Gretchen Kern
Curriculum Vitae
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Education

2015. PhD, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
   Concentration: Linguistics
   Dissertation: *Rhyming Grammars and Celtic Phonology*
   Advisor: Donca Steriade
2010. MA, University of Wisconsin-Madison
   Concentration: Linguistics
   Thesis: *On Secondary Stress in Old Irish*
   Advisor: Marlys Macken
2009. MA, Aberystwyth University
   Concentration: Irish
   Thesis: *Ogam Inscriptions of Ireland: A relative chronology based on linguistic evidence*
   Advisor: Patrick Sims-Williams
2003. BA, University of Southern California
   Concentration: East Asian Languages and Cultures

Dissertation Abstract

This dissertation broadens our understanding of a typology of poetic rhyme through the analysis of three rhyming traditions that show unconventional patterns in the contents, position, and size of rhyme domains. The rhyme domain (RD) is a string of segments that stand in correspondence with another string of segments in a poetic constituent.

In Early Irish poetry, strict identity of consonants in RDs is not required, but consonants instead correspond based on membership in defined classes. These classes correlate with sonority levels. Though analysis of VCC and bisyllabic rhymes, which match for sonority, but not featural identity, across the RD, I show that poetic rhyme can be sensitive to the sonority profile of a rhyme, and not just to similarity of segments. Statistical analysis of a rhyming corpus provides further evidence for this.

Old Norse skaldic rhyme shows an unusual position for RDs. Rather than occurring at the end of two lines in a couplet, both RDs appear in the middle of a single line. One of these RDs will occupy the penultimate syllable of a bisyllabic word, which means that the rhyme will begin and end word-internally. This gives evidence for rhyme being based not on a syllable rime, but on the interval: a metrical constituent that spans from one vowel to the following vowel including all intervening consonants.

The four types of Welsh cynghanedd I analyze present challenges in terms of the size, position, and contents of the RD. In all four types, the RDs occur with in a single line, like skaldic, but the position, size, and number of the RDs are less predictable. The RDs may span the entire line, or may contain only a single interval or consonant each. My analysis shows that all four types of cynghanedd can be analyzed as separate poetic grammars drawing on the same set of constraints in different rankings. A few constraints maintain a fixed ranking across all four cynghanedd grammars.

Analysis of these three apparent outliers contributes to the development of a typology of rhyme, showing that even extreme cases draw on familiar concepts to define their RDs.

Conference presentations & posters

2015. *Syntactically unjustified morphs and other strategies for hiatus resolution in Irish prepositions.* 12[Th] Old World Conference in Phonology, Universitat de Barcelona.

2014. *The (Dis)use of the syllable in the rhymes of Dafydd ap Gwilym.* 34[Th] Harvard Celtic Colloquium. Harvard University.

2013. *Old Irish Pronouns, Agreement and Disagreement.* 33rd Harvard Celtic Colloquium. Harvard University.

2012. *Aspects of Old and Middle Irish Rhyme.* 32nd Harvard Celtic Colloquium. Harvard University.

2012. *Perceptual Similarity in Sonority Contours: Evidence from Early Irish Rhyming Patterns.* 7th Celtic Linguistics Conference, Université Rennes 2, France.

2012. *Perceptual Similarity in Sonority Contours: Evidence from Early Irish Rhyming Patterns.* Poster, 20th Manchester Phonology Meeting. University of Manchester, England.

2010. *On Secondary Stress in Old Irish.* 32nd Annual University of California Celtic Studies Conference, UCLA.

Invited talks & workshop presentations

2012. *Rhyme and Meter in Early Irish Verse.* Invited talk, Literary Linguistics Research Group. University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland.

2012. *The Phonetic Basis of Early Irish Rhyme.* Invited talk, Indo-European Workshop, Harvard University.

Courses and workshops

2011. Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, Summer School
  Two-week intensive Old and Classical Modern Irish course

2010. Oideas Gael, Gleann Cholm Cille & Gleann Fhinne, Co. Donegal, Ireland
  Six-week intensive Irish language course

2009. University of California, Berkeley
  Linguistic Society of America Summer Institute

2009. University of Arizona, Tucson
  Formal Approaches to Celtic Linguistics Mini-course

2008. Welsh for Adults, Aberystwyth, Wales
  Week-long intensive Welsh course

2007. University of Wales, Bangor
  Paleography training weekend workshop

Languages

Native: English
Advanced: Japanese, French
Intermediate: Modern Irish
Beginning: Welsh, Mandarin Chinese, Farsi
Reading knowledge: Old, Middle & Classical Irish; Middle Welsh; Late Old & Classical Japanese; German
Linguistic knowledge: Continental Celtic languages, Tocharian, Anatolian languages, Iranian languages.

Current Research

Phonological similarity and constituency in poetic rhyme and alliteration
The Old Irish verbal system and the syntax/phonology/morphology interfaces
Syntactic inversions in poetry

Teaching Experience

2013, autumn. Teaching Assistant for course 24.961 (graduate introduction to phonology), MIT.
   Instructor: Michael Kenstowicz.
2012, autumn. Teaching Assistant for course 24.900 (undergraduate introduction to linguistics), MIT.
   Instructor: David Pesetsky.
2004-2005 school year. Assistant English teacher, Lycée de l'Elorn. Landerneau, France.
2003, spring. Classroom assistant, USC Language Academy. Los Angeles, CA.

Awards

2012. Conference travel grant from the Association Francophone de la Communication Parlée.
2010. FLAS Summer Fellowship for Modern Irish/Gaelic from the US Department of Education.
2009. Diebold Fellowship in Indo-European Studies for the Linguistic Society of America Summer Institute.

Service

2013. Co-Chair, Graduate Orientation Women's Welcome Lunch, for Graduate Women@MIT.
2012-2013. Student Representative, MIT linguistics department.
2010. Organizing committee, Workshop in General Linguistics 8, UW-Madison.