

Work-Notes on Modern Welsh Narrative Syntax (I) *fe-* and *mi-* Revisited: From Macro-Syntax to Narratology¹

Ariel Shisha-Halevy

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Following an early brief attempt at a formal-and-functional resolution of the pre-verbal elements *fe-* and *mi-* in narrative (Shisha-Halevy 1995: Excuse II), these two discourse-function converters are examined again, as part of a comprehensive narrative-grammatical study of Kate Roberts's fiction.²

The challenge and fascination of these elements lie also in their theoretical standing. First, they provide a striking example of the first principle of structural analysis, namely, that functional, indeed structural identity is a matter of coordinates: the junction of compatibilities and commutabilities. Secondly, the semantic facet of *fe-* and *mi-* extends beyond sentence- and text-grammar, to narratological phenomenology levels – tone and nuancing.

In the corpus of Kate Roberts's short stories and novellas, the following main roles and frame statements are here proposed for *fe-* (with Preterite or Imperfect) and *mi-* (with Preterite):

Fe- signals:

- temporal distancing from the story-now, flashback, recollected episode and other cases of inserted memory narrative; narrated character's (and Narrator's) alienation (including for instance sarcasm and irony); Narrator's detachment (e.g. 'voiceover' and evidentiality cases)

- strong delimitation – breaking the narrative thread; halting narrative pace; reducing cohesion, loosening or disabling concatenation
- transition to internal narrative, to Comment Mode or Omniscient Narrator’s Channel
- superordination (subsuming several functions). Rhematization. (With Imperfect) narrative apodotics. Sequelling, *dénouement* or wind-up.

Mi- is typical of

- report; appreciation/evaluation. Reminiscent personalized narration. Locutive narration
- epistolographic narrative
- diary narrative
- emotionally involved narration. Confession. Reflection.

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0.1 The topic of this article is the interplay between clauses and forms introduced by the opaque elements *fe-*, *mi-* and *zero*, a concise account of a complicated subject. This brief study is more suggestive than conclusive: a starting-point for discussion, for a study that readers might pursue. It aims to provide a coherent interpretation, and bring to the fore some problems, and use them to focus on deeper, underlying concerns.

Let me begin with a few preliminaries, to explain my purpose and methodology in this paper, which reports on work still in progress – work-notes, concerning narrative *fe-* introducing the main narrative carrier (Preterite)³ or the Imperfect (but not the tense, in narrative conventionally called ‘present-future’, which I prefer to call Aorist,⁴ which is essentially dialogic); *mi-* introducing the Preterite only. *Fe-* and *mi-* are discourse-structuring converters: pre-clausal elements signalling micro- and macrosyntactic status for the clause.⁵ The converted clauses are here always affirmative.⁶ For corpus I use the short stories, and two novellas (*Stryd y Glep* (1949) and *Tywyll Heno* (1962)) of Kate Roberts;⁷ the examples are relatively few, selected as particularly revealing from the abundant evidence, and meant to be representative only. A point that needs to be made concerns the value of the examples: the core evidence is unambiguous and compelling, but the peripheral examples, albeit less cogent, still corroborate and comply with a thesis that enhances and

enriches the understanding of the text. (It is always a problem to know how much weight to give the caprices of documentation, but the abundance of examples in our case allows considerable confidence.) This extended note far from exhausts the functional spectrum of the opaque features in point, which require monographic discussion. It should be observed that both elements, and especially *fe-*, are opaque, and their signifié, while highly complex, may be epitomized as ‘the rhetoric of distancing and involvement’. Moreover, it is probable that these two morphs, conjointly and separately, are components of a significant cluster, the formal mega-signal of a mega-sign.

The roles or values of *fe-* and *mi-*, familiar preverbal elements in Modern Welsh, are remarkably nuanced and vary in different (sub)textemes and genres, even in Kate Roberts’s own idiolect. (This may be one of the reasons for the general obfuscation of the grammatical evaluation of this feature.) The difference between different writers – corresponding to different staging of narratives – is striking. The present study concerns broadly conceived narrative.

0.2 First, some theoretical, formal and functional theses – points of fundamental significance as framing statements for the system of explanation.

(1) *fe-* and *mi-* are distinct linguistic signs. They co-occur in the same corpus, in the same texteme and registers, hence they are not ‘meaningless’ or even stylistically operative (in the sense of ‘semantically unopposed’);

(2) *fe-* and *mi-* are sentence converters;

(3) *fe-* and *mi-* are formally and functionally asymmetrical.⁸ They co-occur in the corpus (and thus cannot be simply regulated in a dialectal distribution);

(4) an immediately striking formal distributive factor is the propinquity of *fe-* to the delocutive (3rd-person) sphere, of *mi-* to interlocutive (1st-2nd-person) personal sphere. This implies a high objectivity or detachment factor for *fe-*, a high subjectivity factor for *mi-*;⁹

(5) juncturally, the effect of *fe-* and *mi-* is very different. The former signals (inter alia) manipulation of – a dramatic break or loosening in – narrative concatenation; the latter seems indifferent in this respect. Juncture is a prime, all-important parameter of syntax: thus, *fe-* may be seen as an element controlling narrative flow;

(6) the respective functioning and distribution of *fe-* and *mi-* are by no means simply correlatable with the Evolution and Comment Modes (alias Foreground/Background) of the narrative;¹⁰

(7) while the two converters formally operate in macrosyntax, their (high-level, abstract-relational) signifieds fall well within the narratologically meaningful semantic ranges.

0.3 I take *fe-* and *mi-*, prefixed to affirmative narrative verb clauses, to be important grammatical signals in narrative texture – sophisticated, powerful yet finely nuanced narrative devices in involved patterning, all-important in Kate Roberts’s prose. As I see it, *fe-* and *mi-* are *discourse-structuring converters*, that is, exponents of discourse, not of syntactical-unit, functions. They form distinct narrative tenses; indeed, they are arguably among the most important narrative units; in the case of *mi-*, the combination arguably forms a distinct narrative tense. Both are features of narrative structure, being prime modulators, that is, signals of shift marking and patterning of narrative texture. (Their absence is a real *zero* signal, with its own complex junctural and narratological signification): even more than features of narrative staging, these are signals of narrative design and architecture. Kate Roberts’s construction at her best is never shoddy; an awareness of the devices discussed here enriches the reading of the text, often with subversive overtones.

In 1995 (*Studia Celtica* 29), I defined and explained the notion of conversion as applied to Middle Welsh, and *en passant* attempted a tentative pilot study of the Modern Welsh sentence converters *fe-/mi-*, in the context of narrative focusing, on the basis of a short novel, *Y Gromlech yn yr Haidd* (1988), by the late Islwyn Ffowc Elis, a greatly missed friend and mentor. The conclusions were corroborated in another corpus, *Bwrw Hiraeth*, collected short stories (1981) by Dafydd Parri (see below).

The present study is in principle independent of the 1995 pilot, which, however, is not retracted here. That study was not nuanced enough, not subtly enough argued, and left lingering questions and doubts. It is certainly incomplete, and simplistic to a degree. Its orientation and perspective, not to mention its corpus/database and idiolect, are entirely different. Still, the 1995 sketch is presupposed by, and in a way basic to, the present tractate.

0.4 A word on the descriptive-heuristic advantage of the notion of conversion over the conventional, diffuse '(pre)verbal particle', beyond the agrammemic (or, at best, lexico-grammemic) connotations of 'particles', which generally have either discourse-analytical associations – as 'sentence particles' or *Abtönungspartikeln* (Discourse Markers) – or just as last-resort pigeonholing. Linguists have often a loose way with '(sentence) adverbs', 'adverbials' and 'particles'. The advantage of the conversion approach lies mainly in the systemic implications of conversion and converter-hood, as paradigmatic notions. 'Conversion' broadly and specifically signals the syntactic/macro-syntactic status of a clause (of predicative nexus). Thus, for instance, and by paradigmatic token, discourse-referred conversion (interrogation, response, negation and more) sheds necessary light on the macro-syntactic perspective. Moreover, conversion syntax constitutes an essential typological trait.

0.5 In his outstanding grammar, Peter Wynn Thomas (1996) devotes considerable space to *fe-* (*mi-* is throughout paired with *fe-*, but not really considered functionally, certainly not in opposition to *fe-*). Thomas is apparently the only scholar to offer a detailed functional account of *fe-* (and, incidentally, to use Kate Roberts generally in his database). He does not accept the still prevalent approach of *fe-/mi-* in a south/north dialectal distribution, although they actually co-occur in literary modern Welsh, northern and southern, and certainly in Kate Roberts's 'northern' corpus. (For data on this geographical distribution, also of early forms of the converters, see Morris-Jones (1913: 428). Indeed, *mi-* as colloquial 'northern' and *fe-* as formal/literary 'southern' features of style are acceptable in a general perspective, and do not conflict with the functional statements made below.)

I must, however, take exception to certain of Thomas's statements – mainly to the diffuse description and the inevitable flatness ensuing from the restricted 'sentence-grammatical' view, the non-macro-syntactic scope. One finds little conceptual clarity in Thomas's functional statements; nor does he ask, let alone answer, the question of structural and oppositional value of the elements in point. A point of view with which one would certainly take issue is the alleged 'asemanticism' (see p. 88: '[*fe-*] may be omitted without altering the meaning'). This, I believe, is unacceptable.¹¹

Thomas (1996: §§3.7–10 (p. 86ff.)) points to three large functional groups for *fe-* [*mi-*]:

(a) ‘Semantic functions’ (p. 87f.) – our signifying roles – which consist of emphasis on ‘cyflawni gweithred y ferf’, *fe-* being a ‘geiryn cadarnhaol’ (here *mi-* is explicitly said to replace *fe-* on occasion). [Although focusing – or rather rhematization – is certainly part of the functional spectrum for *fe-*, see below, this statement is too vague. I must confess I am critical of the notion of ‘emphasis’ *tout court*, while focusing and rhematization is anything but straightforward (see below).]

(b) ‘Stylistic motivation’ – to convey informality, colloquiality or ‘rhuthmau llafar’ (p. 86, etc.). As a brief overview will immediately show, this is hardly the case in Kate Roberts’s work; on the contrary, *fe-* signals inter alia formal detachment and alienation. Moreover, ‘style’ (instead of signification) arguments rather deplete signification ones of their cogency. (Of course, style *connotation* is quite normal alongside signification.)

(c) ‘Grammatical function’ – that is, presumably, morphological roles: ‘to accommodate infixed pronominal object’. [This immediately begs the question of the infixed object position itself, and of *fe-* as a non-pertinent morphological element.]

0.6 David A. Thorne presents *fe-* and *mi-* as ‘pre-verbal particles’ (§§ 80, 212IV, 336), with some diachronic information, paradigmatic indication, but no functional discussion. Similarly, Melville Richards’s classic *Cystrawen y Frawddeg Gymraeg* (1938: §§36, 3(b), 135, 145) focuses on diachrony, with no functional synchrony at all. This is a most serious omission of essential matter: it is astonishing to realize the prevailing convention, that *fe-* and *mi-* have nothing but a formal *raison d’être* – or not even that; no attempt to do justice to the subtleties of the astonishingly rich, formally marked narratological semasiology observable in Welsh (and in Celtic generally).

I believe that these converters require a closer and more sensitive analysis of text, cotext and context, and that their narratological signifieds are of the essence.¹²

0.7 In Shisha-Halevy (1995: §3.2.1, Excuse II, p.170ff.),¹³ the main functional statements are, for the relevant syntagmatic environments (I quote, more or less):

Fe-: a non-concatenating, delimitation (I) marking a shift in narrative function, a break in the chain that signals a turning-point or the narrative unit of block in which the narration announces or clarifies (through the characters or the author's explicit information) its meaning, or (II) turning the focus onto a different, internal 'discourse world', a layer or channel shift. *Zero* + preterite, on the other hand, is the concatenating, linking narrative tense, carrying the main-line, 'steady pace' plot.

Mi-: 1st person: '*perfectum praesens*'. Personal-sphere report. Reminiscent narrative. 3rd person: excited report.

0.8 Although I have to declare a descriptive syntactician's full interest, the *raison d'être* of the present investigation is not merely in the structuralist *signifiant/signifié* analytic evaluation of a textual element: a formal feature (and a paradigmatic choice: we are after all dealing with the oppositions, in the Preterite environment, of *fe-* with *mi-*, and either/both with *zero*), calling *ipso facto* for a matching semantic-functional one. Its goal is more ambitious, vastly more important, and considerably more interesting. For I believe these features operate on the highest levels of narrative structure, levels that are traditionally and conventionally within the brief of *narratology* or (as it is also currently known) narrative studies, that is, not usually considered part of the mission of linguistic analysis. (Note that I am not referring to an interdisciplinary approach, but to an extension in the linguistics continuum, still in the protocol of structural analysis.) Thus, questions like that of the 'narrative Me' (Zimmermann 1971), or Narrator's involvement (below), or the depths and variety of memory narratives. The elements under study have an intense bearing on understanding Kate Roberts's text. The author's gamut of feeling – subjectivity, involvement, sensitivity, empathy and compassion for her characters – or objective, distanced, alienated detachment – are all expressed by and in linguistic nuancing signals. In other words, I suggest, more or less following in the footsteps of Harald Weinrich, that it is up to structural-linguistic (grammatical) analysis to map 'purely narratological' landscapes: the case of *fe-/mi-* is an exquisite showpiece for applying this uni-disciplinary ambition.

Fe- and *mi-*, most striking of discourse converters, are prominent among the narrator-director's staging devices and options for choice. By implication, higher or lower frequency, or even absence, of these elements¹⁴

are significant for what may be considered, and reveal, stylistic and artistic decisions concerning the regulation of narrative information and narrative organization.¹⁵ This makes a structural linguist's analytic work difficult – not least since the evidence is often bound to be ambiguous, and some notions are fluid and problematic, and hard to bring sharply into focus – but highly rewarding. In the present study, I start with and focus on the signifieds – the functions; obviously, beyond the two signifiers, there is a whole textual world of formal features that need to be included in the description.

1. *Fe-*

1.1 On the first level of signification, one's eye is drawn at once to cohesion contouring: *fe-* combined with the Preterite is a primarily junctural device – its main operative principle is a **delimiting break**, or disruption, or loosening, or even disabling of narrative concatenation, a break or halt in narrative flow, as opposed to *zero* conversion. This drastically reduces cohesion, even when seeming to concatenate on its own. Note the crucial importance in narrative grammar of manipulating or halting concatenation, pace- and rhythm-setting,¹⁶ which underlines the importance of *fe-* as 'brake' – by no means impairing iconicity, but superimposing a distinct, looser pace. This junctural delimitation precludes **compound reading** of plot strands and linguistic events, and thereby enhances the identity and selfhood of the *fe-* converted clause. Note that here, in a Preterite environment, with *fe-*, *zero*, and more rarely *mi-*, is one of the striking cases of switching (*Übergang*), syntagmatic contrast in narrative. (Note that, when it comes to concatenation grammar, juncture all but coincides with syntax. Pacing and rhythm regulation are basically junctural.)

1.1.1 A note on tensing. The often invoked double temporality of narrative complicates the dissociation of tense and time clearly and emphatically propounded by Harald Weinrich. Moreover, tenses operate and are valued in textemes, not in language. Tensing is not applicable absolutely to language, but to textemes.¹⁷ In narrative, the Welsh Preterite – not past tense – is the *zero* carrier; it is combined with both *fe-* and *mi-*. The Imperfect – in narrative, not *past* tense either – also combinable with *fe-*, but not with *mi-*, is very different (and arguably *marked*), since it is essentially non-concatenating.¹⁸ See below.

1.2 On the second level of functional resolution, *fe-* signals **distancing from current narrated reality**, from the storyline and from the story-time present ('story-now'). This more or less corresponds to Genette's '*anachronies*'.¹⁹

1.3 On the third, and semantically most open and explicit level of resolution, as application of 1.1–2, *fe-* signals, according to cotext and context, to the author-director's staging programme, the following cases and types of layered and otherwise complex narration:

1.3.1 Two time-lapse narratives in contact, opening a new narrative: looking back into the past – flashback, recollected episode, narrative backtracking, reminiscence, fragmented memory narrative, memory backdrop and recollected mood.²⁰ (This is by no means marginal: in Kate Roberts's works, the past often casts shadows on the present.) **Autobiographical 'forensic personal truth'. Cut away to a different narrative.**

1.3.1.1 Note that the borderline between flashback and ('jump-start') memory narrative, the heart-rending process of recollection (which also involves distancing of time and space), as also between the several different types of memory narrative (subject of a separate study), is often fleeting, and so faint it barely exists. In this functional range, *fe-* may even disable the iconicity factor of narrative evolution, even though the narration event sequence may still match the 'reality' one. The case of *fe-* converting the pluperfect is striking: this is an *episodic narrative* inlaid in a past framework.

1.3.1.2 Tell-tale 'obstinate signals' (H. Weinrich)²¹ for this function are (typically topical presets) *unwaith* 'once', *weithiau* 'at times', *rywdro* 'once, on (some) occasion', *un diwrnod* 'one day', *un noson* 'one night', *un bore* 'one morning', and a few others. The pluperfect following *fe-* serves as backtracking episode marker.

(1) (*O Gors y Bryniau* 111)²² [Dora Lloyd reminisces about her calf.]
Teimlodd yn wir ddiig ato unwaith. Fe dorodd i mewn i gae'r lein ddillad
ryw ddiwrnod, ac fe wnaeth ddifrod yno. Fe basiodd popeth [*sic*] rhad,
ond fe gnodd bopeth drud onid oeddynt yn rhidyll fel bocs pupur, ac yn eu
plith flows sidan gwyn, y blows lliw cyntaf i Ddora Lloyd ei brynu ar ôl

claddu ei gŵr. Yr oedd yn ddig hyd ddaagrau wrtho ar y dechreu. ‘She felt truly angry with him once. He broke into the clothes-line field one day, and wrought havoc there. He ignored everything cheap, but chewed everything expensive until they were full of holes like a pepper pot, and amongst them a white silk blouse, the first coloured blouse Dora Lloyd bought after burying her husband. She was angry with him at first to the point of tears’. *Fe-* introduces here strikingly all clauses constituting the memory chunk.

(2) (*O Gors y Bryniau* 14) *Fe*’i gwelai Tomos ef ei hun eto yn hogyn bach bach yn eistedd ar y stôl gron wrth y tân gartref, ar noson oer yn y gaeaf ... ‘T. saw himself again as a small, small boy, sitting on the round stool by the home fire, on a cold evening in winter...’

(3) (*Gobaith* 24) ond unwaith fe lwyddodd Wiliam ar gynllun i fynd i nôl ei fam yno, ar esgus fod ganddo eisiau ei gweld ar fater pwysig. ‘but William succeeded once in a plan to follow his mother there, on the pretext that he needed to see her on an important matter’.

(4) (*Gobaith* 95) *Fe* aeth yr amser ymlaen, a minnau heb ei dweud, nes o’r diwedd teimlwn nad oedd werth ei dweud ... ac yno fe syrthiais mewn cariad â bachgen o’r un oed â mi ... ‘Time went on, without me saying it, until at last I felt it was not worth saying ... and then I fell in love with a boy the same age as me...’

(5) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 25) Ond rywdro, wedi iddynt ddechrau mynd ar i lawr, fe aeth i siou efo’i gŵr, am ei bod yn ddiwrnod braf yn yr haf a hwythau heb obaith cael mynd oddi cartref am wyliau ‘But once, after they began going down, she went to a show with her husband, since it was a nice day in summer and they had no hope of getting to leave home on vacation.’

(6) (*O Gors y Bryniau* 93) Weithiau fe âi’r ynni y meddyliaisai ei roddi yn ei thafod i’w breichiau. *Fe* dystiai’r ffordd y sgwriai’r ffustion ar ambell fore Llun wedi cael ffræe â Wil, i hynny’n dda. ‘Sometimes the energy she had thought to put in her tongue would go into her arms. The way she would scour the fustian on the occasional Monday morning after a quarrel with Wil would bear witness to that quite well.’

Fe- here converts the Imperfect. Almost the whole story is here reminiscence flashback! The tension (and blurring) of memory and reality is important, and programmatic, in Kate Roberts's work (consider 'Dychwelyd' in *Gobaith*, where the two realities – 'story now' and 'memory now' coalesce and overlap.

(7) (*Prynu Dol* 58) Un diwrnod fe ddaeth rhyw dawelwch imi wrth ddychmygu fy mod i yn ôl yn y Swyddfa ac Olwen, y teipydd, yn dwad â phaned o de i mi yn y pnawn ... 'One day, some tranquillity came to me by imagining I was back in the Office, with Olwen the typist bringing me a cup of tea in the afternoon ...'

(8) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 47) Fe fu'n mynd trwy rew a lluwch eira, gwynt a glaw, gwres a hindda. Fe fu'n mynd pan fyddai ganddi obaith magu a phan orweddai rhai o'r plant yn gyrff yn y tŷ. 'She went through frost and snowdrift, wind and rain, heat and fair weather. She went when she had hope of having children, and when some of the children were lying, corpses, in the house.'

(9) (*Hyn o Fyd* 66) [Elen abstracted. 'She' is Elen's aunt] (... ni ddylsai fod wedi marw o gwbl.) Fe'i cawsid yn farw yn ei gwely un bore wedi i rywun dorri i mewn i'r tŷ am nas gwelsid er rhai dyddiau ... '(... she should not have died at all.) She had been found dead in her bed one morning after someone broke into her house since she had not been seen for several days.'

(10) (*Rhigolau Bywyd* 40) [Reminiscences of a ghost girl] Ond un noson, noson fel heno, a'r gwynt yn chwythu o'r môr ac yn glanhau'r strydoedd o bobl ac o laid, fe chwythodd y gwynt longwr ifanc i mewn ... Fe ddaeth i mewn yn llythrennol wedi ei chwythu gan y gwynt ... a chydag ef fe ddaeth awel pob môr. 'But one evening, an evening like tonight, with the wind blowing from the sea and cleaning the streets of people and mud, the wind blew in a young seaman ... In he came, literally blown in by the wind ... and with him came the breeze of all seas.'

(11) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 15) Fe welsai Ann het fach bert yn siop Mrs. Griffith am ddau ac un ar ddeg. 'Ann had seen a pretty little hat in Mrs. Griffith's shop, for two and eleven.'

(12) (Extra-corpus: Islwyn Ffowc Elis, *Ffenestri Tua'r Gwyll* (1955: 302–3) [a terrible experience relived by Ceridwen, who recounts it to her young protégé] ‘Fe fynnodd inni’n dau ddod yma, er ’y ngwaethaf i ... fe helpodd Lewis fi i ddod ag o i fyny ... ac wedyn fe aeth Lewis i aros yn y *Collen*. Fe gawsom swper, fe dynnodd o amdano a gwisgo’r crys nos a’r gŵn sy amdanoch chi rwan – ... ac mi wisgais innau’r goban ’ma sy amdana’ i. ’Roedd o’n gorwedd ar y sofffa lle’r ydech chi rŵan. Mi ddwedais i wrtho fod arna’i eisiau y sofffa i wneud gwely i mi fy hun. Ac fe aeth yn lloerig. Mi ddwedodd nad oeddwn i ddim wedi bod yn wraig iddo ... ac mi gododd a dod amdana’i a gweiddi y dangosai o imi piau fi petai’r peth ola’ wnâi o ... Mi waeddais i arno i gofio am ei galon ... Mi gydiodd yno’ i, a ’nghodi i, a ’nghario i i’r stafell ’na ... Mi roth ei ddwylo am ’y ngwddw, a gwasgu ... Pan oeddwn i’n llipa, bron yn anwybodol, fe’i treisiodd I ... Pan oedd o’n codi, dyma fo’n rhoi gwaedd – mi alla’i chlywed hi rŵan – ac mi ddisgynnodd dros erchwyn y gwely, a phan edrychais i, dyna lle’r oedd o a’i ewinedd yn ei frest a’i wyneb yn ddu las ... yn ofnadwy.’ ‘“He insisted the two of us come here, against my will ... Lewis helped me bring him up ... Afterwards, Lewis went to stay in the *Hazel*. We had supper, he undressed and put on the nightshirt and the dressing-gown you have on now ... and I put on this nightdress I have on. He was lying on the sofa where you are now. I told him I needed the sofa to make my bed. And he went mad. He said I had not been a wife for him. And he got up and went for me and shouted he would show me whose I am, even though this would be the last thing he does. I shouted at him to remember his heart ... He caught hold of me, and picked me up, and carried me to that room there ... He put his hands around my neck, and pressed. When I was limp, and almost unconscious, he raped me ... When he got up, he suddenly gave a shout – I can hear it now – and slipped down over the bedside, and when I looked, there he was, with his nails in his chest and his face dark blue ... terrible.”’ Remarkable here is the alternation and gradual transition from *fe*-chronicling to the personal *mi*- mode as emotions intensify. (See further below, ex.75).

1.3.2 Perspectival distancing: perspective and mode shift, e.g. to internalized or internal-focalization narrative; from Evolution to Comment Mode;²³ to Omniscient Narrator’s Channel (Narrator’s

appreciation or evaluation; ‘unknowable information’). Internalization. Transition to parallel plot, condensed or summary narration. Voiceover.²⁴ Considerable overlapping or blurring with (1.3.3) is observable here. The Imperfect converted with *fe-* is often a case of ‘narrative hypothetics’, apodotics or remote/parallel reality (§1.3.4 [c] below). Note especially the recurring *fe wyddai* ‘he/she knew’, formally Imperfect, often with a degree adjunct (*yn iawn*, *yn eithaf da*, etc.):

(13) (*Laura Jones* 9) *Eithr fe wyddai Deian yn amgenach.* ‘But Deian knew better.’

(14) (*O Gors y Bryniau* 71) *Pletiodd Jôs ei wefusau. Fe wyddai yn eithaf da fod digon o nerth yng ngewynnau Wiliam Gruffydd eto ...* ‘Jôs pursed his lips. He knew very well there was strength enough still in Wiliam Gruffydd’s sinews ...’

(Sim. *fe wyddai* – *Ffair Gaeaf* 57, *Te yn y Grug* 20, 89, *O Gors y Bryniau* 43 and often.)

(15) (*Stryd y Glep* 26) *Wrth weld Doli yn eistedd yn y gadair yn y fan yma, yn edrych mor fodlon arni hi ei hun, yn plygu ei phen ac yn codi ei thraed wrth chwerthin, fe gododd rhyw wrthryfel ynof ... a methais ddal fy nhafod.* ‘Upon seeing Doli sitting here in the chair, looking so pleased with herself, bowing her head and lifting her feet laughing, some rebellion arose in me ... and I failed to curb my tongue.’

(16) (*Stryd y Glep* 30–1) *Yn raddol, fel petai’n codi o’r hisymwybod, daeth achos fy mhoen yn glir imi. Yn rhywle yng ngwaelod fy meddwl fe boenwn, nid am fod Miss Jones wedi taro i mewn neithiwr, ond am y gall wneud bob nos Sul eto.* ‘Gradually, as if it were rising from my subconscious, the cause of my pain became clear to me. Somewhere at the base of my mind I was worrying, not because Miss Jones barged in last night, but because she could do so again every Sunday night.’

(17) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 79) *Pan glywodd fod ei achos yn anobeithiol, fod y tyfiant o’r tu mewn iddo wedi myned yn rhy ddrwg – pe cawsai’r doctor afael arno ddwy flynedd yn gynt – fe gerddodd rhyw deimlad diddim i lawr*

ei gorff o’u ben i’w draed. ‘When he heard that his case was hopeless, that the growth inside him had become too bad – had the doctor only got hold of it two years earlier – some insignificant feeling went down his body, from his head to his feet.’

(18) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 24) Fe obeithiasai hi lawer gwaith y caent wenwyn wrth fwyta’r hen fwydydd tyniau rhad. ‘She had often hoped they would be poisoned by eating those cheap tinned foods.’

(19) (*O Gors y Bryniau* 109) Yn ei meddwl, fe gamgymerodd Nel yr ochenaid. ‘In her mind, Nel misunderstood the sigh.’

(20) (*O Gors y Bryniau* 97) Fe’i gwelodd hi ei hun yng ngwaelod y llyn hwnnw. ‘She saw herself at the bottom of that lake.’

(21) (*Haul a Drycin* 11) Ni chysgodd Winni fawr y noson honno. Fe’i gwelai ei hun yn cael ei throi o’i lle ... ‘Winni didn’t sleep much that night. She saw herself being dismissed from her position ...’

Here *fe-* may be seen as introducing an inferential explicative clause, beyond its internalizing role.

1.3.3 The alienation syndrome in delocutivity environment – a pervasive mood in Kate Roberts’s opus: Narrator’s and/or narrated character’s detached observation; ‘auctorial’ narration,²⁵ ‘clinically’ objective,²⁶ distancing, detached, impersonal voiceover. Generalizations and truisms. Metanarrative comments. Character alienation, self-questioning and/or emotional involution.²⁷

1.3.3.1 In this spectrum – probably the most interesting of the distancing applications – the voiceover case is especially complex and significant. It brings us near *meta-narrative*, with ‘subcanonical moods’.²⁸ This detachment/objectivity role is strikingly corroborated by the almost conditioned use of *fe-* in journalistic report; here distancing interfaces with evidentiality.²⁹ The voiceover role – in the Narrator’s Channel – may comment, explain, give parallel or secondary or background or filling-in information, and so on.

(22) (*Gobaith* 65) (a striking instance of protagonist alienation. First-person narration: the minister, invited to tea with three ladies, recounts explicitly a point of intense alienation.) Yn sydyn hollol fe'm cawn fy hun yn gwneud yr un peth â'm cyfaill Huw, yn edrych o'r tu allan ar y tair, ac ar y te parti. Nid oeddwn i ynndo, ond safwn o'r tu allan. Yn fy myw ni allwn lai na gweld y tair merch fel tri jwg mewn set, y jwg mawr, y jwg canol a'r jwg bach ... 'All of a sudden I caught myself doing the same as my friend Huw, looking from outside at the three and at the tea-party. I wasn't in it, but was standing outside. For the life of me I couldn't help seeing the three women as three jugs in a set, the big jug, the medium jug and the small jug...'

(23) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 58) Wrth fyw ar ei ben ei hun fel hyn fe lwyddai i beidio â chlywed dim da am Aels na'i gŵr 'By living on his own like this, he succeeded in avoiding hearing anything good about Aels or her husband.'

(24) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 82) Ond wedi diwrnod neu ddau fe ddaeth Dafydd Parri yn ôl ato'i hun, y Dafydd Parri a oedd yn bod pan weithiai bob dydd yn y chwarel ... 'But after a day or two, Dafydd Parri came back to himself, the Dafydd Parri that he was when he was working each day in the quarry...'

(25) (*Tywyll Heno* 85) yn lle ei drafod fel yr oedd, fel condemniad ar halogi'r deml, fe aeth digalonedd Crist yn ddadl dros ddefnydio grym ac yn ddadl dros ryfel. 'instead of discussing it as it was, as a condemnation of the defilement of the Temple, Christ's dejection turned into an argument for using force and an argument for war'.

(26) (*Tywyll Heno* 77) Ond fe aeth y sgwrs i gyfeiriad na ragwelswn i. 'But the conversation went in a direction I had not foreseen.'

(27) (*Gobaith* 95) Fe aeth yr amser ymlaen... 'Time went on...'

(28) (*Stryd y Glep* 37) Dan a aeth adref gyntaf a Miss Jones yn olaf, ac fe'i cafodd hi ei hun mewn sefyllfa ddigrif. 'It was Dan who went home first and Miss Jones last, and she found herself in a funny situation.'

(29) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 89) Eithr ymhen tipyn fe aeth na fedrai godi o gwbl. ‘But in a little while he became so he couldn’t get up at all.’

(30) (*Gobaith* 23) Ac o’r awr honno fe dyfodd y cyfeillgarwch ... ‘And from that hour the friendship grew ...’

(31) (*O Gors y Bryniau* 117) Rhywsut fe aeth deuddeng mlynedd ar hugain o ’mywyd yn ddim. ‘Somehow thirty-two years of my life turned into nothing.’

(32) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 14) Wrth gwrs, fe fu Tomi’n hoff o deisen. ‘Of course, Tomi was fond of cake.’

The next set of functions consists of three major special applications of *rhematizing superordination*.³⁰

1.3.4 (a) Superordination: rhematization; nexus focusing.³¹ ‘**Prospective reality**’: **sequel (often unexpected), outcome, dénouement, wind-up** (‘and/ but then, at last’, ‘and so’, ‘finally’, etc.) Often paragraph- or episode-final, thus (co)signalling narrative articulation.

1.3.4 (b) Superordination: parenthesis.³²

1.3.4 (c) Superordination (fe- + Imperfect): ‘narrative apodosis’; ‘narrative hypothetics’: ‘would’. Often, one observes an **internalizing effect (thoughts, musings, reverie: cf. §1.3.2 above).** ‘Apodosis’ here does not presuppose a protasis – indeed, this is not a conditional construction, but in essence a remote/parallel-reality case of rhematization. ‘Apodotic’, taken broadly, is a superordinated high-rhematic syntactic status, with a correlated *stricto sensu* protasis a special case. This function, overlapping or interfacing the internalizing one, is an important role of the narrative Imperfect.

(33) (*Tywyll Heno* 83) (Melinda is leaving for the Continent.) Fe ddeuai adref efo phynnuau o ddillad newydd eraill. ‘She would come home with loads of new clothes.’

- (34) (*O Gors y Bryniau* 111) Os câi y llo yn ôl, fe âi a’i meddwl oddi wrth bethau eraill ‘If she got the calf back, he would divert her thoughts from other things.’
- (35) (*Yr Wylan Deg* 100) Gwyddai y byddai ei mam yn gas iawn wrthi, ond dim gwahaniaeth. Fe âi hynny drosodd. ‘She knew her mother would be very unpleasant to her, but never mind. That would blow over.’
- (36) (*Stryd y Glep* 36–7) Miss Jones wedi mynd i edrych am ei chwaer, ac ni byddai’n ôl hyd un ar ddeg. Fe aeth yntau cyn hynny. ‘Miss Jones gone to visit her sister, and would not be back until eleven. He (i.e. Dan) left before that.’
- (37) (*Te yn y Grug* 69) ‘Dowch i’r tŷ er mwyn inni gael ych gweld chi’n iawn, Tomos’ – Ac fe ufuddhaodd fel oen. ‘“Come to the house that we may see you properly, Tomos” – And he obeyed like a lamb.’
- (38) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 104) Chwiliodd am ei fam, ac fe’i gwelodd yn eistedd yn y gadair hanner cylch wrth y tân a’i llygaid wedi chwyddo gan grio. ‘He looked for his mother, and saw her sitting in the half-circle chair by the fire, her eyes swollen with crying.’
- (39) (*O Gors y Bryniau* 30) Yn lle cael gwasgfa, fe gafodd syniad. ‘Instead of having a seizure, he had an idea.’
- (40) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 82) Ond wedi diwrnod neu ddau fe ddaeth Dafydd Parri yn ôl ato’i hun, y Dafydd Parri a oedd yn bod pan weithiai bob dydd yn y chwarel ... ‘But after a day or two, Dafydd Parri came back to himself, the Dafydd Parri that he was when he was working daily in the quarry ...’ See also ex. (24) in §1.3.3, for a possible alternative interpretation.
- (41) (*Gobaith* 26) Bore trannoeth fe’i cafwyd yn farw yn ei gwely. ‘The morning after she was found dead in her bed.’
- (42) (*Gobaith* 91) (Annie sings a pennill over the trout.) Yna fe’i cafodd ei hun yn beichio crio wrth edrych ar y brithyll. ‘Then she found herself sobbing as she looked at the trout.’

(43) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 91) (final scene – final paragraph of the story ‘Y Condemniedig’) Gafaelodd ynddi, a throdd hi ato, ac yn ei threm fe welodd y wybodaeth a roes y doctor iddo yntau. Aeth y frawddegau i ffwrdd. Ni allai gofio dim yr oedd arno eisiau ei ddweud wrthi ond fe afaelodd ynddi, ac fe’i gwasgodd ato, a theimlai hithau ei ddagrau poethion ef yn rhedeg hyd ei boch. ‘He took hold of her, and turned her towards him, and in her look saw the knowledge the doctor had given him too. The sentences went away. He could not remember anything he had to tell her, but held her, and pressed her to him, and she felt his hot tears running down her cheek.’

(44) (*O Gors y Bryniau* 114, final paragraph of the story ‘Y Wraig Feddw’) Ped aethech heibio i’r beudy ymhen tipyn fe welsech Dora Lloyd yn godro efo’i dwy law, ei phen yn dynn yn nhynewyn y fuwch ac yn canu i fiwsig y llaeth yn chwistryllio i’r piser, y pennill hwn ... ‘Had you gone by the cowshed in a little while, you would have seen Dora Lloyd milking with her two hands, her head tight in the cow’s flank, singing to the music of the milk squirting into the pitcher, this pennill ...’

(45) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 114) Ni chafodd ei meddyliau siawns i aros yn hir gyda’r trychineb: fe aeth cwsg yn drech na hwynt, diolch i’w blinder. ‘Her thoughts had no chance to dwell long on the calamity: sleep overpowered them, thanks to her fatigue.’

(46) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 16) Fe wnâi les i Mrs. Ifans weld na chafodd hi mo’r het wedyn. Ac fe gâi Ann, trwy hynny, gnoi cil ar ei haberth. ‘It would do Mrs. Ifans good to see that she did not get the hat after all. And Ann would, thereby, be able to think over her sacrifice.’

(47) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 73) Eithr heddiw, beth bynnag, fe gâi deisennau bychain o binc a melyn ... ‘But today, anyway, she would get small cakes, pink and yellow ...’

(48) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 105) Eto fe hoffai fyned i’r chwarel efo Rhys, a ymddangosai fel dyn iddo ef ... ‘Still, he would like to go to the quarry with Rhys, who appeared to him as a man ...’

(49) (*Haul a Drycin* 11) Trannoeth, dydd Sadwrn, yr oedd yn brynhawn rhydd iddi, ac fe âi adref ... ‘Next day, Saturday, was a free afternoon for her, and she would go home ...’

(50) (*Haul a Drycin* 12) Fe gâi ei llysfam dipyn o flas y tafodd a gawsai mam Winni. ‘Her stepmother would get a taste of the tongue which Winni’s mother had gotten.’

(51) (*Tywyll Heno* 77) (‘have another cuppa with me, Mum, and let’s not answer if the door-bell rings’) Ac fe gawsom lonydd. ‘And we did get some peace and quiet.’

A case of nexus focusing. So too are the following examples:

(52) (*Hyn o Fyd* 75) (of Elen’s furniture:) Yr oeddynt yn gyfain gyda’i gilydd ac fe gaent fod yn gyfain. ‘They were complete with each other, and they would stay so.’

(53) (*Ffair Gaeaf* 79) Sut y medrodd gysgu’r noson honno? Ac eto, fe gysgodd. ‘How could he sleep that night? And yet, sleep he did.’

(54) (*Rigolau Bywyd* 34) Yn araf y caeodd yr adwy ar ôl Gruffydd, ond fe gaeodd. ‘It was slowly that the gap following Gruffydd closed, but close it did.’

(55) (*Hyn o Fyd* 66) (Elen deliberates about going to the auction) Âi fe âi. Eithr oedodd eto ac eistedd. ‘Go she would. But still she tarried and sat down.’

An uncommon – and interesting, from the general-syntactic angle – case of a *topicalized* (*âi*) and then *focalized* (*fe âi*) finite subnexus.³³ It is significant that the pattern occurs in Free Indirect Discourse narrative, here sharply shifting to concatenating Evolution Mode.

(56) (*Hyn o Fyd* 67) Beth petai hithau –? Daeth trymder drosti. Ond fe âi er hynny, câi weld pobl, câi weld bywyd. ‘What if she too –? Sadness came over her. But she would go; she would get to see life.’

(57) (*Haul a Drycin* 18) Yr oedd, fe debygai, ar ei ffordd i gael ffrind. ‘She was – it seemed – on her way to getting a friend.’

Parenthetic. So too

(58) (*Gobaith* 21) Ni bu hynny’n hawdd, nid oherwydd y frwydr yn erbyn tlodi bob amser – fe gaiff dyn dawelwch meddwl mewn tlodi yn aml – ond oherwydd Ann ... ‘This wasn’t easy, not because of the struggle against poverty all the time – a person may often achieve peace of mind in poverty – but because of Ann ...’

* * *

2. *Mi-*

2.0.1 This non-concatenating converter, combined with the Preterite (not the Imperfect) in narrative, is often associated with *fe-* (concatenating-loosener). Indeed, it is frequently opposed to *fe-*, but arguably not to *zero*, and is primarily different from *fe-* in that it is not, or is far less, operative juncturally; in fact, it is non-concatenating (while *fe-* is concatenation-loosening). Another difference is less tangible, and difficult to prove: *mi-* forms *verbal form-units*, so to speak *morphological* units, whereas *fe-* seems to introduce *syntactical* units.

Functionally, *mi-* forms are in general *experientially subjective*.³⁴ They occur typically in locutive, sometimes allocutive environment, and form a ‘nynegocentric’ tense-form, to use a term coined by Damourette-Pichon. This includes emotivity and generally interlocutive internalization.³⁵

The emotional involvement, immediacy,³⁶ enhanced vividness, internal subjectivity, and, needless to say, locutivity and *nynegocentricity* of [*mi-* + preterite] are often strikingly evident, but, beyond this, this converter is still largely enigmatic, since registerial (informal) and even dialectal (north/north-western) factors also seem to be involved. Especially intriguing is the case of *mi-* with *delocutive* actor or object, formally ‘discordant’ but functionally still tangibly within the interlocutive sphere – indeed, very often in narrative within the dialogic texteme.

On the whole, the *mi-* narrative tense seems rather diffuse and less syntactically clear-cut than *fe-* units. Its semantics raises more questions than answers, even if locutivity and emotional involvement seem certain and

primary, often recalling the functional range of a *perfectum praesens* tense. The borderline between the categories suggested below is often blurred.³⁷

Functionally, *mi-* belongs in a syndrome of judgemental, experiential as against evidential *fe-*; character's view rather than Narrator speaker's attitude (Wright 1995). We encounter here empathetic deixis (Adamson 1995), subjectivity (also Carey 1995) and narrative dialogized (which is very different from report). In 'locutive narratives' – actually locutive-sphere narration – subsuming letters, reports, autobiographic, confession and reminiscental narratives (and more), *fe-* is rare or absent. Among Kate Roberts's works, the early and very personal *Laura Jones* is conspicuously rich in *mi-* forms. A study yet to be carried out is the statistical investigation of 'concordant' ('*mi chwarddais*') vs. 'discordant' ('*mi chwarddodd*' and other persons). This will also be significant for determining the grammaticalization cline of *mi-* (and, for that matter, of *fe-*, despite the asymmetry of the two converters). Needless to say, dialogic *mi-* – notably *mi-* + Aorist, a prominent future tense – belongs to a different system.

(a) Epistolary syntax³⁸

(59) (*Laura Jones* 21–2) *Mi chwarddodd yn braf amser cinio* 'He laughed pleasantly at dinner-time'

Mi gododd eisiau chwerthin mawr arnaf 'A strong need to laugh arose in me'
Mi anghofiais ddweud hefyd ... 'I also forgot to say ...'

Mi gerddodd i'r lliidiart ddwsinau o weithiau 'He walked to the gate dozens of times'

(vs. *Cymerais dair noson i sgrifennu'r llythyr yma* 'It took me three nights to write this letter').

(60) (*Yr Wylan Deg* 19) *Gwrthod y gwahodd wnes i , ond mi ddwedodd y wraig y gwnâi hi frechdanau cig i mi, a dyma nhw* 'I refused the invitation, but the woman said she would make meat sandwiches for me, and here they are'

(61) (*Yr Wylan Deg* 20) *Mi welais i un ddynes ddiddorol* 'I saw one interesting woman'

(62) (*Laura Jones* 32) *Ond mi eglurais iddi ...* 'But I explained to her ...'
Mi heliodd meistres fi i 'ngwely ryw noson am fy mod yn gweiddi cymaint ... 'Mistress chased me to my bed one night for shouting so much ...'

Mi euthum ymlaen efo'r hanes 'I went on with the story'
Mi ddaeth i'r tŷ fel bwled a nal i 'She came into the house like a bullet and caught me'

(b) Report, evaluative (as against 'objective') narration. Emotional involvement narrative. Confession.³⁹

Here we encounter a pronounced affinity of the *mi-* form with the *perfectum praesens* tense. In fact, this is arguably one of the two perfectal narrative tenses of Modern Welsh, the other being '{*mae-*} + *wedi-* converb', which, however, is essentially dialogic. The quintessential locutivity of the Present Perfect, of diachronic and synchronic significance, is thus nicely brought home.

It is remarkable that narrative articulators, like *yna*, seem near-incompatible with *mi-* narration; this is hardly the case with *fe-* narrative.

(63) (*Hyn o Fyd* 60) 'Mi wnaeth eich gŵr beth gwirion' oedd ei sylw.
'"Your husband did a stupid thing" was his remark.'

(64) (*Haul a Drycin* 29) 'Marged Huws, Twll Mawn, ydw i, ac mi feddyliais y dylwn i ddwad i edrach amdanoch chi a chithau yn ddiarth yn y lle yma. Clywais nad ydach chi ddim yn cael buwch eto, ac mi ddois i â phrintan o fenyn ...' "I am Marget Huws, of Twll Mawn, and thought I should come and visit you, you being a stranger in this place. I heard you haven't yet got a cow, and I brought a print of butter ..."

(65) (*Haul a Drycin* 10) 'Winni, mi welodd Mr. Huws chi yn siarad efo rhyw fachgen ar y cei gynnau' "Winni, Mr. Huws saw you talking to some boy earlier on the quay"

(66) (*Rhigolau Bywyd* 58) Mi gafodd Meri farw fel y buo hi fyw – yn lân. 'Meri died [actually 'she obtained/was given to die'] as she had lived – cleanly.'

Text-final clause.

(67) (*Hyn o Fyd* 83) Mi ddisgynnodd glaw taranau o hiraeth drosof; nid oes arnaf gywilydd dweud. 'A thunderstorm of longing rained over me; I am not ashamed to say.'

(c) Diary entries – recollected episodes:⁴⁰

(68) (*Stryd y Glep* 24)⁴¹ Wedyn, gan na fedraf siarad am bethau dwfn iawn, mi roddais yr hym iddo reit garedig nad oedd yn rhaid iddo ofni pechu ... ‘Then, since I cannot speak of really profound things, I gave him quite kindly the hint that he did not have to fear committing a sin ...’

(69) (*Stryd y Glep* 12) Nid oes mymryn o wir ynnddi o angenrheidrwydd, ond mi ddywedais beth nes i’r gwir wedyn ... ‘There isn’t necessarily a particle of truth in it, but then I said something close to the truth ...’

(70) (*Prynu Dol* 95 and following) Dydd Sul, Rhagfyr 1: Mae un peth i’w ddweud dros bregeth sâl, mi ellwch adael i’ch meddwl grwydro i’r fan a fynnoch, a mi fu fy meddwl i yn y selar drwy’r pregeth heno ... Bu agos imi gollu fy holl fusnes o’i achos y llynedd: mi aeth yn bedlam ulw wedi i mi ddweud fy meddwl wrth ryw ledi fawr ... Mi edliwiodd Poli ei hachau iddi yn ôl i Adda ... ‘Sunday, 1 December: there’s one thing to be said for a lousy sermon, you can let your thoughts wander wherever you wish, and my thoughts were in the cellar during the sermon this evening ... I nearly lost my entire business because of it last year: it became an utter bedlam, after I gave some grand lady a piece of my mind ... Poli blamed her lineage all the way back to Adam ...’

(d) Miscellaneous: 1st-person subjective/emotional narration; monologues; memory narrative, intensely relived experience. Vivid narrative.⁴²

There are different formal types of memory narrative in Kate Roberts (this narrative subtextemic feature, so important in Kate Roberts’s work, deserves special monographic study). Of these, *mi-* is perhaps the least marked or prominent type; others, quite distinct, are presentative, ‘veiled’ (Imperfect carrier), ‘paintbrush’ (Aorist carrier), ‘meltdown’ (blending various Present tenses) memory narratives.

(71) (*Haul a Drycin* 10) ‘Mi tafodais ef yn iawn a dweud wrtho am fynd adre at ’i fam’ “‘I rebuked him properly and told him to go home to his mother’”

(72) (*Laura Jones* 28) Cofiaf yn dda pan euthum yn was ffarm yn ddechrau, mi fyddwn bron â marw o eisiau mynd at yr hogiau i chwarae ... ac mi

stopiodd yr awydd am fynd atynt i chwarae ynof mor sydyn ... ‘I remember well when I became a farm hand at the beginning, I would almost be dying to join the boys to play ... and the desire to join them to play stopped in me as suddenly ...’

(73) (*O Gors y Bryniau* 117) Ac mi deimlais gyffyrddiad bodis melfed fy athrawes ar ochr fy wyneb ... rywsut fe aeth deuddeng mlynedd ar hugain o ’mywyd yn ddim ‘And I felt the touch of my teacher’s velvet bodice on the side of my face ... somehow, thirty-two years of my life turned into nothing’

(74) (Extra-corpus: Islwyn Ffowc Elis, *Ffenestri Tua’r Gwyll* (1955: p. 302) [a terrible experience relived by Ceridwen, who recounts it to her young protégé] ‘Fe fynnodd inni’n dau ddod yma, er ’y ngwaethaf i ... fe helpodd Lewis fi i ddod ag o i fyny ... ac wedyn fe aeth Lewis i aros yn y *Collen*. Fe gawsom swper, fe dynnodd o amdano a gwisgo’r crys nos a’r gŵn sy amdanoch chi rwan – ... ac mi wisgais innau’r goban ’ma sy amdana’ i. ’Roedd o’n gorwedd ar y sofffa lle’r ydech chi rŵan. Mi ddwedais i wrtho fod arna’i eisiau y sofffa i wneud gwely i mi fy hun. Ac fe aeth yn lloerig. Mi ddwedodd nad oeddwn i ddim wedi bod yn wraig iddo ... ac mi gododd a dod amdana’i a gweiddi y dangosai o imi piau fi petai’r peth ola’ wnâi o ... Mi waeddais i arno i gofio am ei galon ... Mi gydiodd yno’i, a ’nghodi i, a ’nghario i i’r stafell ’na ... Mi roth ei ddwylo am ’y ngwddw, a gwasgu ... Pan oeddwn i’n llipa, bron yn anwybodol, fe’ m treisiodd i ... Pan oedd o’n codi, dyma fo’n rhoi gwaedd – mi alla’i chlywed hi rŵan – ac mi ddisgynnodd dros erchwyn y gwely, a phan edrychais i, dyna lle’r oedd o a’i ewinedd yn ei frest a’i wyneb yn ddu las ... yn ofnadwy.’ “He insisted the two of us come here, against my will ... Lewis helped me bring him up ... Afterwards, Lewis went to stay in the *Hazel*. We had supper, he undressed and put on the nightshirt and the dressing-gown you have on now ... and I put on this nightdress I have on. He was lying on the sofa where you are now. I told him I needed the sofa to make my bed. And he went mad. He said I had not been a wife to him. And he got up and went for me and shouted he would show me whose I am, even though this would be the last thing he did. I shouted at him to remember his heart ... He caught hold of me, and picked me up, and carried me to that room there ... He put his hands around my neck, and squeezed. When I was limp, and almost

unconscious, he raped me ... When he got up, he suddenly gave a shout – I can hear it now – and slipped down over the bedside, and when I looked, there he was, with his nails in his chest and his face dark blue ... terrible.”

This complex and sophisticatedly narrated episode features the *fe-* vs. *mi-* oppositions, with a gradual transition from the general *fe-* to the particular and detailing *mi-* mode, as emotions intensify, as well as different types of concatenation, and presentatives for peak and *dénouement*.

* * *

To conclude. My main thesis and central proposition regarding the two converters *fe-* and *mi-* implies a complexity and staging sophistication far in excess of that which conventional textbook treatment suggests, a complexity of narratological significance.

Many key questions remain, beyond a refinement of functional resolution, demanding scrutiny in a rigorous analysis and an explanatory framework sufficiently subtle. The first, and most fascinating, concerns the tension between the delocutivity/locutivity spheres, respectively emblemized in narrative in the opposition of the Preterite and the Perfect. The second question is one of correlations: between *fe-*, detachment and rhematization/focalization, between *mi-*, between thematicity and subjectivity, between either and modality. Thirdly, a question of affinities: the affinity of rhematicity and narrative distancing/detachment, of thematicity and involvement. Fourthly, questions of differences: between narrative and dialogic environment for *fe-* and *mi-*; between narrator and character (and non-character) as subject to alienation or involvement. And then, quantitative studies of ‘concording’ *mi-* + locutive (‘*mi anghofiais*’) and discordant (grammaticalized) *mi-* + delocutives (‘*mi chwarddodd*’); also the statistical data regarding *fe-*, a case of highly grammaticalized delocutivity.

Notes

1. This is an expanded version of a paper delivered at the Fourteenth International Congress of Celtic Studies, Maynooth, August 2011. This is to be the first in a series of descriptive studies of Kate Roberts’s narrative grammar. My warm

thanks are extended to Simon Rodway for his comments on the Welsh texts and their translation into English, and to my advanced students at the Hebrew University Department of Linguistics, for their vigorous, intelligent reaction to theses set here.

2. The present study is conducted in precisely the same conceptual framework, analytic protocol and terminology as past studies by the author (see in particular 1995, 1998, 1999, 2007, all with terminological glossaries).
3. 'Epic' rather than temporal or historical. See Hamburger (1968: 59ff.); Zimmermann 1971.
4. As 'undefined' or 'generic' present, in the etymological sense of the Greek term and its conception in Stoic grammar; this is the form used in Greek as performative or 'Koinzidenzfall' (E. Koschmieder): the term is so used in other grammars, e.g. in Coptic. See Shisha-Halevy (1995: § 3.0.1; 1998, 38, n. 17).
5. See Shisha-Halevy 1995.
6. The negator *ni(d)- / na(d)-*, being itself a discourse-oriented converter, is incompatible with *fe-* and *mi-*.
7. The collections and novellas used for illustration are: *Ffair Gaeaf* (1937), *Gobaith* (1972), *Haul a Drycin* (1981), *Hyn o Fyd* (1964), *Laura Jones* (1930), *O Gors y Bryniau* (1925), *Prynu Dol* (1969), *Rhigolau Bywyd* (1929), *Stryd y Glep* (1949), *Te yn y Grug* (1959), *Tywyll Heno* (1962), *Yr Wylan Deg* (1976).
8. The two converters do stand in opposition, and so to speak ring the changes in narrative texture, yet are not any more symmetrical than are the interlocutive (1st/2nd) and delocutive (3rd) persons and their respective spheres. On the contrary, they reveal the asymmetry quintessential in the (inter)personal worlds in language and discourse. Now the present statements are corpus-based, *Spezialgrammatisch*, hence essentially synchronic; the diachrony of these converters accounts, albeit broadly, for the interlocutive-sphere effect of *mi-*, the delocutive-sphere effect of *fe-*; both are, of course, etymologically well founded, and in fact account for the said pronounced asymmetry of the two elements, for whereas the formal/functional range of *fe-* is juncturally clear and relatively sharp, *mi-* is often quite fuzzy. In fact, here is a striking instance of grammaticalizing reshuffling of semantic contents, ensuing, not in a fading or tracing of pre-grammaticalization semantics, but in resystematization – revamping, so to speak – of the complex signifié.
9. In film technique, longshot/zoom-out and close-up/zoom-in may correspond (to a degree) respectively to *fe-* and *mi-*. However, the validity of such statements

depends on specific ‘national’ film semiotic systems, ‘staging dialects’, as it were – not unlike the ‘stylistic’ variation in narrative staging. (I am indebted to Mr Benjamin Freidenberg for information regarding film theory.)

10. Cf. Shisha-Halevy (1997; 2007: 30ff.).
11. As a rule, the approach of Awbery 2004 is conventional; I cannot evaluate her statements, since Spoken Welsh is outside my competence. *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* (1267), too, presents *fe-* historically and etymologically, with no synchronic functional statement.
12. Moreover, the distributions of *fe-*, *mi-* and *zero* (frequency, scarceness) are symptomatic, a criterion for identifying and defining narrative subtextemes.
13. See p. 171, n. 117, for references to further discussions.
14. (*Haul a Drycin* 16, absolute opening) ‘Aeth y teulu i gyd i’r capel...’ ‘The whole family went to chapel...’ – apparently a case of exclusion of *fe-*.
15. Genette (1972: 183ff.). In narratological terms, *fe-* and *mi-* are *focalizers*, signals of external and internal focalization (Genette 1972 and Rimmon-Kenan 1996: 71ff.); for *fe-* in particular, and its grammaticalized delocutivity, consider in a sense Rimmon-Kenan (1996: 73) ‘3rd person centre of consciousness’.
16. Cf. Bal (1997: 99ff.).
17. See Weinrich (2001: *passim*) (earlier famously pointed out by É. Benveniste; see also Zimmermann 1971). This insight is crucial when considering *fe-* clauses.
18. Genette (1972: 118ff.). Cf. Shisha-Halevy (2007: 48–53).
19. Cf. Rimmon-Kenan (1996: 77ff.).
20. Cf. Emyr (1976: 34ff.) (‘cofio’). Kate Roberts’s awareness of time as a continuum is sophisticated.
21. Weinrich (2001: 348) s.v. ‘Obstination’.
22. For the corpus of Kate Roberts’s stories, see Shisha-Halevy (1998: 10f. (n. 4)).
23. Cf. Shisha-Halevy 1997, 2007.
24. Cf. Bal (1997: 104f.). This may arguably also belong in the §1.3.1 functional range of distancing; here too ‘desubjectivation’ and evidentiality may be claimed.
25. ‘Auctorial narrative’ (Stanzel 1955: 47): the reader sees the world over the narrator’s shoulder, as it were. ‘Er-Form’ (Stanzel 1955: 38): the delocutive perspective or focalization.
26. See the almost medical reporting in ‘Y Condemniedig’ (in *Ffair Gaeaf*).
27. This is only seemingly paradoxical. *Fe-* distancing can effect subjectivity

as well as ‘detached objectivity’. (Cf. Banfield (1982: 14ff.) on the famous issue of alienating tenses in Camu’s *L’étranger*.) *Tywyll Heno* is a novella concerned with the protagonist’s deep paralyzing enveloping alienation, and abounds with *fe-* events. See also Emyr (1976: 61); Morgan (1991: 54ff.). Note also the story ‘Te P’nawn’, in *Gobaith* (below, ex. 23) – here sarcasm is indeed prominent.

28. The key modality of character alienation, including several manifestations such as sarcasm (see Haiman (1995: 337ff.): ‘subcanonical moods’, including sarcasm, guilt, and more), is a powerful and prominent motive, perhaps one of the foremost motives in Kate Roberts’s fiction.
29. It may be that *fe-* + Preterite, generally, has turned into a default reporting/narrating tense, with *fe-* wholly formalized and devalued.
30. Superordination, a junctural and macrosyntactic feature and concept, subsumes numerous narrative functions. Intriguingly, it is also *meta-narrative* to a degree (see Haiman 1995: ‘meta-message’). Rhematization, cf. Old French *si*, well studied by S. Fleischman, J. Rychner and others. Consider also the ‘it’s’ element *pe* in Coptic (Shisha-Halevy (2007: esp. 29–137)).
31. Nexus focusing, that is, the marking of the predicative nexal dependence in itself (not the theme, rheme or adjunct or object) as focal: Shisha-Halevy (1995: 162ff.; 1998: 47ff., 51ff.); Cohen (2005: ch. 2; 2009). (For instance: ‘I did see her in London’, ‘You *are* nice.’) Generally speaking, focus in narrative is still enigmatic and befuddling, and we cannot advance much beyond ‘focus phenomena’ (Dik et al. 1981). Discussions such as Lambrecht (1996: ch. 5) are not really concerned with narrative.
32. Interestingly, the parenthetical status is evidently superordinate to its environment; juncturally, its correlative boundaries reveal a distinctive looser linkage to its cotext.
33. See Goldenberg 1971 (‘Tautological Infinitive’). The topicalization of a finite verb form – a verbal nexus – is remarkable. The combination of homolexic topicalized and then focalized subnexus is a distinct focalization figure in Welsh: see Shisha-Halevy (1995: 167f.).
34. See Wright and Stein 1995. A little of the extensive literature about this still somewhat subversive issue is suggested in Edward Finegan’s introduction (1995: 1–15).
35. See also Rimmon-Kenan (1996: 79f.).
36. At times, *mi-* + delocutives (3rd persons) appears to convey *close evidence*,

which may suggest *fe-* as a signal for *remote or more remote evidence*. See Aikhenvald 2003.

37. Two texts in the corpus are especially striking and probably telling in their use of *mi-*. First, the important locutively internalized novella *Stryd y Glep*, in which the narrator, bedridden and unmoving Ffebi Beca, harshly watches, recounts her surrounding world, rules (or attempts to rule) relationships seething around her, a watchful, wistful, resentful invalid god: *mi-* is here certainly the prevailing converter (see Emyr 1976: 253 s.v.). Secondly, a naive tale-within-a-tale ('Dici Ned', in *Gobaith*) with a child's fantasy-wishful-autobiography governed by *mi-*forms (along with other narrative forms).
38. Cf. Shisha-Halevy 2005. 'Quasi-epistolary grammar' is an important structural device in Kate Roberts's work.
39. Cf. Emyr (1976: 74ff.).
40. Cf. Emyr (1976: 249 s.v. *dyddiadur*; 1976: 101). The locutivity of the various diary sub-textemes is not far removed from the epistolary one. Like other works, *Stryd y Glep* is constructed in the diary form. Diary syntax in Kate Roberts involves also the narrative or log-book infinitive: see Shisha-Halevy 1997.
41. *Stryd y Glep*, with *Tywyll Heno*. Kate Roberts's two 'introspective' novellas (see Emyr 1976: index).
42. The systemic absence of the Narrative Present in Kate Roberts's fiction may be associated with the frequent occurrence of *mi-*narrative, but also with the very restricted distribution of the Aorist; the only 'Present' is the periphrastic-dirative one. See Wright (1995: 166ff.).

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