

Late Cornish

Iwan Wmffre

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Abbreviations

1Pl	first person plural
1Sg	first person singular
2Pl	second person plural
2Sg	second person singular
3Pl	third person plural
3Sg	third person singular
(+ l)	followed by lenition
(+ P)	followed by provection
(+ s)	followed by spirantisation
adv.	adverb
B.	Breton
C	consonant
C.	Cornish
Cont	contents
Desc	descriptive
Emph	emphatic
f.	feminine noun
fig.	figure
fig.	figuratively
form.	formal
Fut	future
Imp	imperative
Indef	indefinite
inf.	informal
lit.	literally, literary
LC.	Late Cornish
(Lh)	a spelling of Edward Lhuyd
Locat	locative
m.	masculine noun
(M)	following phonetic form is mutated
MC.	Middle Cornish
MnB.	Modern Breton

neg.	negative
OC.	Old Cornish
PastPart	past participle
pers.comm.	personal communication
Pl	plural
pn	personal-name
pos.	positive
Pres	present
PresSubj	present subjunctive
Pret	preterite
R:	response
RelPart	relative pre-verbal particle
S:	statement / question
Sg	singular
tn	toponym
V	vowel
Vn	verb-noun
W.	Welsh

0. Introduction

0.1 Cornish

The speakers of late Cornish referred to their language as *Curnoack kærnuak*, which term consists of *Curnow kærno* 'Cornwall, Cornish-person', to which was suffixed an unproductive adjectival marker *-ak* once commonly used to denote languages. I have preferred the epithet Late Cornish to that of Modern Cornish for the Cornish of the 17th and 18th centuries, so as to distinguish that variety from the revived Cornish of 20th century enthusiast learners. Nevertheless it should be kept in mind that Late Cornish - though now no longer spoken - was indeed a 'modern' variety of the Cornish language, and in many respects distinguishable from the Medieval corpus of texts that has preserved what is universally known as Middle Cornish.

0.2 Location and number of speakers

By 1700 the Cornish-speaking area was confined to a redoubt in the western part of the hundreds of Penwith and Kerrier in the far west of the peninsula of Cornwall. To the east of this 'redoubt' lay a larger area - roughly, Cornwall west of the town of Truro - which had only just lost the Cornish language in the preceding century. Cornish-speakers in 1600 cannot have numbered much more than about 20,000, and their numbers are estimated to have dropped to about 5,000 by 1700 (1986b George), which number is likelier to be an overestimate than an underestimate.

0.3 Sociolinguistic and contact situation

Up to 1700 Cornish had existed besides the dominant influence of English for almost 800 years, and had borrowed a substantial amount of vocabulary from that language. As in the case of loanwords of French origin in Welsh, it is not yet established whether the influence of Medieval French on Cornish came about directly through the medium of French-speakers or indirectly from English-speakers. It is incorrect to talk - as some have done - of an innate incapacity of speakers of Late Cornish to express themselves, or to brand all speakers of Late Cornish as 'semi-speakers', for whilst it is true that a number of Late Cornish texts have a stilted feel to them, it must be remembered that some of these texts were translations from the English, either by Cornish-speakers illiterate in their own language probably ill at ease with the written medium, or by people more familiar with English than Cornish as their native language. N.J.A. Williams (1995) rightly draws attention to the fact that many features - both phonological and syntactic - considered Late Cornish

are also attested in Middle Cornish texts. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that with the progressive abandonment of the language in favour of English, the remaining speakers felt more and more the unrelenting pressure of the encroaching dominant language : a speaker born in the earlier part of the 17th century commented about 1700 that "the old men dying away, we find the young men to speak it less and less, and worse and worse," (1982 Pool).

Cornish appears to have survived in the far west of Cornwall as the language of a homogeneous community up till the later 17th century. There are signs that there then occurred a language shift to English, broadly comparable to that which has - and is - occurring with its sister language Breton in the 20th century (1986a George). The development of tin- and copper-mining industry in western Cornwall in the early 17th century, with an accompanying influx of English-speakers, is likely to have hastened the demise of Cornish (1969 Smith & Hooper). The last monoglot Cornish-speaker is said to have died about 1675, and the last individuals that can be justly regarded as Cornish-speakers died about 100 years later in the closing decades of the 18th century. Whilst there is growing body of knowledge concerning language shift as a topic of socio-linguistics, there remains, of course, a dearth of information on when and how language shift occurred from Cornish to English in the early Modern era. P.A.S.Pool (1982) notes a number of interesting snippets of information concerning language use in the West Penwith and Lizard peninsulas

- 1542 "And there be many men and women the which cannot speak one word of English, but all Cornish" (1982 Fudge)
- 1644 "at Land's End they speak no English"
- 1662 "We met none here [St. Just] but what could speak English; few of the children could speak Cornish"
- c1676 death of a monoglot Cornish-speaker noted at Gwithian.
- c1700 "there is more of English spoken than of Cornish, for here may be found some that can hardly speak or understand Cornish, but scarce any but both understand and speak English;"
- 1700 "a great many of the inhabitants ... especially the gentry, do not understand it; there being no necessity thereof, in regard there's no Cornishman but speaks good English"
- c1702 birth date of two women from Mousehole who could understand Cornish but not speak it well (these were slightly younger neighbours of Dolly Pentreath, the reputed last speaker of Cornish).
- c1708 date at which Cornish was noted as having last been spoken generally amongst the inhabitants of St. Just and Paul.
- c1712 date after which Dolly Pentreath of Mousehole, then aged twenty had to learn English.

The accumulated conclusion from the above evidence is that a language shift had occurred, and Cornish in its last redoubt had universally ceased to be transmitted to children by their parents before 1700. In general the contemporary attitude to Late Cornish was one of disdain. Nicholas Boson reported that in his youth, in the earlier part of the 17th century, his mother had prevented him learning Cornish by forbidding the servants and neighbours to speak to him except in English, William Scawen also reported c.1680 that "the poor speak Cornish but are laughed at by the rich that speak it not" (1969 Smith & Hooper). In the 18th century Cornish was noted as having survived amongst certain types of livelihood : fishermen at Paul and Mousehole, tanners at St. Just. William Bodinar, a poor fisherman of Mousehole born in 1711 testified that he had learnt his Cornish by going to sea with old men in his youth when a whole week could pass without a word of English being uttered. William Bodinar's situation is reminiscent of situations in late 20th century Brittany where Breton can still be heard spoken in the midst of traditional work environments such as fishing or agriculture, even when most of the participants have French as their family language at home.

William Bodinar's letter of 1776 is the last surviving authentic text of Cornish, and though he never spoke it at home, the quality of his Cornish is broadly comparable with the main body of Late Cornish texts of circa 1700.

0.4 English influence

The influence of English and French on the remaining speakers of Celtic languages in the 20th century is known well-enough. It may be interesting to note seeming instances of interference by English on the dwindling body of Cornish-speakers in the early Modern era. We do not expect the surviving texts to always represent the contemporary spoken language accurately¹, so that care must be taken when extrapolating a feature from a text and ascribing it to Late Cornish.

Below are listed a number of features in Late Cornish that can be ascribed to the direct influence of English (it must be emphasised that most of these features occur occasionally rather than regularly in Late Cornish and may not necessarily reflect the spoken language of all Late Cornish speakers)

- The overuse of the definite article in the same clause is contrary to the practice of all Celtic languages (the offending definite article is underlined)
an fêr Karêsk an fe:r kar'e:sk 'Exeter fair'
an ostes an tshei an ostas an tʃəj 'the hostess of the house'
an gweth an looar an gwe:ð an luər 'the trees of the garden'

¹ N.J.A. Williams (1995 pp.139-43) criticises particular points of language of some of the later writers.

an cuntillian an zanzo an kəntiljən an zanzo 'the assembly of the saints'

- The use of locative forms (underlined) instead of descriptive forms of present of **bo:z** 'being'
ma ve goz guaz ma vi gəz gwa:z 'I am your servant'
theara vee dean bodjack an puscas θ erə vi de:n bodʒək an pəskəs 'I am a poor fisherman'
(lit. '... a poor man of the fish')
- The use of the English plural marker < -s >
poscaders 'fishermen'
- The use of uninflected prepositions (underlined) at end of clauses
iggeva setha war idʒəvə seðə war 'is sitting upon'
cummeraz war kəmerəs war 'take over'
- The needless addition of adverbs (underlined)
merwel akar merwəl ə'kar 'dying away'
- The use of **gwe:r** 'green' rather than **gla:z** 'grue' for the verdancy of plants
güêr vel an güelz gwe:r vel an gwelz 'as green as the grass'
- The examples of words of English origin used side by side with more traditional Cornish words
devilow devilo 'devils' v. jowloo dʒowlo 'devils'
cushez kəʃəs 'cursed' v. molithees məliθəs 'cursed'

The striking inconsistency of mutation in Late Cornish texts may reflect atrophy of mutation in Late Cornish, or due to the distorting prism of the written record. Atrophy of mutation may, but need not necessarily, be due to English influence. Some developments in Cornish are as likely to be purely internal developments as due to English influence, such as the replacement of conjugated forms of regular verbs by periphrastic constructions (see 3.3), the replacement of synthetic forms of prepositions and verbs by more analytic forms (see 2.17, 2.25), and the replacement of the possessive determiners by the suffixed personal pronouns (see 2.15).

K. George (1995) lists phonetic influences of English on Late Cornish as opposed to Middle Cornish, some of the changes show convergence with developments in English, but there is hardly one example of importation of a hitherto unknown English sound into Cornish. The development of stressed historical < i > to əj in Late Cornish is often cited as an example of a Cornish sound following a contemporary English development. However, whilst the development of əj is similar to English its incidence is not : in Late Cornish it occurred in open syllables

- (1) *tshyi* (Lh) tʃəj, *kei* (Lh) kəj 'dog', *trei* (Lh) trəj 'three', *nyi* (Lh) nəj

but - contrary to English - did not occur in closed syllables

- (2) *tir* (Lh) ti:r, *meen* mi:n, *guin* (Lh) gwi:n, pn. *Chreest* kri:st 'Christ'

In fact, the development of əj in Late Cornish is more similar in development and incidence to the development of historical < i > in the coastal Breton of Vannes (1973 Hammer).

The shortening of suspected (half-)long vowels in the penultimate vowels is ascribed to the influence of English (1995 Williams) but could well be an independent development in Cornish.

Edward Lhuyd (1707), the Welsh linguist, expressed his distaste of some features of Late Cornish

"Some English phrases are also imitated by the Cornish, which would be absurd in Welsh : such as *mi vedn mæz alêz* I will go abroad, or I will walk forth : as if one should say in Welsh, *mî a vÿnna vÿnd ar lêd*, which would not be understood till explain'd, and then sufficiently ridiculous."

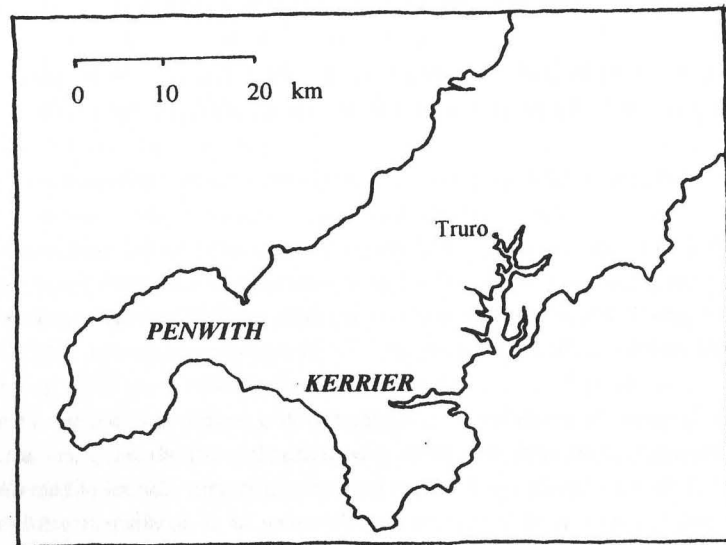
However, it is dangerous to conclude that a language is in a parlous state because of a certain number of loanwords, calques, or because of the general abandonment of older grammatical rules. Immediately after the quoted paragraph Edward Lhuyd misjudged other features of Late Cornish as displaying English influence (such as the use of **gwi:l** 'doing' as an auxiliary (see 3.3), and the position of the superlative adjective (see 46) - both these features are also found in Breton, where one is rather stretched to call on the influence of English).

0.5 Dialectal situation

Cornish in the 17th and 18th centuries was spoken in the peninsulas of West Penwith and the Lizard. Since this area formed a restricted area less than 50km in length, and since surviving information on Late Cornish comes overwhelmingly from the West Penwith peninsula dialect variation is not easily ascertainable.

N.J.A. Williams (1990) has drawn attention to a dialectal alternation between medial **-dʒ-** in western Cornwall and medial **-z-** in mid-Cornwall, reflected in the predominance of the former form in Late Cornish texts, and the latter form in Middle Cornish texts. The limit between these two dialectal realisations lies on the easternmost fringe of the area of Late Cornish - on a line linking Camborne to Falmouth - so that the realisation in **-z-** is hardly attested in Late Cornish texts. N.J.A. Williams (1995) also believes pre-occlusion of **-n-** and **-m-** to **-dn** and **-bm** - the latter forms being typical of Late Cornish - represents a dialectal difference rather than a diachronic difference, though this interpretation of the difference is not beyond dispute, R. Gendall (pers. comm.) notes that the Middle Cornish literature which is characterised by no pre-occlusion is generally agreed to

fig.1



have been composed near Falmouth, within the area in which pre-occlusion is later attested. J.Loith (1897) and K.George (1985) draw attention to the fact that Cornish - when spoken as a traditional community language - could still be considered as a particular eccentric dialect of Breton, though N.J.A.Williams (1996) disputes this.

0.6 Typology and historical sketch

Cornish is a fusional language belonging to the Celtic family of the Indo-European phylum, and most closely related to Breton and Welsh. Its existence, like Welsh, is due to the survival in the westernmost parts of Britain of a Brittonic dialect (Brittonic being the original Celtic language of Britain). Cornish speech was widely spoken in Devon and the westernmost parts of Somerset in the earlier Medieval era, but had been confined to the present county of Cornwall by the 10th century. Following an independent existence under its own royal rulers Cornwall seems to have become an integral part of the incipient English state of Wessex by the 10th century. Cornish may well have become a peasant vernacular before the establishment of the Anglo-French state in the late 11th century, and this was certainly the case well before the end of the Medieval era.

The possibilities of intercomprehension between Late Cornish and contemporary Breton, its closest language, might be loosely compared to that existing between southern English and Scottish

English : there is a record of an 18th century Cornish sailor who was able to make himself understood to Breton sailors using his Cornish (1982 Pool).

0.7 Reconstruction

Systematic knowledge of Late Cornish owes a great deal to the recent labours of Richard Gendall, and in many ways this presentation of Late Cornish can be viewed as a condensation of his *Student's Grammar of Modern Cornish* (1991a), which is replete with examples illustrating almost every aspect of the language. My particular contribution to the study of Late Cornish has more to do with the pronunciation.

Notwithstanding all the work done to understand Late Cornish, since the language is no longer spoken to illustrate the features of late Cornish is fraught with difficulties. There only exists a limited number of texts, and it is difficult to ascertain the relationship of variant forms of words to each other, literary conservatism is likely to be responsible for some variations, though it is likely that - as with any living language - traditional receding forms vied with novel expanding ones. Forms not attested in any text, but likely to have existed due to paradigmatic pressure have been preceded by an asterisk (*), in cases of greater doubt only a question mark is left (?).

In order to reveal certain phonetic features of the language obscured by the orthography, I have chosen to represent late Cornish using the conventions of the International Phonetic Association. I give some explanations for the principles on which I have phoneticised late Cornish in the section on phonology (a fuller discussion will appear in a forthcoming article entitled *The Sounds of Cornish c.1700*). And whilst there remains room for disagreement on specific phonetic features of late Cornish it is the author's fervent hope that his attempt to phoneticise that particular stage of the language will be found useful by others, in part if not in whole.

1. Phonology

1.1 Consonants

In Old Cornish it is quite likely that stops and fricatives in word final position varied between being voiced and unvoiced according to the following sound much like in contemporary Breton. The extant texts of Middle and Late Cornish suggest that this system had altered - much as Middle

fig.2

	plosive	fricative	nasal	lateral	trill	approximant
bilabial	p b		m			w̥ w
labiodental		f v				
dental	t d		n	l		
alveolar		s z			r	
postalveolar		ʃ ʒ				
palatal						j
velar	k g		ŋ			
glottal		h				

Welsh orthography would suggest - so that variation of voicedness of final consonants remained in unstressed final syllables, but that in stressed monosyllables final consonants had become voiced². Variation in unstressed final syllables is rarely found with **-k/-g** because of the habit of writing uniformly as **-k** (excepting a few examples by Edward Lhuyd, viz. *külliaġ* 'cock', *kranag* 'toad', *manag* 'glove'), but with **-p/-b** and **-s/-z** variation is evidenced

- (3) *modrap* (Lh) ~ *modereb* 'aunt'
 tn. *Vorrap* ~ tn. *Morrab* 'sea-shore'
tavas ~ *tavaz* 'language'
bownas ~ *bownaz* 'life'
iggans ~ *iganz* (Lh) '20'

In the phonetic notation employed in this study - for final consonants - I have normalised voiced consonants in monosyllables and unvoiced consonants in unstressed final syllables - except for **-θ/-ð** which do not seem to have participated in final consonant variation.

The **<r>** of Cornish is likely to have been alveolar trilled r as in Welsh and in the Breton of older speakers³. There are many examples of r being unstable in unstressed syllables in Late Cornish, e.g., *pridiri* ~ *perdiri* ~ *pedeere* which I have chosen to represent as **prədiri** 'thinking',

² Note that as late as 1875 Henry Jenner collected the forms *deg* '10' but *ignack* '11' as traditional Cornish numerals preserved by Cornish-English speakers in Mount's Bay (1995 Williams).

³ It is just feasible that the retroflex ɽ - typical of south-western and Cornish-English, and used by many present-day learners of Cornish - was heard in Late Cornish, if so it was likely to be due to the influence of the encroaching English language. The retroflex ɽ is heard in the Breton of some areas of Tregor, though here it coexists in free-variation with the alveolar trilled r (not forgetting the uvular ʀ - a recent loan from French - among younger speakers).

gÿrgirik (a derivative of *grigear*) which I have chosen to represent as **grəgirik** 'partridge', *kenefra* ~ *keneverah* ~ *kaniffar* ~ *kinever* which I have chosen to write as **kənevər** 'every', *ladran* ~ *leddarn* and *ebbarne* ~ *ebbron* which I have chosen to represent as **ladrən** 'thieves' and **ebbrən** 'sky'; the MC. *del* 'as', later also meaning 'that', became in Late Cornish *dero* ~ *dre* ~ *dro* ~ *dru* ~ *dr'* **drə** 'that'. This instability is sometimes found in stressed syllables, e.g., *perna* **pernə** 'buying', from MC. *prena*.

The suspected original velar fricative x (or possibly uvular fricative χ) of earlier Cornish seems to have remained a fricative into Middle Cornish as it was written **<gh>** finally⁴. In Late Cornish it was **h** in initial position, and seems to have been elided in medial and final positions. I have interpreted the reflex of the Brittonic fricative in Late Cornish thus, though it might be possible to argue that some sort of fricative, most likely a pharyngeal **ħ** - as in Breton - may have survived only to be ignored by the orthographical conventions of the writers of Late Cornish. Edward Lhuyd certainly wrote **<h->** in initial positions, showing he considered it nearer to **h** than to the Welsh uvular fricative χ, however his notation of **<h>** in final and medial positions, e.g., *môh*, *zêh*, *zehaz*, and *arhans*, may indicate **h** or a pharyngeal fricative **ħ** - though I suspect he placed these examples of **<h>** for etymological purposes.

Final **-ð** in polysyllabic words tended to elide in Late Cornish, cf. *crenga* **kərendʒə** 'love', *ombla* **əmblə** 'fighting', *duah* **duə** 'end', *trua* **triwə** 'pity', *menna* **menə** 'mountain', tn. *Morvah* **mɔrvə** (*Morveth* 1327), and there are also two attestations of elision of final **-θ** in polysyllabic words *beska* **beskə** 'never', and *mascogna* **məskognə** 'stupidity' (note, however, that *biscath* **beskəθ** is attested in the very last surviving Cornish text).

For simplicity's sake I have refrained from noting the opposition between long and short consonants, though I suspect this opposition did exist, e.g., *gwella* 'best' is almost certain to have been realised **gwel:ə** rather than **gwelə** as suggested by the broad transcription I have generally adopted.

The consonant **ŋ** is simply an allophone of **n** before **g**, **k**.

1.2 Vowels

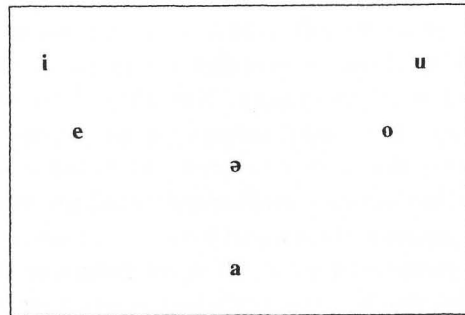
The vowels of Late Cornish, as far as can be attested, are given in fig.3 : all the vowels - except for **ə** - can be long or short.

Even considering the vagaries of an English-style spelling during the early Modern era, the variation of vowels in the orthography of Late Cornish is much greater than in Breton or Welsh, this has probably much to do with vowel neutralisation (see 1.4). Because our knowledge of Late Cornish is so dependent upon orthography I have refrained from noting open variants such as **ɪ**, **ɛ**, **ɔ**,

⁴ In initial position the Middle Cornish spelling **<h->** for the original Brittonic velar fricative x may indicate weakening to **h**, but may also be explained as a convention for some kind of 'rasped' fricative since **<gh>** could not be placed initially in Middle English orthography.

o, though I suspect these are the realisations of i, e, o, u, when preceding consonant clusters or geminate consonants. Similarly vowel length in stressed medial syllables has not been marked by me, though stressed medial vowels may have been lengthened when not preceding consonant clusters or geminate consonants, e.g., *tazo* 'fathers' may have been realised **ta:zo** even though I have elected in this study to note it as **tazo**. N.J.A. Williams (1995) argues fairly convincingly

fig.3



that length [·] in stressed medial vowels had been dispensed with by the time of late Middle Cornish.

There has been debate as to the quality of long < a, aa, ah, â > : many contemporary Cornish language enthusiasts have opted for a realisation **ɛ:**, mainly because this is the local realisation of words containing long < a > as are found in the place-names of western Cornwall, e.g., tn. *Polglaze* **pɔl'gɛ:z**. However, to accept such a realisation depends upon accepting the pronunciation of 20th century western Cornish-English dialect as a reliable guide to the sounds of 17th century Cornish. The realisation **ɛ** of western Cornish-English is also given to words containing long < e >, e.g., tn. *Carn Brea* **ka:ɾn bɾɛ:** - that is to say western Cornish-English has **ɛ:** as the realisation of both Cornish long < a > and long < e >, which vowels were carefully distinguished by the native writers and Edward Lhuyd⁵. It may be that the long < a > was an advanced **a:**, feasibly as advanced as **æ:** or **e:**, but to posit **ɛ:** is to go against the evidence of Late Cornish texts (it may well be that some speakers of Late Cornish consciously copied the realisation

⁵ That the English graphemes < aCe > and < ea > are realised identically in the Cornish-English of West Penwith is vouched for by other studies (1983 North, 1990 Ó Coileáin). On the other hand, R.Gendall (pers.comm.) argues that as he has heard *Polglaze* realised as **pɔl'gɛ:z**, and *Carn Brea* realised as **ka:ɾn bɾɛ:** amongst local speakers of Cornish-English. This may prove to be the case, but in view of the contradictory evidence of aforementioned researchers into the same dialect, the realisations claimed by R.Gendall need confirmation through recordings of speakers. This demonstrates the urgent need for intensive and methodical research, backed by recordings, into the Cornish-English of West Penwith if we want to discern any phonological substratum derived from Cornish.

ɛ: from the refined English of the 17th and 18th centuries, but it is questionable how representative of Late Cornish such a realisation would have been).

Edward Lhuyd noted the vowel < ɛ > as distinct from the vowel < ɔ >, though both these vowels of Lhuyd are noted < oa > by other writers of Late Cornish. My own interpretation of the facts is that Lhuyd heard the quality of long < o > in Cornish as lower than that of Welsh long, and more similar to an English long < o > of 1700, and that through negligence - typical of his book - left a seemingly significant difference between < ɛ > **ɔ:** and < ɔ > **o:** that did not exist in Cornish.

1.3 Diphthongs

There exist a few diphthongs, four with **w** : **iw**, **ew**, **aw**, **ow**, and maybe three with **j** : **əj**, **oj**, **uj**. The existence of **uj** is not assured since **uj** would in traditional orthography also have been < oy, oi > which could stand for **oj**. In contrast with loanwords from English such as *point*, which presumably contained **oj**, the reason for suspecting **uj** as the realisation of < oy, oi > in words of native origin is the notation *mûi*, *muí*, *müi*, *mûy*, *muy* - as well as *moy*, *moi* - by Edward Lhuyd, as well as *mouy* by a native writer for 'more' (another word which should contain **uj** should be *oye* 'egg', which, however, was noted *ôi* by Edward Lhuyd). It is also difficult in a number of cases to distinguish **iw** and **ew** as both tended to be noted < ew > in traditional orthography.

1.4 Accentuation and vowel neutralisation

From the present-day pronunciation of place-names in Cornwall Cornish is known to have had the stress accent on the penultimate syllable just like its sister languages Breton and Welsh⁶. This is further confirmed by the variation in the spelling of the final vowel of polysyllabic words in both Middle and Late Cornish which also points to a penultimate stress (in the transcription conventions of this study penultimate accentuation is taken as given and the accent symbol ['] will not be noted unless it falls on the ultimate syllable).

Most final vowels in Late Cornish are found written < a >, though only few were originally < a >. The majority of examples of final syllable < a > are from historical < e >

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|--|
| (4) | <i>Guenar</i> 'Friday' | cf. BW. <i>Gwener</i> |
| | <i>kazak</i> 'mare' | cf. B. <i>kazeg</i> , W. <i>caseg</i> |
| | <i>progath</i> 'sermon' | cf. B. <i>prezeg</i> , W. <i>pregeth</i> |
| | <i>zehaz</i> 'thirst' | cf. B. <i>sec'hed</i> , W. <i>syched</i> |

⁶ Where to place the tone accent remains - at present - an unresolved question (if similar to Breton then it should be on the penultimate syllable alongside the stress accent, or if similar to Welsh it should be on the ultimate syllable).

It could be thought that the above words were realised **gwēnar*, **kazak*, **prəgaθ*, **zeas* just like some dialects of Welsh pronounce the cognate words as *gwe-nar*, *kasag*, *pre-gaθ*, *səʒad*. However, there exist enough examples of final syllable < *a* > from sources other than historical < *e* > to lead one to suspect that final syllable < *a* > was to be realised as the neutral vowel ə as in many 20th century Breton dialects. Below are examples of Late Cornish words with final < *a* > from sources other than historical < *e* > (for reasons of space cognates in Old and Middle Cornish, Breton and Welsh have not been included).

- (5) historical < *o* > *aūan* 'river', *ispak* 'bishop', *gybman* 'seaweed', *kosgar* 'boys', *lūar* 'garden', *pjysgadar* 'fisherman', *pidnian* 'brain'
 historical < *uy* > *morraz* 'thigh', *olaz* 'hearth'
 historical < *ū* > *zeithan* 'week'
 historical < *i* > *esgaz* 'shoe', *kegaz* 'hemlock', *gwanath* 'wheat'

The < *a* > in the final syllables of the above words is more easily explained as the neutral vowel ə than *a*.

The elision of the final vowel in some Late Cornish words also argues for the neutral vowel ə

- (6) *kynl* (Lh) 'gathering' cf. B. *kuntuilh*, W. *cynnull*
mēz (Lh) 'maid' cf. B. *maouez*
glaws 'dried cow-dung' cf. B. *glaoued*, W. *gleuad*
leez 'many' cf. B. *liez*, MW. *liaws*
hern 'pilchard' cf. E. *herring*
*dzarn*⁷ 'garden' cf. F. *jardin*
krêg 'hanging' cf. MC. *cregy*
prêv 'proving' cf. MC. *prevy*
gennam 'with me' cf. MC. *genama*
theram 'I am (Locat)' cf. LC. *therama*
o'm 'I am (Desc)' cf. LC. *oma*

If it can be trusted, a very late form *bedn* 'woman' from earlier *benen* presupposes elision of the final syllable and the remaining **ben'n* being treated as other examples of MC. < *nn* >. More proof of elision of final vowels is found with the existence of non-etymological < *-a* > appended to the end of a number of words

⁷ In central Breton the pronunciation of *jaradrin* (also loaned from F. *jardin*) is ʒaʁn ~ ʒɛʁn.

- (7) *ðanna* for *ðan* 'then'
panna for *pan* 'which'
piūa for *piw* 'who'
'riga for *rig* 'did'

It will be questioned why did Edward Lhuyd most usually note the unstressed final vowel as < *a* > when he had < *y̆* > as a perfectly adequate notation for the neutral vowel ə⁸. The answer would seem to be interference from his native language, as ə is never found in final unstressed syllables in Welsh. This seems confirmed in Lhuyd's treatment of final unstressed vowels in Breton, where he wrote *luzauan* and *tersian* for MnB. *louzaouen* 'herb' and *terzien* 'fever' when the only known realisations of this final syllables in Breton are -*en* or -*ən*⁹, so that we are compelled to interpret Lhuyd's < *-a* > in the final vowel as a notation for the neutral vowel ə.

The neutral vowel ə was not exclusively noted < *a* >, viz. *ebron* 'sky' (W. *wybren*, OC. *huibren*), *molhuÿdzhon* (Lh) 'snail' (B. *melc'hwedenn*, W. *malwoden*), *hÿrroz* (Lh) 'rams' (W. *hyrddod*).

Some significant suffixes such as the plural suffix -*o*, the 3Sg feminine suffix -*i* of prepositions, and the 2Pl of the imperative -*o*, are not affected by vowel neutralisation.

On the pattern of central Breton one might suppose that vowel neutralisation of the final syllable would be cancelled in derivative forms such as plurals, because of the change of place of the accent, but many examples in Late Cornish do not show historical < *e* > reappearing

- (8) *controvagian* 'neighbours' *contrevack* 'neighbour'
*izala*¹⁰ 'lowest' *izal* 'low'
helagan 'a willow' *helak* 'willows'
redanan 'a fern' *redan* 'ferns'
loander 'joy' *loaan* 'happy'

Again we may be interpret this medial < *a* > as *a* or the neutral vowel ə, the following spellings lead me to think that the realisation was ə

- (9) *novdho* 'news' *noweth* 'new'
bledhÿnno (Lh)¹¹ 'years' *bledhan* 'a year'

⁸ The spellings *dÿhodzhÿdh* 'afternoon' and *naddyr* 'snake' are exceptional.

⁹ In a similar fashion, a number of dialectologists of Breton have tended to write *e* instead of *ə* in final unstressed syllables, we can only surmise the influence of French where *ə* is never found in these contexts.

¹⁰ Note that this seems contradicted by the form *esella*.

¹¹ Note that other attestations of the word - viz. *blethednyow*, *blethedniou*, *blethydyow*, *blethanniau*, *blethaniou* - make Edward Lhuyd's *bledhÿnno* look suspect.

bȳnollan (Lh) 'a broom (plant)' *banal* 'broom (plants)'

Some examples which preserve historical < e > in derivatives - seeming exceptions to what has been stated immediately above - are forms affected by a final plural suffix -i

- | | | |
|------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| (10) | <i>abelly</i> 'foals' | <i>ebal</i> 'a foal' |
| | <i>porelli</i> 'porkers' | <i>porall</i> 'porker' |
| | <i>castilli</i> 'castles' | <i>kastal</i> 'castle' |

Old Cornish did not know vowel neutralisation of final syllables, but variation in the vowels of final unstressed syllables in Middle Cornish, e.g., *onan* ~ *onen* ~ *onyn* (B. *unan*), argue for stress induced vowel neutralisation in Cornish by at least the 15th century, and N.J.A. Williams (1995) argues that such vowel neutralisation is attested in 14th century Middle Cornish - at any rate much earlier than similar attestations of stress induced vowel neutralisation in either Welsh or Breton.

Vowel neutralisation occurred not only in unstressed final syllables but in pre-stress syllables (much like in spoken Welsh)

- | | | |
|------|--|----------------------------------|
| (11) | <i>abelly</i> əbeli 'foals' | Sg <i>ebal</i> |
| | <i>bȳnollan</i> bənolən 'broom' | Pl <i>banal</i> |
| | tn. <i>Bonallack</i> bənalək 'broomy (place)' | Pl <i>banal</i> |
| | <i>boziāz</i> bəziəs 'fingers' | Sg <i>bēz</i> |
| | tn. <i>Clubmyer</i> kləbmjər 'pigeon house' | Sg <i>kȳlobman</i> (Lh) 'pigeon' |
| | <i>lȳgodzhan</i> ləgodʒən 'mouse' | Pl <i>logos</i> |

There is also vowel neutralisation in stressed syllables before consonant clusters (also found occasionally in spoken Welsh)

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| (12) | <i>kȳlliag</i> kəljək 'cock' | OC. <i>chelioc</i> , cf. W. <i>ceiliog</i> , B. <i>kilyeg</i> |
| | <i>moldeer</i> məldir 'mile' | cf. W. <i>milltir</i> |
| | <i>pȳsgaz</i> (Lh) pəskəs 'fish' | Sg <i>pesk</i> pə:sk |
| | tn. <i>St. Buryan</i> zan bərjən | <i>St. Beriane</i> 1220, cf. B.tn. <i>Berrien</i> |

neutralisation of **a** is attested preceding **l**

- | | | |
|------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| (13) | <i>kolon</i> kələn 'heart' | cf. W. <i>calon</i> , B. <i>kalon</i> |
| | <i>molath</i> mələθ 'curse' | cf. B. <i>malloz</i> |

and retraction of e preceding n

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------------------|--|
| (14) | <i>ganaw</i> gano 'mouth' | cf. W. <i>genau</i> , B. <i>genou</i> |
| | <i>gwanath</i> gwanəθ 'wheat' | cf. W. <i>gwenith</i> , B. <i>gwiniz</i> |
| | <i>gwannan</i> gwanən 'bee' | cf. W. <i>gwenyn(en)</i> , B. <i>gwenan(enn)</i> |

If the above interpretation of the phonology of Cornish is accepted the amount of vowel neutralisation is much higher than in either Welsh or Breton. It may be queried whether the pre-occlusion of Middle Cornish **n**: and **m**: to **dn** and **bm** between Middle and Late Cornish was in part compensation for the loss of vowel distinctions which vowel neutralisation entailed.

Some words are accented finally, either because they were originally composed of two separate words, e.g., *bennak* **bə'nag** '... ever', or because of the monosyllabisation of an original disyllable, e.g., *mȳtern* (Lh) **mə'tern** 'king'.

Various diachronic motivations to do with the position of the stress accent explain the realisational variation between some final consonants in the root word and their corresponding medial consonant in derivatives

- | | | | |
|------|---|----|---|
| (15) | <i>logaz</i> (Lh) logəs 'mice' | v. | <i>lȳgodzhan</i> (Lh) ləgodʒən 'a mouse' |
| | <i>pȳsgos</i> (Lh) pəskəs 'fish' | v. | <i>pysgetsha</i> (Lh) pəsketʃə 'fishing' |
| | <i>darras</i> dorəs 'door' | v. | <i>dergawe</i> dərʒo 'doors' |
| | <i>kolon</i> kələn 'heart' | v. | <i>kelednack</i> kələdnək 'hearty' |

however, such consonant variation of derivatives is not uniform

- | | | |
|------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (16) | <i>taaze</i> ta:z 'father' | <i>tazou</i> tazo 'fathers' |
| | <i>pehas</i> pəəs 'sin' | <i>pehazo</i> pehazo 'sins' |

1.5 Survival of Cornish pronunciation in the English western Cornwall

I have already discussed the impossibility of Cornish-English **ɛ:** being the realisation of Late Cornish **a:** (see 1.2). Other features of western Cornish-English which represent English realisations rather than preservation of Cornish pronunciation are

- Loss of initial **h-**, e.g., *agar* (← LC. *hagar* **hagər**).
- Diphthong **ew** instead of **aw** and **ow**, e.g., *skew* (← LC. *skaow* **skaw**), *kȳrew* (← LC. *crow* **krow**).

- Length before consonant clusters, e.g., **ka:ɾn** (← LC. *carn karn*).

There are, however, some features of western Cornish-English that are quite likely to be survivals from Cornish

- Diphthong **ɪw** for < *ew*, *ue* > in Cornish-English instead of standard English **ju** and south-western English **v**:
- Penultimate stress in many local place-names, including the local realisation **ken'edi** given to a Scottish preacher called *Kennedy* at Hayle in the 1880s (1903 Jenner).

The features highlighted above show that Cornish-English contains - at one and the same time - reflexes of Cornish sounds and of English sounds. Of course a considerable number of sounds are common to many languages, whether the languages are related or not, so that it is an impossible task to ascribe either a specifically English or a Cornish origin to a number of sounds in western Cornish-English. Nevertheless, an extended phonological study of the traditional Cornish-English dialect of West-Penwith - including intonation - is to be urgently desired, so as to enable more definite conclusions to be arrived at concerning the survival of Cornish influence as a substratum in the English of western Cornwall.

1.6 Orthography

The orthography of late Cornish can be conveniently divided into three categories

- 1) a modernised late Medieval rhymed verse of 1611 : William Jordan's *The Creacon of the World*
- 2) numerous scraps of prose - as well as a few songs
- 3) the Welsh-based phonetic script of Edward Lhuyd

We may take category 2) as the most representative orthography of late Cornish, with category 3) as a check (any reference gleaned from Edward Lhuyd will be immediately followed by the bracketed initial (Lh) - some texts following Edward Lhuyd's visit show the influence of his orthography, and a conscious striving by Cornish writers to create a literary language). The illiterate background of many of the writers of category 2) - at least as far as the Cornish language was concerned - means that much of the variation in spelling is useful as a clue to how words were realised in the spoken language of this period. However, much of the variation in spelling was due to the fluidity of English orthographical conventions of that period, exacerbated by the celebrated 'Great Vowel Shift' and its subsequent consequences on English vowel values. In the period when late Cornish was spoken the values given to English vowels differed between the south-east of England and

areas of Britain peripheral to London such as Wales and northern England. There is every reason to believe that some features of the English of Cornwall in the 18th century were conservative as opposed to the contemporary fashionable English of south-eastern England. The spellings < *ea* > and < *-r* > in Late Cornish almost always meant **e**: and **r**, though we find the south-eastern realisations **i**: for < *ea* > and **∅** for < *-r* > in the 18th century spellings *ɸentonear* for **ɸentən'ie** (1935 Henderson) and *clapier* for **klapjə** 'talking'.

2. Morphology

2.1 Morphophonology

As with other Celtic languages Cornish is characterised by mutation of initial consonants of words governed by grammatical considerations, so that 'do' is *gwra gra*, but 'I do' is *me ra mi ra*, and 'if he does' is *mar kra mar kra*. In Late Cornish these mutations are grouped into three separate classes, viz. i) lenition, ii) spirantisation, iii) provection, which are illustrated in fig.4 below.

Whilst fig.4 (below) displays the classic mutations of Cornish many have noted that Late Cornish texts display little conformity in the realisation of mutation according to grammatical rules. It is difficult to ascertain whether this fact demonstrates an anarchic development of the mutation system in Late Cornish or simply reflects writers' unfamiliarity with writing the spoken language (indeed some of the writers had learnt - or were learning - Cornish as a second language). Whilst both reasons are likely explanations for the anarchic realisation of mutations in Late Cornish texts, I have preferred to explain most examples of lack of expected mutation as due to the failing of writers - whether because they were illiterate in Cornish or knew it rather imperfectly as a second language.

fig.4

lenition		spirantisation		provection	
k	→ g	k	→ h	g	→ k
t	→ d	t	→ θ	d	→ t
p	→ b	p	→ f	b	→ p
g	→ ∅ ¹²				
d	→ ð				
b	→ v				
m	→ v				
gw	→ w				

Lenition has the largest number of triggers, and is especially associated with feminine nouns.

- (17) *an hagar-breeve an hagər bre:v* *prev pre:v*
an drea an dre: 'the town' *tre tre:* (f.)
y gy i gəj 'his dog' *kyy kəj*
the vara ðə varə 'your (Sg) bread' *bara barə*
e thanen i ðanən 'send him' (lit. 'his sending) *danen danən*
e ara i arə 'leave him' (lit. 'his leaving') *gara garə*
en wollaz e n wla:z 'in the country' *glaze gla:z*
an wethan an weðən 'the tree' *gwethan gweðən* (f.)

Spirantisation has three triggers, the possessive determiners ə 'my', i 'her', and (a)gə 'their'¹³

- (18) *oh thees ə θi:z* 'my men' *teez ti:z*
a phokkat ə fəkət 'my pocket' *pokkat pəkət*
i hodna i hɔdnə 'her neck' *codna kɔdnə*
'ago phidn agə fedn 'their head' *pedn pedn*

¹² Some examples of *gr-* and *gl-* do not become *r-* and *l-* but *wr-* and *wl-*, e.g., *gre:g* 'wife', *gla:z* 'country' become respectively *tha wreag ðə wre:g* and *an wolas an wla:z*: this is because the initial consonant cluster in these words has simplified from an original **gwre:g* and **gwla:z* (however, cf. *an laaz an la:z* 'the land').

¹³ Spirantisation was also originally triggered by the numerals *trəj f. tər* 'three', however, none of the examples of Late Cornish shows mutation, e.g., *try cans trəj kanz* 'three hundred' *try termen trəj termən* 'three times'. Similarly, there are examples of the possessive determiner (a)gə 'their' followed by the radical consonant, e.g., *aga Curmoack agə kərnuək* 'their Cornish', *ge tavaz gə tavəs* 'their language'. This suggests that loss of spirantisation was spreading.

Provection is triggered by *mar mar* 'if', and the pre-verbal particle *a ə* which precedes verb-nouns - and which is often elided

- (19) *mar peth traveeth gwrez mar pe:ð tra've:θ gre:z* 'if
nothing is done' (lit. 'if is nothing done') *bith be:ð*
mar pee angy mar pi: an'dʒəj 'if they had been' (lit. 'if had
been they') *bee bi:*
mar kra wonen veeth leverol mar kra ənən ve:θ ləverəl
'if anyone says' (lit. 'if does anyone saying') *gra gra*
a privia ə privjə 'bleating' *brivia brivjə*
a toaz ə to:z 'coming' *doaz do:z*
prydzhan prədʒən 'boiling' *bridzhan brədʒən*

Another mutation class found in Middle Cornish - the mixed mutation - was triggered by the adverbial particle *en en* and *maga (ma)gə* 'as', but the mixed mutation seems to have been replaced by lenition in Late Cornish

- (20) *yn vëu en vew* 'lively' *bew bew* 'alive'
en 'lannith en lanəθ 'cleanly' *glaneth glanəθ* 'clean'
gwryes vas gre:z va:z 'well done' *maze ma:z* 'good'
maga vras magə vro:z 'as big' *browse bro:z* 'big'

Only in the case of the adjective *da da:* 'good' does the mixed mutation seem to have been preserved

- (21) *etta ~ ta (en) ta:* 'well'
maga ta magə ta: 'as well'

There are traces of nasal mutation following the definite article

- (22) *an nore an no:r* 'the earth' *daor do:r* 'earth'

There seems to be evidence in Late Cornish of what is termed neo-lenition in Breton linguistics: that is to say lenition of *f-* and *s-* to their voiced counterparts *v-* and *z-*. This was specifically alluded to as a mutation by Edward Lhuyd (1707):

"*karrak*, 'a rock'; but 'the rock' is *an garrak*: so *fordh* or *forh* 'a way'; *an vordh*, 'the way';"

However, Edward Lhuyd may have been mistaken in understanding neo-lenition as a mutation, if his radical *forh* may be shown to be Middle Cornish which the tn. *Park Voregles* (1985 Padel) may suggest if it can be shown to be composed of **vor* + *an* + *eglās*. At any rate neo-lenition does not seem to be caused by the usual contexts that cause lenition, e.g., '*gyz vordh gəz vor* 'your (Pl) way', *go zettyaz gə zettjəs* 'set them' (lit. 'their setting'), *gerriow zanz gerjo zanz* 'saintly words', *gerrio Zouznak gerjo zowznək* 'English words', *an zanzo an zanzo* 'the saints', *erra zetha erə zedə* 'were sitting', *eu Zil ew zi:l* 'is Sunday', as well as being found initially in *vorh vor* 'pitchfork', *vorn vorn* 'oven', *zēh ze:* 'dry', *Zouz zowz* 'Englishman'. It seems likely that neo-lenition was establishing itself - unevenly - as the radical form of words that originally had *f*- and *s*-, as has happened in many dialects of Breton. Whenever this voicing began in Cornish the original motivation for this change may well have originated in south-western English, since this variety of English had voiced *f*- and *s*- to *v*- and *z*- at a much earlier date.

2.2 Noun morphology

Nouns have no cases in Cornish, though they can be marked for number and gender.

2.3 Number

The commonest distinction of number in Cornish is between the singular and the plural, the unmarked form being sometimes the singular, sometimes the plural

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|------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| (23) | <i>goon gu:n</i> 'moor' | Pl <i>gunneau gunjo</i> 'moors' | (Pl suffix -o) |
| | <i>hazan hazən</i> 'a seed' | Pl <i>haaze ha:z</i> 'seed' | (Sg suffix -ən) |

In a number of cases both the singular and plural forms are marked with suffixes

- | | | |
|------|---|------------------------------|
| (24) | <i>lyžuuan</i> (Lh) <i>ləzuən</i> 'plant' | Pl <i>lozo lozo</i> 'plants' |
|------|---|------------------------------|

As in the other Brittonic languages there are a great variety of plural suffixes, the commonest plural marker being -o (and its variant -jo)

- | | | |
|------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| (25) | <i>jowloo dʒowlo</i> 'devils' | Sg <i>jowle</i> |
| | <i>vozou vozo</i> 'walls' | Sg <i>fôz</i> (Lh) |
| | <i>sorto sorto</i> 'sorts' | Sg <i>sort</i> |
| | <i>gerriau gerjo</i> 'words' | Sg <i>geer</i> |

The other plural suffixes are -jən, -i, -əs, -s, followed by a small number of rare suffixes.

The plural suffix -jən commonly refers to a group of people, e.g., *prounterian pronterjən* (*pronter prontər* 'priest'), *contravagian kontrəvagjən* (*contrevack kəntrevək* 'neighbour'), *Curnowean kərnowjən* 'Cornish (people)', but is also found for other classes, e.g., *murrian mərjən* (*mürrianan mərjanən* 'ant'), *gorollion gorəljən* (*goral gorəl* 'ship').

The plural marker -i is found in *müzi mozi* (*moaze mo:z* 'girl'), *esily əzili* (*esəl ezəl* 'limb'), *porelli porili* (*porall porall* 'porker'). The plural suffix -əð is found in *gwregath gregəð* (*gwreag gre:g* 'wife'), *mighterneth mätərnəð* (*matern mätərn* 'king'), *tereath tireð* (*tir ti:r* 'land'). In Late Cornish the plural suffix -əs reflects both a Celtic suffix - viz. MC. -es

- | | | |
|------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| (26) | <i>poskas pəskəs</i> | Sg <i>pešk pe:sk</i> 'a fish' |
| | <i>prevas prəvəs</i> | Sg <i>preav pre:v</i> 'insect' |
| | <i>horroz horəs</i> | Sg <i>horr hor</i> 'ram' |
| | <i>eelez eləs</i> | Sg <i>eal e:l</i> 'angel' |

as well as a Middle English plural -es

- | | | |
|------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (27) | <i>bestaz bestəs</i> | Sg <i>be:st</i> 'animal' |
| | <i>plankez plankəs</i> | Sg <i>plankan pləŋkən</i> 'plank' |
| | <i>yettes jetəs</i> | Sg <i>yet jet</i> 'gate' |

The plural suffix -s, of English origin, is mainly found in words loaned from English, e.g., *martshants* (Lh) *martʃənts* 'merchants', *clappiers kləpjərs* 'speakers', but it is also found applied to names of agents ending in -ər such as *poscadərs pəskadərs* (*pysgadar pəskadər* 'fisherman') rather than the expected **pəskadərjən* (cf. spoken Welsh (*py*)*sgotwrs* for literary *pysgotwyr*).

Finally a number of rare plural markers are found in *henwyn henwən* (*hanaw hano* 'name'), *ladran ladrən* (*ladar ladər* 'thief'), and suppletive plurals are *trevon trevən* (*choy tʃəj* 'house'), *teez ti:z* (*dean de:n* 'man'), *taklo taklo* (*tra tra* 'thing'), *ohan oən* (*odgon ədʒən* 'ox'), *doola dulə* (*dorn dorn* 'hand').

Some plurals are formed through internal affection, e.g., *denz denz* 'teeth' (*danz danz* 'tooth'), *devaz devəs* (*davaz davəs* 'a sheep'), *ean e:n* (*oan o:n* 'lamb'), *mine məjn* (*mean me:n* 'stone'), *treiz* (Lh) *trəjz* (*trooze tru:z* 'foot'). A tautological appearance of the plural suffix -o is attested for *enow eno* 'lambs', *meanow meno* 'stones', and *devidgiow də'vidʒo* 'sheep'.

A dual form with *dew* (f. *diw*) is found for the symmetric bodyparts

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------------|---|
| (28) | <i>skooth sku:ð</i> 'shoulder' | <i>diskodh</i> (Lh) <i>diskuð</i> 'shoulders' |
|------|--------------------------------|---|

<i>b[r]odn brodn</i>	<i>devran divrən</i> 'breasts'
<i>dorn dorn</i> 'hand' ¹⁴	<i>doola dulə</i> 'hands'
<i>pednglin pedn'gli:n</i> 'knee'	<i>pedndowlin pedndowlin</i> 'knees'

A comparison with Middle Cornish shows the dual forms to have largely been superseded by suffixed plurals in Late Cornish (similarly to a Welsh development)

(29) <i>lagaz lagəs</i> 'eye'	<i>lagagow lagadʒo</i> 'eyes'
<i>brêh</i> (Lh) <i>bre</i> 'arm'	<i>breihaü</i> (Lh) <i>brejo</i> 'arms'
<i>gar gar</i> 'leg'	<i>garro garo</i> 'legs'

Theoretically these dual forms could contrast with plurals in *-o/-jo* referring to an assembly of body parts, however, there is no proof of such distinction in Cornish.

2.4 Gender and the definite article

The definite article is *an an* (often reduced to *ən*), the *-n* sometimes eliding to give *a ~ ə* before consonants, e.g., *a venen a venən* 'the woman', tn. *Gweal a Vellin gwe:l a velin* 'field of the mill'.

Cornish has two grammatical genders for nouns, masculine and feminine, which effect the way in which words mutate. Generally the masculine gender does not trigger mutation¹⁵, whilst the feminine gender can be determined by, either, i) lenition of a following adjective, or, ii) lenition following a definite article, e.g.,

(30) <i>chy tʃəj</i> 'house' (m.)	* <i>an tʃəj biən</i> 'the small house'
<i>benen benən</i> 'woman' (f.)	* <i>an venən viən</i> 'the small woman'

the plural form of feminine nouns is not lenited by the definite article nor does it trigger lenition

(31) * <i>an benenəs biən</i> 'the small women'

A feminine suffix which is added to nouns that refer to a masculine occupation or condition is the marker *-əs*

¹⁴ The word *du-lə* is a dual form of MC. *leyf* 'hand', a word which became obsolete and which was replaced in Late Cornish by *dorn*, which originally meant 'fist'.

¹⁵ A restricted category of plurals referring to occupation or condition of men shows lenition after the definite article, e.g., *ti:z* 'men' → *an deez an di:z* 'the men'; *klevjən* 'sick people' → *an glevyan an glevjən*; *martfənts* 'merchants' → *an varishants an vartfənts*.

(32) <i>mestres mestrəs</i> 'mistress'	<i>mêster mestər</i> 'master'
<i>arlothas arloðəs</i> 'a lady'	<i>arluth arləð</i> 'lord'

There is no regular indefinite article in Late Cornish

(33) <i>nebbaz gerriau nebəs gerjo</i> 'a few words'
<i>dên dâ</i> (Lh) <i>de:n dâ:</i> 'a good man'
<i>mean orrol me:n ərəl</i> 'another stone'
<i>sythen warebar zəjθən war'bar</i> 'a whole week'

though there are sporadic examples of *idden idn* 'one' used as an indefinite article

(34) <i>idden mees warbar idn mi:z war'bar</i> 'a whole month'
<i>udn eal wheake idn e:l wə:g</i> 'a sweet angel'

2.5 Derivation

Derivational suffixes which adjust the meaning of a noun are

(35) <i>-ər</i>	indicates an agent's name, <i>poscader pəskadər</i> 'fisherman' (<i>pysgaz pəskəs</i> 'fish'), <i>peeber pibər</i> 'piper' (<i>pib</i> (Lh) <i>pi:b</i> 'pipe').
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There suffix *-wəθ* indicating content of time is found in late Middle Cornish *noswyth* 'night' and *dyth wyth* 'day' but is not attested in Late Cornish, nor is a postulated suffix **-əs* (cf. B. *-ad*, W. *-aid*) referring to physical content (cf. E. '-ful') attested in Late Cornish. The diminutive/affective suffix *-ik* is attested only in *meppig mebik*¹⁶ (*mabe ma:b* 'son') and *gÿrgirik grəgirik*¹⁷ (*grigear grigjər* 'partridge').

¹⁶ The 'normalisation' of *mebik* from *mepik* is debatable. I take the medial *p* of *meppig* as representing an unvoicing of medial voiced consonant : a feature occasionally found in Late Cornish (see note 20) This occasional medial unvoicing affected voiced stops, but it may also have affected voiced fricatives, thus explaining the spellings *skreefā ~ skrepha ~ screffā skrefā* and *goffen gōfən*, in words which originally contained medial *-v* (cf. B. *skriva*, W. *gofyn*).

¹⁷ Though Edward Lhuyd simply explained *gÿrgirik* as 'partridge' K.George (1993) interprets this as 'young partridge', in opposition to *grigear* 'partridge'.

2.6 Adjectival nouns

Nouns can sometimes act as adjectives

- (36) *tn. Ponsmean* **ponz'me:n** 'stone bridge' *mean* **me:n** 'stone'
tn. Ponspren **ponz'predn** 'wooden bridge' *predn* **predn** 'wood'

2.7 Negation

For the negative particles **na/nag**, see 2.26.

Nouns can be emphatically negated by the negative adjective **ve:θ** 'at all, (not) any', e.g.,

- (37) *ni er dên vêth* **ni o:r de:n ve:θ** 'nobody knows' (lit. 'not knows man at all')
nag ez drog vyth gwres **nag e:z dro:g ve:θ gre:z** 'no harm has been done' (lit. 'not is bad at all done')

The concept 'nothing' is conveyed by *traveeth tra ve:θ*.

- (38) *na ges travith* **nag e:z tra ve:θ** 'there is nothing'

The negative conjunction **na/nag** 'nor'¹⁸ is the opposite of **ha/hag** 'and'

- (39) *na ve idn frôth na mikan* **na vi idn fro:θ na mikən** 'there was not any strife nor spite'

There is no certain attestation of a negative particle meaning 'not' as in an English phrase such as 'not that house, the other', Edward Lhuys did write *niz en ydnek* 'not only' in a letter of his composition, but this may well be an adaption to Cornish of the Welsh negative particle *nid* 'not'.

2.8 Adjectives

Except for the effects of mutation adjectives remain invariable in form except in their comparative and superlative forms. They nearly always follow the noun they describe

¹⁸ Like the conjunction **ha/hag** the form **nag** of the conjunction is used when preceding a vowel, except in the case of the definite article **an** where it becomes compressed, e.g., *nan na n* (by analogy with **ha/hag** it also becomes compressed with the 3Sg possessive determiners *i* 'his' and *i* 'her').

- (40) *bennen younk* **benən joŋk** 'a young woman'
benen vaaz **benən va:z** 'a good woman'
dên kôth **de:n kô:θ** 'an old man' (lit. 'man old')

except for *hagar* **hagər** 'ugly'

- (41) *hagar musi* **hagər vozi** 'ugly girls'
hagar auall **hagər awəl** 'storm' (lit. 'ugly wind')

and a small number of adjectives loaned from English

- (42) *hujeth tra* **hiwdʒə tra** 'a huge thing'
hugez meneth euhall **hiwdʒə menəθ iwəl** 'an exceedingly high mountain'
bad-ober **bad obər** 'crime' (lit. 'bad deed')

2.9 Adjective morphology

Both the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives are inflected as **-ə** and can only be distinguished from each other through the use of the definite article, the comparative form being indefinite and the superlative form being definite.

fig.5

adjective		comparative		superlative	
bro:z	'big'	brosə	'bigger'	an brosə	'the biggest'

Both suffixes unvoice the final consonants or consonant clusters

- (43) *hagar* **hagər** 'ugly' → (*an*) *hackra* (**an**) **hakrə** 'uglier/the ugliest'
teag **te:g** 'beautiful' → (*an*) *tecka* (**an**) **tekə** 'more beautiful/the most beautiful'

as well as lengthening sonants

- (44) *kear* **ke:r** 'dear' → *kerra* **kerə** 'more precious'

peor ***pe:r** 'pure'¹⁹ → *purra lader* **pərə ladər** 'a more absolute thief' (lit. 'a purer ...')

The case of single < n > becoming double < nn >, led in Late Cornish to the further regular change to < dn >, as instanced in the case of *bean* **biən** 'small'

(45) *bean* **biən** 'small' → (*an*) *behathna* (**an**) **bihatnə**²⁰ 'smaller/the smallest'

A late form *broaza* **brozə** 'bigger' (**bro:z** 'big') appears to show unvoicing no longer productive.

Some adjectives display irregular comparative and superlative forms

fig.6

adjective		comparative		superlative	
liəs	'many'	<i>mouy</i> muj	'more'	<i>an moya</i> an mujə ²¹	'the most'
da:	'good'	<i>gwel</i> gwel	'better'	<i>an gwella</i> an gwelə	'the best'
dro:g	'bad'	<i>gweath</i> gwe:θ or <i>lacka</i> lakə	'worse'	*an gweθə or *an lakə	'the worst'
nebəs	'few, little'	<i>le</i> le:	'less'	<i>an leha</i> an leə	'the least'
ogəs	'near'	<i>nêz</i> (Lh) ne:z	'nearer'	<i>nessa</i> an nesə	'the nearest, the next'

Contrary to adjectives in general the superlative is usually placed before rather than following the noun

(46) *an gwella ternuan* **an gwelə ternuən** 'the best side'

¹⁹ One might expect ***pi:r** - cf. tn. *Polpeer* (Tintagel) -, to be the later realisation of MC. *pur* **py:r** 'pure', but it would seem that the vowel of the Cornish word became lowered to **pø:r** as in B. *peur* **pø:r** 'very'. The realisation ***pø:r** - cf. tn. *Polpeor* (Lelant) -, would have regularly given Late Cornish ***pe:r**, but it seems to have been replaced by a loan from English *power* **piwr**, and apart from some attestations in toponymy the adjective is mostly found as an adverb preceding adjectives, with the vowel weakened to *por* **pər** 'very'. Both the adverb **pər** and the comparative **pərə** reflect a weakening of MC. **ø:**, rather than LC. **e:**.

²⁰ Medial provection explains **tn** rather than **dn** in *bihatnə*, other examples of medial provection in LC. are attested in the inflection of *en* **en** 'in' (see 2.17, 68), and occasionally in *uppa* **əpə** for *obba* **əbə** 'here' and *ackas* **əkəs** for *aguz* **agəs** 'your (PI)'.
²¹ Though spellings without < h > are commoner, instances of spellings such as *moitha*, *güelha*, *pelha* might lead one to suspect that the **h** of < -ham > - the original superlative suffix of Brittonic - survived into Late Cornish : note similar spellings in Middle Cornish texts (1946 Lewis).

en nessa tshei (Lh) **en nesə tʃəj** 'in the next house'
[*an*] *nessa zeithan* (Lh) **an nesə zəjθən** 'next week'
an guella stean en Kernow **an gwelə ste:n en kərno** 'the best tin in Cornwall'
an brossa mine **an brosə məjn** 'the biggest stones'
an idna deu codna teer **an idnə dew kodnə ti:r** 'the two narrowest peninsulas' (lit. '... necks of land')

though there also exist contrary examples

(47) [*an*] *cor gwella* **an kor gwelə** 'the best beer'
an tshei izala **an tʃəj izalə** 'the lowest house'
an Dew euhella **an diw iwelə** 'the highest God'

Many adjectives replace suffixation by a periphrastic construction involving **muj** 'more' and **an mujə** 'the most', e.g., *moy foulze* **muj fawlz** 'falsar', *mouy fortidniez* **muj fortidnjəs** 'more fortunate'. One suspects periphrastic constructions to have occurred more with loan words and polysyllabic words - as in Welsh and some varieties of Breton.

When comparing the comparative form of adjectives is followed by **vel** 'than'

(48) *kerra vel au'r* **kerə vel ovr** 'more precious than gold'
lacka vel zeage **lakə vel ze:g** 'worse than draft'
nag es moye vel pager po pemp **nag e:z muj vel padzər pə bemp** 'there is no more than four or five'

The equative of adjectives is conveyed by a phrase (**ma**)**gə ... vel** 'as ... as'

(49) *kÿ güêr vel an güelz* **gə gwe:r vel an gwelz** 'as green as the grass'

but, if followed by a verbal form, the phrase is (**ma**)**gə ... tər** 'as ... as'

(50) *magga pel ter el eve heathes* **magə pel tər el e:v heðəs** 'as far as he can reach'

There exists one irregular form of the equative, e.g., *kebmaz* **kebməs** ~ *mens* **menz** 'as many ~ much' (**liəs** 'many').

In Middle Cornish the exclamative of adjectives was conveyed by the exclamative particle *ass(a) ~ yss(a)*. Unlike Breton and Welsh the exclamative particle did not immediately precede the adjective, as the verb was placed between the particle and the adjective, e.g., *ass yu hemma trueth bras* 'isn't this a great pity!' (lit. 'how is this ...'). Middle Cornish *ass* is not found in Late Cornish, *fatla fatəl* 'how', a calque on English, being used instead, the only attested example referring to verb-nouns, e.g., *patl ýzhi a kÿlyüü ha trenna ! fatəl idzə ə kəlowi ha trədnə !* 'how it is lightening and thundering!'. With the comparative of the adjective *pezeal pə'ze:l* 'how much' is found, e.g., *pezeal mouy looan pə'ze:l muj luən* 'how much happier' (lit. '... more happy').

2.10 Derivation

Adjectives can be created from nouns or verbs by the addition of a variety of suffixes

- (51) **-ək** E. *-y* as in: *stennack stenək* 'tinny' (*stean ste:n* 'tin'), *lostek lostək* 'fox' (*lost* 'tail'), *kelednack kələdnək* 'heartly' (*colon kələn* 'heart').
- əs** (MC. *-us*), *coves kovəs* 'mindful' (*ko ko:* 'memory'), *prÿderys prəderəs* 'thoughtful' (*pridar predər* 'thought').
- əs** (MC. *-ys*), this is the past participle, *benegaz bənegəs* 'blessed' (*benig-bə'neg-* 'bless'), *demithez dəmeðəs* 'married' (*demith-də'með-* 'marry').

Abstract nouns can be created from adjectives or verbs by the addition of a variety of markers. The commonest or more productive markers of nominalisation are given below

- (52) **-dər** *doünder downder* 'depth' (*down* 'deep'), *drokter droktər* 'harm' (*droag dro:g* 'bad').
- nə(n)s** *bounaz bownəs* 'life' (*bew-bew* 'live'), *marnaz marnəs* 'death' (*maro maro* 'dead').
- ə(n)s** *dyskaz deskəs* 'education' (*desk-desk-* 'learn').
- ə(ð)** *lowenna lowenə* 'happiness' (*looan luən* 'happy'), *trua triwə* 'pity'.
- nəθ** *hyrenath hirnəθ* 'longing' (*hîr hî:r* 'long'), *mascogna məskognə* 'stupidity' (*mescack məskək* 'foolish').

Other markers of nominalisation are no longer productive, e.g. *tolgo tulgo* 'darkness' (*tewl tewəl* 'dark'), *gwreanathe gwrianəð* 'truth' (*gweer gwî:r* 'true'), *eahas jeəs* 'health' (*yach* (Lh) *ja:* 'healthy'), *zehar zəər* 'drought' (*zeah ze:* 'dry'). There is evidence that the suffix **-dər** was replacing less

common suffixes, e.g., *tewlder tewldər* 'darkness' instead of *tolgo tulgo*, *loander luəndər* 'joy' instead of *lowenna lowenə*.

Finally there are irregular correspondents: *menze menz* 'size' (*browse bro:z* 'big'), *lêz le:z* (*ledan ledən* 'width'), and *heaz he:z ~ hester hestər* 'length' (*hîr hî:r* 'long').

2.11 Nominalised adjectives

Adjectives are sometimes - though rarely - found as nouns

- (53) *wheagow wəgo* 'sweets' *wheag* 'sweet'

2.12 Colours

The basic colours of Celtic origin in Cornish are *due diw* 'black', *gwidden gwidn* 'white', *loos ~ lûdzh* (Lh) *lu:z ~ lu:dʒ* 'grey, dull', *glaze gla:z* 'grue', *reeth ri:ð* 'red', *mellon melən* 'yellow', with *güêr gwe:r* 'green' a loan from Latin. It is difficult to ascertain exact values or usages of colour terms in an extinct language, but the term *gla:z* deserves elaboration. In traditional Breton and Welsh the cognates of the colour *gla:z* are well-known to represent a wider spectrum than E. 'blue' or F. 'bleu' - including 'grey' and 'green' -, though there has been semantic remodelling due to the influence of the dominant languages. The phrase *kÿ güêr vel an güelz gə gwe:r vel an gwelz* 'as green as the grass' shows *gwe:r* to have supplanted *gla:z* for the colour of vegetation in Late Cornish, though a list of place-names containing the two colours (1985 Padel) demonstrates *gla:z* was at one time more in use for vegetation than *gwe:r*. Edward Lhuyd notes *bloü* for 'blue', as if *gla:z* no longer meant blue, though the figurative *goon las gu:n la:z* 'blue down' for 'sea' preserves the meaning 'blue'. Edward Lhuyd also noted *blêu glaz blew gla:z* 'grey hairs'.

It is difficult to ascertain how much the compound colour terms attested only by Lhuyd were in use, viz. *kigliü kigliw* 'pink' (lit. 'meat colour'), *ruthvelyn riðvelən* 'orange' (lit. 'red yellow').

2.13 Demonstrative particles

There are two principal degrees of demonstrative particle, **ma** 'this', **na** 'that', these are placed immediately following a definite noun

- (54) *a tacklow ma a taklo ma* 'these things'

an powna an pow na 'that district'

If the noun is followed by an adjective - or even many adjectives - the demonstrative particle is placed following the adjective

- (55) *an pelle arrance ma an be:l arəns ma* 'this silver ball'
en guili kala na en gweli kalə na 'in that straw bed'
an gwas brās sigirna an gwa:z bro:z zigər na 'that big lazy fellow'

The demonstrative particles are also found compounded in demonstrative pronouns (see 2.19), and locational adverbs (see 2.32).

2.14 Personal pronouns

Gender is only distinguished in the 3Sg. In addition to its plural meaning the 2Pl has also become the formal or polite form of the 2Sg. R.Gendall (1991a) suspects that the distinction between the informal and the formal forms of the 2Sg was breaking down in Late Cornish to the profit of the latter (much like *you* replaced *thou* in standard English).

Listed below are the independent personal pronouns

fig.7

	singular		plural	
1st	mi	'I, me'	nəj	'we, us'
2nd	tʃi	'you'	wəj	'you'
3rd (m.)	e:(v)	'he, him'	(ən')dʒəj ~ əj	'they, them'
(f.)	həj	'she, her'		

The only suffixed personal pronoun with a different form in Late Cornish is *vi* 'I, me' (1Sg) (the MC. *gy dʒi* 'you' (2Sg) having been replaced by the corresponding independent personal pronoun).

There also exist other forms of the personal pronouns as clitics in the conjugation of verbs and prepositions in the singular (except for the 3Sgf.).

fig.8

	singular	
1st	-mə	'I, me'
2nd	-tə	'you (inf.)'
3rd (m.)	-və	'he, him'

2.15 Possessive determiners

The ordinary possessive determiners are given below

fig.9

	singular		plural	
1st	ə ²² (+ s)	'my'	(a)gən	'our'
2nd	ðə (+ l)	'your (inf.)'	(a)gəs	'your'
3rd	i (+ l)	'his'	(a)gə (+ s)	'their'
	i (+ s)	'her'		

Possessive determiners are commonly found as object pronouns preceding verbs

- (56) *e ra tha rowlia e ra ðə rowljə* 'he will rule you (Sg)' (lit. '... your (Sg) ruling')
me vedn e thone mi vedn i ðo:n 'I will carry it' (lit. '... its carrying')
an poble ez e gara an pobəl e:z i garə 'the people that love him' (lit. '... that his loving')
na venja hedda ... gun greevia na vendzə hedə gən grivjə 'that would not trouble us'
(lit. '... our troubling')
ne el e ge dibre nə el e: gə dibri 'he cannot eat them' (lit. '... their eating')

Clitic forms of the possessive determiners are found for the singular persons and for the 3Pl

²² The form *ma, mo, me* 'my' appears only in Edward Lhuyd and writers who might have been influenced by him. The 19th century saying *ben ma brea* collected in West Penwith, which was supposed to mean 'woman of my esteem', may have been contaminated by a dialectal version of English *my*, but, in any case, looks suspiciously identical to the Manx *ben my chree* 'woman of my heart', a saying which seems to have had some currency as it is found at present in the name of a ferry of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company.

fig.10

	singular		plural	
1st	-m	'my'		
2nd	-θ	'your'		
3rd (m.)	-n	'his'	-z	'their'
(f.)	-z	'her'		

these forms are found following the relative pre-verbal particle *a*

- (57) *why am gweell wəj a m gwe:l* 'you (Pl) see me' (lit. '... my see')
ny ath dēg (Lh) nəj a θ de:g 'we will carry you (Sg)' (lit. '... your (Sg) will-carry')
tī an kāv (Lh) tʃi a n ka:v 'you (Sg) will find him' (lit. '... his will-find')
an jowl en garaz e an dʒowl a n garəs e 'the devil left him' (lit. '... his leaving him')
me as rowle hy mi a z rowl həj 'I will rule her' (lit. '... her will-rule')
e ez devannaz tha Vethalem e: a z dævənəs θə vethəlem 'he sent them to Bethlehem' (lit. '... their sent to Bethlehem')

and the conjunction *ha/hag* 'and' is sometimes found combining with ordinary possessive determiners

- (58) *haw ha w* 'and my'
hay (Lh) ha j 'and his'
hai (Lh) ha j 'and her'²³

or with clitic possessive determiners

- (59) *ha'm grēg ha m gre:g* 'and my wife'
hath (Lh) ha θ 'and your (Sg)'

The ante-positioned possessive determiners came to be reinforced by a corresponding post-positioned personal pronouns (in the case of the 1Sg the suffixed personal pronoun *vi* rather than the independent personal pronoun *mi*).

²³ The possessive determiners *ə* 'my', *i* 'his', *i* 'her', appear here in their non-syllabic guise of *w* and *j* (the reason *w* corresponds to *ə* is that it was earlier realised *o* before the vowel was neutralised to *ə*).

- (60) *a bredyr vi ə bredər vi* 'my brothers'
e haaze hie i ha:z həj 'her seed'
gun tavaz ny gən tavəs nəj 'our language'
gÿz levar hüei gəz levər wəj 'your (Pl) book'
aga gwerhas y agə gwerəs əj 'their help'

This dual marking of possession made possible the replacement of the possessive determiner by the personal pronoun (much as has happened in the Welsh of younger speakers of the 20th century). The first step appears to have been elision of the possessive determiner, and the re-radicalisation of any spirantised consonants²⁴

- (61) *wreag vee gre:g vi* 'my wife'
bedar vi (Lh) bredər vi 'my brother'
kar ve ka:r vi 'my friend'
kolan ve kələn vi 'my heart'
seara vee serə vi 'my father'
dreav nye tre:v nəj 'our village'
kar ny kar nəj 'our friend'
egles nei egləs nəj 'our church'
lagagow an gie lagadʒo ən'dʒəj 'their eyes'

To mark exclusivity possessive determiners are followed by *honnen hənən*, e.g., *a hunnen ə hənən* 'myself', *dah honen də hənən* 'yourself (Sg)', etc (the element *hənən* '...self', is a modification of *ənən* 'one').

- (62) *pow e whonnen pow i hənən* 'his own country'

2.16 Reflexive pronouns

Reflexive pronouns are composed with possessive determiners followed by *honnen hənən* as the object of a verb

- (63) *hedha go honnen heθə gə hənən* 'stretching themselves'

²⁴ The apparent lenition of *wreag* 'wife' and *dreav* 'village, town' is likely to be the result of the speaker treating the lenited form as the radical form.

In Late Cornish the reflexive particle *om-* **əm-** was no longer productive and was only found fossilised in such words as *ombla əmblə* 'fighting', *umthan əmðən* 'conceiving'

(64) *ma hy a humthan ma həj əh əmðən* 'she is conceiving'

Reciprocal pronouns are conveyed by **an nəjl ... i gilə** 'the one ... the other'

(65) *an Frencok ... parrez tho cummeraz war a niel, ha an Sousenack ... war e gilla an vregkək parəs ðə gəmerəs war an nəjl, ha n zowznək war i gilə* 'French ready to take over the one, and English the other'

2.17 Preposition morphology

In common with other Celtic languages Cornish has inflected prepositions

(66) **genəmə** 'with me' (**genz** 'with')
ðəðə 'to him' (**ðə** 'to')
ragə wəj 'for you (Pl)' (**rag** 'for')

Below is given the inflection of *tha ðə* 'to'²⁵

fig.11

	singular	plural
1st	ðə vi ~ ðemə	ðə nəj ~ ðen
2nd	ðə tʃi ~ ðiz	ðə wəj ~ ðeo
3rd (m.)	ðə e ~ ðəðə	ðə n'dʒəj ~ ðəðə(ns)
(f.)	*ðə həj ~ ðeði	

It will be noted - this being also true for the conjugation of verbs (see 2.25) - that there are two forms of the inflection of prepositions, the first given in the tables below represent a newer analytic inflection, whilst the forms given afterwards represent the older synthetic inflection. Late Cornish

²⁵ N.J.A. Williams (1995 p.151) believes the variant spelling < d- > found for < th- > for the prepositions *tha ðə* 'to' and *thurt ðort* 'from' is due to a realisation that lay between interdental ð and dental ɖ, much like the realisation of ð in 19th century Cornish-English.

used both inflections, with a tendency to prefer the analytic forms for the 1st, 2nd persons, and the 3Pl.

The endings for the 1st and 2nd persons of a large number of prepositions - what may be termed the regular inflection of the prepositions - is given below (it must be emphasised that this is a composite tabulation of inflectional endings as a complete inflection of a preposition is not preserved in the texts).

fig.12

	singular	plural
1st	-ə vi ~ -əmə	-ə nəj ~ -ən
2nd	-ə tʃi ~ -əs	-ə wəj ~ -ə
3rd (m.)	-ə	-ən'dʒəj ~ -ə(ns)
(f.)	-i	

Prepositions regularly inflected are *urt ort* 'at, by', *thurt ðort* 'from', as well as *en en* 'in' - on the modified base **et-**.

Less regular in their inflection are the prepositions *rag rag* 'for', and *derag di'rag* 'in front of', as in the 3rd persons they are inflected on the modified bases **rakt-**, **di'rakt-**²⁶, and even less regular are the prepositions *genz/gen genz/gen* 'with', *war war* 'on', *a a* 'of', inflected on the modified bases **gen-**, **warn-**, **ahan-** in the 1st and 2nd persons, but **gəndʒ-**, **war'nəð-**, **a'nəð-** in the 3rd persons.

The 3rd persons singular can be alternatively conveyed simply by using the preposition followed by the personal pronouns **e:(v)** 'him' and **həj** 'her'.

(67) *war ef war e:v* 'on him'

The difference in the form of the base between the 3rd and other persons is an old difference also found in the inflection of many Breton and Welsh prepositions. The reason **ort** and **ðort** are regularly inflected in all persons is due to the fact that these forms were originally restricted as 3rd person bases **ort-** and **ðort-** which spread analogically at the expense of early Late Cornish *uar or*

²⁶ The inflection of *reb reb* 'by, besides' and *heb heb* 'without' are likely to have been similar to *rag rag*, except there remains uncertainty as to the modification of the base of the 3rd persons the unattested ***rept-** / ***hept-** or the Middle Cornish **repθ-** / **hepθ-** (in Middle Cornish the base of the 3rd persons of *rag rag* was **rakθ-**).

and *thor ðor* (MC. *orth* and *thyworth*) - the same analogical remodelling on the 3rd person of prepositions is found in spoken Welsh with *dros, gan, rhwng, yn*²⁷.

In the case of the preposition *en/et* 'in', the form *et* not only appears in the inflection of the pronoun but also independently before possessive determiners

- (68) *et a phokkat et ə fokət* 'in my pocket'
et i gever et i gevər 'in regard to him' (lit. 'in his regard')
ett aggon colonow et agən kəlono 'in our hearts'
et aguz kolan et agəs kələn 'in your (Pl) heart'
et ago doola et agə dulə 'in their hands'

The *et* in the phrase *ed eskas vi* (Lh) *et eskəs vi* 'in my shoe' must be due to an elided 1st singular possessive determiner *ə*.

The preposition *en* is also particular in that it merges with a following definite article to give an identical form *e n* meaning 'in the'²⁸

- (69) *en nessa tshei* (Lh) *e n nesə tʃəj* 'in the next house'
en dezan e n dezən 'in the cake'
en powe e n pəw 'in the land'

The variation of the preposition *genz* and *gen* appears to be related to whether they are followed by a vowel or by a consonant, the full form *genz* remaining before vowels

- (70) *genz an krei genz an krəj* 'with the shout'
genz e golhan genz i gələn 'with his knife'

and the reduced form *gen* appearing before consonants

- (71) *gen kawall gen kawəl* 'with a fish-basket'
gen hern gen herən 'with pilchards'
gen dewan gen diwən 'with sorrow'²⁹

²⁷ And similarly with the preposition *der ðer* 'through' which is found as *dreath dre:ð* because its inflection was based on the base *dreð*.

²⁸ The phrase *ed an egloz* 'in the church' written as an epitaph c.1777 for the last speaker of Cornish by a certain engineer from Truro called Thomson is wholly exceptional.

There appears to be a similar motivation to the reduction of *nanz* 'valley' to *nan* when preceding consonants, *Lamorna, Nancledra* and *Nanpean* were *Nansmorno* 1302, *Nanscludri* 1302 and *Nanspian* 1332 (1985 Padel)³⁰.

There are a number of prepositions which have an auxiliary inflection through *ðə* 'to'

- (72) *dro dro:* 'around, about' *dro tho dro: ðə* 'about', etc
ogaz ogəs 'near' *ogaz tha ogəs ðə* 'near to', etc

Other prepositions - termed fractional prepositions - are composed of two elements, e.g., (*war*)*bedn* (*war*)*bedn* 'against', *warler war ler* 'after', *en kever eḡ kevər* 'in respect of', *en crease eḡ kre:z* 'in the middle of', can be personalised by placing a possessive determiner between the two elements

- (73) *üar 'ago phidn war agə fedn* 'against them' (lit. 'on their head')
et i gever et i gevər 'in respect of him' (lit. 'in his respect')

The replacement of the possessive determiners by suffixed personal pronouns (see 2.15) affected fractional constructions as can be seen from the example below

- (74) *warbedden ni war bedn nəj* 'against us' (lit. 'on head us')

A number of prepositions are not inflected, e.g., *tereba t(ə)rebə* 'until', *pocara (pə)kar a* 'like, as'

- (75) *tereba ve tərebə vi* 'until I'
tereba chee tərebə tʃi 'until you (Sg)'
pecarra why pəkar a wəj 'like you (Pl)'

2.18 Interrogatives

Most of the interrogatives include the interrogative particle *pə* 'which'

- (76) *puha piw* 'who'
pandra (pən)drə 'what' (*pan* 'which' + *tra* 'thing')

²⁹ Attested exceptions are : *genz hedna* 'with that', and *gen a holhan* 'with my knife', *geen an jowle* 'by the devil'.

³⁰ This reduction for *nanz* is attested at least as far back as the 16th century, and around 1400 in the place-names *Nancothan* and *Lamorna* (1985 Pool).

<i>panna</i> pan 'which'	(* pə 'which' + an 'the')
<i>peniel</i> pən'əjl 'which one'	(pan 'which' + əjl 'other')
<i>peleah</i> pə'le: 'where'	(* pə 'which' + le: 'place')
<i>fatla</i> fatəl 'how'	
<i>fraga</i> frag 'why'	(* pə 'which' + rag 'because')
<i>pezeal</i> pə'ze:l 'how much/many' (+ Sg)	(* pə 'which' + ze:l 'as much/many')
<i>puna termen</i> pən termən 'when'	(pan 'which' + termən 'time')

Found only in Middle Cornish - though possibly existent in Late Cornish - are *pegemmys* 'as much/many' (+ Pl) and *pvr* 'what time', respectively containing ***pə** 'which' and **kebməs** 'as much', and **e:r** 'hour'.

2.19 Demonstrative pronouns

Below are given the forms of the demonstrative pronouns

fig.13

singular		plural	
hebmə ~ * hebə	'this one' (m.)	remə	'these'
hobmə ~ * hobə	'this one' (f.)		
hednə ~ hedə	'that one' (m.)	renə	'those'
hodnə ~ hodə	'that one' (f.)		

2.20 Indefinite pronouns

The impersonal pronoun was *onen ənən* 'one'

(77) *tha gwelle onen feere* **ðə wi:l ənən fi:r** 'to make one wise'

There are two substitute pronouns the definite *neb neb* 'the one'³¹, and the indefinite *onen ənən* 'one' (which lenites an immediately following adjective if the noun referred to is feminine).

(78) *neb na gare y gy neb na ga:r i gəj* 'whosoever does not love his dog' (lit. 'the one ...')
do neb ra e hanwelle **ðə neb ra i hənwel** 'to whosoever names him' (lit. 'the one ...')
ma leeas wonnen kelles **ma liəs ənən keləs** 'many a one is lost'
gen wonen reeg gweel ke **gen ənən rig gwi:l ke:** 'by one who made a hedge'
try kaldzha üynyn (Lh) **trə kaldzə ənən** 'that one could' (lit. 'that could one')
ow onyn perfect ə **ənən perfəkt** 'my perfect one'

There is a varied assortment of indefinite pronouns, e.g., *nabonnen nəbənən* 'someone, somebody', *wonen veeth ənən ve:θ*³² 'anyone, anybody', *denveeth de:n ve:θ* 'no-one, nobody', *kyniver üonan* (Lh) **kənevər ənən** 'everyone, everybody', *radden radn* 'some'.

As in Middle Cornish the position of the definite article varies in the phrase **an ol** ~ **ol an** 'all'

(79) *gen ol an kolan ve* **gen ol an kələn vi** 'with all my heart'
ul an sompel ol an sompəl 'the whole matter'
an holl fraternity **an ol fraterniti** 'the entire fraternity'

2.21 Numerals

The cardinals are listed below (fig.14)

³¹ The attested examples are better translated as 'whosoever', though 'whosoever' was also expressed as *piita bennak piw bə'nag*.

³² The English words 'anyone, anybody' can exist in positive and negative phrases, and in negative phrases can be used as 'no-one, nobody'. The Cornish *ve:θ* is negative so that *ənən ve:θ* is likely to have originally been limited to negative phrases and have originally meant 'no-one, nobody'. However, it is found meaning 'anyone, anybody', presumably a secondary meaning on the pattern of E. 'anyone, anybody' (see 2.7). Similarly *nagwonnen nagənən* 'no-one, nobody' is likely to be another calque on English which replaced *de:n ve:θ*.

fig.14

<i>onen</i> ənən (<i>idden idn</i>)	1	<i>whettak</i> ɤetək	16
<i>deaw</i> dew f. <i>dew diw</i>	2	<i>zitack</i> zəjtək	17
<i>try</i> trəj f. <i>tayr təjr</i>	3	<i>itack</i> əjtək	18
<i>pager</i> padzər f. <i>pider pedər</i>	4	<i>nownjack</i> nowndzək	19
<i>pemp</i> pemp	5	<i>iggans</i> igəns	20
<i>whea</i> ɤe:	6	<i>deag warn</i> iggans	30
		de:g war n igəns	
<i>zith</i> zəjθ	7	<i>duganz</i> dugəns	40
<i>eath</i> e:θ	8	<i>hanter kanz</i> (Lh) hantər kanz	50
<i>naw</i> naw	9	<i>tri iganz</i> tri igəns	60
<i>deag</i> de:g	10	?	70
<i>ednack</i> ednək	11	<i>pager egance</i> padzər igəns	80
<i>dowthack</i> dowθək	12	<i>padzhar iganz ha dæg</i>	90
		padzər igəns ha de:g	
<i>tarthack</i> tarθək	13	<i>canz</i> kanz	100
<i>puzwarthack</i> padzwarθək	14	<i>meel</i> mi:l	1 000
<i>punthack</i> pənθək	15	?	1 000 000

Cornish numerals display marked vigesimal features, and we find the numbers 10 to 20 repeated in 30-39, 50-59, 70-79, 90-99. The order of the elements varies in phrasal numerals. There are at least two examples of the order found in Breton and literary Welsh

- (80) *deg ha duganz* **de:g ha dugəns** '50'
douthak ha dogans **dowθək ha dugəns** '52'

and three examples of the order also found in spoken Welsh

- (81) *dewghans ha try* **dugəns ha trəj** '43'
try egence a pemp **trəj igəns ha pemp** '65'
padzhar iganz ha dæg **padzər igəns ha de:g** '90'

On comparative grounds the former construction should represent an older way of composing phrasal numerals, whilst the latter should represent a newer construction. However, the evidence of

Late Cornish - all the above examples are culled from mid to late 18th century sources - does not endorse this conclusion.

If a noun is added to a phrasal number it follows the first element

- (82) *whe sithon warn egans* **ɤe: zəjθən war n igəns** '26 weeks'

The usual marker for addition in numbers is *ha ha* 'and', though the numbers 21-39 employ the preposition *war* 'on' with an epenthetic *n*

- (83) *onen warn iggans* **ənən war n igəns** '21'
deaw warn iggans **dew war n igəns** '22'

For '1' the form *ənən* is the independent form, whilst *idn* is used before nouns and causing lenition of feminine nouns

- (84) *ow onyn perfect* **ə ənən perfəkt** 'my perfect one'
ydn marh **idn mar** 'one horse'
ydn dra **idn dra** 'one thing'
idden mees **idn mi:z** 'one month'

Most numerals do not trigger mutations, however, both forms of '2' cause lenition, and are lenited by the definite article

- (85) *an dhêatü* **an ðew** 'the two'

The commonest ordinals are listed below (fig.15)

fig.15

<i>kensa</i> kenzə	1st	<i>yd'n'hakvas</i> (Lh) ednegvās	11th
<i>nessa</i> nesə	2nd	<i>dowthegvas</i> dowðegvās	12th
<i>tridga</i> tridzə	3rd	<i>iganzvath</i> igānzvās	20th
<i>padgurra</i> pədzorə	4th		
<i>pempas</i> pempās	5th		
<i>wheffas</i> wefās	6th		
<i>sithas</i> zəjθās	7th		
<i>eathas</i> eθās	8th		
<i>nawas</i> nawās	9th		
<i>deagvas</i> degvās	10th		

Ordinals are usually preceded by the definite article, though it is unclear if mutation is triggered by the article or the gender of the noun referred to by the ordinal. The lenited forms *dridga* '3rd' and *bodwerha* ~ *bozverah* '4th' given by William Rowe may follow a definite article (in both Breton and Welsh there are examples of lenition of the ordinal following the definite article even when the ordinal refers to a masculine noun).

Ordinals commonly precede nouns

- (86) *an kensa journa* **an kenzə dzurnə** 'the first day'
 [an] *wheha[s] deth* **an wɛfəs de:ð** 'the sixth day'
 [an] *nisau blethan* **an nesə bleðan** 'next year'

2.22 Verb morphology

The regular verbs of Late Cornish have a very reduced conjugation, only a restricted number of auxiliary verbs having full conjugations. The auxiliary verbs are : **bo:z** 'being', **gwi:l** 'doing, making', **goðās** 'knowing', **mednə** 'willing', **gallās** 'being able'.

Nearly all verbs are composed of a base which can be marked for tense, mood, person, number, and - in two specific cases - for gender (3Sg) and formality. As in spoken Welsh the conjugation of the verb in Late Cornish had become more analytic since suffixed personal pronouns were added to the original suffixes.

2.23 Persons

The persons of the verbs generally correspond to those of the personal pronouns (see 2.14), and the prepositions (see 2.17).

When the subject is otherwise expressed within a phrase it is the 3Sg of the verb that is used, and not the corresponding personal form, e.g., *nag ewe an poble vaze* **nag ew an bobl va:z** 'the people are not good'. This is shown more clearly in attested examples from the preterite tense of *gweel* **gwi:l** 'doing'

- (87) *me rig* **mi rig** 'I did'
e reeg **e rig** 'he did'
an dzhei ryg **an'dzəj rig** 'they did'

Thus the 3Sg is also the non-personal function of the verb, in that it functions as the form of the verb used when the person is already referred to by other means. This use of the 3Sg form of the verb for the non-personal function of the verb is general.

2.24 Tenses and moods

There are six tenses/moods in Late Cornish, viz. present, present subjunctive, past, preterite, future, conditional (+ past habitual).

It would seem that - as in French and Welsh - there was no distinct difference between habitual and punctual or non-habitual in Late Cornish - though originally the true present and true past existed only with the verb **bo:z**, whilst the other verbs originally only had the present habitual (which also served as future) and the past habitual (which also served as conditional). Thus, in Late Cornish - except for the verbs **gallās** 'being able', and **goðās** 'knowing' - the present habitual forms of **gwi:l** 'doing, making' and **mednə** 'willing, insisting' are mostly found with a future meaning, and the past habitual forms are mostly found with a conditional meaning. That the original punctual present and past conjugations of **bo:z** came to convey the habitual present and past in Late Cornish can be shown by the following sentences which contain verbs of continuous actions that would demand an habitual tense of the verb

- (88) *therama suppoga* **θ erəmə səpɔzə** 'I suppose' (lit. 'I am supposing')
thera ve crege **θ erə vi kredzi** 'I believe' (lit. 'I am believing')
thera vee a menia **θ erə vi ə menjə** 'I mean' (lit. 'I am meaning')
thera ni a güelez **θ erə nəj ə kweləs** 'we see' (lit. 'we are seeing')

therama pedeere θ *erāmā prādiri* 'I think' (lit. 'I am thinking')

other verbs which can also be continuous show a lack of distinction between punctual and habitual

(89) *theram cara whye e'n colan* θ *erāmā karā wāj e n kələn* 'I love you (Pl) in the heart'
(lit. 'I am loving you (Pl) ...')

ma an mableean ni e gana ma [g]ən *mab'le:n nāj i ganā* 'our clerk sings it' (lit. 'is our clerk its singing')

2.25 Verbs

The conjugation of the auxiliary verbs in Late Cornish is complicated by variation caused by competition between analytic and synthetic or compound forms. For whilst the conjugation of verbs in Late Cornish - through the use of personal pronouns - is broadly analytic, in the 1st, 2nd, 3Sg masculine, there also exist variant forms of the verb which we can term synthetic.

fig. 16

	analytic	synthetic	
1Sg (Locat)	erā vi	erāmā	'I am'
3Sg (Locat)	ma e	mavā	'he is'
1Sg (Desc)	o vi	omā	'I am'
2Sg (Desc)	o tʃi	ostā	'you (Sg) are'
3Sgm. (Desc)	ew e	ewā	'he is'
3Sg (Desc)	o: e	ovā	'he was'
1Sg (Cond)	mendzā vi	mendzāmā	'I would'
3Sg (Cond)	galdzā e	galdzāvā	'he could'

The variation between analytic and synthetic forms of the verb is already found in Middle Cornish (1947 Lewis), and though both forms - a conditional form of *menna mednā* 'willing, insisting' - are found in the same phrase the fact that it is in one of Edward Lhuyd's compositions makes it suspect as far as native usage is concerned

(90) *mendzha vi po ny vendzham* (Lh) **mendzā vi pā ni vendzāmā** 'whether I would wish (to) or not (lit. '... or I would not wish')

in the 3Pl there also exists a synthetic variant

fig. 17

	analytic	synthetic	
3Pl Pres (Locat)	man'dzāj	monz	'they are'
3Pl Pres (Desc)	en'dzāj	enz	'they are'
3Pl Pres (Subj)	bon'dzāj	bonz	'they are'
3Pl Fut + Pres	gran'dzāj	granz	'they do'
3Pl Pret	grigən'dzāj	grigən(s)	'they did'

The 3Pl in **-ns** without dependant pronoun generally seems to be an older usage (though more commonly found in the present tense of **bo:z**). There is also evidence for the survival into the 17th century of synthetic form of the 2Sg in the present tense **o:z** (Desc) (**bo:z** 'being'), and in the 1Pl in the present tense **gelən** (**galās** 'being able'), **gorən** (**goðās** 'knowing'). Below are some examples of these synthetic forms

(91) *neg ooz an behathna nag o:z an bihatnā* 'you (Sg) are not the smallest'
douste oze dust o:z 'you (Sg) are dust'³³
th'ens en kinever tol θ enz en kanevār tol 'they are in every hole'
nag enz buz nebbas nag enz bāz nebās 'they are but few'
na oren pendra tho weel na orən pəndrā ðā wi:l 'we do not know what to make'

The synthetic form of the 2Pl seems only to have survived into the 17th century in the case of the present tense and imperative mood of **gwi:l** (identical forms)

(92) *na re'au gauas na reo gowās* 'you (Pl) will not have'
na reo gara na reo garā 'do not - you (Pl) - leave'

The reason the synthetic form of the 2Pl survives in this verb and in no other is probably because it could not easily be neutralised as the other conjugated forms of the present tense of **gwi:l** were all monosyllabic.

³³ I assume the first < e > of the manuscript form *eze* is a misreading of < o >, a common enough mistake when transcribing 17th century English script.

In the following conjugation tables when paired forms occur I have placed analytic forms before the compounded and synthetic forms. The scarcity of conjugated forms can be explained by the common use of the SVO (subject-object-verb) construction in Late Cornish (see 3.2) which means that the commonest conjugated form of any verb is the 3Sg.

The main irregular verb is **bo:z** 'being' (fig.19), whose multiplicity of forms is rather complex and needs to be clarified.

All present and past forms of the verb **bo:z** are modified according to whether they are positive statements (initial or non-initial), positive questions, or negative statements/questions.

fig.18

initial positive statement	θ erə vi / θ o vi	'I am'
dependent positive statement	*... erə vi / ... o vi	'... I am'
positive question	*erə vi ? / *o vi ?	'am I?'
negative statement	*nag erə vi / nag o vi	'I am not'
negative question	*nag erə vi ? / *nag o vi ?	'am I not?'

From the above we can see that a verb in initial position in a positive statement is preceded by the preverbal particle *eth* $\text{ə}\theta^{34}$, usually reduced to θ in Late Cornish, in a dependent positive statement by a clause, and in negative statements/questions by the negative particle *nag* **nag**. With positive questions the verb only seems to be initial because an original interrogative particle *a* **a** which preceded the verb was generally elided in Late Cornish.

In the present and past tenses a distinction is made between locative and descriptive forms.

(93) **erə vi ~ erəmā** v. **o vi ~ omā** 'I am'

The locative forms are employed when giving a location

(94) *thera vi ybma* (Lh) **θ erə vi: əbmā** 'I am here'
era why tshyi ? erə wəj tʃəj ? 'are you inside?'

³⁴ Exceptionally, not in the 3rd persons of the present locative of **bo:z** (see fig.19).

fig.19

	bo:z	
	present locative	
1st	erə vi ~ erəmā	*erə nəj
2nd	*erə tʃi ~ estā	erə wəj
	<i>initial</i>	
3rd (m.)	ma e ~ mavā	man'dʒəj ~ monz
(f.)	*ma həj	
	<i>non-initial</i>	
3rd (m.)	idʒə e ~ idʒevā	idʒən'dʒəj ~ idʒəns
(f.)	*idʒə həj	
	present descriptive	
1st	o vi ~ omā	o nəj
2nd	o tʃi ~ ostā	o wəj
3rd (m.)	ew e ~ ewā	en'dʒəj ~ enz
(f.)	*ew həj	
Indef	e:z	
	past locative	
1st	erə vi ~ *erəmā	*erə nəj
2nd	*erə tʃi ~ estā	*erə wəj
3rd (m.)	erə e ~ *erāvā	erən'dʒəj ~ *erəns
(f.)	*erə həj	
	past descriptive	
1st	*o: vi ~ omā	*o: nəj
2nd	*o: tʃi ~ *ostā	*o: wəj
3rd (m.)	o: e ~ ovā	on'dʒəj ~ *enz
(f.)	*o: həj	

and with verb-nouns

(95) *thera vi laol* (Lh) **θ erə vi lawl** 'I am saying'

ma setha ma seðə 'he is sitting'
ma'n kuliak a prania ma n kəlɟək ə pranjə 'the cock is crowing'
emā a kıl err (Lh) ma ə ki:l er 'it is snowing' (lit. 'it is doing snow')

The 3Sg forms **ma** / **idzə** are used with the persons of the prepositions **ðə** 'to' or **genz/gen** 'with' in order to denote possession (cf. 104)

- (96) *ma owne du vee ma own ðə vi* 'I am afraid' (lit. 'is fright to me')
ma tha ni materne da ma ðə nəj mə'tern da: 'we have a good king' (lit. 'is to us king
 good')
idzha'n léaiuh dhv'n dèn yjnk-na ? idzə n lew ðə n de:n jɔŋk na ? 'does the calf belong
 to that young man ?' (lit. 'is the calf to the man young that ?')
ma'n viuh gen leauh ma n viw gen lew 'the cow is with calf' (lit. 'is the cow ...')

On the other hand, the descriptive forms are employed with adjectives

- (97) *tho ve an Arleth θ o vi an arləð* 'I am the Lord'
gwag o ve gwa:g o vi 'I am hungry'

or with a definite complement

- (98) *an arleth ewe Deawe an arləð ew diw* 'the lord is God'

as well as being used with the past participle of verbs

- (99) *tho chee molithees θ o tʃi məliθəs* 'you (Sg) are cursed'
benegaz eu de hanou bānegəs ew də hano 'blessed is your (Sg) name'
tho ni devethez θ o nəj dəveðəs 'we have come'

The distinction between the locative and the descriptive forms is best demonstrated by the simple questions *peleah ma e ? pə'le: ma e ?* 'where is he?', and *piūa yū ... ? piw ew ... ?* 'who is ... ?'.

An additional function of the 3Sg descriptive **ew** is to convey the relative relationship in the present tense (this particular usage of **ew** being different from Breton and Welsh which have special relative forms, B. *zo*, W. *sydd*).

- (100) *ev eü dèn dā (Lh) ev ew de:n dā:* 'he is a good man'

E grensa ewe ... seere i gārenzə ew zi:r 'His love is sure'
an tacklow ewe per trink an taklo ew per trenk 'the things are very sour'
hanter blethan ew whe sithon warn egans hantər bleðən ew wē: zəjθən war n igəns
 'half a year is 26 weeks'

The present tense of **bo:z** is further complicated by the additional form **e:z**. One function of **e:z** is as a relative form

- (101) *gen Tas es en nefē gən ta:z e:z en ne:v* 'our Father who is in heaven'
kenefra geer eze toaze meaze kənevər ge:r e:z to:z me:z 'every word that comes out'

The other function of **e:z** is to be employed with indefinite complements (as opposed to the definite forms **ma** and **e**)

- (102) *ez kēz ? e:z ke:z ?* 'is there cheese ?'
nag es moye vel ... nag e:z muj vel ... 'there are no more than ...'

The remaining tenses of **bo:z** are given below (figs.20-21)

fig.20

	future ³⁵	
	singular	plural
1st	*beðə vi ~ beðəmə	*beðə nəj
2nd	*beðə tʃi ~ *bestə	*beðə wəj
3rd (m.)	be:ð e ~ *beðə	*beðən'dzəj ~ *beðəns
(f.)	*be:ð həj	

³⁵ There are no attestations in Late Cornish of the future tense of **bo:z** having a present meaning, this is probably because the difference between habitual and non-habitual had ceased in Late Cornish and unlike other verbs whose conjugation shared a future meaning with the present habitual, **bo:z** had an alternative present tense.

fig.21

	preterite ³⁶	
	singular	plural
1st	*bi vi ~ *bimə	*bi nəj
2nd	bi tʃi ~ *bistə	*bi ʋəj
3rd (m.)	bi e ~ bivə	*bin'dʒəj ~ *bonz
(f.)	*bi həj	

The conditional tense of **bə:z** is only known through the 3Sg **biə** (the conditional tense is also the past habitual tense).

(103) *e veea gwel e: viə gwel* 'it would be better'

An idiomatic construction of possession based on the 3Sg of **bə:z** means 'having' rather than 'being'³⁷ (cf. 96)

(104) *mee a vee owne mi a vi: own* 'I was frightened' (lit. 'I had fright')

ni veea preeze da rag an hearn nəj viə pri:z da: rag an hern 'we would get a good price
for the pilchards'
termen arall why veth moye termən arəl ʋəj ve:ð muj 'another time you (Pl) will have
more'

The conjugated forms of **gwi:l** 'doing, making' (fig.22) are used exclusively as auxiliary verbs to other verb-nouns

(105) *te ra guile whele tʃi ra gwi:l ʋe:l* 'you (Sg) will do work'

an Arlith reig guil an arləð rig gwi:l 'the Lord made'

³⁶ It is quite likely that in Late Cornish the forms of the past subjunctive merged with those of the preterite, the form **bin'dʒəj** of the past subjunctive is noted in the phrase *mar pee angy mouy fortidniez mar pi ən'dʒəj muj fortidnəj* 'if they had been more fortunate'.

³⁷ This conjugation - though to all appearances simply lenited forms of the conjugation of **bə:z** - can be treated as the irregular conjugation of the verb **kowəs ~ gowəs** 'having, getting'. The verb-noun **kowəs ~ gowəs** appears to have derived from the verb-noun **kavəs** 'finding', whose regular conjugation is on the base **kav-**, e.g., *kevez buz mennau kevəs bəz meno* 'rarely found' (lit. 'found but often').

fig.22

	future + present	
	singular	plural
1st	gra vi ~ gramə	*gra nəj
2nd	gra tʃi ~ *grastə	gra ʋəj ~ greo
3rd (m.)	gra e ~ *gravə	gran'dʒəj ~ granz
(f.)	gra həj	
	preterite	
	singular	plural
1st	grigə vi ~ *grigəmə	*grigə nəj
2nd	*grigə tʃi ~ gristə	grigə ʋəj
3rd (m.)	grig e ~ *grigəvə / gra:z	grigən'dʒəj ~ grigən(s)
(f.)	*grig həj	
	conditional + past habitual	
	singular	plural
1st	*gresə vi ~ *gresəmə	*gresə nəj
2nd	*gresə tʃi ~ grestə	*gresə ʋəj
3rd (m.)	gresə e ~ *gresəvə	gresən'dʒəj ~ gresəns
(f.)	*gresə həj	

The 3Sg preterite is divided between the form **grig** and a variant form *gwraze* **gra:z**, composed of the base **gra-** and **-əs** the preterite's regular 3Sg suffix. These forms appear to have had different semantic applications **grig** meaning 'did' and **gra:z** meaning 'made'.

The conjugated forms of the verb **menna mednə** (fig.23) was mostly used as an auxiliary verb to other verb-nouns. Its original meaning 'willing, insisting' was still sometimes found in Late Cornish

(106) *e vendzha mēs dre e: vendʒə mo:z dre:* 'he insisted on going home'

*an vartshants a vendzha arta dhv Dzhuan mē: drē barh an dzhei an vartʃants a vendʒə
artə ðə dʒuən mo:z dre: barən'dʒəj* 'the merchants insisted again that Jowan go
home together with them'

fig.23

	future + present	
	singular	plural
1st	*medn vi ~ mednəmə	*medn nəj
2nd	*medn tʃi ~ mentə	mednə ʋəj
3rd (m.)	medn e ~ mednəvə	*mednən'dʒəj ~ mednəns
(f.)	*medn həj	
	conditional + past habitual	
	singular	plural
1st	mendʒə vi ~ mendʒəmə	*mendʒə nəj
2nd	*mendʒə tʃi ~ *mendʒəstə	*mendʒə ʋəj
3rd (m.)	mendʒə e ~ *mendʒəvə	*mendʒən'dʒəj ~ *mendʒəns
(f.)	mendʒə həj	

The conjugated forms of the auxiliary verb *gallus galəs* 'being able' are given below (figs.24-25)

fig.24

	present ³⁸	
	singular	plural
1st	gelə vi ~ geləmə	*gelə nəj
2nd	*gelə tʃi ~ geləstə	gelə ʋəj
3rd (m.)	gel e ~ *geləvə	*gelən'dʒəj ~ geləns
(f.)	*gel həj	

³⁸ Presumably this can also have a future meaning, though the only attested examples of Late Cornish have a present meaning.

The subjunctive form of the present tense of *galəs* is different from the forms of the present only in the retention of an unaffected vowel, e.g., *mala ve moaz m alə vi mo:z* 'so that I may go'; *mal nagwonnen moaz m al nag'ənən mo:z* 'so that no-one may go'.

fig.25

	conditional + past habitual	
	singular	plural
1st	galdʒə vi ~ galdʒəmə	*galdʒə nəj
2nd	*galdʒə tʃi ~ *galdʒəstə	*galdʒə ʋəj
3rd (m.)	galdʒə e ~ galdʒəvə	*galdʒən'dʒəj ~ galdʒən(s)
(f.)	*galdʒə həj	

In Late Cornish the auxiliary verb *gothaz goðəs* 'knowing' was remodelled on the 3Sg *go:r*

fig.26

	present	
	singular	plural
1st	gorə vi ~ gorəmə	*gorə nəj
2nd	?	*gorə ʋəj
3rd (m.)	go:r e ~ *gorəvə	*gorən'dʒəj
(f.)	*go:r həj	

The past tense of *goðəs* is only known through the 3Sg *oya uja*.

Subjunctive forms of the verb are not regularly found in Late Cornish, only in the verbs *bo:z* 'being', *gwi:l* 'doing, making', and *do:z* 'coming'.

fig.27

	bo:z		gwi:l	
	present subjunctive		present subjunctive	
	singular	plural	singular	plural
1st	*bo vi ~ *bomə	*bo nəj	*grefə vi ~ *grefəmə	*grefə nəj
2nd	*bo tʃi ~ bostə	*bo ʋəj	*grefə tʃi ~ *grefəstə	grefə ʋəj
3rd (m.)	bo e ~ bovə	bon'dʒəj ~ bonz	grefə e ~ *grefəvə	*grefən'dʒəj ~ *grefəns
(f.)	*bo həj		*grefə həj	

Even with the verbs **bo:z**, **gwi:l**, and **do:z** the present subjunctive is restricted to following conjunctions such as *pa pə* 'when' (compressed as **po**), *lebma lebmə* 'where'

- (107) *po chee ha tha wreag p o tʃi ha ðə wre:g* 'when you (Sg) and your (Sg) wife are' (lit. 'when are...')

po marh ledres p o mar ledrəs 'when a horse is stolen' (lit. 'when is ...')

en chei lebma vo dean koath en tʃəj lebmə vo de:n ko:θ 'in a house where there is an old man'

pa reffo why doaz pə refə wəj do:z 'when you (Pl) come' (lit. 'when do you (Pl) come')

pe teffa have pə tefə ha:v 'when summer comes' (lit. 'when comes summer')

However, there are signs that the subjunctive form was becoming obsolete in Late Cornish, even following *pa pə*

- (108) *parewe why e gavaz pə reo wəj i gavəs* 'when you (Pl) will find him' (lit. '... do you (Pl) his finding')

Otherwise, the present subjunctive of **gwi:l** is found preserved fossilised in phrases with an optative meaning

- (109) *Dewe reffa gun sowia ul diw refə gən sowjə ol* 'may God save us all'
Dewe reffa e sowia diw refə i sowjə 'may God save him'

Apart from the verb-noun (see 2.30) and past participle (see 2.29) the regular verbs of Late Cornish only have conjugated forms in three tenses/moods - viz. imperative (2Sg/Pl), future/present (3Sg), preterite (3Sg).

In the imperative mood the commonest forms are the 2nd persons, the 2Sg being identical to the verb base, and the 2Pl being marked by **-o**.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| (110) <i>cowz kowz</i> 'talk you (Sg)' | Vn <i>cowz kowz</i> 'talking' |
| <i>debar debər</i> 'eat you (Sg)' | Vn <i>debre debri</i> 'eating' |
| <i>kebmer kebmər</i> 'take you (Sg)' | Vn <i>komas kəmerəs</i> 'taking' |
| <i>comero kəmero</i> 'take you (Pl)' | Vn <i>komas kəmerəs</i> 'taking' |
| <i>evo evo</i> 'drink you (Pl)' | Vn <i>eva evə</i> 'drinking' |
| <i>goribow gorebo</i> 'answer you (Pl)' | Vn <i>gorriby goribi</i> 'answering' |

In the 2Pl note the affection in the base of < a > to < e >

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| (111) <i>keno keno</i> 'sing you (Pl)' | Vn <i>cana kanə</i> 'singing' |
| <i>gero gero</i> 'leave you (Pl)' | Vn <i>gara garə</i> 'leaving' |
| <i>greo greo</i> 'do you (Pl)' | Vn <i>gweel gwi:l</i> 'doing, making' |

there are a few irregular forms of the imperative such as

fig.28

verb-noun	2Sg		2Pl
bo:z 'being'	<i>bethes beðəs</i>	'be'	<i>betho beðo</i> 'be'
do:z 'coming'	<i>deas de:z</i>	'come'	<i>decow deo</i> 'come'
mo:z 'going'	<i>ke ke:</i>	'go'	?
gwi:l 'doing'	<i>gra gra: ~ graze gra:z</i>	'do'	<i>greo greo</i> 'do'
garə 'leaving'	<i>gāz (Lh) ga:z</i>	'leave'	<i>gero gero</i> 'leave'
drəj 'bringing'	<i>dro dro:</i>	'bring'	?
rəj 'giving'	<i>ro ro:</i>	'give'	?

The variant 2Sg form **gra:z**, found mostly in negative statements, is reminiscent of the Breton imperative suffix **-ḃs** (restricted in Breton to the negative form of the 2Sg, e.g., **deb !** 'eat !', but **zebḃs ke !** 'eat not !')

- (112) *te na ras latha denueth tʃi na ra:z laðə de:n ve:θ* 'do you (Sg) not kill anybody'
che na raze debre nothe tʃi na ra:z debri nəðə 'do you (Sg) not eat another'
na raze gen leua na ra:z gən lewə 'do you (Sg) not lead us'
na raze geil na ra:z gwi:l 'do you (Sg) not'

The use of **gra:z** in a positive statement is attested in one instance, e.g. *güraz kóna abarhan nei gra:z konə abarə nəj* 'do you (Sg) sup together-with us', perhaps this demonstrates the spread of this form at the expense of **gra:**.

The concept 'must' is conveyed by *reze re:z* followed by the 3Sg of the verb **bo:z** and the preposition **ðə** 'to'

2.28 Answering

Like other Neo-Celtic languages Cornish originally had no single way to express 'yes' and 'no'. There is not much material that indicates the method of answering. R. Gendall (1991a) is of the opinion that Late Cornish had substituted *eea iə* 'yes' and *na na* 'no' for the Middle Cornish practice of repeating the verb (preceded by the negative particle *na/nag* in the negative). The terms *iə* and *na* do not seem to be loans from English and are likely to have had a more restricted or specific role in Middle Cornish.

It is possible that the verb could still be employed in Late Cornish to indicate emphatic agreement if the following sentence and response - and our interpretation of it - is to be relied upon

(120) *S: me a venja moaz tre mor menta mi a vendzə mo:z tre: mar mentə* 'I would go home if you (Sg) would'

R: menjam mendzəmə 'I would'

2.29 Past participle

The past participle is uniformly realised *-əs*³⁹ with an affected verb base. Below are some examples of the past participle (in some cases the verb base has been given, as the verb-noun itself has an affected base)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| (121) <i>kelles keləs</i> 'lost' | Vn <i>kelly keli (kol-)</i> |
| <i>lethez leðəs</i> 'killed' | Vn <i>ladha (Lh) laðə</i> |
| <i>kevez kevəs</i> 'found' | Vn <i>cavaz kavəs</i> |
| <i>gennez genəs</i> 'born' | verb base <i>gan-</i> |
| <i>gueskez gweskəs</i> 'struck' | Vn <i>güeskal (Lh) gweskəl (gwask-)</i> |
| <i>pebez pebəs</i> 'baked' | Vn <i>pobaz pobəs</i> |
| <i>neceaves nəkevəs</i> 'forgotten' | Vn <i>nakevy nəkevi (nəkov-)</i> |

some verb bases are not affected (or at least not visibly so)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| (122) <i>garres garəs</i> 'left' | Vn <i>gara garə</i> |
| <i>salles zaləs</i> 'salted' | Vn <i>zalla zalə</i> |
| <i>towles towləs</i> 'thrown' | Vn <i>towlah towlə</i> |

³⁹ It is feasible that vowel neutralisation was resisted and the past participle was realised *-is*. This would have helped differentiate it from the 3Sg preterite suffix *-əs* and the verb-noun suffix *-əs*, as well as the denasalised variant *-əs* of the nominalising suffix *-əns* (see 52).

kemeryz (Lh) kəmerəs 'taken'

Vn *komas kəmerəs*

there are a few irregular forms of the past participle such as

fig.30

verb-noun	past participle	
do:z 'coming'	<i>devethez dəveðəs</i>	'came, has come'
mo:z 'going'	<i>gellez geləs</i>	'went, has gone'
gwi:l 'doing'	<i>gwreaze gre:z</i>	'did, has done'

One of the commonest functions of the past participle of verbs is to convey the perfect tense along with the 3Sg of the preterite tense of *bo:z* 'being' as an auxiliary verb

- (123) *ha'n manah a vi kemeryz (Lh) ha n manə a vi: kəmerəs* 'and the monk was taken'
me a humnen ve gennez ... en Collan me ə hənən vi: genəs ... en kolən 'I myself was born in Collan'

2.30 Verb-nouns

The verb-noun is the most used form of the verb. In Cornish the verb-noun is most commonly composed of a verb base with one of many verb-noun suffixes (the exceptions being a number of verb-nouns composed of verb base with no suffix, e.g., *adzhan (Lh) adzən* 'knowing, recognising', *danen danən* 'sending', *gwary gwari* 'playing', *cuntell kəntəl* 'gathering').

The commonest verb-noun suffix in Cornish is *-a(h) -ə* and its variant *-ya(h)*, *-ia -jə*, followed by *-i*, *-y*, *-e -i*, the suffixes *-az*, *-as*, *-ez*, *-es -əs*, and *-a(l)*, *-ol(l) -əl* being markedly less common. There are a number of verb-noun suffixes specific to one verb, e.g., *hüerhin (Lh) wəran* 'laughing', *bridzhan (Lh) bridzən* 'boiling'.

There is evidence that the neutralisation of final vowels to *ə* also occurred in verb-nouns (see 1.4), this weakening makes it easier to explain variation in verb-noun suffix

- | | | |
|---|----|---------------------|
| (124) LC. <i>clunka kləŋkə</i> 'drinking' | v. | MC. <i>collenky</i> |
| LC. <i>arha arə</i> 'commanding' | v. | MC. <i>erghy</i> |

LC. *pobaz pobās* ~ *peba pebā* 'baking'⁴⁰

LC. *debarra dibarā* ~ *deberrhee diberi* 'separating'

To form a verb-noun from an adjective the verb-noun suffix *-he* **-he** is employed, e.g., *lowanhe luān'he* 'gladdening' (*luān* 'joyful').

2.31 Adverbs

For reasons of space only a very few of the large number of non-inflected adverbs will be dealt in this section.

Adjectives are commonly used as adverbs

(125) *deskez da deskās da* 'well educated'

In Middle Cornish the adverbial particle *en* **en** preceded adjectives to make an adverb (conveyed by '-ly' in English), but it was commonly elided in Late Cornish (see 20-21).

The adverb *por* **pər** means 'very' (lit. 'pure')

(126) *por tha pər ða* 'very good'

The adverbs *meaz* **mē:r** and *leeaz* **liās** go with nouns, the former meaning means 'much, many' the latter meaning 'many a'

(127) *mere hurleye* (sic) **mē:r hɛrlɛrs** 'many hurlers'

liāz termen liās termən 'many a time'

leeaz greage liās gre:g 'many a wife'

The adverb with the comparative form of adjectives is *pulta* **pəltə**

(128) *polta gwel pəltə gwel* 'much better'

⁴⁰ The form *peba* supposes affection of the verb base **pob-** which can only have been triggered by the verb-noun suffix **-i** which in this case had been neutralised to **ə** and written as < a >. Late Cornish forms such as *dimedha* 'marrying', *deska* 'teaching', *pidzha* 'praying', *teva* 'growing' (cf. MC. *demedhy*, *desky*, *pysy*, *tevy*) may have a neutralised **-i** rather than an original verb-noun suffix < -a >, cf. *krêg*, *prêv* (see 6).

The ante-positioned *luck* **lək** and *lowar* **lowər** mean 'enough, plenty'

(129) *leath luck le:θ lək* 'plenty of milk'

pÿsgoz lyk (Lh) **pəskəs lək** 'plenty of fish'

seere louare zi:r lowər 'sure enough'

The adverb meaning 'few' is *nebbaz* **nebās**

(130) *nebbaz gerriau nebās gerjo* 'a few words'

Note *pəl* 'far' is commonly applied to time

(131) *po leea ve chee mar bel ? pə:le: vi tʃi mar bel ?* 'where were you (Sg) so long ?'

2.32 Locational adverbs

These are three degrees of locational adverbs : *obma* ~ *obba* **əbmə** ~ **əbə** 'here', *enna* **enə** 'there', *hans* **honz** 'yonder'. A fourth degree of location found in MC. *eno* 'yonder (out of sight)' would have in Late Cornish been indistinguishable in realisation from **enə** 'there'. A directional form **ði** is attested in *ny won [an] for thy ni on an vor ði* 'I do not know the way yonder' (1611 Jordan), but it is unclear whether this form reflects Middle Cornish or Late Cornish usage⁴¹. Another set of locational adverbs is comprised of the directional **(a')lebma** ~ **(a')lebə** 'from here, hence' and **(a')lenə** 'from there, thence'.

2.33 Emphasis

There is uncertainty as to how exactly emphasis was conveyed in Late Cornish, R.Gendall (1991a) concludes that any feature could be given prominence by initiating a sentence or clause, cf. emphatic *meea na vidna cowz a Sawzneck mi na vedn kowzə zowznək* 'I will not speak English' as opposed to *na vadna vi na vednə vi* or *na vadam na vednəmə* 'I will not'.

The subject-fronted construction is also considered by him to be more emphatic than the verb-fronted construction (see 3.2).

⁴¹ Cornish dictionaries give the meaning of this word as 'thither, there', but its Breton cognate *di* is a special directional form of B. *eno* 'yonder (out of sight)' rather than B. *aze* 'there'.

3. Syntax

3.1 Component order

The noun precedes the adjective in Cornish

(132) *gwethan heer gweðan hi:r* 'tall tree' (lit. 'long tree')

This is a feature common to all Neo-Celtic languages which appears to have developed at the expense of a contrary order that obtained in Ancient Celtic and Indo-European. The old component order is retained with the numerals, ordinals, and superlative inflection of adjectives, as well as being fossilised in a number of compound terms (such constructions being no longer productive in spoken Late Cornish)

(133) *tn. Bolingey bəlindzi* 'mill-house' (*belin belin* 'mill' + *chy tʃəj* 'house')
grigear grigjər 'partridge' (*grig gri:g* 'heather' + *yar ja:r* 'hen')

3.2 Sentence

Neo-Celtic languages are often characterised as being VSO (verb + subject + object) languages, and while this component order is evidenced in Cornish in the present and past conjugations of *bo:z*, the commonest component order is SVO (subject + verb + object).

In positive statements the present and past conjugations of *bo:z* mostly use a verb-fronted construction, except for the 3Sg descriptive forms *ew* 'is' and *o*: 'was' when used in a relative function

(134) *ev eü dèn dā ev ew de:n dā*: 'he is a good man'
dèn kóth o é de:n ko:θ o: e: 'he was an old man'

All other conjugations of Late Cornish (including the regular verbs and the remaining conjugations of *bo:z*) use a subject-fronted construction in positive statements

(135) *ti a vědh tʃi a ve:ð* 'you will be'
ni veea plaises nāj viə plezəs 'we would be pleased'
angye ve gwarnez ən'dzəj vi: gwarnəs 'they were warned'
me ra bose mi ra bo:z 'I will be'
Deewe reeg lawle diw rig lawl 'God said' (lit. '... did say')

Dewe reffa sowia diw refə sowjə 'may God save'
me a vedn moaz mi a vedn mo:z 'I will go'
ni venja pea nāj vendzə peə 'we would pay'
gy el e glowas ən'dzəj el i glowəs 'they can hear him'
an Sousen ... olga gawaz an zowzən aldzə gawəs 'the English could have had'
Deew a ore diw a o:r 'God knows'
me a lavar theze mi a lavər ðiz 'I will tell you (Sg)'
e vaster thesquethaz i vestər ðəskweðəs 'his master showed'

The component order reverts to VSO (verb + subject + order) if the sentence is a question or negative (see 2.26, 2.27).

3.3 Periphrastic constructions

Periphrastic constructions involve the conjugated form of an auxiliary verb preceding a verb-noun. To convey the present and past tenses it is the verb *bo:z* 'being' that acts as the auxiliary verb, to convey the preterite tense the verb *gwi:l* 'doing' acts as the auxiliary verb, and to convey the future and the conditional tenses either *gwi:l* 'doing' or *mednə* 'willing, insisting' act as auxiliary verbs. The difference between *gwi:l* and *mednə* as auxiliary verbs to convey the future and conditional tenses seem to reflect the influence of English 'shall' and 'will', and 'should' and 'would'. With numerous exceptions R.Gendall (1991a) seems to translate *gra* as 'shall', *gresə* as 'should', *medn* as 'will', and *mendzə* as 'would'.

(136) *ra ve moas ? ra vi mo:z ?* 'shall I go ?'
te ra guile tʃi ra gwi:l 'you (Sg) shall do'
mee a ved'n moze mi a vedn mo:z 'I will go'
me vedn gweel mi vedn gwi:l 'I will do'

The verb-noun is commonly used with *bo:z* 'being' as auxiliary verb with the verb-noun particle *a ə* (often elided) which triggers provection

(137) *'mā 'n dzhyi a rostia ha prýdzhan* (Lh) *man'dzəj ə rostjə*
ha prədzən 'they are roasting and boiling' Vn *bridzhan brədzən*
ma gi karebma dha ui man'dzəj korebmən ðə wəj 'they
are greeting you (Pl)' Vn *garebma gorebmən*
theram ry do why θ erəmə rəj ðə wəj 'I am giving you (Pl)' Vn *ry rəj*

however the verb-noun follows directly other auxiliary verbs such as **gwi:l** 'doing', **mednə** 'willing', **galəs** 'able'

- (138) *mor krown gi perdiri mar kran'dʒəj prədiri* 'if they think'
e rig doaz e: rig do:z 'he came'
e vedn ri e: vedn rəj 'it will give'
me a venja moaz tre mi a vendʒə mo:z tre: 'I would like to go home'
ni a ell debre nəj a el debri 'we can eat'

3.4 Auxiliaries

To convey 'should, ought' the 3Sg of the verb **kōðə** 'falling' is used: *coth kō:ð* (present), *cuffia kəfiə* (conditional)

- (139) *me a goth ... gorthya Dew mi a go:ð gorjə diw* 'I should worship God'
... lebma gothfia an dzhei ostia lebmə gəfiə ən'dʒəj ostjə 'where they should stay'

the 3Sg of the verb **talves talvəs ~ talvega talvedʒə** 'being worth' is also used: *tale ta:l* (present), *talveha talviə* (conditional)

- (140) *me dāl güellaz an òst an tshei mi da:l gweləs an o:st an tʃəj* 'I ought to see the landlord'
na dale deez perna kinnis na da:l ði:z pernə kenez 'you (Sg) should not buy fuel'
why dalveha gowas an brossa mine wəj dalviə gowəs an brosə məjn 'you (Pl) should get the largest stones'

The old meaning of **talvəs** was still found in Late Cornish

- (141) *môr-teed a metten travyth ne dāl mo:r ti:d an metən tra ve:θ na da:l* 'morning tide is worth nothing'

To convey 'can, being able' the verb **galəs** 'can' is used

- (142) *gy el e glowas ən'dʒəj el i glowəs* 'they can hear him' (lit. '... his hearing')
elo why clapij Kernuack? elə wəj klapjə kərnuək? 'can you (Pl) speak Cornish?'
na algama e clappia na aldʒəmə i glapjə 'I could not speak it'

Edward Lhuyd gives examples of **goðəs** 'knowing' as an auxiliary verb meaning 'being able'

- (143) *mî ôr môs mi o:r mo:z* 'I can go'
ev ôr kleüaz e:v o:r klowəs 'he can hear'

To convey unwillingness one uses *refusia rəfiwʒə ðə* 'refusing to'

- (144) *ny rug eff refusia the verwell na rig e:v rəfiwʒə ðə verwəl* 'he did not refuse to die'

3.5 Subordinate clauses

The conjunctions *hal/hag ha/hag*⁴² 'and', and *buz bəz* 'but' initiate clauses with a subject-fronted construction

- (145) *hag e reeg debre hag e rig debri* 'and he ate' (lit. '... did eat')
bez leddarn a glenaz ort an dzhei bəz ladrən a glenəs ort ən'dʒəj 'but thieves fell upon them'

Other conjunctions such as *na/nag na/nag* 'not', *ne nə* 'until', *pa pə*⁴³ 'when', *mar mar* 'if' initiate subordinate clauses with a verb-fronted construction

- (146) *ne reeg hi doaze nə rig həj do:z* 'until she came' (lit. '... did come')
pereege a vennin gwellas pə rig an venən gweləs 'when the woman saw' (lit. '... did see')
mar kressa an dean ... gwellaz mar kresə an de:n gweləs 'if the man saw' (lit. 'did see')

Before forms of **bo:z** in the present and past tenses the conjunctions **pə** and **mar** (found as *me ~ mo mə*) have the **θ** of the complement pre-verbal particle usually used only in principal clauses

- (147) *po the'ns salles da pə θ enz saləs da:* 'when they are well salted'
potho Herod maraw pə θ o: herod maro 'when Herod was dead'
po tho an gye devethez en choy pə θ o: ən'dʒəj dəveðəs en tʃəj 'when they had come inside'
meth ewe da gene gazawaz mə θ ew da: geno gəzowəs 'if you (Pl) are good enough to listen' (lit. 'if is good with you (Pl) listening')

⁴² The form **hag** of the conjunction is used when preceding a vowel, except in the case of the definite article **an** and the 1Sg and 3Sg possessive determiners **ə** 'my', **i** 'his' and **i** 'her', where it becomes compressed, e.g., *ha'n ha n* 'and the', *hay* (Lh) *ha j* 'and his', *hai* (Lh) *ha j* 'and hers'.

⁴³ Not to be confused with *po pə* 'or', e.g., *erra po nag erra erə pə nag erə* '... she was or she was not'.

mothosta maab Deew mæ θ ostæ ma:b diw 'if you (Sg) are the son of God'

However, the appearance of **θ** following the conjunctions **pæ** and **mar** has all the appearance of being a development peculiar to Late Cornish, even though **mar** had a variant **marz** before vowels

(148) *mars ô hūi marz o: wəj* 'if you (Pl) are'

3.6 Relative clauses

One of the commonest subordinate clauses is the relative clause preceded by the pre-verbal particle *a ə* that can be translated as 'that' or ignored

(149) *Deew a gowzas diw a gowzæs* 'God talked'

an peath a eze laverez an pæ:θ a e:z ləveræs 'the thing that is said'

an venin a resta ry tha vee an venən a restæ rəj ðə vi 'the woman you (Sg) gave me'

peüa ez enna ? piw a e:z enə ? 'who is there ?'

The relative particle is often elided in Late Cornish, the only remaining marker of the relative clause being the lenited verb which initiates the clause

(150) *Deu laveraz diw ləveræs* 'God said'

e reeg debre e rig debri 'he ate' (lit. 'he did eat')

pew veda why gowas piw vednə wəj gowæs 'who will you (Pl) have'

3.7 Complement clauses

The complement clause which was also preceded by a pre-verbal particle *y/yth* in Middle Cornish is not common in Late Cornish (except fossilised as the **θ** of initial forms of the present and past tenses of **bo:z**). Its general elision and the variation in spelling between < *e* > and < *a* > suggests it had become indistinguishable from the relative pre-verbal particle

(151) *e ra doaz matern ə ra do:z mæ'tern* 'a king will come'

Here is a sentence with the pre-verbal particle elided

(152) *dhan vevnaz vâz vêdh [an] marnaz gwella ð an vownæs va:z ve:ð an marnæs gwelə* 'to the good life will be the best death'

A new pre-verbal particle for complement clauses in Late Cornish variously written as *dero* ~ *dre* ~ *dro* ~ *dru* ~ *dr'* ~ *tre* ~ *tro* ~ *trÿ* ~ *tr'* **dræ** ~ **trə** 'that' (from the MC. *del*, later also found as *tel*⁴⁴). This particle is compressed with a following verb if that verb has an initial vowel, e.g., *droma dr omə* 'that I am', *tro tr o:* ~ *dero dr o:* 'that was', *dressa dr esə* 'that did', *drolga dr aldʒə* 'that could'.

(153) *ez gweel them creege dre vednava dowethe akar e:z gwi:l ðemə kredʒi drə vednəvə dueðə ə'kar* 'which makes me believe that it will die out' (lit. '... end away')
me a ore ... druava talvez buz nebbaz me a o:r dr ewə talvəs bəz nebəs 'I know that it is worth but little'

The older meaning MC. *del* 'as' was still found in Late Cornish

(154) *magga pel ter el eve heathes magə pel trə el e:v heðəs* 'as far as he can reach'

When referring to location the particle *lebma* ~ *leba* **lebma** ~ **lebə** 'where' is employed

(154) *an stearan ... savaz derez leba era an flō younk an sterən savəs dre:z lebə erə an flo: jonk* 'the star stood over where the young boy was'
en chei lebma vo dean koath en tʃəj lebma vo de:n ko:θ 'in a house where there is an old man'

3.8 Negative clauses

Negative clauses are initiated by the negative particle *na/nag* **na/nag** 'that not' (see 2.26)

(155) *ethyw screffez na ra dean bewah dreath bara e honnen eθ ew skrefəs na ra de:n bewə dre:ð barə i hənən* 'it is written that man will not live through bread alone'

⁴⁴ N.J.A. Williams (1995 pp.223-25) explains how the form with **d-** arose from an earlier *del* 'as' whilst the form with **t-** arose from an earlier (fa')*tel* 'how', both being used to mean 'that'. Note the difference in accentuation between the conjunction (fa')*tel* and the interrogative *fatəl* both meaning 'how'.

4. Texts

The following piece is transcribed from a part of the only surviving Cornish folk-tale as noted by Edward Lhuyd :

Kibmiaz tēg e kemeraz, ha tiūa ha tre e travaiaz; ha war an dhiuath e
kibmjās te:g e gāmer-ās, ha tiwa tre: e dravalj-ās; ha war an duāð e

leave fair he (M) take-3Sg.Pret, and towards home he (M) travel-3Sg.Pret; and on the end he
 He departed and towards home he travelled; and in the end he

rig dēz dha Gūn St. Eler ha enna ev a vettiaz

rig do:z ðā u:n zanz ilār hag enā e:v a vetj-ās

(M) do.3Sg.Pret come. Vn to (M) down Saint Hilary.tn and there he RelPart (M) meet-3Sg.Pret
 came to the downs of Saint Hilary and there he met

gen trei vertshant a Tre Rīn - tīz plēu - tēz dre

gen trāj martfānt a dre:ri:n - tī:z pliw - to:z dre:

with three merchant-Pl from (M) Trerine.tn - men countryside - (M) come-Vn home.Adv
 with three merchants from Trerine - country men - coming home

mez an fēr Karēsk.

me:z an fe:r kar'e:sk

out the fair Exeter.tn.
 from Exeter fair.

- "Ha Dzhūan" amedh an dzhei, "diou gennan nei. Lūan oan nei dhv

- "ha dzuān" með ən'dzāj, "de-o genā'nāj. luān o:-nāj ðā

- "hello Jowan.pn" quoth they, "come.2Pl.Imp with-us. Joyful is. 1Pl.Pres to

- "Hello Jowan" they said, "come with us. We are glad to

'gȳz guelaz hwei. Pōlia ve ti mar bēl ?"

gəz gwel-ās wāj. pə'le: vi'tʃi mar bel ?"

your see-Vn you. where (M) is-2Sg.Pret so (M) far ?"
 see you. Where have you been so long ?"

Amedh Dzhūan :

a með dzuān :

and quoth Jowan.pn :

And Jowan said :

- "Me a ve servia ha lebmēn theram mēz drē dhv

- "mi a vi servj-ə ha lebmān θ erāmā mo:z dre: ðā

- "I RelPart (M) is-3Sg.Pret serve-Vn and now is-1Sg.PresDesc go. Vn home.Adv to

- "I have been serving and now I am going home to

a urēg."

ə wre:g."

my (M) wife."

my wife."

Ha medh an dzhei :

a með ən'dzāj :

and quoth they :

And they said :

- "Eūz (sic) bārha nei ha uelkom ti a vēdh."

- "de:z barā'nāj ha welkām tʃi a ve:ð."

- "come.2Sg.Imp together-with-us and welcome thou RelPart (M) be-3Sg.Fut."

- "Come along with us and you will be welcome."

An dzhyi a kymeraz an vōr noueth, ha Dzhūan a guithaz an

ən'dzāj a gā'mer-ās an vor nowāð, ha dzuān a gwiθ-ās an

they RelPart (M) take-3Sg.Pret the road new, and Jowan.pn RelPart (M) keep-3Sg.Pret the

They took the new road, and Jowan kept [to] the

vōr gōth. Ha mēz reb kēou Tshoy Uūn, ha nagō an vartshants

vor go:θ. ha mo:z rib ke-o tʃəju:n, ha nag o: an vartfānt-s

road (M) old. and go.Vn by hedge-Pl Chywoon.tn., and not be-3Sg.Past the (M) merchant-Pl

old road. And going past the hedges of Chywoon, and the merchants had not

gillyz pèl dhoart Dzhûan; bez leddarn a glenaz ort an dzhei. Ha an dzhyi

gel-æs pel ðort dʒuan; bəz ladr-ən a len-æs ort ən'dʒəj. ha ən'dʒəj

go-PastPart far from Jowan.pn; but thief-PI RelPart (M) stick-3Sg.Pret by them. and they gone far from Jowan, when thieves fell upon them. And they

a dhalladhaz dhv 'uïl krei, ha genz an krei a 'ryg an

a ðəlad-əs ðə wi:l krəj, ha genz an krəj a rig an

RelPart (M) begin-3Sg.Pret to (M) do. Vn cry, and with the cry rel.part (M) do.3Sg.Pret the began to cry, and with the cry that the

vartshants guïl, Dzhûan a greiaz auêth :

vartʃənt-s gwi:l, dʒuan a grəj-əs ə'wɛ:ð :

(M) merchant-PI do. Vn, Jowan.pn rel.part. (M) cry-3Sg.Pret also :
merchants let out, Jowan also cried :

- "Leddarn ! leddarn !"

- "ladr-ən ! ladr-ən !"

- "thief-PI ! thief-PI !"

- "Thieves ! thieves !"

Ha genz an krei a 'rig Dzhûan guïl an ledran

a genz an krəj a rig dʒuan gwi:l an ladr-ən

and with the cry RelPart (M) do.3Sg.Pret Jowan.pn do. Vn the thief-PI

And with the cry Jowan let out the thieves

a forsakiaz an vertshants. Ha po 'ryg an dzhei dhvz dhv

a forsakj-əs an vartʃənt-s. ha pə rig ən'dʒəj do:z ðə

rel.part. abandon-3Sg.Pret the (M) merchant-PI and when (M) do.3Sg.Pret they come. Vn to abandoned the merchants. And when they came

Varha Dzhou, enna an dzhei a vettiaz arta.

ðə varə'dʒow, enə ən'dʒəj a vetj-əs artə.

(M) Market Jew.tn, then they RelPart (M) meet-3Sg.Pret again.
to Market Jew, there they met again.

- "*Ha Dzhûan*" *amedh an dzhei, "sendzhvz òn nei dhv huei. Na via*

- "**ha dʒuan**" *með ən'dʒəj, "sendʒ-əs o:-nəj ðə wəj. na via*

- "hello Jowan.pn" quoth they, "hold-3Sg.Pret is. 1Pl.Pres to you. not (M) is.3Sg.Cond

- "Hello Jowan" they said, "we are obliged to you. Were it not

ragoh huei nei a via tiz oll dizurêyz. Diz barha nei, ha

ragə'wəj nəj a via ti:z ol diz're:z. de:z barə'nəj, ha

for-you we RelPart (M) is.3Sg.Cond men all undone. come.2Sg.Imp together-with-us, and for you we would all have been ruined men. Come along with us and

uelkym ti a vèdh."

welkəm tʃi a ve:ð."

welcome thou RelPart (M) is-3Sg.Fut

you will be welcome."

The following piece is the last surviving continuous text of Cornish written by William Bodinar in 1776.

Bluth vee eue try egence a pemp. Theara vee dean bodjack an puscas. Me

blu:ð vi ew trəj igəns a pemp. θ erə vi de:n bədʒək an pəsk-əs. mi

year (of age) me.Dep is three twenty and five. is. 1Sg.PresLocat me man poor the fish-PI. I

My age is sixty five. I am a poor fisherman. I

rig deskey Cornoack termen me vee mawe. Me vee de more gen seara vee

rig desk-i kərnək termən mi vi maw. mi vi də mo:r gen serə vi

(M) do.3Sg.Pret learn-Vn time I (M) is.3Sg.Pret lad. I (M) is.3Sg.Pret to sea with father me.Dep

learnt Cornish when I was a lad. I went to sea with my father

a pemp dean moy en cock. Me rig scantlower clowes eden ger Sowsnack cowes en cock rag

a pemp de:n muj en kok. mi rig skant lowər klow-əs edn ge:r zowznək kowz en kok rag

and five man more in boat. I (M) do.3Sg.Pret hardly hear-Vn one word English speak in boat for

and five other men in a boat. I hardly heard one word of English spoken in the boat for

sythen warehar. Na riga vee biscath gwellas lever Cornoack. Me [rig] deskey

zəjθən war'bar. na rigə'vi biskəθ gwel-əs levr kərnək. me [rig] desk-i

week together. not (M) do. 1Sg.Pret ever see-PastPart book Cornish. I (M) do.3Sg.Pret learn-Vn

a week at a time. I never saw a Cornish book. I learnt

Cornoack moas da maore gen tees coath. Nag es moye vel pager po pemp en dreav nye
kærnuæk mo:z də mo:r gen tí:z ko:θ. nag e:z muj vel padzær pə bemp en tre:v nəj
 Cornish go.Vn to sea with men old. Not is.PresIndef more than four or (M) five in town us
 Cornish [by] going to sea with old men. There are no more than four or five in our town who

ell clapia Cornoack leben, poble coath pager egance blouth. Cornoack
el klapj-ə kærnuæk lebən, pɒbl ko:θ padzær igəns blu:ð. kærnuæk
 (M) can.3Sg.Pres speak-Vn Cornish now, people old four twenty year (of age). Cornish
 can speak Cornish now, old people eighty years old. Cornish

ewe oll neceaves gen poble younk.
ew oll nəkev-əs gen pɒbl joŋk.
 is.3Sg.PresDesc all forget-PastPart with people young.
 is all forgotten by young people.

One is tempted to see the characteristics of a 'semi-speaker' in some features of William Bodinar's letter, e.g., *dean ... an puscas* 'men of the fish' instead of *poscader* 'fisherman'; *termen* 'time' instead of *po pə* 'when'⁴⁵, and the locative *theara vee* rather than the descriptive *tho vee*.

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⁴⁵ Similarly *amser* 'time' is used for *pan* 'when' by a number of Welsh-speakers from southern Wales.

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- 47 **Tamanaco** (Carib, extinct) Sp. Gildea & S. Méria
- 50 **Zulu** S.E. Bosch & G. Poulos*
- 57 **Comorien** (Bantu) Ahmed-Chamaga
- 58 **Tokelauan** (Polynesian) R. Hooper*
- 59 **Kunama** M.L. Bender*
- 62 **Belarussian** A.Ja. Suprun & U. Doleschal
- 63 **Maldivian/Divehi** J.W. Gair & B. Cain
- 64 **Dogon** V. Plungian*
- 65 **Corse** M. Giacomo-Marcellesi*
- 66 **Bulgare** J. Feuillet*
- 68 **Sumerian** J.L. Hayes*
- 69 **Basilicatense** (Ital. dial.) R. Bigalke*
- 70 **El Gallego** J.A. Pérez Bouza*
- 71 **Pima Bajo** (Uto-Aztecan) Z. Estrada Fernández*
- 73 **Kalderaš** (Romani) L.N. Tcherenkov & M.F. Heinschink
- 74 **Abruzzese** (Ital. dial.) R. Bigalke*
- 77 **Lhasa Tibetan** S. DeLancey
- 78 **Ladin dia Val Badia** L. Craffonara
- 79 **Souletin** (Basque dial.) U.J. Lüders
- 80 **Creolese** (Guyanese Creole) H. Devonish
- 81 **Akkadian** Sh. Izre'el
- 82 **Canaano-Akkadian** Sh. Izre'el *
- 83 **Papiamentu** (Creole) S. Kouwenberg & E. Murray*
- 84 **Berbice Dutch Creole** S. Kouwenberg
- 85 **Rabaul Creole German** (Papua New Guinea) C. Volker
- 86 **Nalik** (Austronesian) C. Volker
- 88 **Nyulnyul** (non-Pama-Nyungan) W. McGregor*
- 89 **Warrwa** (non-Pama-Nyungan) W. McGregor*
- 92 **Icari** (Dargwa) N.R. Sumbatova & R.O. Mutalov
- 93 **Daur** (Mongolic) Chaolu Wu (Üjiyedin Chuluu)*
- 100 **Bare** (Arawak) Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald*
- 101 **Acadian French** D. Jory & V. Motapanyane*
- 102 **Polabian** (Slavic) W. Suprun & U. Doleschal
- 103 **Chamling** K. Ebert*
- 104 **Kodava** (Dravidian) K. EBERT*
- 105 **Romanes** (Sinti) D. Holzinger*
- 106 **Secpedice-Romani** P. Cech & M.F. Heinschink*
- 107 **Roman** (Romani) D.W. Halwachs et al.
- 109 **Karachay** (Turkic) St. Seegmiller*
- 111 **Nivkh** E. Gruzdeva
- 114 **Hittite** S. Luraghi*
- 115 **Lower Sorbian** (Slavic) G. Spieß
- 116 **Songhay** R. Nicolai & P. Zima*
- 117 **Macedonian** V.A. Friedman
- 119 **Abkhaz** Sl. Chirikba
- 120 **Ainu** J.C. Maher
- 121 **Adyge** R. Smeets
- 122 **Tuki** (Niger Kordofan) E. Biloa
- 123 **Hindi** Mahendra K. Verma
- 124 **Q'eqchi'** (Mayan) J. DeChicchis
- 125 **Czech** L. Janda & Ch.E. Townsend
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- 128 **Turin Piedmontese** D. Ricca
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- 137 **Yingkarta** A. Dench*
- 138 **Jurruru** A. Dench
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- 154 **Polci** R. Cosper
- 155 **Bashkiri** A. Bodrogligeti
- 158 **Vogul** T. Riese
- 159 **Mandan** (Siouan) Mauricio Mixco*
- 160 **Upper Sorbian** G. Schaarschmidt
- 161 **Toura** (Mandé) Th. Bearth
- 162 **West Greenlandic** J.M. Sadock
- 165 **Dagaare** (Gur) A. Bodomo
- 166 **Yuchi** M.S. Linn
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- 186 **Enets** A. Künnap
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