

MARIA BLOCH-TROJNAR

POTENTIAL FORMS
IN THE LEXICON OF MODERN IRISH

INTRODUCTION

According to various estimates the mental lexicon of an average language user ranges from 45,000 to 60,000 words (Fromkin *et al.* (2000: 8)). This is only a fraction of the lexicon of the language as a social institution (de Saussure's *langue*). According to McCrum *et al.* (1991) the compendious Oxford English Dictionary lists about 500,000 items (excluding technical terminology).¹ However, counting words in a given language is an arduous and elusive task due to the ability of language users to expand the lexical stock in rule-governed as well as non-rule governed ways (Lyons (1977: 549)). Polish neologisms such as *szopkarz* 'artist producing tableaux of the Nativity', *dzielność* 'bravery' or *wykladowczyni* 'female lecturer' may, if accepted by a wider linguistic community, in time become institutionalized. Even if they are not recognized by respectable lexicographers or are not granted the status of actual or usual words, their existence should not be neglected. They are possible words which demonstrate the generative capacity inherent in our morphological competence and as such constitute a legitimate object of linguistic analysis. In the first part of this paper we shall present views adduced in favour of recognizing potential words in morphological analysis and in the second we shall examine some Irish data which corroborate this approach.

Dr. MARIA BLOCH-TROJNAR – Ph.D. in Linguistics, Associate Professor in the Department of Celtic at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin; address for correspondence – e-mail: bloch@kul.pl

¹ In terms of contents the English lexicon is unique compared to the modest lexicons of neighbouring German or French which contain about 185,000 and 100,000 words respectively.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Since the initial proposal of Allen (1978), a fair amount of evidence, both empirical and theoretical, has accumulated to support the view that the lexicon should be conceived of as two interacting lists – a list of actual words which may be idiosyncratic (the Permanent Lexicon) and a list of potential words which are morphologically regular (the Conditional Lexicon).

This structuring finds support in psycholinguistic studies (e.g. Caramazza *et al.* (1988)), where morphologically complex words (products of both derivation and inflection) are either listed and accessed directly or generated, i.e. formed ‘on-line’. The first route of access is utilised in the case of high frequency, opaque forms with unproductive suffixes whereas the second for transparent, low frequency words. The Permanent Lexicon is, thus, a list close to the traditional notion of the lexicon in that it contains all idiosyncratic items, which are either morphologically simplex or complex. An item can be classified as idiosyncratic only by virtue of its frequent usage (Stemberger and MacWhinney (1988)). The Conditional Lexicon contains all possible words produced by regular processes.

As far as morphological theorizing is concerned, by far the most articulate advocate of the Conditional Lexicon and the importance of potential forms is Malicka-Kleparska (1985, 1987). She argues that ‘without resorting to potential forms no WF rule of any significant generality could be drawn out since potential forms fill two kinds of gaps: they function as input unattested lexemes and output non-utilized words’ (Malicka-Kleparska (1987: 105)). Let us set out her views in greater detail on the basis of feminine personal nouns.²

The category of *Nomina Feminiativa* subsumes derivatives formed from corresponding masculine personal nouns by means of suffixation. The relevant word formation rule (WFR) can be adumbrated as follows:

$$[X]_{[N, + \text{personal}, + \text{masculine}]} \rightarrow [[X] + \text{suffix}]_{[N, - \text{masculine}]}$$

It subsumes a number of formal makers, *-ka* being the most productive:

² A detailed analysis of the rule in question is offered in Malicka-Kleparska (1985: 118-138).

Masculine Personal Noun

pisarz ‘writer’
 tłumacz ‘translator, interpreter’
 nauczyciel ‘teacher’

Feminine Personal Noun

pisarka
 tłumaczka
 nauczycielka

If we cling to the view that only actual words should serve as input to derivation we are hard put to account for the existence of feminine names possessing the relevant formal exponent but lacking an attested masculine base form, e.g. *szwaczka* ‘needlewoman’, *praczką* ‘laundress’, *koronczarka* ‘lace-maker’. These feminine nouns must instead be derived from other available attested bases such as *szyc* ‘to sew’, *prac* ‘to wash’, *koronka* ‘lace’ respectively, in which case the formal description of the process and the semantic contribution of the formal exponent are more difficult to specify.

Attested base

szyc ‘to sew’
prac ‘to wash’
koronka ‘lace’

Feminine Personal Noun

szwaczka ‘needlewoman’
praczką ‘laundress’
koronczarka ‘lace-maker’

On the other hand, if we recognize potential forms, i.e. masculine nouns *?szwacz*, *?pracz*, *?koronczarz*³ we get rid of the problem of baseless lexemes and are given a straightforward and uniform account of the form and semantics of *szwaczka*, *praczką* and *koronczarka*.

It has to be borne in mind, however, that potential forms can be evoked only under certain circumstances. First of all, it should always be possible to find an attested word on which the potential form is based, e.g. *prac* ‘to wash’ → *?pracz* → *praczką*, *koronka* → *?koronczarz* → *koronczarka*. In addition to this, a potential form must be supported by a WFR, i.e. it must conform to a pattern attested in the language. By parity of reasoning, *pracz* can be regarded as potential since there is a rule in Polish whereby personal names are derived from verbs, i.e. *zamiatać* ‘sweep’ → *zamiatacz* ‘sweeper’, *kopać* ‘dig’ → *kopacz* ‘digger’ etc., whereas *koronczarz* is justified by virtue of the systematic relationships *lalka* ‘doll’ → *lalkarz* ‘doll manufacturer’, *czapka* ‘cap’ → *czapkarz* ‘cap maker’, *mleko* ‘milk’ → *mleczarz* ‘milkman’. Furthermore, to regard a form as potential, it must be capable of undergoing the same WF processes as attested lexemes which belong to the same category.

³ ‘?’ denotes a potential form.

The occurrence of potential forms as outputs of WF is also subject to certain limitations. In the model of overgenerating morphology bases undergo a process across the board wherever the conditions on their application are satisfied. Yet, potential complex words may be blocked,⁴ i.e. they will fail to appear in actual speech if there exists an institutionalized synonymous form (based on the same root) (Aronoff (1976: 43-45)). Blocked items cannot give rise to further derivatives, e.g. #*stealer*⁵ blocked by *thief* cannot give rise to **stealerless* (Rainer (1988)) or #*domik* blocked by *domek* ‘house, dim.’ cannot give rise to the second degree diminutive **domiczek* and *domeczek* appears in actual usage (Malicka-Kleparska (1987: 115)). For that reason some linguists have argued that the traditional dichotomy: possible vs. actual words should be replaced with a trichotomy: possible – potential – actual words, where the blocked word is merely potential, formed in accordance with a WFR but not acceptable under normal linguistic circumstances. If no blocking effects are in force and bases conform to the restrictions on the rule, gaps in the output should be regarded as potential words unattested for pragmatic reasons. There is nothing in the linguistic system, which prevents the appearance of ?*biskupka* or ?*samurajka* derived from *biskup* ‘bishop’ and *samuraj* ‘samurai’ respectively. That the acceptability of such formations hinges to a large extent on extra-linguistic reality can best be exemplified by two recently attested female names such as *muszkieterka* based on *muszkieter* ‘musketeer’ and *obrończyni* from *obrońca* ‘defender’.⁶ However, it is not an easy matter to decide unequivocally whether gaps in the output of a rule are due to linguistic or pragmatic factors.

In sum: a potential word must be formed in accordance with a WFR operative in a given language, i.e. it must have a specifiable input and it must formally and semantically correspond to attested forms. Like attested forms belonging to the same category it should be subject to further derivational operations. In the remaining part of this paper we shall examine data from Irish and demonstrate that it is possible to render certain rules more general and exceptionless with the aid of potential words.

⁴ The definition put forward by Aronoff (1976) has been refined and now takes into account not only synonymy but also productivity and frequency (Rainer (1988)).

⁵ ‘#’ marks a blocked potential form, ‘*’ denotes an impossible, unattested formation.

⁶ Both were used in the film *Barbie i Trzy Muszkieterki* ‘Barbie and the Three Musketeers’. The English title is semantically ambiguous and it is by no means clear that the three musketeers are Barbie’s female friends.

DATA FROM MODERN IRISH

Deverbal nominalizations in -áil

As far as the derivational category of Nomina Actionis or ‘abstract deverbal action nouns’ is concerned, it is commonly assumed (Bauer (1983), Malicka-Kleparska (1988), Szymanek (1989: 135)) that there is one derivational rule with well-behaved semantics, i.e. ‘act(ion)/process of V-ing’ which transposes verbs into corresponding nouns. In Irish, the formation of deverbal nominalizations involves about twenty morphophonological exponents (their identity and conditioning not to be discussed here).⁷ For the time being we shall narrow down the scope of our interest to verbal roots which terminate in the phonetic string [a:l]. These verbs are generated by two productive derivational processes, both of which employ the same root/stem forming element *-ál*. The first uses English verbs as bases and almost any English verb not exceeding three syllables in length (Doyle (1992: 99)) can be borrowed into Irish by adding [a:l] (1a). The second operates on nouns (Wigger (1972: 207-210)), as depicted in (1b). The verbs in question form their corresponding nominalizations by means of palatalization of the final consonant.

(1)	English Verb	Verbal Root	Nominalization
a.	bake ['beik]	bácál- [ba:ka:l]	bácáil [ba:ka:lʲ]
	pack ['pæk]	pacál- [paka:l]	pacáil [paka:lʲ]
b.	Noun		
	lód [lo:d] ‘load’	lódál- [lo:da:l] ‘load’	lódáil [lo:da:lʲ]
	planda [plandə] ‘plant’	plandál- [planda:l] ‘plant’	plandáil [planda:lʲ]

However, the highly productive rules in (1) do not account for all *-áil* forms. Of all forms in *-áil* listed in Doyle and Gussmann (1996) about 270 have corresponding verbs. As pointed out by Ó Cuív (1980: 128) there are about 100 abstract nouns for which no corresponding verbs are attested. These abstract nouns can be related to other forms (2a) or may be non-compositional (2b). Some of the latter forms are modeled on English verbs (2c).

⁷ For a detailed analysis the reader is referred to Bloch-Trojnar (2006, 2008a).

(2) Noun	Verb	Abstract Noun in <i>-áil</i>
a. slaba ‘mud, slob’	–	slabáil ‘(act of) puddling, sloppy work’
buaic ‘highest point’	–	buaiceáil ‘(act of) showing off’
taoisc ‘gush, downpour’	–	taoiseáil ‘(act of) vomiting’
b. –	–	strucáil ‘(act of) bargaining’
–	–	gloinceáil ‘(act of) rocking’
c. –	–	sulcáil ‘(act of) sulking’
–	–	scriobláil ‘(act of) scribbling, scribble’
–	–	trádáil ‘(act of) trading, trade’

The semantics of abstract nouns is uniform ‘(act of) verbing’ but the semantic relation between the abstract noun and the corresponding noun in (2a) is not systematic and does not follow any of the typical derivational N→N patterns (cf. Szymanek (1988: 178-180)), which may mean that they are not derivationally related and there is no need to draw the distinction between subgroups (a) and (b) after all.

There are about 50 forms such as for example, *boirbeáil* ‘(act of) threatening, gathering, heightening’ which Ó Dónaill (1977)⁸ lists as a nominalization which can discharge the function of the Verbal Noun (VN), i.e. the present participle – *ag boirbeáil* ‘threatening’.⁹ These abstract nouns are both native (3a) and foreign in origin (3b):

(3) Noun	Noun in <i>-áil</i>	VN
a. paidhc	paidhceáil	<i>Bhí sé ag paidhceáil roimhe sa dorcha-</i>
‘poky place’	‘poking’	<i>das.</i> ‘He was probing his way in the dark.’
–	cáibleáil	<i>Bhí sé á cháibleáil san uisce.</i>
	‘knocking about’	‘He was being tossed about in the water.’
b. –	peilteáil	<i>Tá sé ag peilteáil leis.</i>
	‘pelting’	‘He is speeding along.’

⁸ Henceforth ÓD. ÓD is the most comprehensive Irish-English dictionary available.

⁹ The progressive aspect in Irish is expressed by means of a periphrastic construction made up of the substantive verb *bí* followed by the preposition *ag* and the VN, e.g.

Táim ag péinteáil ballaí.
I am PRT paint-VN wall (gen.pl.)
‘I am painting walls.’

The term Verbal Noun employed in traditional grammars such as Ó hAnluain (1999) is used with reference to the present participle, the infinitive and the deverbial nominalization since there is no surface distinction between them. A single form *péinteáil* depending on the syntactic environment will be glossed as ‘to paint, painting, the act(ion) of painting’.

Dictionaries do not provide examples of finite or infinitive usage for many of these verbs. In the model of morphology we advocate it is not possible to have an inflectional form of the verb without the actual or potential verbal root existing in the language. The lack of verbal forms other than participles may be due to the lexical characteristics of the verbs in question and/or may simply be due to the scarcity of language data in the dictionary concerned.¹⁰

Let us now address the issue of forms in (2). We will claim that all abstract nouns in *-áil* are derived from potential verbs stored in the Conditional Lexicon. Firstly, the semantic paraphrase '(act of) verbing' is typical of actional nominalizations. Secondly, the idiosyncratic semantic relationships existing between simple nouns and nominalizations in *-áil* (2a) are characteristic of N→V derivation and not N→N derivation. There is a productive verb-forming rule in Irish as exemplified in (1). Thirdly and most importantly, we can prove the existence of these potential verbs because they serve as bases for another derivational process, namely the derivation of Nomina Agentis.

Nomina Agentis can be derived from verbal roots and participles (Bloch-Trojnar (2008b)). One type is formed by adding *-í* to the positional variant of the active participle marked with the depalatalizing suffix *-a*.¹¹

(4) Verb (citation form)	VN-gen.	Nomen Agentis
bácáil 'bake'	bácála	bácálaí
caill 'lose'	cailliúna	cailliúnaí
troid 'fight'	troda	trodaí

If forms listed in (2) are indeed derived from potential verbs, these potential verbs should be capable of functioning as bases for the derivation of agentive nouns. More than 60 Nomina Agentis can be related to potential

¹⁰ Biber *et al.* (1999: 471) demonstrate that lexical associations play a part in the formation of the progressive aspect. Some verbs occur over 80% of the time with the progressive e.g. *bleed, shop, chase, starve, chat, joke, kid, moan*. Other verbs have a very weak association with the progressive (less than 2% of the time) e.g. *arrest, award, thank, see, incline*. Certain English verbs are non-continuous verbs, i.e. they never occur in the progressive. By the same token, we should recognize the existence of verbs which are inherently imperfective or feature mostly in the progressive for stylistic reasons. Many of the verbs above describe sloppy, casual ways of doing things, and are highly colloquial, which could account for their strong lexical association with the progressive.

¹¹ In traditional grammars the positional variant of the active participle used to postmodify a noun is referred to as the genitive case of the VN. For a detailed explanation why this terminology is misguided the reader is referred to Bloch-Trojnar (2008b). For a different proposal see Doyle (1992: 71-112).

VNs. In the list below 5 (a, b, c) we can find some agentive nouns which correspond to abstract nominals displayed in 2 (a, b, c) respectively.

(5) Potential VN	Nomen Agentis
a. slabáil ‘puddling, sloppy work’	slabálí ‘sloppy worker’
buaiceáil ‘showing off’	buaiceálaí ‘swagger’
scuaideáil ‘spattering’	scuaideálaí ‘spatterer, sloppy person’
b. strucáil ‘bargaining’	strucálaí ‘bargainer’
gloinceáil ‘rocking, swaying’	gloinceálaí ‘person of unsteady gait’
cadráil ‘chattering’	cadrálaí ‘chatterbox’
c. trádáil ‘trading’	trádálaí ‘trader’
scriobláil ‘scribbling’	scrioblálaí ‘scribbler’
geaimleáil ‘gambling’	geaimleálaí ‘gambler’

In sum: whenever we encounter a form ending in *-áil* in the dictionary glossed as ‘(act of) verbing’ it means that there exists a verb in *-áil*, which serves as the base for this particular nominalization. It is a matter of arbitrary choice of dictionary authors that certain forms are listed as nouns and others as verbs. For example, some abstract nouns which we put into the category which lacks verbal sources, actually, have corresponding VNs according to Dinneen (1927):

Ó Dónaill (1977):	slabáil, -ála, ‘(act of) puddling, sloppy work’ tiargáil, -ála, ‘(act of) preparing, preparatory work’
Dinneen (1927):	slabáil, -ála, ‘working in a careless manner’, <i>ag slabáil agus ag slobáil</i> tiargáil, -ála, ‘preparing; preparation’, <i>ag tiargáil chum iascaigh</i> , ‘getting ready to go fishing’

It is reassuring to find out that even with a limited corpus such as ÓD, which is nowhere near as comprehensive as its English counterpart – the OED, given the appropriate morphological model of description we are capable of making the right predictions.

Deverbal nominalizations in -acht/íocht

There is a class of verbs in Irish which are confined to the progressive aspect and are best analyzed as derived from agent nouns (Wigger (1972: 209-

210), Bloch-Trojnar (2008c)),¹² e.g.

(6) Agent Noun	(V)VN
<i>siúinéir</i> ‘joiner’	<i>ag siúinéireacht</i> ‘doing joinery work’
<i>ceardaí</i> ‘craftsman’	<i>ag ceardaíocht</i> ‘working as a craftsman’

A detailed examination of over 3000 forms terminating in the relevant string in Doyle and Gussmann (1996) leads to the conclusion that the majority of attested *-Vcht*¹³ forms featuring in verbal contexts are denominal (about 147 forms) and about 100 of these nominal bases denote an agent.¹⁴ A further 220 *-Vcht* formations related to agent nouns are not listed in VN usage but stand for nominalizations glossed as ‘(act of) V-ing’, which may mean that we have to do here with derivatives from potential verbs.

Agentive nominalizations are predominantly deverbal (e.g. Bauer (1983: 285-291)). However, they may also be denominal, often with the use of the same formal markers, e.g. in English *write_V* → *writer* and *farm_N* → *farmer*; in Polish *pisać_V* ‘write’ → *pisarz* ‘writer’ and *piosenka_N* ‘song’ → *piosenkarz* ‘singer’ (cf. Szymanek (1989: 185-188)). The same is true of Irish, e.g.

(7) Deverbal Agent	Denominal Agent
foghlaím → foghlaimeoir ‘learn’ ‘learner’	feirm → feirmeoir ‘farm’ ‘farmer’
scaip → scapadóir ‘scatter’ ‘scatterer’	aill → ailleadóir ‘cliff’ ‘cliff-climber’
bácáil → bácálaí ‘bake’ ‘baker’	scéal → scéalaí ‘story’ ‘storyteller’

¹² Similar rules are attested in other languages. One of the semantic patterns typical of English *N* → *V* conversion enumerated by Marchand (1969: 368) is the predicate-subject complement type. The resulting derivatives are paraphrasable as ‘to be, act as, play the *N*’, e.g. *butcher*, *father*, *ape*. In their detailed analysis of innovative verbs in English Clark and Clark (1979) distinguish agent verbs as one of the nine fundamental sense groups. The Irish forms in question also bear a striking resemblance to the so-called *odrzeczownikowe formacje stanowe* (denominal state formations) in Polish discussed by Grzegorzczkowska, Laskowski and Wróbel (1999: 575-576). Derivatives based on names of professions and positions are interpreted as ‘perform duties/actions characteristic of *X*’, e.g. *burmistrzować* ‘be/act as/hold the position of mayor’, *gospodarzyć* ‘be/perform the duties of a farmer’, *matkować* ‘be/act as a mother’.

¹³ *-Vcht* is used to refer to both *-(e)acht/iocht*.

¹⁴ The remaining formations in *-(e)acht/iocht* refer to the category of deadjectival nominalizations (*Nomina Essendi*), which are not relevant to our discussion. A detailed analysis of this category is available in Doyle (1992: 26-69).

snámh → snámhaire
 ‘swim’ ‘swimmer’

beach → beachaire
 ‘bee’ ‘bee-keeper’

This distinction has a bearing on the formation of verbs since deverbal agents are far less likely to serve as bases for the derivation of verbs. This state of affairs is to be expected due to the operation of blocking.

The actual occurrence of an innovative VN derived from a Nomen Agentis is blocked if there exists a corresponding verb which has a regular verbal noun which serves as the base for the derivation of the Nomen Agentis.

(8)	V	Nomen Agentis	VN derived from NA
	buail ‘hit’	buailteoir	#
	cáin ‘punish’	cáinteoir	#
	nigh ‘wash’	niteoir	#

Vicious circles in word-formation are avoided, especially, if the resulting form is to have the same meaning, i.e. V (VN) → Nomen Agentis — # → V (VN).

Deverbal agents give rise to new verbs only in 22 cases attested in ÓD. If the meaning of the V (attested only in the VN usage) derived from a deverbal Nomen Agentis is not equivalent to that of the parent verb, it is attested in actual use.

(9)

Verb	Regular VN	Agent	V (VN in <i>-(e)acht/-(a)íocht</i>)
croch, ‘hang’	ag crochadh ‘hanging’	crochadóir ‘hang- man, gallowsbird, loafer’	ag crochadóireacht ‘loitering, hanging around’
diúg, ‘drain, drink to the dregs, suck, sponge on’	ag diúgadh ‘draining (of liquid, of vessel), sponging’	diúgaire ‘drinker, tippler, parasite, sponger’	ag diúgaireacht ‘draining of liquid, tipping, sponging, wheedling, scrounging, whimpering, crying for favour’
bearr, ‘cut, clip, trim’	ag bearradh ‘cutting, trimming’	bearrthóir ‘trimmer, sharp- tongued person’	ag bearrthóireacht ‘addressing cutting remarks to each other’

There are occasional doublets, i.e. regular VNs and VNs in *-Vcht* with the same meaning. This shows that blocking is no more than ‘a tendency towards economy in the lexicon’, as Scalise (1986: 157) puts it. Rainer (1988) further explains that the blocking strength of a word increases with its frequency. When the actual word is rare, hence more difficult to retrieve from the mental lexicon, its blocking strength is weak, which makes the generation of a new word faster (Anshen and Aronoff (1988)).

(10)

Verb	Regular VN	Agent	(V)VN in <i>-(e)acht/- (a)íocht</i>
iasc ‘fish’	ag iascach ‘fishing’	iascaire ‘fisherman’	ag iascaireacht ‘fishing’
dornáil ‘fist, box, fight with fists’	ag dornáil ‘boxing’	dornálaí ‘boxer’	ag dornálaíocht ‘boxing’
beachtaigh ‘correct, criticise’	ag beachtú orm ‘correcting, criticising me’	beachtaí ‘critical, captious person’	Ná bí i gcónaí ag beachtaíocht orainn. ‘Don’t be forever correcting, criticising us.’

There are 85 deverbal agents in ÓD, which have a corresponding *-Vcht* nominalization glossed as ‘(act of) V-ing’. In a model of morphology which recognizes the Conditional Lexicon, these nominalizations point to the existence of potential verbs.

(11)

Verb	Agent	V (VN)	Nominalization in <i>-(e)acht/- (a)íocht</i>
lorg ‘track’	lorgaire ‘tracker’	?	lorgaireacht ‘(act of) tracking’
cum ‘form, shape’	cumadóir ‘maker, composer’	?	cumadóireacht ‘(act of) inventing’
rop ‘thrust’	ropaire ‘thruster’	?	ropaireacht ‘stabbing, violence’
pian ‘pain, punish’	pianadóir ‘tormentor, punisher’	?	pianadóireacht ‘(act of) paining, tormenting’
feac ‘bend’	feacaí ‘bender, compliant person’	?	feacaíocht ‘(act of) bending, yielding’

Not without difficulty it is nevertheless possible to find examples of *-Vcht* forms from this group in the VN function, which bears out their status as potential verbs. In de Bhaldraithe (1985) we find *ag leargaireacht thart* (*lorgaire = leargeire*) ‘going past idly’ and *Dhá bhean a bhí a’ ropaireacht* ‘two women who were scolding him’.

As far as lexical and denominal agents are concerned we find 80 *-Vcht* formations which function as present participles (12), i.e. four times more in comparison with their deverbal counterparts and about 135 nominalizations derived from potential verbal nouns (13).

(12)

Nomen Agentis	Present Participle
maistín ‘rude person’	ag maistíneacht ‘acting rudely, deliberately misbehaving’
druncaeir ‘drunkard’	ag druncaireacht ‘boozing’
cocaire ‘cocky, cheeky person’	ag cocaireacht le chéile ‘sparring at each other’
gliodaí ‘wheedler, coaxer’	ag gliodaíocht le duine ‘ingratiating oneself with sb’
ceardaí ‘craftsman’	ag ceardaíocht ‘working as a craftsman’

(13)

Nomen Agentis	V (VN)	Nominalization in <i>-(e)acht/-(a)íocht</i>
spailpín ‘seasonal, hired labourer, scamp’	? attested in de Bhaldraithe (1953: 197)	spailpíneacht ‘(act of) working as a migratory farm worker, (act of) scamping’
clabaire ‘garrulous person’	? de Bhaldraithe (1985: 190)	clabaire ‘(act of) prattling’
gunnadóir ‘gunner, rapid talker’	? de Bhaldraithe (1985: 122)	gunnadóireacht ‘gunnery, rapid-fire speech’
síofróir ‘know-all, gossip’	? Dinneen (1927: 842)	síofróireacht ‘fairy lore, precocious talk’
leadaí ‘idler’	? de Bhaldraithe (1992: 401)	leadaí ‘(act of) idling’

The fact that ÓD does not provide a VN usage, does not mean that it is not possible to use the forms in *-Vcht* in this way. Scrutinizing sources other

than ÓD seems to corroborate our interpretation. For instance, de Bhaldraithe (1953: 197) uses the first item in (13) as a VN – *ag spailpínteacht a bhí tú ó mhaidin agus codladh a bheith ort* ‘you were sleeping and scamping from morning’.

CONCLUSION

The model of overgenerating morphology offers a more satisfactory account of the Irish data than analyses based on actual words gathered in the most comprehensive Irish-English lexicon available, i.e. Ó Dónaill (1977). It turns out that word lists frequently reflect arbitrary choices of the lexicographer rather than the linguistic reality, hence unsystematic gaps in the domains of application of particular rules. With potential words acting as inputs to and outputs of derivation, WFRs are characterized by a maximum of generality and descriptive elegance. It is encouraging to find out that the predictions of the model are corroborated if other sources are consulted. Hopefully, the increased availability of electronic corpora will give a fillip to further research and ultimately result in the publication of a revised lexicon.

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FORMY POTENCJALNE W LEKSYKONIE
WSPÓŁCZESNEGO JĘZYKA IRLANDZKIEGO

Streszczenie

Artykuł składa się z części teoretycznej, przedstawiającej oraz ilustrującej zagadnienie form potencjalnych w analizie morfologicznej, oraz analitycznej, w której formy potencjalne postulo-

wane są w analizie wybranych rzeczowników odczasownikowych w języku irlandzkim. Analiza przeprowadzona jest w ramach morfologii leksykalnej, której celem jest konstrukcja modelu kompetencji językowej w zakresie słowotwórstwa, tj. systemu reguł umożliwiających tworzenie leksemów pochodnych. Przedmiotem badań są zarówno wyrazy aktualne, jak i potencjalne. Leksykon rozumiany jest jako dwie współzależne jednostki: leksykon trwały, który odpowiada tradycyjnemu pojęciu słownika, gdyż zawiera jednostki o nieprzewidywalnych cechach językowych, oraz leksykon warunkowy, będący zbiorem wszystkich morfologicznie złożonych jednostek językowych o znaczeniu strukturalnym, przewidywalnym na podstawie znajomości reguł słowotwórczych. Procesy słowotwórcze w odróżnieniu od fleksyjnych charakteryzują się różnym stopniem produktywności, jednak analizy oparte wyłącznie na słownictwie aktualnym tworzą obraz pełen wyjątków, nieprzewidywalnych i nieuzasadnionych nieregularności o charakterze semantycznym oraz formalnym. Dopuszczenie form potencjalnych, które ma miejsce w ściśle określonych warunkach, przyczynia się znacząco do ich redukcji. Model ten z powodzeniem znajduje zastosowanie w wyjaśnianiu pozornego braku czasowników motywujących dla określonej grupy nominalizacji dewerbalnych w języku irlandzkim zakończonych na *-áil* oraz na *-(e)acht/iocht*.

Summarised by Maria Bloch-Trojnar

Key words: lexicon, potential words, verbal noun in Irish.

Słowa kluczowe: leksykon, słowa potencjalne, rzeczownik odslowny w języku irlandzkim.