Towards a fuller understanding of language use in Wales

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Abstract

This article considers the importance of developing a holistic understanding of the factors that influence language choice and examines two periods of intense language policy and planning activity in Wales. Part 1 looks at the historical context of the interaction between Welsh and English, focusing on the pivotal years 1880–1920. Part 2 turns to the present day and to measures put in place to influence the use of Welsh. In both periods, language policy and planning has operated across many spheres with the aim of either maintaining the use of Welsh or triggering a switch to using Welsh. In light of these discussions, Part 3 considers the kind of research needed to further develop the field and suggests that long-term micro-level study of an individual's language choice may help us better understand the nuances of this issue and thus better shape policies and initiatives that respond to these complexities.

Key words: language choices, language policy, language planning, Wales, holistic understanding

Résumé

Cet article s'intéresse à l'importance d'une compréhension holistique ou globale des facteurs qui influent sur les choix langagiers. Deux périodes de mise en œuvre intensive d'aménagement et de politique linguistiques au Pays de Galles servent de contexte à une exploration en trois temps. La première partie se penche sur le contexte historique de l'interaction linguistique entre le gallois et l'anglais, avec un regard particulier de 1880 à 1920. Dans un deuxième temps, nous analysons les pratiques et les politiques actuelles qui sont mises en œuvre pour appuyer la revitalisation linguistique. À ces deux époques, la politique et l'aménagement linguistique traversent plusieurs sphères de la vie quotidienne, soit pour maintenir l'utilisation du gallois, soit pour encourager le choix linguistique des citoyens vers le gallois. À la lumière des analyses de mise en œuvre des politiques linguistiques à ces deux époques, la dernière partie de cet article propose une réflexion sur les types de recherches qui pourraient élargir le champ de la politique linguistique. Il apparaît que des recherches

longitudinales sur les choix langagiers des individus pourraient approfondir notre compréhension des nuances de cette situation, nous permettant de mieux cibler et formuler les politiques et les initiatives afin de réellement répondre aux complexités des pratiques linguistiques.

Mots-clés : choix linguistiques, politique linguistique, aménagement linguistique, Pays de Galles, compréhension globale

Introduction

The interaction between languages has a long and complex history. Correspondingly, and in order to move the field of language policy and planning forward, this article argues for as holistic an understanding as possible of the factors that influence language choice and language use. In 2002, the Welsh Assembly Government published *Iaith Pawb: A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales*. That document outlines a vision for Wales, namely of "a truly bilingual Wales, by which we mean a country where people can choose to live their lives through the medium of either or both Welsh or English" (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002, p. 1). As Kymlicka (2007) has noted, the goal of language policy thus presented is not "to create two parallel and largely monolingual societies" (p. 513) but rather "to encourage greater bilingualism in everyday life, so that most citizens will feel comfortable operating in either language in a wide range of functions" (p. 513). Kymlicka goes on to comment that this "clearly makes sense" given the history and demographics of Wales (p. 513), where the two languages have co-existed for hundreds of years. Crucially, the interaction between these languages is complex, as is people's choice of when to use one language over the other. The trend over the last centuries has been of a shift for Welsh from being the majority to the minority language. This decline is understood to have occurred as a consequence of declarative measures (beginning with the passing of the Act of Union in 1536[1]) and accumulative and insurmountable pressure (for example, through the influence of Empire and immigration), resulting in English becoming the dominant language; see Williams (2008, pp. 253–260). Nevertheless, Welsh is the most vibrant of the Celtic languages and, in the 2001 census, 582,400 people noted that they speak Welsh (WLB, 2003, p. 1).

Over the last fifty years, a number of steps have been taken to strengthen the standing of Welsh in public life. Key language legislation has been passed and devolution has meant that language policies have been developed and language has become increasingly incorporated into other public policy areas.

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[1]As a result of the Act of Union of 1536, English was declared as the language of the courts and the language of administration, and those who used Welsh were not allowed to hold public office.

These legislative and governmental interventions are of course crucial for re-
alising the vision of a truly bilingual Wales, as set out in the National Action
Plan (*Iaith Pawb*). What is also key in turning this vision into reality is that a
significant number of people in Wales are willing and able to use the Welsh
language in a wide range of contexts.

The question of *using* Welsh is one that is central to the Welsh Assembly
Government's most recent Welsh language strategy. Published for consultation
in December 2010 *Iaith Fyw: Iaith Byw / A Living Language: A Language for
Living* is a document that strongly advocates the need to "promote and facili-
tate" the use of Welsh (Welsh Assembly Government, 2010a, p. 2). The words
'promote' and 'facilitate' are revealing, for they highlight one of the issues
that challenges policy makers and language planners in Wales. Because of the
complex history of Welsh, even among Welsh speakers, there is often a need
to stress the language's validity, relevance and importance in a given context
and to support and encourage use of the language before it is employed. For
example, in the workplace, there may be a difference between (a) the num-
ber of staff who state that they speak Welsh and who regularly do so in their
private lives and (b) the number who are willing and/or able to use it in the
workplace context. This reluctance to use the language can be seen even in sit-
uations where it would be to the speaker's advantage to use Welsh, such as in
healthcare situations, as Welsh is the language in which an individual is most
comfortable (Misell, 2000, p. 25).

This article proposes that, if we are to move language policy and language
planning in Wales towards new frontiers, there is a need to develop a holistic
perspective on language choice and language use. In other words, the argu-
ment is that it is vital to gain an understanding of how the interaction between
different factors (e.g. power structures, interpersonal relations, traditional prac-
tices, media pressure) impact on speakers and make them choose one language
over another in various situations. Undoubtedly, an understanding of the inter-
play between the three components of language policy as outlined by Spolsky
(2009) — practices, beliefs and management — have a significant role to play
in helping us understand the influences on the language choice of individuals
(pp. 4–5). Given the influence of the past on practices and beliefs, this article
will firstly take a historical perspective on the interaction between Welsh and
English. To do so is not to claim that we are forever bound by the perceptions
of the past and therefore unable to grasp new opportunities; but rather that the
history of the interaction between peoples and languages is one way of en-
riching our understanding of the forces that shape the way we think, and that
may explain some of the complexities that language planners face. Specifically,
we shall examine early attempts to manage the dynamics between Welsh and
English during the pivotal years of the late nineteenth and early twentieth cen-

turies. Secondly, we shall reflect upon some of the measures and interventions that have been put in place since the mid-twentieth century to influence the use of Welsh. Thirdly, we shall consider the kind of research and information needed by researchers, policy makers and language planning practitioners in order to address the ambiguity of language choice and language use and shape policies and initiatives that help secure a viable future for Welsh.

Part 1: Interplay between Welsh and English: A historical perspective

In Wales (as in many other European and New World countries), attempts to systematically and strategically protect and promote the Welsh language and culture (vis-à-vis English language and culture) began in earnest in the nineteenth century.[2] One man in particular could claim the title of Wales' first language planner and language policy maker: O.M. Edwards (1858–1920). Edwards was an influential figure that shaped the way generations of Welsh speakers regarded their language, their culture and their history. For many years, "O.M." was a Fellow in History at Lincoln College at the University of Oxford and, from 1907 until his death in 1920, he held the post of Chief Inspector of Schools for Wales; yet Edwards was also a proliferate author and editor. He edited journals about Wales, wrote travel books comparing Wales and other nations, wrote histories of Wales and books for children about Wales. Edwards' aim throughout his life was to instil a sense of pride and self-worth in his fellow Welshmen and crucially he sought to express the importance and validity of the Welsh language and Welsh culture.

During Edwards' lifetime, the Welsh language was at a juncture (a situation not unlike the one in which it finds itself today): there were many reasons to be hopeful about the language's future and yet many powerful forces against which it had to battle. On the one hand, the Welsh-language publishing press was flourishing, the Nonconformist chapels[3] were a powerful stronghold for the language, and the political developments of the period meant that the ordinary Welsh-speaking people were able to elect their MPs from amongst their own, the most notable example being David Lloyd George (British prime minister 1916–1922). On the other hand, the growth of industry and the rail infrastructure, the influx of English-language reading materials and the forces of Empire, to name but a few, meant that an English-language culture was in-

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[2]As in other parts of Europe, this can be attributed to the influence of Romanticism, which encouraged an interest in the *Volk* and their traditions and to the effects of industrialisation which brought people together thus fostering new ideas.

[3]These were Protestant communities such as Methodists, Baptists and Independents. The Nonconformist movement was very strong in Wales and had an important impact on the nation's social and cultural development.

creasingly present in Wales. Wales at that time had no national institutions,[4] there were no legislative measures that pertained to the Welsh language and education was, for the most part, delivered in English. Welsh, therefore, was becoming marginalised and overshadowed in public life as English became the natural — and often unavoidable — choice.

This situation inevitably led to complex attitudes towards the Welsh language both by Welsh speakers and by those who did not speak Welsh (an increasing proportion of the population). In the periodicals of the day, for example, the question of how the Welsh language applied to the modern world was regularly aired. Some said that economies of scale would inevitably lead to the language's demise as, for example, cheap English language literature saturated the market; others held that, while English may reign in the world of commerce and law, Welsh would always express the essence of the nation and would therefore survive. For others, if the Welsh people were to remain true to themselves and show themselves worthy of being called a nation, the Welsh language had to be integral to all aspects of life (see, for example, Kilsby Jones, 1883; Taflog, 1883; Hen Ddisgybl 1885). In all of these discussions, the relationship between Welsh and English was a central concern, with some accepting and others resenting the fact that English had come to be equated with progress and moving on in the world while Welsh was increasingly seen as a backward and sentimental language. For Edwards and other nation-builders of the period, a danger posed by this mindset was that the Welsh language and a Welsh perspective on the world were at risk of becoming obsolete in all spheres of life. Confidence in the value and legitimacy of the Welsh language was waning as English came to dominate. In order to promote Welsh, therefore, these nation-builders sought to stress the validity of Welsh for the modern world and did so in a way that engaged their audience and responded to the language dynamics of the time.

As outlined in the introduction, one of the key areas to develop in terms of language policy and language planning is a holistic understanding of what influences people's language choice and language use. As a nation-builder, one of the great successes of Edwards' work was that he made his target audience — ordinary Welsh-speaking people[5] — choose Welsh and use Welsh. At the time that he was writing, for the vast majority of his audience, Welsh

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[4]Some national institutions were established at end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, most notably the University of Wales, the National Library of Wales (NLW) and the National Museum of Wales.

[5]In his works Edwards refers to the 'ordinary' Welsh speaking people as *y werin* and his work elevates *y werin* to almost mythical status. In broad terms, *y werin* (as defined by Edwards) were Welsh-speaking, Liberal-voting, Nonconformists who believed in the value of education and hard work and who had a strong sense of moral propriety.

would have been the language of the home, language of the community and language of religion. However, at the end of the nineteenth century — even in these domains — there were indications that the predominance of Welsh was under threat.[6] Edwards' success lay in his ability to stress the importance of Welsh in these three domains, thus helping to maintain the language therein and also to secure new spheres for the language, such as education and publishing. Edwards played a key role in ensuring that in these areas English was not the only option. To turn to Spolsky's (2009) "practices, beliefs and management" (pp. 4–5), in Wales at the turn of the nineteenth century, the *practice* of using Welsh was strong; Welsh would have been heard and used daily by a large portion of the population. That population's *beliefs* about the language — its validity and relevance to the modern world — were, however, increasingly challenged because of social, economic, political and cultural pressures. Given this context, leaders such as Edwards realised that attempts to influence beliefs about the Welsh language were necessary in order to ensure that use of the language remained vibrant. Edwards' interventions involved influencing status and corpus issues and operating across many spheres: the family, the community, mass media and education.

In terms of securing status for the Welsh language, Edwards' most significant contribution was in the field of education. The clarity of his vision, his forward thinking and strategic purpose in this regard is striking — and can be seen in a letter of 1909 to Herbert Lewis, M.P. (NLW, Dr Leslie Wynne Evans Papers, 7/7). The letter demonstrates that he realised that the educational policies that he advocated had to chime with the concerns and priorities of his age: thus, he refers to the need to deliver technical education in those schools located in areas of heavy industry; he responded to the drive for self-improvement that so characterised the period by advocating the development of school libraries that would "make the school a centre of intellectual life in rural districts" (NLW, Dr Leslie Wynne Evans Papers, 7/7). It is also clear that Edwards understood the language planning process to be holistic. In a particularly striking passage, he recognises that children with special educational needs who were sent away to schools in England and taught to read and write in English suffered because "When they come back, their parents do not understand them: their education stops, and they are no better off than they were before" (NLW, Dr Leslie Wynne Evans Papers, 7/7). Edwards is therefore arguing that breaking

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[6]For example, as the number of English speakers was growing in certain areas, some Nonconformist leaders were concerned that these English speakers would not become integrated into the chapel community, because the services were conducted in Welsh. To encourage integration, therefore, English-language chapel services were introduced. For some, such as Emrys ap Iwan, this served only to demonstrate the servility of the Welsh and the "English cause" was much mocked in his work.

the link between school, community and family was detrimental to the child. The recognition of the link between schooling, community and family is key: it underpins Edwards' vision of society; namely, that a youth will learn from his or her community and eventually give back to that community. Edwards would also have been aware, however, that this link was sometimes willingly broken as parents of infant children from rural Welsh-speaking Wales wrote to his department requesting that their child be taught in English rather than Welsh, for they wished their child to learn English because they could speak enough Welsh (NLW, O.M. Edwards Papers, BC1/1/45). Edwards would realise, therefore, that his efforts to promote and protect the Welsh language had to contend with challenges — from inside and outside Wales — and negotiate a myriad of conflicting forces and complex dynamics. He thus needed to present his audience with a coherent vision for Wales and the Welsh language.

Edwards played a key role in maintaining the link between different spheres of experience through his publications. In a letter to the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, Edwards explains his own role in providing educational materials in Welsh, noting that "For many years, all school books in Wales have been written by myself or by men I have brought up, — books on Welsh History, nature study, folklore, nursery rhymes etc." (NLW, Dr Leslie Wynne Evans Papers, 7/1). Edwards was also a very successful editor of periodicals and through these enterprises shaped ideas about Wales and the Welsh language. In these journals we see, for example, his influence on corpus planning. During his time in Oxford in the late nineteenth century, Edwards had been part of a group of students who came under the influence of the Jesus College Professor of Celtic, Sir John Rhys. This group was instrumental in developing a new orthography for Welsh, which led eventually to the publication of John Morris Jones's *A Welsh Grammar* in 1913. Edwards' publications were a showcase for this new orthography and in his own writing, he adopted a style of language that was "of the people", that is, a style that reflected their idioms and turns of phrase. He did so at a time when much published Welsh was pompous and affected and when attractive and forward-thinking English periodicals were increasingly available. Edwards' contribution to corpus planning was very important: it meant that appealing and lively Welsh language literary texts were produced and read and also that those without formal education in writing Welsh were willing to submit work for publication in Edwards' journals.[7] These publications were thus a way of giving a platform to and legitimising the perceptions, values and experiences of Edwards' target audience — and most crucially of all

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[7]It was Edwards' editorial policy to accept contributions from those who wrote colloquial Welsh and in so doing, he encouraged many aspiring writers to try their hand at writing and publishing in Welsh (see Edwards, 1897, p. 63).

perhaps, legitimising their language. Elsewhere (Hughes, 2010), I have argued that Marshall McLuhan's "The medium is the message" may be a useful concept for understanding the impact of Edwards' periodicals on Welsh language society, for the periodicals not only influenced the ideas of the society but its structures and *modus operandi*. These periodicals edited by Edwards fostered a community; Edwards identified this community as comprising the writers who contributed to the journal, the journal's distributors and those who sympathised with the journal (most notably its readers). The periodicals were thus a means of fostering networks that would also have fed in turn into other networks — literary societies, family homes and schools. The journals therefore were a medium that communicated an important message, not only through the text itself but through the act of buying, reading, sharing and discussing the journals. In short, the journals provided an alternate to the English language publications and succeeded in influencing language choice and language use.

Schiffman has stated that language policy has to be in touch with linguistic culture or it is "in serious trouble" (1996, p. 59).[8] Edwards understood the linguistic culture in which he worked and challenged that culture in such a way that engaged his audience and encouraged their co-operation in his vision. His success is evidenced by the sales of his journals, by the numerous letters he received congratulating him on his success and vowing to join with him in promoting his vision for Wales, in the new writers he fostered through his journals and by his lasting impact on Welsh literature and Welsh thought. In short, Edwards was successful at changing practices and encouraging the development of new spheres for Welsh. His may not have been a politically radical stance (and certainly his vision and actions had their limitations[9]), but within certain spheres — education and publishing in particular — he set the Welsh language on a positive course for the future. Although it is almost a century since his death, I would therefore suggest that Edwards' work remains relevant for the field of language policy and planning. His activities were varied and touched

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[8]The ethno-symbolist school of political scientists makes similar arguments with regard to attempts to nation-build. See, for example, Smith (2001, p. 82).

[9]Some have argued that his interventions did not go far enough and that because of his focus on cultural nationalism, rather than political autonomy, Welsh nationhood did not grow to its full potential. Edwards proposed, for example, that Wales should operate within a British context but that to do so successfully it had to be true to its own traditions and values and that the Welsh language had to flourish. As has been suggested above, Edwards was promoting his ideas for Wales at a complex juncture in the nation's history and I would argue that his success lay in promoting to his audience a vision for Wales that they could understand and with which they could engage because it made sense to them. His was not a politically radical stance, but was nevertheless one that challenged dominant narratives and engaged his audience.

upon a wide range of areas such as education and publishing. Furthermore, study of his innovative attempts to influence linguistic culture demonstrates the importance of understanding context and the myriad of conflicting forces and complex dynamics that a successful policy or implementation plan must negotiate. Study of his work also reminds us that these forces and complexities are not new.

Part 2: Interplay between Welsh and English: Modern-day Wales

Attempts to influence the linguistic culture of Wales have continued, and indeed intensified, in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The focus has widened since Edwards' time yet a similar pattern emerges as language planners attempt to address practices and beliefs with the aim of influencing daily language choices. In terms of language planning, Williams (2007b) has noted that in Wales it is "Stealth rather than legislation" (p. 27) that has produced gains in language maintenance, and comments that "in Wales, the style of intervention becomes almost as critical as the content of reform" (Williams, 2007a, p. 430). These two phrases imply that, in order to move the Welsh language planning agenda forward, it has been necessary to negotiate complex forces and dynamics and to respond to the mood of the times.

This notion is equally present in writings by members of the Welsh Assembly Government and the National Assembly for Wales. Morgan, then First Minister of Wales, writes with reference to the Welsh Language Act 1993 that "One of the main considerations of the Act was to make good the injustice done to the minority without raising the hackles of the majority" (2007, p. 45). Thomas, then Chair of the National Assembly for Wales' Culture Committee[10] and later Heritage Minister of the Welsh Assembly Government, outlines the issues voiced during the process of reviewing the standing of the Welsh language. He refers in particular to the concerns raised with regard to developing a policy to safeguard the Welsh heartlands: "There was a clear need to facilitate access for indigenous people to good-standard housing and well-paid employment in order to allow them to remain within their local communities. But there was also a real fear that such actions could be judged to be discriminatory" (Thomas, 2007, p. 374). Thomas also draws attention to the baggage that all the political parties and their members brought with them to the negotiating table with regard to attitudes towards the Welsh language (pp. 375–377). These conflicting attitudes, of course, mirrored the range of opinions about Welsh language in society as a whole.

The comments above illustrate the approach taken to language planning in

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[10]This committee was charged with taking a comprehensive review of the Welsh language.

Wales, which is one of careful persuasion. Dunbar (2007) and Williams (2007) have outlined how the Welsh approach contrasts with the Canadian approach, noting how the latter is based on a *rights* model while the former is based on being "constructive, consensual", as manifested in the work of the Welsh Language Board (WLB), for example (see Williams, 2007a, p. 430). The Welsh approach is, as noted by Dunbar, necessitated by the "relative absence of clearly defined minority language rights" (p. 148). It is also, I would suggest, driven by the history of Wales — a nation of two long co-existing languages, where the goal now seems to be to build a consensus about how best to promote the minority language. This goal has led to a range of successful approaches to language planning and language policy and Dunbar notes, the "numbers of speakers have grown and [. . .] the capacity to use the language has expanded into many new linguistic domains" (p. 148). However, each of the policy and planning initiatives also has its limitations and frustrations for those who wish to see the language flourish.

During the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, language policy and planning in Wales has operated in many spheres including legislation, education and the community. From a legislative perspective, the Welsh language's position has been strengthened during the past two decades with the passing of the Welsh Language Act 1993 (giving statutory status to the Welsh Language Board and Welsh Language Schemes) and the new Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, which gives the Welsh language official status for the first time and creates the post of Welsh Language Commissioner. These developments give the Welsh language status and the impact of legislation can be seen, for example, in the bilingual services that have been developed by public bodies and the acceptance of the need to include Welsh language considerations in areas such as recruitment. On its own, however, legislation does not promote language use and this is highlighted by Huws (2009) in her examination of the impact of legislation on the use of Welsh in the courts system.

The first Welsh-medium school was established by Sir Ifan ab Owen Edwards — O. M. Edwards' son — in Aberystwyth in 1939. Since then, there has been a sea change in the development of Welsh-medium education sparked initially by grass-roots movements.[11] Now supported by Government policy, the first Welsh Medium Education Strategy was published in 2010 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2010b, 2011). Indeed, the growth in Welsh-medium education has been largely credited with the rise in the number of Welsh speakers recorded in the 2001 census, where the highest percentage of Welsh speakers

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[11]Grass-roots movements such as RhAG (*Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg*, 'Parents for Welsh Medium Education') continue to be important stakeholders in the debate about Welsh-medium education and its development. See www.rhag.net/index.php.

was found to be children of school age (40.8% of 5- to 15-year olds) (WLB, 2003, p. 1). Once again, however, Welsh-medium education on its own is not enough to secure the future of the language and particular concern has been raised about some children's reluctance to use the Welsh language outside the classroom. In Gwynedd, the county with the highest percentage of Welsh speakers, this has led to research being undertaken to look into the patterns of language use amongst young children. In the presentation of their research, Thomas and Roberts (2011) note that "Children who speak the dominant community language at home often revert to the comfort of their L1 in peer–peer interactions, and do so even with children for whom their L1 is the minority language" (p. 89). As they point out in their conclusion, "The shift from passive to active engagement with the language in all walks of life can only be achieved through careful curriculum planning, and only if education policy is supported by the wider socio-political agenda" (p. 106).

Some of the most innovative Welsh language planning initiatives have come from community-based projects, the *Mentrau Iaith* ('Language initiatives') and *Twf* ('Growth'), for example. These initiatives, which are funded by the Welsh Language Board, seek to mobilise support and use of the language at grass-roots level. Twf, for example, is an initiative to encourage parents to bring up their children speaking Welsh and the organisation has a network of field officers. The Mentrau Iaith started with Menter[12] Cwmgwendraeth (an area in southwest Wales) in 1991. By now there are twenty-three Mentrau Iaith in Wales, organising a wide range of activities and support for local organisations, social groups and businesses. The level of activity is impressive, but of course, by its very nature, community-based work has undefined parameters. For example, the success of a given activity to promote use of the language will depend on the willingness and ability of the community members to attend the event, as participation is voluntary. The Mentrau are nonetheless a key part of developing a holistic approach to language planning as they seek to empower communities and are an excellent example of bottom up language planning.

As this very brief overview demonstrates, there have been a range of approaches to language policy and planning in Wales. As has been suggested above, on its own, each approach has its limitations. In order to shape policies and implementation plans which have a significant impact on language choices and use, a holistic approach to language policy and planning has to be adopted. As Williams (2007a) has highlighted, devolution has facilitated this approach:

> There is a belief that interest groups, local government representatives and officers, specialist agencies, individuals and social movements are somehow 'empowered' by devolution and are thus participants in the process of formu-

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[12]*Menter* is the singular, while *Mentrau* is plural.

lating and implementing language-related policies. [. . .] Partners in Wales are far more self-consciously concerned with an approach we may label 'holistic language planning'.   (p. 392)

To maximise the potential of this situation, however, this article suggests that more needs to be understood about the interaction between the different spheres and levels of language planning and their influence upon an individual's language choice.

Part 3: Moving towards new frontiers

Thus, the key question that is asked in this concluding section is how do we come to understand the influences on language use and language choice and, in particular, how do we understand the interaction between interventions that take place in different spheres. Let us consider two specific examples.

Recent research by the Welsh Language Board has shown that parents who are not themselves Welsh speaking are supportive of sending their child to a school where education is delivered through the medium of Welsh (BBC Newyddion ['News'], 2011). From a language policy and planning perspective it is necessary to enquire what has triggered this choice.

- Is it, for example, the influence of initiatives such as Twf that has encouraged them to introduce their child to Welsh?
- Is it the influence of Language Schemes in public bodies that have meant that the Welsh language has gained status?
- Is it the influence of their friends and family?

It may be a combination of all of these factors, but we have yet to understand the impact of the interaction among the different forces and impulses upon parent language choice. There are also questions to be asked about the impact of the decision to send their children through Welsh-medium education upon their own use of the Welsh language. For example:

- Will they learn Welsh themselves?
- Will they attempt to use Welsh in the workplace?
- Do they see their own use of the language as separate from that of the child?

Again, this is likely to vary across individuals, but to understand the full impact of policy and to further develop implementation plans, more needs to be understood about questions such as these.

In recent years, the Welsh Language Board has invested in initiatives to promote the use of Welsh in the workplace. The scheme is entitled *Promoting*

and Facilitating Bilingual Workplaces (WLB, 2009) and has been undertaken because Welsh Language Schemes in most cases only relate to the bilingual services that are offered to the customers of a public institution, rather than to its staff. This has led to a situation where staff use Welsh with customers but not necessarily with one another. The Welsh Language Board's program has led to many good initiatives to raise awareness of the importance of using Welsh in the workplace and of facilitating this. To further progress with this work, however, a deeper understanding needs to be reached about the factors that influence staff language choice at work. Questions that may be considered include the role of leadership, the influence of the line manager and the influence of a neighbouring colleague. What role does language play in these and other workplace situations and what power and strategic decision-making issues are at play through language? LeBlanc (2010) has carried out an ethnosociolinguistic study on the use of French in the workplace in New Brunswick and this kind of micro-level, long-term study has great potential for moving the field of language policy forwards.

In light of these observations about the possible interdependence of different spheres of language planning, and in order to move language policy and planning onwards to new frontiers, it may be fruitful to engage with fields of study that explore social networks. These fields of study have the capacity to look at patterns of behaviour in large-scale populations. One idea would be to track individuals' language use in various contexts — as parents, as employees, as employers, as customers, and as socially active individuals. This may allow us to see what factors may push an individual to use one language over the other in a given situation and may help us to understand the impact of significant measures to promote the language (such as legislation) as well as smaller scale measures (such as bilingual signage and posters). In so doing, we would then gain a deeper understanding of the interaction between the different spheres of language planning activity. This kind of work may also allow us to gain a deeper understanding of the needs of plurilingual individuals and thus better equip us, through the implementation of policy or through the designing of support programmes — in education and healthcare for example — to meet the needs of those individuals. A deeper understanding of this particular issue will potentially also make it easier to demonstrate the implications of not responding to the needs of plurilingual individuals — be they societal, economic or cultural.

To conclude, therefore, I would propose that, to move the field of language policy and planning forward, it is necessary to implement micro-level, long-term studies of language use. Important work has already been carried out in this field in Canada by Bourhis, Montaruli and Amiot (2007), in their study of language use in Montreal. More long-term study of this kind needs

to be undertaken. As mentioned by Bourhis et al., however, "cause and effect relationships are difficult to establish when evaluating the impact of language policies on language behaviour and language shift" (p. 191). However, focusing on the impact of the interaction between different policies and different language planning initiatives may give a fresh focus to this question and thus in turn sharpen the effectiveness of our policies and projects. Such a study would cut across the traditional language planning spheres and challenge us to build upon the work of scholars such as Bourhis and LeBlanc and look closely at the real impact of any language policy or language planning initiative. Such research may help illuminate the impact of the interactions and networks that an individual experiences on their choice of language in a given situation. In turn, such research may help language planners and language users better negotiate the complex dynamics and forces that always have, and always will, influence language use and language choice.

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