

Impersonal Forms and their Paraphrases in Welsh

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0. Introduction

Welsh verbs have special forms, called the impersonal form like (1), where the verb *siarad* ‘speak’ is conjugated into the present impersonal form *siaredir* ‘one speaks’ / ‘is spoken’. They are sometimes translated into English with the passive construction (‘be done’), but according to King (2003: 224), ‘they convey the idea of the general action of the verb without specifying who or what is doing it’. It is sometimes said that the function of the impersonal form in Celtic languages resembles that of the impersonal pronoun *on*¹ ‘one’ in French.

1-cy)	<i>Siaredir Cymraeg fan hyn</i>
siarad-ir	Cymraeg L-man hyn
speak-PRS.IMPERS	Welsh.F DSJTV-place.F this
‘One speaks Welsh here’ / ‘Welsh is spoken here’	

[King (2003: 225)]

The impersonal form is one of the remarkable features which Celtic languages have in common, but it is not used in Colloquial Welsh very often. Then, in this paper, the author would like to consider how impersonal clauses with the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in French are translated into Welsh, through a contrastive study with French, using a famous novel *Le Petit Prince* and its Welsh translation *Y Tywysog Bach*.

Please note that all the analyses, the glosses and the translations in this paper are mine. Abbreviations after example numbers denote a name of languages (cy: *Cymraeg* ‘Welsh’ / fr: *Français* ‘French’).

1. Welsh Language

1.1. Overview

The *Welsh* language (*Cymraeg*) belongs to the *Celtic* branch of the *Indo-European* family. In detail, as shown in Figure 1, it composes the *Brittonic* languages of the *Insular Celtic*, with *Cornish* (*Kernewek*) and *Breton* (*Brezhoneg*). In the other branch of the *Insular Celtic – Goidelic* languages,

¹ Derives from the Latin word *HOMO* ‘man’ (nominative singular) and constitutes a doublet with the ordinary noun *homme* ‘man’, which derives from the accusative form *HOMINEM*.

Irish (*Gaeilge*), Scottish Gaelic (*Gàidhlig*) and Manx (*Gaelg*) are known.

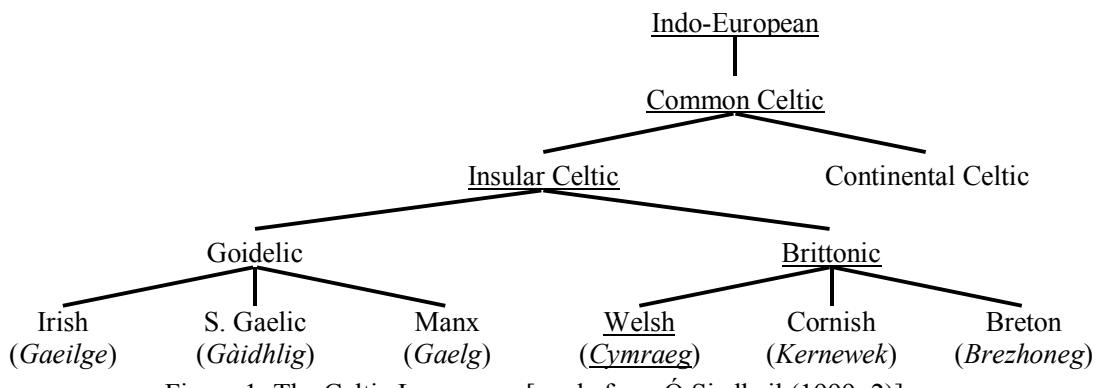


Figure 1: The Celtic Languages [made from Ó Siadhail (1999: 2)]

Welsh is spoken in Wales in the United Kingdom. According to *ethnologue* its number of speakers is 562,000 (2011) and according to UNESCO it is 750,000 (labelled as ‘vulnerable’). It is the most vigorous language among the Celtic languages. Note that, according to the Welsh government, the population of Wales is 3,113,000 (2016).

1.2. Grammatical Features

Some remarkable features in Welsh are given below.

i) The basic word order is VSO

e.g. *Gwelodd y ddynes ddraig* ‘The woman saw a dragon’ (lit. ‘Saw the woman dragon’)

ii) Adjectives are postposed

e.g. *y tywysog bach* ‘the little prince’ (lit. ‘the prince little’)

iii) Initial consonants are changed in particular circumstances (initial mutation)

e.g. *merch* ‘a girl’ > *y ferch* ‘the girl’

There are three types of mutation: *Lenition*, *Nasalisation* and *Aspirantisation* (see Abbreviations and Symbols).

iv) Some prepositions are conjugated according to the person and number

e.g. *ar* ‘on’ > *arnafi* ‘on me’

2. Previous Researches

2.1. Welsh Impersonal Form

2.1.1. Background Knowledge

The *impersonal* form (also referred to as *autonomous* form) of verbs is a very characteristic feature

which Celtic languages have in common, as Hewitt (2002) says:

All the Celtic languages have “impersonal” verb forms in *-r* and *-d*. In English-language Celtic studies, the term “autonomous” is also used. These forms are said to be related to the “passive” conjugation of Latin (*-itur*²), but there is only one form per tense (at least in the modern languages;

[cited from Hewitt (2002: 15)]

In other words, verbs in many languages have six forms per tense (conjugated for three persons and two numbers), but Welsh verbs have seven forms per tense in addition to those six, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Present tense of *canu* ‘sing’

	SG	PL
1ST	<i>canaf</i> [can- af]	<i>canwn</i> [can- wn]
2ND	<i>ceni</i> [can- i]	<i>cenwch</i> [can- iwch]
3RD	<i>cân</i> [can- Ø]	<i>canant</i> [can- ant]
IMPERSONAL	<i>cenir</i> [can- i r]	

[Thomas (1992: 311); morpheme analysis mine]

2. 1. 2. King (2003)

Descriptions in this section are based on King (2003).

One single argument in clauses with an impersonal form is interpreted as a subject, not an object.

At first, in Welsh, direct objects in the clause are lenited (this function of the lenition is glossed as *disjunctive* in this paper, which means that it is not *conjunctive* to the verb), while subjects remain unchanged.

Then, when a personal form is used, the initial consonant of a direct object is lenited like (2). To the contrary, when an impersonal form is used, the initial consonant of a following argument is not lenited like (3), so that it is a subject.

2-cy) *Fe drefnodd gyfarfod*

fe^L **trefn-odd** ^L-cyfarfod
POS **organise-PST.3SG** DSJTV-meeting.M

‘He/She **organised** a meeting’

[King (2003: 225)]

² *-itur* is the indicative passive present third person singular form: e.g. *emō* ‘I buy’ > *emitur* ‘it is bought’

3-cy) *Fe drefnwyd cyfarfod*

fe^L **trefn-wyd** cyfarfod
POS **organise-PST.IMPERS** meeting.M

‘One **organised** a meeting’ / ‘A meeting **was organised**’

[King (2003: 225)]

In addition, an agent can be expressed by the preposition *gan* ‘with’ like (4).

4-cy) *Ataliwyd dwsin o geir gan yr heddlu yn y Bala neithiwr*

atali-wyd dwsin o^L carⁱ **gan** **yr** **heddlu** yn yr Bala neithiwr
stop-PST.IMPERS dozen.M of car.M-PL with DEF police.M in DEF Bala.M last.night
‘A dozen of cars **were stopped** by the police in Bala last night’

[King (2003: 226)]

That is, one single argument in the clause with an impersonal form is a grammatical subject and an oblique agent phrase can be used there. In this point, this construction may seem to be a passive one, but it can be applied to intransitive verbs like (5).

5-cy) *Eir yno yn gyson dros y Nadolig*

e-ir yno yn^L cyson dros yr Nadolig
go-PRS.IMPERS there ADV constant over DEF Christmas.M
‘One often **goes** there over Christmas’

[King (2003: 226)]

Thus, the essential function of the impersonal form is not a passive and it simply indicates that the agent in the clause is not specified for some reason.

2.1.3. In Colloquial Welsh

It is known that Welsh has two styles: *literary* and *colloquial* language. Concerning the situation of the impersonal form in Colloquial Welsh, King (2003) says:

These forms, which it is important to know at least for recognition purposes, are found primarily in newspapers and in the media. However, they are not unknown in ordinary speech, and reports of their demise are, certainly for many dialects, premature.

This method avoids any use of **cael**³, and involves adding endings to the verb, therefore the verb-stem is required for this. In the modern language only non-past (-ir) and past (-wyd) are available, so any other tenses

³ Means ‘get’ and is used to form a passive clause.

have to be formed using **cael** anyway.

[King (2003: 224)]

In addition, Hewitt (2002) says:

It should be added that in Welsh, these forms are emphatically part of the literary register, and apart from a handful of set phrases, are rarely heard in spontaneous conversation.

[Hewitt (2002: 17)]

In other words, it is said that the impersonal form is less used in Colloquial Welsh.

2. 2. Impersonal Clauses with the Impersonal Pronoun *on* ‘one’ in French

Descriptions in this section are based on Byrne and Churchill (1986).

The impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ can be used only as the subject and refers to a person or persons unspecified. In addition, it is frequently found where English has a passive like (6-fr).

Note that, in this paper, the singular number of nouns or adjectives and the present tense and the indicative mood of verbs in French are regarded to be morphologically unmarked, so that these three categories are omitted in the gloss.

6-fr) *Ici on parle français*

ici **on** parl-e français
here IMPERS speak-3SG French.M

‘Here **one** speaks French’ / ‘Here French is spoken’

[Byrne and Churchill (1986: 204)]

This pronoun is often used as the equivalent of any personal pronoun (particularly of *nous* ‘we’) like (7-fr).

7-fr) *On a été contents de vous voir.*

on a-Ø ét-é-Ø content-Ø-s de vous v-oir
IMPERS have-3SG be-PTCP.PST-M satisfied-M-PL of 2PL.ACC see-INF
‘**We** were satisfied to see you’

[Byrne and Churchill (1986: 204)]

In the literary language, the definite article is frequently added to *on* ‘one’ after a word ending in a vowel like (8-fr).

8-fr) *Si l'on avait su!*

si le **on** av-ai-t s-u-∅
 if DEF.M IMPERS have-IMPF-3SG know-PTCP,PST-M
 ‘If we had known!’

[Byrne and Churchill (1986: 204)]

3. Corpus and Methodology

In the research of this paper, data will be retrieved from a novel originally written in French, *Le Petit Prince* and its Welsh translation *Y Tywysog Bach* (see below).

Table 2: Corpus

language	Title	ID	pages
French	<i>Le Petit Prince</i>	PP-fr	9-93
Welsh	<i>Y Tywysog Bach</i>	PP-cy	9-95

However, there is a problem: as already mentioned above, concerning Welsh, the literary language and the colloquial language are very different from each other and one can observe the difference between the two registers in the morphology, the syntax and even grammatical categories. For example, Tomas (1992) gives some examples to contrast them: (9-cy) is *the literary language* and (10-cy) is *the colloquial language* (one of the northern dialects).

9-cy) *Nid yw ef yn mynd*

nid yw ef yn mynd
 NEG be.PRS.3SG 3SG in go.VN

‘He is not going’

[Tomas (1992: 264)]

10-cy) *Dydi o ddim yn mynd*⁴

d-ydi o ^L-dim yn mynd
 NEG-be.PRS.3SG 3SG DSJTV-NEG in go.VN

‘He is not going’

[Tomas (1992: 264)]

The Welsh version of the novel is written in the colloquial form, where the impersonal form of verbs is less likely to be used, as already seen in §2.1.3. Consequently, only eight examples of the impersonal form are found through the book. In other words, many original constructions with the

⁴ In the dialect of the novel, it should be *Dydy e ddim yn mynd*.

impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in French, which could be translated into Welsh with the impersonal form, are in fact translated with other constructions than those with the impersonal form.

Then, in this paper, the author would like to consider how impersonal clauses with the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ (including *l’on* ‘the one’) in French are translated into Welsh.

4. Result

The result of the research is given below.

Table 3: Welsh Translations of the Impersonal Pronoun *on* ‘one’ in French

construction (subject)	frequency	
second person plural	22	30.99%
<i>dyn</i> ‘man’	7	9.86%
first person plural	6	8.45%
third person singular	6	8.45%
<i>neb</i> ‘no one’	5	7.04%
impersonal form	3	4.23%
third person plural	1	1.41%
miscellaneous pronouns	5	7.04%
other constructions	12	16.90%
unanalysable	4	5.63%
total	71	100.00%

4. 1. Impersonal Form

First, I will consider the three cases where the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in the original French text is translated into Welsh with the impersonal form, which are the most relevant in this paper. In all the three cases, the verb *gallu* ‘can’ is conjugated into the impersonal form in the Welsh text, and there, a notion of ‘possibility’ or ‘ability’ can be observed like (11). In this case, you can see the modal verb *pouvoir* ‘can’ in the original French text.

11-fr) *On pourrait entasser l’humanité sur le moindre petit îlot du Pacifique.*

on	pour-r-ai-t	entass-er	la	humanité	sur	le	moindre-Ø	petit-Ø
IMPERS	can-FS-COND-3SG	pile-INF	DEF.F	humanity.F	on	DEF.M	least-M	little-M
îlot	de+le	Pacifique						
islet.M	of+DEF.M	Pacific.M						

‘One can pile the humanity on the smallest islet of the Pacific’

[PP-fr: XVII]

11-cy) *Gellid crynhoi'r ddynoliaeth i gyd ar yr ynys fach leiaf yn y Môr Tawel.*

gall-ⁱid crynho-i yr^L dynoliaeth i^N cyd ar yr ynys
can-IMPF.IMPERS gather-VN DEF humanity.F to junction.M on DEF island.F
L-bach-Ø L-llei-af yn yr Môr Tawel-Ø
ATR-little-F ATR-small-SUP in DEF Ocean.M Silent-M

‘One could gather the humanity altogether on the smallest island on the Pacific Ocean’

[PP-cy: XVII]

In the other two examples, the modal verb *pouvoir* ‘can’ does not appear in the original French text, but there seems to be a notion of ‘possibility’ or ‘ability’, judged from the context.

12-fr) — *Les étoiles sont belles, à cause d'une fleur que l'on ne voit pas...*

le-s étoile-s so-nt bell-e-s à cause de un-e fleur que
DEF-PL star.F-PL be-3PL beautiful-F-PL to cause.F of INDEF-F flower.F REL.ACC
le on ne voi-t pas
DEF.M IMPERS NEG see-3SG NEG

‘— The stars are beautiful, because of a flower which **one** does not see...’

[PP-fr: XXIV]

12-cy) ‘*Mae'r sêr yn hardd o achos blodyn na ellir mo'i weld.*’

mae-Ø yr sêr-Ø yn hardd o achos blodyn na^L
be-PRS.3SG DEF star.F-PL ADV beautiful of cause.M flower.M-SG REL.INDIR.NEG
gell-ir mo ei^L gwel-d
can-PRS.IMPERS NEG 3SG.M.POSS see-VN

“The stars are beautiful because of a flower which **one** cannot see”

[PP-cy: XXIV]

13-fr) *il y en a des centaines d'autres qui sont quelquefois si petites qu'on a beaucoup de mal à les apercevoir au télescope.*

il y en a-Ø de+le-s centaine-s de autre-e-s qui
3SG.M.NOM PRN.DAT PRN.ABL have-3SG of+DEF-PL hundreds.F-PL of other-F-PL REL.NOM
so-nt quelque-e=fois si petit-e-s que on a-Ø beaucoup de
be-3PL some-F=time.F too little-F-PL REL.ACC IMPERS have-3SG many of
mal à le-s apercevoir à+le telescope
bad.M to 3.ACC-PL see-INF to+DEF.M telescope.M

‘there are hundreds of others which are sometimes so little that **one** has many difficulties to see them in the telescope’

[PP-fr: IV]

13-cy) *Maen nhw'n blanedau mor fychan ambell waith fel mai prin y gellir eu gweld ag ysbienndrych.*

mae-n nhw yn^L planed-au mor^L bychan-Ø ambell L-gwaith fel
be-PRS.3PL 3PL ADV planet.F-PL so little-PL some time.F as
mai prin y **gell-ir** eu gwel-d ag ysbienndrych
CMPL hardly REL.INDIR **can-PRS.IMPERS** 3PL.POSS see-VN at telescope.M

‘They are too little planets sometimes as **one can** hardly see with a telescope’

[PP-cy: IV]

King (2003) says that the impersonal form of the verb *gallu* ‘can’ is a feature in the written language rather than the spoken one, but he argues this verb in a separate section. The description of King (2003) and the result of the research in this paper may suggest that the impersonal form of this verb can be used more frequently than others.

4. 2. Second Person Plural

Then, I will consider the cases where the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in the original French text is translated into Welsh with the second person plural subject. As a whole, 22 examples with such a construction are retrieved. For example:

14-fr) *C'est très utile, si l'**on** est égaré pendant la nuit.*

ce es-t très utile-Ø si le **on** es-t égaré-Ø pendant la nuit
it be-3SG very useful-M if DEF.M **IMPERS** be-3SG stray-M during DEF.F night.F
‘It is very useful, if **one** is stray during the night’

[PP-fr: I]

14-cy) *Gall hyn fod yn ddefnyddiol iawn pan fyddwch **chi** wedi colli eich ffordd yn y nos.*

gall-Ø hyn L-bod yn defnyddiol iawn pan^L **bydd-wch** **chi** wedi⁵
can-PRS.3SG this DSJTV-be.VN ADV useful very when **be-FUT.2PL** 2PL after
coll-i eich ffordd yn yr nos
lose-VN 2PL.POSS way.F in DEF night.F

‘This can be very useful when **you will have** lost your way in the night’

[PP-cy: I]

It can be said that this type of paraphrase is the most frequent one, based on the result. In such cases, it seems that general events are described, which is parallel to the generic use of *you* in English, and this feature is very different from the next one, the case with the first person plural subject.

⁵ The construction *bod* ‘be’ + *wedi* ‘after’ + verbal noun (‘be after doing’) constitutes the *perfect* form (‘have done’), while the construction *bod* ‘be’ + *yn* ‘in’ + verbal noun (‘be in doing’) constitutes the *non-perfect* form.

4.3. First Person Plural

Here, I will consider the cases where the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in the original French text is translated into Welsh with the first person plural subject. As a whole, six examples with such a construction are retrieved. For example:

15-fr) *Mais on exige de l'explorateur qu'il fournisse des preuves.*

mais **on** exig-e de le explorateur que il fourniss-e
but IMPERS demand-3SG of DEF.M explorer.M CMPL 3SG.M.NOM supply.SUBJ-3SG
de+le-s preuve-s
of+DEF-PL proof.F-PL

‘But **one** demands of the explorer that he supply proofs’

[PP-fr: XV]

15-cy) *Ond fe fyddwn ni'n gofyn i'r fforiwr ddod â thystiolaeth i ni.*

ond fe^L **bydd-wn** **ni** yn gofyn-Ø i yr fforiwr ^L-dod â^H
but POS be-FUT.1PL 1PL in demand-VN to DEF explorer DSJTV-come.VN with
tystiolaeth i ni
evidence.F to 1PL

‘But **we** **will** demand to the explorer to come with an evidence for us’

[PP-cy: XV]

Contrary to the last one, the second person plural subject, it seems that more concrete events are described in these examples, i.e. with a concrete subject *we*. As already seen in §2.2., the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in French can be used as the equivalent to *nous* ‘we’.

4.4. Third Person Plural

There is only one example where the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in the original French text is translated into Welsh with the third person plural subject. For example:

16-fr) *On note d'abord au crayon les récits des explorateurs.*

on not-e de abord à+le crayon le-s récit-s de+le-s
IMPERS note-3SG of arrival.M to+DEF.M pensil.M DEF-PL account.M-PL of+DEF-PL
explorateur-s
explorer.M-PL

‘**One** notes first with the pencil the explorers’ accounts’

[PP-fr: XV]

16-cy) *Mewn pensil y byddan **nhw**'n nodi adroddiadau'r fforwyr i ddechrau.*

mewn	pensil	y	bydd-an	nhw	yn	nod-i	adroddiad-au	yr
in.DEF	pensil.M	REL.INDIR	be-FUT.3PL	3PL	in	note-VN	report.M-PL	DEF
fforiwr- ⁱ	i ^L	dechrau						
explorer.M-PL	to	beginning.M						

‘It is in the pensil that **they** will note the explorers’ accounts at first’

[PP-cy: XV]

In this case, it seems that a more concrete event is described like (15) in the previous section, with the first person plural subject. However, this is uttered by the narrator who does not belong to the group indicated by the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ (= geographers).

4. 5. *dyn* ‘man’

There are seven examples where the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in the original French text is translated into Welsh with the noun *dyn* ‘man’ as a subject. For example:

17-fr) *Millions de ces petites choses que l'**on** voit quelquefois dans le ciel.*

million-s	de	ce-s	petit-e-s	chose-s	que	le	on	voi-t
million.M-PL	of	this-PL	little-F-PL	thing.F-PL	REL.ACC	DEF.M	IMPERS	see-3SG
quelque-e=fois	dans	le	ciel					
some-F=time.F	in	DEF.M	sky.M					

‘Millions of these small things that **one** sees sometimes in the sky’

[PP-fr: XIII]

17-cy) “*Miliynau o'r pethau bach mae **dyn** yn eu gweld weithiau yn yr awyr.*”

miliyn-au	o	yr	peth-au	bach	mae-Ø	dyn	yn	eu	gwel-d
million-PL	of	DEF	thing.M-PL	little-PL	be-PRS.3SG	man.M	in	3PL.POSS	see-VN
weithiau	yn	yr	awyr						
sometimes	in	DEF	sky.M						

‘Millions of the small things that **man** sees (them) sometimes in the sky’

[PP-cy: XIII]

It can be said that this type of paraphrase is the second most frequent one, based on the result. In addition, there are another three examples where the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in the original text corresponds to the third person singular masculine pronoun *e* ‘he’ (classified into ‘third person singular’ in Table 3 in §4), which refers to *dyn* ‘man’ in the preceding clause or sentence.

For example, there are two instances of the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in (18-fr) and the first one is translated into Welsh as *dyn* ‘man’, while the second one into *e* ‘he’, in (18-cy). In the Welsh

example, the personal pronoun *e* ‘he’ referring to the noun *dyn* ‘man’ in the preceding clause is used to avoid repeating it.

18-fr) — *Tu sais... quand on est tellement triste on aime les couchers de soleil...*

tu	sai-s	quand	on	es-t	tellement	triste-Ø	on	aim-e
2SG.NOM	know-2SG	when	IMPERS	be-3SG	so		IMPERS	love-3SG
le-s	coucher-s	de	soleil					
DEF-PL	setting.M-PL	of	sun.M					

‘— Thou knowest... when **one** is so sad **one** loves the settings of sun...’

[PP-fr: VI]

18-cy) “*Wyddost ti, pan mae dyn yn drist iawn mae e'n hoffi gweld yr haul yn machlud.*”

^L	gwydd-ost	ti	pan	mae-Ø	dyn	yn ^L	trist	iawn	mae-Ø	e
Q	know-PRS.2SG	2SG	when	be-PRS.3SG	man.M	ADV	sad	very	be-PRS.3SG	3SG.M
yn	hoff-i	gwel-d	yr	haul	yn	machlud-Ø				
in	like-VN	see-VN	DEF	sun.M	in	set-VN				

““Doest thou know, when **a man** is very sad **he** likes to see the sun setting””

[PP-cy: VI]

In total, it can be said that ten examples have the noun *dyn* ‘man’ as a subject.

Semantically, it seems that general events are described in such cases, but the difference between constructions with the second person plural subject in §4.2 and those with the noun *dyn* ‘man’ in this section is not clear, at least in this paper.

4. 6. *neb* ‘no one’

Then, there are five examples where the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in the original French text is translated into Welsh with the pronoun *neb* ‘no one’. This pronoun is normally used in the negative clause (so that glossed as ‘no one’ in this paper) and all the five examples are negative ones. For instance:

19-fr) *On ne peut pas mourir pour vous.*

on	ne	peu-t	pas	mour-ir	pour	vous
IMPERS	NEG	can-3SG	NEG	die-INF	for	2PL.EMP

‘**One** cannot die for you’

[PP-fr: XXI]

19-cy) “All **neb** farw drosoch chi.

L	gall-Ø	neb	L-marw-Ø	dros-och	chi
NEG	can-PRS.3SG	no.one	DSJTV-die-VN	over-2PL	2PL
‘ No one can die for you’					

[PP-cy: XXI]

Among them, the three examples contain a notion of ‘possibility’ or ‘ability’ in the context, like those with the impersonal form of *gallu* ‘can’. King (2003) says that the negative form of the impersonal form of *gallu* ‘can’ is less frequent than the positive form. It might be concluded that some negative clauses with the pronoun *neb* ‘someone’ retrieved from the text correspond to the positive clauses with the impersonal form of *gallu* ‘can’.

In the following example, on the contrary, a notion of ‘possibility’ or ‘ability’ is not included. In this case, the adverb *jamais* ‘never’ in the original French text may cause such a translation (however, not all clauses with *jamais* ‘never’ are translated into Welsh with the pronoun *neb* ‘no one’)

20-fr) — *On n'est jamais content là où l'on est, dit l'aiguilleur.*

on	ne	es-t	jamais	content-Ø	là	où	le	on	es-t
IMPERS	NEG	be-3SG	never	pleased-M	there	where	DEF.M	IMPERS	be-3SG
d-i-t	le	aiguilleur							
say-PST-3SG	DEF.M	signalman.M							

‘— **One** is never pleased there where **one** is, said the signalman’

[PP-fr: XXII]

20-cy) “*Does neb byth yn hapus yn y fan lle mae e, ” meddai dyn y rheilffordd.*

d-oes	neb	byth	yn	hapus	yn	yr ^L	man	lle	mae-Ø
NEG-be.PRS.3SG	no.one	yet	ADV	happy	in	DEF	place.F	where	be-PRS.3SG
e	meddai	dyn	yr	rheilffordd					
3SG.M	say.DFCTV	man.M	DEF	railway.F					

“**No one** is ever happy in the place where **he** is,” said the railway man’

[PP-cy: XXII]

Note that in the example above, there are two instances of the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in (20-fr) and the first one is translated into Welsh as *neb* ‘no one’, while the second one into the third person singular masculine pronoun *e* ‘he’, in (20-cy). Therefore, it can be said that six examples have the pronoun *neb* ‘no one’ as a counterpart of the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in French, in total.

4.7. Third Person Singular

There are six examples where the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in the original French text is translated into Welsh with the third person singular pronoun as a subject. As already seen in §4.5 and in §4.6, four instances of the third person singular masculine pronoun *e* ‘he’ are retrieved from the text, three of which refer to the noun *dyn* ‘man’ and one of which refers to the pronoun *neb* ‘one’ in preceding clauses.

Then, in the other two examples, the third person singular feminine pronoun *hi* ‘she’ is used and refers to the noun *bobl* ‘people’, which is a feminine noun, in the preceding clause, as follows:

21-fr) ***On*** est un peu seul dans le désert...

on es-t un-Ø peu seul-Ø dans le desert
IMPERS be-3SG INDEF-M little lonely-M in DEF.M desert.M

‘One is a little lonely in the desert...’

[PP-fr: XVII]

21-cy) ‘*Mae hi braidd yn unig yn y diffeithdir.*’

mae-Ø hi braidd yn unig yn yr diffeithdir
be-PRS.3SG 3SG.F a.little ADV lonely in DEF desert.M

“‘She (= people) is a little lonely in the desert’”

[PP-cy: XVII]

4.8. Miscellaneous Pronouns

In five examples, other pronouns are used as a translation of the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in the original French text. Various pronouns are retrieved from the research, but they are difficult to be generalised, so that just one example of them (*rhywun* ‘someone’) is given below:

22-fr) *Donc, quand la moralité de l’explorateur paraît bonne, on fait une enquête sur sa découverte.*

donc quand la moralité de le explorateur paraît bonne on
therefore when DEF.F morality.F of DEF.M explorer.M appear-3SG good-F IMPERS
fai-t un-e enquête sur sa découverte
do-3SG INDEF-F investigation.F on 3SG.POSS.F discovery.F

‘Therefore, when the explorer’s morality appears good, one does an investigation about his discovery’

[PP-fr: XV]

22-cy) *Yna, pan fo gonestrwydd y fforiwr yn ymddangos yn foddaol, bydd rhywun yn ymchwilio i'w ddarganfyddiad.*

yna pan^L b-o gonestrwydd yr fforiwr yn ymddangos-Ø yn^L
then when be-SUBJ.3SG honesty.M DEF explorer.M in appear-VN ADV
boddaol bydd-Ø rhywun yn ymchwili-o i+el^L darganfyddiad
acceptable be-FUT.3SG someone.M in research-VN to+3SG.M discovery.M

‘Then, when the explorer’s honesty appears acceptable, **someone** will research his discovery’

[PP-cy: XV]

4.9. Other Constructions

Here, some of other constructions will be dealt with. First, in the following example, there is no element in Welsh which corresponds to the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in the original French text. In (23), the oblique phrase *dans le livre* ‘in the book’ in the original French text is treated as a grammatical subject in the Welsh translation and the use of the impersonal form is avoided:

23-fr) **On** disait *dans le livre*:

on dis-ai-t dans le livre
IMPERS say-IMPF-3SG in DEF.M book.M

‘**One** said in the book:’

[PP-fr: I]

23-cy) “ (...) ” meddai ‘r llyfr.

meddai yr llyfr
say.DFCTV DEF book.M
“ (...) ” said the book’

[PP-cy: I]

Then, in (24), the construction with the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in the original French text is translated into Welsh as a reflexive-like construction, where the subject *y planedau mawr* ‘the big planets’ refers to the direct object *eu* ‘their’⁶.

⁶ The direct object of verbal nouns appears as a genitive construction or a possessive adjective.

24-fr) *Je savais bien qu'en dehors des grosses planètes comme la Terre, Jupiter, Mars, Vénus, auxquelles on a donné des noms,*

je	sav-ai-s	bien	que	en	dehors	de+le-s	gross-e-s	planète-s
1SG.NOM	know-IMPF-1SG	well	CMPL	in	outside	of+DEF-PL	large-F-PL	planet.F-PL
comme	la	Terre	Jupiter	Mars	Vénus	à+le-s=quell-e-s	on	
like	DEF.F	Earth.F	Jupiter.M	Mars.M	Venus.F	to+DEF-PL=REL-F-PL	IMPERS	
a-Ø	donn-é-Ø		de+le-s	nom-s				
have-3SG	give-PTCP.PST-M		of+DEF-PL	name.M-PL				

‘I knew well that apart from large planets like the Earth, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, to which **one** gave names,’

[PP-fr: IV]

24-cy) *Fe wyddwn i'n iawn fod yna gannoedd o blanedau eraill heblaw'r planedau mawr sydd wedi eu henwi, megis y Ddaear, Iau, Mawrth a Gwener.*

fe ^L	gwydd-wn	i	yn	iawn	^L -bo-d	yna	^L -cann-oedd	o ^L
POS	know-IMPF.1SG	1SG	ADV	real	DSJTV-be-VN	there	DSJTV-hundred.M-PL	of
planed-au	arall- ⁱ	heblaw	yr	planed-au	mawr-Ø	sydd	wedi	eu ^h
planet.F-PL	other-PL	except	DEF	planet.F-PL	big-PL	be.REL.DIR	after	3PL.POSS
enw-i	megis	yr ^L	Daear	Iau	Mawrth	a	Gwener	
name-VN	like	DEF	Earth.F	Jupiter.M	Mawrth.M	and	Venus.M	

‘I really knew there being hundreds of other planets apart from large planets which **have been named** (lit. **have named them(selves)**), like the Earth, Jupiter, Mars and Venus’

[PP-cy: IV]

Examples classified as ‘Other Constructions’, again, are difficult to be generalised, so that no further consideration will be given in this paper.

5. Other Occurrence of Impersonal Form in Welsh

There are only two examples where the impersonal form in Welsh corresponds to the passive voice in the original French text. For example:

25-fr) *Cet astéroïde n'a été aperçu qu'une fois au télescope, en 1909, par un astronome turc.*

cet-Ø	astéroïde	ne	a-Ø	ét-é-Ø	aperç-u-Ø	que	un-e
this-M	asteroid.M	NEG	have-3SG	be-PTCP.PST-M	glance-PTCP.PST-M	only	INDEF-F
fois	à+le	télescope	en	1909	par	un-Ø	astronome
time.F	in+DEF.M	telescope.M	in	1909	by	INDEF-M	turc-Ø

‘This asteroid **was glanced** only one time in the telescope, in 1909, by a Turkish astronomer’

[PP-fr: IV]

25-cy) *Dim ond unwaith, trwy ysbienddrych, y gwelwyd yr asteroid yma, a hynny ym 1909, gan seryddwr o Dwrci.*

dim ond un^L=gwaith trwy ysbienddrych y **gwel-wyd** yr
 nothing.M but one=time.F through telescope.M REL.INDIR **see-PST.IMPERS** DEF
 asteroid yma a hynny ym 1909 gan seryddwr o^L Twrci
 asteroid this and that.PL in 1909 with astronomer.M of Turkey.M

‘Only once, through a telescope, when this asteroid **was seen**, and in 1909, by an astronomer of Turkey’

[PP-cy: IV]

26-fr) *Le cinquième jour, toujours grâce au mouton, ce secret de la vie du petit prince me fut révélé.*

le cinqu-ième-e jour toujours grâce à+le mouton ce-Ø secret
 DEF.M five-ORD-M day.M always grace.F to+DEF.M sheep.M this-M secret.M
 de la vie de+le petit-Ø prince me **f-u-t** **révél-é-Ø**
 of DEF.F life.F of+DEF.M little-M prince.M 1SG.DAT **be-PST-3SG** **reveal-PTCP.PST-M**

‘The fifth day, always thanks to the sheep, this secret of the little prince’s life **was revealed** to me’

[PP-fr: VII]

26-cy) *Ar y pumed diwrnod, diolch eto i’r ddafad, **datgelwyd** y gyfrinach hon i fi am fywyd y tywysog bach.*

ar y pum-ed diwrnod diolch eto i yr^L dafad **datgel-wyd**
 on DEF five-ORD day.M thanks.M again to DEF sheep.F **reveal-PST.IMPERS**
 yr^L yfrinach hwn-a i fi am^L fywyd yr tywysog bach-Ø
 DEF secret.F this-F to 1SG about life.M DEF prince.M little-M

‘On the fifth day, thanks again to the sheep, this secret **was revealed** to me about the little prince’s life’

[PP-cy: VII]

However, approximately 30 passive clauses are retrieved from the original French text (although it is very difficult to judge whether the clause concerned is a passive construction like *it is broken by him* or an adjectival predication like *he is tired*) and it can be said that such a corresponding is rather rare.

Based on the data, the following two constructions are major ones when the passive construction in French is translated into Welsh: α) *get-passive*; β) *activisation* of the clause. Note that the former is presented as a passive construction in King (2003).

For example, the passive verb phrase *avais été frappé* (lit. ‘had been hit’) in the original French text is translated into Welsh with a construction with the verb *cael* ‘get’, in (27):

27-fr) *J'ai sauté sur mes pieds comme si j'avais été frappé par la foudre.*

je ai saut-é-Ø sur me-s pied-s comme si je
1SG.NOM have.1SG jump-PTCP.PST-M on 1PL.POSS-PL foot.M-PL as if 1SG.NOM
av-ai-s ét-é-Ø frapp-é-Ø par la foudre
have-IMPF-1SG be-PTCP.PST-M hit-PTCP.PST-M by DEF.F lightning.F

'I jumped on my feet as if I **were hit** by the lightning'

[PP-fr: II]

27-cy) *Neidiai ar fy nhraed fel pe bawn i wedi cael fy nharo gan fellten.*

neidi-ais ar fy^N traed fel pe **ba-wn** i **wedi ca-el**
jump-PST.1SG on 1SG.POSS foot.M.PL as if **be-COND.1SG** 1SG **after** **get-VN**
fy^N **tar-o** gan^L mellt-en
1SG.POSS **strike-VN** with lightning.F-SG

'I jumped on my feet as if I **would have been struck** (lit. I **would have got** me **strike**) by a lightning'

[PP-cy: II]

Then, the passive verb phrase *avais été découragé* (lit. 'had been discouraged') in the original French text is translated into Welsh with activisation of the clause: the original subject *je* 'I' corresponds to the direct object *fy* 'my' in the translation and the original oblique agent phrase *par les grandes personnes* 'by the adults' to the subject *oedolion* 'adults' in (28):

28-fr) *Je avais été découragé dans ma carrière de peintre par les grandes personnes à le âge de six ans*

je **av-ai-s ét-é-Ø décourag-é-Ø** dans ma carrière
1SG.NOM **have-IMPF-1SG be-PTCP.PST-M discourage-PTCP.PST-M** in 1SG.POSS.F career.F
de peintre par le-s grand-e-s personne-s à le âge de six an-s
of painter.M by DEF-PL big-F.PL person.F-PL to DEF.M age.M of six year.M-PL
'I was **discouraged** in my career of painter by the adults at the age of six years'

[PP-fr: II]

28-cy) *Roedd oedolion wedi fy siomi yn fy ngyrfa fel arlunydd pan oeddwn i'n chwech oed,*

r-oedd-Ø oedol-ion **wedi fy siom-i** yn fy^L gyrfaf fel
POS-be-IMPF.3SG adult.M-PL after 1SG.POSS **disappoint-VN** in 1SG.POSS career.F as
arlunydd pan oedd-wn i yn chwech oed
painter.M when be-IMPF.1SG 1SG in six age.M

'Adults **had disappointed** me in my career as a painter when I was six years old,'

[PP-cy: II]

Finally, the other three instances of the impersonal form in Welsh will be given below. In the following example, the causative verb phrase *fit trembler* ‘made shake’ in the original French text is translated into Welsh with the impersonal form *siglwyd* ‘was shaken’ (<*siglo* ‘shake’) and the original direct object *la cabine d'aiguillage* ‘the switching cabin’ corresponds to the subject *y caban signals* ‘the signaling cabin’.

29-fr) *Et un rapide illuminé, grondant comme le tonnerre, fit trembler la cabine d'aiguillage.*

et un-Ø rapide illumin-é-Ø grond-ant comme le tonnerre
 and INDEF-M rapid.M illuminate-PTCP.PST-M scold-PTCP.PRS like DEF.M thunder.M
f-i-t **trembl-er** la cabine de aiguillage
do-PST-3SG **shake-INF** DEF.F cabin.F of switching.M

‘And a rapid illuminated, scolding like the thunder, **made shake** the switching cabin’

[PP-fr: XXII]

29-cy) *Siglwyd y caban signals gan ruo taranllyd trêñ cyflym, llawn golau.*

sigl-wyd yr caban signal-s gan^L rhu-o taranllyd-Ø trêñ
shake-PST.IMPERS DEF cabin.M signal.M-PL with roaring.M thundery-M train.M
 cyflym-Ø llawn-Ø golau
 quick-M full-M light.M

‘The signaling cabin **was shaken** by a thundery roaring of a rapid train, full of light’

[PP-cy: XXII]

In the following example, the impersonal construction *il ne fallait pas* (lit. ‘it must not’) in the original French text corresponds to the impersonal form *dylid* ‘one ought to’ (<*dylu* ‘ought to’) in the Welsh translation. In King (2003), the impersonal form of this verb is argued in a separate section, as well as the case of *gallu* ‘can’, which was considered in §4.2.

30-fr) *Je savais bien qu'il ne fallait pas l'interroger.*

je sav-ai-s bien que **il** ne fall-ai-t pas le
 1SG.NOM know-IMPF-1SG well CMPL **3SG.M.NOM** NEG must-IMPF-3SG NEG 3SG.M.ACC
 interrog-er
 interrogate-INF

‘I knew well that you must not interrogate him’

[PP-fr: XXIV]

30-cy) *Fe wyddwn yn iawn na ddylid ei holi.*

fe^L gwydd-wn yn iawn na^L **dyl-id** ei hol-i
POS know-IMPF.1SG ADV right CMPL.NEG **ought-IMPF.IMPERS** 3SG.M.POSS ask-VN

‘I knew well that **one ought** not to ask him’

[PP-cy: XXIV]

In the last one, the impersonal form *elwir* ‘one gains’ (< *elwi* ‘gain’) is used in the Welsh translation, but there is no element corresponding to it in the original French text. Here, the constructions in the original text and those in the translation are quite different.

31-fr) *J'ai de sérieuses raisons de croire que la planète d'où venait le petit prince est l'astéroïde B 612.*

je ai de sérieus-e-s raison-s de cr-oire que la planète
1SG.NOM have.1SG of serious-F-PL reason.F-PL of believe-INF CMPL DEF.F planet.F
de où ven-ai-t le petit-Ø prince es-t le astéroïde B 612
of REL.ADV come-IMPF-3SG DEF.M little-M prince.M be-3SG DEF.M asteroid.M B 612
‘I have serious reasons to believe that the planet from where the little prince came is the asteroid B 612’

[PP-fr: IV]

31-cy) *Mae gen i resymau pendant dros gredu mai o'r blaned a elwir yn asteroid B 612 y daeth y tywysog bach.*

mae-Ø gen i L-resym-au pendant-Ø dros^L cred-u mai o
be-PRS.3SG with 1SG DSJTV-reason.M-PL definite-PL for believe-VN CMPL from
yr^L planet a **elw-ir** yn asteroid B 612 y daeth-Ø
DEF planet.F REL.DIR **gain-PRS.IMPERS** ADV asteroid.M B 612 REL.INDIR come-PST.3SG
yr tywysog bach-Ø
DEF prince.M little-M

‘I have definite reasons to believe that it is from the planet which is **called** asteroid B 612 (lit. **one gains** in asteroid B 612) that the little prince came’

[PP-cy: IV]

6. Conclusion

The impersonal form in Welsh is hardly used as a translation of the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ in French, at least in this study. In many cases, it is translated with the second person plural subject, or sometimes, with the noun *dyn* ‘man’. When the impersonal pronoun *on* ‘one’ is less generic, it can be translated into Welsh with other constructions, notably with the first person plural subject.

In half of the examples with the impersonal form in Welsh, the verb concerned is a modal verb,

such as *gallu* ‘can’ and *dylu* ‘ought’, of which impersonal form is described in a separate section in the previous research. In this point, the result concerning them can be said to coincide with such a description.

The impersonal form is also said to correspond to the passive construction in other languages, but such a translation can be established in a very few cases. Passives as used in French are more likely to be expressed with the *get*-passive or, in many cases, they correspond to active clauses.

In this paper, Welsh texts are written in the colloquial language, where the impersonal form is not supposed to appear very often. Texts written in literary Welsh should be also researched in the future.

Abbreviations and Symbols

Morphological Processes

- L: lenition (e.g. *merch* /merx/ ‘girl’ > *y ferch* /ə verx/ ‘the girl’)
- N: nasalisation (e.g. *calon* /kalon/ ‘heart’ > *fy nghalon* /və ɬalon/ ‘my heart’)
- H: aspirantisation (e.g. *tad* /tad/ ‘father’ > *ei thad* /ei θad/)
- ^a: a-colouring of a stem (e.g. *gwyn* ‘white (M)’ > *gwen* ‘white (F)’)
- ⁱ: i-colouring of a stem (e.g. *gafir* ‘goat’ > *geifir* ‘goats’)

Grammatical Terms

1	first person	EMP	emphatic	PL	plural
2	second person	F	feminine	POS	positive
3	third person	FS	future stem	POSS	possessive
ABL	ablative	FUT	future	PRS	present
ACC	accusative	IMPERS	impersonal	PST	past
ADV	adverb	IMPF	imperfect	PTCP	participle
ATR	attributive	INDEF	indefinite	Q	question marker
CMPL	complementiser	INDIR	indirect	REL	relative
COND	conditional	INF	infinitive	SG	singular
DAT	dative	M	masculine	SUBJ	subjunctive
DEF	definite	NEG	negative	SUP	superlative
DFCTV	defective	NOM	nominative	VN	verbal noun
DSJTV	disjunctive	ORD	ordinal		

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ウェールズ語の非人称形とその言い換え

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ウェールズ語には他のケルト諸語と同様、動詞の非人称形が存在する。この非人称形は基本的に主語が不特定である場合に用いられるが、時に他言語において受動態で表現されるような環境にも対応する。ただしウェールズ語においては、この非人称形が口語形であまり広く用いられない、ということが知られている。

そこで本稿では、フランス語原作小説 *Le Petit Prince* およびそのウェールズ語訳である *Y Twysog Bach* を用いて、フランス語の非人称代名詞 *on* ‘one’ による節がどのようにウェールズ語に翻訳されているのかを調査した。

結果、フランス語の非人称代名詞 *on* ‘one’ に最も多く対応したウェールズ語の構文は 2 人称複数主語によるものであったが、名詞 *dyn* ‘man’ を主語とした用例もある程度得られた。1 人称複数主語として翻訳されたものも見られたが、これはフランス語の非人称代名詞 *on* ‘one’ が 1 人称複数を表している場合であると考えられる。

ウェールズ語の非人称形については、テキスト全体で 8 例が得られたのみである。そのうちフランス語の非人称代名詞 *on* ‘one’ に対応するものは僅か 3 例であり、それらは全て法助動詞 *gallu* ‘can’ によるものであった。