageing sector of the population – although there have been some small increases in Gaelic-speaking abilities e.g. between 1961 and 1971 with a 10 per cent increase in the census figures – a feature of Lowland Scotland exclusively. However, from 1971 to 1981 for the first time there were proportional and numerical increases of Gaelic speakers in the Western Isles and parts of Skye (together with some other areas attracting oil-related industry, and suburban fringes of the larger cities). The declining numbers of Gaelic speakers over a century of census results have been presented in Figures 13.1 and 13.2, above. It will be seen that the overall decline has continued through the 1991 and 2001 censuses. The upturn of younger Gaelic speakers in 1981 associated with primary Gaelic teaching schemes was not continued in the 1991 census, but some subsequent small increases among young people can

be demonstrated, as a result of the development of Gaelic-medium education (see Figures 13.11 – 13.16, above).

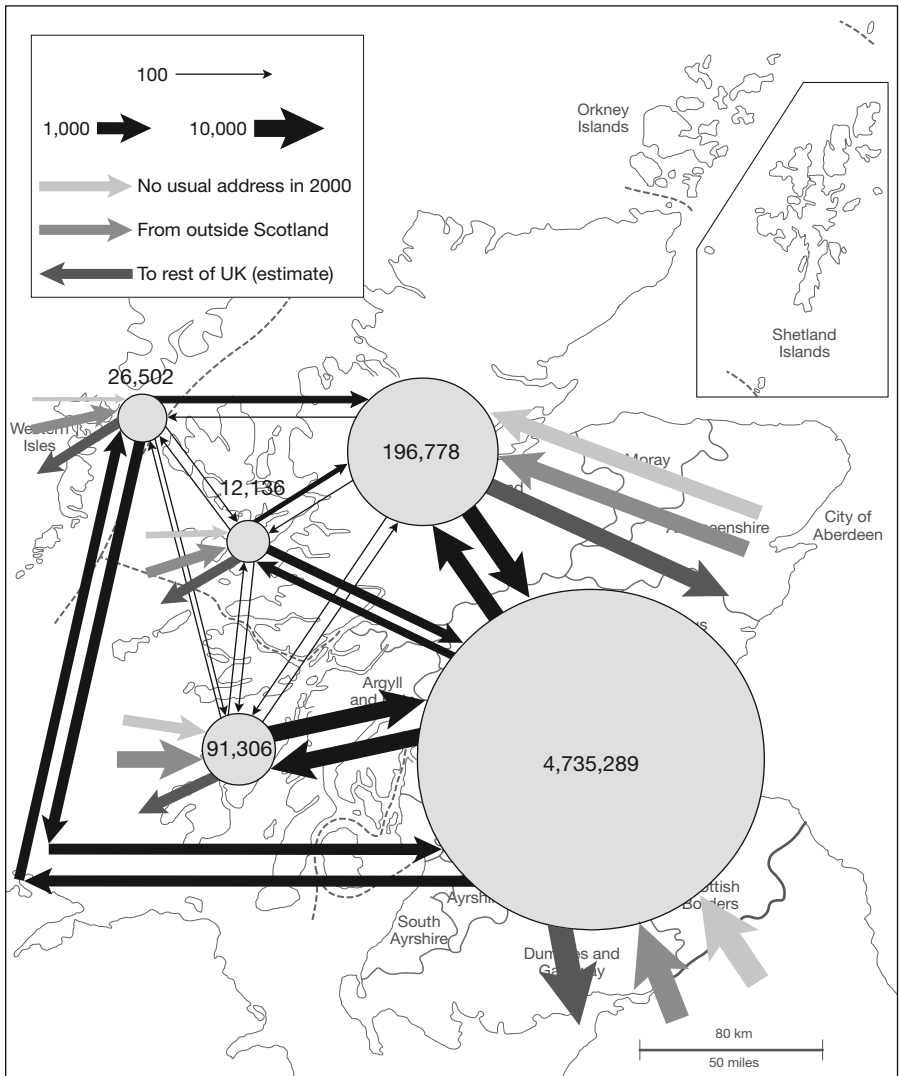
There were in 1981, within the contemporary *Gaidhealtachd*, a number of areas in which the proportion of young people (aged 5–24) speaking Gaelic matched or exceeded the proportion in the older age ranges. These areas may be said to demonstrate some viability in their maintenance of the language. At the 1981 census, they comprised some 30 of the 140 enumeration districts of the Western Isles, chiefly in western Lewis, southern Harris, the Uists and Barra, and some 9 of the 50 enumeration districts in Skye, chiefly in its northern and southern extremities. In some other areas Gaelic maintenance in the 5–24 age range was within 1–2 percentage points of the older generations, as in the Western Isles communities of Barra and Vatersay, or within 3–4 points, as in the remainder of Harris, Scalpay and remoter parts of Lewis (MacKinnon 1987a). In the Isle Oronsay postcode sector of Skye, the incidence of Gaelic was stronger in the 3–24 age range than among the older population – the likely result of the policies of the local estate, Fearann Eilean Iarmain, in using Gaelic as its language of management (MacKinnon 1985b). Although these effects were considerably diminished in the 1991 and 2001 censuses, there were still some six out of sixteen census wards in the Western Isles maintaining the language among young people (MacKinnon 2007).

There was some evidence in late twentieth-century surveys and censuses that in the most strongly Gaelic communities, supportive attitudes and usage of the language were less well represented among the younger women, as compared with other age and gender groups. There was also a definite differential migration of younger women as compared with younger men from the most strongly Gaelic areas (MacKinnon 1977, 1984a, 1985a, 1986). Other research suggests that within the occupational continuum of Gaelic communities, Gaelic was best conserved within the semi-skilled agricultural group, which comprised the crofting ‘core’ of these communities. Young Gaelic-speaking adults may well seek Gaelic-speaking partners with supportive attitudes, but often a local Gaelic-speaking man will bring home a non-Gaelic-speaking bride. As the young women remaining within the community tend to be marginally less supportive of Gaelic, the prospects for intergenerational transmission of Gaelic are similarly diminished.

The social distribution of Gaelic-speaking abilities also seems to be patterned by migration. The prospects for employment in professional, managerial, skilled non-manual and skilled manual occupations are limited within the Gaelic-speaking areas. Community leadership roles, which tend socially to be associated with these occupational categories, are in a sense exported to urban Lowland Scotland and elsewhere, and thus tend to diminish in the Gaelic home areas. The skilled occupational categories – especially the non-manual group – tend to be less supportive of Gaelic in usage and loyalty terms (MacKinnon 1985a, 1988a, b), but where new industry has attracted young, skilled and semi-skilled Gaelic speakers back to the home areas to work, this has increased both the incidence of Gaelic (MacKinnon 1987a, b) and its profile in the community (Prattis 1980).

Analysis of census data in terms of migration and Gaelic in households became possible with the 1991 and 2001 censuses. This is illustrated in Figures 13.24 (pp. 630–1) and 13.25 (pp. 637–8) regarding migration patterns of the general and Gaelic populations in 2000–1; and Figures 13.26 (p. 639) and 13.27 (p. 640) regarding the situation of Gaelic and intergenerational transmission within families of different types. These data strongly suggest that the principal causes of language shift are to be found in the increasing numbers of Gaelic speakers migrating outwith the main Gaelic areas, and a reverse flow of non-Gaelic speakers permanently settling within them.

From the 1991 census it has also been possible to analyse intergenerational transmission



*Figure 13.25a* 2001 census: major areas for Gaelic – all migrants. Source: base map supplied by General Register Office (Scotland), data from 2001 census plotted by K. MacKinnon 2008

of Gaelic in the family, and this is illustrated in Figures 13.26 (p. 639) and 13.27 (p. 640) for families of different types. An increasing number of marriages and households are established across the two languages with the result that children of Gaelic-speaking parents are less likely to be brought up speaking the language. This ties in with the importance of institutions outwith the home for reproducing language in the upcoming generation, such as Gaelic-medium education, the Gaelic media and cultural infrastructure.



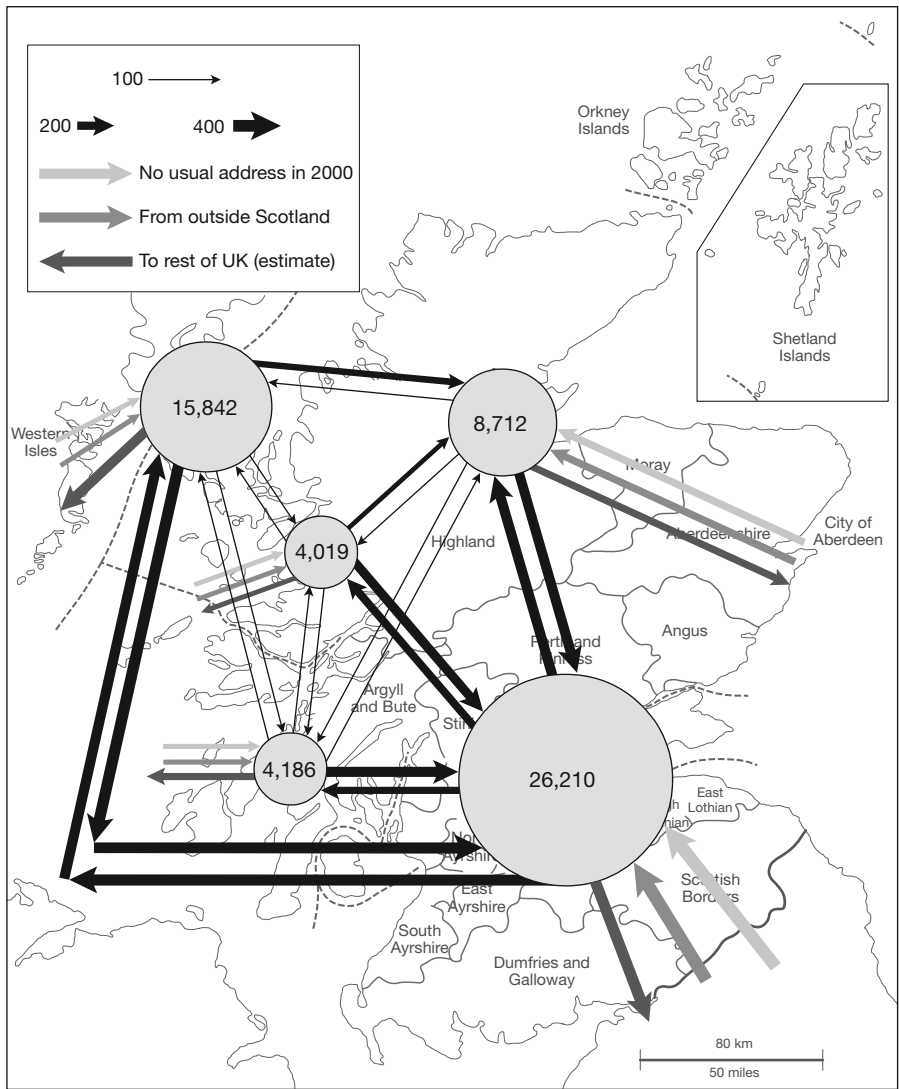
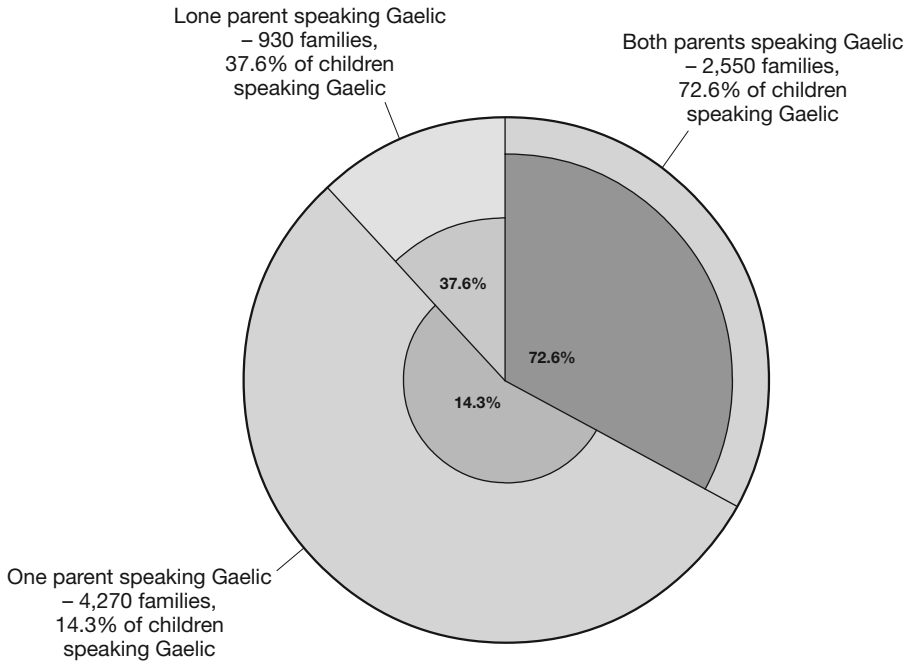


Figure 13.25b 2001 census: Gaelic migrants. Source: base map supplied by General Register Office (Scotland), data from 2001 census plotted by K. MacKinnon 2008

Virtually all Gaelic speakers today are functionally bilingual. Gaelic monolingualism is restricted to a handful of the most socially isolated elderly and to pre-school infants. Thus code-switching and calqueing are common – and sometimes even deliberately engaged in for effect (MacAulay 1982). One of the chief areas of influence of English upon Gaelic is in the introduction of new technology, and the taking over of English terms into Gaelic.

**Scotland: 7,750 families with  
Gaelic-speaking parents**



*Figure 13.26* Families with Gaelic parents and children aged 3–15 years, Scotland.

Source: 1991 census Scotland, *Gaelic Monitor*, Table 3

Mainland dialects today are moribund, and eastern dialects extinct. The Lewis dialect has the largest number of speakers. It has a somewhat ‘singsong’ character often and easily parodied by speakers of other dialects (MacAulay 1979; Gleasure 1983). Gaelic speakers often state that they resent dialects other than their own, especially in broadcasting. Paradoxically, survey informants frequently claim that ‘the proper Gaelic’ is not spoken in their home area. Such reactions result from lack of exposure to alternative speech varieties and perhaps to some image of ‘pulpit Gaelic’ or newsreaders’ Gaelic as in some way providing a standard variety. Both reactions probably result from deficiencies of the education system in insufficiently developing people’s linguistic repertoire and awareness in Gaelic as compared with English. A recent study investigates register in Western Isles’ Gaelic (Lamb 2008). It has demonstrated a lively and varied range of registers among ordinary Gaelic speakers despite universal bilingualism and contact with English.

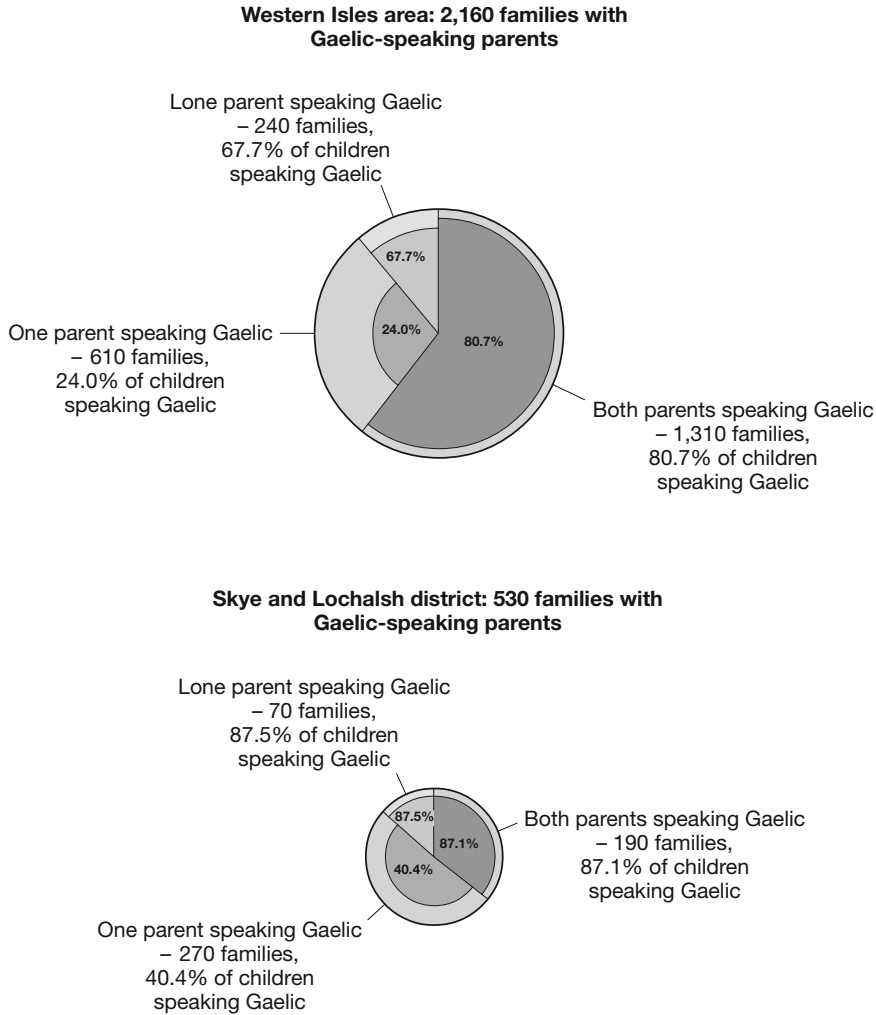


Figure 13.27 Families with Gaelic parents and children aged 3–15 years, Western Isles area and Skye and Lochalsh district. Source: 1991 census Scotland, *Gaelic Monitor*, Table 3

## GAELIC LANGUAGE-LOYALTY, ATTITUDES AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS IN SURVEY PERSPECTIVE: 1972-4, 1976-8, 1986-8, 1994-5, 2004-5

The present author has investigated attitudes towards Gaelic in a series of surveys already noted in Harris, Barra and Skye (MacKinnon 1977, 1985a, 1988a, b, MacKinnon and MacDonald 1980). In these studies Likert-scale language-loyalty indexes have been analysed in comparison with standard social-identity factors. One common and consistent association throughout these studies has been the relative weakness in supportive attitudes towards Gaelic on the part of younger women remaining in these communities. This feature was paralleled by weaknesses in Gaelic usage levels and language abilities (MacKinnon 1977: 160; 1985a: 74).

In these earlier studies, higher Gaelic language loyalties within these most strongly Gaelic local communities also significantly associated with skilled, semi-skilled andcrofting occupational identities, as compared with those of both higher and lower prestige (MacKinnon 1985a: 79). In terms of education levels, loyalties were higher among the non-selective and higher-education groups, compared with those proceeding only as far as selective and further-education establishments (MacKinnon 1985a: 77). In terms of political and religious identities, higher Gaelic loyalties associated with allegiance to the more 'ethnic' Free Presbyterian and Roman Catholic churches, but were closely followed by Free Churchers – and loyalties were lowest among the established church followers. Highest Gaelic language loyalties were shown among Labour and Nationalist voters (the predominant groups in the Western Isles), and lowest among non-voters and Liberal supporters. However, in a national public-opinion survey undertaken in 1981, in Skye the predominating Liberals were the highest in Gaelic loyalties, and nationally, support for the Gaelic language tended to polarize on a Nationalist–Alliance–Labour–Non-voting–Conservative continuum (MacKinnon 1981: 30, 46–50).

These results have been largely confirmed in later and more extensive studies in Skye and the Western Isles as a whole (MacKinnon 1988a, b) and are summarized below.

In the 1986–8 survey in Skye and the Western Isles, two types of approach were used to analyse attitudes and loyalties towards Gaelic: a 'Gaelic Policies Support Score' based upon ten questions relating to Gaelic in public life, the media and education, and a Likert-type 'Gaelic Language-Loyalty Index' based upon eleven attitudinal questions (derived from a pilot study of twenty-seven questions). The latter measure was by definition and construction the more discriminating and bi-modal in character. Analysis by social identity was undertaken both for Gaelic speakers and for non-Gaelic speakers in the sample.

There were a number of social attributes which could be shown to associate with higher levels of support for Gaelic policies and Gaelic language loyalty, both among Gaelic speakers and in the sample as a whole. These are listed in Tables 13.7 and 13.8.

In the 1986–8 Western Isles survey, analysis of variance within the Gaelic population as a whole similarly indicated that of all the age- and sex-groupings, younger women had the lowest of all mean Gaelic-speaking ability levels ( $F = 3.19$ , sig. 0.0085), mean family Gaelic-usage levels (present:  $F = 5.16$ , sig. 0.00014, and original:  $F = 4.18$ , sig. 0.0013), and mean Gaelic language-loyalty scores ( $F = 4.33$ , sig. 0.00098).

*Table 13.7* Social factors associating with higher levels of Gaelic language policy-support and language-loyalty (Isle of Skye 1986–8)

- 
- Residence in the more remote northern and western areas;
  - the attempt at some time to learn the language;
  - origination in another and more strongly Gaelic area;
  - male gender as opposed to female gender;
  - fatherhood as contrasted with – especially middle-aged – motherhood;
  - education proceeding only to the elementary or junior secondary levels among the older respondents, and higher education more generally;
  - semi-skilled and crofting occupational roles;
  - static or downward occupational mobility among the Gaelic speakers;
  - more radical (Nationalist and Labour) political support;
  - allegiance to the Free Church.
- 

*Table 13.8* Social factors significantly associating with lower Gaelic policy-support and language-loyalty (Isle of Skye 1986–8)

- 
- Lack of Gaelic-speaking ability;
  - origin in a non-Gaelic-speaking area;
  - female as opposed to male gender;
  - motherhood – especially middle-aged – as contrasted with fatherhood;
  - senior secondary, comprehensive or technical college education;
  - skilled non-manual occupations in the case of policy support, and professional/managerial and housewife-only occupations in the case of language loyalty;
  - for policy support, non-involvement in crofting among Gaelic speakers;
  - upward occupational mobility among Gaelic speakers;
  - Alliance political allegiance among the Gaelic speakers;
  - and in the sample as a whole Alliance voting and political non-involvement;
  - allegiance to non-Presbyterian churches.
- 

For the prospects of Gaelic language maintenance in the remaining strongly Gaelic areas the results of this survey thus strongly confirm one of the more important findings of previous surveys in Harris and Barra in the 1970s (MacKinnon 1977; MacKinnon and MacDonald 1980). Of all age and sex groups the younger women remaining in these communities are the least supportive regarding Gaelic-speaking ability, family usage and language loyalty. These are, of course, mean results and there is, therefore, much individual variation. The results for these Gaelic communities are not representative of the Gaelic-speaking language group as a whole – the majority of whose members today usually reside outwith the residual strongly Gaelic-speaking areas, and among whom younger Gaelic-speaking women may well be among the most supportive of their language.

In view of the higher mean score levels of the language-loyalty index and policy-support score in the Western Isles compared with Skye, there was not, on the whole, a great deal of significant variation of mean loyalty and support levels for Gaelic among Gaelic speakers in terms of most main social factors. The few attributes significantly associating with mean Gaelic Policies Support Scores and Language-Loyalty Index Scores are already listed in Tables 13.7, and 13.8, above.

Further analysis of these survey results tended to confirm patterns of intergenerational transmission, usage patterns and attitudes towards language in line with previous findings. However, the greater homogeneity of the results for Gaelic speakers in the Western Isles compared with the Isle of Skye indicated more general support and loyalty towards Gaelic across the social spectrum. The overall means on these two measures were higher among Gaelic speakers in the Western Isles than in Skye: for Policy Support 68.3 compared with 60.9, and for Language Loyalty 30.0 compared with 23.9.

What can be said, in conclusion, of the sociology of contemporary Gaelic–English language contact in the *fìor-Ghaidhealtachd* ('the truly Gaelic area') of Skye and the Western Isles? Gaelic language maintenance can be seen simplistically as a case of cultural lag: the language hangs on in stable and undisturbed remote areas, and among the crofting community and traditional lifestyles. The analysis of census and survey data, however, reveals that the situation is more complex than this. There are regenerative as well as attritional processes at work. Education is important for regeneration in at least two respects. The strengthening of Gaelic within the school curriculum has had specific census effects (which can, of course, be argued as to the extent to which children continue using their Gaelic after school). Higher education, leading to professional occupational roles, has enabled local Gaelic speakers to return to work in Gaelic communities, and respondents in these occupations tend to be among the most supportive of Gaelic in both usage and attitudinal terms. The respondents who have been educated only to SCE O-, Standard-, and H-grades and lower technical or vocational qualifications, and who have been upwardly mobile into skilled manual or non-manual occupations are the least supportive of Gaelic. This pattern has also been noted in Wales (Harrison et al. 1981: 32–8, 40, 52). Economic developments linked to the return of locals to work in these areas have also had a strengthening effect for Gaelic (Prattis 1980: 211–31).

The other major factor of social identity bearing upon Gaelic language maintenance which this survey has confirmed has been the weakness of support for Gaelic among the young women remaining in these communities, and in particular the young mothers. This has important implications for the transmission of Gaelic to later generations. The fact that today many young mothers are keen for their children to acquire Gaelic – and will now even campaign for Gaelic-medium playgroups, nursery schools and primary units – does not outweigh the fact that one-quarter of Gaelic-speaking parents in the survey reported that their eldest child did not speak Gaelic.

More recent studies have illustrated the decline of Gaelic within the remaining Gaelic-majority areas both in terms of incidence of the language within the community and age-spectrum, and in the rapid decline of Gaelic in everyday use in the community. In 1994–5 the only national study to date of Gaelic speakers throughout Scotland was undertaken under the aegis of the EU Euromosaic Project (see MacKinnon 2001, 2003, 2006). Although this was a small-scale quota-sampled survey, there was a sufficient subset of Western Isles respondents ( $N = 130$ ) to make comparison with earlier studies, and with an initiative undertaken ten years later in 2004–5: the Western Isles Language Plan Project (see MacKinnon 2007, and again Figures 13.20–13.23, above).

These studies have illustrated the rapidity of decline of Gaelic in various ways. In family usage there have been sharp falls in intergenerational transmission and usage from grandparents, through parents and partners, to children and among children themselves (see again Figures 13.10, 13.20 and 13.21, above). This decline has been paralleled by decline in usage within the community (see again Figures 13.19, 13.22, and 13.23, above). This has been particularly rapid in the Western Isles between the surveys undertaken in 1994–5 and 2004–5. These developments all prompt the question whether or not

a viable Gaelic-speaking local community can for very much longer continue to exist in its traditional homeland. And indeed, whether without it, any viable form of Gaelic social structure is a possibility.

These studies, and the analysis of census data on Gaelic speakers, migration and household structures (MacKinnon 2005, 2006), have pointed to a model whereby an increasingly mobile population, in which Gaelic speakers have now become virtually as mobile as anyone else, removes Gaelic speakers from their home areas, and dilutes these areas with non-Gaelic-speaking incomers from elsewhere. Marriage and family formation are thus increasingly undertaken between Gaelic- and non-Gaelic-speaking partners, and as a consequence Gaelic ceases to be transmitted in the family. The situation has now become acute in the Western Isles, as the last remaining Gaelic majority area. By the time of the 2001 census the generation of parenthood had reproduced themselves with Gaelic-speaking children in only six of the area's sixteen census wards: Uig/Carloway, Coll/Gress, Harris West/East, Lochmaddy/Paible, Daliburgh/Eriskay, and Barra/Vatersay (GROS census 2001 Scotland Table S143). In the Western Isles as a whole only 1,437 households out of 4,835 (29.7 per cent) were couple families with two Gaelic-speaking parents. Even so, only 976 of their 1,276 children aged 3–15 years (76.5 per cent) were Gaelic-speaking. Of the children of the 307 Gaelic-speaking lone parents, only 138 of 272 (50.7 per cent) were Gaelic-speaking (see again Figure 13.27, p. 640). These considerations raise concern with Gaelic in the family as a crucial issue for the future of the Western Isles as a Gaelic-speaking community. Support policies for Gaelic within the family are needed urgently if the language is to be effectively maintained.

## **GAELIC SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AT THE START OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

In order essentially to address these problems, local initiatives in the Western Isles led to the establishment of the Western Isles Language Plan Project in 2003 under the Western Isles Language and Culture Forum. It undertook a research survey whose initial findings were published in late 2005 (WILPP 2005). Upon this research base it has proceeded to undertake various local initiatives in support of the language in family and community. At this time various other moves were afoot to enhance the status of Gaelic both nationally and locally.

In 2000 as one of the early initiatives of the devolved government in Scotland, the Macpherson Task Force on Gaelic (1999–2000) reported and advised on measures for more effective institutional support of the language. The Ministerial Advisory Group on Gaelic (MAGOG) was then set up to advise on practicalities, and recommended official status and recognition by a language act, the establishment of a language development board, and improvements in Gaelic education. These were accepted by the then Scottish Executive and a language authority, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, was constituted in 2003. In 2005 the Holyrood Parliament unanimously passed the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act, which gave legal status to the language on the basis of equal respect with English. This considerably strengthened the recognition of Gaelic under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which the UK government had signed two years earlier. In 2006 Bòrd na Gàidhlig became a statutory authority empowered by the Act to require Scottish public authorities to formulate Gaelic language plans, and to disburse grant moneys in support of Gaelic, administer the Gaelic special grants scheme in education, which by 2008–9) was then running at £5.466 million annually, and advise what had by then become the Scottish Government, on Gaelic matters.

Also in 2000 the Milne Task Force on Gaelic Broadcasting (1997–2000) reported that the language had become affected by ‘an unprecedented state of technological change’. It recommended that the then Gaelic Television Committee should be upgraded to an overall broadcasting authority for the whole range of media (radio and internet as well as television, potentially accessible world-wide), with services to be delivered terrestrially until digital came on-stream under a Gaelic Broadcasting authority (subsequently *Seirbheis nam Meadhanan Gàidhlig*/Gaelic Media Service and, from 2008, *MG Alba*). An annual funding budget of £44 million was recommended to deliver three hours of new television daily, eighteen hours of radio, and new electronic technology via the internet. At the time of writing (2009) many of its recommendations have been achieved, including an all-Gaelic TV channel.

With the advances in Gaelic education noted above, the early twenty-first century seems to have witnessed most of the goals which were striven for throughout the twentieth. Yet, ironically, this is taking place at a time when the prospects for the continuation of Gaelic as a community language face a crisis. Neither the securing of official status nor the implementation of public authority language plans will, of themselves, secure the future of the language. The initial priorities of *Bòrd na Gàidhlig* have been chiefly directed towards the approval and implementation of public authority language plans: six per year. The first six comprised the Western Isles, Highland, and Argyll and Bute councils, the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Government, and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. These, of course, include authorities responsible for national and local services, including education, and enterprise. However important, these alone will not secure the language in everyday life unless they are backed up by initiatives at family and community level.

With the present shaky prospects of Gaelic in community life, it would be important to secure all-through Gaelic schooling in its heartlands areas, whereby families with Gaelic speakers can have support from outwith the family to buttress their own initiatives and objectives within the home. In 2001 only about one in five of all Gaelic speakers lived in an all-Gaelic household, under one-third (28.2 per cent) in a local area where Gaelic speakers formed a majority, and just over one-third (35.9 per cent) in the remaining ‘heartland’ areas of the Outer and Inner Hebrides. Almost half (46.9 per cent) in fact lived in urban, Lowland Scotland. Gaelic speakers in the ‘heartlands’ no longer have the demographic ‘mass’ or language-reproductive replacement rates effectively to maintain the language. Planning authorities need to realize this because the provisions they make will work only if institutions outwith the home play their part too. So far the Western Isles authority has been slow to develop Gaelic-medium education much beyond about a quarter of its primary school roll. It has been reluctant to introduce all-through all-Gaelic schooling, or policies to develop both the language and language arts children bring with them to school, together with the other language and language arts which are present in their community. This happens in Wales. It is not yet fully understood in Scotland. Without ‘joined-up’ policies, planning will be ineffective.

The importance of education in any language-planning strategy has been recognized by *Bòrd na Gàidhlig* in its National Plan, published in 2007. The development of Gaelic and Gaelic-medium education since 1985 has been supported by research initiatives in which the Scottish Centre for Language Teaching and Research at Stirling University (SCILT) and the *Lèirsinn* Research Centre for Gaelic Affairs at *Sabhal Mòr Ostaig* have both played an important part (Johnstone 1994; MacNeil 1994; Stradling and MacNeil 1996, 2000; Johnstone et al. 2000). These and other studies have drawn attention to levels of demand, shortfalls in supply of trained teachers and high levels of attainment. Similar



to Welsh experience, the Gaelic-medium experience has been shown to be highly successful in terms of educational attainment levels, including both spoken and written English at levels comparable to or better than English-medium educational levels in Scotland.

The media and the Gaelic arts likewise have crucial roles to play in language maintenance and regeneration, and they have been well supported by appropriate research initiatives which demonstrate their importance (Sproull and Ashcroft 1993; Sproull and Chalmers 1998; Chalmers and Danson 2004). From a local fèis or arts festival in Barra, twenty-five years ago, a national cultural and educational movement, Fèisean nan Gàidheal, has developed. So have local Gaelic arts clubs, such as Ceòl is Craic in Glasgow. These are important moves in developing a Gaelic cultural infrastructure nationally. The future of a Gaelic-speaking community lies very much in creating new forms of network and structure based around community social centres, Gaelic schools, and new forms of communication media, the Gaelic arts, and new electronic technology. These are likely to be a feature of the Gaelic environment for the majority of Gaelic speakers outwith the 'heartlands', and they will be just as appropriate and necessary within them. Local initiatives in such urban centres as Inverness, Glasgow and Edinburgh have begun to undertake research on the social and cultural needs of local Gaelic speakers, and have based local language planning upon it. In Edinburgh, for example, local survey research among Gaelic speakers undertaken by Wilson McLeod (2005) has drawn attention to the possibilities offered by new forms of urban Gaelic networks and communities, as has a similar study in Inverness (Pedersen Consulting/Hecla Consulting 2004). A recent study on Gaelic learners (MacCaluim 2007) has emphasized their importance nationally for reversing language shift. There is at last an official infrastructure which needs to stay abreast of all this, and to lead it effectively, in order to enable the new Gaelic networks of the future to develop. The language and its speakers today face the challenge of whether the remaining strongholds can for much longer continue as traditional everyday Gaelic speech communities. If not, the new Gaelic statutory and cultural infrastructure might need urgently to prioritize a new Gaelic community based upon today's social realities and developing technology.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC CONTEXT OF WELSH

*Robert Owen Jones and Colin H. Williams*

It is a minor miracle that Welsh has survived to this day. The 2001 census figure records that 20.8 per cent of the population can speak Welsh, giving a total of 582,000 self-reported speakers. Many thousands more can understand Welsh. Beyond Wales, especially within the rest of the UK there are a large number of Welsh speakers who, despite their current residence, contribute to the vitality of Welsh in so many ways. Undergirding these speakers, far more formal attention, resources, investment and government backing is being expended on promoting and spreading the language than ever before. The Wales Assembly Government policy is to create a bilingual society and to secure a flourishing future for the use of Welsh in as many spheres of social and public life as is possible. The challenge is great and there are limited grounds for hope that current efforts to revitalize Welsh will yet succeed.

However, throughout fifteen centuries of its existence the Welsh language has been under siege and for most of the period whenever bilingual and linguistically-mixed communities have come into being, linguistic erosion has occurred with a resultant rejection of Welsh as the primary language.<sup>1</sup> In the sixth century Welsh was spoken, not only in the area currently known as Wales, but also in the West Midlands of England, and through present-day Lancashire and Yorkshire into the lowlands of Scotland. Indeed the earliest Welsh poetry originated in southern Scotland and is ascribed to poets living in that area (the Old North) in the sixth century. When the Anglo-Saxons gained a victory at the battle of Chester in 615 they effectively drove a wedge between the Welsh speakers of Wales and their compatriots in the north. The loss of political independence accompanied by a lower social and economic status ultimately resulted in an erosion of Welsh outside the borders of Wales. Enforced bilingualism for utilitarian reasons and the absence of an institutional framework to bolster the language eventually resulted in a language shift. The Welsh language became confined largely within the borders of Wales.

For the first millennium of its history Welsh in Wales was not only safe but flourishing. It was the natural linguistic medium of all sections of society – peasants, farmers, land-owners, craftsmen, clergy, lawyers, administrators and the gentry. Furthermore a distinct cultural and literary tradition developed which was initially supported by the princes and later on by the gentry. The poet and storyteller (*cyfarwydd*; pl. *cyfarwyddiaid*) were professionals and their training was both thorough and arduous.<sup>2</sup> Welsh was both the medium of everyday speech for discussing the weather, farming, hunting or interpersonal relationships, and also a medium that had developed appropriate registers for all aspects of life: high status situations as well as lowly, less formal, situations. Welsh became an effective literary language and the poets developed distinctive but complicated metrics which later

evolved into strict metre poetry. The poets were language specialists and this in turn gave the language prestige and helped develop a fairly uniform literary variety which gave rise to a standard spoken literary variety since initially this was an oral/aural culture rather than a written culture.

The medieval Welsh tales illustrate the mastery and professionalism of the storytellers.<sup>3</sup> They had to have at their disposal a stock of adjectives, synonyms and phrases so that they could interpret and recount the story effectively. They also had to be aware of the linguistic competence of their audience. This in turn had the effect of promoting a public register in Welsh which was accepted and understood throughout the country.

Welsh was also the language of administration and of the legal profession. In Saunders Lewis's opinion, 'The Welsh laws represent one of the high points of European civilization during the Middle Ages' (1932: 32). Lloyd and Owen (1986: xix) state that the Welsh laws, like the mythological tales and the poetry, were composed in Welsh and therefore the language had developed the vocabulary and terminology to deal with complicated legal minutiae. The language of Hywel's Laws is clear, detailed and totally unambiguous. It is somewhat surprising, however, that a legal code ever developed in Welsh, especially as early as the tenth century. That alone is evidence of the socio-political strength and linguistic adequacies of the language at the beginning of the Middle Welsh period. Across Europe local vernaculars had not achieved such a status. Latin remained supreme in the legal domain and other associated domains. Yet in Wales the vernacular had sufficient status and dynamic application to compete with and supersede Latin in the legal domain. The same is partly true in the religious register because during the Middle Welsh period a substantial body of religious material appeared in Welsh, such as parts of scripture and Welsh translations of the lives of saints (see T. Jones 1940; Roberts 1961). Latin, however, remained the official language of the religious register, yet all works which were deemed important were translated into Welsh, which demonstrates that the sociological conditions at the time promoted an expansion in the use of Welsh. Latin, the *lingua franca* of the ecclesiastical and academic world in Europe, did not have a higher or more prestigious status than the vernacular in Wales. Dating from the same period there are manuscripts showing that Welsh could be used for such highly technical domains as medical surgery, herbal medicine and personal hygiene (Diverres 1913). There were, in Wales during the Middle Ages, professional doctors who had received the kind of training in orthodox practical medicine that was available in some of the great medical centres of Europe such as Bologna and Salerno (Lloyd and Owen 1986: xxiv). These men practised their craft and preserved knowledge of it in writing in the vernacular Welsh. The language had professional status and had been adopted in the very domains where Latin had traditionally dominated.

One can truly call the Middle Welsh period the 'Golden Age': not only was excellent literature produced, but the domains of the language were considerably extended in spite of the fact that Wales lost its political independence in 1282 as a result of the Edwardian conquest. English colonial control transformed the formal, political and legal status of the country, but it did not change drastically the social order and the resultant stability helped to sustain and promote the language in spite of the fact that it lacked political status. Welsh-medium culture was entrenched in the very fabric of the social order. The aristocracy looked upon it as their privilege and duty to support the bards and the *cyfarwyddiaid* and some went as far as to establish their own libraries of poetry, stories, traditions and historical documents. The gentry were men of learning and although in time they had considerable contact with Norman French, with other Europeans and of course with the English, that did not erode their pride in their own ancestry, pedigree and indeed identity.

The gentry remained supportive of and loyal to their roots, their culture and their own language. They were the social elite, but also the leaders, and their adherence to the language made it possible for it to expand its spheres of application and realize its full potential socially and linguistically. The language had a full complement of registers at this time. A person could discuss all topics through the medium of Welsh. The language was robust in both the spoken and the written modes. All relationships from the very personal to the most formal and official could be expressed in it. In general for the first nine centuries or so of its existence, the Welsh language survived and flourished and was successfully adapted to new social situations as they arose. The next six centuries have seen periods of recession in terms of functional use and numbers of speakers, yet there have also been significant periods of revitalization, as is currently being experienced.

In 1891 Professor John Morris-Jones of the University College of North Wales wrote about the Welsh language:

More people today speak it than ever in its history, it is more widely read in proportion to its speakers than possibly any other language. One quarterly and one bimonthly magazine are published in it, some fifteen monthlies as well as eighteen or twenty weekly newspapers. It has at last been given recognition by the British Government. Acts of Parliament and other parliamentary papers are translated into it. The government pays for teaching it as a special subject in primary schools. A century ago it was prophesied that it would be extinct within a hundred years. No one today would dare utter a similar prophecy.

(Morris-Jones 1891: 49)

John Morris-Jones was sincere in his sentiments, and yet over a century later, many of those who are concerned with, and have a concern for the Welsh language, are still haunted by similar pessimistic prophecies.

Within four years of Morris-Jones's optimistic statement, Southall's (1895) report on the official census survey reported that only 54 per cent of the population of Wales spoke Welsh, as opposed to 71 per cent as estimated by Ravenstein (1879) for the early 1870s. During the twentieth century the percentage of Welsh speakers fell to 20.8 per cent in 1971, to 19 per cent in 1981 and to 18.7 per cent in 1991. This apparently inexorable decline measured a definite language shift from Welsh to English. It would be futile, however, to try to understand recent trends and developments without viewing them within a historical perspective. J. E. Southall made a salient point vis-à-vis the socio-historical context of synchronic tendencies:

From 1871 to 1891 colloquial Welsh has remained nearly stationary. The reason for this is that the Tudor Legislation and Hanoverian politics set currents into existence which harassed the language, but which were not strong enough to prevent its benefiting by the increase of population and the popular education of the meeting houses. All the while however the nineteenth century was sharpening its knives and gradually gathering strength to dispute further advances.

(Southall 1895: 35)

The Acts of Union of England and Wales in 1536 and 1542 are frequently cited as the first decisive milestones in the erosion of the Welsh language. This incorporation certainly was important and its effects far-reaching, but it would be fairer to say that it accelerated rather than initiated the encroachment of English on domains which had traditionally been

Welsh medium. Professor Glanmor Williams (1988) argues that the Welsh language had been in competition with Latin, French and English long before this date; that upper-class Welshmen had started turning to English, and some were opting to send their children to be educated in England at centres such as Oxford, Cambridge and the Inns of Court.

Many of them had become 'Saeson' in public language before 1536; it had been the price of advancement before and after the Acts of Union (G. Williams 1988: 49). The Acts of Union merely formalized certain forces that had been quietly at work for some years, and the immediate results were not as dramatic as was commonly believed. But they were the first official pronouncements to regard the Welsh language as being inferior to English.

Also be it enacted by the authority aforesaid that all justices, Commissioners, sheriffs, coroners, escheators, stewards and their Lieutenants, and all other officers and ministers of the law, shall proclaim and keep the sessions, courts . . . in the English tongue, and all oaths of officers, juries and inquests and all other affidavits . . . to be given and done in the English tongue; and also that from henceforth no person or persons that use the Welsh speech or language shall have or enjoy any manner of office or fees within this realm of England, Wales or other the King's Dominion upon pain of forfeiting the same offices or fees, unless he or they use and exercise the English speech or language.

(W. Rees 1937: 95–6)

The psychological effects of such a pronouncement had far-reaching repercussions. The Welsh were granted equality with the English under the law, and new socio-economic opportunities were open to them, but it meant accepting the supremacy of the English language and ascribing to Welsh a low socio-economic status. In all political, administrative, legal and public circles, English was the only language allowed. Welsh certainly had registers appropriate to such situations but they could no longer be used. This was not forced bilingualism for the mass of the population, but rather a statute that had direct and adverse effect upon that section of society which had previously produced the administrators, the legal advisors, the educators and indeed the societal leaders. The very section of society that had upheld Welsh literacy and culture now became intent upon making its young men literate in English. Anhysbys [Anonymous] (1585: 53) comments: 'the gentry and others neglect and treat the Welsh language with contempt; most of the gentry can't read or write in Welsh, a fact which should shame them. This causes the English to believe and indeed to pronounce that the language is ugly, weak, lifeless and worthless.' They were sent to England to be educated and very often returned as strangers to the roots that had nurtured them. The gentry was gradually anglicized, which meant that social differences in Wales then became closely correlated with linguistic differences. The Welsh cultural framework that had been the mainstay of the language collapsed. Public-status domains which had been Welsh medium were therefore weakened and eroded. For the educated, all status registers were in English, and Welsh became largely associated with low status situations such as hearth and home, farming or addressing tenants and illiterate persons. Since education was English medium, literacy became associated with the English language. Gradually the registers of the Welsh language were being eroded and replaced by registers in an increasingly hegemonic language. For the first time in its history the Welsh language was deteriorating, and its potential register spectrum was shrinking. As early as 1547 William Salesbury warned that such tendencies could have catastrophic results unless stemmed: 'And take this as



a warning from me. If you do not save, build and perfect your language within the time span of the present generation, it will be too late. And if a language does not have learning, knowledge and wisdom in it, it is like the screeching of birds and the roar of animals and beasts.<sup>4</sup>

Within twenty-five years of the introduction of the Acts of Union, Gwilym Hiraethog in an introduction to his collection of proverbs records this sad state of affairs:

O God how unkind and so unnatural are so many Welshmen, particularly those who go outside the borders of their natural land of birth and their country . . . And all those who stay for a while away from home come to hate and to forget the language of their land of birth and their own mother tongue. One notices this when they speak Welsh clumsily in a corrupt accent and so indistinctly, although they have not learnt properly any other language, nor can they speak clearly their own native language, but instead use a corrupt, inarticulate pronunciation following a foreign language.

(T. H. Parry-Williams (ed.) 1953: 60)

Gruffydd Robert, living in exile in Milan, made similar comments in 1567 in the introduction to his Grammar 'Dosparth Byrr Ar y Rhan Gyntaf i Ramadeg Cymraeg' (Robert 1567: i):

Seeing myself for some years being regarded as worthless in the land of Wales and with nothing substantial written in me which would add to the knowledge of my dear people: I decided that it would be a good thing for me to travel through the lands of Europe to find out whether anyone of the languages there was in such a contemptuous state as I am and being considered to be useless to those who speak it, which is my lot.

Negative attitudes to Welsh were obviously prevalent. Commercial, educational, professional success and prosperity became equated with the English language. The low status of the Welsh language branded it with the mark of inferiority. This register-conditioned bilingualism was, of course, by definition unstable because of the negative attitudes towards Welsh which eventually resulted in a language shift among the aristocracy. Gruffydd Robert comments (1567: xii):

I wish that I would be as natural a choice to the Welsh gentleman as his mother tongue is to any other man. Sometimes my heart feels pity when I see many who were born and nurtured to speak me but are now unmindful of me, rejecting me and flirting with a foreign language before even knowing her properly. You will find some, as soon as they see the river Severn, or the spires of Shrewsbury and they hear an Englishman once say 'good morrow' they start to forget their Welsh and start pronouncing it with an affected accent; their Welsh becomes anglicised and their English (God knows) is far too Welsh.

The literary tradition had changed radically by the end of the sixteenth century and the most prolific output were songs written to English melodies. In terms of artistry they were inferior material, but they were songs in Welsh which appealed to the grass roots. They were invariably composed in dialect and this undermined the idea of a standard form. Everything about the Welsh language was becoming undignified and it would seem that

the fate of the language was sealed unless a new cultural framework could give it status and social prestige and preserve it as a literary and written medium.

Two movements helped to avert linguistic extinction, namely, the Reformation and the Renaissance. The Reformation had not made great headway in Wales. The mass of the population did not really appreciate its true import, but there were remnants of the old gentry stock who had received a certain amount of traditional Welsh education as well as the new and who were convinced that Reformed theology was the answer to the spiritual needs of the people of Wales. Clerics such as William Salesbury, William Morgan and Richard Davies were adamant that the Gospel should be presented to the people in their own language. It was the distinguished humanist and Christian William Salesbury who pleaded passionately with his fellow-countrymen to secure a Welsh translation of the Bible: 'Unless you wish to be worse than animals . . . insist on getting learning in your language . . . And unless you wish to abandon utterly the faith of Christ . . . insist on getting the Holy Scripture in your language' (Salesbury 1547: II).

Internal pressure and external geo-strategic considerations, namely the fear of Catholic-inspired invasion from Spain and France via Ireland, prompted Parliament in 1563 to order the Welsh bishops to secure Welsh translations of the Bible and of the Book of Common Prayer and to place copies in every parish church by 1 March 1567. The time scale was unrealistic but translations of the Book of Common Prayer and of the New Testament appeared in that year. It was not until 1588 that William Morgan's complete translation of the Bible was published. He drew upon the linguistic usages of the bards of the previous three centuries and therefore his work contained a standardized literary variety of Welsh in terms of vocabulary, idiom and syntax. It proved to be an excellent translation and the revised version, published in 1620, is a literary masterpiece that remained unchanged until the publication of a new translation in 1988. The influence that the Bible has had on the sociolinguistics of Welsh is impossible to measure. Before 1800 about 31 different editions had been printed. Between 1800 and 1900 about 370 different editions were printed (some in the USA). Each edition consisted of several thousand copies.

The main importance and contribution of the Bible to Welsh literature is that it served as a standard variety of the language. In a land that did not possess a university, or any other cultural establishment that could give guidance on linguistic and literary matters, the Bible translation was taken as an example of the standard variety. This then helped avert the situation where one would have a collection of different if not incomprehensible dialects. The linguistic forms of the Bible therefore gained prestige as being 'correct and standard Welsh'. Thomas Parry (1944: 153) notes: 'The Bible appeared at the ideal point in time when it was most needed. It fortunately came while the old dignified standard language was still alive and at a time when there were around several clerics who had mastered it.' In time the Bible became a linguistic measuring stick as well as a source of spiritual guidance. A parallel development was the printing of a large number of books in Welsh, mostly in the field of religion but also encompassing such varied fields as vocabulary, grammar, linguistics, botanical science and archaeology.

Suddenly at this dark hour in the cultural history of our country we see Welsh emerging as a modern literary language with a new confidence, capable of development as a medium of instruction and study in a multitude of directions. This is due to the energies of Biblical evangelism. And we have a cultural framework appearing that was able to undo much of the harm perpetuated by the Act of Union.

(B. Jones 1974: 68)

Welsh was now established as a written medium and the printed word gave it prestige and status in the eyes of its speakers. It is estimated that between 1546 and 1695 a total of 170 books were printed in Welsh. During the next 22 years up to 1718 a total of 126 were published, and during the next 22 years the total increased to 250 books. The nineteenth century saw a proliferation of published material in Welsh, ranging from books to periodicals and weekly newspapers. In 1896 it is estimated that thirty-two periodicals and twenty-five newspapers were published in Welsh. Hughes & Son (Publishers) testified to the Cross Commission 1886–7 that at least £100,000 per annum was spent on Welsh-language publications (see Edwards 1987: 122). All these were aimed at the ordinary reader. Welsh was firmly established as the language of literacy.

Religious zeal and fervour resulted in theological publications in Welsh and with the Methodist revival in the eighteenth century came one of the greatest literacy drives in Europe. Griffith Jones's circulating schools taught many of the Welsh peasantry the rudiments of reading so that they could read the Word of God in their own homes. By 1761, the year of the founder's death, approximately 3,495 schools had been held and 158,000 educated in the skills of reading in Welsh. A letter written by Griffith Jones on 11 October 1739 throws light on the fact that his schools were Welsh medium: 'May we therefore not justly fear when we attempt to abolish a language . . . that we fight against the decrees of heaven and seek to undermine the disposals of divine providence' (quoted in R. T. Jones 1973: 68). In Griffith Jones's eyes, to maintain Welsh-medium schools was to respect God's will – it was a religious obligation! With the spread of the Methodist movement and the numerous religious revivals which characterized Wales in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Christianity became the dominant interest and force in Welsh life. Local social life revolved around the chapel. Between 1800 and 1850 chapels were put up at the rate of one a fortnight. Preaching festivals drew large crowds and theological discussions were not confined to places of worship. All this gave a boost to the language because the religious domain was not only important, affecting all aspects of people's lives, but was also of high status. Religious observances and practices gave the faithful a solid linguistic education by expanding their range of registers. Through preaching, ordinary people became acquainted not only with religious terminology, but with public and formal modes of address. They became acquainted with a spoken literary variety of Welsh. Through the mid-week meetings and Sunday schools they were given an opportunity to communicate orally in a less formal situation while at the same time being educated in the literary written language through the reading and writing activities. Life could be lived fully in Welsh, in spite of the fact that it did not have official recognition and also in spite of the fact that it was an expression of social class.

## GEOLINGUISTICS: THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Geolinguistics is the study of language in spatial context.<sup>5</sup> Thomas Darlington (1894, quoted in Rhys and Jones 1900: 548) was of the opinion that in 1801 approximately 80 per cent of the population of Wales spoke Welsh. The other 20 per cent were restricted mostly to certain towns, and areas such as South Pembroke, Gower and along the border with England. Ernest Georg Ravenstein (1879, quoted in Rhys and Jones 1900: 548–9) estimated that 66.2 per cent of the population of Wales spoke Welsh in the early 1870s. As shown in Figure 14.1 this reveals a slight decline (approximately 14 per cent) over a period of seven decades. J. E. Southall (1895: 24) records 54.5 per cent as being Welsh speaking with 29 per cent being monoglot Welsh speakers according to the census figures

for 1891. The decline during the two decades 1871–91 had been extremely sharp – (17 per cent) almost double the rate for the preceding seventy years. According to the 1901 census figures the Welsh-speaking percentage had dropped further to 49.9 per cent, but as Table 14.1 illustrates, the rate of decline was not uniform throughout Wales.

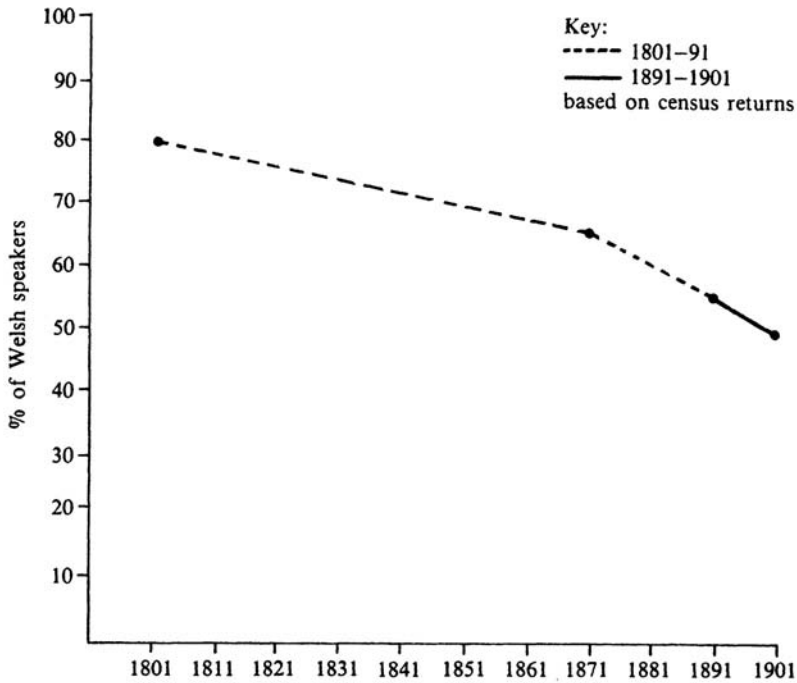


Figure 14.1 The decline of Welsh speakers, 1801–1901. Sources: 1801 – Darlington 1894; 1871 – Ravenstein 1879; 1891 – Southall 1895; 1901–81 census returns

Table 14.1 Percentage of Welsh speakers in the counties of Wales, 1891–1901. Source: based on census data for 1891, 1901

	1891	1901	Increase/decrease
Anglesey	95.5	91.7	–3.8
Cardigan	95.25	93.0	–2.25
Merioneth	94.25	93.7	–0.55
Caernarfon	89.5	89.6	+0.1
Carmarthen	89.5	90.4	+0.9
Flint	68.0	49.1	–18.9
Denbigh	65.5	61.9	–3.6
Montgomery	50.5	47.5	–3.0
Glamorgan	49.5	43.5	–6.0
Brecon	38.0	45.9	+7.9
Pembroke	32.0	34.4	+2.4
Monmouth	15.0	13.0	–2.0
Radnor	6.0	6.2	+0.2

The decline was most apparent in the industrialized areas on the eastern side of the country – Glamorgan and Flint. The intriguing question is why there was such a sudden decline at a time when nation-building processes were gaining ground and national institutions were being established. Thus the National Eisteddfod dates effectively from 1858. Teachers' training colleges were established at Swansea in 1849 and at Bangor in 1853. University College Aberystwyth was established in 1872, University College Cardiff, in 1883 and University College of North Wales also in 1883. The Federal University of Wales came into being in 1893. But the telling, sad observation is that the Welsh language was almost totally ignored in these educational establishments, apart from University College Cardiff where the first Chair of Welsh was established and where teaching was conducted through the medium of Welsh as opposed to the conventional practice of teaching Welsh at university through the medium of English. Welsh disappeared from the curriculum of Y Coleg Normal, Bangor, within five years of its establishment. When University College Aberystwyth opened its doors in 1872, Welsh was not among the subjects offered and that situation remained until 1875 simply because it was not regarded as a priority subject – it was not considered an academic field of study. In fact the founders were openly anti-Welsh. 'The founders had said in a money raising circular that it was the diffusion of English that was needed; Welsh they added could look after itself' (Ellis 1972: 15). Welsh had a low socio-economic status. It was considered an inferior language which could not cope with commercial, economic and academic matters. In the new world of British imperialism, it was a fetter rather than an asset. Bilingualism, and ultimately English monolingualism, should be the goal of all who sought economic advancement. Welsh was restrictive; English opened new doors. This emphasis on the dominance of English in most status situations inevitably gave Welsh a low social-mobility profile and this facilitated language erosion and shift. Gal (1979) cites a similar case in Austria after the First World War. Social identity associated with German became desirable for social mobility with a consequent gradual but definite shift from Hungarian. How people perceive their language is extremely important because very often language status is seen as a manifestation of the social status of its speakers.

According to John Rhys and D. Brynmor Jones (1900: 549), between 1801 and 1891 the total population of Wales trebled. Welsh speakers doubled in number but the increase in monoglot English speakers was sevenfold, mainly because there was a large-scale immigration into the industrial areas of monoglot English speakers from 1860 onwards. The majority were not linguistically assimilated into the Welsh-speaking communities. Bilingual and mixed language areas developed into transitional areas with a consequent language shift. The English monoglots tended not to become bilingual, but bilingualism among speakers of Welsh led to an intergenerational language switch to English in these mixed language areas.<sup>6</sup> E. G. Lewis (1973) argues that industrialization, with its associated migration of workers, was mainly responsible for the sharp decline in the percentage of Welsh speakers during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. A heavy influx of a monoglot English element into Glamorgan changed the demographic patterns of the county and tipped the linguistic balance by making English the majority language.

Before 1850 immigration into the industrial south-east had been from other areas in Wales and so the population would have been almost entirely Welsh speaking. Between 1851 and 1901 the rate of increase in population in Glamorgan was six times the rate in other areas. The population increased by 1,210,000, and approximately half of these were immigrants – the majority coming from rural areas of the west of England. During the period 1871–81, the rate of inflow into Glamorgan was higher than into any other area

in Britain, and of this influx 57 per cent came from England. The result obviously was a mixed language area. The intensity of Welsh speakers within communities was considerably diluted, and this in turn led to language erosion. It is estimated that in 1850 the proportion of Welsh speakers in the most anglicized areas of Glamorgan was 65 per cent, and in the upper peripheries of the valleys it was as high as 98 per cent (E. G. Lewis 1973: 55). By 1891 this proportion had fallen to 49.5 per cent, although five registration districts showed returns in excess of 60 per cent. Immigration had affected the intensity of Welsh speakers within communities and with a higher level of bilingualism among Welsh speakers, everyday life outside the home and chapel became dominated by English. The domains of the language were therefore considerably restricted, which made language shift a normal process and language maintenance a conscious act of defying this trend which characterized the majority.

Industrialization was the prime force with immigration as a contributory factor, but at the root of erosion, facilitating language change, was the low status afforded to Welsh since the middle of the century and the psychological effect which this inferiority syndrome had on Welsh speakers themselves.<sup>7</sup> On 10 March 1846 William Williams, MP for Coventry, asked in the House of Commons for a Royal Commission to examine the state of education in Wales. He argued that the socio-economic unrest of the period, as manifested in the Rebecca Riots and the Chartist movement, arose out of ignorance of the English language. This was a communication problem which could only be solved by the masses learning English rather than by the masters and industrialists learning Welsh!

If the Welsh had the same advantage for education as the Scots they would, instead of appearing as a distinct people, in no respect differ from the English. Would it not then be wisdom and sound policy to send the English schoolmaster amongst them. The people of that country labour under a peculiar difficulty from the existence of an ancient language.

(quoted in Edwards 1987: 124)

The Report of the Royal Commission in 1847 (Part II: 66) was in a similar vein.

The Welsh language is a vast drawback to Wales and a manifold barrier to the moral progress and commercial prosperity of the people. Because of their language the mass of the Welsh people are inferior to the English in every branch of practical knowledge and skill . . . Equally in his new or old home his language keeps him under the hatches being one in which he can neither acquire nor communicate the necessary information. It is the language of old fashioned agriculture, of theology and of simple rustic life, while all the world about him is English . . . He is left to live in an underworld of his own and the march of society goes completely over his head!

It is ironic that protests to the Report referred to as the 'Treachery of the Blue Books' centred on the attack made upon the moral fibre and development of the Welsh.<sup>8</sup> They did not protest vehemently against the degrading and insulting references to their language. It seems that the situation created by the Act of Union, whereby the social role of Welsh had been curtailed and English made the official public language, had left a mark on people's attitudes and perception. 'The Treachery of the Blue Books' went one step further in that it constituted an open attack on the will of the people to support their language. Welsh was

equated with poverty, ignorance and low status. All useful knowledge and social standing could be acquired through the use of English. In 1866 *The Times* stated that 'the Welsh language is the curse of Wales' (quoted in Edwards 1987: 130) and such statements were certain to have a catastrophic effect in the field of education.

When a system of elementary education for the children of Wales was developed the Welsh language was totally ignored. It was taken for granted by the English promoters and by the Welsh people themselves that education through the medium of Welsh would be ineffective and useless. In 1864 J. B. R. Jones stated that Welsh might be of help in the teaching of English, but it could not possibly be a field of study itself: 'to make a child a Welsh scholar, and Welsh scholar only would be simply preposterous at this day'. The Welsh language was an impediment: 'in the way of education which is necessary for the Welsh labourer who aspires to become an employer . . . generally speaking it does not materially aid . . . in filling the empty cupboards and purses, and in satisfying the cravings of the hungry children of even those who cling to its sympathies with such patriotic and romantic ardour' (quoted in Edwards 1987: 140). The Education Act of 1870 reflected this low esteem of Welsh by totally ignoring the language, and the whole purpose of education in Wales was to make monoglot Welsh children bilingual and to promote literacy in English alone. Children were punished at school for speaking Welsh and they were actively encouraged to carry tales to the teacher if one of them spoke Welsh. When a child was caught speaking Welsh he had to wear a cord around his neck with the words 'WELSH NOT'. This was considered the ultimate disgrace. This sign would then be passed on to the next child who was caught breaking the English-only rule. At the end of the school day the child wearing the sign was severely punished.

As a result of the 1889 Education Act, intermediate schools were established in Wales but Welsh as an academic subject in the school curriculum was limited to a small number of schools where it was offered as an optional subject. In traditionally strong Welsh-speaking areas, therefore, English was the normal medium of education, of administration and of pupil-teacher interactions. As noted by Professor Jac L. Williams (1963: 52), 'There was no national language policy and Welsh opinion at all social levels revealed very little enthusiasm for extending the use of the language, beyond the home, the chapel and the eisteddfod.'

During the 1880s there was a slight shift in opinion when the Society for the Utilization of the Welsh Language in Education advocated a greater use of Welsh at elementary level but mainly as a means of teaching English more effectively, a means of achieving a higher level of bilingualism.<sup>9</sup> This certainly was achieved because by the turn of the century 69.8 per cent of all Welsh speakers were bilingual. The proportion of monolingual Welsh speakers fell drastically during the next eight decades. The 1981 census figures reveal that only 4.2 per cent of all Welsh speakers were monolingual and in terms of the whole population of Wales, the monolingual Welsh speakers constituted only 0.8 per cent. In terms of actual numbers the Welsh monoglots had dwindled from the 280,900 of 1901 to a mere 21,283 in 1981 (see Figure 14.2).

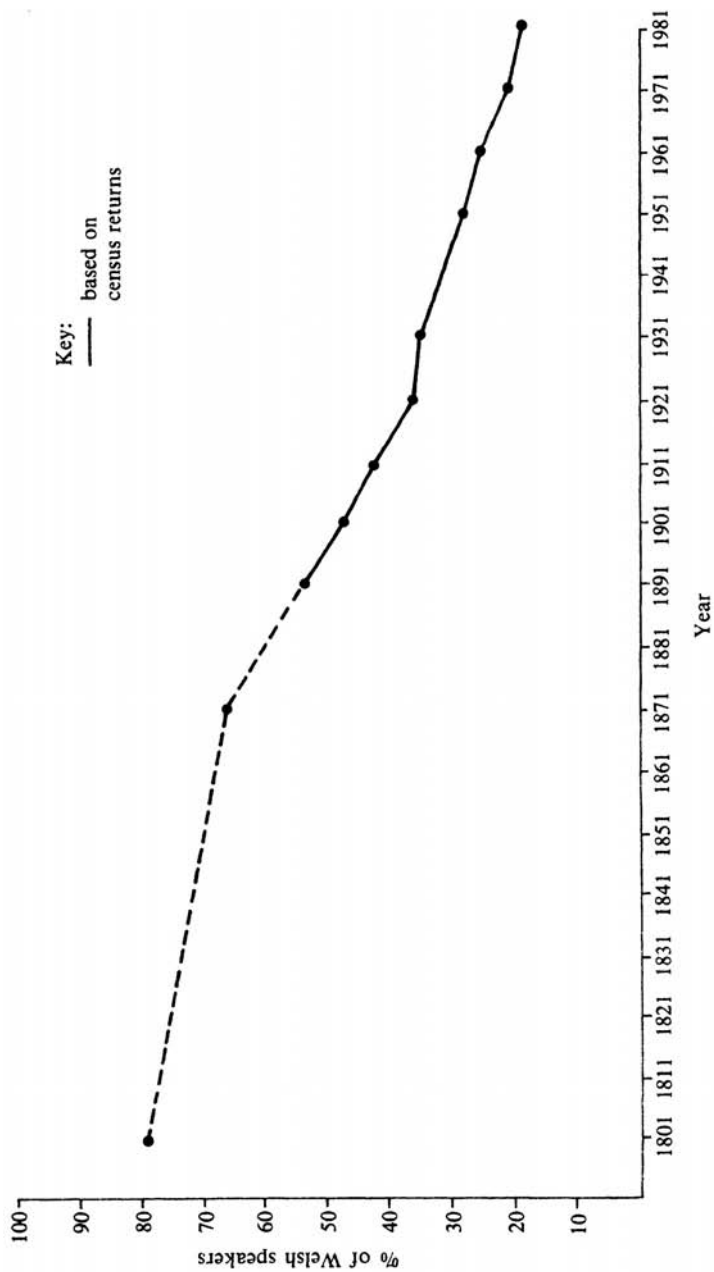


Figure 14.2 The decline of Welsh speakers, 1801–1981. Sources: 1801 – Darlington 1894; 1871 – Ravenstein 1879; 1891 – Southall 1895; 1901–81 census returns



Table 14.2 Percentage of Welsh speakers: monoglots/bilinguals

	1901	1911	1921	1931	1951	1961	1971	1981
Monoglots	30.2	19.47	16.9	10.76	5.76	3.99	6.02	4.2
Bilinguals	69.8	80.53	83.1	89.24	94.24	96.01	93.98	95.9

Table 14.3 Percentage of population speaking Welsh or monoglot English

	1901	1911	1921	1931	1951	1961	1971	1981
Welsh speakers	49.9	43.5	37.1	36.8	28.9	26.0	20.8	18.9
Monoglot English	50.1	56.5	62.9	63.2	71.1	74.0	79.2	81.1

As Table 14.2 illustrates, by 1981 approximately 95.8 per cent of all Welsh speakers were bilinguals. During the same period the total number of Welsh speakers had decreased from 929,800 in 1901 to 503,549 in 1981. Table 14.3 shows the percentage of the population able to speak Welsh in 1901–81.

Figure 14.2 shows that the rate of loss of Welsh was slow during the first seven decades of the nineteenth century. The rate for each of the next two decades was equal to the total for the first period. During the following seven decades the rate of loss slowed down but was over three times the rate for the first period. It is ironic that the percentage difference between the stronger and the weaker language is the same in 1981 as in 1801 except that there is a reversal in the roles of stronger/weaker at the two extremes of the time scale. Such statistics are, of course, arresting and would seem to indicate that bilingualism in Wales was a failure, in that it worked in one direction only. Welsh speakers acquired English, while the reverse infrequently happened.<sup>10</sup> It would seem that there is a link between language erosion and shift and bilingualism, but obviously the same patterns of change are not exhibited in the same intensities in all areas of Wales.

**GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF WELSH SPEAKERS – TWENTIETH CENTURY**

Professor John Morris-Jones’s optimism concerning the Welsh language (Morris-Jones 1891) may appear misplaced when one considers that the 1891 census report indicated that only 54 per cent of the population was then Welsh speaking. But one fact needs to be borne in mind: the English monoglots were confined to certain areas, notably the industrial south and north-east. Welsh remained the majority language in the largest proportion of the geographical area of Wales (see Table 14.1, p. 657). Southall (1895: 25–6) comments, ‘if we exclude the monoglot English in Monmouthshire and the Cardiff and Swansea districts, the percentages would run thus: English 27.75, Welsh 72.25. These percentages tally very nearly with the estimate which has been repeatedly expressed in public, that seven out of ten Welsh people speak Welsh.’ Based on Anglican Church visitation returns Pryce (1978) plotted the territorial erosion of Welsh, between 1750 and 1900. The map in Figure 14.3 shows that up to 1750 only a slender buffer zone along the Welsh–English border had shifted to English.

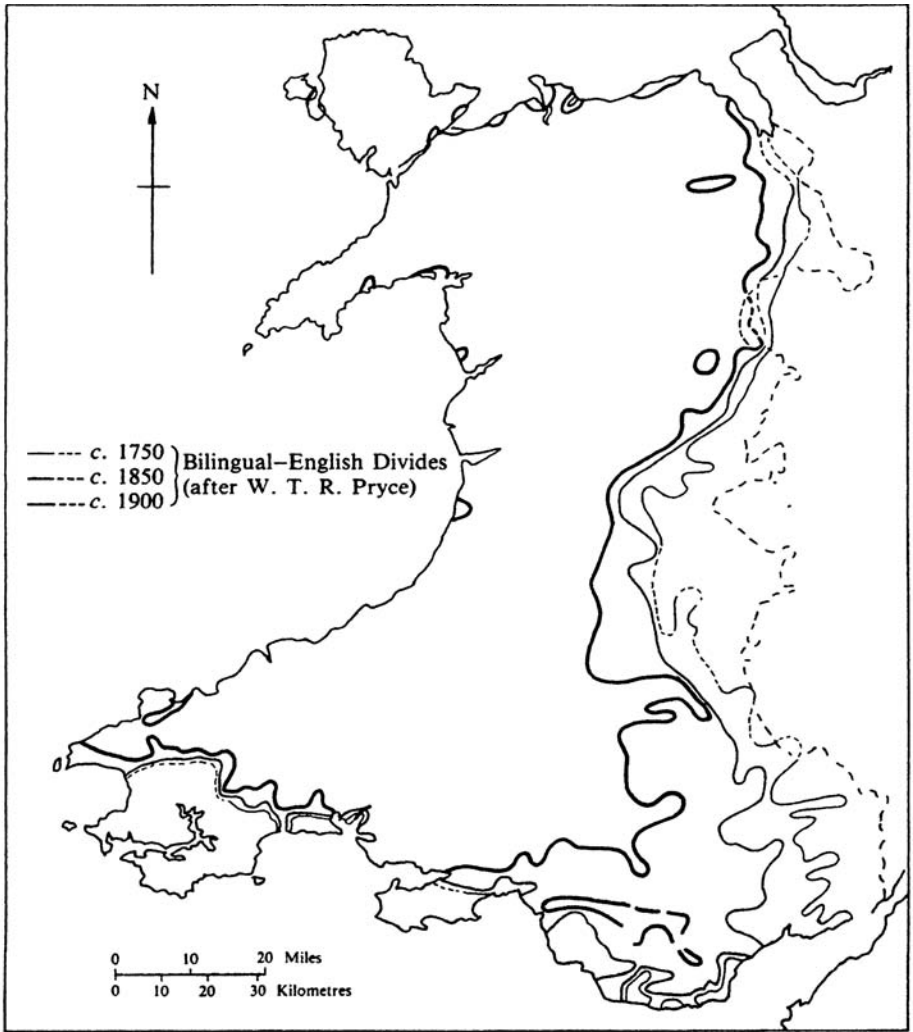


Figure 14.3 Westward movement of English, 1750–1900. Source: after Carter 1989

By 1900 the boundary had shifted still further westward with the most apparent changes seen in the south-east in Glamorgan. Certain changes were also taking place beyond the main linguistic frontier, in that there appeared small pockets of English dominance mainly in small towns and new resorts scattered along the North Wales coast. Over most of the land area of Wales, however, the Welsh language dominated in that it was the first language of the communities with an intensity factor of 80 per cent or over.

In an area extending through Carmarthenshire into Cardigan, northwards into the west and north of Montgomeryshire and thence to Meirioneth, Denbigh, Caernarfon and Anglesey, over 80 per cent of the population was Welsh speaking in 1931 (Figure 14.4, overleaf). One could travel from Holyhead through Wales to the southern coast and Welsh

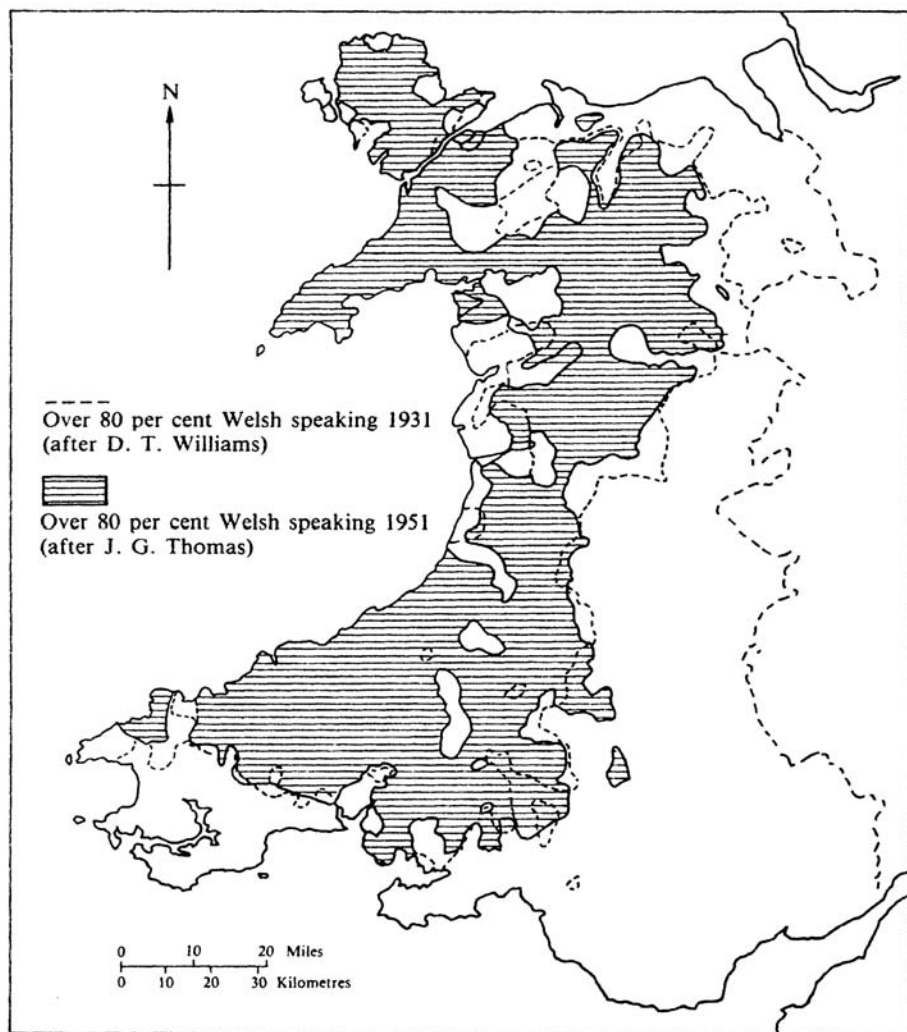


Figure 14.4 Areas with 80 per cent Welsh speakers in 1931 and 1951. Source: D. T. Williams 1937

could be used as the normal everyday medium of communication. But, however, during the three decades the percentage of Welsh speakers decreased and inroads were made into this Welsh-speaking heartland. Throughout the period the Welsh monolingual category dropped sharply with the greatest erosion recorded prior to 1911. Between 1911 and 1921 the bilingual category dropped from 35 per cent to 30.8 per cent. C. H. Williams (1980) is of the opinion that this happened because bilingual children of the previous decade switched to become monolingual English adults. He drew attention to the vital necessity of maintaining intergenerational family transmission of Welsh and advocated a national programme to target the language choice of young parents-to-be.<sup>11</sup> This language switching was undoubtedly a phenomenon which mainly characterized industrial

areas where there was already a strong monoglot English element in the communities. In sociolinguistic terms this was an expected development since the language of the majority had prestige, economic value, educational and social connotations and had been actively promoted for generations as the key to prosperity. The Welsh language had a specialized use in certain domains, but social changes meant that the role of the chapel, the literary meeting, and the local *eisteddfodau* was being displaced by workingmen's clubs and by entertainment and leisure activities which were predominantly English medium. The period 1931–51 saw a further sharp decline in the numbers of Welsh speakers. This was accompanied by a further contraction of the Welsh-speaking heartland (see Figure 14.4). The solid geographical area of 1900 (Figure 14.3) was not only shrinking along the eastern and southern periphery, but the linguistic influences of the small towns and tourist resorts of 1901 had spread inland from the north Wales and Cardigan coast.

By 1961 the Welsh-speaking population had fallen to 659,022, comprising 26 per cent of the total population of Wales. In 1931 the proportion stood at 36.8 per cent. There had been a constant diminution of those able to speak Welsh, but this was more noticeable in areas which had a density of under 50 per cent speaking Welsh in 1951. In geographical terms there were only minor changes in the spread of English and in the erosion of Welsh since 1931. Jones and Griffiths (1963: 195) state, 'The distribution has changed very little except in detail since the 1931 data were made available . . . Comparison with the 1951 map shows that inroads of increasing anglicization have been small and along some sections only of the language divide.' As is apparent from Figure 14.5 (overleaf) in 1961 one could see a sharp division between Welsh Wales and English Wales. Anglesey, Caernarfon, Meirionnydd, Cardiganshire, Carmarthenshire, together with west Denbighshire, west Montgomeryshire and north Pembrokeshire were predominantly Welsh speaking (over 80 per cent). The main areas of the rest of the country were under 30 per cent Welsh speaking. Jones and Griffiths (1963: 195) concluded that 'The distribution emphasizes that there is a predominantly Welsh Wales, fairly sharply divided from a highly anglicized area and yielding territory only reluctantly to the small peripheral advances of the latter.' Such a description, however, would not be apt for the 1961–81 period. The decline in territorial terms up to 1981 was dramatic. The solid territorial base of 1931 was, by 1981, a highly fragmented one.

A comparison of the 1961 census figures with the 1971 figures shows how the dominance and intensity of Welsh speakers had changed and the greatest decline was along the periphery of the central core. Bowen and Carter (1974) proposed that suburbanization, the growth of tourism and the popularity and development of some regions as retirement areas had accelerated erosion along the north Wales and Cardigan coasts. C. H. Williams (1981) cites urbanization as a prime factor in anglicization, suggesting that the Welsh/English divide was synonymous with rural/urban distinctions. Suburbanization from the 1960s onwards further depleted the rural Welsh heartland.<sup>12</sup> Migration from rural areas to urban areas meant that individuals and families lost the opportunity to use Welsh as the natural medium of communication in everyday situations. Use of the language was considerably restricted and a much wider spectrum of registers became English based. Without institutional support for the language in such communities it had very little scope for succeeding as a vital communicative medium. Added to this apparent failure of the language within the urban environment was the gradual increase in the numbers of retired monoglot English immigrants in the traditional Welsh-speaking areas, followed by the second-home buyers who were often able to outbid locals for properties in rural Wales. They were later followed by the 'post-industrial' trek of younger immigrants with young families who sought a new life away from the bustle and strains of urban living.<sup>13</sup> Such immigrants are often unaware

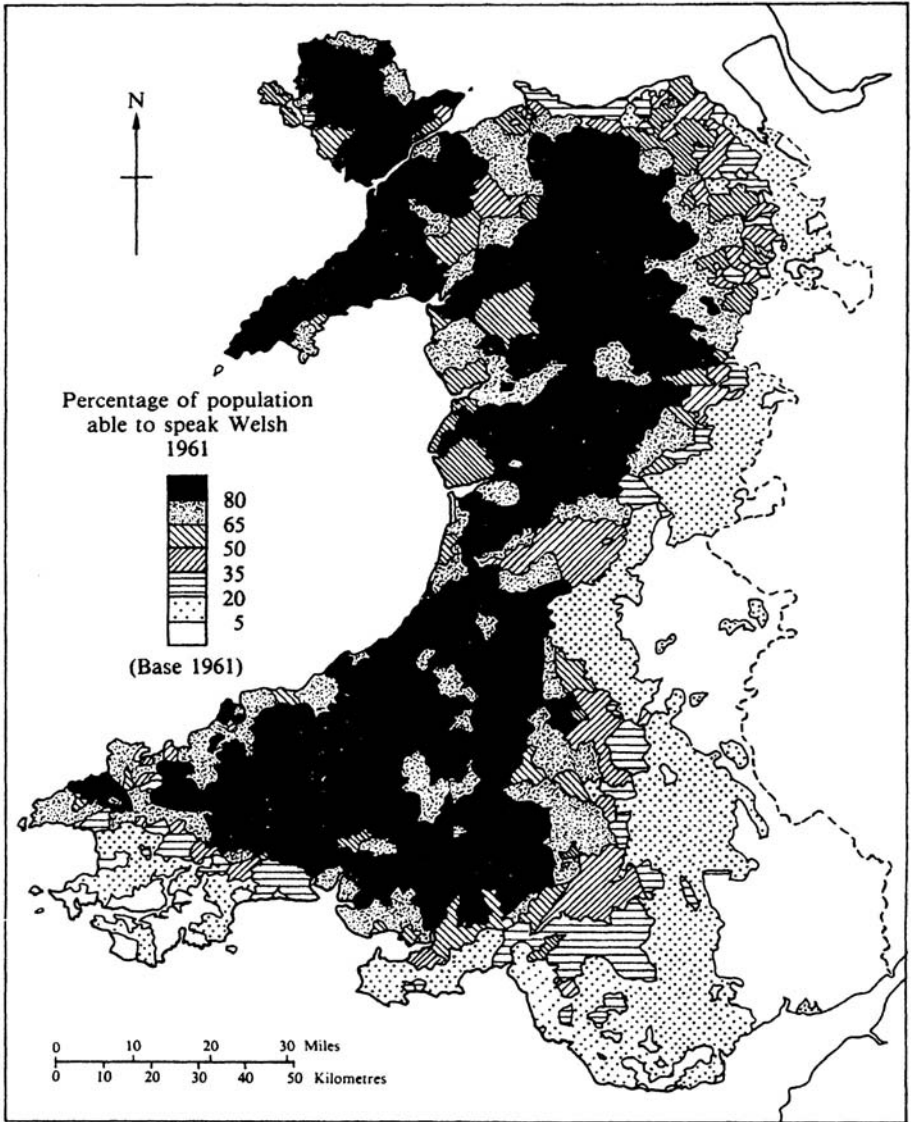


Figure 14.5 Distribution of Welsh speakers, 1961. Source: after Aitchison and Carter 1985

of the culture, heritage and history of the areas into which they settle and care less about the adverse impact which they may have on the fragile balance of rural community life.<sup>14</sup> This immigration accelerated during the second half of the 1980s partly because of the 'post-industrial' factor and partly because of cheaper housing in comparison with house prices in England, particularly in the south-east. These population changes, with the immigration of English families being greater than the out-migration to urban areas, indicate

a displacement of the Welsh-speaking population which in turn will dilute the intensity of Welsh speakers in what were predominantly Welsh-speaking areas. Linguistic assimilation of immigrants, particularly of the young and of young parents, would seem to be the only hope of retaining the Welsh-language ethos and character of communities in Gwynedd, and parts of Dyfed. Greater linguistic awareness on the part of Welsh speakers themselves and a greater institutional use of Welsh has certainly given the language greater prestige, and this in turn creates a more favourable language-learning environment. The fact that local authorities (for example, Gwynedd County Council) attempt to provide a bilingual service has resulted in the introduction of Welsh-language classes during working hours, and non-Welsh-speaking officers are encouraged to participate in such classes. This would seem to be an important reversal of past attitudes where an English-speaking newcomer was not expected to learn Welsh; when bilingualism operated for Welsh speakers only.

Another insight into the patterns and causes of erosion arises out of Bowen and Carter's (1975) comments concerning Welsh oracy and literacy. They noted that there was a high tendency for a decline of Welsh dominance in the period 1961–71 in Welsh-speaking areas where low reading and writing proportions were recorded in 1971. Low levels of literacy in Welsh were, in fact, an indicator of possible further erosion in the future. Their study also highlighted the total ineffectiveness of Welsh-language teaching within the educational system in that it could produce communities where oral fluency in the language could be undermined by a necessity to switch languages when changing from the oral to the written medium. Low literacy levels in Welsh inevitably led to a restrictive spectrum of registers and poor control and competence, which in turn led speakers to regard the vernacular as being inferior to their competence in English, thus facilitating a language switch. 'Welsh oracy without literacy is like a body devoid of limbs. It may have life but because of limited usefulness, survival may be difficult' according to Baker (1985: 21).

The 1981 census shows that the somewhat diminished 70 per cent Welsh density heartlands of 1971 (Figures 14.6, p. 668, and 14.7, p. 669) had been further eroded during the intercensal period. The spatial continuum, although partially broken in the Severn/Dyfi mid-Wales area, was by 1981 totally fragmented into six isolated islands. Central and south-west Anglesey remained, and mainland Gwynedd stayed almost intact. Dyfed, however, was fragmented into four different areas. Gwynedd has the highest density of Welsh speakers. The five wards which contain over 90 per cent Welsh speakers are in Gwynedd, namely Caernarfon, Penygroes, Porthmadog, Llnaelhaearn and Llanuwchllyn. Areas which contain over 80 per cent density of Welsh speakers are again mostly in Gwynedd (Figure 14.8, p. 670). The areas showing a decline from 80 per cent in the intercensal period are predominantly in Dyfed and north-west Powys. This is a cause for great concern, but it also shows that some of the positive policies adopted in Gwynedd in regard to the language have borne fruit.

The general picture may appear dismal. There has been a decrease in the spatial distribution of Welsh speakers and when they are expressed as a proportion of the total population of Wales, there is further erosion, but it is somewhat encouraging to realize that the rate of erosion has been considerably diminished. During the 1950s the erosion rate was 2.9 per cent and it was 5.2 per cent from 1961–71 but down to 1.9 per cent during the 1971–81 period. Carter (1985: 102) argues that percentage terms do not necessarily give the whole picture. In 1981, in terms of actual numbers, there were 15,081 Welsh speakers in Cardiff constituting 5.73 per cent of the total population of the capital, and the 7,840 in Caernarfon constituted 86.45 per cent of the population there. By comparing changes in the numbers of Welsh speakers during the 1961–71 period with the figures for 1971–81, Carter was able to show the increase/decrease trends and reversals over the two

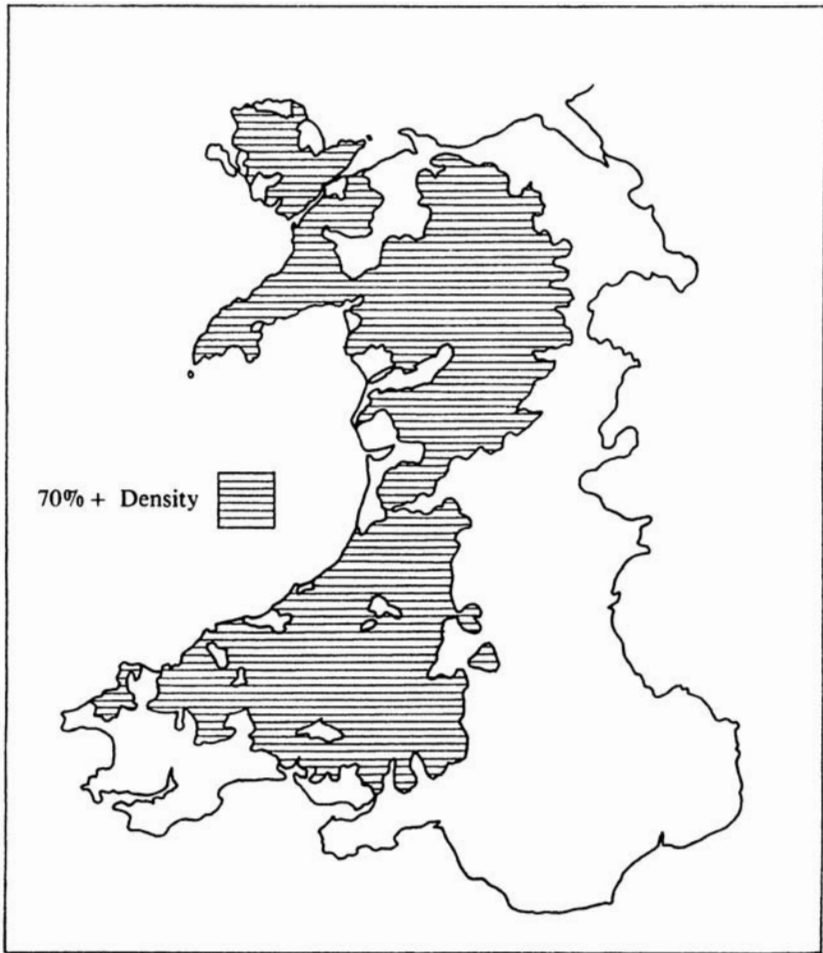


Figure 14.6 Welsh heartlands, 1971. Source: after Baker 1985

decades. During the 1961–71 period a total of 680 (73.2 per cent) communities showed a decrease in numbers and 249 (26.8 per cent) recorded an increase. During the 1971–81 intercensal period the communities recording a decrease in actual numbers had fallen to 54.6 per cent, whereas the returns for 45.4 per cent of the communities recorded an increase! As shown in Table 14.4 (p. 671), the decreases in numbers recorded in 1961–71 show patterns of acceleration of decrease, deceleration of decrease and a reversal from decrease to increase in 1971–81.

Carter’s analysis further highlighted the fact that since 1961 there has been a significant increase in the number of Welsh speakers in areas which were almost totally anglicized. This is an important trend revealing changing attitudes to the language and indicating a stubborn determination to preserve and disseminate the language where it previously had no status whatsoever.

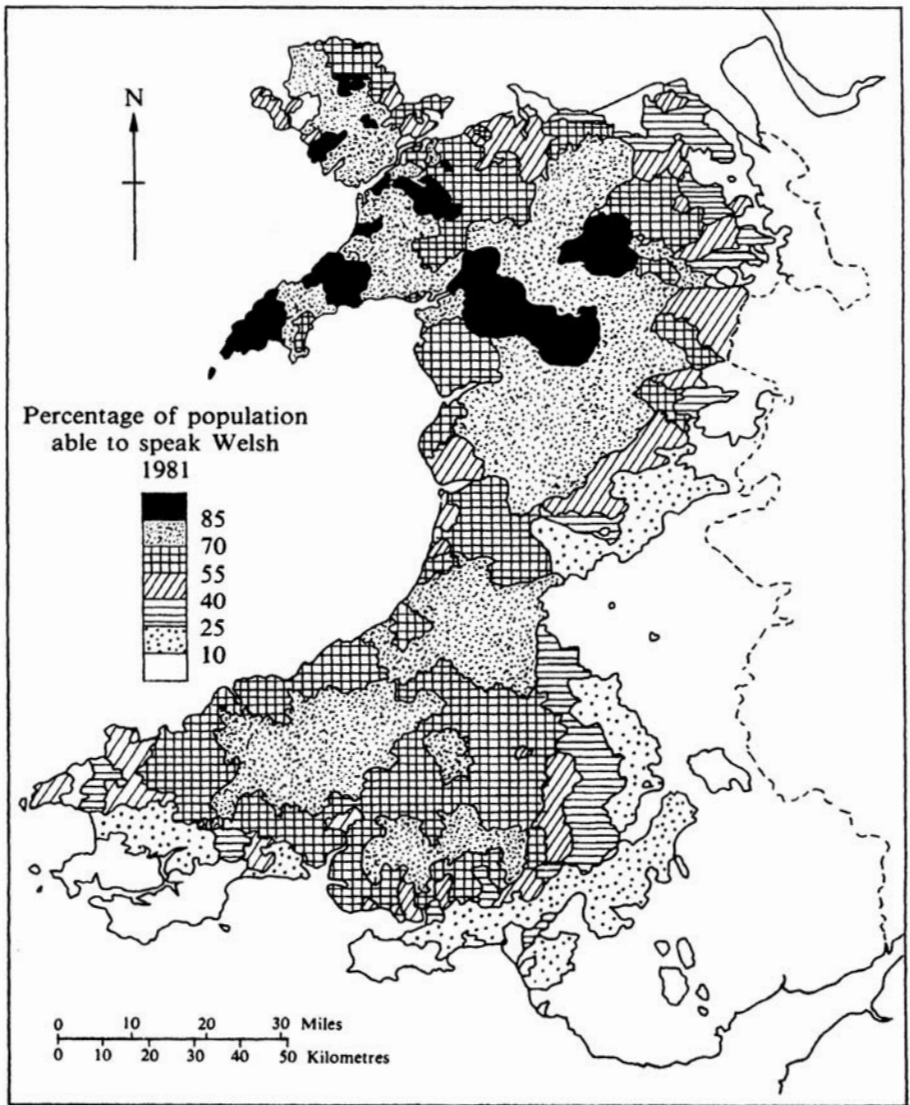


Figure 14.7 Distribution of Welsh speakers, 1981. Source: after Carter 1989

This was brought about partly by a migration into anglicized areas of a professional, educated but highly upwardly mobile Welsh-speaking element. A new commitment to the language, however, is now spreading, particularly with the provision of Welsh-medium education.<sup>15</sup> The age profile of Welsh speakers bears this out. In Gwynedd, the traditional stronghold of Welsh, one would expect to have more children speaking Welsh than people in the middle-age group. Gwynedd County Council's education policy readily explains this phenomenon, but the same pattern was also recorded in Clwyd, Mid Glamorgan and



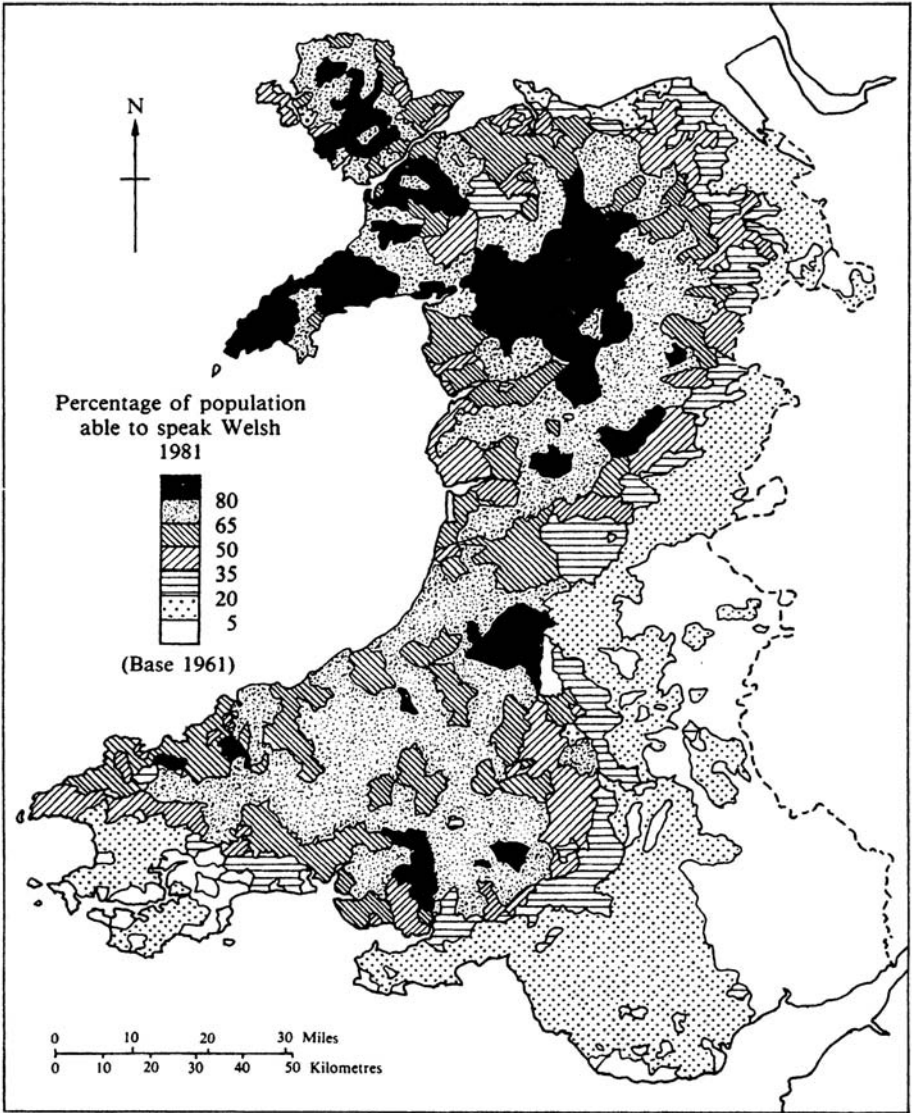


Figure 14.8 Distribution of areas showing an 80 per cent density of Welsh speakers in 1981. Source: after Aitchison and Carter 1985: 17

South Glamorgan. This is an encouraging factor which again may be explained by reference to the success of Welsh-medium education in these areas, and to its high profile in attracting a high percentage of pupils from non-Welsh-speaking homes. In Dyfed, West Glamorgan and Powys there is some cause for concern. The age distribution shows that the percentage of schoolchildren who speak Welsh is much lower than the percentage of elderly people doing so. In these areas Welsh speaking is a phenomenon associated mainly with older people. But one must also bear in mind that during the 1971–81 period,

*Table 14.4* Numbers of Welsh speakers: changes 1961–71, 1971–81

1961–71		Changes in the decrease and increase areas of 1971–81 period		1971–81	
Communities showing a decrease	73.2%	Acceleration of decrease	15.4%		
		Deceleration of decrease	29.8%	54.6%	Decrease
		Increase	28.0%		
Communities showing an increase	26.8%	Decrease	9.4%		
		Deceleration of increase	8.6%	45.4%	Increase
		Acceleration of increase	8.8%		

the rural areas of Dyfed and Powys had to contend with a new problem – immigration of younger English-speaking families on a scale which made cultural and linguistic assimilation virtually impossible without additional resources and proper linguistic planning.

The 1981 census revealed that 72.1 per cent of the Welsh-speaking population is literate in the language. This was only marginally lower than the percentage of 73.2 per cent for 1971 (Bowen and Carter 1975). As in 1971, low literacy levels tend to coincide with low density levels which may be interpreted as indicating that the language is in greatest peril of being eroded and replaced by English in areas with a low literacy level. In effect it means that in such communities, the full potential of the register range is not realized in Welsh, and so consequently a change in mode of discourse from the spoken to the written necessitates a language shift. Such a phenomenon is quite common in other bilingual communities where literacy is equated with education, administration and institutional bodies, and hence with the high prestige variety (Gal 1979; Dorian 1981). For bilingualism to remain stable in a non-diglossic situation there must be an equilibrium between oracy and literacy. The latter has a stabilizing effect upon a language because it gives its speakers access to accepted standard and literary forms. When they do not have control over all the medium possibilities, speakers will invariably give their own non-literary vernacular a low rating, thus facilitating language shift to the high-prestige language, in this case English.

In 1981 wards containing over 70 per cent of Welsh speakers tended to show the highest levels of literacy among their speakers. Areas with lower densities of Welsh speakers contained the highest levels of illiteracy. 'Illiteracy in Welsh is mostly to be found amid Welsh speakers in wards where Welsh is spoken by the few rather than the many. The personal cost–benefit balance for Welsh speakers who are in a minority may tilt against being literate in Welsh. Literacy in such areas may have low currency value' (Baker 1985: 25).

That may indeed be the overall pattern, but it is always dangerous to generalize. Baker (1985: 27) makes the point very clearly that not all areas within the 70 per cent isopleth exhibit high levels of literacy.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, areas with less than 20 per cent Welsh speakers

Table 14.5 Distribution of literacy in wards with less than 20 per cent Welsh speakers using a Welsh-speaking base. Source: based on Baker (1985: 26)

	Clwyd	Dyfed	Gwent	Mid-Glamorgan	South Glamorgan	West Glamorgan	Powys	Gwynedd
20–39% literacy	2 (2.5%)	3 (8.6%)	36 (40.4%)	10 (10.4%)	2 (5.1%)	4 (10%)	7 (10.8%)	0
40–59% literacy	32 (39.5%)	21 (60%)	46 (51.7%)	56 (58.3%)	9 (23.1%)	30 (75%)	28 (43.1%)	0
69–79% literacy	47 (58%)	11 (31.4%)	7 (7.9%)	30 (31.3%)	28 (71.8%)	6 (15%)	30 (46.1%)	5 (100%)

are not uniformly low in literacy rates, as Table 14.5 based on Baker (1985: 26) shows. Literacy remains relatively strong in Gwynedd irrespective of the low density of Welsh speakers in these five wards. South Glamorgan follows with 71.8 per cent of its wards scoring an acceptable literacy score in Welsh. Clwyd comes next with 58 per cent. In all other counties most of the wards with less than 20 per cent Welsh speakers returned lower literacy rates. As noted above, Gwynedd, Clwyd and South Glamorgan showed a higher percentage of younger speakers than of middle-aged speakers. In Wales the 1981 census reported that 78.2 per cent of the 15–24 Welsh-speaking age group were literate in the language, in comparison with a score of 63 per cent for the corresponding 65+ age group. All this would indicate a necessity to look at survey results continuously and to bear in mind that language erosion is not the same at different periods, although similar sociological, economic, political and cultural conditions may prevail. There may be a low Welsh-speaking density in South Glamorgan and indeed in Mid Glamorgan, but as pointed out by Ambrose and Williams (1981: 7) high or low percentages alone will not promote or weaken a language. There are many other factors that combine with density, such as migration, rural/urban factors, industrialization, and the higher prestige of the other language (see Denison 1977; Gal 1979; Kahane and Kahane 1979; and Dorian 1981). As pointed out by Fasold, one cannot predict a language shift: ‘Although many of the often-cited sociological factors are present when a shift does occur it is all too easy to find cases in which some speech community is exposed to the very same factors, but has maintained its language’ (Fasold 1984: 217).

The prophets of doom state that all the odds are against the survival of Welsh, but nevertheless it is still a fact that Welsh today is in a far stronger position in sociolinguistic terms than it was a century ago. Changing attitudes, greater use and applicability, a higher socio-economic profile, and more facilities for learning could all thwart the predictions of language death. The census figures between 1951 and 1981 reveal a certain degree of inaction and apathy during the preceding decades. In the 1991 figures rays of hope were identifiable which were confirmed by the results of the 2001 census discussed below.

## WELSH-MEDIUM EDUCATION

In the field of education the twentieth century has seen a gradual expansion in the use of Welsh as a teaching medium, starting with the infants' schools during the first decade, the primary schools during the 1930s (in those areas which were predominantly Welsh speaking) and reaching university degree level by the 1960s. The most rapid expansion and radical developments, however, have been accomplished during the last three decades 1960–90.

During the first six decades, advancement in the use of Welsh for teaching subjects other than the language itself was rather slow. As early as 1907 the Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools in Wales stated that

Any of the subjects of the curriculum may (where the local circumstances make it desirable) be taught in Welsh. Where Welsh is the mother-tongue of the infants that language shall be the medium of instruction in the classes. Provision should be made for the teaching in every school, of Welsh history, and the geography of Wales and Welsh literature should also be included in the curriculum of higher elementary schools.

This clearly stipulated that subjects other than Welsh itself could be taught partly or wholly in Welsh. But as Professor Jac L. Williams (1963: 58) stated, 'Wales continued to be reluctant to give her national language an important position in the curriculum of her schools. Welsh was rarely used at all as a medium of instruction beyond the settling in period in the infants' school.'

For the previous half century Welsh had been outlawed from the world of education and a very dangerous diglossic situation came into being. Education, progress and commerce were equated with the English language. The only two high-status situations in which Welsh could be used were religion and culture/entertainment (*eisteddfodau*, *cyrddau llenyddol*, *cyrddau cystadleuol*, *cymanfaoedd canu*). As long as Welsh Nonconformity stood firm, the language held its ground.<sup>17</sup> That did not remain so and for many speakers, Welsh ceased to be a medium for public interaction. Diglossia-linked bilingualism inevitably led to a language shift in many areas. It is mainly through efforts to secure a place for it in the educational realm that the language has reasserted its status as a linguistic medium in the public sector. Attitudes have changed considerably from those of the first decade of the twentieth century, when typical opinions about the usefulness of Welsh were totally negative. Even Sir John Morris-Jones in his 'Syllabus of Instruction in Welsh', *Cymmrodorion y Barri* (1912) gave greater importance to the teaching of English: 'I have no quarrel with those who consider that the first object of the elementary schools in Wales should be to teach the children English, but I do hold that its second object is to teach them Welsh.'

Today Welsh is well established as a medium of instruction in education. Indeed it is now possible for parents to opt for Welsh-medium education for their children from the nursery age up to university level. At some of the universities in Wales, degree courses in subjects other than Welsh are available through the medium of Welsh. Teacher training colleges also provide instruction, and academic and vocational courses entirely through the medium of Welsh are available. Business and secretarial courses are also available taking Welsh as one of the working languages. All further-education colleges in Gwynedd offer Welsh-medium courses and in order to ensure effective bilingual education it is essential that equal status be given to both Welsh and English in every aspect of the college's work (Gwynedd County Council Language Policy (1975): ix). All this is fairly recent and is the result of the changing attitudes and language awareness of the past thirty years or so.

The first Welsh-medium school opened in Aberystwyth in 1939 and it was an independent school. Welsh-medium education was a concept which appealed mostly to academics and a few professional people. By 1950 a total of seven designated bilingual primary schools operated. By 1960 the number had increased fourfold to twenty-eight and one secondary school was opened in the north-east – Ysgol Glan Clwyd. During the 1970s and 1980s expansion in the bilingual school category (Ysgolion Cymraeg) was probably one of the most important language-maintenance factors of the century. These schools helped to stem a language-shift process that had been going on in the anglicized areas since before the turn of the twentieth century. During the 1988–9 school year a total of 22,638 pupils attended the schools whereas twenty years earlier all children in those same catchment areas would have received monolingual English education. During the 1950s and 1960s in these areas it was a struggle for Welsh-speaking parents to bring up their children to speak Welsh because the home was the only domain where they would hear the language being used. Mixed-language families found it virtually impossible to ensure that their offspring would be bilingual. Certain degrees of success could be achieved when such children attended Welsh-medium Sunday schools. This was the only environment with which they could associate Welsh – in addition, of course, to the informal but socially restricted home environment. The result was that parents took the easy option and spoke English with their children. In a Ministry of Education Survey (1950) (cited by Betts 1976: 6), it was noted that in the old county of Glamorgan only 42 per cent of Welsh-speaking parents opted to speak the language with their children. In the predominantly Welsh-speaking heartland of Meirionethshire, 96 per cent spoke Welsh with their children. If only the father spoke Welsh, in Glamorgan a mere 4 per cent opted to speak the language with their siblings. In homes where only the mother spoke Welsh the retention rates for the Welsh language were 7 per cent in Glamorgan and 39 per cent in Meirion. The availability of Welsh-medium schools in anglicized areas has transformed the situation from a negative to a positive standpoint vis-à-vis the language. At first the Welsh-medium schools had to prove themselves to be capable of giving a balanced and effective education. The old myth that pupils' English would suffer had to be dispelled and the advantages for the pupils of bilingual education had to be expounded. In terms of educational and cultural achievements these bilingual schools were and are a great success. They do not teach language in a vacuum. It is the main medium of instruction right across the curriculum, not just for Welsh literature, religious education or history, but also for mathematics, computer studies, geography, environmental studies and, at secondary-school level, economics, home economics, physics, biology and chemistry. These schools intentionally establish a Welsh ethos within an anglicized setting and deliberately promote the Welsh dimension through the curriculum. Extra-curricular activities play a very important role in these schools and are extremely important factors for imparting Welsh culture and values to the pupils. It can, of course, be argued that this social setting for such activities as choir practice, folk dancing or *penillion* singing is rather artificial in that it is school linked and teacher controlled. There is an ever increasing danger of the Welsh language being associated in the minds of the children with education and school activities and consequently being restricted to these domains only. In these areas, since local community life is dominated by English, Welsh-language social activities are evolving along a social-network basis and the school is pivotal within such a structure. These bilingual schools have helped to make it possible for individuals and groups to live a full and varied social life in Welsh even in anglicized and urbanized areas.

As Table 14.6 shows, the growth rate of the bilingual schools between 1950 and 1988 was phenomenal. During the 1970s the number of pupils in bilingual primary schools

Table 14.6 Designated bilingual schools (*Ysgolion Cymraeg*). Source: Welsh Office (1988: 4)

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Primary schools	7	28	46	54	64	64	64	67	67	67
No. of pupils	—	—	6,253	9,769	10,447	10,788	10,978	11,472	11,539	12,112
Secondary schools	0	1	4	11	13	14	16	16	16	16
No. of pupils	—	—	2,017	7,860	8,933	9,576	10,065	10,279	10,620	10,526

increased by 50 per cent and in the secondary sector a 289 per cent growth was recorded. This occurred at a time when school rolls were generally falling. Between 1980 and 1988 a 24 per cent increase was seen in the primary sector and a 33 per cent increase in the secondary sector. It is quite obvious that such an increase in numbers is not from Welsh-speaking homes alone. A high proportion comes from mixed-language homes where one of the parents may be Welsh speaking, and also from non-Welsh-speaking homes, simply because parents want their children to grow up bilingually. In many cases it is a matter of bridging the linguistic gap left by previous generation-linked language shift. The numbers of young Welsh speakers in the anglicized and industrial areas are increasing annually. Therefore the designated bilingual schools serve two purposes in that they strengthen and extend the linguistic development of children for whom Welsh is the first language by expanding their range of registers in Welsh, and they introduce Welsh through play and instruction to non-Welsh-speaking infants who can then benefit from Welsh-medium instruction as if they were native speakers of Welsh. The standardizing influence of the schools not only expands the children's lexical control and grammatical structures but as dialect surveys have shown, parents' lexical ranges can also be considerably extended when they adopt words and structures to conform with the patterns of their children.<sup>18</sup> Non-Welsh-speaking parents, by seeing how easily their children's education has operated, have been prompted to attempt to learn Welsh themselves. The right motivation is then present: there is a utilitarian reason for learning Welsh in spite of the fact that it is not generally required within the community at large. Such motivation is often fired by intense enthusiasm and this in turn creates more supporters for Yr Urdd ('Welsh League of Youth'), Cymdeithas yr Iaith ('Welsh Language Society'), Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin ('Welsh Pre-school Playgroup Association'), local Welsh societies and clubs. In short the *Ysgolion Cymraeg* (bilingual schools) have given the language educational and social prestige at a time when language-maintenance action was long overdue. These schools have certainly produced a legion of fluent learners, but real success can only be measured in terms of the numbers who will keep on using the language after they leave school and who will participate in Welsh-medium social activities. There is the ever increasing danger of Welsh becoming a classroom language alone, unless children can socialize in Welsh in a fairly wide and representative spectrum of situations. This obviously calls for a multiplex system of social networks which can give Welsh a valid role in a realistic cross-section of social situations.

Over the years there has been an expansion in the use of Welsh as a teaching medium in schools other than the sixty-seven designated bilingual primary schools. This is particularly true of schools in the traditional Welsh heartlands of Dyfed, Powys, Gwynedd and Clwyd as illustrated in Table 14.7 (overleaf).

During 1987–8 a total of 363 primary schools in Wales taught solely through the medium of Welsh, catering for 12.2 per cent of the primary school population, and a

Table 14.7 Primary schools teaching through the medium of Welsh 1987–8. Source: *Statistics of Education in Wales, Schools No. 2* (1988)

		Clwyd	Dyfed	Gwent	Gwynedd	Mid Glamorgan	Powys	South Glamorgan	West Glamorgan	Wales
A	Schools having classes where Welsh is the sole or main medium of instruction	13.9%	35.0%	2.6%	69.7%	8.9%	15.8%	5.8%	9.5%	20.7%
B	First- and second-language pupils in classes where some of the instruction is through the medium of Welsh	4.0%	19.5%	0	8.6%	0	2.6%	0	0.6%	5.4%
C	Second-language pupils in classes where some of the teaching is through the medium of Welsh	10.3%	16.1%	0	18.2%	1.6%	6.2%	3.2%	3.0%	7.7%
D	Schools having classes where Welsh is taught as a second language but not used as a teaching medium	71.4%	20.1%	0	3.0%	85%	72.8%	54.2%	80.4%	46.7%
E	Schools where no Welsh is taught	0.4%	9.3%	97.4%	0.5%	4.5%	2.6%	36.8%	6.5%	19.5%

further 8.4 per cent received some of their tuition through the medium of Welsh. A total of 47.1 per cent were taught Welsh as a second language only and for 32.4 per cent Welsh was not on the curriculum (Table 14.8). The bulk of the latter category came from the most heavily anglicized areas. Of the 83,373 pupils who were not taught Welsh at all, 39,683 (47.5 per cent) were at school in Gwent, 19,301 (23.1 per cent) in South Glamorgan and 10,075 (12 per cent) in West Glamorgan. The largest number of pupils were in category (D), that is for them Welsh was taught as a second language within the school curriculum. It was not used as a medium of instruction for any other subject. In most cases the contact hours were insufficient and since the children did not hear Welsh being spoken outside the classroom, the motivation to succeed and to attain a working level of fluency

Table 14.8 Number of pupils/Welsh medium teaching. Source: based on *Statistics of Education in Wales, Schools 1988*

School category	No. of pupils	%
A	31,320	12.2
B	6,088	2.4
C	15,325	5.9
D	121,246	47.1
E	83,373	32.4

was lacking.<sup>19</sup> At present, as the above statistics suggest, there are grave inconsistencies in the teaching of Welsh at primary level in different parts of Wales.

During 1987–8 a total of fifty-three secondary schools in Wales engaged in Welsh-medium teaching. Sixteen of these taught ten subjects or under. Another fourteen schools taught between eleven and fifteen subjects using Welsh, and a total of twenty-three schools used Welsh for teaching over sixteen subjects. It is quite evident that what started as an ‘*Ysgolion Cymraeg*’ phenomenon is now operated in non-designated bilingual schools and most of these are in the traditional Welsh-speaking areas. Twenty-one out of the twenty-four secondary schools in Gwynedd use Welsh as a medium of instruction for subjects other than Welsh language and literature. Such an expansion in the use of the language has resulted in a demand for subject textbooks in Welsh. This gap is gradually being filled.

Since 1975 Gwynedd Local Education Authority has led the field in implementing a positive bilingual policy in all its schools and recently in all further-education establishments within the county: ‘the aim is to reinforce the bilingualism of pupils from Welsh-speaking homes while at the other end the main aim is to develop the bilingualism of Welsh learners’ (Gwynedd County Council 1975: vii). All pupils in Gwynedd primary schools receive Welsh lessons. The majority (54.2 per cent) are taught mainly through the medium of Welsh and a further 39.4 per cent are in classes where some of the teaching is through the medium of Welsh, and only 6.4 per cent have a minimal contact through a formal Welsh lesson alone. The aim as laid out in the *Gwynedd Language Policy Document* is: ‘to consolidate and develop each child’s Welsh and English capabilities in all aspects both active and receptive, so as to ensure that he/she can speak, read and write fluently and confidently in both languages on transferring to the secondary school’ (Gwynedd County Council 1975: i). To achieve such aims the schools have been actively encouraged to use Welsh across the curriculum and thereby expand children’s knowledge through the medium of Welsh. In the case of learners it is an example of extending their receptive control, which ultimately leads to an extended productive control of the language. Teaching resources in the form of *athrawon bro* (peripatetic language teachers) were introduced to show the local teacher how to teach Welsh effectively to children of different linguistic backgrounds and to do that across the curriculum.

Since the 1970s Gwynedd, like the rest of rural Wales, has experienced in-migration of English-speaking families in such numbers that they could not be assimilated into the education system as it was without changing it drastically. At the beginning of the 1988–9 school year, a total of 678 monoglot English newcomers were registered in Gwynedd primary schools. The Authority’s language policy was being stretched, and more resources were required to supplement the language centres which the Authority first established in 1984. The first centre was at Caernarfon. The main aim of the centre was to give intensive language teaching to newcomers aged between 7 and 11 years old, thus enabling them to integrate without much difficulty into the life of the local community school, and without disrupting the language policy currently operating. By 1988 six such centres had opened, three in west Gwynedd, one in east Gwynedd, one on Anglesey and one in Meirion. A Welsh Office grant made this possible. The length of time the child spent at each centre was approximately one school term. At any one time no more than twenty children could be accommodated. The 1988–9 statistics show that double the number of children could have received this intensive language training if only the facilities had been available. With such an influx of young English families into rural Wales such attempts to integrate them linguistically, culturally and socially into the fabric of the local communities are extremely important. By now there has been an expansion of such language facilities, but there is an additional complication in that a significant proportion of the incomers now



come from the newer member states of the EU in eastern Europe, thus complicating the home background–school regime relationship.

At the secondary school level, the standard and degree of Welsh-medium teaching varies according to the linguistic characteristics of the catchment area of each particular school. It can vary from a 70 per cent intensity in some schools to 20 per cent in others. There is also provision for developing the linguistic control of those who are learners so that they can benefit from Welsh-medium teaching. Gwynedd's policy is indeed progressive, and it is the ethos of that policy that has influenced other parts of Wales as a result of twenty years' experience of finessing the obligations of the National Curriculum. The Education Reform Act 1988 has had a great impact upon the role of Welsh in education, for it introduced Welsh as a core subject in the National Curriculum for pupils in Welsh-medium schools and as a foundation subject in all other maintained schools.

A summary of the key results for January 2006 reveals that there were 458 Welsh-speaking primary schools (29 per cent of the total number) with 52,867 pupils on roll, three more schools and 75 more pupils than in 2005. The proportion of primary school pupils taught in classes where Welsh is used as the main medium of teaching rose from 19.6 per cent in 2005 to 20.1 per cent in 2006. The percentage of pupils assessed in Welsh at the end of Key Stage 1 decreased slightly from 20.1 per cent to 20.0 per cent, and the percentage assessed in Welsh at the end of Key Stage 2 increased slightly from 19.1 per cent in 2005 to 19.3 per cent in 2006.

Tables 14.9 (opposite) and 14.10 (p. 680) record the distribution of maintained primary schools by LEA and the pupils taught Welsh as a first language in year groups 1–6 by LEA for 2006. Gwynedd, Carmarthenshire, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Ceredigion are notable in terms of the total numbers identified in Table 14.10. What is significant, however, is the role of the school in producing fluent children from non-Welsh-speaking homes (Table 14.9). This is particularly evident in the case of Caerphilly and to a lesser extent Rhondda Cynon Taf and Cardiff, although it is an increasing feature over much of Wales. The growth in the number of Welsh-medium secondary schools and the total number of pupils are recorded in Table 14.11 (p. 681). For secondary schools in January 2006, 15.2 per cent of pupils in year groups 7–11 (compulsory school age) in maintained secondary schools were taught Welsh as a first language, up from 14.8 per cent in 2005. A further 83.9 per cent were taught Welsh as a second language. The percentage of Year 7 pupils taught Welsh as a first language increased from 15.5 per cent in 2005 to 16.7 per cent in 2006. The percentage of pupils assessed in Welsh as a first language at the end of Key Stage 3 increased from 14.5 per cent in 2005 to 15.7 per cent in 2006, slightly higher than the percentage of Year 9 pupils reported as having studied Welsh as a first language (15.3 per cent) (National Statistics: Statistical Bulletin, 2007).

The profile demonstrated in Table 14.12 (p. 681) of maintained secondary pupils by ability to speak Welsh by LEA suggests significant spatial variations and a quite complex relationship between fluency gained at home and fluency and competence acquired as a result of formal education. The county with highest number of pupils who speak Welsh at home is Gwynedd at 4,436, the lowest is Blaenau Gwent with only two pupils. The county with highest number who do not speak Welsh at home but who are fluent as a result of their education is Rhondda Cynon Taf at 2,533, the county with the lowest number is Merthyr Tudful with only two students. The county with the highest number who speak Welsh but not fluently is Caerphilly with 4,510 and county with the lowest is again Blaenau Gwent. Unsurprisingly given the total number of pupils involved (18,643) the county with the highest number of pupils who cannot speak Welsh is Cardiff at 13,880. The county with the lowest number is Ceredigion at 281.

Table 14.9 Maintained primary school pupils, aged five years and over, by ability to speak Welsh, by LEA, 2006. Source: Office of National Statistics, *Welsh in Schools*, Table 4, 2007\*

LEA	Speaks Welsh at home		Do not speak Welsh at home but can speak it fluently		Speaks Welsh but not fluently		Cannot speak Welsh		Total pupils
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.
Isle of Anglesey	1,548	35.2	117	2.7	1,544	35.1	1,191	27.1	4,400
Gwynedd	4,494	57.0	260	3.3	2,002	25.4	1,125	14.3	7,881
Conwy	822	11.5	60	0.8	1,853	25.9	4,432	61.8	7,167
Denbighshire	600	9.2	293	4.5	2,453	37.5	3,192	48.8	6,538
Flintshire	239	2.2	212	2.0	2,953	27.7	7,251	68.1	10,655
Wrexham	261	2.9	207	2.3	1,022	11.4	7,445	83.3	8,935
Powys	708	7.9	316	3.5	5,468	61.1	2,464	27.5	8,956
Ceredigion	1,485	35.5	466	11.1	1,811	43.3	422	10.1	4,184
Pembrokeshire	544	6.6	343	4.2	1,520	18.6	5,783	70.6	8,190
Cardiganshire	2,869	24.6	628	5.4	2,874	24.6	5,303	45.4	11,674
Swansea	404	2.6	407	2.6	1,287	8.3	13,396	86.5	15,494
Neath Port Talbot	588	6.2	473	5.0	1,003	10.6	7,385	78.2	9,449
Bridgend	240	2.5	392	4.1	899	9.4	8,013	84.0	9,544
The Vale of Glamorgan	378	4.1	193	2.1	863	9.3	7,878	84.6	9,312
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	1,100	6.7	1,074	6.6	2,221	13.6	11,981	73.2	16,376
Merthyr Tydfil	140	3.4	287	6.9	277	6.7	3,426	83.0	4,130
Caerphilly	46	0.4	1,297	9.9	4,985	38.2	6,720	51.5	13,048
Blaenau Gwent	80	1.6	47	1.0	819	16.8	3,926	80.6	4,872
Torfaen	23	0.3	239	3.6	2,934	44.1	3,455	51.9	6,651
Monmouthshire	76	1.3	33	0.6	4,076	69.7	1,660	28.4	5,845
Newport	21	0.2	284	2.6	2,784	25.9	7,668	71.3	10,757
Cardiff	945	4.4	1,049	4.9	1,799	8.4	17,611	82.3	21,404
Wales	17,611	8.6	8,677	4.2	47,447	23.1	131,727	64.1	205,462

\* The data mainly represent parents' perceptions of their children's fluency and will not necessarily be the same as the ability shown by the pupil in their school work.  
Source: Annual Schools' census.

*Table 14.10 Pupils taught Welsh as a first language in maintained primary schools in year groups 1–6, by year group, by LEA, 2006. Source: Office of National Statistics, Welsh in Schools, Table 5, 2007*

LEA	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Year 6	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Isle of Anglesey	472	70.8	556	73.3	533	75.2	562	73.9	552	73.6	539	71.8
Gwynedd	1,154	90.5	1,154	90.2	1,217	92.3	1,287	93.2	1,184	93.3	1,271	94.5
Conwy	258	23.2	274	24.2	294	24.5	275	21.7	259	21.5	261	20.9
Denbighshire	216	22.0	245	22.8	234	20.8	252	22.5	203	18.8	218	18.9
Flintshire	99	6.0	110	6.2	92	5.2	122	6.6	92	5.1	111	6.0
Wrexham	129	8.6	145	9.7	142	9.6	114	7.7	140	9.5	132	8.8
Powys	184	13.6	237	16.2	202	13.6	220	14.1	196	13.0	211	13.4
Ceredigion	459	70.6	489	71.4	518	73.0	500	71.3	491	70.2	556	74.1
Pembrokeshire	252	19.8	260	19.2	280	20.0	231	16.4	246	17.9	222	16.2
Cardiganshire	986	54.0	935	51.1	956	50.3	1,021	49.7	1,019	50.0	1,027	52.2
Swansea	287	11.6	250	10.1	254	9.7	260	9.6	232	8.9	211	8.1
Neath Port Talbot	249	17.4	255	16.9	269	16.8	253	16.1	228	13.6	214	12.8
Bridgend	123	8.3	140	8.9	133	8.4	141	8.1	108	6.9	117	7.4
The Vale of Glamorgan	158	10.7	166	10.7	143	9.2	137	8.5	148	9.5	136	8.5
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	505	19.7	507	18.9	533	19.5	478	16.3	461	17.0	414	15.0
Merthyr Tydfil	70	10.6	71	10.9	66	10.0	84	11.5	72	10.1	63	9.0
Caerphilly	277	13.4	274	13.1	251	11.5	239	10.3	231	10.6	209	9.5
Blaenau Gwent	33	4.2	51	6.3	35	4.4	43	5.3	27	3.2	32	3.7
Torfaen	63	6.6	82	7.9	101	8.9	67	5.6	73	6.5	61	5.0
Monmouthshire	28	3.1	33	3.6	22	2.4	25	2.4	19	1.9	12	1.2
Newport	52	3.1	55	3.1	53	2.9	51	2.8	54	3.0	46	2.5
Cardiff	420	12.6	428	12.2	425	11.7	396	10.9	357	9.6	342	9.5
Wales	6,474	20.2	6,717	20.1	6,753	19.6	6,758	18.9	6,392	18.4	6,405	18.2

*Table 14.11* Welsh-speaking secondary schools and pupils, 1990–2006.<sup>1</sup> Source: Office of National Statistics, *Welsh in Schools*, Table 15, 2007

	1990–	2000–1	2001–2	2002–3	2003–4	2004–5	2005–6
Secondary schools <sup>2</sup> :							
Number of schools	44	53	53	53	54	54	54
Number of pupils	27,897	38,007	38,817	39,458	40,169	40,221	40,828

1 September for 1990–, and January thereafter.

2 Welsh-speaking secondary schools as defined in Section 354(b) of the Education Act 1996. A Welsh-speaking secondary school is one where more than half of foundation subjects, other than English or Welsh or Religious Education, are taught wholly or partly in Welsh.

*Table 14.12* Maintained secondary pupils by ability to speak Welsh by LEA, 2006<sup>1</sup>  
Source: Office of National Statistics, *Welsh in Schools*, Table 16, 2007

LEA	Speak Welsh fluently at home	Do not speak Welsh at home but can speak it fluently	Speaks Welsh but not fluently	Cannot speak Welsh	Data not available	Total pupils
Isle of Anglesey	1,611	439	1,535	397	0	3,982
Gwynedd	4,436	726	1,697	402	0	7,261
Conwy	690	243	3,339	2,373	0	6,645
Denbighshire	797	357	2,469	3,147	0	6,770
Flintshire	182	263	1,693	7,030	0	9,168
Wrexham	238	443	798	5,359	0	6,838
Powys	483	333	3,613	3,504	12	7,945
Ceredigion	1,632	580	1,677	281	30	4,200
Pembrokeshire	627	414	2,791	3,512	0	7,344
Carmarthenshire	2,497	915	3,573	3,931	0	10,916
Swansea	420	499	3,498	9,193	0	13,610
Neath Port Talbot	579	535	1,512	6,362	0	8,988
Bridgend	20	40	856	7,303	0	8,219
The Vale of Glamorgan	377	357	3,806	3,640	0	8,180
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	737	2,533	1,077	11,604	0	15,951
Merthyr Tydfil	11	2	649	3,093	0	3,755
Caerphilly	81	929	4,510	6,293	0	11,813
Blaenau Gwent	3	7	409	4,066	0	4,485
Torfaen	203	496	2,504	3,866	0	7,069
Monmouthshire	10	6	3,350	1,357	0	4,723
Newport	11	7	2,449	6,705	0	9,172
Cardiff	617	910	3,236	13,880	0	18,643
Wales	16,262	11,034	51,041	107,298	42	185,677

<sup>1</sup> The data mainly represent parents' perceptions of their children's fluency and will not necessarily be the same as the ability shown by the pupil in their school work. Source: Annual Schools' census.

A second feature of this data set is that whilst Gwynedd (4,436), Anglesey (1,611) Ceredigion (1,632) and Carmarthenshire (2,497) each have relatively high numbers who speak Welsh fluently at home, it is only Carmarthenshire which has double the number who cannot speak Welsh fluently or not at all at 7,504. In part this represents the geolinguistic reality of demographic change and within family language transmission, but it also reflects Carmarthenshire's vacillating experience of Welsh medium provision as opposed to the more 'progressive' educational policies of other counties within Y Fro Gymraeg.

The current aim is to create a bilingual Wales, and a heavy burden has been placed upon the statutory education system to realize this aim. A great deal will depend on adequate funding, on the availability of proper teaching resources in terms of teachers and material, and on the introduction of specialist retraining courses for teachers. Special skills are required for second-language teaching especially if the language is to be more than a subject on the curriculum and is to become a vehicle for all kinds of experiences and knowledge. Many more teachers need to be recruited for linguistic training in Welsh, so that there are adequate numbers of competent teachers in all areas at all levels extending from nursery to secondary.<sup>20</sup> An interesting development has been the National Practitioners' Training Programme, run in north Wales by Bangor University and in south Wales by Cardiff University. By the spring of 2008 five very successful courses had been run in each centre. The teachers are seconded from their schools to receive intensive training in Welsh language skills and to refresh their communication skills in key areas. Supply cover costs are met from the Welsh Assembly Government-funded scheme and this proven model is to be replicated on a larger scale in order to meet some of the structural demands inherent in the insufficient supply of Welsh-medium teachers within an education system which is becoming increasingly bilingual.

The effectiveness of the proposals will depend on the expertise, good will and enthusiasm of teachers and at grass-roots level on the pupils themselves. They need to realize that there is a point in learning Welsh, that it can be used in a cross-section of relevant social situations. The teaching, learning and the use of Welsh must be advantageous for social communication if it is to be successful.<sup>21</sup>

One of the agencies which has helped strengthen and boost the role of Welsh over the past forty years or so is the nursery schools movement, *Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin*. The first Welsh-medium playgroup was established in Cardiff in the late 1940s because young parents saw the benefits of such sessions for their pre-school youngsters to socialize, play and extend their range of acquaintances and experiences through the medium of Welsh. In an anglicized area this had a sound sociolinguistic base because it helped expand the children's range of registers and established Welsh as the language of play. By the mid-1960s there were approximately 20 similar groups in existence and by 1971 when *Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin* was officially established there were 70 playgroups operating, attracting less than 1 per cent of the pre-school age group. By 1973 a total of 137 *Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin* groups operated and by 1978 this figure had more than doubled to 280 with approximately 3,200 children attending. By 1983 the number of groups had increased to 403 and later in 1988 there were 538 groups plus 320 mother-and-toddler groups. During 1988 a total of 11,258 children attended these playgroups, with 4,510 coming from Welsh-speaking homes but the majority (6,748) from non-Welsh-speaking homes. The most recent figures for 2006/7 suggest that there were 550 MYM groups, and a further 450 'Cylchoedd Ti a Fi' which enable mothers and their toddlers to experience Welsh-medium pre-school activities.

The *Mudiad*'s vision and policy rest squarely on the necessity to give every child, irrespective of language background, colour or creed, an opportunity to learn through play in

a Welsh linguistic environment. The linguistic policy is explained to every parent at the outset and English-speaking parents are often surprised at how easy it is for young children to learn a second language through play. Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin serves a dual role in contemporary Wales. It strengthens and consolidates Welsh as a social language, and it has a part in changing the attitudes of non-Welsh speakers by showing them that bilingualism is preferable to monolingualism. The figures for 2007 show how successful Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin has been in attracting non-Welsh-speaking parents. It is no longer a case of mounting a rearguard action to stop further erosion in traditional Welsh-speaking areas, but also a real attempt to regain ground which was lost one, two or three generations ago. In the mother-and-toddler groups the mothers remain present throughout the session and non-Welsh speakers are encouraged to learn simple words and phrases based on the daily activities of their children – dressing up, going to bed, eating. The informal language-learning aspect is aimed at both child and parent simultaneously. Parents are encouraged to learn with their children. This gives added motivation to parents to attend local language-learning classes.

The expansion in the number of playgroups from 137 in 1973 to 517 in 2006/7 and the introduction of mother-and-toddler groups in 1980 reaching a total of 451 such groups in 2006 is quite remarkable. The core grant to MYM from the Welsh Language Board stands at about £1,123,600 and the organization also draws down finance from a number of other organizations, giving it a total income in 2006/7 of £5,816,248.<sup>22</sup> To that extent it is an excellent example of a central agency, with a clear mandate, being able to navigate its way through the various financial channels with considerable success and acumen. This work in conjunction with the *Ysgolion Cymraeg* gives children an opportunity to be bilinguals even when family background is not so. The next step is to generate a steady flow of new bilingual adults. Children who learn Welsh as a second language are far more likely to gain total fluency and confidence if they have the opportunity to use the language within their own homes as well as within their peer group in the playgroup and at school.

## ADULT WELSH LEARNERS

During the 1960s and early 1970s adult Welsh classes were part of the night-school scene but there was no structured course aimed specifically at adults and especially at achieving oral fluency. Most classes taught literary Welsh, which often meant that learners could not identify in the spoken Welsh of their areas the patterns and structures which they were taught in class. When trying out their newly acquired Welsh phrases, learners were frequently ‘corrected’ by native speakers who found listening to literary Welsh being spoken a very unnatural experience because of its formal connotations. Such classes were often sporadic, and held during the winter months, one evening per week, lacking progression from one year to the next. Several residential summer courses were held which brought learners from different areas together and gave them intensive tuition for a limited period.

Because of an upsurge in interest and greater demand for Welsh classes from parents, grandparents, employees and newcomers to Welsh-speaking areas and because of immense improvements in the facilities available, the success rate in gaining competent fluency was much higher during the 1980s. In 1974 the University of Wales appointed a Welsh Language Officer with the specific task of organizing structured courses for adult learners. The result was the Wlpan Welsh course – an intensive course aiming primarily at oral fluency extending over two hours per session several times a week for a period of twelve weeks or so, giving a total of one hundred contact hours. Other more advanced

post-Wpan courses follow, aimed at extending the learners' range of registers, oral and spoken, informal and formal. The initial emphasis is upon teaching oral Welsh, taking great care to introduce dialect features local to the area. Literary Welsh is taught at a later stage. The final stage of this course leads to an examination and, for successful candidates, the University of Wales Certificate of Proficiency in Welsh is awarded. Several of these candidates have progressed to university to follow a degree course in Welsh. The Certificate itself is also taken as a professional qualification by employees such as those of local government authorities, social services, the civil service and the banks. The Welsh Joint Education Committee has now appointed an officer in charge of teaching Welsh to adults whose main contribution is that of setting out assessment objectives for different levels of learners and arranging courses for both tutors and students. It publishes information sheets several times a year which set out the various day courses, publications and developments relevant to the adult-learner scene. It also disseminates information about CYD (Cymdeithas y Dysgwyr, 'Learners' Society'; *cyd* means 'joining' or 'union') and Pont (Bridge), a society that aims to integrate learners into the mainstream of Welsh-language social and cultural life. These, coupled with the advent of Welsh clubs in anglicized areas, not only supply social settings where learners can socialize with native speakers, and thus have opportunities to speak the language with non-learners, but they also help to dispel the old tendencies which Carol Trosset describes:

All learners I spoke to agreed that the hardest thing about learning Welsh is getting opportunities to speak it. In general people do not speak to learners in Welsh. Even when they know that someone is learning Welsh and wants to hear it spoken, Welsh speakers will tend to use English in his presence. Learners attempting to converse in Welsh with native speakers often find that the first time they make a linguistic mistake, thus signalling their lack of total fluency, the Welsh speakers will switch to English.

(Trosset 1986: 169)

It is now realized how important it is to integrate learners into Welsh life linguistically, socially and culturally. CYD, Pont, Cymdeithas yr Iaith, Merched y Wawr (Welsh version of the Women's Institute), Yr Urdd and local Welsh societies have an important role in accomplishing this end. The story of Nant Gwrtheyrn on the Lleyn peninsula amply illustrates the enthusiasm and determination within Wales in the 1980s to set up a viable Welsh language centre in what was once an abandoned village. The will for the language to survive, the intensity of feelings concerning the language, and the dramatic spread of Welsh education from nursery to adult level could be considered as the most important hallmarks of the 1980s. The decade could be labelled 'The Welsh learner's decade' and at the current rate of growth, there will be more second-language Welsh speakers than there are native speakers in the foreseeable future. Today Nant Gwrtheyrn has diversified its provision and now faces a very vibrant future after experiencing considerable financial difficulties.

## PUBLISHING

The past three census reports indicate a definite relationship in some areas between language shift and low literacy levels in Welsh. This situation came into being partly due to the English education system, and partly due to the weakening of the role of the Sunday school within the local communities. Even in strong Welsh-speaking areas, people who

prefer to speak Welsh rather than English will feel far more at ease reading and writing in English rather than in Welsh. Reading and writing in Welsh progressively became a middle-class/educated/professional phenomenon. In many working-class and industrialized areas, the domains of Welsh became restricted to a finite number of fields and relationships and to the oral medium only. By the 1950s the once prolific publication trends in terms of books, periodicals and journals had been reversed and the whole future of Welsh publishing was in the balance. The readership was continually shrinking and the spectrum of material which saw the light of day was restrictive in its appeal. There was a real danger of the written word in Welsh becoming a mode restricted to academics, poets and literary critics. Publishing in Wales was in a critical state. In October 1951 the government established a committee under the chairmanship of A. W. Reedy to examine the state of Welsh-language publishing. Its findings were disturbingly forthright: 'A bookless people is a rootless people, doomed to lose its identity and its power of contributing to the common fund of civilisation . . . If the published language goes, the language itself as a cultural medium will soon follow: and if Welsh goes a bastardized vernacular will take its place.' Action had to be taken.

The outcome of the report was the establishing of the Welsh Books Committee under the aegis of the Welsh Joint Education Committee. In 1954 it launched a scheme to increase the supply of interesting and appealing books to schools. At the same time a network of Welsh book societies was established to promote the role of popular Welsh books and therefore extend the readership network among adults. This latter movement eventually resulted in the establishment of the Welsh Books Council in 1961. In 1956 central government established an annual grant of £1,000 for five years to aid publishers in the publication of Welsh books for adults only.

By the mid-1970s four separate bodies were providing financial support to authors and publishers in Wales – The University of Wales Press Board, The Welsh Joint Education Committee, The Welsh Arts Council and The Welsh Books Council. Positive steps were made to rationalize this situation as highlighted in the *Reedy Report* (Home Office 1951: 2). But this support system had developed in an *ad hoc* manner and central co-ordination was lacking. These were the main points raised in 1978 by the Council for the Welsh Language's report *Publishing in the Welsh Language*: 'the need for a general strategy is inescapable . . . the very nature of the present system, developed *ad hoc* over a number of years often makes co-ordination of purpose and effort difficult. It also runs the risk of not being completely attuned to customer demand which in our opinion, is the most important factor of all' (1978b: 79–80). After 1981 the Welsh Books Council administered the Government Grant to the publishers of Welsh books for adults, with support from the Welsh Arts Council. Between 1981 and 1986 the Welsh Books Council supported a total of 546 titles, and the Welsh Arts Council supported 44 titles in the 1982–7 period. Financial support for these publications totalled £638,720 (Market Research Working Party 1988: 10–12).

In the late 1960s the Welsh Joint Education Committee became responsible for the publication of Welsh reading books. The Welsh Reading Books Scheme was based on the principle of guaranteed sales. The local education authorities were committed to buying a total of 1,300 copies of each title. This also guaranteed that new, interesting and appealing children's books reached the targeted readership. Between 1982 and 1988, this scheme supported a total of 129 titles at a cost of £592,020 (Market Research Working Party 1988: 14). In 1978 the Welsh Books Council accepted an invitation to administer a new grant aimed at fostering leisure reading for children and young adults. This rectified the imbalance that had previously existed within this age range. Books of a high standard in



both content and design had been produced but there was a gap in material for older children and young people. Between 1980 and 1986 the Welsh Books Council supported 406 titles at a cost of £373,378 (Market Research Working Party 1988: 15, 17). Between 1983 and 1987 the Arts Council supported a further ten titles. This is an excellent example of co-ordination of effort and co-operation between these three agencies.

With an expansion in Welsh-medium education, there has been considerable expansion in the publishing of textbooks. Between 1982 and 1987 Welsh local education authorities supported 132 titles (Market Research Working Party 1988: 18). Further support came from the Welsh Office Grant which totalled £3.3m between 1978/9 and 1987/8. This growth, dictated by readership demands, has been in children's and young people's books and magazines, such that there is now a vibrant and attractive publishing output covering a very wide range of interests.

However, it has to be borne in mind that more books, in a wider spectrum of fields for a diversified readership range, cannot possibly be produced without nurturing new authors, because professional authors in Welsh comprise a rare breed since the financial rewards are far from adequate.

Between 1978 and 1988 the number of new publications rose by 56.4 per cent from 266 to 416 in 1988, but the increase in children's publications was 176.3 per cent during the decade. In 1978 children's books represented approximately 30 per cent of that year's output, but ten years later this category represented 47.6 per cent of the annual output. Children's books, fiction and non-fiction became top of the production line and this mainly because of Welsh Office support. Some headway was made in popular books for young adults but the actual increase was only 5.5 per cent. This is the very area where further expansion has been realized so as to reduce the dependency on the reading of Welsh books as a school-linked phenomenon.

Since 1998 a reinvigorated publishing and media industry has laid greater emphasis on commissioning and promoting the publication of novels, leisure and light reading for adults, which should have a fairly wide readership appeal. In 2007 the Welsh Books Council had 49 full-time employees and an annual turnover of £4.89 million. Within its Welsh language section a total of £1,357,078 was distributed towards the publishing of Welsh language books and magazines, and other materials such as audio-books and CD-ROMS. In total 231 books were supported and sixteen magazines. Of course, many other volumes are published outwith the remit of the Welsh Books Council, be they private commercial publishers, the University of Wales Press, the Welsh Joint Education Committee and several other agencies.

Allied to this growth in encouraging reading in Welsh is the development of community newspapers in Wales over the past forty years which furnishes clear examples of a self-help movement among ordinary people in local communities. Betts (1976: 142) avers that 'The launching of the monthly "papurau bro" (seven between September 1974 and the 1975 National Eisteddfod) based almost entirely on a formula of local news is thus one of the most significant developments ever in Welsh language journalism.' It helped reverse the depressing situation at the beginning of the 1970s when sales figures for national newspapers such as *Y Cymro* and *Y Faner* were disappointingly low. Local Welsh weeklies such as *Yr Herald Gymraeg* and *Herald Môn* were struggling even in the Welsh-language strongholds of Gwynedd.<sup>23</sup> Productive literacy was rapidly becoming the domain of an educated elite. Welsh reading material was rejected as being too high-brow and the style was too complicated and unfamiliar. During the 1960s the Welsh language had secured a certain amount of official recognition but it was felt that gains at the formal, official level needed to be matched by greater use of the language in unofficial

and informal contexts where the mass of Welsh speakers would be able to use it and appreciate its utilitarian applications. This campaign to foster the use of Welsh in informal contexts where English had already been making considerable inroads resulted in the phenomenal growth of the Welsh pop-record market, greater use of Welsh in the media, and at the local level in the publication of community newspapers. The importance of the latter development is described by Clive Betts (1976: 132): 'The new *papurau bro* (district papers) have rescued the language from the clutches of the *littérateur* and returned it to the manual labourer in the council house up the street who is far more interested in the state of his sewers than in the latest poetic gem from the minister in the manse in the next county.'

In 1971 *Llais Ceredigion* saw the light of day, but owing to financial and distribution problems it ceased after five issues. In April 1973 *Y Dinesydd* was published in Cardiff as an attempt to give greater publicity to the social-network linked activities of the various Welsh-speaking strands in the capital. The following year four new newspapers were launched, all in Welsh-speaking areas, but geographically spread from Crymych in the south-west to Talybont/Glandyfi in the midlands, to Bala and Bethesda in the north. The editor of *Papur Pawb* estimated that in 1973 only approximately 20 per cent of the people around Talybont were reading Welsh, and yet with the introduction of the *papur bro* the figure was boosted to a significant 90 per cent (Betts 1976: 142). The initial aim of the *papurau bro* was to provide reading material in Welsh which would be appealing and relevant to the local communities. They were aimed at fostering and encouraging Welsh-medium social activities, defending and strengthening the local Welsh community, and promoting economic development at the local level. Many of them are no more than a catalogue of local news items – births, marriages, deaths and reports of cultural, social and sports events. All are purely local in orientation. Others over the years have become more ambitious and have realized that the newspaper can be a force in influencing, and indeed in promoting, national and local issues. This, of course, entails extending the domains of the language from discussing purely local social matters to dealing with political, economic and national issues.

The *papurau bro* have improved both in terms of content and appearance and have increased in circulation. Between 1973 and 1989, sixty-three community newspapers were established and fifty-four of those are still in existence. That represents a considerable success rate because all the work at the local level is accomplished by volunteers. In 1987/8 over 60,000 copies of *papurau bro* were bought every month (C. Jones 1988: 19). However, it is estimated that the actual readership will be nearer 180,000 as many newspapers are distributed free to employees in large institutions such as universities and hospitals. The growth rate was phenomenal during the 1975–80 period. It then slowed down between 1980 and 1983, and since then growth has been minimal. This again shows clearly that 1975–80 was the 'golden age' when forty new *papurau bro* were established, in complete contrast with 1984–9 when the new titles were only six in number.<sup>24</sup> The location and circulation of *papurau bro* in 1989 is shown in Figure 14.9 (overleaf). Currently there are about fifty-eight *papurau bro* which are published regularly. Newsprint journalism might see a significant boost in both its quality and reach with the launch of a daily Welsh-medium newspaper designed to offer real choice to readers who can currently access only English-language newspapers, if and when it becomes a viable proposition.

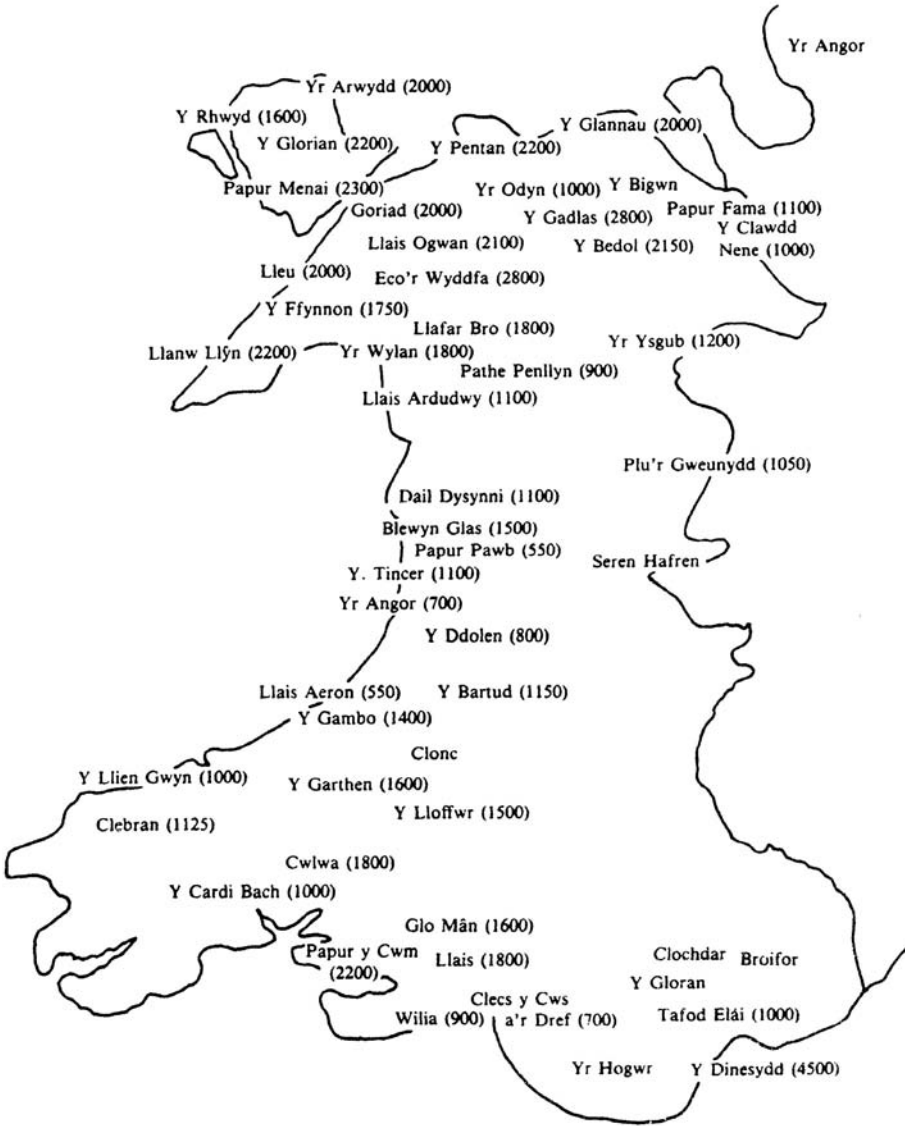


Figure 14.9 Location and circulation of community newspapers, 1989.

THE MASS MEDIA

With the advent of new technology, no community can be isolated and insulated from outside influences whether they are cultural, attitudinal, moral, political or linguistic. It used to be held that two main pillars supported the Welsh language, namely the home and the chapel. Even when all other daily situations demanded use of English, Welsh would

remain the language of hearth and home and of religion. It was held that the purpose of education was to teach English, and the home and Sunday school would look after Welsh. The same kind of pattern and mentality emerged within the Welsh community in Patagonia at the beginning of the twentieth century. Education, administration, commerce and banking were conducted in Spanish which became the official language of public life, and gradually displaced Welsh in all public domains apart from the religious context. In Patagonia such a restricted, register range has resulted in language choice being determined largely by locale. Two individuals will address each other in Welsh in chapel and also in each other's homes. In the post office, the shops, the banks or indeed any other public place the same individuals will speak to each other in Spanish. It would seem to be a unique diglossic situation, but nevertheless a very dangerous one for the very existence of the minority language. When the majority language spreads into the home, experts argue that the minority language is lost. The invasion of the home domain by English via the mass media was considered a crucial factor in linguistic erosion and language shift during the second half of the twentieth century. During the 1970s Welsh-language activists were concerned that the dominance of English programmes on the radio and particularly on television was having an erosive effect upon the use of the Welsh language. American research had concluded that television has negative effects on minority languages and cultures (Berry and Mitchell-Kernan 1982). E. Price-Jones's (1982) research in Wales affirmed this conclusion. He shows that television can affect children's attitudes to Welsh, and if other Welsh cultural influences are absent – if, for example, a child is not exposed to Welsh-medium Sunday school and its related religious and cultural milieu, then he or she is likely to adopt a less favourable attitude to the Welsh language. This tends to lead to a language shift because of a higher degree of English acculturation which is brought to children's homes via television and other media. The conventional view is that as children spend more time watching television than any other activity, the erosive effect of the mass media on language and culture becomes very apparent. There were a few Welsh programmes on television during the 1960s and 1970s, but they were mostly screened at unsociable hours. One had to be an enthusiast to tune in to a Welsh programme after the English station had closed. Linguistic equality did not exist in spite of the Welsh Language Act of 1967. As is indicated in Table 14.13, in 1971–2 barely two hours out of a total of 65 were devoted to Welsh-medium radio broadcasting, and less than two hours out of a total of 29 hours were devoted to Welsh-medium television transmission.

*Table 14.13* Welsh and English broadcasting 1971–2

	Welsh	English	Total
Radio	2 hrs 9 mins	63 hrs 24 mins	65 hrs 33 mins
Television	1 hr 48 mins	27 hrs 16 mins	29 hrs 4 mins
Totals	3 hrs 57 mins	90 hrs 40 mins	94 hr. 37 mins

Agitations, protests and a sustained series of campaigns for better provision characterized the 1970s and they represented a valid cross-section of Welsh speakers (see A. D. Rees 1971, 1973: 179–93; Davies 1972). In 1972 a total of 94 hours 30 minutes of programmes per day were broadcast by the BBC and ITV to Wales. A total of 3 hours 57 minutes were given to Welsh and 90 hours 40 minutes devoted to English programmes. Only 3.3 per cent of all radio broadcasts were in Welsh and a mere 6.2 per cent of all television programmes catered for Welsh speakers. Such a situation was seen as grossly

unfair. Rees (1973: 180) comments: 'But on radio there was only one hour of Welsh for every thirty-one in English and on television one for every fifteen. In short, the proportion of Welsh broadcasting in Wales bears no relation whatsoever to the proportion of Welsh speakers in the population. The Welsh language is simply drowned in a sea of English.'

During 1959–60 a total of 16.4 hours per week were transmitted, increasing to 27.8 hours in 1971–2. That represented a 5.8 per cent increase per year over the twelve years whereas the growth rate in English programmes had been 6.3 per cent per annum. Although the total number of hours of Welsh had increased by 11.4 hours per week, proportionally the provision for Welsh speakers had diminished in comparison to English-language programmes being transmitted. The Welsh Language Society persisted in its non-violent campaign for radical change (C. H. Williams 1977) and offended some, but stirred the conscience of others and won their sympathy. A. D. Rees states:

While Judges condemn the offenders as criminals, such national bodies as the Guild of Graduates of the University of Wales and the National Eisteddfod confer honours upon them . . . Under the Society's leadership, hundreds of older people are already withholding payment of television licences and scores of them have been fined by magistrates' courts – each offender taking advantage of the court as a public platform to draw attention to the scandalous condition of Welsh broadcasting.

(A. D. Rees 1973: 189)

The Crawford Report 1974 (Home Office 1974) conceded that a fourth television channel should be devoted to Welsh-medium broadcasting, but little happened during the second half of the decade apart from a gradual increase in the number of hours allotted to Welsh television programmes. In 1971–2 the total amounted to 12.7 hours per week; by 1978 it had increased to 14.85 hours and in 1981 to 18.5 hours. The implementation of the Crawford Report, however, seemed very uncertain by 1980 when the government announced that the new fourth channel would not be devoted to Welsh programmes, but rather that the Welsh output would be increased on existing channels. Such a reversal in policy resulted in uproar and during the summer of 1980 the Welsh press was dominated by this question. The issue, indeed, became a symbol of the struggle for the existence of the language and culture. Dr Gwynfor Evans, president of Plaid Cymru and widely respected even by his political opponents, announced that his fast to death would start on 6 October 1980 unless the government kept its original promise. A letter signed by seventy-eight prominent Welsh people was sent to the Home Secretary. They expressed their concern and dissatisfaction with the existing framework, stressing the important role that television had in bolstering and enriching Welsh culture. Finally on 17 September the government announced that the Crawford Report decision would be implemented. A total of twenty-two hours per week of Welsh programmes would be broadcast on the fourth channel and at peak viewing time. S4C went on the air in November 1982 and the number of hours allotted to Welsh-language programmes has gradually increased over the years. In 1983 the channel provided 24.6 hours of Welsh language broadcasting per week, and this rose to 29 hours per week by 1990. In 2007 the S4C analogue service broadcast 32 hours of Welsh language programmes mostly in the peak hours, 18:00 to 22:00, in accordance with its statutory obligations. Eighty hours per week are broadcast on the digital S4C channel, which was launched on the 15 December 1988. In addition, S4C2 broadcasts live transmissions from the National Assembly for Wales. In 2007 it received £94m of funding. Some of its Welsh language programmes, including *Newyddion* and *Pobl y Cwm*,

are produced by the BBC as part of its public service remit and provided to S4C free of charge. Most of its English language programmes, derived mainly from Channel 4, are broadcast at non-peak hours. S4C is controlled by the Welsh Fourth Channel Authority, which is an independent body unconnected to Ofcom which regulates other UK television channels such as the BBC, ITV and Channel 4.

Smaller amounts of income are derived from the sale of programmes and broadcast air time, which totals £5.3 million, a Wales Assembly Government (WAG) annual grant of £90, 857; £321,000 from the sale of goods and publications and £169,000 from other sources. It has been calculated that the added value of S4C activities to the Welsh economy totals some £87 million per annum.<sup>25</sup> Of course, the greater added value lies in the availability of high quality entertainment, sport and news-related programmes in Welsh, which not only acts as a popular social bond but also as a career development choice within the media.

The full impact of these developments, however, must be seen against the background of radio broadcasting in Wales during the same period. In 1978 Radio Cymru was established and all Welsh-language programmes were moved to the VHF waveband, a total of approximately 65 hours per week. Radio Cymru was a great success. Now all kinds of programmes could be broadcast in Welsh from news and current affairs programmes to chat shows, from pop music to the more traditional hymn singing. There were hobbies' programmes, women's programmes and, of course, children's programmes. Sports took on a much wider meaning and commentaries and discussions became as natural in Welsh as the more traditional slot *Munud i feddwl* (religious). Subjects which had not hitherto been discussed in Welsh in public were now commonplace and hence there was an expansion in vocabulary – Welsh words being used instead of loan words. Radio Cymru did much to raise the linguistic consciousness of the ordinary Welsh speaker and added prestige and status to the language because it managed to show that economics, international politics, and social matters such as adoption, abortion, racism and AIDS could easily be discussed in Welsh. The language was no longer restricted to the literary domains of great poetry, prose and drama, but was shown to be an effective medium for all aspects of life. Radio Cymru has gone on from strength to strength and, during 2007 approximately 80 hours per week were given to Welsh programmes. Such expansion has not meant a second rate, inferior or less professional service. Professionalism is one of the hallmarks of Radio Cymru. It had to succeed, it had to attract listeners, and it was in direct competition with other established channels. It is now possible to listen to Welsh radio all day with a fascinating array of programmes to suit all tastes. Radio Cymru as a Welsh-medium channel had operated for four years before the establishment of S4C in 1982. The successes and failures of the former certainly helped the latter.

From its inception S4C proved to be a great success, particularly since Welsh programmes were now available at peak viewing time. There have been interesting developments, successes and failures. News coverage, both Welsh and international, is of a high standard. Current affairs programmes cover a wide spectrum of subjects and therefore help to give the language a much wider applicability than has customarily been given to it since the middle of the nineteenth century. Television, by covering a wide spectrum of subjects and aspects, is one of the greatest forces in expanding the register range of Welsh speakers. People can discuss various sports activities in Welsh whereas thirty years ago they would have used English terms. Welsh language 'soaps' and other drama series are extremely popular and the daily *Pobol y Cwm* is one of the longest running programmes on British television. Children's programmes are innovative and professional, and must be so, in order to compete with the high standards of English counterparts. A few programmes

are screened specifically for learners of the language and several 'personalities', such as Nia Parry, owe their popularity to their commitment to making the learning of Welsh both effective and fun.<sup>26</sup> With the increased demands on Welsh teaching arising from the National Curriculum, more programmes aimed at learners of different age groups are of immense value.

A number of excellent films and film series have been screened, but more are needed if S4C is to retain a reasonable percentage of Welsh viewers. The competition is fierce at present, because whenever a Welsh programme is screened, the bilingual viewer has the choice of the whole gamut of digital channels at the same time. A large number of potential S4C viewers are lost when a popular or appealing programme is screened on the other channels. S4C recognizes the needs to diversify and has initiated a range of options which include the development of a second digital channel appealing to teenagers and young people. This represents quite a challenge because Welsh translations or adaptations of English programmes would not fully answer the need, since the English ones are already available and are usually of a high standard. A second pressure on the Authority is the current demand that in order to justify its £94 million annual funding from the UK tax and media support that it develop a Welsh content, but not necessarily a Welsh-medium, mix of programmes. This might satisfy the inclusive agenda but would certainly go against the grain of having a default Welsh-medium television channel.

One spin-off from the establishment of Radio Cymru and of S4C is the Welsh-language mass-media business. The Welsh music business seems to be holding its ground with a steady flow of new products appearing on the market annually. The 1980s heralded a decade of growth for the 'independent television studio companies' which mushroomed in response to the call for material by the Commissioning Department of S4C. Some excellent material has been produced by these 'independent studios'. However, there has recently been a period of consolidation and retrenchment into five large companies, one of which, Tinopolis, for example, is a significant player on the international stage, working out of London, while retaining a smaller proportion of its resource base in and around Llanelli. Such developments suggest that Welsh can be mainstreamed: even though it is a minority language, its unique culture can be portrayed effectively to a wider audience, and hence make an impact on the greater European Union.

## CULTURE/LANGUAGE

### The Eisteddfod

In spite of periodic financial crises the National Eisteddfod still flourishes and alternates annually between north and south. It is a huge undertaking in terms of arranging, administering and financing such an event. It is a cultural gathering that is unique to Wales, where amateurs compete in set competitions on the literary, musical and dramatic levels and in the visual arts. It is an excellent manifestation of established Welsh cultural values, ideals and attainments. The annual 'National' is in fact the pinnacle of all the local *eisteddfodau* held throughout the year. The Eisteddfod Court takes seriously the task of promoting the culture and language of Wales and takes a leading role in all discussions which have a bearing on these issues. Since 1950 the official language has been Welsh and this all-Welsh rule is jealously safeguarded. All notices on the Eisteddfod field are in Welsh and all the work of the Eisteddfod is conducted in Welsh. Here even bilingualism is not entertained. It has been strongly argued that such a strict linguistic rule can do more harm than good because it excludes non-Welsh speakers from participating fully. Some local authorities

in anglicized areas have refused to contribute towards the costs of the Eisteddfod because of this linguistic rule. Others have come to accept it as a necessary buffer against potential anglicization of traditional Welsh cultural events. The rule has not detracted from the appeal of the Eisteddfod even in predominantly English-speaking areas.

The Eisteddfod is regarded as one of the most prestigious cultural events of the year, not only in the literary and musical fields but progressively so in the domains of drama, concerts and the visual arts. It is also a meeting point for people of different political shades, different social backgrounds, different interests, but who are concerned about the Welsh language and Welsh culture.

The Urdd National Eisteddfod caters for children and young people and has over the years been very sensitive to the needs of young learners and the absolute necessity of giving them a taste of Welsh culture and integrating them into that tradition through involvement in the Eisteddfod's activities. For many youngsters a visit to the Eisteddfod can be a cultural and a linguistic shock. By hearing the language being used naturally around them, they realize that it is not just a classroom language. By experiencing the day's or week's activities they realize that there is a distinct cultural tradition which is available to them. Through such activities at local, county and national levels the Urdd makes a very important contribution to the effort to transmit Welsh cultural values in music, literature, drama, folk dancing and the visual arts. Its headquarters within the Millennium Centre in Cardiff Bay evince a modernity and self-confidence, while its wide programme of activities aims to be inclusive and relevant to today's youth, regardless of ethnocultural or racial background.

One may conclude that these associations and movements which foster Welsh culture are, within the limits of their resources, doing excellent work. By interesting people in Welsh culture, they are also strengthening and revitalizing the role of the language in local communities. The main drawback is that such activities are almost totally dependent upon voluntary workers and a large measure of state subvention. There is a dire need for a structured approach to the transmission of Welsh culture because it is one of the most important aspects of language maintenance/language planning, particularly since a revitalized interest in culture can inevitably affect the social role of language within different communities.<sup>27</sup>

## STATUS AND OFFICIAL DOMAINS OF THE LANGUAGE

For the Welsh language to survive, it must pervade an individual's whole way of life. The language needs to be far more flexible in terms of social domains and potential usage. The implied inferior status afforded to the Welsh language in the past had an adverse psychological effect on the speakers of the language. Many came to regard Welsh as inadequate and unrefined for the demands of the modern period. It had rural connotations and was not really suitable for urban and suburban living. Changes in education provision, however, have gone a long way to redress this imbalance. The growth of Welsh schools and of Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, the Mentrau Iaith, the success of Welsh-medium multi-media, the mushrooming of *papurau bro* and the streamlining of Welsh publishing are clear indications of a re-awakening of Welsh-language awareness. There is a wholehearted determination to expand the use of Welsh, so that its speakers can have that basic human right of being able to use their chosen language to discuss all aspects of daily life. Linguistic confidence goes hand in hand with an awareness of worth and value resulting in language promotion efforts. The use of Welsh in public life, in the



economic and financial spheres, in law and administration is a goal which has not been fully realized for over 450 years. During the latter part of the twentieth century steps were taken in the right direction: attempts had been made to give the Welsh language a respected and rightful status in public life. It has been a long, tiresome and often divisive struggle, but the current sociolinguistic state of the Welsh language, the successes, the gains, the revitalization of Welsh-speaking networks in the anglicized areas and the new emphasis on operational bilingualism cannot be fully understood without reference to the struggle to expand the role of Welsh in the public and institutional spheres in Wales.

At the National Eisteddfod held in Cardiff in 1938 the Welsh Language Petition was organized and was presented to Parliament in 1941 containing 394,864 signatures. It called for greater recognition for Welsh in public life. It resulted in the Welsh Courts Act of 1942 which provided that the Welsh language may be used in any court in Wales, by any party or witness who considers that he/she would otherwise be at a disadvantage by reason of his/her natural language of communication being Welsh. All court proceedings, however, were to be recorded in English and so Welsh, although accepted in certain circumstances, still did not have a status similar to English. During the 1950s and early 1960s individuals protested and tested the system, and these were in a sense forerunners of the structured national campaigns of the 1960s.<sup>28</sup>

In February 1962 Saunders Lewis delivered the BBC Wales radio lecture entitled '*Tynged yr Iaith*' ('The fate of the language'). He outlined the factors which had been, and still were, effecting a decline of the Welsh language. He startled his listeners by his conclusion that 'if present trends continue Welsh will cease to be a living language early in the twenty first century' (Lewis 1972: 13). But he also exhorted his listeners to challenge the flow of decay and despair by struggling to change the sociolinguistic conditions which were strangling the vitality of the language in the public, official and institutional spheres in Wales.

Go to it in earnest and without wavering to make it impossible to conduct local authority or central government business without the Welsh language . . . This is not a haphazard policy for isolated individuals . . . It is a policy for a movement and that movement should be active in those areas where Welsh is the everyday spoken language, demanding that all election papers and every official form relating to local or parliamentary elections in Wales be in Welsh, raising the Welsh language to be the main administrative medium of district and county.

(Lewis 1972: 26)

In time *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg* (Welsh Language Society) emerged with the prime aim of promoting the use of Welsh by challenging the authorities on a number of fronts. In February 1963 a demonstration was held in Aberystwyth post office followed by the blocking of Trefechan Bridge to all traffic. These actions brought to the public attention the inferior status of the Welsh language in law. The young students of 1963 managed to bring to the forefront an issue which had been smouldering for two decades. Through their action they challenged the status quo and jolted many from inaction and despondency. In July of the same year the Minister for Welsh Affairs convened a committee, under the chairmanship of Sir David Hughes Parry, 'to clarify the legal status of the Welsh language and to consider whether changes should be made in the law' (Welsh Office 1965: iii). In 1965 the Hughes Parry report recommended that Welsh should have equal validity with English in government and administration: 'there should be a clear, positive, legislative declaration of general application to the effect that any act, writing or thing done in Welsh should have the

legal force as if it had been done in English' (Welsh Office 1965: 35). This, however, did not give equal status to Welsh because it did not give the legal right to the Welsh speaker to use his/her own language in official contexts. The Welsh Language Act 1967 merely made possible the use of Welsh in courts and on official forms. It had not gone far enough, and so Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg immediately set about testing the principle of equal validity. Campaigns were started for bilingual versions of road-fund licences, electoral registration forms, income tax forms, pension forms, radio and television licences. Banks were obliged to concede on the bilingual cheque issue. Bilingual electricity bills and gas bills came next in line. In time these were made available, but only as reactions to protests rather than as a natural outcome of a declaration of equal validity. By the mid-1970s British Rail and the National Bus Company became targets of the campaigning.

Supermarkets were by then putting up bilingual signs. During the 1960s and 1970s Cymdeithas yr Iaith campaigned vociferously on the road-sign issue. All kinds of counter-arguments were presented against implementing a bilingual policy. Visitors would be confused and would get lost if place names such as Aberteifi co-occurred with Cardigan and people would find it impossible to pronounce Caernarfon rather than Caernarvon! Bilingual signs could be a major cause of road accidents. After a long drawn out campaign, bilingualism became the established norm. Many thought that this was a case of making a mountain out of a molehill, but in reality it was a battle that had to be won if due respect was to be accorded to the language. Anglicized spellings of Welsh place names were indeed symbolic of the inferior status that had been granted to Welsh. Further, all the demonstrations and press coverage brought the language issue to the forefront of Welsh politics. During the 1970s Cymdeithas yr Iaith concentrated on two issues – the need for a Welsh language television channel, and the holiday-home question in rural Wales. The non-violent approach of these 'young extremists' has been criticized as being divisive, destructive and non-productive, but, in reality, the historical record is quite clear. All concessions have been preceded by an intensification of Cymdeithas' activities. D. G. Jones (1973) assessed the role of Cymdeithas yr Iaith as follows:

*Cymdeithas yr Iaith* has succeeded in bringing the problem of the Welsh language into public notice on a scale never achieved before . . . every campaign *Cymdeithas yr Iaith* has in addition to the obvious aim of obtaining concessions in the public use of Welsh, a less immediate but equally central aim which is to awaken a new spirit among the people . . . But *Cymdeithas yr Iaith* will readily concede that status will not of itself save a language. Just as important, as part of the broad strategy, is the spirit of determination which the fight for official status calls into being. *Cymdeithas yr Iaith* has assumed that persuasion to be effective, does not have to be friendly, and that the kind of persuasion which shocks and challenges people, impresses them with a seriousness of purpose and appeals to the aristocratic instinct in them, eventually brings more solid results.

(D. G. Jones 1973: 303)

In 1973 the Secretary of State for Wales nominated members to a newly established Welsh Language Council and their brief was to advise on all questions relating to the Welsh language. They reported on broadcasting, on children's magazines and on Welsh-medium nursery education, and all these gained government support, thus securing for the Welsh language a more prominent role in national life. Nevertheless, the main language issue, that of non-equality with English, still remained an open sore. Although many leaflets and forms were translated into Welsh, they were only available on request, so that most people

did not even know of their existence. Further, such leaflets and forms were not always publicly displayed. This meant that if one wanted to use the Welsh language in an official capacity it entailed the extra effort of seeking out such a facility if it existed.<sup>29</sup>

During the late 1980s a number of incremental reforms in education, public administration, the legal system and local government sought to increase the opportunities available both to learn and to use Welsh in society. At the time these were recognized as being piecemeal, insufficient and rudimentary. Nevertheless they have had an impact on subsequent events – none more so than the Education Reform Act, 1988 which granted a Core Subject status for Welsh in all schools within the statutory education age range of 5–16. For the first time in national history, all of the children of Wales have had an opportunity to develop some bilingual skills, and for a substantial minority to develop real fluency in Welsh. The most tangible move was the decision taken in July 1988 by the Rt Hon. Peter Walker MP, acting on the advice of eight prominent Welshmen, to establish the Welsh Language Board. Its brief was to advise on matters which called for legislative or administrative action. It was also to advise the Secretary of State for Wales on the use and promotion of the Welsh language. In January 1989 the Board published *Yr Iaith Gymraeg: Strategaeth i'r Dyfodol* (*The Welsh Language: A Strategy for the Future*) (Welsh Language Board 1989a). Its aims were to create a bilingual community and to encourage new situations where Welsh could and would be used. It would seek legislation in order to achieve these aims, but this would be done within a framework of equal validity rather than of equal status. The Board saw this as the only way forward and in spite of a discordant response to its proposals, it presented its case for equal validity to the Secretary of State for Wales in July 1989 and in October of the same year, it presented a Draft Bill (Welsh Language Board 1989b) to the Welsh Office. The Board's approach is that of persuasion and since 1988 it has sought to expand the use of Welsh in the public sector and more recently in the private sector through exhortation rather than through compulsion. During 1989 it published *A Bilingual Policy: Guidelines for the Public Sector* (Welsh Language Board 1989d) and *Practical Options for the Use of Welsh in Business* (Welsh Language Board 1989e). In March 1990 the Inland Revenue established a special unit for dealing with taxation matters through the medium of Welsh. The Department of Social Security also developed bilingual policy guidelines for its staff, and similar initiatives were launched by other state bodies and agencies which served the general population.

Critics of the Draft Bill agreed with the general aims of the Welsh Language Board, but feared that it would be too weak to secure permanent success. It advocated equal validity and not equal status and in this respect followed the lead of the Hughes Parry report and the Welsh Language Act 1967. Yet the latter did not work satisfactorily. Hughes Parry (Welsh Office 1965) and the Council for the Welsh Language (1978a) rejected statutory bilingualism because of serious financial and practical obstacles, in spite of the fact that such a pattern would have lifted all limitations upon the use of the Welsh language. In the context of equal validity, the clause which has caused most dissent is 2.1a. 'So far as is practicable, comply with the reasonable requirements of every person resident in Wales who indicates that he wishes to receive written material of whatever nature, or otherwise to communicate, by any means whatsoever in Welsh or English as the case may be' (Welsh Language Board 1990b: 2.1a). This may be interpreted as stating that Welsh is only available if the request is a reasonable one and fulfilling it is practicable. The terms 'reasonable' and 'practicable' may be interpreted in a host of different ways. Here lies the fear of all who criticized the Draft Bill. Eleri Carrog of 'Cefn',<sup>30</sup> reacting to a revised version of the Draft Bill, said 'Our basic standpoint is that no individual nor society should be forced to prove the reasonableness of using his own language in his own

country' (Carrog 1990: 5–6). The revised version stressed that if a request is refused, then such action would have to be justified at law. The second part of the Bill sought to set up a Statutory Welsh Language Board which would be responsible for all matters dealing with language maintenance and possibly with language planning. The need of a single body to assess and promote linguistic matters was abundantly clear, but there were fears that it would not be a strong body with the necessary authority to implement policies.

The resultant Welsh Language Act 1993 provided a statutory framework for the treatment of English and Welsh on the basis of equality.<sup>31</sup> Its chief policy instrument was the strengthened Welsh Language Board, established on 21 December 1993, as a non-departmental statutory organization.<sup>32</sup> It had three main duties:

- 1 Advising organizations which were preparing language schemes on the mechanism of operating the central principle of the Act, that the Welsh and English languages should be treated on a basis of equality.
- 2 Advising those who provide services to the public in Wales on issues relevant to the Welsh language.
- 3 Advising central government on issues relating to the Welsh language.

The eleven Board members were appointed by the Secretary of State for Wales and they devoted two days a month to the activities of this quango. The day to day work of the Board was undertaken by thirty staff members divided into seven areas of responsibility, namely Policy, Public and Voluntary Sector, Grants and Private Sector, Education and Training, Marketing and Communication, Finance, Administration.

The Welsh Language Act 1993 details key steps to be taken by the Welsh Language Board and by public sector bodies in the preparation of Welsh-language schemes. These schemes are designed to implement the central principle of the act which is to treat Welsh and English on the basis of equality. Between 1995 and 1999 a total of sixty-seven language schemes had been approved including all twenty-two local authorities. On the eve of devolution notices had been issued to a further fifty-nine bodies to prepare schemes. Today over 500 such schemes have been implemented, and undoubtedly they have been highly instrumental in changing the character of bilingual services within public authorities. Yet it may be asked how effective they have been in changing the linguistic choice and behaviour both of providers and of the general public. Systematic monitoring of the schemes by the Language Board as part of its audit function reveals a wide variation in behaviour patterns, both among the various local authorities and institutions and by the general public.<sup>33</sup>

The Board also had the right to extend its remit in other sectors covered by the Act, and had given priority to education and training. By June 1998 the Welsh education schemes of two local authorities had been approved and a further fifteen were being developed (Welsh Language Board 1998). Further and higher education colleges, together with Welsh-medium pre-school provision have also received attention. Between 1998 and 2006 Education Learning Wales (ELWa), with input from the Board, had co-ordinated a national strategy for Welsh for Adults, and this sector has benefited from a more robust and systematic provision of service, accreditation of Adult Tutors, resource development and strategic intervention related to skills acquisition in key areas of the economy, such as insurance and banking, retail sales and the legal profession. In total, grants of £2,027,000 were distributed in the year 1997–8 to local authorities to promote Welsh-language education.

The Welsh Language Board's primary goal is to enable the language to become self-sustaining and secure as a medium of communication in Wales. It has set itself four

priorities: 1) to increase the numbers of Welsh speakers; 2) to provide more opportunities to use the language; 3) to change the habits of language use and encourage people to take advantage of the opportunities provided, and 4) to strengthen Welsh as a community language.

In order to meet its first aim of increasing the numbers speaking Welsh it has focused its efforts on promoting the use of Welsh among young people by seeking to

- ensure that the provision of Welsh-language and Welsh-medium education and training is planned in conjunction with the key players, to ensure an appropriate level of provision for young people to obtain Welsh language education services;
- discuss and formulate policies and effective initiatives for promoting the use of Welsh among young people, in conjunction with relevant organizations;
- ensure the proper provision of public and voluntary services for young people through the medium of Welsh (in conjunction with public and voluntary bodies);
- provide grants for initiatives which promote the use of Welsh among young people.

The Board's second objective is

to agree measures which provide opportunities for the public to use the Welsh language with organizations which deal with the public in Wales, giving priority to those organizations which have contact with a significant number of Welsh speakers, provide services which are likely to be in greatest demand through the medium of Welsh or have a high public profile in Wales, or are influential by virtue of their status or responsibilities.

In order to increase opportunities the Board has

- agreed Welsh language schemes with organizations in accordance with the stated objective;
- encouraged providers of public services to regard the provision of high-quality Welsh-medium services on a basis of equality with English as a natural part of providing services in Wales;
- encouraged Welsh speakers through marketing initiatives to make greater use of the services available through the medium of Welsh;
- worked closely with the voluntary sector in formulating and implementing Welsh-language policies, particularly in relation to the delivery of child- or youth-related services and special needs;
- promoted and facilitated the use of the language in every aspect of education and training and ensured that appropriate provision is made for persons who wish to learn Welsh;
- maintained an overview of the strategic educational plans and schemes of all education authorities and establishments, and created partnership with the agencies concerned to improve provision where appropriate;
- ensured that planning of provision for vocational education and training takes account of potential increases in demand from employers for Welsh speakers;
- promoted the authorization and standardization of Welsh-language terminology, in conjunction with relevant academic and professional bodies;
- encouraged professional training and recognized standards for translators working with Welsh;

- ensured that appropriate Welsh-language software continues to be developed to meet the needs of users;
- encouraged the increased provision of Welsh in the private sector.

A third objective is to change the habits of language use and encourage people to take advantage of the opportunities provided. This is done through an innovative marketing campaign, including attractive bilingual public display signs, the development of a Welsh spellchecker and on-line dictionary, a direct Welsh Link Line for queries regarding the Welsh language and language-related services, a language in the workplace portfolio/file, a Plain Welsh campaign with excellent guidelines for writing Welsh, an agreement with Microsoft that a Welsh version of its computer functions be available from 2005 onwards, and other improvements to the infrastructure so necessary before a real language choice can be made by the general public.

The Welsh Language Board's (WLB) fourth objective is 'that Welsh-speaking communities be given the facilities, opportunities and the encouragement needed to maintain and extend the use of Welsh in those communities'. The Board has committed itself to

- undertake research into the linguistic make-up of Welsh-speaking communities and the social and economic factors which affect them;
- identify the main threats to the Welsh language within Welsh-speaking communities, and formulate effective action plans for addressing potential problems in conjunction with key players across all sectors;
- discuss and develop with unitary authorities, especially those in the traditional strongholds, their role in terms of administering language initiatives and co-ordinating language policies;
- promote co-operation between communities to foster mutual support, encouragement and understanding;
- assess the effectiveness of existing community-based initiatives (such as 'Mentrau Iaith') as a means of promoting the use of Welsh and their usefulness as a model for facilitating the creation of new locally run initiatives;
- facilitate the establishment of local language fora to promote Welsh language initiatives, to create opportunities for using Welsh and to motivate and encourage people to do so;
- promote the learning of Welsh by adults (including the provision of worthwhile opportunities to use Welsh outside the classroom and other ancillary support);
- provide grants to support activities to strengthen Welsh within the community.

A significant influence on the ability of Welsh speakers to use their language within employment is the spread of multilingual Information Technology. Many small companies have been engaged in this process for a long time, but real co-ordination of developments in the field was achieved as a result of the Welsh Language Board taking the lead and advancing strategic initiatives.<sup>34</sup> A priority was the standardization of terminology and lexicographical resources, which was facilitated by the establishment of a Corpus Planning Unit within the WLB, whose standardized dictionary of IT terms has proved invaluable, as have the more universal spellcheckers, grammar checkers and computerized dictionaries, developed in partnership with the WLB.<sup>35</sup> A number of long-standing issues were tackled by the WLB, whose professional staff have both identified the needs and resourced the resultant solutions. Among these may be listed: localization and other applications, switchability of interface and language attributes, especially in relation to

Microsoft products, KDE and GNOME, bilingual web design standards, and content creation aids. A key development has been the standardization of Welsh-language keyboards, diacritical marks and fonts, so that both keyboard short cuts or character code numbers can be employed by PC users.<sup>36</sup>

Another field which has grown as a result of simultaneous developments within IT and increased demand from the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW), local government and major institutions, has been computer-aided translation which although in its early stages of deployment, augurs well for the greater deployment of bilingual technology aids. Speech recognition, adaptive technology and integration of machine translation and speech technology (MT, SR, TTS) have also developed. However, as any behavioural scientist will advise, a major stumbling block is the willingness of the end users to take advantage of the opportunities afforded. Thus basic IT skills training, language awareness and e-learning are now on the agenda of many specialist training companies.<sup>37</sup>

The pre-existent Welsh Office governmental system, though strong in parts, was more concerned with implementing statutory provision, than with language planning and the creation of a new vision for bilingualism in Wales. It discharged its remit primarily through the Welsh Language Board, a quango, established by the UK Conservative government in 1989, to act as a sounding board for the development of Welsh-medium services. By 1999, the WLB had established itself as the principal agency for the promotion of Welsh in public life. However, throughout the period independent commentators had queried the original settlement of the Language Act and had concluded that in vesting public institutions with language obligations while gliding over the issue of individual language rights, the Welsh Language Act had fallen far short of establishing Welsh as a co-equal language (C. H. Williams 1998a, 2000).

## THE IMPACT OF DEVOLUTION ON THE FORMULATION OF LANGUAGE POLICY, 1999–2008

As a consequence of UK devolution, a Scottish Parliament and a National Assembly for Wales were established in 1999. The bilingual National Assembly puts into operative effect the reality of two official languages as acknowledged in the Welsh Language Act of 1993. A priority for the Assembly's first term was a thorough review of the condition of Welsh carried out by both the Culture Committee and the Education Committee. The key recommendation was the political goal of establishing a bilingual society to be encouraged by the implementation of a new government strategy as enunciated in *Iaith Pawb* (2003). Critical decisions on language policy are now being taken by involved and informed politicians, leading many to presume that civil society has also been 'empowered' by devolution in respect of formulating and implementing language-related policies.<sup>38</sup> The largely positive trends identified by the 2001 census on the Welsh language also boosted self-confidence as a 2 per cent increase in the proportion of Welsh speakers was recorded between 1991 and 2001. These results need to be tempered by the type of critical analysis offered by Higgs et al. (2004). As Figure 14.10 reveals, the overall pattern from the censuses of 1981 and 1991 is retained with only Anglesey, Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire having over 50 per cent of their population who can speak Welsh. In terms of absolute numbers, Carmarthenshire has the largest numbers of Welsh speakers.

Following a comprehensive review of the state of Welsh undertaken during 2002, the WAG has committed itself to achieving these five goals:

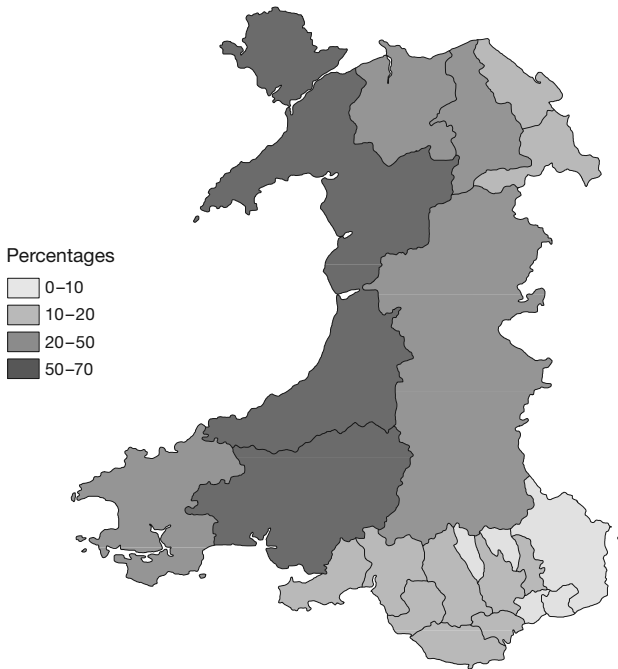


Figure 14.10 Proportion of people aged 3 and over who can speak Welsh (2001 census)

Source: Office of National Statistics (2003); reproduced from Higgs et al. 2004: 192

- 1 by 2011 to increase the proportion of Welsh speakers by 5 percentage points from the 2001 census baseline;
- 2 to arrest the decline in heartland communities, especially those with close to 70 per cent+ Welsh speakers;
- 3 to increase the proportion of children in pre-school Welsh education;
- 4 to increase the proportion of families where Welsh is the principal language;
- 5 to increase the provision of Welsh-medium services in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

*Iaith Pawb* is the current benchmark for calibrating government commitment. It has adopted many of the fine recommendations put to the Assembly's Education and Culture reviews during 2002. The most notable of these are: the operation of the principle of language equality; devising an effective in-house bilingual culture; deciding how Welsh will be a crosscutting issue in all aspects of policy; producing bilingual legislation; developing a professional bilingual legislative drafting team of jurilinguists as in Canada; developing innovative IT translation procedures; prioritizing the NAFW's translation needs; finessing WAG's relationship with the Welsh Language Board and its many partners; relating its bilingual practices to other levels of government, institutions and to civil society.

A critical area of sociolinguistic maintenance is language transmission both within the family and within the education system. Thus a campaign has been launched to boost language acquisition, principally through the statutory age 5–16 education provision, life-long learning, and latecomer centres. In an increasingly mixed language of marriage context the



successful pilot project on the 'Twf' – Family Language Transfer – programme will be extended to other sites in Wales. There is a commitment to boosting the bilingual services of NHS Wales, and of Iaith Gwaith, the Welsh in the workplace programme. Finally, in order to access such increased choice, the government has recognized the need to invest in language tools and the sociocultural infrastructure both through increasing the resources of the WLB and through its own in-house developments. The WAG has to determine how it will handle the recommendations adopted by *Iaith Pawb*, listed earlier in the paragraph.

Beyond the realms of public administration there remains the pressing need to promote Welsh within the private sector. This would include greater political and legal encouragement, with sanctions where necessary, the adoption of holistic perspectives rather than a fragmented and sectoral mind-set; the development of appropriate terminology and sharing of best practice; a Language Standardization Centre; the highlighting of the economic benefits of bilingualism; encouraging a professional discussion regarding the role of Welsh in the economy; developing role models among the SMEs and larger companies; influencing key decision-makers who are often based outside Wales. Whether a single new Welsh Language Act can deliver such a diverse range of responses is problematic, but there can be no doubt that the absence of binding legislation affecting the bilingual delivery of goods and services from whatever source is the greatest impediment to the realization of a fully functional bilingual society.

For the immediate future a number of reforms are required. These would include:

- a review of the way in which Welsh is taught and used as a medium for other subjects within the statutory education sector;
- a comprehensive review of teacher training for Welsh medium and bilingual schools;
- priority action in the designated 'Fro Gymraeg' districts;<sup>39</sup>
- more concerted action by the WDA, WLB, WTB, and ELWa (and their successor agencies) to implement the integrated planning and policy proposals agreed within the Language and Economy Discussion Group;
- urgent consideration to the need to expand the bilingual education and training opportunities afforded by the Welsh university and further education sector;
- extension of the Welsh Language Act, both to strengthen the status of Welsh within a revised political landscape and to take account of the rights of consumers and workers within designated parts of the private sector;
- the establishment of a Language Commissioner for Wales.<sup>40</sup>

## COALITION GOVERNMENT FOR ONE WALES

In the summer of 2007 the Labour Party and Plaid formed a coalition government, based on the agreed policy aims enunciated in 'One Wales' (2007). The coalition government allowed Plaid to enter government with three strategic areas of responsibility. Its leader Ieuan Wyn Jones became the Economy and Transport Minister, Rhodri Glyn Thomas became the Heritage Minister (which includes responsibility for the Welsh language) and Elin Jones became Rural Affairs Minister. Each of these appointments allows for a fresh injection of ideas and in some policy areas a far greater commitment to the mainstreaming of bilingualism. Of the many strident promises made in 'One Wales' (2007) three areas are worthy of note. They relate to Welsh-medium education, to legislative reform and to a greater recognition of the role which Wales might play within the international community. In terms of Welsh-medium education, 'One Wales' states:

We will set out a new policy agreement with Local Education Authorities to require them to assess the demand for Welsh-medium education, including surveying parental wishes, and to produce a resulting School Organisation Plan, setting out clear steps to meet needs. We will create a national Welsh-medium Education Strategy to develop effective provision from nursery through to further and higher education backed up by an implementation programme. We will establish a Welsh-medium Higher Education Network – the Federal College – in order to ensure Welsh-medium provision in our universities. We will explore the establishment of a Welsh for Adults Unit with sufficient funding, giving priority to tutor education. (p. 22)

The mandate also resolves to regenerate communities, establish credit unions, reduce poverty, maintain sustainable environments, support rural development, promote local food procurement, and encourage renewable technologies.

On the Welsh language itself, the document confirms the thrust of *Iaith Pawb* and asserts that

We will be seeking enhanced legislative competence on the Welsh language. Jointly we will work to extend the scope of the Welsh Language Legislative Competence Order included in the Assembly government's first year legislative programme, with a view to a new Assembly Measure to confirm official status for both Welsh and English linguistic rights in the provision of services and the establishment of the post of Language Commissioner. (p. 34)

Other features include working in tandem with Westminster to press the case for Welsh becoming an official EU language, enhancing the use of Welsh in cyberspace, addressing the effects of population migration imbalances, promoting the representation of Wales within international agencies, drawing on the collective energies of the Welsh diaspora. In other words, realizing a wish list of activities which give recognition to Wales's independent character and role within the wider world in the manner of Québec and Catalunya.

When he was the responsible Minister, Rhodri Glyn Thomas proved an effective operator in clearing several log-jams and in releasing more resources for publishing, the arts and live theatre, not least of which was a substantial re-negotiation of the debts and annual subsidy given to the Millennium Centre. His successor A. F. Jones made determined statements about the need to empower the National Assembly to legislate for the needs of the Welsh language. In broad terms, therefore, there is far greater impetus now to promote and regulate the Welsh language across a wide variety of fields.

## CONCLUSION

The vitality of Welsh cannot be doubted. There is a quantum difference between the current period and the 1970s and 1980s of the last century in almost all aspects of education, public service provision, the mass media and IT applications. And yet, many entertain significant doubts about the ability of the base of speakers to sustain itself over the long term. The growth in the number of speakers, produced by both the statutory education system and the adult learners' programmes, is very welcome. Observers are more sanguine, however, when it is revealed that less than 6.5 per cent of all families in Wales are made up of parents and children who are capable of speaking Welsh. Further, the majority of Welsh speakers are to be found in domestic contexts where they are the only speakers of the

language within the household, either as a result of their families having grown up and relocated or because the younger speakers have acquired a proficiency in school which is not shared by their parents. Clearly such language isolation does not bode well for the long-term reproduction of either the language or its related culture.

The principal agency of language and governance, the Welsh Language Board, has matured to become a professional, para-public institution, an arm of government backed by UK parliamentary legislation, a champion of radical and innovative measures, and a critic of many aspects of Welsh public and commercial life. Its actions and underlying approach have been criticized mainly in respect of its grant allocation decisions, its prioritizing of some cultural and youth-rated activities over others, and its regulatory behaviour vis-à-vis some public institutions. It has also been accused of being naive in advancing neo-liberal presumptions regarding its capacity to intervene in the marketplace, to influence the language choice and child-rearing practices of parents and for its quango-like relationship with government. However, because of its relative autonomy of action it has forged a wide variety of enabling partnerships, at one step removed from the day-to-day concerns of government, thereby acquiring its own legitimacy as the authoritative language-planning body. It has also mobilized a genuine discussion on the question of language rights and the establishment of a Language Commissioner. This has been the long-term aim of selected political parties, Cymdeithas yr Iaith and language advocates. The enforcement of compliance with Welsh-language schemes is dependent on action by the National Assembly for Wales. Public bodies believe that the board has far more powers than it actually has to enforce its recommendations. Consequently, the largely constructive, consensual approach of the WLB, especially when dealing with large organizations that do not have an obvious self-interest in promoting bilingualism, has paid off. More recently National Assembly decisions have strengthened the WLB and made more urgent its deliberations in terms of constructing a bilingual society.

Despite the professional competence and care of language-planning agencies, the ultimate future of the language rests on the myriad inter-connected decisions of speakers, acting either as individuals or in concert. A minority language cannot survive as a targeted resource or as a social network phenomenon; it must be the normal natural communication medium of distinct communities. Even though the number of Welsh speakers is increasing in the anglicized south-east, this growth must be tempered by the realization that the language continually loses ground in the 'heartland' areas. Any expansion in the use of Welsh, with its recognized official status, will have only a limited impact if the numbers of native speakers diminish and if Welsh-speaking communities are gradually dispersed. Survival of the language demands careful planning and resources at all levels – educational, economic, social, institutional and cultural. But ultimately it requires stamina, enthusiasm, and above all sheer determination on the part of its speakers to make it vibrant and essential.

## NOTES

- 1 Our interpretation of the 'sociolinguistics' of Welsh is broad here; for a treatment which details the linguistic aspects more, see Coupland (2008).
- 2 The most refined and developed form of their knowledge and training is portrayed in *Gramadegau'r Penceirddiaid*. Although the grammar section is basically a translation of Latin grammar (Donatus and Priscian), a substantial section deals with the art of poetry. See Williams and Jones (1934: xiii–xxxix); Jarman and Hughes (1979: 74–86); Matonis (1981: 128); and Parry (1962). Further insights concerning the status and professionalism of the bards are given in the Welsh Laws.

- 3 The repertoire consisted of three main types:
  - (a) those of Welsh origin;
  - (b) those which show evidence of European influence;
  - (c) translations.

There is therefore evidence of European cultural and linguistic contact but that in fact enriched the native Welsh tradition and illustrated the vitality and resourcefulness of the Welsh language itself.

- 4 William Salesbury 'Oll Synnwyr Pen Kembero Ygyd', in Hughes (ed.) (1951: 10–11).
- 5 Geolinguistics in general and certainly in Wales owes much to the meticulous and imaginative work of John Aitchison and Harold Carter, who concentrated on census analysis, W. T. R. Pryce who reconstructed historical church records to map linguistic changes, and Colin H. Williams who used his interpretations of the spatial analysis of Welsh to inform public policy and language planning studies.
- 6 See Liebersohn 1972, 1980 where it is shown that societal language shift (French/English) is due to intergenerational switching. Bilinguals pass on one of the two languages to the next generation. E. G. Lewis (1972) cites migration as a dominant factor in language shift in what used to be the USSR.
- 7 See Gal (1979), Dorian (1980) and Timm (1980). In each of these studies the language erosion and accompanying bilingualism and the following language shift were in the direction of the high-status language.
- 8 For details and a comprehensive discussion see Roberts (1998).
- 9 In 1885 Dan Isaac Davies HMI published a pamphlet 'Tair Miliwn o Gymry Dwyieithog' – three million bilinguals by 1890. He was obviously optimistic that the system would create bilinguals of both Welsh and English monoglots.
- 10 Southall (1895). English speakers who migrated to Cardiganshire were assimilated into the Welsh-speaking communities because their numbers made that possible: 'Carefully considered, the evidence shows pretty conclusively that Welsh must have been acquired by thousands of English settlers or their immediate descendants since 1847, who have thus become successful candidates for initiation into the circle of Welsh nationality' (Southall 1895: 17).
- 11 This call was repeated in Williams and Evas (1997) and implemented in the successful Twf Project run by the Welsh Language Board and Cwmni Iaith.
- 12 E. G. Lewis (1978). He suggests that the Welsh language is increasingly identified with a declining rural economy and a vanishing culture. As a result Welsh is seen as the language of intimacy and ethnic affiliation rather than as the language of economic interests. Migration as a factor affecting language shift is well documented. See Tabouret-Keller (1968, 1972); E. G. Lewis (1978); Dressler and Wodak-Leodolter (1977); and Timm (1980).
- 13 Carter (1989) examined the geographical distribution in 1981 of those born in Wales and also examined the change in the percentage of Welsh speakers in the decade 1971–81: 'It is this which has induced the present crisis of the language for the reservoir which continually renewed it is in danger of drying up' (Carter 1989: 21). See James (1986: 69–70). Between 1971 and 1977 it is estimated that 12,000 immigrants moved into Anglesey and of those only 2,150 (18 per cent) were Welsh speaking. In fact 73 per cent of all immigrants came from England.
- 14 The arrival of small numbers of monoglot English children at a small rural school affected the linguistic balance and often resulted in a switch from Welsh-medium teaching to English-medium teaching.
- 15 Ambrose and Williams (1981) conclude that the Welsh language is not necessarily safe in areas where 80 per cent of the inhabitants speak the language, and they stress that it is not necessarily dying in areas where 10 per cent or less of the population do so. Cardiff is, of course, a case in point. Welsh speakers constitute approximately 11 per cent of its population and yet in recent years the area has seen a great increase in the number of Welsh speakers. It is suggestive of future trends that Welsh-language cultural and educational facilities are better in this area than in some other areas with a high density of Welsh speakers.
- 16 This is obviously the legacy of an educational system which taught every subject except Welsh through the medium of English.

- 17 See Thomas (1987: 16, 17). In Pontrhydyfen (Neath-Port Talbot County Borough Council), in spite of industrialization and a certain degree of immigration, the language survived at the beginning of the century because the religious and socio-economic conditions upheld it. 'The main social centres were the nonconformist chapels which played an important role in language maintenance as their activities were exclusively Welsh in language. They therefore gave Welsh a respected status in a domain that was central to community life. Involvement in chapel activities also meant a high degree of exposure to formal variations of Welsh, the Sunday Schools providing a medium through which some level of literacy in the language could be attained.'
- 18 This point was made in several course-work extended essays on lexical variation in the Welsh Department, University College, Swansea.
- 19 Llwyd (1983: 16): 'the standards of the class are no better than the teacher responsible for them. This is especially true in the context of presenting Welsh as a second language. Unless there is strong motivation to succeed on the part of the individual teacher, then strong declarations of policy by the LEA are in vain.'
- 20 The success of this scheme owes much to the leadership and pedagogic skills of Cen Williams and the very able tutors employed by both centres who present the retraining programme in a professional and non-threatening manner, for recall that most of these teachers may have basic Welsh language skills, but often lack the confidence to deploy them in a classroom setting.
- 21 This, of course, necessitates a change in attitudes on both sides of the linguistic divide, if the traditional pattern described in Greene (1981) is to be reversed: 'Even in Wales where the language had been highly developed by the time that universal education was introduced, only a few fanatics ever dreamed of making it the language of instruction and the Welsh people opted for a bilingualism in which no English man ever participated and in which the losses were inevitably in one direction' (Greene 1981: 8).
- 22 For details see the Annual Report of MYM, 2006/7.
- 23 These two had retained a strong Welsh language policy in spite of the general trend towards bilingualism which had been a blot on Welsh journalism e.g., *Yr Adsain*, Corwen. In the 12 July 1932 issue, twenty-one news items were in English and only four in Welsh. *Y Seren* and *Y Cyfnod* of Bala followed a similar policy. 'Of the nine papers listed in *Benn's Newspapers Press Directory* for 1967 with Welsh-language titles only four had not succumbed to the blight of bilingualism, a form of palsy which usually leads to death' (Betts 1976: 131). In terms of content, however, the *Herald Gymraeg* and *Herald Môn* 'suffer from . . . far too much emphasis on the world of literature, culture and eisteddfodau' (Betts 1976: 138). Other news items which were of interest to the public at large were printed in the English *Caernarvon and Denbigh Herald* and the *Holyhead and Anglesey Mail*. The Welsh-medium newspapers therefore gave restricted coverage and this was a contributory factor in lowering sales.
- 24 The papers in question are *Tafod Elai* (Cardiff area, est. 1985), *Y Clawdd* (Wrexham), *Clochdar* (Cynon Valley), *Hogwr* (Bridgend, all est. 1987), *Y Bigwn* (Denbigh, est. 1988), and *Papur Bro Ifor* (Rhymney Valley, est. 1989).
- 25 Source: 'Effaith Economaidd S4C ar Economi Cymru 2002–2006', June 2007. We are grateful to our colleague Caroline Walters for drawing these figures to our attention. For other details visit [www.s4c.co.uk/corfforaethol](http://www.s4c.co.uk/corfforaethol).
- 26 On a personal note, Nia Parry is a former student and colleague of the authors.
- 27 The 1987 Urdd National Eisteddfod was held in Cwm Gwendraeth where the Welsh language was slowly losing ground. It is a valley of industrial villages where coal mining was once the main employer. A gradual weakening in the role of the chapels, coupled with a change in employment patterns and the low status afforded to Welsh within the communities, has led to gradual erosion. The 1987 Eisteddfod kindled new interest and new pride in the language, and local people approached the Welsh Language Board with ideas for a new initiative, Menter Iaith ('Language venture'). In June 1990 the Cwm Gwendraeth Initiative was launched and a director and staff were appointed. 'The challenge was to widen the role of Welsh in all walks of life and to show people its relevance in their lives. Their success has led to the development of similar initiatives in all parts of Wales. For a critique of Menter Cwm Gwendraeth see Campbell (2000) and for the Mentrau Iaith in terms of community empowerment, C. H. Williams 2000).

- 28 The most notable examples were Eileen and Trevor Beasley of Llangennech, who refused to pay rates until Llanelli District Council would issue bilingual rate demands. Legal proceedings were instituted against them on twelve occasions. They were at first regarded as eccentric cranks but gradually public opinion changed and in 1960 the Council gave in and provided bilingual rate forms. In their quite different ways the extended families of Gwynfor Evans and of Trevor Beasley are central to the development of the Welsh language struggle.
- 29 A total of 377 forms and leaflets were available in Welsh in 1986 but only 29 of them were produced bilingually. All the others were separate Welsh versions. They covered a whole range of public services. (Information from Welsh Language Board (1990b).)
- 30 Cefn is a movement which aims to support and extend the use of Welsh in business, place of work and public life. Its spokesperson and mainstay, Eleri Carrog, is an effective and tireless advocate of social justice in Wales.
- 31 More recently commentators have begun to argue that the Welsh Language Act was essentially an Act to establish the Welsh Language Board rather than an Act to secure equality of treatment for both the Welsh and English languages.
- 32 It was funded by a grant from the Welsh Office, which, for example, in the year ending 31 March 1998, prior to devolution, totalled £5,756,000.
- 33 Under the spirit of the 1993 Act, the Board has also developed partnerships with the twenty-two Unitary Authorities through Rhwydïaith (Network), with the Welsh Consumer Council, the Welsh Council for Voluntary Action and with a range of private sector organizations. During the financial year 1997–7 grants totalling £2,254,792 were distributed under the Board's main grants scheme to organizations as varied as the National Eisteddfod, the Welsh Books Council and Shelter Cymru (Welsh Language Board 1998).
- 34 The key strategy document is 'Information Technology and the Welsh Language', November 2005.
- 35 Canolfan Bedwyr, Bangor, has produced a significant amount of essential software products in this field, as have a multiplicity of other smaller private companies throughout the UK: for example, Draig Technology Ltd and its work on diacritical marks and on fonts.
- 36 Thus Microsoft Windows XP Service Pack Two (XSP2) contains a locale for Welsh, which is part of the operating system.
- 37 The best known is Cwmni Iaith, with offices and skilled personnel deployed throughout Wales.
- 38 A dissenting note to this orthodox view has been raised by Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg who are campaigning for a Council of the Welsh language on the grounds that direct access to politicians is still very difficult, while a statutory consultative council would give supplicants and lobbyists regular opportunities to advance their concerns and views.
- 39 Of course, this is dependent upon an official designation of the Welsh Heartland districts and a consideration as to who will co-ordinate proposed remedial action.
- 40 Based on Canadian and Irish experience, the office should be an independent regulatory body.

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## CHAPTER 15

# LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND IDENTITY IN BRITTANY

## The sociolinguistics of Breton

*Lenora A. Timm*

### OVERVIEW OF BRITTANY

#### Geography

Brittany is easily recognized on topographical maps of France as that western arm of northern France that projects into the Atlantic Ocean. It is with good reason, then, that the westernmost of the four departments that comprise today the *Région Bretagne* (henceforth Breton Region) within the administrative parameters of France is called Finistère (<Lat. *finis terrae*) 'the end of the earth'; the other three departments are Côtes d'Armor, Ile-et-Vilaine, and Morbihan. Prior to 1941, however, Brittany also included the department of Loire-Atlantique, lying south of the other four. It was detached from the others during the administrative reorganization of France under the Vichy Regime, a sore point for many Bretons, and a vocal movement exists today calling for its re-attachment to the Breton Region.<sup>1</sup> The major city of Loire-Atlantique, Nantes, was the seat of the Duchy of Brittany during its period of semi-autonomous existence that extended effectively from the late Middle Ages until the French Revolution. In this chapter, reference to Brittany or Bretons should generally be assumed to mean the current official (four-department) region unless mention is specifically made of 'historical Brittany'.

Brittany is an impressive-sized peninsula (27,200 km<sup>2</sup>), three of its sides consisting of coastlines (2,730 km) and over half a dozen inhabited islands, mainly off the western and southern coasts; it possesses several important commercial and military ports. Altogether, Brittany represents 5 per cent of the surface of continental France.<sup>2</sup> Its northern coast is located approximately 100 miles from the southern reaches of Great Britain (Devon and Cornwall) on the other side of the English Channel. The similarity in names – Brittany, Britain – is of course not accidental, as both are reflexes of an earlier indigenous ethnonym, Pritani, Latinized by the Roman invaders as Britani or Britanni,<sup>3</sup> whence also (via Welsh) the linguistic designator Brythonic for one of the two subgroups of languages to which Breton belongs (along with Welsh and Cornish); Goidelic is the branch consisting of Irish, Scottish Gaelic and Manx. The eastern capital Rennes in the *département* (henceforth department) of Ile-et-Vilaine, lies about 350 km west of Paris; the western capital, the naval port city of Brest, lies 250 km further west.

Traditionally the peninsula has been contrasted geographically by invoking two

Breton terms: *Arvor* ('on the sea') in reference to the coastal areas and *Argoad* ('on/at the woods') in reference to the interior areas, which have historically been and are still today the region's rural strongholds. Interior Brittany also has two relatively low-lying mountain ranges – the *Monts d'Arrée* and the *Montagnes Noires* – each with altitudes not exceeding about 400 metres, but associated with distinct patterns of land use and lifestyle. These differences in habitat, accessibility, and human ecology in the two areas are reflected in the differential patterns of Breton language maintenance and shift over the centuries, as the coastal regions, particularly cities and other larger population centres along the coasts, became francophone centuries before the inland and upland areas did.

## Population

Recent data (2005) from France's Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques (INSEE) indicate 3,063,000 inhabitants for the Breton Region (Bretagne. [com/fr/geographie/demographie](http://com/fr/geographie/demographie)). For the Department of Loire-Atlantique INSEE data for the same year show 1,134,266 inhabitants. The total population of historic Brittany is thus 4,197,266. Within the Breton Region, the three western departments – roughly constituting Lower (traditionally Breton-speaking) Brittany – have a population of 2,133,000 and Upper (traditionally French-speaking) Brittany has 930,000.

The five largest cities in the Breton Region are Rennes (209,900), Brest in northern Finistère (145,200), Quimper (64,900), Lorient (58,300) and Vannes (54,000); Nantes in Loire-Atlantique in historic Brittany has a population of 281,000.<sup>4</sup>

## The settlement of Brittany

Received notions of the settlement of the Breton peninsula – often referred to in documents from earlier centuries as *Armorica* – have interpreted the settling of Brittany as a series of immigrations of Celtic peoples from south-western England during the fifth–seventh centuries AD.<sup>5</sup> It is generally held that Britons (Celtic peoples from England) led by priests and warriors were fleeing the advancing Anglo-Saxon invaders, seeking a brighter future on the other side of the channel and that they encountered there either no inhabitants or very few (the 'desert' hypothesis of the Celtic scholar Joseph Loth: see Giot 1999: 296). It was not until the 1960s, as Humphreys observes (1993: 609), that linguist François Falc'hun challenged this interpretation, arguing instead for the continued existence of a Gaulish-speaking (Gallo-Roman) population on the peninsula with whom the Briton immigrants would have had to contend one way or another. For Falc'hun there is no other way to understand the high degree of distinctiveness of the southern regional dialect (*vannetais*) of Breton from the three northern dialects (*léonais*, *trégorrois*, and *cornouaillais*). He elaborated in two important studies (1963, 1981) the controversial idea that *vannetais* was the continuation of Gaulish which he believed was still spoken in parts of *Armorica* in the fifth to sixth century AD. This went against the prevailing thinking developed during the nineteenth century by historian Arthur La Borderie, linguist Joseph Loth and others, that emphasized the insular origins of Breton language and culture, denying any Gaulish survival as an important component of the new Breton society.

In more recent years, however, linguist and historian Léon Fleuriot (1980) came to believe that the immigrants could not have successfully established themselves in *Armorica* without the presence of a culturally similar population (*ibid.*; see also Favereau 2006; Wyart 2004). It may be that the Gallo-Roman residents more or less welcomed the Breton immigrants, possibly seeing them as additional support against the Saxons who,

if historian Nora Chadwick is right, had already made assaults on Armorican Gaul (1965: 202). Whatever the state of Gaulish survival in Armorica, successive waves of emigration by insular Britons cannot be doubted, according to Pierre-Roland Giot, whether

facilitated by invitations from Roman authorities to go occupy empty or deserted spaces; or perhaps motivated by epidemics . . . ; or by famines . . . or by the demoralizing raids of the Saxons, Angles, Frisians, Picts, Scots and Irish. But . . . the common basis [of the migrations] was quite simply the urge to move on.

(Giot 1999: 305)

Evidence from place names strongly suggests that the immigrants settled mainly in the northern and western sectors of the peninsula, for it is here that one finds a preponderance of settlements with one of several clearly Breton prefixes, such as *plou-/plu-/plé-* ('parish'), *gui(c)-/gwi(k)-* ('bourg'), *lan-* ('monastery/hermitage'). In the southern and south-eastern parts of Brittany, by contrast, there is a predominance of place names in *-acum*, a Latinized form of the Gaulish *-ac*. Such data suggest that the immigrants either did not attempt to, or did not succeed in, colonizing this already densely populated region, which is attested archaeologically (Chadwick 1965: 250).

In the centuries following their arrival the Bretons engaged militarily with the Franks who had been establishing themselves in the northern portions of Gaul and had pushed westward to Armorica, increasingly referred to as Britannia in the literature after the sixth century. The Franks intended to supersede the Romans as the rulers of Gaul and thus fought the Bretons to exert their dominance, and they succeeded until, in a famous battle in 845 AD, the Breton military leader Nominoë defeated them on Breton soil and proclaimed Breton independence, which was to last only briefly into the tenth century. During this time Breton armies were able to lay claim to the eastern city of Rennes and the southernmost city of Nantes.

## THE SHIFTING LINGUISTIC FRONTIER

It is assumed that the Breton language travelled and installed itself with the eastward-moving armies and dependents such that it became possible to speak of a Breton-Frankish linguistic boundary that extended, in the tenth century, as far east as the so-called Loth's line, running, *grosso modo*, from Mont St Michel in the north to the estuary of the Loire River in the south; this is based on Loth's examination of the configuration of place names in ninth-century charters (see Loth 1883). The majority of names to the west of the line in these charters are in Breton, the majority to the east are Gallo-Roman. This boundary has ever since been interpreted as showing the easternmost expansion of the Breton language indicated on the map (Figure 15.1) as Loth's line. The westward recession of the linguistic boundary is indicated by Sebillot's (1886) and Timm's (1976) lines.

It has long been customary in literature about Brittany to refer to two Brittanies on the basis of this shifting frontier – i.e., Lower Brittany (Breton *Breiz izel*) lying west of the line, in which Breton has been spoken continuously (if by diminishing numbers of people in recent times) since the era of the immigrations and Upper Brittany (Breton *Breiz uhel*) lying east of the line in which Breton had been spoken fleetingly, or not at all. Lower Brittany is also frequently referred to in the literature as *Bretagne bretonnante* 'Breton-speaking Brittany'.

Subsequent surveys undertaken in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have dem-

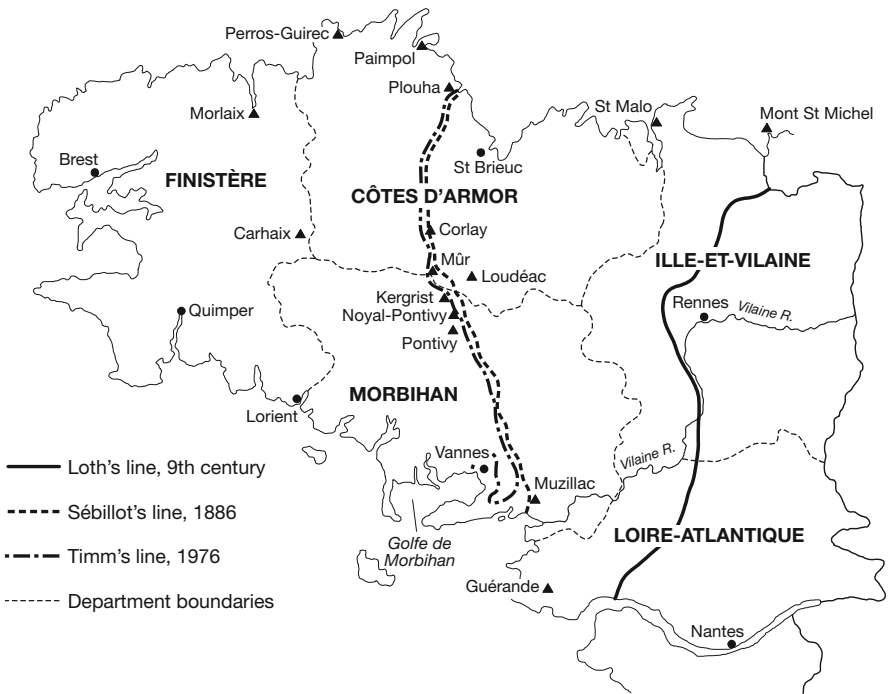


Figure 15.1 Brittany: department boundaries and the shifting linguistic frontier

onstrated a significant westward regression of Loth's boundary. The best-known is that of Paul Sébillot (1886) who traced a line running roughly from just west of the city of St Brieuc in the north to just east of the city of Vannes in the south (refer to Figure 15.1). This line was re-investigated in 1942 by R. Panier, who did not significantly alter the configuration delineated by Sébillot, yet the researcher noted anecdotally that French was nonetheless being spoken in one supposedly solidly Breton-speaking village; for example, he reported hearing children who, in playing a game of war, shouted out orders and calls for help in French. Panier also noted that children seemed to be learning Breton more from the grandparent generation, not from their parents, even though the latter were Breton speakers (though likely bilingual). He concluded from these and other observations that 'spontaneous thought is in French' (1942: 111).

Thirty-four years later, I undertook my own inquiry into the status of this 'frontier', visiting forty communities west of Sébillot's 1886 line (and classified by him as Breton-speaking), interviewing three or four local people in each community on the use of Breton in their daily life in the community, asking who would speak it with whom, where, and how often. My findings were not surprising: nearly a century after Sébillot's observations, the vast majority (28/40) of the once firmly Breton-speaking communities were no longer that. In some villages interviewees would recite the names of the two, three, or four older people who still spoke Breton among themselves. In ten villages Breton seemed to have disappeared from usage altogether, for I would be told 'Breton is finished here . . . you

have to go to X to find it.' The generational shift was evident, and one man, about 50, commented, 'our generation already spoke French by preference' (Timm 1983: 453).

My investigation brought one important modification to the Sébillot/Panier line: the city of Vannes and its hinterlands in the Morbihan, previously included west of the frontier, needed to be situated east of the line (see Figure 15.1), as interviewees stressed that Breton was 'finished' in that area and that 'one needs to go to the Finistère' to find it (ibid.: 454). In the end, it was clear that the very concept of a linguistic 'frontier' separating Breton-speaking from French-speaking Brittany was illusory. Instead I envisioned Breton as 'surviving in islands strung throughout a widening sea of French speakers' (ibid.). In twenty-first-century Brittany, this interpretation still holds, though the islands are becoming smaller and smaller among the traditional Breton-speaking population and may be better conceptualized as social networks or communities of practice (see below).

## BRITTANY'S LATER HISTORY

Current versions of the history of Brittany look to the 'glorious' years of an independent kingdom under Nominoë and then under several male successors who ruled Brittany until 907. However, this independence started unravelling with assaults in that same year by Vikings who devastated Brittany, burning churches and monasteries, and pillaging as they went. The raids wreaked havoc on the literary treasures created and housed in monastic establishments. Taking what manuscripts they could, the monks, along with many of the aristocracy, fled to more secure sites well to the east or to England and other parts of Europe (Galliou and Jones 1991: 167–8).

Though Viking raids on Brittany gradually subsided and a new Breton leader – Alain Barbetorte (d. 952) – attempted to restore the kingdom, he did not enjoy the success of his predecessors and Brittany was inexorably drawn politically into the Frankish fold, bolstered by aristocratic intermarriage between Bretons and Franco-Normans.<sup>6</sup> Brittany entered the Middle Ages as an emerging feudal society dominated by a landed aristocracy, some with powerful political links to the Carolingian dynasty and its Capetian successor. The territory existed as a semi-autonomous duchy through much of the Middle Ages until it was officially annexed to the French Crown in 1532 by an Act of Union. This Act still resonates negatively with many Bretons who view as humiliating a statue that was inaugurated in 1911 in Rennes showing the last Duchess of Brittany, Anne de Bretagne, kneeling in submission to the French king. A clandestine group of Breton nationalists bombed the statue in 1932 on the occasion of the celebration of the 400th year of the Act of Union.

In spite of its incorporation into the French Crown in the sixteenth century, Brittany continued to enjoy a fairly high degree of autonomy, having retained its own parliament and wielding considerable control over its own finances and judicial system; indeed for several centuries following the union it had a flourishing economy, based on agricultural goods, salt, industrial crops such as flax and hemp, and a thriving merchant marine and fishing industry (Collins 1994: 60). Galliou and Jones refer to maritime expansion in the seventeenth–eighteenth century that created 'the commercial fortunes of the merchants, privateers, *armateurs* [ship-owners] and *bourgeoisie* of the great ports – Nantes, Brest, Saint-Malo and Port-Louis (now Lorient, M[orbihan])'. These historians point out that one can still see this wealth in the architecture of Nantes and in many chateaux and large country houses in the environs (1991: 284). On the other hand, conditions for the masses in late medieval times 'would have differed scarcely at all from the penury revealed by the

excavations at Lann Gouh en Melrand and Pen-er-Malo [twelfth century] . . . windowless temporary shacks, sunken-floored huts or simple single-cell buildings' (ibid.: 259–60). Conditions did not improve significantly among the ordinary people until the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Travellers through Brittany in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries attest to this backwardness, encapsulated in one famous writer's description – Victor Hugo in *Quatre-vingt treize* – of the Breton peasant:

wild, grave and peculiar, this clear-eyed man with long hair, living off of milk and chestnuts, restricted to his thatched roof . . . using water only for drinking . . . speaking a dead language, loving his kings, his lords, his priests, his lice

(cited in Laîné 1992: 65)

Breton monolingualism was the norm for the very numerous poor peasantry evoked by Hugo as well as for other subsistence-level social classes well into the nineteenth century (cf. Deguignet 1904). All of this began changing in the last decades of that century as the forces of modernization, urbanization, out-migration, compulsory education and conscription drove the process of restructuring Breton society that would play out over the next 150 years, favouring the learning and use of French and the increasing marginalization of the Breton language (see below).

## LANGUAGE HISTORY

Old Breton is dated to the fifth–eleventh centuries. Unfortunately, there is not much evidence of this early form of the language; what exists consists of a few proper nouns for the earliest centuries and then, from the eighth century, more numerous examples in the form of glosses on manuscripts and additional personal and place names found in cartularies or other Latin sources (Fleuriot 1985: 33). However, it is not doubted by most historians that Old Breton had a rich literary tradition that, for a variety of reasons, including the continuing assaults on Breton monasteries by the Vikings during the ninth to tenth centuries, has largely disappeared.

Middle Breton runs from the eleventh century to the early seventeenth century. Historical linguist Kenneth Jackson breaks this into two sub-periods, the first lasting until c. 1450 and during which most information surviving about this form of the language is found in cartularies and other documents (1967: 3). The longest piece of text known to us from this period is in fragments of a poem penned by a scribe in the margins of a Latin manuscript<sup>7</sup> that he had been copying; it has been dated to approximately 1350. These are described by Hardie (1948: 6) as 'typical *boutades humoristiques*', which helped ease the dreary monotony of scribe-work; they have been reconstructed from the handwriting and translated by Breton scholars Ernault and Loth as

<i>An guen heguen am louenas</i>	The fair one, her cheek gladdened me
<i>An hegarat an lacat glas</i>	The lovable (one) of the blue eye
<i>Mar ham guorant va karantic</i>	If my dear one assures me [that]
<i>Da vout in nos o he costic</i>	I shall be in the night at her side
<i>Vam garet. nep prêt. et ca. va</i>	Mother dear, etc.

(Loth 1913: 244–5; 247)



The internal rhyming scheme, so characteristic of Middle Breton, is very apparent in these fragments. The last line, with its mention of 'etc.', seems to show that it was a well-known refrain and did not need to be written out (Hardie 1948: 7).

Historian Michael Jones points out that there are no administrative texts in Breton from this period and that 'it is rare indeed even to find a phrase recorded in that language' (2003: 5). He does give one example extracted from an inquiry in the city of Vannes in the year 1400 following a public disturbance in which a local church authority, writing in Latin, described how men and women from the bourg began to shout in Breton 'Ferwet, ferwet, ferwet, donet avant', which the clergyman translates (in Latin) as 'Close up, close up, close up, they are coming here' (ibid.: 12, n. 47). One cannot fail to notice the French influence surfacing in this fragment of Breton.

The second sub-period of Middle Breton identified by Jackson runs from the latter half of the fifteenth century to the early seventeenth. It gives us the richest set of literary texts (ibid.), including the first printed work in Breton, the *Catholicon* – a Breton–French–Latin dictionary compiled by Jean (Jehan) Lagadeuc (1499), though it had appeared much earlier, in 1464, in manuscript form – saints' lives and other doctrinal writings, as well as dramatic works of a religious nature.

Modern Breton is dated from the seventeenth century to the present. Here, too, it is necessary to distinguish two phases. Jackson speaks of Early Modern Breton for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and Modern Breton for the nineteenth and twentieth; in each case, of course, what we are really talking about is an elaborated, literary Breton, rather than the traditional spoken forms of the language, which are fairly different in phonology and lexicon. However, the elaborated variety has become in recent decades the principal form of Breton offered (and available) to people learning it as a second or additional language, about which more will be presented further on.

Modern (literary) Breton, particularly following its re-vamping in the early decades of the twentieth century, is associated with a considerable body of literature encompassing multiple genres, with new titles appearing regularly at present. In this regard it has transcended the fairly limited repertoire of themes and genres associated with Breton-medium literature of past centuries.

## THE PRESENT SITUATION

### Numbers and age cohorts of speakers

It has been estimated that in the early years of the twentieth century 1.4 million or 93 per cent of the population of Lower Brittany was still speaking Breton on a daily basis (Broudic 1983; cited in Foy 2002: 29). This included an estimated 900,000 monolinguals and 500,000 bilinguals (ibid.). It has also been estimated that 100,000 people (7 per cent of the total population of Lower Brittany: 1.5 million) were at that time monolingual French speakers (ibid.).<sup>8</sup> A diglossic regime regulating language choice would most likely have prevailed at that time – i.e., with French as the High language for most public and official domains of use and with Breton as the Low language for family, neighbourhood, and work contexts (agricultural, maritime), and for religion (along with Latin and some French).

Fifty years later, in 1952, Francis Gourvil estimated (he did not conduct a survey) that there were 1.1 million people speaking Breton regularly, but now with only 100,000 of these being monolinguals, the remaining one million being bilinguals. Monolingual French speakers had risen in numbers to 400,000 or 27 per cent of the population (Gourvil 1968: 106–8).

Several decades after Gourvil's estimates, surveys on language use in Brittany were undertaken by individual researchers, radio stations, and such agencies as the Breton-regional newspaper *Le Télégramme* and the research institute TMO-Régions Ouest; these revealed steady declines and even dramatic drops in the number of people in Lower Brittany identifying themselves as Breton speakers. For example, Humphrey Lloyd Humphreys in 1962 conducted a survey in the commune of Bothoa in northern Lower Brittany, which was based in part on the local electoral register of 1882; extrapolating from that, he derived an estimated 686,000 speakers for the whole of Lower Brittany (1993: 627–8).

In 1987 Fañch Broudic worked with the regional public radio station Radio Bretagne Ouest to sample 999 Bretons in Finistère, arriving at a projected estimate of 614,587 adults (aged 15 or more) speaking Breton in Lower Brittany, i.e., 57.1 per cent of that population, with an additional 195,146 who claimed to understand but not speak the language (reported in Humphreys 1993: 630).

Ten years later Broudic worked with the TMO-Régions Institute to conduct a new survey which turned in a dramatic result: the revised estimate for the number of individuals able to speak Breton was 240,000, less than half the number reported in Broudic (1987). An additional 140,000 claimed to understand the language. The age distribution of speakers was similarly striking, although not completely surprising in light of clear tendencies reported on in the literature on this subject in the past (see Table 15.1).

*Table 15.1* Distribution of Breton speakers by age in 1997. Source: Broudic 1999: 32

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Age	Percentage of Breton speakers
15–19	0.5
20–39	5.0
40–59	28.0
60–74	49.5
> 75	17.0

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In today's Brittany there are no longer any Breton monolinguals, as all Breton speakers also speak French and the vast majority have acquired their literacy skills in that language as well (except in the case of children schooled in Diwan or bilingual classes, to be discussed later). Further, nearly 80 per cent of speakers who know of Breton, according to Broudic, say they use it only occasionally (1997: 45), even among friends and with family, the former strongholds of the language.

The most recent survey on speakers of non-French languages in France was conducted by INSEE in 1999 (results reported in Le Bouëtté 2003; see also Broudic 2003). This is an important survey, as it is the largest representative sample ever attempted in France: 380,000 adults aged 18 or more were surveyed throughout the country, including 40,000 in Brittany. The principal finding relevant to the present overview is that 257,000 Breton adults claimed that they sometimes used Breton to converse with people close to them (spouses, partners, parents, friends, colleagues, shopkeepers, etc.); interestingly, English was second, with 111,600 claiming to speak the latter at times in these situations. Not surprisingly, the survey also showed that the use of Breton was ten times more likely in the western department of Finistère than in the eastern department of Ile-et-Vilaine. Another finding – one known anecdotally for quite a while, but here confirmed – was this: in the 1920s 60 per cent of children learned their Breton from their parents; by the 1980s, only 6 per cent of children learned Breton in this old-fashioned way (*ibid.*: 21). To anticipate a bit, by the 1980s Diwan's immersion pedagogy was gaining headway, and the public

school and Catholic school systems would soon follow this lead with the introduction of bilingual (Breton–French) classes. It is in these institutions that the vast majority of children from the 1980s on would learn their Breton.

## REASONS FOR THE DECLINE IN THE USE OF BRETON

For several decades scholars have been analysing the reasons for the decline in the use of Breton (and other regional languages in France and other parts of Europe). There are doubtless many features shared in the stories of regional languages. In the case of such languages in France, these reasons may be considered under two rubrics: (1) social, economic, institutional and lifestyle changes that affected the entire country; (2) negative attitudes towards regional languages.

### Socioeconomic, institutional and lifestyle changes

A good example of institutional change that had widespread consequences for Breton is found in the educational reforms carried out by Jules Ferry, the Minister of Education in the 1880s. Ferry's 'laws' established free, public, compulsory, and secular elementary education for all children of primary school age, and were thus an important vector of linguistic change, bringing the standard, official language of the Republic into their lives, and serving as the basis for the development of their literacy and numeracy skills.

Other forces of a socioeconomic nature were also at work that would have a cumulative impact on linguistic practices. The export of commercial products and the attraction of foreign business people to Brittany encouraged the diffusion of French among at least the commercial classes of Bretons. Commercial exchanges with outsiders had in fact been going on for some time, for even during the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries Brittany was recognized as a centre of first-class horse fairs, drawing customers from as far away as Germany and the Netherlands (Collins 1994: 60); French was necessarily the language of such negotiations. In the nineteenth century, the laying of national rail lines that linked much of inland Brittany with the outside facilitated and accelerated such exchanges and provided greater accessibility to the more isolated interior areas of the peninsula. The railway also facilitated out-migration of Bretons to other sites in France in search of work, especially to the Paris region, where it was necessary for them to learn at least some French. In fact, Paris had for centuries been a favoured destination of Bretons seeking to improve their economic lot, and we find that as early as the thirteenth century there was a satirical literature caricaturing the Bretons as menial laborers and poking fun at their awkward French (Galliou and Jones 1991: 185). Construction of railways also brought French-speaking railway workers into Brittany, along with their often more left-leaning political ideas, as happened in the interior largely *bretonnant* town of Carhaix in the early twentieth century (Broudic 1995: 414, n. 8). An evolution in *mentalités* was well under way: Breton was increasingly viewed as the language of socioeconomic stagnation and the past, French as the language of social mobility, high culture and the future. Unsurprisingly, parents began choosing in ever-increasing numbers, especially after the Second World War, not to "burden" their own children with the ancestral tongue (see below).

Universal male conscription was instituted in 1872, which meant that young Breton men serving in the French armed services would be exposed to and would almost certainly learn some French, although they may have continued speaking Breton among themselves. There are accounts of especially harsh verbal treatment of Breton recruits by

French-speaking officers and soldiers, scathing and racist in tone; and it is claimed that some Breton soldiers were summarily executed as German spies during the First World War because they did not speak French and could not defend themselves in that language against espionage charges (Gwegen 1975: 45).

Finally, an important lifestyle change in the form of tourism became a reality for the more leisured classes beginning in the mid- to late nineteenth century, and Brittany was a destination of choice for Parisian tourists (and also for artists such as Gauguin). A hostelry industry expanded to accommodate such visitors, whose numbers swelled following the French state's institution in 1936 of paid holidays for all salaried workers. Naturally this would have promoted the learning of French among locals working or seeking work in the booming hotel and restaurant industry.

### Negative attitudes towards the language

In addition to the effects of universal French-based education, military conscription, and socioeconomic developments on the practice and maintenance of (or shift from) Breton, the complex issue of internalized negative attitudes towards the language, and sources of these, cannot be overlooked. Though not affecting everyone everywhere in Brittany, the use of *le symbole* introduced during the Third Republic to humiliate school children 'caught' speaking Breton on the school premises produced in many who experienced it a negative attitude towards their mother tongue, which of course was the intended effect. *Le symbole* ('the symbol', variably called *le signal* 'the signal', *le signe* 'the sign', or *la vache* 'the cow') worked in this way: a simple object from daily life – most often a sabot (the iconic peasant wooden shoe), but sometimes a piece of wood, a bobbin, an old potato, a cork, an iron ring, a tin can, etc. (Prémel 1995: 85–6) – would be attached by the teacher around the neck of a child heard speaking Breton; the only way the child could earn release from this humiliating display was by reporting hearing another child speaking Breton, to whom the 'symbol' would then be transferred, and so the item passed from one child to another as the day progressed. The child ending up with it at the end of the day might receive corporal punishment, be assigned to clean the latrines after school; or perhaps be made to write 100 times on the chalkboard such lines as *Je parle breton à l'école* 'I speak Breton at school' (ibid.: 81). For many children who experienced this sort of treatment, Breton would become negatively associated with school, learning, and most aspects of social mobility, hastening the shift to French.

Parents often approved of this practice, for they saw it clearly in their children's best interests to learn French, by whatever means necessary, knowing that in speaking only Breton they would be on a short tether vis-à-vis the expanding outside world. However, this did not mean that Breton would not continue to be the principal, or sole, language of the household and the neighbourhood in rural Brittany, and thus many children from this period (late 1800s–early 1900s) would still have spoken the language, or at the least, have developed a strong passive or comprehension knowledge of it.

Complementing the negative set of values attached to speaking Breton was the increasing perception of French as the language not only of education and upward socioeconomic mobility but of fashionability, of being in vogue, a perception held especially by the female population. Linguist Albert Dauzat (1929) reported that in the 1920s young rural women from Lower Brittany dreamed not of marrying an eligible peasant bachelor of their own *pays*, but rather of walking away on the arm of a civil servant or a military man, and setting up house in the nearby bourg or town. He also notes how young female servants in hotels would pretend not to know a word of Breton in exchanges with clients

dressed in city attire (Dauzat 1929: 38). Fañch Broudic briefly discusses a 1951 study that considered gender differences in the use of Breton at that time; of young women the study's author says, 'Every time a girl has been relatively distanced from her parents, she only speaks French to old people and even . . . to the cows' (1995: 428).

In the early 1970s, sociologist Fañch Elegeët conducted interviews with fifty-nine Bretons living in Northern Finistère, finding that while the vast majority of the men (30/34) agreed to hold the interview with him in Breton, less than half (9/19) of the women agreed to do so. Moreover, while all the men 17–20 years old would speak Breton in their neighbourhood – at least with older people – young women of that age would never do so (reported in Gwegen 1975: 62). In a multi-year study of social change conducted by a team of social scientists in the community of Plodémet (Finistère) in the early 1960s, one researcher concluded that 'women [are] the secret agent of modernity' (Morin 1967: 164).

During the Second World War, the German occupation of France, and the subsequent unfortunate choice made by a small number of Breton militants belonging to the Parti National Breton (PNB) to collaborate with the Nazis in the hope of ultimately securing Breton independence, the Breton language was further undermined. The PNB's official organ, *Breiz Atao* (*Brittany Forever*) has become emblematic of this entire movement, and the mere mention of it today can be moderately distressing to many Bretons.

As part of the aftermath of that war, Breton cultural expression was largely repressed for some years as thousands of Bretons were prosecuted by the French government under suspicion of collaboration even in the absence of direct evidence of this (Fouéré 1977: 67; Hamon 2001: 229). Several of the most prominent leaders of the Nazi-implicated activists were condemned to death or sent to forced labor camps (Fouéré 1977: 67–8); others were exiled from France. It is important to point out that the vast majority of Bretons during this difficult period took no part in this separatist movement and, indeed, were outspoken French patriots; many were among the Resistance fighters opposing both the Nazis and Petain's Vichy Regime.<sup>9</sup> However, the taint of 'collabo' came subsequently to be associated with anything faintly resembling Breton political organization, more so than in other regions of France, which also had had collaborators in their midst (*ibid.*)

## THE RE-VALORIZATION OF BRETON LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

In the late 1940s certain elements of Breton culture began to re-emerge more publicly again: L'Association des sonneurs de biniou (The Association of Biniou Players) was reorganized in 1946; in the same year the Breton language literary revue *Al Liamm* was launched (Fouéré 1977: 75), and continues to this day. The national *Loi Deixonne* (*Deixonne Law*) was passed in 1951, making it possible for regional languages to be taught optionally for a few hours a week under certain circumstances; it was in truth not a very meaningful advance for teaching or learning such languages, given the conditions it imposed, but it was at least a nod in the direction of tolerance of (a tightly constrained) linguistic diversity. On the other hand, courses by correspondence (which had been started before the Second World War) continued, as well as Breton language workshops and summer camps (*ibid.*: 78).

Also re-emerging after the Second World War in Brittany were Cercles celtiques (Celtic Circles), volunteer/enthusiast associations, focusing on the promotion of traditional songs and dances throughout historic Brittany. Public performance of dances in traditional costumes is one of the goals of these circles, and they have become a familiar

part of the lavish festivals, found especially in the summertime in Brittany. More local festivals known as *festoù-noz* (night festivals) based on traditional communal parties consisting of singing *kan-ha-diskan* (call-and-response) and group dancing, were re-instituted in the late 1950s and have recently become very popular in their own right, for younger generations as well.

Brittany's linguistic and cultural renewal was accelerated by the tumultuous events of 1968 that shook France and much of the rest of western Europe, launching a new era of movements to revitalize languishing ethnolinguistic minorities and to gain more local or regional control of social and economic institutions. Along with other regions in France, Brittany was swept into this new momentum. Two major strikes by workers in Brittany in 1972 (factory workers in St Brieuc and milk producers in central Brittany) helped draw general public attention to issues of inequity felt by the regions vis-à-vis the central authorities, and a growing current of sentiment against centralized government was becoming discernible among other sectors of the Breton population than those centrally involved in the strikes. The metaphor of Brittany as an 'internal colony', around since the early 1960s (Fouéré 1977: 87), with France (or at least Paris) as the occupying power of a 'colonized' Brittany, was gaining greater and greater currency.

It is during this period of foment, in the late 1960s through the 1970s, that the seeds were sown of a vigorous revalorization of the Breton language, now seen by much of the public as a distinctive symbol of Breton identity. There was an upsurge in the production of Breton learners' manuals and cassette tape sets; new editions of older dictionaries appeared along with the publication of new ones. Increasing numbers of summer and weekend language camps were organized, reaching out to adults to learn the traditional language. A signal event during this era was the creation in 1977 of a Breton-medium nursery school, the first of the Diwan classes that would soon proliferate in Brittany (see below).

In sum, the decades following the Second World War, particularly from the 1960s to the present, have brought an increasing recognition and validation of both Breton language and culture. At the same time the traditional Breton-speaking culture has been disappearing through the effects of modernization, urbanization, globalization, and of course the inevitable attrition due to the aging of the population who are the last standard-bearers of that traditional culture.

## FORMS OF BRETON

The Breton language has thus far been discussed in rather generic terms, but this masks considerable underlying complexities that must be addressed in any account of the socio-linguistic situation in Brittany. This section provides an overview of the varieties of Breton, of efforts to normalize the language through time and of the latter-day construction of what is now usually called 'Neo-Breton' in the literature.

### Regional dialects: the vernaculars

It has long been customary, if not entirely justifiable linguistically, to speak of four regional dialects of (spoken) Breton that correspond territorially, *grosso modo*, to the four ancient dioceses of medieval Brittany: to the north lies the diocese of Léon, whence the dialect designator *léonais* (in French, *leoneg* in Breton); east of that lies Tréger and its vernacular Breton *trégorrois* (Breton *tregerieg*); the central diocese is called Cornouaille, with its dialect *cornouaillais* (Breton *kerneveg*); and in the southern part of the peninsula

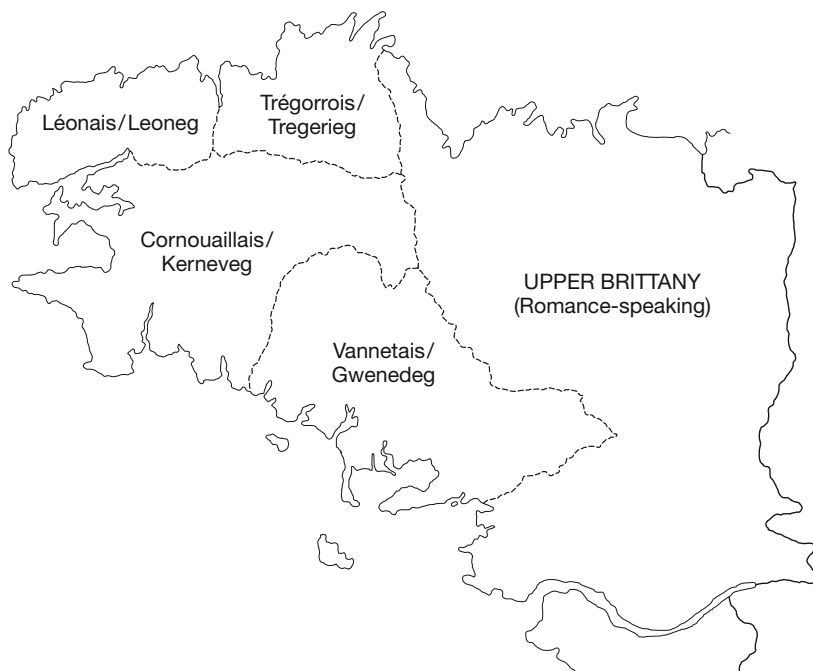


Figure 15.2 Upper and Lower Brittany and traditional dialect areas within the latter

is found the diocese of Vannes and its dialect *vannetais* (Breton *gwenedeg*, see Figure 15.2). Together the three northern dialects are often abbreviated as KLT. *Vannetais*, as noted earlier, differs sufficiently from the other three, principally in terms of phonology,<sup>10</sup> to have retained its own orthography, in spite of twentieth-century efforts to provide a ‘unified’ orthographic representation of the language.

Within each of the traditionally designated regional dialects there is considerable variation at the spoken level, even from commune to commune. This has led one linguist (Le Dû 1997) to envisage spoken Breton in another way – as consisting of what he calls ‘badumes’ (coined by him from the Breton phrase *e-barzh du-mañ*, translatable as ‘over here among us’ (ibid.: 420), that is, highly localized forms of speech among people who are in daily contact with one another.

In more recent sociolinguistic parlance, we might think of these as the speech forms of a social network (cf. Milroy 1987) or a community of practice (cf. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992) and therefore rather different from what is normally understood as a regional dialect. In any event, the sense of tight connection between a particular place/people and a particular variety of Breton has been one of the reasons traditional speakers of the language have found it awkward, or even bizarre, to speak Breton with others outside their community of practice, typically preferring to switch to French.

### Written forms of the language in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

Throughout most of the period of Middle Breton, until the fifteenth century, there was a more or less shared, interdialect, written form of the language (Abalain 1989: 197).

More dialect-slanted writing began to appear after that, probably due to a generalized teaching of the language, meaning that those writing – often clerics working within their local jurisdictions producing documents that they hoped would be understood by their parishioners – improvised as they went along. It was not until the advent of Jean-François Le Gonidec (1775–1838), generally regarded as the first great grammarian of Breton – he systematized the language in his *Grammaire Celto-bretonne* in 1807 – that a serious attempt to normalize the grammar and its written expression was made. Le Gonidec made the decision to base this normalized language on the *léonais* dialect in the north; in his manipulations he did not attempt to capture *vannetais*, which had had its own literary form since the seventeenth century. As Elmar Ternes has pointed out, *léonais* and *vannetais* represent the two most divergent dialects of the four, making the two literary forms of the language nearly incomprehensible to the majority of Breton speakers (1992: 382). A major emphasis of Le Gonidec was the elimination of French-derived words, to be replaced with neologisms based on Celtic elements; in fact, this had already been a concern to some of his predecessors, notably Dom Michel Le Nobletz (1577–1652) in the sixteenth century, and his disciple Julien Maunoir (1606–1683) in the following century. These Jesuit priests were interested in rectifying the French-infused Breton of their predecessors and contemporaries, whose Breton has long been deprecated as ‘priests’ Breton’ (*brezoneg beleg*) and compared, in unflattering terms, with ‘kitchen Latin’ (Timm 1996: 27).

### Twentieth-century reforms

The push for lexical purity remained a theme and a *modus operandi* of subsequent generations of Breton language reformers, notably in the *Grande dictionnaire français-breton* (1980; orig. 1931) of François Vallée (1860–1949) who ‘applied himself to the systematic exploitation of the derivational possibilities of Breton for the creation of neologisms’ (Humphreys 1993: 617). Vallée collaborated in his efforts with René Leroux (*alias* Meven Mordiern, 1878–1949) to construct a language in which any subject of erudition could be discussed. Interestingly, neither of these reformers was a native Breton speaker, and they made little or no effort to come into contact with native speakers of the language (Le Dû 1997: 424), but devoted their lives to perfecting Breton as they understood that process. Following two generations later in that same spirit of linguistic reform was a group of writers and activists gathered under the umbrella of a new literary journal called *Gwalarn*, headed by the Brest-born (hence native francophone) linguist and English teacher Roparz Hemon (1905–1974).

In order to promote the teaching of Breton in schools during the Vichy regime, these language activists decided in 1941 to adopt a completely unified (Breton *peurunvan*) orthography that would accommodate certain pronunciation needs of the KLT dialects and the more divergent *vannetais*. The result was the incorporation of a new letter, the digraph <zh>,<sup>11</sup> to be used in words in which the KLT dialects had a written <z> (either a phonetic [z] or [s] depending on position in the word) and *vannetais* had a written <h>, phonetically [h]; thus, for example, Breiz (Brittany) in KLT and Breih in *vannetais* would now be written Breizh, and readers would pronounce the letter according to their dialect preference. The new orthography was soon dubbed in Breton *zedacheg* (in reference to the letter <z> (‘zed’) in the digraph). As this reform was made during the time of German occupation of northern France and the aforementioned collaboration with the occupying regime on the part of a number of Breton militants and intellectuals, the new orthography was soon seen as ideologically tainted in the eyes of many other Bretons and rejected



by them. Two other orthographies were created in subsequent decades, but, in spite of the political history associated with the *zedache*g spelling, the latter has persisted and become over time the predominant orthography for representing the literary form of Breton, often called Neo-Breton.

### Neo-Breton

Beyond the orthographic reforms worked out by Hemon and others in 1941, the structure of the language had been modified and its lexicon greatly amplified to the point that it could be described in part as a pan-dialectal koine with a bias (as had been true from Le Gonidec's time) towards *léonais* pronunciation, e.g., no palatalization of velar consonants before front vowels, widespread in *vannetais* and in some areas of *cornouaillais*. The structural and linguistic differentiation of Breton vis-à-vis French was emphasized by these language reformers, with the goal of achieving a purer 'Celticity' in syntax and lexicon. Ideologically speaking, the purpose of such corpus planning was to produce a language based on logic and abstraction,<sup>12</sup> suitable for the creation of a secular literature catering to the intellectual elite of Brittany, and, more pointedly, suitable as a national language. Roparz Hemon was quite explicit about this in the manifesto with which he launched *Gwalarn* in 1925, describing it as 'a literary review destined for the elite of the Breton-speaking public and whose ambition is nothing less than that of setting Breton literature on the path for long followed by many a small nation' (cited in Calvez 2000: 34). Later he would write 'From the dust of dialects a language was made . . . a literary language first, from 1925 until 1941. From 1941, a language of State' (cited in Le Dû 1997: 425).

The *Gwalarn* writers, especially Hemon himself, devoted themselves to the production of this literature. Considering the relatively small number of participants in this effort, the output of essays, plays, short stories, poems, reviews, translations of world literature, and linguistic studies is truly impressive, surely more material quantitatively speaking of a secular nature in two or three decades than had been written in the previous two or three centuries.

Neo-Breton would later be the basis of a very popular method – *Brezhoneg Buan hag Aes* (*Breton Quickly and Easily*) for learning Breton authored by Per Denez, of the University of Rennes 2, and ultimately it would be the variety taught in the Celtic Studies section of that university, which over the years has become a major centre for the training of Breton language teachers, some of whom emerge as instructors in Diwan and the bilingual streams of public and private education, and in adult courses. People learning Neo-Breton are usually referred to as *néo-bretonnants* and, more recently, as *brittonphones*; while native speakers are called *bretonnants* or occasionally, and sardonically, *paléo-bretonnants* (Le Coadic 1998: 252).

Though Neo-Breton has become the prevailing literary standard, there are written varieties of Breton that utilize one of the other existing orthographies and do not accept all of the grammatical and lexical principles of Hemon's Neo-Breton. For example, *Skolveurig* (University orthography) was created in the 1950s by Breton linguist François Falc'hun to bring Breton orthography closer to French (as opposed to the distancing principle of the *Peurunvan* orthography). It does not use the <zh> digraph of *Peurunvan*, among other differences. Writers choosing *Skolveurig*, like those using *Peurunvan*, tend to draw more on the grammar and syntax of *léonais* than on the other dialects, but some adherents of this orthography look to grammarians such as Pierre Trépos (1970), Sèité and Stéphan (1996) or Visant Favé (2004) rather than Hemon (1970) or Denez (1972) in seeking models of specific morphosyntactic structures or idiomatic formulations. *Skolveurig* is the default

orthography for the literary journal *Brud Nevez* and the publishing house associated with it, Emgleo Breiz, in Brest.

*Etrerannyezhel* (Interdialectal orthography) is the most recent spelling system, created in 1975 by linguist Fañch Morvannou and used by him in his teach-yourself-Breton book, *Le Breton sans peine* (1978). The publishing house Skol Vreizh in Morlaix sometimes uses this orthography in its Breton-language collection.

Thus, far from being all but extinct, as various observers had predicted in the past century, Breton has been making a comeback as a standardized literary language, Neo-Breton, a variety of the language that is now learned mainly in schools or in language courses. Unlike Traditional Breton, which was learned at home as a first language and which for countless centuries had no public presence, Neo-Breton is now heard (and has been for several decades) on the broadcast media, is available in secular and educational print media and is visible on road signage,<sup>13</sup> maps, street, house and shop names, commercial products, etc. In the meantime Traditional Breton continues to decline as its speakers pass away, a paradox well captured by Mari Jones in the title of an article – ‘Death of a language, birth of an identity’ (1998) – which also points to a crucial symbolic aspect of the ascent of Neo-Breton, i.e., as the icon of the sociocultural movement (which embraces an economic component) to valorize Breton culture and history and to affirm its unique identity within France and Europe.

### The Neo-Breton/Traditional Breton divide

One might well ask at this point what Traditional Breton speakers feel about this seeming transformation of the societal role and new value attached to the language. In fact, some attention has been paid this topic, with most observers pointing to a linguistic rift between the two groups (Timm 2001b: 452), and an apparent difficulty or lack of will of the two groups of speakers to communicate with one another. In many situations of language revitalization (see below), the elders are looked to for assistance in providing models of language usage and for help in keeping learners from slipping back to their first language habits, but this sort of intergenerational co-operation has not worked out very well in Brittany for several reasons. First, Breton has for long been a language of the family, neighborhood and religious practice. Traditional Breton speakers have been accustomed to this sort of domain specialization, find it ‘normal’, and thus may express bemusement at the Neo-Breton speakers’ emphasis on expanding the role of Breton in society. As Mari Jones puts it:

Standardized Breton and the local dialects . . . represent different ways of life, outlooks and mentalities and it is for this reason that the revivalists have never been able to ensure the support of a significant percentage of the native speakers . . . A cross-dialect Breton for communication beyond the immediate vicinity is redundant for these people, for this role is already performed by French.

(1995: 436)

A second issue has been the undeveloped or under-developed literacy skills in Breton among the traditional speakers, leading to a lack of confidence in their own competence in Breton and a tendency to defer to the Neo-Breton taught in the schools as ‘correct’ Breton inasmuch it is based on a literary standard to which they have had no exposure. They therefore do not feel that they are able to add to the further development of Neo-Breton.

Third, traditional speakers may feel annoyed by Neo-Breton. I have heard this most

often expressed when they listen to Neo-Breton on the broadcast media; a typical reaction is to switch off the radio or television, while grumbling about not understanding a word. Of course, this sort of attitude is not conducive to engaging the traditional speakers in dialogue with the neo-speakers.

Finally, traditional speakers are very sensitive to the nuances of Breton; if a Neo-Breton speaker or learner makes an effort to speak with them in Breton, the traditional speaker quickly senses the 'accent' and may shift immediately to French. The learner may be frustrated in seeking information from a traditional speaker on how to express an idea, being told curtly that 'that isn't said in Breton', which cuts off the conversation (Miossec 2000: 1–2). In short, considerable persistence is required if one is determined to attempt learning a traditional form of the language.

## REVITALIZATION EFFORTS: REVERSING LANGUAGE SHIFT

### Transformation and revitalization

Much of the work by language activists on revitalizing Breton over the past century consists of efforts to 'transform' the language in order to render it more suitable as a vehicle for literature, pedagogy and wider social life (Timm 2001b); Neo-Breton has been the fruit of these efforts. However, another vital component of revitalization is the process of Reversing Language Shift (RLS), a term coined by Joshua Fishman and explicated by him in a book of that title in 1991. Here Fishman provides a detailed analysis of how RLS can be accomplished for languages threatened with decline and disappearance. He introduces the notion of the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) which illustrates, in eight stages, the actions that need to be taken to reverse an ongoing process of shift.<sup>14</sup> The steps begin with Stage 8, representing a situation in which a language community has all but lost its traditional language and indicates remedies to deal with it, ending at Stage 1 with a nearly restored language. The full scale is presented in Table 15.2 (note that 'X' is the place holder for any given language threatened with loss, and 'Y' the place holder for the dominant language).

Recently Fishman's scale has been applied to the Breton situation by Marcel Texier and Diarmuid Ó Néill (2005), who evaluate, stage by stage, the status of Breton with regard to RLS; the following paragraphs provide a summary of these authors' analysis, along with some additional observations.

### Stages 8 and 7

Traditional Breton speakers correspond, *grosso modo*, to the criteria depicted in these stages inasmuch as the vast majority of these speakers are concentrated in interior Lower Brittany, they are fairly socially integrated, but they are mainly well over 50 years old and thus well beyond childbearing. As noted earlier, there can be difficulties in getting traditional speakers to work with younger generations – i.e. in 'reassembling from their mouths and memories' the linguistic material that could be transmitted to 'demographically unconcentrated adults' elsewhere in Brittany. There have been efforts to provide adult language instruction – correspondence courses, evening, weekend, or week-long courses have been running for years. It is estimated by the Office de la Langue Bretonne (2006b) that several thousand adults each year – 3,060 in 2006 – take some training in Breton but this is a very small number in light of the total population of Brittany and when it is remembered that death claims each year thousands of the traditional speakers.

*Table 15.2* The Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS). Source: Fishman 1991: 87–107

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**State 8:** Most vestigial users of X-ish are socially isolated old people, and X-ish needs to be reassembled from their mouths and memories and taught to demographically unconcentrated adults

**Stage 7:** Most users of X-ish are a socially and ethnolinguistically active population but they are beyond child-bearing age.

**Stage 6:** The attainment of intergenerational informal oracy and its demographic concentration and institutional reinforcement.

**Stage 5:** X-ish literacy in home, school and community, but without taking on extracommunal reinforcement of such literacy.

**Stage 4:** X-ish in lower education . . . that meets the requirements of compulsory education laws.

**Stage 3:** Use of X-ish in the lower work sphere (outside of the X-ish neighbourhood/community) involving interaction between X-men and Y-men.

**Stage 2:** X-ish in the lower governmental services and mass media but not in the higher spheres of either.

**Stage 1:** Some use of X-ish in higher-level educational, occupational, governmental and media efforts (but without the additional safety provided by political independence).

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## Stage 6

The attainment of intergenerational 'oracy' is seen by Fishman (and others) as the most crucial aspect of RLS, for unless there is daily face-to-face interaction in the context of familial and communal intimacy, most activities undertaken at the other stages will remain limited in scope and even largely symbolic. This interaction is, in general, not taking place.

## Stage 5

The attainment of literacy in home, school, and community was rarely if ever a goal for traditional speakers for whom literacy in French was always taken as the priority in nearly all contexts (except religion). However, now that Neo-Breton has gained acceptability and is being promoted in the region, organizations have been created to assist adults in the acquisition of Breton literacy. The total number of adults possessing moderate to advanced literacy in Breton is relatively small – some 40,000 are estimated (Texier and Ó Néill 2005: 181). As a result the demand for Breton-medium literature is not high, which, in cyclic fashion, limits the opportunities for writers and journalists to express themselves in Breton.

## Stage 4

Lower-level education through the medium of Breton is available to some extent in Brittany; clearly there is much more now than before 1977, the founding year of the Diwan network of schools. Both public and private (Catholic) schools in addition to Diwan now

offer Breton classes for part of the curriculum where there is demand for this. It is important, however, for supporters of Breton (or any small language) not to place undue emphasis on the schools to secure the future of the language, for without the support of language use outside of the school walls, bilingual or immersion schooling in and of itself will not ensure the indefinite continuation of the language.

### **Stage 3**

Breton is weakly developed in the workplace beyond the local level of interaction since French overwhelmingly dominates in all that has to do with commercial and professional activities and negotiations beyond the local level. On the other hand, there has been some effort to use Breton in labelling home-grown or manufactured products, an initiative promoted by the business association *Produit en Bretagne* (Produced in Brittany): Breton names are affixed to a wide range of products, from *crêpes* to clothing and on shop signs. All of this draws attention to the language in a small way, offering a display of regional identity but with virtually no influence on the practice of the language. In only a few extra-communal work domains – those specifically devoted to the promotion of the language such as the Office de la Langue Bretonne, Breton or bilingual radio stations and schools, theatrical troupes, etc. – is Breton likely to be used on a regular basis.

### **Stage 2**

There is little meaningful presence of Breton in the lower governmental services. The visual presence of the language has improved at the level of communal government – e.g., many communities have posted bilingual road and street signage – and Breton has been recognized as a language permissible in court, though interpreters are hard to find and few people ask for them (Texier and Ó Néill 2005: 190). The Regional Council of Brittany espouses the importance of Breton, but does not use it on its website. The Council lends financial support to the Diwan and public bilingual schools as well as to Breton-oriented publishing houses. Yet the minutes of the Council's monthly meetings are written in French; and, according to the Euromosaic survey on Breton in public services, 'Very few people can read and write Breton, and they are simply not used to the idea of writing official business in Breton. Indeed the very ethos of official administrative settings seems to discourage the use of Breton' (2006: 5).

### **Stage 1**

With the exception of the use of Breton in the Breton or Celtic departments of the two major universities in Brittany, in Rennes and in Brest, the extension of Breton into higher level educational, government and media domains has not happened and is not likely to so long as Brittany remains part of a France preoccupied with the notion of French as the one and only official language of the Republic (see Rogers 1996), but surveys and voting patterns demonstrate that the vast majority of Bretons have no desire to become politically independent from France, while nonetheless feeling themselves to be, and being identified by outsiders, as a region with a particularly strong identity (Dargent 2001; Tabouret-Keller 1999). As Texier and Ó Néill observe, 'Not only has Breton no official status in Brittany, it has no status in France or at a European level (for example in dealings with bodies representing the European Community, such as its parliament or various agencies' (2005: 193). Some in Brittany hope to secure an official status for

Breton, and there is talk of establishing a Breton-medium university in Carhaix in central Lower Brittany (ibid.), which already has a functioning Breton-medium *lycée*. Further, the Regional Council voted in December 2004 to adopt and promote a new *politique linguistique* (linguistic politics) in Brittany with the goal of expanding student enrolments in Diwan and bilingual schools to 20,000 by 2010. All of this is evidence of the regional government's support and good will for Breton, but it is still a long way from the sort of solid entrenchment of a language within society at this stage of the RLS process envisaged by Fishman.

Among Texier and Ó Néill's closing remarks on the RLS situation in Brittany is this challenging commentary:

There is no dodging the main question. Unless Bretons focus squarely on demographic concentration of Breton speakers at the home–family–neighbourhood–community level . . . the erosion of Breton as a community language will continue unabated, probably at the same disastrous rate as during the five post-war decades. Uncomprehending Breton language activists will be left scratching their heads (again, like the Irish before them) wondering aloud, 'what went wrong? The schools are full of Breton, but nobody speaks it!'

(2005: 196)

## THE EVOLUTION OF ATTITUDES TO BRETON

Although it appears at present unlikely that Brittany will experience Stage 1 in RLS, there has been a considerable positive, and perhaps lasting, shift in Bretons' attitudes to their traditional language. Without this, the progress that has been made in some of the other stages of RLS would probably not have happened. This section will sketch in the broad trends in both Bretons' and outsiders' perceptions of and attitudes toward Breton language and culture.

Following the brief period of Breton independence during the ninth–tenth centuries AD, Brittany became a society dominated by a landed aristocracy and a well-entrenched clergy who controlled a large working population consisting of peasants, fisherfolk and artisans who were, with rare exceptions, monolingual Breton speakers. The aristocracy, clergy and urban bourgeoisie functioned in French most of the time, though many of the rural, estate-owning nobility would have known and used Breton as well.

Because the bulk of the Breton population was of the labouring classes, poor and uneducated, it is scarcely surprising that the language they spoke soon became associated with backwardness, even primitiveness – an association that lasted for centuries. For example Stephane Strowski (1952) tried to demonstrate that Breton was an 'archaic' language because one could not make generalizations in it (according to him) and it had an inadequate lexicon. Linguist D. W. F. Hardie describes Breton as 'primitive' for its lack of lexical distinction between the colors blue and green (1948: 58).

As Brittany began moving into modernity in the late nineteenth century, the stigma attached to Breton became even more pronounced: the language was denounced by various authorities as an obstacle to progress, an impediment to clear and lucid thinking, and the handmaiden of reactionary religious, and monarchist, thinking, vividly depicted in this opinion, published in 1919 in the *Revue de l'enseignement primaire*, about the idea of teaching in Breton: 'Teaching in Breton, while throughout Breton-speaking Brittany the regional dialect is the vehicle of reactionary ideas, the intermediary for a propaganda

that not only works against the Republic, but goes as far as espousing separatism' (Chanet 1996: 211, n. 14).

Once in circulation, such notions are hard to dislodge, and it is clear in reviewing some recent literature on the perceptions of Breton speakers who were born between the late 1800s and early 1900s that they had internalized a good deal of this negativity. Much of this commenced in the schools where, as discussed earlier, Breton-speaking youngsters were humiliated with the 'symbol' if they lapsed into Breton while on the school premises. Others may have found themselves discomfited for not knowing French when they travelled to cities, when they were recruited into military service, or when needing to deal with the justice system.

In the mid-nineteenth century Bretons were particularly singled out for caricature by Parisian newspapers and journals presenting Bretons as clumsy, uttering inarticulate peasant oaths, the butt of jokes. For example, *Le Journal Illustré* (in 1896) and *L'Indiscret* (in 1902) depicted Breton 'men drinking from troughs with animals . . . and ignorant impregnated women' (Moch 2004: 7). This was followed in 1905 with the first appearance of what would be the remarkably successful cartoon character Bécassine, ultimately featured in album-length children's literature that continued until the 1940s. The Parisian creators of this incompetent Breton servant traded on stereotyped Breton characteristics of naiveté and blind loyalty to one's employers (Forsdick 2005: 26). In another popular work, aimed at adults in the 1920s, a family saga by Roger Martin du Gard, a stereotypically naive Bretonne comes to Paris, where she is seduced and abandoned and trained out of her 'Breton accent [that] you could cut with a knife' (cited in Moch 2004: 8).

The aftermath of the Second World War brought on more negatively charged freight for Breton due to the association of the language with the small collaborationist movement of that period mentioned above. For a while Breton was tainted in the eyes of many with treason and fascism, and it may have accelerated the shift to French (Quéré 2000: 41–2). The association of Breton with nationalism and separatism has continued to be a leitmotiv, surfacing frequently during the turbulent years of the 1970s with clandestine autonomist groups bombing some carefully targeted public sites, and more recently in organizations (albeit tiny) at both ends of the political spectrum that advocate autonomy or independence, such as Emgann and Strollad Breizh (left-leaning) and Adsav (right-leaning).<sup>15</sup>

Despite the lingering association of Breton with political agendas clearly not appreciated by the majority of the Breton population, it is clear that overall popular attitudes towards both Breton identity and the Breton have been softening, though occasionally tinged with ambivalence, as will be evident in some of the following discussion.

In 1998 sociologist Ronan Le Coadic published an important empirical study, *L'Identité bretonne*, based on findings from in-depth interviews he conducted with what he calls 'ordinary' Breton men and women, aged 20 to 65, from across Brittany. The interviewees' knowledge of Breton ranged from none (the majority) to full fluency (a minority). He found that a solid majority (25/46) responded to the question 'What does the fact of being Breton represent in your personal life?' in ways that indicated it was very meaningful: 'It's pride in my roots!', 'My way of living, my reason to live'. Not all were so emotive, but no one found being Breton at all negative (as might well have been the case in early decades of the century). Indeed, some of his respondents appear to have resorted to what sociologists call 'symbolic inversion', assimilating long-standing outsider stereotypes of the Bretons and attributing positive value to them as present-day markers of Bretonnitude: 'stubborn', 'primitive', 'rough', 'emotional', 'heavy drinkers', 'close to nature', and so on (1998: ch. 5, *passim*).

Le Coadic's research also demonstrated clearly that a sense of belonging to Brittany, as territory, as region, as landscape, is more 'primordial' for many Bretons than are ties of kinship or a knowledge of the Breton language. One interviewee commented, 'There is nonetheless this sentiment of belonging to something . . . the Breton is very attached to his/her region.' Another explained that 'Everyone is different, but one is on a soil that is called Brittany and everyone is conscious of that' (Le Coadic 1998: 321–2). Francis Favereau, likewise, argues that for Bretons identity is above all an attachment to a *paysage* – a place and its landscape, encapsulated in the French phrase *patrimoine paysager* (1993: 47–9). An interviewee in Le Coadic's study depicts this sentiment more specifically: 'One is from this *pays*, from this territory . . . And the reality of the *paysages*, of the sites and the characteristics of the Lower-Breton *paysage*, I think that that's the basis of [our] identity' (1998: 65). As to the importance of language for Breton identity among Le Coadic's interviewees, while it was often cited as a marker of Bretonnitude, there was no agreement as to its centrality for identity; more respondents from Upper Brittany (non-Breton speakers) stressed the importance of the language for identity than did respondents from Lower Brittany (which included those respondents with knowledge of the language [ibid.: 215]).

In spite of disagreement about the importance of the Breton language for Breton identity, there is general agreement that the language should be maintained. Recent public opinion surveys in Brittany show a high level of support, whether one spoke the language or not, for preserving it – 88 per cent in a survey conducted by TMO Ouest in 1997 (Kergoat 1999: 420); this was a notable increase from the 76 per cent who had so responded in a TMO survey of 1990 (Nicolas 2001: 144). Eighty per cent in the 1997 survey signalled their approval of having Breton taught *optionally* in the schools (Quéré 2000: 79). Broudic points out that the *bretonnants* are the least interested in such instruction but that when they are in favour of it, they are more likely to say it should be required (1995: 245).

This favourable trend was particularly noteworthy among young people: 96 per cent of those under 20, compared with 75 per cent of those over 75, were in favour of the survival of the language (Nicolas 2001: 144), from which Nicolas concludes that 'this situation is therefore of the sort to inspire a reasonable confidence' (ibid.). Yet the expression of support does not necessarily translate into a desire to take steps to ensure the preservation of the language, for example, by sending one's child(ren) to an immersion or bilingual school. One of Le Coadic's interviewees, when asked if he would consider sending his children to a Diwan school, replied 'That leaves me cold, that absolutely does not motivate me' (1998: 203). Another person opined that in offering Breton 'it isn't necessary to spend an hour learning it, but a short half-hour or even five minutes would suffice to learn a thing or two in Breton' (ibid.). A 60-year-old man interviewed by Quéré considered that Breton language schooling is 'apostolate . . . and it's a very courageous struggle that they have undertaken, but . . . let's say that I'm not very optimistic as to the final results' (2000: 80).

This sort of ambivalent feeling about teaching/learning Breton also comes up in Rachel Hoare's study (2000) of young people's (aged 8–18) attitudes towards Breton (and French) language and identity. Using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies,<sup>16</sup> Hoare analysed reported levels of competence in speaking and reading Breton, reported practices of language use and understanding of Breton at both the spoken and written levels, perceptions of Breton identity, and the relationship between the comprehension of Breton and Breton identity; she also examined her data for evidence of gender and/or regional (Upper vs. Lower Brittany) patterns of perception and use. Her main findings may be summarized as follows:



- Nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  (74 per cent) of respondents agreed that Breton should be preserved.
- Nearly  $\frac{2}{3}$  (62 per cent) feel it should not be obligatory in the schools, and more than  $\frac{2}{3}$  (68 per cent) think that English, German or another 'living language' would be more useful.
- Males showed a stronger sense of Breton identity, with 48 per cent saying they felt more Breton than French vs. 37 per cent for the females, and more females (43 per cent) than males (30 per cent) feel they are more French than Breton.

(Hoare 2000: 337–41)

Slightly at odds with what was reported earlier concerning the greater interest expressed by adult Bretons from Upper Brittany in having Breton taught, it was the young people in Lower Brittany in Hoare's study who showed a higher level of support for this (ibid.: 341). This appears to complement another of her findings, that 'just over twice the proportion of Lower Brittany informants (30 per cent) as Upper Brittany informants (14 per cent) have a powerful sense of Breton identity and that the inverse relationship is true for French identity' (ibid.: 337).

Overall this study paints a picture of a young generation of Bretons who have been rallied symbolically to the cause of preserving the traditional language – much of this rallying mediated by the considerable public attention given to the Diwan immersion schools over the past three decades – are sympathetic towards efforts to promote its teaching and broader use in society, but are nonetheless not sufficiently motivated, as Hoare puts it, 'to participate directly (only 16 per cent would be very interested in improving their comprehension skills' [ibid.: 343]). The author concludes with a statement by a 15-year-old male interviewee that captures the rather paradoxical positioning of many from this generation of Bretons: 'If the language dies out a whole culture is lost and I don't think that's a good idea, I think that it should definitely continue. But it's not up to me to do it – there are always others who will' (ibid.: 344).

Unlike this young man, others may attach value to learning and using the language. Children and adolescents receiving their entire education (nursery school to *lycée*) in the Diwan system are very likely to be invested in the language and at least some of these will form, or have formed, families in which their own children will be/are taught Breton within the household. There are other reasons, too, for promoting and/or speaking Breton. For example, one woman told researcher Anna Quéré that she wants to see Breton revalorized because she knows that her parents and her sisters suffered from contempt for having spoken Breton, so she would like to avenge them in a sense by assertively speaking the language today (1999: 83).

Illustrating yet another motivation for choosing Breton, Le Coadic mentions the case of a man, born in 1975, who pushed his *bretonnant* family to teach him the language to give him an advantage with girls by showing that he was different from the other lads, a tactic that seems to have brought some results. Moreover, he says, 'I really love to show that I know how to speak Breton. I'm proud of this, yes!' (2002: 143). This suggests the emergence of a very different perspective on the attractiveness of Breton as a form of gender display in comparison with that reported for earlier decades.

The foregoing examples have focused on Neo-Breton speakers, but it is important to point out that native *bretonnants*, too, find positive reasons for using Breton, at least within their daily local lives. This has been documented in the work of Eva Vetter whose case study of the social networks of such speakers in a small rural community near Brest in northern Finistère shows affirmative uses of Breton by many of these older-generation speakers, though such use belies an underlying situation of 'language conflict', as she

sees it, pointing to the sometimes contradictory linguistic practices around the choice of Breton or French by these speakers. She gives the example of selling a calf, a negotiation deemed better executed by seller and buyer in Breton, given the historical value accorded that language for this type of activity, but both buyer and seller are most likely to speak French with their children or grandchildren, as, in those interactions, French is accorded a higher value (1999: 218).

Vetter is quite explicit that this and other examples of language conflict she presents are not illustrative of diglossia but rather of 'an extremely conflicted and unstable sociolinguistic situation' (ibid.: 221). Although Breton is being used regularly by older speakers in the community in four specific networks – family, neighbourhood, (local) workplace and local leisure activities – which are helping preserve the language, there is no intergenerational transmission of Breton.

To sum up, the relationship between language and identity among Bretons is complex and has evolved in several directions through the generations. From a close fit between the two for the vast majority of the Breton population for nearly a millennium and a half, the opening of Brittany to the forces of modernization and then post-modernity wrought an increasing incidence of language shift. Ordinary people of the peninsula were brought into the national educational system, the armed forces and international warfare, they emigrated to find jobs elsewhere, and tourists descended on the peninsula in ever increasing numbers in the twentieth century, all of which inevitably altered the traditional languacultural<sup>17</sup> identity of Bretons – not for everyone all at once, but steadily, inexorably French advanced into nearly all domains of social interaction, leaving Breton as the language of family life, religion, and rural or maritime workplaces. Intergenerational transmission of the language was ruptured during or just following the Second World War, with the result that today only a very small proportion (about 16 per cent) of Bretons of Lower Brittany speak Breton on some sort of regular basis, and they are almost exclusively older people (Broudic 1999: 114).

## INSTITUTIONAL AND EXTERNAL SUPPORT FOR BRETON

In recent decades a number of institutions, agencies, organizations, or initiatives have been developed that lend support to the Breton language in a variety of ways. Four of these will be described here.

### Office de la Langue Breton (Ofis ar Brezhoneg)

The Office de la Langue Bretonne (OLB) was created in May 1999, supported by the Breton Region and by the Department of Loire-Atlantique. It has three locations: Carhaix in Lower Brittany, Rennes in Upper Brittany, and Nantes in Loire-Atlantique. Legally the OLB is a private cultural association, but its services are on behalf of the Breton public. Its main activity is language planning and development, though it has no powers of imposition or enforcement of any initiatives it might create. Services include:

- L'Observatoire de la langue bretonne (Observatory of the Breton Language) gathers and analyses sociolinguistic data on number of speakers, practice of the language in daily life, use in schools, etc.
- Normalization of Breton toponyms. As of 2005 this service had produced a 62-page list of bilingual names for communes throughout historic Brittany and has provided bilingual signage for communes, roadways and public sites.

- Translation upon demand (excluding literature) from French into Breton.
- TermBret proposes new terminology to allow brittophones to use Breton in all sectors of modern life; 17,000 new terms have been created in recent years.
- New initiatives that promote Breton – e.g., ‘Ya d’ar brezhoneg’ (‘Yes to Breton’), launched in 2001 – encourages businesses, organizations and communes to sign an accord demonstrating their commitment to use Breton in their establishments or communities. Hundreds of entities, including sixty communes, have signed (as of 2007).

### **Institut Culturel de la Bretagne (ICB)**

Founded in 1981 with the support of the Conseil Régional de Bretagne and the Conseil Général de Loire-Atlantique, the ICB’s mission is to develop and diffuse Breton culture in the broadest sense of the term; it helped establish the OLB.<sup>18</sup> The participation of Loire-Atlantique, which lends financial support to the Institute along with the Breton Region, highlights the Institute’s commitment to the historical, five-department conception of Brittany. The ICB serves as a publishing house of non-fiction works on a modest basis, and produces a quarterly journal *Sterenn* (*Star*) and a monthly newsletter; it is located in Vannes (Morbihan).

### **The International Committee for the Defence of the Breton Language**

This nonprofit organization was first established in Brussels in 1975 by persons, both Breton and non-Breton, concerned about the future of the language and interested in non-confrontational advocacy to promote its recognition and use in Brittany’s public sectors, including schools and the media. The committee has branch organizations in several countries, including in North America and Canada. The US branch publishes a monthly newsletter, *Bro Nevez* (*New Country*), which is a resource for the latest news from Brittany about events and documents concerning Breton language, culture, and history.<sup>19</sup>

### **The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML)**

Arguably a potential source of legal support for Breton (and other regional languages in France), the ECRML was drafted by the Council of Europe and readied for ratification by member states in November 1994. The Charter provides sixty-eight practical steps that might be taken to bolster the status, teaching and visibility of regional and minority languages (Grin 2003: 64). However, the document has no force unless individual member states of the Council are willing both to sign *and* to ratify it – i.e., declare the state’s definitive consent to be bound by the charter’s provisions. France was very slow to respond to this initiative, worrying that, if ratified, it would be in conflict with Article Two of the Constitution in which it is stated that ‘the language of the Republic is French’. After years of studying the matter further, the government authorized an official to sign the document in May 1999. Six weeks later the French Constitutional Council ruled the Charter contrary to fundamental [French] law, arguing that the Constitution would need to be revised to allow for the Charter’s full, legal ratification. To date (2009), the Charter has still not been ratified by the French government. Disappointment and no small measure of cynicism have been the widespread reaction among linguistic and cultural activists in Brittany and elsewhere.

## BRETON IN SOME IMPORTANT SOCIAL DOMAINS

### Education

Free, public, secular and obligatory primary education was inaugurated in France in the early 1880s with the laws of Jules Ferry (then Minister of Public Instruction), and with this innovation came the imposition of French as the sole medium of instruction, in principle if not always in practice (see Chanet 1996). In Brittany there were some unsuccessful efforts, on the part of the elites and clergy, in the latter half of the nineteenth century to instruct Breton-speaking students (the vast majority) in their maternal language.<sup>20</sup> Again in the 1930s–1940s there was a movement – *Ar Brezoneg er Skol* (Breton in School) – to establish Breton-medium primary schools in rural Brittany. A campaign advocating this was launched among the municipal councils of Lower Brittany to obtain their vote in favour of teaching Breton in parity with French in the public school system. Over half the communes in Lower Brittany voted affirmatively on this proposal during the years 1934–7 (Fouéré 1977: 42–3), but the outcome was not commensurate, as only one such public school was established near Lannion and it remained open for just two years (1942–4) (Gwegen 1975: 97).

By contrast, the opening three decades later, in 1977, of the first Breton-language nursery-school classroom in Lampaul-Ploudalmézeau (Finistère) with five students aged 2–4 was the harbinger of a much more momentous undertaking soon to unfold – persistent and serious attention devoted to Breton not only as a language suitable to be taught in school but as a medium of instruction. This was a grassroots initiative taken by young adults, language and cultural activists who probably did not anticipate fully the success their approach would enjoy. By 1979 there were 11 such classes with 100 students (Rogers 1996: 554). Soon primary schools, then middle schools, and eventually a *lycée* would be established across Lower Brittany, Upper Brittany and the department of Loire-Atlantique. With an annual growth rate of up to 20 per cent during the 1980s (and continuing in the 1990s), it quickly became necessary to establish a substantial institutional framework for Diwan, the training and hiring of teachers, public outreach, fundraising and negotiations with the National Education Ministry. Diwan's legal status is that of a private cultural association, but it has for many years been seeking incorporation into the national educational stream. This has been a tempestuous and, for Diwan, a frustrating set of negotiations; although the movement has been granted some limited support in the form of partial payments of teachers' salaries, the Ministry continues to refuse to accept Diwan as a part of the public educational system. (For a detailed account of the ups and downs of these negotiations, see Rogers 1996.) The Diwan schools do, however, receive support from the Regional Council of Brittany, from the department of Loire-Atlantique, and from departmental councils within administrative Brittany. Diwan also mounts fundraising campaigns and receives private contributions,<sup>21</sup> nevertheless, making ends meet is a constant challenge for the organization.

In spite of its travails – or perhaps partly because of them – the Diwan commitment to teaching Breton, and in Breton, has become a prominent popular cause and a symbol of regional identity. While political movements have not regularly drawn Bretons to the streets in large numbers to demonstrate in favour of or against an issue, Diwan has done so: crowds in the thousands (up to 15,000 in one demonstration in Rennes [Vallerie 2003]) take to the streets, peacefully, carrying placards expressing their solidarity with Diwan and their support of the Breton language. Diwan has indisputably become one of the most salient emblems of Breton identity in recent times.

Though not drawing as much attention from the media, the two other important streams of education using Breton in the curriculum – public Div Yezh (Two Languages) and private (Catholic) Dihun (Awaken) – bilingual classes together teach considerably more youngsters each year than does Diwan. The first public bilingual class was offered in 1982 in a rural community in Finistère, following the Savary Circular<sup>22</sup> of the same year that authorized, on an experimental and voluntary basis, the opening of bilingual classes in which the media of instruction would be French and a regional language (Arzur 1996: 33). Like Diwan, the public bilingual classes met with a favourable response from parents and communities and were soon launched on an impressive growth trajectory.

The Catholic school system's bilingual class stream was inaugurated somewhat later, in 1990. It, too, has been seeing demand climb regularly and today counts nearly 4,000 students.<sup>23</sup> Table 15.3 indicates the distribution of schools across these three streams of education and Table 15.4 shows the number of students in each educational stream by department, including Loire-Atlantique in historical Brittany.

*Table 15.3* Number of bilingual school sites according to stream (Diwan, public, Catholic) for 2006–7. Source: Office de la Langue Bretonne 2006a

	<b>Pre-elementary</b>	<b>Elementary</b>	<b>College</b>	<b>Lycée</b>	<b>Total</b>
Diwan	34	32	5	1	72
Public	66	60	12	7	145
Catholic	58	54	15	1	128
Total	158	146	32	9	345

*Table 15.4* Number of students by department according to stream for 2006–7. Source: Office de la Langue Bretonne 2006a

	<b>Diwan</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Catholic</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% growth</b>
Côtes d'Armor	484	967	374	1,825	+3.6%
Finistère	1,682	1,655	1,338	4,675	+7.6
Ile-et-Vilaine	121	468	173	762	+6.0%
Loire-Atlantique	187	143	50	380	–3.3%
Morbihan	452	1,033	1,948	3,433	+7.5%
All Brittany	2,926	4,266	3,883	11,075	
Annual growth (%)	1.7	9.9	6.4		

Within five-department Brittany, according to most recent figures available (Office de la Langue Bretonne 2006a), over 11,000 students are receiving up to half of their instruction in Breton; this represents less than 2 per cent of the school-age population in Brittany. Enrolment in these classes is highest by far in Finistère (1,682) compared with Côtes d'Armor (484) and Morbihan (452); these are the three departments traditionally considered part of Lower (Breton-speaking) Brittany. Across historic Brittany, the public stream enrolls the greatest number of students (4,286), the Catholic stream is second in numbers (3,883) and Diwan third (2,926).

Why do parents choose immersion or bilingual schooling? An important motivation is that they feel that bilingualism is a good thing for mental development, and they want their child to learn another language. Breton is a logical choice since it is the traditional

language of the region, even though the vast majority of parents sending their children to such schools do not themselves speak Breton. Still, it is perceived as a living language by the parents (Kuter 1999: 179). Breton may also be perceived by some as a defence against Americanization (ibid.: 180) and probably increasingly against the widely feared homogenizing effects of globalization.

Lars Erickson has further investigated parental motivation, interviewing 16 families who had made the decision to send their children to Diwan schools to find out what motivated them to do so. The responses he received emphasized aspects of diversity or difference that Diwan schooling represents. Some stressed what Erickson calls the 'ethnic' aspects of Diwan, that is, the schools are perceived as protecting Breton language and culture. Others were drawn by the 'linguistic benefits of Diwan's bilingual curriculum' (2005: 4), as they believe, in accordance with recent scientific literature on this subject, that bilingualism brings psychological and intellectual benefits to children. Finally, some parents expressed appreciation for Diwan for pedagogical reasons, saying it offers more flexibility than the national system, and encourages children to be more creative and to enjoy learning more. They feel, too, that Diwan pedagogy focuses more on contributing to children's overall intellectual development than on preparing them mainly to do well in national tests (although, as it has turned out, Diwan-educated children score better than the national averages on a number of test measures).

## BRETON AND OTHER CELTIC LANGUAGES

Breton in higher education are taught at the two principal universities of Brittany – Université Rennes 2 Haute Bretagne in eastern Brittany and Université de Bretagne Occidentale in western Brittany (Brest). Université Rennes 2 offers the equivalent of the *licence*,<sup>24</sup> the MA and PhD degrees in Breton, emphasizing the three domains of language (including linguistics), literature, and civilization. In 1985 Rennes was authorized to administer a CAPES degree (Certificat d'Aptitude au Professorat de l'Enseignement du Second Degré) which certifies its recipients as qualified to teach Breton in public secondary schools; this was followed in 1989 by the authorization of the DEUG (Diplôme d'Études universitaires générales), which, since 1993 has been a two-year university degree;<sup>25</sup> students may now opt to take that in Breton. In 2002–3 there were 338 students studying for a degree in Breton at Rennes and 272 at Brest (Mercator-Education 2003: 22).

Historically, Université Rennes 2 has been an important site of teaching and research in Breton and other Celtic languages, first offering courses in this area in the 1880s, and creating a chair in 1903. The present-day Département Breton et Celtique (Department of Breton and Celtic), which administers these degrees, is also associated with the Laboratoire de Recherche Bretagne et Pays Celtiques (Laboratory of Research on Brittany and Celtic Countries), focusing on Breton and Celtic bilingualism, oralities, and Celtic studies in general.

The Université de Bretagne Occidentale offers the BA and MA degrees as well as the DEUG and CAPES described above. In addition it offers a one-year Diplôme d'université: Langues et culture de la Bretagne (University Diploma in the Languages and Culture of Brittany) for non-specialists to deepen their understanding of Brittany.

This university is the base for the Centre de recherche bretonne et celtique (CRBC, Centre for Breton and Celtic Research), grouping together some thirty researchers and teachers in a range of humanistic disciplines focusing on Brittany and other Celtic countries.

## BRETON IN PUBLISHING

### Journals

Following the First World War, political/literary journals appeared such as *Breiz Atao* (1919–1944) and *Gwalarn* (1925–1942), with the goal of producing literature for the Breton intellectual elite. *Gwalarn* was reincarnated after the war as *Al Liamm* and in 1957 a second literary review *Brud* was launched, later re-emerging as *Brud Nevez* in 1977. Other journals getting started around this time are *Hor Yezh* in 1954, oriented to linguistic studies, *Imbourc'h* in 1969 (a Christian-slanted political review), *Al Lañv* in 1980 and *Bremañ* in 1980, the last two being cultural and political reviews with some international coverage, especially in *Bremañ*, which prints about 1,000 copies of its monthly issues, and claims some 3,000 readers.

A new journal appeared in 2006 called *BreizhMag*, published fortnightly by the Morbihan-based society Douar ha Tud Breizh (Land and People of Brittany), the title emphasizing its interest in 'the environment and Breton identity' (from the journal's website: [www.anarvoig.com](http://www.anarvoig.com)). Sold on newsstands nationwide, some of its content is also on the internet; it has a circulation of 15,000. Although French predominates, there is sometimes Breton content, at least on the internet version. The magazine donates a considerable percentage of its revenues to Diwan.

A children's magazine, *Moutig*, was set up in 1990. Since the year 2000 four additional journals have been established, focusing on children: *Louarnig* in 2000, *Rouzig* in 2001, *Gripi et Bara Gwin* in 2002 (ceased in 2003) and *Meuriad* in 2003. All Breton-language journals are available mainly on subscription; the range of subscriptions is between 200 and 1,000, and the average number of subscribers per journal is about 430 (Office de la Langue Bretonne 2004).

There are no daily newspapers or journals in Breton; the two francophone dailies most widely distributed in Brittany – *Le Télégramme* and *Ouest-France* – publish weekly articles in Breton – e.g., interviews on current topics or columns about Breton history (*Le Télégramme*) and articles about important Breton festivals (*Ouest-France*). The latter paper also offers on Sundays a short lesson on Breton grammar (Courcelle 2003: 132).

### Books

For the period 2000–3, there were 45 organizations of one sort or another publishing books in Breton or bilingually, which represents 22 per cent of publishers in Brittany (Office de la Langue Bretonne 2004). Most publishing houses are cultural associations, though 25 per cent of them, those created most recently, are established as business enterprises (meaning they are not eligible to receive public funds). On the surface, the publishing industry seems to have the capacity to hire a substantial number of employees; however, the OLB's survey revealed that of the 184 people involved in Breton publishing in the early 2000s, only 55 were salaried, either full time or part time; the remainder (69 per cent) were volunteers (*ibid.*). Most of the important publishing houses are located in Finistère, but some are found also in the other three departments, including Ti-embann ar Skoliou brezhonek (TES) in Ile-et-Vilaine, which produces materials for the Diwan and bilingual schools.

According to the Breton region statistics for 2003, 'of 1300 book titles published each year in Brittany, 80–100 new titles are in Breton or are bilingual'.<sup>26</sup>

Office de la Langue Bretonne (2004) reports that books are published for adults, with only about 15 titles a year for children and only a few each year for adolescents, mostly

related to school studies. The average number of *copies* of Breton books printed was 1,300 in 2003; for bilingual books it was 2,400. The overall range in number of copies was 300–15,000, with the upper figure representing for the most part reference works such as dictionaries and grammars of Breton.

## THE BROADCAST MEDIA

### Radio

Until the early 1980s broadcasting services on which Breton could be heard were very limited – just under six hours per week of radio and under one hour per week of television time (Humphreys 1993: 636). Under the Socialist presidency of François Mitterrand, there were two developments favouring regional language broadcasting:

- 1 publicly funded Radio France was authorized to establish regionally focused branches as France Bleu X (e.g., France Bleu Alsace, France Bleu Bourgogne, etc.); and
- 2 non-state, independent (called ‘associative’) radio stations were also authorized.

Thus it was that a publicly funded station came to Brittany in 1983 – France Bleu Breiz Izel (which had operated as Radio France Bretagne Ouest until September 2000 – Moal 2000: 124). The station is headquartered in Quimper in south-western Lower Brittany and provides about 18 hours per week of Breton language programming (Nicolas 2001: 148). A second public station, France Bleu Armorique, is headquartered in Rennes in Upper Brittany; it offers much less programming in Breton, about four hours a week (with one two-hour programme repeated).

### Independent stations

Such stations have been proliferating throughout France since they were first authorized; in Brittany alone there are probably close to two dozen at present, though not all have Breton-language programming, and not all prove viable. Among the more successful ones are Radio Kreiz Breizh, launched in 1983 and broadcasting from Callac in central Breton-speaking Brittany – it offers nearly 18 hours/week in Breton language programmes – and Radio Bro-Gwened, broadcasting from Pontivy in southern Brittany. Both are bilingual stations. Radio Bro-Gwened gives some preference to the *vannetais* form of Breton indigenous to the area; its Breton-language programming constitutes about 26 hours per week.

During the 1990s five more independent stations were added: Plum FM, based in Plumelec in the Morbihan; it offers programmes in both regional languages, Breton and Gallo, along with French. Arvorig FM in Brest serves the north-western sector of Brittany and broadcasts only in Breton (though its musical selections are multilingual/multi-cultural). Radio Kerne, near Quimper, covers the south-western part of Brittany. Only Breton is used on this station, which broadcasts for 60 hours a week. Radio Emeraude is based in Lesneven and is a Breton-medium station, broadcasting for 14 hours a week, offering interviews with ordinary and extraordinary Bretons, as well as a phone-in programme. Radio Rivages is a Catholic station based in Brest that broadcasts 5–6 hours weekly in Breton, including some news, programmes on Breton writers, as well as vespers and sacred music.

Most of the independent stations are staffed by volunteers – up to 45–50 in the case of Plum FM and Radio Bro-Gwened; Arvorig FM and Radio Kerne have four to five



(salaried) staff. The majority of these independent stations are accessible worldwide through internet streaming. Musical offerings predominate, but Breton is heard between sets of music, and during daytime and early evening hours there are Breton-language programmes such as news, discussions about literature, cinema, and world issues, and interviews with local or regionally notable individuals. Radio Kreiz Breizh claims that it has for long had more broadcasts in Breton than any of the other stations, and estimates that, together with the other independent stations, it reaches a potential audience of 300,000.<sup>27</sup>

Overall, radio broadcasts utilizing Breton have increased considerably over the past few decades in both number and length of on-air time. It remains the case that the content of most radio broadcasting in Breton is related to the region's society and culture. While some may find reason to be critical of this, it may rather be an essential component of the region's renewed initiatives to express, project, and protect its cultural and historical identity.

### Public television

Analogous to the national radio network in France, national public television is controlled centrally by France Télévisions, which offers 13 regional networks; the one for the west, based in Rennes, has two sub-regionals, one each for Région Bretagne and Pays de la Loire. Though it offers some Breton-language programming, this varies with locale in Brittany: western Brittany (but not Pays de la Loire) has a daily local news programme of about 4 minutes in Breton entitled *An Taol lagad* at lunchtime (Moal 2000: 125). It also receives a 26-minute programme on Saturday afternoon, *Du-mañ, Du-se* (formerly *Breiz o Veva*) that includes reports and interviews and a 45-minute Sunday lunchtime talk show, *Red an Amzer*, that focuses on news and cultural events in Brittany as seen through the eyes of two journalists and one guest (Winterstein 2001: 153); it is subtitled in French. For quite a few years these three offerings have been the traditional mainstays of Breton programming on public network television. In recent years more Breton-language (often subtitled) programming has been added, as a result of a new commitment on the part of France 3 Ouest to present Breton-language materials. This is made explicit on the channel's website: 'Attached to its patrimony and through it, to the Breton regional language and culture, France 3 Ouest takes on daily life as a veritable vector for the transmission of the local ancestral language.'<sup>28</sup> The channel airs 85 hours of Breton annually, about 30 per cent of its programming. To achieve this, several new weekly programmes have been devised, mainly oriented to children and young adults. The station also provides year-round coverage of public events involving the Breton language such as concerts, festivals, singing competitions and cyber *festoù-noz*.

### Non-public television

Private television stations have made significant inroads on the French government's monopoly of the visual media. Undoubtedly the most celebrated of these in relation to Breton programming is the satellite channel television TV Breizh (Brittany TV). It was launched in September 2000 after considerable advance publicity, since it was the first regional television channel of its kind in France (Winterstein 2001: 156). The founders of this venture had looked to Wales's S4C and Ireland's TnaG (now TG4) as models worthy of emulation, but with a key difference: from the outset TV Breizh was financed by private funds from world-class tycoons – including two Bretons (Moal 2000: 126) – who had

calculated, after conducting market research, that Brittany was ready and had the population to sustain this undertaking, especially considering the thousands across the Breton diaspora who still feel attached to Brittany. Non-terrestrial broadcasting would make the channel available to this potentially loyal audience.

TV Breizh had intended to be completely bilingual by allowing viewers to choose either a Breton- or French-language track, an option on a digital channel; there were also plans to offer feature films dubbed into Breton. Programmes were to cater to Neo-Breton speakers 'to give the image of a youthful, dynamic television' to help offset the long-standing image problem of Breton as a language for the over-sixties (ibid.: 161–2). It also planned a soap opera series directed at learners of Breton (Moal 2000: 127).

Unfortunately, it soon became apparent that many of these features would not be cost effective (Winterstein 2001: 156), and Breton-language offerings were fairly quickly limited to two hours daily of children's programming and some parts of adult chat shows (ibid.). Moreover, the projected audience of three million homes subscribing to TV Breizh did not materialize. What happened? Several explanations have been advanced, including the difficulty of changing people's viewing habits, the reluctance on the part of viewers to pay for the service, and general resistance to the channel's existence (Milin 2003: 73).

Though TV Breizh did not bring to fruition its initial mission, the city of Rennes has created a successful cable station, TV Rennes 35, which offered in autumn 2007 the first sitcom in Breton, *Leurenn Breizh*, acted by the Breton theatre company Pik Achu. Ten episodes aired on this cable station, catering to what the channel's director calls the 'young, committed Breton-speaking audience' (Hicks 2007: 1). It is worth noting that TV Rennes 35 broadcasts free of charge, without subscriptions.

## NEW MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES

Brittany was a pioneer in the development of the information technologies that much of the world relies on so heavily today, so it is not surprising that there are many web-related sites devoted to Breton language and culture. For example, a server called Kervarker has been active since 1995, describing itself as 'dedicated to the Breton language'. Here one can get introductory lessons in Breton, drawing on both visual and audio components, enter a live chat space with others, ask questions, learn about Breton names, history, etc. There are numerous other internet sites that cater to Breton language and/or culture. For economy of space, only a few will be mentioned here.

Association Stalig is a site dedicated to promoting and disseminating Breton culture on the internet; for example, it allows free access to several Breton or bilingual streaming radio stations (as described above) and to several Breton record and book distributors. Antourtan.com describes itself as 'the first Breton television on the internet', offering coverage of events in Brittany, Breton radio, Breton news, and broadcaster of 'cyber *fest noz*' (which had 83,000 viewers in 81 countries around the world on 2 November 2002). It maintains an archive of 1,750 video files collected since 1999, and allows interested parties to access interviews conducted by several of the associative radio stations or videotaped interviews with persons working in or knowledgeable of a variety of issues concerning Breton language and culture. Breizhat.com and Gwalann.org are other sites of this nature that provide innumerable opportunities to gain a 'virtual' *entrée* into Breton cultural life.

The browser Mozilla and search engine Google are available in Breton formats, and in March 2007 an official agreement was signed between OLB, the Breton Region and

Microsoft to have Breton included among Microsoft's language offerings. As only about 100 languages have been accorded this presence by Microsoft, the agreement is seen as an important advance for the status, and presumably the use, of the language (Anon. 2007: 1). A Breton version of Wikipedia exists and proudly asserts (as of August 2007) that it is the fiftieth language to have achieved the distinction of having 10,000 or more articles in the Wikipedia system; in fact it has over 16,000.<sup>29</sup>

## BRETON THEATRE

Breton-language theatre has a long and distinguished history, extending back to the time of Middle Breton, and it remains vital today; indeed it has been enjoying renewed popularity in recent years, with no fewer than 15 companies, including several professional ones. A few of these were established in the 1970s (Ar Vro Bagan, Strollad Plougin and Teatr Penn ar Bed), with the remainder emerging since the 1990s. Several are professional, and others developed within educational settings such as Diwan or adult evening classes as a means of encouraging the use and development of learners' Breton-language skills; some companies offer performances in French as well as Breton.

## BRETON MUSIC AND FESTIVALS

Since the 1970s Breton music and the festivals that feature such music, along with dance, have been of paramount importance in the revitalization and re-creation of Breton identity. Anthropologist Lois Kuter did some pioneering work in the early 1980s on the role of Breton music and dance in Bretons' understanding of their identity, and how this parallels language (1981a, 1981b). More recently Desi Wilkinson has written on the role of the *fest-noz* (night festival), in particular, in the expression of Breton identity. As he sees it,

The *fest noz* does two important things vis-à-vis identity: First, it celebrates local identity expressed in the *danse du pays*, the most meaningful and accessible way of 'being Breton' for many. Second, it further activates an inclusive pan-Breton identity in both a cultural and social sense . . . the modern *fest noz* event . . . is the most important public expression of contemporary bretonnitude. (2003: 223)

Since the 1970s, he continues, 'there has been a new fusion of the building blocks of music, mythology, history, and politics in Brittany to give contemporary meaning and form to celtitude' (ibid.: 226). Most of these elements are in evidence in the numerous regional festivals that take place across Brittany, and especially in Lower Brittany during the summer months (while the far more numerous local *festoù-noz* occur throughout the year).

No summer festival draws more attention than the international Festival interceltique de Lorient (FIL). Launched in 1970, the FIL currently (August 2007) registers 700,000 visitors and 4,500 artists and performers extending over 10 days of festivities and calling itself 'the biggest Celtic festival in the world'. Wilkinson describes it (and others of its genre) as 'extravagant public displays of contemporary Brittany's concern with a pan-Celtic identity' (ibid.: 228).

The older Festival de Cornouaille, held each year since 1923 in Quimper in July, offers nine days of Breton and other Celtic music and dance festivities. Like the FIL, it attracts a huge domestic and international audience – 300,000 in 2006.

Of more recent vintage is the Festival des Vieilles Charrues (Festival of the Old Ploughs), which started in the 1980s as a sort of inlanders' joking mimesis of the big festivals of the coastal sites (Gemie 2005: 113–14). Since 1994 it has been held in the town of Carhaix in interior Finistère, running for four days; registering 200,000 visitors in 2007, Vieilles Charrues has grown into one of the largest festival venues in Europe for young adults (mainly) to enjoy Celtic and other popular music – rock, reggae, funk, hip hop, etc. (ibid.: 116). Emphasizing the 'world' aspect of such festivals, Wilkinson situates them in the context of globalization, saying they 'can be viewed as an encapsulation of the parallel ideas of local and global identity as expressed through music . . . opening up ever-widening vistas of diasporic experimentation' (ibid.: 229).

What is the role of the Breton language in all this grandiose expression of Bretonnitude and Celtitude? Breton is heard in some of the lyrics of songs, certainly in those of the more traditional genres of *kan ha diskan*, *gwerz*, etc. Otherwise it is for the most part only emblematically present, in signs and labelling of products, for, as Gemie observes, at the FIL 'the language has no official status' (ibid.: 113). This points to what he calls 'the success of a low-impact non-verbal Celtitude' among spectacle devotees, citing a Scottish musician's opinion that 'it's certainly easier not having words get in the way of that roguish twinkle or that misty yearning' (ibid.: 116).

## THE JOB MARKET

The OLB reports that for 2006 there were 900 full-time, salaried positions throughout Brittany for 'brittophones'. Not surprisingly, the majority of them are found within the realm of education (73.4 per cent), and most of these (9/10) are in the immersion and bilingual programmes, with the remainder consisting of instructor positions in adult language programmes or assistant jobs in the Breton-medium nursery schools. Smaller numbers of jobs are available in other sectors as well; the overall distribution of jobs by type is shown in Table 15.5.

*Table 15.5* Distribution of jobs utilizing the Breton language. Source: Office de la Langue Bretonne 2006c

Position type	Percentage of jobs
Education	73.4
Administration (e.g., directors, secretaries, bookkeepers)	10.0
Culture (e.g., promoters of Breton culture, translators, collectors of traditional folk culture)	4.6
Media (print and broadcast journalists, producers)	4.1
Industry, crafts, commerce	1.7
Arts and shows	1.3
Public administration	1.3
Other occupations	3.0

Just five years earlier there had been about 330 jobs in Brittany for brittophones, showing an obvious growth pattern, though it had been envisaged in 2001 that there would be 1,000 jobs by 2006, a projection based partly on the hope that the satellite television station TV Breizh would create additional positions for Breton speakers in the media and related areas. As already discussed, TV Breizh did not develop in this direction.

## CONCLUSION

For a millennium and a half (circa 500–1900 AD), Breton was a language unthreatened by the possibility of disappearing. During those many centuries it was mainly spoken by the lower socioeconomic strata of society, but that base was very considerable demographically, and the intergenerational transmission of oracy was not interrupted. The Breton aristocracy had early on abandoned the language for French, followed by the rural nobility and the urban bourgeoisie. The Catholic clergy from the seventeenth century onwards developed modern Breton as a written medium, and an older robust tradition of Breton theatre also promoted the use, on a limited basis, of written Breton.

Sea changes for the practice of Breton are detectable by the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as the still largely monolingual Breton-speaking population began to be swept into the national education system, the military (for men), out-migration and a growing tourist industry establishing itself in Brittany. The two world wars in the following century accelerated the language shift already under way, especially in the aftermath of the Second World War when Breton parents ceased, en masse, passing Breton on to their children – the moment of rupture of familial intergenerational transmission that is so vital to the reproduction of a language. Ever since then the story of Breton has been one of steadily declining numbers of native speakers and the limitation of its use to fairly closed social networks or communities of practice.

This is so in spite of a very considerable effort from the late 1970s onwards to establish schools in Brittany in which Breton immersion or bilingual pedagogy would be practised. That initiative, on the part mainly of young parents who themselves had not learned Breton in their own families of origin, has succeeded – along with the adult learners of Breton – in creating a new cohort of Breton speakers – the *néo-bretonnants* or *brittophones* – who have, in some instances, received a significant portion of their pre-university schooling in Breton, and who speak Breton among themselves. Like the older native *bretonnants*, they practise Breton in social networks or communities of practice, speaking and/or writing the language in real and/or virtual space. Overall their numbers are estimated at 15–17,000<sup>30</sup> or about 0.4 per cent of the population of historic Brittany (4.2 million).

Given the politics of resistance of the French government concerning the promotion of regions and their languages, these pedagogical movements have attracted the interest of many in the Breton public (and not just those involved in Breton-language learning) who are concerned to maintain and promote Brittany's regional identity and economic development. The central government's wrangling with Diwan and its refusal to incorporate the latter into the national education system have prompted impressive numbers of Breton citizens to take to the streets in support of immersion and bilingual schooling. The government's refusal to ratify the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages has further augmented public support for the language. In short, across a broad spectrum of the Breton population, the language has become a powerful symbol of Breton identity, whether they happen to speak it or not.

Breton still presents a reasonable demographic profile of speakers – with 257,000 registered by the latest INSEE survey – who claimed to speak Breton at least sometimes with people close to them. However, when one considers that the vast majority of these are older speakers (>50–60), it is clear that within a relatively short time numbers will tumble very dramatically. While the immersion and bilingual schools are training some 11,000 students each year, not all complete their education in these streams, necessarily limiting their proficiency in the language. Several thousand adults enrol each year in supplemental

Breton language courses or workshops but the outcome of these in terms of real linguistic competence remains uncertain, or unknown. With 10,000 of the older *bretonnant* population dying each year, these second-language learner numbers cannot fill the gap.

Although the Breton Region approved a plan in 2004 for the linguistic politics of Breton, calling for an increase the number of students in Diwan and bilingual classes to 20,000 by 2010, the reality as that year approaches is that only slightly more than half that number is found in these streams of education. Further, while the OLB, established in 1999, has been working indefatigably to re-Bretonize toponyms and communal names and to provide bilingual road signage throughout Brittany (among other projects), these efforts have not increased the practice of Breton in society in any significant way. Such projects remain important symbolically, but perhaps are only, as one person put it, 'a vaccine against forgetting' that Breton was once here (Quéré 2000: 78). Thus, the languacultural situation in Brittany has come to a point where many Bretons are proud to proclaim their Breton identity, to support the teaching of the language and the promotion of Brittany's diverse cultural expressions and its economy, but where only a relative hand-ful feel compelled to do so through the medium of Breton.

## NOTES

- 1 More information is on the website of the Comité pour une réunion administrative de la Bretagne, available: [www.cuab.org](http://www.cuab.org) (accessed 10 September 2007).
- 2 Geographic data from Merienn (2004: 1).
- 3 *Encyclopedia of the Celts: Pacht-Pwyll*. Available: [www.celticgrounds.com/chapters/encyclopedia/p.html](http://www.celticgrounds.com/chapters/encyclopedia/p.html) (accessed 29 July 2007).
- 4 INSEE data, available: [www.citypopulation.de/France-Bretagne.html](http://www.citypopulation.de/France-Bretagne.html) and [www.citypopulation.de/France-PaysdeLaLoire.html](http://www.citypopulation.de/France-PaysdeLaLoire.html) (accessed 9 September 2007).
- 5 Much of this account developed during the course of the nineteenth century – a period of Romantic imaginings about the history and nature of 'the Celts' combined, in Brittany at least, with complex debates concerning the origins of both the French and Breton languages, shot through with contesting religious and political ideologies and goals. For a detailed account of this period in Breton intellectual history, see Guiomar 1987.
- 6 Note that 'the last duke to speak Breton as a native was probably Alain Fergent (1084–1113/16); his successors were almost certainly monolingual French speakers' (Jones 2003: 5).
- 7 This is the *Speculum Historiale* of Vincent de Beauvais (Guyonvarc'h 1987: 197).
- 8 These figures are estimates, as the French government has never included in its censuses questions relating to languages spoken by the population. However, unofficial surveys have been conducted from the time of the Revolution to the present, which have helped shed some light on the question.
- 9 For more about this historical period, see Caerleon 1969; Calvez 2000; Fouéré 1977; Frélaut 1985; Hamon 2001; Nicolas 1986.
- 10 *Vannetais* places word stress on the final syllable rather than the penultimate syllable, characteristic of KLT; it also has a voiceless glottal fricative [h] where the other three dialects have a voiceless sibilant [s]. In addition there are some minor morphological differences distinguishing *vannetais* from the other three – e.g., some plurals in *-ion* instead of KLT *-ien*; *-ein* for the infinitive suffix in lieu of *-a* or *-añ* for KLT (Gourvil 1968: 98).
- 11 This digraph innovation had actually been first proposed in 1911, but was rejected at that time by the majority of Breton writers.
- 12 Le Dû sees in this the influence of Esperanto (1997: 424).
- 13 Nearly 70 per cent of communes in Lower Brittany have Breton signage, 20 per cent of them within city limits (Nicolas 2001: 146).
- 14 Fishman's scale is explicitly modelled on the Richter Scale for measuring the intensity of

- earthquakes, with higher numbers reflecting higher levels of geologic disruption; in the case of language, higher numbers indicate higher levels of societal disarray and thus greater threat to the prospects for survival (1991: 87).
- 15 None of these organizations has a substantial following, perhaps several hundred individuals in each.
  - 16 The quantitative part of the analysis comprised responses to 470 questionnaires; the qualitative portion was based on a subset of sixty-two individuals who participated in interviews with the researcher.
  - 17 A term proposed by anthropologist Michael Agar (1994) to refer to the often close connection between language and culture.
  - 18 A fuller description of the Institut's mission is available at [http://www.institutcultureldbretagne.com/article.php3?id\\_article=2](http://www.institutcultureldbretagne.com/article.php3?id_article=2)] (accessed 31 August 2007).
  - 19 More information is available at the ICDBL website: <<http://www.breizh.net/icdbl/saozg/index.htm>> (accessed 31 August 2007).
  - 20 E.g., in 1870 Henri Gaidoz, the director of the new *Revue celtique* (and a Basque) and Charles de Gaulle (great-uncle of the later President of France) drafted a *Pétition pour les langues provinciales*, the first of its kind. Based on the idea that the French language is well established and will always be the living and veritable symbol [of France], they asked for the right of these languages 'de garder leur place, si modeste qu'elle soit, au soleil de la grande patrie.' Shortly thereafter war with the Prussians broke out and the petition was set aside (Postic 2003: 385).
  - 21 Courcelle points out that 'in certain cafés in Brittany, the box for tips is for "Diwan". In the majority of *festoù-noz*, the entrance fee is increased by one franc for "Diwan"' (2003: 135). However, very substantial funds come in from the proceeds of the large festivals held each summer in Brittany – e.g., in 1999 the Vieilles Charrues festival donated one million francs of its profits to Diwan (Gemie 2005: 112, 114); it does so each year.
  - 22 Alain Savary, Minister of Education at the time.
  - 23 However, in a recent letter from the President of Dihun, dated 9 May 2007 the writer expresses consternation at the 'regular degradation of bilingual education' within this stream. Online: <<http://www.dihun.com/actualites/etatdeslieux07.htm>> (accessed 12 September 2007).
  - 24 The *licence*, equivalent to the BA degree in Britain and the USA, was first created in 1981.
  - 25 Prior to 1993 it was a two-year degree following the *licence*; now it is a two-year degree on the way to the *licence*.
  - 26 From the region's website, the section entitled 'Editions en breton': <[www.region-bretagne.fr/CRB/Public/rubriques\\_thematique/culture\\_et\\_sport/cache\\_culture\\_et\\_sport/editions\\_en\\_breton3114](http://www.region-bretagne.fr/CRB/Public/rubriques_thematique/culture_et_sport/cache_culture_et_sport/editions_en_breton3114)> (accessed 15 August 2007).
  - 27 Sources for information concerning radio stations are the following:  
Association Stalig website: <<http://www.stalig.com>>; Radio Kreiz-Breizh website: <[www.antourtan.org/radio/rkb.html](http://www.antourtan.org/radio/rkb.html)>; Bretoned Bro Bariz website, with this link to 'Radios en Bretagne': <[www.gwalarn.org/bbb/articles.php?lng=fr&pg=26](http://www.gwalarn.org/bbb/articles.php?lng=fr&pg=26)>
  - 28 'France 3 Ouest et la langue bretonne'. Available: <[www.ouest.france3.fr/emissions/mouchigdall/2429785-fr.php](http://www.ouest.france3.fr/emissions/mouchigdall/2429785-fr.php)>; (accessed 1 September 2007).
  - 29 Information available at <[br.wikipedia.org/wiki/Degemer](http://br.wikipedia.org/wiki/Degemer)> (accessed 22 September 20007).
  - 30 This is based on Broudic's calculation that about 6.5 per cent of those who (in the 1997 survey) claimed to know Breton learned it through some sort of schooling (1999: 59), yielding 15,600 school-trained speakers (out of 240,000). Using the 2003 INSEE figure of 257,000 speakers, this would raise the school-trained number slightly to 16,705.

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# THE REVIVED LANGUAGES – CORNISH AND MANX

*Ken George and George Broderick*

## REVIVED CORNISH

### Introduction

Cornish is a remarkable language in that, after being moribund throughout the nineteenth century, it has been revived, and is now spoken by a growing band of enthusiasts. Many academic linguists have hitherto ignored Revived Cornish, because being in the business of comparative philology, they are interested only in the traditional language. Some (for example Wakelin 1975; Price 1984) have adopted an unnecessarily scornful attitude: a few, notably the late Professor Léon Fleuriot, have supported the language movement and actually tried to converse in Cornish. For the sociolinguists, however, Revived Cornish is of great interest (MacKinnon 2000; Wimmer 2006).

## SLEEPING

In the nineteenth century, a few people (notably John Davey, d. 1891) had a traditional knowledge of pieces of Cornish, such as the Lord's Prayer and the numerals, but so far as we know, they could not converse. From the mid-century onwards, others began to compose new material in Cornish (Saunders 1999).

## RISING

### Jenner's reconstruction

The revival is usually considered to date from 1904, when Henry Jenner (1848–1934) published his *Handbook of the Cornish Language*, though it is clear (Williams 2004) that Jenner was composing poetry in Cornish thirty years previously. For the first sixty years of its life, Revived Cornish was largely a written medium: although many revivalists wished it to be a spoken tongue, it was difficult for speakers to meet frequently, owing to poor communications. The spoken language was heard mainly on ceremonial occasions: at the annual *Gorsedh* (gathering of bards), at midsummer bonfires, and at church services.

## The process of revival

The extant literature of traditional Cornish (about 176,000 words) seems enormous when one examines it line by line, but is limited in scope. The religious verse which makes up its bulk is not representative of the everyday speech of Cornish people in the Middle Ages, and still less suitable as a basis for conversational Cornish in the twenty-first century. The task of codifying and reconstructing Cornish, begun by Jenner, was taken up in the 1920s by Allin-Collins and by Robert Morton Nance (1873–1959), but Nance's views were dominant. He was later joined by the Englishman A. S. D. Smith (1883–1950).

Unlike Jenner, Nance based his ideas for the revived language firmly on Middle Cornish. This was reasonable, because 75 per cent of the extant material dates from the Middle Cornish phase. He spent many years attempting to rationalize the spelling, eventually producing an orthography which he called Unified Cornish (Nance 1929). It was based primarily on the forms found in the *Ordinalia* (see chapter 11). Where two or more alternative spellings are found in the texts, Nance chose the commonest; in cases of doubt, he chose the simplest form.

It appears that Nance first devised the orthography, and then subsequently, with the help of Smith, thought out a phonological system to fit it. This is the converse of what they should have done, but since until the 1970s revived Cornish was largely a written medium, it did not matter much.

The syntax, semantics and lexicon of the traditional language are all incomplete, and in the absence of traditional Cornish speakers, all the gaps have to be filled by analogy, both within the language and with Breton and Welsh. On the whole, the problems of reconstructing Cornish grammar and syntax were solved by Nance and Smith during the years 1920 to 1940, with the aid of the notes of Lhuyd (1707) and Stokes (1872), and using Breton grammar as a comparative model. Occasionally mistakes in their reconstruction come to light and have to be rectified, e.g. the *tek a wel* construction, which Nance had wrongly interpreted as an exclamative (Padel 1978, 1979).

The lexical gaps comprise:

- a common words which must have existed in the language, but do not happen to have been recorded; e.g. Breton *razh* suggests that the Cornish word for 'rat' may have been *rath*;
- b words for concepts which did not exist in the eighteenth century.

Many of the gaps were filled by Nance in his dictionaries (Nance 1938, 1952, 1955): in many cases he used Breton and Welsh cognates, but often favoured borrowing from Middle English.

## Organizations

After a partially false start before the First World War, the Cornish revival progressed under the auspices of the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies (the first founded in 1920) and the Gorsedh of Cornwall (established in 1928). Since 1940, the Gorsedh has held annual competitions for original works written in Cornish, which have done much to encourage a modern literature.

## Publications

Publishing in Cornish has always suffered from a lack of money. Many publications have been financed privately by their authors, or paid for by advance subscription. Nance was able to publish numerous short articles about Cornish and stories in Cornish in the magazine *Old Cornwall*, which he edited. Yet no money was available to publish his Unified versions of the *Ordinalia* until well after his death in 1959 (Sandercock 1982, 1984). A large amount of poetry was composed during Nance's lifetime, but has only recently been published (Saunders 1999). A short play in the style of the *Ordinalia* (Pollard 1941) and an epic poem by Smith (1951) were among the few books in Cornish to be published.

## Conclusion

Nance summed up his work on Cornish with the remark: 'One generation has set Cornish on its feet. It is now for another to make it walk'. An assessment of this work after an interval of nearly fifty years has been made by Lyon (2007).

## WALKING

In the early 1970s, the attitude towards Cornish began to change. The more widespread ownership of cars and the use of telephones enabled Cornish speakers to communicate much more frequently than in the 1930s. Faster roads also enabled many more Cornish speakers to visit other Celtic countries, particularly Wales, and to see at first hand how it is possible to live one's life using a Celtic language. A few parents have been inspired to teach their children to speak Cornish from birth, the first native speakers for 200 years. Today an increasing number of people wish to lead their lives as far as possible through Cornish, and to speak it on all possible occasions as a living language.

Although unquestionably a living language, it is not a living community language. There is in Cornwall no village where Cornish is spoken by most of the people for most of the time. The nearest that one can get to a Cornish-speaking community is the Cornish Language Weekend, held almost every year since 1976, comprising formal lessons, games, songs, walks, a concert, and Cornish dancing. Unlike in Brittany and Wales, there is in Cornwall no reservoir of traditional Celtic speakers. This meant that it took some years before the best speakers reached full fluency. Spoken Cornish is practised at the *Yeth an Werin* (Language of the people) meetings, held regularly in taverns.

The increased interest in Cornish may be seen as part of a wider cultural movement, including the revival of traditional Cornish dancing. Although spoken by a very small number, the language is seen in this movement as having immense symbolic significance, and has been used to emphasize Cornwall's distinctiveness.

## Phonology and orthography

The change of emphasis in the 1970s from written to spoken Cornish meant that the question of pronunciation became increasingly important. A few speakers began to look beyond Nance's Unified Cornish to the original spelling of the traditional texts. Gradually it became apparent to them that, so far as phonology is concerned, what some academics had been saying for years was true – that Nance's reconstruction was

not as good as it might have been. Nance’s systems of spelling and pronunciation had been passed from teacher to pupil, and repeated without critical examination in most textbooks.

Saunders was the first to react against Nance’s Unified Cornish; in 1979 he produced a spelling system based on that of Lhuyd, but so radically different from Nance’s that it did not gain acceptance (for an example, see Saunders 1985). Next, the whole basis of the revived language was called into question; a small group, led by Richard Gendall, believed that it was better to use as a base the traditional language of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries rather than that of the fifteenth and sixteenth. These problems were studied in great depth by the present author, and his recommendations were that:

- a the grammar of Revived Cornish continue to be based on that of Middle Cornish;
- b a phonological base be defined, approximating the pronunciation of the traditional language c. 1500;
- c the orthography be modified so as to fit the phonological base, and form a system which aspires to phonemic perfection.

The phonological base and its associated orthography (modified from George 1986 in the light of more recent research) are summarized in Table 16.1.

Table 16.1 Correspondences between phonemes and graphemes in *Kernewek Kemmyn* (slightly simplified)

Phonemes	Graphemes	Remarks
/i, ɪ, e, a, ɔ, o, u, œ, y/	<i, y, e, a, o, oe, ou, eu, u>	
/ej, aj, ɔj/	<ey, ay, oy>	
/iʷ, iʷ, eʷ, aʷ, ɔʷ, yʷ/	<iʷ, yʷ, eʷ, aʷ, ɔʷ, uʷ>	
/j, w/	<y, w>	
/p, t, k; pp, tt, kk/	<p, t, k; pp, tt, kk>	
/b, d, g/	<b, d, g>	<-p, -t, -k> in polysyllables
/f, θ, x, s; ff, θθ, xx, ss/	<f, th, gh, s; ff, tth, ggh, ss>	
/v, ð, h, z/	<v, dh, h, s>	
/ʃ, tʃ, dʒ/	<sh, ch, j>	
/m, n, l, r; mm, nn, ll, rr/	<m, n, l, r; mm, nn, ll, rr>	

These recommendations were adopted in principle by the Cornish Language Board in July 1987. The change-over to the new spelling, known as *Kernewek Kemmyn*, took about six years to complete. Many teachers, perceiving the advantages of the new system, began to teach it enthusiastically.

A small number of speakers preferred to continue with Unified rather than to change. At the same time another small group preferred to use as a base not Middle Cornish as had Nance, but the Late Cornish of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Williams (1995) criticized all three forms of Cornish, and put forward his own spelling, called Unified Cornish Revised (UCR). His criticisms of *Kemmyn* were rejected by Dunbar and George (1997). Table 16.2 summarizes the bases of the four reconstructions.

Table 16.2 Reconstructions of Cornish

	Grammar	Pronunciation	Spelling
Nance (1929)	Middle Cornish (principally the <i>Ordinalia</i> ) + Middle Breton	1 English dialect of West Penwith, c. 1900 2 Evidence of Lhuyd, 1701 3 Modern Welsh, c. 1925	Middle Cornish (principally the <i>Ordinalia</i> ), c. 1400 ‘Unified Cornish’
George (1986)	Middle Cornish + Middle Breton (Brown 2001)	A phonological base approximating the pronunciation of Cornish c. 1500, obtained from a detailed analysis of: (a) graphemes (b) Breton and Welsh sounds (c) rhyme schemes	A system which aspires to phonemic perfection; similar to Middle Cornish and to Unified Cornish, but with some new graphemes: <i>Kernewek Kemmyn</i>
Gendall (1991)	Late Cornish of the ‘Newlyn School’, mainly Wm Rowe, c. 1690	1 English dialect of West Penwith, c. 1930 2 Evidence of Lhuyd, 1701	English spelling conventions of 17th- and 18th-centuries ‘signpost spelling’
Williams (1995)	Tudor Cornish	Based on Williams’ discredited hypothesis of a ‘prosodic shift’	Partly historical, but with some anachronistic graphemes: ‘Unified Cornish Revised’

## Lexicon

The work of expanding the lexicon has been continued by the Vocabulary and Grammar Committee of the Cornish Language Board. In the early 1980s they published three supplements to Nance’s dictionaries, entitled *On the Roads*, *Kitchen Things* and *Home and Office* (Snell and Morris 1981, 1984). The principle adopted by the editors of these supplements was to use, in order of preference:

- a an existing Cornish word, with extension of semantic range, e.g. *maglenn* ‘gear system’, originally ‘mesh, snare’; *lost* ‘queue’, originally ‘tail’;
- b a new word constructed from familiar Cornish elements, e.g. *marghlergh* ‘bridle way’ = *margh* ‘horse’ + *lergh* ‘track’; *glan gales* ‘hard shoulder’ = *glan* ‘border’ + *kales* ‘hard’
- c a new word based on Breton or Welsh, e.g. *oyl-men* ‘petroleum’, cf. Breton *eoul-maen*; *rosva* ‘promenade (road)’, cf. Welsh *rhodfa*;
- d a new word based on other European languages, without giving English any special priority, e.g. *tuyow oll* ‘through traffic’, cf. Fr. *toutes directions*;
- e direct borrowing, e.g. *patrol* ‘patrol’, cf. Fr. *patrouille*; *radio* ‘radio’ from international vocabulary.



An example of the kind of semantic problem that the compilers of the supplements had to tackle is the allocation of the following words, all referring to containers of some kind, to present-day kitchen equipment: *bason, bolla, chek, kaltor, lester, padell, per, skala, skudell, seth*. This is very difficult in the absence of traditional speakers.

The work of coining and examining neologisms is undertaken by the Vocabulary and Grammar Committee of the Cornish Language Board, and more widely by contributors to the web-site Govel Geryow, run by Tony Snell. The forthcoming revised edition of the *Gerlyver Meur* will contain the following approximate numbers of head-words:

Words in traditional corpus	fully assimilated	5,500
	partially assimilated	500
	unassimilated	1,500
Neologisms		4,500
Total		12,000

It is interesting to note that about eighteen of Nance’s neologisms in group (a) were subsequently found in *BK*. Many of his words in group (b) are in widespread use; e.g. *pellwolok* ‘television’ (lit. ‘far view’), *pellgowser* ‘telephone’ (lit. ‘far-speaker’). Others have not found favour; e.g. *margh-horn* ‘bicycle’, calqued on Breton *marc’h-houarn* (lit. ‘iron horse’) has been replaced by *diwros* (lit. ‘two wheels’, cf. French *deux roues*); and *golokwedrow* ‘spectacles’ (lit. ‘view-glasses’) has been replaced by *diwweder* ‘pair of glasses’. There has also been a tendency to replace the plural suffix *-ys*, which occurs in loan-words from Middle English, by the Celtic *-ow*.

**Publications**

With the formation of the Cornish Language Board in 1967, the number of publications began to increase. The Board has published new editions of almost the entire corpus of traditional literature (see chapter 11), and has fostered new literature. The first full-length novel was written by Bennetto (1984). Many others have followed, notably by Michael Palmer and John Richards. The most successful magazine is the monthly *An Gannas*, which has been running for over thirty years.

Since the introduction of *Kernewek Kemmyn*, the number of publications has risen considerably (Table 16.3). The volume of new literature in revived Cornish now exceeds that of the traditional corpus. Although some (e.g. George 2006) still copies the style of the medieval plays), most work reflects a more modern style. Translations include *Treasure Island* (Lyon 1984), *Alice in Wonderland* (Edwards 1990) and *Die Zauberflöte* (George 2000).

*Table 16.3* Number of items in the Cornish Language Board's sales list

Dictionaries and grammar books	10
Courses (books and recordings)	8
Books about Cornish	14
Texts from traditional Cornish	20
Graded readers	26
Poems, songs and opera	7
Background studies	14
The Bible	24
CD-ROMs and DVDs	3
Total	126

### Education

Cornish is taught in only a few schools (about seven at present). Even in these, it is almost always outside the curriculum. The teachers are either Cornish speakers who happen to be members of staff, or Cornish speakers who come to the school to give unpaid lessons.

It follows, then, that most Cornish speakers have learned the language at evening classes, or through private study. In addition to about twenty evening classes in Cornwall, there are various classes elsewhere, notably in London and Australia, and from time to time in Wales and Brittany. A correspondence course, *Kernewek dre Lyther*, has been running since 1983. On its formation in 1967, the Cornish Language Board instituted a system of examinations, now in four grades, which have received formal accreditation.

The glorious ideal, the ultimate goal of the language movement is to restore Cornish as the vernacular of the Cornish people. This long-term objective is unlikely to be achieved in the foreseeable future, though it would be brought nearer if Cornish were to be made available as a proper subject to all schoolchildren in Cornwall.

### Other domains

There are at present about ten religious services in Cornish every year, of which the best attended are the Christmas carol service and the harvest festival. Numerous hymns have been translated into Cornish. For many years, Rod Lyon has broadcast a short programme in Cornish every week on Radio Cornwall. The occasional use of Cornish in the worlds of government and business is newsworthy. Perhaps the most successful domain has been the making of short films in Cornish.

### Organizations

Since 1967, the teaching and development of Cornish have been managed by Kesva an Taves Kernewek, the Cornish Language Board. This body was set up jointly by the Gorsedh of Cornwall and the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies, but in 1985 it was re-constituted so as to be independent, and more democratic. Fifteen of its twenty-one members are elected from Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek, the Cornish Language Fellowship, a society open to the mass of Cornish speakers and learners. The Language Board operates through the following five committees:

- Vocabulary and Grammar – deals with problems of grammar, and creates new words;
- Publications – publishes and sells books and recordings (see table 16.2);
- Media – deals with newspapers, film, radio and television: attempts to increase broadcasting time in Cornish;
- Education – co-ordinates the teaching of Cornish at evening classes and by correspondence;
- Examinations – conducts yearly examinations at four grades, ratified by a national body.

A group called Agan Tavas was formed to serve the interests of those who wish to write in Unified Cornish (and also UCR). Those who use Revived Late Cornish may belong to another group called Cussel an Tavas.

## READY TO RUN?

In 2002, after a long campaign, Cornish was finally recognized by the UK government under Part II of the European Charter for Minority Languages. In principle, this gave Cornish a measure of official status which it had never previously enjoyed. In practice, it allowed a larger sum of money to be made available to the language than formerly. This money is channelled through Cornwall Council, which set up a partnership on which serve councillors and representatives of language groups.

The prospect of money caused the groups who do not use *Kemmyn* to cease squabbling among themselves and to attack *Kemmyn*. They re-opened the question of orthography, placing it on the agenda of the partnership. Nicholas Williams criticized *Kemmyn*, claiming that it was linguistically flawed. The partnership appointed a commission to look into the question of the spelling. They were charged with determining which of the four principal existing orthographies (*Kemmyn*, Unified, UCR and revived Late Cornish) would be best for use in education and public life. During the course of their deliberations two ‘compromise’ forms were devised. The commission compiled its report without either ascertaining the numerical support for the various factions, or consulting the various bodies which support the language. They stated verbally that the linguistic basis of *Kernewek Kemmyn* is sound. They recommended that a new discussion group be set up to consider the question of orthography.

Hitherto the Cornish language movement has been run by enthusiasts, who have made great progress with a notable effort of will. If the possibility of increased financial support is realized, then it will fundamentally change the nature of the movement. This prospect is already causing considerable internal strain. It remains to be seen how the movement will cope. We can no doubt learn from our Celtic neighbours and indeed from other minority language groups.

## REVIVED MANX

### The first phase

Though some efforts towards revival had been under way in Man since c. 1875, the Revival of Manx could in reality be said to have started on 22 March 1899 with the founding of Yn Çhesaght Ghailckagh (YCG) (The Manx Gaelic Society) under the presidency

of Manx academic and Speaker of the House of Keys, A. W. Moore (1836–1909). The founding of a society of this nature had its roots in two main factors: (a) the general wave of interest and enthusiasm in matters Celtic emanating from Ireland which swept over all the Celtic countries at that time (late nineteenth century); and (b) more particularly relevant to the situation in Man, the revelation from Henry Jenner's survey of 1874 (Jenner 1875) of the considerable retreat Manx had sustained by the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

YCG is still the most important institution in Man for the maintenance and promotion of Manx. Its objectives and means, then as now, could be outlined from its constitution as follows:

- 1 The preservation of Manx as the national language of the Isle of Man.
- 2 The study and publication of existing Gaelic literature and the cultivation of a modern literature in Manx.

These were to be achieved through setting up classes, holding lectures, and encouraging those who have Manx to speak it regularly. In addition, YCG aims were to seek to have Manx taught in schools, to promote Manx music and songs, to contribute relevant material about YCG to magazines and journals, and to collect aspects of oral literature (tales, songs, etc.) still thought to be extant among the people. In addition, the *Isle of Man Examiner* contributed (c. 1899–1902) to the revival by running a column in Manx or including material on Manx folklore, especially that collected by Charles Roeder (1848–1911), a native of Gera in Thüringen, then resident in Manchester (see also Roeder 1904; Cubbon 1933, 1939).

With regard to YCG aims to have Manx introduced into the schools, several problems had to be overcome. At the turn of the nineteenth/twentieth centuries the British authorities felt responsible for education in Man, where in 1872 a slightly modified version of the 1870 English Elementary Education Act (which made no provision for Manx, but which had little or no effect on it, as the language shift in favour of English had by then already taken place (see Broderick 1991, 1999a) was implemented and so any sanction to teach Manx in schools had to be sought from that quarter. After three years of correspondence between Whitehall and YCG it was decided to leave the matter to individual schools, with the result that only one school was willing to teach Manx. The half-hour lesson per week was withdrawn shortly afterwards, and efforts to have Manx brought into the schools on a proper basis had to wait until 1992 (see below).

In May 1913 YCG began publishing its journal *Mannin*, edited by YCG secretary and folklore collector Sophia Morrison (cf. Maddrell 2002). A literary publication containing much on Manx folklore, folklife, music and songs, etc., it appeared twice yearly (May and November) for nine issues until May 1917, folding just after the death of its editor (in January 1917).

The demise of this publication marked the end of a phase prompting YCG stalwart J. J. Kneen in 1931 to comment that 'Celtic enthusiasm, always of a fugitive nature, sadly waned again during the last twenty years' (Kneen 1931: 20), and the revival was not to see a further surge in energy and activity until about 1930.

Concomitant with, but slightly predating the surge in interest in Manx Gaelic, was the interest in Manx traditional music, songs and lore. In 1893 the Castletown general practitioner and fiddle player Dr John Clague (1842–1908) began a systematic collection of Manx folksongs and folk tunes while on his rounds, concentrating in the south (c. 1893–6), and the brothers W. H. and J. F. Gill collected material in the north (c. 1895–8). Clague's

music collection contains some 270 items, plus variants, in four manuscript notebooks (Clague 1893–8; Gilchrist 1924–6; Jerry 1987), and his fragmentary song collection (relating to the foregoing) in a further nine notebooks now in the Manx Museum archive (MM) (see Broderick 1982). Clague collected a considerable amount of folklore material also (see Clague 1911; Broderick 1982), found in the Manx Museum archive (MS 450A). The Gills' music collection recently came to light and is also housed in the Manx Museum archive (Gill Manx Music Collection). At about the same time A. W. Moore was also collecting material, partly from oral, but predominantly from documentary sources. His collection (Moore 1896) consists of 74 songs or song-fragments, of which 40 have airs associated with them (see also Broderick 1981).

### The second phase

Personal enquiry seems to indicate that the revival received a second major impetus in enthusiasm *c.* 1930 lasting until the outbreak of the Second World War. The two main protagonists at that time were J. J. Kneen (1872–1938) and Mona Douglas (1898–1987). J. J. Kneen, also active during the 'First Phase', was a producer of mint rock by profession who found time to be a prolific *Heimatforscher*. He brought out a six-volume work on Manx place-names (Kneen 1925–8), a Manx grammar (Kneen 1931), and a work on Manx personal names (Kneen 1937), not to mention a flood of smaller writings to do with Manx (see Cubbon 1933, 1939). The Norwegian Professor of Celtic and Comparative Philology at Oslo, Carl J. S. Marstrander, praised Kneen's efforts during visits to Man in 1929 and 1930 (Marstrander 1929–33), and arranged for the Nansen Fund in Norway to grant Kneen £200 to assist him in his work. However, in spite of Marstrander's praise, Kneen was not a trained linguist or academic (see Thomson 1969: 189, fn. 1). He was active in YCG, holding the posts of secretary and latterly as president.

Mona Douglas, also active during the 'First Phase', was a folklorist and folksong collector at a time (particularly in the 1920s) when scant attention was being paid to things Manx, collecting from *c.* 1912 to *c.* 1930 from some of the last bearers of the Manx music and song tradition (see Douglas and Foster 1928, 1929, 1957; Cubbon 1933, 1939; Kissack 2006; Maddrell 2007; Broderick 2008). Mona Douglas was also a poet and a romantic, and some of her poetry regarding Man was inspired by the 1916 Rebellion in Ireland (Douglas 1916). In 1931 she and others founded the Manx youth movement Aeglagh Vannin (Douglas 1932) at a time when such movements were in vogue, and was active in YCG and the Celtic Congress right up until the Second World War. Ms. Douglas was evidently equally vigorous in pursuing her interests in Manx national politics, and from personal enquiry (1990) and interviews with surviving members it seems that she played a central role in the apparently shadowy organization Ny Manninee Dhooie 'the true Manx', at the outbreak of war or shortly before. Like Plaid Cymru in Wales (taking its cue from Ireland), Ny Manninee Dhooie, it seems, advocated a neutral stance for Man during the Second World War, which caused many Manx people to regard the movement as pro-German. It is probably due to these activities that Mona Douglas failed to become President of Yn Cheshaght Ghailckagh in 1939 (Miller 2004: viii). After the war Mona Douglas's overt interests in Manx politics appear to have ceased.

From the very beginning and even today, interest in and enthusiasm for matters Manx, particularly the language, is linked, in the minds of many Manx people, with pride in Manxness and the Manx national identity, hence the YCG motto *Gyn chengey, Gyn cheer* 'no language, no country'. The striving for individual national consciousness in Man,

but also in other Celtic countries at that time (1920s to 1930s), attracted interest from Germany where ‘exaltation of the native thing’ was a fundamental aspect of government policy, particularly after 1933.

The Nazis took a keen interest in matters Celtic (including Manx), especially the SS-Wissenschaftsamt Ahnenerbe (in 1940 renamed ‘Wissenschaftsamt A der SS’), set up in 1935 by Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler and two others. The purpose evidently was to attract specialists in a number of fields that could also serve the political interests of the state (Simon 1985a, 1985b). One such field was devoted to matters Celtic and was headed by Professor Dr Ludwig Mühlhausen (1888–1956) who became Professor of Celtic in Berlin in 1936 on the enforced resignation of his Jewish predecessor Julius Pokorny. Mühlhausen joined the NSDAP in 1932 and the SA in 1933, and in 1943 transferred to the SS. In December 1936 Mühlhausen, with others, set up in Berlin the Deutsche Gesellschaft für keltische Studien (DGKS, German Society for Celtic Studies) which had as its secretary the West Prussian Celticist Gerhard von Tevenar (d. 1943) and as its honorary president the renowned Celtic scholar Rudolf Thurneysen (d. 1940); Mühlhausen was chairman. By 1942 through Mühlhausen’s efforts the DGKS (and the *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie und Volksforschung*, as it was then known) had come under SS control (Berlin Document Centre 1941–4; Simon 1992; Lerchenmüller 1997, 2002, 2008).

In addition to his duties as secretary of the DGKS, Tevenar, an SS man, seemingly had an interest in Breton studies, as well as Cornish and Manx. In September 1941 he delivered a lecture on the Isle of Man, its history, constitution, traditions, language, etc., at a joint symposium of the DGKS and a science ministry sponsored initiative (primarily directed against England) styling itself *Kriegseinsatz der Geisteswissenschaften* at Wernigerode, Sachsen-Anhalt (Tevenar 1941a). It is clear from the contents of the published version of the lecture that Tevenar was fairly au fait with the Manx situation and almost certainly had contacts with Man, either through correspondence or personal visits. The Irish Rising of 1916 and its aftermath made it clear to the Nazis that it was possible for a Celtic country to detach itself from its domineering occupying power, and SS interests in matters Celtic evidently had as an aim, in a British Isles context, to fragment English control through support for political and cultural movements in the Celtic countries. Tevenar was also the author of an obituary and *laudatio* to J. J. Kneen after the latter’s death in November 1938 (Tevenar 1941b).

In promoting Manx traditional music and dance, etc., Mona Douglas was evidently imbued with the nationalist ethos of the 1920s–40s, which finds a place in her writings even as late as 1981 (Douglas 1981; Broderick 1999b, 2001/2).

### The third phase

After the Second World War language enthusiasts and nationalists turned their attention once more to matters Manx. On 30 September 1952 Douglas C. Fargher (1926–1987), then secretary of YCG and one of the ‘giants’ of the language movement, together with Joe Woods, secretary of the Manx Branch of the Celtic Congress, printed an appeal in the *Mona’s Herald* to ‘Support the Manx Language’. This came at a time (1951–3) when YCG, following the examples of the Irish Folklore Commission (1948) and the Manx Museum Folklife Survey (1949–52), made a series of sound-recordings of the last dozen or so of the native Manx Gaelic speakers (Broderick 1983), and felt that it had a sufficient corpus of material to get the ball rolling once more. At the end of what essentially is Fargher’s appeal a call is made to:

throw off apathy and disinterestedness and take part in another crusade which can harm no one, but which will strengthen us as individuals and as a nation. We refer to the crusade for maintaining and using the Manx Language. Join an Evening Class, Manxmen, and bring a friend with you.

(Fargher and Woods 1952)

At that time a number of Manx enthusiasts had learned the language direct from the then surviving native speakers. Interest in native Manx speech had evidently been sparked off in the 1930s by the Marstrander visits (1929, 1930, 1933) and by April 1946 C. W. Loch, a visitor to the island, interviewed some of the enthusiasts and was able to report a total of twenty surviving speakers whose names and addresses were printed by A. S. B. Davies of Moelfre, Colwyn Bay, in 1948 (Loch 1946; Davies 1948). Fargher had at that time opened a fruiterer's business in Douglas with a close friend and Manx speaker Leslie Quirk, and the duo, according to themselves, conducted all their business together in Manx. In 1956 the business folded and Fargher took off to Zambia (then Northern Rhodesia) for a six-year stint in the mines, as a result of which YCG for a while lost an active secretary. Fargher returned to Man in 1962, but seemingly did not take an active interest again in language affairs until 1970, when, once again at the helm of YCG now injected with fresh blood, he set things in motion once more.

Over the next few years Fargher and his dynamic team set in train a series of publications: new (Jerry 1978, 1980) or reprints of older editions (Kneen's *Place-Names* (1925–8)); this encouraged publications by others, for example, books (Broderick and Stowell 1973b), records (Broderick and Stowell 1973a; Broderick 1977), maps (Broderick 1973), language courses (Stowell 1986), dictionaries (Fargher 1979), etc. From 1983 to 1986 the local amateur film unit Foillan Films produced four documentary films entirely in Manx Gaelic and one bilingual Manx–English film for public consumption. The subject matter covered ranged from folk-songs to the Manx language and its native speakers to modern-day poets (Foillan Films 1983, 1984, 1985a, 1985b, 1986). In 1985 YCG instituted the Ned Maddrell Memorial Lecture in honour of the last known native Manx speaker. The lecture is held annually in April, delivered by an invited academic in the field of Celtic Studies. In a similar vein YCG in 1998 instituted Leeaught y Ghaue (The Gaue Lecture) in honour of Manx native speaker, former blacksmith (Mx. *gaaue*) John Kneen (1872–1958), latterly of Ballaugh Curragh. The lecture is delivered in Manx by an invited speaker.

In the early 1970s, in order to promote an active competence in the spoken language, YCG held *Oieghyn Gailckagh* 'Manx-speaking evening sessions' once a month in a pre-arranged bar, changing in venue from month to month. This had the effect of inspiring confidence in speaking Manx and presenting an opportunity to learners to acquire it directly from those who had obtained Manx from the old native speakers themselves. In that respect, at any rate, the tradition of spoken Manx could be said to be unbroken. The pronunciation of Manx as spoken today is essentially that of the last native speakers. In late 1974 regular Saturday night Manx music and song sessions began to take place in the Central bar in Peel, since late 1989 transferred to the White House, also in Peel. This is the longest known continuous Manx traditional music session in the island (cf. Woolley 2003). Emphasis is nowadays laid more on music than on song, and the sessions have thereby encouraged many musicians into the music aspect of Manx tradition. At present Manx music and dance (Curtis 2006) enjoys considerable popular support in the island (cf. Maddrell 2006a, 2006b), with active support from the Manx Heritage Foundation (a Manx government quango) for its promotion in schools. This in turn has led to a rapid

increase in the number of youth groups playing Manx traditional music in Man and the monthly publication (since February 2006) of *Kiaull Maminagh Jiu* 'Manx music today', which gives details *inter alia* of Manx (and other Celtic) music sessions in Man and of visiting traditional Celtic music groups to the island.

## MANX IN THE SCHOOLS

There has always been in Manx schools a recognition that, despite the use of the 'English Code' from the 1872 Act (see above) in the Manx education system, there was a strong flavour of Manxness about the whole arrangement. Until the recent influx of a non-Manx population most of the pupils bore Manx names: Juan, Finlo, Orry, Kirree, Joney (forenames), Cowle, Clague, Corlett, Kelly, Mylchreest, Quine (surnames) – the list goes on. They spoke a Manx–English dialect, lived in places bearing Manx names, and their teachers used the occasional greeting of *moghrey mai* [mərə 'mai] 'good morning' or *fastyr mie* [fəstə 'mai] 'good afternoon/evening'. Efforts to have Manx taught in island schools, which failed in the early years of the twentieth century, did not begin to bear fruit until 1974 when a new Director of Education, Mr Alun Davies, a native Welsh speaker of Dolgellau, was appointed. He was sympathetic to the idea, provided that there were people capable of teaching Manx. The situation then was that there were a number of individuals, usually YCG members, competent in Manx, but not trained teachers, and a few trained teachers (about a dozen at the maximum) both competent in Manx and able to teach it. The latter were mainly concentrated in the thirty-two primary schools, and were given the opportunity of introducing Manx into the classroom when and where they saw fit. In the five secondary schools at that time there was no teacher on the staff competent in Manx. To remedy this the Director of Education sanctioned the use of 'laymen/laywomen' to teach Manx once a week during lunchtime break as a 'club' activity. The first of such clubs was set up in the Easter term of 1976 at Ballakermeen High School, Douglas.

In 1982 a GCE 'O' level examination in Manx was instituted, preparation for which took place at evening classes initially for adults at the College of Further Education (now the Isle of Man College). The idea was that teachers with an 'O' level qualification would be in a position to teach Manx formally in the schools. One or two secondary school teachers took up this option. However, a lack of 'takers' for the examination caused it to be suspended four years later. Its replacement by a GCSE examination, with more emphasis on the spoken language, has been available in the schools since 1992. This was shortly followed by an Advanced level course in Manx, also with emphasis on the spoken language.

In recent years, in line with the general trend in Europe to favour minority rights and cultures, there has been a move to have Manx taught on a regular basis in all the island schools. This 'demand', evidently emanating from pressure groups such as the Celtic League and from a Gallup Poll (January 1991) showing 36 per cent of those asked in favour of Manx as an *optional* subject in schools, resulted in Government (in reality the government quango Manx Heritage Foundation) setting up the position of Oarseyr Gailckagh 'Manx Language Officer' under the aegis of the Department of Education. The initial task is to set up syllabuses in Manx for pupils in the schools, eventually covering the full age range (5–19). Dr Brian Stowell, the first incumbent of that post, took up his duties on 2 January 1992 and was assisted by two peripatetic teachers seconded from the teaching pool, in the implementation of what was a historic undertaking in the history of education in the Isle of Man. The numbers of teachers has over the years been increased to cope with demand. At present some 800 (out of a total of c. 10,000) pupils



per year receive regular tuition in Manx. In addition, recent activity has seen the setting up of Manx Kindergärten and crèches as well as the institution of an all-Manx-speaking primary school. As far as it goes, Manx has now been set upon a firm footing within the education system of the Isle of Man.

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