

## 13. Spoken Jameld, informality and dialects

### 13.1 Contractions

Contractions are common in spoken Jameld, e.g.

<i>me jist</i> → <i>me'st</i>	I'm
<i>ye jist</i> → <i>ye'st</i>	you're
<i>et jist</i> → <i>et'st</i>	it's
<i>ven ist</i> → <i>ven'st</i>	we're
<i>et eri jist</i> → <i>et eri'st</i>	this one's
<i>ṭsald</i> → <i>ṭsa'</i>	will
<i>kümne</i> → <i>küm</i>	come
<i>met te</i> → <i>mete</i>	with the

(The above are to be distinguished from *me*, *ye*, *ne* and *te* eliding to *m'*, *y'*, *n'* and *t'* before vowels, which are required in modern standard Jameld. It is considered incorrect to write or say *\*me olt* or *\*te ül*.)

Additionally, certain other combinations also contract or are simplified in speech. For example, verbs whose present indicative ends in *-je* or *-ye* can become contracted before *ye* or *yen*:

*Was thakje ye?* → *Was thak' ye?*    What do you think?

### 13.2 Discourse particles

Speakers often make use of so-called discourse particles or fillers, as a placeholder while planning what to say next, when uncertain or to introduce a topic the hearer won't like. Jameld discourse particles include the following:

<i>ans</i>	some	) uncertainty, hesitation
<i>er</i>	er, um	)
<i>intedédh</i>	actually	)
<i>öh</i>	er, um	)
<i>zolink</i>	as long as	)
<i>zo</i>	so, thus	) "you see"
<i>zowis</i>	thus	)
<i>zovor</i>	so, thus	linking to previous utterance

<i>zochan</i>	like that	) something like that
<i>zochans</i>	some like that	)
<i>zoch'nan</i>	one like that	)
<i>wel</i>	well	) rebooting conversation
<i>welzo</i>	well then	)
<i>zowel</i>	anyway	)
<i>zowér</i>	actually	introducing unwelcome topic

*Zo* also fills another role as an emphatic when scolding or warning children or subordinates (or jocularly pretending to do so):

<i>Rohk zo!</i>	Take care!
<i>Endiyë zo!</i>	Stop that!

See also sections 4.9 IMPERSONAL *ET* AND “*IT*”, 5.14 PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE and 5.16 PAST SUBJUNCTIVE for additional information about informal usage.

### 13.3 Dialects

A full discussion of Jameld dialects is beyond the scope of this slim volume. However, the descriptions that follow should suffice to illustrate the major differences and features of the three main dialects, while touching briefly on important sub-dialects.

- Üstzur (“East Zur”)

The main literary dialect and traditionally the most prestigious, Üstzur is spoken in the east of Zuraaland. “Modern standard Jameld”, as generally documented in the present dictionary and grammar, is defined as the educated speech of Jameld-speaking residents of Wissembörg and the Üstzur region, which includes Sténselz and Ridselz, close to the capital; the lowlands east of the central ridge; Sülz and the villages of Mitlant princing in the south (in some of which a transitional dialect is spoken); and Hunspach in the south-east, which has some minor but distinctive features in its dialect. The variant of Üstzur spoken in the village of Élibak, to the north-west of Wissembörg, is notable for certain unusual traits. Üstzur is regarded by some in the other regions as a bit prim and proper, but is well understood by all Jameld-speakers.

- Vestzur (“West Zur”)

Vestzur is spoken in the south-west of Zuraaland, in the spa town of Niderbrönt and the surrounding villages, including Wörth and Wintstén. It is a progressive dialect and shows signs of French influence, due in part to the large numbers of visitors that have historically flocked to Niderbrönt to take the waters. Vestzur pronunciation is considered to be “easier” – if not to pronounce, then at least on the ear – with [x] and [ç] reduced to [h], and [dʒ] to [ʒ]; Üstzur’s tap-r [r] becomes uvular [ʀ]. Äu is pronounced [ø:] rather than [ɔ:], and the question words tend to start with *h* (see below for examples). Since the late 20th century, the pronunciation associated with this dialect has gained something of a cachet among the younger generation and is seen as “cool” in comparison to stuffy old Üstzur.

- Börgeslant (“Land of the Castles”)

This is a conservative rural dialect, spoken in the mountainous north and north-west of Zuraaland, including the small town of Lembek, along the Sténbek valley, and the isolated village of Wenjelsbek, where the dialect has some distinctive and unusual features.

Börgeslant dialect retains some vestigial features of Old Jameld grammar:

I. Grammatical gender, although simplified

The former three genders, masculine, feminine and neuter, have been reduced to two in Börgeslant, with the masculine and feminine being combined into a common gender. The definite article has two forms, *te* (common and plural) and *et* (neuter singular); an additional form, *tem*, is used by some speakers as a dative definite article (common and plural). No other relics of grammatical gender remain.

II. “Irregular” plural nouns

Unlike the other dialects, Börgeslant has retained some of the Old Jameld plurals that feature ablaut (vowel alternation; cf. English “mouse”/“mice”). A plural suffix *-(e)n* sometimes also appears:

English	Börgeslant sing/pl	MSJ sing/pl
man	<i>monn / minn</i>	<i>monn / monnes</i>
foot	<i>foud / füden</i>	<i>föd / födes</i>
tree	<i>baam / bëmen</i>	<i>baam / baames</i>
ewe	<i>áy / œyn</i>	<i>äi / äis</i>

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goose	<i>gaas / gēse</i>	<i>gaas / gaase</i>
cheese	<i>zas / zōse</i>	<i>zas / zase</i>
cow	<i>kou / kün</i>	<i>ëxar / ëxares</i>
shoe	<i>tsuw / tsün</i>	<i>tsün / tsün</i>

Some plurals have been compressed:

hand	<i>hant / hinn</i> (< <i>hinten</i> )	<i>hant / hantes</i>
tooth	<i>dant / dinn</i> (< <i>dinten</i> )	<i>dant / dantes</i>

Others may be less predicable:

day	<i>däi / däjen</i>	<i>däi / däis</i>
toe	<i>tä / täjen</i>	<i>tä / täs</i>
eye	<i>ígh / jin</i>	<i>iy / iys</i>

### III. Pronoun differences

The personal pronouns in Börjeslant are as follows (modern standard Jameld pronouns are shown for comparison):

	<u>nom</u>	<u>acc/dat</u>	<u>MSJ</u>
1S	<i>ek, 'k</i>	<i>mě</i>	<i>me / ime</i>
2S	<i>the</i>	<i>the</i>	<i>ye / iye</i>
3Sm	<i>ě</i>	<i>ě</i>	<i>e / ie</i>
3Sf	<i>es, 's</i>	<i>es, 's</i>	<i>es / ies</i>
3Sn	<i>et, 't</i>	<i>et, 't</i>	<i>et / iet</i>
1P	<i>ve</i>	<i>ve</i>	<i>ven / iven</i>
2P	<i>ye</i>	<i>ye</i>	<i>yen / iyen</i>
3Pmf	<i>tem</i>	<i>tem</i>	<i>tem / item</i>
3Pn	<i>temt</i>	<i>temt</i>	<i>temt / itemt</i>

As can be seen, only the first-person singular pronoun has a separate objective form in this dialect; the other objective forms have been lost. (MSJ uses a “new” set of objective pronouns not derived from Old Jameld.)

### IV. Conjugation of verbs

In Börjeslant, verbs in the plural number generally carry a *-(a)n* suffix, in both the present and the past forms, and the second-person singular form has a *-s* ending, again in both the present and the past. The verb *lube* (“to love”; MSJ *liuben*) here serves to provide some examples:

English	Börgeslant	MSJ
I love you	<i>ek lub the</i>	<i>me liub iye</i>
You love me	<i>the lubs mē</i>	<i>ye liub ime</i>
We love it	<i>ve luban't</i>	<i>ven liub iet</i>
I loved you	<i>ek lubta the</i>	<i>me liubta iye</i>
You loved me	<i>the lubtas mē</i>	<i>ye liubta ime</i>
We loved it	<i>ve lubtan't</i>	<i>ven liubta iet</i>

Note the full paradigm of the irregular verb *sen/isten* (“to be”):

English	Börgeslant	MSJ
I am	<i>ek jist</i>	<i>me jist</i>
You are (thou art)	<i>the jist</i>	<i>ye jist</i>
He/she is	<i>ë/es jist</i>	<i>e/es jist</i>
We are	<i>ve san</i>	<i>ven ist</i>
You are	<i>ye san</i>	<i>yen ist</i>
They are	<i>tem ist</i>	<i>tem ist</i>

The Börgeslant accent is also distinctive, with a number of the vowels having a notably different value from those in other dialects of Jameld. Written Börgeslant makes use of the additional letters *á*, *í* and *œ* for this reason.

	Börgeslant	MSJ
<i>a</i>	[æ:], stressed [æə]	[a], long [ɑ:]
<i>aa</i>	[æ:], stressed [æə]	[ɑ:]
<i>au</i>	[ʌ:], stressed [ʌə] (written <i>á</i> )	[aʊ]
<i>ä</i>	[æj]	[e], long [e:]
<i>äu</i>	[ø] (written <i>œ</i> )	[ɔ:]
<i>e</i>	[ɛ:], stressed [ɛə]	[ɛ], long [e:]
<i>é</i>	[ɛ:], stressed [ɛə]	[e:]
<i>ë</i>	[ej]	[i:]
<i>i</i>	[ɛ] long [i:] (written <i>í</i> )	[ɪ], half-long [i]
<i>ī</i>	[əj]	[aɪ]
<i>o</i>	[ɔ:]	[ɔ], long [o:]
<i>ö</i>	[ɔj]	[œ], long [ø:]
<i>u</i>	[u:]	[ʊ], long [u:]
<i>ü</i>	[uj], final after vowel [j]	[ʏ], long [y:]

In unstressed position, *a*, *e*, *o* and *u* tend towards [ə].

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For comparison, here are some key words in all three main dialects:

	Üstzur	Vestzur	Börgešlant
one	<i>aunt</i>	<i>aun</i>	<i>án</i>
two	<i>tī</i>	<i>taa/tö</i>	<i>tī</i>
from	<i>wrun</i>	<i>wru</i>	<i>wru</i>
to see	<i>visen</i>	<i>vize</i>	<i>ṫsaae</i>
eye	<i>iy</i>	<i>iy</i>	<i>ígh</i>
head	<i>chaa/chadof</i>	<i>chaa</i>	<i>chaaf</i>
small	<i>lex, kley</i>	<i>iti, klé</i>	<i>lix/líx</i>
yes	<i>jey</i>	<i>jé</i>	<i>jé</i>
no	<i>nau</i>	<i>nò/nau</i>	<i>né</i>
what	<i>was</i>	<i>haz</i>	<i>wa</i>
who	<i>wi</i>	<i>hi</i>	<i>wí</i>
why	<i>umwi</i>	<i>oni</i>	<i>umwi</i>
when	<i>wen</i>	<i>hen</i>	<i>wen</i>
how	<i>wau</i>	<i>hau</i>	<i>wu</i>
where	<i>au</i>	<i>äu</i>	<i>á</i>
which	<i>wist</i>	<i>hest</i>	<i>wist</i>

In case of doubt, the reader is advised to use modern standard Jameld to avoid confusion, except among close friends or in highly informal situations. These notes on dialect have been provided to prepare the learner for local words, verb forms and pronunciations that may be encountered around Zuraaland.