

## Mutations – Rules for States 3, 4 and 5

### Recap on State 2 (The Soft Mutation)

Previously we have looked at the soft mutation (State 2). This applies to words following a feminine noun (**benen<sup>2</sup> dha** “a good woman”), feminine nouns after “an” (the definite article) (**an<sup>2</sup> venen** “the woman”) and plural masculine nouns relating to people (**tus<sup>2</sup> grēf** “strong people”).

In addition we notice that “un” (one) (**un<sup>2</sup> venen** “one woman”) and “dew” (two) (**dew<sup>2</sup> dhen** “two men”) also mutate the following word if it is feminine singular or masculine plural relating to people.

Some particles also cause a state 2 mutation e.g. (**me a<sup>2</sup> welas** “I see” or **me na<sup>2</sup> welas** “I do not see”)

Some other words, particularly pronouns “dha” (your) (**dha<sup>2</sup> jy** “your house”) and “y” (his) (**y<sup>2</sup> gath** “his cat”) cause a soft mutation, as do some prepositions such as “a” “of” “war” “dhe” “heb”.

Finally Pajer (four) has the feminine form Peder to be used with feminine nouns, and Mil (1,000) causes a soft mutation

So, in summary State 2 occurs

- After “an” for feminine singular nouns and masculine plural relating to people ( which makes the “Soft Mutation” the odd man out as gender can make a difference as to whether mutations are applied.
- After some particles (a, ny, na)
- After possessive pronouns (dha & y)
- After important functional words (mainly prepositions)
- In numbers un, dew, peder and mil causing a following mutation

### State 3 – Aspirate Mutation

This mainly happens:

- After the possessive pronouns ow (my), hy (hers) and aga (theirs)
- After tri and teyr (masculine and feminine forms of three)

**This mutation is independent of gender of any nouns involved**

### State 4 – Hard Mutation

Mostly you will find this mutation in secondary clauses after mar “if” and the present participle “ow” ( -ing) “ow<sup>4</sup> quil” (doing), “ow<sup>4</sup> colhi” (washing)

**This mutation is independent of gender of any nouns involved**

### State 5 – Mixed Mutation

This occurs after “yn” the adverbial particle meaning “-ly” “yn tyen” (completely) “yn teffri” (really), and after the verbal particle “y” (that) “me a<sup>2</sup> welas y<sup>5</sup> teth ef” (I saw that he had come)

**This mutation is independent of gender of any nouns involved.**

Numbers

| 1   | 2 (SOFT) | 3 (Aspirate) | 4 (Hard) | 5 (mixed) |
|-----|----------|--------------|----------|-----------|
| B   | V        |              | P        | F,V       |
| C,K | G        | H            |          |           |
| CH  | J        |              |          |           |
| D   | T        |              | T        | T         |
| G   | -,W      |              | C,K      | H, WH     |
| GW  | W        |              | QU       | WH, W     |
| M   | V        |              |          | F,V       |
| P   | B        | F            |          |           |
| QU  | GW       | WH           |          |           |
| T   | D        | TH           |          |           |
| F   | V        |              |          |           |

## Numbers

Initially numbers seem very confusing in Cornish because the rules seem a little uneven the place to start from however, is the rule that "The genders of the numbers used must agree with the genders of the noun that follows."

Examples:

Tri (m) and Kei (m)

Teyr (f) and Cath (m)

Pajer (m) and Den (m)

Peder (f) and Benyn (f)

What is slightly confusing is that the numbers one, two and a thousand have the SAME word for masculine and feminine forms (although in counting Onen is still used for one and there used to be Dyw as a feminine form for one, but this is now extinct).

So we also have

Un (m) and Maw (m)

Un (f) and Mowes (f)

Dew (m) and Teyger (m)

Dew (f) and Davas (f)

Un (f), Dew (f), Peder (f) and Mil (f) all cause a state 2 soft mutation, as does Dew (m). Un (m) does not though since it works the same way as 'an' (the).

Teyr (f) causes a state 3 aspirate mutation, as does Tri (m)

So we have Un Kei, Dew Gei, Tri Hei, Pajer Kei, Pypm Kei, and Un Gath, Dew Gath, Teyr Hath, Peder Gath, Pypm Cath.

Any other numbers don't mutate the following noun.

## Infixes Pronouns

Infixes pronouns are also potentially messy, and evidence from the texts is scrappy so it's not really obvious what's going on. This is illustrated nicely by the third person plural 'their'. In theory this should be 'ga but is shown in texts as 's (same as 'her').

The particle 'a' would normally be used to separate the subject noun and the verb (e.g. me a wra - I do, I shall), so a second state would normally apply. An infixes pronoun should 'normally' stop the soft mutation from happening:

Me a'gan car (I like us), Me a'gas gwel (I see you [plural]), Me a'm gwelas (I saw me). Me a'n feth (I beat him).

The infixes 's 'her' is an aspirate sound though, so it forces an aspirate mutation in some places (like a state 5) - Me a's car (I love her) but Me a's whel (I see her). Technically 's should also be used in place of 'ga 'their' but if you were to use 'ga then the full state 3 would occur.

'th 'your' (singular) is debatable, but it appears to me that it should cause a state 2 fairly consistently.

So we have:

Me a'm car, Me a'm gwel  
Me a'th gar, Me a'th wel  
Me a'n car, Me a'n gwel  
Me a's car, Me a's whel (note)

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Me a'gan car, Me a'agan gwel  
Me a'gas car, Me a'agas gwel  
Me a'ga har, Me a'ga whel  
or for 3p  
Me a's car, Me a's whel

## **a'm bes**

A'm bes 'to have' does not obey the rules at all (and there may be other verbs that had/have irregular infix rules). You'll just have to learn a'm bes!!

Me a'm bes (I have)

Te a'th eus (You have)

Ef a'n jeves

Hei a's teves

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Nei a'gan bes

Whei a'agas bes

Ynjei a'aga fes or Ynjei a's fes