

## **Singulatives and diminutives in P-Celtic languages**

Sabine Heinz and Karolina Rosiak (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań)

Whoever wants to learn a modern P-Celtic language is faced with a category unusual to other Indo-European languages, i.e. the singulative as found in Welsh *plentyn*, *madarchen* and many other denotations for realities which naturally come in larger numbers. Although this marked category was described as early as 1907 by Strachan, it has been largely ignored in modern language descriptions and only become a truly recognised feature in Breton dictionaries. King (1993: 48-67) notices this phenomenon for Welsh, but neither applies the term singulative to it, nor links it to diminutive suffixes from which they derive, nor applies his observations in his own dictionary. This is rather unfortunate, as such false descriptions in dictionaries as highly frequently used linguistics reference books and depositories potentially harm the morphology of the languages. Indeed, the category of the singulative is of extra-ordinary use in forming various semantic expressions in the P-Celtic languages, conveying for instance diminutives, fragmentation, singularisation, and personalisation. In the light of the under-representation of the P-Celtic singulatives, this paper therefore aims to depict the range of potential meanings expressed by singulative-diminutive constructions as well as their interplay with grammar in the currently spoken three P-Celtic languages. In addition, it will be shown that the diminutive-derived singulatives are flexible in form, which partly depends on the gender of the base word. However, they may as well impose a gender on their base words, which makes doublets possible.