

The Subjunctive in Guernsey Norman French

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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that a French (Norman) dialect has been spoken on Guernsey for over a thousand years, very little work has been done on this variety. This paper begins to redress that balance by investigating the position of the subjunctive mood in spoken and written Guernsey Norman French. As well as considering the vitality of the present and imperfect subjunctive and documenting their usage in so-called ‘grammar book’ contexts, the mood’s morphology is examined, revealing in some cases survival of forms found in the medieval Norman dialect. Furthermore, it is found that the conditional tense may replace the subjunctive in certain contexts and possible reasons for this are also examined.

I INTRODUCTION

A variety of Romance has been spoken in the Channel Islands for some two thousand years. The Islands formed part of Gaul and, when the province was subjugated by the Romans under Julius Caesar between 58 and 51 BC, they became part of the Roman Empire (Lemprière 1974:18). The arrival of the Germanic-speaking Norsemen in Northern France in the tenth century led to the incorporation of the Islands within the Duchy of Normandy in 933 and strong economic, juridical and linguistic ties with mainland Normandy were maintained until 1204, when King John ‘Lackland’ lost the Duchy to King Philippe Auguste II of France.¹ Indeed, describing the Islanders during the Middle Ages, Le Patourel states that they ‘were of the same blend as the Normans of the Cotentin, they spoke the same dialect, with their own local variations, traded with the same money and lived under the same customary law’ (Le Patourel 1937:35).

Despite their connections with the Duchy of Normandy, the Islands did not revert to France in 1204, electing to remain part of England, with the consequence that France now became their enemy. Fears of a French invasion during subsequent centuries led to the progressive fortification of Jersey and Guernsey, the two largest islands, due to their proximity to the French coast.

There was, however, no immediate anglicization. The Islands formed part of the Norman diocese of Coutances until 1569 and strong trade links with France were maintained, with the common activity of fishing probably representing a major source of contact with the mainland population. Moreover, the Islanders remained francophone, with English still a largely alien tongue and although standard French was spoken on the Island – for example in the course of certain business transactions and when members of the French aristocracy made their home on Guernsey during a period of relative neutrality between England and France (1483–1689), it never became the language of the majority of the Island's inhabitants and, where it was known, its position was that of a High variety in a diglossic situation with Guernsey Norman French (Guernesiais to the Islanders).

Writing in 1876 on the situation of English in Guernsey, Tupper states that the language's presence on the Island was chiefly as 'the speech of the upper classes' (1876:35). However, expanding trade links with Britain during the nineteenth century, a period which also saw the beginnings of the Island's tourist industry and the advent of English and Irish labourers to work in the granite quarries contributed steadily to the increase in influence of the English language, a state of affairs which continued into the twentieth century. Indeed, in a survey of the position of French and English in Guernsey in 1920, the Swedish linguist Sjögren stated that: 'Dans les deux centres urbains, Saint-Pierre-Port . . . centre commercial et culturel, et Saint-Samson . . . petit port d'exportation du granit, cette lutte était déjà terminée en faveur de l'anglais. Si l'on pouvait compter sur les doigts ceux qui y parlaient encore guernesiais, le nombre de ceux qui le comprenaient n'était guère plus élevé. Dans la partie rurale de la paroisse de Saint-Samson, . . . dans la majorité des foyers, les enfants, s'ils comprenaient souvent ce qu'ils appelaient, d'un terme péjoratif, le 'Guernsey gibberish', ne parlaient que l'anglais' (Sjögren, 1964:xvi). In the Vale parish which, until 1806 had formed a separate island, Sjögren noted that in 1920 'la regression du patois avait atteint les jeunes au-dessous de trente ans' and that throughout the North of the Island, even native speakers of the dialect were beginning to use 'un système phonique qui était influencé par l'anglais' (Sjögren, 1964:xvi).

In the so-called High Parishes that formed the South of the Island, however, 'la base d'articulation était restée intacte' (Sjögren, 1964:xiv). English was seldom used and there still existed monoglot speakers of Guernesiais. However, the dialect was dealt a severe blow, even in its heartlands, when, in 1940, the demilitarization of the Channel Islands led to the evacuation of a great many Guernsey folk, including almost all the Island's children, in the face of an imminent German invasion. Martel notes that 'The children . . . returned in 1945 speaking nothing but English . . . all or nearly all had forgotten their 'guernesiais'' (1964:540–1).

This situation has been exacerbated by factors such as the expansion of the finance industry, which between 1970–1991 alone brought 2,041 mainly

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English-born immigrants to Guernsey (whose total population in 1991 was 58,873). Low taxation created an image of the Island as a haven for those earning high incomes and ease of transport to mainland Britain led to an influx of British workers. Inter-marriage between Guernsey folk and immigrants accelerated the decline of Guernesiais within the family domain and gradually, use of the dialect became more and more stigmatized as Guernsey folk began to look increasingly to English as the way to social advancement.

For all these reasons, therefore, the latter half of the twentieth century has witnessed a progressive and widescale decline of Guernesiais. Today, English is the dominant language throughout the Island. Information on speaker-numbers is at best meagre: Tomlinson estimated that there remained about 6,000 speakers of the dialect at the beginning of the 1980s, mostly over the age of fifty (1981: 16–17). This would have represented around 11 per cent of the Island's population. In 1996, however, Tomlinson stated that this number had probably decreased to 3,000 due to natural wastage, a figure representing about 5 per cent of the Island's population (Domaille, 1996:25).

2 THE GUERNESIAIS DIALECT

If I have described at some length the history of Norman French on Guernsey, it is in order to emphasize the Island's long francophone tradition and to highlight the fact that the dominance of English is a recent occurrence. Before proceeding to outline the survey conducted, I will make a few brief remarks on the nature of the dialect spoken on the Island.

The French of Guernsey is a Norman dialect, although its geographical isolation has also given the variety a distinct identity. Thus, although it undoubtedly shares many linguistic features with the varieties spoken in Lower Normandy, and on the other Channel Islands (Brasseur, 1978a:49–64), it also shows several idiosyncratic developments which mark it off, from its Island neighbours (Brasseur, 1978b:275–306; Collas, 1934:213–25). Moreover, there also exists a large amount of variation within the Guernesiais spoken on the Island (Tomlinson, 1981:29).

There existed no literary tradition in Guernesiais before the writings of Georges Métivier and Denys Corbet in the nineteenth century, since until this time it was not fashionable to write in local languages (Spence, 1993:42). However, written material of a kind does exist from medieval times in the form of several literary texts. Wace, the author of the twelfth century *Roman de Brut* and *Roman de Rou* left no doubt as to his Channel Island origins:

Jo di et dirai que je suis
Wace, de l'isle de Gersui.
Roman de Rou, l. 5322

Many of the Old French texts extant today survive in the form of Anglo-Norman manuscripts, for example the Lamspringe manuscript of the *Vie de*

St. Alexis and the Digby 23 manuscript of the *Chanson de Roland*. Although the additional supra-regional characteristics in the language of these manuscripts make it impossible to wholly equate this variety with medieval Norman, let alone the variety of that dialect spoken in the Channel Islands, as Spence noted (1993:42), their examination has enabled the main characteristics of the dialect and the earlier developments of the regional forms to be determined (see Spence 1993:42; Brasseur 1978 a and b; Collas, 1934; Spence, 1957 for further details).

3 THE SUBJUNCTIVE

The focus of the survey, undertaken in July 1997, was the use of the subjunctive mood in Guernesiais. Detailed accounts of the evolution of the forms and functions of this mood from Latin to Modern French are given in, for example, Harris (1978), whilst its contemporary usage is outlined in most grammar books – Price provides one such comprehensive description (1993:358–83), as does Grevisse, who defines the mood thus: ‘le subjonctif indique que le locuteur (ou le scripteur) ne s’engage pas sur la réalité du fait’ (1988:1304).

An examination of eleventh – and twelfth-century Anglo-Norman manuscripts reveals that the subjunctive was very much in evidence in the medieval dialect in both main and subordinate clauses and present and imperfect tenses.

- (1) *N’i ad icel ne demeint irance (La Chanson de Roland l.1845 – 12th century)* (‘there is no one there who does not show anger’)
- (2) *Ait vos Deus, ki unkes ne mentit (La Chanson de Roland l.1865 – 12th century)* (‘may God help you, he who never lied’)
- (3) *Chi chi se doilet, a notr’os est il goie (La Vie de St. Alexis l.503 – 11th century)* (‘whoever may grieve, to us it is a matter of joy’)
- (4) *Si preient Deu que conseil lur an dunist (La Vie de St. Alexis l.329 – 11th century)* (‘they pray to God to give them advice’)
- (5) *Si me leüst, si t’ousse guardét (La Vie de St. Alexis l.490 – 11th century)* (‘if it had been allowed me, I would have taken care of you’)
- (6) *Mult oïssiez orgues suner (Le Roman de Brut l.10421 – 12th century)* (‘you would have heard well the sound of the musical pipes’).

Admittedly, when examining Old French texts it is necessary to take account of the fact that the language of the scribe may not reflect that of the author, as scribes often adopted the practice of memorizing the texts they were copying line by line and imposing their own dialect upon the version they were producing. However, this discrepancy does not affect the present study in that, despite the fact that three of the texts cited here, namely the *Chanson de Roland*, the *Voyage de St. Brendan* and the *Vie de St. Alexis* were not written in Normandy,² the fact that they were copied by an Anglo-Norman scribe

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means that they do reveal characteristics of this dialect. For example, it is apparent that there existed forms of the present subjunctive peculiar to Western dialects, and thus Norman, which contained a *-ge* extension (Pope, 1952:344 §910). Although such forms were also found in Southern Western dialects (Pope, 1952:503 §xvii) they may legitimately be considered as a characteristic feature of Anglo-Norman as they appear frequently in Anglo-Norman manuscripts (see (7) – (12) below) but are not usually found in Northern and Eastern dialects (Pope, 1952:344 §910), nor indeed are they common in more Central dialects, such as francien, which gave rise in due course to standard French.

- (7) *Venget li reis, si nus purrat venger* (*La Chanson de Roland* l.1744 – 12th century) ('let the king come, he will be able to avenge us')
- (8) *Ne l'orrat hume ne t'en tienget por fol* (*La Chanson de Roland* l.2535 – 12th century) ('no-one will hear of it without thinking you mad')
- (9) *Ço lur est vis que tengent Deu medisme* (*La Vie de St. Alexis* l.539 – 11th century) ('it seems to them that they are holding God himself')
- (10) *Si li preiuns que de tuz mals nos tolget* (*La Vie de St. Alexis* l.505 – 11th century) ('let us pray to Him that he take us away from all evil')
- (11) *Que l'ume Deu quergent, ki est an Rome* (*La Vie de St. Alexis* l.297 – 11th century) ('that they look for the man of God, who is in Rome')
- (12) *Ne lairunt pas que ne'l prengent* (*Le Voyage de St. Brendan* l.1478 – 12th century) ('they will not let them take him').

4 THE SURVEY

As the use of the subjunctive in modern standard French has been shown to be influenced by register (Müller, 1985:242), with fewer instances of the mood being used the more informal the situation,³ it was decided to examine the Guernesiais subjunctive in two distinct contexts, namely in writing and in speech. Although the dialect has no significant literary tradition in the twentieth century, it does appear in print annually in the form of the *Bulletin* of the *Assemblaie d'Guernesiais*, a society founded in 1956 for the preservation of Guernesiais, whose activities include events such as dinners, folk dancing and social evenings. The *Bulletin* has appeared annually since 1963 and, other than the occasional short article in the *Guernsey Evening Press*, represents the only regular written output in the variety. The *Bulletin* contains what may be considered formal writing in Guernesiais, namely an annual report by the Secretary, as well as literary output in the form of articles, short stories and poems.

As a result of the generosity of one of the members of the *Assemblaie*, I was

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able to examine the complete series of *Bulletins* from issue 4 (1966) onwards for examples of the subjunctive. As contributions to the *Bulletin* are made by a range of different people, the data obtained may be considered a reasonable representation of the use of the subjunctive in a relatively formal register of Guernesiais.

Use of the subjunctive was also examined in a more informal context by recording the speech of sixty-five informants who were interviewed at their homes during July 1997. All the informants in question were native speakers of Guernesiais and were over fifty years of age.⁴ Informants were selected via the friend-of-a-friend technique, devised by Lesley Milroy (1980) in the course of her work on English urban vernacular in Belfast. This technique involved establishing contact with someone willing to act as a 'linchpin' by approaching potential informants on my behalf. The initial informants then increased the sample by putting me in contact with their friends and relatives who, in turn, introduced me to their friends and relatives and so forth. In this way, I was able to gain access to several social networks of speakers. Ball and Müller point out the merits of this technique within the setting of minority speech-varieties:

It is often found that social networks of minority language speakers are fairly dense, in that it is the social network (rather than geographical area) that maintains the usage of the language. In this case, if researchers can gain access to such a network, therefore, they can obtain linguistic data from many members of the network, and an analysis of a set of networks will probably be representative of the speakers of the minority language in that community as a whole (1992:246).

The friend-of-a-friend method proved to be an ideal sampling technique for this type of survey. In the first place, low speaker numbers precluded a random sample being made in that the chances of hitting upon speakers via this method were not high. Secondly, the fact that I was able to mention a friend's name when introducing myself initially to informants meant that I was generally perceived as less of an 'outsider' – the natural reluctance of most people to be interviewed may be tempered if they feel that a friend or relative has successfully 'come through' the same process. In many cases, informants themselves volunteered to contact other informants on my behalf – either via the telephone or by accompanying me to their houses. The latter technique especially contributed to lessening the formality of the interview. Groups of friends or relatives were frequently interviewed together, which had the desired effect of making the occasion more of a 'chat among friends' than an interview, which was conducive to the production of an informal register. Finally, as the weeks went by, my presence as something of a novelty – a young, non-Islander who had learnt Guernesiais – meant that word soon got

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around the small speech community (my thanks go to *BBC Radio Guernsey* and the *Guernsey Evening Press* who also contributed to this), which may have led to some speakers granting me interviews in order to see for themselves. In total, twenty-eight hours of tape-recordings were made and analysed as part of this survey.

4.1 *Previous descriptions of the Guernesiais subjunctive*

Guernesiais is primarily a spoken variety, having never been taught in the classroom and with a considerable percentage of its native speakers unable to write it. As a consequence, there seems to have been no call for the publication of a definitive grammar book of the variety, prescribing rules such as the contexts in which the subjunctive is required. This does not mean, however, that the issue of the subjunctive has not been addressed although, as will be seen, there exists no real consensus among contemporary commentators.

The 1983 article entitled *Guernesiais: A Grammatical Survey*, by Marie de Garis⁵, which appeared in the *Report and Transactions of la Société Guernesiaise* describes the usage of the subjunctive as follows:

I **Subjunctive in Principle** [sic] **Sentences**

The third persons of the Present Subjunctive are used with the force of Imperatives:

Qu'i n'faeche, or *qui n'fasse*, *érian*, Let him do nothing.⁶

Qu'a n'dit rian, Let her say nothing.

II **Most Common Uses of the Subjunctive**

(1) After the following verbs and expressions:

<i>d'siraïr</i> , to desire	<i>ch'est piti</i> , it is a pity
<i>doutaïr</i> , to doubt	<i>ête caotent</i> , to be pleased
<i>r'grettaïr</i> , to regret	<i>ête étounnaï</i> , to be astonished
<i>d'mandaïr</i> , to ask	<i>ête mârri</i> , to be angry
<i>fautrar</i> , to be necessary	<i>il est temps</i> , it is time
<i>voulier</i> , to wish	<i>il est possible</i> , it is possible
<i>crôindre</i> , to fear	<i>il est nécessaire</i> , it is necessary
<i>aver haonte</i> , to be ashamed	<i>i's'peut</i> , it may be
<i>aver paeux</i> , to be frightened	

and all synonyms of the above.

(2) In a subordinate clause after a Negative or Interrogative main clause.

Jé né cré pas qu'il est ciz li.

I don't believe that he is at home.

Etes-t'ous saeure qu'a y s'en va?

Are you sure that she is going?

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- (3) After the following conjunctions:
afin qué, so that *a mouoins qué*, unless
pour qué, so that *dévànt qué*, before
bian qué, although *jusqu'a tchi qui*, until
- (4) After a Superlative including the words *lé seul*, *lé prumier*, *lé drôin*, words expressing a superlative idea.
La seule ponais qui vaut coutcher.
The only parsnip worth cooking.
Le milliaeux ch'fa qu'il avait accatai.
The best horse that he had bought.
- (5) After *qui*, *qué*, *tchi*, *daont*, *ou* in a relative clause expressing surprise:
Accate aen fro qué tu pourras maette es neuches.
Buy a frock which you can wear at the wedding.
- (6) After the compound words.
tchi qu' whoever, whatever
tchi qu'tes whoever you are
tchi qu'i fait what he does

III Further Uses of the Subjunctive

- (1) After *dévànt qué*, before.
dévànt qui' sache, before he knows.
dévànt qué nous pourrons laeux d'visse, before we speak to them.
dévànt qui peuvent entraïr, before they can enter.

- (2) After *voulier qué*, wanting.
Je veurs qu'i'arrete, I want him to wait.
Qué voulous que j'faeche, What do you want me to do?

(De Garis, 1983:345–6; section numbering mine).

Eric Lukis' work on the dialect, *An Outline of Guernesiais*, contains the following account of the Guernesiais subjunctive:

Having been an unwritten patois there are no set rules for the use of the Subjunctive but many elderly people employ it in conversation after expressions of doubt, fear, regret and after 'it is necessary' and certain conjunctions. e.g.

although it might not be done	=	<i>biênq i ne sei pa fait</i>
so that she may enjoy	=	<i>afinq â s piaie</i>
lest she know	=	<i>de pâurq al ne le sache</i>
I shan't go unless she does too	=	<i>j n irai pa sinàq â y auge etou</i>
he feared she might not come	=	<i>i croyneie k âl ne venisse pa</i>
... before he should come	=	<i>avàq i venisse</i>

(Lukis 1979:11).

On the same page, Lukis also lists the following as additional conjunctions requiring the subjunctive:

without	<i>sàq</i>	lest	<i>apâurq ... ne</i>
until	<i>doncéq ... ne</i>	unless	<i>amuênq ... ne</i>
when	<i>ameq</i>		

Finally, Tomlinson's 1981 doctoral thesis, *Le Guernesiais – étude grammaticale et lexicale du parler normand de l'île de Guernesey* implies a far more restricted use

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of the subjunctive, mentioning only that the mood may be used after: ‘/pur ké/ *pour que*, /dvà ké/ *avant que* and /ó mǫ́ ké/ *à moins que*’ (1981:91, transcription Tomlinson’s).

According to de Garis, therefore, the Guernesiais subjunctive is used as commonly as its standard French counterpart, and in similar contexts. Lukis also suggests quite a widespread usage. However, both these accounts seem to be somewhat equivocal in that scrutiny of de Garis’ article reveals that in (2), (4) and (5) of section II and in part of (1) of section III the examples quoted contain the indicative mood (de Garis, 1983:345–6). In fact, since de Garis does not differentiate between written and spoken Guernesiais it may be that in colloquial usage the patterns will be closer to those of *français populaire* than to the norms of standard French (see §4.2 below). Moreover, the fact that Lukis lists *avàñq* as one of the conjunctions that require the subjunctive in Guernesiais may indicate that his work is influenced by Standard French (*avant que*). *Dévàñt qué* is the usual conjunction used in the dialect to express the notion of ‘before’. Indeed, no examples of the conjunction *avàñq* were encountered in either the spoken or written data analysed for this survey.

As regards the tenses of the subjunctive, all three sources cited above mention the fact that, unlike in standard French, the imperfect subjunctive is still used in Guernesiais. However, Lukis claims that its occurrence is word specific, only commonly being used with the verbs *venir* (‘to come’), *estre* (‘to be’), *aver* (‘to have’), *alaer* (‘to go’) and *mettre* (‘to put’) (1979:17). Tomlinson, on the other hand, states that ‘L’imparfait du subjonctif s’emploie normalement dans la concordance des temps mais les locuteurs ne sont pas toujours sûrs de sa forme’ (1981:110). Consequently, the data were analysed not only according to whether or not the subjunctive was used in a given context but also in order to determine whether or not the tense of the subjunctive selected complied with sequence of tense rules. In addition, the nature of the forms produced was examined.

4.2 *Results*

The contexts listed in the above studies were scrutinized, together with those seen to trigger the subjunctive in eleventh- and twelfth-century Anglo-Norman manuscripts although, as will be seen, not all of them yielded sufficient tokens for analysis.⁷ As stated above, both written and spoken data were analysed in order to determine whether, as in standard French, register has a bearing on the use of the subjunctive in Guernesiais. The results are displayed separately, but side by side, for purposes of comparison.

⁷ It should be noted that only three of these contexts were agreed upon as triggers of the subjunctive mood by all three studies, namely the conjunctions *pour qué*, *dévàñt qué* and *à mouõins qué*.

Table 1. Contexts in which the subjunctive is present in a majority of cases (70%–100%)

SPEECH	WRITING
1. Independent Clauses – Optative [18 tokens]	1. Independent Clauses – Optative [27 tokens]
2. Independent Clauses – Set Phrases [16 tokens]	2. Independent Clauses – Set Phrases [20 tokens]
3. <i>I' faout qué</i> ('It is necessary that') [121 tokens]	3. <i>I' faout qué</i> [63 tokens]
4. <i>Voulier qué</i> ('to want to') [61 tokens]	4. <i>Voulier qué</i> [53 tokens]
5. <i>à mais qué</i> ('when') [43 tokens]	5. <i>Sàns qué</i> ('without') [35 tokens]
	6. <i>Ordounnair qué</i> ('to order that') [21 tokens]

Table 2 Contexts in which the subjunctive is only present in a minority of cases (0%–30%)

SPEECH	WRITING
1. <i>Bian qué</i> ('although') [29 tokens]	1. <i>Bian qué</i> [19 tokens]
2. Verbs of thinking/believing in the negative [98 tokens]	2. Verbs of thinking/believing in the negative [74 tokens]
3. <i>I' (mé) r'sembble qué / I' (m')'est avis qué</i> ('it seems [to me] that . . .') [37 tokens]	3. <i>I' (mé) r'sembble qué / I' (m')'est avis qué</i> [26 tokens]
4. <i>Dévànt qué</i> ('before') [24 tokens]	4. <i>Dévànt qué</i> [53 tokens]
5. Impersonal expressions: <i>Il est X qué . . .</i> [67 tokens]	5. Impersonal expressions: <i>Il est X qué . . .</i> [64 tokens]
6. After a Superlative (including <i>lé seul, lé prumier, lé drôin</i> ('the last') etc.) [32 tokens]	6. After a Superlative (including <i>lé prumier, lé drôin</i> etc.) [27 tokens]
7. <i>Óimair qué</i> ('to like that') [14 tokens]	7. <i>R'grettair qué</i> ('to regret that') [16 tokens]
8. Negative antecedent [24 tokens]	

Table 3. Contexts in which the subjunctive is often present (30%–70%)

SPEECH	WRITING
1. <i>à mouôins qué</i> ('unless') [60 tokens]	1. <i>à mouôins qué</i> [40 tokens]
2. <i>dànqué / entertchié qué</i> ('until') [164 tokens]	2. <i>dànqué / entertchié qué</i> [42 tokens]
3. <i>pour qué / à fin qué</i> ('in order that') [108 tokens]	3. <i>pour qué / à fin qué</i> [61 tokens]
4. <i>Ête</i> + adjective + <i>qué</i> ('to be' + adjective + 'that') [53 tokens]	4. <i>Ête</i> + adjective + <i>qué</i> [121 tokens]
	5. <i>Óimair qué</i> [33 tokens]
	6. Negative antecedent [17 tokens]

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As may be seen, the subjunctive is still widely used in Guernesiais, despite the virtual absence of this mood from English, which has become the dominant language on the Island. However, since all the contexts listed in tables 2 and 3 still trigger the subjunctive in mainland Norman (Université Populaire Normande du Cotançais, 1995: 234–5, 237–8, 241–2), it is possible that contact with English may be a factor in its decline in Guernesiais. As mentioned above, it is noteworthy that the example given by de Garis of, *inter alia*, the subjunctive being triggered by a relative clause including a superlative, which both the spoken and written data analysed in this survey revealed to be triggering the indicative, actually contains a verb in the indicative mood (de Garis, 1983:345–6). On the other hand, in writing at least, the subjunctive is often used in a relative clause after a negative antecedent – a context not mentioned by any of the contemporary commentators but which also triggers the subjunctive in mainland Norman (Université Populaire Normande du Cotançais, 1995:235). Another context that was a widespread trigger for the subjunctive in both medieval and modern Norman, *P (mé) r'semlle qué/ P (m')'est avis qué* had apparently lost this function in Guernesiais.

In her study of the use of the tenses of the French subjunctive in subordinate clauses, Lindqvist highlighted the fact that both the person of the verb in the subordinate clause and the actual meaning of the subordinate verb could have a decisive role in determining whether the present or imperfect subjunctive was used (1979:28). For instance, when the matrix verb was in the imperfect tense, the imperfect subjunctive was more likely to be chosen in historically appropriate contexts in the subordinate clause if the subordinate verb was in the third person singular (1979:33). With the other persons of the verb, the present subjunctive was more often than not likely to be selected, except if the verb in question was either *avoir* or *être*, where both the imperfect subjunctive and present subjunctive of all persons of the verb were used (1979:34).

The fact that the third person singular is a very commonly used form, and that certain verbs enjoy more currency than others might therefore be influencing the Guernesiais results. It is not inconceivable that informants might be avoiding the subjunctive in contexts where they were unsure of a particular morphological form or the conjugation of an uncommon verb. In order to determine whether such considerations were indeed having a bearing on the use of the subjunctive in modern Guernesiais, the variables listed in table 3 (where it had been found that informants were apparently making a less restricted choice between the use of the subjunctive and indicative) were re-examined according to, firstly, the person of the verb in the subordinate clause and, secondly, the meaning of the subordinate verb.

The results of this further analysis are displayed in table 4:

Table 4. Contexts in which the subjunctive is often present (30%–70%) – Reanalysis

SPEECH	WRITING
<p>1. <i>à mouôins qué</i> ('unless') [60 tokens] Correct: 35 Incorrect: 25 Analysis of 'incorrect' contexts: 1) 1ps – 6 2) <i>Ête</i> ('to be') – 14 3ps – 10 <i>Aver</i> ('to have') – 9 2ppl – 3 <i>Saver</i> ('to know') – 2 3ppl – 6</p>	<p>1. <i>à mouôins qué</i> [40 tokens] Correct: 24 Incorrect: 16 Analysis of 'incorrect' contexts: 1) 3ps – 16 2) <i>Ête</i> – 8 <i>Aver</i> – 8</p>
<p>2. <i>dànqué/entertchié qué</i> ('until') [164 tokens] Correct: 96 Incorrect: 68 Analysis of 'incorrect' contexts: 1) 1ps – 4 2) <i>Ête</i> – 12 3ps – 64 <i>Aver</i> – 56</p>	<p>2. <i>dànqué/entertchié qué</i> [42 tokens] Correct: 29 Incorrect: 13 Analysis of 'incorrect' contexts: 1) 3ps – 13 2) <i>Ête</i> – 12 <i>C'menchie</i> ('to begin') – 1</p>
<p>3. <i>pour qué/à fin qué</i> ('in order that') [108 tokens] Correct: 36 Incorrect: 72 Analysis of 'incorrect' contexts: 1) 1ps – 7 2) <i>Ête</i> – 17 3ps – 42 <i>Pouvier</i> – 24 3ppl – 25 <i>Ouir</i> ('to hear') – 2 <i>Saver</i> – 25 <i>Veies</i> ('to see') – 1 <i>Voulier</i> ('to want') – 3</p>	<p>3. <i>pour qué/à fin qué</i> [61 tokens] Correct: 29 Incorrect: 32 Analysis of 'incorrect' contexts: 1) 3ps – 23 2) <i>Ête</i> – 12 3ppl – 9 <i>Pouvier</i> ('to be able to') – 20</p>
<p>4. <i>Ête</i> + adjective + <i>qué</i> ('to be' + adjective + 'that') [53 tokens] Correct: 16 Incorrect: 37 Analysis of 'incorrect' contexts: 1) 2ps – 16 2) <i>Ête</i> – 16 3ps – 17 <i>Aver</i> – 12 3ppl – 4 <i>Pouvier</i> – 9</p>	<p>4. <i>Ête</i> + adjective + <i>qué</i> [121 tokens] Correct: 48 Incorrect: 73 Analysis of 'incorrect' contexts: 1) 3ps – 73 2) <i>Ête</i> – 46 <i>Aver</i> – 27</p>
	<p>5. <i>Ôimair qué</i> [33 tokens] Correct: 19 Incorrect: 24 Analysis of 'incorrect' contexts: 1) 2ppl – 18 2) <i>Ête</i> – 14 3ppl – 6 <i>V'nir</i> ('to come') – 9 <i>Braïdrair</i> (??) – 1</p>
	<p>6. Negative antecedent [17 tokens] Correct: 9 Incorrect: 8 Analysis of 'incorrect' contexts: 1) 3ps – 8 2) <i>Ête</i> – 4 <i>Aver</i> – 2 <i>Pouvier</i> – 1 <i>Siouittair</i> ('to suit') – 1</p>

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Given the fact that the data indicate that non-use of the subjunctive occurred in the third person singular (supposedly the most common form of the subjunctive and therefore the one with which informants are likely to be most conversant) in all of the above contexts, it is clear that the phenomenon is not attributable to unfamiliarity with an uncommon morphological ending. Furthermore, it is also unlikely that the meaning of the verb in the subordinate clause has been of influence here since in most cases, the verbs in question were *ête* ('to be'), *aver* ('to have'), *voulier* ('to want'), *pouvoir* ('to be able to') and *saver* ('to know'). Despite the fact that these are irregular they also constitute some of the dialect's most commonly used verbs, and, consequently, ones with which most speakers would be familiar. The results, therefore, were not being skewed by these factors.

Turning back to tables 1–3, it is noteworthy that the triggers for the subjunctive often appear to be lexically, rather than semantically, motivated in Guernesiais. For instance, unlike the case in standard French, it is impossible to define usage after verbs of volition since, in speech at least, whereas *voulier qué* triggers the subjunctive in a majority of cases, *ômaïr qué* usually triggers the indicative. Similarly, *i' faout qué* is likely to trigger the subjunctive whereas other impersonal expressions (such as *i'(mé) r'semlle qué* and *il est X qué*) are not even when, as with *i' faout qué*, the latter expresses obligation: *il est important/ essentiel qué tu vas*. It is also worth noting that, although consistent use of the subjunctive was made in certain independent clauses, current usage in this context represented a considerable reduction over the contexts in which the mood was found in such clauses in medieval Anglo-Norman manuscripts. As in standard French, the optative main clause subjunctive was now introduced with a pseudo-subordinating *qué*, as were the instances obtained in the data of the third person singular subjunctive used as a command form, for example:

- (13) *qu'i n'éprouvent pas à mé lé dire!* (lit. 'let them not try to tell me that')
- (14) *qu'i souognient à laeux affaires!* (lit. 'let them look after their own business')
- (15) *qu'i naons lâquent trântchille!* (lit. 'may they leave us alone!')
- (16) *qu'i lé sachent!* (lit. 'may they know it').

Insofar as the question of the vitality of the subjunctive is concerned, no meaningful opposition of moods was still apparent in any of the above environments. This may be compared with, for example:

- (17) *Ço lur est vis que tengent Deu medisme* ('it seems to them that they are holding God himself')
- (18) *E ço m'est vis que ço est l'ume Deu* ('and it seems to me that he is the man of God').

Both are from the *Vie de St. Alexis* (11th century), 1.539 and 1.343, respectively. The subjunctive in (17) implies the uncertainty of the feeling whereas the indicative in (18) indicates more certainty. It is therefore debatable whether

the Guernesiais subjunctive is in fact any less of a grammaticalized form than its standard French counterpart.

A further point worthy of attention is the relative homogeneity of usage between speech and writing. In both cases, the same constructions proved likely to trigger – or not to trigger – the subjunctive. This may suggest that, perhaps due to the dialect's largely unwritten tradition, spoken and written Guernesiais are only slightly differentiated from the point of view of formality. The only variables in which usage visibly differed according to medium were *ôimair qué* and relative clauses with negative antecedents, which were more likely to trigger the subjunctive when written than when spoken.

The data also revealed that the usage of the Guernesiais subjunctive would indeed seem to approximate more closely to the patterns of *français populaire* usage than to the norms of standard French. For example, Gadet's claim that in *français populaire* the subjunctive is still widespread in clauses of wishing or desiring (1992:89) corresponds to the findings in this survey for *voulier qué* (speech and writing) and *ordounnair qué* (writing) (table 1) and her assertion that, in the case of many other usages, the subjunctive is replaced by the present indicative also held good for many of the constructions of Guernesiais (table 2). However, this is not to suggest that there is an exact correspondence between usage in *français populaire* and in Guernesiais: for example, unlike in *français populaire*, in speech *oimair qué* only triggers the subjunctive in a minority of cases in Guernesiais (table 2) and despite no longer being regular triggers of the subjunctive in Guernesiais, the constructions in table 3 had far from lost this function altogether.

Finally, it was noted that use of the imperfect subjunctive was widespread. This differs from the situation in standard French, from which Cohen describes this form as having disappeared in speech and states that it is seldom used in writing (1965:188). This will be examined further below.

4.2.1 *Forms of the Subjunctive in Guernesiais*

Tomlinson's claim that speakers were no longer sure of the forms of the imperfect subjunctive (1981:110) prompted an examination of the morphology of both the present and imperfect subjunctive. Again, both oral and written data were analysed.

SPEECH

a) *The present tense*

The data revealed a considerable amount of variation in the forms produced for the present subjunctive.

(i) *Forms with a -ge extension*

As stated in §3, the present subjunctive of medieval Norman was characterized by the presence of a -ge extension. The reflexes of these forms are relatively well-maintained in the Norman French of Jersey (Jèrriais), and are still to be

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seen in the verbs *aller* ('to go') (*qué j'âge*), *attendre* ('to wait for') (*qué j'attenge*), *prendre* ('to take') (*qué j'prenge*), *tcheindre* ('to hold') (*qué j'tcheinge*) and *v'nin* ('to come') (*qué j'veinge*) (Birt 1985:208–10). Mainland Norman also conserves these forms in verbs such as *allaer* ('to go') (*que je veiche*), *veî* ('to see') (*que je veige*) and *creire* ('to believe') (*que je creige*) (Université Populaire Normande du Cotançais, 1995:171–2). However, these forms are not as well preserved in Guernesiais, their reflexes only surviving in the verb 'to go' (*allair*) (*qué j'aouche*; /auf/) and in speech, even these are being supplanted by alternative forms with the stem /al/, which is also the third person singular form. Indeed, a comparison made of the first person singular present subjunctive form of *allair* produced by twenty-six informants revealed that seventeen of these favoured the /al/ forms, three informants (all from Torteval parish) produced the related form /ajl/ and only six informants used the /auf/ form of the present subjunctive. Although the /ajl/ form seemed to be restricted to Torteval, where informants also tended to favour /al/, it was not otherwise possible to draw an isogloss delimiting the use of /al/ and /auf/ forms as their respective usage did not appear to be parish-based. Interestingly, Tomlinson's study, which is based on the speech of Torteval, records the form /al/ for only the third person plural and the impersonal pronoun /nu/, which takes a third person singular verb, and not for the third person singular itself (1981:114). My data revealed that the /al/ form was now also being used in Torteval for the first person singular, the second person singular and the third person plural, a possible indication of the progressive ousting of the /auf/ form.

It is also worth noting that the form /i vɛŋʒ/ (< *v'nir* 3ps.) was obtained from one elderly informant. This form is not mentioned by either Tomlinson or de Garis, who cite /i vyón/ (transcription Tomlinson's) as the sole third person singular form possible. It may be that /i vɛŋʒ/ is a reflex of the Norman form with its *-ge* extension although, given the lack of corroborative evidence, this cannot be stated with certainty.

(ii) *Other forms*

Despite generally conforming to those given in Tomlinson's study, a degree of fluctuation was recorded in the present subjunctive forms of the commonly-used verbs *faire* ('to do/ to make'), *aver* ('to have'), *dire* ('to say') and *veies* ('to see'). The alternative forms are listed in Table 5 below.

The infinitive was also occasionally found in place of the subjunctive in the case of some verbs with an infinitive stem ending in *-d*. For example *apprendre* ('to learn') and *prendre* ('to take').

b) *The imperfect tense*

Most of the examples of the imperfect subjunctive obtained from the spoken data involved the verbs *aver* ('to have'), *ête* ('to be'), *veies* ('to see') and *v'nir* ('to come'). Although *ête* was generally conjugated appropriately, there was some uncertainty with regard to the other verbs, although this represented a minority of cases overall. Such uncertainty regarding the forms of the

Table 5. Present subjunctive forms in contemporary Guernesiais

Verb	Form given in Tomlinson's study	Form(s) recorded in this survey
<i>Faire</i>	1ps/ 2ps/ 3ps/ 3ppl: /fâç/ 2ppl: /fezâi/	1ps: /fēs/ , /fējs/ 2ps: /fēz/ 3ps/ 3ppl: /fējs/, /fējʃ/, /fēz/, /fēʃ/
<i>Aver</i>	1ps/ 2ps/ 3ps/ 3ppl: /és/ 2ppl: /éyi/	2ps: /ε/, /es/ 3ps/ 3ppl: /ε/, /es/
<i>Dire</i>	1ps/ 2ps/ 3ps/ 3ppl: /diç/ 2ppl: /dizâi/	1ps: /di/, /diz/, /diʃ/, /diʒ/
<i>Veies</i>	1ps/ 3ps: /vé/ 2ps/ 3ppl: /vés/ 2ppl: /véyâi/	1ps: /vēs/ 2ps: /vez/ 3ps: /vε/, /vez/

Table 6. Imperfect subjunctive forms in contemporary Guernesiais

Verb	Form given in Tomlinson's study	Form(s) recorded in this survey
<i>Aver</i>	1ps/ 2ps/ 3ps/ 2ppl/ 3ppl: /âs/	1ps/ 3ps: /œs/
<i>Pouvier</i>	1ps/ 2ps/ 3ps / 2ppl/ 3ppl: /pâs/	3ppl: /pys/, /pyr/
<i>V'nir</i>	1ps/ 2ps/ 3ps/ 2ppl/ 3ppl: /vâns/	3ppl: /vins/
<i>Veies</i>	1ps/ 2ps/ 3ps/ 3ppl: /vâs/ 2ppl: /véyis/	3ppl: /vis/

imperfect subjunctive has also been noted by Lepelley in the dialects of the Val de Saire (1974:127).

As will be seen below, [§4.2.2] forms of the present subjunctive were occasionally used in contexts where sequence of tense rules required the imperfect tense.

WRITING

As Guernesiais has no standardized spelling, and the *Bulletin* of the *Assemblée d'Guernesiais* states clearly that: 'L'Épillage dans les articles du Bulletin a été laissé à la discrétion des contributeurs',⁸ it is difficult to give an exact account of variation of forms in the written language as one may not be sure of the precise sounds an author may be trying to convey with their choice of characters. Interestingly, *il vienge* was occasionally used as the third person singular form of the present subjunctive of *v'nir*, which would seem to support the suggestion made above that this form may still survive as an isolated relic of the medieval Norman *-ge* extension (*vian/vienne* being the most usual forms). In the case of *allair* ('to go'), reflexes of the Norman forms with *-ge* extensions and the alternative forms in *-l* seemed to be used indiscriminately.

⁸ 'The matter of spelling in the *Bulletin's* articles has been left to the discretion of the contributors'.

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The *-ss-* graphy was evidently considered to be the hallmark of the subjunctive and was apparent in the present and imperfect tenses alike – *je vaisse* (*veies* [‘to see’] – present), *je disshe* (*dire* [‘to say’] – present), *je faisshé, i’ faisshens* (*faire* [‘to do/ to make’] – present) and *i fusse* (*ête* [‘to be’] – imperfect), *i visse* (*veies* [‘to see’] – imperfect), *i paeusse* (*pouvier* [‘to be able to’] – imperfect), *i creisse* (*creire* [‘to believe’] – imperfect), *i ausse* (*aver* [‘to have’] – imperfect).

4.2.2 *Sequence of tenses*

As the tense of a main clause verb has repercussions for that of a subordinate clause, the tense of the subjunctive (past/present) is often governed by that of the matrix verb. By examining the sequence of tenses in the data, therefore, it was possible to determine firstly, the vitality of the imperfect subjunctive in Guernesiais and secondly, whether, as in standard French, it was being replaced by the present subjunctive.

SPEECH

Out of a total of 513 contexts examined which involved a sequence of tense pattern, only 105 warranted use of the imperfect subjunctive in a subordinate clause. This is not surprising, given the fact that most speech, other than story-narration, is situated in the present. Examination of the 105 contexts in question, however, revealed that the imperfect subjunctive had indeed been used in 60 of these (i.e. 57% of all contexts). This indicates that the form, if not flourishing, is at least being used productively to some extent by most speakers and is far from the moribund state of its standard French counterpart. The present subjunctive was substituted for the imperfect subjunctive in 24 of these contexts (23%) and the remaining 21 cases (20%) involved the imperfect subjunctive being replaced by the conditional.

This substitution of the conditional for the imperfect subjunctive is not fortuitous. The conditional did not exist in Classical Latin and derives from the Vulgar Latin infinitive and imperfect indicative of HABERE (‘to have’), in a development akin to the French future tense, which derived from the Vulgar Latin infinitive and present indicative of HABERE (Price 1971:§15.4). Due to its links, therefore, with both the hypothetical and the concept of pastness, the French conditional may exhibit modal values despite ostensibly being an exponent of future-in-the-past and indeed, may be used to express a whole variety of nuances, such as supposition, attenuation, possibility and so forth in much the same way as the Latin (and Old French) subjunctive (Dubois *et al.*, 1961:§186).⁹ In modern French, the semantic links between the subjunctive and the conditional are clear. Indeed, Sten argues that although they may not express the same nuance in every context, in a sentence such as ‘qu’il venait d’obtenir d’un roi allié que son armée ne serait pas pour toujours mise au repos, des Anglais qu’il n’évacuassent pas Salonique’ (Giraudoux, Bella 11), very little seems to separate the two (1952:89).

⁹ For the modal values of the subjunctive in Latin, see Harris (1978:166–70).

The presence of the conditional in a subordinate clause as a replacement for the subjunctive, whether present or imperfect, was most likely when the matrix verb was itself in the conditional (33/48 contexts overall, or 69%). This conditional *par attraction* is not peculiar to Guernesiais. Cohen, for example, states 'Je peux témoigner par Fressines (Deux-Sèvres) que dans le français local la tournure 'je voudrais, il faudrait qu'il viendrait' est constamment employée' (1965:63). Sten also cites Damourette and Pichon's examples of the substitution of the conditional for the subjunctive 'chez des paysans bourguignons': 'Il faudrait que j'en aurais une autre', in Paris 'Faudrait qu'on les expulserait' and in journalistic usage 'dont on put craindre un instant qu'elles ne s'éterniseraient'. Damourette and Pichon declare that this syntax is unlikely to be heard 'chez les gens de bonne compagnie' (Sten, 1952:90).

WRITING

The imperfect subjunctive was used in 120/180 possible contexts in the written data (67%). This represents an increase over its use in subordinate clauses in speech. Again, there was evidence of the substitution of the present subjunctive for the imperfect subjunctive (50/180 contexts – or 28%). In the written data, the conditional was only substituted for the imperfect subjunctive in 10/180 contexts (6%) and for the present subjunctive in 10/200 contexts (5%), representing a reduction compared with the substitution occurring in subordinate clauses in speech. The conditional *par attraction* was also evident in written Guernesiais, appearing in 71% of possible contexts (50/70). This would not be widely tolerated in standard written French where, in subordinate clauses, as Lindqvist points out, 'le conditionnel introduit de préférence le mode subjonctif' (1979:31) (Cf. Togeby 1982:§843): an indication, perhaps, of the fact that written and spoken Guernesiais may be only slightly differentiated.

The fact that the conditional was being substituted for both the present and the imperfect subjunctive in Guernesiais was deemed to warrant further analysis in order to determine whether or not such substitution was context-specific. Accordingly, the extent to which the phenomenon was seen to occur in each subjunctive-triggering context under observation in §4.2 was examined. (Note that these represent a greater number of contexts than those examined above, as they are not restricted to those governed by sequence of tense rules). The results are displayed in tables 7–9.

Tables 7 and 8 confirm the findings made earlier in this section, namely that the conditional is being substituted for the subjunctive in both speech and writing. The replacement of the subjunctive by the conditional in speech is by no means a development peculiar to Guernesiais and, as stated above, is undoubtedly due to the close association that exists between the subjunctive, the conditional and the notion of hypothesis. Indeed, studies such as those of Clédat (1927), Fleischman (1982) and Grevisse (1988) have suggested that the same phenomenon may be witnessed in mainland French, in which the

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Table 7. Contexts in which the conditional is substituted for the subjunctive – SPEECH

Context	Contexts in which substitution occurred as a percentage of the total number of occurrences of this context	Conditional substitution occurring for the present subjunctive as a percentage of the total number of conditional substitutions	Conditional substitution occurring for the imperfect subjunctive as a percentage of the total number of conditional substitutions
<i>Ôimaîr qué</i> [14 tokens]	100% [14 tokens]	0%	100% [14 tokens]
<i>I' faout qué</i> [121 tokens]	10% [12 tokens]	33% [4 tokens]	66% [8 tokens]
Negative antecedent [24 tokens]	8% [2 tokens]	50% [1 token]	50% [1 token]
<i>À mouôins qué</i> [60 tokens]	8% [5 tokens]	100% [5 tokens]	0%
<i>Voulier qué</i> [61 tokens]	8% [5 tokens]	40% [2 tokens]	60% [3 tokens]
<i>Pour qué</i> [108 tokens]	22% [24 tokens]	25% [6 tokens]	75% [18 tokens]
<i>I' (m') r'sembble qué</i> [37 tokens]	14% [5 tokens]	0%	100% [5 tokens]
Verbs of thinking/believing in the negative [98 tokens]	7% [7 tokens]	71% [5 tokens]	29% [2 tokens]

subjunctive and the conditional are by now so close in meaning as to be almost freely interchangeable, mainly in speech but occasionally in writing (Cf. Sten's remarks, cited above). For instance, Grevisse cites the examples of 'Je voudrais qu'il viendrait' and 'Il aurait fallu qu'on aurait chanté' as 'fréquent dans l'usage populaire de diverses provinces et du Canada' (1988:§869. See also §865e). Similarly, Brunot and Bruneau state that in *français populaire*, the conditional 'remplace le subjonctif quand celui-ci conserve sa valeur modale' (Brunot and Bruneau, 1969:320) – this could be exemplified in a sentence such as 'je cherche une maison qui aurait un jardin' – and Gadet notes that in the same variety that 'le conditionnel ... semble préféré au subjonctif pour marquer une éventualité: "supposons que je voudrais, à moins que j'aurais su"' (1992:89). Sten states that in modern written French there is a tendency to use the conditional in cases which would historically require the subjunctive in order to express the 'valeur spéciale du conditionnel' (1952:87) – in other words, the modal value, often felt to be lacking from the modern French subjunctive which is more often than

Table 8. *Contexts in which the conditional is substituted for the subjunctive – WRITING*

Context	Contexts in which substitution occurred as a percentage of the total number of occurrences of this context	Conditional substitution occurring for the present subjunctive as a percentage of the total number of conditional substitutions	Conditional substitution occurring for the imperfect subjunctive as a percentage of the total number of conditional substitutions
<i>Ôimaîr qué</i> [33 tokens]	66% [22 tokens]	0%	100% [22 tokens]
<i>I' faout qué</i> [63 tokens]	10% [6 tokens]	33% [2 tokens]	66% [4 tokens]
Negative antecedent [17 tokens]	12% [2 tokens]	0%	100% [2 tokens]
<i>À mouôins qué</i> [40 tokens]	20% [8 tokens]	0%	100% [8 tokens]
<i>Voulier qué</i> [53 tokens]	9% [5 tokens]	0%	100% [5 tokens]

not triggered by syntax rather than meaning, and Cohen also gives many examples of the conditional being used in contexts which would traditionally require a subjunctive according to prescriptive grammar-book usage – for example after verbs of commanding and eventuality (1965:54, 81ff).

Several studies indicate that the fact that the subjunctive has a reduced morphological system, compared with the indicative, may lead to the use of the latter in contexts traditionally reserved for the former, especially with regard to the future and conditional (Togebly, 1982:§840, Boysen, 1971:28–9). Clearly, the lack of a future subjunctive tense, and the mood's consequent recourse to the present tense in such contexts may result in ambiguity, which may be avoided either by using a construction with *devoir* such as 'Je ne crois pas qu'il doive aller lui rendre visite aujourd'hui' or, as Togebly notes, 'bien souvent on remplace tout simplement le subjonctif par le futur ou par le conditionnel de l'indicatif' (1982:260). He goes on to list a number of contexts where the conditional is substituted for the subjunctive in this way, and notes that substitution for an imperfect subjunctive is especially prevalent when the main clause is in the present. For example:

- (19) *Certaines satisfactions dans lesquelles il semble qu'on ne pourrait avoir comme excuse que la démence complète* (1982:262)
 (20) *Mais je crains bien qu'elles ne seraient jamais que de fausses diaconesses* (1982:262)

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Table 9. Contexts in which the conditional is never substituted for the subjunctive

SPEECH	WRITING
<i>Dévànt qué</i> [24 tokens]	<i>Dévànt qué</i> [53 tokens]
<i>Dànqué qué/ entertchie qué</i> [164 tokens]	<i>Dànqué qué/ entertchie qué</i> [42 tokens]
After a Superlative (including <i>lé seul, lé prumier, lé drôin</i> etc.) [32 tokens]	After a Superlative (including <i>lé seul, lé prumier, lé drôin</i> etc.) [27 tokens]
Independent clauses – optative [18 tokens]	Independent clauses – optative [27 tokens]
Independent clauses – set phrases [16 tokens]	Independent clauses – set phrases [20 tokens]
Impersonal expressions – <i>Il est X qué</i> [67 tokens]	Impersonal expressions – <i>Il est X qué</i> [64 tokens]
<i>Bian qué</i> [29 tokens]	<i>Bian qué</i> [19 tokens]
<i>Ête</i> + adjective + <i>qué</i> [53 tokens]	<i>Ête</i> + adjective + <i>qué</i> [121 tokens]
<i>À mais qué</i> [43 tokens]	<i>Ordownnair qué</i> [21 tokens]
	<i>R'grettair qué</i> [16 tokens]
	<i>Pour qué</i> [61 tokens]
	<i>I' (m') r'semlle qué</i> [26 tokens]
	Verbs of thinking/believing in the negative [74 tokens]

(21) *Je ne crois pa qu'on me rendrait service en cherchant* (1982:262)

(22) *Quoique je serais furieux que vous me réveilliez* (1982:261).¹⁰

Sten also argues that the strongly felt modal value of the conditional combined with the lack of subjunctive past forms corresponding to precise tenses of the indicative might conceivably encourage the maintenance of the conditional in a context such as 'je ne t'empêcherai pas de parler, quoique le mieux serait ... d'appeler le père Théodose' (Zola) rather than its replacement by *fût*, a form that makes no distinction between the nuances conveyed by *était*, *fut* and *serait* in the indicative (1952:86–7).

It may be possible to conjecture, therefore, that due to a combination of the reduced morphological system and diminishing modal connotations of the subjunctive, the conditional is a well-placed candidate, in both mainland French and Guernesiais, to become some form of alternative subjunctive used to reintroduce the notion of modality – and futurity. However, it is important to note that although conditional substitution has been demonstrated to occur in both varieties, it seems to occur in a greater number of contexts in the latter, and also in contexts where it would never occur in mainland French, such as after verbs of volition (*voulier qué*) and (in speech) after *pour qué*.

¹⁰ It is stated, however, that after prepositions such as *avant que, pour que, sans que* and verbs of volition the indicative is rare (Togeby, 1982:260–1)

Furthermore, the varieties diverge significantly in terms of written usage where, given the school-promoted consciousness of the prescriptive grammar rules among speakers of mainland French, it is less likely that conditional substitution would appear as consistently in print or in any formal piece of writing although it may occur at times to emphasize the notion of futurity (Togebly, 1982:§840).

Although it was demonstrated in §4.2 that, generally speaking, speech and writing were found to be only weakly distinct in Guernesiais with respect to the use of the subjunctive, medium does not seem to be totally without significance with regard to conditional substitution. In the first place, three contexts emerged where substitution by the conditional consistently occurred in the spoken data but not in writing, namely *pour qué*, *I' (m') r'sembble qué* and verbs of thinking/believing in the negative. There seems to be no apparent reason for this divergence in that the contexts in question did not form a clearly defined group and were semantically quite different from one another. Furthermore, although the analysis undertaken in §4.2 indicated that verbs of thinking/believing in the negative and *I' (m') r'sembble qué* did not often trigger the subjunctive (table 2) (which might be a possible explanation behind their triggering of the conditional, see below), *pour qué* which, in speech, triggered the conditional in more than one in five contexts (table 7) was revealed to behave quite differently in written Guernesiais where, although it proved a frequent rather than a systematic trigger of the subjunctive (table 3), it was never followed by the conditional (table 9). Written Guernesiais, then, appears closer to the usage of mainland French, for which Togebly lists *pour que* (1982:261) as a preposition which is never followed by the conditional.¹¹ Moreover, tables 7 and 8 also indicate that although, in the case of speech, conditional substitution occurred for both tenses of the subjunctive, it was overwhelmingly clear that, in the case of writing, the conditional was only generally substituted for the imperfect subjunctive. This corresponds to Togebly's findings on mainland French (1982:260–2). However, the fact that in Guernesiais some substitution was occurring for the present subjunctive in the context of *i' faout qué* may signal the beginnings of such a tendency in the present tense.

This is not to say, though, that the Guernesiais conditional is replacing the subjunctive altogether for, as has been demonstrated above, substitution was found to be occurring only in a restricted number of contexts, rather than systematically across the whole range of subjunctive-triggering contexts (tables 7, 8, 9) and both the present and imperfect subjunctive are still widely used in speech and in writing (table 1). However, tables 7 and 8 reveal that, in both these media, the conditional is undoubtedly being used frequently in a number of contexts which traditionally trigger the subjunctive.

¹¹ Note that the same is said to be true of *avant que* (*dévànt que* in Guernesiais), another preposition which does not admit conditional-substitution either in mainland French or in Guernesiais.

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A possible explanation as to the extent of conditional substitution in contemporary Guernesiais may lie in the claim made by Tomlinson that many speakers are no longer sure of the forms of the imperfect subjunctive, although he makes no mention of their replacement by the conditional (1981:110). As has been demonstrated above (§4.2.1, table 5) this also applies to the present subjunctive, where a variety of forms were found in this survey. Could it be, then, that the conditional, which shares many of the subjunctive's traditional links with modality, may be brought in to compensate for uncertainty regarding the subjunctive forms that would normally be required in these contexts?

In addition, it is possible to conjecture that since there is traditionally no alternative but to use the subjunctive in the contexts examined in this survey, a state of affairs which, as has been argued in the case of French, may serve to diminish its modal connotations (Harris, 1978:173), could it be that the use of the conditional in contexts which traditionally trigger the subjunctive may represent an effort to reintroduce the notion of modality in Guernesiais, by using what in this context represents a marked form rather than the unmarked subjunctive? Another reason may, of course, be that the conditional is used to emphasize the notion of futurity, as seems to be happening in mainland French (Togebly, 1982:§840), a notion which the subjunctive is unable to convey adequately, given its lack of a separate morphological future form. Admittedly, as table 9 reveals, there are some contexts which never seem to admit conditional substitution but it is possible that this may be accounted for as the beginnings of a tendency, spreading perhaps via a form of lexical diffusion, which as yet has not extended to all contexts.

These hypotheses remain to be tested on the basis of future usage, which will reveal whether conditional substitution becomes extended to more contexts or whether it has reached a 'steady state'.¹² Clearly, isolating any of the above as the main factor behind conditional substitution will prove to be extremely difficult and, indeed, it may not be altogether imprudent to acknowledge at least the possibility of multiple causation (Thomason and Kaufman, 1988:51).¹³ The fact remains however, that in contemporary Guernesiais, conditional substitution in subjunctive-triggering environments is becoming commonplace, to the point that the conditional has even been described by de Garis, in her grammatical survey of the variety as an alternative to the present subjunctive, citing the example *A' veurt qué t'irais la veies* ('she wants you to go and see her') (1983:332), although I do not believe that it is yet a systematic alternative in all contexts and at present, at least, the subjunctive is still statistically more likely to be encountered.

¹² Provided, of course, that the decline in speaker-numbers does not continue at its present rate.

¹³ The fact that the subjunctive has diminished modal connotations and is unable to adequately express futurity when required may be leading to its non-use. This may, in turn, lead to people becoming uncertain of the forms of the subjunctive and once this occurs they will start to avoid using the mood.

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5 CONCLUSION

Analysis of the data collected in this survey has revealed that the Guernesiais subjunctive still displays some of the features witnessed in medieval Anglo-Norman manuscripts. Although declining in usage, reflexes of the medieval Norman forms with a *-ge* extension may be seen in the present subjunctive paradigm of *allair* (and arguably *v'nir*), and many of the contexts in which the subjunctive was attested in medieval times still trigger the mood today. Moreover, the imperfect subjunctive, which is moribund in standard French, is still used frequently in both spoken and written Guernesiais.

Although all native speakers of Guernesiais are bilingual in English and all but a few now use the latter more regularly than the former, the data revealed that the subjunctive mood – absent from English – still featured widely in several contexts in both independent and subordinate clauses, where it was triggered systematically in both speech and in writing. It also emerged that although, for the most part, the conjugations remained intact, there was evidence of some variation in the morphological forms used for both the present and imperfect tense of the Guernesiais subjunctive. The fact that, by and large, the subjunctive was maintained to a similar degree in the contexts under scrutiny in spoken and written Guernesiais may indicate that these two media are only slightly differentiated, probably due to the lack of a written tradition in Guernesiais, which implies that people are writing very much as they would speak. This, of course, differs greatly from the situation in standard French, where absence of the subjunctive from contexts such as those examined here would not generally be tolerated in writing although, as has been demonstrated, they may occasionally be omitted in low register speech (Müller, 1985:242) or where it is felt that the subjunctive does not convey adequately the notion of futurity (Togoby, 1982:§840). There was, however, an indication that in Guernesiais too non-use of the subjunctive is more likely to be tolerated in speech than in writing: although the mood was triggered more frequently in writing than in speech in only two of the constructions examined in §4.2, it was clear that sequence of tense rules were being observed more rigidly in writing.

Finally, there remains the question of the vitality of the Guernesiais subjunctive. Commentators such as Harris have pointed out at length that although the subjunctive of standard French still remains as a purely formal category, its meaningfulness as an exponent of modality is being eroded and its triggers are mainly syntactic in nature – in many cases dependent upon specific lexical items (1978:174). It would be difficult to argue a case for a separate state of affairs in modern Guernesiais for, as has been shown, in the case of most triggers there appears to be little semantic motivation. Groups of words or expressions with similar meanings and functions may be described as triggering the subjunctive in Guernesiais, but in practice the outcome is often tied to the lexis so that, unlike in standard French, it is not possible to group the triggers

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into generic classes. For example, *à mais qué*, a conjunction, will trigger the subjunctive in a majority of cases while *bian qué*, another conjunction, will not.¹⁴ Similarly, *voulier qué*, a verb of volition, triggers the subjunctive widely, whereas *ôimaïr qué* does not. As stated above, it could be that a desire to re-introduce the notion of modality in contexts such as these represents a major factor behind conditional substitution in contemporary Guernesiais.

In main clauses, the optative may still be considered as a productive context for the subjunctive but as in standard French (and unlike in medieval times) it is now formed in Guernesiais with an obligatory (pseudo-subordinating) *qué*, possibly due to influence from standard French. Certainly, the Guernesiais subjunctive is no longer found ‘unaccompanied’ in any independent clause apart from in a few set phrases. Its restriction to subordinate clauses, where in most cases the semantic nuance is conveyed by the matrix verb, means that, as in standard French, the subjunctive generally remains a formal category with little semantic value. As in standard French, it is the conditional rather than the subjunctive which has come to be the chief exponent of verb-marked modality in Guernesiais – both epistemic:

(23) *I' s'rait v'nu* (judgement) (‘he must have come’)

(24) *I' pourrait v'nir demôin* (possibility) (‘he could come tomorrow’)

(25) *Si j'étais riche, j'acat'rais aen môto* (contra-factivity) (‘if I were rich, I would buy a car’)

and deontic:

(26) *J'voudrais dire tchique chaose* (attenuation) (‘I would like to say something’)

(27) *Tu dévrais allair lé veies* (subjectivity) (‘you should go and see him’)

(28) *Eche-qué je pourrais dire tchique chaose?* (permission) (‘could I say something?’).

Due to this role which it already fulfils in the contemporary Guernesiais and, given the apparent absence of modality in the grammaticalized subjunctive-triggering contexts of the dialect, it is plain to see that the conditional would be a prime candidate for re-introducing modality in such contexts, should speakers of the variety require this.

The conditional should not, however, be seen as the only way of expressing modality in Guernesiais. As in standard French, modal verbs and lexical items such as *il est possible qué* and *probablément* also have a role to play. Similarly, attenuation may also be marked by the imperfect tense – *j'voulais te d'màndaïr tchique chaose*, and judgement by the future tense – *i' s'ra v'nu*. Moreover, there exist some types of modality that the subjunctive alone can express, such as in the case of imperatives, where the present subjunctive retains its role as the sole exponent of this category in the third person singular (de Garis, 1983:345). However, as this survey has demonstrated, the undoubted links

¹⁴ Although both of these constructions were described as triggers of the subjunctive by Lukis (1979:11).

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between the conditional and the non-factual/hypothetical in modern Guernesiais may be leading to its expansion to contexts traditionally reserved for the subjunctive.

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