

THE PREVERBAL POSITION IN BRETON AND  
RELATIONAL VISIBILITY

by

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The Preverbal Position in Breton and  
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## Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to give a unified account of the preverbal position in Breton, a Celtic language closely related to Welsh. In recent years, Breton preverbal position has been analysed as a topic position to which a nominal is moved from its underlying postverbal position. However, this type of analysis remains problematical.

Using Relational Grammar developed by Perlmutter and Postal in the late 1970s, and, in particular, the Relational Theory of Case, proposed by Gerdtz (1991), I show that the preverbal position is unmarked for a particular grammatical relation in Breton. Furthermore, each preverbal nominal must be licensed in that position by a particle *e/a*, *eh/ez*, or *ne*, acting like a “case assigner”. This is however subject to dialectal variations.

In Breton, nominals are morphologically unmarked for case. The verb remains unmarked for person and number when free standing nominals are used. The word order is relatively ‘free’. The licensing of the preverbal nominal is not sufficient to indicate the grammatical relation of that nominal. The relational identification of nominals is accomplished by two rules: *Definiteness Condition* and *Subject Precedence*. With these rules and the licensing properties of the particles, I can account for the preverbal position in Breton, including dialectal variations found in this language.

I further extend this analysis and show how incorporated pronouns, bound personal morphemes appearing on the verb as well as the preposition, help the relational identification of the nominals. I also show how adjuncts are licensed preverbally and identified by coreferentiality with a postverbal bound morpheme.

As a result of this analysis, I claim that word order in Breton is the ultimate expression of the rules of the grammar operating on the morphology as well as the syntax of this language. Word order in Breton cannot be taken as a basis on which the syntax is elaborated. Relational Grammar, taking grammatical relations as primitives, is better suited

to treat Breton syntax than any theoretical framework incorporating the notion of configurationality.

to Meriadeg Herrieu

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"me gwellan gourhemenneu"

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## The Preverbal Position in Breton and Relational Visibility

Breton, a Celtic language closely related to Welsh, has never been as thoroughly studied as in the past decade.<sup>1</sup> In particular, its word order has been and still is the object of debates. To cite a few examples, Borsley and Stephens (1989) and Borsley (1990) argue for an underlying VSO order for Breton, while Hendrick (1988, 1990) and Stump (1989) assume underlying SVO. However, such a debate remains fruitless unless we make a careful and thorough examination of the analysis and representation of the grammatical relations in the language. The word order of a language is not a matter of pretheoretical assumptions, but rather the result of the optimal interpretation of the rules of the grammar of the language as they operate on the morphological as well as the syntactical levels. Unless we properly interpret these rules, we cannot establish with certainty the word order of the language.

The aim of this thesis is to provide a more unified account of Breton syntax through a systematic examination of especially the preverbal position in simple sentences.<sup>2</sup> In whatever theoretical framework applied to Breton syntax todate, e.g., Generalized Phrase Structure Grammar (GPSG) (see Borsley 1990) or Government and Binding (GB) (see Hendrick 1988; or Stump 1989), Breton preverbal position is regularly analysed as a **TOPIC** position.<sup>3</sup> However, there are serious problems inherent in these approaches, a

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<sup>1</sup> The Celtic languages divide into two groups. The Gaelic group comprises Irish, Scot Gaelic and Manx Gaelic; also called Q-Celtic. The Brythonic group comprises Welsh, Cornish and Breton; also called P-Celtic. Q-Celtic refers to Celtic languages having, for example, the interrogative words and the numbers four and five beginning with the sound [k]. P-Celtic refers to Celtic languages having the cognate interrogative words and the numbers four and five beginning with the sound [p].

<sup>2</sup> By simple sentences, I mean **monostratal** sentences or sentences showing only **one layer** of grammatical relations (see Perlmutter: 1983).

<sup>3</sup> In Lexical functional Grammar (LFG) elaborated by Bresnan (1982), Breton preverbal position is seen either as a **TOPIC** or **FOCUS** position, and this is also theoretically problematical. For more detail see Schapansky (1989).

full presentation and discussion of which are outside the scope of this thesis. Although Breton is a Celtic Language, it does not share with Irish or Welsh the VSO order which appears to be justifiable for these two languages.

In Breton, a verb cannot begin a sentence. The preverbal position must be occupied by some nominal (e.g., subject, direct or indirect object, etc) or by some adverb (e.g., of time, location, etc) as sentences (1) to (4) illustrate for the Gwenedeg dialect (see p 4 for Breton dialects).<sup>4</sup>

- (1) Tad Annaig e lenn ul lihér.  
father Annaig vp read-prs a letter  
'Annaig's father is reading a letter.'  
(Séité and Herrieu 1981:19)
- (2) Ur grampoéhenn e wélan édan hé beg.  
a crepe vp see-prs-1s under her beak  
'I see a crepe in its beak.'  
(op. cit. p 40)
- (3) D' ur paotrig e lar un istoér<sup>5</sup>.  
to a boy-dim vp tell-prs-3s a story  
'He is telling a story to the little boy.'  
(op. cit. p 12)
- (4) Beb yaou éh a Annaig de valé d'er hoed.  
each thursday vp go-prs Annaig to walk to the wood  
'Annaig goes for a walk to the wood every thursday.'  
(op. cit. p 74)

Furthermore, preverbal elements must be followed by a verbal particle, e.g., *e* and

<sup>4</sup>The Abbreviations used in this thesis are: dem=demonstrative particle; dim=diminutive suffix; ext=existential; f=feminine gender; fut=future tense; imp=impersonal suffix; ind=indicative mood; ipf=imperfect aspect; ipt=imperative mood; m= masculine gender; neg= negative particle; p= plural; pcl= proclitic; prs=present tense; pst= past tense; s= singular; sing=singulative suffix; sit =situational; vp=verbal particle; 1=first person; 2=second person; 3=third person.

<sup>5</sup>In Breton, the indefinite article is realized as *un* before a word beginning with the consonants *n*, *t*, *d*, *h* or beginning with a vowel; as *ul* before a word beginning with the consonant *l*; as *ur* elsewhere. This holds for the definite article as well.

*eh* in the above sentences.<sup>6</sup> My conclusion in this thesis is that Breton should be characterized neither as a VSO nor as an SVO language, but rather as a **VERB-SECOND**, i.e. a language that displays the peculiarity of having the verb in second position, with the order of the postverbal elements determined by the item present in preverbal position. Moreover, the preverbal item needs to be **licensed** (see below) into the structure of the sentence by some means other than word order, which is relevant to the postverbal elements. No one preverbal element can occur without being immediately followed by one of the particles.<sup>7</sup> The verbal particle *e/a* acts as a licensing device, while the verbal particle *é(h)/e(z)* and the negative particle *ne* do so optionally, and only in some dialects. These latter particles, however, interact with word order in allowing a nominal to occur in preverbal position according to its grammatical relation.

The framework I have adopted for this study is **Relational Grammar** (RG), developed by Perlmutter and Postal in the 1970s. Unlike any theory which incorporates the concept of configurationality, RG presents a unique opportunity to study grammatical relations, taken as primitives by the theory. More specifically, I shall follow the **Relational Visibility** proposed by Gerdts (1990) defined as *a nominal must relationally identified by some morphosyntactic means* (case, agreement or word order). Despite the fact that Breton displays a relatively free word order with no morphological cases on the nominals and no agreement markers on the verb, I will show that Relational Visibility plays

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<sup>6</sup>In the spoken language, the particles may be deleted, but the mutation they induce are still realized. The designation of elements such as *e* or *eh*, as verbal particles is dependent on the fact that these particles occur in simple sentences in the language. 'Verbal particle' is also a term traditionally accepted in Breton grammars. Other designations such as 'relative particle' or 'relative pronoun' are also found in the literature.

<sup>7</sup>This does not account for the occurrence of proclitics or reflexive particles, which occupy a fixed position, immediately preceding the verb. When proclitics or reflexive particles are used, the verbal particles are deleted. The mutations showing on the initial consonant of the verb are the mutations induced not by the verbal particles, but by proclitics (cf fn 3 p 38). Hemon (1975: 276 and 278) gives examples of sentences where the verbal particle occurs before the reflexive particle, or combines with a following proclitic.

a role in licensing nominals in that language.

**License** is a relational term that refers to nominals being appropriately marked in a given sentence according to the rules of the language.<sup>8</sup> According to Gerdts (1990:200), a nominal is **licensed** if it is **relationally identified** by some morphosyntactic means (case, agreement, or word order). That is, if a language uses case marking, then the nominals should show the appropriate cases according to their grammatical relations. If a language uses agreement, then the verb should agree in person and number with these nominals. If a language uses word order, then the nominal should occur in the appropriate position given their grammatical relations. In Breton however, as I will demonstrate, **licensing** and **relational identification** are complementary but distinct processes. The licensing of nominals is accomplished in terms of position, either preverbal or postverbal while the relational identification of nominals is accomplished by other principles (see Chapters Two and Four).

Breton has no officially established standard dialect. This presents some difficulty in handling the data. Four major dialects are recognised. Leoneg, spoken in the northwestern part of Brittany, is regarded as the literary language and is taught in schools outside the Gwenedeg-speaking area, and at universities. Gwenedeg is spoken in the southeastern part of the Breton-speaking area, which corresponds roughly to the western half of the "département du Morbihan". Tregerieg is spoken in the northern part of the Breton-speaking area. And Kerneveg is spoken elsewhere. A distinction can be drawn on

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<sup>8</sup>For the original use of 'license' in this sense see Gerdts and Youn (1988: 161-162).

phonological grounds between the group comprising Kerneveg, Leoneg and Tregerieg, known as KLT, and Gwenedeg.<sup>9</sup> Gwenedeg is phonologically so different from the other dialects, that it is not mutually intelligible with them.<sup>10</sup> Further differences distinguish Leoneg from Kerneveg and Tregerieg. These differences include the use of the verbal particles relating to the preverbal position in the written as well as in the spoken dialects, a topic discussed later in this paper (see Chaps. 1 and 4).

Particular attention must be paid in selecting a data base. Urien (1982) presents a study of the dialect of Leoneg with some references made to Kerneveg and, to a lesser extent, to Tregerieg. Hendrick (1988, 1990) bases his GB analysis of Breton on the Kerneveg dialect which exhibits sentences regarded as ungrammatical in Gwenedeg and Leoneg. Although Stump (1984, 1989), like Urien, bases his GB analysis on Leoneg, he nevertheless uses some of Kerneveg data. The dialect I choose to focus on for this study is Gwenedeg which has been excluded from recent treatments. Some attention will also be paid to Leoneg, which shares with Gwenedeg a similar use of verbal particles, and to two varieties of Kerneveg, namely written Kerneveg and the variety of Kerneveg spoken at Lanvenegen (Canton du Faouet).

The primary bibliographical data sources used in this study include the works of the above mentioned authors on Leoneg and Kerneveg. The Gwenedeg sources include works

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<sup>8</sup>To avoid confusion between the Gwenedeg and non-Gwenedeg spelling, I will use e.g. *e/a* to indicate that the particle is realized as *e* in Gwenedeg and as *a* in KLT.

<sup>10</sup>It is for these reasons that Kerneveg, Leoneg, and Tregerieg were grouped together in the 1911 Reform of the Breton orthography, while Gwenedeg was not taken into account. Today Gwenedeg has a spelling system on its own. This will be noted in this work when contrasting Gwenedeg with Leoneg or Kerneveg data.

The same reasons lead Stump (1989, fn1 p 431) to state that "an investigation of Vannetais [Gwenedeg] is best pursued apart from any general inquiry into Breton grammar". However, as I shall demonstrate, Gwenedeg is a dialect of Breton that must not be excluded apriorily as a curious deviant of the language.

by M. Herrieu, author of two Gwenedeg textbooks and a French-Gwenedeg dictionary. Other Gwenedeg data is also drawn from short stories written by Jaffré (1986). Thus the data is mainly literary, with the addition of some field data and personal intuition.



## Chapter One

### The Particle System

Breton shares with Irish or Welsh a certain number of features characteristic of the Celtic languages.<sup>1</sup> However, as already mentioned, differences exist with respect to word order and the use of the verbal particles. In Celtic, these particles occur immediately preceding the verb and affect the initial consonant of the following verb by mutation. These particles are used in Irish and Welsh mainly in relative clauses and interrogative sentences beginning with a question word. In addition, they are used in Breton in simple sentences with a preverbal item.

This chapter discusses the relationship between the particles and the preverbal element in Breton. Breton has three particles, two verbal particles *e/a* and *éh/ez* used in affirmative sentences and a negative particle *ne*. These particles show different degrees of licensing power which varies from dialect to dialect. The dialects considered here are Gwenedeg/Leoneg (G/L), written Kerneveg (K) and the variety of Kerneveg spoken at Lanvenegen (Lan).

In discussing the data, I adopt here the RG notation system where the "term" grammatical relations are represented by numbers: **1** represents the subject, **2** the direct object, and **3** the indirect object.<sup>2</sup> Oblique relations (such as locative, instrumental, etc...) are represented by **OBL** (see Perlmutter 1983). However, in Breton only the distinction

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<sup>1</sup>The features include the well known mutation system, the lack of relative pronoun, the agreement system, the use of prepositions carrying bound personal morphemes, ... . This list is not exhaustive.

In Breton, the verbal particle *e/a* and the negative particle *ne* induce lenition of the initial consonant of the following verb. The verbal particle *éh/ez* induces mixed mutation (lenition of the voiced stops, except *d* which undergoes provection). The following table represents the literary Gwenedeg mutations and do not cover all the possible range of mutations found in the spoken language.

consonants	p	t	k	b	d	g	gw	m
lenition	b	d	g	v	z	h	w	v
mixed mutation				v	t	h	w	v

<sup>2</sup>These symbols --1, 2, and 3-- will used hereafter and will exclusively refer to the grammatical relations associated with each of them.

between unmarked nominals (1s and 2s) and nominals marked by a preposition (3s and obliques) is required. Thus, I will not distinguish 3s and obliques here, all represented by 3/OBL <sup>3</sup>.

### 1.1 Sentences without Particles

In Breton (6), unlike in Irish (7) or Welsh (8), the verb cannot begin a sentence.

- (6)\* V 1 2 3/OBL  
 \*Gwel er merhed bokedeu ér liorh.  
 see-prs the girls flowers in-the garden  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

- (7) V 1 2 OBL  
 Bhris an duine an chathaoir leis an ord aréir.  
 break-pst the man the chair with a sledge hammer yesterday  
 'The man broke the chair with a sledge hammer yesterday.'

(adapted from O Siadhail 1989: 207)<sup>4</sup>

- (8) V 1 2 OBL  
 Rhododd y plant y llestri ar fwrdd y gegin.  
 put-pst the children the dishes on table the kitchen  
 'The children put the dishes on the kitchen table.'

(adapted from Awbery 1976:17)

Furthermore, the verb cannot immediately follow a preverbal item, hence the ungrammaticality of the following sentences.

- (9)\* 1 V 2 3/OBL  
 \*Er merhed gwel bokedeu ér liorh.  
 the girls see-prs flowers in-the garden  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

- (10)\* 2 V 1 3/OBL  
 \*Bokedeu gwel er merhed ér liorh.  
 flowers see-prs the girls in-the garden  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

- (11)\* 3/OBL V 1 2

<sup>3</sup>3s and obliques are not syntactically differentiated. Both 3s and obliques are preceded by a preposition. The same verbal particle *eh/ez* is used whether a 3 or whether an oblique occurs in preverbal position. Furthermore, 3s and obliques may display bound morphemes with which a preverbal adjunct can be coreferential.

<sup>4</sup>"Adapted" means here that the original sentence quoted from the given author has been slightly modified for the purpose of the analysis. For instance, modification of a sentence may involve substitution of a pronoun for a noun.

*Er	liorh	gwel	er	merhed	bokedeu.
in-the	garden	see-prs	the	girls	flowers

'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

A verbal particle is required by the syntax to link a preverbal item with the rest of the sentence. The particles *e/a* and *é(h)/e(z)* are restricted to affirmative sentences, while simple negative sentences are marked by one particle *ne* in all dialects under consideration.

## 1.2 Verbal Particle *e/a* in Gwenedeg/Leoneg

The verbal particle *e* cannot begin a sentence, as (\*12) shows.

- (12)\* e V 1 2 3/OBL
- |    |         |     |        |         |        |        |
|----|---------|-----|--------|---------|--------|--------|
| *E | wel     | er  | merhed | bokedeu | er     | liorh. |
| vp | see-prs | the | girls  | flowers | in-the | garden |
- 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

It does occur with a 1 or a 2 in preverbal position as in (13) and (14).

- (13) 1 e V 2 3/OBL
- |     |        |    |         |         |        |        |
|-----|--------|----|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| Er  | merhed | e  | wel     | bokedeu | ér     | liorh. |
| the | girls  | vp | see-prs | flowers | in-the | garden |
- 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'
- (14) 2 e V 1 3/OBL
- |         |    |         |     |        |        |                     |
|---------|----|---------|-----|--------|--------|---------------------|
| Bokedeu | e  | wel     | er  | merhed | ér     | liorh. <sup>5</sup> |
| flowers | vp | see-prs | the | girls  | in-the | garden              |
- 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

The verbal particle *e* cannot occur with a 3/OBL in preverbal position, as (\*15) shows.

- (15)\* 3/OBL e V 1 2
- |        |        |    |         |     |        |          |
|--------|--------|----|---------|-----|--------|----------|
| *Er    | liorh  | e  | wel     | er  | merhed | bokedeu. |
| in-the | garden | vp | see-prs | the | girls  | flowers  |
- 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

---

<sup>5</sup>In (14), the preverbal 2 must be indefinite (Gweltaz Hamel personal communication). The use of a definite nominal in preverbal position implies that this nominal is interpreted as the subject of the sentence. In the context of (14), we thus have (i).

(i) Er bokedeu e wel er merhed er liorh.  
the flowers vp see-prs the girls in-the garden  
'The flowers see the girls in the garden.'

If this is possible as a metaphorical expression, this is however not acceptable in the ordinary use of the language as (ii) shows.

(ii)\* Er bokedeu e wel er merhed er liorh.  
the flowers vp see-prs the girls in-the garden  
'The girls see the flowers in the garden.'

This suggests that the verbal particle *e* licenses in preverbal position only a nominal that is not marked by a preposition. In other words, we can claim that the licensing property of *e* is equivalent to marking the preverbal nominal with “direct case”. The term “case” is not entirely appropriate in the Breton context since the language shows no evidence for morphological case.<sup>6</sup> But it is taken here in an abstract sense. As we will see next, nominals that fail to be marked by this “case” cannot be licensed in the structure of the sentence.

The verbal particle *e* cannot occur with two unmarked preverbal items, independently of the order in which they occur, hence the ungrammaticality of (16) and (17).

(16)\* 1 2 *e* V 3/OBL  
 \*Er merhed bokedeu *e* wel ér liorh.  
 the girls flowers vp see-prs in-the garden  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

(17)\* 2 1 *e* V 3/OBL  
 \*Bokedeu er merhed *e* wel ér liorh.  
 flowers the girls vp see-prs in-the garden  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

Although the verbal particle *e* can license a 1 (cf. (13)) or a 2 (cf. (14)) in preverbal position, only one of them can be licensed at the time.

However, the verbal particle *e* can occur with two preverbal items, if the first one is a 3/OBL, as (18) and (19) show.

(18) 3/OBL 1 *e* V 2  
 Er liorh er merhed *e* wel bokedeu.  
 in-the garden the girls vp see-prs flowers  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

(19) 3/OBL 2 *e* V 1  
 Er liorh bokedeu *e* wel er merhed.<sup>7</sup>  
 in-the garden flowers vp see-prs the girls  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

<sup>6</sup>See Gerdts (1990).

<sup>7</sup>In (19), the preverbal nominal must also be indefinite (see fn 5 p 9).

This suggests that a 3/OBL is not licensed by *e* into the structure of the sentence; we claim instead that it is licensed by its preposition.

In contrast, if the two preverbal elements are in the opposite order, that is, if the 1 or the 2 appears before the 3/OBL, the result is ungrammatical.

(20)\* 1 3/OBL e V 2  
 \*Er merhed ér liorh e wel bokedeu.  
 the girls in-the garden vp see-prs flowers  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

(21)\* 2 3/OBL e V 1  
 \*Bokedeu ér liorh e wel er merhed.  
 flowers in the garden vp see-prs the girls  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

We can account for this by claiming that the particle *e/a* can only license a nominal which is adjacent to it. Since the 1 in (16) and the 2 in (17) are not adjacent to the particle, they can not be marked by “direct case” and therefore can not be licensed in that position. This is further verified by the impossibility of (20) and (21) where the 1 in (20) and the 2 in (21) are separated from the particle by a 3/OBL. Finally, we see that not only can *e/a* license an adjacent 1 or 2, but it **must** license such a nominal. We see this from (\*12) and (\*15) above where no unmarked nominal appears in preverbal position.

In summary, we give the licensing rule for *e/a* as (22):

- (22) *The verbal particle e/a in Gwenedeg/Leoneg*  
 (i) *licenses one and only one adjacent preverbal 1 or 2, and*  
 (ii) *must license such a nominal.*

Since either a 1 or a 2 can appear in preverbal position, the particle *e/a* may license the nominal but it does not **identify** it. Therefore the relational identification of the nominals is accomplished by some other principle; which will be the focus of Chapter Two.

### 1.3 Verbal Particle *eh* /*ez* in Gwenedeg/Leoneg

In contrast to *e*, the verbal particle *éh* may begin a sentence in discourse related contexts such as an answer to a question as in (23) or a reply to an order as in (24).

- (23)a. Ag é-menn é tet? b. E(h) tan ag er hoed.  
from where vp come-prs-2p vp come-prs-1s from the wood  
'Where do you come from?' 'I come from the wood.'  
(adapted from Herrieu 1979)
- (24)a. Kerhet de gousket! b. Eh an abenn.  
go-ipt-2p to sleep vp go-prs-1s soon  
'Go to bed!' 'I am going soon.'  
(Herrieu and Séité 1981: supplément)

In sentences uttered in isolation, the verbal particle *eh* like the verbal particle *e* cannot begin a sentence, as (\*25) shows.

- (25)\* é(h) V 1 2 3/OBL  
 \*E(h) wel er merhed bokedeu ér liorh.  
 vp see-prs the girls flowers in-the garden  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

Moreover, the verbal particle *el*h, unlike the particle *e*, cannot be preceded by a 1 or a 2, as (\*26) and (\*27) show.

- (26)\* 1 é(h) V 2 3/OBL  
 \*Er merhed é wel bokedeu ér liorh.  
 the girls vp see-prs flowers in-the garden  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'
- (27)\* 2 é(h) V 1 3/OBL  
 \*Bokedeu é wel er merhed ér liorh.  
 flowers vp see-prs the girls in-the garden  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

However, the verbal particle *eh*, unlike the particle *e*, can be preceded by a 3/OBL, as in (28).

- (28) 3/OBL é(h) V 1 2  
Er liorh é wel er merhed bokedeu.  
in-the garden vp see-prs the girls flowers  
'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

Recalling that 3/OBLs are licensed by a preposition, we can claim here also that the particle *éh/ez* has therefore no licensing power.

The verbal particle *éh* cannot be preceded by two unmarked preverbal items, regardless of the order in which they occur.

(29)\* 1 2 *éh* V 3/OBL  
 \*Er merhed bokedeu *é* wel *ér* liorh.  
 the girls flowers vp see-prs in-the garden  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

(30)\* 2 1 *éh* V 3/OBL  
 \*Bokedeu er merhed *é* wel *ér* liorh.  
 flowers the girls vp see-prs in-the garden  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

Moreover, two preverbal items cannot precede *éh/ez*, even if one of them is a 3, as

(\*31) - (\*35) show.

(31)\* 3/OBL 1 *éh* V 2  
 \*Er liorh er merhed *é* wel bokedeu.  
 in-the garden the girls vp see-prs flowers  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

(32)\* 3/OBL 2 *éh* V 1  
 \*Er liorh bokedeu *é* wel er merhed.  
 in-the garden flowers vp see-prs the girls  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

(33)\* 1 3/OBL *éh* V 2  
 \*Er merhed *ér* liorh *é* wel bokedeu.  
 the girls in-the garden vp see-prs flowers  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

(34)\* 2 3/OBL *éh* V 1  
 \*Bokedeu *ér* liorh *é* wel er merhed.  
 flowers in-the garden vp see-prs the girls  
 'The girls see flowers in the garden.'

The above data suggest that the verbal particle *éh/ez* has no licensing power in Gwenedeg/Leoneg. Unmarked 1s and 2s, since they are not licensed by the verbal particle *éh/ez*, cannot appear in preverbal position. Only a 3/OBL nominal, licensed by its preposition can precede the particle.

In summary, while the verbal particle *e/a* in Gwenedeg/Leoneg licenses an unmarked nominal, a 1 or a 2, in preverbal position, the verbal particle *éh/ez* cannot license a nominal in that position. The distribution of the verbal particles is summed up in Table 1.

Table 1: *The Verbal Particles in Gwenedeg/Leoneg*

GRs of Adjacent Preverbal Nominals		
1	2	3/OBL
A	A	B

Legend:

A = particle *e/a*  
B = particle *éh/ez*

#### 1.4 Particle *éh/ez* in Kerneveg

The use of the verbal particles as presented above is not shared by all Breton dialects. Differences are found in some varieties of Kerneveg, namely written Kerneveg and the variety of this dialect spoken at Lanvenegen (Canton du Faouet).<sup>8</sup> We see that while the licensing property of the particle *e/a* is quite parallel, the licensing property of the particle *éh/ez* is different. Let us first consider written Kerneveg.

##### 1.4.1 Written Kerneveg

In written Kerneveg, the particle *e/a* can license a preverbal 1, as in (35), or a preverbal 2, as in (36).

- (35) 1 a V 2  
 Ar c'hleier a sone ar gousperoù.  
 the bells vp ring-ipf the vespers  
 'The bells were ringing the vespers.'  
 (Denez 1971:35)
- (36) 2 a V 1 3/OBL  
 Ul lamm a reas ar baotred war ar c'hleuz...  
 a jump vp do-pst the boys on the mound  
 'The boys climbed the mound.'  
 (op. cit. p 124)

<sup>8</sup>Too little data is available on the other varieties of spoken Kerneveg to draw solid conclusions on the use of the verbal particles. I do not therefore include data from these varieties in the present study. More fieldwork needs to be carried out on this topic.



The particle *e/a* in Kerneveg has therefore the same licensing properties as the particle *e/a* in Gwenedeg/Leoneg given in (22).

Recalling sentence (27), a preverbal 2 cannot be licensed in preverbal position by *éh/ez* in Gwenedeg/Leoneg. This is however possible in written Kerneveg, where a 2 can occur in preverbal position followed by *ez* as (37) shows.

- (37) 2 e(z) V 1  
 Morwenna e wel Yann  
 Morwenna vp see-prs Yann  
 'Yann sees Morwenna.' (\*'Morwenna sees Yann.')
- (Press 1986:192)<sup>9</sup>

If we assume that like in Gwenedeg/Leoneg the particle *éh/ez* has no licensing power, then the 2 in (37) fails to be licensed in preverbal position. It is not marked by a preposition and is not followed by the particle *e/a*. However, if we assume that the particle *éh/ez* is different in Kerneveg and does in fact have licensing power, then we can account for an unmarked nominal in preverbal position. We can thus claim that the particle *éh/ez* has licensing power in Kerneveg. To be precise, I give the following rule for the particle *éh/ez* in Kerneveg.

- (38) *The verbal particle éh/ez in Kerneveg can license an adjacent preverbal 2.*

In other words, the particle *éh/ez* is equivalent to an "accusative case assigner", and assigns this case only optionally. The distribution of the particles for written Kerneveg are given in Table 2.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup>According to Press (1986: 192), these types of sentences are ambiguous as we don't know which is the subject or which is the object. It is unclear to me why (36) should be possible with the interpretation given above. Normally, in such a case, the Subject Precedence rule should apply, with Morwenna interpreted only as the subject (see next chapter for more detail). Since Press does not give his sources, I cannot reject this sentence. It may come from a variety of Kerneveg I am not familiar with. Further research need to be done on this topic.

<sup>10</sup>How can we explain the overlap between the particles in written Kerneveg? According to Urien (1987-174), only one particle, *e/a* (+ lenition) is used in spoken Kerneveg, with the exception of the variety of this dialect spoken at Lanvenegen. Perhaps under the influence of Leoneg taught in schools, Kerneveg writers, desirous to maintain a certain standard, keep artificially a distinction that no longer exists in their native dialect (Urien, personal communication).

Table 2: *The Verbal Particles in written Kerneveg*

GRS of Adjacent Preverbal Nominals		
1	2	3/OBL
A	A/B	B

Legend

A= particle *e/a*

B= particle *éh/ez*

#### 1.4.2 Lanvenegen

According to Urien (1987:174), the particle *e/a* is used only with a preceding subject, while the particle *éh/ez* is used with a preceding object.<sup>11</sup> However, we see that the 2 in preverbal position is followed by the particle *éh/ez*, as in (37).

- (39) 2 ez V 1  
 Petra e(z) tebre ar vugale?  
 what vp eat-ipf the children  
 'What did the children eat?'

(adapted from Urien 1987:174)

This gives us the following licensing properties of the particles for this dialect:

- (36) In Lanvenegen, (i) *the verbal particle e/a licenses only an adjacent preverbal 1.*  
 (ii) *the verbal particle éh/ez licenses an adjacent preverbal 2.*

In this dialect, the particle *e/a* is equivalent to a “nominative case assigner”, while the particle *éh/ez* is equivalent to an “accusative case assigner”, and assigns this case only optionally. The distribution of the particles in Lanvenegen is summed up in Table 3.

Table 3: *The Verbal Particles in Lanvenegen*

GRs of Adjacent Preverbal Nominals		
1	2	3/OBL
A	B	B

Legend:

A= particle *e/a*

B= particle *éh/ez*

<sup>11</sup> I have no data to confirm this for Lanvenegen. I assume here Urien's statement (op. cit.)

Recalling sentences (\*29) and (\*30), we saw that in Gwenedeg/Leoneg, when both 1s and 2s occur in preverbal position, neither one of them can be licensed by the particle *éh/ez*. This also holds for the varieties of Kerneveg discussed here. In Breton a 1 can never be licensed in preverbal position by the particle *éh/ez*. A 2 must be adjacent to the particle to be licensed by *éh/ez* in preverbal position in Kerneveg.<sup>12</sup> However, in written Kerneveg, the equivalent of (\*30) also is impossible, as (\*40) shows.

- (40)\* 2 3/OBL ez V 1  
 \*Morwenna er maez e wel Yann  
 Morwenna outside vp see-prs Yann  
 'Yann sees Morwenna outside.' (\*'Mona sees Yann outside.')

For the same reasons, (\*33) and (\*34) are not possible in Kerneveg.<sup>13</sup>

### 1.5 Negative Particle *ne*

Since we find an opposition between the particles *e/a* and *éh/ez* in affirmative sentences, we may expect to find a similar kind of opposition in negative sentences. However, only one negative particle *ne* is used in basic sentences.<sup>14</sup>

Unlike the particle *e/a*, the negative particle *ne* can begin a sentence, as (39) shows.

- (41) ne V 1 2 3/OBL  
 Ne wel ket er merhed bokedeu ér liorh.  
 neg see-prs neg the girls flowers in-the garden  
 'The girls do not see flowers in the garden.'

<sup>12</sup>I have no data to confirm this for Lanvenegen.

<sup>13</sup>Only the equivalent of (\*32) should be possible in Kerneveg, in particular in Lanvenegen, where all 2s are licensed by the particle *ez*. Here too I have no data to confirm this. In written Kerneveg, (\*32) should be possible, with perhaps a strong emphasis on the preverbal 2 as in (39).

(39) 3/OBL 2 ez V 1  
 Er maez Morwenna e wel Yann  
 outside Morwenna vp see-prs Yann  
 'Yann sees Morwenna outside.' (\*'Morwenna sees Yann outside.')

<sup>14</sup>In negative relative clauses and negative imperatives, another negative particle *na* is used in Leoneg and Kerneveg. In Gwenedeg, *na* has been reduced to *ne*. In Tregerieg, a dialect not included in this study, *na* is used instead of *ne* in all environments.

Unlike the particle *e*, the negative particle cannot be preceded by a subject, as (42\*) shows.<sup>15</sup>

- (42)\* 1 ne V 2 3/OBL  
 \*Er merhed ne wel ket bokedeu ér liorh.  
 the girls neg see-prs neg flowers in-the garden  
 'The girls do not see flowers in the garden.'

This suggests that a 1 cannot be licensed in preverbal position in negative sentences.

However, a 2 as in (43) or a 3 as in (44) can precede the negative particle *ne*.

- (43) 2 ne V 1 3/OBL  
 Bokedeu ne wel ket er merhed ér liorh.  
 flowers neg see-prs neg the girls in-the garden  
 'The girls do not see flowers in the garden.'

- (44) 3 ne V 1 2  
 Er liorh ne wel ket er merhed bokedeu.  
 in-the garden neg see-prs neg the girls flowers  
 'The girls do not see flowers in the garden.'

This indicates that a preverbal 2 can be licensed in negative sentences involving the negative particle *ne*, like in sentences involving the particle *ez* in some Kerneveg varieties.

The negative particle *ne* can be preceded by two preverbal items if the first one is a 3 and the second one is a 2 in (45).

- (45) 3/OBL 2 ne V 1  
 Er liorh bokedeu ne wel ket er merhed<sup>16</sup>.  
 n-the garden flowers neg see-prs neg the girls  
 'The girls do not see flowers in the garden.'

<sup>15</sup>This restriction may have its source in historical linguistics. Old Breton seemed to have a surface VSO order where the negative particle usually preceded the verb, like in modern Welsh or Irish. Modern Breton word order evolved from the so-called 'abnormal sentences' not found with negation (cf Fleuriot: 1964-412/3). This suggests that negative sentences in modern Breton still exhibit the old VS order. Another plausible explanation may involve the particle *ez*. According to Hemon (1975: 276/78), *a* is never used with a negative particle, whereas *ez* is omitted with the negative particle. Furthermore, when the negative particle *ne* is followed by the verbs 'to be' or 'to go', having a consonant-initial infinitive form but a vowel-initial root, a *d* appears verb initially as in (i) and (ii).

- (i) Nen don ket klañv.  
 neg vp-be-prs-1s neg sick ('I am not sick.')  
 (ii) Nen dan ket kuit.  
 neg vp-go-prs-1s neg away ('I don't go away.')

This *d* may be a residue of the old particle /æð/ realized as *d* before vowels and *z* before consonants. However, the relation between *d* and *ez* is not yet clear (cf. Lewis and Pedersen: 1961-243 and 319/22; Fleuriot: 1964-275/80).

<sup>16</sup>The 2 in (40) must be indefinite (cf. fn 5 p 9).

However, the verbal particle *ne* cannot license two preverbal items if the first one in linear order is not a 3/OBL, as (\*46) and (\*47) show.

(46)\* 1 2 ne V 3/OBL  
 \*Er merhed bokedeu ne wel ket ér liorh.  
 the girls flowers neg see-prs neg in-the garden  
 'The girls do not see flowers in the garden.'

(47)\* 1 3/OBL ne V 2  
 \*Er merhed ér liorh ne wel ket bokedeu.  
 the girls in-the garden neg see-prs neg flowers  
 'The girls do not see flowers in the garden.'

Example (48), the variant of (47), is not possible as a 1 occurs in preverbal position, which is not allowed, as we have seen earlier.

(48)\* 3/OBL 1 ne V 2  
 \*Er liorh er merhed ne wel ket bokedeu.  
 in-the garden the girls neg see-prs neg flowers  
 'The girls do not see flowers in the garden.'

Also, it cannot license two preverbal items where the 1 occurs preverbally as in (49), where the 2 is not adjacent to the particle, as in (50).

(49)\*2 1 ne V 3/OBL  
 \*Bokedeu er merhed ne wel ket ér liorh.  
 flowers the girls neg see-prs neg in-the garden  
 'The girls do not see flowers in the garden.'

(50)\*2 3/OBL ne V 1  
 \*Bokedeu ér liorh ne wel ket er merhed.  
 flowers in-the garden neg see-prs neg the girls  
 'The girls do not see flowers in the garden.'

Although the negative particle *ne* can be preceded by both a 3/OBL and a 2, adjacency to the particle is required for the 2 in order to be licensed preverbally, hence the ungrammaticality of (50). A 1 can never be licensed in preverbal position in negative sentences, whether it is or it is not adjacent to the negative particle as (\*46), (\*47) and (\*48) show. Based on the above discussion, I give the following rule for the negative particle in all dialects.

(51) *The negative particle ne can license an adjacent preverbal 2.*

In other words, the negative particle *ne* is equivalent to an “accusative case assigner”, and does assign this case only optionally.

In summary, the negative particle *ne*, like the particle *éh/ez* in discourse related contexts, can begin a sentence. Furthermore, it licenses a preverbal 2, thus paralleling the particle *ez* in some Kerneveg varieties. Moreover, unlike *e/a* and like *éh/ez* the negative particle cannot license a 1 in preverbal position. Table 4 summarizes the distribution of *ne*.

Table 4: *The Negative Particle*

GRs of Adjacent Preverbal Nominals		
1	2	3/OBL
	C	C

Legend:

C= negative particle *ne*

To conclude this chapter, I give a summary of the distribution of the particles in Breton in Table 5.

Table 5: *The Particles in Breton* <sup>17</sup>

Dialects	GRs of Adjacent Preverbal Nominals		
	1	2	3/OBL
G/L	A	A	B
K	A	A/B	B
Lan	A	B	B
		C	C

Legend:

G/L= Gwenedeg/Leoneg

K= written Kerneveg

Lan= Lanvenegen

A= particle *e/a*

B= particle *éh/ez*

C= particle *ne*

<sup>17</sup>In this table, we see that the licensing properties of the negative particle *ne* corresponds to the licensing properties of the verbal particle *ez* in Lanvenegen.

The verbal particle *e/a* licenses, in Breton, an unmarked preverbal nominal and furthermore must license such a nominal. It licenses a 1 or a 2 in Gwenedeg/Leoneg and written Kerneveg. In Lanvenegen, it licenses only a 1. The particle *eh/ez* has no licensing power in Gwenedeg/Leoneg whereas it can license a preverbal 2 in Kerneveg. Finally, the negative particle *ne* can license a preverbal 2.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>See appendix for comparison with the other Celtic languages.

## Chapter Two

### Relational Visibility

According to the **Relational Visibility Principle**, proposed by Gerdts (1990b), *every nominal must be relationally identified by some morphosyntactic means*: (case, agreement, or word order). However, as seen in the preceding chapter, case is not morphologically realized in Breton, and the verb remains unmarked for person and number in sentences involving free standing nominals. Furthermore, word order does not help identify nominals in sentences involving the particle *e/a* in most dialects (except in Lanvenegen), since both subjects and objects can precede this particle. If the relational identification of the nominals cannot be accomplished by the morphosyntax of the language, how then is this identification realized?

In this chapter, I will demonstrate how the relational identification of subjects and objects is accomplished. I will also consider how other types of nominals, complex nominals and unmarked obliques, are licensed and relationally identified.

#### 2.1 The Licensing of Subjects and Objects

As seen in the preceding chapter, in sentences involving the particle *e/a* either the subject or the object can occur preverbally. Although the particle *e/a* licenses an adjacent preverbal 1 or 2, it does not identify it. The relational identification of these nominals is accomplished by some other means. As I will demonstrate, semantic (Definiteness Condition) and syntactic (Subject Precedence) restrictions serve to identify the subject. In sentences involving the particles *eh/ez* and *ne*, the subject, restricted to the immediate postverbal position, is identified by word order. The object is identified in postverbal position by word order. It is identified in preverbal position by the particles according to whether the sentence is affirmative or negative or according to specific dialectal rules. Let us first consider the particle *e/a*.



### 2.1.1 Verbal Particle *e/a*

Since the preverbal position is not assigned any particular grammatical relation, some rule of the language must identify the subject. Let us first consider the Definiteness Condition.

In active sentences such as (52) and (53), we encounter a difficulty in determining which nominal is the subject and which nominal is the object.

- (52) Er      gownifl      e      glaské      ur gaolenn      tenér.  
       the      rabbit      vp      search-ipf      a cabbages-sing      tender  
       'The rabbit was looking for a young cabbage.'  
       /(\*'A young cabbage was looking for a rabbit.')

- (53) Ur      gaolenn      tenér e      glaské      er      gownifl.  
       a      cabbages-sing tender vp      search-ipf      the      rabbit  
       'The rabbit was looking for a young cabbage.'  
       /(\*'A young cabbage was looking for a rabbit.')

The verb remains unmarked for person and number. The nominals *gounifl* and *gaolenn* remain unmarked for case. The order of occurrence of the nominals is free. The same verbal particle *e/a* is used. The only difference between the nominals relates to definiteness. In (52) and (53) *gounifl* is definite, and thus preceded by the definite article *er*, while *gaolenn* is indefinite, and thus preceded by the indefinite article *ur*. In Breton, the definite nominal must be interpreted as the subject in such a context. In both sentences, the definite nominal *gounifl* is the subject while the indefinite nominal *gaolenn* is the object, hence the ungrammaticality of the interpretation given in parentheses. The *Definiteness Condition* is formalized in (54).

- (54) *In a sentence involving one definite and one indefinite nominal, the definite nominal must be interpreted as the subject of the sentence.*

In affirmative sentences involving two definite nominals, as in (55) and (56), both nominals can potentially be subject. They remain unmarked for case and can both occur in preverbal position. The verb also remains unmarked for person and number.

- (55) Er      hah      du      e      dapo      el      logodenn - sé.  
the      cat      black      vp      catch-fut      the      mice-sing-dem  
'The black cat will catch that mouse.'  
/\* That mouse will catch the black cat.)
- (56) El      logodenn -sé      e      dapo      er      hah      du.  
the      mice-sing-dem      vp      catch-fut      the      cat      black  
'That mouse will catch the black cat.'  
/\*('The black cat will catch that mouse.')

(Séité and Herrieu 1981:125)

The Definiteness Condition cannot be invoked here to ensure the visibility of the subject and object. Press (1986: 192) assumes that sentences like (55) and (56) are ambiguous, as we don't know which nominal is the subject and which nominal is the object, since they are not morphologically marked<sup>1</sup>. However, this type of sentence is never ambiguous for a native speaker of the language. When two definite nominals are involved in a sentence as in (55) and (56), the preverbal nominal is necessarily interpreted as the subject; hence the ungrammaticality of the interpretation given in parentheses.

- (57) Ur      hah      du      e      glaské      ur      logodenn.  
a      cat      black      vp      look-for-ipf      a      mice-sing  
'A black cat was looking for a mouse.'  
/\*('A mouse was looking for a black cat.')
- (58) Ur      logodenn      e      glaské      ur      hah      du.  
a      mice-sing      vp      look-for-ipf      a      cat      black  
'A mouse was looking for a black cat.'  
/\*(A black cat was looking for a mouse.)

In interrogative sentences, both the subject and the object can be realized as question words as (59) shows.

(Hendrick 1988: 252)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>I have translated Hendrick's data into Gwenedeg.

However, only the question word marked as the subject can appear in preverbal position. Changing the order of occurrence of the question words results in the ungrammaticality of (60).

- (60)\*    Petra    e            zèbr            più?  
           what    vp        eat-prs        who  
           \*'What does who eats?'

(op. cit.)

This can be accounted for by subject precedence. Since both question words *più* and *petra* are indefinite, only the subject can appear in preverbal position; hence the ungrammaticality of (60). The rule of *Subject Precedence* is formalized (61).

- (61)    *When two nominals, both definite or both indefinite, occur in a sentence, the nominal in preverbal position takes precedence over the nominal in postverbal position and must be interpreted as the subject of the sentence.*

Subject Precedence is a word order rule allowing the verbal particle *e/a* to license and identify preverbal subjects only, while objects are licensed and identified postverbally by word order.

### 2.1.2 Verbal Particle *éh/ez*

As seen in chapter I.3, the verbal particle *éh* does not license subjects and objects in preverbal position in Gwenedeg/Leoneg. Rather they occur in postverbal position, where they are licensed by word order. The nominal immediately following the verb is the subject, and the next nominal is the object as (62) shows.

- (62)    Er        wéenn - hont        é        wel        er    hah    du        brini  
           in-the   trees-sing-dem        vp        see-prs        the   cat   black        crows  
           'The black cat sees crows in the tree over there'

(adapted from Séité and Herrieu 1981:41)

In the above sentence, the nominals *hah* and *brini* are unmarked for case. The verb is unmarked for person and number. Only word order can tell which nominal is the subject and which nominal is the object. Changing the order of occurrence of the postverbal nominals leads to the ungrammaticality of the sentence as (\*63) shows.

- (63)\* Er      wéenn   - hont      é      wel      brini      er hah du.  
in-the trees-sing-dem      vp      see-prs      crows      the cat black  
'The black cat sees crows in the tree over there.'

In sentence (39) we saw that in Lanvenegen a 2 is licensed in preverbal position by the verbal particle *éh/ez*. It is also relationally identified by the same particle since, in this variety of Kerneveg, 2s are always licensed by this particle, unlike 1s, which are always licensed and identified by the particle *e/a*.

In sentence (37), we saw that in written Kerneveg a preverbal 2 is licensed by the particle *éh/ez*. Changing the order of occurrence of the nominals leads to the ungrammaticality of the sentence, as (64) shows.

- (64)\* Yann   e(z)      wel      Morwenna  
Yann   vp      see-prs      Morwenna  
'Yann sees Morwenna.'

(Press 1986:192)<sup>3</sup>

The verbal particle *éh/ez* therefore licenses and identifies a preverbal 2, while the 1 is licensed and identified postverbally by word order.

### 2.1.3 Negative Particle *ne*

As seen in I.5, the negative particle *ne* cannot license a subject in preverbal position. One piece of evidence for this involves *zo*.<sup>4</sup> *Zo* is the form of the verb 'to be' usually occurring with a preceding subject as (65) and (66) show.

- (65) Er      vugalé      e      zo      ér      ger.  
the      children      vp      be-prs      in-the      house  
'The children are at home.'
- (66) Er      vugalé      e      zo      klañv.  
the      children      vp      be-prs      sick  
'The children are sick.'

<sup>3</sup>The examples taken from Press however are a little problematical since the references are not given and we don't know from which variety of Kerneveg they come.

<sup>4</sup>*Zo* evolved from *s-o*, where *s* is the third person singular present tense of the verb 'to be', and *o* the old relative suffix (cf. Lewis and Pedersen: 1961-320). *Zo* originally meant 'who is'. Due to the change of word order from the old to the modern period, *zo* came to be used with a preceding subject.

*Zo*, however, cannot occur in negative sentences, as (67) and (68) show.

(67)\* Ne zo ket er vugalé ér ger.  
neg be-prs neg the children in-the house  
'The children are not home.'

(68)\* Ne zo ket klañv er vugalé.  
neg be-prs neg sick the children  
'The children are not ill.'

The subject restricted to the postverbal position is licensed by word order. *Zo* cannot therefore cooccur with the negative particle. The grammatical forms for (67) and (68) are given below in (69) and (70).

(69) N' éma ket er vugalé ér ger.  
neg vp-be-prs-sit neg the children in-the house  
'The children are not home.'

(70) Nen dé ket klañv er vugalé.  
neg vp-be-prs-att neg sick the children  
'The children are not ill.'

In (69), *éma* is the form of the verb 'to be' specifying the physical location or psychological state of the subject. *Ema* is composed of the particle *éh/ez* which has been incorporated into *ma* 'is' (Kervella 1976:163). This incorporation is not complete in Gwenedeg since *éma* can be written in two words *é ma* (see Jaffré 1986). Since *éma* contains the particle *éh/ez*, the subject cannot occur in preverbal position, as (\*71) shows.

(71)\* Er vugalé éma klañv.  
the children vp-be-prs-sit sick  
'The children are sick.'

In (70) *(d)é* is the form of the verb 'to be' associated with a preceding attribute and a following subject. In this sentence, *é* (*eo* KLT) encodes the particle *éh/ez* deleted in Gwenedeg in most environments, but still used in Kerneveg and Leoneg after the conjunctions *ma* 'that' and *pa* 'when' (see Kervella 1976:162 for Kerneveg). In Kerneveg, the particle *éh/ez* can still be used following an attribute, as (72) shows.

(72) Brav ez eo an amzer.  
nice vp be-prs the weather  
'The weather is nice.'

(op. cit. p 163)

However, in negative sentences, a residue of the particle *d* is still realized with the verb 'to be', as seen in (70).<sup>5</sup> Since *é/leo* encodes the particle *éh/ez*, then the subject cannot occur in preverbal position in affirmative sentences, as (\*73) shows.

- (73)\* Er vugalé é klañv.  
the children be-prs sick  
'The children are sick.'

The forms of the verb 'to be' used in negative sentences are the forms used in affirmative sentences with a postverbal subject, as (74) and (75) show.

- (74) Er ger é ma er vugalé.  
in-the house vp be-prs-sit the children  
'The children are at home.'

- (75) Klañv é er vugalé.  
sick be-prs-att the children  
'The children are sick.'

In an active sentence both subject and object are licensed and relationally identified in postverbal position by word order as in (76).

- (76) Ne dapo ket er hah du el logodenn - sé.  
neg catch-fut neg the cat black the mice-sing-dem  
'The black cat will not catch that mouse.'

Changing the order of occurrence of the nominals results in the ungrammaticality of (\*77).

- (77) \*Ne dapo ket el logodenn-sé er hah du.  
neg catch-fut neg the mice-sing-dem the cat black  
'The black cat will not catch that mouse.'

As seen in the first chapter, a 2 can be licensed in preverbal position by the negative particle. This particle also identifies the preverbal 2 since the subject is never found in that position in negative sentences, as (78) shows.

- (78) El logodenn - sé ne dapo ket er hah du.  
the mice-sing-dem neg catch-fut neg the cat black  
'The black cat will not catch that mouse.'  
/\*'That mouse will not catch the black cat.'

<sup>5</sup>We also find this *d* in negative sentences with the verb 'to go', which also has a vowel initial root. We find *d* after the conjunction *mar* 'if' and *pe* 'when' See also fn 15 p 18)

To sum up, the negative particle *ne* behaves like the verbal particle *éh/ez*. The subject, licensed and relationally identified in postverbal position by word order, must be preceded by the appropriate form of the verb ‘to be’. In affirmative sentences, when the subject occurs postverbally, the same forms of the verb are used. However, when the subject occurs preverbally, all the semantic distinctions conveyed by these forms of the verb ‘to be’ are neutralized since the particle *e/a* has to be used and can be followed by only one form of the verb, *zo*.

To recapitulate, the verbal particle *e/a* licenses an adjacent preverbal 1 and 2. Following the Definiteness Condition, *e/a* licenses and identifies either a definite preverbal 1, with the indefinite 2 licensed and identified postverbally by word order, or an indefinite preverbal 2, with the definite 1 licensed and identified postverbally by word order. Following Subject Precedence, the particle *e/a* licenses and identifies a preverbal 1 only, with the 2 always licensed and identified postverbally by word order. The verbal particle *éh/ez* in Kerneveg and the negative particle *ne* can license and identify a preverbal 2, with the 1 always licensed and identified postverbally by word order. When a 3/OBL appears adjacent to these particles, both the 1 and the 2 are licensed and identified postverbally by word order.

## 2.2 The Licensing of Complex Nominals and Unmarked Obliques

In the first section of this chapter, I have considered the licensing of subjects and objects, a topic crucial to the understanding of Breton syntax. In this section, I will consider how other types of nominals are licensed, namely noun complements and adverbial expressions not marked by a preposition. Let us consider first noun complements.

## 2.2.1 Complex Nominals

Since case is not morphologically realized in Breton, how are noun complements licensed in the language? Given what I have claimed, I will show that word order and prepositions play a role in licensing noun complements.

Breton displays various means of licensing noun complements. Word order can be used alone, as in (79).

- (79) Tad Yvonig e labour bemp dé.  
 father Yvonig vp work-prs each day  
 'Yvonig's father works every day.'

In (79), both nominals *tad* and *Yvonig* remain unmarked for case. The morphology does not indicate which of these two nominals is the head noun and which is the complement. However, the order of occurrence of these two nominals cannot be changed without resulting in the ungrammaticality of (80).

- (80)\* Yvonig tad e labour bemp dé.  
 Yvonig father vp work-prs each day  
 'Yvonig's father works every day.'

Breton has a rule stating that, when not otherwise indicated, the head noun precedes complements. Theoretically, there exists no limit to the number of complements a nominal can have as (81) shows.

- (81) Liù dor ti mamm Morvena e blij dein.  
 color door house mother Morvena vp please-prs to-1s.  
 'The color of the door of the house of Morvena's mother pleases me.'  
 (Herrieu 1979:195)

The complements of the noun *liù* are licensed by word order alone, while the whole nominal itself is licensed by the verbal particle *e*.

Word order can be used in conjunction with either the possessive adjective, as in (82) or the definite article, as in (83).

- (82) Hiriù é labour Yvonig é dad.  
 today vp work-prs Yvonig his father  
 'Yvonig's father is working today.'



- (83) Mab er mestr-skol e zo deit er mintin-man.  
 son the master-school vp be-prs come the morning-dem  
 'The teacher's son came this morning.'

When the possessive adjective appears, as in (82), the complement *Yvonig*, occurs first followed by the possessive adjective *e* and the head noun *dad*. In this sentence, the head noun is identified by the presence of the possessive adjective. When the definite article appears, as in (83), the head occurs first, followed by the definite article and the complement. In this instance, the head noun is identified as the bare nominal.

Word order can be used in conjunction with the preposition *de* 'to' as in (84) or the preposition *ag* 'of, from' as in (85).

- (84) Ur mab de Pier e zo bet kaset d' er brezel.  
 a son to Pier vp be-prs been sent to the war  
 'One of Pier's son has been sent to the war.'

- (85) En deur sklêr ag er vammenn-sé e zo yein.  
 the water clear from the spring-dem vp be-prs cold  
 'The clear water of that spring is cold.'

(adapted from Herrieu 1979:195)

The preposition *de* in (84) occurs when the head noun is indefinite like *ur mab*. In this instance, the head noun is identified by the presence of a determiner. The use of a determiner requires that the following complement be licensed by a preposition. The preposition *ag*, as in (85) serves to emphasise the source or the origin of the complement. Here too, the head noun comes first and is followed by the complement necessarily licensed by a preposition.

In summary, the use of these different possessive constructions follows strict syntactic rules. When word order alone licenses nominals, no determiners and no prepositions can occur. The head noun comes first, followed by its complement. When word order in conjunction with the definite article or possessive adjective, license nominals, the first noun in linear order takes no determiners, while the second noun is preceded by the article or the possessive adjective. When word order and prepositions license nominals, the head noun occurs first followed by its complement licensed by a preposition. *De* follows indefinite nominals only while no restriction occurs with *ag*.

### 2.2.2 Unmarked Obliques

As seen in chapter one, 3/OBLs are licensed by a preposition and can occur as the first of two preverbal items, the second of which is licensed by the particle *e*. When 3/OBLs occur in preverbal position adjacent to a particle, they are followed by the particle *éh/ez* as (86) shows.

- (86) Er      wéenn   -hont      é      wélan      pemp   bran.  
          in-the   trees-sing-dem      vp      see-prs-1s      five    crow  
          'I see five crows in the tree over there.'

(Séité and Herrieu 1981:41)

In (86), the 3/OBL, *wéenn*, is licensed by the preposition *ér*. The subject and the object occur in postverbal position. The use of the particle *é(h)* may seem redundant. The particle *éh*, however, is used with unmarked preverbal 3/OBLs, such as adverbial expressions of time, as in (87), or adjectives used as adverbs, as in (88).

- (87) Er      blé - man      éh      es      avaleu.  
          the      year-dem      vp      be-prs-ext      apples  
          'There are apples this year.'

(Herrieu 1979-29)

- (88) Brav    é      kan      er      huider.  
          nice   vp      sing-prs      the      lark  
          'The lark sings nicely.'

(Séité and Herrieu 1981: 69)

In (87), *er blé-man* is an adverbial expression of time and as such cannot be licensed in preverbal position by the verbal particle *e/a*. Since it is not marked by a preposition, nothing distinguishes it from a regular nominal. Its grammatical relation must be made visible. This is achieved by the use of the particle *éh*, indicating that a non-nominal occurs in preverbal position. The same holds for (88), where *éh* indicates that a non-nominal, in this case *brav*, an adjective used as adverb, occurs in preverbal position.

To conclude this chapter, the Relational Visibility Principle plays a crucial role in identifying nominals, although it may appear that Breton violates this principle. There are two ways to approach the problem. The first and less desirable approach is to assume that word order is not sufficient to license nominals and therefore that extra devices are required for visibility purposes. The second and more desirable approach is to recognise that the Breton lexicon encodes a certain number of features that are relevant to the syntax of the language, such as definiteness for nominals, and aspects for the verb 'to be'. In Breton, grammatical relations are not assigned to nominals in terms of fixed position in a sentence, but rather in terms of the relation in which these nominals stand to one another, which word order ultimately expresses. Just in case these relations are not clear, a word order rule, Subject Precedence, intervenes.

## Chapter Three

### Pronoun Incorporation and Relational Visibility

Traditional Breton grammars recognise two conjugations in the language. In the impersonal or analytic conjugation, the verb remains unmarked for person and number. This type of conjugation is used only with free standing nominals. In the personal or synthetic conjugation, the verb is marked for person and number. This type of conjugation is used when there are no free standing nominals. To account for these facts, Stump (1989: 429) proposes within GB the "Complementarity Principle" defined as "within a clause, overt argument noun phrases never appear with concording personal affixes". Under this analysis, personal affixes are seen as inflections that agree with a phonologically null *pro*. The lack of inflections corresponds to a lack of agreement. In addition, a third type of agreement process is needed in negative sentences: the verb agrees with a preverbal but **not** a postverbal subject. Thus this and other analyses developed at the same time (cf. LaPointe (1983), and Hendrick (1988)) provide no simple account of the Breton agreement system. To account for the same facts, Anderson (1982) proposes the Incorporation Analysis, assuming that pronouns get incorporated into a preceding verb or preposition. This analysis offers one principle, Pronoun Incorporation, to account for the Breton pronominal system.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter considers the Pronoun Incorporation analysis and how this analysis relates to Relational Visibility. The "agreement" between a preverbal nominal and a verb in negative sentences will be considered in the next chapter.

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<sup>1</sup>McCloskey and Hale (1984) have developed an Agreement Analysis for Irish. They reject Anderson's Incorporation Analysis on the ground that Incorporation cannot be identified with syntactic movement (527). Hale (1987) however argues that certain cases of so-called agreement morphemes (of the Celtic type) are to be analysed as syntactic movement of a pronominal D head (Baker and Hale 1990: 292). Doron (1988) also argues that the Incorporation analysis is better suited to account for Irish data. Baker and Hale (1990) give a Pronoun Incorporation approach to Breton data.

### 3.1 Pronoun Incorporation

Breton displays three sets of pronouns: a) independent pronouns, restricted to the preverbal position; b) dependent pronouns or proclitics, always prefixed to the verb or infixed into a prepositional adverb; c) suffix pronouns, affixed to verbs or prepositions. The latter two can be considered as incorporated pronouns.

#### 3.1.1 Independent Pronouns

Independent pronouns, used as 1s in (89) and as 2s in (90), can occur in preverbal position.

- (89) Me/ te/ éañ/ hi/ ni/ hwi/ ind e wel bokedeu.  
 I / you/ he/ she/ we/ you/ they vp see-prs flowers  
 'I / you/ he/ she/ we/ you/ they see(s) flowers.'

- (90) Me/ te/ éañ/ hi/ ni / hwi/ ind e wélant.  
 I/ you/ he/ she/ we/ you/ they vp see-prs-3p  
 'They see me/ you/ him/ her/ us/ you/ them.'

They cannot, however, occur in postverbal position, as (\*91) and (\*92) show.

- (91)\* Bokedeu e wel me/ te/ éañ/ hi/ ni/ hwi/ ind.  
 flowers vp see-prs I / you/ he/ she/ we/ you/ they  
 'I/ you/ he/ she/ you/ we/ they see(s) flowers.'

- (92)\* Er vugalé e wel me/ te/ éañ/ hi/ ni/ hwi/ ind.  
 the children vp see-prs me/ you/ him/ her/ us/ you/ them  
 'The children see me/ you/ him/ her/ us/ you/ them.'

Independent pronouns used as 3s cannot follow prepositions, as (\*93) shows.

- (93)\* ..é sellet ...doh er jiboésour é skampein arlerh hi.  
 in watch from the hunter in rush after her  
 '...watching the hunter rushing after it.' (the hare)

With the negative particle *ne*, independent pronouns used as 1s cannot occur in preverbal position, hence the ungrammaticality of (94).

- (94)\*Me/ te/ éañ/ hi/ ni/ hwi/ ind ne wel ket bokedeu.  
 I/ you/ he/ she/ we/ you/ they neg see-prs neg flowers  
 'I/ you/ he/ she/ we/ you/ they do(es) not see flowers.'

Used as 2s, however, these pronouns can occur in preverbal position preceding *ne*, as (95) shows.

- (95) Me/ te/ éañ/ hi/ ni/ hwi/ ind ne wélant ket.  
 me/ you/ him/ her/ us/ you/ them neg see-prs-3p neg  
 'They do not see me/you/him/her/us/you/them.'

With the negative particle *ne*, independent pronouns, either 1s or 2s, are also prohibited from occurring in postverbal position, hence the ungrammaticality of (96) and (97).

- (96)\* Ne wel ket me/ te/ éañ/ hi/ ni/ hwi/ ind bokedeu.  
 neg see-prs neg I/ you/ he/ she/ we/ you/ they flowers  
 'I/ you/ he/ she/ we/ you/ they do(es) not see flowers.'

- (97)\* Ne wélant ket me/ te/ éañ/ hi/ ni/ hwi/ ind.  
 neg see-prs-3p neg me/ you/ him/ her/ us/ you/ them  
 'They do not see me/ you/ him/ her/ us/ you/ them.'

Independent pronouns are restricted to the preverbal position. They can be used as 1s or 2s in affirmative sentences but only as 2s in negative sentences.

### 3.1.2 Dependent Pronouns

Instead of personal pronouns, personal suffixes can be used, either affixed to a verb, as in (98) and (99), or affixed to a preposition, as in (100).

- (98) Bokedeu e wélan /-es/ - / -am/ -et/ -ant/ -er  
 flowers vp see-prs-1s /- 2s/ -3s/ -1p/ -2p/ -3p/ -imp  
 'I/ you/ he-she/ we/ you/ they/ one see(s) flowers.'

- (99) Ne wélan /-es/ - / -am/ -et/ -ant/ -er ket bokedeu.  
 neg see-prs-1s /-2s/ -3s/ -1p/ -2p/ -3p/ -imp neg flowers  
 'I/ you/ he-she/ we/ you/ they/ one do(es) not see flowers.'

- (100) Sûr é plij en istoér dein/ dit/ dehoñ/ dehi  
 certainly vp please-prs the story to-1s/ -2s/ -3sm/ -3sf/  
 The story certainly pleases me/ you/ him/ her/ us/ you/ them.  
 dem/ doh/ dehé.  
 to-1p/ -2p/ -3p

As we can see, not all independent pronouns have a corresponding personal suffix. No suffix corresponds to the third person *éañ* (he) and *hi* (she), since the third person

singular personal suffix is unmarked in Breton. No independent form corresponds to the verbal impersonal suffix *er* (one).

Proclitics used as 2s are restricted to the immediate preverbal position as in (101), where the verbal particle is deleted.<sup>2</sup>

- (101) Er      vugalé      o      gwel.  
          the      children      pcl-3p      see-prs  
          'The children see them.'

They cannot occur in postverbal position, hence the ungrammaticality of (102).

- (102)\* Er      vugalé      e      wel      o.  
          the      children      vp      see-prs      pcl-3p  
          'The children see them.'

Proclitics used as 3s are infixed in the prepositional adverb, as in (103), and cannot be postposed, as (\*104) shows.

- (103) ..é      sellet ...doh      er      jiboésour      é      skampein      ar hé lerh.  
          in      watch from      the      hunter      in      rush      after-pcl-3sf  
          '...watching ...the hunter rushing after her...'
- (104)\* ..é      sellet ...doh      er      jiboésour      é      skampein      arlerh hé.  
          in      watch from      the      hunter      in      rush      after pcl-3sf  
          '...watching ...the hunter rushing after her...'

With the negative particle *ne*, the proclitic still occurs in immediate preverbal position, as in (105), and cannot be postposed, as (\*106) shows.

- (105) N'      o      gwel      ket      er      vugalé.  
          neg      pcl-3p      see-pres      neg      the      children  
          'The children do not see them.'
- (106)\* Ne      wel      ket      er      vugalé      o.  
          neg      see-pres      neg      the      children      pcl-3p  
          'The children do not see them.'

When the verb occurs in sentence initial position, the proclitic still occurs preverbally, as in (107), and cannot be postposed, as (\*108) shows.

<sup>2</sup>According to Fleuriot (1964:262), proclitics evolved from old accusative case forms. Proclitics however tend to disappear in KLT, superseded by the use of the partitive.

(107) O        gweled        e        hra    er        vugalé.  
           pcl-3p see                vp        do-prs the        children  
           'The children see them.'

(108)\* Gweled        o        gra    er        vugalé.  
           see                pcl-3p do-prs the        children  
           'The children see them.'

When the verb occurs in the past participle, the proclitic keeps its immediate preverbal position, as in (109), and cannot occur after the past participle, as in (\*110), nor before the auxiliary, as in (\*111).<sup>3</sup>

(109) Goudé        boud    o        gwelet,        o        cherras        er        vugalé.  
           after        be        pcl-3p seen                pcl-3p pick up-pst        the        children  
           'After having seen them, the children picked them up.'

(110)\* Goudé boud    gwelet        o,        o        cherras        er        vugalé.  
           after        be        seen                pcl-3p pcl-3p pick up-pst        the        children  
           'After having seen them , the children picked them up.'

(111)\* Goudé o        boud    gwelet,        o        cherras        er        vugalé.  
           after        pcl-3p be        seen                pcl-3p pick up-pst        the        children  
           'After having seen them, the children picked them up.'

To summarize, independent pronouns, proclitics, infixes, and suffixes occur in complementary distribution with one another. Independent pronouns, restricted to the preverbal position, occur only as 1s or 2s form. Proclitics, prefixed to verbs, occur only as 2s and remain in that position whatever tense verbs exhibit and whatever order they have in a sentence. Proclitics, infixed in prepositional adverbs, occur only as 3s.<sup>4</sup> Suffixes, bound to verbs, occur only as 1s, whereas bound to prepositions, they occur only as 3s.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup>The reflexive particle *en em* also written *em* or *um* in Gwenedeg, has the same distribution as the proclitics. It always occurs immediately preceding the verb and induces lenition of the initial consonant of the following verb. The mutations induced by proclitics are: spirantization of the voiceless occlusives P T K after 1st person singular *me/em* and 3rd person singular feminine *he* and 3rd person plural *o*; spirantization of the voiceless velar occlusive K after 3rd person masculine singular *er* and 1st person plural *on*; lenition after 2nd person singular *te*; provection of the voiced occlusives B D G after 2nd person singular *hal/az* and 2nd person plural *ho*.

<sup>4</sup>We find certain contexts where proclitics are not used. After a verb in the imperative (cf. fn 7 p 41) and after the verb 'to be' used with the meaning of 'to have', we find independent pronouns in postverbal position. The verb 'to be' used with the meaning of 'to have' displays proclitics in immediate preverbal position (cf fn 6 p 39).

(i)- Ambrouget        em        oè        éan        betag        é        di.  
           accompanied        pcl-1s    be-ps    him        til        his        house



These facts can be accounted for by a Pronoun Incorporation analysis. The pronoun incorporation rule can be formalized as following:

- (112) In Pronoun Incorporation,  
 a- 1s can be suffixed to the verb.  
 b- 2s can be prefixed to the verb.  
 c- 3s can be either suffixed to a preposition or infixed into a prepositional adverb.

This rule will account for the restricted distribution of independent pronouns as well as the distribution of personal suffixes and proclitics. It will also account for ungrammatical examples like (113), where agreement with a free standing 1 is not possible; like (114) where agreement with a free standing 2 is not possible; and like (115), where agreement with a free standing 3 is not possible.<sup>6</sup>

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'I accompanied him to his house.'

<sup>5</sup>The prepositional suffixes evolved as a result of the 1911 Reform of the Breton orthography (Urien, personal communication). In their *Grammaire Bretonne du Dialect de Vannes*, Guillevic and Le Goff (1902: 33) give the prepositions followed by clitics pronouns written in two words (cf. also Hemon: 1975). It is not uncommon to find today in the literature the preposition *de* 'to' followed by a clitic written in two words (eg *d'ein* = to me). Jaffré (1986) gives few examples of the kind for Gwenedeg. This is found in the other dialects as well (Urien, personal communication). We can see incorporation at work here. Prepositions were once followed by independent pronouns (Fleuriot 1964: 261). As the pronominal system evolved, independent pronouns became restricted to the preverbal position, while clitics made their appearance after prepositions. These clitics, having a phonologically reduced form, became semi-incorporated into the preceding prepositions. The incorporation was completed by human interference.

<sup>6</sup>Beside the general pattern, we find two instances where verbs do not show the choice between an incorporated and a free standing form. The verb *émé* 'to say', a compound of the verb 'to be' used in the context of reporting someone else's speech, never takes incorporated pronouns. Instead, we find independent pronouns in postverbal position.

- (i)- Kement-man, émé éan, e zelié arriu geton un de bennag  
 all-dem say he vp (should) happen to-3sm a day some

'All this, he says, should happen to him some day' (Jaffré 1986:14)

This verb, which was once inflected for tense, person and number, remains today only in the present tense, with no personal suffixes. This suggests that, when incorporation cannot take place, free standing forms are used. In KLT, *eme* is even reanalysed as a preposition showing the personal suffixes (cf. Hemon 1975:243/4; Hingant 1868: 103).

The verb 'to be' used with the meaning of 'to have' shows proclitics instead of personal suffixes (the table is given for Gwenedeg in the present tense).

- |       |               |        |
|-------|---------------|--------|
| (i)   | singular      | plural |
| 1-    | em es         | on-es  |
| 2-    | t' es         | ho-pes |
| 3m/f- | en-des/hé-des | o-des  |

There exists no true infinitive form for this verb. *Kaoud*, a reduction of *kavoud* 'to find', or *en-doud* can be used. *En-doud* comes from the infinitive form of the verb 'to be', which once showed proclitics. These proclitics disappeared from most of the dialects, except in High-Gwenedeg where they are still used today : *em-boud* (be to me), *ha-poud* (be to you), *en-doud* (be to him), *hé-doud* (be to her), *on-boud* (be to us),

- (113)\* Er      vugalé      e      wélant      bokedeu.  
           the      children      vp      see-prs-3p      flowers  
           'The children see flowers.'
- (114)\* Er      vugalé      o      gwel      bokedeu.  
           the      children      pcl-3p      see-prs      flowers  
           \*'The children see them flowers.'
- (115)\* ..é      sellet...doh      er      jiboésour      é      skampein      ar hé lerh  
           in      watch from the      hunter      in      rush      after-pcl-3sf  
           \*...'...watching ....the hunter rushing after her the hare.'
- er      had.  
           the      hare

Syntactically speaking, the Pronoun Incorporation Rule is always optional. The choice of an incorporated form may signal some kind of neutrality from the speaker's point of view, since part of the information carried by a full nominal is lost in a reduced form. It may also assume some background knowledge shared by both the speaker and the hearer. The choice of a free standing form adds some kind of emphasis on the specific information

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*ho-poud* (be to you), *o-doud* (be to them) (cf. Herrieu 1981: 23). Irish does not have a verb 'to have' and displays a similar use of the verb 'to be' (cf. McCloskey and Sells 1988).

These proclitics have been analysed as agreement markers since they can occur with a 'subject' in the same sentence (cf. Hendrick 1988). However, given the framework adopted in this work, I assume that these proclitics are initial 3s that have advanced to 2, and are marked as 2 in immediate preverbal position. In postverbal position they would be marked as 3s. This can be seen in (ii)

- (ii)- Ur      levr      e      zo      genein  
           a      book      vp      be-prs      with-1s  
           'A book is with me/ I have a book.'

As initial 3s, these proclitics can be coindexed with adjuncts as in (iii).

- (iii)- Me      mamm      hé-des      prenet      ur      levr      eidein.  
           my      mother      3sf-be-pres      bought      a      book      for-1s  
           'My mother, she has bought a book for me.'

However, these proclitics are highly unstable. In Gwenedeg, either the proclitic or the adjunct is used. Only in emphatic speech, both the proclitic and the adjunct are used in the same sentence. Furthermore, proclitics tend to be reduced in Gwenedeg. Only one form can be used to cover the third person, masculine and feminine, singular and plural (cf. Herrieu:1979-224). In Jaffré (1986-64) we find the following sentence where the proclitic *en*, 3rd person masculine singular, does not agree with a preverbal nominal 1st person plural.

- (iv)- Oann      ha      mé      en      des      reit      d' anaout penaos ne oè ket  
           Oann      and      I      pcl-3sm      be-prs      given      to know      how      neg      be-pst      neg  
           'Oann and I (we) told how the saint was not lost but hidden.'  
           kollet      ar      sant      meit      kuhet.  
           lost      the      saint      but      hidden

thus brought to the hearer's attention. The choice of one form or the other is therefore not free but context dependent.<sup>7</sup>

### 3-2 Pronoun Incorporation and Relational Visibility

As seen in the preceding section, a free standing nominal can never cooccur with a bound morpheme. Pronoun Incorporation thus is an efficient means of marking grammatical relations. The grammatical of the incorporated pronoun being transparent, we can infer the grammatical relation of the free standing nominal as (116) and (117) show.

- (116) Ul      lihér    e      skrivez  
          a      letter   vp      write-prs-2s  
          'You are writing a letter.'

(Séité and Herrieu 1981:33)

- (117) Er      wéenn - sé                      o      gwel                      Yann  
          in-the trees-sing-dem              pcl-3p see-prs                      Yann  
          'Yann sees them in that tree.'

(adapted from Séité and Herrieu 1981: 43)

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<sup>7</sup>Some recent developments in Low-Gwenedeg tend to support the Incorporation Analysis. In the imperative second person plural, the following object pronoun tend to become incorporated into the verb.

- (i)-      Sellet                      éañ                      becomes                      seletañ  
          watch-ipt-2p              him                      watch-ipt-2p-3sm  
          'Watch him!'
- (ii)-      Karet                      ind                      becomes                      karetè  
          love-ipt-2p              them                      love-ipt-2p-3p  
          'love them !'

(cf. Herrieu 1979: 132/3). *Eañ* [jã] is reduced to [õ] and *int* is reduced to [ɛ] before the incorporation. *Oñ* and *è* are homophonous to the corresponding prepositional suffixes.

Another piece of evidence in favor of the incorporation analysis involves the use of the partitive in Gwenedeg. Unlike Leoneg, which uses the partitive as a 2 in postverbal position, Gwenedeg uses the partitive as emphatic device with the meaning 'as for X' (Herrieu 1979: 135).

- (iii)-      N'              int                      ket              fall              anehè.  
          neg      be-prs-3p              neg      bad              of-3p  
          'As for them, they are not bad' (adapted from Herrieu 1979: 61)

If the agreement analysis were available, we should have expected to find a free standing nominal, noun or pronoun, to appear in postverbal position instead of the partitive. Furthermore the bound morpheme on the partitive cannot be replaced by a free standing nominal (eg \**ag er vugalé* 'of the children'). This use of the partitive in Gwenedeg is restricted to negative sentences.

With the framework adopted for this study, we can account for the entire Breton pronominal system, the regular as well as the irregular patterns. Furthermore, whenever an incorporated form cannot be used, independent pronouns appear in postverbal position as 1s with *émé*, or as 2s with *en-dout*.

In (116), *e* can only license in preverbal position the object *lihér*, since the subject is an incorporated pronoun suffixed to the verb. In (117), the object *o* is an incorporated pronoun prefixed to the verb, and the subject *Yann* is licensed in postverbal position by word order.

When both subject and object appear as incorporated pronoun, as in (118), the visibility of both the subject and the object is ensured by the order of the bound morphemes.

- (118) Er      wéenn - sé                      o      wélan  
          in-the trees-sing-dem              pcl-3p see-prs-1s  
          'I see them in that tree'.

In negative sentences, we find the same order of occurrence for the incorporated pronouns, as (119) - (121) show.

- (119) Ul      lihér   ne      skrivez      ket.  
          a      letter   neg      write-prs-2s   neg  
          'You are not writing a letter.'

- (120) Er      wéenn - sé                      n'      o      gwel              ket      Yann.  
          in-the trees-sing-dem              neg      pcl-3p see-prs              neg      Yann  
          'Yann doesn't see them in that tree.'

- (121) Er      wéenn - sé                      n'      o      gwélan              ket.  
          in-the trees-sing-dem              neg      pcl-3p see-prs-1s              neg  
          'I don't see them in that tree.'

To conclude, Pronoun Incorporation is a morphosyntactic device that facilitates the relational identification of nominals. A 1 is always suffixed to the verb, it can thus be inferred that the free standing nominal is a 2. A 2 is always prefixed to the verb, it can thus be inferred that the free standing nominal is a 1. When both a 1 and a 2 cooccur, the order of occurrence of these morphemes indicates that the prefix is a 2 while the suffix is a 1. Incorporated 3s, either suffixed to a preposition or infixed in a prepositional adverb, are always identified by the preposition or prepositional adverb.

## Chapter Four

### **Adjuncts and Relational Visibility**

In the preceding chapters, we saw that a preverbal nominal is licensed by a particle (see table 5). The relational identification of the nominals is accomplished either by semantic restriction, word order or particle (see table 8). However, I have not included in the discussion nominals of a second type namely adjuncts. Adjuncts do not bear any grammatical relation of their own and are coreferential with some other postverbal nominal realized as a bound personal morpheme. The term ‘adjunct’ corresponds to the current view of GB ‘topicalized’ or ‘left dislocated’ NP binding a resumptive pronoun. Typically in Breton, an adjunct occurs in preverbal position and is coreferential with a postverbal bound 3.

This chapter discusses how adjuncts are licensed and relationally identified in Breton. Given the licensing properties of the particles in the different dialects, we may expect adjuncts to be licensed differently according to specific dialectal rules and according to whether the sentence is affirmative or negative.

#### **4.1 The Licensing of Adjuncts**

Given that adjuncts do not have grammatical relations of their own, how can they be licensed in preverbal position? Since that position is not marked for a particular grammatical relation, the presence of an adjunct is not problematical. However, since each unmarked preverbal nominal must be licensed by a particle, which particle is used to license adjuncts remains to be determined. Let us first consider the verbal particle *ela*.

#### 4.1.1 Verbal Particle *e/a*

As seen in chapters one and two, the verbal particle *e/a* licenses an adjacent unmarked preverbal 1 or 2 in Gwenedeg/Leoneg. We may expect that, in these dialects, the particle *e/a* can license an adjacent preverbal adjunct as well. However, of the two dialects that have only the particle *e/a* to license a preverbal nominal, only Leoneg shows a preverbal adjunct licensed by the particle *e/a*.<sup>1</sup> Given the Incorporation Analysis adopted earlier, an adjunct will never be coreferential with a 1 bound to the verb in affirmative sentences. This would be taken as an instance of ‘agreement’, which is not allowed in this language (see sentence (113)).

In (122), a Leoneg sentence, the adjunct *Leonie* in preverbal position cooccurs with the subject *aon* in postverbal position.

- (122) *Leonie*        *a*        *zavas*        *aon*        *ganthi*.  
          *Leonie*        *vp*        *rise-pst*        *fear*        *with-3sf*  
          ‘Leonie, she got scared.’

(Urien 1982: 243)

How do we know that *Leonie* is the adjunct and not the subject? Since the adjunct is never necessary to the understanding of the sentence, it can be omitted, as (123) shows.

- (123) *Aon*        *a*        *zavas*        *ganthi*.  
          *Fear*        *vp*        *rise-pst*        *with-3sf*  
          ‘She got scared.’

Changing the order of occurrence of the nominals leads to the ungrammaticality of (\*124).

- (124)\* *Aon*        *a*        *zavas*        *Leonie*        *ganthi*.  
          *fear*        *vp*        *rise-pst*        *Leonie*        *with-3sf*  
          ‘Leonie, she got scared.’

In (124), *aon* cannot have *ganthi* as coreferential since *aon* is masculine while *ganthi* is feminine. Furthermore, Breton does not allow a nominal to immediately precede the element with which it is coreferential, because of the visibility requirement. Although *Leonie* could be identified through coreferentiality with *ganthi*, it cannot be licensed in

<sup>1</sup>In Gwenedeg, this type of sentence is restricted to relative clauses.

postverbal position. ‘Adjunct’ is not a term grammatical relation (e.g., a 1, a 2, or a 3), and therefore cannot be licensed in postverbal position by word order. In (122), *ganthi* is a 3/OBL while *Leonie* is not assigned a grammatical relation since this would conflict with the licensing properties of the particle *e/a*; hence the agrammaticality of (124). Since adjacency to the particle is required for a preverbal nominal to be licensed in that position, we may expect adjuncts to follow this rule as well. This is verified by the contrast obtained from sentences (125) and (\*126).

(125) Dec’h            d’        an        noz    Leonie   a        zavas    aon    ganthi.  
          yesterday    to        the       night   Leonie   vp       rise-pst   fear   with-3sf  
          ‘Leonie, she got scared yesterday evening.’

(126)\* Leonie   dec’h        d’        an        noz    a        zavas    aon    ganthi.  
          Leonie   yesterday   to        the       night   vp       rise-pst   fear   with-3sf  
          ‘Leonie, she got scared yesterday evening.’

In (125), the oblique *dec’h d’an noz* can occur in sentence initial position followed by the adjunct *Leonie* licensed by the particle *e/a*. Reversing the order of occurrence of the oblique and the adjunct leads to the ungrammaticality of the sentence, as shown in (126).

The only particle that can license an adjunct in preverbal position in Leoneg is the particle *e/a*. Using the particle *éh/ez* leads to the ungrammaticality of the sentence shown in (127).

(127)\* Leonie            e(z)        savas                    aon        ganthi.  
          Leonie            vp        rise-pst                fear        with-3sf  
          ‘Leonie, she got scared.’

The particle *éh/ez* does not license nominals in preverbal position in this dialect, and word order licenses only postverbal nominals. As the adjunct is not properly licensed in preverbal position with the particle *éh/ez*, the sentence is ruled out.

If a preverbal adjunct is licensed by the particle *e/a* in Leoneg, how is it identified? we cannot appeal here to the Definiteness Condition nor to Subject Precedence, although both the adjunct and the subject remain unmarked for case and the verb remains unmarked for person and number. We cannot appeal to word order for the same reasons. What is left is the coreferentiality with a postverbal 3/OBL bound to the preposition. I therefore claim

that the relational identification of the preverbal adjunct is accomplished by its coreferentiality with a postverbal bound 3/OBL.

To sum up, in Leoneg the verbal particle *e/a* , acting like a "direct case assigner" licenses an adjacent preverbal adjunct. The preverbal adjunct is relationally identified by coreferentiality with a postverbal 3/OBL, thus not conflicting with the relational identification of the 1.

#### 4.1.2 Verbal Particle *éh/ez*

As seen in chapter one, section four, Kerneveg (written Kerneveg and Lanvenegen) differs from Gwenedeg/Leoneg in the licensing properties of the particles. In Kerneveg a preverbal 2 can be licensed by the particle *e/a* , whereas in Gwenedeg/Leoneg it cannot . In Lanvenegen, we can predict that a preverbal adjunct is licensed by the particle *éh/ez*, since the particle *e/a* licenses only subjects in this variety of Kerneveg. In written Kerneveg, where a 2 can optionally be licensed either by the particle *e/a* or by the particle *éh/ez*, we can predict that adjuncts too are licensed either by the particle *e/a* or by the particle *éh/ez* (see Hendrick 1988:76 sentence (15) a and b).

(128) is the Kerneveg counterpart of Leoneg (122).

- (128) Leoneg            e(z)    savas            aon    ganthi.  
          Leoneg        vp    rise-pst        fear    with-3sf  
          'Leoneg, she got scared.'

In (128), we see that the preverbal adjunct is licensed by the particle *éh/ez*.

In Kerneveg, the preverbal adjunct must also be adjacent to the particle to be licensed in that position, hence the ungrammaticality of (130) as opposed to (129).

- (129) Dec'h            d'    an    noz    Leoneg   e(z)   savas   aon   ganthi.  
          yesterday    to    the    night   Leoneg   vp   rise-pst   fear   with-3sf  
          'Leoneg, she got scared yesterday evening.'

- (130)\* Leoneg   dec'h            d'    an    noz    e(z)   savas   aon   ganthi.  
          Leoneg   yesterday    to    the    night   vp   rise-pst   fear   with-3sf  
          'Leoneg, she got scared yesterday evening.'



In Kerneveg as well, the preverbal adjunct is relationally identified by its coreferentiality with a postverbal bound 3/OBL, thus not conflicting with the relational identification of the 2.

To sum up, in Kerneveg the verbal particle *eh/ez*, acting like an "accusative case assigner", licenses an adjacent preverbal adjunct. The relational identification of the preverbal adjunct is accomplished by coreferentiality with a postverbal bound 3/OBL; thus not in conflict with the relational identification of the 2 in this dialect.

#### 4.1.3 Negative Particle *ne*

As seen in chapter one section five, all dialect differences are neutralized in negative sentences. We can predict that, in negative sentences, adjuncts are licensed the same way in all dialects, namely by the negative particle *ne*. However, negative sentences present an additional difference from their affirmative counterparts. In the firsts, the subject must be realized in postverbal position either as a free standing nominal or as a bound morpheme. Theoretically, nothing can prevent a preverbal adjunct from being coreferential with a postverbal bound 1 in negative sentences, since the adjunct will never be interpreted as the subject, as (131) shows for Gwenedeg (This holds for all dialects under discussion).

- (131) *Mem breudér ne zeint ket*  
       my brothers neg come-fut-3p neg  
       'My brothers, they will not come.'

(Herrieu 1979: 28)

In (131) we see the adjunct *mem breudér* corefering to the 1 bound to the verb.<sup>2</sup> This type of sentence leads Stump (1989: 433) to postulate that the negative particle *ne* bears the feature AGR(eement) and the following verb agrees with a preceding but not a following

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<sup>2</sup>The second *m* of *mem* is a residue of the nasal mutation. Today it is optionally written and affects the voiced stops: [m] before [b]; [n] before [d] and [ŋ] before [g].

subject. It is unclear to me why negative sentences would show such a behaviour. Negative sentences differ from affirmative sentences only in that the position of the subject in negative sentences is restricted to the postverbal position.<sup>3</sup>

With the negative particle *ne* as well as with the verbal particle *e/a* and *eh/ez*, adjacency to the particle is required for the preverbal nominal to be licensed in that position, hence the ungrammaticality of (133) as opposed to (132).

(132) Arhoah        mem    breudér        ne        zeint        ket.  
          tomorrow    my    brothers        neg    come-fut-3p    neg  
          'My brothers, they will not come tomorrow.'

(133)\* Mem    breudér        arhoah        ne        zeint        ket.  
          my    brothers        tomorrow        neg    come-fut-3p    neg  
          'My brothers, they will not come tomorrow.'

In Leoneg and Kerneveg, a preverbal adjunct can be coreferential with a postverbal bound 3/OBL, as (134) shows.

(134) Leonie        ne        zavas        aon    ganthi.  
          Leonie        neg    rise-pst        fear    with-3sf  
          'Leonie, she did not get scared.'

In (134), the preverbal adjunct *Leonie* is licensed by the negative particle *ne*. The identification of the preverbal adjunct is also accomplished by coreferentiality with a postverbal bound 3.

To sum up, the negative particle *ne*, acting like an "accusative case assigner", can license an adjacent preverbal adjunct. The relational identification of the adjunct is accomplished by coreferentiality with a postverbal bound morpheme, either a 1 bound to the verb or a 3/OBL bound to the preposition.

To recapitulate, in Gwenedeg/Leoneg the verbal particle *e/a* licenses an adjacent preverbal adjunct, which can be thought of being assigned an equivalent to "direct case".

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<sup>3</sup>-See fn 15, p 18.

The verbal particle *éh/ez* in Kerneveg and the negative particle *ne* can license an adjacent preverbal adjunct, which can be thought of being assigned an equivalent to “accusative case”. This leads us to revise our table on the licensing properties of the particles.

Table 6: *The Particles in Breton: Revision.*

Dialects	GRS of Adjacent Preverbal Nominals				
	1	2	Adj	3/OBL	
G	A	A		B	
L	A	A	A	B	
wK	A	A/B	A/B	B	
Lan	A	B	B	B	
		C	C	C	

Legend:

G = Gwenedeg  
L = Leoneg  
wK = written Kerneveg  
Lan = Lanvenegen  
A = particle *e/a*  
B = particle *éh/ez*  
C = particle *ne*  
Adj = adjunct

In conclusion, we can assume that in Gwenedeg/Leoneg the verbal particle *e/a* licenses an adjacent preverbal adjunct. In Kerneveg the verbal particle *éh/ez* in Kerneveg and the negative particle *ne* license an adjacent preverbal adjunct. The relational identification of the adjunct is accomplished by coreferentiality with a postverbal bound morpheme, only a 3/OBL in affirmative sentences, either a 1 or a 3/OBL in negative sentences.

In the past, little attention has been paid to negative sentences, which have been noted usually only for the difference in the agreement pattern they exhibit when contrasted to affirmative sentences. Negative sentences however play an important role in revealing the grammatical status of the nominals in sentences involving the verb 'to be', and thus

shed light on the grammatical status of the nominals in affirmative sentences as well, as I have demonstrated.

## Chapter Five

### The VEP Triangle

In the preceding chapters, we discussed how preverbal nominals - subjects, objects and adjuncts- are licensed and relationally identified in the different Breton dialects- Gwenedeg, Leoneg and Kerneveg. We also considered how postverbal nominals, complex nominals and marked/unmarked indirect objects/obliques are licensed and relationally identified in these dialects.

This concluding chapter discusses how Breton data fare with respect to the Principles of Relational Visibility, Economy, and Priority (VEP) proposed by Gerds (1990). Lets us first consider Relational Visibility.

#### 5.1 Relational Visibility

Breton, a language displaying no morphological case on the nominals and no agreement on the verbs, uses word order as the main morphosyntactic means to indicate grammatical relations. Word order is nevertheless not sufficient to account for nominals in many sentences. The preverbal position in Breton is not assigned a particular grammatical relation and every item can potentially occur in that position. Interacting with word order, we saw, in affirmative sentences, the importance of the verbal particle *e/a* licensing a preverbal subject, object or adjunct, as opposed to the particle *éh/ez* occurring with anything else in preverbal position in Gwenedeg/Leoneg. We also saw in Kerneveg the importance of the verbal particle *éh/ez* licensing and identifying a preverbal object. We realized as well the importance of the often neglected negative sentences and verb 'to be' interacting with word order and grammatical relations of nominals. To all these devices affecting the morphology as well as the syntax, we need to add the Definiteness Condition and Subject Precedence interacting as well with word order and the grammatical relations of the nominals.

With this picture in mind, we can assume that Relational Visibility is achieved in Breton by a series of oppositions interacting with word order: marked (by a preposition) versus unmarked nominals; definite versus indefinite nominals; preverbal versus postverbal position; particle *e/a* versus particle *eh/ez*; affirmative versus negative sentences. One question arises: what is the word order of Breton? From the above data, we can see that Breton cannot be characterized as a VSO or as an SVO language. The verb cannot begin a sentence, unlike its Irish or Welsh counterparts. A preverbal nominal is required and is not restricted to subjects. If Breton had either one or the other of the two above-mentioned word orders, we would expect the grammatical relations of the nominals to be more transparent. However, this is not the case. No grammatical relation is assigned in terms of fixed position. The particles license preverbal nominals morphologically unmarked for a particular grammatical relation. Following Urien (personal communication), I will assume that Breton should rather be characterized as having the verb in second position, with the order of the postverbal elements determined by the item present in preverbal position. This is formalized in (135).

(135) *Word Order of Breton*

*X vp V S O*

*X represents any category occurring in preverbal position followed by the appropriate verbal particle, vp, while V remains in second position. The order of the postverbal elements is S O, if X is neither a subject nor an object .*

## 5.2 Relational Economy

Relational Visibility is the first of the Visibility, Economy, Priority or VEP principles proposed by Gerdtz (1990). Let us consider Relational Economy. According to the Relational Economy Principle, *nominals tend not to be doubly/multiply identified*. Nominals are usually marked by one morphosyntactic means. If they are marked by word order, they will not be marked by case or agreement. How does this fit Breton data? Breton, with the multiple devices used to ensure Relational Visibility, achieves Relational

Economy at some cost for the grammar. As I will demonstrate, Breton seems to have pushed the Relational Economy, perhaps, to the limit of what is acceptable.

Nominals in Breton get marked once. The best example of this is the Incorporated Pronouns, which cannot cooccur with free standing nominals. Pronoun incorporation is an economical means of marking relations only once. However, the rest of Breton syntax is often not as clear as it should be. The preverbal position in Breton, not being assigned a particular grammatical relation, requires some device to identify the preverbal nominal. This identification is realized in various ways; the first of which is the grammatical status of the preverbal item, whether it is or is not marked by a preposition, whether it is or is not coreferential with a postverbal item. When the preverbal element is not marked by a preposition nor coreferential with a postverbal item, the identification is effected by the relation this nominal stands to the rest of the sentence, according to whether it is definite or indefinite, and according to whether the sentence is affirmative or negative. It is only when the nominals cannot be identified that Subject Precedence is invoked.

It seems therefore that the order of occurrence of nominals in a given sentence gives the grammatical relations of these nominals once the above-mentioned rules have been appropriately filtered.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The verb 'to be', however, may create a problem, since it displays different forms according to whether the nominal is definite or indefinite and whether it occurs in preverbal or in postverbal position. These forms may appear redundant given the above rules. However, this is not the case. Each of these forms is associated with one particle. It is this particle that tells where the subject can potentially occur, either in preverbal position with *e/a*, or in postverbal position with *eh/ez*. The forms of the verb 'to be' occurring with *eh/ez* are either *el/eo*, semantically neutral, the counterpart of *zo*, or *eh es/ez eus* indicating existentiality or *e malemañ* indicating a situation. It is only when the subject is in preverbal position that the semantic information carried by the forms of the verb 'to be' is neutralized. *Zo* is the only form that can be preceded by the particle *e/a* licensing unmarked nominals in preverbal position. The use of the verb 'to be' is therefore not redundant.

*Zo* does not indicate by itself that the subject occurs in preverbal position, as can be seen below.

- (i) Er had e zo buan trezet er stêr dehi.  
the hare vp be-prs fast crossed the river to-3sf  
'The hare, it quickly crossed the river.'

(Jaffré 1986: 10)

In the above sentence, the nominal *had* is the adjunct in preverbal position, while the subject *stêr* is in postverbal position. This construction is possible only if *zo* does not agree with a preverbal subject. This construction supports indirectly the Pronoun Incorporation analysis.

In summary, the principle of Relational Economy is governed in Breton by a certain number of rules operating on the nominals as well as the verbal morphology that word order expresses. In that sense, Breton follows, perhaps to an extreme, the principle of Relational Economy, which works in close relationship with the principle of Relational Visibility.

### 5.3 Relational Priority

According to the principle of Relational Priority, *nominals tend to be identified by the first means available* (case, agreement or word order). Since Breton is a verb-second language with the preverbal position unmarked for a particular grammatical relation, it follows that Breton violates Relational Priority. The preverbal nominal should be licensed and relationally identified first. Although it is licensed by a particle, it is not identified by it except in the varieties of Kerneveg discussed above. The rules outlined above must be applied first to give the correct word order. Furthermore, nominals are identified not by word order per se, but rather by the relation in which they stand to one another.

### 5.4 The VEP Triangle

The Visibility, Economy, Priority or VEP triangle, proposed by Gerdtz (1990) is meant to account for languages displaying various word orders and using one morphosyntactic means rather than another. Following her classification, **type I** characterizes SVO languages using word order as the main or sole means to identify grammatical relations. **Type II** characterizes VSO languages using agreement. **Type III** characterizes SOV languages using case. And **type IV** represents mixed languages which use the three morphosyntactic means to various degrees.

Where does Breton, a verb-second language, fit in these patterns? Since Breton uses word order as the main means for identifying grammatical relations, it would be better



considered with *type I languages*, such as Mandarin, using no case and no agreement. However Mandarin, like Breton, uses extra devices such as reduplication of verbs and insertion of particles to license nominals that would otherwise not be licensed by word order (Gerdt's, personal communication). **Type I'** refers to SVO languages using word order as well as agreement and thus violating Relational Economy. In Gerdt's view, agreement covers agreement markers as well as incorporated pronouns and clitics. I would like to suggest that agreement should be carefully defined so as to exclude incorporated pronouns and clitics that never cooccur with free standing nominals, as discussed above for Breton. Under this, Breton fits in the class of type I language, which should be characterized as verb-medial languages, including SVO, OVS as well as V-2 languages.

## CONCLUSION

In this analysis, I have attempted to provide a comprehensive treatment of the preverbal position in Breton. Within the framework adopted in this work, the Relational Visibility proposed by Gerdtz (1990), I have accounted for all the phenomena relating to the preverbal position in Gwenedeg, and for all the dialectal variations found in Leoneg and Kerneveg. The grammatical relations, taken as primitives by the theory, are shown to be syntactically realized though morphologically unmarked in Breton. Since Breton is a verb-second language, with the preverbal position unmarked for a particular grammatical relation, grammatical relations are not assigned to a particular position in a given sentence, but are **visible** in the relation they stand to one another in that sentence. And the visibility is ensured by a certain number of rules operating on the nominals as well as on the verbal morphology that word order ultimately expresses. The verbal particles *e/a* and *éh/ez*, the negative particle *ne*, and the verb 'to be' all have an important role to play in this, since they interact with word order as well as the grammatical relations of the nominals.

I hope to have demonstrate the value of the Relational Visibility in accounting for a particular aspect of Breton syntax. Other analyses presented todate in frameworks assuming an underlying order from which all the word order possibilities can be derived, generate sentences that are ungrammatical in the language since they fail to incorporate rules such as the Definiteness Condition and Subject Precedence. Furthermore, such analyses cannot generate sentences that are grammatical in the language since they fail to recognise the licensing properties of the particles. If the particle *éh/ez* is reserved for indirect objects/obliques as has been assumed, then the data presented in chapter one, section four, ought to be ungrammmatical , but they are not. Moreover, if the verbal particle *e/a* is reserved for preverbal subjects and objects as has been assumed, then the data presented in chapter four section one ought to be ungrammatical, but again, their grammaticality is

shown clearly in this thesis through the application of the Relational Visibility. Frameworks taking 'Agreement' to be universal fail to recognise that, if a language has a "null agreement", the grammatical relations of the nominals ought to be transparent (through word order or overt case marking) for identification purposes. However, as discussed above, this is not the case in Breton. Finally, if an underlying word order is assumed, the surface word order should be predictable. However, as I have shown clearly in this thesis, this is not the case in Breton. Word order is not "what comes first" , but rather "what comes last" in this language. Building Breton syntax on word order is thus inappropriate.

In addition to providing an opportunity to study the syntax of a verb-second language and to examine the different dialects of Breton and how these dialects differ from one another, this work makes the following contributions: it supports Relational Visibility, as proposed by Gerdts (1990); it offers insight into the syntax of the Celtic languages, and specifically into the role that the verbal particles play in these languages.

## Appendix

### The Verbal Particles in Irish, Welsh and Cornish

In this appendix, I will compare briefly how the other Celtic languages, Irish, Welsh and Cornish, use the verbal particles. In Irish and Welsh, these particles are mainly used in relative clauses, cleft constructions and interrogative sentences beginning with a question word. Cornish, like Breton, uses the verbal particles with a preverbal nominal in simple sentences. This discussion however will be restricted. I have not included in my analysis of Breton relative clauses nor cleft constructions. I have therefore no basis for comparison with the other Celtic languages. Only interrogative sentences can be discussed for Irish and Welsh. Although revived Cornish is based on early modern Cornish, I have no data available for that period. I will therefore use data from middle Cornish as a basis for comparison.

In Irish, Welsh and Cornish, the particle *a* (+ lenition) corresponding to Breton *e/a*, is used with a preceding subject in the a- set and with a preceding object in the b- set.<sup>2</sup>

Irish (136) a Cé a bhi ann?  
 who vp be-prs there  
 'Who is there?'

(McCloskey 1990: 231)

b Cén teach a cheannaigh tú?  
 which house vp buy-pst 2s  
 'Which house did you buy?'

(Chung and McCloskey 1987: 221)

Welsh (136) a Pwy a ddaw gyda ni?  
 who vp come-prs with us  
 'Who comes with us?'

(Williams 1980: 56)

b Beth a wnewch chwi yno?  
 what vp do-prs-2p 2p there  
 'What do you do there?'

(op.cit.)

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<sup>1</sup>In Irish lenition is also called aspiration in traditional Irish textbook (see O Siadhail 1988). You can see this by the *h* following *b* in *bhi* and *c* in *cheannaigh*. In traditional grammar books, the particle *a* (+lenition) is considered as a direct relative particle. In GB terms, it is a complementizer associated with the binding of a gap.

b      An      gath      a      welav.  
          the      cat      vp      see-prs-1s  
          'I see the cat.'

(op. cit. p 233)

(139) Cá leis a mbeifea ag suil? (Donegal dialect)  
 what with-3s vp be-cond-2p in expect  
 'What would you expect?' (from it)  
 (O Siadhail 1989:319)

(141) Omma y hwel an den an gath.  
 here vp see-prs the man the cat  
 'Here, the man sees the cat.'

(George 1990: 233)

<sup>3</sup>In Irish, nasalisation can be seen by the *m* preceding *b* in *mbeifed*. In traditional grammar books, this particle is considered as an indirect relative particle. In GB terms, it is a complementizer associated with the binding of a resumptive pronoun.

Table 7: *The Verbal Particles in Irish/Welsh and Cornish* <sup>4</sup>

Languages   GRS of Adjacent Preverbal Nominals				
	1	2	3	
I/W	A	A	B	
Cor	A	A/B	B	

Legend:

I/W = Irish/Welsh

Cor = Cornish

A = particle *a* (+ lenition) corresponding to Breton *e/a*

B = particle *a/y* corresponding to Breton *éh/ez*.

If we compare this table with table 5, we can see that the licensing properties of the verbal particles in Irish, Welsh, and Cornish do not differ from the licensing properties of the corresponding particles in Gwenedeg/Leoneg. The variations found in Kerneveg are also found in early modern Cornish (cf George 1991:236).

It is also interesting to note that Irish has another variant of (137) given below.

- (142) Caidé a mbeifeá ag súil leis?  
 what vp be-cond-2p in expect with-3s  
 'What would you expect?' (from it)

(O Siadhail 1989: 319)

This construction is reminiscent of the adjunct constructions considered in chapter four. Compare this sentence for example with Leoneg sentence (120) and Kerneveg sentence (126). The verbal particle used in the Irish sentence above corresponds to the verbal particle used to license a preverbal adjunct in Kerneveg.

To sum up, the licensing properties of the verbal particles show similar behaviour in Breton, Irish, Welsh and Cornish, although the use of the verbal particles is more restricted in Irish and Welsh.

<sup>4</sup>In the Celtic languages mentioned above, there may exist dialectal variations and variations between the written and spoken languages. More research need to be done on the topic. This table is in no way definitive but only tentative.

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