

KERNEWEK DRE LYTHER

Dyskans Peswar

Peswara Dyskans

Definite article, mutation, **yma dhe**, word order, negative particle, **ny²**

YANN HAG* ANJELA

Yann a² drig yn chi byghan ogas dhe'n mor. Pyskador yw Yann. Yma gwreg dhe Yann, Anjela hy hanow. Hi a ober yn koffiji yn Sen Malo. Yma'n koffiji a-berth yn fosow an² dre. Dhe Yann hag Anjela yma mab ha myrgh. An mab yw Erwan ha'n² vyrgh yw Marie. Erwan yw studhyer orth Pennskol Roazhon ha Marie yw servyades y'n koffiji gans hy mamm. Pub mis po dew Yann a² dhannvon lyther dhe Yowann yn Kernewek. Ny² woer Yann Sowsnek, ny² woer Yowann na Frynkek na Bretonek. Ny² yllons kesskrifa marnas yn Kernewek.

*ha (“and”) adds “g” when followed by a vowel.

Gerva

chi	house	pub	every
byghan	small	mis	month
pyskador	fisherman	po	or
koffiji	café	dew	two
Sen Malo	St Malo	a² dhannvon	sends
a-berth yn	inside	ny² wor	does not know
fosow	walls	na....na	neither...nor
studhyer	student	ny² yllons	they cannot
pennskol (f)	university	kesskrifa	(to) correspond
Roazhon	Rennes (Breton form)	mor	sea
servyades (f)	waitress		

Govynnnow

All the answers, except those marked can be copied from the passage.*

- 1) Ple trig Yann?
- 2) Ple'ma'n chi?
- 3) Pyth yw Yann?
- 4) Pyth yw hanow gwreg Yann?*
- 5) Pleth (where) ober Anjela?
- 6) Ple'ma'n koffiji?
- 7) Pyth yw hanow mab Yann hag Anjela?*
- 8) Pyth yw hanow myrgh Yann hag Anjela?*
- 9) Pyth yw Erwan?
- 10) Pandr'a² dhannvon Yann dhe Yowann?
(“Pleth” is used instead of “Ple” before a vowel)

Gramasek

A. The Definite Article. In English this is the word “the”. In Cornish it is “**an**” and we have met it several times already though often joined to the previous word:

e.g. **y’n** (in the); **ha’n** (and the)

This word always causes second state mutation in the following noun when it is feminine singular:

e.g. **myrgh** (daughter) **an² vyrgh** (the daughter)
tre (town) **an² dre** (the town)

*Exercise 1. All the following nouns are feminine. Write **an²** in front of them making the second state mutation where necessary, and then translate.*

- 1) **tre** (2) **myrgh** (3) **benyn** (4) **hwoer** (5) **servyades**
6) **gwreg** (7) **skrifennyades** (8) **bro** (9) **kowethes (female friend)**
(10) **mammyeth**

B. Negative particle **ny²**. This replaces **a²** before a verb when it is negative, i.e. when “not”, “does not” etc. is used in English.

e.g. **Yann ny² woer Sowsnek** Yann does not know English.
Yowann ny² woer Frynkek Yowann does not know French.

Like “**a²**” it causes second state mutation.

When a sentence becomes negative it ceases to be a “nominal” sentence and becomes a “verbal” one. In such sentences the verb ending alters to agree with or indicate the subject so that **ny²** can be used in this way only when the subject is 3rd person singular, i.e. a singular noun or a 3rd person singular pronoun. When the subject is not one of these it has to follow the noun. Verbal sentences will be dealt with more fully later.

*Exercise 2. Make the following sentences negative, i.e. replace the **a²** with **ny²** and then translate into English. The mutation will remain in the second state, e.g.*

***Yowann a² gews Frynkek**>**Yowann ny² gews Frynkek** Yowann does not speak French.*

- 1) **Yowann a² drig ogas dhe Sen Malo.**
- 2) **Marie a² ober y’n koffiji.**
- 3) **Anjela a² dhannvon lyther dhe Yowann**
- 4) **Yann a² werth lyvrow.**
- 5) **Jenyfer a² gews Frynkek.**

This is a simple way to make a nominal sentence negative but it places exceptionally strong emphasis on the subject and is therefore quite unusual. The neutral, and by far the most common, way to make a sentence negative is to use **ny²** in the same way but to put the subject after the verb, e.g.

Yowann a² woer Bretonek>**Ny² woer Yowann Bretonek** Yowann does not know Breton.

It is therefore important that you become accustomed to starting negative sentences with the negative particle, as in the following exercise.

Exercise 3. Using this method put the following sentences into the negative and translate.

- 1) **Yowann a² dhysk Frynkek.**
- 2) **Yann a² skrif lytherow.**
- 3) **Anjela a² woer Sowsnek.**
- 4) **Erwan a² woer Kernewek.**
- 5) **Marie a² skrif dhe Yowann.**

C. More mutations. You will have noticed that a number of short words cause second state mutation. So far we have met:

dhe² (to, at) **a²** (verb particle) **ny²** (negative particle) **y²** (his)

Exercise 4. Translate the following into Cornish keeping a special lookout for these mutations:

- 1) Wella lives near a café.
- 2) He speaks Breton.
- 3) His daughter learns Cornish.
- 4) His son works near a shop.
- 5) His wife does not know French.
- 6) He sends letters to Brittany.
- 7) The woman works in the café.
- 8) The secretary speaks English.
- 9) She speaks Cornish.
- 10) Yann does not learn English.

D. To have. We saw in dyskans 3 how the idea of having something is often expressed by “**Yma....dhe**”. “**Yma....gans**” can be similarly used when there is a looser association rather than actual possession:

e.g. **Yma ki gans Peder** Peter has a dog with him.

Like **dhe**, **gans** combines with pronouns to make (e.g.):

ganso with him **gensi** with hergansa with them.

Exercise 5. Translate into Cornish:

- 1) He has a letter with him.
- 2) Yowann has some friends with him.
- 3) Anjela has Marie with her.
- 4) He has got the books with him.
- 5) Where are the letters? With Erwan.

E. Word order. Notice the sentence “**Pyskador yw Yann**”. This conveys the same information as “**Yann yw pyskador**” i.e. “Yann is a fisherman” but placing the “**pyskador**” first emphasises this word - Yann is a fisherman, nothing else. The flexibility of word order and the variable emphases that can be obtained is a feature of Cornish.