Phoenix from the ashes: reconstructed Cornish in relation to Einar Haugen's four-step model of language standardisation

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1 Introduction

When considering Haugen's model of language standardisation (Table 1), it is important to emphasise its flexibility and adaptability. It was never intended as an immovable artefact, much less a prescriptive route to standardisation. In this article we consider a case study of standardisation that does demonstrate the four steps of Haugen's model, but not in the order they were originally presented. This of course would be fine by Haugen, who variously stressed his model's malleability, for example that the "four steps ... may be simultaneous and even cyclical" (Haugen 1987: 59). Cornwall, administratively a county and a duchy in the extreme southwest of England, is the ancestral home of a language almost lost to history. The Cornish language revival is fascinating and distinctive for many reasons; its ordering of Haugen's four steps is just one of them.

Steps (1) and (3), Haugen (1987: 59) notes, "are the responsibility of society, while (2) and (4) are accomplished by linguists and writers". This raises the first contrast to Cornish, which has undergone "decline, death and resurrection" (Shield 1984: 329): slowly dying over the 16th–19th centuries, and being manually reconstructed from its scant written remains. The revival is now at a historically high point, but in Haugen's terms with relatively little input from 'society' in any broad sense – all four steps are mostly undertaken by a fairly small number of volunteer activists, and some civil servants. As we discuss, this is one of the key pressures faced by the contemporary revival.

Table 1: Haugen's four-step model of language standardisation (1987: 59)

	Norm	Function
Society	(1) Selection	(3) Implementation
Language	(2) Codification	(4) Elaboration

A second contrast comes from Haugen's implicit ordering of 'selection' before 'codification'. "Selection … is called for only when someone has identified … a *language problem*. … This can also be called an *allocation of norms*." (Haugen 1987: 59, orig. emphasis). In Cornwall, codification instead preceded selection. In the centuries following the loss of Cornish as a vernacular, different enthusiasts collected its few written remains and codified these into different orthographies, which in time led to debate over selecting one for official usage. The ordering of our sections reflects this chronology.

As this is an invited article applying Haugen's model, in order to give a full picture we cite extensively from other research alongside our own findings. Any factual details without a citation come from our data, which involved around fifty semi-structured interviews (conducted 2005–2014) with families using Cornish intergenerationally and language activists, as well as documentary research into newsletters, policy documents, circulars, and other correspondence (for further methodological details see Sayers 2012; Renkó-Michelsén 2013, in prep.). Responsibility for the accuracy of these details is our own.

2 Codification (or, Death and reconstruction)

Within codification, Haugen (1987: 60) includes *graphisation*: assigning characters to sounds. This presupposes an oral language, but all that remained of Cornish was writing. Codification for Cornish was still relatable to Haugen's meaning though: determining a relationship between the written record and whatever the spoken vernacular might have sounded like. We outline that long and diffuse process now, starting with the gradual death of Cornish.

Dorothy 'Dolly' Pentreath, who died 26th December 1777 (Jago 1882: 332), "has the reputation of being the last speaker of ancient Cornish" (Treenoodle 1846: 4). In 1768, an antiquarian Daines Barrington visited her on a bet that there were no Cornish speakers left. He wrote that she "spoke in an angry tone for two or three minutes, and in a language which sounded very like Welsh" (cited in Jago 1882: 9). He also noted that English was her second language. Other chroniclers documented Pentreath (ibid.: 330–341), but "as there is no account from any person well skilled in the subject [Cornish] … it may have been only a very broad provincial dialect, intermixed with much of the ancient language" (Treenoodle 1846: 4; cf. Ellis 1974: 120). Even when Cornish speakers had become a known rarity, "not one linguist felt

the compelling need to track down these few remaining speakers and jot down their knowledge" (ibid.: 122). All that remains now is prose and verse, and not a great deal of that (discussed below).

Some speakers outlived Pentreath (Jago 1882: 12–13), but death knells were already sounding for Cornish as early as the 16th century (Treenoodle 1846: 1–4; Jenner 1904: 11–23), and it "finally disappeared in the earlier half of the nineteenth century" (Jenner 1904: 22; cf. Jago 1882: 13). It lingered for decades as sporadic borrowings, calques, numerals, and prayers (Jago 1882), a handful of these isolated echoes surviving into the 20th century (Ellis 1974: 125–146; Shield 1984: 331), but from the 19th century Cornish was only a vestigial colouring of English dialects, comparable to Old Norse in contemporaneous East Yorkshire dialects (Morris 1892: 126–150).

Regarding causes for decline, most authors highlight clerical imposition of English since the 16th century, and the demographic destruction wrought by various wars and uprisings (e.g., Ellis 1974: 52–69). A neglected factor (less exciting but probably more important) is long-term 16th-19th century migration from the largely non-Cornish-speaking east of Cornwall to the language's last footholds in the west – fuelled mainly by a mining boom. As one geographical account puts it, the terminal decline of Cornish in the early 18th century "is almost certainly to be attributed to the influx … not only from East Cornwall … but also from beyond" (Pounds 1943: 45).
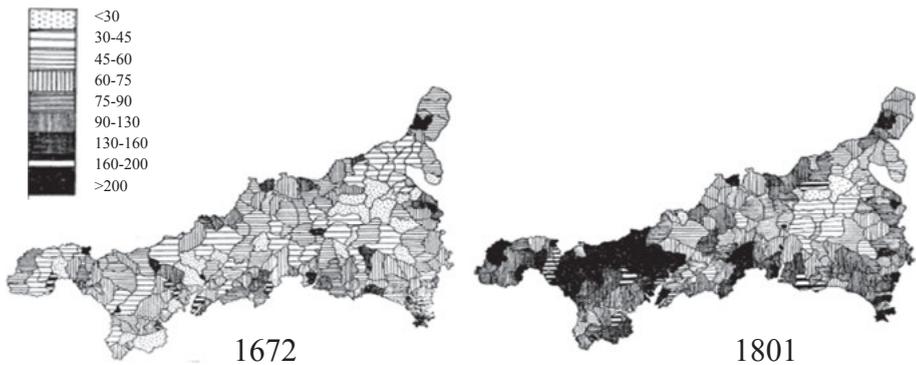
Fig 1: Population per mi^2 in Cornwall 1672 and 1801 (Pounds 1943: 38–39)

Among the earliest known codification efforts is that of a Welshman, Edward Lhuyd (1707), assisted by local Cornish antiquarians. His *Archaeologia Britannica* includes a 33-page "Cornish grammar" based on the few surviving manuscripts. He emphasises this shortage, there being "nothing printed in the Cornish Language, and not above three or four Books … extant in writing" (Lhuyd 1707: 225). He also contrasts "modern Cornish" (ibid.: 231) – i.e. of his time – with older written forms. Today

three historical periods of Cornish are accepted, based on grammatical and lexical divergences among the manuscripts: Old Cornish (11th century); Middle Cornish (ca. 15th–16th century); and Late Cornish (from 1542 "to the end", i.e. 1800s: Jenner 1904: 49; cf. Mills 1999a: 47).

Lhuyd planned to elaborate his work, but died in 1709. Tragically for the codification effort, many of his notes were mismanaged and eventually lost (Pryce 1790: iv). But efforts continued. Notable figures include Cornishman Nicholas Boson. He learnt Cornish as an adult in the mid-17th century through dealings with fishermen, and taught his son John, partly using prose he composed himself (Ellis 1974: 85). An Englishman, Thomas Tonkin, and two Cornishmen, William Pryce and William Gwavas, also learned Cornish as adults, but more from written remains, and partly with the help of John Boson (ibid.: 96). Tonkin, Pryce and Gwavas collaborated to establish a more systematic relationship between sound and writing in Cornish, as well as grammar (Pryce 1790).* Pryce (1790: iv) describes Lhuyd's death as "the greateſt loſs" to the effort: "In his hands, ... not only the recovery of the dialect [sic] would have been effected, but ... adorned with every elegancy and improvement" (ibid.). At this time, the corpus of known manuscripts was very slim (Pryce 1790: iii):

– the "Cottonian Vocabulary" (discovered in the Cotton Library) comprising seven pages of Cornish nouns (ca.1000AD), this being the entire record of Old Cornish;
– three religious dramas translated into Cornish, "1. De Origine Mundi; 2. Of the Paſſion of our Lord; 3. Of the Reſurrection" (ca.15th century);
– a poem, "Of the creation of the world and the deluge, by William Jordan, of Hellaſton" (1611);
– another poem, "Mount Calvary, On the paſſion and reſurrection of our Lord and Saviour" (15th century).

Gwavas and other adult learners used the Cornish they learned to maintain "a correſpondence in their native tongue ... by collecting ... mottoes, proverbs, and idioms" (Pryce 1790: v). They also translated some scripture into Cornish, apparently modelled on Cornish as spoken in their day, which Jenner (1904: 19) judges "of great value in determining the sound of the latest Cornish". Gwavas gathered some further written correspondence from Cornish speakers (Ellis 1974: 97; Pryce 1790: v), and materials from antiquarians (Pryce 1790: v). He and his colleagues also tried to collect words from remaining semi-speakers, but mostly in vain: "the vulgar Corniſh now ſpoken ... is ſo confined to the extremeſt [west] corner of the county, and thoſe ancient perſons who ſtill pretend to jabber it, are even there ſo few; the ſpeech itſelf is ſo corrupted ... that I cannot but wonder at my patience" (ibid.: vi). From these

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* Williams (1865: preface) asserts that their joint work was "disingenuously published by Pryce as his own", but despite only Pryce's name on the cover, he is at least clear inside about the extent of collaboration.

materials they codified a grammar and vocabulary but did not venture to synthesise new words, due to their principal constraint: "I wiſh, indeed, it had been within the compaſs of my knowledge, to have rendered the Vocabulary perfect and complete; but the ſcanty and limited materials I had to conſult rendered every hope of that kind abortive" (ibid.).

Codification continued in the 19th century, perhaps most notably by Edwin Norris and Robert Williams (Jenner 1904: xiv). They claim insights superior to Pryce, even lambasting him as "entirely ignorant of the Cornish Language" (Williams 1865: preface; cf. Norris 1859: 2). Williams (1865: preface) credits Norris' *Sketch of Cornish Grammar* (1859) and his re-translation of the three religious dramas as "of much greater importance than ... all the other remains of the Cornish language taken together". Recalling our overarching focus, standardisation was a growing concern: "The orthography of the manuscripts is so irregular, that it is quite impracticable ... to follow it into all its varieties" (Norris 1859: 3). Instead, Norris follows whichever form "most commonly occurs" (ibid.). They also begin a trend – discussed later – of drawing influence from the two related surviving languages, Breton and Welsh (ibid.). Williams' work especially informed much 20th century codification (Mills 1999a: 45).

Crucially, codification up to this point was mostly about *preserving* Cornish, cataloguing it for study and enabling a very small clique to write and speak it together, not *reviving* its wider use. Even famed revivalist Henry Jenner, during his early work in the 1870s, was indifferent to revival, even dismissive (Ellis 1974: 147). Only with the late-19th century Celtic renaissance, and the 1901 founding of the *Cowethas Kelto Kernuack* (Celtic-Cornish Society) did a revival movement gain momentum (ibid.; Mills 1999a: 46). "[T]hanks to the propaganda efforts of Cowethas Kelto-Kernuak, a demand was growing for a suitable textbook by which to learn the language" (Ellis 1974: 152). For this, the Society approached Jenner (Jenner 1904: xiii), leading to his 1904 *Handbook of the Cornish Language*.

Jenner (1904: ix) favoured "the Cornish of the later period" as a basis. Aiming to regularise spelling and grammar, he drew on historical manuscripts and some Breton. He based his phonology on contemporary English dialects of West Cornwall (especially of the less educated) (Jenner 1904: x) – though less on Welsh, as "Breton of to-day is the nearest thing to Cornish that exists" (ibid.). He mostly relied on historically attested precedents, though these methods clearly entail some conjecture. In the late 20th century, figures such as Richard Gendall and Neil Kennedy further developed Late Cornish, similarly relying on contemporary dialects of English in Cornwall (Harasta 2013: 38). The Late Cornish movement today is less focused on "Romanticism ... and the institutionalization of the examination system. Instead, they tend to valorize the lives of 18th and 19th century Cornish peasants, miners and fisherfolk ... [and] focus ... upon ... the creation of horizontal Cornish/Kernewek communities" (ibid.). As we discuss later, this cultural difference from other revivalist groups has been significant.

Jenner (1904: 24) mentions fifteen manuscripts discovered since those listed by Pryce, mostly scraps scribbled incidentally in larger English documents (a sentence here, a translated prayer or list of names there) but also some larger religious plays and folk tales purposively translated into Cornish. P.B. Ellis (1974: 85, 172) mentions some other more recently discovered texts, but overall there are still only about half a dozen first-hand writings from Cornish speakers, and only Late Cornish, including:

– *Nebbaz Gerriau dro tho Carnoack* (A few words about Cornish), written by Nicholas Boson – although the letter appeared to have been composed in English first (Nance 1930);
– a letter from 1776, written bilingually by fisherman William Bodenor (also spelled Bodinar) (Jenner 1904: 21, 36) who learned Cornish as an adult from the last speakers in his village (George 2009: 491).

These letters, and a few similar (Jenner 1904: 52), are the only remaining first-hand writings by Cornish speakers (see also Mills 2002: 79–82). This paucity is part of a wider tragedy for reconstructionists. Like Lhuyd's squandered notes, so many potential leads into the history of the language were simply lost. This includes the apparently prolific writings of Cornish speaker Richard Angwyn (died ca. 1675), often mentioned by his contemporaries but from whom no known writings remain (Ellis 1974: 88). The reconstruction of Cornish could have been so much more confident, so much less equivocal and extrapolatory, if just some of these many losses had been averted.

At the time of Jenner's *Handbook* in 1904, Robert Morton Nance was a student of Cornish. He later collaborated with Jenner, and in 1920 founded the Old Cornwall Society to replace the Celtic-Cornish Society (Ellis 1974: 158). As more local chapters of the Society opened, so evolved the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies, and with it a conversational clique (ibid.). Nance undertook his own reconstruction of Cornish, influenced more by Williams than Lhuyd (in contrast to Jenner), favouring Middle Cornish (ibid.: 195), and more freely adapting Breton and Welsh words (Shield 1984: 335) alongside contemporary dialectal terms he deemed Celtic (Mills 1999a: 49). In 1929, Nance published a handbook of what he called Unified Cornish, seeking to iron out "discrepancies in spelling" (Ellis 1974: 160). In 1934, he and co-author A.S.D. Smith published a bilingual *English-Cornish Dictionary*, aiming to expand the vocabulary. In 1938, Nance published an expanded dictionary, with further editions in 1952 and 1955. Unified Cornish came to dominate the revival which by the 1930s was growing, mostly students and young middle class people (Ellis 1974: 166), and at long last including some women (ibid.: 167–168). By 1981, fluent speakers numbered around fifty (Shield 1984: 336).

Unified Cornish was never rigidly standardised, while Late Cornish, "a more amorphous phenomenon" (Harasta 2013: 116), allowed as much variation as the corpus attested. This fidelity to the intricacies of the corpus meant a steep hill for

learners of the language; and concerns grew that this might make it a rather exclusive pursuit (Harasta 2013: 111–112). A later codification effort sought to address that: Ken George's *Kernewek Kemmyn* (Common Cornish). Like Nance, George favoured Middle Cornish, but he made radical orthographical changes, departing from purely attested forms and purposively changing the spelling system to align with pronunciation. Published in 1985, Kemmyn's learnability helped it surpass Unified, boosting the revival to a few hundred by 2007 (PFECMR 2007: 6). But to supporters of Unified and Late Cornish, George's "invented spelling" (Harasta 2013: 260; cf. Mills 1999b) was a bridge too far, over-sacrificing authenticity. There was also a palpable culture clash: his was the first codification to be completed on a computer. Perhaps an aggravating factor was that George's training at that time was in oceanography (he has more recently been awarded a *Doctorat du Troisième Cycle* in Celtic Linguistics – Mills, pers. comm.). Unified and Late supporters combined in opposition to Kemmyn, creating a compromise version 'Kernowak Standard', published in 2006 (ibid.: 248, 313). By this point then, there were at least four versions: Unified; Kernowak Standard; Kemmyn; and Late Cornish.

In 2008, by which time central government had become involved (see below), a fifth version was finalised, this time led by commissioned foreign linguists. Called the Standard Written Form (SWF, usually pronounced 'swoof'), it was designed as a linguistic compromise between all versions, a "relatively small adaptation" for all sides (CLC 2007: 8; cf. Bruch/Bock 2008, 2010) – with a view to mutual compromise (discussed later). Haugen (1987: 60) states that codification typically results in "a prescriptive grammar, orthography, and dictionary". For Cornish, by 2008 there were at least five of these. And despite its name, SWF permits 'variant' grammatical forms and spellings more akin to each pre-existing version. This diplomatic accommodation has had unintended consequences, which we explore later. To conclude on codification, we can reflect on some key pressure points in the historical corpus of written Cornish:

1. *Size*. It is very small. George/Broderick (2009: 754) estimate the combined word count of all manuscripts to be "about 176,000 words". This is a punishingly scant basis to reconstruct an entire language, and it illustrates the scope for debate over authenticity.

2. *Paucity of first-hand writing*. The few letters noted above like Boson's and Bodenor's are for Jenner (1904: 51–52) "the really valuable specimens" that, "written by men who spoke Cornish fluently … probably represent what people really spoke in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries". But as adult learners their Cornish may have been quite unusual; we simply cannot know as their writings are so rare.

3. *Reliance on second-hand knowledge*. Lhuyd, Pryce and their contemporaries favoured the historical record. But even where they noted contemporary usage, they ignored peasant speakers in favour of educated locals with passive proficiency (Ellis 1974: 107–108).

4. *Genre and register*. "As the whole of the extant literature of Middle Cornish is in verse, it gives us little help as regards the colloquial Cornish" (Jenner 1904: 49). This literature is also constrained to highly stylised genres of religious tracts and dramas. In Late Cornish, the few letters of Boson et al. were prose, not transcribed speech. Even the mottoes etc. noted by Gwavas, as rehearsed sayings, would have been distinctly stylised. Since speech and writing have major structural differences (e.g. Biber/Conrad 2009: 85), vernacular Cornish remains an enigma.

5. *Phonology*. Drawing influence from Cornish dialects of English was debatable due to the in-migrations noted earlier, which disrupted dialects and diluted prior Cornish influence. As the late 19th century dialectologist A.J. Ellis (1889: 171) writes of Cornwall: "The mode of speech is said to vary ... not more than ten or twelve miles apart .... The miners, who abound, are a mixed race. ... The ... spelling which the dialect-writers of west Cornish have adopted is also rather picturesque than phonetic". Indeed phonological features incorporated into some reconstructions of Cornish appear traceable to Middle English, not Cornish (Shield 1984: 332; Ellis 1974: 194).

6. *Methodological limitations*. P.B. Ellis (1974: 193–195) outlines various academic criticisms of almost all reconstructions, mostly a lack of accountability and linguistic training. He notes that beyond Cornwall "modern Celticists ... unite in ignoring any of Nance's or Smith's work and almost all of Jenner. When they are obliged to quote Cornish words they do so from Williams's [1865] *Lexicon*" (ibid.: 194). Subsequent criticism of Kemmyn was reviewed above, and while SWF was created by trained linguists, this was a compromise between extant versions, not a fresh attempt.

In highlighting these pressure points, it is not our contention that reconstructed Cornish is a fabrication. But it is essential to be clear that the phoenix of reconstructed Cornish, which rose through codification, has an inescapably constrained and circuitous relationship to the ashes of the historically spoken vernacular, which ultimately is lost forever. Through its complex history of codification, Cornish today is a new minority language just as much as an old one.

3 Selection

During the 1980s–1990s, supporters of the different versions of Cornish formed, in Haugen's terms, 'institutions'. The largest, *Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek* (Cornish Language Fellowship), supported Kemmyn. In July 1987, the Cornish Language Board – discussed more in the next section – officially adopted Kemmyn (George/ Broderick 2009: 756), a controversial event (Harasta 2013: 115). In reaction, "users of Unified and Late retrenched and established parallel bodies" (ibid.: 116): respective-

ly *Agan Tavas* (Our Language) – with a smaller but determined profile – and *Cussel an Tavaz Kernuak* (Cornish Language Council) – fluctuating in activity then falling mostly dormant 2000–2011 (ibid.: 126, 232). Dispute between these op-posing factions became sharply vitriolic, with verbal attacks, anonymous telephone abuse, even death threats (ibid.: 23–24). As Dorian wrote contemporaneously in 1994: "The rivalry is acute and unfriendly, with each faction competing for … learners" (Dorian 1994: 488). She espoused multilateral compromise (ibid.: 489), foreshadowing what would eventually come to pass.

An early notable compromise was the aforementioned Late-Unified 'Kernowak Standard'. This in turn fed into development of SWF, as the seeds of multilateral cooperation were later sewn. Specifically, in 2001 the UK Government recognised Cornish under the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (CoE 1992), delegating the matter to its regional arm Government Office South West, which began a formal consultation process on how to promote the language (a key aspect of which was standardisation). The resulting *Strategy for the Cornish Language* included a cautiously worded aim for "a single written form of Cornish for use in official documentation and formal education" (CCC 2004: 18) – neither presuming what that form would be, nor discouraging continued use of other versions in different contexts.

The *Strategy* led to a more substantial combined local, national and European funding package of £600,000 for the period 2006–2009, which enabled among other things:

– The first substantial role for 'government' – in Haugen's terms – in the form of the *Cornish Language Partnership* or 'MAGA', a public-voluntary sector partnership with Cornwall Council as the legally accountable lead. The other partners were: the ceremonial body Gorseth Kernow, the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies, Exeter University's Institute of Cornish Studies, the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Economic Forum, Cornwall Learning and Skills Council, Cornwall Association of Local Councils, and the aforementioned language groups. Constitutionally, MAGA had a Steering Group of representatives from each partner, and a Management Group elected by the Steering Group for everyday oversight (MAGA 2009) – though in 2012 the Management Group changed to a Management Board, not selected from the Steering Group but appointed against a relevant skill-set. The design of MAGA matched the criteria of a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), *aka* Quasi-Autonomous Non-Governmental Organisation (QuANGO) (Harasta 2013: 269), namely a body not under direct control of a government minister but conducting government business and sponsored by a government department (in this case the Department for Communities & Local Government).

– The appointment in 2007 of a Cornish Language Commission, comprising international linguists and language policy consultants, which spent 2007 consulting widely and assessing options for standardisation.

–   Eventual agreement in late 2007 over a single standard form of Cornish.

There was no explicit governmental command to standardise, but it became clear that the *Strategy* could not proceed otherwise. By October 2007, when the Commission reported its recommendations to a public meeting of around 100 attendees (representing all sides), the mood was momentous, with longer term funding hanging in the balance. In SWF lay the promise of a compromise between all versions, and a single standard. What followed the meeting was a remarkably swift agreement – or at least, lack of ruinous disagreement – on officialisation of SWF (Sayers 2012: 112; cf. Bock/Bruch 2008: iii, v). The Cornish language revival had finally found the best of all possible worlds.

All this appeared decisive for the selection process, at least *vis-à-vis* official usage. But what does 'official usage' mean when Cornish teachers are almost all volunteers working without extensive central guidance? An apparent unintended consequence of SWF accommodating variant forms (noted earlier), coupled with the former dominance of Kemmyn, has been a gradual, diffuse, largely unplanned drift towards an orthography that looks more like Kemmyn (Harasta 2013: 272–277). This has not been a Kemmyn conspiracy as such, more just inertia created by the relative availability of Kemmyn resources, and uncertainty about SWF. The longer term effects of all this are unknown. We can conclude this section by noting that the SWF agreement enabled relatively sustainable support and funding, but with continued uncertainty over what revived Cornish is, or should be.

4 Implementation

Unusually for a minority language, despite some use in a small number of families (Renkó-Michelsén in prep.), almost all Cornish speakers are adult learners. Some have passed it to their children – a few of whom maintain it as adults – but there are no unbroken ancestral links to the spoken vernacular. These speakers are the result of a centuries-long effort to rebuild an almost lost language, and with it a new language community.

Haugen defines implementation as "the activity of a writer, an institution, or a government in adopting and attempting to spread the language form that has been selected and codified" (1987: 61). In this section we mostly focus on the activities of 'institutions' and 'government'.

In 1928, *Gorsedh Kernow* (College of Bards) was formed, led by Jenner (later by Nance), and influenced by the Welsh Gorsedd (Harasta 2013: 105). But this was a fairly insular group, its members "largely Anglican [religious denomination], highly-educated and middle class" (ibid.: 5), many from outside Cornwall, and "all ... interested in Antiquarianism and Romanticism" (ibid.). The Gorsedh (or Gorseth) still exists today, conducting ceremonies and awarding Bard status to esteemed

speakers, but the task of administering exams became too large for it, and in 1967 assorted activists established *Kesva an Taves Kernewek* (Cornish Language Board) to take this on, as well as other activities like publishing dictionaries. In Haugen's terms, implementation at this time remained the business of 'writers' and 'institutions', not 'government'. Only with the SWF agreement did government gain a major role, in the shape of MAGA.

Prior to the SWF agreement, implementation was mainly carried out voluntarily by the factional institutions, with only small grants from the County Council and other funders (Sayers 2012: 101). The most prolific publishers were the Cornish Language Board and Cornish Language Fellowship (both using Kemmyn). Publications included grammar books, dictionaries, historical and academic works, children's books, fiction, and periodicals.

As a voluntary endeavour with limited recruitment capabilities, the revival has historically had a particular demographic profile, but with differences between the versions. Harasta's (2013) ethnographic study describes Kemmyn and Unified as attracting more studious learners who relish the challenge of grammatical rules and spellings, while Late Cornish supporters are less scholarly, centring on Cornish as a spoken vernacular and happier with English admixture (ibid.: 222). Harasta also notes how this has unintentionally opened a class divide, with Unified and Kemmyn supporters being predominantly middle-class and older, and Late supporters being more mixed in class and age. Due to a relative lack of coordination among Late users, and perennial problems recruiting in chronically poor communities (ibid.: 242), set against the stronger organisation of Unified and Kemmyn users, "the movement remains dominated by a well–educated population, many of whom have moved to Cornwall for their retirement" (ibid.: 6).

In terms of motivations to learn, whilst Jenner (1904: 5) had a retrospectively distasteful view of Cornish people as "probably of the most unmixed Aryan or white race" – with unsettling implications for language ownership (Harasta 2013: 102) – such ethnic links have since been purposefully disrupted (e.g. Ellis 1974: 6). Today, Cornish remains tied to heritage, but activists mostly emphasise civic identity over ethnicity – although the latter remains a factor for many learners (Harasta 2013: 145–148).

Another avenue for implementation is intergenerational transmission. This was attempted by Cornish families as far back as the 1970s, but the heated disputes of the 1980s–1990s were a major hindrance. With recruitment of new learners choked off, the revival began to age (Harasta 2013: 217). Those who remained often felt that the spelling changes and disputes had done more harm than good. From our own interviews, a father of two expressed his views about the Cornish Language Board's adoption of Kemmyn (displacing Unified) in 1987:

> ...the revival movement went badly wrong and really let our family down... I felt that things had gone too far for a major change in the revival... you've made a big investment of bringing your

children up to be bilingual Cornish-English; last thing you needed was major change... So, what we've done, we've done it in spite of the language revival.

This reflects a theme we found more generally, that in the home Cornish is used mostly orally. It is still too early to say whether SWF has made a significant difference to intergenerational transmission, but the peace it has encouraged will probably help. Similarly in weekend language retreats and other orally-based courses the focus is mostly oral, which can avoid tensions at the crucial early stages of learning. Oral methods could prove crucial in building confidence and encouraging intergenerational transmission. This could of course simply delay debates about orthography until learners begin writing, but the rising profile of SWF may help with that.

In terms of state education, by the end of the 20th century Cornish was being taught in twelve primary and four secondary schools, but mostly outside normal lessons (MacKinnon 2000: 29–30). The SWF agreement enabled progress here, since promoting Cornish in state education became one of MAGA's key responsibilities. In 2012, MAGA's two part-time Education Officers worked with around twenty schools across Cornwall, and saw growing demand – especially around St. Piran's Day (the annual celebration of the patron saint of Cornwall). MAGA has sent three language learning packages to all primary schools in Cornwall. MAGA also trains teachers, and provides teaching materials and some taster sessions – typically one-off invited workshops inside regular classes. The factional institutions' activities have by no means ceased, though MAGA currently has the strongest presence. Cornish has not entered the National Curriculum though, and decisions about Cornish use have been left to teachers and/or headteachers. (A reminder here that factual information without citation comes from our interviews.)

Concerning its wider remit, in 2009 MAGA established advisory Working Groups of appointed volunteers, covering four areas for Cornish: corpus planning; status (nationally and internationally); acquisition; and usage. The Status Group was formed with members of various expertise. The Corpus Group was formed of linguists and people with linguistic knowledge of Cornish who could pore over etymological matters. The Acquisition Group was designed mainly to advise the two paid Education Officers (some members with teaching qualifications have also voluntarily worked alongside the Education Officers in schools). The Acquisition Group closed in 2014 and its members moved on to the newly established Association of Cornish Language Teachers, an umbrella organisation separate from MAGA (though funded by it at present) that shares resources and ideas, supports evening classes, and advocates for teachers (most of whom are unpaid). The Usage Group ended up mostly as a clearinghouse and fell into disuse at some point in 2011–2012.
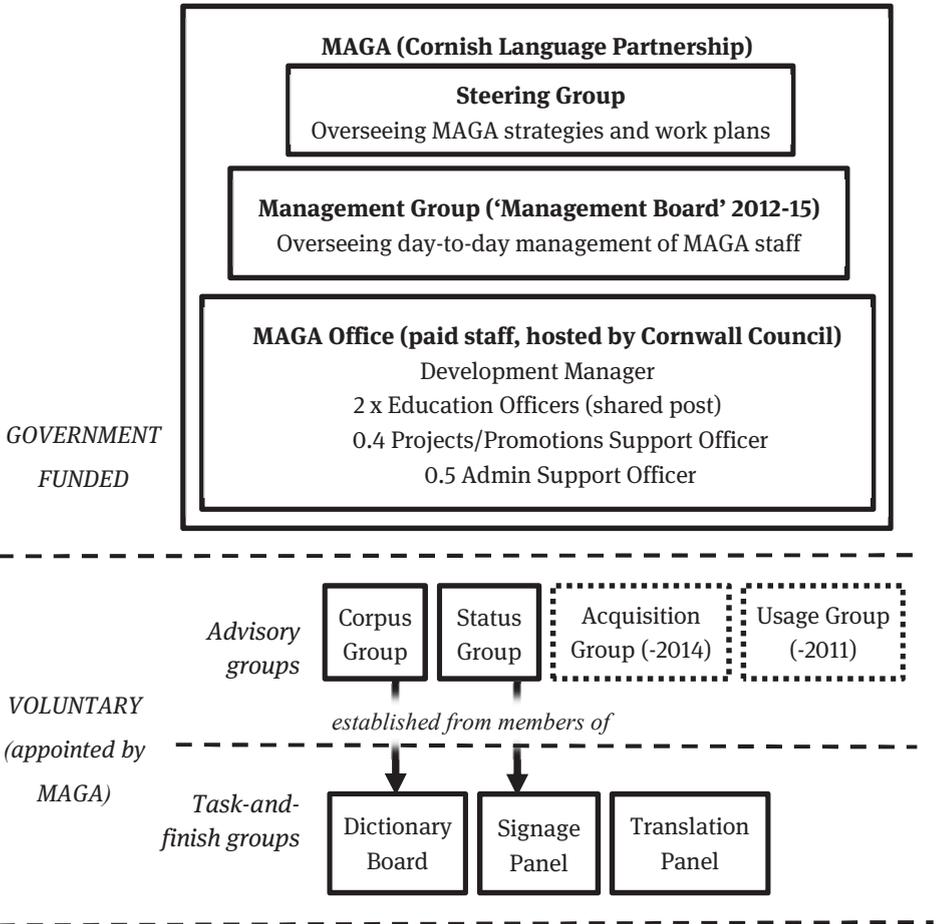
Fig 2: Institutional structure of MAGA until 2015 (our diagram, based on MAGA constitution and our research).

In 2010, MAGA assembled three 'task-and-finish groups', with specified practical duties: the Dictionary Board; the Place-name and Signage Panel (hereafter Signage Panel); and the Translation Panel. Certain members of the Status Group formed the Signage Panel, to facilitate bilingual street signs with Cornwall Council. The Signage Panel employs different methods: if there is a clear Cornish etymology then translation is straightforward; in other cases research is needed, for example with a moor it is important to distinguish upland or lowland moors since Cornish distinguishes these lexically. If a name has no Cornish history, then its English form is retained. Signage may be the greatest symbolic achievement of the revival so far: by January 2014 the Panel had translated its 1000th sign, 'Marine Drive/Rosva Vorek', in the town of Looe. An estimated 17% of Cornwall's street signs are now in Cornish or

bilingual (MAGA 2014), set to rise under a council policy that any new or replaced signs will be bilingual.

The Dictionary Board grew from the Corpus Group, taking responsibility for a new Cornish-English dictionary – continuing a centuries-old practice, this time in SWF. In Haugen's terms the Dictionary Board belongs more in 'implementation' than 'codification' or 'elaboration', as its task was mostly arranging SWF into the new dictionary, not making significant changes to SWF. MAGA published the new dictionary in 2012, first as a PDF, then as an interactive online resource. Since publication the Dictionary Board has remained but become less busy.

The Translation Panel was originally spurred by rising demand, ranging from government correspondence to names for small businesses, parts of web pages, promotional messages for multinational companies aiming to glean some local cachet, postcards, tattoos, and much more. This is a paid service for which MAGA issues invoices. The Translation Panel is the only Working Group to bring any income to MAGA, although it runs at a loss overall. It is currently the most prolific source of Cornish translations, though the existing language institutions are sometimes approached for translations. All this has raised the profile of Cornish in a new way. Some companies have put particular effort into translation. Pubs have been especially keen, perhaps foremost (given its scale) the large pub chain Wetherspoons, which has bilingual signs and printed matter, and has given some premises Cornish names.

Although the lion's share of implementation in SWF has been carried out by MAGA, some of the pre-existing factional institutions also use SWF – most importantly the Cornish Language Board and Cornish Language Fellowship, using it alongside Kemmyn.

As noted earlier, the *Strategy* in 2004 enabled £600,000 in joint funding for 2006–2009. After 2009, the UK Government increased its contribution, but in 2011 started to decrease it, partly for wider macro-economic reasons, and partly because it did not necessarily see itself as financially responsible under the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. By 2014, annual UK government funding amounted to £120,000, to be re-approved by request annually. This reduction, and lack of long-term commitment, has made a challenging environment for implementation. During 2014, MAGA had been planning efficiency reforms to its Management Board and Working Groups, but the insecure atmosphere created by short-term funding, coupled with the need for a new strategy, sparked off more radical changes. We discuss these later under 'Future developments'.

Regarding media presence, for many years there has been a short weekly programme in Cornish on BBC Radio Cornwall (George/Broderick 2009: 759), and nowadays a 5-minute weekly news summary. Cornish has no significant presence in newspapers or on TV, but it has grown on local radio, and online (including social media). An annual 'Speak Cornish Week' began in 2014, scheduled for the last week in July, where members of the public were invited to write something or film

themselves speaking Cornish and upload it to social media with the hashtag #speakcornish. The first Speak Cornish Week saw over 200 Twitter responses, from MAGA, Cornwall Council, Cornish businesses, politicians, BBC Radio Cornwall, and individuals.

Lastly, in relation to the class divide noted earlier (Harasta 2013: 6, 222, 242), MAGA has made some progress here. They perhaps have not discussed the issue explicitly, but by including all schools and visiting a range of public events they have clearly aimed for wide accessibility. Work remains to be done here, which we discuss later.

We conclude on implementation by noting the overall structure of Cornish language policymaking. The 2004 *Strategy* and its various subsequent plans were not drawn up entirely by government. Nor has any of this been guided by legislation specifically about Cornish. These two points clearly contrast to policymaking for Welsh in Wales, Scottish Gaelic in Scotland, and Ulster Scots in Northern Ireland. At first blush one could argue that there is no 'language policy' in Cornwall, but the reality is simply more nuanced and contingent.

5 Elaboration

"Elaboration is in some ways just a continued implementation of a norm to meet the functions of a modern world" (Haugen 1987: 61). As noted under codification, Cornish reconstructionists have long combined adaptations from Breton, Welsh, and dialects of English in Cornwall. Those favouring Middle Cornish (like Nance and George) prefer Breton and Welsh, while those favouring Late Cornish are happier taking cues from local dialects (Harasta 2013: 203–204). All these methods are still used today for elaboration, including for SWF.

Since the mid-late 20th century, efforts have been made to create new terms to fit modern life. All the different language groups have undertaken this task, but the Cornish Language Board (est. 1967 and supporting Kemmyn since 1987), given its larger size, has had the greatest output, having delegated the task to a subcommittee *Yeth ha Gerva* (literally 'Language and Vocabulary' but usually known in English as the Vocabulary and Grammar Committee). This committee decides new words in fields such as cooking, travel, accounting, even physics (e.g. Snell/Morris 1981, 1984; Mills 1999a: 51). It also accepts suggestions from Cornish users, and responds to requests. It variously adapts existing Cornish words to new contexts, words from Breton and Welsh, and (less often) from other languages, including English (George/Broderick 2009: 757). Since the creation of Kemmyn its outputs were incorporated into Kemmyn dictionaries. Since the Language Board recognised SWF, many of these words have been transliterated into SWF as well. In this way – as Haugen indicates above – elaboration can be linked directly to implementation.

But the Vocabulary and Grammar Committee does not lead the elaboration of SWF. That process is actually somewhat unsystematic: over the years MAGA has collated contributions of various groups but without a clear structure, and hampered by some ongoing strains within the revival. For example, the aforementioned Vocabulary and Grammar Committee, despite being the most productive, is a voluntary body under no explicit agreement with MAGA. It could have been formally endorsed by MAGA as the principal body for elaborating SWF, but this touches a nagging sore spot in the revival. We noted earlier the growing influence of Kemmyn over SWF (Harasta 2013: 272–277). In this context, and given the tumultuous history of disputes, official recognition of an organisation that has historically favoured Kemmyn could risk the delicate peace of the SWF agreement.

According to MAGA's 2014 restructuring plans (mentioned earlier), the Corpus Group would have been replaced by a task-oriented group focusing on terminology in SWF and supporting the Translation Panel. The relationship of this new group to the Vocabulary and Grammar Committee was (perhaps cautiously) not specified.

We introduced the Signage Panel earlier under implementation, but it also belongs here under elaboration. Translating street and place names often requires terminological standardisation, for example 'avenue' or 'lane'. Occasionally, historic forms might also suggest new meanings for existing words (and prior mistranslation). In such cases, Welsh and Breton words can be compared, alongside typological and geographical research. If this suggests a new meaning for the word then that can feed into the Corpus Group and Dictionary Board, hence the link to elaboration.

Another important recent event in elaboration was the 2013 review of SWF, a process open to consultation but ultimately directed centrally through MAGA. After five years in existence SWF was reviewed by the SWF Review Board, appointed by MAGA after an open application period (MAGA 2012). Their first consultation invited all Cornish users to submit ideas, improvements and problems by January 2013. There were forty-six responses, mainly from individuals but also language groups (SWF Review Board 2014: 2). Overall the most common request was simply to make fewer changes. According to one of our interviews with a member of the Review Board: "the spelling in Cornish has changed so often over the years that most people are fed up with not knowing how to spell something in Cornish". Accordingly, the Review Board only approved suggestions made by several users, and which did not affect many words.

Next, the Review Board sent out a provisional statement to all the language groups, and to individuals who had submitted responses. The Board met representatives of the language groups and received further feedback from individuals. Their recommendations were submitted to MAGA in December 2013, and the Final Report was published in March 2014. They suggested twenty changes to SWF. Echoing the fatigue noted above, a main suggestion was "a period of prolonged stability" (SWF Review Board 2014: 11). Another recommendation was to establish "an academic

board … which can agree on new words, and prevent some of the issues … being raised again" (ibid.).

To sum up on elaboration, in Haugen's terms, following the SWF agreement 'writers' and 'institutions' were joined by 'government', in the form of MAGA. Thereafter government appeared to dominate, though still heavily reliant on voluntary institutions.

That there was a managed discussion about changes to reconstructed Cornish illustrates just how deeply this remains a planned language. Time will tell if its growth leads to more sociolinguistically spontaneous evolution.

6 Future developments

On 24th April 2014, the Cornish people were recognised by the UK Government as a national minority under the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (CoE 1995). This came with a one-off pledge of £120,000 for MAGA (HM Treasury et al. 2014), not a huge amount of money for an organisation its size. Since at least 2010 the UK Government has been famously frosty towards QuANGOs of all kinds (e.g. Dommett et al. 2014), and it has decided MAGA's funding unhurriedly each year; annual funding for 1st April 2015 onwards was finally announced just two weeks beforehand (DCLG 2015).

This annual uncertainty moved MAGA's Management Board towards a new solution. The 2004 *Strategy* needed to be updated anyway, and so Cornwall Council funded consultants from IAITH (Welsh Centre for Language Planning) to propose a structural reform plan for 2015–2025, aiming for greater stability. On 20th March 2015, at a meeting led by Cornwall Council, IAITH presented its report to representatives of all the language groups (IAITH 2015). Their two most important recommendations were to further develop preschool and school education in Cornish, and to transfer responsibility for the strategic management of the language to Cornwall Council. The latter broadly mirrors the way the Welsh Language Board went from being a QuANGO to an integrated part of the Welsh Government in 2004. For MAGA this could be more stable than the current QuANGO structure.

The consultants also proposed a more sustainable structure for promoting the language. Cornwall Council would appoint a Language Policy and Planning Officer and a Support Officer, with a small advisory panel, all guided by a new language plan. Again this can be seen as reflecting developments in Wales where a statutorily appointed Language Commissioner replaced the Welsh Language Board in 2011 (Jones 2011) and now oversees promotion of Welsh. Further recommendations included a forum representing all organisations with an interest in Cornish, and an independent Language Academy to undertake corpus-related work and guide usage of SWF.

Attendees of the 20th March meeting agreed to accept the recommendations, and to commission IAITH to write job specifications for each post in the envisaged structure. At time of writing (mid-2015) MAGA's day-to-day work continues, but its Management Board has already been dissolved ready for the restructuring. What comes next is not altogether clear. IAITH's recommendations would depend entirely on funding. Parts of the MAGA structure seem likely to survive in some form. The Signage Panel and Translation Panel are always in strong demand. The Dictionary Board would likely evolve, under the IAITH plans, into a Language Academy. It was always intended that the Association of Cornish Language Teachers would become an independent knowledge-sharing and advocacy group. But the precise structures, names, and most importantly funding arrangements that these groups might have are not yet clear.

Future questions remain over implementation and elaboration of SWF. These may become more closely controlled by Cornwall Council or the future Language Academy. It is not impossible that the current uncertainty could cause a return to factional fragmentation. But for now at least, the risk of losing the gains of the last ten years has prevented the reigniting of the spelling dispute.

7 Conclusion

The Cornish language revival clearly illustrates Haugen's four steps, though codification precedes selection. Its complex and varied history of codification, which involved a great deal of extrapolation and conjecture, led to prolonged discord over authenticity. "This debate exemplified the importance of standardisation for minority languages, but its ultimate conclusion saw all sides giving way, and expediency, not ideology, prevailing" (Sayers 2012: 99). From a dead language, its current state of usage as a living, standardised, officially recognised minority language is a remarkable transformation.

An open question for the revival movement is whether they can learn from the consistent historical disinterest in working class Cornish speakers (Ellis 1974: 107–108) and spread sustainably beyond middle class enthusiasts – particularly pertinent in this the poorest region of England (ONS 2011) where the economy continues to decline (Cornwall Council 2013). Indeed the potential for revived minority languages to become concentrated among the middle class is a pervasive question for contemporary language policy (e.g. Mac Giolla Chríost 2004: 147; Smith-Christmas/ Ó hIfearnáin 2015 on Scottish Gaelic and Irish). As noted above, MAGA has attempted to reach out to a range of people, but with limited resources there remain big challenges. In this socioeconomic context, MAGA (or whatever succeeds it) might sensibly pursue the future capability to embed social inclusion and in-creased quality of life explicitly within its remit. Indeed Cornwall's poverty could provide a context for innovative methods. Standardisation, and the quieting of the spelling dis-

pute, has helped to significantly raise the profile of reconstructed Cornish. For the revival movement, the pursuit of greater social well-being could be its next frontier.

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