Manx Gaelic inflection, 6. Initial mutation after er 'Perfect tense' in Classical Manx

Max W. Wheeler revised version, February 2018.

The first version of this paper (July 2015) reviewed the evidence for the initial mutations after the er 'Perfect tense' particle in the Manx Bible, including the Apocryphal books. The current version extends the study to a broader corpus of Classical Manx (1700-1850) and corrects and updates some of the earlier observations, especially as regards variation with f- initial verbs, and with vowel-initial verbs.¹

The pattern of initial mutation of verbal nouns after er in the perfect tense construction is anomalous, in that some consonants are subject only to Lenition 1, while others may undergo either Lenition 1 or Nasalization. In our corpus there are enough examples of the er Perfect construction to get a good perspective on the nature and scope of the variation in question in Classical Manx.

Initial m- and s-, are invariably subject to Lenition 1, and initial p- and b- almost invariably so.²

Verbs beginning with t-, ch-, d-, d-,

¹ The corpus consists of The Bible (B), Apocrypha (Ap), the Book of Common Prayer (BCP), Metrical Psalms of 1777, Thomas Wilson's *Coyrle Sodjey* (CS), and Sermons 1-12 (TW), Yn Fer Rauee Creestee (FRC), John Clague's *Aght giare dy heet gys tushtey as toiggal jeh'n chredjue Creestee* (AG), Thomas Christian's *Pargys Caillit* (PC), C. Lewin's *Manx Texts in 19th-century newspapers* (C19), Cregeen's *Manx Dictionary* (Cr).

² M: er vainshtyragh, er varkiagh, er varroo, er veeooashlaghey, er violaghey, er vooley, er vooadaghey, er vooghey;

S: er hagney 'shunned', er harey, er hassoo, er hauail, er heaghney 'grieved', er heebey, er heeyney, er heidey, er heiy, er heyrey, er hiaulley, er hickyraghey, er hirrey, er hirveish, er hoaral, er hoiaghey, er hoie, er hoilshaghey, er hoilshean, er hooyl, er hoyllaghey, er huill 'trodden', er hurranse.

P: er phaagey, er phaartail, er phardooney, er phlaiynt, er phluckey, er phointeil, er phoosey, er phreacheil, er phrowal, er phuttey;

But NB cases of $P \rightarrow b$ can also be found — in the Prayer Book: ta jeh dty ard-chiarail flaunyssagh er bointeil caghlaaghyn dy Oardaghyn ayns dty Agglish 'who of thy divine providence hast appointed divers Orders in thy Church'; annym nyn mraar deyr shoh er baartail 'the soul of our dear bother here departed'; coilley t'er baartail ayns credjue firrinagh 'all those that are departed in the true faith'. And one in the Bible: coilley coille

B: er vaarail, er vaarey, er vaghey, er vaih, er vannaghey, er vashtey, er ve, er veaghey, er ventyn, er verraghtyn, er vioghey, er vishaghey, er voandyrys, er voggysagh, er voirey, er vrah, er vrasnaghey, er vreearrey, er vriaght, er vrishey, er vriwnys, er vroie, er vroo, er vuinn, er vuirroogh;

One exception: *Nagh vel shiuish er meaghey jeh nyn yoin hene ayns Mee hushtey jeh nyn gurrym?* 'have you not lived in wilful ignorance of your duty?' (FRC p. 5).

1. Consonants *t*- and *ch*-

The following verbs beginning with t- are found only with Lenition 1 (i.e. t- $\rightarrow h$ -) in the perfect tense er construction in the corpus. The figures are for the number of occurrences in the er construction.

tannaghtyn: er	thoylley: er ho(y)lley (4)	traastey: er hraastey (1)
hannaghtyn (10)	tilgey: er hilgey (28)	traaue: er hraaue (2)
tashtey: er hashtey (3)	tooilleil: er hooilleil (4)	trial: er hrial (1)
teaymey: er heaymey (1)	towse: er howse (1)	tummey: er hummey (2)

Table 1 is of *t*-initial verbs subject to variable initial mutation in the *er* construction, with the number of occurrences of each, and the percentage of Nasalization cases (rounded to whole numbers). While *tuittym* and *taghyrt* strongly favour Nasalization, *troggal*, *toiggal*, *treishteil*, *tayrn*, *treigeil* and *toilçhin* favour Lenition 1, though somewhat less strongly. *Troailt* and *trostey*, neither verb having many examples, are evenly divided between the two mutations. The strongly favoured variants are indicated in bold in the table.

In Cregeen's Dictionary, Nasalization after er is indicated also for talkal: er dalkal, tannaghtyn: er dannaghty, teaystney: er deaystney, theinniu: er de(i)nniu, tummey: er dummey, tilgey: er dhilgey, toghtey: er doghtey, toilliu: er doilliu.

	Nasalization	N	Lenition 1	L1	Total	%N
tuittym	er duittym	110	er huittym	5	116	95
taghyrt	er daghyrt	29	er haghyrt	2	31	94
troailt	er droailt	1	er hroailt	1	2	50
trostey	er drostey	2	er hrostey	2	4	50
troggal	er droggal	34	er hroggal	116	150	23
toiggal	er doiggal	4	er hoiggal	21	25	16
treishteil	er dreishteil	1	er hreishteil	6	7	14
tayrn	er dayrn	6	er hayrn	39	45	13
treigeil	er dreigeil	8	er hreigeil	62	70	11
toilçhin	er doilçhin	1	er hoilçhin	10	11	9

Table 1. Variation in t-initial verbs in the Perfect tense er construction

The following four verbs beginning with ch- are found only with Lenition 1 in the perfect tense cr construction in the corpus. The figures are for the number of occurrences in the cr construction.

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çharbaa: er harbaa (3) çhionney: er hionney (1) çhea: er hea (6)^3 çhymney: er hymney (2)
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Table 2 is of *çh*-initial verbs subject to variable initial mutation in the *er* construction, with the number of occurrences of each, and the percentage of Nasalization cases (rounded to whole numbers). *Çheet* and *çherraghtyn* strongly favour Nasalization,⁴ while *çhaglym* and *çhebbal* strongly favour Lenition 1. *Çhyrmaghey*, *çhyndaa* and *çhymsagh(ey)* are more evenly balanced between the two mutations.

³ 1 case of *er chea* (PC 791), interpreted by the 1872 editors as *er hea*.

⁴ But in *Pargys Caillit* 1796 we find only *er heet* ×7 plus *er cheet* ×2.

	Nasalization	N	Lenition 1	L1	Total	%N
çheet	er jeet	661	er heet	16	677	98
çherraghtyn	er jerraghtyn	8	er herraghtyn	3	11	73
çhyrmaghey	er jyrmagh(ey)	3	er hyrmaghey	3	6	50
çhyndaa	er jyndaa	41	er hyndaa	55	96	43
çhymsaghey	er jymsaghey	1	er hymsagh	2	3	33
çhaglym	er jaglym	4	er haglym	21	25	16
çhebbal	er jebbal	4	er hebbal	21	25	16

Table 2. Variation in *çh*-initial verbs in the Perfect tense *er* construction

Cregeen's dictionary also gives *çhiuchey: er jiughey* (sic); he mentions only Nasalization forms for *çherraghtyn*, *çhymsagh(ey)* and *çhyrmaghey*.

2. Consonants *d*- and *j*-.

Verbs beginning with d- are subject to Lenition 1.

daunsin: er ghaunsin	deyrey: er gheyrey (10)	dreamal: er ghreamal (1)
(2)	dobberan: er ghobberan	dunverys: er ghunverys
deayrtey: er	(4)	(3)
gheayrtey ⁵ (26)	dolley: er gholley (3)	
dellal: er ghellal ⁶	dooney: er ghooney (2)	
(39)	doostey: er ghoostey (5)	

Of the verbs beginning with initial *j-*, *jarrood* and *jeeaghyn* exclusively take Lenition 1: *er yarrood*, *er yeeaghyn*. Of the remainder in Table 3, *jannoo* and *jiooldey* strongly favour Nasalization, while *jeigh* favours Lenition 1, in 8 cases out of 13.

	Nasalization	N	Lenition 1	L1	Tot	%N
jannoo	er n'yannoo	1064	er yannoo	46	1110	96
jiooldey	er n'yiooldey	9	er yiooldey	3	12	75
jeigh	er n'yeigh	5	er yeigh	8	13	38
jarrood		0	er yarrood	32	32	0
jeeaghyn		0	er yeeaghyn	43	43	0

Table 3. Variation in *j*-initial verbs in the Perfect tense *er* construction

Cregeen also mentions Lenition 1 outcomes for *juail: er yuail*, and *jummal: er yummal*. For *jannoo* he gives only *er n'yannoo*.

⁵ There is one case of unmutated *er deayrtey*: *Dy vod ooilley yn uill chairagh hie* er deayrtey *er y thalloo tuittym erriu, veih fuil[l] Abel cairagh, gys fuill Zecharias* 'That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias; *Mat.* 23.35.

⁶ There is one exceptional case of 'Nasalization' of *dellal* to *n'ghellal*: mastey ooilley e ainjyssee cha vel unnane dy gherjaghey ee, ta ny caarjyn eck er n'ghellal dy foalsey r'ee, t'ad er hyndaa dy ve e noidyn. 'among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies.' Lam. 1.2. No doubt this is a hypercorrection, based on the observation that some cases of Perfect er gh-(though from radical g-) are in variation with er n'gh-, e.g. er ghoaill ~ er n'ghoaill. Though taken literally, Nasalization of initial d- would give n-, this outcome seems not to occur in the perfect construction. It is, rarely, to be found elsewhere, e.g. nyn nooghys 'their nature' in Pargys Caillit.

⁷ But NB, in *Coyrle Sodjey er yanoo* (so spelt) is exclusively found ×25.

3. Consonants k- (c-) and g-

Nearly all verbs beginning with k/(k- or c-) undergo solely Lenition 1 in the perfect tense er construction. Only five verbs (Table 4) attest any case of Nasalization in this construction, and only for cosney: er gosney are the numbers more than negligible.⁸

	Nasalization	N	Lenition 1	L1	Tot	%N
creenaghey	er greenaghey	2	er chreenagh(ey)	2	4	50
cosney	er gosney	5	er chosney	62	67	07
kionnaghey	er gionnaghey	1	er chionnaghey	25	26	04
cuirr	er guirr	2	er chuirr(ey)	15	17	07
coyrt	er goyrt	3	er choyrt	734	737	00

Table 4. Variation in /k/-initial verbs in the perfect tense er construction

The great majority of verbs beginning with *g*- undergo exclusively Lenition 1 in the Perfect tense *er* construction, e.g. *geid: er gheid, gloyraghey: er ghloyraghey, gra: er ghra*. In the case of verbs beginning with *gi*- followed by a vowel, the mutated form is spelt either *ghi*- or *yi*-, which I take to be purely orthographic variants. Thus, for example, *giarey: er ghiarey ~ er yiarey, gientyn: er ghientyn ~ er yientyn, giootal: er ghiootal ~ er yiootal*. The *yi*- variant spelling is notably more frequent: 79% of cases in the Bible. Nasalization variants are found for only five verbs: *geddyn, gialdyn, gialtaghey, goll*, and *goaill*, and for only one of these — *goll*— is the Nasalized variant significantly more frequent (78%) than the Lenition 1 variant; see Table 5.9 *Goaill* and *gialdyn* have the opposite preference, with 78-79% Lenition 1: *er ghoaill*, ¹⁰ *er yialdyn ~ er ghialdyn. Gialtaghey* occurs only twice in the perfect construction, on both occasions with a Nasalized outcome: *er n'ghialtaghey* or *er n'ghialtaghey*.

	Nasalization	N	Lenition 1	L1	Tot	%N
gialtaghey	er n'ghial(l)taghey	2		0	2	100
goll	er n'gholl	277	er gholl	80	357	78
ai al dun	er n'yialdyn	3	er yialdyn	32	58	22
gialdyn	er n'ghialdyn	10	er ghialdyn(ys)	13	30	22
goaill	er n'ghoaill	78	er ghoaill	298	376	21
geddyn	er n'gheddyn	16	er gheddyn	245	261	06

Table 5. Variation in *g*-initial verbs in the Perfect tense *er* construction

4. Consonant *f*-

The treatment of f-initial words in the perfect tense er construction differs from that of the consonants mentioned previously. Three alternative patterns are found: nasalization (f ov), lenition +n before a consequent initial vowel (f ov), and a much rarer variant consisting of lenition without n-insertion (f ov). There are some verbs that are only found with nasalization: failleil: er vailleil¹¹ (10), failley: er vailley (7), farkiagh(ey): er varkiagh (1), fendeil: er vendeil (1), and folmaghey: er volmaghey (1). In several others, Nasalization is predominant; see Table 6. Only fockley magh shows a very strong preference for lenition +n, though faagail and follaghey also prefer this option. For freaylley, lenition of f- leaves an initial consonant f-, so insertion of f- is excluded.

⁸ The complete corpus data for /k/-initial verbs is given in Apprndix 1.

⁹ One example of *t'er noll shaghey* in FRC.

¹⁰ There is one case (in the Apocrypha) where the Nasalized variant is spelt *er n'goaill*; there are also two cases of unmutated *er goaill*.

¹¹ In PC 1.1153, er vageil.

	Nasalization	N	Lenition 1 + n-	L1	Lenition 1		Tot	%N
fosley	er vosley	35	er n'osley	2			37	95
fakin	er vakin	215	er n'akin	15	er akin ¹²	8	238	90
fuirriaght	er vuirriaght	6	er n'uirraght(yn)	2	er uirriaght	1	9	67
feaysley	er veaysley	6	er n'eaysley	4	er eaysley	2	10	60
freayll(ey)	er vreayll(ey)	45			er reayll(ey)	31	76	59
foaddey	er voaddey	6	er n'oaddey	6			12	50
faagail	er vaagail	14	er n'aagail	23	er aagail	1	38	37
follaghey	er vollaghey	3	er n'ollaghey	6	er ollaghey	3	12	25
fockley	er vockleymagh	6	er n'ockley(magh)	31	er ockley(magh)	3	42	14

Table 6. Variation in *f*-initial verbs in the Perfect tense *er* construction

Cregeen's Dictionary generally gives both of the two predominant alternatives for f-initial verbs, nasalization or lenition + n'. This is the case for: f-aagail, f-aarkey, f-aastey, f-akin, f-ailleil, f-ailley, f-anney, f-arkiaghey, f-eavraghey, f-eavsley, f-eddanagh, f-endeil, f-estal, f-oaddey, f-ockley, f-ollaghey, f-ollaghey, f-osley, and f-uirraghtyn.

For the following verbs, Cregeen gives only the Nasalization variant: *farbagh*, *fasney*, *fassaghey*, *feiyral*, *fenaghtyn*, *feyshtey*, *fliughey*, *fordrail*, *foudaghey*, and *freaylley* ~ *freilley*.

For these verbs Cregeen gives only the lenition + n' variant: farraght, foayraghey, fuillaghtyn, and fuinney.

5. Vowel-initial verbs

As a general rule, after er, n'- is added to verbal nouns beginning with a vowel, an outcome elsewhere characteristic of Nasalization in the inflection of verbs. ¹³ However, there are a fair number of exceptions in the corpus in which n' is absent. Certain verbs favour this alternative more than others. The vowel-initial verbs which do not exclusively have n'- in the corpus are listed below. The more frequent alternative in each case is in **bold**.

Aarlaghey: *er aarlagh* PC1173 (*er n'aarlagh(ey)* ×13).

Aalhieeney: er aalhieeney Isa. 23.2.

Astyrt: *er astyrt* ×3: *Ecclus* 10.15; PC 657-9; *Lam.* 2.5 (*er n'astyrt* ×1).

Eaishtagh: *er eaishtagh* PC 2630 (*er n'eaishtagh* ×28).

Eamagh: er eam AG p72; er eamagh CS p25 (er n'eam ×1; er n'eamagh ×53).

Ee: er ee Isa. 3.14 (er n'ee ×28).

Eeasaght: er eeasaght¹⁴×3: Deut.15.2; 1 Sam.1.28; Neh. 5.4; er yeasaght PC 137 (er n'eeasaght Deut 15.3).

Eeck: *er eek* CS p45; *er eeck* ×2: 2 *Ki*. 17.4; *Prov*. 7.14 (*er n'eeck* ×3).

Eiyrt: *Ta shin er eiyrt rouyr er smooinaghtyn as yeearreeyn ny creeaghyn ain hene* 'We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts' BCP Morning prayer, general confession, (and *id*. Evening prayer); *er eiyrt* ×3: *Num*. 14.24; *Ps*. 44.2. 1 *Tim*. 5.10. (*er n'eiyrt* ×50).

Injillaghey: *er injillaghey* ×10: *er n'injillaghey* ×6.

 $^{^{12}}$ Of *er akin*, that is, Lenition 1 without prevocalic n', there are 5 in the Apocrypha, 2 in *Pargys Caillit*, and one in FRC.

¹³ A: er n'aase, er n'ansoor, er n'att; er n'agglaghey, er n'appaghey.

E: er n'earroo, er n'eebyrt, er n'êginagh, er n'eginaghey, er n'enmys, er n'etlagh

I: er n'imman, er n'immeeaght, er n'iu

O: er n'oanluckey, er n'obbraghey, er n'ouralley

Y: er n'ymmyrt, er n'ynsaghey)

¹⁴ Perhaps favoured by *er eeasaght* 'on loan'.

Insh: er insh CS p.32 ($er n'insh \times 55$).

Irree: er irree magh PC 2094 (er n'irree ×88).

Oardaghey: *er oardagh* CS p.130; *er oardaghey* ×4: BCP Innocents' Day Collect; 1 *Chron.* 9.22; *Job* 34.13; 1 *Cor.* 7.17 (er **n'oardaghey** ×63).

Oardrail: *er o(a)rdrail* ×4:2 *Kings* 19.25; *Isa.* 37.26; *Isa.* 46.12; FRC p.7 (*er n'o(a)rdrail* ×7).

Obbal: er obbal Rev. 3.8 (er n'obbal ×13).

Ooillaghey: *er ooillaghey* 2 *Cor*. 1.21 (*er n'ooillaghey* ×2).

Yeearree: er yeearree ×19: (er n'yeearree Tobit 4.2).

Yllaghey: *er yllaghey Ps.* 38.8 (*er n'yllagh* ×2).

Ymmyrkey: er ymmyrkey Lev. 12.2; Num. 17.8; Ps. 55.12; Aght Giare p.78, (er

 $n'ymmyrkey \times 63$).\8

Yndyr: Yn ardnieu balloo ta er yndyr er PC 1796.

Appendix 1. Initial mutation after er in /k/-initial verbs With turquoise background, examples with nasalization attested in texts.

	Nasalization			Lenition 1		
cadley				er chadley	Cr	
caggey				er chaggey		16: B, Ap
caghlaa				er chaghlaa		13: B
caigney	er gaigney	Cr		er chaigney		1: B
cammagh				er chammagh	Cr	
casey	er gasey	Cr		er chassey		3: B. Ap
casherickey				er chasherickey		33: B, Ap, CS, BCP
castey				er chastey		4: B
сеаи				er cheau		20:TW, Ap, B, C19
claghey	er glaghey	Cr		er chlaghey		1: B
clashtyn				er chlashtyn	Cr	BCP, C19, PC, TW, FRC, Ap. B
cleaynaghey	er gleaynaghey	Cr		er chleaynaghey		1: B
cleiy				er chleiy ~ chleigh		17: B
<i>cliaghtey</i>	er gliaghtey		1 CS	er chliaght(agh)ey		7: B
coadaghey	er goadaghey	Cr				
coamrey				er choamrey		9: Ap, B
coayl				er choayl		41: C19, PC, TW, Ap, B, FRC
combaasal				er chombaasal		1: B
coodaghey	er goodaghey	Cr		er choodaghey		16: B, Ap
cooilleeney				er chooilleeney		70: AG, CS, C19, PC, TW, Ap, B
cooinaghtyn				er chooinaghtyn		11: BCP, Ap, B
coonaghey				er choonaghey	Cr	
cooney				er chooney		11: BCP, B, Ap
coontey				er choontey		2: B
cordail				er chordail		8TW, B
<u>cosney</u>	er gosney	Cr	5 B	er chosney		62: AG, CS, BCP, PC, TW, Ap, B
cowraghey				er chowraghey		2: B
coyrlaghey				er choyrlaghey	<u> </u>	6: B
<u>coyrt</u>	er goyrt		1: FRC, 2: B	er choyrt	Cr	734 incl. 1 FRC
craa				er chraa		3: B
craghey				er chraghey		2: B
craidey				er chraidey		1: B
creck				er chreck		12: Ap, B
credjal	er gredjal		1:CS	er chredjal		35: TW, B

	Nasalization			Lenition 1		
creenaghey	er greenaghey	Cr	2: B	er chreenagh(ey)		2: B
creoghey				er chreoghey		4: B
croghey				er chroghey		1: B
cronnaghey	er gronnaghey	Cr		er chronnaghey		2: B
croo				er chroo	Cr	62: CS, BCP, PC,
						TW, Ap, FRC, B
crossey				er chrossey		7: B
croymmey	er groymmey	Cr		er chroymmey		6: TW, B
cruinnagh/t/ey				er chruinnaghey	Cr	8: Ap, B
cuirr 'sow'	er guirr		1 B,	er chuirr		6B
			=1 BCP			
			BCP	an abasimass		8: AG, B
<i>cuirrey</i> 'invite'				er chuirrey		8. AU, D
cummal				er chummal		16: Ap, B
				er chummey		12: Met, Ap, B
cummey				er chur		380
curmaghey/-al				er churmal/-agh	Cr	7: TW, B
karragh(ey)				er charragh(ey)	Cr	7. I W, D
keayney				er cheayney	Cr	2: B
keiltyn				er cheiltyn	Cr	13: B, Ap
kerraghey				er cherragh(ey)	CI	9: AG, Ap, B
kerraghtyn				er cherraghtyn		2: B
keshal				er cheshal	Cr	2. D
kiaddey				er chiaddey	CI	8: Ap, B
kiangley	er giangley	Cr		er chiangley		15: CS, TW, B
kiarail	ci giungicy			er chiarail	Cr	54: AG, CS,
TOTAL COLU				or omaran		BCP, Ap, B
kiartaghey				er chiartaghey		3: B
kionnaghey	er gionnaghey	Cr	1 B	er chionnaghey		21: B, BCP
kiunaghey				er chuinnaghey		1: B

Appendix 2

Cregeen's models for mutaion of g- in the er perfect tense:

er n'gheddyn	er n'ghialtaghey	er ghlenney
er gherrym	er ghirraghey	er gholl ~ er n'gholl
er ghiallagh(ey)	er ghiennaghtyn	er ghrainney
er ghialdyn ~ er	er yiennaghtyn	er ghreimey
n'ghialdyn \sim er	er ghiootal	er ghreinnaghey
yialdyn	er ghleashaghey	