On some morphological properties of the adjective in Gothic

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Abstract

The morphology of Gothic, as well as that of other older Germanic languages, has traditionally been analysed in phonological terms, with classifications that reflect earlier stages in the development of Germanic. This paper represents a pioneering attempt at applying the 'canonical' approach to the analysis of older Germanic, with a view to producing an adequate synchronic analysis of the morphological properties of the Gothic adjective. It is demonstrated that the traditional separation of strong and weak forms is synchronically unreasonable, and determination represents a non-canonical morphosyntactic feature of the Gothic adjective. Even though the traditional stem-class labels are obsolete from a synchronic point of view, synchronic form variation within Gothic adjective paradigms warrants distinguishing four inflectional classes, a classification which coincides with the traditional philological taxonomy. In addition to inflectional class, Gothic adjectives have been found to have stem indexing and syncretic index features.

Keywords: Gothic, weak adjective, strong adjective, canonical typology, morphological features, determination

1 Introduction

It has been traditional in historical Germanic linguistics to split up the nominal lexicon on an etymological basis, various types of stem class distinguished in accordance with the attested or reconstructed element that intervened between the root and the inflection of the word. In nouns, for instance, these distinctions are often motivated by the different

stem classes being restricted to nouns of a given gender: thus, Germanic *a*-stems are either masculine or neuter, while *ō*-stems are exclusively feminine. These distinctions are essentially a reflection of a fairly remote past in the development of Germanic and may be seen to be formally unwarranted as no clear *a* or *ō* element is consistently identifiable throughout the respective paradigms of attested Germanic.

Besides, the traditional principle is only partly useful as no straightforward gender distinctions underlie the composition of some other stem classes: *u*-stems, for instance, include members of all genders; adjectives are not gender exclusive altogether, even though most adjectives are etymologically traceable back to an original nominal stem class (this is, in fact, one of the most compelling pieces of evidence to suggest that no formal distinction was made between adjectives and nouns as lexical classes in the Indo-European proto-language).

As a result, the system as presented in traditional historical terms makes for an unobjective and inadequate presentation of the synchronic state of affairs and tells us little about the actual morphological make-up of the language. Because the feature of gender is not consistently manifest across paradigms, it cannot be the (only) reference criterion, and more formal descriptional machinery is required.

In an effort to produce a more adequate synchronic account of data, this paper offers an alternative to the traditional analysis of Gothic adjective morphology on the basis of the 'canonical' method.

2 The Canonical method: basics

The 'canonical' method is a relatively recent development in typology, which has now been applied to both morphological and syntactic levels of description, and notably areas such as agreement, suppletion, morphological and morphosyntactic features and others—see Corbett (2005), (2006), (2007) and Corbett/Baerman (2006), with further references in each.

It is, first and foremost, a methodology whose goal it is to address cross-linguistically attested phenomena in a consistent and principled way. It seeks to 'define a principled point in the theoretical space and calibrates outwards from it' (Corbett 2007, 8), the theoretical space representing a range of possibilities that all conform to definitional parameters. In other words, in canonical typology it is the definition which is the point of departure. Only after definitional limits reaching the 'logical end point' have been set for each parameter are actual instances introduced to 'populate' the created theoretical space. But what is a canon and how are canons identified?

The canon represents a canonical, or 'best', 'clearest', 'indisputable', instance of a linguistic phenomenon which conforms to every definitional parameter. Because the definition itself pushes theoretical possibilities to the limit, such idealised canonical instances of linguistic phenomena may either be very rarely attested or even altogether non-existent and, such being the case, represent logical constructs. Canonical examples are found where the various definitional parameters converge. What this means in principle is that a given example, whether attested or only imagined, conforms to every criterion set and represents an ideal point of reference to measure from. Thus a canon implies neither 'usual', 'frequent', 'normal', 'expected', 'unmarked' or 'prototypical' (Corbett 2009). Rather, establishing a canonical manifestation of a linguistic phenomenon supplies theoretical context for the identification of real-life instances, which, among other things, allows a more adequate and consistent treatment of gradient phenomena and highlights phenomena that have escaped notice.

2.1 Canonical inflection

In traditional grammatical description, anything to do with word forms other than clearly derivational affixation is treated under 'accidence' or 'morphology', and while various structural types of elements are differentiated, no attempt is ever made to inquire into the theoretical implications of drawing any such distinctions. This is particularly true of traditional philological accounts of grammatical structure. For instance, we learn from Wright (1954, 85-103) that nouns in Gothic fall into two broad types, strong and weak, a distinction founded on the diachronic phonological properties of stem type, strong nouns having 'vocalic' stems and weak nouns '*n*-stems'[1]. However, while structural differences are indeed observable between the paradigms of these noun types, the ramifications of drawing such distinctions are left undefined. It seems important to point out, as a preliminary observation, that while class distinctions are primarily morphological, they have effects on the exponence of morphosyntactic features (i.e. inflections). Hence, two types of feature within Gothic (and more generally, early Germanic) nouns as well as adjectives: morphological, which refer to syntax-independent form variation, and morphosyntactic, which correlate with syntactic context. As has been noted, both morphological and morphosyntactic features have a place in making up the adjective paradigm in Gothic, and while each type of feature can be set apart for theoretical discussion, in practice there exists a degree of interdependence between their formal exponence. But what is an inflectional paradigm and how does the principle of canonicity apply to it?

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[1] The same practice is followed in every other treatment of Gothic grammar, including Kieckers (1928), Gukhman (1958), Krause (1968), Lehmann (1994), Rauch (2003), Braune/ Heidermanns (2004) and others, as well as the grammars of other older Germanic languages.

In synthetic languages such as Gothic, an inflectional paradigm is a catalogue of the forms of a lexeme which bear some morphosyntactic significance. This is to say that forms are found to vary in different syntactic contexts, and based on this variation, they are identified as bearers of grammatical information defined in terms of features and their values. Thus, any slot within the paradigm of a Gothic adjective can be defined in terms of case, number, gender and determination[2]. While the actual composition of the paradigm cannot be established without a careful observation of a lexeme's behaviour in syntax, the dimensions of the canonical paradigm of a lexeme can be theoretically constructed. So by observing form variation we can identify four case feature values on the one hand, and three gender values on the other (making a total of twelve slots) across two number values (twenty-four slots). The feature of determination, which consists of two values, 'definite' and 'indefinite', scopes over these features and their values, making a total of 48 slots. In a canonical situation, each slot would be defined in terms of unique formal exponence. In other words, each slot within the paradigm would be uniquely predictable. What follows is a table of criteria, reproduced from Corbett (2007, 9), which sets out the requirements of a canonical paradigm:

	COMPARISON ACROSS *CELLS* OF A LEXEME	COMPARISON ACROSS *LEXEMES*
COMPOSITION/STRUCTURE	same	same
LEXICAL MATERIAL (≈ shape of stem)	same	different
INFLECTIONAL MATERIAL (≈ shape of inflection)	different	same
OUTCOME (≈ shape of inflected word)	different	different

Table 1. Criteria for canonical paradigms

According to this, the paradigms of different lexemes are naturally bound to be different owing to different lexical material used. In a canonical situation, the structure of the paradigm and the inflectional component should be predictably the same. However, while the paradigm of what is a single lexeme shares structural characteristics with the paradigms of other lexemes, each cell is uniquely identified in terms of morphosyntactic specification.

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[2] Traditionally, an *a priori* division is created between strong and weak adjectives. It is based partly on the functional principle of setting apart definite and indefinite forms and partly on the philological principle of stem structure, all the strong (indefinite) adjectives having stems in a vowel, and weak (definite) adjectives being *n*-stems. It must be emphasised that this subdivision is dogmatic and as such is theoretically unsound and irrelevant from the point of view of synchronic form variation taking place within one lexeme.

2.2 Canonical morphological features

A number of problems with regard to the study of morphological features are pointed out by Corbett and Baerman (2006), who make a pioneering attempt at providing a typology of morphological features. The main criterion for the recognition of a class of morphological features (as distinct from morphosyntactic features) is form alternation that has no reference to syntactic rules. As a result, four types of feature are distinguished: inflectional class, stem indexing, syncretic index and morphophonological features.

Inflectional class features fall into affixal and prosodic, and the two subclasses cross-classify. Affixal features help identify in the lexicon groups of lexemes that share the same inflectional properties. Prosodic features represent a sub-variety of inflectional class. Here lexemes are grouped in accordance with their paradigmatic stress patterns.

Stem indexing features partition lexemes of the same class in accordance with stem alternations that serve to distinguish various grammatical functions.

The syncretic index feature refers to forms that correspond to more than one morphosyntactic value. In other words, the same pattern of formal relationship (syncretism) affects the same slots in the different parts of the paradigm.

What underlies morphophonological features is intra-paradigmatic formal distinctions which arise as a result of certain phonological processes. Although, on the basis of their Polish examples, Corbett and Baerman (2006, 241) conclude that the morphophonological feature distinctions are based on no longer productive phonological rules, this may well be called into question. Germanic abounds with instances of such features: in Old English, for instance, any cluster involving the potential splicing of [č] and [t] resulted in the cluster -*ht*- [xt]. Hence, the infinitive *cweccan* 'to shake' gives the preterite *cweahte*. Besides, the presence of the cluster [xt] causes breaking in the root, which is another morphophonological feature of Old English.

3 Gothic adjective paradigm design

We are first going to look at two inflectional paradigms involving a putative (*a*-stem) adjective—unlike the convention, the two paradigms, indefinite and definite (labelled provisionally as I and II), have been assembled into a single system.

It is of note here that Gothic grammar manuals conventionally supply full paradigms of given words despite the fact that a complete paradigm has not been attested for a single Gothic adjective. As a result, two types of linguistic inference are made: on the

one hand, a number of forms in a paradigm for any given adjective are inferred from the attested tokens of other adjectives; on the other hand, and especially in the case of weak adjectives (which are naturally less frequent than strong ones)[3], details of missing forms can be hypothesised analogically on the basis of forms in other paradigm slots—this is how various weak forms, traditionally not given in grammars, have been supplied here.

This approach has clear pedagogical advantages, not least because it generates a consistent picture of how some common phenomena were manifest. However, it has shortcomings too, and in particular the fact that it creates a false impression that the grammatical system of a dead language is simpler, more regular, less prone to defectiveness and the like. At any rate, even though details in the paradigms are in part reconstructed, the reconstructions recommend themselves as very plausible, and there is no reason to question the plausibility of what must have been a general pattern, particularly if we want to make any further progress in synchronic morphological analysis.

3.1 Inter- and intra-lexical variation

Although every attempt has been made here to verify the attestation of adjective forms, the evidence for the paradigms is largely based on Wright (1954). Any forms not supplied by Wright are additionally posited.

Singular	I	II	I	II	I	II
	Masculine	**Masculine**	**Neuter**	**Neuter**	**Feminine**	**Feminine**
Nom.	-s	-a	-∅/-ata	-ō	-a	-ō
Acc.	-ana	-an	-∅/-ata	-ō	-a	-ōn
Gen.	-is	-ins	-is	-ins	-aizōs	-ōns
Dat.	-amma	-in	-amma	-in	-ai	-ōn
Plural						
Nom.	-ai	-ans	-a	-ōna	-ōs	-ōns
Acc.	-ans	-ans	-a	-ōna	-ōs	-ōns
Gen.	-aizē	-anē	-aizē	-anē	-aizō	-ōnō
Dat.	-aim	-am	-aim	-am	-aim	-ōm

Table 2. Paradigm 1 of the Gothic adjective

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[3] Weak adjectives are scarce because of the relatively rare pragmatic need to produce a definite description, a situation that would require more complex cognitive processing. Besides, weak adjectives can only be attributive and hence make a relatively small subset of all attributive uses—the opposite (i.e. a definite predicative form) would be in conflict with the basic FSP principle that clause-final information is new (and therefore indefinite). The same can be said about the distribution of indefinite and definite adjectives in Lithuanian, the latter being confined to attributive positions.

This analysis has been obtained following the principle of eliminating recurrent forms. Thus, if we were to take an adjective such as *blinds* 'blind', the one form occurring throughout the paradigm would be the form *blind-,* which is itself further indivisible. What remains is inflectional material whose functional status is yet to be established.

Such a juxtaposition of paradigms has several advantages. First, what the above table clearly illustrates is not only a complete set of adjective inflections, but also the fact that all of this formal variation occurs within a single lexeme! Thus, even though, on the surface, we are juxtaposing two sets of inflections, it would be incorrect to analyse the inflectional partitioning between classes I and II as a morphological feature of inflectional class. In other words, the distinction between I and II is on the same level of grammatical analysis as that between Nominative and Accusative or between Neuter and Feminine as it originates outside pure morphology, in the morpho-semantic feature of determination. Therefore, synchronically, it does not make sense to talk about separate paradigms (indefinite as opposed to definite); instead, I and II represent two additional feature values within a single paradigm. As is to be expected from a canonical paradigm, all of these features and their values (with the exception, of course, of the values of any given feature) cross-classify: each case value is distinguished across number, gender, determination and the like.

Now let us look at another paradigm, but this time one of a different putative (*-ja* stem) adjective. As in the previous instance, the following inflectional forms have been obtained by the elimination of the most immediate recurrent forms which are further indivisible. The question of what is a further indivisible form is not entirely straightforward and will require some deliberation. Consider the following:

Singular	I	II	I	II	I	II
	Masculine	**Masculine**	**Neuter**	**Neuter**	**Feminine**	**Feminine**
Nom.	-jis	-ja	-i/-jata	-jō	-ja	-jō
Acc.	-jana	-jan	-i/-jata	-jō	-ja	-jōn
Gen.	-jis	-jins	-jis	-jins	-jaizōs	-jōns
Dat.	-jamma	-jin	-jamma	-jin	-jai	-jōn
Plural						
Nom.	-jai	-jans	-ja	-jōna	-jōs	-jōns
Acc.	-jans	-jans	-ja	-jōna	-jōs	-jōns
Gen.	-jaizē	-janē	-jaizē	-janē	-jaizō	-jōnō
Dat.	-jaim	-jam	-jaim	-jam	-jaim	-jōm

Table 3. Paradigm 2 of the Gothic adjective

Assume the underlying lexeme is the adjective *midjis* 'middle'. Two analyses seem possible: one between *mid-* and the remainder and the other between *midj-* and the remainder. This binary segmentation alerts us to a possible hierarchy of forms: the form *midj-* is unchanged throughout the paradigm; separating it from the remainder gives us a near-identical set of endings to the one of the adjective *blinds*. The question is now whether the element *j* is actually an integral radical component of *midjis* (in which case the paradigm is in principle identical with that of *blinds* and presents no theoretical interest) or a separate (perhaps bound) element in its own right. Any individual intra-lexemic analysis is likely to lead to the same cul-de-sac; however, an inter-lexemic examination of the paradigm provides an unambiguous clue. Consider the following attested forms of the adjectives *midjis, niujis* 'new' and *gawiljis* 'willing':

Pl.D.m.	mid	jaim
Sg.A.f.	mid	ja
Sg.G.f.	niu	jaizos
Sg.N.f.w.	niu	jo
Pl.N.m.	gawil	jai
Sg.N.m.w.	gawil	ja

Table 4. Inter-lexemic analysis of adjective morphology

It is apparent from this juxtaposition of the different paradigm slots of different lexemes that the element *j,* although it occurs throughout the paradigm, is not part of the root of any of the adjectives. At the same time, juxtaposing these attestations with the respective slots of the paradigm of adjectives such as *blinds* gives the following analysis:

Pl.D.m.	mid	j	aim
Sg.A.f.	mid	j	a
Sg.G.f.	niu	j	aizos
Sg.N.f.w.	niu	j	o
Pl.N.m.	gawil	j	ai
Sg.N.m.w.	gawil	j	a

Table 5. Inter-lexemic analysis of adjective morphology: roots, stem suffix, inflection

Thus the element *j* is, strictly speaking, not part of the inflection; nor does it seem to belong to the root. At the same time, its presence with some adjectives and not others is lexically conditioned, no productive rule being possible to formulate for Gothic that would warrant the use or non-use of the element. Now that we have successfully identified the Gothic adjective inflection, it seems reasonable to term this intervening

element provisionally a stem suffix. After all, it is the tandem of the root and the *-j-*element that remains unaltered throughout the paradigm[4].

Adjectives such as *hrains* 'clean', *analaugns* 'hidden, secret', *brūks* 'useful' and some others, which are originally *i*-stems, form a separate group. Again, like with the above two classes, the differences in form which emerge in the paradigm are lexically-conditioned, and while the inflectional material remains generally almost the same as that of the two previously discussed groups, differences in stem morphology are significant enough to warrant a separate treatment. Consider the following paradigm:

Singular	I	II	I	II	I	II
	Masculine	**Masculine**	**Neuter**	**Neuter**	**Feminine**	**Feminine**
Nom.	-s	-ja	-∅	-jō	-s	-jō
Acc.	-jana	-jan	-∅	-jō	-ja	-jōn
Gen.	-is	-jins	-is	-jins	-jaizōs	-jōns
Dat.	-jamma	-jin	-jamma	-jin	-jai	-jōn
Plural						
Nom.	-jai	-jans	-ja	-jōna	-jōs	-jōns
Acc.	-jans	-jans	-ja	-jōna	-jōs	-jōns
Gen.	-jaizē	-janē	-jaizē	-janē	-jaizō	-jōnō
Dat.	-jaim	-jam	-jaim	-jam	-jaim	-jōm

Table 6. Paradigm 3 of the Gothic adjective

This paradigm is peculiar in that it taps into the two previous paradigms to build its own system. One distinctive characteristic is the wide presence of the stem suffix *-j-,* which makes the representation of all plural values, as well as most singular values, equivalent to that in the previous paradigm. In the singular, even though most slots are the same as in Paradigm 2, there are a few significant exceptions which do not lend themselves to an explanation in terms of a productive rule. First, the Sg.N.m./n. *-s/-∅* and Sg.G.m./n. *-is/-is* slots in **I** (solid line) are the same as those in the first paradigm. No such symmetry exists in the accusative singular of the same gender slots (dotted line), the Sg.A.m. **I** slot *-jana* corresponding to the same slot in the second paradigm, and the Sg.A.n. **I** slot *-∅* to

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[4] One reservation is to be allowed for though: the Sg.N.m. form *-j-is* and the Sg.N.n. form *-i.* Synchronically, the vowel *i* here can be said to be in complementary distribution with the approximant *j* in other paradigm slots. If *j* is assumed to be the underlying form for every slot, additional rules can be postulated in order for certain phonetically undesirable situations to be avoided. So in Sg.N.m. the vowel *i* is inserted to prevent the cumbersome splicing of ***-js;* in Sg.N.n. the underlying *j* is vocalised to prevent cumbersome strings of a preceding consonant and an approximant such as ***-dj* in **midj and the like.

that in the first paradigm[5]. One unique distinctive property is the Sg.N.f. **I** slot *-s*, which, though it is syncretic with its masculine counterpart, is not found in any other paradigm. Thus, it is the unpredictable variation of these properties (as set against other paradigms) that warrants distinguishing this paradigm as an independent class. If a more principled formulation is to be attempted, while the first paradigm is defined in terms of a zero stem alternant, the second has the suffix *-j-,* and the third a suffix alternation (zero vs. *-j-*).

A fourth paradigm to be considered is one of the traditional *u*-stem adjectives such as *hardus* 'hard' or *qairrus* 'gentle'.

Singular	I	II	I	II	I	II
	Masculine	**Masculine**	**Neuter**	**Neuter**	**Feminine**	**Feminine**
Nom.	-us	-ja	-u/-jata	-jō	-us	-jō
Acc.	-jana	-jan	-u/-jata	-jō	-ja	-jōn
Gen.	-aus	-jins	-aus	-jins	-jaizōs	-jōns
Dat.	-jamma	-jin	-jamma	-jin	-jai	-jōn
Plural						
Nom.	-jai	-jans	-ja	-jōna	-jōs	-jōns
Acc.	-jans	-jans	-ja	-jōna	-jōs	-jōns
Gen.	-jaizē	-janē	-jaizē	-janē	-jaizō	-jōnō
Dat.	-jaim	-jam	-jaim	-jam	-jaim	-jōm

Table 7. Paradigm 4 of the Gothic adjective

The same reasoning would in principle apply to this paradigm as to the previous one. Insofar as we can identify the stem type of any adjective with any degree of certainty, to the best of my knowledge, there is not a single attested instance of a definite *u*-stem form. Thus, all type **II** plural forms are hypothetical (even if still quite believable because of analogies within and between the paradigms). Again, here we discover a characteristic shared by two previous paradigms: the stem suffix *-j-* is present in most slots, and the entire set of plural forms is identical with that of two previous paradigms. The unique identifying characteristics of this paradigm, again, follow from the evidence of **I** Sg.N./G.m. and Sg.N./G.n. (solid line). The genitive for both gender values is reconstructed. However, the nominative alone, backed up by the Sg.N.f. *-us* suffices to justify distinguishing this paradigm. Like with the previous paradigm, the more generic

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[5] A note must be made here regarding the Sg.N./A.n. slots. No *i*-stem adjective form in *-ata* has been attested and, as a result, the suffix is usually left out, with only the pure stem suggested as a possibility. This, however, is inconsistent with the reconstructions of other unattested paradigm slots. The form in *-ata* is a result of reference to a syntactic rule. Thus, because the alternation in these slots is a question of syntactically-conditioned (rather than lexically-conditioned) allomorphy, it makes no sense not to posit *-ata* (or possibly *-jata*) as an alternative to the pure stem.

Sg.A.m. slot is in contrast with the unique alternant *-u-* in Sg.A.n. (dotted line); both forms in *-jata* are shared with the *midjis* paradigm.

Thus, it would seem that this paradigm is defined in terms of an alternation between *-j-* and the zero stem alternant—that is, of course, considering that *-us, -aus,* and *-u* are regarded as inflections. However, the synchronic status of these elements is problematic. While they certainly form a contrast with the rest of the paradigm and show the absence of the element *-j-,* which recommends them as inflections, their contrast with *-s, -is* and zero (respectively) in the previous paradigms, as well as the alternation of the mutually contradictory forms *-u* and *-jata* (the former unique to this paradigm and the latter referring to at least two other paradigms) suggests separating *-u-* as a stem suffix. This, however, would have implications for our treatment of the alternations between *-aus* and *-is* (with *-au-* and *-i-* separated as stem markers)*,* which would in turn have destructive ramifications for the synchronic treatment of the entire *a*-stem paradigm. Thus all this seems to be a question of making analytical decisions as to how far we are willing to go with the analysis into recurrent forms in our pursuit of a consistent description.

It would seem reasonable to suggest then that, synchronically, *-us, -aus,* and *-u* all represent inflectional material which incorporates elements of what were former stem class markers. Hence, if our description is to be consistent, for Paradigms 3 and 4, the alternation to be posited is not between zero and *-j-,* but between two distinct sets of inflections, one of which is synchronically unsegmentable and the other contains a stem marker.

3.2 Stem index

As has been shown, the paradigms of Gothic adjectives are defined in terms of two basic kinds of alternation. One of them is conditioned by the presence or absence of the element *-j-*. In an attempt to situate it in relation to the root and the inflection we have provisionally termed it a stem suffix. This suffix seems to perform a twofold role. First, it has the capacity to select certain portions of the paradigm thereby associating the exponence of given morphosyntactic categories with its presence (in about 92% of slots) or absence (8%) in paradigms 3 and 4. Second, the alternation can be used to generalise over the entire Gothic adjective lexicon.

Hence, following the definition supplied by Corbett and Baerman (2006, 240-241), we dignify the alternations throughout and within Gothic adjective paradigms with the name 'stem indexing'. On the basis of this feature, Gothic adjectives can be split into two large classes: (i) adjectives which are unaffected by the presence of this element (Paradigm 1) and (ii) adjectives wholly or partially affected by its presence (Paradigms 2-4).

3.3 Inflectional class

Gothic can also be defined in terms of inflectional class features even though the presentation is much less straightforward than that in Russian, not least because in a number of instances identifying the inflection poses considerable issues. Nevertheless, here are the distinctive paradigm slots that contrast throughout the above paradigms—notice that, following the principle of recurrent forms, any stem markers have been left out:

Singular	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV
Masculine				
Nom.	-s	-is	-s	-us
Gen.	-is	-is	-is	-aus
Neuter				
Nom.	-∅/-ata	-i- /-ata	-∅/(-ata)	-u- /-ata
Acc.	-∅/-ata	-i- /-ata	-∅/(-ata)	-u- /-ata
Gen.	-is	-is	-is	-aus
Feminine				
Nom.	-a	-a	-s	-us

Table 8. Inflectional classes of the Gothic adjective

All other paradigm slots being inflectionally syncretic across the four classes (the plural inflection being entirely identical throughout), the above table represents instances of variation which contrast the formal exponence of feature values, the morphological contrast only discoverable among the indefinite forms. The classes of adjectives which the four columns represent correspond to the traditional philological stem-class distinctions. It is evident that Class IV is the most 'canonical' of the four (and incidentally, is the least productive one), and while there is a considerable degree of syncretism across Classes I – III, the differentiation of each class as separate is made valid by a difference in the shape of at least one feature value. Thus, while Classes I and III are inflectionally almost identical, their distinction relies on the difference between the feminine slots. The difference between Class I and Class II consists in the contrast between masculine nominative and neuter nominative and accusative. The most economic scenario of synchronic description would, however, require reference to two feature values, Sg.N.m and Sg.N.f., for access to the inflectional class feature of the Gothic adjective.

Unlike Corbett and Baerman's affixal and prosodic morphological features, our adjective inflectional classes and stem-index types do not cross-classify, but rather seem to form a stacking system (i.e. warrant two competing classifications). While the adjective lexicon is formally partitioned into two broad groups on the basis of the stem indexing characteristics

of lexemes (which, similar to pure morphological features, have no reference to any syntactic or semantic rule and are lexically determined), subtler distinctions are based on inflectional class features. In other words, the two morphological features, stem class and inflectional index, are perhaps best viewed as ancillary to each other.

3.4 Syncretic index

Finally, the Gothic adjective system is non-canonical as it is defined in terms of extensive syncretisms along every dimension. The significance of this from a morphological point of view is that syncretism results in synchronic variation between a bulk of autonomous forms (each of which refers to a certain unique set of morphosyntactic features) and forms that duplicate other forms in the system. Such forms collectively refer to a set of morphosyntactic values by virtue of being formally identical. Syncretism may manifest itself in various ways and, as a result, have different effects on the paradigm. Let us consider the plural masculine and neuter slots of Paradigm 2 of the Gothic adjective:

Plural	Indef.	Def.	Indef.	Def.
	Masculine	**Masculine**	**Neuter**	**Neuter**
Nom.	-j-ai	**-j-ans**	**-j-a**	**-j-ōna**
Acc.	**-j-ans**	**-j-ans**	**-j-a**	**-j-ōna**
Gen.	**-j-aizē**	**-j-anē**	**-j-aizē**	**-j-anē**
Dat.	**-j-aim**	**-j-am**	**-j-aim**	**-j-am**

Table 9. Syncretism in the Gothic paradigm (partial Paradigm 2)

The slots given in bold represent morphosyntactic values which are affected by syncretism. They are in contrast with the indefinite masculine nominative slot, which is the only autonomous slot in this partial paradigm. What is important is that syncretism here not only reduces the canonicity of the paradigm to a minimum (6%) by obscuring the distinctions of case, gender and determination, but also provides at least two inferences into the idiosyncrasies of paradigmatic distribution. First, the squared slots indicate two instances of morphosyntactic exponence which pattern together and each of which, similar to the only autonomous slot in this paradigm, represent one entity from a morphological point of view. As such, they each represent a syncretic index. Second, the two instances of syncretic index show systematic behaviour in that the same value slots are affected across two different gender values (a syncretism of function). Besides, this provides a generalisation about syncretism over multiple inflection classes, the same patterns of syncretism affecting Paradigms 1-4 in exactly the same location.

4 Conclusions

The conventional philological presentation of the structure of Gothic adjective morphology has suffered from certain dogmatic postulates that have obscured our understanding of properties and phenomena that play a significant role in the structural make-up of Gothic as it is synchronically attested.

It is proposed here that the canonical methodology, designed for typological study, can be fruitfully applied to the description of Gothic morphology. The canonical method does not present in itself a framework or a theory which pursues an alternative classification at any cost. Rather, it delivers a disciplined way of thinking which not only ensures a principled and accurate account of synchronic facts but also helps capture a number of valuable theoretical generalisations.

We have seen that there is no synchronic justification for setting apart definite and indefinite adjectives as determination is merely an extra feature of the same paradigm. While at first sight it may be tempting to assume a certain overarching significance for the category of determination as it realises its feature values via different lexical material, this view would be mistaken as the same applies in principle to the exponence possibilities of any feature, whether viewed vertically or horizontally. The point is that each token is marked for only one value of each feature at any one time. There is, however, one significant difference between determination and other features as they apply to the adjective: while gender, number and case have reference to syntactic rules (primarily agreement), the provenance of determination assignment is outside syntax.

Every effort has been made here to avoid unnecessary emphasis on the traditionally recognised adjective stem classes. This traditional labelling makes no sense synchronically as the paradigms do not consistently demonstrate clear evidence of stem marking which would exclusively correspond to any of the labels. If anything, the definite (*n*-stem) forms, even though the historical stem marker has blended with the inflection and is still manifest in a number of slots, contain traces of former vocalic stem marking (in the shape of the stem suffix *-j-* and so on). Thus referring to them as *n*-stems is at the very least inaccurate synchronically as the assignment of the *n*-stem inflection is over and above their intrinsic morphological properties.

Nevertheless, certain vestiges of the former stem types are indeed observable in each respective paradigm, which warrants drawing synchronic morphological distinctions, even if the morphological justification for identifying the adjective classes is of a different kind. Because of extensive inter-paradigmatic inflectional syncretism, many

scantily attested adjectives cannot be synchronically assigned to a stem class with certainty as there is no formal characteristic about the adjective (root) that would suggest an association with any given class. In other words, the stem assignment of any given adjective is entirely lexically conditioned.

Finally, an analysis of adjective paradigms has shown that the traditional distinction of four stem-types is supported synchronically as it coincides with synchronically observable lexically-conditioned formal alternations among different adjective paradigms, even if the traditional stem-class labels are somewhat obsolete. Gothic adjective material indicates that former stem-class morphology is gradually shifted towards inflectional morphology (i.e. formal variation that plays a role in morphosyntax). At the same time, the adjective in Gothic is defined as having purely morphological features such as stem class, inflectional index and syncretic index; no phonomorphological features have been found to exist.

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Dėl gotų kalbos būdvadžio morfologinių ypatybių

Artūras Ratkus

Santrauka

Gotų kalbos ir kitų senųjų germanų kalbų morfologija tradiciškai nagrinėjama remiantis fonologiniais kriterijais. Tokioje tradicinėje formų klasifikacijoje atsispindi ankstesnieji germanų kalbų raidos etapai; taigi, toks analizės metodas – sinchroniškai neaktualus. Siekiant nuosekliai aprašyti gotų kalbos būdvardžių morfologinius požymius sinchroniniu požiūriu, straipsnyje taikomas kanoninis metodas. Pirmiausia pristatoma „kanono" sąvoka, apibrėžiamas kanoniškumas fleksijų morfologijoje ir pateikiama grynųjų morfologinių požymių tipologija. Kanonas, tai – abstrakcija, kuri yra daugelio kanoninių kriterijų konvergencijos rezultatas. Nustatant kalbos reiškinio kanoną, išplečiamos reiškinio teorinės ribos ir sukuriama kanoninė erdvė, kurioje galima logiškai ir nuosekliai klasifikuoti reiškinio apraiškas. Remiantis kanonine metodologija straipsnyje įrodinėjama, kad tradicinis stipriųjų (neapibrėžtųjų) ir silpnųjų (apibrėžtųjų) būdvardžių paradigmų atskyrimas yra sinchroniškai nepateisinamas, kadangi determinacijos (apibrėžtumo/neapibrėžtumo) kategorija, tai – pilnavertė morfosintaksinė būdvardžių kategorija. Skirtingai nuo skaičiaus, linksnio ir giminės kategorijų, determinacija laikytina nekanoniška. Argumentuojama, kad sinchroniniu požiūriu tradicinė būdvardžių klasifikacija pagal istorinį kamiengalį – nebeaktuali, kadangi patys kamiengaliai paradigmose sinchroniškai nebeapčiuopiami. Nepaisant to, fleksijų sistemoje egzistuojanti leksiškai determinuota formų įvairovė sudaro prielaidą išskirti keturias būdvardžių klases, kurios sutampa su istorine klasifikacija

pagal kamiengalį. Taigi galima teigti, kad senoji kamieno morfologija ilgainiui virsta morfosintaksine morfologija. Be minėtų keturių būdvadžių fleksinių klasių, gotų kalbos būdvardyje išskirtini dar du grynai morfologiniai požymiai: kamieno rodiklis ir sinkretiškumo rodiklis.

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