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Trabajo Fin de Grado

**CELTIC LANGUAGES IN
THE EUROPEAN
CONTEXT: IRISH AND
ITS RELATION WITH
BRITISH ENGLISH**

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Junio, 2016

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Resumen

El siguiente trabajo consiste en una descripción de las lenguas Celtas dentro del contexto Indo-Europeo, presentando una breve exposición sobre este filo lingüístico y las familias y lenguas que lo componen. Posteriormente, se ofrecerá una explicación de las teorías de origen de los Celtas y sus lenguas, al igual que se hará una clasificación por ramas de las lenguas que componen esta familia. Asimismo, se expondrán las principales características que las distinguen del resto de lenguas o son más relevantes, de manera breve, según su fonología, morfología y sintaxis. Para terminar, habrá un enfoque sobre el Gaélico Irlandés, explicando el caso del Hiberno-Irish, y haciendo una comparación de préstamos entre el Irlandés y el Inglés.

Palabras clave: Indo-Europeo, lenguas Celtas, Gaélico Irlandés, Inglés, préstamos.

Abstract

The following dissertation is a description of Celtic languages in the Indo-European context, where a brief statement about this linguistic phylum is presented, along with the families and languages composing it. Subsequently, an explanation about the origin theories of Celts and their languages will be provided, as well as a classification of the languages belonging to this family. Additionally, the main features that distinguish this phylum from the rest, and the ones which are more relevant, will be presented in a concise manner, as far as its phonology, morphology and syntax are concerned. To conclude, the case of Irish Gaelic will be deeply explained, as well as the example of Hiberno-Irish, including a comparison of borrowings between Irish and English.

Key words: Indo-European, Celtic languages, Irish Gaelic, English, borrowings.

Celtic languages in the Indo-European phylum context

Almost half of the spoken languages worldwide belong to the Indo-European phylum, with 3 billion of native speakers. However many speakers Mandarin or Arabic have, it is still the largest language phylum, including some of the most spoken languages in the world such as English, Hindi or Spanish. This broad group has up to 445¹ languages and dialects, and can be found in most of Europe and some parts of Asia.

Due to the massive expansion and invasions during Colonial period, today's Indo-European languages are present in the rest of the world, not only in Europe. We find English in North America, Oceania or Africa, or Spanish and Portuguese in South America.

First studies.

Indo-European studies are relatively new. European travellers who went to Indian peninsula (16th century) realised that there were similarities between Iranian and European languages, like Sanskrit, and Greek and Latin. Marcus Zuerius² proposed in 1647 a primitive common language to these similarities: Scythian, where he included Albanian, Baltic, Celtic, Greek, Dutch, German, Latin, Persian, and Slavic. However, it was not a successful research.

Evliya Çelebi³ saw similarities between German and Persian some years later, as well as Gasto Coerdoux, who worked on a comparison of Greek, Latin and Sanskrit conjugations in the 1760s. A few years later, William Jones⁴ added Celtic, Gothic and Persian to those studies. Apart from them, Mikhail Lomonosov⁵ compared Baltic, Chinese, Finnish, Iranian and Slavic.

It was not until 1813 that the term “Indo-European” was coined and used for the first time by Thomas Young⁶. A comparison among some old languages was made by Frank

¹ Data from *Ethnologue* (11/06/2016)

² Dutch linguist (1612-1653)

³ Turkish traveler (1611-1682)

⁴ Anglo-Welsh philologist (1746-1794)

⁵ Russian polymath, scientist and writer (1711-1765)

⁶ English scientist (1773-1829)

Bopp⁷, being his work the one which marked the beginning of Indo-European languages as an academic discipline. From the 1850s up to the last third of 20th century, some remarkable authors appeared, as August Schleicher, Karl Burgmann and Kuryłowicz.

Origin theories

Indo-European studies have evolved a lot in the last decades, and the following conclusions have been reached. It is believed that before Indo-European languages started to spread through Europe and Asia, there was a common “mother” language named by experts as Proto-Indo-European. Scholars used a comparative method in order to make the linguistic reconstruction of the rest of Indo-European languages' evidence, as their aim was to study and show the relations and similar characteristics among those languages. That supposed language probably appeared in a region around Black or Caspian Seas and was used around 3500 and 2500 BC.

History and evolution

We know that Indo-Europeans lived between North Caucasus and the north of Caspian Sea during 4th millennium BC; from that time to 3500 BC, the first wave of migrations reached Ukraine, Romania, Yugoslavia and Hungary. The second wave of migrations (3000 BC) reached main parts of Central Europe, as Balkans, as well as Anatolia and north of Iran. The final movement reached Greece and oriental areas of Mediterranean. On their way, they made contact with other people whose language was substituted by the one they used. By 2000 BC the languages composing Indo-European already had enough differences among them.

As far as we know, Proto-Indo-European was a fusional language, as Sanskrit and Greek show. That characteristic has developed into a more analytic kind of languages⁸, something that happens with English, French and Persian. There are grammatical typologies which make them very different; as a result, the similarities they share are not easily noticeable, since they had developed a lot on their own. Their relation can only be found

⁷ German linguist and philologist (1791-1867)

⁸ **Fusional language**: “language in which one form of a morpheme can simultaneously encode several meanings.” <http://www-01.sil.org/linguistics/GlossaryOfLinguisticTerms/WhatIsAFusionalLanguage.htm> (11/26/2016); **analytic language**: “any language that uses specific grammatical words, or particles, rather than inflection, to express syntactic relations within sentences” <http://www.britannica.com/topic/analytic-language> (11/06/2016)

thanks to broad comparative studies. This phylum is nowadays divided into different families, which are, in alphabetical order: Albanian, Anatolian, Armenian, Balto-Slavic, Germanic, Hellenic, Indo-Iranian, Italic, Tocharian and Celtic, the one on which this dissertation is focused.

Sub-families

Albanian and Armenian families are composed of their sole correspondent languages: Albanian, with 5'4 million of speakers from Albania, Kosovo, and some parts of Macedonia and Greece; and Armenian, which has 6 million of speakers and is the official language of Armenia.

Anatolian was located in a region of Asia Minor, which primary language was Hittite, used between 1650 and 1200 BC and today extinct. Tocharian is another family which was placed as well in nowadays' Turkey. It is the least known branch, though it is understood it was used from around 8th century AD until 10th century AC, and it had two main families: Tocharian A and B.

The Balto-Slavic phylum is branched into two main subdivisions: Baltic and Slavic. On the one hand, Baltic languages are Lithuanian and Latvian; Latvian is spoken by 2'5 million of speakers, while Lithuanian is used by 3'9 million of speakers. Slavic languages, on the other hand, are present in Eastern Europe, mainly in the Balkans, and some parts of northern Asia. They have 315 million of speakers and three main branches. East Slavic, with Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian and Rusyn; West Slavic, which includes Czech, Slovak, Polish, Kashubian, and Upper and Lower Serbian; and South Slavic, in the Balkans and with Macedonian, Bulgarian and Old Church Slavonic (now extinct) in the Eastern family, and Slovene, and Serbo-Croatian in the Western family.

The Germanic family has three main groups as well, and its languages are used by more than 500 million of native speakers around the world, as well as it has many second language users. We also have three main branches. In West Germanic, we have English, German, Dutch, Low German and Afrikaans; in the North-Germanic branch, we find Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, Icelandic, and Faroese; finally, in the East-Germanic branch, we find extinct languages such as Gothic, Burgundian, and Vandalic.

Hellenic languages leading representative is Greek, with 13 million of speakers and spoken mainly in today's Greece. Italic is one of the main phyla too, as Germanic. It includes Romance languages as Italian, Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese, Galician, French, Romanian, Occitan, among others. It has around 800 million of speakers, most of them Spanish and

French. It also includes some nowadays extinct languages from Italic peninsulae, such as Umbrian, Oscan, Faliscan and South Picene. Latin is considered part of this family as well, as it is the “mother” of all.

Finally, Indo-Iranian languages are the most major branch of Indo-European languages, since most of the largest languages as far as native speakers are concerned (+1 billion of speakers) are part of the Indo-Aryan group, where we find Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Punjabi, or Marathi. There are two other branches: Iranian, with Persian, Pashto and Kurdish; and Nuristani, a smaller one, with Askanu and Kamkata-viri.

Celtic languages

How do we know a language is Celtic? First, not only its typological level has to be taken into account, but also its phonology, morphology and lexicon. Dr David Stitfer⁹ follows the next pattern:

“First, a language is Celtic, if its lexemes and morphemes can be derived by specifically 'Celtic' sound laws and morphological processes from reconstructed Proto-Indo-European forms. Some of these sound laws are exclusively Celtic and can serve as very good indicators; but most sound laws are also found in other Indo-European branches and are therefore ambiguous if taken on their own; some of the so-called 'Celtic' sound laws mentioned in the literature cannot be safely postulated for Proto-Celtic, but only for the later individual languages.” (Stitfer, 2008:10)

Martin J. Ball mentions in his book *The Celtic Languages*, another definition of “Celtic language”: “The genetic sense of what is a 'Celtic' language is clearly related to the ethnic in that it treats as Celtic any language lineally descended from the reconstructed proto-language.” (Ball 2004:5)

It is believed that Celts emerged around 3000-2500 BC when they probably started to use Proto-Celtic as their language¹⁰. Their original foundation has been a controversial topic for centuries, something that similarly happens with Indo-European. They were people who lived in Iron Age and Medieval Europe, and who had some cultural resemblances among them as their languages, nowadays known as Celtic. Their expansion and placement through

⁹ Dr. David Stitfer, *Old Celtic Languages* (Wien 2008)

¹⁰ Proto-Celtic is a supposed language mother of the next Celtic languages.

Europe are an undefined matter too; for instance, we have the case of those Iron Age's inhabitants in the British Isles, whose origin is still not certain.

Similarly, a 19th century's theory declares that Celts were part of Urnfield (1300 AD – 750 BC) and Hallstatt Culture (800-450 BC), for iron-working had a great spread during those times. Following 450 BC, Celts might have migrated to the British Isles, as well as they expanded their territories across Central Europe during the first half of 1st millennium BC. They ended occupying a vast region of Central Europe.

Origin theories and first mentions

To begin with, Celts as a single tribe never actually existed; everything we know is only an idea: they were never a single nation, as they were not interested in having a state, and even in today's studies, it is rather difficult to talk about them as a single ethnic group. The most probable fact is that they were different tribes who might not even know each other, but who shared some cultural facts and traditions, and probably spoke Proto-Celtic. "celticity' originally was more a matter of being the scion of a particular cultural and historical heritage rather than an explicit recognition of linguistic affiliation." (Martin 1992:4). As far as we are concerned, there is no such thing as a single Celtic language, and common Celtic culture; it is a metaphorical idea. Nevertheless, as it was mentioned before, there are different theories about them and their origin, of which the main ones are the following:

The principal theory declares that this Indo-European culture emerged from the Urnfield Culture. Celts appeared in the Alps and occupied a region in Central Europe by the end of the second millennium BC; therefore, they were somehow connected with the Urnfield Culture, which was present in that part of the Old Continent during Late Bronze Age (1300BC – 750 BC). Its name evokes to their tradition when cremating the deceased, as they placed their ashes in urns. Innovations in agricultural and technology practices started to be carried then. This culture was the evolution of Tumulus culture and was subsequently divided into two main waves: Hallstatt and La Tène Culture, which were known thanks to their burial and pottery rites. Both cultures were solidly powerful and developed an organised society.

On the one hand, Hallstatt Culture appeared around 650 BC in centre Austria. Their distinctive feature was how they produced different types of weapons, and how they started to substitute the use of bronze for ironing. These changes are perceived in burial areas, where we find ceramic objects and armament, a tradition that was distributed through the rest of occidental Europe. Some scholars consider this point as the rise of Proto-Celtic. Moreover,

the region where Hallstatt Culture was positioned is considered as the “Celtic homeland”. However, there are very few remains of this culture, so it is difficult for specialists to guess the original date of their birthplace.

On the other hand, La Tène Culture's expansion started around 400 BC in a region in the south-west of France. The methods they followed in burials and when working with metal were also spread to the rest of Europe, something that marked the greatest moment of Celtic Culture in the Old Continent. Their power is readily perceivable with the Rome's plundering that took place in 390 BC. In the process of Romans starting to gain power, there was a group of settlements in the North of Italy, known as Cisalpine Gaul, as well as in some parts of Gaul, Great Britain, and Spain. The fact that there were different settlements in the various regions indicates us why are there different theories concerning the exact origin of Celts. Some other innovations, such as the carriage or shields, were more evolved or started to appear. However, these glory times did not last long; two centuries later, strongest cultures as Romans and Teutonic began to gain power, making La Tène and Hallstatt weaker.

Due to the expansion of Roman Empire and Germanic tribes, Celts were little by little restricted to Ireland, some parts of Great Britain, and Brittany. From then on, those regions emerged on their own as cohesive cultural entities. Meanwhile, Continental Celtic was lost due to those invasions and the following ones.

Linguists tend to look for more theories. For instance, some scholars say that Celts came from Spain and later went to the British Isles and the rest of Europe. This new theory is controversial due to the small probes, which mainly are only 50 stones with Tartessian inscriptions.

The earlier information obtained about Celts is from Greeks and Romans, and it is to be found in historical texts. Romans and Greeks did not differentiate them. They made reference to different tribes (the Aedui, the Helvetii), whose linguistic similarities were already noticed by some authors as Tacitus did with British and Gaulish languages, and St. Jerome about Galatian and the Gaulish dialect of Treveri. They said that Celts were illiterate people who did not have the ability to read and write; they were believed to be so because druids¹¹ were not interested in writing down their knowledge, but in memorising it. Greeks mentioned Celts as *Keltoi*, which probably was the pronunciation of Celtic tribes. “Celts” and

¹¹ Druids are known as the wise people from Celtic tribes, something similar to poets.

“Celtic” were not terms used in the context of people from the British Isles. Romans named them as *Celtae* or *Galli*¹².

The first author who mentioned them was Festus Rufus Avienus, proconsul of Africa, in *Ora Maritima* (336 AD). Hecataeus was the first Greek writer who made allusions to them. Herodotus placed their territory around Danube river (5th century AC), as well as “in the Iberian Peninsula, farthest from Hercules' columns” (cited in Sainero 1994 as Romero 2006:15); and Plato also mentioned them. Aristotle was the first ancient writer who gave us a detailed description of Celts. Polybius wrote about the wars between Celts, Poseidonies about Gauls, and Livy described the Celtic attack on Rome of 387 BC. Strabo related them with Gaul people. The emperor Julius Caesar (100-44 BC) wrote a lot about Celtic people, as in *De Bellum Galicum*, where he told how he defeated the Gauls and gave an explicit description about Druids who inhabited the continent.

History and evolution

The British Isles have suffered plenty of attempts of invasions, and so have Celtic population. Romans tried to invade England until they settled there up to 410 when the last troops left British' territories. Right after that invasion, a crude fight developed between Celtic and Latin languages, where Latin had more influence in southern regions. During that period, Celts, Romans and Anglo-Saxons had plenty of struggles and fights among them. Anglo Saxons set up a nation which final settlement dated back to the end of 6th century. By the 7th century, Cornwall, Scotland and Wales remained as Celtic lands; Celtic people were cut off in mountains. Meanwhile, Ireland maintained its independence up to the Norman Invasion, when Henry II invaded it in 1169.

Different kingdoms started to be established when Anglo-Saxons arrived and settled in the British Isles. Northumbria was the most powerful of the primary seven of them¹³. Those nations maintained their relations and contact and even shared their territory along with Celts. Anglo-Saxons lived in England for more than 1500 years, a period in which they imposed their languages, and society and economy experienced a great hegemony. Celt was more important in Wales, Scotland and Ireland, as it is nowadays. Right after Anglo-Saxons, German invasions started to take place around the 5th century.

¹² People from Gaul, territory of contemporary France.

¹³ The Heptarchy: East Anglia, Essex, Kent, Mercia, Northumbria, Sussex, and Wessex.

In *The Languages of Britain*, Glaville Prices¹⁴ contemplates that the very first Irish people's surges occurred around 270 AC. They established the Waterford kings' dynasty in Dyfed, a dynasty of kings who governed that territory up to the 10th century, and who conquered England. Conversely, Nennius considers that Irish lived in Wales around 400, a fact that he justifies with some names found in inscriptions from the 6th century in Devon and Cornwall. Inasmuch as Welsh, Cornish and English started to push Irish during that period, there is a possibility that a bilingual period took place.

Regarding languages, there was a primitive Celtic language in England known as Britton¹⁵, from which we only obtained names in Latin alphabet and abbreviations in coins of famous chiefs. Anglo-Saxon languages were the predominant ones for centuries, something that provoked Celt to be almost cleared out. Influence between both languages was rather little. Borrowings are the most remarkable example of this contact, which the main purpose is to express new concepts. English later borrowed Norman words related to army, kitchen or laws; and from Celtic languages those related to cities and geography.

Most parts of those common characteristics developed from Brythonic Celt, known as the “mother” of Cornish, Welsh, and Breton. The rest of relations are to be based on Goidelic Celt, as a result of a presumably early Irish settlement in a centre region of England at the beginning of Christian era. The only data we have are some stones found with Goidelic inscriptions. As far as we know, those settlements date back to 3rd century BC in Wales, and they originated Brecknock kingdom, which survived from 5th to 10th AC.

Sub-families

At least, Celtic languages are divided into two main branches: Insular and Continental Celtic. It might be considered as a geographical distinction, though it is not, since Breton is included in Insular Celtic.

"While it is true that the Insular Celtic languages share many traits, their counterparts do not appear to have many specific characteristics which group them together in opposition to the former; 'continental' really is a catch-all for 'non-insular'". (Bell, 2005:5)

¹⁴ Cited in Ramon Sainero's *Lenguas y literaturas Celtas: origen y evolución* (2009:36).

¹⁵ Also known as Common Brittonic, an ancient Celtic language present in Britain during Iron Age.

As we can see, geography is not enough to divide languages. Before explaining the geographical distinctions among Celtic languages, the linguistic differentiation between Q-Celtic and P-Celtic should be mentioned.

Q-Celtic is also known as Goidelic Celt, which some scholars consider as the older one, and as the main characteristic is that it usually realises final occlusive sounds with /k/ sounds when needed. It is present in Ireland, the Isle of Mann, and Scotland, mainly on Highland regions, since Irish migrations were settled around that territory. P-Celtic, on the other hand, is also known as Brythonic Celt, and as main distinctive characteristic, the final occlusive is realised by /p/ sound. At some time, it might have been expanded through plenty of territories in Great Britain. Still this classification, which is considered nowadays obsolete, Celtic languages are classified in Continental or Insular languages.

Continental Celtic

Continental Celtic Languages are nowadays extinct though they had a significant presence all through the continent of Europe, as its name indicates. These languages were present in a region which went from Iberia to west Balkans, even Anatolia, in Turkey. Despite the fact that those languages might have had a splendour period, the only ones attested today are a few languages and dialects which Celts used.

The oldest Continental Celtic language is believed to be **Lepontic**, which was spoken in Switzerland and Northern-Central Italy during 6th century BC. It was employed by the people who lived in Cisalpine Gaul, a Roman province which was known as being around Italian lakes. A few coins with Lepontic inscriptions are the only data that have been found so far about this language, which are the oldest remains conserved of Celtic languages. Some bilingual stone inscriptions of Todi, which are written in Lepontic and Latin, are also part of those proves.

Celts also inhabited the Iberian Peninsula, where they used a language known as **Celtiberian**. This language was created as a mixture of Iberian languages and Celtic, something that happened around the regions where both cultures were next to each other, mainly in Central Spain. It also had a strange relationship with Gallaecian, a dialect spoken in Galicia, Asturias, and Northern Portugal. The only data obtained is some onomastic evidence in two short and one longer inscription.

Lusitanian was a language used in the Iberian Peninsula as well, between Douro and Tagus rivers. The only remains found are five inscriptions and a few place names. Although

some linguists consider it as Celtic, it cannot be classified into this family since it is much closer to Italic languages, and it lacks some usual characteristics of Celtic languages. Then, it would be related to Celtiberian, due to the geographical situation and some possible connections they had.

The final language found in the Iberian Peninsula is **Tartessian**. It is hard to relate to a particular family as a consequence of the very few remains left and is thought to be the oldest Celtic language by some scholars. Tartessian was the written language used in the South West of Iberian Peninsula during a part of 1st millennium BC. The capital city of Tartessos was Gadir, today's Cadiz. However, there is no scholarly agreement so far for us to classify Tartessian.

“Corresponden a las invasiones célticas más antiguas, (...) coetáneas a las primeras en Gran Bretaña. No obstante, no existen indicios de su relación con el goidélico insular, y lo más verosímil es aceptar esta lengua como perteneciente a los Celtas Hallstáticos entrados en la Península hacia los siglos VII-VI AC” (Mentioned in Sainero, 1994 as TOVAR, A. *Enciclopedia Lingüística Hispánica I* 1960:112)

Apart from the Iberian Peninsula, Celts were also present in France's territories, where they reached a high status and power. They used **Gaulish** (6th AD-6th BC), which was present in the areas that came from Belgium to Turkey, being more significant in France (more concretely between Seine and Garonne rivers), where they used Gaul dialect. Some other important dialects were **Noric** and **Galatian**, which were placed in Balkans and Asia Minor. Gaulish is the Celtic language with biggest linguistic evidence. There are some stone inscriptions dedicated to divinities; the lead tablet from Chamalières contains 336 characters; a clay plate from Larza, a magical text about females, has up to 1000 characters in 160 words; and the Calendar of Coligny has 11 lines, and probably talks about a wedding.

Gaulish relationship with the rest of Celtic cultures is something doubtful, and the linguistic relationships are a surprise. Dottin says in his book *La langue gauloise* (mentioned in Sainero, 1994:13): “Gaulish belongs then to a third group of Celtic languages, it is not actually related with Brythonic”. In order to justify himself, he talks about some primitive Gaulish inscriptions written in Greek and Latin alphabet, which includes names of famous people and places. Those few words maintain /k/ sound as in *Cisiambos* and *Contoutos*; therefore, it could be a dialect related to Goidelic Celt.

One of the most important dialects related to Gaulish was **Galatian** (or Galatic), which was used mainly in Asia Minor, in a big region around contemporary Ankara. There are no remains left in order to prove this, and we hardly know anything about this language. Galatian was probably used from 3rd century BC to 4th century AD, even 6th.

The next important Continental Celtic language was **Noric**, which classification is controversial too. It is also known as Eastern Celtic, and the only remains we have are two unfinished inscriptions from Noricon, a Roman province (nowadays around Grafenstein, Austria). We do not have enough information about it, as when did it appear; what we know is that it was probably extinct around 2nd century AD.

Insular Celtic

As far as Insular Celtic is concerned, it is divided into two main branches: **Goidelic** (or Gaelic) and **Brittonic** (or British). They were present in the British Isles, and most of its languages are still alive today. Brittonic is still alive nowadays and has itself two main branches: Northern and Southern British. Also, Brittonic languages were present in Britain before Romans arrived, from which they got plenty of borrowings; Goidelic was present in Ireland and west coast of Scotland in the 6th century.

In the **Northern British** branch, we find Welsh and Cumbric. **Welsh** is one of the Celtic languages still alive today. It is spoken in Wales and the Welsh colony in Argentina, Y Wladfa. The number of speakers is around 740.000, and only half of them consider themselves fluent though they do not use it in their everyday duties. **Cumbric** was extinct around the 12th century and was used in North regions of England. It was a language placed in Cumbria, which is an archaic term for “The old North” or “The Lake District”. It is very close to Welsh, and there are not much of linguistic evidence.

On the other hand, in the **Southern British** branch, we find Cornish and Breton. **Cornish** was the primary language in Cornwall during centuries. It was “pushed” westwards progressively by English until it was considered extinct in 1777 with the death of Dolly Pentreath, the last native speaker of Cornish. However, there has been a revival which started in the 20th century, which users are very few: around 20 native speakers and 600 who consider it as their main language. **Breton**, though considered to be an Insular Celtic language, is found in the North of France, in Brittany. The reason why this happens is that Britons migrated to the north of France and brought with them their language. Nowadays,

including second language students, it has around 210.000 of speakers. It is important to mention that it is not related at all with Gaulish since it was a much earlier language.

Finally, **Goidelic** is the living branch which includes more native speakers nowadays. It includes Irish, Manx, and Scottish Gaelic. Scottish is the only one which needs “Gaelic”, to make a distinction between Scottish and Scots, an extinct language of Germanic origin. All these languages came from the same root: Scottish was a dialect of Irish, which developed itself through the centuries, as well as Manx.

Irish is the “mother” of the rest of Goidelic languages. It is also the one with more users, rather native or second language speakers who live in the island. Native speakers are just a small percentage of this total; most of them live on the west coast of Ireland (Gaeltacht). It is official in the Republic and considered as a second language in Northern Ireland. During its history, it has suffered not only the pressure of English but also the loss of millions of speakers due to the Great Famine and subsequent migrations. However, it has been revived for the last two centuries. Furthermore, Irish is a language that has not undergone many changes from the time of its beginning.

Scottish Gaelic was developed from Middle Irish, which was brought to Scotland around 4-5th CE by Irish settlers. Though it is not considered an official language by the European Union either the United Kingdom, its status is of Indigenous language, as it is a minority language. More than 57.000 people can speak Scottish Gaelic, and around 87.000 have some facility with it. There is a dialect connected to it in Canada known as Canadian Gaelic, with 1500 speakers, most of them from Nova-Scotia's province. The main result of Irish influence on Scottish Gaelic was on its morphology.

Finally, **Manx** is considered to be another Irish dialect. It was present in Isle of Mann from the 10th century, more or less, and it started to diverge around 13th century from Irish, and 15th century from Scottish. Its latest speakers died in 1974, which made it disappear. Yet there has been a revival during these last years, with 200 speakers with enough competence on it. It actually never died, some people only had little knowledge about it.

Irish Gaelic

It is thought that between Bronze and Iron Age, Celtic settlers arrived in Ireland. They brought the languages which were going to be Irish and took over Ireland's before history with their new culture.

Nothing is known about the languages used in Ireland before Celts arrived. At the beginning of the Christian era, its inhabitants already used Early Irish. They later brought the

language to Scotland, and their contact made the language mutually intelligible up to 13th century. Latin was introduced in the 5th century by Christian missionaries and was used as the language of church ceremonies. Norse arrived with Vikings invasions from 9th to 10th centuries.

Britain suffered the impact of Roman's invasions much more than Ireland, which has been somehow on a geographical isolation. The result of that little contact is the little evidence we have of the earlier stages of Irish Gaelic, right before literacy was introduced by those invasions. A list of geographical names (rivers, coastal landmarks, and tribe names) found on Ptolemy's map are considered as the first proves of this language. Still that little contact, "a familiarity with Latin (...) is implied by recent interpretations of the archaic script called Ogam in which the early inscriptions are written" (Russell, 1995:9).

Though spoken much earlier, Ogham inscriptions are the first written data of Insular Celtic; most of them belong to 5th-6th centuries and a few from 4th century AD. The first Ogam inscriptions were found in a region in the south of Ireland, as a group of three hundred of inscriptions. "The Ogam script consists of groups of from one to five strokes and notches about a central spine which is usually formed by the long side of the inscribed stone" (mentioned in Ball and Fife 2005: as Gearóid 1992:101). Their script is composed of horizontal and diagonal lines in an archaic form of the language. Ogam inscriptions are later written in Latin alphabet and might be the translation of a counting system in tally-sticks. Most of those inscriptions consist of proper names in the genitive case ("The stone of X"), and also mention "son", "daughter", "grandson" or "people and tribe". They were used until the 7th century when manuscripts started to appear as well. Besides, Ogam inscriptions help us understand some characteristics of Irish phonology as they belong to the period in which lenition, vowel affection and loss of final syllables changes took place. However, they show us a little information about morphology.

Old Irish texts are considered as the point where Celtic literary tradition starts. First manuscripts from the 7th century are in Old Irish. They are a compilation of glosses and comments on biblical and grammatical Latin texts and were written by Irish monks in European monasteries, as the Würzburg Glosses (8th AD), or some readings found in the book of Armagh¹⁶ and a Cumbria manuscript, considered to be linguistically earlier. They are so valuable because none of them has suffered any change. Old Irish verses are found with some

¹⁶ An Irish-Latin manuscript from 9th century preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin.

Latin texts, as well as in later manuscripts as *Lebor na h-Uidre* "The Book of the Dun Cow" and the Book of Leister, from 12th-14th centuries. Still they might have been copied and therefore changed; consequently, we could find a mix of Old, Middle and Early Modern Irish features. They also show us how Irish preserved some Indo-European inflectional endings, and vowels and consonants later lost. Irish Gaelic is considered as the third oldest literature in Europe, following Greek and Latin. *Saltair na Rann* "The Psalter of Staves" (10th century) marks the beginning of Middle Irish; *Táin Bó Cúailnge* "The Cattle Raid of Cooley" (12th century) also belongs to this period.

Irish suffered a significant change when Cistercian¹⁷ reforms were carried out, and Anglo-Norman invasions started. Religious centres stopped nurturing native learning, so bardic¹⁸ families began to gain importance; they normalised poetic language, a process which was initiated around 1200 and lasted more than four centuries. They developed a standard version of their dialect, old-fashioned, known as Early Modern or Classical Irish. They taught it in schools until the end of the Gaelic order, around 1601. Anglo-Normans brought with them English, but not French; part of their nobility used it, but it left no track on the Irish language.

Literary tradition was conserved and restored thanks to scholarly families, who copied manuscripts and gave access to Continental literature to Ireland, as well as some translations. English also influenced Irish literature from 1600 onwards, something that finished with the rise of Irish Literature Revival, when at the end of 19th century, Irish institutions and population decided to protect, promote and revive their language, as well as their culture and folklore.

In 14th and 15th centuries, English was almost eliminated with the weakening of the colony and the rise of the Gaelic. It was known in the major cities, the Pale¹⁹ and Wexford; in the rest, people used Irish. When Tudors arrived, it was reintroduced, though Irish was the language of most of the Irish people until 1745, when it started to fall as people learned English. Tudors and the following reigns carried out that process by implantation of plantations, which caused a great movement of migrations. By the 17th century, those

¹⁷ Religious order composed of monks and nuns who followed Saint Benedictine's Rule.

¹⁸ Name used in order to refer to poets who "composed and recited verses celebrating the legendary exploits of chieftains and heroes." <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/bardic>

¹⁹ The Pale: area in Ireland controlled by English during late Middle Ages.

plantations started to broke down. Cromwell later accomplished a government where he banished Catholics²⁰ to the west of Ireland and even prohibited the use of Irish. The Great Famine²¹ was the point of inflexion, since at least a quarter of Irish population died or migrated; that is, at least 2 million of native speakers of Irish disappeared from Ireland. The change from the use of Irish to English as the main language provoked Irish people not to feel so attached to their homeland. "The loss of the Irish language is the decisive event in Irish history, since it altered radically the self-understanding of the Irish and destroyed the continuity between their present and their past" (The Oxford Companion to Irish History, 2007). Hyde showed this situation in *Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland*²².

Irish Gaelic is a language which has suffered little changes in its history. For instance, the text about Cuchulainn that appears in a couple of manuscripts (*Leabhar Laigen* and *Leabhar na huidre*), dates back to 9th century, and we can see that it has little changes when comparing it with the one from the beginning of Christian Era. Also, there are plenty of words alike or very similar in the 20th century. Ireland is today considered as an English-speaking country, though Irish Gaelic pervasive as the main language up to 19th century. The struggle between both languages was harder to win by English since Irish had a well-established language history and situation. Irish has five periods in its history: Ogam Irish (inscriptions, 5th-7th centuries), Archaic Irish (manuscripts, 7th century), Old Irish (8-9th centuries), Middle Irish (900-1200), and Modern Irish (13th century until nowadays). Irish still survives in Gaeltachtaí, though some studies are pessimistic about its continuance due to the big differences among dialects, something that provokes the spoken form difficult to develop, and also because of the presence and pressure of English.

²⁰ Most Catholics used Irish as their mother tongue.

²¹ Period of starvation between 1845 and 1852 mainly caused by the potato blight.

²² Manifesto published in 1892 where he exposed the reasons why Ireland had to support its own traditions.

Celtic languages main characteristics²³

Phonology

The first thing we should take into account is that Proto-Celtic has plenty of differences from other Indo-European languages as far as phonology and morphology are concerned. Some of those features will be explained now.

Changes from IE to Celtic

Regarding phonology, Proto-Celtic showed that it had already suffered changes before, something that makes it different from the rest of Indo-European families. There are four main changes, which started by the modification in long vowels and diphthongs. Long vowels were readjusted in four different manners in the phonological chart, and in consequence, diphthongs were reduced, and Proto-Celtic conserved five vowels.

The second noticeable feature was the loss of /p/. When it appeared in initial or medial position, it was dropped. For instance, Latin *porcus* "pig" counterpart in Celtic is *orc*. We find that in Brittonic languages, /p/ re-appeared later, coming from /k^w/; on the other hand, in Goidelic languages it came from the simplification and devoicing of consonant clusters.

There were two final changes. On the one hand, the change of IE /g^w/ into /b/, as can be seen in OIr *bó*, W *bu* (cow, ox), which came from IE *g^wou- and is also found in Latin as *bous*, Gk *boûs* and Skt *gauh*. On the other hand, when a vowel was between /l/ and /r/, it was vocalised into /li/ and /ri/, e.g. W *ryd*, Gaul *Ritu-* "ford" < *prtū- (cf. Lat *portus*, Eng *ford*).

Fixed stress

Celtic languages have a regular process when placing the stress of any word, which does not take into account the syllabic structure or part of speech. In Goidelic languages, stress is mainly placed at the beginning of a term, though there are some particular dialectal cases. As a result, in the Gaelic branch, affixation does not provoke the movement of stress, as in the Brythonic branch it is quite changeable since the stress is usually found in the penultimate syllable but its position is changed when it suffer suffixation or erosion of final syllables. Furthermore, the placement of the accent in Goidelic on the first syllable provoked a reduction and syncope of the unaccented syllables around it, and vowels were reduced.

²³ For more details, attach to Russel, Paul *An Introduction to the Celtic languages* (10-12) and Ball and Fife *The Celtic Languages*.

Mutation

Insomuch as phonology is concerned, the main characteristic is mutation. It is the "use of alternations to the initial phoneme of words." (Fife, 8) New mutations and triggers have developed, as some have disappeared.

It is interesting that there is very few evidence in the Continental family concerning mutation, mainly present in Gaulish and Celtiberian. In Insular Celtic, one of the leading roles of mutations is that they "involve similar phonological alternations" (Fife, 9). In Irish, for instance, there are two mutation rules: Lenition and Eclipsis, whereas we find three in Welsh. Mutation involves plenty of changes, such as prefixing of consonants. It is usually placed after the article, causing the grammatical environments to change, as in the mutation of feminine nouns and adjectives. To differentiate person and number, diverse patterns of mutations are used. It is also used when marking objects of prepositions. It also takes place with verbs, so as to different particles are associated, such as subordinating particles, for direct relatives and oblique relatives. It also has a major role in derivational morphology, as it provokes changes in the stem. Finally, it is associated with the vocative case.

P/Q-Celtic

Brittonic and Goidelic also have some distinctive features between them, mainly phonological, whereas morphological ones tend to be of degree. This distinction has already been explained, but now it is time to exemplify its characteristics. */k^w/ was usually delabialized in Goidelic, merging as /k/, and labialized in Brittonic as /p/: Ir *cethar*, W *pedwar* "four" < *k^wet̪o̯res (cf. Lat *quattuor*). When surrounded by /u/, /k^w/ was delabialized too in Brittonic. The retention of /k^w/ is perceived in Ogam inscriptions. This distinction resulted in the supposed division of P and Q Celtic for Brittonic and Goidelic.

Morphology and syntax

Concerning morphology and syntax, there are some features unique to Celtic. For instance, case system and reflexes that were seen in Indo-European can be still found in Goidelic languages. The most remarkable feature that differentiates it from the rest of Indo-European languages is the VSO word order, among other less important.

VSO word order

Celtic languages show a very uncommon word order, not present within Indo-European languages: VSO. This word order might be a reason to explain an earlier origin of Celtic languages than the rest of IE, yet it is not a trust-worthy theory.

This word order implies other features in the language, which are indicated by five main universals stated by Greenberg²⁴. They are all prepositional (3), use SVO as another word order (6), use interrogative particles in questions (12), the main verb comes after the auxiliary (16), and use post-head modification (19). One exception to this word order is that there are some pre-verbal particles, whose role is to indicate the illocutionary force or subordination of the next sentence.

Nominal system

Case system is conserved in Goidelic languages, as well as it displays Indo-European reflexes. In the earlier stages of the languages, dual inflexion and neuter gender were preserved too. Infixes, which are pronominal series used with articles, are mainly used in Gaulish as an infixation of a pronoun between the particle and a verb. Today it is only present in fossilised verb forms, though it is used in Welsh and Breton in literary forms.

Verbal system

Categories of moods and tenses were inherited in Celtic languages, such as reduplicated futures, the use of *r-* ending in impersonal and passive forms, and of *-t̪iō* suffix for past passive participles and preterite passive. Wackernagel's Law and Vendryes' Restriction happen in Celtic languages. On the one hand, the frontier says that "unaccented elements, usually sentence particles or pronouns, go in Second place in the sentence after the first accented element" (Russell 1995:13). On the other hand, the restriction, which is a kind of refinement, "require that pronouns, or sometimes in the archaic language sentence connectives, should either be infixes into compound or negative verbs or, in archaic Irish only, suffixed to simple verbs" (Russell, 1995:13). For example, OIr *fom·gaib* "he seizes me": *fo·gaib* "he seizes". There are traces of this procedure in Welsh. Also, this provokes the regular initial verb, another feature of Celtic languages.

²⁴ American linguist (1915-2001) expert on linguistic typology.

Verb “to have”

Celtic languages do not have a counterpart verb to English possessive *to have*. Instead, they use constructions similar to Greek *estí moi* or Latin *est mihi* "there is to me". In Irish it works as *tá airgead aige* and in Welsh *mae arian gyda fe* "he has money" or "there is money with him". Moreover, the dative infixed pronoun has been replaced by the use of prepositional forms. In Cornish and Breton, we can see that they use the third-person singular of the verb “to be” and a dative pronoun encliticized to the verbal particle. In Welsh, they use "to be" with the preposition "with". All Goidelic languages realise a similar construction, characterised by the utilisation of the preposition *ag* "at". This construction is also used in some idiomatic expressions, as Ir *tá a fhios agam* "I know (lit. I have its knowledge)". Furthermore, each language express perfective possession "get" with a simple verb: Ir *faigh*, W *cael*, Br. *kaout*.

The relationship between English and Irish.

The case of “Hiberno-English”.

Irish-English is how we define the group of dialects of English spoken in Ireland. It has been before called Anglo-Irish and Hiberno-English, terms that will be explained now.

First of all, Anglo-Irish was a term used in order to refer to the language used in formal situations, such as politics and literature. Hickey (2007:3) considers it as the oldest term since it refers to the settlers that lived in Ireland in the 17th century. Filppula adds that this term makes reference to texts written in English by Irish speakers.

Secondly, Hiberno-English is used in order to convey all the Irish dialects of English. Plenty of linguists consider this term as the more useful, as it is more generalised.

Finally, the term Irish-English is rather controversial and therefore difficult to be accepted. Hickey defines it as “... a more neutral label which refers to varieties of English in Ireland and is parallel to labels such as Canadian English or Australian English” (2007:5). However, other scholars do not follow this term just because of that reason: to put it in the same level of Canadian or Australian English.

As far as we know, Hiberno-English probably appeared before the plantations were established; when those communities were set up, and Irish Gaelic was almost cleared out, it revived again until today. Baugh says in his book:

“The distinctiveness of Irish English derives from a mixture of three sources: the influence of the Irish language; the influence of Scots, especially in

the Northeast; and the nature of the original English that was brought to Ireland from western England in the seventeenth century and that has remained quite conservative (...)" (Baugh, 299: 2002)

He also talks about some Hiberno-English features, such as the influence of Irish vocabulary (*blarney*, *smithereens*) and the peculiarities in pronunciation (*tay* for *tea*). The similarities in syntactic structures between Irish and Hiberno-English are also explained, as the expression of the perfective tenses with the use of "after", and the present participle and the verb "to be": *He said that he knew that I was after getting lost* (= ...that I had got lost").

Moreover, one of the great examples of this dialect is its influence on literature. For instance, during the 18th century, English authors somehow mocked at stereotypes of Irish people in plays, where they remarked their peculiar accent when speaking in English. However, in the 19th century, the Irish Literature Revival started to give rise to Irish writers and style, with authors as Douglas Hyde and W.B. Yeats, and later by James Joyce.

Celtic borrowings in English.

English is known to be a Germanic language that has been built thanks to the different invasions the British Isles have suffered: it has Latin, Scandinavian, Celtic, and French influence, among many others. Nevertheless, the influence of Celtic languages was not so significant; it was actually attested in place-names such as rivers, mountains or towns. Before we start, we have to take into account three situations: some borrowings English has taken from Celtic languages when were they borrowed, and to which language do they belong. A small number of Celtic loanwords started to be used in English when the common Germanic period was still developing. For example, OE *rice* "kingdom" (noun), "rich, powerful" (adjective) is Celtic, as well as OE *ambeht* "servant" or *dun* "hill, down". Of course, we have to bear in mind that some Latin borrowings entered into English via Celtic, as *ceaster* and *-coln* (Lincoln). Piotr Stalmaszczyk (1995) mentions in his article the four main periods of English language history, and the possible Celtic words taken during those periods:

1. Old English (450-1100): between 9 and 23 borrowings
2. Middle English (1100-1500): between 50 and 80
3. Early Modern English (1500-1700): between 60 and 85
4. Late Modern English (1700 -): 55 – 102

Those Celtic words attested to the Old English period are divided into three groups: the ones from Continental Celtic, those assimilated after 5th century, and the ones coming from Old Irish related to the church (OE *dry* “magician, sorcerer”; from OIr. *Druí*, pl. *druid* “magician, druid”). Yet the three groups, just the second is the best example of Celtic borrowings in Old English. That is so because the ones that came from Continental Celtic are also present in Common Germanic (the “mother” of English), and the words used in Church in Old Irish were generally Latin loanwords (e.g. OE *ancor* < OIr. *Anchara* < Lat. *Anachoreta* “a hermit, anchorite”; OE *cross* < OIr. *Cross* < Lat. *Crux* “cross”). The number of loanwords during Old English period rises to 23, which might be higher as some scholars consider.

In the Middle English period, not so many words were borrowed despite the high contact among these languages and cultures, as the Henry II invasions of Ireland. Just at the end of this period of English language, more words were proved to be borrowed, though there are no more than three hundred. In the case of Irish, we have the following examples:

banshee (< *bean* “woman” + *sidhe* “fairy hill”);

bawn (< *bó* “cow” + *dún* “fortress”);

galore (< *go* “to” + *leór* “sufficiency”);

shamrock (< *seamróg*, as a diminutive of *seamar* “clover”);

Tory (< *tóraigheachd* “pursuit”);

Most borrowed words are related to geographical facts such as names of cities or rivers. Also, most words are borrowed from English to Celtic. Nevertheless, this process does not take into account sufficiently enough the influence of Celtic on the dialects of English.

It is evident that one of the main consequences of contacts among tribes was the changes in language, some linguistic effects that have been taking place for centuries. For instance, there are some Welsh words of Irish origin: Welsh *brat*, which means “rag” in English and “cape” in Irish; and Welsh *croesan* “buffoon” can be found in Irish as *crossan*. Moreover, there are some Celtic words used in spoken English, not only by Irish and Scottish but also by English people, which are worldwide recognised, as *bard* “poet”, *whiskey*, *slogan*, *clan*, *druid*, *loch* and *banshee*. Some other Celtic words used in spoken English, but not so common, are *ommadhawn* “silly”, *cleeve* “basket”, *loy* “narrow shovel” and *spalpeen* “naughty”. The word “Gaelic” can be used as an example too. It is possible that it originally came from Welsh *gwydd* “savage, uneducated”, which developed into *Gwyddeleg* “Irish language” and *Gwyddel* “men from Ireland” and was borrowed around 7th century BC by Old

Irish as *Goidelg*. In addition, something quite curious is the case of *Erse*, a word used to name the Gaelic language that comes from the Scots language.

As Ireland, Scotland and Wales are the territories where Celtic culture has had more presence, their regions still conserve plenty of words related to geography of Celtic origin. We know they are Celtic thanks to texts that belong to periods before Anglo-Saxons. Writers as Ptolomeo, Tacit, Gildas and Bede wrote about geography names of Celtic origin, which are found in old manuscripts. In order to guess the Goidelic birth of an English word, it has to be based on traces, since the relationship between them is difficult to track. The following list of place-names show a clear Celtic influence:

- Leeds. *History of the English People* (Bede) as *Liddise*; *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* as *Lindesse*. The IE root *plat-* “broad, extent” developed into Gr *plotós* “to slide” and AS *flod* “river”. The OIr word *letha* “to widen” and W *lled* have a similar meaning to those. Moreover, the OIr word for “water”, *lind*, developed into ModIr as *lion*, meaning “to slide”. This word was also present in Cornish as *len*, with the meaning of “water” as well.
- Lincoln. *History of English People* (Bede) as *Lincolina* (=hill of Lind); *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* as *Linaylene*. It is composed of two words: on the one hand, PrimC *lind* “water” might have developed into W *llyn* “lake” and Ir *lind*. OIr *caillech*, which developed into ModIr *coileach* (water supply) and W *ceiliog*. Therefore, Lincoln may mean “water dispenser” or “source of Lind”.
- London. *Itinerarium Antonini* (Tacito) as *Londinium*. Formed by two words: on the one hand, the Celtic word *lon*, which in OIr and Scot. means “bog” or “muddy area”; on the other hand, the Celtic word *dún* in ModIr means “fortress, city”. *Town*, on its behalves, comes from OIr *duine*, which evolved into W *din* and *dyn*.
- Cambridge. This word also developed from two roots. IE root *kamb-* is present in OIr as *camb* (bend, twisted), in Cornish and W as *cam*, and in Breton as *Kamm*. The Cel suffix *granda* is present in OIr with the meaning of “ugly”, and in W as *graen*. Also, OFris *brigge* developed into AS *bryag*, and today's “bridge”. Cambridge's meaning is “curved or ugly bridge”.
- Cornwall. It is highly possible that there was a Brittonic village named *Cornovii*. IE rot *kered-* developed into Lat *cornu*, and OIr *corn*, which in ModIr and W exists as *corn-* and means the same as Eng. IE root *weik-* developed into Lat *volcae*, which in OW *guichir* “savage”, then developed into ModW *gwith* or *gwyth* “madness, anger”.

OE as *wealh* “foreigner, savage; Welsh man”. Cornwall then may mean “tribe of savage men with corns”.

- Silbury Hill *Sil* is a Goidelic word which means “drop of water, rain”. This word might have a Hispanic origin as we find the river *Sil* in Galicia. AS *burg* “castle, fortress, refuge” had a dative form, *byrig*, which developed into *-bury* and Ir *brig* (pile). Silbury Hill is a historical monument, similar to a circular pile; so it might mean “Sil pile”.
- Manchester. Lat *castra* developed into OE prefix *-ceaster*. IE root *ma-* drawn up in Ir and Scot as *mam* “circled hill, wasteland”, whereas in W means “place”. Its origins might also be primitive Brittonic *mamucion*.
- Canterbury IE root *kantho-* developed into different forms: W *cant* “ring, circle”, OIr *cétad* “circular”, OBrit *coucant* “full place” and Gaulish *cantos* “edge, angular”. The second part is the suffix *bury* which has already been explained.
- Dover. Its name was *dour*, which is probably related to water, and is present in W as *dwr* or *dwr*, and in Ir as *wisge* and *burn*.
- Derwent. It was an old and small Brittonic village, known as Derventio. IE root *deru-* is present in Gaul *dervus* “oak forest” and Celt *derva* “oak”. It developed into OW *dar* and ModW *derwent* (singular) and *derw* (plural). It is also present in OIr *dair* and *daur*, which developed into Scot and Ir *darach*.
- Cumberland. IE word *kum-b* developed into Roman-Gaulish as *cumba* “valley” and is present today with the same meaning in W as *cwn*. In the case of *-land*, it is of OFris origin, which developed into AS with the same form.
- Malvern Hill. *Domesday Book* as *Malferna*. It is basically a Welsh word, *Mole-fryn-moel*, which means “naked”. Meanwhile, *fryn* means “hill”.
- Avon. The IE root *ap-* “water” developed in most of Celtic languages. It is found first on Skt as *ambhar*. We also have Gaul *abona*, PrimGoid *aban* which developed into Ir *abham* and Scot *abhain*. It is also present on W *afon* “river”. We can find it mentioned in *Registrum Malmesburiense* as *Abon*, and in *Cartularium Saxonicum* as *Afon*.
- Dee. Goid *dia* developed into OW a *duiu*, which is nowadays *dyfrllyd* “water”. Meanwhile, we have a ModIr counterpart *de* “air flow”. We also have the genitive form *dia* “God” in Ir and Scot. In *Welsh Genealogies*, it is mentioned as *DubrDui* “divine water”. It is also mentioned in *Domesday Book* as *De*.

- Ouse. On the one hand, Skt and Lat *udan* means “wave”, whereas Goid *uisce/usce* developed into ModIr *uisge* and Scot *uisg*, meaning “water”.
- Thames. In Skt we find the word *tamasa* “darkness”; at the same time, we have in OIr the word *tám*, which developed into Ir and Scot as *tamh* “tranquil, dead”. *Tamesis* (Bede and Caesar). It might mean “dark river” or “river of death”.
- Trent. ModIr *trean* “strong, fast”, preffix *tri-* and *tre-*, which in ModW is *trwy* and mean “through, across”. *History of the English People* as *Treenta*, whereas in *Domesday Book*, it is mentioned as *Trente*. Its possible meaning is “fast or fast-flowing river”.
- Dorking. The IE root *deres-* might develop into OIr *dorche* (darkness), which later developed into ModIr *dorcha* and Scot *dorch*. It is mentioned as *Dorchinges* in *Domesday Book*.
- Dove. The IE root *dheue-* “shinny, dazzling” developed into OIr *du(a)e* “wall” and *de* “God”. We also have the case of *dubra* with the same meaning as W *du* “darkness”. We can see it in *Cartularium Saxonicum* as *Dufan*.
- Wear. It is possible that one common word developed into ModIr *warán* “fresh manantial”, Scot *war* “waterfall”, Arm *waran* “fresh water” and Welsh *wear*, which has more or less the same meaning and is somehow related to *gwyar* “blood”, which on its own has a dubious origin. It is mentioned by Bede as *Wirusand Wire*, and as *Werra* in *History of Saint Cuthbert*.
- Bann. IE root *bha-* “to shine” developed into Sans *bhanü* “light” and OIr *ban* “white”. It might also come from Eng *band*, and it means “white, shinny river” in Ir.

Irish lexical borrowings on English

In the case of Ireland, its dialects related to English can be well described, as well as the number of Irish elements in English is quite significant. For instance, we have around 60 Irish lexical items out of 260 in Anglo-Irish²⁵. We can find in its morphology and semantics of words a notable number of examples of Celtic influence. Regarding morphology, Irish English builds diminutives with the suffix *-in* (*-een* in English), and can be found in the below examples:

²⁵ Ó Muirithe 1990:149-162, quoted in P. Stalmaszczyk

- Baween “a loose with jacket of home-made ndyed flannel” (<Ir. *Báinín* “flannel; white jacket” < *bán* “white”).
- Boreen “small road, narrow lane, byroad” (< Ir. *Bóthairín* “a lane”, diminutive of *bóthar* “road”).
- Colleen “a girl” (< Ir. *Cailín* diminutive of *caille* “girl, wench; countrywoman”).
- Shebeen “a place where alcoholic drinks are sold illegally” (Ir. *Sibín* “illicit whiskey” < *séibe* “liquid measure, mug”); cf. Also derived forms: *shebeening*, *shebeener*.
- Spalpeen “rascal, villain; youngster” (Ir. *Spailpín* “seasonal hired labourer; rude person, scamp”).
- Drisheen Ir *drisín* “animal's intestines”.
- Dudeen Irish *dúidín*, diminutive of *dúd* 'pipe'.
- Shoneen Ir; *Seoinín*, diminutive of Seon “John” an Irishman who imitates English ways.

That diminutive process is also used with names: *Pegeen*, *Tomeen*, *Mikeen*. Furthermore, it is curious that some of the words which underwent that process originally came from English:

E *pink* < Ir. *Pincín* < E *pinkeen*

E *pot* < Ir. *Poitín* < E *poteen*, *pottheen* “illegally produced whiskey”

With respect to semantics, we find the interesting process of “English words that replaced Irish terms often inherit their scope of meaning”. As a result, we may find examples of words originally English, but with an Irish meaning. For instance, in the use Irish carries with colour adjectives (*dearg* “red”), where they carry a metaphorical sense,

red edge “very keen edge” (cf. Ir. *Faobhar dearg*)

red war “bloody conflict” (cf. Ir. *Cogadh dearg*)

red rotten “completely decayed” (cf. Ir. *Dearg lofa*)

Irish *dubh* “black” has an intensifying connotation, as can be seen in English *black corruption*, *black hole* or *black starvation*. The following sentences reflect those senses clearly:

There was a red war “there was a great trouble.”

An old black wind blew in over the bog “a harsh, bitter wind blew over the bog.”²⁶

²⁶ Examples found in Henry 1957:126, mentioned by P. Stalmaszczyk

Another semantic process takes place when two or more words are needed for the correspondent denotations of an Irish word. This can be seen in the following examples: Irish *garrái* “garden; small” is used in Hiberno-English only with its first meaning; also, Irish *sliabh* “mountain; moor” is used by Irish English speakers as “mountain” but with the sense of “moor”; finally, Irish *baile* “home; place, spot” is related to English *place*, and then resulting in Hiberno-English as *house, home, homestead*. This last example is found in Standard English as well, as in the case of *in my place*, meaning “at my home”.

Even though the presence of Irish words in English should be higher than expected, actually we do not find many, as most of them were originally Celtic and were borrowed in later periods. Nowadays, some words might still be borrowed, but the status of English is much greater than Irish, so it tends to occur the other way around. The following list exemplifies some examples with its definition and origin:

- Acushla Ir *a chuisle (moi chroi)* 'O pulse (of my heart)!'.
- Barmbrack Ir *bairin breac* 'speckled cake'.
- Bog 1500, from Irish *bogach* "bog".
- Bonny-clabber Ir *bainne clabair*, denoting thick milk for churning.
- Bother Anglo-Irish origin, related to Ir *bodhaire* 'noise', *bodhram* 'deafen, annoy'.
- Boycott from Irish Land League ostracism of Capt. Charles C. Boycott (1832-1897), land agent of Lough-Mask in County Mayo, who refused to lower rents for his tenant farmers. Quickly adopted by newspapers in languages as far afield as Japanese (boikotto). The family name is from a place in England.
- Brat "beggar's child". OIr *bratt* "cloak, cloth" OE *bratt* "cloak," then northern England dialect word for "makeshift or ragged garment;" The modern meaning is perhaps from notion of "child's apron."
- Brogue Oir *broce* "shoe", or *barrog* “a hold”; "rough, stout shoe" used by Highlanders (the 1580s) "speech of those who call a shoe a brogue."
- Camogie Irish *caméog*. An Irish game resembling hurling, played by women or girls.
- Carrageen Irish *carragín*. An edible red shoreline seaweed with flattened branching fronds found in both Eurasia and North America and used to produce carrageenan.
- caubeen Ir *cáibín* 'little cape, old hat'; Irish beret.
- Clabber Irish and Gaelic *clabar* "mud". Short for bonnyclabber.
- Clan OIr *cland* offspring, ScotG *clann*; “clan”.

- Clarsach Irish *cláirseach* Scots Gaelic *clàrsach*. A small harp with wire strings, used in the folk and early music of Scotland and Ireland.
- Colcannon Ir *cál ceannann*, equivalent to *cál* “cabbage”, *ceann* “head” + *-ann*, weak variant of *fionn* white.
- Corrie ScotG and Ir *coire* 'cauldron, hollow'.
- Craic Irish pronunciation of English *crack*.
- Cross Lat *crux*, OIr *crois*, OE *crois*; replaced OE *rood*.
- Currach from Ir and ScotG *curach* 'small boat'. “Coracle”.
- Dulse: Ir and ScotG *duileasg*.
- Drumlin Ir *druim* "back, ridge." diminutive of *drum*.
- Esker Ir *eiscir* "ridge of gravel", now “deposit left by a glacial stream”.
- Fenian OIr *feinne* (pl. of Fiann, Irish warriors) plus Oir *Fene* (ancient inhabitants of Ireland).
- Fleadh Ir *fleadh ceoil* 'music festival'.
- Gallowglass. Ir *gallóglach*, from *gall* 'foreigner' and *óglach* 'youth, servant, warrior'.
- Glen ScotG and Ir *gleann* (earlier *glenn*), “narrow valley”.
- Gob Ir *gob* “mouth” related to English noun *gob*.
- Hooligan, probably from a 19th-century fictional family surname (Houlihan) from a well-known play. Russian started to use it as “scofflaws, political dissenters” (*khuligan*), meaning later world-widely used from 20thc.
- Keen Oir *coinim* “I wail”, Irish *caoinim* “I weep, wail, lament”.
- Kern OIr *ceithern* 'band of foot soldiers', Ir *ceithearn*; “peasant, rustic”.
- Leprechaun Oir *luchorpan* “a very small body”, Ir *lupracan*.
- Lough Irish and Gaelic *loch* "a lake, pool".
- Merrow EIr *murdúchann* “siren” (*muir* “sea” + *dúchann* “song, melody”). “Mermaid”.
- Moiley Irish *maolai* “hornless cow” (*maol* + *-ey*).
- Pollan Irish *pollán*, perhaps based on *poll* 'pool, lake’.
- Pookawn Irish *púcán*. “small fishing boat”.
- Punt Irish word for “pound”.
- Puss Ir *pus* 'lip, mouth; face'.
- Rapparee Ir *rapaire* 'short pike'.
- Fawney/phoney: Ir *fainne* “ring”; "finger-ring".

- Sidhe Ir *aos sidhe* 'people of the fairy mound'.
- Shillelagh earlier, "oak wood used to make cudgels" (the 1670s), from Shillelagh, town, and barony, famous for its oaks, in County Wicklow, Ireland. "cudgel".
- Slew Ir *sluagh* "host, crowd, multitude"; "large number".
- Slob Ir *slab* 'mud'.
- Tanist Ir and ScotG *tánaiste*, second in excellence'.
- Trousers Ir *triús* and ScotG *triubhas*.
- Turlough. Ir *tur* "dry" + *lough* "lake".
- Uilean OIr *uilenn*, Ir *uilleann* "elbow".

English borrowings in Irish

English has been influencing Irish during its whole history, but the loanwords are more noticeable from the 17th century. Due to the differences between both languages, mostly in phonology and morphology, influence is not so strong and easily found. Code-switching is a way by which Irish speakers use some lexical terms which they might not remember in Irish; therefore, they decide to use the English counterpart. They are usually related to technical terms, like those about medicine. This is a colloquial way of borrowing, also sometimes employed in Spanish (anglicisms).

Some of those English words might be affixed by an Irish suffix or prefix. For instance, *an-* ("more", augmentative connotation), can be added to *funny* (*an-funny* "very funny"), or can be found in sentences like *Bhí an-night againn san ostán* 'We had a great night in the hotel'. The same happens with suffixes, such as the adjective suffix *-(e)áilte*, that some Irish speakers might use as in *stubbornáilte* 'stubborn'.

As far as syntax is concerned, Irish is actually quite influenced by English; for instance, phrasal verbs which work as English idioms are usual in Irish, which are translated literally sometimes: *Caithfidh tú d'intinn a dhéanamh suas*. 'You have to make your mind up.' [must you your mind COMP make up]. Sometimes, calquing is also used.

Regarding semantics, secondary meanings of English words might be utilised for different verb forms of Irish. The Irish verb *breathnaigh* (*ar rud*) counterpart in English is *to look* (at something); however, the English meaning of *look* "have a certain appearance" is represented in Irish by intransitivising the verb as in the following example: *Tá an teach nua ag breathnú go maith anois* 'The new house is looking nice now.'

Concerning words, new borrowings tend to be easily adapted than the older ones. As far as older borrowings are concerned, they are classified according to two paradigms: the first one is composed of words beginning with /v,h,w,j/ which are not a native feature of Irish non-mutated words. The assimilation of loanwords having those phonemes at their beginning was to change them, resulting in legitimate word-initial segments. We can perceive these changes in the following examples, stated by Magdalena Chudak:

English	Irish	English	Irish
Vice	Vís [b'i:s]	Hogshead	Oigiséad [og'əs'e:d]
Vinegar	Finéagar [fi:n'e:gər]	Hurricane	Airicín [ar'ək'i:n']
Vitamin	Beathaimín [b'ahami:n]	Wall	Balla/falla [b/falə]
Haddock	Cadóóg [kad:og]	Waist	Básta [ba:stə]
Halibut	Failbó [fal'əbo:]	Yeast	Giosta [g'istə]
Hinge	Inse [in's'ə]	Yeoman	Gíománach [g'ima:nəx]

From this list of examples we can extract the idea that initial [w] and [y] were replaced by [b] and [f], as well as [h] is realized by [k], [f], or it is deleted, and [j] turns into [g]. The next examples are English words which first consonants are original portions of Irish:

English	Irish	English	Irish
Back	Meaic [m'ak]	Bargain	Margadh [marəgə]
Bank	Mangcán [maŋka:n]	Bible	Miobla [m'iblə]
Butt	Muta [motə]	Blanket	Plaincéad [plaŋ'k'ed]
Circuit	Torcaid [t'irkəd]	Clamp	Glamba [glampə]
Dad	Gaid [gad']	Felt	Peilt [p'el't']
Gout	Dúta [du:tə]	Prove	Fromh [frov]

The first consonants of above examples that is, [b], [d], [f], [g], [k] and [p] have been modified, as well as they also appear like that in native Irish words.

On the other hand, concerning new borrowings, there is a curious situation. Some persons prefer to use Irish new coined words which are counterparts of some English forms. Ó Curnáin mentions (quoted in Magdalena Chudak 2007:1996) that “such stylistic avoidance of English borrowings, and hence the adoption of Modern

Irish neologism and usage, is now common (e.g. on radio and television)". Moreover, new words tend to enter the language as Anglicisms, so they are no longer assimilated as in other times. The examples bellow will briefly explain this situation, as well as the lack of mutation that takes place:

English loanword	Irish pronunciation	English loanword	Irish pronunciation
Heap	[he:p']	Happy	[hæ:p'i]
Hedge	[heʃ]	Van	[v'æn]
View	[v'u:]	Warning	[wa:rniŋ]
Water-proof	[wa:tər pru:f]	Willing	[wil'iŋ]
Wise	[wais]	Worth	[wort]
Wrong	[ra:ŋg]	Yarn	[ja:rən]

As we can clearly see, these words have not suffered much influence; then they are almost pronounced alike in English and Irish; there is any change in first consonants anymore.

The mutation did not only take place with old borrowings in phonology but also in morphology. Nowadays they are only changed by older speakers, as we can see in the following list of mutated borrowings:

family t'family héin 'your own family'

push aon phush mhór 'one big push'

only an t-only duine 'the only person'

plan an phlan 'the plan'

foul-play an fhoul-play 'the foul-play'

paint an phaint 'the paint'

machine an mhachine 'the machine'

plane an phlane 'the plane'

paint pink paint phink 'pink paint'

bicycle mo bhicycle 'my bicycle'

farm a fharm 'his farm'

However, not every borrowing undergoes this process.

"In the case of words beginning with /v, h, w, j/, there is no mutation because no mutation outputs are available in the Irish mutation system. But, for other initial segments, it appears that

mutation does not apply simply because the word is a loanword.”
(Chudak, 2010:67)

Conclusion

As a conclusion, thanks to this study we can clearly perceive how important Celtic languages and culture are to Europe and especially England history, and how much information about their origins and history is left and about to be discovered. There are plenty of studies being carried out, something that shows us the interest upon these languages, and the attempt to keep them alive.

These studies could go beyond and be available to everyone, so we know the richness of this culture and discover why it is related to England. Usually, when people think about Celts, the image our mind creates its set mainly in England; people seldom would think about Celts living in Spain, or being a powerful civilisation in Europe before the Roman Empire was expanded.

The presence of Celtic culture and language has not influenced as much as we may think English culture, and even more, English language. That might happen probably due to the strength and pressure of the latter upon the rest. Nonetheless, they are still an important role of the culture in the British Isles nowadays.

Finally, the case of Ireland has been one of the most interesting situations in Europe and England history. Nowadays, when someone walks the streets of Dublin, they feel an atmosphere of people glad about their country, culture, and language; they might be nationalistic or patriotic but multicultural at the same time. Despite how much Ireland has suffered during its history, and how many times it was about to collapse, it is one of the strongest nations today. They clearly fight for their customs, traditions and of course, language, without letting out progressing and developing along with the rest of the world.

Still these conclusions, there are a bunch of questions that every linguist might have wondered once: what about the people who lived there before Celts arrived? Where did they come from? What language did they use? How did that language look like? Who were they? Is it possible that Celts arrived in Ireland earlier than we think?

Due to the lack of information and proves, it is yet difficult to answer them; but as long as we study and discover them, some new facts might appear.

Leyend

AS: Anglo-Saxon

Cel: Celtic

Eng: English

Gaul: Gaulish

Gk: Greek

IE: Indo-European

Ir: Irish Gaelic

Lat: Latin

ModIr: Modern Irish

ModW: Modern Welsh

OBrit: Old Bryttonic

OE: Old English

OFris: Old Frisian

OW: Old Welsh

PrimC: Primitive Celt

PrimGoid: Primitive Goidelic

Scot: Scottish

Skt: Sanskrit

W: Welsh

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