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Middle and Late bases for Revived Cornish

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Abstract

Following the call for papers on the meta-linguistics of the Cornish revival, I address the difficulty of catering both for speakers who use a Middle base and those who prefer a Late base. Whereas most orthographies of revived Cornish have been aimed exclusively at one or other of these bases, SWF attempts to deal with both. The original desideratum was to devise a “single written form”, being a compromise between the wishes of the two groups of speakers; but when this proved impossible, the fall-back position was to have a system which includes both Middle and Late variants. In effect the two “Main Forms” of SWF amount to two different orthographies. Some speakers have therefore called for the number of variants to be reduced, if possible to zero. In this paper I show that this wish cannot be realized, owing to the unpredictable forms in Late Cornish. I also suggest a solution to the problem.