

- Provision and use of machine-readable Manx texts.
- Participation in Oracle's "Scoop" project for schools.

All the above are now a reality but remain very much in their infancy, as the production of suitable teaching material falls upon the same limited number of activists working for the maintenance of the language. Although geographically central in the Celtic speaking world, Manx unquestionably remains a language on the edge in a number of other ways.

Regrettably, Manx still remains on the periphery of many projects and initiatives from which it could undoubtedly benefit. It is often, understandably, overlooked because of the comparatively insignificant number of speakers and, hitherto, small voice. I would, therefore, appeal to all those presently working assiduously for the advancement of their own languages to consider if, in some way, their ideas and efforts could be shared and made available to their smaller relations. Much has already been achieved for Manx through the generosity of contacts in the other Gaelic speaking countries and also America, who have provided computer expertise including the processing and the hosting of data. Particular mention should be given to Caoimhín Ó Donnaille at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and John T. McCranie at the University of California for their help and encouragement for Manx on the Internet.

The recently launched "Eurolang", a project of the European Bureau for Lesser-Used Languages, is a welcome new development in such partnerships; "The objectives of Eurolang are to supply national and regional media with news of general interest about Europe's linguistic diversity. It concentrates on minority and regional language matters and news from European Institutions which affect the minority communities of Europe." Unfortunately, Mann's political position, being outside of the EU, has for the present time left Manx once more on the edge and unable to participate - yet another example of a missed opportunity for us in Mann to share and cooperate.

Projects that may be considered worthy of joint production through cooperation between Gaelic speaking countries might include: -

- The compilation of a Triglote Gaelic Dictionary. This was first attempted by John Kelly in 1802 but unfortunately partially destroyed by fire at the printing press in 1808. Only three volumes A to Le survived the blaze and the further mysterious loss of two of these volumes by 1925 left only A to Bw extant. In the words of William Cubbon "The Manx language seems to be fated to suffer literary calamities: doubtless many manuscripts have perished unknown to us." A machine readable version would be far less susceptible the vagaries of wind, wave and fire to which others have succumbed and would plainly be of inestimable benefit to anyone engaged in the further study of the Gaelic languages.
- The production of a Triglote Gaelic database would naturally lead to exploring the feasibility of producing inter-Gaelic translation programs. This would overcome the present difficulties arising from such matters as the differences in spelling conventions and would substantially widen the scope of available written material which would be of particular value to Manx readers.
- The production of a large corpus of machine-readable texts in the three Gaelic languages suitable for comparative studies. Initially, consideration might be given to texts presently readily available such as in the Prayer Book and Bible.
- The setting up of a central database of people working in various fields. The database to consist of a register to list individuals who are engaged in research in some area of Gaelic

Studies and who are prepared to make others aware of their work and perhaps, are willing to share their expertise in collaborative ventures. Such a register to be kept updated and extended at regular intervals.

Describing Manx as a Language on the Edge may seem to be reinforcing the very arguments of the pessimists previously quoted. However, I believe that the language is now “on the edge” in another and more constructive sense. Manx in the twenty-first century is undoubtedly on the edge of a significant breakthrough in numbers, status and utilisation and there is every reason to have great optimism for the future of the language. We may still take comfort from the words and observations of an old Manx fisherman, conversing with George Borrow on the 23rd of August 1855, but which nonetheless, still ring true down the years:

"I said that I believed there were a great many Manx people ashamed to speak Manx, and that in a little time it would be discontinued; he said, No Manxman need be ashamed of speaking the language of his country, and that Manx would be spoken as long as Man floated."

Fortunately, it is not only the Island itself that has remained buoyant over the years but also the hopes and aspirations of an ever increasing number of Manx speakers. Their enthusiasm and drive has ensured not only a retreat from the edge, but a positive move for Manx back towards the centre of the Celtic speaking world.

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Imagination in the Teaching of Cornish

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Abstract

The teaching of Cornish to adults is becoming more professional as student numbers grow, but much depends on amateur activity. This article warns against over-reliance on the established technical-rationality of language teaching and calls for imaginative responses which acknowledge tacit understanding, indeterminacy and the importance of professional artistry. It also calls for an appeal to the aesthetic qualities of Cornish, rather than a vain quest for functional motives or calls to nationalistic duty.

Introduction

Everyone's teaching practice is unique. Individual personalities, approaches and styles create differences even when factors, such as the curriculum and environment are the same. As a teacher of Cornish, uniqueness applies to most of what I do. In promoting a language with few speakers, I am removed from vocational and functional concerns, indulging in an activity which many regard as pointless or eccentric, the irrational antithesis of the modernist notion of progress. Cornish is now taught in varied contexts but most of us work in relative isolation, often outside educational institutions with few colleagues or off-the-shelf resources and no imposed curriculum. We operate without a ready-made framework and there is little by way of an established body of experience to draw upon. There are few opportunities to swap ideas and no ready-made corpus of teaching strategies or accepted wisdom. There is often no prescribed set of competencies that learners work towards. These circumstances are both a blessing and a curse. They give freedom from imposed constraints and preconceptions and allow negotiation of the learning process. We can set our own agenda, aims and objectives. The down-side is that teachers are reliant on their imagination, and that of learners, to devise resources and strategies. Imagination and creativity determine success. That's fine when it is 'coming up with the goods' and there is time to apply ideas, but on occasions sessions stagnate for want of a fresh input.

New opportunities

These are exciting times. There is renewed interest in the local and a growing acceptance of difference as something enriching - or at least a fact of life. Liberal assimilationism is being questioned and plurality championed.

'[T]he conditions of postmodernity offer new opportunities... In the rediscovered emphasis on the 'local', the 'particular' and the 'unique', a space may be being created for the Cornish language that did not exist in conditions of modernity.' [Deacon B., 1996: 103]

If postmodernity permits a multiplicity of views, values and perspectives, and if postmodernism rejects notions of uniformity, then this is certainly the case.

'Metessen, en norveaz crownick'ma, nye ra cavas preze noweth en amyttians an cowethians plurel; Metessen, en leasder e gowethians moye comprehendes, na veath comeres gon gonesegath ha gon deffrangow en disdayne, ha en luddras'na nye alga trouvia vor tha voaz clowes gon leav.'

(Perhaps, in this global world, we will find a new opportunity in the acceptance of the plural society. Perhaps, in the breadth of its more inclusive society, our culture and our differences will not be derided and in that framework we could find a way for our voice to be heard.)

[Kennedy N., 1997]

Doors are opening. Small spaces for Cornish are being created within institutions which once excluded it. Heightened interest in identity, coupled with globalization and improved technologies, has strengthened links with our diaspora, making it possible for migrants and their descendents to keep in contact with an imagined home and participate in its life without being present. Technologies which might be viewed as the instruments of a homogenizing cultural imperialism are, paradoxically, helping to maintain distinctiveness, facilitating the growth of a Cornish 'affective alliance' globally. People in Australia's Little Cornwall or Michigan's U.P. can actively take part, contributing as well as benefiting.

Imagination is at play in the construction of identity, the reinvigoration of diasporic links and the visualization of the language itself. It seems appropriate to consider the rôle of imagination, and the linked factor of artistry, in teaching. Imagination is a vast and polysemous category, but for my purposes, common understandings of the productive, creative imagination are adequate. They cover the areas of dream, fancy, fantasy, creative thought and conjecture.

Representing Cornish

The decision to learn Cornish requires an imaginative element of fancy. Learners visualize a world where it is possible to use Cornish in all situations, extending it from the closeted domain of the organized event, to the shop, pub and work-place. Whilst Gerald Priestland, from a position of ignorance, has described the revival as '*rather like putting a corpse on a heart-lung machine and claiming it is alive*' [1980], some enthusiasts speak as though their fully Cornish-speaking community is already a reality, claiming that new vocabulary is '*naturally generated amongst Cornish speakers, just as in English*' [Lyon 1996]. Here imagination merges with self-delusion but Ken George, whilst asserting that Cornish is alive, sensibly points out that:

'[R]evivalists must not get so carried away that they forget that Cornish is not in all 'respects like other tongues.....this argument [the 'natural' generation of

vocabulary] is less valid for Cornish than for a major language like English or French' [George K.J., 1986]

Against this background, the way in which we present language has great impact, as recognized by Bev Newman of WEA South Wales:

'The imagery associated with many of the minority languages ...can cause young adults to reject them entirely as being an historical extension of what they are already experiencing in the present...Languages must be presented socially and in educational settings in such a way that they are shown to be relevant to modern life.' [Newman B., 1996]

Creativity must be employed in countering negative, received images of the language as variously:- quaint, twee and druidic (the preserve of robed bards of the Gorsedd), insular and exclusive (a refuge for the inward-looking), extreme and dangerous (likely to lead to conflict), dead and academic (for historians and linguists), eccentric and comic (for the loonies). Whilst the language, as a powerful symbol of distinctiveness, lies at the heart of various overlapping constructions of identity, the inheritance of imagery from the early 'Celtic Revival' (c.1890-1945) is at odds with a popular Cornishness based on past industrialization and occupational cultures. Such 'Celtic' images, many of them imported from the Gaelic Ireland Movement, still distance people from the language. The early revival is now understood as a romantic reaction to the '*great paralysis*' [Payton P., 1992] of Cornish industry which sought escape from the perceived horrors of modernity by looking to a rhetoricized, pre-industrial, 'Celtic' past. Its leaders were typically middle class, often anglicized and Anglo-catholic with establishment credentials and Tory sympathies. They were informed by prevalent English imaginings of the '*Celts*' as mysterious, romantic providers of otherness and had no real notion of Cornish becoming a community language. By contrast, present-day learners are invariably motivated by feelings of economic, political and cultural marginalization and their sense of Cornishness is likely to be based on the constructions of the industrial age: accent, mining, rugby, diet, choirs, bands, emigration, Methodism and egalitarianism. Learners are increasingly drawn from the poorer sections of the community, have anti-establishment views and are sceptical about authority. Their engagement may be seen as reclaiming a language which has been misappropriated by 18th century antiquarians, romantic Celtophiles and academics. Thus, the current growth of a popular, grass-roots movement represents a significant discontinuity with the early revival and can best be fostered by linking it to lived Cornish experience and employing positive imagery to create a 'cool' aura of cultural value.

Professionalism

Although the revival began c.1890, its expansion dates from the 1970s and the move towards professionalism from the 1990s. We are operating in a new area with no technical rationality other than that of language teaching in general. Whilst theories of learning, language acquisition and group dynamics are useful, we are forced to deal with situations as they arise, encountering problems with no ready-made answers. I am, for example, faced with a group which has reached a plateau of achievement beyond which it seems unable to proceed. The precise situation is new and I am finding it difficult to think my way out of the impasse. Discussion with my students and other teachers has failed to show a way forward and there is no *Penguin Guide to Teaching Cornish* that I can refer to. In such situations I often fall back

on intuition rather than theory and much of the progress made stems from a mixture of 'feel', imagination and inspiration, led by an identification of learning needs.

Donald Schön contrasts the safe '*high ground*' of technical rationality and research-fed, professional knowledge with the less certain areas of problem-solving which he calls the '*swamp*' [1987] Within the swamp he maintains that '*indeterminate features of practice*' are at work: - artistry, intuition, improvisation, invention and '*testing in practice*'. This would seem to characterize the confused area into which I have ventured, an unexplored zone which has no hard rock other than the language. I am forced to improvise and invent strategies which I immediately test. Schön refers to '*an art of problem framing, an art of implementation, and an art of improvisation -all necessary to mediate the use in practice of applied science and technique.*' [ibid.] These arts assume a rôle which greatly overshadows the application of theoretical or technical knowledge, and imagination, frequently of a disciplined variety, informs them.

Schön has described how the academic status of individuals and areas of activity are related to their proximity to basic science and technical knowledge, showing how this leads practitioners to seek research-based, technical knowledge and apply it. We need not worry; Cornish has such low status that there is little to lose by wading into Schön's swamp. Even so, Revived Cornish (*what* is taught, rather than *how*) is the subject of intense debate, conducted within the limits of scientific/empirical linguistics and modernist assumptions. The wisdom of this has been questioned by Deacon:

‘..the language debate must move beyond the scientific discourse and open up the debate to such things as speculation, reflection, intuition and feelings. Such knowledge should be admitted as equal and no longer, as assumed by modernism, inferior to the knowledge produced by scientific method.’
[Deacon B, 1996:102]

Much the same could be said of how the language is taught.

Perhaps we should ask why sessions work before looking for shortcomings. That might identify an alternative or complimentary approach to applying theories of learning, in Schön's words, '*turning the problem upside down*', asking what can be learnt from how we deal with his '*indeterminate zones of practice*' before applying research from elsewhere. I am often at a loss to define the factors that have made successful sessions gel. Often I feel that I am responding to events instinctively rather than consciously. This is hard to reflect upon. It is easy to consider the effectiveness of an activity or resource but hard to do so for something intangible that falls outside technical rationality. Schön suggests that we should ask what we can learn from examining artistry (rather than seeking to apply technical knowledge) but I am reluctant to analyze the process closely for fear of becoming self-conscious in an area which relies on a lack of inhibition and spontaneity. This is what Michael Polanyi called the '*tacit dimension*' [1967] , where we instinctively use knowledge and skills that we are not aware of consciously and cannot break down into a convenient set of actions for future use. The paradoxical danger of trying to examine the process or attempting a break-down of Schön's '*knowing-in-action*' (forms of know-how demonstrated in active practice but defying verbal description) is that it can place newly constructed knowledge in an expanded technical rationality as accepted truth.

Aesthetic Responses

But it does no harm to consider how sessions succeed in firing the imagination. I have started encouraging students to enjoy language before concentrating too heavily on grammar or the deliberate memorizing of vocabulary. Some years ago a campaign in Brittany encouraged people with the inviting slogan *'taste your language'*, the idea being that language is something sensuous to be savoured and rolled around on the tongue as an enriching part of life. When a language has little commercial application, this motivation would seem to be an obvious one to stress, yet teachers have been slow to identify and exploit its potential, instead repeating the tired, unimaginative mantra of the early revival: *'Why should Cornishmen learn Cornish? ...the answer is simple. Because they are Cornishmen.'* [Jenner, 1904:xi] Learning is reduced to a chore which we have a duty to perform in order to assert group identity. Imagination is called for in creating a sense of fun and cultural enrichment if the public is to be enthused. Richard Kearney, in discussing the postmodern imagination, writes of the need to be poetical *'...in the broad sense of 'inventive' carried by the word poiesis.'* [1994]. The postmodern imagination *'needs to be able to laugh'* [ibid.]. Such remarks fit comfortably with trying to create an aesthetic which is removed from functional concerns. Learners need to be encouraged to develop an empathy and intuitive feel for Cornish. This may help them use it to its full capability, making an imaginative leap beyond the limits of English. To this end we might consider how they can enjoy the sounds, rhythms and textures of language. In this we have the advantage many learners drawn to Cornish by a love of place-names. I have started exposing people to songs, readings and fluent conversation in the early stages, being aware that care must be taken. Stella Hurd warns that *'For many adult learners and teachers the introduction of a song or poem into the lesson has little appeal.'* [1992] but she recognizes *'the cultural significance of this kind of material and the wealth of possibilities it can open up.'* This meets needs which for other languages can be met by visiting communities where they are spoken.

Creative language production

I am conscious of the need to move students towards a creative use of language at an early stage i.e. putting words together in sentences of their own devising, rather than repeating ready-made phrases. Drama and improvisation often allow them to communicate effectively, using gesture, mime, facial expression and body language to fill gaps in their vocabulary. It brings out the extrovert in many and generates a sense of achievement, but as Hurd points out:

'[S]hy or slow learners may be unwilling or unable to participate. Some profess quite openly to have 'no imagination' and find the whole process....bewildering and painful.' [1992]

The reasons for using such techniques are well stated by Hurd:

'[They] release inhibitions that can act as a barrier to learning....help establish a co-operative, collaborative atmosphere' enabling learners to *'...engage at their own level in their chosen manner, to surprise and be surprised, and to discover their own personal language "gaps"'* [ibid.]

They encourage learners to take possession of events and elicit an imaginative, active input.

Final thoughts

Initially, I simply abandoned the idea of a linear and graded, grammar-based approach in favour of a communicative style (again applying research-based knowledge), but, as time has gone on, I have often plunged classes into chaos. Whilst the best sessions involve immediacy and rapidity, their essential volatility and departure from convention can be their downfall. In trying to enthuse I may destroy all structure. From being spontaneous, classes degenerate as learners find that they have so much to say to each other in English. I am having to manage enthusiasm whereas previously I simply sought to generate it. It has also been necessary to appreciate that linear progressions suit certain learners and should not be dismissed as never being appropriate. Different people approach language in different ways and we should not exclude received practices from simple scepticism. I have mainly been reacting against an experience of audio-visual and behaviourist methods (e.g. those of B.F. Skinner) and, in questioning wisdoms drawn from empirical rationality, I am not arguing for the abandonment of all such theory. I simply wish to see other forms of knowledge admitted within an imaginative, aesthetic framework. In the case of a language revival which defies functional or rationalist explanations, this seems particularly appropriate. We do not need practical reasons, excuses or ideological justifications for Cornish anymore than we need them to grow flowers or play music.

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The ISOS Project – A Digital Library of Irish Scripts on Screen

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Abstract

This paper describes a collaborative project between the School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies and the School of Computer Applications, Dublin City University, the purpose of which is to produce high resolution digital images of Irish manuscripts together with ancillary text and commentary for display on the WWW.

Introduction

Manuscripts in the Irish language are to be found throughout the world, in libraries and in private collections. Roughly five thousand survive and, not surprisingly, the biggest collections are located in Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales. These manuscripts, as is well known, range in date from the 12th to the 19th centuries, and are made from vellum down to about the middle of the 16th century when paper starts to take over, paper finally predominating from the early seventeenth century onward. The ongoing need for primary access to these books by scholars becomes an increasing concern to librarians depending on the physical state of the documents. In the past, the use of surrogates such as facsimiles and photostats was advocated from time to time. In more recent times microfilm copies of a significant number of manuscripts have been made and, while this has facilitated access, it is very rarely that such copies can be considered even half-adequate as surrogates.

In the area of Celtic languages, the teaching/learning value of the project rests, at present, in its potential for use as a primary source for textual and palaeographical studies in the Irish language. (Scholarship holders at the School of Celtic Studies are already making use of the resource for this purpose.) As the amount of available material increases so too should that potential be increasingly realised. It must be stressed, of course, that the main concern of

ISOS is the making available of that primary source: the use that is made of it will ultimately be a matter for the teachers and researchers themselves.

The present paper outlines a project which demonstrates how, using modern information technology, it is possible to make images of these manuscripts available to a wide audience without endangering the originals, while coming as close as is possible to realising the concept of the true surrogate, and thus resolving the previously conflicting concerns of access and conservation. The ISOS project is on-going and some material is already accessible.

Overview of the ISOS Project

Irish Script on Screen (ISOS) is a joint project between the School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, and the School of Computer Applications, Dublin City University to digitise images of Old Irish manuscripts and make them available for scholarly and for casual use on the WWW. Much advice and guidance has been provided by the Bodleian Library at Oxford University who are running a similar project to ISOS. The present phase of the project is being run in partnership with Trinity College Library, Dublin.

This project, then, combines the ostensible polarised interests of the humanities and the sciences in a unique and, we hope, fruitful collaboration. For the School of Celtic Studies, ISOS represents a natural extension of its statutory responsibilities with regard to research and publication of research in the area of Irish manuscripts. The potential for combining texts, either diplomatic or normalised, with images of the sources themselves; or for linking those images to manuscript catalogues - something which has been achieved already - that potential is an exciting one, deserving of investment of time, money and research.

For the School of Computer Applications, having already worked with organisations such as the *Irish Times* and RTÉ on information retrieval projects, the attraction of the ISOS project is that it connects to a core research interest of the School, namely the development of digital libraries.

The work of the project is divided between the partners as follows: the School of Celtic Studies selects the material to be digitised (in consultation with the holding library), prepares the catalogues, and is responsible for image capture and quality control. Processing and storage of the images, creation and maintenance of the website, are the responsibility of the School of Computer Applications.

The ISOS project, therefore, is setting out to digitise Irish manuscripts of various dates between the late eleventh century and the nineteenth, and to make them available for educational and research purposes on the WWW. The contents of the manuscripts have been recorded, in fine detail, into digital form by scanning them with a high resolution colour camera. Global access to the material is ensured by placing them on the WWW. There are several reasons for, and benefits from, the ISOS project:

- Digitisation is contributing to the long-term conservation of the manuscripts. Technology has allowed the material to be digitised into ultra high resolution detail which has reduced the need for consulting the originals themselves, therefore helping in their long-term preservation.

- Remote access to the digitised material is being provided to scholars of Celtic Studies throughout the world, thus increasing their availability to this community.
- The development of a WWW site of the images along with the provision of relevant information has resulted in the creation of an electronic resource which is of cultural and educational interest to the casual web browser as well as to schools.

Technical Overview of the ISOS Project

A Dicomed Studio Pro XL digital camera is used to capture images. This is a non-intrusive capture mechanism which does no damage to the manuscripts as the light levels required to scan a picture of a manuscript page are much less than that required for copying. Images are digitised at 600 dpi with each pixel being 24 bit colour. The file size of any given image varies according to the physical size of the manuscript page but in general an uncompressed digital image (TIFF) of a manuscript page may vary from 60Mb to 120Mb.

After scanning, the image is loaded onto a PC and the brightness of the images is adjusted slightly using Adobe Photoshop so that the images match the physical pages, in as far as possible. The images are transferred to 1GB Jazz disks and sent to DCU for further processing. Equilibrium's Debabelizer is then used to process the images in batch mode. Each image has a ruler added to it to give a scale for the image, and each image is also stamped with an identifier on the top and a copyright notice on the bottom. The resultant TIFF images are then archived onto DLT tapes each of which generally stores about 25 GB of images and these are then stored at different locations for security purposes.

After images are processed by adding a ruler and identifier, JPG compressed versions of the images are also created using DeBabelizer. These are done in two levels of compression with large high-quality JPG images, varying from 1.5 MB to 5 MB, as well as lower resolution JPG images of a few hundred Kbytes, and finally, thumbnails.

The JPG images are also digitally watermarked using the Digimarc Batch Embedding Tool [1]. This tool inserts an invisible digital watermark into each image which can be read using Digimarc's ReadMarc, a software tool downloadable for free over the Internet. When ReadMarc is used to read a watermark from an image a URL is given to the user, who can then go to the URL and get information about the copyright holder. Digimarc's watermarking has become very popular in allowing the tracking of image abuse on the internet.

Archival and Conservation Concerns

Crucial to the success of ISOS is the attention to best practices with regard to the management of the material being digitised. Great care was taken from the outset to ensure that the camera technician was fully qualified, to degree level, in archival and conservation studies. Temperature and humidity are monitored daily in the digitisation environment, and the modalities of conservation practice - such as the use of acid-free securing implements, and so forth - are observed at all times. This means that not alone are the partners satisfied that every possible care is taken of the manuscript originals, but confidence in our ability to operate effectively in a library environment, or with library materials, is generated, resulting in the excellent relations the ISOS team have enjoyed with the libraries with which they have worked.



Current Status and Plans

The ISOS project began with a pilot stage lasting from July 1998 to May 1999. This period allowed the project to explore the various technical challenges which the digitisation of Irish manuscripts presents, to experiment with the photography, and to gain valuable experience from handling a range of different bibliographic formats.

The Abbot and community of Mount Mellerey Abbey, Co. Waterford, readily agreed to the temporary transfer of their collection of thirteen Irish manuscripts to the School of Celtic Studies for use in the pilot stage of the digitisation project. These manuscripts had all previously been catalogued by the School, and their availability to the project was therefore of great value. Images from this collection are now publicly available on the ISOS website. Coláiste na Rinne, Rinn Ó gCuanach, Co. Waterford, also placed some of their collection at the disposal of the project, and images from these manuscripts are available on the website.

On completion of the pilot stage of the project in May 1999, ISOS entered into an agreement with Trinity College Library to undertake a programme of digitisation of some of its important collection of Irish manuscripts. For environmental and security reasons the work, which will take a further two years to complete, is being carried out in the Library in co-operation with Trinity's Conservation Laboratory and Manuscripts Department.

TCD MS 1339, p. 29 (detail)



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The project's primary target in TCD is MS 1339 (H 2 18), otherwise known as the Book of Leinster, a diplomatic edition of which was published by the School of Celtic Studies [3]. The Book of Leinster, properly *Leabhar na Nuachongbhála*, is an anthology of Irish tradition – prose, verse, and genealogy – the compilation of which spanned the second half of the twelfth century. It takes its name from an ecclesiastical foundation in Co. Laois, that of Oughaval, near Stradbally. Of the number of scribes who worked on it only one is known by name: Aed mac meic Crimthaind, coarb of Terryglass, Co. Tipperary.

ISOS also aims to digitise the complete collection of Irish medical manuscripts in TCD, the catalogue of which is nearing completion at the School of Celtic Studies. TCD's holding of twenty-eight such manuscripts accounts for over a quarter of all extant medical manuscripts in Irish.

As manuscript images are captured, post-processed, archived onto tape and placed online, there are three levels of resolution available. Thumbnails and lower-quality JPEGs are available to casual WWW users. The quality of these images is sufficient for browsing but not for detailed study so registered users, who complete and sign a registration form, are provided with access to the higher-quality JPEG images.

Conclusions

The roles that the different partners play in the ISOS project are complementary. DIAS are the subject experts, who are familiar with the material and who carry out the role of scholarly

domain experts. DCU are the technical partners who have the know-knowledge and experience in building large digital collections for the web. The benefits of ISOS to both communities are clear. DIAS, and Celtic scholars worldwide, are provided with access to high-quality images; DCU has a very real collection of digital artefacts, with catalog information, with which to pursue its research interests in digital libraries. And, as a side-effect, casual web users have access to a previously unavailable resource.

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Teaching Scottish Gaelic to Irish Speakers

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Abstract

Teaching Gaelic within a department of Irish to Irish speakers presents a new set of challenges to the language teacher. To what extent does knowledge of a cognate language affect progress in the target language? Prior knowledge of the cognate language is seen initially to allow speedy development, but later language interference can hinder attainment of fluency.

Introduction

This paper is largely a series of observations on my own experiences of teaching Gaelic to Irish-speaking students in an Irish department. I compare the progress of the Irish speaking student of Gaelic with a model used by Brian Page of English L1 speakers learning French. I make specific references to the 'four stages' Brian Page uses in his discussion of the development of the English learner of French (Page, 1998: 124). By comparing each of Page's stages in turn with my own students' experiences, as I have perceived them, it is evident that these stages do not apply to the Irish learners of Gaelic. I relate each of the stages to one of the four semesters in my two-year Gaelic course.

Stage 1

Assuming **stage 1** is absolute beginners to post beginners, the Irish learner of Gaelic quickly and easily passes this stage. The grammar, and sometimes vocabulary, at beginner level may not be totally unfamiliar to the Irish speaker. A typical first lesson in any Gaelic classroom, or indeed any language classroom, could involve concepts such as 'greetings'. The teacher might introduce a sentence such as this:

G. *Hallo a Mhairead, ciamar a tha thu?* Hello, Margaret, how are you?

For the non-Irish speaker, the first concept the Gaelic teacher would need to explain would be the use of the 'vocative case' here. *Mairead* radical form, becomes *a Mhairead* when the person is being addressed by the speaker. For the Irish speaker, this would pose no problems, the vocative working in the same way in Irish:

I. *Dia dhuit, a Mhairéad, conas tá tú?*

Most modern structured language courses aim to teach the students to quickly be able to produce simple informative phrases about themselves, and to recognise questions relating to

the same. An example of this type of language would be ‘what’s your name?’, which in Gaelic is articulated as follows:

G. *Dè an t-ainm a tha ort?* (lit. what the name which is on you?)

To the English L1 learner of Gaelic, the structure of this question often causes problems. Firstly the word order is different to English, in that the verb follows the noun. Secondly the student is being introduced to the linguistic phenomenon of the ‘compound prepositional pronoun’. The compound prepositional pronouns are a very common feature in Gaelic: the learner cannot function without them and it is therefore essential that they are introduced at as early a stage as possible. It often takes a long time for the English L1 speaker to get to grips with them, but for the Irish speaker they pose no difficulties. In this particular example the compound prepositional pronoun would be basically the same:

I. *Cén t-ainm atá ort?*

In comparison with Page’s stage one students with ‘single or two-word utterances’ and ‘considerable hesitation’, the Irish learner of Gaelic is considerably more accomplished, syntactically at least. Page also considers pronunciation, which in his learners has ‘strong interference from native pronunciation’. At **stage 1** Gaelic pronunciation may not seem as ‘alien’ to the Irish speaker. The Irish speaker would probably be familiar with various consonant clusters which might otherwise ‘throw’ another learner, for example: *ghlan*, and *dorcha* - pronunciation in the two languages can be similar. They would also be able to associate what they see on the page with the oral format relatively easily: orthographic conventions such as ‘th’ in Gaelic to represent /h/ and ‘bh’ to represent /v/ would certainly not be unfamiliar, as they would be to the learner of Gaelic with no Irish.

Stage 2

Page notes that ‘his’ learners at this stage will have a ‘very limited vocabulary’, and again this does not apply to the Irish learner of Gaelic. Whereas the non-Irish learner of Gaelic and the Irish-speaking learner of Gaelic may have been introduced to the same amount of words by the teacher, the Irish-speaker will have a much larger passive vocabulary, due to the shared linguistic ancestry of the two languages.

Page also notes that at this stage the learner will be ‘stringing words together ungrammatically’. At this stage my students will have been introduced to, for example, a large number of compound prepositional pronouns, and would be expected to recognise and use them in idiomatic constructions - for example to express possession: *tha cat agam* (I have a cat), and also *tha mi a’ bruidhinn ris* (I am talking to him). Whereas the concept and construction of phrases using the compound prepositions poses less problems to the speakers of Irish than to non-Irish speakers, there is the possibility that the Irish learner might use inappropriate prepositions. In the example *tha mi a’ bruidhinn ris*, the Irish learner often wants to substitute the preposition *le / leis*, coming from the Irish *tá mé ag caint leis*. The preposition *le* also exists in Gaelic, but to use it in this situation would be wrong.

By now students will also have been introduced to the past, present and future tenses of regular verbs and the verb ‘to be’, which they will be able to use with varying degrees of

success. There is a problem with Irish 'language interference' at this stage, that the non-Irish speakers do not have.

As we know Gaelic and Irish have a different tense structure, Gaelic having fewer tenses than Irish. In order to make up for this apparent lack of tenses, Gaelic favours a system of periphrastic constructions to express different tenses and aspects. The Irish speaker will be familiar with these periphrastic constructions, as they also exist in Irish, though are not as widely used as in Gaelic, nor are they used in the same way. The students will firstly be taught how to express continuous action in the past, present and future using the relevant forms of the verb 'to be' and verbal noun.

e.g. a' cur

	PRESENT	PAST	FUTURE
G.	Tha mi a' cur	Bha mi a' cur	Bidh mi a' cur
I.	Tá mé ag cur	Bhí mé ag cur	Beidh mé ag cur

Although there is an apparent correspondence between the languages, there are differences. The English 'I put' can be expressed in two ways in Gaelic *tha mi a' cur* and *bidh mi a' cur*, which superficially correspond with Irish *tá mé ag cur* and *beidh mé ag cur*. Only the former of these Irish examples would be associated with the present (along with *cuirim*, which Gaelic does not have), whereas the latter would be associated only with a future meaning.

By extension, this cross-over of aspect and tense applies to all verbs in Gaelic. Gaelic *cuiridh mi*, which superficially relates to Irish *cuirfidh mé* ('I will put'), may mean 'I put' or 'I will put'. This frequently causes difficulty for the Irish-speaking student who finds it hard to disassociate what s/he knows about the tense system in Irish, when the languages look as if their tense systems behave in a somewhat similar fashion.

Stage 3

Stage 3 of my course for Irish speakers would involve a review of all the irregular verbs in Gaelic, some of which would have been encountered by this stage. I would also teach modal and auxiliary constructions - again some of which would have been encountered. In addition to the formal written aspects of the course, the students would also be required to do more aural and oral work.

Compared to Page's 'stage 3' learners the Irish learners can also 'form longer sentences, many well formed but most containing formal errors of some sort'. In this instance the errors are nearly always due to language interference. Page says his learners 'have a limited vocabulary'. This need not be the case with the Irish learner who may still have an advantage over the non-Irish learner, there still being a discrepancy in the receptive and productive vocabulary of the Irish-speaking learner. Although the Gaelic and Irish lexicon are similar, giving an apparent advantage to the Irish student of Gaelic, there is a problem with 'false friends'. I have noted a tendency in the students that when they are unsure of a Gaelic word, they will use an Irish word. Although this sometimes might work, it is often unacceptable and can lead to complete misunderstanding. Only familiarity with the target language assures correct lexical usage. Some examples of common 'false friends' are:

I.	ag cur as do (annoying)	G.	a' cur as do (killing)
	ní mór dom (I have to)		cha mhòr (barely/almost)
	b'fhéidir (perhaps)		b' fheudar dhomh (I had to)
	An Bhreatain Bheag (Wales)		A' Bhreatainn Bheag (Britanny)

Stage 4

Teaching to the 'stage four' learners is largely an exercise in promoting linguistic independence incorporating idiomatic constructions, revision of grammar points, new vocabulary, authentic texts for discussion and as models for free writing. At this level language interference often prevents the Irish-speaking student achieving the 'near native production' that Page identifies in his 'stage four' learners. Written assignments by my advanced learners often contain a disproportionately high amount of grammatical mistakes, compared to the non-Irish speaker at this stage. These mistakes would not normally be made by them when completing tasks centred around particular grammar points, but when they are required to write creatively, interference is present.

At this stage, students often still make the mistake of trying to use a non-existent present tense, based on their knowledge of the Irish tense system. The dative case in Gaelic is particularly problematic for the students, whereas nominative, genitive and vocative are not. The Irish-speaking students may initially appear to have a distinct advantage over their non-Irish speaking counterparts being familiar with the concept of initial mutation following certain prepositions. However, there is a tendency to treat nouns following simple prepositions in Gaelic in the same way as they behave in Irish; this would not be acceptable as correct Gaelic. Comparison of how the (shared) nouns *bòrd* / *bord* (masculine) and *gealach* (feminine) behave after simple prepositions, when definite and indefinite, illustrates where the students' difficulties arise. The Irish examples follow the standard Irish practices; northern dialects would of course behave differently.

G.	bòrd beag, air bòrd beag, am bòrd beag, air a' bhòrd beag
I.	bord beag, ar bhord beag, an bord beag, ar an mbord beag
G.	gealach bheag, air gealach bheag, a' ghealach bheag, air a' ghealaich bhig
I.	gealach bheag, ar ghealach bheag, an ghealach bheag, ar an ngealach bheag

Students have an erroneous tendency to lenite indefinite nouns following most simple prepositions, when only 'bho', 'fo', 'do', 'de', 'mu', 'ro', and 'tro' cause contact mutation in Gaelic. When the noun is definite the students often want to use eclipsis and they struggle with the internal changes to the nouns and following adjectives.

As regards oral competency at this advanced stage in their Gaelic course, there are often some major flaws which can prevent 'the near native production' Page noted in stage four. My students are obviously learning in a very artificial environment with little or no chance to practice their language skills outside the classroom, except with each other if they choose to do so. If they do choose to do this it can pose a number of problems, as does getting the students to talk to each other in pair or group work in class. When talking to one another, they very quickly lapse into Irish pronunciation of certain phonemic items. There are several Gaelic sounds in particular which I have noted the students struggling with - these sounds often share an orthographic representation with a different sound in Irish.

For example, 'ao' in Gaelic is pronounced /u:/ and, approximately, /i:/ or /e:/ in Irish - so shared words such as *craobh*, *aon* and *daoine* are pronounced differently. 'mh' is often pronounced /w/ in Irish whereas it is usually /v/ in Gaelic, and sometimes silent. The '-adh' suffix is nearly always voiced in Gaelic, but rarely in Irish and is normally rendered as /ə/.

Other pronunciation problems which are still prevalent at this stage are stress patterns, the consistent production of authentic Gaelic 'l's, 'n's and 'r's and the production of preaspiration so that *cat* will be pronounced /k^haht/, Gaelic, and not /kat/, Irish, and *mac* will be pronounced, for example, /maxc/ or /mahc/ and not /mac/.

Conclusion

The Irish-speaking learners of Gaelic are often able to make themselves understood more quickly than non-Irish speakers. In terms of achieving 'near-native' competencies, however, interference from the cognate language makes this goal at least as hard for them as it is for the non-Irish speaking student.

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Waiting for TV-Breizh?

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Abstract

Until two years ago such a phrase would have been equivalent to Beckett's "Waiting for Godot", so hopeless (or at least far ahead) did it seem for Breton speakers to finally get the adequate TV service in their language that most of their Celtic counterparts had secured for themselves in the 1980s or 90s (S4C in Wales, the CTG financed programmes in Scotland, and TnaG - now TG4 - in Ireland). But things are changing...

Reversing language shift in Brittany ?

After the dramatic drop in the number of speakers throughout the XXth century (from 1,5 million after World War I to 1 million after World War II to an estimated 240 000 in 1997), the main challenge facing the Breton language for its survival into the XXIst century and beyond is most certainly the near extinction of family transmission within the homes.

In a survey published in 1998 by the INED (National Institute of Demographic Studies) about various language communities in France, native or migrant alike, Breton shows the lowest rate of transmission, close to 0%. In the *Euromosaic* report (*production and reproduction of minority language communities in the European Union*) published in 1996 by the European Commission, Breton ranked 32nd out of 48 communities, with a rating of 8 for "reproduction" on a scale graded from 1 à 28.

The authors of the *Euromosaic* report, Belgian P.Nelde, Catalan M.Strubell and Welshman G.Williams considered that situation to be "[...] a consequence of the extreme position of the French state by reference to the modernist goal of cultural and linguistic homogenisation, and the associated denigration and neglect of minority language groups within its territory. This has certainly been responsible for generating a profound negative identity among members of the respective language groups . Furthermore, while the current situation begins to approximate a situation of benign neglect, there is little indication of any policy development that seeks to redress the situation."

A merely mechanistic analysis of the demographic situation of the language could lead to the conclusion that Breton is doomed. But the socio-linguistic trends of the past 20 years should allow us to think quite differently. Seemingly, the very socio-economic factors that contributed to the decline of the language during the transition from a traditional society to the industrial era are now the basis of its present revival.

Far from being a nostalgic attitude, the promotion of the social and educational use of Breton is widespread in the general public. The age of "negative identity" is over and done with for a

growing number of Bretons : a poll carried out in 1991 in the Finistère/Penn ar Bed (the westernmost part of Brittany) showed that 94,5% of the people surveyed thought that the language should be retained, among which non Breton speakers were the most determined. Even the French population as a whole think that "regional" languages should be recognized and protected (77% in favour of a law and 19% against in 1994).

Counting on schools

For decades, nobody but a few really cared about the decline of the language : Bretons were busy studying - through the medium of French - to become civil servants (and therefore often emigrate) ; or else, when they stayed on the farm, they were fighting off degrading stereotypes by becoming more and more competitive all the time.

Its presence in the environment was felt to be so "natural" that no one could imagine it possible for Breton to disappear. The new generations, deprived from the language and therefore unable to pass it down to their own children by themselves, have developed a deep sense of loss. Feeling that they had been dispossessed of part of what they were, they are the ones who have strongly demanded Breton medium schools, and even created them (Diwan) when they weren't granted.

Since the first Diwan school was set up 22 years ago, and despite the fact that the overall numbers of school age children in Brittany have been going down steadily since then, Breton medium education hasn't ceased to increase in numbers (between +15 and +20 % every year), also in state and catholic schools, to reach the global figure of 5600 students in september 1999. Although family transmission is unbeatable when it comes to language maintenance, the growing social demand for Breton medium education, as a substitute, can be considered a vital criteria that marks off a language of the future from a purely residual phenomenon.

The demand would originally come from educated lower middle class families, but the recruitment is increasingly diverse now, becoming closer all the time to the local community's socio-cultural structure : even though social careers (and teachers in particular) are still overrepresented, more and more workers, employees and farmers are sending their children to Breton-medium schools. All the more so since bilingual children's school results have been found very good : educational authorities have avoided conducting a general assessment of their standards in Breton as yet, but national evaluations in French and maths at primary and secondary level have confirmed their excellent level, and the first three generations of Diwan teenagers have passed their baccalaureat (leaving certificate).

Breton is now generally seen as a dynamic element in a society that has to find new solutions within itself to transcend such crisis as agricultural overproduction and its environmental consequences, or the end of state assisted industries like the navy arsenals. Cultural activities and production, often language linked, provide more and more qualified jobs - without having to emigrate. They also generate profits in other sectors of the economy, increasingly eager for "authenticity" (tourism, food industry,etc), through the positive image conveyed internationally by Breton musicians and singers.

Not surprisingly, the newest developments in this permanent search for non-standardized products have taken place in the communication and media sector : the Breton Language

Office, set up in June 1999, region and state funded ; new Breton language radio stations and internet sites ; and a television private venture due to go on the air on August 4th, 2000, during the Lorient Interceltic Festival : TV-Breizh.

What can the media do ?

Joshua Fishman writes in *Reversing Language Shift* : "Even the much touted mass media are insufficiently interpersonal, child-orientated, affect-suffused, societally binding to attain cumulative intergenerational mother-tongue transmission, particularly so since the proportion of Yish [i.e.French] utilized by the media will long (and perhaps always) be greater than the proportion of Xish [i.e.Breton]. [...] The favorable outcomes of the Hebrew, Catalan and Quebec French cases *did not begin with* work, media or government Xization ; they began with the acquisition of a firm family-neighborhood-community base." Having said that, he also adds further in his book that "the importance of Xishization of these services and influences is beyond question". As head of TV-Breizh Rozenn Milin when interviewed by a French TV magazine : "I don't know if we'll manage to reverse the decline of the Breton language, but it's important to try".

For the past two decades, those few families (a few thousand people across Brittany at most) who did transmit the language in their homes and/or send their children to Breton medium schools expressed their frustration over the lack of adequate Breton TV programmes for the youth, but they weren't strong enough a lobby to have any influence on the issue. Hence the ridiculously small amount of hours (85 h a year...) broadcast in Breton on France3Ouest, the state run public television service.

All programmes are broadcast during the most inconvenient time slots (lunchtime, Saturday afternoon, Sunday morning) ; after a short-lived attempt at providing programmes for all ages and tastes in the 80s, nearly all programmes now belong to the "news-current affairs" category, to suit the mainly ageing target audience (a 1994 survey by the INSEE - National Institute of Statistics - found that 300 000 people listened to TV or radio programmes, at least sometimes, out of 689 000 who said they understood Breton. But listeners and viewers were rather old : 159 000 above 60 and only 21 500 under 30. Most of them didn't get an extensive education: 171 000 had been to school until the age of 14/15. 31 000 out of 39 000 regular listeners/viewers were retired) ; all programmes are now subtitled in French (without any opt out) except for the daily 4'30" news - which are discontinued during the summer ; finally, you won't have access to the same amount of Breton programmes if you live in the West (all programmes, the news being the most successful with *circa* 20 000 viewers daily), the East (no daily news... unless you go on the internet !) or the South (only Sundays).

Television programmes in Breton (and radio programmes to a lesser extent) are at the same time *the* popular media, so to speak, with a population which is generally a lot more familiar with the oral message than with the written word (contrary to the Welsh public for example). Quite naturally for a language that has presently no widespread accepted standard form, people often complain - though sometimes with an obvious lack of goodwill - that the dialectal variety of people interviewed, or indeed the attempted "central" expression of the announcers is an obstacle to comprehension.

Over the past two years the whole picture has been changing rapidly : following a project carried out by the Cultural Council of Brittany, an umbrella organization for all language and

culture groups, and the commentating of the soccer World Cup in Breton on Eurosport, the Breton born president of TF1 (the biggest private channel in Europe) announced in October 1998 that he would launch a bilingual satellite/cable digital television channel broadcasting across Europe, an information that was confirmed in April 1999 in the Isle of Skye during the Interceltic Film and Television Festival.

The challenges facing TV-Breizh

Audience

Market research allegedly showed that Brittany was the only region in the state with both a strong identity and enough population (4million), plus an important diaspora in France and Europe with strong attachment to the old country. Even if broadcasting costs are getting cheaper all the time, due to digital technology, those were conditions that made the project viable. The potential audience will initially be the 75 000 households with access to cable television in Brittany (2 million in France), and the 100 000 equipped with satellite dishes. Considering that both figures are on the increase, and also that Brittany will be the first region to get digital terrestrial television in 2002, the aim is to have 200 000 viewers after 4 years of broadcasting.

Funding

TV-Breizh will be a private channel with private funding. Anybody in France and Europe will be able to receive TV-Breizh provided they have subscribed to the multiplex by satellite or cable. Advertisement and sponsoring will be part of the funding too. The initial budget was to be over 100 million francs a year, it will be closer to 80 million - 1/10th of Welsh S4C's annual budget - causing the channel to give up on news (unfortunately, because Breton would have had access to international, not just local news). Industrialists of Breton origins will be the main investors, but also international TV tycoons such as Berlusconi and Murdoch. This brought about controversy over the cultural quality and the general ideology of the channel : in a country where the public/private and left/right divides are historically vivid, reconciling these opposite views will therefore be yet another challenge.

Programming

TV-Breizh will broadcast daily from 7 a.m to 1 a.m. The 5 to 6 hour grid of "fresh" programmes, between 5.30 p.m and 22.30 p.m (repeated 3 times a day) will be as follows :

- 1h30 of children's programmes (including cartoons)
- 1h of "Breton and Celtic" music (ranging from traditional to U2)
- two 20 mn talk-shows (political/economical, then cultural/sports)
- from 20.30 p.m, alternatively : movies (twice a week, from the wide "Celtic" catalogue : Irish, Scottish, Welsh films, or else US films on Celtic themes), documentaries (including on Breton history, emigration, etc) and magazines (maritime, sports, culture,etc)
- there will be short clips for total beginners to get acquainted with the language, by presenting some aspects of Breton vocabulary through humorous cartoons. That will lead, in the second year of broadcasting, to a full learning programme under the form of a daily sitcom.

What place for Breton ?

Viewers subscribing primarily for the language will obviously be a minority, but the channel's commitment to broadcast in Breton will be made easier by digital technology, through the use of two sound channels on option, one for each language. That choice will be made possible for all children's programmes and for documentaries from the start. As for feature films, only one a month will be available in the Breton version (dubbed from English) during the first year, then one a week. Talk-shows invitees will be welcome to use Breton whenever they happen to be speakers of the language... and willing to do so. Altogether there should be an average of 2 hours of Breton daily (broadcast three times) .

Educational implications

"Television is for watching, television is for fun, not for teaching" would still be quite a common view among the public, and probably even more so among teachers, who often see it as nothing short of a (badly) influential rival. And so it is, in a way. But it has become such a big part of children's and teenagers' lives, conversations and concerns that schools simply can't ignore it anymore. Parents of Breton speaking children had until now a narrow range of moving pictures to choose from : just a few cartoons released on videos, but these were also usually showed... at school.

The very fact that a daily peak-time children's programme will exist - be it on a paying channel that not everyone will get, be it dubbed mostly from British, American or Australian programmes - is going to change a lot of things in the schoolyard. It will also modify the image that non-speakers have of the Breton language. Especially so since TV-Breizh have also announced that they want to be an interactive channel with a strong multimedia presence.

It could change things within the classroom too, way beyond the sitcom for learners itself. "Celtic" cultural background programmes will be preferred whenever possible : a cartoon version of Tristan and Izold is currently being dubbed, and some "historical" feature films - Hollywood and others - will follow. Some of that material will be usable in schools without fear for embarrassment : a big change, since fiction production in Breton has been rare and, one must admit, often not very good (due to shortage of trained scriptwriters, filmmakers, actors, and of course time and money, but there's hope that, through dubbing, a new generation will be able to make their own films in due course, that could eventually amount to 30% of the total).

For the past decade anyway, only documentaries - some very good ones - and news/current affairs programmes have been produced, but they don't have the same effect as fiction on a child's imagination and expression. TES (Ti Embann ar Skolioù - the multimedia resource centre for Breton medium schools) for example have released, in cooperation with France3Ouest, a compilation of agricultural news items: hardly something you'd use everyday.

What is the main objective of using TV news programmes (or radio or audio-tapes, for that matter, although they're not as successful with the pupils) ? In the Breton context of a declining social use, it is, most certainly, to enrich the sometimes overstandardized language used in schools by bringing right into the classroom the richness of all varieties of Breton

(accents, dialects, registers, men and women, young and old, etc) while keeping in mind that the Breton population has of course become very mobile and isn't living.

That richness should be kept in TV-Breizh programmes, despite the technical constraints of synchronized dubbing, because Rozenn Milin has made sure to recruit translators and studio actors across all those varieties, and the commitment to use a rich, but authentic language has been stressed throughout their month-long training during the summer of 1999, especially when it comes to accentuation and intonation.

TV-Breizh translators will have to deal with the same old dilemmas (dialectal/"standard" ; loanwords/neologisms ; code-switching and mixing, etc) as other sectors, except with a much greater responsibility. Some challenges actually sound very exciting : which of our dialects will we use to dub the Scots, their Irish allies... and their English enemies in Braveheart ?

Another predictable outcome : with the boost to all sectors of the Breton audio-visual industry (including France3Ouest, hopefully), Breton teaching will at last lead to more careers than just those of... Breton teaching.

Living Celtic Speech: Celtic Sound Archives in North America

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Abstract

This paper will provide a preliminary survey of various archives throughout North America that have Celtic language recordings. In general, it will treat only collections that are held at institutions as opposed to ones that are in the possession of private individuals. Also it will not, for the most part, consider holdings that are outside North America, although they may contain much interesting North American material. Therefore Archives such as those of the BBC, the School of Scottish Studies and the Department of Irish Folklore in Dublin or Radio na Gaeltachta will not be considered. These are the general guidelines but there may in fact be one or two deviations from them in the course of the paper.

To begin it might be well to consider briefly the history of sound recording. As we were leaving the 1990s and entering the year 2000 one heard more and more reference to the invention of sound recording. Some months back National Public Radio in the United States started a series of programs which play excerpts from recordings made over the course of the twentieth century. In November of 1999, the Canadian Broadcasting Company, acknowledging the lead of NPR, also started a radio series entitled "Lost and Found Sound" which plays home recordings made by Canadians in past decades.

Sound recording was invented in 1877 by Thomas Edison, just one hundred years too late to record Dolly Pentreath of Cornwall. Edison's first device used tin foil. Tin foil was soon replaced by wax cylinders. Edison was followed by a number of others, such as the German-born Emile Berliner, who invented the gramophone in the 1880s and also was the first to use disks to record sound. Berliner produced a series of disks between 1888 and 1901 which included vocal selections sung in English, French, Italian, Russian, Spanish and at least one piece in Scottish Gaelic. The Gaelic selection was recorded in Glasgow on September 5, 1899 and features the soprano Jessie Niven MacLachlan singing "Oro Mo Nighean Donn Bhòidheach" to piano accompaniment. These recordings of Berliner's were re-issued in CD format in 1988 to commemorate the centenary of the invention of the gramophone. The Loeb Music Archive at Harvard has a copy of the CD and they have given me permission to play the Gaelic track here.

As early as 1901 the music of Irish piper Patrick Tuohey had been recorded and phonograph selections of his were being advertised for sale in the New York Irish World. In the early years of this century a number of Irish Gaelic language courses on record, some produced in

Ireland, some in the United States, were advertised in Irish American publications. These advertisements are interesting in that they stress the importance of learning to speak the language and one even points out that a person who cannot read can learn with this method.

By the late 1920s various recording techniques were being used to record Celtic folklore and linguistic data. In 1929 James Delargy became the first investigator to use the Ediphone to record Irish folklore (Dorson 1966). In 1931 Professor Dögen who was director of the Lautabteilung of the Preussische Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, made a number of 78 r.p.m. disk recordings of most Irish dialects that were still extant, including eighty disks of Ulster dialects. For further information on this project see the Appendix to the *Minutes of the Royal Irish Academy*, Session 1928/29 and Colm Ó Baoill's texts in Appendix II of volume 4 of Heinrich Wagner's *Linguistic Atlas and Survey of Irish Dialects*, p. 283-303.

Let us turn now to North America and we will begin in Nova Scotia with Helen Creighton, one of the early collectors of folklore. Creighton was a remarkable woman who became an icon in Nova Scotia and indeed all of Canada. She was born to an affluent family in 1899 in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia just across the harbor from Halifax. In 1928 she was a journalist looking for a story line. Someone suggested that she do a story on pirates and pirate songs and mentioned that she might be able to get some material by talking to people in a small coastal village outside of Halifax. She went there, met just the right tradition bearers and thus stumbled into her lifelong vocation as a collector of folklore. Just outside the Halifax area she was to continue to find a treasure trove of English-language folklore, including a good many Child ballads. In 1933, she traveled to remote Cape Breton, accompanied by a music teacher, to collect folksongs but she did not yet have a recording device. Miss Creighton tells us in the introduction to her *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia* that she and her companion were perplexed to discover that most of the people they met in Cape Breton had either French songs or Gaelic songs (Creighton and MacLeod 1964). They decided to go for what they considered the more exotic Gaelic songs and succeeded in taking down the notation of forty Gaelic songs that weekend. In 1943 the Library of Congress supplied Creighton with a recorder which enabled her to take down Gaelic and French songs as easily as English. Over the course of her collecting career which lasted into the 1970s, Creighton recorded hundreds of Gaelic songs in Cape Breton, the eastern mainland of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. The interesting thing is that she says that she never sought out Gaelic songs and she never attempted to learn Gaelic but if Gaelic songs were what people offered to sing for her, she accepted them readily. She published 150 of these songs in 1964 in the book referred to above, *Gaelic Songs in Nova Scotia*. Calum MacLeod of St. Francis Xavier University supplied the Gaelic texts which he transcribed from Creighton's tapes and he also made the translations. There are still many more of Creighton's Gaelic tapes that have never been published. These are housed in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia in Halifax along with the thousands of tapes she collected of English and French material. Copies of some of her material are also found at the Library of Congress in Washington and at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa. In November of last year a biography of Creighton was published, authored by Clary Croft who worked with Helen Creighton in her last years cataloguing her collection.

Just at the time Helen Creighton was taking an interest in Nova Scotia folklore, John Lorne Campbell of Scotland was absorbed by the question of Gaelic in Canada. Campbell had studied Gaelic at Oxford with Professor John Fraser. Campbell moved to Barra and became the first to use the Ediphone to collect Scottish Gaelic folklore. In 1932 he visited Nova