Coherence Markers:
Conjunctive Personal Pronouns in Middle Welsh

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Welsh has a complicated personal pronoun system, which has been classified by scholars in a number of different ways. For example, D. Simon Evans in his *Middle Welsh Grammar* (1964, 49-58) makes the following classification, which is presented here in a slightly more formalized way:

1. Independent pronouns
   1.1. simple: *mi, ti, ef*…
   1.2. reduplicated: *miui, tidi, efo*…
   1.3. conjunctive: *minheu, titheu, ynteu*…
2. Dependent pronouns
   2.1. possessive pronouns
       2.1.1. unstressed possessive pronouns (with further subdivisions)
       2.1.2. stressed possessive pronouns: *meu, teu, eidaw*…
   2.2. infixed pronoun object: *’m, ’th, ’y*…
   2.3. affixed pronouns
       2.3.1. simple: *ui, di, ef*…
       2.3.2. conjunctive: *inneu, ditheu, ynteu*…

(For a different classification see, for example, Watkins 1977, 146-165).

A number of theoretical arguments leads us to suggest that it is most reasonable to distinguish between clitics and independent pronouns, the first class being divided into three sub-classes, i.e. possessive and object proclitics and auxiliary postclitics. Both the auxiliary and independent forms have within them a morphologically distinctive class of pronouns, termed in Welsh *cysylltiol* (from *cysylltu* ‘to bind’), and in English ‘conjunctive’.³

The most important syntactic positions in which these pronouns are found in the classic Middle Welsh prose text *Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi* (PKM) are listed below.⁴

1. topicalised subject:
   (1) *Ynteu σ ynteu lwnywys yr esgidyeu* [PKM 80.03]
       C:3SGM P fashion:PRT3SG A shoe:PL

   ‘He fashioned the shoes’

³ H. Pedersen uses the unsatisfactory term *zusammengesetzte* in his *Vergleichender Grammatik* (1909-13), which does not say anything about their function.
⁴ The PKM text is taken from Williams 1930, now available electronically at http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/celt/mcymr/pkm/pkm.htm
2. subject following a finite verb
(2) Yna y doethant wynteu attaw ef. [PKM 74.22]

Then P come:PRT3PL C:3PL to:3SGM 3SGM

‘Then they came to him’

2.1 subject of an imperative
(3) A manac ditheu y mi pa furyf y gallwyf hynny. [PKM 3.5-6]

And tell:IMP2SG C:2SG to 1SG what form P can: PRSSJ1SG

‘But show me how I may do it’

3. complement of a conjugated preposition
(4) Ac yna ymellwng idaw ynteu [PKM 90.08]

and then let down:VN to:3SG C:3SGM

‘And he let himself down’

4. after a possessive pronoun denoting
4.1. possessor
(5) mae yniuer y llys, ac yn anniuer ninheu namyn hynyn? [PKM 52.4]

be:PRS3SG host A court and POSS:1PL host C:1PL save this

‘Where is the host of the court and our host save this?’

4.2. patient (of a verbal noun)
(6) minheu a ‘allaf dy ‘rydhau ditheu o’r geireu [PKM 69.25]

C:1SG P can:PRS1SG POSS:2SG free:VN C:2SG to=A word:PL

‘I can free thee from those words’
4.3. agent (of a verbal noun)

(7) A ˈsphan wybuwyt eu medwi wynteu [PKM 36.13]
and when know:PRTIMPERS POSS:3PL be.drunk:VN C:3PL
‘And when it was known that they were drunk’

5. after an object clitic

(8) E brenhin a’e clywei wynteu [PKM 30.10]
A king P+O:3PL hear:IMF3SG C:3PL
‘The king could hear them ’

One of the distinctive features of conjunctive pronouns is their frequent use in apposition to nouns, especially proper nouns, in preposition as well as in postposition. (Simple pronouns can be used in this way too, but only exceptionally: one example in PKM as opposed to nineteen examples of conjunctive pronouns).

6. in apposition to a noun

(9) Ac y gwledychwys ynteu Pryderi seith cantref Dyuet [PKM 27.18]
And P rule:PRT3SG C:3SGM P. 7 cantref D.
‘And Pryderi ruled the seven cantrefs of Dyfed’.

(10) Ynteu Gronwy Pebyr a ˈgyrchwys Penllyn [PKM 91.15]
C:3SGM G. P. P make.for:PRT3SG P.
‘Gronw Pebyr made for Penllyn’

Many scholars have discussed these pronouns. There is the major issue of their origin, to which John Morris-Jones, Holger Pedersen, Pierre-Yves Lambert, Paul Russell and Peter Schrijver have contributed (Morris-Jones 1913, 274; Pedersen 1909-13, 184-5; Lambert 1984, 186; Russell 1982, 30-38; Schrijver 1997, 83-90). This discussion is not considered further in this paper, as I have analysed it elsewhere (Parina 2004, 200-209).

Sir John Morris-Jones describes them with the help of English equivalents even, but, too, for my part, but with the following reservation (1913, 273): ‘A pronoun of this series is always set against a noun or pronoun that goes before (or is implied). This series is in common use in Mn.W.; sometimes the added meaning is so subtle as to be untranslatable: chwi a minnau “you and I”, but as a rule minnau signifies “I too”, “even I”, “I for my part”, “but I”, “while I”. Proinsias Mac Cana (1990, 414) distinguishes sixteen different uses of conjunctive pronouns in Middle Welsh
prose, according to syntactic and semantic parameters and emphasizes that their use is ‘very much a matter of stylistic choice’.

Graham Isaac (1996, 53) suggests in his book *The Verb in the Book of Aneirin* that the main function of the conjunctive pronouns in Middle Welsh is coding a switch in the salience or topicality of an argument. He distinguishes between two types of use:

1. Syntagmatic: a topic is promoted from a previous low-topicality role to a high-topicality role (e.g. syntactic subject). Reference of the pronoun to a previous low-salience topic is established. He illustrates this rule with the following passage from *Culhwch ac Olwen*, given here with my glossing:

   (11) A gwedy disgynnu Arthur y'r tir, and after descend:VN A. to=A land
dyot seint lwerddon attaw y erchi nawd idaw.
come:VN saint:PL Ireland to:3SGM to ask:VN protection to:3SGM
Ac y rodes ynteu nawd udunt hwy,
and P give:PRT3SG C:3SGM protection to:3PL 3PL
ac y rodassant wynteu eu bendith idaw ef [CO 1061-64]
and P give:PRT3PL C:3PL POSS:3PL blessing to:3SGM 3SGM

‘And after Arthur had landed, the saints of Ireland came to him to ask his protection. And he gave them his protection, and they gave him their blessing’

However, several instances contradicting this rule can be found in PKM. On the one hand, a conjunctive pronoun is used when it has the same syntactic position as its antecedent:

   (12) Yna y rodes Arawn y furuf, a’γ y i’drych e hun
then P give:PRT3SG A. POSS:3SGM form and POSS:3SGM semblance POSS:INT 3SGM
γ Pwyll, Pendeuc Dyuet, ac y kymerth ynteu y furuf e hun
y P. chief D. and P take:PRT3SG C:3SGM POSS:3SGM form POSS:INT 3SGM
a’γ y dryrch. [PKM 6.23-25]
and=POSS:3SGM semblance

‘Then Arawn gave to Pwyll prince of Dyfed his proper form and semblance, and he himself took his proper form and semblance’.

On the other hand, a topic can be promoted to a high-topicality role but still be coded with a simple pronoun:
‘And one blow only thou art to give him, that he will not survive’

2. Paradigmatic: a topic is promoted to high topicality in a prototypically low-topicality role (e.g. syntactic object, genitive or complement of preposition). Reference of the pronoun to a previous high-salience topic is established. This is illustrated in example 14:

(14) Ac y nessawys y gwr y attunt, ual yd ymglywynt ymdidann.
and P approach:PRT3SG A man:PL to:3PL as P hear:PRS3PL conversation
Bwrrw badeu allan a ‘wnaethont wynteu, a nessau parth a’r tir, throw:VN boat:PL out P do:PRT3PL C:3PL and approach:VN towards=A land
a chyuarch guell yr brenhin.
and wish:VN better to=A king
E brenhin a’e clywei wynteu a’r lle yd oed…[PKM 30.7-10]
A king P=O:3PL hear:IMF3SG C:3PL from=A place RP be:IMF3SG

‘And the men drew near them that they might hear each other’s discourse. They put out boats and came towards the land, and they greeted the king. For the king could hear them from the place where he was…’

Here the second occurrence of a conjunctive pronoun fits the second rule suggested by Graham Isaac, whereas the first occurrence is necessary because of the possible ambiguity of the sentence. The use of a conjunctive pronoun assumes that the referent it codes is unambiguously non-coreferent to the subject of the first clause (this is related to rule 1).

As shown, the rules formulated by Isaac do not have a predictory force, but the whole corpus of PKM reveals that conjunctive pronouns are really most often used in cases when two clauses have the same participant set and the syntactic role of a particular participant changes from one clause to another.

In the course of my research I have tried several parameters to help predict occurrences of conjunctive rather than simple pronouns in Middle Welsh texts. One theory was that the difference might be due to the number of clauses separating the referent and its anaphor (this is a parameter which seems to apply to many languages in their referential choice, as shown in Givón 1983), but a rough analysis showed that the average distance between the full noun phrase and both the simple and the conjunctive pronoun is about two clauses. Thus further study of the parameters determining pronoun choice is required.
Meanwhile, there is further information to be drawn from equivalents in other languages. First, the work of translators rather than scholars was considered. Two authoritative translations of PKM were chosen, into English by Jones and Jones (1949), and into German by Maier (1999), and all the occurrences of conjunctive pronouns in the First Branch were collected (approximately one hundred examples). One task which proved particularly difficult for the translators was the quotation formula heb ynteu, which is so widely used in this text, in interchange with heb ef. Jones and Jones translate it ‘said he’, but also very often ‘he replied’ or ‘he answered’, thus rendering this dialogue structure by means of a verb. In contrast, Bernard Meier deliberately translates the verb throughout the text by sagen only, so that his variants are sagt er or sagt der. In the narrative parts of the text, the conjunctive pronouns are most often translated by mere personal pronouns. This is true particularly for those pronouns that are used after possessive clitics, but there are also several other methods that the translators use to render additional meanings.

1. The most common semantic function is contrast, rendered in English by but, for his part, yet and in German by aber, seinerseits, für sein Teil, doch:

(15) {What is left of the feast, said Pryderi, do you continue with it?}

\[\text{Ich aber will nach England gehen, um Caswallawn, Belis Sohn, meinen Gehorsam zu bezeigen. [Maier 57]}

And I will go to tender my homage to Caswallawn son of Beli, to Lloegyr [Jones&Jones 42] \(^5\).

2. Another sense conjunctive pronouns can convey is addition.
This is most often translated by English too, German auch. Several examples of it are found in PKM:

(16) {When the brothers came, these brothers took council on where to wait for Pryderi and his men}

\(^5\) As we have mentioned above, the most common way to translate a conjunctive pronoun is to substitute it with a personal pronoun, so it was quite difficult to find an example where both translations choose to convey the additional meaning by means of a lexical item, therefore sometimes we give examples where only one of translators makes an attempt to convey this extra semantics the pronouns discussed.
A temporal addition, that is the addition of a subsequent event, can be rendered by conjunctive pronouns too (rendered by English then, German dann):

(17) {The young man mounted his horse, but before he had settled himself in his saddle the lady passed him by}

(18) {it is a peculiarity of the mound that whatever high-born man sits upon it}
The same process is probably reflected in examples where there is no agreement between the conjunctive pronoun and the noun with which it is used in apposition:

(20) Y neuad ynteu a gyweirwyt y Pwyll a’e niuer

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<td>and or – or but because so also even</td>
<td>also so and even</td>
<td>even also so and</td>
<td>and (me, you, he...) but (me, you, he...) also (me, you, he...) even (me, you, he...) then (me, you, he...)</td>
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The translations of the elements analysed in these papers shows that the vast majority of them correspond to the additional meanings of the Welsh conjunctive pronouns. It can therefore be assumed that the conjunctive personal pronouns in Middle Welsh are there to ensure discourse cohesion, so that it is possible to say that their different uses are manifestations of meanings in one single field of contrast and addition.

**Abbreviations**

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>article</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>conjunctive pronoun</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>VN</td>
<td>verbal noun</td>
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Bonno, K. & S. Kodzasov. 1998. ‘Семантическое вариирование дискурсивных слов и его влияние на линеаризацию и интонирование (на примере частиц же и ведь)’ (Semantic variation of discourse markers and their influence on linearisation and intonation [through the example of particles zhe and ved]). *Дискурсивные слова русского языка: опыт контексто-семантического описания (Discourse markers in Russian: an attempt at context-semantic description).* Moscow: Pomovsky i partnery, 382-443.


