

*Why Don't the English Speak Welsh?*<sup>1</sup>

HILDEGARD TRISTRAM

*Introduction*

**A** LONG with many eminent British linguists, such as Robert W. Burchfield<sup>2</sup> or David Crystal,<sup>3</sup> Richard Coates,<sup>4</sup> in a recent study on the Late British contribution to the making of English toponymy,<sup>5</sup> commented on the absence of ordinary lexis of Late British origin in the English lexicon by saying that:

We shall need to confront the apparent paradox that whilst the Angles and the Saxons seem content to have taken some place-names from the Britons – not an enormous number, but not negligible either – they took practically no ordinary vocabulary.

Is this really a paradox? I would claim that comparison with other instances of historical *shift* situations should lead us to *expect* that English did not borrow much lexical material from Late British. I would also suggest that while English did not borrow much lexis, the language was indeed affected by grammatical<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I gratefully acknowledge that I owe this question to Dr Heinrich Härke (Reading), who in turn had been asked the same question by a journalist of BBC Radio 4. I am also most thankful to Dr Gary German (Brest, France), Dr David L. White (Austin, TX) and Prof. Erich Poppe (Marburg) for commenting on earlier drafts of this paper and for generously sharing their observations with me. I also owe sincere thanks to Prof. Nick Higham's extremely helpful linguistic corrections. Needless to say that all errors and infelicities are entirely my own responsibility.

<sup>2</sup> Richard W. Burchfield, *The English Language* (Oxford, 1986), p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Coates, 'The Significance of Celtic Place-names in England', in *The Celtic Roots of English*, ed. Markku Filppula, Juhani Klemola and Heli Pitkänen, *Studies in Language* 37 (Joensuu, 2002), pp. 47–85, at p. 47; see also Coates in this volume. This echoes earlier statements made by Margaret Gelling, 'Why Aren't We Speaking Welsh?', *ASSAH* 6 (1993), 51–6, at p. 51, and Bryan Ward-Perkins, 'Why did the Anglo-Saxons not become more British?', *EHR* 115 (2000), 513–33, at p. 514.

<sup>5</sup> For the term 'Late British' see Karl Horst Schmidt, 'Late British', in *Britain 400–600: Language and History*, ed. Alfred Bammesberger and Alfred Wollmann (Heidelberg, 1990), pp. 121–48.

<sup>6</sup> For a comparison of the earliest Old English and earliest Old Welsh texts that have been preserved and where the latter show many features which later became characteristic of English as opposed to other Germanic languages, see Hildegard L. C. Tristram, 'Attrition

and phonological transfer from Late British before the impact of the Vikings and the Normans made itself felt, but that this only showed in *writing* in the Early Middle English period after the demise of Old English diglossia. It was the lack of earlier scholarly attention given to the different *types* of linguistic contact situations as well as to the complex processes of language acquisition, change, death and birth,<sup>7</sup> which prompted the question: 'Why did the Britons not contribute more loan words to English?' In the following paper, I am going to discuss a few recent linguistic approaches and explore what they may tell us about the *type* of linguistic situation which obtained in Britain during the period of the Anglo-Saxon takeover and before the advent of the Vikings. I will then concentrate on two salient *grammatical* characteristics of English which are likely to have been calqued<sup>8</sup> from Late British.<sup>9</sup>

### *Recent Linguistic Approaches*

#### *Contact linguistics*

Contact linguistics investigates the types of interaction between languages in both forced and peaceful contact situations across the world and through time.<sup>10</sup> It seeks to establish an understanding of the diverse processes of cross-linguistic interaction based on the contact between speakers of different languages and of the catalytic agency of bilingual speakers. Language contact and contact-induced language change means interaction between speakers because, from a socio-linguistic point of view, it is not the languages themselves that interact but people who communicate and adapt their linguistic usage to the exigencies of the contact situation in order to be able to satisfy their communication needs.<sup>11</sup>

Thomason and Kaufman (1988) have convincingly shown that a distinction needs to be drawn between different contact scenarios. *Borrowing* scenarios differ from *shift* scenarios. Borrowing presupposes language maintenance between the respective languages or dialects in contact. If two or more languages or

of Inflexions in English and Welsh', in *The Celtic Roots of English*, ed. Markku Filppula *et al.*, pp. 111–49, at pp. 127–53, 138–44.

<sup>7</sup> See for instance *Sprachtod und Sprachgeburt*, ed. Peter Schrijver, Münchner Forschungen zur historischen Sprachwissenschaft 2 (Bremen, 2004).

<sup>8</sup> Calques (from French *calque* 'trace') are loan translations where the components of words, phrases and grammatical structures are translated item by item from one to another language. Cf. David Crystal, *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, 5th edn (Maldon, MA, 2003), s.v. *calque*. Calques thus may not only be lexical but also grammatical, i.e. morphosyntactic.

<sup>9</sup> On phonological transfer see Schrijver in this volume.

<sup>10</sup> Uriel Weinreich, *Languages in Contact* (The Hague, 1953, repr. 1968); Sarah G. Thomason and Terrence Kaufman, *Language Contact: Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1988); Sarah G. Thomason, *Language Contact: An Introduction* (Washington DC, 2001); Donald Winford, *An Introduction to Contact Linguistics* (Oxford, 2003).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. James Milroy, 'A Social Model for the Interpretation of Language Change,' in *History of Englishes: New Methods and Interpretations in Historical Linguistics*, ed. Matti Rissanen, Ossi Ihalainen, Terttu Nevalainen and Irma Taavitsainen (Berlin, 1992), pp. 72–91.

dialects are maintained within one and the same society, and one of them carries more prestige than the other and consequently may be more widely used than the other, then linguists speak of 'diglossia'.<sup>12</sup> Most borrowing, however, takes place between the languages of adjacent population groups. Borrowing may, of course, also take place between the languages of non-adjacent peoples, such as, for instance, all European languages now borrow extensively from British and American English as the languages of globalizing economies.<sup>13</sup> Shift scenarios, on the other hand, involve the language death of source languages and restructuring of target languages.

These two contact scenarios (*borrowing* and *shift*) seem to be subject to different patterns of feature transfer between languages. The *borrowing* gradient depends on the intensity and length of contact as well as on the socio-economic structures involved. Nouns are commonly transferred first, then verbs and adjectives. Function words are only borrowed in cases of very intensive contact.<sup>14</sup>

The different types of *shift* scenarios depend on the social prestige of the people involved and the power relationships between the social groups; these determine the direction of the shift. In fifth- and sixth-century Britain, supposing an elite dominance situation, linguistic contact may have taken place between a relatively small military elite, i.e. the social group in power, and the subservient population. The members of the evolving elite were originally speakers of prestigious varieties of Germanic (Frisian, Saxon, Anglian, Jutish, Frankish),<sup>15</sup> while the bulk of the population is likely to have consisted of low prestige speakers of Late British and/or British Latin in the Lowlands and Late British in the Uplands.<sup>16</sup> These seem to have shifted to the evolving Old English dialects over quite some time (fifth to ninth century).<sup>17</sup> The shift pattern is likely to have been uneven and variously conditioned, with some areas, such as in the south-east, shifting much earlier than the north and south-west, with pockets in remoter areas preserving their British cultural and linguistic identity longer than elsewhere.<sup>18</sup> In all prob-

<sup>12</sup> Charles A. Ferguson, 'Diglossia', *Word* 15 (1959), 325–340; Joshua A. Fishman, 'Bilingualism with and without Diglossia, Diglossia with and without Bilingualism', *Journal of Social Issues* 23 (1979), 29–38.

<sup>13</sup> *A Dictionary of European Anglicisms*, ed. Manfred Görlach (Oxford, 2001); *An Annotated Bibliography of European Anglicisms*, ed. Manfred Görlach (Oxford, 2002); *English in Europe*, ed. Manfred Görlach (Oxford 2002).

<sup>14</sup> See Thomason and Kaufman, *Language Contact*, pp. 74–7 ('Borrowing Scale').

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Hans Frede Nielsen, *The Continental Backgrounds of English and its Insular Development until 1154* (Odense, 1998), pp. 77–9; Peter Trudgill, *New-Dialect Formation: The Inevitability of Colonial Englishes* (Edinburgh, 2004), p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> For British Latin in the island of Britain, see Peter Schrijver, *Studies in British Celtic Historical Phonology* (Amsterdam, 1995); 'The Rise and Fall of British Latin', in *The Celtic Roots of English*, ed. Markku Filppula *et al.*, pp. 87–110.

<sup>17</sup> Ward-Perkins, 'Why did the Anglo-Saxons?', 258, suggested that the successful native resistance of local, militarised tribal societies to the invaders may perhaps account for the fact of the slow progress of Anglo-Saxonisation as opposed to the sweeping conquest of Gaul by the Franks.

<sup>18</sup> On the existence of the *Wal-* element in English place names, indicating the presence of identifiable 'others' in the Anglo-Saxon naming period, see J. R. R. Tolkien, 'English and

ability the *shift* process was one of adults and not of children, as children up to around seven years of age learn second languages as native children do,<sup>19</sup> i.e. with no transfers from the source languages.<sup>20</sup>

### *Strata linguistics*

The study of strata linguistics began as early as the nineteenth century. In 1881–2, the Italian dialectologist Graziadio Ascoli (1829–1907)<sup>21</sup> suggested that the origin of the differences within and across the Romance languages<sup>22</sup> were due to the interaction between colonising speakers of (vulgar) Latin and speakers of what he termed *il sostratto* ('substrate' languages), such as Etruscan or the Celtic languages of Gallia Cisalpina and Gaulish in Gallia Transalpina.<sup>23</sup> The term *substrate* refers to the languages of the speakers colonised by the Romans, who had no prestige and power. The terms *superstrate* and *adstrate* were coined later;<sup>24</sup> *superstrate* denotes a prestige language forcibly imposed upon substrate speakers and *adstrate* denotes two (or more) prestige languages in collateral interaction with each other.

Welsh', in *Angles and Britons*, O'Donnell Lectures (Cardiff, 1963), pp. 1–41, at pp. 26ff.; Margaret L. Faull, 'The Semantic Development of Old English *wealh*', *Leeds Studies in English* 9 (1976), 20–44; Kenneth Cameron, 'The Meaning and Significance of Old English *walh* in English Place-names', *Journal of the English Place-Name Society* 12 (1979/80), 1–53; Michael Cichon, 'Indigenous "foreigners": Legal, Poetic and Historical Sources for Old English *wealh*' (paper given at the 12th International Congress of Celtic Studies, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 26 August 2003, publication forthcoming). On the social structure of Anglo-Saxon England, see below, footnote 52.

- <sup>19</sup> Jack Chambers, *Sociolinguistic Theory: Linguistic Variation and its Social Significance*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 2003), ch. 4.
- <sup>20</sup> See below the section on psycholinguistics. I do not agree with Raymond Hickey, 'Early Contact and Parallels between English and Celtic', *Vienna English Working Papers* 4/2 (1995), 87–119, who suggests that the children of the Britons and the Anglo-Saxons played together and/or the Anglo-Saxons had Late-British-speaking nurses and that therefore the elite adopted linguistic features from Late British. Hickey cites parallel cases in the southern United States, where the language of superstratal whites is supposedly hard to distinguish from rural African-American Vernacular English, or in Finland, where superstratal Swedish-speaking Finns adopted prosodic features from Finnish. If child acquisition of Old English by speakers of Late British had obtained, it would be difficult to explain why the written Old English standard was kept remarkably free of Brittonicisms until the Norman Conquest.
- <sup>21</sup> Graziadio Isaia Ascoli, 'Die ethnologischen Gründe der sprachlichen Umgestaltungen', authorised translation of Ascoli's *Sprachwissenschaftliche Briefe* by Bruno Güterbock (Leipzig, 1887), pp. 13–45; first published in *Rivista di filologia e d'istruzione classica* 10 (1881–2); reprinted in *Substrate und Superstrate in den romanischen Sprachen*, ed. Reinhold Kontzi (Darmstadt, 1982), pp. 29–54.
- <sup>22</sup> Cf. Walter von Wartburg, *Die Ausgliederung der romanischen Sprachräume* (Halle a.d.S., 1936).
- <sup>23</sup> See also recently Salikoko S. Mufwene, 'Competition and Selection in Language Evolution', *Selection* 3 (2002), 45–56, at p. 53; 'Language Birth and Death', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (2004), 201–222, at pp. 212ff.
- <sup>24</sup> The term 'superstrate' was first used by Walter von Wartburg in 1932 and the term 'adstrate' in the same year by Marius Valkhoff; cf. Kontzi, *Substrate und Superstrate*, pp. 9–10.

When one language ('superstrate') is forcibly imposed upon the language of a subjected population ('substrate'), the sociolinguistic result, as mentioned before, may be that of 'diglossia'.<sup>25</sup> The 'high' language of the political elite ( $L_H$ ), which symbolizes wealth, power and prestige, dominates the 'low' language ( $L_L$ ) spoken by most of the population; indeed, the speakers of  $L_H$  may actively seek to suppress  $L_L$ . The outcome depends on the strategies of linguistic norm enforcement wielded by the respective political elite. Situations of diglossia may remain stable for short or long periods of time. This depends on the social barriers between the two groups of speakers. The type of social barrier will also determine the number of bilingual speakers of the respective languages. When the social barriers erode, diglossia leads to language *shift*, i.e. to the 'death' of one of the two languages. The shift process gives 'birth' to a modified form of the target language on account of inevitable, linguistic accommodation processes.<sup>26</sup>

There are two possible scenarios of linguistic shift, top down scenarios and bottom up scenarios, i.e. speakers of a substrate language ( $L_L$ ) may shift to the language spoken by the superstrate speakers ( $L_H$ ) or superstrate speakers ( $L_H$ ) may shift to the language of the substrate language ( $L_L$ ). Both scenarios are common. Which direction the shift takes depends on language-external factors, such as social structures and power conditions. In the following I leave aside the field of the sociology of language shift,<sup>27</sup> and confine myself to discussing some of its internal, i.e. linguistic aspects.

For the three basic types of strata contact (superstrate, substrate and adstrate), Theo Vennemann (1995) has proposed the following rules of thumb:<sup>28</sup>

(1) *Superstrate rule or lexical rule* (top down)

Superstrates exert influence on the *lexicon* of their substrates, especially in the areas of social contact but less so in the domains of morphosyntax and

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Ferguson, 'Diglossia' (footnote 12). Annette Sabban, 'Operationalising the Concept of Diglossia', in *The Celtic Englishes II*, ed. Hildegard L. C. Tristram (Heidelberg, 2000), pp. 18–39.

<sup>26</sup> Of the many publications on the topic of language death and birth, I only refer to three recent ones: Theo Vennemann, 'Sprachgeburth durch Sprachkontakt', in *Sprachtod und Sprachgeburth*, ed. Peter Schrijver and Peter-Arnold Mumm (Bremen, 2004), pp. 21–56; Peter Schrijver, 'Der Tod des Festlandkeltischen und die Geburt des Französischen, Niederländischen und Hochdeutschen', in *Sprachtod und Sprachgeburth*, ed. Peter Schrijver and Peter-Arnold Mumm, pp. 1–20; Salikoko Mufwene, 'Language Birth and Death' (see footnote 23 above).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Joshua Fishman, *Readings in the Sociology of Language* (The Hague, 1968); *Advances in the Sociology of Language*, 2 vols. (The Hague, 1972); *The Sociolinguistics of Society* (Oxford, 1984).

<sup>28</sup> Theo Vennemann, 'Etymologische Beziehungen im Alten Europa', in *Der Ginkgo Baum*, Germanistisches Jahrbuch für Nordeuropa 13 (Helsinki, 1995); repr. in *Europa Vasconica – Europa Semitica*, ed. Patrizia Noel Aziz Hanna (Berlin, 2003), pp. 203–97.

phonology. Examples include Latin and British/Brittonic,<sup>29</sup> Anglo-Norman/Angevin French and English,<sup>30</sup> and English and Welsh.<sup>31</sup>

(2a) *Substrate rule (morphosyntactic rule)* (bottom up)

Substrates exert influence on the morphosyntax and the phonology (prosody in particular) of their superstrates as well as on their idiomatic structure, and not (so much) on their lexicon. Examples include Gaulish and Latin,<sup>32</sup> Late British and English,<sup>33</sup> West Slavic and German,<sup>34</sup> Old Prussian (a Baltic language) and German,<sup>35</sup> and Latin or Greek and Arabic in the Middle East and North Africa.<sup>36</sup>

(2b) *Toponymic rule*

Substrates often determine the toponymy of their superstrates, while anthroponyms tend to behave like ordinary nouns, i.e. they do not influence their

<sup>29</sup> On the substantial influence of Latin on British/Brittonic, see Henry Jones, *Yr Elfen Ladin yn yr Iaith Gymraeg* (Cardiff, 1943), repr. 1980; Stefan Zimmer, 'Latin and Welsh', *Donum grammaticum. Studies in Latin and Celtic Linguistics in Honour of Hannah Rosén*, ed. Lea Sawicki and Donna Shalev (Leuven, 2002), pp. 395–406.

<sup>30</sup> The literature on this topic is legion and, because of the prestige of the French language as the language of Norman power and later of diplomacy and culture, the study of French loan words in English has attracted the special attention of scholars since the nineteenth century; see for instance Otto Jespersen, *Growth and Structure of the English Language* (Oxford, 1954; orig. pub. 1905), ch. V, pp. 85–113; repr. Oxford (with a foreword by Randolph Quirk, 1990), pp. 78–105; Fernand Mossé, 'On the Chronology of French Loan Words in English', *English Studies* 25 (1943), 33–40; Manfred Scheler, *Der englische Wortschatz* (Berlin, 1977), pp. 52–63; Xavier Dekeyser, 'Romance Loans in Middle English: a Re-assessment', in *Linguistics across Historical and Geographical Boundaries*, ed. Dieter Kastovsky and Aleksander Szwedek (Berlin, 1986), pp. 253–66; Thomason and Kaufman, *Language Contact*, pp. 306–15; David Burnley, '5. Lexis and Semantics', *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, ed. Richard M. Hogg, vol. VII, 1066–1476, ed. Norman Blake (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 409–99 at pp. 423–32 (the influence of French); Julie Coleman, 'The Chronology of French and Latin Loan Words in English', *Transactions of the Philological Society* 93 (1995), 95–124.

<sup>31</sup> On the influence of English on Welsh, see for instance Thomas H. Parry-Williams, *The English Element in Welsh* (London, 1923), and 'English–Welsh Loan-Words', in *Angles and Britons*, ed. N. K. Chadwick, O'Donnell Lectures (Cardiff, 1963), pp. 42–59; Clive Grey, 'English Loanwords in Welsh: Some Aspects', (unpublished BA dissertation, Bangor, 1978). I am very grateful to Prof. Alan Thomas (Bangor) for pointing out this valuable study to me and to Clive Grey for allowing me to read a copy of it.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Brigitte L. M. Bauer, 'Language Loss in Gaul: Socio-historical and Linguistic Factors in Language Conflict', *Southwest Journal of Linguistics* 15 (1996), 23–44; G. Woolf, *Becoming Roman: The Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge, 1998).

<sup>33</sup> Due to widespread 'Anglo-Saxonism' not much research has been undertaken in this field until recently; see Gary German, 'Britons, Anglo-Saxons and Scholars: 19th Century Attitudes towards the Survival of Britons in Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Celtic Englishes II*, ed. Hildegard L. C. Tristram (Heidelberg, 2000), pp. 347–74.

<sup>34</sup> G. Bellmann, 'Slawisch/Deutsch', *Sprachgeschichte. Ein Handbuch zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und ihrer Erforschung*, ed. Werner Besch, O. Reichmann and S. Sonderegger, vol. 4 (Berlin, 2000), pp. 3229–59, at pp. 3230–5.

<sup>35</sup> G. Bellmann, 'Baltisch/Deutsch', *Sprachgeschichte. Ein Handbuch zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und ihrer Erforschung*, ed. Werner Besch et al., pp. 3269–82, at p. 3272.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. R. H. Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period* (Cambridge, MA, 1979).

superstrates. Examples include 'native' place-names in Cornwall, Wales, Ireland, Scotland or North America.

### (3) *Adstrate rule*

Adstrates exert influence on their adstrates on all levels but mostly on their lexicon. Examples include Old Norse and English in the Danelaw,<sup>37</sup> Vlaams/Flemish and Walloon (in Belgium), and Finnish and Swedish (in Finland).

Since Late British served as a substrate to the nascent Old English dialects, we should therefore hardly expect any bottom up lexical transfer. What we should expect, however, is phonological and morpho-syntactic transfer, and this is exactly what we find in the early history of the English language. The domain of phonological transfer has been broached by Peter Schrijver.<sup>38</sup> I therefore limit myself to the field of morphosyntactic transfer. But before I discuss two of the more salient morphosyntactic transfer features ('calques') from Late British to English, I will very briefly point out three other recent, linguistic study fields which, beside contact and strata linguistics, are relevant to the understanding of how language shift works in general and how the shift from Late British to English may have worked in particular. These fields are creole studies, psycholinguistics and social psychology.

### *Creole studies*

Within the English overseas colonies, from the beginning of the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries, large numbers of non-standard, English-speaking colonisers entered into contact with many different, ethno-linguistically heterogeneous populations.<sup>39</sup> As the different colonial economies varied, for example as trading colonies, exploitation/plantation colonies or settlement colonies,<sup>40</sup> so also did the complex, adaptive linguistic systems among the respective speakers, which arose as the outcome of linguistic contact.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>37</sup> John H. McWhorter, 'What happened to English?', *Diachronica* 19 (2002), 217–72; D. Gary Miller, 'The Morphosyntactic Legacy of the Scandinavian–English Contact', in *For the love of Inglis lede*, ed. Marcin Krygier and Liliana Sikorska, *Medieval English Mirror* 1 (Frankfurt-am-Main, 2004), 9–39.

<sup>38</sup> Peter Schrijver, *Studies in British Celtic Historical Phonology* (Amsterdam and Atlanta, 1995); 'The Celtic Contribution to the Development of the North Sea Germanic Vowel System,' *NOWELE* 35 (1999), 3–47; 'The Rise and Fall of British Latin'; see also his contribution to this volume.

<sup>39</sup> *The Other Tongue: English across Cultures*, ed. B. Kachru (Urbana, IL, 1982); Klaus Hansen, Uwe Carls and Peter Lucko, *Die Differenzierung des Englischen in nationale Varianten* (Berlin, 1996); Tom McArthur, *The English Languages* (Cambridge, 1998).

<sup>40</sup> The same type of ecologies, of course, also obtained in the Portuguese, French and Dutch colonies.

<sup>41</sup> The publications in creole studies are legion. Suffice it to point out here Robert A. Hall Jr, *Pidgin and Creole Languages* (Ithaca, NY, 1966); *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages*, ed. Dell Hymes (Cambridge, 1971); Derek Bickerton, *Dynamics of a Creole System* (Cambridge, 1975); *Roots of Language* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1981); Robert B. LePage and Andrée Tabouret-Keller, *Acts of Identity: Creole-Based Approaches to Language and Ethnicity* (Cambridge, 1985); Peter Mühlhäusler, *Pidgin and Creole Linguistics* (Oxford, 1986: exp. and rev. ed., London, 1997); *Linguistic Ecology: Language Change and*

It has recently been shown that the processes underlying the birth of creoles and the speciation of genetically related languages are closely connected, if not the same.<sup>42</sup> Speakers invariably create and adapt languages according to their needs to adjust to changing socio-economic conditions. The adaptive processes depend on the respective linguistic input.<sup>43</sup> Speakers select those linguistic features from their contact languages which are salient and therefore serve their communication needs best.<sup>44</sup>

In the case of the contact situation between speakers of Late British and speakers of the Old English dialects, this may have been exactly what happened. The speakers of Late British shifted to the language of their conquerors and selected for transfer those features of their native language which were the most salient ones.<sup>45</sup>

### *Psycholinguistics*

Contact linguistics, strata and creole studies explain *how* languages interact under specific contact conditions; they do not, however, explain the psychological aspects of the linguistic behaviour of the shifters. This falls into the domain of psycholinguistics.<sup>46</sup> Psycholinguistics deals with first language (L<sub>1</sub>) and second language acquisition (L<sub>2</sub>), bilingualism, code-switching, language shift and language loss.<sup>47</sup> Psycholinguistics also explores the age factor relevant

*Linguistic Imperialism in the Pacific Region* (London, 1996); John R. Rickford, *Dimensions of a Creole Continuum* (Stanford, CA, 1987); *Pidgins and Creoles – An Introduction*, ed. Jacques Arends, Pieter Muysken and Norval Smith (Amsterdam, 1995); Herman Wekker, *Creole Languages and Language Acquisition* (Berlin, 1996); Salikoko S. Mufwene, *The Ecology of Language Evolution* (Cambridge, 2001).

<sup>42</sup> Mufwene, *The Ecology*; 'Competition and Selection'.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Susanne E. Carroll, *Input and Evidence: The Raw Material of Second Language Acquisition* (Amsterdam, 2000).

<sup>44</sup> On the impact of salience in dialect and language contact see Paul Kerswill and Anne Williams, 'Salience as an Explanatory Factor in Language Change: Evidence from Dialect Levelling in Urban England', *Reading Working Papers in Linguistics* 4 (2000), 63–94.

<sup>45</sup> I am *not* arguing here that English is a creole on the basis of Late British *cum* the nascent Old English dialects prior to the advent of the Scandinavians. Nor would I subscribe to the views of Charles-James Bailey and Karl Maroldt ('The French Lineage of English', *Langues en contact* (Tübingen, 1977), pp. 21–53) nor to Patricia Poussa's view ('The Evolution of Early Standard English: the Creolization Hypothesis', *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia* 18 (1982), 69–85) that English has to be considered as a creole with French and Old Norse as input. There are, of course, broad and narrow definitions of what a 'creole' is; see for instance Bickerton's narrow view as opposed to Bailey and Maroldt's very broad view. In my understanding a 'creole' is a variety of a language where speakers of more than two languages in contact, with one of them a prestige language, form a new and independent communicative system by creatively restructuring the input features of the source languages. The restructuring process, however, is the same as in 'ordinary' 'bottom-up' or 'top-down' shift processes, only that the degree of congruence of the 'creole' with the input languages is much less pronounced.

<sup>46</sup> I gratefully acknowledge the help with this paragraph from my Potsdam colleagues Prof. Susanne E. Carroll and Dr Hartmut Burmeister. All errors and infelicities are, however, my own responsibility.

<sup>47</sup> From the host of publications in this field, I would like to single out Joshua A. Fishman, 'Bilingualism with and without Diglossia' (see footnote 12 above); Susan Gal, *Language*



for native-like acquisition of target languages. The proficiency of child and adult L<sub>2</sub> acquisition differs considerably. Adult L<sub>2</sub> learners are far less successful in their replication of target languages than children are: the younger the children, the better their proficiency.<sup>48</sup> Also of relevance is the distinction between ‘naturalistic’ or ‘unmonitored’ acquisition modes and acquisition by ‘special monitoring’, such as structured acquisition in the classroom.<sup>49</sup>

Psycholinguistics is a vast and fast developing field of research that I cannot go into in any detail here. I will only mention those basics, which may be relevant to our problem as to what happened when the speakers of Late British chose to speak the nascent Old English dialects.

There seems to be a two-stage, natural time course operating in unmonitored L<sub>1</sub> and ‘bottom up’ L<sub>2</sub> acquisition. The first stage is that of the acquisition of the lexicon, i.e. the vocabulary. The second stage is that of the acquisition of morphosyntax. The difference between L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub> acquisition of morphosyntax lies in the observation that, especially among adult L<sub>2</sub> learners, speakers often remain restricted to a pidgin type version of L<sub>2</sub>, i.e. they largely communicate with lexicon but without, or with only little, ‘correct’ morphosyntax.<sup>50</sup> This phenomenon is called ‘fossilisation’. In spite of a long exposure to the target language, adult L<sub>2</sub> speakers commonly do not improve their proficiency in the grammatical replication of the target language. Thus, in the case of adult, ‘bottom up’ L<sub>2</sub> acquisition, the learners usually tend to acquire the L<sub>2</sub> lexicon consciously and deliberately, while the morphosyntax (and phonology) of the target language are acquired unconsciously and imperfectly. The imperfectly acquired and fossilised L<sub>2</sub> structures are then passed on by the learners to their children. In situations of slow language shift over a number of generations, the fossilisations may then become grammaticalised.<sup>51</sup>

*Shift* (New York, 1979); René Appel and Pieter Muysken, *Language Contact and Bilingualism* (London, 1987); Terence Odlin, *Language Transfer: Cross-linguistic Influence in Language Learning* (Cambridge, 1989); Don Kulick, *Language Shift and Cultural Reproduction* (Cambridge, 1992); *One Speaker: Two Languages. Cross-disciplinary Perspectives on Code-switching*, ed. Lesley Milroy and Pieter Muyskens (Cambridge, 1995); Suzanne Romaine, *Bilingualism* (Oxford, 1995); Josiane F. Hamers and Michel H. A. Blanc, *Bilinguality and Bilingualism* (Cambridge, 2000); Susanne E. Carroll, *Input and Evidence*, and ‘Language Contact from a Developmental Perspective’, in *The Celtic Englishes II*, ed. Hildegard L. C. Tristram (Heidelberg, 2000), pp. 9–17.

<sup>48</sup> Psycholinguists consider the proficiency of twelve-year-olds as already that of adult learners (personal communication, Susanne Carroll, Potsdam, 31/10/03).

<sup>49</sup> See for instance *Bilingualism across the Lifespan: Aspects of Acquisition, Maturity and Loss*, ed. Kenneth Hyltenstam and Loraine K. Obler (Cambridge, 1989); *Trends in Bilingual Acquisition*, ed. Jasone Cenoz and Fred Genesee (Amsterdam, 2001); Fred Genesee, Johanne Paradis and Martha B. Crago, *Dual Language Development and Disorders* (Baltimore and London, 2004).

<sup>50</sup> Cf. T. Givón, L. Yang and M. A. Gernsbacher, ‘The Processing of Second Language Vocabulary: From Attended to Automated Word-recognition’, *Institute of Cognitive & Decision Sciences, Technical Report No. 90–4* (n.d.), 1–19, at p. 1. (I owe access to this publication to Dr Hartmut Burmeister, Potsdam.)

<sup>51</sup> A prime example in modern times of a slow shift over many generations occurred in Ireland between the seventeenth and the twentieth centuries. Here adult learners passed on their

In the case of our Britons acquiring the dialects of Old English, the first step thus seems to have been that of unstructured adult acquisition of the Old English target dialects as L<sub>2</sub>. Perhaps, initially, there may have been only a small stable group of adult bilinguals who mediated between the speakers of Late British and the Old English dialects. Social segregation, as in Ireland before the end of the eighteenth century, may have generally kept the two population groups apart. As long as the social barrier lasted, this scenario will have meant for adult bilinguals a native-like acquisition of the lexicon but transfer on the level of phonology and morphosyntax because of their unconscious, imperfect replication of the target language. In the course of time, however, the number of bilinguals increased. This would eventually have led to child language acquisition. Children would have learned the imperfectly acquired L<sub>2</sub> from their parents as their L<sub>1</sub> and subsequently passed on their linguistic knowledge of the modified target language to their own children.

From the textual evidence we have, the social barriers between the free and land-holding elite of Anglo-Saxon society and their dependents were perhaps fairly stable until the advent of the Normans.<sup>52</sup> I would thus assume that the diglossia between Late British-derived Old English<sub>L</sub> and elite Old English<sub>H</sub>, spoken by the comparatively small number of people forming the aristocracy, was very pronounced. Only the language of the elite, the high variety of Old English narrowly monitored and standardised, seems to have been codified in writing, and it was this version of the language which remained remarkably constant over many centuries. This written code continued to be adhered to until the effect of the Norman Conquest was increasingly felt in the twelfth century, when the spoken language of the erstwhile illiterate mass of the population – arguably of largely British extraction – made inroads into the written vernacular.<sup>53</sup>

fossilised L<sub>2</sub> phonology and morphosyntax to their children to the effect that present-day Irish English is easily recognisable by its pronunciation, prosody, grammar and phraseology, while lexical transfers from Irish are rather limited. Knowledge of lexical Irishisms is rapidly decreasing among the young generation, as a Potsdam study in the 1990s, on the recognition of Irishisms by Irish university students compared to over-sixty-year-old interviewees, has shown. For the early contact situation between Irish and English, see for instance Raymond Hickey, 'An Assessment of Language Contact in the Development of Irish English', *Linguistic Change under Contact Conditions*, ed. Jacek Fisiak (Berlin, 1995), pp. 109–30, at pp. 113ff., and 'Arguments for Creolisation in Irish English', in *Language History and Linguistic Modelling. A Festschrift for Jacek Fisiak*, ed. Raymond Hickey and Stanisław Puppel (Berlin, 1997), pp. 969–1038, at pp. 977–81.

<sup>52</sup> On the social structure of Anglo-Saxon England, see, for instance, Dorothy Whitelock, *The Beginnings of English Society*, Pelican History of England 2 (Harmondsworth, 1952), pp. 111ff.; Stenton, *ASE*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1971), pp. 141–8; Heinrich Härke, 'Early Anglo-Saxon Social Structure', in *The Anglo-Saxons from the Migration Period to the Eighth Century*, ed. John Hines (Woodbridge, 1997), pp. 125–70 at pp. 141–8. On slavery in Anglo-Saxon England and the mixed ethnic origin of the unfree population, see David Pelteret, 'Slave Raiding and Slave Trading in Early England', *ASE* 9 (1981), 99–114, and *Slavery in Early Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 1995). See also footnote 18 above.

<sup>53</sup> Heinrich Härke, 'Kings and Warriors: Population and Landscape from Post-Roman to Norman Britain', in *The Peopling of Britain: the Shaping of a Human Landscape*, ed. Paul Slack and Ryk Ward, Linacre Lectures 1999 (Oxford, 2002), pp. 145–75; Hildegard L. C.

*Social psychology: Speech accommodation theory*

Why would substrate speakers want to acquire the language of their masters? What would their personal motivation be? The trivial answer is, of course, because of their desire to partake in the prestige, social advancement and economic success of the elite and above all because of their desire to gain access to the social benefits associated with prestige status. Bilingual speakers already have social advantages compared to monolingual substrate speakers.<sup>54</sup> The main incentive for superstrate, second language acquisition in diglossic societies therefore is utilitarian.

On the psychological level the basis for this utilitarian behaviour has been explained by the linguistic adaptability of individual speakers as well as groups of speakers. In order to communicate effectively, people unconsciously adapt their linguistic behaviour to that of their interlocutors. The mental attitude which fuels the desire to communicate successfully leads the speaker to adjust her/his speech to that of her/his interlocutor. Without speaker accommodation, linguistic interaction would not be possible, as we would all be idiosyncratic speakers of our own idiolects. The extent of adjustment depends on a large variety of psychological factors.<sup>55</sup> Speaker accommodation as a social technique operates in all communicative situations, including those of inter-language communication and L<sub>2</sub> acquisition.<sup>56</sup>

Tristram, 'Diglossia in Anglo-Saxon England, or What was spoken Old English like?', *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia* 40 (2004), 87–110.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Pierre Bourdieu's theory of 'superlégitimation' of speakers who are able to make use of more than one language in the 'marché linguistique', when they have access to the 'symbolic capital' of the prestige language: Bourdieu, *Ce que parler veut dire: l'économie des échanges linguistiques* (Paris, 1982); *Language and Symbolic Power* (Oxford, 1991); *Langage et pouvoir symbolique* (Paris, 2001).

<sup>55</sup> Speech Accommodation Theory was developed in the 1960s and 70s by Howard Giles and his colleagues. See Giles and Robert N. St. Clair (1979), eds., *Language and Social Psychology* (Oxford, 1979); Giles and P. M. Smith, 'Accommodation Theory: Optimal Levels of Convergence', in *Language and Social Psychology*, ed. Giles and St. Clair (Oxford, 1979), pp. 45–65; Giles, 'Accommodation Theory: Some New Directions', in *Aspects of Linguistic Behaviour, Festschrift for R. B. LePage*, ed. M. V. S. de Silva, York Papers in Linguistics (York, 1980); R. L. Street and Howard Giles, 'Speech Accommodation Theory', in *Social Cognition and Communication*, ed. M. Roloff and C. R. Berger (Beverly Hills, CA, 1982), pp. 193–226; Giles, Nikolas Coupland and Justine Coupland, 'Accommodation Theory. Communication, Context, Consequences', in *Contexts of Accommodation, Developments in Applied Linguistics*, ed. Giles, Coupland and Coupland (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 1–68.

<sup>56</sup> Speech Accommodation Theory originally arose out of four different theories developed in social psychology, which have found wide acceptance: *similarity attraction theory* (people need approval from others to be able to successfully communicate among each other), *social exchange theory* (people minimize their social costs and maximize their social rewards in communicating with each other), *causal attribution theory* (people constantly attribute causes to their interlocutors' motives and intentions when communicating) and *intergroup distinctiveness theory* (people constantly compare themselves across social groups on valued social dimensions, concerning power, social prestige, possessions etc.). Cf. Leslie M. Beebe and Howard Giles, 'Speech Accommodation Theories: A Discussion in Terms of Second-Language Acquisition', *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 46 (1984), 5–32; Leslie M. Beebe, 'Five Sociolinguistic Approaches to Second

Supposing that social behaviour did not change much in this respect over the past 1,500 years, the insights of modern social psychology may also have had some relevance to the motivations of speakers of Late British in their desire to adapt themselves linguistically and to communicate as effectively as possible with Anglo-Saxon speakers of higher status.

*Transfer from Late British to the Anglo-Saxon Dialects*

What was spoken Old English like, the language of the bulk of the population? Unfortunately, we know nothing about spoken Old English to the extent that it differed from the language as it was committed to writing, which was an instrument of power enforcement in the hands of a very few monastics belonging to the elite. In Old English literature we seldom hear about non-aristocratic people; they were given no voice.<sup>57</sup> The spoken language only became visible (literally) after the Norman Conquest, after William the Conqueror effectively replaced the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy by Norman-French speaking barons, clerics and their followers. Spoken Old English therefore only started to be admitted to the realm of writing at the beginning of the twelfth century: witness the so-called 'Continuations' of the *Peterborough Chronicle*.<sup>58</sup>

As pointed out before, elite written Old English was kept remarkably unchanged over the long period of Anglo-Saxon cultural and political dominance. The continued use of the Irish-derived insular script saw only minor adaptations of the graphemes (use of runic characters etc.). The limited spelling variations, e.g. West Saxon <y> for earlier <ie>, matched the rather unexciting dialect variations between early recorded Northumbrian and the later Mercian, Kentish, Northumbrian and West Saxon written dialects. These suggest that the Anglo-Saxon elite, as mentioned before, used the technology of writing for the purposes of the creation and maintenance of ethnic identity<sup>59</sup> and the affirmative unity of

Language Acquisition', in *Issues in Second Language Acquisition. Multiple Perspectives*, ed. Beebe (New York, 1988), pp. 43–77 at pp. 61–8.

<sup>57</sup> There are very few exceptions, such as the mention of the cowherd Cædmon in Bede's *HE* IV, 24, who bears a Brittonic name, and the swineherd (OE *swan*) in the entry of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Parker MS) for AD 754 and 755, who revenged his master named Cumbra, another Brittonic name, by killing his murderer, the deposed king of the West Saxons, Sigebryht. For the complete text of this *Chronicle* entry, see *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, vol. 4, *MSA*, ed. Janet Bately (Cambridge, 1986), *sub anno* 755.

<sup>58</sup> *The Peterborough Chronicle 1070–1154*, ed. Cecily Clark (Oxford, 1957, 2nd edn 1970); Tristram, 'Diglossia' (footnote 53 above), pp. 89ff. Interestingly, the earliest documents issued by William's administration were written in the OE standard, as Anglo-Norman had not been codified as yet.

<sup>59</sup> Witness for instance the evidence of the heroic epic *Beowulf*. Its singular copy is contained in the Nowell Codex (BL MS Cotton Vitellius A.xv), dated between the end of the tenth century (Neil R. Ker) and the earlier eleventh century (Kevin S. Kiernan). The historical distance between the sixth century in which the plot of *Beowulf* is set and the extant text in the manuscript directed at an elite audience is remarkable. The very uniformity of the use of the Old English language and even more so the transparency of the Old English names of

their culture.<sup>60</sup> The Benedictine Reform enforced the uniformity of the written standard across the entire area of England.<sup>61</sup> When this standard was devalued under the Normans, the spoken language became more socially acceptable and eventually assumed the status of a written code. This was no unified interregional code but a localised and, in a number of cases, even personalised one.<sup>62</sup> In a recent paper I suggested that early Middle English reflected spoken Old English, because the written divide between Old and Middle English was only apparent.<sup>63</sup> The real communicative divide came with the massive influx of French lexis, especially between the end of the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries. French lexis estranged the language so much that sixteenth-century Renaissance scholars did not consider the earlier period to be ‘English’ but ‘Saxon’<sup>64</sup> and led scholars

the characters in the poem show that the time depth of the story was deliberately telescoped into a uniform ethnic present. On the dating of *Beowulf* see Kevin S. Kiernan, *Beowulf and the Beowulf Manuscript* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1981); Colin Chase, *The Dating of Beowulf* (Toronto, 1997). On the elite character of the four poetic manuscripts and their political background in the tenth-century Benedictine Reform, see Gunhild Zimmermann, *The Four Old English Poetic Manuscripts. Texts, Contexts and Historical Background* (Heidelberg, 1995).

<sup>60</sup> Cf. John Hines, ‘The Becoming of the English: Identity, Material Culture and Language in Early Anglo-Saxon England’, *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 7 (1994), 49–59; ‘Britain after Rome: Between Monoculturalism and Multiculturalism’, in *Cultural Identity and Archaeology: The Construction of European Communities*, ed. Paul Graves-Brown, Siân Jones and Clive Gamble (London, 1996), pp. 256–70; ‘Welsh and English: Mutual Origins in Post-Roman Britain?’, *Studia Celtica* 34 (2000), 812–84; ‘Attitude Problems? The Old Saxon and Old English *Genesis* Poems’, in *Language Structure and Variation*, ed. Magnus Ljung (Stockholm, 2000), pp. 69–90, esp. at p. 78; Walter Pohl, ‘Conceptions of Ethnicity in Early Medieval Studies’, *Archaeologia Polona* 29 (1991), 39–49; ‘Ethnic Names and Identities in the British Isles: A Comparative Perspective’, in *The Anglo-Saxons from the Migration Period to the Eighth Century*, ed. John Hines, pp. 7–40 (see footnote 52 above).

<sup>61</sup> Lucia Kornexl, ‘*Concordes equali consuetudinis usu* – Monastische Normierungsbestrebungen und sprachliche Standardisierung in spätaltenglischer Zeit’, in *Prozesse der Normbildung und Normveränderung im mittelalterlichen Europa*, ed. D. Ruhe and Karl-Heinz Spieß (Stuttgart, 2000), pp. 237–73; Mechthild Gretsch, ‘Winchester Vocabulary and Standard Old English: the Vernacular in Late Anglo-Saxon England’, The T. Northcote Toller Memorial Lecture 2000, *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 83 (Manchester, 2001), 41–87; ‘In Search of Standard Old English’, in *Bookmarks from the Past. Studies in English Language and Literature in Honour of Helmut Gneuss*, ed. Lucia Kornexl and U. Lenker (Frankfurt, 2003), pp. 33–67.

<sup>62</sup> As for instance the twelfth-century *Ormulum*; cf. Robert Burchfield, ‘The Language and Orthography of the *Ormulum* MS’, *Transactions of the Philological Society* 54 (1956), 56–87; Manfred Markus, ‘The Spelling Peculiarities of the *Ormulum* from an Interdisciplinary Point of View: a Reappraisal’, in *Studies in Mediaeval English Literature and its Tradition: A Festschrift for Karl Heinz Göller*, ed. Uwe Böker, Manfred Markus and Rainer Schöwerling (Stuttgart, 1985), pp. 69–86; Stephen Morrison, ‘Vernacular Literary Activity in Twelfth-Century England: Redressing the Balance’, in *Culture politique des Plantagenêt (1154–1224)*, ed. M. Aurell (Poitiers, 2003), pp. 253–67; Meg Worley, ‘Using the *Ormulum* to Redefine Vernacularity’, in *The Vulgar Tongue: Medieval and Postmedieval Vernacularity*, ed. Fiona Somerset and Nicholas Watson (University Park, PA, 2003), pp. 19–30.

<sup>63</sup> Tristram, ‘Diglossia’ (see footnote 53 above).

<sup>64</sup> See Angelika Lutz, ‘When did English begin?’, in *Sounds, Words, Texts and Change*.

like Reinard W. Zandvoort to pose the question whether or not 'English' should be considered as a Germanic language.<sup>65</sup>

### *Grammatical features*

In which areas of morphosyntax is substrate transfer from Late British to spoken Anglo-Saxon most likely to have occurred? In my 2002 paper given at Mekrijärvi, I suggested that, beside other features,<sup>66</sup> the attrition of nominal inflexions and consequently the rise of a fixed word order are the least ambiguous transfer features from Late British because these already showed in Old Welsh texts.<sup>67</sup> Another very likely transfer feature not linked to the attrition of noun inflexions concerns the syntax of the verbal nucleus of the verb phrase and, here in particular, the development of periphrastic constructions (periphrastic aspect, periphrastic DO).

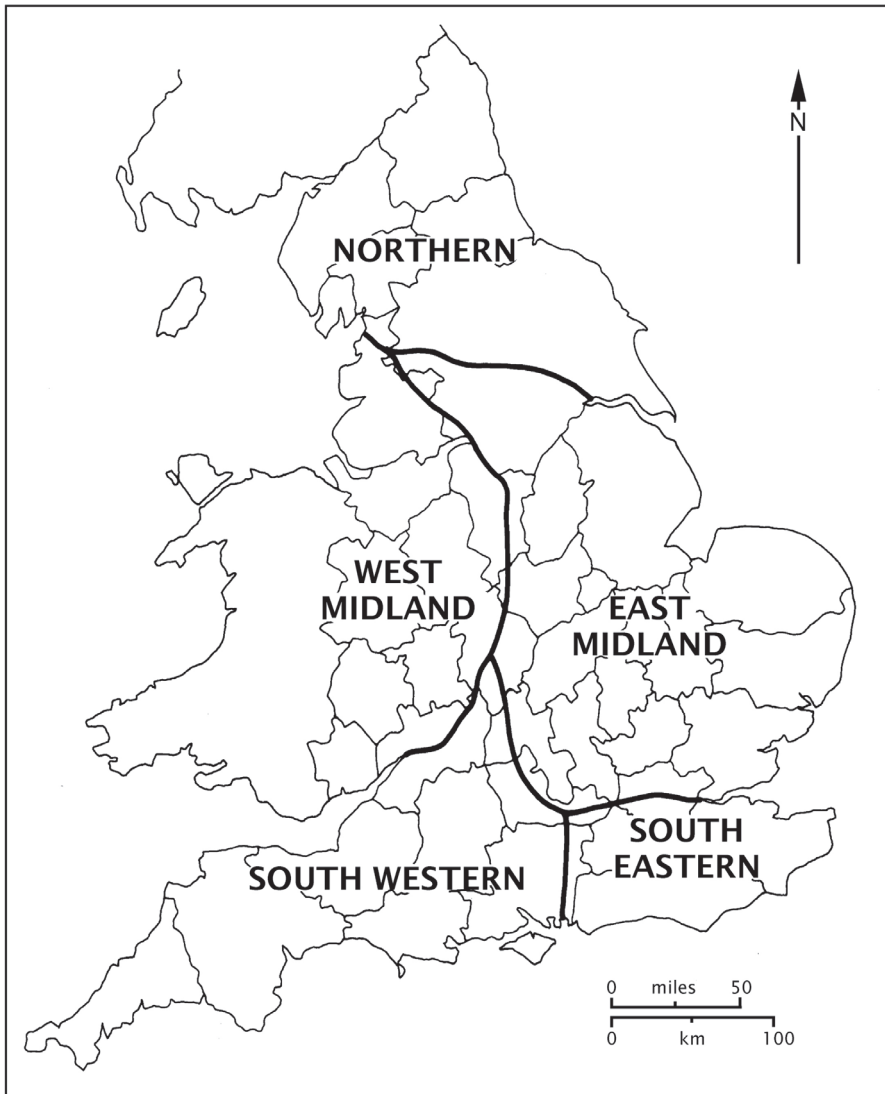
The typological change of English from a predominantly synthetic language to a predominantly analytical language and the consequent loss of inflexions, have commonly been attributed to two causes, either to language contact between Old English and Old Norse or to the prosodic impact of the strong stress on the (first) stem syllable of a lexeme. Both hypotheses can be refuted on cross-linguistic evidence. Spoken Old Norse was as strongly inflected as written OE<sub>H</sub>. Even if the Scandinavians had only communicated with the Anglo-Saxon elite, why should this contact involving two inflected languages have led to the attrition

*Selected Papers from 11 ICEHL, Santiago de Compostela, 7–11 September 2000*, ed. Teresa Fanego and Elena Seoane (Amsterdam, 2002), pp. 145–71.

<sup>65</sup> Reinard W. Zandvoort, 'Is English a Germanic Language?', in *Collected Papers II* (Groningen, 1955/1970), pp. 54–66.

<sup>66</sup> Morphosyntactic transfer features, which have been proposed as to their possible origin in Late British, are discussed by W. Preussler, 'Keltischer Einfluss im Englischen', *Revue des Langues Vivantes* 22 (1956), 322–50; David L. White, 'Brittonic Influence in English', unpublished undergraduate thesis (Austin, TX, 1987); 'Explaining the Innovations of Middle English', pp. 169 f.; 'On the Areal Pattern of "Brittonicity" in English and its Implications', in *The Celtic Englishes IV*, ed. Hildegard L. C. Tristram (Potsdam, 2006), pp. 306–35; Hildegard L. C. Tristram, *How Celtic is Standard English?* (Saint Petersburg, 1999); 'The Politics of Language: Links between Modern Welsh and English', in *Of dyuersitie & chaunge of langage. Essays Presented to Manfred Görlach on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, ed. Katja Lenz and Ruth Möhlig (Heidelberg, 2002), pp. 257–75, at p. 272.

<sup>67</sup> Tristram, 'Attrition' (see footnote 6 above). The following four criteria need to be met for the possible identification of morphosyntactic parallels between English and Welsh as transfer features: the *priority of attestation*, the *frequency of occurrence*, the *conformity with other syntactic structures in the source language* and the *degree of grammaticalisation* in the source language; see Hildegard L. C. Tristram, 'The Celtic Englishes – Zwei grammatische Beispiele zum Problem des Sprachkontaktes zwischen dem Englischen und den keltischen Sprachen', in *Akten des zweiten deutschen Keltologensymposiums (Bonn, 2.–4. April 1997)*, ed. Stefan Zimmer, Rolf Ködderitzsch and Arndt Wigger (Tübingen, 1999), pp. 254–76, at p. 274; Tristram, 'The Politics of Language', pp. 257–75, at p. 270; see Thomason and Kaufman, *Language Contact*, pp. 93 f. for a different catalogue of requirements as evidence for the assumption of contact-induced language change; see also Erich Poppe, 'Zu den "erweiterten Formen" des Englischen und der inselkeltischen Sprachen', *Sprachwissenschaft* 27 (2002), 249–81.



15.1 Map of English regional dialects, taken from Lilo Moessner and Ursula Schaefer, *Proseminar Mittelenglisch* (Darmstadt, 1974), p. 126; see also George L. Brook, *English Dialects* (London, 1963), p. 60.

of inflexions? This hypothesis is not empirically borne out by cross-linguistic evidence. German ethnic groups in Russia, for instance, who shifted to Russian in the twentieth century did not do away with the Russian inflexions. If the strong initial accent was responsible for the attrition of unstressed syllables, why did High German not lose its inflexions?

Another hypothesis that has been advanced to explain the loss of inflexions is to suppose that the languages of the western European seaboard took part in the common typological drift of the Indo-European languages in Europe from a predominantly synthetic character to a predominantly analytic character, with Vulgar Latin, Welsh and English leading the way.<sup>68</sup> But why should English seemingly have developed its analyticity only in the Middle English period?

The rise of periphrastic aspect (imperfective vs. perfective) and DO periphrasis have been variously explained as having been influenced by Latin or French participial constructions.<sup>69</sup> However, Latin, as the language of learning, and societal French were superstratal languages with respect to spoken English and as such are unlikely to have influenced the syntax of their substrate (see above, p. 196).

The most likely hypothesis for both the nominal attrition of inflexions and the verbal periphrases is that of transfer through 'bottom-up' shift from Late British to Old English dialects. This transfer arguably started during the first centuries of the Anglicization of Britain and showed in written form during the Middle English period. This hypothesis will be further explored in the following.

#### *Two innovative areas*

Compared to the written Old English standard, the Middle English dialect zones reveal two innovating areas on the level of morphosyntax, the northern dialect zone and the south-western dialect zone. Interestingly, the attrition of inflexion was first attested in the northern zone and verbal periphrases seem to have arisen in the south-western zone. David White has argued that attrition is due to the substratal contact of English with a substantial Late-British-speaking population as well as with later adstratal Old Norse, which reinforced the attrition already under way when the Scandinavians started to settle. White has also suggested that the rise of verbal periphrases derived from the contact of West Saxon with substratal Late British speakers. Wessex had relatively few contacts with the

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Uwe Hinrichs and Uwe Büttner, eds., *Die europäischen Sprachen auf dem Weg zum analytischen Sprachtyp* (Wiesbaden, 2004). Unfortunately, and perhaps rather tellingly, the discussion of the Celtic languages is not included in this book. On the hypothesis of the typological cycle of long term development from syntheticity to analyticity and back to syntheticity, see Carleton T. Hodge, 'The Linguistic Cycle', *Language Sciences* 13 (1970), 1–7. On drift see Edward Sapir, *Language* (New York, 1921), ch. VII 'Language as a Historical Product: Drift'; Theo Vennemann, 'An Explanation of Drift', in *Word Order and Word Order Change*, ed. Charles N. Li (Austin, TX, and London, 1975), pp. 269–305; Dieter Kastovsky, 'The "Invisible hand," Drifts, and Typological Shifts. Examples from English', in *A Companion to Linguistics. A Festschrift for Anders Ahlqvist on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday*, ed. Bernadette Smelik et al. (Münster, 2005), pp. 286–95.

<sup>69</sup> See for instance Tauno Mustanoja, *A Middle English Syntax. I: Parts of Speech* (Helsinki, 1960).



Scandinavians.<sup>70</sup> These innovations are significant, as they seem to have diffused from their respective focal centres over the centuries until they entered Standard English from the Tudor period onward. It is telling that these ‘innovations’ have close parallels in the Old Welsh and Middle Welsh texts.<sup>71</sup> It can be assumed quite independently that they originated in Late British.<sup>72</sup>

As I discussed the attrition of inflexions *in extenso* in my Mekrijärvi article,<sup>73</sup> I will not repeat myself here but concentrate instead on the rise of the south-western feature of verbal periphrasis.

### *Periphrastic aspect*

The most salient south-western innovations occurred in the verb phrase (VP). Here the Late British-speaking learners of Old English seem to have modelled the syntax of the VP of their target language on analytic constructions of the Late British VP. These analytic constructions consisted of a form of the verb **BOT** + *yn* (construction marker) + **Verbal Noun** (VN)<sup>74</sup> in order to express the semantic category of aspect, here the imperfective aspect (‘progressive’) in the present tense. In the past tense, imperfective aspect was grammaticalised synthetically in Late British and Old Welsh by distinctive verbal inflexions. These marked the perfective aspect by *preterite* inflectional endings (also called ‘aorist’ in Welsh grammar books) and the imperfective aspect by *imperfect* inflectional endings,

<sup>70</sup> David L. White, ‘Explaining the Innovations of Middle English: What, Where, and Why?’, in *The Celtic Roots of English*, ed. Markku Filppula *et al.*, pp. 153–74; ‘Brittonic Influence in the Reductions of Middle English Nominal Morphology’, in *The Celtic Englishes III*, ed. Hildegard L. C. Tristram (Heidelberg, 2003), pp. 29–45; ‘On the Areal Pattern of “Brittonicity” in English’.

<sup>71</sup> As a typical colonial substrate language, Brittonic under the Romans was not recorded. We have to resort to Old Welsh and Middle Welsh texts as the closest cognates to Late British for comparison with English. Cf. Patrick Sims-Williams, *The Celtic Inscriptions of Britain: Phonology and Chronology, c. 400–1200* (Oxford, 2003).

<sup>72</sup> There is a methodological problem to be considered here. Welsh is not the direct descendant of the Late British (and British Latin) spoken by the language shifters in the Lowland and Upland Zones. The Welsh language is a descendant of a peripheral variety of Late British. In dialect research it is common knowledge that peripheral dialects tend to be more conservative than dialects spoken in more focal centres. It therefore has to be assumed that central Late British was more advanced in its developmental stages from, among other features, syntheticity to analyticity than the ancestor of Medieval and Modern Welsh. But since, unfortunately, we have no coherent records of central Late British, the closest we can get is Old Welsh and Middle Welsh. It may be assumed, however, that their broad developmental tendencies may have been similar to those varieties of Late British in the central areas.

<sup>73</sup> Hildegard L. C. Tristram, ‘Attrition’ (see footnote 6 above).

<sup>74</sup> Welsh **BOT** means ‘be’. It is important to note that the Celtic languages do not have infinitives (INF) but verbal nouns (VN). Among the infinite verb forms of Indo-European languages, the grammatical category of the *verbal noun* needs to be formally distinguished from the *infinitive* and also from common nouns denoting actions (*action nouns*). The VN is inflected for all cases, and it governs a genitive attribute instead of an accusative object, as the INF of a transitive verb did in Old English and in other Germanic languages. On the morphosyntax of the VN in Welsh, see Stefan Schumacher, *The Historical Morphology of the Welsh Verbal Noun* (Maynooth, 2000). For the Celtic languages in general, see Jean Gagnepain, *La syntaxe du nom verbal dans les langues celtiques* (Paris, 1963).

much as in Classical French (*passé simple* vs. *imparfait*) or as in Spanish (*pretérito* vs. *imperfecto*), Italian (*passato remoto* vs. *imperfetto*), the South Slavic languages, Albanian, Classical Greek and Modern Greek.<sup>75</sup> Learners of Old English are likely to have felt the need to express the distinction between perfectivity and imperfectivity in addition to the rather simple tense marking of their 'Germanic' Old English. They resorted to a calque of analytic constructions, such as in the present tense of Late British, the use of which, by over-generalisation, came to be extended to mark imperfectivity in the past as well.<sup>76</sup> As Old English had no VN as a distinctive grammatical category that could be used for calquing Late British aspect marking,<sup>77</sup> the learners first seem to have resorted to the use of the OE present participle as the semantically closest infinite form. Such constructions occasionally surfaced in written OE<sub>H</sub>, as shown for instance in the OE *Orosius*:<sup>78</sup>

swa hit **heofones tungol** on þæm tidun **cyþende wæron**<sup>79</sup>  
as **the stars of heaven were announcing** it in those times (i.e. the birth of Alexander the Great)

**hie** þær mid micelre bliþnesse buton gemetgunge þæt win **drincende wæron**  
there **they were drinking** the wine with great joyfulness (and) without moderation<sup>80</sup>

Dr Ilse Wischer analysed three sections of the Old English *Orosius* from the Helsinki Corpus comprising 8,660 words for the occurrence of periphrastic aspect forms. She found sixty-nine **BE + V-ende** constructions. This amounts to 8% of the verb forms used in these passages, quite an impressive result. Reading through the *Orosius* in Janet Bately's edition, I noticed that the use of the periphrastic aspect clusters in certain passages while it is virtually absent in passages of original prose, such as in the travel accounts by Ohthere and Wulfstan.<sup>81</sup> A

<sup>75</sup> Personal comment, Elton Prifti (Berlin, 05/07/04).

<sup>76</sup> A circumspect discussion of language contact as a necessary and sufficient condition for the use of imperfective aspect in Welsh and in English can be found in Ingo Mittendorf and Erich Poppe, 'Celtic Contacts of the English Progressive?', in *The Celtic Englishes II*, ed. Hildegard L. C. Tristram (Heidelberg, 2000), pp. 117–45; Erich Poppe 'Zu den "erweiterten Formen" des Englischen'.

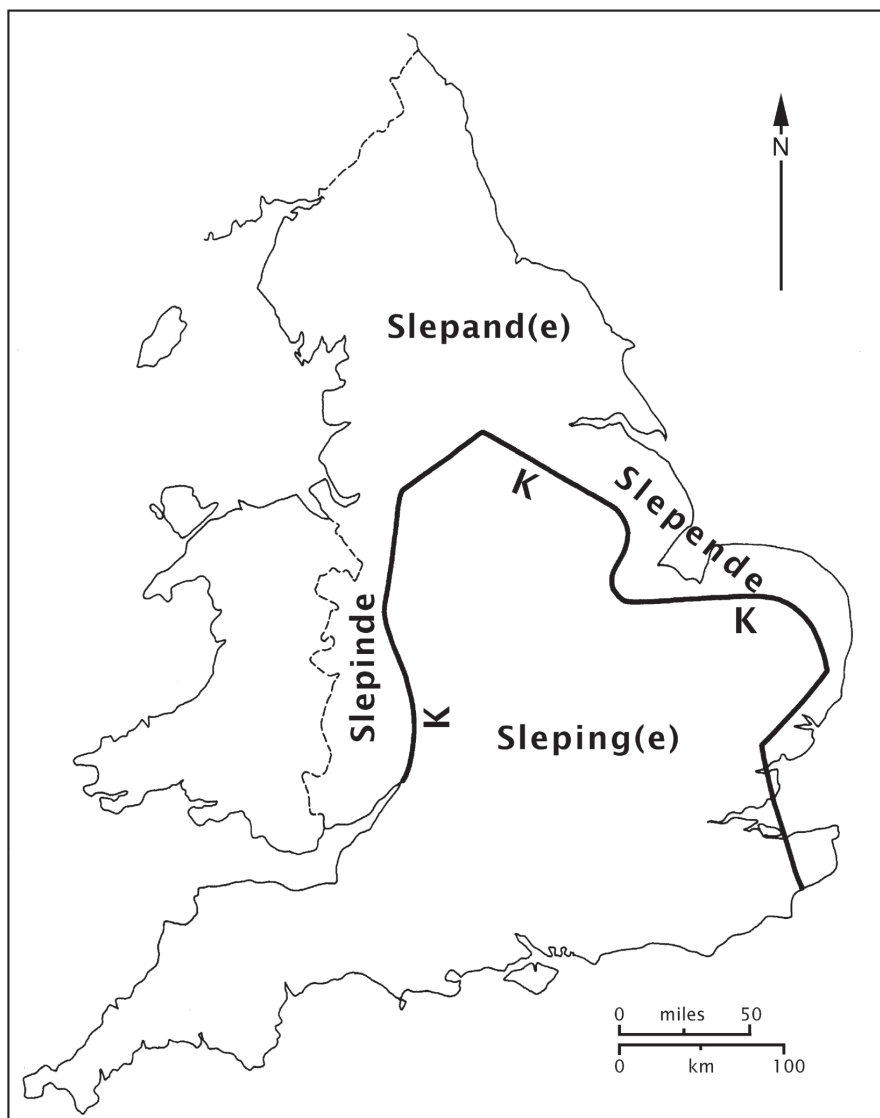
<sup>77</sup> See Hildegard L. C. Tristram, 'Aspect in Contact', in *Anglistentag 1994 Graz*, ed. Wolfgang Riehle (Tübingen, 1995), pp. 269–94, at p. 282; 'The Politics of Language', p. 271 (see footnote 66 above).

<sup>78</sup> Janet Bately, ed., *The Old English Orosius*, Early English Text Society, supplementary series 6 (Oxford, 1980); Peter Kitson, 'The Dialect Position of the Old English Orosius', *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia* 30 (1996), 3–35; Ilse Wischer, 'Old English Prefixed Verbs and the Question of Aspect and Aktionsart', in *Anglistentag 2003*, ed. Christoph Bode, Sebastian Domsch and Hans Sauer (Trier, 2004), pp. 71–84.

<sup>79</sup> Bately, *The Old English Orosius*, p. 58, line 8.

<sup>80</sup> Bately, *The Old English Orosius*, p. 44, lines 29–30.

<sup>81</sup> Bately, *The Old English Orosius*, pp. 13–18.



15.2 Map of the present participle in Middle English, taken from Fernand Mossé, *Manuel de l'anglais du moyen âge, II, moyen anglais* (Paris 1959), p. 114.

total analysis of the use of periphrastic aspect in the various manuscript copies of the *Orosius* is still a desideratum.<sup>82</sup>

While in written OE the present participle invariably occurred with the ending *-ende*, in Middle English texts the participle occurred with four different endings: *-ende*, *-and(e)*, *-inde*, and *-ing(e)*. These showed a curious geographical distribution. Eastern England and Kent preserved the OE *-ende* inflexion, the north had *-and(e)* (which was probably influenced by Old Norse), the West Midlands had *-inde*, while the entire south and the central Midlands had *-ing(e)*. The rise of the Middle English *-ing(e)* ending for the present participle and its possible derivation from OE action nouns ending in *-ung* and later *-ing*, e.g. *huntung* 'hunt' and *ræding* 'reading', has been much discussed. Suffice it to say here that the entire south-west, i.e. the former kingdom of Wessex, forms a large part of the Middle English *-ing(e)* area and seems to have been a focal point in the development of *-ing(e)* as the ending of the present participle. It looks as if the endings of the two OE infinite verb forms, i.e. of the present participle and the action noun, or gerund, merged, the *-ing(e)* ending doing service for both functions, present participle and action noun. This may again be due to substratum influence, as Late British/Old Welsh had no present participle and the OE action noun was the closest analogue to the Late British/Old Welsh VN. It is therefore plausible that this merged form diffused into the central Midlands pushing conservative participle *-nd-* forms to the periphery.<sup>83</sup> As mentioned before the use of the analytic expression of imperfect aspect in the present tense of Late British and Old Welsh eventually extended in English to its use in the other tenses as well.<sup>84</sup>

### *Periphrastic DO*

Another grammatical calque, which is characteristic of the South West of England and became grammaticalised in the standard language, is the use of periphrastic DO in the verb phrase.<sup>85</sup> Here it is interesting to note that Welsh GWNEUTHUR

<sup>82</sup> Kitson, 'The Dialect Position of the Old English *Orosius*', pp. 27 f., tentatively sees the language of the *Orosius* as a late-ninth-century approximation of the West Saxon dialect of the Bristol area.

<sup>83</sup> Tristram, 'Aspect in Contact', p. 282; White, 'Explaining the Innovations', pp. 161–4, takes the *-ing* forms to be gerunds used as predicate adjectives forming a progressive construction. It should also be mentioned that constructions like *be ahunting* etc. in Middle English texts, surviving in modern dialects are commonly derived from OE *be on huntunge*, which would be even closer to Welsh **BOT** + **yn** + **VN** constructions, as some scholars take the Welsh *yn* construction marker to be derived from a locative particle.

<sup>84</sup> A comparison of the expression and use of the imperfect aspect in Modern English and Welsh is given by Johannes Heinecke, 'The Temporal and Aspectual System of English and Welsh', in *The Celtic Englishes III*, ed. Hildegard L. C. Tristram (Heidelberg, 2003), pp. 85–110; cf. Heinecke, *Temporal Deixis in Welsh and Breton*, *Anglistische Forschungen* 272 (Heidelberg, 1999).

<sup>85</sup> Of the very extensive literature on the rise of DO constructions in English, special mention should be made of Patricia Poussa, 'A Contact Universal Origin of Periphrastic DO with Special Consideration of Old English – Celtic Contact', in *Papers From the 5th International Conference on English Historical Linguistics*, ed. Sylvia Adamson et al. (Amsterdam, 1990), pp. 407–34; Johan van der Auwera and Inge Genee, 'On the Convergence of Languages and Linguists', *English Language and Linguistics* 6 (2002), 283–307;

's/he does' in periphrastic constructions was extraordinarily common in Middle Welsh prose texts, much more common than in Middle English ones, especially in the form VN + a (construction marker) + **GWNEUTHUR**.<sup>86</sup> In fact it was so common that Welsh scholars have wondered whether its meaning may have been bleached and assumed the function of the simple verb construction. It is important to note that this type of periphrasis involving a verb meaning DO also occurred in Middle Cornish and in Middle Breton. In modern Breton this periphrasis is fully grammaticalised for focus marking.<sup>87</sup> Interestingly, Modern Welsh has not reached the same degrees of grammaticalisation of periphrastic DO constructions as Breton and English.

In the texts written in the insular languages during the High and the Late Middle Ages, the use of periphrastic DO was quite fluid and allowed a number of uses: contrastive emphasis, focus marking, causativity (as in French for instance), habituality, iterativity etc. Causativity, for instance, is in evidence in the following Middle English sentence:

þi soule cnul ich wile **do ringe** (*The Fox and the Wolf*, 251)<sup>88</sup>  
*I will make the knell of your soul ring.*

Middle English texts experimented with the use of a variety of periphrastic, aspectual constructions, such as the inchoative use of **gin(ne) + INF** or **gin(ne) (for) to INF** :

þe wolf **gon** sinke, þe vox arise (*The Fox and the Wolf*, 239)  
*The wolf began to sink, the fox to rise.*

The use of *will* (pres.) and *would* (past) was common to express habituality:

þu draȝst men to fleses luste þat **willeþ** þine songes **luste** (*Mandeville's Travels*)  
*You entice people who commonly listen to your songs to the lust of the flesh*

Andrew Garrett, 'On the Origin of Auxiliary DO', *English Language and Linguistics* 2 (1998), pp. 283–330; David L. White, 'On the Origin of DO: Brittonic Influence Reconsidered', *English Language and Linguistics* (forthcoming).

<sup>86</sup> The Middle Welsh verb form **GWNEUTHUR** 'does', developed into Modern Welsh **GWNEUD** 'does'. To my knowledge the very few extant genuine Old Welsh texts unfortunately do not contain instances of periphrastic constructions of the type of VN + a (construction marker) + **GWNEUTHUR**. On the use of this construction in Middle Welsh, see Arwyn Watkins, 'Trefn yn y Frawddeg Gymraeg', *Studia Celtica* 12/13 (1977/78), 367–95; Proinsias Mac Cana, 'Further Notes on Constituent Order in Welsh', in *Studies in Brythonic Word Order*, ed. James Fife and Erich Poppe (Amsterdam, 1991), pp. 45–80; James Fife and Gareth King, 'Focus and the Welsh "Abnormal Sentence": a Cross-Linguistic Perspective', in *Studies in Brythonic Word Order*, pp. 81–153; Erich Poppe, 'Word order in Middle Welsh: the Case of Kedymdeithyas Amlyn ac Amic', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 40 (1993), 95–117; see also Hildegard L. C. Tristram, 'DO-Periphrasis in Contact?', in *Language in Time and Space. Festschrift für Wolfgang Viereck*, ed. Heinrich Ramisch and Kenneth Wynne (Stuttgart, 1997), pp. 401–17, at pp. 408f.

<sup>87</sup> Tristram, 'DO-Periphrasis in Contact?', pp. 409–11.

<sup>88</sup> The unique manuscript of *The Fox and the Wolf*, MS Digby 86, is dated to c. 1271–83, while the text is considered to have been composed around 1250. The dialect is southern with traces of West Midlands forms.

Most of these aspectual experiments did not enter the English Standard, but many of them survived in the dialects. In the modern Standard periphrastic DO has two functions which are clearly distinguished by stress. Stressed DO expresses emphasis (i.e. marking by 'contrastive accent'), while unstressed DO means support of negation and question marking. Non-standard periphrastic DO expressing habituality is widely used in south-west England,<sup>89</sup> Ireland<sup>90</sup> and Newfoundland.<sup>91</sup>

### *Conclusion*

I hope to have shown that morphosyntactic 'innovations' of Middle English which made it into the present day English Standard may have arisen as syntactic calques initiated by the large number of shifters from Late British to Old English. It is suggested that these shifters typologically changed the structure of English grammar from a predominantly synthetic, *cum* tense language to a predominantly analytic, *cum* aspect language.<sup>92</sup> Half a century ago the aforementioned grammarian Reinard W. Zandvoort raised the question whether or not English is a Germanic language at all.<sup>93</sup> As a Dutchman he compared English with Dutch and German (and some Scandinavian languages). He expected to find an East-West dialect continuum between these Germanic languages, but he found a gap, Dutch siding very strongly with German and English being typologically different from both. According to Zandvoort the difference is less pronounced on the phonological level than on the syntactic one. Zandvoort's discussion of the differing syntactic features is impressive and would certainly warrant a closer examination as to when and in which dialect area English started to diverge from the 'Germanic' patterns largely preserved in Dutch, German and the Scandinavian languages. As a synchronic linguist Zandvoort did not investigate the historical reasons for this divergence but confined himself to presenting the data 'for further consideration'.<sup>94</sup> For some of the most interesting features of the many referred to

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Ossi Ihalainen, 'Periphrastic "Do" in Affirmative Sentences in the Dialect of East Somerset', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 67 (1976), 608–22, repr. revised and abbreviated in *Dialects of English: Studies in Grammatical Variation*, ed. Peter Trudgill and J. K. Chambers (London, 1991), pp. 148–60.

<sup>90</sup> Markku Filppula, *The Grammar of Irish English: Language in Hibernian Style* (London and New York, 1999), pp. 130–50.

<sup>91</sup> Sandra Clarke, 'On Establishing Historical Relationships between New and Old World Varieties: Habitual Aspect and Newfoundland Vernacular English', *Englishes Around the World*, ed. Edgar W. Schneider (Amsterdam, 1997), pp. 277–93; Graham Shorrocks, 'Celtic Influences on the English of Newfoundland and Labrador', in *The Celtic Englishes*, ed. Hildegard L. C. Tristram (Heidelberg, 1997), pp. 320–61, at p. 343.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Graham Isaac, 'Perfectivity, Transitivity, Ergativity: the Grammar of Case in Welsh Non-finite Clauses', *Journal of Celtic Linguistics* 7 (1998), 39–61. Isaac claims that 'Welsh sentences ... are structurally dominated by the aspectual opposition of imperfective vs. perfective' (p. 39). English may be considered to be close to that.

<sup>93</sup> Zandvoort, 'Is English a Germanic Language?' (footnote 65 above).

<sup>94</sup> Zandvoort, 'Is English a Germanic Language?', p. 66.

by Zandvoort, I would suggest that we should consider Late British origins as the ultimate source, such as the attrition of the inflexions of the NP, fixed word order, periphrastic aspect and DO support, as argued above.

So, why then don't the English speak Welsh? My suggestion is that the English don't speak Welsh because the native Britons chose to give up their native varieties of Late British and shift to the emerging Old English dialects first in the British Lowland Zone and later in the Highland Zone over a period of some 300 years. In doing so they are likely to have Brittonised spoken Old English on the level of phonology and above all morphosyntax. By shifting they produced OE<sub>L</sub>, i.e. vernacular Old English or what we eventually encounter as 'Middle English', which only surfaced in writing after the Norman Conquest. These shift-induced analyticising tendencies were reinforced by contact with adstratal Old Norse in the Danelaw areas, particularly in the north. The aspectual tendencies, however, arose in the south west, where Scandinavian influence was far less pronounced and substratal influence of Late British therefore likely to have been solely responsible for grammatical calques.

The psychological reasons for this hypothesised, massive language shift of the British population may be sought in a number of socio-economic and political incentives, among which the potent construction of a unifying ethnic identity of the Anglo-Saxon elite may have been the decisive one. From a linguistic point of view, it is perfectly plausible that, as the 'substrate rule' says, there was next to no lexical transfer. 'Bottom-up' shift scenarios prompt phonological and morpho-syntactic transfer, as L<sub>2</sub> lexis is usually acquired consciously by adult learners, while phonology and morphosyntax are acquired unconsciously. The psychological motivation for such a 'bottom up' shift may then be sought in the speakers' desire to emulate the prestige language for the sake of approval and participation in the social benefits of elite Anglo-Saxon society.