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**PROLEGOMENA TO THE STUDY  
OF CODE-SWITCHING IN THE OLD IRISH GLOSSES\***

JACOPO BISAGNI

ABSTRACT. This article investigates the frequent alternation of Latin and Old Irish in several collections of Early Medieval Irish glosses (especially focussing on the glosses to the Epistles of St Paul in Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, MS M.p.th.f.12), in the attempt to ascertain how modern language contact and code-switching theories (Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Frame – or MLF – model *in primis*) may help us understand this phenomenon, as well as the exact nature of the linguistic relationship between Hiberno-Latin and the vernacular among the Medieval Irish *literati*. Criteria for identifying what can be legitimately defined as 'written code-switching' are discussed, and a methodology for the study of code-switching in Medieval glosses is proposed.

KEYWORDS: bilingualism, cleft sentence, code-switching, *colloquia*, diglossia, historical sociolinguistics, Matrix Language Frame model, Würzburg glosses.

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is probably not an exaggeration to say that the study of bilingualism has been the object of an explosion of interest during the last thirty years. In turn, within the domain of bilingual studies, no phenomenon seems to have attracted more interest than code-switching, especially from the point of view of sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and syntax.<sup>1</sup>

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\*This article is the result of the re-elaboration of several papers on Latin/Old Irish code-switching presented at conferences and seminars over the past four years. Part of the research undertaken towards the preparation of this article was supported by the Millennium Fund of the National University of Ireland, Galway (2010/2011). I would like to thank Michael Clarke, Pierre-Yves Lambert, Pádraic Moran and Mark Stansbury for discussing with me many of the topics treated in this article. Needless to say, responsibility for any remaining error lies with me alone.

<sup>1</sup> It would be impossible to provide here a satisfactory account of the very substantial amount of literature on code-switching published since the seminal 1980 article by Shana Poplack ('Sometimes

In recent years, the remarkable progress of our understanding of the dynamics characterising modern bilingual communities has also prompted philologists and historical linguists to study Ancient and Medieval bilingualism by availing of new theoretical perspectives: in this context, it is worth mentioning impressive achievements such as J. N. Adams's ground-breaking book *Bilingualism and the Latin Language* (published in 2003), or the more recent multi-author volume *Code-Switching in Early English* (published in 2011).<sup>2</sup>

It is certainly not surprising that, among all aspects of bilingualism, code-switching is the one that has been studied most frequently by scholars working on historical corpora: indeed, besides the above-mentioned availability of a substantial body of scientific literature on this topic, code-switching is also one of the few overt bilingual behaviours which can manifest themselves in writing, thereby providing precious primary evidence for bilingual practices of the past.

Unfortunately, it is notoriously difficult to find a precise definition of code-switching (hereafter abbreviated as CS), partially due to terminological disagreement among scholars, but also due to the elusive nature of the phenomenon itself. For the time being, it may be enough to confine ourselves to the broad definition provided in the introduction to the recent *Cambridge handbook of linguistic code-switching*: 'the alternating use of two [we may add: 'or more than two'] languages in the same stretch

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I'll start a sentence in Spanish *y termino en Español*: toward a typology of code-switching', *Linguistics* 18 (1980) 581–618); good up-to-date bibliographies on this topic can be found in P. Gardner-Chloros, *Code-Switching* (Cambridge 2009), and B. E. Bullock & A. J. Toribio (ed), *The Cambridge handbook of linguistic code-switching* (Cambridge 2009).

<sup>2</sup> J. N. Adams, *Bilingualism and the Latin language* (Cambridge 2003); H. Schendl & L. Wright (ed), *Code-Switching in Early English* (Berlin/Boston 2011). Other relevant contributions which may be mentioned here are: J. N. Adams, M. Janse, S. Swain (ed), *Bilingualism in ancient society* (Oxford/New York 2002); F. Biville, J.-C. Decourt, G. Rougemont (ed), *Bilinguisme gréco-latin et épigraphie* (Lyon 2008); K. Braunmüller, & G. Ferraresi (ed), *Aspects of multilingualism in European language history* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia 2003); E. Campanile, G. R. Cardona, R. Lazzeroni (ed), *Bilinguismo e biculturalismo nel mondo antico* (Pisa 1988); A. Grotans, *Reading in Medieval St. Gall* (Cambridge 2006); S. Le Briz & G. Veyseyre (ed), *Approches du bilinguisme Latin-Français au Moyen Âge* (Turnhout 2010); D. A. Trotter (ed.), *Multilingualism in Later Medieval Britain* (Cambridge 2000); J. Watt, *Code-switching in Luke and Acts* (New York 1997); S. Wenzel, *Macaronic sermons* (Ann Arbor 1994).

of discourse by a bilingual speaker'.<sup>3</sup> Although there is still considerable disagreement among scholars over points of detail, the following brief summary by Brian Hok-Shing Chan manages to capture the main traits of the *status quaestionis* in regard to the nature and function(s) of CS:

'Researchers have recognized that CS is not an indicator of deficiency in either or both language(s). Instead, it is most often viewed as a resource that bilinguals tactfully utilize to achieve various communicative effects [...], to index social roles and identities [...], and/or to manage ongoing talk [...]. Furthermore, researchers have come to realize that (intra-sentential) CS – far from being random – is patterned and structurally governed, although there is still debate about the nature of grammatical constraints on CS and whether these constraints are universal'.<sup>4</sup>

As conveniently summarised by Penelope Gardner-Chloros, most studies of this phenomenon, which nowadays we know to be widespread in multilingual communities throughout the world, can be understood as belonging to one of the following three categories: (1) 'sociolinguistic/ethnographic descriptions of CS situations'; (2) 'pragmatic/conversation analytic approaches'; (3) 'grammatical analyses of samples of CS and the search for underlying rules, models and explanations to explain the patterns found'.<sup>5</sup>

While on the one hand most works on Ancient and Medieval multilingualism CS would fit comfortably in at least one of the first two categories, on the other hand there is no doubt that research on the grammatical (and more specifically syntactic) aspects of historical bilingualism remains under-represented.<sup>6</sup> If we focus on the specific case of Early Medieval Ireland, studies dealing with Latin/Old Irish CS are still extremely rare, and published work on the grammatical aspects of CS in this particular historical context is basically non-existent: to my knowledge, there are only

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<sup>3</sup> Cit. from Bullock & Toribio, *Linguistic code-switching*, xii.

<sup>4</sup> Cit. from B. Hok-Shing Chan, 'Code-switching between typologically distinct languages', in Bullock & Toribio, *Linguistic code-switching*, 182.

<sup>5</sup> Cit. from Gardner-Chloros, *Code-switching*, 10.

<sup>6</sup> In his (otherwise excellent) *Bilingualism and the Latin language* (p. 298), J. N. Adams states that it seems to him '*perverse* that some linguists have shown a desire to establish 'universal' constraints on code-switching when there is as yet so little empirical data available about a practice which is undoubtedly familiar all over the world, particularly in this age of globalization, when English is intruding heavily into dozens of languages' (my italics). Such a statement gives a good idea of the strong suspicion towards this kind of investigation which can still be found among (some) philologists.

two articles dealing specifically with CS in Medieval Irish sources, and both adopt a broad socio-historical perspective; furthermore, the present writer published a preliminary (and therefore far from comprehensive) discussion of Latin/Old Irish CS in an article written in collaboration with Immo Warntjes, concerning the occurrence of vernacular forms in the otherwise fully Latin treatise known as the Munich Computus.<sup>7</sup>

This defective situation seems to be due to a variety of reasons: first of all, it is true that essentially all grammatical models of CS have been elaborated on the basis of speech rather than writing,<sup>8</sup> whereas even as far as modern languages are concerned, the study of written CS is still only incipient.<sup>9</sup> However, while it is important to be aware of this potential issue, it is nonetheless encouraging that the few existing attempts at syntactic analyses of CS in pre-modern sources have obtained

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. N. Müller, ‘Kodewechsel in der irischen Übersetzungsliteratur: *Exempla et Desiderata*’, in E. Poppe & H. Tristram (ed), *Übersetzung, Adaptation und Akkulturation im insularen Mittelalter*, (Münster 1999) 73–86; D. Bronner, ‘Code-switching in Medieval Ireland: the case of the *Vita Tripartita Sancti Patricii*’, *Journal of Celtic Linguistics* 9 (2005) 1–12; J. Bisagni & I. Warntjes, ‘Latin and Old Irish in the Munich Computus: a reassessment and further evidence’, *Ériu* 57 (2007) 1–33 (for a critical edition and a detailed analysis of the Munich Computus, see now I. Warntjes (ed. & tr.), *The Munich Computus: text and translation. Irish computistics between Isidore of Seville and the Venerable Bede and its reception in Carolingian times* (Stuttgart 2010)). A brief discussion of bilingualism and code-switching can now be found in E. Johnston, *Literacy and Identity in Early Medieval Ireland* (Woodbridge 2013) 27–31. I should also mention here the ongoing research project ‘Medieval Irish Bilingualism’, hosted by the University of Utrecht (more details on the project can be found at the website <<http://www.medievalirishbilingualism.eu/>>).

<sup>8</sup> It may be worth keeping in mind J. N. Adams’s caveat on this matter: ‘It must be stressed that the primary evidence relating to bilingualism in dead languages is very different from that which modern linguists investigating bilingualism in spoken languages can call on. Written evidence raises its own problems of interpretation, and it would not do to accept uncritically all of the assumptions implicit in linguistic research on bilingualism in spoken form’ (*Bilingualism and the Latin language*, 3).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. e.g. C. Montes-Alcala, ‘Written codeswitching: powerful bilingual images’, in R. Jacobson (ed.), *Codeswitching worldwide II* (Berlin 2001) 193–223; L. Callahan, *Spanish/English codeswitching in a written corpus* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia 2004); L. Hinrichs, *Codeswitching on the Web: English and Jamaican creole in e-mail communication* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia 2006); M. Dorleijn & J. Nortier, ‘Code-switching and the internet’, in Bullock & Toribio, *Linguistic code-switching*, 127–41. Unfortunately, I have not been able to see M. Sebba, S. Mahootian & C. Jonsson (ed), *Language mixing and code-switching in writing: approaches to mixed-language written discourse* (London 2012).

interesting correspondences with conclusions drawn on the basis of modern CS in spoken corpora.<sup>10</sup>

Another difficulty which may have so far prevented the application of modern CS theories to Medieval Irish sources is the fact that such theories are often based on linguistic approaches which, as far as I can tell, are not frequently employed by scholars working in the area of Celtic philology (e.g., frameworks belonging to generative grammar, such as x-bar theory or ‘government and binding’).

Finally, we should perhaps not underestimate the potentially negative impact of the enduring presence of old-fashioned views on CS, language contact, and on the role of Latin in the Early Middle Ages, reflexes of which can often be found in the secondary literature. Indeed, while the passage from Hok-Shing Chan’s article cited above shows the positive attitude to CS generally adopted by modern linguists, who see CS as a communicative resource skilfully employed by bilinguals, it is also fair to say that things have not always been so. In an oft-cited passage from his influential 1953 book *Languages in Contact*, Uriel Weinreich pronounced what now sounds like a definitive condemnation of intra-sentential CS:

‘The *ideal bilingual* switches from one language to the other according to appropriate changes in the speech situation (interlocutors, topics etc.), but not in an unchanged speech situation, and *certainly not within a single sentence*’ (my italics).<sup>11</sup>

In light of statements such as this, we may understand the following quote from Christine Mohrmann’s discussion of the Latin of Saint Patrick as a more or less direct consequence of the linguistic *Zeitgeist*:

‘the Latin of Patrick is clumsy, he is *hampered by his bilingualism*, but the structure of his language as such exhibits the characteristic traits of the living, colloquial, vulgar Latin of the fifth century’ (my italics).<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. e.g. N. McLelland, ‘A historical study of codeswitching in writing: German and Latin in Schottelius’ *Ausführliche Arbeit von der Teutschen HauptSprache* (1663)’, *International Journal of Bilingualism* 8 (2004) 499–523; H. Schendl, ‘Syntactic constraints on code-switching in medieval texts’, in I. Taavitsainen (ed.), *Placing Middle English in context* (Berlin/New York 2000) 67–86; H. Schendl, ‘Beyond boundaries: code-switching in the leases of Oswald of Worcester’, in Schendl & Wright, *Code-switching in Early English*, 47–95; H. Halmari & T. Regetz, ‘Syntactic aspects of code-switching in Oxford, MS Bodley 649’, *ibid.* 115–53.

<sup>11</sup> Cit. from U. Weinreich, *Languages in contact* (New York 1953) 73.

Views of this kind can occasionally be found in more recent literature too, as exemplified by this passage by David Howlett concerning the distribution of languages in sources from Anglo-Saxon England:

‘when Anglo-Saxons wrote English they wrote English, and when they wrote Latin they wrote Latin. They did not *contaminate* their Latin with English’ (my italics).<sup>13</sup>

Likewise, the fairly widespread consideration of Hiberno-Latin as a purely (or mostly) artificial written language, a foreign idiom with little or no spoken dimension, seems to be based on old assumptions rather than actual evidence. In the article cited above, Mohrmann also provided a one-sentence summary of her understanding of the nature of Medieval Irish Latin:

‘in Ireland Latin was introduced as the language of the Christian Church and of the Latin civilization introduced by Christian missionaries, without being adopted as the current language of everyday life’.<sup>14</sup>

Again, it would be easy to find many similar statements in more or less contemporary works on Medieval Latin; the following passage from Erich Auerbach’s famous *Literary language and its public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages* will have to suffice for the present purpose:

‘In the [...] ninth and tenth centuries and the first half of the eleventh, Latin was a purely artificial language, written according to ancient models and often degenerating into a kind of pedantic puzzle’.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Cit. from Ch. Mohrmann, ‘The Earliest Continental Irish Latin’, *Vigiliae Christianae* 16 (1962) 216–33: 217.

<sup>13</sup> Cit. from D. Howlett, ‘A polyglot glossary of the twelfth century’, in G. Stewart & D. Trotter (eds), *De mot en mot: aspects of medieval linguistics. Essays in honour of William Rothwell* (Cardiff 1997) 81–91: 89. The same passage is also cited (and criticised) in Schendl, ‘Beyond boundaries’, 47.

<sup>14</sup> Cit. from Mohrmann, ‘Irish Latin’, 217; cf. also ead. ‘Le latin médiéval: I. Langue morte ou langue vivante? - II. La prose. - III. La poésie’, in *Études sur le latin des Chrétiens* (4 vols, Rome 1961) vol. 2, 181–232 [originally published in *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 1.3 (1958) 265–94]: 183 (‘Au moyen âge [le latin] n’est plus que la langue de l’enseignement, de toute la culture scolaire et savante; il est langue, aussi, de plusieurs secteurs de la vie institutionnelle, du droit, de la politique; il est, surtout, langue de l’Église, de la liturgie et de la spiritualité’).

<sup>15</sup> Cit. from E. Auerbach, *Literary language and its public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages* (London 1965) 121 [Engl. tr. of *Literatursprache und Publikum in der lateinischen Spätantike und im Mittelalter* (Bern 1958)].

In a much more recent contribution on pre-Norman British Latin, Michael Lapidge also adheres to the evaluation of this language as a substantially artificial entity:

‘On the whole one *assumes* that, for the Anglo-Saxons, Latin was primarily a written language, and that such Latin as they spoke was an artificial reconstruction of something resembling classical Latin, permeated here and there by Vulgar Latin pronunciation’ (my italics).<sup>16</sup>

The use of the verb *assume* betrays the somewhat aprioristic nature of the subsequent statement. Interestingly, a comparable (although much more ‘uncompromising’) formulation, applied this time to Medieval Irish Latin, may be found in an article by Inge Genee published in the same year as Lapidge’s:

‘As for the lack of oral bilingualism, it is *generally acknowledged* that the role of Latin as a spoken language in medieval Ireland remained extremely restricted (but cf. Harvey 1992 for a dissenting view). It was mostly a written language, although it was perhaps occasionally spoken by clerics as a lingua franca. An important sign of the lack of oral fluency in Latin is found in the fact that the majority of the Latin loans in medieval Irish had a pronunciation that was based on British Latin: lacking their own habits of speaking Latin, the Irish resorted to adopting the pronunciation of the British clerics who introduced many of these words [...]. A number of Latin loanwords are explainable both ways: either as coming directly from Ecclesiastical Latin or via British Latin’ (my italics).<sup>17</sup>

Given that this paragraph by Genee *precedes* her actual linguistic analysis of Latin influence on Old Irish (which, as becomes apparent at the end of the article, she believes to have been minimal), it is difficult not to detect here a certain degree of circularity.

Even more importantly, the second half of this passage seems to contain an internal contradiction: it is not clear to me why the ‘lack of oral fluency in Latin’ in Medieval Ireland would be shown by the fact that ‘the majority of the Latin loans in medieval Irish had a pronunciation that was based on British Latin’. Quite to the contrary, this shows that a large amount of words, which were eventually integrated

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<sup>16</sup> Cit. from M. Lapidge, ‘How ‘English’ is pre-conquest Anglo-Latin?’, in Ch. Burnett & N. Mann (ed), *Britannia Latina* (London/Turin 2005) 1–13: 4.

<sup>17</sup> Cit. from I. Genee, ‘Latin influence on Old Irish? A case study in medieval language contact’, *Journal of Celtic Linguistics* 9 (2005) 33–72: 41.



into the Irish lexicon, were borrowed through the oral medium, that is by hearing, and presumably understanding and imitating, the speech of (possibly native) speakers of British Latin. Indeed, Damian McManus's demonstration that the new phoneme /p/ was integrated in Irish at a very early stage, before the Irish lenition,<sup>18</sup> suggests that Irish speakers may have been quite intensively and extensively exposed to spoken Latin at least since the earliest phases of the Christianisation. Moreover, Celticists have long known that several features of Old Irish orthography originated from the idiosyncratic way in which Latin was *pronounced* in Late Antique and Early Medieval Britain.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, *pace* Genee, the idea that the restricted role of spoken Latin in Medieval Ireland is 'generally acknowledged' is also questionable. Not only should we register Anthony Harvey's 'dissenting view', mentioned by Genee herself,<sup>20</sup> but we should

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. D. McManus, 'A Chronology of the Latin loan-words in Early Irish', *Ériu* 34 (1983) 21–71: 48 'as we have seen above [...] that the phoneme /p/ is found in words which were undoubtedly borrowed before lenition and long before vowel affection, it will be evident that the adoption of this foreign sound into Irish cannot have had anything to do with the disappearance of /kw/ from the native phonemic inventory. Its adoption by the Irish must be ascribed to their increasing familiarity with it, through contact with Latin and British, rather than to a necessity occasioned by the loss of their closest corresponding sound'.

<sup>19</sup> For the role played by British Latin pronunciation in the establishment of Old Irish orthography, cf. e.g. A. Ahlqvist, 'Litriú na Gaeilge', in K. McCone, D. McManus, C. Ó Háinle, N. Williams, L. Breatnach (ed), *Stair na Gaeilge: in ómós do Pádraig Ó Fiannachta* (Maynooth 1994) 23–59: 29–31. The precise definition of the nature of Late Antique and Early Medieval British Latin is a notoriously controversial issue; cf. in particular A. S. Gratwick, 'Latinitas Britannica: was British Latin archaic?', in N. Brooks (ed.), *Latin and the vernacular languages in early medieval Britain* (Leicester 1982) 1–79, and the following two critical responses to this article: D. McManus, 'Linguarum Diversitas: Latin and the Vernaculars in Early Medieval Britain', *Peritia* 3 (1984) 151–88; P. Russell, 'Recent work on British Latin', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 9 (Summer 1985) 19–29. Jean-Michel Picard has pointed out that Latin must have been spoken in pre-Christian Ireland at least 'among the slaves brought back from the raids carried out by the Irish in Britain and on the continent' (in 'The Latin language in early medieval Ireland', in M. Cronin & C. Ó Cuilleánáin (ed), *The Languages of Ireland* (Dublin 2003) 44–56).

<sup>20</sup> The article that Genee refers to in the passage cited above is A. Harvey, 'Latin, literacy and the Celtic vernaculars around the year AD 500', in C. J. Byrne, M. Harry & P. Ó Siadhail (ed), *Celtic languages and Celtic peoples. Proceedings of the second North American Congress of Celtic Studies*, (Halifax 1992) 11–26. Harvey has forcefully restated his position in a more recent essay entitled 'The

also take into account the position of other scholars. For instance, in an article discussing the motivations for the alternate use of Latin and Early Old Irish in the Cambrai Homily (where the Irish sections occasionally provide a direct translation for an immediately preceding Latin sentence),<sup>21</sup> Jean-Michel Picard has pointed out that, given the remarkable exegetical complexity that underlies the Homily, ‘il est difficile d’imaginer que ce texte s’adresse à un public d’Irlandais incultes’, and it seems to him likely that

‘ce texte a été plutôt écrit pour un public monastique lettré susceptible d’apprécier une composition bilingue où l’élément de traduction joue un rôle mineur par rapport à l’élément intertextuel. Il faut rapprocher cette démarche du travail des glossateurs irlandais de la même génération qui ont annotés les Psaumes et les Epîtres de saint Paul. [...] Le travail de traduction ou d’expression en langue vernaculaire ne s’assimile donc pas à un exercice de compréhension de la langue latine, mais semble au contraire procéder de l’élucidation de concepts souvent difficiles. Le passage du latin à la langue maternelle devient alors un moyen de clarifier ses idées et de proposer au groupe une interprétation dont on a éliminé au moins l’équivoque de la transposition culturo-linguistique’.<sup>22</sup>

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non-Classical vocabulary of Celtic-Latin literature: an overview’, available at <<http://journals.eecs.qub.ac.uk/dmlcs/overview.pdf>> (accessed 06/09/2013; the same work has also been published in M. Garrison, A. P. Orbán & M. Mostert (ed), *Spoken and written language: relations between Latin and the vernacular languages in the Earlier Middle Ages* (Turnhout 2013) 87–100); in particular, at p. 9 Harvey writes: ‘as I hoped to have demonstrated some years ago in an article on the Cambridge Juvencus manuscript, what the evidence there seemed to show was that as late as the tenth century it was possible for Irish individuals to travel to a Welsh monastery, remain there long enough to receive their entire formal training as scribes (as was shown by their Welsh handwriting) and be kept on as trusted members of the scriptorium (as was shown by the fact that they had been allowed to gloss the valuable manuscript in question), while at the same time remaining so ignorant of the local Welsh vernacular that on the rare occasions when they had tried to write a gloss in that language they had made elementary mistakes [...]. This state of affairs could surely only have come about if Latin was the everyday, not just the liturgical, language of the house’.

<sup>21</sup> For an edition of the Cambrai Homily, cf. Wh. Stokes & J. Strachan (ed), *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* (2 vols and supplement, Cambridge/Halle a.S. 1901–1910; reprint: Dublin 1987) [hereafter referred to simply as TP] vol. II, 244–7.

<sup>22</sup> Cit. from J.-M. Picard, ‘L’Homélie de Cambrai: écriture bilingue et traduction dans les milieux irlandais du VII<sup>e</sup> siècle’, in M. Ballard (ed.), *Europe et traduction* (Ottawa 1998), 25–36: 33–4.

Picard is not the only scholar to posit a considerable bilingual proficiency on the part of the Medieval Irish intellectual elite. To give only one more example, Paul Russell has recently suggested, in the context of a discussion of some Old Irish syntactic structures which may reflect the influence of Latin syntax, that ‘such influences presuppose a high level of functional bilingualism in Old Irish and Latin’.<sup>23</sup> In the end, it seems that Genee’s perspective can hardly be seen as being ‘generally acknowledged’.

Of course, another factor which may be at least partially responsible for this lingering uncertainty in regard to the exact nature of Hiberno-Latin, and its relationship with Old Irish, is the nature of the evidence itself. When studying modern bilingual contexts, linguists can adopt numerous criteria to distinguish between different ‘types’ of bilingualism: such criteria would include, for instance, the relative degree of competence in the two languages, their pragmatic and functional distribution, but also the social connotations and even the psychological attitudes attached to the two languages, as well as to each individual’s linguistic behaviour. In order to assess these aspects, linguists can usually rely on large surveys, interviews, and direct access to complex sociolinguistic dynamics.

Needless to say, no evidence of this kind is available to us for the assessment of the position of Latin in Early Medieval Ireland; as a consequence, the considerable divergence of opinions still existing among scholars is perhaps not too surprising. In other words, it seems that in many cases scholars have tried to produce comprehensive, unified explanations for an extremely diverse phenomenon such as bilingualism, on the basis of insufficient or simply unsuitable evidence. For obvious reasons, texts of high literature such as Adomnán’s *Vita Columbae*, or the treatises of Irish grammarians, have often attracted the attention of scholars working on Hiberno-Latin; however, texts such as these, being characterised by a high degree of meta-linguistic awareness, probably do not offer the best examples of common linguistic

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<sup>23</sup> Cit. from P. Russell, ‘‘What was best of every language’’: the early history of the Irish language’, in D. Ó Cróinín (ed.), *A New history of Ireland: I. Prehistoric and Early Ireland* (Oxford/New York 2005) 405–50: 447. Cf. the somewhat similar remarks expressed in Müller, ‘Kodewechsel’, 76: ‘Wir können davon ausgehen, daß bei den monastischen Gelehrten des irischen Mittelalters ein Mindestgrad an funktionaler Zweisprachigkeit vorlag, insofern Lehre und Forschung historischer und kirchlichen Materien den Zugang zum Lateinischen wie auch zum Irische voraussetzte’.

trends (i.e. of the ‘average’ form of Latin employed in Early Medieval Irish monasteries). Moreover, anecdotal evidence, which must be used to make up for the relative paucity of primary evidence, is notoriously problematic in terms of its interpretation.

Finally, among the factors which may hinder our assessment of Latin/Old Irish bilingualism (or lack thereof), we must acknowledge potential issues linked to diachronic and geographical factors: we cannot be sure that our conclusions on linguistic patterns of, say, the seventh century, will also be applicable to the ninth; moreover, we cannot be sure that the same conditions of education applied to all Irish centres of learning at any given time. On the contrary, we can take for granted that the sociolinguistic dynamics of a monastic foundation in Ireland were not the same as those applicable to an Irish-speaking community working in a continental monastery.

Nevertheless, while all these difficulties should be taken into account, they should certainly not prevent us from looking for new methodologies for investigating the available evidence. In particular, as we shall see, the application of a number of principles and methods of modern CS studies to the Early Medieval Irish bilingual material can yield interesting results.

## 2. SPOKEN LATIN IN EARLY MEDIEVAL IRELAND?

Before we get to the specific analysis of Latin/Old Irish CS, it will be useful to review briefly some elements which may help us formulate a working hypothesis about the use of Latin among the Irish *literati*: the cultural and linguistic contacts between Ireland and Britain during the period 600–900 offer a first interesting set of data. Besides the above-mentioned clear influence of *spoken* British Latin on the development of Old Irish orthography, and on the phonology of Latin loanwords in Old Irish, we should also take into account the fairly numerous sources (Bede and Aldhelm *in primis*) that mention the presence of English students in seventh-century Irish monastic schools:<sup>24</sup> while it is likely that at least some of these foreign students

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<sup>24</sup> For brief overviews of this topic, cf. C. Ireland, ‘Seventh-century Ireland as a study abroad destination’, *Frontiers* 5 (1999) 61–80 (p. 62: ‘learned culture in medieval Ireland was, effectively, bilingual’); D. Ó Cróinín, ‘The first century of Anglo-Irish relations (AD 600–700)’, *O’Donnell Lecture* (Galway 2003). For Bede’s witness concerning the ‘many English nobles and lesser folk in Ireland who had left their own land during the episcopates of Bishops Finán and Colmán, either to

eventually learned some Irish (king Oswiu being a case in point), it is also eminently plausible that teaching on disciplines such as grammar, Biblical exegesis and *computus* would in fact have been carried out mainly through the medium of Latin.<sup>25</sup>

These elements suggest that Latin was spoken in Irish monasteries at least in the context of education and learning, i.e. as part of what has been defined by Francis Britto in a classic study of diglossia as the ‘non-authentic domain’, that is the domain ‘in which one uses language before a passive audience, takes on a role’.<sup>26</sup> The argument, however, can be taken even further. Indeed, we should not forget the evidence provided by the Early Medieval Insular didactic texts generally known as *colloquia*, which may be described as elementary conversation handbooks designed for early learners of Latin, with a strong emphasis on lexical instruction. These texts contain strikingly vivid descriptions of ordinary, every-day situations, which certainly pertain to the ‘authentic domain’ of language use, according to Britto’s definition (cf.

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pursue religious studies or to lead a life of stricter discipline’, cf. *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* III, 27.2 (B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (ed. & tr.), *Bede’s Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford 1969) 312–3). For Aldhelm’s complaint about the ‘thronging students’ who went to study in Ireland, cf. R. Ehwald (ed.), *Aldhelmi Opera*, MGHAA 15 (Berlin 1919), Epist. 5 *ad Ehfridum*, p. 492 (English translation in M. Lapidge and M. Herren (trans.), *Aldhelm, the prose works* (Cambridge 1979) 163).

<sup>25</sup> Bede himself provides us with some striking statements concerning the crucial role of orality for the teaching of disciplines of primary monastic interest such as *computus*, e.g.: *Quae verbo melius colloquentis quam scribentis stilo disci pariter et doceri queunt* ‘These things can be both learned and taught more easily through speech than by the pen of a writer’ (*De temporum ratione*, §4; cf. Ch. W. Jones (ed.), *Beda opera de temporibus* (Cambridge 1943) 185; F. Wallis (tr.), *Bede: The Reckoning of Time* (Liverpool 1999) 18); *Quae profecto omnia melius colloquendo quam scribendo docentur* ‘In truth, all this is easier to teach by oral explanation than in writing’ (*De temporum ratione*, §20; ed. Jones, *Beda opera*, 222; tr. Wallis, *Bede*, 68). For a discussion of these and other relevant sources, cf. Bisagni & Warntjes, ‘Latin and Old Irish’, 30–1.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. F. Britto, *Diglossia: a study of the theory with application to Tamil* (Washington 1986), 298. The dichotomy between ‘authentic’ and ‘non-authentic’ domain has been profitably employed by Anna Grotans in her study of the intellectual life of Medieval St Gall; Britto’s dichotomy is thus summarised by Grotans: ‘Generally the principle of diglossic dichotomy is taken to be “informal” vs. “formal”. Britto argues that these terms can be ambiguous and suggests instead the dichotomy of “authentic” vs. “non-authentic”. In the authentic domain the language one uses is the language in which one speaks spontaneously, in natural or real life situations, without assuming any “role”’ (Grotans, *Reading in Medieval St Gall*, 114).

fn. 26). This brief passage from the ninth-century Welsh (or possibly Cornish) *colloquium* known as *De Raris Fabulis* (preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 572) is a good example of the typical contents of the *colloquia*:

*Ubi est abbas huius podi uel princeps huius loci? – Ad epulam perrexit siue ad conuiuium aut ad prandium uel ad cœnam, que preparata est ei in domo unius uiri de senioribus loci illius. – Quot sunt qui perrexerunt cum eo? – Non difficile. Tota familia monasterii illius, seniores et sacerdotes et prespiteri et minimi pueri com omnibus subiectis...*

‘Where is the abbot of this church or the abbot of this place? – He went to a feast, banquet, meal, or dinner which was prepared for him in the house of a man among the leaders of this place. – How many were there who went with him? – Easy. The whole community of this monastery, senior monks and bishops and priests and the small boys with all [its] dependants...’<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. S. Gwara (ed. & tr.), *De Raris Fabulis, ‘On uncommon tales’: a glossed Latin colloquy-text from a tenth-century Cornish manuscript* (Cambridge 2005) 6–7. Many *colloquia* also contain humorous conversations between students and other realistic depictions of classroom activity; moreover, a passage of *De Raris Fabulis* contains an explicit reference to spoken Latin in a monastic context: *Et episcopus dicit ad principem sacerdotum: (an) habes latinam linguam? [...] Non tam bene sapio, quia non multum legi, sed tamen fui inter scolasticos, et audiui lectores docentes(que) predicantesque atque illam mirabiliter die et nocte meditantés atque dicentes, et obsonium facientes. Unde et ego ex illis aliquid [...] <longa> tamen meditatione pauca fona [...] recognosco, sed etiam haec regulariter respondere non possum. Ignoro enim regulas grammaticorum, nec <scio> exempla poetarum* ‘And the bishop says to the leader of the priests: “Do you know Latin?” [...] “I do not know it so well, because I have not read much, but nevertheless I was among students, and I heard lectors teaching and preaching, and both contemplating and speaking Latin wondrously day and night, and performing mass. Hence, from them [...], I discern somewhat – a few words – by deliberate thought, but I cannot convey even these grammatically. For I am ignorant of the grammarians’ rules, nor do I know the examples of the poets”’ (cit. from Gwara, *De Raris Fabulis*, 30–1; my emphasis). For more details on the Insular *colloquia*, cf. S. Gwara (ed.), *Latin colloquies from pre-conquest Britain* (Toronto 1996); id. *Education in Wales and Cornwall in the ninth and tenth centuries: understanding De Raris Fabulis* (Cambridge 2004); S. Gwara & D. Porter, *Anglo-Saxon conversations: the colloquies of Ælfric Bata* (Woodbridge 1997). For in-depth investigations of the Graeco-Roman origins of this genre, cf. C. Dionisotti, ‘From Ausonius’ schooldays? A schoolbook and its relatives’, *The Journal of Roman Studies* 72 (1982) 83–125; E. Dickey (ed.), *The Colloquia of the Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana*, vol. 1 (Cambridge 2012). For a strong statement in favour of the idea that Latin was a spoken language in Early Medieval Irish monasteries, cf. L. Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l’enseignement grammatical* (Paris 1981) 265: ‘le

Admittedly, none of the extant *colloquia* can be ascribed with certainty to an Irish author. Nonetheless, several scholars have pointed out close affiliations between some of the British *colloquia* and the *Hisperica Famina*, which were most likely composed in seventh-century Ireland.<sup>28</sup> For instance, the text known as *Colloquium Hispericum* (preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 865) has been shown to contain much material derived directly from the *Hisperica Famina*.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, Michael Lapidge has drawn attention to similarities between the *Hisperica Famina* and the above-mentioned *De Raris Fabulis*, also noting that the formulation *fuimus antea in Hibernia uel Britannia uel Francia* (found in yet another *colloquium*),<sup>30</sup> ‘where it might seem that the first word is the original lemma, the two following words lexical variants, [...] might indicate [...] that the colloquy originated in Ireland’.<sup>31</sup> Regardless of whether we consider the *Hisperica Famina* as serious scholastic exercises in the tradition of Priscian’s *Praeexercitamina*,<sup>32</sup> or rather as ‘utterly unserious, ponderous parody [...] of the pedestrian pedagogy and language of the scholastic colloquy’,<sup>33</sup> the obvious links between the *Hisperica Famina* and the *colloquia*, as well as the

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latin pouvait avoir tous les usages et toutes les dimensions d’une langue parlée et vivante, encore que réservée à une minorité de clercs’.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. M. Herren (ed. & tr.), *The Hisperica Famina, I: the A-Text* (Toronto 1974) 32–9; a more cautious dating (between the seventh and the ninth century) is proposed in C. E. Roth, ‘Some observations on the historical background of the *Hisperica Famina*’, *Ériu* 29 (1978), 112–22: 112. For a similar line of reasoning concerning the likely presence of *colloquia* in Ireland, cf. P. Zanna, ‘Lecture, écriture et morphologie latines en Irlande aux VII<sup>e</sup> et VIII<sup>e</sup> siècles: nouveaux matériaux, nouvelles hypothèses’, *Bulletin Du Cange / Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi* 56 (1998) 179–91: 186–7.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. M. Lapidge, ‘Latin learning in Dark Age Wales: some prolegomena’, in D. Ellis Evans, J. G. Griffith & E. M. Jope (ed), *Proceedings of the seventh International Congress of Celtic Studies* (Oxford 1986) 91–107: 97; Gwara, *Latin colloquies*, 9–10; Gwara & Porter, *Anglo-Saxon conversations*, 23–4.

<sup>30</sup> This is the *colloquium* preserved in Oxford, St John’s College MS 154. An almost identical phrasing can be found in *De Raris Fabulis: Fui ante in Ibernia uel in Britannia uel in Francia* (cf. Gwara, *De Raris Fabulis*, 18–9).

<sup>31</sup> Cit. from Lapidge, ‘Latin learning’, 95–6.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. G. Knappe, ‘On Rhetoric and Grammar in the *Hisperica Famina*’, *The Journal of Medieval Latin* 4 (1994) 130–62; id. ‘The rhetorical aspect of Grammar teaching in Anglo-Saxon England’, *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 17 (1999) 1–34: 32. For a good summary of the *status quaestionis*, cf. B. Miles, *Heroic saga and Classical epic in Medieval Ireland* (Cambridge 2011) 20–1.

<sup>33</sup> Cit. from Lapidge, ‘Latin learning’, 96.

similarities between the *Hisperica Famina* and the *Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana* pointed out by Michael Herren,<sup>34</sup> show that the very existence of the *Hisperica Famina* implies the knowledge of colloquy-type texts on the part of the Medieval Irish *literati*. If we are thus willing to adopt the *colloquia* as evidence relevant to monastic life in Early Medieval Ireland, it seems that Irish monks learned to speak Latin also outside the classroom.

The evidence presented above suggests *prima facie* that the linguistic configuration of early Irish monasteries may have corresponded to a typical case of diglossia *à la* Fishman:<sup>35</sup> on one side Latin, a foreign but highly prestigious ‘global’ language; on the other side Irish, a native vernacular without any international prestige. This view would seem to be confirmed by Adomnán’s preface to his *Vita Columbae*, where he apologises to the readers for his occasional use of Irish:

*Beati nostri patroni Christo sufragante vitam discripturus [...] in primis eandem lecturos quosque ammonere procurabo ut [...] res magis quam uerba perpendant, quae ut estimo inculta et uilia esse uidentur. [...] Et ne ob aliqua scoticae uilis uidelicet linguae aut humana onomata aut gentium obscura locorumque uocabula, quae ut puto inter alias exterarum gentium diuersas uilescunt linguas, utilium et non sine diuina opitulatione gestarum dispiciant rerum pronuntiationem.*

‘With Christ’s favour I shall describe the life of our blessed patron; and I shall in the first place endeavour to persuade all who may read it [...] to regard the substance rather than the words, which appear, I think, crude and of little worth. [...] Let them not despise the publication of deeds that are profitable, and that have not been accomplished without the help of God, on account of some unfamiliar words of the Irish tongue, a poor language, designations of men, or names of tribes and places;

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. Herren, *Hisperica Famina*, 19–20.

<sup>35</sup> The term *diglossia* was first used by Ch. Ferguson (in ‘Diglossia’, *Word* 15 (1959) 325–37) to refer to two varieties of the same language, one of which typically has high prestige (H-variety), while the other has low prestige (L-variety). In an article published a few years later (‘Bilingualism with and without diglossia, diglossia with and without bilingualism’, *Journal of Social Issues* 23 (1965) 29–38), J. Fishman adopted the term *diglossia*, but extended its use to encompass any linguistic setting in which there is a sociolinguistic dichotomy between a high- and a low-prestige language, even if the two languages are genetically unrelated.



words that, I suppose, *are held to be of no value*, among other different tongues of foreign peoples'.<sup>36</sup>

There is no doubt that Latin is represented here as a language superior to Irish: it would thus seem easy to posit an elementary diglossic scheme whereby Latin = H vs. Irish = L. In fact, things are not so simple. It is well known that Irish developed at an

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. A. O. Anderson and M. O. Anderson (ed. & tr.), *Adomnan's Life of Columba* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition: Oxford 1991) 2-3; R. Sharpe (tr.), *Life of Saint Columba* (London 1995) 103 (my emphasis). A similar attitude was expressed in a well-known *colophon* by Ferdomnach, the compiler of the stories on St Patrick appended to Tírechán's notes in the Book of Armagh: *Finiunt haec pauca per scoticam imperfecte scripta, non quod ego non potuissem Romana condere lingua sed quod uix in sua scotica hae fabulae agnosci possunt; sin autem alias per Latinam degestae fuissent, non tam incertus fuisset aliquis in eis quam imperitus, quid legisset aut quam linguam sonasset pro habundantia Scotaicorum nominum non habentium qualitatem* 'Here end these few pieces, written imperfectly in Irish. Not that I could not have penned them in the Roman language, but these stories are hardly intelligible even in Irish; had they, on the contrary, been told in Latin, one would not so much have been uncertain about them as left in the dark as to what one had read and what language had been used because of the great number of Irish names which have no established forms' (cf. L. Bieler (ed. & tr.), *The Patrician texts in the Book of Armagh* (Dublin 1979) 178-9, §17.1; cf. also *TP* II, 243.1-6). For a more ample discussion of both passages, cf. M. Richter, 'O quam gravis est scriptura: early Irish lay society and written culture', in P. Ní Chatháin & M. Richter (eds), *Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: texts and transmission* (Dublin 2002) 27-36: 29-30; Bisagni & Warntjes, 'Latin and Old Irish', 2-4. For the higher prestige of Latin in respect to vernacular languages in the Early Middle Ages, cf. I. Warntjes, 'Die Verwendung der Volkssprache in frühmittelalterlichen Klosterschulen', in G. Mierke & Ch. Fasbender (ed), *Wissenspaläste. Räume des Wissens in der Vormoderne* (Würzburg 2013) 153-83: 156-7 (many thanks to Immo Warntjes for sending me a copy of his article). The prejudice against inserting 'barbaric' words into Latin prose can already be found in the Late Antique grammatical tradition concerning the *soloecismus* and *barbarismus* (cf. Holtz, *Donat*, 653-8), and the same prejudice was then forcefully restated by Isidore of Seville in his *Etymologiae*, at I, xxxiii.2 (W. M. Lindsay (ed.), *Etymologiarum siue Originum libri XX* (Oxford 1911); S. A. Barney, W. J. Lewis, J. A. Beach, O. Berghof (tr.), *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* (Cambridge 2006) 56): *Dictus autem soloecismus a Cilicibus qui ex urbe Solo<e> [...] profecti, cum apud alios commorantes suam et illorum linguam uitiose inconsequenterque confunderent, soloecismo nomen dederunt. Unde et similiter loquentes soloecismos facere dicuntur* ('It is called solecism from the Cilicians, who came from the city Soloe [...]; when, while dwelling among other peoples, they mixed their own and other languages incorrectly and incongruously, they gave their name to solecism. Whence those who speak like this are said to commit solecism'). An echo of this prejudice may moreover be found in the section *De duodecim uitiiis ausonicae palathi* ('On the twelve faults of Ausonian diction') of the *Hisperica Famina* (Herren, *Hisperica Famina*, ll. 116-32, pp. 74-5; cf. also p. 147).

early stage a certain status of ‘scholarly language’, which could occasionally be used side by side with Latin. Significantly, Old Irish is characterised by the almost complete absence of detectable dialectal features, suggesting that a standard or at least supra-regional high-status language was established, perhaps already in the seventh century, by the members of the Irish intellectual elite.<sup>37</sup> The famous story found in *Auraicept na n-Éces*, according to which Irish was created by Féníus Farsaid out of ‘what was best of every language’,<sup>38</sup> may also be mentioned in this context as evidence that Irish was not always dismissed as ‘a poor language’ (cf. *uilis lingua* in Adomnán’s above-mentioned preface). In other words, while Latin obviously enjoyed a position of international cultural pre-eminence, at the same time Irish seems to have been perceived as an important tool at least for in-group communication, worthy of being employed in a learned context for the production of vernacular literature, as well as for the elucidation of difficult texts. Medieval Irish monasteries thus seem to offer a case of what we might call ‘complex diglossia’: rather than a classic diglossic dichotomy H vs. L, what we have here is a situation where L can be treated as a ‘quasi-H’ variety, at least in specific domains of language use (in this redefined dimension, the L-position would be presumably occupied by everyday colloquial Old Irish; this linguistic variety is, however, basically invisible to us).

### 3. THE GLOSSES: PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

In view of the context described above, it is not a coincidence that glosses, besides being our main source of information on Old Irish grammar, also represent the

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<sup>37</sup> For the question of dialects (or absence thereof) in Old Irish, cf. R. Thurneysen, *A Grammar of Old Irish* (Dublin 1946) 12, §16; A. Ahlqvist, ‘Remarks on the question of dialects in Old Irish’, in J. Fisiak (ed.), *Historical dialectology: regional and social* (Berlin/New York/Amsterdam 1988) 23–38; Russell, ‘What was best of every language’, 439–42; K. Murray, ‘Dialects in Medieval Irish? Evidence from placenames’, *Studia Celtica Fennica* 2 (2005) 97–109. For the definition of Old Irish as ‘a spoken as well as a written learned register inculcated in the monasteries in partial replacement of more colloquial registers learned from the cradle’, cf. K. McCone, ‘The Würzburg and Milan Glosses: our earliest sources of ‘Middle Irish’’, *Ériu* 36 (1985) 85–106: 103 (cf. also 87, 101–6).

<sup>38</sup> Cf. A. Ahlqvist (ed. & tr.), *The Early Irish linguist: an edition of the canonical part of Auraicept na n-Éces* (Helsinki 1983) 48, §1 (cf. also the H. Roe’s rather critical review of Ahlqvist’s edition in *Peritia* 6–7 (1987–1988) 337–9). For a discussion of this passage, cf. e.g. Russell, ‘What was best of every language’, 405–7.

primary sphere of written interaction between Irish and Latin. While of course the use of Latin and Irish in the same text is a very frequent phenomenon in Medieval Irish sources (almost every Old and Middle Irish text presents at least some Latin insertions, ranging from short formulas, such as *ut poeta dixit*, to larger textual units), glosses are in many respects an ideal place to start investigating Latin/Old Irish code-switching.

First of all, unlike the majority of literary texts, glosses are usually attested in manuscripts which date from the Old Irish period. Secondly, in spite of constituting a remarkably extensive corpus if taken collectively, individual glosses are in most cases short and discrete textual units: they can be easily counted and categorised, and for this reason they are particularly suitable for statistical analysis. Moreover, glosses have no reason to exist in autonomy, as their purpose is to elucidate the text to which they are attached; this makes them good examples of a purely ‘functional’ scholarly register, relatively uninfluenced by literary models or specific aesthetic requirements.<sup>39</sup>

Much more controversial than the foregoing observations is the assessment of the exact nature and intended readership of the Early Medieval gloss. The Anglo-Saxonist Gernot Wieland has tried to show in a number of publications that at least some collections of Old English glosses may have been akin to lecture notes, used in the classroom by monastic teachers, or may otherwise represent notes taken by students during lectures.<sup>40</sup> An even more radical approach has been adopted by Anna Grotans who, in her discussion of glossing in Old High German, argues that

‘the interlinear and marginal annotations found in classroom manuscripts are merely the written traces of a much fuller, oral reading practice now lost to us’.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> It may be useful to reiterate here the characterisation of glosses as texts of relatively low formality, proposed in Bisagni & Warntjes, ‘Latin and Old Irish’, 6: ‘glosses cannot be considered as an example of proper, continuous prose; they represent a heterogeneous collection of scattered thoughts, bits of translation, quotations and interpretations, which are, moreover, subject to a constant process of accretion, epitomisation and modification. A gloss has no purpose on its own: its very existence is justified only by the text which it elucidates’.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. G. Wieland, ‘The glossed manuscript: classbook or library book?’, *Anglo-Saxon England* 14 (1985) 153–73; id. ‘Interpreting the interpretation: the polysemy of the Latin gloss’, *The Journal of Medieval Latin* 8 (1998) 59–71.

<sup>41</sup> Cit. from Grotans, *Reading in Medieval St Gall*, 138.

However, it would be a serious mistake to simply assume this position as the *communis opinio*. For instance, Michael Lapidge has argued that many glossed manuscripts from Anglo-Saxon England should be regarded primarily as ‘library books’ used for private study, rather than ‘classbooks’,<sup>42</sup> and this point has been defended and further elaborated by Mariken Teeuwen in a series of studies, mostly based on her in-depth investigation of Early Medieval glossing on Martianus Capella.<sup>43</sup> This debate has barely touched the domain of Celtic Studies, and the secondary literature does not offer many suggestions as to how the Old Irish glosses may have been used in the context of monastic learning. On the whole, though, it is my impression that scholars working on Early Medieval Ireland have inclined to adopt positions rather similar to Wieland’s. For instance, in his above-mentioned article on the Cambrai Homily, Jean-Michel Picard makes some observations in regard to the function of the Old Irish glosses, pointing out that

‘le contenu intellectuel de ces gloses, aussi bien latines que gaéliques, est très souvent complexe et fait plutôt penser à des notes d’un cours s’adressant à des étudiants avancés plutôt qu’à des élèves apprenant le latin’.<sup>44</sup>

More recently, in his analysis of the Latin/Irish St Gall glosses to Priscian’s *Institutiones Grammaticae*, Rijcklof Hofman has observed that,

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<sup>42</sup> Cf. M. Lapidge, ‘The study of Latin texts in Late Anglo-Saxon England, I. The evidence of Latin glosses’, in Brooks, *Latin and the vernacular languages*, 99–140.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. M. Teeuwen, ‘Glossing in close co-operation: examples from ninth-century Martianus Capella manuscripts’, in R. H. Bremmer Jr. & K. Dekker (ed), *Practice in learning: the transfer of encyclopaedic knowledge in the Early Middle Ages* (Paris/Leuven/Walpole 2010) 85–100; ead. ‘Marginal scholarship: rethinking the function of Latin glosses in Early Medieval manuscripts’, in P. Lendinara, L. Lazzari, C. Di Sciacca (ed), *Rethinking and recontextualizing glosses: new perspectives in the study of Late Anglo-Saxon glossography* (Porto/Louvain-la-Neuve/Turnhout 2011) 19–37 (cf. pp. 23–4: ‘the nature of the oldest gloss traditions on Martianus Capella [...] reveals that their first goal is not to educate, but to collect: they generated new learning based on the ancient building blocks found in the main text. [...] Thus they are not educational texts, but rather scholarly collections, containing the seeds of new, medieval learning. I am aware of the fact that the two genres, educational and scholarly, are perfectly able to overlap, and that it is often difficult to pry them apart, but still the emphasis should be on their goal to generate new learning rather than to teach old learning’).

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Picard, ‘L’Homélie de Cambrai’, 33.

‘although it could be argued that many glosses are as useful to an individual reader in a library as to a teacher explaining Latin grammar in the classroom, the general character of whole runs of glosses points to the second alternative’.<sup>45</sup>

Overall, it seems very difficult to provide a definitive answer even on a case-by-case basis, let alone an answer valid for Early Medieval glossing in general. Glossing is a notoriously multi-faceted phenomenon, whose nature and function may vary through time and space; moreover, as has been rightly pointed out by Suzanne Reynolds, the *intended* function of a gloss is not necessarily identical to the way in which that same gloss will be *used* by its successive readers.<sup>46</sup> A glossed ‘library manuscript’ could have been used by a monastic teacher for explaining a text to his students; likewise, lecture notes may have gained conventional status over time, eventually being used for private study and copied together with the primary text. It is not without reason, then, that James F. Kenney wrote what follows, in regard to the manuscript containing the Würzburg glosses on the Epistles of Paul:

‘This volume has very great interest as one of the few surviving Irish biblical MSS which were produced, not for liturgical, devotional or artistic purposes, but for use in the study and the lecture-room’.<sup>47</sup>

Now, while it seems impossible to elaborate a definitive ‘theory of the gloss’ which should account for all or most cases, it is nonetheless worth asking whether some clarity on the origin and nature of Early Medieval glosses could be obtained, at least for what concerns bilingual materials, by interrogating the linguistic configuration of the glosses themselves. More specifically, a study of CS in the glosses (the Old Irish glosses, in the present case) might indicate whether the corpus presents structural patterns compatible with oral bilingual practices: a positive conclusion would point to the possibility, or plausibility, of a close relationship

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<sup>45</sup> Cit. from R. Hofman (ed.), *The St Gall Priscian Commentary. Part 1*, 2 vols (Münster 1996) vol. 1, 49.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. S. Reynolds, ‘Glossing Horace: using the Classics in the Medieval classroom’, in C. Chavannes-Mazel & M. Smith (ed), *Medieval manuscripts of the Latin Classics: production and use* (Los Altos Hills/London 1996) 103–17; this point is also discussed in Teeuwen, ‘Glossing in close co-operation’, 88.

<sup>47</sup> Cit. from J. F. Kenney, *The sources for the early history of Ireland: ecclesiastical. An introduction and guide* (Columbia NY 1929 [2<sup>nd</sup> ed.: Dublin 1966 and 1968; reprints: Dublin 1978, 1993, 1997]) 635, §461.

between Irish glossing and actual classroom activity, whereas a negative conclusion might lend some support to an evaluation of these glosses as a mostly – or even purely – written phenomenon.

It would obviously be naive to expect a written corpus to be identical to the bilingual conversations which usually represent the focus of CS studies; nevertheless, among all kinds of Medieval Irish writing, glosses are a textual type which presents at least a real *chance* for the potential preservation of traces of orality, precisely by virtue of their above-mentioned predominantly ‘functional’ nature and lack of literary self-awareness, with associated lower formality. In this context, it is certainly significant to note that some recent studies of written code-switching in contexts of relatively low formality (such as internet-based chats and e-mails) have revealed a certain (although admittedly by no means complete) level of compatibility with oral production.<sup>48</sup>

Of course, the Old Irish glosses also present a number of problems and challenges of a more ‘practical’ nature. First of all, this material lacks quantitative and typological coherence: in some collections, such as for instance the glosses found in the Southampton Psalter, the use of Irish is minimal, and may be confined to the occurrence of one-word Irish glosses within a predominantly Latin context;<sup>49</sup> on the other hand, in many cases vernacular glossing is very substantial, a fact which applies not only to the well-known large corpora of Würzburg, Milan, and St Gall, but also to

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<sup>48</sup> Cf. Montes-Alcalá, ‘Written codeswitching’, 194–6 and Hinrichs, *Codeswitching on the Web*, 17–9 for a more precise definition of the concept of ‘informality’ in the context of computer-mediated communication (in particular, at p. 19, Hinrichs points out that ‘language use in e-mail is less regulated by formal and pragmatic norms than in other written text types, and that it is a choice for users to make whether they wish to adhere to the norms established by paper-based writing. The more informal language use is likely to occur in C[omputer-]M[ediated] C[ommunication], not in paper-based texts’); for the complex relationship between oral and written medium in this type of language use, cf. *ibid.* 19–21, and also Dorleijn & Nortier, ‘Code-switching and the internet’, 127 (‘Internet data are not written language in the traditional sense. Language on the internet [...] is felt by most users to be much more informal, and much less reflected upon by its authors than written texts. Consequently, the kind of language used in CMC contains a lot of colloquial forms and other features that are usually associated with spoken language’).

<sup>49</sup> Cf. *TP* I, 4–6; P. Ó Néill, ‘Some remarks on the edition of the Southampton Psalter Irish Glosses in *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*, with further addenda and corrigenda’, *Ériu* 44 (1993) 99–103; *id.* (ed.), *Psalterium Suthantoniense*, CCCM 240 (Turnhout 2012).

smaller collections, such as the *scholia* to the computistical works of Bede preserved in Vienna and Karlsruhe.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, glosses refer to texts of diverse nature and contents, and are scattered in manuscripts which vary significantly as to both date and provenance. In many cases, we do not know whether the glosses were actually composed by the scribe, or whether they were copied from an earlier exemplar. In a nutshell, we often do not know when and where a particular set of glosses was composed, and by whom. While it is more than likely that several collections (perhaps the majority) were written in Ireland, it is also likely that at least some Old Irish glosses were written by *peregrini* working on the continent.

Last but not least, although significant progress has been achieved over the past few years, many collections of Old Irish glosses (including Würzburg and Milan) cannot be read yet in complete, up-to-date critical editions.<sup>51</sup> In spite of being an immense scholarly achievement for its own days, the *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* is no longer entirely satisfactory: in particular, the relationship between the glosses and the main text is not always clear, or accurately represented; moreover, the glosses written only in Latin were generally omitted (with occasional exceptions), and they remain for the most part unpublished. As pointed out by Pádraig Ó Néill,

‘as the study of Old Irish glosses progresses from an exclusive interest in collecting lexicographical and grammatical data to considering relationships between gloss and text, so the need for greater editorial accuracy and comprehensiveness has become more important’.<sup>52</sup>

Still, while on the one hand all these issues must be acknowledged and taken into account, on the other hand they should not prevent us from carrying out some preliminary research, with the principal aim of identifying new possible directions of investigation. This was indeed the idea behind the one-year project ‘Testing Methodologies for the Study of Latin/Old Irish Bilingualism in Early Medieval Ireland’ (financially supported by the Millennium Fund of the National University of

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<sup>50</sup> Cf. *TP* II, 31–7 (Vienna); 10–30, 256 (Karlsruhe); cf. also M. Dillon, ‘The Vienna glosses on Bede’, *Celtica* 3 (1956), 340–4.

<sup>51</sup> The most significant exception to this is the case of the St Gall glosses to Priscian, now available at <[www.stgallpriscian.ie](http://www.stgallpriscian.ie)> (this on-line database, presenting an edition of both Latin and Irish glosses in St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek MS 904, was prepared by Dr Pádraic Moran, building on the work previously carried out by Rijcklof Hofman).

<sup>52</sup> Cit. from Ó Néill, ‘Some remarks’, 99.

Ireland, Galway), which I undertook in 2010, with a focus on the grammatical functioning of intra-clausal<sup>53</sup> CS in the Old Irish glosses.

First of all, I analysed a representative sample of glosses from seventeen collections published in the *Thesaurus* (2,631 glosses in total).<sup>54</sup> Within this corpus,

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<sup>53</sup> In her latest works on CS, Carol Myers-Scotton prefers to use the term ‘projection of the complementizer’ (abbreviated as CP) rather than ‘sentence’ or ‘clause’, as the CP refers unequivocally to the ‘highest level in a tree of syntactic structures’, and ‘both independent and dependent clauses are CPs’ (C. Myers-Scotton, *Contact Linguistics. Bilingual encounters and grammatical outcomes* (Oxford/New York 2002) 8; cf. also pp. 54–6). However, while I agree with her motivations for rejecting the ambiguous term ‘sentence’, her reason for not using ‘clause’ seems less transparent to me, and based only on a semantic nuance (cf. Myers-Scotton, *Contact Linguistics*, 55: ‘Some researchers who can see the problem with sentence in analyses use ‘clause’, instead, as their unit of analysis. But clause also has its problems. Clause brings with it a history as more a semantic unit than a structural one’). Given the much wider diffusion and greater intuitiveness of ‘clause’, and given that, as far as my corpus is concerned, clause and CP would coincide in basically all instances, I will keep using the former term in the present article. My almost exclusive focus on intra-clausal CS is due to the fact that this type of phenomenon displays the highest degree of grammatical interaction between the two languages involved; the only derogation from this principle has been the inclusion of glosses where CS takes place at the boundary between a main clause and a relative clause: although these are not instances of intra-clausal CS *stricto sensu*, the close syntactic link between a relative pronoun and its antecedent(s) makes of these glosses interesting cases of linguistic interplay (often involving crucial instances of cleft sentences).

<sup>54</sup> Here follow the figures for the total number of glosses (both monolingual Irish and bilingual; only the few monolingual Latin glosses occasionally published in *TP* have been excluded from this count) found in each collection (or part of collection) considered in the context of my 2010/2011 project (the data are based on *TP*): (1) Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. Lat. 215 (biblical glosses, *TP* I, 1–2; hereafter Reg.) = 40 glosses; (2) Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. Lat. 68 (glosses on the Psalms, *TP* I, 3; hereafter Pal.) = 25 glosses; (3) Cambridge, St John’s College, C.9 (glosses on the Psalms, *TP* I, 4–6; hereafter South.) = 42 glosses (this figure includes the three additional glosses first published in Ó Néill, ‘Some Remarks’, pp. 101–3); (4) Dublin, University College Archives, *St. Caimín’s Psalter*, Franciscan MS A 1 (glosses on the Psalms, *TP* I, 6; hereafter CPs.) = 9 glosses; (5) Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 301inf., fols 2a–30d only (glosses on the Psalms, *TP* I, 7–67; hereafter MI.) = 1,230 glosses; (6) Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, F.IV.1, fasc. 7 (glosses on the Gospel of Mark, *TP* I, 484–94; hereafter Tur.) = 118 glosses; (7) Dublin, Trinity College, *Book of Armagh*, MS 52, (glosses on the New Testament, *TP* I, 494–9; hereafter ArmBGl.) = 98 glosses; (8) Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, M.p.th.f. 12, fols 1a–5a only (glosses on the Pauline Epistles, *TP* I, 499–526; hereafter Wb.) = 435 glosses; (9) Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, F.IV.24 (glosses on the second Letter of Peter, *TP* I, 713–4; hereafter TurP.) = 19



276 glosses (10.5% of the total) presented some form of CS (i.e., intra- or inter-clausal), and in particular 197 glosses (7.5%) presented intra-clausal CS. The internal data for the four most important collections were as follows:<sup>55</sup>

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glosses; (10) Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, Aug. perg. 195 (glosses on Augustine, *TP* II, 1–9; hereafter AugA.) = 109 glosses; (11) Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, Aug. perg. 167 (glosses on Bede, *TP* II, 10–30; hereafter AugB.) = 246 glosses; (12) Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 15298 (glosses on Bede, *TP* II, 31–7; hereafter VB.) = 81 glosses; (13) Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 5755 (glosses on computus, *TP* II, 39–41; hereafter VatC.) = 21 glosses; (14) Nancy, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 317 (356) (glosses on computus, *TP* II, 41; hereafter NancC.) = 6 glosses; (15) Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 45.14 (glosses on Philargyrius' commentary to Virgil's *Bucolica*, *TP* II, 46–8; hereafter Phil.) = 125 glosses; (16) Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14846 (glosses on *sortilegia*, *TP* II, 236–7; hereafter Sort.) = 23 glosses; (17) Dublin, Trinity College, *Book of Dimma*, MS 59 (*notulae*, *TP* II, 257; hereafter BD) = 4 glosses. For more bibliographic information about each collection, cf. D. Ó Cróinín, 'The earliest Old Irish glosses', in R. Bergmann, E. Glaser & C. Moulin-Fankhänel (ed), *Mittelalterliche Volkssprachige Glossen* (Heidelberg 2001) 7–31 (especially 24–7); D. Bronner, *Verzeichnis altirischer Quellen*, Marburg 2013 (available on-line at the website <<http://www.uni-marburg.de/fb09/lingbas/materialien/pub/materialien/altirische-quellen.pdf>> accessed in September 2013; many thanks to Dagmar Bronner for sending me a printed copy of her most useful *Verzeichnis*). The glosses in Bern, Burgerbibliothek, Cod. 258 (*TP* I, 2) and some other small collections published in *TP* were not taken into account, as they present no instance of intra-clausal CS. Of course, Old Irish glosses were also discovered in the decades following the publication of *TP*; however, given the exploratory nature of the present project, I felt that, for the present purpose, the material found in *TP* provided a sufficiently extensive range of material. As the reader may have noticed, I have also excluded from this study the St Gall glosses, as well as all other glosses on Priscian's *Institutiones grammaticae*: this choice was taken on the basis of the working hypothesis that the metalinguistic nature of these collections may alter somewhat the conditions of interaction between Latin and Old Irish. In other words, I believe that glosses on grammatical texts deserve to be treated as a separate case (a study of bilingualism in the glosses on Priscian is currently being carried out by Pádraic Moran at the National University of Ireland, Galway).

<sup>55</sup> These are the glosses containing intra-clausal CS in the four collections cited in the diagram (the numbering of the glosses corresponds to the various ways in which each collection is presented in *TP*; all glosses presenting CS *only* between a main clause and a relative clause, but no intra-clausal CS 'proper', are marked in boldface): Ml. 2a6, 2b17, 2c2, 14a4, 14a10, 14b6, 14d5, 16c10, 17b8–9, 17b14, 21c10, 22c5, 23a5, 24d24, **24d30**, 26a3, **26b26**, 26c1–2, **27b19**, 28a10, **28d7**, 29a6, 29b14, 30b3; AugB. 18a1–4, 18b9, 18b12, 18c3, 18d2, 19c2–3, 31b2, 32a8, 32c1, 33b8, 33c9, 36a1; AugA. 1a1–3, 5d3, 5d5, 6b1, 6c5, 10a1–2, 11d1, 12a1, 12d1, 13a3, 13b2, 13d1, 14a2–3; Wb. 1a1–2, 1a9, 1b8, 1b11–12, 1b15, **1c10**, 1c12, 1c17–18, 1d1, 1d8–9, 1d14, 1d19, 2a3–4, 2a8a, 2b5–6, 2b8, 2b15–16, 2b22, 2c1,

MI.	2.1% (26/1,230)
AugB.	6.9% (17/246)
AugA.	15.6% (17/109)
Wb.	21.4% (93/435)

As this diagram shows clearly, intra-clausal CS (hereafter abbreviated as IaCS) is not distributed evenly among the various collections: the Milan glosses only present a very feeble proportion, while the Würzburg glosses are exactly the opposite. Obviously, the reasons for this considerable variance are very difficult to ascertain at this stage; nonetheless, these data allow us at least to recognise the Würzburg glosses as the most promising terrain for an investigation of Latin/Old Irish IaCS, and this is what led me to decide to continue my work by focussing on this collection in particular.

#### 4. THE WÜRZBURG GLOSSES

The main text of Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, MS M.p.th.f.12 (hereafter Wb.) was written around the middle of the eighth century, most likely in Ireland, and consists of an incomplete copy of the Epistles of St Paul. The scribe who wrote the main text is also responsible for the first layer of glosses: these are written in Latin for the most part, but occasionally also in an early form of Old Irish (this layer is usually referred to as *prima manus*): these glosses were thus probably copied from an earlier exemplar of *ca.* AD 700 (which, most likely, contained the main text of the Epistles

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2c5–7, 2c10–11, **2c16**–17, 2c20–**25**, **2d2**–4, 2d7, 2d11, 2d13–14, 2d16, 3a1, 3a3, 3a5, 3a7–10, 3a14, 3b4, **3b10**, 3b12, 3c9, 3c21, 3c24–25, **3c34**, 3d6–7, 3d13, 3d15, 4a4, 4a6, 4a13, 4a15, 4a17, 4a21, 4a24, 4a27, 4b2, 4b11, 4b13–14, 4c1, 4c8, 4c13, 4d3, 4d10, 4d14, 4d27, 4d30, 5a5–7, 5a21. The data relative to intra-clausal CS within the other thirteen collections are as follows: Reg. 6/40 = 15% (*TP* I, 1.6, **1.26**–7, 1.28–9, 2.2, 2.9, 2.18); Pal. 3/25 = 12% (*TP* I, 3.17, **3.35**–6, 3.38–9); South. 2/42 = 4.8% (*TP* I, 5.37–8; Ó Néill, ‘Some Remarks’, pp. 101–2); CPs. 2/9 = 22.2% (*TP* I, 6.16, 6.26); Tur. 5/118 = 4.2% (nos. 49, 58a, 60, 129, 131); ArmBGl. 4/98 = 4.1% (**170b1**, 170b2, **184b**[marg.], 185b1); TurP. 2/19 = 10.5% (nos. 5, 29); VB. 7/81 = 8.6% (nos. 10, 21, 23, 29, 32, 34, 74); VatC. 5/21 = 23.8% (nos. 2, 11b[marg.], 14, 24, 26); NancC. 3/6 = 50% (nos. 3, 5, 6); Phil. 2/125 = 1.6% (10b38, 16a100); Sort. 1/23 = 4.3% (*TP* II, 236.3); BD 2/4 = 50% (*TP* II, 257.4, 257.6).

too). The second scribe, who may have worked some time after the first, is the main glossator: he added many thousands of Latin, Old Irish and bilingual glosses whose nature ranges from one-word translation-glosses to extensive exegetical and theological commentary (his glosses are found at fols 1r–32v). Finally, a third scribe added a few glosses at the end of the manuscript (fols 33r–34r). The glosses have been shown to rely on a remarkably wide array of Late Antique sources, the most prominent one being undoubtedly the controversial commentary to the Epistles of Paul written in the early fifth century by Pelagius, whose work is cited more than a thousand times, and whose name is explicitly mentioned (with the abbreviation *pl*) in nearly a thousand glosses.<sup>56</sup> Given that for the present article I have examined the glosses published in *TP* I, 499–590 from fols 1ra–14ra (i.e., slightly less than half of the whole collection),<sup>57</sup> and given that the glosses written in the *prima manus* usually

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<sup>56</sup> The literature on Wb. is quite extensive. For useful overviews, cf. *TP* I, xxiii–v; Kenney, *Sources*, §461 (pp. 635–6); K. H. Schmidt, ‘Die Würzburger Glossen’, *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 39 (1982) 54–77: 54–63; Bronner, *Verzeichnis*, 54–5. For the date of the manuscript, cf. B. Bischoff & J. Hofmann, *Libri Sancti Kyliani. Die Würzburger Schreibschule und die Dombibliothek im VIII. und IX. Jahrhundert* (Würzburg 1952) 11, 98, 147. For the date of the glosses, cf. R. Thurneysen, ‘Das Alter der Würzburger Glossen’, in *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 3 (1901) 47–54: 51–2 (*prima manus* around AD 700; main body of glosses between 700 and 800); J. Pokorny, ‘Über das Alter der Würzburger Glossen’, *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 10 (1915) 36 (dates the main body of glosses to AD 760–770); P. Ó Néill, ‘The Old-Irish glosses of the *prima manus* in Würzburg, M.p.th.f.12: text and context reconsidered’, in M. Richter & J.-M. Picard (ed), *Ogma. Essays in Celtic Studies in honour of Próinséas Ní Chatháin* (Dublin 2002) 230–42: 230. For the three hands discernible in the manuscript, cf. L. Chr. Stern, ‘Bemerkungen zu dem Würzburger Glossencodex’, *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 6 (1908) 531–45: 544–5; Schmidt, ‘Die Würzburger Glossen’, 56–7; P. Ní Chatháin, ‘Notes on the Würzburg glosses’, in P. Ní Chatháin & M. Richter (ed), *Irland und die Christenheit: Bibelstudien und Mission* (Stuttgart 1987) 190–9: 190–1; A. Breen, ‘The Biblical text and sources of the Würzburg Pauline glosses’, in P. Ní Chatháin & M. Richter (ed), *Irland und Europa im früheren Mittelalter: Bildung und Literatur* (Stuttgart 1996) 9–16: 9–10 (suggests that the three scribes worked more or less simultaneously). For the use of Pelagius and other Late Antique sources (including Origenes, Cassiodorus, Jerome, Augustine, Gregory the Great, Isidore, and the so-called Ambrosiaster) on the part of the glossators, cf. H. Zimmer, *Pelagius in Irland. Texte und Untersuchungen zur patristischen Litteratur* (Berlin 1901) 112–37; A. Souter, *Pelagius’s Expositions of Thirteen Epistles of St Paul. I* (Cambridge 1922) 25–7, 326–8; Breen, ‘The Biblical text and sources’, 13–5.

<sup>57</sup> Besides using the standard edition of Wb. in *TP*, I have also worked from the facsimile by L. Chr. Stern, *Epistolae Beati Pauli glosatae glosa interlineali. Irisch-lateinischer Codex der Würzburger*

consist in brief monolingual explanations of single words, most of the following analysis will deal with the work of the second scribe.

The number of glosses containing at least one word in the vernacular in the first fourteen folios is 1,478, and 527 of these (35.7%) are written in a mixture of Latin and Old Irish. Out of these, 315 glosses (59.8%)<sup>58</sup> present inter-clausal code-switching (hereafter IrCS), while 258 (49%)<sup>59</sup> exhibit IaCS (glosses which only

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*Universitätsbibliothek* (Halle a. S. 1910), available on-line at the website <<http://titus.fkidg1.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/celtica/wbgl/wbgl.htm>>. Moreover, I have been able to use an unpublished transcription of the Latin glosses of Wb. carried out by Seán de Paor, to whom I wish to express my gratitude for sending me a copy of his work.

<sup>58</sup> The glosses that present IrCS are: Wb. 1a1–2, 1a5, 1a8, 1b5, 1b8, 1b11, 1b13, 1b15, 1b18, 1b21–22, 1c5, 1c9–10, 1c13, 1c19, 1d9, 1d14, 1d16, 2a2, 2a4–5, 2a13, 2b1, 2b7–10, 2b13, 2b16–18, 2b20, 2b22–23, 2c12, 2c8–9, 2c11–12, 2c14–15, 2c19, 2c22, 2c24, 2d2–3, 2d8, 2d11, 2d13–14, 3a3, 3a5, 3a7, 3a14, 3b7, 3b16, 3b18, 3b20, 3b22–23, 3b30, 3c11, 3c15, 3c18–19, 3c21, 3c23, 3c30–32, 3c37–38, 3d14, 3d19, 3d30, 4a9, 4a11, 4a13–14, 4a17–18, 4b2, 4b5, 4b9, 4b23–24, 4b26, 4b29, 4b31, 4c8, 4c13, 4c15, 4c20, 4d2, 4d15, 4d25, 5a10, 5a14–15, 5a32, 5b2–3, 5b10, 5b22–23, 5b29, 5b32, 5c2, 5c6, 5c13, 5c18, 5c21–22, 5d1, 5d3–4, 5d8–10, 5d13, 5d22, 5d31, 5d34, 5d39, 6a11, 6a24, 6b10, 6b12, 6b18, 6b29, 6c1–2, 6c17, 6c28, 6d7, 6d10, 6d14, 6d17, 7a6, 7a16–17, 7b2, 7b5, 7b10–13, 7b20, 7c1–3, 7c7, 7c12, 7d1–2, 7d4, 7d7, 7d9–10, 7d14, 7d17, 8a4–5, 8a7, 8a10, 8a13–14, 8a17–19, 8b2–5, 8b8, 8b16, 8d3–4, 8d12, 8d14–15, 8d20, 8d22–23, 8d26–28, 9a4, 9a7–8, 9a11, 9a16, 9a20, 9b6–7, 9b13, 9b16–17, 9b19, 9c9–10, 9c13, 9c19, 9c24, 9c27, 9c29–31, 9c33, 9d3–4, 9d14, 9d20, 9d25, 9d27, 9d28–29, 10a5–6, 10a11, 10a14, 10a16, 10a24, 10a26, 10b3, 10b11, 10b14, 10b21, 10c3, 10c5, 10c9, 10c18, 10d1–2, 10d4, 10d8, 10d15, 10d25, 10d34, 10d37, 11a6, 11a11, 11a13, 11a19, 11a25, 11b1, 11b12, 11b25, 11c1, 11c11–14, 11c19, 11d2, 11d6–8, 12a3–4, 12a6, 12a9–11, 12a14, 12a16, 12a34, 12b1, 12b5, 12b13, 12b16–18, 12b24, 12b34, 12c1, 12c3, 12c7, 12c17, 12c39, 12d3, 12d9, 12d11, 12d24–25, 12d42, 12d44, 13a4, 13a11, 13a13–14, 13a16, 13a19, 13a21, 13a25, 13b3, 13b7, 13b14, 13b24, 13b26, 13b31, 13c13, 13c17, 13d5, 13d9, 13d18, 13d21, 13d27, 13d33, 14a13, 14a28. In respect of the total number of glosses edited in the section of *TP* considered here (i.e. 1,478) the percentage of glosses displaying IrCS is 21.3%.

<sup>59</sup> The glosses that present IaCS are (glosses with CS only between main and relative clause, but with no IaCS *stricto sensu*, are marked in boldface): Wb. 1a1–2, 1a9, 1b8, 1b11–12, 1b15, **1c10**, 1c12, 1c17–18, 1d1, 1d8–9, 1d14, 1d19, 2a3–4, 2a8a, 2b5–6, 2b8, 2b15–16, 2b22, 2c1, 2c5–7, 2c10–11, **2c16**–17, 2c20–**25**, 2d2, 2d4, 2d7, 2d11, 2d13–14, 2d16, 3a1, 3a3, 3a5, 3a7–10, 3a14, 3b4, **3b10**, 3b12, 3c9, 3c21, 3c24–25, **3c34**–35, 3d6–7, 3d13, 3d15, 4a4, 4a6, 4a13, 4a15, 4a17, 4a21, 4a24, 4a27, 4b2, 4b11, 4b13–14, 4c1, 4c8, 4c13, 4d3, 4d10, 4d14, 4d27, 4d30, 5a5–7, 5a21, 5b1, 5b11, 5b15, 5b21–22, 5b33–34, 5b36, 5b42, 5c10, 5c12–14, 5c16, 5c19, 5d1, 5d9, 5d20, 5d33, 5d37, 6a3, 6a7, 6a18, 6a27, 6b3, 6b12, 6b17, 6b25, 6b29, 6c1, 6c10, 6c20, 6c26–27, 6d4, 6d6, 6d12, 6d14–15, 7a2, 7a5, 7a8, 7a13–14, 7b1–2, **7b4**, 7b6, 7b9, 7b11, 7b18, 7b23, **7c2**, 7c8–**9**, 7c12, 7c16, 7d6, 7d9–10, 8a8, 8a10a,

present CS occurring at the boundary between a main clause and a relative clause, as explained in fn. 53 above, are included in this figure; the percentage is 46.3% if these are excluded).<sup>60</sup>

*Prima facie*, these data are impressive, and undoubtedly witness to the remarkable ease with which the glossator(s) could handle the two languages in a scholarly context. However, there is a fundamental question which should be addressed before going any further: is the use of the term ‘code-switching’ really justified for all of these glosses, if by this term we mean the use of two languages within the same linguistic act on the part of an individual speaker or writer? Very simply, the answer is no.

First of all, there is a type of ‘bilingual’ gloss which I have not included at all in the data presented above: I have completely excluded from my analysis all glosses where the inserted Latin words are nothing but direct citations from the main text, which do not participate at all in the morpho-syntactic frame of the clause or sentence. Clearly, any monolingual individual possessing a basic reading knowledge of Latin would have been able to produce such a ‘bilingual’ text. For instance, in Wb. 6b7, ‘*is friu as-berar sumite*’ (‘it is to them that is said ‘*sumite*’”),<sup>61</sup> the Latin verb is obviously a simple quote from Rom. 14:1, *infirmum in fide adsumite*. Interestingly, as has been shown by Liam Breatnach, on several occasions such direct citations are explicitly

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8a13–14, 8a16–18, **8b9**, 8b15, 8c2, 8c10, 8c16–17, 8d28, 9a5, **9a11**, 9a13, 9a22, 9b1–2, 9b7, 9b13, 9b16, 9b19–**20**, 9b25, 9c11, 9c25, 9d1, 9d18, 10a1, 10a15, 10a23–24, 10b10–12, 10b16, 10b21, 10c18, 10d2, 10d4, 10d7, 10d11, **10d20**, 10d30–32, 11a2, 11a6, 11a10, 11a13, 11a23, 11a27–**28**, 11b16a, 11c8, 11c14–16, 11d4, 11d7, 11d15, 12a5–6, 12a28, 12b14, 12b33, 12c4, 12c11, 12c13–14, 12d12–13, 12d41, 13a11, 13a12a, 13a13–14, 13a16, 13a23–24, 13b2, 13b8, 13b12, 13b18–19, 13b23, 13b26, 13b28–29, **13c4**, 13c10–11, 13c13, 13c15, 13c21, 13c26, 13d4, 13d14–15, 13d17, 13d21, 13d25, 13d28, 14a8, 14a30. In respect of the total number of glosses edited in the section of *TP* considered here, the percentage of glosses displaying IaCS is 17.5%.

<sup>60</sup> The percentages for IrCS and IaCS do not add up to 100% because one gloss may contain both types of CS, and may therefore be counted in both categories.

<sup>61</sup> Like in *TP*, words in Old Irish are marked in italics, while the Latin is in Roman type; these conventions are inverted in the English translations (these are usually taken from *TP* for the Irish sections, with minor adjustments; the translations of the Latin sections of the glosses are mine). The expansion of abbreviations is marked in Roman type in the Old Irish, while italics are used for the Latin. Rather than simply reproducing the text of the Wb. glosses as found in *TP*, they have been here re-transcribed from Stern’s facsimile, with minimal editing.

flagged by means of an Old Irish neuter article, like in Wb. 12b25: ‘*is hed a n-demonstrabo inso*’ (‘this is the ‘*demonstrabo*’’, where *demonstrabo* is cited from 1 Cor. 12:31 *excellentiorem uiam uobis demonstrabo*).<sup>62</sup>

More importantly, I believe that a number of apparent instances of IrCS which are, on the contrary, included in the above data, should also be excluded: I am referring to the frequent situation where the two languages are separated by Tironian notes such as the ones for *id est* (.i.) or *uel* (t). Let us take, for instance, Wb. 1c5:

.i. *fodordchu* .i. *non in faciem sed in aure loquentes*  
(‘i.e., whisperers, i.e. *not speaking to the face but in the ear*’)

Here there is no way of establishing with certainty whether the Irish and the Latin section were composed at the same time, and by the same person. In such instances, the Latin or the Irish may have been added at a later stage, only giving the illusion of code-switching. This is not an *ad hoc* statement: in the St Gall Priscian (Sg.), where glosses were added by various hands, we can occasionally see glosses to the same lemma, which were written by different scribes who used different languages. For example, as already noted by Stokes and Strachan (cf. *TP* II, 90, fn. g), in Sg. 36b4, ‘.i. *esgal t tenlach* .i. *census quod tollitur*’, the Irish and the Latin words are in different hands. As perceptively pointed out by Hofman,

‘would these glosses have been copied from the St Gall manuscript into a new manuscript, then it would have looked as if all of it had been the responsibility of one glossator, not two’.<sup>63</sup>

This possibility is particularly relevant to the case of Würzburg, and not only because the main glossator occasionally adds a few words to glosses entered by the *prima manus*.<sup>64</sup> in fact, substantial evidence indicates that many – if not all – glosses

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<sup>62</sup> Cf. L. Breatnach, ‘On the citation of words and a use of the neuter article in Old Irish’, *Ériu* 41 (1990) 95–101. The same phenomenon is also briefly discussed in P. Ó Néill, ‘The Latin and Old-Irish Glosses in Würzburg M.p.th.f.12: unity in diversity’, in Bergmann *et al.*, *Mittelalterliche Volkssprachige Glossen*, 33–46: 38.

<sup>63</sup> Cit. from Hofman, *St Gall Priscian Commentary*, vol. 1, 49.

<sup>64</sup> A good example has been noted by Pádraig Ó Néill in a section of Wb. that lies outside the corpus analysed in the present article: in Wb. 29a19, the word *testor* in the main text (Tim. 5:21) ‘has directly above it the gloss ‘*adiuro*’ (*prima manus*) and to the left of the latter the gloss ‘.i. *guidimm uel*’ (main glossator)’ (cit. from Ó Néill, ‘The Old-Irish glosses of the *prima manus*’, 230, fn. 3). If no attention is paid to the different hands, this gloss simply reads ‘.i. *guidimm t adiuro*’, which looks misleadingly like an example of IrCS.

entered by the main glossator (and probably by the *tertia manus* as well) were not composed by him, but were rather copied from at least one lost exemplar. This possibility was first suggested by Heinrich Zimmer in his edition of the Würzburg glosses,<sup>65</sup> and was later corroborated by several scholars.<sup>66</sup> A piece of evidence which is particularly relevant to the present discussion, and which does not seem to have received sufficient attention yet,<sup>67</sup> is the fact (first observed by Terence A. M. Bishop in 1964) that a number of glosses in Wb. agree with analogous glosses found in another copy of the Pauline Epistles: Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.10.5.<sup>68</sup> In particular, some Irish glosses in Wb. look like direct translations or adaptations of Latin glosses occurring in B.10.5 (hereafter B), as will be exemplified by this comparison between two glosses to Gal. 3:1:

**B**, fol. 21v: .i. *praedicata est crux Christi uobis quasi eam oculis uideritis*  
 ('i.e., Christ's cross has been preached to you as though ye had seen it with  
 [your] eyes').

**Wb.** 19b6: .i. *ro·pridchad dúib céssad Crist amal ad·cethe* [...]  
 ('i.e., Christ's Passion has been preached to you as though ye had seen [it]').<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Cf. H. Zimmer, *Glossae Hibernicae* (Berlin 1881) xv–xvii.

<sup>66</sup> Cf., e.g., TP I, xxv; Breen, 'The Biblical text and sources', 10–1 ('the glosses in the second and third hands, both Irish and Latin, were copied from another manuscript. The reasons adduced by him [i.e. Zimmer] were (1) that the main text was corrected and interpolated by the glossator; (2) that the marginal glosses are not always placed opposite the text to which they refer; (3) that in at least one instance (27c8 [...]) the gloss is on a different word than that in the main text. [...] More striking evidence of transcription is found in the corruption of a number of glosses'); Ó Néill, 'The Latin and Old-Irish Glosses', 44–5.

<sup>67</sup> Notable exceptions to this are, e.g., Ní Chatháin, 'Notes', 192–9; Ó Néill, 'The Latin and Old-Irish Glosses', 44–5.

<sup>68</sup> T. A. M. Bishop, 'Notes on Cambridge Manuscripts, Part VII: Pelagius in Trinity College B.10.5', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 4 (1964) 70–77: 73, fn. 1 ('Anonymous glosses of some length in Gal. iii.1 and Col. iv.16 reappear in Irish in Wb 19b/3, 27d/15'). An additional agreement between the two collections of glosses is noted in Ó Néill, 'The Latin and Old-Irish Glosses', 45, fn. 69. Once again, I am indebted to Seán de Paor for providing me with a copy of his transcription of the glosses in B.10.5, as well as with images of this manuscript.

<sup>69</sup> For other examples of translation from pre-existing Latin glosses, cf. also Wb. 10d18 .i. *rann do loscud for altóir* [...] = B, fol. 3r *quae in honorem alteraris* [corr. to *altaris*] offeruntur; Wb. 10d29 .i. *cen lóg* = B, fol. 3r *sine mercide*; Wb. 11a15 .i. *cen chomalnad ind-í no·pridchim* = B, fol. 3v *si non*

Needless to say, this fact has serious implications for our understanding of the bilingual glosses in Wb., as will be clear from the following examples. While the last gloss just mentioned looks like a simple case of translation from Latin into Irish, the relationship between the two collections of *scholia* is not always so straightforward. Both of the following glosses refer to 1 Cor. 10:10 (*quidam eorum mormorauerunt*):

**B**, fol. 3v: .i. *contra* Moysen *et* Aron .i. ‘melius nobis seruire Ægiptís *quam* mori in deserto’ [Exod. 14:12]

(‘i.e., against Moses and Aaron, i.e. ‘better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert’’).

**Wb.** 11a25: .i. *fri dia* *et* Moysi *et* Aarón ut ‘melius nobis seruire in Ægipto *quam* mori in *hoc* deserto’.

(‘i.e., against God *and Moses and Aaron*’ etc.)

In this example, the Tironian note for *contra* visible in B is expanded as Old Irish *fri* by the Wb. glossator, who moreover adds the word *dia*, ‘God’, not found in B. This is not the only case where Wb. presents a somewhat lengthier gloss than B, as shown by these two examples:

**B**, fol. 4v: .i. *lex naturæ*

**Wb.** 11c19: .i. *lex naturae* .i. *ni-forcain aicned*

(‘i.e., *the law of nature*, i.e., nature teaches not’; gloss to 1 Cor. 11:14 *nec ipsa natura docet*).

**B**, fol. 8r: .i. *a deo*

**Wb.** 13a24: .i. *a deo i tindnacul raith*

(‘i.e., *by God* in bestowal of grace’; gloss to 1 Cor. 14:38 *si quis autem ignorant ignorabitur*).<sup>70</sup>

The former example is very similar to the above-mentioned case from Sg.: at first sight, the gloss has all the appearances of a good example of IrCS, while in fact it is most likely that only the Irish section was composed by the Wb. glossator, the Latin phrase *lex naturae* having been copied from the lost exemplar. The latter example is potentially even more misleading, as the Irish prepositional phrase *i tindnacul raith* was here added directly after the Latin, creating a perfect illusion of IaCS: in fact, we

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*opere conpleam quod sermone doceo*; Wb. 12a10 .i. *tintuúth bélri in n-aláil* [...] = B, fol. 5v [...] *translatio de lingua in linguam*.

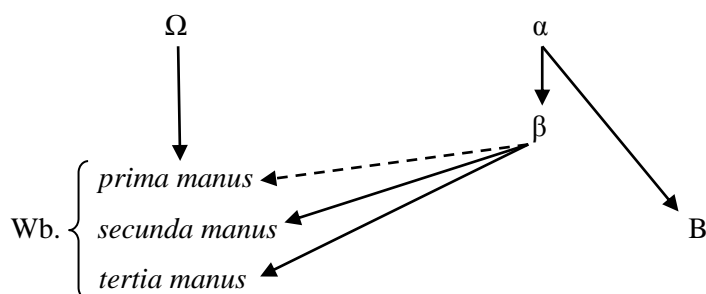
<sup>70</sup> Cf. also Wb. 12b17 ‘.i. principes † *secndapid*’ = B, fol. 6r .i. *principes*.



have here a composite text which was created, as it were, in two steps. Unfortunately, to my knowledge no systematic comparison of Würzburg and B.10.5 has ever been carried out, and such a work naturally exceeds the scope of the present contribution; it is thus difficult to assess the absolute frequency of cases like these. However, as far as IaCS is concerned, in my corpus I have been able to identify only two glosses (11a6 and the already cited 13a24) showing this specific kind of relationship between Wb. and B (i.e., Wb. expanding in Irish on Latin material also found in B, thereby generating ‘illusory IaCS’):<sup>71</sup> thus, although this matter will admittedly require more detailed investigation, the overall extent of this phenomenon may be relatively limited.

Now, while on the one hand it is clear that at least a part of the Wb. glosses are not original compositions but were rather copied from pre-existing Pauline glosses also underlying B, on the other hand Pádraig Ó Néill has provided convincing evidence for the existence of a coherent *usus scribendi* (or rather *usus glossandi*) which can be detected throughout the corpus: this points to a single author who composed his glosses ‘in Ireland, for an Irish audience’ sometime in the first half of the eighth century, relying on a wide range of sources, which probably included a glossed copy of the Epistles of Paul. At the same time, the presence of misplaced and corrupt glosses in Wb. (cf. fn. 66 above) indicates that the single anonymous author posited by Ó Néill should not be identified with the *secunda manus* of M.p.th.f.12: this scribe would thus have been a mere copyist<sup>72</sup> (although, of course, we have no way of telling whether he also occasionally added at least a few glosses of his own composition).

If we take into account the evidence presented by scholars over the past decades, it is now possible to draw a *stemma* illustrating the process of formation of Wb.:



<sup>71</sup> If we remove these two glosses from the list at fn. 59, the recalculated percentage of glosses presenting IaCS in respect of the total number of bilingual glosses (i.e. 256/527) is 48.6%.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Ó Néill, ‘The Latin and Old-Irish Glosses’, 35–8, 40–1, 44–5.

The Greek letters represent here, respectively: Ω = a copy of the Epistles of Paul with glosses of *ca.* AD 700, reproduced by the first scribe;<sup>73</sup> α = glosses on the Epistles of Paul, of uncertain date and provenance; β = Irish glosses on the Epistles of Paul, composed during the first half of the eighth century by incorporating glosses of α, and relying on many Late Antique and Early Medieval sources (these are the glosses which were later copied by the second and third scribe of M.p.th.f.12).<sup>74</sup>

I believe that we may now add at least two elements in support to Ó Néill’s argument, and to this *stemma*: first of all, the main layer of glosses of Wb. shows a remarkable degree of intellectual independence in respect of some of the glosses copied from the lost exemplar α. Let us take, for instance, the *scholia* to 1 Cor. 14:32 *et spiritus profetarum profetis subiecti sunt* (‘and the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets’). B (fol. 7v) presents here a simple gloss to *profetis*: ‘.i. apostolis’, whereas Wb. 13a16 incorporates this elementary interpretation in the context of a much wider discussion:

.i. bertit alaili tra combad spirut nóib ro-boí in profetís ueteris combad hé bad foammamigthe profetís noui .i. apostolis, quod non uerum air ní díib attáa briathar less híc sed de predicatoribus

(‘i.e. some take it that it was the Holy Spirit who was *in the prophets of the Old Testament*, that it was he who was subject *to the prophets of the New Testament*, i.e. the apostles, but that is not true, for it is not about them that he [*scil.* Paul] speaks *here*, but about the preachers’).<sup>75</sup>

It is not difficult to recognise behind the word *alaili*, ‘some (others)’, the pre-existing single-word gloss copied from α, as proven by the reading found in B: however, our glossator did not hesitate to challenge the inherited interpretation of the Pauline passage, openly saying *quod non uerum* ‘but that is not true’, and providing then a different explanation.

A further indication that Ó Néill’s argument in favour of a single author of β may well be correct is the very presence of so much IaCS in Wb.: as we have seen above,

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<sup>73</sup> Cf. Ó Néill, ‘The Old-Irish glosses of the *prima manus*’, 230–2.

<sup>74</sup> For the possibility (represented in the *stemma* with a broken line) that some glosses of β were also copied by the first scribe of Wb., cf. Ní Chatháin, ‘Notes’, 193–5; Ó Néill, ‘The Old-Irish glosses of the *prima manus*’, 237.

<sup>75</sup> The translation of the Irish sections of this gloss provided in *TP* has been here modified following P. Mac Coisdealbha, *The Syntax of the Sentence in Old Irish* (Tübingen 1998) 32.

this phenomenon is found in Wb. to a much greater degree than in any other collection, possibly pointing to a particularly high level of bilingual proficiency.<sup>76</sup>

## 5. ANALYSIS OF THE CORPUS

At this point, it is inescapable that, even once we have sifted through the evidence in order to eliminate all illusory instances, thereby obtaining a more reliable corpus, we are still left with a substantial number of glosses which seem to display ‘real’ code-switching. The problem we face next, then, is how to analyse this corpus: over the past thirty years, linguists have elaborated numerous theoretical models of CS, and it is therefore not easy to identify what the most suitable theory might be. Considerable help in making a choice comes from the ideas formulated by Pieter Muysken in the book *Bilingual Speech*: rather than imposing a universal model of CS regulated by a single set of linguistic constraints,<sup>77</sup> Muysken proposes instead a sensible categorization of CS into three distinct typologies: insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization.<sup>78</sup> As we shall see, it is not difficult to see that Wb. generally matches the first type. As summarised by Muysken,

‘approaches that depart from the notion of insertion [...] view the constraints in terms of structural properties of some base of matrix structure. Here the process of code-mixing is conceived as something akin to borrowing: the insertion of an alien lexical or phrasal category into a given structure. The difference would simply be the size and type of element inserted, e.g. noun versus noun phrase’.

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<sup>76</sup> As pointed out by Suzanne Romaine, IaCS involves ‘the greatest syntactic risk, and may be avoided by all but the most fluent bilinguals’ (cit. from S. Romaine, *Bilingualism* (Oxford 1989) 113).

<sup>77</sup> At the end of a detailed survey of several syntactic theories of CS, Muysken discusses the nature of the various rules and constraints posited by linguists, concluding (rightly, in my opinion) that ‘the evidence seems to point towards probabilistic statements, linked to different language pairs and contact settings. Absolute constraints, that could be invalidated by a single or a few counter-examples, are less appropriate for bilingual speech production data’ (cit. from P. Muysken, *Bilingual speech: a typology of code-mixing* (Cambridge 2000) 28).

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Muysken, *Bilingual speech*, 3; in Muysken’s own words, these three types refer to the following bilingual behaviours: (1) ‘insertion of material (lexical items or entire constituents) from one language into a structure from the other language’, (2) ‘alternation between structures from languages’, (3) ‘congruent lexicalization of material from different lexical inventories into a shared grammatical structure’.

Within the category of insertional CS, the most prominent and elaborate theory presented so far is undoubtedly the Matrix Language Frame model (MLF), proposed by Carol Myers-Scotton: the Wb. corpus seems thus to offer an ideal opportunity to test the applicability of this model to a historical written corpus.<sup>79</sup> While it would be impossible to present here the MLF in all its complexity, it will be useful to provide at least a simplified overview of some of its main characteristics.<sup>80</sup>

The fundamental assumption behind the MLF is that in IaCS one of the two languages involved is cognitively activated more than the other, so that the former provides the morpho-syntactic frame for all the constituents of the clause, while any element provided by the other language is embedded into that frame. The two languages are therefore referred to, respectively, as Matrix Language (ML) and Embedded Language (EL).<sup>81</sup> Two principles derive from this dichotomy: (1) the *morpheme order principle* and (2) the *system morpheme principle*. The former states that the Matrix Language sets the surface morpheme order when single Embedded Language lexemes occur in a bilingual CP: in other words, EL lexemes must respect the word-order and the grammatical rules of the ML. The second principle states that

‘in Matrix Language + Embedded Language constituents, all system morphemes which have grammatical relations external to their head constituent (i.e. which participate in the sentence’s thematic role grid) will come from the Matrix Language’.<sup>82</sup>

In all her works on the structures of CS, Myers-Scotton proposes a cognitive distinction between *content* and *system* morphemes, whose discriminating feature is

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<sup>79</sup> A similar attempt has been carried out in McLelland, ‘A historical study of codeswitching in writing’.

<sup>80</sup> Over the past twenty years, Myers-Scotton has produced several different formulations of the MLF. The following overview is based mostly on her 2002 book *Contact Linguistics*. A more concise but useful and up-to-date presentation of the MLF has been recently published in C. Myers-Scotton & J. Jake, ‘A universal model of code-switching and bilingual language processing and production’, in Bullock & Toribio, *Linguistic code-switching*, 336–57. An excellent overview (and detailed critique) of the MLF can be found in R. Regis, *Appunti grammaticali sull’enunciazione mistilingue* (Munich 2005) 125–58.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Myers-Scotton, *Contact Linguistics*, 8: ‘There is always an analysable or resolvable frame structuring the morphosyntax of any CP. This frame is called the Matrix Language. In bilingual speech, the participating languages never participate equally as the source of this Matrix Language’ (cf. also pp. 58–9 and Myers-Scotton & Jake, ‘A universal model’, 337–8).

<sup>82</sup> Cit. from Myers-Scotton, *Contact Linguistics*, 59 (Myers-Scotton cites here from her own book *Duelling languages: grammatical structures in codeswitching* (Oxford 1993) 83).

being or not being a thematic role assigner/receiver. It is again useful to refer to the author's own words:

'Content morphemes are the main elements conveying semantic and pragmatic aspects of messages, and system morphemes largely indicate relations between the content morphemes'.<sup>83</sup>

In a nutshell, elements like nouns and verbs are content morphemes (given that verbs assign, and nouns receive, thematic roles such as agent or patient), while typical system morphemes include, for instance, articles, verbal inflections, and most case endings. The 4-M version of the MLF model further distinguishes between content morphemes on one side, and three different types of system morphemes on the other: according to the *differential access hypothesis*, morphemes belonging to these four categories are selected at different 'phases', as it were, of the language production process.<sup>84</sup>

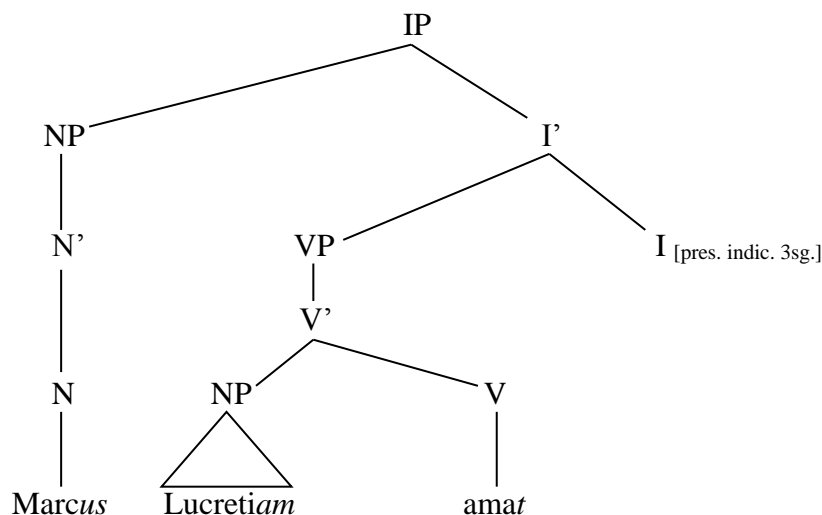
More specifically, the three types of system morpheme behave as follows: (1) *early system morphemes* are accessed at the level of the mental lexicon, and 'supplement' the semantic/pragmatic information whose core is provided by content morphemes (e.g., definite articles add the feature [+definite] to the noun selected in the mental lexicon); (2) *bridges* belong to the sub-class of *late system morphemes* (i.e. morphemes that are activated at the level of the Formulator; cf. fn. 84) and are 'automatically' selected to produce well-formed strings on the basis of morpho-syntactic information internal to their maximal projection (they typically connect content morphemes with each other, e.g. the English possessive 's); (3) *outsiders* are

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<sup>83</sup> Cit. from Myers-Scotton, *Contact Linguistics*, 15 (cf. also pp. 17–8, 69–72).

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Myers-Scotton, *Contact Linguistics*, 17: 'The different types of morpheme under the 4-M model are differently accessed in the abstract levels of the production process'. It is important to point out that, as underlined by Myers-Scotton herself, the 4-M model depends on the adoption of a modified version of Willem Levelt's language production model (cf. W. Levelt, *Speaking: from intention to articulation* (Cambridge MA 1989)), distinguishing between the various levels that underlie the production of a linguistic message: a 'conceptual level' (where the speaker makes decisions pointing to specific semantic/pragmatic feature bundles on the basis of the communicative context and his intentions); a 'lemma level' (where the appropriate lemmas of the mental lexicon are selected in order to realise the speaker's intention); a 'functional level' (where the Formulator takes into account the morpho-syntactic and morpho-phonological indications attached to the previously-selected lemmas, in order to produce a well-formed grammatical structure such as a CP or an IP); a 'positional' or 'surface level' (where the structure produced by the Formulator is turned into an actual utterance).

*late system morphemes* too, but they express grammatical relations external to their immediate maximal projection, as shown by the basic Latin sentence *Marcus Lucretiam amat* in the tree-diagram shown below. In this example, the two case endings (-us and -am) express thematic roles assigned by the argument structure of the verb *amat* (requiring two thematic roles, or  $\theta$ -roles: an experiencer and a theme), which lies outside the two NPs, while the verbal inflection expresses subject-verb agreement (the subject being outside the maximal projection VP):<sup>85</sup>



If we go back to Myers-Scotton's above-mentioned formulation of the *system morpheme principle*, we can now see that it predicts that *outsiders*, such as verbal inflectional morphemes and case markers, will necessarily come from the Matrix Language in all instances of IaCS; moreover, according to Myers-Scotton's prediction, switching involving *bridges* is possible, but rare.

The only exception to this principle is the case of *embedded language 'islands'*, defined by Myers-Scotton as 'full constituents consisting only of Embedded Language morphemes occurring in a bilingual CP that is otherwise framed by the Matrix Language'<sup>86</sup> (e.g., a prepositional phrase in a language A embedded in a clause otherwise expressed in a language B).

Of course, the MLF is not exempt from theoretical and methodological problems: in particular, the definition of objective criteria for the identification of the Matrix

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<sup>85</sup> Cf. Myers-Scotton, *Contact Linguistics*, 17–8, 73–86; Myers-Scotton & Jake, 'A universal model', 340–7.

<sup>86</sup> Cit. from Myers-Scotton, *Contact Linguistics*, 139; for a thorough discussion of EL islands, cf. *ibid.* 139–53.

Language is one of the most frequently debated aspects of the theory, and Myers-Scotton herself has modified her views several times in regard to this matter. While in the first formulation of the MLF she argued that the ML could be identified as the source of more morphemes in a discourse sample, she later rejected this idea.<sup>87</sup> Given that several linguists accept the notion of a dominant language in insertional CS, many different criteria for identifying the ML have been proposed over the years, but, as concluded by Muysken, it seems that ‘a generally valid criterion for defining a single matrix language for a sentence or a conversation is hard to find’.<sup>88</sup> In her 2002 book, Myers-Scotton discusses this issue at some length: she argues that the ML/EL dichotomy is ‘a basic premise of the MLF model’, and also that ‘the MLF model provides the two principles as tests of the premise of unequal participation and as a way to identify the Matrix Language’. Nonetheless, *pace* Myers-Scotton, it is hard not to see here a certain degree of circularity: while on the one hand it is true that the *morpheme order* and the *system morpheme* principles are *based* on objective realities which ‘are independent of the theoretical construct, the Matrix Language’, on the other hand the validity of that same theoretical construct cannot be ‘tested’ by two principles whose definition is fully inscribed within the framework of the ML/EL dichotomy.<sup>89</sup>

Overall, it seems to me that the point of view adopted by Muysken is more cautious, and perhaps more realistic:

‘in many cases, researchers have no trouble identifying it [i.e. the ML], using different criteria. I interpret this as evidence that the notion of matrix language is essentially an

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<sup>87</sup> Cf. C. Myers-Scotton, *Duelling languages: grammatical structure in code-switching* (Oxford 1993); Myers-Scotton, *Contact Linguistics*, 61–2.

<sup>88</sup> Cit. from Muysken, *Bilingual speech*, 68 (cf. *ibid.* 64–8 for an overview of the main criteria proposed by scholars). It is important to note that the very notions of ML and EL may not be relevant to all CS corpora; cf. G. Berruto, ‘Che cosa ci insegna il ‘parlare in due lingue’? Commutazione di codice e teoria linguistica e sociolinguistica’, *Rivista di Linguistica* 17.1 (2005) 3–14 : 7 (‘Si tratta secondo Myers-Scotton di un importante universale del contatto linguistico, e di portata evidente nei casi di ‘code-switching’ su cui l’autrice ha costruito il suo modello; in molti altri casi di contatto linguistico è però indubbiamente difficile da sostenere che una L[ingua] M[atrice] esista e che il concetto sia operativo’).

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Myers-Scotton, *Contact Linguistics*, 59–60 (the potential risk of circularity of Myers-Scotton’s structural criteria for the identification of the ML has also been pointed out, for instance, in Muysken, *Bilingual speech*, 67–8, and Regis, *Appunti grammaticali*, 132).

empirical one – it may be there, or not – rather than a theoretical prime. There is much evidence that indeed in many cases code-mixing [i.e., IaCS] is asymmetrical and involves a ‘dominant’, ‘base’, or ‘matrix’ language. However, in other cases it is not’.<sup>90</sup>

These conclusions match remarkably well the corpus under scrutiny here. Indeed, admittedly, in a few bilingual glosses it is not clear whether Latin or Old Irish should be identified as the ML, as shown by the following two examples:

Wb. 7d6: .i. *ro-fitid primum aduentum per euangelium, ro-fessid secundum aduentum per reuelationem*

(‘i.e., ye know *the first coming through the Gospel*, ye will know *the second coming through [his] revelation*’; gloss to 1 Cor. 1:7 *expectantibus reuelationem Iesu Christi*).

Wb. 8c17: .i. *int-í dia ru-pridchad superedificat*

(‘i.e., the one to whom it has been preached *builds*’; gloss to 1 Cor. 3:10 *alius autem superaedificat*).

In the first example, the language of the main verbs is Irish, but all the other morphemes are in Latin: given that the word order is compatible with both languages, and both Irish and Latin system morphemes such as verbal endings and case markers occur, it is not possible to determine here which one is the ML on the basis of the Myers-Scotton’s principles. As for the second example, we could either recognise there a Latin word order with final verb and an embedded Irish relative clause (in which case Latin would be the ML), or an Old Irish *nominativus pendens* construction<sup>91</sup> with an embedded Latin verb (in which case Irish would be the ML).<sup>92</sup>

However, in the large majority of cases it is fairly easy to recognise the ML, at least intuitively and on a case-by-case basis, since usually it is very clear which one of the two languages provides the morpho-syntactic frame in which constituents from the other language are inserted. For instance, in the following two glosses, single nouns are embedded in clauses whose structure is unmistakably provided by the other language (Old Irish is the ML in the first example, Latin in the second):

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<sup>90</sup> Cit. from Muysken, *Bilingual speech*, 68.

<sup>91</sup> On the *nominativus pendens* construction, cf. Mac Coisdealbha, *Syntax of the Sentence*, 83–8.

<sup>92</sup> Other glosses where the assignation of ML status is not straightforward are Wb. 4b14, 7b9 and 13c26. In 7b9 we read *muinter Priscill et Aquille*: the linguistic status of the two names is not clear to me. Is *Priscill* here adapted to Irish, or is it simply missing a suspension stroke for a Latin ending *-ae* or an *e caudata*? As for *Aquille*, do we have here a Latin or an Old Irish *ā*-stem genitive ending (which would have been homophonous anyway)?



Wb. 1b12: .i. *airechas ceneóil airsiu, ní airechas fidei*  
(‘i.e., primacy of race therefore, not primacy of faith’; gloss to Rom. 1:12).

Wb. 13a11: [...] *quia mos est apud illos freisndis predicatorum*  
(‘... because the confutation of preachers is a custom among them’; gloss to 1 Cor. 14:30).

Thus, in the end it is not difficult to see that this corpus is characterised by a strong asymmetry between Latin and Old Irish, in terms of their serving as ML in the context of bilingual clauses: only in a small minority of instances (5.5%) can we recognise Latin as the Matrix, whereas in the overwhelming majority of cases (95.7%) Old Irish is clearly the dominant language.<sup>93</sup>

Interestingly, these data can be directly compared with sociolinguistic contexts described by linguists working on modern CS. For instance, Muysken points out that ‘insertion[al CS] is frequent in colonial settings and recent migrant communities, where there is a considerable asymmetry in the speakers’ proficiency in the two languages’.<sup>94</sup> Moreover Myers-Scotton has argued that

‘the matrix language is often the speakers’ first language, just because codeswitching is typically an in-group mode of discourse and a first language is typically the language which indexes solidarity in such situations. [...] This more dominant language is often not the language of greater socio-political prestige in the larger community’.<sup>95</sup>

The asymmetry visible in the Würzburg corpus thus seems to support the definition of the sociolinguistic setting in which the glossator worked as a situation of diglossia, in agreement with what I have suggested in section 2 above. Indeed, in a

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<sup>93</sup> These percentages do not add up to a hundred because in three glosses we have what could be called ‘alternating ML’, i.e. the gloss contains more than one clause, and the ML is not the same in all clauses. The percentages were obtained first of all by removing the five above-mentioned instances of undetermined ML from the overall number of Wb. glosses presenting IaCS (so, 258 - 5 = 253). Latin can be recognised as ML in 14 glosses (14/253 = 5.5%): Wb 1c17, 3a7\*, 3d6, 4d30, 5c19, 5d9, 6c20, 9b7\*, 9b16, 12a6\*, 12a28, 13a11, 13a14, 13a24 (glosses marked with an asterisk present ‘alternating ML’; if we consider exclusively the glosses where the only ML is Latin, the figure is further reduced to 11/253 = 4.3%). In all other glosses presenting IaCS (239/253 = 94.5%) Old Irish is the only ML, and if we add to these the three glosses presenting ‘alternating ML’, the figure must then be increased to 242/253 = 95.7%.

<sup>94</sup> Cit. from Muysken, *Bilingual speech*, 9.

<sup>95</sup> Cit. from C. Myers-Scotton, ‘Structural uniformities vs. community differences in codeswitching’, in R. Jacobson (ed.), *Codeswitching worldwide* (Berlin/New York 1998), 91–108: 96, 99.

diglossic environment, it is not surprising that a switch L → H should be more frequent than the reverse, especially in a learned context. At this point, we can formulate a working hypothesis, according to which switching (in writing and perhaps also in speech) from Irish (L variety, or, as we have seen, ‘quasi-H’ variety) to Latin (H variety) may have been a common linguistic behaviour in Early Medieval Irish monasteries, its most obvious effect (intended or not) being the immediate connotation of a text (or utterance) as the product of an intellectual elite.<sup>96</sup> This view receives some support from the fairly frequent insertion of Latin words or even whole clauses in the context of Old Irish poetry and *Kunstprosa*, where linguistic choices are of course at their most planned, self-aware, and self-referential: these works appear to display a sort of ‘conventionalised’ form of CS, where language switching has even become a literary device, an overt symbol of Christian culture and intertextuality.<sup>97</sup>

On the contrary, switching from Latin to Irish may have been either explicitly frowned upon (as we have already seen in the case of Adomnán’s prologue to the *Vita Columbae* and Ferdomnach’s *colophon* in the Book of Armagh), or simply triggered on an occasional basis by teaching needs: for instance, the sporadic switches from Latin to Irish found in Hiberno-Latin computistical treatises such as the Munich

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<sup>96</sup> Cf. Müller, ‘Kodewechsel’, 79: ‘Es ist also zu erwägen, ob der Gebrauch lateinischer Einfügungen bewußt und als stilbildendes Mittel eingesetzt wurde, zum Zweck der Kennzeichnung des Texts als einem spezifischen (kirchlich-monastischen) Genre und Umfeld zugehörig und zugleich als Mittel der Identitätsbildung des Schreibers, der sich an seiner bestimmten Bildungs- und Kulturschicht zugehörig “beschreibt”’. Note that the corpora examined in Müller, ‘Kodewechsel’, and Bronner, ‘Codeswitching in Medieval Ireland’, also mostly involve the insertion of Latin elements in an Irish frame, rather than the opposite.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. the Latin insertions in *Amrae Coluimb Chille* (Th. O. Clancy and G. Márkus (ed. & tr.), *Iona: the earliest poetry of a Celtic monastery* (Edinburgh 1995), 104–15: II, 8–9 (p. 106); V.7; VI.7 (p. 108); VIII, 8, 12, 16; IX, 3 (p. 112)) or Colmán’s Hymn (ed. & tr. in *TP II*, 298–306: lines 21–6, 28, 30, 32, 35–6). The opposite phenomenon (i.e. CS from Latin to Irish in poetry) can also be found occasionally, although it is apparently restricted to cases where an Irish place-name or personal name must be mentioned: cf., e.g., the seventh-century *Versiculi familiae Benchuir* in the Antiphonary of Bangor (F. E. Warren (ed.), *The Antiphonary of Bangor* (2 vols, London 1893), vol. 2, p. 28: §I.1 ‘*Benchuir bona regula*’; §II.1 ‘*Munther Benchuir beata*’; many thanks to Dáibhí Ó Cróinín for drawing my attention to this text).

Computus or the *Computus Einsidlensis* are likely to be due to the didactic necessity of clarifying difficult technical concepts for students whose first language was Irish.<sup>98</sup>

If we now focus on the glosses which display the most widespread phenomenon, i.e. IaCS ‘proper’ from Old Irish (ML) to Latin (EL), further interesting data can be obtained by studying the distribution of EL constituents (I mean both single constituents and EL islands) according to their grammatical class<sup>99</sup> (single verbs,<sup>100</sup> verb phrases,<sup>101</sup> single nouns,<sup>102</sup> noun phrases,<sup>103</sup> adjectives,<sup>104</sup> pronouns,<sup>105</sup> prepositions, prepositional phrases,<sup>106</sup> adverbs,<sup>107</sup> numerals<sup>108</sup>):

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<sup>98</sup> Cf. Bisagni & Warntjes, ‘Latin and Old Irish’, 29–33; cf. also eid. ‘The Early Old Irish material in the newly discovered *Computus Einsidlensis* (c. AD 700)’, *Ériu* 58 (2008) 77–105: 96–8, 102–3; Warntjes, ‘Die Verwendung’, 167–75.

<sup>99</sup> The following percentages were not calculated on the basis of the number of *glosses*, but rather on the basis of the actual number of *switches*, given that one gloss may contain more than one instance of CS. The number of switched elements (i.e. single elements such as nouns and verbs, or whole phrases) in the 226 glosses presenting clear instances of Irish → Latin IaCS is 313 (the number 226 is equal to the 242 glosses mentioned at fn. 93 above, minus 16 glosses, i.e. 14 glosses only displaying CS between main and relative clause, one gloss – Wb. 8a8 – only presenting a switch at the level of the complementizer *quod*, and one gloss – Wb. 5d37 – only presenting a switch at the level of the subordinating conjunctions *quam*).

<sup>100</sup> There are 5 instances of switched verbs, in Wb. 7a8, 9b19, 10b21, 12b14, 13a13.

<sup>101</sup> There are 6 instances of switched verb phrases, in Wb. 2d13, 3a1, 3d7, 9b19, 11b16a, 11d4.

<sup>102</sup> There are 115 instances of switched nouns and proper names, in Wb. 1a1–2, 1b8, 1b11–12, 1b15, 1c18 (2 instances), 1d1, 1d14, 2a3–4, 2b5–6, 2b8, 2b15–16, 2b22, 2c7, 2c10–11, 2c17, 2c20, 2c21 (3 instances), 2c22–23, 2d7, 3a1, 3a5, 3a10 (2 instances), 3a14, 3c9, 3c24, 4a15, 4a17, 4a24, 4a27, 4b13 (2 instances), 4d14, 5a5 (2 instances), 5b34, 5b36, 5c12 (2 instances), 5d33, 6a27, 6b3, 6b25, 6b29 (2 instances), 6c10, 6c26–27, 6d12, 6d14, 7a14, 7b1–2, 7b6, 7b11 (2 instances), 7b18, 7c8, 7d10, 8a13 (2 instances), 8a14 (2 instances), 8c2 (2 instances), 8c10 (2 instances), 8d28, 9b13 (3 instances), 9b25, 9c25, 10a1, 10a15, 10a24, 10b10–12, 10d2, 10d7, 10d11 (2 instances), 11a2, 11a13, 11c14 (3 instances), 11c15, 12a6, 12c4, 12c13, 12d12 (2 instances), 13a23, 13b2, 13b19, 13b23, 13b29, 13c13, 13d4 (2 instances), 13d17, 13d28, 14a8. The number of proper names is 24 (i.e. 7.7% of the whole number of instances of CS).

<sup>103</sup> There are 48 instances of switched noun phrases, in Wb. 1a1, 1b8, 1b11, 1c12, 1d8, 1d19, 2a28a, 2c21 (2 instances), 2c24, 3a3, 3a7, 3a10, 3c25, 3d13, 4a13, 4a21, 4b2, 4c8, 4d3 (2 instances), 4d14, 5a6, 5c10, 5c12–14, 5d1, 5d20, 6a7, 6a18, 6a27 (2 instances), 6c26, 7d9, 8b15, 9a22, 10d4, 11a23, 11c8, 12a5, 13a13, 13a16, 13b18, 13b26, 13c15, 13d25, 14a30.

<sup>104</sup> There are 13 instances of switched adjectives, in Wb. 2b22, 2d11 (2 instances), 6c1, 8a16, 8a17 (5 instances), 13b8 (2 instances), 13d15.

V	VP	N	NP	Adj	Pro	P	PP	Adv	Num
1.6%	1.9%	36.8%	15.3%	4.2%	1.6%	0%	28.1%	9.9%	0.6%
3.5%		52.1%							

The most striking datum which emerges from these figures is undoubtedly the massive presence of nominal elements and, on the contrary, the great rarity of verbal elements. Moreover, there appears to be an absolute constraint against switching single prepositions, whereas prepositional phrases are very common.<sup>109</sup> These distributional patterns match many of the conclusions drawn from modern insertional CS corpora. For instance, as has been pointed out by Myers-Scotton, ‘Embedded Language nouns occur frequently in mixed codeswitching constituents framed by the Matrix Language’, while ‘even in those data sets where Embedded Language finite verbs do occur, they certainly are not as frequent as Embedded Language nouns’, and ‘very few Embedded Language adjectives modifying Matrix Language nouns occur in

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<sup>105</sup> There are 5 instances of switched pronouns, in Wb. 1a1 (*sibi*), 5b36 (*tibi*), 9a13 (2 instances, *mihi* and *uobis*), 9b7 (*nos*, nom.).

<sup>106</sup> There are 88 instances of switched prepositional phrases, in Wb. 1a9, 1c18 (2 instances), 1d8–9, 2a4, 2c1, 2c5–6, 2c21, 2c24, 2d4, 2d14 (2 instances), 2d16, 3a5, 3a8–9, 3a14, 3b4 (2 instances), 3b12, 3c21, 3c25, 3c35, 3d15, 4a4, 4a6, 4b11 (2 instances), 4b13, 4c13 (2 instances), 4d27, 5a21, 5b1, 5b11, 5b21–22, 5b33, 5c14, 5c16, 6a3, 6b12, 6c27, 6d4, 6d6, 6d15, 7a2, 7a5, 7b1, 7b23, 7c12, 7c16, 8a10a, 8a16–18, 8c16, 9a5, 9b1, 9b2 (2 instances), 9b7, 9c11, 9d18, 10b16, 10c18, 10d30, 10d31–32, 11a2, 11a27, 11c16, 11d15, 12b14, 12c11, 12c14 (2 instances), 12d41, 13a13, 13a16, 13b12, 13b23, 13c21, 13d14–15, 13d21.

<sup>107</sup> There are 31 instances of switched adverbs, in Wb. 2c1, 2c10, 2d2, 2d14, 4c1, 4d10, 5a7, 5b15, 5b42, 5c16, 6b17, 7a13, 7d10, 9b13, 9b19, 9d1, 10a15, 10a23, 11d7, 12a6, 12b33, 12c13, 12d13, 13a12a (2 instances), 13a16, 13b28, 13c10–11, 13c21, 13d4.

<sup>108</sup> There are 2 instances of switched numerals: Wb. 11a6, 11a10.

<sup>109</sup> Interestingly, these data (which, it should be remembered, are based exclusively on Wb.) are very similar to the percentages which I obtained in the context of my 2010/2011 on the basis of the collections of glosses listed at fn. 54 above: V 0.7%, VP 1.5%, N 37.1%, NP 18.3%, Adj 2.6%, Pro 0.3%, P 1.1%, PP 29.5%, Adv 8%, Discourse markers 0.9%. This fact suggests that code-switching in the Old Irish glosses does follow recurring patterns, rather than being a random phenomenon. It would therefore be worth pursuing further investigation by analysing a larger corpus.

codeswitching corpora’;<sup>110</sup> moreover, ‘there are not many examples of [...] E[mbedded] L[anguage] prepositions in mixed constituents; more frequently, they occur in P[repositional] P[hrases] that are EL islands’; likewise, ‘even when pronouns are content morphemes, EL pronouns occur very infrequently except in EL islands’.<sup>111</sup>

As for the main principles underlying the MLF model, in general the *morpheme order principle* is quite strictly adhered to: the EL elements are simply inserted into the morpho-syntactic structure provided by the ML. For instance, in Wb. 3a7 we can see an Irish emphasizing suffix governed by a Latin verb (‘*non inputabatur-som riam* [...]’, meaning ‘*it was not attributed* previously’), while at Wb. 3d6 we find the noun phrase ‘*opus tairmthecto* [...]’ (‘*a work of transgression*’), with an Irish genitive qualifying the Latin noun *opus*: in both these examples, Latin is likely to be the ML. To give one further example, this time with Irish as ML, in Wb. 1d14 a Latin accusative is governed by an Irish verb: ‘[...] *isind-í nad-creitid* Christum [MS *Xpm*] *quen [sic] praedicat léx*’ (‘in that ye believe not *Christ, whom the Law preaches*’).<sup>112</sup>

The situation, however, is not so straightforward as far as the *system morpheme principle* is concerned. As we have seen, according to this principle all ‘outsider’ system morphemes such as verbal inflections and case endings should be provided by the ML. In fact, embedded Latin forms regularly display Latin inflection, contrary to Myers-Scotton’s prediction: Latin endings marking, for instance, nominative,

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<sup>110</sup> Cit. from Myers-Scotton, *Contact Linguistics*, 125 (first cit.), 132 (third cit.) and 133 (second cit.). It is also important to mention here that, besides being extremely rare, almost all embedded Latin verbs occurring in my corpus are either infinitives or participles. Obviously, forms such as these are grammatically easier to embed than finite verbs.

<sup>111</sup> The two last citations are from Myers-Scotton, ‘A universal model’, 348–9.

<sup>112</sup> Notice that here the accusative is precisely the case required by the Irish verb *creitid*, but this is not always the case: for instance, at Wb. 23a8 we read ‘.i. *hóre cretes sochuide deo per praedicationem meam*’ (‘because a multitude believe *in God through my preaching*’). The dative case is acceptable for expressing the argument of the Latin verb *credere*, but not of *creitid*, which usually requires a direct object in the accusative. However, since the latter Old Irish verb can also be found in construction with *do* + dative, it seems reasonable to assume that the Latin dative in Wb. 23a8 is functionally equivalent to the Old Irish prepositional construction. Indeed, it is tempting to explain the adoption of the prepositional construction with *do* on the part of the Old Irish verb *creitid* as a direct consequence of syntactic convergence with Latin *credere*.

accusative and dative case can be found in great numbers, as shown by the following examples (to which many more may be added):<sup>113</sup>

Wb. 1c12: [...] *ba léicthi iudici iusto*  
(‘he should be left *to the righteous judge*’).

Wb. 5a5: [...] *inna n-í prechite pacem* [...]  
(‘... of those who preach *the peace*’)

Wb. 6b29: .i. *léicid iudicium deo* [...]  
(‘i.e., leave ye *the judgement to God*’).

I suspect – nor am I the first to do so – that, rather than accepting the MLF as a universal model of CS, we should on the contrary ‘nuance’ some of its aspects in order to accommodate pairs of languages with typological profiles very different from the specific contact situation on which Myers-Scotton based her model, that is Swahili/English bilingualism.<sup>114</sup> If we consider that English has an extremely reduced inflectional morphology, while Swahili is an agglutinative language characterised by a rich repertoire of highly segmentable morphemes, it is easy to understand that this

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<sup>113</sup> The distribution of case forms for single embedded Latin nouns is as follows: nominative 52/115 = 45.2%; genitive 39/115 = 33.9%; dative 11/115 = 9.6%; accusative 11/115 = 9.6%; ablative 2/115 = 1.7%. The nominative is clearly the form which offers the least resistance to embedding, probably by virtue of its being perceived as the ‘default’ form of a noun. Genitive is also frequent as EL element, as in most cases its ending is not an *outsider* system morpheme but rather what Myers-Scotton calls *bridge* (genitival relation often works within the immediate maximal projection; cf. Myers-Scotton, ‘A universal model’, 345). The occurrence of dative, accusative and ablative endings constitutes the clearest violation of the *system morpheme principle*. It is nonetheless interesting to observe that, while on the one hand the relatively frequent insertion of Latin datives and accusatives is probably facilitated by the substantial functional equivalence between these cases in Latin and Old Irish (the equivalence being more precisely between Latin dative and Old Irish *do* plus dative), on the other hand the high functional specificity of the Latin ablative makes it difficult to embed forms inflected in this case in bilingual clauses with Irish as ML, hence the very low percentage of embedded ablatives.

<sup>114</sup> For example, both McLelland (‘A historical study of codeswitching in writing’, 520–1) and Regis (*Appunti grammaticali*, 157–8) conclude, for very different reasons and on the basis of completely different corpora, that the MLF model may not be applicable in CS contexts where the two languages are typologically very close to each other. Muysken too makes several important observations in this respect, cf. *Bilingual speech*, 16, 35–59.

particular language pair represents an ideal combination for a perfectly regular manifestation of the *system morpheme principle*.<sup>115</sup>

Linguistic contact between Latin and Old Irish entails very different challenges. On the one hand, both are synthetic fusional languages with rich inflectional morphology; on the other hand, Latin verbal and nominal morphemes show a fairly high degree of segmentability, whereas Old Irish nominal and verbal morphology are characterised not only by the simple suffixation of overt endings (e.g. nom. sg. *túath* vs. nom. pl. *túath-a*, or nom. pl. *fir* vs. acc. pl. *fir-u*), but also by complex mechanisms of introflexion, such as grammaticalised metaphonesis (e.g. nom. sg. *fer* < \**werah* < \**wiros* vs. gen. sg. / nom. pl. *fir* < \**wirī*) and palatalisation (nom. sg. *bás* vs. gen. sg. *báis*, or 3sg. pres. indic. *beirid*, with palatalised *r* vs. 3sg. pres. subj. *beraid*, with non-palatalised *r*), as well as peculiar typological features such as initial mutations;<sup>116</sup> in other words, it is often practically impossible to identify segmentable morphemes which may be ‘attached’ to embedded Latin forms. As a consequence, even if we accepted the validity of the *system morpheme principle*, it would still seem likely that its surface manifestations will vary considerably depending on the typological profile of the languages involved.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Cf. Muysken, *Bilingual speech*, 10: ‘research on code-mixing has been shaped by the language pairs encountered by researchers, and the key notions were introduced one by one on the basis of the data encountered’.

<sup>116</sup> Cf. K. McCone, ‘An tSean-Ghaeilge agus a réamhstair’, in K. McCone, D. McManus, C. Ó hÁinle, N. Williams, & L. Breatnach (ed), *Stair na Gaeilge: in ómós do Phádraig Ó Fiannachta* (Maynooth 1994) 61–219: §6.2 (metaphonesis), §8.2 (grammaticalisation of initial mutations), §8.3 (grammaticalisation of palatalisation as a consequence of apocope).

<sup>117</sup> Numerous counter-examples to the *system morpheme principle*, mostly linked to typological factors, are presented in P. Auer & R. Muhamedova, ‘‘Embedded language’ and ‘matrix language’ in insertional language mixing: some problematic cases’, *Rivista di Linguistica* 17.1 (2005) 35–54 (cf. p. 38: ‘there are cases in which the inserted word carries along its own inflection. This may occur when the grammar of the matrix language and that of the embedded language are non-congruent. Late system morphemes may then combine with the inserted stem in order to form what Myers-Scotton calls an “embedded language island”’). Cf. also Muysken, *Bilingual speech*, 55, 75–8; Regis, *Appunti grammaticali*, 158; Gardner-Chloros, *Code-Switching*, 109–11. Myers-Scotton herself discusses a number of highly relevant cases where patterns of CS are conditioned by typological incongruity between the languages involved; cf. esp. *Contact Linguistics*, 149–51.

In support of this interpretation, we can observe that the *system morpheme principle* is actually adhered to whenever surface morpho-phonemic structures do not preclude its application: for instance, system morphemes such as emphasising particles may be occasionally attached to embedded constituents,<sup>118</sup> and in at least one case the initial mutation following possessive *a* appears to be applied to the Latin noun *caritas*:<sup>119</sup>

Wb. 12c4: [...] *cot-n-imthæ immurgu a charitás innonn*  
 ('his *charity*, however, will accompany him beyond').

Moreover, in spite of the above-mentioned typological differences between Old Irish and Latin, it is remarkable how well the glossator manages to avail of the functional equivalence between cases in the two language:<sup>120</sup> for instance, we can see that full congruence between the Irish and the Latin genitive case allows the use of a Latin genitive in agreement with the Irish rule for expressing the object of a verbal noun:

Wb. 13b2: .i. *oillu oldate cóiccét fer do demnigud tra resurrectionis*  
 ('more than five hundred men for certifying, then, *the resurrection*' [lit. 'the certifying of the resurrection']).

The equivalence between case functions is so strong that it can even trigger interesting phenomena of syntactic convergence, like in the gloss to 1 Cor. 7:38 (*igitur qui matrimonio iungit uirginem suam, bene facit; et qui non iungit melius facit*), which I present first of all exactly as it was printed in the *Thesaurus*:

Wb. 10b21 (*TP I*, 560.23–5): *tadbat som sund tra dechur fil eterlanamnas et ógi intain asmberar non peccare coiugio et benefacere dondógi et intain asmberar benefacere coiugio is melius facere uirginitatem*

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<sup>118</sup> Cf. e.g. Wb. 2c21: [...] *is pater-som omnis gentis tri sódin* [...] ('...thereby he is *the father of all people*').

<sup>119</sup> Note that, as far as I can see, this word is always spelt *caritas*, never *charitas*, elsewhere in Wb, in both main text and glosses. This fact increases the chances that we are here dealing with a genuine example of lenition affecting a Latin word.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Muysken, *Bilingual speech*, 56: 'Insertion has been argued to take place under categorial equivalence: speakers can only insert a constituent or element from another language if it is somehow perceived as equivalent to a host constituent or element'. For a discussion of the complex notion of equivalence across languages, cf. M. Sebba, 'On the notions of congruence and convergence in code-switching', in Bullock & Toribio, *Linguistic code-switching*, 40–57.



(‘he [*scil.* St Paul] manifests here the difference which there is between matrimony and virginity, when it is said *that wedlock does not sin, and that virginity does good, and* when it is said that *wedlock does good and virginity does better*’).

The declarative clause *non peccare coiugio*, ‘that wedlock does not sin’, is surprising, as we would rather expect here a Latin accusative and infinitive construction (i.e., *quando dicitur non peccare coiugium*). In fact, the infinite plus dative actually found in the gloss corresponds to the Irish construction which consists in a verbal noun followed by the preposition *do* plus dative.<sup>121</sup> Therefore, we have here a clause which, in spite of being lexically Latin, follows instead Irish morpho-syntax: the glossator was here able to extend the functional range of the Latin dative on the basis of the posited equivalence between Latin dative and Irish *do* plus dative construction (cf. fn. 112 above). This is confirmed by the next clause found in the gloss, which exhibits a perfectly parallel structure, but does present CS from Latin to Irish (‘benefacere *dond ógi*’). *Prima facie*, the final clause, with its accusative *uirginitatem*, is puzzling, as it appears to replace the Irish-based syntax presented above with a normal Latin accusative and infinitive. The problem, however, is easily solved by looking at the manuscript reading, where the word is actually abbreviated by means of a suspension stroke placed above the third *i* (*uirginī*); this abbreviation, which was silently expanded into *uirginitatem* by the editors of the *Thesaurus*, should in fact be rather expanded into dative *uirginitati*, thereby restoring a perfect parallelism with the other two clauses:<sup>122</sup>

INF	DAT/ <i>do</i> +DAT
non peccare	coiugio
benefacere	<i>dond ógi</i>
melius facere	<i>uirginitati</i>

This is not the only case where a striking bilingual construction can now be explained on the basis of CS and language contact theory: bilingual cleft sentences are

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<sup>121</sup> Cf. *GOI* §720: ‘In certain types of clause [...] its construction [i.e., of the verbal noun] approximates to that of the infinitive in other languages, viz. where the agent or the object of the action is placed first and the verbal noun attached by means of the preposition *do*’.

<sup>122</sup> An improved editing of Wb. 10b21 can thus now be given: *tadbat som sund tra dechur fil eter lanamnas et ógi in tain as-mberar non peccare coiugio et benefacere dond ógi et in tain as-mberar benefacere coiugio is melius facere uirginitati*.

a case in point.<sup>123</sup> In particular, in a number of glosses the first half of the cleft sentence is in Irish, the second in Latin. Let us take, for example, Wb. 2d2:

.i. *ni ar Abracham tantum scriptum est hoc testimonium* in Genessi

(‘i.e., it is not for Abraham *alone that this witness has been written down in Genesis*’).

Although Latin does not use clefting as fronting pattern, this example is at least in perfect agreement with Irish morpho-syntax, which here does not require a relative clause in the second half of the sentence, the fronted element being a prepositional phrase (cf. fn. 123).

This other example, however, is much less straightforward:

Wb. 10a1: [...] *is dominus immurgu dicit uxorem a uiro non descedere*

(‘... *it is the Lord, however, [that] says that a wife must not separate from her husband*’, glossing 1 Cor. 7:10, *praecipio non ego sed dominus uxorem a uiro non discedere*).

In this case, Old Irish grammar would require a relative clause in the second section of the cleft sentence. In fact, there is no relativiser, and we simply have the Latin verb *dicit* where a relative form of *as-beir* would have been expected, had this gloss been fully written in Old Irish.

It is important to stress that this is not just a strange isolated case. Another example of the exact same phenomenon can be found, for instance, in Wb. 9b19:

.i. *ni hed ón scripsi uobís*

(‘i.e., it is not this *[that] I wrote for ye*’).

Again, the required relativiser is not present in any way or form.<sup>124</sup> The late Pádraig Mac Coisdealbha discussed briefly this type of bilingual sentence in his book

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<sup>123</sup> Clefting is one of the most common Old Irish fronting constructions, whereby a certain constituent is emphasised by being placed in a copular phrase, which is then followed by a relative clause if the fronted element works as subject or object antecedent of the relative clause: for instance, in Wb. 5b17 *.i. is mé as apstal geinte* (‘it is I that am the apostle of the gentiles’), we can see the clear opposition between non-relative and relative form of the copula (*is* and *as* respectively), while in Wb. 20c20 *.i. tol cholno for-chanat* (‘[it is] the will of the flesh that they teach’) the copula is omitted (cf. *GOI* §818), and the lenition of *c* is the mark indicating the relative form of the verb *for-chanat*. Conversely, the fronted element is not followed by a relative clause if it is a prepositional phrase, as in Wb. 4a24 *.i. ar is i retaib nebaicsidib biid spés* (‘for it is in invisible things that *hope* is wont to be’). For descriptions of clefting in Old Irish, cf. *GOI* §§506, 814–8; Mac Coisdealbha, *Syntax, passim* (esp. 65–72).

<sup>124</sup> Notice that a further example of this phenomenon may be recognised in the gloss Wb. 8c17, which has been already discussed above as a case where it is difficult to identify the ML: we may now

*The syntax of the sentence in Old Irish*, where he attributed the lack of the relativiser to the fact that clefting

‘was felt intuitively by the speaker to be a fronting device first and foremost: this being demonstrated by his hesitancy in identifying the following relative clause with the normal relative attribute construction’.<sup>125</sup>

Data now available from modern CS allow us to formulate a slightly different hypothesis. While Mac Coisdealbha was probably right in recognizing here a functional/semantic mismatch between Latin and Old Irish, which prevented the glossator from using a Latin relative clause in the context of an Irish cleft sentence, we should nonetheless also take into account the role played by the morpho-syntactic distance between the two languages: indeed, Latin uses overt inflected relative pronouns, whereas Old Irish marks relativity by means of special forms of the verb, clitic particles, and the application of initial mutations.<sup>126</sup> It is therefore possible that the lack of *both* functional/semantic and morpho-syntactic equivalence created here a conflict, which was however resolved by the glossator by adopting a ‘zero-morphology’ construction (at least in terms of relativity) entailing a cleft sentence realized simply through word order: a solution which, of course, is ungrammatical in both languages.

Many parallels to such a linguistic behaviour can be found in modern CS literature: as pointed out by Myers-Scotton,

‘sometimes Embedded Language content morphemes occur in Matrix Language frames as bare forms, without the S[ystem] M[orphemes] that would make the phrase well-formed in the ML’.<sup>127</sup>

In other words, as summed up by Mark Sebba, in CS ‘we find structures that appear to violate the grammar of *both* languages’,<sup>128</sup> almost as if such structures

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understand ‘.i. *int-í dia ru-pridchad superedificat*’ as a cleft sentence with omission of the sentence-initial copula *is* (cf. Wb. 20c20 at fn. 123 above), and absence of relative marking in the second section of the cleft: [*is*] *int-í dia ru-pridchad superedificat* (‘[it is] the one to whom it has been preached [*that*] builds’).

<sup>125</sup> Cit. from Mac Coisdealbha, *Syntax*, 165.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. *GOI* §492–506.

<sup>127</sup> Cit. from Myers-Scotton, ‘A universal model’, 340; cf. also Myers-Scotton, *Contact Linguistics*, 113, 127–9, 227–8; Muysken, *Bilingual speech*, 62–3; Gardner-Chloros, *Code-switching*, 108.

<sup>128</sup> Cit. from Sebba, ‘On the notions of congruence and convergence’, 49.

where generated by a ‘third grammar’, specific to the dimension of CS. A clear example of this phenomenon can be found, for instance, in the corpus of Ukrainian/English CS studied by S. Budzhak-Jones and S. Poplack:<sup>129</sup>

*vin ne mav friend*  
‘he’ ‘not’ ‘had’ ‘friend’-Ø [i.e., with -Ø instead of acc. pl. ending *-iv*]  
(‘he didn’t have any friends’)

In this example, the English noun *friend* occurs as a ‘bare form’, i.e. without the morphological marker *-iv* required by Ukrainian grammar.

The examples discussed in the last few pages show that, once the evidence has been selected carefully, the Würzburg glosses (and probably the Old Irish glosses in general) offer numerous cases which can be best explained as language contact phenomena, in particular by reference to modern theories of CS occurring in spontaneous bilingual speech.

Nonetheless, one final methodological issue remains to be discussed, namely the relationship between the Latin insertions contained in the glosses and the main text of the Pauline Epistles. What I mean is that, since glosses are never ‘independent products’, but are directly linked to the text which they elucidate, it is necessary to verify how much of their content is directly derived from the main text.

Let us take, for instance, Wb. 6d14:

[...] *ar is do ar-roíét-sa gratiam, do precept do chách*  
(‘...for it is for this that I have received *the grace*, to preach to every one’, glossing Rom. 15:15, *propter gratiam quae data est mihi*).

Here, it is perfectly clear that, while the Latin word *gratiam* is still a good example of CS rather than being a mere citation (the accusative *gratiam* is correctly integrated in the structure of the Old Irish sentence, as direct object of *ar-roíét-sa*), it is equally inescapable that this insertion represents a direct echo of the Pauline text.

A comparable – although slightly different – case is when both main text and gloss contain the same Latin word(s), but inflected in a different grammatical form.

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<sup>129</sup> S. Budzhak-Jones & S. Poplack, ‘Two generations, two strategies: the fate of bare English-origin nouns in Ukrainian’, *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 1 (1997) 225–258: 233. For a discussion of bare forms taking into account factors other than morpho-syntactic structure, cf. J. Owens, ‘Bare forms and lexical insertions in code-switching: a processing-based account’, in *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 8.1 (2005) 23–38.

For example, Wb. 12a6 contains the dative *spiritui*, while the main text presents the same term in different case-forms:

*tri anman do-beir-som híc spiritui [...]*

(‘three names that he gives *here to the Spirit*’; cf. 1 Cor. 12 [...] *in spiritu dei [...]* *autem spiritus [...]* *manifestatio spiritus* etc.).

Of course, in numerous glosses there is no discernible link with any of the Latin words occurring in the main text, as exemplified by the prepositional phrase *in nocte* in Wb. 9a5:

.i. *precept do-som fri dei et saithar ho lámaib in nocte*

(‘i.e., for him, teaching by day and manual labour *by night*’, glossing 1 Cor. 4:12 *laboramus operantes minibus nostris*).

However, even within this category, it is important to make a further distinction between glosses where the occurrence of EL forms can be explained confidently enough as being due to ‘real’ spontaneous CS, and glosses where, on the contrary, the embedded Latin words can be attributed to what we could call ‘monastic technolect’, i.e. terms belonging to the various semantic domains of Christian culture and monastic scholarship: Biblical exegesis, grammar, *computus* etc. The occurrence of the term *euangelio* in Wb. 7b23 offers a very basic example of this type of insertion:

[Rom. 16:17]

.i. *ni hed insin ro-légsid in euangelio*

(‘i.e., that is not what ye have studied *in the Gospel*’, glossing Rom. 16:17 *offendicula praeter doctrinam quam uos dedicistis*).

At this point, we may wonder how many Latin insertions are in fact somewhat stereotypical, formulaic, or due to the existence of a specific form of meta-language, a repertoire of stock-phrases commonly employed by the Irish *literati* for the elucidation of Latin sources. To give an example of how this factor may influence our understanding of language switching in the present corpus, let us consider the following two glosses to 1 Cor. 15:48, *qualis terrenus tales et terreni et qualis caelestis tales et caelestes*. The first gloss refers to *terreni*, the second to *caelestes*:

Wb. 13d12: .i. *cosmili fri Adam i ngnúmaib et accobraib*

(‘i.e., similar to Adam in works and desires’).

Wb. 13d14: .i. *cosmili fri Crist in operibus [et cu]piditatibus*

(‘i.e., similar to Christ *in works and desires*’).

Notice that the same phrase ‘in works and desires’ occurs in Irish first, and then in Latin. It is basically impossible to determine the reason why the glossator switched from one language to the other in these two glosses. There is, however, a distinct possibility that this was nothing but a Latin exegetical stock-phrase translated into its Irish equivalent (or perhaps *vice versa*?) by the glossator.<sup>130</sup> But then, could this isolated example be a trace left by a wider practice now largely invisible to us? Perhaps, many Latin insertions are actually mere conventional stock-phrases which we are now unable to recognise as such. Perhaps, many glosses composed entirely in Irish contain in fact direct translations of Latin scholarly *formulae*. While this is of course only guesswork, it is nonetheless interesting to attempt a categorisation of the instances of IaCS in Wb. according to four types, for which percentages are here provided:<sup>131</sup>

(1) insertions identical to words or phrases occurring in the main text: 111/313 = 35.5%;<sup>132</sup>

(2) insertions similar to words or phrases occurring in the main text: 78/313 = 24.9%;<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> It is worth noting in this context that the use of ‘translation equivalents’ is ‘a common strategy for emphasis among bilinguals’ (cit. from B. E. Bullock and A. J. Toribio, ‘Themes in the study of code-switching’, in Bullock & Toribio, *Linguistic code-switching*, 1–17: 8).

<sup>131</sup> These percentages were calculated on the basis of the 313 instances of switching from Irish to Latin defined at fn. 99 above.

<sup>132</sup> These 111 instances are distributed across the following glosses: Wb. 1b8, 1d8, 2a8a, 2b6, 2b8, 2b15–16, 2c5–6, 2c11, 2c17, 2c20, 2c21 (3 instances), 2c23, 2c24 (2 instances), 2d2, 2d13, 3a1, 3a5 (2 instances), 3a7–9, 3a14, 3c9, 3c24–25, 3d15, 4a4, 4a13, 4a15, 4a17, 4a24, 4a27, 4b11 (2 instances), 4b13, 4c8, 4d3, 4d27, 5a5, 5b22, 5c14, 5c16, 5d1, 6a3, 6a27, 6b29, 6c10, 6c26, 6d4, 6d12, 6d14–15, 7a2, 7a5, 7a8, 7b1 (2 instances), 7b2, 7b6 (2 instances), 7b11 (2 instances), 7b18, 8a14, 8a16–17, 8c2, 9b7, 9b19 (2 instances), 9b25, 9c25, 10a1, 10a15, 10b10, 10b12, 10c18, 10d11 (2 instances), 10d30, 11a2, 11a6, 11a10, 11c14 (3 instances), 11c15, 11c16, 11d4, 11d7, 12c11, 12c14, 12d12 (2 instances), 12d41, 13a13 (2 instances), 13a16, 13a23, 13b8, 13b18–19, 13b29, 13d15. The percentage for this category may be further increased if we include the possibility of direct citation from Latin sources other than the Pauline Epistles. This datum, however, can only be obtained after a thorough exercise of *Quellenforschung*, which obviously exceeds the limits of the present contribution.

<sup>133</sup> These 78 instances are distributed across the following glosses: Wb. 1a2, 1b8, 1c18 (2 instances), 1d8, 1d19, 2a3–4, 2b22 (2 instances), 2c1, 2c21 (2 instances), 2d7, 2d11 (2 instances), 2d14, 3a1, 3a10 (3 instances), 3b12, 3c25, 3d13, 4a21, 4d14, 5b1, 5b21, 5b36, 5c10, 5c12–13, 5d33, 6a7, 6a18, 6b3, 6b25, 6b29, 6c1, 6c26–27, 7a14, 8a10a, 8a13 (2 instances), 8a16, 8a17 (5 instances), 8a18, 8b15, 8c2,

(3) insertions not coinciding with the main text, but semantically belonging to the ‘monastic technolect’: 61/313 = 19.5%;<sup>134</sup>

(4) insertions which do not fit any of the other three categories: 63/313 = 20.1%.<sup>135</sup>

Admittedly, the third category is somewhat subjective: that is, it is difficult to propose objective criteria for the attribution of a given word or phrase to what I have called the ‘monastic technolect’. The figure provided for that category should thus rather be taken as a notional indication of the fact that Latin embedded elements often pertain to the domain of Christian religion and scholarship:<sup>136</sup> this fact shows that, in this corpus at least, Latin/Old Irish CS is to some extent semantically compartmentalised.<sup>137</sup> Moreover, we certainly cannot ignore that fact that more than

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8c10, 8c16, 9b1, 9b19, 9c11, 9d18, 10b21, 10d2, 10d7, 10d31, 11a2, 11b16a, 12a5, 13a12a, 13a16, 13b2, 13b8, 13b12, 13b18, 13b23, 13b26, 13c15, 13d28, 14a8.

<sup>134</sup> These 61 instances are distributed across the following glosses: Wb. 1a1 (2 instances), 1b11 (2 instances), 1c18 (2 instances), 1d9, 1d14, 2a4, 2b5, 2d14, 2d16, 3a14, 3b4, 4a6, 4c13, 4d3, 4d14, 5a5–6, 5a21, 5b11, 5b33, 5c12 (2 instances), 6a27, 6c27, 6d6, 7b23, 7c8, 7c12, 7c16, 7d10, 8d28, 9a22, 9b2 (2 instances), 9b13 (2 instances), 10a24, 10b11, 10b16, 10d4, 10d32, 11a13, 11a23, 11a27, 11c8, 11d15, 12c13, 12c14, 13a13, 13a16, 13d4 (2 instances), 13d14–15, 13d17, 13d21, 13d25, 14a30.

<sup>135</sup> These 63 instances are distributed across the following glosses: Wb. 1a1, 1a9, 1b12, 1b15, 1c12, 1d1, 2c1, 2c7, 2c10 (2 instances), 2c21–22, 2d2, 2d14, 3a3, 3b4, 3c21, 3c35, 3d7, 4b2, 4b13 (2 instances), 4c1, 4d10, 5a7, 5b15, 5b34, 5b36, 5b42, 5c14, 5c16, 5d20, 6a27, 6b12, 6b17, 7a13, 7d9, 7d10, 9a5, 9a13 (2 instances), 9b7, 9b13, 9d1, 10a15, 10a23, 12a6, 12b14 (2 instances), 12b33, 12c13, 12d13, 13a12, 13a16, 13b23, 13b28, 13c10–11, 13c13, 13c21 (2 instances), 13d4. This list includes instances where the embedded Latin element is an adverb. However, twenty of these consist in rather formulaic occurrences of *hic* and *tantum* (abbreviated as *tm*): if we remove all such instances of *hic* and *tantum*, the percentage for category (4) decreases to 13.7%.

<sup>136</sup> Some examples of Latin insertions belonging to type (3) are: Wb 1a1 ‘[...] óre do-n-éconnacht spiritum sanctum sibi [...]’ (‘... because He has imparted *the Holy Spirit to him*’); 1b11 ‘.i. precept passionis et incarnationis Christi [...]’ (‘i.e. to preach *the Passion and the Incarnation of Christ*’); 2d14 ‘[...] .i. hóre ro-n-sóir-ni híc a peccatis nostris [...]’ (‘...since He saved us *here from our sins*’); 4a6 ‘[...] tre fóisitín hirisse in bap̄tismo’ (‘...through confession of faith *in the baptism*’); 6c27 ‘[...] ar-ro-cées side moor n-innith do aurlatu patri’ (‘...for He had suffered much tribulation to obey *the Father*’).

<sup>137</sup> The role of established practices and conventions in the spread of certain types of CS (especially in religious contexts), with a resulting blur in the frontier between borrowing and CS, is discussed in several works on both modern and historical CS, cf. e.g. Muysken, *Bilingual speech*, 29 (‘frequency may result from the conventionalization of a certain type of mixing pattern, rather than from crucial

half of the Latin insertions have a direct link with the main text (the sum of categories (1) and (2) is 60.4%).

These data show that, in the majority of cases, CS is not quite ‘spontaneous’, but is instead elicited by the main text itself, or by the need to use Latin religious formulas and/or technical terminology. These results, however, do not diminish the relevance of CS in Wb. as a language contact phenomenon; on the contrary, they contribute to define its precise nature. Moreover, we should not forget that 20.1% of CS instances (or possibly 13.7% if we use the more stringent criteria presented in fn. 135) can in all likelihood be interpreted as ‘normal’, unmarked, spontaneous, non-elicited CS. After all, as has been observed by B. Bullock and A. J. Toribio,

‘it merits pointing out that not all language alternations in bilingual speech do signal a particular communicative intent or purpose; for many bilinguals, CS merely represents another way of speaking; that is, some bilinguals code-switch simply because they can and oftentimes may not be aware that they have done so’.<sup>138</sup>

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

What emerges from the previous pages is the outline of a possible methodology for the future study of code-switching in the Old Irish glosses.

First of all, it is necessary to verify whether what we are dealing with is, indeed, code-switching. To do so, we need to try and ascertain whether a gloss is likely to be the complete, coherent and original product of one individual writer, or whether it represents instead the merger of several layers of glossing (with or without partial translation from Latin into Irish). Direct textual citations, if not integrated in the

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grammatical factor’); Myers-Scotton, *Contact Linguistics*, 139, 162 (‘many Embedded Language islands are either formulaic or routine collocations, perhaps making them similar to the activation required to access singly occurring forms’); Gardner-Chloros, *Code-switching*, 114–6; Dorleijn & Nortier, ‘Code-switching and the internet’, 135; P. Pahta & A. Nurmi, ‘Multilingual discourse in the domain of religion in medieval and early modern England: a corpus approach to research on historical code-switching’, in Schendl & Wright, *Code-switching in Early English*, 219–51: 242. Also relevant to the present discussion is the widely discussed sociolinguistic notion of *metaphorical* CS, which occurs ‘when the purpose of introducing a particular variety into the conversation is to evoke the connotations, the metaphorical “world” of that variety’ (cit. from P. Gardner-Chloros, ‘Sociolinguistic factors in code-switching’, in Bullock & Toribio, *Linguistic code-switching*, 97–113: 107, similar to Gardner-Chloros, *Code-switching*, 58–9).

<sup>138</sup> Cit. from Bullock & Toribio, ‘Themes in the study of code-switching’, 11.



morpho-syntactic structure of the sentence, should also be excluded from the corpus. The remaining instances of CS may then be the object of grammatical and syntactic analysis: obviously, the exact approach and methods for such an analysis will vary, depending on the chosen perspective (i.e. sociolinguistic, pragmatic, or grammatical) and theoretical framework. In any case, as we have seen, it may also be important to subdivide the detected instances of CS according to a dichotomy between *elicited* and *non-elicited* (or *spontaneous*) CS, expressing the relationship between the EL material found in the gloss and the main text to which the gloss refers. The occurrence of Latin formulaic expressions and technical/religious terminology (if adequately identified as such) should also be treated as a somewhat special case, given that the highly conventional nature of these elements may make them more akin to a form of borrowing, than to CS ‘proper’.

Needless to say, much work remains to be done on this topic, and only a thorough investigation of the whole of Wb. and other collections of glosses will confirm whether the approach proposed here is viable or not.

Still, I believe that the research carried out for the present contribution already allows us to draw a number of working conclusions:

- (1) In spite of the multiplicity of processes which can lead to the formation of a bilingual gloss (i.e. layers in different languages added at different times, partial translation from a pre-existing monolingual gloss, direct citation from the main text, use of technical terminology and conventional phrases), a consistent number of glosses displays striking linguistic features, which seem to be explainable by reference to language contact and CS theory. Provided that all due precautions have been taken in the selection of the glosses which constitute the corpus, the comparison between language mixture in the Old Irish glosses and modern CS in speech appears thus to be a legitimate and useful exercise.
- (2) As a consequence of point (1), it can be argued, on a more general level, that the study of CS in pre-modern written sources is ‘entitled’ to contribute to the overall scholarly debate on the nature and functioning of CS: for instance, some aspects of the CS phenomena described in the present article indicate possible deficiencies in the current formulation(s) of the MLF model, in

agreement with the criticism expressed by other scholars on the basis of modern CS corpora.<sup>139</sup>

- (3) Rather than being uniform, Early Medieval Irish glossing is characterised by a considerable diversity of CS patterns, suggesting a corresponding variety of individual configurations of bilingualism, even within the presumably quite small community of Medieval Irish elite speakers/writers. Such a high degree of variability is probably due to the wide array of factors which can impact upon patterns of use and competence in the two languages. This is of course not unlike what can be found in the context of modern bilingualism: after all, as pointed out by Bullock and Toribio, ‘most bilinguals show disparate abilities in their component languages, for a myriad of reasons, including age of second language acquisition, the quality of linguistic input received, the language most used, and the status of the language in the community’.<sup>140</sup>
- (4) The Würzburg glossator<sup>141</sup> appears to be at the higher end of the above-mentioned range of bilingual proficiency: his language-mixing habits closely match, at least from the structural point of view, the patterns of IaCS observed in numerous modern bilingual communities.

This last point raises a number of issues. As we have seen in section 1 above, Latin is often described in the secondary literature on Early Medieval Ireland as an artificial, bookish language, distant from the dimension of everyday communication, and even scholars who are usually ready to acknowledge the existence of a very high level of Latin competence among the Irish *literati*, sometimes adopt this point of view.

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<sup>139</sup> It should also be pointed out here that the study of historical CS makes available a wider spectrum of sociolinguistic environments and typologically-diverse linguistic encounters. Indeed, one of the strongest points of criticism which may be raised against modern CS studies is the overwhelming presence of English as one of the two languages involved: to give just an example, out of the eighteen CS data sets mentioned in §1 of Hok-Shing Chan’s article ‘Code-switching between typologically distinct languages’ (in Bullock and Toribio, *Linguistic code-switching*, 182–4), English is present in thirteen pairs (and French is present in five).

<sup>140</sup> Cit. from Bullock & Toribio, ‘Themes in the study of code-switching’, 7.

<sup>141</sup> As we have seen in section 4 above, it seems plausible that this collection of glosses was composed by a single individual: we can therefore confidently speak of a ‘Würzburg glossator’ as a loose label for the anonymous Irish scholar who first composed these glosses, which were later copied in M.p.th.f.12.

In a discussion of the Irish contribution to the ‘grammar of legibility’, Dáibhí Ó Cróinín argues that

‘word-separation [...] was introduced by the Irish because for them Latin was an *alien* language. Never having been part of the Roman Empire, the Irish acquired their knowledge of Latin at second hand, from books’.<sup>142</sup>

Likewise, in a recent publication, Anthony Harvey has stated that ‘to the early medieval Irish, Latin was an entirely foreign language, which they had to learn from books’.<sup>143</sup> Somewhat ironically, the same scholar is also the author of a rather different statement, which, in my opinion, comes much closer to the truth: ‘their Latin [i.e., of the Celtic *literati*] was a living, fully developed language which, if not their mother tongue, can at least meaningfully be described as their father tongue’.<sup>144</sup> Indeed, while of course we cannot generalise only on the basis of the partial data discussed in this article, we still have to deal with the fact that the ease with which the Würzburg glossator moves from one language to another, according to consistent and well-defined CS patterns, is at least compatible with a very high level of bilingual proficiency, as argued at point (4) above. This is unlikely to be an isolated case, as suggested by the fairly high frequency of IaCS visible in other collections such as, for instance, the Karlsruhe glosses.

In conclusion, I think that the usefulness of notions and labels often applied to Hiberno-Latin, such as ‘foreign language’, ‘artificial language’, ‘language learned only from books’ etc., , may now be called into question.<sup>145</sup> First of all, if we admit

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<sup>142</sup> Cit. from Ó Cróinín, ‘The first century of Anglo-Irish relations’, 8 (the word ‘alien’ is in italics in the original text).

<sup>143</sup> Cit. from A. Harvey, ‘Lexical influences on the Medieval Latin of the Celts’ in M. Pérez González & E. Pérez Rodríguez (ed), *Influencias léxicas de otras lenguas en el latín medieval* (León/Valladolid 2011), 65–77: 66.

<sup>144</sup> Cit. from id. ‘The non-Classical vocabulary’, 9.

<sup>145</sup> In this regard, I think we have much to learn from the careful choice of vocabulary in the following passage from B. Bischoff’s ‘The study of foreign languages in the Middle Ages’, *Speculum* 36 (1961) 209–24: 209–10 ‘Latin in the Middle Ages did not belong to either of the two normal categories of dead languages or living languages. Being the language of the Western church which every little child admitted to an ecclesiastical school had to learn, it became for many centuries the general vehicle of spiritual culture and of practical record. Thus it was most intimately connected with all the deep changes of the mediaeval *Geistesgeschichte*, and with this inner history it showed to a certain extent grammatical changes and other features of life and growth without being a natural organism’.

that, as argued at some length in section 1, Latin was in Early Medieval Irish monastic communities a language for which not only *reading* and *writing* skills were required, but also *speaking* and *listening* skills, it is then plausible that the learning process would have benefited not only from the study of Latin grammar books, but also from the *viva voce* of the teachers, as well as from the daily contacts between students (especially if the community comprised students from different ethnic backgrounds, thereby turning Latin into a necessary *lingua franca*).<sup>146</sup> In this context, an element which does not seem to have been sufficiently taken into account by modern scholars is the age at which the new members of Medieval Irish monastic communities would have typically begun to receive formal Latin instruction: given the obviously fundamental role played by age in regard to second language acquisition, this is likely to have been a crucial factor in the process of formation and establishment of bilingual practices.

As usual, it is difficult (if not impossible, or even undesirable) to find sufficient evidence to formulate a ‘general rule’, valid for the whole of Ireland during the entire period AD 600–900. However, there are enough indications to assume that instruction began, if not always at least frequently, around the age of seven. As is well known, this was the traditional ‘age of reason’ in the Classical tradition, and the same age is often mentioned in Medieval sources as the moment marking the transition to adulthood.<sup>147</sup> Numerous examples may be mentioned: outside Ireland, Gregory of Tours informs us that he was educated by his uncle, Nicetius of Lyon, from the age of

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<sup>146</sup> The diversity of means involved in the learning process of Early Medieval Irish students of Latin is well presented in Zanna, ‘Lecture, écriture et morphologie latines en Irlande’, 186–91.

<sup>147</sup> Cf. E. James, ‘Childhood and Youth in the Early Middle Ages’, in P. J. P. Goldberg & F. Riddy (ed), *Youth in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge 2004) 11–24: 23 (‘If there is a recognized rite of passage in the life of the young [*scil.* in the Early Medieval West] it is at seven or eight, when the child seriously sets about training to be an adult. In that sense *pueritia* corresponds to our idea of ‘youth’, even if the actual age range is different. The ancient world had this break at the age of seven or eight too. Seven is when school starts; when betrothal may take place; when, according to Galen, hobby-horses may be replaced by real horses’); P. Riché, *Écoles et enseignement dans le Haut Moyen Âge* (Paris 1999 [3<sup>rd</sup> ed.]) 200 (‘L’âge d’entrée à l’école varie selon les cas. Le plus souvent c’est vers 7 ans que les parents confient leur enfant. A cet âge, comme le rappellent les règles monastiques du VI<sup>e</sup> et VII<sup>e</sup> siècles, l’enfant peut commencer à apprendre à lire et à obéir’); id. *Être enfant au Moyen Âge* (Paris 2010) 93, 103–4, 157.

seven, in continuity with the old Roman practice;<sup>148</sup> much closer to Ireland, we know that Bede entered the monastery of Wearmouth at the same age;<sup>149</sup> moreover, in his *Life of Saint Cuthbert*, Bede says that

*usque ad octauum aetatis annum, qui post infantiam puericiae primus est, solis paruulorum ludis et lasciuiae mentem dare nouerat [...]. 'Porro' Cuthbertus 'necdum sciebat Dominum, neque reuelatus fuerat ei sermo Domini' [I Sam. 3:7]. Quod in praeconium laudis dictum est puericiae illius, qui aetate maior perfecte iam cogniturus erat Dominum, ac sermonem Domini reuelata cordis aure percepturus.*

(‘Up to the eighth year of his age, which is the end of infancy and the beginning of boyhood, he could devote his mind to nothing but the games and wantonness of children [...]. ‘Now’ Cuthbert ‘did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him’. This was spoken as a prelude to the praise of his boyhood, for, when he became older, he was to know the Lord perfectly and to receive the word of the Lord, when once the ears of his heart had been opened’).<sup>150</sup>

Very similar evidence exists for Ireland. If we can believe Jonas of Bobbio as a source of information on Early Medieval Irish monasticism (which of course is far from being uncontroversial), the *Vita Columbani* states that Columbanus began to study grammar and the liberal arts at the end of infancy (*peractis [...] infantiae annis*).<sup>151</sup> But there is more solid evidence too: in his article on Celtic fosterage, Peter Parkes has collected several Irish sources (annals and Saints’ lives) equally pointing

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<sup>148</sup> Cf. Gregory of Tours, *Vitae Patrum*, 8.2 (W. Arndt & B. Krusch (ed), *MGH SRM I* (Hannover 1885) 692; E. James (tr.), *Gregory of Tours: Life of the Fathers* (Liverpool 1991) 51): *Nam [et] recolo in adolescentia mea, cum primum litterarum elementa coepissem agnoscere et essem quasi octavi anni aevo...* (‘I remember in my youth, when I was beginning to learn how to read, and was in my eighth year...’).

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, V.24 (Colgrave & Mynors, *Ecclesiastical History*, 566–7: *Qui natus in territorio eiusdem monasterii, cum essem annorum VII, cura propinquorum datus sum educandus reuerentissimo abbati Benedicto* (‘I was born in the territory of this monastery [i.e., Wearmouth and Jarrow]. When I was seven years of age I was, by the care of my kinsmen, put into the charge of the reverend Abbot Benedict [...], to be educated’).

<sup>150</sup> Cit. from Bede, *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §1 (B. Colgrave (ed. & tr.), *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert: a Life by an anonymous monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life* (New York 1969 [reprint]) 154–7.

<sup>151</sup> Cf. Jonas of Bobbio, *Vita Columbani*, §3 (B. Krusch (ed.), *Ionae Vitae Sanctorum Columbani, Vedastis, Iohannis*, *MGH SRG* (Hannover/Leipzig 1905) 155).

to the age of seven as the moment which frequently marked the beginning of monastic education.<sup>152</sup>

If sufficiently exposed to a second language which had considerable social and cultural prestige and which, far from being ‘dead’, ‘foreign’ or ‘artificial’, constituted on the contrary an essential component of the daily routine of a monastic community, any seven-year old child stood a very good chance of achieving considerable bilingual fluency:<sup>153</sup> his language choices would have been subsequently regulated by the sociolinguistic dynamics characterising the context of ‘complex diglossia’ which I have tried to sketch in the opening section of this article.

As a final and very tentative suggestion, it would be tempting to consider the occurrence of CS from Irish to Latin in the writings (and perhaps also in the spoken language) of the Early Medieval Irish monastic *literati* as the manifestation of an in-group mode of discourse, something akin to a specific linguistic register which characterised the scholarly *usus scribendi* (and possibly also *loquendi*), thereby

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<sup>152</sup> Cf. P. Parkes, ‘Celtic fosterage: adoptive kinship and clientage in Northwest Europe’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 48.2 (2006) 359–95: 362, 371 (‘By the ninth century, many children of nobility were [...] being sent to monastic schools at an age of seven years, interrupting their former nursing and training by lay fosterers’). Two sources may be added here to the ones collected by Parkes: *Betha Colmáin maic Lúacháin*, §8 (K. Meyer (ed. & tr.), *Betha Colmáin maic Lúacháin: the Life of Colman son of Luachan* (Dublin/London 1911) 8–9): *Ructha hi ciund secht mblíadna co hanmchaidib 7 rolégsat hi salma 7 a n-imna 7 an-ord n-ecalsa ule léou* (‘At the end of seven years they [i.e., Crónán, Ernáin and Midna, three boys mentioned in the story] were taken to spiritual directors, and with them they read their psalms and hymns and all the order of the Church’); *Vita prima sancti Brendani*, §4 (Ch. Plummer (ed.), *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, 2 vols (Oxford 1910) vol. 1, p. 99): *Cumque per quinquennium apud uirginem nutriretur [...] ad se eum episcopus adduxit, atque litteras edocuit*. ‘Having being fostered by that woman [i.e. Saint Íte] for five years, [...] the bishop adopted him [i.e., Brendán], and taught him letters’.

<sup>153</sup> Of course, this picture is not necessarily confined to Early Medieval Ireland, but may apply to Latin instruction in many different parts of Europe during the Middle Ages, or even at later times. Interestingly, Antonia McManus mentions (in *The Irish Hedge School and its books, 1695–1831* (Dublin 2004) 128–9) several records of astonishing oral proficiency in Latin (and even Greek) on the part of Irish hedge school teachers: for instance, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, T. M. O’Brien (a hedge schoolmaster from Limerick) ‘insisted that his students should speak the Latin language daily, as well as Greek, so that eventually they were as fluent in Latin and Greek as they were in English. In later life they corresponded through Latin and as one contemporary recollected, they even sold pigs at the fair through Latin’.

distinguishing, if only unconsciously, the language of the educated elite from the ordinary language of the illiterate.<sup>154</sup>

A notoriously cumbersome and much-debated passage of the *Hisperica Famina* refers to the difficulty encountered by a monastic student who tries to obtain food from local lay people by communicating with them in Irish: he is not able to utter ‘good Irish speech’ (*scottigenum [...] eulogium*) because he is bound by an ‘Ausonian chain’ (*Ausonica catena*).<sup>155</sup> Could this be a humorous and hyperbolic reference to the

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<sup>154</sup> Likewise, CS from Latin to Irish might have functioned as a marker of ethnic identity among the Irish *peregrini* living in monastic communities on the Continent; cf. Bullock & Toribio, ‘Themes in the study of code-switching’, 10: ‘CS may serve as a marker of group membership and solidarity. Importantly, bilinguals only code-switch with other bilinguals with whom they share a dual language identity. For many, CS is a speech form that allows for the expression of their membership in two cultures: the dominant and the minority’. It is perhaps not a coincidence that Hincmar of Rheims severely reprimanded his nephew, Hincmar of Laon, for inserting in his Latin prose *Graeca, et obstrusa, et interdum Scottica, et alia barbara* [scil. *uerba*] (‘Greek, obscure, and occasionally Irish and other barbaric words’; cited in T. Hunt, *Teaching and learning Latin in thirteenth-century England: I. Texts* (Cambridge 1991) 294); could it be that the latter Hincmar was simply practicing a form of ‘conventionalised code-switching’, progressively consolidated by effect of the increasing presence of Irish scholars in the ninth-century monastic communities of Northern France (Laon being a case in point)?

<sup>155</sup> *Hisperica Famina* (A-text), ll. 271–4 (Herren, *Hisperica Famina*, 84–5): *Quis tales poscet poss<ess>ores / ut melchilentum concesserint opiminium? / Nam ausonica me subligat catena; / ob hoc scottigenum haud cripitundo eulogium* (‘Who will ask these possessors to grant us their sweet abundance? For an Ausonian chain binds me; hence I do not utter good Irish speech’). For the term *ausonica* cf. Herren, *Hisperica Famina*, 129 (‘*ausonicus* is used interchangeably with *hispericus* to refer to the Latin language as spoken by the Romans, hence, by extension, ‘elegant, urbane’). Interpretations of this passage somewhat similar to mine can be found in M. Dunne, *The emergence of monasticism: from the Desert Fathers to the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford 2000) 153 (‘The language of the *Hisperica* is tortuous and elaborate: when pupils make a simple request for food from the local populace they couch their request in grandiloquent terms’), and J.-M. Picard, ‘The Latin language’, 50 (‘Irish was spoken in everyday life, but Latin was spoken at school. Joking about this fact, the author of the *Hisperica Famina* mentions the humbling – and paradoxically funny – situation of those highly educated students having to beg for food from the town’s people and finding it hard to switch from Latin to Irish’). For different interpretations of this notoriously puzzling passage, cf. e.g. M. Winterbottom, ‘On the *Hisperica Famina*’, *Celtica* 8 (1967) 127–39; M. Herren, ‘The authorship, date of composition and provenance of the so-called *Lorica Gildae*’, *Ériu* 24 (1973) 35–51: 39; id., *Hisperica Famina*, 6–7, 34–5; Lapidge, ‘Latin learning’, 96; W. Sayers, ‘Images of enchainment in the

unbridgeable gap which separated the sophisticated and Latin-filled language of the scholar from the more usual vernacular of a lay Irishman?<sup>156</sup>

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*Hisperica Famina* and vernacular Irish texts’, *Études celtiques* 27 (1990) 221–34: 223; Zanna, ‘Lecture, écriture et morphologie latines en Irlande’, 190–1. The collocation *ausonica catena* also occurs at l. 58 of the *Hisperica Famina* (p. 68 of Herren’s edition).

<sup>156</sup> Some support for this interpretation may come from the corresponding passage in the so-called B-text of the *Hisperica Famina*, ll. 65–8 (cited in Herren, *Hisperica Famina*, 34): *Quis tales posset (= poscet) lecto famine possessores / ut melchilenta largo fauore concesserint edulia; / nam strictus romani tenoris me septricat nexus, / nec scotigenum aperto forcipes pompo seriem* (‘Who will ask these owners with select speech, / to bestow their sweet victuals with great generosity? For a tight bond of the Roman tenor separates me; wherefore I cannot string out a series of Irish (words) from my open mouth’). We could perhaps see this as the (again, hyperbolic and paradoxical) complaint of an Irishman who is not able to put together even a short string of Irish words without interference from the *nexus romani tenoris*.