



Language, Culture and Identity in Wales

A Comparative Study Visit Report

13th – 16th January 2014

Democratic
Progress
Institute

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Foreword

This report details the activities and roundtable discussions experienced during the Democratic Progress Institute's Comparative Study visit to Cardiff, Wales from 12th to 16th January 2014. The study focused on the subjects of *Language*, *Culture* and *Identity* in Wales, in the context of devolution. We hope that this visit will be valuable for participants, and that it will contribute to ongoing discussions in Turkey.

DPI's aim is to create and foster an environment in which different parties share information, ideas, knowledge and concerns connected to the development of democratic solutions and outcomes. The objective of DPI's projects is to facilitate the operation of conflict resolution measures in conflicting societies. This is addressed through creating a platform for participants to meet with international experts, to draw upon comparative studies, as well as analyse and compare various mechanisms used to achieve positive results in similar cases. DPI's work supports the development of a pluralistic political arena capable of generating consensus and ownership of work on key issues surrounding democratic solutions at political and local levels.

DPI focuses on providing expertise, research and practical frameworks to encourage stronger public debates and involvements in promoting peace and democracy building internationally. Within this context DPI aims to contribute to the establishment

of a structured public dialogue on peace and democratic advancement, as well as to create new and widen existing platforms for discussions on peace and democracy building. As part of DPI's role of reaching and securing these aims, DPI focuses on supporting a public atmosphere and environment of inclusion and frank, structured discussions whereby different parties are in the position to openly share knowledge, concerns and suggestions for democracy building and strengthening across multiple levels. DPI's objective throughout this process is to identify common priorities and develop innovative approaches to participate in and influence the process of finding democratic solutions. DPI also aims to support and strengthen collaboration between academics, civil society and policy-makers through its projects and output.

With thanks to Grace O'Donovan and the staff of DPI for their assistance with this report. DPI also gives special thanks to the Welsh Government for their hosting of the visit, and to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, for their facilitation of the visit.



Kerim Yildiz

Director, Democratic Progress Institute

Sunday 12th January - Welcome and Introduction by Yılmaz Ensaroğlu¹

Yılmaz Ensaroğlu: Welcome to you all, and thank you for joining us in Wales. You probably know about the Democratic Progress Institute (DPI) already. We have conducted many visits of this kind, with participants including Members of Parliament from all main parties in Turkey, academics, civil society representatives, and others. Our visits focus on comparative experiences, so we can see how different people have handled different situations and we have benefitted from these points. Visits so far have focused on particular case studies and countries. One issue I have noticed is that during previous visits we have not focused specifically enough on one topic; they have been more general in their approach, looking at conflict resolution and democratisation for instance. This time, we have chosen to focus on language and identity issues. We have visited Wales before, but this time we will look at issues of language, culture and language in education. For us in Turkey, language and education are very political issues, in particular concerning the Kurdish language. Language seems to be a more apolitical, cultural and symbolic issue here, but we shall learn more over the coming days. So, we are gathering here as academics and

1 Yılmaz Ensaroğlu is a DPI Council of Experts member, and is the Director of Law and Human Rights Studies, at SETA (Politics, Economic and Social Research Foundation). He is also a member of the Executive Board of the Joint Platform for Human Rights, the Human Rights Agenda Association (IHGD) and Human Rights Research Association (IHAD), and is the Chief Editor of the Journal of the Human Rights Dialogue. He is a member of Turkey's Wise Persons Commission established by Prime Minister Erdoğan.

professors from different universities as well as government officials who are interested in the topic. This is how the group was formed. I will now introduce DPI's Programme Manager Eleanor Johnson who is from Wales herself. Other friends here include İpek Kotan, our interpreter, and Esra Elmas, a Senior Advisor to DPI. We have representatives from the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) who have written reports about the Kurdish language in Turkey. They continue to do excellent work. We have people here from universities, and also those in politics. The mix among us will provide a uniqueness to our discussions, and I look forward to our time here together.

We are going to meet government officials and others during the programme. We want to learn something from their example about language and education. I personally do not know much about language, but was invited to accompany you by DPI's Director, Kerim Yildiz, who was not able to make it. I hope this will be a productive and fun visit.

Monday 13th January - Welcome Reception by the Welsh Government with Ifona Deeley²

Presentation:

Overview of Wales and the Welsh Government

With:

Ifona Deeley, Head of International Relations,
Welsh Government

Venue: **Welsh Government Buildings, Cathays Park, Cardiff**

Moderated by Eleanor Johnson³



*Ifona Deeley addresses the delegation at the Welsh Government
Buildings in Cardiff*

Eleanor Johnson: Welcome everybody, *Croeso i Bawb! Hoşgeldiniz!*

2 Ifona Deeley is a career Civil Servant. She has held numerous positions in the former Welsh Office and now the Welsh Government including Agriculture, Education and Health. She now works as Head of the International Relations Team with responsibility for promoting Wales internationally and handling public diplomacy issues for the Welsh Government.

3 Eleanor Johnson, Programme Manager, Democratic Progress Institute

It is my pleasure to meet with you all here in Cardiff, on behalf of the Democratic Progress Institute (DPI) for our second Comparative Study Visit to Wales, which will focus this time on issues of *language*, *culture* and *identity* in Wales. This visit is very kindly hosted by the Welsh Government, the offices of which we are in here today, and has also been kindly facilitated by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office. We were last in Cardiff as part of our Turkey programme in 2012, for a very interesting visit also hosted by the Welsh Government, which looked more generally at devolution in Wales.

This visit is one of a number of DPI's comparative study visits, which have looked at various case studies and countries, including Ireland, Scotland, South Africa and Germany.

As someone who comes from Wales, it is a privilege to welcome you to my homeland, and I hope you will find the next few days to be of value. I will be here throughout the visit, as will my colleague Esra Elmas and DPI Council of Experts member Yılmaz Ensaroğlu, who you all know, if you have any questions or requirements whatsoever. As some of you may know, DPI's Director Kerim Yildiz is very sorry to miss this visit, as he has an important lecture to give in the United States this week. Our Deputy Director Catriona Vine was also very sorry to miss this visit, due to an important case she currently has in Strasbourg. They both send their apologies and hope to see you at future DPI activities, and wish you all a very fruitful visit.

Wales has seen a number of changes over recent years, including

devolution and the establishment of the Welsh Government in 1999, which I am sure you will hear more about over the days to come. Throughout political and other changes, issues of language and identity have lived on, and continue to be as topical here as ever.

During our visit here in Cardiff, you will be introduced to the kind of issues facing Wales in relation to language and identity including its role in education, Welsh history, politics, governance and constitutional affairs, civil society and other fields. Hopefully the visit will give you an overview of these various aspects, and that you will find it as worthwhile as other DPI visits have been.

I now hand over to Ifona Deeley, Head of the Welsh Government's International Relations Department (the Welsh equivalent of the United Kingdom's Department of Foreign Affairs), who is kindly here today to provide an overview of Wales and the key topics our programme will address. Thank you. *Diolch yn fawr.*

Ifona Deeley: Good morning everyone. It is a pleasure to have you here in Wales. My team is responsible for putting the programme here for your visit. It will be a very interesting visit for you. We thought it would be good to provide an overview of Wales, to set it in context for you because I am aware that the focus is *language* and *identity* issues. What I intend to do this morning is to cover some information on geography and the landscape of Wales, look at some issues in relation to the economy, and touch on culture in

the Welsh language. I do not want to duplicate anything you will be told later. I would also like to look at constitutional issues in terms of Wales as a country. We are a relatively small country of 1, 823 square miles, so fairly small. However, Wales is characterised by its beautiful landscape with its coastline rivers and valleys. The primary features we have are lots of mountains, national parks, and a number of areas designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We are blessed with three natural parks, including Snowdonia, which houses the largest mountain in Wales. This autumn, my husband and I walked up Snowdonia and the views from the top are stunning. We have a national park in mid-Wales, the Brecon Beacons, which is the highest mountain range in South Wales and the South of England, and houses the Pen y Fan, which is popular with walkers. The coastal national park in the West of Wales is called Pembroke National Park. These are designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), but I would like to point out the Gower, because it was the first one designated to us in the whole of the UK in 1956.

Moving on, what you have in front of you is a map of Wales and a map of the UK. Wales is part of the UK and one of the four countries that make up the UK, the others being Scotland, England, and Ireland. It is surrounded on three sides by coast, and joins with England on the Eastern border. I would like to mention at this stage, the length of the coastline in Wales, which is 870 miles long. Two years ago, our coastal path was opened, which allows you to walk the length of the coast in Wales. It is one of

the first of its kind in the world, and rated one of the top tourist destinations in the world by the Lonely Planet Guide. In terms of the population of Wales, it is relatively small with a population of three million, mainly centred around the big cities and the big towns. At the moment, Cardiff has the biggest population. Here, we have a population of 346,000. Other major cities are Swansea, an hour from Cardiff, Wrexham to the North, and Newport, about ten miles to the East.

This is a whistle-stop tour of Wales, and we will cover an awful lot of ground in a short space of time. Wales has been inhabited for over 29,000 years. Original habitation, like the rest of Europe, was tribal and nomadic. In 48AD, the Romans ruled Wales for 300 years, and there is plenty of evidence of Romans in Wales today. You can see it in the road, sewage, infrastructure and the Roman ruins. There are fantastic ruins in Caerleon. It was not until the Romans left Wales that the Welsh identity emerged, which occupied the West of Britain. Forced into extremities, Britain, Scotland and some parts of Ireland and Cornwall were ruled by Saxons who were constantly fighting the Celts for territory. Those who brought their unique language, which Welsh is based on today, come from that period. The Welsh language and culture is one of the oldest today. Following the Celts, we move forward from the Middle Ages and a warring period in British history; England was keen to get Welsh territory, and in 1277, Edward I fought the people of Wales for territory. During this time, many castles were built in Wales, because the English were forced to build castles to

keep the Welsh out. There is evidence of castles all over Wales. An interesting statistic is that there are more castles per square mile in Wales, than anywhere in the world. In 1536, the Act of Union⁴ was signed. That was the period in history that defined the territory of Wales today. Moving forward to modern history, pre-1800s, the agrarian society and industrial period changed. Wales changed so dramatically during that time – and with a relatively small population and land mass – it is hard to believe that Wales was the crucible at the centre of the Industrial Revolution. We were rich in natural resources: copper, iron, slate, and we were required to fuel the industries.

We had four busy ports at that time: Swansea, Cardiff, Newport and Barry. Cardiff was the busiest throughout the whole world, exporting more iron than anywhere else. The first million pound cheque was signed in Cardiff from the US Navy, for a shipping deal. As you can imagine, the migration into Wales was absolutely phenomenal. Wales has always been a tolerant nation, and you will see that a lot of people from different nations have assimilated into the communities. The demise of coal and resources in Wales started from 1945 onwards, because it was cheaper to get coal from other parts of the World. We saw a huge demise between 1970 and 1980, which was a difficult time for Wales. We saw a huge economic

4 The Act of Union in 1536, which was commissioned by King Henry VIII of England, made Wales officially subject to English Law. Wales was divided into seven counties with justices of the peace appointed to each region. Of this act, two per cent dealt with the suppression of the Welsh language, making English the only language able to be legally used in the courts of Wales. Much of the Welsh upper class already spoke fluent English, thus creating a class divide and confining the Welsh language to the lower and middle classes.

downturn, and at that time, there was a call for Wales to reinvent its economy.

The government took a proactive view. Instead of building our traditional industries, they looked at acquiring wood industries from across the globe. It was very successful, and we had a lot of global companies and household names such as Toyota, Ford, and Sony, many of which still remain in Wales. But with the opening of Europe, the opportunities for manufacturing within the UK diminished, because it was more expensive to produce here. The current government has faced challenges in its time, and is trying to turn it around at the moment. They have done it by realising that Wales cannot be good at everything, and chase *every* opportunity. They have tried to identify ten sectors looking to increase trade nationally and globally, and encourage inward investment, but they tend to be in the knowledge-based economy. Examples are financial and professional services, the creative industry, food and farming, and advanced manufacturing. That is what we are looking at at the moment, and we are seeing some success.

These are difficult times globally. What you have in front of you now (the document) shows the current economic position of Wales. The growth value of Wales is £5,696. Employment is 70.7 per cent, where the UK average is 70.2 per cent. There is not a tremendous difference. The figures are slightly skewed by the South-East of England, which is still fairly prosperous. One of the things we are keen to market Wales in is its geographical location

within the UK. We are well primed within the UK to be a hub for businesses looking to set up operations in Europe. An interesting fact is that the Welsh government has recently purchased Cardiff Airport. It wants to create greater flight patterns to the rest of the world, and it will be a huge advantage for Wales.

Moving on to governance, Eleanor Johnson mentioned that politically, these have been interesting times for Wales. In 1977, there was a referendum for Wales, and the people were asked if they wanted greater power than within the UK government. In 1977, the National Assembly for Wales was established with legislative powers. In 2006, the *Senedd*⁵ was opened, and this is the building where the Assembly members were housed. That cost just under £70 million and was designed by Richard Rogers,⁶ world renowned architect. It was built sustainably, with glass everywhere, even looking into the Debating Chamber. The reason is so that the politicians remember that they are working for the Welsh people, and the people can look in and see that they are delivering on the people's needs. The current government is a Labour Government led by Carwyn Jones.⁷ He has 30 seats. The Parliament is made up

5 The Senedd, otherwise known as the Welsh National Assembly building, was built in 2006 and opened by Queen Elizabeth II. It is based in Cardiff Bay, and houses a debating chamber and three committee rooms.

6 Richard Rogers is a prominent architect known for his modernist and functionalist designs. He has received numerous awards for his constructions, including the Minerva Medal and Pritzker Prize.

7 Carwyn Jones is the First Minister of Wales, and a Welsh politician. Born in Swansea, Jones has been an Assembly Member for Bridgend, where he was raised, since 1999. He studied at the University of Wales, and attended the Inns of Court School of Law, London. He was elected as Labour Party Leader and First Minister of Wales in 2009.

of 60 Assembly members, and 40 members are voted in by a first-past-the-post system, with 20 remaining voted in by proportional representation. Carwyn does not have a majority, and voting on key things can be a challenge. The Conservatives have 14 seats. Carwyn is globally-minded, and opened up the economy by creating more trade with other economies. He has embarked on a programme of visits overseas since he has been in office, and this time last year, he was in Turkey, where he met the Prime Minister, and they talked about collaboration in a number of areas. In terms of the Assembly itself, it has quite wide-ranging powers. It is really responsible for things that affect everyday life in Wales, such as health, housing, local government, transport, and agriculture. The UK government remains responsible for fiscal policies, defence, and foreign policy. But the next government is responsible for devolution in Wales. Devolution in Wales has been described as ‘a process not an event.’⁸ The face of politics in Wales has changed tremendously over the last 20 years. As a result, what you will find is a new confidence in Wales in what it is able to deliver, and that is really interesting from a policy perspective.

I would like to talk a little about the Welsh language. Welsh and English have official status in Wales. In terms of Wales itself, everybody speaks English. Ninety per cent of the population speaks Welsh, and the demographic is not just the elderly but young people too. The language is thriving and it continues to grow in Wales,

8 Ron Davies made this statement after the 1997 referendum in Wales on the issue of devolution. A narrow majority (53 per cent) of voters supported devolution. Davies was the Secretary of State for Wales at the time.

and there is a lot of pride. The language is protected by various acts, which Caroline Turner, Deputy Director for the Welsh Language Division within the Welsh Government, will talk about in the next presentation. The language itself is also part of the Welsh cultural identity. I mentioned it is based on the Celtic language, and is the oldest living language in Europe.

Welsh cultural competitive festivals, namely *Eisteddfodd* today, take place in all parts of Wales, including schools and universities. They are competitions wherein people come together and compete in all forms of culture – singing, dancing, literature – they are all valued in Wales. There are three that are actually becoming very infamous across the world, particularly in Europe. The Hay Festival of Literature and the Arts was started after World War II to promote peace and has been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. Within Wales, we have a number of cultural icons, and the first is the Welsh National Opera, which is internationally renowned. It has been in Oman recently, where it went down a storm. There is the Millennium Centre, which opened ten years ago, which houses the performing arts. The ‘Armadillo’ is how it is commonly referred to here. It looks like the back of an armadillo, and it is an extremely interesting design. The performing arts centre is fabulous, and well worth a visit at Cardiff Bay. In Hay-on-Wye, there are more book shops in that town than anywhere in the world. I do not know why it developed that way, but it did. Wales is also known for its state-of-the-art production studios. We have one that actually produces many of the BBC’s top programmes. Wales is increasingly a top

destination for filming Hollywood blockbusters, including Batman and Captain America, because of the diversity of the landscape and the state-of-the-art facilities, and we have many people who are highly skilled in the film industry.

I could not give this presentation without referencing sport. Welsh people are fanatical about sport. Rugby is the national sport of Wales. The home of Wales is the Millennium Stadium, which is a purpose-built stadium for the Rugby World Cup in 1999. It was a unique building at the time with a retractable roof. It does not matter what the weather, the performance will go on. When the rugby team plays in that stadium, the noise lifts the roof off. It is a fantastic atmosphere. Also within Wales, we hosted the Ryder Cup (golf tournament) at the Celtic Manor Resort. It is a resort just outside of Newport, and you may be aware that a NATO meeting will take place there on the 4th and 5th of November this year. We have a number of state-of-the-art facilities, used for training Olympic events, such as the Velodrome in Newport.

Moving on, I would just like to talk about food and drink. Welsh people like to eat. We pride ourselves on our hospitality, and the good quality produce in Wales. You will often hear the phrase: 'from farm to plate', or 'from river to plate'. It is an important industry worth £5.6 billion, with over 43,000 people employed within the industry. The iconic products are whisky, water, and Halen Môn Salt, and it has won numerous international awards. Our Welsh lamb, beef and cheese are exported internationally, including to Turkey. Our meat tastes so good because it is grazed on the Welsh

salt marshes, which make it such good quality.

There are a couple of things I would like to talk about. Wales is firmly part of the UK. It is also a country in its own right, and we have our own legislature with our own laws and powers in a number of areas. The Welsh government affects everyone's lives in Wales. We are a proud nation, and we are proud of our heritage, dynamic economy, and diverse population in Wales. We welcome international visitors, and we are pleased that you are here. Thank you very much. *Diolch yn fawr*.

Eleanor Johnson: *Diolch yn fawr* Ifona. Many thanks for that introduction to Wales. We are very much looking forward to the days ahead.

Monday 13th January - Welsh Language Briefing with Caroline Turner⁹

With:

Caroline Turner, Deputy Director for the Welsh Language Division, Welsh Government

Venue: **Welsh Government Buildings, Cathays Park, Cardiff**

Moderated by Eleanor Johnson



Caroline Turner addresses the delegation at the Welsh Government Buildings in Cardiff

Eleanor Johnson: We have had an interesting first presentation from Ifona Deeley today, giving you all an overview of Wales as a country. We are now joined by Caroline Turner, Deputy Director

⁹ Caroline is Deputy Director for the Welsh Language Division within the Department for Education and Skills in the Welsh Government. She is responsible for the policy framework for the Welsh Language and funding to support organisations promoting the language. She is also responsible for all aspects of Welsh in Education.

for Education and Skills here in the Welsh Government, who is here to discuss the Welsh language with you today and to answer any questions after the presentation. Caroline.

Caroline Turner: *Diolch yn fawr.* Thank you very much. I have the opportunity to talk to you today to explain a little bit about the background of the Welsh language. At one stage, the Welsh language was spoken by virtually *everyone* in Wales. It was the only language spoken for many centuries. It is one of the oldest of the European languages. However, there has been a decline in the number of speakers in the past 100 years. Back in 1902, there were a high number of speakers and a high proportion of speakers as well. By 1911, the number of speakers was in constant decline until around 1980 when the decline stopped. There were lots of public debates, public interventions, government policies, and legislation to encourage people to use the language in all aspects of life. That has slowed the decline, though the language is still fragile. We are now in a position where we are around 20 per cent of Welsh speakers in Wales at the moment. The last of the old people who *only* spoke Welsh (and no English) would have died out around 1980. Back in 1901, *half* the population of Wales spoke Welsh. Those are the numbers.

Geography is also an important fact in terms of the Welsh language. Ifona Deeley spoke a bit about Wales, and we are in our capital, Cardiff, today. There is an important motorway from London to the West of Wales. In the middle there are mountains, but you can

see where the strength of the Welsh language is. The strength of the communities remains in the *rural* areas. I am from Anglesey, Eleanor here is from Aberystwyth. The strength of the Welsh language is traditionally in these rural areas. In terms of numbers, the language really has seen an incredible increase in the South-East in the past 20 to 30 years. There are two main reasons for this growth in particular: first of all, there is a lot of interest in Welsh identity in these areas. People feel that they lost the opportunity to learn Welsh as children, and they want their children to gain that right again. That has been a trend since the 1970 to 1980s. In the Welsh Valleys, we have seen an incredible growth in demand for Welsh education. In response, the Welsh Government has put in funding to set up Welsh primary and secondary schools. The percentage now being educated through Welsh is significant (30 per cent). The number of children receiving Welsh is 21 per cent. But there has been a big growth in this area. The second reason is population movement. The Welsh Assembly was created in 1999 through devolution. What we have seen as being partly responsible for that is a population shift. People like myself moving down to South Wales (from West Wales) to work for the Welsh Government, and from West Wales, has meant that there are more Welsh speakers here now, and that has furthered the demand for education.

There are a significant number of young people in Wales. The last census two or three years ago showed that 45 per cent speak *some* Welsh. Most will be completely fluent. A lot of children from non-Welsh speaking homes will introduce their children to Welsh at

quite a young age through nursery, through television, through activities, and a lot of parents will be learning Welsh themselves as adults. They will send their kids to school at about two or three years old. In quite a short time, they will be fluent. They follow their education through Welsh. Welsh as a subject is also compulsory for all schools. Every child has the opportunity to learn the language. It is compulsory until age 16. Their level of fluency varies – some parents are keen – some children are good. But really, the only way to leave school and be fluent is to *immerse* all of their education through the medium of Welsh. There is a bit of a drop into adulthood. In terms of legislation, there are two things in promoting the Welsh language: there is legislation to give Welsh speakers rights, and there are actions to promote the Welsh language.

First of all, legislation. The first piece of legislation for the Welsh language happened in 1967, which gave people the right to use the language in courts. That was an important step. There were lots of people protesting in the 1960s, people breaking the law, protesting, painting slogans, refusing to pay television licenses. They were appearing before the courts. People realised they had no right to use the language in courts. There were lots of people calling for that as a right. The government then introduced it in 1967, which gave Welsh speakers the right to use it in courts and other aspects of public life as well. For local authorities, it brought new rights in for the first time.

What I mentioned earlier was education. The Education Reform Act in 1988¹⁰ was important as well. There was a natural growth in education before then. In 1988, it really gave a boost to Welsh Medium Schools and made it compulsory for students to study Welsh up until the age of 16. That has been important for growth and demand as well. There has been various legislature on other aspects as well, including planning and housing. The Welsh government has, over time, published guidance on this. The first guidance notes were issued in 2000. We updated these notes last year, and published them again. Welsh language campaigners would like us to go much further, and there is sympathy for that, but with the way the planning system works in Wales, that will be quite difficult at the moment. The plan has gone as far as it has gone.

Another important piece of legislature was in 1993, creating a Welsh Language Board. It created an organisation simply to promote the language. The Welsh Language Act meant for the first time, every public organisation had to have a Welsh Language Scheme outlining what they would do to enable the public to receive services from them in Wales. It was mainly aimed at the public sector, the health industry, the police and the judiciary. It covered some of the private sector, but more organisations have

10 The Education Reform Act in 1988 revolutionized education in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. It accomplished a number of developments in education, including the creation of the National Curriculum (NC), as well as a set of stages with objectives for each student to actualize at different levels. A controlled meaning of the word 'degree' was also emplaced, and parents were granted the element of choice in determining a particular school in which to enrol their children.

come on board voluntarily and created their own schemes. By last year, there were over 500 organisations with Welsh Language Schemes. The schemes are effective up to a point. It did mean that organisations had to consider what they were offering, and make that known to the public, but the reality was that most services tended to be offered by the large organisations. While there were lots of smaller ones, some of the local authorities were not very good at implementing their schemes. It is an important development but only partly effective. Because of that, another piece of legislature was introduced in 2011: the Welsh Language Measure¹¹. This has taken things a step further again. We had devolution by 2011, and it was down to the Welsh Assembly to create it. It created rights for speakers, and established it in Law. It created the principle that the language must be treated no less favourably than English, and gave it equality for the first time.

We are introducing a new Language Standard at the moment, and this will replace the 500 Language Schemes. It has taken a while, but the important thing here is that we have created the Welsh Language Commissioner who leads the Standards. Once the Standards are in law by the end of the year, the Commission regulates and enforces these. Previously, organisations wrote their own schemes and agreed them with the Welsh Language Board. With the Standards, they are

11 The Welsh Language Measure promotes the official status of Welsh in Wales. It promotes the use and facilitation of the Welsh language, and also necessitates the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner. It makes the right to speak Welsh and have access to Welsh facilities a nation-wide legality, including in court, at establishments, and within any services and businesses. It promotes the Welsh language in equal right to the English language, and does not affect the status of the English language in Wales.

created by the Assembly and imposed upon organisations, which is much stronger than expecting organisations to create their own schemes. The last important element here is that we are establishing a Welsh Language Tribunal. We have agreed the regulations, but it is not up yet. A qualified judge will be President of the Tribunal. This is the first time we have had a Welsh Court looking at the rights of Welsh speakers. The Tribunal is there to be a balance, to protect the rights of speakers but also to make sure the standards are reasonable and proportionate for various organisations. The Tribunal will be a very important organisation as well.

Eleanor Johnson opens the floor for questions:

Question: When you talk about the ‘number of speakers who speak Welsh’, do you mean the full language (only Welsh) or that they are bilingual?

Caroline Turner: Both. You will be having a presentation on this tomorrow, but yes, take my daughter for example. She has had all her education through the medium of Welsh only, every subject including Maths and Science, up until the age of 18. Some schools will offer the subjects in both languages. It is a matter for the parents and child to decide. This growth is due to parental demand; there is no compulsion at all. In North Wales, there is a policy because the population mainly speaks Welsh. But it is purely by choice.

Question: What kinds of issues is the Tribunal expecting to deal with?

Caroline Turner: Initially, we would expect some of the organisations in the South-East of Wales to come before the Tribunal, but the proportion is lower. If the Standards are too strict, if the Commissioner tries to impose something they cannot prepare for, these local authorities might come forward and say 'these are not reasonable and not proportionate'. As an organisation, we have drafted the Standard, which covers everything: reception, face-to-face, the website, the way organisations work internally – within that, we have got menus. For example, receiving phone calls. I would expect the local authority to answer every call in Welsh and offer a full service completely in Welsh, but to also offer it in English. That is their choice. In Monmouthshire, it is difficult. Most of their staff do not speak Welsh, so they will need time to prepare. For phone calls, we have got three or four. The strictest one would be applied in specific regions where needed. Over time, we would expect them to offer more and more services. If the menu offered to them is not reasonable, they might hear a case from a local authority or another organisation.

Similarly, the Tribunal will hear cases from individuals. For example, if an individual does not feel that the organisation offers the services they are entitled to, they can appeal to the Commissioner. If they are still not happy, they can go to the Tribunal. So it can range from an individual expecting a service to an organisation who thinks

the Standards are too strong. Another important element is that for the first time in the Measure, it gives Welsh speakers the right to speak Welsh with each other. We never had to legislate about that in the past, but in the past 20 years, there have been examples where employers tell staff they must not speak Welsh with each other. Recently, we had an example where a company said that they cannot speak Welsh with their customers. That is not right. With the Measure, we have included this, so there is the right for Welsh speakers to communicate with each other unhindered. If anyone tries to prevent them, they can take the case to the Tribunal.

Question: Regarding protests and demands in the area, to what extent were the protests, starting in the 1960s for language rights, individual or politically organised?

Caroline Turner: The 1960s was a decade of protest worldwide. There were the 1968 protests in France and America protesting for the rights of Black people. Ireland has been less of an influence. The issues in Northern Ireland were to do with constitutional settlements, and the way it split in the 70s. It was less about language in Northern Ireland, more about religion. That is not an issue in Wales. So yes, the context was important for young people and students, especially students at universities in Wales in the 1960s. What was going on in the rest of the world was important. It made them realise that we needed to do things in Wales too. There was an important speech in 1962 made by Saunders Lewis.¹² He was

12 Saunders Lewis was a Welsh poet, novelist, politician and one of the founders of the political party Plaid Cymru. He was also an outspoken advocate for the preservation of the

the Leader of Plaid Cymru¹³ in the 1940s, and he made a radio speech called 'The Fate of Language' (*Tynged yr Iaith*). What he was saying was that fighting for language was more important than fighting for devolution. The language needed more rights, and we needed it in every aspect of everyday life. With devolution, it was less important. If we got it, it did not mean the language would decrease. That was the experience in Ireland. The political context and influence of the US and France and the rest of the world made that radio speech very important.

There were other things happening in Wales at that time. Liverpool Council had bought a piece of land in North Wales, and other authorities in England had bought land in Wales to create reservoirs for water. As a result, there were communities of Welsh speakers who had to relocate. A lot of people protested about that as well. There was mostly no evidence of violence, no bombs, it was mostly peaceful. Leading this was Plaid Cymru, which was Pacifist, and did not agree with any violent protests, so most were peaceful demonstrations. A lot of those political protests in the 1960s led to a growing awareness and a growing demand for legislation. The reality was that Welsh speakers, people like my parents, were not educated. For a lot of people they did not question the system at all; they just accepted it. You have got to learn English and that is

Welsh language. An English translation of his famous 1962 speech 'Fate of the Language,' which was broadcast on the BBC in 1962, may be found here: <http://quixoticquisling.com/testun/saunders-lewis-fate-of-the-language.html>

13 Plaid Cymru, The Party of Wales, was founded on 5 August 1925. The party calls for independence for Wales in Europe.

how you get on in the world. They were used to speaking English with local authorities and accepted that for many decades. It was the young people and students that pushed the agenda at that time. It has changed now. There was an incident last week where parents were issued with a Welsh Language prescription, and the pharmacy refused to issue it as they did not speak Welsh. There were protests. Even on Twitter, there is a natural awareness that was not there 20 or 30 years ago. The politics in the 1960s were very important. The other thing is that these days, there is an absolute political consensus in Wales to support the rights of Welsh speakers. Across every political party, all are supportive. Lots of adults are learning Welsh. People are doing their best to use it as much as they can. It cuts across the board. It is highly political, but it is crossing support that was not the case 40 years ago. The other important element is that we have had our own Assembly since 1999. There was an earlier Referendum in 1979, and Wales rejected devolution then. For Welsh speakers, it was a shock. Even though Saunders Lewis said there was no link, when people turned down devolution (we then had a Conservative Government under Mrs Thatcher) there was a political backlash. People were campaigning for language rights. We got our own television channel. Politics is always important in the background.

Question: Can you tell us a bit more about the Welsh Language Board? About its structure, its creation? Was it a smooth process or were there conflicts of interest? What went wrong, if a Commissioner was needed to be brought in?

Caroline Turner: Nothing ‘went wrong.’ It was set up in 1992. Universally, people think the Board was very effective. In fact, by about 2005/2006, people really called for strong legislation, and people called for a Regulator. There was a choice. We could have kept the Board, but the decision was made to abolish the Board and create a Commission. The intention was that the Commission would be even stronger if backed by a Tribunal. Nothing went wrong, but it could only go so far. The decision was made by a Coalition Government, the 2007-2011 Labour and Plaid Cymru government. The Deputy First Minister was from Plaid Cymru, Ieuan Wyn Jones, and it was the Coalition Government together that decided to have an even stronger organisation, which was the Commissioner.

Question: What was the composition of the Commissioner?

Caroline Turner: The difference is that the Board consisted of 15 people, appointed by ministers and staff, and grew until it had 75 staff. The Commissioner is a new trend in Wales. We have a Commissioner for old people, young people, and children. The Welsh Language Commissioner is appointed in her own right, it is an individual currently holding that post – Meri Huws¹⁴ – and half the staff of the Welsh Language Board were transferred to her, and the other half were transferred to my division. She was

14 Meri Huws was appointed the Welsh Language Commissioner in 2012. Prior to this role, she served as the Deputy Vice Chancellor at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David from 2009 to 2012 and as the Deputy Vice Chancellor at Bangor University from 1999 to 2009. She started her career as a social worker.

appointed by the First Minister, the powers are divested in her as an individual. She has the ability to make her own decisions and does not have to consult a Board of 15 people. It is a different approach. Shall I go on to talk about our strategy?

I have spoken so far about the background and the importance of legislation. You can give people rights, but it does not mean they will use them. This is a strategy launched three years ago. The vision is to see the Welsh language thrive in Wales. We want to see an increase in the number of people who both speak and use the language, but this is not the main priority. We want to see it thrive, to see people using it in all aspects of life. There is a long way to go in giving people the confidence to use the Welsh language when filling in forms, for example. Forms have been complex and terminology has been complex. Some administrative forms these days, especially web-based forms, applying for a passport and so on, the language is a lot easier. There are filters and you click a box and it takes you to the right page – you have not got to read everything. It is a lot easier than it used to be. Increase in numbers would be desirable but it is not the main focus where it was ten years ago. It is really about encouraging people to use the Welsh language.

There are six themes to our strategy. First of all: language acquisition. The Education Strategy is very important here and Gari Lewis, Head of the Planning Branch in the Welsh Education Unit, will take you through this tomorrow when you meet for a roundtable

discussion with him. The Education Strategy has been important in enabling families who do not speak Welsh, but want their children to learn Welsh and for them to go to Welsh Medium Schools and be immersed in the Welsh language for 15, 16 years or more. We focus on the family even before children begin school. We place an emphasis on supporting families who want to learn Welsh, and for their children to learn Welsh. You are going on a visit tomorrow to a Welsh Language School and will hear more about this. Mudiad Meithrin is an important organisation. It was created in 1972. A network of play groups was established all over Wales, and still exists. Children start school a lot earlier than they used to. The nursery movement is still important. Acquiring the language is crucial, but once children learn Welsh, you need to get them to *use* the language. It is about creating activities to enable children to use the language outside of school. You need to have activities (sporting, cultural, and musical) outside of school so they can see the language as something that is fun. It is not just enforced in schools. This goes for adults as well. A lot of this happens naturally, but there is a need for funding in some areas, to put activities together, especially in Cardiff.

The workplace and the Welsh language services are more to do with Welsh language schemes. The workplace is about encouraging employers to use Welsh in the workplace. As an organisation, the Welsh Government employs about 5,000 people. When I joined 15 years ago, there were about 300 speakers here. Since devolution, the numbers have grown, and we are up to about 20 per cent now.

We are trying to encourage every department to allow and encourage staff to work through the medium of Welsh. We wear a badge to identify service users as Welsh speakers. Once you start a conversation with someone in this language, you carry on. If you know someone who speaks Welsh, you speak in Welsh more often. You can expect Welsh services from health boards, the police, in all aspects of life. The other area is infrastructure. Broadcasting is traditionally government funded since 1982 through our television channel S4C and our radio station. Recently, we have got more commercial radio stations through the medium of Welsh too. Increasingly, we have seen a cross-over using web-based means. The third area in infrastructure is media, social media such as Facebook, websites, and an emphasis on encouraging organisations to use technology through Welsh. Twitter can be used through Welsh, and a lot of organisations use Twitter through both English and Welsh. Publication, broadcasting, and technology are the main elements there. In terms of using the language and promoting the language, this is our strategy. I will not go into any more detail. Our programme is designed so you can see for yourself, but it promotes the use here.

Question: About the badge practice: is it used now as much as before? What are the reasons for using it? Do you think the ability to be able to categorise the Welsh speakers from the non-Welsh speakers at first sight has drawbacks?

Caroline Turner: The only drawback is that non-Welsh speakers might feel excluded. But really, it is about enabling Welsh speakers

to know when they can use services in Welsh. English speakers are welcome to use our services in English. It does not exclude anyone. Some people might see it and feel excluded, but that is generally not the case. It has not been used so much recently, because the Welsh Language Board launched in 2006/2007, and quite soon after that the legislation was in planning for the Welsh Language Measure. The Board then put a lot of work into inputting the legislation. They tended to put less emphasis on more public promotion activities at that time. Responsibility has been split between the Commissioner, who is actually responsible for the badge as a way of promoting Welsh in the work place. She has not yet begun a large-scale programme of using it, and I think she needs to be doing that. The priorities have been elsewhere. There was a big campaign to publicise so that people knew about it and recognised it. It has been a number of years since that campaign, and people have left Wales, and do not know about it. And we have a new generation, which may not have come across the badges. My personal view is that we should stick with what works, and we should use this badge system again. With any campaign of that sort, you need to remind people, and I do not think we have been doing that for the past few years.

Question: I think the Tribunal is very interesting. When will it be in effect properly? Will any special talents or merits be searched for in the people who will work at that court?

Caroline Turner: In the United Kingdom, we try and make sure that legislation is quite extensive. We only introduce elements

when we are ready. We first appointed the Commissioner, and then we implemented standards. The Commissioner is starting consultation. There is a process now in 2014, to consult the Standards, and towards November, the first set of Standards will be imposed on organisations. Only then will this come legally into existence. It is not that it has not worked, it is that we had to wait. The regulations to begin the commencement of the Language Measure were made over Christmas 2013. The regulations have now been in place for the past week. By the end of January 2014, the first step is to appoint a President who has to be a qualified judge with ten years of experience as a judge. There will be more members who support the judge: legally qualified people working in law balanced by lay members. We are not clear on how many cases there will be. We need the President to set up the rest of the Tribunal. We will be advertising at the end of the month, and they will be appointed at the end of April 2014. From May 2014 onwards we will be working with them to agree on the structure, and there needs to be a good number of both legally qualified and non-qualified people. There will be three to five of one, and three to five of the others. If there are numerous cases, we may need more, but I doubt that. If the Standards work well, we should not have any cases at all. Tribunals in the UK vary. Some are very busy. In education, for example, they are busy. Others hardly meet. It will be in place fully by November 2014. When the first set of Standards are imposed by organisations, they can immediately appeal to the Tribunal if that is what they wish.

Monday 12th January - Welcome Lunch at Aberdare Hall hosted by the Welsh Government

Venue: Aberdare Hall, Cardiff



*Participants enter Aberdare Hall for a Welcome Lunch hosted by
the Welsh Government*

Aberdare Hall is an all-female Cardiff University residence that was first constructed in 1883, and founded in 1885 by Lady Aberdare, to encourage education for women in Wales. It is located on the main university campus, and is not far from Cardiff city centre and university academic buildings.

Monday 12th January – Bilingual Education Systems in Wales: Welsh Nursery Education with Hywel Jones¹⁵

With:

Hywel Jones, Chief Executive of Mudiad Meithrin

Venue: Welsh Government, Cardiff, Wales

Moderated by Eleanor Johnson



Hywel Jones, Chief Executive of Mudiad Meithrin, addresses the delegation in the Welsh Government Building

¹⁵ Hywel Jones, the Chief Executive of Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin received an OBE for his services to education and the Welsh Language. Mudiad Meithrin is an organisation dedicated to the support of elementary children and nursery groups through the medium of Welsh. It has been influential in the establishment of Welsh Medium primary schools in areas. ‘Mudiad Meithrin’ is referred to as the “Nursery School Movement”. It was formed in 1971, and offers services to nursery playgroups, day nurseries, and parent and toddler learning groups. As of 2000, there were 14,000 children enrolled, and there has been steady growth.

Eleanor Johnson: Welcome back everyone. Today we are joined by another important speaker in the field of Welsh language education, Mr. Hywel Jones. Hywel will focus on nursery education. *Diorch yn fawr.*

Hywel Jones: Thank you very much for the invitation to come here today, and to tell you a bit about what I do all day, and what I get paid for. The organisation Mudiad Meithrin was formed in 1971, and you may notice on the slide that we have an extra word in here, 'Ysgolion', which means 'schools' in Welsh. We changed last year from '*Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin*' to 'Mudiad Meithrin'. 'Mudiad' means 'organisation' and 'Meithrin' means 'to nurture'. We are helping children to develop. Our organization was formed in direct response to a 1971 census showing that there were only 9,545 Welsh speakers between the ages of three and four. Before I go on, I think we need to spend a little time talking about Wales. There is a difference between where people live, and whether people speak Welsh. The areas of growth have been in the areas of greatest density – those who have lost their Welsh, but want their children to learn Welsh again. 2.9 million people live in Wales. 582,400 speak Welsh. In 1991, 18.7 per cent of the population spoke Welsh, but in 2004, it grew again to 611,000 Welsh speakers at 21.7 per cent of the population. Many who spoke only Welsh have died, but there has been an increase in Welsh speakers in the past ten years to almost 20,000. We are doing something right. Our task now, after children leave my organisation, is to make sure that we, as a nation, keep those figures and that we do not lose

them as the years go on. You might have seen from the slide that we have two types of groups. The first is *Cylchoedd Meithrin*, sessional Welsh Medium early years care and education groups (from age two, to when they start primary school). There are 577 of those. Oddly enough, children start school at different times in the UK; it all depends on what county you are in. Do not ask me why, that is the way it is. So we have them from two to three years old, and then they go on to school. The second group is *Cylchoedd Tia Fi*, which are parent-carer and toddler groups, where the adult has to be in with the children. There are 388 in rural areas, and number 483 in total. They are very informal. They are exposure groups where parents and children have exposure assimilating the Welsh language. They say 'Okay, It is a good thing for my child to be bilingual, and here in Wales it is advantageous to be bilingual.' Many public bodies require the Welsh language.

Question: Are these Welsh speaking parents?

Hywel Jones: No, between 65 per cent and 70 per cent of the parents that bring children to us do not speak Welsh, and that is where the growth comes from. If you have two Welsh speaking parents, then the probability is that the child will speak Welsh already. If you have two English speaking parents, then that is an increase. All the groups practice *immersion methodology*. From day one, when the child comes to the group, they speak *nothing* but Welsh. No English, just Welsh. But by repeating, by using your hands, by showing the child, by using hand gestures and repetition,

the child listens to the language. There are several stages to this. When a child comes first, he looks blank. 'What is she talking about? What language is this? I do not understand'. But gradually, through gestures and through repetition, the child begins to understand. A child will follow that step. The next step is to ask a question. One word answers perhaps. And then perhaps the child will start using longer sentences in response, and the last step is when the child speaks without a prompt. That is very basically how immersion methodology works.

This is what we believe in as an organisation. Acquiring the Welsh language is of advantage to children. Every child should have an equal opportunity to access Welsh Medium services in the earlier years within each reach of their home. It is not always easy, especially in populated areas; they are not easy to access. What parent is going to put a child on a bus at two years of age at 8:00am, and let the child travel to the school? So, we believe that having the services close to home is very important. And, of course, after they leave our groups there is absolutely no point for the child to learn a bit of Welsh if they cannot progress into Welsh Medium Schools and become very fluent. Everything we do is based on learning through play. That is how a child learns. He does not learn like you do behind a desk. A child learns through experiences, through play. Children, whatever their needs, benefit from good quality, early years experiences.

The family is the foundation of a child's development. And that is

why we work very closely with parents. If you were to send your child to school, and you did not speak Welsh, then we would need to support *you* as a parent to tell you what is going on, to help you with CDs, books, simple Welsh lessons at home. Children's rights, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child¹⁶ and the Children's Act 1989¹⁷, are paramount.

Now, we work very closely with the government in planning provision. There is no point in my organisation setting up a group, and then perhaps the nearest school being 30 miles away. So, in every authority, we map the provision. We look where the gaps and schools are, and we look at where the secondary school is.

Data collection: we believe very strongly in collecting data on the children we have. This is important to us. From this data we can see the numbers we have in North Wales, the percentages that come from Welsh homes, the percentages that come from English homes, and mixed language homes, and other language homes. 'Why is that important?' you might ask. If I have a group in Conwy, where 16.9 per cent are Welsh and 60.3 per cent are English language homes, then the way we treat those children is very important. It is a matter

16 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was introduced in 1989 to officially recognise the human rights of all children and young people under 18. The UK signed the Convention on 19 April 1990. The full text of the convention may be found here: http://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publication-pdfs/UNCRC_PRESS200910web.pdf

17 The Children's Act of 1989, implemented for the most part on 14 October 1991, introduced comprehensive changes to legislation in England and Wales affecting the welfare of children. The complete act may be read here: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>

of enriching and expanding their language. These cause challenges within the group. When you come to Cardiff, 13 per cent of people speak Welsh, because of the government and the BBC being based here, people come here to work. This is also important to us. In the planning of the provision, where do the children go after they leave us? We need to know. So, in some areas, the population of Welsh speakers is very high. In South West Wales, it is still high. In South East Wales, it is still fairly high. Now, because we collect the data, we can go by group and ask: 'Why are your progression rates into Welsh Medium Education lower than the national average?' The national average is about 87 per cent, which is very good. 'So why is it only 60 per cent in your group? What is happening here? Do we need to come in and talk to the parents? Are the schools too far away? Is there a very good English Medium School next door and it is easier?' By collecting this data, we are able to know what is happening in each group: where the children grow up, the language at home, and the language of the parents. We can work very closely with them. There are 13,000 children (73 per cent from English or mixed language homes, and 87 per cent from Welsh homes who went on to Welsh Medium Education).

Planning future development: we work closely with the Welsh Education Unit. They know that in four years' time, there will be a Welsh primary school opening in one area, so we need more groups to support that school there. In West Wales, where the Welsh language is mostly spoken, there are quite a few book shops selling CDs, DVDs, and books. In South Wales, there are none, so

we have it online. We tell parents: 'this book is for your children, this book is for you, this book is for seven year olds'. There is a project in West Wales as well, where parents are reminded that they should be speaking Welsh to their children, especially in mixed language homes. It is very easy. If I spoke Welsh, and my wife did not, it would become very easy for the language to become English. Visitors would come to the home to tell me that it is very important to have two languages in the home. The schools do not just happen. Very often they happen as a result of parents, the voters, saying that they want a Welsh school. RhAG is a Welsh acronym meaning 'parent's education'. They are the pressure group, they persuade the authorities. They see the progress and they want that progress to carry on.

Foundation Phase: we have a curriculum for three to seven year olds, called the Foundation Phase. There are challenges in this phase. It believes in children exploring, and finding out for themselves. If you have linguistically diverse groups, you might have Chinese children, children from Pakistan, and so forth. You might encounter scenarios where children revert to English. You have to be careful. In monolingual language schools, there is the widest kaleidoscopic variety of practice of bilingual education. For children from Welsh speaking homes, Welsh Medium Education involves reinforcing and developing their Welsh language skills through a broad range of curricular experiences. This is the Welsh Medium Education strategy – it is our Bible. It provides targets from zero until higher education and university. The challenge is to

respond appropriately to the changes in the linguistic profile of the children arriving in schools. They need to continue to provide for learning for those whose main (if not only) language of the home and neighbourhood is Welsh. At the same time, they must ensure that learners whose Welsh is far less secure, receive enough Welsh Medium input to enable them to become proficient bilingual speakers. It is a challenge, and it is not easy.

In schools in the traditionally Welsh speaking areas, there are more pupils who come from non-Welsh speaking homes. They come from England and settle in the Heartlands. Many teachers in both North and West Wales are finding it difficult to change the way they teach to meet the needs of the pupils. It is a challenge. The impact of the foundation is unclear in terms of Welsh. For the first time, there are several areas of learning. One of those is developing the language. We are still getting there. We may require specialist training for our teachers. One way we could get around this is to group children by language level. If we do that in groups, we have to be very careful. We are setting up 'top-middle-bottom groups'. We might group those reading a story. For example, if you came from a Welsh home, you would need a story that extends you literarily. If you came from a learning home, you would need a story that teaches you basically.

Question: How do you educate teachers for this type of education? In university?

Hywel Jones: No, we train our own leaders. We have a large government contract worth £2 million per year to train two million staff teachers per year. These could be parents who have enjoyed being at home with the children, and have seen them develop. We also run courses in schools for people who go on to university, and who become teachers. We do train our own staff. They are not all Welsh speakers, some are learners as well. The government grants funding to our organisation, and gives us our training grant as well.

Question: I have two questions. How did you develop this strategy? Did you do any pilot strategies or any collaboration within any other contexts?

Hywel Jones: I have not mentioned everything obviously. Across Wales, I have 200 staff. Many of those work part-time as Language Development Officers. But I also have 30 Development Officers who work very closely with the groups themselves, who provide support, and bring feedback to the Head Office. We then develop the strategy as we see things developing. We change our strategy as we find the need. For example, I have been with the organisation for about 20 years. When I first started, there were far more groups that had only Welsh speakers. Now, I do not think I have one group left who are only Welsh speakers. So we have had to develop our strategy: dealing with those who want to enrich their Welsh, and how to deal with those who have no Welsh. It is difficult. I am sure it might be the same back home for you, and if I went into a Turkish school, I imagine it would be very difficult to cope with

two or three languages.

Question: You said the organisation started in 1971. What motivated you to set up the organisation? Was it related to the campaign and protests in previous years? What was the main position of protestors in terms of demands for cultural rights after 1971? You have many achievements today. What was the position of your organisation? Are there other organisations doing this too?

Hywel Jones: Let's start with 1971. I firmly believe in our organisation. The movement started with a collection on a field. They collected £27, and that is how the movement started from small beginnings. Then, more and more parents started lobbying governments. The people within the organisation went to the government to ask for grant funding. The first was £20,000, and it has grown since then. When I started, this was not the largest childcare organisation, but now it is. It is the most important for the Welsh language. Our sister organisation caters for the English Medium sector. They were far bigger than us, and now we have grown past them. We have got an organisation catering for play, one for full day-care, and we have a before-and-after school organisation as well. We are the largest now, which gives us far more clout when talking to the government.

Question: Are there any English Medium nursery schools? If so, how many?

Hywel Jones: Yes, of course, about 20 per cent less. If we have 1,000 schools, they probably have about 800. But even those, because of the Foundation phase, have to make sure that they impart some Welsh. So the profile of the Welsh language in our country is growing. Parents are seeing the benefits of their children speaking Welsh. When we first started marketing Welsh Medium services, it was about understanding two cultures. But parents do not want that. Why learn Welsh? Job prospects? Better salaries? Live in Wales, possibly? And that is the way we want to market the language now, with more concrete things. Every public organisation should have a Welsh speaker as a first point of contact, and they are more likely to think positively about the language. Every Welsh language school I see now is full. I do not think there is room in any of the Cardiff schools. Demand here is exceptional.

Question: Are there private nurseries? Or are they free?

Hywel Jones: None of this is free. A private nursery from 8:00am to 6:00pm would charge about £2.50 per hour.

Question: Who pays?

Hywel Jones: Parents.

Question: So what if you want to go to a public nursery?

Hywel Jones: There are no 'public nurseries.' The government

gives you ten hours of free education a week. They say nursery education in Wales is the most expensive in Europe because the government is not putting any money in. Before three years old, parents have to pay.

Question: Is there any reading and writing at this stage?

Hywel Jones: No, just listening.

Question: So you do not need to prepare any special materials?

Hywel Jones: You do, for children to see. No reading though. Reading develops after three years old, as you go on through the school. It is more important that children learn to speak the language first.

Question: How much English is involved?

Hywel Jones: None. Some start English at seven years old. Even though this is the case, you turn on the television, you watch Disney, you look 20 miles ahead and you are in England, you look even further and you are in America. Children therefore learn English effortlessly. If a group is open, say from 9:00am to 12:00pm every day, then you would get two hours for free and the parents would pay for the extra hour. It all depends on an age-weighted pupil ratio. It depends on how much the authority pays for a five year old child.

Question: Do you think there is a correlation between learning Welsh in early years and those who stay in Wales or move to other countries?

Hywel Jones: I do not know, I think that should be researched more. It is easy to get a job in Wales if you speak Welsh, but then many of our bright young people go and work in London.

Question: You are a voluntary organisation. Is the organisation owned by the government or just you?

Hywel Jones: ‘Voluntary’ is a funny term. We are all paid and salaried. I have a committee, but they are all voluntary. Just to make sure I do not put too much money in my pocket, or go on long holidays! We are also a company. We are the largest funded organisation. We get about £1.2 million per year, and that is the largest child organisation that the Welsh Education Unit funds. It is not perfect, but it does work.

Question: How would you say the Welsh language is perceived in society, and in the UK at large? Are there any positive or negative perceptions?

Hywel Jones: In Wales, there is a positive attitude towards Welsh. I think the majority would like to speak Welsh. We suffer a bit because we are so close to England that people talk about England-*and*-Wales. But when you go to Scotland, everyone knows about

Scotland. It is more along the road to independence than we are. If you go abroad, they know about soccer players from Wales, but they do not know where it is. I do not think English people know that there is a separate language in Wales. Everything is bilingual; you can live your life in English if you need to. But they come into the Welsh Heartlands, and they get a shock.

Question: So this is not in the UK curriculum?

Hywel Jones: No, only in Wales. When I was in school, I did History. The first thing we learnt about was the Stone Ages. I believe in teaching History from where we are *now* and going backwards. What do the Stone and Bronze Ages and the Vikings have to do with anything? How is that relevant to me? For me, I want to know what life was like for my parents, for my grandparents, and that is the way you work back, and then you can talk about the World Wars. Who wants to know about Queen Victoria? We all know about 1066¹⁸, but that has no relevance to Wales. Have you heard about the Welsh Not?¹⁹ Horrible story. I think it was in the 18th

18 The year 1066 saw the Battle of Hastings between the Norman-French army of Duke William II of Normandy and an English army under the Anglo-Saxon King Harold II. A power vacuum had been created in England after the death of King Edward in January 1066. King Harold was killed in the Battle of Hastings, and King William II was crowned King of England on Christmas Day 1066. The Normans would come to have a tremendous influence on the culture, architecture and language of England.

19 The Welsh Not was a punishment used in some schools in Wales in the late 19th and early 20th century to dissuade children from speaking Welsh. The 'not' was given to any child overheard speaking Welsh, who would pass it to a different child if they were overheard speaking Welsh. Whoever was left wearing the 'not' at the end of the day would be lashed by the teacher.

century, schools had a piece of string and a piece of wood with two letters: W, N. This was stored by the teacher at the start of the day and when people spoke Welsh, you had to wear it all day, until you heard one of your friends speaking Welsh. Then you transferred it. At the end of the day, the pupil wearing this was beaten by the teacher. That is how they tried to make sure nobody was speaking Welsh. You can imagine how many children would try and get their friends to speak Welsh. As far as the survival of the Welsh language, it is still here today.

Question: How would a child be treated speaking English in a Welsh Medium School?

Hywel Jones: We would just reinforce the Welsh language. For example, if he says to me: ‘Can I play with a ball?’ the child will repeat it after you repeat it in Welsh. You never castigate that child for speaking English, you just *reinforce* the Welsh. Welsh becomes a natural part of the group. When you go in through the door, it is a Welsh experience. You cannot stop them from speaking English. You just reinforce language patterns. We never drill. We repeat the question.

Question: I know these methods are used in other parts of the world to teach second and third grade Mathematics, and they have positive results. Can you give examples of this?

Hywel Jones: In these schools, all subjects are taught through Welsh.

Question: Do they use physical methods?

Hywel Jones: Not so much. As the child gets older there is no need for it. If you go to New Zealand, and you see the Māori children, they need the physical input. They are such strong children. It gives them an avenue. About 80 per cent of the prison population in New Zealand is Māori. That is because the education system has not catered for them. For example, I saw a Mathematics lesson. They were doing a physical activity to count because they need that. It might be cultural as well.

What we do is a lot of signing (sign language). I have seen many groups using sign language and the children pick it up. They relate what they hear.

Question: These family visits are very interesting to me. Your staff is trained to visit families to convince them to go to these schools. How do you train your staff? How do you visit the families?

Hywel Jones: It is not only visiting the family in the home. We talk to them when they visit the schools. You will meet with an expert on Welsh language education for adult learners later. Parents like to learn Welsh with their children because the constructions at the early stage are very simple, and they find it easy. We have many

courses specifically designed for parents.

Question: In the nursery school, do you teach Welsh stories?

Hywel Jones: No, children experience Welsh through activities.

Eleanor Johnson: Thank you very much for joining us today Hywel.

Monday 12th January - Welsh Language Education for Adults with Siwan Gwyndaf²⁰

With: **Siwan Gwyndaf**, Senior Development Manager, Welsh Education Unit

Venue: **Welsh Government Buildings, Cardiff**



Siwan Gwyndaf addresses the delegation at the Welsh Government Buildings, Cathays Park, Cardiff

20 Siwan Gwyndaf is a Senior Development Manager in the Welsh in Education Unit of the Welsh Government. She has responsibility for the Welsh for Adults sector and is currently tasked with realising the recommendations of the recent Ministerial Review of Welsh for Adults. She has worked as a civil servant for over a decade in the fields of education, culture and Ministerial support.

Eleanor Johnson: Welcome back. We are now joined by our next speaker, Siwan Gwyndaf, who will talk more about education in Wales. Siwan is the Senior Development Manager for the Welsh Education Unit in the Welsh Government. She is responsible for adult Welsh education in Wales. Diolch Siwan.

Siwan Gwyndaf: Thank you very much for this opportunity to talk to you. I hope you find your visit to Cardiff useful and inspiring. It is a privilege to be here today, and I hope I can provide you with some useful information. I believe that we are fortunate in Wales. The Welsh language is a Celtic language, as are the languages of Cornwall (Cornish) and Brittany (Breton), and also the language of the Isle of Man. There was an Act of Union²¹ in 1536 that forbade the use of Welsh. Thousands of people refused to speak Welsh to their children, even though they could hardly speak English themselves. The number of Welsh speakers reduced significantly. A strong movement began in the 1960s with campaigns in Wales to paint monolingual (Welsh) road signs and demanding equal rights to use the language in public life. Language Acts were passed in 1967 and 1993, and the Welsh Language Board was established in 1999 following a Referendum. The establishment of the Welsh Language Commissioner, taking over from the Welsh Language Board was also important.

21 The Laws in Wales Act of 1536, also known as the 'Act of Union', attempted to regularise the relationship between England and Wales, by introducing the English legal system in Wales. The Act also made English the official language of administration in Wales.

Between 2001 and 2011, the proportion of people ages three and over who can speak Welsh in Wales declined. Despite the increase in population, the number of speakers reduced by 20,000 in ten years. I am here to talk to you specifically about Welsh language training for *adults*. Welsh courses have been delivered for decades. During the 1960s, the need for a more structured effort was identified. As a result, Welsh for Adults courses became a part of education, mainly in higher education. In the 1970s, the need to increase contact hours with Welsh speakers was identified. Intensive courses were developed, the way that Hebrew was taught in Israel. Another notable milestone was the establishment of a Heritage Centre, a small empty village by the sea where adults would stay, bringing together a broad range of Welsh learners. The six Welsh for Adults Centres now in existence are responsible for bringing together Welsh learners in the areas that most need language instruction. There are three million people living in Wales, about 600,000 who speak Welsh. The Welsh for Adults Centres provide learning to about 18,000 every year. They are the responsibility of the Education and Skills Department, which includes development for the family (e-learning, marketing, and quality insurance).

The Welsh for Adults Centre receives funding from two separate streams. There is recurrent funding, like every education system, as well as funding through us to develop in the future. The recurrent funding is £10.7 million, or 38 million Turkish Lira. The number of those who attend Welsh for Adult Centres seems to be consistent, despite social and economic changes as a result of the recession. It

has been more difficult to recruit, but it has not affected it too badly. Even though there are the same number of learners, they tend to go on more courses or attend for more hours.

There are a number of reasons to learn Welsh. Research has shown, in order to help people do their work or *find* work, they should speak Welsh with their family. A lot of people want to learn Welsh for their identity within Welsh society too. During the summer of 2012, the former Minister for Education in Wales established a Welsh for Adults review group, which had a complete review of the sector from an external field made up of those who were not working in the field. In July 2013, they published a pamphlet. My job is to implement these recommendations.

The first recommendation is to establish a national entity of some sort to be responsible for the Welsh for Adults Centres. We do not know yet what that entity might be. It might be establishing an organisation responsible for Welsh provision nationally, but we are quite ambitious in terms of what we will be asking that entity to do. The second recommendation is to reduce the number of providers to 14, to make it simpler and avoid complication, and to ensure the Welsh for Adults marketing is effective. About 2.1 million people do not decide to learn Welsh every year. There is a lot of work to be done to make Welsh for adults a part of everybody's lives. Another recommendation is to develop more intensive courses. If you learn it intensively, it is so much more effective than one hour every week. You forget what you have learnt from week to week, and then you

give up and think it is one's own fault. If you do it intensively, and the definition of that can vary (but you learn for five hours a day for a few weeks), then you would make good progress.

Another recommendation is providing a 'one-stop shop' for Welsh language provisions. Because of the history, it can be quite messy. There is so much information about it online through different organisations. So we are going to try and get different things together. They will have the same opportunities and chances as everyone else. The next recommendation is developing Welsh in the work place. It is important that we show how important it is to provide high quality services. This is especially true in some cases, such as education, agriculture, and the media. They are often taken for granted, even though this improves the services offered to customers. We are setting out to address this. Our next step is to discuss this with the Commissioner.

The next recommendation is related to what Hywel Jones was speaking to you about previously - developing the courses further. Parents are strategically a better group than anyone else. They can support their children with education, and parents are more confident about going to a Welsh school for the Family course. The reality is that they are as difficult as any Welsh language course. It is a new language with new grammar. Psychology is a big part of learning a language; psychology and confidence. Welsh for the Family courses are proving very popular, especially through e-learning. This includes having online courses and blended

courses, which are half in the classroom, half online, as well as providing online resources for us to use in our own time. This is getting more and more important as more and more people expect it. At the moment, there are Welsh for Adults websites and a huge amount of resources online and the main task for us is to simplify things so that learners know where to start. There is just so much. Also, using the latest technology and using gaming technology will be important for the future. The next recommendation is to define 'fluency'. This has proved surprisingly difficult in Wales. When do you stop being a 'learner' and start being a 'speaker'? Some are comfortable being 'learners' forever and they need to forget that label and use the language as anyone would. One should reconsider how many contact hours they have with the language. We have a pyramid of five levels: entry, foundation, intermediate, advanced and expert.

We need to consider, at what stage does a 'learner' become 'fluent'? We do not know yet, we have not agreed on it. In the Basque country, the line for benchmark fluency is very high, and they expect learners to pass a very high level. In Wales, we are likely to put the line much lower, with more of an emphasis on consistency. Another recommendation is the national curriculum, which tutors can adapt to suit needs and ensure that they are attractive. Learners like a new book, designed well. The work of Michael McCarthy²²

22 Michael McCarthy is Professor Emeritus of Applied Linguistics at the University of Nottingham, UK, Adjunct Professor of Applied Linguistics at the Pennsylvania State University, USA, and Adjunct Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Limerick, Ireland. He is the author/co-author/editor of more than 40 books on language. Siwan Gwynndaf

on ‘small words’ is very interesting, emphasizing link words. This is how learners can sound more fluent. This is important in terms of ensuring that our learners learn the same language as fluent speakers so there is not a learner language that develops separately from the *main* language. Incorporating semi-formal learning is another thing we need to develop. It could be a trip on a bus to the museum through the medium of Welsh, for example. We will continue to train our tutors. We work with BBC Wales, and media in Wales to provide services through Welsh.

The last two recommendations are coordinating Welsh Medium societies, and finding ways of developing activities with Welsh speakers and Welsh learners together. This is a big weakness where learners are happy to speak to other learners, but do not want to integrate into fluent Welsh speaker communities. They were not welcomed very much when they did in the past. People have realised that this cannot go on, and we need to be a part of one society together. Welsh speakers appreciate the effort made by Welsh learners at the moment, but are shy about expecting learners to use their newfound Welsh. At the same time, Welsh learners prefer to speak to other learners but find it difficult to speak to those with different accents. I hope that this information is useful for you, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

makes reference to McCarthy's research on the importance of learning, when learning a new language, the small words that native speakers tend to use to start conversations, such as Mm, Yeah, So, And, Right, See. He finds that when fluent speakers listen to learners, they tend to judge them to be more fluent if they use the little words that react to the previous turn even if their grammar and range of vocabulary is weak.

Question: What do you mean by ‘providers’? I do not understand the point in your recommendations about reducing the number of providers.

Siwan Gwyndaf: They subcontract with other organisations that provide Welsh language training. I mean all of the universities, the further education colleges, any other companies and organisations that provide tutors and do the lessons on the ground.

Question: What is the point of reducing the number of providers?

Siwan Gwyndaf: We have found that some of the providers are not very interested. They just want the money. Really, they are not adding any value. Another reason is duplication. They might all be spending time writing their own courses, which is a waste of time and money. We want to make it so that being a tutor is a good career, but if there are lots of providers, then they have fewer hours per tutor. So often, they will only be working two hours a week in their own village. We are hoping that the providers left would be able to give those tutors a full time job.

Question: I believe that adult education has the potential to transform a whole society. I can see this potential from the Puerto Alegre experience, where they combined education for kids and families, and they called it ‘school projects’. They did this to raise awareness about discrimination, and the systematic structure based on race, class and gender differences. They had positive results,

showing that there has been quite a bit of improvement in Puerto Alegre. One important thing about that was the content of the curriculum. When they teach literacy to adults and kids, they include the history of the discrimination, structure, and political and economic discrimination in society. This changed the whole situation. Many families were motivated to attend.

Siwan Gwyndaf: Two points: one, is when they attend Welsh for Adults courses, they are often surprised at what they learn in the sense that Welsh is not a *translation* of another language. It is a whole different world. If you understand another people's language, you understand their *thinking*. Learning the language itself will be an eye-opener. Also, we have Welsh Awareness sessions, most often in work places at the moment. There are plans to extend them. When they are in the work place, they are designed for workers to understand the customers they are serving, the history and the culture. They are not necessarily learning the language, but they are learning *why* we are in this situation where there is a need to learn this language. How do you speak to English customers? What is the polite way of dealing with different linguistic situations?

Question: Another question is that of the prohibition of Welsh in Wales. Is this a topic of discussion?

Siwan Gwyndaf: We are in a lucky situation where a lot of the prohibition is now historical. It is discussed to a degree, although a lot of families who historically have family memories and

psychological memories, it affects them. They do not want to learn Welsh; it is difficult for them to understand. It is personal for everybody, whatever the impact has been of what has happened to them. The history, the different feelings from different groups of people, is discussed. People from different backgrounds sit together. It is quite an emotional journey.

Question: It seems that the memory is not alive that much, when compared with Turkey. I have another question. You listed all the recommendations in the report. I am sure they are very relevant in increasing the involvement of Welsh learning practices. Do you have data that shows why people are not participating as much as they can? Do you know the specific characteristics, and needs of the people which you are targeting?

Siwan Gwyndaf: That is one part of the recommendations; it is the marketing. We know the 18,000 people who do, but we do not have enough information about why people are *not*. We know that one reason is that they do not *have* to. It is possible to go through life without speaking Welsh. You can say ‘No, I am not interested in that’. That is different from the Basque Country, where you would need to learn Basque to get a job, live life, and so forth. Another reason is that people do not have the confidence. They think they cannot do it, and if they think they cannot, they cannot. It is something we are going to look at.

Question: Among the 18,000 adults who join your programmes each year, what is the percentage of non-Welsh adults by identity?

Siwan Gwyndaf: That is a good question, and I do not know the answer. A lot. The reason is that very often, people from Europe or people from countries other than England are quite confident with new languages. Learning a new language is what you do when you travel. Another reason is that psychologically, the English who move to Wales do not know the history. They have no ‘baggage’. They have no worries about learning Welsh, they are not interested. They do not need to worry about ‘why my mother did not learn it, why she did not teach me, why have I not learnt it so far?’ and so on. So a lot of those who are not from Wales do not learn Welsh.

Question: Is there any discrimination or exclusion or ‘otherness’ against your study? Maybe some people can blame you for dividing the country, for example?

Siwan Gwyndaf: Yes, it is not usually direct though. It is not usually people saying ‘we hate you, stop what you are doing’. It is usually more subtle, such as ‘what is the point? English is the biggest language in the world anyway.’ They believe that – it is not true! Also, things that are more insulting, such as, making fun of how we speak: how many consonants and vowels we have. I went to Uganda at the beginning of the year; they have a lot of languages. They were saying exactly the same things that people in Wales were saying two generations ago: ‘You have to speak English

to get on in the world'. With every generation, you get new kinds of subtle insults. It is an interesting situation.

Eleanor Johnson: Thank you very much Siwan for what has been a very interesting discussion.

Monday 13th January - Dinner in Mermaid Quay, Cardiff Bay

With Guests:

Siwan Gwyndaf, Senior Development Manager, Welsh Education Unit

Ifona Deeley, Head of International Relations, Welsh Government



*Participants enjoy dinner at Moksh Restaurant with guests
Siwan Gwyndaf and Ifona Deeley*

Tuesday 14th January - The Role of the Welsh Government with Gari Lewis²³

With:

Gari Lewis, Head of Planning Branch, Welsh in Education Unit

Venue: **Welsh Government Buildings, Cardiff, Wales**



Gari Lewis addresses the delegation at the Welsh Government Buildings, Cathays Park, Cardiff

23 Gari Lewis trained as a teacher and taught Welsh as a Second Language in two comprehensive schools in the Rhymney Valley. He then was appointed in 1990 as a Senior Research Officer with the National Foundation for Educational Research in Wales, initially working on National Curriculum assessments in Welsh Second Language and then more widely on evaluations in the field of education. From 2010 to 2008, he worked freelance but also took a part-time appointment in 2005 with the Welsh Language Board as Manager of the Late Immersion Project. He started working full-time for the Welsh Language Board in 2008 as Director of Children and Young People and was seconded to the Welsh Government in January 2011 to work on the introduction of Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and the School Standards and Organisation Bill. He became Head of Planning Branch in the Welsh in Education Unit in the Department for Education Skills in the Welsh Government in April 2012 when the Welsh Language Board was abolished.

Eleanor Johnson: Bore da i chi gyd. Good morning. I am delighted to introduce you all today to Gari Lewis, who is Head of Planning Branch in the Welsh in Education Unit in the Welsh Government. Gari will be speaking to us today about Welsh education and we will have time for further discussion and questions. Gari.

Gari Lewis: Good morning. I hope you had a nice evening last night in Cardiff. I understand from my colleague Caroline Turner, who spoke to you yesterday, that you have a particular interest in education. I will give you a brief introduction, and I will do my best to answer your questions. As with all countries where there is more than one language, the system is diverse. Therefore, the situation of Welsh in terms of the education system has been driven by two things. In areas where there is a more intense population of Welsh speakers (in the West and North), the situation of Welsh in education has been driven by local policy, which reflects the nature of the population. In the more Anglicised areas in the East, the policy has been driven by parental demand; the pressure for Welsh education. In Cardiff, and the school you will visit tomorrow, it reflects that situation. Parents have campaigned for Welsh education, and this has come about because of parents. As a government, we are trying to change our situation. We are trying to make things more equitable. We are trying to do that through legislation, and through planning. My responsibility is to ensure that planning for Welsh education improves. You can ask me at the end whether I think it has improved, or if there are any chances of it improving!

How do we describe Welsh education in Wales? Do we base it on the number of schools, or the percentage of children in Welsh education? A third of primary schools are Welsh Medium Schools, or they have two 'streams'. About a quarter of the secondary schools in Wales are Welsh Medium Schools. You understand that our education system is quite simple. Statutory provision starts at 5 years old, although children usually start school before then. Children in Wales are entitled to ten hours of free education, or child-care from 3 years old onwards. Then they are allocated a full-time place for compulsory education from age 5 until age 16. They then progress to the secondary phase at 11 years old. There is not testing as such as the moment to progress into secondary school. It is quite a simple system. There are no middle schools, just primary and secondary schools. At age 16, there is a choice: pupils can go on to further education, and then higher education starts at age 18. In a Welsh Medium School, they would teach the majority of the curriculum through the medium of Welsh. There are a number of different categories, but I will not bore you with those. All schools have taught Welsh as a subject since 1990. In all schools, the Welsh language is compulsory. There is a debate around the value of Welsh as a second language. I will talk more about this at the end if you would like me to. The question is, should we just call it Welsh, or is it 'Welsh as a second language'?

Question: Do you do courses in Welsh if it is a pupil's secondary language?

Gari Lewis: It is compulsory to study Welsh until age 16. One of the problems you highlight is the allocation of time given to Welsh as a second language, which can be quite insignificant in some cases, even in primary schools. The main successful model in Wales is the *immersion model*, which is in the Welsh Medium sector. I would make a slight distinction between ‘Welsh’, and ‘Welsh Medium.’ The success we have seen in Wales is through the immersion models. We do not see any real progress, or anywhere near fluency being achieved through the ‘Welsh as a second language’ model. The education system in Wales is a primary arm in revitalising the Welsh language. It is the only area really, as Caroline Turner described yesterday, where we have seen a *decline* in the language from the last census. The education system is the only place we see a real increase in the last census.

Immersion is quite successful in Wales, but that would come with considerations as well. You are probably familiar with immersion in terms of fluency and accuracy. The schools can teach entirely in English or the majority in Welsh, but Welsh is taught as a subject in the curriculum until age 16. In the areas where Welsh is traditionally spoken in the North and West, we have bilingual or dual streams. The amount of subjects taught through the medium of Welsh would vary according to the streams, and you are probably aware of those differences in other countries. The stream would take native Welsh speakers, for example. It would offer 70 per cent through Welsh, and other subjects would occur in English. In the North, they do not take Mathematics in Welsh, and then

you have a middle stream of non-Welsh speaker backgrounds who took primary Welsh Medium education. Then you also have those that are late-comers to the area, or who have not achieved that competence in Welsh you would have hoped. 'West is best' as we would say in Wales and West Wales has a high number of Welsh speakers. In the primary school you will visit tomorrow, all the subjects will be taught in Welsh, and the children progress to a secondary school where every subject is taught in Welsh until the age of 18. There are three Welsh secondary schools in Cardiff now, and we hope there will be a fourth. There has been tremendous pressure by parents to have another, and we are hoping there will be more growth.

Question: Who decides this compulsory immersion model? Is there an English immersion model?

Gari Lewis: Since 2008 or 2009, there has been a guidance document. The Welsh Government has issued this document on the categories of schools. That was an attempt to create some order, to put some shape on what was happening organically. In Wales, there is a tension between what has evolved organically because of the nature of an area (in these bilingual areas, they would have increased through the medium of Welsh), so who decides the categories of schools? The Welsh Government has established a framework to describe, rather than define, the different models that have emerged over time. The categories are defined according to a number of characteristics, including the proportion of

time dedicated to Welsh, the ethos of the school (the general announcements and assemblies are either through Welsh, English, or both), and the linguistic outcomes. What would parents expect their children to achieve as far as language is concerned? Would I expect to get a school report in Welsh? It is tricky to describe who decides. Eventually, it will be determined by local policy.

In West Wales, there is a rigorous policy that most schools will be taught through the medium of Welsh. We have the task sometimes (and we are avoiding it) of redefining these schools. If the school governors decide to change a category, they need to consult and go through a statutory process. There is a Welsh school in Cardigan that was a Welsh Medium school. It was Welsh Medium in its early years, and then they decided to get rid of the English stream. They went out for consultation to see if they could change the category of the school. There was a lot of opposition to that. It is not an easy job. A lot of people have moved to Wales from different areas, and are not happy that in certain areas their children have no choice to be educated through the medium of English. As the policy changes, they are not quite convinced that there is an effective way of delivering education in Welsh. Therefore, local councils, teachers, and head teachers have a lot of work in persuading the local population that this is a good idea. We are trying to tidy up this situation.

In East Wales, you will find schools that are either just 'Welsh' or 'English'. In April 2010, for the first time ever, the Welsh

Government (and we are a young administration) published the Welsh Education Strategy. That was a historical step, really. That was the first time the government in Wales took responsibility for the place of Welsh in education.

As I said, the place of Welsh in education is dependent on parental pressure, and the first Welsh Medium primary school did not exist until 1960. In 2010, the former Minister for Education launched this strategy. The Welsh Government then wanted to look at the different models and bring some order to the chaos that exists there. The strategy has six main themes. The one I am responsible for is the improvement of planning. We try to improve planning after age 14, and post 16 years, which is more focused on vocational education. There is very little Welsh education in further education colleges. Sixth Form schools tend to be the main providers. A problem you see with all minority languages is trying to keep children on the journey. In certain areas where there is a choice, those who come from non-speaking backgrounds will often decide *not* to continue. It will happen in the bilingual settings. There is a drop in the linguistic community. Training, practitioners and resources are important. We have got a branch in our division that is responsible for commissioning resources. The biggest challenge of all is outside the school: what do the young children do outside of school? Another historic step, I think, was the School Standards and Organisations Act 2013²⁴, which made the Welsh Education

24 The School Standards and Organisations Act 2013 became law on 4 March 2013. The Act sets out proposals to strengthen school standards, enhance local determination and reduce complexity. It includes provisions for intervening in schools causing concern, school improve-

Strategy a mandatory act. It was responsible for making schools provide a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan by 20 January 2014. We expect 22 plans. The Ministers have the power to improve these plans or to even reject these plans. We can even write our own plan for them. Next Monday, we will be sitting looking at these, and seeing whether they will be good enough to be approved, or whether we recommend to our Minister that he should reject them. It is a scary business. We have been trialling these for about two years; they have had a practice run. The quality is variable, they know that. Local authorities under circumstances will be required to measure the demand for Welsh Medium Education. Some parents have been tested, and then they send their plans to build more schools. Not all local authorities have been doing that.

Question: Then how do they measure it?

Gari Lewis: In the regulations, which follow on from the First Act, we have set out the questions they should use. For parents with children under two years old, they must fill out a questionnaire. There have been difficulties getting a hold of data, live birth data, where their registration of a child at birth should be shared with the local authority so that a survey can be taken of whether they would be interested in sending their child to a local Welsh education authority. Some parents have avoided that because they do not want to support it. The Minister has the power in some circumstances to support these. If you do not measure the demand

ment and Welsh in Education strategic plans.

in the next few years, the Minister will direct you to.

The other thing, which is tricky, is that if local authorities have over 50 per cent of seven year olds in Welsh Medium Education, then they do not have to measure them. We do not want to undermine the areas where they already have quite a strong Welsh demand. So that is the 'get-out' clause. The basis of the strategy is the intention of the Welsh Government to increase the numbers of those experiencing Welsh education. We want to increase the percentage of seven year olds in Welsh education, and the 14 year olds. We measure the 14 year olds because that way we can tell whether they have continued from primary into secondary education. There is a discrepancy between seven year olds and 14 year olds. It drops considerably, especially in some areas.

The situation is this: we have about a fifth of all seven year olds in Welsh Medium Education. Our target by 2015 is 25 per cent, and we are not going to make it. We will fail that target. The Minister has been open about that. We have got 22 per cent of seven year olds, and 17 per cent of 14 year olds. We have got a problem with continuation. In improving planning, we are failing at the moment. There is an increase this year, and we will report this year that there are more than 22 per cent in Welsh Medium Education. It is a success story, but it is not successful in meeting the targets! These are the key means of keeping the language alive in Wales as you will see tomorrow.

It is determined by the linguistic nature of the different communities, and the attitudes towards the Welsh language vary from place to place, as well as the demand. Every time I talk about this, it is quite tricky because of the nature of Wales. Thank you for the questions.

Question: Could you talk a bit about the content of the curriculum, and how it is related to the language? Who designs the content of the curriculum, itself? Also, what is the percentage of English children by identity, who go to bilingual or Welsh Medium Schools?

Gari Lewis: All schools in Wales follow the same curriculum – there is a national curriculum. It is being reviewed, but it is the same. You have got core subjects: English, Mathematics and Science, but in Welsh Medium Schools, they are Welsh, Mathematics, English and Science. In these, the introduction of English is sometimes delayed. Therefore, in the school you will go to tomorrow, in the Foundation Phase, the children will not have followed any formal lessons in English until the age of seven. It is an immersion approach. In that school (based in Canton), it will probably be over 80 per cent who come from non-Welsh speaking backgrounds. But there is quite a significant Welsh speaking population in Cardiff. In order to establish those Welsh language skills, children are taught using the immersion experience. The production of Welsh stabilises around the age of seven, so that English can be introduced. Sometimes it is introduced through the Foundation Phase. The same teacher will teach in English for various parts of the curriculum, but the majority will be in Welsh. The subjects are

then the core subjects, and the foundation subjects, such as History, Geography, Physical Education, Music, and Religious Education.

Question: Can you talk about the content of the History curriculum in Wales?

Gari Lewis: It is a bit of a challenge. There is a National History Curriculum, and the recent one has been reviewed by the last Minister for Education. He would have liked more emphasis to have been placed on Welsh history. In primary schools, the curriculum would be based on typical topics in history, not necessarily on the history of Wales. Behind the question lies another: does it build some sort of cultural identity?

The curriculum of Wales contains a Welsh history curriculum. Teachers are supposed to introduce a Welsh dimension into everything they do, whether it is Science or Mathematics. They are supposed to refer to Welsh examples, Welsh scientists, and so forth. It is being reviewed because it has not been particularly successful. My own view is that the education system does not allow pupils the time to reflect on their own take on language use, their take on linguistic identity, and bilingualism within that.

There will be quite an emphasis on Welsh culture in Welsh Medium Schools. They will compete and do Welsh language activities, but to what extent they explore that, I am not sure. It is interesting because children are communicating all the time. What

does communicating in a second or third language really mean to them? In some Welsh Medium Schools, they are more adept at reinforcing the Welsh identity. But in some schools, you take a typical production or musical show, and often they do a translation of a typical English language show, such as Oliver or Grease. They will translate those. On the other hand, some schools will try to put on a production that reflects local history.

There are more English language resources than Welsh ones. The things on the Kings and Queens of England are easier to teach. Often people say that Welsh history is not as interesting as English history. There has been an influx of English people in Wales. I will turn this around and say that the traditional areas, such as the Valley areas, are the areas which have the greatest populations in Wales. It is about 90 per cent indigenous people who have lived there their whole lives. In the North, it drops to 70 per cent. In West Wales, the influx of those coming in has made a difference in so far as the language is concerned. There are schools in the middle of nowhere where about 30 per cent of children come from non-Welsh speaking backgrounds. This is similar in primary schools. Therefore, Welsh speakers are a minority, even though you can call them the heartland of Wales. Schools have to cope with that demography, with the influx from Eastern Europe and other minorities within the cities. We have not had a massive influx from nationalities, other than English. This has placed tremendous pressure on the need for immersion programmes at an early age. That is why the bilingual standards have been adapted and changed to cope with that pressure.

Question: I want to ask about Welsh textbooks and teaching materials. How do you provide these?

Gari Lewis: There is a commission in process. It is an £8 million set-up, on a needs-identification basis. Books and resources are commissioned based on what is voiced by teachers. The last Minister for Education had a thing about not publishing books; he only wanted digital materials. He put a stop to the publishing of new resources unless they were available in Welsh. The current Minister likes books, so we have gone back to publishing books. Two issues are: we are just about satisfying the need, until the curriculum changes. There is often a lack of awareness amongst teachers of these resources. Teachers, by profession, always provide their own resources anyway. The pressure on the Welsh Medium sector was considerable at the start when there were no resources. By now, there is a mixture of translated materials and new materials. The problem is how the book looks – its presentation. If you have got a lot of good pictures, and the text is attractive, then it is easier to translate and slot it into an existing format, rather than producing something in a new format. It is a question of cost. There is a slight difference in North Wales and South Wales, and the type of language used in educational materials, which has to be attractive, user-friendly, and accessible. A lot of work has gone into that.

Question: Are all the schools state schools or private schools?

Gari Lewis: They are all state schools.

Question: Are there independent schools? What is the difference between them and state schools?

Gari Lewis: There are four independent schools. There are only a few. The private sector is very small in Wales. It is totally different from England. Very few would consider private education.

Question: Are there studio schools, like in England?

Gari Lewis: No, we do not have any free schools or anything like that. We have not got an Eaton, or a Harrow, and so forth. We have a few private schools, but generally the majority of the population would not consider those. There was a feeling that because parents chose Welsh education in some areas, then that education provided a better *type* of education. If parents show an interest there will be that motivation and choice, which generally translates to the quality of education. Welsh language schools have been well achieving, and are almost like private schools.

Question: Are the teachers' and students' expectations reflected in the designing of the schooling systems? Is there any data showing that the teachers are happy with the current policies and practice?

Gari Lewis: As far as Welsh Medium Education is concerned, it is the parents' choice. They are in school at 3 years old. All schools are

required to have a school council. To what extent is the policy and use of Welsh a part and parcel of the discipline and authority of the school? That becomes owned by the young person. We have done a lot of work around that. Young people in the Welsh Medium sector will decide to speak their first language. 'It is the language of oppression', 'it was not their choice', 'it is a dead language anyway' – there is a lot of tension around that and schools have done work around that. The problem is: to what extent is that internalised by young people? It is the same as wearing a uniform. If you do not wear a tie to school, you could be subject to sanctions.

We are publishing a guide for schools, asking them to ensure that they establish linguistic honesty in their schools. It is not just imposed upon them. When we coerce young people, 100 per cent say that they are happy in a Welsh Medium school. Then why do they not speak Welsh to each other? They are young people. We do generally see these positive attitudes being translated when they mature, but it is an interesting question. I do not think we have totally solved it. In our famous plans, all local authorities are required to consult the school's councils on these projects. The people's voice is important in Wales, and there have not been a lot of young people writing in or voicing their concern that this has been imposed upon them. There have been some. I worked as a researcher myself, and I have heard people say: 'This is the worst thing. Why did my parents put me here?' And others were saying: 'I am glad I am here'. I am not sure how they have linked their home languages and school languages to their identity.

Question: Do the teachers have any suggestions for further improvement?

Gari Lewis: I think you will find they are very committed to the mission. Young professionals and young teachers are very committed. They *chose* the Welsh Medium sector. They have been through it themselves, and they see it as important. It is not just about delivering high quality education, but it is about revitalising the language, and making young people engage with the culture of Wales. We have got examples in schools where teachers do not speak Welsh to teach other, and then the initial purpose is lost. But that is probably a minority.

Question: Are the voices of independent teachers – their criticisms and suggestions – taken into consideration when implementing the policy?

Gari Lewis: As far as civil society is concerned, we are in contact with Parents for Welsh Medium Education regularly. As the Welsh Government we answer a lot of letters, and we are very accessible. Similarly, there are organisations that are not so supportive of what we do in Wales, as far as Welsh Medium Education goes. We have had discussions with them. The Welsh Government has published the Standards, and we expected those to be criticised. As far as academic research, there is not enough of it, and it is not rigorous enough. If you want to understand immersion examples, we look to Canada and New Zealand. There is a need for more research in

Wales. I think the whole immersion methodology has been looked at. It is being evaluated by Cardiff University.

Question: Do you go to other countries?

Gari Lewis: Not as often as I should do, or as I would like to. I formerly worked on the Welsh Language Board, and we had a project looking at early years education, which brought the Finland and the Swedish community there, Brittany, the Netherlands, and Scottish colleagues. I have been to the Basque Country. We have done a lot of work for young people's education. I would like to go to New Zealand. It is always a commonality; you do these visits and what you can hit on is the common thread. It is tricky sometimes when you visit other countries. The good thing about Wales is that, when I went to Ireland, we would say that the Irish within Irish medium education is not as good as ours! We have not got enough recorded or empirical data to share with other countries. It would be interesting to see the practices in India, Peru and Ethiopia. The country contexts are very different, but some of the issues are very similar.

Question: Is there data that compares the schools?

Gari Lewis: Secondary schools in Wales are banded. Welsh Medium Schools do well within the system, but they attract fewer people from disadvantaged backgrounds, so you are not comparing 'like with like'. They do perform well, and they do well for the

pupils that they have. Would they do well if they had different people coming in? At the moment they are seen as well performing. If the sector is not good, then it will not be popular for parents, so it is important that there are high quality schools. It is the statutory obligation to improve planning and improve the standard of Welsh Medium Education.

Question: What do you expect for the post age 14 period? Are you optimistic or pessimistic regarding the number of Welsh speakers?

Gari Lewis: We have targets for 2020. I think there may be a flattening out. There will not be a decrease. Often local authorities ask us: 'Do you expect a glass ceiling?' And we say 'No, the possibilities are endless, you can go as high as you want'. But we do not think the early years model from Hywel Jones is robust enough to allow for growth; it will probably remain fairly constant.

Eleanor Johnson: Many thanks indeed Gari for joining us today.

Tuesday 14th January - Bilingualism in Wales: The Role of Civil Society with Siân Lewis²⁵

With:

Siân Lewis, Chief Executive of Menter Iaith Caerdydd



Siân Lewis addresses the delegation at the Welsh Government Buildings, Cathays Park, Cardiff

25 Siân Lewis has worked within the Welsh Language field for the past 20 years, originally with Fflic television, then as the Development Officer and Area Manager for Urdd Gobaith Cymru and for the past nine years as Chief Executive of Menter Iaith Caerdydd. Her career has involved working and coordinating Welsh language events for children and young people to managing a budget of over £550,000 as well as leading a workforce of 7 officers and 95 part time staff in promoting and expanding the use of the Welsh language on a community basis in Cardiff. The annual programmes engage over 22,000 children, young people, families and adults. Her current areas of responsibility include line management of staff, maintaining strong links with Cardiff Council and other local partnerships, along with budgetary management and overseeing the Service's performance against national and local targets.

Eleanor Johnson: Welcome back everybody. I am pleased to introduce our next speaker Siân Lewis, who is Chief Executive of Menter Caerdydd, a Welsh Language Initiative here in Cardiff. Menter Caerdydd is responsible for raising awareness of the Welsh Language in Cardiff. So we will hear more about opportunities for people to learn Welsh outside of school and working hours from Siân. Diolch.

Siân Lewis: Good afternoon and many thanks for the opportunity to meet with you today. I will give you a brief overview of what we do at Menter Caerdydd, and what Menter Caerdydd is. To start off with, we are funded by the Welsh Government amongst other funders, but there are 23 language initiatives in Wales doing the same type of work. The majority of that funding comes from the Welsh Government and some from local authorities. We are based in Cardiff. A brief about Cardiff and where we are: the population of Cardiff is just under 350,000 people. Ten years ago, we had 32,000 Welsh speakers in Cardiff, and there has been a rise again since the last census to 37,000, which is approximately 11 per cent of the population. So there has been a steady rise over the past 30 years. I have lived in Cardiff all my life. As a young child growing up, there was one Welsh junior school in Cardiff and now there are 17, where children are educated in Welsh in every subject. There are 20 schools altogether, secondary and junior. Almost a quarter of the population in Cardiff are fluent Welsh speakers (a high percentage of the population). Back in 1979 when I was a child, there was only six per cent who were fluent. So it has risen.

The Menter Caerdydd mission statement is to ‘promote and expand the use of the Welsh language on a community basis in the capital city, and ensuring that the language becomes an essential part of life in Cardiff and a responsibility shared for the future for every citizen’. We are a community-based organisation; we do not have much to do with education, our priorities are to make sure that everyone speaks Welsh in the community, in the working environment and on a social basis as well. We have been in existence for 15 years since 1988. We had one full-time member of staff then. Now, we have nine staff: six are full-time and three are part-time. Our income was generated by the Welsh Government back then with a grant of £36,000. Last year, our income was almost £600,000. That comes from different sources. As we have grown, we have been able to apply for grants across different avenues in Wales. £80,000 comes from the Welsh Government, £11,000 from the Arts Council of Wales and £239,124 comes from Cardiff Council to make sure that services are provided in Welsh in the leisure department, car services, and so forth. Up until five years ago, none of those services were available in Welsh. We have seven leisure centres in Cardiff. Then, none were in Welsh, now they all are. We do a lot of partnership work with the local authority. In partnership with us, they can provide it more effectively through the medium of Welsh. £90,882 was from a grant providing facilities for children from *Cymorth*²⁶, £15,693 to establish care provision (*Clybiau Plant Cymru*), and £161,652 from *Families First*.

²⁶ *Cymorth Cymru is the umbrella body for organisations working with vulnerable people in Wales. Member organisations provide housing related support and homelessness and care services in Wales.*

What do we provide for that money? Free play provision. We provide free play during every school holiday across Cardiff. About 90 per cent of children are from English speaking families, so they do not typically speak Welsh after 3:00pm when they return home. So we seek to provide them with opportunities to use the language after they leave school for the day. They have to have access afterwards and we provide it for them. We provide holiday activities for children, workshops, sports events, and trips. We are the only providers of holiday care schemes in Cardiff. We run 17 weekly children's clubs from swimming to football to sewing to horse-riding; almost 500 children a week attend these. Family activities are also available so children can interact with their families. There are 20 training courses and weekly adult classes ranging from yoga to cookery to IT classes to guitar lessons. We organised *Tafwyl*²⁷, the Welsh Language festival. The vision is to provide a highly professional all-encompassing festival with an entertainment and event programme, which appeals not only to the Welsh speaking community, but to those that wish to engage in the Welsh language for the first time. We hold it in the Cardiff Castle grounds, with things for every age range. We have a lot of media presence, with local and national press. To run it, it costs us about £80,000 for the week, and we draw in 68 different partners to assist with the festival.

27 Tafwyl is the annual festival established by Menter Caerdydd in 2006 to celebrate the use of Welsh in Cardiff. Tafwyl's main event is Tafwyl Fair, which has developed since 2006 as a fun-filled day which is a combination of artistic, musical, cultural, and sport events all through the Welsh language. More information can be found on the Tafwyl website: <http://www.tafwyl.org/en/>

We draw in £23,000 per year for activities. 1,251 individual activities run throughout the year through us, with 122 volunteers to help out, 138 sessional staff we employ to run different services, and nine staff members are on yearly contracts. There are 47 weekly clubs for families, 98 local and national partners, and 6,000 people receive emails on a daily basis on any Welsh language activities happening in the city, with 10,000 social media followers on Facebook and Twitter.

Question: What is your relation to schools?

Siân Lewis: We have a very positive relationship with every school in Cardiff, and are in contact with head teachers. We run a few clubs within schools where children do not have access. We are not responsible for any educational courses within the schools. Our aim is to bring children who access Welsh Medium Schools to activities outside of the schools. We try to help them with confidence. A lot of teachers see greater confidence in their linguistic skills through us, and hopefully they will make use of the language outside of school. The challenge is to make sure they use the language outside the school at 18 or 19 years old. What we are seeing now is that a lot of young people between ages 18 and 21 have little use for it if they are not working in a job that requires them to be bilingual. They lose the language, but perhaps it comes back when they have children. By then, they have lost the confidence to speak it to their children. So it is important for us to establish its use outside the schools.

Question: For those who still access services in English, do they belong to your organisation?

Siân Lewis: There are mentors in other cities. We all have the same principles in our names. What we tend to do reflects the population. In North Wales, they tend to concentrate much more on the rural areas in Wales. In Cardiff, you cannot make everyone learn the language, but making sure they have access to the language outside is what is important.

Question: Do you think the amount of Welsh heard in the streets has noticeably increased?

Siân Lewis: I am 43. When I was growing up, you did not hear anybody speak Welsh in the street. By now, you hear it being spoken in cinemas, the street, supermarkets, anywhere really, and you do not recognise those people. People want to speak Welsh and want to be Welsh speakers. Signage gives Welsh better status within Wales today than it had five years ago. There is pressure on public service bodies to promote Welsh. They have to be seen providing services through Welsh. That is why they come to us. If they do not, there is the Welsh Language Commissioner, and they will be fined as well. The local authorities do not provide these services as they do not understand the population as much. We tend to consult with them on a regular basis.

Question: You have around ten different bills to promote the Welsh language. Which ones are working better than you expected and which ones are not? With regards to Facebook and Twitter, how do you use them and how do people respond?

Siân Lewis: We promote a lot of our services through Facebook and Twitter. We ask people to tweet back if people are in shops and are using a Welsh language service, and that triggers dialogue on Twitter. People complain if there are not any Welsh language services provided by the council. They will tweet, ‘Why is there not a Welsh speaker receptionist in the leisure centre?’ It raises the profile of the language. We are on a tight budget, so social media is a very good way for us to push our services without any cost. We have a database of services as well. We do not have to provide further marketing services. All our services work, but we work very hard so we sustain a high level of access. They work well because we consult. We do not do something without knowing there is a demand for it. The majority of our services have waiting lists. So we need more money to respond to the demand out there. The Welsh Language Festival has grown considerably over the past eight years. Back then, we had 1,000 people coming, and it cost £2,500 to put on. Now, we have people accessing Cardiff Castle for a much more professional event than it was, and it gives us a great shop window to promote. It shows the fun element of the language, and people have a very enjoyable day. It is the only Welsh language event that is put on to that scale.

People tend to put the language into bubbles and categories and associate it with 'old people'. The festival is growing though, and we have a business plan to build it on an even greater scale and double or triple the amount of people attending.

Question: As far as I know, this access depends on the perception of the language, which has a good status at the moment. I wonder about the perceptions students have of the language. Can you offer some commentary on this?

Siân Lewis: I think ages 14 to 20 is the hardest group. It is the age group that loses interest in the language. The Welsh language does lose the teenage generation because people perceive it to be used by the old generation. Saying that, children leave school. In school, they are forced to use it, and they are corrected. They see it as a language that they have been told they have to improve on. When they leave school, they stop rebelling and they have an identity that they are Welsh speakers and are proud to be bilingual. Especially in Cardiff, being able to speak both languages is a positive career choice. There are more jobs for bilingual speakers. Students are now beginning to appreciate that they are bilingual. But it is a hard target age to make them engage socially with the language.

Question: You mentioned areas of disadvantage?

Siân Lewis: Yes, where the population has high unemployment. We put more activities in these areas. The government puts more

funding for those areas to come out of poverty. You can access funding to provide these services in Welsh in those areas. For the majority of children, in the more deprived communities, 99 per cent were non-Welsh speakers. So they will not speak Welsh outside of school. The tendency then is to have little confidence in speaking Welsh with someone who is not a teacher. By providing after-school services and during holidays, it ensures that they do not lose the language. Their language skills improve by speaking it outside the school.

Eleanor Johnson: Diolch yn fawr Siân. Many thanks.

Tuesday 14th January - Youth and the Welsh Language with Tim Edwards²⁸

With:

Tim Edwards, Director of Urdd Gobaith Cymru (Welsh League of Youth)



Tim Edwards addresses the delegation at Urdd Gobaith Cymru headquarters, Cardiff Bay

28 Tim Edwards is the Director of Urdd Gobaith Cymru, known in English as the Welsh League of Youth. It is a Welsh-medium youth movement, and is Wales' largest youth organisation. It caters for a wide range of youth, from primary school until the age of 25, and offers a variety of different activities, including horse-riding, swimming, and rugby. It hosts the Eisteddfodd, which is the largest youth arts festival in Europe.

Eleanor Johnson: It is a great pleasure to be at the headquarters of Urdd Gobaith Cymru today. I have many happy memories of participating in Urdd activities as a child in Wales. I am delighted to introduce today's speaker Tim Edwards, who will tell us more about youth and the Welsh language. Tim.

Tim Edwards: Diolch. Many thanks Eleanor. We are very pleased to welcome you here to the Urdd today and wish you a fruitful visit. I will start by saying a little about the Urdd in general. We are close to a turnover of 10 million children per annum within the organisation as a whole. There are 461 Welsh or bilingual primary schools, and 56 Welsh or bilingual secondary schools in the country, all of which engage with the Urdd. Around 100,000 children are in Welsh Medium education and a large percentage of those are in one region: North Wales. In the 2001 census, there were 582,000 Welsh speakers in the country, which is quite a low percentage (around 21 per cent), and the percentage in 2011 was slightly lower. Across the decades, since 1961, there has been a gradual decline in the language. In 1981, the percentage was around 53 per cent, and that comes right down to around 21 per cent in 2001. So there is a decrease in the amount of Welsh spoken at home or in education, which is where we, the Urdd, come in. Of our membership, 46 per cent speak English at home, 26 per cent are Welsh learners (as we are growing the use of the language in the community). Across the board, we focus on giving children opportunities to practice their Welsh through activities. The organisation was born in 1922 from a magazine article, and

then our first book club was formed in fields in West Wales in 1928, which were later donated to the organisation. The first Urdd Eisteddfod²⁹ was in 1929. We started sporting activities in 1932, and foreign trips began in 1933. We also have magazines today that continue the tradition of communicating through the medium of magazines.

We do horse-riding, swimming, skiing, canoeing, climbing, sailing. Weekly activity clubs, holiday activities and overnight visits that are for fun or education-based. In the Eisteddfod, we have 45,000 children taking part in competitions every year, and it is Europe's largest annual youth arts festival. It is held on a 20 acre festival site, and is broadcasted live on television and radio, and online. We have shows in the evening in the pavilion and a theatre company that puts on another production. We have famous Welsh patrons, and a scholarship awarded annually for the most promising competitor, who receives £3000 to further their studies in the arts. There are 15,000 competitors for the whole Eisteddfod. I mentioned 45,000, of which the difference is those who take part in local competitions that feed into the county and then feed into the Eisteddfod. There are 400 competitions across six days, and the festival attracts in excess of 100,000 visitors. There is singing and dancing, and we also have technology and science, and a cooking festival, which is very popular on television.

29 An Eisteddfod is a Welsh festival of literature, music and performance. The tradition of such a meeting of Welsh artists dates back to at least the 12th century.

In terms of funding: it comes from a large area. The main ones funders are the local authorities and National Assembly, from which we receive £300,000. The local authority also provides the festival site and amenities, and local support. Obviously, we then have a local fundraising committee. We get sponsorship from commercial sponsors, and a large portion from those who attend and sell their wares. Ticket sales are the next component.

The Eisteddfod takes place in the summer, and is held in the first week of June every year. With the Urdd sports organisations and clubs, we have around 100 clubs that happen weekly. We have competitions in many different disciplines, such as swimming, football, rugby, netball, and so forth. Urdd Gobaith Cymru is a new event, which is a sport event attracting the top 30 children in each discipline to compete in a game, which is a development for the youth going into the Olympics and the Commonwealth Games. During all activities, Welsh is used as the core language, and it gives young people a chance to participate in these activities in Welsh outside the classroom.

We have residential centres. This is the newest, and we also have the city sleepover centre in Cardiff. We have the city-based activities, but there is also a centre based in the mountains, and one on a lake. On average we have 42,000 visitors to the centres. This year, Cardiff alone will have attracted around 18,000 visitors to the centre, who have had an experience through the medium of Welsh.

Where do our children use Welsh? Mainly in schools, and then at home with the family, and then in other activities outside of the home and school. We asked how proud the children are that they can speak Welsh. All those who speak Welsh (around 20 per cent) said they are extremely proud of the language and their heritage. Are there a good range of activities through the medium of Welsh? The largest percentage of young people asked said 'No'. There are few organisations that actually do activities for young people through Welsh. There are Welsh language organisations locally, and the Urdd is growing constantly and providing job opportunities for those going into the communities to provide activities. But as you can see, it isn't even half way there yet.

The largest area that children have identified as needing attention is that they want to participate in sports through the medium of Welsh. It then moves to youth clubs in dance, drama, arts, and so forth, and then moves to computer clubs and health clubs. Children want to see a wide range of activities as they would have in English, and we provide the activities they ask for.

We have an annual goodwill message that we broadcast live across the world. It is broadcast from the National Assembly this year, and has been for the last four or five years. We have a children's Poet Laureate that we announce annually and it changes every year. We have a great relationship with Patagonia (in Argentina), and an organisation that organises exchange visits to Patagonia. It is a region in Argentina where there is a large Welsh speaking

community. A number of settlers went on a ship called the *Mimosa* from Mermaid Quay in Cardiff and settled in Patagonia centuries ago.³⁰ The relationship between ourselves and there is still going strong. We send people there every year to participate in the local schools through Welsh. It is absolutely fantastic. You go to a colony half way across the world and converse in Welsh (with a Spanish accent!). ‘Reach for the Heights’ is a European project that ended but the legacy goes on as officers still work in the communities. S4C is the Welsh television channel that broadcasts through the medium of Welsh. We also have a good relationship with the Arts Council of Wales and the Welsh Books Council.

As for funding, we receive most of it from the Welsh Government. When you consider our turnover is close to 10 million people, and we receive £910,000 from the Welsh Government to promote the language, it is quite surprising. We receive £428,000 from local governance, which includes funding for the Eisteddfod. This includes benefits in-kind, such as donation of the facilities needed to host the Eisteddfod. European funding has ended, but there is another round of funding we are hopeful to get to promote

30 The Welsh community in Patagonia is the legacy of historic efforts to create enclaves of Welsh speakers to preserve the Welsh language and culture. In 1865, at the recommendation of Michael D. Jones, a Welsh nationalist, 150 people from all over Wales sailed to Patagonia on the tea-clipper Mimosa. In the decades that followed, the population of the Welsh settlement gradually increased. In 1875, the Argentine government granted the Welsh settlers official title to the land, which encouraged more people to join the settlement. The community survives to this day, and there has been a concerted effort by the Argentine government and the National Assembly of Wales to promote and maintain its distinctly Welsh heritage and identity.

activities. Sponsorship then comes down to commercial funding, residential centres which brings in a profit of three quarters of a million pounds, which goes back into providing activities, membership fees (50,000 children attend activities), and other local fundraising and donations.

We have a good relationship with the Welsh Assembly and the Welsh Government, and our Chief Executive has been nominated for a recognition from the Queen³¹ because we work with promoting activities for young people in Welsh. I hope that gave you an overview of what the organisation does. It is the largest organisation that provides activities for children and young people through the medium of Welsh outside of the classroom.

31 The Urdd Chief Executive Efa Gruffudd Jones was awarded a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in 2014. The nomination of three Welsh women for the award, which is awarded by the British Queen, proved controversial. A member of the nationalist Plaid Cymru party, Elin Jones, sparked a political row when she tweeted, "Cannot believe that talented young Welsh women think there is some merit in the MBE in 2014". member of the nationalist Plaid Cymru party, Elin Jones, sparked a political row when she tweeted, "Cannot believe that talented young Welsh women think there is some merit in the MBE in 2014".



Participants arriving at the headquarters of the Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Cardiff

Question: Is there a strict rule that at these events and festivals, the children must only speak Welsh?

Tim Edwards: In the Eisteddfod, there are competitions for fluent Welsh speakers and others for Welsh learners. The Welsh learners generally go to English schools, but it gives them an opportunity for them to participate though the medium of Welsh. There are some where you have to be a first language speaker. Sports events are run through the medium of Welsh. 70 per cent are non-Welsh

speakers, but they are experiencing activities being run in Welsh. As for strict rules, it is a Welsh language organisation that operates through Welsh and our aim is to give as many opportunities for them to experience Welsh as possible.

Question: When they are socialising, are they aware that they must communicate in Welsh?

Tim Edwards: Yes, within the competitions, those who are Welsh speaking will communicate in Welsh. You can impose a rule, but you can never follow through. Here, you must greet everyone in Welsh. The language of the centre is Welsh. With the children who don't speak Welsh, we help them learn. I ask them to learn five new Welsh words for every day when they are here. We teach them little phrases. It is not a hard and fast rule but we encourage them to speak it, and we give them the opportunity to learn it.

Question: When you design these programmes, do you have specific role models from other countries? If so, which, and why?

Tim Edwards: We have existed since 1922, so I think we hold a lot of the expertise. Our Chief Executive meets regularly with international Participants and goes to conferences, and we do learn from others. There are activities and models that are not Welsh speaking, so we try to provide those through Welsh.

Question: Is there any specific country case that you use?

Tim Edwards: Not as far as I am aware. We don't use any models from any other country. We have a wealth of experience, which won't be far off 100 years now.

Question: Are you a model for any other case?

Tim Edwards: Yes, a lot of other organisations, such as voluntary organisations, use our models and develop their activities with us. We work very closely with the voluntary sector.

Question: Do you think children see you as an organisation that promotes Welsh language primarily, or an organisation that provides exciting activities?

Tim Edwards: I think it depends what audience you ask. We have two distinct sectors: the primary and the secondary school pupils. The primary sees the organisation as fun, and an opportunity to go away. What we try to do is increase our activities in the secondary sector to reflect that. Younger children will speak Welsh and have fun, but that is an age difference issue really. The second factor is if you ask Welsh medium children who have grown up with Urdd Gobaith Cymru as their main activity provider, they will love it, but English children may not even be aware of its existence. We are trying to expand the work we do by promoting activities through Welsh.

Question: We are trying to understand the relationship between identity and language, and how proud you are that you identify yourself as being Welsh and a Welsh speaker. What is this relationship?

Tim Edwards: I think if you ask 99 per cent of Welsh-born people whether they were Welsh or British, 100 per cent of those would say they are Welsh. The identity is very important. I was brought up speaking Welsh, and it is a big part of one's identity, personally speaking. However, that does not mean to say that the non-Welsh speakers are not also proud of their identity as being Welsh from a *country* perspective. It is a nation; it is not a *county* of the United Kingdom.

Question: Is there tension between being British or Welsh?

Tim Edwards: There are extremes, as there are with all identities and cultures. It is a major issue for certain individuals. Certain individuals would class themselves as Welsh, not British, but then they have British passports. It is a difficult one, as there are tensions. I cannot speak for the majority of the population.

Eleanor Johnson: Many thanks Tim. Diolch yn fawr.

Tuesday 14th January – Lunch at Bacchus Restaurant, Cardiff



*Participants enjoy lunch at Bacchus Restaurant in Cardiff,
hosted by the Welsh Government*

Tuesday 14th January – Visit to Sain Ffagan National History Museum

Private Tour given by Ewan Llwyd, Communications Director,
Sain Ffagan



*Participants in an historical primary school building at Sain Ffagan National
History Museum, learning about the “Welsh Not”*

Sain Ffagan is one of Europe's leading open-air museums and Wales' most popular heritage attraction. It stands in the grounds of the magnificent Sain Ffagan Castle, a late 16th-century manor house donated to the people of Wales by the Earl of Plymouth.

Ewan Llwyd: Croeso! A warm welcome to you all! I hope you enjoy the museum as a visitor, and I can answer any questions. My name is Ewan, and I am from North-East Wales. I have lived in Cardiff for 14 years, and have worked at the Museum for eight years. As you can see we have a beautiful museum. I have brought you here to start talking about the future direction of the museum. In the next five years, we will be spending £25 million on the museum. At the moment, we are looking at 500 years of Welsh history. We will be moving Welsh archaeological treasures to this museum. We will start this narrative timeline with the tooth of a child and the story of the human inhabitants of Wales some 250,000 years ago. The aim is to become a truly *national* history museum telling the whole story of Welsh history. This allows us to look at more themes in more detail. We have a section on beliefs and religions; we can perhaps have an early Pagan burial next to a Christian monument next to a large Hindu statue. So the idea is to bring several themes together. The first thing we will be doing is building a large floating roof. As we go along, I will talk to you about Sain Ffagan as an open-air museum. It is going to be a whistle-stop tour. I will tell you a bit about the history of the Museum as we go along.



Participants attend a private tour of the Sain Ffagan National History Museum

Sain Ffagan museum was formed in the 1920s. Wales was changing rapidly, and by the 1850s, Wales was the first industrial nation on the planet. What that means is that the majority of the people in Wales were employed in Industry not Agriculture. Of course by the 1920s, we had the First World War, and the devastating loss of a lot of young men, which had a profound effect on the Welsh language. Wales was quickly changing, and the rural, traditional way of life was disappearing. So, a curator, Dr Iorwerth Peate³² had the singular vision to create a museum of buildings to represent aspects of rural Welsh life. He based this on Scandinavian museums and, in the 1940s, the Welsh museums were donated a Manor house and its grounds. We quickly started looking for buildings to realise Dr. Peate's vision. We recreated farms, workplaces, mills and places of worship, such as the chapel. The chapel was built in 1777; originally a barn because this certain type of Christianity was, at

32 Dr Iorwerth Peate was a Welsh poet and scholar, and the founder of Sain Ffagan National History Museum.

the time, practiced in secret, so they practised in barns and rural buildings. Then Christianity became more acceptable and they then opened it as a chapel. By now, we have over 40 reconstructed buildings. We have craftsmen, a clog maker, a flour mill, and a blacksmith who makes all the metal things we need as a museum, and also recreates a lot of archaeological implements. So the next steps for building towards our vision for a new museum are to recreate buildings based on original archaeology. We do not have buildings that survived much longer than 500 years ago. We have two new buildings, and the first will open in March 2014. It will be an Iron Age village with two large roundhouses representing agriculture in the Iron Age. By 2019, we will have a Medieval Princes Hall, and for the first time, we will be telling the story of the elite. Sain Ffagan is about ordinary folk, not the rulers, but this will be an administrative centre with a Medieval Hall. This would be where people would go to pay their taxes to the Prince, and pay their respects.



Participants outside a traditional rural Welsh house, at Sain Ffagan National History Museum, Cardiff

Welsh speakers and Welsh learners represent the museum in the same way that the buildings do because they are from the past of Wales, and they have their own experience of living in Wales. We get about 200,000 formal school visits a year. We get 650,000 visits in total, so it is a large percentage. We have based our learning programme around the Welsh school curriculum so you have continuity. We adapt how we interpret each building as well. For example, with our new plans, we have to work within the current curriculum but in five years the curriculum may change so we will adapt again.

Question: Earlier today, we were asking how much Welsh history is in the curriculum. Can you expand on this?

Ewan Llywd: One thing that has changed over time - certainly when I was a child I was not taught a lot about Welsh history and there are distinct gaps in my education that includes knowledge of the Welsh Princes. Some things we will have to decide whether to tackle are taboo subjects about what happened to individuals and their children. It was a brutal time. We will have to deal with some difficult stories.

We do a lot of cooking demonstrations in this building (a typical rural home). Children love finding out how people would have cooked over an open fire instead of putting things in the microwave. We do all kinds of Welsh traditional cuisine, such as the *cawl* which is a stew made with lamb, as well as flatbread and griddle cakes, and

things we don't eat that much these days. We also do a costumed interpretation.

The stones of the houses are boulders left over from the Ice Age, so this is just one step up from a cave.

Farmers who wanted to use the roads would have to pay the landowner to carry the fertilizer across the roads, to fertilize the fields, which the landowners would tax. It was a double punishment. This became a symbol of repression. It prompted the 'Rebecca Riots'³³, where men dressed as women, blackened their faces, and demolished these gates at night. This happened across Wales, and eventually they did get rid of this, which was seen as a symbol of oppression.



Participants try on the Welsh Not in the museum primary school

33 The Rebecca Riots took place between 1839 and 1843 in South and Mid Wales. They were a series of protests by local farmers in response to perceived unfair taxation, in particular, to the tolls charged to use the roads. The rioters, often men dressed as women, took their actions against toll-gates, as they were seen as representations of high taxes and tolls.

We are now in a traditional Welsh primary school. Someone mentioned the Welsh Not. It does not look like anything much, but what it means is that anybody found speaking Welsh was discouraged from doing so by being forced to wear the Welsh Not, which you see here. Of course, the last person at the end of the day wearing the Welsh Not would have to have his palms smacked. Children being children would say: 'Sir, he is speaking Welsh!', and that is how it would get passed on. You did not want to be the child who was not quick enough. This is an exact replica that we found under the floorboards of the Chapel, which was used as a schoolroom sometimes. Of course, not all schools had a Welsh Not. In some schools, you were simply told not to speak Welsh. In others, their Headmasters did not enforce the policy and allowed both languages to be spoken. It became a symbol of something more, and was not necessarily enforced in all Welsh schools. They also had measures to stop people writing with their left hand.

Quite often, children would dress up in Victorian costumes, and the teachers would discipline them in this old style. There was also a 'posture paddle'. If you were not standing straight, you were sent to the corner. The school closed in 1916. There was a report on education in the 19th century, and they sent three English-speaking lawyers around Wales to conduct an inspection. But instead of inspecting the schools, they decided to comment socially on Welsh community life as a whole, stating that they saw a lot of poverty and a lack of 'model behaviour', which they blamed a lot on the Welsh language, as though it was something barbaric and backwards.

The positive that came out of the report was that the new middle class that was forming in Wales at the time did not permit them to blame everything on the Welsh language, and there was a reaction, which led to the creation of Welsh language schools.

Question: What was the common practice at the time?

Ewan: The use of the block of wood. Sometimes there was not any kind of physical manifestation; you were just told not to speak Welsh. If it was drummed into a child enough times, they would learn to stop.



The library and dance hall of the Sain Ffagan National History Museum

In the 1980s, the museum changed the way it collected buildings. It started off with preserving the traditional, agricultural rural

way of life. In the 1980s, employment in the heavy industries, such as coal, was in decline, and symbols of urban life were also disappearing. Children come into the museum shop, and we show them how 100 years ago, this was the equivalent of a supermarket. We tell them about the British Empire as well, and show them the mass-produced things that were canned, such as soup from India. This influences the power that the British once had. We also have a costumed demonstration, where a woman will dress in character as a 'Mrs Roberts', and she pretends she is a character from the past. Next door, we have a real shop selling produce. It is owned by the museum, which helps us raise revenue and income.

In Welsh universities, the students had reading lessons, political lessons – which stemmed from the socialist parts of Wales - teaching you about Marx and so on, and there is a library which would have been full of political and economic works. The kinds of scholarships they quite often funded were for political courses. They would create their own community leaders by sending them to school by helping them become teachers, and political leaders. The focus of this community had moved because of industry, so people stopped using the church. In the 1970s, somebody stole the lead that holds the roof together, so the weather came in. When we dismantled the building, we found some colour on the walls, which you can see today. The museum church dates back to about 1520. When we found the church, all the paintings had been painted over. When we started taking the layers of paint away, we found figures. We traced them, and eventually replicated them back on

the walls. If you were to have stepped into this church in 1520, you would see what we have now today.



Participants observing an historical church dating back to 1520

In 1527, there was a Protestant Reformation in Britain. The King was a Catholic, but he wanted a divorce. He went to the Pope, and the Pope did not allow the divorce. So the King became Protestant, and the rest of the country had to become Protestant as well. One of the things they did was to get rid of Catholic imagery, and this church had that. In a lot of churches, they simply hacked the plaster off the walls or they painted over them. We are lucky to have found such a complete series of wall paintings. The challenge for us now is that people don't know who these Biblical figures are, so there is a lot of interpretation to be done. For Europeans, they are used to seeing scenes such as these in Catholic churches. For Welsh people, it is unusual as they simply did not survive. For me, this is a great

example to showcase the skills we have as a museum. It was either the Protestant Reformation or the Civil War that destroyed these things, or it was the Victorians who simply liked going back to the Gothic stone and thus destroyed the art. This church is dedicated to a Saint called Taylor, who was one of the most important Saints of the Middle Ages. We did not have any imagery of him. But luckily, we share a lot of culture with Britany in the North of France. There is a lot of experimental archaeology, and we have had to fill in the gaps. The paints we have used are based on ochre, which is the mineral found in the earth from the original location. Ochre is red, so all the images are a mixture of red with charcoal for black, or lime for the whites. These are just a few examples of the wealth of buildings we have here at Sain Ffagan. I hope they have given you a taste of Welsh history.

Wednesday 15th January – Visit to Ysgol Gymraeg Treganna Primary School with Rhys Harris³⁴

Private Tour and Presentation:

Rhys Harris, Headmaster



Rhys Harris addresses the participants at Ysgol Gymraeg Treganna primary school

Eleanor Johnson: Bore Da. Good morning. I am very pleased to introduce you all to Mr. Rhys Harris, who is kindly going to show us around Treganna school today and talk a bit about Welsh Medium Education. I will hand you over to Mr. Harris, many thanks for inviting us here today.

³⁴ Rhys Harris is the current Headmaster at Ysgol Gymraeg Treganna primary school in Cardiff. It is a Welsh-medium primary school located in Canton, Cardiff, and was opened in 1987. In September 2013, it underwent a multi-million pound renovation, and now has capacity for 630 pupils and 90 part-time nursery students.

Rhys Harris: A very warm welcome to you. This is a Welsh Medium primary school. Of the children who attend, 70 to 80 per cent come from non-Welsh speaking homes. That means that the parents have *decided* they want their children to be educated in Welsh. It is a choice the parents make, and the reason they make that choice is very different for every parent. Some decide they want their children to learn about the culture and history of Wales, some decide the results in a Welsh Medium School are better. Some will look and think that bilingualism is a great way to educate children and you find lots of 'fringe benefits'. Certainly, the emphasis in a Welsh Medium School is different to that of an English School. The emphasis on the history and culture of Wales will be greater here than in an English school up the road. The majority of our children arrive at three years old, although in the UK, education is not compulsory until the age of five. The majority arrive with little grasp of the language. We then work with the three year olds, and bring the four year olds into the national curriculum and the Foundation Phase. By the time we get to this time of year next year, most will be completely fluent in Welsh. Anglo-Americanism is so pervasive that we don't concern ourselves with teaching English until they are eight years old.

The children receive complete immersion until they are eight years old, and then English and Welsh have equal status for the remaining four years, until the children leave us to go to secondary school. We aim that at 11 years old, children will be completely bilingual. 11 year olds have a limited vocabulary; there is still a lot

to do and learn. The system has been around long enough now. I studied my degrees through the medium of Welsh, and started a teaching career in Welsh. Probably a better advert for Welsh Medium Education and one that is a lot less boring is to go see a tour of the children in their classes. We will talk about the school as we go around. I would like you to meet them, and ask them what they are doing. That is as far as I am going to go, and when we return I am happy to answer any questions. From the point of view of this school, the growth and demand of Welsh Medium Education has been great in South Wales. It is the heartland of the language. There are few shops you go into and expect to speak Welsh. You will probably be able to find a Welsh-speaking doctor and dentist, and quite a few more schools and churches. There are people who are not very confident in English. Such has been the demand that it has grown and grown.

We opened last year in 2013 by amalgamating two schools, one with 150 pupils and the other with 200. We brought the staff and children together into this new building. We sit at full capacity at more than 700, which is really large for a UK primary school. We are beginning quite an adventure here. We have taken a small parent-driven model – it comes from the parents who have wanted Welsh education – and one which has been a very close pastoral relationship with small numbers, to this massive establishment. It is quite a challenge making sure that everything we value about Welsh Medium Education, the ethos, culture and the way we work together, is transferred to this building.

(Participants visit each of the school's classrooms to meet with pupils and teachers.)

That is the whistle-stop tour. You have not seen all of it, but hopefully enough to give you an idea of the school. I am happy to answer any questions, or to try and answer any questions about the building or Welsh Medium Education in general.



Participants during the tour of Ysgol Gymraeg Treganna primary school

Question: I suppose the Welsh teachers speak English, but do the English teachers speak Welsh?

Rhys Harris: There is no definition. They have to speak Welsh. I come from an English-speaking home, and it would be fair to say that even as teachers, you stay more comfortable in your mother-tongue. I am probably more comfortable in English, but

to matriculate, you have to have a GCSE in English, Mathematics and Science, and so all of the teachers here have been qualified to quite a high level in both languages.

Question: But do you try to communicate in Welsh even in English classes?

Rhys Harris: We do not communicate in English at all. It would defeat the point. There are hundreds of schools that communicate in English. We have guests speaking in Welsh, the television they watch is in Welsh, and the music is in Welsh. Beyond the boundaries of this school, there is a pervasive Anglo-American culture. If we do not make this the place where they can speak Welsh then they will not.

Question: Do they speak Welsh during play-time?

Rhys Harris: It is not enough to teach them to speak Welsh; we have to teach them *why*. It is an important part of our work. This is an opportunity for when they get to be adults, and make the decision to speak Welsh to people who understand Welsh. But everything gravitates towards the easiest avenue. So it is easier to speak English. We organise extracurricular activities, we take them to camps, we host three or four clubs after school to make sure that they are aware that Welsh is the language of fun and play as well as something that happens in lessons.

Question: How do you provide textbooks and teaching materials? Are they written by Welsh teachers or English teachers?

Rhys Harris: We have five Welsh universities, and they produce materials for us. It is a good question because the student's choice and modernity makes it hard for us to keep up with things. I am very enthused by the advent of iTunes, and the ability to publish books ourselves. It allows us then to keep producing books. It is a continual problem in Wales; books go out of print. We have to work hard to make sure the textbooks are all available.



Rhys Harris shows participants some of the language resources used by teachers at Treganna primary school

Question: Is there any difference between the Welsh and English curricula?

Rhys Harris: In Welsh Medium Schools, we would not test in English, whereas at an English school you would. When you follow

key stage two (ages 10 to 11), there are four courses: English, Science, Mathematics and Welsh.

What I alluded to earlier is intrinsic to a Welsh Medium school. Children arrive without the language. Teachers are aware of feeding the language, and making them aware of how they use the language. I think that is one of the reasons I feel so strongly about bilingual education.

Question: How long are teachers employed for?

Rhys Harris Frustratingly, being a headmaster eats into my time with the children, which is why I became an educationalist. It keeps me sane to sit with those three year olds. I feel relieved; it is like yoga! Some teachers are permanent. When an employee has worked for me for more than two years, they have the rights of a permanent employee, whether I would like them to or not. It is a balancing act. I am given a pot of money in April based on the number of children in the school. I can then afford to employ X amount of teachers. If I have 60 children in September, I have to make cuts. We aim to always have five to ten per cent of staff on temporary contracts so we have that flexibility.

Question: What are the most challenging aspects of running such a school regarding language policy?

Rhys Harris: The real ‘proof of the pudding’ is the language the children speak in the yard. Giving them this second language is

not just an academic exercise, we want them to grow up as adults and be fluent in the language. That is a challenge. Children do not compromise with you. If they want to speak with you in English, they will. You have to be child-centric all the time. It is a challenge but also a strength. It forces the educators to be thinking in a child-centric manner all the time, and evaluating all the time. It is also a challenge to maintain a coherent family of staff. There are 50 people across this school, which is quite a lot. If I am honest, the building is still a challenge. When you move into a house, it is going to take a number of years to figure out how things work. We arrived on the 9th of September 2013; the children arrived on September 12th 2013. It was really very new. Over the next couple of years, we need to make the building work for us and take on those challenges we are trying to surmount.

Question: What kind of ritualistic practices do the kids go through? Do they have any?

Rhys Harris: There is a religious meeting every day. The school is predominantly Christian. There will be an assembly. The assemblies will end with the Lord's Prayer, and will be Christian by nature. From the point of pledging allegiance to the flag, there is no formal thing. There is a tendency when you teach and when you work with English Medium colleges, for parents to refer to this as the 'Welsh school'. We want the kids to be proud to be bilingualists. I do not want to make them feel as though there are 'non-Welsh speakers'. That is a firmer political foundation, especially with children. You

cannot indoctrinate them, that is how we try to do it.

Question: What is the school's relationship to the community?

Rhys Harris: Because of the percentage of parents that do not speak Welsh, we have to work harder at that. There is language pollution. It can turn the whole class around and then that is gone. We work hard at it, and we set homework every week, and every week we give it in Welsh, and we make them use the web so that parents are able to help. If there is poetry to be memorised for a recital or the Eisteddfod, we send it by MP3 so that parents can take part in what the children are doing.

What started off as a language idea has been a way of bringing families and communities into the school. When, for example, we are preparing for the Christmas concert, we publish a set of karaoke tracks so the children can do it at home for their parents. The parents then wander around singing those songs. It is positive for the parents. We need to work with local businesses, but that is a long-term thing. Traditional business will not be Welsh speaking. It would be naïve of me to say that others do not see us as a threat.

Question: To what extent do parents have a say in what takes place in the school?

Rhys Harris: We let them think they have a say! The school has a governing body. They will be parent representatives. From the level

of management of the school, there is parental governance. If we run it well and are an effective body – and by that I mean, we have a high level of system but we also have a high level of empathy – then the issues the parents are unhappy with frequently get to the governing body. It is a philosophy we have tried to work with. I cannot take credit for it myself. Let's say you have a situation that is high empathy and low system. Think, for example, of a farmer's market: it is a pleasure buying a loaf of bread, but then you take the bread home and it is stale. But there is no system to address it. The farmer's market is closed, and there is nothing you can do about it. On the other end of the system, there is a company like Easy Jet. You do not feel any pleasure booking a ticket, but there is a well-established system for doing so. We are trying to find somewhere half way between both examples so that we are a high level, high system school and the parents feel that they have a pleasure being here.

Question: How long have you been in this school? How typical is this school of a Welsh Medium school, in terms of the activities, progress and teachers?

Rhys Harris: Three months. We are only three months away from being a broom cupboard up the road. It is parent-driven, because parents insist we must have a Welsh school, but Welsh Medium Schools are generally situated in second-hand buildings, and I do not know of any other schools that have these facilities.

Question: Do you have any English students?

Rhys Harris: Yes. To be fair though, the ethnic minority at this school does not reflect the local community. I think that is our challenge for the next ten years. When Welsh Medium Education started, it was very much the bastion of the middle classes. The socio-economic background of the children was very middle class. As we have grown, that has ceased to exist. We have got a spectrum of economic backgrounds. But the spectrum of ethnicity is not wide; it is still predominantly white. Even though we have tried to encourage people, we have struggled to get ethnic minorities to come.

Question: Do you have a language policy towards them?

Rhys Harris: It is strange. Most of our children coming from an ethnic background will speak Punjabi to Dad, English to Mum, and Welsh at school. So the foreign language will be Welsh. It is quite healthy really; their starting point is all the same. We have a catchment area, but you have to make the choice. That makes a difference to the kind of children who come to the school.

Eleanor Johnson: Thank you very much indeed for such an informative tour.

Wednesday 15th January – Language Policy and Planning, and a Historical Overview of the Role of the Welsh Language in Europe with Meirion Prys Jones³⁵

With:

Meirion Prys Jones, Chair of the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity

Moderated by Eleanor Johnson



Meirion Prys Jones addresses the Participants at St David's Hotel, Cardiff Bay

35 Meirion Prys Jones is the Chair of the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD) and Chief Executive of the Welsh Language Board. The NPLD is a forum to promote the practice and support of minority languages across Europe. It includes governments, NGO's, universities, and national and regional organisations. NPLD works directly with the European Commission, and is committed to supporting all languages across Europe, regardless of their status, political standing, or number of speakers.

Meirion Prys Jones: Prynhaum Da. Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to be with you. Maybe I am supposed to be the one to tell you what nobody else will tell you. I want to run through a certain amount of history of Wales, where we are now, and how we got here. At the moment, I work for a European network based around ten governments, which work with the promotion of the Welsh language. For the last 40 years of my work life, I have been a teacher, a school inspector, an education consultant, and have dealt with language planning. For the last two years, I was the Chief Executive of the Language Board up until 2012, with responsibility in Wales for the promotion of Welsh, and an organisation established by an Act of Law before devolution. I am a native Welsh speaker, although my mother did not speak Welsh. So you can see that even in Wales, we have some complexity when it comes to the linguistic make-up of the country. I was in Ankara in November taking part in a conference about the Adyghe language.

I understand from that conference how simple the situation is in Wales! I think we have to say at the beginning that their linguistic situation is so much more complicated. Our situation is quite simple. In fact, most linguistic situations are simple compared to Turkey. But, hopefully, looking at how another country deals with a linguistic situation may give you some ideas and may make you think, and that is the message that we have within the European network. It is difficult to find your answer through someone else, but you can take ideas from others.

I will explain quickly about Wales, and then I am happy for you to ask questions.

Wales does not operate in a vacuum; it operates within the European context, so all the changes happening in Europe affect Wales. The fact that we have had a renewed interest in the Welsh language does not just happen in Wales, it happens right across Europe. You can see since the beginning of the 1980s, there has been a great interest in promoting and keeping the languages countries have alive. We know there are 6,000 languages spoken today, and from research by the European community, there is a danger that it might be reduced to 300 over a period of time unless we take steps to support the languages. The main challenge is that four per cent of the world's population speaks 96 per cent of its languages. You can turn it around: 96 per cent of the population speaks four per cent of the world's languages. So, we have a lot of very small languages spoken by few people, and a few big languages spoken by a lot of people.

Even so, bilingualism and multilingualism are still common in the world. There are a few reasons why Welsh still exists, and it still surprises us because it is so close to one of the strongest languages and communities in the world. There are two answers. The simple answer is the geographical answer: because the English couldn't climb very well! Towards the West of the UK, the land starts going upwards. The people coming from the East did not want to go any further; it was difficult and the weather was too bad. They could

not find their way. That is why Welsh is still spoken today. At a point up until 600AD, Welsh was spoken in England, and further North and further East. It was pushed back around the 7th century into a land where people did not want to go.

Welsh belongs to a group of languages called the 'Celtic languages'. Included in this group of languages are Irish, Welsh, and Britton, which is spoken in the north of France. We also know that Celtic languages were also spoken in Turkey, and according to Wikipedia, they say Ankara is a Celtic name. The language in Ankara was the same as what was spoken in the north of France at one time. Is it safe to say that Turkey is Welsh? Welcome back to your roots!

I mentioned then, that it was a surprise that Welsh still exists, and it is. In 1536, they passed the Act of Union that joined Wales to England. And as part of that act, it said that if you want to have a job in this new state, then you have to speak English. So 600 years ago, they banned the use of Welsh in public life. The only reason that the language survived (and Welsh was probably the strongest of the Celtic languages) was because of religion. At the same time that they passed this law, they also passed another one that translated the Bible into Welsh. For all Welsh speakers, they read the Bible in Welsh. For many centuries since then, the Welsh language was spoken by the majority of the population. That was true up until the beginning of the last century. According to the last census, 50 per cent of the population spoke Welsh. Then you see a big decline in numbers, mainly influenced by two rules that had a big effect

on the use of the language. But then, around the 1950s to 60s, you see a change, where people begin to think 'we are losing something here,' and they start to think of ways to teach the language to their children. You can see when you look at census data, the numbers of children who speak Welsh increases.

I think you have had a presentation from Hywel Jones, and one of the main things that happened in 1971 was that it became possible for parents who did not speak Welsh to send their children to a Welsh language group. You see a dramatic change at that time. You can see the numbers went up for the first time, but in 2011 it went down again. Now, 20 per cent of the population speaks Welsh. If you look at the shape of Wales, you can see that the denser parts are 80 per cent Welsh speaking. Then, they disappear, mainly through migration. There is more migration between England and Wales than any other countries in Europe. More than half the country in 1991 was born outside of Wales. Now, 25 per cent of the population are born outside Wales. It has a big influence on the language and the support for the language itself. You can see the main concentration of people lies in the West and the North.

I mentioned that the most significant development in terms of the promotion of the language was the establishment of *Mudiad Meithrin* in 1971, not only in the provision, but in the interest that people showed in making sure their children spoke Welsh. This was something you can see is a theme. Running through the promotion of Welsh over the last 50 years, it came from the people, not from

the government or politicians. That has only just changed in the last few years. You can see with the development of pre-school education that we saw a big growth of primary and secondary level education. By 2006, the numbers of children in Welsh Medium primary education became greater. The difficult situation then, is that we are going into a situation where the school system produces twice as many fluent Welsh speakers as in the home, and we know that the home is a much more solid base for language development than in school. Those who learn it in school are much less likely to continue speaking it than those at home. That is a challenge for us. How do we make sure those who learn it in school keep using it after they leave?

We also had quite a strong period of community support. During the 1970s and 1980s, we had a strong protest movement called the Welsh Language Society³⁶ (*Cymdeithas yr Iaith*), which was a strong pressure group that still exists, but is not as strong. Where there was a great deal of civil unrest, they put pressure on the government to do more. One of the biggest campaigns was the painting of signs, and then their breakage. It had a strong influence on public perception and on politicians.

36 The Welsh Language Society was founded in 1962 to campaign for the preservation of the Welsh language. The pressure group was at least partly inspired by Saunders Lewis' influential radio lecture 'The Fate of the Language', which was broadcast by BBC Wales in February 1962. In the lecture, Lewis insisted that the Welsh language would die unless revolutionary methods were used to defend it. The Welsh Language Society used non-violent direct action to demand such reforms as bilingual road signs and cheaper local housing.

Question: What was the reaction of the British Government to the protests?

Meirion Prys Jones: The reaction at the time was that nobody noticed, but they established a committee to look at what needed to be done, and then progressively since the 1960s, more action has been taken. Around that time, they passed a new Welsh Language Act, but it was a restricted act that dealt with the court. You could speak Welsh in court. But during that time, you also saw things develop like the television channel in the 1980s (S4C) and then the 1993 Welsh Language Act, which did two things. One was to establish a requirement for all public bodies in Wales to have a scheme that showed how they would deal with the public in Welsh. The second was to establish the Welsh Language Board, the organisation I used to run, which had the job of promoting Welsh in every aspect of life.

When the Board came to an end, we had a staff of 80 people with a budget of €16 million for one year. As I mention, each public body had to have a scheme. The public knew then what the public body would provide in Welsh. You can see that over the past 20 years, we have had a number of strategies and documents showing how the government intends to promote Welsh. We have things on paper, and things in action, but in Wales, once it is written down, it happens.

Also, within the community, television and strong organisations like Mudiad Meithrin promote the language. We have a number of festivals that promote it. It is felt very strongly in communities.

People feel strongly that they want to live their lives in Welsh, but many do not feel that they have that opportunity. We then had a major change in Wales across the political landscape, where we had devolution, and for the first time, we had responsibility that came to the Welsh politicians. Up until then, all Language Acts had been passed in London. That has been a major change, because you had an element of planning, which was not there before. For the first time, the government took on board responsibility for Welsh Medium Education. Up until then, it was always something that nobody really thought about. It was pushed by the parents, and pursued by the local level but not on a national level. In 2010, we had a strategy. They are not keeping to it, but we have a strategy. There is a document there that sets out the goals. Also, we have a new Welsh language strategy called ‘a living language’³⁷, which is the language for life. The main priority is where they want to concentrate their promotion of the language.

Things have changed, and they have changed again. In 2011/2012, they passed a new Language Act, and it took away all structures in place, and changed them completely. The new structures are that the government now takes responsibility for promotion of the language. All the work done by the Board is now done by the government in terms of education, community development,

37 The Welsh Government's Welsh Language strategy 'A living language: a language for living' was published in March 2012. This is the Welsh Ministers' strategy for the promotion and facilitation of the use of Welsh language and is a five-year strategy, from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2017. Full text of the strategy may be found here: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/welsh-language/publications/wlstrategy2012/?lang=en>

and how to deal with young people; it is now all done by the government. The Education Department has a new role in terms of promoting Welsh education, and they have established a new post of Language Commissioner. They are supposed to keep an eye on promoting the language, while at the same time, ensuring that each public body has a plan. They have changed that idea now. Now, they require all public bodies and a section of the private sector to keep to 'Language Standards', but we do not know what those are. They have produced a first draft of that, and it is taken them five years to produce the first draft. The Government and the Commissioner do not agree on the Standards.

There is an element of change taking place with new structures, and they are trying to find their way for the future. You have a Language Commissioner, and the Government has a new role. It makes planning rather difficult. The Government has not got that much of an idea what they want to do. The civil servants have no expertise. They have gone from having an organisation with professional expertise, to where it is run by civil servants with no expertise. But civil servants have the power that experts never had. So, it is a time of change and development.

One good thing is that the Prime Minister for Wales is responsible. Language is at the top of the system, where the First Minister has responsibility for the language. At the same time, the other theme is multilingualism. You should not just concentrate on two languages, but how we can develop our skills in a whole range of languages.

We know that in terms of minority languages, unless you have a chance to use the language, then you will not have confidence, thus no fluency, and you will not use it. We know the challenge is where people have the opportunity to use Welsh. If they use it, they will be more confident and make more use of it. Also, we know that while politicians do not agree, unless you invest a lot of money in a language, it will not survive either. Those in Europe who invest more, they do better. The Government says it is up to the people to use the language, but the evidence shows that unless you spend money on languages, they find it difficult to survive. The research shows that those who use more than one language are 'sexy'. That is research for you!

In terms of the future, we are at a crossroads. All the structures have been changed. We will not know what happens next. It is seen as a developing language, but at the moment we are thinking 'what is happening next?' In some ways, the power has gone from the communities to the politicians and civil servants. Many people see that as a dangerous development as well, but it is a change. We come back to this idea that there is a confidence in young people, and in those who use the language. We are optimistic as a group of speakers, and we have invested heavily in promoting our own language, but there is a bit of a question mark there: 'Where do we go next?'

Question: Can you elaborate more on multilingualism? What are the different ethnic groups living in Wales, and what are the debates

around multilingualism and multiculturalism? To what extent does the current education curriculum cater for these differences?

Meirion Prys Jones: In terms of multilingualism, Wales does not have a big ethnic population. It is mainly based around Cardiff and the three major cities, so it is not a big issue but it is here. Multilingualism is an issue within the UK, and that has an influence on the way governments think. There is a great deal of support provided in the way you deal with ethnic minorities. In the UK, apart from the indigenous minorities, you cannot be taught in any other language except English. That is a strong element in the political and education frameworks. The ethnic groups are provided with the opportunity to be taught languages outside of schools, but there is not good access within the education system. For other languages, as English becomes more the *lingua franca*, people who speak English as a first language feel less of a need to learn others.

There is some pressure placed on the UK and throughout the EU to promote foreign languages, such as French, German and Spanish. But I do not think we do particularly well in that context. We try and promote the fact that if you speak more than one language, then the third and fourth should be easier. We find it difficult to say that the government should look at the lessons learnt from the bilingual school sector, and use it within the other sectors, but they do not. The system finds it difficult to learn lessons from itself. It is quite obvious that the only way you really learn another language

apart from English is through immersion education. You need to have a concentrated push. Nobody seems to take that on board. While there is a push, nobody seems to be able to say 'this is how it should be done'.

Question: Your organisation is called the 'Network to Promote Diversity.' How would you describe diversity within a Welsh context?

Meirion Prys Jones: It is an EU network to promote linguistic diversity. In terms of diversity in a Welsh context, that is a good question. It is not very well promoted in Wales. Trying to deal with the two languages we have means not paying so much attention to diversity in general, although, over the last ten years, we have seen a better situation developing between the Welsh communities and the ethnic communities. They used to fight, but now there is an understanding that they do need to work together. On an EU level, very few languages get attention. If you look at the EU, they are moving into Europe 2020, and they are spending the next seven years on €15 billion for the promotion of languages, but they are really only focusing on five languages. That is not linguistic diversity. That is why this network promotes linguistic diversity. Others will die, and the EU Parliament passed the motion by 92 per cent stating that the EU should do more to promote minority languages, but the EU Commission has ignored it. So there is a debate in Europe on what support should be provided.

Question: Is Welsh language education a government policy here in Wales? Are there different approaches, criticisms, and attitudes towards this policy promoted by the local government? Are there NGOs, which propose different models of education?

Meirion Prys Jones: In some ways, you have to go back to how it develops to answer your question, because there are different areas in Wales that have different attitudes towards Welsh education. The West has a majority-speaking Welsh, and when I went to school at four years old, I was taught in Welsh. Over a period of time, it became the policy of the local authorities. In the East, it slowly developed that it was part of the fabric of society. In the 1950s, people said that they wanted Welsh education as well, because of the legislation passed in 1944 where parents could open their own schools. So parents opened their own schools in the East, and very often in buildings that were unused and substandard. Because these schools start quite small, and have good pupils going there, they grow. That started in the 1950s and 1980s, and then we had increased awareness and support for the language. When I was a child, there was no support for the language. There was a lot of opposition. It is something that spreads across Europe. People become more and more interested in the language, and you get a situation where, for a lot of reasons, people want to send their children to a Welsh school. They feel that maybe they lost out; maybe their grandparents were Welsh. Slowly in the East, you have an increased number of children speaking Welsh.

In the 1980s, up to about 15 per cent were receiving education in Welsh. At the end of the 1980s, they passed a new law that offered a national curriculum set in London. Within Wales, you have a choice. You can either learn Welsh as a subject in school, or learn completely in Welsh. Over a period of time, they thought this could be quite difficult to push through, but it went smoothly. So, over a period of time, it spread through society and we came to learn that the Standards were high and that Welsh was a good thing. Only in the last four years has the government taken that on board and acknowledged that education in Wales should have a strategy for Welsh education. Before, they did not have one, and it was something that grew by itself.

Have we had opposition? Yes, but not so much. Who do you oppose if it is something done by choice? In the West, you will find we have more opposition. It is part of the school system, and has been for a long time. If you do not want your child to learn Welsh, you have a choice. But it has been developing slowly over time, based on parents wanting their children to have their education in Welsh. On the other hand, there has been no major push either. Though the Board had the role of promoting the language, as part of that role we produced marketing, strategies, and so forth. All this was part of the role we had. The Welsh Government has now taken on that role. But, governments find it difficult to say that the language is 'better', so their marketing campaign is that Welsh education is 'available' – not 'good', not 'bad', but available. That has happened in the last couple of months.

Question: Is there any difference in opinion between the political parties in Wales on this matter?

Meirion Prys Jones: There was a strong difference. We have one party, Plaid Cymru, which was established 90 years ago with the specific task of promoting the language. In the 1960s and 1970s, they started to get elected. As this happened, they moved away from that specific purpose because they felt that it was stopping them from ranking higher in elections. So, up until the 1980s and 1990s, there was quite a divide. But, in the last 30 years, the political parties have combined so that they all support the language. They cannot be seen in society as being anti-Welsh.

Question: Which were against?

Meirion Prys Jones: The Conservatives, the Socialists, and the Liberals. It did vary. One of the reasons the language declined during the past 50 years was because Wales was pro-socialism during the international movement. This was in favour of all of Wales being able to communicate through one language, but this meant that you had to get rid of all other languages. They have come back from there since then, but you can see the effect on the Welsh language was quite strong. So, for a period of time, there was a strong anti-Welsh movement from the socialist movement. We have moved on from that in the last 30 years. However, if everybody supports it, you do need to have a certain tension. Someone needs to be able to say that the government is doing enough. If everyone says that it is

OK, then nothing will improve. It is a strange situation.

Question: Can you talk about the number of Welsh education initiatives?

Meirion Prys Jones: Throughout the last 60 to 70 years, we have seen different organisations promoting and pushing for more and more education. It comes from three different sources. The first are parents, on a local level. The second is local authorities, which were very supportive. The third are Her Majesty's school inspectors. They believed that this improved education in Wales. At the same time, you had a number of pressure organisations all supporting the language. Mainly, however, where there was provision of the language, it came from the parents.

In the 1990s, it changed. With the Board, there was a remit that each local authority had to submit a plan, and up until then, three quarters of them did not have any kind of plan. So, from about 1996 onwards, each authority had to have a plan by law. One of the things that has developed from this is a questionnaire conducted by each local authority, which asks young parents if they want Welsh education for their child. I think that will become law from here. That produced some surprising results. For example, there is a town close to the border that was traditionally English. At the time, it was around seven per cent Welsh-speaking. When the results came back, it was 42 per cent. They had to open new schools to start to deal with it. It has gone from parents pushing into the system, and

the system has started to rise. It has mostly developed from parents wanting Welsh language education for their children.

Question: In politics, the parties are defined around promoting Welsh values. Do you think there is a relationship between the political and parental support for Welsh education?

Meirion Prys Jones: I think it is more complicated than that. If you ask parents why they want Welsh education for their child, the link to the political is very small. It is two reasons. The first is that it is part of the family tradition, and the second is that their children will get a better job if they are able to speak Welsh in Wales. In Wales, we know that if you have bilingual skills, you earn about ten per cent more than someone who does not, on average. Those are the two main things.

The closer the school is to someone, the more one sends their kids there. That is another factor. Twenty years ago, I opened a school in a non-Welsh speaking city with five children in a housing estate. Within five years, there were 300 children. If it is close, it develops.

Question: What was the first official Welsh medium school in Wales? When was it established?

Meirion Prys Jones: The first official school was established in 1946, but I think I mentioned there were village schools teaching in Welsh from 1870. They were not called official Welsh schools,

they just spoke the language.

Question: How many English Medium Schools have Welsh as a compulsory subject? How effective is this? Do people really *learn* Welsh?

Meirion Prys Jones: It is awful. They developed a system in 1990 where children between the ages of 5 and 16 had to have half an hour a day of Welsh. That does not work anywhere in the world. It is more a political statement than it is an educational one. So they are still trying to figure out how to make it work.

Question: Do the students resist? Do the teachers not take it seriously?

Meirion Prys Jones: In terms of standards, it is awful. It is the worst performing subject in the Welsh curriculum. Because it is based around children aged 4 to seven and it is taught by teachers who may not speak Welsh at all. In general, it is taught very badly. They tend to do the same thing over and over again. I used to work in the system, but they did not invest in it, and it did not improve. I do not think that even if you worked hard to make it work, it would. It is never enough. Half an hour per day of a language is never enough.

Question: Are there balanced schools?

Meirion Prys Jones: There are English schools, and they call the Welsh Medium Schools ‘bilingual’. It is what comes out of the school. The children who go to bilingual schools in Wales perform better in English than those who go to English schools. But that is quite common for children to perform better in majority language tests. The main push is on language. It gets slightly more balanced when you go up through secondary school.

Question: Are there any truly bilingual schools: Welsh and English? Perhaps in Cardiff, for example, where their English is of a higher standard to promote Welsh, instead of teaching in Welsh only?

Meirion Prys Jones: It has been a long running debate as to how you structure this. There were 50/50 schools, but they did not seem to work very well. The parents found that it was better to send your child to a Welsh Medium school. The balance did not work as 50/50 because of media, and outside factors. We should go back and look at that again though, as we have reached a plateau where 20 per cent are in Welsh Medium Schools. If we want to increase the number of speakers, we have to go up from there. One of the things we have been doing in the European Network is looking at different models. The Basques have 50/50 models, which is one of their three models. When you look at what they have done, most children are in Basque Medium schools. Surprisingly enough, Wales is not a very good place to have that discussion. There is no good discussion about what is happening in Wales. It is very strange. A lot of things happen, but there is no discussion.

Question: In Turkey, I am looking at coming to terms with the history of the language, memory and so on, in terms of promoting equal status with the Kurdish language. Was this an issue in the Welsh context?

Meirion Prys Jones: No, it has not been such a big issue, but you can see that there has been this change from being anti-Welsh and being pro-British, which happened during the middle of the last century, to the fact that most of the population now wants to be seen as Welsh, not British. It has not been a political fight or a change in the streets, but you can see it coming through in the interest in Welsh education, and in the interest in broadcasting. The interest is now in the devolution of power.

The one issue I touched on earlier is the migration from England into Wales. It is migration, but on a political level, you cannot say that they are migrants. It is too politically difficult. That change is having quite a profound effect on society in Wales. Many people do not come from Wales. There is a tension under the surface. Wales is not a particularly good place to have a debate. These things tend to be there and the political life of the country has not developed yet in so far that one can have those kinds of debates. It makes debate difficult when there is one dominant political party who has always been in power locally for most of the last century.

Question: Do many parents send their children to English Medium Schools?

Meirion Prys Jones: We tried to do research on that, and the reason they send their children to Welsh schools is tradition; that has been the case for the education system in Wales. It is a conscious decision. It is also about proximity and location. There are a number of reasons why. It is an interesting question, and we do not really know the answer to that.

Eleanor Johnson: Many thanks Meirion for that fascinating account. It has been very informative for us all and an excellent end to our visit.

Wednesday 15th January – Final Dinner and Closing Remarks at the Vale Resort

Venue:

The Vale Resort, Cardiff

Moderated by Yılmaz Ensaroğlu



Participants providing general remarks on their experience of DPI's comparative study visit to Wales

Concluding Observations

Yılmaz Ensaroğlu: Good evening. On Sunday, we started this comparative study visit, and this is our last session. After the dinner, we will depart for Turkey and I do not think it will be possible for this group to convene again soon. The General Director of DPI, Kerim Yildiz, is in the United States and was unable to join us. He sent a message giving his apologies and thanking Eleanor Johnson for being here. The whole organisation of this was taken on by Eleanor Johnson in London and Esra Elmas in Turkey, and I thank them. I also want to thank you all because you have accepted our invitation and shown your presence in all the sessions. You have been so focused and so committed at these meetings and your input is valued. This was a first experience for us in terms of bringing experts together on a thematic visit. I think we have all learned lessons from this experience, and we are going to put them to good use. We will think hard about it. If there are any suggestions or criticisms by you at this point, we would gladly hear them. As I told you on your night of arrival, what we wish to get out of this trip is not to make a direct comparison with Turkey's case in terms of bilingualism and language and identity issues, but rather to look at experiences from around the world, and get some valuable lessons and ideas from them. Since you are such invaluable academics and members of societies and leading figures, you might actually have some influence with what you write and say on this matter. So, this is a small step in a very serious enterprise. I look forward to working on similar cases. I think that in March in Turkey there will

be a DPI roundtable meeting with civil society leaders in Urfa, so the language issue might also be taken into consideration there. We may also bring some leading figures that work in this area and make them do presentations in Turkey in the future. Of course we are not the only ones who work on language issues. We have two academics from Bilgi University, Esra Elmas helped to facilitate. I hope we will further these studies working altogether. DPI is always ready to bring people from Turkey and international figures who work in this area together. We want to give any kind of support we can in this matter. I want to thank you again. As I say, if you have any suggestions or ideas you can tell us. I thank you, Esra Elmas and Eleanor Johnson, and our intern, Grace O'Donovan, and İpek Kotan, our interpreter.

Eleanor Johnson: Thank you very much and it has been such a pleasure to be with you all in my home country. It has been great to hear your questions and enthusiasm and I hope we can continue to discuss after the visit and share resources and materials. A few of you have mentioned that you might like to learn a bit more about particular aspects of the visit, so I will also be sending materials of particular interest to you. I hope to see you at future DPI activities.

Appendix

Language and Identity in Wales A Comparative Study Visit

13th – 15th January 2014

Participants from Turkey:

- Semih Aktekin, Karadeniz Technical University, Turkey
- Muge Ayan, Bilgi University, Turkey
- Kudret Bülbül, Turkey's Ministry of Education
- Kenan Çayır, Bilgi University, Turkey
- Zafer Çelik, Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Turkey
- Vahap Coşkun, Dicle University, Turkey
- Şerif Derince, Koç University, Turkey
- Esra Elmas, DPI and Bilgi University, Turkey
- Yılmaz Ensaroğlu, Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA)
- Özge Genç, Bilgi University, Turkey
- Bekir S. Gür, Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Turkey

Participants from the United Kingdom:

- Joanna Chard, Welsh Government
- Ifona Deeley, Welsh Government
- Tim Edwards, Urdd Gobaith Cymru
- Siwan Gwyndaf, Welsh Government
- Rhys Harris, Ysgol Gymraeg Treganna primary school
- Eleanor Johnson, DPI
- Hywel Jones, Mudiad Meithrin
- Meirion Prys Jones, Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity
- Siân Lewis, Menter Iaith Caerdydd
- Gari Lewis, Welsh Government
- Ewan Llwyd, Sain Ffagans National History Museum
- Grace O'Donovan, DPI

DPI Board and Council of Experts

Director:

Kerim Yildiz

Kerim Yildiz is Director of DPI. He is an expert in international human rights law and minority rights, and is the recipient of a number of awards, including from the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights for his services to protect human rights and promote the rule of law in 1996, the Sigrid Rausing Trust's Human Rights award for Leadership in Indigenous and Minority Rights in 2005, and the Gruber Prize for Justice in 2011. Kerim has written extensively on human rights and international law, and his work has been published internationally.

DPI Board Members:

Nicholas Stewart QC (Chair)

Barrister and Deputy High Court Judge (Chancery and Queen's Bench Divisions), United Kingdom . Former Chair of the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales and Former President of Union Internationale des Avocats.

Professor Penny Green (Secretary)

Head of Research and Director of the School of Law's Research Programme at King's College London and Director of the International State Crime Initiative (ICSI), United Kingdom (a collaborative enterprise with the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative and the University of Hull, led by King's College London).

Priscilla Hayner

Co-founder of the International Centre for Transitional Justice, global expert and author on truth commissions and transitional justice initiatives, consultant to the Ford Foundation, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and numerous other organisations.

Arild Humlen

Lawyer and Director of the Norwegian Bar Association's Legal Committee. Widely published within a number of jurisdictions, with emphasis on international civil law and human rights. Has lectured at law faculties of several universities in Norway. Awarded the Honor Prize of the Bar Association for Oslo for his work as Chairman of the Bar Association's Litigation Group for Asylum and Immigration law.

Jacki Muirhead

Practice Director, Cleveland Law Firm. Previously Barristers' Clerk at Counsels' Chambers Limited and Marketing Manager at the Faculty of Advocates. Undertook an International Secondment at New South Wales Bar Association.

Professor David Petrasek

Professor of International Political Affairs at the University of Ottawa, Canada. Expert and author on human rights, humanitarian law and conflict resolution issues, former Special Adviser to the Secretary-General of Amnesty International, consultant to United Nations.

Antonia Potter Prentice

Expert in humanitarian, development, peacemaking and peacebuilding issues. Consultant on women, peace and security; and strategic issues to clients including the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, the Global Network of Women Peacemakers, Mediator, and Terre des Hommes.

DPI Council of Experts

Dermot Ahern

Dermot Ahern is a Former Irish Member of Parliament and Government Minister and was a key figure for more than 20 years in the Irish peace process, including in negotiations for the Good Friday Agreement and the St Andrews Agreement. He also has extensive experience at EU Council level including being a key negotiator and signatory to the Constitutional and Lisbon Treaties. In 2005, he was appointed by the then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to be a Special Envoy on his behalf on the issue of UN Reform. Previous roles include that of Government Chief Whip, Minister for Social, Community and Family Affairs, Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Justice and Law Reform. Dermot Ahern also served as Co-Chairman of the British Irish Inter Parliamentary Body 1993 – 1997.

Dr Mehmet Asutay

Dr Mehmet Asutay is a Reader in Middle Eastern and Islamic Political Economy and Finance at the School of Government and International Affairs (SGIA), Durham University, UK. He researches, teaches and supervises research on Middle Eastern economic development, the political economy of Middle East including Turkish and Kurdish political economies, and Islamic political economy. He is the Honorary Treasurer of BRISMES (British Society for Middle East Studies) and of the International Association for Islamic Economics. His research has been published in various journals, magazines and also in book format. He has been involved in human rights issues in various levels for many years, and has a close interest in transitional justice, conflict resolution and development issues at academic and policy levels.

Christine Bell

Legal expert based in Northern Ireland; expert on transitional justice, peace negotiations, constitutional law and human rights law advice. Trainer for diplomats, mediators and lawyers.

Cengiz Çandar

Senior Journalist and columnist specializing in areas such as The Kurdish Question, former war correspondent. Served as special adviser to Turkish president Turgut Ozal.

Yilmaz Ensaroğlu

SETA Politics Economic and Social Research Foundation. Member of the Executive Board of the Joint Platform for Human Rights, the Human Rights Agenda Association (İHGD) and Human Rights Research Association (İHAD), Chief Editor of the Journal of the Human Rights Dialogue.

Dr. Salomón Lerner Febres

Former President of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Perú; Executive President of the Centre for Democracy and Human Rights of the Pontifical Catholic University of Perú.

Professor Mervyn Frost

Head of the Department of War Studies, King's College London. Previously served as Chair of Politics and Head of Department at the University of Natal in Durban. Former President of the South African Political Studies Association; expert on human rights in international relations, humanitarian intervention, justice in world politics, democratising global governance, just war tradition in an Era of New Wars and ethics in a globalising world.

Martin Griffiths

Founding member and first Executive Director of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Served in the British Diplomatic Service, and in British NGOs, Ex -Chief Executive of Action Aid. Held posts as United Nations (UN) Director of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, Geneva and Deputy to the UN

Emergency Relief Coordinator, New York. Served as UN Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Great Lakes, UN Regional Coordinator in the Balkans and UN Assistant Secretary-General.

Dr. Edel Hughes

Senior Lecturer, University of East London. Expert on international human rights and humanitarian law, with special interest in civil liberties in Ireland, emergency/anti-terrorism law, international criminal law and human rights in Turkey and Turkey's accession to European Union. Previous lecturer with Amnesty International and a founding member of Human Rights for Change.

Avila Kilmurray

A founder member of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition and was part of the Coalition's negotiating team for the Good Friday Agreement. She has written extensively on community action, the women's movement and conflict transformation. Serves on the Board of Conciliation Resources (UK); the Global Fund for Community Foundations; Conflict Resolution Services Ireland and the Institute for British Irish Studies. Avila was the first Women's Officer for the Transport & General Workers Union for Ireland (1990-1994) and became Director of the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland in 1994. Avila was awarded the Raymond Georis Prize for Innovative Philanthropy through the European Foundation Centre.

Professor Ram Manikkalingam

Visiting Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Amsterdam, served as Senior Advisor on the Peace Process to President of Sri Lanka, expert and author on conflict, multiculturalism and democracy, founding board member of the Laksham Kadirgamar Institute for Strategic Studies and International Relations.

Bejan Matur

Renowned Turkey based Author and Poet. Columnist, focusing mainly on Kurdish politics, the Armenian issue, daily politics, minority problems, prison literature, and women's issues. Has won several literary prizes and her work has been translated into 17 languages. Former Director of the Diyarbakır Cultural Art Foundation (DKSV).

Professor Monica McWilliams

Professor of Women's Studies, based in the Transitional Justice Institute at the University of Ulster. Was the Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission from 2005-2011 and responsible for delivering the advice on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. Co-founder of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition political party and was elected to a seat at the Multi-Party Peace Negotiations, which led to the Belfast (Good Friday) Peace Agreement in 1998. Served as a member of the Northern Ireland Legislative Assembly from 1998-2003 and the Northern Ireland Forum for Dialogue and Understanding from 1996-1998. Publications focus on domestic violence, human security and the role of women in peace processes.

Jonathan Powell

British diplomat, Downing Street Chief of Staff under Prime Minister Tony Blair between 1997- 2007. Chief negotiator in Northern Ireland peace talks, leading to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. Currently CEO of Inter Mediate, a United Kingdom -based non-state mediation organization.

Sir Kieran Prendergast

Served in the British Foreign Office, including in Cyprus, Turkey, Israel, the Netherlands, Kenya and New York; later head of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office dealing with Apartheid and Namibia; former UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. Convenor of the SG's Executive Committee on Peace and Security and engaged in peacemaking efforts in Afghanistan, Burundi, Cyprus, the DRC, East Timor, Guatemala, Iraq, the Middle East, Somalia and Sudan.

Rajesh Rai

Rajesh was called to the Bar in 1993. His areas of expertise include Human Rights Law, Immigration and Asylum Law, and Public Law. Rajesh has extensive hands-on experience in humanitarian and environmental issues in his work with NGOs, cooperatives and companies based in the UK and overseas. He also lectures on a wide variety of legal issues, both for the Bar Human Rights Committee and internationally.

Professor Naomi Roht Arriaza

Professor at University of Berkeley, United States, expert and author on transitional justice, human rights violations, international criminal law and global environmental issues.

Professor Dr. Mithat Sancar

Professor of Law at the University of Ankara, expert and author on Constitutional Citizenship and Transitional Justice, columnist for Taraf newspaper.



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