MÉLANIE JOUITTEAU

THE POLITENESS SYSTEMS OF ADDRESS, VARIATIONS ACROSS BRETON DIALECTS

A b s t r a c t. This paper provides a synthesis of the various address systems in Breton dialects, and their evolution during the last century. It discusses the available data and provides the elicitation results from recent fieldwork. Three distinct address systems are described: hierarchical T–V (plurals are directed to superiors as a V form), gendered T–V (plurals are directed to women and girls as a V form), and non-dual (the once singular marker noted †2SG is missing in all of the paradigms, and the once plural form noted †V is the unique address pronoun and does not realise a formal marker). These systems are mapped to their respective territories of usage and an analysis is offered of the diachronic evolution and the cross-influences of these three systems over the last century. Most of the speakers in the central and southern area are restricted to a unique address pronoun, like Modern English *you*. This system is gaining ground towards the coasts, where a distinctive T address among male close friends or relatives gives rise to a T–V gendered system like in Welsh (Watkins). In the remaining North and South-East areas, a hierarchical T–V system organised centrally around age and social status is resisting the extension of the central area much more. Evidence is presented for independent subsystems inside both T–V systems: addresses to animals, to clergymen and to God. Occasional inversion of an expected marker serves emotionally charged interactions (aggressive T, hypocoristic V).

Keywords: dialectology; politeness systems; systems of address; Breton; T–V systems; pronoun.

1. INTRODUCTION

Celtic languages have a singular/plural opposition in pronouns of address, see (1) below (Morris Jones 270–71; MacAulay 160). In Standard Modern Breton, this dual opposition is observable in dependent pronouns, pronominal objects of prepositions, or inflected verbs (2a vs 2b). The plural form is compatible with a unique addressee to which is shown politeness and respect, as it is in Welsh, Scottish Gaelic and Breton (2b). In the following, dual address systems are represented by the T–V acronym (from the emblematic French *Tu-Vous* system), where T stands for familiarity forms, and V for formal forms. Both T and V forms rely on a morphologically dual opposition because they are complementary in their usage.

(1)   English French Breton Cornish Welsh   Irish Gaelic Manx

	English	French	Breton	Cornish	Welsh	Irish	Gaelic	Manx
SG	*you*	*toi*	*te*	*ty*	*ti, chdi*	*tú*	*thu*	*oo*
PL	*you*	*vous*	*c'hwi*	*hwi*	*chi, chwi*	*sibh*	*sibh*	*shiu*

(2)   a.   **Te** **n'out**   *ket fur*   (*ac'han**out***) *!*   SG, T forms, *Standard Breton*
           T   neg'are.T   not quiet of.you.T

     b.   **C'hwi,** **n'oc'h**   *ket fur*   (*ac'han**oc'h***) *!*   PL and SG, V forms
           V   neg'are.V   not quiet of.you.V
        'No, YOU are not behaving!'

Some Breton traditional dialects lack this dual opposition. They lack an unambiguously singular address pronoun: (2a) is not recognised or is judged ungrammatical (†2SG). For both plural and singular addresses, irrespectively of familiarity, their only second person pronoun is a dialectal variation of the forms in (2b). This situation resembles English with its loss of the old singular forms of the address pronouns and a reduction of the pronominal paradigms to the once plural form (*you*). These Breton dialects have no deference marker because the absence of dual opposition amounts to the loss of a formal form (in short, if there is only *c'hwi,* then †V). The available pedagogical material and Standard Breton grammars do not provide further details (Kervella §423). The goal of this paper is to map with exactitude the address rules that speakers obey in each dialectal politeness system, from the end of pre-modern Breton to the twenty-first century.

1.1 Methodology and resources

I start with an inventory of the available morphological paradigms in local varieties because pragmatic usage depends on each speaker's morphological inventory.

The first set of resources consists of several maps from the first Atlas (*Atlas Linguistique de la Basse-Bretagne*, ALBB, Le Roux) published between 1924 and 1953. Its data was collected at the very end of pre-modern Breton, mostly before the first World War. The maps are remarkably exhaustive for the morphological inventory of pronouns in all morpho-syntactic contexts, for example with independent pronouns (map 70 for the contrastive pronoun of 'you, you were (sick)'), incorporated pronouns (maps 107 or 502, 'to you.SG' and 'to you.PL'), or verbal forms (map 237, 'you know.SG'). However, the translation protocols gave no context of address. From these data, it is impossible to guess who is supposed to use politeness forms when addressing whom in one's Breton system. The study of gendered systems is difficult. Most of the speakers interviewed before the First World War were men.[1] In 1927, Le Goff explored the Gwenedeg morphological system of address in a short article, with some comments on usage. During the Second World War, the periodic *L'Arvor* called for its readers to report their address practices (Riwall 4). I found no trace of the results in the following issues of the journal, but the grammarian Hemon ("Te pe c'hwi?") published two short articles in *Gwalarn*. In what follows, all of the reports from 1942 come from this precious synthesis of testimonies on local usages. The second Atlas (*Nouvel Atlas Linguistique de la Basse-Bretagne*, NALBB, Le Dû) in 2001 provides some diachronic perspective on the central non-dual area, but only for the independent pronoun forms, again from non-contextualised French translations (maps 455 and 456). The collecting points do not coincide with those of the ALBB. Some notes in the margins of the maps comment on usage. I have compared these data to academic monographs on local dialects, novels or theatre plays, in order to shed light on usages at a given point.

In 2019, I have presented an elicitation protocol to seven native speakers of various traditional dialects, who all declared a frequent use of the language. The speakers were asked to provide in writing their age, gender and dialect of provenance, before translating contextualised sentences from French. The protocol asked for translations featuring addresses to a great

---

[1] Due to losses in World War I, some women were also interviewed in 1920, mostly on the coasts. A cross-examination of the results is impossible.

grandfather, a 5-year-old sister or cousin, a spouse, a male of female acquaintance, a woman in the street, a cat, a spider, an old man in a car (driving invectives), a clergyman and God (Jouitteau, "Kontañ kaoz"). Finally, a friend has provided me with a detailed description of his family address practices over three generations—I will provide this in the final analysis in order to illustrate the instability of gendered systems in the twentieth century.

I refer to the Breton dialects by the traditional terms (Leon in the northwest, Gwened in the southeast, and a more innovative central area located between Kerne in the southwest and Treger in the northeast). The diachronic evolution is constructed around four separated times: the beginning of the twentieth century (ALBB), the 1942 testimonies in Hemon ("Te pe c'hwi?"), the end of the twentieth century (NALBB), and 2019 (my own fieldwork). In the above sources, I have favoured self-reports of usage, because people tend to misinterpret the usages of others: someone whose unique address pronoun is *c'hwi* sounds very formal to a dual (T–V) speaker, who wrongly interprets a formal V form (recall that only *c'hwi* means obsolescence of †V). Moreover, T–V systems vary with respect to their key features. Speakers for whom the dual system is blind to gender can wrongly generalise over a gendered usage they have heard. A priest and a little girl are both suitably addressed by *c'hwi* in Kerne but are maximally differentiated in the Leon system. A *te* pronoun can be prototypical of male close friends in some places in Kerne, whereas in some places in Leon *te* can express address to a complete stranger or to a despised spouse. Methodologically, the perceived sex of the linguist presenting the protocol can be of relevance. When questioned by a man, women tend to report the men's usages. Men have less pragmatic incentive to comment on women's usages. In most of the twentieth-century sources, information on women's usages is partial or absent, and has to be carefully reconstructed.

The paper is structured as follows. In the first section, I present a map of the vast central area where the address system is reduced to the plural form. Once this area has been delimited, I map the different T–V systems according to the features driving their distribution. I next describe the different frontier phenomena observed. I analyse the diachronic evolution of the *c'hwi* †V area. I show that, apart from a southern progression mainly towards Kerne, the dialectal mapping of politeness practices, internally to the Breton language, is mostly stable. I conclude with a discussion and analysis of the results, taking into account language attrition and the influence of French on the now bilingual speakers.

2. DELIMITING THE *C'HWI* ZONE

In this section, I locate on a map the dialectal area where the specific second person singular markers are absent. In this central dialect, *c'hwi* is the independent second person pronoun for both singular and plural addresses. No formal distinction in address is ever made (†V). The map I provide below is a modification of map 70 of the ALBB from the beginning of the twentieth century. I have added the main locations discussed later. Placenames are in Breton, numbered by traditional dialects: Leon is (1–13), Treger is (15–25), Kerne is (30–57), Gwened is (60–90). The darkened area signals the non-dual *c'hwi* †V system; the darker the dots, the older the information they reflect. The heart of this area is not colored for reasons of readability, but the non--dual systems are likely to emanate from it.

ALBB (n° 70 : *toi 2SG*)

5 km

✦ reported gendered address
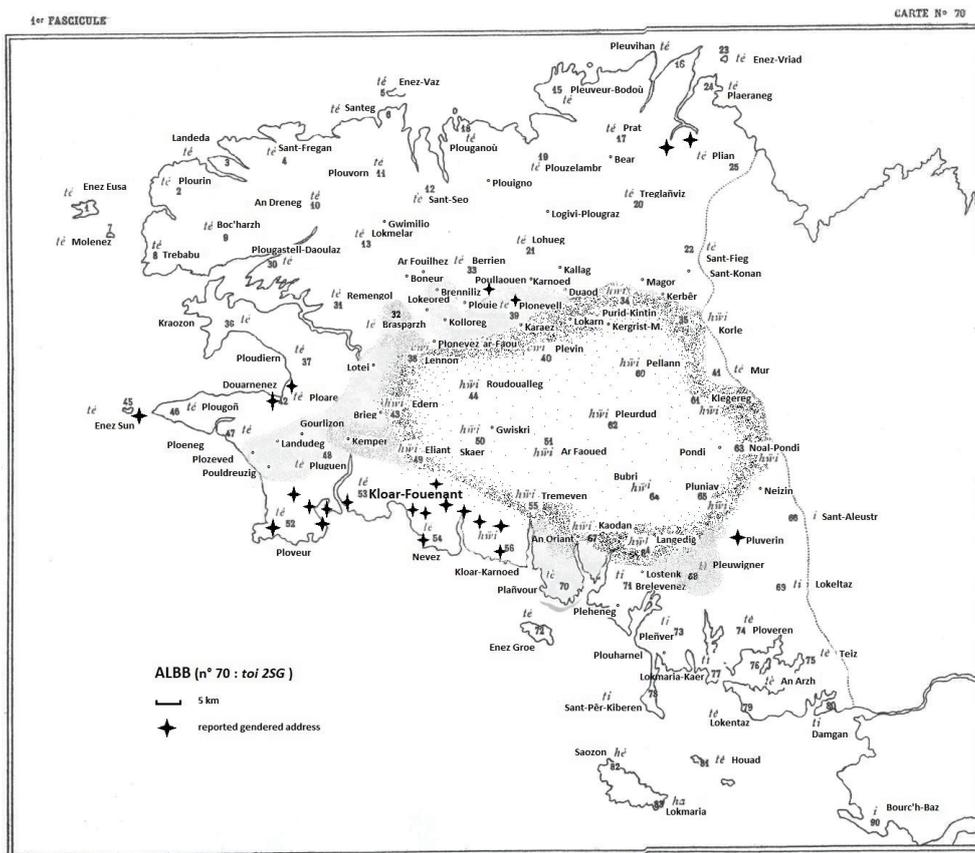
I locate the epicentre of the non-dual *c'hwi* area around Skaer (50), where speakers were clearly restricted to forms in *c'hwi* at the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1952, Naoned (61) notes that only *c'hwi* is known in Skaer and Gwiskri, which corroborates two different testimonies in *Gwalarn* ten years earlier. I inspect the frontier clockwise, starting in the north.

2.1 The northern frontier

In 1942, the non-dual area excludes Ar Fouilhez (west of 33): a mother addresses her children using the T form. Brenniliz, 4 km south, however, is inside the non-dual area. In 1978, Morvannou (252), from Kolloreg, counts Brasparzh (32) as also being in. In Solliec, Lokeored in 2015 still has the two forms (even if not organised in a T–V system, see section 4). NALBB finds a T form in Boneur. In Lannedern, east of Brasparzh, a speaker notes the presence of T in Plonevez-ar-Faou, east of Lennon (38). In Kolloreg, a speaker associates the T form with Plouie.

In Hemon's "Te pe c'hwi?", a speaker reports the case of a housemaid in Karaez-(Plouger) before World War II who did not understand the peasants who addressed her in *te*. She had such poor contacts with T–V speakers that she did not even have passive knowledge of *te*. Both Barzhig in 1942 and Falc'hun in 1951 confirm the absence of *te* in familiarity exchanges in Karaez and 15 km east in Mael-Karaez. In Plevin (40), 10 km south of Karaez-(Plouguer), the man interviewed for the ALBB replied with a single form of address for all paradigms, except for 'with you' where he gave *ginit-te*, a singular form (map 209, point 40), revealing partial contact with a T–V system. In the NALBB, a Motreff speaker (south of Karaez) comments on the familiarity T in Poullaouen. Plonevell (39) had *te* in 1913, but Wmffre (25) locates it in the *c'hwi* area in 1998, in contrast with Poullaouen, 10 km northwest, which is still outside.

Ar Barzhig in 1942 reported a dual system in Karnoed and Kallag, the latter confirmed by a NALBB speaker from Kergrist-Moelou. In Lokarn, another speaker reports that T is used in Duaod. NALBB reports the testimony of a speaker from Sant-Servez (Leon, between points 10 and 13) familiar with T–V alternations, who notes the contrast with Southern Lokarn ("In Lo[k]arn, we would say *hwi* to everybody"). According to Humphreys' speakers (317) in 1985, *te* is commonly used in Magor and Kerien-Boulvriag (closest west), in Sant-Konan, and sporadically in Kerbêr.

In the east, Korle is clearly within the area, at least for the 1912 woman who has only *c'hwi* forms in the ALBB. She has no singular for the possessives

(map 323), object pronouns of the preposition *diouzh* (map 502) or *da* (map 107), nor for the verb *emañ* 'to be' (map 64). We do not know if it was the same for men. In Sant-Fieg (22), 19 km north, again in 1912, another woman has a unique form for the object of *da* 'to' (map 107), but a dual system for the rest of the paradigms, and even for the preposition *diouzh* 'from, to' (map 502).

The northern frontier may have progressed some km north in the north-west of Karaez, but seems otherwise stable. Near the end of the twentieth century, NALBB has a speaker familiar with T–V in Gwimilio (Leon, between points 12 and 13) who reports that in Lambaol(-Gwimilio), 4 km west, "one says *c'hwi*." These locations are far outside of the *c'hwi* area. At the same point of Gwimilio, a speaker (possibly the same one) thinks that more and more T forms are used. I take his comments to be indicative of the existence of two different systems.

2.2 The southern frontier

The easternmost points of the non-dual southern frontier include eastern Gwenedeg, a 5 km-long area of land following the Blavezh River (Hemon, *Historical Morphology* §51, n1, and specifically Le Goff in 1927 and R. Kadig in 1942 for Pondi, Loeiz Herrieu in 1942 for Henbont between 67 and 84, Crahe in 2013 for Langedig 84). In the NALBB, the *c'hwi* zone excludes Neizin, Sant-Aleustr (66), Pluverin, Pleuwigner (68), Lostenk and Pleheneg. The southern progression here is very recent in Pleuwigner, where children younger than four years old squabble in *c'hwi* (3). The code-switching example in (4) confirms the vitality of the non-dual system: a French pronominal T form co-occurs with the Breton -*it* V verbal marker (2).

(3) **C'hwi** n' **oc'h**   *ket fur!*   Child in Pleuwigner, aged 3 (Mermet 137)
     †V   neg'are.†V not quiet
     'YOU are not behaving.'

(4) *Nann!* **Tu**   *laoskit!*   Child, aged 3 (Mermet annexe B)
     no   T.(French)   let.go.†V(Breton)
     'No! YOU let (it go to me)!'

Further west, the non-dual uses in the An Oriant/Kaodan area persists into the 21st century (in 2011 Cheveau, "Breton de Ploemeur" 30; also in 2011 Ar Borgn for Ar Scorff) and expands towards the coast. Plañvour (70) lost T during the twentieth century, and it is also absent in 2007 in Gwidel and

Kewenn north of Plañvour (Cheveau "Direct Object," "Breton de Ploemeur").
This is despite the T–V influence of Groe island.[2] Further west in Kerne,
a 1911 innkeeper in Kloar-Karnoed (56), and it is unclear whether it is a man
or a woman, has no T form for verbs, possessives or the preposition *da* 'to
you' (maps 237, 244, 323), but has for the preposition *diouzh* 'to you' (map
502). T is present in Kloar and the surrounding coastal villages in 1986 and
2017 (Bouzeg 31; Bouzec et al. 491, 501). The non-dual system is cor-
roborated in the interior in Sant-Turian, Banaleg, An Trev, Lokunole,
Gwelegouarc'h and Tremeven (55). In Meslan near (51), NALBB reports
passive knowledge of singular forms, only "heard in songs and stories."
Trépos (206) considers Kemper to be non-dual.

In 1911, the westernmost point includes Edern (43). NALBB adds the
closest parishes of Brieg and Lotei. Brieg had shifted: in 1945, Ar Scao had
reported T forms, out of use in 2019 (Noyer 171, 172, 189). The same
change is manifest 40 km south-west, in the Bigouden area. The 1911
Ploeneg (47) informant of the ALBB had a robust SG–PL distinction (he had
also lived 14 years in Gwaien, 5 km west). For a man from Pouldreuzig, and
who was born in 1914, T was alive, but restricted to aggressive contexts
(Helias). By the end of the twentieth century, the T form is absent in
Pouldreuzig and Plogastell-Sant-Jermen (east of Pluguen 48). In 2019,
Michelle Nicolas confirms a unique form of address in *fi* (= Standard *c'hwi*)
to all humans (5) and animals, even in aggressive contexts, from
Pouldreuzig, Landudeg and Plozeved (6).

(5) **Fi**   *voar   lac'h peus digonget* **oc'h** *lior kan di sadorn?!*   Plozeved
     you.†V know that   have forgotten your. †V book song Saturday
     'You know you forgot your songbook on Saturday?!' (equally to man or woman)

(6) *ma jong d'oc'h   lac'h yac'h   giset!*
     if   thinks to.you.†V that   will.go.†V like.that
     'If you think you're going to escape!'   (threatening a spider)

---

[2] There is a T–V dual system in Groe, where the SG form appears as *as* or *ha* (see section 3,
and Le Goff). The dual opposition is illustrated by *ha **k**ani* 'your.T' (= Standard *da hini*) vs. *u **k**ani*
'your. V' (= Standard *hoc'h hini*) (cf. ALBB maps 323, 325, point 72), even if both markers trigger
the same mutations (*ha **t**orn* 'your.T hand', *mé ha **k**uélou* 'I will see you.T', Le Goff 198).

3. DUAL SYSTEMS

All Breton dialects having a dual SG–PL morphology for their second-person pronouns organise it as a dual T–V system. Two distinct T–V areas emerge. A southern area that I call the "gendered area" surrounds the *c'hwi* †V zone in Kerne and the coastal strip up to Gwenedeg. T is mostly used among men. Women and girls are addressed in V. Women vary in their addresses to men. The other T–V system is blind to gender. It is organised around age and social hierarchy in Leon, the northern part of Treger and east Gwenedeg.

It is important to approach T–V systems as if they involve non-total rules. If the gendered area discriminates against addressees according to gender, and the other area does not, then age, proximity and hierarchy have a gradual effect on all systems. Gendered rules are compatible with ageist rules: in Ar Fouilhez in 1942, the appropriate address is calculated on the basis of the gender and age of the speaker and the addressee. Children start speaking using only T, switching to V addresses to their mother around the age of 6 or 7. A boy will eventually address his dad in V, but only later in life. Likewise, in 2019 in Douarnenez, a 69-year-old man uses V to all girls and women, and T to male close friends. However, he chooses V to address his great grand-father in his head, reflecting a distance that then coincides with age.

3.1 Setting aside subsystems: Church V, aggressive T, hypocoristic V, animals

One has to set aside some T–V subsystems that seem independent internally to a given T–V system. Such a subsystem is, for example, the address to God or a member of the clergy, which is very much in V, even in gendered systems where V is characteristic of the address to women; I found only one optional T/V address to God in Douarnenez (Jouitteau, "Kontañ Kaoz"). There is also a widely reported aggressive T: for Helias, from Pouldreuzic, T expresses "great anger or deep contempt" and is only used in invectives like *Te 'dorr din ur revr*, lit. 'you break one ass of mine'. In Leon, couples addressing each other in V can also interpret a sudden T = address as being extremely aggressive. Driving invectives also seem to obey an independent system. Despite the widely documented aggressive T, driving invectives can be realised in V across all dialects. The sentences (7) to (9) translate as "So, Grandpa, you can't find your levers anymore?!", in a context where the speaker is blocked by another car at a stop sign

(Jouitteau, "Kontañ Kaoz"). This is surprising because these speakers are bilingual and have obligatory T in their French driving invectives.

Marie Monchicourt, woman aged 67, Gwenedeg

(7) *Neuze tad kozh n'eo ket bet kavet **ho**   piñs muy!*
     so   father-old neg is neg been found your.V pliers anymore

Renée Ribeyre, woman aged 71, Plonevez-Porzhe (south of 37)

(8) *Setu, tad-kozh, ne gav**it**   ket   ken   **ho**   oustilhoù!*
     then father-old neg find.V   neg anymore   your.V tools

Marie-Yvonne Paul, woman aged 82, Leon

(9) *Ah neuze papi!   Ne gav**oc'h**   ket **ho**   peñvejoù ?*
     ah then father-old neg find.V   neg your.V tools

Some idiosyncratic uses of V are probably hypocoristic. Tangi Yekel (p.c.) comments that the V form in (10) is exceptional for addressing children. Some addresses to animals could fall under this (11). However, address to humans vs animals is a subsystem of its own: every speaker in the elicitation has used the same marker for both the cat and the spider, regardless of aggressive vs. hypocoristic context.

(10) ***C'hwi** zo ur marmouz bihan.*   Treger (Bear) (Yekel et al.)
     you.V is a monkey   little
     'You are a little rascal.' (in a nice way)

(11) ***C'hwi**, kaz, na viot   ket o kalamarhad an traoù toud amañ.*   Treger (Gros)
     V   cat neg will.be not at step.on   the things all   here
     'You, cat, won't be stepping all over everything here.'

Finally, one has to be very careful not to draw wrong ethnological conclusions from T–V systems. The presence of a V marker, or lack thereof, may be revealing of social organisation, but reading a V marker as a sign of respect and a T marker as its absence is not correct: children addressing their parents in either T or V can feel the same respect for them: it is the linguistic system they use that forces them to encode it linguistically or not. The variation in addresses to women has no documented social correlate in the Breton patriarchal continuum. Gros in (11) is not confused between his cat and a priest.

3.2 Gendered system

The major source for the T–V gendered system is Hemon ("Te pe c'hwi?"). This system recalls the Welsh one, as described by Watkins (164–65) in 1977: "Females, however young, are addressed by the polite form, and they in turn always use the polite form in addressing others. The result is that the polite form usually is the mode of address even between husband and wife, and between parents and daughter. The familiar form is used only … by males when addressing close male contemporaries, or younger males with whose families they have intimate connexions." Gelleg in 1942 reports T–V only for men in Douarnenez, T forms being rare and optional even among peers or brothers. *Te* can be used from a father to his son, but not vice-versa. *C'hwi* is obligatory when a woman participates in the exchange. In 2019, a 69-year-old man in Douarnenez still uses T to address another man of his own age or for driving invectives. He uses V to his great grandfather, women and girls (12), priests and God, cats and spiders.

(12) *Bremañ eo hennezh **ho** kamion deuzoutoc'h   ho   keñ.*   Man aged 69
     now   is this   your.V truck of.of.V   your.V one
     'Now it is your truck for you alone.' (to a young girl) (Jouitteau, "Kontañ Kaoz")

The Plonevez-Porzhe speaker, Renée Ribeyre, from 10 km north and in her seventies, addresses men of her age, cats and spiders in T, but girls, women, highly ranked men and God in V.

Men address each other in T, but women in V in Kemper-Gwezhenneg, as well as in the Pontrev canton, Enez Sun and Pont-an-Abad (Hemon, "Te pe c'hwi?"), in Poullaouen and Plonevell (Wmffre 25), in Konkerne, Ploneour-Lanwern, Penmarc'h, Loktudy, Enez Tudi, Benoded (NALBB), in Tregon, Nizon, Pont-Aven, Rieg, Molan, Nevez, Kloar (Bouzeg 31), and as far east as Pluverin (NALBB). The documentation on how women address men is too fragmented to draw any conclusions. For Hemon (*Historical Morphology* §51, n1), all T–V dialects were gendered, but this seems inaccurate.

3.3 Hierarchical zone

In Leon and most of Treger, the pragmatics of address are gender blind. They reflect age and social ranking in a manner similar to Modern French T–V, with emphasis on the respect due to age. Children commonly address their parents in V. In the early nineteenth century, Le Gonidec ("tutoyer") writes

for Leon: *Né kéd déréad téa hé dâd*, 'The T form is not appropriate to one's father'. Following Troude ("tutoyer"), respect due to age imposes the V form "in the countryside," and brothers have asymmetric usages.

Couples symmetrically use T forms before marriage, and V forms after. The T forms becomes a sign of aggression. The play written by Ar Floc'h in 1913 presents the character of Mathilde, who addresses her boyfriend in V. She suddenly addresses him in T while planning on murdering him. He interprets it as a proximity marker, as it would be in French, and he ends up dead. Madame Pont from Brignogan (north of point 4), 65 years old in 1942, recalls the day when, as a child, she overheard married neighbours using T, an obvious sign they were fighting horribly. Guivarc'h in Santeg (6) in 1942 mentions that symmetric V forms in couples is, for him, archaic, as does NALBB in Plouganoù (18), Magor and Boulvriag (west of point 22). Guivarc'h judges that T marks either equality or the superiority of the speaker relative to the addressee.

T is the address to strangers "who are not priests" in the Pagan country (4) in 1942, whereas, in their French, the same speakers would address strangers in V. T is also, and this does not seem to be contradictory, a proximity marker on the rise. It was a new fashion according to Troude ("tutoyer") among young people to use T if they had already met once. In the 1927 play of Ar Floc'h (32), Fanch and Lan have an age difference of 40 years. Fanch calls his friend *Lanig kozh* [little old Lan], and addresses him in T in the name of their friendship, which Lan opposes because of respect due to age. T has progressed during the twentieth century as a proximity marker. In the Brignogan and Pagan area (4) in 1942, children were most likely to address their parents in T. This led to usage inversions, which people commented on: "Before one would address domestics in T and others in V, and now it is the other way around" (Porsal, north of 2, NALBB). According to the NALBB informants, in Guimiliau people use more and more T forms, and in Plouigno in Treger-West V survives only to address the nobility. In Ouessant, V is still the address to parents. In Jouitteau ("Kontañ Kaoz"), an 82-year-old Plougerne woman (west of 4) has V addresses for her great grand father, a woman she never met, a grandfather (even in driving invectives), as well as clergymen and God. She associates T with a spouse, or anyone of her age or below. Given her age, the number of Breton speakers she can address in V is decreasing.

Ar Barzhig in 1942 considers that there is a dual T–V system in all of Treger. Another *Gwalarn* reader adds that children address their parents in V,

which is corroborated in Plougouskant (west of 16) at the end of the twentieth century. In 1942, in Treger, T is usual among old friends, and as a sign of confidence towards strangers. Equals in age address each other in T in Treger-West in Plouezoc'h (south of Plouganoù 18), and in the interior in Logivi-Plougraz (NALBB).

East Gwenedeg also belongs to the hierarchical T–V zone. Dialectal morphology provides a minor complication for the analysis because, along the coasts from Groe to Berrig (East of Teiz 75), the proclitic T form can appear as *ha* or *as*, whereas it is realised as *te* elsewhere in Gwenedeg and *da* in Standard Breton (Le Goff 198). T forms are the most common in Ar Gerveur (82, 83) and in most of the Gwenedeg coast (Loth 379), as well as in Logunec'h and Sant-Yann-Brevele, even for old people or clergymen (west and south of 66, Le Goff 198). The opposite tendency towards V is, however, also documented: in my 2019 elicitation, Marie Monchicourt in Gwenedeg, who is 67 years old, addresses all adults in V, including her husband. She uses T only to animals and to young girls. Age is the main factor in Laozag (east of 75). V forms are for parents in Plouharnel and Sant-Nolf (north of Teiz 75), but only for grandparents in Plunered (north-west of Ploveren 74, NALBB). On the coast, V to parents may be associated with a higher social status and may include an idiosyncratic gendered distinction between parents (Audic 195).

4. FRONTIER PHENOMENA AND UNSTABLE SYSTEMS

The non-dual *c'hwi* zone is surrounded by different T–V systems, with, of course, some bilingual speakers forming a buffer. Some unstable states are documented throughout the area and in all of Bigouden county. In (13) to (18), the addresses are mixed in discourse, showing the absence of real T or V forms in the system (2†V is compatible with 2†T forms).

(13)   **Lak'**   *'neoñ*   *beke*   **'moc'h**   *'sell'!*   Lokeored
      put.T   of.him   because   are.V   (at) looking
      'Put it on [the seat belt] because you are looking (at it)!'   (Solliec)

(14)   *Diskwez a*   **ret,**   *Kaour-Vraz, na intentez*   *netra...*   Kergrist-Moelou
      show   prt do.†V   Kaour-Big   neg understand.†T   nothing
      'You show, Old Kaour, that you don't understand anything.'   (Le Garrec18)

(15) *Grez   ar pez   a gar**oh***   Plozeved (Goyat 306)
      do.†SG   the piece (that) R want.†PL
      'Do what you want.'

(16) *Breman eo d'**eoc'h**   **de**   unan ar (Camion).*   X, Kerne (man of 79)
      now   is to'you.†V your.†T one the truck
      'Now it is your truck for you alone.' (to a young girl)   (Jouitteau, "Kontañ Kaoz")

(17) *Gouzout a r**ez**   **ho** peus disoñjet **da** levrig kanañ ?* Gourlizon (woman of 63)
      to.know R do.†T †V   has forgotten your.†T book to.sing
      'Do you know you forgot your songbook?'

(18) *Bremañ eo **da**   **c'h**arr-samm de**oc'h**   **da**-unan.*   Idem
      now   is your.†T   truck   to.you.†V   your.†T-one
      'Now it is your truck for you alone.' (to a young girl) (Jouitteau, "Kontañ Kaoz")

In (18), the instability of the second person also has an impact on the consonant mutation system. The second person possessive 2†T triggers /k/>/X/ (compare with the provection /k/>/k/ ***ho karr-samm*** 'your.V truck', vs lenition /k/>/g/ ***da garr-samm*** 'your.T truck'). This is plausibly an innovation, because in the nearby parishes of Ploare (42) and Pluguen (48), two men in 1911 had a more standard 2T *de zorn* with lenition (map 173).

Some Breton dialects have complex morphological fusions of 2†T and 2†V. Trépos' example in (19) attests to a frontier phenomenon in south-east Kerne as early as the first part of the twentieth century. Typologically, the compatibility of both markers recalls the rise of the T–V system in Middle French.

(19) ***ho***   *puoc'h-**t-hu***
      POSS. 2†V   vache-2†T-2†V
      'your cow'   Kerne (Trépos 94)

(20) *Petra a r**ez-t-hu**?*
      what R do.2†T- 2†T- 2†V
      What are you doing?'   Plozévet (Goyat 244–45)

In the north of the *c'hwi* area, some speakers recreate a T–V system despite them having no *te-c'hwi* morphological material. In 1985, Humphreys (317) mentions only *c'hwi* in Bothoa, but in (21) a V form is obtained by the pluralisation of the object and, in (22), a V form is obtained by the addition of a 3PL address to the subject. In both cases, the second

person marker is present (†V), and the plural of the third person nominal obtains a formal address. Typologically, the recruitment of a 3PL element in a T–V system recalls other Indo-European languages, such as German *Sie* or Spanish *Usted*.

(21) *Debet ho   para*   vs   *Debet ho   para**joù**.*
      eat.†V your.†V bread   eat.†V your.†V   bread**s.V**
      'Eat.T your bread.'   'Eat.V your bread.'

(22) **ar re-mañ**   *ac'hanoc'h*
      the ones-here of.you.†V
      'You.V'

5. ANALYSIS

Despite the converging T–V influence of both French and Standard Breton, the Breton *c'hwi* †V zone is maintained, and is even progressing south and west for male speakers, by the weakening of T in the gendered-systems areas. In this area, the usage by the female half of the southern population remain stable, because, in the gendered system, most women already spoke in *c'hwi* †V. Urban centres like Kemper or An Oriant seem to accelerate the changes. Successive wars have impacted upon the sex ratio during the twentieth century, and probably weakened the exclusive male address. War mobilisations and widowing, as well as a longer life expectancy for women, are converging factors supporting *c'hwi* addresses among adults. It increasingly became the only Breton input available to children of both sexes. Men's long fishing seasons could have favoured a better resistance of T forms along the coasts. Non-gendered T–V systems resist better the loss of T: the age factor causes children to be addressed in *te*, and to grow up using it themselves. The aging demographics favour T: the older the speakers, the smaller their pragmatic contexts inducing V. The congruence of these systems with the French modern one is a consolidation factor.

Typologically, gendered T–V is not isolated. Middle Welsh of the thirteenth century had a morphologically dual SG–PL system, but no T–V usages (Höijer 51, 84). Morris Jones (270–71) dates the emergence of Welsh T–V to the fifteenth century, possibly influenced by English T–V, itself from Romance influence. The Modern Welsh gendered system subsists despite the influence of †V in Modern English. Curiously maybe, the proponents of

Standard Breton went against this shared usage with Welsh. The preservation of morphological paradigms and the preference for Leon usage prevailed, converging with an under-documentation of women's usages. It is typologically remarkable that, like Irish, Breton developed a non-dual system, but without contact with †V Modern English. Diachronically, the frontier phenomena show how natives accommodate the pragmatic obsolescence of morphological material (fusions, co-occurrences) or the reduction of morphological material (the creation of non-pronominal V forms). The V strategy realised by the pluralisation of the object should receive more attention and it deserves further study.

The frontier of the *c'hwi* †V area provides evidence for the existence of bilingualism in different Breton dialects. In particular, the localisation of the eastern frontier disproves the idea that the KLT/Gwenedeg dialectal divide prevents interactions in Breton. Western Gwenedeg speakers are in close enough contact with their KLT neighbours to share their politeness practices, as opposed to their eastern Gwenedeg neighbours. Provided that the linguistic dialectal divide between Gwenedeg and other dialects is the deepest one can find, with very difficult intercomprehension, the influence of T–V practices across this divide can only be explained by the hypothesis of a traditionally widespread bilingualism in two distinct varieties of Breton.

The gendered system is intrinsically more sensitive to linguistically unstable situations. Internal Breton migrations since the demographic explosion of the nineteenth century, and the geographic extension of the origin of spouses in the twentieth century (Jouitteau, "Démographie"), have multiplied mixed couples in terms of Breton dialects. This has triggered various idiosyncratic subsystems of address. I illustrate this with the description of the familial address system of a male friend of mine, in his forties. In Rosporden, south of Eliant (49), *te* is symmetrical between fathers and sons, as *c'hwi* is between mothers and sons. Parents address little girls in *te*, who respond in *c'hwi* to them in return. However, in this family, the paternal grandparents form a matrilocal couple, the man being from Kemperle near Tremeven (55), where *te* was unknown. The family stopped speaking Breton until my friend turned 18 and then voluntarily reintroduced Breton practices. His father improvised his paternity in Breton by reviving the *c'hwi* pronoun he had received from his own father, contrary to local usage between fathers and sons. The grandfather was not using *c'hwi* in opposition to a form he just did not have, so discourse acts did not change along the male filiation, but the performance of his system in a gendered T–V environment produced

a (counter-)gendered effect. The use of *c'hwi* among males on the family scale illustrates a masculinity that is exogenous to the place (for locals, they speak like local women do). The same friend illustrates a resistance to the penetration of the French system into his Breton. He addresses female friends in T in his French, but dislikes addressing them in T in his Breton. His professional practice exposes him constantly to Standard Breton, and he explains that even when he inflects his Breton towards Standard Breton, the use of *te* when addressing women feels impolite to him. This resistance to perceived "impolite use" could explain the progression of the central *c'hwi* area, despite the massive T–V influence from French (where it is more impolite to wrongly use a T form than to wrongly use a V form).

The fact that T–V usages in two different languages can produce different outputs for the same speaker in the same enunciation context is interesting in itself. Bilingual Breton-French speakers of the central area address T forms in French, but have no equivalent in Breton. We also saw this mismatch in driving invectives in (7) to (9), with speakers having obligatory V in their Breton and obligatory T in their French. It may be important to note that if, diachronically, the system of one language can influence the system of another one, linguistic politeness usages are not driven by cultural behaviour independent from the linguistic systems. In the case of driving invectives, they are also independent from the perceived politeness system of the addressee, who cannot hear the speaker.

One could wonder, given the decline in the usage of Breton in the modern period, to what extent the mono-*c'hwi* system is linked to language attrition. It is important here to distinguish morphological attrition (paradigm impoverishment) and global language attrition (language impoverishment due to rare use of the language). The loss of the 2SG *te* or *ha* form is a case of morphological attrition: it reduces the morphological pronominal paradigms. In principle, morphological attrition can arise independently of contexts of language attrition, as shown by the diachronic loss of 2SG in English. In the following, I investigate the two potential causation relationships between the two.

I see four arguments as to why language attrition is not the cause for the absence of 2SG pronouns in the central area. First, our data show a solid central area as early as the First World War, at a time when the majority of speakers were monolinguals. Second, signs of language attrition are expected to appear in places and environments where the language is least spoken. On the contrary, the central area is characterised by sociological factors (a rural economy, an absence of major cities, the emigration of the

younger, monolingual French speakers, etc.) that have retarded language loss, comparative to the other dialects. Third, the attrition of the Breton language is progressing under the influence of French, the politeness system of which is incompatible with a non-dual system. French bilingualism in the twentieth century, if anything, supports the T–V systems based on hierarchy, as is the case in Leon or Standard Breton. Finally, diachronic studies confirm that, at least for Gwenedeg, the restriction of uses of T precedes the modern period. Rezac (31) proposes a detailed study of the pronominal systems of pre-modern Gwenedeg. He notes that 2SG pronouns were already restricted to aggressive interactions in one of the earliest and most extensive texts from Gwenedeg, the *Cantiqueu Spirituel* of Pierry Barisy from 1710 (a region in Noyal-Pontivy and Inguiniel). Speakers even self-addressed in *c'hwi*. He also reports the same pattern in Merlevenez in 1818 (Guéquelleu/ Gicquello's translation of the *Prodigal Child*). Again, we find the restriction of 2SG to aggressive usage as a correlating factor for the progression of non-dual usages. More extensive diachronic studies are needed to help us decipher the genesis of the non-dual system, but the hypothesis that language attrition is the cause is not promising. In T–V systems, on the other hand, attrition directly favours a hegemony of the *te* paradigms over *c'hwi*. In systems where speakers restrict V forms to older addressees, when they themselves become part of the older generation they end up interacting only with younger people. If they speak French to all other figures of authority, and if they fail to impose addresses in V to themselves, only T interactions remain.

Morphological attrition, however, may indirectly trigger language attrition (like any other dimension of dialectal variation). The speaker who loses comprehension of the 2SG paradigms loses comprehension of the neighbouring dialects when addressed in them and sounds more formal than expected when speaking to others. This may reduce linguistic exchanges, introduce miscomprehensions, or social discomfort. It may lead to linguistic insecurity and trigger the safe use of a *lingua franca*, i.e. French. Divergences in politeness systems lead to linguistic insecurity, which is a problem of great concern in the contexts of revitalisation. The risk of being impolite in interpersonal exchanges could be a determining factor in the avoidance of Breton in public encounters. An alertness to variation without any actual knowledge of the possible systems encountered results in speakers inverting their usual system, with various impolite outcomes. I provide some examples here. We saw that in various places strangers are traditionally addressed in T. In the 2019 fieldwork, a 79-year-old man from Kerne had robust gendered T–V (T to his great

grandfather, V to a 5-year-old girl or his wife). However, he chooses T when addressing an unknown woman in the street. This strategy is an inversion strategy ("Strangers do it differently, so I'll do it differently myself"). It is statistically bound to fail, because it initiates a social contact with the pronominal paradigms that are unknown in half of the country. Adaptive symmetrical strategies of the type: "Well, this young woman addressed me in T, I'll do the same" are hazardous, because she could have a non-symmetrical T–V system. She could also have a non-symmetrical system but think that you do not, and thus expect an egalitarian T response. One just cannot guess, and there is no Breton internal safe choice. This could create a strong incentive for speakers to switch to French, where the system is more stable. A better knowledge of cross-dialectal variation could help speakers choose more effective strategies. The promotion of Standard Breton could also provide a Breton internal safe choice. I hope this paper contributes to providing both speakers and policy makers with informed choices.

WORKS CITED

Audic, Armelle. "La langue bretonne à Arradon au XXe siècle: réflexion sociolinguistique sur l'histoire du breton à travers un exemple particulier." Unpublished thesis. Université de Brest, CRBC, 2013.

Ar Borgn, Herri. *Brezhoneg ar Skorv, Trésors parlés du val de Scorff.* Skol Vreizh, 2011.

Bouzeg, Mona. *A-dreñv ar pojoù.* Master thesis, Skol-Veur Roazhon II, 1986.

Bouzec, Mona, Jos Goapper, and Yannick Souffez. *Le breton des rives de l'Aven et du Bélon – Blaz ha blazig c'hoazh*, Dastumad Teñzor ar brezhoneg. Edited by An Alarc'h embannadurioù. 2017.

Cheveau, Loic. "The Direct Object Personal Pronouns in Lorient Area Breton." *Studia Celtica*, vol. 41, 2007, pp. 91–102.

Cheveau, Loïc. "Le breton de Ploemeur d'après l'ALBB de P. Le Roux: lecture critique." *La Bretagne Linguistique*, no. 15, 2010, pp. 29–42.

Crahe, Maxime. *Le breton de Languidic: étude phonétique, morphologique et syntaxique d'un sous-dialecte vannetais*. U. Rennes II, 2013.

Le Dû, Jean. *Nouvel Atlas Linguistique de la Basse-Bretagne*. Centre de Recherche Bretonne et Celtique, Université de Bretagne Occidentale, 2001, 2 vols.

Falc'hun, François. "L'histoire de la langue bretonne d'après la géographie linguistique." Unpublished thesis. 1951.

Ar Floc'h, Loeiz. *Trubuilhou ar seiz potr yaouank*. Ouest-Eclair, 1927.

Ar Floc'h, Loeiz. "An diou vuntrerez." *Ar Bobl*, 1913.

Le Garrec, Toussaint. *Ar Vezventi, Tragédie contre l'alcoolisme*. R. Prud'homme, 1901.

Le Goff, Pierre. "Du tutoiement en breton de Vannes." *Mélanges bretons et celtiques offerts à M. J. Loth*, *Annales de Bretagne* 37 bis, 1927, pp. 198–203.

Le Gonidec, Jean-François. *Dictionnaire celto-breton ou breton-français.* Angoulême, 1821.

Goyat, Gilles. "Description morphosyntaxique du parler breton de Plozévet (Finistère)." Unpublished thesis. Skol-Veur Roazhon II, 2012.

Gros, Jules. *Le trésor du breton parlé II (Eléments de Stylistique Trégorroise). Dictionnaire breton-français des expressions figures.* Librairie Bretonne Giraudon, 1970.

Helias, Jakez. *Le cheval d'orgueil, Mémoires d'un Breton du pays bigouden*, Plon, coll. Terre humaine, 1975.

Hemon, Roparz. "Te pe c'hwi?, 'Dastumadeg Kendalc'h Gwalarn," *Gwalarn*, no. 148–149, 1942, pp. 326–327, and 150–151, pp. 418–424.

Hemon, Roparz. *A Historical Morphology and Syntax of Breton.* Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1975.

Humphreys, H. L. *Phonologie, morphosyntaxe et lexique du parler breton de Bothoa en Saint-Nicolas-du-Pélem (Côtes-du-Nord).* Doctoral dissertation. Brud Nevez, 1985.

Höijer, Moa. "Middle Welsh Personal Pronouns in Thirteenth-Century Manuscripts: Variation and Development." Unpublished MPhil dissertation. Aberystwyth University, 2014.

Jouitteau, Mélanie. "Kontañ kaoz (06/2019)," 2019. Elicitation available at arbres.iker.cnrs.fr.

Jouitteau, Mélanie. "Démographie, nuptialité et brassage dialectal en Basse-Bretagne." *ARBRES, wikigrammaire des dialectes du breton*, www.arbres.iker.cnrs.fr. Accessed 20 Mar. 2021.

Kervella, Frañsez. *Yezhadur bras ar brezhoneg.* Skridoù Breizh, La Baule, 1947.

Loth, Joseph. *Chrestomathie bretonne: (armoricain, gallois, cornique).* Paris, 1890.

MacAulay, Donald. "The Scottish Gaelic language." *The Celtic Languages*, edited by Donald MacAulay, Cambridge UP, 1992, pp. 137–248.

Mermet, Michel. *Informatique et maîtrise de l'oral en maternelle bilingue breton-français.* Unpublished thesis, Skol-Veur Roazhon II, 2006.

Morris Jones, John. *A Welsh Grammar: Historical and Comparative. Phonology and Accidence.* Oxford, 1913.

Morvannou, Fañch. *Le Breton sans peine.* 2nd ed., Assimil, 1978.

Naoned, Aldrig, "Rann-yezh Bro-Gernev, enklaskoù e Gwiskriv hag e Skaer." *Tir na n-Og*, no. 35, 1952, pp. 55–61.

Noyer, Pierre. *The Breton of the Canton of Brieg.* Master thesis. U of Sydney, 2019.

Rezac, Milan. 2021. "The development of pronominal clitics in earlier Gwenedeg through Barisy's 1710 Cantiqueu Spirituel." Manuscript. www.iker.cnrs.fr/rezac-milan-cnrs. Accessed 17 Feb. 2021.

Riwall. "Petra lavarout, te pe c'houi?" *Arvor*, no. 68, 26 Apr. 1942.

Le Roux, Pierre. *Atlas linguistique de la Basse-Bretagne.* Six vol., 100 maps each. Rennes Paris, 1924–1953.

Ar Scao, Yann. *Dictionnaire Français-Breton: Cornouaillais/Ar posiou Brezönec-Kerné troet er Gallec.* Manuscript, 1945.

Solliec, Tanguy. "Structure de l'énoncé complexe en breton, le cas de la subordination." *Actualité de la recherche sur le breton et les langues celtiques*, edited by Denis Costaouec and Tanguy Solliec, Emgleo Breiz, 2015, pp. 71–98.

Trépos, Pierre. *Grammaire bretonne.* Imprint, Simon, 1968.

Troude, Amable. *Nouveau dictionnaire pratique français-breton.* 3rd ed., Lefournier, 1886.

Watkins, T. Arwyn. "The Welsh Personal Pronoun." *Word*, vol. 28, no.1–2, 1977, pp. 146–165.

Wmffre, Iwan. *Central Breton* [Languages of the World Materials 152]. Lincom Europa, 1998.

Yekel, Tangi, Riwal Georgelin, and Juluan Ar C'hozh. *Brezhoneg Bro-Vear*, Blog kevredigezh *Hent don*. www.brezhonegbrovear.bzh/index.php, 2015–2020.

SYSTEMY ZWROTÓW GRZECZNOŚCIOWYCH – ZRÓŻNICOWANIE DIALEKTALNE W JĘZYKU BRETOŃSKIM

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Artykuł przedstawia w sposób syntetyczny różne systemy zwracania się w dialektach bretoń-skich oraz ich ewolucję w minionym wieku. W analizie uwzględniono dostępne dane oraz materiał pochodzący z badań przeprowadzonych w terenie. Opisano trzy różne systemy zwrotów: hierar-chiczny (liczba mnoga jest używana w stosunku do osób znajdujących się wyżej w hierarchii), rodzajowy (liczba mnoga używana jest w odniesieniu do kobiet i dziewcząt) oraz nie-dualny (brak wykładnika liczby pojedynczej we wszystkich paradygmatach, dostępny jest jedynie zaimek w liczbie mnogiej). Poszczególne systemy umiejscowiono geograficznie, przedstawiono ich ewolucję oraz wzajemne oddziaływanie na przestrzeni ubiegłego wieku.

Przekład angielskiego abstraktu
Maria Bloch-Trojnar

Słowa kluczowe: dialektologia; systemy zwrotów grzecznościowych; język bretoński; zaimek.