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## **A Preliminary Description of Mood in Welsh**

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### **Abstract:**

In this paper we propose a functional account of the Welsh mood system, focussing on responsives in particular. The discourse functions of responsives are interpreted through the concept of negotiation within the systemic functional linguistic framework, which offers a rich model for accounting for both initiations and responses, including possible tracking and challenging moves. By examining the interaction of mood together with specific features of Welsh, e.g. a dominant VSO clause ordering, mood particles, Subject ellipsis and a complex system of negation, we are able to show that Welsh tends to highlight interpersonal meanings in clause initial position. As the first functional description of Welsh, we also set out important directions for future research, based on the findings presented in this paper.

### **Keywords:**

Welsh mood, negotiation, echo responsives, negation, functional description

## 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Welsh is understood to be the oldest living language in Great Britain and Eire (King 2003: 1). It is the most widely spoken of the surviving Celtic languages with an estimated 700,000 speakers worldwide and approximately 28% of the total Welsh population stating they can speak some level of the language (Welsh Government 2018). However Welsh speakers are not evenly distributed throughout Wales and the world. The dominant regions include North Wales, South Wales, and Patagonia in Argentina. Of the 22 regions of Wales, or local government areas, there are four regions with over 40% Welsh speakers, 12 with between 10% and 30% Welsh speakers and six where fewer than 10% speak Welsh. The Welsh government is committed to increasing the number of Welsh speakers in Wales to one million by 2050 (estimates from the 2011 census show some 562,000 speakers of Welsh in Wales). Despite its relative success as a thriving Celtic language, Welsh is an under studied and under-represented language in linguistic research.

Most research carried out on the Welsh language has concentrated on specific features of syntax or phonology, or sociolinguistic approaches that focus on bilingualism or code-switching. There is, however, a need for functional descriptions of languages since it is precisely the focus on use taken in functional approaches that allows for a comprehensive account of the language. As Bischoff and Jany (2013:1) explain, “functional approaches to language are mainly concerned with examining the question of why language structure is the way it is and with finding explanations in language use”. Halliday (1970:26) was one of the first to argue for this position: “the internal organization of language is not arbitrary but embodies a positive reflection of the functions that language has evolved to serve in the life of social man”. Halliday’s social functional approach to language description developed into systemic functional linguistics (SFL) where language is seen as a meaning-making system, a semiotic resource. According to Butler and González-García (2014: 488), one of the main strengths of SFL is how it accounts for the structure and properties of extended stretches of discourse and in this sense SFL is a framework which offers a descriptive advantage. In our view, the social perspective taken in SFL suggests that it offers considerable promise as a framework for developing a functional description of Welsh, one that extends beyond linguistic theory to applications such as literacy development, clinical studies and natural language processing. The SFL combination of lexicogrammar with text properties can provide a more convincing description than either discourse analysis or syntactic analysis alone.

The aim of this paper is to examine the principle means of negotiating exchange in Welsh. This focus on the interpersonal aspects of Welsh takes up the spirit Halliday’s quote above, i.e. that language use is fundamentally social. Caffarel et al (2004: 87) make the assumption that “every language constructs dialogue for exchanging meaning, for exchanging information (propositions) and for exchanging goods and services (proposals)”. It would seem then that describing the resources for exchange is an appropriate place to begin a functional description of Welsh. Both propositions and proposals invite responses and the combination of these

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<sup>1</sup> We are very grateful to Ed McDonald for his very helpful comments and suggestions on this paper and to the two anonymous reviewers for their useful comments. We are also grateful to the University of Wales Press Fund which financially supported this work.

forms the basis of exchange. As we will demonstrate, Welsh has a very rich set of resources for signalling interpersonal meanings, through mood, which as we argue here should include responsiveness<sup>2</sup>.

The Welsh system of responses is, in some sense, considerably nuanced in grammatical terms. Welsh echo responses are sensitive to grammatical meanings of tense, aspect, number, and person as well as marking semantic distinctions such as inclusivity and degree of intimacy (Jones, 1999). As we examine the interpersonal grammar of Welsh through the response system, we offer important theoretical insights which hopefully prepare fertile ground for further research. For example, Welsh maintains a dominant VSO clause ordering, involving mood particles, Subject ellipsis and a complex system of negation. The combination of these features poses challenges not only to developing a robust account of mood in Welsh but to the theoretical framework itself.

In what follows, we will first provide a very brief overview of the most relevant features of Welsh for our purposes in this paper, and following this we highlight some of the challenges of working to develop a functional description of Welsh grammar. In section 3, we begin to build a description of negotiation in Welsh, drawing on Martin (1992) and Quiroz (2008, 2018), who respectively examine the English and Spanish lexicogrammatical resources for negotiating meaning in discourse. Based on these descriptions, we present our argument that Welsh responsiveness constitute a mood selection. This leads naturally to section 4 where we consider Welsh responsiveness alongside other clause types, focussing on the interaction of the systems of mood and polarity, highlighting the rich resources available in Welsh in terms of the interpersonal metafunction. Finally, in section 5, we conclude by showing how Welsh tends to highlight interpersonal meanings in clause initial position. Here we also set out important directions for future research, based on the findings presented in this paper.

## 2. Brief overview of the Welsh language

As mentioned above, Welsh is a Celtic language and part of the Indo-European language family. Lexically, the Celtic languages share cognates with other Indo-European languages as well as bearing hallmarks of earlier Roman influence such as *pont* ('bridge'; cf *pont* in French) and *fffenestr* ('window' cf *fenêtre* in French). Grammatically, the Celtic languages are linked, among other things, by their shared use of initial mutation patterns, where the onset phoneme of a lexeme is synthesised in specific ways. For example, one mutation, called a soft mutation, occurs when an adjective follows a feminine singular noun: the bilabial nasal [m] in *mawr* (/maʊr/ 'big') mutates to a voiced labiodental fricative [v] in *cath fawr* (/kaθ vaʊr/ 'a big cat'). This feature will be discussed below since Welsh has mood particles which trigger mutations. The Welsh clause has a typical Verb-Subject-Object (VSO) order, with the verb, auxiliary or verb phrase in initial position in the clause, as illustrated in example (1) adapted from Borsley et al. (2007: 341). We will also return to clause word order below in our discussion of mood, since the verb-initial nature of Welsh provides an interesting and different perspective on mood structure.

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<sup>2</sup> Responsives (see Jones 1999) are the term used to refer to responses to questions where in Welsh responses to questions are inflected for person, finiteness and polarity as will be discussed further in the paper.

- (1) Gwelodd y ddynes ddraig  
 see.PAST.3S the woman dragon  
*Saw the woman dragon*  
*The woman saw a dragon*

In this example, the definite article, *y*, triggers the mutation on the feminine singular noun, *dynes* ('woman') > *ddynes* and the mutation on the noun *draig* ('dragon') is triggered because it is the direct object of *gweld* ('see'). Note that, as pointed out by Tallerman (2006: 1750) the mutation only occurs if the direct object is "directly dependent on a FINITE verb". This feature of Welsh explains why in example (2), *draig* does not undergo mutation (i.e. we find *draig* not *ddraig*).

- (2) Roedd y ddynes yn gweld draig  
 be.PAST.3S the woman PRT. see.V.INF dragon  
*Was the woman to see dragon*  
*The woman was seeing a dragon*

The diverse linguistic landscape of modern-day Wales was carved by its physical landscape, along with its history of invasion and industry. The result has been a language with a wide range of dialects and variation. Differences between North and South Welsh, for example, are widely recognised in Welsh language learning. These differences are believed to be mainly lexical, such as the translation of the word 'money' for which North Welsh speakers use *pres* ('brass') while their South Welsh counterparts pay with *arian* ('silver'). However, as King (2003) explains, the picture of Welsh in Wales is far more complex than a simple North-South divide and we find considerable variation throughout the country (see King (2003) for details).

Attempts have been made at various points in history to create a standardised version of Welsh, most notably through Literary Welsh which was established in the 16<sup>th</sup> century with the translation of the Bible (King 2003:14). Like many literary-based standards, but especially given the religious and formal contexts in which the Bible was used, it naturally excludes many of the rich features typical of working-class Welsh speakers, as well as dialectical variation. It has also been criticised for devising new and complex rules that had not existed in the spoken language, rendering it too unwieldy for spoken discourse. As a result, present day Literary Welsh is precisely thus – almost exclusively banished to formal literary contexts such as those encountered at *Eisteddfodau*<sup>3</sup>, traditional cultural celebrations. Efforts to standardise the language were revised in the 1970s, resulting in what has been largely called *Cymraeg Byw* ('Living Welsh') (King 2013). Broadly speaking, *Cymraeg Byw* is the variety of language seen in news reports and formal, non-literary writing. Spoken Welsh, however, still varies greatly throughout Wales. It is widely acknowledged that no standard description of the language has yet sufficiently handled these regional and contextual nuances. The variability of Welsh

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<sup>3</sup> An Eisteddfod (literally SIT, *eistedd*, plus BE, *bod*) is a festival of music, poetry, and dance. Evidence of these events dates back to the 12th century. Currently in Wales, there are multiple local, national and international eisteddfods or in Welsh *esteddfo dau* (plural) held annually.

presents the grammarian with the daunting task of describing a language in which there is no recognised ‘standard’.

Growing interest in the Welsh language is reflected in the variety of Welsh language corpora which are now available. A summary of the main ones is given in Table 1, where we can see that there are now three very large corpora and several other smaller, more specialised corpora.

*Table 1 Welsh language corpora<sup>4</sup>*

Corpus Name	Platform/Software	No. words	Features
Welsh Web Corpus	Sketch Engine, requires a subscription	50,392,441	Some text metadata available Not POS-tagged
Welsh Web Corpus 2013 (trial version)	Free to use in the trial version of Sketch Engine	12,458,397	Some text metadata available Not POS-tagged
CorCenCC (Corpws Cenedlaethol Cymraeg Cyfoes – the National Corpus of Contemporary Welsh)	Free to use online	10,000,000	POS-tagged, some semantic tags
WordNet Cymraeg	Free to use online	unavailable	lexical database of Welsh content words, including sense relations
Corpus of Welsh Language Tweets	Downloadable	7,000,000	Lexical search only, not POS-tagged Raw data available open-source
CEG - Cronfa Electroneg o Gymraeg (Electronic Database of Welsh)	Downloadable via Bangor University website	1,079,032	Extensive text metadata available POS-tagged Raw data available open-source
Siarad	Downloadable via Bangor University website	460,000	Spoken Welsh only Not POS-tagged Raw data available open-source
Corpws Hanesyddol yr Iaith Gymraeg 1500-1850 / A Historical Corpus of the Welsh Language 1500-1850	Free to use online	420,000	Lexical search only, not POS-tagged Raw data available open-source

Most accounts of Welsh syntax fall largely into two categories: reference grammars and treatments within the framework of generative grammar. Reference grammars act much like a dictionary reference for enquiries about grammatical rules and patterns. Their audience is typically an interested but not necessarily academic reader, and such grammars are thus published as books for the public. These are by far the most abundant and accessible source of information on Welsh grammar. Several versions exist, but certainly the most well-known and widely available is King’s *Modern Welsh* (2013). King makes no claim to adhering to any grammar theory, and focusses only on form, not any meaning that might be derived from it. It is, however, a comprehensive and systematic description of Welsh, making it a useful reference to accompany investigations in this field.

<sup>4</sup> See Reference list for urls for each corpus.

The second group of resources are the descriptions published in academic journals and books. These vary in specificity, typically focussing on specific detailed problems such as querying whether instances of *berfenw* (literally ‘verbnoun’) in Welsh are verbs or nouns (Willis 1988; Hannah and Tallerman 2006; Borsley et al. 2007). Traditionally verbnoun or verbal noun forms are considered uninflected forms of verbs where “the sequence ‘be’ + *yn* + verbal noun (as in example (2) above) is considered the equivalent of the progressive aspect in English” (Willis 1998:202). They are called verbnouns because they are seen as having “a quasi-nominal form” (Li, 2004:163). Although Willis (1998) argues convincingly that these are effectively more noun than verb since they undergo mutations in conditions where a noun would mutate, Li (2004:188) argues that “the verbal noun shows both nominal features and verbal features”. What we can conclude from this brief discussion is that the verbal noun is really like a word (e.g. *attack*) which has different parts of speech<sup>5</sup>. While this feature of Welsh is not directly relevant to the aims of this paper, it is worthy of note because *verbnouns* are difficult to gloss effectively in English and it has implications for identifying the functions of the remaining elements of the clause in Welsh<sup>6</sup>. Part of the issue relates to the treatment of the particles *yn* and *wedi* as either aspect markers (Jones & Thomas 1977) or prepositions (Willis 1988)<sup>7</sup>. Future work which concentrates on the analysis of experiential meaning in Welsh should bring a very interesting perspective on this problem.

### 3. Negotiation in Welsh

The brief overview of Welsh in the previous section highlights two key features that are important to bear in mind as we consider the negotiation in Welsh. In this section, we will consider first what is meant by the concept of negotiation generally and why it is a reasonable place to begin to map out a functional description of Welsh. As explained by Quiroz (2018:136):

As the basic lexicogrammatical unit, the clause is thus interpreted as the locus of three kinds of meaning or systemic choices: interpersonally, the clause is a resource to enact interactive roles and negotiate semiotic commodities; ideationally, it is a resource to construe the experience of the surrounding environment and inner consciousness; and textually, it is a resource enabling the flow of discourse in a text.

In this paper, we will be focussing on the resources in Welsh which enact interactive roles and negotiate knowledge and action in meaningful ways. As mentioned above, we first consider

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<sup>5</sup> See Fontaine (2017) for a discussion of ‘attack’ and other noun-verb conversion pairs in English.

<sup>6</sup> The question here is whether *gweld* (see) in *Roedd y ddynes yn gweld draig* is a noun or a verb and whether or not it forms part of a verbal group in which case *yn gweld* would be included as Predicator. The debate on the verbnoun in Welsh is beyond the scope of this paper but an important topic for future research.

<sup>7</sup> There is no direct gloss for these particles. The equivalent of example (2) above with *wedi* would be *Mae’r ddynes wedi gweld draig*. The English translations of both are: ‘The woman was seeing a dragon’ (*yn*) vs ‘The woman has seen a dragon’ (*wedi*).

negotiation as it is handled with the SFL framework, before moving on to consider the systems of mood and polarity.

For Martin (1992: 646), negotiation in English:

involves resolving an exchange by replaying its Mood function (possibly fine tuning through tone), adjusting its POLARITY, MODALITY or TENSE, or substituting its Subject or part of its Residue; alternatively the initiating proposal or proposition has to be replaced and negotiation started over again. The interlocutor initiating the exchange tries to facilitate this by centring meanings at risk in the Mood; it is this facilitation process that explains the pattern of Subject choice in dialogue – the Subject, in other words, is what is at stake.

As seems to be somewhat of a tradition (see Martin 1992, Quiroz 2008), the Monty Python script, *The Argument Clinic* (Chapman et al 1990), will be used as a starting point to develop our account of negotiation in Welsh (see Table 2 below). The perspective that this provides is often referred to in SFL as the view ‘from above’ since it allows us to consider the clause from discourse semantics (see Martin 1992) rather than from lexicogrammar, as is the typical approach in most frameworks. This perspective allows us to focus on the basic negotiatory structures in dialogue. It has been shown that in English, the Subject and Finite elements replay (i.e. confirm or challenge) the modal responsibility of the proposition (see also Halliday & Matthiessen 2014:148). As Quiroz (2018:144) explains, “for English mood, Subject and Finite functions play a key role in clause structure: their presence or absence, as well as their relative sequence, are crucial to motivating basic interpersonal contrasts in this language”. However, Caffarel (2006), Quiroz (2008) and others have provided evidence to demonstrate that languages differ in terms of negotiatory structure, or what, for Halliday, is mood structure (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014), see also the account of Chinese interpersonal clause grammar in Halliday & McDonald (2004: 329-353).

For Quiroz (2008:53) the structure of negotiation includes a Negotiator<sup>8</sup> element, which, for Spanish, is expressed by the verbal group which functions at clause rank to “encod[e] the key interpersonal meanings at stake in verbal exchanges”. For Quiroz the Spanish verbal group includes subjecthood, which she defines in terms of modal responsibility, and ‘finiteness’. There is therefore a distinction to be made between what is meant by subjecthood as compared to Subject. Subjecthood, according to Quiroz (2011:50) does not refer to “the nominal group controlling agreement with verbal morphology”, but rather to the expression of who or what bears modal responsibility in the proposition. In English, however, this concept of ‘subjecthood’ is expressed by a Subject element which normally is realised by a nominal group. The Subject element of the clause constitutes a complex nub of meaning since it is typically

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<sup>8</sup> In SFL, system names are given in full caps (e.g. MOOD) and clausal elements are given with an initial capital (e.g. Subject).



where meanings in all three main metafunctions are conflated (see Fontaine 2012). The importance of the Subject in English is explained by Martin (1992:463) as follows, “a text’s major taxonomic strings will weave themselves through this position, as alternative participants are made modally responsible”. By referring to modal responsibility, as Thompson (2004: 53) explains, we are highlighting the resources through which the clause allows the next speaker to “accept, reject, query or qualify the validity” of the information or proposal.

The basic structure of the Negotiator in Spanish is illustrated in example (3), where *tengo* expresses (i.e. through the inflection of the verb ‘have’) that the speaker carries modal responsibility. The verbal group alone expresses this modal meaning, without the need for a separate syntagmatic functional element, which contrasts with English where both a Subject and a Finite element are needed, as shown in (4). Based on the Argument Clinic excerpt in Table 2, Welsh, as compared to these Spanish and English examples, looks, at first glance, much closer to Spanish than to English as illustrated in example (5), where there is no formal Subject and ‘subjecthood’, i.e. the entity carrying modal responsibility, is encoded through verbal resources. In this case, it is through the impersonal construction since Welsh does not have a verb equivalent for ‘have’. The finite verb in example (5), *mae*, is an instance of the Welsh verb *bod* (‘be’), inflected as 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular present.

(3) Tengo dos codificadores en mi casa (Quiroz 2011:49)  
 ‘I-have’ ‘two decoders’ ‘in my house’  
 Vgp Ngp PP

(4) I have two decoders in my house  
 Subject (I) Finite (have)  
 Ngp Vgp Ngp PP

(5) Mae tri o blant gyda fi (SketchEngine, Welsh Web Corpus)  
 be.V.3p.S. three of children with 1p.S.  
 Vgp Ngp PP  
*I have three children* (literally: ‘is three of children with me’)

Table 2 The Argument Clinic in Welsh<sup>9</sup>

1A	Welsh translation with English gloss and original text	Particle	Responsive <sup>10</sup>	Finite	Subject
	Ai hon yw'r ystafell iawn am ddadlau?"	Ai		yw	hon
	PRT.INT this be.V.3S.PRES-the room right for argue?				
	Is this the right room for an argument?				
2B	Dywedais wrthoch yn barod.			Dywedais	(i)
	say.1S.PAST TO.2PL. PART. ready				
	I've told you once.				
3A	Naddo!		Naddo		
	NEG.PART				
	No you haven't!				
4B	Do, gwnes i.		Do,	gwnes	i
	POS.ADV.PAST do.1S.PAST Pron.1S.				
	Yes I have.				
5A	Pryd?!				
	when.INT				
	When?				
6B	Jyst nawr.				
	Just now				
	Just now.				
7A	Wnest ti ddim!			wnest	ti
	do.V.2S.PAST+SM you NEG.				
	No you didn't!				
8B	Do, gwnes i.		Do	gwnes	i
	POS.ADV.PAST do.1S.PAST Pron.1S.				
	Yes I did!				
9A	Naddo!		Naddo		
	NEG.PART				
	You didn't!				
10B	Do.		Do		
	POS.ADV.PAST				
	You did				
11A	Naddo!		Naddo		
	NEG.PART				
	You didn't!				
12B	Dwi'n dweud wrthoch chi.			Dw	(i)
	be.1S.PAST-PART say.V.INF TO.2PL. Pron.2P.				
	I have told you.				
13B	Do, gwnes i.		Do	gwnes	i
	POS.ADV.PAST do.1S.PAST Pron.1S.				
	Yes I did.				
14B	Naddo wir			naddo	
	NEG.PART true				
	No indeed				

Key: NEG=negative; PART=particle; ADV=adverb; PL=plural; SM= Soft Mutation

<sup>9</sup> We are very grateful to Harri Llewellyn (Bangor University) for the Welsh translation of this excerpt from the English original.

<sup>10</sup> Welsh has a complex system of responsives which will be discussed in section 4. *Do* and *Naddo* are each a finite echo responsive, termed 'perfective responsive' by Jones (1999: 213).

The pattern that emerges from this scripted exchange is that what is required in all responses is a Finite element. Responsives in Welsh will be discussed in more detail below but for the purposes of the current discussion, it is important to note that the responsives in Table 2, *do* (affirmative) and *naddo* (negative), are finite. There is no equivalent of ‘yes’ and ‘no’ in Welsh as responses to declaratives or interrogatives. Responsives typically echo the Finite element of the preceding clause, including any modality that is expressed. Further we can note that in 2B and 3A, repeated here as examples (6) and (7), there is no overt Subject expressed other than the subjecthood expressed through a finite verb and a finite echoic responsive.

(6) Dywedais wrthoch yn barod.  
 say.1S.PAST TO.2PL. PART. ready  
*I've told you once.*

(7) Naddo!  
 NEG.PART  
*No you haven't!*

In what follows, we will examine naturally occurring data, taken from the Siarad corpus of Welsh-English bilingual speech<sup>11</sup>, in order to determine whether we find the same features of negotiation as in the script above. In the excerpt, presented in examples (8) to (12), we find three women talking about another woman with Alzheimer’s disease who was in a nursing home. The participants include Angharad (70 yr, female), Brenda (60 yr, female) and Menna (59 yr, female). The exchange involves an informal conversation in Angharad’s home among the three friends. The Finite elements have been indicated in bold and the Subject underscored.

(8) BRENDA:  
 a mi o'n i yn teimlo wrth bod  
 and.CONJ PRT.AFF be.V.1S.IMPERF I.PRON.1S PRT feel.V.INFIN by.PREP be.V.INFIN  
 mam wedi bod wchi oh  
 mam.N.SG after.PREP be.V.INFIN know.V.2P.PRES oh.IM  
*and I was feeling ... when mum had been ... (you) know, oh*

(9) ANGHARAD:  
 sobr !  
 extremely.ADV  
*terrible!*

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<sup>11</sup> The Siarad corpus of Welsh-English bilingual speech was recorded and transcribed between 2005 and 2008 as part of a research project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), entitled ‘Code-switching and convergence in Welsh: a universal versus a typological approach’. The main theoretical aim of the project was to test alternative models of code-switching with Welsh-English data. Available online: [bangortalk.org.uk](http://bangortalk.org.uk)

(10) BRENDA:  
sobr            **oedd**  
extremely.ADV be.V.3S.IMPERF  
*terrible (it) was*

(11) MENNA:  
**oes**            yna<sup>12</sup>            ddim            achos            i            wneud            hynny  
be.V.3S.PRES.INDEF there.ADV not.ADV+SM cause.N.M to.PREP make.V.INFIN+SM that.PRON.DEM.SP  
*there's no reason to do that*

(12) BRENDA:  
**nag**            **oedd**  
NEG.PART. be.V.3S.IMPERF  
*No/not (it) was*

What we can see from this exchange is that while the Subject in example (8) is overtly expressed, its absence from the remaining contributions suggests it was not necessary in terms of negotiation.

In the following exchange, three teenagers are having an informal conversation at the university they attend. The participants include Colin (17 yr, male), Merfyn (18 yr, male), Sionyn (18 yr, male). Here we will consider only two brief exchanges. In examples (13) and (14) Merfyn is talking about the film *Final Destination*, commenting that he thinks it is quite good in (13). By way of response, Colin confirms that he agrees in (14) with the finite responsive, *oedd*. The Finite elements have been indicated in bold and the Subject underscored.

(13) MERFYN:  
**mae**            o            reit            dda            actually  
be.V.3S.PRES he.PRON.M.3S right.ADJ good.ADJ+SM actual.ADJ+ADV  
*it's quite good actually*

(14) COLIN:  
**oedd**  
be.V.3S.IMPERF  
*it was*

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<sup>12</sup> Despite the suggestion given the English translation, *yna* is not the Subject of this clause in Welsh.

At a later point in the conversation, Merfyn is talking about having a lecture the next day and this brief exchange is given here in examples (15) to (17). As in the previous examples, the Finite elements have been indicated in bold and the Subject underscored. Merfyn does include an overt Subject in example (15) but not in (17). It is worth pointing out that in spoken Welsh, it is easy to drop the first person Subject pronoun following the Finite as often the finite verb ends with a vowel and sometimes even when it does not, as in example (8) above, the item following the Subject is often the particle *yn* and the pronoun *i* is easily absorbed or elided in both cases. As we will see below, even in written language, the Subject is omitted regularly, when it is textually or contextually identifiable.

(15) Merfyn:

**dw**     i     cael     gwrs     fory  
 be.V.1S.PRES I.PRON.1S get.V.INF. lesson.N.F.SG tomorrow.ADV .  
*I've got a lesson tomorrow*

(16) Sionyn:

**wyt** ?  
 be.V.2S.PRES  
*have you?*

(17) Merfyn:

a     wedyn     **dw**     mynd     i     Holyhead  
 CONJ afterwards.ADV be.V.1S.PRES go.V.INFIN to.PREP name  
*and then I'm going to Holyhead*

These examples lead us to suggest that, in Welsh, negotiation is primarily expressed through the Finite verb, which typically comes first in the clause, although potentially preceded by mood particles (as in example (8), *mi*). The instances of an echoic responsive, as illustrated in examples (10), (12) and (14), are arguably independent clauses, or perhaps hypotactic clauses as suggested by Jones (1999:22). The case for this position will be made in the next section. Before turning to the nature of the clause from the interpersonal perspective, it is worth comparing the view of negotiation that we can gleaned from these examples to what we find in Quiroz's (2008, 2011) work on Spanish and also to Caffarel's (2006) work on French, since French has points in common with both Spanish and Welsh, even though Welsh is not a Romance language.

Unlike the Spanish Negotiator discussed above, Caffarel (2006) argues that for French, the Negotiator element includes the Predicator<sup>13</sup> in addition to Subject and Finite. In example (18), the response (18 B) illustrates why all three elements are required in the Negotiator.

<sup>13</sup> In SFL the verbal group is seen to include a Finite and Predicator, where Predicator refers to the non-finite items of the verbal group. For example, the Predicator of 'has eaten' would be 'eaten'. The term is not problem-free but as there is no room for a detailed discussion of this here, we simply gloss the term.

Everything from the Subject to the Predicator must be replayed in the response. The reason for this is in part because of the system of pronominal clitics in French and because of the role of the Predicator (see Caffarel 2006 for details).

(18) A: as-tu      donné      le livre      à Paul.  
           have-you    given      the book    to Paul (*Have you give the book to Paul?*)  
           Finite-Subject   Predicator   Complement   Complement

B: Oui    je      le    lui    ai    donné (Caffarel 2006:129)  
       Yes,    I      it    him    have    given (cf English: *Yes I have*)  
       P-marker   S-clitic   C-clitic   C-clitic   Finite   Predicator

While Welsh does have clitics, they differ from French in that Welsh clitics remain structurally separate and do not form a preverbal cluster as they do in French (Roberts, 1999:633). The following example from Roberts (*ibid.*), given here as (19), illustrates this point where the clitic in question is *ei*. Note that the pronoun *fo* ('him') is given in parenthesis because it is optional. Generally, in written text it is omitted but included for emphasis in spoken language. The reason for its omission is related to the fact that in Welsh some prepositions inflect for person and here *iddo* expresses both the prepositional meaning as well as the person meaning. For example, had the example been 'Emrys gave it to her', the Welsh would be *Mae Emrys yn ei toi iddi (hi)*; in other words, the preposition *iddo* expresses 'to him'.

(19) a. Mae Emrys yn    ei    roi    iddo (fo). (Roberts, 1999:633)  
           be Emrys PRT. it    give    to (him)<sup>14</sup>  
       b. Emrys le lui    a    donné.  
           Emrys it him has given  
           *Emrys gave it to him.*

The use of the pronoun *ei* is seen as a clitic because its use here is syntagmatically marked, i.e. a nominal group (e.g. *y llyfr* 'the book') could not occur in this position: \**Mae Emrys yn y llyfr rhoi iddo (fo)* vs *Mae Emrys yn rhoi y llyfr iddo (fo)*. A similar, and attested, example to this is found in the same conversation discussed in the previous section, shown here as example (20), where it is clear that the pronoun occurs after the Subject and the Predicator (i.e. the non-finite verb *roid*). The response to example (19) would be either *ydy* or *nac ydy* (singular, 'is' and 'isn't') and to (20) would be *ydynt* and *nac ydynt* (plural, 'are' and 'aren't'), which shows that in Welsh, unlike in French, the Negotiator element would not extend to any clitics occurring between the Subject and Predicator.

(20) COLIN

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<sup>14</sup> The English glosses for Welsh and French were not in the original but we have provided them for ease of reference.



mark mood choice explicitly between indicative and imperative and in most cases between declarative and interrogative. However, in Welsh as in French (Caffarel 2006) and Spanish (Quiroz 2008) and many other languages, the distinction is sometimes left to context and/or intonation, with no grammatical (syntagmatic) distinction identifiable.

Welsh has two main mood types: indicative and imperative. As noted by King (2003:153) “literary Welsh has a subjunctive which has all but died out in the spoken language”. However, what is significant in Welsh, as compared to English, is the apparent full integration of the polarity system into the mood system. This distinction is illustrated in example (21), which is an invented example from King (2003: 32-33).

- (21) Mae Fred fan hyn (Fred is here) - positive declarative  
Ydy Fred fan hyn? (*Is Fred here*) - positive interrogative  
Dydy Fred ddim fan hyn (*Fred isn't here*) – negative declarative

These examples illustrate that for clauses with *bod* ('be') as an auxiliary - see example (21) - both mood and polarity are encoded in the verb (i.e. *mae, ydy, dydy*). Welsh has mood particles which tend to be ellipted in casual conversation, leading to some degree of ambiguity if the mutation triggered by the mood particle is not expressed. Mood markers generally trigger a mutation on the following verb which would make the mood explicit. As explained by Borsley et al (2007), declarative clauses and interrogative clauses are historically (and in literary Welsh) introduced by *fe* and *a*, respectively, which trigger a soft mutation. This particle can be dropped but the mutation usually remains. The effect of the particle is illustrated in the invented examples given in (22) to (24), where we can see that the interrogative particle, *a*, is present in (24), triggering the mutation of *talon* to *dalon* ('pay'). However, note that in (23), we find the mutated form of *talon* (i.e. *dalon*) despite there being no interrogative particle expressed; instead its effect is maintained.

- (22) Talon nhw am y tocynnau (*They paid for the tickets*)  
(23) Dalon nhw am y tocynnau (*Did they pay for the tickets?*)  
(24) A dalon nhw am y tocynnau (*Did they pay for the tickets?*)

Awbry (2004) analysed 400 clauses from 8 Welsh speakers from Pembrokeshire, in south-west Wales and found that 47% were unmarked in the sense that the clause did not express a mood particle, nor did it express any mutation if the mood particle was dropped, i.e. no grammatical difference was made between declarative and interrogative clauses. In the remainder of the cases, some encoding of mood was identified; 53% were marked but only 13% in total overtly included a mood particle.

To illustrate the way in which mood is marked in Welsh, we will consider invented examples (25) to (30), which are all variations of 'children + play + in the park' in each of the main mood



types (declarative, interrogative and imperative), both in the affirmative and the negative forms.

- (25) Mae'r plant yn chwarae yn y parc.  
BE-3p.s.pr.-the children PART play in the park  
*The children are playing in the park*
- (26) Dydy'r plant ddim yn chwarae yn y parc  
BE-3p.s.pr.N.-the children NEG. PART play in the park  
*The children aren't playing in the park*
- (27) A ydy'r plant yn chwarae yn y parc?  
PART. BE-3p.pl.pr.-the children PART. Play.INF in the park  
*Are the children playing in the park?*
- (28) Nac ydy'r plant yn chwarae yn y parc?  
NEG. BE-3p.pl.pr.-the children PART. play.INF in the park  
*Aren't the children playing in the park?*
- (29) Chwarewch yn y parc  
play.2p.pl.imp in the park  
*Play in the park*
- (30) Peidiwch â chwarae yn y parc  
STOP-2p.pl.IMP. with play.INF in the park  
*Don't play in the park*

Franks and Fontaine (2015) report on an analysis of 58 clauses from a small corpus of Welsh language from online magazines and blogs. They were interested in determining the extent to which the relationship between Subject and Finite could be analysed as an indication of mood. While the Subject has the potential to be included in all three mood types, the results presented in

Table 4 suggest that there are some typical associated patterns. The symbol ^ indicates 'followed by', therefore 'Subject ^ Finite' describes the pattern where the Subject is followed by the Finite. The use of parenthesis indicates the ellipsis of the element, therefore 'Finite ^ (Subject)' indicates that the Subject was ellipted.

*Table 4 Subject and Finite relationship by mood type*

Subject Finite relation	Declarative	Interrogative	Imperative
N (# clauses)	20	17	21
Finite ^ Subject	70%	100%	9.5%
Finite ^ (Subject)	30%	0%	90.5%

In a larger sample, Williams (2019), in her study of nominal groups in Welsh, found that of the 766 clauses analysed, 18.3% per cent involved an ellipted Subject. Given that both Franks & Fontaine (2015) and Williams (2019) analysed written texts, one would expect that this frequency would only increase in informal spoken language. The picture in

Table 4 gives a misleading impression of imperatives. Before moving on to discuss responsiveness, we will briefly discuss some significant features of the imperative mood in Welsh as related to negotiation.

We have argued in the previous section that the main resource for negotiation in Welsh is the Finite element. However, if we include polarity as an important element, given its overtly marked status in Welsh, then we might ask whether the mood structure for Welsh should include all interpersonal elements up to and including the Negator element<sup>18</sup>, when present. It seems clear that any Predicator, for a clause that might have one, would not be involved in determining the mood structure of the clause. We might therefore propose that mood, like negotiation, is determined solely by the Finite element, even though other clausal elements are closely integrated with the Finite (e.g. mood particles and polarity).

Concerning the imperative mood in Welsh, we find one non-finite construction which appears to function differently to the finite imperative discussed above. The non-finite imperative uses the *berfenw*, the verbnoun mentioned briefly above, and its use is illustrated in example (32) as compared to the finite imperative shown in example (31)<sup>19</sup>. Jones (1999:211) suggests that “the verbnoun form can be purposefully used with weak directive strength and serves merely to put forward actions for consideration”.

(31) Finite imperative (Jones 1999:211)

gna	hi	fanna
do.IMP	she	there
<i>do it there</i>		

(32) Verbnoun imperative (Jones 1999:211)

neud	o	fanna	i	gyd,	ia
Do.INF	he	there	to	all	yes
<i>do it all there, yes</i>					

One feature of Welsh imperatives that is an important distinction as compared to English is that finite imperatives do allow an echoic response, i.e. a response that replays the Finite element<sup>20</sup>, although it is more frequent to find a non-echoic response in these instances (see below for more detail on Welsh responsiveness). In the corpus-based study carried out by Jones

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<sup>18</sup> By Negator element we simply mean the element of the clause expression negation or negative polarity in SFL terms.

<sup>19</sup> It is worth noting that the differences expressed here are eliminated in the negative: *Paid â neud o fanna* ('Don't do it there'). Therefore, where there is a contrast between a finite imperative and a non-finite (verbnoun) imperative in positive polarity, there is not with negative polarity.

<sup>20</sup> There is no replay of the Finite element of the English imperative even in the negative imperative, e.g. *Don't touch that*, where a response might be *I won't* but not *I don't*. This is of course open to both interpretation and debate. See the discussion of 'force of rejection' in responsiveness below.

(1999), of the 381 imperative clauses he analysed, 203 (53.3%) were finite imperatives and the remaining 178 (46.7%) were verbnoun imperatives. The responsives were categorized by type and polarity. Positive nonechoic responsives were by far the most frequent response to both finite and verbnoun imperatives, with a frequency of 95.5% and 95.9% respectively. In other words, only 10 (4.9%) responses to the finite imperatives were finite verbal echoic responsives, which were approximately evenly distributed between positive and negative responsives. Among the negative responsives, the simple response *na* was most frequent with a frequency of 86% following a finite imperative and 83.8% following a verbnoun imperative. The remaining responsives were nonechoic (see Jones 1999 for details). An example of the most typical negative responsive is given in example (33), repeated from (31) above here with the nonechoic responsive (Jones 1999: 211). Jones (1999:213) suggests that “the strong directives conveyed by finite imperatives are more likely to provoke disagreement and are thus more likely to occur as target for negative responses”.

- (33) A: Gna            hi        fanna  
           do.IMP.        she     there
- F: Naci  
       Neg. (nonechoic responsive)

As suggested earlier in this paper, the system of responsives in Welsh is quite complex, and it would not be possible to do justice to it in the space we have available here. However, a brief presentation at this point should nevertheless allow us to make the case for responsives to be considered as a type of mood. The main reason for this has already been hinted at. In the previous section, we argued that negotiating exchange in Welsh involves only the Finite element and the example of responsives was used to make this case. Jones (1999) has provided an excellent account of Welsh responsives in his book, *The Welsh Answering System*. He makes a distinction among three types of responsives: echoic, a finite verbal responsive; perfect, a restricted finite responsive; and nonechoic, a non-finite and non-echoic responsive. By far the most frequent response in the indicative mood in Welsh is the echoic responsive where we find a replay of the Finite element, as we have already seen. However, Welsh also has what Jones (1999) refers to as a perfect responsive, which takes the form *do* ('yes') and *naddo* ('no'), but which are used only in response to clauses expressed in the past perfect tense, as we saw in the Argument Clinic extract above. Jones (1999:56) points out that there is some variation here, but he relates this either to literary texts or to certain dialects but in all cases these are highly infrequent and the perfect responsive is by far the preferred one. Jones (1999:56) explains that the perfect responsive is still a finite responsive (i.e. tense and aspect are replayed) even though the verb is not echoed (replayed). There are conditions under which the perfect responsive is in alternation with the echoic responsive; this occurs in present perfect aspect for clauses involving *bod* ('be'). For details see Jones (1999). The main

distinction between the echoic responsives and the perfect responsives is that the echoic ones maintain traces of subjecthood, as discussed above. In other words, these responsives replay not only the Finite but also the person and number of the entity carrying modal responsibility, irrespective of mood type (e.g. including imperatives), and polarity.

An interesting example is provided in Jones (1999:223), where we find a verbal response that is not fully echoic of the target, but is instead substituted in order to modify the illocutionary force. If we consider the example reproduced here as examples (34) and (35), we can see that the response in (34) does not repeat the verb *cael* 'have' but changes to *gwneud* 'do' in the responsive. According to Jones (1999:223), this form shows a greater "force of rejection" than the responsive in (35) which repeats the same verb *cael* 'have'.

(34) S:    gei                di    neud                y       (3)   gynta  
           Have.Fut.2s. you   do.INF.            the    (3)   first  
           You can do the (3) first (literally *you have done the (3) first*)  
       M:       na                na'i  
           Neg.part.    do.Fut.1s. I  
           No (literally *I don't*)

(35) S:    gei                di    neud                y       llestri gyna  
           Have.Fut.2s. you   do.INF.            the    dishes first  
           You can do the dishes first (literally *you have done the dishes first*)  
       M:       na                cha'i  
           Neg.part.    have.Fut.1s. I  
           No (literally *I haven't*)

The third type of responsive is the non-echoic responsive which is expressed typically as *ie* 'yes' and *nage* 'no', although there is considerable regional variation in these forms throughout Wales. Jones (1999:22) defines nonechoic responsives as those responses which are not "part of the clause structure of accompanying sentence answers ... they can be regarded as being in a paratactic relationship with accompanying clauses and not a hypotactic one".

There is one particular clause construction that requires the nonechoic responsive. When 'fronting' is involved in a clause, i.e. the initial clause element is an experiential element rather than an interpersonal one, the responsive must be non-echoic: *ie* 'yes' or *nage* 'no'. Jones suggests that fronting content, a relatively common occurrence in Welsh, may be related to "the information structure of the clause, such as focus, emphasis, and contrastive emphasis" (1999: 102). As with the issues related to the verbal group, here we see that the analysis and discussion presented is pending the development of a functional account of the textual and experiential metafunctions. The following set of examples is taken from Jones (1999:101) to

show the effect of fronting on the response system and given here as example (36), using more functional terminology<sup>21</sup>, i.e. Finite, Subject and Predicator.

(36)	Fronted	Finite	Subject	Predicator	Responsive
		Oedd	Mair	yn canu?	oedd / nac oedd
	Mair	oedd		yn canu?	ie / nage
	Canu	oedd	Mair?		ie / nage
		be.V.3S.IMPERF	Mair	Part. sing.INF	

*Was Mair singing? / Was it Mair who was singing? / Singing was Mair?*

To summarise this discussion of mood in Welsh, while there are three distinct moods in Welsh which correspond to the main mood types of most if not all European languages, Welsh does display some very interesting features in terms of the grammatical resources for expressing the discourse semantics of negotiation. The presentation here has been necessarily brief and we have not been able to explore in detail some of the contextual considerations of the interplay of mood and negotiation. What we have presented seems to support the claim made by Jones (1999:187) that, for Welsh, “a clause is imperative, indicative or responsive, and any one of these can be positive or negative”. Therefore, we propose a mood system which captures these features as illustrated in Figure 1. For each Welsh clause, two systems are involved simultaneously, mood and polarity. There are some aspects of this proposal that are contentious. For example, whether a strong enough case has been made for the responsive as a clause type and whether the non-finite imperative clause, expressed with the verbnoun construction, should be included in the mood system, since it is not finite. Until these issues can be explored in further detail, the representation in Figure 1 is presented here as a reasonable starting point since it is supported both by the examples discussed here and by the corpus-based analysis provided by Jones (1999).

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<sup>21</sup> The headings used by Jones (1999:101) are: Fronted Verb Subject Progressive Verbnoun.

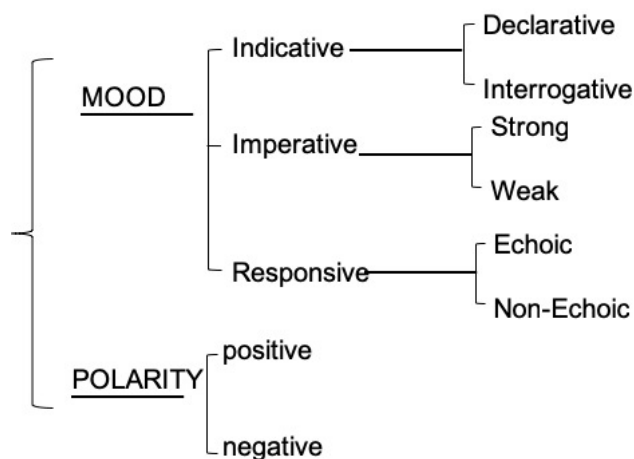


Figure 1 Welsh system of mood<sup>22</sup>

## 5. Summary and concluding remarks

As stated in the introduction, the goal of this paper was to set out an account of the principle grammatical resources for negotiating exchange in Welsh. What the data shows is that the clause initial position in Welsh is highly significant in establishing the meanings ‘at risk’ (Martin 1992). The most typical (i.e. most frequent) is a Finite element; however, even when this is not the case, for example when a nominal group is fronted, it is this that determines the nature of negotiation. We have seen that Welsh has an intricate system of responsives and even though we have only scratched the surface on their function in exchange, our data supports the position taken by Jones (1999) that they constitute a clause which expresses mood. In this sense then, for Welsh, we may safely argue that interpersonal meanings are, to some extent, prioritised. This view is further supported by a regular loss of an explicit, or overt, Subject, and how the concept of subjecthood can be carried through finite verbal, rather than nominal resources.

However, more than simply developing a theoretical position on negotiation in Welsh, we set out to break new ground by publishing this first description of Welsh within a functional framework and certainly the first within systemic functional linguistics. It is very clear from our work here that there is much more to do. We mentioned in the introduction that the Welsh government has a target of one million speakers of Welsh by 2050. Welsh language education, and indeed bilingual language education, is a top priority in Wales. We are convinced that by developing an SFL description of Welsh, we will be able to offer important contributions to language and literacy development in Wales, given the significance of SFL already in both areas with respect to English (see for example McCabe 2017).

<sup>22</sup> As one reviewer pointed out, indicators of the realization of each of the system features would be very interesting but the interaction of negation in the polarity system with the moods system requires further work before a more detail picture can emerge. This interaction is certainly an area that merits further investigation.



In various places, we identified openings for future research, which provide a good starting point for pursuing a full description of the interpersonal metafunction in Welsh. Future work should look more closely at imperative constructions. There is a dearth of research on these clause types generally in all languages. As Jones (1999) suggests, Welsh has two types of imperatives which construe different modal force and yet this effect is not available with negative polarity (see the footnote for examples (31) and (32)). Furthermore, as we saw in examples (34) and (35), substitution in responsive clauses carries different modal meanings and therefore displays interesting features of negotiation, which we were not able to pursue in detail here. However, despite how significant the interpersonal strand of meaning is in Welsh, any such development needs to be complemented by descriptions of the experiential and textual metafunctions. Our analysis shows that there are significant areas where these strands intertwine. For example, a study of experiential meanings, i.e. transitivity patterns, may impact on our understanding of the interpersonal clause and the treatment of the *berfenw* (verbnoun). In terms of textual meanings, Welsh offers a theoretically fertile ground on which to examine the concept of Theme (e.g. regular Subject ellipsis) and thematic constructions (e.g. fronted experiential content and its relation both to responsives and information structure). We feel this paper will serve as an important starting point for pursuing a complete functional description of Welsh.

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#### Welsh Language Corpora

1. CEG - Cronfa Electroneg o Gymraeg  
<https://www.bangor.ac.uk/canolfanbedwyr/ceg.php.en>
2. SketchEngine  
<https://sketchengine.co.uk>
3. CorCenCC (Corpws Cenedlaethol Cymraeg Cyfoes – the National Corpus of Contemporary Welsh)  
<http://www.corcenc.org>
4. WordNet Cymraeg  
<http://users.cs.cf.ac.uk/I.Spasic/wncy/index.html>
5. Corpws Hanesyddol yr Iaith Gymraeg 1500-1850 / A Historical Corpus of the Welsh Language 1500-1850  
<http://people.ds.cam.ac.uk/dwew2/hcwl/menu.htm>
6. Corpus of Welsh Language Tweets  
<http://techiaith.org/corpora/twitter/?lang=en>