Direction and location in Modern Irish

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1 Introduction

The expression of location and direction concerns a section of Irish morphology which shows both great flexibility and regularity. This has arisen through the transparent morphemic structure of words indicating combinations of location and direction (Ahlqvist 1976, MacEoin 1993: 118).[1] The aim of the present paper is to provide a consistent framework for the analysis and description of the morphemes used here and to characterise them semantically from the point of view of the present-day language (see Ó Baoill (1973) for an earlier analysis in a similar vein).

The consideration of these structures throws up the issue of relative transparency in synchronic terms and the extent to which native speakers are at least unconsciously aware of such transparency. It is the view of the present author that a description such as the following captures the intuitions of Irish speakers. For this reason there are few if any references to diachronic developments. The latter are of course interesting for the rise of the present-day system but not of relevance when attempting to describe — in metaphorical terms, of course — the unconscious knowledge of native speakers.

For the purpose at hand all expressions of direction and location in present-day Irish are taken as complex units comprising 1) a base morpheme and 2) a specifying morpheme. These expressions are divided into two groups each of which relates to a particular spatial plane.

(1) a. vertical direction/location
     b. lateral direction/location

2 Vertical relations

Group (1a) contains two base morphemes and three specifying morphemes, giving a total of six possible combinations. The base morphemes are as follows (note that from here onwards base morphemes are indicated by *uppercase* and specifying morphemes by *lowercase* letters and that a hyphen indicates whether a specifier comes before or after the base in question).

(2)   VERTICAL BASE MORPHEMES

         A: {-UAS}   [+above]
         B: {-IS}   [-above]

Both A and B are abstractions and have the following phonemic, phonetic and graphemic realisations.

(3) a. {-UAS}   →   /uːs/   [uəs]   *-uas*
     b. {-IS}   →   /iːs/   [iəs]   *-íos*

The spellings here are those of modern Irish orthography and are uncontroversial. The pronunciation is a different matter and requires comment. The three main dialects of Irish (north, west and south) vary greatly in the area of vowel realisation. Especially the pronunciation of those vowels which are reflexes of short vowels before originally long sonorants can show a wide spectrum of realisations. For the present paper the usual pronunciation in western Irish, roughly that found west of the city of Galway — see the classic descriptions in de Bhaldraithe (1945, 1953) — is given so that the sequence *ann* is /ɑ:n/ (de Bhaldraithe 1945: 13f.) and not, say, /aun/ as in the south or /an/ as in the north. Furthermore, the transcription here is phonemic. This means that the vowels represented in writing as *uas* and *íos* respectively are transcribed as long monophthongs, see (3) above, although in speech there is an *automatic* off-glide [ə] to the following, non-palatal consonant (again see the phonetic representations in (3) above). It a matter of debate whether the vowel in (3a) should be represented as /u:/ or /uə/ as there is no *phonological* contrast between /u:/ and /uə/ and hence parsimony of analysis would demand a single representation, namely as /u:/ (the same applies to *ia* which can be analysed as /i:/).

It is a characteristic of the base morphemes that they are bound and can only appear with one of the three specifying morphemes which have as their morphemic abstractions the following forms after each of which is also added the particular semantic feature it expresses.

(4) a. {S-}   [+direction to]
     b. {AN-}$_1$ [+direction from]
     c. {H-}   [-direction]

It is necessary to mark the second morpheme with a subscript number as there is a second, formally similar morpheme which, however, denotes a different semantic feature – location – when in combination with a further series of base morphemes, see (23) below.

(5)   {AN-}$_1$ + {-UAS}   →   /ə'nu:s/   *anuas*   'from above'

The above form means downwards from a position of being up, that its, in a direction *away* from being up, though in a direction *to* the speaker or other referent.

As opposed to the base morphemes, all of the specifiers in (4a - c) above have varying phonetic realisations depending on whether the initial vowel of the base morpheme they are combined with has the phonetic feature [+palatal] or [-palatal] (the graphemic representation, however, is unaffected by this conditioning). This latter feature is an essential element of Irish phonology and is used in the grammar and lexicon to indicate categories (like case and number) and to distinguish words respectively. In traditional distinctive feature descriptions, palatality is indicated by a combination of [+high] and [-back]. However, for Irish there are many compelling reasons for postulating a single feature [+/-palatal] (its positive value is indicated by a subscript /j/ in transcriptions in this paper, the negative value is left unmarked). This feature can behave differently from all other distinctive features of Irish phonology, above all because of its high functionality on the morphological and lexical levels.

(6) a. {S-}, *s*   →   /s/   / ___ V [-palatal]
                                           /s^j/   / ___ V [+palatal]
     b. {AN-}$_1$, *an*   →   /ən/   / ___ V [-palatal]
                                           /ən^j/   / ___ V [+palatal]

c.   {H-}, *th*   →   /h/   / ___ V [+palatal] [2]
                                           /h/   / ___ V [-palatal]

The semantic features as given earlier for both the base and specifying morphemes appear in pairs for each of the actual forms given right of the arrows in aA - cB (see (8) below). An example of such a combination would be the following form.

(7)   *síos*   /sʲiːs/   [+above], [+direction from]

The six possible combinations can be formulated as follows.

(8)   aA: {S-} + {-UAS}   →   /suːs/   *suas*   'to above'
             bA: {AN-}$_1$ + {-UAS}   →   /əˈnuːs/   *anuas*   'from above'
             cA: {H-} + {-UAS}   →   /huːs/   *thuas*   'above'
             aB: {S-} + {-IS}   →   /sʲiːs/   *síos*   'to below'
             bB: {AN-}$_1$ + {-IS}   →   /əˈnʲiːs/   *aníos*   'from below'
             cB: {H-} + {-IS}   →   /hiːs/   *thíos*   'below'

Typical occurrences of the six final forms are to be found in the following sentences.

(9)   a.   *Chuaigh Diarmuid suas an staighre.*   aA
                    'Dermot went up the stairs.'
       b.   *Tháinig Diarmuid anuas an staighre.*   bA
                    'Dermot came down the stairs.'
       c.   *Tá Diarmuid thuas an staighre.*   cA
                    'Dermot is upstairs.'
       d.   *Chuaigh Bríd síos go dtí an trá.*   aB
                    'Bridget went down to the strand.'
       e.   *Tháinigh Bríd aníos ón trá.*   bB
                    'Bridget came up from the strand.'
       f.   *Tá Bríd thíos ar an trá.*   cB
                    'Bridget is down on the strand.'

As in English, where one has both 'up' and 'over/above' as expressions of location, one has in Irish locational morphemes which need an additional feature to distinguish them from one another. This is the feature [+/-relational]. Consider the following examples.

(10) a.   *Tá Séamus thuas sa seomra.*   'Séamus is up in the room.'
      b.   *Táim chun dul thar lear.*   'I am going overseas.'
            (am-I to go over/above sea)

In the last sentence it is necessary to specify that X is *above* Y whereas in (10a) this is not the case. Thus by the addition of a feature one can distinguish semantically the different forms *thuas* 'up' and *thar* 'over/above'. [3]

(11) a. {H-} + {-UAS}   →   /huːs/ *thuas*   [+above], [-relational]
      b. {H-} + {-AR}   →   /haːr/ *thar*   [+above], [+relational]

2.1 Nominalising locative forms

A further phonetic realisation of both A and B occurs when they combine with the suffixal morpheme {-TAR} which nominalises the base morpheme which is modified. In synchronic phonological terms one can postulate that there is a shift of base-final /-s/ to /-x/ before a suffix beginning in /t/.

(12)   {UAS-}   →   /uːx/ / # ___ {-TAR}
         {IS-}   →   /iːx/ / # ___ {-TAR}
         {-TAR}   →   /tər/

         {UAS-} + {-TAR}   →   /uːxtər/   *uachtar*   'the above'
         {IS-} + {-TAR}   →   /iːxtər/   *íochtar*   'the below'

3 Expressing lateral proximity

The group of lateral morphemes can, for the purposes of classification, be divided into two further subgroups each of which is differentiated from the vertical group by referring to lateral as opposed to vertical direction. The lateral group contains a pair of complementary morphemes and a number of specifying morphemes which, however, do not exhibit the regularity of the vertical group with {-UAS} or {-IS}. The forms of the base morphemes are as follows:

(13)   LATERAL BASE MORPHEMES

         C: {-ALL}   [-proximate]
         D: {-ONN}[4]   [+proximate]

There is a degree of irregularity in the realisation of these morphemes in modern Irish: {-ONN} has the orthographic form *onn* and, in western Irish, the pronunciation [uːn] due to raising of vowels before former long nasals.

      The feature [+/-proximate] is a postulate to account for the compound meaning of the base and specifying morphemes and can be understood as referring to whether the motion is from a point close to the speaker/referent [+proximate] or from some location at a distance towards the speaker/referent [-proximate].

      The specifying morphemes in this case have the same forms as (6a - c) above. There are no variant realisations as both the base morphemes C and D begin with back vowels and hence do not trigger palatalisation of a preceding consonant.

(14)   {S-}   →   /s/   [+direction to]
         {AN-}[1]   →   /ən/   [+direction from]
         {H-}   →   /h/   [-direction]

There are, however, only four possible combinations of C, D and a - c in present-day Irish.

(15)   aC: {S-} + {-ALL}   →   /sɑ:l/   *sall*   'thither, over across'
         bC: {AN-}₁ + {-ALL}   →   /əˈnɑ:l/   *anall*   'from across'
         cC: {H-} + {ALL}   →   /hɑ:l/   *thall*   'beyond, there'
         bD: {AN-}₁ + {-ONN}   →   /əˈnu:n/   *anonn*   'across to'

The following fifth combination can be regarded as obsolete. [5]

(16)   aD: {S-} + {-ONN}   [+direction to], [+proximate]
                                 /su:n/ *sonn* 'hither, here'

Furthermore, it did not have the sole meaning which one would be led to expect from the semantic labelling offered here, that is, [+proximate] and [+direction to] but also the combination [+proximate] and [+stationary]. It is also interesting to note that the form which would be generated with the morphemes D and c in this context neither exists nor has it ever existed, its function being discharged by a formally dissimilar item, *abhus*.

(17)   Dc: {H-} + {ONN} →   /hu:n/ **thann* [-direction], [+proximate]

The word *abhus* is a petrified form which, unlike those in aC - bD, cannot be analysed morphologically[6]. One can therefore attribute its semantic features to the item as a whole.

(18)   /əˈvʌs/   *abhus*   [+proximate], [-direction] 'here, on this side'

In addition, no abstraction is necessary as this is a unique lexical item which is morphologically opaque. It is seen with its semantic complement in the following expression.

(19)   *thall agus abhus* 'here and there'   (lit.: 'there and here')

The following are some representative sentences with examples of aC -b D.

(20) a.   *Cuirtear sall thar an abhainn iad.*   aC
            'They were ferried across the river.'
     b.   *Tá siad ag teacht anall anois.*   bC
            'They are coming from over there now.'
     c.   *Bhí sí féin thall i Sasana uair amháin.*   cC
            'She herself was over in England once.'
     d.   *Chuaigh sé anonn uaim.*   bD
            'He went away from me.'

3.1 Degrees of lateral proximity

A further aspect of lateral proximity in Irish concerns a second group of morphemes which express degrees of proximity. There is a triad of items here, each of which consists of a base and specifying morpheme.

(21)   E: {-SU}   [+proximate]   →   /sʲʌ/   *seo*
         F: {-SIN}   [-proximate]   →   /sʲɪnʲ/   *sin*
         G: {-SUD}   [-proximate]   →   /sʲu:d/   *siúd*

The difficulty which arises here is that {SIN} and {SUD} while both having the feature [-proximate] are distinguished by the extent to which that feature applies, much along the same lines as English made (and in some varieties still makes) a distinction between *there* and *yonder*. When dealing with three (or more) grades of a single feature the binary distinction of plus and minus, +/-, is insufficient. To overcome this I will use a Greek letter, starting with α, which then denotes decreasing grades of the feature it qualifies. By these means one can show formally that the degree of proximity with {SIN} is greater than with {SUD}.

(22) a. {-SU} [αproximate]
b. {-SIN} [βproximate]
c. {-SUD} [γproximate]

The forms E - G are all combinable with a single morpheme, but only with this one, as shown in the following.

(23) d: {AN-}$_2$ → /ən/ *an* [+locative]

This converts the forms E - G, which unlike earlier base morphemes are free and are regularly used to form demonstrative pronouns, into forms which denote the location in question.

(24) Ed: {AN-}$_2$ + {-SU} → /ən'sʲʌ/ *anseo* 'here'
Fd: {AN-}$_2$ + {-SIN} → /ən'sʲɪnʲ/ *ansin* 'there'
Gd: {AN-}$_2$ + {-SUD} → /ən'sʲuːd/ *ansiúd* 'yonder'

a. *Níl Pádraig anseo inniu.* [αproximate]
'Pádraig is not here today.'
b. *Tá do cheannsa ansin ceart go leor.* [βproximate]
'Your one is there all right.'
c. *Rachaimid ansiúd tar éis an dinnéir.* [γproximate]
'We will go over there after dinner.'

3.2 Analysis with the features [+/-confined] and [+/-stationary]

Closely related to the last instances of lateral morphemes is a further group of locational morphemes whose members share a feature which separates them from the foregoing, namely [+/-confined].

(25) *Bhí a athair amuigh sa ghort i rith an lae.*
'His father was out in the field during the day.'

In the above sentence with the (complex) locational morpheme *amuigh* there is an implied contrast between the field [-confined] and a further element with the feature [+confined], for example, a house. This accounts then for the semantic distinction between (25) and (26).

(26) *Bhí a athair sa ghort i rith an lae.*
'His father was in the field during the day.'

The two base morphemes which are used when the notion of confinement, or its absence, is to be expressed are the following.

(27)　　H:　{IST-}[7]　➔　/ɪsʲtʲ/　　*ist-*　[+confined]

　　　　I:　{AM-}　➔　/əm/　　　*am-*　[-confined]

For each of these there are two specifying morphemes.

(28)　　e:　{-ACH}　➔　/ax/　*ach*　　[-stationary]

　　　　f:　{-I}　　➔　/ɪ/　*(u)igh*　[+stationary]

This then results in the following combinations.

(29)　　He:　{IST-} + {-ACH}　➔　/ɪˈsʲtʲax/　*isteach*　'into'

　　　　Hf:　{IST-} + {-I}　　➔　/ɪˈsʲtʲɪ/　*istigh*　'inside'

　　　　Ie:　{AM-} + {-ACH}　➔　/əˈmax/　*amach*　'out to'

　　　　If:　{AM-} + {-I}　　➔　/əˈmʌ/　*amuigh*　'outside'

Three particular points have to be discussed in connection with this set of morphemes. Firstly, the feature [+/-stationary] is necessary as there is a formal distinction which depends on it, see *e* and *f* in (28). Contrast the following two sets of sentences, the first of which does not distinguish formally between [+stationary], see (30a), and [-stationary], see (30b).

(30)　a.　*Tá an pictiúir thar barr an dorais.*
　　　　　[is the picture over top door-GENITIVE]
　　　　　'The picture is over the door.'

　　　b.　*D'imigh sé thar sáile le fiche blian.*
　　　　　[went he over brine/sea with twenty years]
　　　　　'He went abroad at twenty years of age.'

　　　c.　*Tá Seán istigh sa teach.*
　　　　　'Seán is inside in the house.'

　　　d.　*Tar isteach sa chistín más mian leat.*
　　　　　'Come into the kitchen if you want to.'

One can thus mark the form He - If as follows.

(31)　　{IST-} + {-ACH}　=　[+confined], [-stationary]
　　　　{IST-} + {-I}　　=　[+confined], [+stationary]
　　　　{AM-} + {-ACH}　=　[-confined], [-stationary]
　　　　{AM-} + {-I}　　=　[-confined], [+stationary]

The second point concerns alternative phonetic realisations for Hf and If. Basically, the front vowel /ɪ/ is to be found after palatal consonants, i.e. with *istigh*, and /ə/ after non-palatal consonants, i.e. with *amuigh*.

　　　A third point concerns an additional form related to *amuigh* where an /l-/[8] is prefixed to the adverb and an /s/ is infixed, the form then being followed by the preposition 'of' (or a compound form of preposition + article). The semantic function of this prefixed /l-/ is to add

the notion of relationality, in a similar fashion to that described above in (20a + b). The relational element may simply be implied in elliptical sentences such as (32b). Note that the prefix /l-/ is also found with the vertical morpheme {-UAS} [+above], see (32c).

(32)   {L-} + {ASM-} + {-I} = [+relational], [-confined], [+stationary]

     a. *Tá duine éigin lasmuigh den teach.*
        'Someone is outside the house.'
     b. *Tá duine éigin lasmuigh.*
        'Someone is outside.'
     c. *Lastuas den bhalla úd.*
        'Beyond (i.e. further up than) that wall over there.'

4 Cardinal point reference

Finally it remains to deal with the morphemes which are used for the cardinal points in Irish. The four base morphemes can be formalised as follows.

(33)   {UA}   →   /uə/   *uaidh*   =   North
           {AS}   →   /as/   *eas*   =   South
           {ER}   →   /ɛr^j/   *oir*   =   East
           {IR}   →   /iːr/   *iar*   =   West

Each of these can be combined with one of three specifying morphemes which have the semantic features as specified in (4) above. However, only *c* {H-} [-direction] can retain its graphemic form with all the cardinal points; *a* {S-} [+direction to] and *b* {AN-}$_1$ [+direction from] are variously modified, in some cases quite radically.

(34)   {AN-}$_1$ /əd/ *ad*   (North)
           [+direction from]   /ən^j/ *an*   (South)
                             /ən/ *an*   (East)
                             /ən^j/ *an*   (West)
           {S-}   /oː h/ *ó th-*   (North)
           [+direction to]   /oː j/ *ó dh-*   (South)
                             /s/ *s*   (East)
                             /s^j/ *s*   (West)
           {H-}   /h/ *th*   (North, South, East, West)
           [+stationary]

If one divides the cardinal points into two planes, a longitudinal (vertical) and a latitudinal (horizontal) one, as was done with some of the other directional and locational morphemes, then one can formulate the conditions for the realisation of the specifying morphemes on the horizontal plane (East, West) and, in the case of the morpheme with the feature [+stationary], on both planes (North-South as well).

(35) [+direction from] {AN-}$_1$ → /ən/ / ___ V[-palatal] (East)

  /ən^j/ / ___ V[+palatal] (West)

  [+direction to] {S-} → /s/ / ___ V[-palatal] (West)

  /s^j/ / ___ V[+palatal] (East)

  [+stationary] {H-} → /h/ / ___ V[+/-palatal]
  (North, South, East, West)

The vertical plane for {AN-}$_1$ and {S-} does not allow such a formulation. It shows synchronic irregularities in two instances: 1) in the form for North with the feature [+direction from], i.e. /əd/ where the occurrence of [d] cannot be accounted for in terms of palatalisation and 2) in the forms /o: h/ and /o: j/ which are not the expected forms but rather consist of a preceding directional preposition /o:/ *ó* and a lenited initial consonant, i.e. /h/ *th* and /j/ *dh* of the unlenited forms /tuə/ *tuaidh* and /d^{j}as/ *deas* which do not occur as such, however.

4.1 Names of cardinal points

One can nonetheless postulate /tuə/ and /d^{j}as/ as abstractions (along with forms for East and West) and thus by means of two suffixes derive the appellative nominal forms for the cardinal points. Note that the short vowel /a/ in the form for South is raised to /ε/ before the initial palatal consonant of the suffix /-s^{j}k^{j}art/, i.e. one has /d^{j}εs^{j}k^{j}art/. This raising of short vowels before palatals is the rule in Irish phonology so that there is external justification for the description being offered here.

(37) {-SCART} → /s^{j}k^{j}art/ *-sceart* nominalising suffix (longitudinal)

  {-HAR} → /hər/ *-th(e)ar* nominalising suffix (latitudinal)

  {TUA-, DAS-} + {-SCART} → /tu:s^{j}k^{j}art/ *tuaisceart* 'the North'

  /d^{j}εs^{j}k^{j}art/ *deisceart* 'the South'

  {TER-, TIR-} + {-HAR} → /tεr^{j}hər/ *(an) t-oirthear* 'the East'

  /t^{j}i:rhər/ *(an) t-iarthar* 'the West'

The initial *t*-prefix (found before vowel-initial masculine nouns) is included here as it is present in the citation form of these nouns, i.e. in the nominative singular with the definite article.

4.2 Direction, location and cardinal points

In conclusion one can combine the base morphemes in (33) with the specifying morphemes in (34) to attain the following actual forms.

(38) {AN-}$_1$ + {-UA} → /əˈduə/ *aduaidh* 'from the North'

  {S-} + {-UA} → /o: ˈhuə/ *ó thuaidh* 'to the North'

{H-} + {-UA}	→	/huə/	*thuaidh*	'in the North'
{AN-}1 + {-AS}	→	/əˈnʲas/	*aneas*	'from the South'
{S-} + {-AS}	→	/oː ˈjas/	*ó dheas*	'to the South'
{H-} + {-AS}	→	/has/	*theas*	'in the South'
{AN-}1 + {-ER}	→	/əˈnerʲ/	*anoir*	'from the East'
{S-} + {-ER}	→	/sɛrʲ/	*soir*	'to the East'
{H-} + {-ER}	→	/herʲ/	*thoir*	'in the East'
{AN}1 + {IR}	→	/əˈnʲiːr/	*aniar*	'from the West'
{S} + {IR}	→	/sʲiːr/	*siar*	'to the West'
{H} + {IR}	→	/hiːr/	*thiar*	'in the West'

In Irish, as in English, one has the possibility of combining these forms with each other. Arranged according to specifying morphemes one can present three groups for the four cardinal points. These can be used, alone or in combination, as the sample sentences below illustrate.

(39) Stationary: *thuaidh, theas, thoir, thiar.*   'in the north, south, east, west'
Direction to: *ó thuaidh, ó dheas, soir, siar.*   'to the north, south, east, west'
Direction from: *aduaidh, aneas, anoir, aneas.*   'from the north, south, east, west'

  a.   *Bhí mé thuaidh sa samhradh.*
      'I was up north for the summer.'
  b.   *Rachainn ó dheas dá mbeadh mé in ann.*
      'I would go south if I could.'
  c.   *Beidh siad ag teacht anoir.*
      'They will be coming from the east.'
  d.   *An ghaoth aniar aneas.*
      'The South-West wind.'
      [the wind from-the-west from-the-south]

5   Conclusion

The consideration of the above adverbs in Modern Irish shows that the morphology of the language has a highly structured and largely regular system for the expression of the semantic notions of location and direction. Of course any sub-system in a language is the result of diachronic developments, but the considerable regularity of this section of Irish morphology offers firm evidence for the semantic status of the twin notions of location and direction, the expression of which has maintained its clarity, conferring on it a high degree of synchronic transparency which is unique in the language.

Notes

1   The article by Stenson (1997) examines various mixed language idioms (Irish-English) of the type *Nuair a thurnáil sí suas* [when COMP turned she up] 'When she turned up' and confirms that these fit into the syntax of Irish, by corresponding structurally to constructions already available in the language, and are generally motivated by filling lexical gaps.

2   /h/, if it derives from a non-palatal segment, is always [h] irrespective of the value for /palatal/ of the following vowel. However, if its origin lies in the lenition of a palatal consonant then its realisation is [ç] before a back vowel, compare *a Sheáin* /ə hɑːnʲ/ [ə çɑːnʲ], 'John'-VOCATIVE with *a theach* /ə hax/ [ə hæːx] 'his house'.

3   As with *abhus*, *thar* represents a single lexical item which could, however, be segmented morphologically as {H-} + {-AR}➔ /hɑːr/ *thar*. Little is gained by this segmentation, however, as {H-} would be the only specifying morpheme combinable with {-AR} and, more importantly, as the whole morphemic unit has only two features, [+stationary] and [+relational], the second of which would then apply to the base only. The feature [+relational] is insufficient, however, for a base morpheme as it gives no information as to location or direction.

4   For this morpheme the final consonant has been doubled which has the advantage of allowing a distinction between it and the specifying morpheme *b*.

5   This form is found in Dineen (1927: 1087) where it is marked as 'early' (i.e. Middle or Old Irish). It is also listed in the *Contributions to a dictionary of the Irish language*, Vol S. (1953: 429). Ó Dónaill (1977: 1134) labels it as 'literary'. The developmental history of many such forms is treated in Ahlqvist (1976: 158-68).

6   Synchronically of course. Historically the form arose from *i bhfus* which literally meant 'in repose' which then took on the meaning 'here' as seen in *fan i bhfus* 'stay here' (Dineen 1927: 483). The modern spelling *abhus* reflects the indeterminate quality of the initial vowel which is unstressed. A parallel in English is afforded by such words as *about*, *alive*, *asleep* where a former preposition and noun have become a predicative adjective (Old English *on sl³pe* ➔ *asleep*).

7   In the treatment of this and the following morpheme the segmentation made is not correct when viewed diachronically. However, in a synchronic description which purports to account for native speaker's intuitions of morpheme structure this segmentation is appropriate. Note further that the palatal quality of the *t* in this morpheme can be given in the phonetic description of the base morpheme as it is always followed by a front vowel.

8   Diachronically this /l/ represents an elision of the word *leath* /lʲa/ with a following *istigh* or *amuigh* such that it was no longer recognized as such and came to be written as an initial *l* with these forms (cf. *abhus* ⬅ *i bhfus*). A similar case of elision can be colloquially registered in Irish where the word *taobh* /tiːv/ is elided to /t/ in exactly the same environment so that one has the following realisations: *taobh istigh* /tiːsʲtʲɪ/ 'side

in', i.e. 'inside', *taobh amuigh* /tiːmʌ/ 'side out', i.e. 'outside'. Elision of this sort is not by any means confined to these two locational morphemes but occurs across the board in (Connemara) Irish, for example, *cad chuige* 'what for, why' /tɪɡʲə/ or *gach uile* 'every/each one' /xɪlʲə/ which is frequently written *chuile*. A written form which reflects the pronunciation, as in the last case, is an important step to morphological opacity as it is no longer clear of what the elements the item in question is compounded.

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