

fe and *mi* in a Modern Welsh Memoir

preliminary findings toward a structural analysis

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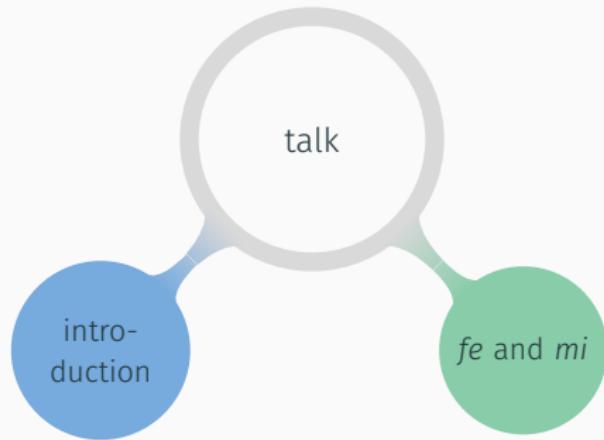
Introduction

What am I going to do?

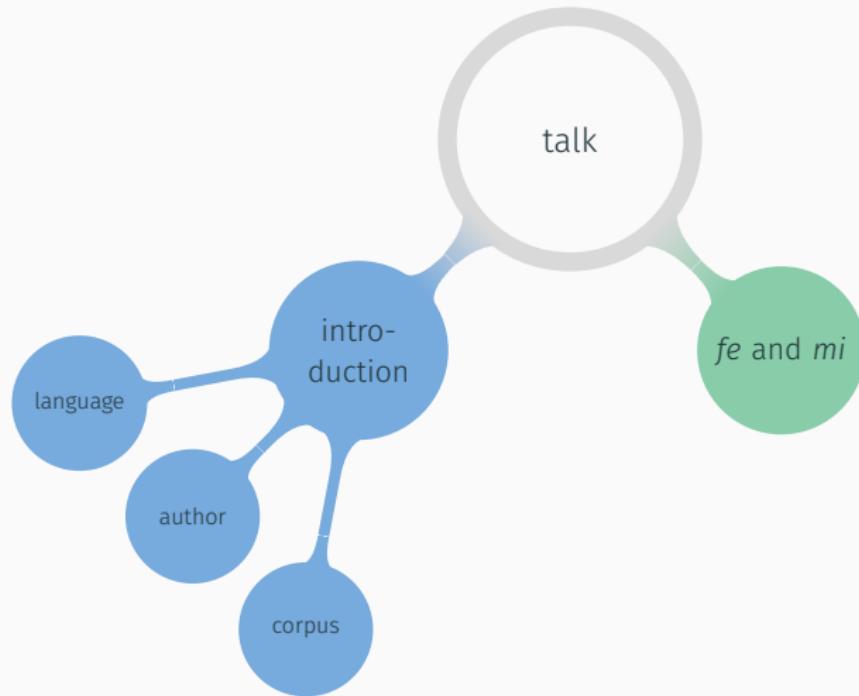
Describe my findings concerning two pre-verbal particles in Literary Modern Welsh: *fe* and *mi*.

- Nothing final or polished.
- As far as I know, *fe* and *mi* are yet to be described in the discussed textemes.

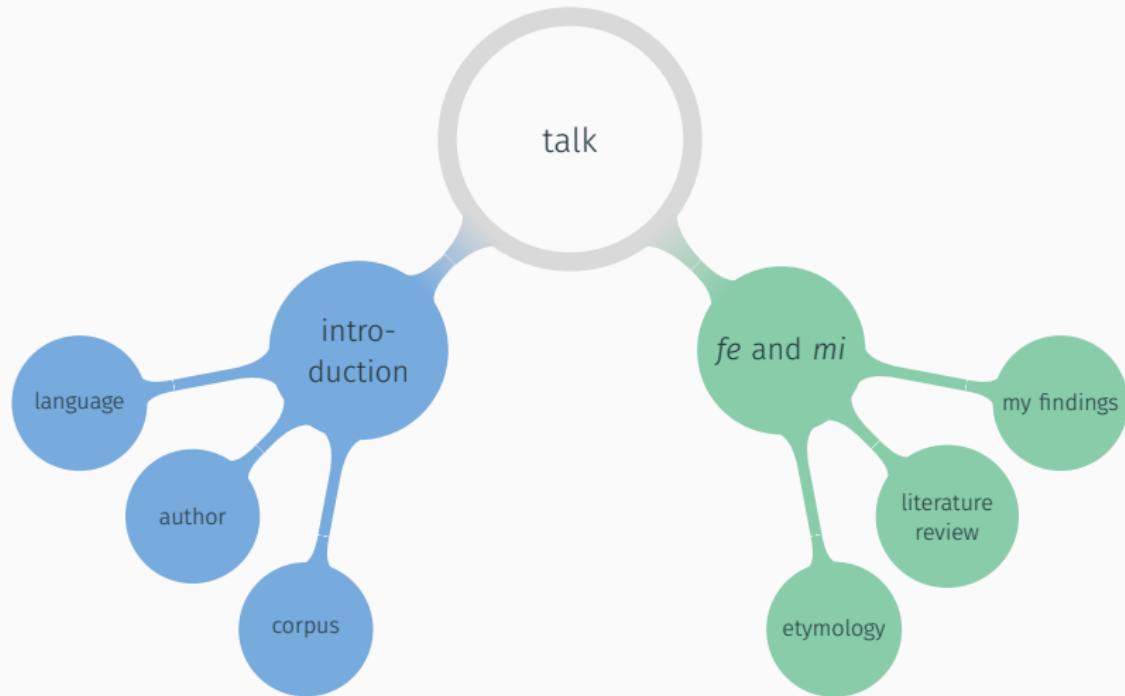
Talk structure



Talk structure

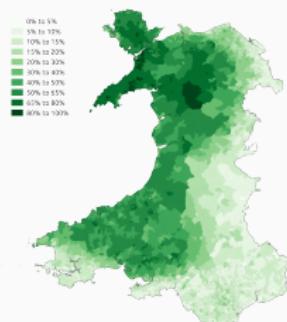


Talk structure



Language: Modern Welsh

- Indo-European > Celtic > Brythonic > Welsh
- Not in the Standard Average European (SAE) Sprachbund¹
- 562,000 speakers ($\pm 1/5$ of the population of Wales)²

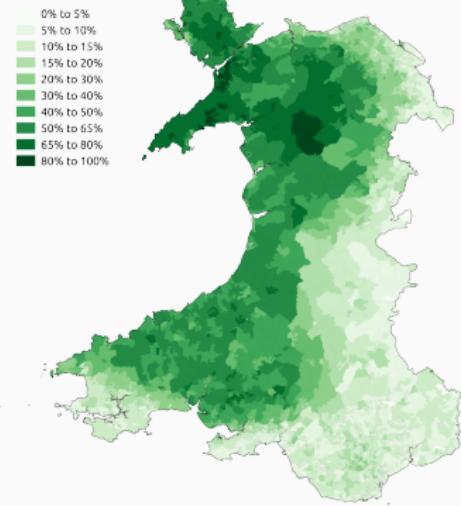


¹ Martin HASPELMATH (2001). "The European Linguistic Area: Standard Average European". In: *Language Typology and Language Universals / Sprachtypologie un sprachliche Universalien / La typologie des langues et les universaux linguistiques: an international handbook / ein internationales Handbuch / manuel international*. Vol. 20.2. Ed. by Martin HASPELMATH et al. Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft / Handbooks of Linguistics and Communication Science. Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter. Chap. XIV:107, pp. 1492–1510

² 2011 census

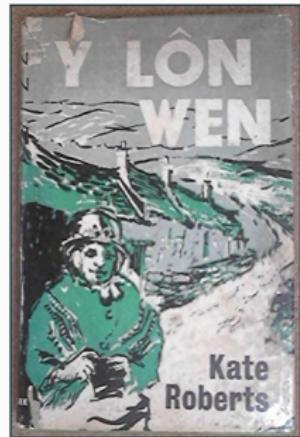
Author: Kate Roberts (1891–1985)

- *Brenhines ein llên*
Brenhines y stori fer
- Formative years: Rhosgadfan
(Arfon, North Wales)
- Diverse genres:
 - Short stories
 - Novels
 - Essays
 - Plays
 - Letters
 - Memoir



Corpus: *Y Lôn Wen* (1960)

- *Darn o hunangofiant*
- Textematically diverse:
 - Social and cultural anthropology
 - *Tableaux* of childhood and youth memories
 - History (both source-based and firsthand)
 - Musings
 - Portraits
 - Anecdotes
 - Geographical descriptions
 - Descriptions of children's games
- ±150 pp.; >58000 words
- Translated into English by Gillian Clarke in 2009



fe and mi

Etymology

Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru (1988):

- *fe:*
 - *ef* + VERB > *ef a* + VERB > ... > *'fa* + VERB > *fe* + VERB
 - Old Welsh *em*, Cornish *ef*, Breton *eff* < Brythonic *emen < Celtic *em-em, reduplicated accusative of *es 'he' [...]
- *mi:*
 - Middle Cornish *my*, *me*, Breton *me*, Old and Modern Irish *mé* < IE. *me- [oblique form of 1sg pronoun]

See also *em* and *mi¹* in: Alexander FALILEYEV (2000).

Etymological Glossary of Old Welsh. Vol. 18. Buchreihe der Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie. Max Niemeyer Verlag.

Literature review

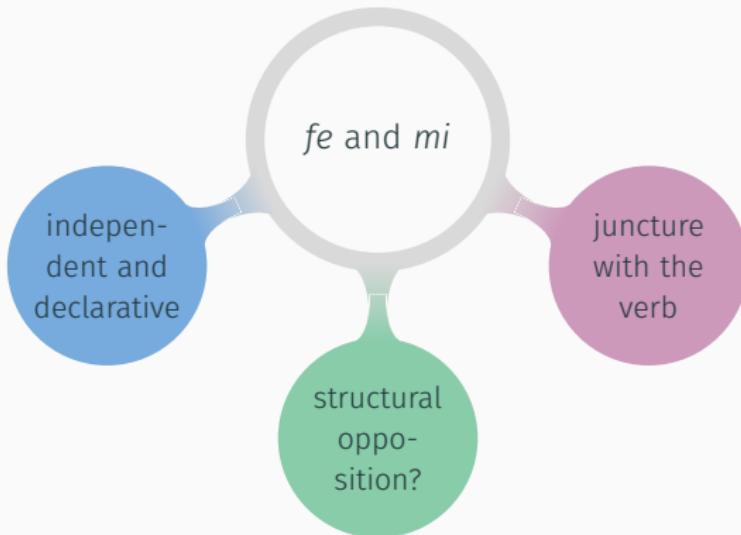
- Ariel SHISHA-HALEVY (2015). "Work-Notes on Modern Welsh Narrative Syntax (I) – *fe-* and *mi-* Revisited: from macro-syntax to narratology". In: *Journal of Celtic Linguistics* 16, pp. 81–111
- Ariel SHISHA-HALEVY (1995). "Structural Sketches of Middle Welsh Syntax (I): the converter systems". In: *Studia Celtica* XXIX, pp. 127–223, §3.2.1
- Peter Wynn THOMAS (Nov. 2006). *Gramadeg y Gymraeg*. Adargraffwyd gyda mân ddiwygiadau. Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru. x, 837
- G. M. AWBERY (2004). "Clause-Initial Particles in Spoken Welsh". In: *Journal of Celtic Linguistics* 8, pp. 1–14

White flags: 'unfunctional', 'asemantic', 'meaningless', 'declarative', 'stylistic', ... (SHISHA-HALEVY (1995))

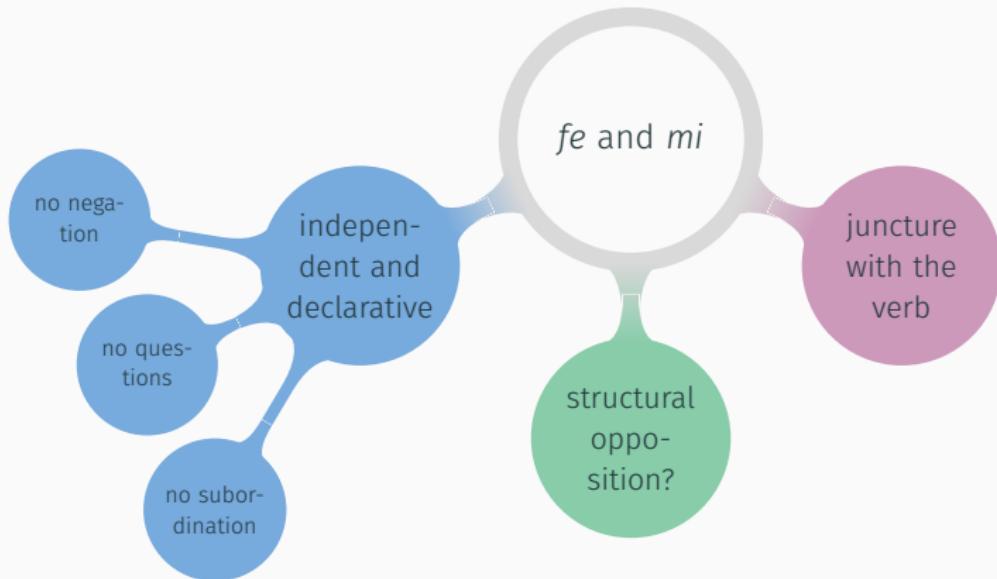
- temporal distancing from the story-now, flashback, recollected episode and other cases of inserted memory narrative; narrated character's (and Narrator's) alienation (including for instance sarcasm and irony); Narrator's detachment (e.g. 'voiceover' and evidentiality cases)
- strong delimitation — breaking the narrative thread; halting narrative pace; reducing cohesion, loosening or disabling concatenation
- transition to internal narrative, to Comment Mode or Omniscient Narrator's Channel
- superordination (subsuming several functions).
Rhematization. (With Imperfect) narrative apodotics.
Sequelling, *dénouement* or wind-up.

- report; appreciation/evaluation. Reminiscent personalized narration. Locutive narration
- epistolographic narrative
- diary narrative
- emotionally involved narration. Confession. Reflection.

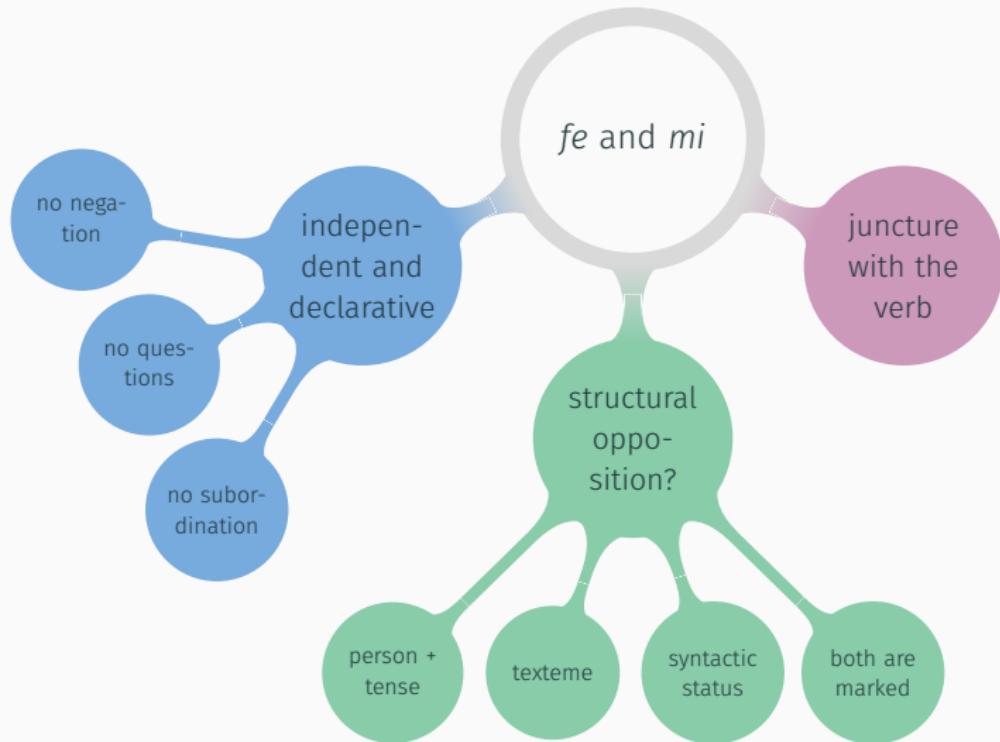
Structural properties



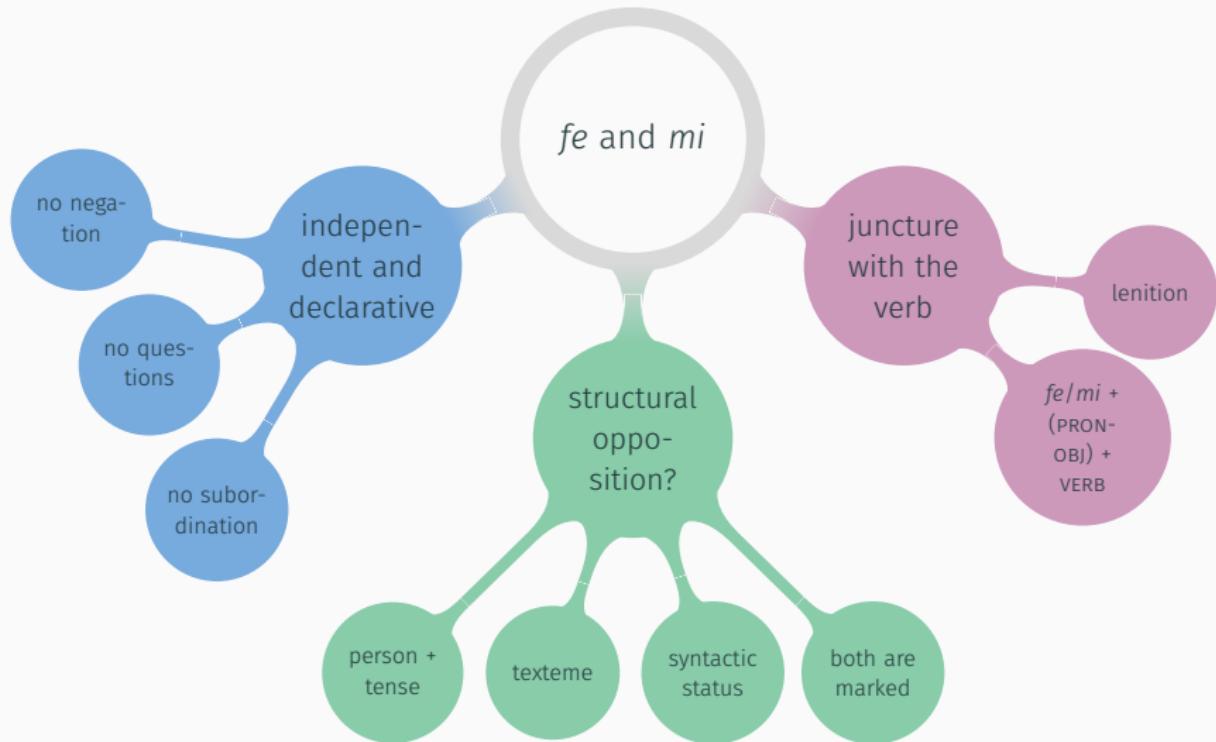
Structural properties



Structural properties



Structural properties

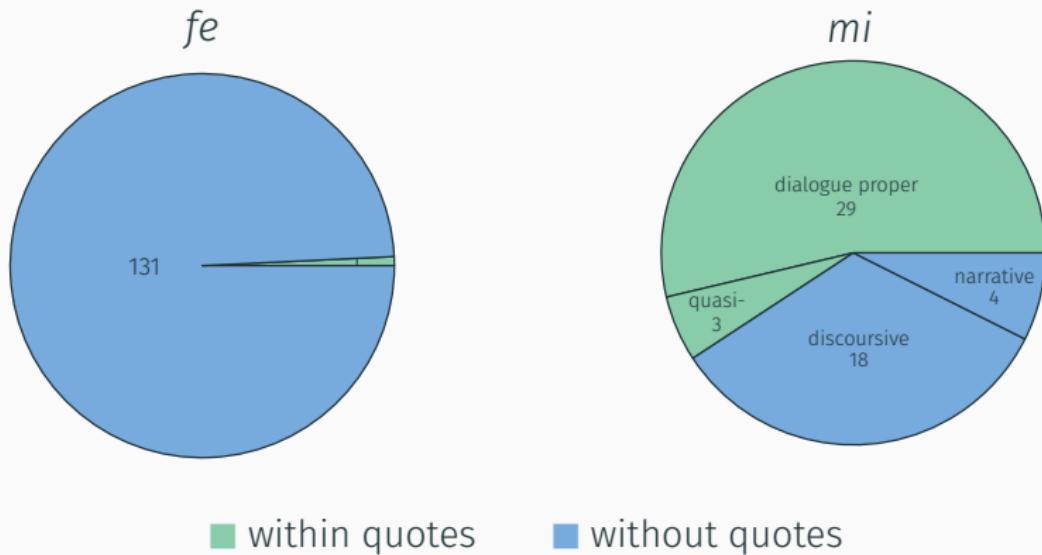


Verb's person and tense

		<i>fe</i>				
person	total	tense				
		AOR	PRET	IMPF	PLUP	<i>bod</i> *
1sg	7	1	5	1		
1pl	5	1		3	1	
2sg	0					
2pl	3	1		2		
3sg	87	2	50	28	2	5
3pl	4	1		2	1	
0	26		14	11	1	
total	132	6	69	47	5	5

		<i>mi</i>				
person	total	tense				
		AOR	PRET	IMPF	PLUP	<i>bod</i> *
1sg	29	17	2	2		8
1pl	3	3				
2sg	2					2
2pl	4	1		1	2	
3sg	15	3	7			5
3pl	1	1				
0	0					
total	54	25	9	3	2	15

*The constructions with *bod* are not homogeneous; they are not subdivided for the sake of simplicity.



- *Y Lôn Wen* does not have much dialogue in comparison to most novels and short stories.
- *fe* and *mi* do not occur in indirect speech.

Selectability

Haiim B. RosÉN (2005). "The Jerusalem School of Linguistics and the Prague School". In: Pierre SWIGGERS. *Haiim B. Rosén: bio-bibliographical sketch*. Ed. by Pierre SWIGGERS. Vol. 8 (N.S.). Biobibliographies et exposés. Leuven: Peeters, pp. 46–47:

[...] So we isolated the cases of neutralization and archi-elements first, in order to be able to effectively examine the functions of the forms under scrutiny in conditions of genuine opposition and selectability. We may state with quite some satisfaction that this procedure, the preliminary isolation of neutralization environments prior to engaging in any attempt at uncovering functions, and especially on the levels superior to phonology, has become standard procedure in our school, [...]

fe

Core function

- The vast majority of instances: focus on the second, positive member of a contrast.
Member A, ... **fe** member B.
- Other functions exist, but they are not nearly as common.

Ex. 1: dialogue, Θ:⊕, homolexemic (*gwybod* ‘know’)

[...] Try'r ysgolfeistr yn ei ôl a gofyn i mi yn Saesneg pwy a'i taflodd. Dywedaf na wn, a rhoi fy nwy wefus ar ei gilydd yn dynn. '**Fe ddylech wybod**', medd ef, a rhoi dwy gansen gïaidd i mi, un ar bob llaw, mor galed ag y gall. Ond nid wyf yn crïo. Deil fy ngwefusau yn dynn ar ei gilydd. [...]

[...] The headmaster turns back and asks me in English who threw the pea. I say **I don't know**, and keep my lips tight together. '**You should know**', he says, and he gives me two fierce strokes of the cane, one on each hand, with all his might. But I don't cry. I keep my lips tight shut. [...]

(Ch. 1, *Darluniau / Pictures*)

Ex. 2: Θ:⊕, homolexemic (*cael* ‘get’, *chwarae* ‘play’)

Ni chaem gyfle i chwarae
'tonnau'r môr' yn aml, gan
fod yn rhaid cael styllen go
fawr a chref i'w chwarae. Ar
yr unig achlysur imi gofio
adeiladu tŷ newydd yn agos
inni, fe gawsom ddigon o
chwarae tonnau'r môr.

We did not often get the
chance to play 'waves of the
sea', as you needed quite a
big, strong plank to play. The
one time I remember a new
house being built near us, we
had plenty of playing 'waves
of the sea'.

(Ch. 6, *Chwaraeon Plant* / Children's Games)

Ex. 3: Θ:⊕

Teip gwahanol iawn oedd y Parch. Henry Rawson Williams, Betws-y-Coed. Dywedai ef bethau a gyrhaedda'i'n o ddwfn, megis, pan ddywedodd yn Rhosgadfan nad oedd gan y blaenoriaid yno ddim gwell i siarad amdano na'r tywydd. Di-giodd hyn fy nhaid, ac ni roddodd gy-hoeddiad iddo wedyn. Ond fe ddaeth Mr. Williams i Rosgadfan ym mlwyd-dyn cyhoeddiadau fy nhaid er hynny, ac ni chafodd ef ei hun byth wybod sut. Ond fe aethai blaenor ieuanc i'r cyfar-fod misol gyda'm taid ac aeth i'w boced am ei ddyddiadur. Aeth at Mr. Rawson Williams a chael cyhoeddiad ganddo, a medru rho'i'r dyddiadur yn ôl yn ei boced heb i'm taid sylwi dim.

The Reverend Henry Rawson Williams, Betws-y-coed, was quite a different sort. He said things that cut deep, such as when he said in Rhosgadfan that the deacons had nothing better to talk about than the weather. This offended my grandfather, and he did not offer him an engagement after that. Even so, Mr Williams did come to Rhosgadfan the year my grandfather was arranging the engagements, and he never understood how. A young deacon attended the monthly meeting with my grandfather, and he took his diary from his pocket. He approached Mr Rawson Williams and fixed an engagement, and managed to put the diary back in my grandfather's pocket without his noticing.

(Ch. 4, *Diwylliant a'r Capel / Culture and the Chapel*)

Ex. 4: Θ:+

Beth a all plentyn ei wneud
yn erbyn cosb nas haedda?
Yr ateb yw dim, ar hyn o bryd.
Ond **fe** **ddaw** dydd dial, fel
yr oedd y stori yn y papur
newydd yn dweud.

What can a child do against
unjust punishment? **The an-**
swer is nothing, at the time.
But **the day of vengeance will**
come, as the story in the
newspaper said.

(Ch. 1, *Darluniau / Pictures*)

Ex. 5: Θ:⊕

[...] Cofiaf i'r prifathro geisio am un wythnos ein rhwystro rhag siarad Cymraeg, drwy ein curu os gwnaem hynny. Ond dim ond am wythnos y parhaodd hynny. Mae'n debyg iddo weld ei bod yn anobeithiol ein rhwystro. Fe ddysgid y Gymraeg inni fel pwnc, gramadeg a chyfieithu yn unig, allan o ryw lyfr coch.
[...]

[...] I remember the headmaster trying for one week to stop us speaking Welsh by beating us when we did. It lasted just a week. He probably saw that it was useless to stop us. Welsh was taught as a subject, just grammar and translation, out of a red book.
[...]

(Ch. 5, *Mathau Eraill o Ddiwylliant / Other Kinds of Culture*)

Ex. 6: contrast of degree

[...] Heddiw, mae'n debyg
y daethai'n rhydd gyda
cherydd. Eithr **fe'i** hanfon-
wyd i garchar. [...]

[...] Today he would proba-
bly have been let off with a
caution. But he was sent to
prison. [...]

(Ch. 11, *Hen Gymeriad* / An Old Character)

Ex. 7: contrast

Heddiw, byddaf yn meddwl
mwy amdani hi nag am yr un
o'm hynafiaid, oblegid i Ffawd
fod mor angharedig wrthi, ac
iddi hithau fod mor garedig ei
hun wrth bawb. O'r mymryn
a oedd ganddi fe roddai yn
hael, caech groeso a charedi-
grwydd bob amser yn ei thŷ,
ac ni wyddai pa bryd i stopio
rhoi.

Today, I think about her more
than any of my forefathers,
because Fate was so unkind
to her and she was so kind
to everybody. What little she
had she gave generously, and
you would always have a wel-
come and kindness in her
house, and she did not know
when to stop giving.

(Ch. 7, *Fy Nheulu / My Family*)

Ex. 8: *cymryd ar-* ‘pretend’

Cymerai arno nad oedd y
nofel a redai yn y papur yn
ddim ond sbwriel. Ond fe'i
daliwyd ryw ddiwrnod. Fy
mam ac un o'm brodyr
yn dadlau yngylch rhyw
Geraint yn y nofel a'm tad yn
torri'r ddadl iddynt!

He pretended that the novel
serialised in the paper
was just rubbish. But he
was caught out one day.
My mother and one of my
brothers arguing about some
Geraint in the novel, and my
father settling the argument
for them!

(Ch. 8, *Fy Nhadau / My Father*)

Ex. 9: in footnote, sorting out uncertainty

[...] Ond yr oedd gwaeth peth wedi digwydd yn y twll — yr oedd partner fy nhad, Wil Tom o Ben-y-groes, wedi ei anafu yn ddifrifol yn ei gefn. ‘Mae wedi ei chael yn ofnadwy,’ medd nhad, ‘mae arna’ i ofn y bydd yn gripil weddill ‘i oes.’ (*Fe wired-dwyd hyn)

[...] But worse happened in the pit below — my father’s partner, Wil Tomos of Pen-y-Groes, has a serious injury to his back. ‘He is terrible,’ said my father, ‘I’m afraid he’ll be crippled for life.’ (*This turned out to be true.)

(Ch. 1, *Darluniau / Pictures*)

Ex. 10: surprise / unexpectedness

¶ Un tro, cyn fy ngeni i, aeth i wneud rhywbeth uwchben y twll yn yr awr ginio, llithrodd y trosol o'i law a syrthiodd yntau i lawr i'r twll. Ond bu'n ddigon hunanfeddiannol i geisio gafael mewn darn o graig, ac fe lwyd-dodd. Cryn orchest oedd gallu dal ei afael felly â'i ddwylo, hyd oni ddeuai rhywun i'w waredu. Ond fe wnaeth, er y dystiai ei fysedd beth a gostiodd yr ymdrech iddo. [...]

¶ Once, before I was born, he went to do something above the pit in the dinner hour and the crowbar slipped from his hand and he fell towards the pit edge. But he had enough presence of mind to try and grasp a rock, and it worked. It was some feat to grab that rock and hold on until someone came to rescue him. But he did it, and his fingers bore witness to the effort it cost. [...]

(Ch. 8, *Fy Nhad / My Father*)

Ex. 11: surprise / unexpectedness

[...] Yr oedd yno dwll mawn
o dan y simnai fawr wedi
ei orchuddio â phapur. Tyn-
nwyd y papur, ac yn y twll fe
ddowd o hyd i un o'r cyfie-
thiadau cyntaf o'r Testament
Newydd, a'r enw ar ei glawr
oedd 'Catherine Cadwaladr'.
[...]

[...] Below the big chimney
there was a peat hole cov-
ered up with paper. The pa-
per was removed, and in
the hole was discovered one
of the earliest translations
of the New Testament into
Welsh, and the name inside
the cover was Catherine Cad-
waladr. [...]

(Ch. 7, *Fy Nheulu / My Family*)

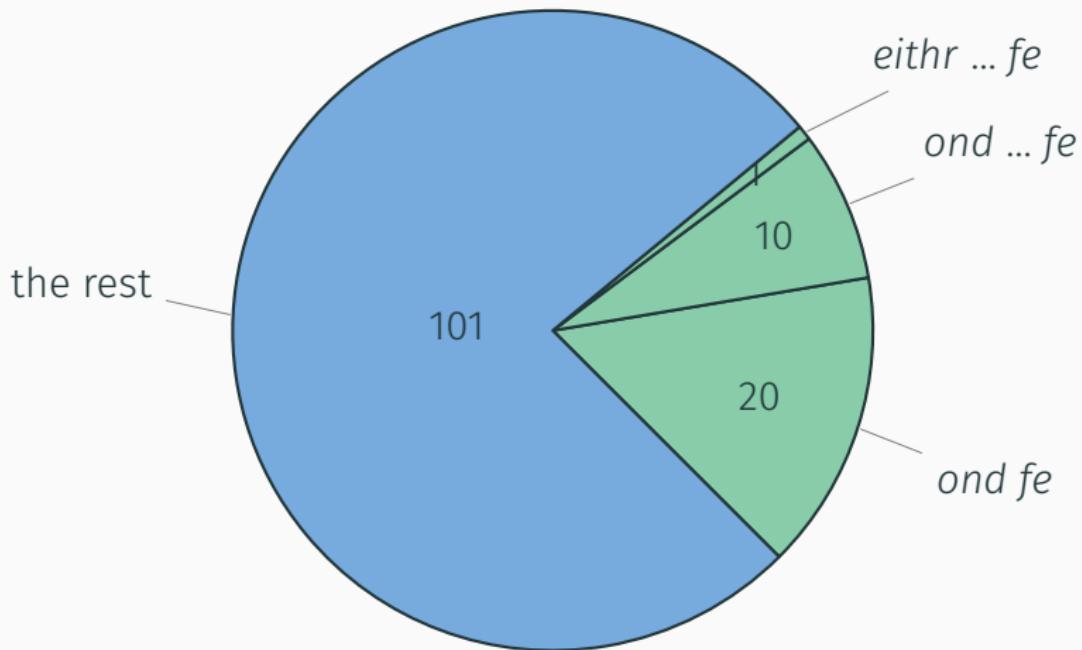
Ex. 12: falsifying previous negated statement

Nid peth diweddar yw cyd-adrodd. Bob hyn a hyn, fe adroddai'r holl ysgol Sul, yn blant a phobl mewn oed, y Deg Gorchymyn neu Weddi'r Arglwydd gyda'i gilydd.

Choral recitation is not new. From time to time the whole Sunday school, children and adults, would recite the Ten Commandments or the Lord's Prayer together.

(Ch. 4, *Diwylliant a'r Capel* / Culture and the Chapel)

ond/eithr 'but' + fe



Ex. 13: a cluster of nine instances of *fe*; rhetoric effect?

Ond **fe grynnodd** gwythiennau'r corff marw ychydig.
Daeth yn fyw. **Fe deimlais** y boen, **fe deimlais** y llawenydd, **fe deimlais** y siom. Bûm yn chwerthin, bûm yn wylo, bûm yn ddig. Bûm yn sgwrsio ar aelwyd Maes-teg, clywais yr acenion, clywais y Gymraeg yn ei harddwch.

A dyma fi'n ôl ar fy aelwyd yn Ninbych, **fe aeth** y pry yn ôl rhwng dalennau'r llyfr. **Fe dawodd** y lleisiau. Ond fel pan oeddwn blentyn, yr wyf yn synfyfrio ac yn poeni. A ddywedais i'r gwir? Naddo. **Fe'm cysurais** fy hun ei bod yn amhosibl dweud y gwir mewn hunan-gofiant. Gadewais y pethau anhyfryd allan. Yr oedd yn fy hen ardal bethau cas, yr oedd yno bethau drwg, yr oedd yno bobl annymunol. Ond petawn i'n sôn am-danynt **fe fyddai** eu teuluoedd am fy ngwaed, ac **fe'm cawn** fy hun mewn llys barn. Ymateliais am fod arnaf ofn. Ofn yw ein gelyn mwyaf, yn ifanc ac yn hen.

But the arteries of the dead body **quivered** a little. It came back to life. I **felt** the pain, **felt** the joy, **felt** the disappointment. I have laughed, I have cried, I have been angry. I have been talking on the hearth of Maes-teg, I heard the accents, heard the Welsh in its beauty.

And here am I back on my hearth in Denbigh, and the fly **has gone** back between the pages of the book. The voices **have fallen silent**. But as when I was a child, I am musing and worrying. Have I told the truth? No. I **comfort** myself that it is impossible to tell the truth in an autobiography. I left out the ugly things. There were in my old neighbourhood foul things, bad things, and bad people. But if I spoke of them their families **would be** after my blood, and I **would find** myself in a court of law. Fear held me back. Fear is our greatest foe, in youth and in age.

(Ch. 13, *Y Darlun Diwethaf / The Final Picture*)

mi

Parenthesis

<i>mi +</i>	{	<i>gredaf</i>	'I believe'	(7 occurrences)
		<i>dybiaf</i>	'I suppose, I think'	(1 occurrence)
		<i>wn</i>	'I know'	(1 occurrence)
		<i>wranta</i>	'I'm sure, I guarantee'	(1 occurrence)

- Occurs only in the Author's discursive textemes.

Ex. 14: Parenthesis: *mi gredaf*

Ond am fy nain y soniwn; yr oedd ganddi hi deulu tua'r Waun-fawr o hyd, un chwaer iddi a gofiaf yn arbennig (caf sôn amdani eto) ac yr oedd ganddi frawd, **mi** **gredaf**, yn byw yno, a'i fab ef oedd Mr. Evan Evans, teiliwr, a fu farw yn y Waun-fawr yn 1916, yr oedd ef felly yn gefnder i'm tad.

But it was about my grandmother that I was talking; she still had family around Waun-fawr, I remember one sister in particular (I will talk of her later) and she had a brother, **I believe**, living there, and his son was Mr Evan Evans, a tailor, who died in Waun-fawr in 1916, and therefore one of my father's cousins.

(Ch. 7, *Fy Nheulu / My Family*)

Ex. 15: Not in parenthesis: *credaf*

Credaf fod llai na chan
mlynedd er pan alwyd ein
pentref ni yn Rhosgadfan,
ac i bobl o'r tu allan, ardal
Rhostryfan oedd y cwbl.

I believe it is less than a hundred years ago that our village was named Rhosgadfan, and to outsiders it was all Rhostryfan.

(Ch. 2, *Fy Ardal / My Neighbourhood*)

Ex. 16: Emotionally intense monologue

'Cyfarfod coffa i bwy? Os cofio,
mi **allasech** gofio fy hogyn i pan
oedd o'n fyw. **Mi** **fuo** ar wastad
ei gefn am bum mis o amser, a
ddaru'r un ohonoch chi anfon
cimint â gair iddo fo, er i fod
o cystal â neb o'r fan yma am
fynd i foddion gras. **Mi** **gwelodd**
James Jones, Croesywaun, o un-
waith yn Bebbington, ac **mi** **an-**
fonodd o lythyr iddo fo wedi
clywed i fod o wedi i glwyfo.'

'A memorial service for whom?
If you're remembering, you
could **have** remembered
my boy when he was alive.
He **was** flat on his back for
five months, and neither of
you sent so much as a word to
him, though he was as good
as anyone round here at at-
tending services. James Jones,
Croesywaun, **visited** him once
in Bebbington, and he **sent** him
a letter when he knew he was
injured.'

(Ch. 9, *Fy Mam / My Mother*)

Ex. 17: Personal involvement [1/2]

‘Y droell yna yn y siambar ydy’r un ddaru mam dreio nyddu efo hi, a chael clewtan gynnoch chi am fusnesu?’

‘D ydw i ddim yn cofio am y glewtan, ia, honna ydy’r droell.’

‘Mae mam yn cofio o hyd. Mae’n rhaid ‘i bod hi’n brifo.’

‘Mi’r oedd hi’n ‘i haeddu hi’ reit siŵr. Wyt ti’n helpu dy fam?’

Nid wyf yn hoffi dweud ‘Ydw’ rhag ofn nad wyf yn gwneud digon.

‘Is that spinning wheel in the chamber the one Mam tried to spin with, and had a clout from you for interfering?’

‘I don’t remember the clout, but yes, that is the wheel.’

‘Mam still remembers it. She must have been hurt.’

‘I gave her what she deserved [lit. she deserved it], certainly. Do you help your mam?’

I don’t like to say ‘Yes’, in case what I do isn’t enough.

Ex. 17: Personal involvement [2/2]

'Mi wnes i smonath wrth helpu y
diwrnod o'r blaen.'

Edrych nain arnaf a'i llygaid fel
dau lafn o ddur glas.

'Be wnêst ti?'

'Golchi'r badell does efo
chadach llestri ac mi aeth y
toes i mewn i'r cadach i gyd
a'i neud o fel tasa'i lond o o
falwod.'

'Mi 'r wyt ti'n gwbod erbyn hyn
mai crafu padell does efo dy
winedd sydd eisio.'

'Ydw.'

'I made a mess helping the
other day.'

Nain looks at me with eyes like
two blades of blue steel.

'What did you do?'

'I washed the dough bowl with a
dish cloth and I got the dough
stuck in the cloth [lit. the dough
went into the cloth] and it was
like a pile of snails.'

'So now you know that you
should scrape the bowl with
your fingernails.'

'Yes.'

Ex. 18: a promise

Dyweddodd y meddyg wrth mam ar un o'r achlysuron hyn: 'Os byddai i byw ar ych ôl chi, mi ofala i y cewch chi gof golofn ar ych bedd.' Ond bu ef farw flynyddoedd lawer o flaen mam.

The doctor said to Mam on one such occasion, 'If I outlive you I'll make sure you have a monument on your grave.' But he died many years before Mam.

(Ch. 9, *Fy Mam / My Mother*)

Ex. 19: a promise

Mae'r lleuad yn ddisglair pan awn allan, ond mae golau disgleiriach na golau'r lleuad o'n blaenau. Mae dyn yn gwerthu llestri ar ochr y ffordd a chylch bychan o bobl o'i flaen. Mae ganddo fflamdoch swnllyd wrth ei ochr, ac mae ei wyneb ef i gyd yn y goleuni. Mae'n siarad fel melin ac yn lluchio'r platiau i'r awyr yn gylch, un ar ôl y llall, ac yn eu dal cyn iddynt ddisgyn.

'Faint amdanynt nhw?' medd y dyn, 'rhai ffres yn boeth o'r popty, **mi** **gynhesan** ych dwylo chi ar noson oer.'

The moon is shining as we go out, but there's a light brighter than moonlight before us. A man is selling dishes beside the road, with a small circle of people before him. There is a noisy flame-torch beside him, lighting his face. He's grinding talk like a mill and juggling the plates in a circle in the air one after another, and catching them before they fall.

'How much for these?' asked the man, 'new and hot from the kiln to warm [lit. **they will warm**] your hands on a cold night.'

(Ch. 1, *Darluniau / Pictures*)

Conclusion

Generalizing view

	<i>fe</i>	<i>mi</i>
etymology	3sg pronoun	1sg pronoun
chief usage	3sg and 0	1sg
general meaning	objective	subjective
sphere	external	egocentric
textematic center	non-dialogic	dialogic

Y Darlun Diwethaf

Mae'r tân yn mynd i lawr yn y grât. Âf i'm gwely. Fe ddaw yfory eto, a chaf ddal i ofyn cwestiynau.

The fire is going down in the grate. I'm off to my bed. Tomorrow will come, and I can go on asking questions.

(Ch. 13, *Y Darlun Diwethaf* / The Final Picture)

Diolch yn fawr iawn i chi!



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