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The politeness systems of address, variations across Breton dialects

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Mélanie Jouitteau

Abstract:
This paper provides a synthesis of the various address systems in Breton dialects, and their evolution during the last century. I discuss the available data and the methodology of my synthesis of it, and I add the elicitation results of my recent fieldwork. I describe three distinct address systems: hierarchical T-V (plurals are directed to superiors as a V form), gendered T-V (plurals are directed to women and girls as a V form) and non-dual (the singular marker is missing in all paradigms, the plural form is the only address pronoun and does not realize a formal marker, †V). I map these systems to their respective territories of usage. I analyse the diachronic evolution and the cross-influences of these three systems over the last century. Most of the speakers in a central and south area are restricted to a unique address pronoun, like Modern English *you*. This system gains ground towards the coasts, where a distinctive T address among male close friends or relatives gives rise to a T-V gendered system like in Welsh (Watkins 1977). In the remaining North and South-East areas, a hierarchical T-V system organized around age and social status resists much more to the extension of the central area. I present evidence for independent subsystems inside both T-V systems: addresses to animals, to clergymen and God. Occasional inversion of an expected marker serves emotionally charged interactions (aggressive T, hypocoristic V).

1. Introduction

Celtic languages have a singular/plural opposition in pronouns of address (1) (Morris Jones 1913:270–1, MacAulay 1992:160). In Standard Modern Breton, this dual opposition is observable on dependent pronouns, pronominal objects of prepositions, or inflected verbs ((2)a. vs. (2)b.). The plural form is compatible with a unique addressee to which is shown politeness and respect, as it is in Welsh, Scottish Gaelic or Breton (2)b. In the following, dual address systems are represented by the T-V acronym (from the emblematic French *Tu-Vous* system), where T stands for familiarity forms, and V for the formal forms. Both T and V forms rely on a morphologically dual opposition, because they are complementary in their usage.

(1)

	English	French	Breton	Cornish	Welsh	Irish	Gaelic	Manx
SG	*you*	*toi*	*te*	*ty*	*ti, chdi*	*(tú)*	*thu*	*oo*
PL	*you*	*vous*	*c'hwi*	*hwi*	*chi, chwi*	*sibh*	*sibh*	*shiu*

(2)a. ***Te*** *n'**out*** *ket fur* (*ac'han**out***) *!* SG, T forms, *Standard Breton*
T neg'are.T not quiet of.you.T

b. ***C'hwi,*** *n'**oc'h*** *ket fur* (*ac'han**oc'h***) *!* PL and SG, V forms
V neg'are.V not quiet of.you.V
'No, YOU are not behaving!'

I wish to thank here Yann-Bêr Rivalin, organizer of the *Kontañ Kaoz* gatherings in Plogoneg, and all speakers taking part in the elicitations. Their data is presented with the speakers' own proposed orthography. Their name has the form they chose for themselves. All citations in English are the author's translation. I also have to thank here two anonymous reviewers and the editor Mark Ó Fionnáin.

Some Breton traditional dialects lack this dual opposition. They lack an unambiguously singular address pronoun: (2)a. is not recognized or judged ungrammatical. For both plural and singular addresses, irrespectively of familiarity, their pronoun paradigms align with (2)b. This situation recalls English, with a loss of the old singular forms of the address pronouns, and a reduction of the pronominal paradigms on the once plural form (*you*). These Breton dialects have no deference marker because absence of dual opposition amounts to the loss of a formal form (if only *c'hwi,* then †V). Available pedagogical material and Standard Breton grammars do not provide further details (Kervella 1947: §423). The goal of this paper is to map with precision the address rules that speakers obey in each dialectal politeness system, from pre-modern Breton to the twenty-first century.

1.1 Methodology and resources

I start with an inventory of the available morphological paradigms in local varieties because pragmatic usages depend directly on each speaker's morphological inventory.

Resources first consist of several maps of the first Atlas (*Atlas Linguistique de la Basse-Bretagne*, ALBB, Le Roux 1924-1953). They are remarkably exhaustive for the morphological inventory of pronouns in all morpho-syntactic contexts, for example with independent pronouns (map 70 for the contrastive pronoun of 'you, you were (sick)'), incorporated pronouns (maps 107 or 502, 'to you.SG' and 'to you.PL), or verbal forms (map 237, 'you know.SG'). However, the translation protocols gave no context of address. From this data, it is impossible to guess who is supposed to use politeness forms when addressing who in one's Breton system. The study of gendered systems is difficult. Most speakers interrogated before the First World War were men[1]. Le Goff (1927) next explored the Gwenedeg morphological system of address in a short article, with some comments on usage. During the Second World War, the periodic *L'Arvor* called for its readers to report their address practices (Riwall 1942:4). I found no trace of the results in the following issues of the journal but grammarian Hemon (1942) published two short articles in *Gwalarn.* In the following, reports from 1942 all come from this precious synthesis of testimonies on local usages. The second Atlas (*Nouvel Atlas Linguistique de la Basse-Bretagne,* NALBB, Le Dû 2001) provides some diachronic perspective on the central non-dual area, but only for the independent pronoun forms, again from non-contextualised French translations (maps 455 and 456). The collecting points do not coincide with those of the ALBB. Some notes in the margins of the maps comment on usage. I have compared this data to academic monographs on local dialects, novels or theatre plays, to shed light on usages at a given point.

Finally, I have presented an elicitation protocol to seven native speakers of various traditional dialects, which all declare usual practice of the language. Speakers were asked to provide in writing their age, gender and dialect of provenance before translating contextualised sentences from French. The protocol asks for translations featuring addresses to a great-grand-father, a 5 year old sister or cousin, a spouse, a known man or woman, a woman in the street, a cat, a spider, an old man in a car (driving invectives), a clergyman or God (Jouitteau 2019, protocol and raw data are available on line at https://arbres.iker.cnrs.fr). Finally, a friend has provided me with a detailed description of his family address practices over three generations – I go back to it in the conclusion to illustrate the instability of gendered systems in the XXst.

I refer to Breton dialects in traditional terms (Leon in the North West, Gwened in the South East, and a more innovative central area located between Kerne in the South West and Treger in the North East). The diachronic evolution is constructed around four separated

[1] Due to the war losses, some women were also interviewed in 1920, mostly on the coasts. Cross-examination of the results is impossible.

times: the beginning of the XXst (ALBB), the testimonies in Hemon (1942), the end of the XXst (NALBB), and 2019 (my fieldwork). In the above sources, I have favoured self-reports of usage, because people tend to misinterpret other's usages: someone whose unique address pronoun is *c'hwi* sounds very formal to a dual (T-V) speaker, who wrongly interprets a V form (but mono-*c'hwi* = †V). Moreover, T-V systems vary with respect to their key features. Speakers for which the dual system is blind to gender can wrongly generalise over a gendered usage they heard. A priest and a little girl are both suitably addressed in *c'hwi* in Kerne, but are maximally differentiated in the Leon system. A *te* pronoun can be prototypical of male close friends in some places of Kerne, whereas in some places of Leon, it can reveal an address to a complete stranger or to a despised spouse. Methodologically, the perceived sex of the linguist presenting the protocol can be of relevance. When interrogated by a man, women tend to report the men's usages. Men have less pragmatic incentive to comment on women's usages. In most sources of the XXst century, information on women's usages is partial or absent, and has to be carefully reconstructed.

The paper is structured as follows. In the first section, I present a map of the vast central area where the address system is reduced to the plural form. Once this area has been delimited, I map the different T-V systems according to the features driving their distribution. I next describe the different frontier phenomena observed. I analyse the diachronic evolution of the *c'hwi* †V area. I conclude by a discussion and analysis of the results.

2. Delimiting the *c'hwi* zone

In this section, I locate on a map the dialectal area where second person markers specifically singular are absent. In this central dialect, *c'hwi* is the independent second person pronoun for both singular and plural addresses. No formal distinction in address is ever made (†V). The map I provide below is a modification of the map 70 of the ALBB at the beginning of the XXst century. I have added the main locations discussed later. Place names are in Breton, numbered by traditional dialects: Leon is (1-13), Treger is (15-25), Kerne is (30-57), Gwened is (60-90). The darkened area signals the non-dual *c'hwi* †V system, the darker the dots, the older the information they reflect.

I locate the epicentre of the non-dual *c'hwi* area around Skaer (50) that was restricted to forms in *c'hwi* at the beginning of the XXst century. Naoned (1952:61) notes that only *c'hwi* is known in Skaer and Gwiskri, which confirms two different testimonies in *Gwalarn* ten years earlier. I inspect the frontier clockwise, starting North.

2.1 The northern frontier

In 1942, the non-dual area excludes Ar Fouilhez (west of 33): a mother addresses her children in T. Brenniliz, 4km south, however is in. Morvannou (1978:252), from Kolloreg, counts Brasparzh (32) in. In Solliec (2015), Lokeored still has the two forms (even if not organized in a T-V system, see section 4). NALBB finds a T form in Boneur. In Lannedern, east of Brasparzh, a speaker notices the presence of T in Plonevez-ar-Faou, east of Lennon (38). In Kolloreg, one associates the T form with Plouie.

In Hemon (1942), a speaker reports the case of a housemaid in Karaez-(Plouger) before World War II who did not understand the peasants who addressed her in *te*. She had poor enough contacts with T-V speakers that she did not even have passive knowledge of *te*. Both Barzhig in 1942 and Falc'hun (1951) confirm the absence of *te* in familiarity exchanges in Karaez and 15km East in Mael-Karaez. In Plevin (40), 10km south of Karaez-(Plouguer), the man interviewed for the ALBB replied with a single form of address for all paradigms, except for 'with you' where he gave *ginit-te*, a singular form (map 209, point 40), revealing partial contact with a T-V system. In the NALBB, a Motreff speaker (south of Karaez) comments on the familiarity T of Poullaouen. Plonevell (39) had *te* in 1913, but Wmffre (1998:25) locates it in the *c'hwi* area, in contrast with Poullaouen, 10 km north-west, still out.

Ar Barzhig in 1942 considers that there is a dual system in Karnoed and Kallag, the latter confirmed by a NALBB speaker from Kergrist-Moelou. In Lokarn, another speaker considers that T is used in Duaod. NALBB reports the testimony of a speaker from Sant-Servez (Leon, between points 10 and 13) familiar with T-V alternations, who notices the contrast with Southern Lokarn ("In Lo[k]arn, we would say *hwi* to everybody"). According to the speakers of Humphreys (1985:317), *te* is commonly used in Magor and Kerien-Boulvriag (closest west), in Sant-Konan, and sporadically in Kerbêr.

In the East, Korle is clearly in, at least for the 1912 woman who has only *c'hwi* forms in the ALBB. She has no singular on the possessives (map 323), object pronouns of the preposition *diouzh* (map 502) or *da* (map 107), nor on the verb *emañ* 'to be' (map 64). We don't know if it was the same for men. In Sant-Fieg (22) 19 km North, again in 1912, another woman has a unique form for the object of *da* 'to' (map 107), but a dual system for the rest of the paradigms, and even preposition *diouzh* 'from, to' (map 502).

The northern frontier may have progressed some km North in the north-west of Karaez, but seems otherwise stable. Near the end of the XXst, NALBB has a speaker familiar with T-V in Gwimilio (Leon, between points 12 and 13) who reports that in Lambaol(-Gwimilio), 4km West, "one says *c'hwi*". These locations are far out of the *c'hwi* area. On the same point of Gwimilio, a speaker (possibly the same) thinks that more and more T forms are used. I take his comments to contrast two T-V systems.

2.2 The southern frontier

The eastern-most points of the non-dual southern frontier include Eastern Gwenedeg, for a 5km large band following the Blavezh River (Hemon 1975: §51, n1, and specifically Le Goff 1927 and R. Kadig in 1942 for Pondi, Loeiz Herrieu in 1942 for Henbont between 67 and 84, Crahe 2013 for Langedig 84). In the NALBB, the *c'hwi* zone excludes Neizin, Sant-Aleustr (66), Pluverin, Pleuwigner (68), Lostenk and Pleheneg. The southern progression here is very recent in Pleuwigner, where children younger than four years old squabble in *c'hwi* (3). The code-switching example in (4) confirms the vitality of the non-dual system: a French pronominal T form co-occurs with a Breton *–it* V verbal marker (2).

(3) ***C'hwi*** *n'* ***oc'h*** *ket fur!* *Child in Pleuwigner (3 year)*, Mermet (2006:137)
†V neg'are.†V not quiet
'YOU are not behaving.'

(4) *Nann!* ***Tu*** *laosk**it** !* *Child (3 year)*, Mermet (2006:annexe B)
no T.(French) let.go.†V(Breton)
'No! YOU let it (to me)!'

Further west, the non-dual uses of An Oriant/ Kaodan area persists into the XXIst century (Cheveau 2011:30, Ar Borgn 2011 for Ar Scorff) and expands towards the coast. Plañvour (70) lost T during the XXst century, also now absent in Gwidel and Kewenn (north of Plañvour, Cheveau 2007, 2011). This is despite the T-V influence of the Groe Island[2]. Further west in Kerne, a 1911 innkeeper in Kloar-Karnoed (56), man or woman, has no T form in verbs, possessives or preposition *da* 'to you' (maps 237, 244, 323), but has on preposition *diouzh* 'to you' (map 502). T has resisted in Kloar and the coastal villages around

[2] There is a T-V dual system in Groe, where the SG form appears as *as* or *ha* (see section 3, and Le Goff 1927). The dual opposition is illustrated by *ha **k**ani* 'your.T' (= Standard *da hini*) vs. *u **k**ani* 'your. V' (= Standard *hoc'h hini*) (cf. ALBB maps 323, 325, point 72), even if both markers trigger there the same mutations (*ha **t**orn* 'your.T hand', *mé ha **k**uélou* 'I will see you.T', Le Goff 1927:198).

(Bouzeg 1986:31, Bouzec & al. 2017: 491, 501). The non-dual system is confirmed in the interior in Sant-Turian, Banaleg, An Trev, Lokunole, Gwelegouarc'h and Tremeven (55). In Meslan near (51), NALBB reports passive knowledge of singular forms, only "heard in songs and stories". Trépos (1968:206) considers Kemper to be non-dual.

In 1911, the western-most point includes Edern (43). NALBB adds the closest parishes of Brieg or Lotei. Brieg had shifted: Ar Scao (1945) was reporting T forms, now out of use (Noyer 2019:171, 172, 189). The same change is manifest 40km west, in the Bigouden country. The 1911 Ploeneg (47) informant of the ALBB had a robust SG-PL distinction (he had also lived 14 years in Gwaien, 5 km west). To a man from Pouldreuzig born in 1914, T was alive but restricted to aggressive contexts (Helias 1975). At the end of the XXst, the T form is absent in Pouldreuzig and Plogastell-Sant-Jermen (east of Pluguen 48). In 2019, Michelle Nicolas from Pouldreuzig, Landudeg and Plozeved confirms a unique address in *fi* (= Standard *c'hwi*) to all humans (5) and animals, even in aggressive contexts (6).

(5) ***Fi*** *voar lac'h peus digonget* ***oc'h*** *lior kan di sadorn ?!* *Plozeved*
you.†V know that have forgotten your.†V book song saturday
'You know you forgot your songbook Saturday?!' (equally to man or woman)

(6) *ma jong d'****oc'h*** *lac'h y****ac'h*** *giset !*
if thinks to.you.†V that will.go.†V like.that
'If you think you're going to get away with it!' (threatening a spider)

3. Dual systems

All Breton dialects having a dual SG-PL morphology organize it as a dual T-V system. Two distinct T-V areas emerge. The gendered area surrounds the *c'hwi* †V zone in Kerne and the coastal strip up to Gwenedeg. T is mostly used among men. Women and girls are addressed in V. Women vary in their addresses to men. The other T-V system is blind to gender. It is organized around age and social hierarchy in Leon, the Northern part of Treger and East-Gwenedeg.

It is important to approach T-V systems as involving non-total rules. Gendered rules are for example compatible with ageist rules: in Ar Fouilhez in 1942, appropriate address is calculated on the basis of gender, age of speaker and addressee. Children start speaking using only T, switching to V addresses to their mother around age 6/7. Boys will eventually address their dad in V, but later in life. Likewise, in 2019 in Douarnenez, a 69-year-old man uses V to all girls and women, and T to male close friends. However, he chooses V to (internally) address his great grand father, showing a distance that then coincides with age.

3.1 Setting apart subsystems: Church V, aggressive T, hypocoristic V, animals

One has to set apart some T-V subsystems that seem independent internally to a given T-V system. Such a subsystem is for example the address to God or clergymen, which is massively in V, even in gendered systems (I found only one optional T/V address to God in Douarnenez, Jouitteau 2019). There is also a widely reported aggressive T: for Helias (1975) from Pouldreuzic, T expresses "great anger or deep contempt" and is only used in invectives like *Te 'dorr din ur revr*, litt. 'you break one ass of mine'. In Leon, couples addressing each other in V also can interpret a sudden T address as extremely aggressive. Driving invectives also seem independent. Despite the widely documented aggressive T, driving invectives can be realised in V across all dialects. The sentences (7) to (9) translate *So, Grandpa, you don't find*

your levers anymore?!, the speaker being blocked by another car at a stop sign (Jouitteau 2019). This is surprising because these speakers are bilinguals and have obligatory T in their French driving invectives.

Marie Monchicourt (woman 67), Gwenedeg

(7) *Neuze tad kozh n'eo ket bet kavet* ***ho*** *piñs muy!*
so father-old neg is neg been found your.V pliers anymore

Renée Ribeyre (woman 71), Plonevez-Porzhe (south of 37)

(8) *Setu, tad-kozh, ne gav****it*** *ket ken* ***ho*** *oustilhoù !*
then father-old neg find.V neg anymore your.V tools

Marie-Yvonne Paul (woman 82), Leon

(9) *Ah neuze papi! Ne gav****oc'h*** *ket* ***ho*** *peñvejoù ?*
ah then father-old neg find.V neg your.V tools

Some idiosyncratic uses of V are probably hypocoristic. Yekel (p.c.) comments that the V form in (10) is exceptional for addressing children. Some addresses to animals could fall under this (11). However, address to humans *vs*. animals is a subsystem of its own: every speaker in the elicitation has used the same marker for both cat and spider, regardless of aggressive vs. hypocoristic context.

(10) ***C'hwi*** *zo ur marmouz bihan.* *Treger (Bear)*, Yekel and al. (2015-20)
you.V is a monkey little
'You are a little rascal.' (in a nice way)

(11) ***C'hwi****, kaz, na viot ket o kalamarhad an traoù toud amañ.* *Treger*, Gros (1970)
V cat neg will.be not at step.on the things all here
'You, cat, you won't be stepping on everything here.'

Finally, one has to be very careful not to draw abusive ethnological conclusions from T-V systems. Presence of a V marker or lack thereof may be revealing of a social organisation, but reading a V marker as a sign of respect and a T marker as its absence is not correct: children addressing their parents in either T or V can feel the same respect for them: it is the linguistic system they use that forces them to encode it linguistically or not. The variation in addresses to women has no documented social correlate in the Breton patriarchal continuum. Gros in (11) is not confused between his cat and a priest.

3.2 Gendered system

Most of T-V gendered systems we know from Hemon (1942). It recalls the Welsh system described by Watkins (1977:164-5): "Females, however young, are addressed by the polite form, and they in turn always use the polite form in addressing others. The result is that the polite form usually is the mode of address even between husband and wife, and between parents and daughter. The familiar form is used only […] by males when addressing close male contemporaries, or younger males with whose families they have intimate connexions." A. Gelleg in 1942 in Douarnenez reports T-V only for men, T forms being rare and optional even among peers or brothers. *Te* can be used from a father to his son, but not symmetrically. *C'hwi* is obligatory when a woman participates in the exchange. In 2019 still, a 69 year old man in Douarnenez uses T to addresses another man his own age or for driving invectives. He uses V to his great-grand-father, to women and girls (12), to priests or God, to cats and spiders.

(12) *Bremañ eo hennezh* ***ho*** *kamion deuzout**oc'h*** ***ho*** *keñ.* *Douarnenez, (man 69)*
now is this your.V truck of.of.V your.V one
'Now it is your truck to you alone.' (to a young girl) Jouitteau (2019)

Plonevez-Porzhe speaker Renée Ribeyre, 10km North, in her seventies, addresses men her age, cats and spiders in T, but girls, women, highly ranked men and God in V.

Men address each other in T, but women in V in Kemper-Gwezhenneg as well as the Pontrev canton, Enez Sun or Pont-an-Abad (Hemon 1942), in Poullaouen and Plonevell, (Wmffre 1998:25), in Konkerne, Ploneour-Lanwern, Penmarc'h, Loktudy, Enez Tudi, Benoded (NALBB), in Tregon, Nizon, Pont-Aven, Rieg, Molan, Nevez, Kloar (Bouzeg 1986:31), and as far East as Pluverin (NALBB). The documentation on how women address men is too fragmented to draw conclusions. For Hemon (1975:§51,n1) all T-V dialects were gendered, but this seems inaccurate.

3.3 Hierarchical zone

In Leon and most of Treger, the pragmatics of address are gender blind. They reflect age and social ranking in a manner similar to Modern French T-V, with a stress on the respect due to age. Children commonly address their parents in V. Early XIXst century, Le Gonidec (1821:'tutoyer') writes for Leon *Né kéd déréad téa hé dâd*, 'The T form is not appropriate to one's dad'. Following Troude (1886:'tutoyer'), "in the countryside", respect due to age imposes the V form and brothers have asymmetric usages.

Couples symmetrically use T forms before marriage, and V forms after. The T forms becomes a sign of aggression. The theatre play Ar Floc'h (1913) presents the character of Mathilde, who addresses her boyfriend in V. She suddenly addresses him in T while planning on murdering him. He interprets it as a proximity marker, as it would be in French, and he ends up dead. Madame Pont from Brignogan (north of 4), 65 years in 1942, recalls the day when, as a child, she overheard married neighbours using T, an obvious sign they were fighting horribly. Guivarc'h in 1942 in Santeg (6) mentions as archaic symmetric V forms in couples, as does NALBB in Plouganoù (18), Magor or Boulvriag (west of 22). He considers T to mark either equality or superiority of the speaker relative to the addressee.

T is the address to strangers "who are not priests" in the Pagan country (4) in 1942, whereas, in their French, the same speakers would address strangers in V. T is also, and this does not seem contradictory, a proximity marker on the rise. It was a new fashion in Troude (1886:'tutoyer') among young people to use T if they already met once. In the theaterplay Ar Floc'h (1927:32), Fanch and Lan have 40 years age difference. Fanch calls his friend *Lanig kozh* [little old Lan], and addresses him in T in the name of their friendship, which Lan opposes because of respect due to age. T has progressed during the XXst as a proximity marker. In Brignogan and the Pagan country (4) in 1942, children are most likely to address their parents in T. This leads to noticeable inversions: "Before one would address domestics in T and others in V, and now it is the other way around" (Porsal, north of 2, NALBB). According to NALBB informants, in Guimiliau people use more and more T forms, and in Plouigno in West-Treger V survives only to address nobility. In Ouessant, V is still the address to parents. In Jouitteau (2019), an 82 Plougerne woman (west of 4) has V addresses for her great grand father, a woman she never met, a grandfather even in driving invectives, as well as clergymen and God. She associates T to a spouse, or anyone her age or below. Given her age, she addresses less and less Breton speakers in V.

Ar Barzhig in 1942 considers there to be a dual T-V system in all Treger. Another *Gwalarn* reader adds that children address their parents in V, which is confirmed in Plougouskant (west of 16) at the end of the XXst. In 1942, in Treger, T is usual among old friends, and a sign of confidence towards strangers. Equals in age address each other in T in West-Treger in Plouezoc'h (south of Plouganoù 18), and in the interior in Logivi-Plougraz (NALBB).

East Gwenedeg also belongs to the hierarchical zone, with the minor complication that along the coasts from Groe to Berrig (East of Teiz 75), the proclitic T form can appear as *ha or as*, realised *te* elsewhere in Gwenedeg and *da* in Standard (Le Goff 1927:198). T forms are the most usual in Ar Gerveur (82, 83) and in the most part of the Gwenedeg coast (Loth 1890:379), as well as in Logunec'h and Sant-Yann-Brevele even for old people or clergymen (west and south of 66, Le Goff 1927:198). The opposite tendancy towards V is however also documented: in my 2019 elicitation, Marie Monchicourt, 67 years old, in her Gwenedeg, addresses all adults in V, including her husband. She uses T only to animals and to a young girl. Age is the main factor in Laozag (east of 75). V forms are due to parents in Plouharnel and Sant-Nolf (north of Teiz 75), but only to grand-parents in Plunered (north-west of Ploveren 74, NALBB). On the coast, V to parents may be associated with a higher social status, and may include an idiosyncratic gendered distinction between parents (Audic 2013:195).

4. Frontier phenomena and unstable systems

The *c'hwi* †V zone is surrounded by different T-V systems, with of course some bilingual speakers forming a buffer. Some unstable states are documented throughout the area and in all the Bigouden country. In (13) to (18), the addresses have compatible 2†V and 2†T forms.

(13) ***Lak'*** *'neoñ beke* ***'moc'h*** *' sell' !* *Lokeored*
put.T of.him because are.V (at) looking
'Put it [the security belt], because you are looking (at it)!' Solliec (2015)

(14) *Diskwez a* ***ret,*** *Kaour-Vraz, na intent**ez** netra...* *Kergrist-Moelou*
show prt do.†V Kaour-Big neg understand.†T nothing
'You show, Old Kaour, that you don't understand anything.' Le Garrec (1901:18)

(15) *Gr**ez** ar pez a gar**oh*** *Plozeved,* Goyat (2012:306)
do.†SG the piece (that) R want.†PL
'Do what you want.'

(16) *Breman eo d'**eoc'h** **de** unan ar (Camion).* *X, Kerne, (man, 79y)*
now is to'you.†V your.†T one the camion
'Now it is your truck to you alone.' (to a young girl) Jouitteau (06/2019)

(17) *Gouzout a r**ez** **ho** peus disoñjet **da** levrig kanañ ? Gourlizon (woman, 63y)*
to.know R do.†T †V has forgotten your.†T book to.sing
'Do you know you forgot your songbook?'

(18) *Bremañ eo **da** **c'h**arr-samm de**oc'h** **da**-unan.*
now is your.†T truck to.you.†V your.†T-one
'Now it is your truck to you alone.' (to a young girl) Jouitteau (06/2019)

In (18), instability of the second person also impacts the consonant mutation system. The second person possessive 2†T triggers /k/>/X/ (compare with provection /k/>/k/ ***ho karr-samm*** 'your.V truck', vs. lenition /k/>/g/ ***da garr-samm*** 'your.T truck'). This plausibly is an innovation because in the closest parishes of Ploare (42) and Pluguen (48), two men in 1911 had a more standard 2T *de zorn* with a lenition (map 173).

Some Breton dialects have complex morphological fusions of 2†T and 2†V. Trépos' example in (19) attests of a frontier phenomenon in South-East Kerne as early as the first part of the XXst. Typologically, compatibility of both markers recalls the rise of the T-V system in Middle French.

(19) ***ho*** *puoc'h-**t-hu***
POSS. 2†V vache-2†T-2†V
'your cow' *Kerne*, (Trépos 1968:94)

(20) *Petra a **rez-t-hu**?*
what R do.2†T- 2†T- 2†V
'What are you doing?' *Plozévet*, Goyat (2012:244-5)

On the north of the *c'hwi* area, some speakers recreate a T-V system despite them having no *te-c'hwi* morphological material. Humphreys (1985:317) mentions only *c'hwi* in Bothoa, but in (21), a V form is obtained by pluralisation of the object, and in (22), a V form is obtained by addition of a 3PL address to a subject. In both cases the second person marker is present (†V), and the plural of a third person nominal obtains a formal address. Recruitment of a 3PL element in a T-V system typologically recalls other Indo-European languages like German *Sie* or Spanish *Usted*.

(21) *Debet ho para* vs. *Debet ho para**joù**.*
eat.†V your.†V bread eat.†V your.†V bread**s.V**
'Eat.T your bread.' 'Eat.V your bread.'

(22) ***ar re-mañ*** *ac'hanoc'h*
the ones-here of.you.†V
'You.V'

5. Analysis

Despite the converging T-V influence of both French and Standard Breton, the Breton *c'hwi* †V zone is maintained, and even progresses South and West in men, by the weakening of T in gendered systems areas. Usages of the woman half of the south population remain stable; most of them already spoke in *c'hwi* †V. Urban centres like Kemper or an Oriant seem to accelerate the changes. The historic impacts on sex ratio during the XXst century probably weakened the male exclusive address. War mobilisations and widowing, as well as a longer life expectancy for women are converging factors supporting *c'hwi* addresses among adults. It increasingly became the only Breton input available to children of both sexes. Men's long fishing seasons could have favoured a better T resistance of T along the coasts. Non-gendered T-V systems resist better the loss of T: the age factor causes children to be addressed in *te*, and to grow up using it themselves. The aging demographics favour T: the older the speakers, the smaller their pragmatic contexts inducing V.

Typologically, gendered T-V is not isolated. Middle Welsh of the XIIIth had a morphologically dual SG-PL system, but no T-V usages (Höijer 2014:51,84). Morris Jones (1913:270–1) dates the emergence of Welsh T-V to the XVth century, possibly influenced by

English T-V, itself from Romance influence. The Modern Welsh gendered system subsists despite the influence of †V English. The proponents of Standard Breton went against this usage shared with Welsh. Preservation of morphological paradigms and inclination towards Leon prevailed, converging with under-documentation of women's usages. It is typologically remarkable that, like Irish, Breton developed a non-dual system without contact with †V Modern English. Diachronically, the frontier phenomena show how natives accommodate pragmatic obsolescence of morphological material (fusions, co-occurrences) or reduction of morphological material (creation of non-pronominal V forms). The V strategy realised by pluralisation of the object should receive more attention and is worth a dedicated study.

The frontier of the *c'hwi* †V area provides evidence for the existence of bilingualism in Breton dialects. In particular, the localisation of the eastern frontier disproves the idea that the KLT/Gwenedeg dialectal divide prevents interactions in Breton. Western Gwenedeg speakers are in close enough contact with their KLT neighbours to share their politeness practices, as opposed to their eastern Gwenedeg neighbours.

The gendered system is intrinsically more sensitive to linguistically unstable situations. Breton internal migrations since the demographic explosion of the XIXst, and the geographic extension of the origin of spouses in the XXst (Jouitteau 2019) have multiplied mixed couples in terms of Breton dialects. This triggered various idiosyncratic subsystems of address. I illustrate with the description of the familial address system of a male friend of mine, in his forties. In Rosporden, south of Eliant (49), *te* is symmetrical between fathers and sons, like *c'hwi* is between mothers and sons. Parents address little girls in *te*, who respond in *c'hwi* with them in return. However, in this family, the paternal grandparents form a matrilocal couple, the man being from Kemperle near Tremeven (55), where *te* was unknown. The family stopped speaking Breton until my friend turned 18 and reinstalled Breton practices. His father improvised his paternity in Breton by reviving the *c'hwi* pronoun he received from his own father, contrary to local usages between fathers and sons. The grandfather was not using *c'hwi* in opposition to a form he just didn't have, and discourse acts did not change along the male filiation, but the performance of his system in a gendered T-V environment produces a (counter-)gendered effect. The use of *c'hwi* among males at the family scale performs a masculinity that is exogenous to the place (for locals, they speak like women do). The same friend illustrates a resistance to the penetration of the French system into his Breton. He addresses female friends in T in his French, but resists addressing them in T in his Breton. He says he feels it would still be impolite. This feeling drives his addresses, despite his perfect mastering of Standard, and his professional practice exposing him constantly to it. This resistance to perceived "impolite use" could explain the progression of the central *c'hwi* area despite the massive T-V influence from French.

Divergences in politeness systems lead to linguistic insecurity, which is a problem of great concern in revitalisation contexts. The risk of being impolite in interpersonal exchanges could be a determining factor in avoidance of Breton in public encounters. Alertness to variation without actual knowledge of possible systems triggers speakers to just inverse their usual system, with results that are impolite to their addressee. I provide some examples for illustration. We saw that in various places, strangers are traditionally addressed in T. In the 2019 elicitation, a 79-year-old man from Kerne had robust gendered T-V (T to his great-grand-father, V to a 5 year old girl or his wife). However, he chooses T when addressing an unknown woman in the street. This inversion strategy initiates a social contact in a paradigm that is unknown in half of the country. Adaptive symmetrical strategies of the type: 'Well, this young woman addressed me in T, I'll do the same' score poorly, because she could have a non-symmetrical T-V system. She also could have a non-symmetrical system but think that you don't, and thus expect an egalitarian T response. You just can't guess and there is no safe choice. This could create a strong incentive for speakers to switch to French, where the

system is more stable. A better knowledge of cross-dialectal variation could help speakers choose more effective strategies. May this paper help provide the speakers with informed choices.

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