



1 Welsh agreement

- verbs, prepositions and nouns agree with their subjects, objects and possessors respectively:

- (1) *gwelaist ti* see.PAST.2SG you 'you saw'
(2) *gwelson nhw* see.PAST.3PL they 'they saw'
(3) *amdanat ti* about.2SG you 'about you'
(4) *amdanon nhw* about.3PL they 'about them'
(5) *dy gath di* 2SG cat you 'your cat'
(6) *eu cath nhw* 3PL cat they 'their cat'

- lexical noun phrases never trigger agreement:

- (7) *Gwelodd y cathod y llygod.* see.PAST.3SG the cats the mice
'The cats saw the mice.' (cf. *gwelson* in (2))
(8) *am y cathod* about the cats
'about the cats'
(9) *cath Dafydd* cat David
'David's cat'
(cf. *amdanon* in (4)) (cf. *eu* in (6))

- word order is VSO, Prep and NPoss
- some prepositions are invariant e.g. *â* 'with'

2 Welsh pronouns

- free pronouns do not inflect for case
- today there are weak and strong pronouns
- weak pronouns double agreement e.g. in ordinary VSO clauses; strong pronouns occur in positions not associated with agreement e.g. focus:

- (10) *Fi nath ennill.* 1SG.STR do.PAST.3SG win.INF 'It was me that won.'
(no agreement, focus fronting)
(11) *Nes i ennill.* do.PAST.1SG 1SG.WK win.INF 'I won.' (agreement, no focus, ordinary VSO)

3 Reduplicated pronouns

- Middle Welsh (1100–1500) also had reduplicated 'extra strong' pronouns:

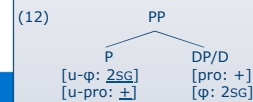
	1SG	2SG	3MSG	3FSG	etc.
reduplicated	<i>myfi</i>	<i>tydi</i>	<i>efo</i>	<i>hyhi</i>	
strong	<i>mi</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ef</i>	<i>hi</i>	

- these weakened phonologically and merged with the strong pronouns in the period 1500–1800:

strong	<i>fi</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>fo</i>	<i>hi</i>
--------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

4 Formal analysis of agreement

- agreement is Agree of ϕ -features for person, number and gender, and a pro feature for lexical vs. pronominal



- plus spellout of multiple terminal nodes under adjacency

- (13) [u- ϕ : 2SG] [pro: +] > agreement morphology + weak pronoun (*ti*)
[u-pro: \pm] [ϕ : 2SG]
(14) *am* [u- ϕ : 2SG] [pro: +] > *amdanat ti* 'about you'
[u-pro: \pm] [ϕ : 2SG]

(Adger 2000, cf. also Ackema & Neeleman 2004, Anderson 1982, Borsley 2009, Doron 1988, Rouvret 1991)

7 Extension of agreement (Grammar 3)

- from the late 19th century some speakers extended *chdi* to contexts where only weak pronouns were allowed, namely subjects of nonfinite clauses (e.g. novels of Kate Roberts, 1891–1985) and tag questions (SAWD data):

- (18) *O'dda chdi dal i ffwrdd, do'chd?*
be.IMPF you still to away, TAG.IMPF.2SG
'You were still away, weren't you?' (SAWD, conwy_14)

- that is, they create a new weak counterpart to *chdi*, and extend the rules for agreement to produce new forms (like *do'chd* in (18)), based on *chdi*, formally e.g. for tags

- (19) [force: TAG] [u- ϕ : 2SG] > *do'chd*
[u-polarity: AFF] [tense: IMPF]

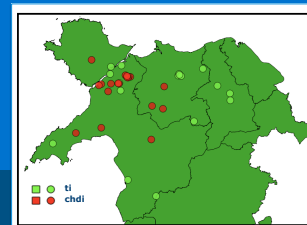


Figure 3. Geographical distribution of tag questions based on *chdi* 'you' in the Syntactic Atlas of Welsh Dialects (SAWD) (circles).

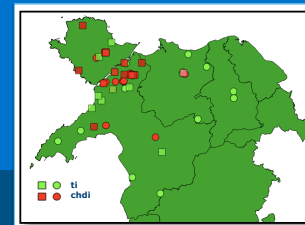


Figure 4. Geographical distribution of non-agreeing *oedda chdi* 'you were' (vs. traditional agreeing *oeddat ti*) in the SAWD and Siarad data.

5 The second person singular (Grammar 1)

- the Middle Welsh second person singular reduplicated pronoun *tydi* underwent a special development
- the non-inflected preposition *â* 'with', the comparative marker *na* 'than' and the coordinator *a(c)* 'and' all trigger aspirate mutation /t/ > /θ/:

- (15) *â thydi na thydi a thydi*
'with you' 'than you' 'and you'

- in the 16th century, these resyllabified and the first vowel of *thydi* dropped, to give:

- (16) *â th'di na th'di a th'di*

- this development is purely phonological and occurred in all varieties of Welsh

8 Loss of agreement (Grammar 4 onwards)

- more recent developments (hence with a narrower geographical distribution, see maps) reflect ongoing loss of agreement
- Aux + pronoun or P + pronoun combinations may be reanalysed with the ending as part of the pronoun, creating items that no longer inflect for person and number e.g. imperfect of 'be':

	'rich agreement' >	no agreement
2SG	<i>oeddat ti</i> 'you were'	<i>oedda ti/chdi</i>
1PL	<i>oeddan ni</i>	<i>oedda ni</i>
2PL	<i>oeddach chi</i>	<i>oedda chi</i>
3PL	<i>oeddan nhw</i>	<i>oedda nhw</i>

- once these heads lack person-number features, the spellout rules in (13) and (14) can no longer apply
- these contexts are automatically redefined as strong and begin to allow *chdi* e.g. *oedda chdi* 'you were' for older *oeddat ti* (Figure 4) and, most recently *gynno chdi* 'with you' for earlier *gen ti* (Figure 5).

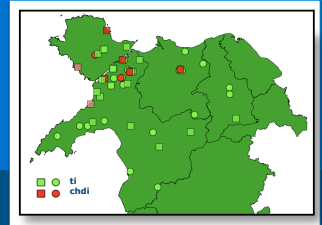


Figure 5. Geographical distribution of non-agreeing *gynno chdi* 'with you' (vs. traditional agreeing *gen ti*) in the SAWD and Siarad data.

6 Nineteenth-century developments (Grammar 2)

- by the early nineteenth century (e.g. fiction of William Rees (Gwilym Hiraethog), 1802–83), some learners had failed to derive *th'di* from *tydi* (probably because *tydi* itself was obsolete)

- they posited *th'di* as a non-derived strong pronoun and used it in all non-agreeing contexts i.e. in focus positions and in sentence fragments

- later speakers dissimilate *th'di* to *chdi* (e.g. fiction of Lewis William Lewis, 1831–1901), but its distribution remains intact
- these developments only happen in the northwest
- formally these speakers innovate a new spellout rule for the strong pronoun:

- (17) D [pro: +] > /xdi/ *chdi*
[ϕ : 2SG]

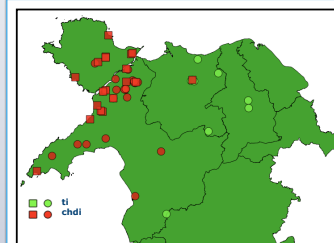


Figure 2. Geographical distribution of *chdi* 'you' in focus position in the Syntactic Atlas of Welsh Dialects (SAWD) (circles) and the Siarad Corpus (squares), present day speakers, all ages. Note the lack of change since the time period of Figure 1, and the widespread distribution of this early innovation.

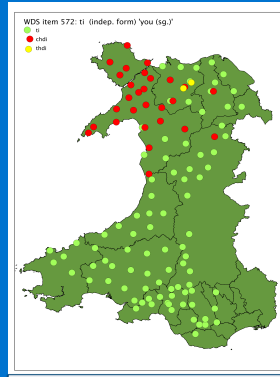


Figure 1. Geographical distribution of *chdi* 'you' in focus position/sentence fragments in speakers born in the 1920s (based on the Welsh Dialect Survey, Thomas 2000)

References

- Ackema, Peter & Ad Neeleman. 2004. *Beyond morphology: Interface conditions on word formation*. OUP.
Adger, David. 2000. Feature checking under adjacency and VSO clause structure. In Robert D. Borsley (ed.), *The nature and function of syntactic categories*, 79–100. New York: Academic Press.
Anderson, Stephen R. 1982. Where's morphology? *Linguistic Inquiry* 13, 571–612.
Borsley, Robert D. 2009. On the superficiality of Welsh agreement. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 27, 225–65.
Borsley, Robert D., Maggie Tallerman & David Willis. 2007. *The syntax of Welsh*. Cambridge: CUP.
Davies, P. 2010. Identifying word-order convergence in the speech of Welsh–English bilinguals. PhD, Bangor.
Doron, Edit. 1988. On the complementarity of subject and subject-verb agreement. In Michael Barlow & Charles A. Ferguson (eds.), *Agreement in natural languages*, 201–18. Stanford, Calif.: CSLI Publications.
Rouvret, Alain. 1991. Functional categories and agreement. *Linguistic Review* 8, 353–87.

Data sources

- Welsh texts in Early English Books Online
Welsh texts in Eighteenth Century Collections Online
Dialogue in 19th-century novels (extension to the Historical Corpus of the Welsh Language. 2004. ed. Ingo Mitterdorf & David Willis. Cambridge: University of Cambridge).
Thomas, Alan. 2000. *Welsh Dialect Survey*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press
Siarad Corpus. 2010–11. ed. Margaret Deuchar. Bangor: ESRC Centre for Bilingualism.
Ongoing fieldwork for the Syntactic Atlas of Welsh Dialects (SAWD)

