**What is a revived language?**

**Linguistic features of Revived Manx in comparison with the traditional language**

As minority language communities worldwide increasingly face the cessation of intergenerational transmission and the process of language shift and death, the practice of ‘language revival’, meaning the revernacularization of ‘dead’, ‘dormant’ or ‘sleeping’ languages attested in written texts, recordings and linguistic documentation, is becoming more prominent, and the study of it more urgent. In addition to the most well-known and, in numerical and political terms, most successful example of Hebrew (Zuckermann & Walsh 2011), a number of examples of revival of indigenous languages in North America (e.g. Miami and Wampanoag), Australia (e.g. Kaurna) and East Asia (e.g. Siraya) have been recently documented, with efforts often led or guided by trained linguists, sometimes from within the indigenous ethnic group itself. Older movements, such as those to revive the Celtic languages Cornish and Manx, which both go back over a century, have mostly been shaped by gifted amateurs.

Within the Celtic languages, the topic of language revival, as opposed to revitalization of still-existing speech communities, is becoming more significant as traditional speech communities are rapidly becoming moribund. Networks of second-language speakers, for example in the cities and towns of Ireland and Brittany, can often be seen as cases of language revival, since their links to traditional native speakers are often tenuous (cf. the ground-breaking study of a Belfast community in Maguire [1991]). It has been argued that such ‘new speakers’ increasingly represent the future of these languages (O’Rourke & Walsh 2015; Hornsby & Quentel 2013), and that new varieties or dialects may be developing in these networks (Ó Broin 2014; Snesareva 2017).

In this context, the study of Revived Manx has a good deal to offer both to Celtic linguistics and to the wider fields of language revitalization and ‘revival linguistics’ (Zuckermann & Walsh 2011: 122). Although a small number of studies have examined certain linguistic features of the revived variety of Manx (e.g. Clague 2004–5; Kewley Draskau 2005; Broderick 2013), hitherto there has been no general overview or description of the linguistic features of the revived language and how it has developed, and diverged, from the natively-spoken variety, which is usually considered to have become extinct in 1974.

Other studies have examined the language movement from an ethnographic, anthropological, sociological or historical perspective, including speakers’ language ideologies (e.g. Ó hIfearnain 2015). However, a lack of engagement with formal linguistic data from Revived Manx speakers, and the evidence of the Traditional Manx corpus, means that scholars have not fully examined the complex interplay between language ideology, historical circumstances, the second language acquisition process and the linguistic and orthographic features of Manx, as well as the nature of the long-standing contact relationship between Manx and English. In the present paper, a variety of phonological, morphosyntactic and lexical features will be presented, showing how they illustrate various factors which can be seen to mould speakers’ (and writers’) usage. These include:

* Substratal influence from English, the first language of almost all Revived Manx speakers, including features consciously avoided but frequently occurring, as well as features of which most speakers seem to be unaware.
* Purism and ‘hyper-Gaelicism’, whereby attested structures are replaced with those perceived, sometimes spuriously, to be more native or more Gaelic.
* ‘Hyper-archaisms’, including restoration of forms to those considered etymologically ‘correct’, even when these may in fact have been ungrammatical in attested periods of the traditional language.
* Spelling pronunciations, based on misinterpretation of the complex and inconsistent Manx orthography.
* Internal analogy, overgeneralization and simplification.
* Erroneous, ambiguous or incomplete information in dictionaries, grammars, language courses, and the usage of prominent individuals or organizations.
* Widespread use of neologisms which may be seen as ‘out of character’ from the perspective of the traditional language, especially those based on Irish.
* Mixing of dialects, registers and historical periods of the language.

Evidence from these features is taken primarily from a corpus of recent literary and pedagogical publications, as well as videos of interviews with Revived Manx speakers available on Youtube.

Manx, like most revived languages, but unlike the usually-cited textbook example of Hebrew, remains largely a second language, moulded by conscious learning by relatively small numbers of adults in each generation, rather than being subject to the usual unconscious processes of language change during intergenerational transmission. In this respect it is perhaps a more typical example of what to expect when a second language is maintained over the long term in small networks of enthusiasts and activists. This has lessons for those considering the future prospects of the other Celtic languages, as well as endangered languages elsewhere, in terms of corpus and acquisition planning, planning language ideology (Armstrong 2012), documentation of surviving native varieties, and preparation of pedagogical resources.

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