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Middle Welsh vs. Early Modern Welsh?

Personal Pronouns in Welsh Walter of Henley

The Welsh version of the Walter of Henley agricultural treatise published in 2006 in the series of Welsh editions of the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies by Dr. Alexander Falileyev contains two versions of the text, one from the Red Book of Hergest (dating, according to latest research sometime after 1382) and the second from Hafod 8 (which was transcribed no later than 1561)[1]. The first of them is a good example of Middle Welsh prose, whereas the second serves as an example of Early Modern Welsh. In the extensive introduction the editor notes several differences between the texts in orthography, morphology and syntax, but does not provide the reader with statistics of such examples. Our working hypothesis was that the juxtaposition of two almost identical texts could allow us to draw conclusions on the changes between Middle Welsh and Early Modern Welsh. We therefore have collected all the examples of personal pronouns in both versions and compared parallel passages. In what follows we would like to show the major differences between the pronominal syntax which can be found in these texts and to set them in broader perspective, comparing with other texts of the same periods. But first of all a few further words must be said on the nature of the treatise under examination.

This tract was written in Anglo-Norman in the 13th century. It was very popular in Britain during the Middle Ages, and many English and Latin translations of the text are preserved in manuscripts. It is cautiously supposed by the editor that the ur-translation into Middle Welsh was undertaken sometime between the last quarter of the 13th century and 1382, and was copied then faithfully in the RBH. No later than 1561 the ur-translation was used again by a scribe of the Hafod 8 manuscript. He modernized the language, allowed paraphrases and omitted certain details. He also included in his version several paragraphs which are not found in other Walter manuscripts. One remark of the editor is essential for our purpose: "The Welsh version of Walter found in Hafod 8 is virtually free from any traces of Middle Welsh usage" [Walter lviii]. To give an idea of the text size: the RBH version is about 2600 words, 240 lines long, Hafod – 2200 words, about 200 lines in the edition.

Leaving aside numerous differences in orthography and/or phonetics of pronouns, we can mark out two major points. Those are the use of the expletive subject *ef* and the use of affixed pronouns.

1. Expletive subject ef

The construction with the expletive subject *ef* appears in the whole text 14 times, 5 times in R, 9 in H.

Table 1. Expletive e*f* in Walter of Henley's text in R (Red Book of Hergest), H (Hafod ms. 8) and PKM

	R	H	PKM
text length (in words):	2600	2200	25500
ef a V S	5	9	5

4 instances of an *ef*-construction in R correspond to an *ef*-construction in H.

(1) R 21: H 264

*Acha6s **ef** a^L dy6eit   y   doeth "A ymachuppo o'r blaen o bell, agos y keiff y les"*
because EF P   say:PRS3SG ART wise
*Ac   **ef**   a^L ddywaid   y   doeth: "ymahypo o bell agos y kayff y lles"*
because EF P   say:PRS3SG ART wise
'Because the wise man says: 'whosoever may take precautions well in advance will gain his profit close at hand [2]''

(2) R 32: H 276
*Bl6ydyn **ef** a^L gerda   kam6ed ac o'r   di6ed hi   a^L gilya*
year   EF P   go:PRS3SG wrong:F and by=ART end   3SGF P   retreat:PRS3SG

*Blwyddyn **ef** a^L gerdda   tra,   ac o'r   diwedd hi   a^L ddifflana*
year   EF P   go:PRS3SG harm,   and by=ART end   3SGF P   disappear:PRS3SG
                              wrongoing
'For a year evil prevails, and finally it retreats'

(3) R 66: H 308
***Ef** a^L dy6eit   itt   dy   s6ydogyon   heu m6y noc a heassant.*
EF P   say:PRS3SG to:2SG   POSS2SG officials

*Ac **ef** a^L ddywaid   dy   swyddogion yddynt hay mwy noc a haysont*
and EF P   say:PRS3SG POSS2SG   officials
'Your officials will tell you that they sow more than they have sown'.

(4) R 140: H 389

Sef acha6s y6, o ch6ynnir bymthec ni6arna6t neu 6yth kynn G6yl Jeuan,
***ef**   a^L dyf   tri   llysse6yn   yn   lle   yr   un.*
EF   P   grow:PRS3SG 3   plants:SG in   place ART   1

Kans os hwny dy yd bymthec diwarnod kyn Gwyl Jeuan,
***ef** a^L dyf   tri yn lle'r   vn.*
EF   P   grow:PRS3SG 3   in place=ART   1

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[2] All translations for Walter examples are cited from the edition, with the exception of (7: H) where it is done by the author of this article. Translations for PKM examples are given after Jones G., Jones T. The Mabinogion. London, 1949.

'The reason is, if one weeds fifteen or eight days before the Feast of Saint John, three plants will grow in place of one'.

A single instance in R, which is rendered differently in this very sentence in H, is formulated identically in (1)

(5) R 18: H 261
*Acha6s **ef** a^L dy6eit   y   doeth "A ech6ynno gan arall ef a gyll yr eida6 e hun*
because EF P say:PRS3SG ART wise

Ac am hyny y   dywedaid y   doeth: "A echwyno gan arall ef a gyll y aiddio y hvn
and therefore P   say:PRS3SG ART wise
'Because the wise man says: whoever borrows from another he will lose his own'

The following are examples of *ef*-constructions in H which do not correspond to an *ef*-construction in R.

(6) R 120: H 367
Kanys or keiff yr arad6r llet deu6ys o'r tir by6
yna y   byd   diogel yr   hat a^S   thec yr   ar.
then P be:FUT3SG safe   ART seed and fine ART tilth

Kans or kaiff aradr led day vys o dir byw,
***ef** a^L vydd   diogel yr   had a   thec yr   egin.*
EF P be:FUT3SG safe   ART seed and fine ART sprouts
'Since, if the plough finds two fingers of live earth, then the seed will be safe and the tilth fair'.

(7) H 247
Llyma gynghoray gwr doeth, yr hwn a elwid Gwallter o Henlai, y roddi dysg a chyngor y bob perchen tir a dayar,
*ac or byddant wrth^L ddysc **ef** a^L wella   arnynt megis y diwaid rac llaw.*
and if+P be:FUT3PL by   learning EF P   get better:PRS3SG at:3PL

'Here is the advise of the wise man, the one called Walter of Henley, to give teaching and advise to every land owner, and if they will abide by the learning, it will get better for them like it is said later '

In R 1 this introduction is formulated in a different way (see Walter XXV)

O gyghor y doeth y keueis, megys yd oed ynteu yn kyghori y vab, val hynn.

'From the counsel of the wise man, as though he were advising his son, I had thus…'

(8)H 312: R70
*A   hefyd **ef** y ddyly   dy   aradwr di yredic ^Lbob blwyddyn naw igain kyfair…*
and also EF P ought:PRS3SG POSS2SG ploughman 2SG plough:VN each year   9   20   acre

Ac uelly y   dywedaf i   y   dicha6n dy   arad6r eredic na6 ugein er6.
and so   P say:PRS1SG 1SG P can:PRS3SG POSS2SG ploughman plough:VN 9   20   acre
'For that reason, I say, a ploughman can cultivate nine score acres in the year'

(9) H 379: R 130
Kans o daw glaw ar y tir o vewn yr wythved dydd, a dyfod rew ddwynos nay dayr wedy hyny,

ef	*a^L*	*gerdda*	*y*	*rew*	*hyd*	*ydd*	*aeth*	*y*	*dwr...*
EF	P	go:PRS3SG	ART	frost	as far as	P	go:PRT3SG	ART	water

Acha6s y6, or da6 gla6 o vy6n yr 6ythuet dyd a dyuot 6edy hynny d6y nos neu deir o re6,

y	*re6*	*a^L*	*gerda*	*hyt*	*yd*	*aeth*	*y*	*d6fyr...*
ART	frost	P	go:PRS3SG	as far as	P	go:PRT3SG	ART	water

'The reason is: if rain comes before the eighth day, and after that two or three nights of frost, the frost will follow where the water went…'

(10)H 449

A symyd hwy y Gwyl Badric,

ac	***ef***	*a^L*	*vydd*	*gwell*	*y*	*kynydd*	*a'y*	*llwyddiant.*
and	EF	P	be:FUT3SG	better	POSS3PL	increase	and= POSS3PL	success

'And move them (bees) on Saint Patrick's day, and their increase and success will be the better'.

The whole paragraph on bee-keeping is absent from R, therefore we don't have a parallel passage in R.

Thus the *ef*-construction is used in our text with the following verbs:

Table 2. Verbs used with expletive subject *ef* in R and H.

	R	H
dywedut 'say'	3	2
cerdet 'walk'	1	2
tyfu 'grow'	1	1
bod 'be'		2
gwella 'get better'		1
dylyu 'should'		1

Three of them are intransitive in our contexts (*cerdet, tyfu* and *gwella*), while *bod* takes a compliment, *dywedut* is transitive, the direct speech being the object, and *dylyu*, even in the modal sense is clearly transitive (as indicated in GPC 1135) and takes verbnoun as a complement.

If we compare this evidence to the MW prose standard text PKM, we shall see that R does not deviate much from it. There are 5 examples of what D. Simon Evans calls "form of personal pronoun employed as particle" [GMW 172] - 7 on 91 pages of edition as compared to 9 on 6 in H.

(11) PKM 4.8–9

Ef	*a^L*	*doeth*	*makwyu-eit*	*a*	*gueiss-on*	*ieueinc*	*y*	*diarchenu…*
EF	P	come:PRT3SG	squire-PL	and	servant-PL	young:PL	to+POSS3SGM	pull off:VN

'There came squires and chamberlains to pull them off him'

This construction is used in PKM with the following verbs:

Table 3. Verbs used with expletive subject *ef* in PKM.

Verb	#	context
dyuot 'come'	2	4.8, 65.1
gallu 'can'	2	5.28, 83.10
galw 'call'	1	91.17 (impers)
dywedut 'say'	1	80.9 (impers)
kyuodi 'arise'	1	18.27

We have shown that the Hafod version still uses the constructions mainly with intransitive verbs. Thus it preserves the Middle Welsh tendency not to use it with transitive verbs, which is massively violated in texts from 17th century [Willis 2007: 298]. One obvious exception is example (8), which shows an innovation in H that definitely deviates from Middle Welsh usage. On the stage of H there is also definitely a tendency for a more frequent use in positions where the construction is theoretically possible in MW. Later the possibility to use the expletive subject with transitive verbs led to the emergence of preverbal particle *fe* (for an analysis of Modern Welsh see [Shisha-Halevy 1995: 171-173; Shisha-Halevy 1997; Awbery 2004]).

(12) Modern Welsh [King 2000: 91]
Fe *agor-a*   *i'r*   *drws i   chi*
EF   open-PRS1SG   1SG=ART   door to   2PL
'I'll open the door for you'

    2. Even more manifest is the difference between the two versions in their use of what is called in literature "affixed" pronouns. These pronouns are also called "echo" pronouns, the term we prefer because from the point of morphological theory the term "affixed" is not quite correct. They have drawn much attention from Welsh scholars (an excellent summary of this discussion is given in [Rowlands 1981: 424ff; Rolant 1985-6]), particularly because, as T. Arwyn Watkins wrote, the difference in the usage of affixed pronouns reflects strikingly the gap between spoken and literary Modern Welsh [Watkins 1977-8: 349]).

    They can be used with finite verbs, inflected prepositions, possessive pronouns in any syntactic function and object clitics. You can the see the statistics in Table 2 .

Table 4. Echo pronouns in RBH and Hafod version: statistics

syntactic position	R	H

after possessive pronouns	4	10
after inflected prepositions	1	5
after finite verbs (exc. imp)	3	9
after imperatives	0	18
total:	8	42

In the following example two auxiliary pronouns are used in Hafod and are absent in R − after a finite verb and after possessive group:

(13) R 10: H 252
6rth hynny, yd ytt6yf yn adol6yn itt lly6ya6 dy^L uuched
therefore   P   bod:PRS1SG   P   pray:VN   to:2SG   conduct:VN   POSS2SG   life
her6yd dy^L allu…
according to   POSS2SG   ability

*Ac am hyny ydd wyf **i** yn adolwyn y ti lywio*
And therefore   P   bod:PRS1SG   1SG   P   pray:VN   to   2SG   conduct:VN
*dy^L vychedd **di** wrth dy^L ally…*
POSS2SG   life   2SG   by   POSS2SG   ability
'Therefore I pray that you conduct your life according to your ability…'

The most striking difference in pronominal syntax is the use of affixed pronouns with the imperative mood. As this treatise is a number of pieces of advice given to the landowner, this mood is employed in the text very often. Imperative appears 95 times in R, and 54 in H. Among those, 18 times the imperative is used with affixed pronouns, whereas there is no occurrence of such a construction in R.

(14) R 64: H 306
Gwybyd bellach pa gymeint a el o hat yn yr er6…
know:IMP2SG   further   how much   RP   go: PRSSJ3SG   of   seeds   in   A   acre

*A gwybydd **di** bellach pa gymaint o had a el mewn erw…*
and   know:IMP2SG   2SG   further   how much   of   seeds   RP   go: PRSSJ3SG   in   acre
'Further, know how much seed will go into the acre'

Can this difference again be explained as syntactic change between Middle and Early Modern Welsh? To evaluate this hypothesis we should look at the use of these pronouns in the history of Welsh and especially compare it this statistics to that of other texts.

P. Mac Cana suggested that the discrepancy between the spoken and literary languages might go back to Middle Welsh and noted a tendency for a more frequent usage of affixed pronouns in PKM dialogues [Mac Cana1975-6: 323]. In our previous work we analyzed all the examples of object clitics, possessive clitics and personal

forms of conjugated prepositions in PKM (see [Parina 2006a, b] for further detailes) [3]. The statistics are as follows:

Table 5. Echo pronouns doubling possessive pronouns in R, H and PKM

	R				H				PKM					
									dialogue				narrative	
	1-2		3		1-2		3		1-2		3		3	
	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	+
#	52	3	28	0	34	4	26	1	147	58	64	12	271	36
%	94.5	5.5	100	0	89.5	10.5	96.3	3.7	71.8	28.2	84.2	15.8	88.3	11.7

In PKM affixed pronouns are more frequently used in 1-2 persons, also with possessive pronouns and personal forms of the conjugated prepositions. Thus we see that the contrast lies not between oral vs. written registers, but between 1-2 vs. 3 person.

As for the imperative the statistics in Walter text versions compared to the PKM are the following:

Table 6. Imperative in R, H and PKM

	R		H		PKM	
	-	+	-	+	-	+
#	95	0	36	18	113	29
%	100	0	66.7	33.3	79.6	20.4

Thus we can see that the H resembles the PKM more closely than does the RBH.

How can this be interpreted? We find an answer in the above-cited article of P. MacCana, who noticed, that in much of early translation literature affixed pronouns are used even in dialogues sparingly [MacCana 1975-6: 324]. This tendency to avoid the use of echo pronouns absent in the translation source text (as Latin lacks such pronouns) was later revived in the Bible translation of the 16th century, which drastically influenced the literary language ever since. Therefore the difference in use of echo pronouns between the RBH and H texts can be explained not in terms of syntactic change but rather the translator's competence and confidence in the literary language.

To conclude: we hope to have demonstrated that the Welsh Walter of Henley edition is an excellent object to observe certain syntactic trends in Welsh. On the

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[3] In that work we could not find any difference between the 1st and the 2nd persons in respect to this syntactic feature, therefore we put those data together. However, a more detailed investigation could help to discover other important tendencies, as shown in Aaron Griffith's analysis of Old Irish notae

other hand, it can also serve as an illustration of translation techniques and stylistics in Wales. But the evaluation of each difference requires comparison with further texts. In such matters as syntax we need a huge number of texts to provide us with reliable statistics. Therefore we can only hope that that 21st century will provide us with syntactically tagged corpora, which make such comparison drastically easier. Of course great scholars like John Morris Jones or P. MacCana had virtual corpora in their minds, but the technical progress would enable us to draw conclusions of some syntactical features and confirm them with reliable statistical evidence. We hope to have shown that calculations can bring correction even to the works of great scholars, but currently they are extremely laborious, whereas in the already existing syntactically tagged corpora of English or Russian a search for imperatives with and without pronouns would take a few minutes. The combination of such thoroughly prepared editions as the Welsh Walter of Henley done by Alexander Falileyev and new technologies would certainly bring many more surprising discoveries to the field of Welsh historical syntax and pragmatics.

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augentes (see [Griffith 2008])

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